



SIPPICAN SOUNDINGS

News from the Marion Council on Aging
February 2021



The Council on Aging's mission is to advocate on behalf of Marion's Older Adult population and to strive to enhance quality of life in the community by providing educational, recreational and cultural programs and activities.

Grab n' Go

Registration is a must by the Friday before, call 508-748-3570. Please consider a donation of \$5.00 for each lunch, but this is just a suggestion. We do not want to exclude anyone from joining us due to cost, as we encourage everyone to get out and enjoy a nice, homemade lunch.

- Tuesday, February 2nd — Turkey & Bacon Sandwich with Beet Salad
- Tuesday, February 9th — Tuna Salad Sandwich with Tomato, Basil & Mozzarella
- Tuesday, February 16th — Chicken Parmesan Sandwich with Garden Salad
- Tuesday, February 23rd — Roasted Veggie Wrap with Pasta Salad



- Thursday, February 4th — Baked Potato Soup
- Thursday, February 11th — No Soup
- Thursday, February 18th — Tortellini Soup
- Thursday, February 25th — Chicken Pot Pie Soup



Friendly Conversation Program

The Friendly Conversation Program is a program sponsored by the Marion Council on Aging. The idea of the Friendly Conversation Program began due to the changes in our lives brought on by the pandemic. The COA recognized how many people were at home on their own with few opportunities to socialize with friends, to see family members and to simply enjoy the routines of going out to shop or have the freedom of just getting out of the house making connections. The Friendly Conversation Program is about meeting the needs of these residents.

If you are someone who is experiencing these feelings of isolation, or know of someone who is, the Friendly Conversation Program will provide a trained volunteer who will call on the phone to "check in" to have a conversation and to hopefully help in feeling more connected to the community and to our daily routines. The Friendly Conversation Program is currently up and running with several residents in Town receiving weekly phone calls from a friendly volunteer. The success has been seen by the mutual connections made between the volunteer and resident and how both have benefitted from the experience.

If you are interested or know of someone who is in need of a friendly phone call, please contact Karen Gregory at 508-748-3570.



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COA Office Hours:

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
465 Mill Street
Marion, MA 02738
508-748-3570

This agency and its programs are funded (in whole or in part) by a grant from Coast-line Elderly Services, Inc., Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and the Federal Administration for Community Living.

Health & Wellness

Podiatry Clinic

Dr. Erik Henriksen, D.P.M. visits the Community Center to provide podiatry services. Please call 508-748-3570 to schedule your appointment.

Dental Cleanings

Mobile Dental Hygiene Services
Teresa Simison, RDH, MSDH
Andrea Read, RDH, MSDH

This service provides consumers with a dental hygienist that travels to the Marion COA with a mobile dental unit providing dental cleanings, screenings, oral health information and education, including denture adjustments and cleanings. To schedule your appointment for February 17th, call 508-827-6725.

Public Health Nurse

Lori Desmarais, Public Health Nurse for the Town of Marion is available for routine immunizations, blood pressure & blood sugar readings as well as home visits. You may contact Lori at 508-748-3507 or ldesmrais@marionma.gov.

Medical Equipment

For those in need of medical equipment such as shower chairs, walkers, canes, commodes, wheelchairs, etc... The COA will provide the item on loan for as long as needed. Call 508-748-3570 to inquire about what we have in stock.

Inclement Weather Policy

When the Marion Public Schools are closed due to a weather related emergency, COA sponsored activities, including transportation, will also be cancelled. If it is school vacation or you just aren't sure, please call the COA office, 508-748-3570. Even if we are closed the voicemail will be updated.

Caregivers

Memory Loss Support Group

Thursdays—February 11th & 25th
1:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.

This support group, led by Carol McAfee, LPN, CDP of Community Nurse Home Care, is appropriate for those in a caregiving role for loved ones afflicted with Memory Loss. Meetings will be held virtually. Contact Community Nurse at 508-992-6278 to attain log in information.

Waterfront Memory Cafe

Wednesdays

1:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m.

Weekly programming for individuals with Alzheimer's or other memory loss, with their care partner, family or friends in a safe, supportive and engaging environment. At this time the Waterfront Memory Café will be meeting via Zoom. Call 508-748-3570 to attain log in information.

Legal Consultations

We are very fortunate to have two highly respected attorneys that offer free legal consultations to the senior community in Marion. Attorney Harry Beach and Attorney Brandon Walecka will be available to offer free phone consultations to discuss any legal questions you may need help with. As a further service, Attorney Walecka will be contributing articles in the monthly newsletter.

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

As a senior citizen, you may be eligible to claim a refundable credit on your personal state income tax return. The Circuit Breaker tax credit is based on the actual real estate taxes paid on Massachusetts residential property you own or rent and occupy as your principal residence.

Who is eligible

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

Who is not eligible

- You are a nonresident.
- You are married and your status is married filing separately.
- You are a dependent of another taxpayer.
- You receive a federal and/or state rent subsidy or you rent from a tax-exempt entity.
- For tax year 2020, the assessed value of principal residence exceeds \$848,000.

Visit:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/senior-circuit-breaker-tax-credit>

Online Safety Seminar

On February 8th at 1:30 p.m. Robin Putnam from the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, will present Online Safety. She will be covering how to be safe on your smart device, social media, online banking and will also give tips on phishing emails and general protection from scams and identity theft. This webinar will be offered as a zoom meeting and you can join the meeting at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81013132987> and the Meeting ID: 81013132987, one tap mobile is +16465588656,,81013132987# US(New York)

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Safe Disposal of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs

What is in Your Medicine Cabinet?

- ⇒ Over-the-counter medications you bought for a health problem you do not have any more?
- ⇒ A prescription medication that you stopped taking because your doctor replaced it with another one or you felt better?
- ⇒ Medications that have passed their expiration date?
- ⇒ Medications used by people who no longer live in your house?



Do not keep medications that are not useful anymore. Throwing them away safely will keep them out of the hands of people who should not take them.

Unwanted medications have traditionally been disposed of by flushing them down the toilet or pouring them down a drain. While this removes them from your house quickly, it is not environmentally friendly: the medications travel through wastewater to treatment plants and septic systems—and from there into our groundwater, rivers, ponds and streams.

Medication may be disposed of at:

Marion Police Station—24/7 kiosk inside the station

Walgreens, Fairhaven—kiosk

Walmart Pharmacy, Wareham—free disposal packs at the pharmacy

CVS, Fairhaven—kiosk in store

CVS in Target, Wareham Crossing—kiosk in store



Healthy Blood Pressure for Healthy Hearts

Every time your heart beats, it pumps blood through vessels, called arteries, to the rest of your body. Your blood pressure is how hard your blood pushes against the walls of the arteries. If your blood flows at higher than normal pressures, you may have high blood pressure, known as hypertension.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease, which is the leading cause of death in the United States. Millions of Americans have high blood pressure, but many people who have it do not know it. That is why it is important to have your blood pressure checked at least once a year.

High blood pressure is a “silent killer”, it does not usually cause symptoms, but it can damage your body over time. It can cause serious health problems such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease or even dementia.

Take the first step toward a healthy blood pressure.

Making lifestyle changes now can help keep your blood pressure in a healthy range—whether you have high blood pressure or you are trying to prevent it. You do not have to make big changes all at once. Small steps can get you where you want to go. Here are some ideas to start. If you have elevated blood pressure and your doctor prescribes medications, make sure to take them as directed.

- ⇒ Eat Healthy Foods—A diet low in sodium and saturated fat can lower your blood pressure as effectively as medicines.
- ⇒ Move More—Get 2^{1/2} hours of physical activity a week to help lower and control blood pressure. That is just 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
- ⇒ Aim for a Healthy Weight—Losing just 3-5% of your weight can improve your blood pressure.
- ⇒ Manage Stress—Stress contributes to high blood pressure and other heart risks. If it goes on for too long it can make your body store more fat.
- ⇒ Stop Smoking—The chemicals in tobacco smoke can harm your heart and blood vessels.

Learn more at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hypertension

Do Not Leave Health Care Decisions to Chance

You likely have your own ideas on what should happen if you became incapacitated. However, your loved ones could have other ideas. Most people think about finances, wills, guardians for dependents, and who inherits, when the issue of their inevitable death arises. But in the event that you do not die but instead, become incapacitated, you may not recognize the importance of planning for future health care decisions.

Have you ever heard of an advance directive (sometimes called living will, personal directive, or Five Wishes®)? Advanced care planning is simply planning for your future care. It is a process that happens over time and throughout life to help people maintain control over the kinds of decisions made on their behalf if they lose the ability to make decisions due to a serious illness or accident.

Make your wishes known in advance and ensure that they are legally enforceable. With an advanced directive, you can designate what procedures doctors should or should not perform if you are incapacitated with no reasonable likelihood of recovery. Another important estate planning document called a health care proxy can be used to appoint one or more persons to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to express your wishes.

What happens if you do not have an advanced directive? For example, if you are in an accident and decisions need to be made about your medical care, your family might not have a good idea what decisions you would make yourself. That can create problems for them, as they try to decide on what care you should receive. Planning ahead for health decisions benefits everyone.

An advanced directive can help avoid arguments. When your preferences are clear it can mean that your health care decision maker confidently knows your wishes. If disagreement occurs among your family, your decision maker has a document to follow based on your wishes. This can help keep family harmony.

Good advanced care planning is done in different stages. Healthy adults need different conversations than those living with increasing complications from an illness or at the end-stage of an illness. It also considers goals, values, and wishes before becoming ill, and names a person who will speak for you in an advanced directive.

Planning for your health care is a gift of peace of mind you can give your loved ones and family. An estate planning attorney can advise you on creating an estate plan and an advanced directive that meet your unique circumstances.

Do you have a suggestion for a future article topic for Attorney Walecka? Reach out to him directly with a question or topic you think would be helpful to readers.

The information contained in this article is not intended to make you an expert on estate planning nor is this article intended to replace the need for the advice of a professional. Rather, this article is simply intended to provide a basic understanding of why estate planning is important for everybody and a basic understanding of some of the more common estate planning tools. This article does not constitute legal advice.

By: Brandon C. Walecka, Esq.

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Valentine's Day Luncheon



A delectable Italian luncheon will be served up on Sunday, February 14th at 1:00 p.m.

This luncheon is being sponsored by Dwight Crosby of Tri Town Motors of Marion. The event will be a drive through distribution, so drive on over and feel the love. Please sign up by calling the Council on Aging offices at 508-748-3570 by February 8th.

Thank You



The Marion Council on Aging assures that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin or income be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.L. 100.259), and federal Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations). Further the Marion Council on Aging will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people.

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