



The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

March 2025

Newsletter Volume 45 Issue 03

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:

We are hoping for warmer temperatures this month and melting the abundance of snow from all of those February storms! March weather can be challenging as well with a mix of seasonal weather, please be sure to watch the school closings as we operate on the same schedule as the Pen-tucket Regional District for delays and closures, if needed.

Join us this month for Breakfast w/ the Chiefs, our Annual St. Patrick's Day event, a Social Security for Women presentation, Compression Education and much more!

If you haven't already applied for Fuel Assistance, please call and schedule an appointment with us. If you are unsure if you qualify, please call and we can help figure that out with you.

In other news, for March and April we will have 45's on Wednesday mornings from 10am-12pm as well as on Monday afternoons! Vinyasa Flow Yoga with Lynne on Wednesday afternoons has been going great, check it out if you haven't already!

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 (unless it is allergy related), beverages are allowed. Thank you for respecting our community!**

-

Inside this Issue

| | |
|--|--|
| Director's Corner.....Pg 1 | |
| LGBTQ+ Social Security for Women ,Pg.3 | |
| Lunch Ordering& NEET.....Pg.4 | |
| Bingo, Active Events, Legal infoPg.5 | |
| Program Updates & Class Info.....Pg 6 | |
| Trips & Travel Info.....Pg 7 | |
| ,Legal Roundtable &Facing the WindPg.8 | |
| Breakfast w/Chiefs.....Pg.8 | |
| Monthly Movie.....Pg.9 | |
| Community OutreachPg. 10 | |
| Health & Wellness News.....Pg 11 | |
| BP Clinics & Thank You.....Pg 12 | |
| March.. Awareness & ActivitiesPg 13 | |
| Senator & Social Work.....Pg....14 | |
| Happy St. Patrick's Day & Contact...Pg 15 | |
| <u>Inserts:</u> Monthly Menu , Daily Calendar, Bard Owl Café, Veterans News, Memoir Writing,, Compression Education Seminar, | |

MARCH





LGBTQ+ Social Connection

Evening

Join us for a meal and conversation!

Please register in advance

Hot meal provided free of charge



Thursday 03/20/25

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, 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!

Social Security Optimization for Women:

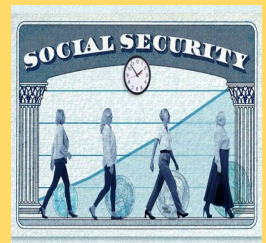
What Do You Need to Know?

Thursday March 20, 2025

1:30pm

Registration Encouraged!

Join Program Host Rick Roche as he reveals the primary factors that drive female financial precarity and why it's vital to coordinate Social Security benefits with spouses to maximize your monthly checks.



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!

Be a Lucky Charm Volunteer to Drive

Older adults in your community need help with transportation.

You decide when and where to drive.

Mileage reimbursement provided.



Call NEET at 978-388-7474 or visit www.driveforneet.org/volunteer to learn more.



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

March Craft

Wed 03/19/25

1:30pm

FREE!



Join us for a fun craft!

Mystery class host!

Limited Space!

Signup required!

All materials provided!

Active Events to Keep your Mind Engaged !

Bard Owl Café

Tuesday 03/18/25 1:30pm

Refreshments Provided!

Registration Required

Limited Seating! See Insert

Legal Clinic Jason Ebacher, Esq

Thurs. 3/13/25 10-11am

by Appt only!

See the Calendar insert for Games schedule!

45's is also now on Wed

mornings from 10a-12p in the Pool Room!

BINGO

Bingo is in Session!

Mondays

**March 3, 10, 17, 24,
and 31**

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



Upcoming Special Events-See Inserts for more details!

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon of Corned Beef & Cabbage w/ Entertainment

Thursday 03/13/25 Lunch at 12pm, Show to follow!

\$5/ticket in advance, must register by 03/10/25 at 4pm

See Flyer for More Details! Dine In Only, NO Delivery/Pickup!

Foot Clinic -Every other month, Appt. Required!

Tuesday 03/11/25 9-3pm

Marie Anderson NP of Jolie Pieds Footcare



Limited Slots! Call Danielle for details !

Exercise & Wellness Classes

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

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

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

Wednesdays at 1:30pm

NEW FREE CLASS ALERT!

Vinyasa Flow Yoga with Lynne Wholley!

Join Lynne for this great new offering!

Thursdays:

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

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

Advanced Registration Preferred!



MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES

Stay tuned for upcoming trips in 2025!

VAN TRIP to Coffee Time Bakery of Salem MA
Tues.03/25/25 Bus Departs at 10am
Lunch on your own at Bill & Bob's Roast Beef!

Dining Out Bells & Romeos –February

Tues. March 18,2025 at

11:00am-

Popovers of Epping NH

Bus Leaves from COA promptly at 11am

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!



An Announcement from the Friends of MCOA:

- * **No scheduled winter Friends Meeting. Spring Meeting to be announced soon!**
- * **Look for some great events sponsored by the Friends in 2025!**

**Legal
Roundtable
Discussion w/
Gerry Shyavitz
Friday 03/14/25
at 10am
Light
Refreshments**

**Facing the Wind Film
Screening & Family
Caregiver Support
Seminar w/Agespan
Thurs.03/27/25 12pm
Lunch N Learn
FREE Lunch
Sign up Required!**



**Breakfast
w/the Chiefs**

Thursday

03/06/25

9:30am

Free Hot

Breakfast

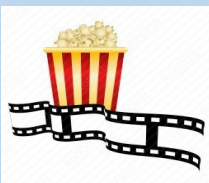
Registration

Required



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

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



Monthly Movies

Irish Wish

Starring Lindsay Lohan

**Tuesday 03/11/25 at
1:30pm**

**Popcorn, Snacks &
Beverages Provided!**



Community Outreach Column



Outreach & Human Services
Daniel Domings, LSWA



.Women are the real architects of society.” — Harriet Beecher Stowe

"You are who you are. No one can tell you who you are but you. Whoever you know yourself to be, you are right." —Maybe Burke

March Remembrances and Awareness:

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Women’s History Month

International Women's Day – **March 8th**

Susan B. Anthony Day – **March 15th**

Saint Patrick’s Day – **March 17th**

Transgender Day of Visibility – **March 31st**

For those of you who may not know, which I did not, March is packed with awareness, heritage, and remembrance. For the sake of the length of this section, please refer to the Diversity Calendar link below for more information.

Introduced in 1987 by former President Ronald Reagan, the month of March is dedicated to raising awareness of developmental disabilities. The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities identified the theme of “A World of Opportunities” in 2024. This month focuses on inclusion, equity, patience, and understanding of the developmental disability community.

First beginning in Santa Rosa, CA in 1978, National Women’s History Week evolved into a month wide celebration of women’s contributions to our nation. For 2025, the theme is designated “Moving Forward Together! Women Educating and Inspiring Generations”. If you are interested in reading some amazing stories of leadership and courage of our female youth, please read the article “Girls to the Front: How Young Women are Shaping Their Future” on the National Women’s History Museum

website listed below.

Created in 2010 by Rachel Crandall, Transgender Day of Visibility was marked to create awareness, give an opportunity to the transgender community to become visible, and acknowledge those who have been discriminated against. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, now called GLAAD, has further information, stories, and understanding of the importance of March 31st to the transgender and nonbinary communities.

Lastly, March is designated “Compassion and Action” for Social Work Month, March 2025. In such a fast paced, energy consuming field, it can be easy to lose sight of our main goal as social workers: helping people. Turning our compassion into action means focusing on the immediate challenges in our town, state, country, and world – and taking action.

<https://www.umassp.edu/deia/events-and-news/diversity-calendar>

<https://www.womenshistory.org/articles/girls-front-how-young-women-are-shaping-their-future>

<https://glaad.org/tdov>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/News/Social-Work-Month>



Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

Did you know that March 3, 2025 is World Hearing Day as stated by the World Health Organization (WHO). This year's theme is "Changing mindsets: Empower yourself to make ear and hearing care a reality for all!"

Hearing loss is a growing problem that affects millions of people around the world. The WHO expects the number of people with hearing loss around the world to double by 2050. More than 1 in 10 people in the United States have some degree of hearing loss. Approximately 1 in 3 adults over 65 and almost half of adults 75 and older have age-related hearing loss. Loss of hearing that is not addressed may be responsible for over 8% of cases of dementia among older adults.

Hearing loss is a frequently overlooked part of overall health and well-being and should be treated as soon as possible to avoid other complications. Unfortunately, most people wait 5-7 years before addressing their hearing loss and only 1 in 5 people who could benefit from hearing aids actually get them and use them.

Hearing loss can impact your ability to work, communicate with others and enjoy life. A loss of hearing can be associated with many other serious conditions including increased risk of falls, depression and isolation. Signs that you may be developing hearing loss include asking people to repeat themselves, difficulty following a conversation (especially while on the phone or in a noisy environment), needing to turn up the volume on the TV, or an inability to hear certain high-pitched sounds. Sometimes you may feel pain, pressure or ringing in your ear, or you may have issues with balance or dizziness.

Age-related hearing loss (also called presbycusis) is hearing loss that can happen gradually as we get older. Many things affect hearing as we age. Changes in the middle ear and along the nerve pathways from the ear to the brain can affect hearing. Long-term exposure to noise and some common medical conditions in older people (like high blood pressure and diabetes) can also play a role. There are some medications (chemotherapy) that are toxic to sensory cells in your ears. New research suggests that certain genes make some people more susceptible to hearing loss as they age.

If you are concerned about your hearing, get advice from a health care provider. Primary care physicians (PCP), otolaryngologists (ENT), and audiologists can be important parts of your hearing health care. Your PCP is often our first stop

for medical care and can refer you to a specialist, if needed, and can also help to determine if there are medical conditions that can contribute to hearing loss.

An ENT, can help determine you're having trouble hearing, offer treatment options and/or may refer you to an audiologist. An audiologist has specialized training in identifying and measuring hearing loss, and recommending and providing interventions, such as hearing aids.

Treatment will depend on the severity of your hearing loss. Devices that help with hearing loss include hearing aids, which are electronic instruments you wear in or behind your ear and that make sounds louder. Cochlear implants are small electronic devices that are surgically implanted in the inner ear for those who are profoundly deaf or have severe hearing loss. There are also assistive listening devices, like telephone and cellphone amplifying devices, apps for your smartphone or tablet, and closed-circuit systems that are available in some theaters, auditoriums, and places of worship.

If you have hearing loss tell your friends and family so that everyone can work together to make living with hearing loss easier. Explain which listening situations are hard for you. Ask people to face you while talking so that you can see their expressions and lip movements, which may help you to understand what they're saying. Ask people to speak louder, but not shout, and to speak more slowly and clearly. Turn off or turn down the volume of background noise, like the TV, when you're having a conversation. When going to a restaurant, ask for seating in a quiet area. Sitting in a booth can help soften or block noise.

As always, be proactive with your healthcare - advocate for yourself, seek advice from your healthcare provider and tell others what you need to make things easier.

Be Well!

Information From: Hearing Loss Association of America
National Institute on Aging





Blood Pressure Clinics

March 2025

Wednesday 03/05/25

Wednesday 03/19/25

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

Jan.16-Feb.15

Supporting Nutrition Program

Food Pantry & Programming

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND
COOLING, INC.

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

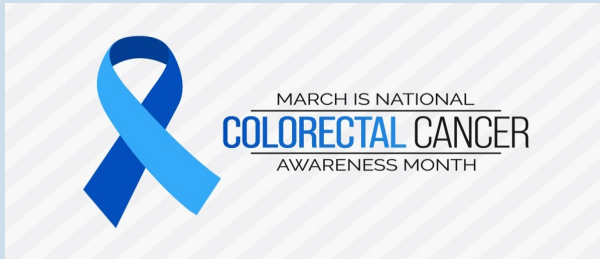
Betty Emery

Patty & Ron Ramsden



This Month's Important Events

Colorectal Cancer Awareness



Women's History Month



National Disability Awareness Month



Nutrition 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 need transportation, please call to book a trip in advance. A minimum of 4 business days is required to book. Monthly Grocery Shop trip for March is Tues 03/11/25 at 10am. 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 & Social Work Month-Intern Spotlight

Senator

Barry Finegold

Hi Everyone:

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

March Office Hours will be on March 18 ,2025 at 10am.



STATE SENATOR
BARRY FINEGOLD

Dawn
SHAND
• STATE REPRESENTATIVE •

**MERRIMAC AND
AMESBURY
COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION**

WHEN: Thursday, March 6th
6pm-7pm

WHERE: Sweetsir School,
104 Church Street Merrimac

JOIN US

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.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season!

Yours in Service,

Barry



Hi Everyone:

Throughout the past four years, I have studied and practiced in the field of Social Work, while pursuing my BSW at Simmons University. This year, on World Social Work Day, I reflect on my passion for the practice, as well as the many wonderful opportunities and experiences that I have been lucky enough to learn from.

I had the privilege of attending my first psychology course while still in high school. This course sparked my interest in human behavior and individual well being. While continuing to study psychology at community college I found myself becoming increasingly fascinated with sociology and political science. I began to realize the significant influence social factors and public/social policies carry over one's overall (physical, mental, social, and spiritual) health, and how benefits/privileges of these social determinants are inequitably distributed throughout society. As I continued to study, my interests continued to evolve. It was not long before I switched my major from psychology, to the more expansive field of social work.

Throughout my studies, I have had the pleasure of interning for five non-profit organizations, each committed to bettering the lives of those in their communities through practices such as community development; environmental stewardship/conservation; and social service assistance, including educational, occupational, residential, nutritional, and healthcare-related advocacy. I am so grateful for every opportunity I've had to practice with each of these incredible organizations; and I'm looking forward to continuing my impact in the fight for social justice!

Sincerely,

Eliza Taylor, Simmons Social Work Intern
Simmons Social Work Intern

**SOCIAL
WORKERS**

CHANGE THE WORLD.



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: Daniel Domings, LSWA

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, Louise Howe

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Chairwoman, Dave Vance, Vice Chairman, Candie Benjamin, Secretary, Clerk vacancy 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!)



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
ddomings@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!***

