

# Senior Scope

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

Vol. 8, Issue 11 Published by Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. September 2026

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Looking back with Spinner, page 5



Louise Conway Quintin (left) honors the memory of her brother, John J. Conway (above), by sharing information about the Fall River Vietnam Memorial Wall and the healing she found there with others.

## Tragic loss inspires woman's campaign for Vietnam Wall

Louise Conway Quintin still cries when she thinks of her brother John J. Conway, who died in 1967 in Vietnam. He was 18, a private first class in the U.S. Marine Corps, who had enlisted at 17, proud to serve his country. "He was my brother; he was like my father; he was my best friend," Quintin said at her Fairhaven

home recently. John joined the Marines with his best friend, Michael St. Pierre, under the buddy system. The two made a pact after St. Pierre came home on leave and suggested John sign up. John went to boot camp that July and came home in October, telling his family he was headed to Vietnam.

At home, things were hard. Quintin's mother had suffered a stroke and her father struggled with alcohol. John, only three or four years older than Louise, stepped in to fill the gap. His last letter home to the family arrived the day after they received

*Continued on page 12*

## Fuel Assistance, SNAP, MassHealth: This year brings more changes than usual. Here's what to know.

By: **Matthew Dansereau**  
*Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, Dartmouth Council on Aging & Town of Dartmouth*

Each year brings changes to public benefit programs, but this year we're seeing more updates than usual. Many of these changes affect older adults who receive Medicare, MassHealth, SNAP, or Fuel Assistance. Staying informed can help you avoid interruptions in benefits and prepare for new requirements before they take effect.

**HEAP (Fuel Assistance) Income Guidelines Increase**  
HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program), commonly known as Fuel Assistance, has announced the following income guidelines for the

2027 heating season:

| Family Size | Income Limit |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1           | \$53,585     |
| 2           | \$70,073     |
| 3           | \$86,561     |
| 4           | \$103,049    |
| 5           | \$119,536    |

If your household income falls below these limits, you may qualify for assistance with your heating costs. For residents of the Greater New Bedford area, HEAP is administered by PACE. In the Greater Fall River area, the program is administered by Citizens for Citizens. Current recipients should receive their recertification packet in September. Applications and recertifications can also be completed online beginning Oct. 1. Because applications increase



dramatically once cold weather arrives, it is always a good idea to apply early if possible.

**Changes to Medicare.gov and SSA.gov**  
Both Medicare.gov and SSA.gov have undergone recent changes. Medicare.gov has a new look,

*Continued on page 7*

## Making the Supplemental Security Income program more efficient

Millions of Americans rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to help meet their basic needs. Last year, we created the SSI Improvement Team to make the SSI program more efficient. The team’s goal is to speed up SSI processing, reduce payment errors, use more automation, and help recipients better understand and comply with program rules. By working efficiently, using new technology, and making our rules simpler, we can handle SSI claims faster and more accurately.

SSI is a complex program, and it takes a lot of resources to run. It also accounts for a large share of payment errors. The new team is working with experts inside and outside the agency to find ways to improve the SSI program. They have reviewed more than 215 suggestions and are putting the best ideas into action.

Some important improvements include:

Payroll Information Exchange (PIE): Now fully in place, PIE lets us record monthly wage reports for SSI recipients. This helps prevent payment errors and removes the need for recipients to report their wages.

Financial Institution Checks: We now obtain more data for all new

SSI claims to spot assets that could affect SSI eligibility, helping avoid overpayments.

Clearer Policies and Easier Reporting: Recipients can now upload documents online, and rules about resources and reporting are easier to understand. Interviews now include clear instructions about reporting responsibilities and penalties.

Simplified Guidance: Instructions for in-kind support, child support documentation, and settlement awards are now clearer, making it easier for recipients and employees.

Better call routing: Directing certain workloads to SSI specialists in our offices who can complete the caller’s request immediately.

We’re also focusing on timely reviews for young adults turning 18 to prevent payment errors. Finally, we’re working to modernize systems, automate tasks, and reduce the burden on recipients.

Some improvements will take more time, but we are committed to keeping the public updated. For more information about the SSI program, visit our Understanding Supplemental Security Income (SSI) page at [www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-understanding-ssi.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-understanding-ssi.htm).

## From the Editor

As of this issue, I am saying goodbye to Senior Scope. Leaving this publication is harder than I expected, even knowing it’s the right call.

Although I can’t tell you who the next editor will be, I can say with confidence that Coastline remains committed to publishing this newspaper with the news and information the South Coast’s older readers need to know. I’m sure you’ll learn more with the October issue.

Over the years, I’ve met so many people who have helped me, shared their stories with me, and impressed me. I came here at an age where I was just beginning to be seen as “old” by the wider world, and then, confusingly, by myself.

It had an effect. I spent nearly a year doubting my abilities. In hindsight, I was letting others determine my truth. I leave stronger and more determined to stay true to myself as I age as well as confident that I can.

Looking back, the best models for this self-determination in aging have been the older adults who were never trying to prove anything. They are the ones who just keep living. The folks who get on the dance floor and don’t think twice about who’s watching. The couple who fell in love in their late 80s and got married without hesitating.

And mostly, incredibly, the ones who were able to express their vulnerability without limiting themselves. The ones who said I need help and accepted it without taking on a lesser version of themselves.

I’ve learned there’s so much bravery in aging and most of it is so quietly expressed it doesn’t get noticed.

Then there are other times, like the 97-year-old woman I read about recently who broke her own wing-walking record - that’s walking on the wing of a plane in flight. Someone asked her why, and she said, “I’d just get bored of life otherwise.”

Most of us aren’t out walking on the wings of planes. But that’s not what she meant. She meant something simpler. She meant don’t shrink.

I didn’t expect this work to change how I think about my own aging, but it did. Issue by issue, I relaxed a little about my life stage. I think about what’s ahead differently now. Less like an ending to manage. More like the open question it’s always been.

That’s what I’ll take with me when I leave this desk. That, plus immense gratitude to all of you who showed me the way.



Beth Perdue



**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<br>59 ½ S. Main St. Acushnet                                             | 508-998-0280                         | Patricia Midurski<br>Samantha Ortiz                                             |
| Dartmouth Council on Aging<br>628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth                                         | 508-999-4717                         | Ginny Walega<br>Matthew Dansereau<br>Joan Menard                                |
| Fairhaven Council on Aging<br>229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven                                        | 508-979-4029                         | Dianne Perkins, Julie Lizotte<br>Carolyn Dantoni, Jean Silver, Richard Marcotte |
| GNB Community Health Center<br>874 Purchase Street, New Bedford                                    | 508-992-6553 x147                    | Derek Mendes                                                                    |
| Immigrants' Assistance Center<br>58 Crapo St., New Bedford                                         | 508-996-8113                         | Lucy Oliveira<br>Delia Moreira                                                  |
| Marion Council on Aging<br>465 Mill Street, Marion                                                 | 508-748-3570                         | Connie Heacox<br>CharylN Feeney                                                 |
| Mattapoisett Council on Aging<br>17 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett                                   | 508-758-4110                         | Connie Heacox                                                                   |
| New Bedford Council on Aging<br>181 Hillman St., Monday-Friday<br>(for New Bedford residents only) | 508-991-6250<br>508-991-6250         | Nora Rose<br>Patricia Foster<br>David Ducharme                                  |
| City of New Bedford-Community<br>Services, 133 Williams St., NB                                    | 508-984-2670                         | Ivis Espinoza-Oviedo                                                            |
| Rochester Council on Aging<br>67 Dexter Lane, Rochester                                            | 508-763-8723                         | Jan Cote                                                                        |
| Southcoast Health<br>200 Mill Road, Suite 109, Fairhaven                                           | 508-965-1047<br>(Internal referrals) | Denise Dupuis                                                                   |



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**Beth Perdue, Editor**  
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— Anna and Ciano Nigra, Assonet

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# New program offers dementia caregivers a break — and a GUIDE

Caregiving can be one of the toughest roles a person takes on, no matter the illness. But caring for someone with dementia carries its own kind of difficulty, since the disease’s symptoms and progression vary widely and no two journeys look the same.

There’s always an element of the unexpected in caregiving, but with dementia, the unexpected is more often the rule. Even those who have cared for others through a disease can find themselves starting from scratch.

“It’s very clear-cut sometimes with other conditions that this is the issue, this is what’s happening in your body, these are your options,” said Jessica Kopecky-Lanausse, Community Resources Supervisor at New Bedford-based Coastline Elderly Services which recently began offering a new dementia-focused program.

But with dementia, “every single person is unique in their journey,” she said.

That’s why Kopecky-Lanausse is excited to talk about GUIDE, a recent Coastline program to support people with dementia and their caregivers to improve the quality of life for everyone involved.

GUIDE, an acronym for Guiding and Improved Dementia Experience, is a nationwide model that was developed and launched by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services two years ago. The model is set

to run for eight years. Coastline began offering GUIDE this summer working with AgeSpan, a Lawrence-based aging services access point.

“To have a program that is dedicated to dementia, in my opinion, is huge, because there is a wide spectrum of dementia diagnoses — Alzheimer’s is one of those — and every different version has different things related to it,” Kopecky-Lanausse said. “It’s such an overwhelming diagnosis to receive. There’s that unknown of, what’s this going to look like? Because you see so many different variables, from the neighbor you had, to a family member, to your best friend’s person who dealt with it.”

That complexity and uncertainty is what GUIDE is meant to address through ongoing support and training for caregivers, along with an annual funding award for respite time when needed.

What’s provided is built around three core areas:

- A monthly connection with a care navigator. Caregivers are paired with a dedicated navigator who checks in with them monthly, helping them make sense of a diagnosis that can look different every step of the way and connecting people to resources as needs change;
- Respite time. GUIDE builds in dedicated time off for caregivers, recognizing that step-

“This program will not only ..give a caregiver a break but (also) give them the case management piece which I think is most important. And that is a monthly support... getting to talk to someone who is educated on dementia, who’s educated on resources, and who understands that you’re on a special journey with your loved one.”

—Jessica Kopecky-Lanausse, Community Resources Supervisor

who is educated on dementia, who’s educated on resources, and who understands that you’re on a special journey with your loved one,” she said. “There’s not one person, whether you’re 19 and you might have a parent who’s got early dementia (and doesn’t) know what to do, to that person who’s 65 and their parent just got (a diagnosis). There’s such a spectrum of it.”

In addition to their care navigator, Kopecky-Lanausse said, there is a support line available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Coastline also helps connect people to additional community resources when needed.

People caring for someone with dementia or similar symptoms are encouraged to reach out for help. An official diagnosis of dementia isn’t needed to connect with the Coastline program, Kopecky-Lanausse said. People can still receive support in a process that may lead to a diagnosis.

Those who may not see themselves as a traditional caregiver — perhaps they’re a friend or neighbor — may also receive support. The same is true for those who have dementia and may not have a caregiver of their own.

To learn more about how GUIDE might help you, email [GUIDE@coastlinenb.org](mailto:GUIDE@coastlinenb.org) or call 508-999-6400.

ping away, even briefly, is part of being able to sustain the role long-term; and,

- Caregiving training. Participants get access to training designed specifically around dementia care, so they’re not left guessing how to handle symptoms or behaviors as they arise.

Kopecky-Lanausse is happy to bring the program to the New Bedford area as part of Coastline’s aging services. The need here is great, she said.

“This program will not only be able to give a caregiver a break but give them the case management piece which I think is most important. And that is a monthly support, like getting a phone call, getting to talk to someone



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4 Slocum Street in Acushnet

# Updates

## Celebrate Good Neighbor Day Sept. 25-29

The MA Coalition to End Loneliness is celebrating its second annual Good Neighbors Day this month to remind people that collectively we can help build a more connected and compassionate community. According to the coalition, Good Neighbor Day “invites people of all ages and backgrounds to show up for their communities” starting with something as simple as saying hello. The statewide campaign is officially Sept. 28 this year, but the coalition is extending it to include events around the state between Sept. 25 and 29. As older adults are at the highest risk of loneliness and isolation, the hope is that they will participate in the many events scheduled during that time. To learn more, or find a nearby event, visit [www.endlonelinessma.com](http://www.endlonelinessma.com).

## Become a Dementia Friend

Sign up to become a Dementia Friends Champion in a free Dementia Friends Massachusetts training to be held 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on Sept. 23. Participants will learn to lead free, one-hour information sessions that help people understand what dementia is and the simple ways they can make a difference. In the free training, you will be able to experience an information session, learn to plan and lead your own session, and access materials you’ll need. No prior experience is necessary. For more information, go to [www.dementiafriendsma.org](http://www.dementiafriendsma.org) or connect with Beth Soltzberg, Dementia Friends Massachusetts Lead, at [bsoltzberg@jfcfboston.org](mailto:bsoltzberg@jfcfboston.org) or 781-693-5628. To sign up for the training, go to [www.dementiafriendsma.org/become-a-dementia-friends-massachusetts-champion/](http://www.dementiafriendsma.org/become-a-dementia-friends-massachusetts-champion/)

## Outdoor yoga classes continue

New Bedford Wellness Initiative yoga classes continue through the end of this month. Monday classes are at 5:30 p.m. in Buttonwood Park, near the Arboretum, ending Sept. 28. Park at the Warming House. Thursday classes are at 5:30 p.m. at Haskell Public Gardens, 777 Shawmut Ave., New Bedford, ending Oct. 1. Parking is on-street along Shawmut Avenue. Both classes are free. Bring a towel, yoga mat and water.

## PATHways grant to support easier hospital discharges

Southcoast Hospital was awarded \$201,424 in July by the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission through the new Promoting Appropriate Transitions to Home (PATHways) investment program. Under the three-year grant, the hospital system will work with Coastline Elderly Services who will provide a staff person to work at St. Luke’s Hospital to assist with discharge planning, according to Coastline. The goal is to significantly reduce the number of unnecessary readmissions to the ER by lining up necessary services ahead of discharge. These services allow the individual to discharge into their homes and communities rather than into skilled nursing facilities or other institutional settings, according to the HPC. In its program description, the HPC noted that patients can face numerous barriers setting up the services they need to be able to discharge directly home or to a community-based setting. This can delay discharges with 2,000 patients on average remaining hospitalized despite being medically ready for discharge, according to findings from the Massachusetts Transitions from Acute Care to Post Acute Care Task Force. In total, \$1.38 million in grant awards were distributed across seven acute care hospitals statewide. For more information, visit <https://masshpc.gov/cdt/investment-programs/pathways>

## Know your options as you age

Options Counseling is a free program that guides adults age 60 and older, families and caregivers through resources that can help them remain in the community. An Options Counselor will work with you to meet your individualized goals. They can provide counseling to you, whether you’re currently at home, in the community, or in a hospital or facility setting. The program is part of the Aging and Disability Consortium of Southeast Massachusetts, which partners with Independent Living Centers to assist people with disabilities of any age and can assist with connecting you with a local partner to receive Options Counseling Services. A referral can be made through Coastline’s Information and Referral Department at 508-999-6400.

## September is Suicide Prevention month

September is suicide prevention month and several events are being held to raise awareness and help prevent loss of life. First, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. on Sept. 10, also World Suicide Prevention Day, the New Bedford Police Department and community organizations will gather at River’s End Park, 194 River Road, New Bedford, to remember those who have been lost to suicide as well as those who may be struggling. The theme this year is “Changing the Narrative on Suicide.” As in past years, the event will close with a Water Lantern Ceremony, a symbol of love, remembrance, healing, and hope. Also, this month, a free Suicide Awareness and Prevention training will be held from 9:30-11:30 a.m. on Sept. 17 at Rachel’s Lakeside in Dartmouth. Come learn the warning signs of suicide and how you can help someone who may be at risk. The program is designed for all skill levels. CEU certificates are available for qualifying professionals. The program will cover common warning signs, risk factors, and protective measures associated with suicide risk; when and how to seek help for someone who may be at risk; available support and intervention options; and, safety planning concepts and referral decision-making. It is presented by Child & Family Services, United Way of Greater New Bedford, Southcoast Behavioral Health, and Community Connections Coalition New Bedford. To attend, register by Sept. 10 at [www.cfsservices.org](http://www.cfsservices.org).

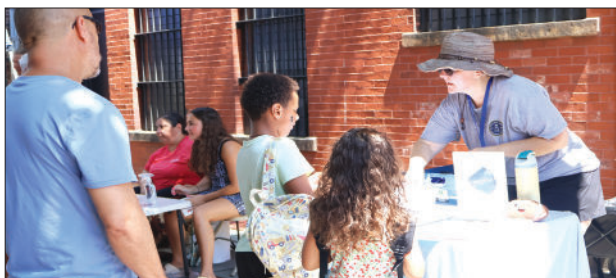
## Mattapoisett public health to hold vaccine clinics

The Mattapoisett Public Health Nurse and Fairhaven Pharmacy will be holding vaccine clinics at the Mattapoisett Council on Aging, 17 Barstow St., on Sept. 2 and Sept. 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A clinic will also be provided at Village Court on Sept. 9 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vaccines offered include Covid 19 (Moderna), Influenza, RSV, Pneumonia, and Shingrix. Pre-registration is required. Forms available at Town Hall and the Council on Aging. Please call Allison Bellora RN for questions at 508-758-4118.



## We Care Health Fair

Coastline Community Supervisor Jessica Kopecky-Lanausse shares the message that being a family caregiver can happen at all adult ages. Regardless of the caregiver’s age, Coastline has resources that can help. Kopecky-Lanausse is shown at the We Care Community Health Fair held by New Bedford Community Health on Aug. 8.



Community

THE HEALING POWER OF COMPASSIONATE TOUCH

Science and decades of nursing experience point to the same truth: connection heals.

By Janice Gagnon-Warr  
New Bedford Wellness Yoga  
Director

When we think about staying healthy as we age, we often focus on eating well, staying active, taking medications as prescribed, and getting enough sleep. While these are all important, there is another powerful source of healing that is often overlooked—compassionate human touch.

Touch is one of our first forms of communication. Long before we understand words, we are soothed by being held, comforted by a gentle hand, and reassured by a loving embrace. That need for safe, caring touch does not disappear with age. In fact, it may become even more important.

Research has shown that compassionate touch can help calm the nervous system, lower stress hormones, decrease blood pressure, and promote the release of oxytocin, sometimes called the “bonding hormone.”

Many people also notice they breathe more deeply, their muscles relax, and they experience a greater sense of peace and well-being.

During my 40 years as a psychiatric and holistic nurse, I have witnessed this healing countless times. Sometimes it occurs during a therapeutic session, but just as often it happens in everyday moments—a spouse holding a hand during illness, a granddaughter giving her grandmother a hug, or a friend offering a reassuring touch on the shoulder.

Healing is not always about curing disease. Often, healing is about feeling seen, comforted,



connected, and less alone. Human touch reminds us that someone is present with us, especially during life’s difficult moments.

Unfortunately, many older adults experience increasing isolation. Children move away, friends pass away, and opportunities for safe, caring touch become less frequent.

Loneliness has been linked to poorer physical and emotional health, while simple acts of connection can make a meaningful difference.

Touch does not have to be elaborate. Holding hands while talking, sharing a warm hug, receiving a gentle hand massage, or simply placing your own hand over your heart while taking a few slow breaths can all help settle the body and quiet the mind.

Equally important is presence. When someone offers us their full attention without rushing, judging, or trying to fix us, our nervous system often begins to relax. Sometimes the greatest healing comes not from what is said, but from simply knowing we do not have to face life’s challenges alone.

As we grow older, we accumulate wisdom, resilience, and life experience. We also continue to need kindness, compassion, and



connection. These are not luxuries—they are essential to our well-being.

This week, consider offering a hug to someone you love, holding a friend’s hand, or simply placing a gentle hand over your own heart while taking a few slow, nourishing breaths. These small moments of connection may seem simple, but they remind us that healing often begins with kindness—both toward others and ourselves.

Perhaps one of the simplest prescriptions for well-being is one we can all offer freely: a caring presence, a gentle touch when welcomed, and the reminder that every person deserves to feel safe, valued, and loved.

Sometimes healing begins with nothing more than one hand reaching for another.

Janice Gagnon-Warr, RN, HN-BC, HTCP, is a board-certified holistic nurse with more than forty years of experience in

“Healing is not always about curing disease. Often, healing is about feeling seen, comforted, connected, and less alone. Human touch reminds us that someone is present with us, especially during life’s difficult moments.”

psychiatric and holistic nursing. She is passionate about helping people of all ages discover practical, evidence-informed ways to support health, resilience, and well-being. Janice sees clients in her private holistic nursing practice in downtown New Bedford, where she offers individualized sessions to support healing of body, mind, and spirit.

To learn more or schedule an appointment, visit [www.janicegagnon-warr.com](http://www.janicegagnon-warr.com).

The Way Things Were



STORM DAMAGE: Water stood waist-deep in this 1954 photo taken at the height of Hurricane Carol, at the intersection of Union and North Front streets in New Bedford. The receding tide left streets littered with downed power lines and shattered property. (Courtesy of Spinner Publications.)

Southcoast Hospitals Group recognized

The U.S. News & World Report announced this week that Southcoast Hospitals Group, including Charlton Memorial, St. Luke’s and Tobey hospitals, earned the Best Regional Hospitals designation, ranking #12 on its list of Best Hospitals in Massachusetts, and #2 in the Providence Metro Area for 2026-2027.

This year, only 505 hospitals earned a spot on the list, and Southcoast Hospitals Group earned the High Performing distinction for providing exceptional care and treatment in eight procedures and conditions, including colon cancer surgery; heart arrhythmia; heart failure; hip replacement; knee replacement; and, maternity care (uncomplicated pregnancy). In addition to regional rankings, Southcoast Hospitals Group was recognized as a Best Regional Hospital for Community Access. This means that the system excels in caring for patients across all socioeconomic groups in the community while maintaining high-quality care.

This year, U.S. News evaluated nearly 4,500 hospitals across 14 adult specialties and 23 procedures and conditions; fewer than half earned recognition in any of those 37 areas of care.

# September 8 is National 988 Day

Each year on Sept. 8, communities across the country mark National 988 Day, a day set aside to make sure people know about the free and confidential support line for anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline connects people to trained, compassionate counselors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by phone, text, or chat.

The day exists to spread the word that help is three digits away. Counselors are there for moments of overwhelming sadness, anxiety, or grief. They also support people struggling with alcohol or drug use, or who are feeling isolated and just want someone to talk to. Family members worried about a loved one can call too. No 988 caller is required to share

their name or personal information, and every conversation is confidential. Support is available in English and Spanish, with interpreters available on request in 240 or more additional languages. Veterans can also ask to be connected directly with a veterans' crisis counselor. Otherwise, the call goes straight to a trained crisis counselor who listens, offers support, and

can point callers toward local resources. Here on the South Coast, calls are often answered close to home. Samaritans Southcoast, based in Westport, is one of the state's dedicated 988 centers, and this year, they're taking on an even bigger role, expanding to handle calls, texts, and chats for the entire state.

## 8 de setembro é o Dia Nacional do 988

À medida que as temperaturas de verão sobem, os idosos enfrentam um risco mais elevado de doenças relacionadas com o calor, por vezes mais rapidamente do que imaginam. As pessoas com mais de 65 anos muitas vezes não se adaptam ao calor tão facilmente como os adultos mais jovens. Certos medicamentos e doenças crônicas também podem afetar a capacidade do corpo de se arrefecer. Isso significa que a desidratação,

as tonturas, a exaustão e até mesmo a insolação podem ocorrer rapidamente durante períodos de tempo muito quente ou húmido. Temperaturas mais elevadas também podem afetar a qualidade do ar. Quando o Índice de Qualidade do Ar, que varia de 1 a 500, ultrapassa 100, o ar exterior é considerado insalubre para grupos sensíveis. Nesses dias, não há problema em estar ao ar livre, mas é recomendável que acompanhe como se

sente e faça pausas quando necessário. Um erro comum é esperar até sentir sede para beber água. Outro é confiar apenas em ventiladores durante o calor extremo. Os especialistas recomendam passar tempo em espaços com ar condicionado sempre que possível, especialmente durante a parte mais quente do dia. Fique atento aos vizinhos, amigos e familiares durante as ondas de calor, especialmente aqueles que vivem

sozinhos. Use roupa leve, evite atividades extenuantes ao ar livre e pergunte ao seu médico ou farmacêutico se os seus medicamentos aumentam a sensibilidade ao calor. Para saber mais sobre segurança contra o calor e sinais de alerta, visite a página de Saúde e Calor dos Centros de Controlo e Prevenção de Doenças em [www.cdc.gov/heat-health/](http://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/) ou ligue para o 2-1-1 para obter assistência local e recursos de refrigeração.

## El 8 de septiembre es el Día Nacional del 988

Cada año, el 8 de septiembre, comunidades de todo el país celebran el Día Nacional de 988, un día dedicado a dar a conocer la línea de ayuda gratuita y confidencial para cualquier persona que se encuentre en una crisis suicida o de sufrimiento emocional. La línea de ayuda 988 para el suicidio y las crisis pone en contacto a las personas con consejeros capacitados y comprensivos las 24 horas del día, los siete días de la semana, por teléfono, mensaje de texto o chat.

Este día tiene como objetivo difundir el mensaje de que basta con marcar tres dígitos para recibir ayuda. Los consejeros están ahí para ayudarle en momentos de tristeza, ansiedad o dolor abrumadores. También ofrecen apoyo a las personas que tienen problemas con el consumo de alcohol o drogas, o que se sienten aisladas y simplemente quieren hablar con alguien. Los familiares que estén preocupados por un ser querido también pueden llamar. Las personas que llaman al 988 no

están obligadas a facilitar su nombre ni datos personales, y todas las conversaciones son confidenciales. El servicio de asistencia está disponible en inglés y español, y se pueden solicitar intérpretes en 240 o más idiomas adicionales. Los veteranos también pueden solicitar que se les ponga en contacto directamente con un consejero especializado en crisis para veteranos. De lo contrario, la llamada se deriva directamente a un consejero especializado en crisis que escucha, ofrece apoyo, y puede

orientar a las personas que llaman hacia los recursos locales. Aquí, en la costa sur, las llamadas suelen atenderse cerca de casa. Samaritans Southcoast, con sede en Westport, es uno de los centros especializados del 988 del estado y, este año, está asumiendo un papel aún más importante, ya que se está ampliando para gestionar llamadas, mensajes de texto y chats de todo el estado.

Translations provided by:



## MBTA launches new pilot program for car-free older adults

The state recently announced a series of new MBTA pilot programs designed to make public transportation more affordable, flexible and easier to use.

The three pilot programs are:

**Car-Free Seniors:** A program where the MBTA will offer free fares to Massachusetts residents age 75 and older who no longer drive. This pilot allows any Massachusetts resident aged 75 or older who holds a Massachusetts ID card and not a driver's license to obtain a free-fare credential that applies across all of the MBTA's bus, subway, ferry and commuter rail services.

This pilot is in partnership with the Registry of Motor Vehicles and aims to give the state's older generation more dignity, autonomy, and travel options.

The Car-Free Senior Program will be available to the public this fall. Riders will be able to apply for the program online using their Massachusetts identification.

**"Unlimited" Two-hour Transfer Window:** Riders can make "unlimited" transfers between bus, subway, and ferry within the two-hour transfer window and pay only the highest fare of any individual trip leg. Previously, riders could only make up to two transfers with further limitations.

Riders must use the same form of payment between all modes for transfers to apply.

**Elimination of Express Bus Fares:**

Express bus fares (previously \$4.25 full fare/\$2.10 reduced fare) will now be the same as local bus fares (\$1.70 full fare/\$0.85 reduced fare), bringing the fares for all bus routes into alignment. Express bus passes will be eliminated.

This pilot does not affect fares for any Silver Line routes.

For more information on all three pilots, visit [www.mbta.com/fares/2026-fall-fare-pilots](http://www.mbta.com/fares/2026-fall-fare-pilots).

## New SHINE website available

The SHINE Program - Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone - has a new landing page on Mass.gov that has been refreshed. The updated site makes it easier for consumers to find information about SHINE, Medi-

care, and helpful resources including a new town locator that connects users with the Regional Office serving their community, according to the state. See the new site at [www.mass.gov/shine-program](http://www.mass.gov/shine-program).

Starting  
in 2026!



# SENIOR SCOPE MOVES TO 11 ISSUES A YEAR

Beginning in 2026, Senior Scope will publish 11 issues per year and will skip the month of August. This small change helps us continue to provide the high-quality coverage you count on.

### What This Means for Subscriber

All current subscribers (as of Dec. 31, 2025) will receive 12 issues. If one of your 12 issues would have been the August issue, we will extend your subscription by one month. All renewals and new subscriptions will be for 11 issues at the same \$18/year price.

### What This Means for Advertisers

Your per-ad price stays the same. With the new schedule, annual advertising cost will simply drop by one month. Same audience. Same value.

Senior Scope is published by  
Coastline, 863 Belleville Ave.,  
New Bedford, MA 02745  
508-999-6400

Benefits changes continued...

but the biggest change is behind the scenes. Individuals must now use an ID.me account to create or access their Medicare.gov account.

The Social Security Administration has also expanded its use of ID.me. Anyone applying online for Social Security Retirement benefits must first create a My Social Security account through ID.me.

This change also affects professionals who assist seniors. While counselors like myself can still help complete Medicare and many Social Security Disability applications, retirement applications now require the individual to have access to their own online account.

If you have not yet created an ID.me account, it may be worthwhile to do so before you actually need it.

More Changes Coming to MassHealth

Several federal changes will affect MassHealth over the next two years.

Beginning in October 2026, certain non-citizens who currently qualify for MassHealth will lose eligibility under new federal law.

Beginning in January 2027, some MassHealth members age 64 and under may need to meet work requirements unless they qualify for an exemption. Some recipients may also be required to complete eligibility reviews every

six months instead of annually.

Looking ahead to 2028, MassHealth may begin requiring cost-sharing for individuals whose income exceeds 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. Additional guidance is still being released, so some details may change before these provisions are implemented.

More Documentation Required for Benefits

One trend many people have already noticed is that state agencies are asking for more documentation than they did in previous years.

Both MassHealth and the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) are increasing verification requirements as they work to comply with new federal regulations.

Medicare Savings Program (MSP) and MassHealth: The MSP application now includes additional questions regarding immigration and citizenship.

Individuals who were not born in the United States are now generally required to submit documentation verifying their citizenship or immigration status, even if they are now U.S. citizens for both the MSP and MassHealth applications and recertifications. Examples include naturalization papers, citizenship certificates, or permanent resident documentation.

SNAP Benefits: DTA is also requesting additional proof of utility expenses.

Previously, simply reporting that

"Medicare.gov has a new look, but the biggest change is behind the scenes. Individuals must now use an ID.me account to create or access their Medicare.gov account."

you paid utilities was often enough to receive the Standard Utility Allowance. Today, applicants are increasingly being asked to provide documentation.

If your utility bill is not in your name, the person whose name is on the bill should provide a signed statement verifying that you pay the utility expense. Without appropriate verification, your monthly SNAP benefit could be reduced.

Don't Ignore Mail From Benefit Programs

One piece of advice I give clients every day is simple: open every letter you receive from MassHealth, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), Social Security, or Medicare.

Many benefit terminations occur not because someone is no longer eligible, but because a recertification or requested documentation was never returned. If you receive a notice asking for information, respond as quickly as possible. Waiting until the deadline can lead to delays, reduced benefits, or even the temporary loss of coverage.

If you are unsure what a letter means, ask for assistance before the deadline passes. Your local Council on Aging, Community Services Department, or SHINE counselor may be able to help you understand what is being requested.

Also, be on the lookout in October for your Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) from your Medicare Advantage Plan or Part D prescription drug plan. This important mailing explains any changes to premiums, deductibles, copayments, covered medications, provider networks, and other plan benefits that will take effect on Jan. 1, 2027. Reviewing your ANOC each year can help you determine whether your current plan will continue to meet your healthcare and prescription needs during the upcoming Medicare Open Enrollment Period.

Need Assistance?

Your local Councils on Aging or Community Services Department can often help with Medicare, MassHealth, SNAP, Fuel Assistance, and other benefit programs. Many have certified Medicare, MassHealth, and Health Connector counselors and SNAP Outreach Partners and can help explain notices, complete applications, and gather required documentation.

As benefit programs continue to evolve, staying informed and responding promptly to requests for information remains the best way to protect the benefits.

Home Care licensing system becomes law

Gov. Maura Healey signed new home care legislation into law in August, creating Massachusetts' first statewide licensing system for home care agencies and establishing new standards to protect older adults, people with disabilities, families and the workers who care for them.

The new law creates consistent standards of oversight for a rapidly growing home care industry to help ensure families can have confidence in the care their loved ones receive while supporting the dedicated workforce that makes it possible for more people to age safely and independently at home, the state said in a media release.

"Massachusetts families deserve peace of mind when they hire someone to care for their loved ones at home," said Gov. Maura Healey. "This law strengthens the safety, quality and accountability of home care across Massachusetts, giving families confidence in the care their loved ones receive and supporting the dedicated workers who make independent living possible."

Home care agencies provide non-medical services such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, companionship, medication reminders and other daily supports to older adults and people with disabilities so they may remain in and live safely in their homes and communities.

The new law directs the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Executive Office of Aging & Independence and the Department of Public Health,

to establish and oversee a statewide licensing system. Under the law, agencies must obtain a state license before operating or advertising home care services. EOHHS will have the authority to inspect and investigate agencies, enforce compliance with state standards, and deny, suspend or revoke licenses or impose penalties when agencies fail to meet legal requirements.

Licensed agencies will be required to conduct background checks on employees; meet state standards for worker safety and consumer protection; provide training on topics including worker safety, abuse prevention and quality care; maintain workers' compensation and liability insurance; and, meet operational, financial, and ownership disclosure requirements established by the state.

The law also establishes a Home Care Oversight Advisory Council to advise EOHHS on implementation and oversight of the licensing system, as well as a Home Care Worker and Abuse Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

In addition, the bill creates a special legislative commission to study family caregiving policies, including the potential costs, benefits and implementation of allowing spouses to serve as paid caregivers through MassHealth, as well as opportunities to expand access to home-based care and reduce reliance on institutional care.

EOHHS will begin working on all facets of the new law in the coming months.

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## Hidden risks of an “Empty Shell” LLC or corporation

By Brandon C. Walecka, Esq.  
Walecka Law, P.C.

Many small business owners understand the importance of forming a limited liability company (LLC) or corporation with the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Filing Articles of Organization (for an LLC) or a Certificate of Incorporation (for a corporation) is often the first step in protecting personal assets from business liabilities.

But here’s the problem: stopping there can leave you with nothing more than an “empty shell.” If you have no operating agreement, bylaws, corporate records, stock or membership certificates, or meeting minutes, are you really protected? **Why Formalities Matter**

The whole point of an LLC or corporation is to create a legal separation between you (the owner) and the business. Courts call this the “corporate veil.” If someone sues your business, they should only be able to reach business assets, not your home, car, or personal bank accounts.

However, that separation only holds up if you treat the entity as a real business—not just a name on paper. Without supporting documents and ongoing compliance, your company may look like nothing more than your alter ego. That’s when courts may “pierce the corporate veil” and hold you personally liable.

### Risks of Having No Operating Documents

#### 1. Piercing the Veil of Limited Liability

Courts look at whether your entity is properly maintained. If there are no bylaws, no operating agreement, no records of ownership, and no minutes, it’s easier for a plaintiff to argue that the LLC or corporation isn’t legitimate.

#### 2. Ownership Disputes

Without stock certificates, membership certificates, or an operating agreement, how do you prove who owns what percentage of the business? This can lead to costly litigation between co-owners—or even heirs if an owner dies.

#### 3. Management Confusion

Who has authority to sign contracts or make decisions? Without bylaws or an operating agree-

ment, there is no clarity. Banks, investors, or partners may hesitate to work with a business that has no formal structure.

#### 4. Tax and Compliance Issues

The IRS and state agencies may expect certain documents to support your claimed tax treatment. Lack of records increases audit risk and may undermine the business’s chosen tax classification.

#### 5. Weak Asset Protection

If you commingle personal and business assets, fail to keep separate records, and have no formal documents, it is much easier for creditors to argue that your entity is just a sham.

#### What Every Business Should Have

To avoid these risks, every LLC or corporation should maintain:

- Operating Agreement (LLC) or Bylaws (Corporation) – sets out ownership, management, and decision-making rules.
- Ownership Records – stock certificates or membership certificates, with a ledger of transfers.
- Minutes and Resolutions – records of major business decisions, even in a single-member LLC or closely-held corporation.
- Operating Manual or Policies – internal guidance for consistency and professionalism.
- Separate Bank Accounts and Records – a must for proving the business is truly separate from the owner.

Filing Articles of Organization or Certificate of Incorporation is only the beginning. Without proper operating documents and ongoing compliance, you may not have the protection you think you do. In the worst case, your personal savings, home, and other assets could be on the line.

If you’ve already set up an LLC or corporation but haven’t gone beyond the initial filing, it’s not too late. An experienced attorney can help you prepare the missing documents and bring your company into compliance—before a lawsuit or dispute tests the strength of your protection.

*This article does not constitute legal advice. To reach out to Walecka Law, P.C., call 774-203-9003 or email Brandon@WaleckaLaw.com.*

# Trivia

## FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) What is the name of the “Green Rust” that sometimes grows on copper?  
A.) Root    B.) Verdigris    C.) Fungi    D.) Pigment
- 2.) Which one of these landmarks was once painted yellow?  
A.) Big Ben    B.) Empire State Building  
C.) Sydney Opera House    D.) Eiffel Tower
- 3.) Which of these is a variety of the color blue?  
A.) Cyan    B.) Taupe    C.) Vermillion    D.) Chartreuse
- 4.) In which US state is there a green sand beach?  
A.) Hawaii    B.) Rhode Island    C.) Florida    D.) California
- 5.) Which singer was known as “ol blue eyes”?  
A.) Bing Crosby    B.) Frank Sinatra  
C.) Perry Como    D.) Kurt Cobain
- 6.) What planet is famous for its big red spot?  
A.) Jupiter    B.) Mars    C.) Mercury    D.) Pluto
- 7.) What famous actor/comedian recently ate tacos in New Bedford?  
A.) Bill Murray    B.) PeeWee Herman  
C.) Dave Chapelle    D.) Bill Burr
- 8.) What tech company is nicknamed “Big Blue”?  
A.) Toshiba    B.) IBM    C.) Samsung    D.) Apple
- 9.) What famous artist is said to have had as “Blue Period”?  
A.) Rembrandt    B.) Van Gogh  
C.) Leonardo da Vinci    D.) Picasso
- 10.) What US river is dyed green once a year?  
A.) Hudson    B.) Mississippi    C.) Chicago    D.) Missouri

[Answers listed on page 11]



## 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 upon completion!

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  
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September 24 - November 12, 2026

Presented by:



This program is funded in part by the Executive Office of Aging & Independence & 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.

# State campaign to help MassHealth members keep their health coverage

Governor Maura Healey announced a coordinated statewide effort in August to help hundreds of thousands of MassHealth members understand and navigate new federal Medicaid requirements that will take effect over the coming months.

Working alongside the Legislature, Health Care For All, and nearly 50 community-based organizations, the Healey-Driscoll Administration said it is launching an extensive outreach and education campaign to help eligible residents maintain their health coverage.

The campaign is aimed at preventing unnecessary coverage loss by helping MassHealth enrollees and applicants understand what changes are coming, who is affected, and what steps need to be taken to keep their coverage.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act, a federal law passed by Congress and signed by President Trump on July 4, 2025, requires states to implement significant changes to Medicaid programs nationwide.

Beginning in January 2027, approximately 360,000 MassHealth members may face new work and education reporting requirements. Many of those members will also be required to renew their coverage every six months instead of every year, creating new administrative hurdles that could cause eligible residents to lose coverage because



of missed paperwork or reporting deadlines.

MassHealth has spent more than a year preparing to implement these federally required changes while minimizing the burden on members wherever possible.

The agency will automatically identify members who qualify for exemptions using information already on file and use data matching to verify work and education requirements whenever possible, reducing the amount of paperwork members must submit.

MassHealth will also contact impacted members directly through mail, text messages, emails and automated phone calls before they are required to take any action.

## What MassHealth members need to know

Over the coming months, there will be changes to MassHealth eligibility because of a federal law passed by Congress and signed by President Trump. Below are some of the changes coming and steps the state recommends people take in advance of them.

### Beginning in October 2026

Some lawfully present immigrants will no longer be eligible for comprehensive MassHealth coverage because of changes required under federal law.

### Beginning in January 2027

Some MassHealth members ages 19-64 will be required to document that they meet new federal work or education requirements.

Many of those members will also need to renew their MassHealth coverage every six months instead of every year.

### Important Exemptions

Many members will not be required to meet the new work and education requirements. Exemptions may apply to members who are:

- Pregnant;
- Parenting children age 13 or younger;
- Living with a disability; and,
- Managing certain health condition

MassHealth will automatically identify members who qualify for these exemptions whenever possible using information on file.

### What Members Should Do Now

- Make sure MassHealth has your current mailing address, email address and cell phone number;
- Open every letter you receive from MassHealth, including your blue renewal envelope; and,
- Watch for emails, text messages and automated calls from MassHealth.

Visit [mass.gov/MassHealthMemberChanges](https://mass.gov/MassHealthMemberChanges) to learn more, determine whether these changes apply to you and find a community-based organization in your area that can provide free enrollment assistance.



Preventing Medicare Fraud

Look for unfamiliar **URINARY CATHETER CHARGES** on your Medicare Summary Notice and report them to the **Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program** at **800-892-0890** or **REPORT@MASMP.ORG**.

# Councils on Aging

## Acushnet COA

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

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

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

**Zumba Gold:** With Pati. Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m \$8; Thursdays, 10:30 a.m Free; Fridays, 9:00 a.m \$8 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.

**Strength and Conditioning:** With Larry. Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. \$6, Fridays, 10:30 a.m. \$1 Take this class standing or seated while alternating upper-body strength work with low-impact cardio to maximize fitness.

**Resistance Bands:** With Karen. Thursdays, 10:15 a.m. Free. Resistance bands use oppositional force to train your muscles instead of weight.

## 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).

**Stay Safe, Stay Connected:** 8-11 a.m. First Thursday of the month (new hours) DPD Older Adult Liaison Scott Affonse will be on hand to answer any questions, listen to any concerns and provide guidance.

**AI Is Here to Stay:** Wednesday September 2 at 1 p.m. with Dale Senechal from Senior U. Free program sponsored by Coastline Elderly Services. Call the center to register.

**THRIVE:** Thursday September 3 5-6:30 p.m. From seed to community, 20 years of Share the Harvest. Join Ashley Brister, Farm Director YMCA's South-coast's Sharing the Harvest Community Farm at the Dartmouth YMCA. Call center to register. Free.

**End Of Summer Party at Jones Beach:** Friday September 4, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Music by Jordan Paiva \$10. Stop by the center to register.

**Single Senior Supper:** 1st Tuesday of the month. September 6 4-6 p.m. Join us for dinner and socialization. \$5. Stop by the center to register.

**Fall Prevention with SouthCoast Trauma Center:** On Wednesday, September 9 1-2 p.m., with presenter Rachelle Rogers, Trauma Injury Prevention Outreach Coord. Free, Call the center to register. Free.

**Poetry Workshop with Paul Cordeiro:** Mondays September 14 & 28 1-2 p.m. Call the center to register. Free.

**Movie & Popcorn:** Thursday September 17 at 1 p.m. "Queen Bees" Helen (Ellen Burstyn) is forced to stay temporarily in a retirement community. She encounters mean cliques, high stake bridge games and new relationships. Call center to register. Free.

**DNRT Walk:** Tuesday, September 22 @ 9am- Join DNRT Land Manager for a walk at Peters Creek Reserve. Free.

**Neuro Bloom Wellness:** Wednesday, September 23 at 1 p.m. Make Daily Life Easier with Simple Technology. Join Ally Etzkorn, MS, CCC-SLP at this hands-on presentation. Call the center to register. Free.

**Beginner Watercolors:** Thursday, September 24 at 10 a.m. Join Lana Quann of "The Wandering Brush" For beginner watercolors. \$10

**The BIG E Trip:** Wednesday, September 30 at 8 a.m. SHARP. Full Day trip, 2 Vans (28 spaces) \$25, includes ticket to the Big E and transportation. Call center to register.

**Intuitive Chair Yoga with Audra:** Mondays 5:30-6:30 p.m. \$10.

**Cardio Drumming:** Mondays at 4 p.m. Work your body and brain, strength and balance with Sue Mandra-Thompson. Free to All. Call the center to register.

**Book Club-Monday** September 14 "The Wedding People" by Alison Elspach

**Acoustic Jam:** Tuesdays 1-2:45 p.m. Do you love music, like singing or do you play an instrument? This informal group meets weekly. Walk-ins welcome.

**Brown Bag Medicine Review:** Thursday Oct. 8, 10 a.m.-noon. Call the center to register.

**Coffee Hour:** Tuesday 9-10:15 a.m., Thursdays 9-10:30 a.m. (Free)

**French Class:** Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Join retired French Professor Suzanne Pelletier for an hour of fun in the world of French. Free, walk-ins welcome.

**MADOT RMV Clinic:** Last Thursday (New Day), by appointment, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Helps with applications, paperwork review, real ID, and more. Free.

**THRIVE:** Thursday Oct. 1, 5-6:30 p.m. Sing Well, Live Well. Join Brian Souza, Artistic Director of the Greater New Bedford Choral Society, and the Falmouth Chorale for an engaging interactive experience. Call the Center to register. Free.

## Fairhaven COA

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. Open 7:30am-3:30pm and until 8pm on Wednesdays. \*Everything subject to change. Please call the COA if you have any questions.

**The iPad course is back at the Fairhaven COA, check out the Fairhaven COA newsletter for more information.**

**Mall Trips:** Sept. 2nd Plainridge Park Casino, Sept. 9th Plymouth Shopping, Sept.16th Mashpee Commons, Sept. 23rd Providence Place, Sept. 30th Hyan-nis Mall & Trader Joes.

**Monday Movie Matinee:** 12:15 p.m. If you would like lunch before the movie at 11:30 a.m., please call the Thursday BEFORE the movie on the Monday. Sept.14th- Erin Brockovich; Sept. 21st Steel Magnolias; Sept. 28th Rousabout.

**Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support:** Every First Thursday 1-2 p.m.

**Cribbage:** Mondays 10 a.m. to noon.

**Tai Chi:** Mondays 11am. Joe Rebello Instructor. See instructor for cost.

**Osteo Class:** Simple and safe bone boosting exercises. Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$1.

**Seated Yoga with Audra:** 9-10 a.m. \$3 Thursdays 9-10 a.m.

**Chair Yoga with Bet:** 10-11 a.m. \$3 Wednesdays.

**Tech Cafe:** Wednesday's 4:30-5:30 p.m.

**MS Support Group:** 10:30 a.m.-noon. Third Tuesday of the month. Please contact A.Nogueira@aol.com for more information and to join the meeting.

**Watercolor Classes:** Wednesday's - 2:00-3:30pm \$10/Class. See the COA Newsletter for the dates. Please call to sign up.

**Single Senior Supper Club:** \$5pp. 4-6 p.m. Must call to sign up.

**Senior U Technology Classes:** Mondays 1:30-3:30 p.m. Please call the center to sign up and see class offerings or see the COA Newsletter.

**Music Bingo:** Last Friday of the month 12:30-1:30pm \$2 Per Person.

**Bingo:** 2nd Friday of the Month 1:00pm (Pay for cards and 50/50 at the door)

**Public Transit Information:** 11:30-1pm. First Friday of the month.

## 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.

**Tech Café:** Apple iPad Basics Thursday, Sept. 3 1 p.m. This class is perfect for beginners. You will leave feeling more confident. You will learn: touchscreen basics, home screen and apps, organizing folders, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and iCloud. Bring your questions and the instructor will help you troubleshoot. Call 508-748-3570 to register to attend. Class size is limited.

**Tech Café:** Cut the Cord, Sept. 8 1 p.m. Gadgets Made Eazy will be on hand to demystify the world of streaming. There is no one-size- fits-all solution. There are plans available to match everyone's needs. So if you have been considering moving away from traditional cable and potentially save money with streaming services this presentation is for you..

Continued on Page 11

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**Cooking Demonstration with Pampered Chef:** Thursday, September 10 12 p.m. Learn some techniques from Linda Medeiros as she shares ways to save money as you prepare delicious meals. Call 508-748-3570 to make your reservation. There is a \$5 donation requested to cover the cost of the food.

**Concert:** Friday, Sept. 11 1 p.m. Come enjoy the music stylings of the Too Much Fun Band. They are a 4 piece group of experienced musicians who love to play music & have fun. Their goal is to get you dancing and give you a worry free fun time that will make you want more fun. Rocking the world one stage at a time.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Monday, Sept. 14 1 p.m. Marion’s Public Health Director and Marion Fire Department will help you identify the types of disasters or emergencies that could happen in your community - Winter Storms, Hurricanes, Floods. Discuss how your medical and physical needs may affect your ability to respond to disaster. i.e. oxygen, electric medical equipment. Sign up for alerts and warnings to receive information before and during an emergency.

**CarFit:** Thursday, September 17 9 a.m.- noon. CarFit is a free, interactive and educational program designed to improve older driver safety. Trained volunteers provide information to ensure the safest “fit” for older drivers and their vehicles. Contact Rachelle Rogers, Trauma Injury Prevention Coordinator with St. Luke’s Hospital Trauma Center at 508-973-5901 to secure a spot.

**Lithium—Ion Batteries:** Friday, September 18 1 p.m. Members of the Marion Fire Department will help us understand the risks and challenges of lithium-ion batteries. Bring your questions and concerns.

Mattapoisett COA

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

**9/11 - A Firsthand Account:** Tuesday, Sept. 8, Light Lunch 11:45 am, Presentation Noon, Cost: Free, Register: (508)758-4110. Join us for a powerful and personal presentation by Mike Gomes, who will share his firsthand experience responding to the events of September 11, 2001. Mike will recount his experience that day and provide an overview of the tremendous response by emergency services, including the days and weeks that followed.

**My Passion:** The 3rd Thursday of every month starting September 17 at 10:00 am, Cost: Free, Register: (508)758-4110. My Passion is an opportunity to share something that brings joy to your life today—or something that brought you joy in the past. Your passion might include life experiences, careers, travels, hobbies, special interests, or anything else that has meaning to you. You don’t have to be an expert or prepare a formal presentation. Simply come ready to share, listen, and connect with others! Please call the COA to sign up to attend or to volunteer to share your passion with the group.

**Fenway Park: More Than Just a Ballpark!:** Tuesday, September 22nd, Lunch 11:15 am., Cost: Free, Register:(508)758-4110. Since opening in 1912, Fenway Park has captivated generations of baseball fans, sports enthusiasts, and historians alike. Nestled in the heart of Boston, this legendary stadium is more than just a ballpark. Join us as Nancy Franks returns to share the stories, traditions, and history behind America’s beloved ballpark. Wear your Red Sox gear and bring your favorite piece of Fenway memorabilia.

**Matter of Balance:** Fridays, September 4 - October 23, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Registration Required (508) 758-4110. “A Matter of Balance”, a free multi-week workshop designed to help individuals prevent falls, manage concerns about falling, and increase flexibility, strength, and balance. This is an eight-session class.

**Medicare/Social Security:** Wednesday, September 16th, 6:00 pm Cost: FREE Register: 508-758-4110. Evening Programming...Join Bill Swerdlick for an educational session on Social Security and Medicare to help you make confident, informed decisions about your retirement benefits. Bill will break down complex rules into practical guidance tailored to real-life situations.

**Pottery:** September 10 & 24 at 10 a.m., Cost: \$10 (everything included). Register: (508) 758-4110. Use your imagination to craft unique items from clay.

New Bedford COA

For assistance, contact the New Bedford Council on Aging at 508-991-6250. Buttonwood Senior Center Programs and Activities with daily Coastline lunches (Monday-Friday) from 11:30 - 12:00. Brooklawn Social Day is at 1997 Acushnet Ave. and Rosemary S. Tierney Social Day is at 553 Brock Ave. A SHINE Counselor is available Monday-Friday. Call 508-991-6250 to schedule an appointment.

**Beginner’s Spanish:** Mondays, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

**Tai-Yo-Ba:** Wednesdays, 8:30-9:15 a.m. with Cameron Bergeron.

**Energy Efficiency Webinar:** Mass Save Resources by HomeWorks Energy, March 20, 9:45 a.m. Call 508-991-6193 to register. Join to understand the resources available to you through the Mass Save program at little to no-cost.

**Zumba Gold:** Mondays 10-11; Zumba Toning is Thursdays 12:30-1:30 with Pati Cautillo.

**Strength & Condition:** Monday 12:30-1:30 and Fridays (2-3) with Larry Bigos.

**Line Dancing:** Monday, 1:30-2:30 p.m. with Kristina Hernandez.

**Yoga Chair:** Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 with Susan Ashley.

**Chair Massage with Diane Charnley:** Every other Tuesday (12:30-2:10). Call for schedule. Advance-sign-up required - 15 mins slots - Cost \$5.

Rochester COA

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

**September trips:** Van rides are a \$5 voluntary donation for town residents or \$10 for non-residents. (Please park in our overflow parking lot when going on a trip.) Thursday, Sept. 10, Cape Cod Canal Cruise (Onset, MA): Lunch at an eatery of your choice. (They charge \$24 for the cruise.) Depart COA at 9:45 a.m. and return by 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23, “The Big E” West Springfield, MA. The 4th largest fair in North America with a wide variety of food, rides, games & exhibits. Senior admission is \$16. Grab lunch where you wish. Depart COA at 8 a.m. and return by 4 p.m.

**Car Show:** Sept. 10 from 4 - 7 p.m.

**Block Party:** Sept. 26 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Food & Music:** Sept. 14 at 11:30 a.m. is lunch with the Bill Jones Jazz Quartet and singer Amanda Carr. Also, Sept. 14 at 5 p.m., dinner with Singer Steve Anthony.

**Brain builders:** Classes on Sept. 10 and Sept. 24 at 12:30 p.m.

**Veterans’ Social:** Sept. 3 at 5 p.m.

**Caregiver Group:** Are you the caregiver for someone with Alzheimer’s, Dementia or another illness? We have a Caregiver Support Group here at the COA. This month’s meetings are on Sept. 1 and 15 at 10 a.m.

**Griefgroup:** Sept. 10 from 1:30 - 3 p.m. in the COA Conference Room. All are welcome. Grief can be experienced from the loss of a loved one, separations & divorce, a serious medical diagnosis & more. Facilitated By Certified Grief Educator Carol Valcourt.

**Free Hearing Clinic:** Sept. 25 from 10 a.m.-noon. You must register in advance at the front desk.

Dementia Directory  
www.alzconnected.org

In-Person Groups

**Alzheimer’s Support Group:** 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 2:45 to 4 p.m. Held at the Dartmouth COA. Group is for caregivers and their care partners. Please contact Donna Leary, 508-264-3892 or mimi.donna29@gmail.com.

**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.

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

September 2026 Trivia Quiz Answers

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



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# Community

## Community Services cuts raise concerns for New Bedford's older adults

Cuts to the City of New Bedford's Community Services Department have raised concerns among local organizations about the impact on residents who rely on the city and community partners for mental health services, crisis intervention and other support.

The concerns include the potential impact on older adults, many of whom already face challenges related to housing, rising costs and access to health and social services.

As of July 1, the city's Community Services Department was eliminated and its programs were moved into a newly created Health & Human Services Department. Eight employees were laid off, with at least four staff members remaining, according to information provided to Senior Scope.

The cuts were part of larger changes to address a \$32 million budget deficit.

Community Services had housed programs including Behavioral Health Outreach for Aging Populations (BHOAP), Fresh Start and the Community Crisis Intervention Team (CCIT).

Local organizations are particularly concerned about the effect of the changes on BHOAP, which provides behavioral health support to older adults, and CCIT, which coordinated a network of community organizations responding to people experiencing

crises.

Rev. David Lima, who works with the Inter-Church Council of Greater New Bedford, said organizations including the council, PACCA, Steppingstone Inc. and others have worked for years to build a network of services for residents who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

"The safety net is there, and it's functioning," Lima said. "But we have to take a look at what we're losing."

Lima said he has noticed an increase in calls to community organizations since the restructuring.

"You can't just say we're going to still do everything by putting it in a consolidated department because inevitably something's lost," he said. "And quite frankly, we're getting a lot more calls than we would have gotten since this has happened in just a month."

Lima said he is concerned about whether the new Health & Human Services Department will be able to reorganize quickly enough to maintain the coordination that existed under Community Services.

"How quickly can the new HHS department reorganize and begin to fill this role again?" he asked.

Coastline Elderly Services is also watching the changes closely.

Sylvia Nobre-Hilton, Coastline's chief operating officer, said BHOAP has been an important resource for

older adults receiving services through the agency. There was already a wait for BHOAP services before the restructuring, she said, and the wait has grown longer.

As of late August, Coastline had not seen an increase in crisis situations directly related to the cuts. The agency has been using its own staff to help address gaps and has designated a program manager to respond to referrals involving people who have not received an official diagnosis.

"I know sometimes cuts need to be made, but changing the structure of these services will cause other negative affects," Nobre-Hilton said in an emailed statement.

She said she is particularly concerned about the loss of direct access to Cynthia Wallquist, the former Community Services director, who was among the employees laid off.

"I think the most pressing issue is/will be not having that direct experienced connection (Cynthia) as a contact," Nobre-Hilton said. "We have worked so closely for so long. The system was not perfect. We know we need more clinicians, but this has made the process harder for staff as well as elder residents."

Wallquist helped create and organize the CCIT team and brought years of knowledge about local resources, including which organizations could

provide specific types of assistance and how to connect people with those services.

Lima said that institutional knowledge was particularly valuable because members of the team often knew people in crisis by name and understood their histories, including what services had helped them in the past and what approaches had not worked.

"There's probably not a more dedicated person and passionate person who wants no credit and just wants the job done," Lima said of Wallquist.

He recalled one case involving a woman who was living on a city street corner in a wheelchair, surrounded by her soiled belongings. Under Wallquist's direction, several organizations worked together to arrange transportation, connect the woman with services in Taunton and find her a place to stay.

Lima said that kind of response depended not only on individual programs, but on relationships and knowledge built among the organizations over time.

The immediate concern, he said, is whether that network will continue to function as effectively while the city restructures its services.

"The safety net is functioning now," Lima said. "But I worry about the future."

### Veterans Wall continued...

word that he had been killed in action. When they opened it, they found that he had written:

*Amongst the masses I walk alone.  
My mind floats free as the wind.  
The shadow of death knocks at my door.  
The battle will be my end.*

"So here I am, 14 years old, losing my brother," Quintin said. "And ever since he died, I try to follow in his footsteps."

Quintin idolized her brother and has spent the decades since trying to keep his memory alive. Most recently, by making sure the Fall River Vietnam Memorial Wall, which includes his name, doesn't stay a secret.

### Finding the wall

Until this Memorial Day, Quintin didn't even know that Fall River had its own permanent Vietnam memorial. When she learned about it, something clicked inside. She began asking people if they knew about the wall, and when they didn't, she felt moved to tell them about it.

"I looked in the mirror and I said, 'You can do this,'" she said. "So that's what I've been doing."

The Fall River Vietnam Memorial Wall sits in Veterans Memorial Bicentennial Park, 1082 Davol St. in the city, alongside other memorials including one to World War II veterans. Each panel of the wall is 360 feet long and 8 feet tall, about 20% smaller than the wall in Washington DC, but built



in the same black reflective stone. Quintin says the Fall River wall holds the same power as the one in D.C.

"They say that when you go, it's heartbreaking, but when you get to the other end, it's a healing," she said.

Her brother's name is among the 58,282 listed on it.

### Getting the word out

Once Quintin realized how few people knew the wall existed, she made it her mission to tell them. She had bumper stickers printed that read "Visit the Vietnam Wall Fall River, MA" she handed out flyers. She spoke to veterans organizations, police and fire departments, and EMTs in New Bedford, Fairhaven, and other towns.

"I would start in the morning and

I would go the whole day," she said. "I was like a wild woman."

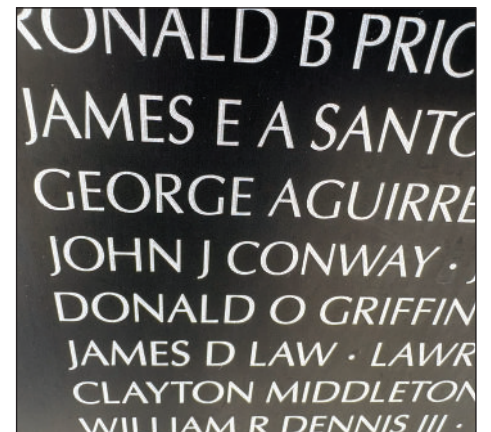
She stopped strangers too, including at the grocery store.

"I'll be at Market Basket and I'll say to people, 'Hey, can I ask you something? Have you ever been to the Vietnam Wall?'" Quintin said.

"Do you know there's a wall in Fall River?" So, I tell them, and I ask them to please at least tell one person."

For Quintin, the wall gives back something that was denied to Vietnam veterans when they came home.

"When they got home, they got treated like crap," she said. "That means everything to me. Everything that they didn't get is there for them, the love, the respect, the honor, the dedication."



At left, Louise Quintin holds a bracelet with her brother's name and date of death in Vietnam. Above, is a fragment of the wall showing her brother's name.

### A life of service

Quintin grew up in the north end of New Bedford and went on to build a career in healthcare, working first at Our Ladies Haven, and later, as a nurse's aide at St. Luke's Hospital. After earning her certification as a pharmacy technician, she moved into the pharmacy at St. Luke's, and worked for 47 years total between St. Luke's and Charlton hospitals.

Now 74, Quintin says the loss of her brother is still fresh and so is her sense of purpose.

"I want everyone to know before I die that there's a wall where they can go and pay their respects and give them the love that they deserve," she said. "I know that my brother didn't die for nothing, (and neither did) any other name that's on that wall."

Learn more about the Fall River wall, at [www.vietnamememorialwall.org](http://www.vietnamememorialwall.org).