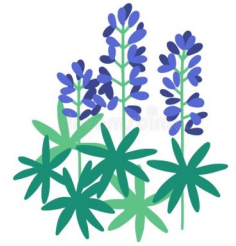


Chesterfield Council on Aging

June 2020 Newsletter



Chesterfield COA & Community Center
400 Main Road, PO Box 7
Chesterfield, MA 01012

Jan Gibeau, Director
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com
413-296-4007

Chesterfield Community Support Group Opens Community Cupboard

A new volunteer group including Denise Cormier, Nancy Rich, Don Willard (new selectman) and Megan Willard (recreation committee) and sons, Trish Colson-Montgomery (selectwoman), Amy Gavalis (library trustee) and Tim McElroy; Gail (COA board) and Mike Lucey, Marianne Drake, Greg Monette (Chesterfield General Store & Cafe) Jesse McMillan (principal, New Hingham), Ron Tadiello and Max Merony, all pulled together to resurrect, clean and sanitize the former recreation committee shed to turn it into an open cupboard providing free supplies of food and other items to make life easier for individuals and families in town who continue to struggle with these tough times. It's located behind the town hall and open daily from 8am to 7pm. We have received donations of both food and other goods from many sources. Most recently, the Hilltown Community Development contributed \$500 to expand and continue the program as the need for help continues. Want to make a donation? There is a donation box in the Cupboard but you can also send a check to Chesterfield Community Cupboard, Box 7, Chesterfield Ma 01012.



CHESTERFIELD COMMUNITY CUPBOARD

FOOD FOR BODY AND MIND

Worried about going into stores?
Come check what we have!

Out of work and need a little help?
Come check what we have!

Just read your last book? Finished your last jig-saw? Come check what we have!

OPEN DAILY 8-7
BROWN SHED BEHIND TOWN HALL

DONATIONS WELCOME

Food, Books of Recent Vintage, Puzzles

Profile: New Selectman Don Willard

Chesterfield has a new member of the Select Board. He may be new in this role but he's been an important part of the life of our community for years. He's been on the Chesterfield Goshen Regional School Committee for 11 years and the Chairman for the last 2 years. He currently serves on the Cemetery Committee. As the Chair of the Recreation Committee for over 15 years, he and his wife Megan have been hardworking creators of a wide array of sports and other creative activities for the young people in town. Don has been a wrestling, soccer, baseball and running club coach for many with a special attention to activities that are inclusive and not focused on just the "winners" on a team.

Don is not just committed to the lives and development of kids. He is equally committed to the life and development of the community itself. Most recently, Don and Megan have played a major role in the creation of the Chesterfield Community Cupboard, a place that provides free food and other supplies during this pandemic.

Born in 1973, Don grew up on a small farm on the outskirts of Northampton. From early on he enjoyed being outdoors, a love that has endured throughout his life. He also learned the meaning of responsibility as he did chores and helped his family raise horses. It seems that from childhood on he has been a believer of DIY (do it yourself). Don is a "doer". From dabbling in a lot of projects as a kid, he learned how to gather used materials from many sources to build things, among them a go-kart. Liking to build evolved into building his own house with Megan. His parents took the view that if your grades were good, your freedom to do other things grew, a philosophy he now follows with raising his four sons.

Don graduated from Fitchburg State and after completing his year of student teaching, he went on to become, at age 27, the fourth generation of his family to join Willard Concrete Company. By the age of 30 he became Vice President and two years later became President, running a company with two divisions: concrete and sand/gravel. It was a business requiring hard work, but it was also very rewarding. Don is proud of the success of a company that provided good service for 99

years. It closed in 2016.

Since then, he has more time to be with his family and contribute more hours to being a volunteer. Becoming a member of the Select Board seems like another logical way to help the community. Respecting and appreciating the contributions of Bob Recos who served the town for 16 years, Don met with Bob to hear his views, advice and council before beginning his new role. Don hopes to serve as a voice of the community by actively listening to the views of people in town, being straightforward in addressing issues and believing in the need to be accountable. As someone who has worked with Don on the Chesterfield Goshen Regional School Committee for many years, I am confident that he will keep his word.

Happy Birthday in June!

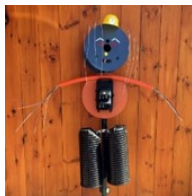


James Dawson, Barbara Smith, Patricia Murphy, Joyce Desaulniers, Gary Denno, Colleen Graves, Susan Barrett-Jones, Michael McMaster, James Kitchen, Scott Frenier, Gary Graves, Kenneth Jones, James Matus, Nancy Boyle, Michael Harris, Thomas Osborne, Robert Westgate, Karen Gaggin, Peter Mikucki, Ronald Wozniak, Laura Figgie, Robert Lyon, Walter Stasz, Kristin Healy, Robert Lovell, Mary Snape, Robert Gaggin, Nancy Henshaw, Thomas Boyle, Harold Jasmin, Spencer Timm, Douglas Fraser, Cynthia Dunbar-Randall, Robert Recos, Virginia Kirk, Nanette Clark, Pauline Osborne



Chester Ushers in a New Communication Era for Chesterfield

Chester, the Broadband Chesterfield mascot, may be made out of spare fiber-optic parts, but he knows that communication is key at any time, and especially these days. In Chesterfield, with a population of 1,200 and around 644 residences, the lack of high-speed internet access can be a challenge for students learning at home, professionals working from home, older residents unable to visit their doctors, or many of us just wanting to watch a movie. However, with a State grant of \$890,000 and a town-approved override of \$1.51 million, the Chesterfield Municipal Light Plant (MLP), working



with Whip City Fiber of Westfield, is building their own fiber-optic network to change all of that. "I believe broadband in Chesterfield would be as important as any other infrastructure the Town has like roads, electricity, and telephone," said Roger Fuller, long-time member of the Chesterfield Select Board.

Broadband Chesterfield is a unique collaboration between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Chesterfield, and Whip City Fiber of Westfield, a municipal utility, to bring much-needed internet access to Chesterfield. The Town voted to subsidize connecting 99% of houses to the network provided that people sign up by June 15, thus providing residents with a cost-free hook-up. "This is a Town-owned network," explains Justin West, the volunteer MLP Manager, "We run it and we set the rates. It is truly a collaborative effort."

Broadband Chesterfield is offering 1-gigabit internet service for \$85 per month and telephone service for \$14.99. This level of service, at this cost, will be invaluable for the hilltown. Jesse McMillan, Principal of the New Hingham Regional Elementary School, is thrilled about getting broadband in Chesterfield. "Technology and the internet, when utilized responsibly, are invaluable tools in the world of education. Unfortunately, many of our students and families are impacted by the digital divide, but Chesterfield's commitment to the broadband project eliminates the equity issue and affords us the opportunity to energize learning experiences in new ways by enhancing and extending learning beyond the classroom and bridging gaps in communication." Jan Gibeau, Director of the Council on Aging, adds, "Broadband can't get here soon enough. Despite the myth that older adults don't use computers, the reality is that 67% of people over the age of 60 regularly go online. Much of my work as director of the Council on Aging is regularly interrupted, delayed, or even lost with our current, outdated system. It's high time to catch up."

In addition to allowing students and older adults access to the internet, tele-medicine, and videoconferencing with family and friends, there is a growing number of people who want to live in the hilltowns but need to work from home. Without high-speed internet, this is virtually impossible.

"Volunteers have made this possible," says West, "Everything from advising, stuffing envelopes, to calling people; this has been an amazing effort, thanks to people's willingness to pitch in, support from the State, the Town administration, and everyone's excitement to finally get connected."

Chester, the Broadband Chesterfield Mascot, seems to embody the New England spirit of "We can get it done!" that makes something like a Town-owned broadband network a reality.

(Continued on next page)

Broadband Chesterfield Contact:
Justin P. West
MLP Manager, Town of Chesterfield
broadband@townofchesterfieldma.com
413-296-4371

More...in case you've been wondering

About Broadband Chesterfield:

Broadband Chesterfield is operated by the Chesterfield Municipal Light Plant and is dedicated to bringing high-speed broadband service to Chesterfield. The mission of Broadband Chesterfield is to provide all residents of Chesterfield with the opportunity to access high-speed broadband in an affordable and sustainable manner.

Chester, the Broadband mascot, points to the thermometer in front of Chesterfield Town Hall that shows the current number of subscribers. Chester is made of fiber optic spare parts donated by Whip City Fiber of Westfield.

The Basics of Broadband

Remember the days when we just turned on our TVs and watched a program? Remember when phones were on the wall and only large corporations had computers? Now people walk around with phones that fit in the palm of their hands that are not just phones, but TVs and computers as well.

If this is sometimes confusing, welcome to the club! I am sure there are lots of people out there who have lots of questions and waiting to sign up for Broadband Chesterfield until they get their questions answered.

The good news is that we are here to help! Here are three ways to get quick, complete, and easy-to-understand answers to your questions:

1. Check out our website for Frequently Asked Questions, videos, and up-to-date information:
<https://sites.google.com/townofchesterfieldma.com/broadband-chesterfield/updates> or visit the Whip City Fiber site at www.whipcityfiber.com/chesterfield

2. Email us: mlpmanager@townofchesterfield.com or give us a call at 413-296-4771 and press #6 to leave a message and we will call you back.

Remember that to qualify for the free drop (a minimum \$625 value) you MUST sign up before July 4th. (the initial subscription period)! You can sign up at www.whipcityfiber.com/chesterfield

Any questions? Just ask!



Ways to reduce stress during COVID-19

⇒ **Take a deep breath** By Sarah Prince

Sarah here, missing my time with my chair yoga class friends.

Here is a little something for them and all of you whether you have ever done any yoga or not.



Why cultivating nasal breathing is good practice:

I am sure we have all been told to take a deep breath more than once. So knowing how to actually get the most out of your next inhale is a good thing. Try this: Tuck your hands behind you so you can press the palms or backs of your hands to feel your lower back ribs. First breathe in thorough your mouth to the count of 3 or 4 or 5, whatever is comfortable for you. Allow a comfortable exhale, perhaps with a sigh. Then do it with your mouth closed. Perhaps you will feel a difference as to how much the ribs move in each case. If you don't, no problem, just doing this little exercise has probably brought more oxygen into your system.

Breathing through your nose has many benefits, including pain management, because it creates a neurological calm due to activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

Yoga, like life, begins and ends with the breath. Next month I will share some ways to enhance health with variations in our exhales.

⇒ **Accentuate the positive while facing difficult times; it's good for your health**

Many people have offered information about positive living but one author, Joanna Castro, from Lifestyle Fifty, best captures the "11 Positive Things Nobody tells you about Aging", which are reprinted below:

1. You don't always have to be right

Remember when you were younger, how important it was to be right? Well, as the years pass by, we begin to understand that being right isn't nearly as important as listening to and weighing up every side of the argument, even possibly deferring to someone else's point of view. We begin to understand that it's often better to lose a few battles in order to win the war.

2. You learn not to judge

In the Western world, we learn early on to want material things and strive to get them. While this isn't altogether bad, it often brings with it envy and jealousy. We might begin to judge others on their material assets and not on who they are as people. As we get older, 'stuff' becomes less important than people and relationships and we learn not to judge, but just to accept people as they are.

3. You begin to want Less

We accumulate so much 'stuff' on our journey

through life in the Western world and much of this is redundant and in excess of what we actually need. As we get older, we begin to realize that sometimes less is more. It's an incremental understanding that we don't need to surround ourselves with a whole lot of material things.

4. You gain more confidence in making decisions.

It's true age brings wisdom. It can also bring more confidence. Why? Because we accumulate Experience with a capital "E" as we journey through life and our life lessons are powerful tools to draw from to make future decisions. Yes we've made mistakes, but we've learned from them and that instills an innate confidence for future decision making.

5. Your children become your friends

It's hard to think of our children as friends when they are firstly so dependent upon us and then perhaps when they're rebellious against us, or even hate us, during their teenage years. What nobody tells us is that as they become adults, grow into their own lives and fulfill their own dreams, we as parents take on a different role. Children now return to the family home and hearth as individuals in their own right and as friends.

6. You understand that there's no point in telling anyone what to do.

At some stage in your life you might feel the urge to proffer unsolicited advice and think that you're doing someone a favor. At a certain age, you then realize that there's no point in telling anyone what to do, that actually, if you think about it, being given advice you didn't ask for doesn't feel very nice. What does feel good though is if someone plants a seed for you to ponder which leads you on to find the right answer yourself.

7. You learn that wrinkles should be worn with pride.

For women especially, the onset of the first wrinkle is a day of some grief and in the years of growing up, a wrinkle free face is falsely deemed a prerequisite of beauty by our youth-centric society. Later in life, we realize that we are fortunate to be growing old and that wrinkles stand as a testimony to our experiences. It shows that we have successfully navigated the troughs and peaks of life. Wrinkles represent the days of our lives, each telling a different story.

8. You are able to treat your parents with unconditional respect.

Our parents, although we love them, may have driven us mad at some point in our lives, and for those of us with children ourselves, the pattern is repeated. As we get older, we learn how to treat our mothers and fathers with respect and how to have patience as they reach their autumn years because we have better understanding of the trials and tribulations they have gone through in the process of aging.

9. It's O.K. to play the fool again

As children we laughed, played the fool and generally didn't think too much about what other people thought

about us. Then our egos developed, self awareness set in and we began to reign in our inner child, and squash the idiosyncratic part of us that was once so spontaneous. When we reach a certain age, it begins to matter less what other people think and not taking ourselves so seriously becomes an option once again.

10. You learn not to criticize

As we get older, we learn there's little value to be gained by criticizing anyone. If we need to say something, it's far better to say something positive than dwell on what's negative. By mid-life, we have learned through trial and error that positive reinforcement always puts us in a much better position.

11. You are thankful for growing old

Not everyone grows old. Many die before their time or in the prime of their life. With age comes gratitude and the knowledge that with every passing year we are privileged, and being grateful becomes a daily ritual that enhances our lives in so many positive ways.

⇒ Want to fight boredom? Try takeout in local Hilltown places

- Chesterfield General Store and Cafe': Fresh bread, sandwiches, muffins, bialys, pizza hot dinners and groceries .
- Snack Bar, Williamsburg: seafood, burgers, chowder, sandwiches, salads
- Elbow Room Williamsburg: Freshly ground coffee, flour, maple syrup: Order and pickup.
- Williamsburg Market: groceries, meats, baked goods, cleaning supplies and toilet paper
- A-1 Hilltown Pizza: pizza, sandwiches, dinners. Order and Pick up.
- Rabbit Hole: Worthington.
- Crabapple Farm Chesterfield: Fresh greens and seasonal veggies, meats, ice cream
- Sawyers Farm: Fresh produce plus other food and supplies. Can order and pickup.
- Creamery in Cummington: groceries and supplies. Can order and pick up.





Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



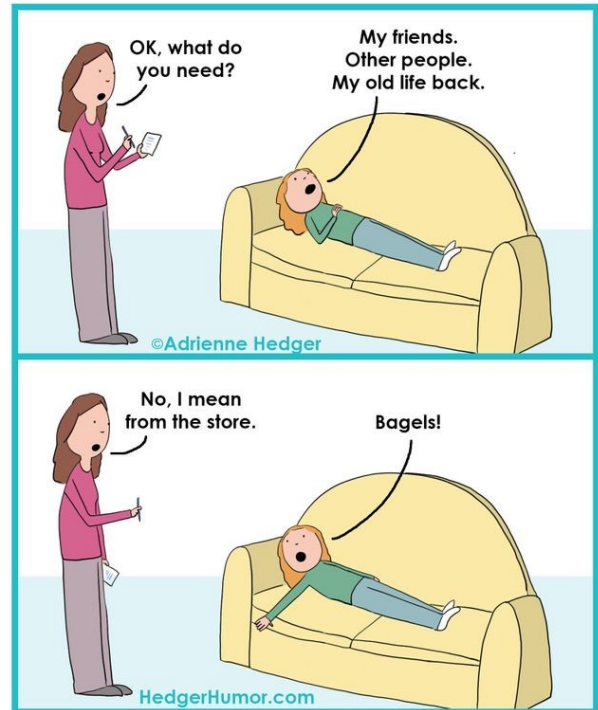
As we stay at home during the pandemic, it gives us a good opportunity to do a safety check of our homes. This month the focus is on electrical safety. Here are some things to think about and/or do:

- Electrical work should be done by a licensed electrician.
- Check all electrical appliances and replace cracked, damaged or loose cords.
- Have outlets replaced if plugs do not fit snugly or the outlet does not accept plugs with one blade larger than the other.
- Plug only one high-wattage appliance into an outlet at a time, even if there is space for another one.
- Avoid using extension cords as fixed features.
- Be sure that arc fault interrupters have been professionally installed to shut off the electricity when a dangerous situation occurs.
- Find reasons for blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers and have an electrician inspect and correct the problem.

--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.*

Scenes From Self-Isolation



**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!

Sorry – more organization!

One of my cousins is very well organized. I am her backup executor and every year she sends me an updated list of all her financial stuff including passwords. For most of us, it is an amazement to get this done once, never mind every year. But if we can emulate her, our survivors will thank us! Here is a list of questions that should be addressed, with the answers written out and given to those who will deal with our affairs. Do recognize that the person who holds your power of attorney, or eventually your executor, will be able to access documents. But giving them a jump start is really helpful.

- * Do you have a will, where is it kept, and who is the attorney who prepared it?
- * Have you given someone a power of attorney for financial affairs? If so, who is it, and where is the document kept?
- * Have you given someone a power of attorney for health care? Same questions as above.
- * Have you done a MOLST and/or other end of-life instructions? And where are those?
- * What bank do you use?
- * Do you have a safety deposit box? Where is the box located and where are the keys? Do you have a current list of contents for the box? And where is it? I hope not only in the box...
- * Where are essential personal papers such as birth and marriage certificates, Social Security and military service records, retirement papers?
- * Where are life, health, and property insurance policies kept? Who issued each of the policies and how do you reach them?
- * Do you have a financial adviser? How do you reach him or her?

Feel free to add any questions that apply specifically to you and that are not covered here. Thanks to Marsha Goetting at the Montana State Extension Service for the genesis of this list.

Neatly,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

I'm hoping as you read this next month, in June, that Spring has finally arrived and we have seen the last of frost and snow. Safe to plant tomatoes, safe to begin to relax our social distancing? However, the landscape has changed, and getting together in large groups may not be part of our lives for a while. If there is good news in all this, it is that we have discovered new ways to help each other. Neighbors are volunteering to help those who cannot get out to do grocery shopping, need to get to medical appointments, or just need to hear another voice. Check and chat activities have sprung up, more of us are learning to Zoom and connect virtually. All of us are checking in with our family and friends more often, and developing a new appreciation for what, perhaps, we had taken for granted....human contact.

Hilltown senior centers are creating a host of new activities, and thinking of new ways to be safe, promote wellness, and stay in touch. If you want to volunteer to help a neighbor, if you need food, if you need puzzles, books, or help with errands, the Good News this month is that you can call your senior center, it's just a phone call away.



Explore the World without Leaving Home

Feeling cooped up and longing to explore a new landscape or historic interior?

Here are some virtual tours to explore online:

- Virtual MA, Massachusetts Regional Tourism Councils: www.massvacation.com/virtual-ma
- Panoramables: www.panoramables.com
Rich, detailed tours photographed by local photographer Mark Roessler.
- Visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see its British Galleries and a presentation:
www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2020/british-galleries
- Historic Deerfield is a treat in its digital form: www.historic-deerfield.org.
- Mass Moments is a daily almanac of Massachusetts history. Visit the website to read short essays depicting an event in Massachusetts for each day of the year:
www.massmoments.org



Listen by Naomi Shihab Nye

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.
Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.

Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to gaze at bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
It is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.



Living in a New World

Covid-19 has launched people of all ages into a new world of cyber communication. It's a "push that came to shove" when the triple challenge emerged to protect older adults from exposure to the virus, finding ways to stay close while following guidelines for social distancing and reach out to each other as the new norms of "normal life" evolve.

We are fortunate that the timing of changes comes as we are finally about to get Broadband in the Hilltowns. Learning to use the internet is becoming more and more a necessity than a luxury as we build stronger communities.

Highland Valley Elder Services has informed us that "each Council on Aging can receive as much as \$3500 of Title IIIB community support funds to better equip COAs in providing services in creative and adaptive ways, to meet the changing needs of our senior population due to Covid-19. "The goal is to allow COAs to promote greater capacity to provide remote services to consumers during the Covid pandemic and beyond."

Some examples of funding include upgraded technology and capacity to communicate by using updated technology and internet services

What kind of programs do we envision? One of the most important issues in developing "Age Friendly Communities" is the desire for more and more accessible information about life in our communities, not just about older adults, but for everyone. Some of us will be setting up computer classes using interactive screens to teach the basics for small groups wanting to talk with each other in limited but social distancing locations. Much better than a teacher moving from person to person to coach you by looking over your shoulder at individual small screens. It'll all be on a big screen onsite that allows you to actually see how to operate and change information tailored to your community or region. It could also be done through the internet with a teacher available both in person and online.

Three of the COAs in the Hilltowns already provide exercises with Joan Griswold's use of ZOOM classes and others are invited. Funding from Highland Valley currently supports this important program. More than one chair yoga teacher plans to also offer some online classes. Who would have thought that we could expand contact and health programs by seeing each other virtually? It's not the same as up front and personal, but as we gradually move toward safer ways of coming together we can also keep our online relationships going.

By the time you read this, you will have no doubt learned of other new programs and services. The Chesterfield COA has wanted for some time to let people what is going on at the Community Center without having to come inside.



Chesterfield Council on Aging
400 Main Road, P.O. Box 7
Chesterfield, MA 01012

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Greenfield MA

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*Travel Group: Mary Ann Coleman,
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*Outreach Com: Jan Gibeau,
Lorrie Childs, Marilyn Davidson*



Newsletter Designer:
Kristen Estelle

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

DOOR- to-DOOR SALES



**If you're considering hiring someone
who knocks on your door and offers
home improvement services...**

- Don't rush or feel pressured into making an immediate decision;
- Get a written estimate and tell them you will get back to them;
- Ask for and check their references before agreeing to have the work done;
- Get bids from established, local companies and compare prices;
- Check with your town hall to see if they need a license or permit to solicit door-to-door;
- Check with your local consumer protection program or police department.

**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**

