

Worthington Corners

December 2024 COA Newsletter



Worthington Council on Aging
2 Packard Common
Worthington, MA 01098

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Welcome December!

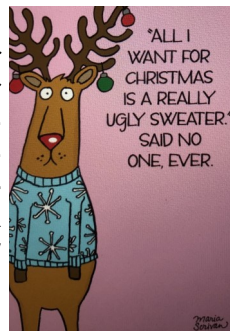
"December's wintery breath is already clouding the pond, frosting the pane, obscuring summer's memory...." ~John Geddes

Holiday Luncheon

Tuesday, December 10th at 11:30am
(please note the change in day of the week)

Comfort Kitchen in Huntington

In keeping with the holiday spirit, you are encouraged to wear or bring an ugly Christmas sweater (we all have one!) Come and enjoy the festive setting and a fabulous meal. Menu choices: chicken parmesan with pasta OR baked cod fillet with parsley bread crumbs and roasted lemon butter. Dessert will be hot apple crisp a la mode!



Reservations are necessary as there will be limited seating. **Please RSVP by December 2nd to 238-1999.** State your name, phone number, meal choice and name of other person ordering with meal choice. *Underwritten by the Rolland Fund.*

December 19th, 12pm-1pm
Grab N' Go Meals
Pick up at Town Hall

Meal choices for the free monthly meal (every third Thursday) will be Tuscan White Bean Soup, Fish Chowder, Roasted Root Vegetables, French Bread, Chilled Pineapple, dessert and milk. RSVP 238-1999 **by December 16** with name, address, phone number and the names of the additional people receiving the meal. Please make sure to come pick up your meal the day of. One time enrollment forms are available at the Town Hall and COA bulletin board. You may drop off the com-

pleted form in the Town Offices and COA drop box. You will need to RSVP, then you can fill out the form when you pick up the meal by reservation. Bringing your own bag would be helpful. A donation to the Highland Valley Elder Services would be appreciated.

Veterans Day Luncheon



Photo courtesy Ed Pelletier

The Worthington COA honored its veterans with a lovely potluck luncheon and a visit from veterans agent Dan Nye. They received hand drawn cards from the students at R.H. Conwell School.

Socks and More Socks

New socks for all ages are still being collected for the homeless. If you are attending the Holiday Luncheon, you may bring them. There is also a collection box in front of the COA office for your convenience or you may contact Phyllis at **238-5962** or **coa@worthington-ma.us** to arrange for pickup. Thanks to all who have already donated.

Tech Help- Good News

The COA office now has internet! There will be scheduled times at the office for tech help and accessing the internet. More information to follow. In the meantime, Eileen Daneri can make home vis-

its for tech help until a designated meeting time is set at the COA office. You may contact her at: **238-4461** or eadaneri@gmail.com

Annual Tree-Lighting Ceremony

The Worthington Parks and Recreation Committee invites everyone to join the fun at the Town Park for our annual Tree-Lighting Ceremony. It will take place on **Sunday, December 1st**, with a rain/snow date of December 8th. Highlights will be a visit from Santa, wonderful food and treats from Within Worthington available at no charge, singing of Christmas carols, and lighting of the tree to begin the holiday season! Come join together for a wonderful celebration.



*Naughty or nice?
Patty Kimura and
Phyllis Dassatti
with Santa*



"Cheers to a New Year and a chance to get it right."

- Oprah Winfrey

Calendar of Events

Chit Chat

Please note– there will be no Chit Chat until further notice.

Healthy Bones & Balance Class

Monday and Friday 10:00-11:00, Town Hall
Call Marcia Estelle at 238-5554 for more info.

Yoga Class

Sunday and Wednesday 9:30-10:30, Town Hall
"First timers": call Eileen Daneri at 238-4461 to check on any schedule changes.

Exercise Class

Monday 4:00-5:00 pm Aerobic Training
Thursday 4:00-5:00 pm Strength Training
At the Town Hall
*Cost: \$10 per class; \$12 per class for walk-in.
Call Judy at 238-4457 for more info.*

Who needs a gym when you can do holiday stretches reaching for a cookie jar?

All COA Events are Fragrance Free.

Transportation can be provided.

Contact Phyllis: 413-238-5962,

coa@worthington-ma.us

The Council on Aging wishes you peace and joy to you and your family this holiday season.



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!

Bad News, Good News

Do you want the Bad news first? Then we will end with the Good, being positive as we are.

The Bad – scams are on the rise in frequency, diversity and impact. Around 50% of people of all ages are likely to lose money to a scam, sometimes hundreds of dollars. The types of scams, e.g., grandparent, social media hack, QR codes, etc., make our exposure and danger so much more likely than before. As for impact, in addition to including how awful we feel about being scammed, the total monetary cost per year in the US might be 10 billion dollars or more. That's dollars with a B.

The Good – more agencies and organizations are paying attention and marshaling resources! I've compiled a list of sources for avoiding and reporting scams.

AARP. The Association of Retired Persons keeps up with types of scams and issues alerts along with other educational materials. There is a Watchdog Alerts newsletter. Go to their scam web page: www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/

BBB. Better Business Bureau prepares topical scam alerts, highlighting current and most active scams. Mind-boggling. To sign up for their newsletter, go to www.bbb.org/us/news/scams, then scroll to the bottom and click on "Sign up for scam alerts".

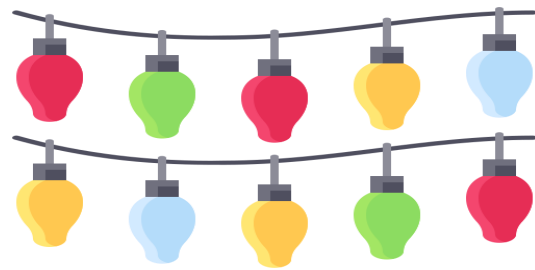
BBC. The British Broadcasting Corporation posts a page called Be Scam Safe with a really full set of scam videos and articles. Type into your browser "Be Scam Safe" to connect.

CFPB. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau at www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/fraud/ talks about understanding scams, knowing your rights, and how-to guides.

DA. The Northwestern District Attorney's office advocates for all residents, especially elders, focusing on education and prevention of consumer scams and elder exploitation. Go to www.northwesternda.org/prevention and click on Consumer Protection or call **413-586-9225**.

VA. The Veteran's Administration has a new service with information, reporting, and assistance on scams for veterans, service members, and their families. Visit www.VSAFE.gov, or call 1-833-388-7233.

Yours in safety,
Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com, 413-268-2228



Seniors Aware of Fire Education

The holiday season is upon us and most of these holiday observances involve electric lights and candles. Here are a few things you can do to keep your celebration bright and safe.

Senior 
SAFE

For indoor lights and decorations:

- Buy lights and electric decorations that are listed safe by an approved testing service.
- Check for and replace any lighting that has frayed wires, broken plugs, sockets or switches.
- Never overload outlets.
- Use no more than three (3) strings of lights on a single extension chord.
- Remember to turn off the tree lights and other electric decorations before going to bed.
- Consider using energy efficient LED lights that stay cool.
- Never use lit candles in the tree or near live or other flammable decorations.
- Keep lit candles at least a foot (12 inches) from flammable items.
- Never leave a lit candle unattended.

For outdoor lights and decorations:

- Only use electric decorations that are rated for outdoor use.
- Plug them into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Use electric connection protectors.
- Anchor outdoor lights and decorations with insulated holders or hooks.

Keep the holidays bright SAFElly!

--Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator
Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.

Tech. Help and Training for December



We have more people to help you with your tech needs and requests. Our long period of low staffing is at an end. With more hands on deck we are hoping our final three months will have much higher efficiency and shorter response times.

More Tech Support Available by appointment

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment: coaTechHelp@gmail.com, phone or text msg **413-296-5080**.

Being delivered now: Internet Hotspots

Need affordable internet access? Have you already requested affordable internet? We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access internet. They work like WIFI without cable or fiber service. Hotspots work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more about how these devices could benefit you, please contact us by phone or email. If you requested affordable internet and were not contacted in November, please reach out to us again. Calls to **413-296-5080** are now returned and email to coatechhelp@gmail.com is also a great way to reach us.

Devices for you: PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks and iPad and Android tablets

Ky Martus continues distributing devices. Please remind us if you requested one and are still waiting. We have more PC laptops, refurbished Chromebooks and iPad and Android tablets. If you need or are waiting for a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device, please contact us. Email coatechconnect@gmail.com, leave message at **413-296-5080**, or use online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Drop in Centers: All are Welcome at Any Location! (no appointment needed)

- Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd. Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00
Three Fridays, 11:30-1:30 (12/6, 12/13 & 12/27)
- Cummington Community House, 33 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 2nd Weds. 10-12 (12/11)
- Goshen Free Public Library, 42 Main St. Drop-in tech support, 3rd Thurs. 12-2 (12/19)

- Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library, 312 Main St. Drop-In tech support, 3rd Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm (12/19)
- Westhampton: to be scheduled. Please contact us for details, coatechhelp@gmail.com or call **413-296-5080** for day/time.
- Williamsburg
Meekins Library Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 12/10 from 10 to Noon
Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support
2nd Tuesday 12/10 from 10 to Noon
- Worthington: tech support at COA office.
Call COA for date & time: 413-238-5962.

Tech Training:

Must pre-register for training no later than one week before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level. To register, email coaTechTrainer@gmail.com, call or text **413-296-5080**, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org

Computer Classes:

Beginner's Windows Laptop Class will restart on Thursdays on December 12, 19 and January 9, 16 from 1:00 - 2:30.

Intermediate Windows Laptop Class starts, over six Wednesdays, 10:30-Noon. December 4, 11, 18 and Jan 8, 15, 22, 10:30-Noon.

Tech Workshops:

- 12/6, 10:30-11:30 Computer Maintenance
- 12/9, 1 - 2:30 Organizing, Storing, & Moving Digital Photos (ONLINE CLASS)
- 12/13, 10:30-11:30 Windows Accessibility
- 12/17, 1- 2:30 Android phones
- 1/10, 10:30 - 11:30 Misinformation
- 1/15, 12- 1:00 Self Learning
- 1/24, 10:30 -11:30 Google Suite
- 1/29, 10- 11:30 iPhones
- 1/29, 6 - 7:00 pm Learn & Watch: YouTube, Libby, Kanopy



On the Road Again...

2025 Trips



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **before** mailing any payments to determine availability: 413-296-4291, francine.frenier@gmail.com. Mailing address: 11 Stage Rd., Williamsburg, MA 01096.

*Day Trip late April TBD. **Encore Casino.*** Boston Harbor casino trip. Lunch on your own, options available on site.

*Day Trip May TBD. **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum & Maggiano's Little Italy.*** Enjoy a delicious family-style lunch at Maggiano's. Tour three floors of galleries at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on your own or with a guide. Price TBD.

*Day Trip June TBD. **Winnepesaukee Railroad.*** Enjoy a delicious turkey dinner, prepared by Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant, aboard the train while touring the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee. Price TBD.

*Multi Day Trip June 22-26. **Montreal & Ottawa. Passports required.*** Visit the Biodome, Notre Dame Basilica, Montreal's Underground City, Parliament Hill, Cruise on the St. Lawrence River. Price \$1,052. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by March 26, 2025. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above.

*Day Trip July TBD. **FDR Homestead & Library and Hudson River Cruise.*** Start your day with a scenic cruise on the Hudson River. Enjoy lunch at Mahoney's Irish Pub & Steakhouse (TBD.) Tour the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the first Presidential Library. Price TBD.

*Day Trip August 3. Triple A affiliates, **Boston Red Sox vs Philadelphia Phillies** at Polar Park, Worcester, MA. A pre-game tour of Polar Park and a ball-park-fare buffet for our group are included. Cost \$90.00. Make check payable to Francine Frenier and mail to address above.*

*Day Trip Sept. TBD. **The BIG E,*** an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage.

*Day Trip Sept 5-Oct 26 TBD. **A Chorus Line.*** 50th Anniversary Production on stage at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Lunch at The Gelston House. More details to come. Price TBD. Wed.Thurs.Sun

*Multi Day Trip October 12-18. **Biltmore Estate & Smoky Mountains, Asheville, NC.*** Seven days, six nights. Visit the Biltmore Estate, the St. Lawrence Basilica, historic Gatlinburg, TN & Asheville, NC. Guided tour of the Smoky Mountains

National Park. Price \$1,099. Discount of \$25 if paid in full by July 18, 2025. Make the check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to the address above. ***As of December 2024, Diamond Tours is expecting this trip to go, despite the hurricane damage. Please stay tuned.***

*Day Trip Nov-Dec. **A Holiday Event in Waltham, MA.*** Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza--100 performers, live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at The Chateau Restaurant. Price TBD. Sundays.

Good News for December

By Deborah Hollingworth

The Good News this month is a reminder that we have a resource called The Connector which can work for you if you have questions about benefits, resources, and services. When your circumstances change, and you could use some help, but don't know what's available or where to start, the Connector can help you "connect" with the resources you need.

This help is available to the seven hilltowns of Plainfield, Cummington, Worthington, Goshen, Chesterfield, Williamsburg and Westhampton through a grant from Highland Valley. We have helped people figure out housing options, determine if folks are eligible for benefits like fuel assistance, SNAP, Circuit Breaker property tax rebates, and if folks qualify for subsidies on their health insurance.

Often it's brainstorming on how to survive a change in medical conditions, or shrinking finances and increasing household overhead/bills. What to do when life throws us a curve ball, or when we might be worried about outliving our savings/investments.

The Connector can help you understand what's available when you're being discharged from a nursing home, or whether you might be eligible for MassHealth and whether MassHealth might pay family caregivers for the help they provide.

There's help out there, but unless you know the eligibility requirements... unless you know how the 'system' works... unless you know what's available... you can't get it, if you don't know about it.

The Connector is here to help you get those resources, over a phone call or a home visit to help with an application. Whatever works for your situation. It's a no cost resource, funded through Highland Valley.

To get help, call your COA and they will get you Connected!

Worthington Council on Aging
Attn: Phyllis Dassatti
PO Box 7
Worthington, MA 01098

Worthington COA

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The Goshen Council on Aging invites you to a three part discussion group based on the book *Let's Talk About Death Over Dinner* by Michael Hebb.

* **January 7, 2025, 4-5pm**

Introduction and receive a copy of the book.

* **February 18, 2025, 4-6:30pm**

Catered dinner and a prompted discussion facilitated by Stacey Mackowiak, End of Life Doula.

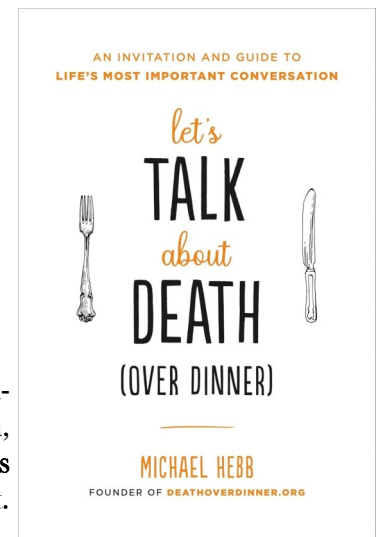
* **February 25, 2025, 4-5pm**

Follow up conversation (optional).

This important and engaging program is free and limited to 15 participants; older adults from all Hilltowns are welcome. Please contact Kerry Normandin, Goshen COA Director, by 1/3 to sign up: 413-268-9354 or coa@goshen-ma.us All three parts will take place in the John James Memorial Hall, 42 Main St. Goshen, MA. Funded by a grant from the MCOA.

"...encourages people to pull up a chair, break bread, and really talk about the one thing we all have in common."

"...transform your difficult conversations into an opportunity of celebration and meaning, changing not only the way we die, but also the way we live."



Massachusetts
Councils On Aging