

# Chesterfield Council on Aging

## August 2023 Newsletter



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

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

### August Calendar of Events

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
	<b>1</b> Chair Yoga 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	<b>2</b> Northern Consortium of COAs 10am Tai Chi 1:30pm	<b>3</b> Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am CISA Pick Up 2pm	<b>4</b> Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am
<b>7</b> Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am	<b>8</b> Chair Yoga 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	<b>9</b> Tai Chi 1:30pm	<b>10</b> Brown Bag 10am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am CISA Pick Up 2pm	<b>11</b> Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am
<b>14</b> Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am	<b>15</b> Chair Yoga 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	<b>16</b> Tai Chi 1:30pm	<b>17</b> Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am Ice Cream Social 2pm CISA Pick Up 2pm	<b>18</b> Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am
<b>21</b> Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am COA Board Mtg 10am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am	<b>22</b> Chair Yoga 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	<b>23</b> Tai Chi 1:30pm Fiber Friends 7pm	<b>24</b> Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am CISA Pick Up 2pm	<b>25</b> Smooth Moves 9am Strength for Life 10am
<b>28</b> Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am	<b>29</b> Chair Yoga 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	<b>30</b> Tai Chi 1:30pm	<b>31</b> Grab' N' Go Meal 11:30am CISA Pick Up 2pm	

# Ice Cream Social

Thursday, August 17th at 2pm  
Chesterfield Community Center



**FREE!** Come cool off with us.

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## 4th of July Recap

July 2nd Block Party Brings Generations together  
for Music and Dance



Lenore Pittsinger,  
daughter-in-law  
Taylor, grandkids  
Bryan and Grace

Chesterfield's 4th of July parade was a big hit!



Despite clouds and light rain, the parade rolled out on schedule, drawing a lively crowd from Chesterfield, other towns, other states and other countries! Food flowed from the Fire Department's pancake breakfast, the Recreation Committee's hot dogs, popcorn, soda and other treats; ice cream from the Historical Society and topped off by the Congregational Church's barbeque chicken and lip-smacking potato salad made every year with a recipe from Mary Jane Miller.

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## Newsletter Funding Update – Great News!

In the July newsletter we talked about the possible lack of funding for the continued printing and mailing of the monthly COA newsletter which would have impacted not only Chesterfield, but all 7 hilltowns. Since then, the Northern Hilltown Consortium (NHC) was able to secure a Service Incentive Grant (SIG) to fund the newsletter for another FULL year. This is fantastic news and a tremendous relief to all of us!

“Hooray...we did it... the written word lives on for another year! Educational programs and conferences will continue. Can you believe it?”

~ Jan Gibeau, Chair of the NHC

The digital mailing list is also still available to all. If you wish to subscribe, please email Kristen Estelle at [regionalcoanews@gmail.com](mailto:regionalcoanews@gmail.com)



The first **5**  
**days** after the  
weekend are  
the hardest.

## Chesterfield Historical Commission Corner

### Caretakers stand guard at Gorge

The “Old Man of the Gorge” is one of the natural wonders that Chester A. Lafond likes to point out to visitors at the Chesterfield Gorge Reservation, but only after he is sure he has collected their dollar.

Lafond, 66, and his wife Lois, 67, have become almost as permanent a fixture at the Gorge as the natural stone sculpture that peers watchfully across the deep ravine in the Westfield River. For the past four years, the Damon Pond Road couple have been the summer caretakers of the popular scenic recreational area, collecting entrance fees from visitors and patrolling the 161-acre reservation.

The Chesterfield Gorge is one of 64 properties in the state under the custodianship of the Trustees of Reservations, a non-profit conservation and historic preservation organization. The area is known for its sheer granite cliffs and the waterfalls and deep pools that flow between them. Picnic sites are available. Hiking and fishing is encouraged, but swimming is not permitted.

The Lafonds are in charge of collecting a \$1 per person entrance fee from visitors, keeping swimmers out of the river, and making sure that the grounds remain tidy and pristine. They are at the Gorge on weekends between May 1 through Oct. 15 and also on holidays. Occasionally they are there on weekdays.

The Lafonds are at their post by 8am on weekend mornings and they sometimes remain until 8pm at night. The Chesterfield Gorge is visited by an average of 200 people on a nice summer weekend, but there was one day when the Lafonds checked in 150 visitors.

“Where they come from, I don’t know,” remarked Mrs. Lafond. “We’ve had visitors here from Alaska and California and a lot of people come back several times over the summer.”

While Mrs. Lafond admits that she only visited the Gorge once during her first 30 years in Chesterfield, the area now has become a second home for the couple. They cook their meals on a gas grill and they eat at the picnic table closest to the entrance.

“I’ve never worked so much as since I’ve retired,” said Lafond, who retired from the Chesterfield Highway Department last year after 26 years. He also now works during the week, driving a grader for private contractors, picking apples, and making stuffed animals on order.

In past years there were several serious accidents at the area, mainly from swimmers diving from the cliffs or slipping off moss-covered rocks. The steep banks make the spot extremely difficult and hazardous for emergency personnel, Lafond explained. But since he and his wife have been on duty, there have not been any serious accidents.

On warm days, he is kept busy getting swimmers out of the tempting cool, deep pools, which can be treacherous in the stiff current. The couple also serve as informal tour guides, and pointed out a 1739 bridge abutment that once was part of the Boston to Albany post road, bowls carved in the riverbed by the action of water and sand, a natural stone formation that looks like a man’s profile, and a curious row of white boulders that almost look as if they had deliberately been placed across the river.

“After spending so much time here, you kind of take it for granted,” explained Lafond. “But there’s always someone new to meet, and it’s interesting to watch the rocks emerge from the river as the summer goes by.”



*In the four years Chester and Lois Lafond have been the caretakers of the Chesterfield Gorge, they have become almost as much of a fixture there as the scenery that attracts visitors from across the country.*

*Daily Hampshire Gazette article & photo by Sandra Doucett, 8/4/84.*

*Reprinted with permission from the Daily Hampshire Gazette.*



### Midsummer, Tobago by Derek Walcott

Broad sun-stoned beaches.

White heat.  
A green river.

A bridge,  
Scorched yellow palms  
from the summer-sleeping house  
drowsing through August.

Days I have held,  
days I have lost,  
days that outgrow, like daughters,  
my harbouring arms.



### Happy Birthday in August!

Timothy Gorham, Paul Marcinczyk, Naomi Sturtevant, Nancy Hewes, Lynn Martus, Michael Brown, John Taillon, Raven Hannah, Sharon Higgins, Donna Ensor, David Jarrett, Marisa Lentner, David Puza, Kim Sarafin, Janet Scully, Richard Konopka, Hill Hillenbrand, Maria Stenzel, Robert Keyes, Karen Henell, Thomas Daggett, Christopher Ryan, Timothy McElroy, Debra Cleveland, June Hinton, Lesley Spokas, Robert Moore, Michael Labarre, Patricia Sicard, Kathryn Marcinczyk, Elizabeth Fondakowski, Douglas Fisher, Mary Ann Coleman, George Wade, Virginia Kaeser, Robert MacLeod



### Summer Safety Tips



#### Stay Hydrated

Drink 8 or more glasses of water per day to stay healthy & hydrated



#### Know the Side Effects of Medications

Some medications have side effects such as drowsiness or sun sensitivity



#### Stay Cool

Stay in the A/C, indoors, go swimming, etc.



#### Wear Light, Loose Fitting Clothing

Wear breathable clothing and light colors that reflect the sun



#### Have Emergency Contacts

Have a list of people to call in case of emergency



#### Know the Weather Forecast

Plan your days accordingly depending on the weather

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

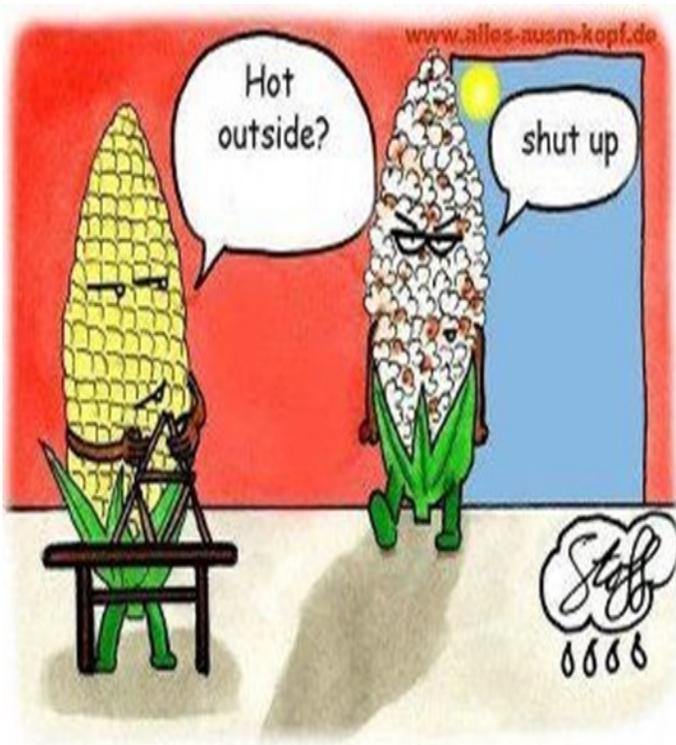
I would like to contribute to the Chesterfield COA. My contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is attached.

*(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 \_\_\_\_\_



**Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, by email instead of snail mail?**

If so, please email Kristen at [regionalcoanews@gmail.com](mailto: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!

### Your State Representatives

#### **State Senator Paul Mark**

Email: [paul.mark@masenate.gov](mailto:paul.mark@masenate.gov)

Phone: 413-464-5635

Mail: 773 Tyler Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Nearby local office hours:  
Williamsburg Town Hall  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 1-3pm

#### **State Representative Lindsay Sadosa**

Email: [Lindsay.Sadosa@mahouse.gov](mailto:Lindsay.Sadosa@mahouse.gov)

Phone: 413-270-1166.

Mail: 76 Gothic Street  
Northampton, MA 01060

## Artificial Intelligence

You've read about it, here it is! Actually, it has been here for awhile. I spoke a text on my phone, trying to say "Cats really know how to nap". The first word appeared on my screen as Katz but by the time I finished my sentence it had changed to Cats. That is a form of AI.

We see it in autocorrect, when our email recognizes an address we start to type, or when Siri figures out who to call. When we have to select all the images with a sidewalk in them to continue to the web page we want, that is a form of AI. Many Applications (Apps) use AI.

In addition to these useful and positive activities, doctors are using AI to help prepare their case notes and discharge papers, saving them time. A recent study at the Mayo Clinic used AI to supplement physician readings for colon cancer and found more polyps than the doctor did. Maps and navigation tools have given us benefits in ease and accuracy of use. E-banking allows us to bank from home.

ON THE OTHER HAND, as AI becomes more sophisticated, it can cause problems. The ability to clone voices is growing so scammers can use AI to duplicate voices and facial images of a grandchild and really alarm a grandparent into sending money. Voice cloning can trick us into sending money to a friend who calls. We are already seeing campaign ads done by AI that show fake photos and videos, helping to spread misinformation and false events.

Things are only going to get worse as potentially very useful Artificial Intelligence gets co-opted for nefarious purposes. Remember last month's note on mindset? We need to keep our Game Brain engaged!

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

## Another Conversation about Memory Scheduled for the Fall!

More than 90 people signed up for the conference on June 22. The Community Center could only accommodate 60 people, leaving 26 on a waiting list. The keynote by Dr. Starr, combined with presentations by Sharon Asher and Deb Hollingworth, set the stage for a day that made it easy to talk about a wide range of sensitive issues. By all measures it was a success.



### When asked to evaluate the day, these were some of the comments:

*“Better than expected.”*

*“Almost as good as someone by my side to do what’s needed.”*

*“I’ve been working with people with memory problems for a long time and I actually learned something new today.”*

*“Made me realize my brain is better than my body.”*

### What was most helpful?

- Dr. Starr answered important questions
- Description of brain function
- Gentle but firm presentations of facts
- Positive focus of the day
- Chatting with others at my table
- What to expect if this happens to someone in your family
- The presenters did not catastrophize Dementia
- Deb’s experience with her parents

### More information wanted:

- Home care resources; where to start, who pays, what’s available
- Finding local in home care services in the Region
- Programs that pay caregivers
- Supportive housing options
- Later life planning help understanding health insurance
- How to make ends meet with dwindling Finances
- Discussions about depression and “nervousness”
- How to find individual counseling for planning for the next stage
- Learning how to talk with someone with memory impairments

- How to respond to tense and difficult interactions
- Common caregiving stresses and how to get help
- Financial pitfalls, protections and planning for long term care
- Affordable options when continued care at home is not possible
- Use of light and touch therapies

### Next Steps

#### **First and foremost the conference will be repeated in the fall!**

Plans are underway to provide monthly small group forums to dig deeper into the topics listed above and more. Look for the plan in the next issue.

**I’m at the place  
in my life where  
Errands count as  
“Going Out”**

**IF THERE WAS A PILL TO CURE  
PROCRASTINATION, I WOULD  
PROBABLY TAKE IT TOMORROW.**



## On the Road Again...

### 2023 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

*Day Trip August 24. **Saratoga Racetrack**, Saratoga Springs, NY. This trip includes lunch at the Inn at Saratoga. Entrée choices are Chicken Normandy or Pasta a la Saratoga. After lunch, spend time at the racetrack in our reserved grandstand seats. Over 60 concession stands on the grounds. Make payment to Landmark Tours for \$130 due **NOW**.*

*Day Trip September TBD. **The Big E**, an annual favorite, with free entertainment at Honor Court Stage. Watch for details. Tentative date September 22. We will depart from the Big E at 4pm.*

*Multi Day Trip September 10-12. **Nantucket Island. REDUCED PRICE. 3 days- 2 nights.** Includes ferry to and from the island, guided tour of the island and all access pass to historical sites. Make payment to First Choice for \$689 p/p double occupancy due **NOW**. Mail to the address above. Limited seats.*

*Multi Day Trip September 29-October 9, 2023. **Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse - S. Dakota & Devils Tower - Wyoming.** 11 days. Stops at Corn Palace, Wall Drug, National Museum of Great Lakes, Iowa Museum of Natural History, Des Moines Art Center, and Eck Visitors Center at Univ. of Notre Dame. Cost \$1,178. Due **NOW**. Contact Francine to reserve your seat. **Two seats remain.***

*Day Trip October 9. **Lake George Cruise** - Take a 2.5 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. A Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. Special pricing for Worthington Seniors \$75, for all other seniors the cost is \$125. Make your check out to Landmark Tours and mail to Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098 by September 5th. Two pick up locations-- Worthington and Northampton. A similar trip sold out recently, so reserve early. For further information contact Phyllis Dassatti at 413-238-5962.*

*Day Trip November 4. **Elvis- A Musical Revolution- North Shore Theater.** An exciting musical in Beverly, MA where you will hear 40 of Elvis' hits. Lunch at Danversport Yacht Club included. Make \$259 payment to First Choice **NOW**. Mail to the address above. A few seats remain.*

~~COMING IN 2024~~

*Multi Day Trip May 2024. **Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island & New Brunswick. Passport required.** Cost TBD per person dbl. occupancy.*

**This 9 day trip includes:** 8 nights lodging including 5 nights in Canada, one night stay in Maine coming and going. 14 meals including: 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners. Guided Tour of Acadia National Park, Guided Tour of Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg.

~~Since Lake George and Lake Sunapee were so popular and sold out in 2023, I will run these two trips in 2024.~~

## Consortium website opens door to "rooms" full of information

Thanks to the work of Peg Whalen, the seven hilltowns of northwest Hampshire County, from Westhampton to Plainfield, Worthington to Williamsburg, are rolling out their redesigned website, <https://northernhilltownscoas.org> This website gives easy, early access to all the Councils on Aging newsletters, in full color, every month. The website also has a section for each town, CHESTERFIELD, CUMMINGTON, GOSHEN, PLAINFIELD, WESTHAMPTON, WILLIAMSBURG, and WORTHINGTON, with NEWS and announcements, CALENDARS, NEWSLETTERS, contact information, photos, and links to important in-town resources and events. The website supplies users access to written information, instructions, video about topics on GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED, links to USEFUL WEBSITES and services access, and many other information sources and volunteer opportunities. The site also describes special INITIATIVES the seven COAs are taking part in, cross-town calendars, and regional news.

Related to Tech Tips, the site has a TECHNOLOGY section dedicated to supporting aging in a digital world, with technical support sources, how-to instructions, workshop video, visual and written handouts about devices and tech uses, links to existing online sources for technology classes, training and technical assistance, and shortly, will have a calendar of scheduled local trainings. Please visit the website regularly and get familiar with its resources. You can reach the site at

<https://northernhilltownscoas.org> (Note, both hilltowns and COAs have "s" after their name, use care in entering the website.) We suggest you bookmark the website so you can quickly and return often to check on the wide variety of activities and services the area COAs are offering.

If you currently are unable to access the internet, your local library can help you visit the website. If you have suggestions or comments about the website, please share them on the site or let your COA know. This website is for EVERYONE in our seven towns. We invite you to help us tailor it to meet the needs and expectations of all the older adults we serve.

Please note, technical support is ongoing throughout the summer, by appointment only. Pre-arranged hours will resume in the fall. Contact your COA or reach out to Peg Whalen for assistance at

[pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:pegwhalenworkshops@gmail.com) or text your name and questions to **413-296-5080**.

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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
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Greenfield MA

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# SCAM ALERT!



## **Protect Yourself & Avoid a Scam**

- Screen your calls & hang up if the caller tries to pressure you.
- Block unwanted calls & text messages.
- Don't give out personal information over the phone, through email or text message.
- Resist the pressure to act quickly.
- Stop & talk about the situation with a friend or family member.
- Never pay someone you don't know by gift card, wiring money or cryptocurrency.

*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  
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