

Worthington Corners

August 2023 COA Newsletter



Worthington Council on Aging
2 Packard Common
Worthington, MA 01098

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Phone: 413-238-5962
coa@worthington-ma.us

Hello August!

“Any day in August is better than a day in January”- Keith Vik

Founders Day

The COA was pleased to be part of Founders Day on July 1st by collecting non-perishable food items for the Goshen Food Pantry.

Two hundred twelve pounds were collected, plus donations keep coming in. It's not too late. If you would still like to donate, you may leave your package in front of the COA office, located at the back of the store. The clerk working that day will securely put it in the office. A huge thank you to those who have donated to this cause.

Checks payable to Hilltown Pantry and cash are welcome: COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, or call Phyllis Dassatti for more info: 413-238-5962.

Annual Picnic

Rain did not dampen the spirits of the 80 guests who attended. Everyone was most appreciative and happy to be with friends and neighbors in such a comfortable space-indoors and outdoors. Worthy Q Smoke N' BBQ, Rick and Marianne Messier, did it again in providing an excellent BBQ lunch. Peter McLean and David LeTellier entertained with their guitar background music. Many thanks to the Board and our behind scenes helpers, Jay Dreschnack, John Burrows, Paul Sena, Scott Smith and Paxton Miller, culinary student at Taconic High School in Pittsfield and the grand-

son of proud grandma, LeAnn Mason to make this summer event the greatest.



There will be no potluck for the month of August.

Upcoming Activities

Potluck

September 11th, 12:00, Town Hall

In recognition of our purple heart recipients who so bravely served.

Sail Away with the COA
October 9th

Our destination is the breathtaking Adirondacks nestled in an exquisite and unspoiled mountain setting, Lake George. We'll take a 2-hour cruise aboard the M/V Lac du Saint Sacrement. A captain's luncheon buffet will be served onboard. Depart 8am from Worthington Congregational Church. 5:15pm approximate return. A similar trip sold out recently.... so reserve early!

Deadline: September 5th. Worthington senior resident discount price \$75; check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to: Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington. Please include your phone number and emergency contact. For more information, call Phyllis Dassatti at 238-5962. Underwritten by the Rolland Fund.

A much-deserved break: Peg Whalen will not have Tech Support in August. She will resume September 26th from 10am-12pm in the COA office. If you have any questions, you may email her at pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com

Great news: Newsletter funding secured!

In the July newsletter we talked about the possible lack of funding for the continued printing and mailing of this monthly newsletter. Good news (and a great relief!): the Northern Hilltown Consortium was able to secure a Service Incentive Grant from MA Council on Aging to fund the newsletter for another year. Jan Gibeau, chair of NHC says: **"Hooray—we did it...the written word lives for another year—and educational programs and conferences will continue. Can you believe it?"** On a personal note, I am pleased to know that we can look forward to receiving our monthly newsletter in the mail with all its wonderful stories and helpful info. Thanks to all who have joined our digital mailing list. To subscribe, please email

Kristen Estelle at regionalcoanews@gmail.com

Availability of Transportation

The proposal to MCOA for transportation funding has been granted on behalf of Plainfield, Cummington, Windsor, Goshen, Worthington and Westhampton COAs for residents over 60. The funds will subsidize the already existing "Hilltown Driver Pool" service that the Hilltown CDC provides. This is a separate service from the Easy Ride Van. Locally hired drivers are available to take individuals to doctors appointments or errands when the Van is not available. Please go to the HCDC website for more information on how to take advantage of this service:

www.hilltowncdc.org/transportation

Calendar of Events

Knitting, other crafts, color therapy, chit chat
August 8th, 3pm
COA office



Healthy Bones & Balance Class
Monday and Friday 10:00-11:00, Town Hall
Call Marcia Estelle at 238-5554 for more info.

Yoga Class
Sunday and Wednesday 9:30, Four Corners Farm
"First-timers": call Eileen at 238-4461 to check on the updated schedule.

Exercise Class
Judy will not be holding class in August.

Foot Nurse Clinic
September 25th at COA Office
Call Piper Sagan at 413-522-8432 to set up an appointment. Discounted price \$25

All Council on Aging activities are fragrance-free.

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!



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!

Your State Representatives

State Senator Paul Mark

Email: 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 Sadosa

Email: Lindsay.Sadosa@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; 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 onboard. 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 or text your name and questions to **413-296-5080**.

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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

