

Living Well



November
2020
Newsletter

Williamsburg Senior Center: Programs & Services for Active Living at 60+

Message from the Selectboard

We've all been living with Covid-19 for 7 months now and we're not done yet. But we have hope and reason to believe that there will soon be relief in sight.

We also know that no one is doing this alone. We all rely on each other: on our families, on our friends, on our connections and on our town to make this trying time be a time of coming together and helping each other. We want you to know that our town government, in all of its forms – departments, committees, boards, its employees and volunteers, including the Senior Center, are doing everything we can to make this time be one of community serving you to the best of our ability.

You are not alone in Williamsburg. We have a full team of volunteers and employees and citizens willing to help in any way we can. We know this is not easy, but let us know how we can help and what we can do to bring community spirit to help you through this trying time.

Sincerely,

Williamsburg Select Board:
William Sayre
David Mathers
Denise Banister



Goodbye and Hello

This month we say goodbye to Melinda McCall and hello to Tamar Smith.

For two and a half years, Melinda has served as the meal site coordinator, a job with many hats. She kept the kitchen clean and organized; ordered and served HVES Congregate Meals; planned, shopped for and cooked delicious Monday Meals; coordinated the Brown Bag Program, often delivering bags where needed. Melinda also researched and administered the Farm Share Program, a huge job in itself(!), and did data entry as well as other office duties. Her cheerful demeanor was a welcome addition to our staff! **Thank you, Melinda. We'll miss you!**

Tamar, a Haydenville resident, started this year as an RSVP volunteer. She helped in the kitchen with Monday Meals and stepped in to deliver lunches when our regular driver was away. Tamar has agreed to be our new Food Program Coordinator. She will be working to maintain and develop the programs that provide food for you, our local 60+ population. Tamar will also be delivering meals – along with Norma Whitley – during this time of Covid-19. **Please join us in welcoming Tamar to the Williamsburg Senior Center!**

COVID, WINTER, AND THE HOLIDAYS

Did someone mention loneliness and isolation? Unfortunately, those are unavoidable topics these days. So much has been written about ways to get through these hard times. And so much does help. There's Zoom and FaceTime check-ins with friends as well as classes and virtual tours all over the world to name only a few options. But that depends on having computer access which many elders in our area don't have.

Luckily, there's the telephone! Yep, that good old-fashioned means of engaging with others. And it's the telephone I'd like to encourage. If you're feeling gloomy or sad, don't hesitate to call the Williamsburg Senior Center at 413-268-8407. We would love to talk with you. And if you'd like, we can connect you to others you might like. Nope, it's not a dating service; it's a community effort to help others while helping ourselves.

Of course, if you're having ongoing depression – if you find you're not eating or you're sleeping too much or too little, crying more often than usual, please call your doctor because s/he cares a lot about how you're doing, too, and will do whatever they can to help.

~Tryna Hope

SHINE, SHINE, SHINE

Lest we forget, **Open Enrollment for Medicare and Medicare-related insurance is from 10/15/2020 – 12/15/2020.** If you are satisfied with your insurance coverage, don't do anything. If you'd like to explore your options, the sooner you do it, the better. Our SHINE counselor responds to Williamsburg calls received during the week on Wednesday afternoons.

Historically, folks (myself included) waited until the last minute because it seems so daunting. However somewhere in the middle of Open Enrollment, SHINE counselors have more calls than they can handle. Make life easy on yourself and on SHINE. Call the Williamsburg Senior Center early and get this taken care of before the rush! 413-268-8407

Williamsburg Senior Center - 141 Main Street, P.O. Box 193 - Haydenville, MA 01039
Phone: 268-8407 - Hours: Mon - Thurs 8:30 - 1:30 - Email: seniorcenterdirector@burgy.org

Currently Active Senior Programs

SHINE

For insurance issues, call the Senior Center to make an appointment. Leave your name and phone number and we'll let an agent know to contact you.

Veteran's Service Officer

The VA office is still open and available. Tom Geryk may be reached at his office at 413-587-1299.

Foot Nurse

Piper Sagan is doing foot care at the Hadley Senior Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call them at 413-586-4023 to make an appointment. Piper can also do foot care in your home, using safe practices (\$80). Call her at 413-522-8432 for an appointment.

Podiatry

Dr. Coby can be reached at 413-774-4450. He has an office at 7 Main Street, Florence.

Modern/Contemporary Dance

Susan Waltner's dance class is still being held outdoors in the garden behind the Town Offices on Wednesdays at 10:30, weather permitting.

Yoga for You

Yoga classes are led on Zoom Tuesdays at 6 pm. Contact Michele at morales.wolk@gmail.com.

Tai Chi

Instructor Marty Phinney is still offering outdoor Tai Chi. Details and times may vary. Group members or interested others can contact her at 413-268-3228.

Medical Rides

PVTA is providing medical rides in their vans. Pre-registration is necessary. We can help with that! If you've already registered, call 413-739-7436 or 866-277-7741 to schedule.

Third Thursday Men's Group

Meets via zoom meeting on 3rd Thursdays @ 8:30 am. Email Larry (landlwest3315@yahoo.com) to get on the contact list. Join in the conversation!

CHAIR Strength & Strengthen

Alexandra Mello will start class via Zoom depending on interest. Day & time to be announced. **If interested, call or email the Senior Center** and you will be contacted when plans are complete. A FREE class.

Strength and Cardio Workouts

Joan Griswold of Goshen is leading Strength and Cardio workouts via Zoom Thursdays at 10:15 am. Check Joan's website at www.bybhealth.com. Contact the Senior Center to sign up!

Brown Bag: Food for Elders

This program provides a free bag of healthy groceries to eligible seniors once a month at the Senior Center. Call The Food Bank at 413-247-9738 or 800-247-9632 or download a printable application at www.foodbankwma.org. (Click on the Get Help tab and select Brown Bag.) Applications can be sent to: The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, P.O. Box 160, Hatfield, MA 01038.

Take and Eat

Two area churches are providing meals delivered every Saturday. The program is looking for other groups that might want to participate. Contact the Senior Center to find out more.

Wellness Calls

The Williamsburg Senior Center is making calls weekly or monthly to see how you are doing. We'd be glad to add you to our call list. Call us at 268-8407.

Holiday Meals From Manna Soup Kitchen

If you have a need or desire for a holiday meal, Manna Soup Kitchen will deliver free fresh-cooked turkey dinners to Williamsburg/Haydenville residents for Thanksgiving. They also offer a meal at Christmas.

To order, call Kim at 413-695-3514 and enjoy the holidays.

Visit the Town of Williamsburg

Website: www.burgy.org

Facebook: Williamsburg Senior Center

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- [To receive this newsletter by email only,](#)

Contact us, leaving your name, address and phone number. Email-sloomis@burgy.org, Ph-268-8407.

The Williamsburg Senior Center counts on YOUR support to continue our programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Williamsburg Senior Center. My contribution of \$ _____ is attached.
(Please write your check to **Town of Williamsburg** with "Senior Center program support" on the memo line.)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



The focus of Fire Safety Month was how to prevent cooking fires. The theme was chosen with a few facts in mind.

1. The leading cause of house fires has been kitchen fires.
 2. The leading cause of kitchen fires is unattended cooking.
 3. Most cooking fires in the home involve the kitchen stove. Here are a few ways by which you can prevent fires in your kitchen:
- ⇒ If you are sleepy or have consumed a bit too much alcohol, do not use the stove.
 - ⇒ Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, boiling, broiling or grilling food.
 - ⇒ Stay in your home when food is cooking.
 - ⇒ Use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
 - ⇒ Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stove top.
 - ⇒ One extra idea -- don't let pan and pot handles overhang the stove top edge where they can be bumped into and pour scalding liquid on you.

Have a safe Thanksgiving!

--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.



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!

Phone scams, Medicare style

So my latest irritation is those calls telling me I am eligible for Medicare supplies and they will be HAPPY to send me a back brace, knee brace, or Medical Item of the Day. The source of the calls will be some town in Massachusetts, or most recently a Williamsburg number. So far they haven't sent me anything... what if they do?

From the FTC: "Don't accept medical equipment you get in the mail — unless you or your doctor ordered it. If it comes to your door and you didn't order it, you can keep it as a gift. You don't have to pay for things you didn't order... if you give them your information, they'll use it to fraudulently bill Medicare. This uses up your medical benefits, which means you might not be able to get the right brace later, if your doctor prescribes one."

How do you tell if the scammers have been successful? Every now and again you will get a letter from Medicare in the mail, a Medicare Summary Notice, that says "This is not a bill" and it will show charges that Medicare paid. If you do not recognize a charge, or know it is one of those braces, call the phone number on the letter and report the blinking buggers.

The same rule holds if the mail brings you other merchandise with a bill, but you didn't order it. You can keep it, try to send it back at their expense, give it away, or use it to line a trash can.

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

Good News!

By Deborah Hollingworth

As I sit down to write, we are about three weeks away from the Presidential election, so it's difficult to think about anything else these days. But we are also in the midst of Open Enrollment for Medicare beneficiaries who might like to look over their coverage and compare plans for this coming year, especially if you've received a letter from your Medicare Rx plan saying coverage is changing and cost is increasing. And if that's not good news...our mailboxes are filled with advertising from other insurance plans saying they can do a better job for us. Can all that go straight to the recycling bin? Or do we need to do something?

There are 1,326,207 Medicare beneficiaries in Massachusetts. Many of us can ignore all this advertising, and ignore the fact that it's Open Enrollment season, because we get our health insurance coverage through our retirement/pension plans, or through the VA. And those who have MassHealth or X-tra help (also called the Low Income Subsidy), do not have to make any changes to their coverage. They can ignore and recycle all the advertising in their mailbox.

For the rest of us, we might do well to check out our coverage. Typically the letter from our insurance plan says they have changed their Formulary, switching some of the generics we take into "another tier", which is another way to say they are going to charge us more for our generic Rx than they did last year. You may have received a letter from your Rx Plan that said they were increasing your monthly premium? We expect shrinking coverage and increasing costs as a way of life. But here's a new wrinkle. It has become more important to know where to shop, and which pharmacy to use. Pharmacy chains, pharmaceutical companies and health insurance plans are connected in ways that are not apparent to us, meaning they often own, or are in business with each other. So picking up your medications at Stop and Shop might be a different price than shopping at CVS.

We are in luck because the **Medicare.gov** website can sort this all out for us. By typing in your list of Rx, and the zip code where you live, the website program can sort through the details of all 27 Medicare Rx plans in our area and rank them in order of least cost for best coverage! You can try using the website yourself, or call your senior center for a SHINE appointment.

One more piece of good news is the **Massachusetts Pharmacy Outreach Program**. This is especially helpful for situations where your Rx is expensive, or is not something you've taken before

and you'd like to know more about the drug. The Pharmacy Outreach Program is a free service provided by the University of Massachusetts and Executive Office of Elder Affairs. It's your reference librarian, available by phone, Monday through Friday from 8:30am - 5pm: **1-866-633-1617**. They look for affordable solutions for you, and can help submit Patient Assistance applications if you qualify to get your Rx free or greatly reduced from the pharmaceutical manufacturer. One of my favorite stories is about my Mom calling them to find out if it might be safe to double the dose of her particular Rx and cut the pill in half. That way she'd save almost \$300 for the year. They said it should be OK, and to ask her doctor. She did. And saved enough money to get her chair reupholstered.

Open Enrollment runs from October 15th-December 7th each year. Call your senior center for a SHINE appointment if you need help sorting it all out.



"You get a call from this number about a busted oven, you're busy. Understand?"

Joan Griswold's Zoom Exercise Classes

Thank you to all who join Joan Griswold's zoom exercise classes! We are very thankful that she does such a great job keeping our muscle strengthening class going and that she is interested in continuing this through the winter months.



Most of our COAs receive grants from Highland Valley Elder Services that partially fund many of our classes. We also use donations to keep paying teachers like Joan. Your donations make her classes possible.

In order to continue, we need donations from each of the seven Hilltowns.

Joan works for each town in six-week sessions. When we were meeting in person, we had a donation jar in which we asked everyone to put in a donation that they could afford. We are very thankful for the donations that have been sent in, but we still need your support. Otherwise, we will not have the funds to keep Joan's classes on Zoom.

When sending in a donation, please send it to the town you would like to support. Joan lists them on her email that she sends out every week. If you would like to join Joan's classes, send her an email: joan@bybhealth.com

careconsultationmanh@alz.org to schedule a Care Consultation today.

We know this is an unprecedented time, and no one should be doing this alone. The Alzheimer's Association staff are still operational and continue to help families each day living with dementia. Our 24/7 Helpline is available at 1-800-272-3900 to anyone who needs to talk about the challenges of dementia during this time. Our Helpline staff are available around the clock for any questions or concerns you might have. They can help address feelings of isolation, and link you to other resources.

Additionally, we are now offering all of our educational programs and support groups via video conference or over the phone. We also offer Meet Ups for those living with dementia. Virtual Alz Meet Ups are a fun, social hour that provide an opportunity to connect with others living through a similar experience.



Free Resources from the Alzheimer's Association

Did you or someone in your family recently receive a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia? Would you like some help navigating decisions after a diagnosis? Are you worried about how to provide the best care for a loved one? Are you concerned about your own memory?



The Alzheimer's Association provides free Care Consultations that are confidential and personalized to the needs of individuals and families. Consultations can be provided by phone or video conference and can include family members in separate locations. Call 617-393-2100 or email

Diane Meehan retires from the Hilltown Food Pantry after 30 Years

A familiar face to many, Diane Meehan recently retired from her position as Director of the Hilltown Food Pantry in Goshen. She started as a volunteer coordinator of the Pantry which has been in numerous locations (Cummington, Chesterfield, Haydenville and finally, in Goshen).

Thank you, Diane, for your many years of dedication and hard work. As the Goshen select board wrote in their letter to you, "You truly embody the popular phrase, 'Think Globally, Act Locally'. The many volunteers and people whom you have touched have enjoyed working with you and wish you all the best as you retire."

Williamsburg Senior Center
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&
Our Many Volunteers

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



This is going to be the
coffee and jelly beans
first year our family
won't be going to Hawaii
because of the virus.

Usually it's because
we can't afford it.



COFFEE AND JELLY BEANS