



Methuen Contributory Retirement Board Fall Newsletter 2019

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Hours:

Mon.—Thurs.:

8 AM—4:30 PM

Friday:

8 AM—12 PM

Board Members:

Michael Hennessy,

Chairman

Louise A. Moss,

Ex -Officio

John T. Sheehy,

Appointed Member

Robert Sheehan,

5th Member

Albert J. Trott,

Elected Member

Staff:

Kaitlyn Doucette,

Retirement Admin.

Barbara Carr,

Retirement Assist.

A, B or C - which one will it be?? So, you're starting to plan for retirement and you're deciding which option will make the most sense for you! Here are explanations of the three option choices. Remember, whatever option you choose, it should be a decision that best suits you and your situation. Please give careful thought and consideration to this information prior to applying for retirement.

OPTION A: Benefits are paid to the member only and are the largest allowance possible. You will receive your full retirement allowance monthly for as long as you live. All allowance payments will stop upon your death and there will be no benefits provided for your survivors.

OPTION B: Benefits are approximately 1% - 5% less monthly than Option A and will also provide you with a lifetime monthly allowance. The annuity portion is reduced so that there could potentially be a benefit left for your beneficiaries. However, it is estimated that the balance of your accumulated deductions will be depleted within 8 to 12 years of your retirement date. If any balance remains in your annuity, it will be paid to your beneficiaries upon your death. You may choose any person, charity or institution as your beneficiary and although once retired you cannot change your option choice, if you've chosen Option B you can change your beneficiary at any time.

OPTION C: Choosing Option C provides you with approximately 7% - 15% less than what you would receive under Option A during your lifetime. This is also called the joint and last survivor allowance. Upon your death, your designated beneficiary will be paid monthly for the remainder of their lives. The allowance you receive depends on the life expectancy factors for both you and your beneficiary. For Option C you may only choose one beneficiary and your choices are limited to your spouse, former spouse (if they have not remarried at the time the benefit becomes payable to you), child, parent or sibling. If you've chosen Option C you cannot change your beneficiary after you've officially retired. If your beneficiary dies before you, your monthly pension will revert to Option A and all benefits will cease upon your death.



Did you know that our esteemed Board members are always attending different conferences and seminars in a continued effort to obtain the latest information and education possible regarding all aspects of retirement? Well, they do and at a recent MACRS conference that our Chairman, Michael Hennessy, attended there was a section that specifically talked about how to avoid financial scams for seniors. The information was so interesting and important we felt it would be beneficial to include some tips and pointers in upcoming newsletters. The following will be the first in a series of excerpts from a publication put out by the Office of the Attorney General in April 2019 entitled “Savvy Seniors”.

“Telemarketing, Telephone Scams and Robocalls”

Many elders find themselves receiving unwanted phone calls, some of which could be scams. Although stopping these calls completely is difficult, there are steps you can take to protect yourself from the following scam:

“The “Grandparent Scam”: If you get a call from a young man or woman who says they are your grandchild in trouble and need money, try not to panic—it is most likely a scam.

“How it Usually Works”: The scammer will start a conversation with something like “it’s me, grandma (or grandpa), your favorite grandchild” and then you may reply with the name of your grandchild. The scammers will probably act like they are very upset and then they will tell you that they’ve been arrested or they’re in the hospital and they need money because they’ve lost their wallet. Whatever the situation, they claim to be in a crisis, which of course invokes you into wanting to help and give them money. The scammers will say this is their only phone call and not to tell their parents, because they don’t want to get them upset. This scam preys on your emotions and the scammers do not want you to take the time to verify all the facts.

“What Should You Do”: Remain calm because the scammer is hoping you will have an emotional reaction. Hang up the phone and continue to call your grandchild or their parents until you can confirm that they are safe and sound. **Never wire funds, send cash or purchase prepaid cards to send to the scammers.** Consider creating a secret word or code with family members to be able to verify a true emergency. Remember to make notes including the callers phone number and the time and date of the call and finally remember it is important to report scams to the following:

- Federal Trade Commission (FTC):
- Phone: (877) FTC-HELP (877-382-4357)
- Online: www.FTC.gov/complaint
- Attorney General’s Office (AGO)
Elder Hotline: (888) 243-5337



Don't forget November 3, 2019 is Daylight Savings time and you need to turn your clocks back at 2 AM!!

It's also a great time to check the batteries in all your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors!



Please note that as of **January 1, 2020** the monthly **MEDEX** rates will be increasing as follows:

- ◆ **Medex One = \$76.26**
- ◆ **Medex Two = \$152.52**

As always, any questions or concerns regarding your benefits can be directed to
Connie Sousa, Employee Benefits Manager.

(978) 983-8577

The Methuen Senior Activity Center will host the ***Annual Holiday Craft Fair*** on Saturday, November 2, 2019 from 9:00 am—3:00 pm. Go shop, mingle, socialize and buy a chance on some great raffles. Prizes will be drawn at 2:00 PM on the day of the fair. Raffle tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00 and are available in the office located at 77 Lowell Street, Methuen Ma.

Attention Power of Attorneys:

If you are legally appointed power of attorney please notify the office and send a copy of the document. Otherwise, we cannot discuss specifics with you.

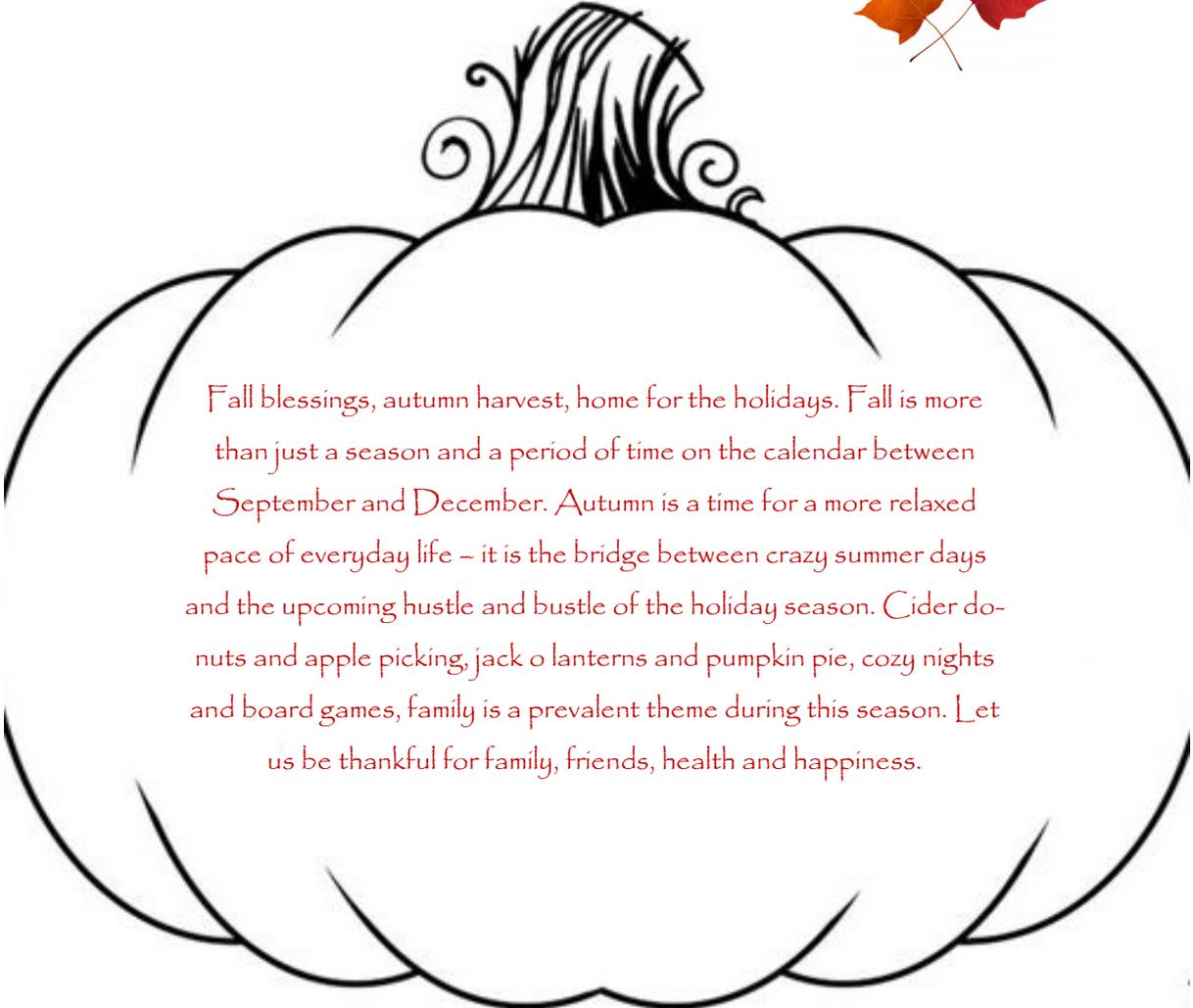


Have you ever wondered how much the retirement office spends on annual postage? Probably not. Do you want to know what we wonder about? (Probably not!) We wonder how many things we mail out get dumped in the trash (or hopefully, recycling). Fifty-three cents (fifty cents government rate) down the drain. We want our letters and correspondence to be well received since we all get junk mail and no one likes it! We want to send just enough information to let you know we are here and care. **We want to keep you updated but not inundated.** If you are interested in being a little more up to date – send us an email so we can have your email address on file. Having junk email is at least a little bit easier to deal with and it helps us save money. Less money used on administrative expenses results in more money going to other areas of the budget. We'll be able to notify you by email of important updates – changes in health insurance rates, the release of a newsletter, any changes in legislation or statutes that relate to retirement law, changes in board members, reminders about affidavits, the mailing date of 1099R forms, etc.

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Fall blessings, autumn harvest, home for the holidays. Fall is more than just a season and a period of time on the calendar between September and December. Autumn is a time for a more relaxed pace of everyday life – it is the bridge between crazy summer days and the upcoming hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Cider donuts and apple picking, jack o lanterns and pumpkin pie, cozy nights and board games, family is a prevalent theme during this season. Let us be thankful for family, friends, health and happiness.