

Living Well

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR

January
2022
Newsletter

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

Senior Citizen Profile: Patricia MacLachlan

A few weeks ago when Patricia MacLachlan, who is blind, was feeding the birds she came to the realization that a young bear was standing nearby. I asked her if she was afraid – it is said that mature bears are most dangerous when there are cubs around – but no, she calmly finished her task and went inside the house. In the course of our chat, what struck me over and over again about “Patty” MacLachlan was her attitude; she is relentlessly positive, grateful and indomitable: “I take life as an adventure.”

MacLachlan began writing at age 35 after her children started school. Author of over 50 books, Patty MacLachlan, who is 83 years old, has several new books coming out this year. She writes every day using a computer. MacLachlan is best known for Sarah, Plain and Tall, for which she won a Newbery Award. In Sarah, a woman from Maine answers a newspaper ad and then travels west to meet a father and two children who have lost their mother who died in childbirth. The children, knowing that Sarah misses the sea, are very anxious that she stay with them. Fortunately, they are not disappointed. Sarah stays and like their mother, she sings.



MacLachlan began reading as a very young child. Books, and the children in them, were her first playmates. She was born on the prairie in Cheyenne, Wyoming and is said to carry a bag of prairie dirt with her to remind her of where she comes from. MacLachlan was an only child and tells me that lacking siblings, she ‘made them up.’ She went to college at the University of Connecticut and then taught junior high school, gaining more knowledge of children and their lives in families. Her work is informed by these experiences. She grounds her realistic picture books and novels in the sometimes challenging experiences of children and of things that ‘are difficult’ and to help children in their everyday lives: “I want children to see that life can be gentle and fair and it is okay to be smart.”

A resident of Williamsburg for 25 years, MacLachlan declares that she ‘loves this town’ where people are so ‘kind.’ While Patty MacLachlan is certainly contending with the challenges of aging, she is warm and optimistic and refuses to give up her sense of adventure. Having read several of MacLachlan’s books, I was already impressed with her writing. I left our brief interview admiring her spirit.

—Tamar Smith

Fuel Assistance & SNAP Help 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**. **The Senior Center (268-8407) can help with completing the application and other questions folks might have.** We can also help if you’d like to sign up with **SNAP** (formerly the Food Stamp program). Reps have been trained and all information remains confidential. Don’t miss out on these important programs!

We Sincerely Thank all of you who have made generous donations in the past year!

Your support enables us to keep our great programs up and running! See three ways to donate on pg. 4.

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

For help with Medicare and Medicare-related insurance, SHINE can help. 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 **February 8th** 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 6pm. 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.~

Monthly Coffee Hour!

The Senior Center is planning an indoor Coffee Hour on Thursday, January 27th, 10-11 am.

Please call 268-8407 or email tsmith@burgy.org to sign up, as indoor space is 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.



Are You Turning 65 This Year?

If so, do you know you are eligible and should sign up for Medicare 3 months before your 65th birthday?

Most people become eligible for Medicare when they turn 65. Your Medicare enrollment steps will differ depending on whether or not you are collecting retirement benefits when you enter your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP). If you are receiving Social Security retirement benefits or Railroad Retirement benefits, you should be automatically enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B. Here is a link for more information:

www.medicareinteractive.org/.../how-to-enroll-in-medicare-if-you-are-turning-65

There is a 7-month window to sign up for Medicare (3 months before your birthday, your birthday month, and 3 months after your birthday.) If you sign up before your birthday, your coverage will start the first day of your birthday month. If you wait and sign up during the 3 months after your birthday, there will be delay in when your coverage will start.

If you miss this deadline, you may have to pay higher premiums for Medicare Part B, which covers doctor bills, outpatient fees and other medical expenses:

www.aarp.org/retirement/social-security/questions-answers/65-this-year-When-should-I-apply-Medicare.html

You do not have to worry about incurring a penalty for late sign up if you are still working and covered by your employer's health insurance, or if you are married and covered under your spouse's work insurance.



Wear footwear with slip-resistant soles and good treads.

Adjust your pace to account for surface conditions.

Walk like a Penguin. Extend arms to the side and point feet slightly outward.

Pay attention to where you're stepping.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Prevent falls.

Many Thanks Every Day from the Williamsburg Senior Center!

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. If you would like to donate, 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 (see below)

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

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.

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!

Are You Prepared for Emergencies?

We are all faced with emergency situations from time to time. It could be a short-term or long-term problem. Do you have a plan?

The first thing I would like to address is a **power failure**. Perhaps your power is out and you are unable to use your telephone (landline). Do you have a cell phone, Ipad, tablet, or laptop that you can use to communicate with your family or friends? If so, do you make sure to regularly keep it charged? Do you have a power pack (external battery/charger) as a back-up? There are many available at a wide range of prices and can provide the comfort to know that you can still make a phone call in an emergency.

The second thing is a **medical alert system**. If you live alone you might want to consider getting one of these systems. It can be a comfort knowing that if you had a medical emergency or a fall and were unable to get up, you could press the pendant and get help. There are many systems available on the market between \$25 and \$50 per month. The most important thing to remember with any system is to do a monthly test. Press the button and tell them you are doing a test of the system. This is extremely important to make sure the system is working and will not fail you when you need it most.

The third item is a **Lock Box**. This is a safe and secure way to allow Police, Fire, and Emergency personnel to access your home in the event of an emergency. You provide a spare key and the Lock Box is placed outside your door. If you make an emergency call and are unable to answer your door, the access code is requested from the dispatch office. This prevents Emergency Personnel from breaking a window or door to gain access and help you if you are unable to open your door. These boxes are provided free of charge (donations are always appreciated) by TRIAD through the Safe Entry Program. For more information contact the Senior Center 268-8404 or the Police Department 268-7237.

The fourth item is a **File Of Life**. This is a magnetic file holder which you keep on your refrigerator. It contains information about your current medications and medical history in case you are unable to provide that during an emergency. It also provides emergency contact information for your next of kin. Responders know to look on the refrigerator for this so that is the best place to keep it. Contact the Senior Center to get a File of Life for you and any others in your household (268-8407).

COVID-19 Boosters/Vaccines

Below listings include several ways to sign up online. Enter your zip code plus which booster manufacturer (Pfizer or Moderna) in order to check available options. If needed, ask for help from a family member, friend, neighbor or call the Senior Center. Bring your COVID vaccination card and insurance information with you to the appointment. If you'd like an appointment sooner than in a couple of weeks, you may need to go to another area such as Easthampton, Springfield, Greenfield depending on the booster manufacturer.

If you become frustrated, go into a pharmacy that's offering the COVID booster vaccine you're looking for to make an appointment in person. Or ask someone to do it for you.

1. www.vaxfinder.mass.gov (I found this site most user-friendly for me)
2. www.vaccines.gov
3. Text zip code to [438829](tel:438829)
4. Call [800-232-0233](tel:800-232-0233)
5. www.covidvaccine.massgeneralbrigham.org/MA or call your provider.
6. **Elks Lodge, 17 Spring St., Florence. [413-584-0297](tel:413-584-0297)**; Mondays 1-5; Thursdays 10-1; Fridays, 10-1. (Website says by appointment only, otherwise wait outside. I was unable to leave a message on phone line.)
7. If you are currently a patient with the **Hilltown Community Health Center**, call them regarding both homebound and in-clinic boosters. They advertise booster vaccinations every Thursday and Friday at the Huntington Health Center. Call to schedule an appointment: [413-667-3009, ext. 261](tel:413-667-3009).
8. **Homebound vaccines/boosters – [833-983-0485](tel:833-983-0485)** (leave your name and number).

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a federal holiday in the United States marking the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year. Born in 1929, King's actual birthday is January 15. The holiday is similar to holidays under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act.

King was the chief spokesperson for nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement, which protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. President Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed three years later. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000. The theme for this year is "**It Starts with Me**".

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](tel:268-8407), or sloomis@burgy.org.

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Well, it is January and it is getting colder and staying warm may be difficult for many of us who live in older houses. You may be tempted to buy and use a space heater. Here are few ways to use one as safely as possible:

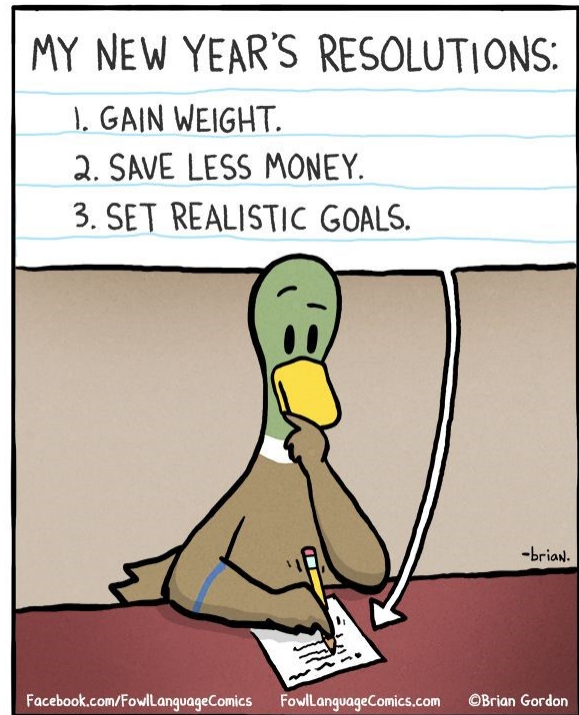


- ⇒ When buying one, look for a heater that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, like "UL" (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- ⇒ Keep the heater 3 feet away from drapes, furniture or other flammable materials.
- ⇒ Put the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- ⇒ Avoid using extension cords. If you must use one, make sure it is heavy duty and marked with a power rating that is at least as high as that on the heater's label.
- ⇒ Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- ⇒ Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in a bathroom.
- ⇒ Don't even think about using unvented kerosene heaters; they are illegal here.

Have a warm and SAFE winter!

--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, 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!

Winter Games?

OK, maybe this is weird, but a possible indoor activity for you is to take some financial literacy quizzes with your family, especially the younger members. Surveys show (you know the "They Say" deal) that we are very poor in some basic financial knowledge.

So what, you ask? Well, knowledge is power. Having good financial knowledge can help a person avoid bad debt and defaults on loans. On a positive note, it can help build an emergency savings fund, earn higher interest on investments, and plan to meet financial goals. Overall, that knowledge can help get and keep enough money to be able to do what a person wants to do.

A major investment firm asked more than 2000 people questions in eight different retirement categories. The average grade that people got right was only 30 percent. No one got all the questions right and the highest overall grade was 79 percent. Here is that quiz – give it a try!

www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/

There are many financial literacy quizzes online; this one is from the AARP:

www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1

This is a well-rounded set of questions that I recommend. From there, you could search for many other quizzes to take, starting with this page: **www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy**

Enjoy your winter!

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

Dealing with Dementia: How to cope

by Jan Gibeau

Living with dementia often means having to cope with the stigma attached to the word itself. Just as we are reluctant to talk about the changes happening in our lives, our friends and family struggle to find the right words to use when talking with you. There is no right or wrong way, of course. Many of the questions and fears that arise are hard to discuss when friends and family members are also trying hard to be comforting and reassuring at the same time. Even though the changes you and they have been noticing have probably been there for a while now, being formally diagnosed with dementia can feel sudden and forbidding. This is time to "think in slices, not loaves". It's important to keep in mind that people living with dementia can still continue to live a full life for years following their diagnosis. Even in the face of this fact, many misconceptions about dementia make life harder for everyone. When you forget something, lose something, can't find a word you're trying to use, you wonder, "Are all these events getting tossed into a new box labelled 'person with dementia'? Am I being seen as 'less than' by friends and family?" Then you realize that you, too, may have already bought into the stigma and it's time to kick it away. It may take more than a few kicks.

One of the most powerful ways to debunk the stigma is to ask and listen to others who are themselves living through the same thing. Listening and talking helps you and your friends as well as your family learn what kinds of things people have experienced and what they have found helpful. It also helps to know that you are not in this alone. Here are a few examples of what experiences people have shared; addressing both what can be painful and what can help:

- When I tell someone I have dementia and I have trouble remembering, people say 'Oh I have trouble remembering too'. It makes me feel like they are being competitive or just not listening. I would like to say, 'You have memory problems? Call me when you forget something 15 times. Losing your keys is nothing compared to losing your house'.
- I often feel people aren't really listening, but are making assumptions. I want people to know that there are times when I can't get through a single task because I can't keep the thought of what I was doing in my mind. When people don't listen, it's upsetting. Ask me a question about what's it like, don't compare your experience to mine.
- People are uncomfortable with the level of difficulty I am having. Perhaps this is why they emphasize that I look normal and talk well.
- I'm often told, 'You don't look like you have dementia'. No one says, 'You don't look like you have diabetes'.
- Many folks seem to think if someone has de-

mentia, the person's gone.

- When you have dementia, you are just a person who has something to deal with like any other disease. You wouldn't leave someone behind if they have COPD and needed some extra time to walk.
- With dementia, I need people to give me extra time to respond. Even though others are trying to be reassuring, they may not realize that their comments leave you feeling hurt and upset.

What are some ideas that people thought would be more helpful?

- It helps to not start a sentence by saying "don't you remember?"
- It helps when someone asks, "If you get stuck, would you rather I helped you or waited?"
- It helps if family and friends and others understand my condition.
- When people understand that I can't get a word, I will describe what word I am looking for. It becomes a group effort and can be fun. I feel we are working together.
- When I give people permission to tell me if something seems out of the ordinary with me.
- When I say, "Stop me if you've heard this". It makes the other person feel comfortable.
- People want to get me organized. It works better if I do the organizing. This helps me to remember where things are and generally makes more sense than another person's idea of organization.
- It helps when my friends and family point out my strengths and achievements, not just instances of forgetting or losing something.

It helps when you and others close to you recognize that you are still you, and the goal is to preserve that as long as possible. It's also important that you think about what you would like and let people know. It's important to make a customized plan that's suited to your personal wishes.

There is so much information online dealing with dementia and they all have value, but it can be hard to find a clear and succinct list of facts, issues and good tips in making a plan. I have found that one of the best resources to begin with is the Memory Handbook created by the Alzheimer's Society in the UK. You can explore more by going to their website (Alzheimers.org.UK) It is written in a way that "get's to the point" in a down to earth way. Worth reading! The Alzheimer's Association website provides access to detailed, in depth articles that address most of the concerns or questions that come up.

Other sources of good information include:

⇒ **Mass Councils on Aging Association;**
Mcoonline.com

⇒ **MA Healthy Aging Collaborative;**
mahealthyagingcollaborative.org, 413-499-0524

⇒ **Executive Office of Elder Affairs;**
EOEA@ mass.gov, 617-727-7750

⇒ **AARP** www.aarp.org, 866-448-3621

The Alzheimer's Association; www.alz.org

3G Service to End in 2022

Major cellular providers plan to phase out 3G coverage beginning in early 2022. What this means is that if you use older devices that rely on 3G networks, the use of your devices will be impacted. This includes cell phones, tablets, emergency/life alert and other medical devices, home security systems, among other technologies. Many providers are reaching out to customers who will be affected by this change; if you are trying to determine if your device uses this older technology, contact the provider or carrier for the service.

Reminder:

SNAP recipients can save an extra \$40-\$80 on their EBT card for fresh fruits and vegetables at eligible locations.



This is supported by the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), a Massachusetts state program where SNAP recipients get at least \$40 of extra SNAP money every month to spend on local fruits and vegetables. That means if you have SNAP, you automatically have HIP! Two of the farms are: Crabapple Farm, 100 Bryant St. in Chesterfield, and Crimson and Clover, 215 Spring St. in Florence. Shop at these farm locations with your SNAP/EBT card, and get at least \$40 extra to spend through the HIP program. Note: you must have at least \$1 on your SNAP/EBT card when you go and shop; in other words, you need to have a balance on your EBT card in order to earn the HIP incentive.

Start the New Year with Smooth Moves

Winter is here! COVID won't go away. Finding yourself feeling a little "stiff" from staying inside so much? Have you been away from exercise and find yourself yearning to get your body moving again? Worried about exercise classes that are more vigorous than you're ready for? If you answered yes to any of these questions, we invite you to join our new class series called **Smooth Moves**. It's a good class for relaxing, stretching out and feeling good. The program will provide you the opportunity to remain seated in a chair



while inviting your body to join you in some basic movements. Joan Griswold, a very knowledgeable instructor, has created this program to gently guide you through movement oriented to increasing your range of movement and flexibility without pain and discomfort. No special equipment necessary.

This class will be offered on Friday mornings at 9:15am at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Would you be interested in participating in person or prefer a virtual offering? All in person programs require participants to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. For more information, contact Joan Griswold at (413) 268-7985 or joan@bybhealth.com

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 by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.

⇒ *Day Trip Jan. 27. Ice Castles* is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using 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. Cost is \$119, \$10 discount if paid early. **Payment due NOW.**

Taking interest lists now on the following:

Multi Day April 24-30. Myrtle Beach Show Trip. 7 days. Cost \$739, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available.

Day Trip May 5. Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip, lunch at The Marina. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$112, \$10 discount if paid early.

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$120, \$10 discount if paid early.

Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound Theater presents David. 5 days. \$549, \$25 discount if paid by February 16, 2022. Flyer available.

Day Trip June 9. Corvettes Doo Wop Revue. Lobster Tail or Prime Rib for lunch. Self Drive to the Log Cabin. Cost to be determined.

Williamsburg Senior Center
141 Main Street
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Haydenville, MA 01039

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

Life in the Artic National Wildlife Refuge
By Fran Ryan

Sunday, January 23rd at 2pm
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.



On January 23 at 2pm, Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting in person at the Chesterfield Community Center. Fran will discuss some of the wildlife that inhabit ANWR, how they adapt to their surroundings and the importance of the ANWR.

**Given that it's cold both here and in the Artic, Hot Chocolate will be provided!*

Peg Whalen presents:
iPhone Basics Workshop

Monday January 31st
2:30 to 5:00pm
Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.

There is still a strong interest by people wanting to learn about their iPhones. Peg will be conducting another workshop that will cover the following issues:

- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Feel comfortable enough with your phone to try apps and features.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Ways to learn more about your phone on your own.

Interested in coming?

Please reserve a spot by January 21st. Call Peg Whalen, workshop presenter, at 413-404-4566. Leave a voicemail or text with your name, email address, cell phone version (e.g. iPhone 7, iPhone SE, iPhone 12) and your home or cell phone number.