

The Common Thread

A North Quabbin Community Coalition Publication

March 2021 ~ Volume 36, Issue 7



Heather's Highlights

Dear Readers,

February's forum featured updates from the North Quabbin Recovery Center. The NQRC is fully functioning with Covid-19 precautions in place for everyone's safety. Their doors are open at 416 Main Street, Athol, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 to 5:00 pm with All Recovery Meetings both in person and virtually through a Zoom platform at 3:30 pm (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/364283750>).

The NQRC is a project of the NQCC and is completely volunteer driven by amazingly dedicated peer leaders and allies. They offer a compassionate, safe space that allows multiple paths of recovery for all. Connection is key at the NQRC, with folks connecting both in person and virtually sharing experiences, support, and fun.

North Quabbin
Recovery Center



Recover and Discover

Currently, the NQRC is promoting February into March as a time to Love Your Recovery. The Center has put up a display in their windows of hearts and quotes reflecting what recovery means to this region. Join the conversation and know that we are all in this together! For the most up to date information, visit the NQRC on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NorthQuabbinRECOVERYcenter>.

Thank you for all you do!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather".

Heather Bialecki Canning
Executive Director

Next Coalition Forum:

March 19, 2021
9:00—10:30 am

The Age- and Dementia-Friendly Project
Presented by Lifepath

Online

(See back page for Zoom link.)

April's Newsletter
DEADLINE: March 23

Email details to
admin@nqcc.org

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** In memory of Edgar Sykes

*Thank
you*

NQCC's Children's Health & Wellness System of Care Task Force Presents Munch & Move through the Month of March!

This year, Munch & Move is a month-long family fun opportunity! Families are encouraged to make a meal together and to have a game or activity night and/or dance party anytime during the month of March. Take pictures and videos to enter for prizes! The deadline to enter is March 31. Submit pictures and videos of your family fun at

<https://www.facebook.com/Munch-Move-101747735284605>.

Munch & Move through the Month of March

Lord Pond Plaza Mural Design Competition

The Town of Athol, in conjunction with the North Quabbin Community Coalition, is inviting artists of all ages to participate in a mural design competition to celebrate the greening of Lord Pond Plaza!

BACKGROUND—The Town of Athol has begun assessing the feasibility of redeveloping Lord Pond Plaza into urban green space through a grant from the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. This assessment will identify opportunities to incorporate nature-based solutions and green infrastructure into the Lord Pond Plaza parking lot area, such as stream daylighting, shade trees for cooling, green space for stormwater and flooding mitigation, and open space improvements. The selected mural design will help celebrate and broadcast this effort.

MURAL DESIGN COMPETITION—The theme for the mural project is “Greening Lord Pond Plaza.” The selected design will be painted on a 4' x 8' plywood sheet for outdoor display. The design competition is open to any individual residing in Athol who can create art appropriate to the theme and setting. Students in grades 7-12 are especially encouraged to submit mural designs. Additional

details will be provided on the Lord Pond Plaza project website in mid-March 2021. To learn more about the Lord Pond Plaza project and to sign up for announcements regarding the Lord Pond Plaza Mural Design Competition, visit

<https://lordpondplaza.wordpress.com>.



Greening Lord Pond Plaza



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RE-ENTRY FOUNDATIONAL MANUFACTURING PROGRAM

Potential for full-time positions after completion of the program!

Have you recently been released from incarceration? Are you struggling to find employment because of a CORI history?

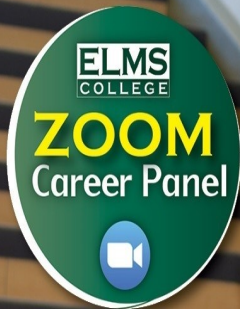
The transition process after incarceration can be difficult, with managing jobs, re-establishing family relationships, and the pressure to not reoffend. We want to help!

- Free, four weeks paid training
- Earn OSHA-10 certification
- Access to case management
- Provide support during transition process after incarceration

Contact Jonathan Olan @ (413) 834-9574 / JOlan@communityaction.us
or Tess Champoux @ (413) 774-7847
to see if you are eligible

This four-week manufacturing program includes online trainings and an in-person lab at Greenfield Community College. COVID-19 precautions will be in place for in-person instruction.

Participants must be eligible to work in the U.S.



March 3
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Social Work Career Panel Night

ZOOM with speakers from various social work areas, including teaching, private practice, state/federal agencies, healthcare, education, addiction & recovery.

email: continuinged@elms.edu to receive your zoom link

elms.edu/off-campus



The United Arc
&
Greater Athol Area Advocates for
Families with Special Needs
proudly present

Virtual Coffee & Conversation

with your legislators from Franklin, Hampshire,
Hampden, & Worcester counties

Friday, March 5, 2021

9:00 am - 10:30 am

Via Zoom

Join us for a conversation about inclusion, choice, and independence with your representatives. Featuring stories of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and advocates.

Having Purpose 2021

RSVP to Willow Ross by February 26, 2021

(413) 774-5558 x1011

willowross@theunitedarc.org

Community Action Pioneer Valley Youth and Workforce Development Programs



**COMMUNITY ACTION
PIONEER VALLEY**
Access • Opportunity • Community

Job openings - 5 Specialist Positions - 37.5 hrs. /wk.

Seeking dynamic, experienced, organized workforce development professionals to provide recruitment, eligibility verification, case management, job/internship placement, and group job readiness training to youth. Candidates must be reliable, engaging, professional, and have strong collaboration skills to work with multiple service providers. Prior experience working with individuals with barriers to employment strongly preferred. CORI, safe driving record, and reliable car required. For full job description and benefits information, visit www.communityaction.us/job-openings. AA/EOE/AD.

YouthWorks! Application Deadline: March 15






Join a cohort of peers and explore careers, receive job training, and work on real employer-sponsored service projects during the months of March and June. Youths ages 16 to 21 can earn up to \$100 per week for participation. Residents of the North Quabbin area, as well as those from Hampshire and Franklin Counties, are eligible. Must be low income (SNAP eligible or free/reduced lunch suffices). All participation is online, with Chromebook and Wifi hotspot loans available to participants. Apply at bit.ly/2Mqb5w1 by March 15, 2021.

What has home visiting looked like for Healthy Families of Franklin County/North Quabbin?

- Virtual and Outdoor visits
- Resource connection
- Virtual groups (with fun goodies!)
- Activity kits and more!

We are here and ready to welcome families!

Click [here](#) to learn more



Healthy Families of Franklin County and North Quabbin is Taking Referrals

Community Action Pioneer Valley has announced that Healthy Families of Franklin County and North Quabbin is taking referrals and that they have English and Spanish speaking Home Visitors available for participants. For more information, visit <https://www.communityaction.us/healthy-families>. For a Referral Form, visit <https://healthyfamiliesreferral.form.wordpress.com>.

NELCWIT

NELCWIT continues to offer all services remotely, including their free, confidential 24/7 crisis hotline at 413-772-0806. Please do not hesitate to call if you need support. Also, they are hiring! Multiple positions are now open, including a North Quabbin-based Counselor/Advocate. Check out their website for more info: <https://www.nelcwit.org/about/employment>.





CHCFC Health Connector Navigator Available

As you may or may not know, Open Enrollment for health insurance through the Health Connector has been extended until May 23, 2021. The Community Health Center of Franklin County (CHCFC) has a Health Connector Navigator that can assist you with the application and answer any questions. Their Navigator, Wendy, can also assist you with applying for MassHealth which has no open enrollment period, so you can apply at any time. You can also apply for health coverage at any time if you have a qualifying event such as losing insurance at a job, a change in income, marriage, birth, or are new to the area. Wendy does not make appointments in the office, but will work with you over the phone (413-325-8500 x146) at your convenience. You can start your own application for MassHealth or the Health Connector at <https://www.mahealthconnector.org>. You can also upload your own documents and make payments there. The coverage that you are available for is dependent on your income and the size of your tax household. If you have any questions, please call Wendy at 413-325-8500 x146.

Housing Mediation Program



Collaborative Resolutions Group (CRG, formerly The Mediation & Training Collaborative) is part of the state's Eviction Diversion Initiative (EDI), and is the state-designated EDI community mediation center for Franklin County (also serving Hampshire and Hampden counties). CRG's Housing Mediation Program helps landlords and tenants work out issues before they get worse and lead to eviction and other serious crises. Circumstances in which community mediation may be a helpful tool:

- People aren't far apart, or are collaborative, and just need a little help to reach an agreement and work out the details
- Issues beyond non-payment (such as property condition or landlord/tenant behaviors)
- Miscommunication (or lack of communication) is a primary barrier
- High conflict, tough communication, seemingly impossible case (complex, multiple issues, personal relationships at stake)
- Tenant isn't eligible for subsidies but both are willing to explore other options to resolve the issue
- "Softer landing" may be possible with a mediated agreement

With support from the Massachusetts Eviction Diversion Initiative and the Attorney General's Face to Face Mediation Program, housing-related issues can be mediated free, confidentially, and at times that work for the people involved either online or by phone. If you'd like to know more about Collaborative Resolutions Group's Housing Mediation Program and how they can collaborate with your agency or group, please contact Betsy Williams, CRG's Mediation Director, at ewilliams@crg-collab.org. For referrals, please contact info@crg-collab.org, call 413-774-7469, or submit an inquiry via their website at <https://www.collaborativeresolutionsgroup.org/contact-us.html>.

BIPOC/LGBTQ Communities Volunteer Opportunity



LifePath
options for independence

LifePath is hoping to find one or two people from the BIPOC and/or LGBTQ communities in Franklin County or the North Quabbin area who might want to volunteer with the Healthy Living Department of LifePath as a workshop leader or coach. LifePath is committed to reaching marginalized communities with their programs due to the heavy toll chronic conditions have placed on these communities here and around the nation. Contact Andi Waisman, at 413-829-9219 or awaisman@LifePathMA.org.

Warwick to Host 2nd Virtual MVP Community Resilience Building Workshop

The Town of Warwick invites town officials, residents, businesses, and other interested community members to attend the second of two virtual workshops on March 8 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm to discuss impacts of climate change on the town and to develop strategic actions to build resilience to those impacts. The workshops are part of a combined MVP Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan with the Town of Northfield, in partnership with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Planning Department.

The March 8 workshop will build upon feedback collected at the first workshop on February 17 and over the past year about climate change threats and challenges facing the town. How can Warwick address impacts from stronger storms, longer power outages, isolation from downed communications and blocked roads, threats to forests, water quality, and public health? Participants will help prioritize these and other challenges, and identify community strengths and actions to address the challenges moving forward.

Meeting notices and agendas with zoom links can be found at: Warwick Town Hall, 12 Athol Road, Warwick, MA 01378 or at <http://www.warwickma.org>. To find out more about this project and how you can become involved, please contact Warwick Town Coordinator, David Young, at 978-729-3224 or coordinator@town.warwick.ma.us.



Athol Lions Dust Off Spring Fling Virtual 5K

The Athol Lions Club is putting on their very first Athol Lions Dust Off Spring Fling Virtual 5K, all online except for walking! The Virtual 5K will be completed at your own pace in a 10-day time frame from March 13 through March 22. Grab your kiddos, your partner, or friend and dust off those running/walking shoes. For more information or to sign up, visit <https://forms.gle/ePHTZzoZPGbsPjZd7>. Contact Karen at 978-320-1015 with questions.



North Quabbin Community Coalition
251 Exchange Street, Athol MA 01331
www.nqcc.org

Mission Statement: The North Quabbin Community Coalition is a community-wide alliance committed to improving the quality of life for all those living and working in the North Quabbin since 1984.

NQCC March Forum:

The Age- and Dementia-Friendly Project
Presented by Lifepath

March 19, 2021, from 9:00 to 10:30 am—Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89452837160?pwd=aXZBTDRFZzY1bXZxL2c3bVdrSjlhdz09>

Meeting ID: 894 5283 7160 ~ Passcode: 242560

Free Online Narcan Training:

March 9, 2021—3:00 - 4:30 pm

Participants will learn what an opioid overdose is, how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose, and how to administer Narcan to reverse an opioid overdose. Zoom details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMkce2gpjouHdCyFsoFXej9LBeRnDmJefmF>



Coalition Regular Happenings

North Quabbin Recovery Center Hours

The North Quabbin Recovery Center provides a compassionate, safe space to offer peer support to allow multiple paths of recovery for all. The Center is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays with All Recovery Meetings happening on those days either in-person or virtually. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/NorthQuabbinRECOVERYcenter> weekly for times. All are welcome.



ACT Group

The ACT Group is held every Tuesday from 1:15 to 2:15 pm. The link to access the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82131343295>.