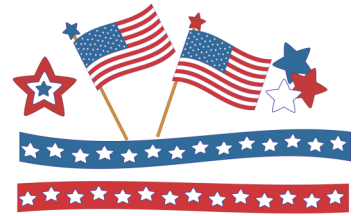


Worthington Corners

July 2020 COA Newsletter



Worthington Council on Aging
2 Packard Common
Worthington, MA 01098

Shelley Modestow Rice, COA Coordinator
Phone: 413-238-5532
coa@worthington-ma.us

Food Updates-

The Worthington Food Pantry (Sponsored by the Northampton Survival Center): Every week prior to Thursday, at 11am, those in need of groceries can call 413-238-1625 or drive-by pickup at the R.H. Conwell School. Pre-packed bags of groceries (fresh produce, pantry items, dairy and meat) will be put in your vehicle. If unable to drive, delivery is available.

Senior Grocery Shopping Hours

Check out your local grocery stores for updates on senior shopping hours:

- ⇒ Stop & Shop, 228 King Street, Northampton: stores.stopandshop.com; 413-584-9200
- ⇒ Big Y World Class Market, 136 N King St Rte 5, Northampton: 413-584-6137
- ⇒ Market 32 Price Chopper, 555 Hubbard Ave, Pittsfield: 413-442-7696; 413-496-9332
- ⇒ River Valley Co-op, 330 N King St., Northampton: 413-584-2665

Many thanks and appreciation for Kelly McCarthy, Director of Performance and Quality Improvement, at Highland Valley Elder Services. She has assisted each Hilltown COA with an opportunity to receive as much as \$3,500 of Title IIIB community support funds. Worthington's COA proposal was approved for upgrading the signage with digital capabilities to provide easy, ongoing communication for the town in a clear and concise manner. The overall vision of this grant is to use this money in a way that can increase communication with updated technology.



Kudos goes to the Hilltown Consortium which has agreed to use part of the SIG grant for a Zoom premium account for each town. Zoom provides a way in which people can meet with each other on their computer (video) or also using just audio by phone. This service provides you with the ability to speak to as many participants as needed at once, and you can view the webcam video of all the others in attendance. For a video tutorial, look up:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-video-tutorials>

Stay informed-

Visit the Town of Worthington website for ongoing updates in the town! **worthington-ma.us**

Read about the latest developments, news and activities in town!

Let us know if you want to receive this newsletter by email only. Send an email to: regionalcoanews@gmail.com

Updates on our Senior Programs:

Coffee & Chat

Postponed until further notice—we're looking at ways we could possibly meet outside while still following the social distancing rules.

Knitting Group

Postponed until further notice. Looking for someone to take the lead of this group. If interested, please call Shelley Rice: 413-238-4294

Healthy Bones & Balance- Temporarily postponed until further notice.

SHINE (Serving the health insurance needs of everyone) - Your SHINE officer is available for you: Deb Hollingworth 413-268-8317; Deborahhollingworth7@gmail. Deb will readily respond to all your emails!

Veteran's Service Officer

The VA office is available to all veterans. Tom Geryk may be reached at his office 413-587-1299. Worthington Town Hall Hours (once Town Hall reopens): 9:00 - 11:00; 2nd and 4th Monday of the month

Hilltown Van (Easy ride)- Call Ed Pelletier 413-238-4418 or Hilltown Easy Ride 413-296-4232

Brown Bag Program

The Food Bank of Western Mass. sponsors the Brown Bag Program, in which eligible seniors can get a FREE supplemental bag of groceries each month. Call us to apply (COA office phone): 413-238-4294

Annual COA Picnic: There will not be an annual COA picnic at the Rod & Gun Club this year. The COA is planning something special to replace this event that will adhere to the Covid-19 guidelines. More to follow...

A sincere thanks and gratitude goes out to the entire Chase family from the Rabbit Hole Restaurant & Tavern! For the past few months, with generous donations from the town, the Chase family has selflessly spent countless hours, time and resources providing the Town of Worthington with hot meals twice a week for those in need.

*Pictured below from left to right:
J Huntington Chase, Jim & Maria Beebe,
Christopher & Elaine Chase*



Inspirational Quote of the Month

"It is only in our darkest hours that we may discover the true strength of the brilliant light within ourselves that can never, ever, be dimmed."

-Doe Zantamata



The Worthington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Worthington Council on Aging. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

Please write your check to The Town of Worthington and send to Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098.

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Worthington Council on Aging

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



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

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

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

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

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

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

If so, please email Kristen at regionalcoanews@gmail.com to be put on the email list. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!



Eternal Electronic Life – or will it end?

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

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

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

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

Yes, life is more complicated,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

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

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

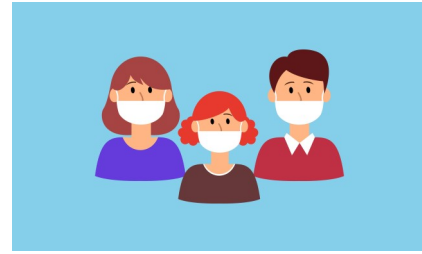
We’re also beginning to see a new way to socialize. Now that we can’t get out to a potluck luncheon, have extended conversations with neighbors at the dump, or get to church, we are learning new ways to do this virtually. Church services by Zoom...who would have imagined? And now we are learning new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

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



A COVID Note: Masking Hearing

By Jeane Anastas



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

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

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

Dare to Disrupt Aging!

Experiences in moving to the Digital World

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ter, the suggestion of a friend, a crisis management executive. "They hate it when people complain about customer service on social media," she claimed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



From AARP

Worthington Council on Aging
Attn: Shelley Rice
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Ways to still enjoy summer during Covid-19:

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

happy
Fourth
of July!