


Moving Forward

Activities and Services for Resident 60+



July 2023 Calendar of Events

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
3 Knitting Group 6pm, Library	4  happy 4th JULY!	5 Walk In Wellness Clinic Library, 10:30-11:30 Mahjong WW, 1:30-3pm	6 Yoga Class Town Hall, 10-11am Artist Reception- Rachel Jenkins Library, 5-7pm	7 The O-Tones Library, 6:30pm
10 Knitting Group 6pm, Library	11 Fitness & Friends Town Hall, 11:30-12:30pm Scrabble 2pm, Library	12 Mahjong WW, 1:30-3pm	13 Yoga Class Town Hall, 10-11am Author visit: Roslyn Malkin Library, 6:30pm Ice Cream Social 12pm, Outside library (Inclement weather: Town Hall)	14
17 Knitting Group 6pm, Library	18 Fitness & Friends Town Hall, 11:30-12:30pm Scrabble 2pm, Library	19 Walk In Wellness Clinic Library, 10:30-11:30 Mahjong WW, 1:30-3pm	20 NO Yoga Class Hot Lunch Program Noon, WW	21 The Blues Brothers Briefcase Library, 6:30pm
24 Tom Ricardi with Birds of Prey Library, 5:30pm Knitting Group 6pm, Library	25 Fitness & Friends Town Hall, 11:30-12:30pm Scrabble 2pm, Library	26 Mahjong WW, 1:30-3pm	27 Yoga Class Town Hall, 10-11am	28
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Westhampton COA ✦ 3 South Road ✦ Westhampton, MA 01027 ✦ Seniors Helping Seniors
 Coordinator: Amy Landau 413-203-9808 ✦ coa@westhamptonma.org



Hosted by the COA!

Thursday, July 13th at Noon

Outside the Library or (if rainy) in the Town Hall

What could be better than enjoying a delicious ice cream in the company of friends and neighbors? Nothing! So please join us. Also, the Hampshire Regional Life Skills students and teachers will be invited!

Attention! Councils on Aging Newsletters At Risk

See the Regional section for an important article on the future of our beloved newsletters.

Curious about the Results of the Digital Survey?
See the article in the Regional section on this too!

A E I O Ukes Bring Fun to the Town Hall



The group, led by Joe Blumenthal, who is the former owner of "Downtown Sounds" in Northampton, meets monthly to practice at Forbes Library. The ukulele players are accompanied by bass and harmonica. Anyone who wants to learn the ukulele is encouraged to attend their Tuesday sessions from 6-7:30 pm at Forbes.



We had a good turn-out! People enjoyed the delicious free lunches and some great Beatles songs, among other popular favorites.

Dementia Friends Program -- Very Informative

Dementia Friends Champions, Kat Peterson and Crystal Wright, volunteers, from the Huntington Council on Aging presented this helpful info session. Some important takeaways were:

- Dementia is not just about memory but also about cognition.
- People with dementia can still live fulfilling lives.
- We can all be "dementia friends" by keeping an eye out for those in our community who may need help. Jump in to help when you can.
- If you're a caregiver for someone with dementia, allow a full 20 seconds for the person you're caring for to answer a question. Also, make your questions as concrete as possible, using visuals.

Memory Cafés in Our Area

Memory Cafés are comfortable and welcoming, social gatherings that allow people experiencing memory loss and their loved ones or caregivers to connect, socialize, and build new support networks. Cafés are free to attend and welcome to all. Both the Southampton and Huntington COAs have Memory Cafes open to Westhampton residents who RSVP. See below:

Southampton Council on Aging:

Thursday, July 20th from 10amNoon
210 College Highway, Southampton.
Please call to confirm details and to reserve a spot: **(413) 529-2105**

Huntington Council on Aging:

First Wednesdays. Stanton Hall, 26 Russell Rd, Huntington.

To confirm date/location and to reserve a spot, contact Outreach Coordinator, **Crystal Wright at (413) 685-5283.**

Bob Miller's Computer Class on Hiatus for the Summer. Stay tuned -- computer class at the Library will resume in the fall.

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

Closed Tuesday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day

Please check the town website or Facebook or Instagram @WesthamptonPublicLibrary for library updates. The library is open for in-person browsing and materials pickup as well as curbside pickup. To place a request for curbside pickup, please email westhampton@cwmar.org or call 413-527-5386.

July Artist - Rachel Jenkins
Opening Reception Thurs. July 6th at 5pm - 7pm

I am the walker. If you live in Westhampton you have seen me. I have walked miles and miles in our town, for 43 years and in all seasons. My name is Rachel Jenkins. After working for forty years as a psychologist I took up painting. My art exhibit with paintings, some poems and a video montage will be at the Westhampton Library for July and August 2023.

Author Visit - Roslyn Malkin
Thursday, July 13th at 6:30pm

Local author, Roslyn Malkin, will share from her book *Paws & Fins: Gifts & Wisdom from my Animal Friends*. "Animals are incredible teachers! They embody great wisdom and teach us how to cherish ourselves and others more deeply. *Paws & Fins* highlights some of my unforgettable experiences living with pets and interacting with dolphins and whales in the wild. Each story describes the uniqueness and personality of that animal and the sacredness of their presence in my life." – From the author

Special thanks to The Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring this event.



Tom Ricardi - Birds of Prey
Monday, July 24th at 5:30pm

All ages are welcome to attend our annual event with Wildlife Rehabilitator Tom Ricardi and magnificent birds of prey! Special thanks to The Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring this event.

Field of Dreams Concerts

For full descriptions please visit the town website or the library's Facebook page.

The O-Tones - Friday, July 7th 6:30pm

The Blues Brothers Briefcase -
Friday, July 21st 6:30pm

The Squeezebox Stompers -
Friday, August 11th 6:30pm

Pan Neubean Steel - Friday, August 25th 6:30pm

All concerts will take place on the library lawn. In case of rain, the concerts will take place in the Westhampton Town Hall. *These free concerts are made possible thanks to our sponsors: Friends of Westhampton Library, The Cultural Council, Easthampton Savings Bank, Marek Builders, Inc., and Florence Bank.*



Message from the Westhampton COA Hikers for July '23

Hopefully by the time you read this we'll be out of the relentless pattern of unsettled weather that's plagued Western Massachusetts through the middle of June! A lot of threat but actually very little rain (although polluted air from wildfires in Canada)! The hiking trails are still waiting for us and with the start of summer we'll be hiking again on a regular basis.

So if you want to get out and get some exercise and fresh air with old and new friends come join our hikes!

Email 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.

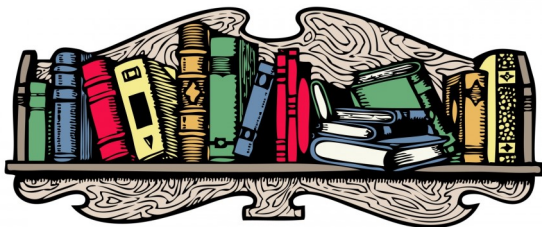
A Community of Readers - Phil Dowling

Dangerous River: Adventures on the Nahanni
By R.M. Patterson

In this memoir, R.M Patterson chronicles his exploration of the South Nahanni River in Canada's Northwest Territory in the 1920's. Patterson and his friend, Gordon Matthews, test the limits of their endurance in one of the most beautiful and wild places on earth-searching for gold and running a trapline in the dead of winter. In the forward, Patterson proudly states that "...I am glad to say that we added little to the world's biggest curse-its stock of scientific knowledge." What he does add is a vivid description of the South Nahanni River, its myths and legends. I have often dreamed of dipping my canoe paddle in this dangerous river, and while that may never happen, I can always pick up Patterson's book and once again visit a time and place that comes to life within its pages.

Nightwoods By Charles Frazier

Charles Frazier, the celebrated author of "Cold Mountain", gifts us with another beautifully written novel. The storyline is simple- a young, reclusive woman is faced with the challenge of raising her sister's twins after their mother's murder- but the key to Frazier's magic is character development. Set in the mountains of North Carolina, a place Frazier clearly knows and reveres, backstories unfold naturally, like the changing seasons. This world is a hostile place, but rest assured, you are in the hands of a master storyteller and he will not let you down.



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

LIES MY MOTHER TOLD ME

By I Might Be Funny

1. "It's illegal to drive with the overhead light on."
2. "If you swallow your gum, it will stay in your stomach for 7 years."
3. "Keep making that face & it'll freeze like that."
4. "I have eyes in the back of my head."
5. "You can't swim for 30 minutes after eating."
6. "Don't sit so close to the TV, you'll go blind."
7. "The dog went to live on a big farm."
8. "I'm just running into the store for *one* thing."
9. "A watermelon will grow in your stomach if you swallow the seeds." © I Might Be Funny
10. "Maybe...I'll think about it."

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!

Your State Representatives

State Senator Paul Mark

Email: paul.mark@masenate.gov

Phone: 413-464-5635

Mail: 773 Tyler Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:

Williamsburg Town Hall
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa

Email: Lindsay.Sabadosa@mahouse.gov

Phone: 413-270-1166.

Mail: 76 Gothic Street
Northampton, MA 01060

Scams and Our Brains

We read a lot about the different scams and the scammers that are out to get us (no, it is not paranoia if they really are, goes the old joke), but what about our role in scams? I got to thinking about the "How" part of our avoiding scams. Perhaps it comes down to how we think about them. Our mental state may direct how we respond to a potential threat.

So, we get an offer, a message, some communication, and wonder if it could be a scam. Are there hard and fast rules to help you to decide? Not always but there are three that should tickle your brain.

- ⇒ If the person asks you for something related to crypto currency, It Is A Scam.
- ⇒ If the person says they are calling from Medicare, Social Security, the IRS, or the FBI, It Is A Scam.
- ⇒ If they are calling from your bank and asking for personal information like your account number, debit card number or pin, account log-in credentials, Social Security Number, or account balance, It Is A Scam.

Other rules are fuzzier, but consider:

- ⇒ Was it an unsolicited phone call?
- ⇒ Was it an unsolicited and maybe poorly worded email?
- ⇒ Was it an unsolicited door visitor?
- ⇒ Does it sound too good to be true?
- ⇒ Do they say there is great benefit but no risk?
- ⇒ Is the speaker or writer pressuring me to hurry, act fast, keep this secret?
- ⇒ Have any friends or family warned me about responding to calls and emails?
- ⇒ Do I think I'm too smart or well-informed to fall for a scam?
- ⇒ What does my instinct say? Or if you prefer, what is my gut reaction?

Probably our best defense against the scams is our brain!

Thoughtfully,

Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com; 413-268-2228

July's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

There are 2.4 million Massachusetts residents who are enrolled in MassHealth's programs. Usually we have to re-certify every year, that is, fill out what looks like an application every year to let MassHealth know about any changes in our circumstances. Did we get married, did our spouse die, did our financial situation change? Is our address the same? In March 2020, when Covid put us in a "public health emergency", re-certification stopped because our MassHealth coverage was frozen in place.

Now that the Covid public health emergency has ended, MassHealth has to start the re-certification process again. For all 2.4 million of us. The good news is that more folks have been hired to help us do this. Highland Valley and LifePath (in Greenfield) have received money to hire a Benefits counselor to help with the re-certification application. So here are some numbers to call if you have questions about the Big Blue envelope.

You can call MassHealth's customer service line at **800-841-2900** or Highland Valley at **413-586-2000** and ask for their Benefits counselor, or LifePath at **413-773-5555** to ask for their Resource Consultant. Closer to home you can contact your Senior Center to speak with your SHINE counselor.

Saving the Written Word: Councils on Aging Newsletters at Risk

Funding from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs for the monthly newsletter ended on June 30th. The Northern Hilltowns Consortium of Councils on Aging has been working diligently to find a way to save it. It's the major way we reach out to 2,326 households with people 60 years or older. It's important. Better communication was one of the priorities people cited in our Age Friendly survey as a priority in making our towns more livable.

What does the newsletter do to make communication stronger? We've focused more and more on getting the word out about:

- Town and regional events that help people feel less isolated and more connected to their communities and each other.
- Access to food, exercise classes, health insurance plans and benefits
- Use of broadband and internet resources, learning how to use iPhones, computers and other equipment needed to enter the digital world

- Learning about scams and how to reduce vulnerability.
- Groups in each town that meet regularly meet to work on arts and craft projects, puzzles, playing cards, etc.
- Educational programs about major issues affecting us as we age, such as memory problems, loneliness, financial problems, access to medical services, long term care and end of life issues.

Losing the newsletter puts all of this in limbo. The Consortium has applied for a number of grants but the process itself is very competitive. We will not know the results until after the final state budget is signed by Governor Healy. Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and Senator Paul Mark have been working hard to support our efforts by filing bills in both the House and Senate. At the time of this writing the request did not make it out of the House budget committee, but the Senate voted to fund \$25,000. We appreciate their work on our behalf. Unfortunately, we need close to \$42,000 each year to keep the newsletter alive.

We have applied for a major grant from EOEA to increase digital equity in rural communities. The hope is to expand electronic access for people who want to switch over to digital copies but also make it available on the Consortium website: **northernhilltownscoas.org**, the town websites, Facebook, and a range of related internet access points. We recently learned that applications that have been submitted resulted in a total of \$3 million dollars, twice the \$1.5 million of the funds available.

The Consortium is still committed to keeping the newsletter going as long as we can. In our June monthly meeting the group voted to use funds from our membership dues to cover the August edition.

Let's hope that we are fortunate enough to get the help we need, but June and possibly July are cliff-hangers for now.

Respectfully,
Jan Gibeau
Chair, Northern Hilltown Consortium of
Councils on Aging



On the Road Again... 2023 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

Day Trip August 10. Garden in the Woods- This trip includes a walking guided tour of the Garden in the Woods in Framingham followed by a luncheon at the Longfellow's Wayside Inn. Entrée choices are Breast of chicken, Baked Salmon, or Yankee Pot Roast. Two floors of historical exhibits to explore at the inn. A stop at Hebert Candy Mansion. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$122 due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. **WAIT LIST ONLY.**

Day Trip August 24. Saratoga Racetrack, Saratoga Springs, NY. This trip includes lunch at the Inn at Saratoga. Entrée choices are Chicken Normandy or Pasta a la Saratoga. After lunch, spend time at the racetrack in our reserved grandstand seats. Over 60 concession stands on the grounds. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$130 due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. **NOTE DATE CORRECTION.**

Multi Day Trip September 10-12. Nantucket Island. Three days to two nights. Includes ferry to and from the island, guided tour of the island and all access pass to historical sites. Make payment to First Choice for \$748 p/p double occupancy due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. Limited seats.

Day Trip September 14. Lake Sunapee Luncheon Cruise- Vermont Country Store. A two hour luncheon cruise on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. This trip includes Luncheon buffet and a stop at the Vermont Country Store. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$111 due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. **WAIT LIST ONLY.**

Multi Day Trip September 29-October 9, 2023. Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse - S. Dakota & Devils Tower - Wyoming. 11 days. Stops at Corn Palace, Wall Drug, National Museum of Great Lakes, Iowa Museum of Natural History, Des Moines Art Center, and Eck Visitors Center at Univ. of Notre Dame. Cost \$1,178. Due **NOW**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat.

Day Trip November 4. Elvis- A Musical Revolution- North Shore Theater. An exciting musical in Beverly, MA where you will hear 40 of Elvis' hits. Lunch at Danversport Yacht Club included. Make \$259 payment to First Choice **NOW**. Mail to the address above. A few seats remain.

Multi Day Trip May 2024. Nova Scotia, Prince

Edward Island & New Brunswick. Passport required. Cost TBD per person dbl. occupancy. This 9 day trip includes 8 nights lodging including 5 nights in Canada, one night stay in Maine coming and going. 14 meals including: 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners. Guided Tour of Acadia National Park, Guided Tour of Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg.

Aging and Technology Survey Results

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their experiences with technology by participating in the Aging and Technology survey and offer thanks to even more people expressing interest in the results. We mailed over 3,516 questionnaires to everyone 60 and older in Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, Haydenville, and Worthington. The response was overwhelming, with over 1,225 returns, a response of 35%.

Here's what we learned:

Our results show 85% of older adults in the Hilltowns use technology daily, 10% use it never, rarely or once in a while, and 5% use it monthly or weekly. The top three reasons for none or infrequent technology use are knowing little to nothing (44%); having no interest (35%); and over one-quarter have concerns about stolen identity, theft, or home break-ins. Of the small number of people never or infrequently using technology, 15% said they cannot afford internet service and computers.

Of those responding to the survey 91% said that they have a computer, laptop, or tablet and are able to access the internet. Almost one in ten (8%) have no technology of any type. About 3/4 report having printers. The types of phones people use varied; 59% still have a landline, 90% have cellular phones, and 90% of these are smartphones. Three quarters have Broadband internet service from either Comcast, Dish, Direct TV, Satellite or Whip City fiber network.

People said that they make use of technology in a variety of ways. Most people use email (93%). Other ways include: searches on the internet, order prescriptions online, make telehealth appointments, use medical/health care portals. Over half of people (52%) use social media of some type to access retirement accounts or online Social Security accounts. Slightly over a third have an online Medicare account.

Who helps with technology?

The major source of help comes from adults: adult or child/teen family members (74.2%) or friends (24.2%). *Continued on next page.*

Westhampton Council on Aging
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Westhampton, MA 01027

PRSR STD
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Need a ride?

Contact Danielle Buzzee at:
(413) 246-0278
or by email:
danielle.buzzee@icloud.com

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continued from page 7)

What are the concerns about “going online”?

Safety was a concern and one-third of people indicated that they have been or may have been a victim of computer or internet scams. Among these scam victims, 6% lost money, 11% report viruses, 3% lost information, and/or 2% had damage to equipment. Very few reported financial loss or damage to authorities, with less than 5% alerting police, DA, or government entities, banks or credit card companies.

The questionnaire includes a section about older adults’ interests in learning more and how they want to get technical support and training.

Almost half of those responding expressed definite or possible interest in learning more. The most requested ways of learning include having someone to call when they have a problem or question and scheduling one-on-one help (40.8%). Workshops (34.5%) and drop-in locations (29.9%) were also identified as ways to learn more. Over 1 in 4 said that being told about helpful websites, watching online videos, and ongoing technology classes were good ways to help them learn more. That’s good to know because all these services currently are available across our seven northern hilltowns or online.

Of the nearly half interested in learning more, the devices they most want to learn to use/use better are smartphones and computers/laptops. Over 70% of people identified technology uses they most wanted to learn, including taking, managing, saving, or sending photos, streaming to TV, scanning documents, and attaching documents.

This survey has been very helpful in charting the course to making life on the internet easier, but we could use more help to get there. If you are among the advanced/expert users and are willing to share a small amount of your time to help other older adults please let us know at nhillcoastech@gmail.com

What’s ahead?

The Consortium has applied for a major grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs that could be a strong way to move us forward. In addition to the needed services identified in the grant, it may also provide a way to help more people get Broadband, have access to hotspots and use laptops at identified computer sites in the Hilltowns.

Your voices have been heard and we await decisions when Governor Healy signs the new budget.