

THE SPIRIT OF BELLINGHAM

March 2023 Newsletter

From the Council on Aging

40 Blackstone Street • Bellingham, MA 02019

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

Josie Dutil, Executive Director • jdutil@bellinghamma.org

www.bellinghamma.org



WELCOME TO THE BELLINGHAM SENIOR CENTER!

With 139 group activities, presentations, and events on the calendar for this month (see pages 8 and 9), there is surely something here for you.

"Our vision," explains Executive Director Josie Dutil, "is to have people leave here feeling better and lighter than when they came in, having less stress and anxiety and more joy."

And the programming at the Center reflects the vision. "We are doing Arm Chair Travel, getting entertainers, historians, and bringing back chorus," says Dutil. "It's an effort to bring in new folks and bring back some who stepped away during COVID. And to bring in younger seniors who think they're not old enough!"

"In 2022, we served more than 900 seniors who participated in activities," adds Dutil. "Come and meet new people, enjoy laughter and fellowship."

Transportation services are also available from the Senior Center.

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GARDENING

WE'RE GETTING READY FOR THE NEW SEASON. WANNA HELP?

Our garden has been "asleep" these past few months, and we have plans to wake it up and we could use your help.

The garden at the Senior Center is designed to provide delicious, nourishing, free vegetables for our elders over the growing season. The eight, 3' x 8' beds are each about two feet deep and will be the focus of project number one. **Attention, please, volunteers!**

(continue on page 10)



MASSHEALTH UPDATE

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SHINE:

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EMHOT:

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(508) 966-0398

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Carl Malo, Kevin
Knehr, Bob Dubois,
Michael Mullaney,
Arthur Linnell, Ed
Nugent, Bob Green-
halgh, Jack Stuart,
Miguel Morillo and
Wayne Goodale

Beginning April 1, all current MassHealth members will need to renew their health coverage. During the pandemic, protections were put in place to prevent coverage from ending. Now that the pandemic is over, so is the protection.

MassHealth has partnered with the Massachusetts Health Connector, Health Care for All, and other organizations to make sure members know how to renew their coverage and are aware of other health coverage options if needed.

MassHealth will be reaching out to all members over the next 12 months to renew their health coverage. There are some important steps you can take now to help insure a smooth renewal.

Update your contact information. Make sure MassHealth has your most up-to-date address, phone number, and email so you won't miss any important communications. Visit www.mahealthconnector.org or call 1-877-623-7773.

Report any household changes. These include a new job, address, changes to your income, disability status, or pregnancy.

Create a login account (if you're under 65 years of age). Visit www.mass.gov/mashealthlogin

Read all mail from MassHealth. Look for a blue envelope coming in the mail. It may offer steps you can take to keep your current coverage. Make note of the important deadlines.

For additional assistance, you can call MassHealth Customer Service at 1-800-841-2900. Lisa Loo at the Senior Center may be able to help, too, and you can reach her at (508) 657-2714.

SNAP UPDATE

If you're on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), your final COVID SNAP payment will be on March 2, 2023. The pandemic is over, and so this special monthly payment is coming to an end.

During COVID, qualifying Massachusetts households were getting an additional check from SNAP to help them purchase food. Starting in April, recipients will receive their "normal monthly benefit."

Find out how you may potentially increase your benefit by visiting www.Mass.gov/ExtraCOVIDSNAP or calling (877) 382-2363.

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.

Our next public Board Meeting will be in person, March 14 at 11am

COA Officers and Board Members

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

Hello March and Happy St. Patrick's Day,

March brings us St. Patrick's Day, college vacations and daylight savings time. St. Patrick's Day is a day when everyone is 'just a wee bit Irish' and of course has the delicious, corned beef and cabbage dinner that we enjoy! Our days are getting longer and that makes us happier! Enjoy March -- we are getting closer to spring!

So, since we are talking about the Senior Center, I would like to tell you that the first time I came to the Center was 12 1/2 years ago -- I had just retired and really didn't know what I was going to do when I met a friend I had played bridge with sometime ago and she suggested I come to the Senior Center to play bridge. Deciding I would go, I walked in to the delicious smell of coffee, the TV on and people sitting reading the paper and watching the television. It was only 8:45am and the place was so lively, busy, and friendly -- such a comfortable feeling. I continued going back every Wednesday to play bridge and along the way met some great people.

About a year later I was asked if I would be interested in working in the Supportive Day program and after giving it some thought, I agreed so for the next 6 1/2 years I worked in the Supportive Day program and loved it! After that, I did volunteer work, worked on the Craft Fair, started a women's golf team -- got as far as having lessons and the next year Covid hit and the Senior Center was closed. We were able to do all our committee meetings via Zoom and that was great! We were so happy when the Center reopened about six months later and little by little the days seemed to get back to a new normal!

Fast forward to today and we are all back to our normal -- the card playing, exercise programs, pool room filled, monthly birthday parties and so much more. I am ever so grateful I took that first step to come and play bridge! I couldn't be happier -- my life is so full and very busy! **If you are looking to find something new to take up part of your day or just want a place to come and have a cup of coffee, then come to the Senior Center where you will find there is so much to do and you will meet some wonderful new friends!**

NEW COFFEE HOUR begins Tuesday, March 7 at 9:30am at the Senior Center. Please come have a cup of coffee (or tea, or hot chocolate), a muffin or donut and conversation! Looking forward to meeting you!

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

Thank you!

Kay Page, Chair



NEWS BRIEFS

BRIDGE PLAYERS WANTED — If you like the card game, or want to learn about it, then come join us on Thursdays at 8:30am at the Senior Center. For more info, contact Albie at (508) 728-2238.

BINGO BACKUP NEEDED — Would you like to be a backup caller for Lenny and Ken? Training will be provided. You'll need to be able to be here noon to 3pm on Wednesdays. By the way, BINGO draws a LARGE crowd! Please contact Terri Graham at the Senior Center to find out more.

ALL THE PRESIDENTS — After a crowd-pleasing presentation last month, Paul Arsenault has agreed to come back for more in April. He'll be talking about U.S. presidents... the little things, and the big things they did while in office. Mark your calendars for Monday, April 10, 11am.

LOAVES & FISHES FOOD PANTRY — Although the name will legally remain the same, internally they will add Millie Woodman's name to the title in recognition of all her great work over the years. A plaque will hang at Saint Blaise in tribute.

SENIOR CENTER HOURS — On Tuesday, March 28, the Center will open at 10am. Staff will be attending a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion workshop. Transportation services will be available from 10am to 4pm on that day.

DRIVE-BY-LUNCHES — March 21 will mark the return of the popular lunches delivered at the Senior Center. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30am to 12:30pm will be provided by PJ's. \$3 per meal for Bellingham residents, \$8 for out-of-towners.

"I WANT TO THANK," all that gave to the "Giving Tree" this past year, says Abby Cirioni who leads the Knitting Group. 355 knit pieces went to St. Blaise and 66 went to Bellingham ladies over 90 years of age.

2023 PRIDE FEST

Plans are coming together for "the first Pride Festival in Bellingham," according to Senior Center Director Josie Dutil who is also the Chair of the Bellingham PrideFest Committee.

The Festival will be held on Saturday, June 24, from 2-6pm at the Bellingham Town Common. Dutil says the family-friendly event will feature "artisans, crafters, vendors, food trucks, information, and activities. We're hoping to bring together different generations of the LGBTQ+ community and friends of the community."

The search is on for vendors and sponsors. **If you'd like to know more, then please contact Josie Dutil by email at jdutil@bellinghamma.org or call (508) 966-0398.**

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

Open Enrollment continues through March 31.

If you have a Medicare Advantage insurance plan and are unhappy or are just unsure that it is the right one for you there is still time to make changes. Until March 31st you have the option of making a change to your plan to ensure that you have the best possible coverage for your needs. **In person and telephone appointments will be available on Wednesdays and can be made by calling the Senior Center at 508-966-0398.**

To prepare for your meeting please bring your insurance card(s), Medicare card and any recent notices you have received pertaining to your insurance.

HEALTH FAIR

Coming to the Senior Center on Friday, May 5, 9am-1pm. Two dozen vendors will be on hand including medical, PT, hearing, and chiropractic professionals plus the YMCA, SHINE, Salvation Army, and assisted living communities. Oh, and there's a free lunch for the first 150 who sign up. So, call Terri Graham now at (508) 657-2710 and reserve your spot!

BELLINGHAM ELDER SERVICE GROUP

Bill Eltzroth, *President*; Jim Fitzpatrick, *Vice President*;
Ray Conklin, *Treasurer*; Muriel Day, *Secretary*; Gail Milgram, *Sunshine Lady*
Board Members: Greg & Doreen MacLellan, Barbara Eltzroth,
Eva Gamache, Paul Arsenault, Peg Brooks, and Linda Drohan

The BESG office is located at the Municipal Center. Please call either the Senior Center at 508-966-0398 or the Town Hall at 508-657-2715 for specific dates and times.

It's SPRING (almost) but the days are getting longer and, hopefully, warmer! Soon, we'll be having cookouts again and outdoor socializing. As I write this, the weather man is predicting very cold temps... but what does he know?!

Don't forget our corned beef and cabbage dinner on Tuesday, March 14 and on Thursday, March 30 will be our annual Chinese lunch so please be sure to sign up for both. And great news... BESG's first trip of the year will be on Thursday, March 16, to Salem Cross Inn.

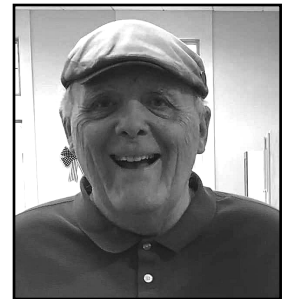
Remember, because of the increased costs of trips — that are beyond our control — we have started accepting weekly or monthly payments toward your trips. Contact Doreen at (508) 966-4221 for details.

Our thanks to Lillian "Dolly" Burnett for her contribution in honor of Charlie Morey's birthday on March 18.

Just a reminder... we are always looking for used wheelchairs, transport chairs, and shower chairs. Please consider donating any that you are not using and bring them to the Senior Center.

**BESG is the Heart and Soul
of the Senior Community.**

Jim Fitzpatrick
BESG Vice President



DOES YOUR HOME NEED REPAIRS?

The Town of Bellingham has received a state grant that will provide financial and technical assistance to eligible residential property owners.

If you earn less than \$78,300 per year, and own and occupy a residential property in Bellingham, then you may be eligible for assistance which may come in the form of a deferred payment loan of up to \$50,000 that may be forgiven.

Eligible repairs include electrical and plumbing upgrades, window replacement, and repairs to roofing, structure, and heating systems. Technical and administrative assistance is provided to home owners by the program staff.

To find out more, visit www.bellinghamma.org and look for "Funds for Home Repairs". Or you can call (508) 657-2891. (You can also come to the Senior Center at 40 Blackstone St. and pick up program forms and an application.)

PROSE BY PAOLA

As the Senior Center's former Outreach Coordinator, Paola Echeverry has a unique perspective on the needs and contributions of seniors and she continues to generously share it with us.



My mother-in-law, a tough, sharp, independent woman who in a foreign country built a family, took pride in raising her kids, caring for her husband, and managing an efficient household, was getting older.

At 80, and after losing her husband, her once strong self, became weaker. The tasks she once did so well during her long life became taxing. In a world where about 75% of women are the caregiver (2020), her son stepped in and invited his mom to live with us in a little apartment attached to our house. Without clearly comprehending the long-term challenges and unprepared for the job (AARP, 2023), Joe and Maria embarked on a transformational, rewarding, and difficult road.

In the USA, about 53-million unpaid adults assist someone over 50 with daily life activities or health care (National Alliance for Caregiving, 2020). By 2015, the value of informal services provided by 41-million caregivers was approximately \$470 billion, the equivalent of about 16 hours of care per week at an average of \$13.81 per hour (AARP Public Policy Institute, 2015).

But as only someone becoming a caregiver knows, caregiving is more than a financial arrangement. **The effects of investing considerable resources in caring for somebody has inevitable physical and psychological consequences.** Positive and negative ones. Some of those include deepening of the relationship, stronger connections, a sense of pride and well-being. Joseph and his mother have grown closer, more comfortable, and more understanding of each other. My lucky daughter has had the chance to witness love, honor, vulnerability, and perseverance.

Nevertheless, despite the positive effects, there are considerable difficulties that, if not dealt with, will distort the lives of the caregiver, the person receiving the care, and the people around them. Confusion with the new role, unrealistic expectations, and lack of control (Cleveland Clinic, 2023) are some causes of physical and emotional exhaustion, depression, and anxiety.

I don't think I can grasp the dimension of Joseph's rewards and challenges. I believe you can only fully understand the consequences of this complex relationship if you are the person giving or receiving the care. Taking care of someone implies being confronted with tough questions about who we are, our new roles, and even the meaning of life.

I don't know if Joseph and Maria are aware of their growth as individuals and their profound love. What I know is that when I see Joseph taking care of his mother, I remember why I married this man.

2023 BESG TRIPS

The BESG offers trips every year to attractive locations, and this year's schedule is filling up as shown below.

"Because of increased costs of trips beyond our control," reports BESG's Doreen MacLellan, "**we will start accepting weekly/monthly payments.**" She also reports greater competition than in the past to secure prime locations.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16 – **Salem Cross Inn** with tour of Quabbin Reservoir. Motorcoach will depart the Senior Center at 8:30am and return about 5:30pm. \$135 per person. Upon arrival in W. Brookfield, MA, the first stop will be a tour of the Reservoir. Then, back to the Inn for it's Original Historic Fireplace Feast in the beautifully restored 1700s colonial home. After lunch, the trip concludes with a visit to Brookfield Orchards for some interesting shopping.



THURSDAY, MAY 18 – **Parker's Maple Barn and Averill House Vineyard.**

TUESDAY, JUNE 20 – **Boston Duck Tour** with lunch at Maggiano's.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15 – Day trip to **Block Island** with tour and lunch at National Hotel.

TENTATIVELY ON THE CALENDAR – In December, **Boston Pops** and lunch.

Please contact Doreen for more information or to book your trip. (508) 966-4221 or email doreenandgreg@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE: Thursday, May 11, at 1pm several key Dean Bank representatives will come to the Senior Center to talk about **FRAUD**. They will detail fraud scenarios and possible responses, and share stories of bank customers. "We've noticed that those who engage with the fraudsters are far more likely to fall victim... and the largest group of those are 55+ in age," explains SVP Michael Carroll. **Join us, and bring your questions.**

Random Acts of Kindness

Bellingham resident Barbara Harrison talks about acts of kindness she very much appreciates.

"Two ladies from Depot Court in Bellingham perform acts of kindness daily. Anyone who is ill, disabled, or just needs help knows them.

"Mary and Nancy bring meals to them several times each week. They are always available to help in many ways. Both ladies are members of the Bellingham Elder Service Group and display acts of kindness often. Thank you to them.

"Last year, my husband passed away and shortly thereafter I had back surgery. I have had many visits from them with dinners and just a friendly, "Hello!"

*We'll publish Random Acts of Kindness each month. And **we invite you to share an act of kindness with us.** Please write it up and drop it off at the Welcome Desk.*

WHAT'S COMING IN

MONDAY

It was one
of those
March
days when the sun shines hot
and the wind blows cold:
when it is summer in the light
and winter in the shade.

—Charles Dickens

6

9am Knitters & Quilters
10am Chair Volleyball
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Poker
1pm Chair Exercise

13

9am Knitters & Quilters
10am Hearing Health
10am Chair Volleyball
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Poker
1pm Zentangle

20

9am Knitters & Quilters
10am Chair Volleyball
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Poker
1pm Chair Exercise

27

9am Knitters & Quilters
10am Chair Volleyball
11am Medicare 101
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Poker
1pm Chair Exercise

TUESDAY

7

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:30am Coffee Hour
10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Line Dancing (\$5)
1pm Pitch

14

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:30am Coffee Hour
10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
11am COA Board Meeting
11:30am Line Dancing (\$5)
Noon St. Patrick's Party
1pm Pitch

21

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:30am Coffee Hour
10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Drive-by-Lunches
11:30am Line Dancing (\$5)
1pm Pitch
1pm Diabetes Prevention

28

10am Center will open
10am Gentle Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Drive-by-Lunches
11:30am Line Dancing (\$5)
1pm Pitch
1pm Book Club

WEDNESDAY

1

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:15am Adaptive Yoga (\$5)
10am Walking Group
10:45am Motion to Music
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Bingo
1pm Art Anyone can Paint

8

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:15am Adaptive Yoga (\$5)
10am Walking Group
10:45am Motion to Music
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Bingo
1pm Art Anyone can Paint

15

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:15am Adaptive Yoga (\$5)
10am Walking Group
10am Arm Chair Travel
10:45am Motion to Music
11am Financial Advice
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Bingo
2pm Legal Advice
3pm Pop Up Pantry

22

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:15am Adaptive Yoga (\$5)
10am Walking Group
10:45am Motion to Music
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Bingo

29

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9:15am Adaptive Yoga (\$5)
10am Walking Group
10:45am Motion to Music
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Bingo

MARCH

THURSDAY

2

9am Bridge
9:30am Intermdt. Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
11:30am Bereavmt. Group
1pm Mahjong
3pm Tech Corner

9

9am Bridge
9:30am Intermdt. Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
1pm Mahjong
1pm Sheriff's Yellow Dot
2:30pm Rainbow Café

16

9am Bridge
9:30am Intermdt. Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
11:30am Bereavmt. Group
1pm Mahjong
1pm TED Talk

23

9am Bridge
9:30am Intermdt. Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
11:30am Drive-by-Lunches
1pm Mahjong

30

9am Bridge
9:30am Intermdt. Yoga (\$5)
11:30am Enhance Fit. (2)
11:30am Drive-by-Lunches
NOON BESH B-Day Party
1pm Mahjong

FRIDAY

3

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Myofascial Release
11am Zumba Gold (\$5)
Noon Canasta
1pm Politics & Principles

10

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Myofascial Release
11am Zumba Gold (\$5)
Noon Canasta

17

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Myofascial Release
11am Travel Workshop
11am Zumba Gold (\$5)
Noon Canasta

24

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Myofascial Release
11am Zumba Gold (\$5)
11am Pianist/Vocalist
Noon Canasta

31

8am Enhance Fitness (1)
9am Walking Club
9am Cribbage
9:15am Myofascial Release
11am Zumba Gold (\$5)
Noon Canasta
1pm Pop Music

SPECIAL NOTES

POST IT! We designed this monthly Calendar so you could pull pages 8 and 9 out of the newsletter and post it somewhere useful.

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

POOL ROOM — Temporarily opening at noon on Thursdays, just for March.

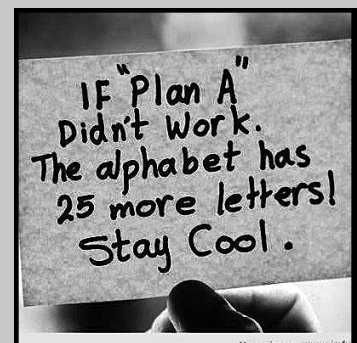
VIRTUALLY YOURS — Every Monday at 9am, the Spiritual Book Club meets via Zoom. Discussion currently is about *Atlas of the Heart* by Brene Brown. Contact Josie Dutil at (508) 966-0398 to sign up.

MEN'S GROUP meets every Wednesday at 11am at Devlin's.

SHINE — Health insurance advice every Wednesday 9am-noon.

LINE DANCING Tuesdays at 11:30am. (\$5)

BLOOD PRESSURE — Come have it checked on Tuesdays at 10am.



WELCOME TO THE SENIOR CENTER

(continued from page one)

On average, the Center provides about 750 rides in comfortable vans each month.

"The large majority of trips are for medical appointments," says Leo Dalpe, one of the transportation coordinators. Shopping for groceries is popular, as is getting to the Center to play BINGO on Wednesdays. The rides are provided free to Bellingham residents.

Come to the Center for free financial and legal advice, hear the latest information about healthcare insurance, and get help with technology issues. This month, there will be a St. Patrick's Party, a monthly birthday party, Rainbow Café, TED Talk, and presentations on Medicare changes, diabetes prevention, and the Sheriff's Yellow Dot Program. Look for a new Coffee Hour debuting this month on Tuesdays from 9:30-10:30am.

If you like games, come to the Center for poker, billiards, canasta, bridge, pitch, cribbage, mahjong, and more. And there are lots of exercise classes.

Call to arrange for a tour or stop by. The Center is located at 40 Blackstone Street in Bellingham and the phone number is (508) 966-0398.



GARDENING...

(continued from page one)

Early next month, work will begin on removing approximately half the soil in each raised bed. And then, Kate Donovan of Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens says they should be re-filled with "one quarter loam and three quarters horse manure." Kate is the Center's "Garden Guru" and provides professional guidance.

During the week of May 15, there will be a "planting event" to put in seeds, vegetable plants, and some flowers.

All of this is accomplished by Senior Center volunteers. More than 20 helped during the planting event last year. See photos below.

Something new this year is removing dirt from the beds. "Our hope is," according to Center Director Josie Dutil, "that the improved soil will yield a bigger crop for our seniors."

Volunteers are needed. On Tuesday, April 4 at 8:30am, we'll begin carting away all the depleted soil. Some students from Bellingham High will be coming... and we hope you will too.

To volunteer, please leave your name and email address at the Welcome Desk or email ddunbar@bellinghamma.org



SUPPORTIVE DAY

The Supportive Day Program is currently accepting applications for a waitlist. The program provides a variety of engaging activities designed to promote socialization with other seniors in a safe and nurturing environment. The advantages are numerous and have provided benefits to both the participant and family member/caregiver alike.

It is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00am - 3:00 pm. It includes a continental breakfast, hot lunch, and an afternoon snack. Transportation is included for Bellingham residents. Out-of-towners may qualify for transportation for a small fee (within a 9-mile radius).

For more information contact the Supportive Day Program Coordinator, Marjorie Warnick, at (508)657-2711 or email mwarnick@bellinghamma.org

VETERANS' NEWS

Login.gov is an easy-to-use, U.S. federal government-provided credential that is built with modern security standards. It offers one account that provides access to VA digital products and services, as well as access to other government agencies. The first time you access products or services at VA that require a higher level of assurance, you may be asked to verify your identity through Login.gov. You can use your existing Login.gov account.

Login.gov, which can be used to sign in to VA.gov, My HealtheVet, VA/DoD eBenefits, and the [VA flagship mobile app](#), among other VA services, offers a slew of other benefits. For instance, it can be used to securely sign in when you apply for federal jobs on USAJOBS. One can also access the [Trusted Traveler Programs](#) at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and apply for small business loans and disaster assistance at the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#).

Plus, Login.gov **support includes an online Help Center with FAQs and step-by-step instructions providing guidance and illustration**, as well as a Help ticket submission form to explain your inquiry and receive a response. Login.gov also allows you to self-manage by changing your phone number, password and email address, along with your multifactor authentication method.

Bellingham's Veteran's Agent is Ana Milot and can be reached at (774) 292-2437. Office hours are 8am-1pm each Friday at Town Hall, lower level.

ARM CHAIR TRAVEL

Next stop, Istanbul, Turkey.



Join us on Wednesday, March 15, at 10am. Watch it on a big screen TV at the Senior Center or join the tour from home via Zoom. And thanks to a generous grant from the Mass. Council on Aging, it's free.

You will be able to walk around one of the famous cities in Turkey. Learn the history of the city and see its most famous sights. Our tour will allow you not only to enjoy a walk with our tour guide, but also to ask the guide your questions in an interactive format.

And then, on Friday, March 17, at 11am, you can participate in a workshop about Turkish cooking and dancing. Learn to prepare an authentic Turkish dish with guidance from a professional chef.

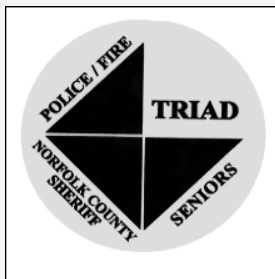
You will learn traditional recipes and hear personal stories. You have the chance to learn about local traditions, dance, and food, that is unique to the region. You can ask any questions.

(Despite a catastrophic earthquake that struck parts of Turkey recently, Istanbul was not physically damaged.)

Coming up are trips to Italy in April, Israel in May, and India in June. Each "two-way experience" is one hour long. You can sign up for any, or all, by contacting the Senior Center at (508) 966-0398. Or check out <https://joinpro.live/bellingham>

THE YELLOW DOT PROGRAM

Yellow Dot is a free program which provides first responders with quick access to critical medical information about the occupants of an automobile in the event of an accident or health emergency. Participants place a Yellow Dot Decal on the driver's side rear windshield of their cars. In the event of an emergency or accident, the Yellow Dot alerts emergency responders that inside the glove compartment there is an envelope containing the operator's medical information. The envelope has the operator's medical conditions, allergies, recent surgeries, medications and emergency contact information.



Join us on Thursday, March 9, at 1pm for a presentation from the Norfolk Sheriff's Office.

UNDERSTANDING MEDICARE

Here's a workshop designed for you if Medicare is on your "to do" list? Don't delay, come to the Senior Center on Friday, March 27 at 11am.

There will be an educational presentation where you will learn what you need to know or what you need to do, as you approach Medicare eligibility age 65.

Attendees will receive a valuable, resource book with some important information and you will leave with a better understanding of Medicare. This is not a sales meeting, and no marketing materials will be available. Bill Bjerke from Fallon Health will conduct the program.



POP MUSIC

"A Journey through the Roots of American Popular Music," says the presenter John Waterman, "is a program of songs, stories and a slide show presentation about characters and events at the origins of the blues, rock, and country music. **It's entertainment that's informative and relevant to our story as a people.** The program runs approximately 80 minutes."

Waterman continues, "I've been performing as a musician and songwriter for over 20 years; my song "Sultana" which tells the story of the Civil War steamboat disaster has been selected to be featured at the Sultana Museum in Marion, AR. I have an M.A. in Popular Music History from Prescott College and an M.A. in Psychology from Kaplan University. My B.A. in History is from Northern Arizona University."

Please join us at 1pm on Friday, March 31, for this presentation. Call the Senior Center to sign up.

POLITICS WITH PRINCIPLES: FIRST FEMALE CABINET SECRETARY FRANCES PERKINS

Wielding a steely determination and velvet whip, this principled politician legislated safety and fairness for working people and retirees.



She was a confidante of FDR, the first female Cabinet Secretary, and object of admiration and contempt from her male contemporaries. Frances Perkins dedicated her career to providing exploited working men and women with safe, humane workplaces. She pushed through legislation to reduce crushing work-week hours, developed a fire-safety code in New York that became a model for the country, and created Social Security. And that is not all.

Discover her secrets to building alliances and staring down bullies to help make government a champion for working people and retirees.

Janet Parnes of Historical Portrayals by Lady J will portray Miss Perkins. **Join us on Friday, March 3, at 1pm,** and please call ahead.

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