

# Senior Scope

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

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## 'IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CHILDREN'

### FGP program gets new life

When Lorraine Silveira found out that the Foster Grandparent program was being dissolved at Coastline, she cried. All she could do, she said, was think about the children in the Head Start program where she volunteered and wonder how the classroom would function without FGP help.

"I was upset every time I thought about it," said Silveira. "I'm in my 13th year (with FGP) and all I could think was that the people who did this don't realize what they're doing, because these children that we help, you know, they need help bad. They don't know anything. They don't know their letters or their numbers."

The Foster Grandparent program, which operated through Coastline in the New Bedford area for more than 40 years, places older volunteers in schools and early learning centers as "grandparents" who help support and guide students and aid teachers. As an AmeriCorps Seniors program, it operates locally through agencies like Coastline.

This spring, the aging services



FGP volunteers aid in classrooms in the greater New Bedford area, supporting children and helping teachers. (File photos)



agency began looking for a new home for FGP.

At the time, Coastline CEO Justin Lees wrote about the decision in Senior Scope, saying, "For Coastline to effectively serve our consumers, we need to become laser-focused on our core programs and allocate whatever available resources we have to meeting these rising needs. The Foster Grandparent program does many things, but it does not serve our core mission of allowing people to live independently in their homes."

What Lees also said is that although Coastline would no

**Continued on page 12**

### Retiring COA director to make ministry her full focus

There's an argument to be made that leading a council on aging is as much ministry work as being a pastor. And in New Bedford's case, retiring Council on Aging director Debra Lee has been both.

Lee relinquished the reins at the COA this spring after 10 years in the position. She leaves to continue her role as pastor at her current church, First Baptist in Swansea, and take on a second pastorate in Warren, R.I.

In leaving, she said she'll miss the creative process of troubleshooting problems for the city's older population, including creating programming and adjusting existing programs to better meet their needs.

"The creativity of the job is probably what I'll miss the most," said Lee. "To be able to look at some-

**"I lifted it up in prayer and just said, 'What can I do?...And doors opened. You always have to pay attention to those open doors.'"**

**—Debra Lee,**  
*Retired COA Director*



thing and say, 'How can I fix this?'"

Lee had been at the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health before applying for the New Bedford position in late 2012. Her job involved traveling throughout the southeastern part of the state to deliver staff education. She saw the COA position as an opportunity to bring her varied skills - in social science, mental health and gerontology - together into one role.

"All the pieces fit together; nothing's ever wasted," she said about her career trajectory. "Everything you did along the line feeds into

**Continued on page 3**



# Social Security expands outreach and access for SSI

**By Delia De Mello**  
*Social Security*

Social Security has expanded its outreach to people in critical need of financial help who may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). SSI provides monthly payments to adults age 65 and older or to other adults – and children – with a disability or blindness who have limited income and financial resources. SSI helps pay for basic needs like rent, food, clothing, and medicine.

“Our outreach efforts targeted areas where a majority of people are living at or below the federal poverty threshold.”

We identified underserved communities in rural and urban areas across the country. We focused on areas with the greatest decline in SSI applications since the pandemic. Our outreach efforts targeted areas where a majority

of people are living at or below the federal poverty threshold. People who receive SSI may qualify for other financial help, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP benefits (formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, and discounted internet service through the Federal Trade Commission’s Affordable Connectivity Program. Social Security beneficiaries may also be eligible for SSI. People with limited income and financial resources and internet access can visit [www.ssa.gov/ssi](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi) to learn more about SSI eligibility and request an appointment to apply for benefits. People without access to the internet can call our National 800 Number at 1-800-772-1213 to speak with a representative. Please share this information with your friends and family to spread the word about SSI.




Delia DeMello

## From the Editor

Sometimes we undervalue the history and landmarks in our own backyards. We can travel the country or world, visiting attractions and marveling at the creativity and achievements of the people who live there, but pass right over the landmarks in our own neighborhoods and communities. I’m guilty of this myself, but on June 23, standing in the new Abolition Row Park in New Bedford during the joyous opening celebration, I found myself wishing and hoping that all of the city’s nearly 100,000 residents would find their way here to spend time at least once in their lifetimes. The newly designed space is a powerful representation of New Bedford’s part in the Underground Railroad and its contribution to ending slavery. It is a testament to the leaders, especially the free and freed black Americans, whose efforts shaped the future of this city. It tells a foundational story of the city and one that, until now, has not gotten the attention it deserves. The park, painstakingly created and made possible by the New Bedford Historical Society, the city, and many other partners, is something that every New Bedford resident can be proud of. Its value is also beautifully reflected in the message that NBHS President Lee Blake confidently asserted at the opening ceremony – that it acknowledges all of New Bedford. In her remarks, Blake noted that people will be able to see more of the colors of the city’s people and their impact on its history through Abolition Row Park. “Now when people hear New Bedford, they think people of color. They think Cape Verdeans. They think African Americans. They think Native people,” she said. “Before they just thought white whalers.” As we acknowledge the voices of those who made this city what it is today – including the ones who have too often been silenced or left behind – as we add those voices to the whole that is this city, we all gain. Abolition Row Park, located on Seventh Street, is worth a visit whether you’re from New Bedford or just passing through. Don’t miss it. Connect with Beth at [bperdue@coastlinenb.org](mailto:bperdue@coastlinenb.org).




Beth Perdue




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**SHINE Counselors**  
in the Greater New Bedford Area

Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	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)	508-284-2608 508-979-1526 508-991-6170	Natasha Franco Luisana Paez-Espinal Nora Rose
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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 Payment Department at 508-742-9114 to donate with a credit card or use the QR code below to donate online.


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# Car Club culture showcased at 50s Night in New Bedford

Great music, ethnic foods, 50s outfits, and friends enjoying the company of friends made the popular 50's Night a success last month. The event is held annually in memory of its original organizer, Joe Jesus. But the main attraction that evening was the cars. People walked the blocks of downtown New Bedford enjoying the hundreds of street rods, race cars, unique antiques, and special interest vehicles lined up one after another, each shining in the evening sun. Vehicles and owners representing seven car clubs as well as those not in a club lined Union

and Purchase streets and Acushnet Avenue, including the Legendary Street Rods, the club to which Jim Hubright belongs. Hubright was on Union Street with his electric blue 1937 custom Ford. The vehicle sat low to the ground, nearly scraping the pavement but has an air suspension system that lets him lift it higher when he drives, Hubright explained. This was Hubright's first time at the car show with this vehicle after selling his 1923 T-Bucket, he said. "I had to make room for the new one," he grinned, referring to the sale.

On Purchase Street, Scott Filkins, of Wareham, was also new to the show. Filkins was enjoying letting passing children sit in the driver seat of his 1937 custom, three-window coupe Ford -- one of the only cars the car enthusiast owns that he did not build himself. "I'll let anyone into my car," he said, about the vehicle he purchased in New Bedford. "I like having a good time and making somebody laugh and smile." The vehicle has a Chrysler Hemi engine, Filkins said, with a modern interior including air-conditioning and power windows and doors.

"The stuff they didn't make in 1937," he said, smiling. Filkins said he was enjoying the event. "I'm glad I came," he said. "It's a nice crowd." Most car club members grow up in the culture with fathers and grandfathers who are car enthusiasts and initiate them into the culture, he said. "Ninety percent had family in a club," said Filkins, praising clubs for their events and the support they give to veterans and others. "I love cars. I've been into cars since I was 12-years-old," he said. "I learned all this on my own."

## COA Director continued...

what you ultimately decide to do." In her time in New Bedford, Lee brought technology to the COA, created a mental health regional team, took on ageism, participated in a project to create a more age-friendly city, and created a social day program that now serves nearly 85 people a week. When she arrived in 2013, she said, everything was still done on paper; nothing was electronic. It was like stepping back in time. "It was nice to be able to bring them into (the 21st century). We created something out of practically nothing," said Lee, noting that this included implementing a system where participants who attend events and programming check in electronically using a keycard. At the time, the city had five active COA locations, but two – the New Bedford Hotel and Ashley Park – closed soon afterwards. In her decision-making, Lee was

always mindful that New Bedford has the second highest percentage of residents who are age 60 and over in the state, she said, second only to Quincy. One of her early projects was sending a survey out to 2,000 older adults who used services in the city. The survey, conducted years before the COVID-19 pandemic made mental health a stronger focus, hit a nerve with respondents, 1,600 of whom sent in answers. Of that number, Lee said, 55 percent indicated they needed help. From that response grew a regional mental health team called EMHOT, which stands for Elderly Mental Health Outreach Team, which still exists today. The program grew to include multiple regions in the state which receive annual legislative funding to continue operating. EMHOT functions locally with the help of partners including Coastline; The Bridge, a Center for Hope and Healing; Bristol Elder Services; the Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford; and contracted

clinicians and other professionals. Lee also worked with Coastline and then CEO Paula Shiner on the New Bedford Age-Friendly initiative. The project was designed to create better age-centered thinking in all areas of the city, including, but not limited to, older needs. One of her latest projects, Lee said, has been securing a \$40,000 grant from the state to provide social day scholarships to families that need them and to extend the hours of social day programming. Implementation of that grant is expected to start this fall, she said. In her time as COA director, Lee put much of her energy into creating a social day program in the city to give older adults a place to go for socialization, engagement, and support. In 2023, the program moved to the Buttonwood Senior Center, a decision that received pushback from older adults in the city who protested the change, one of a series of moves in services over the years, and criticized the COA for what they said was a

reduction in activities and programs. For Lee, though, the move was a positive one, allowing an increase in the number of social day participants, a service that is desperately needed, she said. Looking to the future, Lee is now focusing on expanding her ministry. Her multiple roles, she said, "will allow me to do ministry full-time because all these jobs are ministry-related - (being a) Community Nurse hospice chaplain; working for the Conference of Baptist ministers; and then working the two churches - it's all ministry. My goal was always to be a full-time pastor, but there aren't a lot of churches that can hire a full-time pastor." The opportunities that appeared answered her prayers. "I lifted it up in prayer and just said, 'What can I do?'" Lee said. "And then the job for the Conference of Baptist Ministers opened up (and) that was way more than I needed to be full-time." "Doors opened," she added, "You always have to pay attention to those open doors."



# Update

## Shakespeare in NB brings *The Tempest* to RJD Museum

The Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum and Reverie Theatre Group Shakespeare in New Bedford partnership continues this summer with the production of *The Tempest* in August. Seven performances of ‘*The Tempest*’ will take place on the tented patio in the Museum’s garden at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 17-19 and 24-26 with a sensory-friendly matinee at 2 p.m. on Aug. 27. Admission is free; donations are accepted in lieu of a ticket fee. Seating is first-come, first-served. Attendees will experience the comic tale of Prospero, the overthrown duke of Milan, who maroons his betrayers on a magical island where he creates spells and enchantments that toy with the evildoers until they promise to return him to his throne. The Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum is located at 396 County Street, New Bedford.

## GRG, Inc. receives \$1,000 grant

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Inc., a program which offers support for grandfamilies, was the recent recipient of a \$1,000 Walmart Community Grant to support its program. The monthly support group meets at New Bedford Public Library, 613 Pleasant St. in New Bedford, on the third Tuesday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. Grandparents, please call Brenda Grace at 508-996-0168 for more information on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or after 5 p.m. on other weekdays. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren is partly funded by Coastline and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

## DATMA showing local art outdoors

As part of its 2023 theme “Shelter,” DATMA is highlighting the role artists play in shaping and creating their local community, the ultimate shelter for a city. This exhibit features a range of SouthCoast artists who have never considered their work to be “the right medium” for public art, presenting their work in outdoor spaces for the first time. Open Studios on the Sidewalk is about opening up doors to the different creative practices in the SouthCoast region. The outdoor portion of this exhibition is on view June 22 – Oct. 23 in Tonnessen Park and the entrance of the Seastreak Ferry buildin in downtown New Bedford.

## Compost Bin Day is Aug. 19

Compost Bin Day is Aug. 19 from 8 to 10:45 a.m. at the Crapo Hill Landfill, 300 Samuel Barnet Blvd., New Bedford. Enter through the New Bedford Business Park. New Bedford and Dartmouth residents who purchase, or previously purchased, a backyard compost bin can choose from two types of kitchen counter bins to help compost at home. Collect food waste such as banana peels and apple cores in your kitchen counter bin. When full, empty it into your backyard compost bin. Kitchen counter bins are only available on special Compost Bin Days and while supplies last. The Earth Machine and the New Age Composter are available at the discounted rate of \$25 each. Cash, check, or money order only. Proof of residency required. If you have questions, visit <http://gnbrmdistrict.org/about-us/>, call (508) 979-1493, or email [Marissa@gnbrmdistrict.org](mailto:Marissa@gnbrmdistrict.org).

## Learn to use your phone or computer better

Coastline is continuing its series of technology classes throughout 2023. Beginner and intermediate classes are available as well as iPhone and Android cell phone classes. Choose the class that’s right for you. All classes take place at Coastline’s location at 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford. Contact Roshalene at 508-742-9160 to register and for more information including dates and times of individual classes.

## Rent or mortgage support available

The PACE Housing Opportunity Center provides one-on-one guidance to match available programs to individual needs. We’re committed to helping families and individuals keep their homes and maintain stability during challenging times. Programs and services include: limited rental assistance; mediation when negotiating with a landlord about back rent or payment plans; resources and information on tenant’s and landlord’s rights in Massachusetts; referrals to other local resources to meet family and individual needs; and guidance to apply for local and state financial assistance to prevent losing a home or being evicted from an apartment. PACE also offers lists of available rental units in the city, both subsidized and unsubsidized. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call us at 508-993-0033, Ext.103 or email [cmejil@paceinfo.org](mailto:cmejil@paceinfo.org).

## Learn more about the Frail Elder Waiver

The Frail Elder Waiver is for people who meet the criteria for nursing facility care but prefer to live in the community. The program supports older adults with services to assist them with self-care and everyday tasks. Participants who are age 65 or older can choose to enroll in the Senior Care Options program to get their waiver (and if applicable, their Medicare) service all together through a single SCO plan. FEW is a MassHealth program and is one of several waivers available through MassHealth. Each waiver has both financial and clinical eligibility requirements. An individual may not be enrolled in more than one HCBS Waiver at a time. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs is responsible for the day-to-day operation of this waiver program. For more information on FEW, visit [massoptions.org](http://massoptions.org) or call 800-243-4636.

## Art classes at Tripp Tower

The New Bedford Art Museum will host art classes at Tabor Mill in the city beginning this month. The classes, for Tabor Mill residents who are 65 years of age or older, will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sundays, from Aug. 6 to Sept. 10 at Tabor Mill, 217 Deane St., New Bedford. No experience is necessary. The art museum will provide all art supplies and an instructor. Classes are part of the museum’s Creative Care program and are funded by the Association for the Relief of Aged Women and Coastline Elderly Services.

## Textiles in New Bedford

The New Bedford Preservation Society is conducting a walking tour focused on the “History of the Textile Industry” at 6 p.m. on Aug. 10. The tour will examine the rise and fall of the textile industry and its continuing effect on New Bedford. This event, one of several in the Society’s Summer Walking Tour Series, is made possible by the support of the New Bedford Cultural Council. Please gather at the Joseph Grinnell Mansion, 379 County St. For additional information, check the Preservation Society’s website, <http://nbpreservationsociety.org/>

## Summer Cookouts in the South Coast



(Clockwise from above) The Dartmouth COA Beach Party was a rockin’ affair in June. It was thumbs up at Tripp Towers with residents enjoying burgers and music courtesy of FUN 107. Ladies at the Acushnet COA enjoyed lunch and live music together. Anderson Way residents enjoyed a catered cookout lunch and Grinnell residents ate in style in their beautiful dining space.





# Your Health

## Cultivate the habit of mindfulness one sense at a time

By Jonathan Felix

I sit. I see. Light falls. It reflects off objects and enters the eyes. The retina converts photons of light into electrical impulses that travel the optic nerves. The brain alchemizes these rivers of light into sight. It is wondrous.

Even though my mind may be agitated, my mood depressed, my thoughts fragmented, I can see. My eyes alight on colors. I perceive many shades.

There are millions of receptors within the eye that detect light and color. I am aware of the empty space between me and the objects my eyes rest upon.

Like a camera lens, the pupils contract and dilate, adjusting depth of field...with just a thought.

If the human eye were a camera, it would have over 500 megapixels making it far more advanced than any camera on the market.

The human eye is the only multi-focus lens in the world which can adjust in milliseconds. I am hardly aware of the muscles that dilate or constrict the pupils of the eye or the muscles around the eye that move the eyeballs from side to side (even as I type this).

I blink without thinking. At this moment, I am aware. As awareness blossoms, my mind settles. A calm mind is a refuge.



Because I have sight, I can toss a ball around with my sons. The brain processes millions of bits of information (e.g. the size, shape, and weight of the ball), calculates the ball's trajectory, estimates where the ball will land, coordinates with the motor cortex to move, to extend the arms and fingers, to catch.

The gaze locks on to the target (e.g. the ball). Neurons in the parietal reach region of the brain inhibit eye movements to center on the target.

The brain predicts, decides, and calculates my next movements in fractions of a second prior to execution. It has determined how much energy the body needs to move, to reach, to catch.

If I drop the ball, with practice, the brain revises its predictions, makes



micro adjustments to movements, adjusting as needed so that I can improve my performance.

Is this not wondrous?

The eye processes thousands of bits of information every hour. Again, photons of light are converted to electrical signals that are sent to the visual cortex.

Ninety percent of the connections coming into the visual cortex, however, carry predictions from neurons in other parts of the cortex.

Only a fraction of what we ‘see’ is raw, visual input. What we see is filtered with predictions, evaluations, memory, identification, language from other parts of the mind.

In other words, we co-create what we see. To cultivate the habit of mindfulness, you may find it enjoyable to dedicate each day to one of the senses this week.

Today, I invite you to celebrate the gift of sight.

Be like an artist — sensitive to colors, shapes, form, texture, shadows, space, contours, and the play of light.

Rather than anticipating or labeling what you’re seeing, see if you can go deeper, without naming, without trying to identify what is there, without assigning it meaning, without judging as “pleasant” or “unpleasant,” “interesting” or “dull,” or looking at it through the filter of past associations.

Be curious and open. Marvel at the details. Approach sight with a beginner’s mind, as if seeing for the first time.

*Jonathan Felix is the assistant executive director at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford and one of the Mindfulness facilitators with the New Bedford Wellness Initiative. Jonathan Felix celebrates over 25 years in education and has been practicing mindfulness for 35 years.*

## On Being Firmly Planted

What is “posture” and why should we care?

By Nanci Winterhalter

Simply stated, posture is the position of your body in space, in standing (or sitting) and in action.

For something that sounds so “simple,” our posture actually has broad implications for our general well-being and is often a reflection of how well our body is working and how we feel.

With the nervous system orchestrating, biomechanically our posture determines the amount and distribution of stress on the body’s various parts as we sit, stand and move. It’s a whole body thing!

This includes the obvious — bones, muscle, tendons, ligaments and discs, and also the not-so-obvious — organs and fascia.

Healthy posture distributes the stress of being upright within the field of gravity to the structure most capable of bearing it. Problematic posture does the opposite. Hmmm....

Have you ever played the game, Jenga? In that wonderful stacking game, you place one block on top of the other and balance from the bottom up with the goal of keeping the blocks well balanced so the “stack” remains stable.

When one “block” is “out of place,” the blocks above can and

**“Healthy postural awareness and attention are key in our quest for aging well.”**

do become wobbly.

In the game, the stack eventually fails and falls (as players hold their breath).

In our own body, when we lack healthy musculoskeletal alignment, we (mostly) unconsciously compensate by moving this way and that and over time our physical body makes subtle (or not so subtle) changes. The result: reduction in the muscles' ability to efficiently contract, over-stretching of our stabilizing parts, increased demand on our organs (due to excessive compression), and, possibly, premature degeneration of our joints.

Here is one example: we have all observed (or experienced) slumped-over postures. In addition to discomfort, reduced balance and decreased energy, this posture can cause a restriction in our breathing that can impact our cardio-respiratory function and reduce digestive efficiency.



The good news: posture changes can make a positive difference in overall health.

Research and experience teach us that strengthening posture can improve many aspects of our function including: balance (reducing our risk for falls); energy levels (so we can do more of what we love); mobility (so we can function better in our daily living activities and recreation); deep breathing; swallowing; digestion; elimination; and stress management.

Other benefits of improved posture include appearance, confidence, optimism and mood!

So...what to do?

You might start by asking your trusted medical professional to

refer you to a physical therapist for a posture evaluation and personalized home program.

You can learn to become increasingly aware of the state of your posture (and balance) when sitting, standing and moving.

If you aren’t already doing so, you might consider joining a mindful movement class in your community which can improve your joint range of motion safely and strengthen the muscles that support healthy posture.

Healthy postural awareness and attention are key in our quest for aging well.

Let’s get moving!

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



## RMV details steps for undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver's license

Thanks to the Work and Family Mobility Act, immigrants can now apply for a driver's license in Massachusetts, allowing them to legally drive in the U.S.

The new law, which went into effect on July 1, removes the requirement that Massachusetts residents provide proof of immigration status. That means, as of July, eligible Massachusetts residents can apply for a standard driver's license (class D or M), regardless of their immigration status.

A website created by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles details steps applicants must take in order to obtain a license, beginning by gathering necessary documents and applying for a learner's permit.

A list of documents needed is available on the RMV website at

the website address below. Documents that are not in English must also be submitted with an English translation, including a certification by an individual or organization accepted by the RMV.

There are fees for obtaining a license, including a learner's permit fee of \$30; road test fee of \$35; and license fee of \$50.

A step-by-step guide to the process is available at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/work-and-family-mobility-act-wfma>

The RMV warns applicants to be wary of fraudulent websites and scams. The RMV is the only organization who can issue a Massachusetts driver's license or collect fees for the licensing process, it says. It also warns applicants not to pay anyone else for RMV services.

## RMV detalha as etapas para os imigrantes não documentados poderem obterem uma carteira de condução

Graças ao Work and Family Mobility Act, imigrantes podem agora requerer uma carteira de condução em Massachusetts, permitindo que conduzam legalmente nos Estados Unidos.

A nova lei, a qual entrou em vigor a 1 de julho, elimina a exigência de que os residentes de Massachusetts forneçam prova de estatuto de imigração. Isso significa, que a partir de julho, os residentes elegíveis de Massachusetts podem requerer uma carteira de condução normal (classe D ou M), independentemente do seu estatuto de imigração.

Um site criado pelo Registo de Veículos Automotores de Massachusetts detalha as etapas que os requerentes deverão tomar de forma a obterem a carteira, começando por reunir os documentos necessários e solicitar uma autorização de aprendizagem para estudante.

A lista dos documentos necessários está

disponível no site do RMV no endereço abaixo. Documentos que não estejam em inglês deverão ser submetidos com uma cópia traduzida em inglês, incluindo a certificação por um indivíduo ou organização aceite pelo RMV.

Existem taxas para a obtenção de uma licença, incluindo a autorização de aprendizagem para estudante de \$30; teste rodoviário de \$35; e taxa de licença de \$50.

Um guia com etapa por etapa do processo está disponível no site da RMV em <https://www.mass.gov/guides/work-and-family-mobility-act-wfma>

O RMV alerta os candidatos para terem cuidado com sites fraudulentos e fraudes. O RMV é a única organização que poderá emitir uma carteira de condução de Massachusetts ou receber as taxas para o processo da licença, informa. Também avisa os candidatos a não pagarem a mais ninguém para os serviços do RMV.

## El RMV detalla los pasos a seguir para que los inmigrantes indocumentados obtengan un permiso para conducir

Gracias a la Ley de Movilidad Laboral y Familiar, los inmigrantes ya pueden solicitar el permiso de conducir en Massachusetts, lo que les permite conducir legalmente en Estados Unidos.

La nueva ley, que entró en vigencia el 1 de julio, elimina el requisito de que los residentes de Massachusetts proporcionen prueba de presencia legal. Es decir que, desde julio, los residentes elegibles de Massachusetts pueden obtener una licencia de conducir estándar

(clase D o M), independientemente de su estado migratorio.

El sitio web creado por el Registro de Vehículos Motorizados de Massachusetts detalla los pasos que los solicitantes deben seguir para obtener una licencia, empezando por reunir los documentos necesarios y solicitando un permiso para conducir.

La lista de documentos necesarios está disponible en el sitio web del RMV en la dirección web que figura más abajo. Los documentos que

no estén en inglés también deben presentarse con una traducción al inglés, incluida una certificación de una persona u organización aceptada por el RMV.

La obtención del permiso conlleva tarifas entre las que se encuentran la tarifa del permiso de aprendizaje de \$ 30, el costo de la prueba práctica de \$35; el costo de la licencia de \$50.

La guía paso a paso del proceso está disponible en el sitio web del RMV en <https://www.mass.gov/>

[guides/work-and-family-mobility-act-wfma](https://www.mass.gov/guides/work-and-family-mobility-act-wfma)

El RMV advierte a los solicitantes tener cuidado con los sitios web fraudulentos y las estafas. El RMV es la única organización que puede emitir una licencia de conducir de Massachusetts o cobrar tarifas por el proceso de concesión de licencias. También advierte a los solicitantes no pagar a nadie más por servicios del RMV.

Translations provided by:



## Southcoast Health names new CEO

The Southcoast Health Board of Trustees announced in July that David McCready, MBA, MHA, will join the system on Oct. 1 as president and chief executive officer of the Southcoast Hospitals Group, succeeding Rayford Kruger, MD, FACS, effective Jan. 3, 2024.

McCready joins Southcoast from Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital where he has served as president for the past five years. In addition to his role as president of the Faulkner, he served for 18 years as a member of the leadership team at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

"David is a remarkably collaborative and authentic leader bringing more than 25 years of experience in healthcare leadership to Southcoast Health," said Donald Giumetti, chair of the Board of Trustees for Southcoast Health System.

As Southcoast Health's president and CEO, McCready will be responsible for the overall strategy and operations of the system and all subsidiary organizations.

"Southcoast is a special organization with extraordinary clinical expertise combined with a deep commitment to truly caring for and about its patients and their communities," said McCready. "Southcoast has so much to be proud of, and I look forward to leading and supporting the organization as we continue to fulfill our mission of exceptional care and service."

In late 2022, Southcoast Health



David McCready, MBA, MHA

began a comprehensive and wide-ranging search, attracting interest from over 70 candidates nationwide.

"Throughout this process, we focused on identifying a strong leader who embodies the values of Southcoast Health and understands the unique needs and challenges present in our community," said Carmen Sylvester, vice chair of the Board of Trustees and chair of the executive search committee.

"The Board of Trustees is extraordinarily grateful to Dr. Kruger for his service as president and CEO over the past year-and-a-half," said Giumetti.

Kruger will work closely with McCready for several months to ensure a smooth and successful leadership transition, Giumetti noted.

McCready earned a master's degree in business administration and a master's in healthcare administration from the University of Pittsburgh.

## Local partnership creates a farm-to-food relief program

The A.D. Makepeace Company and Marion Institute have teamed up to develop a farm-to-food relief program to grow food for those in need, the company said in a statement on its website.

The Marion Institute will grow the food on a six-acre, ADM-owned farm known as The Neighborhood Farm at Frogfoot, located in a remote area on the Plymouth-Wareham town line.

Food will go to those in need and help make more local food available to food relief programs, ADM said in its release. A private reception and groundbreaking was held at the farm site in June.

Through a multi-year, no-cost lease agreement, the Marion Institute will create, develop, and manage the Farm-to-Food Relief Program on the property.

The initiative will also allow the Marion Institute to launch a regional gleaning program that will increase the amount of local food available to area food relief programs, according to the release. A gleaning program is based on the notion that every year, thousands of pounds of food goes to waste in the field because farmers either do not have the labor to harvest a crop or the market to sell it too.

The plan is for trained gleaning volunteers, through The Marion Institute, to "rescue" this food before

the crop is lost, delivering it to a local food pantry or processing center for food insecure individuals and families.

The hardest food items to get are affordable meat and seafood, fresh fruits, and vegetables, according to a consumer survey, published in The Marion Institute's Food System Assessment for Southeastern MA. Being able to address this issue by increasing access to fresh, healthy, culturally relevant foods and prepared meals at low-to-no cost will not only address the high rates of food insecurity in our region but will do it in a nutritionally secure way, the organization said in the release.

"Our nation's broken food system is characterized by an abundance of cheap, inflammatory, nutrient-depleted, immune suppressing, ultra-processed foods," said Liz Wiley, executive director of The Marion Institute. "Unfortunately, our current food relief system relies heavily on these shelf-stable products which ultimately negatively impact public health."

"This is a little bit of a dream come true for me," said Jim Kane, president and chief executive officer of the A.D. Makepeace Company, about the plan. "How in 2023 there can still be people going to bed hungry is just beyond me."





Opening ceremonies at Abolition Row Park include (clockwise from above) NBHS President Lee Blake being greeted by a standing ovation from the crowd; NBHS member Carl Cruz (l-r) and City Councillor Naomi Carney greet sculptor Richard Blake; people filled the park to witness the opening; and messaging in the park seen here focuses on the coastal path to freedom for many fugitives from slavery.



# Abolition Row Park celebrated

Abolition Row Park officially opened with fanfare and celebration on June 23, adding a bright new jewel to the city's necklace of historic landmarks.

People crowded the park to hear speakers, filling the space and lining sidewalks and into the street.

Speaker Lee Blake, president of the New Bedford Historical Society, received a standing ovation, as she began her remarks in recognition of her efforts to, despite many obstacles, keep the project moving forward and succeed.

As one speaker said, Blake is the conductor of the Abolition Row project, much as Harriet Tubman was a conductor for fugitives escaping slavery.

Lee spoke about the challenges to transforming the "blighted lot into a testament of the city's amazing abolition history."

"Abolition Row celebrates the history of 19th century black and white New Bedford residents who stood up against the wrongs of enslavement at a time when being an anti-slavery activist was considered crazy and odd," she said. "The

Underground Railroad was perhaps the most dramatic protest against enslavement in U.S. history. And it was truly the first integrated Human Rights Movement in the country."

"It is a story of individual and group sacrifice that can be told through the lives of many of the abolitionists that lived right here. Their voices should be heard; their deeds amplified; and that is what Abolition Row Park will do," she said.

The park opens at a time when there is opposition to telling our historic truth, Blake said.

"Black history is everybody's history. Black history is the history of this country," she said to applause.

Nationally lauded sculptor Richard Blake was present to unveil the statue of a young Frederick Douglass that he created.

"We've been through challenges, obstacles, but we overcame," he said, gesturing to the unveiled sculpture.

Blake created Douglass sitting on mooring ropes "as he contemplates his future and actually realizes for the first time that he's a free man," he said.

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# Important SNAP rules that older adults need to know

By Gavin Bates  
South Coastal Counties Legal Services

If you aren’t already aware of the SNAP program – short for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and sometimes called “food stamps” - it is a mostly federally funded government benefit administered by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance that can help you pay for food. Typically, a single person could get up to almost \$200 a month in SNAP benefits to help pay for food.

If you are an older adult, there are specific eligibility requirements that you’ll need to know and also recent changes that may impact your benefit.

First, in order to qualify, you must meet certain resource and income limits and households with older persons have important exceptions to these limits.

As a senior (or a person with disabilities), the resource limit is about \$3,500. Resources include cash, money in a bank account, or other property that has value. The income limit for households with seniors or a member with a disability is based on net income (the money left after you subtract certain expenses) which must be under 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Your DTA office, a worker from elder services, or your local council on aging can provide more information.

There are a variety of expenses that can be subtracted (or “deducted”) from your income. Two important ones for seniors are the “excess shelter” and “excess medical expense” deductions.

Most households can subtract housing costs (like rent, utilities, etc.) but there is a limit to how much they can subtract. Households with older persons (or someone who has a disability) do not have this cap. Instead, they can subtract all of their housing costs.

In addition, a senior or person with a disability can also subtract any amounts they spend on medical expenses. Those expenses cannot be reimbursed or covered by insurance. They can include costs for prescription medications, over-the-counter medications recommended by a doctor, medical supplies not covered

by insurance, and more. Be sure to consider all of the money you spend on your health when applying for SNAP.

Notably, due to the pandemic, SNAP benefits were temporarily boosted using emergency allotments. However, when the government lifted the public health emergency these additional boosts have come to a close. You can still receive benefits and maximize what you receive by reviewing your deductions and exceptions. If you are struggling with food insecurity, you can seek additional help from your local council on aging, elder services, or food pantries.

This is a time of rising costs and financial insecurity. There is no shame in asking for help.

If you are interested in applying for SNAP, you can do so by completing

**“There are a variety of expenses that can be subtracted...from your income. Two important ones for seniors are the “excess shelter” and “excess medical expense” deductions.”**

an application online, over the phone, in person, or via mail. You can apply online at <https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/>. You can also call DTA for assistance at 877-382-2363.

If you already have SNAP benefits, but want to learn more or need legal advice, you may want to contact an attorney.

Finally, there continue to be issues of identity theft and fraud surrounding SNAP benefits. If your EBT card is not working and you need to set up a new PIN, you can call the hotline at 1-800-997-2555.

*This information is provided by South Coastal Counties Legal Services (SCCLS) which provides free legal services to eligible clients. There are no income criteria for adults age 60+ but individual representation is prioritized to those with the greatest economic and social need. SCCLS has offices in New Bedford, Fall River, Brockton, and Hyannis. For more information, please call our intake line at (800) 244-9023.*

# Trivia

## FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) How many bathrooms are there in the White House?  
A.) 12      B.) 24      C.) 35      D.) 48
- 2.) What makes up 99 percent of a panda’s diet?  
A.) Rice      B.) Bamboo      C.) Eucalyptus      D.) Insects
- 3.) Which New York City borough is home the most congested street in America?  
A.) Queens      B.) Bronx      C.) Manhattan      D.) Brooklyn
- 4.) Where is the longest suspension bridge in the world, opened in 2022?  
A.) Turkey      B.) China      C.) Brazil      D.) Canada
- 5.) Which US state has a town called “Truth or Consequences”?  
A.) Maine      B.) California  
C.) Nevada      D.) New Mexico
- 6.) What is the name of the restaurant where the original Silmo syrup factory was?  
A.) Inner Bay      B.) Hidden Bay  
C.) Ye Olde Bay      D.) Black Whale
- 7.) What was the name of the restaurant located on the top of the Bourne Counting house located at 1 Merrill’s Wharf?  
A.) Copper Cod      B.) Yesteryears  
C.) Yesterday’s      D.) Cafe Estoril
- 8.) Name the delicatessen located next to the bus station/Sears in downtown New Bedford in the 1960s?  
A.) Maxies      B.) New York Bagel  
C.) The Big Apple Deli      D.) Salvati’s
- 9.) What is the last letter in the Greek alphabet?  
A.) Zeta      B.) Zion      C.) Quantos      D.) Omega
- 10.) In Herman Melville’s novel “Moby Dick,” who was the loyal, reasonable first mate?  
A.) Stubb      B.) Starbuck      C.) Ishmael      D.) Queequeg

[Answers listed on page 11]

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# Coastline receives national award for its technology program

Coastline announced recently that its Technology Training Program was selected to receive a 2023 Aging Achievement Award from USAging, one of the highest honors presented by USAging to its members.

The free program, which helps older adults stay socially connected through their computers and cellphones, was among only 50 aging programs in the U.S. to receive honors during USAging’s annual conference this month in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Coastline CEO Justin Lees was in Utah to accept the award on the organization’s behalf.



Kraig Perry leads one of the first technology classes at Coastline.

“The pandemic taught us just how important being connected is to people of all ages. Yet for older adults the barriers to using their phones or other devices have kept them isolated,” said Lees about the program’s success. “Through Coastline’s technology program older adults come together in small classes to learn at their own pace how to email, Zoom, take photos, text, and more.”

“The program has been a success since its inception,” added Coastline Planning Director Zach Boyer. “We’ve found older adults to be eager to learn how to better use their devices. Many start off not knowing how to email or text and end by sending photos and

messages to their children and grandchildren. It’s amazing to see what these quick interactions that many of us take for granted mean to them.”

The program served 70 students in its first year. After each six-week session, participants were surveyed with positive results. One older adult said, “The class was wonderful; it stimulated me to get out of the house and use the computer with confidence. I would like to sign up for more classes, especially smartphone classes.”

The 2023 USAging Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards recognizes USAging’s

Area Agency on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Program members that have found new and innovative ways to support older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers as they live in their homes and communities.

“The AAAs and Title VI programs we honor today have set a standard for innovation and creativity in helping vulnerable older adults live with independence and dignity in their homes and communities,” said USAging CEO Sandy Markwood. “USAging is inspired by the example they have set for others in the Aging

Network.”

All winners are highlighted in the USAging Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards Showcase.

Both computer and cellphone classes are ongoing through the end of the year at Coastline. Small classes begin regularly and older adults who wish to sign up can call Roshalene Grace at 508-742-9160 to register and for information on dates and times of individual classes. Both beginner and intermediate level classes are available.

All classes are held at Coastline’s location at 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford.



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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. **Please note:** Due to an increase in the cost of service, some exercise classes will no longer be free. As of Aug. 1, Tai-Yo-Ba with Cam (Monday) and Strength and Conditioning with Larry (Friday) will now be \$1/per person.

**Whaler’s Cove Senior Palooza Van Tour:** 1 p.m., Aug. 2 at the Senior Center. The Whaler’s Cove team will show up with tunes, ice cream and fun and games. Get ready to sing along and let the melodies fill your soul. The van will be stocked with delicious Italian ice, in a variety of flavors. They will also bring lawn games. Engage in friendly competitions and some well-deserved prizes. RSVPs appreciated, call 508-998-0280.

**Make and Take Painting:** Grab your sense of humor and join us for this weekly paint class with Kristen. Every Thursday, 1 p.m., \$8/class includes all supplies - every week a diferent painting. Reservations required, 508-998-0280.

**End-of-summer BBQ:** Aug. 30. Lunch at 11:30 a.m. and The DeRossi Duo at noon. Doors open at 11:15 a.m. \$2 suggested voluntary donation. Sign-ups begin on Aug. 9.

**Chair Yoga:** Fridays, 1 p.m., \$3/class. A gentle practice in which postures are performed while seated and/or with the aid of a chair.

**Zumba:** Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. \$6; Thursdays at 10:30 a.m., free; and Fridays at 9 a.m., \$6. A lower-intensity version of the typical Zumba class designed to meet the anatomical, physiological and psychological needs of those over the age of 50.

**Tai-Yo-Ba:** Mondays, 10:30 a.m. with Cameron. \$1. Gentle movements inspired from elements of tai chi, yoga and physical therapy. Can be done seated or standing up.

**Don Who? Travel Group:** Looking for day trips? Lunch and a show? Stop by and check out the Don Who? Travel Group. Meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m.

**Strong Women, Strong Bones:** Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. with Karen. \$2/suggested, voluntary donation. Strength training, weight-bearing aerobic exercise, stretching, and balance. A Title III -funded program through Coastline.

**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](http://www.town.dartmouth.ma.us/council-aging/pages/coa-newsletters).

**MOVEMENT & More:** Class designed for people with movement challenges and anyone moving with an aging and changing body. Mondays 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. Walk-ins welcome.

**Parkinson’s Disease Education:** With the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Aug. 17 1-2 p.m. Pre-registration required.

**Lunch & Open Art Studio Tour:** Aug. 19 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Call the Center for more information. Cost is \$5. Preregistration required.

**New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center:** Aug. 21, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. “Boat to Table” program highlighting the working waterfront followed by lunch at the Whale’s Tale Seafood Shack. Cost is \$5 for admission and transportation. Pre-registration is required.

**Library Tech Workshop:** Learn how to download free eBooks, audio books, magazines and more! New director of Dartmouth Libraries, Dina St. Pierre, will demonstrate the library’s online services and assist you with your library tech needs. Aug. 23 11:15 a.m. - noon. Preregistration required.

**Summer Cookout:** Aug. 25 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sponsored by Coastline. Pre-registration required.

**Foreclosure Prevention Counseling:** Aug. 23 1-2 p.m. A HUD approved counselor will provide free confidential counseling and information. Private appointments will be available. Walk-ins welcome.

**Art for your Mind with Art Historian Jill Sanford:** Aug. 31 from 1-2 p.m. Art Topic: Early New England Seascapes. Pre-registration is required.

**Single Senior Supper Club:** Tuesday, Aug. 1 4-6 p.m. Cost is \$5. Pre-registra-tion required.

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

**Chair Yoga with Vicki Smith:** Fridays at 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Cost is \$5.

**Movie:** “About my Father” Wednesday, Aug. 30 at 1 p.m. Pre-registration required. Free.

**Yoga Flow with Jane Hoffman:** Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and Fridays 9-10 a.m. Cost is \$5. Walk-ins welcome.

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

**Acoustic Jam Session:** Tuesdays at 1 p.m. Do you love music, play an instru-ment, love to sing? Join this informal group. Free. Walk-ins welcome.

**Parkinson’s Support Group:** 2nd Thursday of the month 1-2:30 p.m. Please call the Center for more information.

**Blood Pressure Clinic:** The second Thursday and last Tuesday of the month from 9-11 a.m. Walk-ins 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](http://fairhaven-ma.gov/council-aging). Open to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning in September.

**Trips:** Aug. 16 Warwick Mall; Aug. 23 Plymouth Shopping; Aug. 30 Thames Street, Newport, R.I; Sept. 6 Tiverton Casino; Sept. 13 Mashpee Commons; Sept. 20 Thames Street, Newport, R.I.; Sept. 27 Wrentham Village. Trips are \$6.

**Bourne Walking Excursion:** Aug. 24, arrive at the COA for 8:30 a.m. sharp. Bring a bagged lunch, sunscreen and water. Walk along the Cape Cod canal in this 2.3 mile walk.

**Massage Mondays:** With Carol Flock. Aug. 11 & 21. 20-minute massage for \$30. Call the COA to make an appointment.

**Monday Movie Matinee:** Aug. 7 *Ticket to Paradise* 12:15 p.m. A divorced couple teams up and travels to Bali to stop their daughter from making the same mistake they think they made 25 years ago. Aug. 21 *Jerry & Marge Go Large* 12:15 p.m. Sign up for lunch at 11:30 a.m. \$2 donation for lunch.

**Memory Café:** Aug. 24, 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. Join for lunch prior to the memory cafe. Lunch will be Teriyaki chicken with rice and veggies. RSVP required.

**LGBTQ+ Supper Club:** Aug. 23 5-7 p.m. Must call to sign up.

**Single Senior Supper Club:** Third Tuesday of every month from 4-6 p.m. Next meeting is Aug. 15 from 4-6 p.m. Call the Wednesday before to confirm attendance. \$3.

**Tai Chi:** Mondays 11 a.m. - noon. Class size is limited. Please call to sign up.

**Moving with Moxie:** Aug. 9 & 30, \$5. Moving with Moxie is a unique, mobile, therapy-based balance class that is essential for people of all ages who want to improve their balance and mobility. Class size is limited to 10 people.

**Sewing Circle:** Wednesdays, 5:45-7:45 p.m.

## 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. Like us on Face-book: [facebook.com/marioncoa](https://facebook.com/marioncoa). Marion Board of Health: 508-748-3530.

**Plymouth County Mosquito Control Project:** Aug. 7, 1 p.m. Come and learn about the life cycle of a mosquito, services provided by Plymouth County, proven protection methods, mosquito and tick biology. Information will be plentiful and myths will be busted.

**LGBTQ+ Senior Supper Club:** Meets Wednesday, Aug. 9 from 5-7 p.m. at the Marion COA. Join us for food, drink & great conversation! Call 508-748-3570 to register.

Continued on Page 11

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Community

Marion artist's life celebrated



How else would Mary Ross's life be celebrated than with a group art project?

The 95-year old artist, mentor and teacher passed away in May after a lifetime of creating art and encouraging other artists. She was beloved in Marion and especially her Dexter Beach neighborhood for her support of local artists and the weekly art group she ran.

"Every Monday morning she'd have coffee and a little something," said Debbie Kuhlman-Hussey, a Dexter Beach resident who knew Mary all her life. As we worked, "she'd come around and say, 'Move that or do that,' and it was great."

"She was never happier than when she was teaching," she added.

To honor Mary's life, the Marion Council on Aging held a celebration in her name on what would have been Mary's 96th birthday. About a dozen or so participants, including Kuhlman-Hussey, gathered to share memories, chat and reminisce as they worked on paper collage projects.

Over her career, Mary worked in many mediums, including oils, acrylics, collages and found art. Much of her later work focused on paper collages, including series on mermaids and owls. In 2022, Mary held two art shows, one a retrospective of her career at the Marion Art Center.



Mary also established the gallery space in the Benjamin D. Cushing Community Center where the COA is based, inviting artists to show their work regularly. Rosemary Grey, who worked with Mary as a librarian at the Elizabeth Taber Library, said Mary asked her to take responsibility for continuing the gallery shows.

"(Mary) has a heart of gold. I would do anything for her," Grey said.

The atmosphere at the July 18 celebration was light but focused. Most participants were artists themselves and several were also students and neighbors of Mary.

Recalling the rules Mary established, one woman gently admonished another for using scissors to prepare her paper.

"Mary would be upset with you," she said. "You're supposed to tear it, not cut it."

Kuhlman-Hussey too was cutting her paper. "What I'm doing is sacrilegious," she said with a smile.



The Rochester Council on Aging's Block Party has activities for all ages including archery and bubbles for youth, animal encounters, various vendors, and good food and music.



Block party brings generations together

For three hours, the arrows flew, the cows lowed, the burgers were eaten, and music played at the Rochester Senior Center for a crowd of about 400 people, ranging in age from infants to nearing triple digits.

The June 22 Block Party was a new event put on by the Council on Aging to create a town-wide party of all ages at the senior center.

"We are planning to do it again next year and are considering maybe a Saturday to draw even more people," said COA Director Eric Poulin. "We were very pleased with the attendance and all of the volunteer support that we received. It was an excellent community event."

FGP continued...

longer host the program, it would work with local agencies to help transition it to a new host. Based on timing set by AmeriCorps Seniors, FGP volunteers were told that that the proposal process would create a year of transition when they wouldn't be able to participate in classrooms but that, ultimately, they could continue in the program.

For volunteers like Silveira, many of whom have been FGP volunteers for a decade or more, the thought of losing touch with their classrooms was distressing.

Then, in June, volunteers got the call they'd hoped for. Citizens for Citizens, Inc., a Fall River-based community action agency, was willing to step in and carry the program until a new organization could be found. Volunteers were told they could come back to work and continue in the program they'd been working in.

Citizens for Citizens hadn't been

looking for a new FGP program to administer, said Judy Charest, CFC director of FGP programs in Fall River and Taunton area schools. But when she learned that the New Bedford program was in danger, she immediately wanted to help. Her initial plan was to ask New Bedford volunteers to transition to Fall River or Taunton where they could continue to volunteer and receive the program stipend.

But she changed her mind after speaking face-to-face with volunteers. Once she met them, Charest said, she knew she needed to find a way to keep New Bedford active with no hiatus.

"I felt so bad because I couldn't keep them in New Bedford and half of them don't drive. They take buses or (other transportation). They don't make a lot of money, but they depend on it," she said, adding. "If I hadn't have met them, I wouldn't have known. So, I came back to Fall River and spoke to my executive director."

With Charest's enthusiastic support,

CFC made the decision to take on New Bedford's program, operating it from the city and creating a bridge to keep the program active until a proposal process could be held in fiscal year '24.

Speaking in July, Charest said she was working hard to get all the details done before school starts again in September. That means setting up stipend payment processes, creating new memorandums of understanding with New Bedford-area schools and more, she said.

"Coastline has been very, very helpful and really great," she said about the set-up process. "They're going to allow me to use an office space in their building, so I can meet with volunteers there."

Having a New Bedford space also allows volunteers to continue dropping off their completed timesheets twice a month, especially for those who don't email or have access to a fax.

Citizens for Citizens will also look to rent space in New Bedford for the

program and hire a person to run it locally, Charest said. They have committed to running the program for two years and are working with AmeriCorps Seniors to handle any administrative details.

The plan is for the FGP program to go out to bid in fiscal year 2024 to begin again under a new host in FY'25, according to Charest.

Lees said he is optimistic that the process will be a success and a new home for FGP will be found.

"We've heard enough early interest in the program to feel confident a new host will be identified," he said.

For volunteers, these details are unimportant compared to the news that they will return to the children they love. Silveira is most excited about going back to the 17 Head Start children who call her 'Grandma.'

"I'm glad somebody picked this up because the kids, they need us," she said. "They really need us."