

Plainfield Council on Aging

August 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 August Luncheon date is Saturday August 15th at noon at the Golden Eagle Restaurant on Route 2

1935 Mohawk Trail, North Adams
Please RSVP

**Raspberry Sauce recipee
(served at our last luncheon)**

1 half-pint fresh raspberries
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup water
1 cup seedless raspberry jam
1 tablespoon Framboise liqueur

Directions

1. Place the package of raspberries, the granulated sugar, and 1/4 cup water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer for 4 minutes. Pour the cooked raspberries, the jam, and Framboise into the bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade and process until smooth. Chill.

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Eight tickets to
"Literary Legacy: A Guided Tour of the William Cullen Bryant Homestead",
on August 8th at 11:15, are available on a first come first serve basis.

Please RSVP

If more people are interested in going, another tour can be arranged for September 12th.

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

A Zoom event you might enjoy...

On August 15 at 1:00PM

**there will be a zoom lecture on
"The Unknown Heroes of Bunker Hill"
describing the amazing, unsung heroes
of the Revolutionary War**

**The COA will purchase your ticket
If you RSVP**

Michael Rafferty, a life-long learner about the American Revolution with deep experience as a visitor's guide at Boston's key sites, has taken a new interest in the contributions of Native American tribes to the fight for independence throughout New England, including the Mohegans of the Connecticut Valley and the Mohicans of Stockbridge.

One of those Mohegans was Samuel Ashbow, the first Native American to die in the Revolution. Ashbow and a dozen of his fellow tribesmen held off the first two waves of British infantrymen attacking the patriots at Bunker Hill, though his name was largely forgotten until recently. Michael Rafferty wants to share his story and make sure that Samuel Ashbow's legacy will become part of the story of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

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

**You might be interested in these
FREE events...**

**Elizabeth Freeman Day Celebration,
at the Ashley House
17 Cooper Hill Road, Sheffield, MA
on August 22nd.**

**Gather for a joyful day of reflection,
learning, and community at the return of
this annual celebration honoring the life
and legacy of Elizabeth Freeman, whose
landmark 1781 case contributed to the
abolition of slavery in Massachusetts.**

Bring this powerful history to life as you explore the historic home where Freeman's courageous fight for justice began.

Take a look at the newly updated Elizabeth Freeman Interpretive Exhibit, join us for a guided tour of the historic Ashley House, or simply relax on the lawn with music from a beloved local artist and enjoy food from local vendors.

**Please bring lawn chairs
or blankets for the
concert as these will
not be provided for you.**



**The Boston University
Tanglewood Institute**

**is hosting a FREE Community Day at 45
West St in Lenox on August 9th
from 10am - 2 pm
to celebrate the amazing
Berkshires community!**

Hosted on the Boston University Tanglewood Institute campus, this free public event will include live music, local vendors, family activities, and a ticketed all-you-can-eat BBQ, all to thank the town of Lenox and the Berkshires for welcoming us each summer.

They'd love for you to join them!



34th Annual

Stockbridge

SUMMER ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW

stockbridgeartsandcrafts.com



Nuthatch & Blue Studio

FREE
ADMISSION

August 15-16, 2026

Sat. 10-5 • Sun. 10-4

Main Street, Stockbridge

Stockbridge
THE QUINTESSENTIAL NEW ENGLAND TOWN MA

Stockbridge Chamber of Commerce • (413) 298-5200 • stockbridgechamber.org



Lisa Anderson Studio



Michael Wolski



Louis Wallach Fine Woodworking

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MIXED MEDIA
SCULPTURE
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& MUCH MORE

over

70

juried
exhibitors

Barbara Schneider

Sevenars presents the Sparky Quintet

This concludes the season with its
traditional jazz finale, now the
Sparky Quintet.

**Refreshments are served.
Admission is by donation.
Aug 16, 2026 at 4:00PM
Sevenars Academy, Worthington**

**Plainfield Seniors are welcome to attend any
activities planned at
Peppermint Park!**

Horseshoe tournaments, bingo, dinners are a
few of the events going on.

check out their calendar of events



Looking Ahead

**An Offerings for Community Building
September 20
from 3-5pm, rain or shine.**

**Join naturalist educator and wild edibles
enthusiast Arianna Alexandra Collins to
gain greater food security by learning
about and feasting on wild edibles
found in the fall...**

We will walk the Land Arianna lives on and
learn to identify wild edible and medicinal
flora (and fungi if available). After the walk-
about we will gather in Avalon Studio to eat
foods Arianna prepared from what the Land
has to offer. Resources and meal
preparation will also be discussed.

**Register at offeringsbyarianna@gmail.com.
Location and directions will be given
to Ashfield location upon registration.**

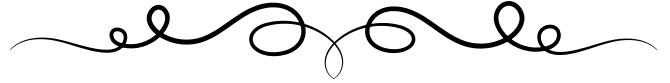
**This event is offered to the community for
FREE through sponsorship of
Share the Warmth Ashfield.**

**We will be arranging another
flu & covid clinic in either
September or October....
keep a lookout for the date**

Upcoming luncheons:

September, Wednesday the 9th,
we will be serving...Bangers and Mashed
potatoes, grilled onions, squash, salad and
bread.

Desserts and donations welcome.



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

**Classes with Jill will 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.**



**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 now available at the
Chesterfield Community Center every
second Wednesday of each Month (except
for August) .**

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

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.

August's Happy Birthdays

Imants Ansbergs, Norman Pfeifer, Carmen Sinno, Kimberly Longey, David Honneus, David Westor, Ann Irvine, Maud Geng, Corey Powers, Guy Matsuda, Claude Dupont, Robert Baker, Steve Bzomowski, Donna Monroe, John O'Dea, Peter O'Brien, Steven Nartowicz, Bruce Rustemeyer, Susan Flores, Douglas Wabnig, Stephen Biagini, Alison Walters, Nancy Lawrence, Mary Sabourin, Christina Schneider, Avery Sharpe, Jeremiah Lobrose, Susan McMahon, Joan Wattman, Polly Ryan, James Lee, Merton Taylor, Pamela Wayne.





August Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Summer heat can be dangerous, especially for older adults. Heat related illnesses can develop quickly and become life threatening if not recognized and treated early.



Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses too much water and salt through sweating. Signs may include heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, muscle cramps, and cool, clammy skin. If someone is experiencing heat exhaustion, move them to a cool place, offer water or a sports drink, loosen clothing, and apply cool wet cloths to help lower body temperature.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Signs include confusion, slurred speech, hot dry skin, seizures, or loss of consciousness. Call 911 immediately and begin cooling the person while waiting for help.

During hot weather:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day.
- Wear lightweight clothing.
- Stay in air-conditioned spaces when possible.
- Check on neighbors, friends, and family members.

Stay cool, stay hydrated, and stay S.A.F.E. this summer!

Capt. Steve Estelle,
SAFE Educator
Goshen Fire Department

TECH CONNECT SUCCESS FOR OLDER ADULTS **TECH HELP FOR AUGUST**

Tech Support home visit is available by appointment.

To arrange a home visit call or message
413-296-5080

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 have received a device from us and are not using it, please call our number 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 all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from
12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 8/20

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support,
from 2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday 8/27

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, 8/11

Worthington tech support - contact
Eileen Daneri eadaneri@gmail.com.



GOOD NEWS FOR AUGUST 2026

By Deb Hollingworth

I'm going to take a stab at trying to clear up some confusion about the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) that many of you have applied for and gotten.

It's been 2 years now since Massachusetts dropped the asset limit and now determines eligibility based on income alone. This was a huge change for this Federal program. Only 12 states have dropped the asset requirement.

MSP...Medicare Savings Program is a Federal program which:

1. pays your Medicare B premium,
2. automatically enrolls you in the Extra Help program which subsidizes the premiums and co-pays for your Rx and
3. automatically makes you eligible for Health Safety Net which gives you free care at any Federally funded clinic or hospital.

MSP is administered by MassHealth. Which is where the confusion may start. If approved, you get a letter from MassHealth. MSP is not a MassHealth program....but you are given a MassHealth ID number and once a year, they send you a re-certification application (looks just like the 2 page MSP application you filled out originally). In order to keep your MSP, you need to complete and return that paperwork to MassHealth.

The Extra Help program that you were automatically approved for when you got MSP, is administered by social security. Fortunately, they don't require recertification every year. Extra Help automatically enrolls you in a Medicare D plan and pays the premium. And when you go to the pharmacy to pick up your Rx, the pleasant surprise is that co-pays are very

low for generics and no more than \$12.50 for any Brand name Rx. The beauty of Extra Help is that enrollment in a Medicare D plan happens automatically without your having to do anything. And as long as you keep your MSP...you will keep your Extra Help.

So where's the confusion?

1. I get calls from folks who say...I never applied for this Medicare D plan? So how did I get one?

It happened automatically...and if you don't like what you were assigned, you can switch. (A SHINE counselor can help with that.)

2. I get folks asking why they have a MassHealth ID number if they didn't enroll in MassHealth? And...medical providers seeing your MassHealth ID number in the system may say "Oh, I see you have MassHealth?"

To which you should answer, "No I don't have MassHealth, I have the Medicare Savings Program which is a Federal program, that subsidizes my Medicare". Even your doctor's office may not understand the difference.

3. Some folks that are approved for Medicare Savings Program have a low enough income to qualify for QMB, and those MSP folks will be mailed a MassHealth ID card. Don't throw it out!

QMB folks have the added benefit which pays any/all co-pays from medical providers. So, if you receive a MassHealth card in the mail, show it to your doctor, and make sure they have it in your medical record.

Questions?

Call your senior center, or your SHINE counselor at Highland Valley, Caroline Solan: 586-2000.

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

Day Trip December 8th Merry Christmazz Holiday Variety Show.

Jimmy Mazz performs seasonal, traditional and contemporary tunes from various artists. Yankee Pot Roast lunch and show at Storowton's Carriage House, W. Springfield. A drive through Bright Nights follows. Make an \$80 check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by October 6, 2026. Wait list only.

Trips in 2027

Watch for upcoming details on a **3-day/2 nights trip to Baltimore to see the Red Sox play** a game against the Baltimore Orioles along with some sightseeing. Waiting for the 2027 MLB schedule to come out in December to determine dates.

HELP WANTED

For the past several years the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs has been able to offer a resource called the Community Connector. This service is funded through a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services. The program is designed to help residents in the 7 northern hilltowns connect with the services they need. The Connector helps you determine eligibility for benefits like SNAP, fuel assistance, subsidized housing, home care services, the Circuit Breaker tax credit. The program was created to help each of us understand how systems work, what benefits are available, and how to apply for them.

This position is Part Time, with flexible hours. Average of about 25 hours per month. Basic computer skills, knowledge of benefit programs and experience working with seniors on "later life" issues is helpful.

For more information, you can contact Jess Humphries at the Chesterfield COA, 400 Main Road, P.O. Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012 or email coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Courage in Cummington

The World War II Refugees



- Saturdays, 2-5 from July 11 to August 29

- With extended hours for Hilltown History Trail— August 1, 10-5

The Old Parsonage, 38 Main Street, Cummington

The Kingman Tavern Museum, across the street, is open for free tours on these dates!

The Cummington Historical Commission has a special exhibit, "Courage in Cummington, the WWII Refugees," on display at the Kingman Tavern Museum. In 1940, Cummington minister Reverend Carl Sangree organized a temporary haven in a home in Cummington for recently emigrated European refugees. Between 1940 and 1944, a total of 39 refugees, many of whom were artists and intellectuals, used their time at the hostel to refine and retool their skills to find permanent jobs and homes in the United States. This exhibit centers the refugees' stories of exile and new experiences in America. This exhibit will run through the end of August. The museum is open on Saturdays from 2-5 and is located at 38 Main St., Cummington.

SCAM ALERT: BEWARE OF TEXT SCAMS

The texts often warn you about a problem you didn't know existed and then try to get you to act quickly to resolve it. Some of the common ruses seen are contained in the scam alert on the last page. The Northwest DA Office Consumer Protection Unit encourages folks to report these types of messages by calling 413-586-9225. NWDA also encourages you to mark suspicious messages as SPAM and block the sender. Need help blocking, contact TechConnect to learn how, 413-296-5080

SAVE



**THE
DATE**

COA Event for LGBTQ+Residents&Allies

**12:00pm, Wednesday, 9/23/26,
Chesterfield CommunityCenter
400 MainRd**

Email henrichsen.bev907@gmail.com for more info.

SEPT 23, 2026

Open to all hilltown LGBTQ+ residents (and Allies)

We are coming together to share a meal, see folks we know and meet those we don't. Come talk about life in the Hilltowns and Happy Valley. This opportunity gives us space to share experiences, concerns and talk about life in or before retirement.

**RSVP requested by registering at the link below or
call 413-296-4007**

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe831Uj4TXfe6OonvBnU75pRISGSyudf9rp5oV3ChNh9Fg_w/viewform

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304 MAIN ST.
PLAINFIELD, MA 01070

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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!

If you get a text message you weren't expecting, **it could be a scam!** What it looks like:

- A message saying there's a problem with payment information.
- An alert about suspicious charges to a bank account or a credit card.
- A package delivery notification.
- An invoice for unpaid tolls or traffic tickets.
- A notice for failure to report to jury duty.
- A bill for an expensive product or service you didn't order.
- A random message from a number you don't recognize or someone you don't know.

What to do: Don't reply. Slow down and verify the information independently. Block and report suspicious messages.

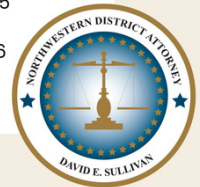


**Northwestern
District Attorney's
Consumer Protection Unit**

Northampton
(413) 586-9225

Greenfield
(413) 774-3186

Working in cooperation with the Office of
the Massachusetts Attorney General



***The 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