

# March 2022 Newsletter

## The Howes House

1042A State Rd., West Tisbury MA 02575 (Across from Alley's)

Phone: (508) 693-2896

Fax: (508) 693-1447



### Office Hours:

**Monday – Friday**

**8:30 AM- 4:00 PM**

**Closed Holidays**

### Important Notices:

*Many in person classes are paused per the board of health. Beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>, we will slowly be opening up for our smaller groups.*

*Please take a look at our virtual program offerings.*

Hello Friends,

Welcome to March - the first month of spring! And a time when animals begin to wake up from their long winter's naps.

As of this printing most of our programs are still paused 😞 but we do have a new exciting program to announce 😊 Join us on a tour overseas! Starting this month, we are offering guided tours of exciting locals around the globe starting with "A Walking Tour of Amsterdam" on March 15<sup>th</sup>!

Also, the Wellness Clinic with a registered nurse will begin again this month - free blood pressure checks & more - March 7<sup>th</sup>!

And ... most exciting news ... Beginning Monday February 28<sup>th</sup> we are excited to welcome our new Outreach Coordinator: Susan Merrill - Susan was here a couple of years ago as a temporary hire but now she is an official full-time member of the team!

Warm Regards,

Joyce Albertine, Director

Bethany Hammond, Assistant Director

Susan Merrill, Outreach Coordinator

### Important Dates:

March 15<sup>th</sup> 10:30AM  
"A Walking Tour  
of Amsterdam"

March 24<sup>th</sup> 10 AM  
Presentation on Identity  
Theft and Fraud  
Prevention

## COVID-19 TEST KITS **BEWARE OF SCAMS**

Have you gotten robocalls, text messages, or emails offering COVID-19 tests in exchange for your Medicare Number? **Be careful! Scammers are selling fake and unauthorized at-home COVID-19 test kits** in exchange for your personal or medical information. Do not give out your Medicare Number for COVID-19 test kits!

**Make sure to purchase FDA-approved COVID-19 test kits from legitimate providers.** Over-the-counter or at-home tests are available for sale around the U.S. at many reputable and trustworthy retailers and pharmacies.

### Avoid COVID-19 SCAMs

Remember, each household in the U.S. can also have four free COVID-19 at-home tests shipped directly to their home at no cost. **Visit COVIDtests.gov** to order tests or learn more about testing.

**If you suspect fraud, call 1-800-MEDICARE to report it.**

The COA has COVID test kits available. Please note kits are given out on a first come first served basis and we are trying to serve our community (Aquinnah, Chilmark, West Tisbury) first.

## ***Join us on a tour overseas!***

The Up-Island Council on Aging is excited to offer monthly guided virtual tours of exciting locals around the globe! Experience the sights and sounds of faraway places from the comfort of your own home! Amsterdam is our first location. Call the Up-Island COA to register! 508-693-2896

### **Highlights of Amsterdam (Live walking tour)** **Tuesday March 15<sup>th</sup> 10:30 AM-11 AM**



### **JOIN US FOR AN INFORMATIONAL TALK ON IDENTITY THEFT AND FRAUD PREVENTION: MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup> @ 10AM (VIA ZOOM)**

Robin Putnam, Events & Outreach Manager from the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, and Sergeant Andrew McLaughlin, from the Orleans Police Department will present on identity theft and fraud prevention. The presentation will include information about their offices and what they do. It will also cover how to be safe online whether it be on your smart device, social media or online banking, phishing emails, and general protection from scams and identity theft. It's some great information that we can all use!

**To Register in advance for this meeting:**

**<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIqd-yvqDkoEtBf4H7dxFHP426M3Bw1NST>**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting



Since 1965, SSCAC has provided a range of critical services to low-income individuals and families on the South Shore of Massachusetts.



THE FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
BEGINS ON NOVEMBER 1, 2020  
AND ENDS APRIL 30, 2021.

### INCOME ELIGIBILITY

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	MAXIMUM GROSS ANNUAL INCOME
Family of 1	\$39,105
Family of 2	\$51,137
Family of 3	\$63,169
Family of 4	\$75,201
Family of 5	\$87,233
Family of 6	\$99,265
Family of 7	\$101,521
Family of 8	\$103,777

IF ELIGIBLE FOR FUEL ASSISTANCE YOU  
MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

#### WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

A program that can install attic and/or wall insulation and perform air sealing measures to prevent loss of heat from your home.

#### (HEARTWAP)

Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Weatherization Assistance Program repairs or replaces your primary heating system.

SSCAC is an equal opportunity provider.

## THE FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

Call South Shore Community Action Council at **508-746-6707** or **1-877 FUEL AID** for information. A staff member will give you information on what you need to do to apply: Proof of Income, Proof of Identity, Fuel bill and heating costs for the last 12 months (Printouts from Utilities, if you have gas or electric heat).

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any low-income family within the income guidelines. You can own or rent (including renters whose heating costs are included in rent). Eligibility is determined by the gross income of all family members over the age of 18, as well as family size.

### ADDITIONAL BENEFIT

You may be eligible for an additional benefit if the cost of heating your home for the last 12 months is high and exceeds the threshold set for your fuel type.

### HOW DOES SSCAC PAY MY BILL?

Your heating company (Gas, Oil, Electric, etc.) will send billing directly to SSCAC and payments up to your benefit level will be made for energy used from November-April.

### EXCEPTIONS?

**YES**, if you have a federal housing subsidy **AND** the cost of your heat is included in your rent **AND** your rent is less than 30% of your income, you are **NOT** eligible.

### DO I PAY ANYTHING ON MY FUEL BILL IN THE WINTER?

**YES**. The Fuel Assistance Program does not pay ALL of your winter heating bills. Call your fuel vendor and ask for your last winter's bill. Subtract your benefit level (Information available by calling **508-746-6707** or **1-877 FUEL AID** toll free long distance) from your winter usage, what is left is your responsibility to pay.

SOUTH SHORE COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL | 71 OBERY STREET | PLYMOUTH, MA 02360 | [WWW.SSCAC.ORG](http://WWW.SSCAC.ORG)

## FUEL ASSISTANCE:

*If you know someone who would benefit from Fuel Assistance but isn't a senior, they can contact Dukes County Social Services at: (508) 696-3840*



## FOOD RESOURCES:

**Surplus Food Distribution** the UICOA distributes surplus food sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Agriculture. The food to be distributed varies; financial guidelines apply. We try to order a variety of produce and dry goods. Currently our program reaches about 20-25+ senior households in the up-island communities. If you find yourself facing food insecurity, please reach out 508-693-2896

## Buy Food Online Using SNAP in MA

### How It Works



1. Amazon and/or Walmart: Add your SNAP EBT card to your account  
ALDI: Sign up for an account at [Shop.ALDI.us](https://www.shop.aldi.us)

2. Shop online for SNAP authorized foods  
Look for "SNAP EBT eligible" on Amazon or ALDI, which is powered by Instacart

3. Checkout using your EBT PIN:  
You cannot use cash benefits on an EBT card to pay  
SNAP benefits cannot be used to pay for shipping or delivery fees

4. Schedule your delivery  
Available with Amazon and select ALDI and Walmart locations

To learn more or apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):  
[Mass.gov/SNAPonline](https://Mass.gov/SNAPonline)



## Buy Food Online with SNAP Fact Sheet

### What is SNAP?

SNAP (formerly food stamps) provides a monthly food benefit to buy healthy food

### Where can I buy food online with SNAP?

ALDI (through the Instacart app), Amazon and Walmart. More retailers may be added later.

### What can I buy?

You can buy SNAP EBT eligible foods.

### Can I use my SNAP benefits to pay the delivery fee?

No. You must pay for fees with another form of payment, like a credit card or gift card.

### I receive TAFDC or EAEDC benefits. Can I use my cash benefits to buy items online?

No. You cannot use your cash benefits on an EBT card to buy online. If you have a bank account you can ask your case manager to sign up for direct deposit so your benefits go directly into your bank account.



Is there a delivery fee?	Express Members: Free for orders over \$35 + reduced service fees Non-Express Members (a la carte delivery): \$3.99 + 5% service fee	Free if you spend \$35 or more	Fees vary \$7.95-\$9.95 Option to pay a flat fee of \$98 per year for all fees
How do I get the food?	Same-day grocery delivery & pickup available via the Instacart app and website	Delivery Only	Curbside pickup OR delivery at some locations Go to Walmart.com and type in your zip code for options near you
How do I know what to buy?	EBT-eligible items will be marked with 'EBT'	Look for 'SNAP EBT Eligible' label next to the item's name	At checkout, the payment screen will show what is SNAP eligible
Where can I learn more?	<a href="https://www.instacart.com/help/section/360009947632">instacart.com/help/section/360009947632</a>	<a href="https://www.amazon.com/snap">amazon.com/snap</a>	<a href="https://www.walmart.com/ideas/discover-grocery-pickup-delivery/walmart-grocery-pickup-accepts-snap-ebt-payments/355540">walmart.com/ideas/discover-grocery-pickup-delivery/walmart-grocery-pickup-accepts-snap-ebt-payments/355540</a>
How do I get help?	<a href="https://www.instacart.com/help/section/360009947632">instacart.com/help/section/360009947632</a>	<a href="https://www.amazon.com/help">amazon.com/help</a>	<a href="https://www.walmart.com/help">walmart.com/help</a>



Learn more or apply for SNAP:  
[Mass.gov/SNAPonline](https://Mass.gov/SNAPonline)



## Community Suppers

First Congregational Church of West Tisbury Community Suppers Program 2022 officially launched on Wednesday, January 12th, and will continue weekly through April. They ask that participants register for their meal through email, phone, or with the online signup on their [website](#). They will offer curbside pick-up and a delivery program for those that cannot drive. Through the selflessness of community volunteers and the Martha's Vineyard Community Foundations and many businesses, this program is possible. If you want to sign up to volunteer click [here](#).

Please contact the FCCWT Community Suppers program at (508) 693-2842 or [WTComSuppers@Gmail.com](mailto:WTComSuppers@Gmail.com) for more information.

*Special Services offered at the Howes House: Below is a list of some of our services. (Please call ahead as protocols have changed due to COVID restrictions.)*

**Free Notary Services**- all Staff are Notary Public's. Please call 508-693-2896 to set up a time.

**Lamination**- We are able to laminate certain documents (cards, hunting/fishing licenses etc.) We can laminate your vaccine card but recommend making a copy first \*unfortunately we are unable to laminate your Medicare card – but we can provide a non-sealed laminate pocket for it.

**S.H.I.N.E Counseling (Serving Health Information Needs of Seniors)** - The objective of SHINE is to ensure that Massachusetts elders have access to objective information, counseling, and assistance on health insurance and health benefit options through a network of trained health benefits counselors, free of charge. Call to schedule an appointment.

**Vineyard Isle Parkinsonians Support Group** - A Support group for both people suffering from Parkinson's disease and their caregivers. This group meets via Zoom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month and is co-facilitated by a registered nurse, a social worker, and a patient. Call the Council for more information.

**SNAP (Senior Nutrition Assistance Program- Formerly Food Stamps)** - Call the Council on aging to set up an appointment to meet with a staff member to assist with completing an application.

**File of Life** – We have file of life cards available for pick up. File of life cards are small cards that you can list medication specifics and/or allergies on that EMTs and Paramedics are trained to look for. It can make all the difference in frantic situations. It's best to keep it on your person and also a copy on your fridge- EMTs are trained to check these places for medication info!

**Durable Medical Equipment Loans**- We have equipment available for loaning out. At any one time we have the following: standard aluminum walkers, rollators, crutches, transport wheelchairs, standard wheelchairs, commodes and other such items. If you need to an item check with us- we are happy to lend you what you will need! (Please note that Wheelchairs and Rollators are on a 2-month loan program.)

**DEPENDS:** If you or a loved one is in need of depends under garments or the insert pads for incontinence please reach out. We have an abundance of packages upstairs. We have both men's and women's that have been donated to us. Availability varies as does size, please call ahead to verify we have what you need.

## Transportation Services

### **Go Go Grandparent (Pilot Program from Healthy Aging MV!)**

There is a new pilot program called **Go Go Grandparent** which is fully subsidized to provide on-demand transport for older adults. It is a concierge service that works directly with Uber and Lyft. It does not require that you have an app on your phone - it is all done by a live operator. The Martha's Vineyard Older Adult Transportation Coalition is piloting this program as well as exploring other solutions for transportation for Older Adults. Please be aware this is piloted towards folks who may not drive anymore and/or meet certain requirements. Contact Cindy Trish at Healthy Aging MV for more info: **508-693-7900 ext. 455**

### **Medivan (VTA)**

#### **Medivan to Boston - Tuesdays- call 508-693-9440**

To participate in the Medivan program, those interested must submit a one-time application through the MVTA. Applications do not require a doctor's note if passenger is over the age of 60. The Medivan holds 12 passengers and provides service on a first come, first served basis. The van picks up passengers every Tuesday from either the Vineyard Haven Park & Ride at 6:15AM or the VH ferry parking lot at 6:30AM for a 7:00AM ferry to Woods Hole. The van travels to all hospitals within Boston. Doctor's appointments must be made between 10:00 and 1:00 for a 2:00ish pick-up. Fee is \$40.00 round trip, including boat.

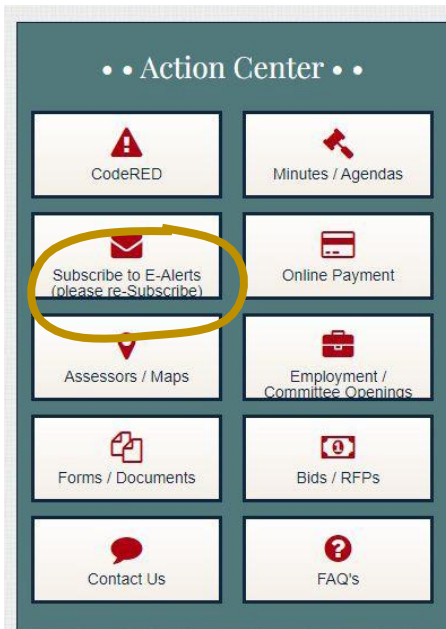
### **VTA Senior Bus Passes**



Bus passes are in! Stop by the office to pick yours up! Great news about the passes is that they are now called 365-day passes! So good for a whole year from date of first use! Say you buy it in August- its good until the following August! Passes are \$40 and available at the front desk 😊

## Want to be ‘in the know?’ Sign up for Email Alerts via Town of WT Website

### How to sign up for Town of West Tisbury email alerts



1. For an email about the next test kit distribution go to the town website [www.westtisbury-ma.gov](http://www.westtisbury-ma.gov)

2. Look at the left of the screen for the “Action Center”

3. Click “subscribe to e-alerts.”

A screenshot of the 'Subscribe to E-Alerts' form. It includes a header with the town's name and seal, a navigation bar, and a form area. The form has fields for 'Your Email' and 'Confirm Email', both containing 'myemail@gmail.com'. Below these is a dropdown menu labeled 'Select one or more lists from the section below'. At the bottom, there is a reCAPTCHA widget with a green checkmark and the text 'I'm not a robot', and two buttons: 'Subscribe Me' and 'Unsubscribe'.

4. Put in your email address and click the box next to “Town Alerts.” This will sign you up for email alerts about the upcoming Covid at-home test distributions.

5. Be sure to scroll to the bottom of the page to click the box to confirm you are not a robot and then click the “subscribe me” button.

The webpage will refresh automatically and you will see a green check mark and the message “You have been successfully subscribed.”



## Virtual Classes

### Zoom YOGA w/ Martha Abbot! On Hiatus through March

Martha who runs our Monday and Friday classes has been hosting an online Zoom yoga class Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 10:30 AM. She opens the “virtual doors” at 10 AM if people want to chat before class, class starts at 10:30 AM. All are welcome. Email [spiritmovesyou@gmail.com](mailto:spiritmovesyou@gmail.com) for log in information.

### Strength Training w/Katryn Gilbert!

Katryn is offering her classes via google meet at 9:00 AM and 9:35 AM, 4 times a week! She is hosting 30-minute classes with a mix of strength training and a little cardio. Please email her at [Katrynnyerdon@prodigy.net](mailto:Katrynnyerdon@prodigy.net) for meeting information!

### Gentle Yoga w/KANTA on Zoom!

While we are sad Kanta is not going to be joining us back in the Howes house, we are happy to share her Gentle Yoga class via Zoom! Tuesday's at 11:30! Meeting ID 824 4775 7861 Passcode: 709904  
Join her via zoom and get back to your yoga practice!

### Knitters Group!

Our Monday Night Knitters group is up and running via zoom! Monday's at 7:00 PM – All are welcome! Contact Ginny at: [islandgirlwt@gmail.com](mailto:islandgirlwt@gmail.com) if you are interested!

### In Person Programming – Please note many in-person programming is paused.

### Patricia Mello and Associates, P.C. @ the UICOA 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the Month.

The attorneys from Patti Mello's office visit the Howes House for appointments. The next visit will be on March 9th. (Only once this month) Please call 508-477-0267 to schedule an appointment.

**WELLNESS CLINIC** – Check your blood pressure, learn about healthy living & discuss health concerns with a registered nurse: 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month 11 AM -12 PM

**PARKINSON'S GROUP** – 2<sup>ND</sup> Monday of the month at 10:30 AM – A support group providing an opportunity for people with Parkinson's to share experiences, new information and updated research. Caregivers are welcome to accompany our people with Parkinson's and stay for the meeting,

**PEDI CARE** – On Hiatus- Will resume in April - 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month. Appointments begin at 9:30 AM. Please call to reserve your spot. Masks required. Toenail maintenance, callus care. No Diabetic foot care. Please note this is NOT a pedicure.

**DISCUSSION GROUP - Weekly Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 PM** – Discussion is on hold for the winter Join us for Open Discussions of Controversial and Contemporary subjects, Group meets outside on our patio or inside weather dependent. All are welcome!

**Watercolor! Friday's at 1 PM Returning in person on Friday March 4<sup>th</sup>**

Bring your own supplies and enjoy an afternoon of painting still life with watercolor or medium of your choice.

**Dance Free! – Tuesdays at 3:00 PM** No Money, No Teaching, No Instructor- just dancing to fun, funky, rhythmic music! Contact Jill at 774-286-1855 for location!

**GLEANED GOODS: Tuesday's** – Due to change of season, our selection and abundance changes. Check in with us on Tuesdays around Noon to see what goodies have been delivered that day! Also posted on our Facebook!

**Audiology Clinic 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM – Appointments take place at Indian Hill Medical Center**

4th Tuesday of every month. Also be on the lookout for special presentations with Dr. Lesley Segal. Appointments will be booked 1 person every ½ hr. **Call 508-693-2896 to schedule.**

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Hello Islanders!

Have you heard of TRI-The Resource Inc.? It's shocking how many people haven't, but we want to let you know what we do, and we are here to help! TRI offers DEFFERED, FORGIVEABLE loans up to \$40,000 at 0% interest for qualified homeowners. That's right, we will fix your leaky roof, or rotted windows for free! But that's not it, we address most health and safety repairs for your home. This could include even include a new heating system. We work with all Martha's Vineyard towns - but are currently (specifically) looking to assist homeowners in EDGARTOWN, WEST TISBURY, and AQUINNAH.

If you are in need of housing repairs, or know someone who is, please CALL US at 508-696-3285.

You can also email at [mvadmin@tritheresource.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:mvadmin@tritheresource.onmicrosoft.com)

We can't wait to hear from you!

Did you know?

### March's Birthstones

March has two birthstones, not unlike some of other months. Aquamarine is the first birthstone for the month, which symbolizes youth, health, and hope. Bloodstone, which looks very different from aquamarine, is a type of quartz known for its fiery flecks of red, representing strength and stealth.



March Quote:



Need a Laugh?



### Support the Friends of the Up-Island Council on Aging

The Friends of the Up-Island Council on Aging is a 501c3 non-profit fundraising board of volunteers who support the programs and services of the agency. Some examples of how the friends assist the COA and the community are their funding landscaping, providing food and/or fuel assistance to in need Up-Island seniors, and financially supporting many COA events. You can help to assist them in their efforts by making a contribution.

Checks can be made payable to: Friends of UICOA, PO Box 3174, West Tisbury, MA 02575 or if you prefer head over to the \*NEW\* Friends Website and donate through PayPal. You can find the new website [here](#)

*Join us on a tour overseas!*

The Up-Island Council on Aging is excited to offer monthly guided virtual tours of exciting locals around the globe! Experience the sights and sounds of faraway places from the comfort of your own home!

**Call the Up-Island COA to register! 508-693-2896**

**Highlights of Amsterdam (Live walking tour)**

**Tuesday March 15<sup>th</sup> 10:30 -11AM**



**Discovering Ushuaia, Argentina (Live walking tour)**

**Thursday April 19<sup>th</sup> 2 -3 PM**



**A Walk Through Athens (Live walking tour)**

**Tuesday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 10 -11 AM**



**\*\*This program is brought to you FREE of charge\*\*  
by the Friends of the Up-Island COA.**