

Lake Currents Article

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LOWLINC: A VILLAGE WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY

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When LOWLINC launches in early 2016, it will become a part of a network of hundreds of communities across the United States whose members want to remain in their homes as long as they can, independently, safely and comfortably. LOWLINC's name describes its purpose: **L**ake of the **W**oods, **L**iving **I**ndependently in Our **C**ommunity.

Sometimes it's called Aging in Place, sometimes it's called Villages. What it means is communities like Lake of the Woods whose members have banded together in volunteer organizations. These volunteer groups coordinate access to a multitude of services, including transportation, home repairs, and social activities, thus enabling seniors to stay in their homes as long as possible.

The first Village was established in 2001. Since then the number of Villages across the nation has grown to nearly 200, with more than 150 currently in development. Members pay a fee to support the requirements of the volunteer organization like insurance, printing, legal filings and website. LOWLINC's fees, at \$400 for an individual and \$500 for a household, are well within the range of fees for other villages.

Each village is organized to suit the needs and characteristics of the community it's serving. For example, in Lake of the Woods an identified need is for access to reliable and competent home repair providers, so a priority for LOWLINC is to provide a list of vetted vendors to its members. Another need is for transportation to shopping, appointments and other errands. LOWLINC also will have an active social program for get-togethers and trips to local entertainment events. Part of LOWLINC's mission is also to provide referrals to existing community service organizations like home health care.

LOWLINC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to enabling Lake of the Woods residents to continue living fully and independently in their homes for as long as possible. While serving the Lake of the Woods community, we are not affiliated with Lake of the Woods Association and our operations have no impact on LOWA's assessment or fees.

For information about LOWLINC and becoming a member, see our website at <http://lowlinc.org/> or contact LOWLINC President Jeff Flynn at 540-273-5078. For more information about the nation-wide group of Villages, see the website <http://www.vtvnetwork.org/>.