

Living Well



December
2021
Newsletter

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

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR SENIOR CENTER

This past year, despite the ups and downs of living in a COVID world, we were able to increase our activity, including essential offerings like vaccinations, food and opportunities for connection. We are proud of what we accomplished and would like to share our progress with you:

We assisted many Elders in setting up COVID vaccination appointments and provided rides to and from sites. We connected homebound people to programs for vaccinations in their homes.

We held a Flu Vaccination Clinic in the parking lot which was limited only by the number of cars that could fit every 15 minutes. (The participating Pharmacy, Walgreens, said it was the most well-organized event they'd held!)

Food is something we never want elders in our area to be without. Meals are delivered five days a week to those who want this service at nominal cost or free, based on need.

The Senior Center also participates in the "Take and Eat" program developed by Our Lady of the Hills and The Williamsburg Congregational Church. Members of these churches provide home-cooked meals every Saturday. A member of our staff makes weekly outreach calls to over 40 participants each week.

It's no surprise that calls and food delivery are important and valued by our seniors – these offer a daily check-in, a phone conversation, a face-to-face interaction and often a laugh or two. These connections are as basic and important as food, this is clear in the feedback we receive:

"Many thanks to everyone for helping to keep us all safe and well-fed."

"I, for one, am thankful that my Senior Center is part of my life. Keep up the good work."

"I've just gotten to a point where I realize I need help. It's so great I can get that help from our Senior Center."

Throughout the year, we continued providing rides to seniors, restarted our Pen Pal program, and offered a variety of exercise opportunities including an in-person dance class. Much to our joy, Tai Chi continued throughout last winter outside in the parking lot! Here is some of the great feedback we've received about our activity classes:

"She is a great teacher and I highly value the ability to improve my health by participating in her class."

"...many thanks for all you do on behalf of us seniors!"

We put up a large tent in the back parking lot making it possible to meet together masked and in person! What a joy it was to attend the first monthly Coffee Hour! And, we received some great feedback from participants:

"Thursday's 'Family Reunion' was a great idea. Everyone looked so happy to be there. Our thanks to everyone who made it possible."

Thank You

"Sending a small contribution directly to you with my appreciation of your hard work, generosity and deep kindness toward seniors and the Town. I am grateful... for each and all."

Would you consider making a year-end donation? Please see "Three Ways to Contribute," on page 3.

Williamsburg Senior Center - 141 Main Street, P.O. Box 193, Haydenville, MA 01039
Phone: 268-8407 ~ Hours: Mon - Thurs, 8:30 - 2:00 ~ Email: seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org

SHINE

Open Enrollment for Medicare and Medicare-related insurance ends on Dec. 7th. If you want to speak to a SHINE agent, call the Senior Center to make an appointment. Leave your name and phone number and we'll have an agent contact you.

Veteran's Service Officer

Though there are no office hours in the Town Offices, the VA office is open and available. Steve Connor may be reached at his office at **413-587-1299** for appointments.

Brown Bag: Food for Elders

This program provides a free bag of healthy groceries to eligible seniors once a month at the Senior Center. Call the Food Bank at **413-247-9738** or **800-247-9632** or download a printable application at <https://www.foodbankwma.org>. (Click on the Get Help tab and select Brown Bag.) Send applications to: The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, P.O. Box 160, Hatfield, MA 01038.

Highland Valley Meals

Packaged meals are delivered Mon-Fri. Call the Senior Center to register. Suggested donation, \$3/meal can be paid weekly or monthly to Highland Valley Elder Services.

Take and Eat

Two area churches are providing freshly made meals delivered every Saturday. Contact the senior center to find out more or to sign up.

Wellness Calls

The Williamsburg Senior Center is still making friendly calls. If you are feeling lonely, or would like check-up calls, we'll add you to our call list. **(268-8407)**

Foot Nurse

Piper Sagan is doing foot care at the Senior Center **December 14th** and on second Tuesdays every other (even) month. Call us **(268-8407)** to make an appointment, (\$50). Piper can also do foot care in your home, (\$80). Call her at **413-522-8432** for an appointment.

Podiatry

Dr. Coby has appointments available on **January 11th**, and the second Tuesday of every other (odd) month. He accepts insurance for payment. Call us **(268-8407)** for an appointment.

Medical Rides

The Senior Center drivers are available for your medical rides again! Call us at least 3 days ahead of any rides you need and we will provide a driver. (You can still use PVTAs for medical rides in their vans with **Dial-A-Ride Services, (413) 739-7436.**) Rides for shopping/errands can also be scheduled through our **Carpool Program.**

Modern/Contemporary Dance

Susan Waltner's dance class is happening on Wednesdays at 10:00 am in the auditorium. Contact Susan at swaltner@smith.edu if you would like to join.

Tai Chi

Instructor Marty Phinney is offering Tai Chi in the auditorium, Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am. Members or interested others can contact her at **413-268-3228**.

Yoga for You

Yoga classes are led on Zoom Tuesdays at 6 pm. Contact her at morales.wolk@gmail.com.

Strength and Cardio Workouts

Joan Griswold is leading workouts via Zoom Thursdays at 10:15 am. Visit her at www.bybhealth.com to sign up.

Men's Group

Meets at the **Williamsburg Snack Shack** on 3rd Thursdays at 8:30 am. To join, email Larry West (landwest3315@yahoo.com), and become one of the "guys!"

~The Senior Center graciously accepts donations to help fund many of our programs.~

Art Studio Sessions

We're sorry to say that Susan Gelotte's art studio sessions are no longer happening at the Williamsburg Senior Center. You are invited to attend her class at the Northampton Senior Center, Mondays, 10am - 12 noon. They would like people to call 413-587-1228 and make a quick and easy 10 minute appointment to register as a "member". This perhaps could be done early on a Monday before the session.



Fuel Assistance is Available...

The fuel assistance program run by Community Action of Pioneer Valley goes a long way in helping folks afford home heating expenses. Applications are being accepted for this program. If you have had fuel assistance in the past, a current application should have been mailed to you. If you are a new applicant: applications can be done online at communityaction.us. The fuel assistance phone number is 800.370.0940. Also, the Senior Center (268.8407) can help with completing the application and other questions folks might have.

Monthly Coffee Hour!

The Senior Center is planning an indoor Coffee Hour on Thursday, December 16th, 10—11 am. Please call 268-8407 or email tsmith@burgy.org to sign up, as indoor spaces are limited.

Masks will be required to enter the building.

If you would like to be included in future social gatherings, call us at 268-8407.

Manna Meals for “The Holidays”

Manna Soup Kitchen offers holiday meals delivered to seniors in the Hilltowns. Hot meals will be delivered on December 25th for the holiday. Please contact mannanorthampton.org/category-1/holiday-meal-order/ or call Kim, **413-695-3514** to place your order.



Three Ways to Contribute

You might not be aware that the Williamsburg Senior Center relies on donations from the community to support some of our best-loved programs and events. Would you consider making a year-end donation to support the Center?

There are three ways to contribute:

1. Donate online via Unipay at www.burgy.org/senior-center
2. Drop off your donation in person during business hours
3. Mail a donation to Williamsburg Senior Center, PO Box 193, Haydenville, MA 01039 (make check out to Town of Williamsburg—see below)

Donations of all sizes are welcome, appreciated and put to good use.

We who work at the Williamsburg/Haydenville Senior Center appreciate your generosity. You are the people and towns we serve. We feel it through your volunteering, thank-you cards, phone calls, donations, and participation. You are always there with us and for us.

The Senior Center also wants to thank the volunteers who offer time and talent to support the Williamsburg Senior Center. Without your dedication, we could not provide so many important programs and services to our seniors.

Many thanks every day from the Williamsburg Senior Center!

The Williamsburg Senior Center counts on YOUR support to continue our programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Williamsburg Senior Center. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.
(Please write your check to **Town of Williamsburg** with “Senior Center program support” on the memo line.)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping Us Support Our Neighbors!



Indoor Coffee Hour

Our first Indoor Coffee Hour was held October 28th in the Senior Center Café. Two tables held folks chatting and eagerly getting to know or catching up with their neighbors. Thanks to Trish at Care One for another birthday cake!

We look forward to more inside group activities as it becomes safer to do so. The next monthly coffee hour is December 16th (see article on pg 3) **If you would like to be included in future social gatherings, call us at 268-8407.**

What would you like to see happening here at the Senior Center? Let us know!

Flu Clinic a Success

The Senior Center flu clinic on October 15th had a great turnout at about 60 people. We would like to thank Walgreens of Florence, especially Matt, Mary, Kelly and Rachel for providing the flu shots.

“It was our pleasure to assist with this clinic. It was extremely well run and one of the most organized clinics I have ever been a part of. Thank you so much for all your work with this.”

We would also like to thank the numerous volunteers from Williamsburg; Denise Banister, Carol Hendricks, Judy and Jim Salosky, Daria D'Arienzo, Joan Coryat and Susan Farrell.

Finally, thank you to CARE ONE—Trish and Nicki—for the water and trail mix. We are honored to be on the receiving end of such generosity!



HAPPY
Holidays

What’s Happening at Meekins?
Meekins Library
2 Williams St., Williamsburg, MA 01096
(413) 268-7472
We have new expanded hours!
Tuesdays 10-6
Wednesdays 1-7
Thursdays 3-6
Saturdays 9-2
Both entrances are now open.
Masks are required for entry.
Visit our Website: www.meekins-library.org.

Visit the Town of Williamsburg Website: www.burgy.org
Facebook: Williamsburg Senior Center
To subscribe or unsubscribe from this newsletter or receive this newsletter by email only, contact us, leaving your name, address and phone number at 268-8407, or sloomis@burgy.org.

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

The holiday season is almost here and everyone is busy getting ready to celebrate them with family and friends. It is time to get all those outside lights in place. Here are some tips on how to use them safely:

Senior 
SAFE

- Be sure to use only lights rated for outdoor use.
- Consider replacing older lights with new LED lights that are cooler and use less electricity.
- Anchor securely outdoor lights and decorations against storms and wind with insulated hooks or holders.
- Do NOT overload circuits.
 - 15 amp circuits support 1,800 watts.
 - 20 amp circuits support 2,400 watts.
- Do NOT drive nails, staples or tacks through wiring insulation.
- Use electrical connection protectors to keep water out.
- Outdoor electrical decorations should be plugged into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) -- either portable or permanently installed by an electrician.
- Store the electric displays inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and to extend their life.

Celebrate the holidays SAFELY!

--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!

ROBO CALLS!!! Note 2 and last for now

I really need to find topics that are easier to write about. Frustration – it is not clear that we can do much to stop these dratted calls without making more issues. I contacted the DA's office to see if there is a review of the many listed options, e.g., commercial programs or apps. Their advice, other than not answering the phone, is to contact your phone carrier and see what they might offer. I'm on AT&T, so I started there and looked at the top three in our area, which are AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile.

All three have gone to bat to combat text and phone spams. Each has a collection of tools, many free to subscribers but not all, that let you block callers. Reviews of those apps are mixed: mostly positive but the negatives include sometimes blocking calls you want. Some require you to report each individual unwanted call or text.

Commercial programs such as RoboKiller, Nomorobo, and Hiya, are available to anyone though there are often costs. These links are a good resource for comparing programs including those from the carriers: www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-block-robocalls-and-spam-calls and www.cnet.com/tech/mobile/how-to-stop-spam-calls/

Actions –

- ⇒ Check your Do Not Call status if you didn't after Note 1, or if you get a new number.
- ⇒ Make sure your password(s) – notice the plural there? – are strong.
- ⇒ Get used to checking for voicemail after you don't answer a call you don't recognize.
- ⇒ Do check out your carrier's offerings – go to their main website and search for "spam blockers" or call your carrier.
- ⇒ Tell me if you find the magic bullet somewhere.

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

December's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth

A couple decades ago, my parents and I decided to sell our homes and buy a house big enough to live together. Dad had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's several years prior and Mom was having more difficulty taking care of him. Too many weepy long distance phone calls where she was having a bad day. It was an hour and a half drive to get to her and I was working full time. We had to have a better plan. Sometimes miracles happen. We found our new home and, despite a depressed housing market, both their condo in Vermont and my home in Chester sold in a matter of weeks. Mom and Pop moved into our new home while construction was underway, making it into a space that would work for both of us. The Chester house had sold, but I was clearing out 25 years worth of accumulated stuff. Three dumpsters later, I was able to joint them. The contractor was a saint. And with the exception of a wayward electrician who held up the sheet rocking, we kept to schedule on renovations.

For my Dad, moving back to Williamsburg worked like a time machine. This had been his home for 50 years before moving to Vermont. His short term memory was sketchy at best, but his long term memory recognized all the landmarks. It was familiar. He felt at home.

Dad had been taking Aricept which was the only Rx on the market for Alzheimer's back then. It was remarkably effective. His conversation improved, he remembered his grandchildren's names again, and better still, he remembered the punch lines for a number of jokes. But Aricept had side effects which he couldn't tolerate. He had to discontinue it and the result was profound and discouraging. He said he felt his mind slipping away. I found a Rx trial program at Southern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington. He was accepted and once a month for a year and a half we went to Bennington where he got to work with a neurologist, Dr. William Pendlebury (who became Medical Director for the University of Vermont's Memory Center) and he got to take a new Rx, not yet FDA approved, called Galantamine. While the results were not as dramatic as Aricept, it did seem to help. He was not oriented to time, but he still knew where he was (because this was his home for many years) and the greatest gift....he remained oriented to person.

I need to emphasize that every Alzheimer's journey is unique to the individual. While there are common factors, each person's experience can be different.

The Good News this month is that we are plan-

ning a series of articles for upcoming newsletters that will give suggestions, information and resources for families dealing with dementia care issues.

My Dad died of end stage Alzheimer's in 2001. Until almost the end, we were able to keep him home with support services that included a Day Program with Hawthorne Services and some home care help through Highland Valley. We were lucky. My job as a social worker meant I was familiar with a lot of the resources available for Alzheimer's patients and their family caregivers. Still.....if I knew then (25 years ago) what I've learned since then.....it could have been a great deal less stressful. It's not an easy journey, but it can be made less difficult if you know what help is available. Next month we'll talk about where the journey starts: getting an accurate, thorough diagnosis.

Peg Whalen presents:

Free Android Smartphone Workshop

Mon. December 13th, 2:30-5:00

Want to catch up with your grandchildren who tell you using a smartphone is simple and easy? The fact is, figuring how to use all of the features of an Android smartphone is often not obvious at all. Join us at the workshop, hang out with friends and have fun "learning the ropes".



- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Understand your phone enough to feel comfortable with using it for new tasks and activities
- Understand what you should be wary of.
- Identify ways to find out more about your phone.

Some of the issues to be covered include how to:

- Get your pictures off your phone and onto your computer
- Find and install apps
- Determine whether you can use it for banking, bill paying, accessing medical records and reaching your doctor's office or pharmacy.

Interested in coming? Please call the workshop facilitator, Peg Whalen, at **413-404-4566** or email **pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com** to register by December 10, 2021. It would be helpful to know your cell/smartphone number and your email address. You will receive a short set of questions that help the organizer prepare to make the workshop most useful for your skills and interested. * Please note: this workshop will not cover how to troubleshoot an ongoing problem with your phone or how to fix broken parts of your phone.

On the Road Again..



2022 Trip Lineup

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

⇒ *Day Trip Jan/Feb. Ice Castles* is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using hundreds of thousands of icicles hand-placed by professional ice artists. The castles include breathtaking LED-lit sculptures, frozen thrones, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and much more. Warm clothing and good footwear recommended. We make a stop for a bite to eat along the way. Date and cost to be determined. Anticipated date is a Thursday in late January/early February when the weather conditions are cold enough. Approx. cost \$110, \$10 discount if paid early. Lunch is on your own. Taking interest list NOW.

⇒ *Multi Day Oct 14-23. Nashville, Memphis & Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—10 days.* \$1,205, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available. Taking interest list NOW.

Day Trip Feb/Mar. Everett, MA. Encore Boston Harbor Casino.

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip.

Day Trip May. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip.

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT.

Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound Theater presents David.

The Road to Evaluating Dementia: What does having an evaluation involve?

By Jan Gibeau

When I wrote about my journey in living with MCI (mild cognitive impairment) in October, I mentioned that once I was worried about the changes in my memory, I arranged to have a complete evaluation to find out "What's going on". It's the first step to take to avoid living with fear and anxiety about the unknown. I thought it might be helpful to share more information about what a

thorough evaluation entails.

To begin the evaluation, your PCP (primary care provider) will take your complete medical history. It's important to bring someone with you, preferably someone who knows you well, so that all of the information is as detailed as possible and you have someone to take notes for you. It also makes it easier to focus solely on your interactions and asking questions without trying to write things down at the same time. Lastly, having a family member or someone close to you there helps to fill in the gaps and ask questions they may have, especially if they will be the ones helping you as you cope with changes as they come up. This is not the time to "go it alone" or "tough it out". It's been said that accepting help is harder than helping others but it's important to remember that the person(s) helping you needs a lot of information and support.

Tests that follow a physical exam usually include neurological tests that evaluate your balance, sensory responses, reflexes, memory and thinking skills. Based on those findings, the PCP may order brain scans, blood tests, genetic tests, and a mental health evaluation to help determine a diagnosis. There are a number of different types of dementia but it isn't easy to determine which type you have because the symptoms are often similar across the spectrum of cognitive impairments. To learn more, you may be referred to other specialists such as a neurologist, or to someone who can evaluate and treat symptoms of depression, which can also present itself at the same time. The symptoms can be very similar which makes the identification of which type of dementia is present difficult. Depression is not uncommon but often overlooked. It's important that it be considered.



Successful treatment of depression can help a great deal in reducing symptoms and improving daily life. Once treated, there is a clearer picture of who are and what other steps need to be considered. Completing all of the tests can take a few weeks depending on the results that emerge. However, it also gives you time to think about questions you may have during this period. A thorough report should be shared with you and other family or friends you want to include.

Personally, I found that the results of the evaluation answered most of my questions and it was helpful to review the probabilities of what I would face in the future. It's been over 22 years and I'm slower... but still headed in the right direction. Next month we'll provide more information about options in our region for getting an evaluation, the impact of having cognitive deficits, how it progresses and what resources are available for managing the changes that begin to unfold.

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

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

Music and Merriment

**An Afternoon of Songs and Connection
with the Hampshire Regional
High School Chorus**

Weds. December 15th at 12:30pm



Join the Hampshire Regional High School Chorus and their director Aidan Linden via Zoom for an afternoon performance of songs ranging from holiday songs, to pop music, oldies and more! Solo and small group songs will be mixed with full group chorus songs. There will be an opportunity for Q&A with the students after the performance as well. Participants are encouraged to join the Zoom session early (by 12:25pm). **For the Zoom link, please contact your COA Director or Coordinator.**

The Cummington Fair 150 year History Book is now for sale!



It can be purchased online at www.cummingtonfair.com under online merchandise on the homepage.

The cost is \$20 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

Any questions? Email April Judd at it.cummingtonfair@gmail.com

Need a haircut? Manicure? Facial?

Smith Voc. Cosmetology Program returns **December 10th** Reserve your spot today!

Cosmetology Training Center
80 Locust St. Northampton, MA
01060-2094

Offering facials, lip waxing, make up applications, and beard trims at this time. Call (413)-587-1414 ext. 3531.

