January-February 2021

Dear Seniors:

Happy New Year! It is nice to say goodbye to 2020 since everyone has gone through so much this past year. We are looking forward to having a vaccine so we will be able to get back to some type of normal.

An exciting venture will begin this month. The four Cape Ann Councils on Aging (Rockport, Gloucester, Manchester, Essex) and SeniorCare have formed a coalition with 1623 Studios on local cable television station 67. We will be providing senior programming for this channel. Some of the programs they will be showing are strength & balance, yoga, entertainment, art instruction, cooking shows, and more. We hope to provide you with programming that you will enjoy and take part in.

Together with CATA, the Senior Center is now providing free taxi service to non-COVID medical appointments, the grocery store, the food pantry, meal delivery, and more. We still need to take the many precautions that the CDC advises. The senior center still has cloth masks available if you are in need. Please call us and we will see that you get one.

Take care, stay well, stay connected with family, friends, and neighbors via telephone, computer or on social media. We miss everyone.

Sincerely,

Diane Bertolino

Free Rides

Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) has received a COVID-19 Taxi Grant that will provide free rides to Rockport residents. You will need to call the Rockport Senior Center, 978-546-2573 at least 48 hours in advance and we will schedule the ride.

Eligible trip purposes would be for meal deliveries, food pantry delivery, deliveries of prescriptions, transportation needs of the homeless, out of town, non-COVID related non-emergency medical transportation, groceries and other essential shopping trips. People on Mass Health will need to make arrangements with CATA (978-283-7196) using a PT-1 form for medical transportations.
Try a Grab & Go Lunch
SeniorCare is providing take out lunches to the Rockport seniors. Seniors (age 60+) drive to the senior center’s parking lot and can pick up a lunch on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Seniors must make a reservation at least 24 hours in advance or sooner to reserve a meal by calling Michelle, 978-546-5027. Call if you would like a monthly menu sent to you or email pbertolino@rockportma.gov. Pick up time is 11:00AM. At this time, no one is allowed inside the building. Please wait by the side door. All participants should wear a mask and be prepared to observe appropriate social distancing.

Meals on Wheels
Home delivered meals are available to any Rockport senior who feels it would be helpful to them. If you would like to be added to the program, please call SeniorCare, 978-281-1750 and ask for Information & Referral.

CATA Schedule
Dial-A-Ride, Monday through Friday, service is offered from Rockport to Gloucester. Pick up in Rockport starts around 9AM and the latest pickup to return home is 2PM. If it is an appointment, the appointment should not be scheduled before 9:30AM.

Tuesdays are the Grocery Shoppers Shuttle, pickups start at 11:15AM and return at 1:15PM. They will take you to either Eastern Avenue Shaw’s, Stop & Shop or Market Basket.

Dialysis service is offered to the Beverly Dialysis Clinic on Monday through Saturday for customers with first or second shift treatment times. Call CATA, 978-283-7916 for more information.

Action Inc. Offers New Rental and Mortgage Assistance
Action Inc. has new short-term rental and mortgage assistance available for renters and homeowners who have recently lost their jobs, been furloughed, or lost significant income due to COVID-19. If you need assistance, please call, 978-282-1000 to complete a short intake and schedule an appointment with one of their client services advocates. If you are approved, you may receive assistance with back or future rent or mortgage payments, based on your current income.

Action Inc. Fuel Assistance
This free, no-cost program is available to anyone who meets eligibility guidelines. Action, Inc. also will work with you to determine your eligibility for discounts on your gas, oil, electricity and phone bills. Call 978-281-3900 to see if you qualify. The income guidelines for 1 person is $39,105.00 and 2 people are $51,137.00. The complete guideline list is available online or by calling Action.

The Open Door Food Pantry
The Open Door is safely open for in-pantry shopping only on Tuesdays & Wednesday, by appointment from 10AM-4:30PM. Screening questions, temperature taking, social distancing and masks are required.

You can book online at FOODPANTRY.org or call 978-283-6776. Curbside distribution of prepacked bags of groceries will still be available Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10AM to 5PM.
A Message from Our Congressman:

Seasons Greetings!

No matter what holiday you celebrate, I hope you can find a way to meaningfully connect with your family and friends that’s safe.

Many people are also in need of help from the federal government right now, whether it’s because their social security checks or a tax return they were expecting didn’t come, they have a question about Medicare options for the year ahead or they want the latest information on the pandemic. If you have questions about government benefits or want more information, call us at (978)531-1669 or send me a message online at https://moulton.house.gov/contact

We’re pretty good at getting results: my team and I are proud to have earned a 2020 Democracy Award from the Congressional Management Foundation for running the best constituent service operation in the United States Congress. We also surpassed the $3 million mark for returning money to constituents in August of this year. The sum represents years of work on behalf of constituents who have contacted the office when federal agencies that owed them money failed to deliver. The top two things we help people with is securing social security benefits and access to veterans benefits, but there’s a lot we can do to help with housing, heating your home, and of course turning your ideas into legislation.

This year in Washington, we also accomplished two of my three priorities for breaking the stigmas that prevent people from getting mental health care. In October, my bill to make 988 the national number for the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Hotline was signed into law. I worked with partners in the House and Senate to steer the bill across the finish line. I’ve also started talking about my own experience with post traumatic stress, because I think when we talk about these things, it makes it easier for other people to get help too.

I’m also trying to hold up good examples of people serving our communities, so that more people step up and serve. I recognized Lynn’s Carlos Prudencio, a senior in High School, with the Peter J. Gomes Service Award. I created the award in 2016 in memory of Rev. Peter J. Gomes, my mentor and the minister of Harvard’s Memorial Church. Carlos has been volunteering to help distribute meals to families in need during the pandemic, advocates for a human rights curriculum in local schools, and is a local leader in the Black Lives Matter movement.

On Veteran’s Day, I continued the annual tradition of Veterans Town Halls to provide a forum for veterans to share the pride, grief, or quiet appreciation of life that war bestowed upon them and for non-veterans to listen and to learn. If you couldn’t join us on Veteran’s Day, you can watch Veterans Town Hall on Facebook.

That’s just a little bit about what we are doing every day. It’s an honor to serve and represent you in Congress. Please give us a call, send us an email or write us a letter if we can help you.

Sincerely,

SETH MOULTON

Member of Congress
**Exercise & Physical Activity**
Deciding to become physically active is one of the best things you can do for your health. Exercise and physical activity are not only great for your mental and physical health, but they can help keep you independent as you age. According to Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans you should do at least 150 minutes (2 1/2 hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, like brisk walking or fast dancing. If you prefer vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (like running), aim for at least 75 minutes a week. Be active at least three days a week.
Do muscle-strengthening activities, like lifting weights or doing sit-ups, at least two days a week.

**Should You Exercise with Osteoarthritis**
Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis among older people. It occurs when cartilage, the tissue that cushions the ends of the bones within the joints, breaks down and wears away. For people with arthritis, exercise can reduce joint pain and stiffness. It can also help with losing weight, which reduces stress on the joints.
Try the different types of exercise below to help relieve symptoms of arthritis. Keep in mind that you may need to avoid some types of activity when joints are swollen or inflamed. Flexibility exercises, such as upper and lower-body stretching and tai chi, can help keep joints moving, relieve stiffness, and give you more freedom of movement for everyday activities.
Strengthening exercises, such as overhead arm raises, will help you maintain or add to your muscle strength to support and protect your joints.
Endurance exercises make the heart and arteries healthier and may lessen swelling in some joints. Try activities that don’t require putting a lot of weight on your joints, such as swimming and biking.

**Benefits Checkup**
Benefits Checkup is an online tool that screens your eligibility for over 2,500 federal, state and private benefits programs that are available. These programs include medications, health care, income assistance, food & nutrition, housing and utilities, tax relief & more, such as food stamps and fuel assistance. You can apply for many of the programs online or you can print the application form.
Go to [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org) to begin the process. When you put in your information, this program will let you know what you are eligible for.

**Address & email Change**
If your contact information has changed, please let us know. We want to keep our information current. Call us, 978-546-2573 or email the information to pbertolino@rockportma.gov

**Free Used Medical Equipment**
The American Legion Hall in Rockport stores donated, used medical equipment such as walkers, wheelchairs, shower seats, and canes. Call Larry Story, 978-546-3726 if you are in need of any of these items.

**Masks**
Masks are still available that were generously donated to the senior center. You can call the senior center and we will leave them outside by the door for you.
Memorial Gifts Made to “Friends of the Rockport COA”

- David & Enid Wise
- In Memory of Margaret Eddy
- Judy Cooney
- In Memory of Don Charest
- Judy Harris
- In Honor of Diane & Paula Bertolino

Donations were received from:

- Susan Herron
- William Braunlich
- Barbara Anderson
- Charles & Joanne Levin
- Esther Joyce
- Nancy Robb

Attorney Advice and Estate Planning
The first Thursday of each month, Troy Sullivan, an estate planning and probate attorney will discuss your legal concerns by phone appointment only. He can help guide you in the right direction. 15 minute consults, 9:30-11AM, by appointment. Call the Senior Center for an appointment, 978-546-2573.

Open Door Food Pickup
The COA, along with the Open Door and SeniorCare will have groceries available for pickup outside the Senior Center on Wednesday, January 6th and February 3rd at 10AM. This income eligible, 60+ program offers free, fresh fruits and vegetables, plus an assortment of canned goods. Senior Housing is excluded because you already receive this at your site. Call to sign up, 978-546-2573.

USDA Meat Distribution
SeniorCare and the COA are working together to distribute ten pound boxes of cheese and assorted frozen, cooked meats. Call the Senior Center if you are interested, call 978-546-2573.

Zoom Presentations
Robin Putman, Events & Outreach Manager from the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, will present the two following zoom presentations.

Shopping Rights
Tuesday, January 19th, 1-2PM. This online presentation will include information about expressed & implied warranties, return policies, defective merchandise, pricing discrepancies, and shopping online, through the mail or television. Join zoom meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85950828692

Home Improvement Contractors
Monday, February 22nd, 1-2PM. This online presentation will be about home improvement contractors. It will cover registration of contractors, what to do about complaints, arbitration, and the guaranty fund. Join zoom meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89050615604

Meditation with Rockport COA
Wednesday, January 27th, 10:30AM You are invited to a zoom webinar. Sponsored by Element Care. Register in advance for this webinar: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2IpY_ZLeQoCfl5PTsrMGNQ

Arthritis Exercise Class
Tuesday, February 9th, 10AM An exercise class geared towards pain management of arthritis to increase range of motion, and maintain ability to do activity of daily living. Sponsored by Element Care Register in advance for this webinar: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MLutjok1Rle56DqcJ30ffw
Donations
We welcome all donations. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation in memory or in honor of someone, or a bequest, please make checks payable to the Friends of Rockport COA.

Name ___________________________________________ $______.____
Address ____________________________________________Town________________
State______ Zip__________

Please circle: In Memory or in Honor of _______________________________
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