

Chesterfield Council on Aging

April 2022 Newsletter



Chesterfield COA & Community Center
 400 Main Road, PO Box 7
 Chesterfield, MA 01012

Jan Gibeau, Director
 coa@townofchesterfieldma.com
 413-296-4007

April Calendar of Events

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
				1 Smooth Moves 9am Joan Griswold Exercise Class 10:15am
4 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am	5 Mah-Jongg 1pm	6 Coffee & Chat 9am Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm	7 COA Monthly Breakfast 9am	8 Smooth Moves 9am Joan Griswold Exercise Class 10:15am
11 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am <i>Sun. 4/10 2pm</i> Spring Fling w/ James Kitchen & Josh Wachtel	12 Mah-Jongg 1pm	13 Coffee & Chat 9am Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm	14 Brown Bag 10am Grab' N' Go Hot Lunch 11:30am Drawing & Watercolor Class 1pm	15 Smooth Moves 9am Joan Griswold Exercise Class 10:15am
18 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am	19 Mah-Jongg 1pm	20 Coffee & Chat 9am Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm	21 Computer Class 10am Drawing & Watercolor Class 1pm	22 Smooth Moves 9am Joan Griswold Exercise Class 10:15am
25 Advanced Tai Chi 9:30am COA Board Mtg 10am <i>Sun. 4/24 2pm</i> Jazz Quartet Dave Christopolis	26 Chair Yoga w/ Sarah Prince 10am Mah-Jongg 1pm	27 Coffee & Chat 9am Beginner T'ai Chi 1pm	28 Grab' N' Go Hot Lunch 11:30am Drawing & Watercolor Class 1pm	29 Smooth Moves 9am Joan Griswold Exercise Class 10:15am

Spring Moves Inside

The Chesterfield Community Center is Open!

Welcome!

The Chesterfield Board of Health officially removed mask restrictions on March 2nd. Once again, the COA is able to offer all of its programs and events onsite. Use of masks will be optional in order to support those who prefer to wear a mask, but opening up brings a breath of fresh air (pun intended) to any and all who have been tapped out by the extended isolation we have all endured.

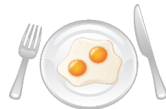
The Community Center COA office hours are 9-12 Monday-Thursday. Come use the library or pick up a puzzle. Stop in to have coffee and catch up with friends, old and new on Wednesdays from 9-11 am.

COA Monthly Breakfast Branches Out

This spring we're offering something new:
Breakfast for both men and women.

Give it a try!

Thursday, April 7th
9-11 am



*Like to cook or help out? Volunteers needed.
Call the COA: 296-4007*

Grab and Go Hot Meals Coming Soon

April 14 & 28 at 11:30am
Chesterfield Community Center

Drive by and Pick Up
or Come on In!



Every month on the 2nd and 4th Thursday
11:30 am

The word is out: these meals are great!
Make your reservations now: deadline April 7th

Contact Jan Gibeau at the Chesterfield COA:
413-296-4007
coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Suggested donation is \$3.00

Computer Class

Thursday, April 21

10-12

Community Center

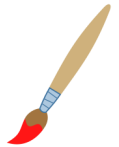
Sign Up Now!
Deadline April 11

Peg Whalen will be instructing us how to use a computer in a way that avoids "techy talk". She also understands the different ways a person learns and adapts her style accordingly. The COA has five computers available. Classes will be held in the large room upstairs to enable social distancing. Enrollment is limited; if you are interested, please contact her at pwhalen05@gmail.com or contact the COA and leave a message: 413-296-4007. The COA has purchased 5 desktop computers for use in this class.

Spring is Bustin' Out All Over

Drawing and Watercolor Class with Lena Garcia

Thursdays from 1-2pm
10 classes - April 14- June 16
Community Center



Let spring reawaken your creative side through the exploration of drawing and watercolor. Classes will focus on drawing skills, looking at the elements of art and progress to creating watercolor paintings. Experience not needed. Just come, create and have fun.

Lena is a new resident in Chesterfield who moved here from the Seattle area last summer with her husband and two elementary school-aged kids. She's previously taught classes at the community center, homeschool resource school and homeschool co-op and offered private lessons. Learn more at her website: www.lenagarcia.com Sign up by calling the COA at 296-4007 or emailing coa@townofchesterfieldma.com

Sponsored by the Chesterfield COA

*Partially funded by a grant from
Highland Valley Elder Services*

Staying Connected

Reaching out and staying in touch with each other has helped us cope with the long months of isolation. It's been hard to not visit with friends, have little respite from cooking at home and other ways of fully living in our community. Thankfully, we live in a small town where many people have known each other for years, even generations, so staying in touch has been ongoing. For some, the isolation has been lonely beyond the years of

COVID. The COA is forming a group of volunteers who can fill the gaps by reaching out to see if people would like "check-in" calls, someone they can call, or have a visitor come by now and then.

Would you like to be one of the neighbors making those connections? If yes, contact Jan Gibeau at the Chesterfield COA 296-4007, send an email to coa@townofchesterfieldma.com or drop a note to COA, Box 366, Chesterfield, MA 01012.

*APRIL MUSIC
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER*



SPRING FLING
JAMES KITCHEN
JOSH WACHTEL
APRIL 10
2PM



JAZZ QUARTET
DAVE CHRISTOPOLIS
APRIL 24
2PM

*Sponsored by COA with partial funding from
Highland Valley Elder Services*

**Chesterfield Public Library:
a Gold Mine in the Hills**

A small library can offer big gifts that go way beyond providing books to read; it opens a door to the CWMARS network so people in town can get books from over 100 libraries in the network as well as access to e-books, audio books, movies, TV shows and music through electronic resources like Libby and Hoopla. Within or outside of the walls of the building, Cindy Squier's work as our librarian has created programs that bring together all ages

in the community. Working in partnership with the library, the COA has enthusiastically supported and taken part in the many multigenerational events that are fun for kids, parents, grandparents, and other folks who love being educated and entertained at the same time. Multigenerational laughter has a special ring to it. Many other offerings, for kids especially, have included making valentines, Christmas ornaments, bats, ghosts, and pictures to color, seasonal treats and goodies. The library is looking forward to possibly having a pass to MASS MoCA and the Butterfly Conservatory in South Deerfield available to the public along with our standard Mass. Parks pass and the Clark Museum in Williamstown.

The teams supporting the life of the library are often unseen, but much needed. The Board of Trustees includes Amy Gavalis, Jennifer Peotter, and Linda Urban-Lyon. In addition to support from the town, state aid funds, donations, grants from the COA, the Cultural Council and fundraising by the Friends of the Library all add to the financial footing needed to spawn new ventures. Volunteers do the rest and without them vitality would wither. Want to help out? Call Cindy Squier at the library 413-296-4735.



Happy Birthday in April!



Richard Purrington, Nancy Huckins,
Richard Liimatainen, Janice Gibeau,
Claudia Barnas, Larry Cervelli,
Kester Warlow-Harry, Cheryl Nugent,
Daniel Benedisuk, Winston Bancroft,
Kenneth Sicard, Robert Palmer, Nancy Rich,
James Brisbois, Darlene Russo, Douglas Reed,
Merrill Wheeler, Carol Rhine, Joseph Desmarais,
Barbara LaRoche, James Montgomery,
Darlene McVeigh, Jean Marra, Robert Giusti,
George Still, Anne Wiktor,
Edwin Matusewicz, Peter Furnari, Ann Pickrell,
Thomas Layman, Thomas Janik, Michael LaRoche,
Diane Lamontagne, Lawrence Holmberg,
Theresa Scott, Craig Cristofori, James Liimatainen,
Patricia Newman, Eileen Theroux, Glenn Smith,
Kathleen Rhine, Deanne Ursia

Chesterfield Historical Commission Corner

The Days of the one-room Schoolhouse Remembered

When Anna B. Curtis came to Chesterfield in 1930 as a 19-year-old school teacher, her duties included stoking the woodstove and keeping the schoolhouse tidy, as well as teaching grades one through eight.

On Monday when Mrs. Curtis visited the Davenport Elementary School second through fifth grade students to share some of her memories of the one-room schoolhouse days, she pointed to several youngsters whose grandparents, aunts, uncles, and parents she once taught during her 50-year career.

There were once five schoolhouses in Chesterfield, Mrs. Curtis said, including the Center School, which stood between the First Congregational Church and the Grange Hall, and where Mrs. Curtis first began teaching, and schools on Ireland Street, South Street, Bofat Hill, and on Worthington Road in West Chesterfield. At times, Mrs. Curtis said, only four children attended a school but sometimes there were as many as 20 youngsters in a schoolhouse.

All of the students walked to school, the big boys carrying pails of water to be used at the schoolhouse. Everyone went home at lunch, including the teacher. Mrs. Curtis boarded with the Clark family in the home now owned by Willard and Anne Crompton on Main Road. In winter it was not unusual to catch sight of the teacher sledding home down the hill for a hot lunch.

While responsible for teaching all subjects to eighth grade levels, Mrs. Curtis recalls that there was actually more time for individual attention. "You know how nice it is for the teacher to sit right down next to you. Well, that's how we survived," Mrs. Curtis told the youngsters.

The older children in the seventh and eighth grade also helped out with the little ones, and brothers and sisters kept each other in line, Mrs. Curtis noted.

Heat was provided by a woodstove and on cold winter days, the children sat in a circle around the stove to recite their primers. Boots and mittens were also kept warm, near the stove, to be put back on when the children had to return to their desks for written lessons.

Every year near the end of March, a three-week recess called "mud vacation" was held when the town's dirt roads became impassable.

After teaching two years at the Center School, she was transferred to the South Street School. It was in 1933 that she married Forrest Curtis; young women were forced to give up their teaching careers when they married- so, while raising four daughters and a son, she served on the local school committee and substitute taught at the various one-room schoolhouses. In 1947 she returned to full-time teaching and in 1948 she became the first principal of the Davenport Elementary School, a consolidation of the five one-room schools. She taught grades six through eight then.

"After 25 years of teaching in Chesterfield," Mrs. Curtis said, "they finally let me go on to high school." She taught at Williamsburg High School and at Hampshire Regional High School before retiring in 1981. She said that every morning there was inspection at which students had to show that they had come to school prepared with a handkerchief.

When she first began teaching, her annual salary was \$750, "and I thought I was as rich as rich could be," she said. While school facilities have changed, she believes that children are basically the same. "They still want love and attention. You have to make each one feel important. There are just more opportunities for children to do something idiotic these days," she remarked.

Daily
Hampshire
Gazette
article by
Sandra
Doucett
3/14/1984

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Daily
Hampshire
Gazette*



The Chesterfield Council on Aging benefits from your support for our programs for Chesterfield seniors!

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

*(Please make out your check to "Town of Chesterfield" and write "COA programs" in the memo line;
mail to Janice Gibeau, Director, Chesterfield COA, PO Box 7, Chesterfield, MA 01012.)*

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Thank you for helping support Chesterfield seniors!

Senior SAFE

There is a common misconception that falling is an expected part of the experience of getting older. This is not true. Falls are preventable. Here are some things you can do or be mindful of that reduce the risk of falling:

- ⇒ Stay active. Regular exercise improves leg muscle and balance. Ask your health care provider which type of exercise is the best for you. Check in with your local COA to find what programs are available.
- ⇒ Make your home safer. Get rid of clutter on the floor. Improve lighting in places like stairs and hallways. Get rid of scatter rugs or secure them with double sided-tape. Have handrails on all staircases. Install grab irons in the bathroom and use non-slip mats in your tub and shower.
- ⇒ Have your vision, hearing and feet checked yearly and be aware of what medications make you feel sleepy or dizzy. Wear shoes with non-skid soles and don't shuffle but pick up your feet when walking.

Have a fall free spring!

--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.



So I lay them and you get all the credit?

Would you like to receive your newsletter, in color, 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!

It shouldn't be so hard...

I got a note the other day about a reader's experience in dealing with Medicaid as her mother was ill and, as it turns out, dying. It was a mess! So I don't know the solutions but decided to pass on the cautions she sent me. We will call her Sal and give an abbreviated version of what happened.

Sal's mother was in rehab and Sal was trying to get her into a long-term care bed and approved for Medicaid. Her mother was finally approved but died the next day. No Medicaid card or number ever arrived. The program has a burial fund, see: www.mass.gov/service-details/who-can-apply-for-funeral-and-burial-payment-assistance for information. In Sal's case, the fund was set up at a bank with only the mother's name and no beneficiary. There was a paperwork issue that took coordination between the state and the bank. The bank did not share with Sal some of the requirements for using the account. Between these matters and all the other items you can imagine (the rest home, medical bills, insurance, never mind her mother's well-being), things were very hard.

Lessons learned:

- do everything you can ahead of time (my favorite Big Five and related documents),
- check that real estate and bank accounts are in the ownership that you want,
- remember that even people in official positions can make mistakes,
- make written notes after a conversation with the bank, insurance, funeral home, attorney, Medicare/Medicaid, including the date and person talked to,
- think about what you heard and if there is an inconsistency or something just feels "off", follow up on it,
- AND at the end of each conversation, ask "What else should I know or ask you?"

Carefully,
Jean O'Neil, TRIAD committee member
413-268-2228, jeanoneilmass@gmail.com

April's Good News

By Deb Hollingworth

Maybe you remember years past when we were encouraged to collect our "emergency information" and fill out a "File of Life" card which came with a magnetized pocket so it could be hung on your refrigerator?

You might ask at your Senior Center to see if they have any of these File of Life pockets available, but even if they don't, you can make your own.

Here's why it's important: when we are in a stressful situation, like a health emergency, some of us get that shot of adrenalin and become amazing at getting 911 resources in place, and dealing with ER admissions information, but most of us are not amazing.... we get a "stress dementia" where we can't recall our health insurance numbers, sometimes our phone information, or list of Rx or medical conditions.

You don't have to worry about remembering important information like Rx allergies, or various doctor's names and phone contact information if you write it all down on an Emergency Information Sheet.

It should list: your name, date of birth, your health insurance numbers, your primary doctor's name and address. Then a list of your medical conditions and Rx that you take (which would include any allergies). Your emergency sheet should also include your Health Care Proxy, and family member's contact information.

Several years ago, I was the chauffeur for my sister who had a detached retina and needed several appointments in Burlington, MA for surgery. Each time we went to check in, the receptionist asked her the same questions: name, address, phone and health insurance information. As my sister became more distressed about her loss of vision, she had more difficulty answering what appeared to be simple questions. So we wrote down all the answers to questions ahead of time, and just gave the card to the receptionist. Whew....sigh of relief. Another time my Mom fell and set off her Lifeline. I got the call at work from the Lifeline folks, met the ambulance at the ER, and there was my Mom, on the stretcher with her File of Life information clutched in her hands. I just handed it off to the admission folks and was able to stay with her as she got processed in the ER for admission. She didn't have to wait alone, waiting for me to get admission because all the necessary information was on the File of Life card.

You can make your own Emergency Sheet of In-

formation. And you can carry it in your wallet. Might save you considerable stress when you need it?



POLKA PALOOZA

IN HONOR OF

**RUSS
RICHARDSON**



FEATURING

THE EDDIE FORMAN BAND

SATURDAY APRIL 2, 2022

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

POLKA DANCING, FOOD & FUN

CASH BAR, DONATIONS AT THE DOOR WELCOME

American Legion Post 236
5 Bridge Street
Haydenville, MA 01039

On the Road Again...

2022 Trip Lineup

Listed are the bus trip destinations with various travel groups. Most trips are limited to 36 passengers. Chesterfield COA and *Friends of Northampton Senior Center* are helping with the cost of some trips. Contact Francine Frenier if interested or want more information by calling 413-296-4291 or emailing francine.frenier@gmail.com.



Updates on the following:

Multi Day May 2-5 Lancaster, PA Sight & Sound Theater presents David. 4 days. \$485, due by **April 4, 2022.** Flyer available. Dates and price change.

Taking interest lists on the following:

Day Trip May 18: Dancing Dream Abba Tribute Band at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes chicken & salmon lunch. Cost \$113, **due by 4/18/22.** Flyer available.

Day Trip. Encore Boston Harbor Casino. Postponed until June 2022.

Day Trip Aug 10. The Jersey Tenors, a musical tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons at Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT. Includes lunch. Cost \$114, \$10 discount if paid by 6/30/22. Flyer Available.

Multi Day Aug 15-17. Kennebunkport & Portland Maine Coastal Tour. 3 days. Cost \$359, \$25 discount if paid by 5/8/2022. Flyer available.

Multi Day Oct 14-23. Nashville, Memphis & Rock & Roll Hall of Fame—10 days. \$1,205, \$25 discount if paid by 7/2/22. Flyer available. A few seats remain.

Day Trip July/August. Worcester, MA Red Sox Triple A affiliate team, Woo Sox game.

Day Trip September 9. Thomaston, Connecticut. Naugy Scenic Train Ride.

Day Trip Sept. The Big E

Day Trip Late Sept/Early Oct. Wareham, MA. Cranberry Bog Tour.

Day Trip Oct 4. Octoberfest! The Schnitnel Brothers perform. Self Drive to the Log Cabin. Meal choice and Cost to be determined.

What's in a word?

Every month over 2000 COA newsletters go out to the households of older adults in the seven northern hilltowns. Each town receives both local and regional sections that include news, trips, events, health information, access to benefits, tips from Jean O'Neil on how to protect yourself from scams and other risky shenanigans, fire safety facts from Worth Noyes, Good News from Deb Hollingworth about how to get what you want when you need it and a host of other important topics that help people stay in their own homes and live as independently as possible.



A grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs has made all of this possible. It's been a vital and concrete way to help those living in small, rural towns. It's helped us join the national AARP Age Friendly Communities.

This grant has enabled us to keep the written word alive and provide the kind of critical communication that is of such high priority to everyone; and, it actually comes to your doorstep or post office. **This grant is set to end on June 30th. At that time the written word in the newsletter will stop coming.**

It seems ironic to be talking about loss of the written word as everything shifts toward living in the digital age. I can see why some of our local and national newspapers are struggling. Oddly, they are struggling because people have moved to the virtual world; we're struggling because so many people in our rural communities have limited access to the virtual world. Many don't have broadband, some can't afford the costs of having broadband connections and many simply cannot afford to buy a computer.

To make the severity of the problem even worse, our newsletter has provided the major tool we have had to reduce isolation, connect people to the information they want and need and build regional networks that allow us to stretch and share our resources.

We are working hard to develop options that will support the survival of this service. **If you would miss this newsletter, please help by telling us how the newsletter fits into your life and why you would hate to lose it. We're planning to prevent this, down to the last word.**

Please contact your COA NOW!

Chesterfield Council on Aging
400 Main Road, P.O. Box 7
Chesterfield, MA 01012

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 183
Greenfield MA

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Francine Frenier, Gail Lucey



Newsletter Designer:
Kristen Estelle

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

CHARITY SCAM

You get a call from a charity looking for donations. Scammers try to fool you into giving money using these tactics:

- They rush you into making a donation;
- They use names that sound like a real charity;
- They change the caller ID to make you think it's a local caller.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE SURE THE MONEY IS GOING TO A GOOD CAUSE?

- Research the charity before donating;
- Verify that the organization is registered with the MA Attorney General's Office;
- Look up the charity online & read what others are saying about it.



If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit:

Greenfield (413) 774-3186
Northampton (413) 586-9225



Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General