



City of Somerville

May, 2021

# Council on Aging News

Hello Friends,

Welcome to our May newsletter! May brings so much exciting news to share with you.

We are pleased to announce that the Somerville Council on Aging has been selected for a second grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council for transportation purposes. Through this grant we will be able to continue to provide taxi transportation for Somerville's seniors to the grocery store, pharmacy and for non-urgent medical appointments at no cost to you. Since our taxi program began in July, we have provided nearly 4,000 rides!

May also brings opportunities to join new sessions of nutrition classes, and declutter group, both via Zoom, or to join us for our first outdoor exercise sessions. Also, on May 13th we have the very special opportunity for a behind the scenes tour of the Wang Center, right from the comfort of our own homes! We will join a tour guide, via Zoom, to hear the history of the iconic building and even take a peak into the dressing rooms!

Whether you're hoping to try a new exercise, mental health program, or cultural opportunity, I'm certain you can find an activity to try within our newsletter!

Here's to a wonderful May,  
*-Ashley*



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## *Social Work Corner with Natasha Naim*

### *Aging and Alcohol Intake*

Aging is synonymous with change, and rightfully so. With age comes changes in how we view and think about the world and changes with our own bodies. While we may feel young at heart, it's important to take into consideration that our bodies respond differently than when we were younger. This is especially true in regards to alcohol consumption.

As we age, the way our bodies respond to alcohol changes as well. The amount of alcohol that our bodies could handle when we were younger is different than the amount of alcohol we can handle now. It takes less alcohol to become intoxicated which means re-evaluating the amount of alcohol you consume. Alcohol also remains in our body longer as we age, which means that the effects of drinking alcohol last longer.

Drinking alcohol can also interact with the medications we are taking. Alcohol mixed with certain medications can affect our cognition and make us feel sleepy or make us feel lightheaded. Some medications include alcohol as an ingredient, therefore increasing our risk for alcohol poisoning. Even taking over-the-counter medications can have negative side effects. Remember to talk to your doctor about how the medications you take can potentially interact with the alcohol that you consume.

If you are interesting is cutting down on your alcohol intake, consider talking to your doctor or a therapist about how to cut down effectively. Having a conversation with a professional can help you engage with alcohol in an appropriate way that doesn't put your health and safety at risk.

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**To RSVP to the following programs please call Natasha at 617-625-6600 ext. 2317 or e-mail her at [nnaim@somervillema.gov](mailto:nnaim@somervillema.gov)**

### *Mental Health Awareness*

**Tuesday, May 11th from 11:30 am-12:30 pm** the Somerville Council on Aging, in partnership with Roberta Robinson, from Cambridge Health Alliance, will be continuing our Mental Health Awareness series. Every month Roberta discusses new and interesting topics in regards to mental health.

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### *Book Club*

**Friday, May 21st from 10:00 am -11:00 am**

Do you love books and want to discuss your love of reading with others? Consider joining book club. Book club is now meeting online via Zoom.

This month's book will be: ***Rivera Gold*** by Laurie R. King

### ***Caregiver Check-In***

Are you a caregiver for a loved one and want to connect with other caregivers? Would you like to discuss the joys and challenges of caregiving? The Somerville Council on Aging is hosting a monthly check-in via Zoom for caregivers. Our next check-in will take place on ***Tuesday, May 25th from 11:30 am-12:30 pm.***

### ***Online De-cluttering Classes***

Sometimes it's easier to collect items and harder to get rid of them. De-cluttering can be a difficult process but you don't have to do it alone. If you are looking for support in regards to downsizing, decluttering or discarding items, consider joining the online de-cluttering support group. With a supportive group environment, you will learn how to turn your mountain of items into a manageable amount. Our next session will begin on ***Wednesday, May 26th at 11am.***

### ***Brown Box Distribution, Thursday, May 27th***

Many of us are facing food insecurities due to COVID-19. If you find yourself in need, please reach out to us! The COA can assist with applications for food stamps, our Brown Box shelf-stable food program, or connect you with a local food pantry.

### ***Adult Incontinence Supplies Available***

Through the generosity of the community, the Somerville Council on Aging has received donations of adult incontinence supplies. Styles and sizes vary. If you or a loved one are in need, please contact ***Natasha*** at ***617-625-6600 ext. 2317.***

### ***Somerville Prevention Services***



In recognition of April 2021 being Alcohol Awareness Month, Somerville Prevention worked with youth and community members to create a social media awareness campaign about underage drinking prevention and small alcohol bottle littering. We focused particularly on the impacts of youth exposure and the environment.

If you want to check out more, please go to [Facebook.com/SomervilleCares](https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCares) or our Instagram @somervilleprevention!

We will also be hosting a Virtual Small Alcohol Bottle Forum on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm. This event will be open to all community members to hear more about our extensive work on underage drinking prevention over the last few years. Learn more from youth and adult community members about their perspectives and identify strategies to address concerns. If you're interested in attending, please contact

***Kira Vaughan at 617-625-6600 ext. 4334 or email [kvaughan@somervillema.gov](mailto:kvaughan@somervillema.gov)***

### ***Did you know?***

In 2019, 96% of all Somerville Middle School students reported no current alcohol use! And in 2020, 86% of all Somerville High School students reported no current alcohol use!

## *Nutrition with Mary Marshall*

**Did you know that May 11th, is National Eat What You Want Day?**



Observed annually on May 11th, National Eat What You Want Day sets diets aside for a day of indulgence. It's about having one day a year of eating with no regrets. Whether you love donuts or fast food, today is your day to gratify without feeling guilty. The media constantly bombards us with images of the perfect body and it seems like every week we're told about something else that's not good for us. Add to that all the health food fads that come and go, it's no surprise we get so worried. Eat What You Want Day is a breath of fresh air, but how did it come about?

Eat What You Want Day was created by Thomas and Ruth Roy at [WELLCAT.COM](http://WELLCAT.COM) (Wellcat Herbs and Wellcat Quirky Holidays). Eat What You Want Day is just a way to enjoy life with friends and family. Many nutritionists even agree that "taking a short break" from your diet regimen is actually good for you.

Eat What You Want Day invites you to temporarily say goodbye to your usual eating plan. Do not think about whether something is healthy or whether you're on a diet: simply eat what you like. ***But do not overdo it:*** if you suffer from allergies or serious diseases, you should think about whether you should participate in Eat What You Want Day! And keep in mind that eat what you want doesn't mean eat all you can.

The saying, "Everything in moderation" applies to this holiday quite aptly. Though, we're not quite sure they meant EVERYTHING at the same time. Use this rare occasion and indulge in something you always wanted to try.

Source: [www.cute-calendar.com](http://www.cute-calendar.com)

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### *Upcoming Nutrition Classes*

A new series of ***Nutrition Classes*** will begin the week of ***May 3rd***  
Mondays at 11:00 am or Wednesdays at 10:00 am  
*New and returning members are welcome!*

**To RSVP please call Mary at 617-625-6600 ext. 2316 or e-mail her  
at [headtofitness10@yahoo.com](mailto:headtofitness10@yahoo.com)**

## *Chris Kowaleski, Health and Wellness*

### *May is Mental Health Awareness Month!*

As the days become nicer, there is nothing better for our mental health than to spend some time outside in the sun amongst the new growth. Grass has started to grow, flowers have started to bloom and leaves are starting to return to trees. Spending time outside can help improve your mood and help reduce the feelings of stress or anger while bringing calm to your mind. It has also been shown that spending time outside increases a person's activity level which in turn increases serotonin levels within the body. Such an increase can help ward off depression and bring positive changes to your mental health.

This is also a great time of year, if you haven't already done so, for spring cleaning and to reduce the amount of clutter that may have built up over winter. According to Rush University of Chicago, "putting off cleaning tasks and letting clutter pile up can have an impact on your physical and mental health". Clutter can disrupt our concentration, increase anxiety, and increase the risk of falling.

As we go through the month of May, be mindful of the steps we can take to improve our mental health!

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### *Outside Exercises Classes and Walking Group*

We are excited to announce the start of outside exercise classes and walking group! Beginning on **Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**, Chris will host outside exercise classes on **Mondays at 10:00am** and on **Wednesdays at 1:00pm**. Each class will meet in front of the Holland Street Center at the flag pole and will incorporate stretching, strength training and balance exercises.

The **walking group** will meet on **Friday mornings at 9:30am** in front of the Holland Street Center and will enjoy walks through area neighborhoods.

All classes and groups will be limited to 8 participants and will follow City of Somerville social distancing and mask policy. Pre-registration is required.

**For additional information or to register for one of the above programs, contact Chris by email at [ckowaleski@somervillema.gov](mailto:ckowaleski@somervillema.gov) or by phone at 617-625-6600 ext. 2315.**

## *The Somerville COA is a MAPC Taxi Grant Recipient!*

Through a MAPC grant, the Council on Aging is offering free taxi transportation to all Somerville residents over the age of 60.

### **Rides can be used for:**

Grocery Shopping in Somerville  
Pharmacy Prescription pick up in Somerville  
Routine Medical Appointments in the follow areas:  
Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Everett, Revere, Boston or the V.A. in  
Jamaica Plain or West Roxbury

For more information or to register for a ride please call:  
**Connie Lorenti at 617-625-6600 ext. 2319**

**Monday thru Wednesday: 8:30am-4:30pm**

**Thursday: 8:30am-6:30pm**

**Fridays: 8:30am-1:30pm**

*All rides must be pre-approved by Council on Aging staff **TWO DAYS** prior to your transportation need.*



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## *Upcoming Programs*

### *May Mask Drive Thru*

**Monday, May 10th from 10:30 am-12:00 pm**  
**Holland St. Center**

The COA has masks available for Somerville residents who are 60 and over. If you are in need of a mask or may know of a friend or neighbor who may need a new mask, stop by our Drive-Thru.

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### *Virtual Wang Theatre Tour*

**Thursday, May 13th 1:00 pm—Via Zoom** Join Scott Towers as he takes us on a tour of the Wang Theatre. Learn about the theatre's architectural highlights and unique history – from its hotel roots and glamorous days as a movie “cathedral”, to today's role as an impressive venue for performances and events.

**Space is limited**

**Please RSVP to Maureen at [mbastardi@somervillema.gov](mailto:mbastardi@somervillema.gov) or 617-625-6600 ext. 2335.**

### *Music and Movement with Steve*

***Wednesday, May 19th from 10:30 am-11:30 am—Via Zoom or Call In***

Join Steve as he plays guitar, sings and leads gentle movements. Just tapping your toe or singing along can help move your body in new ways.

***Please RSVP to Debby at [dhiggins@somervillema.gov](mailto:dhiggins@somervillema.gov) or 617-625-6600 ext. 2321.***

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### *Music and Munch*

***Wednesday May 19th from 12:00 pm-1:00 pm***

Join us online via Zoom or by phone to learn, sing-along, relax and enjoy some music while you munch.

***To RSVP call Debby at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or e-mail her at [dhiggins@somervillema.gov](mailto:dhiggins@somervillema.gov)***

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### *May Boxed Lunch Pick-Up*

May's monthly boxed lunch pick up will be held on ***Thursday, May 20th at the Ralph and Jenny Center.***

While we can't share lunch together we hope you are able to drive thru to pick up a lunch.

***Masks and RSVPs required; please call Connie at 617-625-6600 ext.2319 to sign up.***

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### *Virtual Bingo Day*

***Tuesday, May 25th from 10:00 am - 11:00 am***

Join us online or via phone to play ***BINGO***.

We will supply you with the bingo cards and instructions.

***Space is limited***

***To RSVP call Debby at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or e-mail her at [dhiggins@somervillema.gov](mailto:dhiggins@somervillema.gov)***



*Connect with us!*

Stay connected with the COA by:

Following us on *Facebook* at [www.facebook.com/SomervilleCoa](http://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCoa)

Joining our *Google Email Group*— contact *Debby* at  
*617-625-6600 ext. 2321* or [dhiggins@somervillema.gov](mailto:dhiggins@somervillema.gov)

Call us at *617-625-6600 ext. 2300*



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