



The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

August 2023

Newsletter Volume 43 Issue 8

The Center-Merrimac Living Well

100 East Main Street
Merrimac, MA 01860

Tel: 978-346-9549 Fax: 978-346-0528

Hours M-TH 8:30-4pm, F 8:30-1pm

Web: www.townofmerrimac.com/council-on-aging

Executive Director: Brienne R. Walsh:
bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com

Facebook: Merrimac Council on Aging &
Senior Center

Find our Newsletter Online:
www.merrimac01860.info/184/Senior-Center
www.ourseniorcenter.com/find/merrimac-

Director's Corner

Hi Everyone!

The summer is starting to wind down already! We have had so much rain this season, it hasn't felt very summer like as of late. Hoping for a dry and warm August before fall arrives!

Summer vacations in the White Mountains are great August memories for me that I now am able to make new again with my kids. I hope all of you have had a wonderful summer so far with your friends and loved ones.

We have lots of great events and programs for you this month to keep you as busy as you want to be! Our Musical Memory Café on 8/1, KevTech technology class on 8/9 and Cabbage Island Excursion to Boothbay Harbor on 8/17 are all a great start to the month! We will round out the month with a Lobster Roll Luncheon on 8/21, Intergenerational Monthly Movie on 8/22, and Honoring Choices Lunch N Learn on 08/24 as well as our End of Summer Luau on 8/31! There's lots more in between, be sure to read all the inserts and each page well so as not to miss all the fun!

I hope to see you this month!

Stay well!

-Brienne

Reminders:

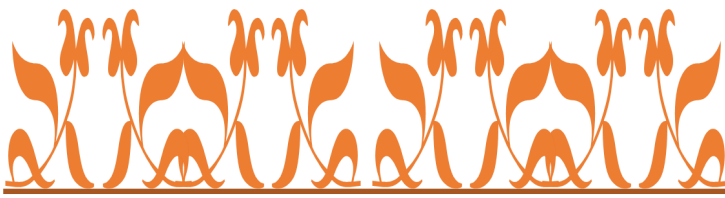
**** Advanced Registration is required for all activities, classes and events ****

**** No OUTSIDE food is permitted in the building, beverages are allowed. Thank you for respecting our community!**

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LGBTQ+ Social Connection

Evening

Join us for a meal and conversation!

Please register in advance

Hot meal provided



NO AUGUST GATHERING!

We will resume in September!

End of Summer Luau!

Under the Tent! (Weather Permitting,
Otherwise Inside)

Thursday

08/31/23 at 2pm

Join us for tropical beverages, fruit,
snacks and hand scooped Richie's
Slush in multiple flavors!

See the insert for more details!



Health Advisory:

Please remember to stay home if you are ill or unwell. This is for the safety of all of our community members as well as staff and volunteers.

Thank you!

Farmer's Market

Coupons

Distribution begins promptly on Wed Aug 2 at 9am

A limited number of \$50 in coupons are available to older adults 60+ that are Merrimac residents and meet income guidelines.

These coupons are good for produce and honey from local participating farms and farmer's markets.

Call Brienne or Bridget at 978 346 9549 for more information

Continuing Changes in Senior Center Operations:

Van and NEET Transportation:

8 clients per ride will be allowed on the van to go on van trips. NEET rides are 1 per car.

- 1. Client encouraged to wear a mask**
- 2. Client must use Sanitizer Gel before boarding the van.**
- 3. The Driver cannot assist the client boarding or de-boarding the van/car.**
- 4. Donation for ride should be place in envelope and placed in basket driver will have place on seat behind him/her for your convenience.**
- 5. The van will be sanitized after each ride and before another passenger embarks.**
- 6. Call well in advance (at least 4 business days) for a ride as we are limited in our ability to offer rides.**

A. Eligibility requirement:

- a) Clients must be able to self-transport from their home to the vehicle, enter and exit the back seat. Walkers and Wheelchairs must be done by client only, not the driver.**
- b) Clients must be able to buckle their own seat belt.**
- c) Clients must return signed NEET registration/guidelines form prior to transportation.**

B. Prescreening:

COA scheduler must ask pre-screening COVID-19 questions prior to appointment.

Ordering Meals:

To order a meal, call the Senior Center at 978-346-9549 by Thursday at 11 for meals the following week or order by the month. You can also now order by email! Send your name, phone number, address, dates and meals to be ordered at emurray@townofmerrimac.com

Delivery: Meals will be delivered to your door between 12 and 1 (Merrimac only) with minimal contact. Please mail in your payment by check or leave envelope taped to your door. Food will be left at the door if no one is at home. Meals are \$5.00 per meal, \$25/ per week (as of 5/2/22).

Order food delivered, ***for in house dining on Mon-Thurs*** or pickup!

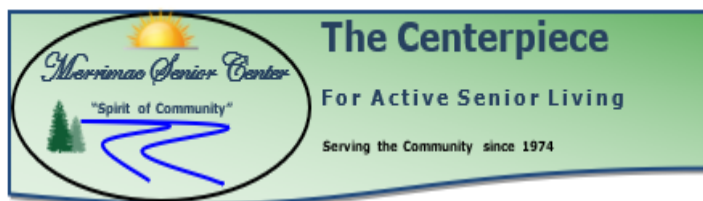
**Did you know that the
Merrimac Senior Center is a Certified SNAP Outreach
Partner??**

**We can help with
applications and
recertifications!**

**Call for an
appointment !**



Centerpiece Info—Friends News-Bingo-Bill Duke Class/Game Schedule



Merrimac Senior Center
The Centerpiece for Active Senior Living

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Please mail my newsletter (\$8.00 for the year)

☐ Please email my newsletter to my email address above (No charge)

Newsletter is available at: <http://townofmerrimac.com/184/Senior-Center>

Please return this form to:

Merrimac Senior Center
100 East Main Street
Merrimac, MA 01860

If paying by check, please make out to: Merrimac COA

Watercolor Class w/ Bill Duke

Monday 08/07/2023

1-4pm

Limited to 10 participants

\$20/per person payable on class day

Games are Back! NEW Days!

45's: Mondays at 1pm-3:30p

Rummikub: Tuesdays at 1pm-3:30p

Cribbage: Wednesdays at 1pm-3:30p

Registration Required!



Friends of the COA - Annual Dues

The Nutrition Program continues to provide meals to anyone who wants one (they are currently serving 40+ meals daily, M-F and delivering them to the door as well as holding a daily congregate meal on Mon-Thurs). The Friends continue to help with the cost. Note that your donations make this possible! Thank you for your continued generosity.

Send your dues or Gift to:

**Friends of the COA, 100 East Main St.,
Merrimac, MA 01860**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel/Cell _____

Dues: \$10__\$25__\$50__\$100__Other__

Donation to Gift Account: _____

Given in Honor of or Memory of:

BINGO

Bingo is in Session!

Mondays

August 7,14,21,28

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



Upcoming Special Events

Lobster Roll Luncheon Monday 08/21/23 at 12noon

See the Insert for Details about pricing and ordering!



August Foot Clinic w/Barbara Ullman-CANCELLED-

Look for a rescheduled date this fall!

All August appointments will be moved to the new date!

9am-12pm By Appointment Only \$30/per visit/cash only

! Limited Slots !



Exercise Classes

Advanced Sign Up Required!

Mondays:

Exercise w/Pam at 9:30am \$5

Vinyasa Yoga w/Jane 6pm

\$3/per class

Tuesdays: Meditation & Yoga w/Bianca \$7/class

Wednesdays:

Chair Yoga w/Mary at 1pm; \$5

Thursdays:

Exercise w/Pam at 9:30am \$5

**LINE DANCING HAS BEEN PERMANENTLY
CANCELED BY THE INSTRUCTOR**

Fridays: No Classes on Friday



TRIPS & TRAVEL



MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES TRIPS & TRAVEL

For full event details request flyer or call the center!

8/17/23 Cabbage Island Clambake (Boothbay Harbor ME), Boat ride, double lobster Clambake (taxes & meal tip included), group seating, Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation.

\$142.00/person Contact Denise for additional information!

Only a couple of spaces remain, don't delay, call to reserve your spot!

Dining Out Belles & Romeos

Leaves from COA Thursday 08/10/23 11:00 AM



A different mystery excursion each month! Our group will embark on a restaurant adventure to remember! Bus cost is just \$5 and the cost of lunch is on your own!

Enjoy time with old and new friends!

Call Denise with questions or for additional info. Sign up today !

An Announcement from the Friends of MCOA:

- * **Be sure to purchase raffle tickets for our monthly Friends raffle! A different**
Tickets are available at the reception desk, pay by cash

*Friends of
Merrimac COA
Membership
Meeting
Tuesday
September 12th
at 1pm
Please join us!*

**NO MEN'S BREAK-
FAST IN AUGUST!**



**Join us in
October 2023!**

NO PUZZLES OR BOOKS AT THIS TIME AS WE REORGANIZE OUR LIBRARY.

themed basket each month!

or check only!

Please Note: We are only accepting food pantry donations and Medical Equipment at this time!

Monthly Movie Popcorn & Treats Provided~

Intergenerational Movie Screening-Bring Your Grandkids!

Puss in Boots: The Last Wish



Tuesday 08/22/23

1:30pm

Beeyonder Returns!

The Golden Horn of Istanbul Turkey

Wednesday 08/16/23 at 11:30am

Snacks & Beverages Included!



Community Outreach Column



Outreach & Human Services
Bridget Batcheller, MSW



Happy August! It feels like we were just welcoming summer, and now it seems on its way out. Let's cherish these warm, sunny days while they are around! I will be away from July 30-August 15, soaking up the sun on my honeymoon in Nice, France. If you need me or have any outreach related issues, please reach out to Brienne.

This month, the Merrimac COA is bringing back memory cafes! We used to host a memory cafe every other month, but have not since COVID, so we are very excited to bring back some normalcy. If you're not familiar with or have ever heard of a memory cafe, it is a welcoming place for people with memory loss, forgetfulness or other changes in their thinking. Family and friends are invited as well, since there are often different agencies present to offer resources for caregivers and those living with memory loss. It also provides a moment in time for the caregiver and the person with memory loss to spend time together without the role or pressure of being a caregiver. Each memory café is different. Some cafés invite guest artists, some offer interactive performances or education about memory changes, and some are just for relaxing and conversation. But all cafés share one goal: to help guests feel comfortable and to know that they are not alone. Cafés are a place to talk with others who understand what you are going through, to help you forget about limitations and instead focus on strengths while enjoying each other's company and exploring something new! Our memory cafe will be held quarterly and this month's cafe will have a musical guest! Music can be so powerful and healing, especially to those with memory loss. Research shows that not only does it have the ability to lower stress and anxiety, it can improve cognition, mood and provide relief, even if only for a brief moment. Music triggers the part of the brain associated with memory, reasoning, speech, emotion and reward. That's why people often can recall a memory when listening to a specific song or can remember to play a musical instrument, even if they can't remember their own name. We hope you will join us and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity!

At the end of the month, we will also be welcoming Ellen DiPaolo, president and CEO of Honoring Choices Massachusetts to talk about health care and end of life planning. It can be a scary subject to broach, which is why we wanted to offer a workshop explaining the importance of having a healthcare proxy and a personal directive. Even if you feel you are in good health, appointing someone to be your proxy or mapping out your exact health care decisions puts you in a better position, should something happen suddenly. We will offer assistance filling out either of these forms, that Ellen will go over, if you decide this is something you'd like to do. In September, we hope to follow this discussion with a Death over Dinner conversation, where we discuss death and how important of a discussion this is, yet nobody has. We suffer more when we don't communicate our wishes but we suffer less when we know how to honor the wishes of our loved ones. As we build greater comfort and understanding around this topic, every single one of us wins. The dinner table is the most forgiving place for difficult conversations and provides warmth, connection and puts us in touch with our humanity. It offers an environment that is more suitable than the usual places we discuss end of life. So please, join us at the Merrimac COA dinner table as we break bread and discuss death.



Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

I hope you all are enjoying summer. The weather is beautiful so try and get outdoors to take a walk or to just sit and enjoy the sun and warm temperatures. The month of August is National Immunization Awareness Month and is the perfect time to speak with your primary care provider to ensure that you are caught up on routine visits and vaccinations that may have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vaccines are not only for kids. Vaccinations are critical components of routine healthcare for all adults. They provide protection against severe illness, disability, and death from 15 different infectious diseases like influenza, pneumococcal disease, herpes zoster (shingles), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, HPV-related cancers, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough). That said, still a majority of U.S. adults are missing routine immunizations. Talk to your doctor about vaccines you may need for your age and health conditions. This is especially important if you have certain health conditions as you may be at increased risk for complications from some vaccine-preventable diseases.

As we approach the fall, I want to highlight a few important infectious diseases and the vaccines we have to protect ourselves. Let's start with COVID-19. At this time, the CDC recommends that everyone aged 6 years and older should get 1 updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to be up to date. People ages 65 years and older have the option to receive 1 additional vaccine dose, for a total of 2 bivalent vaccine doses, regardless of the number of previous monovalent vaccine doses received. The additional bivalent vaccine dose should be administered at least 4 months after the first bivalent vaccine dose. People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may get additional doses of updated Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Please speak with your primary care provider regarding your specific situation and to determine if/when you should get an additional booster.

Another vaccine that I would like to highlight is the flu vaccine. Everyone aged 6 months and older should get

an annual flu vaccine. You are less likely to become seriously ill or hospitalized with the flu if you get the vaccine. A flu vaccine is especially important if you have a chronic health condition, such as heart disease or diabetes. You should get your vaccine by the end of October each year so you are protected when the flu season starts. It takes at least two weeks for the vaccine to be effective. However, if you have not received your flu vaccine by the end of October, it's not too late — flu season typically peaks in December or January. As long as the flu virus is spreading, getting vaccinated will help protect you. Also, there are flu vaccines designed specifically for older adults. The CDC recommends that people age 65 and older receive a higher-dose flu vaccine that is potentially more effective than the standard flu vaccine for people in this age group. Talk with your primary care provider about which vaccine is best for you.



Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox. If you had chickenpox, the virus is still in your body. As you get older, the virus could become active again and cause shingles. Healthy adults age 50 and older should get vaccinated with the shingles vaccine, Shingrix, which is given in two doses. You should get a shingles vaccine even if you've already had chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, or if you don't remember whether you had chickenpox. You should also get the shingles vaccine if you've already had shingles or received Zostavax (an earlier shingles vaccine which is no longer available).

As the summer is winding down, please call your primary care provider and ensure that you are up to date with all recommended vaccines for your age and health status. Vaccines protect ourselves and our community from diseases that are potentially serious and life threatening. Let's do our best to take care of each other! Be Well!

Information from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults/for-practice/increasing-vacc-rates.html>



Blood Pressure Clinics for Aug

Wednesday August 2nd

Wednesday August 16th

9am-10am

Please note the change in day!

SHARPS Disposal Drop Off Site

New Containers Available for \$ 10



***Public Health Nurse Hours will
be changing effective July 13th!***

New Hours will be:

Tuesdays 8:30am-2:45pm

Wednesdays 8:30am-10:30am

Thursdays 8:30am-2:45pm

***Please feel free to call and leave a
message for Danielle at any time!***

Many Thanks to All, for the Donations to
the Senior Center, Food Pantry and Programming
Initiatives

June 16th-July 15th

**(Supporting Nutrition Program & Food
Pantry)**

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND

COOLING, INC.

Betty Emery

Betty & Bob Elliott

Joyce Nevins

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

Chris Manni and Family

In Honor of Muriel McNair

Norman & Carol Denault

In Honor of Thelma Gibbs

Leo Joubert

In Honor of Robert Whitcomb

Linda Parker

Alberta Peavey

Matthew Blaney of Gordon's Sew & Vac Center
for repairing our Quilting Group's

Sewing Machine

**I've got a way with plants.
It's a way where they
turn brown and die,
but it's a way!**



Maxine.com www.facebook.com/maxine

This Month's Important Events

National Immunization Awareness



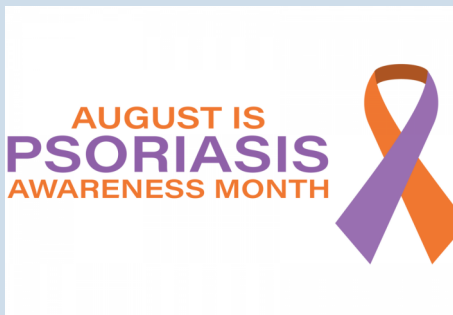
August 1-World Lung Cancer Day



International Overdose Awareness Day



Psoriasis Awareness Month



The Pool Room is OPEN!

The Pool Room is open **limited** hours
Tues & Thurs 9am-12pm or reservation

Do you knit or crotchet?

Would you like to learn?

Join us for Knitting Group

Tuesdays at 1:00pm



Van Trip Transportation

If you would like to go shopping, please call Nick Fiorello to book a trip in advance. We will do our best to accommodate requests. A minimum of 4 business days is required to book. Thank you.

Veterans Services

Vet Crisis: 1-800-273-8255, press 1

Kevin Hunt, Veterans Services
KHunt@CityofNewburyport.com

Office: 978-462-2201

Fax: 978-462-2275

Newburyport Office: 331 High Street,
Newburyport, MA 01950



Jeremiah Murphy, Veterans Services

Amesbury Office: 978-388-8136

Fax: 978-388-8127/68

68 Elm Street, Amesbury, MA 01913

Feel free to contact either office! Senior citizen veterans or widow(er) of a veteran may be eligible for monthly financial assistance & reimbursement of medical expenses if your income is within certain guidelines. Note: house of residence & vehicles are not counted as assets.



Senator Barry Finegold



Dear Neighbors,

June and July were both busy months on Beacon Hill and around the district.

In last month's column, I told you all about the passage of the Senate budget and promised to provide a substantive update as soon as possible. The budget is currently before a Conference Committee, where House and Senate members will come to a consensus on a final bill. I am hopeful that the final budget will be released and passed in the next several weeks, and will provide more detail on local earmarks once the budget is finalized!

We have also been hard at work on a \$590 million tax relief package that I hope will bring meaningful relief to residents across Massachusetts while upholding fiscal responsibility. The Senate's tax relief package would provide relief to renters, seniors, and parents struggling with high early education costs while also increasing much-needed housing production. As different versions of this legislation have passed the Senate and the House, a Conference Committee has been appointed to resolve differences between the two bills.

Beyond the legislative work, my office had a number of productive meetings, speaking with leaders in historic preservation, the business community, and renewable energy space. I also had the opportunity to attend a slew of community events; celebrating Pride in Haverhill and Amesbury, attending ribbon cuttings for new businesses, and enjoying myself at community events like Amesbury Days and the Frederick Douglass Reading in Haverhill.

As always, please reach out if I can be of assistance. You can reach me directly at barry.finegold@masenate.gov or contact my office at 617-722-1612.



Hello Veterans and Family Members

We just received this information on the Medicare Savings program, also called the MassHealth Buy-In. As part of the Chapter 115 program we are required to have our clients apply for the Buy-In if they qualify.

Both the income and asset limits have had significant increases, allowing a lot more of our seniors to take advantage of this program which will increase their Social Security payment by \$1,978 per year.

The application only takes a few minutes to complete and can also be used to apply for SNAP Benefits and if the client is approved, they will also be enrolled in the Extra Help prescription assistance program.

If you have any questions concerning your benefits, please call the Veteran Services Office at

978-388-8136.

Jeremiah Murphy,

Veterans Agent



SENIOR CENTER STAFF

Exec. Director: Brienne R. Walsh

Program Coordinator: Denise Gilman

Public Health Nurse: Danielle Cataldo, RN, MSN

Kitchen Chef: Judy Kimber Morrill

Outreach/ Human Services Coordinator: Bridget Batcheller, MSW, LC

Volunteer Coordinator: Sandra Blanchet

Transportation Coordinator, Van Driver: Nick Fiorello

Senior Aide & Van Driver :Paul Charron

Custodian/Van Driver: Wayne Jones

Food & Nutrition Director: Eileen Murray, CDM, CFPP

Food Pantry Coordinator (Volunteer): Candie Benjamin

Trips: Denise Gilman

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Chairwoman, Dave Vance, Vice Chairman, Candie Benjamin, Secretary, Maryann Mikson, Clerk MEMBERS: Betty Elliott, Kathy Devaney, Donna Doherty (Mtgs. On 4th Friday of month, 11am no meeting in Nov., Dec., July, & August, unless needed)

THE CENTERPIECE VOLUNTEERS

COLLATING & MAILING: Bill Gaylardo, Maryann

Mikson, Nancy Lind, Betty Elliott, Barbara Sheehan, Toni Quimby

FRIENDS of the Merrimac COA Officers: President: Ann Murphy Vice President: Joann Crenshaw Treasurer: Richard Fournier, Secretary: Pat Lundin Members: Any and all who have paid their dues and are welcome to attend meetings! (Generally the 1st Tuesday of the month, Please join us!)

**To find our newsletter online,
The Centerpiece for Senior Living, go to:**
<https://mycommunityonline.com/organization/merrimac-senior-center>



Massachusetts
Councils On Aging

Non-Profit Org
**U.S. POST-
AGE
PAID**
**PERMIT NO.
3**



Staff EMAILS:

If you have any questions, concerns, or need help, please call the senior center or email any of the following:

The COA Director, Brienne Walsh
bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com

Program Coordinator: Denise Gilman
dgilman@townofmerrimac.com

Outreach & Human Services Bridget Batcheller
bbatcheller@townofmerrimac.com

Food & Nutrition Director: Eileen Murray
emurray@townofmerrimac.com

Nursing Services: nurse@townofmerrimac.com

Transportation, Nick Fiorello:
nfiorello@townofmerrimac.com

***Don't forget the Friends Bake
Sale on Sat 08/12/23 9am -12pm!***