

Senior Scope

A newspaper serving the communities of **Acushnet ■ Dartmouth ■ Fairhaven ■ Gosnold ■ Marion ■ Mattapoisett ■ New Bedford ■ Rochester**

Vol. 4, Issue 6

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March 2022

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50 years
SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM
 CELEBRATE • INNOVATE • EDUCATE
 March 2022 • acl.gov/snp50 • #SNP50
Celebrating Senior Nutrition 1972-2022

Nourishing the body and soul

Senior Nutrition programs celebrate 50 years of success, 1972-2022

Coastline Nutrition Director Philip Beard sometimes compares the organization's Meals on Wheels operation to the U.S. post office's. It may not be fancy or showy, he says, but it gets the job done day in and day out, providing a service that is relied upon by thousands.

Beard runs Coastline's meals program which provides more than 400,000 nutritious meals each year to seniors living at home as well as to group sites across the South Coast. For many older adults, that meal may be the only warm food they'll eat and the driver the only person they'll speak to on that day.

Older adults who have become frailer with age or have medical problems cannot always provide for themselves, Beard said, noting he hears from seniors that they are too tired to stand in front of the stove to be able to cook, or that they're not able to shop for groceries for themselves.

With Coastline's meals program, they can sign up for a warm, nutritious, home-delivered lunch every



As Senior Nutrition programs celebrate their 50th anniversary this month, *Senior Scope* looks back at Coastline's 40+ years of serving meals in the region.



weekday without needing to meet any requirements, including income levels. It is also free, with only a \$2 voluntary donation request that many choose to contribute.

Programs like Coastline's, which

exist across the country, are being celebrated this month, as the nation's senior nutrition program turns 50 years-old. The anniversary is helping the thousands of programs

Continued on page 3

Widowed support group heals with heart

Losing a spouse is like losing half of your own self, forcing you to learn how to live again, believes Jane Rocha, 67, widowed persons director at the YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts.

Rocha went through this process herself, after her husband died in 2018.

"Because my husband was chronically ill, my life became totally centered around him," she said.

"It wasn't just trying to put one foot in front of another for me, it was helping him put his feet one in front of another," she continued. "When he passed away so suddenly, I was trying to take the two halves of myself and become one. I thought I don't

"When we're genuinely heard by those who understand what we're talking about, it is, in fact, very healing."

—Jane Rocha,
 YWCA Widowed Persons Director

have to breathe for him and me anymore. I just have to do that for me."

When Rocha speaks about relearning how to live your life, she means it literally. She and her husband had a standing Friday night shopping excursion, for example. Every week, they visited BJ's and then Market Basket, where Rocha's husband would get

a coffee, while she shopped.

But after he died, Rocha wasn't sure she could make the trip alone.

Her first Friday at Market Basket was traumatic. She remembers spilling potatoes across the floor and nearly breaking down when a large man approached her to help collect them. He could see she was upset and at first thought it was his unfamiliarity and large size that caused her dismay.

What he said next made Rocha catch her breath.

"He said I used to sit with your husband at the counter and I just was so concerned because I haven't seen him in a while. Is everything OK?" said Rocha.

The connection and timing of

Continued on page 12

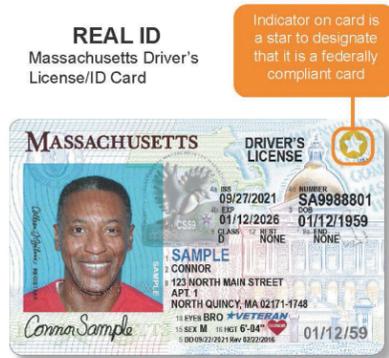
REAL ID deadline extended to 2023

Massachusetts residents intending to travel by air will have more time to obtain a REAL ID thanks to another extension of the state's deadline from October 2022 to May 2023.

Under the new deadline, residents will need a REAL ID, or other acceptable ID such as a valid passport, by May 3, 2023, to fly within the U.S., access certain federal facilities, or enter military bases. The Department of Homeland Security extended the deadline based on the disruptions created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A REAL ID for Massachusetts is a form of your license that will also act as a federal ID. It is a Federal Security Standard for IDs that was created in 2005 as a result of increased federal security measures after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. It will be required for all air travel in the U.S. for anyone 18 years of age or older as of May, 2023.

To replace your driver's license with a federal REAL ID, you'll need to visit the RMV in person and provide specific documentation. You can start the process online at mass.gov/id to make sure you have the proper information



- ✗ CANNOT be processed online – must make a reservation to visit an RMV Service Center or AAA members can visit a AAA branch if not a first-time applicant
- ✓ Proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful presence required
- ✓ Is a valid driver's license or identification card
- ✓ Is valid for up to 5 years or length of stay in the U.S.
- ✓ CAN be used to board a plane in the U.S. or enter federal buildings after May 3, 2023
- ✓ Is an acceptable form of identification for federal purposes

The REAL ID acts as a federal form of identification. It goes into effect in May, 2023.

when you go to the RMV.

Documents you use to prove your identity must be original, according to the state. No photocopies or laminated documents will be accepted. If you are missing a required document, your credentials will not be processed.

For more information, including a checklist of documents that will be accepted, visit mass.gov.

From the Editor

We all have some idea of what elderly isolation looks like and means. Even if we don't personally know someone experiencing it, we've seen photos or heard of cases of elder neglect or abuse.

But unless we're older and have experienced our bodies and abilities changing firsthand, it's difficult to really understand what it feels like, especially in today's youth-obsessed society.

In my interview with Jane Rocha this month (page 1, *Widow support group heals with heart*), she used the words "being put in the corner," to describe disconnected seniors, meaning they are no longer seen as having value and social worth. And, what was truly frightening to me, is that she sees elders putting themselves in the corner, volunteering to sideline themselves because they no longer look or act the same.

Think about yourself for a moment. Does your age number reflect how you feel inside? For many of us, it doesn't. Inside we are still the person who played, laughed, partied, and experienced life as a vital individual.

Does that person disappear when our bodies become frail? I don't believe so and Jane doesn't seem to either.

I had reached out to her after hearing her present to a Coastline committee and wanting to learn more of her perspective. She sees people grieving on many levels today, not just for the loss of a person, but for loss due to the

pandemic, and for older adults, for the loss of self.

Rocha wants to help seniors communicate to their loved ones that while "my body may have become frail, my spirit remains the same."

She believes seniors need to fight against the instinct to minimize themselves, to make themselves less because they may look less to others.

I didn't plan to write about isolation this month. I wanted to sing the praises of another program, Meals on Wheels, officially senior nutrition, that's celebrating its 50th anniversary nationally this month.

The program feeds seniors across the country and, through Coastline, here in the South Coast (page 1, *Nourishing the body and soul*).

But in my interviews on Meals on Wheels, I learned how the program does more than deliver food to older adults. Over and over, I heard how much the delivery drivers' presence, arriving with a hot meal, a bright smile, and a friendly hello each day, can mean for older adults, especially those living alone.

It's one way we are reducing isolation here in the South Coast and that's good.



Beth Perdue

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Mass Options 844-422-6277
massoptions.org 844-422-MASS



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Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	Peggy Vollmer Ann Raymond
Fairhaven Council on Aging 229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven	508-979-4029	Dianne Perkins Carolyn Dantoni Freda St. Marie-Johnson
GNB Community Health Center 874 Purchase Street, New Bedford	508-992-6553 x147	Derek Mendes
Immigrants' Assistance Center 58 Crapo St., New Bedford	508-996-8113	Lucy Oliveira
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Mattapoisett Council on Aging 17 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett	508-758-4110	Connie Heacox
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Checks can be made out to "Coastline" (not "Senior Scope") and mailed to 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745.

Donations for March 2022

Our donors help *Senior Scope* carry out its mission, and we cannot thank you enough for your support. Voluntary donations can be mailed to Coastline, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745. Checks can be paid to the order of: *Coastline*. We cannot process checks made out to "*Senior Scope*." You can also call Coastline's Accounting Clerk, Michelle Walton, at 508-742-9114 to donate with a credit card or use the QR code below to donate online.

In Thanks:

— Joseph Gomes
\$25

This month: \$25
Year-to-Date: \$45

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TIMELINE

1972

The Older Americans Act of 1965 is amended to include a national nutrition program for seniors.

1981

Coastline begins supplying Meals on Wheels, taking over from New Bedford.

1994

Meals served per day grows from 1,100 to 1,400.

1996

Coastline begins using refrigerated and heated trucks for meal delivery.

2002

Philip Beard becomes program director and is still serving in the role today.

2019

Coastline's Medical Nutrition Therapy program receives an Aging Achievement Award from n4a.

2020

Pandemic closes group sites for meals; home delivery continues.

2021

Coastline's total meals served has doubled over 20 years, reaching 440,000.

2022

Meals on Wheels programs in the U.S. join forces to celebrate 50 years of success.

Meals continued...

in communities throughout the U.S. educate others about their successes and work to keep support strong for ending senior malnutrition and isolation in the future.

Regional from the start

Nationally, President Nixon's amending of the Older Americans Act made nutrition programs a reality in 1972 and it's that anniversary date, 50 years ago this month, that is being celebrated now.

Coastline began its Meals on Wheels program in the early 1980s, taking the reins from an existing one that the city of New Bedford had begun in the '70s.

At the time, Maria Connor was an outreach worker and future Coastline nutrition director, who came with the program when it moved to Coastline.

"This was a time when social services were evolving," said Connor, now president of the Dartmouth Friends of the Elderly and a Coastline Advisory Council member. "Some places didn't have councils on aging yet and there were no home care programs."

The nutrition program became a cornerstone of those future programs, she said.

Connor was hired by the city during the 1970s working for then director of nutrition in New Bedford, David Alves. Even then, the program was regional, she said, delivering meals in local towns as well as in the city. It worked, in part, because they collaborated with local churches, housing sites, and other organizations in each community.

The program grew quickly, she said, not just as an initiative to support better nutrition, but as a way to bring older adults together for social interaction. The entertainment provided – including live music, community plays, and trips to Lincoln Park – also helped bring more seniors into the program.

"We explored every means to bring (seniors) out of the house," said Connor. "There's nothing worse than having seniors these days being like a shut-in when there's no need for that."

The Need

The numbers of seniors in need of meals and the social connection they provide is eye-opening.

Before the pandemic, nearly 9.7 million seniors were threatened by hunger, 5.3 million of which were considered food insecure or very low food insecure, according to Meals on Wheels America, a national organization supporting more than 5,000 community-based programs that address



Coastline's Meals on Wheels program has evolved over the years, becoming a digital operation, adding meals for specific dietary needs, and moving from local cooking to a contracted process. Even the delivery system has shifted with better vehicles keeping food fresher, and a registered dietitian on staff to answer questions on nutrition.

senior isolation and hunger. Those numbers have since grown with more seniors experiencing hunger and/or social isolation now, it said.

In addition to physical obstacles, half of seniors living alone also face financial ones, lacking the resources to pay for their basic needs like food, according to MOWA, which estimates the economic strain of these conditions nationally is \$51 million.

The Secret Sauce

If there's a secret ingredient to the success of Meals on Wheels, it's the drivers.

Drivers are Coastline employees who work for several hours a day around lunchtime delivering meals home by home. Because they see their meal recipients five days a week, they get to know them and become familiar with their habits and patterns, Beard said.

"That's the distinguishing piece," said Beard, about the interactions with drivers. "Our intent is to see the people."

Drivers are often the first to spot when something is wrong, he said. Perhaps they see a walkway that isn't shoveled or mail that hasn't been picked up. Other times, they might notice a person's disheveled physical appearance or injuries such as a black eye.

Because drivers visit regularly

with a smile and a meal, people also tend to be more open and casual in these conversations than they might be with a home care assessment person. That means referrals from drivers are an important way to get a senior the help he or she needs.

"We'll make referrals out (to other Coastline programs) because a driver sees something," said Beard. "Yes, that's definitely part of it."

Connor said she's observed firsthand what Coastline drivers mean to older adults when her sister-in-law was struggling with arthritic hands in her later years. She noticed then how kind the meals drivers were and how they took extra time and care to open the packages for her sister-in-law when she could not.

"They're my heroes," she said.

What's Next for Meals

Now 50 years strong, Meals on Wheels programs are looking to the future.

At Coastline that means keeping what's best about the program and making improvements where needed, according to CEO Justin Lees.

"Coastline is looking at ways to give meal recipients more choice when it comes to the food they receive and perhaps adding more ethnic foods, Portuguese favorites," said Lees.



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Update

Learning more about the Earned Income Tax Credit

The American Rescue Plan temporarily expanded the existing small federal earned income tax credit (EITC) for low-wage working adults without children at home by increasing the maximum credit and broadening the eligibility to younger and older workers, according to a release from the National Center on Law and Elder Rights. This newly eligible population consists of childless adults between the ages of 19-24 and over the age of 65. The expansion goes into effect this year (for those with earnings in tax year 2021) and will benefit millions of adult workers. The maximum EITC for this population nearly triples to roughly \$1,500, and the income limit to qualify has increased to about \$21,000 (\$27,000 for couples married filing jointly). Eligible workers must file their taxes to get the credit, even if they don't owe federal income tax. This expansion of the EITC may be helpful to many older adults who are working. Ask your tax assister for help in filing or see more information at TaxOutreach.org.

New Bedford ends mask mandate

The city of New Bedford has ended its mask mandate for municipal buildings. The city made the decision in February with an effective date of Feb. 18 at 4 p.m. The decision comes after the state announced it was lifting its mask mandate for public school buildings as of March 1. School systems, however, can still choose to enforce masks.

Calling all older adults daily

The R.U.O.K. Program is a free telephone calling service for older adults and people with disabilities living in Bristol County. The Bristol County Sheriff's Department will make a telephone call to an individual's home at approximately the same time each day. To enroll in the program, call 508-994-8932 or 888-809-8932. This program serves communities in Bristol County, including Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven and New Bedford.

Plymouth County manages a similar service called the Safety Assurance program. This program can help people maintain an independent lifestyle. All calls are monitored by a communications officer. Contact the Plymouth County Sheriff's Office at 508-830-6200 or visit them online at pcsdma.org.

Projects serving older adults welcome to apply

United Way of Greater New Bedford has relaunched its Mini-Grants program as Changermaker Grants. These grants enable all-volunteer groups to get community-focused projects off the ground with grants of up to \$2,500. Any all-volunteer group in the UW's service area is welcome to apply as long as they have a budget under \$40,000 and a great idea. Apply by March 11 at unitedwayofgnb.org/changemaker-grants.

Program helps older adults stay mentally fit

Buzzards Bay Speech Therapy's popular course Brain Builders continues on Mondays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and on Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. Participants can join the class online or by phone or choose at home programs delivered each week by mail or email. The class is meant to help improve your memory, word-finding skills, thinking skills, and socialization. Brain Builders is facilitated by Lisa Yauch-Cadden, MS CCC-SLP, Kari Star, MS CCC-SLP, and Lori Yauch, MA CCC-SLP. For information and the link to connect to the class, contact Lisa at 508 326-0353; or lycslp@gmail.com. Funding provided in part by a grant from Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Classes are for education and socialization and not intended to diagnose/treat any condition/problem.

COVID eviction help available

Are you in danger of losing housing due to COVID-19? Take advantage of free legal assistance. The COVID Eviction Legal Help Project is operated by a group of regional legal aid organizations to provide assistance to both tenants and landlords facing pandemic-related eviction issues. Call them at 800-244-9023, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. More information can be found at nbrenthelp.com.

Rummage Sale in Dartmouth

St. Julie's Ladies Guild will have a rummage sale with clothes, shoes, accessories, household items, domestics, knick-knacks, toys, books, and more. New & special items (in the Specialty Corner). The sale will be March 1-7 p.m., March 25 and 9 a.m. to noon, March 26 at St. Julie Billiard Church Hall, 494 Slocum Rd., Dartmouth, MA. Face masks are required. Sponsored by the Ladies Guild.

Become a personal and home care aide online

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is now offering the Personal and Home Care Aide State Training (PHCAST) online. This free, virtual and self-paced training is for anyone interested in becoming a community-based home care worker.

Home care aides are an integral part of the in-home care team. They provide services that support older adults and persons with disabilities to thrive and live in their homes and communities, as well as to make decisions about their care and lifestyle.

PHCAST is a self-paced, video-based, 11-module online training program. You can complete each module from your home computer or smartphone. For more information, and to sign up for the program, visit mass.gov/PHCAST.

GRG, Inc. meeting resumes schedule in March

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Inc. resumes their regular monthly meeting this month. GRG, Inc. offers support for grandfamilies. The monthly support group meets at the New Bedford Public Library, 613 Pleasant St. in New Bedford, on the third Tuesday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. The next meeting will be March 15. Grandparents, please call Brenda Grace at 508-996-0168 for more info. Her days off are Tuesdays and Wednesdays. You can also call after 5 p.m. on work days. You may also support their annual scholarship program, which benefits local students who were raised by their grandparents. Checks can be made out to Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Inc., and mailed to 119 Parker St., New Bedford, MA 02740. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren is partly funded by Coastline and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Ticket discounts are now available for shows at the Z

Coastline is happy to once again be working in concert with the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center to bring arts and entertainment back to the community, after the pandemic hiatus.

The Z is providing discounted tickets as a community benefit. Please see their upcoming show schedule and attendance policies at www.zeiterion.org. Contact your local Council on Aging to purchase discounted tickets.



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17 Barstow St., Mattapoissett

For more information and registration, contact Stephanie Gibson at 774-510-0193 or you may register online at healthyliving4me.org.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the Administration for Community Living in collaboration with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley and North Shore, Inc.

Your Health

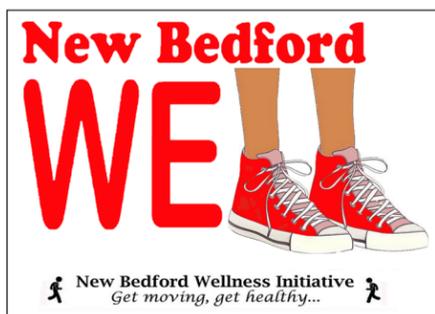
Embracing mindfulness through direct experience

By Nicole Winning
Owner of Metta Rising

Explaining mindfulness is like trying to describe art, love or nature in a couple sentences. There are nuances, layers, and different pathways to approach the experience of these topics. The best way to better understand these arching topics is through your own direct experience, again and again. Knowing that every time you experience them you are also going to experience them differently because you are a different person.

From day to day, season to season, we are always shifting in our perceptions of things. Take a moment and chuckle at the idea of you describing love when you were 20, compared to you describing love now. This is the same with mindfulness. Our experience of it is always changing and yet there is also something within our experience over time that doesn't change. That is where the juicy insight lies and the key to beginning our journey again and again into the field of mindfulness.

Understanding that everything is changing is a huge step towards seeing the bigger picture of what we do when we are practicing mindfulness or mindfulness meditation. The difference between mindfulness and mindfulness meditation is that the prior can happen anytime, anywhere. The latter form of mindfulness is a dedicated time in either a seated, walking or standing position to the act of mindfulness. It can last for however long you'd like, but you are dedicating your attention to the principles of mindfulness without distractions. The prior is more casual. It



can happen amidst children crying, cell phones ringing, televisions playing, etc.

The underlying principles of what we do in either practice is mostly the same. We are noticing; but, not just noticing. We are noticing things that come to our attention via our physical sensations, mental thinking and emotional flavoring; but we are also noticing our relationship to what we notice.

Do we latch onto pleasurable feelings, thoughts and sensations and push away the undesirable ones? Do we take things personally or ramble on our opinions about them? Do they take us to memories of the past or imaginations of the future? It's a lot to bite off at first, but what helps us to simplify it all is the fact that we typically notice that whatever we are noticing is changing. Physical sensations, thoughts, feelings and what is happening around us is always changing.

Mindfulness asks us to take note of that. That you and life are always changing. Even when we think we are stuck or moving slowly, this is never the case. At some level, things are always changing. There is a freedom in this recognition because you know that at some point, things will change.

However, this increased awareness of

Connecting with the observer mind during meditation can open new paths to experiencing freedom.



things always changing will not always be settling. We can't change the reality of what we see unfolding, but there is even more freedom in realizing that who is noticing the changes, never changes. This is the observer, pure awareness, the self.

The observer is like a white screen at the movie theater. The film played on it is analogous to your mind and sense recognition. We can only see the film because of the white screen. In the same light, we can only become aware of our thoughts, feelings and five senses because of our awareness. We take the screen to be the film and our awareness for our mental, emotional and physical experiences, but they are actually two things serving together as one. When

we realize that who is noticing everything is something that is unchanging and unaffected by changes, there is great freedom and relief.

Mindfulness toggles back and forth between these two perceiving opposites. Life and your mental/emotional/physical self are always changing, so there is no need to hold on too tightly or get too rattled. And, you, the observer of it all, are never changing and unaffected.

You have to dedicate time to your own experience of these topics to better solidify your understanding, knowing that every time you dip your toe in these topics you will be different and the same, and that that will be your doorway and the path.

What St. Luke's Hospital's Trauma Center means for the South Coast

St. Luke's Hospital recent official designation as a Level II Adult Trauma Center fills a critical need in southeastern Massachusetts and parts of Rhode Island. But what does it mean to the region's families and older adults?

Senior Scope spoke to Rachelle Corchado, Trauma Outreach Prevention Coordinator at St. Luke's, about what the new trauma designation will do for the South Coast and what her role there will be.

What is a Level II Trauma Center and how did that come about?

There was an identified critical need for a trauma center in this region due to there being no other Level I or Level II centers in Massachusetts EMS Region 5, which serves southeastern Massachusetts. Becoming a verified trauma center means that St. Luke's has put in place the infrastructure and resources to care for this region's most critically ill trauma patients 24/7 365 days of the year.

Does it mean new services locally?

For area residents, this means that they will no longer have to be transported to Boston or out of state to Providence to receive trauma care. In trauma, the faster you can get a patient to a verified trauma center, the better that patient's chance of survival. Having a verified trauma center in this region will allow patients to have quicker access to definitive care. It also includes establishing community injury prevention activities which this region will benefit from as well. Overall, all the services that a trauma patient requires will be provided for right here at home, from pre-injury prevention activities, to specialized trauma



care within the hospital, to follow-up and rehabilitation services after injury.

Having a Trauma Center closer to home means Emergency Medical Service (EMS) transport times are reduced and death rates are drastically reduced. The nearest trauma centers had been near the Boston area, and in Rhode Island. We now have one here in New Bedford! Most importantly there will be patient and family support.

Can you tell us a little about yourself and what your role with the trauma center is?

I am the Trauma Outreach Prevention Coordinator focusing on educating our community about injury prevention and trauma care to indirectly decrease

death and injury by establishing injury prevention activities within our region. I also raise visibility of St. Luke's Hospital Level II Trauma Center Program through increasing public awareness.

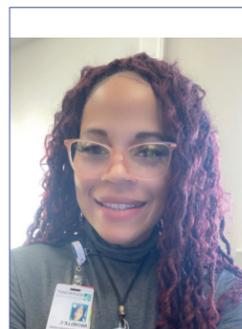
What types of activities/programs will you be implementing through the trauma center?

The injury prevention activities are still in the planning phases and some restrictions remain in place due to COVID. A few proposed injury prevention activities include: Motor Vehicle safety/Seat Belt Safety Program, Violence Prevention Program, minimizing distractions, Bike Helmet education, and implementing the Trauma Survivors Network Program. Education and outreach services will be presented to our patients, families, and community.

Can you tell us more about one of these programs?

Trauma injury prevention focused specifically on fall prevention will be our first program launched at St. Luke's Hospital Level II Trauma Center. The initial phase of this program will be a bedside home fall assessment by our injury prevention coordinator with tips on how to prevent falls within the home and community. This will be done while the patient is still in the hospital and followed by patient/family education, handouts, and community resources/reference.

I'd love it if people could spread the word, share with their family and friends that St. Luke's Hospital is a level II Trauma Center. Let us know how we can serve you. For more information, please contact Rachelle Corchado, Trauma Outreach Prevention Coordinator, St. Luke's Hospital, 508-973-5901.



Rachelle Corchado

Los planificadores de la infraestructura verde quieren escuchar de los residentes de New Bedford

La ciudad de New Bedford utiliza soluciones basadas en la naturaleza para aumentar la resistencia al clima y de la comunidad reduciendo las inundaciones urbanas, mitigando el calor extremo y mejorando la habitabilidad de los barrios.

Como parte del proyecto, también se está trabajando para educar al público sobre los

conceptos de infraestructura verde y para solicitar opiniones a través de una encuesta que está disponible en línea en inglés, español y portugués.

En su Estrategia Maestra de Infraestructura Verde, New Bedford ha dicho que dará prioridad a los proyectos en los barrios donde los residentes obtendrán mayores

beneficios. Para ello, sin embargo, la ciudad quiere escuchar primero las opiniones de los residentes sobre estos objetivos y en qué lugares de sus barrios les gustaría ver más naturaleza.

Comparta su opinión en una encuesta comunitaria para dar forma a la estrategia de Infraestructura Verde y ayudar a New Bedford

a apoyar barrios resistentes y habitables.

Vaya a la página web <https://nbresilient.com/category/green-infrastructure> para obtener un enlace y completar la encuesta en inglés, español o portugués.

Para más información sobre el Proyecto, visite www.nbresilient.com.

Green infrastructure planners want to hear from New Bedford residents

The city of New Bedford is using nature-based solutions to increase climate and community resiliency by reducing urban flooding, mitigating extreme heat, and improving neighborhood livability.

As part of the project, it is also working to educate the public about green infrastructure

concepts and to solicit feedback through a survey that is available online in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

In its Green Infrastructure Master Strategy, New Bedford has said it will prioritize projects in neighborhoods where residents will get the most benefits. To do

that, though, the city first wants to hear from residents their thoughts about these goals and where in their neighborhood they'd like to see more nature.

Share your input in a community survey to shape the Green Infrastructure strategy and help New Bedford support resilient and

livable neighborhoods.

Go online at <https://nbresilient.com/category/green-infrastructure> for a link to complete the survey in English, Spanish, or Portuguese.

For more information on the project, visit www.nbresilient.com.

Planeadores de infraestructuras verdes querem ouvir dos residents de New Bedford

A cidade de New Bedford está usando soluções baseadas na natureza para aumentar a resiliência no clima e comunidade reduzindo as inundações urbanas, mitigando o calor extremo, e melhorando a habitabilidade do bairro.

Como parte do projecto, está também trabalhando para educar o público sobre os conceitos das

infraestruturas verdes e solicitar a opinião através de questionários os quais estão disponíveis online em Inglês, Espanhol e Português.

Na sua Estratégia Principal de Infraestrutura Verde, New Bedford tem dito que irá dar prioridade ao projecto nos bairros onde os residentes obterão a maioria dos benefícios. Para fazer isso, no

entanto, a cidade primeiro quer ouvir dos residents sobre o que pensam sobre estes objetivos e onde nos seus bairros gostariam de ver mais natureza.

Compartilhe a sua opinião no questionário da comunidade para dar forma à estratégia de Infraestrutura Verde e ajudar a suportar a resiliência e vivência nos

bairros de New Bedford.

Vá online no <https://nbresilient.com/category/green-infrastructure> para a ligação onde poderá completar o questionário em Inglês, Espanhol ou Português. Para mais informação sobre o projecto, visite www.nbresilient.com.

Translations provided by:

 Southcoast Health

What Does It Say About Your Neighborhood If the Supermarket Isn't So Super?

By Chase Daw Giles
Kaiser Health News

Though I grew up in Roxbury, “the heart of Black culture in Boston,” I now live in Los Angeles, where I typically shop for groceries at Whole Foods Market or Trader Joe’s. Their produce is fresh, green, abundant. Organic options beckon as you walk in the door.

So it gnawed at me, a Black woman, when I recently walked into a supermarket in a lower-income L.A. neighborhood and was greeted by an array of processed, high-sugar, high-sodium foods—often offered with a nice discount: Coca-Cola products, five 2-liter bottles for \$5; sugary cereals, two for \$4; boxed brownie and cake mixes.

The pandemic had underlined longstanding health disparities of Black and brown communities. Covid had resulted in a 2.9-year decrease in life expectancy for Black Americans, compared with 1.2 years for white Americans. Research had consistently shown that among the underlying factors giving rise to those poor health statistics — high rates of diabetes and heart disease, for example — is poor diet, fueled by a lack of healthy food options in their neighborhoods.

“I could go into a supermarket, and I can tell everything about the people who live [in the area] based on what’s in their carts, based on what’s at eye level, what’s not at eye level,” said Phil Lempert, also known as the “Supermarket Guru.”

In retail, specific product placement — not just a store’s inventory — heavily influences a shopper’s experience. So shouldn’t responsible markets encourage shoppers to make better choices?

“I could go into a supermarket, and I can tell everything about the people who live [in the area] based on what’s in their carts.”

—Phil Lempert,
“Supermarket Guru”

“There’s a lot of racism, to be honest, I think, behind these decisions, whether it’s unconscious or implicit,” said Andrea Richardson, a policy researcher on nutrition epidemiology at the Rand Corp.

The presence of a supermarket in your neighborhood should signal that you aren’t living in a food desert, but, I wondered, if the supermarket isn’t guiding you toward more healthful food choices, you might as well be.

So when I flew home for Thanksgiving, I enlisted my mother, Lilie to help with more research. We set out one Sunday last fall to buy 12 items on a simple “healthy eating” shopping list at five locations of Stop & Shop, a supermarket chain with stores in a cross section of Boston neighborhoods.

First the good news: We were able to find every item we wanted at each store. But, just as I’d experienced in L.A., healthy foods were easier to find in higher-income neighborhoods. In lower-income areas, junk food was more likely to be front and center.

At the Stop & Shop I recall from my childhood in Jamaica Plain, the food choices had become much more balanced, with a plentiful organic food



section in the front of the store. But that likely in part reflects the gentrification that has taken place since I was a kid. Jamaica Plain now has a median income of almost \$77,000.

Our next two stops were in even fancier areas, Brookline (median income over \$115,000) and Somerville — both green oases compared with many of Boston’s grittier neighborhoods. At the Brookline location, each aisle started with low-fat, low-sugar choices like Crystal Light, and the candy section was minuscule.

Our next Stop & Shop was in South Boston—a working-class, Irish Catholic community. It was strikingly different than our first stops. The organic section consisted mostly of breakfast bars and cereals. The produce section positioned caramels, candied apples, and pumpkin-spice doughnuts in a bin alongside regular apples — at the bargain price of two packages for \$3. The “International Foods” aisle sold everything you need for a very American Taco Tuesday,

while a big part of this section was dedicated to Italian and Irish foods.

In the Grove Hall neighborhood in Dorchester — a predominantly Black neighborhood with a median income of \$55,000 — the offerings were downright dispiriting. Soda was displayed prominently near one entrance. And as we walked the aisles it seemed that many of the “sale” items were sugary soda products, chips, or cookies. This store had a dizzying array of snack food options, including 20 kinds of Oreos. And there wasn’t an organic food section at all.

Lempert, the “supermarket guru,” explained that companies and brands pay retailers “promotional dollars” to put their goods “at eye level” or on sale, or make them available for consumers to sample. But in making these largely commercial decisions, markets make it more difficult for people in low-income areas to eat healthfully, encouraging those with poor diets to continue the habits that landed them with diet-related illnesses.



Fairhaven Council on Aging new director Martha Reed (left) is learning the job from longtime director Anne Silvia who retired on Feb. 25.

COA names new director

Anne Silvia's retirement is leaving big shoes to fill in the organization that supports the town's older adults, but newcomer Martha Reed is here and ready to fill them.

Silvia's last day as the Fairhaven Council on Aging director was Feb. 25.

A New Bedford native, Reed has worked for many years in the social service area and is familiar with many of the resources available throughout the region. She also has experience in, and a passion for, the process of finding the right solution for people who need help in what is sometimes a complicated and chaotic social support system.

Reed comes to the COA from Catholic Social Services where she was the grants and compliance coordinator

for 13 years. She moved back to New Bedford a few years ago after living in Rhode Island for many years.

"I like to find solutions for people and this role kind of fulfills that," Reed said. "I've been very passionate about that, especially for older adults who are alone or don't have social supports."

Reed began work at the COA on Feb. 14, allowing for overlap with Silvia as the current director. It's been nice, she said, coming to an agency that is running well and has a great reputation.

Silvia noted that Reed has a great background for her new role.

"She knows all of the players (in social service areas) and that's half the battle of learning how to run the COA," she said.

Fairhaven COA closes its Social Day program

Fairhaven Social Day has closed its doors for good, according to Anne Silvia, retiring COA director, although not without a sliver of hope for the future.

To those who needed it, Social Day was a lifeline allowing them a safe space to spend their days and a chance to socialize with others while their caregivers worked.

It was also enjoyable, said Silvia, with food and themed events keeping the atmosphere fun and festive.

"Back before COVID, there was a party every day," she said.

When the COA closed for public safety reasons related to COVID in March 2020, Silvia said she thought she would reopen a few weeks later. Instead, the Social Day program didn't reopen until June of 2021, more than a year later.

"Fifteen months can do a lot of damage to people, so we lost a lot of people or they spiraled to the point that they couldn't (be independent enough to be in social day)," she said.

Where the program had had as many as 20 to 25 people per day prior to COVID, they were down

to 7 or 8 afterwards with days that were even lighter. Financially it was unsustainable, Silvia said.

Even so, she said, "It broke my heart to close it because the seven people who came needed it. They needed that socialization."

While there are no current plans to reopen Social Day, Silvia, who retired at the end of February,

"It broke my heart to close it because the seven people who came needed it. They needed that socialization."

—Anne Silvia
Retiring COA Director

said new COA director Martha Reed will reexamine the program and decide if it can be reopened and if it will be sustainable.

They are preparing to put the necessary article on the Town Meeting warrant this spring to authorize funding in hopes that that can happen, confirmed Reed.

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Putting together a legal checklist in the beginning of the year is a good habit to create.

Your New Year's Legal Check-up

By Michelle Beneskim Esq.
Suprenant & Beneski, P.C.

A new year is upon us, and with it comes a host of New Year's resolutions. A Neilson.com survey found that the top goals for the new year included: staying fit and healthy, losing weight, enjoying life to the fullest, spending less, saving more, spending more time with family and friends, and getting organized.

While each of those goals is worthwhile and important, don't forget to add to your List of Resolutions a Legal Check-up!

Use the checklist below as a tool to determine whether you have good, foundational estate planning documents in place and whether you should consider meeting with an elder law attorney to discuss foundational planning, estate tax minimization, asset protection, creditor protection and/or special needs planning.

Legal Check-up Checklist:

Durable Power of Attorney: a well drafted DPOA will allow a primary agent and alternate agent to make legal and financial decisions for you if you cannot make them for yourself and may avoid the need for a court-appointed conservator.

Massachusetts Health Care Proxy: a well drafted HCP will allow a primary agent and alternate agent to make medical decisions for you if you cannot make them for yourself and may avoid the need for a court-appointed guardian.

HIPAA Release Authorization: permission for your protected medical information to be shared with named individuals.

Advance Directive (Living Will): this directive instructs health care providers to administer, withhold, or withdraw specified medical treatments and is to be used as a guide for those who make decisions on

your behalf when you are no longer capable of expressing your wishes for yourself.

Last Will and Testament: tells the court which individuals (or charities) are to receive your property and possessions on your death and identifies to the court who you have named as the primary and alternate personal representative (formerly executor/executrix) of your estate.

Do you have an estate worth more than \$1,000,000, including real estate, investment accounts, retirement accounts, etc.? Do you have young children or a child or grandchild with special needs? Do you have spendthrift children or grandchildren? Are you concerned about protecting your assets against the cost of future long-term care needs?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, if you don't have one or more of the documents listed above, or if you want to have your documents/plan reviewed to make certain that it will work as needed when the time comes, we invite you to contact our office to schedule a meeting with one of our attorneys to gain clarity on your plan and learn recommendations to best accomplish your objectives. If interested, please contact our office at 508-994-5200.

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Money Management Program helps older adults pay their bills

Many older adults turn to family members and loved ones for help when they can no longer pay their bills regularly or balance their checkbooks, due to illness, frailty or other aging-related concerns.

But what happens with individuals who don't have access to family assistance? For many, that's where Coastline Elderly Services' Money Management Program, run by Natacha Salemme, steps in.

Salemme oversees a team of volunteers who visit their clients each month, helping sort their mail, organize bills, write out checks (which the client signs), and balance their accounts. Volunteers often work with clients for years, developing friendships, and assisting as they achieve their financial goals, according to Salemme.

For people who enjoy being organized and intentional with their finances, the program is incredibly rewarding, she said. Over time, volunteers watch their clients reach new financial goals and get

to see how their assistance helped to make that happen.

The program currently has 41 volunteers, but Salemme said more are needed. The program covers Coastline's eight communities plus as far north as Mansfield and Norton.

Volunteers don't need a financial background to be able to help.

"Do you know how to balance a checkbook and write a check? If you know how to do that and you have a little bit of time to spend with an elder, that's (all you need)," Salemme said.

Volunteers decide how many clients they are able to take on and in what area they will work. They typically make one to two client visits per month with each lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to 1-2 hours.

Interested in volunteering? If so, call Natasha Salemme at 508-742-9113. For bill-paying assistance, call Coastline at 508-999-6400.

Trivia

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- Where was Caesar salad invented?
A.) Italy B.) Mexico C.) France D.) Canada
- What continent are potatoes native to?
A.) South America B.) North America
C.) Asia D.) Australia
- Who was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic?
A.) Jacqueline Cochran B.) Bessie Coleman
C.) Eileen Collins D.) Amelia Earhart
- Which constitutional amendment gave women the right to vote?
A.) 19th B.) 14th C.) 27th D.) 11th
- The word "crochet" comes from the French word for what?
A.) Wool B.) Scarf C.) Small hook D.) Difficult
- Where in a house would you find a "P" trap?
A.) Under your sink B.) In the walls
C.) In your cellar D.) On your furnace
- What film marked the debut of 60's superstar James Bond?
A.) Dr. No B.) Casino Royale
C.) Goldfinger D.) Thunderball
- What product did John Glenn bring to space?
A.) Instant coffee B.) Ovaltine
C.) Kool Aid D.) Tang
- Which of these rocks can float on water?
A.) Pumice B.) Granite C.) Quartz D.) Soapstone
- What does the word "karate" translate to?
A.) Strong fist B.) Kicking art
C.) Empty hand D.) Powerful kick

[Answers listed on page 11]

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Social Security: Keep your card safe

By Delia De Mello
Social Security



Delia DeMello

We encourage you not to carry your Social Security card with you every day. The best way to “Guard Your Card” is to keep it in a safe place and share it only when required. In fact, in most cases, just knowing the Social Security number should be enough. In 49 states and the District of Columbia, a Social Security card isn’t required to request a Real ID. Only Pennsylvania requires it.

Please be careful about sharing your number when asked for it. You should always ask why your number is needed, how it will be used, and what will happen if you refuse. Also, you shouldn’t carry documents that display your number.

If you need a replacement Social Security card, we make it easy. You may be able to use a personal my Social Security account to request a replacement on our website. If you live in one of 46 participating states or the District of Columbia, and are requesting a replacement card with no changes, like a name change, you can use our free online service at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/replacement-card.html. Visit our Social Security Number and Card page at www.ssa.gov/ssnumber to learn more about your Social Security card.

Please read our factsheet, How You Can Help Us Protect Your Social Security Number and Keep Your Information Safe, at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10220.pdf Our Guard Your Card infographic at www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/assets/EN-05-10553.pdf, is another great resource to understand whether you need to show your card.

Tax preparation assistance is available

Those looking for help with filing their taxes this year will find plenty of options in the region. See below for a list of locations and information on how to sign up. Age requirements vary by COA so if you are younger than 65, let the COA know when you sign up for an appointment. Unless otherwise noted, assistance is provided at the COA location.

Fairhaven Council on Aging: The Senior Center will be offering tax assistance to low-income seniors filing a short form.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment.

How to sign up: Call the COA at 508-979-4029.

Dartmouth Council on Aging

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment in the Bullard Building at the COA.

How to sign up: Call the COA at 508-999-4717.

Mattapoisett Council on Aging: The Senior Center will be offering tax assistance with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income.

When: Every Friday by appointment.

How to sign up: Call the COA at 508-758-4110 or email coadirector@mattapoisett.net.

Rochester Council on Aging: The Senior Center will be offering tax assistance to all low/moderate income persons with special attention to those 60 and over.

When: Every Wednesday by appointment.

How to sign up: Call the COA at 508-763-8723.

Community Economic Development Corporation : The CEDC offers VITA free tax preparation by appointment.

When: By appointment.

Where: 1501 Acushnet Ave., New Bedford

How to sign up: Call the CEDC at 508-979-4684.

MassHire grant to help with behavioral health crisis

MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce was approved for a \$524,000 Behavioral Health Partnership Expansion Grant from the Commonwealth Corporation in January to improve the number of qualified mental health professionals in Southeastern Massachusetts.

With the grant, MassHire will work closely with organizations that offer community-based behavioral health and substance/opioid use disorder treatments to create ways to increase mental health professionals. The initiative includes entry-level training for unemployed individuals, career track advancements for existing workers, and funding to assist those in need of supervision hours as they work toward licensure in the behavioral and substance abuse field.

A portion of the funding will also be used for strategic planning to address longstanding employee recruitment and retention challenges in the behavioral and substance/opioid treatment sector within MassHire Greater New Bedford, Bristol, Greater Brockton and South Shore boards.

This funding is providing training for nursing assistant, home health aide, and medical assistant. MassHire Southeast Region 6 Career Centers have begun recruitment for these free training programs. Unemployed persons or healthcare employers interested in participating should contact Jacqueline Sylvia at (508) 979-1504 ext. 116 or email jacqueline@mhgnb.com for information.

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Councils on Aging

Acushnet COA

For more information, call the Acushnet Council on Aging at 508-998-0280. The center is located at 59 ½ South Main St., Acushnet, MA 02743.

Left, Right, Center: Save the Date for the return of this program on April 20 from 12:30-3 p.m. Pre-registration required.

Welcome Sign Painting: Join the COA at 1 p.m., March 21 to design your own gnome welcome sign on an 18-inch plank. \$6 per person. Limited to the first 10 to register. 508-998-0280.

Presentation on Aryuveda Medical System: Join the COA to learn how to boost your immune system and build strength of mind and body. Non-medical advice. Pre-registration suggested. Free. 508-998-0280.

Drop-in Cribbage Games: Every Friday at noon at the COA.

Bunco: 12:30 p.m., March 16. Pre-registration required. 508-998-0280.

Strong Women, Strong Bones with Karen Corcoran: Great exercise class for those living with osteoarthritis or osteoporosis. A Title III funded program. 9 a.m. Monday-Thursday. \$2 suggested voluntary donation.

Chair Yoga with Sue Ashley: 1 p.m. every Friday. \$3/class.

Nutty Knitters: Grab your knitting needles and join this social group at 9:30 a.m. every Monday.

St. Anthony Senior Group returns: 1 p.m., 2nd and 4th Monday of every month.

New Bedford Garden Club: 1 p.m. first Wednesday of every month.

Zumba Update: Our Zumba program returns in March with the same Tuesday - Thursday schedule.

Dartmouth COA

For more information, call the Dartmouth Council on Aging at 508-999-4717. The center is located at 628 Dartmouth St., South Dartmouth, MA 02748. Read the current newsletter or previous newsletters online at: www.town.dartmouth.ma.us/council-aging/pages/coa-newsletters.

Family Caregiver Support Group: Join Coastline in a partnership with the DCOA for monthly support group the first Thursday of the month from 1-2:30.

YWCA Widow Person Program at the Center: Two sessions, 8:30-10 and 10:30 - noon on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Walk ins are welcome.

Elder Law consultations: With Atty. Brandon Walecka, 2nd Thursday of the month from 10-11 by appointment.

Free Legal consultation: With Justice Bridge through UMass Law the last Wednesday of the month from 2-3 by appointment.

Hearing Clinic with At Home Healthcare: Hearing Evaluations & Hearing Aid Checks, 10 a.m. to noon, 3rd Thursday of the month. Call the Center to schedule an appointment.

Visiting Dental Hygienists Clinic: Call 508-827-6725 for more information and to schedule an appointment.

Blood Pressure Clinic is back: 10-11 a.m., the last Tuesday of the month. Walk-ins welcome.

Pen Pal project: Contact the Center if you would like to be paired with a writing buddy in the community.

Free Pain Consultations: With Baystate Physical Therapy by appointment the 3rd Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.

Dance for Parkinson's: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Mondays. Participants are empowered to explore movement and music. Walk ins welcome. Free.

Art Class: 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesdays. \$10. Students work on own pieces and receive instruction as needed. Contact the COA for more information.

Know your Basic Consumer Rights: With Southcoastal Legal Services, 1 p.m. Thursday, March 24. Pre-registration required.

Chill with Ava the Great Dame service dog: 11:30 a.m. Mondays. Walk ins welcome.

Resistance Bands with Larry: 1 p.m. Wednesdays. Bands are gentle on joints, versatile and can be modified for all levels. This group class will include a stretching and balance component. Bands provided \$2. Walk-ins welcome.

Mah Jongg: 1-3 p.m. Fridays

Cribbage: 8:30-10:30 a.m. Tuesdays.

Save the Date: Single Senior Supper Club, formerly of the Fairhaven COA, first Tuesday in April from 4-6. Reservations required. For more info, contact the Center.

Gentle Yoga Dance with Jane Hoffman: Gentle yoga combined with dance moves is a great form of exercise and uplifts the spirits. Cost is \$5. Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

Tai Chi: Tuesdays 9 to 10 a.m. Eight-week session \$30. Drop in for a free class.

Dance for Parkinson's: Mondays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Participants are empowered to explore movement and music. Walk-ins welcome. Free.

Book Club: Second Monday of the month at 1 p.m. For more info call the Center.

Guided Meditation with Lynda: Tuesdays, 10:15-11:00. Class is free. This class is great for those who are looking for potential new ways to release any tension and stress in the mind and body. Come take this time to unwind and expand, and let Lynda be your step by step guide into relaxation.

Fairhaven COA

For more information, call the Fairhaven Council on Aging at 508-979-4029. The center is located at 229 Huttleston Ave., Fairhaven, MA 02719. Visit the Fairhaven COA website at: fairhaven-ma.gov/council-aging.

Computer Class: Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Must register for class.

April Trips: April 6, Twin River Casino; April 13, Warwick Mall; April 20, Hyannis Mall, Xmas Shop, Trader Joe's & Whole Foods; April 27, South Shore Plaza. Reservations open. Fee is \$6 unless marked. Van leaves the Center at 9 a.m.

Blood Pressure Clinic: Fairhaven Town Hall every other Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call the Board of Health for more information at 508-979-4023 ext. 125.

Chair Yoga: Mondays and Thursdays from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. \$3. Modified yoga program in a seated/standing position.

Osteoporosis Class: Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:30 to 10 a.m. \$1. Simple, safe, bone-boosting exercises.

Mobile Dental Hygienist: Call Teresa or Andrea at 508-827-6725 or email them a smile@mobiledentalthygiene.com.

Foot Care: Second Thursday, by appointment. \$30.

Walking: Monday to Friday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Check the schedule and sign-up at the Fairhaven Council on Aging. No walking Feb. 22-25.

Zumba: Fridays, 11:30-12:30. Sign up at Senior Center. \$7.

Attorney Suzanne J. Seguin: Free. 15-minute consultation. Call for info.

Sewing Circle: Wednesday evenings from 5:45 to 7:45 p.m.

MahJongg: Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. MahJongg is a rummy-style game that uses MahJongg tiles instead of playing cards.

Community Nurse Caregivers Support Group: Free respite, first Wednesday of month from 1 to 2 p.m.

PACE/Fuel Assistance: For new applications or if you have questions, call Phyllis at the Senior Center at 508-979-4029.

Reassurance Program: A free service for elders wanting a daily telephone check-in with a responsible person, ensuring all is well.

Marion COA

Call the center at 508-748-3570. The center is located at the Benjamin D. Cushing Community Center, 465 Mill St., Marion, MA 02738. Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/marioncoa. COA hours of operation are: operating Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Marion Board of Health: 508-748-3530.

Canal Side Artists: Art Gallery show opens March 3, 5-7 p.m. at the COA building. Art drop-off date for next month's show on Tink Spring! is March 30.

Mardi Gras Bingo: 1 P.M. March 1. Come out and celebrate Mardi Gras with a themed bingo. Try your luck in this game of chance. \$5 for a standard pack of play, \$1 coverall & \$1 50/50 game.

Rock & Roll Singo Bingo: 1 p.m. March 8, Bingo with a beat. Replace the numbers with your favorite songs! Test your musical knowledge, win some prizes and have some fun. Free, but registration is required. Call 508-748-3570.

Continued on Page 11

Now Accepting Applications*

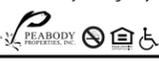
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*Income guidelines may apply. Please inquire in advance for reasonable accommodations. Info contained herein subject to change w/o notice.

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Now Accepting Applications. Overlooking New Bedford Harbor and Buzzards Bay, Olympia Tower is now accepting applications for 1 & 2 bedroom apartments. Specially designed for people 62 years old and over and for handicapped or disabled persons who are 18 years old and over. Enjoy the convenient downtown location and feel secure in the friendly atmosphere. Rent based on 30% of adjusted income. Income requirements, please call for info.

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Estate Planning is For Everyone: 1 p.m. March 11. Brandon Walecka of Walecka Law, P.C. will be on hand to explain all you need to consider when it comes to Estate Planning.

Pilgrims & Plymouth: 1 p.m. March 14. Submerge yourself in the year 1620. Discover the religious discipline, emerging leaders, and hardships the Pilgrims endured while living in England and the Netherlands and more.

Technology Series: 1 p.m. March 15. David Vieira of Home PC Help Desk will be at the Center to answer your previously submitted questions. When you call 508-748-3570 to register for this class, you will submit your technology question and David will research it and answer them. Class size is limited. Bring your laptop, phone or other device.

Ask A Doctor: 10:15 a.m. March 18. When your appointments seem shorter and doctors are pushed to deal with electronic records as well as responding to your needs, you might find you do not always get your questions answered. This meeting will let you get those questions answered. Submit anonymous questions in the box at the COA office entrance.

Culture Park of New Bedford Presents...Spring Shorts: 1 p.m. March 21. A collection of entertaining and thoughtful 10-minute plays performed as staged readings by theater professionals. Light refreshments offered afterwards. Limited seating. Reservations required; call 508-748-3570.

Cooking Demonstration with Linda Medeiros: Noon, March 22. Learn how to prepare ham & cheese paninis and a simple dessert. There is a \$5 suggested donation. 508-748-3570 to register.

Mattapoisett COA

For more information, call the Mattapoisett Council on Aging at 508-758-4110 or go to mattapoisett.net/council-aging. The center is located at 17 Barstow St., Mattapoisett, MA 02739.

Dementia Education: Understanding & Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors at 1 p.m. March 15 with speaker Carolyn Lazaris of Alzheimers' Assoc. Registration required. Meeting is virtual by Zoom. Meeting ID: 883 0324 3206.

Boston Symphony Orchestra Open Rehearsals Returns: March 3 and April 14. Leaves: 6:30 a.m. Cost: \$10 van. Open Rehearsal tickets can be purchased at the door. Limited van space. Call today to reserve your ride.

Early American Colonial Painting: March 2 at 12:30 p.m. Join local art historian Jill Sanford for an enjoyable hour of challenging yourself to see in new ways! Learn about the famous people, places and events of the Revolutionary War through the eyes of those who experienced it. Register at 508-758-4110 or email to: coadirector@mattapoisett.net.

Trips: March 24, Four Corners Grille, Tiverton, R.I. followed by time to visit the small local shops in walking distance. March 31, Mezza Luna, Buzzards Bay, is a highly rated destination for quality Italian dishes. Pre-payment required one week prior to trip date. Museum requires masks and proof of vaccination.

Movie & Pizza: March 30 at 12:15 p.m. "Belfast" is a semi-autobiographical film by Kenneth Branagh, this British-Irish drama centers on a glamorous working-class family and their young son's childhood, as they get caught in the mayhem of Belfast's troublesome times Pizza \$1/slice. Prepay and registration required.

Pottery/Clay Sculpting: 10-11:30 a.m., every 2nd and 4th Thursday. \$10 fee. Registration requested. Your clay will be put into a kiln and returned for you to paint/decorate, and sent to the kiln for final glazing.

Knitting: Mondays at 10 a.m.
Games: Cribbage on Tuesdays from 3 to 4:30 p.m.; and Bridge on Thursdays from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Please call to register.

Widowed Persons Support Group: First Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. A confidential, respectful group of people who share and care. Call Nancy at 508-973-3227 to register.

Hearing Aid Services: First Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m. (by appointment). Free hearing screening and hearing aid cleaning.

Foot Care: Last Monday of each month by appointment. \$30 (some insurances accepted). Service by Dr. Alan Lechan, D.P.M.

New Bedford COA

As of March 1, the Buttonwood Senior Center remained closed. The City of New Bedford intends to announce when Buttonwood will reopen on its website and social media accounts. Follow the City on Facebook at: [facebook.com/CityofNewBedford](https://www.facebook.com/CityofNewBedford).

For updates and assistance, also contact the New Bedford Council on Aging at 508-991-6250. Anyone visiting Buttonwood for the first time (or returning for the first time) must show proof of vaccination to be registered to attend.

Adult Social Day: The New Bedford Council on Aging's Adult Social Day Care Program operates at two locations: Social Day South (at the Rosemary S. Tierney Community Center) and Social Day North (at the former Brooklawn site). Contact the New Bedford COA for more information at 508-991-6250.

Rochester COA

For more information, call 508-763-8723. The Rochester Council on Aging is located at 67 Dexter Lane, Rochester, MA 02770. Visit the website at townofrochestermass.com/council-aging. Facebook: [facebook.com/RochesterMass](https://www.facebook.com/RochesterMass).

Tax assistance: Begins Feb. 9. Every Wednesday, 9 a.m. to noon. through April 13 volunteers will be at the center to help with taxes. To register, call the center at 508-763-8723.

Free Fun Friday: Every Friday in March come and check out our Fitness Center and use our equipment at no charge.

Essential Oils Class: Join Erica Benoit on March 17 to see what essential oils can do for you! Class is free but items that you make may cost \$5-\$10 to purchase.

Breakfast is Back! Breakfast is open to the public – you do not have to be a Rochester resident and all ages are welcome. Stop by for an affordable, home-cooked breakfast Monday through Friday from 7 to 9 a.m. If you would be interested in volunteering, please call 508-763-8723 to leave your name and your preference.

Podiatrist: Dr. Sarah Desrosier joins us once again on March 24. Please call her office at 508-946-1444 to make an appointment.

Creative Crafters: Formerly Busy Bees, at a new time. Thursdays, 1 p.m. If you like to knit, crochet or any other craft, join us.

Tai Chi & Qigong: Tuesdays at 3 p.m. with instructor Colman Fink.

Tai-Yo-Ba: Mondays, 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Participants will be mentally engaged the whole time to increase activation from brain to body. Exercises will be performed seated and standing. Any exercise can be modified to suit your needs.

Fitness Room hours: The Fitness Room is open Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Barre-Balance-Stretch: Thursdays at 12:45 p.m. with Marsha Hartley. \$5.

Chair Yoga: Fridays at 11:30 a.m. with Marsha Hartley. \$5.

Line Dancing: Beginners, Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m.; otherwise Fridays at 9:30 a.m. With Nancy Cabral; \$3.

Ballroom Dancing: Wednesdays at 10 a.m. With Nancy Barrett. \$5.

Dementia Directory

www.alzconnected.org

In-Person Groups

Alzheimer's Support Group: Every other Tuesday, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Held at the Dartmouth COA. Group is for caregivers and their care partners. Please contact Carolyn Greany at 508-304-4587.

Community Nurse Caregivers Support Group: First Wednesday of the month from 1 to 2 p.m. Held at the Fairhaven COA. Contact Community Nurse 508-992-6278 ext. 2805 to register.

Memory Loss Support Group: Every other Thursday from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Held at the Marion Council on Aging. To register, call the Marion COA at 508-748-3570 or call Community Nurse at 508-992-6278 ext. 2805.

Family Caregiver Support Group: Every first Thursday of the month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Meets at the Dartmouth Council on Aging. Open to any caregiver, regardless of illness of person cared for. Call Stephanie Gibson at Coastline at 774-510-5209.

Virtual Support Groups

LGBTQ Phone Support: First Monday of the month. For anyone in the LGBTQ community who is caring for an individual with dementia. Contact Barb Meehan at 508-291-0660 or bamscats@gmail.com.

Family Caregiver Support Group: Virtual Meetings are held every third Thursday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Call Stephanie Gibson at Coastline at 774-510-5209.

Additional Options: Call the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 or visit www.alzconnected.org.

March 2022 Trivia Quiz Answers

1. B | 2. A | 3. D | 4. A | 5. C
6. A | 7. A | 8. D | 9. A | 10. C

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The Way Things Were



Route 6 westbound traffic coming from the bridge, High and North Second Streets, fall 1956. Photo courtesy of Spinner Publications.

Before the completion of Interstate 195, all traffic heading to or returning from Cape Cod via Providence, Connecticut and New York rumbled through the city streets of New Bedford on US 6. At times, as on holiday week-

ends, traffic would back up the entire length of North or Kempton Streets. Bumper to bumper the cars crawled through the West End. And if the Fairhaven Bridge were to open for marine traffic, well, *forgetaboutit!*

The Way Things Were is a new collaboration between *Senior Scope* and *Spinner Publications* bringing you historic photos of New Bedford and surrounding areas from *Spinner's* unique collection. We invite readers to join in by sharing their older photos and memories of times past for publication. To participate, email digital photos and background stories to Beth Perdue at bperdue@coastlinenb.org or call 774-438-2729 for information.

Donating from home in Dartmouth

Dartmouth residents who want to donate gently used clothing and small household items can now have their donations picked up at home.

The Town of Dartmouth and Big Brother Big Sister Foundation have partnered to let Dartmouth residents easily donate clothing, linens, shoes, and small household items by scheduling an appointment for a home pickup. Both the Town of Dartmouth and Big Brother Big Sister Foundation will receive a rebate from the clothing.

Residents can schedule a free home pick up by texting PICKUP to (508) 466-4590 or scheduling a pickup time at BBBSFoundation.org. On collection day, they are asked to set the bags and/or boxes either at the curb or their front doorstep and have all of them clearly marked with BBBS.

"Donating clothing helps the environment, helps save taxpayers money and helps clean out your closets. We look forward to having a great mutually beneficial partnership for years to come," said Tim Barber, Interim Director of Public Works.

In addition, a new clothing bin is available at the Department of Public Works office, 759 Russells Mills Road. Residents can drop off bagged clothing, paired shoes, blankets, towels, curtains, and soft fabric accessories. Everything must be placed inside the bin which is available between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays or other scheduled closures.

For questions about what to donate, please email bbbsinfo@cmrkne.com or call (508) 466-4590.

YWCA's Stand Against Racism Challenge is live

Launching April 4, the Stand Against Racism Challenge is a virtual learning tool designed to create dedicated time and space to build more effective social justice habits, particularly those dealing with issues of race, power, privilege, and leadership.

Participants will have the opportunity to log on to the challenge via phone app or by visiting the challenge website and are presented with challenges such as reading an article, listening to a podcast, reflecting on personal experience, and

more. This year's theme merges five focus areas which will guide and inform our racial equity work including civic engagement, economic development, education, healthcare, and representation in media.

The Stand Against Racism Challenge is a part of YWCA's annual Stand Against Racism taking place from April 28 - May 1 and informs our theme: We Can't Wait: Equity and Justice Now!

Register now by visiting www.stand-againstracism.org.

Healing with Heart continued...

the moment amazed Rocha.

"I had never noticed him," she added. "I'm in the store thinking, how do I get through this today? And that was how I got through that day."

"It just was such a beautiful moment. I hugged the man."

It's been three and a half years since Rocha's husband died, and during that time, she's been rebuilding her life one step at a time. She now also works with other widowed people helping them grieve in groups run by the YWCA and at the Dartmouth Council on Aging.

Group meetings kick off with introductions. Everyone gets a chance to say who they are, introduce their loved one who died, and tell the group a bit about their own story. The conversation starts naturally from there, Rocha said, and she lets the group set the agenda.

It's not hard to start conversations, she added. It's much harder to stop them. She has even stopped calling for bathroom breaks because the group doesn't want to quit, even for a moment.

Rocha's experiences with grief, both messy and transformative ones, are helpful to those in her group, mainly because she serves as a benchmark for them, especially the newly widowed, she said. They can see where she is emotionally now and that gives them faith they can get



Widowed Support Group members include (l-r) Cathy Carlisle, Frank Gracia, Leo Bouchard, and Joel Morse.

there too.

"I did the work and that's what I urge people to do," said Rocha. "We all need healing in our lives. When we're genuinely heard by those who understand what we're talking about, it is, in fact, very healing."

She's clear she's not just speaking about women. Her groups now have more men than women, she said. "I'm as surprised as everybody," she said. "Because men typically don't talk about their feelings and men don't volunteer to speak up in any type of a group session."

But not true in Rocha's group.

"I have male-dominated groups and they're open, and they share, and they're grieving openly. They cry. I don't always have enough Kleenex on the table and that blows my mind."

Although Rocha's groups are not designed specifically for older adults, her perspective on aging today informs her work.

"As I get older myself, I see the disconnect between the generations. I think we have to fight for our lives if we want to stay mentally well and healthy. And I think seniors need to be taught how to do that because (so often) we don't want to impose

and we don't want people to feel obligated," she said.

"It's a chronic issue where older adults feel invisible and they don't feel heard and they don't feel people want to be around them and it's very, very sad."

"How do you communicate that need to be able to connect?" she continued. "On the far end, where I am, it's like I just see (older) people relegating themselves to the corner and they don't need to do that. They're still vital. They still have so much to offer. They need help in getting there."

Beyond age diversity, Rocha also sees a world hit by the pandemic and struggling to figure out how to grieve.

"It's almost a shame that it's only for widows," she said about her support group. "Because I think we need help grieving in society today. We don't grieve well; we don't connect; and we don't stay connected and that adds to (the isolation)."

Resources



Widowed Persons Support meets mornings on the first and third Thursdays of the month at the Dartmouth COA and Thursday evenings at the YWCA.

To enroll, please contact Jane Rocha at 508-999-3255 or at jrocha@ywcasema.org.