



Village Neighbors

Working Together to Create Community!

July / August 2021, Issue 14

A rural community of neighbors helping aging adults lead independent and engaged lives at home.

**Leverett + New Salem +
Shutesbury + Wendell**

1-413-345-6894

www.villageneighbors.org

P.O.Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072

pr@villageneighbors.org



VN Annual Meeting 2021

The VN Annual Meeting took place on Sunday, June 27, in the pavilion behind the Wendell post office and Country Store. 4 Board members were elected for 2-year

terms: **Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien, Don Stone, Judy Raphael and Jeannette Stockton.**

Each of the year-end reports illustrated how well Village Neighbors came through the year! We are financially healthy, with 129 members and 89 volunteers. We responded to 200+ specific requests for services. We were able to obtain 2 grants—one for small repairs in 42 member households so far, and the other, a COVID resiliency grant, supported a membership drive and volunteer appreciation gifts of T-shirts.

A common through-line in all the reports was this: to help us continue growing our village neighborhood, we need to add more neighbors to the dedicated core group. We invite you to consider joining our committees, even as an ad hoc member with one specific task.

Especially useful would be: 1. People who have IT or web support skills. Do you have a younger family member who might be available? 2. A resident from Shutesbury and another from Leverett—to join the Membership committee so that all 4 towns are represented. 3. People to help recruit and support new volunteers and members. 4. One more Call Manager to be available one week/month to respond to members' requests for service.

In summary, we are excited about all the ways Village Neighbors will become an even more caring and vital resource for our elders in the upcoming year.

Free Small Home Repairs Accepting Applications

Over 40 member households have received the wonderful benefits of both volunteer labor and free materials for small repair projects in their homes. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Church Street Fund and individual VN member contributions, we will be able to continue our work for members until October. Projects include minor home repairs that do not require building permits. We will give priority to projects that deal with safety concerns in member's homes, but will respond to all requests we feel capable of handling.

Our volunteers receive professional guidance and consultation support from a local licensed contractor to ensure Village Neighbors' work is effective, safe and on target for you. We are meticulous about following COVID era guidelines when working in your home.

If you would like an application or need assistance in filling an application for work in your home, contact pr@villageneighbors.org. A member of our team will contact you to review your needs.

Special Thanks to our Generous Sponsor,
The Church Street Fund,
administered by the **Community
Foundation of Western
Massachusetts.**



Village Neighbors News and Events

Hiking With Our Neighbors

Our first Village Neighbors hike took place in the North Quabbin trail system on Saturday, June 13. About 10 of us enjoyed a couple of hours' walk on wide, mostly flat, tick-free trails—with our enthusiastic guide, aka the Trail Whisperer. A stop for lunch, meeting some new people and simply being together again in-person—made the day both meaningful and memorable!



If you are interested in participating in another VN hike, please contact pr@villageneighbors.org



Writing To Remember

A Memoir Writing Class With Ruth Flohr Spaces Available in the August Session

In this memoir writing class we will discover the inspiration and tools to effectively begin writing your life-story. This class is open to fledgling writers as well as seasoned writers.

This method includes instruction, reading memoir samples, discussion, and impromptu writing exercises with feedback. There will also be an online forum with writing resources and a platform to post your stories.

Meeting each Tuesday for six weeks on Zoom.
Dates: **Tuesdays, August 17 to September 21**
Time: **10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Tuition: **FREE**

For more information or to reserve your spot call Ruth Flohr at **978-544-6534** or email pr@villageneighbors.org.

*Generously sponsored by
Mass Cultural Grants from
Leverett, Shutesbury, Wendell
and New Salem.*



Music on the Wendell Common

Meet Village Neighbors outside for a music moment on the Wendell Common.

Doug Tanner and the Wranglers return from Volunteer Appreciation Day to play again **July 21, 5:30- 6:30**, rain date July 22.

Call **413 345 6894** for a ride to this event sponsored by your Village Neighbors.

Workshops & Support Groups

LifePath continues to offer monthly informative classes and workshops, as well as weekly support groups and gatherings. To find out more visit <https://lifepathma.org/events> or call **800-732-4636**.

July's topics include:

Living Well with Long-Term Health Conditions
Healthy Eating for Successful Aging
Dementia Caregiver Support Group
Rainbow Elders Virtual Gathering

Local Events & Community Outreach

Leverett Village Co-op Rattlesnake Gutter Second Saturdays Market

On June 12th, the Leverett Village Co-op launched its Rattlesnake Gutter Second Saturdays Market – a monthly arts, crafts, and flea market featuring live music, local wares, nonprofits and lots of good vibes. After a long and tedious year of quarantine, it was a wonderful opportunity for artisans to bring their crafts back out to the public, and for neighbors to mingle in person again. Fun was had by all!

Village Neighbors volunteers, Gail Mason and Fay Zipkowitz, worked our table at the well-attended event. Spreading the word about Village Neighbors, they supplied information, handouts, FAQ's and LifePath literature. We had three volunteer sign ups and one person requesting services. We're growing!

We will be tabling this event every month. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact

pr@villageneighbors.org



Have You Completed Your Membership Renewal?

Membership renewal letters were sent out in May to every member household. It's that time of year again for members to renew their membership to Village Neighbors. Although there is no membership fee, we do need to update your membership and your information annually. Please complete the form and return in the self-addressed stamped envelope. If you need another form or assistance in completing yours, please contact servicerequests@villageneighbors.org or call **413-345-6894**

VN Vaccinated Drivers Needed

We are eager to hear from **volunteers** who want to resume driving. Please contact us at **413-345-6894** or volunteers@villageneighbors.org and submit most recent driving license and Coverage Selections page of your auto insurance. We will also need to see your COVID vaccination card showing a completed vaccination. We will send a copy of our new policy for limited driving at this time.

Village Neighbors is actively recruiting new volunteers now!

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION Zoom Meeting Tuesday, July 13th, 6:30 PM

Hybrid meeting both on Zoom and in person at the Wendell Senior Center.

We request that those who attend in person be fully vaccinated.

At the orientation you will learn about the organization and find out about the wide range of volunteer activities that you can choose from. Please RSVP to **Genie Casey** at generalinfo@villageneighbors.org by **July 7th** to register, and indicate how you will attend. She will send a zoom invitation and will email your application and volunteer handbook for you to print out before the one-hour orientation, or they can be mailed to you.

Looking for Volunteers to Serve on Our Committees

VN Committee work is a rewarding and fun way to make a difference in your community!

Service Committee: Answer requests from Members and connect them with Volunteers waiting to assist.

CONTACT servicerequests@villageneighbors.org

IT Committee: Assisting with all things electronic including data and website management and communications **CONTACT** generalinfo@villageneighbors.org

Fundraising Committee: Fundraising and grant management **CONTACT** destone99@gmail.com

Village Neighbors is a community volunteer-run organization, part of the Village-to-Village national network, dedicated to helping aging adults lead independent and engaged lives at home.

**We offer FREE Membership for anyone over 60 in our 4 Towns:
Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell.**

Call or email today to find out more about membership, services and volunteering.

1-413-345-6894 or email generalinfo@villageneighbors.org

Visit our website to view the list of free services we offer www.villageneighbors.org



***Fun Events Are Happening Again...
Do You Need A Ride?***

Village Neighbors fully vaccinated drivers are available for rides, with both driver and member observing COVID masking, distancing and ventilation protocols. **Give us a call 1-413-345-6894 or email servicerequests@villageneighbors.org**



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