

Worthington Corners

April 2025 Newsletter



Worthington Council on Aging
2 Packard Common
Worthington, MA 01098

Phyllis Dassatti, COA Coordinator
Phone: 413-238-5962
coa@worthington-ma.us

Welcome April!

"Despite the forecast, live like it's Spring."
~Lilly Pulitzer

"As a wise man once said 'April Fools Day is for amateurs. You NEVER need an excuse to mess with people's heads'". ~Al Yankovic

Embrace Spring With a Flowering Plant!

Spring Flowering Plant Giveaway



Monday, April 14th 11am-12pm
Curbside- Worthington Congregational Church

No reservation necessary- first come, first serve
One per household.

Save The Date: May 12th at 12pm Potluck Luncheon at Town Hall

Lafayette Visit To Worthington- Members of the Worthington Lafayette Committee will attend our May Potluck luncheon on May 12 to explain the festivities planned for the weekend of June 13-14 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's visit to Worthington. Two hundred years ago, General Lafayette stopped overnight in Worthington while on his visit to all twenty five United States.

(There will be no potluck luncheon in April.)

April 17th, 12pm-1pm

Grab' n 'Go Meal

Pick up at Town Hall

Choices for the free monthly meal (every third Thursday): Chive and Cheese Quiche, or Pasta Primavera, Garlic Bread, Broccoli, and Chilled Peaches. RSVP at **238-1999** (deadline is April 14) with name, phone number and the names of additional people receiving the meal. One time enrollment forms are available at the Town Hall and

COA bulletin board. You may drop off the completed form in the Town Office and COA drop box. You can fill out the form when you pick up the meal by reservation. Bringing your own bag will be helpful. A donation to the Highland Valley Elder Services would be appreciated. There will be a glass container on the table for your convenience.



Photo courtesy of Ed Pelletier

The March 10 St Pat's Celebration was a "blast", from the amazing luncheon prepared by the Chesterfield General Store, to singing along with the live music of the "Rolling Scones." RH Conwell students also entertained with their Irish limericks.



Hugh Corner reciting his Irish Limerick.

Photo courtesy of Ed Pelletier.

Free Property Address Markers

Fire Department representative, Janine Modestow, described how to get free property address markers at the March luncheon, stressing the importance of having emergency personnel to easily find your house.

A joint effort of the COA, Fire Department, and Town volunteers are offering free property address markers. Address markers make 911 calls

more efficient, reducing the time it takes for caregivers and emergency personnel to find your house. The Robo call will be set up April 21 with a deadline of May 5. To reserve yours, call **238-1999**, with your name, address and phone number. Supply is limited. Free Installment will be provided by town volunteers.

Hilltown CDC Community Development Grant

The Town of Chesterfield, as the lead community with Hilltown CDC, is applying for a Community Development Block Grant. Additional communities that will be served by the grant include Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Savoy, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington. If awarded, the funds help support the Goshen Food Pantry, the Hilltown Elder Network HEN, the Health Outreach Program for Elders, and the housing Rehabilitation Program, in all eight towns. If anyone would like to support this grant, survey forms can be found at the Town Hall.

Natural Ways for a Restful Night's Sleep

Are you having trouble drifting into a peaceful, nourishing slumber? You're not sitting up at night alone. More than 60 million Americans suffer from poor sleep quality. It negatively affects your mood, memory, and it boosts your risk for depression, obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. Here are some foods to eat before bedtime.

- Almond butter crackers- Like cashews and pistachios, almonds are another nut with bedtime benefits. They contain melatonin and magnesium to contribute to better rest.
- Kiwi? Eating two kiwi fruits one hour before bed for four weeks helps you fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.

Healthline.com

Calendar of Events

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 9:30-10:30, Town Hall
"First timers": call Eileen Daneri at 238-4461 to check on any schedule changes.

Exercise Class

Monday 4:00-5:00 pm Aerobic Training
Thursday 4:00-5:00 pm Strength Training
At the Town Hall
Cost: \$10 per class; \$12 per class for walk-in.
Call Judy at 238-4457 for more info.

Tech Help

Eileen Daneri can make home visits for tech help until a designated meeting time and place is set. You may contact her at **238-4461** or eadaneri@gmail.com



**All COA Events are Fragrance Free.
Transportation can be provided.**

Contact Phyllis: 413-238-5962,
coa@worthington-ma.us

***The Cummington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue
our important programs for local seniors!***

I would like to contribute to the Cummington COA. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

*(Please make out your check to Cummington Council of Aging and mail to
Cummington COA, PO Box 95 Cummington, MA 01026.)*

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____



Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Preventing Electrical Fires

Here are some things you should look for and do to prevent electrical fires.



Call 911 if you experience any of these warning signs:

- arcs, sparks, or short circuits
- sizzling or buzzing sounds
- odor like a vague smell of something burning

Call a licensed electrician if you experience these warning signs:

- frequent tripped circuit breakers or blow fuses
- dimming or flickering lights, light bulbs that pop or wear out too fast
- overheated plugs, cords or outlets
- shock or mild tingling
- loose plugs
- damaged wires or faulty outlets

Some things you can check on your own are:

- overloaded outlets - only one appliance on an outlet
- electric cords behind furniture, couches, and bureaus
- overloaded power strips, most are for low current devices
- frayed wires, cracked insulation or any damage
- extension cords not properly rated for appliances
- cord or wire nailed into place can short out or arc
- do not use indoor rated cords outdoors.

Be charged up for a SAFE spring!

--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.

Social Security Safety, part 1

Assuming you have been following the news, you could - should? be aware of the safety of your Social Security information. I have recently learned that we can block access to our Social Security account from someone who has a nefarious intent. Because I have online access to my account, I proceeded to check this out.

So I tried to set a block. And failed. I could not get into my account using ID.me which is what I signed for a couple of years ago. I did get into my account using what I thought was an old user name and password. But then there was no option to block anyone else.

Stay tuned – I Will make this work!

In the meantime, remember the old safety warnings. Don't carry your card with you. Don't share your number over the phone, EVER. Don't give out your number unless it really is necessary; when someone asks for your number, push back nicely. Ask why they need it, what is the consequence of them not having it.

It is a good idea to create your own online account, at **www.ssa.gov/myaccount** That way even if someone gets your number they can't adopt your account for their own. With an online account, you can:

- Get your benefit verification letter
- Check your benefit and payment information and your earnings record
- Change your address and phone number
- Start or change direct deposit of your benefit payment
- Get a replacement Medicare card
- Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S for tax season.

As always, stay safe.

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



Tech. Help and Training for April



GREAT NEWS!

TechConnect will continue providing services through a partnership with Northampton Open Media. Although we have fewer trainings going forward, drop-ins and tech support will continue. Please take advantage of ongoing service.

DELIVERING NOW AND ACCEPTING NEW REQUESTS: Internet Hotspots

It's not too late if you need affordable internet access! We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access the internet, and they work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us by phone or email. Call **413-296-5080** or email **coatechdevices@gmail.com**.

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** or check the website, **www.northernhilltownscoas.org**, for locations and time. You can attend drop-in at all locations, except Nash Hill.

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

Please remind us if you requested one and are still waiting. There is still time to join the Digital World. We have ordered more PC laptops/ computers, refurbished Chromebooks, iPads 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 **coatechdevices@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
Two Fridays, 11:30-1:30 (4/4 and 4/18)
- Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (4/9)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12pm-2pm (4/17)

- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (4/17)
- Westhampton Library, 1 North Rd. Drop-in tech support, 4th Thurs. 2-4pm (4/24)
- Williamsburg Meekins Library Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 4/8 from 10:30-12:30
Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 4/8 from 10 to Noon

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**

Tech Workshops, April into August:

*On Fridays twice a month from **10:30–11:30** at
Chesterfield Community Center*

- 4/4 - Social Media
- 4/18 - Cloud Basics
- 5/2 - Intro to Google Suite
- 5/16- Microsoft Word
- 6/6 - Microsoft Excel
- 6/20 - Canva
- 7/18 - Windows Basics
- 8/1 - Google Drive

Computer Classes:

No ongoing computer classes are scheduled. An alternate online resource for basic training can be accessed, with help from us, at **www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/login/?location=17640-MG8N-techconnect**

We can set up your access to this website and help you begin to train yourself for very basic to more advanced beginner digital literacy.



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 May 6. One day at **Encore Casino in Everett, MA.** \$20 in Free Slot play. Lunch on your own. Restaurants on site. Cost \$40. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to the address **NOW. A few seats open.**

Day Trip May 8. Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition at Saunders Castle at Park Plaza Boston, MA. Lunch at Venezia. Cost \$144.00. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by April 8.

Day Trip May 19. 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. Price \$144. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address **NOW. Waitlist only.**

Day Trip June 17 Isles of Shoals Cruise in Portsmouth, NH. Lunch at Foster's Clambake in York, Maine. Cost \$154. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by May 17.

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. Payment of \$1,052 due **NOW.** Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **Waitlist only.**

Day Trip July 16. FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise. Take a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy a boxed lunch on board. Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the first Presidential Library. Price \$140. Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by May 28. **Waitlist only.**

Day Trip August 3. Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox Woo Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies Lehigh Valley IronPigs** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ballpark-fare buffet are included. Cost \$90.00. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above by June 1.

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

Day Trip Oct. 9. A Chorus Line. Center orchestra seating for the 50th Anniversary Production on stage at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Center Orchestra seating. Lunch at The Gelston House. Price \$177. Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by August 1.

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. Make

the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. **As of April, Diamond Tours is expecting this trip to go, despite the hurricane damage around the area. Please stay tuned. A 2nd bus has a few open seats.**

Day Trip Sunday, December 7. 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 \$160 (approx.) Make a check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to the address above by August 1.

Good News for April 2025

Let's talk about the "Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset", what many of us called the offset rule that effected our social security benefits (reducing them).

On January 6th, President Biden signed into law the Social Security Fairness Act that **ENDS** the offset! The American Federation of Teachers estimates this will effect more than 100,000 Massachusetts teachers. Municipal workers and Federal employees will be affected too. All this means your social security retirement benefit is going to increase starting April 1st! But it gets better. Your increased benefit actually started January 2024....which means you will get a lump sum amount to catch up. After that you should see an increased monthly social security benefit which the Biden administration estimates at about \$350/month for over 2.8 million Americans. That first "catch up" amount is supposed to happen April 1st, so check your bank statement for an additional U.S. Treasury deposit.

This Good news may have some drawbacks. The first is: don't try to contact the social security office now since they are flooded with folks calling asking for help calculating their new benefit. Wait times on phone calls can be up to 3 hours.

But more concerning is this new income may impact your public benefits like MassHealth, SNAP, and the Medicare Savings Program. MassHealth has decided not to count windfall income for the next 6 months. So we have until October before this new income will be counted.

If you think you might be at risk of losing benefits because your income and assets have increased, you should contact your senior center for a SHINE appointment for questions about the Medicare Savings Program and check to see if you can have a conversation with the Connector program for other benefits.

Worthington Council on Aging
Attn: Phyllis Dassatti
PO Box 7
Worthington, MA 01098

Worthington COA

Phyllis Dassatti,
Coordinator
coa@worthington-ma.us
413-238-5962

Camille Smith, Chair
Helyn Myrick, Co-Chair
Judy Sena, Secretary
Helen Pelletier
Pat Kennedy
Susan VanBuren
Eileen Daneri
Marykay Farley
Jay Dreschnack

Kristen Estelle,
Newsletter Designer
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

**Spring/ Summer Clothing
Exchange**

Saturday, April 26th, 9am-3pm

Goshen Congregational Church
45 Main St. Goshen



Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent! Drop off your washed, gently-used men's, women's and children's spring/summer clothing and accessories at the church on Wednesday 4/23 from 6-8pm or Friday 4/25 from 9am-3pm (you can also call Laura at 268-7005 to arrange a different time), then come back to shop on Sat. the 26th from 9am-3pm! All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not.

**Let's Keep Talking About Death-
Part 2**

**May 20, May 27 and June 3rd
4:00-5:30pm**

**John James Memorial Hall
42 Main St. Goshen**

We are continuing our series of conversations based on *Let's Talk About Death Over Dinner* by Michael Hebb. Sessions will be led by End of Life Doula Stacey Mackowiak and take place over three sessions-May 20, May 27, and June 3 from 4:00-5:30pm.

More info to come in the May newsletter.
All are welcome!

