

Shutesbury Geezette

The Newsletter of the Shutesbury Council on Aging

Winter 2025

Community Potluck Lunch

On the **first Tuesday of each month at noon**, the **Town Hall's Senior Lounge** comes alive with the smell of home-cooked dishes and the sound of friendly conversation. The **Community Potluck Lunch** is a wonderful way to share good food and good company with neighbors.



This monthly tradition is open to all ages. Whether you bring a favorite dish to share or simply come as you are, you'll be warmly welcomed. It's a chance to meet, greet, and dine together, building connections that make our community strong. Come for the meal, stay for the

friendship, and invite someone new to join in the fun!

Shutesbury Public Health Nurse: Sarah Fiske

Hello readers!

I am **Sarah**, the public health nurse serving **Leverett** and **Shutesbury** with the goal of improving population health. This includes **injury prevention education and training** (e.g., gun safety awareness, emergency preparedness, stop-the-bleed and Narcan training), as well as **chronic disease prevention and self-management** (e.g., walking programs, blood pressure monitoring, diabetes education, and stroke awareness).

Other initiatives include **monitoring of infectious and communicable diseases, vaccine clinic coordination, one on one wellness consultation, medical device lending, mother-baby programs, and community cooking classes.**

I partner with the **American Heart Association** and the **University of Massachusetts, College of Nursing** to engage in programs that promote health and wellness.

Upcoming scheduled events include, a **Plant Based Cooking Class** on **11/13** and **High Blood Pressure Education** on **11/18**. *Stay tuned for more information and how to sign up!*

I serve Leverett on Tuesdays 8-4 and Shutesbury on Fridays 8-4 at

the Town Hall. Appointments are encouraged as community needs pull me out of the office.

Contact me at for any inquiries **sarah.fiske@vhrcare.org**.

Meet the New Town Administrator

After six years of working in municipal and human services, I am thrilled to join the Shutesbury community as the new Town Administrator.

I'm a UMass Amherst alum and recently completed my Master's in Business Administration. Originally from Cape Cod, I moved to WMA to finish my undergrad and have been here ever since. Outside of work, you can find me at a yoga class or a live music venue.

I'm generally at Town Hall from **9am to 4:30pm, Mon. - Thurs.** I welcome folks dropping in, though meetings may impact my regular hours. ~**Hayley**

Hayley Bolton, Town
Administrator **(413) 259-1214**

The Council on Aging's Programs

In addition to **Community Lunch**, the COA supports free **yoga** and **strength training** classes provided by Shutesbury's Library. **The Massachusetts Councils on Aging** most commonly offered programs are physical fitness classes. Shutesbury's classes, especially aimed at seniors, are offered on zoom. Contact the **Shutesbury Library Director** for the link(s). **413-259-1213**

Shutesbury COA also supports a **Footcare Clinic** which meets in the **Town Hall's Senior Lounge**

on the **third Wednesday of every month, from 9 am to 2 or 3 pm.**

To sign up for a 25 to 30 minute session, contact the Council on Aging by phone **413-259-3796** or email **councilonaging@shutesbury.org**.

The current provider of the Clinic is **Nurse Simonne**, an experienced LPN with a certification in Footcare, who comes to us highly-recommended. We ask that you contribute what you can to enable the COA to continue to present the Clinic.

Free Rides

Franklin County Regional Transit Authority (FRTA)'s Demand-Response service provides free transportation anywhere in Franklin County to those over 60.

Get the initial application by calling **413-774-2262** or download at **www.frta.org** Call the same number or visit **https://www.frta.org/getting-around/demand-response/** for details.

Free rides throughout the area are the most used service **Village Neighbors** provides to members. To learn more about becoming a member (it's free) contact Village Neighbors at **membership@villageneighbors.org** or call **413-345-6894 ext.2**

Neighborhood Dementia Support Initiative

By **Barbara Bodzin**, NDS coordinator Village Neighbors

You may have heard about, or even participated in one of the events **Village Neighbors** has held in collaboration with our **4 town Councils on Aging (COAs)**.

What you may not know is that representatives from each COA have been working closely with Village Neighbors volunteers to guide this vital initiative.

The group meets regularly to explore ways we can better support neighbors living with memory loss, as well as the people who care for them. So far, the **Neighborhood Dementia Support (NDS)** program, thanks to funding from **LifePath**, has hosted the following valuable presentations:

Optimizing Brain Health as We Age, facilitated by **Linda Puzan** and **Nancy Spittle**, which explored practical ways to keep our aging brains healthy.

The Many Faces of Dementia, introduced the different types of dementia, how to recognize them, and ways to support community

members experiencing memory loss.

The ABC's of Dementia, This interactive program focused on activities, behaviors, and communication strategies, helping us better understand and support members living with memory loss. It is designed to provide practical tools for volunteers who would like to accompany members on walks and engage in other activities.

These programs were open to all community members and very well received. We continue to seek Village Neighbors volunteers and community members who would like to be part of this essential work. Together, we can make a real difference. Whether you volunteer, attend a program, or simply share what you've learned with a friend, every effort helps create a more caring and connected community. Thank you for being part of this work. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event!

Memory Cafe

A Memory Café is a free social gathering for people living with changes in their memory or thinking and the people who care about them.

Memory Cafes focus on people, not medical conditions. No one is asked if they have a diagnosis. We invite you to join in community and to enjoy some music or other activity, some food and friendly informal visiting.

**Mondays: December 9, 2025
January 12, 2026 11-12:30**

It will be held at the

Wendell Community Senior Center

2 Lockes Village Rd, Wendell Center

This Café is hosted by the **Wendell COA**, with support from **Village Neighbors**, and the **Neighborhood Dementia Support Group**.

Please **RSVP** to **Nancy Spittle** at **978 544 6760** so we have food and seating for all.

Village Neighbors

Village Neighbors is a community group that helps members over 60 with support to remain in their homes. VN does that by providing rides to appointments, errands, friendly visits, home repairs and most anything else our members might ask for.

Membership and services are free, we are completely volunteer run. Our 297 members ask for services, and our 160 volunteers help to provide them. Call **413-345-6894** or check out our website for more info. **<https://www.villageneighbors.org/>**

Sand For Seniors

The **Shutesbury Police Department** is once again offering its highly valued **“Sand for Seniors”** program to support our residents during the winter months, sponsored by the COA and Home Depot. This initiative provides seniors, individuals with disabilities, and residents in need with buckets of sand delivered directly to their doorstep.

To participate call the **Police Department at 413-259-1279**. Please leave a message with your name and phone number, and clearly state that your call is regarding the **“Sand for Seniors”** program. An officer will return your call, gather the necessary information, and make arrangements for delivery.



Shutesbury Council on Aging
P.O. Box #276
Shutesbury, MA 01072

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Reader, please help the Shutesbury COA!

Help us save money to provide new programs by sending your email address to **councilonaging@shutesbury.org**. Mailing this newsletter - which goes to half of the households in town - is expensive. The COA wants to use the money instead for programs of interest to you.

When you send it, let us know whether **bus trips** to sites of **natural beauty** or **historic interest**, or to **museums**, **concerts** or **plays** would appeal to you.

If not, what programs could the COA offer that would interest you?

The Shutesbury Council on Aging

Jessica Makepeace, Co-Chair, Treasurer

Suasan Millinger, Co-Chair, Secretary

MaryJo Johnson

Jeannette Stockton

Rich Strangman

Meetings are the second Wednesday
of the month at 5:30 pm on Zoom

Phone: 413-259-3796

Email:

councilonaging@shutesbury.org

P.O. Box 276, Shutesbury, MA 01072