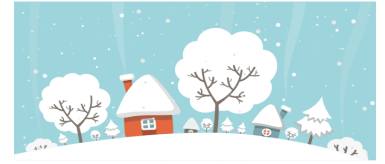


# Chesterfield Council on Aging

## January 2022 Newsletter



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

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

### January Calendar of Events

<u><b>Monday</b></u>	<u><b>Tuesday</b></u>	<u><b>Wednesday</b></u>	<u><b>Thursday</b></u>	<u><b>Friday</b></u>
<b>3</b> <b>Tai Chi</b> 9:30-10:30am	<b>4</b> <b>Mah-Jongg</b> 1-4pm	<b>5</b> <b>Beginner T'ai Chi</b> 1pm	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Smooth Moves</b> 9:15am
<b>10</b> <b>Tai Chi</b> 9:30-10:30am	<b>11</b> <b>Chair Yoga</b> 10am <b>Mah-Jongg</b> 1-4pm	<b>12</b> <b>Beginner T'ai Chi</b> 1pm	<b>13</b> <b>Brown Bag</b> 10am	<b>14</b> <b>Smooth Moves</b> 9:15am
<b>17</b> <b>Tai Chi</b> 9:30-10:30am	<b>18</b> <b>Chair Yoga</b> 10am <b>Mah-Jongg</b> 1-4pm	<b>19</b> <b>Beginner T'ai Chi</b> 1pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Smooth Moves</b> 9:15am  Sun. 1/23 2pm Life in the Arctic program
<b>24</b> <b>Tai Chi</b> 9:30-10:30am <b>COA Board Mtg</b> 10am	<b>25</b> <b>Chair Yoga</b> 10am <b>Mah-Jongg</b> 1-4pm	<b>26</b> <b>Beginner T'ai Chi</b> 1pm	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Smooth Moves</b> 9:15am
<b>31</b> <b>Tai Chi</b> 9:30-10:30am <b>iPhone Workshop</b> 2:30-5pm				

## Much Needed Help Has Arrived: Pete's Winter Wagon!

The last few winters has left many people looking, to no avail, for help with shoveling and other jobs. Good news! Pete Bowlby is ready to help.

Do you need someone to  
pick up and deliver?  
My Winter Wagon delivers:

Firewood  
Groceries  
Supplies

\$10/trip near Chesterfield

Want to know more?  
Call Pete B. at 413-272-9359

When asked why she liked working in Chesterfield, she said that she likes the small town community feel and how friendly people are. She loves being active in helping the community. Not a small order given the challenges of installing a new phone system and a new integrated IT network for interactive access among departments. We welcome Brenda and look forward to her successes in making a difference; her stated wish.

Ugh... January.  
The whole month is  
just a giant Monday.

## Profile: Brenda Lessard

You may have noticed that when you call the Town Office a new voice is on the line. She's our new town administrator, Brenda Lessard. If you've always lived in the Hilltowns, you may have already met her. As they say, it's a small world. If you used to go to the Lunch Box, you probably have seen her there. She is the daughter of Tommy Thomas and his wife, Celia. Evelyn Culver, the COA Coordinator in Goshen, is Brenda's aunt. Brenda grew up in Goshen and has been in the Hilltowns for most of her life. She knows the Hilltowns well: a real boon for Chesterfield. Brenda wears more than one hat and is also the town clerk in Williamsburg. In small towns you're never far away from someone you know. Charlene Nardi, our town administrator before Sue Labrie, became a mentor for Brenda when Charlene was the town administrator in Williamsburg.

Following her graduation from high school, Brenda became a Licensed Practical Nurse, caring for people at Northampton Nursing Home and Hampshire Care. When she married and became a mother of two, she took on a new career as a full-time Mom. In addition, she provided daycare in her home for 7-8 other children.

An important part of her life was helping at the Lunch Box. Among many tasks, she helped her mother in the kitchen and, in turn, her mother taught her all the skills she would need following her mother's death to keep the meals coming.

## Special Acts of Kindness and Hope

It's sometimes heartening to hear news of good things happening instead of being pummeled by the bah-humbug, cynicism in the air. One of those good news stories comes from Kessie Warlow Harry. When asked to share her poetry and the background of the story of why she initiated this effort to help people just coming to this country, she shared the following:

In November, I wrote a poem a day as part of a fund-raising effort by the Center for New Americans (CNA). The poem below is one in an autobiographical series I started this year. As a very privileged immigrant to this country more than fifty years ago, I fell in love with the United States, the people, the landscape, but mostly its freedoms, something which I think born and bred Americans don't always fully understand. And that is what happens to most immigrants, they fall in love with the United States. But it is not easy moving from one homeland to another. The Center for New Americans is an organization close to my heart because it is there for those who need help. They work with new arrivals to the United States in huge ways. The Center has been welcoming and serving immigrants in W. Mass for almost 30 years. They offer free classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); instruction in civics, career preparation and technology; and provide support services, connecting immigrants to community resources (housing, healthcare, childcare). During the past 18 months, they have

purchased and loaned tablets to students who could not otherwise connect to classes, and have distributed over \$125,000 in emergency relief, paying rent, utilities bills, and buying food cards. With support from the CNA, students obtain living wage jobs, start their own businesses, and build new lives. Several of our teachers write and fundraise with 30 Poems in November! and we teach poetry in class. For more information, please visit their website: <http://cnam.org>, and if you feel so inclined, donations are always welcome!

*A Part of Me IV*  
*Saunton Sands*  
*November 7, 2021 by Kessie Warlow-Harry*

The sight of remembered beach  
came later with my Dad's creamy  
white bare legs with skinny feet  
attached, lying prone on cold,  
hard, wet sand his head tucked  
between rocks, a straightened wire  
coat hanger in his hand, a hook at  
the far end, and grunts, and mumbles  
coming from his mouth.  
"He's there...nearly got him."  
Ah yes." And out comes Dad's arm  
Cold, wet, sandy, crooked from a massive  
break when young, slowly pulling  
the hanger out of the mini cave, lapped  
by the sea, and a blue dangling thing  
hanging on tight.  
"Our supper!" Dad cries, and I in awe,  
see my first lobster at the end of a  
coat hanger.

---

**From the Chesterfield Historical Commission  
Corner**

## **The Berry Business**

In August, when the field is a rhapsody in blue, John Roberts, a former music teacher and now a full-time blueberry grower, harvests one of this area's largest berry crops.

Blue Ridge Farm, tucked between the Roberts' home on South Street and the Dodge's homestead, now is in full production. Scattered among the six acres of bushes, up to 30 workers a day will pick 35,000 pints of blueberries. Roberts grows 14 varieties of blueberries, including early, in-season, and late crops and ranging from the giant Coville to the old-fashioned Rubell pie berries. Blue Ridge Farm blueberries are shipped to Boston by way of a Hadley produce trucker, and then ultimately are marketed across New England.

"Blueberries helped me put my kids through school, and now it's my retirement income," said Roberts. Since he retired as the music supervisor for the Central Berkshire Regional school district in 1979, he has devoted himself to berry farming and some related activities, things like the Eastern Berkshire Blueberry Association and the hobby of winemaking.

The son of a dance-band musician in Springfield, Roberts began playing the violin when he was 8. After serving in World War II, he earned a bachelor's degree in music education at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Roberts married Dorothy Dodge, and he settled in her family's farmhouse on South Street. There, wild blueberries abounded, both in the pastures and the nearby woods.

As a "circuit rider" music teacher for the Berkshire Hilltowns, Roberts needed a second income to support his family of four children, so he took a summer job as an overseer at Joseph Kuznicki's blueberry farm in Blandford. "Kuznicki brought cultivated blueberry farming to Western Massachusetts," said Roberts. "He realized that the land in the Hilltowns is perfect for berry cultivation."

After working in Blandford for a dozen years, Roberts decided to plant his own. He bought some land from his father-in-law, land ideal for berries. "Mountain laurels and white pine are a good indication for berries." Blueberrying has become an August tradition for the Roberts. Mrs. Roberts recalls her father hiring women to pick from the wild high-bush variety. The ladies once got a nickel a quart.

The first year, Roberts planted 160 bushes. "I learned by doing it the wrong way," he said. "I over fertilized and killed off half my crop." Over the years he increased his crop and his expertise. He now has over 4,000 bushes.

A lot depends on mulching and pruning. He mulched his field with 350 cords of sawdust ("Sawdust is a wonderful mulch. It's a growth medium, it keeps moisture in and weeds out, and it  
(continued on next page)

maintains an even soil temperature.”) Every eight to 10 years, the bushes are cut to two-inch stumps, and it takes three years before they produce again. But when they do, they bear bigger and better fruit. The plants are also pruned each year. Last year the pile of prunings was 400 feet long.

As the blueberry farm flourished, Roberts’ career did too. He became the first music instructor at the Central Berkshire Regional High School and then the district’s music supervisor. He also joined the Berkshire Symphony in Williamstown where he played second fiddle. He has played with the Pioneer Valley Symphony in Greenfield for 10 years.

Blueberries have given Roberts a respite from the professional pressures and constant rehearsals. But he also casts an aesthetic eye toward his field. “Look at the lovely colors of these berries,” he said. “The peak of ripeness is when the berry is firm and sweet and frosty ‘bloom’,” he noted.


During the 10-to-12 week picking season, Roberts becomes the town’s largest employer. He hires about 15 women and another 15 youngsters to harvest and package the crop. The workers get paid by the pint with a good picker picking up to 120 pints a day.

The berries go into 10-pint wooden carriers which are stacked in the barn and then are packaged for market by Roberts’ daughter, Priscilla Smith, and lone Cherry of Huntington Road.

Article by Sandra Doucett (1980’s)  
Reprinted with permission by the  
Daily Hampshire Gazette



**Happy Birthday in January!**



Beverley Sunderland, Edward Breau, Judith Terry,  
Martha Liimatainen, Judith Press, Noel Rogers,  
Eunice Maguire, Lucille Bartus, Charles Nugent,  
Carole Bergeron, William Michalowski,  
Jeane Anastas, Beverley Henrichsen,  
Mary Ellen Frye, Pierre Brisson, Joseph Bartus,  
Georgeann Michalowski, William McVeigh,  
Brooks Ryder, Thomas Dawson-Greene,  
Carl Cignoni, Deborah Thibault, James Kolodziej,  
Russell Peotter, Christine Ciccarello,  
Debra Blanchard, Eileen McGowan, Mary Heon,  
Geoffrey Hitzig, Lynn Hicks, Janet McCann,  
William Miller, Sally Kolodziej, Marianne Hoag,  
Kent Hicks, Beverly Pomeroy, Heidi Pruzynski,  
Bert Church, Kevin Cotnoir, Lisa Shaw

***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

Well, it is January and it is getting colder and staying warm may be difficult for many of us who live in older houses. You may be tempted to buy and use a space heater.

Here are few ways to use one as safely as possible:

Senior   
**SAFE**

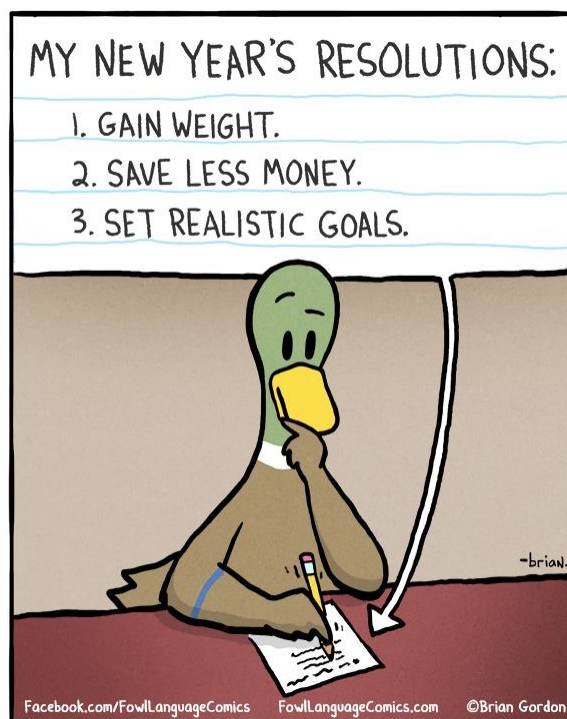
- ⇒ When buying one, look for a heater that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, like "UL" (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- ⇒ Keep the heater 3 feet away from drapes, furniture or other flammable materials.
- ⇒ Put the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- ⇒ Avoid using extension cords. If you must use one, make sure it is heavy duty and marked with a power rating that is at least as high as that on the heater's label.
- ⇒ Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- ⇒ Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in a bathroom.
- ⇒ Don't even think about using unvented kerosene heaters; they are illegal here.

Have a warm and SAFE winter!

--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.*

## 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!

## Winter Games?

OK, maybe this is weird, but a possible indoor activity for you is to take some financial literacy quizzes with your family, especially the younger members. Surveys show (you know the "They Say" deal) that we are very poor in some basic financial knowledge.

So what, you ask? Well, knowledge is power. Having good financial knowledge can help a person avoid bad debt and defaults on loans. On a positive note, it can help build an emergency savings fund, earn higher interest on investments, and plan to meet financial goals. Overall, that knowledge can help get and keep enough money to be able to do what a person wants to do.

A major investment firm asked more than 2000 people questions in eight different retirement categories. The average grade that people got right was only 30 percent. No one got all the questions right and the highest overall grade was 79 percent. Here is that quiz – give it a try!

**[www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/](http://www.newretirement.com/retirement/retirement-financial-literacy-can-you-do-better-than-average/)**

There are many financial literacy quizzes online; this one is from the AARP:

**[www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1](http://www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-01-2014/test-your-money-smarts.html#quest1)**

This is a well-rounded set of questions that I recommend. From there, you could search for many other quizzes to take, starting with this page: **[www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy](http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/topic/financial-literacy)**

Enjoy your winter!

Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member  
413-268-2228, [jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)

## Dealing with Dementia: How to cope

by Jan Gibeau

Living with dementia often means having to cope with the stigma attached to the word itself. Just as we are reluctant to talk about the changes happening in our lives, our friends and family struggle to find the right words to use when talking with you. There is no right or wrong way, of course. Many of the questions and fears that arise are hard to discuss when friends and family members are also trying hard to be comforting and reassuring at the same time. Even though the changes you and they have been noticing have probably been there for a while now, being formally diagnosed with dementia can feel sudden and forbidding. This is time to “think in slices, not loaves”. It’s important to keep in mind that people living with dementia can still continue to live a full life for years following their diagnosis. Even in the face of this fact, many misconceptions about dementia make life harder for everyone. When you forget something, lose something, can’t find a word you’re trying to use, you wonder, “Are all these events getting tossed into a new box labelled ‘person with dementia’? Am I being seen as ‘less than’ by friends and family?” Then you realize that you, too, may have already bought into the stigma and it’s time to kick it away. It may take more than a few kicks.

One of the most powerful ways to debunk the stigma is to ask and listen to others who are themselves living through the same thing. Listening and talking helps you and your friends as well as your family learn what kinds of things people have experienced and what they have found helpful. It also helps to know that you are not in this alone. Here are a few examples of what experiences people have shared; addressing both what can be painful and what can help:

- When I tell someone I have dementia and I have trouble remembering, people say ‘Oh I have trouble remembering too’. It makes me feel like they are being competitive or just not listening. I would like to say, ‘You have memory problems? Call me when you forget something 15 times. Losing your keys is nothing compared to losing your house’.
- I often feel people aren’t really listening, but are making assumptions. I want people to know that there are times when I can’t get through a single task because I can’t keep the thought of what I was doing in my mind. When people don’t listen, it’s upsetting. Ask me a question about what’s it like, don’t compare your experience to mine.
- People are uncomfortable with the level of difficulty I am having. Perhaps this is why they emphasize that I look normal and talk well.
- I’m often told, ‘You don’t look like you have dementia’. No one says, ‘You don’t look like you have diabetes’.
- Many folks seem to think if someone has de-

mentia, the person’s gone.

- When you have dementia, you are just a person who has something to deal with like any other disease. You wouldn’t leave someone behind if they have COPD and needed some extra time to walk.
- With dementia, I need people to give me extra time to respond. Even though others are trying to be reassuring, they may not realize that their comments leave you feeling hurt and upset.

What are some ideas that people thought would be more helpful?

- It helps to not start a sentence by saying “don’t you remember?”
- It helps when someone asks, “If you get stuck, would you rather I helped you or waited?”
- It helps if family and friends and others understand my condition.
- When people understand that I can’t get a word, I will describe what word I am looking for. It becomes a group effort and can be fun. I feel we are working together.
- When I give people permission to tell me if something seems out of the ordinary with me.
- When I say, “Stop me if you’ve heard this”. It makes the other person feel comfortable.
- People want to get me organized. It works better if I do the organizing. This helps me to remember where things are and generally makes more sense than another person’s idea of organization.
- It helps when my friends and family point out my strengths and achievements, not just instances of forgetting or losing something.

It helps when you and others close to you recognize that you are still you, and the goal is to preserve that as long as possible. It’s also important that you think about what you would like and let people know. It’s important to make a customized plan that’s suited to your personal wishes.

There is so much information online dealing with dementia and they all have value, but it can be hard to find a clear and succinct list of facts, issues and good tips in making a plan. I have found that one of the best resources to begin with is the Memory Handbook created by the Alzheimer’s Society in the UK. You can explore more by going to their website ([Alzheimers.org.UK](http://Alzheimers.org.UK)) It is written in a way that “get’s to the point” in a down to earth way. Worth reading! The Alzheimer’s Association website provides access to detailed, in depth articles that address most of the concerns or questions that come up.

Other sources of good information include:

⇒ **Mass Councils on Aging Association;**  
[Mcoonline.com](http://Mcoonline.com)



⇒ **MA Healthy Aging Collaborative;**  
mahealthyagingcollaborative.org, 413-499-0524

⇒ **Executive Office of Elder Affairs;**  
EOEA@ mass.gov, 617-727-7750

⇒ **AARP** www.aarp.org, 866-448-3621

**The Alzheimer's Association;** www.alz.org

### 3G Service to End in 2022

Major cellular providers plan to phase out 3G coverage beginning in early 2022. What this means is that if you use older devices that rely on 3G networks, the use of your devices will be impacted. This includes cell phones, tablets, emergency/life alert and other medical devices, home security systems, among other technologies. Many providers are reaching out to customers who will be affected by this change; if you are trying to determine if your device uses this older technology, contact the provider or carrier for the service.

### Reminder:

**SNAP recipients can save an extra \$40-\$80 on their EBT card for fresh fruits and vegetables at eligible locations.**

This is supported by the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), a Massachusetts state program where SNAP recipients get at least \$40 of extra SNAP money every month to spend on local fruits and vegetables. That means if you have SNAP, you automatically have HIP! Two of the farms are: Crabapple Farm, 100 Bryant St. in Chesterfield, and Crimson and Clover, 215 Spring St. in Florence. Shop at these farm locations with your SNAP/EBT card, and get at least \$40 extra to spend through the HIP program. Note: you must have at least \$1 on your SNAP/EBT card when you go and shop; in other words, you need to have a balance on your EBT card in order to earn the HIP incentive.



### Start the New Year with Smooth Moves

Winter is here! COVID won't go away. Finding yourself feeling a little "stiff" from staying inside so much? Have you been away from exercise and find yourself yearning to get your body moving again? Worried about exercise classes that are more vigorous than you're ready for? If you answered yes to any of these questions, we invite you to join our new class series called **Smooth Moves**. It's a good class for relaxing, stretching out and feeling good. The program will provide you the opportunity to remain seated in a chair while inviting your body to join you in some basic



movements. Joan Griswold, a very knowledgeable instructor, has created this program to gently guide you through movement oriented to increasing your range of movement and flexibility without pain and discomfort. No special equipment necessary.

This class will be offered on Friday mornings at 9:15am at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Would you be interested in participating in person or prefer a virtual offering? All in person programs require participants to wear masks regardless of vaccination status. For more information, contact Joan Griswold at (413) 268-7985 or joan@bybhealth.com

### On the Road Again...



#### 2022 Trip Lineup

These are some of the bus trip destinations in different stages of planning with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Contact Francine Frenier by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.

⇒ *Day Trip Jan. 27. **Ice Castles*** is an award-winning frozen attraction in Lincoln, NH. The attractions are built using thousands of icicles hand-placed by professional ice artists. The castles include breathtaking LED-lit sculptures, frozen thrones, ice-carved tunnels, fountains and much more. Warm clothing and good footwear recommended. We make a stop for a bite to eat along the way. Cost is \$119, \$10 discount if paid early. **Payment due NOW.**

#### Taking interest lists now on the following:

*Multi Day April 24-30. **Myrtle Beach Show Trip.*** 7 days. Cost \$739, \$25 discount if paid early. Flyer available.

*Day Trip May 5. **Country Shopping in Southern Vermont Trip,*** lunch at The Marina. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$112, \$10 discount if paid early.

*Day Trip May 18: **Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band*** at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost to be determined. Approx. cost \$120, \$10 discount if paid early.

*Multi Day May 23-27. Lancaster, PA. **Sight & Sound Theater presents David.*** 5 days. \$549, \$25 discount if paid by February 16, 2022. Flyer available.

*Day Trip June 9. **Corvettes Doo Wop Revue. Lobster Tail or Prime Rib for lunch. Self Drive to the Log Cabin.*** Cost to be determined.

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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 183  
Greenfield MA

Chesterfield COA

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



*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

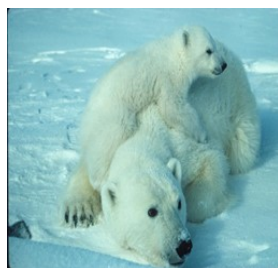
This Newsletter is sponsored in part by a grant from The Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

**Life in the Artic National Wildlife Refuge**

**By Fran Ryan**

**Sunday, January 23rd at 2pm**

Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.



On January 23 at 2pm, Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting in person at the Chesterfield Community Center. Fran will discuss some of the wildlife that inhabit ANWR, how they adapt to their surroundings and the importance of the ANWR.

*\*Given that it's cold both here and in the Artic,  
Hot Chocolate will be provided!*

**Peg Whalen presents:  
iPhone Basics Workshop**

**Monday January 31st  
2:30 to 5:00pm**

Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd.

There is still a strong interest by people wanting to learn about their iPhones. Peg will be conducting another workshop that will cover the following issues:

- Understand some basics of getting your phone to do what you want it to do.
- Feel comfortable enough with your phone to try apps and features.
- Do things you have been told it can do but you have not figured out how.
- Ways to learn more about your phone on your own.

**Interested in coming?**

Please reserve a spot by January 21<sup>st</sup>. Call Peg Whalen, workshop presenter, at 413-404-4566. Leave a voicemail or text with your name, email address, cell phone version (e.g. iPhone 7, iPhone SE, iPhone 12) and your home or cell phone number.