



Triad Newsletter

A Waldo County Joint Venture in Senior Safety

Volume 23, Issue 2

Spring 2025

Triad Happenings Events

Drug Take-Back & Shredding Day

Unwanted medication, eyeglasses and hearing aids will be collected again this spring. The Belfast Lions will have the hearing aids and eyeglasses refurbished to give to those who cannot afford them. Medications will be disposed of properly to help prevent accidental use, theft, or entry into the water supply.

Documents that should be shredded contain personal information. This includes outdated tax materials, old bank statements, and unwanted medical records. Triad can accept up to three banker's boxes of papers to be shredded from each household. If you wish, you can watch your documents being destroyed.

Saturday, April 26
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Belfast Public Works
54 Crocker Road, Belfast

The event is free to Waldo County households. We will accept donations to help defray the cost of the rental on the shredder truck if you wish to contribute.

If you cannot come to this event and want to dispose of unwanted drugs, there are safe disposal boxes at the sheriff's office, the Belfast Police Department, Searsport Police Department, Seaport Family Practice and local pharmacies.



Weekend Workshops

Triad has been holding its spring Weekend Workshops. The last classes in this series will take place on **Saturday, April 5**.

The remaining topics are:

- **Tie Dyeing** and
- **Easy Quilt Stars**

For more information and to register, go to:

waldocountytriad.com

or

call: **322-4149**

Registration is required by March 28.

Triad Senior Appreciation Day

Thursday, June 12

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Tarratine Hall

154 Main St., Belfast

- **Bingo** with prizes
- **Exhibits** from organizations that provide services for older residents.
- **Free lunch**

Wrap them in Warmth

Next winter, Triad will be offering lap robes to older residents who need more warmth for comfort. We are looking for individuals who would knit, crochet or sew a lap robe to pass along. See page 5 for more information.

Read about 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

Veterans Benefits Scam

Veterans are being approached and told they are eligible for more financial benefits than they are currently receiving, such as pension or disability benefits. The person you talk with will claim they can help you apply to get the maximum amount. If a veteran is now determined by the Veterans Administration (VA) to be 20% disabled, the scammer claims he can guarantee you a 100% disability rating. Getting your rating changed with the real VA takes time but the scammer will claim he can speed up the process for you - for a fee, of course.

In reality, there is no guarantee a disability rating will be changed and there is no way to speed things along. VA representatives will fill out forms for you free of charge. You should never pay for this service. Only scammers charge for filling out VA forms or guaranteeing a higher disability rating or more pension money..

Financial Investment Scams

Financial investment scams have been going on for a very long time. Today offers are coming by phone call, social media ads and emails. The scam investment will be promoted as a sure or nearly-sure thing. In previous years, the scammer has asked for payment as a wire transfer or gift cards. Lately, some scammers are asking for payment in gold bars.

There are some red flags with an offer like this. Few investments are a sure thing and a reliable company does not take payment in gift cards or gold bars. Scammers choose gold because the value has been rising steadily and they hope the trend will continue.

Nationwide, many older people are losing their life savings to financial scams, often hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is the area where individuals lose the largest sums of money each year. This does not involve the most people but the most money.

Unexpected Package Scam

You get an unexpected package from an unknown sender. When you open it, you find a note saying it is a gift but it does not say who sent it. Also, instructions direct you to scan the QR code to find out who it is from. If you scan the code with your smart phone, you may be taken to a website that steals information from your phone or downloads malware onto your phone.



If you did scan the QR code and entered your user name and password into the website, change your password right away. Create a strong password that is hard to guess. Check your credit report as well as your credit card bills and bank accounts. If you find any activity that is not yours, report it and get help recovering your identity.

What about the gift? The law says if it was sent in your name to your address, you can keep it.

Online Car Sale Scam

Selling a vehicle online gives you a wide audience of potential buyers and it has become a major way people sell used vehicles. Scammers are getting involved in this, too. It begins with a message from someone saying they are interested in buying your vehicle. They are not local so cannot look at it in person. Next, they send a check as a deposit so you will hold the car for them. The check is hundreds more than the buyer agreed to send. The person claims the check was mistakenly written for the wrong amount and asks you to send the extra back. If you deposit the check, it will initially appear in your account. It can take a few weeks until the bank figures out the check was fake and when they do, they take the money out of your account. If you have sent the "extra" money back to the scammer, you have lost the full amount of the check you received.

If a legitimate buyer had written a check in the wrong amount, he or she would write another check, not ask you to write a check and send it back.



More Scams

Income Tax Scams

For a number of years, con artists have been stealing Social Security Numbers and submitting tax return forms in the names of others, always getting a large refund. Then, when the real person sends in a return, he or she will get a notice that a return has already been filed in their name. To help combat this issue, the IRS has been telling people to get their returns in as soon as they have all the necessary documents. The IRS added many workers to help find fraud and help the individuals whose identity had been stolen.

Until the recent past, people had to remain vigilant during tax season. Now scammers have moved on to other methods of getting tax money and these scams can take place any time of the year. You might get a notice saying you have a large refund coming. All you have to do is call a number provided in the message and someone will help you get that money. The bottom line will be that you have to send them a substantial fee for their efforts. If you send the fee, you will eventually realize you have been scammed and there is no refund and you are out the payment you sent to the scammer.

The phone call scam continues where someone says he represents the IRS and you owe a significant amount of money that you must pay immediately or be arrested. The caller says if you pay now, he can get the amount due reduced. Of course, you did not owe the money and if you sent the funds, the scammer keeps it. This scam is not as widespread as it once was as a large number of callers impersonating the IRS were discovered and arrested about a year ago.

If it is really the IRS, they will contact you through the postal service. If there needs to be further contact, you can give them permission to email or phone you. They will not contact you on social media, accept gift cards as payment, threaten to arrest you, take your driver's license or leave pre-recorded messages on your phone. Scammers do all these things.

Another Unexpected Package Scam

Scammers are sending fake "luxury" items like rings or Bluetooth speakers to people who never ordered them. The scammer has a website where these fake items are being sold. They find names and addresses online and mail an item as a free gift. Next, they use your name and address to write rave reviews about the product to help boost the sales of their products.

You might think you do not really care if someone used your name in a fake review. It could mean the scammer has your personal information and it can continued to be used for other purposes.

The Federal Trade Commission has a few suggestions on what you should do to help protect yourself, such as:

- Change your passwords on all your online shopping accounts in the event one of the accounts was compromised.
- If the package came from an online marketplace such as Amazon or Walmart, send a message to the company so they can investigate and remove the seller.
- Check your credit report for signs of identity theft.
- Check your credit card statements carefully for any unauthorized purchases.
- Do not contact the sender. That person will try to get more sensitive information from you to use to steal your money.
- Keep the merchandise and report the fake review to the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.ftc.gov

Pass It Along

People who know about scams are more likely to be able to spot them. Triad asks you to share what you know about scams with your family and friends. The Triad board of directors would be pleased to add them to the newsletter list if they have an interest.



Card Declined Scams

The Better Business Bureau is getting a growing number of reports from consumers whose credit or debit card was declined while they made an online purchase. People said they got a notice to try another card. Typically, the second card failed, too. However, when their statements came, the charges were on every card the customers tried. The charges were often for more than the person thought they were spending. One woman thought she was buying an item for a few dollars but when the card statement came, the charge posted to the card was over \$2,500.

Last fall, the American Automobile Association (AAA) warned its members about emails and texts that appeared to come from AAA offering a free emergency kit for those who took a survey. The kit was free but you had to use your credit or debit card to pay for shipping. A scammer had duplicated the AAA website and collected lots of credit card numbers and made many charges to unsuspecting AAA members.

Surveys are a favored tool of scammers. Many people will fill out a survey to get a gift for just the cost of the postage.

To stay safer, use a credit card rather than a debit card. Credit cards have stronger fraud protection. If you are unfamiliar with a company, research it before making a purchase. If you visit an online company you think you know, check the website address as sometimes scammers use a very similar one with just one letter different from the real company address.

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!

Celebrity Imposter Scams

There is a growing number of celebrity imposter scams where a scammer pretends to be a celebrity looking for a relationship. This is a new twist on the romance scam. The celebrity finds you on social media. After that person has been messaging you for a while and a connection is made, the “celebrity” needs money for something, perhaps a new charity they want to start and they need sizable donations to get the project underway.

Whatever the reason given for needing money from you, celebrities do not generally manage their own social media accounts. If you think you may be communicating with a star, go to that person’s website and contact their management team to find out if the celebrity is really contacting you.

Cryptocurrency Scams

Cryptocurrency is hot now with the price of one Bitcoin reaching \$100,000 last December. All the hype about it can lure the novice investor into a scam. Last year, people 50 and older lost a reported \$2.5 billion in this market.

Once criminals get a person to invest, they often show the victim fake profit reports. This encourages the victim to invest more. Frequently, when a person tries to withdraw their money, they find the bogus company has disappeared.

Cryptocurrency is the payment method requested by many scammers because it is hard to trace. Once funds have been passed to a scammer, they generally cannot be retrieved. Be aware of situations where the need for money is urgent and payment is accepted as cryptocurrency. It is likely a scam.

Something To Keep In Mind

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



Things to Know

Wrap Them in Warmth

The cost of home heating fuels keeps some people from being able to afford to keep their homes warm enough for comfort. Next winter, Triad will distribute knitted, crochet, or quilted lap robes to those who could use some extra warmth. If you would like to provide one, we are accepting lap robes that are approximately 36" - 40" wide and 42" - 48" long. Patterns for many baby quilts will provide the size; you might just have to change the colors used. If you need a pattern, let us know.

Any extra lap robes will be shared with the Knit-Wits of Bank of America. They are employees who volunteer to crochet and knit lap robes for residents of area veterans' homes and Hospice patients.

211 Maine

It can be overwhelming to try to find the right phone number or service when you are looking for support. For nearly 20 years, 211 Maine has been providing the connections to local services for people all over the state. The service is free and offers confidential information and referral service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can be reached by phone by dialing 211 or by text or email. You can choose to talk to someone about what you are trying to find or you can search their database to find local services. All of us are looking for help at some point and these specialists are there to steer you in the right direction. Let's say it is cold and the electricity is out at your house, they can give you the location of the closest emergency shelter that has been opened. Maybe you are looking for help with parenting, they can direct you to the area resources.

Thank you

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

The organization offers information and connections about a wide array of services including:

- **Aging & Disability Services** - community meals, home health, respite care, and transportation
- **Basic Needs** - Food and clothing banks, and financial assistance
- **Child Development Resources** - screenings, dental health, and parenting
- **Educational Resources** - HiSET (GED), English as a second language, tutoring and mentoring, and financial aid for education, literacy education
- **Family Services** - Care for an aging family member, dealing with the death of a loved one, child care, and adoption
- **Food Assistance** - In-home meal delivery, Food cupboards and soup kitchens, SNAP (Food Stamps), WIC, and nutrition education
- **Health Care and Assistance** - Nutrition and wellness programs, health care, health insurance (Medicare, Medicaid, Affordable Care Act) prescription payment assistance, and medical transportation
- **Housing Assistance** - Financial support for heating, utilities, or essential home repairs, and lead testing
- **Job Programs** - Vocational training
- **Mental Health Resources** - Counseling, treatment, problem gambling, and support groups
- **Substance Use Treatment & Recovery** - Alcohol and drug use treatment, support groups
- **Transition Services** - Help for those new to America

Call: 211

or

Text your zip code to: 898-211

or

Email: [info @211maine211](mailto:info@211maine211)



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
6 Public Safety Way
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 it 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,

call: **1-866-426-7555** or

email: **triad@waldocountyme.gov**

If you have a File of Life with many edits, we can provide both large and small replacement inserts.

Contact Triad

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

Website: waldocountytriad.com

Phone: 322-4149

Email: triad@waldocountyme.gov



Community Opportunities

Spring Drug Take-Back & Shredding

Date: Saturday, April 26

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

Location: Belfast Public Works
54 Crocker Road, Belfast

Bring unwanted medications for proper disposal and eyeglasses and hearing aids to be repaired and given to someone who could use them. Bring any outdated documents containing personal information that you want shredded.

Weekend Workshops

Experienced volunteers will share their art or craft in day-long workshops in the two remaining workshops on **April 5**. Register by March 28 to tie dye or use an easy technique to make quilt stars that keep their points. For a copy of the program and registration materials, call or check the Triad website.

Senior Appreciation Day

The day will include:

- Exhibits from organizations serving seniors
- Free lunch
- Bingo with prizes

Date: June 12

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: Tarratine Hall, 154 Main St, Belfast

Dining at the YMCA

Date: Last Wednesday of the month

Start Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: YMCA
157 Lincolnton Ave., Belfast

Registration: Call **338-4598**

(Please register so they have the right amount of food for those attending.)

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

Searsport Senior Drop-In Center

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: Former Lions Clubhouse
44 Prospect St.
Searsport

Veterans' Services

A representative of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services will be at Spectrum Generations monthly if people have made appointments to see him.

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 - 1:30 p.m.

Location: VFW Hall, 34 Field St., Belfast

Requirement: Rabies certificate for each animal

To donate pet supplies, there is a drop-box near the door at the VFW Hall in Belfast. They accept new or used leashes, bowls and other pet items. Food donations are great and partial bags of dry food are okay, too.

RFID Sleeves

RFID card sleeves block the transmission waves that come from credit/debit cards that allow a card reader to take payments. Scammers have a device that can read the data stored on debit/credit cards. Triad will have protective RFID card sleeves available at coming events. Be sure to pick one up.



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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email: triad@waldocountyme.gov

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Waldo County Triad programs are open to all residents who are age 50 or older.

To change your mailing address or to add or remove a name to this mailing list, call Waldo County Triad at 322-4149 or email at triad@waldocountyme.gov

Spring 2025

Change Service Requested

Waldo County Triad
6 Public Safety Way
Belfast ME 04915



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