



# Longevity Ledger

## Ayer Senior Center

December 2022

### ***From The Desk of the Director—***

*“December is a month of lights, snow, and feasts. A time to make your amends and tie off loose ends. Finish what you started and hope your wishes come true.” - Unknown.*

For me, December is a time of joy and hope, for embracing family traditions and making new ones. We decorate the house, attend a holiday celebration like a light show or The Nutcracker, adopt a family in need, and joyously search for a gift that our loved ones will appreciate. Growing up, my mother made an egg casserole with fresh fruit on Christmas morning, a tradition I continue with my children.

During a recent visit home, I helped my mom bring holiday decorations up from the basement. Each item she pulled out had a memory associated with it, of a particular stage in her life. While she doesn't put them all out anymore, she enjoys the trip down memory lane. The same can be said about our traditions. Times change, our families grow up and leave, and our bodies aren't as capable as they used to be. But we can still find great joy and peace in remembering those cherished traditions and what they meant to us. What are your favorite traditions?

Many thanks to Bemis Corporation for their holiday goody bags, and to an anonymous donor who wanted to “bring holiday cheer to the seniors” with another gift bag. We'll be handing them out at the Christmas Party—hope to see you there!



**WINTER WEATHER REMINDER:** If the Ayer-Shirley schools are closed, the Senior Center will be closed.



**Council on Aging Mission Statement:** The Ayer Council on Aging (COA) is a service department for members of the community 60 years of age and older. We provide comprehensive information and quality services to help seniors, their caregivers, and adult children. Our goal at the Ayer COA is to empower individuals and families as they make life choices in support of aging with dignity, health, and personal fulfillment. We provide a variety of programs and services to bring together our senior citizens in a safe and nourishing environment, including meals, transportation, social service assistance, fitness classes, health education and screening, activities, and social opportunities.

**COA Board of Directors:** Dennis Curran, Paula McCrea, Janine Nichipor, Carole Tillis, Marge Withee

**Next COA Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 13 at 2pm**

**Katie Petrossi**, Director

**Sam Parr**, MART Van Coordinator

**Denise Galvin**, Nutrition Coordinator

Open 9am-3pm daily

[www.ayer.ma.us/council-aging](http://www.ayer.ma.us/council-aging)

**Ayer Senior Center**

18 Pond Street Rear

Ayer, MA 01432

Main Office: (978) 772-8260

Dial-a-Ride: (978) 772-8261

# Special Events *(RSVP Required)*



## Silver Bells (It's Christmas Time in the City)

**Friday, December 2 at 6:30pm**

**Cost: \$15.00** The hustle and bustle of Christmas in New York City comes to the Theatre at the Mount (at Mount Wachusett Community College) in this traditional-meets-untraditional Christmas Spectacular! This theatre performance showcases the elegance and excitement of Times Square, Radio City Music Hall, and St. Patrick's Cathedral—filled with holiday music, love and laughter for the entire family...and a special visit from the big guy in the red suit himself!



## SHINE Medicare Counseling

**Monday, December 5 by appointment, and the first Monday of the month in 2023. FREE.**

Questions about signing up for Medicare or making changes to your Medicare plans? A certified SHINE counselor is available to assist you with free and unbiased support: we are available to discuss all options related to Medicare and additional coverage, and we do not sell any plans. In-person and telephone or video calls are available. Support in Spanish is also available. SHINE also offers resources online through its website at [www.shinema.org](http://www.shinema.org) and our weekly Medicare 101 webinars.



## Fuel Assistance Application Assistance

**Mondays, December 5 & 19 by appointment.**

Don't let rising fuel costs take over your budget! Fuel Assistance (also known as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) helps eligible households pay a portion of their winter heating bills. If you make less than \$42,411 annually for a household of one (or \$55,461 for a household of two), this program can help you pay for the cost of your primary source of heat. Appointments will be at the Senior Center, but please call MOC Fuel Assistance at 978-342-4520 to schedule your appt.



## "Gift One, Keep One" Holiday Crafts: Tea Trees

**Tuesday, December 6 at 1pm**

**Cost: \$4.00**

These easy and adorable trees are made from festive tea sachets, and will taste as good as they look! Make one for yourself, and one to gift.



## Senior Center Listening Session

**Wednesday, December 7 at 1pm**

As we near the end of 2022, it's time to reflect on what we've accomplished in our first year open "after" the pandemic, and what we'd like to focus on in 2023. Staff will be available to listen and facilitate discussion. This is YOUR senior center; we want to hear your program, transportation, meal, etc ideas!



## Bus Trip: Dinner & Magic of Lights

**Monday, December 12 at 4pm**

**Cost \$8.00 plus the cost of your meal**

This festive evening will begin with dinner at Tavolino at Patriot Place. Once the sun has set, we'll head to Gillette Stadium, where their parking area has been transformed into the Magic of Lights, a dazzling drive-thru light display featuring almost one million lights!



## "Gift One, Keep One" Holiday Crafts: Mason Jar Recipes

**Friday, December 16 at 1pm**

**Cost: \$5.00**

Baking is a fun holiday tradition... but why make a mess of your kitchen, when you can use ours? We'll be layering all the ingredients you need to make festive cookie mix gifts—adorable and delicious!



## Christmas Luncheon and Party

**Wednesday, December 21 at 12pm; FREE**

Gather with friends new and old to celebrate the holiday season. We'll enjoy a delicious ham dinner, followed by an optional Yankee Swap (spending limit of \$15, please), door prizes, holiday goody bags, and more!

# Monthly Events



## Hydroponic Gardening Club Returning in January!

Hydroponic gardening involves growing plants without soil! In place of soil, the plants grow in a nutrient-rich water solution. Please stop in to see our new hydroponic garden, learn how to grow vegetables in this unique format, and then eat the harvest! *This program is made possible through a grant with the Central Massachusetts Area Agency on Aging and 2gether We Eat.*



## Senior Store

**Senior Center: Daily following lunch**

**Pond Street: Second Mondays (Dec 12) at 1pm in Bldg A; 2pm in Bldg B**

**Pleasant Street: Third Mondays (Dec 19) at 1pm**

The Senior Store is a convenience program offered by the senior center, featuring snacks, household items, personal care items, and basic groceries. Prices vary and reflect what we paid for the items (this is not a fundraiser, nor is it subsidized).



## Women's Conversation with Linda

**Wednesday, December 14 & 28 at 11am. FREE.**

Get together to laugh, share, and discuss issues relevant to women as they age. The topic will change every week; examples include sleep, stress, grief, fitness, etc. No politics/religion.



**Coping with Grief:** Nashoba Nursing offers two ways to support those who are grieving. The traditional **Support Group** offers conversations about death and grief. For more information, contact Lucia Camara of Nashoba Nursing at (508) 951-3850. Support groups meet on **December 14** at 11am at the Shirley Senior Center, and/or **December 28** at 2:30pm at Shirley Meadows Community Room. Their second offering is a **Grief Social**, which provides a gentle opportunity to gather and meet with others who are grieving. Gentle and light conversation to help work through the grief, meet and hear how others are getting through their grief, and realize there is no need to go this alone. December's Grief Social will take place Friday, **December 9**, 4:30-6pm at the Bull Run Restaurant. *COA Van transportation is available for daytime support groups, but not the evening social.*



## Supper Club

**Returning in January!**

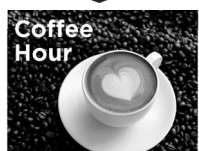
**Cost: \$4 for the van + the price of your meal**

A word about timing: at-home pickups begin at 4:30; if you're meeting us at the Senior Center be ready to leave at 5pm. If you're meeting us at the restaurant, adjust for driving time.



## Coffee and Cribbage with a Cop

**2nd Tuesday (December 13) at 11am** Get to know members of Ayer Police Department over a cup of coffee, or challenge them to a game of cribbage! This casual event is a great time to discuss issues, ask questions, and build community together.



## Coffee & Conversation

**Fridays in December at 9am; FREE**

Join us for coffee and pastries on Fridays in December. This is a great way to drop in and see our remodeled Senior Center, if you haven't been in since before the pandemic!

## Senior Center Robocalls

Robocalls help us reach people quickly to notify about weather-related closings, last minute program changes, delayed meal deliveries, etc. Please consider adding a contact to your cell phone called "Senior Center Robocall" with the number (617) 855-0125. All robocalls from the Senior Center come from this number.

# For Fun

- Cribbage** Tuesdays at 11am. All experience levels welcome.
- Rummikub** Tuesdays at 1pm. All experience levels welcome.
- Bingo** Thursdays at 1pm. \$1.00 per card.
- Coffee Hour** Fridays at 9am. Join friends old & new for coffee and pastries.
- Movies** *Returning this winter!*

## Creativity



### Knit/Crochet

Wednesdays at 1pm Gather around the fireplace to visit with friends! This month we're working on simple hats and mittens to donate to local charities. Pattern will be provided!



### My Life Journaling

**Tuesdays at 10am**

**Cost: \$10.00 (paid at the end when we print)** Want to leave your life story for future generations, but not sure where to

start? Are your children or grandkids bugging you to fill out one of those memory books? We'll make the process easy by meeting weekly to respond to pre-determined writing prompts. Then we'll print and bind it.

## For Your Health



### Chair Massage

**Tuesday, December 13 at 12:30pm**

Cost: \$10/10 mins or \$20/20 mins. Chair massage provides relief from aching muscles, while remaining fully clothed & sitting in a supportive massage chair.



### Well-Adult Clinic

**Thursday, December 8 at 12:30pm**

Nashoba Board of Health nurses will provide free blood pressure screening, general health information, and first aid. For in-home flu or COVID booster shots, call Nashoba Public Health at (978) 772-3335 ext. 357 to schedule.

## Fitness



### Chair Exercise

**Tuesday thru Friday at 9am. Free.**

This chair exercise program will feature a variety of favorite DVD-based favorites like Ann Pringle's Strength & Stretch, as well as the Grow Young Fitness videos that alleviate arthritis and joint pain.



### Intermediate Chair Exercise

**Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 10am. Free.**

This DVD-based chair exercise program takes it up a notch, for those looking for a faster paced workout, including the Curtis Adams fitness series.



### Chair Yoga

**Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am. Free**

This DVD-based yoga practice features a variety of poses that can be done seated or standing.



**Strength-Balance-Flexibility with Jeff Cote** *(Streaming in December; Live Classes Resume in January)*

**Mondays at 9am; FREE** This instructor-led class will help you keep your muscles strong, your joints flexible, and reduce your risk of falling!



**Tai Chi with Jeff Cote** *(Streaming in December; Live Classes Resume in January)*

**Tuesdays at 11am; FREE**

Often described as meditation in motion, Tai Chi is a slow-moving exercise that reduces stress & anxiety, improves flexibility, balance & agility, reduces joint pain, and promotes good sleep.

# Meals *(RSVP Required)*

Join us at one of our many dining options: MOC meals, catered meals, restaurant meals, and twice monthly supper club. All onsite meals served at noon. Suggested \$3.00 donation for all meals.

Please call 978-772-8260 to sign up. RSVPs allow us to have enough food for everyone.



## **Meals on Wheels**

*Provided by MOC*

Call 978-345-8501 Ext. 2 to register

Meal includes: Entree, Bread, Fruit, Milk

Delivered Tuesday & Thursday between 12:00 –1:30pm

Someone must be home to receive the meal



**Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry provides food and support to residents of Ayer and surrounding towns.**

Pick up in your own car:

December 2, 6, 7, 9, 14, 17, 21, 28, 30

We pick-up food & deliver to seniors (after 2pm):

December 2, 9, 23

Christmas Meal Special Delivery: December 20

If you need delivery, you must reserve 48hrs ahead

**First time Loaves & Fishes clients:**

Call (978) 772-4627x312 or

email [clientservices@loavesfishespantry.org](mailto:clientservices@loavesfishespantry.org) to enroll or schedule a drive-thru time.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			<sup>1</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Teriyaki Chicken & Rice (Marty's Café) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Chicken Rice Bake	<sup>2</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Beef Bolognese Over Penne <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None
<sup>5</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Chicken Jambalaya <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>6</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Stuffed Shells (Lazy Mary's) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: French Meat Pie	<sup>7</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Meatball Subs (The Cottage) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>8</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Sausage, Peppers, Onions (Donelan's) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Rosemary Turkey	<sup>9</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Potato Pollack <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None
<sup>12</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Cheese Omelet <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>13</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Rotisserie Chicken (Boston Market) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Chicken Teriyaki	<sup>14</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Roast Beef Sandwiches (Junction) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>15</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Vegetable Penne (Filho's Cucina) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Chicken Picatta	<sup>16</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Apple Pork <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None
<sup>19</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Potato Pollack <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>20</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Pizza (Littleton Sub Shoppe) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Beef & Lentil Chili	<sup>21</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Christmas Party: Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Veg Medley (Donelan's) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>22</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Breakfast Burritos (Karyn's Kitchen) <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Swedish Meatballs	<sup>23</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Meatloaf <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None
<sup>26</sup>  Closed in observance of Christmas	<sup>27</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Chicken Cacciatore <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Chicken Cacciatore	<sup>28</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Macaroni & Cheese <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None	<sup>29</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> Nashoba Park Luncheon—menu to be announced <u>Meals on Wheels</u> MOC: Roasted Pork	<sup>30</sup> <u>Senior Center</u> MOC: Chicken & White Bean Chili <u>Meals on Wheels</u> None

# MART Van

Please call 978-772-8261 to schedule a ride  
Call the MART van directly at (978) 514-5118 for return trips

## Fares:

\$1.00 each way in-town

\$2.00 each way, out of town

The MART Van is available to Ayer residents age 60+ and those with disabilities of any age.

Rides must be reserved 48 hours in advance!

Special Programs may cause modifications to this schedule.

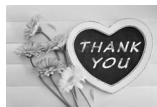
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning 8am-12pm	Leominster & Fitchburg	Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Harvard, Devens	Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Harvard, Devens	Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Harvard, Devens	Acton & Concord
Afternoon 12-4pm	Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Harvard, Devens	Group Shopping (see below)	Market Basket in Littleton	Ayer, Shirley, Groton, Harvard, Devens	Loaves & Fishes Deliveries

## Group Shopping:

- 1st Tuesday: Nashua Mall Plaza (Nashua): Christmas Tree Shops, Kohls, Burlington Coat Factory, LL Bean  
2nd Tuesday: Walmart (Lunenburg)  
3rd Tuesday: Target (Leominster)  
4th Tuesday: Highland Commons (Hudson/Berlin line): Market Basket, BJs, TJ Maxx, Lowe's, Cabelas, Michaels, Bed Bath & Beyond, PetSmart, and more.

Many thanks to the following businesses who have  
donated to the Ayer Senior Center recently:

*Ayer Shop & Save  
Bemis Corporation*



## Important Phone Numbers

**Community Legal Aid—Fitchburg**

(978) 516-5155

**Elder Abuse Hotline**

(800) 922-2275

**Executive Office of Elder Affairs**

(617) 727-7750

**Fuel Assistance**

(978) 342-4520

**Aging Services of North Central Massachusetts**

(978) 537-7411

**Nashoba Nursing Service**

(978) 425-6675

**SHINE Medicare Counseling**

(508) 422-9931

## Tax Relief for Seniors

Would you like to put your skills, expertise, hobbies and interests to good use for the town, while at the same time reducing your property tax bill?

You can work up to 105 hours at the equivalent of \$14.25/hr to receive up to \$1500.00 off your taxes!

While you can be placed with any town department, the Senior Center is looking for:

- Receptionist to answer phones
- Handyman to assist seniors with basic home maintenance
- Homemakers or Personal Care Attendants (training available)
- Craft class instructors
- Social media manager
- Technology tutor
- Much, much more!

**Interested in learning more?  
Call the Senior Center at  
978-772-8260**

# Alzheimer's: Tips to Make the Holidays More Enjoyable

(excerpted from MayoClinic.com)

The holiday season can cause mixed feelings for a family affected by Alzheimer's disease or other dementia. While typically a time for celebration, families may experience a sense of loss for the way things used to be. For caregivers, the holidays may create added work. You'll also have to consider the needs of the person with dementia during holiday decorating and gatherings. By adjusting your expectations and modifying some traditions, you may find meaningful ways to celebrate holidays.



## Creating a Safe and Calm Space:

To create an appropriate environment during the holidays for the person with dementia:

- **Tone down decorations.** Avoid blinking lights or large decorative displays that can cause confusion. Avoid decorations that cause clutter or require you to rearrange a familiar room.
- **Avoid safety hazards.** Substitute electric candles for burning candles. If you light candles, don't leave them unattended. Avoid fragile decorations or decorations that could be mistaken for edible treats, such as artificial fruits. If you have a tree, secure it to a wall.
- **Play favorite music.** Familiar or favorite holiday music may be enjoyable. Adjust the volume to be relaxing and not distressing.

## Adapting Holiday Activities:

To help the person with dementia enjoy the holidays:

- **Prepare together.** Mix batter, decorate cookies, open holiday cards or make simple decorations. Focus on the task rather than the outcome.
- **Host a small gathering.** Aim to keep celebrations quiet and relaxed. Plan the gathering at the best time of day for the person with dementia. Keep daily routines in place as much as possible.
- **Provide a quiet place.** If you are having guests over, provide a quiet place for the person with dementia to have time alone or to visit with one person at a time.
- **Plan meaningful activities.** You might read a favorite holiday story, look at photo albums, watch a favorite holiday movie or sing songs.
- **Keep outings brief.** If you'll be attending a holiday gathering, plan to be brief or be prepared to leave early if necessary. Make sure there is a place to rest or take a break.

**Preparing Holiday Visitors:** To help visitors prepare for holiday time with a person with dementia:

- **Provide an update.** Let guests know ahead of time about any changes in behavior or memory since their last visit. Providing a recent photo can help people prepare for changes in appearance.
- **Offer communication tips.** Suggest ways for guests to listen patiently, such as not criticizing repeated comments, not correcting errors and not interrupting.
- **Suggest activities.** Tell guests ahead of time what activities you have planned or suggest something they might bring, such as a photo album.

## Taking care of yourself:

Self-care is crucial for caregivers during the holidays. To make the season enjoyable:

- **Pick and choose.** Focus on the holiday activities and traditions that are most important to you. Remember that you can't do it all.
- **Manage others' expectations.** Set realistic expectations for what you can contribute to family holiday celebrations.
- **Delegate.** Let family and friends help with cleaning, addressing cards and shopping for gifts.
- **Make time for yourself.** Ask a family member or friend to give you a break so that you can enjoy a holiday outing without caregiving responsibilities.

## Trusting your instincts:

Simplifying celebrations, planning ahead and setting boundaries can help you minimize stress and create a pleasant holiday experience for you and the person with dementia.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<h1>December 2022</h1>			<b>1</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Bingo	<b>2</b> 9:00 Coffee Hour 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch
<b>5</b> 9:00 S-B-F with Jeff 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 11:45 Gardening 12:00 Lunch  <i>SHINE by Appt</i>  <i>Fuel Assistance by Appt</i>	<b>6</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 10:00 Journaling 11:00 Tai Chi 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Rummikub 1:00 Tea Trees	<b>7</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Listening Session 1:00 Knit/Crochet	<b>8</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Bingo	<b>9</b> 9:00 Coffee Hour 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch 4:30 Grief Social
<b>12</b> 9:00 S-B-F with Jeff 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 11:45 Gardening 12:00 Lunch 2:00 Mobile Store Pond St Bldg A 3:00 Mobile Store Pond St Bldg B 5:00 Dinner & Lights	<b>13</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 10:00 Journaling 11:00 Cribbage with a Cop 11:00 Tai Chi 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Massage 1:00 Rummikub 2:00 COA Meeting	<b>14</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 11:00 Women's Conversation 11:00 Grief Support 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Knit/Crochet	<b>15</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Bingo	<b>16</b> 9:00 Coffee Hour 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Recipe Jars
<b>19</b> 9:00 S-B-F with Jeff 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 11:45 Gardening 12:00 Lunch 2:00 Mobile Store: Pleasant St <i>Fuel Assistance by Appt</i>	<b>20</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 10:00 Journaling 11:00 Cribbage 11:00 Tai Chi 12:00 Lunch & 1:00 Rummikub	<b>21</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Christmas Lunch & Party	<b>22</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Bingo	<b>23</b> 9:00 Coffee Hour 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch
<b>26</b>  <b>CLOSED</b>  <b>in observance of</b>  <b>Christmas</b>	<b>27</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 10:00 Journaling 11:00 Cribbage 11:00 Tai Chi 12:00 Lunch <i>No afternoon programs</i>	<b>28</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 11:00 Women's Conversation 12:00 Lunch 2:30 Grief Support	<b>29</b> 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch 1:00 Bingo	<b>30</b> 9:00 Coffee Hour 9:00 Chair Exercise 10:00 Intermediate Chair Exercise 12:00 Lunch  <i>No afternoon programs</i>