

Cummington Council on Aging

November 2017 Newsletter

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

Anne Parsons, Director
413-634-2262
coa@cummington-ma.gov
Hours: Tuesday 2pm-5pm
Wednesday 9am-12pm

Events — November 2017

Monday:

Healthy Bones / Balance	9:00-10:00am
Coffee Hour	10:00-11:00am
Board of Assessors Assistant	9:30-11:30am
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00-11:00am
Bryant Library	6:00- 9:00pm
Veterans' Agent :	
(In Cummington 1 st & 3 rd Mon.)	9:00-11:00am
(In Williamsburg or by appt.)	2:00-4:00pm

Tuesday:

COA Office Hours	2:00- 5:00pm
Town Admin. Assistant	9:00-11:00am
Discussion Group (11/14)	1:00-3:00pm
In Community House Library	

Nov. 21: COA Potluck Luncheon Noon
Board of Health mtg 1st & 3rd Tues, 7:00pm
Veterans' Agent 2:00-4:00pm
(In Williamsburg or by appt.)

Wednesday:

COA Office Hours	9:00am-12pm
Compactor	5:30-7:30pm
Bryant Library	6:00-9:00pm
Veterans' Agent	2:00-4:00pm
(In Williamsburg or by appt.)	

Thursday:

Healthy Bones / Balance	9:00-10:00am
Nov. 2: COA Board	10:30am
Town Clerk	4:00-7:30pm
Building Inspector	6:00-8:00pm
Board of Assessors meeting	6:30pm
2 nd & 4 th Thursdays	
Selectboard	7:00pm
Veterans' Agent	2:00-4:00pm
(In Williamsburg or by appt.)	

Friday:

Veterans' Agent	2:00-4:00pm
(In Williamsburg or by appt.)	

Saturday:

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

Board of Directors will meet on
Thursday, November 2nd at 10:30am.

Thanksgiving Dinner **Tues. November 21st at 12 Noon** **Community House**



Our annual Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner will be held on November 21st at 12:00 noon in the Community House. Lorraine York-Edberg, **SHINE** Regional Program Director, will be here to speak with us. **SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)** is a state program that provides free, unbiased health insurance information and counseling assistance to Massachusetts residents with Medicare, their caregivers, and those approaching Medicare eligibility. **The deadline for open enrollment is December 7th.**

Appointments to meet with Lorraine after the luncheon can be made by calling Anne Parsons: 634-2262. If you need a ride in order to attend, call the COA office at 634-2262. Please don't be shy and don't miss out! Good food, good people!

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet at the:

The Brewmaster's Tavern
4 Main St. Williamsburg, MA
on **Wednesday, Nov. 8th**

We will leave from the church at Noon. This is the last outing for us this year. Come and enjoy!

Cumington's COA is looking for four residents who are looking to serve their community through becoming a board member on the Council on Aging. As a board member, you would share in the leadership of the COA, attend monthly meetings, share in the development and support of program/service goals, and provide support to the director. Although the majority of members must be 60 or over, the board should be a cross section of our community. If this interests you, please contact the COA office at 634-2262.

New **Medicare cards** will be coming out between April 2018 and April 2019. Beware of anyone who contacts you about your new Medicare card. You do NOT need to give out public or private information to get your new Medicare Number and Card.



Hilltown Elder Network (HEN)

provides eligible seniors with up to 2 hours of housework/shopping/etc. per week. HEN is run by the Hilltown Community Development Corporation (HCDC).

If you could use a little help around the house, call the Cumington / Plainfield Coordinator, Sandra Powers: 413-634-5558.

The Cumington 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 Cumington Council on Aging and write "program support" in the memo line. We thank everyone for their continuing support. ~ Anne Parsons

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.

Name _____

Address _____

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

Community Credits Program

by the Northern Hilltown Consortium of COAs & supported by Highland Valley Elder Services Title 3 funds

What is the COMMUNITY CREDITS Program?

- A way to make aging at home as easy as possible.
- You can get/give a little help to do tasks or share activities.
- We match seniors who would like something done with someone who can do it.
- It's multigenerational, matching seniors, non-senior adults & HS students.
- You help hilltown youth meet a requirement for their High School diploma.

How does the COMMUNITY CREDITS program work?

- Credits are non-monetary points given to seniors. No cost to participate.
- Credits based on age (if 60+), years of hilltown living, volunteer hrs/ mo.
- 10 Credits get you 1 hour of time – for tasks or activities of any kind.
- Earn more credits by doing tasks or enjoying activities with others.

How do I sign up & get my COMMUNITY CREDITS?

Name (Printed)	Town
Birth year	Address
Yrs living in hilltowns	Mailing Address
If you volunteer, how many hrs/mo	Zip code
If yes, what do you volunteer for:	Phone number
	Email: (optional but helpful)

RIDES	I Would Like	I Can Offer
		Appointments (medical /dental / etc)
		Bank / Credit union
		Concerts, Movies, Entertainment
		Doing errands together
		Eating Out / Restaurants
		Grocery store
		In town /valley /other towns
		Library
		Mall /Department Store/Other Shops
		Pharmacy
		Visit a friend in town or nearby
		Other:
OTHER	I Would Like	I Can Offer
		Bill paying /Check writing
		Find contractor for house
		Help w/ Highland Valley Elder Services
		Help calling about bills or services
		Help with technology /cell phone /TV
		Home maintenance
		Organizing mail / filing papers
		Packing to move /travel
		Sorting /Shredding papers
		Tax preparing
		Other:

ACTIVITY	I Would Like	I Can Offer
		Caregiving relief / respite care
		Company to play games (mark)
		Scrabble, board games
		Chess/Backgammon
		Play cards, Bridge, Rummy
		Chess / Backgammon/
		Mah Jong
		Cooking / baking / preparing food
		Entertainment, Concerts, Plays
		Get/return library books
		Help to understand / fix computer
		Learn / Teach / Help (mark)
		Basket making, Crafts
		Computers, Internet, Technology
		Cooking, Baking, Canning
		Dancing, Yoga, Pilates
		Knit, Crochet, Needlework, Spin
		Quilting, Sewing
		Woodworking, Carving
		Making phone calls
		Running errands
		Scheduling appointments
		Shopping together at stores
		Watching movies
		Other:
Comments:		

OUTSIDE CHORES	I Would Like	I Can Offer
		Change storm windows
		Clean gutters
		Clean barn or stalls
		Fix lawn mower / snow blower
		Gardening, weeding, tilling
		Mow lawn / rake leaves
		Painting
		Pet walking
		Plowing /shoveling /snow blowing
		Prep for winter /spring /summer /fall
		Remove trash
		Stack / split wood
		Wash windows (inside &/or out)
		Other:
INSIDE CHORES	I Would Like	I Can Offer
		Move fire wood/wood pellets/salt
		Replace high light bulbs & batteries
		Cooking / baking /preparing food
		Housecleaning
		Moving heavy stuff
		Painting
		Pet care
		Prep for spring/summer/fall/winter
		Trash / junk removal
		Other:
Comments:		

Stronger than Yesterday

What interests you? There's never been a better time to learn a new form of exercise or pick up one you haven't done in years.



Chair Yoga

Yoga is for everyone, and this form is gentle and relaxing. It improves your flexibility and may offer relief from arthritis and insomnia.

Tues. 10am, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr
*Led by master yogini Sarah Prince.
Requested donation: \$5/class.*

Thurs. 10:45am, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
Led by Alexandra Mello. \$10/class.*

Yoga for You

*Taught by Michelle Wolk, this class is geared for active adults. Any adult can join. Class is \$12 or 6 classes for \$60.**

Tues. 6-7pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Dance Class (Modern/ Creative)

Contemporary dance for adults, taught by Susan Waltner. Donations gratefully accepted.

Weds. 10am, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Feldenkrais

Create flexibility, strength and balance, with trained instructor Michele Morales-Wolk. Open to all ages.

Mon. 7pm, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
Requested donation: \$5/class

Thurs. 6pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
*\$10/class**

Healthy Bones and Balance

Designed to increase participants' strength, mobility, flexibility and balance, H B & B classes are a

free, fun way to exercise and socialize. Medical clearance is required.

Mon. & Thurs. 9:00am
Cummington Comm. House

Mon & Fri. 10:30am
Worthington, Maples I Comm. Room

Tues. 10:30am Williamsburg Cong. Church

Thurs. 4pm, Williamsburg Senior Ctr.

Hiking

Chuck Horn organizes hikes around the Westhampton/ Easthampton area. To get on his email list, drop him a line: chornrita66@comcast.net

Muscle Strengthening Classes

Strength training keeps your bones strong and helps maintain muscle mass.

Weds. 10am, Goshen Town Hall

T'ai Chi

T'ai Chi is a wonderful activity known to increase balance, centeredness within oneself, and an enhanced relationship with the natural world.

Mon. 9:30am, Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
(Advanced; \$5/class)

Thurs. 6:30pm Chesterfield Comm. Ctr.
(Beginner; \$5/class)

Thurs. 9:30am Williamsburg Senior Ctr.
*\$10/class**

To find out more about these classes, and to register, please contact the appropriate COA coordinator:

Chesterfield:

Janice Gibeau, 296-4007,
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Cummington:

Anne Parsons, 634-2262, coa@cummington-ma.gov

Goshen: Evelyn Culver, 268-3316, ematkc@aol.com

Westhampton:

Julia Lennen, 537-9880,
westhamptoncoa@comcast.net

Williamsburg:

Marie Westburg, 268-8407, coa@burgy.org
* Financial aid may be available for Wburg residents.

Worthington:

Sandy Epperly, 238-5584, coa@worthington-ma.us

Hilltown Veterans



By Peg Whalen
Regional Outreach Coordinator for the
Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

This month we are sharing information about veterans. Drawing on U.S. Census data, the National Association of COAs (NCOA, July 2017) reported over 20 million Americans are veterans: about 8% of the population. Nearly 10 million veterans are 65 or older and over 1.3 million are older than 85.

Many veterans are unaware of what they are eligible to receive. And, many women have served our country and often do not know they are considered veterans with access to many benefits. If you are a woman and served the military in some capacity, you may be surprised to learn you do have veteran status. There is much you may qualify for because of your service.

NCOA notes there are "a variety of public and private benefits that can help veterans afford to remain independent, healthy, and secure." Benefit eligibility can depend on length and type of service, service-related disability and household income. Veterans may qualify for some or many of the following:

Financial assistance: Veterans' pensions; The VA Death Pension for spouses; Disability; financial aid for education.

Health and long-term care: Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits; The Choice Program; Telehealth; VA Blind Rehabilitation Services; state veterans' homes; home hospice care.

Home loans: Special housing grants and guaranteed home loans.

State programs: Discounted hunting or fishing licenses; license plates; educational assistance; employment and job search assistance.

Help for caregivers: Caregivers of veterans may be eligible for help with Adult Day Health Care services and Respite Care.

The State of Massachusetts includes the above and also offers benefits for motor vehicle license plates, property tax exemptions, housing, outreach and trauma response, employment-related, bonuses and annuities, burial benefits, legal assistance, and many other benefits and opportunities. The Secretary of the Commonwealth has a state publication, "Veterans' Laws and Benefits", a 64-page document with detailed information. Ask your library for a copy or help getting it online.

Every Massachusetts town has a Veterans' Agent. Several hilltown COAs regularly provide Veterans' Agents with space to meet with veterans. If you would like to talk with a Veterans' Agent, contact your local COA or search online for a list of agents and contact information.

All the programs above are included on the site: BenefitsCheckUp.org, a free online benefits screening questionnaire that shows the likelihood that you or a loved one may be eligible for programs. The checkup

gives details on where to get application assistance. Completing the BenefitsCheckUp® also screens eligibility for programs that are not only for veterans, including help paying for medications, food, utilities, and more.

To all veterans and military families, please accept sincere appreciation for your service and the daily sacrifices you made for all of us.

The Equifax Mess – Part 2

Any good news on Equifax, you ask? Short answer: no. We remain highly irritated and concerned. But in review, there are steps to take.

1. Don't Click.
2. Check at least one of your credit agency reports: AnnualCreditReport.com.
3. Put a freeze on each agency.
More on that next time.
4. Change and improve passwords.

PASSWORDS – Hint 1. For easy-to-remember passwords: make up a sentence about the account. For instance, if you donate each month to a pet gecko rescue site, use a sentence about it, e.g: Pet geckos are the most lovable reptiles. Then use the first letters of the sentence and add a symbol and your lucky number, that is: Pgatmlr\$55. The bank account that you opened in 1998 could be My bank is very friendly 1998!, or Mbivf1998!

Hint 2 – Do NOT use these bad bad bad passwords – 123456, password, qwerty, football, baseball, your own name, parent's name, hometown... and the like.

Hint 3 - There is some thought among security professionals that a set of words is harder for a computer program to break. We may see changed password guidelines that alter the request for upper case, number, special character, etc. In the meantime, please don't use the same password for everything. I thank you.

Securely,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD Committee Member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

The 2018 ACA (Affordable Care Act) enrollment period has been shortened from 90 days to 45 days (November 1-December 15, 2017) and the advertising budget to promote open enrollment has been slashed from \$1M to \$100k in an effort to sabotage the program. You're probably not seeing a lot of advertising about the enrollment window online or on TV. Local centers who assisted folks in enrolling have had their funding cut. Please share this information with your family, friends and neighbors, in any way that you can. People's lives depend on it.

On the Go!

The COAs in the hilltowns and in the valley offer many opportunities to get out of the house and do something fun with other people.



Finding trips that work for you is our goal!

Consequently, the Northern Hilltowns Councils on Aging Consortium will be providing monthly lists of trips, including information about each trip and contact points for reserving a spot. **If you know of an interesting group event, let us know: regionalcoanews@gmail.com.**

The Chesterfield COA Travel Group and the Northampton Senior Center have arranged the following outings, and you are welcome to join!
Please make your reservations early as these trips fill up fast!

Wednesday, Dec. 6th: Enjoy the **Rockettes' Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall** and free time in NY. \$142. Lunch on your own. **The bus is full, but you may be put on a waiting list.** Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.

Tuesday, December 12 **"Merry Christmazz Holiday Variety Show" with Jimmy Mazz** at Storowton Tavern, W. Springfield, leaving the Chesterfield Community Center at 10:30 am via carpool, and returning after lunch. 30 seats have been reserved. The cost is \$30.00, including a pot roast luncheon, but the Chesterfield COA has offered to pay half (\$15.00) for Chesterfield seniors. Be sure to get your reservation lined up with Mary Ann (413-296-4787) and your \$15 or \$30 check (Chesterfield or non-Chesterfield senior) to her by November 16th: 190 East St. Williamsburg, MA 01096.

Sister Act, a musical comedy, will be performed at Westchester Theater in Elmsford, NY. A full luncheon is included. Cost is \$125, and there is a \$10 discount if paid in full by March 15. Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.

May 25th– June 4th:**Mt. Rushmore and the Black Hills of South Dakota.** This 11-day bus trip costs \$950 with double occupancy. Roommates are available. There is a \$25 discount paid in full by February 1, 2018. Trip insurance is available, and \$100 reserves your seat. Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.

Sept. 7th– 11th:**Washington DC.** Enjoy a full day at the Smithsonian and two-day guided tour of the city. Cost is \$540 with double occupancy. Roommates are available. There is a \$25 discount if paid in full by June 1, 2018. Trip insurance is available and \$100 reserves your seat. Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.

Would you like to receive your newsletter by email instead of snail mail?

If so, please email Kristen at **regionalcoanews@gmail.com** to be put on the email list.



Hilltown Easy Ride's November Schedule

Every Tuesday:

Shopping at Northampton Big Y and Walmart

Every Wednesday:

Food Pantry in Goshen.

Thursday, November 9th:

Shopping in Pittsfield

The Easy Ride Van would love to get you to any event possible. Want to go to your local COA luncheon? Want to try that exercise class in the neighboring town? Just please make sure you have filled out a Demand Response Application with FRTA first. It will take at least one week before you will receive an answer from FRTA to be approved.

Easy Ride Coordinator Fran Goebel is happy to help local seniors fill out an application form for eligibility and assist riders with booking trips and signing up for outings. **Fran can be reached at 413-296-4232 or ride@hilltowncdc.org.** Her hours are: Mon. 2:30pm-4pm, Tues. 8am-10am, Weds. 2pm-4:30pm, Thurs. 8am-12pm, Fri. 8am-1pm. Please feel comfortable leaving her a message with the details of your request and she will get back to you as soon as possible.

Out and About in November

Sun. Nov. 12th at 2pm

Roger Tincknell

*Chesterfield Comm. Center, 400 Main Rd.
Chesterfield, MA*

Roger has been performing for over 40 years to groups of all ages, from preschoolers to seniors. He is a two-time Parents' Choice award-winning recording artist, and people can't help but get into the music as he sings everything from ballads to swing to bluegrass. All ages welcome! *Sponsored in part by a grant from the Chesterfield Cultural Council. Also 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 Child Care, and the New Hingham PTO.*



Mon. Nov. 13th at Noon

Veterans Day Dinner

**RH Conwell School, 147 Huntington Rd.
Worthington, MA**

The Worthington COA invites ALL hilltown veterans, regardless of age, and their spouse or caregiver to our Veteran's Day celebration. Lunch will be served at Noon. Due to limited space, reservations are required. Call Sandy Epperly at 238-5584. Come and enjoy a wonderful roast pork dinner, and the friendship of your fellow veterans. If you need a ride, call the Hilltown Easy Ride: 413-296-4232.

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



The National Fire Protection Association creates the theme for the Annual "Fire Prevention Week." This year's theme is MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT. Here are a few things you can do to help make every second count if your house is on fire:

- Make a home escape plan. Draw a sketch of your home's floor plan. Include all the windows and doors (inside and outside doors) Find and draw two ways out of each room and the house. Establish a safe meeting place outside the house where everyone will meet and show it in your plan. Post your plan where everyone can see it.
- Do a home fire escape drill at home at least twice a year.

You can MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT!
Stay S.A.F.E.!

--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.