


Moving Forward

Westhampton Council on Aging

Programs and Services for Active Living at 60+



February 2018 ~ Calendar of Events

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
			1 COA Luncheon Church, Noon Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	2
5 Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	6 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	7 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	8 Afternoon movie Library, 1:15pm	9
12 Computer Class Library, 10am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	13 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	14 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	15 Scrabble Library, 5:30pm	16 COA Breakfast WW, 8am-9:30am
19 Presidents' Day- Library closed	20 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm Scrabble Library, 1:30pm	21 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am	22 	23 COA Board Meeting WW, 9:30am
26 Computer Class Library, 10am Knitting Group Library, 6:30-8pm	27 Board & Card Games, WW, 1:30pm	28 Coffee & Social Time Library, 10am		

Westhampton COA ✦ 3 South Road ✦ Westhampton, MA 01027 ✦ Seniors Helping Seniors

Coordinator: Julia Lennen 413-537-9880 ✦ westhamptoncoa@comcast.net

In Memoriam

June Williams 5/26/46 – 12/12/17

Mary Holt: 11/22/36 – 1/7/18



January Luncheon

Unfortunately, Mother Nature played a trick on us the day that our luncheon was scheduled. A snowstorm began around daybreak and continued most of the day. Then the high winds came for two days with bitter cold temps. Remember? At least we weren't the only ones who needed to cancel plans that day. However, with each day that goes by, spring is getting closer. We'll celebrate our January birthdays at our February luncheon, hopefully.

February COA Luncheon

So, on the very first day of February, we'll gather at the church for our first luncheon of 2018. After our potluck lunch, Fran Ryan will be entertaining us with one of her interesting wildlife programs. Fran says: "This presentation, on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, will take us on an exciting journey to one of the most breathtaking eco-regions in North America. Located in northeast



USFWS Photo

Alaska, this vast and spectacular refuge boasts 19.8 million acres of wild, healthy, unspoiled land. Famous for its wildlife, the refuge is inhabited by 45 species of land and marine mammals and 180 species of birds. This land also encompasses the homelands of the Inupiat and Gwich'in peoples. Participants will be introduced to the famous Porcupine caribou herd, and a host of other intriguing arctic animals such as musk ox, Dall sheep, wolves, arctic fox and polar bears. We also can look at some of the teachings and culture of the Gwich'in people and why they call this region "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins".

Because we weren't able to meet in January, there will be lots of birthday cards to sign because birthdays just keep coming no matter what the weather is! There will also be a nurse present to take blood pressures. We'll still be collecting non-perishable food items to be delivered to the Easthampton Food Pantry, too. The Easthampton COA Newsletter often mentions that they are very appreciative of donations received from Westhampton.

Board and Card Games

February is another good month to spend more time inside and perhaps join others for board or card games. They'll be taking place each Tuesday at 1:30pm at Westhampton Woods, and Scrabble games will be taking place at the library on Thursday, Feb. 1st, and again on the 15th at 5:30. Also, Scrabble will be played at the library at 1:30 on Tuesday, Feb. 6th, and Tuesday, Feb. 20th. If you're interested, join the groups anytime. They would be happy to see you.

Afternoon Movie

What a great way to spend a chilly February afternoon—at the movies! There will be one at **1:15pm on Thursday, Feb. 8th at the library.** You can call ahead to see what will be shown or even suggest one that you'd like to see.

Coffee and Social Time

Another good winter activity is to join the group that meets every Wednesday at 10am at the library for hot beverages and conversation. A bonus might be finding a book or magazine to check out for reading at home.

Computer Classes

This group meets with Bob Miller from 10am until noon on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month. In February, that will be on the 12th and 26th. Any senior is welcome to attend the classes or just drop in if you are having a problem with your computer. Bob is excellent at solving computer problems and has loads of tips to make your life easier working with your computer. If there's something specific that you'd like to learn, let him know, and he might make it a lesson for everyone. No matter what your level of computer knowledge, you're invited to attend. If you have a laptop, bring it along.

Below: Bob Miller helping Lilly Baxter at a December computer class.



December Caroling

On Sunday, Dec. 17th, two groups of townspeople spent the afternoon traveling around Westhampton to residents who are 80 and older. They sang a few carols at each stop and presented them with a holiday basket filled with fruit and other goodies put together by our local church. For most of the carolers, this is a favorite annual event to take part in—to see the joy brought to seniors during the holidays. *Photos by Norm Cotnoir*



Above: Sam Jenkins presents Peg Kelley with fruit basket during caroling in December.

Below: Sam Jenkins presents fruit and cookie basket to Betty Douville.



Below: Charlie Florek receives basket from carolers



COA Breakfast

In February, our monthly breakfast will be on Friday, the 16th, from 8:00 until 9:30. Come early and visit with neighbors and friends or just stop in when it's convenient for you. There will be homemade coffee cake or quick breads along with coffee, tea, cocoa and milk. Hot instant oatmeal in a number of flavors is also available.

Library News from Lynn

February 1st from 6-8pm

Reception for Laura Bundeson, the Community Room artist.

February 28th at 3pm:

Computer Class--Tech Topics--The Internet. These classes are geared towards PC computers. All are welcome, call us if you have questions.

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 (including at least 3 wheelchairs). In addition to walkers, there are shower stools, crutches, canes and other equipment to use in the bathroom. There are also 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.





TRIAD COUNCIL

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

AGING-IN-PLACE

When the 50+ year old population is surveyed, the majority continues to state a preference for staying at home as long as possible. Presently 1 in 3 Americans is age 50 or over. By 2030, 1 out of every 5 people in the USA will be 65 or older. To accomplish this goal, our age-defying group must learn to begin to design home environments with an eye towards remodeling projects that are attractive and barrier-free regardless of one's age or abilities.

Some common sense safety projects we can do ourselves or at little cost:

HOME FIT 'TO DO' LIST: Room-by-Room

- Install halogen light sensor night lights in bathroom and hallway plugs
- Replace traditional light switches with illuminated rocker-style light switches
- Install photosensitive porch/ entryway lighting; motion sensors on outdoor floodlights
- Install peep holes on exterior doors; install lever-style door handles (they're easier than knobs)
- Install swing-away hinges on all doors to add two inches of width for easier access
- Use a rubber-suction bathmat in tub/ shower; install hand-held adjustable shower head
- Install non-slip mats under rugs to make secure; mount railings on all stairwells
- Replace kitchen/ bath cabinet knobs with easier to grip D-shaped handles
- Create a kitchen work surface you can sit at by removing cabinetry beneath a counter
- Apply no-slip paint to walking surfaces inside and out to prevent falls
- Create a Fire Emergency Exit Plan for getting yourself and others out of your home

SPRING HOME PROJECTS? START PLANNING!

If you will need professional help for your project, it's important to be organized. Before you hire someone, you need to do your homework and not be rushed. Reliable and trustworthy contractors plan projects in advance. Here are some recommended steps to follow:

1. Review your budget and your preferred time frame for the completed job.
2. List the things you want done. Write out the specific changes you want a contractor to do.
3. "Aging-in-Place": think about updates and future unique needs of folks 50+ to continue living independently at home longer. Visit www.aarp.org/caps for ideas; click on "Home Fit Lists"
4. Get two contractor recommendations from people you know. What problems did they have?
5. Verify MA Contractor's license, liability, and workman's comp insurance.
6. Compare contractors and their experience in the project you want done. If needed, will they be responsible for hiring sub-contracting work with a plumber/ electrician?
7. Put everything in writing. A clear and detailed price and contract is essential, making sure that everything you agreed to is in writing. Get a copy of Contract and anything signed.
8. Verify with building inspector if a permit is required so inspections can occur.
9. Don't pay final bill until all work is completed and inspected. Get written proof sub-contractors and suppliers have been paid.

***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!



Regional News

Outreach in the Hilltowns: Progress to date

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

The Northern Hilltowns Consortium of COAs Service Incentive Grant supports COAs as they expand senior outreach in the hilltowns. We will be reporting outreach progress and the state of outreach in each town. This month we report on Plainfield.

The Plainfield Council on Aging and the town-based Plainfield Cares organization are serving roughly 250 town seniors. The Plainfield Council on Aging has added three board members including two from Plainfield Cares. Plainfield Cares is a volunteer organization created in 2016 and continues into a third year of support for residents. Plainfield COA nutrition outreach continues with Plainfield's COA luncheon twice a month – the only northern hilltown offering meals and social contacts twice a month.

Plainfield Cares offers short-term/transitional assistance for people returning to town after illness, injury or surgery. Care includes coordinating meals, helping with basic tasks, arranging company, doing pet care, and meeting other time-limited needs. Volunteers also are available to take residents to medical appointments, treatment, and meet other needs for rides. Additionally, the organization supports library use like rides to the library, book return or reading pickup. Outreach includes volunteers calling every senior to talk or meet and arrange delivery of information seniors need for safely ageing-in-place in Plainfield. Several residents have enjoyed conversations with callers and gotten detailed Plainfield-specific information and resource packets. There are enough information packets for seniors of any age.

Packets also are available for viewing at the library.

The COA urges residents to request an information packet, attend lunch, or talk with a volunteer by phone or at a convenient home visit. Even if you don't need assistance yourself, you can become an informed neighbor or friend able to share information or offer suggestions to people you quietly watch out for or already are helping.

FY18 Housing Rehab Program

Hilltown CDC will be submitting a grant application for FY18 to continue the Housing Rehab Program for the towns of Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Peru, Plainfield, and Worthington. If you have used the Housing Rehab Program in the past or would like to use it in the future, we'd like to hear from you.

We welcome your ideas, suggestions, or input about the design of the program and how we could improve the overall effectiveness of our services. Please call or email your comments no later than February 9, 2018. We look forward to your input. If you're interested in applying for the Housing Rehab Program, please be sure to request an application when calling or emailing.

Contact Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org for more information or an application to the program.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.

Surely I don't really need to check...

Here is one more credit report note, then I promise I'll change topics. For a while.

I've had a couple people ask if they really need to check their credit report if they don't use a credit card or they aren't going to make a big purchase. Short answer – yup.

Long answers – A credit report may contain items other than credit cards such as some debit or gas cards, mortgages, car loans, medical accounts, telephone plans, public records, and who is accessing your report. Keeping up with your credit reports can help you avoid identity theft, assure a family member hasn't messed you up, fix errors, and learn how to improve your credit score. With a better score, you may be able to get or negotiate lower rates (insurance, loans, rentals) or get a higher credit limit to help fund a small business.

Here's a shocker: if a thief gets ahold of your identity and charges his family's phone plan to it, or her medical bills, it won't be him or her who has to straighten out the mess. The mess can be straightened out, but the process is not something you will enjoy doing.

Another shocker – long ago, when I was learning how to be an adult, there was no need to know about credit reports and scores! Life is different now. As always, if what I write can help you help someone else, feel free to use these notes.

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

Become a VITA Volunteer!

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program

The Hilltown CDC is partnering with the Berkshire County United Way to bring VITA to the Hilltowns of Western Massachusetts, and is seeking volunteers to help low-to-moderate income individuals in preparing tax returns.

VITA offers FREE basic tax return preparation by IRS-certified individuals, with electronic filing to qualified households that make \$54,000 or less. By volunteering for just a few hours a week from early February to mid April, you could help to provide THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS in benefits for working, income-eligible individuals and families in Western Massachusetts. The VITA Program offers **free tax help** to income eligible individuals to build assets and gain access to financial resources that will enrich their lives.

No experience necessary – All volunteers will receive training and materials appropriate for their position. Specific training dates will take place beginning in January of 2018. **No risk**- Volunteers are

covered under the Volunteer Protection Act and are not accountable for tax returns filed to the IRS.

Volunteer Positions available:

• Greeters

As a Greeter, you will create a welcoming atmosphere at VITA sites while also helping to check in families and individuals accessing VITA services. While tax training is not required for greeters, a positive attitude is critical to being effective in this important role.

• Tax Preparers

Are you good with numbers, computers, and forms? Tax preparers work with filers to prepare their federal and state income tax returns. Volunteers receive free, in-depth training and must pass an IRS certification test.

Helping with the VITA program can be rewarding while serving a vital role in our community. To find out more, please leave a message for Program Coordinator Assistant, Lisa Westervelt, at the Hilltown CDC at 413-296-4536, extension 100, or email at LisaW@hilltownCDC.org

Need help with your housing repairs?

Hilltown CDC received funding for the FY17 Housing Rehab Program, and we're currently applying for the FY18 Housing Rehab Grant. We're accepting applications from homeowners who live in **Chesterfield, Cumington, Goshen, Plainfield, Peru, and Worthington** who need help with their housing repairs. Here's a sample of some the work that can be performed under the Housing Rehab Program:

HOUSEHOLD INCOME GUIDELINES/ LIMITS:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Gross Annual Income</u>
1	\$44,800
2	\$51,200
3	\$57,600
4	\$64,000
5	\$69,150
6	\$74,250
7	\$79,400
8	\$86,750

Possible Repairs:

Siding	Roofs and Chimneys
Windows, Doors, and Siding	Floor Joists, Flooring
Insulation, Walls, Ceilings	Foundation Work
Septic Systems and Sewer Tie-in's	
Handicap Accessibility Work	
Plumbing and Electrical	
Wells, Pumps, and Hot Water Tanks	
Lead Paint Removal	
Asbestos Removal	

These are **NO interest/NO payment loans** which may be entirely forgiven, and all repair work is completed by a licensed contractor of your choice. Please don't delay, funding is available and you may be surprised to find out you qualify! Contact Paula Bilodeau, Program Manager, at (413) 296-4536, ext. 123 or email paulab@hilltowncdc.org for more information and an application.

Funding is provided by the US Dept. of HUD/DHCD and MA CDBG Programs.



On the Go!

The Northampton Senior Center has arranged the following outings, and you are welcome to join!



Please make your reservations early as these trips fill up fast! **Call Francine Frenier at the Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228.**

April 20- Friday: Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, a unique museum filled with 10 rooms of Polish history, emigration and culture. Located in Chicopee. Enjoy a German-fare lunch on your own at the Munich House prior to the museum stop. Sign up early, seats are limited. Cost is \$36.

April 26- Thursday: Sister Act, a musical comedy, will be performed at Westchester Theater in Elmsford, NY. A full luncheon is included. Cost is \$125. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by March 15.

May 8- Tuesday: Maggiano's Cooking Demo & Lunch, and JFK Library Centennial Celebration. Learn tricks of the trade and enjoy a 3 course family-style luncheon. Then visit the JFK Library for its 100th celebration exhibit. Cost is \$114. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by March 27.

May 25-June 4 : Mt. Rushmore and the Black Hills of South Dakota, 11 days, via bus, \$950 with double occupancy. Roommates available. Fourteen attractions and sites galore. Pay in installments or pay in full by Feb. 1 and receive a \$25 discount. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

June 21-Thursday: The Gilded Age of the Berkshires. Tour Ventfort Hall and The Mount. Buffet lunch on terrace at The Mount. Cost is \$112. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by May 7.

June 26-28: Three Day Tour to Lancaster, PA. Two shows, *Jesus* at Sight & Sound Theater and *The Wizard of Oz* at Dutch Apple Dinner Theater and more. \$434 with double occupancy. Pay in installments or pay in full by April 5th and receive a \$25 discount. \$50 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

July 10 - Tuesday: Tour of Mark Twain Home and Wickham Gardens. Lunch at Promenade Shops on your own. Cost is \$74. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 1.

July 24 - Tuesday: Best of Boston. Duck Boat Tour, lunch on your own at Quincy Market and

New England Aquarium. Cost is \$109. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by June 12.

August 7 -Tuesday: Tour of Fenway Park and Lunch at Cheers. Enjoy some free time in Boston. Cost is \$123. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by July 1.

Sept. 7-11: Washington D.C., 5 days, via bus, \$540 with double occupancy. Full day at the Smithsonian. Pay in installments or pay in full by June 1 and receive a \$25 discount. \$100 Deposit. Trip insurance available.

Dec. 10- Monday: White Christmas Big Band show and luncheon at Aqua Turf, Plantsville, CT. Rob Zappulla and his 13-piece Big Band will perform holiday favorites. Cost is \$102. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by October 30.

Dec. 17- Monday: The nostalgic holiday favorite, A Christmas Carol is performed at The Bushnell. A pre-show luncheon at Aqua Turf, Plantsville, CT. is included. The all-inclusive price is \$106. There is a \$10 discount if paid in full by October 30.

Coming to the Bushnell Hartford, Ct.
HAMILTON--date to be determined.
(probably late 2018 early 2019)

Spa Days at Smith Vocational

Come enjoy some pampering! Smith Voc seniors from the Cosmetology program are offering the following:

- Shampoo, cut & style \$5.00
- Manicure \$4.00
- Pedicure \$8.00
- Basic Facial \$8.00



Spa Days will be on the following Fridays: **Feb. 9, Mar. 16, Apr. 13 and May 18**, in Room 124 of Building A at the school. To enable the students to prepare for the specific services, **please call 413-296-4007 to make an appointment.** Each appointment takes about an hour and are scheduled for 9 am and 10 am. Following the Spa Day, enjoy lunch at the Oliver Smith Restaurant!

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.

Westhampton Council on Aging
3 South Road
Westhampton, MA 01027

PRSRT STD
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Greenfield MA

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

Out and About in February

Thurs. Feb 15th at 2pm
Snow date Thurs. Feb 22nd at 2pm
Need a Ramp?

Easthampton Council on Aging
19 Union St. Easthampton



Do you need a ramp to get in and out of your home? Do you know someone who does? For many, the expense and effort of hiring a contractor are daunting. Stavros's Home Sweet Home program is designed to help seniors and people with limited mobility have ramps installed. Home Sweet Home program staff assess needs, provide help with financing, and oversee installation. Come to the Easthampton Council on Aging to hear a presentation by Home Sweet Home program director Lois Brown, who will talk about the best way to contact her program, financing options, and more, with time for questions afterwards. **RSVP: 413-527-6151.**

Sun. Feb 18th at 2pm
Contemplating Common Creatures
by Fran Ryan
Chesterfield Comm. Center, 400 Main Rd.
Chesterfield, MA

In this Horizon Production presentation, environmental educator, Fran Ryan, will reveal the secret lives of the Eastern chipmunk, the Eastern gray squirrel and the meadow vole. We will discuss their characteristics, behaviors, lifecycles and shed some light on these creatures with whom we share our world.

While many of us know a little something about those "charismatic species," like bears, big cats, wolves and whales - the big stars of the wild kingdom- these little guys just don't get a lot of press. Their stories, however, are just as fascinating.



Come and get a peek into the lives of these interesting furry neighbors and see what makes them tick, and how best to live happily along side them.

Funded in part by a multigenerational grant awarded by Highland Valley Elder Services to the Chesterfield COA, which coordinates these programs in partnership with: the Westhampton COA, Chesterfield Public Library, CFCEs of Westhampton and Chesterfield, Davenport Childcare, and New Hingham PTO.

