

Plainfield Council on Aging

September 2020 Newsletter



Plainfield Council on Aging
Town Offices, 304 Main St.
Plainfield, MA 01070

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September Notes and Tips during Covid-19

Plainfield Mutual Support Network Still Available

The Plainfield Mutual Support Network (PMSN) in coordination with the Plainfield Police Department, Board of Health and the Council on Aging is still going strong and ever present in town. We have approximately 17 members who oversee the group of volunteers who are willing to help with grocery shopping, pharmacy needs as well as just reaching out to individuals who would like a friendly smile or visit on the telephone. We continue in an environment of social distancing and quarantine requirements and are required to wear masks when out in public.

There are homemade masks available. You may contact either Erin Kelly-Dill at 413-336-0123 or Marissa Valenza at 413-634-5703. These gals have also made approximately 84 masks for the children at Sanderson Academy. Thank you for all your efforts!

Again, for your information, the PMSN web page is plainfield-ma.us/supportnetwork. One can also check out our Facebook page, "Plainfield mutual aid and support" for additional information. You can also call (413) 634-1030 for requests or more information. Please leave a voicemail and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We have also added the HCDC COVID-19 Hilltown Response to our web page (hilltowncdc.org/covid19) for further information and as a valuable resource.

Commonwealth Of Massachusetts Phase III Covid-19 Reopening

Governor Charlie Baker is slowly opening the Commonwealth with safe health guidelines. Full guidance and list of businesses eligible to reopen in Step One of Phase III can be found at: www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts. Businesses and sectors set to begin opening in Phase III are subject to compliance with all mandatory safety standards.

Revised Gatherings Order: Under the updated gatherings order, indoor gatherings are limited to eight people per 1,000 square feet but should not exceed 25 people in a single enclosed, indoor space.

Outdoor gatherings in enclosed spaces are limited to 25 percent of the facility's maximum permitted occupancy, with a maximum of 50 people in a single enclosed outdoor space. This includes community events, civic events, sporting events, concerts, conventions and more. This order does not apply to outdoor, unenclosed gatherings if proper social distancing measures are possible.



HVES Title III CARES Grant

Along with the other towns in the Northern Hilltowns COAs Consortium, the Plainfield COA has received a grant with which we will purchase four computers for our COA. We are hoping to lend these computers to seniors who would like to learn how to use one. Especially during these restrictive times, a computer is a valuable tool to reach out to family and friends with email or Zoom video for example. These computers would be lent out on a 4-month basis with basic instruction included in the rental. At the end of the instruction, the computer will be returned to the COA for the next recipient.

Zoom Training

Using Zoom is a great way to reach out virtually and stay connected – especially as you are staying home during the coronavirus outbreak.

Here are the easy steps to join a Zoom call for the first time:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E

Remember to Vote in the Sept. 1st Primary!

If you have received a mail-in ballot, you may place it in the mail slot located on the door of the Town Offices if you prefer not to vote in person.



Household Hazardous Waste Dates

Registration is required for this event and will take place from October 1- October 18. Residents are asked to email the HRMC with their name, address (Street and Town), and phone number. HRMC confirmation of your reservation (done via email) is required to participate. If you are unable to attend the HRMC HHW event, we have reciprocal arrangements with nine other regional Towns that are offering HHW events. In 2020, the HRMC has agreements with the following communities to allow HRMC member Town residents to participate in their events. In all cases, pre-registration is required. Registration for each of the events typically begins 3-4 weeks prior to the event. If you are an HRMC resident, please contact Kathleen Casey at 413-685-5498 or email hrcm@hrcm-ma.org to inquire about attending one of the following regional events:

- 9/12/20 9am-noon Agawam
- 9/26/20 9am-noon Greenfield (FCSWMD Towns)
- 9/26/20 9 am-noon Orange (FCSWMD Towns)
- 10/3/20 9 am-noon Chicopee
- 10/24/20 9am-noon Westhampton (HRMC Towns)
- Fall TBD 9am-noon West Springfield

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative is composed of these member towns: Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. HRMC info: PO Box 630 Williamsburg, MA 01096, Phone: 413-685-5498, Email: hrcm@hrcm-ma.org, Website: www.hrcm-ma.org

Thank You for Your Donations!

We are very grateful to everyone who has donated/contributed to the COA these past several months. You allowed us to flourish in the challenge to better serve the folks in Plainfield. The COA relies on the support of friends like you so we continue that conversation and understanding. Thank You!

The Plainfield Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Plainfield Council on Aging. My contribution of \$ _____ is attached.
(Please write your check to The Town of Plainfield and mail to Plainfield COA, 304 Main St. Plainfield, MA 01070)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Plainfield Council on Aging

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



Wow! It is already September and it is still hurricane season, which has already messed with us. With this in mind, here are a few ideas on how to prepare for any emergency.

- Have a plan on how to get out of the house in 3 minutes or less.
- Keep eyeglasses, canes, walkers, hearing aids, COVID masks near where you are sleeping
- Make sure pathways are clear of clutter.
- Install night lights (LEDs work well) throughout the house to prevent falls.
- Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the road so first responders do not have to spend crucial time finding you.
- Get and fill out a FILE OF LIFE from your Council On Aging and post it on the refrigerator.
- Know where you can seek shelter and sustenance; this pre-planning is very important during this COVID time of social distancing.

Stay strong and be SAFE!

--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.

I still can't believe people's survival instincts told them to grab toilet paper.	I'm going to stay up on New Year's Eve this year. Not to see the New Year in, but to make sure this one leaves.	If I had only known in March it would be my last time in a restaurant, I would have ordered dessert.
At the store there was a Big X by the register for me to stand on... I've seen too many Road Runner cartoons to fall for that one.	Having some states lock down and some states not lock down is like having a peeing section in a swimming pool.	Until further notice, the days of the week are now called, thisday, thatday, otherday, someday, yesterday, today & nextday.
THEY SAID A MASK AND GLOVES WERE ENOUGH TO GO TO THE GROCERY STORE THEY LIED, EVERYBODY ELSE HAD CLOTHES ON	The dumbest thing I've ever purchased was a 2020 planner.	When Does Season TWO of 2020 Start? I Do Not Like Season ONE.
Keep in mind, even during a pandemic, no matter how much chocolate you eat, your earrings will still fit.	The buttons on my jeans have started social distancing from each other.	I never thought the comment "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6 foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are

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!

What Luck...

So you know I'm a fan of checking our credit reports to make sure information is correct, that no one has absconded with our information, and as a reminder to do good financial management. The recommended practice is to check one of the three major credit bureaus every four months, so each one is checked once a year at no cost.

Well, what luck! Because of the virus we have grown to hate, the bureaus are allowing free weekly access to our reports through April of next year. If somehow you haven't been checking your reports, here you go - www.annualcreditreport.com/reviewYourReport.action. Look at each one now, dispute anything that is wrong, get it fixed, then start the annual cycle of checking.

While you are there, put a freeze on each report. That will keep unsavory people from accessing your report, stealing your information, and gaining credit or opening an account in your name. Just make very very very sure that you print out or write down the pin they give you. You will need that to thaw your report, if / when you want to be considered for credit.

Q. If I have a freeze, do I still need to check my report for correctness? Or can I just trust credit card companies and mortgage holders to always provide the right information? A. Yup. Nope.

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

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

We should be baking zucchini bread. It freezes well, and by now if we don't watch it, they can get to be the size of baseball bats.

As we enter another month of Covid, stretching resources gets to be more challenging. Families out of work, bills still needing to be paid, groceries getting more expensive- it's good that our gardens are finally producing after what seemed like a slow start. Let's hope for a late frost.

This is a reminder for folks to check out the Hilltown Mobile Farmer's Market which is in Blandford and Huntington on Friday afternoons and Worthington and Cummington on Thursday afternoons. The Market runs July 23rd to October 9th this year and accepts SNAP (food stamps) benefits, HIP (Healthy Incentive benefits as well as cash. Produce is from local farms and looks terrific. Blueberries, peaches, apples soon, tomatoes, squash, corn, kale, onions, beets, you name it, you can probably find it at the Market. If you can't get to the Market, there are volunteers who can shop for you if you call your senior center and ask. And of course, you can be one of those volunteers and shop for a senior, or someone who is having difficulty getting out...or struggling to make ends meet.



This has been an amazing time to watch the generosity of our neighbors helping neighbors. Senior centers are getting donations of food, money and time from a growing band of volunteers. The Food Pantry is in full swing in Goshen on Wednesday afternoons, and the Chesterfield Cupboard is open daily. Chesterfield's effort to help those in town who need groceries has been a real community effort, getting up and running, and now with volunteers helping to shop, stock shelves, clean and manage inventory. It has been exciting to see more families use the cupboard, and more donations come in.

Williamsburg's Take and Eat weekend meal program continues to help seniors every other weekend with a home delivered meal made by volunteers at Our Lady of the Hills, and the Williamsburg Congregational Church. If you know someone who could use a meal, or if you'd like to be a volunteer and help to continue this effort, you can give the Williamsburg Senior Center a call. The office may not be open, but the staff is still working and can be reached daily.

Here's a pitch for those of you who may not have checked out the SNAP program, also known as food stamps. You can apply online. The application process takes about 20 minutes. Don't have a

computer? Call your senior center to get help getting that application started. Benefits have been expanded. So if your income is less than \$1,777 a month for an individual, \$2,146 for a couple, \$2,514 for a family of three....you could qualify. With the price of groceries continuing to increase, this might help at the check out counter.

Meanwhile, let's bake and share zucchini bread?

2 cups of graded zucchini
3 eggs lightly beaten
1 cup salad oil
1 cup sugar
3 1/2 cups flour
2 teaspoons of vanilla
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
A pinch of salt, a pinch of cinnamon
Add raisins, chopped walnuts, if you want



Bake at 350 degrees for an hour. Makes 2 loaves.

Recipe from:

Garden Ways Zucchini Cookbook, 1977.



The 2020 Census is underway! It counts every living person in the USA. From **August 11 to September 30th**, Census takers will interview homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census.

If you have not responded, you can do so by returning the mailings you should have received from the U.S. Census Bureau.

If you didn't receive your mailings, no problem! You can fill out your information over the phone with a verified Census Bureau representative at 844-330-2020. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Secretary of the Commonwealth's staff to have a conversation about Census operations at 833-621-2020.

Your community depends on your Census response for funding and representation for the next decade to come. The impact on your community include: school lunches, plans for highways, support for firefighters and families in need. Census results affect your community every day. Please respond if you haven't already done so.

**Part-Time Work Available:
Hilltown Elder Network**

The HEN program needs caregivers in Williamsburg and Goshen. Help elders with housework, various household chores and transportation to appointments. Pays \$15.00 per hour. For application, call Fran Goebel at 268-7411. *The HEN program is sponsored by the Hilltown Community Development Corporation.*



**New Hingham Regional Elementary School
and Goshen COA sponsor first virtual
multigenerational program**

Fran Ryan, well known for her captivating, educational programs on the lives and habits of wildlife, will be presenting a session on **Introduction to the Life of the Black Bear on September 25 at 1pm.** Filmed and broadcast from New Hingham through Zoom, students at the school and older adults in the area will be linking and learning together. Thanks to a grant funded by Highland Valley Elder Services, and managed by the Chesterfield COA through a partnership with several other COAs, this program launches one of the new normal ways to connect several generations, from young to old, who now share the experience of feeling isolated. Many a grandparent is missing seeing their grandkids and kids are struggling with virtual learning.



To join this event please contact the
New Hingham Regional Elementary School:
413-296-0000.



**Shop or Volunteer at the
Hilltown Mobile Market**

The Hilltown Mobile Market is an innovative collaboration to increase the availability of fresh, local, and affordable produce to Hilltown residents of Western Massachusetts. We are back for our second season in 2020! Your support during our pilot season last year resulted in increased grant funding to purchase a market vehicle and broaden our reach to more communities. From July 23rd - October 9th, the market is visiting The Maples in Worthington from 2-3:30pm on Thursdays, the Kingman Tavern in Cummington from 4:30-6pm on Thursdays, the Post Office in Blandford from 2 -3:30pm on Fridays, and the Town Green in Huntington from 4:30-6 pm on Fridays. Stop by and shop with cash, credit, debit, SNAP, WIC, or Senior FMNP Coupons! Or if you have some free time and would like to get more involved in the market, you can sign up to volunteer by visiting: tinyurl.com/HMMvolunteer or emailing Seva Tower at sevat@hilltowncdc.org.

**Survey shows that Joan Griswold's
Exercise Program Responds to
Successes and Need for More Sessions**

A recent survey of the 38 participants in Joan's classes makes it clear that the group now has several members who have been exercising with Joan for several years (38%) and another 41% who have been with the class for at least a year. New membership continues to grow with another 22% who have just started participating in the past six months. More classes have led to more frequent participation. One in 5 of the participants attend one a week, 17% twice a week and 29% three times a week.

Have the programs had an impact on their personal health? Over 60% reported that they feel a difference in their overall strength, 11% have increased energy and physical endurance, 13% more flexibility, 5% less pain exercises, while 11% not having noticed a change in their bodies. Another 14% requested a 4th class, which Joan has scheduled and started in Williamsburg on Thursdays at 10:15am. This class will be offered as an entry level class. Folks who might be interested in the class need to contact Joan (joan@bybhealth.com) to review expectations about their current health status and abilities to ensure the class is a good fit. She will also help in navigating the system for those who have not enrolled.

It's clear that the desire and commitment to exercise is consistent and growing. Joan notes that everyone, COAs and students alike, "have all worked hard to bring the current level of fitness to an incredible place".

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

Need something to celebrate?

Here are 12 lesser known holidays in September!

- 5th: National Cheese Pizza Day
- 6th: Read a Book Day
- 9th: National Teddy Bear Day
- 10th: Sewing Machine Day
- 11th: No News is Good News Day
- 12th: Chocolate Milkshake Day
- 16th: Collect Rocks Day
- 19th: International "Talk Like A Pirate Day"
- 20th: Wife Appreciation Day
- 21st: Miniature Golf Day
- 26th: National Hunting & Fishing Day
- 28th: Ask a Stupid Question Day

