

Plainfield Council on Aging

May 2022 Newsletter



**Plainfield Council on Aging
Town Offices, 304 Main St.
Plainfield, MA 01070**

May Luncheon



When: **May 11, 2022**
(unless otherwise restricted by the Board of Health)

Time: **12 noon**

Where: Plainfield Town Hall

Menu: Ham, baked beans, cole slaw, applesauce

Our April lunch featured a large turkey—we all enjoyed a little Thanksgiving in April along with being together in person again!

Get Your Second Covid Booster

The Massachusetts government recently announced that, following recommendations from the federal government, 2nd boosters are now available for anyone 50 or older as long as it's been at least 4 months since their 1st booster. A few of the many handy places to get boosted include:

- Pittsfield: Big Y, Walgreens, CVS
- Greenfield: Big Y, Walgreens, CVS
- Florence: Walgreens
- Northampton: Big Y, Walmart

Foot Care Clinic

The foot care clinic is up and running again with Piper Sagan every other month with the next one scheduled for **Tuesday, May 10th** at the Community House in Cummington. Cost is \$50 per person. Masks are required. Please contact Chris at croumeliotis@cummington.ma.gov or call **634-2262** to leave a message or ask a question.

Is this COA Newsletter Important to You? Let us know!

This newsletter is funded by the Massachusetts Service Incentive Grant (SIG) and designed, printed, and mailed by the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs, of which Plainfield COA is a member. As each fiscal year ends on June 30, we need to communicate the value of the newsletter to our funders. YOU are in the best position to express that value. Has the newsletter been important to you—particularly during the isolation and stress of the pandemic? If so, would you be willing to write a brief testimonial on its significance? If so, please send it to the Plainfield COA, 304 Main Street, Plainfield, MA 01070.

Thank you!

Happy Birthday in May!



Emily Cavin, Gerald Connell, Margaret Connell, Ellen Dupont, Darlene Graham, Jewel Green, Dorothy Hendricks, Michael Kalagher, Margaret Keller, David Kramer, Lori Lamontagne, Hendrik Messenger, Mary Potter, Denise Sessions, James Shearer, William Sheppard, Barbara Threat, Earl Walrath, Sue Warner, Christian Wrobel

Medical Equipment Swap

Remember, the COA currently has equipment available, including wheelchairs, walkers, crutches & canes, shower chairs, raised toilet seats & free-standing commodes plus assorted braces, pedal exercisers, bed guards, and trekking poles.

Call Susan at 634-0025 if you need equipment.

Reality Check

by Elizabeth Van Loan

I feel young and full of pep,
Rushing hither and yon.
Enjoying every passing day
Seldom weebegone.
Until the daily news proclaims:
"Elderly Woman Hit by Car."
And I am halted in my tracks,
My pleasant world ajar.
Forced to face reality—
That 'elderly' woman is
younger than me!



Top dog or not, you gotta slow down.



MOTHER
ma mère
MOMS
MUM
M A - M A
mommy
M A D R E
MAMMY
MA!



She made broken look beautiful
and strong look invincible.
She walked with the Universe
on her shoulders and made it
look like a pair of wings.

-Ariana



The Plainfield Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Plainfield Council on Aging. My contribution of \$ _____ is attached.
(Please write your check to The Town of Plainfield and mail to Plainfield COA, 304 Main St. Plainfield, MA 01070)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Plainfield Council on Aging

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

This year has seen a significant increase in violent storms in the southern United States. I hope this is not an indication that we will have tornados in the months to come, but here are a important survival tips in case of a violent storm:



- ⇒ GET INSIDE. If you are outside, get inside. When you are inside, get as far inside the middle as you can away from windows and doors.
- ⇒ GET DOWN. Get underground if possible. If you do not have a basement, go to the lowest floor possible.
- ⇒ COVER UP. Flying debris and glass in a violent storm are the number one killer. Stay under the stairs or in a room or space without windows. Use pillows, blankets, coats, or anything else to cover up, protecting your head and body from flying debris.
- ⇒ TO GO. Have a TO GO bag with you in which you have your medicines, clothing, documents, cell phone, credit cards, any thing you may need for an extended time away from home.

I sincerely hope that you will not need it, but it never hurts to be prepared.

Stay S.A.F.E.!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.



Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

MediCARE uh oh

Says the caller, I CARE that you are eligible to get a new Medicare card with a security chip, and I just want to verify your number so we can send it. And, he says, if you give me your social security number I can see what additional benefits you may be able to receive. Or she says, I would like to send you a new knee brace and it won't cost you a penny! Just give me a credit card number so you can easily pay the minimal shipping costs.

The caller may be sweet as pie offering things as above, or you may get threats: If you don't verify your social security number, we will have to cancel your Medicare coverage. You have a medical bill that must be paid now or you will not be able to fill your next prescription. There has been suspicious activity on your account and we need to verify your identity or you will be liable for charges.

Phooey on those callers! You know how much medical care can cost, it's a big business. If a scammer can rip off your information, they can turn your good name into lots of dollars. They may also spend your benefits on actual care for themselves, so when you make a claim you find your benefits are already used. Medicare reminds us that:

1. Our Medicare number needs to be kept secure, just like a credit card number.
2. Medicare will never call you. You will get a letter if they need to contact you.
3. No Medicare person will make a house call.
4. Medicare cannot enroll you over the phone unless you called first.
5. Medicare cards do not expire, so there is no need to send you a new one.

If you suspect a Medicare card scam, report it to Medicare at 800-633-4227. I tried the number – you will need to say "Report a fraud" and give your date of birth, then get transferred to a person. They will ask for your Medicare number to continue.

With care,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com
413-268-2228

May's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Lately I've been getting questions about Lifelines, also called "personal emergency response" systems. So here's some information on what they are, how they work, what they cost and who pays, along with a list of providers.

These medical alert systems have advanced far beyond the basic pendant you wear around your neck. These days the range of options include wrist bands, belt accessories, phone apps, and can be part of a home security system. Features include: wellness checks, medication reminders, remote control for answering the phone. And they can come with a GPS tracking device. Or, you can still get a pendant that you wear around your neck, with a button to push if you fall and can't get up.

If you push that button, or if you fall and the pendant registers that impact, the Call Center comes on line and will begin to ask if you are all right. If you respond, you can have a conversation with the Call Center to let them know how best to help. For instance, one of their first questions will be, do you want us to call an ambulance? Or should we contact your neighbor, family, friend who you have listed as someone who helps in an emergency? If you are not able to respond, the Call Center will call 911 emergency services and give them details you listed in your personal information.

I remember receiving a call at work one afternoon from the Call Center saying my Mom had fallen and she agreed to be transported to the hospital. We had set up the Call Center procedure to notify family when an event occurred, whether or not Mom agreed to hospital transport. The Call Center will have necessary emergency information to help EMT responders and/or they will contact whoever you have indicated as your emergency contacts.

What does a Lifeline cost? Prices range, depending on what features you choose. The basic pendant ranges from \$20 - \$35 per month depending on provider. Lifelines that also act as medication dispensers start at \$70 per month and up.

Who pays? Medicare does not pay. MassHealth does. If you are a State Home Care client with Highland Valley, Lifeline can be one of the services you receive. To qualify, you would need to have a medical condition that makes you prone to falls, or need help managing your Rx, or have dementia and be at risk of wandering. In these cases, Highland Valley might pay for your Life Line.

There are at least a dozen Lifeline providers who service our area. Here are a few:

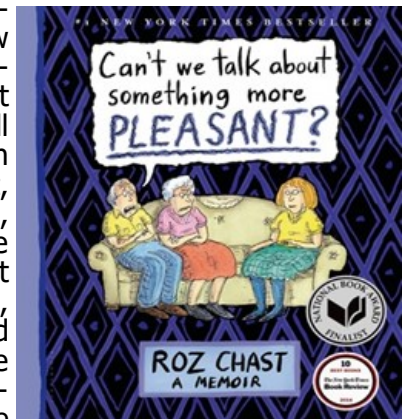
- ⇒ Bay Alarm Medical 844-805-7647
- ⇒ Medical Guardian 800-487-7415
- ⇒ Medical Alert 800-833-0850
- ⇒ Phillips Lifeline 855-651-7015
- ⇒ Link to Life 888-544-4462
- ⇒ Ready Home Medical Alarms LLC 413-535-3035
- ⇒ SafetyNet by LoJack 877-434-6384

For more information on their specific products you can Google them and check out their websites. Or you can find Lifeline products through retailers like Walmart, CVS or through national cell phone carriers like Verizon or AT&T.

Being a Caregiver: Can't we talk about something more pleasant?

Sometimes portrayals of caregivers are based on an embedded assumption that the caring is based on existing loving and supportive relationships within a the family, a notion that, for some, seems too good to be true. The life of a caregiver is often far more complicated and stressful, especially when it comes to caring for parents. Not every family is a replica of the "Waltons". Messages like "We don't share family business and you shouldn't complain" are often internalized and pop up when the child becomes an adult. Getting through this can be tough unless there are chances to vent.

Sometimes it's necessary to face the tougher topics in life by softening them with humor. Roz Chast, a cartoonist for the New Yorker, has achieved this in talking about what it's like to help aging parents as they reach the end of their lives and also deal with the complex nature of longstanding personal and family dynamics. Her memoir is a mix of text and special cartoons. If you've seen her cartoons in the New Yorker, you'll recognize her style. Not everyone can pull off telling a story in a way that is honest, touching, engaging, sad and funny at the same time. It's not full of clinical lingo, facts, directions and advice. It's a more down to earth portrayal of one of the most difficult rites of passage we face. It's available through CWMARS at the library or if you go online there are several other very affordable sources. *Published by Bloomsbury Press 2014.*



On the Road Again...

2022 Trip Lineup

These are the bus trips being planned for 2022 with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. *Friends of Northampton Senior Center* is helping with the cost of some trips. Contact Francine Frenier if interested or want more information by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.



Updates on the following:

Multi Day Aug 15-17. Kennebunkport & Portland Maine Coastal Tour. 3 days. Cost \$359, \$25 discount if paid by 5/8/2022. Flyer available. Need a few more passengers.

Day Trip September 10. Thomaston, Connecticut. **Naugy Scenic Train Ride.** Stop at Fascia's Chocolate Factory. \$120.00. \$10 discount if paid by July 30. Lunch entrée choices: Chicken Marsala, Salmon or Pork Tenderloin at Black Rock Tavern. New Date Saturday, 9/10/22.

Taking interest lists on the following:

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes Chicken & Salmon lunch. Cost \$113. Due NOW. Join us to experience the glitz and glamour of the 70s! Flyer Available. Make payment to FNSC and mail to: Francine Frenier, 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096.

Day Trip. Encore Boston Harbor Casino. June 15, 2022. Cost is \$37 which includes \$20 free slot play. Meals on your own. Meet the bus at Sheldon Field, Old Ferry Rd, Northampton at 7 a.m. *time subject to change. Make payment to Francine Frenier and mail to: Francine Frenier, 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096 by May 8th.

Multi Day Oct 14-23. Nashville, Memphis & Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—10 days. \$1,205, \$25 discount if paid by 7/2/22. Flyer available. Only a few seats remain.

Day Trip July/August. Minor league baseball game. Red Sox Triple A minor league team, **Woo Sox** in Worcester, MA. Date and cost to be determined.

Day Trip Aug 10. The Jersey Tenors, a musical tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch: Chicken Parmesan & Broiled Scrod. Cost \$114, \$10 discount if paid by 6/30/22. Flyer Available.

Day Trip Sept. The Big E
Day Trip Late Sept. Wareham, MA. **Cranberry Bog Tour.**

Day Trip Oct 4. Oktoberfest! The Schnitnel

Brothers perform. Self Drive to the Log Cabin. Meal choice and cost to be determined.

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip. 7 days. Cost \$TBD, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available. This will be rescheduled for 2023.

Food News: Hilltown Mobile Market, HIP and Snap

The Hilltown Mobile Market is making a big transition and moving online! The new marketplace will allow customers to order directly from Hilltown farms, with over a dozen pickup locations available throughout the Hilltowns. Door delivery in the Hilltowns will be available at Westhampton Woods and The Maples. Customers can sign up for a farm share or shop freely as often as they like. SNAP/HIP, WIC and Senior Coupons will be happily accepted at select locations. **The Market will be open from July 16 – November 18, 2022.** Alternative ordering options will be available for those without internet and several pre-season training sessions will be offered to get folks signed up and familiar with the online market. Visit www.hilltownmobilemarket.info for more information and to sign up today or call Hunt Chase at (413) 296-4536 ex. 116. Stay tuned for training session dates.

Open HIP Locations: Hampshire County

What is HIP?

The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) is a Massachusetts state program where SNAP recipients get at least \$40 of extra SNAP money every month to spend on local fruits and vegetables. That means if you have SNAP, you automatically have HIP! Shop at the eligible farm locations with your SNAP/EBT card, and get at least \$40 extra to spend through the HIP program. Note: you must have at least \$1 on your SNAP/EBT card when you go and shop; in other words, you need to have a balance on your EBT card in order to earn the HIP incentive.



How to find a HIP location near you: Locations are organized by county. Addresses are listed for each location, including zip codes. To search by zip code and find the location closest to you, visit buylocalfood.org/hip-map to view our new map! Visit the delivery service websites to see if they offer delivery or pickup near your home! For up-to-date information on locations, as well as other locations in the rest of the Pioneer Valley, see www.facebook.com/HIP.PioneerValley or contact Ellery at ellery@buylocalfood.org.

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Plainfield Town Offices
304 Main St.
Plainfield, MA 01070**

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PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

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This Newsletter is sponsored in part by a grant from The Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Saturday, May 21st 9am-3pm

Spring Clothing Exchange



**Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St., Goshen**

Outfit your family for the spring without spending a cent! Drop off your washed, gently-used men's, women's and children's spring clothing and accessories at the church in the vestibule on Wednesdays from 6-8pm and Fridays from 9am-3pm, or call Laura Barrus at 268-7005 to set up a specific time. Then come back to shop on Saturday the 21st from 9am-3pm! All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not.

Why do I need Prescription Advantage?

"Why do I need Prescription Advantage?" This question is often asked. Many say, "I don't need it. I already have a Medicare Part D plan" or "I have coverage from my former employer." Even with Part D or other coverage, **there are many reasons to join Prescription Advantage, including:**

- It does not replace your existing coverage, it supplements it;
- It can lower your co-pays if you reach that coverage gap, also known as the "donut hole";
- It allows you to change your Medicare plan outside of Medicare's open enrollment;
- At certain income levels it's FREE!

Prescription Advantage also provides benefits for individuals age 65 and older who are not eligible for Medicare, as well as those under age 65 with a qualified disability.

Find out how Prescription Advantage can help you by calling **1 (800) 243-4636** or visiting prescriptionadvantagemma.org *Prescription Advantage is administered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.*