

Westhampton Council on Aging

March 2017 Newsletter



Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

Calendar of Events

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
		1 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	2 COA Luncheon Church, Noon	3 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am
6 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	7 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	8 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	9 Foot Care Nurse WW, Unit F, 10:30am Afternoon Movie Library, 1:15pm	10 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am
13 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Computer Class Library, 10am-12pm Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	14 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Games Library, 1:30pm	15 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10 am	16	17 COA Breakfast WW, 8-9:30am Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am
20 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	21 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	22 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	23	24 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am
27 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Computer Class Library, 10am-12pm Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	28 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Games Library, 1:30pm	29 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9 am Chair Yoga Class WW, 9am Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	30	31 Walking Group Town pk lot, 8 & 9am COA Board Meeting WW, 1pm

Note From The New COA Coordinator

Greetings, All –

My name is Julia Lennen and I live with my husband, Robert, on Burt Road. On January 9th, the Westhampton Selectboard appointed me the Coordinator of the Council on Aging. I am excited about the opportunity to give back and engage directly with my beautiful community.

I am extraordinarily lucky that our COA Board and the Friends of the COA are so kind, helpful, and professional. It gives me time to learn about my community and the needs of our ever-growing senior population so we can work together on programs and services.

I have not worked in the human services field before and, since my appointment, I have been busy learning about senior services and local service providers. I am even enrolled at HCC in a Human Services class! (You have to love the senior waiver!)

We moved to Westhampton because we liked the house and the rural landscape. Little did we know how special and unique Westhampton is!

Everyone is encouraged to contact me with issues or ideas. I can be reached at:
westhamptoncoa@comcast.net or 413-537-9880.

~ Julia Lennen

February Luncheon

Janet Shaw and Glenda Colon from Stavros Services presented an informative program describing what services are offered for seniors. If anyone would like more information on their services, please call Glenda, the Stavros Options Counselor, at 413-256-0473.

March Luncheon

On **March 2nd** we'll be hosting the 4th grade and their grandparents at our annual intergenerational luncheon. We always look forward to the amazing array of talents that these children bring with them. After our usual potluck luncheon, we'll all be entertained by the 4th graders' program. As usual, come early to sign birthday cards, and blood pressure checks will be available. Don't forget that the Easthampton Food Pantry is always looking for non-perishable food items. Check your cabinets to see if you have something that you could bring to our meeting for the Pantry.

Country Music and Luncheon

The COA Friends have announced an event at the Log Cabin on **April 18** which includes a Country Music show and luncheon. The "Truck Stop Troubadours" will be performing "Songs of the Grand Ole Opry". Tickets are \$55.00 per person, but if a group of us attends, the Friends will be giving each a discount. For more information, contact Betty-Anne Gould (757-849-9995) or Ellie Scott (527-2335).

Scrabble or Board & Card Games

The afternoon Scrabble games have moved to the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 1:30 at the library. If you'd prefer other board or card games, head to Westhampton Woods, Unit F, at 1:30 on Tuesdays. At either venue, you're sure to find other seniors and enjoy your afternoon.

Monthly Afternoon Movie

On **Thursday, March 9th**, there will be a movie shown at the library at 1:15. If there's a movie that you'd especially like to have shown, contact the library in advance. You can also call the library earlier in that week to see what movie is scheduled for the 9th.

Senior Breakfast at WW

Our March COA breakfast will be on **Friday, March 17th** which is also St. Patrick's Day. Come to Westhampton Woods, Unit F, between 8:00 and 9:30 for homemade coffee cake and/or oatmeal. There's always plenty of coffee, tea, cocoa and milk available, too. Enjoy breakfast with other seniors just a few days before spring arrives!

Early Spring Hikes

Chuck Horn has organized a hike for **Wednesday, March 1st** (bad weather date is Wed., March 8th) from 1:30pm – 3:30pm. Hikers will meet at Westhampton Woods to carpool to Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton. The hike will begin at the Nature Center to see bird feeders, etc., then head to wooded trails and/or fields, depending on conditions. This will feature easy walking. Chuck will send out emails to previous hikers, but if you haven't heard from him and are interested, call Chuck at 527-6765.

A second hike is planned for **Wednesday, March 22nd** (bad weather date, Wed., March 29th), from 10:00am—noon. Beginning on Easthampton Rd. (or carpooling from Westhampton Woods again) across from the old Parsons Farm sawmill, the trail ends on Southampton Rd. We might include another trail between Kestrel Land Trust on Southampton Rd. and Cemetery Rd. (These trail accesses are only about 100 yards apart.)

Assistance for Seniors

There are several sources for support for seniors living in Westhampton. Please feel free to take advantage of any of these services!

Transportation: If you need a ride to an appointment or the like, or if you're in need of other transportation, please call Louise Jasionkowski at 527-5134.

Equipment: The COA has a variety of medical equipment available to loan to anyone who needs it. In addition to walkers, there are shower stools, crutches, canes, equipment to use in the bathroom. Please note that there are some bed pads and packages of disposable undergarments available for anyone who could use them. Please call Jean Webster, 527-5077, if you'd like to borrow or use any of these items.



HEN Program: If you are age 60 or over and need help with cleaning, laundry, etc., we can help. The Hilltown Elder Network (HEN), of which Westhampton is a member, matches elders with caregivers at no cost to the elder. This program does have some income guidelines. Call Lilly Baxter at 527-1532 for information!

Handyman Services: If you need handyman services, we have two willing gentlemen who have offered their services (at reasonable rates) to Westhampton seniors. Call Bob Pajak at 529-0905 or Paul McCutcheon at 203-3149.



Computer Classes

These classes for seniors are led by Bob Miller on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at the library from 10:00 am until noon. Bob troubleshoots problems and answers questions during the first hour and has a specific lesson for the second hour. All seniors are welcome, regardless of skill level. If you have a laptop, bring it along. Bob has extra laptops for folks to use during the classes though. You may also attend sessions on a drop-in basis.

Chair Yoga Classes

With the arrival of spring, Sarah Prince is back with 10 weeks of chair yoga. The first class this year will be on **Wednesday, March 29th**, at 9:00 at Westhampton Woods, Unit F. Just a reminder that these gentle classes emphasize body awareness and self-care with practices that improve breathing, balance and flexibility. The classes always end with a brief relaxation time that allows a meditative flow. The atmosphere is casual with no worries about getting it 'right'. Seniors and caregivers can come to any or all sessions. These classes are paid for through a grant and by Friends.

Foot Care Nurse

Diane Roeder will be coming to Westhampton Woods on **March 9th** at 10:30. If you'd like to make an appointment with her, she can be reached at 413-374-0457. Her next visit will be in May.

A Note From The Library

Writing Your Life: a free four-week workshop:

March 8, 15, 22, and 29 at 6pm. Create a written record for yourself, for loved ones, or for publication. Learn how to turn a family history into compelling stories, tips for keeping a journal, prompts and exercises for turning memories into memoir, and readings of published memoirs and optional sharing of one's own work. If you're interested in attending, please register at the library. Made possible thanks to the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Enjoy the sugaring season!

A Winter Eden

A winter Eden in an alder swamp
Where conies now come out to sun and romp,
As near a paradise as it can be
And not melt snow or start a dormant tree.
It lifts existence on a plane of snow
One level higher than the earth below,
One level nearer heaven overhead
And last year's berries shining scarlet red.
It lifts a gaunt luxuriating beast
Where he can stretch and hold his highest feast
On some wild apple tree's young tender bark,
What well may prove the years' high girdle mark.
Pairing in all known paradises ends:
Here loveless birds now flock as winter friends,
Content with bud inspecting. They presume
To say which buds are leaf and which are bloom.
A feather hammer gives a double knock.
This Eden day is done at two o'clock.
An hour of winter day might seem too short
To make it worth life's while to wake and sport.

*Robert Frost
March 7, 1923*



Whose business is it, if I choose to read, or play on the computer until 4am, or sleep until noon?



I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 50s, 60s & 70s, and if I, at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love, I will.

Contributed by Barbara Bak of Chesterfield



TRIAD COUNCIL

Seniors, Police, and Support Services Together — Learning ~ Informing ~ Empowering
Contact: Ginny Curtis – 529-9873 — westhamptontriad@comcast.net

THE GRANDKIDS ARE NOT IN JAIL!

Scammers are back stealing millions of dollars by returning to the successful "Grandparents Scam". Pleading calls are made to save the grandkids in various emergency situations. Wanting to help, too many seniors become victims of this fraudulent financial trick. If you get one of these calls about a relative/ friend in danger or trouble with an immediate request to wire cash, you need to pause and stay calm. Ask for a number to call them right back, if they won't give you one; that's a red flag! Hang up. You can then always call another family member to confirm their safety.

Scammers know your name, names of relatives, even pets. They know phone numbers, special dates, personal information. How? They buy it, steal it, and you hand it to them by making semi-intimate details about your life available through social media: Facebook and Twitter.

Take steps to protect yourself:

- ✦ E-mails: Don't open attachments from strangers. Crooks remotely access your computer.
- ✦ Social Media: Use caution when revealing anything about your family, travel plans, or contact information.
- ✦ Family Secret Code Word: Establish one secret word as a Safety Code for your immediate family to use only for emergency identification among yourselves.
- ✦ Computer safety: Use both antivirus and anti-spyware software to keep intruders out.
- ✦ Report fraud: Don't be embarrassed if you have fallen prey to a scam; we can't catch imposters if we don't tell authorities: Northwestern District Attorney's office 586-9225

THAT AUTHENTIC-LOOKING CHECK

You have to admit, it is tempting to deposit a \$3,500 business check into your account when "all" you have to do is send them back a \$200 check to receive the entire sweepstakes of \$200,000. Your check will clear the bank. The scam is that their computer-generated authentic-looking check will NOT. You are left holding a bounced check. If you did enter a sweepstakes and are still tempted to deposit the "bait", please take the check into your bank and have them first verify its authenticity so you are not duped.

2017 SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES

In 2017, 173 million people are paying into the system.

Retirement age Increases: If you were born between 1943 and 1954 full retirement age is 66.

Amount of Earnings subject to Social Security Tax increased from \$118,500 to \$127,200.

Maximum Benefit allowed for a worker at full retirement age has increased to \$2,687.

Earn more without affecting benefits: Every \$2.00 you earn above \$16,920, \$1.00 is withheld, but once you reach full retirement age, Social Security will recalculate your benefits to give you a credit for those withholdings.



The Westhampton Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to continue our important programming for local seniors!

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

(Please write your check to The Westhampton Council on Aging, write "program support fund" in the memo line, and mail to Westhampton COA, 3 South Rd. Westhampton, MA 01027.)

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Westhampton Council on Aging

Regional News

Seniors Aware of Fire Education



Is your house number clearly visible from the street? Seconds count in an emergency. Emergency personnel from a neighboring community, i.e: the ambulance, may be unfamiliar with where your house is.

Here are a few tips about how you can help the emergency responders find you when you need them in a hurry:

- Use large visible numbers, the bigger the better.
- Use numbers with a contrasting background, so they can really be seen.
- Put numbers under light so they can be seen at night.
- If your driveway is long, post your numbers on both sides of your mail box or on both sides of a pole at the road end of the driveway.
- Keep the numbers visible by trimming any trees or bushes.

--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.*

Susan Waltner's Modern / Contemporary Dance Class at the Williamsburg Senior Center is continuing, with great reviews! If you are interested in joining, call the Williamsburg Senior Center at 268-8407. Classes are held on Wednesdays, 10 am. Free, with donations accepted for the Senior Center program funding.

Crabby Road

Crabby Road



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What can go wrong with Hello?

Avoiding phone scams takes a good bit of care these days. Having written in the past that offices such as Social Security, Medicare, and the Internal Revenue Service will NOT call you and ask for information or money, I am Very Sorry to say that is only 2/3 true now! As we were warned several months ago, the IRS can turn selected accounts over to a collection agency which can call you and say the call is from the IRS. However, before the IRS turns a debt over to the agency, they will send a written letter to the taxpayer. So if you do not get a letter and know you are not in trouble with the IRS, continue to not answer the phone from the IRS.

A second phone call caution is that when you answer the phone, if it is not someone you know, it is advisable to never say the word "yes". The initial question from the caller could be something like "Can you hear me ok?" or "Are you the homeowner?" You automatically give an affirmative answer and they record that. In the future, they can use your voice saying "yes" to say that you signed up for a cruise, subscriptions, or a home security system. While you may not give out information on that call that they can use, they now have a live phone number and can call again, gradually hoping to collect some banking or other financial information.

As always, share this information if you like, and give me a holler if you'd like to know more. I'll be happy to give you more resources including where I get my information.

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



Outreach Update

by Peg Whalen,
Regional Outreach Coordinator of the
Northern Hilltowns Councils on Aging Consortium

Things are changing for aging, services, and supports. Last month I explained a national emphasis on aging in place. I am writing about Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) this month to begin highlighting changes & growth at HVES that are making aging easier for all of us. Highland Valley Elder Services is the aging services access point for our hilltowns & many other towns in the Pioneer Valley. HVES is responsible for providing aging information, referral, & service assistance. In the northern hilltowns, it is our one best source for information & help for all things related to seniors, caregivers & aging.

As an aging service access point, HVES offers a broad range of services, programs, & supports. This month I am discussing the Options Counseling Program. Options Counseling is administered statewide by the State of Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs & other state offices. Options Counseling assists seniors & families with making informed choices. Options Counselors provide information & help arrange services & resources that support independence in aging in settings individual seniors choose. Options Counseling is available not only to people age 60 & older, but also for people with disabilities, caregivers, & family members.

Options Counseling provides:

- free consultations with certified Options Counselors
- unbiased information, either in person, over the phone, or by email
- discussion about your short-term & long-term goals
- a personalized approach that ensures your choices are respected

You can explore options about:

- paying for services
- getting referrals related to individual needs & wishes
- receive assistance with planning the next steps
- get information about long-term care services & supports.

Options counselors can meet with you face-to-face at the HVES office in Northampton, in your home, or at another location you agree to meet with the options counselor.

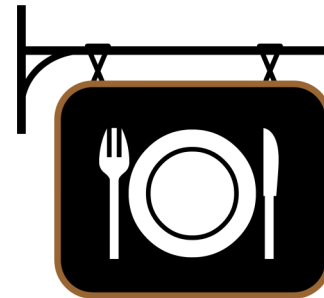
How do you know if and when options counseling is for you? Consider the following questions: Have you had a change in your health which requires additional assistance? Are you or a loved one concerned about your ability to live on your own? Are you feeling over-

whelmed trying to make a decision about your future? Are you worried about returning home after a stay at the rehabilitation facility or nursing home? Are you thinking about moving but don't know where to start? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then Options Counseling may be for you.

To make the first step toward getting more information and support for maintaining your independence call, or ask someone you trust to call, Highland Valley Elder Services at (413) 586-2000. Their offices are at 320 Riverside Drive, Suite B in Florence, MA. It's that simple: reach out with a call and arrange to meet a certified options counselor. You will be surprised by how much support you have access to and how affordable it can be for most people.

Massachusetts Senior Citizen Restaurant Discounts

There has to be some benefits to getting older!



Applebee's has a 15% discount for seniors 60+ with Golden Apple Card *(please contact your local Applebee's directly to verify this senior discount)*

Ben & Jerry's has a 10% senior citizen discount available for seniors 60+ in Massachusetts *(please contact your local Ben & Jerry's directly to verify this senior discount)*

Burger King has a 10% senior discount available on beverages for seniors 60+ *(please contact your local Burger King directly to verify this senior discount)*

Chili's has a 10% senior citizen discount for seniors 55+ *(please contact your local Chili's directly to verify this senior discount)*

Dunkin' Donuts has a senior citizen / AARP member discount *(please contact your local Dunkin' Donuts directly to verify this senior discount)*

Subway has a 10% discount for senior citizens 60+ *(please contact your local Subway directly to verify this senior discount)*

Wendy's has a 10% discount available for senior citizens 55+ *(please contact your local Wendy's directly to verify this senior discount)*

Compiled from seniorcitizendiscountlist.org

Changes in the Disabled Parking Placard

Beginning last month (February), Disabled Parking Placards issued by the RMV have a new appearance. Small blue wheelchair symbols appear behind the placard number and expiration date. This security feature has been added to help identify instances of altered placard numbers or expiration dates that have been observed and cited by law enforcement. This change applies to all placards, both permanent and temporary.

All old style placards with the plain white background in the placard number and expiration date will remain valid until the date of expiration shown on the placard. It will take up to five years before the old placards are completely phased out.



When you reapply at the time of your current placard's expiration date or apply for the first time, be sure to use the newest form, found at:

www.massrmv.com/Portals/30/docs/20060.pdf
Your local senior center or COA coordinator may also have some of the forms available for your convenience.

Did you know?

- It was 19th-century Russian playwright and short story writer Anton Chekhov who made the following sage observation: "Love, friendship, respect, do not unite people as much as a common hatred for something."
- You might be surprised to learn that Harriet Tubman — famous for her work as a conductor on the Underground Railroad — also served as a Union spy during the Civil War, providing key intelligence that aided in the capture of Jacksonville, Florida. She also was the first woman to lead an armed assault during the Civil War; the Combahee River Raid freed 750 South Carolina slaves.
- If you suffer from galeophobia you're certainly not alone; Steven Spielberg's 1975 film "Jaws" may have popularized the fear of sharks, but it certainly didn't start it. Logically, though, swinophobia makes more sense — pigs kill more people every year than sharks do.
- When Edgar Allan Poe first started writing his most famous poem, "The Raven," he intended it to be short. Over the next decade, though, he kept adding to it, until it finally reached a length of 18 verses. The poem's publication in 1845 had a mixed critical reception; William Butler Yeats called it "insincere and vulgar" and said "its execution [is] a rhythmical trick," and Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I see nothing in it." "The Raven" was wildly popular with the public, though, and Poe became — for a brief time — the most famous writer in America.
- It's still not known who made the following observation: "Thousands of years ago, cats were worshipped as gods. Cats have never forgotten this."



Compiled from seniordigestnews.com

Joke Corner

Whatever you may look like, marry a man your own age. As your beauty fades, so will his eyesight.

The reason women don't play football is because 11 of them would never wear the same outfit in public.

I want my children to have all the things I couldn't afford. Then I want to move in with them.



Connecting Councils on Aging More Important Than Ever

When three questions come up in COA Board meetings -- What is the Consortium? What does it do? Why is it so important? -- it is not uncommon to find that the answers don't come easily. Formally speaking, the Northern Hilltown Councils on Aging Consortium is a group of seven COAs who have been coming together for many years in order to support each other, spread the word about programs in their towns and share what thoughts they have about helping the elders in our communities. Always informative, the focus has usually rested on programs and activities that have received funding awarded to each town's COA, primarily from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) or Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES). As the numbers of older people steadily rise, the demands for financial support have been increasing, but the funds available are not able to keep pace. "Going regional" is the financial road now being taken. More and more requests for money are required to have a regionally-based plan and capacity to provide services.

In 2016, the Consortium was able to successfully step up to this challenge by creating the EOEA-funded 3-year grant to address isolation and develop outreach strategies that could help elders "age at home." Without this grant, we would no longer have received funding to support and expand our respective COA town newsletters including regional news, and with this grant, we have a full-time dedicated Regional Outreach Coordinator, Peg Whalen, whose column often appears in these newsletters. In addition, HVES has granted us money to increase Community Connections and launch "Community Credits," a new program, initiated by Susan Bronstein, serving as the Community Coordinator. By issuing "credits earned," this program promotes the bartering of services between those who need things done and those who can help.

We can anticipate that the demands for regional proposals will only grow. The Consortium has the capacity to meet those demands very well and serve a critical role in stretching dollars and preserving the services that are so vital to all of us. Want to know more? Just let your COA director or coordinator know.

Jan Gibeau
Chair, Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs

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Newsletter Designer

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

The Chesterfield Council on Aging invites you to enjoy another music treat...

The Northhamptones

Sunday, March 26th at 2pm

Chesterfield Community Center
400 Main Rd. Chesterfield, MA

Led by NHS choral director Beau Flahive, the Northhamptones are NHS' A Capella ensemble. A very talented and ever-evolving group of students who offer consistently first-rate and complex vocal arrangements, the TONES have performed at the Massachusetts State House, the Calvin Theater with the Young at Heart Chorus and the rock band FOREIGNER. The Northhamptones are known for their sell out New Year's Eve shows at The Academy of Music and have sung the National Anthem several times at Fenway Park. After hours of rehearsals filled with music and laughter, their contagious energy is sure to light up the stage and warm your hearts.



Free and open to the public!

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 the New Hingham PTO.