



AGE-FRIENDLY

Franklin County & North Quabbin

What is Age & Dementia Friendly Franklin County & North Quabbin?
We make it easier for older adults to stay connected, active, and supported.
[The Regional Action Plan](#), developed by local partners & residents, offers a roadmap for making our community an even better place to grow older.



Guests and the Backyard Oasis production team celebrate 50 episodes. From left: Dan Conlon, Denise Schwartz, Judy Raper, Bela Breslau, Meg Ryan, and Alex Audette. Photo credit: Chris Larabee/Greenfield Recorder

Aging, Community, and the Power of Podcasting

In our Age Friendly communities, the voices of local older adults matter—and it matters that they are heard. These voices are treasures of wisdom, experience, and insight. And with over 20,000 people over the age of 65 in Franklin County, that's a lot of voices. And boy, do they have stories to tell.

But how to get those voices out into the world? There are lots of ways. Local older adults contribute widely across all mediums—fine art, writing, dance, and lectures, to name a few. In addition, since the fall of 2023,

the perspectives of Franklin County's older adults can be heard on virtually any device across the world directly from the studios of Greenfield Community College, with the launch of [the Backyard Oasis podcast](#).

The name Backyard Oasis hints at what to expect. Greenfield Community College, a regional leader in lifelong learning, established [Older Adults Seeking, Inspiring and Serving \(OASIS\)](#) to further engage older adult learners who have long been a core of the GCC student body. According to Judy Raper, Associate Dean of Community Engagement at Greenfield Community College and Backyard Oasis founder, "Franklin County is home to a remarkable community of older adults whose intelligence, enthusiasm, and life experience enrich GCC in countless ways. OASIS was created to ensure we not only support their continued learning but also benefit from the valuable insights they have to share." "Backyard" evokes a setting: comfortable, familiar, inviting—but perhaps most importantly, the podcast is conceived by, run by, and for local older adults.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Planning Gaps Leave Older Adults Unprepared for Care

by James Fuccione, [Massachusetts Health Aging Collaborative](#)

A new survey from the National Poll on Healthy Aging, based at the University of Michigan, shows that many adults over 50 aren't prepared for long-term care needs. While 71% expect to need help with daily activities as they age, only 37% have discussed their preferences with loved ones, and just 1 in 10 have spoken with a financial advisor. Nearly half wrongly believe Medicare will pay for long-term care services, like help in the home or a nursing facility.

Most people said they'd prefer to receive care at home, but many haven't taken steps to make their homes safer or more accessible. These gaps between expectation and planning can leave older adults and their families unprepared when needs arise.

This poll highlights the importance of early conversations and proactive planning to help people age in place safely and with dignity.

[Read the Full Report](#)



Protect and Increase Funding for the Older Americans Act

**60 Years
of the OAA**
July 14 • 1965–2025

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Older Americans Act (OAA)—a landmark law that has helped millions of older adults age with health, dignity, and independence. OAA programs fund everything from home-delivered meals and transportation to caregiver support and wellness activities—many of the very services we highlight in our Age & Dementia Friendly work. [Learn more with this fact sheet](#)

TRAINING



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MATURE WORKERS**

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- Franklin Transit Management
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- Behavioral Health Network
- LifePath
- Guardian Angel Senior Services
- Hilltown Community Health Center
- Mass PCA Directory
- Quabbin Valley Healthcare
- Greenfield Senior Center
- The Greenfield Public Library
- Greenfield Community College
- Senior Community Service
Employment Program
- Cooley Dickinson Health Care
- Department of Developmental
Services
- More to follow!

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MassHire Programs & Services are funded in full by US Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration grants. (Additional details furnished upon request.)

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The Many Faces of Dementia

This free presentation is open to all and will provide an overview of the different types of dementia.

Please join us at one of the following options:

Thursday, July 31 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Presentation Followed by Q&A and refreshments Wendell Library 7 Wendell Depot Road Wendell, MA	Wednesday, August 20 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Presentation Followed by Q&A Zoom Meeting For Zoom link go to: www.villageneighbors.org
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Presenter Linda **Puzan, MSW**, brings decades of experience in the fields of dementia care and memory support. Linda has dedicated her career to understanding the challenges of memory loss and providing compassionate guidance to individuals and caregivers alike.

This event is part of a series of presentations and activities sponsored by the Village Neighbors and the Councils on Aging of Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell **Neighborhood Dementia Support Program**.

For support with memory loss, contact Village Neighbors at 413-345-6894 or email us at generalinfo@villageneighbors.org

This Age & Dementia Friendly Community Award is supported by LifePath, with funding from the Point32 Health Foundation and the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Network, a project of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Retrofit Ancillary Grantee (RANGE) Program

The Residential Retrofit Program brings high-speed, reliable internet to public and affordable housing across Massachusetts by upgrading infrastructure and wiring. To support full use of these upgrades, the new \$8M RANGE program offers grants to housing operators for related investments. [More info available here.](#)

MassVets Benefit Estimator Launched to Help Veterans Access Financial Aid

The MassVets Benefit Estimator helps veterans and families quickly determine eligibility for Chapter 115 financial assistance. Chapter 115 provides state-funded aid for daily living expenses, medical costs, rent, and more. The 2024 HERO Act expanded benefits, preventing eligibility loss due to cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and enabling direct deposit for faster payments. Veterans can use the estimator at vets.mass.gov and apply through their local Veterans' Service Officer (VSO). For assistance, call (617) 210-5480.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Catalyst Fund

The Catalyst Fund provides one-time non-renewable grants of up to \$7,500 for twelve months to help community-based organizations strengthen their capacity to expand access to health and health care in Massachusetts. The Catalyst Fund is intended to help organizations pay for activities that can strengthen their infrastructure, build capacity, or plan for the future, and as its name implies, help spark innovation. [Click here for more information.](#)

Funding for Community Transportation

Looking for funding for a community transportation service or coordination effort? [Check out these federal, state, foundation, and other funding opportunities.](#)



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The advertisement is a promotional graphic with a light blue background and a darker blue border. It features a yellow starburst with the word 'NEW' and a yellow arrow pointing towards the text. The text is in a mix of bold black and blue fonts. At the bottom, there is a logo consisting of three overlapping teardrop shapes in blue, purple, and orange, with the text 'memory cafe alliance' below it.

Our thanks to the Age & Dementia Friendly Franklin County & North Quabbin Steering Committee members:

- Michael Archbald - Foothills Health District
- Jean Dodge - LifePath's Rainbow Elders

- Lynne Feldman - LifePath
- Mary Giannetti - Heywood Healthcare
- Cathy Savoy - Athol Council on Aging
- Denise Schwartz - OASIS Council at Greenfield Community College
- Meg Ryan - FRCOG
- Rachel Stoler - FRCOG
- Phoebe Walker - FRCOG



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