# TOWN of TOLLAND COUNCIL on AGING LATE SUMMER NEWSLETTER

241 West Granville Rd. Tolland, Massachusetts 01034

August 11, 2022 Hi Neighbors,

Summer is half over and it's been a good one so far. Hot, humid, some rain and some good times! And there are more to come. On June 26 the town held a party on the green to thank Eric Munson who has been working in service to the town of Tolland since 1974. Hamburgers and hotdogs were grilled and ice cream provided by the Granville Scoop. A brief presentation in honor of Eric was followed by a performance of the New England Swing Orchestra. The event was sponsored by the Tolland Cultural Council, with support from Massachusetts Cultural Council, and the Tolland Recreational Committee. There is still a lot more of summer ahead of us, enjoy it.

The COA has hired a **new Outreach worker**, Mary Ann Deming. Mary Ann brings a great deal of enthusiasm and professional skill to the job. Inside this this newsletter is an article about her background and objectives. We welcome her to the team. We also must thank Ann Skipski, our previous outreach worker for her years of service and all the good she has done for Tolland's residents.

Broadband - A report by Kevin Donovan on the progress of the Broadband installation is on the inside pages

The Tolland Council on Aging's "Rides For Seniors" program provides rides for Tolland's full and part time senior residents to doctor's appointments, lab work or therapy appointments, grocery or drug store shopping or other transportation needs that our senior residents might have.

To reserve a ride, call 413 258-4794 x 129 at least 72 hours before you need a ride. Leave a message containing your name, phone number, when you need a ride and where you are going to. You will get a return phone call confirming the appointment. There is no charge for this service. All of our drivers have received the Covid 19 vaccine. All our passengers must also be fully vaccinated against Covid 19. If you would like to be a volunteer driver call this same number, leave a message and we will get back to you.

Summer Yoga will continue meeting at 9AM on Thursdays in the PSC through August.

**Summer Monthly Luncheons** will continue into September. The next one will be Tuesday September 13 at Noon in the PSC. In order for us to get the right amount of food, please call 413 258-4794 X129 or e-mail us at <a href="mailto:councilonaging@tolland-ma.com">councilonaging@tolland-ma.com</a> to make a reservation.

A **DPW Update by Kate Donovan**, Tolland's DPW Superintendent outlining some of the work she and her crew are doing is inside this newsletter.

There are several other items inside we hope you will find of interest including information about some of the changes to Massachusetts voting laws.

The COA is looking for new Board members. If you would like to know more about the Council call 413 257-4794 X 129, leave a message, and we will get back to you.

That's all for now. The Tolland COA

### **COA Outreach Worker**

Hello, I am MaryAnn Deming and am honored to serve as outreach worker for our Tolland Council On Aging (COA). Ann Skibski, our former outreach worker, did a phenomenal job in this role for the past three years and leaves some mighty shoes to fill.

I grew up in Colebrook, a small town just over the CT border. I attended University of Saint Joseph for my nursing degree and was employed at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital for 33 years. During that time I worked in a variety of clinical settings including Medical/Surgical, Oncology, the Emergency Department and Critical Care. My very first job in high school was at the nursing home in New Boston where I met Jim, and we have been married for 31 years. We were blessed with three children and were very fortunate to raise them here in Tolland.

My folks moved to join us in Tolland 17 years ago, and like Jim's parents planned to age in place. My mother suffered a stroke a few years ago, and my father passed away at home last winter, after a few months on hospice. Mom now lives with Jim and I, and last year I left work to be a full time stay-at-home-daughter. Tolland is a wonderful community to live in, but as we have learned first hand over the past few years our seniors do struggle with some of the challenges that most small towns face. As outreach worker, my hope is to help fill some of that gap and work to support our COA's mission:

"To enable our seniors to remain independent, at home, for as long as possible while providing for choices and opportunities. This includes identifying unmet needs, developing and implementing programs and services that help to meet those needs as well as providing education and advocacy as indicated."

Thankfully we have town leaders, a Council On Aging, and a community of neighbors very dedicated to fulfilling this mission, as it does take a village. I am looking forward to connecting with everyone over the next months to see how we can best meet these needs together. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns, or to just say hello!

MaryAnn Deming Phone: 413-427-5532 mademing22@aol.com

**DPW Update by Kate Donovan** - The DPW has been busy performing routine grading and maintenance on all gravel roads, roadside mowing continuing on all roadways, as well as getting ready for several paving projects later this summer.

Roads projects scheduled for this season are the reclamation and paving of Beetle Rd, North end of Hartland Rd, gravel portion of Clubhouse, and the North section of Schoolhouse Rd.

In preparation for these late summer paving projects, all drainage has been improved by clearing ditches and cross pipes. Tree work will be done throughout all project areas, as well as line painting when the paving is complete.

Burt Hill Road is scheduled for a restorative penetrating surface treatment in late August, followed by crack sealing where needed. The Town parking lots will also be crack sealed. The restorative treatment is an application of asphalt emulsion topped with small aggregate to fill in cracks. The asphalt penetrating treatment works like a sponge or deck sealant. The treatment soaks into the pavement, giving its elasticity back, and restoring the life of the asphalt. This is the first application of this treatment in Town, the DPW is looking forward to its results in pavement preservation.

The state has completed the repaving and line painting on the full length of Rt. 57 and it's a real pleasure to drive on.

The new DPW dump truck should be delivered to Town before the winter season, and the Department will continue to perform maintenance on all of our equipment and the four Town owned buildings.

### Comcast/Xfinity Broadband Update

August 1, 2022 From Kevin Donovan

Comcast has begun installing, for "Presold customers", "aerial drops" and "underground drops" (pulling cable through an existing underground conduit (UG)).

In order to become a Presold Customer, you must contact Comcast and speak with Barbara or Jeff (contact below).

- Work on these drops is being done seven (7) days a week
- The contractor will not be making appointments for this outside work.
- They are traveling in white vans and will have a sticker on the back of the truck saying "Comcast Contractor." They typically do not have to enter the home for this work.
- The contractor (CCG) will look at any drops to homes and verify the work needed.

Once completed, they issue the pre-install drop workout for aerial drops or underground drops.

- AERIAL DROPS
- The drop crew will place the aerial drops on the home, and connections installed near the area of the electric or existing phone line connections.
- UNDERGROUND DROPS
- If needed, the UG crew will place a duct or pull-through customers' existing conduit if available.
- The contractor will install a connection box (NID) on the home, place an ONU (Mini Optical Node) in the box, hook it up to the fiber drop, and test I to make sure the drop has light and is ready to go
- A Comcast installer will make an appointment to complete the actual installation of the customer services in the home when the service is live on your street.

Barbara Eberstadt 203 321-3045

Jeff Roffman 860 837-3939

Barbara eberstadt@comcast.com jeff\_roffman@comcast.com

Please note that work is being done simultaneously in all three phases below to speed the process of the network build.

Comcast, as of this writing has over 30 live customers on the Network, 80 in process who are in Phase 1. The

### Phase 1 (alphabetical)

Beechwood Lane

Beetle Road

Brook Lane

Cottontail Lane

E Otter Dr.

Forest Road

Hartland Road

Hill Drive

Jeff Miller Road

Lakeside Drive

Meadow Drive

Otter Pond Trail

Path Road

Ridge Road

Robins Rst

S. Village Rd

75-240 Schoolhouse Rd

Slope Road

Stones Throw Drive

Thicket Road

**Upper Otter Drive** 

View Drive

W Granville Road (206-

1096)

W Otter Drive

Woods Lane

### Phase 2

**Anglers Hook Drive** 

Beetle Road (117-427)

**Burt Hill Road** 

Chipmunk Xing

Clark Road

Clubhouse Road

Colebrook River Road (22-389)

Covell Road

E Otis Road

Fiddlehead Lane

Fox Den Road

Harvey Mountain Road

Laurel Land

Meadow Drive

**New Boston Road** 

**Owls Nest Lane** 

Porcupine Pt

Rivers Road

W Granville Road (33,113,205)

Woodchuck Hollow Road

### Phase 3

Clubhouse Road (945-1111)

Lakeview Lane

Lands End Drive

Moreau Road

North Trail

Ona Road

Pinewood Drive

Schoolhouse Road (5, 2451)

South Trail

# HILLTOWNS

# With elections soon be aware of voting methods

Avoid any confusion

Mary Kronholm Correspondent HILLTOWNS - Gov. Charlie Baker recently signed into law an election reform law titled "The VOTES Act," which among other things, makes several of the temporary changes resulting from pandemic permanent, so many of these policies and procedures will be familiar.

Just this week, Hilltown residents started receiving their official 2022 Vote by Mail Application cards from the Secretary of the Commonwealth Elections Division.

The cards are only to request a mailin ballot.

It is important your voter information is checked for accuracy before the card is returned, which is already postage-paid and addressed to the voter's town clerk office – so you have the convenience of dropping it in any mailbox once it's completed.

There is one point for voters who identify as having no party affiliation or are "unenrolled" must be aware of — they must choose a party to receive a mail-in ballot to participate in the Sept. 6 primary and/or the Nov. 8 general state election

At that same time, it is important to remember that the party affiliation for anyone who requests the ballot will not

be changed permanently – it is only for the two upcoming state elections.

There are several steps printed on the card that must be filled out when requesting the ballot.

One of those is the voter can ask that the mail-in ballot be sent to a different address and there is a choice to include their telephone number.

But most importantly, if a voter requests a mail-in ballot, there are three options that must be selected.

For the elections the voter wants to participate in, there are three choices:

- All 2022 Elections
- Sept. 6 State Primary Only
  - Nov. 8 State Election Only

If the voter selects "All," then ballots for those two elections will be sent to the address confirmed by the town or city clerk

That voter will only have ballots for those two elections mailed to them.

And again, there is no option to vote as "unenrolled."

The local clerk will only send a ballot for one or the other party, not both.

The voter must then sign the application to return it to their local clerk by mail or by dropping it off at their office.

And don't be confused -- this is only an application for an early Vote by Mail ballot, not the actual ballot.

The voter's information will be veri-

Official Vote by Mall Application
Voter Information

This is the card from the Secretary of State that voters who want a mail-in ballot will need

fied by the local election official, in most

communities, that is the town clerk.

Once voter status has been verified, one ballot will be mailed out prior to each election date.

The deadline for the town clerk or election official to receive a request for any ballot, either an Early Vote by Mail or and absentee ballot is five business days before the election.

A business day is any weekday that is not a legal holiday, so this will typically fall one week before Election Day.

For the Sept. 6 State Primary, because Labor Day is not a business day, the deadline for election officials to receive vote by mail applications is 5 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 29.

For the Nov. 8 State Election, the deadline for election officials to receive vote by mail applications is 5 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 1

No ballots can be mailed to any voter whose application has not been received by 5 p.m. five business days before the election.

### **Prescription Drug Assistance**

Each year thousands of Medicare beneficiaries reach a gap in their Medicare prescription drug plan that is often referred to as the "donut hole"

If you reach that gap, you will see your prescription drug costs increase dramatically! Don't let this happen to you. **Prescription Advantage** can help.

If you have Medicare or other prescription insurance, Prescription Advantage helps to fill gaps in coverage. For people not eligible for Medicare, Prescription Advantage provides primary prescription drug coverage.

For more information about Prescription Advantage, call MassOptions at 1-800-243-4636, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, or visit <u>prescriptionadvantagema.org</u>.

For quicker processing of applications and responses to pended applications, please use our online application and our online fax option (508-793-1166). You can always call us for assistance with either of these options. Live agents are here to help Monday thru Friday 9:00 am- 5:00 pm EST.

### Who is eligible for Prescription Advantage?

Prescription Advantage is available to Massachusetts residents who are:

- Age 65 or older, eligible for Medicare, and have a gross annual household income less than 500% of the Federal Poverty Level, or
- 65 years of age or older and not eligible for Medicare, or
- Under age 65, work no more than 40 hours per month, meet MassHealth's CommonHealth disability guidelines, and have a gross annual household income at or below 188% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Not MassHealth or CommonHealth members\*

\*In some cases, individuals receiving assistance from MassHealth to pay for Medicare Part A and/or Part B premiums, deductibles, and co-payments may still be eligible for Prescription Advantage.

### How Does Prescription Advantage Work with a Medicare Part D or Creditable Coverage Plan?

Prescription Advantage supplements prescription drug benefits by helping to pay for medications covered by Medicare Part D or creditable coverage plans\*\*. Membership category determines when Prescription Advantage benefits begin. At that time, members pay no more than Prescription Advantage co-payment amounts. Click here for more detail information

\*\*Creditable coverage is coverage as good or better than drug coverage offered by Medicare and is usually provided by an employer or union.

### Not Eligible for Medicare?

Prescription Advantage may be able to provide primary coverage to Massachusetts residents who are not eligible for Medicare. Click here for more detail information

For more information, call customer service at 1-800-243-4636.

Apply Online: Click here

By phone: call 1-800-243-4636

- By mail: <u>Click here</u> to download an application. Mail to P.O. Box 15153 Worcester, MA 01615-0153
- By fax: <u>Click here</u> to download an application. Fax to 508-793-1166

For application assistance, call customer service at 1-800-243-4636, Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm EST.

Family Size	Annuai	Monthly		Weekly	
1	\$ 67,950	\$	5,665	\$	1,305
2	\$ 91,550	\$	7,630	\$	1,760
3	\$ 115,150	\$	9,595	\$	2,215
4	\$ 138,750	\$	11,565	\$	2,670
5	\$ 162,350	\$	13,530	\$	3,120
6	\$ 185,950	\$	15,495	\$	3,575
7	\$ 209,550	\$	17,465	\$	4,030
8	\$ 233,150	\$	19,430	\$	4,485
Each Add'l	\$ 23,600	\$	1,965	\$	455



### COST SAVINGS Strategies TIP #1 from SHINE

Did you know that the **Medicare Savings Plans** can help you pay for Medicare premiums and make you eligible for BIG SAVINGs on your prescriptions? Check these current 2022 numbers. If you have Medicare and your income and assets are similar to those below, you might qualify!

Medicare Savings Plans	Gross Monthly Income Limit	Asset Limit*	Application to use	Benefits
MassHealth Senior Buy-In (QMB)	\$1,473 (individual) \$1,984 (couple)	\$16,800 (individual) \$25,200 (couple)	MassHealth SACA-2 or Buy-In 1-800-841-2900	Medicare A, B premiums, deductibles and copays, automatic full extra help with prescription costs
MassHealth Buy-In (SLMB, QI-1)	\$1,869 (individual) \$2,518 (couple)	\$16,800 (individual) \$25,200 (couple)	MassHealth SACA-2 or Buy-In 1-800-841-2900	Pays Medicare B premium & full extra help with prescription costs

<sup>\*</sup> Primary residence and one vehicle are not counted

If you have any questions about these programs, contact a SHINE counselor or outreach worker at your COA or MassOptions at (1-800-243-4636). You can apply any time and reap big savings!

# hearing Help for

ge-related hearing loss is the slow loss of hearing in both ears. It's a common problem linked to aging. About 30 out of 100 adults older than age 65 have hearing loss.

This hearing loss happens slowly. So some people are not aware of the change at first. Most often, it affects the ability to hear high-pitched noises such as a phone ringing or a microwave beeping. The ability to hear low-pitched noises is often not affected.

### How is age-related hearing loss treated?

Treatment will depend on your symptoms, age, and general health. It will also depend on how severe the condition is.

Treatment options for age-related hearing loss may include:

- Hearing aids
- Assistive devices, such as telephone amplifiers or technology that changes spoken words to text
- Training to use visual cues to figure out what is being said (speech reading)
- Methods to prevent too much wax in the outer ear

### Living with hearing loss

If you have hearing loss, your health care professional can refer you to specialists in hearing loss, such as an:

- Otolaryngologist. This is a doctor who specializes in diseases and conditions of the ears, nose, and throat. They are sometimes called an ENT.
- Audiologist. This is a health care professional who specializes in testing and managing hearing problems.

In addition to getting medical follow-up, you can also:

- Tell family and friends about the problem so they can help you cope.
- Ask people to face you when they talk so you can see their faces. Watching expressions and facial movements can help you understand the conversation better.
- Explain to people that they don't have to speak slowly or shout, just speak louder.
- Turn off the TV when you are not watching it.
- Be aware of the impact of your environment on your hearing. In a restaurant, don't sit next to a band or the kitchen. Background noise makes hearing more difficult.

### >> Remember!

Original Medicare does not cover the cost for routine hearing and vision exams, glasses, or hearing aids, but our Medex Vision and Hearing benefit plan can help fill in that coverage gap for a low monthly cost.\*

For more information or to enroll in this plan, call us at 1-888-366-3212 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

\* Medex Vision and Hearing benefits are furnished through TruHearing and EyeMed providers. Restrictions may apply.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT - Thank to Sue Moore

THIS IS RIGHT ON THE NOSE. ......READ IT SLOWLY... I DON'T KNOW WHO WROTE IT, BUT I AM GUESSING IT WAS A SENIOR!!! I FIRST STARTED READING THIS AND WAS READING FAST UNTIL I REACHED THE THIRD SENTENCE. THIS IS VERY THOUGHT-PROVOKING. MAKES YOU STOP AND THINK.

AND THEN IT IS WINTER You know... time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. But, here it is... the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise... How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathorn it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting grey...they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change....Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!

But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's NOT over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!

Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one.

LIVE IT WELL! ENJOY TODAY! DO SOMETHING FUN! BE HAPPY! HAVE A GREAT DAY!

### REMEMBER:....

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.

"LIVE HAPPY IN THIS YEAR AND EVERY YEAR!

### LASTLY, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

TODAY IS THE OLDEST YOU'VE EVER BEEN, YET THE YOUNGEST YOU'LL EVER BE SO - ENJOY THIS DAY WHILE IT LASTS.

- ~Your kids are becoming you......
- ~Going out is good.. Coming home is better!
- ~You forget names.... But it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!!!
- ~You realize you're never going to be really good at anything
- ~The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.
- ~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".
- ~You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch..
- ~You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... "what?" . ???
- ~Now that you can afford expensive jewelry, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.
- ~You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!
- ~What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- ~Everybody whispers.
- ~You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet.... 2 of which you will never wear.
- ~But Old is good in some things: Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!!

Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!" It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter That Tells What Kind Of Life You Have Lived.

## BARBARA BERNARD It's a week to have some fun

SUPPOSE THERE IS A similarity between retirement and senility because, frankly, I think people are senile if they stop working. That is, of course, my own opinion.

So let's talk about retirement. Here are some questions people ask about retirement, and I hope you

enjoy the answers:

■ How many days are there in a week? The answer is six Saturdays and one Sunday;

- When is a retiree's bedtime? The answer is two hours after falling asleep on the couch;
- How many retirees does it take to change a lightbulb? The answer is just one, but it might take all day;
- What is the biggest gripe of retirees? The answer is there is not enough time to get everything done;
- Why don't retirees mind being called seniors? The answer is the term comes with a 10% discount;
- Among retirees, what is considered formal attire? The answer is tied shoes;
- Why do retirees count pennies? The answer is they are the only ones that have the
- What is the common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire? The answer is, "Nuts!"
- Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage? The answer is

they know as soon as they do, one of their adult children will want to store their things in that space;

- What do retirees call a long lunch? The answer is normal.
- What is the best way to describe retirement? The answer is the never-ending coffee break; and
- What is the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree? The answer is if you cut classes no C one calls your parents.

Now let's talk about senility.0 Here are some perspectives that have amused me as I'm now in my 90s:

- Just before the funeral services the undertaker came up to the very elderly widow and asked, "How old was your husband?" "98," she replied, "two years older than me." The undertaker commented, "So, you're 96," to which she responded, "Hardly worth going home."
- A reporter interviewing a 104-year-old woman asked her, "What do you think is the best thing about being 104?" She replied, "There is no peer pressure."
- The same reporter began to ask questions of older peo-

ple. In one case, the question was "You do not seem senile. Why do you call yourself that and why do you want to be senile?" One responded, "The nicest thing about being senile is you can hide your own Easter eggs and then have fun finding them."

- Said another in their interview, "I've sure gotten old. I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, two new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications which make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia. Have poor circulation, hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I am 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends. But thank goodness I still have my driver's license."
- And, another responded, "I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my leotard on the class was over.
- Would you like to know how to prevent sagging? Just eat until the wrinkles fill out."
- And, finally, from another older person, "It is very scary when you start making the same noises that your coffee maker makes. This is the senility prayer. Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do like and the eyesight to tell the difference."

Barbara C. Bernard, of Holyoke, is a columnist for The Republican.

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IMPORTANT DATES COMING UP IN Toll	and
August 18 & 25 Yoga- 9AM @ PSC	
August 13 - Concert on the Green	
September 1 - Southwick-Tolland-Granv	ille
Schools start	
September 5 Labor Day	
September 6 MA State Primary	
September 13- COA Noon Lunch at the F	SC
September 26 – 1st day of Rosh Hashana	h
October 10 – Columbus Day	
<b>WATCH NEWS &amp; NOTICES FOR UPDATE</b>	S

How many retirees does it take to change a light bulb? One, but it might take all day. I decided to stop calling the bathroom the "John" and renamed it the "Jim". I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.

Writing my name in cursive is my signature move.

Tolland Council on Aging 241 West Granville Rd. Tolland, MA 01034