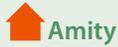


HomeHaven News



homehavenvillages.org

203.776.7378

NOVEMBER 2021

Message from the President

As the Swiss poet Henri-Frederic Amiel once wrote:

“Life is short. We don’t have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind.”

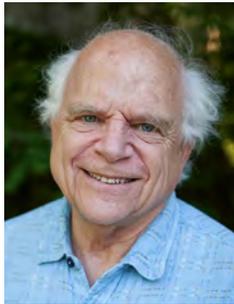


Photo by Rick Allen

Thank you for letting me walk with you these last two years as a member of HomeHaven. I am grateful for and excited by the wonderful opportunities I now encounter in my new role as president of the board.

Simply stated: It will certainly gladden my heart if I’m able to help gladden yours.

As a newbie, my first job is to get a really good understanding of the organization and the membership. I will attend a variety of committee meetings and visit all the Villages. I have already spoken with a goodly number of you and I encourage each and every one of you to call me with your perspectives on the present and the future of HomeHaven.

I am really awed by what you ALL have done. Think about it: this Haven of ours is only 10 years old and it is already rewarding us in so many ways.

Love and kindness abound, which can only mean that the best is yet to come.

Kerry Triffin

Read All About It!

The next newsletter will be a combined December-January issue to be posted in early December. The deadline for copy is Tuesday, November 16.



The Annual Meeting in Brief

HomeHaven’s Annual Membership Meeting on October 24 drew 60-65 members together to hear about the past year’s accomplishments as well as plans for the upcoming year. New president Kerry Triffin shared a bit of his personal story and voiced his admiration for HomeHaven’s mission and achievements. Lauri Lowell discussed highlights of the Annual Report: 41 new members, a successful campaign to create an investment fund, new activities to keep us connected (and healthy!) such as “Walk & Talks,” and insights into members’ passions through eight “Lunch & Learns” and four “Poets & Writers” presentations.

Kate Hay presented the highly anticipated “Can’t Live Without You” awards to Pat Jackson Allen, chair, and the Health and Wellness Committee; Rick Allen and Judith Colton, co-chairs, and the Visitors Committee; and Fred O’Brien for his three years of service as board president.

It was a celebration, though virtual, of HomeHaven members living independently, aging well, and being good to each other.

- Francie Irvine

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Generous support for HomeHaven provided by:





Happy Birthday to HomeHaven members with a birthday in November

Harry Attridge Susan Bers
Phyllis Crowley Frank Estes
Bill Graustein Belle Greenberg
Steve King Gretchen Kingsley
Irene Miller Christiane Nockels Fabbri
Kate O'Brien Trish O'Leary-Treat
Jerry Pollitt Dick Resch
Jinny Schneider Joel Silverman



HomeHaven's Mission Statement

We help our members remain active, independent, and productive as they grow older in the comfort of their homes and communities. We provide social and educational activities, companionship, volunteer opportunities and services, and referrals to qualified professionals.

JOIN US!

For information, call the HomeHaven office at 203.776.7378 or email us at info@homehavenvillages.org

"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others."

- Mohandas Gandhi

Welcome!

Cindy Crooker – *East Rock Village*



HomeHaven News

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New Haven, Connecticut 06511
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Layout and design by PIROET

Thanks to Ellen Ryerson for her help in editing and proofreading this edition.

... AT YOUR SERVICE!

In the past three months, HomeHaven provided members with:

- 17 rides by volunteer drivers
- *Numerous* phone or socially distanced visits by volunteer visitors and Village Leaders
- 6 computer assists and numerous Zoom assists by volunteer computer helpers
- 17 referrals for household maintenance, information, and home health services

Note: Members often call a service provider more than once or share names of providers with other members. You can help us keep accurate records by always letting the office know each time you use a provider originally recommended by HomeHaven. ***Thanks so much!!***

Look for monthly reports giving rolling three-month totals.

HEALTH MATTERS: Understanding Blood Pressure and Hypertension

by Pat Jackson Allen, APRN

“Blood pressure” describes the flow of blood pushing against the walls of arteries as the blood moves from the heart to other parts of the body. If the pressure required to circulate the blood through the body increases, the result is called *hypertension*. Hypertension has many causes and is common as we get older. Usually, no symptoms alert us to hypertension; often health care providers diagnose it only when blood pressure readings are elevated during health evaluations. Undiagnosed, untreated, or under-treated hypertension can cause targeted organ damage to the heart, brain, eyes, and kidneys and increase the risk of myocardial infarctions (heart attacks) and cerebral vascular accidents (strokes).

What do the numerical readings of a blood pressure test mean? Blood pressure results are expressed in two numbers, displayed one above the other: systolic and diastolic pressure.

Systolic Pressure

The top number for the blood pressure reading is the *systolic* pressure. A normal systolic pressure is *120 mm Hg or less*. This pressure is created by:

1. The volume of blood pumped from the left ventricle – the large pumping muscle of the heart – with each contraction.
2. The resistance in the arteries to the movement of the blood. Resistance in the arteries results from two factors: the diameter of the arteries and the elasticity or stiffness of the large arteries. Any plaque narrowing the blood vessels will require a higher pressure to move the blood throughout the body.

3. The volume and viscosity of the blood being pumped from the heart. A larger volume or thicker blood requires greater pressure to move blood through the body. As we get older, structural and functional changes in the heart affect its ability to pump blood effectively: long-term buildup of plaque makes it more difficult for blood to pass freely throughout the body, often leading to elevated blood pressure.

Diastolic Pressure

The bottom number of a blood pressure reading is called the *diastolic* pressure; it indicates the pressure in the arteries as they rest between beats of the heart. The normal *diastolic* pressure is *80 mm Hg or less*. The diastolic pressure will usually rise as the systolic pressure rises indicating that even at rest, the heart is working harder.

In 2017, the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association released new guidelines defining normal blood pressure as 120/80 mm Hg or less, even in adults 65 years and older. As with many other health concerns in older adults, life style changes offer more promising ways to deal with hypertension than do drugs. Recommendations to lower blood pressure and strengthen the heart include: exercising 3-4 times per week for 40 minutes; eating a heart-healthy diet of fruits, vegetable, whole grains, poultry, fish, and low-fat dairy; restricting added salt in the diet; losing weight, if warranted; and finally, reducing stress.

If your provider deems medications necessary, s/he has a wide range from which to choose. Often, more than one medication may be necessary to keep your blood pressure at or below 120/80 mm Hg. These medications work in various ways: by enhancing heart function to reduce the need for increased pressure; by relaxing the blood vessels or increasing their diameter to allow easier flow of blood; and by reducing the blood volume with a diuretic (water pill) that increases urine output.

Doctors must prescribe medication to control hypertension carefully, with full knowledge of possible interactions with other medications. If blood pressure is reduced too much or too quickly, dizziness, confusion, or falls may occur.

Pat Jackson Allen is the chair of the Health and Wellness Committee and a member of Amity Village.



John Schneider and Louis Audette at the East Rock Brewery on September 23rd.

IT: “These are a few of (our) favorite things...”

by John G. Sawyer

No “Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens” here! We are talking mobile device apps. We, as IT Committee members, are often asked what our favorite apps are. Here are the responses from three of us:

Harriet Bergmann

- Clock – Set alarms (very useful)
- Health – Counts steps, tabulates
- NY Times Cooking – I use it on the computer more, but it’s handy on the iPhone
- Picture This – Flower identification (extremely handy)
- WSHU – Listen to NPR
- Wunderground – Weather

Jim Maggart

- Accuweather, Dark Sky, etc. – Check weather
- Compass – Creates compass on phone
- Flight Tracker – Track planes in flight
- Magnifier – Magnify documents or objects using phone camera
- Merlin – Identify birds by sound
- OnTime – Schedule for Metro North trains
- PlantSnap – Identify plants
- Scannable Evernote – Scan any document into Evernote
- Translate – Translate from one language to another (has voice recognition)

John Sawyer

- Bedside Clock – I use this on a charger stand in lieu of an alarm clock
- Clock – Set alarms and timers
- Evernote – I find this an easier note app to use than Apple’s own offering. It also can exist on a Windows desktop. (See Jim Maggart’s comments above on Scannable Evernote.)
- Facetime – Video chat with anyone else in the Apple universe
- Nook – Where I buy and read most of my fiction
- MTA eTix – Buy and use Metro North tickets
- MyChart – For all YNHHS users
- Parkmobile – Pay for parking at meters almost everywhere (I’ve used it in Cambridge MA, and Princeton NJ, as well as New Haven)
- The Weather Channel – Current weather anywhere
- Tiny Calendar – Display your calendar (works well with Google calendar)
- Uber – Being down to a one-car family, rides when you need them
- Wallet – Being a big user of Apple Pay, this is where I store my credit/debit cards
- Waze – Real-time traffic conditions and driving directions
- WFSB 3 – The local channel we favor. Mainly used for weather.
- Zinio – Where I buy and read most magazines

There! Our not-so-brief listing of some of our favorite mobile device apps. Anyone who has ever looked at the Apple App Store knows that this list represents about .01% or less of the content of the store. I have a hundred or more apps beside these on my phone, but except for banking apps, these are the ones I use most.

John Sawyer serves on the IT Committee and is a member of Amity and Westville Villages. Harriet Bergmann serves on the IT and Activities Committees and is a member of ERV. She also leads the popular Memoir Groups. Jim Maggart is the chair of the IT Committee, serves on the Finance Committee, and is a member of Hamden Village.

The ABCs of QCDs: Making Charitable Gifts from Your IRA

by Frank Estes

If you have achieved a certain level of maturity – for present purposes, the age of 72 – Uncle Sam will insist that you withdraw a specified amount from your retirement IRAs (designated as the “required minimum distribution” or RMD) so that he can have a shot at taxing it. One way to cause that shot to miss is to make charitable contributions from your IRA utilizing Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs).

Amounts transferred by a QCD will not be included in your taxable income but will go toward meeting your required minimum distribution for the year. You cannot also claim a charitable tax deduction for your gift, but this matters less in the light of recent tax legislation that limits the itemized deductions you can take while increasing the size of the “standard deduction” available to you. A reduction of taxable income may be more valuable than a charitable deduction, and certainly will be when you take the standard deduction.

The requirements for making a QCD are fairly straightforward. The donor must be age 70½ or older. The gift must be an outright transfer directly from an IRA to a qualified charity – such as HomeHaven or another 501c3 organization. QCDs cannot be made to donor advised funds, private foundations, or supporting organizations. An individual may make QCDs up to a total of \$100,000 in any one year.

Managers of IRAs have their own forms and procedures for implementing QCDs, but generally they are relatively simple and easily obtained. At a minimum you will need to tell them the amount of

the gift, from what investment it should be made, and the name and address of the charity it should go to. (Subtle Hint: HomeHaven’s address is 291 Whitney Ave., Suite 103, New Haven, CT 06511)

Most IRA Managers do not have a minimum gift size limit, but the paperwork might get repetitive enough to discourage making multiple small gifts. It might be wise to set your own standards (e.g., “I’ll use QCDs for each of my year-end gifts of \$xxx or more”). It sometimes takes a while for the transfers to be made, so don’t wait until the last minute to get this year’s gifts in process. They have to be completed by December 31st.

QCDs can be made at any time, but they are obviously most attractive to you as a donor when you still have an RMD amount that needs to be taken before the end of the year. If you have already taken your required amount for this year, you may want to make your year-end QCD gifts next January using part of next year’s required distribution.

You should, of course, consult with your financial advisor to plan how best to deal with the required withdrawals from your retirement accounts. QCDs may be a useful element in that plan, and they are a great way to support the charitable organizations you care about.

Frank Estes is the chair of the Fund Development Committee and a member of Amity Village. He can be reached at estesfw@hotmail.com if you have questions about this article.

2021 HomeHaven Annual Meeting



INTRODUCTIONS

The past year has prevented us from getting to know new members, so the next several issues of this newsletter will include “profiles” of new members of HomeHaven’s villages.

JUDY BIRKE, by Nan Ross

I met Judy a number of years ago, and we instantly bonded. Both of us were born in Europe, she in Hamburg and I in Vienna. Judy left Hamburg as a baby with her mother and moved to Manhattan, where she grew up and attended the High School of Music and Art. From the time she can remember she was interested in art, and in her early years thought of becoming an artist.

In 1966 Judy came to New Haven and received an undergraduate degree in Studio Art at Albertus Magnus, and a graduate degree in Communications at Fairfield University. Shortly afterwards, she realized the solitary life of an artist was not for her, and that her talent was perhaps not sufficient to make it a satisfying career.

That realization made her veer to the “business” of art rather than the “making” of art. Her knowledge and education stood her in good stead. She became an art consultant, working with a variety of businesses – corporations, banks, hospitals – to collect and buy art both for their décor and as an investment. She curated numerous art collections for companies in Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. Eventually, she expanded this business to include individual collectors; these enterprises were a huge success.

In 1982, Judy decided to try her hand at gallery work and became the Director of the Munson Gallery in New Haven and, subsequently, of the Norwalk Community College Art Gallery. But after several years, Judy was eager to return to consulting and advising. She took the required courses and exams to become an art appraiser. In addition to her work, she taught courses on *Business Management for the Artist* at Southern Connecticut State University. And as if that were not enough, she became the art reviewer and critic for a variety of publications, including the *New Haven Register* and *Art New England*.

Within the greater New Haven community, her name became synonymous with appraisal and consulting work; she was the person to go to for advice in arts management of every kind. She has served on the boards of both the Arts Council of Greater New Haven and the Creative Arts Workshop.

Judy has two children, both girls, both married. One lives in Boulder, Colorado, and the other in Manhattan, along with a granddaughter who also lives in New York. Her great joy is spending time with her family;

her weekly train jaunts to New York to hang out with her granddaughter attest to her commitment. These meetings started at Mia’s birth and continued through her adolescence. The two of them continue to hang out together as much as possible, and they both agree that this is the best thing either of them has ever done.

Judy became a collector early on in her long life in the arts, and the walls of her apartment are hung “salon style” from ceiling to floor. Her judicious taste is evident.

Recently retired, she decided never, ever to buy another work of art, but she has realized the truth of the maxim that real collectors, despite not having an inch more wall space, continue to collect. And that’s our Judy.

After hearing about HomeHaven from a variety of people, she decided that it was an organization full of people with whom she could form fine reciprocal relationships, a benefit to all parties.

Nan Ross is a member of Westville Village.

ELLEN AND BOB SCALETTAR, by Fred O’Brien

The Scalettars of Woodbridge have recently joined Amity Village. Ellen and Bob are well-known in their community and are welcome additions to the burgeoning HomeHaven ranks.

Ellen is very familiar to residents of the Amity towns; involved in community service, she most recently completed a second term as First Selectman of Woodbridge and previously served as a State Representative. Bob, though a less public figure, has spent his career first as a pediatrician, then moving into medical administration where he served in various capacities for such entities as CHCP and Blue Cross.

Both Ellen and Bob are Brooklyn natives; they met as teenagers at summer camp in Vermont. Their lives and careers (and 47-year marriage) have taken them from Baltimore to Philadelphia and then to Woodbridge in 1990, where their lovely home on Racebrook Road has been the scene of many election-related gatherings. We talked in their sunroom overlooking a meticulously cared-for garden.

Ellen’s background is in the law. She graduated cum laude from CUNY and then from the University

continued on page 7

of Maryland School of Law in Baltimore. She first practiced in private litigation, including a major case representing ABC News. Meanwhile, Bob had graduated from GW Medical School and, while practicing as a pediatrician, got a Master's in Public Health at Johns Hopkins. He became increasingly interested in health care delivery and its systems and, while in Baltimore, served as the Chief Medical Officer of a community health center and, subsequently, as Chief of Pediatrics at a Johns Hopkins affiliated hospital.

In 1989, Bob was recruited to be Medical Director of CHCP, a staff model HMO, in New Haven. Recognizing the great promise of the CHCP model, the family (they have two kids and now two young grandchildren) decamped to Connecticut. When that model was taken over by for-profit health insurers, it died out. Nevertheless, Blue Cross Blue Shield of CT recruited Bob to assimilate the strengths of the staff model HMO into the traditional business of large health insurers. Bob continued that role as Chief Medical Officer of other large insurers, and he continues to work as a private consultant sharing his wealth of experience with clients.

Ellen describes her entry into politics as almost accidental, the result of a knock on her door by Nan Birdwhistell, then a candidate for Woodbridge First Selectman. Such one-to-one politics were hitherto unknown to Ellen as a Brooklyn-Baltimore-Philly

resident. She became a member of the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee and in short order was asked to run as a sacrificial candidate for the Connecticut Assembly, a seat believed securely in Republican control. She agreed; she won.

Ellen served three terms in the Assembly representing the 114th House District. She was the Democratic-endorsed candidate for Secretary of State in 1998, but was defeated in a primary by now-Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz. Ellen worked outside of electoral politics as Director of Policy, Research & Legislation for the CT Senate Democrats. Today, she continues her earlier work at CT Voices for Children as Senior Fellow for Fiscal Policy.

Shortly after Ed Sheehy, the popular First Selectman of Woodbridge, died unexpectedly in 2013, the Democratic Town Committee nominated Ellen to run in the upcoming election. She was elected twice to that position before stepping down in 2017. If she is now finally done with elected office, Woodbridge's loss is HomeHaven's gain. What is most intriguing is that, unlike most politicians, her electoral achievements were made without generating bitter enemies. We welcome these accomplished and interesting people to HomeHaven!

Fred O'Brien is the immediate past president of HH and a member of Amity Village.

October Walks

Photo by Al Atherton



L to R: Jane Jervis, Norman Chonacky, Peggy Atherton, Cindy Crooker, Karen Schneider, and Carolyn Gould walking and talking at Racebrook Tract Trail on October 11th.

Photo by Lauri Lowell



Bird walk in Edgewood Park on October 6th with Bill Batsford. From left, Judy Moore, Bill Batsford, Terry Flag, Jean Spencer.

HOUSEHOLD SERVICES COMMITTEE: *Good Housekeeping Advice is Timeless*

by Hal Spitzer

At our last Household Committee meeting, we noted that we have repeated the same advice in different words over the years. We wondered what other subjects might make your life easier at home. We would love to know, but we will continue to discuss “good housekeeping” ideas in upcoming articles, hoping that you welcome our advice, no matter how often we’ve given it.

To wit, this month’s article: though the format differs slightly, this message is the same as Bruce Lawler’s first article for the *Newsletter*, November 2013. It is as relevant today as it was then. We hope that new members will learn from it, and longer-term members will refresh their memories about preparing for the coming season.

Clocks are turned back on November 7: that is a reminder to check smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

- Change the batteries in those that require batteries.
- If you do not have smoke alarms or carbon monoxide detectors, you should purchase and install them now.

Since the days are shorter and it gets dark earlier, check outdoor lighting to be sure it is working properly.

- Are the lights aimed properly on your porches, steps, walks, and driveways?
- Do you need additional outdoor lighting?
- If the lights have motion sensors, make sure they are aimed properly.
- Lights with motion sensors should have timers that are set to go on and off at your desired times.

Leaves are falling; they can become slippery when they are wet.

- Keep your walkways and steps clear of leaves.
- Trim trees and bushes for fuller growth in the spring.
- Aerate and seed your lawn.

Please call the office if you need help with any of these important tasks. Do not put off making your appointment with Bruce for a home safety assessment. This is an invaluable service that we provide with your membership. You may choose not to follow the advice, but it is worthwhile to receive it. Happy Fall everyone!

Hal Spitzer is the chair of the Household Services Committee and is a member of Hamden Village.

HH ONGOING EVENTS (members only)

MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The groups meet every second and fourth Monday of the month for an hour and a half. We’re Zooming these days, and it’s working beautifully. For more information or if you would like to attend a meeting to see how it works, please email Harriet Bergmann at hfb183@gmail.com.

PINS AND NEEDLES

Monday, November 1 at 3:00 pm. In-person!

We will meet at Gretchen Kingsley’s home on 205 Church Street, apt. 10J. RSVP to Gretchen at gma322@gmail.com or 203-915-0898. Bring a project and enjoy good company and lively discussion. New members are always welcome at these monthly gatherings. If you would like to join the group, please call Kathy Denardo at (203) 687-8835. You must be fully vaccinated to attend.

PLAY READING GROUP

Tuesdays, Nov. 9 & 16. 7pm.

Play Reading: *Oedipus the King*, by Sophocles.

Play Reading is staying on Zoom for now. Join a dedicated group of readers of all kinds of plays.... Sign up on the HH events calendar if you want to be a reader: the limit for that is 12, but if you’re simply interested in being in the audience, please call Kate in the office so we include you in the Zoom invitation. Francie Irvine will send the Zoom invitation the day before. **Registration is required.** Please register through the HH calendar.

BOOK GROUP

Monday evenings, 7pm, every 5 weeks.

All genres welcome! Please contact Peggy Atherton (peggyatherton@yahoo.com or 203-273-6118) for the current title & meeting time.



Events: November



The office will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 25 & Friday, November 26.

Friday, Nov. 12. 11am. On Zoom.

HH Lunch & Learn presents

“Art Deco in America” with Elaine Lawson.

Join us as Elaine Lawson (Amity) takes us through the history and influence of the Art Deco period in American art. The Zoom link will go out prior to the presentation. **Members only.**

Tuesday, Nov. 16. 10am. On Zoom.

Good Nutrition for Healthy Bones with Ellen Liskov, RDN, MPH, CDE

The Health & Wellness Committee invites you to a presentation featuring a dietitian from YNH. We will discuss “need to know” information about nutrition and bone health. Topics will include vitamins, minerals, & food choices for optimum bone health; how to choose supplements safely and wisely; & how to determine if your diet is meeting your needs. Bring to this Zoom meeting any nutrition supplements you take & at least one food label that has a nutrition facts panel. The Zoom link will go out prior to the presentation. **Members only.**

Remember to check out the HH Happenings on Fridays for all the latest on HH gatherings, presentations, and general goings on.

HOMEHAVEN OFFICE

👉 203-776-7378 👈

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Village Gatherings

All HHers attending in-person events should be fully vaccinated.

AMITY

Thursday, Nov. 4. 5pm

Virtual Happy Hour!

Join us on the first Thursday of every month! Check your email or the HH calendar for details.

Tuesday, Nov. 23. 3pm

Village Coffee with Westville

We are meeting for coffee again! Westville & Amity villagers are meeting on the 4th Tuesday of every month. **Join us in the courtyard at Bloom (794 Edgewood Ave @Central Ave).**

DOWNTOWN

Watch your email & HH Happenings for the latest on when & where we are gathering!

EAST ROCK

Saturday, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27. 5pm

Virtual Happy Hour!

Join us every Saturday!

Wednesday, Nov. 10. 10am.

Coffee @The Neighborhood Café, 947 State St.

HAMDEN/NORTH HAVEN

Tuesday, Nov. 9. 10:30am

In-person Coffee @Best Video, 1842 Whitney Ave. See you then!

WESTVILLE

Thursday, Nov. 11. 5:00pm

BYOPicnic!

Meeting in-person @Celeste’s house.

Tuesday, Nov. 23. 3pm

Village Coffee with Amity

We are meeting for coffee again! Westville & Amity villagers are meeting on the 4th Tuesday of every month. **Join us in the courtyard at Bloom (794 Edgewood Ave @Central Ave).**