

Chesterfield Council on Aging

December 2020 Newsletter



Chesterfield COA & Community Center
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Celebrating Chesterfield's 90+ Seniors



Oliver Wiley

Born and raised in New Mexico, and a graduate of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, Oliver took what he planned to be a temporary job with Westinghouse with a view to learn about the East but this turned out to be a permanent job working in Bridgeport CT. Oliver and his wife purchased property in Chesterfield in the early 1970s, built a house and moved in 1992, by which time he had retired from Westinghouse.

Oliver has been actively involved with town life from the outset. Indeed, he has contributed and continues to give much to Chesterfield. He served on the COA board for many years up to 2008 and continues to attend many of the COA programs and activities, with his partner and fellow white-water canoer Joan Hicks, and brings his special homemade iced tea to the annual June picnic! In addition, Oliver was the Chesterfield representative to the Council on Governments for several years and was a member of the Chesterfield Planning Board for twelve years. Living on the Chesterfield/Worthington line, Oliver has always attended the Worthington Congregational Church, serving as a trustee for a number of years. And, Oliver used to own a small 2-seater airplane that he kept at a now defunct airstrip in Worthington. He may not fly anymore, but he surely keeps moving.

Beverley Sunderland

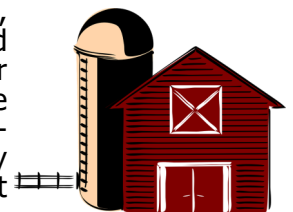
Beverley was born and raised in South Bend, Indiana to parents who were the first of their generation to leave farming and move to town. Her father was a tool and dye maker and her mother was a homemaker. Beverley has fond memories of times on her paternal grandparent's farm riding "Lady" - a work horse, and of identifying plants on walks in the woods with her grandmother. She also loved fishing with her father and hunting rabbits and squirrels with her uncles. Bev attended

Purdue University and later got her law degree at Western New England College Law School. Bev, after losing her first husband because of an accident, remarried and had 3 children in the following 3 years in addition to her first daughter, Robin. The family continued to grow with the adoption of 3 babies. About that time, Beverley said, "All I wanted from life was to be a mom." With her college professor husband and children, she eventually landed in Amherst.

Following a divorce, Beverley took in Cambodian and Vietnamese refugee children with 5-6 refugee children often living in her home and attending Amherst schools; 32 refugee children lived with her during an 11 year period, and she is still in contact with many of them. For the next 25 years, she had a solo law practice specializing in divorce and family law. Bev retired in 2009 at the age of 79. In 1994, Beverley moved to Chesterfield, to the former church parsonage, which is big enough for her large family to visit, now including grandchildren and great grandchildren. Beverley loves gardening, raising chickens, cooking, knitting and sewing. She stays fit by walking three miles most mornings. About Chesterfield, she said, "Chesterfield people are the best people in the world and I am so happy here." Beverley served on the Chesterfield Zoning Board of Appeals for 8 years.

Nanette Andre Clark

Nan, a long-time Chesterfield resident, was born and raised in Northampton, but came to Chesterfield every summer since birth during her childhood. Her grandparents had a cottage on Damon Pond and in 1956 her parents also had a cottage, so Nan's children had the same Chesterfield summer experience. Nan graduated from Emerson College in 1950 with a major in speech and radio. She married Warren Wright and spent many years in academia, raising three children and serving as a foster mother for 12 different children. She moved to a farm in Chesterfield in 1964, to "where my heart has always been". It felt like coming home. A writ-



er all her life, she followed a writing workshop with Jane Yolen in the 80s, and she published her first story. Nan writes non-fiction, mostly true animal stories and aspects of the history of Chesterfield, frequently published in the Small Farmers' Journal. With her second husband, Merwin Clark, she enjoyed the country life to which her heart had always yearned, learned about oxen and for 25 years served as the Coordinator and Announcer of the Ox-Teamster's Challenge at the Cummington Fair. Following her retirement from Smith College at age 79, Nan took Mah Jongg lessons and is now an avid enthusiast and teacher who has also taught classes to others wanting to learn the game.

Nan served on the Conservation Commission for about 15 years, including 5 as chair during a controversial time with the implementation of new wetland laws. She was a 5 year member of a task force on creating awareness of domestic and animal abuse and has been a long time member of the Chesterfield Historical Society. At age 80, she joined the Hampshire Emergency Animal Response Team and was deployed to the Dakin Humane Society in Springfield because a tornado had caused extreme damage. Nan says she is happy to have lived long enough to not only have 3 adult children, but also 3 grandsons and 2 great granddaughters, all of whom stay in close touch with her during the COVID epidemic.

Eileen Delano

Eileen was born in South Worthington on Nov. 1, 1927. She lived in the last house in Worthington or the first house in Worthington depending on which way you were going. Eileen began school in the one room school house in South Worthington that had no electricity or running water. She was in the first class to attend the Russell Conwell School when it opened in 1942. Eileen later went to school in Huntington but due to severe allergies and asthma, she spent more time out of school than in and did not finish.

Eileen had decided early on that she would get married at age 25. Eileen married Jim DeLano on November 29, 1952, 28 days after she reached her 25th birthday. They first lived with Eileen's folks before moving to New York and working on a couple of farms. Her husband enjoyed working outside and worked at Lane Construction before choosing to find a job that was indoors. Jim passed away in 2008. Eileen and Jim moved to Chesterfield in 1955 when they purchased their first home, where she still happily resides. When asked what she likes about Chesterfield, Eileen responded, "I like the country air. Wouldn't go to the city to live for nothing".

Other residents age 90 or over were unavailable for interviews:

Norman Hathaway and Gaylon Donovan

Broadband Chesterfield December Update

By Justin West

We are making progress! Phase 1 (the support cable) is nearly 100% complete and work has begun on Phase 2 (adding the fiber optic cable to the support cable). TriWire assures us that we are on schedule.

Many of you with underground utilities have been contacted by TriWire to set up an appointment for trenching and installing the conduit through which the fiber optic cable will run to your house. If you have called TriWire and have not heard back, be patient. They will call you just as soon as they have an appointment for you. If you do not have underground utilities, no action is required at this time.

A Broadband Who's Who

It can be confusing keeping all of the players separate in this broadband process. So, here is a short "Who's Who" to help clarify all of the players.



Broadband Chesterfield is the name of Chesterfield's fiber optic broadband network. The network is owned by the Town of Chesterfield and is administered by a Municipal Light Plant board and manager.

Municipal Light Plant (MLP) board and manager

Municipalities may own, maintain, and operate a municipal light plant (MLP) in order to provide services to their citizens. Forty-one communities have established MLPs. MLPs are run by municipal light boards and a MLP Manager.

Town of Chesterfield

The Town of Chesterfield (the residents) owns the broadband network.



Whip City Fiber

Whip City Fiber (part of Westfield Gas and Electric) is our internet service provider (ISP) and network manager. This means that they handle all of the technical details such as repairs, billing, and maintenance.



TriWire

TriWire has been contracted to actually construct the network for us. Their job includes stringing the fiberoptic cable on the poles, installing the MSTs at each residence, and making the actual hookup for each house.



Looking Back and Planning for the Future



Town residents at Dedication of the Veterans Park

One of the most important things we have learned from gerontologists is that reminiscing is not only a good way to age gracefully, but to use the time we have during this pandemic to look back at our past and plan for the future .

How to look back at the history of life in Chesterfield:

- Talking to friends and families has always been the key to keeping connections strong. Telling stories about “back in the day”, even if it’s by making phone calls. One important fact to remember is that before the technology of iPhones, internet and Facebook, we all talked by phone. We even enjoyed doing it. It was a great way to not be lonely. In the really old days everybody could listen in (not always a good thing). Nevertheless, keep talking.
- The Chesterfield Library has a wealth of information on the history of the town, its buildings, and families and other related topics.
- Both the Chesterfield Historical Commission and the Historical Society are great ways to see what an important role the heritage of the past plays in the enduring progress toward the future quality of community life.



A new way of expanding the reach of historical information has lead to the introduction of a new column in the newsletter, described below.

Coming Soon: The Chesterfield Historical Commission's New Column!



This column will contain stories on such historic sites as the Edwards Museum, Chesterfield’s historic cemeteries, canals, and many other historic sites in town. In addition, there will be news on what is happening in Chesterfield with preservation and historic properties. Our aim is to keep you, the town, informed. Stay tuned.

Missed your chance to get a flu shot at the last town clinic?

IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR THE NEXT ONE!



Walgreens is coming to us for an on-site clinic!

**Where: The back entrance of the
Chesterfield Town Offices**

**When: Thursday, December 3
10am -1pm**

Sign up now!

**Contact Jan: 296-4007 or
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com**

**Please remember to bring your insurance
information and wear your mask.**



Age Friendly Communities: Update

Chesterfield is an officially designated member of the AARP/ WHO national/ international network committed to making it easier for people in every town to have access to the resources so necessary to aging in place. A core team has been formed and is looking at the following issues people have said are very important to them yet need improvements, such as access to public buildings, like the public library, which currently has no safe access to the bathroom; or access to choices of walkable safe paths, roads or sidewalks to key areas for exercise. Another issue is the safety of walking to key locations in town such as the Library, Edwards Museum, Post Office, CDC, Davenport Childcare, Town Offices, the church, Veterans Park and the Community Center. The prevailing view is that all of these issues represent a high priority in making life safer for everyone.

The CDC has received a Walkability grant that is collaborating with us to conduct a street audit and look at ways to move ahead. A team of town volunteers has worked with Healthy Hampshire and you may have already seen the brochures with maps and descriptions of walking trails that lead to accessible trails that include historic sites such as the cemetery in the center of town, the town hall and places like the Chesterfield General Store to take a break and get food.

Happy Birthday in December!



Peter Scully, Sarah Donley, Nancy Papillon,
Mary Guilmette, Joseph Gazillo,
Stephen Liimatainen, Judith Lyons,
Donna Safford, Richard Blais, Justin West,
Sharon Imig, Deborah Curtis, Arthur Smith,
Kathy O'Neill, Kathleen Brisbois,
Michael Kuzmeski, Allan Lamere, Mary Bancroft,
Luther Curtis, Kirke Henshaw, Gail Judd,
Marjorie Jasmin, Marguerite Hewes,
Bonnie Borst, Patricia Roberts, Geraldine Rogers,
Mary Leake, Judith Lyon, William Coleman,
Marilyn Davidson, Norman Hathaway,
Gaylon Donovan, Michael Lucey, Mark Puza,
Tom Dolan, Holly Chamberlin

THE COMMUNITY CUPBOARD

NEW WEEKLY HOURS

Tuesdays: 9 to 11 AM

Fridays: 9 to 11 AM

In the foyer area of the Community Center

Come to the parking lot, fill out the checklist at the bottom of the ramp, and a volunteer will pick it up. You may enter the foyer when the person before you leaves. Everything you use meets COVID CDC requirements.

PLEASE WEAR A FACE MASK

We hope to keep offering this program though the fall and winter for those having trouble getting to the store, facing financial challenges, or dealing with health and safety issues because of COVID-19.



With thanks for generous help from Florence Bank, Chesterfield Council on Aging, Hilltown CDC, Dakin Humane Society, and anonymous donors.

**LIFE IS JUST
A SERIES OF
OBSTACLES
PREVENTING
YOU FROM
READING
YOUR BOOK.**



Senior SAFE

This year's holiday season will be very different for many people because of COVID; one of the things many people will do is decorate their homes with bright lights to shine during this dark time. Here are a few suggestions on how to brighten your corner of the world safely:

- ⇒ Buy lights and electric decorations that are listed by an approved testing agency.
- ⇒ Replace old lighting that has frayed wires, broken plugs, sockets or switches.
- ⇒ Never overload outlets.
- ⇒ Use no more than 3 strands of lights on a single extension cord.
- ⇒ Consider using energy efficient LED lights that stay cool.

For outdoor lights consider:

- ⇒ Using only lights rated for outdoor use.
- ⇒ Plug outdoor decorations into a ground-fault circuit interrupter.
- ⇒ Anchor outdoor lights and decorations with insulated holders or hooks.

Have a SAFE and happy holiday season.

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cumington 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, 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!

Charity – where does it begin?

Everyone has a favorite cause to support. This time of year, we are inundated with requests to part with our money for a really good organization! So, how to tell if this is a good idea or not? How to tell how much is enough?

First, can you afford it? Your budgetary “needs” should be considered first, like rent or mortgage, heat, and groceries. After that, we have “wants”, savings, and discretionary spending. Charity contributions are considered discretionary – I cannot think of an exception to this.

Second, which cause do you like? As an ecologist and farmer’s daughter, I lean toward environmental, conservation, and agricultural / food issues. We may support medical research, literacy, veteran’s programs, animal welfare – the list goes on. We may support local fundraisers or children’s programs or the library.

Third, is the cause being considered a valid one, a good one? Valid means not a scam! A good one means considerations such as how much money is spent on management, i.e., does a large percentage of income go to the actual cause. I still like Charity Navigator (**www.charitynavigator.org**) for analysis of many causes, though they will not feature our local scene. One benefit of this resource is that they now show Advisories: charities “that raise concerns”. A second benefit is that you can donate anonymously to a listed organization! That means fewer mailings coming in the mail! Less inundation!

With charity in my heart,
Jean O’Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

Experts say they're usually fine — but here's what to consider when choosing your specs

by Sarah Elizabeth Adler, AARP
September 24, 2020



Who needs reading glasses? All of us do, eventually, thanks to a condition called presbyopia — a gradual loss of the ability to clearly see things up close — that becomes noticeable for most people beginning in their 40s. Because presbyopia is caused by age-related changes to the lens of the eye, it isn't preventable or reversible. But experts say that the right pair of reading glasses, including those readily available at retailers like a dollar store or pharmacy, can help bring small print and other objects, like your smartphone screen, back into focus.

Here's how to find your perfect pair.

Over-the-counter reading glasses

"Reading glasses from a drugstore are, in fact, perfectly safe," says ophthalmologist Michelle Andreoli, M.D., a clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology, who notes that over-the-counter reading glasses, including low-cost dollar store options, can help you focus up close and will not damage your eyesight. But, she adds, once your up-close vision starts changing, you can expect it to continue to worsen into your mid-60s. That means the reading-glass strength you start out with will need to increase as the years go by. "A good rule of thumb is that any strength of [reading glasses] will last someone between 45 and 65 about two years," Andreoli says.

Experts say the best way to determine what strength you need in the first place is with a yearly eye exam, which can tell you what power (notated with a number like +1.00 or +2.50) you need. The higher the number is, the stronger the glasses are. If you haven't been to the eye doctor or want a way to double-check in the store, Andreoli recommends grabbing a greeting card from the stationery aisle to carry out a DIY test: Hold the card at a comfortable reading distance and try on several pairs until you find the ones that work best.

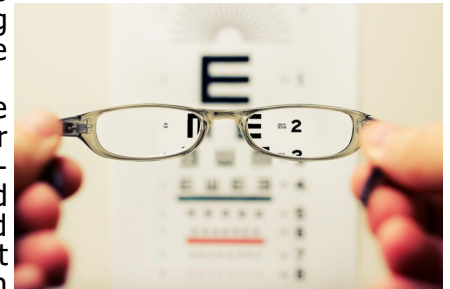
If you're stuck between two pairs? "In most cases, when two reading-glass powers seem equally suitable, choose the glasses with the lower power," says optometrist William Reynolds, president of

the American Optometric Association. "Picking reading glasses that are too strong typically will cause more discomfort problems than reading glasses that are a little too weak."

Another thing to keep in mind is the activity you'll be using the reading glasses for. Working on the computer, for example, typically takes place at a greater distance than reading a book, and thus requires a lower strength.

Prescription reading glasses

The over-the-counter route isn't right for everyone, Reynolds says, including people who have astigmatism (meaning the eye's cornea or lens isn't perfectly round) and those who need a different strength for each eye. In those cases, prescription reading glasses from the eye doctor are a better option. The most popular choice of prescription reading glasses are progressive lenses, Reynolds says. They combine multiple prescriptions in one lens, with a gradual top-to-bottom change, allowing someone to wear just one pair of glasses to correct far-away, middle-distance and up-close vision.



For people who otherwise have no vision problems, Andreoli says that reading-glass lenses that are clear (non-prescription) on top are another popular option available from the eye doctor. They can be worn continuously and eliminate the need to take your reading glasses on and off throughout the day.

Fredric Grethel, a board member of The Vision Council, a nonprofit optical industry trade association, notes that prescription reading glasses might also be a better choice for someone who wants more options, such as blue-light blocking lenses or an antireflective coating — not to mention a greater selection of fashionable frame choices. "The world has really changed from some years ago," Grethel says of the numerous reading-glass options — both over-the-counter and prescription — available today. "Now they're fashionable, they're fun, and they can give you personality."



How to Strengthen Your Lungs to Fight COVID-19

by Michelle Crouch, AARP
July 31, 2020



As you know, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can cause serious lung damage and breathing problems — along with a host of other health issues. And as the virus continues to spread, you may be wondering if strengthening your lungs will help you fight it off if you are infected.

"One of the first things that happens with COVID is that you get short of breath and your oxygen saturation begins to fall," says Raymond Casciari, a pulmonologist at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, California. "The better condition your lungs are in, the better off you will be."

To get your lungs into better shape, the top critical-care pulmonologists we interviewed all agreed that the best option — hands down — is regular old physical activity, the kind that gets your heart rate up. "Anything that makes you breathe faster is basically a breathing exercise," says Joshua Denson, a pulmonary and critical care specialist and assistant professor of medicine at Tulane University School of Medicine. "My first advice would not be, 'Go sit in a chair and breathe deeply.' I'd say, 'Get on a bike and ride 20 minutes a day,' or 'Go for a brisk walk.'" Aim for activity that ramps up your breathing.

Staying active is especially important for older Americans, because lung function decreases as you age. Over time, the muscles that support your breathing become weaker, lung tissue loses elasticity and the air sacs inside your lungs become baggier. Studies show exercise can slow that decline and boost lung function.

Aerobic activity also helps air get into the deepest parts of your lungs that you don't use when you are sedentary, says Bruce Levy, chief of the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

"If there are any secretions or pollutants you've breathed in, aerobic activity helps you clear them out of your lung and decreases your risk of infection or pneumonia," he says. "Aerobic fitness also helps your body obtain oxygen from the environment and use it in the most efficient manner," he says. "If you happen to get COVID, if you've been doing cardio, that's going to help you."

What's important for lung health, Levy and others say, is to exercise at an intensity that quickens your breathing rate and leaves you feeling breathless, whether it's swimming, biking or walking briskly.

"Some older adults are deathly afraid of feeling 'short of breath,'" Casciari says. "I have to convince them that it's a good thing."

How breathing exercises can help: Deep breathing exercises are another way to get air deep into your lungs and clear secretions. Although they're not as effective as physical activity, they are better than doing nothing for people who are sedentary, pulmonologists say, and they can be particularly helpful for people who have mobility issues.

"If you're bedridden, or caring for someone who's bedridden, doing some controlled breathing can be very useful because there is no other way to train," Levy says. "If you are not exercising, the base of your lungs can partially collapse, which increases the risk for infection if you breathe in a virus."

Levy notes that if you already exercise regularly (and don't have a chronic lung condition), breathing exercises may not confer any additional respiratory benefit, but they certainly won't cause any harm. Besides, you may reap other benefits: Research shows slow, controlled breathing can help lower your heart rate, stabilize your blood pressure and ease anxiety.

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

Already December! The Good News is that the deep frost arrived late and with the last spurt of warm weather there was still time to plant more tulips. There's hopeful news about a Covid vaccine, and the election is behind us. Perhaps there is reason to believe that the next few months will not be so stressful.

Dealing with Covid may mean not seeing the whole family for holidays, but senior centers are coming up with new ideas to celebrate. Whether it's a drive by and pick up Turkey dinner, or holiday gift cards that may arrive in your mail box, we are inventing new ways to reach out to family and friends. The theme song for the long winter that lies ahead is....don't hibernate....keep in touch.

Zoom meetings for coffee and chat, book clubs, writing groups, puzzle exchanges, cooking classes and/or recipe exchanges and exercise classes are still happening.

Senior centers are also making calls to "phone buddies", so If you'd like a phone call, for no reason other than to chat, let them know. As the days get shorter and colder, it's important to keep in touch.

Times like these, we need to be inventive, thoughtful and on the look out for ways to help.



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'Mass Appeal': *Special Senior Edition!*

Council On Aging Directors from throughout Western Mass have been working with Mass Appeal co-host Patrick Berry on a special edition of the show that will focus on older adults. What began as a collaboration to highlight area Senior Center holiday performers, morphed into an entire show dedicated to the topic of aging adults in our area.



Tune in to WWLP Channel 22 for Mass Appeal on Tuesday, December 8th at 11am for an hour filled with information and local entertainers performing both original holiday pieces as well as traditional favorites. Topics that co-hosts Alanna Flood and Patrick Berry will delve into the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of older adults, caregiver stress, nutrition, and fitness. When a group of dedicated, compassionate, committed Senior Center Directors teams up with a talented television duo, the results are definitely worth watching!