

Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging

Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



January 2022

Happy New Year!

The COA is Taking a Break in January

By the time you receive this newsletter, December will have come and gone. Thanks to the hard work of the Life Skills Hampshire Regional High School students and their teachers, COA Board volunteers and the generous contribution of the Friends of COA, we will have offered the Holiday Grab-n-Go gift bags in the Town Hall parking lot and hopefully everyone will have enjoyed the tasty delectables therein. We will also have gathered virtually for the "Music & Merriment" Hampshire Regional Chorus Zoom program with chorus director Aidan Linden and his talented young singers! (December was pretty much a Hampshire Regional themed month, wasn't it?! How lucky we are to immerse ourselves in such local talent).

But now it's the New Year, 2022! Happy New Year to all of you! May this year bring much joy to all and a glimmer of hope that the pandemic will come to an end or at least take a back seat. For this first month of the new year, the COA Board and Coordinator are taking a much-deserved break. This time will not only give us a bit of rest but also enable us to re-evaluate where we are, find new programs of interest to our community and figure out a plan for continuing our popular Yoga classes in February, with a new teacher. In the meantime, please see the two listings in the next column as well as the programs/events at the Library.



Joan Griswold Fitness Classes for All Levels

Looking for an opportunity to stay active and connected with others as COVID continues? Join others in the Hilltowns for Zoom exercise classes. Certified instructor, Joan Griswold, has been offering a variety of exercise programs every weekday morning. All levels of exercisers are welcome! Join others who are working on their personal health. These groups will return in person as soon as it is safe for us all to gather in person. Would you like more information? Contact Joan at joan@bybhealth.com.

Computer Class with Bob Miller 2nd and 4th Mondays - 10 AM to Noon

Bob Miller will continue with computer classes at the Library. Classes are held on the second and fourth Monday of the month. Masks are required in the Library. For questions, contact Bob at Miller.r.e@comcast.net.

Library Events

Hours: Mon & Thu 2pm - 8pm
Tue & Wed 9am - 12pm & 1pm - 5pm;
Sat 10am - 1pm

Visitors to all town buildings, including the library, are required to wear face masks indoors. This is in order to protect our youngest readers and other vulnerable populations against COVID-19. Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Holiday Closings - Saturday 1/1 in observance of New Year's Day; Monday 1/17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Westhampton COA ✦ 3 South Road ✦ Westhampton, MA 01027 ✦ Seniors Helping Seniors
Coordinator: Amy Landau 413-203-9808 ✦ coa@westhamptonma.org

Recurring Programs:

- ⇒ Scrabble Group
Mondays at 2pm
- ⇒ Knitting Group
Mondays at 6pm
- ⇒ Book Group
Tuesday January 25 at 7PM

Book Group will meet in person at the library weather permitting. Our January title is TBD. Book Group meets once a month and is open to new members!

COA News

Save the Date for the COA February Program Westhampton Wildlife Captured by WebCam

Thursday, Feb. 10th at Noon



On Thursday February 10th at Noon, naturalist and writer Laurie Sanders will join us via Zoom. Laurie will share excerpts of day and nighttime video capturing beavers, deer, herons, raccoons and many other species who call Westhampton home. If you are unfamiliar with Zoom, check out Bob Miller's computer classes so you are set to launch Zoom.

Community Working Together: HRHS Life Skills Students and Older Adults in Westhampton

The COA is recruiting Westhampton residents for a new Pilot Program, pairing HRHS Life Skills students with people needing assistance. The Life Skills students can perform a variety of chores and errands, such as:

- raking or gathering branches/twigs (weather permitting)
- grocery shopping (person provides list and money and students will procure and deliver)

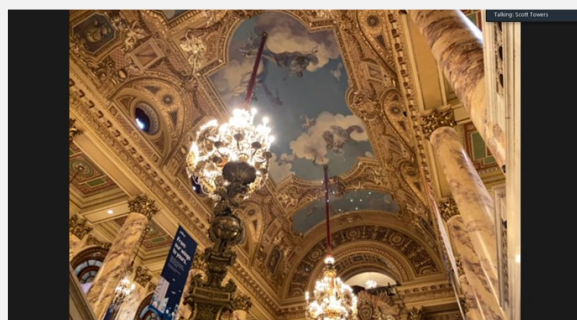
- laundry (students will pick up, do laundry at HRHS, and deliver back)
- wash car
- help clean out garage
- stack wood
- bake treats and deliver
- cook a meal with resident-provided ingredients and deliver
- pick up and deliver take-out food (either collect money before or could be paid online when ordered by people using service)

Students are always accompanied by HRHS staff. The students and staff are fully-vaccinated and wear masks and can only work with residents who comply with HRHS Covid protocols.

If you are interested in any of these services, please contact **Julia Lennen (413-537-9880)** at jslennen@gmail.com or **Lorraine Galica (413-387-3960)** at lagfjord@comcast.net. Get help and support the Life Skills students!

From Alison Lebrecque at HRHS: The Life Skills Program at Hampshire Regional is excited to partner with the Westhampton COA. The primary focus of the Life Skills Program at Hampshire Regional is to provide a functional curriculum along with daily living and vocational skills that will lead to a successful transition to adulthood for students with disabilities. Our students and staff are hardworking and caring individuals who are looking forward to helping out in our local community.

A Peak into the Glamorous Days of Yore at Boston's Wang/Boch Theater



Last November, the COA hosted a live Zoom tour of the historic Wang/Boch theatre in Boston. This program attracted some new participants to our group including a Westhampton resident who lives in Westhampton but also spends time in Boston. Our guide, Scott Towers, gave us a live, behind-the-scenes tour of the theater which is one of Boston's most prominent landmarks. The theater first opened in 1925 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It has a seating capacity of

3,500 and is one of the five largest stages in the U.S. Scott shared a lot of the theater's history including a glimpse into its glamorous days as a movie 'cathedral'. We enjoyed seeing the gorgeous ceiling with its mural and chandelier in real time. We also saw enormous sculpted busts of the heads of iconic actors in an often-overlooked section of the theater. A screenshot of the theater is on the previous page.



Chuck Horn pointing the way at the Hartnett-Manhan Memorial Forest.

Memory Café Program at the Southampton Senior Center is Ongoing!

This program is for Westhampton Residents too!

Thursday 10 AM to Noon

Join the free monthly Memory Café at the Southampton Senior Center for a fun, engaging, supportive environment where attendees can share and receive caregiver support, education, respite and reduce isolation. Memory Cafés encourage people to socialize and enjoy each other's company while reminding them that they are not alone. This monthly program welcomes individuals experiencing all different stages of memory loss, as well as caregivers, family and friends. Programs include artists, musicians, crafts and educational events, as well as activities that promote physical fitness and sensory stimulation. The relaxed, casual atmosphere promotes information sharing & support. Hosted by Southampton Council on Aging and funded by Highland Valley Elder Service Title III Grant.

- January 20, 2022
- February 17, 2022
- March 24, 2022
- April 21, 2022

For more information call **413-529-2105**.

NOTE: Transportation by van is possible if booked one week in advance.

A Message from the Westhampton COA Hikers Greetings for the new year!

For 2022, the Westhampton COA hikers would like to expand hiking to include more rigorous hikes while maintaining (and even expanding) our less difficult hikes. There are many wonderful, but challenging hikes in the local area such as the Stevens Property "Big Loop" (mostly in Westhampton with its trailhead in Huntington) or the Horse Mountain Conservation area, Williamsburg & W. Hatfield, or ..? Throughout the winter

months we'll continue to look into new and fun places to hike. And if we get a break in the weather, we'll be offering hikes then. The local area also has some great bike trails which we could utilize as a way to exercise and socialize when the rest of the landscape is inaccessible. With some luck, maybe we'll be able to schedule a snowshoe hike. So stay tuned for emails from the WCOA Hikers. For anyone interested in joining the Westhampton COA Hikers, email us at **westhamptoncoahikers@comcast.net** and we will add you to our email hikers list. Please note that all group emails are sent as blind copies (BCC) for your safety and privacy. Happy Trails!

A Community of Readers - Sue Slowick

One of my favorite non fiction authors is Rick Bragg. He writes stories filled with emotion about his family in the deep south. *All Over but the Shoutin'* is his memoir of growing up poor in Appalachia. Another book of his I highly recommend is *Ava's Man*, Rick's story about his hard working grandfather who kept food on the family table through the worst of the Great Depression. I just finished reading Rick's new book *A Speckled Beauty: A Dog and His People*. Rick tells how his life was transformed by his love for a stray dog.

I also love all kinds of travel and adventure books. An excellent read is *Turn Right at Machu Picchu* by Mark Adams. Mark retraces Explorer Hiram Bingham's 1911 expedition into the Andes Mountains of Peru and "discovery" of Machu Picchu. It is a fascinating and very funny account of Mark's journey through some of the world's most majestic, historic, and remote landscapes.





TRIAD COUNCIL

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

Do You Qualify This Year?

Yearly, we remind you during tax preparation time to take advantage of the MA Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, a refundable tax credit. Here are the qualifications for 2021, see if you qualify! The maximum credit amount you can receive is \$1,170. If you forgot last year, you can file an amended MA personal return with your Schedule CB. If you are a senior and don't have to file taxes, send in a Schedule CB for the amount you are due with a MA Personal Tax Return.

2021 MA SENIOR CIRCUIT BREAKER TAX CREDIT

For complete details visit [mass.gov/senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit](https://www.mass.gov/senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit). Certain MA seniors who own or rent and occupy residential property as their primary residence are eligible for a refundable MA tax credit up to \$1,170. This tax credit is based on the actual real estate taxes paid on the MA residential property you own or rent.

- You must be 65 or older by January 1, 2022.
- You must be a MA resident or part year resident.
- You must file a Schedule CB with your MA personal income tax return.
- You must own or rent residential property in MA and occupy it as your primary residence.
- If you are a homeowner, your MA property tax payments must exceed 10% of your total MA income for the tax year.
- If you are a renter, 25% of your annual MA paid rent must exceed 10% of your total MA income for the tax year.

For tax year 2021, your total MA income does not exceed:

- \$62,000. - Single individual, not head of household
- \$78,000. - Head of household
- \$93,000. - Married couples filing a joint return

Who is not eligible:

- You receive a federal or state rent subsidy or rent from a tax-exempt entity.
- You are a nonresident.
- You are married and you are filing separately.
- You are a dependent of another taxpayer.
- For tax year 2021, assessed valuation of primary residence (prorate w/ 1 acre only) exceeds \$884,000.

HOW TO APPLY: Simply fill out a Schedule CB, the MA Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit form.

Go to: [mass.gov/dor/forms](https://www.mass.gov/dor/forms)

or Call: DOR Tax Dept. **617-887-6367**; Toll Free: **800-392-6089** 9am to 4pm weekdays.

Visit: MA Tax Tips for Seniors and Retirees for other important suggestions.

Raise a glass to all that we have withstood! Have a Happy & Safe New Year!

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

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Well, it is January and it is getting colder and staying warm may be difficult for many of us who live in older houses. You may be tempted to buy and use a space heater. Here are few ways to use one as safely as possible:

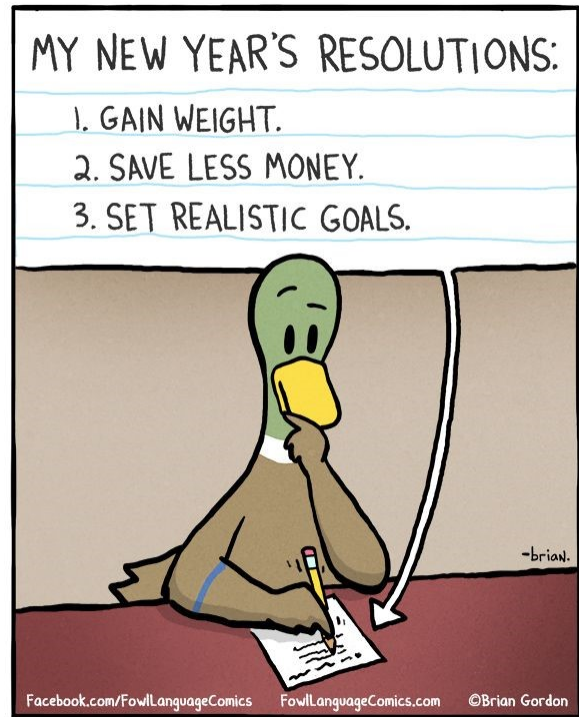


- ⇒ When buying one, look for a heater that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, like "UL" (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- ⇒ Keep the heater 3 feet away from drapes, furniture or other flammable materials.
- ⇒ Put the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- ⇒ Avoid using extension cords. If you must use one, make sure it is heavy duty and marked with a power rating that is at least as high as that on the heater's label.
- ⇒ Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- ⇒ Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in a bathroom.
- ⇒ Don't even think about using unvented kerosene heaters; they are illegal here.

Have a warm and SAFE winter!

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

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



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!

Winter Games?

OK, maybe this is weird, but a possible indoor activity for you is to take some financial literacy quizzes with your family, especially the younger members. Surveys show (you know the "They Say" deal) that we are very poor in some basic financial knowledge.

So what, you ask? Well, knowledge is power. Having good financial knowledge can help a person avoid bad debt and defaults on loans. On a positive note, it can help build an emergency savings fund, earn higher interest on investments, and plan to meet financial goals. Overall, that knowledge can help get and keep enough money to be able to do what a person wants to do.

A major investment firm asked more than 2000 people questions in eight different retirement categories. The average grade that people got right was only 30 percent. No one got all the questions right and the highest overall grade was 79 percent. Here is that quiz – give it a try!

www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/

There are many financial literacy quizzes online; this one is from the AARP:

www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1

This is a well-rounded set of questions that I recommend. From there, you could search for many other quizzes to take, starting with this page: **www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy**

Enjoy your winter!

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

Dealing with Dementia: How to cope

by Jan Gibeau

Living with dementia often means having to cope with the stigma attached to the word itself. Just as we are reluctant to talk about the changes happening in our lives, our friends and family struggle to find the right words to use when talking with you. There is no right or wrong way, of course. Many of the questions and fears that arise are hard to discuss when friends and family members are also trying hard to be comforting and reassuring at the same time. Even though the changes you and they have been noticing have probably been there for a while now, being formally diagnosed with dementia can feel sudden and forbidding. This is time to “think in slices, not loaves”. It’s important to keep in mind that people living with dementia can still continue to live a full life for years following their diagnosis. Even in the face of this fact, many misconceptions about dementia make life harder for everyone. When you forget something, lose something, can’t find a word you’re trying to use, you wonder, “Are all these events getting tossed into a new box labelled ‘person with dementia’? Am I being seen as ‘less than’ by friends and family?” Then you realize that you, too, may have already bought into the stigma and it’s time to kick it away. It may take more than a few kicks.

One of the most powerful ways to debunk the stigma is to ask and listen to others who are themselves living through the same thing. Listening and talking helps you and your friends as well as your family learn what kinds of things people have experienced and what they have found helpful. It also helps to know that you are not in this alone. Here are a few examples of what experiences people have shared; addressing both what can be painful and what can help:

- When I tell someone I have dementia and I have trouble remembering, people say ‘Oh I have trouble remembering too’. It makes me feel like they are being competitive or just not listening. I would like to say, ‘You have memory problems? Call me when you forget something 15 times. Losing your keys is nothing compared to losing your house’.
- I often feel people aren’t really listening, but are making assumptions. I want people to know that there are times when I can’t get through a single task because I can’t keep the thought of what I was doing in my mind. When people don’t listen, it’s upsetting. Ask me a question about what’s it like, don’t compare your experience to mine.
- People are uncomfortable with the level of difficulty I am having. Perhaps this is why they emphasize that I look normal and talk well.
- I’m often told, ‘You don’t look like you have dementia’. No one says, ‘You don’t look like you have diabetes’.
- Many folks seem to think if someone has de-

mentia, the person’s gone.

- When you have dementia, you are just a person who has something to deal with like any other disease. You wouldn’t leave someone behind if they have COPD and needed some extra time to walk.
- With dementia, I need people to give me extra time to respond. Even though others are trying to be reassuring, they may not realize that their comments leave you feeling hurt and upset.

What are some ideas that people thought would be more helpful?

- It helps to not start a sentence by saying “don’t you remember?”
- It helps when someone asks, “If you get stuck, would you rather I helped you or waited?”
- It helps if family and friends and others understand my condition.
- When people understand that I can’t get a word, I will describe what word I am looking for. It becomes a group effort and can be fun. I feel we are working together.
- When I give people permission to tell me if something seems out of the ordinary with me.
- When I say, “Stop me if you’ve heard this”. It makes the other person feel comfortable.
- People want to get me organized. It works better if I do the organizing. This helps me to remember where things are and generally makes more sense than another person’s idea of organization.
- It helps when my friends and family point out my strengths and achievements, not just instances of forgetting or losing something.

It helps when you and others close to you recognize that you are still you, and the goal is to preserve that as long as possible. It’s also important that you think about what you would like and let people know. It’s important to make a customized plan that’s suited to your personal wishes.

There is so much information online dealing with dementia and they all have value, but it can be hard to find a clear and succinct list of facts, issues and good tips in making a plan. I have found that one of the best resources to begin with is the Memory Handbook created by the Alzheimer’s Society in the UK. You can explore more by going to their website (Alzheimers.org.UK) It is written in a way that “get’s to the point” in a down to earth way. Worth reading! The Alzheimer’s Association website provides access to detailed, in depth articles that address most of the concerns or questions that come up.

Other sources of good information include:

⇒ **Mass Councils on Aging Association;**
Mcoaonline.com

- ⇒ **MA Healthy Aging Collaborative;**
mahealthyagingcollaborative.org, 413-499-0524
- ⇒ **Executive Office of Elder Affairs;**
EOEA@ mass.gov, 617-727-7750
- ⇒ **AARP** www.aarp.org, 866-448-3621

The Alzheimer's Association; www.alz.org

3G Service to End in 2022

Major cellular providers plan to phase out 3G coverage beginning in early 2022. What this means is that if you use older devices that rely on 3G networks, the use of your devices will be impacted. This includes cell phones, tablets, emergency/life alert and other medical devices, home security systems, among other technologies. Many providers are reaching out to customers who will be affected by this change; if you are trying to determine if your device uses this older technology, contact the provider or carrier for the service.

Reminder:

SNAP recipients can save an extra \$40-\$80 on their EBT card for fresh fruits and vegetables at eligible locations. This is supported by the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), a Massachusetts state program where SNAP recipients get at least \$40 of extra SNAP money every month to spend on local fruits and vegetables. That means if you have SNAP, you automatically have HIP! Two of the farms are: Crabapple Farm, 100 Bryant St. in Chesterfield, and Crimson and Clover, 215 Spring St. in Florence. Shop at these farm locations with your SNAP/EBT card, and get at least \$40 extra to spend through the HIP program. Note: you must have at least \$1 on your SNAP/EBT card when you go and shop; in other words, you need to have a balance on your EBT card in order to earn the HIP incentive.



Start the New Year with Smooth Moves

Winter is here! COVID won't go away. Finding yourself feeling a little "stiff" from staying inside so much? Have you been away from exercise and find yourself yearning to get your body moving again? Worried about exercise classes that are more vigorous than you're ready for? If you answered yes to any of these questions, we invite you to join our new class series called **Smooth Moves**. It's a good class for relaxing, stretching out and feeling good. The program will provide you the opportunity to remain seated in a chair while inviting your body to join you in some basic



movements. Joan Griswold, a very knowledgeable instructor, has created this program to gently guide you through movement oriented to increasing your range of movement and flexibility without pain and discomfort. No special equipment necessary.

This class will be offered on Friday mornings at 9:15am at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Would you be interested in participating in person or prefer a virtual offering? All in person programs require participants to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. For more information, contact Joan Griswold at (413) 268-7985 or joan@bybhealth.com

On the Road Again...



2022 Trip Lineup

These are some of the bus trip destinations in different stages of planning with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Contact Francine Frenier by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.

⇒ *Day Trip Jan. 27. Ice Castles* is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using thousands of icicles hand-placed by professional ice artists. The castles include breathtaking LED-lit sculptures, frozen thrones, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and much more. Warm clothing and good footwear recommended. We make a stop for a bite to eat along the way. Cost is \$119, \$10 discount if paid early. **Payment due NOW.**

Taking interest lists now on the following:

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip. 7 days. Cost \$739, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available.

Day Trip May 5. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip, lunch at The Marina. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$112, \$10 discount if paid early.

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$120, \$10 discount if paid early.

Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound Theater presents David. 5 days. \$549, \$25 discount if paid by February 16, 2022. Flyer available.

Day Trip June 9. Corvettes Doo Wop Revue. Lobster Tail or Prime Rib for lunch. Self Drive to the Log Cabin. Cost to be determined.

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

Life in the Artic National Wildlife Refuge
By Fran Ryan

Sunday, January 23rd at 2pm
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.



On January 23 at 2pm, Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting in person at the Chesterfield Community Center. Fran will discuss some of the wildlife that inhabit ANWR, how they adapt to their surroundings and the importance of the ANWR.

**Given that it's cold both here and in the Artic,
Hot Chocolate will be provided!*

Peg Whalen presents:
iPhone Basics Workshop

Monday January 31st
2:30 to 5:00pm
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.

There is still a strong interest by people wanting to learn about their iPhones. Peg will be conducting another workshop that will cover the following issues:

- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Feel comfortable enough with your phone to try apps and features.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Ways to learn more about your phone on your own.

Interested in coming?

Please reserve a spot by January 21st. Call Peg Whalen, workshop presenter, at 413-404-4566. Leave a voicemail or text with your name, email address, cell phone version (e.g. iPhone 7, iPhone SE, iPhone 12) and your home or cell phone number.