

The Strawberry Vine

Hours of Operation
Mon - Fri: 8am - 3pm

JANUARY 2026

Phone: 508-823-0095
www.dighton-ma.gov

DIGHTON COUNCIL ON AGING

1059 Somerset Avenue
Dighton, MA. 02715
**SERVING ALL DIGHTON CITIZENS
OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE**

OUR MISSION

It shall be the mission of the Dighton Council on Aging to promote, evaluate, and encourage new and existing activities and services which will enhance the quality of life of elders living in the Town of Dighton.

HAPPY
New Year


YOU MAY BE ASKING... WHY AM I RECEIVING THIS?

Welcome to the Dighton Council on Aging's Strawberry Vine monthly newsletter (or for those who have been already been receiving this, hi again!). If you are new to this mailing, it is because you are turning 60 years old this year. With that said, happy early birthday to you!

The Dighton Council on Aging is a resource to all those 60 years and older. We offer application assistance (examples: SNAP, Fuel/Energy, Health Insurance), resources for Meal Deliveries, Financial Assistance, Legal Services, Caregiver Support including Home Care, Home Repairs, Socialization and so much more! We also offer many programs and classes that you will see on pages 4 and 5.

We hope that you take advantage of the resources the Town of Dighton offers through us, the Dighton Council on Aging. We love making new friends so please stop by, say hi, ask questions and give us feedback! We are here to serve YOU.

Please note: If you would like to receive this via email or would like to be removed from the mailing list, please contact 508-823-0095.

 Laura Medeiros Armstrong
Office Manager



Dighton
Council On Aging

ANNOUNCEMENT!

Dighton Residents and Future Seniors

The U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2030, the United States will—for the first time—have more residents aged 65 and older than children under 18. All Baby Boomers or one-fifth of the nation's population will have reached the traditional retirement age of 65 by 2030.

As the Dighton Council on Aging prepares for this historic shift, we want to ensure our programs reflect the passions, lifestyles, and digital savvy of the next generation of older adults. This means focusing on what you care about: music, food, fitness, health and wellness, technology, and beyond.

To build a vibrant future for our community, we're launching a quick survey to learn your interests. Your input will directly shape the classes, events, and programs we offer.

Please scan the QR to complete the survey or stop by the Dighton Council on Aging to fill out a paper copy.

Thank you in advance,
Anabela "Bela" Powell, Executive Director

Dighton
Council On Aging
1059 Somerset Avenue
Dighton, MA 02715
(508) 823-0095



REMINISCING WITH MYRNA

Page 2

REMINISCING WITH MYRNA: BEGINNING A HISTORIC 250TH YEAR OF AMERICA AND NOTING THE BEGINNING OF 314 YEARS OF THE TOWN OF DIGHTON

As December, 2025, closes its doors on yet another year, America looks forward to a year of celebration in 2026 – recognizing the 250th Anniversary of the nation of America on July the Fourth.

Also in 2026, the community of Dighton, Massachusetts, which was incorporated in May of 1712, will celebrate 314 years as a Massachusetts town.

However, America in New England had a difficult beginning. This brief story will begin our nation's 250th year with a bit about Dighton's beginnings and their relationship to the beginning of our nation.

The Pilgrims were very much weakened after a very difficult journey across the sea, and they found themselves entering a land whose once mighty Indian population was in a greatly weakened state, as well. America, in what was to become New England, made her start here on 'shaky ground.'

There is no way that a single short story can include all of our local information. Dighton's own story begins in the earliest days of the Pilgrims in 1621, because this little town contains five miles of the Old Bristol Path along which two Pilgrims, accompanied by an Indian guide, walked from Plymouth to Bristol, Rhode Island, home of the Indian Chief Sachem, Massasoit, in 1621. Indian feet had trod this pathway for many years – possibly even centuries – before the Pilgrims arrived. They had once been a very powerful people, but illness had changed that.

The Pilgrim newcomers were walking into unknown territory and just barely beginning to learn about the people who were here before them. They knew nothing of Indian life, habits, nor means of living, and they spoke a very different language, but they were fortunate to meet with a probably very wary, yet not unfriendly Indian leader in Massasoit at a relatively quiet time in history, following a terrible plague. No doubt Massasoit had his own reservations about the newcomers, but his strong reserve and willingness to work together with the Pilgrims with his weakened tribesmen suited the occasion well and initially worked out advantageously for both peoples. The Pilgrims' coming was a fortuitous happening for an Indian nation that had just barely survived a three-year long plague of illness.

The Indians (*now called Native Americans in a recent effort toward seemingly more respect of our predecessors here*) had suffered very recent losses with an outbreak of a disease – probably smallpox or leptospirosis – that nearly decimated the coastal tribes. Called “the Great Dying Plague,” of 1616 to 1619, so powerful was its impact that the Indians' very large planting field, referred to in many writings as, simply, “the Great Field,” in what became Dighton, lay prepared, but unused, because of so many deaths among them. That plague of 1616-1619 devastated all Native American populations in coastal New England, with estimates suggesting that in some areas up to 90 percent of the Indian population died. (*It is said to have reoccurred in 1633, with more suffering and death.*)

The first two Pilgrims to see the 'great field' noted that the field lay unused, overgrown with very tall weeds (“higher than our heads,”) although it had at some earlier time been prepared for planting when they passed it by on their way to Bristol. There are tales of unburied Indian remains upon the ground of the 'great field' because there was no one left to bury them. The Indians' need for survival food must have been very difficult to meet during that time. They made use of the forests for hunting and the rivers for fishing and so some of them did barely survive, but all of New England's coastal Indian tribes were greatly weakened when the Pilgrims arrived in 1620.

In 1712 Dighton became a town. Its people lived hard lives built on faith in God, with church participation absolutely required for all but the very young, very old or infirm. Their lives were built literally from scratch. At first there were no shelters here, no provisions other than what little they had left after their journey from across the sea. The Indians helped them and taught them and they cut wood and built shelter and tilled the

land and grew crops and farmed and hunted and fished, while starting to build up sea-based and other industries that would soon make Dighton a very strong town.

Dightonians built ships and set out to sea. Their farms thrived and times – though very hard - were improving. Their government established, they struggled through fourteen years as an officially divided town – two towns, in fact. Dighton and Wellington. But the time as a divided town did end when they came together as a single town again -- Dighton. The lessons learned led to a thriving community. They built churches and schools and established commerce – local and international. Some Dightonians kept slaves, but Dighton officially set them free after the Revolution and long before the nation did the same.

Once having owned land on both sides of the Taunton Great River as parts of Dighton, the two holdings on the west side of the river both became part of the town of Berkley.

Dightonians served our nation in wars –first, the Revolution that established America's freedom from England, and many since then. Patriotic Dighton folks have always served our nation and many still proudly serve today in the military that protects our freedom. There have been MANY American military war heroes and heroines whose homes are or were in Dighton, Massachusetts, and Dightonians have always served our nation in peacetime.

And so, as we enter the year of America's 250th Birthday, Dighton stands proudly among America's earliest communities – truly one of the building blocks of our nation. We may humbly proclaim our participation and fly our flags proudly. Our forebears have paid dearly for our right to do so.

I wish everyone a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year of 2026 and I sincerely hope that you will take part in Dighton's many activities being planned in celebration of America's 250th Birthday!

Happy New Year!

Very sincerely,

Myrna



**Free Community Yoga
Six Thursday Sessions
January 8th through February 12th at 10:30
Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Avenue**

You are invited to our introductory yoga sessions with No Place Like Om - Yoga with a Physical Therapist.

Enjoy a 60 minute vinyasa (flow) class. Learn to pair breath with movement to help quiet your mind. Gain strength, flexibility and have fun along the way.

All levels are welcome - no previous yoga experience required.

What to bring:

- mat
- water
- comfortable clothes
- belt/strap
- blanket (for cranky knees)
- foam block



**Registration Required
Call the Library at (508) 669-6421**

TOWN CENSUS

Why is it so important to complete & return the Local Town Census?

By participating in the town census, residents contribute to the accurate representation of their community and support the essential services and programs that benefit the local population.

Data provided is used to:

- Maintain an accurate & current voter registration list.
- Maintain an accurate list of residents of the Town.
- Assist Public Safety and First Responders in responding to emergency calls.
- Apply for grants to fund projects and offset costs.
- Project future school enrollment and for school registration.
- Serve as proof of residency, such as qualification for in-state college tuition, job applications, adoption or other special applications, identity theft, social security benefits, tenancy, military/veteran benefits, etc.



**For more information:
508-669-5411 Option #2**

As stated above, the Town Census helps with applying for grants to offset town costs. The COA would like to emphasize this point as we are always looking and applying for grants. Accurate numbers are important for this!

UPCOMING EVENTS

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EXERCISE & MOVEMENT

EVERY MONDAY

9:00am Fitness Class @ COA

EVERY WEDNESDAY

9:00am Chair Yoga @ LV

EVERY FRIDAY

9:00am Tai Chi @ OTH

FRIDAY, 01/09

1:00pm Line Dancing @ OTH

WEDNESDAY, 01/14

12:30pm Chair Zumba @ COA

FRIDAY, 01/16

10:30am Zumba Gold @ COA

FRIDAY, 01/23

1:00pm Drum's Alive @ OTH

Please register for events/programs, especially those involving food.

Please note that all food events and exercise & movement classes cost \$4.00 unless noted otherwise. If you do not have the money, please still come and enjoy your favorite events and programs!



MONTHLY OFFICE HOURS

01/13 | 09:00AM
Council on Aging,
1059 Somerset Avenue

Senator, Kelly Dooner, joins the COA monthly for office hours on the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

Utilize this opportunity to learn, ask questions, advocate for the things that are important to you!

MUSIC, FOOD, GAMES & CRAFTS

EVERY WEEKDAY

8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA

EVERY MONDAY

10:00am Mahjong @ COA

1:00pm Bingo @ COA

EVERY TUESDAY

1:00pm Art Group @ COA
(Instructed Classes 1/6 & 1/20)

EVERY THURSDAY

1:00pm Cribbage @ LV

EVERY FRIDAY

10:00am Knit/Crochet @ COA

WEDNESDAY, 01/21

10:30am Brew with Bela @ LV

WEDNESDAY, 01/21

12:30pm. Music with Dave @ COA

FRIDAY, 01/23

9:00am..Monthly Breakfast @ COA

MONDAY, 01/26

12:00pm Trivia @ COA



FREE REIKI SESSION

01/09 | BY APPOINTMENT
Council on Aging,
1059 Somerset Avenue

The holiday and winter season can be stressful, emotional and cause aches on the body. Book a free reiki session to reduce stress, anxiety, muscle tension and improve your overall wellbeing.

*Learn more & register today:
508-823-0095*

HEALTH & EDUCATIONAL

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Appt. Only..... Tech Support
(call COA to book your appt.)

WEDNESDAY, 01/07

10:00am Blood Pressure Clinic
with Dighton Fire Dept. @ LV&COA

FRIDAY, 01/09

Appt. Only FREE Reiki @ COA

TUESDAY, 01/13

9:00am Office Hours with Senator,
Kelly Dooner @ COA

THURSDAY, 01/15

Appt. Only..... FREE Legal Consult
(call COA to book your appt.)

LOCATIONS:

Council on Aging (COA):
1059 Somerset Ave.
Lincoln Village (LV) :
300 Lincoln Ave.
Old Town Hall (OTH):
1111 Somerset Ave.




MONTHLY TRIVIA

01/26 | 12:00PM
Council on Aging,
1059 Somerset Avenue

Trivia host, Larry, sets up a fun, free and exciting trivia game monthly at the Dighton COA along with many other surrounding COAs. Join us in an attempt to take down the multi-winning Brainiacs team. You're guaranteed to learn something new!

JANUARY 2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

Please do not arrive to any COA program or event more than 15 minutes early as staff and volunteers need time for setup.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>We understand winter months can be lonely for many reasons. Socialize right from the comfort of your own home with one of our many volunteers! Our volunteers can email, mail letters or set up phone calls with you on days/times that work best for you and them! Please contact the Dighton Council on Aging if you are interested in joining our Pen Pal Program. Information remains confidential between you and our volunteers.</p>				
5 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Fitness @ COA 10:00am Mahjong @ COA 1:00pm Bingo @ COA	6 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Instructed Art Class @ COA 10:00am Mahjong @ COA 1:00pm Bingo @ COA	7 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Chair Yoga @ LV 10:00am Blood Pressure Clinic with DFD @ LV & COA Tech Support by Appt. Only @ COA	8 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Cribbage @ LV	9 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Tai Chi @ OTH 10:00am Knit/Crochet @ COA 1:00pm Line Dance @ OTH Reiki @ COA by Appt. Only!
12 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Fitness @ COA 10:00am Mahjong @ COA 1:00pm Bingo @ COA	13 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Office Hours w/ Senator Kelly Dooner @ COA 1:00pm Art Group @ COA	14 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Chair Yoga @ LV 12:30pm Chair Zumba @ COA Tech Support by Appt. Only @ COA	15 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Cribbage @ LV 1-on-1 Legal Consult @ COA by Appt. Only!	16 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Tai Chi @ OTH 10:00am Knit/Crochet @ COA 10:30am Zumba Gold @ COA
19 CLOSED  Martin Luther King Jr. Day	20 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Instructed Art Class @ COA	21 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Chair Yoga @ LV 10:30am Brew w/ Bela @ LV 10:30am Music w/ Dave @ COA Tech Support by Appt. Only @ COA	22 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Cribbage @ LV	23 9:00am Monthly Breakfast @ COA 9:00am Tai Chi @ OTH 10:00am Knit/Crochet @ COA 1:00pm Drums Alive @ OTH
26 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Fitness @ COA 10:00am Mahjong @ COA 12:00pm Trivia @ COA 1:00pm Bingo @ COA	27 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Art Group @ COA	28 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Chair Yoga @ LV Tech Support by Appt. Only @ COA	29 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 1:00pm Cribbage @ LV	30 8:30am Coffee Hour @ COA 9:00am Tai Chi @ OTH 10:00am Knit/Crochet @ COA

CLOSED



RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

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MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN

Are you looking to borrow medical equipment?

The Dighton Council on Aging receives donations of wheel chairs, walkers, commodes and many other items. If you are in need, please call our office to check availability at 508-823-0095.

Are you looking to donate medical equipment?

Please call our office to schedule your donation at 508-823-0095.

Are you returning equipment?

You MUST call ahead and physically hand the equipment over to a staff member. You CANNOT drop the equipment off outside of the COA building. This in turn ruins the equipment and creates a dysfunctional program.

Please do not drop off items at Lincoln Village.

LUNCH PROGRAM!

**11:30 AM | COUNCIL ON AGING
1059 SOMERSET AVENUE**

The Dighton Council on Aging offers lunch every Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday.

We require 48 hours notice to reserve a seat for lunch.

Our meals are ordered in bulk through Bristol Aging & Wellness (formerly known as Bristol Elder Services) and served by our amazing staff and volunteers.

Mingle and make friends with our day program attendees & staff!

The menu is available on our website & you can call us today to reserve your seat: 508-823-0095

Bristol Aging & Wellness greatly appreciates donations to continue their meal programs. The Dighton Council on Aging has a locked donation bin that Bristol Aging & Wellness picks up monthly.



«««« GATRA »»»» TRANSPORTATION «««« SERVICES »»»»

Dial - A - Ride

Travel Within: Dighton, Raynham, Taunton & Berkely

Weekdays: 6:00am - 6:00pm

No weekend services

Fares: \$1.75 one way or \$15.00 for a 10-ride pass

Call Dighton Council on Aging to learn more: 508-823-0095 or

book directly with GATRA:

774-226-1219

MedWheels Program

Travel long distance (outside of Dighton, Raynham, Taunton & Berkley) for medical related appointments only.

*There is no direct cost associated with this program. A suggested donation is appreciated.

Call Dighton Council on Aging to learn more: 508-823-0095



If you have never utilized GATRA's services, you must complete an application with the Dighton Council on Aging.

FUEL ASSISTANCE!

It's that time of year again!

If your income falls within the guidelines shown, you may be able to receive Fuel and Energy Assistance!

**Please contact us to schedule an appointment by calling:
508-823-0095**



Citizens for Citizens, Inc. Fuel Assistance

2025 - 2026 Income Guidelines

**YOU MAY QUALIFY FOR FUEL ASSISTANCE
& ENERGY DISCOUNTS IF YOUR GROSS INCOME
IS UNDER THE FIGURES BELOW.**

Household Size	4 Week Income	4 Week Fixed	Annual Income
1	\$3,982	\$4,314	\$51,777
2	\$5,208	\$5,642	\$67,709
3	\$6,433	\$6,970	\$83,641
4	\$7,659	\$8,297	\$99,573
5	\$8,884	\$9,625	\$115,504
6	\$10,110	\$10,953	\$131,436

WWW.CFCINC.ORG

508 - 679 - 0041 // 508 - 823 - 6346

Fall River

Taunton

PRIME TIME

Supportive Adult Day Program

Would you or someone you know benefit from meeting and socializing with new friends, trying new experiences and activities all while keeping active in your mind and body? Then Prime Time might be the perfect fit for you!

Offerings Available :

- Breakfast, lunch & refreshments
- Arts & crafts
- Health clinics (podiatry, blood pressure, flu, etc.)
- Musical entertainment
- Games (bingo, cards, trivia, etc.)
- Fitness programs (chair yoga, zumba, movement, etc.)
- Outdoor activities on our porch or patio
- Themed presentations
- Socialization
- Reminiscing
- & so much more!

**SCHEDULE A FREE TOUR
OR LEARN MORE:**





SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY!

Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 3:00pm
1059 Somerset Avenue
Dighton, MA 02715
(508) 823-0095

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| *Transportation | *Medical Equipment |
| *SNAP (Food Stamps) | *Technology Support |
| *Energy / Fuel Assistance | *Socialization |
| *Home Repair | *Nutrition Information |
| *Health Insurance | *Potential Scam/Fraud |
| *Money Management | *Health Clinics |
| *Home Delivered Meals | *Housing Resources |
| *Home Care | *Medical Equipment |
| *Caregiver Support | *Tax Information |
| *Legal Services | *Health Resources |

HAIR CUTS FOR MEN & WOMEN

Maria Costa offers hair cuts to men and women in our own private hair salon in the Dighton Council on Aging!

Appointments are typically booked on Friday's but exceptions may be made. Prices will vary based on services needed.

Please call Maria directly to book your appointment or with any questions: 508-930-8291

DIGHTON TRASH BAGS

Purchase single trash bags at the Dighton Council on Aging.

Purchases may be made Monday—Friday from 8am—3pm.

Please call with any questions: 508-823-0095

Cost: \$1.40 small | \$2.80 large

VETERAN RESOURCES

The Dighton Veteran's Agents' Office is located in the lower level of Old Town Hall, 1111 Somerset Ave. Please note, if you are a widow of a Veteran (not re-married), you may be eligible for benefits as well. Please call Dighton's Veteran's Agent, Raymond Hague, at 774-872-0944

HOME HANDYMAN PROGRAM

This is a volunteer position and services are limited to light repairs/installations such as installing safety equipment, assembling furniture, light yard work, etc.

Give the Dighton Council on Aging a call at 508-823-0095 to schedule your appointment today!

AARP FREE TAX PREPARATION UPDATE!



Unfortunately, the Dighton Council on Aging has been informed by our county's AARP Tax Preparation Representative that that they are not going to be able to provide free tax services in Dighton this year due to lack of AARP volunteers. This is unfortunate after our successful tax season last year.

We are thankful that a few surrounding Council on Agings and organizations have opened their doors to Dighton residents. Please call us for more information on this and as always, call sooner than later as all appointments work on a first come—first serve basis.

AARP is hopeful that next year they can expand the pool of volunteers and be able to reopen in Dighton.

COA MESSAGES

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COUNCIL ON AGING'S YEAR IN REVIEW:

The Dighton Council on Aging (COA) had ourselves a busy year! We would like to thank our staff, volunteers, partnered organizations and departments but most importantly, YOU, the residents for utilizing & supporting our services.

In 2025 (*January—November*) the following statistics were captured by our COA reporting platform:

Events/Programs: 405 unduplicated & 14,171 duplicated residents attended our COA programming or events. See page 4 & 5 to see what is happening at the COA!

New Users: 108 new users utilized our services.

Volunteers: 31 volunteers logged 1,610 hours worth of volunteer time.

Medical Equipment Loan Program: 116 residents utilized this program.

Transportation: 52 rides were scheduled through the COA through GATRA or other transportation companies.

SNAP/EBT: 34 applications were completed by the COA for residents.

Wellness Checks: 20 wellness checks were conducted by COA staff. If you are concerned about a loved one, neighbor or friend who is 60 or older, please call us!

Health Screenings: 109 residents received a health screening which consisted of either our Flu Clinic, Hearing Screenings, Podiatry Clinics and Blood Pressure Clinics.

Fuel Assistance: 15 fuel assistance applications were completed from January—November. Please remember, we are taking appointments for this fuel season from now through March.

Handyman Program: 28 residents were served through this program.

SHINE Counseling: 94 residents received health benefits counseling by Kendra & Bela, our two certified SHINE Counselors.

Salon Use: 55 residents utilized our hairdresser totaling 248 hair cuts.

This is just a small inside look at the Dighton Council on Aging. Our staff & volunteers are dedicated to assist you in whichever aspect you are looking for. From scheduling programs—application assistance, we are here for you! Please visit or call us with any questions, concerns or to say hello! See you soon!

Winter Advisory

The Dighton Council on Aging will be closed if Dighton schools are closed due to inclement weather **ONLY**.

(Does not include delayed starts, vacation time, teacher's conferences etc.)

Please check your local TV & radio stations and the Dighton COA Facebook Page for cancellation information.

COA Programs are subject to be rescheduled and those who registered would be notified.

Please call: 508-823-0095 with any questions.





Photographed above you'll see some of our weekly bingo players. Join us on Mondays at the Council on Aging at 1:00pm and be sure to bring your \$1 bills for a chance to win some money! See you there!

The Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School Chorus joined our supportive adult program, Prime Time, in singing Christmas and wintertime carols this holiday season. This is a beautiful collaboration that our team looks forward to every season. If you or someone you know may benefit from attending Prime Time, please call 508-669-6272 or stop by for more information.



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