

WINDSOR COA NEWS
November/December 2023

Our mission is to serve older Windsor adults by providing opportunities and resources that advance the quality of life in a rural community.

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs provides financial support for this COA publication

MORE BREAKING NEWS!

As we wrote in our last issue, Windsor is the newest community to be included in the "Hilltown Driver Pool" transportation program operated by the Hilltown CDC (Community Development Corp.).

Three residents are in the process of receiving the necessary authorizations to become official members of the "Hilltown Driver Pool" who will bring local senior residents for groceries, to doctor and other necessary medical and other professional appointments.

Rides can be arranged by calling Ed Pelletier, dispatcher at 413-296-4232 between 8:15 and 9:45 AM weekdays. You can also leave a message. Rides must be scheduled well in advance, so call even a month before your appointment. Same day requests cannot be accommodated, and destinations should be within a 40 mile radius from the rider's home.

Questions? You can call Sue Jacobs at 413-446-4295 or 413-684-3191.

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**November Coffee and Workshop**

November 8<sup>th</sup> will be our next Community Coffee beginning at 10 AM. Come for coffee, tea, bagels, fresh fruit, baked goodies and great conversation.

This will be followed at 11:00 with a presentation by Linda Puzan, LICSW who is a Dementia Coach and Wellness Coordinator for LifePath in Greenfield.

Caring for someone with dementia has its unique challenges. Caregivers cannot control the disease, but you can gain skills to help manage the stress and even find joy in caring for your loved one. Linda will help us understand the progression of Alzheimer's and other types of dementia and the impact the diagnosis can have for the whole family.

Linda will be offering tips on handling changes in behavior and other difficult dementia issues; strategies for communicating, and suggestions to help cope with the progression of the disease. Lunch will be served following her presentation.

As always, please let us know if you plan to attend one or both events by calling or texting Jessica at 413-329-4364 by Monday of that week so we have enough food.

***Just for chuckles (or groans...)  
I want to buy one of those reversible jackets to see how it turns out.***

**Reminder....**

It's Fuel Assistance time. Jessica is available to assist Windsor residents with help in applying or renewing for the program. Please contact her to set up an appointment.

## Winter Safety Tips for Elders

*Provided by COA Board Member, Jean Wagner*

With winter quickly approaching, your COA wants to provide you with some tips to keep safe and healthy during the coming months.

Preparation for winter is key. Make sure your home is insulated. If you heat with wood, make sure your chimney/flue is inspected and cleaned yearly. Make sure your smoke detectors are working and that the batteries are changed twice a year. Battery-operated carbon monoxide detectors are also highly recommended.

Prepare for power outages. If you have a generator, make sure it is operable. Keep a supply of candles, battery operated lanterns and flashlights. Also, keep a supply of water, preferably in glass containers. Have non-perishable food on hand. Make sure your cell phone is completely charged. Consider setting up a group-text with your neighbors so everyone nearby can check on one another and can help each other out.

Reduced body fat, less efficient circulation and slower metabolism come with aging. The more prolonged and severe the cold, the harder it is for the body to maintain a healthy internal temperature. Elders therefore have a higher risk of developing hypothermia and frostbite. Stay inside and keep your thermostat at 68-70 degrees. If you do go outside, be sure to dress in layers, covering all exposed body parts.

More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling. Take extreme caution when walking outside. Wear ice cleats on your boots and use a ski pole (s) or cane for stabilization. Keep a supply of sand or cat litter to treat icy areas.

Vitamin D deficiency can occur due to lack of sunlight. Eat foods high in Vitamin D such as milk, grains, tuna, salmon and cheese.

Stay hydrated. Our bodies have a 40% reduced thirst response in the winter because our blood vessels constrict, which helps the body conserve heat. Drink plenty of water!

Use extreme caution when shoveling. If you need to, check with your doctor to make sure your health conditions don't prohibit shoveling. If you are allowed, go very slowly and push the snow instead of lifting it.

Due to the cold, short days and isolation, winter can lead to depression for many people. One way to help with this is to come to the monthly Community Coffee events. Come meet new friends, enjoy coffee and baked goods. You are not alone!

Lastly, we are very lucky to have our elder outreach person, Jessica Buoymaster. She is available to answer questions, help you get through challenges and direct you to resources you need. Her phone number is 413-329-4364.

## Transportation for Our Vets

*Provided by COA Board Member, Alan Zawistowski*

Soldier On and the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority have partnered to provide transportation to veterans and their families. Transportation is available M-F from 8 AM to 5 OM to the VA Medical Centers at Leeds, MA and Albany, NY, the Pittsfield Outpatient Clinic, medical appointments, work, education and shopping. Veterans and their families in need of transportation can contact the Veterans Families Transportation Call Center at (413) 418-4300 or toll free at (855) 484-8743.

*We wish you all a happy,  
healthy and safe holiday season.*