



Acton Senior Center Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2021



The Council on Aging at the Senior Center is located at 30 Sudbury Rd Rear.
Telephone: 978-929-6652. Email: seniorcenter@actonma.gov
Website www.actoncoa.com Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/actoncoa>

From Abolition Through Civil Rights in Music Part 2 via Zoom

Wednesday, February 17th, 1:00-2:00

In the final part of this multimedia series, John Clark will cover the music of the Civil Rights movement that begins with a controversial Oscar Hammerstein song *You've Got to Be Carefully Taught* and the song *We Are Americans Too*, a response to a 1956 racial incident involving Nat King Cole. He will look at the history of the 1950s-60s Civil Rights anthems, like *We Shall Overcome*, *Eyes on the Prize* and Bob Dylan's *Blowin' in the Wind*. Also included are noteworthy songs by Odetta, Curtis Mayfield, Janis Ian, Sam Cooke, Sly & the Family Stone, James Brown and Nina Simone as well as fiery proto-rap protest poetry by spoken word artists. Please register for this program by emailing the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov. For more information on using Zoom, see "Virtual Programming" description on page 7. *Prior to a career as a high school and adult education teacher, John Clark worked in music publishing in Nashville. He enjoys sharing his passion for music with senior centers and senior residences.*



Tropical Rain Forests: Why Is Their Survival So Important? via Zoom

Tuesday, February 23rd, 1:00-2:00pm



Today's tropical rain forests, some of the most pristine, wildlife-rich places left on earth, are facing environmental challenges like never before. Using photographs from his volunteer work in Peru, Mark Hopkins will discuss why these forests are of such importance to the planet's health and reveals how deforestation and other human induced threats are challenging their very existence. He describes how, as an Earthwatch volunteer, he assisted biologists to assess the health of the forest and rivers, and to teach the

indigenous people how to sustain equilibrium that can keep the forest healthy for generations to come. Learn what is being done to protect the region's monkeys, jaguars and other terrestrial mammals, caiman, macaws, manatees and fish, as well as its unique pink fresh-water dolphins. Please register for this program by emailing the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov. For more information on using Zoom, see "Virtual Programming" description on page 7. *Mark Hopkins, a frequent speaker in the area, is a writer and photographer now retired from a career in advertising.*

Directors Corner

The COA continues to offer an amazing array of programs and classes virtually both on Acton TV and on Zoom. The COA website has a direct link to ActonTV's on demand Senior Center programs and classes that you can watch whenever you like. Our newsletter has the schedule for Acton TV on page 7 of this newsletter. If you need assistance with Zoom, we have AB Honor Society students willing to walk you through it. Keep in mind if you don't have technology or are not comfortable using it you can call in to listen to any of the Zoom programs on your telephone. I have heard from some people who enjoy doing that and even though they are not able to see other faces or the program, listening in has helped them feel more connected. The COA staff is available if you have any questions, concerns or just want someone to talk to. Stay well, Sharon

Verizon/AOL/Yahoo users: You may find emails from the Council on Aging/Senior Center are sometimes blocked and marked as spam. If you are waiting for registration confirmation or a Zoom link from us, make sure to check your spam folder. You can remove the COA email domain (@actonma.gov) from your Verizon spam block. [Try these steps](#); follow this link to Verizon instructions: <https://www.verizon.com/support/knowledge-base200868/> or contact Verizon customer service for assistance.

Drive thru Lunch at the Senior Center provided by Benchmark Senior Living/Robbins Brook



Thursday, February 11th (snow date Feb. 12th), 12:00-12:30pm

Open to All Seniors

Enjoy a turkey sandwich, chips and a cookie boxed up and ready for you to take away. This meal is subsidized in part by Minuteman Senior Services.

A \$2 donation is requested.

We will have a special surprise! **Please sign up by February 8th.**



American Writers Series via Zoom with Dr. Lawrence Lowenthal:

Thomas Wolfe, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Saul Bellow, Sylvia Plath, and Philip Roth

Fridays, February 12th, 26th, March 12th, 26th, April 9th, 11:00-12:00pm

Because of the popularity of Dr. Lowenthal's program on Langston Hughes, we have scheduled the rest of his series, American Writers. He will discuss the life of each writer and read from their various works.

February 12th: Thomas Wolfe. A veritable giant—both physical (he was 6'7") and literary—Thomas Wolfe was a wild and almost uncontrollable force, an author of incredible power, energy, creativity and ego. Although critics lamented his often blundering and teeming style, he surmounts them with the sheer force of his creativity, his moody genius, and is still assured of a place as one of the great authors of the 20th century.



February 26th: Edna St. Vincent Millay. A legend in her time, she was an admired lyrical poet and playwright, and a leading figure in the Bohemian Era of Greenwich Village in the gaudy 20s. Great British novelist and poet Thomas Hardy said America had two attractions: skyscrapers and the poetry of St. Vincent Millay.



Watch for the March and April newsletters for remaining lecture descriptions. Please register for this program by emailing the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov. For more information on using Zoom, see "Virtual Programming" description on page 7.

Dr. Lawrence Lowenthal received his Ph.D. in English from New York University. He has taught college-level English, American Literature, film, and Jewish history courses, served in the Israeli Army, lectures on a variety of topics in the Greater Boston area, writes about human rights issues for the local press, has appeared on TV and radio, and has hosted a local radio show.

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The Stuarts: Crown, Parliament, and the Foundation of Modern Britain via Zoom **Tuesday, February 16th, 2:00-3:00pm**

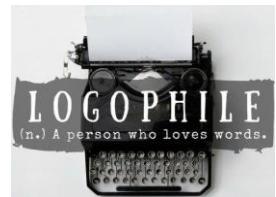


During the 17th century, the Stuart dynasty reigned over England. It was a period of tremendous growth but also political and social turmoil. Paolo Di Gregorio will tell the dramatic tale of Stuart England that is full of romance, conspiracy, rebellion, regicide, and restoration. This tumultuous era would lead to the eventual emergence of Modern Britain. Please email the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov to register for this program and you will receive the Zoom link by the morning of the presentation. See "Virtual Programming" on page 7 for more information on using Zoom. *Paolo Di Gregorio, the Artifactual Scholar, is an historian, archaeologist, and educator with a passion for telling the stories of our past. He has presented numerous historical lectures and discussions on a variety of topics in American, European, and World history. His presentations at the Center are always interesting and well-received.*

Words Galore via Zoom

Mondays, February 1st and 8th, 2:00-3:00pm

Val Walker's fun and lively hour of word play and brain twisters concludes this month. Learn new words, explore the history of old words and delve into the origins of words. Enjoy limericks, riddles, famous quotes, puns, and fascinating trivia about trendy words. Play guessing games with the dictionary and words-within-word games. Val Walker, MS, is an author, educator and consultant. She was a counselor for 20 years, is a contributing blogger for *Psychology Today*, and author of *The Art of Comforting* and *400 Friends and No One to Call*. If you are new to this program, email the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov to register.



Sculpture Class via Zoom with Sandy Wilensky

Acton Seniors Only

Thursdays, until March 4th, 9:00-11:00am

Email seniorcenter@actonma.gov for class availability.

Virtual Watercolor Class with Sandy Wilensky

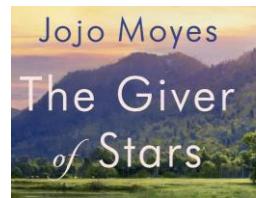
Acton Seniors Only

Wednesdays, February 10th through March 17th, 9:00-11:00am

All levels of experience are welcome to this watercolor class via Zoom! Beginners will build skill upon skill while experimenting with various watercolor techniques. Those with experience can paint individual projects and choose to participate in lessons that are of interest. Classes will begin with a drawing warm-up/lesson, followed by a skill/technique that will then be incorporated into a watercolor painting. Visual perception, color theory, and elements of composition along with techniques of brush strokes, washes, layering, texture, special effects and transparency will be woven into the class instruction over time. Painting subjects will include still life, landscape and objects from nature. Paintings will be shared with the group with a goal of positive affirmation of learning. Please only sign up if you plan to attend most of the classes. **To register, email seniorcenter@actonma.gov beginning at 1:00pm on Wednesday, February 3rd.** Early submissions will not be accepted. If you are a Verizon/Yahoo/AOL email user, check your spam folder as emails from the COA are sometimes blocked. Participants will receive the Zoom link from the instructor. If you haven't used Zoom before, see links to tutorials elsewhere in this newsletter. *Sandy had a career in education with experience teaching people from age 3-93. She is a certified art instructor and believes strongly in the ability of all people to learn in a supportive setting and that enhanced learning occurs when interest is high and the student knows what he wants to learn. She has recently been teaching watercolor classes in area senior centers and in her studio at ArtSpace Maynard.*



Java with John, Most Fridays at 10:00am www.youtube.com/actontv1 and Acton Radio WAEM 94.9 FM. The show will be aired later on ActonTV. Join the Town Manager, the COA Director and guests, as they give update and answer questions. Check the website under 'special announcements' for up to date broadcast information. Questions can be emailed ahead of time to manager@actonma.gov.



Book Discussion Group via Zoom

Wednesday, February 3rd, 1:00-2:30pm

Join our monthly virtual book group via Zoom! Ann Kulsick facilitates the gatherings. In February, the group will be discussing *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes. To place a hold on this title through the Acton Memorial Library, go to find.minlib.net. If you need assistance, contact the AML reference department at 978-929-6543 or reference@actonma.gov. If you would like to read ahead, the March title is *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett. If you are new to the Zoom book group, please register by emailing seniorcenter@actonma.gov. We will email you the Zoom link, which will also be posted in Special Announcements at www.actoncoa.com.



Computer Club via Zoom

Wednesdays, February 10th and 24th, 1:30-3:00pm

Bring your computer and hardware questions, problems and related issues to meetings via the Zoom platform. This is a club with no formally planned instruction. Several regulars share their experiences to resolve any computer issues from Windows system difficulties, email setups/usage, networking issues, upgrades and assistance with "how do I" frustrations. MAC and Chrome/Android users are welcome. Regular attendees will receive an email with Zoom meeting information which will also be published on our website under "Special Announcements" prior to each meeting. See "Virtual Programming" on page 7 for more information on using Zoom.

Intermediate Chess Classes with Ken LeBow via Zoom

Thursdays, 1:00-2:30pm; ongoing

If you are playing chess with confidence but are seeking feedback on how to improve your game, this is the class for you! Chess is a great way to exercise your brain—studies show playing can improve memory, boost concentration skills and increase creativity. Class is ongoing but is open to new participants. To register and receive the Zoom link, email seniorcenter@actonma.gov and include your name and phone number.



Dancing Through the Decades Interactive Program on ActonTV's Cable and YouTube Channels

Raul Nieves and Eileen Herman-Haase, performers/creators of Dancing Through the Decades with Dance Caliente will entertain you with romantic and energetic period ballroom dances from the comfort of your own home. Throughout the show they will engage you with participatory lessons so you can experience the flavor of each dance, using your chair as your partner. Their aim is to stir your heart, bring joy to your day and exercise your muscles. Please check the ActonTV schedule or watch online at Dance Thru the Decades or from the Senior Center At Home Playlist at www.youtube.com/ActonTV1. This program is supported by a grant from the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, and the Friends of the Acton COA.



The Friends of Acton COA

The FCOA Annual 2020 Appeal letter will have arrived by now.

Many thanks to all who contributed in 2020 prior to receiving it. For your convenience pledges may now be made online at our enhanced website www.friendsofactoncoa.com

Your continued support is greatly appreciated as we all look forward to a much better new year!

If you would like to dedicate your gift in honor or in memory of someone please include details on the form, contact the Senior Center at 978-929-6652, or email friendsofactoncoa@gmail.com

The Friends of Acton COA will not be meeting in February. Next meeting is March 8th.

The Acton COA Board

The Council on Aging Board hopes you are having a healthy 2021.

This winter has brought many challenges but we know that Acton seniors are resilient and creative in dealing with issues.

We wish you well in finding things that bring you joy and comfort in February: Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, President's Day and then, longer days!

COA Board Meeting, Tuesday, February 9th at 10:00am via Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/94258881200>

Via Telephone: (646) 876-9923 and enter Webinar ID: 942-5888-1200

Volunteers Needed for Virtual Storytime

Building off the success of an initiative started during Acton-Boxborough United Way's Week of Action, we invite retired volunteers to read to young students. Join us in reducing isolation by making connections online, helping kids with reading, and giving parents support in their child's journey to a love of learning. We provide training. You commit to a weekly virtual connection with your reading buddy. Interested in learning more? Contact Amy Cerel at abcerel@comcast.net.

Students reaching out to Seniors



Need assistance with Zoom or just someone new to talk to? We have a wonderful group of students that would like to connect with you. They can help you with Zoom or other IT issues over the phone, share life stories as pen pals, chat with you over the phone or via Zoom. Times have been lonely and difficult for everyone; why not connect with someone who could benefit from the contact as much as you can? Please call us at 978-929-6652 if you are interested and we will match you with a student.

 **Follow the Acton Council on Aging/Senior Center on Facebook!** Get the latest information on programs and services, plus tips, photographs, aging related information and more. Search for @actoncoa on Facebook. If you follow or like our page, our posts will show in your News Feed.

Mind, Body and Spirit

Terri's Tips Tuesdays at 10:00 on Zoom

Tuesdays, February 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd 10:00am



Fitness instructor Terri Zaborowski hosts a popular weekly live chat via Zoom! This is a great way to get some inspiration and encouragement concerning fitness and wellness, while seeing familiar faces. Check "Special Announcements" on the COA homepage, www.actoncoa.com, for the meeting link (which changes each week). See "Virtual Programming" on page 7 for information on using Zoom.

Laugh For Your Health with Susan Phillips via Zoom!

Thursdays, February 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th, 11:00-11:45am

Time to shed some stress and get refreshed! Group focus is on cultivating joy, ease, and warm connection—through contagious group laughter exercises, with short breaks of soothing belly breaths. Each class ends with guided relaxation. This practice is called Laughter Yoga, but there are no mats or yoga poses. Health benefits include increased energy and alertness, mood elevation, stress relief, positive connections with others, and an immune system boost. If you are a new participant, email the COA at seniorcenter@actonma.gov to register for this program and we will send you the Zoom link, which will be recurring, or you can view the link on our website www.actoncoa.com. For more information on participating in programs via Zoom, see "Virtual Programming" description on page 7. *Susan Phillips, M.Ed. is an Integrative Health Coach and Laughter Yoga Teacher. Her workshops promote laughter as a tool to build joy, resilience, connection, and collaboration.*



Mindfulness/Meditation with Erin Loperto via Zoom

Pre-Registration Required

Mondays, February 1st, 8th and 22nd, 10:00am

The Board of Health via a CHNA15 grant is collaborating with the COA to provide this program. If you're feeling extra anxiety or loneliness these days due to the pandemic, you're not alone. This time has us all facing more stress and uncertainty than usual. Meditation can be a pathway back to steadiness that is immeasurably helpful. Mindfulness meditation can reduce stress, relieve symptoms of anxiety and depression, and help you live a more present life. Whether this is your first time meditating or you want to deepen your practice, join Erin LoPorto for this program. For more information contact Sheryl Ball at 978-929-6453 or sball@actonma.gov. Access the link to [registration](#).



Virtual Exercise Classes



The Acton COA offers classes and presentations through Acton TV's cable and on-demand YouTube channels. You can view all of the classes that have been recorded from your computer, smart TV, smartphone, or tablet from the Acton Senior Center At Home Playlist: Go to www.youtube.com/actontv1, click on "playlists" and scroll down to "Acton Senior Center at Home." If you do not have access to the internet the classes are shown on Acton TV, Comcast 8 and Verizon 45 – see the schedule below. For up to date schedule visit www.actontv.org. There are now 15 Council on Aging exercise and movement classes on the playlist!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00am	Senior Fitness	Line Dancing 2	Senior Fitness	Line Dancing 1	Active Aging
10:00am	Nouvon Fitness	Chair Exercise	Nouvon Fitness	Chair Exercise	Nouvon Fitness
11:00am	Active Aging	Active Aging	Active Aging	Active Aging	Active Aging*
12:00pm			Gentle Yoga		Gentle Yoga
2:00pm	Line Dancing 1	Yoga	Chair Exercise	Yoga	Line Dancing 2

“Nutrition for Active Agers”, Monday – Thursday, 10:30am on ActonTV

This is a four-part series designed and presented by Holly Kouvo, certified personal trainer and nutrition specialist, known to many in the area. Each broadcast will cover a different



topic such as: learn how to read food labels, create diets for special health conditions, speed up your metabolism and eat foods that are healthy for your brain. This program has been made possible through a CHNA 15 Grant.



Virtual Support Group for those with Early-Stage Memory Loss

Wednesdays, February 17th and March 24th 4:30pm

A dementia diagnosis can be overwhelming. We invite those with early-stage dementia to join Bridges® memory care professionals to answer your questions and for a guided conversation to connect with others who truly understand the specific challenges and emotions that you may be going through. Experts will provide resources, information about the disease, and practical tips and advice to help you live a full, rewarding life while planning for the future. Contact Sarah Turcotte at 978.692.9541 or STurcotte@Bridgesbyepoch.com for the Zoom link or more information.

Bringing Our Programs into Your Home via Zoom

Most Council on Aging/Senior Center programs continue to be offered virtually, many using the Zoom video conferencing platform. Each program description will indicate how to participate.

Consider giving Zoom a try if you haven't done so already! It is very user friendly, but if you'd like some assistance the COA can connect you with an Acton-Boxborough student to help you get acquainted with using Zoom.



zoom

- If you have not used Zoom, you can view tutorials on the company's website www.zoom.com; click on the “support” tab. There are many how-to-use Zoom videos on YouTube including this one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>. You can learn how to unmute yourself, allow yourself to be viewed to all other attendees via video, and how to change to speaker view so that the person running a class or giving a lecture will be prominent on your screen.
- If the Zoom program does not require registration, you can find the link on the day of the program under “Special Announcements” on our website www.actoncoa.com.
- To register for a Zoom-based program, email the Council on Aging at seniorcenter@actonma.gov. You will receive an email with the Zoom link by the morning of the scheduled program. If you do not receive the link, please check your spam folder or call the Council on Aging at 978-929-6652 for assistance.
- You do not need a Zoom account to attend a meeting. You can use a computer, smartphone or tablet. Some computers do not have cameras and microphones, so in that case you will be able to view/listen to the meeting but not be seen or heard.
- If you don't have any of these devices, you can join in via telephone call. Ask the COA for the information needed to dial in.
- Emails from the Council on Aging are sometimes blocked by Verizon/AOL/Yahoo. If you find this is happening, remove the COA email domain (@actonma.gov) from your Verizon spam block. Follow this link to Verizon instructions: <https://www.verizon.com/support/knowledge-base-200868/>. Contact Verizon customer service if you need further assistance.



Thank you to.....

Rivercourt Residences for lunch.

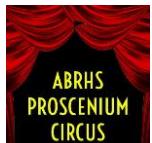
AB National Honor Society for their ongoing assistance helping seniors with technology.

Dorothy Wade for your donation to the Council on Aging Gift account in honor of the Chaddha family.

Hearing Aid Batteries

2020 was the last year of the Button-cell Battery Rebate Program. The battery industry has been able to remove mercury from button-cell batteries. That represents a success for the environment but results in the end of this program. We will no longer be collecting button cell batteries.

Thank you for all who participated.



Acton Boxborough High School's Proscenium Circus Presents.....

"Warchester Academy" a new musical, written by the students and recorded through Zoom. February 5th, 6th and 7th. Visit www.abdrama.org for free tickets and how to watch.

Acton Historical Society is offering a series of free presentations over zoom.

Email jenkslibrary@verizon.net to register.

Sunday, February 7th, 4:00pm "Debate over the Battle of the North Bridge, April 19th, 1775."

Sunday, March 7th, 4:00pm "History of Railroads in Acton."

Sunday, April 11th, 4:00pm "Overview of Acton's History"

For more details on each presentation visit www.actonhistoricalsociety.org



LWV The League of Women Voters and Green Acton Panel Discussion on Plastics: "Recycle, Reuse, Refuse" February. 25th, 7:00-8:15pm

The League of Women Voters Acton Area and Green Acton are co-sponsoring a panel discussion to help us clear up confusions and make decisions about personal habits and wider actions around plastics. Ben Harvey, President of E.L.Harvey Waste and Recycling Service will explain what happens to Acton's recycling when it leaves the transfer station. Eric Hudson, Founder & CEO of Preserve, will talk about innovative ways to reuse plastic. And Janet S. Domenitz, Executive Director of MASSPIRG will talk about how to "zero out plastic." Register in advance at: <http://bit.ly/3oSZ0y6>



Sage and Seekers Program

Seniors, share your life experience and invaluable knowledge! The non-profit organization Sages & Seekers is recruiting Seniors (65 and older) to participate in a 7-week

intergenerational program with high school students from The Rivers School this Spring. See [flyer](#) for more details.

Your maturity and experience provide a larger perspective on life from which the younger generations can learn. You will be paired with one 10th grade student (the same student each week) with whom you will share your life story and experiences. Past participants are welcome and rave about the program. Contact: Kena Thompson 239-293-0338, Betsy Reale 617-272-5139 or Natalie Massarotti 978.460.3711 or email them at sages@rivers.org.

Food Assistance

(Opening hours during bad weather may differ– always check ahead)

“Grab and Go” Lunches from the Senior Center

In lieu of congregate lunches, Minuteman Senior Services has been providing daily lunches Monday through Friday for pick up, 11:30-12:30pm at the Senior Center.

Additional menu options are available. For menu or to reserve a lunch please call at least 24 hours in advance at * **note new number 781-221-7098***. A \$2 donation is requested. Meals on Wheels Minuteman Senior Services can be reached at 781-272-7177, toll free (888) 222-6171 or visit www.minutemansenior.org [Menu](#)

Acton Food Pantry - 978-635-9295, 235 Summer Road, Boxborough.

www.actonfoodpantry.org

Distribution Schedule 10am-7pm Wednesday & 9:30am-11:30am Thursdays as a DRIVE THRU PANTRY ONLY. During this time you do not need to be a registered client of Acton Food Pantry, They will provide food to anyone in need. CLOSED WEEK OF 4th WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH. Donations always welcome – call to arrange drop off.

Acton Community Supper and Food Pantry



Helping Feed our Neighbors since 1984

Mount Calvary Community Supper, 472 Massachusetts Ave,

Wednesdays, 4:00-5:00 pm, or until run out. www.mtcalvaryacton.org

We will be handing out meals from the walkway at the back of the church, please follow our volunteers' directions. Bring a box or bag to place your meals in your car to prevent spillage. Please remember to wear your mask at all times when in the driveway. 1 meal per person in the car.

Watch local TV for storm announcements (channel 4, 5, and 7): If Acton schools are “ALL Remote Learning or Closed”, our Supper will be closed. ALSO check: www.mtcalvaryacton.org or www.facebook.com/CommunitySupperofActonMA [Menu](#)

Open Table, 33 Main Street Maynard, MA call 978-369-2275 or check website

www.opentable.org for “Drive-Thru” pantry information.

Tuesdays 1:00pm-6:30pm, Thursdays 1:00-4:30pm. New guests are invited between 5:00-6:30pm.



SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program call Bev for information. 978-929-6652.

Check balance and monthly SNAP benefit amount by calling the DTA Assistance Line @ 877-382-2363. Enter you SSN and year of birth to hear an automated message with your monthly SNAP amount or visit DTAConnect.com



AB Regional School District is continuing to offer meals for curbside pickup at the Acton-Boxborough High School (Hayward Road entrance) **every Wednesday** from 3:30-5:00pm. Shopping bags with 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches to each person. For families of two or more are offered a bonus food box which varies each week.

BE AWARE THAT THE SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE IN THE EVENT OF BAD WEATHER. Twitter updates @ABFoodServices1.



MMSS are looking for Meals on Wheels drivers in Acton, Boxborough, and Maynard. If you are interested in volunteering 60 - 90 minutes a week, to provide meals to our seniors please contact the Minuteman Senior Services Volunteer Coordinator Yuen Li at volunteer@minutemansenior.org or call her at 781-221-7093. Please call with any questions you may have especially regarding our Covid19 Protocol. Thank You.



Essential Assistance

Senior Real Estate Tax Relief

There are numerous ways you might qualify for tax relief if you are: over 65 with income and assets that are low-to-moderate, over 70, veteran with a disability or suffering financial hardship in general. To find out if you qualify, visit the Acton town website and click on the "Quick Link" for Property Tax Relief Programs or call the Assessor's office at 978-929-6621, or email assessors@acton-ma.gov. A copy of the January COA Tax Primer presentation is available from the Assessor's Office.

The **Circuit Breaker tax credit** is based on the actual real estate taxes paid on the Massachusetts residential property you own or rent and occupy as your principal residence. The maximum credit amount for tax year 2020 is \$1,150. If the credit you're owed exceeds the amount of the total tax payable for the year, you'll be refunded the additional amount of the credit without interest.

- You must be a Massachusetts resident or part-year resident and be 65 or older by Jan. 1, 2021.
- You must file a Massachusetts personal income tax return and own or rent residential property in Massachusetts and occupy it as your primary residence.
- For tax year 2020, your total Massachusetts income doesn't exceed:
 - \$61,000 for a single individual who is not the head of a household.
 - \$76,000 for a head of household.
 - \$92,000 for married couples filing a joint return.
- If you are a homeowner, your Massachusetts property tax payments, together with half of your water and sewer expense, must exceed 10% of your total Massachusetts income for the tax year.
- If you are a renter, 25% of your annual Massachusetts rent must exceed 10% of your total Massachusetts income for the tax year.

If you are eligible for the Circuit Breaker Credit, complete [Schedule CB](#) with your Massachusetts state income tax return.

If you qualify for the State Circuit Breaker, and are at least a 10 year resident of the Town of Acton, you may be eligible for local assistance through the Town. Please contact the Assessors' Office at 978-929-6621 for more information.

Senior Citizen Water Bill Discount Policy - The Water Supply District of Acton offers a Senior Citizen Water Bill Discount that entitles seniors (65+) having low-to-moderate incomes to a reduction in their bill. Call the Town Assessor's Office at 978-929-6621 or the Water District at 978-263-9107.

Social Security Administration (SSA) www.ssa.gov

During the current coronavirus pandemic, SSA continues to provide help.

You can speak with a representative by calling 1-877-457-1737 or the National Number 1-800-772-1213. Many services are available online.

SMOC, Fuel Assistance – Residents that received fuel assistance last winter should have received their re-application form through the mail. Contact the COA if you need assistance completing the form.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Known commonly as Fuel Assistance, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides eligible households with help in paying a portion of winter heating bills thru November-April.

Eligible applicant information - Homeowners and renters including households whose cost of heat is included in the rent can apply. Eligibility is based on household size and the gross annual income of every household member, 18 years of age or older. Household income cannot exceed 60% of estimated State Median Income.

Household Size	Maximum Gross Income
1	\$39,105
2	\$51,137
3	\$63,169
4	\$75,201

If you are 60 years of age or older call Beverly Hutchings, Senior Services Coordinator at 978-929-6652 or email bhutchings@actonma.gov

SHINE Program (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) www.shinema.org

- ✓ Are you turning 65 and want information about Medicare?
- ✓ Are you 65 and losing employer group health insurance due to a recent job loss?
- ✓ Are you disabled and under age 65 covered by Medicare with questions?
- ✓ Are you a Medicare beneficiary and concerned about prescriptions costs, medical billing and co-payments?
- ✓ Are you living on a fixed income and having difficulties keeping pace with health care costs.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, the SHINE program is here to help! For no-cost, confidential counseling call the COA 978-929-6652 to speak with Beverly to schedule an appointment.



Acton Boxborough United Way is providing much needed assistance at this time after very generous donations have made it possible for them to help those in financial need, go to www.abuw.org for more information and eligibility criteria or call the COA on 978-929-6652, or if you would like to donate.

Minuteman Senior Services, our State Home Care, provides a variety of services including:

Care Management - In home assessment and support activities of daily living and Meals on Wheels. Minuteman Senior Services can be reached at (781)-272-7177, toll free (888) 222-6171 or visit www.minutemansenior.org

Help Line Numbers

Alzheimer's Association Helpline 1-800-272-3900,

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233

Samaritans 1-800-273-8255,

Grief Counselling 978-774-5100

Legal Assistance

The Massachusetts Senior Legal Helpline - 800-342-529, Monday-Friday 9:00am-12noon.

Dial-A-Lawyer: Free Legal Advice by Phone for Elders - On the first Wednesday of every month, from 5:30-7:30pm, attorneys are available at 617-338-0610 or 877-686-0711.

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Bar Association.

The COA also offers a bi-monthly "Ask the Lawyer" appointment service.



ACTON TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE

978-929-6600

Speak to a town employee with questions you may have on the impact to services, and changes to scheduled opening times.

Window service at the Town Hall, for Land Use and the Collector's Office, is by appointment.

Pay your town bills on-line, and request and pay for permits.

Information can also be found on the Town website www.actonma.gov

The Town of Acton Radio is broadcasting on WAEM 94.9 FM.

Acton TV is broadcasting on Channels Comcast 8 & Verizon 45.



A mixture of sand and salt is available free to Acton residents (no contractors) at the designated area located at the Highway Division, 14 Forest Road. Use caution while entering and exiting as vehicles and equipment are prevalent. Please bring your own shovel and container.

Veteran Services Officer for Acton and Boxborough, James MacRae would like to remind veterans and surviving spouses that there are benefits that you may be entitled to, including healthcare and accessing the Covid vaccine. <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>.

Reach out to him at vso@actonma.gov or call 978-929-6614 for a confidential chat about your needs.





Acton Nursing Services

Podiatry Clinics

Acton Seniors Only

Appointments: Thursdays, February 4th and 18th, 12:15pm-4:00pm

Call 978-929-6650, we will start booking on Monday, February 1st at 1:00pm.

Leave a message and staff will return your call with your appointment time.

Patients should call from the parking lot when they arrive and someone will come to escort them in once the appointment prior has exited the building. See additional guidelines below.

1. Reminder calls will include a symptom check to include symptoms of COVID-19, travel and not limited to close contact of positive COVID-19 cases in the two weeks prior to your appointment. Appointment can be cancelled based on these answers.
2. Any signs of fever, cough, shortness of breath, body aches etc. should be reported to ANS before coming to the building for your appointment.
3. ANS will ask questions related to symptoms, travel, risks of close contacts with COVID-19 and take temperatures before you are escorted into the building.
4. The client shall wear a face covering while in the building and during treatment, if this is difficult for you please discuss when booking an appointment.
5. Please follow the guidelines in place by MDPH to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 including hand washing, social distancing of 6' & face masks when social distancing cannot be achieved.

Durable Medical Equipment for Loan – Acton Nursing Service has a variety of items to loan, or if you have items to donate, call Denise, weekdays, 8:00am-5:00pm at 978-929-6650.

For Covid vaccination information consult your PCP, or check www.mass.gov/covid-19 for up to date information. The Town will post updates as we have them. *Correct at time of going to print.

Where can I go to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Public COVID-19 vaccine clinics when available can be found at CDC's interactive website: vaccinefinder.org. Once the vaccine is widely available you can also check with your primary care provider, local pharmacy or local health department. Information will also be available on the Dept. of Public Health website.



Who is authorized to administer vaccinations?

In addition to licensed health care providers, like doctors and nurses and pharmacists, according to the federal CARES Act, vaccinations may be administered by pharmacy interns, certified pharmacy techs, paramedics, and certified medical assistants, under the direct supervision of a primary care provider. When available, all health care institutions including hospitals, community health centers, and private medical offices will have access to the COVID-19 vaccine to vaccinate their patients.

Pharmacies including large retail outlets such as CVS, Walgreens, Osco, and Walmart will have access to the vaccine and will be able to vaccinate their customers. Vaccine will likely also be made available to local health departments for vaccinating their local residents at public clinics.

For up to date information please go to www.mass.gov/covid-19.

Transportation

All of Acton's fixed-route services, including the Rail Shuttle and Cross-Acton Transit (CAT), are suspended until further notice.

- Door-to-door services remain in operation, for essential trips (urgent medical appointments, groceries, etc) however, riders are encouraged to utilize alternative modes of transportation if possible. To schedule rides, continue using CrossTown Connect dispatch by calling **978-844-6809** during normal business hours.
- Any additional questions can be forwarded to Austin Cyganiewicz by phone on 978-929-6513 or email acyganiewicz@actonma.gov.



Acton Memorial Library

For up-to-date information visit www.actonmemoriallibrary.org or call 978-929-6655 10:30am-5:30pm Mon-Fri, 10:30am-1:30pm Saturday. Curbside pickup is currently available.

Stay up-to-date with announcements and library info by following us on Facebook, Instagram (@ActonLibrary) and Twitter (@ActonMemLibrary), or by going to www.actonmemoriallibrary.org

The Town of Acton is proud to offer a new **Public Shade Tree program** to identify locations along



TREE CITY USA®

street right of ways, or where no public space is available, on adjacent private properties as provided by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87. If you have proposed a location that is suitable for a tree and agree to water the newly planted tree for at least the first growing season, the Acton Tree Warden will consider the request while compiling a final list of suitable locations.

Site Control - As noted above, the majority of the trees will be planted on public land.

However, Massachusetts law does permit the expenditure of public funds to plant trees up to twenty (20) feet back from the edge of the public way, with landowner permission. The new trees will be Public Shade Trees, as legally defined, and are therefore given a degree of protection from removal, unless they are deemed to be hazardous by the Tree Warden.

No trees shall be planted in locations where they would interfere with future sidewalks.

Project Scope - The type of tree shall be selected by the Tree Warden. The final decision to plant a tree will be based on several factors such as soil type, proximity to road salt, overhead wires, etc. and the need for diversity of plantings to avoid tree cover loss due to disease and insects.

Right Tree Right Place - Matching the right tree to the right place is the best way to ensure the health and longevity of our trees. A tree that has its needs met is better able to withstand the pressures of insects, disease, or other stress factors. Choosing the right tree for the right place ensures vibrant health, reduces maintenance, and maximum benefits. Take note of site factors such as sun/shade, soil type, and drainage, and find a tree species that fits those characteristics. Equally important is considering the mature size of the tree compared to the space constraints of the location, including overhead utility wires, nearby structures and hardscapes, and other plants.

Contact Information - For more information, please contact Ryan Hunt, Acton Tree Warden, at (978) 929-7743 or by email (treewarden@actonma.gov)

Acton Fire Department -Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors



The Acton Fire Department has a limited supply of battery operated combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors available. Any senior who currently has a house built before 1975 with battery operated detectors is eligible. Priority will be given to those who have detectors that are non-existent, not working, or older than ten years old. To sign up contact the COA.

Hello everyone!! Tom Matthews your friendly, neighborhood, firefighter in the Town of Acton.

We talked about electrical and heating safety last month and we hope you all are doing well! This month we want to focus on **slip and falls and house numbers**: Slip and falls account for than 800,000 people being hospitalized because of slip and falls each year. Get regular exercise- gives you strength and helps with balance; wear proper foot wear- depending on surfaces. Socks on bare floors can be bad. Take your vitamins- calcium and vitamin D helps keep bones strong; review medications- make sure medications do not cause dizziness and vertigo; prepare your home- install railings, grab bars, proper lighting and keep walkways clear

House numbers on the front of your home help us to find you faster in the event of an emergency. Having numbers on your mailbox or on the front of your house that can be seen from the road is key to our success! They should also not be the same color as your house.

Again we want all our senior citizens to be safe in their home. If you ever have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to reach out. Until next month please be safe!!

Important messages from the Acton Police Department



If you are currently living with a family member who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, dementia, bipolar, autism, etc, please contact Detective Eracleo at 978-929-7543 or meracleo@actonma.gov. The Acton P.D. has created a database which alerts officers when responding to your home for service. Having up to date photos of your loved ones, phone numbers on file, and places they may visit if they wander will reduce the time it takes to reunite with your loved ones.



There has been an **increase** in fraud concerning our senior citizens. The Acton PD encourage you to contact them on their non-emergency number **978-929-7711**, if you experience fraud or have suspicion that you may have been a victim of fraud. Do NOT give any personal information over the phone. There is NO charge for the Covid vaccine, nor is there a way to pay to get it quicker than you would under CDC and State guidelines.

Volunteers Sought for Town Boards & Committees

There are more than 40 boards and committees in town run by volunteers, and many need new members. For a list of openings, please visit <https://actonma.gov/jobs.aspx> . Applications may be filed online from the town's website at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/formcenter/town-managers-office-5/volunteer-application-43>.

Managing your newsletter subscription

Every September the Council on Aging (COA) updates the mailing list from the Town census to include residents turning 60, These residents are considered by the state to be "seniors" and eligible to utilize the Senior Center and the services we provide. This year, while it has been very different due to the pandemic we are still providing services and hosting a variety of programs virtually via zoom, or as pre-recorded video on Acton TV. The Friends of the Acton COA remain active supporting these programs, and other resources such as our File of Life magnets. Without the Friends' annual Holiday Fair, the annual Appeal is their main fundraising event this year.

Should you wish to be removed from the newsletter mailing list please contact us. If you prefer to receive it electronically follow the instructions under 'subscribe to newsletter' on our homepage at www.actoncoa.com where you may also access the newsletter directly.

If you are going to be away for an extended period please consider suspending your delivery, and subscribing online to our e-newsletter – wherever you are you can always 'zoom' into our programs. Every returned or unread newsletter has a financial cost. The e-newsletter arrives promptly in your email and is full of color and live links.

We are very happy to discuss your specific concerns.

ACTON COA STAFF	ACTON COA BOARD MEMBERS	
Sharon Mercurio, Director	<i>Ellen Feinsand Chair</i>	<i>Alma Sandman , Vice Chair</i>
Rosie Atherton, Office Manager	<i>Lori Cooney, Sec.</i>	<i>Chunsheng (Bill) Fu</i>
Chris Chirokas, Program Manager	<i>Jeff Bergart</i>	<i>Michelle Holmberg</i>
Bev Hutchings, Senior Services Coordinator	<i>Michael Chautin</i>	<i>Bonnie Lobel</i>
Bernice Nicoll, Activities Assistant	<i>Ann Corcoran</i>	<i>Niru Velankar</i>
Fiona Starr, Staff Assistant	<i>Jacquie Friedman</i>	
Terri Zaborowski, Exercise Instructor	COA Friends does not meet in February.	
	COA Board, Tuesday, February 9th, 10:00am Zoom	

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1 FEBRUARY 2021 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Meditation with Erin(p.5) 2:00 Words Galore Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Line Dancing 1	2 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Tuesday Tips with Terri Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 2 10:00 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	3 COA via Zoom: 1:00 Book Group Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Chair Exercise with Mary	4 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Sculpture Class 11:00 Laugh for Your Health 1:00 Intermediate Level Chess Class Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 1 10:15 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	5 YouTube Acton TV live: 10:00 Java with John* Acton TV: 9:00 Active Aging 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Line Dancing 2
8 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Meditation with Erin(p.5) 2:00 Words Galore Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Line Dancing 1	9 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Tuesday Tips with Terri 10:00 COA Board Meeting Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 2 10:00 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	10 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Watercolor Class 1:30- 3:00 Computer Club Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Chair Exercise with Mary	11 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Sculpture Class 11:00 Laugh for Your Health 1:00 Intermediate Level Chess Class At Senior Center 12:00 Drive thru lunch Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 1 10:15 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	12 YouTube Acton TV live: 10:00 Java with John* COA via Zoom: 11:00 American Writers Acton TV: 9:00 Active Aging 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Line Dancing 2
15 Office Closed Presidents' Day Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Line Dancing 1	16 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Tuesday Tips with Terri 2:00 The Stuarts Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 2 10:00 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	17 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Watercolor Class 1:00 Civil Rights Music II 4:30 Early Memory Loss (p.6) Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Chair Exercise with Mary	18 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Sculpture Class 11:00 Laugh for Your Health 1:00 Intermediate Level Chess Class Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 1 10:15 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	19 YouTube Acton TV live: 10:00 Java with John* Acton TV: 9:00 Active Aging 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Line Dancing 2
22 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Meditation with Erin(p.5) Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Line Dancing 1	23 COA via Zoom: 10:00 Tuesday Tips with Terri 1:00 Tropical Rain Forests Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 2 10:00 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	24 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Watercolor Class 1:30- 3:00 Computer Club Acton TV: 9:00 Senior Fitness 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 11:00 Active Aging 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Chair Exercise with Mary	25 COA via Zoom: 9:00 Sculpture Class 11:00 Laugh for Your Health 1:00 Intermediate Level Chess Class Acton TV: 9:00 Line Dancing 1 10:15 Chair Exercise with Mary 11:00 Active Aging 2:00 Gentle Yoga	26 YouTube Acton TV live: 10:00 Java with John* COA via Zoom: 11:00 American Writers Acton TV: 9:00 Active Aging 10:00 Nouvon Fitness 12:00 Gentle Yoga 2:00 Line Dancing 2

Calendar Notes

Schedule correct at going to press. *Subject to change.

Snow date for drive-thru lunch is **Friday, February 12th**.

For "Meditation with Erin" (page 5) and "Support Group for Early Memory Loss" (page 6) - see individual descriptions for details on how to register.

Check Acton TV schedule at www.actontv.org Acton TV broadcasts on Comcast 8 and Verizon 45

For YouTube live broadcasts www.youtube.com/actontv1

Contact the COA for information on Zoom links where stated at seniorcenter@actonma.gov

Links may also be posted on the homepage www.actoncoa.com under "Special Announcements".

There is advice [here](#) if you have Verizon/AOL/yahoo and need to fix your COA emails going to spam.

This month the following activities are supported by the Friends of the Acton COA:

Words Galore, From Abolition Through Civil Rights in Music, The Stuarts, Sculpting class, Watercolor Class and the American Writers series.

Visit the Friends website to contribute to their annual appeal www.friendsofactoncoa.com.

Rivercourt Residences supplied the delicious drive through lunch in January. Again it was so nice to see familiar faces, and to welcome some new ones! Next drive-thru see page 2 for details.



Zane is becoming a regular visitor at Windsor Green.

Contact the COA if you or someone you know would like a visit. Detective Jon Stackhouse and Zane are always happy to make socially distanced house calls.



Covid-19 Vaccination Information

The most up-to-date information can be found by contacting your PCP or visiting

<https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine-in-massachusetts>

Updates for Vaccination Centers can be found at [vaccinefinder.org](https://www.vaccinefinder.org).

Visit www.mass.gov for information on covid guidelines, RMV procedures etc.

Updates will be posted on the Town website www.actonma.gov

Also check our website and facebook page,

www.actoncoa.com and facebook: @actoncoa

Tax Preparation

AARP have no plans currently to do in person tax assistance. (*at the time of going to press) There are commercial and private tax preparers in town or you can consult your financial advisor. The IRS has a website www.irs.gov which gives a lot of helpful advice and options to obtain paperwork, as well as offering a 'self-filing' option, go to www.irs.gov/filing. Individuals can also call 800-829-1040, TTY/TDD 800-829-4059. Waiting times may be extended.



The AARP website will also have updates on services and assistance available. www.aarp.org. Email taxaide@aarp.org, Call Toll free 888-OUR-AARP (687-2277) Toll free TTY 877-434-7598.

You can call the staff at the Senior Center, 978-929-6652 with any questions or concerns for yourself or for a neighbor. Or just call to say 'hello'. We miss you!

