

Worthington Council on Aging

March 2020 Newsletter



Worthington Council on Aging
2 Packard Common
Worthington, MA 01098

Shelley Modestow Rice, COA Coordinator
Phone: 413-238-5532
coa@worthington-ma.us

Dates to Remember:

Monday, March 9th, Noon

COA Potluck Luncheon at the Town Hall

Bring your favorite dish!

*Check weather reports for cancellations. If Russell H. Conwell School is cancelled, the COA Potluck will be cancelled.

Mondays & Fridays, 10:30-11:30am

Healthy Bones and Balance at the Maples

Mondays, 3-5pm

Knitting Group at the COA Office

No meeting on the 2nd Monday of the month due to the COA Potluck.



Sundays, 9 am, Mondays, 4:30 pm

Wednesdays, 4 pm (Gentle) and 5:30 pm

Fridays, 8:30 am (Gentle)

Yoga for You at the Town Hall

Eileen Daneri, Instructor (238-4461)

Interesting tools for evaluating your health

Everyone seems to know that numbers such as your weight and BMI (body mass index) can be predictors of developing certain diseases and life expectancy. But, a growing body of research is finding other measures not commonly thought of, may also be useful tools for evaluating your health and risk of disease.

The first measure is to look at how fast you walk or stroll. In a June 2019 study published in the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, researchers found that brisk walkers enjoy longer life expectancies regardless of their BMI. Walking functionally measures balance, coordination, lower limb and core strength as well as cardiovascular health. You need to be in good physical shape to keep up a swift pace.

Another measurement of your health can be evalu-

ated by how many push-ups you can do. Push-ups require strength and endurance—upper body, core strength and overall cardiovascular health. A longitudinal cohort study of 1,100 adult men found that those who could perform more than 40 push-ups had a significant lower risk of developing heart disease than those who could only complete less than ten push-ups. This was published in the February 2019 issue of *JAMA Network Open*.

The next measurement may seem unusual. Your grip strength can identify muscle and cardiovascular weaknesses. How tight you can grip something relates to both your upper body strength as well as your heart's ability to handle pumping against a higher pressure (because your blood pressure increases with the act of gripping).

A study of a half million middle-aged people found that weaker grip strength was strongly linked with the occurrence of negative outcomes such as lung cancer and disease, according to research published in *May 2018, issue of BMJ*. Surprisingly, grip strength was an even better predictor of death than blood pressure or overall physical activity. Invest in a pair of hand-grip squeezers. Do 10 squeezes in the morning and 10 more in the afternoon.

And lastly, the number most people dread, your waist circumference. Excessive belly fat is associated with health conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, high triglycerides, high blood pressure and coronary artery disease according to the Mayo Clinic. An ideal waist circumference is less than 35 inches for women and less than 40 inches for men.



Look at your numbers—don't wait, you can start to improve them today.

***"May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until
we meet again, may God hold you in the
palm of His hand."***

Author unknown

Social Security Phone Scam with a Twist

The Inspector General is warning seniors that **scammers are not only calling and pretending to be government employees** threatening legal action and demanding money or gift cards! They are *now sending fake documents by email* to convince you to do what they ask...some documents *even look like official Social Security letter-head!*

Social Security does not send official reports by email; Social Security will never threaten you with arrest or other legal action over a fine or fee; **Social Security will never** ask for payment by gift card, cash or wire transfer.

The Social Security Administration will send you a letter by MAIL if there is an issue with your Social Security account.

If you get such a call,
**hang up or call the police, or
 Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-243-4636.**



Do You Have Medicare and Need to Change Plans?

Did you change your Medicare or Medicare Advantage plan last fall? Were your prescription costs much higher than expected? Are your bills much higher than anticipated? Don't be trapped into paying more than you should!

Please know that Medicare has acknowledged that some people may have "made the wrong plan choice because of inaccurate information from the new Plan Finder website."

They advise you to call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) and explain your situation. The Call Center representatives can help you throughout the year with options for making changes.

If you would like to research your options before making that call, you can talk with a SHINE counselor by calling 1-800-243-4636 or your town's senior center.

ALZHEIMER'S COMMUNICATION

1. Never ARGUE, instead AGREE
2. Never REASON, instead DIVERT
3. Never SHAME, instead DISTRACT
4. Never LECTURE, instead REASSURE
5. Never say "REMEMBER," instead REMINISCE
6. Never say "I TOLD YOU," instead REPEAT/REGROUP
7. Never say "YOU CAN'T," instead do what they CAN
8. Never COMMAND/DEMAND, instead ASK/MODEL
9. Never CONDESCEND, instead ENCOURAGE
10. Never FORCE, instead REINFORCE



Leezo's Care Connection
SUMMON YOUR STRENGTH

Source: Hospice Care of the Southwest

The Worthington Council on Aging counts on YOUR support to help build important programming for local seniors!

I would like to contribute to the Worthington Council on Aging. My contribution of \$_____ is attached.

Please write your check to The Town of Worthington and send to Worthington COA, PO Box 7, Worthington, MA 01098.

Name _____

Address _____

Thank You for Helping to Support Your Neighbors!

Worthington Council on Aging

Seniors Aware of Fire Education

This month we have a home fire safety check list. Please use it. Circle the Y (yes) or N (no).

Senior 
SAFE

- Y N Do you have working smoke alarms on every level of your house?
- Y N Do you stay in the kitchen while heating food?
- Y N Are space heaters placed 3 feet or more from things that can burn?
- Y N Are electrical wires in good condition (not damaged or cracked)?
- Y N Do you know two ways out of every room in your home?
- Y N Do you know what to do if your smoke alarm or CO detector sounds?

If you checked NO to any of these questions, you are at a greater risk for being injured in a home fire. Do what you need to do to be able to say YES to all the questions. Senior S.A.F.E. will help you along the way.

Have a S.A.F.E March!

--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.

Crabby Road

Crabby Road



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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. Include your address so I will know which mailing list to take you off of. Thanks!

Social Security – Something else to check!

Along with death and taxes, we find the Social Security Administration (SSA) in our line of sight. Our interest is in making sure our earnings records are correct. The SSA keeps track of our earnings and calculates our benefits from those records, so if there is an error, we could lose money. I assume it would never be an error the other way...

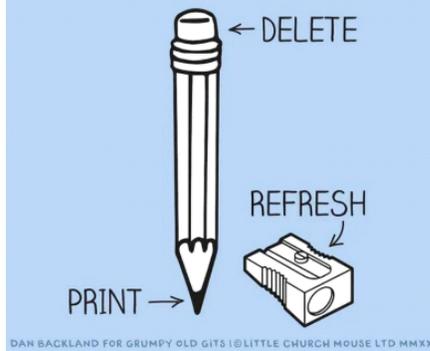
The SSA sends earnings statements every five years until a person turns 60, then they are sent every year until retirement. When you look at the statement, the first thing is to verify that this is YOUR record and your social security number. The second thing is to check their figures against your pay stubs or income tax forms.

Dealing with Social Security online is quite beneficial – the main page is **www.ssa.gov**. If you don't have a computer, it might be worth your time to have someone help you get an online account; you can go to the library to access it.

And I know you know this – a phone call saying your social security card has been compromised, or that you need to send it in to be renewed, or that you need to send money to reinstate your account - is poppycock. This is one of the biggest frauds going these days. In fact, says the Federal Trade Commission – "A Social Security scam was the top government fraud scam and phone calls were the number one way people reported being contacted by scammers. While most people said they hung up on those calls, those who lost money reported a median loss of \$1,000 in 2019."

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

WHEN I WAS A KID, THIS WAS MY COMPUTER:



Cancer Connection Spring / Summer Guide 2020

If you are, or know someone, in treatment for cancer or are a cancer survivor, call Cancer Connection at 413-586-1642 to ask for their current Guide, or check out their website at www.cancer-connection.org. You may be surprised at the many free activities and classes available to you. For example: Hands in Clay, Creating Collage, Spirit of the Written Work, Improv, as well as support groups, integrative therapies, and several kinds of exercise and physical activity.

Good News!

In the late 1990's, **MassHealth** changed income and assets regulations for residents 65 or older who are significantly frail. This is called the **Frail Elder Waiver**. If you are "frail" enough to need significant home care support in order to avoid a nursing home placement, MassHealth allows you to have up to \$2,313/ month in income. (This amount increases each year according to the COLA) The asset limit of \$2,000 remains the same, but if the applicant is married, "excess assets" can be transferred to the healthy spouse, and even better, MassHealth will not count the healthy spouse's income! The good news here is that when you are frail enough to require nursing home care, MassHealth makes it easier to qualify and get the care you need to stay home. The objective is to provide an alternative to nursing home placement.

Better yet, there are two MassHealth programs that will pay family caregivers for the help they provide. Anyone you are not married to can be paid for help bathing, dressing, help with meals and medication management, help getting to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and laundry. These two programs are called Adult Family Care and the Personal Care Attendant program. Adult Family Care pays a monthly tax free stipend, the Personal Care Attendant program pays an hourly wage.



It should be mentioned that MassHealth also pays for Rx, for Adult Day Health programs, and all co-pays and deductibles for medical goods and services, acting as a secondary insurance for Medicare. Between the two, once you qualify for MassHealth, you have 100% coverage.

For more information about MassHealth regulations, MassHealth Adult Family Care and Personal Care Attendant programs, or help with the MassHealth application, you can ask at your senior center how to get in touch with a SHINE counselor.

Sleep Study

The UMass College of Nursing is doing a sleep study involving caregivers of individuals with mild cognitive impairment or early Alzheimer's Disease. Members of the pair must live together and not have a diagnosed sleep disorder.



Sleep problems are very common in people with mild cognitive impairment. Because they are often dependent on their caregivers, this interferes with the sleep of their caregivers as well.

Their study question is: can objective sleep data help guide self-management strategies for better sleep for both?

For more information, contact Cynthia Jacelon: (413) 545-9576 or jacelon@umass.edu.

Adapting Home to Age in Place

Plan to stay in your own home as you grow older? Here are some of the possible remedies that can make life easier and safer:

Difficulty: Balance and Coordination

- Bath seat in the tub or shower
- Bathtub with transfer bench
- Walk-in shower with pull-down seat
- Grab bars near the bath and toilet
- Handrails extending beyond the top and bottom of the stairs
- Stairway handrails on both sides

Difficulty: Hearing Impairment

- Dishwasher is ultra-quiet to reduce background noise.
- Increased volume on phones.
- Smoke detectors have strobe lights.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Domestic Violence Advocate, Hilltown Safety at Home (HS@H) 413 387-3120
 If you need help in an emergency, call 911 or the Safe Passage hotline 888 345-5282
Elder Abuse Hotline 800 922-2275
First Call for Help Information and Referral Resources 800 339-7779
Fuel Assistance Application and Recertification 800 370-0940
Hilltown Elder Network – H E N (sponsored by Hilltown CDC) 413 296-4536 x120
Veterans' Service Officer Tom Geryk 413 587-1299
 (Westhampton) Joe Henning 413 207-3541
 (Plainfield) Brian Brooks 413 772-1571
DO NOT CALL Registry 888 382-1222

Food Services

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Brown Bag Program 800 247-9632 or 413 268-8407
Food Stamps - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 413 552-5400 or 413 296-4007
 Call Chesterfield COA for assistance 413 296-4007
Hilltown Food Pantry - Goshen Town Office Bldg- Diane Meehan, Director 413 268-7578 Wed 1-3; 3rd Wed 1-6
Meal Site Williamsburg Senior Center 413 268-8407
Meals on Wheels Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) 413 586-2000 or 800 322-0551
Northampton Survival Center, 265 Prospect St. Northampton 413 586-6564
Salvation Army Emergency Food, Fuel or Medication Vouchers 413 586-5336/6564

Health Services

Highland Valley Elder Services Intake referral for homecare, etc. 413 586-2000
Hilltown Community Health Center- Medical & Dental 413 238-5511, ext. 131
 HOPE Nurse, Mary Kane 413 238-5511, ext. 322
 Ellie Mathias, HealthWise Community Health Worker 413 238-5511, ext. 322
Podiatrist Dr. Michael Coby, call Williamsburg Senior Center 413 268-8407
 to schedule (Alternating months at the Senior Center)
Foot Care Piper Sagan, RN
 foot care in Cummington, call Ann Eisenhour 413 634-2243
 foot care in Goshen, call Liz Loven for appt. 413 268-7122
 foot care in Williamsburg or in-home visits 413 268-8407
 Deb Dean, foot care in Westhampton 413 667-5363
 Diane Roeder, foot care in Chesterfield 413 374-0457
SHINE, Medicare & Drug Coverage Part D & Prescription Advantage
 Wayne Glaser 413 268-8407
 Lorraine York-Edberg 413 773-5555, ext. 2275
 Deborah Hollingworth (Chesterfield) 413 296-4007 or 413 268-8317
Mass Health and New Health Coverage
 Buliah Mae Thomas at Hilltown Comm. Health Center 413 667-2203

Transportation Services

Cummington Neighbor to Neighbor Drivers 413 634-2262
Westhampton transportation Appts or groc. shopping, Louise Jasionkowski 413 527-5134
Williamsburg Medical & Carpool Rides (call to schedule) 413 268-8407
PVTA Dial-A-Ride (tickets sold at Williamsburg Senior Center) 866 277-7741
Hilltown Easy Ride Van & Driver Pool Ed Pelletier 413 296-4232

Local Councils on Aging

Chesterfield COA, Janice Gibeau 413 296-4007
Cummington COA, Chrisoula Roumeliotis 413 634-2262
Goshen COA, Evelyn Culver 413 268-3316
Plainfield COA, Susan Metcalfe LaRock 413 743-5345
Westhampton COA, Amy Landau 413 203-9808
Williamsburg Senior Center, Sherry Loomis 413 268-8410
Worthington COA, Shelley Modestow 413 238-5532

Worthington Council on Aging
Attn: Shelley Rice
PO Box 7
Worthington, MA 01098

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

Worthington COA

Shelley Rice, Coordinator
coa@worthington-ma.us

Camille Smith, Chair

Laurie McAnulty

Helen Pelletier

Pat Kennedy

Susan VanBuren

LeAnn Mason

Laurie Pennell

Phyllis Dassatti, Secretary

Newsletter Designer:
Kristen Estelle
regionalcoanews@gmail.com

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Out and About in March

Saturday, March 7th at 5pm

Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

Chesterfield Congregational Church

Cost is \$14.00 for adults; children 12 and younger \$7.00; children under 3 no cost. Everything is home-made and served family style. Take out available. Contact Nancy Hewes with reservations 296-4230.

Sunday, March 8th, 8:30am-10 am

Irish Celtic/Gaelic Music & Breakfast

Chesterfield Church

Irish Celtic/Gaelic music by The Rolling Scones (Banjo, Guitar, fiddle, stand up bass). Full breakfast- Irish crime French toast, pancakes (pure maple syrup), eggs, home fries and a variety of homemade scones. Donations welcomed.

Wednesday, March 11, 12:15 pm

A lively participatory program by Davis Bates!

Williamsburg Senior Center, 141 Main St. Haydenville

Williamsburg Senior Center invites you to "A Celtic Celebration, Stories and Songs of the Season" in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Sponsored by the Williamsburg Cultural Council. All are welcome--Join us!

Sunday March 15th at 8am and returning at 6pm

Foxwoods Casino Bus Trip

The bus will be leaving the Goshen town parking lot at 8am. This bus trip is a fundraiser for the Chesterfield veteran's park committee and Friends helping Friends. Good break from the winter and not far to drive. To sign up or if you have any questions, call Kris Zdaniewicz: 413-329-8919.



Save the Date!

Sat. April 25th 9am-3pm

Spring/ Summer Clothing Exchange

Goshen Congregational Church, 45 Main St., Goshen

Get a new spring wardrobe for your family without spending a cent! Drop off your washed, gently-used men's, women's and children's spring/summer clothing and accessories at the church on Weds. April 22nd from 5-8pm and Fri. April 24th from 9am-3pm, then come back to shop on Sat. the 25th from 9am-3pm! All are invited to participate whether you donate clothes or not. Thank you everyone for your contributions!