



CVCOA employees Rachel Roberts, Samantha Davis, and Jenn Badgett stand with Board President Paula Otenti at CVCOA's holiday lunch for staff and board.

Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA)

supports older Vermonters to age at home.

Our mission is to support Central Vermonters to age with dignity and choice.

At CVCOA, we respect the wishes of older adults to age at home, staying connected to the communities they know and love.

We provide comprehensive programs and services for older adults and caregivers to support independence, quality of life, and connection:

- Caregiver Support
- Information and Assistance
- Options Counseling
- Case Management
- Nutrition and Wellness
- Technology and Creativity
- Volunteer and Community Services

The CVCOA Helpline team addresses questions about aging and aging resources, including referrals for transportation, mental health services, housing assistance, nutrition options, home health services, legal aid, and more.

Learn more about our programs and services at cvcoa.org.

The first step is always to contact the CVCOA Helpline 1-802-477-1364.



SPRING 2024

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Ways to give and engage:

Volunteer: Learn more at www.cvcoa.org/volunteer

Donate: Give by mail or online at www.cvcoa.org

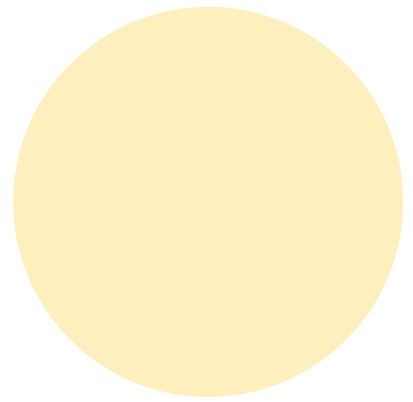
Serve: Apply to become a CVCOA board member at www.cvcoa.org/board-of-directors

Sponsor: Become a business sponsor to share your values with the community. See more at www.cvcoa.org/our-sponsors.

Leave a Legacy: Make a lasting impact with a future gift through legacy giving in your will or trust www.cvcoa.org/ways-to-give.



POWERED BY CONNECTION: MAY 2024



Human Connection is crucial to a vibrant community.

We find ourselves once again having completed another trip around the sun and celebrating another Older Americans Month. Since I count myself among that august body (I am 74) I almost feel like someone celebrating their own birthday. All of us “of a certain age” have something to celebrate as do the communities in which we live. We may celebrate because we have lived long lives which has allowed us to see and experience a myriad of events, some good, some bad, but all of it life enriching. I would hope that for most of us, those things that have enriched our lives far outweigh



those that have been disappointments or the cause of trauma, physical or mental. Our longevity is rightly celebrated by the communities in which we live because we provide a certain leavening, a wisdom, if you will, that would not be there if everyone were young, inexperienced in the ways of the world, and, to use a term my dearly departed mother would use, still “wet behind the ears.”

The theme of this year’s important celebration is **Powered by Connection**, and that is exactly to what I am referring. Human connections of all kinds, with people of all ages, all levels of education, all economic levels, all races and ethnic groups, and all abilities, both physical and mental, are crucial to a vibrant community and to fully appreciate the human experience.

So, let’s celebrate this power of connection this month and keep it foremost in our lives as we continue to age within our own communities. CVCOA is here to help you make that happen, which is why our mission statement is **to support Central Vermonters to age with dignity and choice**. Never hesitate to reach out to us if and when you need our assistance. After all, providing assistance to you is why we exist.

John Mandeville, Executive Director

NEWS!

BARRE ELEVATOR IS WORKING When 2023’s July flood spilled into our basement, it took out our elevator command center, rendering the accessibility feature unusable. We are happy to report that our elevator is now fully functional!

NEW RANDOLPH OFFICE CVCOA satellite offices at Randolph Senior Center, South Royalton Senior Center, and in Rochester are being centralized at a new home base in downtown Randolph that’s fully accessible and will be open by appointment.

You're Invited! Events



Creative Aging Celebration

Friday, June 7

Workshops at 10:00 am and 1:00 pm, Art Walk from 4:00 - 8:00 pm

T. W. Wood Gallery, 46 Barre St., Montpelier, VT 05602

Experience an open gallery exhibit of creative work by older artists in Central Vermont and participate in fun, live workshops and creative activities at T. W. Wood Gallery, during Montpelier's Art Walk. Treats and drinks will be available at this free event. No tickets required!

More information and schedule: <https://www.cvcoa.org/creative-aging-celebration>

Age Outdoors

Saturday, September 7 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm

Oxbow Park/Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, 257 Portland St., Morrisville, VT 05661

Age Outdoors with CVCOA this September during our fun run, walk, and bicycle ride on the scenic Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to celebrate healthy aging! Your ticket to run, walk, or ride includes lunch at our post-event celebration in Oxbow Park.

Tickets: \$30 (includes lunch)

More information and tickets: tiny.cc/ageoutdoors



New to Medicare Workshops

CVCOA provides information, counseling, and assistance to all Medicare-eligible persons under the auspices of the State Health Insurance Program or "SHIP." We can answer your questions about Medicare, private insurance plans, supplemental insurance plans, and Vermont State insurance programs.

We offer monthly **New to Medicare Workshops** to help individuals who are new to the Medicare system. These sessions take place remotely using Zoom. To participate, register by calling **1-802-479-0531** or by sending an email with your name, address, phone number, and the date of the workshop you would like to attend to: medicareworkshops@cvcoa.org.

2024 New to Medicare Workshop Schedule:

May 14, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

June 11, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

July 9, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

August 6, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

September 10, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

October 8, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

November 5, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

December 10, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Find additional resources and informational videos at

www.cvcoa.org/insurance-and-medicare-counseling

or call the CVCOA Helpline at **802-477-1374** with questions.



Navigating Medicare

Expanding Nutrition Options

CVCOA and partner nutrition programs will soon offer expanded options for medically tailored meals

Through a grant from Meals on Wheels America, CVCOA's Director of Nutrition and Wellness has built a recipe database that will share the beloved recipes of Central Vermonters. This database will allow recipes to be adapted to a Medically-Tailored meal option to support people with hypertension, diabetes, kidney disease, or heart disease. Each of our twelve nutrition programs will have access to this database so that they can find recipes and build menus to meet the needs of their communities.

Opportunity to share a favorite meal with Central Vermonters

There's something special about meal traditions, and that's why we want to use your family's traditional or favorite meals for this database. When you share your family recipe, you support a culinary database that will preserve Vermont's culture while nourishing your neighbors.

Send a picture or text of your recipe to recipes@cvcoa.org or give us a call to discuss other ways to share. We can't wait to hear from you!

What's Next

The functionality of the database is currently being tested, and recipes are being loaded in. Next, our nutrition programs will begin to access and utilize recipes, and eventually Meals on Wheels America will share this resource with members outside the region.



Congregate Meal Programs

Senior centers and meal programs throughout the region offer lunchtime congregated meals as well as social and wellness activities.

Find a location near you by visiting www.cvcoa.org/nutrition-programs or call the CVCOA Helpline at 1-802-477-1364.

3SquaresVT

3SquaresVT is a nutrition program that boosts your food budget to help you stay healthy.

About 1 in 10 Vermonters use 3SquaresVT, including over 14,000 Vermonters who are age 60 and over.

If everyone in the household is 65+ or receives SSI, your benefits are deposited directly into your bank account as cash.

Are you wondering if you qualify for 3 SquaresVT benefits?

For more information or help filling out an application over the phone or in your home, call Michelle Mahikoa, CVCOA Nutrition Outreach Specialist, at 1-802-479-7524.

Memorable Times

Stories • Memories • Music • Community

A relaxed social time for people living with mild to moderate memory loss and their care partners

Online: Memorable Times Jukebox

Every Wednesday
from 10:30 to 11:15 am

Location: Zoom

Email Barb Asen at basen@cvcoa.org for the Zoom link

This dementia friendly gathering takes place weekly on Zoom with friends from Scotland. Participants gather to share songs, stories, memories, and laughter.

In-person: Memorable Times Café

Third Wednesday of the month
(Quarterly: January, April, June, October)
from 1:30 to 3:00 pm

Location: Vermont History Center
60 Washington St., Barre 05641

Refreshments provided. Accessible parking available.

This dementia-friendly community program is free and open to the public! Participants share stories, songs, movement, and laughter. Memorable Times is sponsored by Central Vermont Council on Aging in partnership with the ABLE Library of the Vermont Department of Libraries. ABLE Library staff can help interested participants access books in a format that fits their reading needs, including large print books, digital talking books, print braille picture books and audio-described DVDs.

For more information contact Barb Asen at
802-476-2681 or basen@cvcoa.org

View upcoming Memorable Times themes
on the CVCOA website
at www.cvcoa.org/events.



Caregiver Support

In addition to Memorable Times programs, contact Family Caregiver Support about respite grants, classes, support groups, and resources. Visit <https://www.cvcoa.org/for-caregivers/> or call the CVCOA Helpline at 1-802-477-1364.



Creativity is for Everyone . . .

Including older adults!

Whether you have been a lifelong artist, are returning to creative activities after a hiatus during your career, or are brand new to developing creative skills, CVCOA recognizes creative aging as an integral part of healthy aging.

In 2020, CVCOA started a Creative Care Kit project as a pandemic response to ensure older adults had the opportunity to engage in creative activities in their homes. The goal was to help alleviate social isolation and loneliness through creative expression.

Participants start by choosing one of five kits: watercolor, digital drawing, poetry, crafting, or drawing/illustration. Kits are delivered to a recipient's home and include a binder of arts lessons and a set of supplies. There is an option to be connected with a volunteer companion to create, share and discuss artwork with and an option to request an iPad for participating in Zoom art-making sessions.

All participants are encouraged to share their work at CVCOA's Creative Aging Celebration, which showcases and honors the creative voices of older adults. **We hope you will join us at this year's event on June 7 at T. W. Wood Gallery in Montpelier.**

To date the program has served about 250 people. **To find out more about participating in the Creative Care Kit program, visit our website at <https://cvcoa.org/creative-aging>.**

“We all have a story to tell, and for some of us, telling that story through art-making is incredibly empowering. Older adults can develop creative skills at any age - no one is too old to be creative!”

- Luke Rackers





Powered by Connection

A Volunteer and Case Management Story

Last summer CVCOA Case Manager Bill Merrylees worked with David and Judy

Murphy of Central Vermont Mission (CVM) to provide clients a way to enter and leave their homes safely.

CVM is an organization dedicated to helping residents of Central Vermont and the Northeast Kingdom maintain their homes.

They tackle minor and major repairs and modest remodeling, by partnering with volunteer groups. In this particular case, a group of retired handymen from a church in Pennsylvania connected with CVM and stepped up to help neighbors in our community.

A couple in Middlesex needed new steps to their front door. The existing steps were rickety and on the verge of collapse. Not only did CVM rebuild the three stairs, they also built a landing with a railing and an overhang above the door to protect anyone standing on the steps from rain and weather.

Another client who is mobility challenged and legally blind needed a ramp to safely get in and out of the house. When he saw the ramp during a home visit, Bill Merrylees remarked, "It's kind of deluxe."

Thanks to these amazing connections, materials were the only cost for both projects. David from CVM set up a materials account at rk Miles where community members were able to donate toward this expense.

These clients are not only able to stay in their homes and move in and out more freely, they are *safe* to enter and leave their homes without fear of a fall.

Stay Engaged, Stay Connected, Stay Healthy!

Volunteering supports healthy aging and builds strong communities.

CVCOA volunteers make a tremendous impact on the lives of older adults in Central Vermont. Use your energy and experience to help our older neighbors remain in the homes and communities they love. Volunteer orientation, training, and support is provided.

We have a variety of volunteer opportunities to fit your schedule:

Deliver Meals on Wheels, Provide Companionship or Respite, Lead a Wellness Class, Assist with Grocery Shopping, Organize Household Items, Motivate Creativity, Prepare Garden Beds, Support Caregiver Programs, Offer Technology Guidance, And More!

Find volunteer opportunities and apply today at

www.cvcoa.org/volunteer

or call 802-241-4840.



[ACL.gov/OAM](https://www.acl.gov/OAM)
#OlderAmericansMonth





Central Vermont Council on Aging
59 N. Main Street Suite 200
Barre, VT 05641

Are you receiving CVCOA's monthly email newsletters and special announcements? Sign up today at www.cvcoa.org and click the "Click to Subscribe to Our Newsletter" button at the bottom of our homepage.

GetSetUp

Helping Older Adults Make A Difference

With free access to thousands of peer-based online classes, The Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) is making it easy for Vermonters 60+ to stay active and social. GetSetUp's custom-built video learning interface has been tailored to older adults of all tech levels. Vermont's older adults can easily connect with a safe community of over 4.6 million peers globally.

Sign up for free at:
<https://www.getsetup.io/partner/vermont>



Did you catch the April 8 eclipse?



CVCOA is the leading expert and advocate for healthy aging for Central Vermonters.