

Lake Currents Article
May 13, 2016 Issue

LOWLINC Volunteers: Voting for a Community of All Ages
Mary-Jane Atwater, LOWLINC Board Chair

There is a saying: “Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy... When you volunteer, you vote about the kind of community you want to live in.” At LOWLINC, our 63 vetted volunteers are enthusiastically voting for a community of all ages, where older LOW residents are able to stay in their homes as long as possible.

LOWLINC volunteers provide transportation for shopping and medical appointments; run errands such as picking up mail and delivering prescriptions; make friendly calls and visits; assist with computer issues; provide home maintenance services; and make it possible for members to attend social events. During April, these volunteers handled 97 service requests!

Several LOWLINC volunteers agreed to share a bit about what they do. Ann Hatfield makes a daily weekday “check in” phone call at 8 am to a LOWLINC member who lives alone, sharing the task with another volunteer who calls on weekends. Ann says, “After four months of daily calls, I feel I know her [the member] well, even though I’ve never met her. We talk and joke; we have a nice rapport. Making these calls is not only a good thing to do, but it also gives me a reason to get up in the morning.”

Rick Rappoport heads up the home maintenance team, which has developed a “home maintenance checklist” – a free service available to LOWLINC members that includes changing light bulbs, furnace filters, and smoke detector batteries, among other tasks. Rick says, “We look at things people forget about. During one visit, we determined the smoke detector battery needed to be replaced, and we cleaned the duct in the dryer and vents behind the refrigerator. Often, when we respond to a service request, we’ll notice other work we can do while in the home.”

Debbie Beisheim is a volunteer driver. According to Debbie, “It makes me feel good to help people and I will gladly drive for another person.” Debbie’s motivation stems in part from a personal situation several years ago when she could not drive and was reluctant to ask neighbors and friends for rides. Debbie reports that she enjoys the conversations she has with members. “I hope to see LOWLINC grow so that this service is available to me when I need it.”

For information about LOWLINC volunteering or membership, please visit our new website www.lowlinc.org or call 1-855-LOWLINC (569-5462).