

Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging

Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



October 2020

COA Events

Learn about Medicare Fraud and Abuse Thurs. October 1st Zoom Luncheon



Get informed about Medicare. Join this free information session from the comfort of your home. Learn to monitor your own healthcare records for healthcare errors and abuse including unintentional incidents, practices or procedures on the part of providers that are inconsistent with sound medical, business or fiscal practices. Be on the lookout for procedures that result in providers receiving payment for services that fail to meet professionally recognized standards of care or are medically unnecessary or incur unnecessary costs. Materials designed to accompany the program, including a Personal Healthcare Journal, will be available at the Library front porch during September.

The MA SMP Program conducts outreach and free educational sessions across the state to empower Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, family members, caregivers and professionals on the importance of being an engaged healthcare consumer. Only through consumer engagement can we prevent, detect and report healthcare errors, fraud and abuse which are costly, but too often have health related consequences.

For the Zoom link, contact **Amy Landau** at **WesthamptonCOA@comcast.net** or leave a message at **413-203-9808**.

COA Breakfast Fri. October 16th at 9:00 am

Julia Lennen will host the October Breakfast via Zoom. Grab your smartphone, tablet, or computer, and coffee! Join Julia and your neighbors for a lively discussion. BYOB! That is "Bring Your Own Breakfast"! If you would like an invitation to the COA Breakfast zoom, please call **413-537-9880** or email **jslennen@gmail.com**.



COA Board members Ray Fontaine, Chuck Horn and Colleen Basile on the job to pick up a 2nd load of frozen meat boxes in Northampton for Westhampton Seniors in need. The delivery was made possible through Highland Valley Elder Services.

Library News

Curbside by Appointment

To place a curbside request, please call **413-527-5386** or email **westhampton@cwmar.org**. Not sure what you'd like? Chat with a librarian by phone or email for personalized recommenda-

Westhampton COA ✦ 3 South Road ✦ Westhampton, MA 01027 ✦ Seniors Helping Seniors
Coordinator: Amy Landau 413-203-9808 ✦ westhamptoncoa@comcast.net

tions. Please call **413-527-5386** or check our website at www.westhampton-ma.com/westhampton-public-library for the most up to date hours of service.

Drive-in Wifi

Just a reminder – the library has expanded its wifi network into the parking lot. To park and use our wifi:

1. On your computer, phone or tablet go to Settings >Wifi >LibraryPublicHotspot.
2. Select LibraryPublicHotspot and an agreement form will pop up.
3. Scroll to the end of the form and select "Continue to the Internet".

Book Group

Join Book Group for a virtual meeting on Zoom. Please email westhampton@cwmares.org for login details. Our October book is "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins. Lydia and her young son, Luca, must flee their home in Mexico after the rest of their family is murdered by Javier Fuentes, a drug cartel boss. Book Group will discuss the novel and the controversy surrounding its publication. Book Group meets once a month and is open to new members!

Make and Take Craft – Fall Leaf Votive

The library will be launching a series of "Make and Take" crafts in October. Our first adult craft is a fall leaf votive kit complete with a small glass jar, faux fall leaves, a tea light candle, and foam brush. All you need to complete the craft is glue! Supplies are limited. Please email mschwelm@cwmares.org to request your kit.

Protein Is Important and It's Not Just About Meat!



Joan Griswold teaches us how to make a frittata!

This was just one of the many lessons we learned at the last COA Zoom Luncheon on Sept. 3rd, with nutritionist and fitness instructor, Joan Griswold. She provided us with a fun, educational presentation on healthy eating and nutrition. With an apple in her hand, Joan emphasized eating whole foods and keeping our plates colorful with fruit and veg-

gies on one side and lean protein and carbs (the last in moderation) on the other. She also reminded us of the importance of drinking plenty of WATER and staying fully hydrated every day. Way to go Joan!

Important Reminder: Get Your Flu Shot

Just a reminder to make sure to get your flu shot! Healthcare professionals are strongly advising that everyone get their flu shot to minimize the chance of getting sick or contracting respiratory issues which could make one more vulnerable to Covid-19.

Mail-In Voting for the November 3rd Presidential Election

The mail-in ballot application deadline is Oct. 28th at 5pm. All mail-in votes must be postmarked no later than November 3rd and received in hand or by mail no later than 5 pm on November 6th.

NOTE: At this time, the drop box outside Town Hall is NOT set up to receive ballots. The Town Clerk is looking into the possibility of obtaining an official drop box for ballots. For more information and updates, please check the Town Clerk page at: www.westhampton-ma.com/town-clerk

Two statewide ballot measures were certified for the 2020 ballot in Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Ranked Choice Voting Initiative and The Massachusetts "Right to Repair" Initiative. Learn more at:

https://ballotpedia.org/Massachusetts_2020_ballot_measures

Need Low-Cost Internet but Can't Afford it?

Internet Essentials offers low-cost internet (\$9.95/month and the first 2 months free) to low-income customers who qualify. Call: **1-800-934-6489** OR ask a friend or family member to help you sign up: www.internetessentials.com. They also offer **low-cost computers** at this link: www.internetessentials.com/low-cost-computer.

Lifeline Support offers a discount of up to \$9.25 on your internet bill for eligible customers. Check them out at: www.lifelinesupport.org or contact Safelink Wireless at: **800-723-3546** or Assurance Wireless at: **888-898-4888**.

Learn How to use your Computer/ Tablet/Smartphone

Would you like help from a computer-savvy high school student on learning the ins and outs of your new device? Contact Jennifer Reagan, Administrative Assistant at Hampshire Regional High

School. Phone: **413-437-5587** or by email at: **jreagan@hr-k12.org**. Jennifer may be able to connect you with a HS student in need of Community Service Hours! (They need 30 hours to graduate.) You may be able to meet a student outside the school on the grounds at 2:30pm (safely masked) for help.

International Pen Friends

Although we can't physically travel overseas right now, there is nothing to stop us from traveling in our imaginations through the exchange of handwritten letters with a friend in another country. And it's especially exciting to receive a handwritten letter in an air mail envelope. I remember doing this as a child: I had one pen pal in France and one in Australia. We sent each other photos and described our lives. It was fascinating. Well it turns out that for a reasonable fee, you can be matched with someone your own age, even with someone over 60! International Pen Friends will pair you with someone who shares your interests. You can choose up to eight countries in which you would like to be matched with your pen friend and the language(s) in which you'd like to correspond. Go to: **www.ipfworld.com/services.html** to apply. For one applicant, the cost is \$30. Do you know a friend who also wants an international pen pal? For two people, the cost is \$40, so you would each pay only \$20.

~ Amy Landau

Scammed!

It's different when it happens to you, said the voice of experience. I knew better, but the scammers did a great job of faking an Xfinity 'Upgrade your account' email message - the usual Xfinity background, logos, and even most of the Xfinity/Comcast email address. Stressed out and not thinking straight, I bit the bait, compromising personal information in the process. Belatedly I called Xfinity. Bad news: they never ask for personal information unless you call them and they're checking birth date, address, etc. On request, I forwarded the original email I received to their fraud department. I then checked my bank account. Good luck, no odd action - yet. Next, I called the bank and they put a watch on my account. I froze my accounts at all three credit report agencies - Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion. I also called our local non emergency police number. Our police chief, Dave White, thanked me and suggested I file a report with the Federal Trade Commission. He also said these scams are far more common than people realize.

~Chuck Humbler Wiser Horn

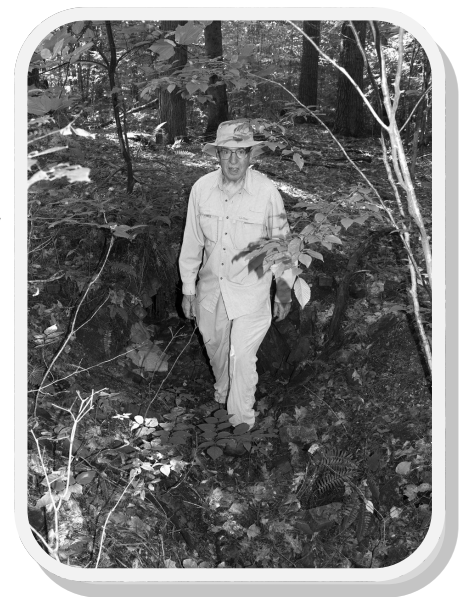
Lead Mine Hike

After a hot and busy August, Chuck Horn and I

have been exploring new hikes for the Westhampton COA Hikers. The idea is to put together a package that includes a brief description of a hike including any relevant history along with photos of points of interest for individual hikers or very small groups of hikers. This way hikers can, on their own, safely enjoy the wonderful outdoors of Westhampton and surrounding towns. These descriptions will be available via email to those who are on the Westhampton COA Hikers Email List.

We plan to send out information and photos on a hike to the abandoned lead mine adjacent to the Harnett Conservation Area - located, where else, off Lead Mine Road, Southampton. So stay tuned. In the coming weeks we will be doing the same for other great local hikes. If you'd like to be included in our email list, please contact me at westhamptoncoahikers@comcast.net.

~Ray Fontaine



Chuck Horn standing in front to the abandoned lead mine furnace in Southampton.

Ending Loneliness and Building Community

AARP and many local organizations are collaborating to help you stay healthy and connected during this pandemic and beyond. The AARP Massachusetts Task Force to End Loneliness & Build Community is launching the #ReachOutMA campaign on Good Neighbor Day (September 28th). The Taskforce will be sharing information about how social isolation and loneliness affect your health, with tips for how to connect with older adults and community members of all ages. There will be an online summit on October 1, to share insights from community research done with support from The UMass Gerontology Institute. To learn more: **www.aarp.org/ma**. The AARP Foundation also has you covered on this topic at **www.connect2affect.org**.



TRIAD COUNCIL

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

October 24th: Free Event to Create a Safe, Healthy Home

Properly dispose of your household hazardous waste at the Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) annual Collection Event: Saturday, Oct. 24th. From 9am to Noon at the Westhampton Highway Dept. on Hathaway Road.

This event is FREE to Town residents. **IMPORTANT: Reservations and Pre-registration is required between October 1 –18th.** Email your name, road and mailing address with town and zip code, and telephone number to hrmc@hrmc-ma.org or you may phone HRMC with the above information including an email address at 413-685-5498. **HRMC will confirm your registration by email and send an attached confirmation letter to bring with you to the event.**

Common Household Hazardous Waste Examples from:

Your Yard: Root killers, rodent killers, No-Pest strips, insect sprays, pesticides

Your Home: Drain cleaners, mothballs, spot removers, toilet cleaners, arts & craft supplies, furniture polish, oven cleaners, metal polish, upholstery cleaner, flea powder

Your Workshop: Aerosol cans, paint thinners, photo chemicals, roofing tar, sealants, stains, varnish, wood strippers, wood preservatives, oil based paints (NO LATEX PAINT)

Your Garage: Vehicle batteries, brake fluid, used motor oil, gas treatments, antifreeze, gasoline, transmission fluid, engine degreaser, kerosene, solvents

We, along with our environment, are exposed to harmful chemicals in many ways – including products we use to clean our homes or maintain our gardens. Products we flush down drains, place in household trash, or apply to lawns and gardens impact our well water, water supply recharge areas, and the air we breathe. We can make our homes safer and healthier by changing purchasing habits, adopting minor changes to the way we clean our homes or care for our gardens and lawns, and properly storing and disposing of household chemicals. Take the time to research safer alternatives for hazardous household products. Try replacing moth balls with cedar chips or lavender flowers, rosemary, mint or cloves!

**“No job is too big, and no action too small,
the care of our earth is a job for us all.”**



***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 Friends of the Westhampton Council on Aging, write "program support fund" in the memo line, and mail to Charlotte Wood, 14 Perry Hill Rd. Westhampton, MA 01027.)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Westhampton Council on Aging



Highland Valley ELDER SERVICES

**Assisting Elders, Families & Caregivers
through collaboration, education
and advocacy for 45 years.**

413-586-2000

**All programs and services still operational
during the COVID pandemic.**

Information & Referral Services

Family Caregiver Program– Resources for Caregivers

Home Delivered Meals

Community Dining Sites

Ombudsman Services– For Nursing Facility Advocacy

Money Management Assistance

Protective Services

Case Management

Options Counseling

Transportation Concierge

Homemaking, Personal Care, Companion

Personal Emergency Response Systems

**Consumer Directed Options- Hire family/friends to
provide the assistance you need.**

And more...

www.highlandvalley.org

info@highlandvalley.org



Options Counseling provides:

- Free consultation with a certified Options Counselor.
- Unbiased information.
- One-on-one meeting, either in person, over the phone or by email, to discuss what your short and long term goals are.
- Personalized approach that ensures that your choices are respected.
- Exploration of options for paying for services.
- Referrals related to your particular needs and wishes.
- Assistance with planning the next steps.
- Information about long-term care services and supports.

**To connect with an Options Counselor contact Highland Valley Elder Services Information & Referral Department:
413-586-2000**

Chesterfield Community Cupboard closes as the Little Corner Cupboard opens in new location on October 1



Cold weather coming, lack of heat sources and logistical problems with snow plowing have led the Chesterfield Community Support Team, in consultation with the Board of Health, to set up at a smaller site at the entrance to the kitchen at the Chesterfield Community Center. It's been clear that the food that's been offered at the Cupboard has been very appreciated and needed. The need to keep it going will no doubt continue as financial hardships grow, prices of food increase and farm markets begin to close. Even with the Goshen Pantry, CISA coupons and Hilltown Bucks, food insecurity persists.

New protocols have been developed for assuring the health and safety of everyone using the cupboard in the new restricted space. The "Little Corner Cupboard" will be open twice a week on Tuesdays from 9-11am and Thursdays from 2-4pm. Volunteers are required to be on site during the open hours. Strict guidelines for social distancing and sanitizing will continue to be followed and masks are required. The goal of staying as anonymous as possible is still in effect. The duration of the program will be guided by the receipt of business and individual donations.



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

If so, please email Kristen at **regionalcoanews@gmail.com** to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

Scam Covid-style

You have to admire scammers, in some ways. They see a new thing in life and adjust their pitches to it, and quickly. For instance, did you know some scammers want you to think you can get a government stimulus check from a car dealership? They may send a check that says "COVID-19 Auto Stimulus" with space to endorse the check on the back, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Another example. I ate inside in one restaurant and they asked me for contact information in case they need to do virus tracing, e.g., tell me there has been a potential contact with a person who tested positive for Covid-19. Well, another wrinkle from the scammers is to call and pretend to be a contact tracer and ask questions that go beyond the names of places and people you have come in contact with. A real tracer will never ask you for money or financial information.

Certainly the savvy citizens of Massachusetts would not suffer from these scary scams! Sadly, from Jan. 1 to Sept. 9 in MA, there were 5,664 fraud reports with a loss of \$2.69 million dollars. And that is just what was reported! There was a very sharp increase in cases starting in mid-March. Funny coincidence, that, timed with the virus. These data are from the FTC Covid-10 and Stimulus Reports:
public.tableau.com/profile/federal.trade.commission#!/vizhome/COVID-19andStimulusReports/Map

I'm sure you can figure out not to buy a virus testing kit, "early-release" vaccine, or a preventive or cure for Covid-19 from a phone call or email. You won't assume someone who says s/he is calling from the government (Social Security, Centers for Disease Control, etc.) has your best interests in mind. All the old safeguards still hold – don't click on email attachments, don't answer the phone from an unknown source, guard your wallet and identification., don't get pressured into paying, keep some skepticism.

Please Be Safe,
 Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
 413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

For all of us on Medicare, it's annual Open Enrollment again. October through the first week in December...we get to go shopping...for our health care coverage. If you don't want to "shop" for different coverage, you don't have to, but there might be a better deal, that is better coverage for less money. And we all love to bargain hunt. Maybe not so much with health insurance? If I've heard it once, I've heard it dozens of times that folks just wish their coverage was simple. Perhaps in my lifetime, it will be, and we will look back on these days of chaos when health insurance companies bombarded us with their advertising as "back in the dark ages".

But in the meantime, our mailbox (and TV) is full of advertisements for health insurance because this is the season to switch if you want to.

What is all the advertising about?

When we turn 65, and we've paid into social security, or our spouse has paid into social security, we get Medicare: original Medicare A & B.

Then we can sign up for a Medicare D plan to cover our Rx, or enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan that covers Rx. Each year in the fall, during Open Enrollment, we get to change our mind and select different coverage. Many Medicare beneficiaries will decide to change their Rx coverage (their Medicare D plans). This happens a lot because the D plans change their prices, change their deductibles...even change their formularies which is the list of Rx they cover. So what was a "good" plan for you last year may not be a good plan for you next year.

An example that kept us SHINE counselors busy last year was a Humana Walmart's switch. Their \$32 x month D plan that covered a lot of Rx, changed to a \$62 x month plan for the same coverage. If folks read their mail, they were pretty upset. If they knew to call a SHINE counselor, they could "shop" the plans for the upcoming year and discover that Humana had another plan, in the \$30 x month range...which covered almost the same Rx. But you had to know this....and switch.

How does the switch work?

During Open Enrollment, you get to sign up for a new plan if you want. The new plan takes effect January 1st and cancels out your old plan. To see if you should switch, you might contact your SHINE counselor who can do a Plan search/



analysis for you and give you the contact information you need to call and enroll in a new plan.

You can call your senior center to schedule an appointment with a SHINE counselor. 'tis the season to be shoppers, if we want.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

**Saturday, October 24, 2020,
9 am – Noon**

at Westhampton Highway Department

Create a Safe Home: Properly dispose of household hazardous waste. The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) announces their annual HHW Collection Event for residents of the ten HRMC member communities of: Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington.

The program is free to HRMC member-town residents, however, reservations and pre-registration is required. Pre-registration runs from October 1-18, 2020. Please email your name, street and mailing address (including town and zip code), and phone number to hrcm@hrcm-ma.org. Or you may phone HRMC with the above information including an email address at 413-685-5498. Note that Huntington residents are asked to provide their transfer station sticker number at the time of registration. HRMC will confirm your registration by email and send an attached confirmation letter to bring with you to the event.

Protect your home and our environment by properly disposing of old or unwanted household chemicals. Products containing lead, petroleum products, pesticides, herbicides, and acids should NOT be poured on the ground, down the drain, or placed in household trash.

The HRMC HHW collection program accepts a wide range of unwanted household products with labels that indicate that special handling is required. Examples of common warnings include "caustic, toxic, corrosive, poison, flammable, warning, danger, caution and keep out of reach of children and pets."



Make your home a safer home by changing your purchasing habits, and adopting some minor changes to the way you clean your home or care for lawns and gardens.

For more information on recycling, visit the "What to do With" link at: www.hrcm-ma.org

Epidemics

The world today seems to find us more stressed and frightened than COVID-19 can explain. The unrest, divisions and anger seeping into the fabric of our lives leaves us hoping, if not longing, to find a way to understand how we got here and what's in the future. Sarah Prince, our yoga teacher, found a passage from Ayurveda, an ancient system of health maintenance. Today it is often referred to as the sister science of yoga. The main text, Charaka Samhita, written 2,000-2,500 years ago, is primarily a discourse between Atreya (a great Ayurvedic physician) and his disciple Agnivesa. It was first written in Sanskrit in a poetic style, as are all Vedic texts. The rhythm, meter and melody of the Vedas allowed for easier memorization.

The Root Cause of Epidemic

Agnivesa asks Atreya, "What is the root cause of Vata imbalance, which is the root cause of an epidemic?" This was Atreya's response (remember, these are written in poetic form, over 2,200 years ago):

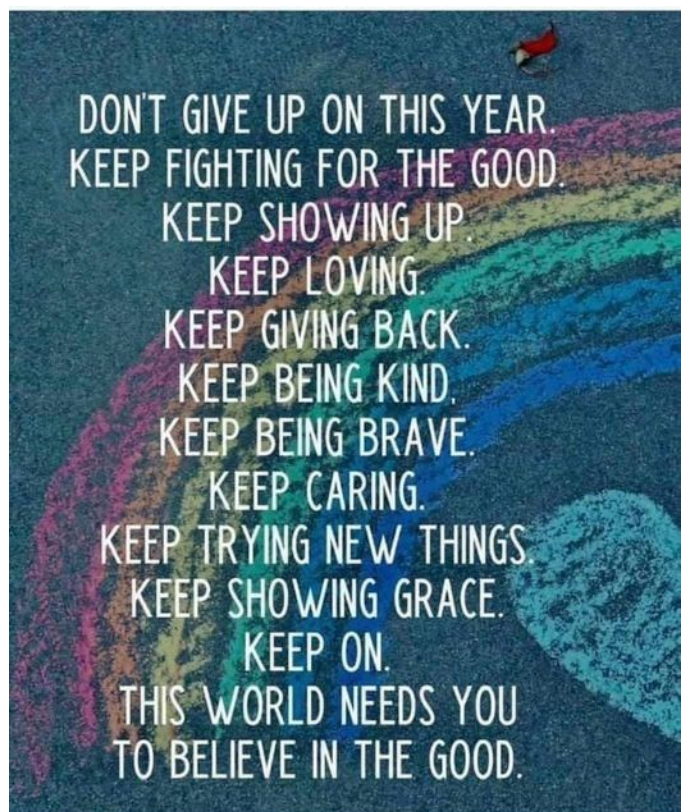
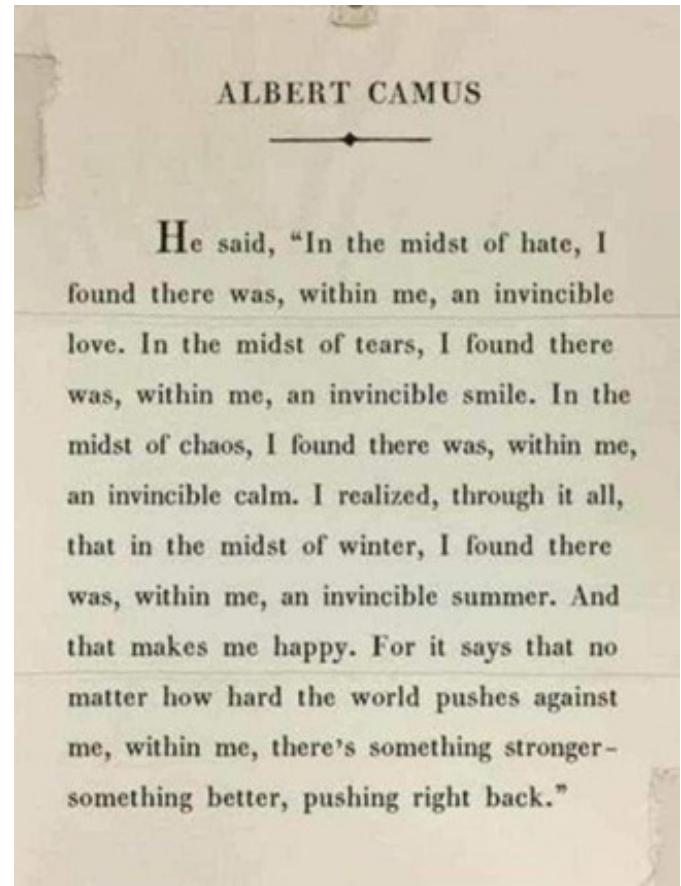
The root cause of derangement of vata and epidemic is unrighteousness. When the Heads of country, city, guild and community have transgressed the virtuous path and deal unrighteously with the people, their officers and subordinates, the people of the city and community, and merchants carry this unrighteousness further.

Thus, the unrighteousness puts pressure on and forces righteousness to disappear. Then the people with righteousness, having disappeared, are abandoned even by the Gods. Consequently, when righteousness has disappeared, unrighteousness has the upper hand and the Gods have deserted the place, the seasons get affected and because of this, it does not rain on time or at all. There is abnormal rainfall, winds do not flow properly, the land is affected, water reservoirs are dried up, and herbs, giving up their natural properties, acquire morbidity or die. Then epidemics break out due to polluted environment and food.

Likewise, unrighteousness is also cause of the destruction of community by weapons. Those who have excessively increased greed, anger, attachment, and conceit, disregarding the weak, attack each other.

Sharma, PV Charaka Samhita, Vimanasthanum, Ch. 3. Verses 20, 21 Chaukhamba Orientalia. Delhi. 1981

During this challenging time everyone who looks for truth and the right thing to do and does it will bring balance back to our planet.



Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

**Westhampton
Council on Aging**

Amy Landau, Coordinator

Louise Jasionkowski, Chair

Chuck Horn, Secretary

Ray Fontaine,
Hikes

Julia Lennen,
Board Member

Lillian Baxter,
HEN Representative

Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

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

October is Fall Prevention Month

CATCH YOURSELF! Simple Steps to Prevent Falls

Your risk of falling increases when you have:

- fallen before
- balance problems
- chronic diseases
- depression
- hazards in the home
- a lot of medications
- memory problems
- muscle weakness
- problems walking
- vision problems

Reduce your risk of falling and stay independent, healthy and strong by following these steps:

1. **Get a fall risk assessment.** Talk to your doctor about your fall risk, especially if you have any of the conditions above.
2. **Review your medications.** Bring all your meds and supplements to your doctor or pharmacist at least once a year and when there are changes in your health. Ask about side effects and interactions, especially if you take four or more meds.
3. **Have your vision checked** once a year by an eye doctor.
4. **Engage in regular physical activity.** Ask your doctor about the best activities for you and make a plan. Doing Strength and balance exercises using your lower body can build your strength, improve your balance and coordination, and reduce your risk of falling.
5. **Assess your home and make changes for safety.** Use a home safety checklist or talk with a professional to look for things inside your home that make you more likely to fall. Change your home to make it safer; reduce clutter, improve lighting in rooms, hallways and stairwells; and install handrails and grab bars.

For more information, visit: www.stopfalls.org.