

# Living Well



August  
2023  
Newsletter

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



## A Dog Day Morning!

August 11th, from 10 am – 12 (noon)

Lunch will be served at 11:30 am

The Senior Center, and the youth of the Williamsburg Grange and 4-H (led by Shannon Wade and Faith Bisbee respectively) will be visited by **therapy dogs** courtesy of **Bright Spot Therapy Dogs** in Leeds. I think we all know the value that pets can offer to our lives; this is a great opportunity to connect and feel the warmth and friendliness of an animal's presence. (Dogs will be leashed. We will have a dog-free zone, if you'd rather.)



Please call to register at 268-8410 or email [seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org](mailto:seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org).



## Newsletter Funding Update

In the July newsletter we talked about the possible lack of funding for the continued printing and mailing of the monthly newsletter. Good news (and a great relief!) the Northern Hilltown Consortium (NHC) was able to secure a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) from MCOA (MA Council of Aging) to fund the newsletter for another year. Jan Gibeau, chair of the NHC, had this to say "Hooray...we did it... the written word lives on for another year! Educational programs and conferences will continue. Can you believe it?"

On a personal note, I am pleased (as punch!) to know that we can all look forward to receiving our monthly newsletter in the mail with all its wonderful stories and helpful, important information.

Thanks, also, to all who have joined our digital mailing list. To subscribe, please email [sloomis@burgy.org](mailto:sloomis@burgy.org) or call 268-8410.

—Melissa Wilson

## Pets Can Enrich Our Lives

For many years I was a pet-sitter. I was never much of a dog person, but I love cats. Most of my jobs were with dogs. I easily learned to love them— Labs, German Shepherds, Pugs, Aussies and more. Some of them were a handful, but they all won me over.

I remember a household of 3 pugs—they also had 10 birds! Their old pug was temperamental and had an attitude. I didn't care much for pugs...until the old one passed on and they got a puppy. He was so adorable and loveable that I started loving all three of them. But, the Australian Shepherds up the road totally stole my heart. I'll never forget sweet Zoey and young and exuberant Brio. He was so brave when he tangled with a porcupine and I had to take him to get the spines removed. Or when his older buddy, Zoey went deaf—he would sit with her while she slept in the yard, keeping watch the whole time.



Here's what some of our neighbors say about their pets:

"My Corgis are like a cross between a dog and a cat. They are so special that way."

"My sweet little kitty is great company. Now I have someone to talk to and tend to. I'm never alone."

"My black cat gives me a lot of joy and laughter, except when she catches a mouse and drops it on me (alive) at 4 in the morning. Not so funny!"

"I've owned and known many dogs, but our rescued lab mix, Fenway, was my heart dog. He stayed by my side through recovery from surgeries, illness, and even learned to growl "I love you." A friend once said that she hoped to find someone who looked at her the way Fenway looked at me. That's the magic thing about dogs, when they love you, they love you scars and all."

—Sherry Loomis

Williamsburg Senior Center - 141 Main Street, P.O. Box 193, Haydenville, MA 01039  
Phone: 268-8407 or 8410 ~ Hours: Mon - Thurs, 8:30 - 2:00 ~ Email: [seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org](mailto:seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org)

## SHINE

**For Medicare and Medicare-related insurance issues, 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

VA office hours are back! Stop in to see our rep, Dan Nye on 1st & 3rd Wednesdays or call **413-587-1299** for appointments.

### Brown Bag: Food for Elders

Eligible seniors can get a free bag of groceries on 2nd Thursdays at the Senior Center. Call the Food Bank at **413-247-9738** or **800-247-9632** or download an application at <https://www.foodbankwma.org>. Send applications to: The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, P.O. Box 160, Hatfield, MA 01038.

### Congregate Meals

**Meals are being served in the Senior Café Mondays—Thursdays!** Fridays are by delivery only. **Mondays (and some Thursdays) we make fresh-cooked meals**, and other days we get meals from Highland Valley Elder Services. **Please join us! Contact Tamar at 268-8419, 2-3 days ahead to reserve a meal.**

### 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.

### Foot Nurse

Piper Sagan is doing foot care at the Senior Center **August 8th** and the second Tuesday every other (even) month. Call us (**268-8407**) to make an appointment, (\$50). Piper can also do footcare in your home, (\$80). Call her at **413-522-8432** for an appointment.

### Podiatry

Dr. Coby has appointments available on **September 12th**, and the second Tuesday of every other (odd) month. He accepts insurance for payment. Call us (**268-8407**) for an appointment.

### Hilltown Elder Network

Also known as the **HEN Program**, is available from the Hilltown Community Development Corporation for housekeeping and other duties. Call the coordinator, **Fran**, at **268-7411** for more info.

### Medical Rides

Senior Center drivers are available for your medical rides funded by **PVTA**. **Call us at least 3 days ahead** and we will provide a driver. (You can also use their **Dial-A-Ride Services, 413-739-7436.**)

### Carpool Rides\*

Rides for shopping/errands can be scheduled through our **Carpool Program**. **Call us at least 3 days ahead** and we will provide a driver.

## Companion Program/Friendly Visits\*

Would you or someone you know benefit from a friendly visit or a regular companion? We can set it up for you! Contact us for more info.

*\* The previous two programs are provided by a Title III Grant through Highland Valley Elder Services.*

### Wellness Calls

The Williamsburg Senior Center makes friendly calls. If you are feeling lonely, or would like check-up calls, we'll add you to our call list. (**268-8419**)

### Modern/Contemporary Dance

**Susan Waltner's** very popular dance class happens on **Wednesdays at 10:00 am** in the auditorium or on the lawn. Contact her at [swaltner@smith.edu](mailto:swaltner@smith.edu) if you would like to join. Donations gratefully accepted.

### Tai Chi

**Marty Phinney** offers Tai Chi outside or in the auditorium, **Tuesdays, 9:30 am**. Members or interested folks can contact her at **413-268-3228**. Donations gratefully accepted.

### Healthy Bones & Balance

**Mary Bisbee** leads HB&B on **Mondays at 1 pm** (except holidays) and **Thursdays at 9:30 am in the Auditorium**. Call the Senior Center to sign up or stop in to check it out! **Free class** sponsored by RSVP.

### Strength and Cardio Workouts

**Joan Griswold** is leading workouts via Zoom **Thursdays at 10:15 am**. Visit her at [www.bybhealth.com](http://www.bybhealth.com) to sign up. Other hours may also be available.

### Men's Group

Meets at the **Williamsburg Snack Shack** on **3rd Thursdays at 8:30 am (Aug. 17th)**. To join, email **Larry West** ([landlwest3315@yahoo.com](mailto:landlwest3315@yahoo.com)), and become one of the "guys!"

### Ladies Who Lunch

Meets at the **Williamsburg Snack Shack** on **3rd Fridays at 11:30 am (Aug. 18th)**. Please call **268-8407**, or email [sloomis@burgy.org](mailto:sloomis@burgy.org) to reserve your spot at the table or just stop in! (Look for our sign.)

### Technology Program

**Need help using your cell phone, computer or other devices?** The Senior Center has a group of volunteers who can help! Volunteers work one-on-one with folks and arrange a time that works for both parties. **Please contact the office at 413-268-8410 to schedule an appointment.**

## Save the Date!

**September 15th, 10 - 1**

**Health Fair at the Town Office Building**

See the September Newsletter for more information



## Cooking Up Some CHANGES at the Senior Center Café!

As some of you know we make “home-cooked” meals on Monday and are usually filled to capacity. We are expanding our offerings to include specially-made foods on Thursdays too! Stay tuned for more changes!

**We are looking for experienced kitchen help.** If interested, please contact Tamar at 268-8419.



## News From the Transportation Desk... We Are Busy, Busy, Busy!

Thanks to our volunteer drivers, we are getting you where you need to go; medical rides, picking up groceries and prescriptions, and to necessary appointments.

To keep the wheels spinning smoothly, please remember:

- **Call at least three of our business days in advance** to schedule your ride. (Mon. - Thurs., 9 am - 1 pm, 268-8407)
- **You must be able to get to the driver’s car, and into and out of it without assistance.** *If you need extra help, please have a friend or relative accompany you, as our drivers cannot provide personal care assistance. They are your method of transportation and a friendly companion on the road, only.*
- **If you use a wheelchair, or need a ride with less than 3 days’ notice,** the PVTA offers an excellent service via their Dial-A-Ride program. Please call 413-739-7436 to schedule your ride. Visit PVTA.com for more information.

\*\*\* *As our population continues to age in place, we will need a few special people to occasionally ride the PVTA van with local seniors. If you have a flexible schedule and can manipulate a wheelchair from their doorstep to the van, into the doctor’s office and back, please contact us. 268-8410 or 268-8407.* \*\*\*

—Your Rides Coordinator, Joy Moore

## Many Thanks

to the Village Green for their donation of Ice Cream and Toppings for our **Ice Cream Social!** AND a **big thank you to the volunteers** who helped make it happen! About 40 folks enjoyed ice cream, and we raffled off gift baskets too. Lots of fun and “Social”izing happened that day! *(Photos by Daria D’Arienzo & Sherry Loomis)*

**The Williamsburg Senior Center relies on donations from the community to support 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](http://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.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You for Helping Us Support Our Neighbors!**

## Planning Board Working on Comprehensive Plan for Our Town!

With the support of the Town Select Board, your Planning Board has launched a multi-year project to write a Comprehensive Plan for Williamsburg.

### Why is this a good thing?

A Comprehensive Plan is a valuable guideline for Town decisions that affect how the Town may change over time, how and where it will grow, and what will be preserved. The Plan is a long-term vision for the future.

### What is in a Comprehensive Plan?

The plan will start with community goals and policies, including patterns of development consistent with Town values. This section sets the tone for all other sections. There are seven additional elements to the

plan: land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, services and facilities, and transportation. The plan will close with implementation activities and schedules.

These are sections required under the Massachusetts General Law. The Town may add elements that are important to citizens.

### How do we get your input?

There will be a survey and a set of listening sessions beginning in August. Look for a post card in the mail this summer with details on how to participate in these conversations. Your input is crucial to our success.

**Planning Board 2023:** Steve Smith, Chair, Tariq Abu-Jaber, Chris Flory, Holly Hendricks, Jean O'Neil and Eric Schmitt.



### Midsummer, Tobago by Derek Walcott

Broad sun-stoned beaches.

White heat.

A green river.

A bridge,

Scorched yellow palms

from the summer-sleeping house  
drowsing through August.

Days I have held,

days I have lost,

days that outgrow, like daughters,  
my harbouring arms.



## Summer Safety Tips



### Stay Hydrated

Drink 8 or more glasses of water per day to stay healthy & hydrated



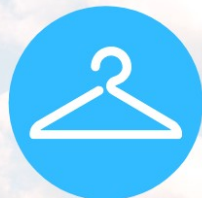
### Know the Side Effects of Medications

Some medications have side effects such as drowsiness or sun sensitivity



### Stay Cool

Stay in the A/C, indoors, go swimming, etc.



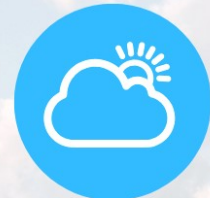
### Wear Light, Loose Fitting Clothing

Wear breathable clothing and light colors that reflect the sun



### Have Emergency Contacts

Have a list of people to call in case of emergency



### Know the Weather Forecast

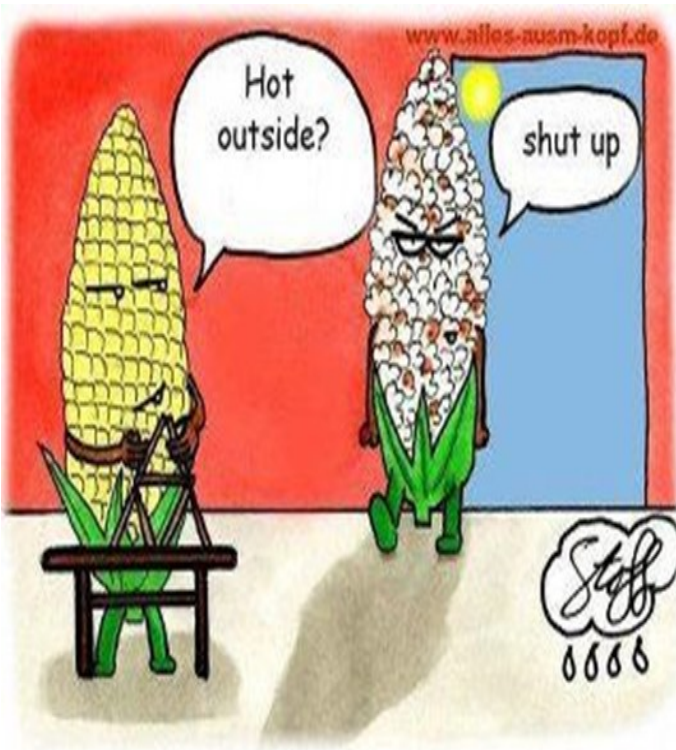
Plan your days accordingly depending on the weather

## Get the Digital Version!

You can get a color digital image (a pdf download of this newsletter) along with, or instead of a paper copy! As postage rates go up and grant funding goes down, we may resort to digital copies more and more. Join a list of your neighbors who already get digital copies!

Visit our website, [www.burgy.org](http://www.burgy.org) or our Facebook Group: [Williamsburg Senior Center](#)

**To subscribe or unsubscribe from this newsletter or receive a digital copy by email,** contact us, leaving your name, email address and phone number at **268-8410**, or [sloomis@burgy.org](mailto:sloomis@burgy.org).



**Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, 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!

### Your State Representatives

#### **State Senator Paul Mark**

Email: [paul.mark@masenate.gov](mailto:paul.mark@masenate.gov)

Phone: 413-464-5635

Mail: 773 Tyler Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:  
Williamsburg Town Hall  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

#### **State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa**

Email: [Lindsay.Sabadosa@mahouse.gov](mailto:Lindsay.Sabadosa@mahouse.gov)

Phone: 413-270-1166.

Mail: 76 Gothic Street  
Northampton, MA 01060

## Artificial Intelligence

You've read about it, here it is! Actually, it has been here for awhile. I spoke a text on my phone, trying to say "Cats really know how to nap". The first word appeared on my screen as Katz but by the time I finished my sentence it had changed to Cats. That is a form of AI.

We see it in autocorrect, when our email recognizes an address we start to type, or when Siri figures out who to call. When we have to select all the images with a sidewalk in them to continue to the web page we want, that is a form of AI. Many Applications (Apps) use AI.

In addition to these useful and positive activities, doctors are using AI to help prepare their case notes and discharge papers, saving them time. A recent study at the Mayo Clinic used AI to supplement physician readings for colon cancer and found more polyps than the doctor did. Maps and navigation tools have given us benefits in ease and accuracy of use. E-banking allows us to bank from home.

ON THE OTHER HAND, as AI becomes more sophisticated, it can cause problems. The ability to clone voices is growing so scammers can use AI to duplicate voices and facial images of a grandchild and really alarm a grandparent into sending money. Voice cloning can trick us into sending money to a friend who calls. We are already seeing campaign ads done by AI that show fake photos and videos, helping to spread misinformation and false events.

Things are only going to get worse as potentially very useful Artificial Intelligence gets co-opted for nefarious purposes. Remember last month's note on mindset? We need to keep our Game Brain engaged!

Be smart,  
Jean O'Neil  
TRIAD Committee member  
[jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com); 413-268-2228

## Another Conversation about Memory Scheduled for the Fall!

More than 90 people signed up for the conference on June 22. The Community Center could only accommodate 60 people, leaving 26 on a waiting list. The keynote by Dr. Starr, combined with presentations by Sharon Asher and Deb Hollingworth, set the stage for a day that made it easy to talk about a wide range of sensitive issues. By all measures it was a success.



### When asked to evaluate the day, these were some of the comments:

*“Better than expected.”*

*“Almost as good as someone by my side to do what’s needed.”*

*“I’ve been working with people with memory problems for a long time and I actually learned something new today.”*

*“Made me realize my brain is better than my body.”*

### What was most helpful?

- Dr. Starr answered important questions
- Description of brain function
- Gentle but firm presentations of facts
- Positive focus of the day
- Chatting with others at my table
- What to expect if this happens to someone in your family
- The presenters did not catastrophize Dementia
- Deb’s experience with her parents

### More information wanted:

- Home care resources; where to start, who pays, what’s available
- Finding local in home care services in the Region
- Programs that pay caregivers
- Supportive housing options
- Later life planning help understanding health insurance
- How to make ends meet with dwindling Finances
- Discussions about depression and “nervousness”
- How to find individual counseling for planning for the next stage
- Learning how to talk with someone with memory impairments

- How to respond to tense and difficult interactions
- Common caregiving stresses and how to get help
- Financial pitfalls, protections and planning for long term care
- Affordable options when continued care at home is not possible
- Use of light and touch therapies

### Next Steps

#### **First and foremost the conference will be repeated in the fall!**

Plans are underway to provide monthly small group forums to dig deeper into the topics listed above and more. Look for the plan in the next issue.

**I’m at the place  
in my life where  
Errands count as  
“Going Out”**

**IF THERE WAS A PILL TO CURE  
PROCRASTINATION, I WOULD  
PROBABLY TAKE IT TOMORROW.**



## On the Road Again...

### 2023 Trips



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

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

*Day Trip September TBD. **The Big E**, an annual favorite, with free entertainment at Honor Court Stage. Watch for details. Tentative date September 22. We will depart from the Big E at 4pm.*

*Multi Day Trip September 10-12. **Nantucket Island. REDUCED PRICE. 3 days- 2 nights.** Includes ferry to and from the island, guided tour of the island and all access pass to historical sites. Make payment to First Choice for \$689 p/p double occupancy due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. Limited seats.*

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

*Day Trip October 9. **Lake George Cruise** - Take a 2.5 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. A Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. Special pricing for Worthington Seniors \$75, for all other seniors the cost is \$125. Make your check out to Landmark Tours and mail to Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098 by September 5th. Two pick up locations-- Worthington and Northampton. A similar trip sold out recently, so reserve early. For further information contact Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962.*

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

~~COMING IN 2024~~

*Multi Day Trip May 2024. **Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island & New Brunswick. Passport required.** Cost TBD per person dbl. occupancy.*

**This 9 day trip includes:** 8 nights lodging including 5 nights in Canada, one night stay in Maine coming and going. 14 meals including: 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners. Guided Tour of Acadia National Park, Guided Tour of Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg.

~~Since Lake George and Lake Sunapee were so popular and sold out in 2023, I will run these two trips in 2024.~~

## Consortium website opens door to "rooms" full of information

Thanks to the work of Peg Whalen, the seven hilltowns of northwest Hampshire County, from Westhampton to Plainfield, Worthington to Williamsburg, are rolling out their redesigned website, <https://northernhilltownscoas.org> This website gives easy, early access to all the Councils on Aging newsletters, in full color, every month. The website also has a section for each town, CHESTERFIELD, CUMMINGTON, GOSHEN, PLAINFIELD, WESTHAMPTON, WILLIAMSBURG, and WORTHINGTON, with NEWS and announcements, CALENDARS, NEWSLETTERS, contact information, photos, and links to important in-town resources and events. The website supplies users access to written information, instructions, video about topics on GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED, links to USEFUL WEBSITES and services access, and many other information sources and volunteer opportunities. The site also describes special INITIATIVES the seven COAs are taking part in, cross-town calendars, and regional news.

Related to Tech Tips, the site has a TECHNOLOGY section dedicated to supporting aging in a digital world, with technical support sources, how-to instructions, workshop video, visual and written handouts about devices and tech uses, links to existing online sources for technology classes, training and technical assistance, and shortly, will have a calendar of scheduled local trainings. Please visit the website regularly and get familiar with its resources. You can reach the site at

<https://northernhilltownscoas.org> (Note, both hilltowns and COAs have "s" after their name, use care in entering the website.) We suggest you bookmark the website so you can quickly and return often to check on the wide variety of activities and services the area COAs are offering.

If you currently are unable to access the internet, your local library can help you visit the website. If you have suggestions or comments about the website, please share them on the site or let your COA know. This website is for EVERYONE in our seven towns. We invite you to help us tailor it to meet the needs and expectations of all the older adults we serve.

Please note, technical support is ongoing throughout the summer, by appointment only. Pre-arranged hours will resume in the fall. Contact your COA or reach out to Peg Whalen for assistance at

[pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com) or text your name and questions to **413-296-5080**.

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

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Tamar Smith  
&  
Our Many Volunteers

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

# SCAM ALERT!



### *Protect Yourself & Avoid a Scam*

- Screen your calls & hang up if the caller tries to pressure you.
- Block unwanted calls & text messages.
- Don't give out personal information over the phone, through email or text message.
- Resist the pressure to act quickly.
- Stop & talk about the situation with a friend or family member.
- Never pay someone you don't know by gift card, wiring money or cryptocurrency.

*If you have a  
consumer problem or  
question, contact the*

### **Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit**

**Greenfield**  
**(413) 774-3186**  
**Northampton**  
**(413) 586-9225**

**Working in cooperation  
with the Office of the MA  
Attorney General**

