

CUMMINGTON COUNCIL ON AGING NEWSLETTER

JANUARY, 2016

Cummington Council on Aging
P.O. Box 95,
Cummington, MA 01026
413-634-2262
coa@cummington-ma.gov



Carolyn Urekew, Director
Hours:
Wednesday & Friday
9 AM—12 PM

EVENTS – JANUARY, 2016

Mondays:

*Osteoporosis Exercise	9:30-10:30 am
Coffee Hour	10:30-11:30 am
Board of Assessors Assistant	9:30-11:30 am
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00-11:00 am
Needlework Group	1:30-3:30 pm
Bryant Library	6:00-9:00 pm
Veterans' Agent - 1 st & 3 rd Mondays,	9:00-11:00 am

Tuesdays:

Town Admin Assistant	9:00-11:00 am
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****COA Potluck Luncheon, Jan 19th, 12 Noon
at the Community House (3rd Tuesdays)**

New: Discussion on Being Normal: *see back pg. 1/12, 1/19, 1/26 & 2/2, Cummunity House Library, 1-3 PM*
Tap Dancing 4:00-4:45 pm
Board of Health meeting 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7:00 pm
Veterans' Agent, 3rd Tuesdays, 6:00-8:00 pm
at the Williamsburg Town Offices

Wednesdays:

COA Office Hours 9 am-12:00 noon

Chair Yoga with Sarah Prince	12:00-1:00 pm
Bryant Library	6:00-9:00 pm
Compactor	5:30-7:30 pm

Thursdays:

*****COA Board of Directors, Jan 7th, 9:30 am**

Town Clerk	6:00-7:30 pm
Selectboard	7:00 pm
Board of Assessors meeting 2 nd & 4 th Thursdays	6:00-8:00 pm
Building Inspector	6:00-8:00 pm

******Movie Matinee, 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 1:30pm**

Fridays:

COA Office Hours 9 am-12:00 noon

Saturdays:

Compactor	7:00-11:00 am
Bryant Library	8:30 am-12:30 pm

***Help Prevent Osteoporosis** and have fun doing it!!! Mondays at 9:30 am - Followed by the weekly **Coffee Hour at 10:30 am.**



****COA Pot Luck Luncheon, Jan 19th, noon**

Our potluck luncheons are a fun social event with a lot of good food. **Do you need a ride in order to attend?? If so, call Carolyn at 634-2262. Please don't be shy and don't miss out!!**

*****Board of Directors will meet on Jan 7th at 9:30 AM. The Board is looking to add new members. If you think you may be interested please call Elliot Ring at 634-5666 or Co-chair Anne Parsons at 634-5707.**

******Movie Matinee:** Come to the **Community House at 1:30 on Jan 7th for Being There and Jan 21st for Nights in Rodanthe. Two great movies!** Don't drive to town for movies, come to and enjoy good movies, refreshments and good friends right here in town!

ATTENTION:

You are invited to join a Community Discussion on the widely acclaimed book, "BEING MORTAL" BY ATUL GAWANDE

Neighboring towns have had much enthusiasm for this book and the discussions around it.

See the ad on the back page and Peg's Outreach column on page 3 for info.

Check with the Bryant Library for a copy of the book. For more information contact Barbara Murphy Malinak at 634-5020 or Peg Whalen at 413-404-4566.

The December Luncheon was held on December 15th at Noon here at the Community House. The lunch was fantastic as usual and we were also happy to help celebrate Mr. David Cole's 93rd birthday with a special cake for him. By request, he and his daughter Nancy shared a dance to Dean Martin's rendition of "Baby It's Cold Outside". Thanks to Sue Forgea for leading our caroling after the luncheon. And once again, the COA gave Poinsettias to 8 lucky recipients and Candy Cane Sleighs.

Our potluck luncheons are a fun social event with a lot of good food. **Join us on January 19th!** Do you need a ride in order to attend?? If so, call Carolyn at 634-2262. Please don't be shy and don't miss out!!



We're Searching for Volunteers who would be willing to participate in our Neighbor to Neighbor program. We always need drivers! While the FRTA van use is encouraged, there remains a need for the one on one driver. It could be taking someone to grocery shop or to a Dr.'s appointment. If you would or could be interested, please call Carolyn at 634-2262.

Please remember the FRTA van is running for your use. You do need to have an application in with FRTA **before** you need to use it. I have the applications. If you need one please let me know and I will get one to you.

Also, if you have MassHealth and need a ride to the Doctor, ask him/her for the form that you would need to submit **prior to** calling the number on the back of your MassHealth card.

Hilltown Elder Network (HEN) provides eligible seniors with up to two hours of housework/shopping/etc. per week. HEN is run by the Hilltown Community Development Corp (HCDC). If you could use a little help around the house, call **Charlie Hayes at 413-296-4536, Ext. 120.**



The Council on Aging Extends a Heartfelt THANK YOU to those in our community who continue to generously donate to help support our programs. We are grateful and appreciate all that you have done and continue to do! It is because of the generous donations we have received that we are able to keep our programs going and have even been able to start new ones. The words Thank You just don't seem to cover the gratitude I feel!



A new phone book is being compiled If you wish to be included in it, call Anne Parsons at 634-5707 or email mistertimothy@verizon.net. The deadline was Dec. 31st. Get in touch with Anne ASAP if you haven't. She may be able to get you in!



"Plans are nothing; Planning is everything"
~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

Regional Content

2016 Medicare Part B Premium

You may have heard your Medicare Part B premium is going up. This is **not** true for everyone! Those whose Part B premium was deducted from their Social Security check last year will continue to pay \$104.90 per month.* Those newly enrolled in Part B this year will likely pay \$121.80 per month. People with limited income and assets may qualify for a program that will pay their premium. Those with incomes greater than \$85,000 per year (\$170,000 for a couple) have higher premiums and will pay between \$170.50 and \$389.80 per month for Part B.

Trained SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone...on Medicare) volunteers can help you through free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance. To schedule a SHINE appointment, call your local Senior Center. For other SHINE related matters, call 1-800-AGE-INFO (**1-800-243-4636**) then *press* or *say* "3". Once you get the SHINE answering machine, leave your name and telephone number and a volunteer will call you back as soon as possible.

*There was **no** cost of living increase in Social Security benefits for 2016 and the law prevents benefit checks from being reduced.

Northern Hilltown COAs Consortium:

At its November 16th meeting, attended by Jan Gibeau, Chair, Peg Whalen, Outreach Coordinator, and COA directors of the participating towns, the committee discussed the Highland Valley Grant. As of early December, they have received two applications for the position of Community Connections Program Coordinator outlined in the December newsletter. Interviews are underway with the expectation of filling the position by January 1st. There will be an update in the February newsletter. Peg Whalen reported the success of the Plainfield book discussion group who are reading Being Mortal. The program will serve as a model for similar ones in the other towns. (See articles on pages 6 & 8.) The group discussed many differences in the ways that towns, COAs and their boards address budgets. Jan agreed to contact Kathy Bowler at MCOA to explore options of providing orienting and training sessions. The next meeting is scheduled for January 4th at 11:30am.

Outreach Report by Peg Whalen

The past month of outreach has been busy and rewarding. In addition to attending regular lunches, I also attended several Holiday Celebrations. We have scheduled another community discussion of *Being Mortal*, by Atul Gawande. (See the ad on the back page.) I am continuing to schedule the community discussions in other hilltowns. Most will meet during daylight hours, though I will schedule a group at night so that those who work during the day have a chance to participate. If you have not read the book, please do so. It is NOT about right to die or related topics. It is a thoughtful look at current options and plans for living our older adult years, where and how we choose. The book also offers ways we can think & talk with family, friends, and neighbors about what we want for the coming years of our lives. I think you will find it thought provoking and helpful in thinking about the rest of your life.

I also am interested in offering an LGBTQ focused group. I have heard from several seniors and there are enough people interested to form a discussion group. Please watch for forthcoming newsletter articles about community discussion groups coming to your town.

Other outreach efforts relate to a new regional Community Connections Program (CCP). The purpose of Community Connections is to give interested seniors, who are alone more often than they'd like, a chance to connect with other individual seniors. The Community Connections Program in your town needs you. If you like meeting new people, enjoy helping others, or just want to do some volunteer work, please consider participating in CCP. You can make a difference to someone who would appreciate more human contact, or wants to meet others in town. Please consider volunteering to give another senior the chance to connect with you. We have learned in the past two decades that giving help to others is a positive, life enhancing experience. Each town will develop its own version of Community Connections.

Let me know what you think of the book, the groups, the LGBT focused discussion, the CCP or anything at all. I can be reached by phone, text message, letter, or voice mail. Give me a call, leave a message at 413-404-4566, or email me at pwhalen@hchcweb.org. Or you can write me at Chesterfield Senior Center, P.O. Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.

*The Chesterfield Council on Aging invites Hilltowners of all ages,
from preschoolers to seniors, to:*



Ring in the New Year!



International Food Potluck and Country, Folk and Bluegrass music by James Kitchen & Friends

James Kitchen (fiddle, banjo) Mike Metzger, Stephen Katz (cello), Josh Wachtel, Kim Wachtel, Sarah Stockwell-Arthen, Dave Christopolis (bass), The Chesterfield Church Choir and others.

Music will include "The Chesterfield Crawl" seen below!

2 pm Sunday, January 10th, 2016

Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd., Chesterfield, MA

FREE & open to the public! All ages welcome!

Bring your favorite international dishes to share! Food from any country or region is encouraged, from cherished family recipes to your favorite cuisine. The whole family is invited to share in the food and the fun!



***This event is a benefit for the Food Bank of Western MA:
all honoraria and donations received will go to them.***

Funded in part by a multigenerational grant from Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield and Westhampton COAs, Chesterfield Public Library, CFCEs of Westhampton and Chesterfield, Davenport Childcare, and New Hingham PTO.

The Cummington Council on Aging says THANK YOU to our Generous Supporters!

If you haven't already, won't you please consider making a contribution? Your help will support our monthly newsletter and our Neighbor to Neighbor transportation program. Many of the folks receiving these services would be isolated without our help. If you would like to make a donation, please fill out the form below and send it with your check made out to the Cummington Council on Aging and write "program support" in the memo line. We thank everyone for their continuing support.

--Carolyn Urekew, Coordinator

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

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

Name _____

Address _____

**Thank you for helping to Support Your Neighbors!
The Cummington Council on Aging**

BY REQUEST by Peg Whalen

I recently was asked by a group of seniors if I could explain what the 3 & 4 letter abbreviations mean, what are the available senior services, & which agencies provide them. There are so many abbreviated words. What does it all stand for and how is it relevant to anyone? The following is my brief explanation.

EOEA	Executive Office of Elder Affairs (state-level)
COA	Council on Aging (town-based)
ASAP	Aging Services Access Point
HVES	Highland Valley Elder Services
HCDC	Hilltown Community Development Corp.
HEN	Hilltown Elder Network
HCHC	Hilltown Community Health Center
ROC	Regional Outreach Coordinator
CCP	Community Connections Program

This alphabet soup simmers down to just three categories:

Money Sources - public, (federal, state and municipal) and private non-profits providing funding and technical assistance (EOEA, HVES), to **Organizations** (COAs, HVES, HCDC, HCHC), that deliver **Services** (HEN, CCP, Congregate meal sites, home care, home health aides, ROC).

COA is a Council on Aging, each town has one. COAs have Coordinators who give information, make referrals, and sponsor activities for seniors. COAs have volunteer board members that take an oath and hold a council position for a designated time period. Coordinators are appointed, most often by select boards.

Most town COAs apply annually for state funds from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA). State funding goes to COAs to be used as needed with some restrictions. Funding is based on number of seniors 60+, as counted in the 2010 census; it is not based on current annual town census. Many, but not all, northern hilltown COAs also receive town funding.

The HEN program is a service provided in your home. The Hilltown Elder Network (HEN) is run by the Hilltown Community Development Corporation (HCDC) for seniors, based on income and need. HEN workers often provide help with housekeeping, cooking, small tasks and short trips. Each town has a HEN Supervisor working to coordinate HEN workers.

HCHC, is the Hilltown Community Health Center, providing medical, dental, mental health, optical care, and social services at locations in Worthington and Huntington. HCHC is overseeing the Regional Outreach Coordinator (ROC – that's me).

The remaining four letter word is HVES. A Plainfield senior offered the following description of Highland Valley Elder Services. I include it here with her permission. the Highland Valley Elder Services, discuss the services they offer to help us stay in our homes as we age, everything from home care and food, to money management. Services are available to individuals and/or caregivers. While HVES's primary focus is on those whose income, not including savings or assets, is under \$37,000 a year, they do offer some services to everyone, regardless of income. Of particular interest, and a good place to start, is a service called Options Counseling, which provides a series of consultation visits, in your home if wanted, regarding programs and resources available, both those you might be eligible for under their programs, and/or those you might pay for privately. If you don't qualify financially, you can still take advantage of their contracted providers on a private pay basis, which gives you the security of knowing you are working with a reputable group. So the bottom line is, feel free to call and find out. You do not have to wait until you specifically need services; it is even advisable to meet with someone before a crisis happens to know how to access services you may need. Their number is **413 586-2000**.

Please be in touch:

**Peg Whalen, Chesterfield Senior Center at P.O. Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.
(413) 404-4566 or pwhalen@hchcweb.org**

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COUNCIL ON AGING**

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**CUMMINGTON COA NEWSLETTER HAS BEEN FUNDED IN PART BY: GENEROUS DONATIONS,
THE TOWN OF CUMMINGTON, and THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ELDER AFFAIRS**

Cummington **COMMUNITY DISCUSSION**
based on

Being Mortal
by Atul Gawande

The book *Being Mortal* is a thoughtful discussion of later life preparations for living our older adult years where and how we choose. The group will include a discussion of how we can think & talk with family, friends, and neighbors about our coming years of our lives.

Discussions will occur on Tuesdays; 1/12, 1/19, 1/26, & 2/2 at 1-3 pm in the Cummington Community House Library and be facilitated by Peg Whalen, our hilltown Regional Outreach Coordinator.

Everyone is welcome. RSVP is preferred but not necessary--even if you are just thinking about coming, let us know. Call Barbara at 634-5020 or Peg at 413-404-4566 (text msg okay) or pwhalen@hchcweb.org. Parking instructions available.

Book copies may be found in Cummington's Bryant Free Public Library or your own town library. eBook versions may be available through CW-MARS. The book can also be purchased in paper, Kindle & Nook formats.

