

Plainfield Council on Aging

March 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

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Wednesday, March 13th at Noon
Town Hall

We will be serving corned beef and cabbage as well as a vegetarian boiled dinner option.



Desserts are welcome additions. In honor of St. Patrick's Day, Tim Van Egmond will present "Enchanted Tunes & A Magic Wish". He'll provide a "leprechaun's treasure" of Irish songs, stories, and poems, ranging from the rib-tickling through the spine-tingling to the heart-warming. He'll accompany himself with guitar, hammered dulcimer, and lumberjack (a wooden puppet that taps out a rhythm on a paddle board). Check him out at timvanegmond.com/. This program is supported by a grant from the Plainfield Cultural Council via the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Blood pressure readings will also be available gratis the Hilltown Community Health Center and Gretta Cullett.

The Alzheimer's Association will host the annual **Virtual New England Family Conference** on March 1 & 2 from 9:30-2:00pm. Experts in the field of care and support will share practical and concrete recommendations, resources, and guidance in the care and support for those living a life with dementia. Check out the program at www.alz.org/manh/events/family-conference. Best of all, it's FREE. Polly will attend and provide lunch for anyone who wants to join her and view it on a big TV screen, 413-212-1581 or email pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us

The Clark Art institute has free admission through the end of March. Polly will schedule a van for **Friday, March 29th** if anyone is interested in going – lunch at the Café included! Call 413-212-1581 or email pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us by March 22nd to reserve a seat. Check out www.clarkart.edu/

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).

The exercise class at Earthdance will continue for another 4 Tuesdays **beginning March 5th** and will 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. A sliding fee of \$40-60 will cover all 4 classes. Drop-ins are welcome to join at \$18 per class. Weather cancellation will be made up at the end of the sessions. A sliding fee of \$5-15 will cover each lunch, please RSVP to Polly if you want to join us just for lunch: 413-212-1581. Dates are: **March 5, 12, 19, & 26**. Exercise is from 11am to noon and lunch will be noon to 1 pm. Meet us at 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.

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

Like snowshoeing? The Hilltown Land Trust and All Out Adventures have a program you can join. Check it out at: alloutadventures.org/ourprograms/#seniors

Need a friend or support? Join Polly and/or a nurse for coffee. Schedule a time convenient for you by calling 413-212-1581 or email pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us

The Northern Hilltown COA website has a fresh look and is an immensely useful resource! Check it out at 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)



The Hilltown COAs are looking for volunteers to provide technology support, training is available. Please contact Gail Lucey at coatechvolcoor@gmail.com or call 413-348-3489 if you're interested.

The Plainfield Mutual Support Network (PMSN) has a list of volunteers providing rides to local vendors and medical appointments. Please call 413-634-0170 a few days ahead to schedule something. Leave a message with your contact information and details of your transportation needs.

PLEASE take advantage of the **“Hilltown Driver Pool” service** that the Hilltown Community Development Corporation provides. Check out www.hilltowncdc.org/transportation. Locally hired drivers are available to take individuals to doctors or on medical errands door to door. Contact Ed Pelletier to schedule a ride at 413-296-4232 between 8:15am-9:45am M-F or leave a voicemail.

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.

Happy Birthday!

Frank Alletson, Joan Bianchi, Michael Brigley, Blanche Cizek, Timothy Forsythe, Kay Gilbert, Judith Gowdy, Betsey Howes, Kathryn Jensen, Robert Kasper, Jane Lewandowski, Beverly Major, Richard Phelps, Robert Silberberg, Joan Timberlake, John Westwood



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

SAVE THE DATE!



TechConnect Fair
APRIL 6, 2024, 10 AM-3 PM
 New Hingham Elementary School
 Chesterfield

Join us for a festive event offering technology support and exploration, giveaways, and more.
 For adults 60 and older.



TECH CONNECT
 SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS

A program of the Northern Hilltown's
 Consortium of COAs

www.northernhilltownscoas.org

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!

*May your troubles
 BE LESS AND YOUR
 blessings be more
 AND NOTHING BUT
 happiness come
 THROUGH YOUR DOOR.
 -Irish Blessing*

The English Language – gotta love it...

I enjoy those pieces that question why our language includes things such as spellings that are the same but the sound is different, e.g., cough, rough, though, and through. Then there are the words that just make me smile, like “kerfuffle”.

Our language changes all the time, too. We now have phishing and smishing and vishing and catfishing, and more. The AARP has a nice page with some definitions:

www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2023/glossary-of-scam-terminology.html

A few highlights – phishing means they send real-looking emails to get us to click and provide information. Smishing means real-looking and sounding text messages on our phone. Vishing is a voice message, again to get us to buy something or to provide information. Catfishing is making a fake online profile, perhaps to start a romance scam or begin an online game and from that a relationship (which likely won’t end well).

Never mind the word, the idea is the same. A hacker or scammer pretends to be our bank or Medicare or the insurance company. He or she sounds real or friendly or helpful or scary, depending on how they are working their scam. They are trying to get us to willingly give up critical information so they can steal something from us, like our identity or funds in our bank account. Apparently tax season causes a rise in all these things, including fake emails – phishing! to get tax identifier numbers. If it happens to us, we can report this to phishing@irs.gov

Here’s to safe fishing,
 Jean O’Neil
 TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

March's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Donald Trump, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders all agree on one thing. The cost of our prescription drugs is too high. Americans pay more for their Rx than any other nation. This is not news: we know this.

The Good News is that efforts to reduce our cost are underway, starting with the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act which became effective August 16th, 2022. As of January 2023, co-pays for most insulins are now reduced to \$35/month or less. Vaccines are now zero co-pay including the shingles vaccine. Next year OOP starts. That's a cap on Out Of Pocket spending on Rx. So once you have spent \$2,000 in co-pays on your prescriptions, you will not have Rx co-pays for the remainder of the year.

The Federal government is also targeting high cost Rx. We have to wait until January 2026 to see savings on Eliquis, Xarelto, Jardiance, Farxiga, Entresto, Imbruvica and Stelara which are on the list of the first 10 Rx to be reduced. And in 2027, we'll see another list of 10 Rx to be reduced. This is because Medicare will be able to negotiate with the drug manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies will have to pay a "rebate" if they raise their prices more than the rate of inflation. This may seem like a slow process, but it's progress.

In Massachusetts, we've had out of pocket spending limits for Rx co-pays with our Prescription Advantage program since the 1990s, but this has only been available to lower income residents. The Federal OOP program does not have income/asset eligibility rules. Everyone is eligible. For more information on Rx costs, or if you have questions about generics, or other cost savings measures, you can contact the Pharmacy Outreach Program at **866-633-1617** or call your senior center to ask for an appointment with your SHINE counselor.



Technology Help and Training for March



Volunteers Still Needed: to learn more about what's needed to help others with technology contact the Volunteer Coordinator at **413-296-5548**, email coatechvolcoor@gmail.com, or visit the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org.

Tech Support

- Support available by email: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within 24 hours.

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 3/12 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg
Repeats 2nd Tues of each month
- Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Thurs 3/12 from 10:00 to Noon
Repeats 2nd Tues of each month

Tech Training:

- Beginner's Computer / Laptop Class
Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00, for 6 weeks starting 3/7 through 4/11, or 4/18 through 5/23
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class
Wednesdays 10:30 – Noon, for 6 weeks starting 2/21 through 3/27 or 4/3 thru 5/8

All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level.

Must register for classes or workshops no later than one week before the scheduled training date. Email coaTechConnect@gmail.com; call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Event Save The Date:

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

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 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 \$131 (price correction) Payment to FNSC is due by March 12. Please mail them to the address above. **A few seats are 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 - is due NOW. Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **A few seats are available.**

*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 FNSC 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. Waitlist available.**

*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 October 14th. **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.**

*NEW Day Trip October 15. **Culinary Institute of America--*** Enjoy a "CIA" experience, lecture and tasting with lunch at Catarine de Medici. The \$TBD Payment to Francine Frenier is due by August TBD. Please mail a check to the address above. This trip will depart from Hadley.

*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.

Summit to Fight Fraud: Preventing Fraud and Scams for Older Adults and Others *Tuesday, March 19th at 10am*

Sponsored by Investor Protection Trust, and presented with the Massachusetts Securities Division, the Pension Action Center will host a free in-person **AND live-stream event** on fraud prevention on Tuesday, March 19th. The event is free of charge, but registration is required.

Hosted in the UMass Ballroom space from 9am-3pm, with programming starting at 10am after a breakfast welcome reception, we will gather a group of experts in this field: guest speakers and panelists including several Q&A sessions. We aim to have presenters from community law enforcement, AARP MA, the Banker's Association, state officials, in addition to other stakeholders and experts in this space.



Link to Register: <http://tinyurl.com/2rkbejux> OR email your COA Coordinator/Director for the link.

**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.

NEW Drawing Class in Goshen!

Thursdays, April 4 - May 23 from 1-3pm
Goshen Town Hall - Upstairs
Suggested Donation of \$10 per class

This eight week, two hour drawing class is geared for beginners who would like to learn to draw, or would like to grow their skills in drawing. We tackle questions like "How do you break down what you see in order to draw it?" "How can you see the shape, line, value?" and "How can I suggest movement within my drawing?" Senior, adult and teen participants will work on these skills in an encouraging and relaxed atmosphere. Each class will begin with a warm up, and then a drawing project. The goal is to stretch our brain, try something new and to have fun together.



Save the Date: Saturday, April 13th at 3pm

4D1G Gospel Quartet

Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St., Goshen

Come enjoy this HymnSing and gospel music with us! Dennis Ainsworth on piano. More details to follow.

Save the Date: Saturday, April 27th, 9-3pm

Spring / Summer Clothing Exchange

Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St., Goshen

Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent! More details to follow.

