

Plainfield Council on Aging

February 2024 Newsletter



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

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

Valentine Luncheon



Wednesday, February 14th at Noon
Town Hall

We will be serving meat and vegetarian chili, broccoli cornbread, salad, and dessert. Other desserts are welcome additions! Guest Speaker, Patick Cahillane, Deputy Sheriff in Hampshire County, will inform us on the TRIAD Community Policing program while we enjoy our desserts. Blood pressure readings will be available gratis the Hilltown Community Health Center and Gretta Cullett.

The exercise class at Earthdance has been a huge success and will continue for another 4 Tuesdays beginning February 6th and will again be followed by a delicious and nutritious meal. Instructor Judy Messer will focus on structural and flexible strength training for balance & bones using introductory Yoga and Pilate techniques. The cost is based on what you feel you can afford. A sliding fee of \$40-60 will cover all 4 classes. Weather cancellation will be made up at the end of the sessions. Drop-ins are welcome to join at \$18 per class. A sliding fee of \$5-15 will cover each lunch.

Dates are: **Feb. 6, 15 (Thursday), 20, & 27.** Exercise from 11am to noon, lunch: noon to 1pm-please rsvp 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). Thanks to the COA and the Earthdance Creative Living Project for subsidizing this event.

Like snowshoeing? The Hilltown Land Trust and All Out Adventures have a program you can

join. Check it out:

alloutadventures.org/ourprograms/#seniors

Need a friend? The “Memory Support Group” and “Dancing with Polly” is going to morph into “Coffee Hour with Polly”. She will chat (dance/walk?) with you anywhere and anytime. Whether you just need company or help with something, she will be there to listen and provide guidance when needed. “Just call out my name and I’ll be there” 413-212-1581 or email her at pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us

What does our younger generation have in common with members of the COA community? Making and eating ice cream? Stories? Sharing skills? Art? Singing? Would you like to participate in a multigenerational Sharing Club? Would you bring your grandkids? If so, let’s get one going. Call Polly to express your interest, 413-212-1581 or email pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us

Need a ride? Volunteers Dennis Carr (available noon-4pm) and Erik Burcroff (available 8-4pm) will take you as far as Pittsfield, Northampton, Easthampton, or North Adams. Call Dennis at 413-634-5031 or email him at 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.

Need help with shoveling snow this winter?
Let Polly know at pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us or 413-212-1581.

Grab and go hot meals are available for Plainfield's 60 and over residents at the Cummington Community House. They can be picked up **every Tuesday** between noon and 12:30. To register or order for the first time, call Chrisoula at 634-2262 or email 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 **March 5th**. Please call Piper Sagan at 413-522-8432 to schedule an appointment (\$50) or a home visit (\$80/session).

Please consider doing Covid home testing before attending COA events to curb any spread. Medical equipment supply coordinator, Shirley Todd, has test kits on hand. Call her at 413-446-9608 for an exchange. If she is unavailable call Polly at 413-212-1581.

Please call Polly if you would like to be a COA volunteer and give a neighbor a helping hand, 413-212-1581. The season is here when people will need help with snow shoveling especially! If anyone does snow plowing and needs more customers, please let Polly know that too.



The Clark Art institute has free admission through the end of March. Polly will schedule a van for a Friday sometime in March to transport anyone interested in going. Call 413-212-1581 or email pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us to reserve a seat. Check out the Clark's website: clarkart.edu/

The Northern Hilltown COA website has a fresh look and is an immensely useful resource! Check it out: northernhilltownscoas.org/ See what is happening in neighboring towns and feel free to join their events.

Please see the regional section of this newsletter for information on technology support. Forms are now available to officially request free technology equipment and free internet hookup with Whip City in Town Hall (look in the COA cabinet), the town offices and the library or get one from Polly.

For income eligible individuals, discounted internet is provided through the Affordable Connectivity Program. Check it out at www.fcc.gov/acp (The program may be updated to provide free internet to qualifying households later in the year.)

Happy Birthday!

Virginia Ansbergs, Ursula Burnham,
Barbara Cheda, Rebecca Coletta, Liebe Coolidge,
Sebern Fisher, Gail Fusco, Anna Hanchett,
Anna Hathaway, Daniel Hoch, Susan Honneus,
Rema Loeb, Ronald Major, Linda Mason,
James Pugliese, Stephen Ridel, William
Schusser, Ute Stebich, Cathy Tobin,
Frances Vilbon



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

Technology Help and Training for February



Tech Drop in Center Hours:

(no appointment needed)

- Weekly on Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00 at 400 Main Rd Chesterfield Community Center
- Meekins Library Drop-In tech support on Tuesday 2/13 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg
- Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Thurs 2/22 from 10:00 to Noon

Tech Training:

- Beginner's Windows Computer Class continues, weekly Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00, Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class sign-up starts now, classes to begin in March.

Must register for classes or workshops.

Email coaTechConnect@gmail.com; call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Must register one week before the scheduled training date.

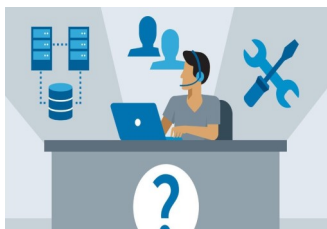
Tech Help Requests or Volunteering:

- Support available by email: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within 24 hours.
- See our updated website www.northernhilltownscoas.org to sign up online as a volunteer or to request tech assistance.

Event Save The Date:

On **Saturday, April 6th** we will be holding a **Tech Connect event** with vendors, mini-workshops, information, and activities at New Hingham Elementary School, Smith Rd, in Chesterfield.

Watch for more information in the coming month.



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!



Seniors Aware of Fire Education

We were now in "Open Burning Season" which began Jan. 15 and ends May 1. This is the time in which you may burn brush, cane, driftwood and forest debris outside. It is against the law to burn construction material or debris. Here are some safety tips for outdoor burns:



- Get a burning permit from your town. They are issued on a daily basis based on weather conditions.
- An adult must attend the fire until it is totally extinguished.
- Have fire control materials at hand — water supply, rakes, and shovels.
- Pick an open area 40 feet from any structure in which to build the fire.
- Do NOT use gasoline or any other combustible liquid to start the fire.
- If the wind picks up, be ready to quickly extinguish the fire.
- If the fire gets out of control, immediately call for help - 911.

The reason I have chosen Open Burning Season for the February topic is because the best time to prevent wild, out-of-control fires is to burn during wet, snowy conditions. These conditions help keep the fire from rapidly spreading on and under ground.

You even have one more day in February to be fire 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.

Love is in the Air, but also...

It is the Valentine season again! Love it. But there are issues for some folks around this time of year. One of our friends, a very educated and smart but lonely guy, joined a dating service. He went 0 for 4 on successful interactions. I asked him if he had any advice to share, and this is what he sent.

"I would like to share my thoughts on online dating. My experiences have not been good. I have had four horrible experiences and unfortunately I got burned big time on one of them. The patterns as I look back are similar. Unfortunately you tend to ignore red flags until it is too late. The following patterns are serious red flags:

1. All of them start off by telling you how nice it is to meet you. "You are the first person since my husband died that I feel a real connection to." "Let's move slow before we move to texting, phone before meeting." Always a hint of being flirtatious.
2. They ask a lot of questions about you but are very vague about themselves.
3. They send photos, nothing inappropriate, but ask for none in return.
4. No interest in your past relationships (like why am I online), have been married, kids, etc.
5. When texting, you respond within a reasonable period of time, they respond sometimes hours later with one or two words. They rarely ever respond by using your name, appears to be honey, babe, etc.
6. when texting for specific information, they immediately respond with a text so lengthy, you wonder if it has been scripted.
7. In my case, all have appeared to either been self-employed and/or business owners, and some emergency has come up. "I know we have known each other a short period of time, but can you send me...?"
8. When I have asked for the local address or to send me a copy of their driver's license, I get responses like, "I have trust issues", "If we are going to be life partners, why can't you do this?" etc.

The last one was really good. We had telephone conversations, etc. We were supposed to get together like the next day or a weekend. She called me to say her work required her to go out of town. Shortly thereafter, a panic phone call of an emergency where she needed to borrow \$5,500 until she returned home.

Hope this helps. I have no more shame to hide. By the way, I decided to give up online dating."

Be safe, y'all.

Jean O'Neil

TRIAD Committee member

jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228



February's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Recently I've had questions about lifeline services; what they cost and how to get them if you don't have a land line anymore. There are several possibilities including subsidies for both your land line bill and/or your wireless/Smart phone bill. Utility companies are mandated to provide discounts for low income customers. So if you live in subsidized housing or receive SNAP benefits or have MassHealth, you qualify. This applies to both a land line or a wireless bill. To get more information and help applying, you can call Verizon at 1-800 Safe-Link. ((1-800-723-3546). If Verizon is your phone carrier, they will discount your bill. However, the discount is only about \$10/month for a land line, and \$5.50/month for wireless. If you have a Smart phone you might explore apps that act as a lifeline.

For folks who have a land line, but can't afford the Lifeline service fee of about \$30/month, Highland Valley offers to pay for lifeline if you have a medical condition that makes you susceptible to falls. If you call Highland Valley Elder Services at 413-586-2000, you can ask to speak to their Benefits counselor who may have more suggestions on how to cut costs. Also, MassHealth will pay for a lifeline if your doctor orders it. (Like getting a prescription from your doctor).

Lifeline works when you fall at home, but there are additional features for mobile lifelines in case your car breaks down, or you sprain an ankle while hiking in the woods and need help. The GPS feature can guide emergency responders to your location.

With luck, you may never need to use your lifeline. But you and your family and friends will have some peace of mind knowing you have one.

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.

Day Trip April 5 or 15th. Culinary Institute of America-- Enjoy a "CIA" experience with lunch at Catarina DeMedici. Free time to explore the bookstore and bake shop. The \$125 Payment to Francine Frenier is due by February 20th. Please mail a check to the address above. This trip will depart from S. Hadley.

Day Trip Tuesday, May 14. Neil Diamond -The Tribute from Las Vegas - Rob Garrett, known as the King of Diamonds, performs at the Aqua Turf Club, CT. Family style meal of Chicken ala Kathryn & Broiled Scrod included. The \$137 Payment to FNCS is due by March 12. Please mail them to the address above. **Two seats available.**

Nine 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 to the address above. **Four openings.**

Day Trip Thursday June 13. Timeless Music Pop to Broadway - Luncheon and Show at Storrowton Tavern Carriage House in W. Springfield. Self-drive or carpool. Cost is \$77 made out to Chesterfield COA and mailed to address above. Chesterfield seniors: please call for pricing.

Day Trip Thursday, July 11th. Lake Sunapee Luncheon Cruise- Vermont Country Store. A two hour luncheon cruise on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. This trip includes Luncheon buffet and a stop at the Vermont Country Store. The \$118 Payment to Landmark Tours is due by May 10. Please mail to the address above. **This trip sold out last year, so reserve early.**

Day Trip Wednesday, August 7th. Resorts World Casino-- Catskills, NY trip. Can you get enough of **Elvis**? Enjoy a lovely ride to the Catskills. Included: King in Concert show, Buffet Lunch and \$25 free slot play, driver gratuity. The \$145 Payment to FNCS is due by May 5. Please mail to the address above. Please include your date of birth for the player card. **THIS TRIP IS A GO.**

Day Trip October TBD. Lake George Cruise- Take a 2 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. The Captain's Luncheon Buffet

will be served on board. Keyboard entertainer performs. Stops at scenic Prospect Mountain and the Lake George Outlets with 30 stores to explore. The \$131 payment to Landmark Tours is due by August 19th. Please mail to the address above. **This trip sold out last year, so reserve early.**

Four Day Trip September 30- October 3. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound production of the biblical show Daniel. Cost \$646, per person dbl. occupancy - \$25 discount if paid in full by **June 20th**. Includes: Sight & Sound Theater show, tour of Philadelphia, time in Hershey's Chocolate World, 6 meals, hotels, driver gratuity. **Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. Call now to reserve your spot.**

Day Trip Friday December 13. Festival of Trees and Red Rose Lunch. Enjoy the uniquely decorated Christmas Trees at the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield. Enter a chance to win a tree and associated gifts. Some are worth hundreds of dollars. Then walk over to the Red Rose Italian Restaurant for lunch: pizza, salad and bread. The \$TBD Payment is due by October 25. Please mail to the address above.

Do you know about the Hilltown Driver Pool Program?

This is a door-to-door service provided by members of your community looking to support your occasional transportation needs to important medical appointments, related errands and trips to the grocery store. Residents from the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Hinsdale, Peru, Plainfield, Windsor, Westhampton and Worthington who are ambulatory and at least 60 years of age are eligible for service. This is a grant-funded program; suggested donations range from \$5-\$10. Interested in being a driver? Schedules can be very flexible. For services or more information about supporting this program as a driver reach out to Ed Pelletier at **(413) 296-4232** or email: ride@hilltowncdc.org.



Please take this Hilltown CDC survey:

The Hilltown CDC is applying for funding that supports important programs in our community: the Goshen Food Pantry, the HEN Program, Health Outreach Program and the Housing Rehabilitation Program. You **do not** have to be a recipient of these programs, but **you do** need to be a Hilltown resident. Please take a few moments to share your important feedback and support of this valuable Hilltown resources:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KTMT25C>

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

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

Plainfield COA

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

Shirley Todd, Chair
Ginger237ma@yahoo.com
413-634-2134

Susan Pearson, Secretary
spearsonbooks@gmail.com
413-634-0025

Susan Honneus
413-743-5345
stormpetrel22@gmail.com

Ann Irvine
413-634-5698
irvinea@verizon.net

Mary Potter
413-734-5430
mary@potterhomebuilders.com

Bonnie Phillips
413-634-2290
bfillups21@icloud.com

Newsletter Designer
Kristen Estelle

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

CHARITY SCAM

You get a call from a charity looking for donations. Scammers try to fool you into giving money using these tactics:

- They rush you into making a donation;
- They use names that sound like a real charity;
- They change the caller ID to make you think it's a local caller.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE SURE THE MONEY IS GOING TO A GOOD CAUSE?

- Research the charity before donating;
- Verify that the organization is registered with the MA Attorney General's Office;
- Look up the charity online & read what others are saying about it.



If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit:

Greenfield (413) 774-3186
Northampton (413) 586-9225



Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General