



# THE Cheshire Chatter

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

January / February • 2026

## Cheshire COA Center Is All About Active Living

The Cheshire Council on Aging (COA) has been a beehive of activity during November and December.

The Center played host to entertainers Lighten-up Acoustic Duo and writer Kevin O'Hara; both were well received. (See more about these two events inside.)

With the onset of colder weather, the outdoor activities have come to a halt until the spring thaw, but that doesn't mean everything stops. There are exercise groups for all levels of activity available indoors on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays to help keep those muscles activated and the heart pumping.

Some may say, "oh, that's the senior center" when referring to the Cheshire COA Center. It is truly a "Center for Active Living." Active Living isn't just about keeping the physical body in shape; it's about mind, body and soul - a balance. The COA offers a place for like-minded groups to meet who are interested in a variety of subjects; gardening, bee-keeping, hand-made crafts, quilting, reading, and games, just to name a few.

In November and December participants in various crafting activities decorated natural greenery swags for hanging on their doors, as well as beautiful cards to send of the holidays.

There is a "pop-up library" offered every 2nd Wednesday where "seniors" can conveniently pick up and drop off books while visiting the Center.

Currently, the Center offers Mah Jongg Monday and Bingo Tuesday; but they also have other games and puzzles to keep the "little grey cells" moving. Please check out the article inside about Mah Jongg. Maybe it will peak an interest in others.

While Elder Services provides the daily meals at the Center, twice a month (usually the 1st Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday) Homemade meals are created and served onsite, or packaged for pickup if one can't stay and eat. Sometimes the meals are accompanied by entertainment, speakers, or informational sessions.

The Cheshire Council on Aging Center for Active Living is a place to enjoy, make new friends, learn new skills, absorb all it has to offer. Maybe they'll see you soon at 119 School Street, Cheshire, MA?



*The COA entry in the Cheshire Festival of Trees (at left) was just TOO CUTE! And, as has been the tradition, a group of COA volunteers served up hot cocoa and snacks to those who attended the Town Tree Lighting, hayrides and toured the Festival of Trees. Shown above left to right: Marie, Marlene, Dawn and Brenda.*

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## Brenda's Thoughts .....

*Happy New Year!!!!*

The big holidays are behind us; but there are a few coming these next two months that I would like to remind everyone that the Center will be closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Presidents' Day. Otherwise, it will be business as usual with maybe a twist or two.

We have a couple of cute crafts/events coming up. First of all, sticking with the theme of winter, we are going to do a really cute lighted snowman decoration with a couple of options to create the "effect" desired. Fair warning, there will be glue and glittery stuff involved so dress accordingly.



*Lighted Snowman*

Next up is something a little different; still kind of crafty, but this time it will be edible. We will be making these adorable little heart-shaped mini pies.



*Mini Valentine Pies*

Each person should be able to make 5 or 6. A little something special to share for Valentine's Day.

The Mah Jongg group is growing and learning along the way. Be sure to check out Pat's article in this issue; maybe it will inspire you to join the group.

At the same time, I would like to remind everyone that there are other groups of interest that meet at the COA on a regular basis. Some meet once a month - like the Beekeepers and the Gardening Club, and others twice monthly, like the Quilters. Regardless of when they meet, they all welcome new members. You can find their contact info in the Community Notes and their meeting times on the Calendar pages.

*We look forward to seeing you in 2026!*



*These ladies were a few who produced beautiful swags to display for the holidays. There were nearly 30 participants in this event!*

### COA Board Members

Robert Balawender .....	413.743.3356
John Bianchi .....	413.743.5723
Suzanne Boyle .....	413.743.5187
Carol Francesconi .....	413.743.5028
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Val Tyska .....	413.743.3802
Peter Traub .....	413.743.3496

### Alternate Board Members

Doreen Aleshevich .....	413.446.8212
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### Resources and Contacts

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Director	
Van Transport.....	413.446.2559
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### NOTICE

**Dr. Estela Ogiste**

Will be holding an information session  
about Macular Degeneration  
at the

**Cheshire COA • 119 School Street  
On Wednesday, January 28th @ Noon**

*Dr. Ogiste is an Associate of Advanced Eye Care.*

Contact the Center for more information  
413.743.1690 x107



# Library Offers New and Entertaining Challenges for Students and Patrons in the 2026 New Year

*Jennifer Luitjens, Library Director  
Cheshire Public Library*


According to poet Edith Lovejoy Pierce, "We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day." And with that bit of inspiration, Happy 2026 from the Library!

With the bustle of the holiday season behind us and the outdoor temperatures dipping, now is the perfect time to slow down and cozy up inside with a good book. We have 1,000s to choose from in our physical space, including the newest releases, and millions from our shared library network. There's also the option of audible books, digital books, magazines, cookbooks, local museum passes, as well as puzzles and games. If you need some motivation, try our Winter Tic-Tac-Toe Challenge (available at library or at <https://www.cheshirepubliclibrary.org/printables>). For a full-year challenge, you can participate in the Massachusetts Center for the Book 2026 Reading Challenge (instructions available at the library or at <https://www.massbook.org/readingchallenge>).

Feeling creative or yearning to be? Come out on Tuesday, January 27th at 6:30pm for Paint Pouring with local artisan, Jill Reynolds. Mocktails and cookies will be available as they enhance the creative process! Registration for this event is required as space is limited to 12 adults. For a heads-up on our next program with Lorraine Faucher, mark your calendar for Monday, March 9, for an all-occasion card-making class.

Our ongoing programs for our younger patrons include weekly storytime and monthly STEM events. We will also have additional activities during school vacations. Families are reminded that our library footprint extends to the 2nd floor, which contains areas for reading, playing games, and constructing legos. This space is open to all with adult supervision whenever the library is open.

For more information about our services or programs, please visit our website (<https://www.cheshirepubliclibrary.org/>) or follow us on social media (links on website). See the Community Notes on page 13 in this issue of the Chatter for the full calendar breakdown.



**Cheshire Public Library**

## 2026 WINTER TIC-TAC-TOE

read a biography or memoir	attend a local concert or visit a museum	read a book with one-word title
read a book published in 2026	read a 2025 bestseller	read a book published <2025
read a book with a color or number in the title	take a winter hike in the snow	read a book set in a warm climate

Complete 3 in a row to enter prize drawing;  
complete entire grid for extra entries!  
Challenge ends Feb. 28, 2026



**Bedard Brothers**

(413) 743-0014  
Rte 8 Cheshire, MA 01225 [www.bedardbros.com](http://www.bedardbros.com)

## There's A New Game In Town

by Patricia Gebarowski

This past July, a Mah Jongg group was formed at the Cheshire Senior Community Center. Several of us showed up to learn the game and satisfy a long standing curiosity (held by me at least) about it.

Like many people, I had played the computer version of Mah Jongg which is a form of solitaire, matching tiles which have lovely Chinese characters and illustrations.

I knew there was another form of Mah Jongg as a tabletop game consisting of colorful tile pieces with the Chinese designs but I had never had the opportunity to find out what it was all about.

Once a few years ago as I was having coffee with a friend at Panera in Pittsfield I watched a group of about eight women sitting nearby at two tables spreading out tiles in an interesting formation. One player who knew my companion, said that they met there regularly to play Mah Jongg and had done so for a number of years.

I had no idea that groups like this existed!

When Brenda at the Senior Center in Cheshire purchased two Mah Jongg sets and announced the formation of the group, I was so there!

Most of us had little or no practical knowledge of how to play the game. There was a couple of more experienced players among us and they capably guide us beginners with patience, good nature and sound advice.

The game, designed for four players, consists of sets of tiles decorated with characters of three suits: "Kracks", which are Chinese characters, "Bams", which are depictions of bamboo sticks, and "Dots", or circles, drawn as round shapes.

Then there are Winds: North, South, East and West and Dragons, which are, well, Chinese style dragons, except for a white Dragon, which is a square, appearing like a bar of soap - don't ask me why.

Flower tiles, representing the four seasons, come into play with certain hands and a number of Jokers can be used as wild cards to complete a chosen line.

We play what is called the American Mah Jongg game and the rules that we follow are from the National Mah Jongg League, Inc. which has existed for 88 years. They also produce a new card every year that lists eighty one winning combinations of tiles, each on a "line" that allows you to collect a correspondent grouping of tiles and gleefully call out



*Some of the ladies in the Cheshire Mah Jongg group: l-r Pat G, Pat C, Annette, Faye and Joyce. Shown here with a set made in the early 1900's.*



*Pat C, Pat G, Annette and Maggie study the card to figure out which hand would be appropriate to follow.*

"Mah Jongg" when you are able to recreate that line with your tiles.



It is as simple as that, but drawing tiles and deciding which ones to keep, that will match which line and choosing which ones to discard is challenging and exciting. It just keeps you thinking, concentrating and wanting to play another game....and then another.

No two games are going to be the same.

Mah Jongg was born in China in about 1870. It is thought to be based on traditional Chinese card games, the designs being transferred to tiles of bone, ivory or wood.

The name Mah Jongg translates to "Game of Sparrows" in Chinese, so called because the sound of the tiles being "shuffled", or mixed, was like the twittering of sparrows.

Mah Jongg became very popular in China, spreading to other countries in the early 1900s. Ever growing in popularity, it rose to fad status in the United States in the 1920's.

Through the intervening years, it remained very popular especially among Asian and Jewish communities.

In 2018, the movie "Crazy Rich Asians" spurred the widespread embrace of the game among a broader demographic of the younger generation, both women and men.

Then along came the pandemic, starting in 2020, which forced us all to pursue limited group sized activities, mostly indoors, with close "pandemic partners" and the game flourished.

The benefits of the game are enormous. It is believed to stave off cognitive decline and promote life affirming social contacts and interactions.

Since the pandemic, participation has continued to increase in social and younger age groups, its popularity spreading to include Mah Jongg themed cruises and vacation resort packages as well as state and national championships. Variations in the rules in different regions of the country have evolved.

If learning the game seems daunting, there are many tutorials available, especially online. YouTube is a prime source of assistance and a series of videos entitled "Basic Mah Jongg For Absolute Beginners"

is probably the easiest and most explanatory of the videos available.

If that doesn't work for you, come to the Cheshire Senior Community Center on a Monday at 12 o'clock to play or just observe and decide if it is for you. We will welcome and guide you through the steps.

If you do join in, you will soon be calling out "Mah Jongg" and you will be feeling so good about your new incredible skill and talent before you know it.



*It is a feeling of unexplainable joy when the "magic" of the player's planning and the luck of the draw all comes to fruition... "Mah Jongg!!!!"*



*Mah Jongg is a thinking game; sometimes the players have to push back and really plan their "strategy." Sometimes, that strategy changes a couple of times during the course of playing.*

## 500-Year-Old French Documents Found Buried in Cheshire?

By Barry Emery

{ from his book, *Historical Mysteries of Cheshire* }

Sometimes it's easy to forget that before we were a town, before we were a county, and even before the Puritan colonists had arrived to settle Boston, there were French Jesuit missionaries who were traveling in the northeast. They came to the wilderness of North America to convert the native Indians to Christianity.

In 1954 a man in Cheshire dug up a box whose contents may prove that those early Jesuits had traveled to our area.

Albert Sawyer of Cheshire was using a bulldozer to grade his property near state highway Rt 8 when he unearthed and then crushed a metal box. Very close to the box and probably once inside, were three very old parchments and a pair of white gloves.

The story of his discovery and the resulting mystery about the documents was previously told in local newspapers during the last century. I will summarize what has already been reported, along with revealing new evidence and conclusions regarding the mystery.

### The Parchments

The documents were very old parchments written in French. Initial examinations of the parchments were inconclusive as to their meaning and origin. Apparently, the parchments were put aside and forgotten about until 1964 when Oscar R. Choquette, who was head of the Adams Historical Society and also a high school French teacher, became interested in them.

Mr. Choquette forwarded one of the documents to Rep. Silvio O. Conte's office in Washington, DC. Rep. Conte was able to get it analyzed by experts who determined the language was old French. Further examination of the documents revealed their age and contents.

Each parchment was a lease agreement for farmland in Beaugency, a town in central France. The newest lease was issued to a Louis Raymbeault. The documents were dated: 1430, 1438 and 1588. One of Mr. Choquette's theories regarding the parchments were that the leases may have belonged to a Frenchman Isaac Jogues. He was a Jesuit missionary who was captured by Mohawk Indians along the Mohawk River (map at right) in New York. Fearing his box of documents contained evil spirits, the Indians may have buried it Cheshire, far from their encampment.





Saint, Isaac Jogues was a Jesuit priest, missionary, and martyr who traveled and worked among the native populations in North America. He gave the original European name to Lake George, calling it Lac du Saint Sacrement, Lake of the Blessed Sacrament. This proves he traveled very close to our region. But, the question remains, why was he in possession of the leases belonging to Raymbeault. Jesuit records show there also was a Jesuit missionary by the name of Charles Raymbeault who did spend five years in the new world of North America. However, Choquette could not find any record of him traveling near New England.

I was able find this reference of both Jogue and Raymbeault traveling together. This opens the possibility that Raymbeault could have entrusted the documents to Jogues for some reason.

After speaking with Alice Howe, the Jesuit archivist for New England, I located additional evidence that Raymbault did in fact travel very close to Cheshire because he was in Albany as revealed by the reference below. Here is the relevant entry from the Jesuit documents stored in the Creighton University archive.



In June, 1642, Jogue and Raymbault descended to Quebec, with a company of Hurons, to obtain supplies for their mission. On the return journey, an ambushed band of Iroquois attacked the party, 31 miles above Three Rivers, and captured Jogues, the Donnés René Goupil and Guillaume Couture, and several Huron converts. The captives were taken to the Mohawk villages, where they were cruelly tortured, and some burned alive; Goupil was murdered, soon after; while Jogues and Couture were given to Indian families as slaves. In August, 1643, Jogues contrived to escape by the aid of the Dutch commandant at Rensselaerswyck (also called Fort orange; now Albany).

Here is another source mentioning Raymbeault's travels in North America.

**From a thesis by Harold Hickerson, "Feast of the Dead Among the Seventeenth Century Algonkians of the Upper Great Lakes"**

**The voyages of discovery of Brul to the upper Great Lakes in the 1620's, of Nicolet to Green Bay in the 1630's, the journey of the Jesuits, Jogues and Raymbeault, to Sault Ste. Marie in 1641**

With this new information regarding Raymbault's travels, it seems very plausible that the Mohawks ended up in possession of the parchments and the Mohawks definitely traveled in our area as exemplified by the Route 2, the Mohawk Trail.

■ *To be continued in the next issue.*



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## Cheshire COA Hosts Events

On Wednesday, December 17th, The Cheshire Council on Aging held a luncheon with musical entertainment from Lighten Up Acoustic Duo, Tracy Kittler & Jim Sauve! There was lots of singing and even some dancing. Everyone appeared to be having a good time. The center appreciates everyone who came out and enjoyed this day with them.

A special mention goes out to Dawn Krutiak for running the kitchen like a boss, turning out yet another delicious homemade meal and to the volunteers for providing excellent service with a smile!

*Happy Holidays!*



## Nine Bakers Participate in Cookie Swap

Who knew swapping cookies could be so much fun? Well, those who participated in the 3rd Annual Cookie Swap at the Cheshire COA knew.

First, they enjoyed a delicious brunch that was produced by Dawn Krutiak. Biscuits and sausage gravy, sticky buns, fresh fruit salad, piping hot coffee. Yum!

Each baker made 60 cookies to be divided and shared with the others (10 total). The participants each received 10 sets of 6 cookies, all being different and delicious!

What's a party without some fun and games. They played two rounds of "Whose gift is it anyway?" It was kind of like gift exchange with a twist or two. In the end, everyone went away with a little something extra, a full tummy, and lots of cookies to share.





# WINTER SAFETY TIPS

People still must venture outside during the winter months to go to work, visit their doctors, and shop for food and other necessary items.

**Slips and falls can lead to serious health issues especially for the elderly. Often these types of falls cause major injuries such as hip and wrist fractures, head trauma and major lacerations. The following tips may decrease the number of winter injuries:**

- Plan ahead and give yourself sufficient time.
- When walking on steps, always use the hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.
- When walking on an icy or snow-covered walkway, take short steps and walk at a slower pace so you can react quickly to a change in traction.
- Bending your knees a little and taking slower and shorter steps increases traction and can greatly reduce your chances of falling. It also helps to stop occasionally to break momentum.
- Even though streets and sidewalks have been cleared of snow and ice, you should still be approached with caution. Look out for “black ice”. Dew, fog and water vapor can freeze on cold surfaces and form an extra thin, nearly invisible layer of ice that can look like a wet spot on the pavement. It often shows up early in the morning or in areas that are shaded from the sun.
- Carry heavy items can challenge your sense of balance. Try not to carry too much – you need to leave your hands and arms free to better balance yourself.
- Be prepared to fall and try to avoid using your arms to break your fall. If you fall backward, make a conscious effort to tuck your chin so your head doesn’t strike the ground with a full force.
- When entering a building, remove as much snow and water from your boots as you can. Take notice that floors and stairs may be wet and slippery – walk carefully.
- Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles – use the vehicle for support.

# Prepare Now for Upcoming Elections

*Submitted by Whitney E. Flynn  
Cheshire Town Clerk*

## WHY LOCAL ELECTIONS MATTER

When we think about elections, our minds often jump to presidential races, but the truth is that local elections shape our daily lives just as much—if not more! From the roads we drive on to the schools in our neighborhoods, the leaders we elect locally make decisions that directly impact our communities. That's why voting in local elections is one of the most powerful ways to make a difference.

## YOUR VOTE, YOUR COMMUNITY

Local governments handle the services and programs we rely on every day: schools, public safety, parks, transportation, how new businesses are developed, and even what you can and cannot do with your own property. Selectmen, school boards, and local officials make choices that affect everything from classroom sizes to road repairs. When you vote locally, you choose the leaders who will decide about the place you call home.

## DECIDING WHERE YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO

Ever wonder where your hard-earned money goes? Local officials create budgets determining funding for schools, emergency services, and community projects. By voting, you help decide whether more funding goes to things like public safety, libraries, or road improvements. Your tax dollars should work for you—voting makes sure they do. Currently only 5% of Cheshire voters are making all the decisions about how your money is being spent. Are you responsible for it? Because either way, you are!

## BIG CHANGES START LOCAL

Some of the biggest policy changes in history started at the local level before becoming national movements. Issues like education reform, environmental initiatives, and public health policies often begin in town/cities and states before they grow into larger-scale action. By participating in local elections, you help set the stage for the changes you want to see.

## YOUR VOTE CARRIES MORE WEIGHT

Local elections often see low voter turnout, which means your vote is even more powerful. While

millions vote in presidential elections, local races can be decided by just a handful of votes, every vote counts. In some cases, elections have come down to single digits! When you vote locally, your voice is amplified.

## LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS ARE PART OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Local officials are right here in our communities, making them more accessible than national leaders. You might spot them at the grocery store, at a fun community event, or even have the chance to chat with them directly! This close connection means they're more likely to listen to us, the voters—especially those who show up at the polls. By participating in local elections, we can ensure our leaders are truly working for the people who elected them—us! Let's make our voices heard and celebrate the power we have to shape our community together!

## MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

The first step to making a difference is being prepared. Check your voter registration, know your polling location, and mark your calendar for upcoming elections. You can easily access all this information by visiting

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/> or [www.cheshire-ma.gov](http://www.cheshire-ma.gov)

Cheshire Town Clerk, Whitney Flynn:  
[townclerk@cheshire-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@cheshire-ma.gov)

413-743-1690 X104 Monday-Wednesday 9am-5pm  
(Make an appointment after hours)

If you have any suggestions about how to improve voter turnout, please reach out! Your voice matters; and so does your vote!!!





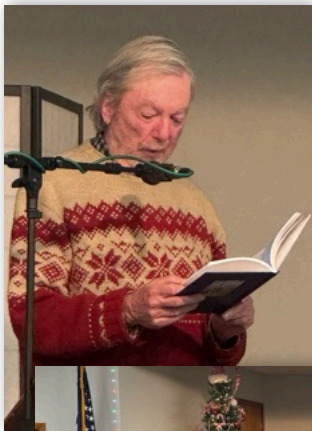
## Cheshire PD Received Grant for New AEDs, New Cruiser in Production Stage

Officer Aaron Goodell reports that the Cheshire Police Department received a grant for the purchase of three new automatic external defibrillators or AED's as they are commonly referenced. These new units are consistent with the units utilized by Cheshire Fire Department and Northern Berkshire EMS and allows for critical time saving.

The new Cheshire PD cruiser is in the production phase and expected to be placed in service in the new year. This will expand the fleet to three cruisers and replace one of the current frontline units. The cruiser it is replacing will be maintained to serve as a back-up vehicle during repairs or for events and construction details, so residents

may see it at more events throughout town, while not detracting from patrol coverage.

Submitted by:  
Officer Aaron C. Goodell  
Cheshire Police Department  
90 Church Street  
Cheshire, MA 01225  
413-743-1501 (phone)  
[www.cheshire-ma.gov](http://www.cheshire-ma.gov)



*Renowned Author and humorist Kevin O'Hara was well received at the Cheshire COA Center on Friday, December 12th. The event was made possible by The Friends of the Cheshire Council on Aging. He read excerpts from his latest book "A Christmas Journey, Vol. II."*



### Become a Friend of the Cheshire Council on Aging!

The Friends of the Cheshire Council on Aging provide financial and other support serving the needs of the senior population of Cheshire. By becoming a "Friend" you will be supporting the activities of our seniors. The fee for joining in 2026 will remain at \$10 and will be due in January of 2026.

All non-profits are receiving less money from the government so the need to provide financial support from other sources has become critical. The "Friends" support activities that the Town is unable to finance. Among the activities the "Friends" have financially supported in the past are:

- Cultural events such as a play at Barrington Stage and Millionaire Dollar Quartet at the Colonial Theatre.
- Sponsorship and funding for Sheryl Faye's and Kevin O'Hara presentations.
- The annual nonagenarian birthday party.
- Apple picking at Lakeview Orchard.
- Financial support of the Cheshire Food Pantry.
- Other social and craft activities.

Any support which you are able to provide would be most appreciated.

**Please fill out the bottom portion and return to**  
Ed St. John at 4 Edmunds Street, Unit N101, Adams, MA 01220  
or call at 743-5603  
or email to [estjohn1@roadrunner.com](mailto:estjohn1@roadrunner.com).

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TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Thank you.**

## EDMUND R. ST. JOHN, III

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# ❄️ Special Events ❄️

## JANUARY

**Thursday, January 1st**

*COA Center Closed For New Years Day*

**EVERY MONDAY • Noon - 2**

*Mah Jongg Monday @ COA Center*

Call 413-743-1690 ext 107 for more information.

**Monday, January 5th • 9 - 11am**

*Senior Haircuts @ COA Center*

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

**Tuesday, January 6th • 11:30am**

*Homemade Soup & Sandwich @ COA Center.*

Call ahead to reserve a plate and for grab-n-go dinner. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Wednesday, January 14th • 11am**

*Pop-up Library with Jennifer Luitjens @ COA Center.*

A variety of books will be available to be "checked out" with the books to be returned next month, as this will be a monthly event.

**Wednesday, January 14th • 12:30pm**

*Snowman Craft @ COA Center.* Call ahead to reserve a spot. There is no charge for this event. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Thursday, January 15th • 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.

**Monday, January 19th**

*COA Closed For Martin Luther King Jr. Day*

**Wednesday, January 21st • 11:30am**

*Homemade Soup & Sandwich @ COA Center.*

Call ahead to reserve a plate and for grab n go dinner. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

## FEBRUARY

**Monday, February 2nd • 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.

**Tuesday, February 3rd • 11:30am**

*Homemade Soup & Sandwich @ COA Center.*

Call ahead to reserve a plate and for grab-n-go dinner. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Wednesday, February 11th • 11am**

*Pop-up Library with Jennifer Luitjens @ COA Center.*

A variety of books will be available to be "checked out" with the books to be returned next month, as this will be a monthly event.

**Wednesday, February 11th • 12:30pm**

*Making Mini Valentine Pies with Dawn and Brenda*

Call ahead to reserve a spot. There is no charge for this event. Estimating that each person can make 5-6 mini pies. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Monday, February 16th**

*COA Center Closed For Presidents Day*

**Wednesday, February 18th • 11:30am**

*Homemade Soup & Sandwich @ 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 remains an active contributor to the Cheshire community during these trying times. We are always looking for new members. 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 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. Every year, during the Christmas season, we conduct our Give A Gift program to provide those in need, local families and seniors, with Christmas gifts. Our club also installs and cares for the American flags located throughout the town. If you are interested in joining or would like more information or have any questions, please contact: Stacey Gurney coachylady@aol.com.



# Community Notes

## Town Clerk's Office:

### Mid-Term Elections This Year

Residents are encouraged to start preparing and educating themselves about upcoming elections, whether on the national, state, county, or local level. Please see the information included in this issue of the Chatter and start thinking about the upcoming elections this year.

### 2026 Dog Licenses

Dog licenses are due April 1st.

Make sure your pets' rabies vaccinations are up to date; watch for the upcoming vaccine clinic in the spring.

## Cheshire Library - New Year/New Challenges

### Open Hours

- ★ Monday, 10-2
- ★ Tuesday, 12-7  
(storytime for preschoolers at 11am)
- ★ Wednesday, 12-5
- ★ Thursday, 10-2
- ★ 1st Saturdays, 12-2 (Sept-June)

### Other Events

#### JANUARY

- ❖ 3rd at 11am - STEM for grades 1-5 (Legos)
- ❖ 27th at 6:30pm -  
Paint Pouring & Mocktails (adults)

#### FEBRUARY

- ❖ 7th at 11am -  
STEM for grades 1-5 (Messy Science)
- ❖ 17th at 11am -  
Storytime and Games for ALL youth

*Jennifer Luitjens, Library Director*

Cheshire Public Library  
23 Depot Street/PO Box 740  
Cheshire, MA 01225  
(413) 743-4746

[https://www.cheshirepubliclibrary.org/2026 Winter Challenge.jpg](https://www.cheshirepubliclibrary.org/2026%20Winter%20Challenge.jpg)  
0.30 MB

**Cheshire Ladies' Reading Club** is the oldest continually meeting reading club in the United States, carrying on a tradition first inspired by Emma Petittclerc 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. Carole's phone number is 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

In the most appropriate manner, we begin our January book review with *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon on Thursday, January 8, 2026, 6 PM in the Cheshire Public Library.

In February, we'll have some fun with *James* by Percival Everett - a reimagining of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the perspective of the enslaved character, Jim.

On March 12, we depart from the "book of the month" so to speak; each member will present a short summary of a book of personal choice to the group. It's likely that some of those presented in March will be selected for reading and discussion by the whole group sometime in the future.

Join us on the second Thursday of the month at 6 PM, at the Cheshire Public Library. We'd like to hear about what you are reading.

**Cheshire Garden Club** - meets on the third Wednesday of each month, from March through November, at 6:30 PM in the Cheshire Senior Center. Anyone is free to attend, to ask gardening questions, or to join our group. Contact Margy Gwozdz at: [wgwozdz@roadrunner.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

## Cheshire COA Center For Active Living



**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; Monday, January 26th and, **PLEASE NOTE**, the February Brown Bag will be Monday, March 2nd. Pick up at COA Center. Contact Brenda to sign up. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Mah Jongg**- Every Monday starting at Noon. All levels of experience welcome, from newbies to the well versed. Depending on level of knowledge, the group plays 2 or 3 games.

**Aerobics** - 9am -10am Monday, Wednesdays & Fridays. Led by Jane Bryce

**Chair Yoga** - Fridays 10-11am, 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, September 18th • 8:30am – 1pm. Sorry, no walk-ins - 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.)

**Senior Haircuts** – 9 a.m. – Noon. Haircuts by Meraki Salon of Adams. Discounted Senior cost is \$20. Call center to book your appointments for Monday, January 5th and Monday, February 2nd. Please be advised that the stylist room at the Center doesn't have a hair wash station. It is only designed for hair cuts. The use of water spray bottles are used to dampen hair prior to cutting.

**Shuffleboard** - at the Cheshire COA Center for active living, continues being held every Wednesday at 12pm through November. The court is also available for use during regular business hours. Call for more information. 413-743-1690 ext 107

**Pickleball** - Whenever weather is permitting, the court will be available. Rules are listed on the back of the COA building, participants provide their own equipment (except for the net), and use the court at their own risk. Call the Center for more information. 413-743-1690 ext 107.

**Biking** - Whenever weather is permitting, the bikes will be available. Participants provide their own protective equipment (if using helmets, pads, etc), and use the bikes at their own risk. Call the Center for more information. 413-743-1690 ext 107.





# January 2026

## Cheshire COA & Community Calendar of Events

December							February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31										

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	Blood pressure readings available @ Senior Center M-W-F 10-11			 <b>Happy New Year</b> <b>Senior Center Closed</b>	Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11	Cheshire Pantry 11-12
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Aerobics 9-10 <b>Hair Cuts 9-11</b> Lunch 11:30. <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>	<b>Homemade Meal 11:30</b> Bingo 12:15	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30	Grab-n-Go 10-12	Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>	Lunch 11:30. Bingo 12:15	Aerobics 9-10 <b>Pop-up Library 11a</b> Lunch 11:30 <b>Snowman Craft 12:30</b>	<b>Foot Clinic 8:30-1:00</b> Grab-n-Go 10-12 Quilting 1-3:30	Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	<b>Martin Luther. King Jr. Day</b> <b>Senior Center Closed</b>	Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15	Aerobics 9-10 <b>Homemade Meal 11:30</b> Beekeepers 6 pm	Grab-n-Go 10-12	Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11	
25	26	27	28	30	30	31
	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Brown Bag 9am-1:30pm</b> <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>	Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15 <b>Dr. Estela Ogiste Info Session @ Noon</b>	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30	Grab-n-Go 10-12	Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11	

# February 2026

## Cheshire COA & Community Calendar of Events

January							March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
1	<i>Groundhog Day</i>	2		3		4		5		6		7	
	Aerobics 9-10 <b>Hair Cuts 9-11</b> Lunch 11:30 <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>		<b>Homemade Meal 11:30</b> Bingo 12:15		Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30		Grab-n-Go 10-12 Quilting 1-3:30		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11		<b>Cheshire Pantry 11-12</b>		
8		9		10		11		12		13	 <i>Valentines Day</i>	14	
	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>		Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15		Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Making Valentine Mini Pies 12:30</b> <b>Pop-up Library 11a</b>		Grab-n-Go 10-12		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11				
15	 <i>Presidents Day</i>	16		17		18		19		20		21	
	<b>Senior Center Closed.</b>		Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15		Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Homemade Meal 11:30</b>		Grab-n-Go 10-12 Quilting 1-3:30		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11				
22		23		24		19		26		27		28	
	Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30 <b>Mah Jongg 12-1</b>		Lunch 11:30 Bingo 12:15		Aerobics 9-10 Lunch 11:30		Grab-n-Go 10-12		Aerobics 9-10 Grab-n-Go 10-11 Chair Yoga 10-11				
1		2		3		26		27		28		1	
PLEASE NOTE, the February Brown Bag will be available on Monday, March 2nd													
												Blood pressure readings available @ Senior Center M-W-F 10-11	