

WESTFORD COUNCIL ON AGING NEWSLETTER MAY 2020

OUR MISSION: The Council on Aging promotes the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of aging adults and their engagement in all realms of community life.

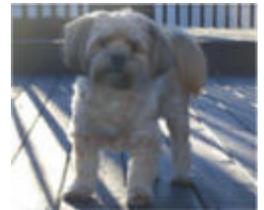
20 Pleasant St., Westford, MA 978 - 692 - 5523 www.westfordma.gov/coa <https://www.facebook.com/>

Things are happening, even while the building is closed!

The Cameron is offering **SHINE** (Serving The Health Insurance Needs of Everyone*) appointments on **Monday, May 11** with Fred Baumert, SHINE Counselor and Westford resident. SHINE Counselors provide unbiased health insurance information one on one with individuals in their own communities, giving guidance on health care programs including Medicare, Medigap, Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage and more. **Appointments will also be offered on Monday, June 8. To make a phone consultation appointment call the COA at 978-692-5523.** SHINE is administered by the MA. Executive Office of Elder Affairs under a grant from The Administration of Community Living.

New Pet Food Initiative

The Westford Animal Control Officer and Town Social Worker will work in collaboration to assist residents who are experiencing financial hardship caused by the Covid-19 crisis. The Cameron Senior Center will accept donations of pet food and necessities from 8-1 Monday through Thursday. Please leave items outside the main entrance door. Donations can also be left in the container outside the Westford Police Station entryway. Residents requesting assistance with pet supplies may call or email Alison Christopher LICSW at 978-399-2325 or achristopher@westfordma.gov Monday through Friday, 8-4, OR Kirsten Hirschler, ACO at 978-692-4574 or email Khirschler@westfordma.gov.



Cameron, Village Breakfast Restaurant, American Legion Post 159 and Cumming's Foundation sponsor Veteran's Breakfast

Friday May 22nd at 8am – Pick up or Delivery (and if open we can eat together once again). With appreciation, we invite veterans and their spouse to have breakfast thanks to our sponsors. **Please call Katie at 978-399-2330** to reserve your breakfast choice.



Meal Choice One - Pancake breakfast (optional toppings please specify: blueberry, strawberry, or chocolate chip)
Meal Choice Two - Scrambled eggs, home fries and your choice of bacon, sausage patties or links

Mother's Day at Kimball Farm Friday, May 15 10:00am – 6:00pm

In honor of Westford mothers throughout our Cameron community our COA would like to offer 50 complimentary Kiddie Cups of Ice Cream from the selection list below. You must register by calling the Cameron at 978-692-5533 by May 13th at noon and don't forget to share your ice cream choice.



On May 15th for those that registered through the Cameron for a special ice cream simply go to Kimball's drive through and provide your name to the ice cream attendant and enjoy your ice cream!

Classic Ice Cream Flavors: Vanilla, Chocolate, Strawberry, Coffee, Black Raspberry, Kahlua Crunch, Mint Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Peanut Butter Swirl, Coffee Oreo, Vanilla Blueberry Crumble.

Directors Report ...

Hello to Everyone,

As we continue to adjust our lives to cope with self-isolating, masks, closures, and loss of human connectivity, your staff is working hard to prepare for your return hopefully by June/July. You will see a sparkling new inside of the Cameron thanks to the hard work of Chris Mitchell and John Wilson. They have been doing a deep cleaning to disinfect rooms, painted, and organized many areas of our great center space. With the excitement of returning to a super clean and refreshed building, our staff is also planning for the reinstatement of our programs and daily activities. Please understand that although everyone is eager to return back to our friendly and active center, the opening will be gradual and controlled due to the uncertainty of Governor's orders, safe distancing and acceptable group gathering sizes. As always please reach out to me if you have any thoughts about our center opening, new program ideas and more.

Thank you for your patience and support during these times,

Jennifer

Lobby Chat with Cameron Staff: Fun and informative group conference calls

Wednesday, May 13th at 11:30 - Katie and Jennifer

Tuesday, May 19th at 11:30 - Alison and Claire

Wednesday, May 27th at 11:30 - Chuck and Annette

To join the call, dial 1-224-501-3412. When prompted, key in the access code—141-408-645 It's that easy!



Want a little travel destination diversion? Enjoy these informative narrated tours found on Youtube.Watch

Smithsonian Air and Space
<https://youtu.be/lzMZni2Avqk>

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
<https://youtu.be/lzMZni2Avqk>

Top 25 Tourist Attractions in Europe
<https://you.be/lzMZni2Avqk>

Holy Land Israelis & Palestinians Today
<https://you.be/lzMZni2Avqk>



Special reminders from Town Hall:

- Delayed real estate and personal property tax collection from May 1st to June 1, 2020
- Waived interest and penalties for tax bills due after March 10th, 2020 thru June 30, 2020
- Extended the filing deadline for Exemptions and Deferrals from April 1, to no later than June 1st 2020. If you are not sure if you qualify for Town exemption or deferrals please call Annette Cerrullo, Outreach Coordinator at 978-692-5523 and she will be glad to help you.
- Delayed the opening of the Westford Community Gardens until late May . Registration for the upcoming season is still open and applications are available.
- Rescheduled our Annual Town Meeting to June 20, 2020 and Town elections to June 30, 2020
- Waived the current late fee by extending the deadline for dog licensing to July 1, 2020

For more information on COVID-19, including resident services, the latest town department information, CDC guidelines, testing sites in MA, daily updates and more visit our town's website at westfordma.gov/COVID-19.



A BIG thank you to our friends at Westford Cable Access Television (Westford CAT) for keeping us connected! All programs air on Comcast Channel 8 and Verizon Channel 35.

Any program on Westford CAT will also be posted on our Website and our Facebook Page.

Fitness Classes with Carol Wing will air as follows:

Monday - Yoga 9am, Tuesday - Chair 9am, Wednesday - Zumba 9am, Thursday - Chair 9am, Friday - Zumba 9am

Grab & Go Lunch and Jazz Concert with Justin Myers Trio Friday May 29

A Grab and Go lunch will be provided at the Cameron starting at 11am. You will not need to leave your car—simply drive to the side kitchen door where you will see steps and a friendly volunteer/staff face. There you will receive your reserved lunch window-side. Please call the Cameron at 978-692-5523 to reserve your sandwich lunch which includes chips, a cookie, a piece of fruit and your choice of Chicken salad, turkey and provolone, or ham and cheese. To view the Jazz Concert, tune to Westford CAT at 12:30pm. A donation may be given to support this and other Cameron programs.

Paint with Kate on Westford CAT Friday June 5 Time is TBD

A paint kit can be purchased for \$10 and will include a Canvas (16x20), a brush set, and paints, and can be picked up the week of May 18 – May 22. If you need delivery it will be delivered Wednesday May 27

Master Entertainer, Mickey Lorden is back for a free virtual concert for the Cameron Friday, June 12 at 12:30pm. Enjoy in the comfort of your home and lunch is included!

Thanks to Paul's Diner (owner Sal Buonacore), Mark Kost and Drew Farms Men's Over 30 Softball Team we are going to provide a Grab & Go Lunch for just \$2. Lunch includes a bottle of water, chips and cookie, and your choice of an 8" Italian sub, turkey and American cheese with lettuce and tomato on a baguette, or a vegetarian wrap. Meal selection must be placed by Monday, June 1 by noon. Please call 978-692-5523. Grab & Go pick-up will begin at 11:00 at the Cameron and you won't have to get out of your car. Delivery is also available. Please let us know if you need delivery when you call to your reserve your meal. Mickey's Virtual Concert can be viewed on W-CAT on Comcast 8 and Verizon



A little extra "happy" virtual flower arranging with Paula from Westford Florist Thursday, May 20 at 10am

Wouldn't it be nice to learn a little more about flower arranging and give that favorite room a fresh vase of flowers? Provided flowers will include hydrangea, carnations, iris, daisies and filler. A vase will be provided with your flower delivery. Cost is \$10. Payment can be made at delivery and Cameron Buck cards can be used. Limited to 30. Please RSVP to 978-692-5523.



Don't forget to watch WCAT on Comcast Channel 8 and Verizon Channel 35

FREQUENTLY ASKED COVID-19 SOCIAL WORK QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS!**If I have worked and now filed for unemployment, will that impact my social security benefits?**

Unemployment benefits do not affect or reduce retirement and disability benefits. State unemployment compensation payments are not wages because they are paid due to unemployment rather than employment. However, income from Social Security may reduce your unemployment compensation. Contact the Massachusetts unemployment office for information on how your state applies the reduction.

If I'm on Social Security Retirement, Disability, or SSI, how will I get my Economic Impact Payment?

Prepared by the Social Security Administration. Information provided by IRS and the Bureau of Fiscal Service. April 27, 2020

A Message to the Social Security Beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income Recipients:

There is a document that provides information for Social Security beneficiaries (retirement, survivors, disability) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients related to economic impact payments being issued to eligible individuals. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), not the Social Security Administration (SSA), will send all payments electronically or paper checks by mail. We documented for you different scenarios to help explain what actions, if any, you may need to take to receive your economic impact payment and any payment for a qualifying child. **However, only the IRS can answer questions you may have about your personal or family situation. Please do not call SSA with your payment questions.** Visit www.irs.gov/coronavirus for the latest information available.

You can find the information you need by following these steps:

Go to <https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/>

Read: How do I get my economic impact payment

Locate the blue text that describes which monthly benefit you receive and when you started receiving benefits

Look for the row that matches your situation whether you filed a 2019 or 2018 tax return, and whether you have any qualifying children.

If I am struggling with getting food, what can I do?

If you have funds, but are concerned about going to the store, call Alison at 978-399-2325 or Annette at 978-399-2326 to request a volunteer shopper.

If you don't have enough money, visit the Westford Food Pantry outside the senior center on Wed evening 6-8 or Friday morning 9-11. If you are concerned about leaving your house, call Annette or Alison about having a food pantry bag delivered.

If you don't have enough money for food, you can also apply for SNAP. The easiest way to do this is to use the screening tool on the [Mass.gov/DTA/COVID-19](https://www.mass.gov/DTA/COVID-19). If you need help, Alison or Annette can assist you over the phone by entering your information on the website. You can also call the Project Bread Food Source Hotline at 1-800-645-8333.

Meals on Wheels has been expanded to seniors who are homebound because of Covid-19. If you are interested in home delivered meals through Elder Services of Merrimack Valley, call 1-800-892-0890 to request.

Other Expenses are problematic due to lost income. What can I do?

Consider applying for LIHEAP as the deadline has been extended to the end of May for this winter's heating expenses. Call CTI at 978-459-6161 to do the application by phone.

CTI also has RAFT funds for preventing eviction/foreclosure/homelessness. Call 978-654-5607

What should I do if I feel that my mental health is suffering?

If you feel there is immediate danger that you may harm yourself or someone else, call 911.

If you have an urgent need, you can call the area Crisis Team: Lahey/Northeast Behavioral Health 24-hour access number **1-800-830-5177**

If you are struggling with mood or substance use issues and want to connect with a counselor, you can look on Network of Care Massachusetts website. You can also call William James Interface Referral Service to speak directly with an intake worker who will find you a treatment provider who takes your insurance. This is a free service for Westford residents. Call 1-888-244-6843 Mon-Fri 9-5.

If you want to get support by phone or would like help accessing services, call Alison Christopher LICSW, Monday through Friday, from 8am to 4pm.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has a good COVID-19 Resource Guide at www.nami.org/covid-19
<http://www.westernmassrlc.org/hidden-community-happenings-fix/888-on-line-and-phone-supports-march-2020> Is a link to on-line and phone support groups of many types

You can also use a helpline:

Mass 211-Call2Talk 24/7 Helpline-508-532-2255

SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline-24/7-800-985-5990

Samaritans-24/7 Helpline-877-870-4673

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline-800-273-8255

What if I am experiencing Domestic Violence and I need help?

You can call Massachusetts Safelink Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline 24/7 at 1-877-785-2020 to talk to a counselor about resources, referrals, safety planning, and support filing restraining orders.

If you are experiencing a Domestic Violence Emergency, call 911.

Stimulus Payment Scam Awareness

Be aware that as stimulus payments are being sent out by the IRS, there are reports of scammers stealing these payments. Please take precautions to avoid becoming a victim of theft or identity fraud.

If you have a 2018 or 2019 federal tax return on file and are eligible for a stimulus payment under the CARES Act, the IRS will deposit their stimulus payment directly into the bank account listed on their income tax return. Social Security recipients and railroad retirees will automatically receive a \$1,200 stimulus payment in the same way they receive monthly benefits, even if they did not file a return for 2018 or 2019. In order to protect payments and personal data, DO NOT click on links sent by email or text message that appear to originate from the IRS. The IRS will not contact individuals by telephone, email, social media or text message. To learn more about how to recognize and report phishing and online scams, please visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov.



Edna continues to answer the phone and provide information to our callers!



Chuck continues to provide transportation services with a smile!



Katie recording Carol's classes so we can show them on Westford CAT!



Martha is working from home, creating and populating a database of all the town's residents age 60 and over.



Chris is sprucing up the building so we can welcome you back as soon as it's safe!



Claire is continuing to do payroll and all other administrative functions to keep us up and running!



The Greater Lowell Community Foudation (GLCF) and the Westford Community Foundation, an affiliate fund administered by the GLCF, provide funding for COVID-19 outreach, food distribution, and for needed supplies.

Cameron staff Chris Mitchell (l) and Al McGilvray package perishables for 50 Senior Housing residents who requested food assistance.



The Westford Food Pantry hours are Wednesdays, 6-8 pm and Fridays, 9-11 am.

Pictured (from left) are WFP Treasurer, Bernard Peloquin, Gordon Scott, President Tim Baker and Jim Barrett. They are filling 100 bags of food for distribution.

If you would like to donate, please go to www.westfordfoodpantry.org for ways to help. Thanks!

Ears sore from wearing your face mask?

Cameron participant Judy Stewart has graciously offered to knit an “ear saver”, which attaches to your mask to avoid hurting your ears. Let us know if you’d like one, and she’ll make one for you!



Gaining Grounds tentatively starting in late May!



Gaining Grounds of Concord is once again offering their fresh, organic produce to all Westford residents who meet income guidelines. To qualify one must sign an income attestation on the day of produce pick-up. Income guidelines are based on Fuel Assistance: Household of 1-\$37,360, HH of 2-\$48,855, HH of 3-\$60,351 and HH of 4-\$70,846.

Weekly distributions are held at the Westford Housing Authority at 65 Tadmuck Road. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, distribution will be held outside the community building. Because this program is so desirable, people often arrive early so we will pass out numbers starting at 12:30. Please note the freshly picked vegetables and fruit will be prepackaged (due to COVID-19) and distributed at 1:00.

Distributions will be every Thursday with start date to be determined and continuing through Autumn. If you have any questions please call Annette at 978-399-2326.



If you would like a puzzle to do for relaxation, please call the Cameron and we will be glad to deliver to your home.



If you have a book request or would like a staff member to select a book based on your reading interest, please give us a call and we will check it out for you from our Cameron library. Please let us know if you need it delivered.



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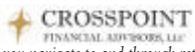


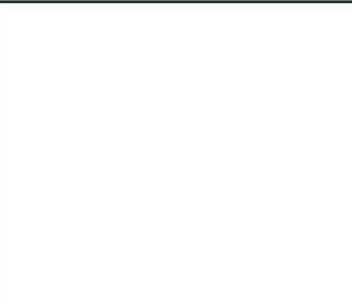
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Series: Coping and Connecting for Seniors During COVID-19

Chelmsford Senior Center in partnership with William James College

Westford residents are welcome to participate

Session 1: Developing Your Social Support Network

Thursday, May 14, 1-2pm

Zoom Video Link: <https://williamjames.zoom.us/j/94933828278>

Call-In Instructions:

- 1) Call: 1-301-715-8592
- 2) When prompted, enter meeting: 9-493-382-8278

Description:

You may have many people in your life, yet still have nobody to call when you need a ride to the doctor. Or, you may have lots of help with practical stuff but feel like there's nobody you can truly call a friend. Whatever your social life looks like, come join us to explore the world of relationships and how to get more of what you need even during these challenging times. This workshop will teach about eight different types of support and provide guided exercises to help you identify both the strongest and weakest links in your own social network. Note: This event is for adults aged 60 and older.

Session 2: The Art of the Social Phone Call

Thursday, May 28, 1-2pm

Zoom Video Link: <https://williamjames.zoom.us/j/94295906322>

Call-In Instructions:

- 1) Call: 1-301-715-8592
- 2) When prompted, enter meeting: 9-429-590-6322

Description:

With COVID-19 limiting our ability to gather together in person, we need to rely more than ever on the telephone to keep up our social connections. In this workshop, you'll learn essential communication skills to help deepen the quality of your conversations and thus your relationships. We will also talk about the pros and cons of spontaneous and scheduled calls, hanging up gracefully, dealing with disagreements, and more.

Note: This event is for adults aged 60 and older.



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Beware of fraudulent offers for COVID-19 testing from door-to-door, grocery store, telephone and mail order offerings- It is probably a scam!

The Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (MA SMP) Program is warning the public to be wary of anyone other than a treating physician who is offering you coronavirus testing. Be particularly suspicious of anyone offering COVID-19 testing in exchange for your Medicare number, money, or to gain access into your home. Testing can only be ordered by a treating physician. We have heard about teams in white coats going door-to-door offering virus testing.

Never accept a coronavirus test from someone:

- Who comes to your door;
- Who approaches you at the grocery store or other community venue, parking lot, etc.;
- Who calls offering a mail-in test in exchange for money or Medicare number;
- Who calls to request your bank card or account information to pay for a test.
- Always call the Westford Police Department at 978-399-2345 if you experience this type of community encounter

**Bridges BY EPOCH Memory Care Assisted Living Offers:
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If you are caring for someone with dementia or are living with memory loss and need support during these difficult times, we are here for whatever your need! We are offering virtual and remote support during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may need resources, insight on best way to get supplies or supportive conversation.

Please contact one of the Bridges Senior Advisors and we will be here for you!

Wendy Sage-Matsis wsage-matsis@bridgesbyepoch.com

Cell: 603-718-0842 Office: 603-594-0581 x 5812

Sarah Turcotte sturcotte@bridgesbyepoch.com

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Wonder How to Get Your Cameron News?

- If you are age 70 or older the Cameron monthly newsletter will automatically be mailed to you. If you would like to know more, please contact Martha at 978-399-2324
- If you prefer receiving a newsletter via email, please go to town website and click on "Notify Me" and type in your email to sign in. Under "Agenda Center" Click on Council on Aging
- Members of the Friends of the Cameron Senior Center receive complimentary monthly newsletters as a part of annual Friends membership.
- If you would like to be mailed a monthly newsletter for an annual cost of \$12 please send a check made out to the Town of Westford and mail to: Cameron Senior Center- 20 Pleasant, Westford, MA., 01886 or stop in at the center.
- Find our Facebook Page at facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/

Westford Food Pantry

If you are interested in helping 2-3 hours per month, please contact Lynn Roderick, Volunteer Coordinator for further information
lynnmroderick@aol.com

Hours

Westford Community Food Pantry, located on the first floor at Cameron, is staffed by volunteers.

MAY FOOD PANTRY HOURS:

- **Wednesdays: May 6, 13, 20 and 27** from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- **Fridays: May 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29** from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

BOARD MEETINGS

COA Board - Postponed
Friends of Cameron—Postponed

COUNCIL ON AGING STAFF

Jennifer Claro, Director of Elder Services
Alison Christopher, LICSW / Social Worker
Annette Cerullo, LSW /Outreach Coordinator
Claire France, Records Supervisor
Charles Dutton, Transportation Dispatch
Christopher Mitchell, Maintenance Supervisor
Katherine Russell, Senior Assistant
Martha Brockway, Senior Assistant
Edna MacNeil, Front Desk
John Wilson, Maintenance
Robert Rafferty, Night Supervisor

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Robert Tierney, Vice Chair
Kathryn Wilson, Clerk
Helena Crocker
Patricia Holmes
Sandra Collins
Ret. Chief George Rogers
Ret. Veteran's Rep. Terry Stader

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