

Newton Senior Center ■ 345 Walnut Street ■ Newtonville, MA 02460 ■ 617-796-1660 ■www.newtonseniors.org

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May/June 2021

Help Us Invent Our Next Normal: A Message from Director Jayne Colino It's so hard to believe it has been a year since I wrote to you here about COVID-19 and the Senior Center closing to the

public. So much has happened to the world and all of us since then. I am sure we can all find our own words to describe the past year. Here, at the Senior Center, we have missed you dearly, yet we have found ways to meet people's needs for services and connection. A year ago, I barely knew how to attend a meeting using Zoom. I am proud to say hundreds of you have attended our amazing virtual programs. You have traveled virtually to countries you never thought you would, exercised with friends from other states, painted in your own living rooms, and connected in this new way. We intend to continue these virtual program opportunities, even as we inch closer to the time when we can meet in person. We are also looking at ways to expand online access for people and have recently been awarded a Tablet Program grant to provide a tablet loan for those who may lack access to technology but want to participate in our virtual programming (more details to come in the next few weeks). Yet, even as we look ahead, I'm so proud of everything we have done during the past year and continue to do. Current and newly recruited volunteers have helped us provide over 1,000 deliveries of food, prescriptions, and other essential items from stores, food pantries, and other emergency resources. We have delivered over 10,000 daily meals since last March to people who would have come the center to dine if it were open. More recently, we have been able to add wonderful meals from local restaurants under a program with the Newton Needham Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club. Volunteers delivered Thanksgiving dinners, holiday cookies and cards, and mystery gift bags provided by Newtonville Books. The delivery of these items was as important and as appreciated as the connections participants used to make at our doorsteps; they reminded people that they were being thought of. Although we closed our doors to in-person programming back in March of 2020, we did not close in any other way. We continued to provide transportation safely by offering un-shared rides. Residents were still able to access durable medical equipment and parking stickers through safe methods of distribution. We have now had two successful tax filing seasons provided in a space with social distancing measures and plastic partitions. Our SHINE (Medicare) counselors helped hundreds of people during Medicare open enrollment and other health insurance decisions over the phone and using computers instead of face-to-face here at the center. Additionally, staff and volunteers responded to thousands of inquiries and assisted people in getting vaccine appointments, which will enable us, one shot at a time, to move closer to gathering, again. As I hope you can see in the programs and services described above, we did not close, we adjusted what we did to help people during an unprecedented time. We are now asking you to be patient with us and to provide input as we imagine and reinvent our next new normal at the Newton Senior Center. As we look to re-opening, we are working closely with the Newton Department of Health and Human Services and the Public Buildings Departments to assure the safest possible environment, as we re-open our doors. We are also working closely with the Massachusetts Association Council on Aging and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to learn how to safely reopen. As you know, the Senior Center functions in a multitude of ways. We function as a movie theater, a restaurant, fitness club and office space, sometimes all at once. We are learning, for instance, that the function room allows far fewer people for fitness than it would for a lecture or a movie. We do not know exactly when we will be able to reopen. We do know that we will not be able to unlock the doors and just welcome everybody back in. Most likely, our programs will have limits, and you will need to pre-register for all programming. We also anticipate that services will continue to be offered by appointment only. Don't think of this as another loss, but as moving toward our next normal and beyond. We are so excited to share this time with you. Stay tuned, as we figure this out together.

If you want to receive the e-newsletter every Friday, please email iseidmann@newtonma.gov The Newton Senior Center remains closed to the public. The majority of our programs in May and June will be held virtually. You can reach staff at the Newton Senior Center by calling 617-796-1660 and leaving a message. 1

Notices

It's Time to Renew your Senior Parking Stickers!

The Department of Senior Services offers Newton residents age 65 or older free parking in the City's municipal parking lots, with some restrictions.



- Current parking stickers (blue) expire on June 30, 2021
- New stickers (red) will be available for purchase starting May 1^{st} , 2021
- New stickers will be good for two years and will expire on **June 30, 2023**
- This year we will be renewing via <u>mail-in only</u>.

 <u>Senior Parking Sticker mail packet MUST include:</u>
- 1.) Legible copy of your MA driver's license showing age 65 or above AND Newton residence
- **2.)** Legible copy of your MA registration showing Newton residence AND "registration type" as passenger.

Commercial vehicles do not qualify for a sticker. The address on registration and driver's license must match. If leased, also provide a copy of your lease agreement showing Lessor and Lessee. Lessee address must match driver's license.

- **3.)** Include a check for \$6 per sticker requested (max 1 per vehicle), payable to the City of Newton. *Please make sure your telephone number is included with your information in case we have questions or you are missing documentation.* You also have the option to pay with credit card online by going to our website www.newtonseniors.org. A copy of your online receipt must be included with your mail packet.
- **4.)** A self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of your sticker(s).
- **5.)** Mail to the Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut St., Newtonville, MA 02460, **Attention: Parking Stickers Please note:** Stickers will be processed in the order they are received and returned by mail in your self-addressed, stamped envelope. All copies of the documentation sent will be shredded unless you request that it be returned along with your sticker. Additional information about the Senior Parking Sticker program can be found on our website at www.newtonseniors.org. If you have questions you can also reach us via email at SCcustomerservice@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1662 and leave a message.

Disclaimer We thank our advertisers, presenters, and program sponsors for all they do to educate, inform, and inspire participants. The Center does not specifically endorse any service or product advertised, presented, or sponsored herein.

The Newton Senior Center will be closed for all business on: Monday, May 25th (in observance of Memorial Day) and Friday, June 18th (in honor of Juneteenth). NewMo will not run. Lunch delivery, grocery shopping, and prescription pick-ups will not be available.

NewMo

NewMo – Newton in Motion – is our transportation service for residents age 60 and older. The service is provided by Via under a contract with the Department of Senior Services. Riders can request trips to the Senior Center, medical appointments, houses of worship, grocery shopping, and to long-term care facilities within the Garden City. You can also go to any Village center, any city building or city-sponsored program or event, and to the Needham Street Corridor. NewMo takes riders to certain medical facilities outside of Newton, as well. Unlike Newton's previous transportation system, NewMo is an ondemand system similar to Uber or Lyft. That means you call shortly before you want to travel on the day you want to travel. During the pandemic, you will be the only passenger in the vehicle, unless you are traveling with a companion. Call Elizabeth Lund at 617-796-1665 to sign up.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program works to improve the health of low-income senior residents by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods provided through the Greater Boston Food Bank. Seniors must be 60+ and complete the application form in advance to be registered to receive groceries. Eligible residents will receive two free bags of food once a month (3rd Friday of the month: May 21st & June 18th) containing healthy shelf-stable products. Food packages include a variety of foods such as nonfat dry milk, juice, farina, oats, ready-to-eat cereal, rice, pasta, peanut butter, dry beans, canned meat, poultry, or fish, and canned fruits and vegetables. On occasion, fresh produce will be distributed, as well. Participants can pick up at the Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut St, from 1-2pm. Please call Emily Kuhl at 617-796-1672 to sign up or if you have difficulty coming to the center.

<u>Daily Meal Delivery is Available through Springwell</u> Please call Emily Kuhl at 617-796-1672 to sign up.

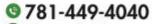
Durable Medical Equipment Loan/Donation Program

The Newton Senior Center coordinates a program that allows Newton residents to borrow and donate "gently-used" medical equipment. Contact us 617-796-1673 and leave a message and we will call you back. The Senior Center is closed and all donations are by appointment only.

Save the Date! Community Document Shredding & Drug Take-Back Day Saturday, July 10, 2020, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. by appointment (rain or shine)

Newton Resource Recovery Center, 115 Rumford Avenue,
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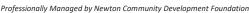
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The SHINE Program can help you apply for Prescription Advantage. Trained SHINE volunteers offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of Medicare and related health and drug insurance programs. To schedule a SHINE phone appointment, call the center at 617-796-1660. For other SHINE related matters, call 1-800-243-4636, then press 4.

Thank you for Your Contribution to the **Newton Senior Center!**

Mary Clory, Paul Campbell, Madeline Dupiton, Loretta D' Amore, Dilma Thyme, in thanks to the Newton Senior Center Andrea Hemment, in memory of Maria Mazzola

Thank You to Our Sponsors for Supporting our February and March Virtual Programming!

The Newton Lions, Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care, BAYADA Home Health Care, and Wingate Residences at Boylston Place, for co-sponsoring our concert with pianist Leona Chung and vocalist Cara Bender

The Newton Lions, for sponsoring our Songs of the Civil Rights Movement program with John Clark AND our Valentine's Day Concert with Michael Goodwin

Right at Home- Boston MetroWest, for sponsoring our Memory Café on Showboat with Debi Block

Wingate Chestnut Hill, for sponsoring our Mindfulness Series with Neil Motenko AND the Crooners' Caravan Tour of New England with Frank King

Griswold Home Care, for sponsoring our Singing Songs of the 1970s program with Pam Steinfeld

Hebrew SeniorLife, for sponsoring our Beyond Pantsuits program with Historic Newton

Briarwood Rehabilitation & Nursing Center, for sponsoring our Memory Café with Joel Light and Dan Moore

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Newton Department of Senior Services

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Staff: 617-796-XXXX

Email: first initial last name@newtonma.gov

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Mission

The mission of the Department of Senior Services is to optimize quality of life for older adults and those who support us through welcoming, respectful, and meaningful opportunities that engage and value older people and empower us to remain independent and to be important assets in our community.

Vision

To provide sustained leadership that helps Newton be a livable and age-friendly community for all who choose to age here.

Statement of Welcome

The Newton Department of Senior Services welcomes the diversity of our senior community and strives to reflect our values of inclusion and mutual respect through supportive services, programs, and advocacy.