

THE SPIRIT OF BELLINGHAM

February 2026 Newsletter

From the Council on Aging

40 Blackstone Street • Bellingham, MA 02019

Phone: 508-966-0398 • Fax: 508-966-5843

www.bellinghamma.org



WHAT'S FOR BREAKFAST?

At the Senior Center, it could be bacon and eggs... sausage... home fries... pancakes... cranberry orange bread pudding... sweet potato hash... French toast... eggs benedict... and a lot more. There's coffee, tea and juice, too.

Since July, the Center has been offering breakfast meals ranging in price from \$1 to \$10. Service is on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:30 to 10am.

"It's a joy to eat here," says Art with a grin referring to the Joyful Cup Café. He continues, "Excellent service, excellent food, pleasant atmosphere." In the next seat over, Russ says, **"The cook is fantastic."** She is also his wife.

"Serving breakfast at our Senior Center has been an absolute joy," reports Center Director Josie Dutil.

(Continued on page six)

Pat Goodale

February 2, 1941—December 8, 2025

(Please see page two)

THRIVE AFTER THERAPY



After physical therapy, movement continues to be necessary. In partnership with BayState PT, a new program at the Senior Center will offer weekly supervised PT exercise sessions helping participants bridge the gap between skilled physical therapy and independent fitness.

The purpose of the program, according to Senior Center Director Josie Dutil, is to empower older adults to keep progressing, promote independence and functional mobility, encourage community involvement, build lifelong movement habits and support confidence and safety.

This free program will begin on February 10 at 1pm and take place every Tuesday.

(Continued on page four)

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Stuart, Marcia Men-
dell, Wayne

Goodale, Joe Alger,
Dan Curtis and Paul
Laferriere.

Remembering Pat Goodale

Patricia Ann Goodale passed away at home on Monday, December 8, just short of her 85th birthday. A familiar face at the Senior Center, she served as president of the Bellingham Elder Service Group as well as a tireless volunteer at the Center.

She was married to Wayne Goodale for almost 60 years, and had 14 children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren in the family. She lived in Bellingham since 1988.

We honor and remember her in the comments below.



Wayne Goodale.

"We were going to celebrate our 60th anniversary on February 12. The family is still planning a get-together around that date. She was a gifted crafter and talented artist. She loved animals and nature and loved her flowers and garden. Oh, and the birds, especially! The bread at the Senior Center always came in handy. She will be missed by all."

Josie Dutil (Senior Center Director). "Pat Goodale dedicated much of her artistic talent to our Senior Center in the form of decorations. Every centerpiece we own at the Center was lovingly created by Pat, with supplies paid for by the Bellingham Elder Service Group. Her commitment over the years has made such a positive impact that will be woven into the history of our Senior Center and felt for many years to come. She is an unsung hero that will forever be missed."

Cindy Duquette (One of Pat's daughters). "I know firsthand how much my mom truly enjoyed volunteering and being a part of many of the things that take place at the Senior Center. She spoke of it often, and always upon my visits with her for tea, she would have some project or craft set up on her kitchen table that she was currently working on. Shortly after her passing, I took her Bible home with me that was sitting on the living room table next to her chair and was fumbling through it when I came upon a scripture she had written on a piece of paper. 1st Peter 4:10. So of course I had to look it up! It reads, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." And this is what she did -- making something, giving it away or contributing her talents in some way to serve the community, my school, whatever came her way. She will always be missed, I'm grateful to have had her as my mom."

Kay Page (Chair of the COA). "I have known Pat since she was the President of the BESG and have enjoyed working with her on several committees. Pat made the favors for last year's Christmas party and again this year. She also made the flowers for the tables in the dining room. Not only was she so talented she was also a pleasure to work with -- always on time, willing to do whatever needed and so helpful to anyone. Pat is and will be missed!"

COUNCIL ON AGING MONTHLY REPORT

The COA provides support and leadership to our senior community through advocacy and by implementing educational, nutritional, recreational and wellness programs to meet their needs. **508-966-0398**

Our next public Board Meeting will be at the Center on February 10 at 11am

COA Officers and Board Members

Chair: Kay Page. Treasurer: Dave Dunbar. Secretary: Brenda Griffin. Board Members: MingMing He, Glenna Laverdiere, Tsune Roberts, Wendy Wright. Associate Members: Steve Racicot, Tina Arsenault.

Welcome February!

February is here and brings us Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day and of course the one we all wait for and that is Groundhog Day. Will he or won't he -- see his shadow that is. Does it really matter? We are in New England and I'm sure we will have more winter whether Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow or not! The next special day in February is Presidents' Day. It is not only a Monday holiday, a day off making a long weekend, but a day set aside to honor all presidents -- past and present! Last but not least we have Valentine's Day -- a day of flowers, candy and cards. However you celebrate, enjoy the day! Enjoy February!

We've had some questions about an in-person book club so if you like to read, like to talk about what you have read, and like people come join us! We can meet during the day or at night whatever works for the group! Please call the center at 508-966-0398 and leave your name and phone number. It is a great time to get a book club going! Look forward to hearing from you!

If you haven't signed up for the BESG Valentine's party you have a few days -- be sure and read Jim's article on page five and get the information regarding sign-up and the party.

Coffee and Conversation is Tuesday from 9:30-11:00am. Once again, if you haven't tried Coffee and Conversation make this the Tuesday the one you do. Look forward to seeing you! The Joyful Cup Cafe is now open for breakfast and lunch, with no pre-ordering. Breakfasts on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; Lunch on Tuesday, and Thursday. You love the breakfasts and you will love the lunches! Come join us!

Reminder, **the First Annual Chili Cook Off Police vs Fire** is Friday, February 6th at the Senior Center -- call the Center to reserve your seat and be among those testing. Will be delicious and lots of fun!

Remember the COA is the eyes, ears and advocates for the senior community. If you have any suggestions, comments or concerns call the Senior Center at 508-966-0398.

Thank you,
Kay Page, Chair



NEWS BRIEFS

WINTER STROLL — Join Lisa Loo for a stroll at Hopedale Pond on Thursday, February 12 at 11am. Meet at the Hopedale Street parking lot. Walk is 11am-noon, then lunch at the Rail Trail Flatbread Company in Milford. Please dress appropriately. Call Lisa for more info at (508) 657-2714.

COFFEE & CONVERSATION — Every Tuesday at 9:30am. Town Manager Joe Laydon will attend the first Tuesday of each month.

SPIRITUAL BOOK CLUB — The Club meets via Zoom on Mondays at 9am. Discussion will be about *The Girl Who Baptised Herself* by Meggan Watterson. Please call host Josie Dutil at (508) 657-2705 to join or for more information.

TECH CONNECT — This informative session returns this month on Tuesday, 2/3 at 1pm. Bring your questions!

PERSONAL HOME HEALTH CARE — Learn about navigating home care, ways to pay for support (VA, insurance, programs), elder law and estate planning, and more affordable staffing options for seniors. Bring your questions and join us for this educational presentation on Thursday, February 12, at 1pm.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE — Join us on Mondays at 9am... just for fun!



Why does continued movement after PT matter? (continued from page one)



It reduces stiffness, weakness, and pain; it improves cardiovascular health, supports bone density, enhances mood and cognition, prevents decline at PT, and supports long-term independence.

The program can also help older adults with their balance. Falling is the leading cause of injury with more than 14-million older adults reporting falls every year.

Dutil says this program benefits the community by encouraging seniors to stay active, building supportive networks, providing supervised movement, and creating continuity after PT.

If you plan to attend, please bring your home exercise program from your PT and any assistive devices and wear comfortable clothing.

We are grateful to MCOA for the special incentive grant that helped us equip the space.

SCAN IN, PLEASE

Your membership scan card is your key to the Senior Center! Scanning at the front entrance is a quick and efficient way of signing in to the many daily offerings.

Card scanning not only registers your name, programs, and dates you are attending, it provides important data for grant writing and aids in the allocation of State and local funds. The data may be used to advocate with citizens for financial support.

You may already be scanning your card for a weekly class, but don't forget to scan to record volunteer hours, attendance at a lecture, or times you are simply enjoying a meal or dropping in to get bread or eggs. This accumulated data is studied in various ways so the Center will be "in the know" about Bellingham's older adult needs and interests.

If you don't have a card, the folks at the front desk can help.

BELLINGHAM ELDER SERVICE GROUP

Jim Fitzpatrick, *President*; Eva Gamache, *Vice President*;
Doreen MacLellan, *Treasurer*; Del Cournoyer, *Secretary*; Gail Milgram, *Sunshine Lady*
Board Members: Peg Brooks, Bill & Barbara Eltzroth, Linda Drohan, Patty Fisher, Pat
Gorman, and Greg MacLellan

For more information about the BESG and its programs, please call the Senior Center at 508-966-0398 for specific event dates and times.

Welcome to February!

It's the shortest month of the year and as of this writing, the winter hasn't been that bad yet -- cold but not a whole lot of snow. Hopefully, I haven't just put a jinx on it. In my mind, it's spring already. Spring starts when the days start getting longer. And another sign of the start of spring is it right after the Super Bowl this month. Spring training starts for baseball so all the sports fans are gonna be excited this month.

We have two events this month that I'm sure people will enjoy. On Friday, February 13 is our annual Valentine's party from noon to two. There will be food choices: ham and cheese sandwiches, egg salad sandwiches, and chicken salad sandwiches for eight dollars each. Chicken noodle soup, too. We are planning to use our new kitchen for the Valentine's party (watching them do such a good job we wanted to try them out). Like all our events, you must sign up at least a week in advance so you have until February 6 to sign up for the Valentine's party.

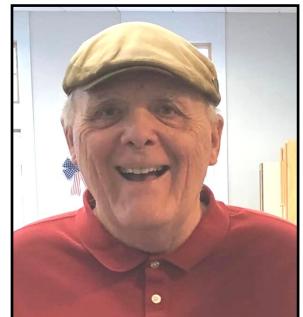
Our birthday party this month is on the 26th and will feature meatloaf by Mickey G. That's always popular! If you plan to attend, you must sign up by February 20.

In December, we lost a very kind and artistic member of the BESG board, Pat Goodale. (See page two for more about Pat). She was a very creative artist who made all the handouts, including little stockings, that Santa passed out this year at the Christmas party, as well as putting the finishing touches on all the table decorations. We had a float a couple years ago in the Memorial Day parade and Pat designed and decorated the trailer as well as some of the flowers that she made out of paper look real. She was also the past president of BESG. When I became president, she was very supportive and had a lot of good ideas. A lot of hints she offered made my job that much easier and for that I will always be grateful. She was a wonderful woman, always willing to help out and will forever be missed.

BESG IS THE HEART AND SOUL OF
THE SENIOR COMMUNITY

Jim Fitzpatrick

BESG President



BREAKFAST AT THE CENTER

(Continued from page one)

Dutil continues, "From the friendships and camaraderie experienced by our volunteers to the community of breakfast regulars we accommodate, new life has been infused into the Center. And quite noticeably, this is the program that brings in more men than any other program we do here! We are so excited to work towards the same feel and energy with our lunch program this month."

Chef Kelly Forestal came to the Senior Center after cooking at Dean College in Franklin for 24 years. **"I like our beautiful kitchen,"** she says, "I get great feedback from people. It's a great gathering place... **drop by the window and say 'Hello'.**"



"Breakfasts are my favorite meal of the day," says Jean. She likes the special breakfasts the best.

And Jay says, **"Great food! Great people. I highly recommend."** Kay says the service is "great" and she loves the bacon and home fries. Bubba says "there's nice company... you get to meet new people."

These are comments from a few of the 30 people or so who enjoyed breakfast at the Joyful Cup Café last month.

THE JOYFUL CUP CAFÉ AT THE SENIOR CENTER IS OPEN AT NOON FOR LUNCH ON TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS.

Reservations are no longer necessary. Prices range from \$6-\$10.

Wanna FREE lunch? Join our Diner's Club and get ready for a tasty, satisfying, no-cost lunch! You'll get a small punch card and every time you come in to the Joyful Cup Café for a \$5+ meal, we'll punch your card. Ten punches = free lunch!

If you'd like to volunteer to help in the dining room and/or the kitchen, then please call us at (508) 966-0398



LUNCH

BEVERAGES

Coffee (regular or decaf).....	Free
Hot Tea (regular or decaf).....	Free
Iced Tea.....	\$1
Lemonade.....	\$1

SALADS

Garden Salad.....	\$5
Half Salad.....	\$3

SOUP

See Specials for Daily Soup Options

Bowl.....	\$5
Cup.....	\$3

MADE TO ORDER

Sandwiches served with chips	
BLT (Bacon, Lettuce, Tomato).....	\$6
Ham & Cheese (Lettuce, Tomato).....	\$5
Grilled Cheese.....	\$3
Add Tomato.....	\$4
Add Bacon.....	\$5
Add Ham.....	\$5
Bread: White, Wheat or Rye	
Hamburger.....	\$6
Cheeseburger.....	\$7

SIDES

Bag of Chips.....	\$1
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ENTREE

See Specials for Daily Options

Please note we cannot safely accommodate food allergies.

*These items can be cooked to order. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness.

Join us for an introduction to light weight remote control airplanes.

Presenter Steve Rivet will have five or six planes to talk about including setting up for flight and binding to a transmitter. Also, battery charging setup. New stabilization features make flying much easier. Test your flying skills with Remote Control flight software and RC radio set up.

Check it out! Friday, **February 20, 11:30am.** Please call ahead to reserve your spot.



RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry (508) 966-2862

SNAP—Nutritional Assistance (833) 712-8027

Mass Behavioral Hotline (833) 773-2445

Call2Talk Mental Health Hotline—Dial 988

Essential Community Resources—Dial 211

SAGE LGBTQ+ Hotline (877) 360-5428

Elder Abuse Hotline (800) 922-2275

Domestic Violence (800) 799-7233

Alzheimer's Association Helpline (800) 272-3900

Poison Control (800) 222-1222

Bellingham Police and Fire Departments— Dial 911. Non-emergency: Police (508) 966-1515. Fire (508) 966-1112.

You are invited!

First Annual Chili Cook-Off

Bellingham Fire versus Bellingham Police

It's coming to the Senior Center on Friday, February 6, from noon to 1pm. Join us for this tasty competition. Attendees will choose two small cups of chili to taste. One will be from the Fire Department and one from the Police Department (you won't know which is which). Taste. And vote.

"The winner will get a small trophy and bragging rights," smiles police lieutenant Christopher Padula. "We're excited," explains fire lieutenant Derek Kesselman. "This is our first cook-off and we're trying to be more active in the community."

So who is actually going to prepare the chili? Lt. Padula (pictured on the right) says, "I plan to call on a couple of culinarily-gifted people at the police department. But I think we are the underdogs." At the fire department, Lt. Kesselman (he's on the left) says, "We have lots of cooks here at the south station and we've had some internal cook-offs before. We hope it won't be too spicy for sensitive pallets."



Along with chili, there will be corn bread, desserts, and coffee. There will not be a charge to attend... it's all free. After all the votes are counted, the winner will be announced. Both lieutenants said their departments are looking to become more involved in community activities.

Please call the Senior Center at (508) 966-0398 to reserve your seat at the table. Space is limited.

WHAT'S COMING IN

MONDAY

2
 8:30am Chair Yoga
 9am Knitters & Quilters
 9am Joyful Noise
 10am Chair Volleyball
 1pm Poker
 1pm Chair Exercise

9
 8:30am Chair Yoga
 9am Knitters & Quilters
 9am Joyful Noise
 10am Chair Volleyball
 1pm Poker
 1pm Chair Exercise
2:15pm 50+ Job Seekers

16



23
 8:30am Chair Yoga
 9am Knitters & Quilters
 9am Joyful Noise
 10am Chair Volleyball
 1pm Poker
 1pm Chair Exercise

TUESDAY

3
 8:30-10am Breakfast
 9:30am Coffee & Convo
 10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
 Noon Canasta
 Noon Lunch
 1pm Pitch
1pm Tech Connect

10
 8:30-10am Breakfast
 9:30am Coffee & Convo
 10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
 10am Blood Pressure
11am COA Board Meeting
 Noon Canasta
 Noon Lunch
 1pm Pitch
1pm Thrive after Therapy

17
 8:30-10am Breakfast
 9:30am Coffee & Convo
 10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
 Noon Canasta
 Noon Lunch
 1pm Pitch
1pm Thrive after Therapy

24
 8:30-10am Breakfast
 9:30am Coffee & Convo
 10am Blood Pressure
 10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
 Noon Canasta
 Noon Lunch
 1pm Pitch
1pm Thrive after Therapy

WEDNESDAY

4
 9:15am Deep Stretch (\$5)
 10am Walking Group
 Noon Lunch
 1pm BINGO

11
 9am SHINE
 9:15am Deep Stretch (\$5)
 10am Walking Group
 Noon Lunch
 1pm BINGO
1pm Learn to Paint

18
 9:15am Deep Stretch (\$5)
 10am Walking Group
11am Financial Advice
 Noon Lunch
 1pm BINGO
2pm Legal Advice
3pm Pop Up Pantry

25
 9:15am Deep Stretch (\$5)
 10am Walking Group
 Noon Lunch
 1pm BINGO

FEBRUARY

THURSDAY

5

8:30-10am Breakfast
9:30am Stretch & Strength Yoga (\$5)
10:30am Bereavement
10:30am Black History Month; President Obama's Legacy
Noon Lunch
1pm Mahjong

12

8:30-10am Breakfast
9:30am Stretch & Strength Yoga (\$5)
10:30am Black History Month; Maya Angelou: Still I Rise
11am Hopedale Pond Stroll
Noon Lunch
1pm Mahjong
1pm My Personal Home Health Care
2:30pm Rainbow Café

19

8:30-10am Breakfast
9:30am Stretch & Strength Yoga (\$5)
10:30am Bereavement
10:30am Black History Month; How Martin Luther King Changed the World
1pm Mahjong
Noon Lunch
1pm Canadian Rockies & Glacier National Park presentation

26

8:30-10am Breakfast
9:30am Stretch & Strength Yoga (\$5)
10:30am Black History Month; Harriet Tubman & the Underground Railroad
Noon Birthday Party (\$15)
1pm Mahjong

FRIDAY

6

8:30-10am Breakfast
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Chair Yoga
Noon Chili Cook Off

13

8:30-10am Breakfast
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Chair Yoga
11:30am Mental Health Tips
Noon Valentine's Day Party

20

8:30-10am Breakfast
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Chair Yoga
11:30am Remote Control Airplanes

27

8:30-10am Breakfast
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Chair Yoga
11:30am Mental Health Tips
11:30 Singer Alex Connolly

NOTES

ONCE-A-MONTH and NEW offerings are listed in **bold**. Program dates and times change so please call the Center to confirm all activities.

POOL ROOM — Opens at noon on Mondays. 8am-4pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays. 8am-3pm on Fridays.

VIRTUALLY YOURS — Every Monday at 9am, the Spiritual Book Club meets via Zoom. Contact Josie Dutil at (508) 966-0398 to sign up.

SENIOR STRONG — 8am on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; 11:30am on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Two, 16-week sessions. Call the Senior Center for more information.

SHINE — Need help with your health insurance? Between 9am and noon on every other Wednesday you can get it with our SHINE representative. Please call ahead and book your appointment.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH Every Thursday in February the Center will offer a 60-minute documentary about a black American who made a difference. 10:30-11:30am. On the 5th: President Obama's legacy and unfinished business. On the 12th: Maya Angelou and Still I Rise. On the 19th: How Martin Luther King Jr. changed the world. And on the 27th: Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

BSC MEN'S CLUB — The Club meets every Wednesday at 11:30am at Liz's Tavern in Bellingham.

VETERANS NEWS

The Veterans Service Office in Bellingham exists to assist vets in securing the most complete package of benefits.

It is staffed by Art Campbell, Veteran's Agent, who is assisted by Maryhelen Hibben. They can be reached at (508) 657-2812.

OVERPAYMENT FRAUD

Scammers are alarmingly clever in targeting veterans, surviving spouses and family members who receive VA benefits. They pretend to be official VA representatives and use official communication channels to demand repayment for alleged benefits overpayments. Fraudulent letters, emails and texts often include fake VA letter-heads and logos, making it difficult to distinguish genuine VA communications from scams. Learn more about overpayment scams: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqowY9391ls>

HOME LOAN GUARANTEE

As part of our mission to serve you, we provide a home loan guaranty benefit and other housing-related programs to help you buy, build, repair, retain, or adapt a home for your own personal occupancy. Learn more about the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program. <https://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/index.asp>

VSO is coming to the Senior Center. Watch for the information table in the lobby beginning next month.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, often referred to as CBT, is a well-researched and validated treatment. It is based on the theory that human beings often engage in patterns of thinking and acting that are not helpful. There are about 10-12 types of distorted thinking. Let's review just 3 types: catastrophizing, overgeneralization, and personalization.

Catastrophizing is the tendency to expect that no matter what, the worst-case scenario is the most likely outcome. Chicken Little was expert at catastrophizing. The sky was always falling even when it was just a little rain. Some of us spend much of our day worrying about any number of terrible things that might befall us. In fact, anxiety is all about expecting problems are just around corner.

Overgeneralization is the tendency to take one event and use it as the basis for many other events. An overgeneralizer who does not win the first time they shoot pool, will assume they are "no good" at pool and will never try again. Overgeneralizing is a quick way to take the fun and challenge out of life and limit the hope we need to persevere through difficult times.

Personalization is the tendency to interpret situations as if they were directed toward us specifically. For example, if someone walks past you without saying hello, a person prone to personalization might think "I must have done something wrong" rather than consider the more likely scenarios that the individual was running late, was focused on a task, or simply did not notice them. Personalization can often lead to guilt, shame, and unfair self-criticism.

Challenging these patterns of thinking, thereby increasing the accuracy of our thoughts, can dramatically improve our emotional resilience and lead to a much happier life. So, just start by asking yourself, "Is there really evidence for this idea?" or "Are there other explanations for this conclusion?"

Please feel free to contact Gail Bourassa with questions, thoughts, or column ideas: gbourassa@bellinghamma.org or call 774-307-3524. (Gail is the Senior Center's Mental Health Therapist, and she hosts Mental Health Tips **the second and fourth Friday of each month at 11:30am, at the Center.)**



AARP TAX PREP

If you'd like to take advantage of free, professional help in preparing your federal income tax filing, then call the Senior Center and make an appointment... no voicemails, please. You must speak to a person to get an appointment.

It is vital that you bring to your appointment your 2024 Tax Return no matter who did it. You must bring a canceled check. IRS may not be sending checks for refunds anymore.

If you have any of these circumstances, AARP cannot do your return: You sold your house in 2025. You have more than two brokerage statements. You hold, sold or exchanged crypto/virtual currency or digital assets.

"We want to be as supportive as possible with our tax volunteers as they work through all of the tax code changes new to them this year," says Senior Center Director Josie Dutil.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING WITH THE COST OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

We'd like to acknowledge the generous folks who responded to our recent request for a minimum \$15 donation to help pay rising postage costs to mail the newsletter.

Thirty-six people have contributed so far. And here are the latest:

Phyllis & Brian Calvey, Melinda Damon, Joan Crawford, Virginia Desjourdy, Katharina Lutz, Ethel Pannis, Judith & Ernest Pelletier, Glenna & Mark Laverdiere, William Coniaris, Verona & Jeannette Gross, Dr. Janice Chiappone, Rosemary Farrell, James & Linda Fitzgerald, Norma Cronin, Nancy Cerutti, Loretta Lopez, Lynn Bruce, and Rina & Robert Scafidi.

You can help, too. Contact the Senior Center at (508) 966-0398 and ask about supporting the newsletter.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Lisa Loo, the Senior Center's Social Services Coordinator, offers information below on four key programs you might like to take advantage of. Contact Lisa at (508) 657-2714 for a confidential consultation. She can help you navigate applications for local, state, and federal programs, connect you with benefits and services, and provide community resources.



Durable medical equipment loans

The Center loans wheelchairs, walkers, rollators, shower seats, commodes, etc. Please call ahead before donating items as there is limited space available. Donated equipment must be clean and in new or like-new condition with no stains, rips, or missing hardware. All equipment must be cleaned and sanitized before returning.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The heating season will continue through April 30. Please make an appointment to apply and obtain a checklist to determine what supporting documentation is required to apply. SMOC processes these applications and determines approval for this program. The average benefit award for last year was \$1,000 for the season. FY2026 income eligibility: \$51,777 for one person and \$67,209 for two.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Did you know that SNAP can help you buy healthy food? Older adults making less than \$2,608 per month (before taxes) or \$3,525 for couples, may be eligible. EBT cards work just like a debit card at the grocery store and online.

File of Life

This form should be updated annually to provide essential information to first responders when you can't. The Center has refrigerator magnets and wallet cards available at the welcome desk. In an emergency, every second counts!

HISTORICAL BELLINGHAM

Pelatiah Smith and Smith Tavern

Pelatiah Smith was born around 1657 in Malden and settled in Bellingham. He was the first and only Bellingham settler to be called "Gentleman", buying his large home on Rawson's Farm, and one-fourth of a sawmill on Stall Brook. He and two of his sons signed the petition for the founding of the town.

Pelatiah's occupation is listed as a blacksmith in old records, and he was also Bellingham's first Town Clerk. His sons kept the principal tavern in town, where stagecoaches stopped on their way from Boston to Hartford to change horses. The tavern was located on Hartford Ave. It is likely the tavern was a stop for Nathan Hale and his troops in 1776. The tavern stayed in the family until it burned down in the 1800s.

Pelatiah was buried in the North Bellingham Cemetery and his headstone reads: Here lies the body of Pelatiah Smith deceased in the 70th year of his age in September the 10th day in the year 1727. (Picture to the right.)



Content above was provided by Vice-Chair of the Historical Commission Jennifer Russo. You can reach the Commission by calling (508) 966-5838 or email: history@bellinghamma.org



Canadian Rockies & Glacier National Park is the place to learn about on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 1pm. Join us at the Senior Center as Diane Silverman details a special six-day travel opportunity to Calgary. Explore ice fields, waterfalls, glacial peaks, and towering summits. And bring your questions to the presentation.

LEARN TO PAINT

Join Amy Adams for an opportunity to learn how to paint all kinds of pictures. All the supplies you'll need are included. **Wednesday, February 11 at 1pm. Class is FREE and made possible by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council.**



Please call ahead to let us know you'll be attending.



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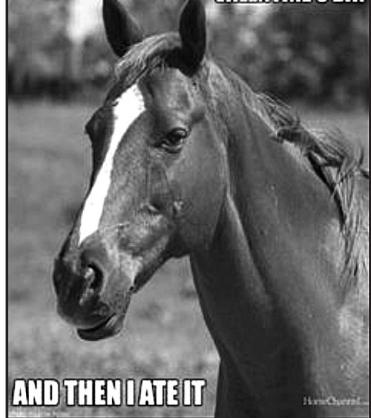
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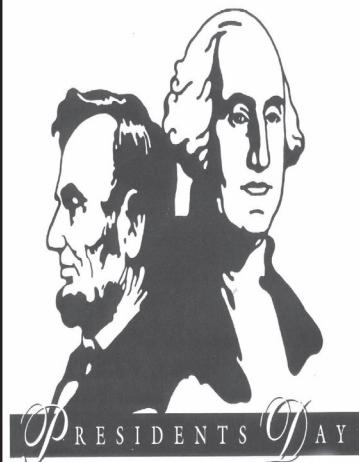
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Downsizing can feel overwhelming or maybe you are not looking to move yet, but you need guidance as you think about the future. Maybe you want to explore aging-in-place. We are here to listen, support, and guide you. Talking with an agent who truly understands the needs of seniors is a great first step. We are experts when it comes to senior moves. Call, we will listen.



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FEBRUARY'S TIP

"Aging in place" is the ability to live in one's own home and community safely and independently. Sometimes the best move is not moving at all - just some upgrades and tweaks to your current home to make it safer and more comfortable.

If you would like to learn more about aging in place, please reach out. We'll help you evaluate your home and help you decide whether this approach supports your current and future housing needs.

**Bellingham COA Senior Center
40 Blackstone Street
Bellingham, MA 02019**

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Address correction requested

INSIDE THIS EDITION...

We offer activities and information for seniors.

Page 1— Breakfasts in the Cafe
Page 2 — Remembering Pat Goodale
Page 3 — COA's Monthly Report
Page 6 — Weekly Dine-In Lunches
Page 7 — Chili Cook-Off
Pages 8 & 9 — February Calendar
Page 11 — Social Services
Page 12 — Historic Bellingham

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In regards to all Senior Center programming and transportation this winter, it will be aligned with the Bellingham school's cancellations and delayed openings.

The Center will remain open for information and referrals unless Town Hall closes. If you requested transportation on a day when schools are closed or delayed, then we apologize for any inconvenience.

Call the Senior Center at (508) 966-0398 for the latest information.

If you are receiving this newsletter, but don't ever read it, then please let us know so we can remove your name from the mailing list. Call (508) 966-0398 to unsubscribe. Thank you.