

## “WISE GUIDE”



HAPPY NEW YEAR

In the Chinese New Year, 2026 is the **Year of the Fire Horse**, a symbol of good fortune, strength, and stability. Aren't we all hopeful that this year will bring those promises? At The Senior Center, our staff and volunteers are continually looking for ways to make things better—to meet the needs of our community, to support those who need a helping hand, and to guide those who want to help toward opportunities that make the greatest impact. We are hopeful that 2026 will bring new treasures in friendship, opportunity, and health.

While winter in the West County hills can be unpredictable, we are looking ahead to a season filled with fun, educational, and engaging activities. As we begin the New Year, **we have many people to thank.** The volunteer members of the **West County Senior Services District** have worked diligently to develop the first district of its kind in the state. New endeavors often come with hiccups and detours, yet the **Board of Managers** has remained consistent, patient, and persistent throughout the process. Our **Councils on Aging** have embraced the COA Collaborative and are busy planning Conversation Cafés and special events. From the **volunteers** who created gardening magic throughout the warmer months, to our Bones and Balance instructors, talented chefs, receptionists, and Home Repair volunteers—each played a role in making 2025 special, and together we look forward to an even better year ahead.

As you read through this newsletter, we invite you to pull out the calendar and mark the activities that spark your interest. **Consider making a resolution to connect with others** who are embracing aging in creative and dynamic ways. **Our Memoir**

**Group**, led by Joan Livingston, has recently published a book—Writings from the Center—now available on Amazon. In January, we're delighted to host a special lunch where many of the writers will share readings from their work, and copies of the book will also be available for purchase.

We're also excited to introduce new gathering ideas, including an **Afternoon Tea**. Especially during the colder months, imagine joining friends for cups of specialty teas alongside savory and sweet treats. We'll explore tea etiquette, share stories and reflections, and enjoy the warmth—both in our cups and in our company.

*Sheila Litchfield shares stories on the Sudden Senior Podcast*



# SeniorWise

January- February 2026



### Cold Feet Thank You!

We are so grateful for the wonderful outpouring of sock donations dropped off at The Senior Center during November and December. Thanks to your generosity, we received an abundance of adult socks, along with many pairs for children and infants. In fact, we had to empty our donation box four times to make room for them all! These donations will make a meaningful difference for individuals and families in need, helping to keep feet warm, healthy, and comfortable throughout the winter months. Thank you to everyone who contributed—your kindness truly helps to improve quality of life in our community.

### iPad Tablets for Loan

If you would like to borrow an iPad for a week, please call us or visit in person to complete the device checkout procedure. Contact Juli at 413-625-2502 for more information.





Thoughtful Gifts at The Senior Center

We are deeply grateful to our community for their generous donations, which make a significant difference in the lives of our seniors. Your thoughtfulness and support help us create a nurturing and supportive environment for all. Thank you for your continued generosity.

THANK YOU!

A Special Thank You To...

Bev Finnevan – office supplies

To all who generously donated socks for our Sock Box

Nancy Stevens, CJ Barnes, John Pollard, Mary Jean Fitzpatrick – cards

Kathy Wall – office supplies and soap

Lynn Matthewson – phone

Jack MacDougall – cat food

Turkeys: Shirley Waterhouse, Joan Knox, Prudy Wholey, Art Newell

Joe Czajkowski Farm – squash for Thanksgiving dinner

TRIAD – pumpkin pies

Cookies for Cookies Bags: Joan Knox,

Eileen Lively, Ellen Eller, Dot Lyman, Julie Moreno,

Karen Herzog, Joanne Soroka

Raffle Baskets: Senior Center Gardeners, Juli Moreno and Phyllis Garland, Shelburne COA, Janice Fluieriel and Kathy Wall, The Grinch, Gloria Fisher,

Wheels of Friendship: A Volunteer Driver Initiative Bringing Seniors Together, One Ride at a Time

The Wheels of Friendship initiative is designed to help older adults access programs, social activities, and essential resources at The Senior Center by providing door-to-door transportation through a network of volunteer drivers. This initiative encourages community engagement by enabling active seniors to support their peers through safe, reliable transportation.

How It Works

Volunteer Drivers: Seniors and other community members sign up to provide door-to-door rides for older adults needing transportation to The Senior Center.

Eligibility: Riders must be able to enter and exit a standard vehicle with minimal assistance (walkers and canes permitted; no wheelchairs or specialized mobility devices).

Two-Way Service: Drivers provide both pick-up and drop-off services to ensure riders can fully participate in activities.

Scheduling: Rides are arranged in advance through The Senior Center, coordinating availability between drivers and riders.

Call us at 413-625-2502 to sign up as a volunteer, or as a potential participant in receiving rides.

Senior Center Bad Weather Policy

For programs and services at The Senior Center, we have traditionally followed Mohawk School District's delay schedule. If Mohawk District has a 2-hour delay The Senior Center will open at 10. If Mohawk cancels school for the day, usually the Center will also be closed. Our voicemail will be updated on days with questionable weather by 7:00am. Call us at 625-2502 and listen to the voicemail message for updates.



Author Fred Warren visited with A Novel Idea book club to donate his latest novel.

Buckland COA, Ashfield COA

To Our Guest Chefs for two wonderful holiday meals – Joanne Soroka, Karen Herzog

Jack MacDougall – cat food

Sandy Tholman – raisins

Kathy Taylor – coffee

Diane Nisotis- handmade cards

Donations to Gift Fund

Klein Family Trust

Susan Samoriski

Cheryl Faufaw

Noreen O'Brien

Luahn C Page

Joan Lawless

Sherry Taylor

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Senior Center and member Councils on Aging's is to enrich the lives of residents in the community as they age by designing support networks, identifying, and meeting their needs and interests, and providing services and programs in welcoming, respectful, and safe environments.

STAFF

Juli Moreno, Director

Teddy Doucette, Outreach Coord.

Dot Lyman, Activities Coord.

Beverly Finnivan, Van Driver

Paul Labelle, Van Driver

Peter Otten, Van Driver

Hugh Knox, Meal Site Manager

Gloria Fisher, Office Assistant

WEST COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES BOARD OF MANAGERS

Sylvia Smith, Chair, Shelburne

Christine Baronas, Shelburne

Janice Fleuriel, Secretary, Buckland

Regina Purrinton, Buckland

Amy Shapiro, Vice Chair, Ashfield

David Collins, Ashfield

NEWSLETTER

SeniorWise is produced bi-monthly.

Content contributions are welcome

THE SENIOR CENTER

413-625-2502

sfsrctr@crocker.com

WEBSITE

the-senior-center.org

Like us on Facebook:

Mainstreetshelburne

PROGRAMS

Memoir Writing Group's "Writing from The Center" Book

The Memoir Writing Group began in 2015 under the leadership of Karen Earle, then Faith Kindness and currently Joan Livingston. This group continues to meet on Fridays and have published a book with some of their writings. Joan states, "I have been impressed by the quality of the writing the group creates. I believe their works deserve to be shared with others, so I suggested this anthology. Group members who wanted to participate submitted prose, poetry, plus the art you see." Members of the group who participated are Nancy Brewer, Debra Hoyle, Marie Fuller, Ellen Kaufmann, Caroline Mack, Margaret Payne and Juliet Seaver.

On Tues., January 13, at the inside Tuesday lunch, lunch participants will have the opportunity to meet this group and hear a few of the writings. Make sure to pre-register for lunch by January 8. Copies of the book will be available for sale.

Afternoon Tea at The Senior Center

Wednesday Jan 7, Feb 4, 2-3:30p.m.

As winter settles in, we're excited to introduce a new monthly gathering at The Senior Center: a yet-to-be-named Afternoon Tea group. Starting in January and February, we'll set aside one cozy afternoon each month to enjoy a traditional tea hour—with classic offerings like hot tea, cucumber sandwiches, biscuits with cream, and other delights.

We're especially hoping to connect with tea enthusiasts who enjoy specialty or exotic blends. If you have a favorite tea you'd like

to share—or would like to donate a small amount for the group—we'd love to hear from you.

Join us for warmth, good company, and good tea as we embrace the comforting rituals of Afternoon Tea etiquette during the coldest months of the year. All are welcome!

Crafts and Company (New)

Wednesdays, Jan. 14, 21, 28, Feb. 11, 18, 25, 1:30-3p.m.

Do you like to nature journal, gel print, collage, scrapbook, sketch or paint in watercolor or mixed media? Maybe you keep a daily journal or like to make junk journals. Let's beat the winter doldrums and meet at the senior center to work on projects that are dear to our hearts while we enjoy each other's company. Bring your printmaking supplies, paper, paints, pencils and pens or whatever you use. Pre-register by Jan. 8.

Heart and Soles Walking Club -December January, February

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9-10 a.m.

Starting Monday December 1st, the Heart and Soles walking club will meet again at Cowell Gym in Shelburne, and at Sander-son Academy in Ashfield. It's a great way to connect with others while taking many steps in a comfortable and safe setting. Bring water, a change of shoes to keep the gym floor clean and discover how many laps make a mile. Walking Pre-registration is not required. Show up and walk! Dona-tions appreciated.

Calling All Ghouls and Creative Spirits!

Monday January 12, February 23, 2:30-4:00 p.m.

The Senior Center and the West County Se-nior Services District are teaming up to host a Haunted House in 2026, and we're getting an early start to make it an unforgettable event! We're forming a Haunted House Planning Committee and are looking for volunteers with all kinds of talent- makeup artists, builders, decorators, actors, organizers, and anyone with a creative or spooky streak! The committee will meet once a month through next summer, then every other week as we get closer to the big event in October 2026.

Join us for the first planning meeting on Mon-day, January 12 and February 23rd from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at The Senior Center. Enjoy fun seasonal snacks and beverages as we brainstorm ideas and start shaping this spine-tingling com-munity event! Come be part of the frightful fun—let's make some Halloween magic to-gether!

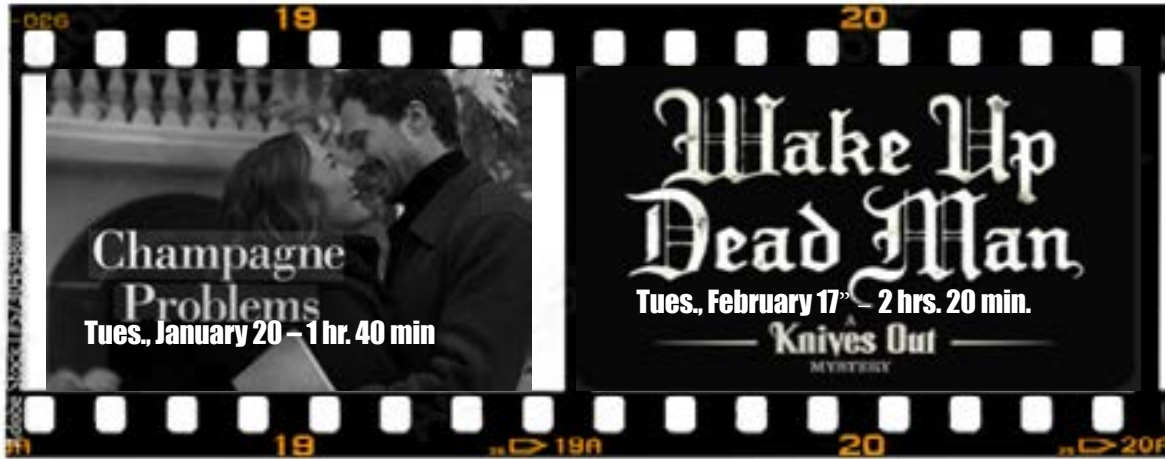
Speed Gaming, at a Conversation Cafe

Thurs, Feb 19, 3-5 p.m. (snow date Thurs Feb 26)

Sponsored by the Councils on Aging's of Ash-field, Buckland & Shelburne

Shake off the winter blues and join us for an uplifting afternoon of games, great com-pany, and good food! Come test your luck, sharpen your mind, and share some laughs over some board games, puzzles, and cards. Whether you come with friends or hope to make new ones, there's a seat at the table for you. We'll dive into games from 3:00-4:30 p.m., followed by a light meal and easy con-versation from 4:30-5:30 p.m. All are truly welcome.

Need a ride? Contact The Senior Center—we're happy to help get you there.



Movies

The show begins at 1 p.m.

## Reflexology

**1st Wednesday of every month. Jan 7, Feb. 4, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**

Susanne Recos, certified American Reflexologist, returns to The Senior Center for personal appointments. She will work on your hands for ½ hour or your feet for 1 hour. Massaging hands or feet stimulates the nervous system and relaxes the body. Cost for Ashfield, Buckland, and Shelburne members: \$20 for hands, \$35 for feet. Cost for others: \$25 for hands, \$40 for feet. Payment is made directly to Susanne Recos by check, cash or credit card. Pre-registration is required.

## A Novel Idea Book Club

**Wednesday Jan. 14, Feb. 11, 2:30- 4:00 p.m.**

The Book Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. Favorite books, authors and genres are shared by all in the group. Notes on the meeting make it possible for members to read books and authors they had not previously considered, especially after another member's sharing about what it meant to them. The novel idea is to bring one of your favorite books, a book you've just read, or information on your favorite author. If someone shares a book or author that interests you, the book may be shared or can be found at the library, which is open at the same time as Book Club! Come one, come all, it's a Novel Idea.



## Senior Talking Points

**Friday, Jan 9, Feb. 13, 1:30-3 p.m.**

Every second Friday, The Senior Center offers a group called Talking Points. We meet and talk about issues with aging, interesting facts we've learned, or a shared story of independent living and empowerment. We focus on fun and laughs, and the independence of solo aging.

## Drumming Group

**Mondays at 1:00 p.m. (12:30 first Monday of the month)**

Taught by Irene Baird. A group of drummers gathers weekly to learn new drumming techniques and socialize. Space is limited. Call the Center at 625-2502 if you are interested in joining the group.

## Men's Night Meetings

The Men's Night Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month. Call Cal Parsons if you would like to attend (413-427-4871). Meet to carpool at The Senior Center.

## Knitting Group

**Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.**

If you enjoy knitting, crocheting or doing other handwork, come and do it with the group. There is no telling how many scarves, dishcloths, socks and Afghans the group has finished. The conversation is good too!

## Bingo!

**Thursdays at 12:15 p.m.**



*Alan Young teaches macrame*

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# HEALTH

## Preventing Respiratory Sickness

Lisa White, Franklin Regional Council of Governments Cooperative Public Health Services Nurse, states that each year, respiratory viruses cause millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in the U.S. Flu and other types of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are spread mainly by airborne droplets released by talking, sneezing or coughing. To help protect yourself and others:

1. Get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for all major fall and winter respiratory diseases.
2. Put physical distance between yourself and others in public spaces and when you feel sick.
3. When you sneeze or cough, use a promptly disposed of tissue or the crook of your arm.
4. Handwash regularly and use a hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.
5. Clean surfaces such as door handles and railings frequently.

On September 4th, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to guarantee insurance coverage of vaccines recommended by the state, including respiratory virus vaccines like COVID, flu and RSV. DPH Commissioner Dr. Robbie Goldstein also issued a standing order to allow pharmacies to continue to provide COVID vaccines to MA residents aged five and older

## Happy Feet: Our Foot Clinic

Proper footcare is essential for our health and well-being. This help often prevents common issues such as falls, infections, and complications related to chronic conditions like diabetes. We are happy to partner with Foot Care by Nurses to provide foot care services by appointment. This program is partially funded by The Senior Center Gift Fund and a grant from the Fred W. Wells Trust.

## Foot Care Clinics

**Mondays, Jan. 5, Feb. 2, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**Mondays, Jan. 12, 26, Feb. 9, 23, (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)**

Registered Nurses from Foot Care by Nurses provide clinics at the Center. Appointments take up to 30 minutes and include nail clipping, callous removal, and a relaxing foot massage. Call the Center to book a private appointment at 625-2502. Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne seniors are charged \$40, and a new rate of \$50 for residents of other towns. (Note: If you can't keep your appointment, please call 413-625-2502 and cancel because if you do not call and do not show up for the appointment you will be billed a fee of \$10, as we are still billed for your time slot.) For home visits, \*which are the financial responsibility of the client, \* call 413-367-8369.

## Free! Healthy Bones and Balance

Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. at The Senior Center

Thursdays 10:00 a.m. at St. John's Corner, Ashfield

Jane Wagener, Janet Connolly and Honey Boyden are the instructors for this program designed to increase participants' strength, mobility, flexibility, and balance.

## Live Standing Dance Class - Aerobics

**Every Tuesday, 4:30-5:30 p.m.**

This class is led by Kathy Steinem and meets every Tuesday from 4:30-5:30 at The Senior Center. The cost is \$20/month. We need a minimum of 6 people to offer the class. Pre-register by calling the Center at 625-2502.

## Yoga

**Wednesdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.**

Whether a beginner or expert, yoga can greatly improve your quality of life. From improving your balance, reducing pain, increasing flexibility, and improving your mood, yoga might be your new favorite exercise that doesn't even feel like exercise (but indeed, it

is). Louise Legouis is instructing this class. Bring your own exercise mat. For Seniors only. The cost is \$20 per month.

## Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

**Mondays at 8:30 am at The Senior Center**

**Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. at The Senior Center**

Taught by Beth Bascom and Janice Fleurriel. The gentle, slow movements in this class help build back muscles, increase balance, strengthen the immune system and more. Can be done seated or standing. Because there is so much interest in the program, some participants will come Mondays and others will come Thursdays. If interested in joining or for more information, call The Senior Center at 625-2502. Pre-registration necessary. Cost: \$20/month.

## "Ask the Nurse"

**Tuesdays, Jan 27, Feb. 24, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.**

We are delighted to inform you that a dedicated FRCOG nurse is available at The Senior Center every 4th Tuesday of the month, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Our nurse is here to address your health-related inquiries, provide essential medical services, and support your overall well-being. During your visit, the nurse can assist you with health-related questions, check your blood pressure, and monitor blood glucose levels. Additionally, for your convenience and safety, the nurse will collect used needles and supply secure collection boxes for proper needle disposal.

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY Lifepath Lunch	FRIDAY
<b>January 2026</b> The Senior Center in Shelburne	☞ = Please call 625-2502 to pre-register for all activities. No walk-ins accepted for programs or events	<i>Library Book Delivery Dates</i> <i>Buckland – 1/6, 1/20</i> <i>Arms – 1/7, 1/21</i> <i>Ashfield – 1/7, 1/21</i>	<b>1</b> <b>New Year's Day</b> <b>Senior Center closed</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Senior Center</b> <b>Closed</b>
<b>5</b> 9-1 Foot Clinic 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 12:30 Drumming 2:00 Caregivers Support Group	<b>6</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞  4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>7</b> In-town Shop ☞ 8:30 Yoga 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 9-3:30 Reflexology 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal. 2-3:30- Afternoon Tea	<b>8</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo 3:00 COA Collaborative Meeting Pre-register for 1/13 meal	<b>9</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>10-12 Internet Café at Center</b> <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>9-10 Walking at Sanderson</b> <b>1:30-3 Senior Talking Points</b>
<b>12</b> 9-4 Foot Clinic☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 1:00 Drumming 2:30-4- Haunted House Planning Mtg	<b>13</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 12-1:30 Inside meal : New Year's Brunch- program by the Center's Memoir Writing Group ☞ 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>14</b> In-town Shop ☞ 8:30 Yoga 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal 1:30-3 Crafts and Company 2:30 Novel Idea Book Club at Ctr 5:00 Men's Nite to	<b>15</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo	<b>16</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>9-10 Walking at Sanderson</b> <b>Wal-Mart Shop Trip☞</b> <b>12-1:30 Memory Cafe☞</b>
<b>19</b> <b>Martin Luther King Day</b> <b>Senior Center</b> <b>Closed</b>	<b>20</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 1:00 Movie: “Champagne Prob-Lems” 1 hr 40 min 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>21</b> In-town Shop ☞ 8:30 Yoga 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal 1-3:00 Brown Bag 1:30-3 Crafts and Company 3:00 Board of Managers Mtg.	<b>22</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo Pre-register for 1/27 meal	<b>23</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>9-10 Walking at Sanderson</b>
<b>26</b> 9-4 Foot Clinic☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 1:00 Drumming	<b>27</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 10:30-12:00 Ask the Nurse☞ 12-1:30 To Go Meal: Menu- beef stew, roll, dessert ☞ 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>28</b> In-town Shop ☞ 8:30 Yoga 9-10 Walking at the Cowell 9-10 Walking at Sanderson 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal 10-12 Veteran's Agent 1:30-3 Crafts and Company	<b>29</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo	<b>30</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>9-10 Walking at Sanderson</b>

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY Meals on Wheels / Lifepath Lunch	FRIDAY
<b>2</b> 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 9-1 Foot Clinic ☞ 12:30 Drumming 2:00 Caregivers Support Group	<b>3</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>4</b> In-town Shop ☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 8:30 Yoga 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal. 9-3:30 Reflexology☞ 2-3:30- Afternoon Tea	<b>5 Greenfield Shop Trip☞</b> 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo Pre-register for 2/10 meal	<b>6</b> <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>Walking at Sanderson</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>10-12 Internet Café at Ctr.</b>
<b>9</b> 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 9-3:30 Foot Clinic☞ 1:00 Drumming	<b>10</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 12-1:30 Inside Valentine meal & Entertainment by Donna Lee “The Love songs of Connie Francis” Menu- lasagna, salad, bread, dessert☞ 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>11</b> In-town Shop ☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 8:30 Yoga 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal. 1:30-3 Crafts and Company 2:30 Novel Idea Book Club at Ctr 2:00 Men's Nite	<b>12 Greenfield Shop Trip☞</b> 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo 3:00 COA Collaborative Mtg.	<b>13</b> <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>Walking at Sanderson</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>1:30-3 Senior Talking Points</b>
<b>16</b> <b>President's Day</b> <b>Center closed</b>	<b>17</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 1:00 Movie: “Wake Up Dead Man-A Knives out Mystery” 2 hr. 20 min 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>18</b> In-town Shop ☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 8:30 Yoga 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal 1-3:00 Brown Bag 1:30-3 Crafts and Company 3:00 Board of Managers mtg	<b>19</b> 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo 3-5:30 Conversation Cafe Pre-register for 2/24meal	<b>20</b> <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>Walking at Sanderson</b> Staff available by phone 9-3 <b>Wal-Mart Shop Trip☞</b> <b>12-1:30 Memory Cafe☞</b>
<b>23</b> 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 9-3:30 Foot Clinic☞ 1:00 Drumming 2:30-4 Haunted House Planning-	<b>24</b> Greenfield Shop Trip☞ 10:30-12:00 Ask the Nurse☞ 12-1:30 To go Meal - Menu: shepherd's pie, bread, dessert. 4:30-5:30 Aerobics	<b>25</b> In-town Shop ☞ 9-10 Walking at the Cowell Walking at Sanderson 8:30 Yoga 10:00 Healthy Bones & Bal 10-12 Veteran's Agent 1:30-3 Crafts and Company	<b>26 Greenfield Shop Trip☞</b> 9:00 Tai Chi for Arthritis & Bal 10:00 Knitting Group 10:00 Healthy B&B-Ashfield 11:30 Lifepath meal☞ 12:15 Bingo	<b>27</b> <b>9-10 Walking at the Cowell</b> <b>Walking at Sanderson</b> Staff available by phone 9-3
	Library Book Delivery Dates Buckland – 2/10, 24 Arms – 2/11, 25 Ashfield – 2/11, 25	<b>February 2026</b> The Senior Center in Shelburne	☞ = Please call 625-2502 to pre-register for all activities. No walk-ins accepted for programs or events	

## Understanding Questions About Cash Withdrawals

Recently, **a local senior shared an experience** that left her feeling uneasy: when she went to withdraw a few thousand dollars from her bank, the **teller asked what the money was for.** She wondered whether this question is asked of everyone—or just seniors.

To better understand this practice and help our community stay informed, Senior Center **Director Juli contacted several banks to learn more.**

Banks report that fraud and financial scams have increased significantly, affecting people of all ages—not just older adults. Because of this, many banks have added new safeguards. One of these is that when someone withdraws a large amount of money, tellers are trained to ask the purpose of the withdrawal.

**This is not meant to be intrusive.** Instead, it's **intended to protect customers from common scams** where someone is pressured to withdraw cash, buy gift cards, or purchase cryptocurrency. Bank staff are encouraged to explain that once a customer walks out the door with cash, the bank can no longer insure it or assist as effectively if the transaction turns out to be fraudulent.

Some banks may also ask customers to fill out a brief form documenting the purpose of the withdrawal. This provides an added layer of protection and helps them identify potential fraud patterns.

Bank representatives also acknowledge that tellers sometimes feel a strong responsibility to protect their customers—especially if they've previously discovered someone was being scammed. As a result, they may occasionally come across as overcautious or overly assertive. Ideally, these conversations should occur privately, but procedures vary from branch to branch.

While many customers appreciate the extra layer of safety, others may feel uncomfortable or think, "It's my money." Both reactions are understandable. The important thing to know is that these questions are a growing part of fraud-prevention efforts and are generally asked of all customers making large withdrawals, not just seniors.

Our goal at The Senior Center is to keep our community informed, prepared, and empowered. If you ever feel unsure during a banking interaction, you can ask to speak privately or request a supervisor. And as always, if you have concerns about scams, fraud attempts, or anything that doesn't feel right, we're here to help.

## MEALS

### "To Go" Tuesday Lunches –

Beginning in January there will be one inside lunch and one to go lunch every month. (See our activity calendar for dates, times, and menus.) Pre-registration is required by calling 625-2502. For to go lunches, drive up in front of The Senior Center between 12-1:30 and your meal will be handed to you. For inside meals, the meal will be served at Noon followed by a program. Limit for meals inside is 40. The cost is \$4 for both inside and to go meals.

**Thursday Weekly Lifepath Lunches –** Meals are Thursdays at 11:30. Inside dining will allow up to 20 people to enjoy a hot plated meal in the company of others. Menus are available at the Center. Pre-registration is required by Mondays before 3:30 p.m. by calling 625-2502. Suggested donation: \$3.50.



## TRANSPORTATION

FRTA provides curb-to-curb Van Transportation for residents aged 60+ of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Rowe, and Shelburne. Priority is for (non-emergency) medical rides and food shopping. Please call FRTA at 413-774-2262 to make an appointment at least 48 hours in advance or for more information. A short application with a copy of a photo ID needs to be pre-approved for ridership.

The Senior Center FRTA van arranges rides to out-of-county medical appointments. If your medical appointment is in Hatfield, Northampton, Florence or Leeds, call The Senior Center at 413-625-2502 to arrange an out-of-county ride.

Call the FRTA at 774-2262 x163 for information and reservations and for information regarding their fixed route between Charlemont and Greenfield with stops in Buckland and Shelburne.



## OUTREACH

Outreach Services: The Outreach Coordinator, Teddy Doucette, provides office, home, and satellite visits. The focus is on benefits available to seniors, as well as future planning, housing, and living environment. The coordinator is the liaison with services provided to seniors throughout West Franklin County. Call Teddy at 413-625-2502.

The Senior Center provides Outreach Services for residents of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne. Residents from other towns who need help with Fuel Assistance, benefits applications, homecare, housing searches, connecting to local resources, or registering for Meals on Wheels can contact Lifepath at (413) 773-5555.

### Ashfield Sweet Treats

The Outreach Coordinator will be in Ashfield once monthly on a Tuesday delivering baked goods to homebound and other seniors in the area.

### Home Repair Program

A volunteer is available to do minor home repairs for seniors, such as replacing broken windows, small plumbing and electrical jobs and other repairs. This is a free service available to residents of Ashfield, Buckland, and Shelburne; however, the senior is expected to purchase all needed parts and materials. Voluntary donations are accepted. If you have a project or if you are interested in volunteering to do home repairs, please call Ted at 625-2502.

*Both support programs are funded in part by a grant through Lifepath from the Federal Administration for Community Living and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging and Independence.*



*A Home Repair Volunteer luncheon*

## Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services

### Caregiver Support Group Mondays, Jan 5, Feb. 2, 2 p.m.

A support group for family members caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia meets the first Monday of the month, unless there is a Monday holiday. Outreach Coordinator Ted Doucette and Social Worker Dianna Young facilitate the group. Please contact Teddy at 625-2502 prior to your first group attendance. There is no charge to attend.

### The West County Memory Café Fridays, Jan. 16, Feb. 20, 12-1:30 p.m.

The Cafe is a monthly gathering of individuals with memory loss and their care partner. Come and enjoy some lunch, an activity, socialization, and a chance to meet others experiencing similar challenges. Sign up by calling Teddy at The Senior Center at 625-2502. There is no charge to attend, but donations are always welcomed.

## Fuel Assistance Season!

2025-2026 Fuel Assistance Income Guidelines

1 person \$51,777  
2 people \$67,709  
3 people \$83,641  
4 people \$99,573



Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne contact Teddy for support in the process, everyone can call Community Action for help at 413-774-2310.

## COUNCILS ON AGING



A Council on Aging (COA) in Massachusetts is a municipal agency dedicated to supporting and enhancing the quality of life for older adults within the community. COAs provide a wide range of services, including social, recreational, health, and educational programs, as well as resources and advocacy to help seniors maintain independence and well-being. Each COA works closely with local, state, and federal organizations to address the diverse needs of the aging population.

**Shelburne Council on Aging**  
**Nancy Brewer, Sue Bishop, Sylvia Smith, and Penny Spearance**

**Buckland Council on Aging**  
**Ellen Eller, Joanne Soroka, Lisa Khanna, Susan Schauger**

**Ashfield Council on Aging**  
**Roy Rudolph, Janice Wright, Mary Mosley, David Collins**

The COA meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Belding Library, 2-3 p.m. Brown Bag luncheon held 11:30-1p.m. the first Thursday of each month at the Congregational Church on Main Street in Ashfield will be on pause throughout the winter months.



*Ashfield Council on Aging Thanksgiving lunch at The Lake House*

### The COA Collaborative

The COA Collaborative, **Jan 8, Feb.12, 3-4 p.m.**

The COA Collaborative will serve as a regular, inclusive, and flexible forum where COA members from Ashfield, Buckland, and Shelburne—and potentially beyond—can come together to:

- Stay informed about Senior Center programming and developments.
- Share town-specific updates and concerns related to elder services.
- Exchange ideas, resources, and best practices.
- Collaborate on regional events, outreach efforts, and special projects.
- Provide support and guidance to one another in their ongoing local COA work.

This Collaborative ensures that, while the formal governing structure is changing, the connection between The Senior Center and our partner towns remains strong, responsive, and rooted in shared values.



## RESOURCES

The **Brown Bag program** provides a bag of groceries for low-income adults who are age 55+ (or younger with a documented disability). Brown Bags are distributed on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Center from 1-3 p.m. To apply, call the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts at 1-800-247-9632 or contact The Senior Center for help with the application. **Jan. 21, Feb. 18.**

The **West County Food Pantry** located at Cowell Gym in Shelburne is open **every Wednesday from 11-3:30 p.m.** Participants are welcome to come twice a month for a grocery pickup and every week for a produce-only pickup. Both indoor and curbside pickups are available. Delivery available for Shelburne and Buckland residents. Custom orders can be placed by calling 413-773-5029 ext. 2.

The **Clothes Closet at Cowell Gym** is open on the **2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month from 11-3:30 p.m.** In addition, the Community Closet located at the Cowell is now open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month.

The **Hilltown Churches Food Pantry**, located downstairs at the Congregational Church on Main Street in Ashfield, is open **every other Tuesday from 3-5 p.m.** The pantry allows people to select their own groceries. Masks and social distancing are required while inside. The only requirement for accessing the food pantry is proof of residency in one of the towns that are served and a simple statement of need. The Food Pantry serves the eleven hill towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Monroe, Plainfield, Rowe, and Shelburne. There are no income requirements.

### No-Cost Home Modifications Available

Community Action of the Pioneer Valley has received a grant to offer the Older Adult Home Modification Program. This program allows low-income homeowners aged 62+ living in Franklin and Hampshire



*Sylvia and Bill Smith enjoyed stories with John Wheeler at the Conversation Café*

counties to modify their homes at no cost. These home modifications can improve the general safety of your home, increase accessibility, and help you maintain your independence. Some examples of modifications include the installation of grab bars, temporary ramps, transfer benches, raised toilet seats, and more! Contact 413-774-2310, Option 4, or email [homerepairs@communityaction.us](mailto:homerepairs@communityaction.us).

### Veterans' Support Services

**Jan. 28, Feb. 25**

A Veteran's Agent will be in the Senior Center on the **4th Wednesday of each month from 10-12 p.m.** Please call The Senior Center if you would like to see the agent here. There is also a Veterans' Services representative available at the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District in Greenfield. For questions or information, you can call them directly at (413) 772-1571.

### You May Qualify for SNAP Benefits!

If your 1-person household has a gross monthly income of \$2,608 or less  
 If your 2-person household has a gross monthly income of \$3,525 or less

## Free Sears, Kenmore Sewing Machine

We have received a donation of a Sears, Kenmore Sewing Machine, that has only been used a couple of times. If anyone needs a sewing machine please call the Senior Center at 625-2502.



Senior Center Foundation, Inc.  
7 Main Street P.O. Box 464  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

# SeniorWise

January- February 2026

**The-Senior-Center.org**

*Our New Website! Check It Out!*

Non Profit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit 183  
Greenfield MA

*Eileen Lively and quilters from Heath donated  
two amazing quilts to fortunate seniors!*



Volunter Gardeners: Ellen, Judy and Janice

## Foundation

The Senior Center Foundation was formed in 2014 as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization solely to provide financial support for the programs and services of the Senior Center, Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.