

Plainfield Council on Aging

November 2023 Newsletter



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

Polly Ryan, Coordinator
413-212-1581
pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us

Thanksgiving Luncheon

Wednesday, November 8th at Noon
Town Hall



We will be serving a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Feel free to share fun seasonal jokes with us which may help to reduce our blood pressure ahead of the BP clinic after lunch (gratis the Hilltown Community Health Center and Mary Krol).

Veterans Luncheon

Friday, November 10th at Noon
Town Hall

Our annual Veterans' spaghetti luncheon will be held at Town Hall on Friday, November 10th at noon. All Veterans are welcome. Please RSVP to Susan Metcalfe Honneus at stormpetrel22@gmail.com or **413-570-5544**.

Covid is on the rise again! We advise everyone to do home testing before attending COA events to curb any spread. Medical equipment supply coordinator, Shirley Todd, will have test kits as needed, call her at 413-446-9608 for an exchange.

Another flu and COVID vaccine clinic will be held **November 8th** at the Plainfield Public Safety Complex, 38 North Central Street, from 10am to noon. Pre-registration is recommended: <https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/northampton> or by calling 413-587-1314 to register by phone. Seniors (60+) who register will get a \$25.00 gift

certificate. This saves time at the clinic and helps plan for staffing & supplies. Vaccines are available to anyone, so walk-ins will be accommodated. Ages 2 and up are welcome to participate. There is no cost, and no health insurance is needed. However, health insurance information is collected to reimburse some of the Northampton Health Department's expenses.

Homebound and need a vaccine? Use the link below or call **413-587-4919** and leave a message to request a home visit. A nurse will follow up with you directly. Appointments are typically scheduled within a week. Visit:

northamptonma.gov/2487/

Homebound-Vaccination-Visits

A new exercise class followed by a delicious and nutritious lunch is being offered at Earthdance complimentary of your COA and Earthdance Creative Living Project!

Exercise classes will be conducted by Judy Messer who will focus on structural and flexible strength training for balance & bones using introductory Yoga and Pilate techniques.

Dates: Tuesdays (Nov 7, 14, 21, 28, Dec 5, 12).

Time: Exercise from 11am to Noon

Lunch Noon to 1pm

Please RSVP to Polly for lunch: **413-212-1581**. Feel free to join us just for lunch or exercise too. Meet us at Earthdance, in the Beautiful Square Studio, 252 Prospect Street. Check out Judy at **JudyMesser.com** or call her for more information, **413-221-3012**. If you can, please bring a set of hand weights (2 or 3 pounds).

Need a ride?

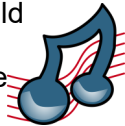
Volunteers Dennis Carr (available noon-4pm) and Erik Burcroff (available 8am-4pm) will take you as far as Pittsfield, Northampton, Easthampton, or North Adams. Call Dennis at **413-634-5031** or email sweeneyonce@gmail.com and Erik at

413-262-1587 or email him at shoshawalker@gmail.com to arrange rides. Donations accepted.

You can also take advantage of the "Hilltown Driver Pool" service that the Hilltown CDC provides. Locally hired drivers (1 of which is a Plainfield resident) are available to take individuals to doctors or on medical errands. Please go to the HCDC website for more information on how to take advantage of this service: www.hilltowncdc.org/transportation. To schedule a ride, Contact Ed Pelletier at 413-296-4232 between 8:15am-9:45am M-F or leave a voicemail.

Technology support is returning in a new fashion! Peg Whalen will still be giving one on one help by appointment. The COA Consortium received a \$300,000 grant from EOEA to increase rural digital literacy and internet access in our consortium area. The project has four goals: FREE internet service to those households without; FREE laptop/tablet devices; FREE training to use their new or current devices; FREE ongoing technical support. Contact Peg Whalen at 413-296-5080 or email coaTechHelp@gmail.com for more information and/or to request FREE equipment & hookups to the internet.

Dancing with Polly continues on **Wednesday, November 15th at 10am** in the Plainfield Town Hall. Enjoy dancing at your own pace to some of the participants favorite music! All ages are welcome!



Our monthly support group for those impacted by memory loss and their caregivers will be on **Wednesday, November 15th** in Plainfield Town Hall at **11:30am**. A nurse from the Northampton

Health Department, Jennifer Brown, will join us to discuss normal memory loss that comes with aging and memory loss of concern. We will also discuss tips for enhancing memory. If you're interested in learning or sharing how we might care for our neighbors struggling with this, please join us. Together we will decide what to explore next.

Grab and go hot meals are available for Plainfield's 60 and over residents at the Cummington Community House. They are ready for pick up every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month between noon and 12:30 but must be ordered in advance (in November, pick up is the 14th and 28th, please order by November 7th). To order meals, call Chrisoula at 634-2262 or croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov. Suggested donation is \$3 per meal for Highland Valley Elder Services who prepare them.

The next **Foot Care Clinic** at the Community House in Cummington is scheduled for **November 7th**. Please call Piper Sagan at 413-522-8432 to arrange an appointment (\$50/session) or schedule a home visit, (\$80/session).

Happy Birthday!

Susan Lococo, Kathryn Pugliese, Mark Stinson, Jennifer Lee, David Perkins, John Tobin, Judith Cole, Janis Talbot, Lionel Beckwith, Lina Bernstein, Robert Mellstrom, William Gilbert, Sandra Morann, Bonnie Pierce, Robert Fusco, Edward Morann, Jerry Little



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



The big cool down of fall has already started and folks are firing up their wood stoves and fireplaces. Most chimney fires are started by a build up of CREOSOTE in the chimney which can ignite in and through the chimney into the house.

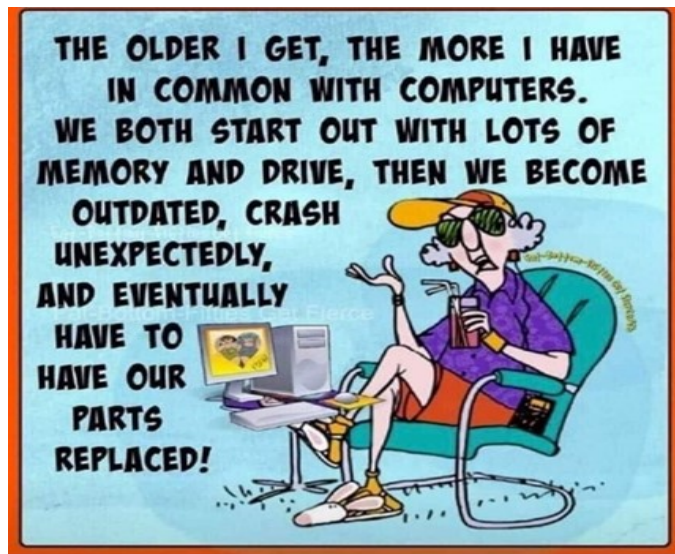
Here are a few tips on how to begin the wood heating season safely:

- Have your chimney inspected and/or cleaned at the beginning of the heating season.
- Burn only dry, well seasoned hardwood to reduce creosote accumulation.
- Do not use flammable liquid to start the fire.
- Make sure the damper is open before starting the fire.
- Always use a fireplace screen to keep flying sparks and embers from falling onto the floor.
- Shovel ashes into a metal bucket with a metal lid, and place it on the ground well outside the building. Ashes and embers can stay hot for days and still ignite combustibles.

Have a SAFE wood heating season!

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

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department 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!

Your State Representatives

State Senator Paul Mark

Email: paul.mark@masenate.gov
Phone: 413-464-5635
Mail: 773 Tyler Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:
Williamsburg Town Hall
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa

Email: Lindsay.Sabadosa@mahouse.gov
Phone: 413-270-1166.
Mail: 76 Gothic Street
Northampton, MA 01060

My Forgetter's getting better but my Remember-er is Broke

Often times I walk into a room, say
"What am I here for?"
I wrack my brain, but all in vain
a zero is my score.
At times I put something away where it is safe,
but, Gee!
The person it is safest from generally is me!

When shopping I may see someone, say "Hi"
and have a chat,
Then, when the person walks away I ask myself,
"Who the heck was that?"

Yes, my forgetter's getting better while my
remember-er is broke,
And it's driving me plumb crazy and that isn't
any joke.

My forgetter's getting better but my
remember-er is broke, to you that may seem
funny but to me that is no joke.
For when I'm "here" I'm wondering if I really
should be "there," and, when I try to think it
through, I haven't got a prayer!

The Book- Part 3. Personal Information

By Jean O' Neil and Deb Hollingworth

Thanksgiving is coming - we should talk stuffing! Well, not the turkey, but your wallet. Part of the process of organizing our paperwork is knowing where to best keep it.

So on to Part 3. We all have a batch of personal documents, some need to be with us at all times, others are needed now and again, others maybe once every several years, if that. Where should these items be kept?

Wallet. An appropriately skinny wallet has your driver's license, vaccination records, library card, grocery or gas cards, one or two credit cards, and roadside assistance card. If you have under-age children, you should carry some of their records as well.

Home. Safe but available, you might keep your Medicare card, and vehicle title and registration in your home. We also recommend keeping a copy of your will, durable power of attorney, health care proxy, living will, and letter of instruction at home.

Safety deposit box. A very secure and protected way to store information is a metal box in your bank's vault. Here can go things that you don't need immediate access to, likely a birth certificate, marriage or divorce papers, social security card, military discharge papers, real estate deed, and passport.

Our local banks have safety deposit boxes that may cost \$40 or more a year, more for a larger box. They give you two keys and keep one; your key plus their key is needed to access the box. If you lose your key, they will have to drill the box open and charge you.

If you don't have a safety deposit box, there are alternatives. You can buy a safe to keep at home in a secure place. Safes come in different qualities and prices based on their size, level of protection from burglary, and resistance to fire.

Another alternative, simplicity itself, is to make a copy of the documents and ask a friend or family member (perhaps the person who has your Power of Attorney?) to store them so they are in a second location. If that location is in a different state, even better, to reduce chances of an emergency hitting you both. This approach at least gives you a start on replacements if needed.

Back to stuffing. Why do we ask you to un-stuff your wallet? Identify theft! If you carry your social security card and your Medicare or health insurance cards and your wallet is stolen or lost, the

information on those cards can help an unscrupulous person hijack your identity. We can hear some of you protesting now – I can't remember those numbers! OK. You can make a copy of the card, cut it to shape, block out the last four characters, and memorize them. Or maybe not bother. Deb says the Medicare card is easily replaced with a phone call, and we note that you shouldn't need the full Medicare number until you go to a new medical provider.

One more thing – if anyone would like a large three-ring notebook, I have two and will be happy to give them a new home. Give me a call. Jean, 268-2228.

Until next time – part four will be on home matters, such as history of home improvements and overall house management. You'll really want to learn about a family heirloom clock...

We DO NOT throw away
perfectly good food in this
house.

We put the left overs in
Tupperware, put the
Tupperware in the fridge, let it
go bad, THEN throw it out.

Haircuts and More at Smith Vocational High School

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Manicures, colors, facials, and other hair care options are being offered at Smith Vocational High School on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The cost is \$5.00 for a haircut. Please call for other prices. The Smith Vocational Cosmetology students provide the services with their teacher alongside.



Simply call 413-587-1414 ext. 3531 for an appointment. The Salon is located in Room 124 of Building A at Smith Vocational High School, 80 Locust St., Northampton. **All are welcome!**

On the Road Again... 2024 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

~~COMING IN 2024~~

Multi Day Trip May 29– June 6, 2024.

Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island & New Brunswick. *Passport required.*
Check your expiration date.

Cost \$1,644 per person dbl. occupancy, \$25 discount if paid in full by **February 20th**. Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail next year to the address above. Wait List Only.

This 9 day trip includes: 8 nights lodging including 5 nights in Canada, two night stay in Maine. 15 meals including: 8 breakfasts, 6 dinners, 1 lunch. Guided Tour of Acadia National Park, Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Prince Edward Island

~If you have called in the past and are on the list for this trip, please call or email Francine again to confirm you are still interested.~

~~*Since Lake George and Lake Sunapee were so popular and sold out in 2023, I will run these two trips in 2024.*~~

~~*A trip to Sight and Sound Theater in Pennsylvania Dutch country to see Daniel is in the works.*~~

Looking for day trip ideas for 2024. Please email Francine at address above.

The answer is “YES” if.....

1. You have none of the above
2. You have Medicare and are interested in a Medicare supplement
3. Your medical conditions have changed and you expect to need more medical care
4. Your Rx costs are significant
5. You expect to travel, or spend significant time out of State
6. Your doctor is “not in network”
7. You have gotten denials for services
8. You just don't like your current health insurance coverage
9. You're just curious

RESOURCES

- The SHINE program (also called SHIP program in other States)
- The Pharmacy Outreach Program
- Prescription Advantage (for Massachusetts residents only)
- The MassHealth Buy-in program
- X-tra Help through Social Security
- Health Safety Net

For information on any of the above resources, give your senior center a call to get an appointment with your SHINE counselor.



What is Open Enrollment?

Open Enrollment happens each year from October 15th through December 7th. It's the time when we can shop for health insurance.

Do You Need to Shop?

The answer is “NO” if....

1. You have health insurance through your pension retirement benefit
2. You use the VA for medical care
3. You have MassHealth
4. You are still working and have employer's insurance coverage or your spouse is still working and you are covered under your spouse's insurance

November Tech Talk; It's a Small World by Peg Whalen

Remember Disney's “It's a Small World After All”. I always loved that song. Well, the world is now singing a new tune, “It's a Digital World After All”. I took some liberties and rewrote the lyrics.

It's a world of tech
A world of skills
It's a world to explore
And a world with thrills
There's so much to be shared
That it's time we're aware
It's digital world after all.

I'd love it if all of us were singing this song. Many of you already do. I encourage more of you to join

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PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

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(continued from previous page) them. We can all benefit from living in this new world. You've lived through party line phone service, rotary dialing, and wireless phones. Now we have handheld computers that make calls, take pictures, send text messages, do email, and offer video calling.

The internet saves us money, time, gas, energy. Telehealth appointments with our health providers, safe online banking to spare us trips to the bank, ordering prescription refills easily, and shopping that saves us driving to stores. We can watch tv for much less than costly cable and satellite services. Working on puzzles is free and easy. The internet opens a world to us where we can read about topics we are interested in, learn just about anything, even work from home.

Using digital technologies lets us reach people we may be unable to see regularly. We can watch young family members living elsewhere grow up. Social media, like Facebook, gives many people a way to lessen loneliness or isolation. Video calls make it possible to share holidays with those we love. We can relieve boredom and enjoy the stimulating competitive exchanges we love by playing games online, like Mah Jong. Visiting people we otherwise would lose contact with is easier when friends move away or when we retire and don't see coworkers we enjoyed working with.

There really is so much to be shared, explored, learned. I encourage you to build your skills in ways you find helpful. Our new Digital Literacy funding provides you with many ways to explore this digital world. You can participate in ways you find interesting and accessible. And we can help, with learning, equipment, broadband, and support. Because, It's a Digital World After All!

Ongoing Tech Support & Computer Classes with Peg Whalen

We're offering Drop-In Center Tech Support at the Chesterfield Community Center on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. In November, Drop-In is on 11/1 and 11/15 from 10am-3pm. You can stop in or schedule: **coaTechHelp@gmail.com** or **413-296-5080**. Please call or email for assistance outside Drop-In hours. Free equipment and broadband installation will be available soon, along with training.

Computer classes you can attend at any point are on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. Register before coming: **coaTechHelp@gmail.com** or **413-296-5080**. Classes are scheduled for 11/9, 12/14, 12/28, 1/11, 1/25, from 1:00 to 3:00. Laptops are provided. You are encouraged to bring your own to learn on. We start with turning a computer on OR you can learn just what you are interested in. Give it a try!