

Senior Scope

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

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Ending homelessness in New Bedford



People gathered at PAACA in New Bedford on Feb. 16 for a shared community meal as part of a daylong focus on ending homelessness. Julia Orlando, the day's main presenter, also joined the group.

Homelessness can be ended and it can be ended in New Bedford.

That's the message Julia Orlando, director of a 27,000 square-foot low-barrier, comprehensive shelter in Bergen County, N.J., delivered in her Feb. 16 presentation at the Whaling Museum in New Bedford. Orlando successfully led the New Jersey county's work to end homelessness and become the first in the nation to reach functional zero for chronic homelessness - meaning homelessness for this population is rare and brief.

Speaking before an audience of more than 100 people, Orlando was clear that Bergen County's process wasn't easy. It raised anxiety for many in the community, particularly in making the important shift to a "housing first" perspective, she said.

"Every community believes if they build it, (those who are homeless) will come and what I needed them to understand is they are already here."

—Julia Orlando, Ed.M, MA
 Director, Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services Center

Housing first, in part, means letting go of official rules to accessing housing in order to more fully include people sometimes considered difficult. "Difficult" individuals can be those who are addicted to substances, have criminal records, mental health problems, don't meet qualifications such as having been homeless for

a specific length of time, or won't follow rules.

Housing first also starts with listening to the people who are in need of housing, Orlando said, calling respecting "lived experience" an important best practice in any homelessness solution.

"This is not about fixing people. This is about ending homelessness," she told New Bedford professionals. "These folks are not going to change their behavior to meet your goals."

Orlando led city officials, social service professionals, volunteers and others in the audience through the process of creating an \$11 million regional shelter with the goal of ending homelessness. Completed in 2009, the building is operated 24

Continued on page 12

NB Food Tours mixes local dishes, a dash of history and a dollop of pride

The result is delicious.

If you decide to check out New Bedford Food Tours, don't go because of the food alone.

That's not to say the food isn't worthy. A two-hour tour stops at five locations with a chance to try the best of what passionate and trendy local places have to offer.

Think linguica cheese rolls made with The Baker's freshly made dough, rolled, spread with butter, and re-rolled dozens of time for that perfect taste and airy texture.

Or the Cachupa Rafugado with eggs at Izzy's Restaurant, a Cape Verdean



This fried cauliflower dish is tossed in a sweet chili sauce at The Pour Farm Tavern in New Bedford.

hot spot that brings those in the know to New Bedford from hundreds of miles away.

But the tour offers so much more. New Bedford Food Tours got its

start in 2022 by co-founder and New Bedford native, Pam Schwartz, whose family ran a food distribution company and was a part of the city's food scene for years. She and her wife, Sara Gonzalez, brought their idea to E-for-All's pitch contest in 2021 and won first prize. They've since launched the business with a limited number of tours available.

Schwartz was one of many young professionals who left New Bedford as a young adult but returned home to see it with fresh eyes. Her affection and love for the city and region shines

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Social Security launches redesigned website

By Delia De Mello
Social Security

Have you visited the redesigned SSA.gov yet? In December 2022, we updated our homepage to help you find what you need more easily.



Delia DeMello

“SSA.gov is visited by over 180 million people per year and it is one of our most important tools for providing efficient and equitable access to service,” said Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, at the launch. “Whether providing service in person or online, our goal is to help people understand what they may qualify for and seamlessly transition them to an application process.”

Now, with improved self-service accessibility to online services, you might not have to call or visit an office to get what you need. This helps our staff focus on serving customers who need in-person assistance.

The redesign is intended to provide a clear path to the tasks you need to accomplish. Many of the most visited

sections of SSA.gov are now live with a more user-friendly and task-based approach. New pages and improvements based on public feedback will continue to be unveiled in the coming months, as part of our ongoing efforts to improve how the public can do business with us. When you visit SSA.gov, you can use interactive tools to:

Check eligibility for benefits

The new eligibility screener is a convenient and simple way for you to learn if you might be eligible for benefits.

Save time on Social Security number and card online services

If you lose your SSN card, you may not need a replacement. In most cases, simply knowing your SSN is enough. If you do need a replacement card, you may be able to request it online by visiting our Social Security Number and Card page at www.ssa.gov/ssnumber.

You can also start an application for an updated card or request an SSN for the first time. You may never need to go to an office, but if you do need to visit an office to complete the application, then you can save a lot of time by starting online.

Start an application for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

You can start the application process online and request an appointment to

apply for SSI benefits by answering a few questions on our SSI page at www.ssa.gov/ssi.

Apply for Social Security benefits

For most benefits, you can apply online or start an application online. In many cases, there are no forms to sign. We will review the application and contact you with any questions or if we need more information. Visit our online services page at www.ssa.gov/onlineservices to apply for retirement, disability, or Medicare.

Many Social Security services do not require an office visit. If you have a personal my Social Security account, you can start or change direct deposit, request a replacement SSA-1099, or print or download a current benefit verification letter if you need proof of your benefits.

If you're not yet receiving benefits, you can use your online account to get a personalized Social Security Statement, which provides your earnings information as well as estimates of future benefits. The portal also includes a retirement estimator tool and links to information about other online services. We encourage people without a personal my Social Security account to create one today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

From the Editor



Beth Perdue

I was thrilled this month when retired *Senior Scope* editor Jeannine Wilson Aidala pulled me aside at the end of a meeting and said she was planning to write about an experience of being disrespected based on her age.

I had been looking for an opportunity to raise the topic of ageism in *Senior Scope* and I knew Jeannine, as a skilled and thoughtful writer, could do it best. To be fair, she is clear in her description that she felt the slight she experienced was meant to be helpful - see her column, “Young Lady,” page 12 - but she is also clear how calling an individual who has lived more than eight decades a “young lady,” is demeaning and communicates that you're being seen as helpless and no longer competent.

Too many times, disrespected elders remain respectful in those encounters and hold back the words that might clarify their strength and ability. Jeannine chose the higher ground too.

It's a tough call. What have you done in these situations?

Connect with Beth at bperdue@coastlinenb.org or by mail to *Senior Scope*, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745



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508-999-6400

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



SHINE Counselors
in the Greater New Bedford Area

Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	Peggy Vollmer Virginia Walega
Fairhaven Council on Aging 229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven	508-979-4029	Dianne Perkins Carolyn Dantoni
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
Marion Council on Aging 465 Mill Street, Marion	508-748-3570	Connie Heacox
Mattapoisett Council on Aging 17 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett	508-758-4110	Connie Heacox
New Bedford Council on Aging 181 Hillman St. (for New Bedford residents only)	508-991-6250 508-991-6252 508-991-6170 508-991-6170	Natasha Franco Luisana Paez-Espinal Pat Foster Nora Rose
PACE, Inc. 166 William St., New Bedford	508-999-9920	Freda St. Marie-Johnson
Rochester Council on Aging 67 Dexter Lane, Rochester	508-763-8723	Jan Cote
Southcoast Health 200 Mill Road, Suite 109, Fairhaven	508-758-3781	Denise Dupuis Carla Marcelino Sandra Spoor

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Senior Scope

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Common Ground project wants to record your stories

Oral history project reveals New Bedford through the stories of the people who live here

A recently opened exhibit at the Whaling Museum is offering the city a new view of itself through the eyes and lived experiences of the people who live in the region.

The oral history project, called Common Ground, exists to give voice to community members, according to the museum's website. "By gathering individual stories, Common Ground presents a diverse, inclusive, and celebratory accounting of the lived experiences of South Coast," the project description reads.

These stories help the museum better represent the New Bedford area community, said museum board member Bernadette Souza.

"This is an opportunity for local people to get their voices into the museum," Souza said. "We don't want to be the story of just 19th century whalers."

Souza and Project Coordinator Emily Reinl spoke at an in-service training for the Foster Grandparent program at Coastline in late January, hoping to encourage the older adults in the room to participate. The recording process can be done in as little as 10 minutes, they said, with several easy options for making the recording, including the ability to have retakes.

"When you hit start recording, you'll see the counter start clicking and it gives you 10 minutes," Souza told FGP volunteers. "And if you need another 10 minutes you can start again."

Stories told by the people who lived them help broaden and deepen people's understanding of life in the region, and sometimes show a different side of an experience or location.

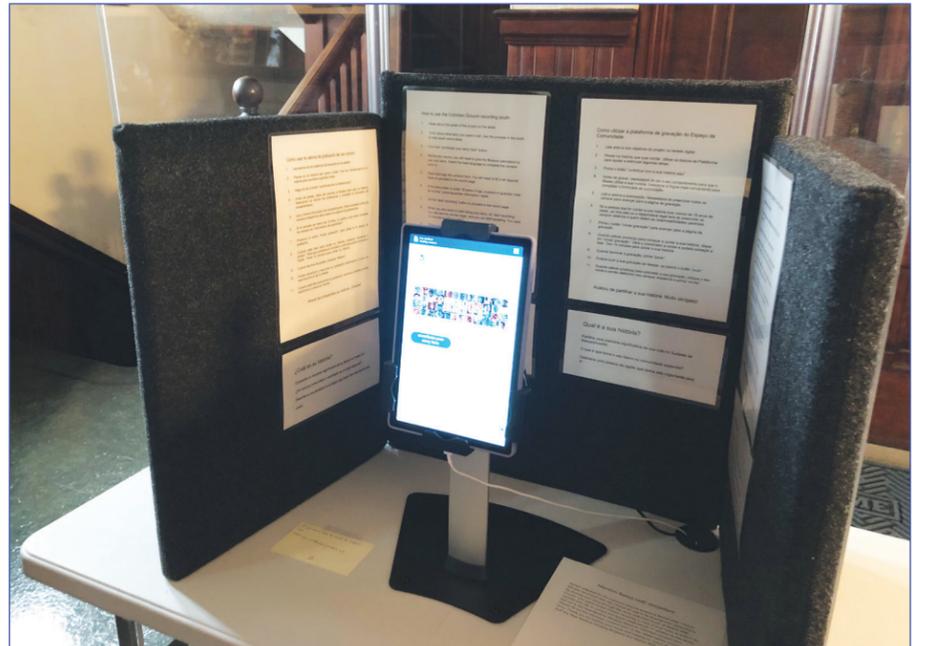
For example, Souza described how she grew up in the Bay Village Housing Development, an area of the city considered poor by others. But her experience was both positive and affirming, she said, describing groups of children playing together and being cared for by many "mothers."

"We had so many moms and they all cared," said Souza.

"When my mother didn't have (the children), the next-door neighbor did...and each mom gave me something to make me who I am today. I learned about community, relationships, and trust and I learned about love and how to be kind and respect people," she said. "So, whenever I have a chance to thank these moms, I say 'Thank you.'"

Stories of growing up in the city are just one subject that people can focus on in their recordings. There are many possibilities, said Reinl.

"It's pretty broad what we're



The Common Ground kiosk is shown above at the Bethel A.M.E. Church in New Bedford. The kiosk is traveling to various sites in the city to make it convenient for residents to tell their stories. It will be at Coastline until March 20.

accepting," she said. "We're looking for stories of life in the region – Fall River to Wareham."

Some stories are dramatic like living through a hurricane or blizzard and others are more focused on what day-to-day life was like.

"No story is too mundane because they all paint a picture of life in this region," said Reinl. "As long as it takes place in this region and as long as it is about you or a family story, that's good."

You never know who in the future will listen to and connect with your story, said Souza.

"Your grandkids' kids might say that's my great-grandmother. I want to hear her story."

The Common Ground recording kiosk will be at Coastline's North End location Monday – Friday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. until March 20. Call the nonprofit at 508-999-6400 and ask for Roshalene to schedule an appointment. Or, visit the recording booth in the Whaling Museum — no entrance fee needed — or record from your home via the museum's online connection at www.whalingmuseum.org/commonground/.



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Update

'From One Heart' art exhibit

A new exhibit called, "Dil ba Dil Rah Dhara" (meaning From One Heart to Another): The Afghan Women's Art Project, is on display at the New Bedford Main Public Library, 613 Pleasant St., through the end of the month. The exhibit showcases Afghan handicrafts, including fiber arts, embroidery, jewelry, decorative painting, and traditional and modern garb. The show is the culmination of several months of work by six local women who came to Massachusetts as refugees in late 2021. Call the library at (508) 991-6275 for hours and viewing information.

Computer training available

Technology classes through Coastline are being held throughout 2023 for a variety of experience levels. Two six-week classes are available: an introduction to basic skills like emailing, computer safety and connecting with friends and family; and one for those who want to broaden their skills including using the cloud and data processing. A three-week cell phone class is also available covering topics like sending texts and photos and using QR codes. Separate sessions for Android and Apple phone users are available. All classes are held at Coastline, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford from 9-11 a.m. To sign up, contact your local Council on Aging to complete an intake form. Seats are limited and filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Call Roshalene Grace at 508-742-9160 if you have questions.

Mental fitness for older adults

Buzzards Bay Speech Therapy's popular course Brain Builders continues via Zoom on Mondays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and on Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. Participants can join the class by phone or online or choose at-home programs delivered each week by mail or email. The class is meant to improve memory, word-finding skills, thinking skills, and socialization. Brain Builders is led by Lisa Yauch-Cadden, MS CCC-SLP, Kari Star, MS CCC-SLP, and Lori Yauch, MA CCC-SLP. For information and to obtain the link to connect to the class, contact Lisa at 508-326-0353; lycslp@gmail.com; or @buzzardsbayspeech. Funded in part by 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.

New Bedford Folk Festival will not return this summer

The New Bedford Folk Festival has officially been retired following its 25th anniversary in the summer of 2022. Longtime festival organizers Alan and Helene Korolenko and Zeiterion President Rosemary Gill announced the decision on the site's website saying the festival was no longer financially sustainable. "While other options were explored, ultimately, the decision was made for the festival to go out on a high note," the three organizers said in their statement.

Clothing sale at local church

A sale of gently-used clothing and toys will be held at St. Julie Billiard Church Hall in Dartmouth on March 24 and 25. Clothing for the entire family will be available along with toys and jigsaw puzzles from 1-7 p.m. Friday, with half-price deals from 5-7 p.m., and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday with fill-a-bag for \$3 deals. The church is located at 494 Slocum Rd., Dartmouth. Sponsored by the Ladies Guild.

Have you Heard About Greg?

Greg O'Brien was diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's 12 years ago after a bicycle accident required a series of cat scans that revealed the disease. An investigative reporter, Greg chose to educate the world about Alzheimer's. In 2014, he published the award-winning book, "On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimer's. In 2020, childhood friend Steve Ecclesine, now a Hollywood director, and Greg decided to make "Have You Heard About Greg: A Journey Through Alzheimer's with Faith, Hope and Humor." The film will be shown at the Acushnet Council on Aging at noon March 18, followed by a meet and greet at 1:45 p.m. with Greg. The event is free and open to everyone.

Get help connecting to internet

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC program that helps families to be able to afford to connect to the internet. The benefit provides a \$30 or more monthly discount on your monthly cable bill and a one-time discount of up to \$100 toward a laptop, computer or tablet. Income limitations and other guidelines apply. Apply online at www.ACPBenefit.org to submit or print out an application to mail in. Then, contact your preferred participating provider to select an eligible plan and have the discount applied to your bill. To learn more, call 877-384-2575, or visit fcc.gov/acp.

Age 60 or older? Know your options

Options Counseling is a free program that guides adults age 60 and older, families and caregivers, through resources that can help them remain in the community. An Options Counselor will work with you to meet individualized goals, including present or future planning needs. They can provide counseling whether you're currently at home, in the community, or in a hospital or facility setting. The program is part of the Aging and Disability Consortium of Southeast Massachusetts which partners with Independent Living Centers to assist people with disabilities of any age. The Options Counselor may assist with setting up services or provide you with local resources. To make a referral, call Coastline's Information and Referral Department at 508-999-6400.

Free vaccine and wellness clinic opens once a week

A new community vaccine and wellness clinic is available one day a week at PAACA, 360 Coggeshall St., New Bedford. The clinic is open every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. People do not need to be a patient to get vaccines at the clinic or to access glucose or blood pressure checks there. They also don't need identification or health insurance, according to a flyer put out by the Community Health Center. The service is free for everyone. The Community Health Center is partnering with nursing students from UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences and PAACA to bring the health and wellness services to the community.

Get help with consumer issues

The New Bedford Regional Local Consumer Program wants people to know that gift cards are for gifts and not for payments. If someone calls you and asks you to buy a gift card to pay bail or ransom; keep your social security benefits; pay an IRS debt; pay for computer tech support; pay for a family member in trouble; keep your utilities on; or, pay for a lottery prize, beware. Hang up because it's a scam. The consumer program made the announcement working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General. Contact them at 508-979-1693 or consumer@newbedford-ma.gov if you have a consumer problem or question.



Dancing the Day Away

Two groups of "seniors" transcended age gaps at the Dartmouth Council on Aging Valentine's Day Dance last month. Dartmouth High School seniors and National Honor Society members enthusiastically danced with town seniors, bopping to classics from the '50s through the '70s. Both groups showed off their best moves and enjoyed each other's company.

Your Health

More tips for the active aging adult in the new year

Part II of a Q&A with
Dr. Tom Bozzo



Back in January, *Senior Scope* showcased a range of active aging tips for adults in a conversation with Dr. Tom Bozzo. This month, we have part two of that conversation with tips for staying healthy through good nutrition and self-care.

If you haven't incorporated mental, emotional, and spiritual health strategies into your routine, now is a good time to start. Consider this the wellness side of the health and wellness partnership.

What role does nutrition play in active aging?

When it comes to nutrition, I think the same rules apply to most of us - young and old alike. I'm a big fan of Michael Pollan's quote "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." He's written some great books, including "Food Rules."

By "food" he means real foods that your great grandmother would recognize rather than highly processed foods.

I think of two things when I think of nutrition: maximizing the good stuff and avoiding as much of the bad stuff as I can.

A large variety of vegetables is

the good stuff. Veggies are loaded with phytonutrients which promote health (cancer and heart-disease fighting foods).

Too many processed foods and added sugars are the bad stuff - they are pro-inflammatory. I think we have become especially blind to all the added sugars we pour into our bodies in drinks each day - sodas, juices, and fancy coffee drinks. My goal is to drink zero calories daily and to generally limit the added sugar in my diet to 30 grams daily (read your food/drink labels).

Sweets are all the sweeter as an occasional treat rather than as a daily routine.

How important are supplements to healthy aging? Do you recommend them?

I am not a fan, unless you have a specific condition or nutritional deficiency, and your doctor recommends something specific as a result.

I don't believe in ads or fads.



Supplements are not regulated by the FDA, can make unfounded or exaggerated claims, and are being pushed by companies that prey on our desire for a quick fix for aging and fitness woes.

In general, I believe that if something SEEMS too good to be true, it probably IS too good to be true. Don't get suckered.

Are there any other recommendations you have for people who want to age well?

I have focused almost exclusively on physical health in the preceding questions (See part one of this discussion in the January 2023 *Senior Scope*.) However, mental and cognitive health also have huge impacts on quality of life.

As we age, our mental well-being is bolstered by maintaining community and purpose. Our community comes from nurturing connections with old neighbors, friends, and family; or from building new relationships. Maintaining purpose involves continuing activities that bring us joy, keep us active, or help others.

Our cognitive well-being can be sharpened by staying physically and mentally active and engaged. Learning new things and taking on new projects is an excellent approach.

We can't control everything as we age, but these are several of the things we CAN do to maintain or improve the various aspects of our health. Go for it in 2023!

Tom Bozzo decided to do something new when he was 30 and went to medical school. After completing his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Washington in Seattle, he relocated to the Southcoast where he has worked in primary care and addiction medicine since 2008. He especially enjoys team and competitive sports, but also likes being active with almost anything that gets him outdoors - biking, running, swimming, hiking, etc.

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Call 1-866-610-2273 (TTY: call MassRelay at 711), 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., 7 days a week. The call is free.

Home-delivered meals help older adults stay in their homes

When Coastline's drivers head out to deliver meals each weekday morning, they do more than just drop off food at the home of an older individual. They provide a friendly face, a daily safety check, and someone to ensure that help is provided, if needed.

These professionals are part of the Meals on Wheels program at Coastline, making sure that older adults who are homebound, live alone, or are unable to prepare and cook meals are fed and checked on. Meals meet nutritional guidelines and are delivered Monday through Friday, except on holidays, in New Bedford and six surrounding communities.

Nutritional staff strive to use fresh, local ingredients to create delicious meals that offer variety and flavor. The program is part of a national Meals on Wheels effort

that helps millions of older adults remain in their homes every year.

In addition to home deliveries, meal sites are available where older adults can come and sit down with others to enjoy their lunch. There are nine sites in New Bedford and local towns open at varying days and times. A complete list can be found at <https://coastlinenb.org/find-a-meal-in-your-neighborhood/>.

A \$2 voluntary donation is suggested for both meal sites and home deliveries; however, no one is turned away because they are unable to contribute.

Meal menus are posted each month at www.coastlinenb.org/nutrition-menu and on the organization's Facebook page at [Facebook.com/CoastlineNB](https://www.facebook.com/CoastlineNB). To learn more, call Coastline at 508-999-6400.

Refeições entregues em casa ajudam os idosos a permanecerem nas suas próprias casas

Quando os condutores do Coastline, saiem para fazer a entrega de refeições todas as manhãs dos dias úteis, eles fazem mais do que simplesmente entregar a comida na casa de um idoso. Eles providenciam um rosto amigável, uma verificação de segurança diária, e alguém para assegurar que ajuda é providenciada, se necessário.

Estes profissionais são parte do programa de Meals on Wheels do Coastline, assegurando que os adultos idosos os quais estão retidos em casa, vivem só, ou estão incapazes de preparar e cozinhar as refeições, são alimentados e verificados. As refeições estão dentro das linhas de orientação nutricionais e são entregues de segunda a sexta, com exceção dos feriados, em New Bedford e em seis comunidades à volta.

A equipa de nutrição esforça-se para usar ingredientes locais, frescos para criar refeições deliciosas que oferecem variedade e sabor. O programa é

parte do esforço nacional de Meals on Wheels o qual ajuda milhões de adultos idosos a permanecerem nas suas casas todos os anos.

Adicionalmente às entregas domiciliárias, locais para refeições estão disponíveis onde adultos idosos podem vir, sentar-se com outros e apreciar o seu almoço. Existem nove locais em New Bedford e comunidades locais abertas em vários dias e horas. Uma lista completa pode ser encontrada no <https://coastlinenb.org/find-a-meal-in-your-neighborhood/>.

Uma doação voluntária de \$2 é sugerida para ambas as refeições locais e domiciliárias; contudo, ninguém é rejeitado porque não podem contribuir.

Os menus para as refeições são publicados mensalmente no www.coastlinenb.org/nutrition-menu e na página da organização no Facebook no [Facebook.com/CoastlineNB](https://www.facebook.com/CoastlineNB). Para mais informação, chame para o Coastline no 508-999-6400.

Las comidas a domicilio ayudan a los adultos mayores a quedarse en sus hogares

Cuando los conductores de Coastline salen a repartir comidas diariamente en días laborales, hacen algo más que dejar comida en casa de una persona mayor. Proporcionan una cara amable, un control de seguridad diario y alguien que se asegura de que se preste ayuda, en caso necesario.

Estos profesionales forman parte del programa Meals on Wheels de Coastline, asegurándose de que los adultos mayores confinados en casa, que viven solos, o no pueden preparar y

cocinar las comidas reciban alimentos y estén controlados. Las comidas cumplen las normas nutricionales y se entregan de lunes a viernes, excepto los días feriados, en New Bedford y seis comunidades de los alrededores.

El personal de nutrición se esfuerza por utilizar ingredientes frescos y locales para crear comidas deliciosas que ofrezcan variedad y sabor. El programa forma parte de un esfuerzo nacional de Meals on Wheels que ayuda a millones de adultos mayores a

permanecer en sus hogares cada año.

Además de las entregas a domicilio, hay sitios de comidas donde los adultos mayores pueden ir y sentarse con otros para disfrutar de su almuerzo. Hay nueve sitios en New Bedford y pueblos locales abiertos en días y horarios variables. La lista completa puede consultarse en <https://coastlinenb.org/find-a-meal-in-your-neighborhood/>.

Se sugiere un donativo voluntario de \$2 tanto para los sitios de comidas como para las entregas a domicilio; sin

embargo, no se rechaza a nadie por no poder contribuir.

Los menús de las comidas se publican cada mes en www.coastlinenb.org/nutrition-menu y en la página de Facebook de la organización en [Facebook.com/CoastlineNB](https://www.facebook.com/CoastlineNB). Para más información, llame a Coastline al 508-999-6400.

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Study Criteria

To be considered for the RethinkALZ study, patients must:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be ages 50 to 87 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a family member or loved one who can be available as a study partner during the entire study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be diagnosed with, or have a suspected clinical diagnosis of, Alzheimer's Disease | <input type="checkbox"/> Be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or have had a previous COVID-19 infection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a gradual change in memory for six months or more | |

Other criteria will apply. There is no cost to the patient to participate in the RethinkALZ trial or for any of the study-related procedures. No hospitalization will be required. You may be compensated for your time and travel for each clinical study appointment.

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For additional guidance or to speak with a representative of the MA SMP Program call 800-892-0890 or visit www.MASMP.org.

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SMP
Senior Medicare Patrol
Preventing Medicare Fraud

This project is supported in part by grant number 90MPPG0051 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Is it time for the dentist? A Q&A with Dr. Winterhalter

By Nanci Winterhalter, MSPT

I have invited a guest contributor to address an important topic — our oral health. A graduate of UMass Amherst with a B.S. in public health and Tufts University with a degree in medical dentistry, Dr. Desiree Winterhalter has provided family dental care in our region for over three decades and I am privileged to have her as my sister-in-law!

Nanci: What are some common oral health challenges that older adults encounter?

Des: As we age, we can experience many changes in our gums, bone, teeth and salivary flow. Changes in our gums can lead to gum recession and bone loss resulting in more root exposure and spaces where food particles and plaque can build up. Roots are more susceptible to decay and sensitivity than the enamel on our teeth. Bone loss will lead to ill-fitting dentures and partials. Age and some medications can decrease our salivary flow. With a decreased amount of saliva, more food particles and plaque build-up on the surfaces of our teeth, increasing our risk of decay and gum disease. Diminished saliva can make it more difficult to wear dentures or partials resulting in sore areas. Acid reflux, or heartburn, can also present changes in

our teeth causing erosion. Last, a decrease in our fine motor skills as we age can affect our ability to brush and floss, compromising dental health.

Nanci: How is dental health related to my general health?

Des: Research has shown that there is a strong link between our oral health and general health. For example, the inflammation in our gums is strongly correlated to cardiovascular and other systemic diseases. Bacteria in our gums can travel to weakened heart valves, causing a condition known as endocarditis. Decreased saliva along with missing molars, poor occlusion — the way the teeth meet when the lower jaw (mandible) and upper jaw (maxilla) come together — or poorly fitting dentures contribute to improper chewing and will interfere with diet, digestion and absorption, ultimately causing malnutrition.

Nanci: What are good practices that I can use to maintain a healthy mouth and strong teeth as I age?

Des: It is recommended that older adults receive regular cleanings and checkups from their dentist twice yearly. Those with periodontal issues or systemic disease may need cleanings more frequently. Brushing twice daily with a fluo-



ride toothpaste and flossing once daily, preferably before bedtime, is good homecare.

Alert your dentist if you notice a dry mouth or your saliva is stickier than usual. There are many over the counter products your dentist can recommend to help with dry mouth. One important step is to drink plenty of water to keep hydrated. Rinsing after every meal or snack throughout the day can help with food residue. I recommend swishing forcefully to push food from the crevices it hides in.

Using a battery powered brush can help with dexterity. A water pic can help clean large spaces created by missing teeth or gum recession.

Flossers (floss on a holder) can be helpful to those who have trouble controlling traditional floss. There are products on the market that will help remove food and plaque from between the teeth such as proxabrushes, interdental brushes and soft picks. Your dentist can prescribe fluoride toothpaste for dry mouth or sensitive teeth, which is a good way to prevent tooth decay.

“A smile is a curve that sets everything straight.”

— Phyllis Diller

Nanci Winterhalter, MSPT, is a certified yoga teacher and yoga therapist.

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Real Estate sales can be complicated after owner's death

By Brandon C. Walecka, Esq.

In recent months we have had a number of calls with the following problem: The caller is attempting to sell a home owned by a family member; a buyer has been found, but then shortly before the closing the sale hits a snag.

The buyer's attorney does a search and discovers that the deed shows the owner to be someone who has died. The caller is being told that they need to be named as Personal Representative (formerly known as executor/executrix) proving that they have the authority to sell the property. The caller feels trapped with a buyer ready and does not know where to start.

So, how did this happen? No one realized that when the owner died, a legal process was necessary to determine who has the authority to sell the property as well as to determine the individual(s) entitled to the proceeds from the sale. In Massachusetts, this is done through the Probate Court.

Why is there Probate if my loved one had a will?

A will is probate. The last will and testament is a document in which you designate who will receive your property after your death. It is used by the Probate Court to transfer property owned in your name alone at your death to your heirs. In most wills, you will name a person called a "Personal Representative" who will work with your lawyer and the Probate Court to transfer your property to your heirs. The timeline for the entire process which includes submitting the Probate petition, receiving court authority, filing an inventory of assets within the estate, liquidating assets, selling property, and finally closing the estate, could take 12-15 months, if not longer. Often, the cost and delay of Probate can be avoided through some basic estate planning techniques.

When this discovery is made only after a buyer is found and everyone is ready to close, it can be difficult to meet sale-related deadlines. For example, the buyer may have a mortgage lined up at a certain interest rate, but that rate lock is set to expire. The time it takes to get a personal representative appointed may be longer than the buyer has available to save the rate.

How can Probate be avoided?

Most people are unaware of what Probate is and when it applies. But asking questions of your loved ones before they pass is the key so you understand future steps for the property. There are many different strategies available to help avoid the cost, delay, and public nature of the Probate process.

Create a Trust

A trust is a document wherein an individual "Grantor" creates a trust instrument and names an individual (usually themselves) as "Trustee." The grantor then transfers property into the trust and the trustee manages and distributes the property according to the terms of the trust. A trust allows you to specify how you wish your property to pass. It may also avoid some adverse tax consequences associated with other strategies, while accomplishing the same goal of avoiding probate.

Joint Ownership

Adding another person to your home as a joint owner or "joint tenant with rights of survivorship" will allow your property to pass to the other individual upon your death without the need for a probate proceeding. The obvious pitfall to this is that while you are alive the other owner has equal rights as you and the asset is subject to any claims of the owner and/or any of their creditors.

Life Estate Deed

A life estate is a deed in which you transfer your home to the persons whom you want to have it after you pass away (remainderperson), but reserve unto yourself the right to live in your home until you pass away. There are different types of life estate deeds with benefits and drawbacks, but all avoid Probate.

Understanding how your loved one owns their home can help to avoid the costly and expensive Probate process. We encourage you to meet with a qualified estate planning attorney and review the strategies available to help determine which is right for you.

Do you have a suggestion for an article topic for Attorney Walecka? Reach out with a question or topic at Walecka Law, P.C., 774-203-9003 or Brandon@WaleckaLaw.com. This article does not constitute legal advice.

Trivia

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) What president said, "Mr. Gorbachev.... tear down this wall"?
A.) Richard Nixon B.) Bill Clinton
C.) John F. Kennedy D.) Ronald Reagan
- 2.) Who stole Christmas in a children's story by Dr. Suess?
A.) The Lorax B.) Norton C.) The Grinch D.) Mr. Who
- 3.) Which of these animals does NOT hibernate?
A.) Groundhog B.) Giant Panda
C.) Hedgehog D.) Kodiak Bear
- 4.) Which ingredient is added to milk & cream to make frozen custard?
A.) Butter B.) Egg yolks
C.) Oil D.) Salt
- 5.) What does an ornithologist study?
A.) Birds B.) Sharks
C.) Horse D.) Lizards
- 6.) Whose signature is the largest on the Declaration of Independence?
A.) Ben Franklin B.) John Hancock
C.) John Quincy Adams D.) Thomas Jefferson
- 7.) How many US states begin with the letter "M"?
A.) 6 B.) 7 C.) 8 D.) 9
- 8.) What is the largest park in New York City?
A.) Central Park B.) Alley Pond Park
C.) The Greenbelt D.) Pelham Bay Park
- 9.) Which of these cities has the highest population?
A.) Los Angeles B.) New York City
C.) Miami D.) Chicago
- 10.) What city in the US has the most churches?
A.) Indianapolis, Indiana B.) Jacksonville, Florida
C.) Memphis, Tennessee D.) Selma, Alabama

[Answers listed on page 11]

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People's Pressed was one stop on a recent food tour where the group got to try a version of the juice shop's acai bowls.

through in every step of the tour.

The still-growing business celebrates the city and its highs and lows, with stories about people, buildings, tragedies, and successes from the past. Tours also incorporate details on the art and architecture on view here. One recent tour, for example, took a break from eating to see an art exhibit at the Star Store and learn more about the building's varied history.

Whether you know everything about New Bedford's history or nothing at all, a New Bedford food tour will leave you smiling with pride and vowing to come back to taste more of its delicacies.

Stops are close to each other in the downtown area, so the walking is not extensive. Still, it's best

to wear good walking shoes and bring water to stay hydrated. Alternatively, an alcohol ticket can be added for some light libation during the experience.

To go, here's what you need to know:

- The tour stops at five locations and is approximately 1.5 miles in length.
- A purchased ticket of \$80 includes food tastings, tips, and a knowledgeable and entertaining tour guide.
- The tour will go on, rain or shine.
- Spring tour dates are available at www.nbfoodtours.com. Most, but not all, Thursday, Friday, and Saturdays are on the schedule.

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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.

Have you Heard About Greg?: Journalist Greg O'Brien, diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's, chose to educate the world about the disease, publishing an award-winning book in 2014. In 2020, he was part of the film "Have You Heard About Greg: A Journey Through Alzheimer's with Faith, Hope and Humor" which will be shown at the COA at noon March 18, followed by a meet and greet with Greg. Free.

Zumba: All Zumba classes are on hiatus for the winter. Classes resume April 11.

Moving with Moxie starts in March: Balance and circuit training group designed to improve your balance. Enjoy therapy based small group circuit training, including an obstacle course. \$5. Limited to 10 participants. Call for March dates, 508-998-0280.

Reverse Mortgages Lunch and Learn with East Coast Capital: Free and open to homeowners age 62+. What is a reverse mortgage? How much will I receive? Am I even eligible? Find the answers to these questions and more. March 15 at noon. A light lunch will be served. RSVP at 508-998-0280.

Line Dancing with a Twist: Join new instructor Rondae for her very first "Line Dancing with a Twist" class March 20 at 1 p.m. Free, registration required.

Walking Club: With Patsy. Restarts March 23, 9 a.m. Location TBD. Call for information.

Carving Out Your Story: Oral history workshop March 29, 1 p.m. Workshop will help uncover interesting stories. Using prompts and interactive activities, award-winning storytellers Karen Chace & Andrea Lovett will guide participants through the process of finding those jewels that deserve to be remembered. Sponsored by the Mass Cultural Council. Free and open to the public. Pre-registration required. Sign-ups begin March 8.

Creativity with Color: Painting with Kristen. Thursdays at 1 p.m. \$6/per person includes all supplies; bring your sense of humor! Class size limited. Call to register.

Strong Women, Strong Bones, a Title III program: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. \$2/suggested, voluntary donation. Great exercise program for those living with osteoporosis or osteo arthritis.

Strength and Conditioning with Larry: Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.; \$6, Fridays, 10:30 a.m., free Take this class standing or seated while alternating upper-body strength work with low-impact cardio to maximize fitness benefits.

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.

Tax Preparations: Tuesdays between 9 and 11 a.m. Feb. 7-April 11 for low to moderate income individuals filing the simple form. Contact the center to schedule an appointment.

Senior Supper Club: Tuesday, March 7 from 4-6 p.m. Cost is \$5 in advance.

Medicare Advantage presentation: You have an opportunity to change your plan between Jan. 1 and March 31. Come learn more about Medicare Advantage plans and how they work. Pre-registration required. March 8 at 1 p.m.

St Patrick's Day Dinner: March 13. With The Tony Martin Trio entertainment. \$15. Pre-registration required.

Pet Preparedness: March 16 at 1 p.m. Do you worry about your pet should you need to go to the hospital or be away for an extended period of time? Join Sandra Gosselin, Dartmouth Animal Control supervisor, for a discussion and self-help checklist to ease this transition for you and your pet. Pre-registration required.

Humane Society and Shelter South Coast: March 16 at 1 p.m. Melinda Ventura, Humane Society Director, will provide us with an overview of some of the local Humane Society's services and programs. Free pet sweaters and shelter literature will be available. Pre-registration required.

Technology Classes: March 10 and 17, 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is required. Cost is \$5 per session.

Cooking Demo with the Cedars: Call the Center for more information. Pre-registration required. March 23 at 1 p.m.

Pop-up Art: March 24, 10:30 a.m. - noon. Sculpt your own clay succulent and potted cacti. Cost is \$5. Preregistration is required.

Movie: "Rescued by Ruby" March 29 at 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Free.

Art for Your Mind: March 30 at 1 p.m. "Appreciating Animal in Art" Pre-registration required.

Save the Date: Carving Out Your Story, an oral history workshop to uncover interesting stories from your past through prompts and activities. April 3. 10-11:30 a.m. Sign-ups begin March 13.

New Open Studio Art Class: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. - noon. Work on projects with other artists and get instruction on an as-needed basis. Cost is \$10. Walk-ins welcome.

Parkinson's Support Group: Second Thursday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m. Designed for people with Parkinson's and their care partners. Walk-ins welcome.

Coffee Hour: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:15-10:15 a.m.

Free Pain Consultations: Baystate Physical Therapy. By appt., 3rd Thursday at 1 p.m.

Pound by Pound: Weight loss support. Wednesdays, 10:15-11. Walk-ins welcome.

YWCA Widow Person Program: At the Center -1st and 3rd Thursday. Two sessions from 8:30-10 a.m. and 10:30-noon. Walk-ins are welcome.

Fairhaven COA

For more information, call the Fairhaven Council on Aging at 508-979-4029, located at 229 Huttleston Ave., Fairhaven, MA 02719. Visit the website at: fairhaven-ma.gov/council-aging. Open to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning in September.

Memory Café: March 23, noon to 2 p.m. A gathering that individuals with early to moderate Alzheimer's or other memory loss and their care partner, family or friends can attend in a safe, supportive and engaging environment. Reservations required.

Fort Adams, Newport, R.I.: Walking Trip March 23. Departs COA at 9 a.m. sharp. \$10. Limited to 12. Call to sign up. Wear proper footwear and outerwear; must bring a bagged lunch. Returns by 3 p.m.

Hey Kathy!: Chat with Kathy Clark from Moxie Mobility Training about exercise, vitals, navigating healthcare, home modification, fall prevention etc. March 22 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Free for residents. \$5 for non-residents.

Single Senior Supper: Third Tuesday of every month from 2-4 p.m. Time changes to 4-6 p.m. as of April. Call the Wednesday before to confirm attendance.

AARP Tax Aide Program: Appointments are on Tuesdays beginning in February, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Call the COA for an appointment.

Moving with Moxie: Balance and Circuit Training Group. March 8 and 29 at 1 p.m. Second and last Wednesday in the Rec Center. \$5. Limited to 10. Call COA to sign up.

Reiki/Alphasonic: 9-noon, March 13 and 27, Reiki is a subtle yet powerful form of energy medicine that is an effective modality for a wide range of issues in the body, mind and spirit. Alphasonic can be used to help improve health and performance, aiding the body to heal and recover faster. \$20 per session. Sign-ups required. Call the COA.

Wellness Clinic: 11:15-1:15 every Wednesday. Call the Board of Health for information at 508-979-4023, ext. 125.

Web Browser Safety: Parts I and II. March 6 and 8. 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Sandisk iXpand Flash Drive: March 13 and 15. 9 - 10:30 a.m. Must have access to a USB Device that can connect to your Android or Apple iPhone.

Navigating the Apple iCloud (Basics): March 20 and 22. 9 - 10:30 a.m. Must have and Apple iCloud account and know their Apple ID and password.

Navigating the Google Photo App: March 27 and 29. 9 - 10:30 a.m. Must have a Gmail account and know your password. Call for details.

Chair Yoga: Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:15 a.m. -12:15 p.m. Cost is \$3.

Tai Chi: Mondays, 11 a.m. - noon. Call for more information and cost.

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](https://www.facebook.com/marioncoa). Marion Board of Health: 508-748-3530.

Fall Prevention: March 10 1 p.m. Representatives from Oakley Home Access, the Marion Fire Department/EMS and the Marion Board of Health will discuss options and solutions for barriers in the home that could cause a fall. You can request a free home assessment. Call 508-748-3570 to sign-up.

Musical Performance: March 17 1 p.m. Enjoy an afternoon of music performed by two of our favorite visitors, John & Rick.

Continued on Page 11

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A Celebration of Ireland with Eddie Dillon: March 13 1 p.m. Enjoy an Irish music performance by Eddie Dillon. Originally from Boston, Dillon now of Fairhaven, is a well known entertainer and songwriter who has performed many years in Irish folk clubs and festivals throughout the Northeast. He plays the guitar, mandolin, banjo and bass. Call 508-748-3570 to make a reservation.

Wildflowers of Cape Cod: March 20 1 p.m. Celebrate the first day of Spring with a wildflower program presented by Cape Cod Canal Park Ranger Samantha Gray. She will take a close look at wildflowers and what and when to expect them.

Culture Park Short Plays: March 24 1 p.m. The Culture Park Uncommon Lunch Players will be returning to present a selection of fun, entertaining and relevant short plays, by local and regional playwrights. Call 508-748-3570 to reserve your spot.

Movie: March 3, 1 p.m. "The Banshees of Inisherin." Set on a remote island off the west coast of Ireland, this film follows lifelong friends Pádraic and Colm, who find themselves at an impasse when Colm unexpectedly puts an end to their friendship.

LGBTQ+ Senior Supper Club: March 8 from 5 - 7 p.m. at the Marion COA. Join us for food, drink & great conversation! Call 508-748-3570 so we know to expect you.

Waterfront Memory Cafe: Wednesdays 1-3 p.m. An engaging gathering for individuals with memory loss and their care partner. If you would like to join us for lunch beforehand, make reservations 48 hours in advance. Register by calling Linda at 508-748-3570.

Beginner Bridge Classes: With ACBL Bronze Life Master Kate Furler Tuesdays, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Class text is Audrey Grant's Bidding for the 21st Century. Eight week series. \$125.00; text available for another \$20. Call 508-748-3570 to register. First class is March 7.

Knitting instruction: Thursdays, 1 p.m. Suzanna Curtis will offer knitting instruction.

Mattapoissett COA

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

March Trips: March 9, 11:30 a.m. \$3 van, Brack's Grille & Tap, Taunton, home of the one-pound meatball! From fried pickles to poutine, there is something for everyone! March 16, 8:30 a.m., \$10 van; \$6 admission. Mapparium & Mary Baker Eddy Library. The world-famous, three-story, stained-glass globe is one of the key attractions. The Mapparium's three-dimensional perspective of the world of 1935 is enhanced by 'A World of Ideas,' an original presentation with words, music, and LED lights. March 23, 11:10 a.m., Upper Cape Restaurant. \$5 van. March 30 RI Home & Flower Show, \$5 van.

Pottery Clay Sculpting: March 9 and 23. 9:30-11 a.m. \$10 includes all materials and having your pieces fired in a kiln and glazed. Call to register, as space is limited.

Shakespeare for Scaredy Cats: A 5-week session begins March 2 on Thursdays, 6-7:30 p.m. Register: 508-758-4110. This is not a course! This is a relaxing way to learn about Shakespeare. Join the chat about the play or just listen. Free.

Artist Meet & Greet: March 24 at 9:30 a.m. Stop by for one hour of information and light refreshments. Instructor Christine Cummings will share her teaching style and the variety of arts (i.e: painting, drawing) and craft options that she will offer at the COA's new weekly program, starting in April. Register at 508-758-4110 or email coadirector@mattapoissett.net.

Movie & Pizza: 12:15 p.m. March 29. The Fabelmans is a 2022 American coming-of-age drama film directed by Steven Spielberg, who co-wrote and co-produced it with Tony Kushner. The film is a semi-autobiographical story loosely based on Spielberg's adolescence and first years as a filmmaker. Pizza \$1/slice. Prepay and registration required.

Art for your Mind: March 1 12:30 p.m. Masters of the Dutch Golden Age: A close look at images by famous painters such as Rembrandt and Vermeer, as well as other 17th Century Dutch masters who reached levels of excellence that still inspire viewers today. April 5, 12:30 p.m. Families in Art offers an opportunity to experience the concept of family, as expressed by a variety of artists. Call 508-758-4110 for details.

Walking Group: Meets every Wednesday at 9 a.m. May move indoors (mall walks) for inclement weather. Call the COA for details.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide: In-person tax assistance, free, to those 60+ who are low to moderate income. Tax-Aide volunteers are trained and IRS-certified every year to make sure they know about and understand the latest tax code. Mattapoissett COA tax services will begin the first week of February and continue until April 15. Call to register and the COA will contact you when the day/time is established. Spots fill up fast.

New Bedford COA

For updates and assistance, contact the New Bedford Council on Aging at 508-991-6250. All are welcome.

Adult Social Day: 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.

Tai Chi: Mondays, 2-3 p.m. 8-week program. Participants can join any time.

Bingo: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Noon-1:30 p.m.

Zumba Gold: Mondays 10-11 a.m.

Creative Writing: Tuesdays 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Strength and Conditioning: 2-3 p.m. Fridays.

Pool: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Knitting: Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

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 townofrochesterma.com/council-aging. Facebook: facebook.com/rochestercoaging.

March Trips: March 9, Chowder Sampling at Mike's in Fairhaven. Travel to Periwinkle & Seconds Count. Continue to Mac's and then Euro and Fathoms. Leave at 11:15 a.m. from COA & return at 3:30 p.m. March 21, Rhode Island School of Design Museum with lunch in their cafe. Leave at 9:15 a.m. from COA & return at 3:30 p.m. March 29 Cracker Barrel and Wrentham Outlets with lunch TBD. Leave at 9:30 a.m. from COA & return about 3:30 p.m.

REAL ID: March 15, 10 a.m. Registry of Motor Vehicles presentation on everything you need to know about REAL ID compliant drivers licenses and identification cards.

AARP Tax Preparation: This free tax service is offered to all low/moderate income persons with special attention given to those age 60 and over. Taxpayers need not be retired or a member of AARP. Will be held every Wednesday from Feb. 8 through April 12. Please contact Ann Soares at the COA at 508-763-8723, Ext. 201 or e-mail her at ASoares@townofrochester.com to schedule an appointment. Appointments can be made after Jan. 15.

Mobile Hygiene Dental Services: March 3 at the COA. Call 508-867-6725 to make an appointment.

TRIAD meeting: March 1 at 11 a.m.

Chair Yoga: Resumes March 16 at 3 p.m.

Brain Builders: March 16 and 30. 1 p.m. in the COA conference room.

Disposing of Electronics: COA will collect old electronics until May. A box will be placed in the big activity room. No TV's or computer monitors.

Dementia Directory

www.alzconnected.org

In-Person Groups

Alzheimer's Support Group: Every other Tuesday, 2:45 to 4 p.m. Held at the Dartmouth COA. Group is for caregivers and their care partners. Please contact Carolyn Greany at 508-304-4587.

Caregivers Support Group: First Thursday of the month from 1 to 2 p.m. Held at Fairhaven COA at 508-979-4029.

Caregiver Group: First and Third Tuesdays 10 a.m. at the Rochester COA. Come join us and find out more. Register with Carol at 508-763-8723.

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

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.

LGBTQIA+ Bereavement Support Group: An 8-week free online support group for LGBTQIA+ meets via Zoom from Nov. 1 to January 3 on Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. Email Lisa Krinsky at lkrinsky@fenwayhealth.org if interested.

March 2023 Trivia Quiz Answers

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

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Community

The Way Things Were

Cannon Street Playground in 1936

Young people (at right) from New Bedford's South Central neighborhood celebrate the playground's summer opening.

In 1938, dignitaries including Mayor Leo E.J. Carney and Portuguese Consul Dr. Goulart da Costa renamed the park in honor of Joseph J. Monte, the first Cape Verdean awarded a Purple Heart. During World War I, Fogo-born Monte had fought in the 307th Infantry until



captured by German soldiers.

Eighty years later, Monte Park, on Acushnet Avenue adjacent to

the Bay Village Housing Project, remains a cultural and recreational hub in the community.

SRPEDD seeks input on local transportation plan

About 50 older adults attended a presentation by staff from the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District in January to hear about plans for a new Regional Transportation Plan and provide input to help shape planning.

The RTP looks at the region's transportation options and how people are able to move from one point to another. It considers

roads, bridges, public transportation, airports, freight movement, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

As part of its process, SRPEDD is looking for people to complete its Moving Forward 2050 Transportation Survey. The confidential survey gives residents a way to alert SRPEDD to the challenges to using the existing transportation system

and helps them create a relevant future transportation system.

To add your voice and complete the survey, visit SRPEDD's website at <https://srpedd.org/transportation/regional-transportation-planning/regional-transportation-plan-rtp/moving-forward-2050/>. There is also an extensive list of documents and videos related to the process that can be accessed there.

Homeless continued...

hours a day, 365 days a year, with 76 beds (down from 90 pre-pandemic), an on-site nurse, three meals a day, shower facilities, laundry, storage, mail service, computers and phones.

The facility is impressive to look at, resembling a hotel from the exterior, a fact that drew criticism from many who felt it was too luxurious, Orlando said.

But it is still a shelter, she added.

"Is it comfortable?" Orlando said. "No, it's not...But it's clean and safe and I think those are the two most important things."

Orlando's presentation was part of a day-long workshop put on by the New Bedford Health Department, Greater New Bedford Opioid Task Force, Homeless Service Provider Network, Steppingstone, The Bristol County Regional Alliance, and Rise Up for Homes.

Unlike other shelters, including ones in New Bedford, the Bergen County shelter allows people to stay all day. They can have three meals a day there, if needed. "Folks don't have to get up in the morning and go someplace else," Orlando said. "So people are not (moving about) in the community during the day. They might be, but they don't have to be. That's a key feature for us."

Being able to provide beds as needed to those who are newly homeless requires moving people out of the shelter and into permanent housing regularly. The outflow of the shelter must match the inflow, Orlando said.

Guests are told when they arrive that

"Shelters are not the end game... Shelter gets people off the street and housing ends homelessness."

**—Julia Orlando,
Bergen County, N.J.**

their stay is temporary and they must work with services on a plan for long-term housing, Orlando said, adding, that it's communicated regularly.

"That's what we do. (We say,) we're so happy you're here...but it's not home. You're leaving."

In the early days of planning the shelter, Orlando said there was a lot of resistance to the county's efforts. She spent years reaching out regularly to residents and the business community building support for the project, she said, looking for ways to connect, listen, and shift thinking around homelessness and people who are homeless.

"Every community believes if they build it, they will come and what I needed them to understand is they are already here," she said. "People who pay rent and have jobs fall into homelessness... Things happen to people and if you have a place that can respond to that, you can actually benefit your community."

Once the shelter opened and began opening meals to the public, more people were in the building to see what homelessness looked like, a factor that contributes to better understanding.

"Every night different people from our community serve meals, not in the

street, not in a park, in our building and every night a different group comes in and sees the face of homelessness. And you know what they see? Someone they went to high school with, or they see a neighbor," said Orlando. "It changes the perception."

Two groups that she personally struggles with most are young adults and older ones, Orlando said. She sees about two people over the age of 80 needing shelter every week, usually individuals who don't need nursing homes but can't afford assisted living residences.

"We need an answer for that and we don't have one," she said.

In her comments about New Bedford, Orlando was very positive about the work already being done. She noted several bright spots, including a community dinner for those who are homeless being held at PAACA the evening of the workshop and the city's commitment to and success in getting veterans into housing.

"When our vets come home and they kiss the ground, they shouldn't have to sleep on it," Orlando said. "You are honoring the people who served our country in the most important way."

Ultimately, New Bedford should focus on ending homelessness, Orlando said. "Not managing it — ending it — and that's a different kind of work."

She also stressed that communities still need more housing.

"Shelters are not the end game," she said. "Shelter is temporary. Shelter gets people off the street and housing ends homelessness."

Young Lady?

Retired *Senior Scope* editor pushes back on ageism

By **Jeannine Wilson Aidala**
Retired *Senior Scope* Editor

I was lucky enough to spend some time in Florida last month. I flew Southwest as I usually do. I know Southwest has gotten a bad rap recently but I've always liked them. They don't have any hidden fees and they've never lost my luggage.



If you're not familiar with Southwest, you don't get an assigned seat when you buy your ticket. Instead, you're assigned to the A, B or C group when you check in 24 hours before your flight. The A group boards first and so on.

My return flight was sold out and I was in the B group so many of the seats were taken when I boarded. I was making my way down the aisle scanning the empty seats, when a smiling 30-something flight attendant addressed me, "Are you looking for an aisle seat, young lady?"

I've passed the 80-year mark and one thing that really annoys me is being referred to as a "young lady." When someone calls me a "young lady" I feel as if I'm being treated like a child instead of a rational adult. It's not flattering, it's patronizing.

I was looking for an aisle seat, but I felt like telling the perky flight attendant, "I can take care of myself. I'm an adult and I can find my own seat." To be fair, she probably meant well but her comment rubbed me the wrong way.

This "young lady" tag comes up all too often — in the doctor's office, the supermarket and lots of other places, and it's downright annoying.

It's not just women who feel they are being patronized, male friends and relatives have told me about similar experiences. Men who fought wars and had successful careers are viewed as helpless once their hair turns white.

It's all part of the ageism that is pervasive in American culture. When you're no longer young, you lose your value.

I think it's time for us older adults to assert ourselves. We need to push back against ageism and let the world know we still count.

Talk Back

Have you encountered ageism recently?

Share your thoughts with *Senior Scope* by emailing bperdue@CoastlineNB.org or mail to *Senior Scope*, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745.