

Merrimack Valley 50+

July  
2024

# Active *Life*

**Making Homes  
Safer for Aging  
in Place**

**Things to Do:  
Merrimack Valley  
Community  
Calendar**

***Free***

[www.merrimackvalleyactivelife.com](http://www.merrimackvalleyactivelife.com)

# Merrimack Valley 50+ Active Life

## July 2024

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Merrimack Valley 50+ **Active Life**

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### Easy Ideas to Stretch Your Retirement Budget

Ways seniors can save on enjoyable activities

(Family Features) Retirement may mean you have unlimited time to enjoy each day, but it doesn't mean you have a budget to match.

You probably already know staying active is essential for aging with grace, so instead of letting limited funds keep you at home, explore some ways you can enjoy your leisure time without breaking the bank.

**Hit the Gym**  
 Many fitness centers offer special rates and programs for older adults. Hitting the track or joining a group fitness class are easy ways to socialize while getting some exercise. The discounted membership is also an investment since staying fit is important for physical and mental health.

**Enjoy Early Dinner Deals**  
 You can still enjoy dining out occasionally, especially if you take advantage of lower-cost meals designed with older adults in mind. Many specials are for meals earlier in the day, which is consistent with a growing trend toward earlier dining. According to Yelp, the number of people eating from 4-6 p.m. has grown 9% (up to 26% from 17% in 2019). Eating earlier promotes better digestion, and earlier meals are often lighter portions for smaller appetites. For example, Cracker Barrel's Early Dinner Deals feature smaller portions served from 4-6 p.m. on weekdays. Menu items include a variety of home-style favorites like chicken n' dumplings, meatloaf, catfish and more.

**Check Out the Library**  
 Your local library is filled with hours of free entertainment, but it's not just the kind you'll find from getting a library card. You can undoubtedly find a book that covers any genre or interest you can name, but most local libraries also offer programming tailored to special interests and the sessions are typically offered for free or at a low cost. It's an easy, affordable way to pick up a new skill, meet a favorite author, learn about a topic that intrigues you and more. Other resources to explore include your library's DVD collection

and internet access if you don't have a computer at home.

**Nurture a Garden**  
 Tending a garden may seem like a seasonal activity, but you can make it a year-round hobby. Researching and planning is a good way to carry your gardening enthusiasm into the cooler months and you can start seedlings indoors to extend your growing season. While you're digging into this low-cost pastime, remember the results of your efforts, such as fresh fruits and veggies, can help cut your grocery costs, too.

**Mind Your Money with DIY**  
 Saving money at the grocery store is just one way you can make DIY projects work for you. There are dozens of other examples of ways you can put your skills and interests to use by passing time doing something you enjoy while benefiting your bank account. If you like to tinker with cars, figure out what repairs you can handle yourself and avoid hefty service fees. Crafting and sewing might mean you have ready-made gifts for special occasions and a way to repair or repurpose damaged clothing instead of discarding it.

**Ask About Discounts**  
 You may be surprised by how many places offer discounts for older adults that they don't readily advertise. In some cases, you'll find the information on their website or signage, but other times, you may find it easier to just ask. When you're booking an appointment or checking out, inquire about discounts for older adults, including any restrictions, age requirements, the amount of the discount and other pertinent details. Sometimes the discounts are offered on certain days or for specific services, or they may require you to join a loyalty club to access the discounts. When dining out, many restaurants offer a variety of loyalty perks. For example, rewards members at Cracker Barrel can earn points, or "Pegs," on qualifying restaurant and retail purchases. Members can also take advantage of bonus birthday, anniversary and surprise rewards throughout the year.

METHUEN MEMORIAL MUSIC HALL

July 3 - Meg Cutting - "Kaleidoscopes"  
 Willoughby Frederick and Emma Jacobson Watts Memorial Concert  
 Compositions by Cook, Alain, Hindemith, Bach, Hampston and Messiaen

July 10 - Joseph Ripka - "American and French Masters"  
 Compositions by Hampton, Bolcom, Paulus, Litaize and Dupré  
 In Memory of Kenneth T. Morse

July 17 - Anne Laver - "Heroes and Saints"  
 This concert pays tribute to all who have contributed to Methuen Memorial Music Hall over the years  
 Compositions by Davis, Schumann, Draper, Franck, Bach, Chee, van Oortmerssen, and Laurin  
 Sponsored by Cheryl Duerr and Steve Young

July 24 - Lukas Hasler - "Harmonic Conversations:  
 A Cross-Century Collaboration"  
 Compositions by Bach, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Price  
 Sponsored by Campbell Steward

July 31 - Carina Brackin - "Something Old, Something New,  
 Something Borrowed, Something Blue"  
 Compositions by Buxtehude, Widor, Whitlock, Hakim, Pumfrey and Bonnet  
 Sponsored by a Friend from Salem, NH

These concerts are held at Methuen Memorial Music Hall, 192 Broadway (Rt. 28) in Methuen.

Concerts begin at 7:30 pm; Doors open at 7:00 pm  
 Tickets are available at the door or online at Tix - Ticket Sales

Adults: \$15, Students: \$10, Children under 6: Free  
 Information about Group Discounts is available by e-mailing [info@mmmh.org](mailto:info@mmmh.org)

Also

July 7, 3:00 pm - Red, White and Blue Festival - A Free Patriotic Celebration  
 Raymond Nagem, Organ    Leonardo Ciampa, Piano  
 Elizabeth Keusch, Soprano  
 The program concludes with a Patriotic Sing-Along



## Ways to make your parents' home (or yours) safer for aging in place

(BPT) - Aging in place, the ability to live at home safely as we age, is crucial for many of us. The Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation at the University of Michigan recently found 88% of Americans want to stay in their homes as they age. But, that same study found only 15% have thought about the types of home modifications they need to make aging in place possible. Those modifications are crucial to prevent falling and other issues that can affect a person's ability to live safely at home.

Here are seven ways to create a safe, accessible environment for your aging parents - or yourself.

1. Create clear pathways. It's vital for people to have clear pathways to get around in their home. Look at the rooms, especially the living room and bedroom, with a critical eye. Is anything in the way as you move from the bedroom to the bathroom? How about from the living room to the kitchen? Do you need to maneuver around end tables, accent chairs or lamps? Stacks of books next to an armchair by the fireplace? It might mean you'll need to move furniture to a new room configuration to create a clear pathway from Point A to Point B.

2. Remove throw rugs. They're one of the biggest tripping hazards in the home, and they can make using a walker problematic. Get them up and get them out! And

while you're focusing on floors, use non-slip wax on wood floors and add non-skid treads to steps.

3. Add a toilet seat with built-in support arms. Bathroom safety is critical to aging in place. The Bemis Independence Assurance, for example, features support arms, each with a weight capacity of 350 pounds, integrated into the seat. The seat is mounted directly to the porcelain for stability. It's also elevated three inches, to make sitting and standing easier. This type of seat eliminates the need to install permanent grab bars near the toilet and makes it easier for people to sit and stand.

4. Add non-slip treads or appliques to the bathtub or shower floor. It's quick, it's easy and it can save you or your loved one from a nasty fall. Add grab bars to help steady people in the shower or for extra stability getting into and out of the tub, and a waterproof shower seat.

5. Consider converting your tub into a walk-in shower. This is a more expensive fix than adding grab bars or a new toilet seat, but a walk-in shower is ultimately much safer than climbing over a tub, and can also accommodate a wheelchair.

6. "Smarten" up the house. Smart faucets, thermostats and other smart appliances can add ease of use, protection and safety for older adults. Faucets can be voice

or motion activated, and turn off automatically at the end of use. Smart thermostats can keep the house at a comfortable temperature, and smart HVAC units can come with features like leak alerts that sense if pipes have burst or are leaking. All of these smart home items can be monitored from a cell phone, which adds peace of mind for adult children with an aging parent.

7. Install cameras inside and outside the house. Along with smart appliances, cameras can give adult children of aging parents

an added layer of peace of mind, and a way to check on their loved one instantly on their phone, from wherever they are.

By making these and other simple, inexpensive changes, you or your loved ones can age in place safely, for as long as possible. And everybody wants that, right?

## Merrimack Valley Calendar of Events

# July

**Monday, July 1**  
DROPP-IN TECH TIME  
MONDAY, JULY 1 2:30—4:30 PM  
Reference Desk 2nd Floor Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950  
Drop-in Tech Time  
Bring your simple technology questions for a drop in session. We can help with the basics for your phones, laptops, computers, and e-readers. Stop by the 2nd floor reference desk for help.  
Please bring your chargers & pertinent usernames & passwords.  
Sessions can last up to 30 minutes and will be run with available staff on a first come, first served basis. Contact [info@newburyportpl.org](mailto:info@newburyportpl.org) or call us at 978-465-4428 x 242 with questions.  
No Registration Required

**Tuesday, July 2**  
OPEN HOURS WITH LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION  
TUESDAY, JULY 2 1:00—2:00 PM  
Third Floor Conference Room Newburyport Public Library 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950  
Open Hours with Library Administration  
Come talk with library administration, including Head Librarian Kevin Bourque! We will be available for the public from 1-2pm Tuesdays in the 3rd Floor Conference Room to field questions, comments or concerns. Feel free to pop by!  
No Registration Required

MAH JONGG  
TUESDAY, JULY 2 1:00—3:00 PM  
Great Hall Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844  
Let's play Mah Jongg! We're bringing this popular game back to the library, on the first Tuesday of the month at 1pm. Not sure how to play? Maybe it has been awhile? Don't worry! This is a friendly game, and we'll do our best to match up people with similar skill levels. The library will provide a few scoring cards, but it would be best if players had their own. They can be purchased HERE from the National Mah Jongg League. Cards usually become available in March for the year. No Registration Required

**Wednesday, July 3**  
NEXT CHAPTER BOOK GROUP  
(IN PERSON)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 2:00—3:00 PM  
Senior Community Center 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA, 01950  
Next Chapter Book Group (IN PERSON)  
The Next Chapter Book Group invites you to join our monthly book discussion on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm. We will be meeting at the Senior Community Center. This meeting will be held in the Boardroom. Registration is not required, and masks are optional.

This month's title is "The Perfect Couple" by Elin Hilderbrand.  
"It's Nantucket wedding season, also known as summer-the sight of a bride racing down Main Street is as common as the sun setting at Madaket Beach. The Otis-Winbury wedding promises to be an event to remember: the groom's wealthy parents have spared no expense to host a lavish ceremony at their oceanfront estate. But it's going to be memorable for all the wrong reasons after tragedy strikes: a body is discovered in Nantucket Harbor just hours before the ceremony-and everyone in the wedding party is suddenly a suspect. As Chief of Police Ed Kapenash interviews the bride, the groom, the groom's famous mystery-novelist mother, and even a member of his own family, he discovers that every wedding is a minefield-and no couple is perfect. Featuring beloved characters from The Castaways, Beautiful Day, and A Summer Affair, The Perfect Couple proves once again that Elin Hilderbrand is the queen of the summer beach read." Books are available for request via the library catalog. Email [programs@newburyportpl.org](mailto:programs@newburyportpl.org) or call 978-465-4428 x242 if you have any questions, or to have a librarian put the book on hold for you.  
No Registration Required

MOVIE MATINEE: "ARTHUR THE KING" (IN-PERSON)  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 2:30—4:30 PM  
Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA  
Movie Matinee: "Arthur the King" (IN-PERSON)  
Join us for our Movie Matinees on Wednesday afternoons.  
This week we will be screening "Arthur the King" (2024, PG-13) starring Mark Wahlberg, Simu Liu, and Juliet Rylance at 2:30 pm. Run time 1 hour 47 minutes.  
"An adventure racer adopts a stray dog named Arthur to join him in an epic endurance race."

Come and enjoy the theater-like screen and sound system with fellow film buffs. This free event will be held in the Program Room and all are welcome!  
\*Please note that movie showings are subject to change with short notice. For the most current movie schedule, we recommend checking with the library directly.  
No Registration Required

COMMUNITY OF STITCHERS  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 6:30—7:45 PM  
Amesbury Room Amesbury Public Library 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA, 01913  
COMMUNITY OF STITCHERS  
Do you have a sewing, cross-stitch, knitting, crochet or other craft project you are working on? Bring it to a meeting of our Community of Stitchers where you can work on your project, get advice from your fellow creators, and show off your work! Our local stitching enthusiast and advanced knitter, Sarah Chapman, will be on hand at each meeting to help attendees with their projects. All experience levels are welcome - come enjoy a creative evening with us!

No advanced registration required - walk-ins welcome!  
STAFF CONTACT: Jodie Blouin, [jblouin@amesburylibrary.org](mailto:jblouin@amesburylibrary.org), 978-388-8148  
Did you know? We have a summer reading program for adults as well as for kids. Visit our summer reading page for more details. Sign up for our e-newsletter, and be among the first to learn about all of our programs and events for adults.  
No Registration Required

FIBER ARTS GROUP  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 6:30—8:00 PM  
Milhendler Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830  
Fiber Arts Group  
Calling all fiber artists! Bring your current project(s) of knitting, crocheting, hand stitching, hand quilting, and embroidery, or whatever else, to work on in the company of other fiber arts enthusiasts! Instruction is not offered at this event but fellow attendees are always happy to offer advice when they can.  
No registration needed. Drop in at any point during the 90-minute block!  
No Registration Required

**Thursday, July 4**  
HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

**Tuesday, July 9**  
ROBERT FROST ON THE FARM  
(IN-PERSON)  
TUESDAY, JULY 9 6:00—7:00 PM  
Program Room Newburyport Public Library 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA  
Robert Frost on the Farm (IN-PERSON)  
Robert Frost on the Farm  
New Hampshire farming in 1900 as told by the poet.

While it makes spoken words sing like sauntering music, the poetry of Robert Frost also educates us about New England farming at the start of the 20th Century. (Hint: It was hard.) In celebration of both New England history and Robert Frost's poetry, author and poet Jeffrey Zygmunt recites a selection of Frost's poems about farming. Frost's expressive and much-loved poetry helps us appreciate the rigorous demands of farm life in our region a century ago. Recited from memory, each poem is accompanied by commentary about its artistic beauty, about the experiences and emotions it expresses, plus background on Frost that gives us insight into the poem's origin and intention. The program includes a summary of Frost's life. This lively discussion and recital of some of Robert Frost's best poems is a celebration of both New Hampshire farming and Robert Frost's unique gift for capturing it in poetry. Jeffrey Zygmunt is a New England writer and poet who has also published numerous poetry, fiction and non-fiction books (including some children's books), and short stories. Working as a journalist, he has published articles in a long list of magazines and newspapers. He speaks regularly about poetry and art - especially to promote the works of American poets Edgar Allan Poe and Robert Frost - at venues around New England.  
Registration required.

WORDS BOOK GROUP  
TUESDAY, JULY 9 7:00—8:30 PM  
Trustees' Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844  
This book group focuses on authors and stories that explore diverse and underrepresented voices and experiences.  
A bit about the book:  
A tenacious Māori detective, Hana Westerman juggles single motherhood, endemic prejudice, and the pressures of her career in Auckland CIB. Led to a crime scene by a mysterious video, she discovers a man ritualistically hanging in a secret room



and a puzzling inward-curving inscription. Delving into the investigation after a second, apparently unrelated, death, she uncovers a chilling connection to a historic crime: 160 years before, during the brutal and bloody British colonization of New Zealand, a troop of colonial soldiers unjustly executed a Māori Chief. New members are always welcome. No Registration Required

#### Wednesday, July 10

MOVIE MATINEE: "JAWS" (IN PERSON)  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 2:30—4:30 PM  
Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA  
Movie Matinee: "Jaws" (IN PERSON)  
Join us for our Movie Matinees on Wednesday afternoons.

This week we will be screening "Jaws" (1975, PG) starring Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw, and Richard Dreyfuss at 2:30 pm. Run time 2 hour 4 minutes.

"When a killer shark unleashes chaos on a beach community off Cape Cod, it's up to a local sheriff, a marine biologist, and an old seafarer to hunt the beast down."

Come and enjoy the theater-like screen and sound system with fellow film buffs. This free event will be held in the Program Room and all are welcome!

\*Please note that movie showings are subject to change with short notice. For the most current movie schedule, we recommend checking with the library directly. No Registration Required

SECOND EDITIONS BOOK CLUB  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 2:30—3:30 PM  
Costello Center 68 Elm St., Amesbury, MA, in cooperation with the Amesbury Council on Aging, join Assistant Library Director Stephanie Smith for a book group geared toward older adults that will meet 2nd Wednesdays from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at the Senior Center. New members are always welcome! Please call the COA Reception Desk at 978-388-8138 to register.

This month, we will be discussing The Library Book by Susan Orlean. Part history of the Los Angeles Public Library, part true-crime investigation into the fire that ravaged LAPL's Central Branch in 1986, this book brims with fascinating people, little-known facts, and stories too wild to be made up. We will also have copies of the next month's book in regular print and large print available to borrow using your library card. Copies of the book will also be available for pickup at the Amesbury Public Library.

STAFF CONTACT: Stephanie Smith, ssmith@amesburylibrary.org, 978-388-8148 x607  
Did you know? We have a summer reading program for adults as well as for kids. Visit our summer reading page for more details.

Sign up for our e-newsletter, and be among the first to learn about all of our programs and events for adults.

Registration Requested: Call COA @ 978-688-8138

ADULT SCRABBLE CLUB  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 6:30—8:30 PM  
Trustees' Room Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844  
Attention wordsmiths! The Nevins Library Adult Scrabble Club is back for another round of wordplay. Join us for a fun night of scrabble. All competition levels are welcome.

The Adult Scrabble Club will meet every other Wednesday in the Trustees Room from 6:30-8:30pm. Let the Games begin! No Registration Required

#### Thursday, July 11

MAXWELL SHULTZ...IS GETTING MARRIED (A STAND UP COMEDY EVENT)  
THURSDAY, JULY 11 6:00—8:00 PM  
Johnson Auditorium Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830  
Maxwell Shultz...is Getting Married (A Stand Up Comedy Event)

Come see Haverhill resident and native Maxwell Shultz rehearse his upcoming comedy special, "...is getting married". After doing stand up comedy for ten years, Maxwell is bringing his material back home before his wedding to deliver a hilarious, mature, and explicit hour of comedy. He will be joined by comedian Bill Douglas. Maxwell Shultz is a Massachusetts storytelling comedian sharing anecdotes about his real life for nearly a decade. His most recent album, "Just Another Beautiful Day" was released December 2022 and the special accompanying it is free on YouTube. His third special and album is due out at the end of 2024. He has traveled across the country doing stand-up and cannot wait to come to your town!

Registration Required  
This show is for adults 18+.

#### Friday, July 12

FRIDAY FLICKS  
FRIDAY, JULY 12 10:00 AM—12:00 PM  
Johnson Auditorium Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830  
Friday Flicks  
Join us Friday mornings for a movie! In honor of Harrison Ford's birthday, this month we are featuring him in some iconic classics, as well as in some newer films. Today we watch Star Wars: The Force Awakens (2015). No Registration Required

#### Wednesday, July 17

FIT N TRIM  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 17 12:00—1:00 PM  
Milhendler Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830  
Fit N Trim  
Come join us for a new adult fitness class called Fit N Trim! You can improve your balance, strength and flexibility in this class.

Wednesdays, July 10th through August 28th from 12-1 with instructor Sandra Bernat. Adding weight training 1-2x a week will improve your balance, develop stronger bones and improve mobility and endurance so that you can walk/stand longer. Weight training will preserve and enhance muscle mass and reduce the involuntary loss of muscle that occurs as we age. Sponsored by the City of Haverhill Public Health Department. No Registration Required

#### Friday, July 19

METHUEN FARMER'S MARKET  
FRIDAY, JULY 19 10:00 AM—4:00 PM  
Front Porch Nevins Library 305 Broadway, Methuen, MA, 01844  
Farmers Market 2024 crop

The Nevins Library is the proud host of the Methuen Farmer's Market again this summer! Come and shop fresh produce from local farmers, right on the front lawn! All the farmers accept SNAP/EBT/food stamps as well as debit, credit, and cash; GWL market coupons, WIC, and senior farmers market coupons are also welcome.

This year, thanks to a grant from the Mass Cultural Council, everyone is invited to enjoy Music at the Market as well!

On the schedule this week:  
Working Man's Trio - Classic American Songbook standards, Latin jazz, and Country songs. 11am-1pm  
No Registration Required

#### Saturday, July 20

SPANISH CONVERSATION PRACTICE  
SATURDAY, JULY 20 11:00 AM—12:00 PM  
Milhendler Room Haverhill Public Library 99 Main Street, Haverhill, MA, 01830  
Are you looking to improve your conversational Spanish in a supportive and friendly environment? Join us!  
Come practice your Spanish speaking and learn some vocab, the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month, 11am-12pm.  
No registration required.

#### Tuesday, July 23

ADDISON GALLERY TALK: LAYING THE FOUNDATION: EXPLORING THE NUCLEUS OF THE ADDISON'S COLLECTION  
TUESDAY, JULY 23 3:00—4:00 PM  
Zoom  
Join Gordon Wilkins, Robert M. Walker Curator at the Addison Gallery of American Art, for a virtual tour and discussion of the exhibition. This program is presented in conjunction with Andover's Memorial Hall Library.

Registration is required. A video recording of the program will be available online about a week after the presentation. Laying the Foundation: Exploring the Nucleus of the Addison's Collection explores the eclectic mix of works that comprise the Addison's founding collection, which reflects not just the best of what was avail-

able on the market at the time but also the specific tastes and predilections of those who contributed to its creation. The exhibition is on view at the Addison Gallery of American Art through July 31, 2024. Image credit: John Singer Sargent, Cypress Trees at San Vigilio, 1913, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover  
STAFF CONTACT: Stephanie Smith, ssmith@amesburylibrary.org, 978-388-8148 x607  
Did you know? We have a summer reading program for adults as well as for kids. Visit our summer reading page for more details. Sign up for our e-newsletter, and be among the first to learn about all of our programs and events for adults.

#### Thursday, July 25

VIRTUAL ART TALK: DEFINING AMERICA: ILLUSTRATORS AND THE SATURDAY EVENING POST  
THURSDAY, JULY 25 7:00—8:00 PM  
Zoom

Join us each month to explore and appreciate different artists or artistic movements with Jane Oneail!

Registration is required;  
This program is presented in conjunction with the public libraries of Chelmsford, Groton, and Tewksbury and funded in part by the Friends of the Amesbury Public Library.

July's Talk: The iconic Saturday Evening Post magazine reached millions of homes each week, featuring illustrated covers that spoke to the experiences of the modern American nuclear family. Explore the styles and themes of beloved illustrators including Norman Rockwell, N.C. Wyeth and John Philip Falter.

Image: Norman Rockwell, Rosie the Riveter, 1943. Crystal Bridges Museum.

About the Presenter: Jane Oneail (pronounced OH-neel) is the founder of Culturally Curious, a company that curates and presents art appreciation programs for audiences worldwide. Jane holds a master's in Art History from Boston University and a master's in Education from Harvard University. Born and raised in NH, she has worked at some of the state's most esteemed cultural institutions, including the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, where she served as Executive Director, and the Currier Museum of Art, where she held the role of Senior Educator. Jane has also taught at the college level for more than a decade, most recently at Southern New Hampshire University. For more information visit the Culturally Curious website.

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#### Tuesday, July 30

JUST THE FACTS - NONFICTION BOOK GROUP - VIRTUAL  
TUESDAY, JULY 30 5:00—6:00 PM  
Virtual Program Newburyport Public Library 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA, Just the Facts Logo

Join us for NPL's Just the Facts Book Group! This group selects and discusses nonfiction books. All are welcome.

PLEASE NOTE, THIS MONTH'S MEETING IS VIRTUAL.

This event will be held on Zoom. Register online by calling 978-465-4428 x 242. A link will be emailed to participants automatically. If you do not receive a link, please email info@newburyportpl.org or call 978-465-4428 x242.

This month's pick is Prisoners of the Castle: an epic story of survival and escape from Colditz, the Nazis' fortress prison, by Ben Macintyre.

Prisoners of the Castle  
In this gripping narrative, Ben Macintyre tackles one of the most famous prison stories in history and makes it utterly his own. During World War II, the German army used the towering Colditz Castle

to hold the most defiant Allied prisoners. For four years, these prisoners of the castle tested its walls and its guards with ingenious escape attempts that would become a legend. But as Macintyre shows, the story of Colditz was about much more than escape. Its population represented a society in miniature, full of heroes and traitors, class conflicts and secret alliances, and the full range of human joy and despair. In Macintyre's telling, Colditz's most famous names - like the indomitable Pat Reid - share glory with lesser-known but equally remarkable characters like Indian doctor Birendranath Mazumdar, whose ill treatment, hunger strike and eventual escape read like fiction; Florimond Duke, America's oldest paratrooper and least successful secret agent; and Christopher Clayton Hutton, the brilliant inventor employed by British intelligence to manufacture covert escape aids for POWs. Prisoners of the Castle traces the war's arc from within Colditz's stone walls, where the stakes rose as Hitler's war machine faltered and the men feared that liberation would not come soon enough to spare them a grisly fate at the hands of the Nazis.(Description summarized from

catalog record.)  
Please register by calling 978-465-4428 x242.

#### Wednesday, July 31

MOVIE MATINEE: "EMMA" (IN-PERSON)  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 31 2:30—4:30 PM  
Program Room Newburyport Public Library, 94 State Street, Newburyport, MA  
Movie Matinee: "Emma" (IN-PERSON)  
Join us for our Movie Matinees on Wednesday afternoons.

This week we will be screening "Emma" (2020, PG) starring Anya Taylor-Joy, Johnny Flynn, and Mia Goth at 2:30 pm. Run time 2 hours 4 minutes.

"Jane Austen's beloved comedy about finding your equal and earning your happy ending, is reimagined in this. Handsome, clever, and rich, Emma Woodhouse is a restless queen bee without rivals in her sleepy little town. In this glittering satire of social class and the pain of growing up, Emma must adventure through misguided matches and romantic missteps to find the love that has been there all along." Come and enjoy the theater-like screen and sound system with fellow film buffs.

This free event will be held in the Program Room and all are welcome!

\*Please note that movie showings are subject to change with short notice. For the most current movie schedule, we recommend checking with the library directly. No Registration Required

Please send any events you would like considered for the Calendar of Events to Editor@merrimackvalleyactivelife.com

We're looking for a freelance writer from the Merrimack Valley area to contribute to

**Merrimack Valley 50+ Active Life**

Please send a writing sample to:  
mike@merrimackvalleyactivelife.com



Breakfast & Lunch

*Carleen's*

Thirty years serving the Merrimack valley  
\*Great food & friendly staff  
\*Open 7 days a week

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## Tired of Chronic Pain?

### Medical Experts Offer 3 Helpful Tips

(BPT) - If you're coping with back, neck or knee pain on a regular basis, you're not alone. According to research, one in every two Americans experience musculoskeletal (MSK) pain, which affects the bones, tendons, ligaments, muscles and nerves. The 2024 State of MSK survey of 10,000 Americans with chronic and acute pain conducted by Hinge Health shows that pain is too big a problem to ignore.

Nearly half the survey respondents say chronic pain prevents them from living life to the fullest (47%), while 27% report MSK pain has decreased their productivity at work, and 22% agree it has made them consider leaving their job.

Beyond physical symptoms, chronic pain is also associated with poor mental health. About one-third of survey respondents report feeling depressed, and nearly half report anxiety.

"We live in a nation in pain," said Dr. Jeff Krauss, MD, chief medical officer at Hinge Health. "And many are not accessing what doctors consider the first-line treatment for MSK pain: physical therapy, education and lifestyle change."

The survey found people with chronic pain are more likely to seek over-the-counter or prescription pain medications, despite the fact that 47% of people who do not feel in control of their pain fear side effects or complications from those treatment methods.

In some cases, the real or imagined cost of physical therapy, plus the ability to make in-person appointments, can be barriers. Fortunately, digital PT has helped overcome one barrier. In the survey, 48% of people say a digital physical therapy program would make it easier to follow their care plan, and 43% say they "need" PT care with a digital component. Digital PT stands out as the preferred initial approach for chronic MSK pain, with a 70% satisfaction rate among members.

Here is some advice from physical therapists at Hinge Health for coping with MSK pain, including moving around safely for pain management, increasing motion and boosting sleep. Note: This information is for educational purposes only, and you should always consult your healthcare provider for your unique situation.

#### 1. Keep moving

When experiencing pain, it's natural to want to stop moving, hoping that rest will make the pain stop. Unfortunately, staying still can lead to a downward cycle - with pain increasing and mobility decreasing.

"Movement is medicine," said Dr. Krauss, "and many kinds of pain worsen if you rest too much. Staying active can help you work through joint stiffness and help muscles gain strength over time, which can improve your symptoms."

If your pain is due to an accident or physical trauma, or if you're concerned

about increasing pain as you move, see your healthcare provider. Ask about in-person or digital PT options for guidance on how to move safely as part of your pain management plan.

#### 2. Move and stretch gently

Motion can help relieve stiffness and reduce pain over time, with physical therapists recommending an approach to movement that gradually increases your strength and range of motion.

\* Back pain: Stretching is helpful, but avoid awkward twisting, bending or motions that lead to over-tensing back muscles.

\* Neck pain/stiffness: Take breaks from holding one position too long, such as sitting at your computer. Set a timer to occasionally adjust your position, gently stretch your neck or roll your shoulders.

\* Knee pain: Strengthen muscles that protect your knee, especially your quads (the front of your thighs), with exercises like stepping up to and down from a low platform.

A physical therapist can help you learn specific exercises and stretches to support areas of your body causing you chronic pain. Beyond reducing pain, PT can also help treat other conditions, such as strengthening the pelvic floor to address bladder issues.

#### 3. Boost sleep

Pain makes it hard to get a restful night's sleep, and poor sleep can increase sensitivity to pain - leading to another downward spiral. The survey found over half of people (53%) who have experienced pain in the past 12 months say it affects their sleep, and 26% have been diagnosed with a sleep disorder. Here are tips to try:

- Change your pillow: To improve sleep, especially with neck pain, swap out your pillow. Your ideal pillow depends on the issues you're having and your preferred sleep position. Try different kinds for several nights to find what works for you.
- Practice good sleep hygiene: Keep your room cool and dark, and make sure to go to sleep and wake at the same time each day.
- Relaxation techniques: Meditation, breathing exercises or warm baths can help you relax before bedtime.

"Making an effort to improve your sleep is an important step in treating pain," said Dr. Krauss. "While there are many easy and effective ways to do this on your own, sometimes it's necessary to work with a professional who can offer proven techniques, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for insomnia."

Learn more about digital physical therapy at [HingeHealth.com](https://HingeHealth.com).