

Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging
 Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



May 2018 ~ Calendar of Events

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
	1 Board & Card Games , WW, 1:30pm	2 Chair Yoga Library, 8am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	3 COA Luncheon Church, Noon Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	4
7 Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	8 Board & Card Games , WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	9 Chair Yoga Library, 8am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	10 Foot Care WW, call 413-374-0457 Afternoon movie Library, 1:15pm	11
14 Computer Class Library, 10am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	15 Board & Card Games , WW, 1:30pm	16 Chair Yoga Library, 8am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	17 Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	18 COA Breakfast WW, 8am-9:30am
21 Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	22 Board & Card Games , WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	23 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am Chair Yoga Library, 8am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	24 	25 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am COA Board Meeting WW, 9:30am
28 Memorial Day- Library closed	29 Board & Card Games , WW, 1:30pm	30 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	31	Need household help? Call 527-1532 for the HEN Program.

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

In Memoriam

Mara O'Connor
Betty Douville



April Luncheon

Close to 40 seniors enjoyed lunch together on Thursday, April 5th. Afterward, John Yount, PT from Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice, did a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Falls Prevention". It was very informative, and we were all able to relate to it (as much as we hated to admit it!). With the take-home literature, we should now be more aware of unsafe habits and things we might be able to change in our homes.



Kathy Zawacki, Buddy Nevins and Nancy Motyka

May Luncheon

On May 3rd we'll be gathering at the church for a potluck lunch followed by make-your-own sundaes for dessert. Joining us will be Dave Robison, a professional genealogist and president of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society. Genealogy is very popular with families these days, and it will be interesting to hear and see how professionals delve into our ancestries. As always, we'll have a nurse available for taking blood pressures, and there will be birthday cards to sign for our fellow seniors. Our box for non-perishable items to be donated to the Easthampton Food Pantry will be in the dining room as always.

Walking Groups

Again, we're removing this from our calendar since seniors are walking along South Rd. at their own pace and at times that work for them. If you enjoy walking with others, invite a friend and head to South Rd. anytime or walk by yourself and enjoy the spring birds and nature as it wakes up again. The important thing is to keep walking!! It really can keep you healthier and safer by strengthening your legs.

Chair Yoga Moved Back to WW

After two classes at the library at 8:00am, chair yoga classes moved back to WW on Wednesdays at 9:00am. The chairs at the library are not suited for this type of use, and the early hour was a drawback for some seniors. Our instructor, Michelle Morales-Wolk, is able to make small spaces work for her classes, and everyone is happier with the folding chairs again. These classes will continue through May 23rd. Come join the fun of gently stretching your body as it feels comfortable.

Board and Card Games

As you can see from the pictures, WW is a popular spot every Tuesday afternoon at 1:30pm. At the same time, other seniors will gather at the library on May 8th and 22nd for scrabble games. If you can't make the early games, Scrabble will also be played at the library at 5:30 on May 3rd and 17th. Come to either place for some friendly competition and socializing whenever you'd like.



Above: Jessie Krug, Marilyn Witherell, Mary Vachula, Ellie Scott and Mae Pelissier

Below: Joanne Brooks, Sylvia Snape, Betty-Anne Gould and Ilene Lorow



Coffee and Social Time

If you'd rather just sit and relax at the library with a cup of coffee, join others there on Wednesdays at 10:00am. There's always something going on and people to visit with.

Foot Care at WW

Diane Roeder, RN, will be making a visit to

Westhampton Woods, Unit F, on **Thursday, May 10th**, for anyone who has scheduled an appointment with her. If you'd like to have your toenails trimmed or have any other foot issues, feel free to call her for an appointment at 413-374-0457.

Movie at the Library

Again this month, the library will offer a free afternoon movie for seniors. It will be shown on Thursday the 10th at 1:15. You can call the library a few days ahead to see what movie will be shown or even suggest something that you'd like to see sometime.

Hikes

After being snowed out on the scheduled day, the hikers had a wonderful afternoon on trails in Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary on Sunday, March 25th. We were even treated to a young eagle flying around just overhead at the end of our hike. Then on April 4th we were rained out but rescheduled for the following Sunday to hike the newer trails of the Kestrel Trust land in Westhampton.



Above: Arcadia hikers: David and Judee Wayne, Chuck Horn, Lilly Baxter and Ray Fontaine

Below: Kestrel Trust land: Andrea Pichette, Lilly Baxter, Wendy Blow, Mary Ellen Prince, Barbara Cook, Ray Fontaine, Pat Miller and Chuck Horn



Computer Class

Bob Miller is still at the library on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 10:00 until noon to tackle any computer problems seniors may have. You are welcome to attend no matter what your level of computer skills. The group quite often learns from someone else's problem, too. If

there's something specific that you'd like to learn, come and mention it to Bob. It could very well turn into a lesson for everyone. The group will be meeting on **May 14th** this month. Unfortunately, the library will be closed on the 4th Monday due to Memorial Day.

COA Breakfast

The 3rd Friday in May will be the 18th. The 'Breakfast' sign will be in front of Unit F at WW to welcome seniors to the monthly breakfast from 8:00 until 9:30. Besides coffee, tea, hot cocoa and milk, there's always homemade coffee cake or quick breads to enjoy while visiting with friends or meeting soon-to-be friends. And if it's a rainy day, it might bring a little sunshine to your morning. Join us.

Library News

- May 14-** *Local History Trivia Night! 6:30pm*
- May 19-** *Grown in Westhampton Plant Sale*
- May 24-** *6:30pm- "The Pleasures and Pitfalls of Researching and Writing Historical Fiction"*

M. P. Barker is a writer, editor, historical consultant, and time traveler. She got a firsthand taste (sometimes literally!) of 19th-century New England rural life when she was a costumed historical interpreter at Old Sturbridge Village. There she milked cows, mucked out barns, and found inspiration for her historical novels, *A Difficult Boy* and *Mending Horses*, which have been honored by organizations ranging from the Massachusetts Center for the Book to the International Reading Association. Made possible thanks to the Friends of the Library and the Lyn Keating Programming Fund.

- May 31-** *Strange New England Folklore 6pm-*

Pull up a log to listen to outdoor explorer Michael Girard share some of New England's most interesting folklore. While on historic adventures of rediscovery, Michael has uncovered some tales of strange creatures, secret hideouts, cities of gold and lost pirate treasure that most people have never heard of before. Remember, not all folklore is fiction! Made possible thanks to the Friends of the Library and the Lyn Keating Programming Fund.





TRIAD COUNCIL

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

Why are we still falling?

While knowing the basic precautions for avoiding falls: grab bars, non-skid rug backing, rubber shower mats, etc., however, each year one out of three of those 65+ takes a tumble. Why? There is not enough talk about the hidden health issues and normal byproducts of aging that make us prone to this potentially catastrophic event.

- **Eyewear:** Eyes refocus more slowly as we age. We use reading glasses, bifocals. Glasses can blur faraway objects, impairing depth perception. Don't walk around with your reading glasses. You'll miss a stair step or fail to see the dog's toy on the rug.
- **"Sensible" shoes:** With age, we lose some sensations/ feedback from neurological functions (inner ear, legs, eyes, feet) telling us where we stand. Those thick-soled "sensible" sneakers can trip us up, dull sensation from feet. If you are prone to falls, wear thinner-soled shoes inside.
- **Gangly Gait:** "Gait" is the way we walk, stand, sit, and is affected by joint problems. Problems show up in poor balance, stooped posture, muscle weakness or slowed reflexes. At your annual check-up, request a "Gait & Balance Evaluation".
- **Weak Knees (and Bad Canes):** 70% of folks 70+ suffer from osteoarthritis, which affects your gait and makes you unsteady. Most people don't use a cane properly. Get proper advice, including cane's proper height.
- **Too Many Meds:** More than 60% of folks 65 to 85 use 5+ prescription meds. Taking multiple meds puts nearly 1 in 25 at risk for a major drug reaction that can lead to a fall. One of the big culprits: sleep aids – many falls occur in the AM or during nighttime bathroom trips when getting up from bed. We don't adjust quickly from normally lower blood pressure during sleep; medications that lower blood pressure compound the balance problem.

Fear of falling: why?

This is a slippery slope. Being afraid, without having a doctor's evaluation, actually increases your risk. When you are afraid, you restrict your activity, leading to a loss of muscle strength, endurance, and mobility – three things that make you vulnerable to falling! Consult your doctor first. There are ways to gain balance, strength, boost confidence:

- Yoga is strengthening and has poses to improve balance.
- Stretching exercises, water aerobics, walking, Pilates, Tai Chi
- Get a vision check-up / remove all clutter on stairs and paths you walk often
- Check your shoes: American Podiatric Assoc. has a "1-2-3 Test" that evaluates balance.
- Enjoy spring, plan your walks, know the terrain, and stay upright!

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



Fires caused by cooking accidents are the number one cause of fires by older people. So, this month we'll consider some familiar ways of avoiding and dealing with fires in our kitchens.

- STAND BY YOUR PAN! Never leave cooking unattended.
- Wear short or tight fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose sleeves easily catch fire.
- Put a lid on a grease fire to smother it, then turn off the heat.
- Never throw water on a grease fire. Water will spread fire around.
- Never move a burning pan. You can easily ignite your clothes or spill fire onto someone or something else. Put a lid on it.

Be 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 Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.



The Hilltown Easy Ride will be starting a program to promote exchange among Hilltown COAs for events and luncheons. We will still be able to do medical rides and shopping as well.

You must be 60+ and live in the towns of Goshen, Chesterfield, Cummington, Worthington or Plainfield to be eligible for the van. All riders must fill out a Demand Respond Application with FRTA. We would gladly help you with that process, or you may go on the FRTA website and download an application. It takes about a week to process, and once you get the acceptance letter you can start booking rides.

We are happy to answer questions:
413-296-4536 or ride@hilltowncdc.org

The dispatcher's new hours are Mon.-Thurs. 8am to 10:30am and Fridays 8am to 11am, but messages will also be checked from home, so please leave a message and it will be returned.

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.

A Good Deed Never Goes...

Sometimes it's hard for a young person or someone who had a run of back luck with their finances to get on their feet. You, being a good person, may be wanting to help them out. Well, love, DO be careful.

It is possible for you to authorize a child or someone else to use your credit card, called "piggybacking". The child, as an authorized user, benefits from your good credit, assuming their activity is reported to the credit bureaus by the card company, and begins to gain or improve their credit. BUT the authorized user is not responsible for paying on the card; you are. If things go wrong... about a third of all cases of piggybacking do not end well, according to a recent Washington Post Color of Money column.

Another example of a good deed that can get punished is co-signing. I once co-signed a car loan for a young friend just out of school. That effectively meant that I had taken the loan on the car. If something went wrong, I could own a wrecked car or get sued for the entire loan amount. All ended well – she kept the insurance up and paid off the loan on time. Alarmingly, a co-sign situation that is growing more common is for grandparents to co-sign a student loan. The bad statistics and consequences on that are just that: bad.

If you are considering doing a co-sign, please read this first:
www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0215-co-signing-loan. Then call me. I'm serious!

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

Age Friendly in Goshen

By Peg Whalen
Regional Outreach Coordinator for the
Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

The Goshen COA has been hard at work on growing its outreach in 2018. In Goshen:

- there are 338 residents age 60 and over
- older adults now account for 35% of town residents
- between 2016 and 2018, the number of residents age 80 and over increased from 39 to 52

Outreach efforts require more community support. Given these statistics, the COA is considering new outreach methods and finding ways to attract more year-round and seasonal volunteers.

For many years, in addition to personal outreach done by the COA Coordinator and five board members, Goshen has had a sixth dedicated "outreach" worker, Dora Emerson. Dora might visit, call, help with rides, and otherwise reach out to the town's oldest residents and homebound older adults. These six COA members provide support to a limited number of town residents. They do so by:

- donating time to deliver meals
- checking regularly with several older adults
- giving rides
- lending a listening ear to older people they know

Looking outside the COA to bolster outreach led them to contact the fire, police, and emergency management departments. The goal is to create an expanding circle of town resources and personnel specially attuned to older adults' needs. The board is committed to working with the other town departments to identify older adults that are on oxygen, live alone or have homes in isolated locations. Advance knowledge provides more effective assistance in times of need – like accidents in the home, ice storms and tornados.

Goshen has a limited number of involved residents. Few as they are, they have created effective, non-intrusive ways to watch out for various older adults. For example, one resident agreed to using a system for alerting their neighbor of their well-being. If the garage door – which is closed every night – is not open in the morning, that person checks with the other to confirm their safety; another plan includes having an older adult make a call each morning to indicate that they are okay and active for the day; a daily call also works well in reverse. A family member, friend or neighbor can call an older adult every

morning at an agreed-on time.

These are simple ways of caring that effectively support town residents. Imagine proposing one of these methods to a neighbor you know or have concerns about. These are non-intrusive solutions that are simple and respectful and are hallmarks of an age-friendly community.

Free Daily Shuttle to Mass General

Cooley Dickinson Health Care and Massachusetts General Hospital have teamed up to provide a free daily shuttle from Northampton to Boston.



The round-trip shuttle leaves from 8 Atwood Drive in Northampton at 6:30am. The shuttle will drop off passengers at the Massachusetts General Hospital entrance on 55 Fruit Street in Boston, and leave at 3pm to return to Northampton.

The shuttle will have the ability to hold 12 people, will be equipped with Wi-Fi, and will run daily Monday through Friday. While the shuttle is free, reservations are required, and must be made 24 hours in advance. Children under 18 years of age are required to have an adult with them. Reservations can be made by calling 888-554-4234.

New Driver's License & ID Requirements

As of March 26, 2018, to get or renew any driver's license, ID card, or learner's permit, customers need documentation showing U.S. citizenship or lawful presence as required by federal and state law. Customers will also need to choose between getting a REAL ID license or ID card, or a Standard license or ID card. Visit Mass.gov/ID for more info and a complete list of acceptable identification documents. Customers are now also able to start applications online. Our new online Info Center includes specific information about the documentation requirements for non-U.S. citizens, drivers over the age of 75, learner's permit holders, and those new to Massachusetts.

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE: MAY 2018

Stronger than Yesterday

What interests you? There's never been a better time to learn a new form of exercise or pick up one you haven't done in years.



Chair Yoga

Yoga is for everyone, and this form is gentle and relaxing. It improves your flexibility and may offer relief from arthritis and insomnia.

Tues. 10am, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr
*Led by Michelle Morales-Wolk
Requested donation: \$5/ class.*

Weds. 9am, Westhampton Woods, Unit F
Led by Michelle Morales-Wolk thru 5/23. Free or small donation.

Thurs. 10:45am, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
Led by Alexandra Mello. \$10/class.*

Yoga for You

*Taught by Michelle Wolk, this class is geared for active adults. Any adult can join. Class is \$12 or 6 classes for \$60.**

Tues. 6-7pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Dance Class (Modern/ Creative)

Contemporary dance for adults, taught by Susan Waltner. Donations gratefully accepted.

Weds. 10am, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Feldenkrais

Create flexibility, strength and balance, with trained instructor Michele Morales-Wolk. Open to all ages.

Mon. 7pm, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
Requested donation: \$5/class

Thurs. 6pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
*\$10/class**

Healthy Bones and Balance

Designed to increase participants' strength, mobili-

ty, flexibility and balance, H B & B classes are a free, fun way to exercise and socialize. Medical clearance is required.

Mon. & Thurs. 9:30am
Cummington Comm. House

Mon & Fri. 10:30am
Worthington, Maples I Comm. Room

Tues. 10:30am Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Thurs. 4pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Hiking

Chuck Horn organizes hikes around the Westhampton/ Easthampton area. To get on his email list, drop him a line: charleshorn@gmail.com

Muscle Strengthening Classes

Strength training keeps your bones strong and helps maintain muscle mass.

Weds. 10am, Goshen Town Hall

T'ai Chi

T'ai Chi is a wonderful activity known to increase balance, centeredness within oneself, and an enhanced relationship with the natural world.

Mon. 9:30am, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
(Advanced; \$5/class)

Thurs. 6:30pm Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
(Beginner; \$5/class)

Thurs. 9:30am Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
*\$10/class**

To find out more about these classes, and to register, please contact the appropriate COA coordinator:

Chesterfield:

Janice Gibeau, 296-4007,
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Cummington:

Anne Parsons, 634-2262, coa@cummington-ma.gov

Goshen: Evelyn Culver, 268-3316, ematkc@aol.com

Westhampton:

Julia Lennen, 537-9880,
westhamptoncoa@comcast.net

Williamsburg:

Sherry Loomis, 268-8407, sloomis@burgoy.org
* Financial aid may be available for Wburg residents.

Worthington:

Sandy Epperly, 238-5584, coa@worthington-ma.us

Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

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

Out and About in May

Sat. May 5th @ 7pm & Sun. May 6th @4:30pm
Spirit of the Hills Community Chorus

*Northampton Senior Center, 67 Conz St.
Northampton, MA*

Singers aged 8-80, based in Williamsburg, will perform music from the world's community singing traditions of South Africa, Bosnia, England, Basque Spain, Corsica, American gospel, American Jewish traditions, and more. Donation Requested: \$15/adults, \$5/children. **To benefit the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.** Directed by Penny Schultz. Christopher Haynes Accompanying on piano and accordion.



Sun. May 6th, 2pm
Leadership & Climate Change:
A Special Hilltown Panel Discussion
*Chesterfield Comm. Center, 400 Main Rd.
Chesterfield, MA*

The Hilltown Eco-Action group in cooperation with Chesterfield Community Center will present a panel presentation followed by Q&A. The event will include special presentations on climate change from three different perspectives and feature: environmental lawyer Kevin Healy, biologist Ed Stockman, and Climate Action NOW co-founder, Susan Theberge.

The topics will include **Lawyers Fight Climate Change,**

Kevin Healy; **Building Solidarity to Respond to Climate Change**, Susan Theberge; and **Our Industrial Food System and Climate Change: A Well-Kept Secret**, Ed Stockman.

The Hilltown Eco-Action Group was formed in January 2017 as part of Defend the American Republic, a group of concerned residents of Worthington and surrounding communities. This group was established to protect the earth in any way we can from the ever-accelerating climate change crisis.

Free to the public. Donations are appreciated.

Tues. May 8th, 1:30pm
Tanglewood Marionettes: "The Dragon King"
*New Hingham Regional Elementary School
30 Smith Rd., Chesterfield, MA*

A terrible drought has overtaken the land, and all the world has turned brown and lifeless. The Dragon King is ruler over all things water, and the people are beginning to wonder why he has not brought the life-giving rains in such a very long time. An underwater fantasy based on Chinese folklore, *The Dragon King* tells the tale of an intrepid Grandmother who journeys to the bottom of the sea in search of the elusive Dragon King, and the answers to why he has forsaken the land above. Free and open to all ages!

Funded by the Chesterfield Council on Aging through a multi-generational grant from Highland Valley Elder Services.