


Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging

Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



March 2018 ~ Calendar of Events

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
			1 COA Luncheon Church, Noon Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	2
5 Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	6 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	7 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	8 Foot Care WW, call 413-374-0457 Afternoon movie Library, 1:15pm	9
12 Computer Class Library, 10am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	13 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	14 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	15 Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	16 COA Breakfast WW, 8am-9:30am
19 Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	20 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	21 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	22 	23
26 Computer Class Library, 10am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	27 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	28 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	29	30 COA Board Meeting WW, 9:30am

Westhampton COA ✦ 3 South Road ✦ Westhampton, MA 01027 ✦ Seniors Helping Seniors
 Coordinator: Julia Lennen 413-537-9880 ✦ westhamptoncoa@comcast.net

In Memoriam

Charles Ognibene 1/10/27—1/21/18



February Luncheon

Finally, we were able to gather for our first potluck luncheon of the year on February 1st. Fifty-two seniors attended and shared a delicious luncheon and helped to celebrate January and February birthdays. After lunch we were entertained by Fran Ryan who presented a very interesting program about the wildlife found in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge located in north-east Alaska.



Left: Fran Ryan presented our program in Feb.

Below:
January and February birthdays:
Mary Laprade, Wendy Blow,
Janice Tracy and Shirley Raymond



Ruby Bridges Event

In 1960, Ruby Bridges was a 6-year-old African-American girl living in Louisiana. With four federal marshals escorting her, Ruby became the first black student to attend the all-white William Frantz Public School in New Orleans. This made history, and a lot of mob protests occurred back then. Three years ago, a second grader at the Westhampton Elementary School read the story of

Ruby Bridges that was in the school library. She decided that she'd like to have Ruby come visit her school. After finding out how expensive it would be, she tried to get the Westhampton PTO to help fund it, but again, it was too expensive.



Finally, as time passed, she wrote a letter to the President of Smith College with her wish. They were able to contact Ruby, and Smith College agreed to pay for her speaking engagement. Now the 2nd grader is in the 5th grade, and Ruby actually called her personally! Ruby Bridges spoke at John M. Green Hall in Northampton, where the public was invited, on February 2nd. However, a few hours before that, Ruby came to the Westhampton Elementary School to speak to all of the children and teachers, thanks to this young girl, Dana Warren, who was very persistent in getting her to come. Our COA decided to use multi-generational grant money to buy a book about Ruby Bridges for each student, and Ruby signed each one during her visit to the school. Some seniors also volunteered during the week prior to her visit so that each classroom got at least one visit from a senior who talked about what they remember from the 1960 event or what it was like when they attended elementary school. The students and teachers were very welcoming and the principal hopes to have more interaction with the seniors in the future. Our COA members were also invited to attend Ruby's visit to Westhampton.

March Luncheon

On the 1st of March, we'll be joined by the 4th grade from the Westhampton Elementary School. Their grandparents are also invited to our luncheon. After lunch, the class members will entertain us with their talents. Their show is always incredible and features a wide array of talents! It's obvious that the kids and their teachers put a lot of work into preparing for this event, and we are very appreciative that they choose to come every year. Don't forget that we'll still have a nurse available before lunch to take blood pressures, and we'll also be collecting, as usual, nonperishable items for the Easthampton Food Pantry. Of course the birthday cards will be available to sign, and we thank our COA member, Marion Miller, who sends out these cards during the month to seniors who will be celebrating a birthday.

Foot Care at Westhampton Woods

Diane Roeder, RN, will be making her bimonthly visit to Westhampton in the morning on **Thursday, March 8th**. (She comes on the odd num-

bered months.) If you would like to see her for foot care, you can reach her at 413-374-0457 to make an appointment.

Board and Card Games

Every Tuesday afternoon at 1:30, seniors gather at Unit F of Westhampton Woods to join in card and board games. At the same time, Scrabble games take place at the library twice a month. In March that will be on the **6th and 20th**. Scrabble will also be played at the library on the **1st and 15th at 5:30pm**. Come anytime to join the fun!

Free Afternoon Movie

Since we're still usually waiting for spring in early March, an afternoon at the movies might sound good to you. There will be a movie showing at the library at **1:15pm on Thursday, March 8th**. Call the library to see what Lynn has planned or even suggest a title if there's one that you'd like to watch.

Wednesday's Coffee and Social Time

There's always someone to visit with and enjoy a beverage on **Wednesdays at 10am** at the library. Catch up on town news and enjoy some mid-week relaxation during your morning.

Computer Classes

During March, the 2nd and 4th Mondays will be on the **12th and 26th** when you'll find Bob Miller at the library from 10am until noon to help seniors with computer problems and include a lesson or two. Of course, you don't have to have a problem to attend the class. You might even learn something when hearing about someone else's problem. Sometimes it's fun to just explore your computer (or one of Bob's if you can't bring a laptop with you) for a while without interruptions from home. Remember that any senior is welcome to attend the class whether they have a lot of computer knowledge or are just learning. Bob has a lot of patience!



Monthly COA Breakfast

Our monthly breakfast at Westhampton Woods, Unit F, will be on **Friday, the 16th from 8:00 until 9:30**. Homemade coffee cake or quick breads, hot oatmeal along with coffee, tea, cocoa and milk will also be served. Let's hope the weather is clear and not too cold with only four days until spring! Come and have some breakfast

while visiting with other seniors or just come for a beverage, if you prefer.

Spring Chair Yoga

Mark your calendars: Chair Yoga with Michele!

Michele Morales has been teaching yoga in the Pioneer Valley for over 18 years. She is an instructor at the Senior Centers in Southampton and Northampton where she incorporates her experience as a practitioner of yoga with a form of gentle movement called the Feldenkrais Method.

When and where: 10-week series at the **Library at 8am starting Wednesday, March 21st**.

Please note: This arrangement is coming together right at this newsletter's deadline, so, if you're interested, please confirm the date and time with Julia or a Board member prior to March 19th.

March Events at Library

The Westhampton Library will be hosting an **HRMC Compost Display on Saturday, March 17th**. The Earth Machine Compost Bin will be on display and the HRMC Administrator will be on site from 10:30 until noon to answer questions and to take bin orders. The display will provide useful information for you to get started converting your kitchen scraps and yard waste into a rich soil amendment and for diverting the estimated 25% of organic material that is typically disposed of in your weekly trash.

- **Coffee with the Chief-** *Monday, March 19th 7-8pm*. Chief Norris of the Westhampton Fire Department will be on hand to answer any of your questions. Coffee and refreshments. Drop in anytime between 7pm-8pm.
- **Dark Frequencies-** *Monday, March 26th, 6:30pm*. For over 75 years, strange pirate radio messages have been picked up over shortwave radio. These have become known as numbers stations. But what are they? Who is sending them and why? How is it they have captured the imagination of many who hear them? Come and find out. Funded by the Friends of the Westhampton Public Library and the Lyn Keating Programming Fund.
- **Tech Topics-** *March 28, 3pm*. We will cover privacy, security, and ways to keep your computer safe.





TRIAD COUNCIL

Seniors, Police, and Support Services Together — Learning ~ Informing ~ Empowering
Contact: Ginny Curtis – 529-9873 — westhamptontriad@comcast.net

2017 SENIOR MA CIRCUIT BREAKER TAX CREDIT

It is that time again! Put up to \$1,080 in YOUR pocket if you qualify. This tax credit is based on the actual real estate taxes paid on the MA residential property you own or rent. You may qualify if:

- You were 65 or older on or before December 31st.
- Owner or tenant in Massachusetts as your primary residence
- Your total income does not exceed: Single \$57,000; Married Filing Jointly \$86,000; Head of Household \$72,000.
- The assessed real estate valuation of your property does not exceed \$747,000.

HOW TO APPLY:

Obtain a Schedule CB, the Circuit Breaker Credit form. You can download the form at mass.gov/dor/forms with detailed instructions.

2017 AARP'S VOLUNTEER TAX-AIDE PROGRAM LOCATIONS

- AARP's Tax Aide number is: 1-888-227-7669
1. Easthampton Senior Center: 19 Union Street 413-527-6151
Appointments required: Wednesdays 9am to 1pm and evenings 6pm to 9pm
 2. Northampton Senior Center: 67 Conz Street 413-587-1232
Appointments required: Wednesdays 9am to 1pm

In addition, there is assistance at:

1. VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) free to complete tax forms: 1-800-906-9887
2. General MA Tax information, go to seniors webpage: mass.gov/dor/seniors

2017/ 2018 SOCIAL SECURITY FACT SHEET

173 million workers are in the work force. 46% of those working in private industry have no private pension. 39% workers report they have not personally saved for retirement. 62 million retired, disabled workers & survivors collect Social Security. 2017 average monthly benefit: \$1,379. In 2018 it is \$1,404.

In 2017: \$955 billion in Social Security was paid out. 2018 Amount of Earnings subject to Social Security Tax: \$128,400, an increase from \$127,200. Nine out of 10 individuals age 65 and older receive Social Security benefits. Social Security represents 33% of the income of the elderly.

In 2018: There are 2.8 workers for each Social Security beneficiary. By 2035, there will be 2.2 covered workers for each beneficiary.

ENJOY THE SUGARING SEASON!



The Westhampton Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue our important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Westhampton COA. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

(Please write your check to The Westhampton Council on Aging, write "program support fund" in the memo line, and mail to Westhampton COA, 3 South Rd. Westhampton, MA 01027.)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!



Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



The number one fire safety item in your house is your smoke detector. It does save lives. In a typical home, fire, smoke, heat and toxic gases build up rapidly. So, when a smoke alarm sounds, get out of the building immediately before your escape route is blocked. Make sure you:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your house and in each bedroom.
- Test them monthly.
- Replace the battery twice a year.
- Check on the back of the detector for its age. If it is 10 or more years old, replace it with a new one which will have a 10 year battery. Smoke alarms do wear out, so replace them.
- Never ever disable your smoke detector. The life you save will be your own.

Be SAFE!

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

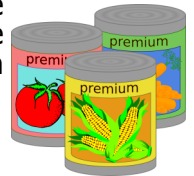
The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Hilltown Food Pantry

The Hilltown Food Pantry, run under the auspices of the Northampton Survival Center, is located on the bottom floor of the town office building in Goshen. The pantry is open to people in the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. Hours are Wednesdays from 1pm-3pm, and, on the third Wednesday, there are extended hours: 1pm-6pm. During the winter months, the pantry closes if the Hampshire Regional School District closes.

Diane Meehan is the director of the food pantry. If you have any questions, the pantry's phone number is 413-268-7578, and will be answered on Wednesdays, otherwise the call goes to the Northampton Survival Center.

Donations of non perishable items, personal care items and paper products are always welcome and appreciated. In-season produce is also helpful. Someone is available at the food pantry after 10am on Wednesdays for donation drop-offs.



Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list.

Finally – new Medicare cards!

At long last, people on Medicare will be getting new identity cards with a new number. If you haven't reached that magic age yet, please know that a person's current Medicare number is their social security number followed by one or two characters. The characters don't exactly disguise the number, so if you carry your Medicare card, which you may need now and again, you are also carrying your social security number! And that, of course, is a big no-no because of identity theft.

New cards will be mailed starting in April 2018. Some cards may not show up for a while because there are a lot of us who will be receiving them; the government has allowed itself a year.

Now this will be a shocker: there are likely scammers out there who will call and try to trip you up. They might tell you that a fee is required for the card, that more personal information is needed before the card can be mailed, or that your benefits will be stopped until you provide more information. All not true. Just hang up.

Your new Medicare number, called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier, will still need to be protected to ensure your privacy and security. Make sure you know who you are sharing it with.

The office sending the cards is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS says if someone calls and asks for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Turn 'em in.

Cheers,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD Committee Member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Outreach in Cummington continues to expand

By Peg Whalen

Regional Outreach Coordinator for the Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

The Cummington Council on Aging is reaching out to over 300 town seniors. COA board members continue functioning as the primary outreach team, respectfully and regularly watching out for the wellbeing of residents that may be isolated or have special vulnerabilities.

Cummington's COA is the only hilltown board that maintains a specific council position of Corresponding Secretary. In this role, Peg sends cards of support or condolence. The entire COA board identifies people that are ill or families that have recently lost a senior. Birthday cards also go out to residents 80 and over.

Their COA Neighbor to Neighbor ride program provides non-driving seniors with access to transportation by matching volunteers with seniors needing rides to appointments. Early expansion of outreach included a discussion of the book *Being Mortal*, which continued beyond the group meetings. Several book group participants have continued meeting about issues reflected in the group's name: "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, and Befriending Death". In successive months, the group focuses on "living fully" the first month, "aging gracefully" the second month and "befriending death" the third month, and then repeats the cycle. The discussion group is open to all ages. Participants have come from Holyoke, Williamsburg, Hinsdale, Plainfield and Chesterfield, among others. They meet once a month on the 2nd Tuesday from 1pm to 3pm in the Community House Library room.

Most recently, the Cummington COA initiated contact with younger seniors aged 60 to 69. This growing group of seniors received a personal letter introducing the COA, which invited input and participation. The letter was shared with area COAs. Several neighboring towns are using this approach as an outreach tool to engage younger seniors.

Several book and discussion participants and others have formed Cummington Community Cares, a newly organized town volunteer group, open to all. The initial group includes roughly 20 participants. The group's purpose is to establish a program that strengthens the ability of the people of Cummington to care for each other in the face of disasters and emergencies- large or small, community-wide or personal. The group is exploring what community preparedness involves and how residents can effectively care for each other. Another small group of volunteers is looking at ways to prepare food for people in need. Discussion has started to strategize ways to expand a call list or phone tree to encompass the entire town.

The group is also considering ways to mobilize a group to do "mapping" of community resources and needs. In January and February, Cummington Fire and emergency management members trained a group of residents as the first C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team), resulting in a small

initial team of residents with the knowledge and skills to assist others in many types of emergencies.

The West Cummington Congregational Church also does outreach to the congregation and other residents by maintaining a call list that any resident can be included on, arranging for nutrition support through coordinated food access, and counts several members of the COA board among the congregation. The Village Church does outreach to its congregation, many of whom are seniors. The Village Church nurtures community and promotes vitality in the village by providing care, connection, and healing to church members. One COA board member has a connection to the congregation.

Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

Adults age 65 and older are eligible to receive this tax credit when their property taxes and half of their water/sewer bills total more than 10% of their income. Or, if they rent an apartment (without a state or federal subsidy), they may get this tax credit if their rent is more than 25% of their income.

Here are some details:

- Tax filers should use the "Schedule CB form" and "Form 1", respectively.
- It's easy to get the forms. Download Form 1 and Schedule CB Form at the official Department of Revenue site: www.mass.gov/lists/2017-massachusetts-personal-income-tax-forms-and-instructions

If you need help, VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) helps low income and middle income people fill out tax returns for free. Call them at 1-800-906-9887. There are other options including AARP's Tax-Aide program and you can reach them at 1-888-227-7669.

It can be tough to continue taking care of our furry loved ones when illness and death affect our lives. **New 2U Dog Rescue** is a non profit organization in Greenfield run by compassionate volunteers who take in dogs from senior citizens and folks who can no longer care for their beloved pets. Their goal is to place the dogs into a loving foster home environment, evaluate them and match them up with their New2U forever family in the state of Massachusetts.

**Contact Dawn: 413-824-9225,
new2udogrescue@yahoo.com.**

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Domestic Violence Advocate , Hilltown Safety at Home (HS@H)	413 559-8039
If you need help in an emergency, call 911 or the Safe Passage hotline	888 345-5282
Elder Abuse Hotline	800 922-2275
First Call for Help Information and Referral Resources	800 339-7779
Fuel Assistance Application and Recertification	800 370-0940
Hilltown Elder Network – H E N (sponsored by Hilltown CDC)	413 296-4536
Veterans' Service Officer Tom Geryk	413 587-1299
(Westhampton) Joe Henning	413 207-3541
(Plainfield) Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District in Greenfield	413 772-1571
Regional Outreach Coordinator , Peg Whalen	413 404-4566
DO NOT CALL Registry	888 382-1222

Food Services

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Brown Bag Program	800 247-9632 or 413 268-8407
Food Stamps - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	413 552-5400
For assistance call Fran @ Williamsburg COA	413 268-8407
Hilltown Food Pantry - Goshen Town Hall - Diane Meehan, Director	413 268-7578 Wed 1-3; 3 rd Wed 1-6
Meal Site Williamsburg Senior Center	413 268-8407
Meals on Wheels Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES)	413 586-2000 or 800 322-0551
Northampton Survival Center , 265 Prospect St. Northampton	413 586-6564
Salvation Army Emergency Food, Fuel or Medication Vouchers	413 586-5336/6564

Health Services

Highland Valley Elder Services Intake referral for homecare, etc.	413 586-2000
Hilltown Community Health Center - Medical & Dental	413 238-5511, ext. 131
HOPE Nurse , Robin Laferriere, RN	413 238-5511, ext. 313
Janet Dimock , HealthWise Community Health Worker	413 238-5511, ext. 149
Podiatrist Dr. Michael Coby , call Williamsburg Senior Center to schedule (Alternating months at the Senior Center)	413 268-8407
Foot Care Oni, RN , foot care in Goshen, Call Liz Loven for appt.	413 268-7122
Oni, RN , foot care in Williamsburg or in-home visits	413 268-8407
Oni, RN , foot care in Plainfield or in-home visits	413 522-7219
Diane Roeder , foot care in Whamp & Chesterfield	413 374-0457
SHINE, Medicare & Drug Coverage Part D & Prescription Advantage	
Wayne Glaser	Call your COA for appointment
Richard Bauman (Westhampton)	413 527-5240
Lorraine York-Edberg	413 773-5555, ext. 2275
Mass Health and New Health Coverage	
John Bergeron, HCHC-Huntington	413 667-2203
Buliah Mae Thomas at Hilltown Comm. Health Center	413 667-2203

Transportation Services

Cummington Neighbor to Neighbor Drivers	413 634-2262
Westhampton transportation appts or groc. shopping, Louise Jasionkowski	413 527-5134
Williamsburg Medical Rides Williamsburg Senior Center (to schedule)	413 268-8407
PVTA Dial-A-Ride (tickets sold at Williamsburg Senior Center)	866 277-7741
FRTA Van Fran Goebel	413 296-4232

Local Councils on Aging

Chesterfield COA , Janice Gibeau	413 296-4007
Cummington COA , Anne Parsons	413 634-2262
Goshen COA , Evelyn Culver	413 268-3316
Plainfield COA , Deborah Thibault	413 634-0275
Westhampton COA , Julia Lennen	413 537-9880
Williamsburg Senior Center , Marie Westburg	413 268-8407
Worthington COA , Sandra Epperly	413 238-5584

Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

Westhampton Council on Aging

Julia Lennen, Coordinator

Louise Jasionkowski &
Jean Webster, Co-Chairs

Wendy Blow, Secretary

Lillian Baxter,
HEN Representative

Chuck Horn,
Member

Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

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

Out and About in March

Thurs. March 15th at 12:15pm
St. Patrick's Day Songs & Stories with
folksinger and storyteller Tim Van Egmond
Williamsburg Senior Center, 141 Main Rd.
Haydenville, MA

Van Egmond will accompany himself on a wide variety of traditional instruments, including guitar, hammered dulcimer, and limberjack (a wooden puppet that taps out a rhythm dancing on a paddleboard). His captivating talent, warmth, and engaging humor create a moving and enjoyable experience for all.



This program is supported in part by a grant from the Williamsburg Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Fri. March 16th, 9am & 10am
Spa Day at Smith Vocational
80 Locust St. Northampton, MA

Students in the Cosmetology program are offering the following: Shampoo, cut & style \$5.00; Manicure

\$4.00; Pedicure \$8.00; Basic Facial \$8.00. Please call 413-296-4007 to make an appointment. Each appointment takes about an hour and are scheduled for 9 am and 10 am in Room 124 of Building A at the school. Following the Spa Day, enjoy lunch at the Oliver Smith Restaurant!

Sun. March 18th at 2pm
Sidetracked
Chesterfield Comm. Center,
400 Main Rd. Chesterfield, MA



Roots rock, Country and Blues for all ages. Come shake off the winter blues and enjoy this concert that will have you on your feet in no time.

Funded in part by a multigenerational grant awarded by Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield COA, which coordinates these programs in partnership with: the Westhampton COA, Chesterfield Public Library, CFCEs of Westhampton and Chesterfield, Davenport Childcare, and New Hingham PTO.

Tues. March 20th at 4:30pm
Prediabetes Informational Meeting
Hilltown Community Center, 9 Russell Rd.
Huntington, MA

Free yearlong class offered to all area residents with prediabetes. Contact Ellie Brasil at 413-667-2203 ext. 322 or ebrasil@hchcweb.org for more information.