



Littleton Elder and Human Services/COA
33 Shattuck Street
P.O. Box 1305
Littleton, MA 01460
Phone: 978-540-2470
Fax: 978-952-2363

February 22, 2021

Dear COA Participant,

On behalf of the Elder and Human Services Staff, I am writing to let you know The Executive Office of Health and Human Service sent a letter to Board of Health on 2/17/21 updating the Boards on the status of the State vaccination plan. The letter informs local Boards of Health that as of March 1st they will no longer receive vaccine to provide first doses to their residents; they can receive second doses to complete the vaccination series for those they have already given their first dose.

As a result of the changes made by the State the local clinics being held at Devens will be suspended as of March 1st. The Boards of Health will conduct clinics at Devens to administer 2nd doses after March 1st and only for those who received their first dose at one of the Devens clinics; those individuals who have received a first dose at one of our clinics will be contacted for their second dose.

If you are still waiting to receive the COVID-19 vaccine please visit www.mass.gov/covidvaccine as this site will provide you with available appointments near you. A vaccine scheduling resource line has been launched by the State to assist eligible residents to more easily schedule an appointment. The line can be accessed by dialing 2-1-1 and selecting the prompt for "Help Scheduling a Vaccine Appointment". The line is available 24/7. Appointments will be scheduled based on availability.

Based on this change at the State and local level Littleton's COVID-19 information line has been deactivated and the online waitlist submission form has been removed from the Town's website.

Additional roll-outs since the newsletter went to print include:

MA Eligibility for Residents ages 65+ and 2 or more comorbidities

Effective Thursday, February 18, 2021, Massachusetts residents ages 65+ and individuals with 2 or more comorbidities are eligible to schedule appointments to receive the COVID vaccine.

With this announcement, almost 1 million individuals are newly eligible for vaccine. Please note: People aged 75+ and those eligible during Phase 1 should continue to book appointments to receive Part 1 and Part 2 vaccines.

Massachusetts Caregiver/Companion COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility

Effective Thursday, February 11th, an individual who accompanies a person age 75 or older to one of four mass vaccination sites to receive the vaccine will be eligible to receive the vaccine too, if they have an appointment booked. Both the companion and the individual age 75 or older must have an appointment for the same day and both individuals must be present. Only one companion is permitted. The companion must attest that they are accompanying the individual to the appointment.

Older adults SHOULD NOT accept calls offering assistance from someone they do not know or trust. If traveling to a vaccination site with someone who is not part of your household, please continue to wear masks, practice hand hygiene, and social distance.

Supporting Home-bound Residents

If you, a family member, neighbor or friend are homebound and living in Littleton, we'd like to hear from you. At this time, there is no definite date scheduled to do this, but this will help us identify those who need assistance once the vaccine is available to do so.

If you need additional assistance please contact Littleton's Department of Elder and Human Services by phone at 978-540-2470. We are here for you and happy to assist!

The Town of Littleton continues to advocate on your behalf. As stated by Anthony Ansaldi, Littleton's Town Administrator during a recent CBS interview, "Local government has been resilient and really stood up to the task, so when the governor asks us to pivot and if he asks us to pivot and be ready to administer vaccines on a local level, I'm sure that we will all stand up and meet that call."

While your local officials continue to advocate to establish a potential regional vaccination site please look into other options as the fate of a regional clinic is uncertain at this time.

Sincerely,

Ashley Shaheen

Director of Elder and Human Services

The Broadcaster

MARCH 2021



Sunday, March 14th

IMPORTANT NOTICE

At the time of printing this issue of The Broadcaster, the Elder and Human Services Department is open by appointment only. All other events will continue to meet virtually.

Please feel free to check in with the front office at **978-540-2470** for updates on this ever-changing situation.

As always, EHS staff continues to work to assist the community. Please reach out if you are in need. **However, if you have a life threatening emergency, please call 911.**

Greetings!



It is early February as I write this letter to you! I am writing to share how the Town has been involved in the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. The Town has been accepting names of Littleton residents 75 years old and older on a first come first served basis to be placed on a waitlist that will be utilized to schedule appointments at the clinic on Wednesdays at Devens Community Center, organized by Nashoba Board of Health. The clinic is held weekly on Wednesdays as vaccine becomes available. The Elder and Human Services Department is assisting with coordination efforts and we are currently accepting names to aid in the scheduling of future appointments. Please contact the vaccine information line **978-540-2444** **between the hours of**

10:00 am-2:00 pm, Monday through Friday or fill out the electronic form and have your name added to a waiting list:

<https://www.littletonma.org/CovidVaccineWaitlist>.

As the vaccine becomes available an Elder and Human Services Staff member will reach out to you to schedule an appointment!

While you are waiting for an appointment, we urge you to continue to check the state website on a daily basis, checking with your physician or local pharmacy to be able to obtain a vaccine at an earlier time frame. As of February 5th, a vaccine scheduling resource line has been launched to help residents 75 and older more easily schedule an appointment. The call center is staffed by representatives who can provide live phone support to assist residents with booking appointment. Call center workers will have the same access to appointments that users will see on the public website. The line can be accessed by dialing 2-1-1 and selecting the prompt for "Help Scheduling a Vaccine Appointment" **Monday through Friday from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm**

Information is changing frequently, so I encourage you to continue reaching out to the Department of Elder and Human Services by phone, visiting our website and Facebook page to obtain the most up to date information. I recognize people are frustrated and feeling overwhelmed. It is important to remember to breathe and realize that while it may take some time, all of our seniors who wish to be vaccinated will get the vaccine. We are here to help! In the meantime, continue to practice social distancing, wash your hands and wear a mask. We will get through this ... **TOGETHER!**

Ashley

COA Board Update



Celebration Time! Do you realize that the COA Board project to have a monthly LCTV show celebrated their first year anniversary last month?

The show, called **Highlights from EHS/COA** is the brainchild of two current COA Board members: Anita Harding and Susan Melander.

They recognized the fact that, in addition to the monthly events which occur and are publicized in the monthly Broadcaster, there is a wealth of information about different programs the Town of Littleton has in place to help folks that should be shared. The idea to have a show was presented to the COA Board who quickly supported and encouraged them to proceed. Thanks to Mark Crory who guided and helped them to quickly get the show up and running and who also continues to provide monthly help editing etc. to ready it for viewing.

The show purposely airs toward the end of the month to provide a preview of the COA opportunities which are planned for the following month (so the information gets out a little ahead of the Broadcaster). In addition to that information, special topics such as the available Tax Exemptions, the Real Estate Tax Deferral program, the Tax Relief Program for Elders and the Disabled (TREAD) etc. are explained in detail. In addition to all of that, they have special guests and our EHS Director often will highlight special programs being planned.

The COA Board appreciates and thanks Anita and Susan. What a great job they are doing! Please do take 30 minutes of your time and watch it on Cable or access it through the Town website, LCTV shows.

Marge Payne, Chair, COA Board

Tech Friend Program



Hi Littleton Community,

My name is Brianna Levasseur and I am a member of Littleton High School's NHS program. The word "unprecedented" has appeared many times in the papers, but I guess I must use this same word again. With such unprecedented times, I have seen a growing reliance on technology, not just for ease, but also for safety's sake. Technology has replaced face-to-face social interactions and has become our safest access to the outside world for the time being. With that being said, a new program is partnering NHS students with fellow senior residents that may be interested in technology assistance with using cellphones, the internet, Zoom accounts, or with interacting with friends and family through social media. Hopefully such a program will help with technology use efficiency and will keep connections between families and friends strong during these tough times.

Call 978-540-2470 to be added to the interest list.



The Town of Littleton has compiled information and resources for residents and members of the community.

Visit: <https://www.littletonma.org/information-coronavirus-covid-19>

for information on the Town's response to COVID-19 and the impact on town services, programs and facilities. The page will be updated as new information becomes available.

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COA Office Hours:
Monday-Friday
9:00 am- 4:00 pm
COA Outreach Hours:
Monday-Friday
9:00 am-3:00 pm

Broadcaster by Email and Online!!

You can get the Broadcaster by email! Visit our website www.littletonma.org, select "Sign up to receive Email Notifications," enter your email address and select "Elder & Human Services Monthly Newsletter" on the next page. Look for the Broadcaster on the website, too.

OUTREACH CORNER

Please contact Amy at 978-540-2472 for Outreach assistance.

NEW Childcare Subsidy for Income Eligible Local Families



A new program is available to residents of Littleton, which will provide childcare subsidies to low-moderate income families. Littleton and four other local communities (Acton, Boxborough, Maynard and Westford) were awarded these funds to help parents/caregivers be able to work, return to work or seek employment. Having reliable childcare so that parents/caregivers are able to work or seek employment is the main purpose of this program.

Additional details on the program are available at, <https://www.littletonma.org/home/news/new-childcare-subsidy-income-eligible-local-families>.

The program guidelines and application are available on The Elder and Human Services website, <https://www.littletonma.org/elder-and-human-services/pages/childcare-subsidy-program>.

All inquiries regarding the program and completed applications should be directed to **Amy DeMichele at 978-540-2472 or via email ademichele@littletonma.org**.

The New Normal New England Road Trip – No Mask or Gas Required with Ted Reinstein

**TUESDAY, MARCH 30 at 7:00 pm
FREE VIRTUAL PROGRAM**



Join Ted virtually during a challenging time when most people are limiting their travel; this talk takes folks along on a rollicking ride around New England—all in just one hour, and all from the comfort of their own home.

Author of three books about New England and longtime “Chronicle” reporter Ted Reinstein is your tour guide as you go from Maine to Rhode Island, Mt. Washington to Mt. Mansfield, and Berkshire foliage to Fenway Park. But Ted’s 20-plus years of reporting and telling stories from all over New England means this is not your average bus tour. Prepare to meet colorful characters who’ve done the darndest things, learn odd facts about familiar places, and of course—this being a Ted talk—expect to visit at least a few fabulous classic diners. (Spoiler alert: Ted reveals where to find *THE* best clam chowdah in America—and it’s right here in New England!) Ted will take questions following the talk.

Please use below link to register

<https://actonma.zoom.us/j/98770766306?pwd=VVlIQ0oxOGJtSmgyaEhaZVAvM2hndz09>

For more information, please email sball@actonma.gov or call 978-929-6453.

Funding for CHNA 15 is provided from Lahey Hospital and Medical Center and Winchester Hospital through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s Determination of Need (DoN) process.



The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month’s energy expense and is not eligible for state or federal energy assistance. Income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state’s median income levels.

Please contact Amy at 978-540-2472 to set up an appointment to complete an application for this program.



To apply for Fuel Assistance, contact Amy to schedule an appointment:

ademichele@littletonma.org or call 978-540-2472

Disclaimer: Some announcements and advertisements in this Broadcaster are not sponsored by EHS/LCOA.

ELDER ABUSE?



If you suspect someone is being abused, neglected or financially exploited, contact *Minuteman Senior Services, Protective Services* at 781-221-7069 during regular business hours; after hours on evenings, holidays and weekends, call 1-800-922-2275 to speak confidentially to the *Elder Abuse Hotline*.



CORNER

QUESTION: *How is the EHS Department continuing to operate during COVID-19?*

ANSWER: The Elder and Human Services Team continues to be working on-site and available by phone or by appointment to assist you! We are continuing to offer grab and go programs, virtual offerings, and programs made available on LCTV. The home delivered meals program continues to be a wonderful resource throughout the pandemic. (Thank you, Gayle and Volunteers!). Transportation services will continue for essential trips such as medical and grocery shopping trips! We are here and continue to be here for you! If you need assistance navigating the COVID-19 roll-out vaccine process please let us know.

Creating Your Psychological First Aid Kit for Surviving the Coronavirus By Henry Quinlan

Join us for this much needed virtual presentation—**Tuesday, March 9th at 11:00 am**

To Register please click on the following link
https://actonma.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jgXV3wcuTIO-KjQTJYAvuQ



Content will include, taking care of yourself from head to toe, making sure you have access to physical, emotional and social support, basic bodily needs, maintain your psychological equilibrium whether living alone or with others, setting priorities building hope and resiliency in your life and staying connected.

Henry Quinlan is an 81-year-old semi-retired publisher who has long spoken on issues involving seniors. He is best known for his presentation, "Building a Life in your Senior Years that has Meaning and Purpose for You." He is currently writing a book, "How to Build Your Emotional Pension."

For more information, please email:
sball@actonma.gov or call 978-929-6453

Funding for CHNA 15 is provided from Lahey Hospital and Medical Center and Winchester Hospital through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Determination of Need (DoN) process.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN LITTLETON*



The Littleton Rental Assistance Program (LRAP) provides rental assistance to income-eligible households who are renting qualified housing units in the Town of Littleton. The goal of the program is to provide greater housing stability and housing opportunities to cost burdened renters in Littleton. **This program is managed by the Littleton Affordable Housing Trust, through the Elder and Human Services Department and funded by the Community Preservation Act.**

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) provides financial relief for qualifying residents who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. **This program has been created and funded by the Littleton Affordable Housing Trust, utilizing its Community Preservation Act or other non-federal funds.**

LRAP and ERAP guidelines, instructions and the applications are available online on the Elder and Human Services Department page which can be accessed via the Town Website, <https://www.littletonma.org/elder-and-human-services>. Completed applications can be submitted by mail, e-mail or in person.

Contact Amy DeMichele at 978-540-2472, Outreach Coordinator for additional information.

William James INTERFACE

Your mental well being is important! This website is free and can connect you and loved ones to specific support, in your area virtually, with someone specializing in what you need and who accepts your health insurance.

<https://interface.williamjames.edu/community/littleton>

WORD SEARCH

Find the hidden words



Friends of the Littleton Council on Aging



The Friends board is enjoying the fact that our flowers to the seniors program is proving to be what we had hoped it would be. The notes and smiles we have received have made this all worthwhile. We will continue to deliver as long as we can. We have not forgotten any of you.



Tuesday, March 16th is our next "Lunch To Go" St. Patrick's celebration with corned beef and cabbage, catered by Il Forno's restaurant. **The cost is \$5.00 per person and pick up is 11:30 am to 1:00 pm.**

Sign up starts on Tuesday, March 1st by calling the COA office at 978-540-2470.



Craft Class



Can you believe it is March already? Unfortunately the craft class is still not able to meet together in the multipurpose room. We are, therefore, putting together another Grab and Go. It will be decorating a picture frame with jewels, gems

and shells. All that you need to create a masterpiece will be included in the Grab and Go Kit. You will be able to pick up your Kit on Wednesday, March 10th, between 1:00 and 2:00 pm in front of the Library. The cost of the Kit is \$3.00. You must register by calling 978-540-2470. Early registration is important because there will be a limit of 20 Kits available. Hope to see you on March 10th.



We thank the Friends of the COA and their generous donors for their continuing support in mailing our newsletters. Activities with this symbol are partially or fully funded by the Friends of the COA.



Protecting Today What Matters Tomorrow

Many people want the peace of mind that comes from legally protecting their most cherished assets: their health and the financial future of their family. We help you do this by compassionately listening and responding to your needs.

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Littleton Council on Aging, Littleton, MA 06-5119

Minuteman Senior Services MARCH 2021 Meals on Wheels Menu

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 BBQ Chicken Meatballs Mac & Cheese Broccoli Wheat Bread Fruit Cup	2 Grilled Chicken Coq au Vin Yukon Gold Potatoes Green Beans Multigrain Bread Applesauce Cup	3 Diced Pork with Teriyaki Sauce Vegetable Fried Rice Asian Blend Veggies Multigrain Bread Yogurt	4 Meatloaf Onion Gravy Mashed Potatoes Scandinavian Blend Veggies Dinner Roll Fresh Fruit	5 Mini Ravioli Primavera Sauce Italian Blend Veggies Italian Bread Lorna Doones
8 Chicken with Vodka Sauce Couscous Spinach Multigrain Bread Yogurt	9 Sloppy Joe Potato Wedges Broccoli Hamburger Bun Fruit Cup	10 Chicken & White Bean Chili Brown Rice Brussels Sprouts Wheat Bread Fresh Fruit	11 Chicken Meatballs Cacciatore Sauce Tri Color Rotini Mixed Vegetables Italian Bread Chocolate Chip Muffin	12 Baked Pollock Piccata Orzo & Spinach Pilaf Carrots Multigrain Bread Fruit Cup
15 Beef Bolognese Cavatappi Pasta Italian Blend Veggies Wheat Bread Applesauce Cup	16 <u>SPECIAL</u> Corned Beef Hash Braised Cabbage Herbed Carrots Dinner Roll Fruit Cup	17 Grilled Chicken Apricot Glaze Wild Rice Pilaf Green Peas Multigrain Bread Cookie	18 Roast Pork Herb Gravy Bread Stuffing Butternut Squash Wheat Dinner Roll Yogurt	19 Macaroni & Cheese California Blend Veggies Dinner Roll Fresh Fruit
22 Chicken & Rice Bake Capri Blend Veggies Multigrain Bread Fruit Cup	23 Beef & Broccoli Teriyaki White Rice Wheat Bread Yogurt	24 Chicken Brunswick Stew Green Beans Marbled Rye Fruit Cup	25 Chicken Kielbasa Pepper & Onion Medley O'Brien Potatoes Hot Dog Roll Fresh Fruit	26 Salmon Red Pepper Pesto Wild Rice Pilaf Cauliflower Gratin Multigrain Bread Lorna Doones
29 Shepherd's Pie Green Beans Dinner Roll Yogurt	30 Grilled Chicken Florentine Sauce Mashed Sweet Potatoes Mixed Vegetables Multigrain Bread Fresh Fruit	31 Pork Stroganoff Egg Noodles Spinach Wheat Bread Cookie	To CANCEL or ORDER, Call your local meal site by 11AM the <u>DAY BEFORE</u>	For weather emergencies and cancellations, please check Fox 25 TV station



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zoom

Video Conferencing

Living Alone and Living Well Group-Virtual Meeting

Living Alone and Living Well continues to meet monthly via Zoom, **Thursday, March 18th at 10:30-11:30 am.**

Please contact Amy at 978-540-2472 for Zoom info, and to sign up.

Virtual Coffee Hour



Join EHS Staff for a virtual coffee or tea hour via Zoom.

The second Friday of every month from 9:00-10:00 am (March 12th).

Please contact the EHS Dept. at 978-540-2470 for the Zoom invitation to log on.

Life Ahead Recovery Support Group

Meets virtually on the last Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:00 pm. **March's meeting is on Wednesday, March 31st.** Please contact Nicole at 978-540-2475 for details.

Virtual Loving Stitches



Meeting every Monday from 12:00-2:00 pm via Zoom. Join in the fun! Whether you are a former member or brand new, the group welcomes you!

Please contact the EHS Dept. at 978-540-2470 for Zoom information on how to log in.

Virtual Social Anxiety Group

Social Anxiety Group continues to meet every other **Tuesday from 1:00-2:30 pm** via Zoom and we would love to have you join! March dates will be **Tuesdays March 9th and 23rd.**

Pease contact Nicole Sarvela at 978-540-2475 for Zoom info and to sign up.

An invitation to participate in a program to promote safety and well-being for seniors



District Attorney Ryan will discuss the far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic including the increase in scams that target the elderly and other vulnerable populations.

Discussion will also focus on the lasting impacts of isolation and provide advice on how to mitigate feelings of loneliness.

Tuesday, March 16th at 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting

<https://actonma.zoom.us/webinar/register/WNhdCeL3tLT9KfKhpT0L7DvQ>

Please contact Sheryl Ball sball@acton-ma.gov for questions or help with registration for this event.

Zoom information will be sent to you upon registering.

This program is sponsored by CHNA 15 through a regional grant between Acton, Littleton and Boxborough



Our LGBTQ+ Group is a collaboration between EHS, Minuteman, First Church Unitarian of Littleton, The First Baptist

Church of Littleton and The Congregational Church of Littleton. We have a virtual event scheduled for **Thursday, March 25th from 5:00-6:30 pm.** The event will be facilitated by Bob Lin-scott of the LGBT Aging Project. Please join us to hear stories of coming out and experiences shared by people across the generations.

Call Amy at 978-540-2472, or email Amy at: ademichele@littletonma.org to register and get the Zoom link.

REMINDER:

ALL ACTIVITIES LISTED IN THE BROADCASTER ARE FOR LITTLETON RESIDENTS. OTHER AREA RESIDENTS WILL BE PLACED ON A WAIT LIST IF PROGRAMS ARE NOT FILLED AND NOTIFIED IF THERE ARE OPENINGS IN ANY ACTIVITIES.

Transportation Program



The COA Transportation Program continues to operate in limited capacity on Wednesdays and Friday mornings for medical and essential trips, including trips to the pharmacy, grocery stores, banks, post office, town hall, etc. In order to ensure the safety of our riders and bus drivers, we require only one passenger on the bus at all times, masks required for both riders and bus driver, pre-screen riders prior to service and we adhere to new cleaning procedures. Special thanks goes to the Fire Department for providing the deep-cleaning at the end of the day! For more information on Transportation Services, please consult the back of this newsletter.

This year, EHS vans will follow the decision of Minute-man Senior Services/Meals on Wheels. When Meals on Wheels deliveries are canceled, all van services will be canceled.

Residents will be notified by Dispatch to reschedule if their ride is canceled.

COVID Vaccine Schedule per DPH

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/when-can-i-get-the-covid-19-vaccine>

Emergency Contact Information

Littleton Police Department: 911 or 978-540-2300

Littleton Fire Department: 911 or 978-540-2302

Psychiatric Emergency Services: (800) 540-5806 If you are experiencing a mental health or emotional crisis, please call to speak to an Advocates crisis clinician. We are available to help 24 hours a day, every day.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: (800)273-8255

Samaritans Statewide Helpline: (877)870-4673 The Samaritans Statewide Helpline is available to anyone in Massachusetts who is need of emotional support. Anyone can call or text the helpline to receive help from specially trained volunteers.

COIN: Community Outreach Initiative Network, Addiction and Recovery assistance 508-488-5072.

New to Town? Never used the COA before? Call or email Outreach Coordinator Amy DeMichele for a New Participant Packet for all the info you need!

978-540-2472 ademichele@littletonma.org

Mystery Bag Program



Our February Mystery Bags were a great success! **March bags will be ready for pickup on Mondays, March 8th and 22nd in front of the Library between 11:00 am and 12:00 noon.** The bags are filled with new puzzles, word games and more to get us thinking about and welcoming spring. This program is open to all seniors. Join the fun! Our Social Club Leader, Anne-Marie Chernosky, will create the bags that will keep you guessing until we are all back together in person. **If you haven't already signed up for the program, please do so at 978-540-2470.**

There is a maximum of 20 bags each of the March dates.

April Mystery Bags will be available on April 12th and 26th.

This program is funded through the Emerson Community Grant Award.

indian hill music

Indian Hill Music Virtual Connections:

Missing live musical performances? Join Indian Hill Music online for exclusive interviews with our musicians, uplifting performances by small ensembles from the Orchestra of Indian Hill, "Bruce's Playlist" with Orchestra of Indian Hill conductor Bruce Hangen, and performances from guest musicians in a variety of genres.

Use the following URL to watch our latest Inspired Ensembles performance video, featuring our co-principal violists play Mozart: **Amelia Hollander Ames and Peter Sulski.**

<https://bit.ly/3ozmFTc>

Use the following URL to view all of Indian Hill's Virtual Connections content.

<https://indianhillmusic.org/orchestra>

Line Dancing Classes



Kari's Line Dancing classes are available on LCTV, or OnDemand via the LCTV website littletonma.org.



The Littleton Council on Aging values the diversity of our participants, staff, volunteers, and the Littleton community. We strive to promote a welcoming environment including differences in race, socioeconomic status, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, and other forms of uniqueness.

TECH TIP FROM BILL VALES



As I sit down in early February to write my Tech Tip, Covid19 deaths continue to rise. We are now nearing 460,000 deaths in the U.S., up by more than 100,000 since last month. The US death total from Covid19 has now exceeded US deaths in World War 2. Our next record will be to surpass the death count for the US Civil War. Think about these numbers.

It did not need to be this horrific. If we had a coherent national strategy for how to mitigate the spread of Covid19; if we had a coherent testing strategy that provided quick results; if we had medical and scientific truth conveyed to the public; if public health was seen as a patriotic and responsible act rather than being politicized. If, if, if.....

We are having a very difficult winter. Many of us have gone from hearing about someone with Covid19 to knowing someone with Covid19 or worse yet to knowing someone that has died from Covid19. Experts predicted spikes in infections, hospitalizations and deaths after the holiday season. Like clockwork the predictions held true and the devastation continued. It does make me wonder if as a society we are stupid or simply ignorant to the facts.

Now we are faced with various logistical problems involving the distribution and administration of the vaccines. A lack of a national plan in 2020 contributed to this. Reported today at the CDC website there are 39 million people vaccinated. This is good news as we are making headway, but with a population of ~330 million, we have a way to go and time is of the essence. I am hoping we see vaccination rates grow exponentially as vaccine distribution improves.

States are now working on setting up large venues where people can be vaccinated. This is helpful for getting the masses vaccinated, but it is not optimal for seniors and disabled people to negotiate. I see reports in MA. that local distribution points will be opening up, including medical centers, doctor's offices and pharmacies. This will be a definite improvement for accessibility.

People are able to sign up for vaccinations using a tiered approach based on: age, comorbidities and their role in society. The general idea is that high risk people and front-line workers should be vaccinated first.

I see progress at the local levels helping people get appointments for vaccinations and arranging transportation.

I encourage everyone to stay informed using their local doctors, medical facilities and various websites. You should be checking the state website for updates and look to your local town facilities for guidance.

<https://www.mass.gov/>

If we want to be prepared, we must be informed with science-based data. We need to dig for the data and do some critical thinking. A good source of information is the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Avoid conspiracy theories, non-scientific speculation of cures or treatments, science denial and dogma of any persuasion relating to the virus. Follow the science for testing and mitigation; it is the best way we can open up society, keep our hospitals functioning and remain alive.

The best defenses we have against the virus continue to be: 1) wear a mask, 2) social distance from people, 3) avoid congregate or group settings 4) regularly wash your hands.

Virtual Internet Presentations



Bill Vales' Virtual Internet Presentations (via Zoom) will be held on **Thursdays from 10:30 am to 12:00 noon.**

Topics for March 2021 are:

- March 4** Purchasing a new computer
- March 11** Using Search for general information, images and YouTube
- March 18** Internet of Things (IoT). Benefits, vulnerabilities and risks
- March 25** Map applications, Google Maps, Google Earth, historical maps, wetland maps

To sign up for these meeting please call the **COA at 978-540-2470**. Provide your name and email address. Before the meeting you will receive an email with the Zoom link that you will use to connect to with your web browser.

Please sign up at least one day before the class, so that we are able to add you to the participant list.

Programs and Events—February 2021

Date	Day	Time	Description	Page
Mar 1,8,15,22,29	Mon	12:00-2:00 pm	Zoom: Loving Stitches	P7
Mar 4,11,18,25	Thurs	10:30 am-Noon	Zoom: COA Internet Computer Class	P9
Mar 9	Tues	11:00 am	Zoom: Create Psychological First Aid Kid	P4
Mar 9 and 23	Tues	1:00-2:30 pm	Zoom: Social Anxiety Group	P7
Mar 10	Wed	1:00-2:00 pm	Grab and Go Craft Class	P5
Mar 12	Fri	9:00-10:00 am	Zoom: Virtual Coffee Hour	P7
Mar 8 and 22	Mon	11:00 am-Noon	Mystery Bag Program Pickup	P8
Mar 16	Tues	11:00 am	Zoom: DA Ryan: Scams Targeting Seniors	P7
Mar 16	Tues	11:30-1:00	Friends Lunch to Go Pickup	P5
Mar 18	Thurs	10:30 11:30 am	Zoom: Living Alone & Living Well	P7
Mar 25	Thurs	5:00-6:30 pm	Zoom: LGBTQ+ Event	P7
Mar 30	Tues	7:00 pm	Zoom: Virtual Road Trip with Ted Reinstein	P3
Mar 31	Wed	6:00-7:00 pm	Zoom: Life Ahead Recovery Support Group	P7

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MARCH 2021

TRANSPORTATION

- Arrange a ride by calling Dispatch at 978-844-6809; Monday through Friday - 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Messages on the answering machine after 4:00 pm will be returned the following business day.
- Open to all riders 60 years of age or with a qualified disability. Others may be taken on a space-available basis. Veterans ride for free. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Trips are booked first-come-first-served with priority given to medical requests. Ride service is curb-to-curb.
- Requests should be made 48 hours in advance.
- You must provide the exact address of your destination (street number and town), as well as a destination telephone number when you book your ride.
- Passengers are asked to be ready 15 minutes before their booked trip time and to wait for 15 minutes after their scheduled time to allow for traffic and unexpected delays.
- Please call if you must cancel so your timeslot can be used by another rider.
- Dispatch services provided by CrossTown Connect (CTC). Funding for transportation provided by MART – Montachusett Regional Transit Authority and the Town of Littleton.

LITTLETON EHS TRANSPORTATION CHARGES

Rides are provided to appointments between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm.

- Rides greater than 15 miles (except medical rides in Concord) -- **\$7 one way**. Call for info on towns served.
- Rides to medical services in Concord -- **\$1 one way**
- Rides within CTC service area (Littleton, Acton, Maynard, Boxborough) -- **\$1 one way**

**** Rides to and from a Council on Aging (and the Senior Diner) in any of the four town are always FREE ****

We also provide rides to Lahey Hospital in Burlington and to the Boston area hospitals.

- 1st and 3rd Fridays – Boston area hospitals
- 2nd and 4th Fridays – Lahey (Burlington)

We can take you to a pick-up point for a MART ride to Boston any day, Monday – Friday. Call for details.

REMINDER

If you use the van on a weekly basis, please call **EVERY** week to continue your reservation. If you are accompanied by someone on the ride, they must also pay the fare.