

THE Cheshire Chatter

Cheshire Council on Aging PO Box 507 • Cheshire, MA 01225

January / February • 2025

Record No. of Votes Cast in Cheshire for Presidential Election

By Whitney Flynn

Happy winter everyone!

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the Town's amazing Election Officials for their outstanding performance during one of the busiest election seasons we've ever had in Cheshire.

Despite the heightened political environment, the November 5th, 2024 Presidential Election had a record 1954 votes cast, and concluded without an issue. I attribute this success to the wonderful community members that make up Cheshire, as well as the skilled election workers we have here. I sincerely appreciate the continued dedication and experience of our election team; as the rules of elections are ever changing, requiring more training, preparation, and scrutiny than ever before. Cheshire is lucky to have the top-notch services of Alison Warner, Timothy Garner, Mary Ellen Baker, Neil Baker, Celia Ferro, Denise Gregoire, Sharon Chalmers, Thomas Chalmers, Lorraine Faucher, Ann Mange, Judy Serafin, Wendy Warner, Doreen Aleshevich, Robert Belini, Carol Daniels, Elizabeth King, Lora McGrath, and Marcus Lvon.

As a new Clerk, I continue to be inspired by their knowledge, patience, kindness, professionalism, and good nature (mixed with a bit of fun too!). May these



Shown above: The last Election Results tape pulled by Town Clerk, Christine Emerson (left), after 30 years of service. Assisting her is Alison Warner and long time election official Carol Daniels.

invaluable individuals continue to uphold the function and integrity of our elections for many years to come!

My heartfelt exclamation of gratitude goes out to the previous Town Clerk, Christine Emerson, for helping immensely with every question presented, and for her gracious contribution to this office; remarkably serving 30 years as Town Clerk. Now retired, Chris continues to be an invaluable resource to me, and this Town, with her immense knowledge and experience; and for this grace, I am eternally grateful. I'm still in awe of all that she was able to accomplish in this office and am honored by the training and experience she continues to provide. Cheshire is truly blessed.

Thank you all for being such valuable assets to this Town, it means more than words can express!

If anyone is interested in becoming an Election Official, please contact Town Clerk, Whitney Flynn @ (413)743-1690 X104 or townclerk@cheshire-ma.gov

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Brenda's Thoughts

Wow! Another year in the history books! Here's hoping everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a great start to the New Year!

There are a couple of crafting events lined up at the COA Senior Center: a snowman hat center piece on January 22nd and a Valentine candy jar on February 5th, just in time for Valentine's Day. So, if anyone is interested in either or both, call to get on the list!

We had a huge turnout for the Kissing Ball craft. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and came away with a lovely decoration for the holidays.



Again this year, the COA hosted the Cocoa and Cookies station at the opening night of the Festival of Trees at the Cheshire Community House. Hopefully, you were able to make it to the showing sometime during the holidays. In case you missed it, here

is a picture of the COA Silver and Gold Tree.

May you have many blessing in this New Year!



COA Board Members
Robert Balawender413.743.3356

don board Members	
Robert Balawender	413.743.3356
John Bianchi	413.743.5723
Carol Francesconi	413.743.5028
Mal Gwozdz	413.743.9356
Val Tyska	413.743.3802
Barbara Proper	413.743.4945
Peter Traub	413.743.3496
Alternate Board Members	
Suzanne Boyle	413.743.5187

D 10	
Doreen Aleshevich .	 413.446.8212
Suzanne Boyle	 413./43.518/

Resources and Contacts

Brenda Caufield	413.743.9719
Director	
7.7 m	412 446 2550

Van Transport......413.446.2559
Car transport (Adams COA)413.743.8333
Medical appointments

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Please let our advertisers know that you appreciate their support of the Cheshire Council on Aging whenever you visit their establishments.



Nothing better than hot cocoa and cookies after a brisk hayride to the town tree lighting! Thanks ladies for volunteering your time!



What's in Store at the Cheshire Library for the New Year

By Jennifer Luitjiens, Library Director

Happy New Year from your friends at the library!

Did you set any goals or make any resolutions for 2025? If any of them involve learning new things or engaging more with your community, then the library can help you out! Each month we add newly-released book titles to our collection in a variety of genres to meet and expand your interests. In addition to our own physical collection, we have access to the resources of over 160 libraries in central and western Massachusetts. And we're not just books - we have a healthy assortment of videos for those who still use a dvd or blu-ray player. Another fun winter activity involves puzzles and games, which we now have available for loan at the library. Prefer to get out and about? We have free or discounted museum passes for Cheshire residents to reserve and use at one of 5 local museums.

Do you need any motivation for winter reading? We have a few options for you to consider. We have an adult winter challenge that encourages reading and other activities on a bingo-style grid, as well as a youth 30-minute increment reading challenge. Both of these challenges are available in the library or on our website at

https://www.cheshirepubliclibrary.org/printables.

In addition, there is a year-long 2025 Reading Challenge created by the Massachusetts Center for the Book, materials for which are at the library.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook or Instagram so you can keep informed of all of our programs and happenings.

Here are some highlights of what's coming soon:

WEEKLY:

Every Tuesday @ 11am - Storytime for preschoolers

MONTHLY:

1st Saturday of month extra OPEN hours from 12-2 2nd Wednesday of month @ 11am -Pop-up Library at Senior Center

January

4th @ 11am Lego-time (grades 1-5) 21st @ 7pm Third Tuesday Trivia (adults) - 80's theme

February

1st @11am

Donuts & Clues (grades 1-5)

18th @ 11am

Storytime for ALL youth -

SHARKS virtual program with AWSC

18th @ 7pm

Third Tuesday Trivia (family) - Disney theme

20th @ 11am

Winter fun for ages 3-6 (Family Center of Northern Berkshire County)





Election Day in Pictures



Previous Town Clerk, Christine Emerson, with the longest serving Election Official, Carol Daniels.



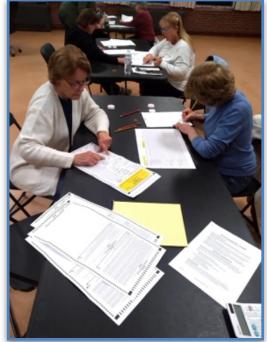
Chair races help to pass the time during the slow turnout for the State Primary Election.



Smiling faces ready to greet voters and make the voting experience as seamless as possible.



When the polls close, everybody has a job and takes it quite seriously. Time to count and tally. The day doesn't end when to doors close.

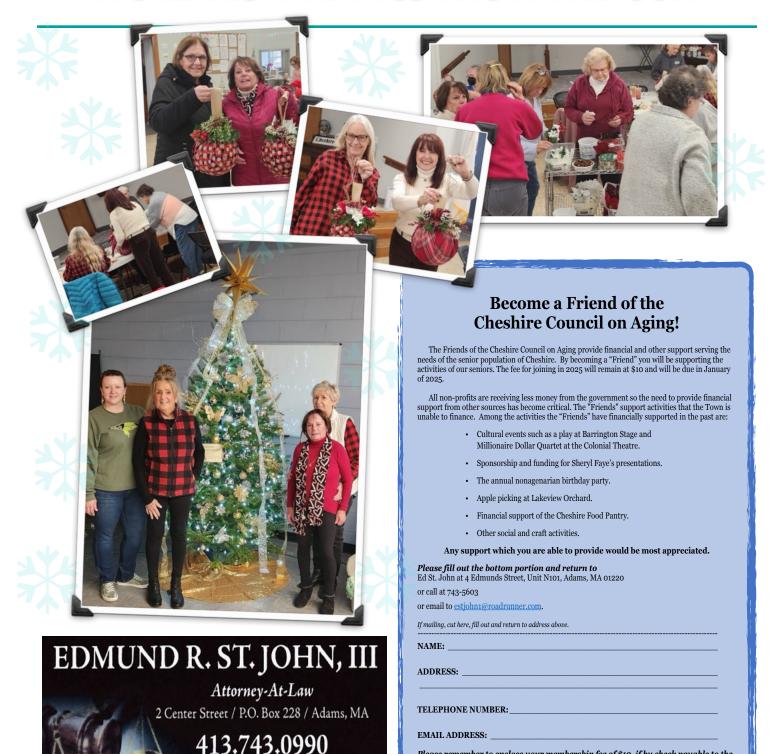








MORE FESTIVE PICS FROM THE COA &



estjohn3adams@roadrunner.com

30% SENIOR DISCOUNT

Please remember to enclose your membership fee of \$10, if by check payable to the Friends of the CCOA.

Thank you.

SPECIAL EVENTS &

JANUARY

Monday, January 6th • 9 - 11am Senior Haircuts @ COA Center

Stylists from Meraki Salon of Adams. Discounted Senior cost is \$20. Book your appointment. 413-743-1690 ext 107

Thursday, January 16th • 8:30am - 1pm

Foot Clinic. Appointments only. It is held inside the Center. Call Brenda @ 413-743-1690 ext 107 to schedule an appointment and for protocol. There is a \$40 fee for this clinic.

Wednesday, January 22nd • 12:30pm Snowman Hat Centerpiece Craft @ COA Center.

Limited seats available for this activity. Be sure to call Brenda at 413-743-1690 ext 107 to be included.

Tuesday, January 28th • 9am - Noon

CHP Van @ COA. Routine health checks, Flu & Covid Vaccines. First come first served. Please note, there won't be a CHP van visit in February.

Tuesday, January 28th • 11:30am

Homemade Meal @ COA Center. Call ahead to reserve a plate and for grab n go dinner. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

FEBRUARY

Monday, February 3rd • 9 - 11am Senior Haircuts @ COA Center

Stylists from Meraki Salon of Adams. Discounted Senior cost is \$20. Book your appointments. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

Wednesday, February 5th • 12:30pm Valentine Candy Iar Craft @ COA Center.

Limited seats available for this activity. Be sure to call Brenda at 413-743-1690 ext 107 to be included.

Tues., Feb. 11th & Wed., Feb. 26th • 11:30am *Homemade Meal @ COA Center.* Call ahead to reserve a plate and for grab n go dinner. 413-743-1690 ext 107.



Cheshire Lions Club -

The Cheshire Lions Club completed wrapping gifts for its annual Give A Gift program with the help of Leo volunteers:

Quonell Bradley, Kamarian Kastner, Diego Luna, Aiden Middlebrook, Alexis Warner, and Savannah Warner. The presents will be delivered to families with the help of the Cheshire Police Department. The \$500 Fuel raffle was won by Renee Bresett and in the spirit of giving, the Cheshire Lions Club drew a second name: Richard Lampron, to whom they awarded a \$250 second prize.

Our next event is Bingo, coming this winter. Look for flyers for more information.

We remain an active contributor to the Cheshire community during good times and bad. Among our contributions, we support ongoing eye research efforts. We have also supported numerous local organizations such as the Youth Center, the Friends of the Cheshire Council on Aging, the Cheshire Public Library, the Cheshire Fire Department and various charitable organizations and athletic teams. We donate annual scholarships to Cheshire graduates from Hoosac Valley High School, McCann Technical School and BART. Our club installs and cares for the American flags located throughout the town.

We are always looking for new members. If you are interested in joining or would like more information or have any questions, please contact Jennifer Waterman at

jen@watermanexcavating.com.

Happy Holidays from the Cheshire Lions Club



PLEASE NOTE THE COA CENTER WILL BE CLOSED ON

Monday, January 20th Martin Luther King Day and Monday February 17th Presidents Day





Town Clerk's Office:

IMPORTANT: Town of Cheshire Annual Town Census will be mailed mid-January. Please carefully review the information and make any necessary corrections, sign the form and return it to the Clerk's Office. The Census Return may also be mailed or placed in the "drop-box" located at the 191 Church Street entrance to the Town Offices

2025 Dog Licenses

Dog licenses are due April 1st

Cheshire Library Hours/Events

Monday 10-2

Tuesday 12-7, with preschool story-time at 11am AND

Third Tuesday is Trivia Night @ 7pm

January 21st (adults) - 80's theme

February 18th (family) - Disney theme

Wednesday 12-5

Thursday 10-2

1st Saturday of the month 12-2, with STEM activity for elementary-aged children at 11am

Cheshire Ladies' Reading Club is the oldest continually meeting reading club in the United States, carrying on a tradition first inspired by Emma Petitclerc in 1879. As we are a reading club, books are read at the meetings themselves. If you have an interest in helping to continue a long Cheshire tradition contact club president Carole Hilderbrand @ 413-329-2212 for information.

Historical Commission - The Cheshire Historical Commission is again accepting donations of items or documents relating to our town's history. Please call 743-5423 for details.

The Cheshire Community Book Club After discussing Sparks Like Stars by Nadia Hashimi at the December get-together, we were again reminded that when we talk about books together, we have an increased understanding of what we've read, that talking about them together, generates. We continue to be surprised that even though the setting and characters may come from places and times we ourselves have not experienced, the themes are

relatable. On January 9, 2025 we'll exchange thoughts about *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* by Lisa See. On February 13 we switched our discussion to *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt; the experiences of our children and grandchildren and the possible outcomes of their experiences. On March 13, *The God of the Woods* by Liz Moore will be the featured book. Join us on the 2nd Thursday of the month, at 6 PM, at the Community/Senior Center. Bring a friend.

Cheshire Garden Club - generally meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Cheshire Senior Center. Anyone is free to attend to ask gardening questions, or to join our group. You can contact Margy Gwozdz at:

wgwozdz@roadrunner.com with any questions.

Cheshire Northern Berkshire Beekeepers Association meets at 6 p.m. in the Cheshire COA Center on the 4th Wednesday of every month except November and December. Interested parties are welcome to join us. For more information, contact Jeanne Davis. Email with any questions:

Jeannedavis59@gmail.com.

Cheshire Lions Club meets once a month from September to June. Our meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month at 6 PM. Most meetings are held at the Harbor House Inn. If you are interested in learning more about ways to support our community, contact Lynda Bianchi, President at 743-5723 or 244-3420. Hoping to see you at our next meeting.

BE IN THE KNOW!

Sometimes events get added after publication, or for reasons beyond the control of the COA, dates or times get changed. **BUT**, you can always be in the know by visiting the Cheshire COA Facebook *PAGE*. While you are there, check out the pages of other local organizations and businesses! *Be in the know!*

Cheshire COA Center for Active Living

CHP Mobile Health Van - At the Center on Tuesday, January 28th, 9-12. No February visit is scheduled. Please follow our Facebook page for dates and times as they sometimes change. CHP Mobile Health Unit staff offers blood pressure checks, A1C screenings, cholesterol checks and "sick" visits on top of typical and annual vaccinations. No appointment needed and open to anyone. You may also call Brenda with any questions at the COA office @ 413-743-1690 extension 107







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 \$3.00 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 available five days a week, except holidays. To reserve your meal, call 413-743-1690 extension 107 at least 24 hours in advance. Suggested Meal Donation of \$3.00 for 60 and over.

Bingo- Every Tuesday at 12:15, \$1 per card

Brown Bag - Free paper bag of food is available between 9:30am and 1:30pm; January 27th and March 3rd on the last Monday. Pick up at COA Center. Contact Brenda to sign up. 413-743-1690 ext 107

Aerobics - 9am -10am Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays no charge...

Chair Yoga - 10am -11am Fridays, Led by Maryann Kuffs

Blood Pressure Readings - 10am -11am Mon., Wed., and Fri.; performed by Mal & Carol

Foot Clinic - The Foot Clinic will be scheduled for Thursday, January 16th • 8:30am – 1pm. Sorry, no walkins - appointments only. It is held inside the Center. Call Brenda @ 413-743-1690 ext 107 to schedule an appointment and for protocol. There is a \$40 fee for this clinic.

Quilting - Quilting and all stitchers are welcome on the first and third Thursday of the month (unless it falls on a holiday), 1pm-3:30pm led by Betty King. (\$5 suggested donation to benefit the Cheshire Pantry.)

The Community Book Club - meets at the COA Senior Center every second Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM. If you enjoy discussing books you've read or just enjoy listening to discussions about books in the current orbit of attention, please join us. Bring a friend.

Senior Haircuts – 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.. Haircuts by Meraki Salon of Adams. Discounted Senior cost is \$20. Call center to book your appointments for Monday, January 6th and Monday, February 3rd.

Cheshire Northern Berkshire Beekeepers Association – 6 p.m. at the Cheshire COA Center on the 4th Wednesday of every month except November and December. Interested parties are welcome to join us. For more information, contact Jeanne Davis. Email with any questions Jeannedavis59@gmail.com.

Shuffleboard - Usually begins in May at the Cheshire COA Center for active living and continues every Wednesday at 12:15 pm through November. Call the Center for more information. 413-743-1690 ext 107

Greetings/Events Coming in the New year



Images submitted by Barry Emery







Happy Valentine's Day!

Make plans now to join in the

Two-Day Family Valentine Event

at the

Cheshire **Community House**

Plans haven't been fully finalized, but the event will be happening on

February 7th & 8th

Watch for updates via social media, posters/flyers, and by word of mouth. This event will be great family fun for everyone.

Annual Town Census and Why Residents Should Respond

Submitted by Whitney Flynn, Cheshire Town Clerk

- 1) It's the law. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 51, Section 4 mandates an annual street listing of residents as of January 1 each year. The law prescribes a fine of up to \$500.00 and/or up to one year in jail for failure to respond to the census and the law further prescribes a fine of up to \$10,000.00 and/or up to five years in jail for knowingly providing false information.
- 2) The information is used to compile the street list, copies of which go to the Police and Fire departments. This helps emergency responders to know how many people live at a residence, which helps them to determine if everyone is safely out of the house in an emergency.
- 3) If you are a voter and do not respond, you will be made inactive on the voting list. Then when you come to vote, you will be delayed because you must now fill out paperwork and attest (swear) under oath that you have in fact continuously lived in the Town of Cheshire since the last time you either voted or responded to an annual census. If you do not respond to a census or vote within three years of being made inactive, you will be dropped from the voter list completely. Under current Massachusetts law you will then only be able to vote a provisional ballot, which ultimately may not count, since all provisional balloting must be researched and verified; you must be listed on the voters list.
- 4) It serves as proof of residency which residents need to qualify for state benefits or veterans' benefits and exemptions, as well as in-state tuition remission at state colleges.
- 5) It provides the town with student population estimates for the coming year so that planning can happen for budgeting and care of Cheshire students.
- 6) It is important information for grant applications and funding.
- 7) Shows growth of your community, which may be appealing to prospective home buyers.

WHAT IS THE ANNUAL TOWN CENSUS?

Massachusetts General Law (MGL Ch. 51 § 4) mandates an annual street listing of residents as of January each year. The Town Clerk's office mails census forms to all Cheshire residents at the beginning of every year. The census form asks for the name, date of birth, occupation, and veteran status of all residents in your household.

WHY IS THE CENSUS IMPORTANT?

An accurate count of residents in Town leads to better municipal services. Answering the census on a yearly basis helps us maintain accurate population information. The information collected is used to prove residency, update voter rolls, veterans' benefits, birth records, help predict future school enrollment, establish polling needs, qualify for state and federal funding, as well as grants for the Town.

Under MGL Ch. 51, 4c, failure to respond to the census for three consecutive years shall result in removal from the active voting list and may result in removal from the voter registration rolls.

DOES TURNING IN MY CENSUS FORM REGISTER ME TO VOTE?

This form does *not* register you as a voter and you are *not* able to change party affiliation on this form. You can register to vote and/or update your party affiliation in-person at our office or by going online to https://www.sec.state.ma.us/OVR/.

WHERE DO I RETURN THE CENSUS?

Please update and/or make any changes to the form, sign, and return it to the Town Clerk's Office by February 28, 2025. It can be returned by mail to PO BOX S, in-person, or by leaving it in the drop box located at 191 Church Street.

DOG LICENSES

Dog license forms are also included with your census mailing. Please remember DOG TAGS EXPIRE ON MARCH 31st. Massachusetts General Law states dogs must be licensed annually, with proof of a current rabies vaccination. Failure to comply may result in a citation. Renew in-person or by mail. Please return the completed form to us along with a self-addressed stamped envelope, and a check made payable to the Town of Cheshire.

All dogs must wear dog licensing tags and Rabies tags at all times. It is required by law.

Please contact the Town Clerk's at 413-743-1690 X104/ townclerk@cheshire-ma.gov or visit Town Offices, 191 Church Street for more information regarding your dog tag/license.

MOVON

2025	Calendar of Events
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	Cheshire COA & Co

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SATURDAY		Cheshire Pantry 11-12								
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FRIDAY		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11		Aerobics9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11
THURSDAY	2	Grab-n-Go 10-12 Quilting 1-3:30	0	Grab-n-Go 10-12 Comm. Book Club 6pm	16	Foot Clinic 8:30-1:00 Grab-n-Go 10-12 Quilting 1-3:30	23	Grab-n-Go 10-12 Card Making 1:00	30	Grab-n-Go 10-12
WEDNESDAY	-	K Happy New Year Senior Center Closed	ω	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 Pop-up Library 11a	15	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30	22	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 Snowman Hat Craft 12:30 Beekeepers 6 pm	29	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30
	31	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	7	A I	4	A I	2	M O S L	28	1:30 A
TUESDAY				Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15		Lunch 11:30. Bingo 12:15		Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15		Homemade Meal 11:30 Aerobics 9-10 Bingo 12:15 Lunch 11:30 CHP VAN 9-12
MONDAY	30	Blood pressure readings available @ Senior Center M-W-F 10-11	9	Aerobics 9-10 Hair Cuts 9-11 Lunch 11:30	13	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 Card Making 1:00	19 Martin Luther King In. Day 20	Senior Center Closed	27	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 Brown Bag 9am-1:30pm
SUNDAY	29		Ŋ		12		19		26	

FEBRUARY2025

Cheshire COA & Community Calendar of Events

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