



The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

The Center-Merrimac Living Well

November 2023
Newsletter Volume 43 Issue 11

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:
[Senior Center/ Council on Aging - Town of Merrimac, MA](#)

Director's Corner



Dear Friends:

November brings two events that remind us to be thankful with Veterans Day and Thanksgiving.

Our Annual Veterans Day Luncheon will be on Wednesday 11/8/23 and is open to Merrimac veterans and a guest of their choice. The menu will be a baked stuffed chicken dinner with all the trimmings! We hope to see many of our community veterans and their loved ones, so be sure to register as seating is limited!

Thanksgiving is a time of reflection and hope for brighter days. With so much going on in the world, we are grateful for our community. The staff and I wish you a happy Thanksgiving season filled with friends, family and food!

A big thank you to all that attended our Annual Craft Fair in October and made it a wonderful success! Our Annual Trunk or Treat event was a great intergenerational afternoon of friendship and fun! This month has many events to nourish your mind and body and I look forward to seeing you all at this month's offerings!

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 free of charge



Thursday November 16, 2023

5:30pm-8pm

New members welcome, feel free to join us!

Are You Looking for Event Space?

Our rooms are available for rental on most evenings and weekends.

Join us to host baby showers, bridal showers, birthday parties, holiday events and more!

Call Brienne at 978 346 9549



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!



The Senior Center will be closed on Friday November 10th, 2023 in observation of Veteran's Day.

We will also be closed for a half day on Wed. 11/22/23 at 12 noon, on Thursday 11/23/ 23 and on Friday 11/24/23 for the

Thanksgiving holiday.

No meals from 11/22/23-11/24/23

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 !**





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

BINGO

Bingo is in Session!

Mondays

**November 6, 13, 20,
27**

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



Watercolor Class w/Bill Duke

Monday 11/06/2023

1-4pm

Limited to 10 participants

\$20/per person payable on class day.
Sign up is first come, first serve and
will be lottery based if the list is long.

See the Calendar insert for
Games schedule!

Legal Clinic Jason Ebacher, Esq

Thursday 11/9/23 10am-11am

By Appointment , Call Ahead!



Active Events to Keep your **Mind and Body Engaged**

In Motion with Powerback PT

Join Laura from Powerback PT to
learn how PT can help you with mo-
bility issues , balance and much
more!

Wednesday November 15th at 11am

Monthly Craft Class with Denise

A different craft each month!

Wednesday 11/15/23 at 1:30pm

Advance Registration Requested!

Lunch N Learn With Avita of New- **buryport**

Free Luncheon(Dine In Only)

Join My Journey Presentation

Thurs. 11/16/23 12pm

Advanced Registration by 11/9/23!

Upcoming Special Events-See Inserts for more details!

Veteran's Luncheon: Wed. 11/8/23 @12pm-

Merrimac Veterans plus a guest! Advanced Registration Required

Free Dine In Luncheon sponsored by Avita on Thurs 11/16/23@12pm

Women's Discussion Group Wed. 11/29/23 1:30pm

December Foot Clinic with Barbara Ullman, RN

Tuesday Dec.5th, 2023, 9-12pm

By Appointment Only \$30/per visit/cash only-Limited



Slots Available!

Exercise Classes

Advanced Sign Up Required!

Mondays:

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

**EVENING YOGA WITH JANE HAS BEEN
PERMANENTLY CANCELED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.**

Check out our other yoga classes instead!

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

Wednesdays:

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

Thursdays:

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

Fridays: No Classes on Friday



TRIPS & TRAVEL

MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES TRIPS & TRAVEL

For full event details request a flyer or call the center!

Our Boston Pops Trips is almost full, limited spaces left!!

SeaFestival of Trees Salisbury Trip: Tuesday 11/28/23-See Insert!

Contact Denise for additional information!

Dining Out Belles & Romeos –

Join us for lunch @Poet's Inn Whittier Tech-Holiday Buffet

Leaves from COA 11:00 AM Thurs. November 16th, 2023

A different 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! If the bus is full, you can always join us in your own car!



An Announcement from the Friends of MCOA:

* Thank you for all your support during our recent Craft Fair! Thank you to everyone who made it a wonderful event! We are always looking for new members to help fundraise for

*Friends of
Merrimac COA*

Membership

Meeting

January 9th, 2023

at 1pm

Please join us!

Final Breakfast of 2023!

Join us on

Thursday

November 30th

9:00am

for Chiefs Breakfast!

***Come for a free hot
breakfast and to hear
about all the latest Town
information from chiefs
and department heads!***

RSVP today!



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

to Sandy Blanchet and her team for a
the Center, please join us!

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

Nick's Retirement Brunch!

**Join us to celebrate the retirement of our Transportation Coordinator,
Nick Fiorello**



Friday 11/03/23

10:00am

Advanced Registration Required!

Monthly Movie!

The Miracle Club

Starring Kathy Bates , Dame Maggie Smith, and Laura Linney

Tues. 11/14/23 at 1:30pm

Popcorn and Snacks Provided





***Outreach & Human Services
Bridget Batcheller, MSW***



For many of us, we look forward to Thanksgiving in November. We spend time with family & friends, eat yummy food, and give thanks for what we have. However, not everyone feels the same about this holiday. For those who descended from the Wampanoag people, this day is known as a National Day of Mourning. The National Day of Mourning has been recognized by Indigenous people since 1970, where they gather on Cole's Hill in Plymouth at noon time to honor Indigenous ancestors and Native resilience and feel strength in action and solidarity. Many Native people do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims & other European settlers on Thanksgiving Day, as it is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands and the erasure of Native cultures. "The National Day of Mourning is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection, as well as a protest against the racism and oppression that Indigenous people continue to experience worldwide." – United American Indians of New England.

We all know the traditional telling of Thanksgiving – pilgrims come to Plymouth, looking for religious freedom and a place to start anew. They make friends with the 'Indians', who help them survive a harsh winter and they celebrate by giving thanks together. Although they may have shared a meal, their relationship was not as amicable as we may have been told. Colonists and settlers continued to come to the land where the Wampanoag resided and created tension between the two groups, leading to war, genocide, land theft, and erasure of the Wampanoag people and culture.

It is important to acknowledge all aspects of our history – including the parts that we want to hide. By acknowledging that part of history, it is allowing those who were harmed to heal and holds those who did the harming accountable. There is healing in truth & reconciliation

This year, I encourage you to learn more and share this history with your friends & family. Go to a National Day of Mourning march as a supporter or find a way to volunteer your time and give back to that community. If you can't attend the National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, they will also be live streaming it on their website at <http://www.uaine.org/>.

You can also support the MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda. They are currently supporting these 5 bills:

- Honor Indigenous People's Day
- Protect Native American Heritage
- Remove Racist Mascots
- Celebrate and teach Native American Culture and History
- Educate Native Youth You can find out more about each bill and how to support at <http://mainindigenousagenda.org/>.

Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

Fall is well underway and we are officially into the holiday season! As we think about celebrating with family and friends, it is important to be mindful of the respiratory viruses that are circulating during this time of year. I am sure that most of you have heard of the “triple-demic” which refers to the winter surges of three respiratory viruses— COVID, RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) and flu viruses. The triple-demic of last season infected millions and overwhelmed hospitals in the U.S. over the 4-month peak span of these viruses.

Now that we are into the fall season, we already see sharp rises in COVID cases and new variants of COVID that may also contribute to increased cases of disease. However, the impact of the expected rise of these respiratory illnesses this winter can be reduced because of new and updated vaccines. I have put updates in my previous newsletters regarding the new RSV vaccine recommended for seniors age 60 and up after discussion with their primary care provider. There is also the updated COVID vaccine recommended for everyone age 6 months and older, which protects against the most recent currently circulating strains of the virus. Of course, the flu vaccine continues to be recommended each year. Thank you to all who came out to get vaccinated against the flu at the flu clinic last month at the Senior Center.

In addition to vaccines, common sense public health measures will continue to play a role in combatting the triple-demic, as viruses such as RSV, flu, and COVID are respiratory viruses spread by the breath, spoken word, and cough. As with most pathogens, some people are more vulnerable than others to these infections. RSV and influenza take their most significant toll on those younger than one year and those older than 65 years, as well as those with serious underlying medical conditions. COVID also exerts its most severe impact on older people and those with underlying medical problems. It is important to avoid others, especially those with vulnerabilities, when ill. Consider testing for COVID before coming into contact with those who are most at risk. Handwashing, covering your cough by coughing into your elbow and using masks when in crowded places and/or if you are more at risk will continue to be important to protect yourself and others.

It is difficult to predict the patterns of RSV, flu, and COVID over the coming months. However, we can

expect a rise in the activity of these viruses as population immunity from last year's infections and vaccinations wanes and new viral forms appear. That is why it is so important to keep up to date with vaccination. This year's flu vaccine is designed to target several different flu strains.

The updated COVID vaccine is also formulated to protect commonly circulating strains of the virus and can reduce severity of disease. Barring the emergence of a markedly more virulent variant that evades protection from the updated vaccine, the FDA anticipates that the COVID vaccine will need to be updated annually like the flu vaccine. Until there is a combination respiratory pathogen vaccine, these vaccines need to be administered separately. Flu and COVID vaccines can be given at the same time. It is best to speak with your provider to determine the best timing for the RSV vaccine.

As a reminder, if you test positive for COVID, stay home for at least 5 days (regardless of your vaccination status) and isolate from others in your home. You are likely most infectious during these first 5 days. Day 0 is the day of your symptom onset or the day of the first positive test, whichever was earlier. Wear a high-quality mask if you must be around others at home and in public. Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask. Monitor your symptoms. If you have an emergency warning sign (like trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately. You may end isolation on day 6 if you no longer have symptoms or your symptoms are improving and you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication). However, you should wear a high quality mask through day 10. Remember, loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and should not delay the end of isolation.

Lastly, every U.S. household can place an order to receive four free COVID rapid tests delivered directly to their home. Order online at www.COVIDTests.gov or call 1-800-232-0233. We also have COVID tests available at the Senior Center or at the Board of Health office in Town Hall. Be Well!

Information From: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>





Blood Pressure Clinics-Nov.2023

Wednesday November 1st

Wednesday November 15th

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!

Office Hours are:

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

September 16th-October 15th

(Supporting Nutrition Program & Food Pantry)

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND

COOLING, INC.

Betty Emery

David Sharkey

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

In Honor of Robert Whitcomb

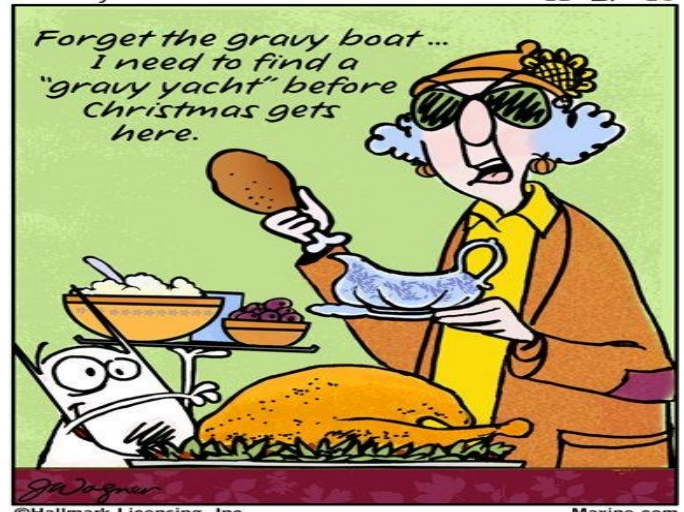
Shirley Mitchell

Bob Bender & Sandy Venner



Crabby Road

11-27-10

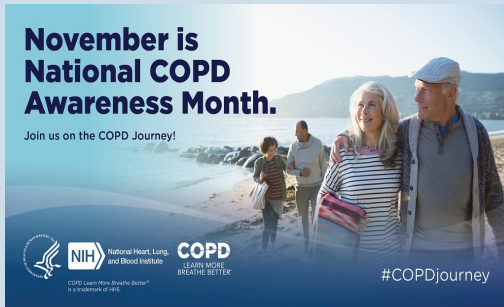


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This Month's Important Events

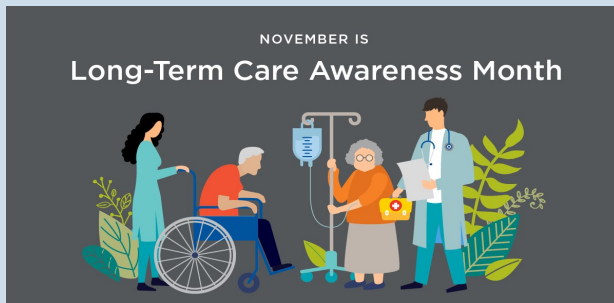
National COPD Awareness Month



National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Month



Long Term Care Awareness Month



National Audiology Awareness Month



The Pool Room is OPEN!

The Pool Room is open! Join us!

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,

My District Legislative Director, Janice Phillips will have office hours at the Merrimac Senior Center each month.

November Office hours will be on Wednesday 11/8/23 from 11am-12pm.

We loved seeing everyone at the October Office Hours!

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.

Yours in Service,

Barry



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

The Veterans Day Holiday will be observed this year on Saturday, November 11th. This is a holiday where we recognize the service of all Veterans. The Merrimac Council On Aging will hold a Veterans luncheon for Veterans and a guest on November 8th at 12:00 p.m. Reservations are required, to register call the COA @ 978-346-9549.

The New Old Oak will be having their annual Veterans Luncheon to be held on November 11th from 12 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. No reservations are required to attend. If you want a meal to go, please call the New Old Oak @ 978-346-9997 to reserve a meal. If you are unable to attend a ceremony, flying the American flag or adorning your home with some type of patriotic decoration is a good way to show our Veteran Community the appreciation they deserve. On Veterans Day there are many restaurants and other businesses that offer Veterans free or reduced meals, coffee, etc. to show their appreciation. For more information on Veteran Day deals go to the website veteran.com, scroll down the page and there is a link for an extensive list of free meals, discounts and deals. Discounts provided by local businesses will also be placed on the Amesbury Veteran Services website Events page.

One of the questions we are often asked at Veteran Services is who is a Veteran or am I a Veteran? Our simple answer is if you raised your right hand and took the oath of enlistment and served honorably on active duty or in the National Guard or Reserves you are a Veteran. The type of benefits a Veteran receives is dependent on several factors including the amount of active-duty service, combat, service-connected disabilities and war time service. The best way to determine the level of benefits you are entitled to is to review your service with your local Veteran Services Office. The Amesbury Veteran Services office can be contacted at 978-388-8136. To do this benefits review, it is best if you have your discharge document available. If you do not have your discharge document, our office is available to assist you with obtaining this important document.



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 : Vacancy

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**

Social Security

Cost-of-Living Adjustment

More than 71 million Americans will see a 3.2% increase in their Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments in 2024.

Social Security will mail cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) notices throughout the month of December to retirement, survivors, and disability

beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and representative payees.

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

***We have free COVID tests and masks
for anyone that needs these items!***