



# The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

May 2024

Newsletter Volume 44 Issue 05

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](http://www.townofmerrimac.com/council-on-aging)

Executive Director: Brienne R. Walsh:  
[bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com](mailto: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:*

*May is here and the nicer weather has arrived, hopefully to stay! Our large outdoor event tent will be going up this month and we have some great events planned for you! Continuing our 50th Anniversary celebrations, we have 2 big performances this month! On 05/23,*

*Agespan sponsors Drag Bingo featuring Gigi Glam and Friends ! This is a free but ticketed event and will fill up quickly! Lots of prizes and fun to be had with Gigi and her friends, all dressed up and ready to call some lucky Bingo numbers! Then on 05/30, the Friends of MCOA will sponsor a free 50's sockhop concert featuring the nationally acclaimed Reminisants! Come and join us for a rocking good time! This event is by reservation only ! Check out the inserts inside for more details about both events!*

*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!*

### Inside this Issue

Director's Corner.....Pg 1  
LGBTQ+ , Holiday Closure.....Pg.3  
Lunch Ordering& Lotus Lanterns Pg.4  
Bingo, Active Events, Bill Duke .....Pg.5  
Program Updates & Class Info.....Pg 6  
Trips & Travel Info.....Pg 7  
Mothers & Others Afternoon Tea, Breakfast w/Chiefs, Friends News.....Pg.8  
Monthly Movies .....Pg.9  
Community Outreach .....Pg. 10  
Health & Wellness News.....Pg 11  
BP Clinics & Thank You.....Pg 12  
May Awareness & Activities ... ..Pg 13  
Greetings & Contact .....Pg 14&16  
Inserts: Monthly Menu , Daily Calendar, Monthly Craft, Drag Bingo, 50's Themed Sock Hop Reminisants Concert, Save the Date Craft Fair, Lunch N Learns, Nutrition Jeopardy



POWERED BY CONNECTION: MAY 2024





## LGBTQ+ Social Connection

### Evening

Join us for a meal and conversation!

Please register in advance

Hot meal provided free of charge



Thursday

5:30pm-8pm May 16,2024

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, celebrations of life 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 Merrimac COA& Senior Center will be closed on Monday May 27,2024 in observance of Memorial Day. We will reopen at 8:30am on Tuesday 05/28/24.**

## Van/NEET Rides-Ordering Meals-

### 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](mailto: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!

### Korean Lotus Lantern Class

Wed. 07/24/24 at 10am

Signup begins now!

\$9/cash due at registration!

Call Denise at (978) 346-9549 for details!



**Make a beautiful one of a kind lantern to light up your life**



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 05/06/24

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 05/09/24 10am-11am

By Appointment , Call Ahead!



### Active Events to Keep your Mind Engaged !

Craft Class! FREE!

Tuesday May 14,2024 1:30pm

Come and Make a Red White and Blue Rustic Patriotic

Hanging Star Banner!

Sign up required for materials!

Pizza and Poetry

Summer Hiatus! Join us in

December 2024 for our next

Installment!

Need a Ride to the Polls?

Monday 05/06/24 from 1-4pm

Call to schedule a ride to vote at the library!

## BINGO

Bingo is in Session!

Mondays

May 6, 13, 20

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



*Upcoming Special Events-See Inserts for more details!*

Home Modification Program Lunch N Learn

Monday 05/20/24 at 12pm

Lunch is \$5 and must be reserved in advance.

Foot Clinic NEWS! Our foot clinic is on summer break!



Our medical pedicurist,

Barbara Ullman will no longer be coming to Merrimac.

We hope to have someone new soon! Watch the newsletter !

**Exercise Classes**

**Advanced Sign Up Required!**

**Mondays:**

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

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

**Wednesdays:** No classes

**Thursdays:**

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

**Fridays:** NEW CLASS ALERT!!!

**The 3B's with Brian!**

**This class fills up fast, be sure to sign up!!**

**\$5/class, bring your friends and get ready to**

**practice the 3B's! Exercise your mind and your  
body in the same class!**



## TRIPS & TRAVEL

### MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES

#### TRIPS & TRAVEL



VAN TRIP 05/28/24 1:30pm  
Steven Coolidge Trustees Gardens  
Bus is \$5 per person, Garden  
entrance \$10/per person  
Call Denise for more info!

#### *Dining Out Bells & Romeos –*

*Join us for lunch Pickety Place is FULL!!*

Leaves from COA

*Stay tuned for the June excursion!*

*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!*

**An Announcement from the Friends of MCOA:**

- \* **Happy May from the Friends of the MCOA! No May Meeting!**
- \* **We are currently running our Friends of the MCOA Membership Drive! Wat**

**Mother's And Others  
Afternoon Ladies Tea**

**Wed.05/15/24**

**2pm-4pm**

**Iced and Hot Tea**

**Sandwiches**

**Desserts**

**Come Celebrate the  
important women in  
your life!**

**Library News!**

**Puzzle in Progress!**

**Join us to finish the  
1000 piece puzzle on  
the table! Drop by any-  
time!**

**NO due dates, bring  
back books when  
you're finished!**

**New Furniture  
Coming Soon!**

**Breakfast with the  
Chiefs**

**Thurs 05/09/24**

**9:30am-FREE!**



**Come hear about  
the outcome of the  
Town Meeting and  
Town Elections and  
get all the news  
from Town Hall,  
Public Safety and  
more!**

**Advanced  
Registration  
Required,  
Limited Seating!**



**BOOKS AGAIN! PLEASE ONLY TITLES FROM 2012-PRESENT! LARGE PRINT NEEDED ESPECIALLY!**

Check the mail for our membership drive

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



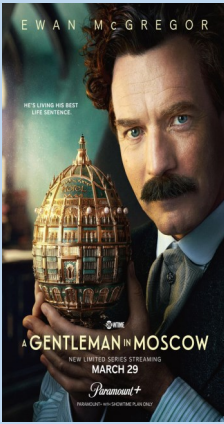
## Monthly Movies!

### Rather: A Documentary

**Thurs.05/07/24 at 1:30pm**



## A Gentleman in Moscow: A Limited Series:Ep.1-3



**Starring Ewan McGregor**

**Tuesday 05/28/24 1:30pm**

**\*\*Popcorn and Snacks Provided**

## Community Outreach Column with Bridget Batcheller, MSW



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



Welcome to May!

In May, we celebrate Older Americans Month to acknowledge older adults and their contribution to society. This year's theme for Older Americans Month, set by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), is *Powered by Connection*. This theme was chosen to recognize the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health & well-being. Being connected to others and having strong and meaningful relationships supports your independence as well as your ability to age in place by combatting isolation and loneliness.

Social connectedness can have an impact on our health – physical, social/emotional, **and** mental health, and each of these areas of health benefits from having strong and meaningful connections. Some of the physical benefits of having strong social connections include prevention of serious illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, and dementia, better quality of life, strong immune system and quick recovery time from illness. Social connections can actually generate a positive feedback loop of social, emotional and physical wellbeing and foster a greater sense of empathy, trust, compassion, and an enhanced mood overall. In addition to these social/emotional health benefits, you may experience some of the mental health benefits that come with having powerful social connections, such as a greater ability to manage stress, higher self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and decreased chance of anxiety and depression.

Whether you feel like you have strong social connections or not, establishing, maintaining and strengthening your connections are important to ways to ensure that you continue to nurture your connections to prevent any feelings of isolation or loneliness. You can improve your social connections in a variety of ways – reaching out to acquaintances or getting to know your neighbors, joining a social club/group or community center. It also requires that we devote time our relationships and make sure we are giving them attention and care. Focusing on the quality and meaningfulness of social connections are more important than the number of connections you have.



A good internal sense of connection is what matters! A good place to start would be giving/sharing/support others, taking care of yourself, and asking for help. If you feel like your life is missing some social interaction and you could benefit from it, try some of the tips mentioned above to create new connections! Start somewhere you are familiar with, like your local senior center! At the Merrimac Senior Center, we have plenty of opportunities for socializing and creating meaningful interactions through our daily programming and different groups that meet. In addition to our regular programming, like daily lunch meals, craft classes, trips & van outings, women's support & grief support groups, we always have new events every month! In May, we will be hosting an ice cream social, drag bingo, local musical entertainment, and educational lunch & learn presentations.

Social connections are not just important for your health, but to society as well! Start thinking about what connection means to you and how you can strengthen your connections in your life.

"May the month of May be a month of sunshine, happiness, and endless blessings." — Unknown



### Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

Greetings from your Public Health Nurse!

It is finally starting to feel like the spring season has arrived! The sun is warming things up and flowers are blooming. As we are fully into spring mode, it is a good time to think about spring cleaning. Cleaning and organizing our space are important for health, safety and hygiene reasons. As you enter into spring cleaning mode, don't forget about cleaning out your medicine cabinet.

When it comes to medication safety, how and where you keep your medication matters. Every year, approximately 2 million people suffer from drug-related injuries. This number includes people who experience medication errors, adverse drug reactions, allergic reactions, or overdoses. Safe and secure storage and disposal of all medications can help avoid accidental injuries.

The first step is to get organized – check to make sure all your medicines are not expired, since taking expired medication may not be safe or effective. Also, ensure that your prescription medicine is stored in the original container and that the safety lock is tightened. The second step is to secure your medication. Safe storage of controlled medications is especially important, as they can be dangerous if taken when not prescribed.

If you find over the counter (OTC) and prescription medications that are either expired or no longer useful to you, they should be disposed of. The best option is to find a drug take back location. They are usually found at a retail, hospital or clinic pharmacy and/or police station. Get more information about drug disposal and a disposal site locator at: [takeback-day.dea.gov](http://takeback-day.dea.gov).

The Merrimac police department has a drug take back location in the station lobby for residents to safely dispose of unused or unwanted prescription medications. Please note, liquids or sharps are not accepted. There are also local pharmacies with medication disposal containers that will accept both prescription and OTC medications. Liquid medication is accepted if less than 4 ounces and in a sealed zip lock bag. The CVS and Stop and Shop pharmacy on Macy Street in Amesbury have medication waste kiosks, as does the CVS in Haverhill on Lowell Street.

If you can not get to drug take back location, you must check the FDA's flush list to see if your medication is on the list. Medications on the flush list are sought-after for

their misuse and/or abuse potential and can result in death if taken inappropriately by adults, children or pets. Drugs with the words fentanyl, morphine, oxycodone, hydrocodone or methadone are some of the drugs on the FDA flush list. Remember that only medications on the FDA flush list should be flushed, and only if a take back option is not readily available. The FDA has determined that the known risk of harm to people and pets from accidental exposure to these medicines far outweigh the risk to human health and the environment from flushing these medications.



If you do not have a take back program readily available and your drug is not on the flush list, the FDA has provided instructions for disposal of the medications in the trash at home. The goal is to make medicines as difficult to consume as possible. Mix medicines with an unappealing substance such as dirt, cat litter, used coffee grounds, or dissolve pills with water or soda; place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag; throw away the container in your trash at home; and delete all personal information on the prescription label of empty medicine bottles or medicine packaging, then trash or recycle the empty bottle or packaging.

Lastly, don't forget about proper disposal of needles. It is against the law in the state of Massachusetts to dispose of sharps in the household trash. Needles/sharps may be disposed of at the Senior Center as long as they are in a red sharps container. There is no drop off fee. Sharps containers are available for purchase at the Senior Center for \$10.00. For more information regarding sharps disposal, visit: [safeneedledisposal.org](http://safeneedledisposal.org)

Be Well!

Information From:

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/where-and-how-dispose-unused-medicines>

[https://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pdfs/WTC\\_Factsheet\\_Prescription\\_Medicine\\_WEB\\_0319-P.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pdfs/WTC_Factsheet_Prescription_Medicine_WEB_0319-P.pdf)





**Blood Pressure Clinics**

**May 2024**

**Wednesday May 1st**

**Wednesday May 15th**

**9am-10am**



**SHARPS Disposal Drop Off Site**

**New Containers Available for \$ 10**

**Disposal is free!**

*Public Health Nurse*

**Office Hours:**

*Tuesdays 8:30am-2:30pm*

*Wednesday 8:30am-10:45am*

*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

March 16th –April 15th

**Supporting Nutrition Program**

**Food Pantry & Programming**

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND

COOLING, INC.

Betty Emery

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

Steven Emery

Karen Campus

**In Honor of Joyce Nevens**

Alberta Peavey



**This Month's Important Events**

**Mental Health Awareness Month**



**Skin Cancer Awareness Month**



**Stroke Awareness Month**



**National Allergy & Asthma Month**



**The Pool Room is OPEN!**

The Pool Room is open! Join us!

**Tues & Thurs 9am-12pm or reservation**

**Do you knit or crochet?**

Would you like to learn?

Join us for Knitting Group

**Tuesdays at 1:00pm**



**Van Trip Transportation**

If you need transportation, please call to book a trip in advance. A minimum of 4 business days is required to book. Monthly Grocery Shop for April is on

**Tues.05/14/24 10:00am. Call to Register! Limited!**

**Veterans Services**

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

Kevin Hunt, Veterans Services  
[KHunt@CityofNewburyport.com](mailto: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. .May Office hours will be on Tuesday May 7,2024 from 10-11am.

I hope you had a memorable experience watching the 2024 Solar Eclipse! I was grateful to enjoy the event with my wife, Amy, at our home in Andover.

This spring on Beacon Hill, the Senate passed a variety of bills including one to establish higher standards for welder safety. We also passed a bill to protect residents from abusive debt collection, and the Senate unanimously approved borrowing for the state's so-called "Chapter 90" program, an annual investment of funding to municipalities for transportation and infrastructure needs.

As Senate Chair of the Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, I will be considering best strategies for ensuring we maximize Massachusetts' competitiveness so our economy thrives. That's why I was appreciative to be reappointed by Senate President Karen Spilka to Governor Healey's Economic Development Planning Council, which is a collaborative group that seeks input and consensus on all things Economic Development.

I am proud to announce that Merrimac's home rule to expand the Select Board from three to five members has passed. This expansion reflects the community's civic engagement and will allow for the board to better serve Merrimac's residents. A big thanks to all who were involved, including Representative Dawne Shand and Select Board Chair Chris Manni.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if my team can ever be helpful. Connect with me by emailing me at [barry.finegold@masenate.gov](mailto:barry.finegold@masenate.gov) or by calling my office at 617-722-1612.

Yours in Service,

Barry

**Dear Veterans & Families:**



As we begin the month of May, the Veteran Services office will be working with volunteers in all our local communities to place flags on the graves of Veterans to honor their service and sacrifice.

Memorial Day was originally called Decoration Day and began during the American Civil War when citizens placed flowers on the graves of those who had been killed in battle. After World War I, it came to be observed in honor of those who had died in all U.S. wars, and its name was changed to Memorial Day. We will be observing Memorial Day this year on Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Merrimac American Legion Post 134 will have a ceremony at the Veterans section of Locust Grove Cemetery on Memorial Day starting off at 8:00 a.m. with a ceremony for each branch of the service. We hope that you will take some time to attend Memorial Day observances this year and pay your respects to those Veterans who have passed away.

Thank you to Rick Olsen of Merrimac who will be placing flags on the graves of over 500 Merrimac Veterans. Rick also receives assistance from members of the American Legion Auxiliary to ensure no Veterans grave is missed. In the event a Veteran grave is not marked, please contact the Veteran Services Office @ 978-388-8136 and we will provide a flag to be placed on the grave.

**In the meantime, feel free to contact the Veteran Services Offices in Amesbury 978-388-8136 or Newburyport 978-462-2201 if you need assistance.**

**Jeremiah Murphy**

**Veterans Agent**





## **SENIOR CENTER STAFF**

**Exec. Director:** Brienne R. Walsh

**Program Coordinator & Trips:** 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:** Jon Behrens

**Senior Aide & Van Driver :** Vacancy

**Custodian/Van Driver:** Wayne Jones

**Food & Nutrition Director:** Eileen Murray, CDM, CFPP

**Food Pantry Coordinator (Volunteer):** Candie Benjamin

**Volunteer Receptionists:** Kathy Egmont, Bill Gaylardo, Julie Gilchrist

### **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](mailto:bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com)

**Program Coordinator: Denise Gilman**  
[dgilman@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:dgilman@townofmerrimac.com)

**Outreach & Human Services Bridget Batcheller**  
[bbatcheller@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:bbatcheller@townofmerrimac.com)

**Food & Nutrition Director: Eileen Murray**  
[emurray@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:emurray@townofmerrimac.com)

**Transportation Jon Behrens**  
[jbehrens@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:jbehrens@townofmerrimac.com)

**Danielle Cataldo, RN, MSN**

**Nursing Services:** [nurse@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:nurse@townofmerrimac.com)

***SNAP Appointments are available by appointment! Call (978) 346-9549!***