



The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

Sept. 2024

Newsletter Volume 44 Issue 09

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

Director's Corner



Dear Friends:

Autumn is quickly approaching, hard to believe the summer is just about over! We have had a wonderful summer filled with great events and programs. Our Lobster Roll Luau was a fun time and we have lots more events on the way this fall!

Meditation with Nancy, which started in August, is going well and filling up quickly, be sure to check it out if you haven't already! This month, we will have a new program for Stamp Collectors with an Organizational Meeting as well as our 1st Repair Fair. We are also busy getting ready for our Annual Craft Fair on October 19th! Tables are still available and we are seeking volunteers to help on the day of the craft fair as well!

Be sure to read all the pages thoroughly and check out the inserts for all the details on this month's programs!

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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Slush & Songs, Repair Fair, Bike Audit Kick-
off Event, Lunch & Learn





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 Sept. 19, 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, graduation 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 09/02/24 in observation of the Labor Day holiday.

We will reopen on Tuesday 09/03/24 at 8:30am.

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!

Introducing our Fall 2024/Spring 2025 Intern:Eliza Taylor

Hello! My name is Eliza Taylor. I am currently a Senior at Simmons University

School of Social Work in Boston. I have three years of work experience in the Human Services industry. I am so excited to begin my Senior Practicum at Merrimac COA & Senior Center, and to get

involved in the community!

Be sure to say hello to Eliza this fall!





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

Sept.9, 16, 23, 30

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



Slush & Songs!

Thursday 09/26/24 FREE EVENT!

2pm

Join us for the musical stylings of Jay Daggett , featuring ice cold Richie's Premium slush from Nice Ice Baby!

Don't miss out on this cool treat, seating is limited!

Advanced Registration is Required



Active Events to Keep your Mind Engaged !

Monthly Craft –FREE

Fall Themed Mason Jar Craft



Wed.09/18/24

1:30pm

Please sign up in advance so we have enough materials!

Legal Clinic Jason Ebacher, Esq

Thursday Sept.12th,2024

10-11am, by appointment only.

See the Calendar insert for Games schedule!

Upcoming Special Events-See Inserts for more details!

Join us for an Estate Planning and Real Estate Lunch N Learn!

Friday 09/20/24 at 11:30am

FREE CATERED Luncheon and Door Prize Raffle!

RSVP Required by 09/18/24 !



Foot Clinic -Every other month, Appointments Required!

Tuesday 09/10/24 10-3pm w/Marie Anderson NP of Jolie Pieds

Limited Slots! Call Danielle for details !



Exercise & Wellness Classes

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

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

Bianca is on Maternity Leave until the end of 2024! Congratulations to Bianca!



Wednesdays: Meditation w/Nancy at 10am \$5

Beginning 08/14/24-NEW CLASS!

Join Merrimac resident, Nancy Masia, BS, Human Services, Certified Meditation & Reiki I&II for an infusion of calm, relaxation and wellness.

Thursdays:

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

No class on 09/16, 09/19, 09/23, 09/26

Fridays: The 3B's with Brian! \$5/class!

Advanced Registration Preferred!

MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES

SUMMER TRIPS & TRAVEL

VAN TRIP Tuesday 09/24/24 1:00pm departure

Bus is \$5/per person

Scenic Ride up the Coast!

Ice Cream/Snack Stop!

Call Denise for more info! Limited Seating!

Dining Out Bells & Romeos –Tuesday 09/17/24 11am

Join us for lunch at The China King Buffet of Haverhill

Bus Leaves from COA promptly at 11am

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!*

If the bus is full, you can always join us in your own car! Stay tuned for the Oct. excursion!

An Announcement from the Friends of MCOA:

- * **Happy September from the Friends of the MCOA! Join us on 09/10/24 at 2pm**
- * **Looking forward to the Craft Fair in October! Be sure to book your spaces so**

**Join us for
Fall Trivia!**

Wed.09/25/24

1:30-3:30pm

Bring a friend or two !

Refreshments Served!

Lots of Laughs & Fun!

**Advanced Registration
Required!**

Library News!

We are taking books
again!

Please only
donate titles from 2012
-present.

Large Print are always
in high
demand!

Stay tuned for more
news!

Breakfast w/Chiefs

Thursday

**September 12, 2024
9:30am**

**Join us for fall updates
from Town departments
and local stakeholders!
Bring your appetite and
questions!**

FREE!!!

**Hot breakfast w/coffee
and juice!**

**Advanced Registration
Required!**



WHEELCHAIRS, TRANSFER CHAIRS, KNEE SCOOTERS AND ROLLATORS UNTIL NOTICE WHILE WE INVENTORY OUR MEDICAL EQUIPMENT SHED!

Join us for our next meeting at the COA!

Soon, call Sandy at (978) 346-9549!

Please Note: We are accepting food pantry donations! Please call if it is a large dropoff!

Monthly Movies!

Yogi Berra : It Ain't Over: A Documentary

Tuesday 09/10/2024

1:30pm



Queen Bees

Starring Ellen Burstyn & Jane Curtain

Tues 09/24/24 at 1:30pm

****Popcorn and Snacks Provided**

Community Outreach Column with Bridget Batcheller, MSW

Outreach & Human Services



Food Assistance:

Our Neighbor's Table: 978-388-1907

Pettengill House Food Pantry: 978-463-8801

Community Action, Amesbury: 978-388-2570

Newbury Food Pantry: 978-358-1077

Transportation:

Northern Essex Elder Transport Inc (NEET): 978-388-7474

Merrimack Valley Transit (MEVA): 978-469-6878

MassHealth PT-1: 1-800-841-2900

Financial assistance:

St Vincent's De Paul - 978-346-8604

Pettengill House - 978-463-8801

Community Action, Haverhill - 978-373-1971

Community Action, Amesbury - 978-388-2570

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) Program

mortgage/rent/utility assistance

Utility Assistance:

Merrimack Light Department has a few options for payment plans

Fuel Assistance through Community Action, Haverhill 978-373-1971

MA Good Neighbor Energy Fund - 800-334-3047

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) Program - Community Teamwork Inc (CTI), Lowell 978-459-0551

MassHealth Applications:

Anna Jaques Hospital

Pettengill House 978-463-8801

Marielys Perez at Community Action Inc, Haverhill - 978-989-1291

Financial assistance:

St Vincent's De Paul - 978-346-8604

Pettengill House - 978-463-8801

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Pettengill House 978-463-8801

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Housing Assistance:

Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Programs (CHAMP) - contact your local housing authority

Fair Housing Program at CTI, 978-654-5637

CTI Section 8 Housing Search: Ja'net Jusino 978-373-1971, ext. 341,
jjusino@communityactioninc.org

Emergency Shelter - 866-584-0653

Pharmacy Outreach Program - 866-633-1617

Assists with questions on prescriptions, lowering costs and evaluating insurance plans to find the right prescription

Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

Do you know that September is Healthy Aging Month? This provides a yearly opportunity to raise awareness and focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older. People are living longer overall and the number of older adults in the U.S. is growing. As we age, our bodies and minds change and maintaining a healthy lifestyle will help us better manage those changes. A healthy lifestyle will enable us to live a longer life and can prevent some common age-related health problems.

September is a great time of year to recapture that “back to school” feeling and start fresh with choosing healthy lifestyle options. The first step is taking charge of your health. It is important to take a proactive approach to aging by incorporating healthy behaviors and habits into your daily life. Read on to learn about some tips to contribute to healthy aging.

Be your own best advocate and play an active role in your healthcare. You know your body best, don't be afraid to ask questions during appointments with your health care provider. Let him/her know of any symptoms that you are having and/or that you are concerned about. Make sure you are knowledgeable about which medications you are taking, why they were prescribed and proper dosing instructions. Stay current with regular physical exams, routine lab work and recommended imaging studies.

Ensure that you maintain a healthy diet. Dietary needs may change as you age. A healthy eating plan includes nutritious foods that are low in cholesterol, fat, and artificial ingredients. Reduce your salt intake. A diet high in sodium (salt) has been linked to high blood pressure, stroke, and heart attack. Add more fiber to your diet, which can help lower cholesterol, control your blood sugar, and maintain good digestive health. You should also drink plenty of liquids (especially water) to remain hydrated.

Move more and sit less. Staying physically active can help you maintain a healthy weight and avoid health problems. Regular exercise will help control blood pressure, prevent heart disease and stroke and possibly lower your risk for depression, anxiety, some forms of cancer, as well as type 2 diabetes. Do something fun so you are more motivated to keep at it, like dancing, swimming, walking or aerobics. We have several dif-

ferent exercise options here at the Senior Center, including yoga and meditation, as well as balance exercises. Talk to your healthcare provider to determine how much exercise you need, which will depend on your age and health.



Keeping our minds active is just as important as keeping our bodies active. There are many activities that can keep your mind active and improve memory. Examples include learning new skills, reading, working on puzzles and playing games. Doing things that you enjoy will make you feel happier and can decrease feelings of loneliness. Volunteering is an excellent way to add happiness to your life by utilizing your time and skills to give back to the community. We have numerous volunteer opportunities here at the Senior Center. Try a new activity (like an art or craft class, or try a new exercise class) and invite your friends/family to join. Make your mental health a priority by practicing meditation and/or relaxation techniques.

As we age, it is important to redefine our purpose and to maintain a sense of identity, both of which are essential to a healthy lifestyle.

Remember, it's never too late!

In response to the COVID summer surge, the state has made more at home test kits available to residents. We have these free kits here at the Senior Center. Come over and grab a box or 2 and please test yourself if you have symptoms. Thank you for testing to keep our community safe!

Be Well!

Information From: <https://healthyaging.net/healthy-aging-month/september-is-healthy-aging-month-celebrates-30-years/>





Blood Pressure Clinics

September 2024

Wednesday Sept.4th

Wednesday Sept.18th

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

July 16th August 15th

Supporting Nutrition Program

Food Pantry & Programming

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND

COOLING, INC.

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

Betty Emery

Maryellen Russo

Joan Maguire

Patricia Sweeney

Shirley Mitchell



This Month's Important Events

Pain Awareness Month



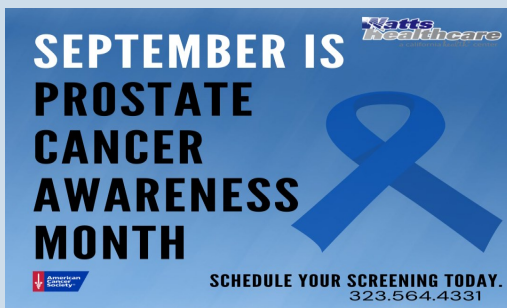
National Suicide Prevention Awareness



Self Care Awareness Month



Prostate Cancer Awareness 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 September is on **Tues. 09/10/24 at 10:00am. Call to Register! Limited!**

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



Hi All:

My District Legislative Director, Janice Phillips will have office hours at the Merrimac Senior

Center each month. September office hours will be Monday 09/09/24 at 10-11am.

Fall is coming, and I couldn't be more excited for the cooler weather – and for football!

This summer, Massachusetts' two-year legislative session came to a close. I am pleased the legislature passed measures to boost housing production, support veterans, and reform assisted living and long-term care sectors. Although formal session has concluded for the year, our work isn't over, and I am looking forward to continuing to advocate for legislation that positively impacts families and individuals across the commonwealth.

I am excited to announce that I will be sponsoring a free State Grants Expo on September 25th at the North Andover Senior Center to connect local government agencies, non-profits, and community service organizations with state grant opportunities. Twenty-five state agencies will be in attendance, providing information on available grants, how to write competitive applications, and who to contact throughout the process. These resources will help our local organizations serve the community efficiently and effectively.

The start of fall also means the start of school. My middle daughter, Ella, began her freshman year of college and my youngest, Max, had his first day of the 7th grade. Congratulations to all the students beginning this new school year!

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

Yours in Service,

Barry



Dear Veterans & Families:



On August 8th, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey signed the HERO ACT into law. The HERO Act (An Act Honoring, Empowering, and Recognizing our Servicemembers and Veterans) includes over thirty provisions that will positively impact hundreds of thousands of veterans in Massachusetts. The following are some of the highlights of the HERO ACT:

Increase the EOVS Disabled Veteran Annuity: Increases the annual annuity paid from \$2,000 to \$2,500, phased in over two fiscal years.

· **Expanding Veteran Access to Behavioral Health Treatment:** Allows veterans on Chapter 115 to be reimbursed for outpatient behavioral health care visits.

· **Increases the Vet-Hire Tax Credit:** Increases to \$2,500 a tax credit for small businesses hiring chronically unemployed or low-income veterans. Eligible veterans include those receiving SNAP benefits, chronically unemployed veterans, and unemployed service-connected disabled veterans.

· **Expanding Veteran Property Tax Exemptions:** Creates two ways for municipalities to increase property exemptions for veterans. The first would create a mechanism for municipalities to double the current exemption more easily for veterans. The second ties the annual property tax abatement amount to inflation, allowing exempted property tax amounts to increase with inflation.

· **Increase access to the Active-Duty Buyback program:** This provision lengthens the time period for veterans to participate in the Active-Duty Service Buyback program from 180 days to 10 years and provides a retroactive grace period for veteran state employees who missed this opportunity.

· **Expand Veteran Motor Vehicle Benefits:** Waives license plate fees on specialty veteran license plates and creates a new woman veteran license plate decal. Additionally, the proposal streamlines eligible disabled/Purple Heart veteran access to motor vehicle benefits.

· **Broaden the Chapter 115 Definition of a veteran:** Better aligns the state Chapter 115 program definition of a veteran with the federal definition. This change allows more Massachusetts veterans to be eligible for the annuity, Chapter 115 benefits, access to the Massachusetts Veterans Homes, and other state benefits. This only applies to EOVS programs and does not affect any other agency or entity.

In total there are thirty changes to legislation that will improve the lives of Veterans and their family members living in Massachusetts. On September 4th, staff from the Veteran Services Offices will be attending training on the HERO ACT to understand all the changes being made to the various Massachusetts Veterans programs.

Jeremiah Murphy



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: vacancy

Social Work & Outreach Intern: Eliza Taylor

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

**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**

Stamp Collectors Organizational Meeting

Tuesday September 17, 2024

10am

Pastry & Coffee Served!

**Join us to learn about stamps,
see our collection and talk about all
things stamps!**

Advanced Registration Preferred!



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

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

Transportation Jon Behrens
jbehrens@townofmerrimac.com

Danielle Cataldo, RN, MSN

Nursing Services: nurse@townofmerrimac.com

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