



Town of Harwich COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING

WEDNESDAY May 5, 2021 10:00AM

Remote Participation Only

Council on Aging Board of Directors
Wednesday, May 5, 2021 10:00 AM

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I. Call to Order

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes from the April 7, 2021 COA Board of Directors Meetings **
(VOTE REQUIRED)

III. Public Comment

IV. Chair's Comments (*R. Waystack*)

- A. Check in with Members
B. Elder Services Program – June 15, 2021

V. Director's Report (*E. Mitchell*)**

- A. COVID-19 Vaccine – COA Role and Current Information
B. COA Staffing Updates
C. Overview of current and anticipated COA Operations
D. New CCRTA Leased Vehicle
E. Programming Updates
F. COA Volunteer needs, recruitment, and training

VI. Old Business

- A. Discussion and possible vote to appoint new liaison to Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands Board of Directors

VII. New Business

- A. Update from Elder Services Board Liaison (*J. Lepore*)

VIII. Member Comments

IX. Adjournment

***Supporting information available at the Harwich Council on Aging*

REMINDER:

Next HCOA Board Meeting – June 2, 2021 at 10 AM

Authorized Posting Officer:

Posted by: _____
Town Clerk

Emily Mitchell
Signature

Date: April 29, 2021

Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors
Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 10 AM
Remote Participation Only

Meeting Attendance:

Board Members: Chair Richard Waystack, Angelina Raneo Chilaka, Joanne Lepore, Ralph Smith, Justin White

COA Staff: Director Emily Mitchell

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Waystack at 10:02 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Joanne Lepore made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2021 COA Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded Ralph Smith. Unanimous vote to approve by members present.

III. Public Comment: None

IV. Chair's Comments (*R. Waystack*):

Chairman checked in with all members and reminded members to complete the mandatory state ethics training and to provide Emily with a copy of their completion certificate.

V. Director's Report (*E. Mitchell*)**

A. COVID-19 Vaccine – COA Role and Current Information.

As of Monday, April 5, 2021, vaccine eligibility in Massachusetts expanded to include people age 55+, anyone age 16+ with one or more of certain medical conditions, and an expanded list of certain workers. On Monday, April 19th, the state intends to open eligibility to all people age 16+. Each time the state has opened a new phase of the vaccine rollout process, there has been a period of increased difficulty in finding an available appointment. Happy to report that over 90% of Harwich residents age 75+ have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

On April 5th, the Town completed its first round of homebound vaccinations. This was coordinated in partnership with the COA, Health Department, EMS, and Outer Cape Health Services. EMS administered 55 shots during this first round. The COA and Health Department continue to take names for a next round of homebound vaccinations – the process is ongoing.

The COA also assisted in vaccination clinics with the senior affordable housing sites – all sites (Pine Oaks 1, 2, and 3) have all had onsite clinics to date.

Cape Cod Community College is an ongoing, standing regional site open 5 days per week. It is operated jointly by Cape Cod Healthcare and Barnstable County. Cape Cod Healthcare is partnering with Cape towns, through the COAs and Health Departments, to identify priority lists to serve at this site. To date, the COA has assisted approximately 300 residents in securing appointments through this priority list partnership.

The COA continues to provide general information, robo-calls, and assistance with regards to vaccine rollout.

B. Overview of current and anticipated COA operations

No major substantive changes to onsite operations – continuing 1:1 onsite services. Van capacity remains at 2 passengers/trip. Continuing community-based services in full swing.

The COA is considering a number of options for scaling up onsite operations in light of expanded reopening at the state level and improving public health data. There are no immediate plans to change onsite operations. Staff are working through the myriad of safety, liability, planning, and physical space factors relevant to the reopening process. The COA is considering expanded onsite services for July at the earliest. Also anticipating additional guidance from Massachusetts Councils on Aging (MCOA) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

C. Volunteer Needs

The COA is hoping to bring on one additional reception volunteer – someone who is comfortable working onsite, answering phones, coordinating program sign ups and check ins. Staff will provide thorough training for new volunteers.

Still seeking additional SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) counselor volunteers. This is a larger time commitment, but eager to bring in dedicated volunteers to assist Harwich residents.

Ralph asked about the time commitment for the reception volunteer. Emily indicated that shifts are approximately 3 hours long and the goal is to bring on a volunteer willing and able to commit to 2-3 shifts per week.

D. New CCRTA Leased Vehicle

In 2019, the COA had requested a new 14-passenger van from Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority through their Mobility Assistance Program. The process was delayed due to COVID, but Emily was notified in February that the new vehicle is ready for COA use. The COA has picked it up and it has been registered and inspected. Emily will be working with Administration to finalize the lease agreement prior to putting the new vehicle on the road. The 14-passenger is larger than two vehicles currently in use (an 8-passenger and a 12-passenger). This is the largest vehicle a driver can operate without a special license. Emily is excited about the opportunity to expand capacity with the larger vehicle, especially in light of the impact of COVID restrictions on transportation services.

Richard asked what will happen to the other vehicles. Emily answered the 8-passenger is also leased from CCRTA and will remain on the road. The 12-passenger was gifted to the COA from Cape Destinations after an older CCRTA-leased 12-passenger vehicle had to be taken off the road in October 2019 after reaching the end of its useful life. The COA does plan to return the larger vehicle to Cape Destinations. Both Richard and Emily expressed their gratitude to Cape Destinations for their generosity in support of COA transportation.

VI. Old Business

- A. Discussion and possible vote to appoint new liaison to the Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands Board of Directors

Joanne has served as the liaison for three years and will be stepping down after the April meeting. Richard asked if anyone was interested in serving as the new liaison. No members in attendance expressed interest. Decision to hold further discussion until the May COA Board meeting when all members are present.

VII. New Business

- A. Update from Elder Services Board Liaison (*J. Lepore*) – Elder Services usually has an annual meeting in May, but will not this year. They do plan to put out a booklet providing an overview of the year. Elder Services is also working to assist older adults in securing vaccine appointments. Office personnel are at 50% capacity. Next meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2021.

Richard thanked Joanne for her service as liaison and for all of her services to the COA, COA Board, and the town overall.

VIII. Member Comments

Comments expressing gratitude for the work of the COA staff and excitement about the older adult vaccination rate in town.

Emily also reminded members about the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2021 at 10 AM at Monomoy Regional High School Stadium Field, with a rain date of Saturday, May 15, 2021.

Richard made an additional reminder about the request for additional reception volunteer support.

IX. Adjournment

Joanne Lepore made the motion to adjourn at 10:27 AM. Motion was seconded by Ralph Smith. Unanimous roll call vote by members present to adjourn.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 10 AM by remote participation only.

COVID-19 Vaccine – Current Information and COA Role

Current Information

- Currently eligible per Massachusetts vaccine rollout plan (as of April 19, 2021): all people age 16+ who live, work, or study in Massachusetts.
- Vaccine appointment registration
 - Registration occurs primarily online
 - Mass vaccination sites **and Barnstable County hosted clinics** have transitioned to a preregistration model. You can complete the preregistration process at <https://vaccinesignup.mass.gov/> After pre-registering, you will be notified when an appointment becomes available. You **can** preregister by phone using the state 2-1-1 line.
 - Other vaccination sites are searchable at vaxfinder.mass.gov.
 - Some vaccine sites, particularly retail pharmacies, have you complete the registration process on their own website.
 - The state has activated phone-based registration assistance utilizing the 2-1-1 line. Callers using this phone line are still picking from the same pool of available appointment; no appointments are set aside specifically for phone registration.
 - Some local health care providers have been able to coordinate phone-based registration.
- Transportation
 - CCRTA is offering free transportation to older adults to vaccine appointments within Barnstable County. Schedule ride using Dial-A-Ride phone number – 800-352-7155

Council on Aging Role

- Homebound Individuals
 - Continuing to work with Outer Cape Health Services (OCHS), as well as Harwich Health and EMS, to plan and implement in home vaccination for homebound residents and their caregivers.
 - OCHS is serving as the provider agency. They will order, store, and provide administration and protective equipment. OCHS is operating under a broader definition of homebound that that provided by the state (the state restricted “homebound” categorization to people who cannot leave their home without two person assist or ambulance transport, OCHS is defining homebound more broadly to better capture vulnerable and at-risk residents who leave the home only for essential appointments or commitments).
 - COA is working to identify, contact, screen, and coordinate new patient and consent paperwork for residents who fall within this category.
 - EMS staff are administering the vaccine (and have staff to complete the appropriate post-vaccine observation period).
 - **First round of homebound vaccinations completed on April 5th. Served 55 residents.**

- **Second round (first dose) homebound vaccinations completed April 20th, second dose scheduled for May 20th. Served 8 residents.**
- Affordable Senior Housing
 - **COA assisted with onsite clinic held at Pine Oaks 1 and 2, organized in partnership with the Pine Oaks Resident Services Coordinator, Outer Cape Health Services, Harwich Health and EMS. Clinic held successfully on March 30th – 42 residents served.**
- Cape Cod Healthcare Priority List for Cape Cod Community College site
 - A standing vaccination site operating Monday through Friday opened at Cape Cod Community College in the first week in March. The site is operated jointly by Cape Cod Healthcare and Barnstable County.
 - For two months (all of March and April 2021), Cape Cod Healthcare partnered with each Cape town to prioritize the most vulnerable residents. The COA and Health Department were able to share names directly with CCH and a CCH staff member would contact residents by phone to schedule an appointment at the CCCC site. **We assisted over 300 Harwich residents to secure an appointment through this channel.**
 - **Demand for this priority list service dropped precipitously by the end of April. CCH is now listing all appointments for general public scheduling – they have both online and phone-based registration options.**
- Information and Referral
 - Residents can opt in to a COA robo-call group – we are sending calls any time there are substantive vaccine rollout policy updates or when vaccine clinics within Barnstable County are announced.
 - Clarifying expectations about the rollout process, vaccine availability, and anticipated timelines.

**TOWN OF HARWICH
JOB POSTING**

Position: Town Chef/Aide to Programs – Council on Aging
Hours: Per Diem
Pay Range: \$ 18.68 – \$23.27 per hour

Education and Experience

A candidate for this position should have a High School education or equivalent, and a minimum of 2 years restaurant or culinary training. At least 2 years' experience working with older adults in a culinary environment is preferred. Current MA ServSafe required. CPR/AED certification required and renewed annually.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

This position is to plan, cook, and serve nutritious meals for older adult participants off the Council on Aging. A candidate for this position should have:

- Ability to plan nutritious menu
- Ability to maintain kitchen including ordering supplies from vendors, shopping in store for groceries, storing food appropriately
- Ability to maintain and document inventory
- Ability to prepare, cook, and serve meals
- Ability to direct kitchen volunteers
- Ability to communicate appropriately with older adults and especially clients with disabilities.
- Ability to communicate appropriately with departmental employees, program participants, and the general public
- Competent and effective oral and written communication skills

Full job description and town employment application are available at <https://www.harwich-ma.gov/home/pages/employment-opportunities>

To apply, please submit completed cover letter, town employment application, and resume by mail to Attn: Emily Mitchell, Council on Aging Director, 100 Oak Street, Harwich, MA 02645 or by email to emitchell@town.harwich.ma.us.

Harwich Council on Aging Statement of Departmental Needs

To effectively serve its mission to support and advocate for older adults, their families, and caregivers in the Town of Harwich, the Council on Aging must adapt to meeting the following operational, programmatic, organizational, staffing and volunteer, and outreach needs. A reorganization of departmental staff positions and locations will enable the COA to expand its offerings and operate more efficiently, without netting any additional staff hours.

Operational/Program Needs

- Remote Programming – since the onset of COVID-19, all onsite classes and programs have been canceled. While we have effectively transitioned to community-based programs to meet most essential needs, there is a significant service gap in our programming capacity.
 - Work with older adults to acquire needed technology for remote participation (internet access, computer/tablet/smartphone access)
 - Training to increase comfort and familiarity with required technology/software
 - Work with departmental and other town staff, and with outside vendors, to provide online and hybrid onsite-remote programming
 - Research liability, intellectual property, insurance requirements as they apply to programming in remote format
 - Develop and apply mechanism for class/vendor payment
- General Programming
 - Expansion of evidence-based program offerings
 - Formal community engagement to solicit feedback and ideas on varying needs and interests
 - Strengthen communication with program instructors/vendors
 - Conduct formal program assessments, adapt programming and priorities as appropriate
 - Expand publicity (update town website, create departmental social media presence, implement formal procedures for sharing information with outside media)

Organizational Needs

- Increase overall departmental efficiency by reviewing job descriptions, actual scope of work performed, assessment of staff placement (e.g. between reception and office areas), and more clearly delineating social services, programmatic, and administrative job functions
- Improve training and skill development of staff (general and aging-specific)
 - Computer skills, website development, publicity
 - Working with individuals with dementia, responding to emergencies, crisis response/mitigation, etc.

- Expand technical capacity
 - Cell phones for Social Services Coordinator and Director
 - Transition to laptops for portability, to facilitate remote work
 - Expand shared file access, utilize file-sharing software that allows simultaneous work/editing by multiple staff members (e.g. Microsoft OneDrive, Google Docs)

Volunteer Coordination Needs

The COA relies on volunteers to provide core departmental services. Close to 100 volunteers perform the work of approximately 3.5 FTE employees, and provide services both onsite and in the community.

- Implement formal volunteer recruitment to meet identified departmental/community needs
- Develop and implement volunteer training, both for new volunteers and offered on a regular basis
- Formalize process for assigning, overseeing, and evaluating volunteer work to ensure quality and consistency
- Formalize process for running appropriate checks (CORI, SORI, driving record) and maintaining appropriate documentation (insurance, waivers) on initial and recurring basis

Outreach/Social Services

- Develop formal outreach plan for older adults (age 60+), with recognition of varying needs of diverse population, differences within older adult age brackets (e.g. 60-75, 75-85, 85+)
- Expand aging-specific professional development for staff providing outreach/social services/health work (Social Services Coordinator, Town Nurse, Director)



Town of Harwich COUNCIL ON AGING

Harwich Community Center □ 100 Oak Street □ Harwich, MA 02645
Tel: 508-430-7550 Fax: 508-430-7530

m e m o

TO: Joseph Powers, Interim Town Administrator
FROM: Emily Mitchell, COA Director
DATE: November 18, 2020
RE: **Proposed Reorganization of Council on Aging Staff**

The mission of the Harwich Council on Aging is to serve and advocate for older adults, their families, and caregivers. We serve this mission through a wide variety of programs and services in areas including outreach, advocacy, nutrition, transportation, health and wellness, education, socialization, and more. More than 50% of Harwich residents are over age 60 and that percentage continues to grow. Older adults are living longer and remaining independent in their communities for longer, often with increasing difficulties and a pervasive shortage of community resources to meet them.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has both highlighted and exacerbated pre-existing community needs. Older adults face the highest health and mortality risks associated with the virus. This has increased anxiety and isolation; created a context for worsening physical and cognitive health due to canceled or delayed medical appointments/procedures and altered in home supports, as well as a lack of exercise and mental stimulation; and overburdened the health and bandwidth of caregivers who lost their community respite resources overnight.

The role of the COA continues to expand to meet these growing and highly varied needs, both pre-pandemic and as we navigate the pandemic impact. In the current context of COVID-19, we have overhauled and adapted operations in an effort to prioritize services that meet the most essential needs with a new focus on community-based and limited onsite offerings in the areas of outreach, nutrition, and transportation. However, though present services are focused and limited, older adults in our community continue to require support in the full range of areas our department is designed to support as outlined above.

Existing departmental staffing resources are insufficient to meet these critical community needs in both pandemic and ordinary circumstances. The proposed staffing reorganization, facilitated by the vacancy in the Program Specialist I position, would help remedy long-standing and newly emerging departmental needs. For this proposed reorganization, I request the following:

- To leave the existing Program Specialist I (HEA Grade 4) position vacant, and
- To fill a Program Specialist II (HEA Grade 8) position in its place

This reorganization proposes no change to the number of departmental staff positions or the number of staff hours. The existing position (Program Specialist I) is benefited and scheduled for 35 hours/week. The requested Program Specialist II position would likewise be benefited and scheduled for 35 hours/week.

This reorganization would allow for improved recruitment and retention of qualified, professional staff, for increased efficiency in existing departmental operations, and for expanded operations to meet identified departmental needs particularly in the areas of program development and volunteer coordination, without adding staff positions or hours.

Budget Impact:

Fiscal Year 2021 – No Impact

- Due to a prior vacancy in the Social Services Coordinator position (filled in August 2020) and the current vacancy in the Program Specialist 1 position, there is a predicted savings of at least \$16,000 between the FY 21 approved COA budget and projected actual FY 21 spending.*
- With this savings, the proposed Program Specialist II position could be hired at any step and remain within the approved COA FY 21 budget (increased cost due to change from Program Specialist I to Program Specialist II range from \$3,568.41 if hired at Step 1 to \$15,588.24 if hired at Step 6)*
- *Figures are based on HEA pay scale for FY 20 + 2% (per the FY 21 budget directive) for both anticipated FY 21 budget savings and for the rate of pay of a newly hired Program Specialist II

Fiscal Year 2022 – No Impact (under certain restrictions)

- **Changes in departmental staffing - unrelated to the proposed reorganization – net an overall anticipated salary and wages cost savings of \$11,025.99 from FY 21 to FY 22.**
 - Calculation of cost increases:
 - Director negotiated step increase: \$1,753.01
 - Van Driver (Gerald Golia) negotiated step increase: \$1,064.88
 - Town Chef negotiated longevity increase: \$432.06
 - **Net increase: \$3,249.95**
 - Calculation of cost decreases:
 - Social Services Coordinator (budgeted for FY 21 at rate of prior Coordinator at Steps 4 to 5; position filled with new Coordinator at Step 1 which will increase to Step 2 in FY 22): -\$7,124.50
 - Eliminate additional 5 hours/week of supplemental van driver coverage approved in FY 21: -\$6,196.94
 - Fill van driver position that was vacant at time of FY 21 budgeting (budgeted at Step 6, propose to fill at Step 3 during FY 21 and fund at Step 4 for FY 22): -\$955.30
 - **Net decrease: -\$14,275.94**
- This net savings would allow funding for the Program Specialist II position up to Step 4 (of its designated HEA Grade 8 classification). Step 4 would reflect an increase of \$10,426.24 over the budgeted Program Specialist 1 allocation for FY 21.*
 - *Again, assumes HEA pay scale for FY 20 + 2% (baseline for FY 21 budget and consistent with FY 22 budget directive for 0% COLA increase above FY 21 budget levels)
- **Based on above calculations, I propose to hire the Program Specialist II position in FY 21 at a maximum of Step 3 (Grade 8).**
- **By operating within this hiring rate restriction, FY 22 funding for this position would cause no net increase to the overall COA budget, consistent with the FY 22 budget directive to level fund.**

Conclusion:

The proposed reorganization serves to increase efficiency and expand departmental capacity without additional staff members or hours. As a result of other vacancies and changes in COA staffing, this can be effectuated, within certain limitations, without any increase to either the FY 21 or FY 22 budgets. Within this context, I respectfully request your support for this reorganization.

Town of Harwich, Massachusetts

Position Title: Program Specialist I (Council On Aging) Grade: HEA4 Hours: 35hours/week (27 hours grant funded/8 hours Town funded)

Department: Council on Aging

Statement of Duties

Working under the general supervision of the COA Director, responsible for assisting with the planning, organizing, and scheduling of the transportation and volunteer programs, while providing support with related administrative work for the Council on Aging.

Essential Functions

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustration of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

1. Answer phones, arrange rides for clients, maintain precise records, and create organized daily van schedules utilizing departmental transportation software, providing accurate and timely communication with clients, drivers, volunteers, community resources, and pertinent departmental staff.
2. Participate in the preparation and processing of all program-related information including client registration, transportation schedules, brochures, reports, applications, and participant notices.
3. Oversee volunteer efforts including volunteer recruitment and scheduling, and assist departmental staff with identifying volunteer needs and coordinating volunteer appreciation activities.
4. Maintain required departmental documentation including confidential files and records, resource information, schedules, activity reports and statistics, and any required expense reports.
5. Communicate promptly and efficiently with departmental staff members to facilitate the provision of quality programs and services and report regularly to the Director.
6. Perform department specific functions as described below.
7. Attend all staff meetings.
8. Perform similar or related work as required.

Supervision

The Program Specialist reports to the Director, following departmental rules, regulations, and policies.

Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience

Associate's Degree in Business Administration or a related field, and three (3) to five (5) years of experience in a professional office setting; or an equivalent combination of education and administrative experience.

Town of Harwich, Massachusetts

Licenses and Certifications

Valid Massachusetts motor vehicle operator's license required in order to attend required meetings and trainings. Must obtain and maintain CPR/AED and First Aid certification. Must be CORI certified.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

A candidate for this position should have the following (as well as department-specific abilities described below):

Knowledge:

- Thorough knowledge of office practices and procedures.
- Knowledge of the main roads in the community in order to facilitate transportation schedules.

Skills:

- Exceptional organizational skills.
- Competent and effective written and oral communication skills.
- Considerable judgment in the handling of individual problems and issues.
- Strong customer service skills and attention to detail required.
- Proficiency in the use of computers including skills in word processing, spreadsheets, data input, and publication software.

Abilities:

- Ability to assess situations and problem solve to coordinate efficient services and accommodate individual needs.
- Ability to work capably with confidential information.
- Ability to prioritize work and perform multiple tasks in a detailed and organized manner to meet deadlines.
- Ability to communicate appropriately with departmental employees, program participants, and the general public
- Ability to maintain accurate and detailed records.
- Ability to operate a keyboard and standard office equipment.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Tools and Equipment Used

Equipment operated includes general office equipment.

Physical Demands

The work requires intellectual abilities and light physical activity throughout the typical work day. At various times work will require strength and agility with the ability to stoop, bend, reach, stand, walk, and occasionally lift and/or move items up to 30 pounds while assisting with programs and assisting clients with mobility. Employee must be able to climb stairs and independently conduct home visitation in a variety of community settings. Vision and hearing must be correctable to "normal" ranges for routine use of equipment, including computers and phones, and the reading of documents for understanding, as well as communicating with vulnerable clients.

Town of Harwich, Massachusetts

Work Environment

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Work is conducted both in a typical office setting, with frequent interruptions, under quiet to moderate noise levels.

Operates standard office equipment including telephone, computer, copier, and fax machine. Occasionally operates motor vehicle.

Makes frequent telephone contacts with senior citizens with physical and cognitive impairments, caregivers and family members, community organizations and vendors. Contacts are in generally made by phone, but occasionally in person and in writing.

Performs responsible duties of a sensitive nature with access to confidential client information requiring judgment and initiative in the implementation of delivery of services.

Errors could result in hardship to Town residents, delay of service delivery, and adverse public relations.

Requires occasional evening or weekend work.

DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS, ABILITIES, AND WORK ENVIRONMENT – COUNCIL ON AGING

Functions:

- Answer phones, arrange rides for clients, maintain precise records, and create organized daily van schedules utilizing departmental transportation software, providing accurate and timely communication with clients, drivers, volunteers, community resources, and pertinent departmental staff.
- Document unmet transportation needs and provide appropriate information and referral regarding available community resources, seeking the involvement of departmental staff for support with challenging situations.
- Maintain accurate records of vehicles and rides; submit this information in monthly reports to relevant partner agencies (e.g. Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority).
- Assist with the coordination of vehicle maintenance and repair appointments, and maintain accurate organized maintenance files for vehicles.
- Compose and submit information for the bimonthly departmental newsletter as requested.

Town of Harwich, Massachusetts

Abilities:

A candidate for this position should have:

- Thorough knowledge of the needs of older adults.
- Ability to work with elders in a sensitive and effective manner.
- Ability to communicate appropriately with older adults and especially clients with disabilities.

Work Environment:

Makes frequent telephone contacts with senior citizens with physical and cognitive impairments, caregivers and family members, community organizations and vendors. Contacts are in generally made by phone, but occasionally in person and in writing.

External and Internal applicants, as well as position incumbents who become disabled as defined under the American With Disabilities Act, must be able to perform the essential job functions (as listed) either unaided or with the assistance of a reasonable accommodation to be determined by management on a case by case basis.

Town of Harwich, Massachusetts

Position Title: Program Specialist II

Grade: HEA 8

Department: Council on Aging

Statement of Duties

Working under the general supervision of the Council on Aging Director, responsible for the planning, development, scheduling, publicizing, implementation, and assessment of departmental programs. Programs are offered with the goals of advancing the department's mission, reaching broader segments of older adults in Harwich, and serving the varying needs of this diverse population. Programs should provide opportunities for meaningful engagement and include health and wellness, education, socialization, special interest, and connection to community and professional resources. Departmental programs and services are provided with the support of approximately 100 volunteers and through relationships with professional vendors. Position will recruit, place, train, and oversee volunteers to ensure quality of services. Position will also serve as point of contact with vendors, ensure compliance with insurance and licensure requirements, assess program success, and provide oversight for COA Revolving Fund.

Essential Functions

The essential function or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statement of duties does not exclude them from the position if work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Programming

- Formal community engagement to identify programming interests, with a specific focus on encouraging new participation with the COA and addressing the highly variable needs of this diverse population.
- Develop, plan, schedule, and execute/oversee departmental programs.
- Recruit vendors to provide programs consistent with mission and designed to meet community needs.
- Serve as point of contact for program vendors and ensure vendor compliance with insurance, licensure, and other credentialing requirements.
- Provide oversight of COA Revolving Fund, including accounting for class payments, maintaining accurate records of program participation and payments, and producing quarterly Revolving Fund report.
- Make determinations about needed program resources and staff/volunteer support and procure appropriate materials in collaboration with Director.
- Program set up including room set up, securing refreshments, managing audiovisual and other technical needs, support to guest speaker/vendors.

- Implement expanded remote programming and hybrid remote-onsite programming.
 - Develop and provide training to bridge technical knowledge gap that may hinder some participants from full access to full range of departmental services
 - Set meeting credentials, share with program participants
 - Host remote programming
 - Ensure compliance with privacy protections, intellectual property requirements, liability/waiver requirements
- Lead, or recruit qualified vendor to lead, at least one evidence-based aging related program.
- Transportation – Plan COA van services (schedule, locations, passenger priority) in consultation with Director and van drivers. Schedule/coordinate all volunteer medical rides.

Volunteer Coordinator

- Recruit qualified volunteers to meet departmental and community needs.
- Develop and provide regular departmental and function-specific training to volunteers, with focus on emergency response, volunteer and client safety, and provision of quality services.
- Maintain required, confidential paperwork/documentation, including CORI/SORI checks for all volunteers, specialized documentation for function-specific tasks (e.g. annual driving record check, vehicle inspection, driver and passenger waivers, vehicle accident documentation, and vehicle insurance for volunteer medical driver program).
- Assign and oversee all volunteer work, provided both on site and in the community (e.g. Friendly Visitor, Telephone Reassurance, Volunteer Medical Transportation, Lunch Distribution, etc.)
- Organize biannual Volunteer Recognition event in collaboration with Director and COA Board of Directors.
- Oversee Senior Tax Work Off Program (which benefits low income seniors and a wide variety of Town departments in receiving volunteer support).

Publicity

- Responsible for departmental and program-specific publicity.
- Update and maintain COA website.
- Create and manage COA social media accounts.
- Create and distribute bimonthly newsletter in collaboration with Director.
- Create program-specific flyers, updated brochures, etc.
- Disseminate information about programs and resources to local print media, on radio, on Channel 18, and to other local and public-facing organizations (other Town buildings including Library and Town Hall, local senior living and assisted living facilities, medical offices, etc.)

Supervision

Position will directly supervise approximately 100 departmental volunteers who do the work of 3.5 FTE employees to provide core services. Position will also provide oversight of program vendors, ensuring compliance with mission and other insurance/licensure requirements.

Education and Experience

A candidate for this position must have a Bachelor's Degree and three (3) to five (5) years of related experience.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Knowledge:

- Thorough knowledge of the needs of older adults
- Knowledge of program development and event planning
- Knowledge of community, local resources, and municipal government
- Knowledge of main roads in the community in order to facilitate transportation schedules
- Knowledge of marketing, print, web-based, and social media, and communications
- Knowledge of remote programming platforms (e.g. Zoom, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, etc.)

Skills:

- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Vendor management skills
- Project planning and management
- Solicitation of feedback and critical program assessment
- Skills in math, bookkeeping, and accounting
- Visual creativity for developing program materials, brochures, and bimonthly newsletter
- Advanced computer skills including word processing, spreadsheets, data input, publication software, design platforms (Canva, Adobe, etc.). Ability to learn new departmental or program-specific software quickly.
- Excellent customer service skills

Abilities

- Ability to work with diverse participants with varying needs, cognitive capacities, abilities, and interests, both individually and in group settings.
- Ability to diffuse situations that could occur in a variety of different workplace settings
- Abilities to work with older adults, families, and caregivers in a sensitive and effective manner.
- Ability to work capably with confidential information
- Ability to maintain accurate and detailed records
- Ability to work independently, to prioritize work, and perform multiple tasks in a detailed and organized manner to meet deadlines.

Licenses and Certifications

- CPR/First Aid certified
- Certification in at least one evidence-based aging related program (e.g. Matter of Balance, Aging Mastery, Chronic Disease Self-Management, Fall Prevention, Behavioral Health, etc.) obtained within one (1) year of hiring

Tools and Equipment Used

Equipment operated includes general office machines, computers, audiovisual equipment (e.g. projector, screen, speakers, DVD player, microphones, assisted listening devices), and program-specific equipment. Job requires occasional set up of chairs, tables, and other equipment required for events and programs.

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk, see, and hear. At various times, work will require strength and agility to stoop, bend, reach, stand, walk, and occasionally lift and/or move up to 30 pounds while assisting with programs and assisting clients with mobility. Employee must be able to climb stairs and independently conduct home visitation in a variety of community settings. Vision and hearing must be correctable to “normal” ranges for routine use of equipment, including computers and phones, and the reading of documents for understanding, as well as communicating with vulnerable clients.

Work Environment

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Work is conducted in both a typical office setting, with frequent interruptions, under moderate noise levels, and in community settings including public venues, other town offices, senior living facilities, and occasionally in clients’ homes.

Operates standard office equipment including telephone, computer, copier, and fax machine. Occasionally operates motor vehicle. Makes frequent contact with older adults with physical and cognitive impairments, caregivers and family members, community organizations, vendors, other town departments, and outside agencies. Contacts are made in person, by phone, email, and in writing.

Performs responsible duties of sensitive nature with access to confidential client, volunteer, and vendor information requiring judgment and initiative in the implementation and delivery of services.

Requires occasional evening and weekend work.

Errors could result in hardship to Town residents, delay or loss of service delivery, monetary loss, legal repercussions, harm to clients, and adverse public relations if errors are made, incorrect information is distributed, or for failure to ensure departmental and vendor compliance with policies, licensure, and other requirements.

External and Internal applicants, as well as position incumbents who become disabled as defined under the American With Disabilities Act, must be able to perform the essential job functions (as listed) either unaided or with the assistance of a reasonable accommodation to be determined by management on a case by case basis.

Town of Harwich COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS



Harwich Community Center ~ 100 Oak Street ~ Harwich, MA 02645

Tel: 508-430-7550 ~ Fax: 508-430-7530

May/June 2021

*The mission of the Harwich Council on Aging is
to support and advocate for older adults, their families, and caregivers.*

COA REOPENING UPDATES

Since July 2020, with the exception of a few weeks following the winter holidays, the COA has been open for limited 1:1 onsite services by appointment only. We have offered podiatry services, elder law attorney appointments, the Town Nurse Wellness Clinic, the Mobile Dental Hygiene Clinic, AARP Tax Aide appointments, Durable Medical Equipment loans, and appointments with staff members. These have been offered alongside our expanded community-based lunch, grocery/pharmacy support, and transportation services.

We are hopeful that COVID case counts will continue to decline and thrilled to see vaccination rates rising. As those trends continue, we are exploring options to scale up our onsite services. This will be a slow process for two reasons. First, we're working hard to develop policies and protocols surrounding screening, capacity, and sanitization that are safe and sustainable. Second, we do not have the staff time and resources to operate full scale community-based and onsite services simultaneously. Our community-based services are helping meet some of the highest needs of our residents, and many are still actively relying on them. We want to make the transition back to an onsite-focused model as smooth as possible!

For our ongoing 1:1 onsite services, we'll be following these protocols:

- We remain appointment-based only. Please call or email to schedule an appointment. Please remain in your car until your designated appointment time.
- We will be calling you 24 hours before any onsite appointment to ask you a series of COVID screening questions. These questions will ask about COVID symptoms, close contact with someone who is COVID-positive or symptomatic, whether you've been asked to quarantine by a healthcare provider, or if you are awaiting COVID test results.
- You must wear a mask, properly covering your nose and mouth, at all times while onsite.

We will be adhering to these protocols regardless of your personal vaccination status (we also will not ask you about your vaccination status unless you are calling for vaccine-related assistance and that information is relevant).

We acknowledge that these standards are stricter than CDC recommendations for people who are fully vaccinated. We are doing this in an effort to protect your privacy, to ensure equitable access to COA services for all residents regardless of vaccination status, and to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and other program participants. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation!

DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE

With both vaccination rates and temperatures steadily increasing, we are entering a time of new growth, joy, and connection. I feel renewed hope every time I talk with someone about a successful vaccine appointment or a day spent with family members for the first time. I'm reminded of our collective emergence from darkness every time I see the first colorful blossoms of tulips and hyacinth popping up after a long winter. May we all rise in the coming months with the same strength, persistence, and vibrancy.



I know many of you reading this are partially or fully vaccinated—congratulations! This has been a long and hard fought battle, accompanied by a great deal of loss and anxiety. I hope you are feeling a measure of relief and enjoying a glimpse of returning normalcy. If you want to receive the vaccine but have not yet secured an appointment, see page 2 for ways we can help!

The weeks and months ahead are sure to bring quite a bit of change, activity, and excitement. Local businesses and organizations are predicting a busier summer than ever. Many places are reopening or lifting capacity restrictions. As vaccine eligibility and supply expand, we hope that everyone who wants a vaccine can get one as quickly as possible. That is sure to pave the way expanded opportunities to reconnect with friends, family, and community in ways that have been impossible for over a year.

On the town side, we are gearing up for our Annual Town Meeting and Town Election. Town Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 8th, at 10 AM and will be located outside at Monomoy Regional High School at Stadium Field (rain date: Saturday, May 15th). The Town Election will be held at the Harwich Community Center on Tuesday, May 18th, from 7 AM to 8 PM.

Be well, stay safe, and I hope to see you soon!
Emily Mitchell

INSIDE!

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COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES

COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

As of Monday, April 19, 2021, all people age 16+ who live, work, or study in Massachusetts are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

As I write this update in the third week of April, three vaccines are approved for use in the United States – Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. Two other vaccines – AstraZeneca and Novavax – are currently undergoing Phase 3 clinical trials in the United States, a necessary step towards possible future FDA approval.

This week, the FDA and CDC recommended a temporary pause in use of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine after a small number of reports of a rare and severe type of blood clot happening in people within two weeks of receiving this vaccine. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has instructed all providers to halt use of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, consistent with this recommendation. The FDA and CDC are conducting an in depth review of these cases and their potential significance, and will issue additional recommendations in the coming days or weeks.

In the Town of Harwich and across Barnstable County, vaccine access has increased markedly since our last update. This reflects a tremendous effort on behalf of the Cape Legislative Delegation, local healthcare providers, Barnstable County Department of Health and the Environment, and in partnership with local entities including municipal Health Departments, EMS, and Councils on Aging. I want to extend a special thanks to Outer Cape Health Services and Cape Cod Healthcare for their roles in facilitating vaccine access for our most at risk residents! I'm thrilled to report that, to date, more than 95% of Harwich residents age 75+, and more than 80% of residents age 65+, have received at least one dose of the COVID vaccine.

How to Make an Appointment

If you are still in need of a vaccine appointment, there are several scheduling options available to you.

Preregistration – You can preregister for a vaccine appointment at one of the state's seven high volume, mass vaccination sites. As of April 16, clinics hosted by Barnstable County are now also part of the same preregistration system. This system allows you to enter all of your personal, contact, and eligibility information in advance. After preregistering, you'll receive weekly status updates and will be notified once an appointment becomes available for you. Once notified, you'll have 24 hours to claim that available appointment. You can preregister online at vaccinesignup.mass.gov or by calling the state's 2-1-1 phone line.

State Registration Website – for all vaccine locations not served through the preregistration system, appointments are searchable on the state registration website: vaxfinder.mass.gov. These include local and retail pharmacy sites. You may also call the state 2-1-1 phone line for registration assistance (please note: callers using this phone line are still picking from the same total pool of available appointments that are posted on the website; no appointments are set aside specifically for phone registration).

Retail Pharmacies – in our area, this is primarily CVS, Stop and Shop, and Walgreens. These pharmacies utilize their own private websites for vaccine appointment registration (appointment availability is often listed on the vaxfinder.mass.gov site, but you'll be redirected to the pharmacy website to complete your registration).

If you're having difficulty securing an appointment or are unable to travel to a vaccine site, please read on for ways the COA may be able to assist you.

Council on Aging Assistance

Here at the COA, we're able to help in a number of ways:

Information and Referral – Our staff and volunteers are well-versed in the vaccine registration process! We're happy to answer general questions or to refer you to specific outside resources if your question is beyond our scope. We also send out robocalls any time a new clinic is announced within Barnstable County or if there are substantive changes to vaccine rollout policies or procedures. Let us know if you want to receive those calls!

Homebound Residents – the COA is partnering with the Health Department, EMS, and Outer Cape Health Services to facilitate vaccine access for homebound Harwich residents. We completed the first round of homebound vaccinations, serving 55 residents, in early April. We are continuing to take names and referrals for subsequent rounds of homebound vaccinations. This service is intended for people who are unable to leave the home except in very limited circumstances like essential medical appointments.

Cape Cod Healthcare Priority List – Cape Cod Healthcare (CCH) is partnering with all Cape towns to help identify and prioritize our most at-risk residents. Towns share contact information for qualifying residents with CCH and CCH then contacts the resident directly, by phone, to schedule an appointment at the standing Cape Cod Community College vaccine site. Towns are prioritizing residents age 75+ with technology barriers, or younger residents with technology barriers who are otherwise at high risk. If you feel you meet these criteria, you can call the COA or Health Department for screening and to be added to the priority list. This service is ongoing – to date, we've helped over 300 residents secure appointments through this partnership with Cape Cod Healthcare.

Please note, we are **not** able to complete the actual appointment registration process, on any platform, on behalf of a resident.

Barnstable County Resources

Barnstable County has a dedicated COVID-19 hotline. Call 774-330-3001 for information. Barnstable County run clinics have transitioned to become part of the state's preregistration model (see left column). They will no longer announce new clinics 24 hours in advance and you will not be able to book appointments through the vaxfinder.mass.gov website.

Transportation

CCRTA is offering free transportation for folks age 75+ to vaccine appointments within Barnstable County. Schedule your ride by calling the Dial-a-Ride phone number—800-352-7155.

CURRENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The programs described on pages 2 & 3 are available as of this writing in mid-April.

LUNCH DISTRIBUTION

Monday—Friday NO COST

We are offering a daily lunch distribution to support seniors who are self-isolating at home. See page 5 for details!



PHARMACY ASSISTANCE

Monday—Friday NO COST

COA staff or volunteer will pick up your prescription medication and bring it to your home if the following conditions are met: (1) Rx is filled at CVS, Shaws, or Stop & Shop in Harwich, and (2) No copay is due (we cannot pay for medication on your behalf, even if you are willing to reimburse). To make a request, call Julie at 508-430-7550.



***Shaws and Stop & Shop now offer flexible payment options. Call Julie to discuss!**

Visiting the COA

Like most town offices, the COA is open by appointment only for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, we cannot provide walk-in service at this time. We have learned that a lot can be accomplished from a distance! When a visit to the COA is needed, we ask that you follow these procedures:



- ◆ Please wait outside or in your car until your appointment time. If the person you are meeting with is able to see you early, they will call your cell phone (we will ask for that number when you schedule the appointment).
- ◆ Please wear a mask/face covering inside the building and on the pathways outside.
- ◆ If you come into the COA offices, please sign in for the purpose of contact tracing.

GROCERY ASSISTANCE

Call to schedule NO COST

If you are trying to avoid the grocery store, we can help! Read this section for details, then contact the COA: 508-430-7550 or jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us.



The COA can pick up and deliver groceries from the Family Pantry at no cost. The Family Pantry offers a full range of groceries, including perishables such as milk, eggs, meats, bread, and produce. The Pantry provides a "Shopping List" of their available items, and your selections are made from this list.

How to Order:

1. Call or email the COA to request a copy of the current Family Pantry Shopping List.
2. When you have your selections ready, call the COA to give your order over the phone. (We accept orders every day of the week, and hold them to be filled on the next scheduled delivery day.)
3. We submit orders to the Family Pantry, where a volunteer will gather and bag up the groceries for each order.
4. COA staff or volunteer picks up the groceries from the Pantry and delivers them to your home. We will leave the bags right outside your front door. (You must be home at the time of delivery.)

More details:

- ⇒ Currently, all deliveries are made on Tuesdays, approximately 1pm-3pm.
- ⇒ You must place your order no later than Monday 3pm for Tuesday delivery (Friday if Monday is a holiday).
- ⇒ The Family Pantry allows you to shop every two weeks.
- ⇒ There is no charge for the groceries or the delivery. Donations to The Family Pantry are gratefully accepted to offset food costs, but there is no obligation to donate.
- ⇒ Service availability is dependent on Pantry capacity and COA volunteer or staff availability. Please give as much notice as possible when placing your order.



The COA also keeps a small supply of non-perishable basics on site for urgent needs. If you know someone who needs help *today*, please call us! 508-430-7550.

WELLNESS & BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC

Town Nurse Susan Jusell, RN **NO COST**

Thursdays 9:30am—12:00pm, by appointment

Meet with the nurse to have your blood pressure taken, ask health related questions, or discuss your health needs. Visits occur in the COA's "Glass Room". All visitors to the Council on Aging must wait outside or in their cars until their appointment time. To schedule an appointment, call the COA at 508-430-7550.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE—In Person

Attorney Michael Lavender **NO COST**

Wednesdays May 26 & June 23

Do you have a legal question? Schedule a free half-hour consultation with attorney Michael Lavender, who specializes in elder law. In-person appointments are now being scheduled. Call the COA at 508-430-7550.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE—Remote

Attorney Raymond Yox **NO COST**

Monday May 3

Schedule a free half-hour consultation with Raymond Yox, Managing Attorney for South Coastal Counties Legal Services. Raymond's appointments will be fully remote. You will schedule your appointment with the COA, and then at your appointment time, Raymond will call for a telephone consultation. Call the COA at 508-430-7550.

MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC

Fridays May 22 & June 26

Preventative dental services are available again at the Community Center! Mobile Dental Hygiene Services offers dental cleanings, exams, fluoride treatments, denture care, and education. Services are free to anyone with MassHealth Standard/Medicaid. They offer affordable rates for individuals without dental insurance.

To schedule an appointment, contact Mobile Dental Hygiene Services directly at 508-827-6725 or smiles@mobiledentalhygiene.com



FOOTCARE CLINIC

With Autumn Knight— May 5 & 19, June 2 & 16

With Dr. Cecilia Moore—May 11, June 15

Certified podiatry providers offer a general assessment of your feet and will trim, file, clean, and reduce thickening of nails, smooth corns & calluses, and massage your feet. Appointments are available 9:00am-3:00pm at the COA for \$45. Please call the COA at 508-430-7550 to schedule your appointment.



MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOANS

Durable medical equipment is available for loan to Harwich residents (canes, walkers, commodes, shower seats, wheelchairs, etc.). Loans to non-Harwich residents are limited to items that we have in abundance.

We "quarantine" all returned equipment for 24 hours before giving it out to a new recipient and spray it with disinfecting spray. However, we are not able to guarantee that it is fully sanitized.

Call to see if we have the equipment you need. We will place it outside the building's South entrance (left side if facing the Community Center building) at a designated time for you to pick up at your convenience.



Equipment can also be *returned* to this same location, without notice, Monday-Friday 1-3 pm.

Please only donate or return equipment that is clean and in good condition. Further, we cannot accept equipment that requires power or non-durable medical supplies (bandages, medications, ointments, opened packages of briefs, etc.) For more info or to request equipment, call 508-430-7550.

UPDATE ON SOCIAL SECURITY APPTS

The Hyannis Social Security office remains closed to the public, and their staff continues to work remotely. SSA is offering their full range of services by phone. To speak to the SSA, call 866-467-0440. You can also access helpful information from their website: ssa.gov.

LUNCH & PROGRAM DETAILS

LUNCH DISTRIBUTION

Monday—Friday, 11am-1pm, NO COST

We are offering a daily lunch distribution to support seniors who are self-isolating at home. Our talented chef, Linda St. Pierre, prepares hearty sandwiches and salads fresh every day, and our friendly volunteers deliver to your home! To sign up or learn more, call the COA at 508-430-7550.

Program details:

- ◆ Schedule: Sandwiches on M & Th, Hot meals on Tu, Salads on W & F. Each meal also includes a side and/or dessert.
- ◆ Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate most dietary restrictions at this time (call for details).
- ◆ Eligibility criteria applies—call the COA to discuss.
- ◆ We have capacity to serve 70 meals per day. At the time of this printing, you can sign up to receive lunch up to 4 days per week. Talk to Julie to set up a schedule.



UPDATES

Lunch Policy Reminder: Board of Health regulations prevent us from leaving a meal if you are not home. You must notify us, preferably at least 24 hours in advance, if you will not be home at the time of delivery. Our goal is not to waste food and to respect the time of our chef and drivers. Further, if you are scheduled to receive a meal but do not answer the door, the driver's phone call, or the follow up call from our office, it is COA protocol to ask the police to do a wellness check. This is an invaluable service and safety precaution our police offer in support of our community. We don't want to abuse their time by asking for this service unnecessarily.

Therefore, if you are not home to receive your lunch, you will receive two warnings. The third time you are not home at the time of delivery, we will have to suspend you from this service. Please note, we understand that emergencies happen! If you are not home due to emergency, that will not be counted against your lunch eligibility.

Holiday note—we are not able to provide lunches when the building is closed. Therefore, there will be no lunch distribution on Memorial Day (Monday, May 31st)

Don't forget! Elder Services of Cape Cod & The Islands offers a Meals on Wheels program. See pg. 15 for details.

Delivery Procedures

To protect everyone's health, all deliveries are now "contactless."

- ◆ COA staff & volunteers are not permitted to enter anyone's home, nor the common areas of congregate housing such as condo buildings.
- ◆ Delivery drivers will wear a face covering/mask and apply hand sanitizer between houses.
- ◆ Driver will set the items down near the door, and step back at least 6 feet after they knock. Place a small table or chair outside your door if you do not want items touching the ground or cannot bend over. *Keep in mind we are not supposed to hand you things directly!*
- ◆ If you wish to speak to the driver, please wear a mask. Don't forget to maintain distance.
- ◆ For food deliveries, **YOU MUST BE HOME.** Board of Health Regulations prohibit us from leaving food outside an empty home.
- ◆ Help us decrease waste! Please call us to cancel as soon as possible if you will not be home.

COA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Council on Aging Board of Directors meets monthly on the first Wednesday of every month at **10 AM**.

At this time, all meetings are held by remote participation only using GoToMeeting. Meeting credentials/call in information will be included on the publicly posted meeting agenda. If you would like to attend any of these meetings and need assistance, please contact Emily Mitchell (508-430-7550 or emitchell@town.harwich.ma.us) at least 24 hours before the meeting and she will guide you through the participation process.

Next meetings:

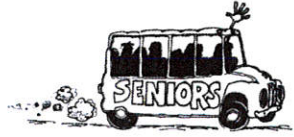
Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 10 AM
Wednesday, June 2, 2021, 10 AM

All agendas will be available on the town website, via the Town Clerk, or by contacting the COA.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

CRANBERRY COACH

Transportation on our handi-capped accessible van is still available for essential trips to grocery stores and pharmacies. **To schedule, call 508-430-7550.**



- ◆ Passengers are limited to maintain social distancing: At the time of printing, we are taking two passengers at a time on the van.
- ◆ You must make a reservation **at least one day ahead**. The more notice, the better!
- ◆ Most trips are scheduled for 9:00 am or 1:00 pm. Your flexibility is appreciated.
- ◆ Passengers must wear a face covering/mask on the COA van and be free of COVID-19 symptoms.
- ◆ **Reminder: rides are to scheduled locations only. Drivers cannot bring you to any location not scheduled through the COA office in advance.**

Cranberry Coach Weekly Schedule

Mondays	Market Basket and Hyannis shopping
Tuesdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Family Pantry deliveries
Wednesdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping
Thursdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping
Fridays:	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping

**Local shopping = Shaw's or Stop & Shop. Call the COA for the current schedule. Stops at CVS, the Post Office, and local banks allowed, only until the Friends' bus resumes service. We continue to transport people to onsite COA programs, Brooks Free Library, and Town Hall.*

Monday Trip Schedule

Hyannis shopping: May 3, May 17, June 14, June 28
Market Basket: May 10, May 24, June 7, June 21

RIDES TO MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Our ability to provide rides to medical appointments is *extremely* limited right now. We will do our best to accommodate your request, but **ride availability is not guaranteed.**

Requests must be made **AT LEAST 4 BUSINESS DAYS in advance.** The more notice, the better! Call 508-430-7550.

Guidelines:

- Travel between Wellfleet and Hyannis only.
- No extra riders are permitted unless required due to disability (must be your household member).
- We are unable to provide ongoing rides for medical therapies (e.g., physical therapy, chemotherapy).
- A stop to a pharmacy after your medical appt. is allowed; please request at the time of scheduling.
- NEW: Limit of 2 medical rides per month.
- NEW: We can no longer offer rides for routine dental visits.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION

CCRTA continues to run services on a reduced schedule. Call the numbers listed for details.



DART

Low cost public transportation is provided by the CCRTA DART bus, by reservation from curb to curb. You must register by calling 1-800-352-7155 weekdays, 8am-5pm.

H2O

Fixed route public transportation provided on CCRTA buses between Orleans and Hyannis, with stops in Harwich Port and at Shaws in Harwich. Call 1-800-352-7155 for information. Exact change needed.

Boston Hospital Transportation

Transportation is provided for medical appointments at Boston hospitals daily by the CCRTA. There is a pick-up in Harwich. Call 1-800-352-7155 to reserve by 11am the day before. Cost is \$30 round trip, \$15 one way.

Call the COA to schedule ALL rides!

508-430-7550

Please give us as much notice as possible—call at least 24 hours in advance for Cranberry Coach rides, and at least 4 business days for medical rides.

TOWN UPDATES AND EVENTS

BROOKS FREE LIBRARY UPDATES

Happy Spring, Harwich! It's always wonderful to leave the cold weather behind us but this year has been especially isolating, hasn't it? As winter has turned into spring more community members have been able to get vaccinated, which has been such a relief. I know some people may feel like the pandemic is over, particularly if you've received the vaccine, but unfortunately that's not the case. If we continue to follow the public health guidelines for mask wearing and social distancing, however, we'll be able to enjoy a summer that seems much more normal this year.

Speaking of a more normal summer, what about the Library? I'm delighted to announce that, if the current surge in the County is under control, we're planning to resume inside browsing in mid-May. Masks will be required and need to remain covering your nose and mouth while inside. The number of patrons doubles in the summer, so we plan to offer short "grab and go" visits - patrons can come in, select some items, and check -out. This will allow us to accommodate everyone without resorting to an unpopular appointment system and the quick turn-over will prevent lines of patrons waiting to enter. We know short visits aren't ideal but they're necessary this summer.

We haven't finalized our schedule but we will be open Monday through Saturday. We'll have some morning and afternoon hours, as most libraries in our area will, but we also want to provide sufficient evening hours so working people have the opportunity to come in after work, too. We're especially concerned with ensuring parents who work during the day are able to bring their children in to pick up books, which is very important so they don't lose ground academically over the summer. Afternoon and evening hours also allow folks to visit after they're done with the beach or other activities or before they head out to for dinner or an ice cream. But if our summer hours aren't ideal for you personally, please know we're trying to meet the needs of all segments of the community and they're for a limited period. We look forward to returning to normal hours in later phases of re-opening.

Curbside Pickup will still be available for those who can't wear a face covering or who don't want to come inside. The current procedure will continue: call us at 508-430-7562 to schedule a pick-up day and your items will be checked out, bagged, labeled with your name, and outside waiting for you. Please wear your mask when retrieving your bag as a courtesy to others in the area.

The Friends of Brooks Free Library have continued to offer their "Books on Wheels" service during the pandemic for residents who are homebound or have difficulty coming to the Library. Volunteers drop off and pick up items on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Please let us know if you're interested in this service and we'll pass your info along to the Books on Wheels coordinator.

More specifics on our re-opening will be forthcoming as plans progress. You can keep up-to-date by checking our website, www.brooksfreeibrary.org, where you can also sign up for our

email newsletter, and by following us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We'll also make announcements on Channel 18, at Selectmen's meetings and in the local newspapers. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me or any member of our staff by calling 508-430-7562 or using the email addresses found on our webpage.

We look forward to welcoming you back into the building soon!

Ginny Hewitt, Library Director

Brooks Free Library and the Voter Information Committee also teamed up in early Spring to produce the "Know Your Town" podcast. Adapted from an in person program pre-COVID, the new podcast allows listeners to learn about various Town Departments including information about their mission, services, pandemic operations, interactions with other departments, budget, and how residents can participate. This is an incredible resource—check it out as we lead out to Annual Town Meeting or just to learn more about our Town (the COA is episode 9)!

Available at: <https://www.brooksfreeibrary.org/bfl-podcast/>

HARWICH COMMUNITY CENTER

Reflection Exhibit

The Community Center has set up a display along the front walkway to reflect individuals' unique personal experiences and emotions. Come to the Center to pick up a shell or piece of driftwood to take home and decorate. You'll then return the memorial item and it will be hung on the display. The exhibit will be up throughout the month of May. If you are one of our lunch recipients, we'll be delivering a shell to you. If you choose to decorate it, you can return it to your lunch driver and we will hang it up for you! For questions or more information, call the Community Center at 508-430-7568.

Reopening: The Community Center remains open to groups that have reserved space for meetings or events (within certain capacity restrictions), for Weight Room appointments, and for other services including passport processing.

HARWICH CULTURAL CENTER

Celebrate Art and Inspiration in Our Community

The Harwich Cultural Center celebrates Art and Inspiration during **Art Week** May 1 – 10, 2021. Are you inspired by the budding flowers in your garden, the sunsets over Red River Beach, or the view of the Wychmere Harbor overlook, or have you written a new poem? Emailing your thoughts to culturalcenter@townofharwich.us or send a note to Carolyn Carey, Harwich Community Center, 100 Oak St., Harwich, MA 02645. We would love to hear how you are inspired by our community. The Harwich Cultural Center will be sharing the submissions online throughout the week.

Councils on Aging Serving Together

COASTAL CONNECTIONS

Cape COAST (Councils On Aging Serving Together) has been collaborating to strengthen our partnerships and leverage our collective resources to offer older adults on Cape Cod enhanced options for virtual programming. Join us as we connect visually through Zoom, widen our circles, and take advantage of greater opportunities for engagement, enrichment, and education. Below is a list of virtual programs open to you in May and June 2021! Each event is hosted by a particular Cape COA and is open to residents of all Cape towns—including Harwich! The sponsoring COA and registration information is included with each event description. **Registration for these programs will begin immediately!**

DISABILITY PLACARD PROGRAM

Wednesday, May 5, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

Join us as we welcome Michele Ellicks of the Mass DOT/Registry of Motor Vehicles as she presents the Disability Placard Program. Learn how to apply for a disability placard, plate, or a disabled veteran's plate. Learn the rules and regulations concerning placards, plates and parking and learn the penalties for illegal use of placards. This will be a very informative session. **To register call Julie at the Mashpee COA at (508) 539-1440 or email coaactivitycoordinator@mashpeema.gov**

RMV'S REAL ID WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 11, 2021, at 10:30am (via Zoom)

Understand the difference between a standard ID and a Real ID. Find out if you need a Real ID and what documents are required for it. Learn when and where a Real ID will be required. **To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.**



ATTRACTING BIRDS TO THE GARDEN WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Thursday, May 13, 2021, 10am (via Zoom)

By providing native plants in your yard, you can attract birds, as well as other pollinators to your home. Bird feeders can attract mice, squirrels, chipmunks and even rats, but native plants provide needed habitat and sustenance specifically for birds. This program includes ideas about choosing your plants, planning your bird habitat, and selecting specific native plants that do well on Cape Cod. Presenter: Leslie Altman, Master Gardener. **To register call the Barnstable COA at 508-862-4761 or email susan.griffin@town.barnstable.ma.us**

MASTER GARDENER: LIFELONG GARDENING

Monday, May 17, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

Gardening is a restorative hobby for many of us. When life experiences affect our ability to garden, we do not need to eliminate that living connection to the earth. Adaptations can be made to allow us to continue gardening even as our flexibility and resilience changes. **To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.**

Cape COAST



PREPARING TO SELL

Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

Presented by Allison Beavon

Thinking of downsizing and selling your home? Realtor, Allison Beavon, will share her expertise and tips for selling your home with as little stress as possible. Learn what to do and not to do to get ready. An enlightening step-by-step process will be presented. **To register call the Orleans Senior Center at 508-255-6333.**

CAPE WILDLIFE CENTER

Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

Zak Mertz is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, and along with talking about the biodiversity on Cape Cod, he will go over what to do if you come across a wild animal, and some tips to help fauna thrive in your own backyard. **To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.**

BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 1pm (via Zoom)

Join us as we welcome Joe Yukna, co-founder of the Cape Cod Military Museum, as he presents a virtual lecture on the Battle of Iwo Jima. The Battle of Iwo Jima was an epic military campaign in the Pacific Campaign during World War II. The iconic picture of the US Marines raising the American flag on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima, came from that event. Mr. Yukna, a well-known military historian, will share little-known facts about the battle. **To register call Julie at the Mashpee COA at (508) 539-1440 or email coaactivitycoordinator@mashpeema.gov**

If you are interested in participating in any of these COAST remote programs, you must call the sponsoring COA directly to sign up. Registration is required for all programs. Contact information is included in the descriptions.

Join me in thanking our Cape-wide COA partners in organizing these events and making them so widely available!

COAST PROGRAMS Cont.

MAKE YOUR MONEY LAST: FINANCIAL PLANNING WEBINAR Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 1pm (via Zoom)

With Sandy Childs, Financial Advisor from Edward Jones.
To register call the Bourne COA at 508-759-0600 ext. 5300.

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

Join us for an educational presentation as we discuss reducing anxiety and depression due to isolation and the impact of Covid-19. This program is presented by Debbie Bratcher from NAMI Cape Cod and the islands located in Hyannis. NAMI Cape Cod and the Islands building support, education and advocacy for Mental Wellness. *To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at 508-394-7606 X1333 or email: Inoferi-hoff@yarmouth.ma.us*



HOLLYWOOD HISTORY BACK TO THE 50s: AN EVENING WITH JAMES DEAN AND MARILYN MONROE Wednesday, May 19, 2021, 7pm (via Zoom)

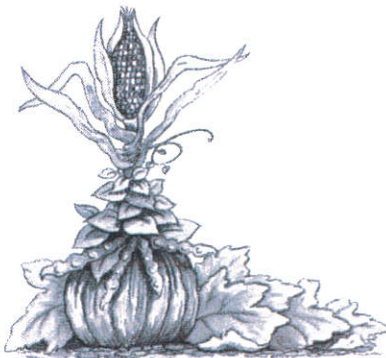
Though they never starred together in a film, James Dean and Marilyn Monroe remain two of Hollywood's biggest icons of the 1950s. Hear about their struggles as actors, enjoy clips of some of their finest moments in film, learn about their meteoric rises to fame, and their tragic and untimely deaths that all led to their indelible Mark on Hollywood, American culture, and celebrity. Not to be missed! Presenter: Frank Mandosa. *To register call the Barnstable COA at 508-862-4761 or email susan.griffin@town.barnstable.ma.us*

"Celebrating New England: Songs and Stories for Everyone" with Davis Bates

Thursday, May 20, 2021, at 10:30am (via Zoom)

Celebrate spring and regional cultural traditions with this program of community-oriented interactive entertainment. The program

will include oral history tales, Native American stories, family tales, and songs about sea, farming, maple sugaring, and more. There will be sing-a-longs, and even a short lesson on playing music with spoons from the kitchen drawer! *To register, call the Harwich COA at (508)430-7550.*



ENGAGING THE SELF: DEMYSTIFYING MINDFULNESS

Thursday, May 20, 2021, 7-8pm & Sunday, May 23, 2021, 6-7pm (via Zoom)

Join Mindfulness Meditation leader, Pete Cormier, and The Awareness Project for a free one-hour Zoom event featuring a short film of dialogue with the self, a guided mindfulness and movement meditation, followed by journaling and voluntary sharing. Participants will get the chance to get up and move, engage each other and embody mindfulness. Come for either date. *To register call the Sandwich COA at 508-888-4737 or the Barnstable COA at 508-862-4761.*

PLAY BALL! CAPE COD BASEBALL LEAGUE & CHATHAM ANGLERS

Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 10:30am (via Zoom)

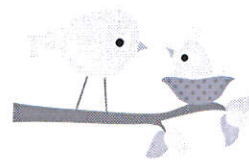
Baseball is back! Join John Garner, Director of Broadcasting, and Mike Geylin, Chatham Anglers GM, for a fascinating presentation on the Cape Cod Baseball League. Topics include league history, current operations, as well as specifics about Anglers' recruiting and activities. *To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.*



"ATTRACTING NATIVE BIRDS"

Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 1:30pm (via Zoom)

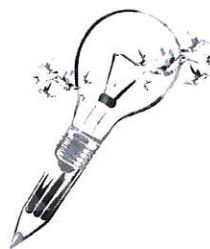
Migrant birds are arriving, and nesting will be underway in May. Join Stephanie Ellis, Wild Care's Executive Director, for this fun and informative presentation that covers attracting a variety of species of birds to your yard throughout the year, what to do if you find a baby bird or a bird strikes your window, and tips on how we can all better co-exist with our feathered friends. *To register call the Provincetown COA at 508-487-7080.*



WRITING TOGETHER WORKSHOP

Tuesdays, beginning June 1, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

Join Lorraine Gilmore on Tuesdays for a session of "Writing Together". Lorraine will provide writing prompts and each person will spend twenty minutes writing and then sharing their story (or essay or poem) with the group. Each member will comment on the writing - sharing thoughts about its structure or dialogue. Comments are supportive and kind. *To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at 508-394-7606 X1333 or email: Inoferi-hoff@yarmouth.ma.us*



COAST PROGRAMS Cont.

WOODS HOLE OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE VIRUTAL TOUR

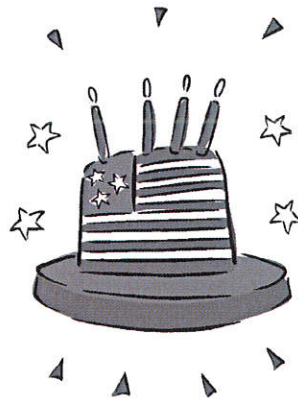
Thursday, June 3, 2021, at 9:30am (via Zoom)

Expert presenter Paul Daigle will take his audience on a virtual tour of one of Cape Cod's most renowned organizations, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. WHOI scientists are committed to understanding all facets of the ocean as well as its complex connections with Earth—including humanity. **To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.**

"COOKING WITH ALLY"

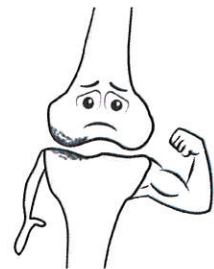
Tuesday, June 8th, 2021, at 11am (via Zoom)

Learn how to make an American Flag Cake! **Ingredients:** 6 ¼ sticks unsalted softened butter, 3 cups sugar, 6 extra large eggs, 1 cup sour cream, 3 teaspoons pure vanilla extract, 3 cups flour, 1/3 cup cornstarch, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 1 ½ pounds softened cream cheese, 1 pound sifted confectioners' sugar, 2 half-pints blueberries, and 3 half-pints raspberries. **To register call the Dennis Senior Center at 508-385-5067.**



JOINT REPLACEMENT HEALTH TALK

Wednesday, June 9, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)



The experts from Kindred Healthcare will present valuable information regarding joint replacement including surgical preparation, rehabilitation and up to date care information on physical therapy. Presenter: Joanne Burbank, Kindred Health. **To register call the Barnstable COA at 508-862-4761 or email susan.griffin@town.barnstable.ma.us**

UNDERSTANDING TRUSTS / PLANNING FOR LONG-TERM CARE

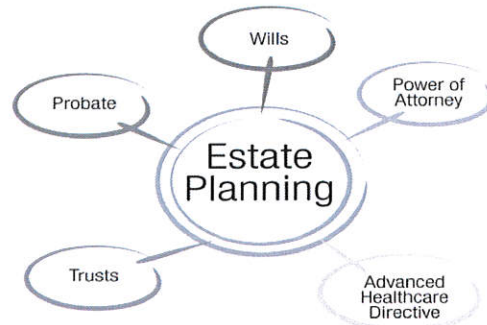
Wednesday, June 9, 2021, at 1:30pm (via Zoom)

Attorneys from Patricia Mello & Associates will help teach about Revocable, Irrevocable, Marital, Special Needs, and Testamentary Trusts, and how these documents can: (1) avoid probate; (2) save on death taxes; (3) provide for disabled children; and (4) protect certain beneficiaries against creditors. Attorneys from the Patricia Mello & Associates, P.C. explain in plain English what a Trust is and how it can be customized to meet your unique estate needs. The second part of this presentation will explain Medicaid law in Massachusetts, and how you and your family can plan for possible care in the future while taking steps to ensure that assets are preserved for you and your family. **To register call the Falmouth COA at 508-540-0196.**

BASICS OF ESTATE PLANNING

Thursday, June 10, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

This presentation covers the basics of estate planning: powers of attorney, healthcare proxy, wills and trusts, probate of estates, estate taxation, and asset protection from nursing home concerns. Presented by Attorney Michael L. Lavender. **To register, call the Harwich COA at 508-430-7550.**



LET'S TALK ABOUT TOMORROW

Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 9am (via Zoom)

This info session, presented by the Homeless Prevention Council (HPC), is designed to create awareness about senior housing on the Lower Cape, to encourage attendees to work with case managers to apply as soon as possible, and to connect residents to the many local resources available. This information is crucial for older adults who are considering either applying for affordable senior housing or aging in place. All are welcome! **To register call the Chatham COA at 508-945-5190.**

TREK ON THE CAMINO de SANTIAGO

Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 10:30am (via Zoom)

Join Pete Cormier to hear the story of his 2016 trek on the Camino de Santiago or The Way of St. James: A Pilgrimage of Medieval Origin. Accompanied by photos, journaling, incredible quilted scenes of photos of the journey and poetry relating to his journey, Peter will tell the story of his 4 week/460-mile trek along the route ending at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain. The Camino de Santiago is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site for its role in encouraging culture exchanges between people from all over the world for many centuries. **To register please call the Sandwich COA at 508-888-4737.**



"HEALTHCARE & YOUR RETIREMENT": FINANCIAL PLANNING WEBINAR

Wednesday, June 23, 2021, 1pm (via Zoom)

With Sandy Childs, Financial Advisor from Edward Jones. **To register call the Bourne COA at 508-759-0600 ext. 5300.**

NOTES FROM THE OUTREACH OFFICE

Julie Witas, MSW

Social Services Coordinator



Start thinking now about new support groups, trainings, or classes you'd like to join or request!

We're not quite at the finish line yet—we're not ready to resume group activities, and that time won't come for another few months. But I do think we're close enough that we can start having conversations about the types of social support groups and activities you'd like to see again.

Is there a specific type of issue you would like to see addressed? An activity-focused group? A training on a particular topic? I am most interested in hearing about issues related to your mental and emotional well-being—the last year has brought so many challenges: health anxiety, social isolation, financial difficulties, changes in routines, only to name a few. Are there things you learned about yourself throughout the last year that you want to explore?

Or maybe you are just ready to move on! If you are in this category and simply seeking new connections, what kind are you looking for? Do you want to gather with a regular group of folks at a regular time every week to just sit and talk about what happened during the pandemic—you might call that a coffee hour group, for example? Do you just want to play cards with people?

Did you learn a skill that you want to teach others, or do you want to learn a new skill yourself (e.g., knitting)? I will start collecting lists of names so that when it is eventually safe for us to gather, we can hit the ground running. I even have the supplies for a few types of groups!

Whatever your idea is—whatever you want to do or talk about with other people—call or email to tell me your idea. I will write down the name of your topic or activity. If someone else calls with the same idea, I will put you together in the same group. And I will cross my fingers that by the Fall, we might actually be able to host some of these wonderful group ideas.

Now I would like to tell you about two groups that are already planned for later this year. Please note that the exact timing is still TBD.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN WHO LIVE ALONE

I am tentatively planning to start this group in mid-July; we would meet by Zoom. Intended members are women who live alone/without partners, especially those with little family support in the area. If you have any interest in joining, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss! If you feel that the Zoom format is a barrier, please do not let that discourage you. I have many ideas for solutions. At least give me a call to let me know you would be interested when in person meetings become an option. 508-430-7550 ext 12

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE—RESILIENCY TRAINING

This Fall, we will offer a FREE 10-week, evidence-based course designed to provide participants with tools to build their resiliency. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, or significant sources of stress. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed.

The process of building resilience is different for everybody. This course outlines a number of tools and strategies that participants may consider as they navigate this process for themselves. Participants sign up to the full course – 10 one-hour classes, each dedicated to a specific topic:

- Connecting with others
- Nutrition
- Sleep
- Dealing with adversity
- When to seek professional help
- Staying positive
- Taking care of your spirit
- Getting physically active
- Helping others
- Creating joy and satisfaction

If you think you might be interested in signing up for this course, feel free to get in touch with me now to let me know. We are very excited to get the opportunity to bring this course to Harwich, thanks to a generous grant from The Harwich Fund to the Friends of the Harwich Council on Aging!

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

Susan Jusell, Town Nurse

As the Scarecrow sang to Dorothy, in the Wizard of Oz; *I would dance and be merry, life would be a ding-a-derry, if I only had a brain.*



The good news is, you have a brain. SO LET'S DANCE AND BE MERRY!

It's time to switch from survival mode to the comeback mode as the weather has gotten warmer and the days are brighter. June 20th is our summer solstice, the longest day of the year. June is also Alzheimer's and brain awareness month and the Alzheimer's Association uses the solstice as a day of recognition. Since it's the day of the most light, we'll fight the darkness of Alzheimer's by doing what we love. That gives you six weeks to plan for summer solstice. Let's make it a great day! I hope that each of you find moments throughout your day to do things that bring you pleasure. It might be putting a chair right at the door to sit at while you watch the birds and the four-legged critters, maybe even a visit from the turkeys. You don't need money and you don't need company to find joy, maybe start by finding appreciation for what you have.

Have you done anything for your brain lately?

It's very simple, events that challenge you are good for your brain. Games and puzzles are easy to access and you can spend days trying to piece a puzzle together. Try a book of word finds or riddles, something on the computer or a deck of cards to be used independently or shared for competitive games. Have you tried an adult coloring book with pictures or designs? It's both stimulating and therapeutic to pick up a package of pencils and start filling in the lines with color. Reading a novel or listening to audiobooks stimulates many parts of your brain, as it challenges you to recall and perceive events of the story each time you stop and start. Sleep is essential to every part of our well-being, if you're not sleeping well, then please talk to your doctor about it. Depression and anxiety are feelings we all have, like being sad or mad, but if it's getting the better of you, then it's time to get some help. There's a number of options, please reach out to your doctor or give me a call and let's explore what direction might be the best path for you to start with.

I know with Covid it's been very tough, but as soon as you can, try to find a way to be an active part of our community. Phone calls are a great way to reach out. If you look back in your past, reach out to somebody you haven't talked to in 10 years, most people would really appreciate it. Staying socially engaged is very important for your brain as is aerobic exercise. Can you move with purpose for at least 10 minutes each day? Try sitting in your chair using a pedaling device in front of you, or step outside and walk five minutes to the right of your house in five to the left. It's important to keep moving to build muscle mass, maintain bone

growth and increase blood flow to the brain as you increase your heart rate.

Last but not least, you've got to feed that brain! There are many studies and different diets with certain foods that you should and shouldn't eat, but in the long run a Mediterranean diet continues to be approved by the experts. The pyramid base is largely built of fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, olive oil, beans, and nuts. The pyramid ascends with fish and seafood, followed by smaller amounts of poultry, eggs, and dairy, then topped with limited meats and sweets.

We're very fortunate on the Cape to have the Alzheimer's Family Support Center here in Brewster. They typically have a nonprofit fundraising event at Brooks Park the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend but because of Covid restrictions this won't be happening this year. They've been available 7 days a week helping to navigate the challenges due to dementia throughout this entire pandemic. You can learn more about them on their website at alzheimerscapecod.org or by calling them at 508-896-5170.

Make note to **save the date** and stay tuned for more info to come!

On **Tuesday June 15th** The Cape Cod Elder Abuse Coalition will host a remote conference via Zoom with our state delegates for Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Three local panelists, one from the Harwich COA Board, will share a story directly from their work as a way to identify the gaps in support for the older population. Then legislators will be invited to respond and questions can be asked at the end by the participants.

At this point we believe that most of the 75+ residents of Harwich that want the Covid vaccine have been vaccinated, and a large percentage of the 65+ have also been vaccinated or have started the process.

Once you are fully vaccinated, wait two weeks and then follow the guidelines set by the CDC for appropriate precautions. This includes visiting indoors in a small private setting without a mask, with the other fully vaccinated people of any age. You can also gather indoors with unvaccinated people of any age from ONE other household UNLESS any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

We're DISCOURAGED from visiting indoors without a mask with people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and advised against attending medium or large gatherings at this time. If traveling, know at the guidelines/restrictions of your destination area and procedure for your safe and uncomplicated return. Since the beginning of April, you're able to travel domestically without pre-or post-travel test and without quarantining after your travels.

I'm having wellness clinics on Thursdays and office visits throughout the week. Please give me a call to set up an appointment, I'm not able to take walk-ins at this time.

Get outside and enjoy the sunshine!

VOLUNTEER NEWS



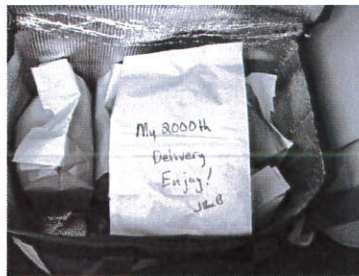
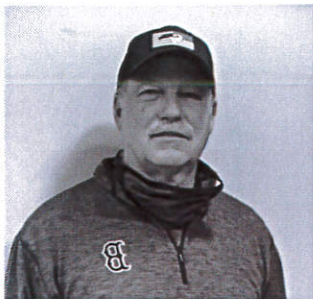
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



John Bathelt

Congratulations on 2,000 deliveries!

(and thanks ☺)



As of a few weeks ago, COA volunteer John Bathelt has delivered over 2,000 lunches & Brown Bags (groceries) since the start of the pandemic in March 2020!

He was the first to volunteer to bring food to seniors when the news first broke that the Town of Harwich would be closing its buildings. He then came in at least 3 days/week for the next several months to deliver lunches and always helped to stretch our coverage when it was thinnest, until we were able to recruit a larger and more stable pool of volunteers. Today, he still delivers lunches twice a week and Brown Bag once a month.

John and his wife Lee are relatively new to Harwich—they're spending their third year here after relocating from Holyoke, Mass. following his retirement. They enjoyed living in Colorado for most of their careers.

When he's not delivering for the COA, you can find him at Thompson's Field with his dogs most days, or perhaps at Long Pond in the summer. He plays golf at Cranberry Valley; follows professional baseball, the field in which his son works administratively; and also follows college volleyball, where his daughter coaches.

CURRENT VOLUNTEER NEEDS

Julie Witas, MSW

Social Services Coordinator



The Harwich Council on Aging is always seeking new volunteers for many types of roles. If you're looking for a way to safely connect with others while we get through these last months of the pandemic, consider joining our team! To find out about our current opportunities, contact Julie by email (jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us) or phone (508-430-7550 extension 12).

We are currently recruiting for the following positions:

Lunch Drivers (1.5 hours/week, at least 4 month commitment): We are always looking for additional volunteers to help with our contactless lunch deliveries. A great way to meet your neighbors (from a distance)!

We prefer drivers who can commit to a regular day every week, but we also keep a roster of back up drivers to fill in for our regulars.

Admin/Reception Desk Assistant (4-10 hours/week, long term commitment preferred): We are currently seeking one or two new additions to our small team of dedicated volunteers that keep our busy office running smoothly. This role is ideal for a retired professional who is looking for a meaningful volunteer experience where their contribution will be truly valued and respected.

Data Entry (1-2 hours/week, occasional): If you have good computer skills, we are looking for someone to help us catch up with some data entry.

How do I get started with volunteering?

Getting started at the COA is easy! Here are the steps:

- 1) A. Complete a CORI authorization form (Julie can email one to you, or you can arrange a time to pick one up from our office),
AND
B. Provide a copy of your driver's license/state ID (Julie can make a copy at the office)
- 2) Tell us what you're interested in doing and your availability. Julie will talk with you to see if we can find a match (we usually can!).
- 3) That's it! If there's an agreeable time & position, you'll be added to the schedule and given a brief orientation!

FRIENDS' NEWS



Friends of The Harwich Council on Aging

100 Oak Street, Harwich MA 02645
508-432-5050
FriendsOfHarwichCOA@gmail.com

A message from Jack Brown, Friends' President

Dear Friends, Donors, and Members,

The peepers are busy now announcing spring, birds are returning to the Cape, and the battle continues against weeds. Most joyful is that many of us are vaccinated and able to socialize carefully with family and friends.

Harwich Fund Grant: We are delighted to announce that the Harwich Fund has donated \$2,000 to Friends to support a Harwich COA pilot program, *Living Your Best Self*. Harwich Fund board member, Brian Scheld introduced himself and the Fund at a recent Friends meeting and indicated the Fund's focus in 2021 is on older adults especially as they are impacted by Covid-19. Emily Mitchell, HCOA Director, and Friends' Board member Chris Joyce submitted the proposal and look forward to the pilot program kicking off in Fall 2021.

Annual Meeting: Secretary, JoAnne Brown is working on plans for our annual meeting. Agenda items include approval of revised bylaws and Board member recruitment. Friends' members, please be on the lookout a meeting announcement.

We hope to contact members via email - if you haven't shared your email yet with Friends, please do so by sending your address to: FriendsOFHawichCOA@gmail.com.

Front Entry Lock Boxes: The Board is exploring ways to purchase lock boxes at a reduced cost from the approved Harwich Fire Department vendor. The lock box allows, in an emergency, firefighters and paramedics immediate entry into the home without forced entry damage.

The plan is that Friends will have a "free" raffle for Harwich older adults and the lucky winners will receive a lock box and arrange for installation by the Harwich Fire Department. More to follow.

Mini-bus/Transportation: Since COVID-19, we have been unable to provide the Thursday shopping/banking loop – nor the monthly excursions to local Cape attractions. Friends has prudently reduced the van's insurance coverage to a savings of over \$5,000. We hope you agree that the Board takes it fiscal responsibility seriously.

Town Information:

Know Your Town: Brooks Free Library and Voter Information Committee teamed up to produce, under BFL Assistant Director and VIC member Emily Milan's direction, a number of podcasts on most of Harwich's departments. The objective is to provide residents info on what each department does, how it interacts with other departments, and its challenges.

While I encourage you to listen to each of the interviews, I hope you will at least listen to our COA Director's segment at: www.BrooksFreeLibrary.org/bpl-poscast

Your Membership: Your dues help Friends supplement Harwich COA programs. Please renew your membership or join Friends for the first time. The form below can be used for both membership and/or donations.

Best Regards,

Friends Board: Jack E. Brown, President; Christina Joyce, Treasurer; JoAnne Brown, Secretary; Susan Lellis, Director, and Richard Waystack, Director.

GIFT DEDICATIONS DECMEBER THROUGH APRIL

In Loving Memory Of

Peggy Rose

Anonymous

Friends of Harwich Council on Aging Board

Christina Joyce

FY 21 FRIENDS OF HARWICH COA MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues are \$5.00 per person / Life dues are \$40 per person

Name _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Town/Zip _____ Phone _____

Town/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

ANNUAL: \$5.00 _____ LIFE : \$40.00 _____

ANNUAL: \$5.00 _____ LIFE : \$40.00 _____

Additional Donation: \$ _____

Additional Donation: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Friends of the Harwich COA
Mail to: FHCOA, 11 Wheaton Way, Harwich Port, MA 02646

CAREGIVER & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

SUPPORT & CONNECTION

The Samaritans on Cape Cod and the Islands:
Senior Outreach Program

Free and available to anyone age 55+
Call 508-548-7999

Senior Outreach is a referral program where outgoing calls are made to isolated or at-risk older adults.

Participants are matched with a Samaritan-trained volunteer who calls the senior once or twice each week. Conversations are confidential, and provide a safe place for older adults to talk about whatever is troubling them most without fear of judgment or repercussion.

If you have been impacted by health problems, retirement, the loss of loved ones, depression, or are struggling with the isolation caused by this pandemic, volunteers are there to listen with compassion and empathy. Or if you know of a senior who might be isolated, lonely, or simply in need of a caring voice, please contact their office to find out more about how we can match that senior with a volunteer.

CALEB CHASE FUND

The Caleb Chase Fund is a Town of Harwich fund designed to help Harwich residents in financial need. The Fund can help with payments for rent, utilities (including phone and internet service), medical bills, car payments, and child care. **If you are interested in learning more about the Caleb Chase Fund, contact Julie Witas (508-430-7550, or jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us) to learn more about the application process.**

Alzheimer's Family Support Center

The Alzheimer's Family Support Center currently offers 47 FREE virtual support groups for caregivers, as well as for people experiencing memory loss. Please call 508-896-5170 for more information and to register for the group that best meets your needs and schedule. AFSC also provides step-by-step phone support on how to access these groups using Zoom!

Upcoming Event:

COVID-19 and Your Cognitive Health: Challenges and Strategies for Reintegrating Post-Pandemic

Monday, May 24, 1:30 PM (via Zoom)

Preregistration required—email info@capecodalz.org or call 508-896-5170

NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

These programs are ongoing. All deliveries are now contact-free.



BROWN BAG PROGRAM

The COA works with the Greater Boston Food Bank and the Family Pantry to distribute brown bags of food for eligible seniors on the 1st Friday of the month. Bags may include fresh fruit or vegetables, meat or frozen food, and shelf stable items. If you have a low income and/or are on MassHealth, SNAP, or Fuel Assistance you will qualify. For more information, call 508-430-7550.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Sponsored by Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands. Meals are delivered to homebound seniors by volunteers. Voluntary donation of \$3 per meal. For more information, call Elder Services at 508-394-4630.

S.N.A.P.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low income individuals and families buy healthy, nutritious food. A SNAP household's monthly benefit depends on household size, income and expenses. For more information, contact the COA at 508-430-7550.

MEMA FOOD BOXES

The MA COVID-19 Center has provided Barnstable County with shelf-stable food boxes to support individuals and households who are in isolation and quarantine due to COVID-19. If you would like to receive a food box, please contact Andrea Marczely, Food Access Coordinator at the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension at 508-375-6944 or by email andrea.marczely@barnstablecounty.org. She can **arrange delivery of the food box to your home!**

CAPE ORGANIZATION FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED

Did you know that Options Counseling is available through CORD? Steve Spillane, PhD will answer your calls about services that may assist you in staying in the community rather than going into a nursing home. Some of the most popular programs he shares information regarding include Personal Care Attendants, Transportation Prescriptions, and the Home Modification Loan Program. Please call CORD at 508-775-8300 x20 and leave a message for Steve or email him at steve@cilcapecod.org.

HARWICH COUNCIL ON AGING
100 Oak Street
Harwich, MA 02645

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FOR THOSE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS, A LARGE PRINT VERSION OF THE NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

HARWICH COUNCIL ON AGING

Harwich Council on Aging
100 Oak Street
Harwich, MA 02645
508-430-7550 (COA)
508-430-7505 (Town Nurse)

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday—Friday 8:30 am—4:00 pm

*www.town.harwich.ma.us
click on "Departments" then "Council on Aging"*

Staff Contacts

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*The printing of this newsletter was made possible
with grant funding from the Massachusetts
Executive Office of Elder Affairs.
Postage is generously provided
by the Town of Harwich.*

COA Disclaimer

*The Harwich COA offers many legal, financial, medical,
recreational and other services and/or activities by volun-
teers or nominal cost practitioners. Seniors participating
in these services do so with the understanding that the
Harwich COA, the Town of Harwich or its employees do not
assume any legal or other responsibility for any advice or
services rendered by such volunteers or practitioners.*