

# Cummington Council on Aging

## May 2024 Newsletter



**Cummington Council on Aging**  
P.O. Box 95, 33 Main St.  
Cummington, MA 01026

**Chrisoula Roumeliotis**  
413-634-2262  
[croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov)

### Newsletter Update – what's new?

For the last several years, this monthly newsletter has been funded by a generous grant, which included enough funds to produce, copy and mail a paper copy of the newsletter to all of you. The funding that allowed us to copy and mail the newsletter is close to running out and we have been unable to find alternate funding. In an increasingly digital world, funding for copying and mailing a paper newsletter is no longer supported. Reading online is becoming the norm.

To that end, we would like to inform you about what will be changing. The July 2024 issue of this newsletter will be the last one that will be mailed to all of you who have not otherwise asked to receive it via email. After the July issue, we can still provide you with an electronic PDF copy of the newsletter. For those of you who currently receive it via email as a PDF, you will continue to receive it that way. For those of you who do not presently receive the newsletter via email but are willing to, please contact me with your name and email address.

We understand that many of you do not want to receive the newsletter by email or do not have the technology to do so. We are working to ensure that this newsletter continues to reach you. We are considering distributing copies of the newsletter to key locations in town (such as the library, Community House, post office and Hillside Terrace). We will also be exploring whether there are options for us to fund the mailing of a limited number of hard copies. Please share your feedback and thoughts with us. We welcome your ideas!

### The Consortium Website

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs is an entity created many years ago that includes the COAs of Cummington, Plainfield, Goshen, Chesterfield, Worthington, Williamsburg and Westhampton. We meet monthly to share ideas and collaborate on funding sources, programs and activities. The Consortium has a website that has

been recently improved and updated. Spend some time looking through it – you'll find information about assorted programs and activities happening throughout the hilltowns, including technology classes. You will also find the newsletter – for Cummington and the other consortium towns – there:

**[northernhilltownscoas.org](http://northernhilltownscoas.org)**

### "Sheepy People" Needle Felting Class Weds. June 19th from 1-4pm Community House

In this class, you will learn how to needle felt "Sheepy People"-- a miniature version of the sheep that were displayed at the parsonage. Taught by children's book author and illustrator Jane Dyer, this class is for all levels, beginners with no experience to advanced. All materials will be provided, including accessories to give your sheep its own identity. This class

is open to all ages; however, it is not appropriate for young children. Cost is \$25 for Cummington residents and \$35 for non-residents. Class size is limited to 12. Email [croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov) or call 634-2262 to register.



**SAVE THE DATE**



**COA Summer Picnic**

**Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Pettingill Park**

*Please note that we will not be having a potluck luncheon in May.*

## Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources

For more information on any of these programs, activities and resources, contact the COA at [croumeliotis@cumington-ma.gov](mailto:croumeliotis@cumington-ma.gov) or 634-2262.

**Weekly Grab and Go Hot Meal– every Tuesday**  
The next meals will be distributed on **May 7, 14, 21 and 28** between noon and 12:30 at the Community House. Leave your name and phone number with the COA by **May 1st** to reserve your meal. Suggested donation of \$3 per meal goes to HVES.

### **Healthy Bones and Balance**

Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

### **Coffee Hour**

Mondays and Thursdays from 10:45 to 11:45 a.m.

### **Needlework Group**

Thursdays, 1-4pm.

### **Technology support**

See the regional section of this newsletter for up-to-date information on technology resources, including computer classes, technology support and more. Contact Peg Whalen: 413-296-5080 or [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com) for additional information or with questions.

### **Foot Clinic**

The next foot clinic will be on **Tuesday, May 7th** with Piper Sagan at the Community House. The cost is \$40 for Cumington residents and \$50 for non-residents. Contact the COA to make an appointment.

### **Living Fully, Aging Gracefully**

The next Zoom meeting for this group is **Tuesday, May 14th**. For more information on this program, contact directly Wynne or Lucy at **634-5576** or [wynlucy@gmail.com](mailto:wynlucy@gmail.com); or Annie at [annieb@crocker.com](mailto:annieb@crocker.com).

### **Resource Cart** *Look by the windows, too!*

Located across from the Community House kitchen and to the left of the COA office – available to you anytime the building is open. Stocked with Covid test kits, medical/surgical masks, hand sanitizer, personal health care journals, file of life forms, walking maps, games & puzzles, greeting cards for various occasions, the current Elder Law education guide, pamphlets and info sheets on a variety of subjects, calendars and much more.

**Medical Equipment:** Walkers, crutches, shower seats and tub transfer seats, toilet seat risers, and more are available for your use. We also accept donations of clean equipment in good condition.

### **Easy Ride Van**

The Hilltown Easy Ride van provides trips for shopping to Northampton on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and to Pittsfield once a month. Medical and other rides can be scheduled for Mondays, Tuesday afternoons, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30 to 4:30. The Driver Pool program is available for medical rides and medical errands (such as picking up prescriptions) when the van is not available. Contact Ed Pelletier at 296-4232 for more information and to arrange a ride.

### **Happy Birthday in May!**

Chester Gorski, Cynthia Joyner, Andrea Hoffman, Lorena Thayer, Charles Quinlan, Theresa Panzeri, Peter Marcoux, Kathleen Knox, Carol Stoddard, Alexandra Cherau, Fredric Nudell, Ann McCullom, Martha Emerson, Cory Heath, Carolyn Hooks, Laura Pierce, Sandra Streeter, Julie Becker, Michelle Taylor, Donald Stupplebeen, Antoinette Reed, Nancy Cole, Judy Messer, Harry Box, Thomas Farrington, Kathleen Sheridan, Kara Falcone, Karen Mohan, Nancy Howes



***The Cumington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue our important programs for local seniors!***

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

*(Please write your check to the Cumington Council on Aging, and mail to Cumington COA, PO Box 95, Cumington, MA 01026)*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for helping to Support Your Neighbors!*

The Cumington Council on Aging



## TechConnect Fair a Success!

On Saturday, April 6th the TechConnect program held a first of its kind northern hilltowns Consortium of COAs Fair. The event was hosted by the New Hingham Regional Elementary School in Chesterfield. Over one hundred people attended the fair! There were seven exhibitors, including AARP, the NW District Attorney's office, Meekins Library, Comcast, Whip City Fiber, Tech Hub from Holyoke and the Alliance for Digital Equity Network. TechConnect staff hosted tables where fair participants could tour the Northern Hilltowns Consortium website, [northernhilltownscoas.org](http://northernhilltownscoas.org), sign up to join the project as a volunteer, get walk-up tech support for technology questions, and sign up for training and workshops. Many people attended the three mini-workshops offered on managing passwords, tech terms and what they mean, and making your tech device fit your needs.

Comments from those who came included: "The training on how to use the Hilltown Consortium website was very helpful". "I appreciated talking about the politics of being sure all people have technology", "I am going home to get my tech-phobic husband and bring him back. I think he would like this!", "This event really lit a fire under me, I have all these things on my list to learn and now I know how to get started". "I love this for our community! Coming here today let's people know they are not alone in their concerns about learning technology."

**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!



## But I did my MOLST!

In September 2022, I wrote about living wills and the state Medical Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST). You may recall that I said a MOLST is an order, while another relevant document, the living will, is more of a conversation. The MOLST takes effect immediately at an emergency, the living will and advance directives come in when you are unable to respond for yourself. That is why having a living will following conversations with your family or friends is so important – it will help them figure out what you would want them to do.

Now, we have the POLST! It is a portable medical order, meaning if you travel in another state, the POLST will most likely apply. The MOLST may not. We were given a POLST form at the hospital a few days ago so they are becoming available.

These two forms are voluntary; you need not think about or plan for your end of life situation. You can also change the forms if you change your mind. Do know, however, that what happens in the future may not be to your liking. For instance, if the ambulance takes you to the emergency room and you do not have a MOLST or POLST on file, or they cannot find it, you will be designated as Full Code. That means if your heart stops and breathing ceases, they will try everything they can to start you back up. That can include chest compressions and intubation.

Where do they find your forms? Your doctor will have one, the person who has your health care power of attorney and any emergency contacts should have a copy. And of course it should be in that red File of Life folder on your refrigerator at home. You can also carry one of those files with you.

Still thinking for the future,  
 Jean O'Neil  
 TRIAD Committee member  
[jeanoneilmass@gmail.com](mailto:jeanoneilmass@gmail.com)  
 413-268-2228

## Tech. Help and Training for May



**Volunteers Still Needed:** to learn more about what we need volunteers for in providing help to others with technology, contact Volunteer Coordinator: **413-296-5548**, [coatechvolcoor@gmail.com](mailto:coatechvolcoor@gmail.com), or visit [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org).

### Tech Support

- Support available by email, phone, drop-in or appointment: [coaTechHelp@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechHelp@gmail.com), phone or text msg **413-296-5080**. Response within a day.

### Drop in Center Hours:

*(no appointment needed)*

- Weekly on Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00 at 400 Main Rd. Chesterfield Community Center
- Friday, May 3, 17 and 31 from 10:00 to 12:00 at 400 Main Rd. Chesterfield Community Center
- Monthly at Meekins Library Drop-In tech support on Tuesday 5/14 from 10 to Noon, Williamsburg
- Monthly at Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support, Tuesday 5/14 from 10am-12pm and 6pm-8pm
- May 10th, Goshen COA, 10am-12pm
- May 20th, Plainfield COA, 9am-11am

### Tech Training:

- Beginner's Computer / Laptop Class  
Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30, continuing through 5/30 (new class starting in June)
- Intermediate Windows Computer Class  
Wednesdays 10:30 – Noon, continuing through 5/29 (new class starting in June)

All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level.

Must pre-register for classes no later than one week before the scheduled training date. Email [coaTechConnect@gmail.com](mailto:coaTechConnect@gmail.com); call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org)

### Tech Workshops:

- iPad Basics, Worthington Library, Thurs. 5/2, 1-2
- Email Basics, Goshen COA, Fri. 5/10, 9-10
- Cyber security/online safety in Plainfield, Monday, May 20th 11-Noon

### Devices Available:

We received our first shipment of PC laptops, Chromebooks and tablets. If you need a device to

connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device please contact us.

Email [coatechconnect@gmail.com](mailto:coatechconnect@gmail.com), leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online form to make request at: [www.northernhilltownscoas.org](http://www.northernhilltownscoas.org)

## May's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

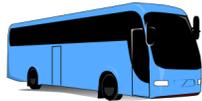
Just a quick note here on how it's going with the Medicare Savings program that I can't seem to stop talking about. The two page application was just released March 1st and for those who filled one out and got it in, I began hearing from you by the end of March that you had received an approval letter from MassHealth already with benefits to start April 1st. This means MassHealth is taking about 3 weeks to process these applications. Amazing. This program pays your Medicare B premium, so you can expect a letter soon from social security with a new social security benefit statement showing they have put \$174 / month back in your retirement benefit.

It's a good idea to keep that acceptance letter from MassHealth because up in the right hand corner there will be your ID number which starts 1000, followed by about 6-7 more numbers. This number is also your ID for Health Safety Net which is another benefit that you get automatically. Health Safety Net can be a life saver because it pays hospital bills that your Medicare and/or Medicare supplement might not cover. And you may get yet another letter saying you have Extra-help which is a benefit that supplements the cost of your prescriptions. You need to give your pharmacists that ID number and show them the Extra-help letter. Same goes for any hospital bills. You would need to let the hospital know you have Health Safety Net so they can bill any residual costs that your Medicare is not picking up.

And ...this is curious....you may not even have to apply in order to get these benefits? I had a caller who received a letter from Prescription Advantage which is a Rx subsidy program for Massachusetts residents. Her letter said that Prescription Advantage was terminating her coverage because she had gotten the Medicare Savings program. How can this be she asked? She never applied. It seems that MassHealth is reviewing all those who have had Health Safety Net the past few years and are automatically approving them for the Medicare Savings program. This is definitely good news. So if you receive any letters saying you have been approved for Medicare Savings program, and you want to know how that happened, call your senior center and ask for a SHINE consult. We can check it out for you. Same goes if you want an application and are having difficulty trying to find it online- just give us a call.

## On the Road Again...

### 2024 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. **\$20 discount for any Chesterfield Senior over age 60 who goes on any trip advertised in the newsletter through 2024.**

*Day Trip Thursday, July 11th. Lake Sunapee Luncheon Cruise- Vermont Country Store.* A two hour luncheon cruise on Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. This trip includes Luncheon buffet and a stop at the Vermont Country Store. The \$118 Payment to Landmark Tours is due NOW. Please mail to the address above. **A few seats are available.**

*Day Trip Wednesday, August 7th. Resorts World Casino-- Catskills, NY trip.* Can you get enough of **Elvis**? Enjoy a lovely ride to the Catskills. Included: King in Concert show, Buffet Lunch and \$25 free slot play, driver gratuity. The \$145 Payment to Friendship Tours is due by June 5th. Please mail to the address above. Please include your date of birth for the player card. **There is a second bus. If interested, call again.**

*Day Trip September TBD. Big E.* Dependent on the offered entertainment.

*Four Day Trip September 30- October 3. Lancaster, PA. Sight & Sound production of the biblical show Daniel.* Cost \$646, per person dbl. occupancy - \$25 discount if paid in full by **June 20th.** Includes: Sight & Sound Theater show, tour of Philadelphia, time in Hershey's Chocolate World, 6 meals, hotels, driver gratuity. **Make payment to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. Call now to reserve your spot. Ten seats available.**

*Day Trip October 14th. Lake George Cruise-*Take a 2 hour luncheon cruise through the vistas of Lake George. The Captain's Luncheon Buffet will be served on board. A keyboard entertainer performs. Stops at scenic Prospect Mountain and the Lake George Outlets with 30 stores to explore. The \$131 payment to Landmark Tours is due by August 19th. Please mail to the address above. **A short wait list is available.**

*NEW Day Trip October 15. Culinary Institute of America--* Enjoy a "CIA" experience, lecture and tasting with lunch at Catarine de Medici. The \$147 payment to Francine Frenier is due by August 15th. Please mail a check to the address above.

*Day Trip October TBD. Boston Fine Arts Museum.* In the planning process.

*Day Trip Friday December 13. Festival of Trees and Red Rose Lunch.* Enjoy the uniquely decorated Christmas Trees at the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield. Enter a chance to win a tree and associated gifts. Some are worth hundreds of dollars. Then walk over to the Red Rose Italian Restaurant for lunch: pizza, salad and bread. The \$TBD Payment is due by October 25. Please mail to the address above.



### Seniors Aware of Fire Education

Here is an important thing to add to your spring chores. Check your house numbers and make sure they can be easily seen from the road. Why? Seconds count in an emergency! First responders (police, firefighters and EMTs) can find your house faster when your home is properly marked.

Senior   
**SAFE**

#### USE LARGE VISIBLE NUMBERS!

- The numbers need to be at least 4-inches in height and facing the street. (Some communities require taller numbers.)
- The letters should be on a contrasting background so they can be seen from a distance.
- The numbers should be under lighting so they can be seen at night.
- If possible, the outside lights should be turned on for the responders.
- If your driveway is long and if your house is not visible from the road, put your house number on both sides of your mailbox, or on a sign post at the end of your driveway. (The Hampshire County Sheriff's TRIAD program has number signs and posts available to everyone to be planted at the end of the driveway. Contact your COA or police department on how to get the number sign and post.)

Be prepared for the time when seconds count!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator  
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

*The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.*

**Cummington Council on Aging**  
**P.O. Box 95**  
**Cummington, MA 01026**

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 183  
Greenfield MA

**Cummington  
Council on Aging**

Chrisoula Roumeliotis,  
Coordinator  
634-2262

Worth Noyes, Chairperson  
634-8003

Ann Eisenhour,  
Recording Secretary,  
Foot Care Coordinator  
634-2243

Gail Roberge, Treasurer  
512-0660

June Lynds, 695-4893

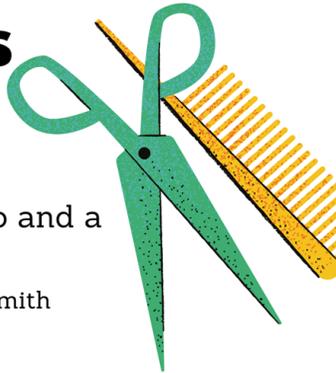
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Kristen Estelle,  
Newsletter Designer  
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

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# \$5 haircuts

SMITH VOCATIONAL  
COSMETOLOGY



Ready for a fresh 'do and a  
new you?

Get your haircut at Smith  
Vocational!

**WHEN:** Tuesdays & Thursdays,  
call to schedule

**WHERE:** The Salon is located in Room 124 of  
Building A at Smith Vocational High  
School, 80 Locust St., Northampton.

**WHAT ELSE:** Manicures, colors, facials, and other  
hair care options, call for other prices

**HOW TO BOOK:** Simply call 413-587-1414 ext. 3531 for  
an appointment. All are welcome!

