Moving Forward

Activities and Services for Residents 60+



October 2025

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Do not miss:

Fall Festival Pie Sale COA Information Booth

Ideas for Articles? Let us know!

Westhampton COA 3 South Road Westhampton, MA 01027

Christine Blakesley, Coordinator

413-203-9808

coa@westhamptonma.gov

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WESTHAN NESTHAL FEE	APTON TIVAL	Wellness Clinic Public Health Nurse 10:30 am, Library Coffee and Chat 10-12, Library Mahjong WW, 1:30 – 3 pm	Chair Yoga WW 10-11 am Estate Planning Library 6:30	3
Computer Help Library 10-12 Knitting Group 6 pm Library Yoga 6pm, Library	7 Fitness w/Friends Town Hall 11:30 – 12:30 Games 1:45–3 pm, WW Scrabble 2 pm, Library	Magic Wings Trip Leave @ 10:30 Coffee and Chat 10-12, Library Mahjong WW, 1:30 – 3 pm	9 Chair Yoga WW 10-11 am COA Luncheon Artist Reception Phil Dowling* Library 5:30 – 7:30	Fall Festival Sunday Noon to 5:00 See inside for pie drop-off info
Library Closed Columbus Day/ Indigenous People's Day	14 Fitness w/Friends Town Hall 11:30 – 12:30 Games 1:45–3 pm, WW Scrabble 2 pm, Library	Wellness Clinic 10:30 am, Library Coffee and Chat 10-12, Library Mahjong WW, 1:30 – 3 pm Energy Advocate Office Hours 1-2	Chair Yoga WW 10-11 am HVES Hot Meal Pickup WW Noon	Westhampton Public Library 15th Anniversary* 5:30 – 7:00 pm
Computer Help Library 10-12 Knitting Group 6 pm Library Yoga 6pm, Library	Fitness w/Friends Town Hall 11:30 – 12:30 Games 1:45–3 pm, WW Scrabble 2 pm, Library	22 Coffee and Chat 10-12, Library Mahjong WW, 1:30 – 3 pm	Chair Yoga WW 10-11 am TechConnect Drop-In 2-4 pm Library Becoming Better Neighbors * 6:30 – 8:00 pm	24 Halloween Candy Donation* Deadline
27 Knitting Group 6 pm Library Yoga 6pm, Library	Fitness w/Friends Town Hall 11:30 – 12:30 Games 1:45–3 pm, WW Scrabble 2 pm, Library	Coffee and Chat 10-12, Library Mahjong WW, 1:30 – 3 pm	30 Chair Yoga WW 10-11 am Vaccine Clinic* Town Hall 2-5	Halloween Town Center 5:30 – 7:30

October Potluck Luncheon

Thursday October 9, 2025, noon Church Dining Room

Join your friends and neighbors for communal lunch on Thursday, October 9th. At the moment, we don't have a theme or program but that does not stop us from sharing delicious and nutritious homecooked food!

Save the Date

Thursday, November 13th at noon Thanksgiving Meal with your Neighbors

Plan to join your friends and neighbors for a Thanksgiving-themed homecooked feast. We have much to be grateful for in our beautiful town. Fill up on turkey, gravy, veggie dishes, desserts and more!



Vaccine Clinic

October 30, Town Hall 2:00 - 5:00 pm

Don't feel like driving out of town for your fall vaccines? Come to the Vaccine Clinic hosted by Hilltown Community Health Center nursing staff at the Westhampton Town Hall.

Available flu vaccine for all ages, including over 65 super booster!

Details to come (too late for the newsletter – keep your eye on the COA tab of the town web site and we will try to get a flyer up at the Library).

Meanwhile, if interested, get your name on a list by contacting Joan Griswold, Director of Community Programs, at (413) 296-4536 ext 102.

It's a Wrap – September Programs

Comcast Cybersecurity and LiftZone Celebration

The common room at the Westhampton Woods Senior Housing complex now has free high-speed Wi-Fi, thanks to Comcast's Lift Zone initiative. The company also distributed laptops to residents during an event at Town Hall on Thursday, joined by state Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa.

Roughly 20 residents attended, each receiving a free Chromebook while learning about online safety, including how to recognize and avoid scams.

"This initiative is so important," said Sabadosa. "When I was first elected, many people in my district didn't

have internet access. Ensuring connectivity for everyone has been one of my top priorities."

The Westhampton Woods site is the 77th Lift Zone established in Massachusetts. The program is part of Comcast's larger *Project Up* initiative, a \$1 billion investment to expand digital access nationwide.

Christine Blakesley, coordinator of the Westhampton Council on Aging, said she hopes the new resources will open more opportunities for seniors to build digital skills. "Pairing free Wi-Fi with hands-on cybersecurity training is a game-changer for our community," she said.

Comcast representatives emphasized both the benefits and risks of being online. Dan Glanville, vice president of government affairs and community impact for New England, highlighted how the new connection offers reliable, high-speed access for all residents. He also shared his own past experience falling victim to an email scam, underscoring the importance of caution online.

Patrick McGranaghan, Comcast's senior manager of security awareness, led a presentation on common scams — from phishing emails and fake government calls to AI-generated voice scams that impersonate family members. He urged participants to pause be-



fore responding to suspicious messages, strengthen their passwords, and avoid clicking unknown links.

Cybercrime has surged in recent years. According to the FBI's 2024 Internet Crime Report, more than 859,000 complaints were filed, with reported losses exceeding \$16 billion. Adults over 60 accounted for nearly \$5 billion of those losses.

Residents welcomed both the laptops and the training. "I thought the presentation was excellent," said Westhampton resident Deb Barthelette. "I get scam messages every day. We can't protect ourselves enough. And getting a laptop was awesome — much appreciated."

The presentation is posted on the town website -- <u>PowerPoint Presentation</u> (https://westhamptonma.gov/wp-content/up-loads/2025-0911-External-Cybersecurity-PRESENTA-TION-DECK.pdf)

Magic Wings (September Program)

Twenty Seniors and one aide enjoyed a magical time surrounded by 4000 butterflies, cute little button quails running all over the place and over 100 varieties of tropical plants. While following the curved paths that lead them around the conservatory it was obvious by the smiles on their faces that they weren't disappointed in their decision to visit Magic Wings. A few of us sat quietly on benches enjoying the peace and tranquility while watching the butterflies swooping about and were silently hoping that one would land of them.



After exploring the conservatory everyone gathered in the outdoor picnic space, that offered a view of native flowers and butterflies, where lunch was served. It was a fun-filled unique experience enjoyed by all who attended.

▲ Love the Outdoors? Join Us as a COA Hiking Group Co-Leader! **▲**

Do you enjoy fresh air, scenic trails, and connecting with others who share a love for the outdoors? Our Council on Aging Hiking Group is looking for a **coleader**, and it might be the perfect role for you!

We're a small but enthusiastic group that gets out on the trails a couple of times a month. Our hikes are thoughtfully planned to accommodate older adults focusing on accessible, enjoyable trails that highlight the beauty of our local area without being too strenuous.

Why become a co-leader?

- Flexible Commitment: You don't need to be available every week. We're just looking for someone who can help lead 1–2 hikes a month.
- Scouting Fun Trails: You'll help scout and plan new hiking routes that are well-suited for seniors—safe, scenic, and satisfying!

- Inspire Others: Your enthusiasm could help others rediscover the joy of nature and spark a new love for hiking.
- **Great Company**: Our hikers are a fun, supportive bunch who enjoy swapping stories, sharing laughs, and exploring new places together.

Whether you're a longtime hiker or simply someone who enjoys a good walk in the woods, this is a great way to stay active, give back, and be part of a wonderful community.

If you're interested or just want to learn more about what being a co-leader involves, see below for contact info. We'd love to chat with you!

Let's keep our community moving—one trail at a time!

To learn more about being a leader – or to get on the mailing list for all hikes drop a line to:
Westhamptoncoahikers@comcast.net

Please note that all group e-mails are sent as blind copies (BCC) for your safety and privacy.

Keep those pies coming ...

Fall Festival Pie Drop Off Information



Thank you to all bakers who signed up to bake/buy pies for the Friends of the Council on Aging upcoming Annual Pie Sale at this year's Fall Festival. Please drop off your pies on Saturday, October11 th , between 11:00 – noon in the kitchen at the church so they can be cut and prepared for the sale. However, if necessary, they may also be dropped off on the day of the Fair begin-

ning at 10:00 a.m. at our booth. (Please keep in mind that the only restriction imposed on our sale is that none of our pies can require refrigeration.)

Thank you in advance for your help in making this year's pie sale the huge success it's been in the past.

Mailing List

We are always working on updating our mailing list and need your help.

If you do not want the print copy mailed to you, please let us know – even if you have previously told us. Please email/call information to Juia Lennen with your preferences: 413-537-9880 or jslennen@gmail.com.

Halloween

Trick or Treating in the center of town will be Friday, October 31st, from 5:30-7:30pm.

Please donate approximately 70 pieces of candy for each child that will be participating. Unopened bags of individually wrapped candy can be dropped off at; Westhampton Elementary School, Westhampton Public Library, and Outlook Farm. Please have all candy donated by **Friday, October 24th 2025**

Veterans' Corner

From Tom Geryk our Veteran's Agent ...

For the October COA newsletter, please include the following veterans' events, which will all be held at the Easthampton Congregational Church, located at 112 Main St., Easthampton:

- Monthly Luncheon: The first Wednesday of the month, October 1st at noon
- Coffee Hours: Every Wednesday in October after the first (8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th) from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Veterans are always welcome to bring a guest to any of these events.

Additionally, if anyone is interested in proposing onetime or ongoing veterans' events in Westhampton, they're welcome to contact me for support.

> Tom Geryk Veterans Agent Easthampton Veterans Services

Office: 413-529-4599 Cell: 413-270-2254

Mark your Calendar – November Veteran's Day Breakfast

The Friends of the Westhampton Council on Aging along with Outlook Farm will once again be sponsoring a free breakfast for our local veterans. This event will take place on TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11th at Outlook Farm between the hours of 7:00 and 10:00 a.m. All who have served or are currently serving in our Armed Forces are welcomed.



Library News

October Library Programs

Hours:

Closed Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day (October 13)

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

Please check the town website or Facebook or Instagram @WesthamptonPublicLibrary for library updates. To place a request for curbside pickup, please email westhampton@cwmars.org or call 413-527-5386.

Recurring Programs (Holidays may impact schedule)

- Computer Help w/Bob Miller 2nd and 4th Mondays 10am-noon
- Knitting Group Mondays at 6pm
- Yoga Mondays at 6pm
 *Yoga is drop-in, first-come/first-served, and registration is not required. Please check Facebook and the town calendar for updates on yoga at the library.
- Scrabble Group Tuesdays at 2pm
- Book Group Fourth Tuesday (9/30).

- Walk-in Wellness Clinics w/ Westhampton's Public Health Nurse - First and Third Wednesday 10 – 11:30
- Coffee & Chat Wednesdays from 10am 12pm
- Tech Connect drop-in tech help Thursday, October 23 from 2pm - 4pm

October/November Artist - Phil Dowling

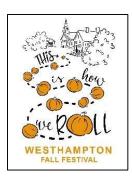
Art Reception - Thursday, October 9th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm

It is often said that 'every picture tells a story'. In photography, it is also true that every picture has a story,



not only of time and place, but how the photographer sees the world. Our visual perception is influenced by our previous experi-

ences as well as our feelings about the subject in the moment we press the shutter button. My photo exhibit casts a wide net of experiences that moved megrand vistas as well as lots of birds and other critters I have encountered. The photos are printed on archival canvas and I framed them with locally harvested wood.



Fall Festival 2025

Sunday, October 12th from 12pm to 4pm

18th Annual Westhampton Fall Festival

(PLEASE NOTE: THE TIMING OF THIS EVENT HAS CHANGED AND IT FALLS A WEEK EARLIER THAN USUAL.)

Westhampton Town Center- great food and fun!

10AM Interfaith Church Service

All Afternoon (12PM to 4:00PM)

5K Road Race - Steeple Tours with Valley Views - Axe Throwing & Lumberjack Demo - Blacksmith Demo - History Museum - Corn Husking - Cider Making - Sledge Hammer Throw - Skillet Toss - Brightspot Therapy Dogs - Cow Pie Bingo - Firefighter's Brigade - Potato Cannons - Giant Pumpkin Competition - Scavenger Hunt - Farm Animals - Haybale Maze - Lawn Games - Children's Games & Crafts...and much more!

Energy Advocate Office Hours

Wednesdays from 1pm to 2pm October 15, November 19, and December 17

Drop in on the third Wednesday of the month and meet with Hannah, our regional Energy Advocate, for one-on-one support to learn about and take full advantage of energy efficiency programs available to residents!

Westhampton Public Library 15th Anniversary Friday, October 17th from 5:30pm to 7:00pm

Come celebrate 15 years—our crystal anniversary—in the "new" library building! The evening will begin with hors d'oeuvres and sweets from State Street Fruit Store plus a trip down memory lane with a library slideshow.

At 6:00pm we'll hear a series of remarks from community members in celebration of our 15th anniversary. Then, at 6:30pm the evening will close out with a library-themed singalong with Jim Armenti. All ages welcome! Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Public Library and the Lyn Keating Programming Fund for sponsoring this event.

Becoming Better Neighbors: LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Empathy in Action Thursday, October 23rd from 6:30pm to 8:00pm

A workshop facilitated by Dr. Nina Tissi-Gassoway (they/she) and Cas

Rego-Martin, MPPA (they/he). Western Massachusetts is known as a



safe haven for LGBTQ+ people. At a time when queer and trans communities are under attack, LGBTQ+ individuals and families in hostile states are moving to our valley and laying down new roots. How can we become better neighbors to queer and trans people, new arrivals and lifelong residents alike? This session will provide an introduction to LGBTQ+ topics including terminology, pronouns, and good practices for being an empathetic ally. Participants will leave with deepened knowledge about their local LGBTQ+ community and new ideas to support queer and trans people in their lives.

Out and about in the Hilltowns



Technology Help & Training for September *GREAT NEWS!*

TechConnect is providing services through a partnership with Northampton Open Media. Although we have fewer trainings going forward, drop-ins and tech support will continue. Please take advantage of ongoing services.

Delivering Now & Accepting New Requests: Internet Hotspots

If you need affordable internet access, we have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access internet and work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us by phone or email.

Call 413-296-5080 or email coatechdevices@gmail.com.

Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment:

coaTechHelp@gmail.com phone or text msg 413-296-5080. You can attend drop-in at all locations, except Nash Hill.

Devices for you: PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads and Android tablets

There is still time to join the Digital World while supplies last. We have ordered more PC laptops/computers, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads and Android tablets. If you need or are waiting for a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device please contact us. Email coatechdevices@gmail.com, leave message at 413-296-5080, or use online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Drop in Centers: All are welcome at any location! (no appointment needed)

- Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd. Chesterfield. Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00
- Cummington Community House Drop-In tech support, 33 Main Street, from 10 to Noon, 2nd Wednesday 10/8
- Goshen Town Hall, Drop-In tech support from 12:00 to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 10/16
- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library Drop-In tech support, from 5:30 to 7:30, 3rd Thursday 10/16
- Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from 2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday 10/23
- Williamsburg
 - Meekins Library Drop-In tech support from 10 to Noon 2nd Tuesday, 10/14
 - Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 910/14
- Worthington Drop-In tech support at COA office – call COA for date/time

Tech Training Classes and Workshops:

There are no workshops or classes scheduled for October.

Hit the Road - Roadtrips

Trips in 2025

Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **BEFORE** mailing payments. For more information

- call 413-296-4291 or
- email: francine.frenier@gmail.com
- mail: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096

Day Trips

November 12, Wednesday: Hamilton at the Bushnell in Hartford with the Holyoke Senior Center. Call 413-322-5625 for more information. Tickets are going fast.

December 7, Sunday: A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA. Reagle Music Theater Players beloved **Christmas-Time** extravaganza – 100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at the Chateau Restaurant. Price \$160. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by October 13. Call or email above to be added to the Wait List.

Note: There are day trips to Radio City Rockettes, Craft Festival at Mohegan, NYC on your own-- all leaving from Chicopee. If interested, call 413-296-4291 or 413-593-3939 for more information.

Day trips for 2026 being planned: Isle of Shoals Cruise and Clam Bake, FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise

Plan Ahead – Multi-Day Trips in 2026:

April 17-21 Washington DC 5 days, 4 nights. Visit or tour George Washington Mount Vernon Estate, Gar-



den & Demorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Smithsonian Institution, Capitol Building, World War II Memorial and more. Price \$790. Take a \$25 discount if paid in full by January 26, 2026. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the ad-

dress above. No money is due until early January.

September 27- October 3 Mackinac Island, the quaint Michigan island where no vehicles are allowed. Trip is for 7 days, 6 nights. Tour the island by horse & Described amp; carriage, cruise the Soo Locks, visit Bronner's Christmas Wonderland, Frankenmuth Bavarian Village and much more, not to mention the plentiful fudge shops. Price \$959. Take a \$25 discount if paid in full by June 27, 2026. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. No money is due until next year.

Good News

Deb Hollingworth

October 2025 Open Enrollment time again for folks who have Medicare! October 15th - December 7th every year is our opportunity to review our health insurance coverage. Do you need to bother? You can stop reading here if..... you are still working and covered through your employer....or if you get your health

insurance through your retirement pension or use the VA because you're a veteran, or if your coverage is through your spouse who is still working? But.....if you don't have any of those options, then it's a good idea to review coverage during Open Enrollment because Medicare plans change their monthly premiums, change co-pays for medical treatment(s) and change co-pays for Rx, especially co-pays and premiums for Rx Medicare D plans.

This year Rx coverage might be less expensive through a Medicare Advantage plan? While I'm cautious about recommending Advantage plans because of all their copays for medical services, and because you have to get referrals...and in some cases, approval for certain treatments....and because not all doctors (especially here in the hill towns) will accept some Advantage plans....it's looking like this year some Advantage plans may do a better job covering your Rx.

It depends on your prescriptions. Which is why it's a good idea to have your Rx list reviewed by a SHINE counselor.

Call **Highland Valley Elder Services** to book an appointment with Caroline Solan who is the SHINE counselor586-2000. If all her appointments are booked up through December 7th...call Life Path which is the Regional SHINE office in Greenfield. 773-5555. If they get completely booked up for appointments, you might try the Pharmacy Outreach Project at 866-633-1617 And if you *still* can't get an appointment, call your senior center to get the latest information on how SHINE is handling the possible overload for Open Enrollment calls.

Triad News

How do we know? You may have read about the recent very large hack by China of many US government and corporate computer systems, and possible exposure of our data via the DOGE effort. Because we are now so digital, no one is totally safe from being hurt by an identity theft. If our identity is stolen, it is Really Irritating and causes a Lot of Bother to fix. Even worse, of course, there may be horrid financial consequences. So how do we know if our identity has been stolen or even just messed with?

Here are some ways to ferret out if your identity has been compromised in some way.

- Your credit report shows activity you didn't authorize or initiate. Someone has opened a credit card account, or started charging medical bills to you. Perhaps your credit score drops without apparent reason.
- You get a message from your bank that something is wrong. Or when you get your statement, you find that an expected deposit has not been made or a very small withdrawal has been made that you don't recognize. (This could be a test on their part.)
- You receive a bill for something you did not buy. You receive merchandise you didn't order, again a test on their part.
- You have automatic bill paying set up and all of a sudden that action is denied.
- Your tax return or payment is rejected.
- There is increased spam on your phone, perhaps calls about suspended benefits such as VA or Social Security.
- You realize mail has stopped coming to you.

A good online resource page for us is https://www.usa.gov/identity-theft.

Stay safe!!

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

The Westhampton Council on Aging benefits from your support for our programs for local seniors!				
I would like to contribute to the Westhampton COA. My contribution of \$ is attached.				
(Please make out your check to The Friends of the Westhampton COA and write "Program Support Fund" in the memo line; mail to Charlotte Wood, 14 Perry Hill Rd., Westhampton, MA 01027).				
NameTelep	phone			
Address				
Email	 -			

Westhampton Council on Aging 3 South Road Westhampton, MA 01027



PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

Westhampton COA

Christine Blakesley, Coordinator

Julia Lennen, Chair

Colleen Basile, Secretary

Ray Fontaine,

Lorraine Galica

Dave Goddard

Lillian Baxter, HEN Representative

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

Check Us Out!

The COA will be hosting an information table at Fall Festival. Please stop by to meet our Coordinator, Christine Blakesley, and our intrepid volunteer Board Members.

Stop first at the Friends of the COA pie sale and then mosey over to our information table.

Learn about our programs and services, suggest new activities, grab a walking map and make new friends.



