

Petersham Council on Aging
P.O. Box 486
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COA



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

This newsletter is underwritten by the Executive
Office of Elder Affairs.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Reminders:

- **Hunting season is open** through the end of the year. Wear orange or red when in the woods.
- **Heating Assistance**– Now is the time to apply or recertify the need for heating assistance for this coming winter. Contact Making Opportunity Count (MOC) at 978-345-7040.
- **Flu Shots and COVID 19 Boosters**– Now is the time to get your flu shots and check if it's time to update your COVID booster.
- **Clean chimneys and check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.**
- **Prepare for winter storms. Make an emergency storm kit.** See last two pages for ideas.

Did you know?

- Life Path offers "Legal Notes" on their website. These are short and readable articles offering legal information that may be useful for seniors. Go to Lifepathma.org. In search box, enter "legal notes". A new page will open. Click on any article. You will be brought to that article as well as a format where you can easily scroll to view other articles.

And with mouse season in full swing...

I lost my pet mouse Elvis the other night. He was caught in a trap.

Spotted a mouse in the house. I took a photo, and although he didn't say cheese, I could tell he was thinking it.

Petersham's Council on Aging Mission Statement
Petersham's Council on Aging dedicates itself to addressing concerns of the sixty year and older population of the Town of Petersham.

COA BOARD NOTES

- The COA Board met on 11/14/2022.
- The Board Meeting Minutes from the 10/10 meeting were read and approved as amended.
- Treasurer's Report was presented and approved.

Discussions:

- (1) The "Memory Café" at the Athol Senior Center has not yet started.
- (2) The COA was contacted by the Talking Book Library. The Council will ask the library to follow-up.
- (3) Volunteer drivers are needed for Petersham Partners, and LifePath seeks volunteers for their programs.
- (4) The Council was contacted by the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps. The Council will ask them to schedule a presentation of their program for the Council. Petersham Partners and the Board of Health will be invited to join the presentation.

DECEMBER IN PERSON DINING & GRAB n GO LUNCH MENU

NOTE: Pick Up Time is on Wednesday at 11:45 a.m. at Lower Town Hall.
In Person Dining is on Wednesday at Noon in Lower Town Hall.

12/7– French Meat Pie, Brussels sprouts, pumpernickel bread, assorted fruit cup.

Total calories: 663. Total sodium: 397 mg

12/14– Chicken Teriyaki, vegetable fried rice, Asian vegetable blend, multigrain bread, yogurt.

Total calories: 716. Total sodium: 976 mg

12/21– Beef and Lentil Chili, brown rice, carrots, wheat dinner roll, fresh fruit.

Total calories: 611. Total sodium: 561 mg

12/28– Chicken thigh with Cacciatore Sauce, Cavatappi pasta, Italian blend vegetable, Italian bread, chocolate chip cookies. Total calories: 680. Total sodium: 633 mg

To reserve a meal or notify of cancellation call Paul Williams at 978-821-5549 by Monday afternoon.

Suggested donation is \$3.00 per meal.

More mouse humor...

A cat died and went to Heaven. God met the animal at the Pearly Gates and said, "You have been a good cat all of these years. Anything you want is yours for the asking." The cat thought for a moment and then said, "All my life I lived on a farm and slept on hard, wooden floors... I would like a real fluffy pillow to sleep on." God said, "Say no more." Instantly, the cat had a HUGE fluffy pillow.

A few days later, 12 mice were simultaneously killed in an accident and they all went up to Heaven together. God met the mice at the Gates of Heaven, with the exact same offer that He made to the cat. The mice said, "Well, we have had to run all of our lives... from cats, dogs, and even from people with brooms. If we could just have some little roller-skates, we would never have to run again." God answered, "It is done." All the mice had beautiful little roller-skates.

About a week later, God decided to check on the cat... He found her sound asleep on her fluffy pillow. God gently awakened the cat and asked, "Is everything okay? How have you been doing? Are you happy?" The cat replied, "Oh, everything is just WONDERFUL... I've never been so happy in my life! My pillow is always fluffy and those little "Meals-on-Wheels" that You have been sending over are delicious."

COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR YOUR HEALTH AND ENJOYMENT:

Tuesdays-

10 to 11 am- Aerobic fitness classes with Kalliope Kalombratsos. Upper Town Hall. Suggested Donation: \$7

Wednesdays-

10 to 11 am- Chair Yoga classes with Loren Magruder. Upper Town Hall. Suggested Donation: \$7

11:45- Grab n Go lunch. Lower Town Hall. To reserve or cancel, call 978-821-5549 by Monday afternoon.
Suggested donation: \$3

Noon- In-person dining in the Lower Town Hall. To reserve or cancel, call 978-821-5549 by Monday afternoon. Suggested donation: \$3

4:30 to 5:30 pm- T'ai Chi classes with Valerie & Nick Wisnewski. Upper Town Hall. Suggested Donation: \$5

Thursdays-

9 to 10:15 am- The Foot Clinic is offered the first Thursday of every month. Bring a towel.
Lower Town Hall. For appointment, call 978-724-3223. Cost: \$5

Fridays-

6:00 to 9:00 pm- Open Games Night. Petersham Congregational Church. All welcome! Free drop-in.

A SAMPLING OF UPCOMING EVENTS...

December 3- Christmas Fair– 9 am to 1 pm. Orthodox Congregational Church. Raffle baskets, handmade items, bake sale and soup for lunch.

December 3- 9am to 2pm and **December 4-** 10:30am to noon- **Christmas Bazaar**– St. Peter's Catholic Church. All handmade items.

December 4– David Alan Pihl, keyboard, and Maria Ferrante, soprano– 2pm. The Stone Church, 283 Main St, Gilbertville. \$25 or as available, four free tickets at the Petersham Memorial Library.

December 7- Dementia Caregivers Support Group Conference Call– 5pm to 7pm. LifePath. Register 413-773-5555 x1230.

December 8- Dementia Caregivers Support Group Virtual and Phone– 10 to 11am. LifePath. Register at above #.

December 8– Make Yarn Gnome Ornaments– 6:30pm. Woods Memorial Library, Barre. Free. Register at 978-355-2533.

December 9– Cooking for the Heart– 6 to 7:30pm. Athol Public Library. Registration required: 978-249-9515.

December 11– Dana Vespers– 4 pm. Orthodox Congregational Church.

December 11– Sounds of the Season/Ware River Concert Band– 2pm. The Stone Church, Gilbertville. Free.

December 13– Mystery Book Discussion Group/*Rather Be the Devil* by Ian Rankin– 6pm. Athol Public Library. Zoom available at 978-249-9515.

December 17– Petersham Jams– 7 pm. Davis Memorial Hall, 1 West St., Petersham.

December 18– A Big Band Christmas/Weir River Jazz– 2pm. The Stone Church, Gilbertville. Free.

December 27– Book Discussion Group/*Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand– 6:30 to 7:30pm. Woods Memorial Library, Barre.



Worcester County District Attorney's Office
Joseph D. Early, Jr.



Community News Brief: Holiday Shopping Scams

The Worcester County District Attorney's Office would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) predicts that product shortages and increased online shopping are likely to result in even more online purchase scams this holiday season. In 2021, holiday scams accounted for nearly 40% of all scams reported to BBB Scam Tracker. There are ways to keep yourself safe while shopping this holiday season.

The BBB recommends the following to “shop safe and shop smart” while online shopping:

- **Research before you buy.** BBB.org and shopper reviews can help you do your homework before paying.
- **If the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is.** The top motivating factor for people who made a purchase, then lost money, was price. Don't shop on price alone.
- **Beware of fake websites:** Check the URL, watch for bad grammar, research the age of the domain, and search for contact information.
- **Professional photos do not mean it's a real offer.** Respondents reported that website photos motivated them to engage with scammers, especially for pets/pet supplies, clothing/accessories, and vehicles.
- **Make sure the website is secure.** Look for the “https” in the URL (the extra S is for “secure”) and a small lock icon on the address bar.
- **Be careful purchasing sought-after products.** The risk of online purchase scams rises during the holidays because more people are making online purchases, and scammers offer the most popular products for the season at great prices.
- **Beware of making quick purchases while scrolling through social media.** Scammers have access to tools they need to learn about your buying behaviors, offering exactly what you want at enticingly low prices.
- **Look for the BBB seal.** BBB Accredited Businesses pledge to uphold the BBB Standards for Trust and to deal fairly with consumers. If a business displays this seal, verify it by going to BBB.org.
- **Use secure and traceable transactions and payment methods.** According to BBB's research, those who paid with a credit card were less likely to lose money.
- **Shipment tracking information can be faked.** Look closely to make sure it is a legitimate business. Avoid clicking on the tracking link. Go to the 'shipper's website and type in the code.

If you think you may have been a victim of a scam, you should do the following:

- **Try to contact the merchant.** Attempt to contact the merchant and keep a record of your outreach. Contacting them in writing is a good way to leave a paper trail of the attempts.
- **Contact your credit card company.** If you used a credit card to make a purchase, contact the credit card company and open a claim dispute.
- **Contact the BBB and submit a claim.** Claims can be submitted to the BBB through their secure website: <https://www.bbb.org/file-a-complaint>

Information adapted from the Better Business Bureau

The email for Petersham Council on Aging is PshamCOA@gmail.com and can be used to request electronic newsletters.

The newsletter is underwritten by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

COA Newsletter Editor: Robin Koenig 978-724-0213
COA Board Chair: Kay Berry: 978-724-6610

WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS

from Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

Before a storm:

[Be informed](#) by receiving alerts, warnings, and public safety information before, during, and after emergencies. Follow instructions from public safety officials.

If you receive dialysis, medical treatments or home health care services, work with your medical provider to determine how to maintain care and service if you are unable to leave your home for a period of time.

Assemble an [emergency kit](#). Add seasonal supplies to your emergency kit, such as extra winter clothing and blankets.

- **Water:** Bottled water (one gallon per person/per day for at least three days).
- **Food:** At least a three-day supply of non-perishable foods that do not need cooking (ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, or juices, protein or granola bars, cereal, peanut butter, dried fruit, nuts, crackers, comfort foods)
- **Tools and Supplies:** Manual can opener, Radio (battery-powered or hand crank), flashlight or lantern, extra batteries, cell phone with charger, wrench, pliers, and other basic tools
- **Personal Items:** Prescription medications (two-week supply), personal hygiene items, eyeglasses, contact lenses, dentures, extra batteries or supplies for medical equipment, change of clothes, sturdy shoes
- **Pets:** Collar, leash, harness, crate, food, bowls, current photo, license and medical information
- **Documents:** Insurance policies, bank account records, identification cards (IDs), medical information, and other copies of important documents
- **Money:** Extra cash and traveler's checks (ATMs may not work during a power outage)
- **Other Items:** First-aid kit, emergency whistle, waterproof matches/lighter, local area maps.

Prepare for possible [power outages](#).

- Fully charge your cellphone, laptop, and other electronic devices before a storm if power outages are expected.
- If your medical equipment uses electricity, talk to health care providers, utility company & your personal support network for options during a power outage. If you'll need assistance during an outage, talk to family, friends & your support network.
- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches around your home that could fall and cause injury or damage.
- Clear clogged rain gutters to allow water to flow away from your home. Melting snow and ice can build up if gutters are clogged with debris.
- Ensure your [smoke and carbon monoxide alarms](#) are working and have fresh batteries.
- Maintain [heating equipment and chimneys](#) by having them cleaned and inspected every year.
- Ensure you have sufficient heating fuel and consider safe backup heating options such as fireplaces or woodstoves.

After a storm:

When outdoors, dress for the season to protect against the elements. Dress in several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing instead of a single heavy layer. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent. Wear a hat, mittens (not gloves) and sturdy waterproof boots to protect your extremities. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

Use caution and take frequent breaks when shoveling snow to prevent overexertion. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter.

Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies, including downed power lines and gas leaks. Stay away from downed utility wires. Always assume a downed power line is live.

Check with your local authorities or call [2-1-1](#) to find locations of warming centers or shelters near you or for other storm-related questions. In the event of [power outages](#) during cold weather, you may need to go to a warming center or emergency shelter to stay warm.

Report power outages to your utility company.

Clear exhaust vents from direct vent gas furnace systems to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure your carbon monoxide detectors are working as it is a silent, odorless, killer. Clear snow from around vehicle exhaust pipes before starting the vehicle to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure emergency generators or secondary heating systems are well ventilated because their fumes contain carbon monoxide.

Check your roof and clear accumulated snow to avoid [roof collapses](#).

Don't park too close to corners so public safety vehicles and plows can maneuver safely.

Be aware of children playing in the streets, particularly climbing on or running out from behind large snowdrifts.

Be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions and those who may need additional assistance.

Ensure your vehicle is ready for [safe winter driving](#). Keep the gas tank at least half-full and have a [Winter Emergency Car Kit](#) in the trunk:

- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Charged cellphone and automobile charger
- Basic first aid kit
- Necessary medications
- Pocketknife
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Extra clothes (including rain gear, boots, mittens, socks)
- High-calorie non-perishable foods (dried fruits, nuts, canned food)
- Manual can opener
- Container of water
- Shovel
- Sand, road salt, or cat litter for traction. Tire chains or traction mats
- Basic tool kit (pliers, wrench, screwdriver)
- Towrope and battery jumper cables
- Road flares/reflectors
- Brightly colored cloth to use as a flag