



Triad Newsletter

A Waldo County Joint Venture in Senior Safety

Volume 22, Issue 1

Winter 2024

Events

What is New with Triad?

New Phone Number:

322-4149

New Mailing Address:

**6 Public Safety Way
Belfast, ME 04915**

Changes to the Website:

Triad can now accept donations directly on the website. Donors can contribute using a credit or debit card rather than exclusively cash or check.

Also, the website also has the new phone number and mailing address.

Weekend Workshop

If you are looking to get out of the house, learn something new and socialize with others, Triad will offer a weekend workshop where each volunteer will lead a day-long class on a handcraft. The first session will be held on **Saturday, February 17** in the Belfast area. This will feature the choice of two classes:

- Ukrainian Egg Decorating, and
- A quilting project

If you have registered for Handcrafters' Day in the past couple of years, you will receive information directly. If not, you can find details on the Triad website or call 322-4149. Pre-registration is required.

Shredding & Drug Take-Back Event

Collect your unused/unwanted medications and documents containing personal information to be ready for the shredding and drug take-back event.

Date: Saturday, April 27, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Location: Belfast Public Works facility
54 Crocker Road, Belfast

Let Triad help you remove clutter from your house. Both drugs and paper will be safely destroyed. You can even watch your documents go through the shredder if you like.



Friendly Caller Program

The short, dark days when it is slippery underfoot are difficult for many older people. They tend to stay inside more and have fewer contacts with the outside world. One thing you can do for yourself is to get on the list of the Friendly Caller program. You call in each morning to let someone at the Communication Center know you are okay. They will chat with you for a few minutes. If you do not call in, they will send someone to your home to be sure you are okay. It is intended to be certain you have not fallen and cannot get up. In reality, the program provides much more. To learn more or to take part, call **338-2040**.

Read about current scams inside →

Waldo County Triad is a partnership of citizens, law enforcement, and other local organizations dedicated to the improvement of the safety of older Waldo County residents through education and service.



Scams

Scams Targeting Veterans

Veterans have become the target of many scammers. They contact people by phone, email, text or social media pretending to be someone you can trust.

A scammer may say they are from the Veterans' Administration and can help you fill out a disability benefit form so you will get the full amount available and they may guarantee that you will qualify. Most recently, the scammer is talking about burial benefits that help cover certain funeral expenses. They will ask for your full name, mailing address, Social Security number and other personal information in order to complete the form. There will be a charge for their service and they may or may not fill out a form for you. Now they have all your personal information to use or sell. The Veterans' Administration has accredited people affiliated with the agency who fill out forms for any benefit free of charge. There is never a guarantee you will qualify just because you apply. If someone assures you will get the benefit, it is a scam.

Some scammers are trying to steal a veteran's pension or disability benefits. Once the information has been collected for another veteran's service, the scammer may be able to divert the pension or disability payments to his or her own account. The veteran will not know it is gone until he or she checks the bank account where the funds should have been deposited.

There are other scammers who say they offer discounts to veterans, just as some legitimate businesses do. Often when you get to the payment, they say they require gift cards, payment app or a wire transfer. You can be sure this is a scam. No government agency uses these forms of payment.

There are scammers saying they are looking to hire veterans for well-paying jobs. To get the job, you fill out the application online and have an online interview. Bang! You have the job. Next you may be asked to send payment for the supplies required for this job. In another instance, you may be sent a check to buy those supplies. You cash the check and buy the supplies only to learn later that the check bounced and there is no job.

Scammers may contact a veteran saying the person owes a fine for not showing up for jury duty. They may say a reduced rate is offered to veterans. The veteran never got a notice to show up for jury duty but the scammer tries to make the person think he or she is in the wrong and pressures the individual for money.

There are other ways scammers are taking advantage of veterans. On social media a person may say they are looking for a romantic relationship with a veteran. Things will seem to be going along well for a while. Then, the person needs money. The amount maybe a few hundred dollars at first but soon the need will be for an expensive medical procedure, vehicle repair or other costly service.

Remember that veterans have become special targets for scammers. Safeguard your personal information. Don't send money up front to get a job and don't send money to someone you met online. Don't send payment as cryptocurrency, payment app, cash, gift cards or wire transfer. Only scammers use these methods and they use them because they are difficult for law enforcement to trace. Scammers do not care that veterans gave years of their lives to protect Americans. They only want your money and will try any way they can think of to get it.

Thank you

to **Tarratine Tribe #13** for their support in helping Triad to keep Waldo County seniors safer in their homes and communities.

Something To Keep In Mind

If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is!



More Scams

Free Trial Scam

The Federal Trade Commission recently closed down a company that was offering free skin care products for a shipping and handling fee of \$4.95. What the business did not tell people was that if they did not cancel within 14 days, the company would charge them \$90 and enroll them in a monthly subscription. It was very difficult to cancel and many people were unable to do it even though they tried. The business has been ordered to return one million dollars to customers and that is only partial payment.

Before you accept a free trial offer, search the company online. Type in the name of the business plus the word "complaint" or "scam" to see what other people are saying about the free trial. Also, watch for pre-checked boxes which may give permission to the company to keep charging you.

If you have a problem with a free trial, dispute unauthorized charges through your credit or debit card company immediately. They will withhold payment until they can investigate the issue.

Scams Involving Impersonations

Recently, there have been reports of people getting imposter phone calls from the inspector general of the Federal Trade Commission. Most often the caller says you have won a prize. To get it, you have to give personal information. Also, you may be asked to send money to cover taxes or some other costs. The Federal Trade Commission, the IRS or other government agencies do not give out prizes. They do not call you out of the blue either. Additionally, you do not win prizes unless you enter a contest and surely you did not enter a contest with one of these organizations.

If you get a call from an agency you did not contact first, hang up. It is a scam. If they tell you a prize is waiting for you, then you know it is a fraud. Some of these callers threaten people with dire consequences if they do not participate. That is another major sign that this is a scammer at work trying to get your money or your personal information.

Request from Friend Scam

More money is being lost through scams that began on social media today than through any other method. Scammers abound there.

In many scams, a scammer sends a message using the name of a friend. Until now most messages asked for money saying they could not get into an online account and needed you to buy an item for them or they had a personal emergency and needed a loan from you.

More recently, scammers have been hacking into a social media profile pretending to be that person and sending fake ads to the friends of the owner of the profile. You buy the item at what you think is the recommendation of a friend only to find that once you pay, no item ever arrives. The scammer took the money and ran. Some of these ads are about investment opportunities and may involve a considerable amount of money. Other messages are coming as a potential love interest supposedly at the recommendation of a friend.

There are a few things you can do to protect yourself on social media:

- Use the privacy settings to limit who can see your information and what you post.
- Do not reply to any messages that ask for money or personal information even if it appears to come from a friend or family member. Call the person to check if the request is real.
- Before you make a purchase, check out the company. Search online for the business name along with a word like "complaint".

Waldo County Wanderer Program

Do you worry about a loved one who wanders? Register him or her with the Waldo County Wanderer Program to help make a quicker return. Registration forms are at the offices of the Belfast and Searsport Police and the Waldo County Sheriff as well as on their websites.

Sign up today!



More Scams

COVID-19 Scams

The cases of COVID-19 are on the rise again and scammers are taking advantage. The Federal Trade Commission just shut down a company marketing a device that looked like a badge to be worn on a cord around your neck to protect from 99.9% of COVID-19 and other viruses within a 3-foot radius. The badge was touted to provide protection for 30 days and would be very helpful in a restaurant when you had to remove a mask to eat. Furthermore, the ad said the product was approved by the Federal Drug Administration. Nothing was true about what this business was saying, including the statement about FDA approval.

Be wary of products claiming to prevent or treat COVID. There are no approved products except those available through a health care provider. Using other products may put you at risk or cause you to delay getting real treatment.

Cryptocurrency Scam

Many people have been interested in investing in cryptocurrency, a digital-based form of currency that is used as a means of exchange rather than cash or credit cards. It is not backed by a government or bank but is meant to be a universal currency.

Some crypto-based financial service providers claim money deposited with them is insured by the FDIC, the government-supported system to stabilize funds in the event of a problem with a bank. Despite claims that cryptocurrency is insured by the government, it is not. The government has no obligation to step in if funds are lost with these firms. Before investing, be sure the company is legitimate.

COVID-19 Test Kits

The federal government is offering free COVID test kits again. You can get two packages of 4 tests by going to: **COVIDtests.gov**. you will be redirected to the post office where you will be asked for your name and mailing address

Harmful Links in QR codes

A QR code (Quick Response code) is a series of black squares on a white background. If you have a smartphone with a QR reader, you can put the phone up to the code and most often, it will direct you to a website with information about a product or service. They can be used to hold information about the ticket you bought for a concert or plane flight. They are being used more and more for all types of purposes.



Scammers are creating QR codes, too. They are sending text messages and emails making up a reason for you to scan it. They might say they are trying to deliver a package to you and you need to contact them in order to reschedule or correct the address. They might say there is a problem with your account and you need to confirm information or there is suspicious activity on your account and you need to change your password. All these lies are used to create a sense of urgency. They want you to scan the code and open their site without thinking about it.

Once you scan the code, a scammer can take you to a site that looks like a real business but is not. If you log into one of these sites, the scammer can collect any information you enter or they can install malware on your device before you realize it.

You can do a few things to protect yourself from spoofed QR codes.

- Don't scan a code in a text or email you were not expecting. If you think the message might be legitimate, phone the company using a number you know is correct or go to the official website of the company to be sure the message is valid.
- Install the updates on your phone and computer to protect your systems.
- Use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication.



Things To Know

Be Ready

Potentially, winter brings blizzards and ice storms. There are things we all need to do to prepare.

These include:

- ◆ Keep informed,
- ◆ Know where to go,
- ◆ Have a family communication plan, and
- ◆ Keep emergency supplies on hand.

You need to be especially prepared for power outages. What can you do to be ready for extended power outages? Here are some thoughts:

- ◆ If possible, have a safe way of heating your home. Be sure to have a working carbon monoxide detector and to have enough fuel for several days.
- ◆ If you do not have a safe way to heat your home, have a plan of where you will go - to a friend, family member, hotel, etc.
- ◆ Know how to drain the plumbing in your house so you do not end up with frozen and broken water pipes.
- ◆ Be sure to have either a fully-charged cell phone or a landline phone. Remember that a cordless phone works only with electricity.
- ◆ Draw several gallons of drinking water before the power goes out. You will need at least one gallon per person per day. If you have pets, you will need water for them, too.
- ◆ When you know a storm is coming, you can fill the bathtub with water to use to flush the toilet periodically. (If there are young children in the home, be sure to childproof the tub.) If you do not have a bathtub, you can fill some pails or other large containers with water for this purpose.
- ◆ Have a flashlight or other portable light with spare batteries.
- ◆ Have a battery-operated or hand-crank radio to listen for emergency information.

- ◆ The Waldo County Emergency Management Agency maintains an internet-based service you can sign up for to receive emergency alerts by text or email. To learn about this service and to sign up, go to:

<http://www.nixle.com>

- ◆ If possible, keep a few days of medications on hand. Fill prescriptions as soon as insurance allows rather than waiting until you run out.
- ◆ Keep a 3 or 4-day supply of food on hand that does not require cooking or refrigeration. That might include peanut butter, crackers, canned meats, and canned fruit.
- ◆ If you have pets, be sure to have food and water for them, too.
- ◆ Keep a well-stocked first aid kit available.
- ◆ Have a family communication plan so you know various ways you can contact one another.
- ◆ Be sure to have a visibly-marked street address located near the roadside in the event you need the help of emergency responders.
- ◆ If possible, stay home and keep off the roads.
- ◆ Check on your neighbors. They might need a little help or maybe an opportunity to have someone to take to.
- ◆ If you need an overnight shelter, call 211 to find out where the nearest open one is located. The usual ones are the Troy Howard Middle School in Belfast, The Mount View School Complex in Thorndike and the Lincolnville Central School in Lincolnville. Also, sometimes towns open warming centers where you can come in through the day to get warm. To find out if one of these centers is open, call the town office or fire department.

Triad has a Website!
Check it out at
Waldocountytriad.com



Things to Know About Triad

Reflective House Number Signs

Triad sells reflective house number signs at cost. Signs are helpful to first responders as they look for a particular house, especially at night. It also helps delivery persons.

You can set the sign beside the road on a post or you can attach it to a rural mailbox. The cost for the sign is \$10.

Send your order to:

Waldo County Triad
P.O. Box 125
Belfast, ME 04915

Include your phone number so someone can contact you when the sign is ready. If it is helpful, someone can deliver it.

Support Triad with Returnables

Swan Lake Grocery accepts returnable cans and bottles for Triad. You can leave your returnables there and let them know the refund is for Triad. Every few months, the store will send a check to Triad for all the refunds made. We greatly appreciate their willingness to help support Triad in improving the safety of older Waldo County residents.

Friendly Caller Program

Many older Waldo County residents live alone without much contact with others. Triad offers the Friendly Caller program to give people a daily connection with the outside world and the opportunity to let someone know they are okay.

Participants call the County Communications Center every morning to have a chat with someone. If the person does not call in, the dispatchers will try calling the house. If there is no answer, they will contact the person designated by the individual to go to the house to check on them. Over the years, several enrolled people have fallen and been unable to get up. This program has been credited with saving lives. To register or to learn more about the program, call **338-2040**.

Supporting Waldo County Triad

Triad is an all-volunteer organization. Funds are used entirely to support programs. Most services are free so that everyone can take part. If you would like to donate to Triad to help support a particular effort. Below are the costs of three Triad services.

- Newsletter - \$6 per year
- File of Life - \$1.50 each
- Carbon monoxide/smoke detectors - \$40 each

The cost of Triad's drug collection, daily call-in and 911 cellphone programs are all donated by member agencies.

To make a donation to help continue what Triad does, make a check payable to: **Waldo County Triad** and send to:

**Waldo County Triad
6 Public Safety Way
Belfast, ME 04915**

File of Life

Triad offers a free medical information packet called a File of Life. It should be kept on your refrigerator door in the event of a medical emergency. It comes with a smaller version to keep in your wallet. Emergency responders are familiar with the File and look for it upon arrival. This packet can save the responders time as all the information they need to start helping you is in that packet. To receive a File of Life, contact Triad at:

322-4149

or

triad@waldocountyme.gov

If you have a File of Life but it has too many erasures on it to easily read, we can provide both large and small inserts.

Contact Triad

If you want information about Triad or its services, visit our new website, call or email.

website: **waldocountytriad.com**

phone: **322-4149**

email: **triad@waldocountyme.gov**



Community Opportunities

Weekend Workshop

Triad will provide a cabin-fever-reliever opportunity with a couple of day-long classes offered by volunteers. One will be on Ukrainian egg decorating and the other will be a quilt-making class. Pre-registration is required.

Date: Saturday, February 17

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Location: Belfast

Details and Registration: Call **322-4149** or visit the Triad website at waldocountytriad.com. If you have received Handcrafters' Day materials in the last few years, you will get direct notification.

Drug Take-Back & Shredding Day

Bring unwanted medications and documents containing personal information such as cancelled check, income tax records, etc.

Date: Saturday, April 27

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Belfast Public Works facility
54 Crocker Road
Belfast

At-Home Flu Vaccines

Belfast Public Health Nursing is offering free flu vaccine for adults over 18 years old. These shots are available to be given in a person's home if they have difficulty getting out or are homebound.

For an in-home appointment, call **505- 4940**

Searsport Senior Drop-In

The Searsport Senior Drop-In center is open to anyone. There are games, Bingo, a free light lunch and a presenter offering information of interest to seniors.

Date: Third Wednesdays

Time: 9 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Lions Clubhouse,
44 Prospect St.
Searsport

Veterans' Services

A representative of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services will be at Spectrum Generations on the last Wednesday of each month if people have signed up to see him. Appointments are required. There is no walk-in service.

Date: Last Wednesday of the month

Time: by appointment only

Location: Spectrum Generations
18 Merriam Rd, Belfast

Appointment: Call **338-1190**

Waldo County Pet Food Pantry

Date: First Wednesdays and Third Saturdays
(come only one of the two days)

Time: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Location: VFW Hall, 34 Field St, Belfast

Requirement: Rabies certificate for each animal.

The pantry accepts pet food no longer needed. (Partial bags are okay.) If you have supplies you would like to donate, there is a drop-box at the VFW hall near the door. If you have pet items you no longer use or wish to buy something to contribute, the volunteers of the pet food pantry will be most appreciative.

Dining at the YMCA

Date: Last Wednesday of the month

Start Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: YMCA
157 Lincolville Ave., Belfast

Registration: Call **338-4598**

Watercolor Painting

The YMCA is offering the opportunity to explore watercolor painting in a relaxed environment, with special attention available for beginners. You will need to provide your own supplies. Drop in or call **338-4598** for the list.

Date: Mondays

Time: 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Location: YMCA
157 Lincolville Ave., Belfast



Waldo County Triad is a partnership of **seniors, law enforcement, and local organizations** dedicated to improving the safety of people 50 and older in their homes and communities through education and service.

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Winter 2024

Waldo County Triad programs are open to all regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

To change your mailing address or to add or remove a name to this mailing list, call Waldo County Triad toll-free at 1-866-426-7555 or e-mail triad@waldocountyme.gov

Change Service Requested

Waldo County Triad
PO Box 125
Belfast ME 04915



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