

Plainfield Council on Aging

September 2026 Newsletter



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

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

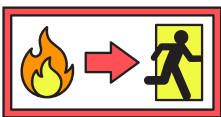
You can now register for COA events on our town website by [following this link!](#)

Directions are on the website. It is extremely helpful when preparing for any occasion to know how many people plan to attend so the amount of supplies needed can be determined ahead of the event. It is also mandated by the state that attendance for all COA activities be documented and submitted in an annual report to AGE (aka, The States Executive Office of Elder Affairs) who grant funds to COA's statewide. If you cannot access the registration form you can always call or email Polly at 413-212-1581 or pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us to sign up for activities.



Please know that our COA board members welcome guests and grandchildren to attend the COA luncheons!

The September Luncheon will be on Wednesday the 9th at noon in Town Hall. On the menu is "Bangers and Mashed" or sausages and mashed potatoes, grilled onions, squash, salad and bread. Desserts and donations are welcome.



Our Fire Chief, Rob Shearer, will be on hand to give us Fire Safety tips

Kelly from the Northampton Health Department will resume the blood pressure clinic.

Healthy Bones and Balance classes with Polly will resume on September 1st and every Tuesdays thereafter at 3:50 in the Cummington Community House



Classes with Jill continue at the Cummington Community House on Mondays and Thursday at 9:30 and all are welcome to join her. They are free and ongoing.

Tickets to

"Literary Legacy: A Guided Tour of the William Cullen Bryant Homestead", on September 12th are available gratis the COA if you **RSVP or contact Polly at 413-212-1581 or pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us**
Please specify your preferred tour time of 10AM, 11:15AM, 12:30PM, or 1:45PM

This guided tour offers a look inside Bryant's thoughtfully preserved country estate, where he spent his formative years and later returned for inspiration and retreat. Explore period rooms filled with original furnishings, Bryant family artifacts, and sweeping views of the Westfield River Valley that helped shape his poetry and environmental values. Discover how Bryant's legacy as a literary figure and early conservation advocate continues to resonate today. Whether you're a history enthusiast, literature lover, or simply someone who appreciates natural beauty and timeless stories, the William Cullen Bryant Homestead offers an unforgettable experience.

"Weep not that the world changes - did it keep a stable, changeless state, it were cause indeed to weep."
William Cullen Bryant

Please join Polly at an event hosted by
Offerings for Community Building and
 sponsored by Share The Warmth
 in Ashfield,
Sunday September 20,
from 3-5pm, rain or shine

Naturalist educator and wild edibles enthusiast Arianna Alexandra Collins will guide us on a walk through her land and teach us how to identify wild edibles and medicinal flora. After the walk-about we will gather in her Avalon Studio to eat food she prepared from what her land has to offer. Resources and meal preparation will also be discussed.



Register at
offeringsbyarianna@gmail.com
Location and directions
will be given
upon registration.



Join Rich Bradway for a FREE guided walk of the campus of Norman Rockwell Museum on September 26th at 10 am – 11:30 am or 1 pm – 2:30 pm

Explore the culturally and ecologically rich landscape that is now home to the present-day Museum. Walk along the riverbank of the Housatonic and learn about the unique geology and topography of the river and the nearby Oxbow. The walk will also address the site's beginnings as the ancestral homelands of the Stockbridge Munsee tribe of Mohicans and will trace that history forward from the 18th century farmland era and the 19th century when the Butler family acquired the land and built a grand estate on the property to the present day as the home of the Norman Rockwell Museum.

FALL VACCINE CLINIC

**PLAINFIELD, MA
 PUBLIC SAFETY**

38 N. Central Street, Plainfield, MA



Tuesday
October 20, 2026
3:00pm – 5:00pm



**SCAN THE QR CODE
 OR REGISTER ONLINE:**
northamptonma.gov/2219/vax



Hampshire Public Health
 Shared Services Collaborative
 Prevent. Promote. Protect.



FLU VACCINE
 Regular (6mos +)
 High Dose (65+)



COVID Vaccine
 Pfizer (65+)
 18+ & considered high risk.

*If you are 18 + and unsure about getting a COVID vaccine, talk with your primary care provider. If they recommend vaccination, we can provide it at our clinic after you complete a vaccine eligibility screening questionnaire.



NEED HELP REGISTERING?
 Call: 413-587- 4903
nurses@northamptonma.gov

- Please bring your insurance card, vaccines are free to you
- Limited Walk-ins, pre-registering is recommended



HOMEBOUND VACCINE PROGRAM

Amherst, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield, Huntington, Middlefield, Northampton, Plainfield, Southampton, Worthington



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COVID VACCINE
 Pfizer



FLU VACCINE
 Regular and High Dose
 (available during flu season)

- Homebound visit available for Covid, Flu vaccine for ADULTS only
- Homebound includes persons with limited mobility and/or difficulty getting out of the home and their caretakers.

- Please have your insurance card available

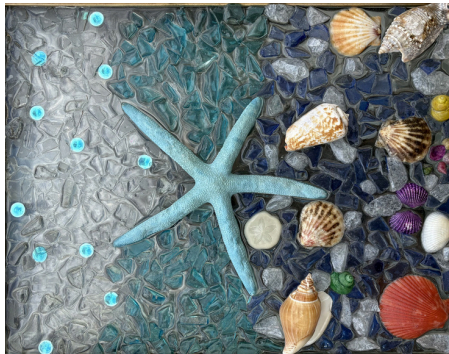


A special workshop on making beach themed acrylic art will take place in Town Hall on Tuesday September 29th from 5:30-7 pm.

Bread and Soup included...yum!

Please RSVP

Lisa Mendel from Mendel's Stained-Glass Studio will guide us in this activity. Supplies will be provided but you are welcome to bring any small beach items you would like to include in your project.



Scam Alert!!!!

Recently Polly received emails from people in town with a subject heading of "YOU ARE INVITED"

This is malicious Phishing
DO NOT OPEN IT!!!

SCAM ALERT!

Scammers are increasingly targeting older adults by convincing them to deposit cash into **cryptocurrency kiosks** (Bitcoin ATMs) located in convenience stores, package stores, gas stations, and other businesses.

How the scam works:

- You receive a phone call, text, or email claiming to be from law enforcement, a government agency, your bank, a utility company, or even a family member in trouble.
- The scammer creates a sense of urgency and instructs you to withdraw cash from your bank.
- They then direct you to a cryptocurrency kiosk and tell you to deposit the money.
- Once the money is sent, it is extremely difficult, often impossible, to recover.

No government agency or public utility will ask you to pay with cryptocurrency.

**Northwestern
District Attorney's
Consumer Protection Unit**

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

Working in cooperation with the Office of
the Massachusetts Attorney General



THE SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

greenagers

ANNUAL

BERKSHIRE GARLIC FESTIVAL

Saturday September 19th
10am - 3:30pm, 159 Main St Sheffield
FREE ADMISSION
Rain Date September 20

To Benefit SHS & Greenagers Education Programs

Savor the Flavor:
Demos, Crafts,
Food Trucks and
GARLIC

ALL AGES EVENT

www.berkshiregarlicfest.com for more info

Hampshire Elder Law Program (HELP) is a program of the Hampshire County Bar Association which provides civil legal services at no cost to low-income seniors, 60 years of age and older.



Services provided include bankruptcy, consumer protection, guardianship, health care proxies, powers of attorney, probate of estates, and wills.

For more information, contact the Hampshire County Bar Association by phone at (413) 586- 8729 or Email: hcba@crocker.com

The next Foot Care Clinic at the Cummington Community House is scheduled for Friday September 4th.

An additional Foot Care Clinic is available at the Chesterfield Community Center on Monday September 14 from 9 am-12 pm.

Please call Piper Sagan at 413-522-8432 to schedule an appointment (\$50) or a home visit (\$80/session).

RIVERFEST '26

A free, family-friendly celebration of place and community in Cummington. Hands-on arts and ecology projects, walks, screening, music, and more!

Saturday, September 19

More details: <https://cummingtonculture.art/riverfest>

Sponsors:



Organizers:



Everyone is invited to this program in Goshen

Sharing and Caring: A Memory Cafe

*A group led by two speech-language pathologists
for adults with memory loss and their care partners.*



Every 1st Thursday, 1pm-2:30pm, Oct 2026-Jun 2027

John James Memorial Town Hall, 42 Main St. in Goshen, MA

Contact Kerry at COA@goshen-ma.us or (413) 268-8236, ext. 118

REACH OUT TO OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTOR!



Do you need help finding resources in the area? Please reach out to our Community Connector, Jen O'Connell.

Jen can help with many issues, including: obtaining benefits such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security. Finding resources so you can continue to live independently at home. Programs for home repairs & transportation assistance. Plus more....

**Jen can be reached at
413-296-4536 ext. 110
or communityconnectjo@gmail.com**

***Funded by a grant from HVES through
funding under the
Federal Older Americans Act***



Got Food?

There are several programs for receiving food and/or prepared meals delivered to your home regardless of your income. Check in with Polly to find one that fits your needs.

Or go to www.plainfield-ma.us/council-aging/page/food-meal-programs

**And, if you wish to help a neighbor by
volunteering to pick up food for them,
please let Polly know.**

**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 413-634-2262 or email her at croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov.

A suggested donation of \$4 per meal supports Highland Valley Elder Services who prepare them.

**Durable Medical Equipment is available
for loan. Please call Shirley to borrow
anything at 413-446-9608**

**Ongoing Programs, Activities &
Resources
on the Plainfield Town Website**

**The Plainfield Mutual Support Network
(PMSN) has a list of volunteers willing to
provide 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.

Tech Connect provides one-on-one training in your home or free equipment like iPads, Chromebooks, PC laptops/desktop computers.

**Email Nancy Brown at
coatechtrainer@gmail.com or call
413-296-5080 to make a request.
Or go to <https://northernhilltownscoas.org/>
and submit your request through a form.**

**Caroline Solan is our new SHINE
Coordinator and can answer all your
Medicare/Advantage plan health insurance
questions.**

She is available in person on Wednesdays at Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES, 320 Riverside Drive in Florence). You can also call HVES at 413-586-2000 and leave her a message or book an appointment. The most expedited way to reach her would be to send her an email at csolan@lifepathma.org.



If you have questions about MassHealth

call Buliah Mae Thomas at the Hilltown Community Health Center 413-238-5511 or email her at bthomas@hchcweb.org

Need a friend or support?

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

September's Happy Birthdays

**Judith Wombwell, Paul Walter,
Peter Bumpus, Rowen Caplan,
Emily Howard, Shirley Todd,
Richard Potter, David Locke,
William Burt, Susan Wabnig,
Victor Mistretta, Joseph Sabourin,
Nora Dial, Nora Hauge,
Peter Harding, David Alvord,
Stephen Wicks, Cynthia Poirier,
Erik Burcroff, Theresa Thatcher,
Sandra Madison, Kathleen Filkins,
Peri Kelly, Paula Harrison,
Lynn Hubbard, Sheri Rosenblum**





September Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



September is Fall Prevention Month, a great reminder to take steps to reduce the risk of falls.

As first responders, we receive many calls each year to assist older adults who have fallen. While some falls result in only minor injuries, others can lead to broken bones, head injuries, or a loss of independence.

The good news is that many of these incidents can be prevented with a few simple changes.

To help reduce your risk:

- Keep walkways, stairs, and entryways free of clutter.
- Secure or remove loose rugs.
- Improve lighting throughout your home, especially at night.
- Install and use handrails on stairs and grab bars in bathrooms.
- Wear sturdy, slip-resistant shoes and avoid walking in socks on smooth floors.
- Have your vision and hearing checked regularly.
- Stay active with exercises that improve strength, flexibility, and balance.

A few minutes spent making your home safer today can help you remain independent, active, and confident for years to come. If you have concerns about fall hazards in your home, don't hesitate to ask a family member, friend, or caregiver for assistance.

Have a safe start to autumn!

Capt. Steve Estelle,
SAFE Educator
Goshen Fire Department

TECH CONNECT
SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS



TECH HELP FOR SEPTEMBER

TechConnect will be offering **Q&A style classes this fall on the second Tuesday of each month** at the Chesterfield COA Community Center. Bring your questions and contributions to our roundtable discussion. Hosted by Lizzy Canady from 1-2pm on the following dates:

9/8/2026: Artificial Intelligence: Trends & Topics

10/13/2026: Putting your digital house in order

11/10/2026: TBD

12/8/2026: TBD

No registration necessary.

Tech Support home visit is available by appt. Call or message 413-296-5080 to arrange a home visit.

Devices for you: Refurbished PC laptops

We have free refurbished laptops while supplies last. Please call 413-296-5080 and leave us a message if you are interested. If you received a device from us and are not using it, please call us to arrange a return so someone else can use it.

Drop-in Centers *(no appointment needed)*

Sites open to residents of all towns
(except Nash Hill location)

Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.

Weekly on Every Tuesday from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from

12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 9/17

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from

2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday 9/24

Williamsburg

Meekins Library Drop-In tech support (call library for latest information) 413-268-7472

Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 9/8

Worthington tech support - contact

Eileen Daneri eadaneri@gmail.com.



GOOD NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

From time to time, I get questions about MassHealth's "Estate Recovery" from folks who might be eligible for MassHealth benefits but are worried that "MassHealth will take my house" or any and all other assets. Eligibility rules for MassHealth are different depending on whether you are dead.....or alive.

If you are alive..... and want MassHealth benefits your countable assets must be less than \$2,000.

- Countable is the key word here. MassHealth does not count a car if you have one registered in your name, or a prepaid funeral contract, or term life insurance or your home if it is your primary residence.
- MassHealth does count a car if you have more than one, does count a home if you do not live in it, does count a whole life insurance policy if it has a cash surrender value, does count savings and retirement investments. (IRAs are uncountable if you are still actively contributing to them)

Excess Assets

If you have more than the allowed \$2,000 in countable assets, you may be able to transfer excess assets out of your name.

As of this writing 2026, you can transfer \$160,000 of countable assets to your spouse. If your assets are more than that, or you own assets jointly with other family members, or friends, you should probably do asset preservation work with an elder law attorney.

MassHealth will count the asset if you are able to access it..... if you no longer own the asset, or can not access it in your life time.... the asset becomes uncountable.

Asset Transfers

If you are not dead....but want MassHealth to pay your nursing home bill, the infamous 5 year look back rule applies. Which means MassHealth looks at any/all asset transfers for the 5 years prior to your entering a nursing home.

- If you are married, MassHealth allows you to transfer up to \$160,000 of countable assets to your spouse. This asset limit changes/ increases each year.
- Remaining countable assets will be used to pay your nursing home bill until you have "spent down" to the \$2,000 asset limit.
- If yours is the only name on the deed to your home, MassHealth may put a lien on your property which would be paid when sold.

If you are dead ... have an Estate that will go through Probate... MassHealth will present a bill to Probate for services rendered during the last 10 years of your lifetime. MassHealth starts keeping track of your "bill" after you turn 55, and does not bill estates valued at less than \$25,000.

For more detailed information you might Google MassHealth Estate Recovery.





LGBTQ+ LUNCH

Join us to share a meal together, see folks you know, and meet those you don't.
Hilltowns LGBTQ+ residents and allies welcome!

Wednesday, September 23rd
12 PM

400 Main Rd, Chesterfield, MA 01012

Register by Sep. 18th to join!

413-296-4007
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com
<https://www.townofchesterfieldma.com/council-aging>

On the Road Again...

TRIPS IN 2026



**Contact Francine Frenier to reserve
your seat BEFORE mailing payments.**

For more info call **413-296-4291**

Email: francine.frenier@gmail.com

**Mail: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA
01096**

Day Trip September 28, Monday. The Big E. An annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage. Frankie Avalon performs his hits. Cost \$18 for Northampton Seniors, all other seniors \$20. Make your check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to the address above. Due Now. NO REFUNDS due to bargain price. The bus leaves from Sheldon Field.

NEW Day Trip Monday October 12th Worthington COA Fall Foliage Bus Trip. Hudson River Narrated Cruise aboard the Rip Van Winkle II, choice of gourmet boxed lunch on board, and Market stop.

Discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$140 for other seniors.

Call Phyllis at 413-238-5962 or email coa@worthington-ma.us for details & to reserve a seat by September 1st.

Trips in 2027

Multi Day Trip April 25- May 1

Savannah, Jekyll Island & Beaufort, SC.

Seven days, six nights. Visit Savannah, "The Belle of Georgia," Magnificent Beaufort, SC "The queen of the Carolina Sea Islands," and Port Royal Sound Maritime Museum and more. Includes hotels, breakfasts and 4 dinners. Price \$987 per person, double occupancy. A \$25 discount is given if paid in full by January 25, 2027. Sign up NOW and pay later. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above after the first of the year.

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Please email Francine NOW so she can see if there is enough interest to make either of these trips a go:

**\*\*3-day/2 nights trip to Baltimore to see the Red Sox play a game against the Baltimore Orioles along with some sightseeing and visit the National Aquarium. Waiting for the 2027 MLB schedule to come out in December to determine dates.**

**\*\*Seven day trip to Chicago, partial itinerary includes a tour of Chicago, a skyline cruise on Lake Michigan, visit historic Navy Pier and museums. Possible date: October 17, 2027.**



## FALL VACCINE CLINIC

### Cummington Community House

33 Main St, Cummington, MA 01026

Wednesday  
October 21, 2026  
10:00am – 1:00pm



#### OR REGISTER ONLINE:

[northamptonma.gov/2219/vax](http://northamptonma.gov/2219/vax)



Hampshire Public Health  
Shared Services Collaborative  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



#### FLU VACCINE

Regular (6mos +)  
High Dose (65+)



#### COVID Vaccine

Pfizer (65+)  
18+ & considered high risk.

\*If you are 18+ and unsure about getting a COVID vaccine, talk with your primary care provider. If they recommend vaccination, we can provide it at our clinic after you complete a vaccine eligibility screening questionnaire.



#### NEED HELP REGISTERING?

Call: 413-587-4903  
[nurses@northamptonma.gov](mailto:nurses@northamptonma.gov)

- Please bring your insurance card, vaccines are free to you
- Limited Walk-ins, pre-registering is recommended



## HOMEBOUND VACCINE PROGRAM

Amherst, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, Hatfield, Huntington, Middlefield, Northampton, Plainfield, Southampton, Worthington

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Pfizer



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- Homebound includes persons with limited mobility and/or difficulty getting out of the home and their caretakers.
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## Sharing and Caring: A Memory Cafe

A group led by two speech-language pathologists  
for adults with memory loss and their care partners.



Every 1st Thursday, 1pm-2:30pm, Oct 2026-Jun 2027

John James Memorial Town Hall, 42 Main St. in Goshen, MA

Contact Kerry at [COA@goshen-ma.us](mailto:COA@goshen-ma.us) or (413) 268-8236, ext. 118

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**PLAINFIELD COA**

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

**Shirley Todd**, Chair  
ginger237ma@yahoo.com  
413-446-9608

**Mary Potter**, Secretary  
mary@potterhomebuilders.com  
413-734-5430

**Susan Honneus**  
stormpetrel22@gmail.com  
413-570-5544

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

# SCAM ALERT!

Scammers are increasingly targeting older adults by convincing them to deposit cash into **cryptocurrency kiosks** (Bitcoin ATMs) located in convenience stores, package stores, gas stations, and other businesses.

**How the scam works:**

- You receive a phone call, text, or email claiming to be from law enforcement, a government agency, your bank, a utility company, or even a family member in trouble.
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Greenfield  
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Working in cooperation with the Office of  
the Massachusetts Attorney General



***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**