



Cheshire Chatter

September / October 2021



Cheshire Council on Aging P.O. Box 507, Cheshire, MA 01225

photo by Elaine Daniels

Carole's Thought's

With so much uneasiness happening in the world, it is a pleasure to focus on the Cheshire COA Center for Active Living and the team that dwells on being positive, who offer a positive-friendly-upbeat environment and activities that are fun and lighthearted.

The Cheshire COA Center for Active Living reopened its doors with welcoming arms to Cheshire folks who enjoy a hot meal three days a week. Grab n' Go is offered daily and indoor eating is offered on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Our weekly statistics for lunches average 100-125, and for socializing I rate us at - Excellent.

During July and August, we offered sessions in Wreath Making, Card Making, Intuitive Painting and Bracelet Making. The team attended the Cheshire Community Block Party and Cruise Night. Our raffles were a hit with many tickets sold. The hamburgers were delicious and checking out 159 unique classic cars was fun. I loved the black and white 1955 Corvette!

On Saturday, August 21, 2021, twenty-five residents attended the play, "Sister Sorry" at the Barrington Stage in Pittsfield. We were fortunate to have eight sponsored tickets by The Friends and 17 tickets sponsored by the Northern Berkshire Cultural Arts Council. Van service was provided by John B. and it was a theatre experience event addressing today's times.

Betty King is always busy addressing cards and August had 92 birthday cards mailed.

Shuffleboard groups are growing as well as folks borrowing the Pickle Ball equipment. Besides three bicycles, soon to arrive will be a tricycle. I hope you will wave to me when you see me pedaling. It's my favorite color – red!

Our raised gardens produced great tomatoes, peppers, basil, eggplant, and squash. It's almost time to plant fall flowers – if the rain ever stops.

Please consider getting the Covid-19 vaccine, wear masks, keep a safe distance as I am hopeful in continuing to offer on-site services to our residents and to encourage folks to see the big WELCOME

sign and to stop in to meet me and the team. New activities are posted on our Face Book page or you can check out our event schedule at the center.

If you have a neighbor, friend, family member who lives alone please guide them in calling me at 743-9719 as there are many services and resources available that they may be eligible for.

We also provide wellness calls. It's not a robo call, it's me calling to say "Hi – how are you?"

Sometimes it is just that one call that makes a person's day because someone cared.

Let's talk my friend.

Cheshire's COA Center for Active Living cares...

Carole

Wreath Making

Led by Nancy Boyer, 9 Cheshire women took part in an afternoon of wreath making at the Cheshire Senior Center for Active living on July 6th. The starting base of the wreaths were made of either straw or grape vines and were chosen by each participant. Then flowers with colors of their choosing along with greens were attached. All 9 wreaths came out exquisite to show what can be done when craft making supplies meet talent meets good friendship and laughter. In fact it was so much fun that the COA plans to have another wreath making event this fall. Sounds interesting? Now's the time to call Carole @ 743-9719 and sign up for the event. There is a \$5.00 fee which includes all materials and instruction.



Nonagenarian Party

On July 9, 2021, the Friends of the Cheshire Council on Aging held a party for the nonagenarians (persons 90 years of age or older) of Cheshire. The party was held at Basswater Grill and attended by 27 people, including ten nonagenarians, their companions and members of the Council on Aging. Nonagenarians in attendance were: Charles (Cheeso) Massaconi, Dorothy Toporowski, Michael (Mickey) Berti, Anna Farnam, Emil Kittler, Inez Jepson, Rita Gordon, George Beckwith, Sr., Kendall Sisson, Jr., and Raymond Moffett. Attendees were offered a choice of filet of sole, beef tips or chicken francais, accompanied by a fresh fruit salad and chocolate mousse. The tables were adorned with a beautiful fresh flower display of yellow daisies and baby's breath assembled by Lynda Bianchi. No birthday lunch is complete without cake and a delicious one was provided by the Friends of the CCOA from Market 32 in Pittsfield. The cake was ceremoniously cut by the eldest attendee, Charles "Cheeso" Massaconi.



Many thanks to all who made this party so successful, including Ed Bassi and the staff of Basswater Grill, Lynda Bianchi and the Friends of the Cheshire Council on Aging.

The following is from a Facebook post By Mark Bissailon of Wiater Farm in Cheshire Harbor

Bachoo remembers Mr. Zepka and His Bees

October 7, 2020 ·



My Bachoo told me this story many years ago about Mr. Zepka the beekeeper from Adams. I hope you enjoy.

Bee Happy. The story of the bees.

When I was a little boy I would love summer because my Mom would buy me a Butterfly net at Woolworth every summer or if they ran out she would make me one from some stockings a coat hanger and a stick, I was such a little monster when it came to catching things like frogs mice, bugs or fish. And I had always had to bring them into the house to show Bachoo. She must thought here we go again what does this kid have now. It made me so happy that she would have such a big smile on her face when I walked in to her room welcoming me with open arms.

There was this time I brought a chicken in and it got lose but no problem she just grabbed it by the feet and said, "Here you go Marek you such a lucky boy." And I was being part of a family who loved and cared for each other so much as we were. You could feel every time you walked in to the door.

I would run all over the farm catching all kinds of bugs, bees and butterfly's. I would put them in a jar and proudly bring them into Bachoo's room to show them off. She would always give the same answer in her strong broken English "Marek let them go they only live for a short time." I would do what she said, You could never not do it what Bachoo told you to do her word was law,

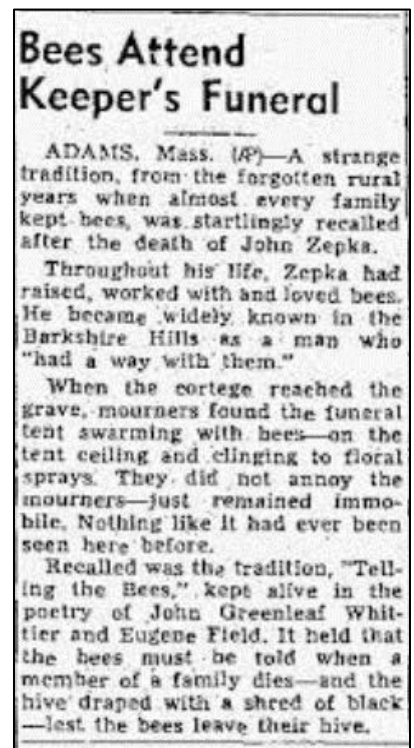
Then she would go on to tell me the story of Mr. Zepka and his bees. She said Mr Zepka was a bee keeper in Adams on Victory Street you know that Street it is right off Summer Street and it was called George St but they changed the name after the War to Victory Street, How appropriate considering all the family's on that Street that had boys fighting the War. Sorry I took a wrong turn.

She went on to say Mr Zepka had many hives and was often seen tending those hives without a covering, She said the bees would never sting him and there was always plenty of honey. Our Grandfather traded some chickens or moonshine for some of that honey so needless to say they were friends. Like Mom always said "Polish people take care of Polish People".

So in 1956 he died and our grandparents attended the Mass at St Stanislaus Church and then processed to the Cemetery. While standing there while the priest was talking a large swam of bees landed on the coffin, Bachoo said they were all over the place and they were not angry they came to say goodbye to Mr Zepka. As quickly as they came they left, You can go see where it happened on his tomb stone there are carvings of bees.

I never truly believed this until I found this information one day online. So the story that Bachoo told me years ago was confirmed by the story below. And It is good to know that our family was part of that story.

This year I began raising bees again and I hope many many years from now those bees show me as much love as those bees in the past showed Mr Zepka, And some day you want to see where the event occurred. I will show just where it happened the place where the bees showed their respect.



Intuitive Painting with Life Coach, Viktoría Seavey



Friday afternoons are usually a time to get prepared for family activities and weekend getaways. On Friday, July 30, 2021 the Cheshire COA Center for Active Living offered a 2 hour workshop in taking time for oneself to explore paints, colors, and to put inner expressions and feelings on paper. It was a time for expression with no right or wrong way of completing the finished art.

The group of 15 women started the program with deep breathing, relaxing the body, and words of encouragement with soothing background music. While exploring colors, you could feel the relaxation taking place as the noise level was only beautiful piano music.

Each person shared their experience, and all realized that it is important to take the time to take care of their well-being and to join

fun activities so the mind can relax, defuse anxiety, and encourage laughter, inner joy, and peace of mind. The afternoon closed with tea and homemade cake by Julie Dzbenski and a fruit delight by Betty King. Please check out Viktoría's website: viktoriaseavey.com. Call Carole if you would like to join another class of Viktoría's. (413) 743-9719



Senior Tech Day - Phones

On Saturday morning July 24th a number of Cheshire residents took advantage of the tech savvy volunteers assembled at the Cheshire COA Center For Active Living to resolve cell phone issues they were having. Some of the issues addressed were not being able to access apps' sign in screens, flip phone issues, cell phone photo quality concerns and adding and deleting contacts as well as other problems. The Cheshire COA thanks all the volunteers that shared their tech advice and hope to have them back again later in the fall for this popular program.



New Raised Gardens



Snapper Sanctuary

By T.F. Williamson



People walking down Railroad Street or along the Rail Trail in Cheshire may catch sight of them on a warm sunny day as they bask in the sunshine. Most know the area as “the swamp” but to the owners of the property it’s Snapper Sanctuary, where these turtles have lived for as long as Mr. Williamson can remember.

Wikipedia will tell you that they reach maturity at 8 to 10 years but actually can live 40 to 100 years. The snapping turtles are omnivores eating both vegetation and animals including frogs, insects, crayfish, dead rodents, fish, ducks etc. Every year the females make an arduous and perilous journey to lay eggs and bury them in just the right soft spot. Crossing the road is especially dangerous for them. Motorists should use caution and can help them to cross by carefully moving them to safety in the direction they are heading. The female will lay her egg in “caches”, maybe five of these, with 5-20 eggs in each. The time varies according to weather conditions, usually June-July, but sometimes as late as November, incubating up to 6 months. Egg and hatchling survival is not guaranteed since there are many predators to which they can fall victim.

How did they come to choose that spot to call home? A little history of that area will reveal it was not always a swamp. Because there’s a small spring that seeps into the spot, it was turned into a holding pond for the long gone Grist Mill further down Railroad Street. A number of other old holding ponds may be seen along that section of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail that were used for the grist mill back in the day.

The holding ponds have become wetland and are habitat for a variety of animals, birds and of course, turtles. Snapper Sanctuary was partially filled in and it was even at one time the town dumping site. All the trees and foliage that are seen today were not there back then and Mr. Williamson remembers skating with neighborhood friends on the pond that formed there because of the spring that even now continues to feed it.

Trees and vegetation have taken root there and a variety of birds and animals as well as the turtles have come to call Snapper Sanctuary home. At some point it was declared a wetland and is now protected from further development.

Now back to the question: why Snapper Sanctuary? The answer is while it may not appear to be such, it is live water. In the winter a good part of the pond freezes over but the spring keeps it partly open and that’s where the turtles go to hibernate. While they CAN stay submerged up to six months without coming up for oxygen, this can be detrimental to the turtle. At Snapper Sanctuary they can break the surface, refresh their oxygen supply and retreat to the safety of the bottom waters once more. They’ve been seen in the spring season moving from the spring-side of the swamp to the channel side.

Here’s hoping they have many more years in the Snapper Sanctuary. As long as the water flows and the wildlife continues to cohabit there, the snappers should be just fine.



Hatchlings: They don’t immediately erupt after hatching. They have their first meal – the shell from which they came. When they emerge from the cache they are about the size of a quarter. Their internal senses send them in the direction of water.



Seeking Refuge: Egg laying day is usually on a very hot day. They come out early and spend the day traveling a route that they have used for years. Sometimes they hit obstacles. The year this picture was taken, a neighbor had built a new fence. She seemed to be a little discombobulated and in the heat of the day took refuge from the sun next to a rain barrel. She has since learned a new route. That year, she laid a cache in the writer’s garden, who obliged her by opening the gate

and letting her into the soft soil.

Cheshire COA Center for Active Living (Senior / Community Center)

COA Activities

September

September	1	11:15am	Veteran's Agent, Steve Roy
September	4	11am-noon	Cheshire Pantry
September	10	12pm-1:30pm	Surprise Craft Project
September	16	by Appointment	Foot Clinic
September	17	1pm-2pm	Let's Talk Anxiety with Carole
September	20	12:30pm-	Cheshire Prisoners of War Camps By: Barry Emery, Town Historian
September	28	12:15pm-2pm	Making Healthy Snacks

October

October	2	11am-noon	Cheshire Pantry
October	6	Following Lunch	Ice Cream Social
October	14	12:30pm	Apple Picking
October	22	12:30pm-1pm	Meditation

Is there a presentation, craft, or activity you would like to have offered at the COA? Please contact Carole at (413) 743-9719. The October calendar is open for suggestions.

New! Shuffleboard

Did you know that the Cheshire COA has revived the Shuffleboard Courts on the south side of the Cheshire Senior Center for Active Living? There has been anywhere from 10 to 14 people playing on Monday nights at 6 pm. The rules are easy to grasp and play regardless of your age or size. No need to bend down or run around a court, so it might be just the thing for you. Get some fresh air, enjoy the company of your friends in a relaxed atmosphere. Of course, the game is a little strategic and can be taken seriously by teams of players that have a competitive streak. If you would just like to watch, we have chairs and also two beautiful green park style benches purchased by Sandy and Joe Sloane in memory of Sandy's parents Victor and Ginger Lancia who also enjoyed playing shuffleboard at the Center in years gone by. So see, come join us for shuffleboard and be part of an old Cheshire Tradition.

New! Pickleball

Pickleball equipment which include portable nets, paddles and balls can be borrowed for use by townspeople from the COA. Places to play include the concrete pad at the school, the newly proposed court to be located at the northwest corner of St Mary's parking lot or maybe even your own driveway if you have a large enough flat area. Pickleball combines the elements of badminton, ping pong and tennis that can be played by two or four people on a court smaller than a traditional tennis court. The solid paddles are lightweight, and the ball resembles the size of a wiffle ball with multiple holes.

New! Bicycles

The COA has added to its fleet of Easy Board Biria bikes an adult 3 wheel bike made by Sun. The 7 speed adult tricycle has disk back brakes as well as a large carry basket. Its low step frame makes it easy to get on and off plus a big comfy seat. So if you miss taking bike rides because you feel you may be a bit unsteady this bike may be for you. Take it for a spin in our parking lot.



CHP Mobile Health Van

The CHP medical van is scheduled for Cheshire once a month. Please follow our Facebook page for dates and times. If you need any non-emergency medical attention or have medical questions stop by and ask the CHP Mobile Health Unit staff. No appointments needed and open to anyone. You may also call Carole with any questions at the COA office @ 413-743-9719



Cheshire COA Van

The COA Cheshire Center for Active Living van is available Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Please call 24 hours before to schedule a ride. A \$2.00 donation is appreciated. Call: (413) 446-2559.



The Café at 119 School Street, Cheshire - Hot Lunch for Seniors -

The Elder Services lunches will be served Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays inside at 11:30am with the Grab n Go meals to continue five days a week if there is a need. To reserve your meal, call 743-9719 at least 24 hours in advance. Suggested Meal Donation of \$2.00 for those 60 and over.

Cheshire Pantry In collaboration with the Cheshire Fire Department-

The Pantry is located at the Cheshire Community / Senior Center and is open to Cheshire residents of any age on the first Saturday of the month from 11am to noon. Emergency food is also available by calling the Center at 743-9719. Monetary donations and nonperishable food, toiletries and paper goods may be left at the Center any Monday through Thursday 9 till 1 PM. I Love Cheshire t shirts with the Food Pantry logo are being sold as a fund raiser.

When notified of a need, a hearty food bag is delivered. This is available by calling 413-743-9719. If emergency assistance is needed call 413-329-2212.

Delivery is available for those isolated or without transportation.

Brown Bag – Free paper bag of food available on Friday, September 24th and Friday, October 22nd between 1 and 2 pm. Contact Carole to sign up.

Morning Exercise - 9am -10am Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

Foot Clinic - The Foot Clinic will be scheduled for September 16th. Sorry, no walk-ins - appointments only. Held inside the Center. Call Carole @ 413-743-9719 to schedule an appointment and for protocol. There is a fee for this clinic.

Quilting - Quilting is on the second and fourth Thursday of the month, 1pm-3pm led by Betty King.

Cheshire Senior Club - Club meets every Wednesday at 12:30 pm and has resumed its monthly restaurant outings.

The **Blood Pressure Readings**, and the **Community Book Club** are on hold.

Community Notes

Town of Cheshire - The Cheshire Block Party and Cruise Night came back roaring into town after a



year's hiatus because of Covid. The COA had a tent at both of these events that was well attended by townspeople. It was a great chance for the COA to gain exposure and tell people about our programs. We appreciate all the support given to us there. It was our pleasure to be part of a Cheshire summertime tradition.

Historical Commission - The Commission has been invited to view a collection of historical artifacts of local importance. We are always eager to add to the knowledge of our area. We will report on our findings in future issues.

Cheshire Ladies' Reading Club – The Cheshire Ladies Reading Club plans to begin its fall biweekly Thursday meetings at the Cheshire Center for Active Living in September. Club members have been meticulously tending the flowers in the horse trough in front of the town hall since the spring planting. If you would be interested in attending a meeting or even joining the club, please contact its president Harriet Tiechert @ 743-1518.

Cheshire Lions Club - INTERESTED IN GIVING BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY? The Cheshire Lions Club is seeking new members. We are a service organization that gives back to the community. We meet the second Wednesday of the month at the Basswater Grill in Cheshire at 6 p.m. If you are interested in further information or joining us for a meeting, please contact Ed St. John at 743-5603 or 743-0990 or email Ed at estjohn1@roadrunner.com.

Become a Friend of the Cheshire COA

You might have heard of the Friends but wondered just what they do for us.

Through the COA, the Friends support our programs and activities financially in areas where the town or available grants do not.

In the past few months they have made a generous gift to the Cheshire Pantry, underwrote the cost of the ice cream vouchers given to children who participated at the Flag Day Ceremony, were instrumental in deferring part of the cost of the many gift cards for Volunteer Appreciation Month, purchased winter coats for children and adults and purchased additional tickets for seniors to go to a play at Barrington Stage beyond what a grant had paid for. The Friends also supply support in the planning and financial aid for other social, educational, cultural activities as well as transportation to some of these events as the need arises.

Please consider becoming a member of the Friends by sending a \$10 check made out to the Friends of the Cheshire COA for the annual dues to Ed St John, 4 Edmunds Street Unit N101, Adams, MA 01220

Resources and Contacts

COA Board Members

Gene Gebarowski, Chair 413-743-2177

Robert Balawender 413-743-3356

John Bianchi 413-743-5723

Carol Francesconi 413-743-5028

Mal Gwozdz 413-743-9356

Barbara Proper 413-743-4945

Peter Traub 413-743-3496

Director

Carole Hilderbrand 413-743-9719 or 413-329- 2212

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Car, Adams COA

Medical Appointments 413-743-8333

Friends of Cheshire COA

Ed and Pam St. John estjohn1@roadrunner.com

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Logo for Bass Water Grill (BWG) featuring a stylized fish and the text 'Bass Water Grill BWG'. Below the logo is the address '287 South State Road' and 'Casual Dining & Banquets'.

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