

Chesterfield Council on Aging

October 2021 Newsletter



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

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

October Calendar of Events

| <u>Monday</u> | <u>Tuesday</u> | <u>Wednesday</u> | <u>Thursday</u> | <u>Friday</u> |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | 1 |
| 4 Tai Chi 9:30-10:30am | 5 Mah-Jongg 1-4pm | 6 Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm Mystic Seaport Trip | 7 Chair Yoga 11am-12pm | 8 Writing Group (Zoom) 11am-12pm <div>Sun. 10/10 Laura Wetzler Concert</div> |
| 11 Tai Chi 9:30-10:30am | 12 Mah-Jongg 1-4pm | 13 Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm | 14 Flu Clinic 10am-12pm Brown Bag 10am Chair Yoga 11am-12pm | 15 Writing Group (Zoom) 11am-12pm |
| 18 Tai Chi 9:30-10:30am | 19 Hip Hop Program 11:30am Mah-Jongg 1-4pm | 20 Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm | 21 Chair Yoga 11am-12pm | 22 Writing Group (Zoom) 11am-12pm |
| 25 Tai Chi 9:30-10:30am COA Board Mtg 10am | 26 Mah-Jongg 1-4pm | 27 Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm | 28 | 29 Writing Group (Zoom) 11am-12pm |

Free Creative Writing Group with Valerie Bowlby

Are you interested in writing poems, songs, stories and/or personal memoirs? Writing prompts will be provided to help you get started, and specific writing techniques will be discussed. This supportive writing group will offer encouragement and positive feedback only (if requested). Anything shared in group will remain confidential, unless specific permission is given by the author or speaker to share or disclose it outside the group.



Where: On Zoom (online or on phone)

When: Starting October 1, Friday mornings from 11-12 PM on Zoom, Access email or call to get writing prompt by 10AM Friday. End date to be decided later.

How: Prompts (i.e. a written, visual or other cue) will be provided each Wednesday via phone or email. Writers can use the prompt or use another idea of their own to start writing. On Friday at 11, the group will meet to discuss the prompt or anything related to writing, and anyone who wishes to share their writing will be encouraged to read aloud. If requested, members of the group will provide positive responses about what worked well in the writing. If the author also wishes, the group member may share what she/he would like to see more of in the writing.

Contact: Valerie Bowlby before attending first group at **413-296-4391** (shared landline) or **vbowlby9@earthlink.net** to give contact info and get Zoom info. for the group.

CHESTERFIELD FLU CLINIC

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7
10-12**

DAVENPORT TOWN OFFICE PARKING LOT

**WALGREENS WILL PROVIDE ONSITE
DRIVE UP CLINIC**



Chair Hip Hop Exercise with Tryna Hope

Chesterfield Community Center
Tuesday, October 19 at 11:30am
Mask required

Sidetracked Concert brought them to their feet!



Everyone had a good time listening and dancing to music by Sidetracked on August 15th.

Unsung Heroine: Therese Brigley

When COA events, classes or other programs go well at the Community Center, we know that Therese Brigley is part of the team making it possible. When parents seek Davenport Child Care, it's because Therese is successfully providing services that are highly regarded in the community. When you come to multigenerational events and see kids and older people in the same room, Therese made it happen.



Therese came to Chesterfield in 1988. She was born in Pittsfield as one of 15 children. When her mother, a nurse, and father, a patent attorney, began to have children, her mother became a fulltime Mom. Growing up with many siblings no doubt played a role in Therese learning how to love and share with others, negotiate ways to deal with disagreements and still carve out ways to become independent. After she married, Therese had two sons: good preparation for what later became Davenport Child Care.

Therese's educational path included getting her Associate degree at GCC, her B.A. at UMass and Master's degree at AIC. During that period she

was asked to help care for first one child, then another and so on. Her initial plan was to become a nurse but it became clear that working with children was her passion so she changed her course and opened Ireland Street Daycare. She subsequently moved on to create and open the current Davenport Child Care Center located at 387 Main Road.

Along the way, Therese took on a position of Custodian as a town employee, responsible for taking care of the Community Center, Davenport town office building, library and town hall. While in this role she met Scott Carpenter and together became a strong team working to keep buildings and sidewalks in Chesterfield safe and in order.

When asked why she moved to Chesterfield, she said it was a good town in which to raise children, a peaceful and safe town with many activities for children and adults to enjoy: walking, fishing, swimming and exploring. Therese is an experienced bicyclist, both individually and as a volunteer leading fundraising events. She loves to read, but says it's hard to find time. That is easy to believe.

We are fortunate to have someone like Therese giving so much to keeping Chesterfield the special town that it is. She is, indeed, an unsung heroine.

Just for laughs!

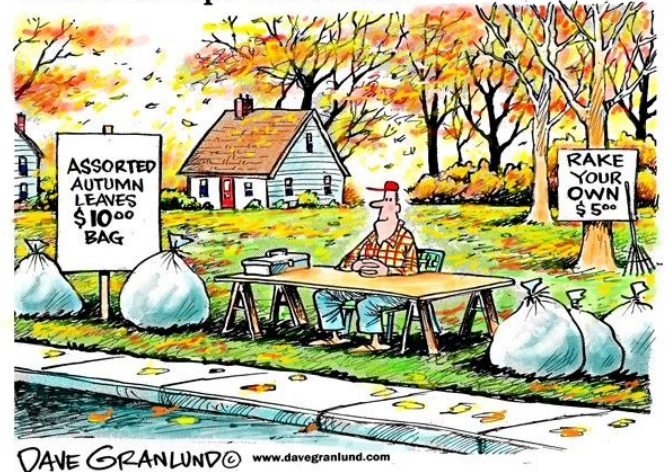
Paraprosdokian:

Figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected.

- ◇ Where there's a will, I want to be in it. 😂
- ◇ The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on my list. 😂
- ◇ Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
- ◇ If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- ◇ They begin the evening news with 'Good Evening,' then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
- ◇ A clear conscience is the sign of a fuzzy memory.
- ◇ I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.
- ◇ I'm supposed to respect my elders, but now it's getting harder and harder for me to find one.



Fall entrepreneur...



New Veterans Service Officers

Steve Connor and Robert Vigneault are now the Veterans Service Officers for Chesterfield.

To schedule an appointment, please call
413-587-1299

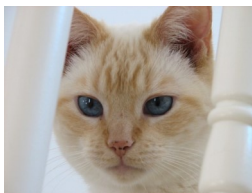
Happy Birthday in October!



Michael Metzger, Lillian Bisbee, Bonnie Kellogg, Ruth Wade, John Follet, Mary Wickland, Lois Hripak, Michael Oneill, Francis Keefe, David Boyer, Daphne Thompson-Addabbo, Susan Fuller, Gerald Randall, Maryann Young, Christine Coderre, Thomas Kress, Beverly Clarity, Amy Gavalis, Cheryl Kress, Maryellen Blais, Ralph Driver, John Lyons, Karl Wickland, Elizabeth Sloan, Daniel Lamontagne, Patrick Bray, Laura Clark, Sarah Rauber, Krislyn Lequin.

Notes from Nan's Nook : My Disappearing Cat

In November 2011, my 15 year old cat, Bandit, and I decided we needed another cat companion. Through my veterinarian we got a young Flame Point male "Rag Doll". He was neutered but never socialized by the previous owner. Rag Dolls are very beautiful, big and loving, but this one was shy and readily submissive to Bandit. He mostly hid so I named him Shy Guy. The 4th night he escaped through a window that was open only three inches. He tore out the screen and was gone in the dark. Poor dear had never been outdoors!



I had heard that St Anthony helps find lost items so I repeated this mantra for 2 hours: "St Anthony, St Anthony, please come around; my cat is missing and needs to be found." Eventually I got a phone call from my next door neighbor, Mark, saying a cat was hiding in his garage. We hunted but found nary a cat. I left food and water which was gone the next day. Then I used a have-a-heart trap in which I found my beautiful but scared Shy Guy. Home we came where I kept windows shut for a while. Slowly our gorgeous Rag Doll adjusted to his new surroundings and became a loving companion for Bandit and me. Oh yes—I changed his name to "Houdini" and called him Dini for short. So grateful for St Anthony who really does find lost items!

~Nan Clark

Reading With Sarah

What comes to mind when you see the word essay? Maybe past trauma: I have to write an essay about my favorite sport or hobby and it's due tomorrow! Some of you may have been assigned Michel de Montaigne's essays to read in school as I was and you were surprised at how enjoyable it was to read those 400 year old pieces. (Montaigne was one of the most significant philosophers of the French Renaissance, known for popularizing the

essay as a literary genre. His work is noted for its merging of casual anecdotes and autobiography with intellectual insight. Wikipedia).

In last month's column I advocated for short stories. This month I'm recommending essays which have one of the same selling points. You can finish one in one sitting or before you fall asleep. Of course some essays are quite long but you can pick and choose in the following volumes. All have indexes with the title of each piece. You can see immediately how many pages they encompass. The titles in David Sedaris's book, *Calypso*, let you know that his are humorous essays. For example these three: Boo-Hooey, The One(s) Who Got Away, And While You're Up There, Check My Prostate. Some of the humor is a little rough as his work is autobiographical and he grew up in a large, rambunctious family. Terry Tempest Williams's *Erosion, Essays of Undoing*, are more serious and reflect her interest in environmental activism and the health of humans, our country and the planet. The book is dedicated to her brother who took his own life. She writes about it in the essay titled: A Beautiful Rugged Place: Erosion of The Body. Some other titles are: The Questions Held By Owls, The Council of Pronghorn, Bluebirds and The Brink of Beauty.

The third collection I read most recently, John Green's *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on A Human-Centered Planet* was published this year. Green is open about mental health challenges he faces and writes in the introduction: The book started out as a podcast, where I tried to chart some of the contradictions of human life as I experience it—how we can be so compassionate and so cruel, so persistent and so quick to despair. Green uses the ubiquitous five star system to rate each subject. From Teddy Bears to Wintry Mix he explores the history or circumstances and gives each 1 to 5 stars. As you can imagine there are plenty of opportunities for humor here as well as despair. Don't miss *Sycamore Trees* which he gives 5 stars. You will find essay collections by American authors under Dewey Decimal #814 at the library. Enjoy being enlightened.

The Chesterfield Council on Aging benefits from your support for our programs for Chesterfield seniors!

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

(Please make out your check to "Town of Chesterfield" and write "COA programs" in the memo line; mail to Janice Gibeau, Director, Chesterfield COA, PO Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Thank you for helping support Chesterfield seniors!

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

October is "Fire Safety Month." Many fire departments have teams that go onto the schools and present a fire safety program with the students. This year the theme for this program is smoke alarms -- The Sound You Can Live With. Here are a few reminders about the important life saving alarms:

Senior 
SAFE

- ⇒ When fire strikes, you may have less than a minute to get out. So working smoke alarms will save your life and the lives of those who live with you.
- ⇒ Check your smoke alarms regularly to make sure they are working.
- ⇒ Smoke alarms wear out over time; most of them are good for about ten years. On the back of the detector is the date it was made. If it is ten years old it needs to be replaced; if there is no date on the back, it is way too old to be working properly. Replace it immediately.
- ⇒ Replace them with new 10-year, sealed batteries, smoke alarms.
- ⇒ When the alarm sounds:
 - + Leave the building immediately.
 - + GET OUT and STAY OUT!
 - + Go to a family meeting place.
 - + Call 911 from outdoors or from a neighbor's phone.

Have a SAFE fall,

--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.

Regional News



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!

Spam Texts!

Well, this was not going to be the topic for this month, but I got a spam text on my phone on Sep 5. First one, and I am not happy! So I assume you may have or will get one or more and will also not be happy. Why is this so bad? In addition to interrupting your day, the sender may try to install malware on your phone, will likely try to get personal information to steal your identity, and may sell your number to some other sleaze so you get even more texts!

What to do? I know you guessed the first step – don't let the sender know they reached a valid number, so don't open the message. On my phone, there is a blue dot by a text if it is unread. To keep it that way, click on the right hand menu and find an option for Delete, Mark as Unread, something like that. You may have to do an internet search to learn how to do this on your phone or call your provider.

Next, follow the suggestions from a Norton antivirus page: **us.norton.com/internetsecurity-how-to-deal-with-spam-text-messages.html** Don't click on any links in the text since you really do not know where you are going when you do that. Check your cell phone bill to make sure all charges are valid. Your phone itself may have some settings that will block these texts; check your user manual or an online source for your kind of phone. Your phone carrier may have a blocker service. If anyone is using blocker software they like, please let me know.

PS – I have learned that five others got the same spam text I did. That shows that computers are sending these things, and we are up against a powerful spam opponent!

Always Something,

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

October's Good News

By Deborah Hollingworth



For all of us on Medicare, it's annual Open Enrollment again. October through the first week in December, we get to go shopping for our health care coverage. If you don't want to "shop" for different coverage, you don't have to, but might there be a better deal, that has better coverage for less money? And we all love to bargain hunt. Maybe not so much with health insurance? If I've heard it once, I've heard it dozens of times that folks just wish their coverage was **simple**. And perhaps in my lifetime, it might be. Maybe we will look back on these days of chaos when health insurance companies bombarded us with their advertising as "back in the dark ages".

But in the meantime, our mailbox (and TV) is full of advertisements for health insurance because this is the season to switch if you want to.

What is all the advertising about?

When we turn 65, if we've paid into social security, or our spouse has paid into social security, we get Medicare: original Medicare A & B. Then we can sign up for a Medicare D plan to cover our Rx, or enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan that covers Rx. Each year in the fall, during Open Enrollment, we get to change our mind and select different coverage if we wish. Many Medicare beneficiaries will decide to change their Rx coverage (their Medicare D plans). This happens a lot because the D plans change their prices, change their deductibles...even change their formularies which is the list of Rx they cover. So what was a "good" plan for you last year may not be a good plan for you next year.

An example that kept us SHINE counselors busy last year was a Humana Walmart's switch. Their \$32/month D plan that covered a lot of Rx, changed to a \$62/month plan for the same coverage. If folks read their mail, they were pretty upset. If they knew to call a SHINE counselor, they could "shop" the plans for the upcoming year and discover that Humana had another plan, in the \$30/month range, which covered almost the same Rx. But you had to know this and switch.

How does the switch work?

During Open Enrollment, you get to sign up for a new plan if you want. The new plan takes effect January 1st and cancels out your old plan. To see if you should switch, you might contact your SHINE counselor who can do a Plan search/analysis for you and give you the contact information you need to call and enroll in a new Plan. You can call your senior center to schedule an appointment with a SHINE counselor. 'tis the season to be shoppers, if we want.

Private Questions: Public Answers

By Jan Gibeau

After being part of the professional world of gerontology for 60+ years, I've learned that one question always comes up: Is this normal aging—or is this some kind of dementia, like Alzheimer's? It's a question asked by many older adults, and by their friends

and family members. It's been asked of professionals in PCP offices, in community health clinics, and in outpatient and inpatient hospital settings. It's something we ask each other all the time.

I've had to face this question myself. After I had heart bypass surgery around twenty years ago, I began to notice after a few years that my memory didn't seem to be quite the same. I knew that I shouldn't ignore my concerns; it was time to face my fears and get a comprehensive neurological evaluation. I was lucky—I was already a patient in the NYU healthcare system, and I was covered by a robust health insurance plan that would cover the costs. I knew where to go and how to arrange what was needed. When you open the door to our healthcare system all of these factors make it easier. For many people, depending on what kind of insurance they have and where they live, getting an evaluation can be difficult. In rural areas especially there is a shortage of the medical professionals needed to make such an evaluation: neurologists, geriatricians, geriatric psychiatrists, nurses, social workers.

I also knew that a comprehensive neuropsychiatric evaluation can sometimes conclude there is nothing going on but normal aging. Some evaluations identify the presence of several types of dementia, including Alzheimer's Disease. My results determined that I had mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a condition that is technically on a spectrum that includes many different types and levels of dementia. At the time I was horrified, worried that I was on a path that would lead directly to Alzheimer's. This was not the case. I was assured by my specialists that my level of functioning was still fine, and might very well remain that way. Even so, ever since the diagnosis was made I have been vigilant in looking for any and all changes, worrying that my condition might have progressed. I feared that the MCI would convert to dementia of the Alzheimer's Type which has a course lasting on average about seven years. Thus far that hasn't happened but the cognitive changes have slowly continued. Sometimes, for example, I can't find the right word. I was at a performance not long ago when the speaker stopped in mid sentence - he couldn't find the word he wanted to use. There was a long, heavy pause as the audience waited. Finally, he moved on and everyone breathed a sigh of relief. I thought to myself, I hope that never happens to me. Now every so often, it does.

For me, each year has brought small changes, usually not noticeable to others, but I have been painfully aware of every one of them. And each step of the way I've learned how to adapt—writing things down, saving information on the computer, saving phone messages, making "to do lists" etc. These are ways to cope that are always helpful, but my need for them has grown. Recently the changes have started becoming more noticeable, happening more and more often, but I'm adapting. I dread the progression of deficits that could erode my independence.

Nevertheless, here I am, still enjoying my work, my family and my friends. I'm surrounded by support by many in this wonderful small town. I'm still able to work and do the things I have always loved doing in the field of aging. For me, facing my fears wasn't, in fact, the beginning of the end. (*Cont. on next page*)

On the Road Again..



Here is a brief outline of up-coming bus trips being offered by Chesterfield and Southampton (marked with *) COAs.

If you would like to share your email address with Francine so we can keep in touch, please send a short message to francine.frenier@gmail.com or call **413-296-4291**. Please make your interest known 4-6 weeks prior to the trips so plans can be confirmed. **Vaccinations are strongly recommended on all trips.**

Chesterfield COA is offering a \$20 refund on any non-sponsored Chesterfield trips listed here, marked with an * to Chesterfield folks 60 years of age and older.

- ⇒ **October 6.** Spend a day at **Mystic Seaport**. \$15 for Chesterfield seniors age 60 and older. \$25 for other adults from Chesterfield and any other community. Lunch on your own at onsite cafeteria. Fee for guided tour or boat rides not included. Payment due **now**.
- ⇒ **October 8-18.** 11 day bus trip to **Colorado Springs**. Sit back, relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery. Activities almost every day. Many meals included. \$1,190 due **now**. Only 2 seats left.*
- ⇒ **November 4. Plymouth 400th Anniversary** program & Thanksgiving buffet luncheon \$143 due **now**. *Seating is limited.**
- ⇒ **December 7. Nashville Christmas Show & luncheon** at the Log Cabin. Country Jamboree performs. **Self-drive**. \$25 for Chesterfield seniors age 60 and older. \$59 for other adults from Chesterfield and any other community. Payment due by November 1st.
- ⇒ **December 9.** Pizza & Salad early dinner prior to tour of **Bright Nights**, Springfield, MA. Cost to be determined.*

(cont. from pg 6) It was the beginning of a long road that many have walked before. I plan to learn as much as I can along the way and throw the door wide open so we can all reduce the stigma of living with neurological impairments. Regardless of how mild the MCI situation was at the beginning of my journey, I know that there is a long road ahead. Many of us may walk in this area--somewhere beyond "normal aging", experiencing some cognitive deficits on the spectrum of dementia-related symptoms. And some of us will progress to dementia.

I share this, feeling a little naked, but I'm opening up about my experiences in hope that it starts a long and public conversation, out in the open so we can all learn from and help each other live as long and independently as possible.

To be Continued...



Laura Wetzler

Hilltown Singer Songwriter Guitarist

"One of the very best" Pete Seeger

Sunday, Oct. 10 at 2pm

Songs for a Sunday afternoon

Featuring Wes Brown on Bass

Outdoors:

Under the Tent

Chesterfield Town Hall Tent

(Behind the PO)

403 Main Rd. Chesterfield 01012

Rain Venue:

Chesterfield Community Center

400 Main Rd. Chesterfield 01012

This is a free COA Event and we'd love to see our neighbors!

Everyone attending should be vaccinated and wearing a mask at all times.

*Sponsored by a grant from
Highland Valley Elder Services.*



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

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

Chesterfield COA

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Francine Frenier, Vice Chair
Bev Pomeroy, Secretary
Carole Bergeron
Jim Brisbois
Marianne Hoag
Gail Lucey
Tim McElroy
Deborah Thibault



Financial Advisor: Nancy Hewes

Librarian: Dee Cinner

HVES Rep: Jan Gibeau

*Art Com: Gigi Kaeser, Chair;
Dee Cinner*

*Travel Group: Carole Bergeron,
Mary Ann Coleman,
Francine Frenier, Gail Lucey*



Newsletter Designer:
Kristen Estelle

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

HRMC ANNOUNCES ANNUAL HHW COLLECTION EVENT
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2021

PROTECT YOUR HOME AND THE ENVIRONMENT:
PROPER HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) DISPOSAL

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) announces their annual Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event for residents of the ten HRMC member communities of: Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington.

Saturday, October 23, 2021 from 9 a.m. to Noon at the Westhampton Highway Department
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED (from October 1 - October 17)

Protect your home and our environment by properly disposing of old or unwanted household chemicals. Products containing lead, petroleum products, pesticides, herbicides, and acids should NOT be poured on the ground, down the drain, or placed in household trash. The HRMC Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection program accepts a wide range of unwanted household products with labels that indicate that special handling is required. Examples of common warnings include "caustic, toxic, corrosive, poison, flammable, warning, danger, caution and keep out of reach of children and pets." NO LATEX PAINT will be taken at this event - Latex paint should be solidified and disposed of in your trash.

The program is free to HRMC member-town residents, however, Pre-Registration is required. Please email your name, street and mailing address (including Town and Zip Code), and phone number to hrmc@hrmc-ma.org. Or you may phone HRMC with the above information including an email address at **413-685-5498**. HRMC will confirm your registration and send a confirmation letter to bring with you to the event. Note that Huntington residents are asked to provide their transfer station sticker number at the time of registration.