



STAY HEALTHY - STAY CONNECTED - AGE WELL

SPECIAL ISSUE 2020

SPECIAL REPORT

SPECIAL THANKS:

TO OUR FIRST RESPONDERS WHO ARE FEARLESS AND CONTINUE TO KEEP US SAFE;

TO OUR HEALTH CARE WORKERS WHO ARE ON THE FRONT LINES OF THIS HEALTH PANDEMIC;

TO OUR ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES WHO CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGHOUT THIS HEALTH CRISIS;

TO MY STAFF WHO TIRELESSLY HELP SENIORS IN NEED;

TO HESSCO, OUR KITCHEN MANAGER AND OUR MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS WHO CONTINUE TO ORGANIZE AND DELIVER EVERY DAY OF THIS CRISIS;

TO WESTWOOD'S TOWN LEADERSHIP FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS;

AND TO EVERYONE IN WESTWOOD WHO IS CHECKING IN ON THEIR ELDER RELATIVES, NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS;

Thank you!

The Pandemic is here and in an effort to keep everyone safe and informed, we are sending out this special issue of our newsletter.

We have cancelled all programs at the Center in April and now through the end of May ... and if the crisis continues, we will continue to cancel programs on a month-to-month basis. This includes all regular and special programming, all transportation and outreach services. We do not make these decisions lightly but it is the only way to continue to keep the staff (and you) safe.

If you have paid for any one-time special program, we have probably already deposited the income. If you would like your money back, when we are opened, we will do our best to refund you. For programs like Drawing, Art etc. that are paid by the month, we will make sure that you are credited in the future. For any travel that you have signed up for and given us a deposit, we will give you back your check if we cancel the trip. *Pease be patient with us because we are "swimming in uncharted waters" and mistakes will happen, but we will do our best to take care of each and every participant.*

Inside please find information from the many Westwood Departments (*as well as an absentee ballot application*) that continue to serve the town, even during this health crisis. Much of this information can be found on the town website, www.townhall.westwood.ma.us, but we thought it important that we connect with you directly. You will also find information on local pharmacies, local grocery stores, as well as AARP Tax Help. *And don't forget to fill out your Census forms.*

Our Meals on Wheels will continue for as long as we are able. We are blessed to have HESSCO as a partner, a kitchen manager who is committed to serving Westwood's elders as well as the most amazing volunteers willing to pack and deliver all the meals ...thank you!

Also please find a questionnaire that we are asking you to fill out and send back to us as soon as possible. We want to make sure we know who you are and if you are having any major difficulties during this crisis; we will try to assist you.

Finally, please check on your friends and neighbors (via phone) daily, stay home and stay safe ... together we will weather this storm by taking care of each other.

*Lina Arena-DeRosa
Director*

NOTES FROM KAREN'S DESK

OUTREACH COUNSELOR

Avoiding Social Isolation and Loneliness during the Coronavirus/COVID-19



Social isolation (the objective state of having few social relationships or infrequent social contact with others) and loneliness (a subjective feeling of being isolated) are serious health issues. A terrible irony of the coronavirus is that steps to prevent its spread increase the risks of social isolation, which carries its own devastating health effects. A report last year by the National Institute on Aging said social isolation and loneliness are linked to higher risks of high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, and even death. Research has found that the health effects of prolonged isolation are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

But social distance does not need to lead to social isolation : the following are some ideas that might help:

TALK WITH OTHERS OUTSIDE WHILE STAYING SIX FEET APART:

With the weather getting warmer, you could set up folding chairs six feet apart and invite a friend or neighbor for a chat. Or you could take a walk and strike up conversations with neighbors while maintaining a six-foot distance.

GET ON THE INTERNET:

Those who are tech-savvy can take advantage of the many opportunities to connect online with others through email and social media such as Facebook and YouTube. You can even do daily group meditation, free through June, on www.MindOasis.org. Also free during this health crisis is premium access to Sanvello app. This app., with over 3 million users, aims to help stress, anxiety, and depression and features a "Staying Socially Connected" Community that offers connection and support.

MAKE PHONE CALLS:

Now is a good opportunity to reach out to others you haven't talked with for a while to see how they're doing. Try to pick up the phone and talk with someone each day. Those who can navigate a smart phone can use apps such as Skype, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp, which let users see as well as hear each other. Those with an Apple device can use FaceTime and those with an Apple or Android device can use the Google Duo App.

LISTEN TO TALK RADIO OR PODCASTS:

Some people find that listening to talk radio helps keep them company. Some of the talk radio stations in the area are WBZ 1030AM, WGBH 89.7FM, WRKO 680AM, Bloomberg 106.1FM/1330AM. "The Lonely Hour" is a podcast in which people open up about their struggles with loneliness and isolation. Sometimes, it's helpful to hear that we're not alone in these feelings and encouraging to learn how others deal with them.

READ BOOKS:

It was C.S. Lewis who said, "We read to know that we are not alone." Those who are online can use their library card to download or stream thousands of eBooks & digital audio books. Many publishers, databases, newspapers, and other digital media platforms have, for a limited time, expanded free access to digital content that normally requires a subscription. If you're not online, now is a great time to revisit your own bookshelves. As Oscar Wilde said, "If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all."

LISTEN TO MUSIC:

In moments of loneliness, it can be helpful to use music as a healing tool to lift your mood and decrease anxiety. Musical experiences are inherently social, scientists tell us, even when they happen in private. When we listen alone, we feel together. Research Scientist, Istvan Molnar-Szakacs, PhD., a research neuroscientist at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience at the University of California, Los Angeles, has explored how music creates the sense of social belonging. "When you are home alone in your house, it feels empty," he says. "And then you put on music and all of a sudden you feel better because you're not alone. It's not that literally you're not alone. But you feel like you have company."

The findings from "The Loneliness Experiment," a collaboration between the BBC Radio 4 and Wellcome Collection in which over 55,000 people took part in a survey exploring attitudes and personal experiences of loneliness (the largest survey into the issue of loneliness to date as of 1/10/18), found that, "...most loneliness is temporary, but we need to find ways to prevent it from becoming chronic." The findings "...suggest that we need to be kinder to ourselves when we feel disconnected from others, but also that there is a whole toolkit of potential solutions that we can try."

We encourage you, especially during this coronavirus pandemic, to take this advice –

Be kind to yourself and keep reaching out to others to stay connected.

When this temporary closure is over, the Senior Center looks forward to welcoming everyone back, including newcomers, to take advantage of the abundant opportunities the Center offers to connect with others.

You can stay safe and stay connected.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ALL WESTWOOD SENIORS *

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Cell#

Name of other members living in your household over the age of 60

1. Are you food secure? Yes or No

~ If no, do you participate in Westwood's Food Pantry? Yes or No

~If no, do you participate in Fuel Assistance? Yes or No

~ If no, do you participate in Food Stamps? Yes or No

~ If no, would you like further information on any of the above programs? Yes or No

2. Do you live alone? Yes or No

~ If yes, would you like a call from our friendly visitor or RUOK? Yes or No

~If yes, do you have family/friends near by that you connect with on a regular basis? Yes or No

3. Do you come to any of the Senior Center programs? Yes or No

~ If yes, what are some programs you participate in:

~ If no, what would encourage you to come in?

Comments:

4. Do you use the Center's transportation program? Yes or No

~ Do you get discounted Taxi Coupons from the Center? Yes or No

~ If you use our transportation, how often and for what (medical, errands, grocery shopping?)

Comments:

5. Do you use the Center's Outreach Services? Yes or No?

~ If yes, can you let us know if the issue you were having was resolved?

~ Comments:

6. Do you own a computer/ laptop, tablet or iPad?

- If yes, will you share you email address with us?

~ If yes, do you check the town website regularly? Yes or No**PLEASE SEND YOUR RESPONSE TO:****Westwood COA, 60 Nahatan Street, Westwood MA 02090 by Friday April 10. Thank you!***** Special thanks to Dover COA for access to their questionnaire.**

FROM LORRAINE'S DESK

As of this writing, deliveries are still being made, but please call these stores directly for further information as it could change.

**PRESCRIPTION
DELIVERY****Walgreens**

683 High St
Westwood MA
781-329-4420
Delivery Free

Prescriptions, narcotic and refrigerated meds must be signed for.
Non-prescription items will be delivered with prescription items.

CVS

299 Washington St
Westwood MA
781-326-1906

Delivery - They have been waiving their delivery fees

Prescriptions - They do not deliver narcotics, liquids, refrigerated or Medicare B items

Non-prescription items will be delivered with prescription items.

BIG-Y Pharmacy

1111 Providence Highway
Walpole MA
508-660-9713

Free prescription delivery within 8 miles of the store. There is a fee for mileage over that. Note: they do not deliver controlled substances.

**GROCERY STORE DELIVERY****Big Y**

434 Walpole St, Norwood MA 02062
781-769-0905

Seniors Hours: 7-8am

Online shopping for pickup or delivery through Instacart

Roche Bros - Phone delivery available for \$14.95

338 Washington St, Westwood, MA 02090
781-694-5442 / Help Desk 781-694-5280

Seniors Hours: 7-8am

Online shopping for delivery

Shaw's

134 Nahatan St, Norwood, MA 02062
781-762-0610

Seniors Hours: 7-9am Tues & Thurs

Online shopping for delivery

Stop & Shop

565 Main St, Walpole, MA 02081
508-668-7722

Seniors Hours: 6-7:30am

Online shopping for pickup or delivery

Wegmans

169 University Ave, Westwood, MA 02090
781-234-0300

Online shopping for pickup or deliver

Whole Foods

300 Legacy Place, Dedham, MA 02026
781-329-7100

Seniors Hours: 8-9am

Online shopping for delivery for Amazon Prime members only.

**Shaw's**

203 Main St, Medfield, MA 02052
508-359-8713

Seniors Hours: 7-9am Tues & Thurs

Online shopping for delivery

NOTE: If you are feeling food insecure, please call HESSCO Elder Services and let us deliver a daily meal to you, Monday through Friday. Their number is 781-784-4944. And the Food Pantry (a private independent non profit) may also be able to help, their number is 781-269-2008.

AGE WELL



If you are able to get online, here are some ideas to help pass the time while staying safely at home:

Notes from Laurel Barnett—
WHS Junior

Need something different to distract you while staying home? Here are some websites you might want to try:

A list of Virtual Concerts to Watch:

<https://>

www.npr.org/2020/03/17/816504058/a-list-of-live-virtual-concerts-to-watch-during-the-coronavirus-shutdown?

Or a tour of the MET:

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-metropolitan-museum-of-art>

Want to go abroad, then check out London's National Gallery:

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/visiting/virtual-tours/google-virtual-tour>

Or Watch Live Cams of animals at the San Diego Zoo

<https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams>

And Laurel writes:

"While we are social distancing, Music Matters has moved online! Videos will frequently be posted on this [YouTube](#) channel. Each day for at least the next couple of weeks, there will be a new video of a different student playing an instrument or singing a song. Hope everyone is staying safe and healthy!" Here is the link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDcjp98VIIU0HiRw_zYxaA/featured

THANK YOU LAUREL!!!

And Paul Hughes, our line dancer instructor has this to share:

Step in Line with
The LineSteppers
Paul's Line Dances

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqMZkIHK2ity2-BzD70RM6-Qv2IMGDJk5>

FROM THE OFFICE OF SENATOR MIKE RUSH

Unfortunately scammers are trying to take advantage of the most vulnerable right now. Below is a message from Nation Grid as a reminder.

Beware of Scammers

Scams related to the COVID-19 outbreak are on the rise. Imposters claiming to be National Grid employees may contact customers to collect past due balances, even promising a savings on the next bill or threatening to disconnect service. National Grid never demands direct payment through the use of a prepaid debit card and never accepts payment through these cards. For additional tips on how to protect against utility scams, visit www.nationalgridus.com/Our-Company/Scam-Alert.

FROM THE OFFICE OF
REPRESENTATIVE PAUL MCMURTRY

As the situation surrounding this infectious disease continues to evolve, the State House remains closed to the general public until further notice. Despite the closure, my entire staff, including Jodi, Garrett, Brandon and P.J. remain working and operational in a remote capacity. Should you need any assistance during this public health crisis please email me at: Paul.McMurtry@MAhouse.gov or my Legislative Aide P.J. Morse at: Peter.Morse@MAhouse.gov. To reach any of us by phone, please call (617) 722-2015. Additionally, [we are still able to receive physical mail sent to the office to my attention at the following address: State House, Room 171, Boston, MA 02133.](#)

AARP TAX HELP

As you may have already heard, the federal government has extended the tax deadline to July 15, which means that you will not face interest or penalties for not paying on time. Massachusetts state taxes are also extended until July 15.



AARP has cancelled all of their Tax Assistance. *As of today, AARP is recommending that people find a private tax company.* At this time AARP does not have a plan for additional dates, however, this may change as things improve. To check if any changes have been made to the AARP Tax Assistance program, please call AARP at 888-687-2277, once the recording starts, simply say "Representative" and this should bypass the recorded menu. *Please call them directly as this is their program.*

*Please note that the Westwood Senior Center will **not** be extending or adding AARP Tax Assistance hours and we have no further information. Thank you.*

UPDATE FROM RICH

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Effective immediately and until further notice: All Fields (Town or School Property and including the High School and Deerfield Tracks), Playgrounds, Tennis Courts and Basketball Courts are CLOSED.



NOTES FROM JARED - BOARD OF HEALTH

Older adults, 65 years and older, are at higher risk for severe illness. COVID-19 is a new disease and we are learning more about it every day.



What you can do if you have a serious underlying medical condition:

- Stay home if possible.
- Wash your hands often.
- Avoid close contact (6 feet, which is about two arm lengths) with people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Avoid all cruise travel and non-essential air travel.
- Call your healthcare professional if you have concerns about COVID-19 and your underlying condition or if you are sick.

For more information on steps you can take to protect yourself, see CDC's [How to Protect Yourself](#)

A NOTE FROM DANIELLE (Y&FS)

Get Connected to a Therapist Over the Phone with the INTERFACE Referral Service

The William James College **INTERFACE Referral Service** is free for Westwood residents at any time, but during this COVID-19 public health crisis they are able to connect you with therapists who can conduct sessions over the phone to address anxiety, depression, grief and loss or any other mental health concerns.

When you call the INTERFACE Referral Service, a representative will ask you about your specific needs and insurance. After the initial phone call you will receive a follow-up call from INTERFACE with contact information for a mental health professional who meets all your needs and is available to begin meeting with you over the phone while social distancing is in place.

It is also important to note that at this time the state has mandated insurance companies to waive all copays for medical or mental health phone sessions. To use the INTERFACE Referral Service, simply call 1-888-244-6843 between 9:00AM-5:00PM, Monday through Friday, or go online to <http://interface.williamjames.edu/>.

UPDATES FROM TRICIA LIBRARY DIRECTOR



The Westwood Public Library has now joined the growing group of individuals, students, families, and businesses working remotely. And while our facilities are closed, library staff are still working on creating innovative content and providing resources and services for our community.

Visit the [Library Website](http://www.westwoodlibrary.org) at www.westwoodlibrary.org and our Westwood Public Library [Facebook Page](#) for special updates created by library staff and some of your favorite authors. These include virtual story times, book suggestions and other postings to inform, amuse, educate, or just provide a diversion! We look forward to welcoming you back to the Main Library and the Islington Branch, and hope that everyone remains safe and healthy.

A MESSAGE FROM PAM TOWN FINANCE DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT MANAGER



Town Hall is closed until further notice, but a skeleton staff is still working on a rotating basis. Any payments or correspondence for Town Hall can be placed in the drive through accessible Green Collection box in front of Town Hall.

NOTES FROM DOTTIE—TOWN CLERK

2020 ELECTIONS



We have a busy election season upon us, enclosed is an absentee ballot application for those who would prefer to vote absentee for any of the upcoming 2020 elections. Please fill it out and get it back to us as soon as possible. Thank You.

2020 CENSUS



If you received an invitation that has just been mailed to all households regarding completing the census, this is legitimate. This is the roll out of the 2020 federal census. There is a unique ID number on this invitation which allows the recipient to go online and complete the questionnaire. This is a safe and secure site and all information is confidential and only used for statistical purposes.

For those who are not comfortable or who have no access to the internet, a paper copy will be mailed in the upcoming weeks.

April 1st is national census day! We encourage all to participate as this is what determines what federal funds will go to cities and towns, congressional seats, etc.

See the timeline below:

3/12-3/20-An invitation to respond online (2020census.gov) to the 2020 census will be mailed to every household; 95% will also receive a paper questionnaire.

April 1, 2020-National Census Day.

4/20-4/27-A final reminder postcard before Census bureau follows up in person.

5/28-8/14-census takers will go door to door to count people who have not responded to the 2020 census. They will provide proof that they are official government personnel.

12/31/2020- The census bureau reports to the President, the population count and apportionment of seats in the US House of Representatives to each state.

2021-Spring-Initial 2020 census data will be made available to the public on census.gov.




Westwood COA
60 Nahatan Street
Westwood MA
02090

PRST Non Profit
US POSTAGE
PAID
Norwood MA
Permit #81


Return Service Requested

WESTWOOD COA
60 Nahatan Street
Westwood MA 02090
781-329-8799 (telephone)
781-329-5949 (fax)
Hours of Operation
Monday—Thursday
8am – 4pm
Friday
8am - 2pm
STAFF CONTACT INFO
Lina Arena-DeRosa - Director
Trish Tucke - Operations Manager
Karen Segreve - Outreach
Counselor
Lorraine Cavanaugh -
Administrative Assistant
John Trigilio - Van Driver (FT)
John Demling III - Van Driver (PT)
Paul Kelly - Van Driver (PT)
Elaine Haddad - HESSCO Meals
on Wheels Coordinator
**COA BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**
Marge Eramo
Cheryl Fay
Josephina Jowdy
Hillary Kohler
Mary Masiello
Stephanie Rames
Bill Sebet
James O'Sullivan
Jessie Turbayne

**FROM COA BOARD CHAIR
JIM O'SULLIVAN**



The Board of Directors of the Westwood Council on Aging sends you its best wishes during these trying and unusual times. The situation seems to have combined the worst of 9/11, the "Shelter in Place" order from the Marathon bombing, and the Blizzard of '78, although in the Blizzard of '78, once the storm was over, we could all go outside and socialize. The COA staff with severe restrictions, are performing miracles for all of you. We thank them for that. Please keep in mind that there is no prohibition on telephone calls. If you know people who are vulnerable and alone, please give them a call and check in on them daily.



Stay safe, stay calm and keep connected
with your friends, family and neighbors.

Jim