



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

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

**1-413-345-6894**

[generalinfo@villageneighbors.org](mailto:generalinfo@villageneighbors.org)

[www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

# Village Neighbors

*Working Together to Create Community!*

May / June 2020, Issue 7

**During the *coronavirus quarantine*, VN will be available for check-in calls, grocery and medicine pick-up and delivery. We have suspended all in-person contact until quarantine is ended, but our volunteers are available for friendly phone visits. Call for more information 413-345-6894.**

Select the links below to learn more:

**[Village Neighbors Response to COVID-19](#)**

**[COVID-19 Resources](#)**

## Village Neighbors

**Is Now FREE**

To Members over 60 in Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell

View a list of available services on our website [www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

**THANKS to our first year members**, whose generosity allowed us to launch Village Neighbors, we are now able to offer **MEMBERSHIP** for **FREE**. Contact [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org) or call **413-345-6894** to learn more.

With 1/3 of our four towns' populations now over age 60, all VN members are encouraged to actively create ways to support each other and volunteer. As we grow, we will need more **VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES**, so please consider becoming a part of the **Village Neighbors Team**.

You can choose to provide direct services to members such as transportation or friendly visits, or work behind the scenes to help the organization run smoothly. We will be happy to

## RESOURCES TO GET YOU THROUGH THE QUARANTINE

**[Western Massachusetts Community Mutual Aid Network](#)**

Volunteer network offering grocery and prescription pick-ups and other kinds of support for residents in Hampshire and Franklin Counties

Email for help:

**[WMA.MutualAid@gmail.com](mailto:WMA.MutualAid@gmail.com)**

**[LifePath COVID-19 Community Resources and Information](#)**

LifePath, an Area Agency on Aging (AAA), is a private, non-profit that provides and coordinates

match your skills and interests to one of our Committees. Contact

[volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org)

or come to our next

## **VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION**

**Zoom Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 19th, 6:30 pm**

At the orientation you will learn about the organization and find out about the wide range of volunteer activities that you can choose from. Since opening over a year ago, we have provided over 230 service visits to members, as well as several educational and social events. During Quarantine we are still doing grocery and medicine pick-up/delivery, and wellness check-ins for our members.

### ***To join the Zoom Volunteer Orientation you must RSVP***

A Volunteer Handbook and Application packet will be sent to you by email, or Sent by Mail if you cannot print it.

**Please RSVP by May 11th**

[volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org)

a variety of services for elders, disabled persons, and caregivers in Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden, and Berkshire counties as well as the North Quabbin region. Their website provides up-to-date information on a variety of community resources. For more information call **413-773-5555**

### **AARP**

AARP Weekly Tele-Town Halls on COVID

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2020/tele-town-hall-coronavirus-03-19.html>

## **2020 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL LETTER**

**ATTENTION MEMBERS:** *Although there is no longer a fee to be a member, we ask all members to **renew annually**, so we can keep track of who our members are and their needs. You will receive a **Renewal Letter** in May, please fill it out and return. We hope you will consider a **donation** to Village Neighbors at this time, so we can continue and expand our work. **Thank You For All Your Support.***

**To DONATE to Village Neighbors**, please mail checks to **Village Neighbors PO Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072**

Or Donate On-line at [www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS TIPS**

### **Lung Strengthening Exercise**

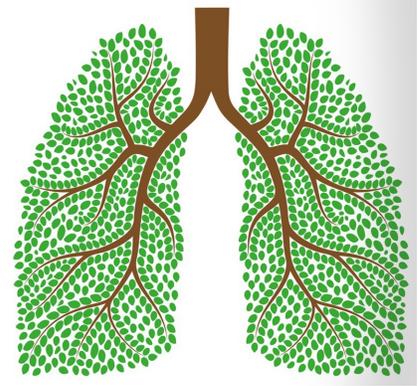
Contributed by **Nancy Spittle** (Membership Committee)

This exercise was given to Chris Cuomo, NBC reporter and brother of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, by several of his doctor friends when he had the corona virus and he believes it was instrumental in his recovery. It is designed to enhance the opening of ALL the little air sacs (alveoli) in the lungs and move static fluid, which would be

a welcome mat for the virus. It's probably good for us at any time!

1. Take in 5 deep breaths, each time holding the breath for 5 seconds.
2. On the sixth deep breath, take it in and do a big cough, covering your mouth.
3. Do 2 cycles of the above, then lay flat with front side down, taking slightly deeper "normal" breaths for the next 10 minutes.

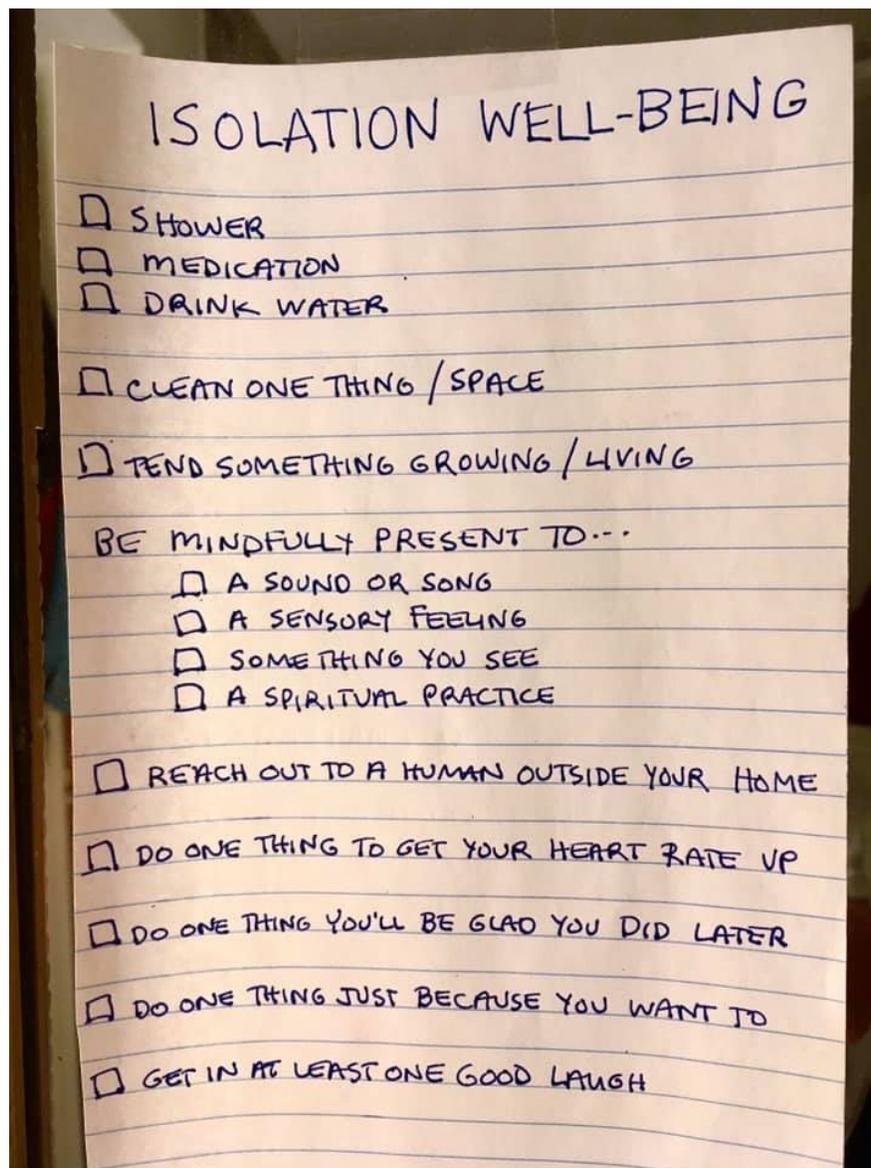
***This can be done two or three times a day.***



---

## Isolation Well Being Daily To-Do List

This powerful and cheery checklist was taken from a Face Book post, but was originally developed by [Lindsay Braham](#)



---

## Keeping Routines and Structure During the Pandemic

by **Miriam DeFant** (Board of Directors)

Daily schedules and routines are essential for our physical and mental well-being. Humans are pattern-loving and pattern-thriving creatures. Rhythms in our daily life create a sense of continuity, calm, and grounding. Researchers have found that daily

routines are essential for stress management. Having a daily routine reduces stress, increases our sense of security and safety. During times of upheaval, it is especially important to maintain some daily rituals or create new ones. For many of us, our daily activities, especially those out in the community, have been disrupted by the pandemic. Having structure to our day, however, can help maintain a sense of predictability and control over our lives.

With all of this in mind, there are still many things we can do to maintain our routines and create new ones in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Daily routines are going to look different for different people. Physical limitations, available resources, personal likes, living arrangements, and individual needs all shape what we can and need to do. Now is a good time to take stock of your daily routines and structure. Questions to ask yourself include:

- What am I doing on a daily basis to support my emotional well-being?
- What am I doing to be physically active?
- If I live alone, what can I do to be outside more and feel more connected to the natural world?
- What am I doing to stay connected to other people right now?
- How am I organizing chores in my home?
- Am I spending too much time watching tv or other screens?
- What can I do to maintain a healthy diet and sleep routine?
- Do I have some activity every day, no matter how small, when I reflect on a small joy or something beautiful to me?
- What are things I am doing right now that are working well for me? What are areas that need some tweaking?

A daily routine is a kind of road map to your day. It doesn't mean there isn't any variety or flexibility. It's important to include creative, social, and intellectual activities as well as time for chores, personal care, and rest.

---

## Local Libraries On-line Offerings

Our local libraries are offering classes and activities online. Check in with your town library to see what is available to stay active and engaged.

### Leverett Library

**1-413-548-9220**

email: [leverettlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:leverettlibrary@gmail.com)

<https://leverettlibrary.org/p/41/Calendar>

### New Salem Library

**1-978-544-6334**

email: [n\\_salem@cwmares.org](mailto:n_salem@cwmares.org)

<https://www.newsalempubliclibrary.org/news-events>

### Shutesbury Library

**1-413-259-1213**

email: [library.director@shutesbury.org](mailto:library.director@shutesbury.org)

<https://sites.google.com/site/mnspearmemoriamlibrary/>

### Wendell Library

**1-978-544-3559**

<https://www.wendellmass.us/index.php/wendell-free-library.html>

---

## SAGE Connect

SAGE is matching LGBT elders with community members and allies who want to connect during the pandemic crisis.

## Councils on Aging

**Councils on Aging & Senior Centers** provide local outreach, social and health services, advocacy, information and referral for older adults, families and caregivers. *Please contact your town CoA directly to find out what services are available during quarantine.*

### Leverett

**413-548-1022 X5** If you would like more information, leave your contact information so that someone can return your call.

### New Salem

Town Coordinator, Nancy Aldrich 978-544-6437

### Shutesbury

Call 259-3796 or email [coa@shutesbury.org](mailto:coa@shutesbury.org)

### Wendell

Susan at 978-544-3758 or Nancy at 978-544-6760.

## Connecting On-Line With Your Neighbors

*Here are the already-existing online places that neighbors are connecting to helping neighbors.*

### Leverett:

#### Leverettconnects

This is an email list for the town of Leverett, MA residents and close neighbors. Posts to the list are intended to be about Leverett events, announcements or news. The list is intended to focus on the Town of Leverett and events, announcements and posts in town to help build a closer community.

Subscribe: [leverettconnects+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:leverettconnects+subscribe@groups.io)

### New Salem:

#### The New Salem News

An online newsletter for residents of New Salem published early Saturday mornings. Currently it goes out to 350 people. Residents may join by writing to [newsalemnews@gmail.com](mailto:newsalemnews@gmail.com) and requesting their e-mail to be added to the list.

### Shutesbury:

#### NextDoor Shutesbury

This is part of a nationwide platform, NextDoor, that is available for any neighborhood or town to use. The purpose is for residents to connect with one another. It includes categories for posting items for sale, news and updates about lost dogs, people experiencing phone or electricity outages, and much more.

Anyone can join. Here's how:

1. Visit [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com).
2. Enter your **residential street address\*** and **email address**.
3. Select **Find your neighborhood**. You will automatically be assigned to that neighborhood.
4. Complete all of the required fields.
5. Click **Sign up**.

6. Finally, verify your address.

**\*Note:** NextDoor does not support the use of P.O. Boxes. Members must join using their physical address.

## Wendell:

### Online Wendell Townsfolk

An online listserv that is available for residents of Wendell. Go to the following web site for instructions on joining the list serve and information on rules and other things.

<https://mailman.deepsoft.com/mailman/listinfo/wendell-townsfolk>

## Senior News

### A Message From The Wendell Selectboard

As part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wendell and New Salem now have a shared Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located at the New Salem Fire Station, which is staffed Monday-Friday 9am-4pm with New Salem and Wendell emergency services personnel. The EOC is not open to the public, but staff is available to respond to questions and concerns related to the pandemic from residents via phone and email. If they do not answer, please leave a message and they will get back to you.

Phone - **978-544-3345**

Email [firedepartment@wendellmass.us](mailto:firedepartment@wendellmass.us) or [chief@newsalemfire.org](mailto:chief@newsalemfire.org)

Please be aware, the EOC is not 911, so for emergencies call 911. And if you are in need of medical advice please call your primary care physician.

---

### Emerging Health Care Fraud Schemes Related to COVID-19 Pandemic

The FBI is warning the public about several emerging health care fraud schemes related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Criminals are selling fake COVID-19 test kits and unapproved treatments through telemarketing calls. Scammers are promising free care to patients in order to gain access to their personal and health insurance information, including their dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and financial data. Be cautious of any unsolicited offers that require or request your medical insurance information. A physician or other trusted health care provider should assess your condition and approve any requests for COVID-19 testing. Legitimate tests are offered free to patients when administered by a health care professional. Also, beware of any calls, emails, or other communications with “urgent” demands for money or seeking to verify personal information.

Be wary of any unsolicited phone calls or emails from individuals claiming to the IRS or Treasury Department.

If someone calls you on the phone, saying they're from Medicare, and asks for your Medicare number or other personal information – just hang up. Medicare will never:

- Call beneficiaries to ask for or to “verify” Medicare numbers.
- Call to sell you anything.
- Promise you things if you give them a Medicare number.
- Visit you at your home.
- Call you to enroll you in a Medicare program over the phone, unless **you called us** first.

It's always a good practice to avoid downloading attachments or clicking links in unsolicited emails. If you want to make a charitable donation to an organization, it's usually best to make the donation directly on the organization's website or by mail rather than over the phone.

For updates and new information on COVID-19, the official sources are:

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health, [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- World Health Organization, [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

If you suspect Medicare fraud, please report it by calling Medicare's toll-free customer service center at **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**.

If you think you are a victim of COVID-19 fraud, immediately report it to **National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline** at **(866) 720-5721**.

## Quarantining Away From Home

### Toque de Queda (*Lockdown*) Being in the Caribbean During Quarantine

by **Elizabeth Fernandez O'Brien** (*PR/Events Committee*)

Every day, every day is something new. We discover new COVID 19 information, and new ways of looking at things. We've noticed the birds and other creatures are returning, the areas are cleaner, it's quiet. The police pass a few times each day.

We are Elizabeth and Bert and we are in self-isolation in Joyuda, Puerto Rico. This means we can drive every other day according to the last number on our license plate. Grocery stores are closed on Sundays. We have friends trying to work and are struggling with the overloaded network.



FaceTime and phone conversations, classes and yes, even meetings, are our connection to the outside world. We did venture out recently, received seeds, seedlings and lettuce from a friend, visited with a couple from a distance, and bought bananas and pineapples from a fruit stand to share with our son. After washing everything, including ourselves, I realized how nervous-making the trip was. Every step must be thought out. "Have I touched this surface with the glove, have I removed it carefully enough, did I clean everything thoroughly with enough soap and water?"

We went out on the balcony the other night and did a unity applause for health care workers and law enforcement. We worry about those who have to work and are not getting enough help. We do our personal precautions. We've hand sewn several masks from my mother-in-law's hand embroidered napkins. It takes us about three hours each

and is a kind of meditation. The governor here obtained one million plus tests for an island of 3 million plus people.

Our son and partner left San Juan, a city full of tourists off cruise ships and so much night life. Their quarantine from us, 20 minutes away in San German, is now over. We wore masks and gloves, delivered the garden items, stayed apart in untouched chairs and played a game on our individual phones together. Try it with a tech savvy friend, it's called Spyfall! or play Hangman over the phone.

Our other son and partner and our "nephew" and partner are isolating in our house in Shutesbury, likely for the long term. He's designing a chicken coop, ordering chickens, Golden Wyandotes and Rhode Islands Reds and more. They bought a freezer and loaded it up. Our son is starting seeds with my grow light, nurturing seedlings he received from his "uncle" and all are able to work from home. Many of us are doing yoga together online on Sundays.

We do a few stretches, get out and walk a mile, pick up our rock and do weight exercises. Just squatting ten times with 2 cans of soup in your hands and doing it twice helps your balance. No one wants to fall or have an illness or accident right now. We have our own activities from wood carving to fundraising for the poorest, most-earthquake-affected town here in Puerto Rico.

We see very few people unlike more urban friends who report walking in parks. OK, the truth is out, we're in an exquisitely beautiful place to isolate. We're at the beach. We've postponed our return until we can determine its safe to enter a public place like an airport. We're OK and we're hoping every member is finding ways to be physically, mentally and personally well. Stay in touch.

## Village Neighbors Newsletter Expanding

### *Contribute to the Village Neighbors Newsletter*

If you are interested in contributing articles or information to the Village Neighbors newsletter, please contact the editor - [dina@dinapolizzi.com](mailto:dina@dinapolizzi.com). We are looking for information of interest to persons over 60 in our four towns: **Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell**. As of this mailing, **Village Neighbors News** has a mailing list of 240 and is growing with every issue.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **Your Village Neighbors Need YOU!**

With Free Membership in place, Village Neighbors will be growing quickly in the coming year. We need Volunteers to assist members at home, and also behind the scenes in the committees that keep our organization working! Contribute as much or as little time as you want. Match your interests and skills to what's needed in the community. *Join the fun and make a difference...*



***It takes a village to make a Village!***

**During the *coronavirus quarantine*, VN is still available for check-in calls, grocery and medicine pick-up and delivery. We have suspended all in-person contact until quarantine is ended, and are taking this time to continue to strengthen and grow our committees and internal organization. Meetings are taking place through conference calls and Zoom. We hope you will consider reaching out to a committee of interest and explore opportunities for volunteering.**

---

## **Membership / Volunteer Committee**

- Recruit and welcome new members and volunteers
- Do new member intake visits
- Conduct volunteer orientations and trainings
- Create and coordinate social activities and programs
- Develop Dementia Friendly community outreach and training

***Volunteer Orientations are run by the Membership/Volunteer Committee. Join us at the Volunteer Orientation if you would like to experience this committee in action and find out more about what we do.***

## **VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION**

### **Zoom Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 19th, 6:30 pm**

At the orientation you will learn about the organization and find out about the wide range of volunteer activities that you can choose from.

During Quarantine we are still doing grocery and medicine pick-up and delivery, and wellness check-ins for our members..

***To join the Zoom Volunteer***

***Orientation you must***

***RSVP by May 11th***

**[volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org)**

A Volunteer Handbook and Application packet will be sent to you by email, or sent by Mail if you cannot print it.

**CONTACT Membership / Volunteer**

---

## **Service Committee / Call Managers**

- Answer requests from Members and connect them with Volunteers waiting to assist
- Assess needs and services
- Train and oversee Call Managers
- Work with the Membership/Volunteer Committee to triage concerns for members and volunteers
- Handle vendor services

***Call Managers work from home to manage member requests.***

**CONTACT Service**

---

## **Events / PR Committee**

- Events • Promotions

- Tabling at community events
- Outreach and Press
- Newsletter • Social media
- Event Calendar

***Contact the Events/PR Committee to learn about opportunities to be involved in planning our next exciting event and connecting with our community.***

**CONTACT Event / PR**

---

## **Fundraising Committee**

- Provide the money for Village Neighbors to function and grow
- Research funding
- Develop funding circles (sources) - donations, members, volunteers, and contributors
- Develop fundraising events
- Recruit local sponsors -banks, businesses
- Research and apply for grants

***Now that Village Neighbors is Free to members, we are counting more than ever on voluntary contributions, funding and grants to meet our income needs for the coming year. Volunteers are needed to make this happen!***

**CONTACT Fundraising**

---

## **IT (Information Technology) Committee**

- Database and website maintenance
- Troubleshoot technological issues
- Manage email and phone programs
- Training volunteers and members
- Home assistance for members with electronics, broadband, Skype, FaceBook, etc.

***IT is the support system for all committees, members and volunteers around technology. With the arrival of Broadband in our rural towns, members will need assistance in setting up and learning how to use their new systems. We need people who are comfortable training others, but not everyone on IT needs to go out into the community. Many of us are happily at home, figuring out and enhancing VN technology.***

**CONTACT IT**

---

## **Village Neighbors Board of Directors**

- Develop policy
- Develop action plans based on Committee input
- Maintain fiscal health of Village Neighbors
- Maintain records

*Board members do not need to be members or residents of our four towns. It would be great if we could add people to the board who have legal, accounting, or social services experience. We have five dedicated members now who are working hard for the organization, but we need more people who could provide varied perspectives and expertise.*

CONTACT VN Board of Directors

## Coming Soon... VN Local Vendor List

Village Neighbors is compiling a list of professional service providers, such as housekeepers, electricians, landscapers, etc., who have been employed by our members.

**Because Village Neighbors believes in supporting our local economy while helping seniors, the vendor list will include service providers who are mainly local to the four towns or adjacent towns.** The list will be available to Village Neighbors on [www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

If you would like to suggest a service provider for the list, please contact Mary-Ann Palmieri at 1-413-345-6894 or [mapalmieri1126@gmail.com](mailto:mapalmieri1126@gmail.com)



VILLAGE NEIGHBORS | [villageneighbors.org](http://villageneighbors.org)



© 2020 Village Neighbors  
Newsletter edit and design - [Dina Polizzi](#)