

Hinsdale/Peru COA Newsletter

December 1, 2021 Volume 3 No 4

Hinsdale/Peru Council on Aging
39 South Street, Hinsdale, MA 01235
www.HinsdaleMass.com T: 413-655-2929

It is the Mission of the Hinsdale/Peru Council on Aging to encourage participation, to provide services available to seniors and to promote activities that will enhance their quality of life.

Committee Members: Cathy Spinney, Janet Verge, Marion Tinney, Carol Ann Pullo, Jill Cole, Eve Gripaldi, Jennifer Stark

A Letter from the COA Board:

We would like to welcome a new member to the Council on Aging Board. Jennifer Stark hails from Peru and brings her skills as a CPA to the board. She has volunteered, and has been voted in, as our new treasurer. Welcome and thank you, Jennifer!

Going forward, the monthly luncheons will be held in the Hinsdale Fire Station. Due to the uptick in the Delta variant of COVID-19, we are unable to seat a large number of seniors in the Hinsdale Town Hall Community Room and maintain the spacing regulations during the continuing pandemic. **Many thanks to the members of the fire department (and friends)** who assist in moving fire trucks and help in setting up the tables & chairs for the luncheons. Watch for announcements on luncheon dates, menus and speakers on the Hinsdale and Peru websites: (www.hinsdalema.gov) or (www.townofperuma.com). Posters are also placed in the Hinsdale Town Hall, the Hinsdale Library, Ozzie's Restaurant and the Hinsdale Trading Company. We will be posting information on **Facebook** also: Search "What is happening in Hinsdale/Peru" or "Hinsdale, MA Citizens for Town Government".



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

December 10, 2021
Annual Christmas Party
Hinsdale Fire Station

January 13, 2022
Sr. Luncheon
Speaker: TBA

February 17, 2022
Senior Luncheon
Speaker: TBA

March 17, 2022
Senior Luncheon
Speaker: TBA

The Mobile Food Bank at Dalton CRA
400 Main St, Dalton **every 4th Wednesday** of the month
11:00 am–12:00 pm. Provides fresh produce and other nutritious foods **at no cost** to families in the community. It is held rain or shine. Please bring your own bags, The Food Bank **does not** provide bags. Watch for future announcements on the Hinsdale Town Website.

Witty Words of Wisdom: *If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments!*

This newsletter is paid for, in part, by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

October Senior Luncheon



We are pleased to report that our October Senior Luncheon, held in the Hinsdale Fire Station, was a great success with forty seniors in attendance. This was our first in-person COA luncheon (after a couple of false starts) since March of 2020 when everything seemed to come to a screeching halt with the arrival of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our new caterer, KJ Nosh, supplied the delicious Penne with Italian marinara sauce, meatballs and a fresh garden salad. Tables were decorated in a Fall/Halloween theme by members of the COA Board.

The Hinsdale Town Administrator, Bob Graves, was the guest speaker. He updated the group on the current town projects and the various grants he has been pursuing in order to repair some of the roads that are in disrepair. Bob expressed his gratitude to Jimmy Fox, of the Highway Dept., for all his years of conscientious service, congratulating him on his impending (2nd) retirement. Bob also acknowledged Lynne Baumgartner, administrative assistant at the Hinsdale Town Hall, for the many hats she has worn and her willingness to pitch in and help wherever needed.

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## New Faces in Hinsdale Town Departments



**We have a new Library Director, Jennifer Cummings.** She started October 1<sup>st</sup> and lives in Becket. She has several years of library experience working at the Lee Public Library, Berkshire Athenaeum and as the Assistant Director at the Huntington Public Library. Tom Butler, our longtime library director, announced his plans to start working towards retirement by stepping down as Director. He will continue as the Assistant Director, working fewer hours a week. Tom will assist Jen's orientation to our community and our patrons.

**Our new Treasurer-Collector is Jennifer Coscia.** Jennifer brings a wealth of experience, having served as an Auditor, Credit Manager, Finance Director, and Chief Financial Officer of a large social service organization. She also runs her own consulting business focused on helping area non-profit organizations succeed with various business challenges. She comes highly recommended by multiple Berkshire County agencies.



**The new DPW Superintendent is John Murray.** John brings years of landscaping and Highway Department experience in the area, serving as the highway superintendent in Chester and as a staffer in Otis. He also runs his own landscaping business out of his home in Becket.

**DPW Mechanic/Crew Member Mike Paton** is relocating to the area from New Hampshire and also comes highly recommended. Mike is currently the head caretaker of a 180-acre working farm, supervising a staff of five. Before that, he was trained and worked as an auto mechanic and has several years of experience as a small engine repair technician.

**The new Head of Hinsdale Cemetery** is Dan Kaufman. His telephone number at the town hall is 413-655-2300, x360. He can also be reached at [cemeteries@hinsdalema.gov](mailto:cemeteries@hinsdalema.gov).

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Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D Drug Plans ends Dec. 7, 2021!! Call Cathy Spinney (413-655-2929) to review your prescription needs and compare costs!!



10 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR BRAIN



Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. Visit alz.org/10ways to learn more !

CATCH SOME ZZZ's: Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.

FUEL UP RIGHT: Eat a balanced diet that is higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

HIT THE BOOKS: Formal education will help reduce risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Take a class at a local college, community center or online.

BUTT OUT: Smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH: Some studies link depression with cognitive decline, so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.

HEADS UP! Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.

FOLLOW YOUR HEART: Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke – obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes – negatively impact your cognitive health.

STUMP YOURSELF: Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Play games of strategy. Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits.

BUDDY UP: Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Find ways to be part of your local community or share activities with friends and family.

BREAK A SWEAT: Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.

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**Ready for your COVID-19 Booster Shot?** You can get vaccinated at many local pharmacies, in addition to the following locations: Pittsfield, North Adams & Great Barrington. **Appointments are required** at all locations. Call 855-262-5465 or visit [vaxfinder.mas.gov](http://vaxfinder.mas.gov).

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The RMV designates Wednesdays at 27 RMV Service Centers to serve customers age 65 and older. Providing older adults with a designated RMV service center every Wednesday results in a safer space for customers to visit. The service centers are dedicated to processing all Registry transactions for older customers. **A reservation is required.** If you are an AAA member, you may make a reservation to renew your driver's license/ID or registration at a AAA location. For information call the RMV at **857-368-8005**. Reminder: Seniors 75+ must always renew their license in person.

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**\*\*Did you know that The Council on Aging Quarterly Newsletter is mailed or emailed to 563 Hinsdale & Peru seniors 65+\*\***

**\*\*Seniors 60 + are welcome to all events\*\***

***THIS IS YOUR December 1, 2021 QUARTERLY COA NEWSLETTER.*** Watch for COA Event Posters announcing Sr. Lunches, events, etc. at Hinsdale Library, Hinsdale Town Hall, Ozzie's & Hinsdale Trading Company. Check the COA Dept. Page on the Hinsdale Town Website [www.hinsdalemass.com](http://www.hinsdalemass.com).

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## **Your Energy Costs**

With electric and natural gas rates set to rise this winter season, Attorney General Maura Healey launched a campaign to educate customers about new and expanded programs available to assist them in paying their energy bills. Due to COVID-19 economic uncertainty and volatility in global fossil fuel prices, customers in New England will see a spike in energy prices this winter. Customers who use gas to heat their homes should expect an increase on their monthly bill, and those who use oil could see an even bigger rise. Some customers also will see an increase in their electric bills.

## **Income-Eligible Energy Assistance Programs**

New and expanded assistance programs are available to help customers pay bills or manage the increase in utility bills due to the pandemic and high fuel prices worldwide.

Don't wait to apply for income-eligible assistance programs. First, contact your utility to apply for an income-eligible rate which provides a discount on your whole bill. Second, you may qualify for the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP eligibility is evaluated based on your gross household income for the past 4 weeks. Use the contact info below to find your local community action agency where you can apply for LIHEAP. Call the Cold Relief Heatline (800) 632-8175 or contact your SHINE Director, Cathy Spinney at 413-655-2929.