



The Centerpiece

For Active Senior Living

Serving the Community since 1974

June 2023

Newsletter Volume 43 Issue 6

The Center

100 East Main Street
Merrimac, MA 01860

Tel: 978-346-9549 Fax: 978-346-0528

Hours M-TH 8:30-4pm, F 8:30-1pm

Web: www.merrimac01860.info/184/

SeniorCenter

Executive Director: Brienne Walsh:
bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com

Facebook: Merrimac Council on Aging &
Senior Center

Find our Newsletter Online:

www.merrimac01860.info/184/Senior-Center

www.ourseniorcenter.com/find/merrimac-senior-center

Director's Corner

Happy Summer!

Summer is here and our tent is up! We are looking forward to bringing some of our programming outdoors for the season and expanding our space!

We will also be restarting Bocce on Wed June 7th.

Bocce will continue until late fall each Wednesday from 1-3pm. Be sure to call to register or if you have questions!

June is Pride Month and we will have special events to celebrate our LGBTQ+ community!

We strive to be a welcoming and safe space for all and hope you will all join us at these events!

When reading this month's edition, look out for new trips, upcoming events and all the latest news here at the Center!

I hope to see you this month!

Reminders:

**** Advanced Registration is required for all activities, classes and events ****

**** No OUTSIDE food is permitted in the building, beverages are allowed. Thank you for respecting our community!**

Stay well!

-Brienne -

Inside this Issue

Director's Corner.....Pg 1

LGBTQ+, Bocce Info.

Juneteenth.....Pg.3

Lunch Ordering& SNAP.....Pg 4

Bingo, Games and Bill DukePg.5

Program Updates & Class Info.....Pg 6

Trips & Travel Info.....Pg 7

Men's Breakfast

.....Pg.8

Monthly Movie& Beeyonder

Returns.....Pg.9

Community OutreachPg. 10

Health & Wellness News.....Pg 11

BP Clinics & Thank You.....Pg 12

June Awareness & Activities Pg 13

Greetings & Contact Pg 14&16

Inserts: Monthly Menu , Daily Calendar, Meditation Retreat, Make Your Own Sundae, Not Another Second Event, Summer





LGBTQ+ Social Connection

Evening

Join us for a meal and conversation!

Thursday, 06/15/23 @ 5:30pm

Please register in advance

Hot meal provided



Bocce is Back!

Wednesdays beginning

June 7th

1-3pm

Call to register or with questions!



Health Advisory:

Please remember to stay home if you are ill or unwell. This is for the safety of all of our community members as well as staff and volunteers.

Thank you!

THE MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY JUNE 19th, 2023 IN OBSERVANCE OF JUNETEENTH



Continuing Changes in Senior Center Operations:

Limited Van and NEET Transportation:

Five clients per ride will be allowed on the van to go on van trips. NEET rides are 1 per car.

- 1. Client MUST wear a mask**
- 2. Client must use Sanitizer Gel before boarding the van.**
- 3. The Driver cannot assist the client boarding or de-boarding the van/car.**
- 4. Donation for ride should be place in envelope and placed in basket driver will have place on seat behind him/her for your convenience.**
- 5. The van will be sanitized after each ride and before another passenger embarks.**
- 6. Call well in advance (at least 4 business days) for a ride as we will be severely limited in our ability to offer rides.**

A. Eligibility requirement:

- a) Clients must be able to self-transport from their home to the vehicle, enter and exit the back seat. Walkers and Wheelchairs must be done by client only, not the driver.**
- b) Clients must be able to buckle their own seat belt.**
- c) Clients must return signed NEET registration/guidelines form prior to transportation.**

B. Prescreening:

COA scheduler must ask pre-screening COVID-19 questions prior to appointment.

Ordering Meals:

To order a meal, call the Senior Center at 978-346-9549 by Thursday at 11 for meals the following week or order by the month. You can also now order by email! Send your name, phone number, address, dates and meals to be ordered at emurray@townofmerrimac.com. Anyone interested in ordering more than one meal may do so. Meals will be delivered to your door between 12 and 1 (Merrimac only) with minimal contact. Please mail in your payment by check or leave envelope taped to your door. Our drivers will “Ring and Run” (well maybe walk quickly), leaving your food at your door. Meals are \$5.00 per meal, \$25/ per week (as of 5/2/22). Order food delivered, *for in house dining on Tuesday-Thursday* or pickup!

**Did you know that the
Merrimac Senior Center is a Certified SNAP Outreach
Partner??**

**We can help with
applications and
recertifications!
Call for an
appointment !**





Merrimac Senior Center
The Centerpiece for Active Senior Living

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Please mail my newsletter (\$8.00 for the year)

☐ Please email my newsletter to my email address above (No charge)

Newsletter is available at: <http://townofmerrimac.com/184/Senior-Center>

Please return this form to:

Merrimac Senior Center
100 East Main Street
Merrimac, MA 01860

If paying by check, please make out to: Merrimac COA

BINGO

Bingo is in Session!

Mondays

June 5,12,26

Upstairs Activity Room

Beverages Welcome, Snack Provided

Limited to 20 Players.



Watercolor Class w/ Bill Duke

Monday 06/05/2023

1-4pm

Limited to 10 participants

\$20/per person payable on class day

Games are Back! NEW Days!

45's: Mondays at 1pm-3:30p

Rummikub: Tuesdays at 1pm-3:30p

Cribbage: Wednesdays at 1pm-3:30p

Registration Required!



Friends of the COA - Annual Dues

The Nutrition Program continues to provide meals to anyone who wants one (they are currently serving 40+ meals daily, M-F and delivering them to the door as well as holding a daily congregate meal on Mon-Thurs). The Friends continue to help with the cost. Note that your donations make this possible! Thank you for your continued generosity.

Send your dues or Gift to:

**Friends of the COA, 100 East Main St.,
Merrimac, MA 01860**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel/Cell _____

Dues: \$10__\$25__\$50__\$100__Other__

Donation to Gift Account: _____

Given in Honor of or Memory of:

Upcoming Special Events



Summer Craft w/Denise

Tuesday 06/20/23 at 1:30pm

Community Safe Sitter Course-Attention Grandparents!

Saturday 6/24/23 10am-4pm For Children Ages 11-14

Sponsored by the Public Health Nurse-See Flyers for Details

June Foot Clinic w/Barbara Ullman-

Tuesday 06/06/23-Appointment Required!

9am-12pm By Appointment Only \$30/per visit/cash only

Exercise Classes

Advanced Sign Up Required!

Mondays:

Exercise w/Pam at 9:30am \$5

Vinyasa Yoga w/Jane 6pm

\$3/per class

Tuesdays: Meditation & Yoga w/Bianca \$7/class

Wednesdays:

Chair Yoga w/Mary at 1pm; \$5

Thursdays:

Exercise w/Pam at 9:30am \$5

**LINE DANCING HAS BEEN PERMANENTLY
CANCELED BY THE INSTRUCTOR**

Fridays: No Classes on Friday



TRIPS & TRAVEL

MERRIMAC SENIOR CENTER ADVENTURES TRIPS & TRAVEL

For full event details request flyer or call the center!



6/14 Newport RI Playhouse, full all you can eat scrumptious buffet lunch, hilarious comedy Spreading it Around followed by a full Cabaret Show, Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation, all taxes & tips included. **\$110.00/person-NO SPACE LEFT**



8/17 Cabbage Island Clambake (Boothbay Harbor ME), Boat ride, double lobster Clambake (taxes & meal tip included), group seating, Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation. **\$142.00/person Filling Up Fast!!**



6/21 Dining Out Belles & Romeos A different mystery excursion each month
\$5.00 Bus

Leaves from COA 11:00 AM, Lunch on your own!

**** PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES ARE BEING HELD regularly , check out the daily**

****See Pg.6 for more details. ****

The Activity Calendar has been moved ! Be sure to read all the pa

*Friends of
Merrimac COA
Membership
Meeting*

*Tuesday 6/6/23
at 1pm
Please join us!*

Men's Breakfast



**Featured Speaker:
Dyke Hendrickson of
Newburyport, Author of
Merrimack:
The Resilient River
Thursday 06/08/23
9am
Advanced
Registration Required!**

HEALTH NURSE IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING SHARPS CONTAINERS.

y schedule ! **

ges, including the inserts!

Please Note: We are only accepting food pantry donations, books, and Medical Equipment

Monthly Movie Popcorn & Treats Provided~

A Man Called Otto Starring Tom Hanks



Tuesday 6/27/23

2pm

Beeyonder Returns!

Walking Tour of Anchorage

Tuesday 6/13/23 at 5pm

Pizza and Soda Included!



Community Outreach Column



Outreach & Human Services
Bridget Batcheller, MSW



. Happy June! There are many things we can celebrate during this month - the two most recognized celebrations being Pride and Juneteenth.

If you find yourself thinking, ‘what is Juneteenth and why is it a holiday?’, Juneteenth became a federal holiday in June of 2021. This effort to make Juneteenth a federal holiday was spearheaded by activist Opal Lee, who walked from her home in Fort Worth, Texas to Washington D.C, traveling two and a half miles each day to symbolize the two and a half years that Black Texans waited for their freedom. Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, on Jan. 1, 1863, abolishing slavery and freeing slaves everywhere but Galveston Texas, who didn’t receive the message that they were free until June 19, 1865. Hence the name, ‘Juneteenth’. You can find people celebrating Juneteenth at block parties or community parades, eating barbecue and other traditional foods, such as red drinks that symbolize perseverance and honors the blood that was shed by African-Americans. The national reckoning over race helped set the stage for Juneteenth to become the first new federal holiday since 1983, when Martin Luther King Jr. Day was created. It is a chance to honor & acknowledge our history and realize the hard work that is still to come. I encourage you to learn more about Juneteenth and how you can support local celebrations. Your local library is a great place to start!

Another important celebration in the month of June is Pride. It’s important to remember why Pride exists, how it’s celebrated today, and what it means to older adults. The first Pride celebration took place on June 28th, 1970, a year after the Stonewall Uprising in 1969. People celebrated by taking to the streets in cities like LA, Chicago, and New York. If you’re not familiar with the Stonewall Uprising, it was a 6-day long riot against police & anti-LGBTQ rhetoric after a gay bar in New York was raided. This was their way of saying ‘enough is enough. Although progress has been made for LGBTQ+ rights, LGBTQ+ elders—the very ones who started the movement—are still fighting for their right to live their lives openly and with dignity and respect as they age. Some of the challenges they face include: twice as likely to live alone, would be more comfortable in long-term care homes if staff had training specific to their needs, are twice as likely to be discriminated against when looking for senior housing (over 30% of LGBTQ seniors worry they may have to hide their identity to get senior housing), have fewer financial resources than non-LGBTQ senior, are twice as likely to feel a lack of community and social support

All of these reasons stress the importance of creating safe spaces and communities for LGBTQ+ seniors and to continue advocating for LGBTQ+ rights. The Merrimac COA has a monthly LGBTQ+ social group that meets for dinner at the center and is a great way to socialize and find community. They meet on the third Thursday of every month from 5:30-8:00 pm and will be celebrating their 10th anniversary as a group in July! Please be on the lookout for any Pride events & celebrations in our June newsletter, including a potential short film screening.

If you’re looking for other social groups, the Tewksbury COA LGBTQ+ Monthly Social Gathering meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 12:30 and the Andover COA monthly LGBTQ+ dinner meets on the first Thursday of the month from 6-7:30 pm. Over the Rainbow Social Club meets monthly for dinner at the House of Seven Gables in Salem, MA, usually on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6-8. Call 978-624-2261 for more information. Looking for something more or different than what is currently offered? Start your own!

As we celebrate Pride Month this year, we must remember that there would be no Pride Month if it wasn’t for the efforts of the LGBTQ+ elders who fought against unfair laws and treatment. Although long strides have been made, LGBTQ seniors still struggle to enjoy celebrations, like Pride, and want to make sure people don’t take for granted the rights that the LGBTQ community has. If you have any questions, suggestions, or need someone to talk to, please don’t hesitate to reach out! The Merrimac Senior Center & COA is an accepting and welcoming space for all.

For more resources for LGBTQ+ elders, head to SAGE’s website: <https://www.sageusa.org> or call the LGBT help hotline at 877-360-LGBT (5428).



Greeting from your Public Health Nurse!

Summer has finally arrived and I am sure we are all eager to spend more time outdoors and to enjoy the sunshine! As we begin to gather together for outdoor events, picnics and barbecues, I'd like to recognize a potential danger that can occur, especially during the warmer months - foodborne illness (food poisoning).

Foodborne illness is common and is preventable. You can get food poisoning after swallowing food that has been contaminated with a variety of germs. Each year, approximately 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from foodborne diseases.

Foodborne illness is more common during the summer months because the germs that cause it grow faster in warmer months due to the hot and humid climate. Also, the number of outdoor events that have perishable food options, like barbecues and picnics, are more common in the summer.

Anyone can get food poisoning, but older adults have a higher risk of foodborne illness because as people get older, their immune systems and organs don't recognize and get rid of harmful germs like they did in the past. Nearly half of people aged 65 and older who are diagnosed with a foodborne illness are hospitalized. People who are more likely to get food poisoning should avoid: undercooked or raw food from animals (like beef, pork, chicken, turkey, eggs, or seafood), raw or lightly cooked sprouts, unpasteurized (raw) milk/ juices and soft cheese (such as queso fresco), unless it is labeled as made with pasteurized milk.

Symptoms of food poisoning usually include diarrhea, vomiting, upset stomach, or nausea. Make sure to call your healthcare provider if you have severe symptoms like bloody diarrhea or diarrhea for more than 3 days that is not improving, fever greater than 102°F, excessive vomiting such that you can't keep liquids down as this can lead to dehydration.

Food Poisoning can be prevented. Here are 4 things to think about to keep your food safe: **clean, separate, cook, chill.**

Clean - wash your hands and all work surfaces before, during and after preparing food. **Separate** - always keep raw/ marinating meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices away from other foods and store in sealed containers in the refrigerator. Use one cutting board for all meats and a separate cutting board for produce, bread, and other foods that won't be cooked. Do not wash raw chicken before cooking be-

cause washing it will spread germs to other foods and to surrounding areas.

Cook - Use a food thermometer to ensure foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature. Beef, veal, lamb, and pork should be cooked to 145°F. Fish with fins:

145°F or cook until the flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork. Ground meats should be cooked to 160°F and all poultry, including ground chicken and turkey to 165°F.

Chill - Keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below and your freezer at 0°F or below. Refrigerate perishable food (meat, seafood, dairy, cut fruit, some vegetables, and cooked leftovers) within 2 hours. If the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F, like a hot car or picnic, refrigerate it within 1 hour. Thaw frozen food safely in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave.

Information from : <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/foods-linked-illness.html>

COVID VACCINE UPDATE: April 19, 2023 – CDC Issues COVID Booster Guidance for Older Adults and Immunocompromised Adults

CDC's new recommendations allow an additional updated (bivalent) vaccine dose for adults ages 65 years and older and additional doses for people who are immunocompromised. This allows more flexibility for healthcare providers to administer additional doses to immunocompromised patients as needed. Monovalent (original) COVID-19 mRNA COVID-19 vaccines will no longer be recommended for use in the United States. The CDC recommends that everyone ages 6 years and older receive an updated (bivalent) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of whether they previously completed their (monovalent) primary series. Individuals ages 6 years and older who have already received an updated mRNA vaccine do not need to take any action unless they are 65 years or older or immunocompromised. For young children, multiple doses continue to be recommended and will vary by age, vaccine, and which vaccines were previously received.

Speak with your primary care provider to discuss your specific situation and to determine if/when you should get an additional booster.

Be Well!





Blood Pressure Clinics for June

Friday June 2, 2023

Friday June 16, 2023

Friday June 30, 2023

10am-1pm

SHARPS Disposal Drop Off Site

New Containers Available for \$ 10



Lady Bells and Romeo's Dining Out!

Once per month, our group will embark on a restaurant adventure to remember! Bus cost is just \$5 and the cost of lunch is on your own! Enjoy time with old and new friends!

Call Denise with questions or for additional info. Sign up today!

Many Thanks to All, for the Donations to the Senior Center, Food Pantry and Programming Initiatives

April 16-May 15

(Supporting Nutrition Program & Food Pantry)

Friends of the Merrimac COA

DAVID HEATING AND

COOLING, INC.

Betty Emery

Joe Fantini and Fantini Baking Co.

Chris Manni and Family

Immaculate Conception Church of

Newburyport

Evelyn & Harold Powers

Lucky 7 Farm

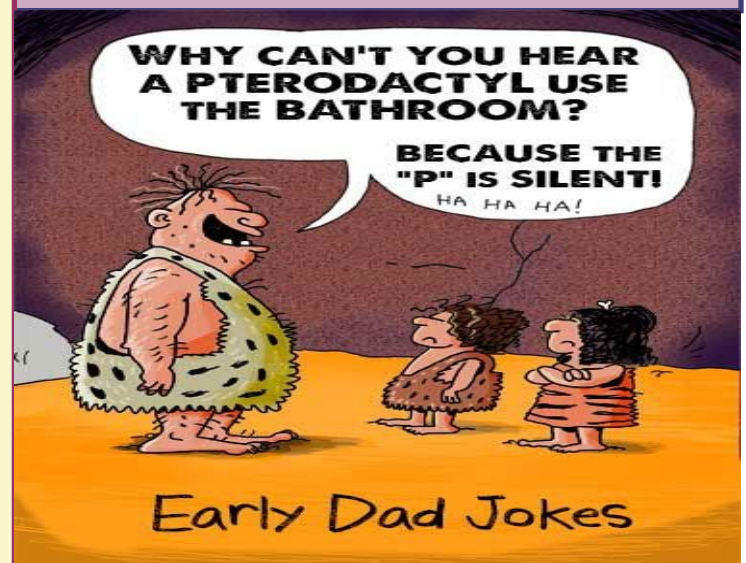
Barbara Manser

In Honor of Eileen Stepanian

Sandra Zieminski

In Honor of Betty Mann

Peter Moir



This Month's Important Events

National Migraine & Headache



June is Pride Month-LGBTQ+



National Safety Month



PTSD Awareness Month



The Pool Room is OPEN!

The Pool Room is open **limited** hours
Tues & Thurs 9am-12pm or reservation

Do you knit or crotchet?

Would you like to learn?

Join us for Knitting Group

Tuesdays at 1:00pm



Van Trip Transportation

If you would like to go shopping, please call Nick Fiorello to book a trip in advance. We will do our best to accommodate requests. A minimum of 4 business days is required to book. Thank you.

Veterans Services

Vet Crisis: 1-800-273-8255, press 1

Kevin Hunt, Veterans Services

KHunt@CityofNewburyport.com

Office: 978-462-2201

Fax: 978-462-2275

Newburyport Office: 331 High Street,
Newburyport, MA 01950



Jeremiah Murphy, Veterans Services

Amesbury Office: 978-388-8136

Fax: 978-388-8127/68

68 Elm Street, Amesbury, MA 01913

Feel free to contact either office! Senior citizen veterans or widow(er) of a veteran may be eligible for monthly financial assistance & reimbursement of medical expenses if your income is within certain guidelines. Note: house of residence & vehicles are not counted as assets.



Senator Barry Finegold



Dear Friends:

Happy June everyone!

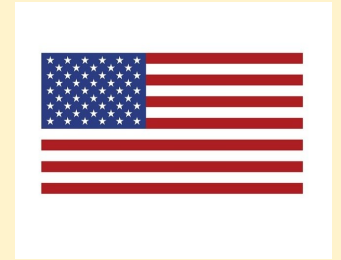
In the State House, spring means budget season. The House approved its budget for Fiscal Year 2024 late last week, and the Senate will be finalizing its version of the budget by the end of this month. Teamwork is a critical part of this process, and I am grateful for the continued partnership of my colleagues in the House. I'll be sure to keep you all updated as the process develops over the coming weeks.

I'm also looking forward to strengthening our Commonwealth's economic development in the coming weeks. The Senate will soon be taking up a tax relief package that will help keep Massachusetts competitive. Ensuring our tax codes are similar to those of other states will help signal that Massachusetts is open for business.

Please stay in touch and as always, if you need any help from my office or have any questions please feel free to reach me at

barry.finegold@masenate.gov or 617-722-1612.

**Yours in Service,
Barry**



Hello Veterans and Family Members:

**If you have any questions concerning your benefits, please call the Veteran Services Office at
978-388-8136.**

Jeremiah Murphy, Veterans Agent



SENIOR CENTER STAFF

Exec. Director: Brienne R. Walsh

Program Coordinator: Denise Gilman

Public Health Nurse: Danielle Cataldo, RN, MSN

Kitchen Chef: Judy Kimber Morrill

Outreach/ Human Services Coordinator: Bridget Batcheller, MSW, LC

Volunteer Coordinator: Sandra Blanchet

Transportation Coordinator, Van Driver: Nick Fiorello

Senior Aide & Van Driver :Paul Charron

Custodian/Van Driver: Wayne Jones

Food & Nutrition Director: Eileen Murray, CDM, CFPP

Food Pantry Coordinator (Volunteer): Candie Benjamin

Trips: Denise Gilman

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Chairwoman, Dave Vance, Vice Chairman, Candie Benjamin, Secretary, Maryann Mikson, Clerk MEMBERS: Betty Elliott, Kathy Devaney, Donna Doherty (Mtgs. On 4th Friday of month, 11am no meeting in Nov., Dec., July, & August, unless needed)

THE CENTERPIECE VOLUNTEERS

COLLATING & MAILING: Bill Gaylardo, Maryann

Mikson, Nancy Lind, Betty Elliott, Barbara Sheehan, Toni Quimby

FRIENDS of the Merrimac COA Officers: President: Ann Murphy Vice President: Joann Crenshaw Treasurer: Richard Fournier, Secretary: Pat Lundin Members: Any and all who have paid their dues and are welcome to attend meetings! (Generally the 1st Tuesday of the month, Please join us!)

**To find our newsletter online,
The Centerpiece for Senior Living, go to:**
<https://mycommunityonline.com/organization/merrimac-senior-center>



Massachusetts
Councils On Aging

Non-Profit Org
**U.S. POST-
AGE
PAID**
**PERMIT NO.
3**

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

Staff EMAILS:

If you have any questions, concerns, or need help, please call the senior center or email any of the following:

The COA Director, Brienne Walsh
bwalsh@townofmerrimac.com

Program Coordinator: Denise Gilman
dgilman@townofmerrimac.com

Outreach & Human Services Bridget Batcheller
bbatcheller@townofmerrimac.com

Food & Nutrition Director: Eileen Murray
emurray@townofmerrimac.com

Nursing Services: nurse@townofmerrimac.com

Transportation, Nick Fiorello:
nfiorello@townofmerrimac.com

***Celebrate Pride and Juneteenth
with us this month!***