

# Living Well

July  
2020

Newsletter

Williamsburg Senior Center: Programs & Services for Active Living at 60+



## “From Our Kitchen to Yours

It is in giving that we receive...”

These precious words come to mind when one learns of the Take and Eat Meals, a volunteer program jointly run by the Williamsburg Congregational Church and Our Lady of the Hills Parish; these home cooked meals occur on the first and second Saturdays of the month.

The meals are prepared, cooked and delivered to seniors living in the community. It has been reported that the meals are truly delicious and the folks receiving them are grateful for the generosity of the local church members. The church members have said that “this is who we are, this is what we do: caring for our neighbors.”

In this exceptional time, the groups have begun to serve meals twice a month. They have doubled their capacity to help! It is this spirit of coming together to make a difference in the lives of individuals residing in our community that will endure regardless of the challenges we all face in this exceptional time. The determination to serve, amidst adversity, prevails.

“If anyone would like a meal, we are happy to provide.” (*This is a quote from a Meals Program volunteer*). Please call the Senior Center at 268-8407 to sign up.

**BurgyStrong 2020**

## Meekins Library Offers Curbside Pickup!

Meekins Library is now able to offer curbside pick up. To order a specific book, check the catalogue, or ask for them to choose from a general category of books, call the librarians at **413-268-7472** or email [meekinsbooks@cwmares.org](mailto:meekinsbooks@cwmares.org). They will check them out to you, place in a paper bag and arrange a day and time for you to pick them up outside the building. Your returns go in the regular book drop for quarantine.



## SNAP!

**Attention Seniors:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of groceries has risen at a dramatic rate.



**To help offset this marked jump in food prices the Senior Center has increased our capacity to help folks sign up for SNAP Benefits (formerly known as food stamps).**

Please call Tryna or Melissa at **413-268-8407** to sign up for this program. It is simple and easy to do.

## What Are You Doing These Days?

**Melinda**, our meal site coordinator reports: “I am at the Town Offices each morning organizing meal deliveries and gearing up for the farm share program. At home, I am planting and weeding, waiting for the vegetables to grow. In addition, there are two batches of chicks growing up quickly, and creating lots of drama in the coop. I am also battling invasives such as garlic mustard and bittersweet...a great activity for anyone stuck at home!”

**Tryna**, Office Assistant, is “Not house cleaning; gardening and getting poison ivy for the first time in my life. (That’s been fun); And honestly, my all-time favorite, making calls to elders like myself and having good conversations and often a good laugh.”

## SENIOR FARM SHARES 2020

**Sign up is now closed for the season!**

This year, we doubled our farm share numbers, topping off at 52 members!

Pick up is **every Tuesday between 4:30 and 5:30** at the Senior Center, 141 Main St, Haydenville.

You will be contacted by email if any changes occur. We encourage you to pick up for a neighbor or friend if possible, though home delivery is also available.

**For info, call 268-8407 or email [mmccall@burgy.org](mailto:mmccall@burgy.org)**

Williamsburg Senior Center - 141 Main Street, P.O. Box 193 - Haydenville, MA 01039

Phone: 268-8407 - Hours: Mon - Thurs 8:30 - 1:30

How Can We Help You?

## Currently Active Senior Programs

### Yoga for You

Yoga classes are led on Zoom and are going "swimmingly"! Tuesdays at 6pm. Contact Michele at: morales.wolk@gmail.com.

### SHINE

For insurance issues, call the Senior Center to leave messages for Wayne Glaser. Leave your name and phone number, and we'll get the message to him. (268-8407).

### Veteran's Service Officer

The VA office is still open and available to all. Tom Geryk may be reached at his office at 413-587-1299.

### Foot Nurse

Piper Sagan is able to do foot care in your home, using safe practices. Price is \$60 per visit. Call her at 413-522-8432 for an appointment.

### Podiatry

Dr. Coby can be reached at 413-774-4450.

### Modern/Contemporary Dance

Susan Waltner's dance class is starting up again as an outdoor activity at the Town Hall. Wednesdays at 10:00 am.

### Tai Chi

Instructor Marty Phinney will resume group as an outdoor activity. Group members can contact her directly at 413-268-3228.

### Medical Rides

If you need a ride for a Dr. appointment or other medical reasons, PVTA is providing rides in their vans. They need about a week's notice so they can get you registered and scheduled in. We can help you get registered for your rides to and from appointments. (268-8407). If you've already registered with them, you can call 413-739-7436 or 866-277-7741 to schedule.

### Computer and Cell Phone Help

Call us if you are having problems. We'll connect you to our consultants, and they can try to help you by phone.

***Other programs may be restarted as it becomes safe to do so. We'll keep you posted!***



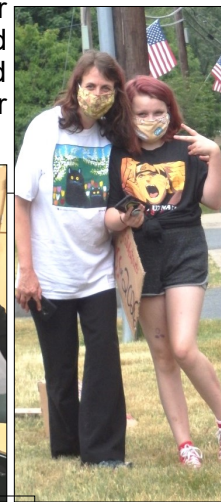
### Please Note:

**We are still making calls to speak with folks on a weekly basis; if this is something you feel you would like, please let us know. It can be just to chat or to help with a specific issue. Please call, we would love to hear from you. (268-8407)**



## Pen Pal Program

On June 8th, Burgy Seniors and their sixth grade pen pals from the Anne T. Dunphy School got together for a last Zoom meeting. The teacher, Ms. Black, extended an invitation to seniors to participate in their graduation by lining Main Street for a car parade of graduating 6th graders and their families. Those who did waved and cheered the students on to their futures! **Congratulations Pen Pals!**



Pen Pals & Parade Watchers

## Join our Trivia Contest!

**Win a gift certificate to Williamsburg Market!**

Daria at Meekins Library kindly came up with a series of trivia questions. We'll publish one each month. Get into the contest by sending your answers by **July 11th** to [sloomis@burgy.org](mailto:sloomis@burgy.org) or call **268-8407**.

Que: For what occasion did Calvin Coolidge come to Williamsburg?

What was the date and the incident that befell the Vice President?

In case there is more than one correct answer, we will draw names. Answers will be published next month. Get in the game—you have nothing to lose!

Our June winner was **Stuart Krantz**.  
Congratulations, Stuart!

## Seniors Aware of Fire Education

### Senior SAFE

This is going to be a different kind of July with 4th of July events cancelled due to COVID 19 and the need to keep socially distanced. One of the events many of us will miss are the fireworks displays exploded by professionals. We may be tempted to make up for this by firing off fireworks and handing out sparklers to children and adults on our own. It is illegal to transport and use fireworks in Massachusetts. Here are a few reasons why:

- Fireworks are very dangerous. Every year fireworks use results in serious injuries and structure fires.
- One third of the serious burn injuries are suffered by children.
- Children imitate adults and know if and where adults have fireworks.
- Even sparklers are very dangerous. They burn at 1200 degrees F. That is very hot considering that wood burns at 575 degrees and glass melts at 900 degrees.

So, please leave fireworks to professionals and help first responders enjoy the holiday with their families. Have a SAFE and quiet July!

--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.*

### Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at [regionalcoanews@gmail.com](mailto: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!



## Eternal Electronic Life – or will it end?

This is one thing we did not think about before the last several years! Our social media platforms don't automatically shut down when we do. Our electronic banking apps remain until we tell them to quit. Folks who do not go online don't have to worry - if that is you, feel free to skip to the next newsletter item or go sniff a flower with joy.

Just for grins, the top 7 social media sites this year are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Reddit. And the phrase I found for eternal electronic life is "digital remains." Okay...

So why I am writing this? You may recall I spend some time looking out for scams and identity theft and the like. Well, what a surprise, there are scammers following the obituaries and social media platforms looking for deaths and therefore unattended personal information. They can steal identities, make pleas for money from your friends and followers, use your photos in ads, and in general make mayhem. Something like half of all instances of stolen information were from social media accounts in 2018.

A few of the platforms have a mechanism to allow survivors to manage, close, or delete an account. Some will allow a memorialization, which might be nice to keep for a few months to make sure followers know of the death. In some cases, you can set this up yourself. When you next revise your will, it is a good idea to include these platforms as assets along with instructions. If you follow a social media platform, you should probably search for their policies and figure out what you want.

Yes, life is more complicated,  
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member  
413-268-2228, [jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)

## Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

Another month battling Covid-19, being good about social distancing, being careful when we do have to go out: it seems harder to maintain our vigilance as the weather warms and our gardens begin to grow. We are impatiently waiting for things to “open up” in hopes that we can imagine a future when things get back to our “new normal”.

Meanwhile we continue to come up with new resources and ways to cope. Initial efforts in the hilltowns have been focused on outreach and food security. Each town’s senior center is checking in with residents, and making sure that folks have food, a way to get their Rx, and sometimes just someone to chat with. Whether it’s signing up for Farm Share, Brown bag, or checking out new “pop up” food pantries (in Chesterfield, Worthington and Williamsburg), the effort continues to make sure seniors have groceries, and someone to shop for them if they need. Senior centers are receiving donations of grocery items, gift cards for grocery shopping, and volunteers to do shopping. Call your senior center if you could use help, or if you know a neighbor who could use help getting meals or groceries.

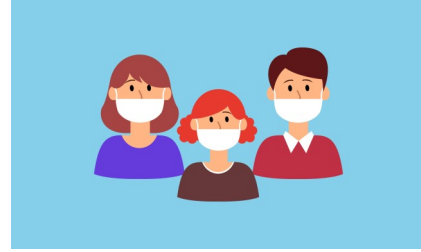
We’re also beginning to see a new way to socialize. Now that we can’t get out to a potluck luncheon, have extended conversations with neighbors at the dump, or get to church, we are learning new ways to do this virtually. Church services by Zoom...who would have imagined? And now we are learning new FaceTime, Google and Zoom skills? Our local legislators are even more aware of our need for Broadband services as efforts to ramp up senior center activities like chair yoga, cooking and writing classes, and book groups begin to spring up. More to come as these new ideas and resources roll out.

It is a “brave new world” as we work on what our new normal will be.



## A COVID Note: Masking Hearing

By Jeane Anastas



Face masks are wonderful and indispensable tools for keeping the COVID-19 virus in check, and I wear one according to state and health guidelines. I feel safer with friends and acquaintances who also wear masks and keep to social distancing rules. Like many, especially among older people, I am hard of hearing (HoH), and age-related hearing loss runs in both sides of my family of origin. When we get diagnosed with hearing loss, most of us have learned that we have unconsciously been reading lips for a long time, and, hearing aids or not, we still use lip reading to enhance our comprehension of speech.

Face masks muffle sound; research shows that the decibels of speech are reduced. In addition, hearing aids or not, the listener cannot see lips moving when people talk, meaning no lip reading is possible. In addition, for those wearing hearing aids, the elastic bands around the ears are not designed to accommodate devices in the ears. When taking off the mask, the elastic can cause the dome of the hearing aid (the part in the ear) to get dislodged, and it is reported that the whole hearing aid may fall out, perhaps getting lost when it is undetected.

While those who communicate using ASL may avoid these particular problems, facial expression is part of the system, compromised by masks. Various websites offer some suggestions to address these mask-related problems. For those using hearing aids, try out fastening systems other than elastic bands. Substitute laces for the elastic that can be tied behind the head. There are small straps for sale that easily connect the elastic bands behind the head. Also for sale are masks that have a clear plastic insert over the mouth area. These are of most help to those who are HoH if others who are speaking with you wear them, and, if you can afford it, they may be worth buying for those one sees most often. When possible, eliminate background noise. Since the speech of others is muffled by the mask, remind people that speaking slowly and enunciating clearly (but NOT shouting) are the best methods of communicating with people with hearing loss, masks or not. Most important, gently remind others about how masks are affecting you since they will want to be supportive. The hardest thing may be to ask.

## ***Dare to Disrupt Aging! Experiences in moving to the Digital World***

*You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas.* – Shirley Chisholm

As we age, women complain of feeling invisible. Sometimes I feel too visibly 60-plus. In a fashion-driven store like Madewell, a saleswoman who looks like a teenager politely meets my gaze, sweetly saying, "Who are you shopping for today, ma'am?" It makes me smile, as it's almost true: I'm usually browsing for my millennial daughter. Sometimes I buy myself a shirt, albeit not a midriff-revealing one.

Other retail experiences are less amusing. When my computer died, Apple had to migrate my data overnight to my new one. A young Ms. Genius brought it out, boxed and ready for its new abode. I wanted to test it first, so I wouldn't have to return to my least favorite "bar."

She reacted as if I'd requested a dozen iPhones for free. She conferred with a Mr. Genius.

Leaning over me, he sternly warned, "I can't teach you how to use the new computer."

"I never asked you to do that. I *know* how to use it," I snapped back.

Grudgingly Mr. Genius unpacked it, complaining as if I'd asked him to take apart the machine's motherboard and reassemble without a manual. Ms. Genius asked, "Do you need to sit down?"

Her tone was insulting. Couldn't she tell I swam laps four times a week? That I wasn't her *grandmother*? — even though, technically, I could be. In her eyes I seemed to be "old lady + computer = nightmare."

An ominous window popped onto the screen of my new computer. *Word could not be accessed.* Ms. Genius said, "Did you originally download it from a disc?"

"Who remembers what I did six years ago?" I regretted my words, not wanting to solidify her ageist impression of me. "I'll ask my daughter." Why did I say that? My humiliation was amplifying externally as if I'd changed my font size to 48.

Meanwhile, my phone was out of juice. I asked Ms. Genius for a charger.

"This table doesn't have adaptors," she said. "I don't want to make you move."

Being treated like a doddering tech idiot at the Genius Bar made me fume. I felt like listing my career accomplishments. Instead I did what any tech-savvy person would do: I took to Twitter, the suggestion of a friend, a crisis manage-

ment executive. "They hate it when people complain about customer service on social media," she claimed.

I blasted their treatment of older customers: *Insulting ageism treatment @apple*. Immediate reply: "You're a valued member of our family, and we never want you to feel otherwise. Can you send us a DM with details? We'll meet you there."

I met them privately in Twitterland. A store manager apologized, saying they might have to retrain their staff, begging me to return and talk about any technology problems. I was greeted by people in headphones who knew my name. The cheery manager escorted me up a flight of glass stairs as if it were the red carpet at the Academy Awards. I met one of their "greatest geniuses," who never once said, "This is the phone I told my mother to get." They even threw in free accessories.

I'd discovered the power of Twitter. No more archaic customer service complaint letters for me!

I was already crafting a tweet to emphasize how tech companies need to rethink how they treat "older" consumers.

Retailers aren't the only ones at fault. When I tried out a new gym's pool, a lifeguard placed swimmers into appropriate lanes to share. Quickly sizing me up, he pointed to the lane with the oldest man. "He's too slow for me," I informed him, but he insisted I try it out. I had to keep passing the other swimmer like a Corvette weaving in and out of lanes on the interstate. Drying off afterward, I met the gaze of the lifeguard as if to convey: *I hope you learned a lesson. Don't judge people by their age.*

Soon after I signed up for a group tennis class, where four players were randomly placed together. When the instructor saw me next to three 30-year-old men, he delivered my instructions geared to someone who'd need to sit on the bench between points. My competitive streak went into overdrive. Even though the young guys could outrun me, my technique was more consistent. The teacher's tone changed, my ranking was elevated. Not once during the 90-minute session did I collapse on the bench.

Sure, I iced my knees later — so does 37-year-old Serena Williams. I bristle every time the media qualifies her achievements at every match using the phrase "based on her age." No matter our age, it's time to stop grouping us by false stereotypes others have conjured up. We deserve to be treated with respect, as strong and confident individuals. And to speak out against ageism every time it occurs.

From AARP



**Williamsburg Senior Center**  
**141 Main Street**  
**P.O. Box 193**  
**Haydenville, MA 01039**

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Our Many Volunteers

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

**Ways to still enjoy summer during Covid-19:**

1. Stargaze
2. Make s'mores in your backyard, or even your microwave!
3. Nap in a hammock
4. Make ice cream sundaes
5. Watch the sun set
6. Make homemade lemonade
7. Go for a scenic drive
8. Bake a fresh blueberry pie
9. Look for fireflies
10. Invite a friend to have a socially distanced talk in the driveway!

*happy*  
**Fourth**  
*of July!*