

# Senior Scope

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

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July 2024

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Celebration of Seniors photos, page 9



Coastline Nursing Home Ombudsman Director Anna Dougherty speaks with a woman about scams at the Celebration of Seniors event on June 14, a day before World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

## Popular elder event highlights fraud prevention

South Coast's older population flooded White's of Westport June 14 as the Bristol County District Attorney's office and Coastline Elderly Services put on their annual Celebration of Seniors event, the day before World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The one-stop shop for information and support for older adults had more than 600 attendees plus about 200 vendors and aging professionals in attendance.

Held each June, Celebration of Seniors raises awareness about elder abuse and fraud, a growing issue as

scammers and scams targeting older people increase.

Speaking to the 600-plus seniors enjoying their breakfast, U.S. District Attorney for Massachusetts Joshua S. Levy warned attendees to be on their guard.

"About 1 in 10 folks who are seniors are victimized by scams, either online, on the phone, or through the mail," he said. "That means 60 people sitting in this room are going to be a victim of scams. That means a lot more (in this room) are going to be contacted and tried to be enticed into giving away

their money, giving away their bank account information, or providing their personal information."

"(The impact) is not just about money," Levy continued. "It can create family stress when you've been victimized, and you lose your money. It can dash your dreams of what you want to do in your retirement if your nest egg is taken by one of these scammers."

District Attorney Thomas Quinn Jr. told participants that he understands they are nice people who have been taught to be polite to callers, but that

*Continued on page 9*

## Brain Builders is more than a class; it's a community

On the surface of it, the 15 people gathered in a virtual meeting space wearing fancy Kentucky Derby hats, were having a fun conversation about horse racing and the recent Derby winner.

They'd placed their unofficial \$2 bets the meeting before and were calculating winnings, ribbing each other on standings, and chatting about everything from racing procedure to the criteria for choosing a winning race horse.

Beyond the banter though, each participant is building skills, work-

ing to develop or redevelop cognitive, memory, or speech abilities damaged or lost through illness or impairment.

The conversation occasionally slows down when someone struggles to recall or say the specific word they want to. No one seems to mind. Mostly, the group lets each person take their time; although occasionally, someone takes advantage of the conversational gap to throw in a joke or good-natured heckle.

This is Brain Builders, a program created by twin sisters Lisa Yauch-

Cadden and Lori Yauch, and Kari Star of Buzzards Bay Speech Pathology, as a supportive community to practice strategies they learn in treatment. Each of the women have degrees in Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology.

"As a profession, we treat it all," said Star. "Those whose speech is not clear. People whose voice is not clear, who have language problems, or can't find words, or can't formulate words. They can have

*Continued on page 12*

# Celebrate your independence with Social Security

By Delia De Mello

Every July 4, we celebrate our nation's independence. For nearly 90 years, our programs have helped create financial independence for millions of hardworking people.

We have useful online resources like the Social Security Statement (Statement) and our benefits estimator tool that helps people not yet receiving benefits.

The Statement shows the benefits that you and your family may be eligible for and provides personalized fact sheets tailored to your age and earnings situation.

The benefits estimator tool allows you to get estimates based on different ages. These online tools can help you better prepare



Delia DeMello

**“The Statement shows the benefits that you and your family may be eligible for and provides personalized fact sheets tailored to your age and earnings situation. The benefits estimator tool allows you to get estimates based on different ages.”**

for your retirement.

### If you're not receiving benefits

You can get the most out of your online experience if you have a personal my Social Security account. You can:

- Request a replacement Social Security card.
- Get estimates for spouse's benefits.
- Get your Statement instantly.
- Get proof that you do not receive benefits.
- Check your application status.

### If you're receiving benefits

- You can use your personal my

Social Security account to:

- Request a replacement Social Security card.
- Get an instant benefit verification letter.
- Start or change your direct deposit. (Social Security beneficiaries only)
- Change your address. (Social Security beneficiaries only)
- Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S instantly for tax season.
- Opt out of mailed notices for those available online.

You can create your personal my Social Security account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount).

Our blog at [blog.ssa.gov](http://blog.ssa.gov) features news and information about our programs and services. You can subscribe and get notified each time we post a new blog so you can stay informed. From the blog, you can also connect with us on Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube.

With so many services and helpful information available online, we are here for you when you need us.

Learn more at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

## From the Editor

Once again, Celebration of Seniors brought together more than 600 older people in one big room to celebrate together, learn about scam and fraud prevention, and connect with the 70 vendors offering information on services and products available to support aging adults. See our feature story on page one.




Beth Perdue

Also on page one, we feature a program called Brain Builders that combines proven cognitive strategies with social fun to build a community of people who meet virtually regularly and support each other as they rebuild their skills.


Finally, don't miss the changes happening at the state level with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the top aging organization for Massachusetts. There is a department name change, new thinking around aging-related language, and an interim director named to lead the department until a new secretary is selected.

Connect with Senior Scope editor, Beth Perdue, at [bperdue@coastlinenb.org](mailto:bperdue@coastlinenb.org).



**Coastline**  
508-999-6400

**Mass Options** 844-422-6277  
[massoptions.org](http://massoptions.org) 844-422-MASS



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

Acushnet Council on Aging 59 1/2 S. Main St. Acushnet	508-998-0280	Jennifer Ledo
Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	Virginia Walega Matthew Dansereau
Fairhaven Council on Aging 229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven	508-979-4029	Dianne Perkins Carolyn Dantoni Jean Silver
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 Delia Moreira
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., Monday-Friday (for New Bedford residents only)	508-991-6250 508-991-6250	Nora Rose Patricia Foster
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	508-965-1047	Denise Dupuis


## Donations for July 2024

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.

**Year-to-Date: \$200**

**Donate online via PayPal here:**





**Senior Scope**

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**863 Belleville Ave.**  
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## Massachusetts updates language on aging Changes include renaming the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts is changing the name of its Executive Office for Elder Affairs after learning that aging adults don't connect with the term "elder."

While conducting research for a new name through focus groups, surveys, and conversations with older adults, caregivers, service providers, and advocacy organizations, the state said it heard that older adults often associate the term elder with someone who is at the end of their life.

Instead, residents prefer neutral terms such as "aging" and "older people," according to a media release. Additionally, research showed older adults deeply value the ability to maintain their independence through the aging journey. From these findings, the agency developed a new name to more accurately reflect its programs and services, and better connect with eligible adults.

The new name, Executive Office of Aging & Independence, better represents the values of older adults in Massachusetts and reflects the agency's ongoing efforts to expand its reach and

ensure older people throughout Massachusetts can access needed information, services, and support through every stage of aging, the office said in its release.

The timing of the name change was chosen to be part of the celebration of Older Americans Month in May.

"The Executive Office of Elder Affairs was established more than 50 years ago and was one of the nation's first state agencies dedicated to addressing the needs of older people," said Governor Maura Healey. "Today, the agency has evolved to offer programs and services that support 1.7 million older residents and nearly 1 million family caregivers. Our administration is committed to meeting the changing needs of today's older adults, and I am thrilled that this name change better reflects those that we serve."

In addition, legislation replaces outdated language across state statutes, such as "elder," "elderly person(s)," and "handicapped" with "older adult(s)" and "adult with a disability." The new legislation also incorporates gender-neutral language.

"Our administration is committed to inclusivity and updating terminology to better reflect and respect our residents," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "In renaming the agency to the Executive Office of Aging & Independence, we recognize that everyone deserves to be able to age on their own terms."

Modernizing the agency's name is intended to reduce stigma around growing older, to normalize aging as a natural process, and to emphasize that older people value independence and self-determination.

To usher in a new, more expansive, model for older adults aging in community, the agency also unveiled a new mission, vision, and tagline:

**Mission:** Together, we support aging adults to live and thrive safely and independently – how and where they want.

**Vision:** We envision a state in which every person has the tools, resources, and support they need to fully embrace the aging experience.

**Tagline:** Your partners in aging.

## MassDOT awards vehicles

The Rochester and Dartmouth councils on aging and M.O.L.I.F.E., the Fairhaven nonprofit that assists people with disabilities, are each receiving support for new vehicles to fill local transportation needs.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation made the May 17 announcement that grant awards of almost \$20 million will be used to purchase vehicles under the Community Transit Grant Program. Also, under the CTGP, more than \$2 million is being awarded for projects expanding mobility for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals. In a third program, \$15 million is being provided to increase operating and capital funding for transit providers through the Regional Transit Innovation Grant Program.

The Rochester COA thanked those who assisted in the grant approval, including Coastline Elderly Services, Sen. Michael Rodrigues, and Rep. Bill Straus. "We will be getting a new fully accessible minivan and a new 12-passenger vehicle. We are hoping for them to be delivered some time in 2025. This is great news for the COA and the seniors in Rochester as it will allow us to retire 2 of our older vehicles from 2009 & 2013 that are both at or over 100,000 miles," the COA said in a Facebook post.

Funding was also awarded to regional transit authorities including the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority.

"This grant will allow us to quickly respond to the start of South Coast rail with flexible, on-demand service that will give us data on customer travel patterns so we can plan future service," said SRTA Administrator Erik B. Rousseau.




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229 HUTTLESTON AVE, FAIRHAVEN, MA 02719

**RSVP: 508-979-4029 BY JULY 26, 2024**

Vendor Contact: Zach Boyer [zboyer@coastlinenb.org](mailto:zboyer@coastlinenb.org)

*Funded in part by Coastline Elderly Services, Fairhaven Council on Aging, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs*

***This public event is targeted to those who are caregivers for adults aged 60 years and older***

# Update

## Lipson named interim Elder Affairs secretary

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs has a new interim secretary to lead the department while a search to replace outgoing Secretary Elizabeth Chen is conducted. Deputy Secretary Robin Lipson is taking on the position left vacant by Chen in her May 31 departure. Chen was appointed by Gov. Charlie Baker as elder affairs secretary in 2019.

## USAgging funding will support social care delivery

Mass Home Care, the association for aging services access providers in Massachusetts, was one of 20 organizations nationwide to be awarded funding through the USAgging's Center of Excellence to Align Health and Social Care in May. The awards will provide infrastructure funding in support of contracting efforts with health care organizations for coordinated access to and delivery of social care programs and services, including support for hospital-to-home care transition programs. Efforts will also enhance state No Wrong Door access systems and coordinate with local and state public health departments. In a May 31 Facebook post, Mass Home Care said it would use the funds to "provide access to long term support services to diverse and hard to reach communities, and to address the health-related social needs of underserved individuals across Massachusetts."

## Cushman Park yoga returns

Fitness in the Park returns with 10 weeks of free yoga and exercise classes in Cushman Park, Green Street, Fairhaven. Classes are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. until Aug. 22. Yoga classes for a mix of experience levels are held Tuesdays, guided by certified teachers out of Sangha New Bedford in downtown New Bedford. Lead yoga teacher is David Trauterman who draws from Ananda and Hatha Yoga using affirmations, longer posture holds, meditation, breath work and chanting to create an uplifting yoga experience for all levels. Summer Bootcamp is held Thursdays with certified personal trainer (A.F.P.A.), Wayne Goulart. The class consists of various exercises that build functional strength and core stability with circuits utilizing light dumbbells and body weight training. Follow Fitness in Cushman Park's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/fitnessincushmanpark](http://www.facebook.com/fitnessincushmanpark) to stay updated.

## July is Disability Pride

Disability Pride Month is celebrated each July to honor the history, achievements, experiences, and struggles of the disability community. July is also the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, landmark legislation that passed on July 26, 1990, and broke down barriers to inclusion in society. The 2024 theme for the month, according to The ARC, the largest national community-based organization advocating for and serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, is "We Want a Life Like Yours." The theme was set by The Arc's National Council of Self-Advocates and reflects the disability community's dreams for life experiences that they are too often denied.

## EOEA holds listening sessions

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs is co-hosting listening sessions around the state with community partners in order to hear more from local communities on how to strengthen Massachusetts' age- and dementia-friendly work. On its website, EOEA said it hopes to "understand how your priorities have changed in the last 5 years, how you have contributed to your communities' efforts to support positive aging, and what large actions or policies you think will support people to age well in our communities in the future." The closest session to the New Bedford area will take place from 1:30-3:30 p.m. on July 16 at the Barnstable Adult Community Center, 825 Falmouth Road, Hyannis. To RSVP, go online to [www.mass.gov/info-details/age-and-dementia-friendly-massachusetts-action-plan-refresh](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/age-and-dementia-friendly-massachusetts-action-plan-refresh) or call the Adult Community Center at 508-862-4750.

## Transfer station takes food waste

Dartmouth residents can now drop off food waste at the Dartmouth Transfer Station. This pilot program will help participants reduce waste and purchase fewer orange SMART program trash bags. Acceptable items include all unpackaged food, bones, and coffee grounds. Examples: fruits, vegetables, peels, meat, chicken bones, seafood shells, eggshells, dairy, breads, grains, and baked goods. Food can be in any condition or past its expiration date. The unpackaged food can be loose, or in BPI certified compostable bags. Visit [bpiworld.org](http://bpiworld.org) for information. The Transfer Station is at 976 Russells Mills Road. Hours are Tuesday and Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., and Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. A transfer station permit is required.

## MCOA initiates 'ActiveAgers' program

Massachusetts Councils on Aging has introduced a new initiative called ActiveAgers to promote physical activity by spotlighting the "dynamic fitness programs offered by local Councils on Aging, centers for active living, and senior centers," according to MCOA. The initiative focuses on programs already being offered by local COAs, including yoga, walking clubs, and more. Through the initiative, COAs track and submit data on participation and then earn accolades and incentives for their involvement and achievements. ActiveAgers is more than just a fitness program, MCOA said in its description. "It is a collective movement that recognizes and rewards participation, welcomes individuals of all abilities, and celebrates the efforts of COAs and their participants." All seniors and COAs in Massachusetts are invited to join. For more information and to get involved, contact Tara Hammes at [tara@mcoaonline.org](mailto:tara@mcoaonline.org).

## Summer celebrations

New Bedford is hosting fireworks over the harbor again this year beginning about 9 p.m. on July 4. The Whaling City Festival is also this month from July 11-14 at Buttonwood Park. And don't miss the Cape Verdean Parade at 11 a.m. on July 6, kicking off from Buttonwood Park. This year, music and more will be held after the parade at Serenity Gardens, 41 Bedford St. in the city.

## Eat Local Challenge

The Marion Institute's Southcoast Food Policy Council wants to increase awareness for eating local among South Coast communities and is inviting people to register for its Eat Local Southcoast Challenge. The Challenge runs for six weeks, from June 24 to July 27, and can be joined any time. It encourages people to eat more local foods from a 200-mile radius of our homes. Once you sign up, you'll receive a weekly email with tips for sourcing local food, recipes for cooking with seasonal products, information about local food systems with suggested books, podcasts, and videos to enjoy learning as you eat local foods, and links to other fun resources. To sign up, visit <https://www.marioninstitute.org/programs/sfpc/eat-local-southcoast-challenge-2024/>

## Dartmouth Seniors Celebrate Summer!



Dartmouth seniors enjoyed a summer party at Apponagansett Beach on June 10, combining sun, good food, music and dancing for a summer opener that had about 180 people attending.

# Your Health

## Step by step look at hypnosis and what to expect

By John Barboza, BCH, CI

When I receive a phone call from a potential client who has an issue that they would like to resolve, I tell them that the first step to resolving the issue is actually reaching out and making the phone call.

We both learn a lot from that initial discussion.

In fact throughout all the sessions, we are working as a team to figure out each step of the process.

During the consultation I tell them how the sessions work, what's expected of them, and what they will be learning and doing during the sessions and at home. And as they discuss their problem and what they are experiencing, I'm weeding out a lot of superfluous information while listening for certain key phrases and words that helps me to better understand what's going on, and how we're going to work on solving the problem together.

Many people say that they have never been hypnotized before, and so some may feel a little nervous because of their preconception of what hypnosis is to them.

This is one reason why when making arrangements for the sessions, I think it's important to work around the client's schedule, because I want them to be as relaxed and comfortable as possible.

Working all day in a stressful



job, along with the stresses of life and the issue that their dealing with can be nerve racking. So coming to each session and sitting in the office chair at a time that is convenient for them, can make all the difference in the world, and can have the best impact on the session's outcome.

After all, my main objective is working for the greater good of the client. It's their success that is important.

To help further defuse the myths, fallacies, and misconceptions about hypnosis, during the first session the clients are taught about what hypnosis is, what it is not, how it works, and what they will experience while hypnotized.

The more knowledgeable you are about something helps remove any fears and doubts, making the sessions even more successful.

Clients who are fascinated with hypnosis tend to find this part of the session exciting, and both the nervous and eager clients end up leaving the office well educated about the topic.

During the hypnosis process,



**“As they discuss their problem and what they are experiencing, I’m weeding out a lot of superfluous information while listening for certain key phrases and words that helps me to better understand what’s going on, and how we’re going to work on solving the problem together.”**

the client moves through various stages of consciousness similar to the stages we go through when falling asleep.

When we are awake and alert we are in the beta state. When we

daydream, we enter trance or the alpha state. While going deeper into hypnosis, we enter the theta and then the delta states, where the hypnotized client is highly susceptible to the positive suggestions for change.

The client may experience intense feelings of euphoria along with many other sensations and emotions which will all be discussed immediately after emerging from hypnosis. And during the period before the next session, the client should notice significant suggested changes they received while hypnotized.

*John Barboza BCH, CI is a hypnotist and a part of New Bedford Wellness where he leads classes.*

## Nursing home chain with South Coast sites to pay \$4M settlement with state

The Massachusetts Attorney General's office announced a \$4 million settlement with Next Step Healthcare LLC to resolve allegations that the nursing home chain “deliberately failed to properly staff the nursing homes it owned and operated, resulting in resident harm and neglect,” according to a state media release.

Co-founded and co-owned by Damien Dell'Anno and William Stephan, Next Step owns, operates, and manages 16 nursing homes throughout Massachusetts, including ones in Attleboro, Fall River, Middleboro, Plymouth, and Taunton.

In its announcement, the state called the agreement the largest nursing home settlement ever reached by the Attorney General's Office and said most of Next Steps' facilities will be required to be overseen, at Next Steps' expense, by an independent compliance monitor.

Under the settlement terms, Next Step agrees to budget staffing at state-mandated levels and

pay an additional \$4 million to resolve the allegations, the state said. Of that amount, \$750,000 will be paid to the Commonwealth, which will evenly distribute the amount to MassHealth and the Long-Term Care Facility Quality Improvement Fund, a DPH-operated fund that aims to improve the quality of care delivered to residents of long-term care facilities. The remaining \$3.25 million will be overseen by the independent compliance monitor and must be used for additional staffing improvements, recruitment, retention, additional benefit costs, bonuses, overtime, wage increases, and/or other staffing-related initiatives over the next three years.

In addition to monetary penalties, Next Step has agreed to hire, at its own expense, an independent compliance monitor, who will oversee the improvement of Next Step's staffing levels and ensure that facilities comply with state staffing requirements. The compliance monitor will be responsible

for reviewing the quality of care delivered to residents at eight Next Step facilities. The compliance monitor will also conduct on-site reviews of Next Step's facilities and will submit compliance reports to the Attorney General's Office every six months.

In its release, the Attorney General's office said the settlement resolves its allegations that Next Step implemented staffing reductions in April 2019, despite its facilities already struggling to ensure adequate staffing levels to meet the needs of residents. Those staffing reductions included reductions of both certified nursing assistant positions and non-CNA positions.

The Attorney General's Office further alleged that Next Step continued to understaff its facilities even after state regulations went into effect in April 2021 requiring certain staffing requirements. As a result, many of Next Step's nursing facilities had staffing levels that ranked in the bottom 10% of their coun-

ties. Low staffing levels at Next Step's facilities led to resident neglect and harm, the Attorney General's Office said in its release.

Based on its contention that Next Step's submission of claims to MassHealth for these substandard services were false claims, in violation of the Massachusetts False Claims Act, the AG's office is asking members of the public who are aware of similar practices at Next Step's facilities and/or by other nursing homes or health care providers to call the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Division at (617) 963-2360 or file a complaint through the Department of Public Health's website.

In its release, the state called the settlement the latest effort by Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell to advance elder justice across Massachusetts, particularly through addressing abuse, neglect and harm of elders, including residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

## Hay apoyo disponible para cuidadores familiares

Ser cuidador de un ser querido puede ser una experiencia realmente gratificante. También puede suponer un reto y causarle tensión física, emocional o mental al cuidador.

Por eso es importante que los cuidadores se cuiden tanto a sí mismos como a sus seres queridos. Encontrar ayuda y apoyo cuando se necesita es importante para el bienestar tanto del cuidador como del familiar que necesita cuidados.

En Massachusetts, los especialistas en cuidadores ayudan trabajando con las familias para crear planes de atención personalizados. Estos especialistas ofrecen información gratuita, consejos y recursos útiles y, en algunos casos, estipendios a través del Programa de Apoyo a Cuidadores Familiares del estado. Los estipendios son fondos que se pagan al cuidador por períodos breves de descanso o para la compra de

productos o servicios que le permitan descansar de sus responsabilidades como cuidador.

Usted es un cuidador familiar si cuida de un ser querido que es un adulto mayor o tiene una discapacidad o enfermedad, ya sea que la persona sea su cónyuge, padre, abuelo, hijo adulto, nieto, amigo o vecino.

Hay servicios disponibles para ayudar a su ser querido, como ayuda

para bañarse y vestirse, administrar las finanzas, comprar alimentos, lavar la ropa o preparar comidas. Para obtener más información, llame a Coastline Elderly Services al 508-999-6400 y solicite hablar con un asesor de opciones. En todo el estado, los cuidadores pueden llamar a MassOptions al (800) 243-4636.

Para obtener más información, visite [www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program](http://www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program).

## Support is available for family caregivers

Being a caregiver for a loved one can be a rewarding experience. It can also be challenging and cause physical, emotional, or mental strain for the caregiver.

That's why it's important that caregivers take good care of themselves as well as their loved one. Finding help and support when it's needed is important for the well-being of both the caregiver

and the family member in need of care.

In Massachusetts, caregiver specialists help by working with families to create customized care plans. These specialists offer free information, useful tips and resources, and, in some cases, stipends through the state's Family Caregiver Support Program. Stipends are funds paid to the caregiver for brief periods of rest or for the purchase of

products or services that provide the caregiver with a break from their caregiving responsibilities.

You are a family caregiver if you are caring for a loved one who is an older adult or has a disability or illness whether the person is a spouse, parent, grandparent, child adult, grandchild, friend, or neighbor.

Services to help your loved one like

assistance with bathing and dressing, managing finances, buying groceries, doing laundry, or preparing meals are available. To learn more, call Coastline Elderly Services at 508-999-6400 and ask to speak to an Options Counselor. Statewide, caregivers can call MassOptions at (800) 243-4636.

For information, visit [www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program](http://www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program).

## Apoio disponível para cuidadores familiares

Ser cuidador de um ente querido pode ser uma experiência verdadeiramente gratificante. Também pode ser desafiador e causar tensão física, emocional ou mental para o cuidador.

É por isso que é importante que os cuidadores cuidem bem de si mesmos, assim como dos seus entes queridos. Encontrar ajuda e apoio quando necessário é importante para o bem-estar do cuidador e do membro da família que precisa de cuidados.

Em Massachusetts, especialistas em cuidadores ajudam na colaboração com as famílias para criar planos de cuidados personalizados. Estes especialistas fornecem informações gratuitas, dicas e recursos úteis e, em alguns casos, bolsas através do Programa de Apoio ao Cuidador Familiar do estado. As bolsas são fundos pagos ao cuidador por breves períodos de descanso ou pela compra de produtos ou serviços que proporcionam ao cuidador uma

pausa das suas responsabilidades.

É um cuidador familiar se estiver a cuidar de um ente querido que seja um adulto mais velho ou tenha uma deficiência ou doença, seja a pessoa um cônjuge, pai ou mãe, avô ou avó, filho adulto, neto, amigo ou vizinho.

Estão disponíveis serviços para ajudar o seu ente querido, como assistência para tomar banho e se vestir, administrar finanças, comprar mantimentos, lavar roupa ou preparar

refeições. Para saber mais, ligue para os Coastline Elderly Services através do número 508-999-6400 e peça para falar com um Consultor de Opções. Em todo o estado, os cuidadores podem ligar para o MassOptions através do número (800) 243-4636.

Para mais informações, visite [www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program](http://www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program).

Translations provided by:

 Southcoast Health



*Save the Date*

**COASTLINE**  
PRESENTS  
**DUELING PIANOS**

**HOWL**  
2GO

*Country Club of New Bedford*

**20 SEPTEMBER**      **6:00 PM**

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# Dartmouth celebrates Older Americans Month in style

Dartmouth Friends of the Elderly hosted an Older Americans Month breakfast to recognize the contributions of older adults in town on May 28 at the Connor Center for Active Living.

The celebration was well attended by older Americans as well as local elected officials who came out to say thank you to the town's older population.

Friends of the Elderly president Maria Connor emceed the morning, accepting three resolutions presented to the Council on Aging to officially acknowledge Older Americans month which is celebrated each May.

Representing Congressman Bill Keating's office, District Director Michael Jackman presented the COA with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition in honor

of Older Americans Month.

Sen. Mark Montigny and Rep. Chris Markey also brought resolutions recognizing older Americans from the state Senate and House of Representatives respectively.

Coastline Elderly Services CEO Justin Lees shared his thoughts about the importance of staying socially connected as we age as recognized by the 2024 theme for Older Americans Month: 'Powered by Connection.'

Dartmouth selectmen Shawn McDonald, David Tatelbaum, and Christopher O'Neil were also in attendance. In his remarks, McDonald urged those in the room to pass on the knowledge they have, especially about town history.

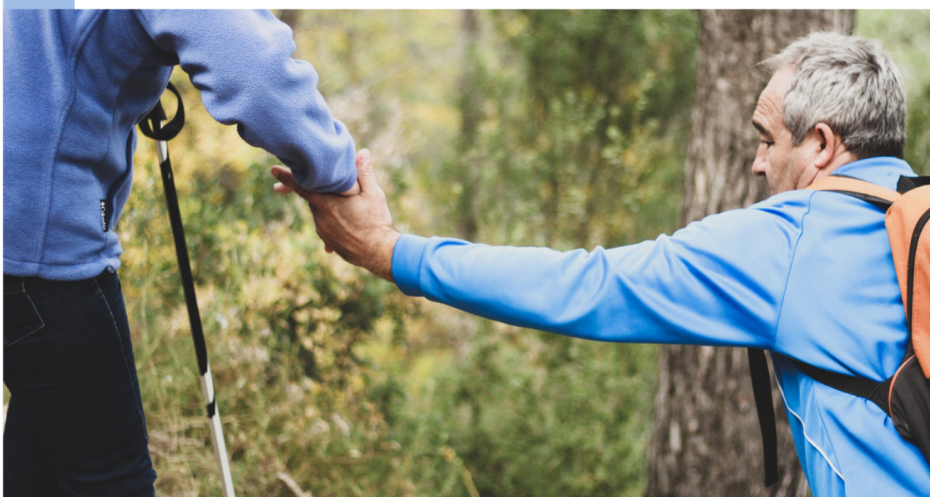
"You're part of that generation where you know what Dartmouth used to be," he said.



Dartmouth Friends of the Elderly president Maria Connor appreciates a comment from Coastline CEO Justin Lees (above). Above right, Sen. Mark Montigny (left) and Rep. Chris Markey (right) present resolutions recognizing Older Americans Month.



## Save the Date!



# A Matter of Balance workshop

Come join us and learn how to prevent falls, increase balance, strength and flexibility! Those who complete the workshop will receive a \$25 gift card to Market Basket!

For questions or to sign up, call Rachel Fouts at **774-510-5224**.

Classes are held once per week for 8 weeks, from 10am -12pm at Coastline 863 Belleville Ave New Bedford, MA 02745 July 12 2024- Aug. 30 2024



This program is funded in part by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs & Coastline Elderly Services. Voluntary donations are accepted but not required, any voluntary donations received will be kept confidential and used to expand the program's services. You will not be denied services if you choose not to donate. Any consumer who is dissatisfied with or has been denied a service, has a right to file a grievance with Coastline Elderly Services within 21 days business days.



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## Updating Your Estate Plan After Your Spouse's Passing

By: Erin L. Nunes, Esq.  
*Surprenant & Beneski*

Whenever the death of your spouse occurs, it is a life-altering trauma. We understand that at the same time, you are experiencing overwhelming grief, your daily life has irrevocably changed and the lack of familiarity is unnerving. In addition, there are myriad legal and financial matters to be taken care of in the immediate aftermath of this terrible loss. Several of these involve updating your estate plan. Though this may be something you'd like to postpone, it is essential that you attend to this matter promptly to protect your family, your legacy, and your assets.

### Documents That Need to Be Altered After the Death of Your Spouse

#### Your Will

Several changes will have to be made to your will now that you are widowed. Since in most cases, your spouse has been named as the first or perhaps the sole beneficiary of your estate, you will now have to direct your assets to those you consider next in line, typically your children. If your spouse was also named as your personal representative, you will also have to designate a replacement.

Significantly, if your spouse passed while any of your children are still minors, you will have to name a guardian so that if you become incapacitated or die while they are still young, your children will be well tended to. In such a case, you should put their funds in a trust so it is protected until they reach the age of maturity.

#### Health Care Proxy

Your Health Care Proxy gives another person the right to make medical decisions for you if you become incapacitated and can no longer make these decisions yourself. If you originally named your spouse as your Health Care Proxy, you will have to choose another trusted individual to make these decisions on your behalf.

#### Durable Power of Attorney (POA)

If you had given your

spouse Power of Attorney (POA) in your existing estate plan, it is important that you designate another trustworthy person now that your spouse has passed. Power of attorney is a crucial designation because it names the individual you give the power to handle your business, legal, and financial affairs. If you don't create a POA in advance, a relative or friend might have to go through an expensive lengthy, public court process to have a guardian appointed if you become incapacitated.

#### HIPAA Release

A HIPAA Release, conceived to protect your privacy, names the individuals with whom you want your medical information shared if you are unable to communicate with healthcare professionals.

During your marriage, you may have signed a HIPAA Release form giving your spouse this privilege, so the form will now have to be altered to make sure that there is someone you trust in this role. Without an updated HIPAA Release form, your family will be unable to access this vital information.

#### Beneficiary Designations

Most people are likely to have other documents with beneficiary designations that require updating, such as:

- Retirement plans
- Life insurance
- Trusts
- Brokerage accounts

If your spouse is currently listed as your beneficiary on any of these accounts, you should review your estate plan with us and make the necessary changes to protect your assets.

When it comes to updating your estate plan after the death of your spouse, we are fully prepared to do all the heavy lifting. We realize how tough life is for you now and will do everything possible to ease your path forward. The sooner you contact us, the sooner we will help you regain your sense of balance.

*Attorney Nunes is a partner at Surprenant & Beneski, an estate planning and elder law practice in New Bedford.*

## Trivia

### FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) What type of bird is a “lovebird”?  
A.) Owl      B.) Falcon      C.) Swallow      D.) Parrot
- 2.) What does a “Sobriquet” refer to?  
A.) Joke      B.) Poem      C.) Nickname      D.) Fear
- 3.) Which city had the first U.S. underground subway system?  
A.) New York      B.) Boston  
C.) Kansas City      D.) Los Angeles
- 4.) What is the most popular Halloween candy in the U.S.?  
A.) Mars Bar      B.) Skittle  
C.) Candy Corn      D.) Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups
- 5.) “Paraskevidekatriaphobia” is the fear of what?  
A.) Halloween      B.) Friday the 13th  
C.) April 1st      D.) New Year’s Eve
- 6.) Which food is traditionally not part of a full English breakfast?  
A.) Sausage      B.) Mushroom      C.) Beans      D.) Potatoes
- 7.) In which U.S. state was the first McDonalds located?  
A.) Ohio      B.) Alaska      C.) California      D.) Texas
- 8.) What is the literal meaning of the word “karaoke”?  
A.) Vocal chords      B.) Empty orchestra  
C.) Singing competition      D.) Solo performance
- 9.) Who was the very first person to host the “Tonight Show”?  
A.) Ernie Kovacs      B.) Jack Parr  
C.) Johnny Carson      D.) Steve Allen
- 10.) The USDA recognizes how many different egg sizes?  
A.) Eleven      B.) Three  
C.) Eight      D.) Six

[Answers listed on page 11]

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Celebration of Seniors may have had its biggest turnout yet in 2024 with well over 600 older people in attendance, plus at least 200 aging professionals.



**Celebration of Seniors continued...**

the best solution is to not pick up the phone, if you don't know the caller.

"I have sympathy with you," Quinn said. But, "You should not communicate with anybody you don't know."

"The nature and extent of the scamming and the fraud and the harm that is being done to you and your friends is not going away," said AARP Massachusetts State Director Mike Festa. "It is getting worse."

An annual presence at Celebration of Seniors, Festa was speaking for his last engagement there, as he retires from AARP Massachusetts after 11 years as state director.

"This is about prevention," Festa said. "It's not natural to hang up on someone. (But) hang up on them. Make it easy. And if it's your daughter and she calls you back, say "Oh, my God, I can't believe it was you."

In addition to fraud awareness, Celebration of Seniors helps share information about elder care services, according to Coastline CEO Justin Lees.

"The complexity of aging services can be hard to navigate for older adults and, while help is always available, it can be intimidating to talk about your vulnerabilities with a stranger," Lees said. "Having an event like Celebration of Seniors lets older people start conversations and ask questions face-to-face

without having to commit to something. That introduction may be all it takes for someone to pick up the phone and call for help when they need it and are ready for it."

Seventy vendors were on site offering information on the many services available to older adults, including supplemental health programs, estate planning, advocacy support, hospice care, medical alerts, and more.

Fall River Vision showcased its mobile services, providing eyecare in a home, nursing home, or group home environment. After an initial free phone consultation, a home appointment can be made if the individual has a medical reason they cannot go to the office, said Ruben Martinez, licensed optician, including on weekends when family members can be there to support them.

Other programs offered more socially oriented support for seniors.

Despite the perception that older LGBTQ+ adults are often not open about their identities, the South Coast LGBTQ+ Network's programs for older adults are the most well attended, said KJ Farias, a staff member.

"We have more trouble reaching the youth," Farias said, citing popular programs like the Senior Supper Club, Munchies, and Bowling nights.

The LGBTQ+ Network also offers elder support services, Farias said, including laundry, home care and more.

# The Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program is here to help YOU!



## PROTECT YOUR MEDICARE NUMBER!

- ✓ Medicare numbers and health insurance information should be protected just like credit cards.
- ✓ Medicare cards no longer contain Social Security numbers, although this number is still very valuable for thieves seeking to commit Medicare fraud and medical identity theft.

## DETECT HEALTHCARE ERRORS, FRAUD AND ABUSE.

- ✓ The SMP Program offers free healthcare journals, "My Health Care Tracker," to keep an accurate record of all healthcare encounters, procedures, tests, and much more.
- ✓ Always review Medicare Summary Notices, Explanation of Benefits, and other billing statements for accuracy.
- ✓ If errors or discrepancies are detected, contact the provider, Medicare, and SMP.

## REPORT BY CALLING THE MA SMP PROGRAM.

- ✓ Contact the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program at **800-892-0890** to report all healthcare errors, fraud, abuse, and scams.

## EDUCATE YOURSELF!

- ✓ MA SMP provides free informational presentations to avoid becoming a victim of healthcare errors, fraud, and scams.
- ✓ MA SMP provides free, confidential assistance to understand Medicare Summary Notices, Explanation of Benefits, and help resolving questionable medical bills.

**TO SCHEDULE A FREE EDUCATIONAL SESSION OR TO VOLUNTEER, CONTACT THE MA SMP PROGRAM AT 800-892-0890**



**Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program at AgeSpan**  
 280 Merrimack Street, Suite 400  
 Lawrence, MA 01843  
 800-892-0890 • www.MASMP.org

# Councils on Aging

## Acushnet COA

**July activities not available at press time.**

For Acushnet Council on Aging programs and activities, see the COA newsletter in the Senior Center or online at <https://mycommunityonline.com/organization/acushnet-council-on-aging>. For more information, call the Acushnet Council on Aging at 508-998-0280. The center is located at 59 1/2 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.

**Hey Moxie Caregiver Connection:** By Moxie Mobility Training. First Monday of the Month at 12:30 p.m. or virtually on Facebook Live at Moxie Mobility Training LLC. Solutions and guidance for caregivers and their loved ones. Education, training and info. on community resources to help you find strategies to overcome the struggles and obstacles in caregiving. Free.

**Boston Duck Tour:** July 18th \$85: Lunch on your own at the Prudential Center. Lots of shops, boutiques & restaurants to visit. Opportunity to independently tour the Prudential Observation Deck. See the breathtaking view of Boston from the 52nd floor!

**Community Nurse:** Hosting a Blood Pressure/ Wellness Clinic the first Wednesday of every month from 8:30-10:30 a.m.

**Cribbage Players Wanted:** The Cribbage League is looking to expand. It meets Mondays 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Stop by the front desk to learn more.

## 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).

**Mindfulness for Amateurs:** July 3, 10:15 a.m. Discover the powerful impact of directing your attention and awareness to shape your feelings, actions, and overall well-being. This talk offers an overview of mindfulness, from its rich historical roots across various major religions to practical, secular techniques for everyday life. Pre registration required.

**Instructional Chess:** Wednesday, July 3rd, Thursday, July 11th, 18th and 25th at noon. "Chess makes kids smart!" Looking for a free, fun, summer activity with your grandchild? Pre registration required.

**Posture & Movement:** Fridays at 8:30-9:30 .m. For those who can easily move on and off the floor. Improve/strengthen your posture as you become more "posture aware." Cost is \$5. Walk-ins welcome.

**Masshealth 101:** Thursday, July 11 at 10 a.m. with Masshealth/Health Connector Certified Application consultant, Matt Dansereau for a discussion on Masshealth, and the various Masshealth and other low cost insurance programs. Pre-registration required.

**Beginner Uke:** Wednesday, July 10th -August 7th 10-11:15 a.m. Join this fun, relaxed course. Students must have their own instrument. Cost is \$25 for 5 week session. Contact Center for more information.

**Uke Circle:** Wednesday, July 10-August 7th 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Have fun strumming and singing together at this 6-week summer Uke Circle! Play and sing some old favorite uke songs, learn some new ones, keep your skills sharpened, and gently nudge yourself out of your go-to comfort zone. Cost is \$40 for the full six-week session. Contact Center for more information.

**Animal Ownership and Safety:** Thursday, July 25 at 10 a.m. with Dartmouth Animal Control Supervisor, Sandra Gosselin. Free Pet Alert stickers will be available as a tool for first responders. Points of discussion: Guardianship if you are hospitalized; emergency contact info in case of emergency; health of your pet; Likes and dislikes; and special food or medicine.

**Decoding Fireflies:** Thursday, July 25 at 1 p.m. With the Audubon Society. Bring your grandchildren and together learn how and why fireflies light up and how to identify them by their flash patterns. Refreshments provided! Pre-registration required.

**Movie:** "Ordinary Angels" Tuesday, July 30.

**Transportation Options for Seniors:** July 12 at 9:30 a.m. Do you need transportation to doctor appts, shopping or to visit a friend? "Sit and Chat" with STRA Demand Response representative. Pre registration required.

**Brain Builders:** Monday July 15 & 29 at 1-2 p.m. BRAIN BUILDERS IS BACK! Classes this month will focus on practicing memory strategies in new and interesting ways. Challenge your skills in small groups, working with your peers to recall all kinds of information. All are welcome. Pre registration required. Free!

**Kayaking:** July 19 at 9:30 a.m. Experience nature along the Westport River with Osprey Sea and Surf Adventures. Join us for kayak instruction and a 2.5 hour guided tour along the Westport River. Discounted cost of \$50 per person includes transportation. Space is limited. Pre-registration is required.

**Qi Gong:** Wednesday, July 17 – Aug. 21, 2:15-3:15 p.m. This ancient Chinese practice combines gentle movements, deep breathing and meditation to promote overall health and well-being. This 6-week series is free! Walk ins welcome.

**Extreme Budgeting:** Friday, July 19 & 26 at 10 a.m. With Julianne Murray. Learn the six simple steps to start your own Extreme Budget journey. Session 1: Start Saving; Session 2: Building Your Budget. Free. Pre-registration required.

**Bristol County Registry of Deeds:** Friday, July 19 at 10:15 a.m. Representatives from the Bristol County Registry of Deeds will be at the Center to discuss the Homestead Act and recording issues which may affect older adults. An on-site workstation will be available to provide the status of your mortgage discharge, provide a print out of your deed and demonstrate of how Registry technology works. A question-and-answer period will follow. Pre-registration is required.

## Fairhaven COA

**July activities not available at press time.**

For information on programs and activities, see Fairhaven Council on Aging Community Newsletter on the town's website at <https://www.fairhaven-ma.gov/council-aging/pages/calendars-menus-and-newsletters>. 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 7:30am-3:30pm and until 8pm on Wednesdays.

**Walking:** Every day (unless noted in the newsletter or at the center) in the Recreation Center next door to the COA inside the gymnasium. 12:00-12:30. Schedule to change June 24 until the beginning of Grade school, Thursdays ONLY from 12-12:30.

**Massage Mondays:** With Carol Flock. 20 minute massages for \$30.00. Please call the COA for dates and appointment times.

**Cribbage:** Mondays 10am to Noon.

**Tai Chi:** Mondays 11am-12pm with Joe Rebello. \$30 for 8 Weeks

**Movie Matinee:** On select Monday's at 12:15. Please see the newsletter or call the center for date and information about the movie that will be playing.

**Osteo Class:** Simple and safe Bone boosting exercises. Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-10am. \$1.

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

**Comfort Dogs:** Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and the Plymouth County Comfort Dogs, Monday, July 8, at 1 p.m. D. A. Cruz will update us on the latest financial scams and schemes that his office has been seeing. You will learn tips and vital information to help you keep yourself protected. He will also talk about the special guest from the Plymouth County Comfort Dog Program, that he founded. There are so many benefits a comfort dog provides to both the community and law enforcement..

**Paint Party with Lidia:** Tuesday, July 9, 12:30 p.m. Come and join in the fun of creating your own masterpiece. Choose from multiple images. Cost for the program is \$20.00, due at me of sign up. Call 508-748-3570 to reserve your spot.

*Continued on Page 11*



**Looking for a career?**  
Do you need a profession that provides a good working environment with a great work-life balance and allows you to make a difference?

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

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**Lunch & Learn:** Heat and its Effects on Older Adults Thursday, July 11, noon. Learn ways to stay safe during the summer heat. Know the symptoms when your body is overheating. Find out guidelines for proper hydration and create a heat action plan. Come meet some of Marion's Fire/EMS team while enjoying a light lunch and learning ways to stay healthy. Call 508-748-3570 to make your reservation by July 5.

**Cooking Demonstration:** July 16 at noon. Join us for a lunchtime cooking demonstration with Barbara Canuel, Registered Dietitian from Community Nurse Home Care. Learn new tips and tricks while preparing quick, nutritious meals.

**Harp Performance:** By Susan Wright Regan Monday, July 15 1 p.m. Susan had a fabulous career as a professional dancer and dance studio owner. Since retiring, she realized her dream of playing the harp. She proves that anyone can take on a new endeavor at anytime. Come enjoy the beauty of Susan's performance and hear some words of wisdom from her.

**Summer Concert Series:** Friday, July 12 at 1 p.m. Enjoy our outdoor summer concert series with the music of Rebecca Pink. Also, Friday, July 19, 1 p.m. with the music of Lady "D" Andrade. Our summer concert series is held outside under the pavilion. Drop by and enjoy good music, good friends and good times!

**Quilt Show:** Wednesday, July 31, 9:30 a.m. The Bayberry Quilters of Cape Cod is hosting a quilt show at the Cape Cod Technical School in Harwich. You will be able to take in a quilt exhibit, browse the merchant mall, enter into a quilt raffle, attend lectures and demos, visit the quilts for sale and the handmade boutique. Admission is \$12. To reserve your spot on the bus, call 508-748-3570 beginning July 10.

### Mattapoisett COA

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

**Band Concerts:** July 3-Aug. 28, every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. Rides available weekly, by appointment.

**Taste of the Town:** Hosted by Matt. Woman's Club, July 16, 5-7 p.m. Shuttle van available from parking lot of St. Anthony's lot (26 Hammond St.) to Shipyard Park. Wave for a ride.

**Harbor Days:** Hosted by Matt. Lions Club, July 20 & 21, 5-7 p.m. Shuttle van available from Ying Dynasty lot to Shipyard Park. Wave for a ride if you see the van driving by. At Harbor Days, the Friends of the Mattapoisett COA would love to see you! They'll be under the back tent, near the food area.

**Ice Cream Social:** July 25, 1 p.m. Sign-ups required.

**Art for your Mind:** July 3 at 12:30 p.m. Free. A selection of images by several prominent American artists—Winslow Homer, Edward Hopper, and Andrew Wyeth, to name a few, will be featured. Join local art historian Jill Sanford for an enjoyable hour of challenging yourself to see in new ways! Call to register.

**Lunch & Speaker:** A Lookback at Amusement Parks in Massachusetts June 28, 11:30 a.m. lunch and noon show. July 9 with lunch at noon and presentation at 12:30 p.m. \$5. Celebrate summer with a trip down memory lane during this engaging, educational and entertaining program. Rides, roller skating, cotton candy, wooden roller coasters—do you remember? Join presenter Nancy A. Franks of "FRANKly Speaking", for an engaging, educational and entertaining program.

**Drum Circle:** Wednesday, July 10. Every 2nd Wednesday 11 a.m.—12 p.m. Cost: \$7 (drums included) Don't miss this class that will be far more fun and beneficial than what you think a drum circle is! Check it out once and you won't want to miss a beat for these monthly classes. No experience needed. Instructor, Sam Holmstock earned a Bachelor of Music Degree in Composition from Berklee College of Music. He continued his formal studies at the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, New York where he studied Composition and Improvisation. He has performed worldwide. Registration required.

**Trips:** July 11, Boston: Auschwitz Exhibit: Long Time Ago, Not Far Away brings together more than 700 original objects of great historic and human value. No book, podcast or history lesson can prepare you for the impact and power this extraordinary collection of artifacts holds. Payment of \$32 (ticket plus van) due by 7/5. Leaves at 9:30 a.m.

### New Bedford COA

For assistance, contact the New Bedford Council on Aging at 508-991-6250. Brooklawn Senior Center is at 1997 Acushnet Ave. and Rosemary S. Tierney Senior Center is at 553 Brock Ave. A SHINE Counselor is available Monday-Friday. Call 508-991-6250 to schedule an appointment.

**Adult Social Day:** Now at Buttonwood Park. Contact the New Bedford COA for more information at 508-991-6250.

**Strength & Conditioning with Larry:** Mondays from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at Brooklawn. Fridays from 2-3 p.m. at Tierney.

**Bingo:** Tuesday & Thursday from noon-2 p.m. at Brooklawn and Monday, Wednesday & Friday from noon-2 p.m. at Tierney.

**Zumba with Pati:** Mondays from 10-11 a.m. and Thursdays from noon to 1 p.m., both at Tierney.

**Chair Yoga with Sue:** Mondays from 10-11 a.m. at Andrea McCoy Gymnasium, Tuesdays from 10-11 a.m. at Tierney, and Wednesdays from 10-11 a.m. at Brooklawn.

### 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 [townofrochester.mass.com/council-aging](http://townofrochester.mass.com/council-aging). Facebook: [facebook.com/Rochester, Mass.](https://facebook.com/Rochester,Mass)

**Trips:** Call 508-763-8723 or visit the front desk to sign up for a trip and please pay at the front desk. July 17 and 24, Cape Cod Canal Cruise. This trip is always very popular so you can only sign up for one date - either the 17th or the 24th. Leaves the COA at 9:15 a.m. and return by 3:15 p.m. Lunch at a spot of your choice. Cruise is \$25 but you pay that to the vendor when you arrive - not to the COA. The van ride is \$5 round trip for Rochester residents and \$10 for nonresidents. **Monday Lunches:** A cowboy-themed luncheon with linedancing entertainment on July 8 at 11:30 a.m. This lunch was very popular last year so sign up ASAP! The menu can be found in the COA newsletter. Cost is \$10.

**Choke Training for Volunteers:** July 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Learn what you should do if someone is choking. Training covers techniques for infants, toddlers, adults and seniors.

**Presentation:** Meeting your Changing Housing Needs as you Age. July 17 11 a.m. to noon. Join us for an informal presentation to help us think about meeting our changing housing needs. There are many options available. We will have knowledgeable speakers on availability and types of knowledgeable speakers on availability and types of senior housing, decluttering and downsizing, the continuum of residential care services, selling or modifying your home and more.

**Moxie Mobility Training:** "Hey, Moxie" Caregiver Connection. For caregivers and their loved ones. July 30, from 9-9:45 a.m. Learn solutions & strategies for overcoming obstacles to aging in place.

### Dementia Directory

[www.alzconnected.org](http://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. Social Day options for person receiving care are available.

**Caregivers Connection Group:** Nov 29 at the Fairhaven COA from 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. With Moxie Mobility Training. Call the COA at 508-979-4029 for details.

**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 the 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](http://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](mailto:lkrinsky@fenwayhealth.org) if interested.

### July 2024 Trivia Quiz Answers

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

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# Community

## Dealing with aggression in people with Dementia

By Judith Graham  
KFF Health News

Caring for older adults with dementia is stressful, especially when they become physically or verbally aggressive, wander away from home, develop paranoia or hallucinations, engage in inappropriate or repetitive behaviors, or refuse to let caregivers help them.

Upward of 95% of patients experience these neuropsychiatric symptoms of dementia, which tend to fluctuate over time and vary in intensity. They're the primary reasons people with dementia end up in assisted living facilities or nursing homes. At some point, families and friends trying to help at home simply can't manage. "When people think about dementia, they usually think about forgetfulness and memory impairment," said Mary Blazek, director of the geriatric psychiatry clinic at the University of Michigan. "But it's behavioral and psychological disturbances that are most disruptive to patients' and caregivers' lives."

Now, help is available from a first-of-its-kind website created by prominent experts in this field. It offers free training in a comprehensive approach to managing neuropsychiatric symptoms of dementia — a method known as DICE — based on several decades of scientific research as well as extensive clinical practice.

The website's goal is to "give people tools to better manage often-distressing situations," said Helen Kales, chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at UC Davis Health in Sacramento, California, and one of DICE's creators. Users learn that neuropsychiatric symptoms are caused by changes in the brain that increase people's vulnerability. Nine video modules and two simulations provide comprehensive information and problem-solving techniques.

More than 16 million unpaid caregivers — primarily family members and friends — help people with dementia live at home.

**"When people think about dementia, they usually think about forgetfulness and memory impairment. But it's behavioral and psychological disturbances that are most disruptive to patients' and caregivers' lives."**

—Mary Blazek,  
Director of Geriatric Psychiatry Clinic

(An estimated 20% of patients live in institutional settings.) The most common form of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, affects nearly 7 million Americans 65 and older.

DICE is also designed to help "avoid the knee-jerk prescribing of psychoactive medications" that have potentially serious side effects, Kales said. Several medical organizations recommend that non-pharmaceutical approaches to troublesome behaviors be tried before drug therapy, but, in practice, this doesn't routinely happen.

DICE is a mnemonic — a pattern of letters meant to serve as a memory aid — that stands for Describe, Investigate, Create, and Evaluate, the four pillars of this approach. At its core is an assumption people with dementia engage in disturbing behaviors for often-unrecognized reasons that can be addressed once they are understood.

Take an example on the website featuring Jennifer, a 55-year-old caregiver for her mother, Betty, 85, whom she tries to bathe daily in the late afternoon. When Betty resists getting into the tub, Jennifer insists, "Let's go! I have things to do." Betty responds by smacking her and shouting, "Leave me alone. It hurts."

DICE asks caregivers to step back from the heat of the moment and examine issues from three perspectives: the person with dementia, the caregiver, and the environment. All can contribute to distressing situations and all need to be considered in fashioning a response.

Examining the problem by using a "who, what, when, how, why" prompt can reveal several potential issues:

The patient. Betty has arthritis and may experience pain getting in and out of the tub. She may feel tired and overwhelmed in the late afternoon.

The caregiver. Jennifer may become easily frustrated when she encounters resistance, adopting a scolding and commanding tone rather than breaking down what Betty needs to do in simple steps.

The environment. The bathroom tends to be cold, with overly bright lights, tepid bathwater, and no grab bars around the tub.

Some possible solutions discussed on the website: Offer Betty an over-the-counter pain reliever before her bath. Try baths in the morning, not the afternoon. Relax expectations that she'll have a daily bath and offer sponge baths several times a week. Install grab bars around the tub, and make sure the water temperature is comfortable. Use a nicely scented soap and play music to help Betty relax. Speak calmly, making simple statements.

**DICE asks caregivers to step back from the heat of the moment and examine issues from three perspectives: the person with dementia, the caregiver, and the environment. ."**

These embody strategies shown to improve neuropsychiatric symptoms associated with dementia: recognizing and addressing underlying medical issues such as pain, infections, or delirium; simplifying the tasks a person with dementia is expected to perform; and establishing daily routines that give structure to the day.

Other important steps: Engage the person in activities that are meaningful to them, including social interactions. Reduce clutter and the potential for

overstimulation in the environment. Make sure the person is using hearing or vision aids, if needed. Get them outside and exposed to light.

If safety, psychosis, or major depression are urgent concerns, then consider using psychoactive medications after consulting a physician.

Of course, this isn't a comprehensive list of recommendations. Nor is it prescriptive. What works for one person with dementia may not work for another.

Using DICE is an iterative process that involves creativity and frequent evaluation to assess whether strategies are working, Kales said. If not, new interventions should be tried.

Although this is the first time family caregivers can access the DICE toolkit, the program has been available to health care professionals for a while. Notably, all of Wisconsin's dementia care specialists have been trained in DICE over the past few years (every county in that state has a specialist who helps families with dementia).

"It's a really pragmatic approach that's put together in a very thoughtful fashion," said Art Walaszek, a professor of psychiatry and medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health who's been involved in that effort.

Other dementia training programs are available, some of which review behavioral and psychiatric symptoms in less depth, and they, too, are increasingly available online. Another valuable resource, Best Programs for Caregiving, launched in March, lists evidence-based programs across the country and their availability. Enter a ZIP code to find information that previously hasn't been assembled in one place. This site, too, is very much worth consulting.

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### Brain Builders continued...

processing disorders, or can't understand what they hear or what they read."

They also treat stuttering and social issues where people may not be good in conversation with others or in social interactions.

"We believe speech pathology in general uses communication, language and cognition," said Yauch. "When my job is from the neck up, I (support) you on your speech, your listening skills, your ability to understand, and your ability to remember what you understand."

The women teach strategies that allow people to compensate for a specific challenge. Any individual Brain Builders class might focus on a single strategy yet also allow each person to approach the challenge and compensate in different ways.

For example, a strategy might

use visual storytelling to improve memory, creating a mental story to help someone remember their grocery list or similar information.

People in the class can have various concerns, including Parkinsons or Multiple Sclerosis, a dementia, head injury or stroke and still benefit, the Brain Builders team said. In fact, bringing people together who have different challenges creates an environment where everyone can learn from each other in the group, they said. "All of a sudden, they're all talking and they realize we are all the same," said Yauch-Cadden.

Brain Builders' virtual community has grown into a safe space with individuals who have been attending for years and have gotten to know each other well.

"It's a judgment free zone," said Yauch-Cadden. "It's a place where people feel free to communicate with us in whatever form they can. We are

here to help."

The class is also held in person in shorter sessions at local senior centers.

"Most of the seniors are concerned about their memory," said Yauch. "So each week we introduce a (memory) strategy and practice that."

"By the time you get through the Brain Builders memory class, you have a handful of strategies which you can apply to different settings," she said.

Practicing is important which is why doing group activities together and trying our strategies is important. This way, people can identify and practice the strategy that works best for them.

For example, if someone isn't a visual learner, they may not want to try the storytelling strategy. Instead they may prefer using alphabetical cues as a memory support.

"The beauty is that we have so many (strategies)," said Star. "You can find what works for you and keep coming back."

### Brain Builders Upcoming Classes

July 15 & 29  
1-2 p.m.  
Dartmouth Council on Aging  
628 Dartmouth St  
S. Dartmouth, MA

Sept. 19 & 26  
1-2 p.m.  
Rochester Council on Aging  
67 Dexter Lane  
Rochester, MA

Sept 16 & 27  
1-2 p.m.  
Marion Council on Aging  
465 Mill St.  
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*All are welcome. For information, call 508-326-0353 or email [Lisa@cccslp.net](mailto:Lisa@cccslp.net).*