



The Blandford Hills Council on Aging News

Phone: 413-848-4279 Ext. 400 or COA@TownofBlandford.com

This Newsletter is sponsored in part by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

What's Happening at the Center for Active Adults Ages 55 and Up? February/March 2019

Think Medicare Open Enrollment Ended in December? Think Again!

Starting January 1, 2019, Medicare is introducing a new Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period. Now, from January 1 - March 31 each year, you can make these changes:

- If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan (with or without drug coverage), you can switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan (with or without drug coverage).
- You can disenroll from your Medicare Advantage Plan and return to Original Medicare. If you choose to do so, you'll be able to join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.
- If you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan during your Initial Enrollment Period, you can change to another Medicare Advantage Plan (with or without drug coverage) or go back to Original Medicare (with or without drug coverage) within the first 3 months you have Medicare.

However, during this period (January 1 - March 31) you cannot

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan if you're in Original Medicare.
- Switch from one Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to another if you're in Original Medicare.

You can only make one change during this period, and any changes you make will be effective the first of the month after the plan gets your request.

Not sure what any of this means?

How this may affect you?

Need help making a change to your plan?

Call Hilltown Senior Outreach at 354-6540 to speak to a trained SHINE Counselor. Assistance is free, unbiased, and confidential. The office is located at 3 Maple St. in Chester.

Hilltown Senior Outreach is a service of the Councils on Aging of Blandford, Chester, and Huntington, and provides information and referral, SHINE Counseling, application assistance, Benefits Check Up, and caregiver support. Services are offered free of charge to residents 60 years of age and older who live in these towns.

SENIOR TAX EXEMPTION AND "CIRCUIT BREAKER" TAX PROGRAMS

If you normally receive a senior tax exemption on your real estate bill, and did not see it on the bills that are due February 1, please contact the Board of Assessor's Office. The application forms were not mailed out.

They can be reached at 848-4279, ext. 200.

The office is open Monday from 9am to 7p.m.

Before filing your taxes, or even if you don't normally file a return, don't forget about the Senior "Circuit Breaker" tax program. It is for persons 65 or over whose property taxes (or 25% of rent) exceed 10% of their annual gross income and who meet other qualifying criteria. You may be eligible even if you receive a property tax exemption through the town. You may be eligible now and for the past three years, even if you did not file a state income tax form. If you have questions, contact the COA, call the Mass. Department of Revenue Customer Service at 1-617-887-6367, or your tax preparer.

**Weekly Events Offered
at your Blandford COA/CAA**

Mondays

*Balance, Strength, & Flexibility
Training Exercise at 9:30 A.M.
in the town hall gym
\$5.00 per class*

Wednesdays

*The 2nd and 4th Wednesdays...
...Taylor's Group
2:00-4:00 P.M.~ FREE*

Saturdays

*Tai Chi at the town hall gym.
8:30 A.M.
\$5.00 per class*

**Monthly Events Offered
at your Blandford COA/CAA**

First Friday

*Open House1-3 P.M.
Come in to learn a new game,
socialize, and/or knit.
Bring a snack and we'll provide
the beverages.*

2nd Friday

*Social Hour12 P.M.
Light lunch will be provided.
\$5 per person*

3rd Friday

Movie1:30 P.M.

4th Friday

*Breakfast10 A.M.
\$5. per person*

*COA/CAA Board meets
4 P.M. in the COA room*

**MOVIE MATINEE
3rd Friday of every month.**

Show starts at 1:30 P.M.

Free popcorn and beverages.

Bring a friend!



February 15th, "Valentine's Day"

This movie follows the intertwining storylines of a diverse group of people from Los Angeles as they navigate their way through romance and heartbreak over the course of one Valentine's Day. Couples and singles experience the pinnacles and pitfalls of finding, keeping or ending relationships in a day in the life of love. PG-13. 2010. Starring Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Garner, Taylor Swift, Jamie Foxx, Jessica Alba, and Kathy Bates.

March 15th, "Secret of the Roan Inish"

A magical tale of a girl whose search for her missing brother brings an Irish legend to life. PG. 2006. Starring Mick Lally, Eileen Colgan, John Lynch, Jeni Courtney, Richard Sheridan, and Cillian Byrne.



Love your Feet!

Upcoming Foot Clinic

Our next Foot Clinic will be held on Thursday,
MARCH 14, 2019 at 11:00 A.M.

The cost of the session is \$30.00, with the COA paying \$5.00 for those 65 and older. The clinic is open to anyone who would like foot care. The nurse will do an assessment and examination of your feet, trim and file toenails, and finish with a foot and leg massage. If she notices anything that should require further attention, she will recommend that you follow up with your podiatrist. For an appointment, please call Barbara Langmore at 848-2816. An appointment is necessary and required!

Friday, February 8, 2019 1:00—2:00 P.M.

Please join us after the **social hour** luncheon as we welcome back Amber Letourneau, Nutrition Coordinator, from the Western Ma Foodbank. She will talk about “Diabetes Prevention and Management” Her presentation is free. The luncheon is \$5. per person.



The Blandford COA/CAA has been awarded **two** grants for 2019!!!! We will be able to host another “**Paint and Sip**” with Michelle Iglesias as well as invite Ellen Russell to teach us how to “**Eco-Print**” and create works of art on silk scarves. Watch for dates and times!



These art events are sponsored by The **MA Cultural Council** and the **Blandford Cultural Council**.



“They who sing through the summer must dance in the winter.” - *Italian Proverb*



Blandford COA/CAA

February 2019

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	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 First Friday 1-3 P.M.	2 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M. Groundhog Day
3	4 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M.	5	6	7	8 Social Hour 12 Noon "Valentine's Day Lunch" Guest Speaker 1:00-2:00 P.M.	9 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
10	11 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M.	12	13 Taylor's Group 2-4 P.M.	14 Valentine's Day	15 Movie 1:30 P.M	16 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
17	18 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M. Presidents' Day	19	20	21	22 Breakfast 10A.M. MA RMV Workshop 11:00 A.M.	23 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
24	25 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M. COA Board Meeting 4 P.M.	26	27 Taylor's Group 2-4 P.M.	28	For future reference, if the Gateway School System has cancelled school due to in- clement weather, the Blandford COA/CAA will also be closed.	



Blandford COA/CAA

March 2019



413-848-4279 ext. 400 or COA@TownofBlandford.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 First Friday 1-3 P.M.	2 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
3	4 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M.	5 Mardi Gras	6 Ash Wednesday	7	8 Social Hour 12 Noon	9 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
10 Daylight Savings Time begins	11 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M.	12	13 Taylor's Group 2-4 P.M.	14 Foot Clinic 11 A.M.	15 Movie 1:30P.M	16 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M.	19	20 First day of Spring	21	22 Breakfast 10 A.M.	23 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
24	25 Balance, Strength, and Flexibility 9:30 A.M. COA Board Meeting 4 P.M.	26	27 Taylor's Group 2-4 P.M.	28	29	30 Tai Chi 8:30 A.M.
31						

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This newsletter is also available on the Blandford COA/CAA Facebook page and on the Town of Blandford's webpage.

SPECIAL ONGOING PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS WITH CONTACT INFORMATION

The Southern Hilltown COA Consortium monthly meeting is held the first Friday of each month – 10:30 AM at 3 Maple Street in Chester.

SHINE: (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone): Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment period runs from October 15 - December 7. SHINE provides FREE, unbiased, health insurance counseling, information, and assistance to Massachusetts residents with Medicare, their caregivers and those approaching Medicare eligibility. Contact the Hilltown Consortium at 413-354-6540 to find out how you can schedule an appointment with Sue Kucharski, a trained SHINE Counselor, to discuss your options. All counselors are extensively trained and certified by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs to speak with Medicare beneficiaries regarding their Medicare coverage. They can also review eligibility for other benefit programs that can help assist beneficiaries with limited resources to pay for healthcare costs.

Fuel Assistance - For information about fuel assistance contact Hilltown Social Services at 413-667-2203, or pick up an application at the Senior Center.

Need a Ride? - The FRTA Van provides transportation to medical appointments, to shopping and picking up groceries to those 60 and over. Contact George Webb, FRTA driver, at 413-667-3428, or pick up an application at the Senior Center.

HCAA Hilltown Plus Program, HCAA's community outreach program.

Baseline Health Folders= Regular Blood Pressure Checks at home—Baseline EKG's.

Call Angela Mulkerin at 413-875-5781 or email her at hilltownplus@gmail.com for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Veteran's Affairs Agent Contact Joe Henning at 413-427-3054 to ask about your Veteran's benefits, medical, and financial questions. You can also go to MassVetsAdvisor.org for One-Stop-Shop for all your benefits.