

Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging

Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



February 2022

COA Events

February Luncheon Meeting: Westhampton Wildlife & Wildlife Cameras Thursday, February 10th at noon

Westhampton residents George Graham and Laurie Sanders will show a few video highlights from their Westhampton wildlife cameras and answer questions about local wildlife and trail cameras.

Graham has lived in Westhampton for 18 years and has been working with wildlife cameras since 2015. An avid nature photographer, Graham retired from his career as a reporter at The Republican in 2019.

Sanders moved to Westhampton in 1994 and is currently the co-director of Historic Northampton. She is the former host of Field Notes, a weekly natural history feature that aired on public radio for a decade and prepared ecological assessments for private landowners, towns, land trusts and state environmental agencies.

Both Graham and Sanders are currently involved in updating Westhampton's Open Space & Recreation Plan. For the Zoom link, contact **Amy Landau** at coa@westhampton.org



Chicken Soup – Home-Delivered!

The Council on Aging is teaming up with the HRHS Life Skills program again in February.

This time we are bringing you warmth and nutrition in the form of a pint of delicious chicken soup. All

you need to do is heat it up! Delivery is planned for **Thursday, February 10th**. Please sign up by **Monday, February 7th** to have soup delivered right to your home. Contact **Julia Lennen** at **(413) 537-9880** or jslennen@gmail.com. Let us know if you need one or two.

COA Programs

Chair Yoga with Angelica Lopez in Town Hall Thursdays at 9 AM

We have hired a new Yoga teacher who comes to us with glowing reviews from the Easthampton COA! At the time of this writing, Chair Yoga is expected to begin on **Thursday, February 3rd** and last for 10 sessions. The new location will be the Town Hall. The COA Coordinator will be emailing those already on the Yoga list to confirm the plan for the first class, but if you are NOT on that list, please contact her at coa@westhamptonma.org or call **(413) 203-9808** and leave a message with your name and phone number for more information. All participants are required to be masked. NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) approved N95 or KN95 masks are the most effective, far superior to cloth masks (which only block 25% of aerosols).



Do You Need an N95 Mask?

Contact the Westhampton Library at **(413) 527-5386** or email: westhampton@cwmar.org for a free mask.

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

Joan Griswold Fitness Classes Via Zoom for All Levels

Join others in the Hilltowns for Zoom exercise classes. Certified instructor, Joan Griswold, has been offering a variety of exercise programs on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. 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 instructor at joan@bybhealth.com.

Slip, Sliding Away? Sand Deliveries for Westhampton Older Adults

Walking out to your mailbox more now that you are driving less? Keep your steps and walkway safe with sand delivered to you by the Highway Department.

Please note that the sand does include some salt -- it is the same mix used on our roadways.

Contact **Julia Lennen at (413) 537-9880 or by email at jslennen@gmail.com**. Please specify the location (for example, near the garage, at the top of the steps) for your delivery. If you have an old bucket with only a little bit left, please leave it out for collection.

No Computer Class in February

Due to the current COVID spike, the Library is on a one-month pause from all in-person programs for the month of February.

Library News & Events

Please check the town website at: westhampton-ma.com/westhampton-public-library or call (413) 527-5386 for a complete list of library hours and activities.

Special Announcement

Effective Monday January 10th, the library will take a one month pause from all in-person meetings and programs. The Library Board of Trustees and Library Director have made this decision out of an abundance of caution in light of the current spike in COVID-19 cases.

We will reassess this decision at our February 10 meeting. Please check the library website and Facebook for updates. *PLEASE NOTE: The library is still open for in-person browsing and materials pickup. We also still offer curbside pickup. To place a request for curbside pickup, please

email westhampton@cwmars.org or call (413) 527-5386.

Westhampton Sugar Houses Art Exhibition Owner - Stephen Holt; Artist - Mary Montague On View January 15 - February

It started with a barter among friends many years ago. Local Westhampton artist Mary Montague needed some landscaping done and Stephen Holt wanted a painting of Steve's Sugar Shack for his birthday. Steve got his birthday wish and the very first painting of "Westhampton Sugar Houses" Mary Montague collection was born. After that, Steve commissioned and bought a new sugar house painting from Mary every year on his birthday. His collection is almost complete, representing almost every sugar house in town. The paintings are displayed at Steve's Sugar Shack during sugar season, then moved to the walls of the Holt home for the rest of the year. And one more painting was just gifted to the collection...Jacqueline Brodeur gave Steve a painting of his original sugar house, the one he built behind his mother Mary Holt's house when he was 15 years old. This little treasure is now among friends!

COA Articles

The Westhampton COA Welcomes Members of the LGBT Community

The COA Coordinator and COA Board members recently completed the Elder Affairs LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender) Training as required by the state of Massachusetts. The training, from Boston University, was very thoughtfully designed. An important take-away was the troubling fact that older LGBT adults often lack the social support more typical for heterosexual, cis-gendered people (those born into the biological sex with which they identify) and risk aging alone or having to conceal their identities – to “go back into the closet” upon entering programs serving older adults. When one thinks of the struggle for equality endured by so many older LGBT adults in their lifetimes, the thought of encountering discrimination later in life, when one becomes more reliant on others through necessity, is devastating. Our recognition of this reality as shared in the training has prompted us to make a statement of our own to address it:

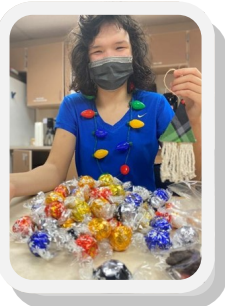


The Westhampton COA welcomes and serves ALL older adults in Westhampton including LGBT adults. Our goal is for everyone to join our pro-

grams and services and to feel as free as possible to be their authentic selves. If you have never joined one of our programs because of any hesitation on these grounds, we hope you will give us a try. We strive to be as welcoming and inclusive as possible and we know that a more diverse community that recognizes the intrinsic worth of every person makes us a better community.

A Look Back at December 2021 – Hampshire Regional High School Themed! Hampshire Regional Life Skills Gift Bags!

The Life Skills students assembled Holiday Gift Bags for Older Adults in Westhampton. COA Board members Julia Lennen and Lorraine Gallica worked with the Life Skills teachers to coordinate this wonderful project.



The bags included the hand-made Christmas tree ornament this student holds, chocolates, a card, a baked treat and an apple from Outlook Farm. The Friends of COA made a generous donation toward this project.



Students with a truck full of holiday gift bags dressed up in festive garb by the Town Hall parking lot where they distributed bags to anyone who came by. On the following day, the students and their teachers delivered their goodies to a total of 18 homes!

Music & Merriment Chorus Program with the HRHS Chorus!

Hampshire Regional High School Students performed live via Zoom for this special holiday program for Hilltown COAs on December 15, 2021. Chorus director and teacher Aidan Linden, put together a beautiful show for us on very little notice! Thank you, Mr. Linden!



Log Cabin with the Friends of the COA



Eleven residents enjoyed a fun-filled, toe-tapping Christmas show at the Log Cabin on December 7th. All agreed that the show was not only a huge success and that the food was delicious, but it was a great way to kick off the Christmas season.

A Community of Readers - Dale Kasal

Wait For It, by Jenn McKinlay, was a pleasant surprise. My first time reading this author, the story is chick-lit/rom-com blended with the more serious issues which the characters face. The author crafts likable and believable people who “travel difficult paths” in this well plotted story.

Anabelle Martin, a freelance graphic designer, moves from Boston to Arizona to escape her past and start over. She arrives in Arizona with a new job and a rented cottage, complete with a reclusive and mysterious landlord. While helping Nick with his emotional and physical struggles, along the way she also learns more about her own courage and resilience....and of course, true love.

Office intrigue, family and friendships, challenges of past trauma, and quirky, charming characters are intertwined with humor and sensitivity in this enjoyable and well written fun read.

Fans of Jojo Moyes’ *Me Before You* will find the plot enjoyable, if not somewhat familiar!



TRIAD COUNCIL

Seniors, Police, and Support Services Together — Learning ~ Informing ~ Empowering
Contact: Ginny Curtis – doghaven555@comcast.net

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. 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 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.

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

In observance of National Burn Awareness Week that happens in February, this month's topic is on preventing and treating burns. This is a hot topic for our age group because skin thins with age and a burn will be much deeper on an elder than on a younger person.

Senior 
SAFE

A decreased sense of touch from diabetic neuropathy can lead to worse burns. Here are a few things of which to be mindful in preventing and treating burns:

- ⇒ Use oven mitts to protect against hot liquids and touching hot pots or ovens.
- ⇒ Set the hot water heater temperature to 125 degrees F. Burns occur in seconds at higher temperatures. (State law requires it to be set between 110 and 130 degrees.)
- ⇒ Heating pads and electric blankets are a significant cause of burns for seniors.
- ⇒ Consider a heating pad where you have to hold the control to keep it on.
- ⇒ We teach children to *Stop, Drop, Cover and Roll* if their clothing catches fire. If getting up off the floor is a problem for you, smother the flames with a towel, blanket or coat.
- ⇒ Cool a burn. Run cool water over a minor burn -- not cold water, not ice, just cool water, which will cool the boiling liquid under your skin.
- ⇒ Call 911 immediately for serious burns.

Have a S.A.F.E. February!

--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.

Regional News

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!



Just playin' my harp...

I do love music and played drums and piano at one time, but I'm not going to break out in song here. This harping is on the need for all of us to take care of the Big Five. I spent 6 months in early 2019 on these if you need to refresh.

So what 's the big deal? Two things: 1. *uncertainty*, and 2. *mental condition*. We know there is uncertainty in life, including not usually knowing how and when our life will end. We don't know what tomorrow will bring, how our health will hold up, how family relationships will go. Being prepared with our will, health care proxy, durable power of attorney, advance directive, and HIPAA release adds some stability and certainty to life, maybe a small feeling of relief.

Mental condition. I do charge right in there, don't I? Well, *someone* has to say these things. If you or someone you care about is going down the dementia path, PLEASE get these documents in order. If you wait too long, the person may not be able to make a good set of decisions. If you wait too long, an attorney may be unsure that the person is still sufficiently capable to be able to understand and sign the documents. The alternative then may include a court-ordered conservatorship or guardianship. Quite the bother...

It would be music to my ears if I hear from you that you've done even 3 of the 5!

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

February's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Here it is, the beginning of a New Year and perhaps a good time to think ahead? I call this "next chapter" planning: when we pause from our daily routine and take time to think about the future and dealing with the "what if" situations in life. What if you have a life changing event, like a medical issue? Or what if you're stressed by diminishing financial resources, not just grocery bills, but health care costs, household overhead...everything seems to cost more and you wonder if your resources will last as long as you do?

While everyone may have these questions, planning ahead can be more challenging if you are caring for someone with dementia, or if you are taking care of yourself and think you may be developing some memory issues.

Where do we start?

Having a conversation with someone familiar with available resources might be a good way to sort through the seemingly limitless amount of information on the internet, in the news and in print. The Good News is that we live in an Information Age.....the challenge is that we live in an Information Age and it can be overwhelming and confusing. So who can you talk to?

If your Senior Center has an Outreach worker, that's a good first call. And for our seven hill towns, Highland Valley has funded a grant for a program called The Connector which helps you find the resources you need and helps you deal with the process of getting connected with those resources. If you call your senior center, they can put you in touch with The Connector.

Options Counselors are another resource, helping in a similar way. You can call Highland Valley 413-586-2000 and ask to speak to their Options counselor, but if you want to check out the website for Greater Springfield Senior Services (the agency, like Highland Valley that covers the Springfield area) , it is GSSSI.org. You can download their Elder Guide which is over 60 pages of resources for seniors, including: housing options, day programs, assisted living residences and nursing homes with dementia supports, caregiver programs, information on legal issues, reverse mortgages, food resources and much more. Options counselors can help you understand these resources and help determine if you are eligible.

The Alzheimers Association has their 24 hour help line, 800-272-3900, and also a Care Consultant (617-393-2100) who can help you understand the disease process, answer your specific questions and concerns and create strategies

to cope effectively as your situation changes. Caregiver support groups, now even more available virtually, are a great way to talk with other caregivers, dealing with the same issues you worry about. You can look online for support groups, or ask the Alzheimers Care Consultant for recommendations.

So the first step for future planning is to find someone to talk to who knows the resources available; someone who can offer suggestions and guidance. Remember you are not alone and there is help, just a phone call away.

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. More information to come in future newsletters. Vaccinations are required. Contact Francine Frenier by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.

Day Trip. Encore Boston Harbor Casino. Postponed till Summer 2022.

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip. 7 days. Cost TBD, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available. This will be rescheduled for 2023.

Day Trip May 5. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip. Includes visit to Grafton Village Cheese, lunch at The Marina, and stops at the Vermont Country Store & Allen Brother's Farm Market. Cost \$103, \$10 discount if paid by 3/24/22. Vaccination proof requirement by the restaurant. Flyer available.

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.

Taking interest lists on the following:

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 by 3/31/22. 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.

Day Trip Aug 10. The Jersey Tenors, a musical tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost \$114, \$10 discount if paid by 6/30/22. Flyer Available.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Domestic Violence Advocate , Hilltown Safety at Home (HS@H)	413 387-3120
If you need help in an emergency, call 911 or the Safe Passage hotline	888 345-5282
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	800 273-8255
Elder Abuse Hotline	800 922-2275
First Call for Help	800 339-7779
Fuel Assistance	800 370-0940
Hilltown Elder Network – H E N (sponsored by Hilltown CDC)	413 296-4536 x120
Veterans' Service Officer Robert Vignault	413 587-1299
(Westhampton) Joe Henning	413 207-3541
(Plainfield) Brian Brooks	413 772-1571
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 or 413 296-4007
Call Chesterfield COA for assistance	413 296-4007
Hilltown Food Pantry - Goshen Town Hall - Diane Drohan, 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, Mary Kane	413 238-5511, ext. 322
Ellie Mathias, HealthWise Community Health Worker	413 238-5511, ext. 322
Podiatrist Dr. Michael Coby, call Williamsburg Senior Center	413 268-8407
to schedule (Alternating months at the Senior Center)	
Foot Care Piper Sagan, RN	
foot care in Cummington, call Ann Eisenhower	413 634-2243
foot care in Goshen, call Piper for appt.	413 522-8432
foot care in Williamsburg or in-home visits	413 268-8407
Deb Dean, foot care in Westhampton	413 667-5363
SHINE, Medicare & Drug Coverage Part D & Prescription Advantage	
Lorraine York-Edberg	413 773-5555, ext. 2275
Deborah Hollingworth (Chesterfield)	413 296-4007 or 413 268-8317
Mass Health and New Health Coverage	
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 & Carpool Rides (call to schedule)	413 268-8407
PVTA Dial-A-Ride (tickets sold at Williamsburg Senior Center)	866 277-7741
Hilltown Easy Ride Van & Driver Pool Ed Pelletier	413 296-4232

Local Councils on Aging

Chesterfield COA , Janice Gibeau	413 296-4007
Cummington COA , Chrisoula Roumeliotis	413 634-2262
Goshen COA , Evelyn Culver	413 268-3316
Plainfield COA , Susan Metcalfe Honneus	413 743-5345
Westhampton COA , Amy Landau	413 203-9808
Williamsburg Senior Center , Melissa Wilson	413 268-8410
Worthington COA , Phyllis Dassatti	413 977-6799

Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

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

Winter Farmer's Markets

Fresh, local food is available all year!



All of these markets take HIP! HIP is free extra SNAP money for fruits and vegetables. Ask the market manager to learn more!

- **Northampton Winter Market**, 67 Conz St. Northampton. Every other Saturday 10am-2pm, through April 2nd.
- **Winter Market at Hampshire Mall**, 367 Russell St., Hadley. Saturdays 10am-2pm, through April 2nd.
- **Easthampton Winter Market**, 122 Pleasant St. Easthampton. Sundays 10am-2pm every other week through March 27th.

The Savvy Caregiver Program

The Savvy Caregiver Program is a FREE six-session training for family and friends who are active caregivers, caring for those living with Alzheimer's or related dementias.



Join Us:

Tuesdays (will be held virtually)
2/22/2022 – 3/29/2022
1:00-3:00pm

For More Information:

Contact: Erin LaBreck
(413)588-5749
Email: elabreck@highlandvalley.org

www.healthyliving4me.org