

Living Well



Newsletter
DECEMBER
2024

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

*** As you know, the Senior Center is no longer mailing the Living Well monthly newsletter. We are making a **special one-time outreach effort** with the December issue to mail it to you. We want to make sure that folks know we are here providing many programs and services!

The monthly newsletter is available in digital form. Contact Sherry at sloomis@burgy.org or 413-268-8410 to join our email list.

If you want copies of past issues, please let Sherry know. There were some great profiles of community members! ***

Senior Profile: Barbara Estes



With mixed emotions I will be moving to Day Brook Village, Holyoke. I will have a small ^{apartment} apartment in the assisted living section.

I will miss being a part of the Senior Center.

Actually my ~~to~~ Dad started going to the Senior Center in 1978 when my Mom died suddenly.

I delivered 'Meals on Wheels' for many years. I enjoyed meeting the different folks.

When I read about the tax write off program I was very interested. I started cooking Monday Meal and helped serve and clean the day with quite a few different directors.

Over the years I met and enjoyed many seniors. It was easy to see how much joy they felt by coming to the Senior Center.

Barbara Estes

Please join us for a
Holiday Sing-Along with

Voices of the Valley Singers!



Thursday, December 12th
at 12:30 pm in the
Senior Center Café

We had so much fun last year
that we invited them back!

To reserve lunch before the show, call
Tamar at 413-338-2920, tsmith@burgy.org.

Lets Do Yoga Together!

New class being offered by Carol Konz.
See Page 3 for details!

Please note that our P.O. Box has
changed to **P.O. Box 447**.
Highlighted in **red**.

Williamsburg Senior Center – 141 Main Street, **P.O. Box 447**, Haydenville, MA 01039
Phone: 268-8407 or 8410 ~ Hours: Mon - Thurs, 8:30 - 2:00 ~ Email: seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org

Food Programs:

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 served in the Senior Café Mondays — Thursdays! Fridays are by delivery only. On **Mondays and Thursdays we make fresh-cooked meals**, and **Tuesdays and Wednesdays** we get meals from Highland Valley Elder Services to eat in or ***Grab-n-Go! Please join us! Contact Tamar at 413-338-2920 or tsmith@burgy.org, 2-3 days ahead to reserve a meal.**

***Grab-n-Go!**

Meals prepared and packaged by Highland Valley Elder Services are free for anyone 60+! Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 11:30 and 12 noon. **Contact Tamar at 413-338-2920, tsmith@burgy.org to reserve a meal.**

Take and Eat

Two area churches provide delicious, freshly-made meals—delivered every Saturday. Contact the Senior Center to find out more or to sign up: **413-338-2920.**

Transportation:

Medical Rides

Senior Center drivers are available for your medical rides *funded by PVTA*. **Call us at least 3 business days ahead** and we will try our best to provide a driver: **268-8407**. (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 business days ahead** and we'll try our best to provide you a driver: **413-268-8407**. *Funded by Highland Valley Elder Services.*

Health/Wellness:

Foot Nurse

Piper Sagan is doing foot care at the Senior Center December 10th, and the second Tuesday every month. Call us at **268-8407** to make an appointment, (\$50). Piper can also do foot care in your home, (\$80). Call her at **413-522-8432** for a home appointment.

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. **413-338-2920**. *Funded by 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. **413-338-2920.**

Healthy Bones & Balance

Mary Bisbee leads HB&B, **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! This **free class** is *sponsored by RSVP*.

Tai Chi

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

Modern / Contemporary Dance

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

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. Other hours may also be available.

Just for Fun:

Arts & Crafts Open Studio

Make your own art/crafts in good company! Bring your supplies and enjoy the camaraderie of being with a group of folks who have shared interests. **This month, we only meet on December 12, 1-3 pm**. Contact **Gloria Black** at Gloriosa05@yahoo.com or 413-268-7767.

Men's Breakfast Group

Meets at the **Williamsburg Snack Shack** on **3rd Thursdays at 8:30 am (Dec. 19th)**. To join, email **Larry West** (landwest3315@yahoo.com) or stop in!

Ladies Who Lunch

Meets at the **Williamsburg Snack Shack** on **3rd Fridays at 11:30 am (Dec. 20th)**. **Please stop in and join us or call 268-8407 for info.** (Look for our sign!)

Other Services:

Technology Program

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

Tech Connect: You can also attend the Tech Connect Drop-in Center at **Meekins Library on the 2nd Tuesday, December 10th, 10 am — 12 noon**. Bring your device(s) and your questions! Call **413-296-5080** or for support available by email, contact: coaTechHelp@gmail.com.

SHINE

SHINE can help you with Medicare and Medicare-related insurance issues. If you want to speak to a SHINE agent, call the Senior Center to make an appointment. **268-8407 or 268-8410.**

Veteran's Service Officer

VA office hours are back! Stop in to see our rep, **Dan Nye** on 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 11:30—1:00, or call **413-587-1299** for appointments.

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, **Amy Phinney, 413-655-0123** for more info.

Stop in Mondays -Thursdays, 8:30-1:30

Let's Do Yoga Together!

Carol Conz leads "Lets do Yoga Together" on Mondays at 10:30 in the auditorium. This hour-long class uses simple Yoga poses to stretch and strengthen muscles. We start with standing poses then finish on the floor. Most but not all can be modified using a chair or to suit individual needs.

Contact Carol at carolconz57@gmail.com if you would like to join. Donations to the Senior Center are gratefully accepted.

News from the Transportation Desk

We are seeking more people to help with driving seniors to their appointments! If you would like to be one of our drivers, contact us or stop in during our office hours (8:30-1:30, Mon.-Thurs.) Stipends are paid by Highland Valley Elder Services or PVTa. Many of our drivers say volunteering is rewarding!

To inquire about driving, or to call for a ride, contact **Joy Moore 268-8407** or jmoore@burgy.org

SHINE Referrals Update

Caroline Solan is the new SHINE counselor. She is available for appointments on Wednesdays (weekly) at Highland Valley, 320 Riverside Drive in Florence. Please make an appointment by calling Highland Valley's (HV) Information and Referral Department at **413-586-2000, ext 999 (option 2)**. Please ask for SHINE or help with Medicare/insurance/open enrollment. Appointments can be done by phone or in person. You can also email Caroline at csolan@lifepathma.org.

SHINE appointments can also be made in the Life Path Greenfield office by calling 413.773.5555. If you have an urgent matter this is the best number to call.

For folks who have issues with Medicare and MassHealth coverage, you can call HV and ask the Intake and Referral Department to leave a message with Scott or Oonagh.

If you have MassHealth issues, please call Buliah Mae Thomas at Hilltown Community Health Center a 413.238.5511 or email bthomas@hchcweb.org.

Please see the regional section for more information.

Holiday Community Read Meekins Library

Sunday, December 8, 1:30-3:00 pm

Celebrate the spirit of the seasons:
Hanukkah, Christmas, Winter Solstice
For more info: www.meekins-library.org or
413-268-7472

Keeping Seniors On Safe Footing

The **Sand For Seniors Program** is a cooperative effort between the Hampshire County TRIAD, Williamsburg COA, and the Williamsburg Police and Fire Departments.

The program is meant as a preventative measure to ensure safety for seniors in winter months.

This year on November 9th approximately 36 sand buckets were delivered to seniors.

Thank you to TRIAD and the Williamsburg Police and Fire Department for providing this service.

Thank You!

Meal Site - Guest Cook Program

A big thank you to **Miana Hoyt Dawson and Katie See** (Pause and Pivot Farm) for the delicious meal – butternut squash shakshuka – with salad, homemade biscuits (and butter!), maple walnut blondie sundaes and beverages served on Nov. 7th.

While I am not so adventurous with foods I am not familiar with – it is always nice to try something new and different. And what a treat it was! Stay tuned for more Guest Cooks next year!
~MW





Manna Community Kitchen
FREE
Holiday Meal
December 25th, Noon-2 PM,
Edwards Church, 48 Elm Street, Northampton
Please register by Dec. 23rd to pick up
your meals or arrange free delivery.
Call or text us at 413-282-8086
mannanorthampton.org

Thank You for Your Support

During the course of the year, the senior center receives notes from seniors we have had contact with. It is usually to thank us for how we have helped them. I'd like to take this opportunity to share some of them with you. It is our turn to thank you for your donations that help us help them!

"Thanks for all you do."

"I have gained a great deal from these (exercise) classes over the years and greatly value their availability."

"It is such a relief to know I can get a ride to my MRI appointment tomorrow – without risking driving myself. Your program makes such a difference."

"A note to thank you for the assistance the senior center has provided to my husband and myself during the recent challenge for us. A heartfelt thank you!"

"Thank you for all you do to make this center a very welcoming place."

"I wanted to give you some good news. Mary Bisbee's Healthy Bones and Balance class has been instrumental in increasing my balance and coordination. The participants (who are now my friends) have a great time socializing, exercising and supporting one another."

"I was so sad and lonely and I started coming here for lunches. I feel so much better now."

"Thank you so much for today's Multi-Generational Luncheon with Goats. Everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to interface with the goats. Please extend our appreciation to your staff and members of the board that made this such a nice event."

"A constituent made a special effort to stop in today to compliment our newsletter."

"My mother always spoke very highly of the Williamsburg Senior Center. That's why we asked for donations in lieu of flowers."

Again, thank you for your support!
~Submitted by Melissa Wilson

The Williamsburg Senior Center Thanks You for All Your Generous Contributions!

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 447**, 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!

Bad News, Good News

Do you want the Bad news first? Then we will end with the Good, being positive as we are.

The Bad – scams are on the rise in frequency, diversity and impact. Around 50% of people of all ages are likely to lose money to a scam, sometimes hundreds of dollars. The types of scams, e.g., grandparent, social media hack, QR codes, etc., make our exposure and danger so much more likely than before. As for impact, in addition to including how awful we feel about being scammed, the total monetary cost per year in the US might be 10 billion dollars or more. That's dollars with a B.

The Good – more agencies and organizations are paying attention and marshaling resources! I've compiled a list of sources for avoiding and reporting scams.

AARP. The Association of Retired Persons keeps up with types of scams and issues alerts along with other educational materials. There is a Watchdog Alerts newsletter. Go to their scam web page: www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/

BBB. Better Business Bureau prepares topical scam alerts, highlighting current and most active scams. Mind-boggling. To sign up for their newsletter, go to www.bbb.org/us/news/scams, then scroll to the bottom and click on "Sign up for scam alerts".

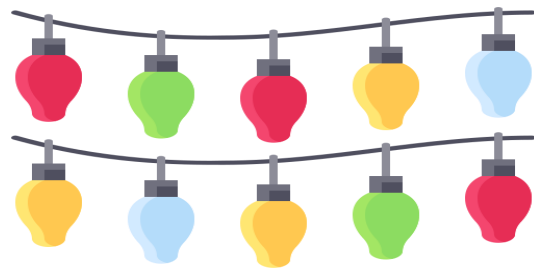
BBC. The British Broadcasting Corporation posts a page called Be Scam Safe with a really full set of scam videos and articles. Type into your browser "Be Scam Safe" to connect.

CFPB. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau at www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/fraud/ talks about understanding scams, knowing your rights, and how-to guides.

DA. The Northwestern District Attorney's office advocates for all residents, especially elders, focusing on education and prevention of consumer scams and elder exploitation. Go to www.northwesternda.org/prevention and click on Consumer Protection or call **413-586-9225**.

VA. The Veteran's Administration has a new service with information, reporting, and assistance on scams for veterans, service members, and their families. Visit www.VSAFE.gov, or call 1-833-388-7233.

Yours in safety,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com, 413-268-2228



Seniors Aware of Fire Education

The holiday season is upon us and most of these holiday observances involve electric lights and candles. Here are a few things you can do to keep your celebration bright and safe.



For indoor lights and decorations:

- Buy lights and electric decorations that are listed safe by an approved testing service.
- Check for and replace any lighting that has frayed wires, broken plugs, sockets or switches.
- Never overload outlets.
- Use no more than three (3) strings of lights on a single extension chord.
- Remember to turn off the tree lights and other electric decorations before going to bed.
- Consider using energy efficient LED lights that stay cool.
- Never use lit candles in the tree or near live or other flammable decorations.
- Keep lit candles at least a foot (12 inches) from flammable items.
- Never leave a lit candle unattended.

For outdoor lights and decorations:

- Only use electric decorations that are rated for outdoor use.
- Plug them into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Use electric connection protectors.
- Anchor outdoor lights and decorations with insulated holders or hooks.

Keep the holidays bright SAFElly!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.

Tech. Help and Training for December



We have more people to help you with your tech needs and requests. Our long period of low staffing is at an end. With more hands on deck we are hoping our final three months will have much higher efficiency and shorter response times.

More Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080**.

Being delivered now: Internet Hotspots

Need affordable internet access? Have you already requested affordable internet? We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access internet. They work like WIFI without cable or fiber service. Hotspots work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more about how these devices could benefit you, please contact us by phone or email. If you requested affordable internet and were not contacted in November, please reach out to us again. Calls to **413-296-5080** are now returned and email to coatechhelp@gmail.com is also a great way to reach us.

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

Ky Martus continues distributing devices. Please remind us if you requested one and are still waiting. We have more PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks and iPad and Android tablets. If you need or are waiting for a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device, please contact us. Email coatechconnect@gmail.com, leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Drop in Centers: All are Welcome at Any Location! (no appointment needed)

- Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00
Three Fridays, 11:30-1:30 (12/6, 12/13 & 12/27)
- Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (12/11)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12-2 (12/19)

- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (12/19)
- Westhampton: to be scheduled. Please contact us for details, coatechhelp@gmail.com or call **413-296-5080** for day/time.
- Williamsburg
Meekins Library Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 12/10 from 10 to Noon
Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 12/10 from 10 to Noon
- Worthington: tech support at COA office.
Call COA for date & time: 413-238-5962.

Tech Training:

Must pre-register for training no later than one week before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level. To register, email coaTechTrainer@gmail.com, call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Computer Classes:

Beginner's Windows Laptop Class will restart on Thursdays on December 12, 19 and January 9, 16 from 1:00 - 2:30.

Intermediate Windows Laptop Class starts, over six Wednesdays, 10:30-Noon. December 4, 11, 18 and Jan 8, 15, 22, 10:30-Noon.

Tech Workshops:

- 12/6, 10:30-11:30 Computer Maintenance
- 12/9, 1 - 2:30 Organizing, Storing, & Moving Digital Photos (ONLINE CLASS)
- 12/13, 10:30-11:30 Windows Accessibility
- 12/17, 1- 2:30 Android phones
- 1/10, 10:30 - 11:30 Misinformation
- 1/15, 12- 1:00 Self Learning
- 1/24, 10:30 -11:30 Google Suite
- 1/29, 10- 11:30 iPhones
- 1/29, 6 - 7:00 pm Learn & Watch: YouTube, Libby, Kanopy



On the Road Again...

2025 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 late April TBD. **Encore Casino.*** Boston Harbor casino trip. Lunch on your own, options available on site.

*Day Trip May TBD. **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum & Maggiano's Little Italy.*** Enjoy a delicious family-style lunch at Maggiano's. Tour three floors of galleries at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on your own or with a guide. Price TBD.

*Day Trip June TBD. **Winnepesaukee Railroad.*** Enjoy a delicious turkey dinner, prepared by Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant, aboard the train while touring the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. Price TBD.

*Multi Day Trip June 22-26. **Montreal & Ottawa. Passports required.*** Visit the Biodome, Notre Dame Basilica, Montreal's Underground City, Parliament Hill, Cruise on the St. Lawrence River. Price \$1,052. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by March 26, 2025. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above.

*Day Trip July TBD. **FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise.*** Start your day with a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy lunch at Mahoney's Irish Pub & Steakhouse (TBD.) Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the first Presidential Library. Price TBD.

*Day Trip August 3. Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ball-park-fare buffet for our group are included. Cost \$90.00. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above.*

*Day Trip Sept. TBD. **The BIG E,*** an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage.

*Day Trip Sept 5-Oct 26 TBD. **A Chorus Line.*** 50th Anniversary Production on stage at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Lunch at The Gelston House. More details to come. Price TBD. Wed.Thurs.Sun

*Multi Day Trip October 12-18. **Biltmore Estate & Smoky Mountains, Asheville, NC.*** Seven days, six nights. Visit the Biltmore Estate, the St. Lawrence Basilica, historic Gatlinburg, TN & Asheville, NC. Guided tour of the Smoky Mountains

National Park. Price \$1,099. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by July 18, 2025. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. ***As of December 2024, Diamond Tours is expecting this trip to go, despite the hurricane damage. Please stay tuned.***

*Day Trip Nov-Dec. **A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA.*** Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza--100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at The Chateau Restaurant. Price TBD. Sundays.

Good News for December

By Deborah Hollingworth

The Good News this month is a reminder that we have a resource called The Connector which can work for you if you have questions about benefits, resources, and services. When your circumstances change, and you could use some help, but don't know what's available or where to start, the Connector can help you "connect" with the resources you need.

This help is available to the seven hilltowns of Plainfield, Cummington, Worthington, Goshen, Chesterfield, Williamsburg and Westhampton through a grant from Highland Valley. We have helped people figure out housing options, determine if folks are eligible for benefits like fuel assistance, SNAP, Circuit Breaker property tax rebates, and if folks qualify for subsidies on their health insurance.

Often it's brainstorming on how to survive a change in medical conditions, or shrinking finances and increasing household overhead/bills. What to do when life throws us a curve ball, or when we might be worried about outliving our savings/investments.

The Connector can help you understand what's available when you're being discharged from a nursing home, or whether you might be eligible for MassHealth and whether MassHealth might pay family caregivers for the help they provide.

There's help out there, but unless you know the eligibility requirements... unless you know how the 'system' works... unless you know what's available... you can't get it, if you don't know about it.

The Connector is here to help you get those resources, over a phone call or a home visit to help with an application. Whatever works for your situation. It's a no cost resource, funded through Highland Valley.

To get help, call your COA and they will get you Connected!

Williamsburg Senior Center
141 Main Street
P.O. Box 447
Haydenville, MA 01039

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&
Our Many Volunteers

The Goshen Council on Aging invites you to a three part discussion group based on the book *Let's Talk About Death Over Dinner* by Michael Hebb.

* **January 7, 2025, 4-5pm**

Introduction and receive a copy of the book.

* **February 18, 2025, 4-6:30pm**

Catered dinner and a prompted discussion facilitated by Stacey Mackowiak, End of Life Doula.

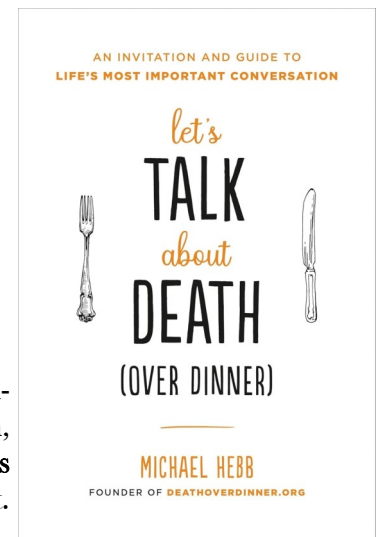
* **February 25, 2025, 4-5pm**

Follow up conversation (optional).

This important and engaging program is free and limited to 15 participants; older adults from all Hilltowns are welcome. Please contact Kerry Normandin, Goshen COA Director, by 1/3 to sign up: 413-268-9354 or coa@goshen-ma.us All three parts will take place in the John James Memorial Hall, 42 Main St. Goshen, MA. Funded by a grant from the MCOA.

"...encourages people to pull up a chair, break bread, and really talk about the one thing we all have in common."

"...transform your difficult conversations into an opportunity of celebration and meaning, changing not only the way we die, but also the way we live."



Massachusetts
Councils On Aging