

---

---

# Leyden Life

---

Leyden, Massachusetts

March 2015

---

**Selectboard Office Hours:**

Monday 12:00 - 5:00 PM, Tuesday—Thursday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Friday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Tax Collector:**

Monday and Wednesday 5:30 - 8:00 PM

**Assessors Office:**

Wednesday 2:00 - 8:00 PM

## Select Board

### SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

The Select Board will meet on Thursdays March 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM, and March 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:45 PM in their office. To be added to the agenda or to get a copy of it, please contact Bob Hardesty at 774-4111 or [leydenselectboard@crocker.com](mailto:leydenselectboard@crocker.com) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Anyone not on the posted agenda is welcome to address the Selectboard at the end of the meeting during the “Citizens’ concerns not anticipated in advance of the meeting” agenda item time.

### FEBRUARY TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Tue, Mar 3 7:00 PM Agricultural Commission  
Wed, Mar 4 6:30 PM Board of Assessors  
Tue, Mar 10 5:30 PM Board of Health (at the Police Station)  
Wed, Mar 11 7:00 PM Planning Board  
Thu, Mar 12 9:00 AM Selectboard  
Mon, Mar 16 7:30 PM Conservation Commission  
Tue, Mar 17 7:00 PM Historical Commission (Downstairs at  
Wed, Mar 18 6:30 PM Board of Assessors the church)  
Thu, Mar 26 6:45 PM Selectboard

Any changes to these meeting dates or times will be posted separately. Meetings *not* held monthly will also be posted separately.

*Note:* Monthly meetings are now posted on the town web site at [www.townofleyden.com](http://www.townofleyden.com). Any changes or additions to meeting times and/or dates should be forwarded to the Municipal Assistant. —*Selectboard*

## Historical Commission

The Leyden Historical Commission is looking for another member to join our team. If you enjoy Leyden history, are willing to help work on historical projects, and can meet one evening a month, please contact Ginny Rockwood at 774-2694 or Bob Snow at 772-0924 for more information. You can also come visit us at our next meeting on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM downstairs at the Leyden United Methodist Church.

## Edith Fisher Memorial

Merton Fisher has sent us a generous memorial gift in memory of his mother Edith. Edith was a wonderful writer, and we would like to find some of her work to reprint in Leyden Life. Can anyone help? So far we have some of her recipes, which we will run in the next issue if we cannot find poems or other writing! (*Note: See Page 3 for Edith Fisher article.*)

## Town Clerk

### TOWN CAUCUS

The annual Town Caucus to nominate candidates for the 2015 Annual Town Election, May 16, will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2015, at 7:00 PM at Town Hall. Offices open for nomination are as follows: **Assessor** (3-year term), Kenneth Spatcher, incumbent; **Board of Health** (3-year term), Gloria Fisher (I); **Constable** (3-year term), Wallace Herzig (I); **Library Trustee** (3-year term), Richard DiMatteo (I); **Moderator** (1-year term), Katherine DiMatteo (I); **Planning Board** (5-year term), Robert Snow (I); **Selectboard** (3-year term), Jeffrey Neipp (I); **Selectboard** (1-yr term), Barbara Wallace (I); **Town Clerk** (3-year term), Robert Hardesty (I); **Tree Warden** (1-year term), Edmund Klaus (I).

### ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND ELECTION

The Annual Town Meeting and Election will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2015, at Town Hall. Polling hours for the Election are 8:00am to 4:00pm. Town Meeting will begin at 9:00am. The last day to register to vote at Town Meeting and Town Election is April 27, 2015.

### DOG LICENSES

Dog licenses for 2015 are now available during regular business hours. Fees are as follows: Neutered and spayed - \$10.00; Not altered - \$15.00; Kennel, 1-4 - \$30.00; Kennel, 5-10 - \$40.00; Kennel, more than 10 - \$50.00.

### NEW TOWN CLERK

After much thought and consideration, I have decided not to run for re-election as your Town Clerk. I have held the office since 2002. I have found it increasingly difficult and time consuming to be responsible for both Town Clerk and Municipal Assistant. At this point, I feel that I can serve the Town and the Selectboard more effectively by devoting my time and efforts to the position of Municipal Assistant. That being said, keep in mind that I will be available for help and training for the new Town Clerk. Thanks for your support and social interaction over the past years.

Town Clerk Office Hours are Mondays 8:00 AM – 12:00 NOON and  
Wednesdays 4:30 – 6:00 PM Phone 774-7769

## To our Mail Subscribers

Renewal forms are enclosed with this issue. Please send them back as soon as possible! Thank you.

## Wells Trust Scholarship Awards

The Fred W. Wells Trust is an organization that provides scholarships to students graduating from high school and to those enrolled in college or an advanced educational program. Recipients are selected based on scholarship, need, extracurricular activities and recommendations.

Applications may be obtained from high school college counselors or at Town Hall during normal business hours. Please note that all applications, recommendation letters and official transcripts now need to be postmarked no later than **Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>**. **Please note: This is a new deadline date—moved from the previous April 1<sup>st</sup> date.**

Please call Lois at 774-4092 for further information if needed. Thank you.

---

---

## Robertson Memorial Library

Library Hours: Monday 1:00 – 6:00 PM; Wednesday 1:00 – 6:00 PM, and  
Saturday 10:00 AM to NOON Phone 773-9334 (Leave a message any time.)

On a cold December day, Ed Johnson visited the library for his usual two books. We chatted for a while and as he was leaving, I mentioned to him that the mail delivery person was having trouble with our library mailbox; it was set too low and kept bumping into the box beside it forcing her to get out of the car, trudge around and place the mail into the box. This was fine during the summer, but the cold of winter made it a chilly chore! Ed ambled over, looked over the ‘set up’ of the box holder, and left without too much comment. Well, true to form, he returned on a day when I was not at the library, undid the metal bolts, drilled a hole higher up, and readjusted the mailbox to make it convenient for our mail lady. All I can say is thank you, Ed. You are one special friend of the library!

Glen Benson is a wonderful volunteer... he is also a great problem solver. If he signs up to volunteer and for some reason can't come in on a Saturday, he asks his wife Kathy to cover for him! Kathy, you are pretty special, and I've added your name to our volunteer list! Glen, you have been super and have volunteered countless times when a Saturday has an unfilled slot or when another volunteer runs into a problem! To all patrons, our volunteers are great, and if you would like to join the ranks, let me know!

At a recent trustees meeting, the team decided to donate withdrawn books to the Leyden Café. All money donated by those who select a book will benefit the café, and we will be glad that some of the library's discarded books have found homes in Leyden! Check them out; they are on the windowsill waiting for you!

Christmas in January! In the return box in late January sat a gift to the library. Since I'm too cheap to spend library money unless I absolutely *have* to, someone donated a great little pencil sharpener! I can now use sharpened pencils rather than stubs! A big thank you to Cornelia Reid who felt sorry for this place and took matters into her own hands! This library is now SHARP!

January ended with a major snow storm, and February brought two even bigger events to Franklin County. The library was closed on these snow days, but we were open on the following days to take care of our wonderful patrons. Please feel free to call the library to see if I've made it in on the day following a storm so that you can get what you need to survive this *cold* winter! A special thank you to Sam Allis, who has done a fabulous job of moving snow and making the library accessible and safe for patrons! And a thank you to Johan Livingstone who saw me shoveling and came to my rescue with, "You're too old to be doing this!" (I was his teacher once; is this payback?)

Western Mass. Electric has contacted us regarding a free Kill a Watt kit which allows homeowners to measure the electric use of household appliances and electronics to help determine how to reduce energy consumption and expenses. I have indicated that we would like to have a kit to lend to patrons. I'll let you know when it arrives!

We have many new DVDs and books! Come and see!

—Chris Johnston

## Board of Health

There will be an opening on the Board of Health at election time. If you have any interest in working with the Board of Health in maintaining a healthy environment for our residents, please let Bob Hardesty know so your name can be put on the ballot.

I will not be running for office again. Due to health reasons I cannot give the position the energy and attention it requires. I would like to thank residents and committees for all the support over the past few years. It has been my pleasure to represent our town and work with you all.

It is my hope that residents will continue to work with the board to clean up yards by eliminating old tires and anything that collects and holds water which makes breeding areas for mosquitoes. Also, old cars and machinery can impact the soil and wells. Let's work together at being proud of our town by doing what each of us can to make our environment safe, healthy and more beautiful. —Gloria Fisher, Chair

## Leyden Life Lowdown

### EASY SUBMISSION

Submit an e-mail to Cornelia Reid at [cr43wr41@gmail.com](mailto:cr43wr41@gmail.com), Carolyn Asbury at [carolyn.asbury@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.asbury@gmail.com), and Bob Taylor at [bobtwo@verizon.net](mailto:bobtwo@verizon.net). (Yes, please send it to *all three* of us.)

Either attach a Word document or include the information in the body of the e-mail. If e-mail is not possible for you, hard copies of items for *Leyden Life* can be left in the book drop outside the Library. The deadline for inputs is the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month**.

If you would like to receive the **electronic version of *Leyden Life*** in PDF format, please email the same three addresses listed above.

### THANKS

Thanks to Ann McNelly and Fritz Mesloh, Ruth Bellows and Don Clark, Angels' Rest, Dorothy Howes, Ellen Coty, Bill and Ellen Dickson, Gerald and Patricia Sanville, Sue and Fred Pazmino, Marie Lovley and Carol Doerpholz for donations.

Thanks to Lois Feldman and Karen Loomis for collating, and thanks to deliverers Marie Bartlett, Marie Lovley, and the Cafferys. (We apologize if we missed anyone.)

## DISCLAIMER

*Leyden Life* is not an official publication of the town, nor an official source of town business. We do our best to print accurately and distribute promptly the announcements and information we receive. Please check with the town to verify information regarding town business or activities.

## Leyden Life

Published monthly in Leyden, Massachusetts by a non-profit group of volunteers.

Editors: Cornelia Reid 774-5146,  
Carolyn Asbury 774-2840

Layout and Design: Bob Taylor 624-8965

Items for the next issue are due to Cornelia at [cr43wr41@gmail.com](mailto:cr43wr41@gmail.com), Carolyn at [carolyn.asbury@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.asbury@gmail.com), and Bob at [bobtwo@verizon.net](mailto:bobtwo@verizon.net) by 5:00 PM on

**Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.**

If you cannot e-mail your submission, please leave it in the book drop outside the Library.

**Donations are always welcome!** Send to:

Leyden Life c/o Reid  
30 West Leyden Road  
Leyden, MA 01337

## Leyden Council on Aging (COA)

**Mission Statement:** The Leyden Council on Aging is a senior advocacy group sponsored and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elder Affairs. Our purpose is to enrich the lives of Leyden residents 60 and older, by providing educational and recreational opportunities that promote the physical, social, and mental wellness of our residents, and by directing seniors and their families to local and state agencies available to address their personal needs.

Like everyone else, we're trying hard to think Spring and new beginnings! The COA Board has digested the senior survey results, in which transportation and exercise ranked first and foremost among many issues listed. We plan to work vigorously with the Selectboard in the coming months to explore transportation options for seniors. We also hope to add an exercise component to our program planning very soon, in response to an overwhelming interest in exercise programs across all age groups. We will keep you updated!

In addition, the Council has smaller projects that we would like to undertake (birthday cards to seniors, phone calls, shopping and errands, emergency food pantry, social services information, help with the Lunch Club, etc.) but we need help to make these ideas a reality. If you are interested in working with us, please come on March 20 to find out more. (See below.)

### Wednesday, March 4

◆ **4:30-5:30 ~ Monthly Business Meeting** at Town Hall. Anyone is welcome to attend. Survey results will be available to look at.

### Wednesday, March 18

◆ **10:30 ~ Life in the Cockpit** ~ Clint Davis will present highlights of his career as a pilot first with the Navy, and later with TWA (remember them?). He will include interesting facts about airplanes, aircraft carriers, and domestic and world airports. There will be time for a question and answer session afterward. Town Hall.

◆ **12:00 ~ Lunch Club** ~ Menu includes egg drop soup, pork-fried rice, and a light dessert. Town Hall.

**Please call Sue Howarth at 774-3118, at least 2 days in advance to reserve a space.**

### Friday, March 20

◆ **2:00 ~ Volunteer Invitation** ~ Join us at Town Hall for coffee, tea and goodies, and hear about ways (big and small) that you can help Leyden's seniors. No pressure...and no long-term commitment required. If you are unable to come to the meeting but are interested in helping, please call Sue Howarth @ 774-3118 or wmhwarth@hotmail.com.

**Weather Note:** Programs will not be held if school is closed or dismissed early due to bad weather.

**Need transportation?** Call Sue Howarth at 774-3118.

## Remembering Edith Fisher

The most valued and cherished item my mother bequeathed to me was her diaries. Mother started writing about her daily activities on January 1, 1984 shortly after my father died. She wrote about baking, cooking, playing cards, rides, tag sales, Leyden events, family and friends and so much more. If she did it, she jotted it down. She wrote about experimenting with recipes to come up with new and unusual recipes of her own. She would serve them to her card-playing partners and visitors. If they liked it, it was a "keeper". If they didn't much care for it, it was a "not again".

She wrote about rides on unknown country roads sometimes alone but more often than not with one or more of her closest, dearest friends. There was not a road Edith wouldn't take. I know—I was the driver on some of her "let's go for a ride" adventures. She'd say, "this road has to come out somewhere"; if it dead-ended or her passenger got too nervous or concerned to drive on, she would reverse direction and start down another road.

Mother's favorite ride was the Green River Road. She wrote an article for *Local Color* which was a collection of stories by Western Massachusetts Senior Citizens. She describes coming to a spot where yellow butterflies were hatching. "There were thousands of them." She stopped the car and her friend and she were "awed by the sight". Mother felt so very honored and thought it was such a privilege to be asked to write the Foreword for the "The Last Village Smithy." Mother loved living in Leyden. The foreword tells the reader why. Mother writes about her closest, dearest friends from across the road, throughout Leyden and Greenfield, and some in other states.

If you ever went on a ride, went to a tag sale, worked a Leyden event, volunteered, or stepped into her home, you may be in Edith's diaries. Mother's last diary entry was on August 16, 2012 a few days before she was taken to Baystate Medical Center. She returned to Leyden for only a few hours after leaving that day. Since mother's death I have had the unique and fortunate opportunity to read about my mother in her own words.

—Merton Fisher



## Historical Commission

### The Campaign to Acquire the Old Forge Continues!

The Leyden Historical Commission expresses its gratitude for the generous donations to its fundraising campaign so far. Every donation is important and brings us closer to our goal.

The focus of the campaign is to acquire the Old Forge as a museum and for storage of Leyden's historical and material culture. If at the end of the five-year campaign we do not have enough funds to purchase the Old Forge, all donations will be returned to the donors. Donations can be mailed to Allison Snow, Friends of the Leyden Historical Commission, 200 Mid County Road, Leyden, MA 01337. Make checks payable to **Town of Leyden** with the memo stating that it's for the forge fundraiser. All donations are tax deductible.

Please address all questions to Ginny Rockwood at 774-2694 or Bob Snow at 772-0924. *Thank you for your continued support!*

# In Memory of Katie Ainsworth

Katie Ainsworth, longtime Leyden resident, died on February 10<sup>th</sup> at Charlene Manor in Greenfield. Katie was a mainstay of many parts of life in Leyden, including the Methodist Church, the Historical Commission, the PTO, and the Fire Department. Most notably to us, in 1976 she and her husband Ray founded the Newsletter, a monthly publication for and about Leyden. After Ray died in 1987, Katie continued the Newsletter on her own until her retirement in 2002, when it became the current *Leyden Life*.

The original Newsletter was typed by Katie, with a handwritten banner, and then mimeographed on the church's machine (which finally gave out in the mid-nineties). Then as now, volunteers helped at various stages. For the first two decades, submissions were handwritten or typed – no computers, no spell- or grammar-check! Katie was a fine writer, and a stickler for correct usage and clarity. She went over every entry with a critical eye and edited fiercely. Many of our editing practices today, such as always giving the day of the week for a date, and underlining it, go back to Katie. A favorite part of the Newsletter was the monthly calendar of lunch menus at the Elementary School!

The most noteworthy feature of all, however, was Katie's regular editorial, just under the masthead. She covered a range of topics, including thanks to the various departments and crews in Leyden (very regularly, in winter, the Highway Department), cautions to watch for children (or deer) on the road, updates on former residents, occasional memorials or congratulations, announcements and requests about Newsletter business. Most memorable were the paragraphs on her thoughts about life in Leyden—vivid observations of nature, the weather, the seasons; philosophical comments about country life; and sometimes, since Katie had high standards and was never afraid to speak her mind, her own spirited opinions about goings-on in Leyden or the world in general. These mini-essays never failed to interest, touch and provoke.

Those of us who put *Leyden Life* out every month have not forgotten the high bar Katie set for us. We are proud to be continuing in her footsteps. Thank you so much, Katie.

The family of Katie Ainsworth would like to thank everyone for being a part of her life. Katie spent almost half of her life in Leyden, a town she dearly loved. Being involved in many town activities, she got to know a lot of you.

Twenty-six of those years was spent writing, editing, printing and delivering the Leyden Newsletter, again, a project Katie loved. As some or most of you know, Katie always wrote a little ditty at the beginning of the Newsletter. They have chosen three pieces for us to print, each one about different things she cared about; flowers, nature and community, plus the editors have chosen two more to include.

Again, thank you for everything, *The family of Katie Ainsworth*

## August 1990

**Wildlife** sightings include a large doe that wandered leisurely down through our field a couple of weeks ago, and three young raccoons in the road between V. Snow's and E. Snow's on Greenfield Road. They moved over to the bandrail when I stopped to scold them, three "bandit" faces peering at me and not a camera in the car. Carol Johnson saw a bear crossing the road in the same area. They have had deer behind their house; they are such a pretty color this time of year.

## March 1991

Well, there is still plenty of time for all kinds of nasty weather but somehow, once we've got past February I always feel as if winter is on the wane. If it does snow, it usually doesn't last too long. Chickadees are saying "phoebe, phoebe" instead of the usual "chicka-

dee-dee-dee". I need to get down to the cellar and rub off all the sprouts on the potatoes that have begun to grow. The potatoes are in a dark corner and well covered but still they know that the days are lengthening and the sun is stronger and planting season is coming.

## June 1992

It's another terrific year for spring flowers and blossoms. Though many complained of the lingering cool, too much rain, etc., the coolness is what stretches out the blossoming season, and the rain nurtures the new leaves and grasses and starts everything growing. It's what makes New England New England! It is so lovely to look out across the field early on a May morning. Everything sparkles with dew, the air is fresh, birds are singing, sun beams across and highlights a clump of daffodils here and there. There are shadows, deep ones down by the big pine, just a smudge or a streak beside small bushes and the clothes poles. It's a picture a lot like life. When we are bogged down in the blackest of shadows, we need to lift up our eyes to see the shining light just beyond.

## January 1994

I would guess that if all the wishes for 1994 were listed, the overwhelming one would be for peace. Peace can never really be legislated nor voted; it will only come when there is no longer "us" or "them", when each person is treated with basic courtesy and a little kindness. Does everyone deserve it? Probably not, but are we to be judge and jury? The biblical verse says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged". I've often thought, though it is not spelled out in so many words, the phrase "and found wanting" completes the thought. If all of us got only what we deserve, we would be unhappy a lot of the time. Let's make an effort; pray for peace here on earth. Let it begin with me, and you, and you, and....

## April 1994

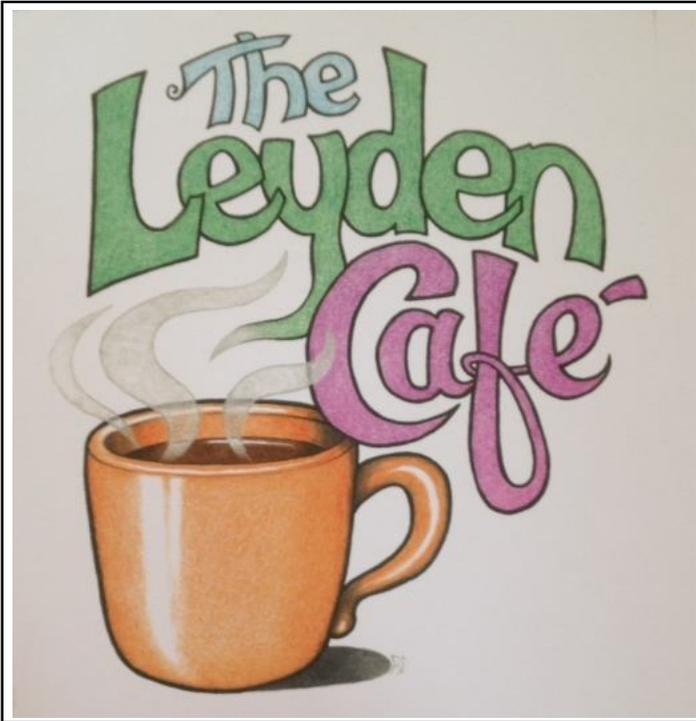
Winter is very reluctant to give way but it will happen. Brooks are running brimful, more in some places, and sap is being made into maple syrup, maple cream, and maple candies. The sun touches my cheek, sometimes it is warm and gentle, and birdsong begins before the sun even gets out of bed. Rubber boots for rain, slush, mud today or lined ones for snow? There are many contradictions but the batting cage has again appeared in Jim Baker's yard, it must be spring!

Hats off to our Highway Department for the outstanding job they have done coping with the winter that never seemed to end. The storms came fast and furious with barely time to deal with one before another began. Bill Franklin and Claytie Brooks spent many, many hours behind the wheel in the trucks plowing and sanding; Sonny Dobias, called in to operate the payloader, also put in many hours. Thank you all for a job well done!

## February 1997

Ten to eleven o'clock at night, outside light on, dog out for last trip, snow falling at a good rate or maybe it's foggy or a misty rain falling and so is the temperature. One of the nicest early morning sounds is the rumble of highway equipment and seeing the blinking, revolving light reflected on the bedroom wall that says the highway crew is out with the plows, sanders and payloader to deal with whatever Nature has thrown at us overnight.

We are honored and grateful that the Ainsworth family has included *Leyden Life* as a recipient of gifts in memory of our founding editor, Katie Ainsworth. Thanks to Dorothy Howes, Beverly and Arthur Williams, Joanne Stevens, Ruth Johnson and Bernice Brooks for memorial donations.



Spring is around the corner now. Cafe game night returns Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 9:30 PM. Please join us!

The Leyden café would like to host a Leyden Market Day on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:00 NOON, at the town hall. Crafters, artists, farmers, potters, any Leyden business people who want to sell their wares are encouraged to participate. If successful, we can plan monthly markets! This is a great chance to buy locally and support the community. Contact Holly Spatcher at [hollyspatcher@gmail.com](mailto:hollyspatcher@gmail.com) to sign up.

As always our Cafe is available for your group/meeting or event. We would hope to share this cozy space.

## Pear Rhodes Elementary School

This year the Pioneer District is participating in a National School Lunch and Breakfast Program Administrative Review conducted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Part of the review process in addition to the district complying with the new regulations for meals served, is healthy eating in all of our school communities beyond breakfast and lunch.

This is an opportunity to remind you the Nutrition Law includes teachers, students, and parents within the school communities as well. Celebrations with food need to meet the requirements. Baked goods using whole grain flour and less sodium, fruits and vegetables are some snack suggestions. *Celebrations with cupcakes or sweets may no longer take place under the tough nutrition standards of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.* The Federal Government publishes an "A List" that includes all acceptable products/food to be in schools. The district has compiled a short list of student favorites, that is available in the school nurse and main office of your child's school, or go to [www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/](http://www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/) for the complete list. The Wellness Policy is available in the nurse and main office to view, or go to [www.pvrsdk12.org](http://www.pvrsdk12.org) website under the Documentation tab, to Policies and Procedures on the dropdown menu and the Wellness Policy is under Community Relations Section VI H, pages 1-18. The A List of acceptable products meeting the 2010 nutritional requirements

## Fire Department

We at the Fire Department hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a great start to 2015. As we start the new year the Fire Department wanted to put out a few friendly reminders and updates for 2015.

1. Brush burning season began January 15<sup>th</sup> and ends May 1<sup>st</sup>. Permits and burning rules may be obtained from [fcburnpermits.com](http://fcburnpermits.com) or by calling Shelburne Control at 413-625-8200.
2. We are currently in the process of constructing a brush tanker to provide water supply for our brush truck. This will allow us to fight brush fires with fewer people and provide water in poor weather conditions.
3. The Fire Department, in conjunction with the Fire Fighters Association, provide the following services on a first come-first served basis for a small donation to the Fire Fighters Association:

Chimney cleaning, brush burning, swimming pool filling, brush clearing for fire roads, and fire pond maintenance. Or call us at 413-773-7673 with any task you need help with and we may be able to help.

4. Incentives for new recruits in 2015, congress is currently working on bill HR5811 that will allow volunteer firefighters to get a tax credit of \$20.00 per hour for the first 300 hours of service a total credit of \$6,000.00! To be eligible you just have to meet our training and call requirements. Most of our calls are usually utility issues and brush fires, and our training schedule is flexible. It's not a bad way to give back to the community and save a buck to boot. Stop by on any Tuesday night after 6:00 PM to learn more. —Clifford Spatcher, Fire Chief

## Knitting Circle

The Leyden knitting circle will meet twice in March, on the 13<sup>th</sup> at Laura Timmerman's house (773-8325) and on the 27<sup>th</sup> at Peggy Brown's house (774-5764) from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. All are welcome to join us; no experience is needed and all kinds of handwork are fine. Even if you don't know how to knit, come along and we'll help you get started! Visitors and all ages are welcome; it's very relaxed and low-key.

—Laura Timmerman, 773-8325

Facebook Group: "Leyden Knitting Circle" Members sometimes post pictures of their projects here, or interesting knitting-related links.

## Selectboard Corner

Brrr! January and February have been white and cold. Many thanks to our DPW for keeping our roads safe! The Special Town Meeting resulted in all Articles passing. Thanks to those who attended. Budget time is here and all the budgets have been submitted. Meetings will now be held to review the budgets and capital needs. WiredWest will be on the Town Meeting warrant, so please try to attend one of the public meetings and be informed. The Town continues to collect back taxes. An auction of properties owned by the Town of Leyden will be held in the spring.

Treat yourself to good conversation, coffee and baked goods at the Leyden Cafe. —Select Board

## Unclassified Ads

### Unclassified Ads Policy Statement

We welcome unclassified ads from Town residents, and will run them free of charge (though a small donation of \$1 or so is always appreciated). We will normally run an ad for one issue only, unless requested to extend it.

**Free:** Twin-size mattress and box spring, in good condition. Call Reids at 774-5146

**VHS to DVD Service Wanted:** We are in search of someone who can transfer VHS tapes to DVDs. Please contact Jim & Sharon Clark at 773-9389, and leave a message if no one answers. We have a few VHS tapes that we would love to save onto DVDs.

**Timber Frame Buildings** small, custom-designed and assembled. Locally milled lumber. Cabins, sheds, workshops, studios, pool houses, greenhouses, etc. Contact Patrick at Single Bay Timber Frames at 413-834-4285 or message me on Facebook at Single Bay Timber Frames.

**Ed's Sugar Shack** has fresh local maple syrup for sale. Available in gallons, half gallons, quarts and pints. Call 773-7619, Ed and Carol Johnson, 72 South County Road, Leyden. Member of Massachusetts Maple Producers Association

**Natural Lamb** is available again from the Petersons at Orchard Valley Farm. No growth-enhancing hormones or antibiotics. Usual cuts generally available. Special orders on request. Call 624-5562 or email ovfarm@verizon.net. Like us on Facebook at Orchard Valley Farm.

**Maple Run Farm:** A limited supply of Persephone's Garden Raw Honey should be available late fall. 2015 should be a great year. Pigs were raised this year, but what we have is spoken for. Natural Romney yarn is for sale for knitting or weaving, processed chemical-free at Green Mountain Spinnery in Putney, VT. Call Barbara Wallace at 774-7780.

## Sweet Morning Farm CSA

2015 FARM SHARES

Shares are on sale! NOW is the time to reserve your share of Leyden-grown, organic vegetables, fruits, and flowers. All shares include a wide variety of vegetables, and flowers plus pick-your-own pole beans, snap peas, and cherry tomatoes. Our farm is not certified but we are committed to organic and sustainable practices.

**Signing Bonus:** All who pay in full for their share before March 20 receive a free dozen eggs as our thank-you.

**POULTRY:** We are taking orders now for duck and chicken raised on pasture and organic, soy-free grain.

**EGGS:** We sell organically grown chicken eggs for \$6.00/dozen.

For details call or email Laura or Robin. Check out our farm blog and Facebook page for news and pictures.

We invite you to become part of our little farm.

—Laura Timmerman, Rob Creamer

Sweet Morning Farm, 413-773-8325,

aurat@crocker.com, <http://sweet-morning-farm.blogspot.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/SweetMorningFarm>

## Linda Romano

Spring into Wellness with Massage, Bodywork, Yoga. Massage for injuries, Arthritis, stress, Bodywork, shiatsu tune up, and Polarity.

Yoga, two sessions available Mondays. Therapeutic AM/PM sessions by appointment only. Wednesday evening yoga 6-week session, spring into the season at 6:30-7:30 pm, all levels.

\*New! Degriefing sessions using the above modalities, wellness coaching for health with focus on a specific goal and Caregivers sessions for stress and support. Have a lovely spring! Call Linda Romano at 413-624-3334.

—Linda Romano

## Pearl Rhodes Elementary School Upcoming Events

### February 13

Six Flags Read To Succeed reading logs are due

### February 16 - 20

Winter Recess

### March 2 - 20

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Pennies for Patients Program

### March 6

Teacher In-service, No School

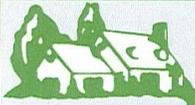
### March 12

FCU Banking Day

**Report Cards**

### March 13 & 20

Parent Teacher Conferences



### JEFF'S HOME IMPROVEMENTS

**Carpentry • Renovations • Home Repairs**  
Masonry and Tile • Home Organization  
Painting • Property Caretaking  
Organic Garden & Landscaping Services

FULLY INSURED • 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE • EXCELLENT REFERENCES  
10 ROLLING LANE • LEYDEN, MA 01337 • 413-773-9597

## Green River Lawn

Fully insured  
Leyden, MA

**Services Include: Mowing, Trimming,  
Property Clean-Up, Brush Removal,  
Water Features and More**

**(413)329-2221 (413)325-1235**  
Ryan Clary and Steve O'Hare  
E-mail [greenriverlawn@yahoo.com](mailto:greenriverlawn@yahoo.com)

## Livingstone Carpentry

*Traditional Craftsmanship, Quality Service*

~SPECIALIZING IN~  
WINDOWS • DOORS • FINE CARPENTRY  
WEATHERIZATION • FIRE & WATER RESTORATION  
NEW CONSTRUCTION • RENOVATIONS

Free Estimates  
Fully Licensed  
and Insured
Johan D. Livingstone  
Leyden, MA  
(413) 475-0771

**Bill Goly,** Owner  
(413) 512-9548

- ◆ Odd Jobs
- ◆ Light Hauling
- ◆ Brush Removal
- ◆ Masonry Work
- ◆ Power Washing



**B&B Services**  
"Professional Work at a Neighborly Rate!"

- ◆ Seasonal Clean-up
- ◆ Mowing & Landscaping
- ◆ Interior & Exterior Painting
- ◆ Snow Blowing

www.bandbservices.us  
[bandbservices@hotmail.com](mailto:bandbservices@hotmail.com)



You are invited to a gathering for volunteers  
sponsored by  
The Leyden Council on Aging

Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 PM  
Leyden Town Hall  
Coffee, tea and snacks provided

We have invited people who have expressed an interest in volunteering for the COA as well as others who may have an interest. We have identified some potential projects that we could use help with. We are also open to ideas on ways that volunteers could help and we would love to hear what your interests might be.

We are planning some evening activities and could use some evening volunteers also

**This will be a very casual gathering. No long term commitment needed.**

If you would like to attend or if you are unable to come to a meeting but are interested in helping please call:

**Sue Howarth @ 774-3118 or [wmshowarth@hotmail.com](mailto:wmshowarth@hotmail.com)**

# VET HAPPENINGS

January, 2015

## NEWS & EVENTS FOR VETS AND DEPENDENTS IN THE UPPER PIONEER VALLEY

### Special points of interest:

- Note from Tim Niejadlik
- Town Councils on Aging and Senior Center
- Food Pantries
- Fuel Assistance Info
- What Veterans Need to Know

### Inside this issue:

- Short message from Tim Niejadlik **1**
- COA's /Senior Centers and Luncheon Clubs **2**
- COA's and Senior Centers continued **3**
- COA's, Food Pantries, Fuel Assistance **4**
- What Veterans Need to Know **5-9**
- Veterans Outreach events this spring **9**



As many of you have read in the local papers the Greenfield Area Veterans' Services is merging with the Central Franklin Veterans District. The new district will be called the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Service District. By July 1st of this year all towns in Franklin County (except Orange) and the Hampshire County town of Plainfield will have all veterans' services under one roof. This merger will allow for increased hours for veterans and dependents at our 294 Main Street Greenfield location. In addition we will expand hours at satellite locations throughout the county. We have begun consolidation of records and are beginning to service veterans throughout the county even before the official July 1st date. Our staff looks forward to answering questions as we complete the process, and look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

Tim Niejadlik, Director.

**A****Ashfield Council on Aging**

Ashfield Town Hall  
413 628-4441 X3  
email: [www.ashfield.org](http://www.ashfield.org)

For Senior Center information call  
Shelburne 413 625-9360

**Athol Council on Aging and Senior Center:** 82 Freedom St.  
TN: 978 249-8986  
email: [coa@tonwofathol.org](mailto:coa@tonwofathol.org)

Multipurpose Senior Center serving the towns of Athol, Philipston, Royalston and Petersham.

Services include health clinics, weekly blood pressure clinics, various recreational/educational programs, tax assistance, peer counselling, transportation, health benefits counselling, resources for grandparents raising grandchildren, weekly Tai Chi instruction, Brown Bag, free legal assistance, intergenerational programs, foot screenings and craft classes. Congregate meals Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at noon; reserve 24 hours in advance.

**B**

**Bernardston Council on Aging**  
POB 504 Bernardston, MA 01337

Senior Center at Powers Institute  
20 Church Street /413 648-5413  
Meal Reservations: 413 648-5319

Services include tax assistance, health benefits counselling, transportation, friendly visitors, educational/recreational programs, intergenerational, and exercise programs. Noon meal available at the center Monday through Friday for a voluntary donation. Call one day

**Buckland Council on Aging**  
7 Main Street, Shelburne

The Buckland Council on Aging is part of a 3 town consortium operating the Shelburne Senior Center. See Shelburne Senior Center.

**C**

**Charlemont Council on Aging**  
POB 243 Charlemont  
TN: 413 339-4201

Offers a senior center and hot noon meal one day per week, Wednesday 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Federated Church Social Rooms, 175 Main Street, Charlemont. Call one day ahead before 10 a.m. for reservation 413 339-5324. Voluntary donations accepted. Other services offered: blood pressure checks, flu clinics, foot wellness and educational programs. Facility is handicap accessible.

**Colrain Council on Aging**  
Please call Any or Richard Hertzog for information on events and to

make reservation for 2nd Wednesday meal; for 55+; from 10 to 1-ish. Foot clinic—by appointment, 1st and 2nd Wednesday of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Conway Council on Aging**

Meets at the Town Hall the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30; call 413 369-4282 for information on activities.

**E**

**Erving COA and Senior Center**  
1 Care Drive, Erving.

TN: 413 423-3649  
email:  
[www.sneiorcenter.Pollv.Kielv@ervin](mailto:www.sneiorcenter.Pollv.Kielv@ervin)

Services available: tax return assistance, transportation, shopping trips, health clinics, fitness activities and outings to local restaurants. Noon meal available at the center Monday through Thursday 11:30—call one day ahead to reserve your spot @ 413 423-3308. Friday is a home cooked meal.

**G**

**Gill/Montague COA/Senior Center**  
62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, MA  
TN-COA 413 863-4500  
TN-Senior Center 413 863-9357

Councils on aging, fitness, health education, health screening, information and assistance, senior center, social programs, wellness programs. Facility is handicap accessible. Meal served at noon Tuesday through Thursday for a voluntary donation. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal 413 863-9357.

**Greenfield COA/Senior Center**  
54 High Street, Greenfield  
TN: 413 772-1517 / Email

[hopem@Greenfield-MA.gov](mailto:hopem@Greenfield-MA.gov) day

The senior center offers a wide range of social, recreational, education, cultural, and health & wellness programs for people 55 and up. Call for more information or check the newsletter on the city site: [www.townofgreenfield.org](http://www.townofgreenfield.org).

*Most town websites have a link to their Council on Aging.*

<http://www.massvetsadvisor.org/>

**The new one stop website for veterans to explore  
benefits and opportunities**

**H**

**Heath COA** (Eileen Lively)  
COA—Town Hall 413 337-4934  
Lunch Club Community Hall, Main St. TN: 413 337-5728  
Bring your own brown bag lunch/social get together the first Thursday of each month, beverages provided. Third Thursday of the month, call day ahead of time to reserve your space for lunch—for a small donation.

**L**

**Leverett COA and Luncheon Club COA**—Terry Allen 413 548-9310  
coa@leverett.ma.us  
Fax: 413 548-1035  
Telephone reassurance, flu clinic, educational programs, volunteer services and luncheons. Help with transportation. Referral services. Luncheon club, congregate meals served at noon on Fridays at Leverett Town hall for a voluntary donations. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal 413 367-2694.

**Leyden COA**

Gilda Galvis—Chair  
Susan Howarth—Assistant  
413 774-7769 (Town Clerk)  
Serving elders in Leyden.

**M**

**Montague COA**  
Turners Falls  
413 863-9357 or 413 863-4500  
Web site: [www.montague.net](http://www.montague.net) Email: [coa@montague-ma.gov](mailto:coa@montague-ma.gov) Provides information, referral, outreach, nutrition and health services in cooperation with other area agencies. Enhances the quality of life for seniors and the community by providing health, education and recreation programs and activities.

**N**

**New Salem COA and Luncheon Club**  
24 South Main St./Town Hall  
978 544-2731  
Meal served the 2nd and 4th Friday November to May at noon for a small donation. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal 978 544-2178. Summer months, lunch is Pot Luck.

**Northfield COA and Senior Center**  
69 Main St./Town Hall  
TN: 413 498-2901 ext. 14  
Fax: 413 498-5103  
Heather Tower, Director  
Senior Center TN: 413 498-2186  
Email: [seniorcenter@townfld.com](mailto:seniorcenter@townfld.com)  
Services include information, education and referral regarding health-care, insurance, fuel assistance, legal and financial management, transportation, outreach, congregate and home delivery of meals, podiatry, blood pressure screenings, health clinics, exercise classes, outdoor and group social activities and outings, TRIAD, friendly visitors, trips and service van information.  
Meal served at 11:30 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday for voluntary donation. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal 413 498-2186.

**P**

**Petersham COA and Luncheon Club**  
Charlotte B. Kennan, Chair of COA  
TN: 978 724-6649 Town Hall  
Congregate meal served on Mondays except holidays at noon for a voluntary donation. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal. 978 724-3276.

**Phillipston COA and Luncheon Club**  
Paula Haley—Chair  
Meal served at First Congregational Church, The Common, first and third Tuesday of every month. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal at 978 249-6828 Wanda Whitney.

**R**

**Rowe COA**  
321 Zoar Road  
Town Hall open Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Web site: [www.rowe.ma.gov](http://www.rowe.ma.gov)  
Call Janice for more information.

**Royalston COA and Luncheon Club**  
Town Hall TN: 978 249-0493  
Congregate meals served on Wednesdays at noon for a voluntary donation. Call one day ahead to reserve your meal 978 249-9656.

Other services include health benefits counseling, trips, recreation/educational programming, intergenerational programs. Brown Bag on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 11 to noon. Blood pressure clinic the 2nd Wednesday 11 to noon.

**S**

**Shelburne COA and Senior Center**  
7 Main Street, Shelburne Falls  
TN: 413 625-2502  
Fax: 413 625-2243  
Web site: [www.townofshelburne.com/departments/senior-center.html](http://www.townofshelburne.com/departments/senior-center.html)  
Email: [sfsrctr@crocker.com](mailto:sfsrctr@crocker.com)  
Programs and activities in 20 service categories including caregiver support, home repair, meals, exercise and wellness, transportation for 9 towns, the arts. A strong emphasis on intergenerational programs and education. Languages spoken: English and French. Handicap accessible.

**Shutesbury COA**

POB 25  
Shutesbury, MA 01072  
TN: 413 259-1371  
Please call for information on programs including fuel assistance and transportation.

**South County COA/Senior Center**  
67 N. Main St., S. Deerfield, MA  
TN 413 665-2141/Open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Mon., Wed., and Fri.  
[scsc@town.deerfield.ma.us](mailto:scsc@town.deerfield.ma.us)  
Serving Deerfield, Sunderland, and Whately. Offering various recreational programs and health clinics. Transportation can be arranged. Trips, speakers, blood pressure clinics, flu clinic, sugar screening and cholesterol clinic and foot clinic. Wii bowling, Bingo, Tai Chi, cards, crafts, conversation and more. Noon meal available at the center for a voluntary donation. Call 2 days ahead to reserve your spot. TN: 413 665-5063.

**Sunderland COA**, Town Hall, 12 School Street. TN: 413 665-1442 (Town Clerk)

**W**

**Warwick COA / Luncheon Club**  
Town Hall, 12 Athol Road  
TN: 978 544-8304 (Town Hall)  
Www.warwickma.org  
Council on Aging offers information and support on aging issues in the town of Warwick.  
A noon meal is served every Tuesday for a voluntary donation. Call 978 544-2630 to make reservations by 9 a.m. the day before.  
This site is handicap accessible.

**Wendell COA/Senior Center**  
Please call 978 544-3395 for information on services offered.

**Whately Council on Aging**  
Town Offices  
218 Chestnut Plain Road  
Whately, MA 01093  
TN: 413 665-4400  
www.whately.org  
Offering information and support on aging issues in Whately.  
Please see South County for information on the Senior center.

**BROWN BAG INFORMATION**  
Brown Bag Program: Food for Elders  
97 N. Hatfield Road  
Hatfield, MA 01038  
TN: 413 247-9738  
Toll Free: 800 247-9632  
Fax: 413 247-9577  
Web site: www.foodbankwma.org  
Email: foodbank@foodbankwma.org  
Bags, prepared by senior volunteers, available at most senior centers in western Mass.  
Languages spoken: English and Spanish. Volunteers are welcome at all sites.

**FOOD PANTRY INFORMATION**  
**Center for Self Reliance**  
3 Osgood Street, Greenfield, MA  
413 773-5029  
Dschnelle@communityaction.us  
Monday & Tuesday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Thursday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Closed Wednesday and Friday  
A program of Community Action to provide emergency food assistance for any low-income household in the Franklin County/North Quabbin area. During the summer, Farmers Market Coupons and SNAP/EBT 'Matching

Coupons' are available to participating families.

**West County Food Pantry**  
51 Maple Street  
Basement, Cowell's Gym  
Shelburne, MA  
12 noon to 6 p.m.  
Call 413 773-5029 to see which Wednesdays the WCFP is open.  
Low-income resident of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Monroe Bridge, Plainfield, Rowe and Shelburne are eligible.

**DEERFIELD FOODS** (Independent; Not part of Community Action)  
7 Boyden Lane, Deerfield, MA  
Web site: deerfieldfoods.sqsp.com  
Email: deerfieldfoods@gmail.com  
Call 914 715-7190 for delivery dates.  
Deerfield Foods brings healthy and affordable food to your community.  
You can buy our boxes at local sites (currently @ the Center For Self Reliance) in your community. Each \$35 box has enough food to cover seven nights of dinner for a family of four.  
To order: deerfieldfoods.sqsp.com/order. People may prepay on line, over the phone, or through their local host site leader (currently at the Center for Self Reliance). Cash, credit cards, checks, debit cards are accepted.  
This service is available to all, single, family, elders.

*Franklin County Community Meals Program*—Greenfield, MA  
TN: 413 772-1033  
www.fccmp.org  
Call or check out their site for more information on evening meals.

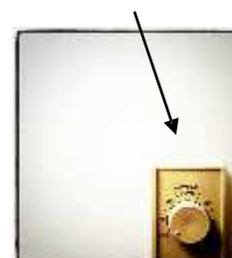
**FUEL ASSISTANCE**  
**Franklin County Home Care Corp/ Area Agency on Aging**  
330 Montague City Road, Suite 1  
Turners Falls, MA 01376-2530  
TN 413 773-5555 / 978 544-2259  
Toll Free: 800 732-4636  
Fax 413 772-1084  
TTY TDD: 413 772-6566  
Web site: www.fchcc.org  
Email: info@fchcc.org  
A non-profit corporation that develops, provides and coordinates a range of services to promote the in-

dependent living of elders including home & community supports. Some programs also serve people with disabilities. Information and programs work to support elders, persons with disabilities, caregivers and professionals. FCHCC serves all Franklin County towns plus Athol, Petersham, Philipston, and Royalston in the North Quabbin area of Worcester County.

Franklin Regional Transit Authority  
12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA  
TN: 413 774-2262  
FAX: 413 772-2202  
Toll Free: 888 301-2262  
TTY TDD: 413 774-2262  
Web site: www.frta.org  
Email: tina@frta.org  
Call for MedRides and other services offered. Vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts. Vets ride free on FRTA. Use your Vets ID card.



Comfort Zone



## What Massachusetts Veterans Need To Know

Besides having a copy of your DD 214, this may be one of the most important documents you need to review and save!

The Veterans Administration and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts offer a number of benefits to Veterans and surviving spouses. This document is *not* a complete list of all benefits you may be eligible or entitled to.

By law, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires every city and town to have a Veteran Service Officer (VSO) to assist Veterans in obtaining federal and state benefits. *Please do not try to do this on your own!*

**Your local VSO is a Veteran and is your primary contact to assist you in answering questions and helping you with the necessary paperwork. Work collaboratively with them!**

To locate the name and contact information of your local VSO, go to <http://www.massvetsadvisor.org/>. This web site offers a great deal of information about Veterans benefits.

### **Massachusetts Veterans, in general, are eligible for the following benefits:**

Welcome Home bonus

Free tuition in all state community colleges, colleges, and universities

Have the word 'Veteran' printed on their driver's license

Under Chapter 115 of Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L. ch. 115), the Commonwealth provides a uniform program of financial and medical assistance for indigent Veterans and their dependents. Qualifying Veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, housing supplies, and medical care in accordance with a formula, which takes into account the number of dependants and income from all sources. Eligible dependents of deceased Veterans are provided with the same benefits as they would were the veteran still living.

May be eligible for long-term care at the Soldiers Homes in Chelsea and Holyoke

Burial in the state Veterans' cemeteries in Agawam or Winchendon or the Bourne National Cemetery and obtain grave markers

Veterans License Plates

Certain disabled Veterans and former POWs are eligible for a waiver of fees for motor vehicle registration and sales tax

Free medical care by the VA for one year immediately upon discharge

Participate in the VA Loan Guarantee Program to purchase or refinance a home

**Ultimately, you are responsible for helping yourself and need to play an active role in obtaining benefits. The following tips are based on past experiences of VSOs and other Veterans that will serve you well!**

### **General information:**

1. Always work closely with your local VSO!
2. When mail arrives from the VA or the state, open it and read it. If you do not understand it, contact your VSO for an appointment to assist you.
3. Always save copies of your VA correspondence as well as your correspondence and copies of

4. Any documentation requested of you by the VA or that you voluntarily wish to submit should go through your VSO to ensure quality control.
5. If you are a 'snowbird' or are traveling for an extended period of time –especially if you have a claim pending – you must let your VSO know. If you miss a VA compensation and pension (C&P) exam your claim will be denied. By letting the VSO know, the exam can be scheduled upon your return or, for example, if you are in Florida for the winter the exam can be scheduled there.
6. Notify your VSO immediately of any change of address, phone number, or dependents' status.
7. If you are changing your direct deposit information, **NEVER** close out your old account until you have confirmed that your direct deposits are showing up in your new account.
8. A Veteran can apply for VA compensation and pension at the same time. The VA will pay the Veteran the higher of the two benefits.
9. VA monetary benefits are tax free.
10. Upon death, a Veteran's compensation or pension benefits do not transfer to a surviving spouse. A surviving spouse may be eligible for VA pension or accrued benefits. Contact your VSO for more information. *Make sure your will is up to date and that the beneficiaries for any pensions and insurance policies are up to date.*

#### **VA Specific:**

The vast majority of personnel within the Veterans Administration are themselves Veterans. You should consider the VA as operating like the military but without uniforms. Everything they do is governed by laws, rules, and regulations.

**Keep in mind, the VA has access to Social Security and IRS records – be truthful at all times.**

**VA Compensation Claims must be *service connected*.** In other words, the injury/disability must have taken place while on active duty. As a guardsman or reservist, if the injury happened during a drill weekend, it doesn't count for VA purposes.

**VA Pension Claims** are available to wartime Veterans and surviving spouses. They are based on income and medical expenses. We will not cover that here because of their complexity.

#### **Always work with your VSO!**

We are using the VA Fully Developed Claim (FDC) process exclusively for ALL claims because it is much more efficient. The FDC process is used for new claims, claims for increases in compensation, or to reopen a claim based on new and material evidence. Once the claim is filed, you will probably not hear from the VA for about 6 weeks.

When a claim is filed, all evidence including private medical records must be included. The VA will obtain your military medical records. If you have received medical care by the VA, note it in the appropriate section of the claim form. The VA will obtain those records, too.

In the case of guardsmen and reservists, you must obtain a complete set of your service treatment records and submit them with the claim. **Note: you cannot double-dip receiving drill pay and VA compensation together.**

If you submit any documents after the claim has been filed, it will pull the claim out of the fast track and can take a year or more to complete.

**If it is going to take a long time for you to gather the evidence, work with your VSO to file an Informal Fully Developed Claim. That will establish your date of claim and give you a year to formally submit the claim.**

Any statement you provide to the VA in support of your claim must focus **ONLY** on what you are claiming! All too often, Veterans will focus on how bad their health is in general. When that happens, the VA, by regulation, takes those additional complaints as *inferred claims* and will automatically pull your claim out of the fast track.

**Evidence in support of your claim** comes in many forms:

Veteran statement

Spouse statement

Buddy statement (people you served with)

Internet evidence from .mil or .gov web sites *only*

Military service treatment records

Private medical records (keep in mind, providers are required by law to save the records for only 7 years)

### **Finding people you served with**

If you have lost track of people you served with, the Internet can be very helpful. You can utilize social media such as Face book or search for your particular unit or ship. You will be surprised how many have 'alumni-like' web sites.

### **Rating Decisions and Appeals**

Once your claim has been finalized, you will receive written notification from the VA about their decision and how they made it. Read it very carefully. If you are dissatisfied with the VA rating decision, you have the right to appeal. It is important to work with your VSO because there are different methods to appeal.

### **Dental plans**

The VA is implementing a comprehensive national VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) to give enrolled Veterans and CHAMPVA beneficiaries the opportunity to purchase dental insurance through Delta Dental and MetLife at a reduced cost. Participation is voluntary. Purchasing a dental plan does not affect Veterans' eligibility for VA dental services and treatment. VADIP opened November 2014 for the purchasing of plans, with coverage beginning January 1, 2014.

Covered services include diagnostic, preventative, surgical, emergency and endodontic/restorative treatment. Delta Dental and MetLife are offering multiple plans. Each participant pays the fixed monthly premiums for coverage and any copayments required, depending on the type of plan selected.

Dependents of Veterans, except those eligible under CHAMPVA, are not authorized to participate in VADIP. Those individuals may be eligible for separate dental insurance coverage offered by these carriers.

Benefits by the percentages:

The VA makes a determination about the severity of a disability based on the evidence you submitted as part of a claim, or that the VA obtains from your military records. The VA rates disabilities from 0% to 100% in 10% increments.

If a Veteran has multiple disabilities, the VA uses a Combined Rating Table to calculate a combined disability rating. Disability ratings are not additive, meaning that if a Veteran has one disability rated 60% and a second disability 20%, the combined rating is not 80%.

**Here’s a look at what the percentages mean**

The benefits are cumulative as the percentages go up so we are not repeating all the info as the percentages increase.

**0%>**

A Veteran is service connected for a disability but it is not disabling enough to warrant compensation. However, the Veteran can receive treatment and prescriptions free from the VA. For example, in cases of hearing loss and/or tinnitus, the Veteran can receive free hearing aids.

The Veteran is eligible for Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance

A Veteran can be reimbursed for VA co-pays as far back as his date of claim for his service connected disabilities

**10%>**

The Veteran begins receiving compensation for the disability

The Veteran can obtain a VA ID card at any VA Medical Center

The Veteran can receive a real estate tax abatement effective July 1 of each year (surviving spouse is eligible as well) The VA sends a summary of benefits letter in late June.

The Veteran is eligible for Voc Rehab

The Veteran is eligible to receive VA compensation and Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). CRSC is not taxable.

**30%>**

The Veteran can begin receiving additional compensation for dependents

**50%>**

The Veteran can receive all prescriptions free through the VA even for medications for maladies that are not service connected

The Veteran is eligible to receive VA compensation and Concurrent Receipt and Disability Pay (CRDP) and VA compensation. CRDP is taxable.

**60%**

The Veteran is eligible to apply for a Disabled Veterans plate at the Registry of Motor Vehicles

**70%>**

VA is mandated to provide long-term care for Veterans who require it in a VA or contracted facility

Veterans can get a 50% reduction on the ‘T’ by filling out a Transportation Access Pass/TAP Charlie Card application and attaching an original letter from the VA specifying your disability rating. Go to: [http://www.mbta.com/uploadedFiles/documents/ACCESS\\_PASS.pdf](http://www.mbta.com/uploadedFiles/documents/ACCESS_PASS.pdf)

**100% service connected as well as Individual Unemployability**

The VA will provide total healthcare for the Veteran including dental

The real estate tax abatement is larger

The Veteran, with a special letter from the VA, may obtain access to military installations to include commissary and exchange privileges

The Veteran or DIC recipients are eligible for the DVS Annuity

Dependents Educational Assistance is established (must be rated total and permanent)

Spouses and dependent children may be eligible for CHAMPVA medical coverage

**VET HAPPENINGS**

Greenfield Area Veterans' Services  
294 Main Street  
Greenfield, MA 01301

Phone: 413-772-1571  
Fax: 413-772-1401  
Email: TimothyN@greenfield-ma.gov

**Free Acupuncture Clinic in Greenfield**— for Veterans, First Responders and their families

Drop In— Wednesdays 5 to 7 p.m.  
345 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Elevator/Wheelchair Access

This free community style acupuncture walk-in clinic for veterans and their families may help with sleeping problems, irritability, and general stress relief. The clinic is offered by volunteer, licensed acupuncturists and the Greenfield Community Acupuncture.

For more information please call: 413 772-0077.

Important Website Addresses:

National VA website: <http://www.va.gov>

Central Western Mass: <http://www.centralwesternmass.va.gov>

Our Facebook address: <http://www.facebook.com/VACWMASS>

MyHealthVet Help Desk: [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) and TN: 1-877-327-0022

**VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC:**

*143 Munson Street*

*Greenfield, MA 01301*

*413 773-8428*

*OR*

*VA Leeds*

*421 North Main Street, Leeds, MA*

*1-413-584-4040*

Veterans Outreach Presentations so far this Spring:

**The 1st will be March 10th, 2015 at the Northfield Senior Center, 69 Main Street, Northfield at 11:30 a.m.**

**Please call 413-498-2186 to register.**

**The 2nd will be at the South County Senior Center in Deerfield MA, 67 North Main Street. Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 11 a.m.**

**Please call 413-665-2141 to register.**

**The 3rd one will be in New Salem at 19 South Main Street, Stowell Building at 12 noon.**

**Please call 978 544-6437 to register.**