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# Hinsdale/Peru COA Newsletter

## December 1, 2020      Volume 2 No 4

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**Hinsdale/Peru Council on Aging**  
39 South Street, Hinsdale, MA 01235  
[www.HinsdaleMass.com](http://www.HinsdaleMass.com) Phone: 413-655-2929

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*It is the Mission of the Hinsdale/Peru Council on Aging to encourage participation, to provide services available to seniors and to promote activities that will enhance their quality of life.*

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*(The Council on Aging board members will not be meeting until further notice due to the uptick of COVID cases.)*

**Best Wishes to all seniors** who have celebrated their 90<sup>th</sup> or 90+ birthdays in 2020. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to celebrate the occasion with our Super Senior Party this year. In lieu of the in-person celebration, the COA mailed all seniors 90 and over a unique handmade birthday card and a gift certificate to Ozzie's Steak & Eggs. Seniors receiving the unexpected card & gift were very appreciative, many sending thank you notes to the COA. 😊😊

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**Thank you** to all seniors who signed up to receive the COA Quarterly Newsletter. **If you would like to receive your copy by email**, please provide your name & email address by emailing [coa@hinsdalema.gov](mailto:coa@hinsdalema.gov) 😊 (Note: if you have not received the email version, you will need to add the COA email to your address book)

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**The October 5, 2020 Flu Clinic** was a great success! Nearly 70 flu shots were given to seniors. Members of the Council on Aging worked tirelessly to keep things moving while following the CDC guidelines. Many thanks 😊 to Nancy Slattery RN for administering the flu shots. A shout out to the Hinsdale Fire Dept. for preparing the firehouse for the event. Thanks to Staples for donating the laminated posters (that were placed around town on the traditional scarecrows) advertising the Flu Clinic. 😊

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**Witty Words of Wisdom:** "Accept that some days you're the pigeon 😊 and some days you're the statue."

*"This newsletter is paid for, in part, by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs"*



### INSIDE

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- Seniors 75+ designated days to renew driving license at RMV

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### **Medicare Open Enrollment for the year 2021**

**Ends December 7th**

*Don't overpay for your Medicare insurance!!*

To find out the best plan for you, call Cathy Spinney at 413-655-2929 for an appointment and she will review your present plan as well as your other options.

**Note:** *the dates given in Sept. newsletter were incorrect.* 😊

## New Peru Council on Aging Director

We are pleased to announce that a new director, **Luanne Forgea**, has been hired for the position of Council on Aging in Peru. 😊 If you would like to join the Peru Council on Aging as a board member or if you need assistance with anything senior-related in Peru, do not hesitate to email Luanne at [coa@townofperuma.com](mailto:coa@townofperuma.com).

During the pandemic, Peru and Hinsdale have been holding off on any gatherings. **We are looking forward to the time when we soon can all get back together!** 😊

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### 😊 “Happy Holidays Hunt Contest” 😊

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused many events to be cancelled. Unfortunately, all Hinsdale/Peru Council on Aging events have been on hold since March of this year. That now includes our Annual Holiday Party, which has always been a big hit and well-attended by our seniors.

By way of making up for the cancellation of the Holiday Party, and in an attempt to put some fun into this joyous season, we have planned a contest to celebrate this “Season of Love and Giving” 😊. If you can find all the smiley 😊 faces in this newsletter, you have a chance at winning a \$25.00 gift certificate for Ozzie’s Steak & Eggs.

**Rules:** 1) Count the number of 😊 smiley faces you find in this newsletter. 2) Call Cathy Spinney at 413-655-2929. 3) Leave your name, address, phone number **and the number of smiley faces 😊 you have counted** on her answering machine. The first 40 seniors to call with the correct number will receive a gift certificate. Good Luck! Have Fun! Enjoy the **Holiday Hunt!!**

***The Hinsdale/Peru COA Board members wish one and all “Happy Holidays”...***

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**SHINE = “Serving Health Information Needs of Elders”**



Your SHINE Councilor, Cathy Spinney 😊, offers free, unbiased, knowledgeable assistance with all of your Medicare choices. The SHINE program is a federally funded, *free health insurance counseling program for Medicare beneficiaries*. It is staffed with highly trained, knowledgeable counselors who can offer you an unbiased review of ALL Medicare choices offered in The Berkshires.

Open enrollment for the 2021 Part D Drug plan is from October 15, 2020 through December 7, 2020. You still have time to review your drug and prescription needs with Cathy in order to find the overall lowest annual drug cost for you. Call 413-655-2929 for an appointment. She will help you navigate the confusing world of Medicare!



## HELP WITH HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS

Groups in the Berkshires stand ready to help people concerned about how they'll make ends meet this winter. Here's a look at some of the resources available during the pandemic from the [Berkshire Community Action Council Inc.](#)...

Loan programs: The council says it can loan up to \$500 with repayment terms of up to a year, with no payments required in the first six months.

Fuel assistance: Eligibility is based on the last 30 days of income, meaning that people who have lost work or hours may be able to receive help. According to the council, people who qualify for home heating fuel assistance can become eligible for 27-36 percent reductions in their electric bills, as well.

For information on BCAC programs, call 413-445-4503

☺ **See last page of this newsletter for more info on the Fuel Assistance Program** ☺

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## Senior Days & Hours at Registry of Motor Vehicles



**Mass. Law requires drivers who are age 75 or older to renew licenses or ID's in person.** The RMV has designated Wednesdays in November and December at (17) ☺ RMV Service Centers to serve these customers. This new customer service option is now offered at locations including Greenfield, Leominster, North Adams, Pittsfield, Springfield, and Worcester.

The Wednesday Senior hours vary by location and are exclusively for customers 75 years of age or older ☺ whose driver's license or ID card expire in September, October, November and December. This new service option is being offered to facilitate proper "social-distancing" protocols. Information regarding the new service hours and additional resources for seniors can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/older-drivers>.

☺ **Senior hours are by appointment only.**

If you are an **AAA member**, you may make a reservation now to renew your driver's license/ID at an AAA location. Visit [aaa.com/appointments](http://aaa.com/appointments) to schedule your visit. If you are not an AAA member, visit [Mass.Gov/RMV](http://Mass.Gov/RMV) to make a reservation to renew at an RMV Service Center. Email or call the RMV for assistance to renew at [MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us) or Call the RMV at 857-368-8005.

The RMV recommends ☺ that all customers get ready online before their appointment. Visit [www.Mass.Gov/RMV](http://www.Mass.Gov/RMV) and click on "Online Service Center," select your renewal transaction (Driver's License or ID), and then follow the prompts to verify your identity and start your transaction.



**THIS IS YOUR December, 2020 QUARTERLY COA NEWSLETTER.** Watch for COA Event Posters announcing Sr. Lunch menus, etc. at Hinsdale Library, Town Hall, Ozzie's & Hinsdale Trading Post. 😊 Also, check the Hinsdale Town Website at <https://www.hinsdalemass.com> for news on upcoming COA events.

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### Fuel Assistance Program



Fuel Assistance is a federally funded program to help low-income households with their heating bills. The program begins November 1<sup>st</sup> and ends April 30<sup>th</sup> each year. All heating types may be eligible for assistance: oil, propane, kerosene, coal, cordwood, wood pellets, natural gas, electric and even some households that have heat included in their rent. Payments for actual usage or fuel delivery are made directly to the heating vendor except when the cost of heating is included in the rent.

If you are eligible for fuel assistance, you may be eligible for a discount on your utilities. The gas and electric companies offer a discount. Fuel assistance will automatically notify all utility companies. A discount is offered by Verizon. This discount is called Lifeline. You need to contact them to 😊 determine your eligibility. Fuel Assistance Application Forms can be found on the BCAC website [www.bcacinc.org/fuel-assistance](http://www.bcacinc.org/fuel-assistance)

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**The Mayo Clinic Newsletter is free.** “Stay up-to-date with the latest health info from experts at Mayo Clinic with the free general interest newsletter **HOUSECALL**”. To sign up go to [www.newslettersignup.mayoclinic.com](http://www.newslettersignup.mayoclinic.com) 😊