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Newton at Home has been organized to enable Newton residents to age at home comfortably, independently, and with peace of mind through a membership-based organization that offers access to comprehensive practical services and fosters social support and a sense of community.

For more information call 617-795-2560 or go to <http://newtonathome.org>

## Letter from our Executive Director

*Greetings.*

Fall brings energy and new activity, but the truth is that summer was very busy at NAH as well.



While an unusually large number of our regular volunteers were away or unable to do their usual volunteer hours for other reasons, member requests remained high. I want to say a quick but heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who filled in this summer giving double or triple their usual hours so that we could still fulfill well over 90% of our requests with volunteers. I also want to say welcome back to all volunteers and welcome aboard to our new volunteers.

Exciting news: we are going to be in pictures! Specifically we are in the process of making a video about Newton at Home. Posted on our website, the video will show our volunteers serving our members and some of our social activities. We will use the video to recruit new members, volunteers and donors. The video is being made thanks to the generous support and

technical expertise of VideoLink, a Newton-based video production company. We will let you know when it is coming to a screen near you.

We have been able to share the local farmers' market bounty with a number of NAH households. To do this we partner with Food to Your Table and several of our volunteers sort and deliver the food. For more information and background on this program, please see the "From Farmer's Market to NAH Homes" story on page 4.

We are educating our members and their families to notify Newton at Home if they are hospitalized. We would be happy to assist in any services that we provide during the member's recovery. (See page 4 for the specific services.)

One last volunteer mention and thank you. One of the volunteers working with the farmers' market food is Nick Epstein who is now a Newton North High School senior. Nick spent three very busy weeks working out of our office this summer. I could barely keep up with phone

*(Continued next page)*

## Save the Date: Annual Meeting

Newton at Home's Annual Meeting will be on Wednesday afternoon, December 5, at the Scandinavian Living Center from 1:30 – 3:30 pm. Come learn about the highlights of the past year and what you can look forward to in the future, meet the new Board members, and enjoy refreshments with your fellow members.

## Executive Director *(Cont'd)*

calls requesting his services. He went out two or three times a day, often thanks to his father's chauffeuring services. Nick gardened, fixed computers, assembled furniture, organized books, and took out trash barrels. We loved having him and appreciated the family volunteer aspect of his service.

And a special welcome to a new office volunteer with whom many of you have already spoken. Barbara Butterworth is answering our phones and assisting in fulfilling member requests on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons. She has quickly become an invaluable member of our outstanding office volunteer staff.

Sincerely,  
Maureen Grannan, Executive Director

## Our Community Business Partners

We have been steadily building relationships with a number of businesses in the community which have been incredibly generous in supporting us through gifts-in-kind. Food at many of events has been provided by Blacker's Bakeshop and Whole Foods. Whole Foods contributed the food for our last Annual Meeting and our First Birthday in the spring. Blacker's Bakeshop also contributed a huge Boston cream pie as a raffle prize at last year's Volunteer Appreciation Brunch.

That event was held at the Boston Marriott Newton Hotel which contributed the space, brunch refreshments, and the audio system we used. The Marriott will host our next Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on Wednesday, January 16, 2013. Another business which contributed an item for the raffle at the Volunteer Appreciation was Houseworks, which has also contributed food to a number of our events.

Swartz Hardware, in Nonatum has provided 30 rakes and 300 leaf bags for our leaf raking fiesta.

We are very grateful to all these businesses and are delighted to provide a public thank you.

## Volunteer Spotlight

By Naomi Shore

*Editor's note: We are very proud of our volunteers and love featuring a profile of two of them in each newsletter. NAH is always searching for more volunteers. Please consider contacting Julie Plaut Mahoney, Coordinator of Volunteers, by calling 617-795-2560.*

### Ryan Grannan-Doll



Ryan Grannan-Doll is definitely part of the connected generation. Ryan helps members with technology in a variety of ways. He has consulted on many computer problems and also has gone shopping with some members to help purchase new computers, phones, and printers.

Ryan, a journalist for five years, has been the editor for the past two years of the WalthamPatch, part of the extensive Patch online community news network. He has also volunteered at NAH for close to two years. His mother, Maureen Grannan, our Executive Director, introduced Ryan to NAH.

He continues to volunteer because he finds this to be "an upper" and a way "to stay in touch in a positive way with humanity." His job brings him into contact with a lot of bad news and tragedy so he feels the need to counteract what could be a depressing view of life. He specifically helps with technology because that is what he is good at.

As an example of the satisfaction his volunteer work brings, Ryan describes the time he went to a member's home to set up her iPad. He thought it would take about 30 minutes, but three hours later, he finally had worked through all the technical difficulties of that particular gadget and location. Yes, he had spent way more time than he figured, but he reports he felt really good that he had completed a difficult job. "It was worth it to see the smile on her face and know that I had done it."

## Bob Larner

Bob Larner has been a member of our Board of Directors since 2009 and vice president since 2010. First, he chaired the Member Services Committee that researched what other villages offered their members and the fees they charged. His committee presented a vision for Newton at Home's services and fees that was adopted by the Board in March 2010.



Then he chaired the Transportation Committee that put together the nuts and bolts of our transportation service and also developed our transportation policy. The policy can be found in the Members Handbook and on our web site under Membership Services. Bob says he got involved when it became clear to him while on the Member Services Committee that transportation would be a large part of members' requests.

Now, Bob chairs the Member Recruitment and Retention Committee. Having been one of the founding members, with a vision of what this organization could be, he feels that we are doing many things right and can improve on others. He notes that we can't take anything for granted and need to continue to develop.

Bob also does direct service as one of our transportation volunteers. He says he enjoys meeting people as he drives them and it helps him get a sense of "how some NAH members really depend on this service. For them it is not a convenience but necessary to maintaining themselves in their homes." He also adds that he has been pulled into other tasks occasionally. For example, he has changed smoke detector batteries. His qualification is that he is tall.

Bob and his wife, Anne, moved to West Newton in 1973 when he was teaching at Brandeis. He subsequently left academia and worked for the federal government and then Charles River Associates (CRAI). He is still a senior staff consultant for them, though he retired from full time work in 2009. One thing he enjoyed in his professional life was working as part of a team and he appreciates the team spirit that pervades NAH.

## Book Discussion Goes First

*By Naomi Shore*

Over the last few months, the Program Planning Committee has moved to implement affinity groups for our members. While several are in the planning stage, a book discussion group organized by committee member Bob Read has been meeting very successfully for the past four months.

Bill Brisk, a member who hosts the discussion in a conference room at his offices, says, "Each of the four sessions has produced lively yet civil and knowledgeable discussions thanks to the diverse backgrounds of the members, and the fact that everyone had read the book! That's incredible given my other experiences with book clubs."

The group decided at the beginning to read a mix of fiction and nonfiction and to give special consideration to Newton authors. So far they have read an impressive list: "The Submission" by Amy Waldman, "Better" by Atul Gawande, "Defending Jacob" by William Landay and "Swerve" by Stephen Greenblatt. Gawande and Landay are both Newton residents and Landay's novel takes place in Newton.

The person who proposes the book poses some initial questions. Brisk has prepared some related material for discussion when he could. Another book discussion group member, Dave Chosiad, says that "the discussions have been very interesting. I started to think about things I wouldn't otherwise ponder thanks to the fact that people come at these things from distinct and different perspectives and life experiences."

Over 10 people have been attending sessions, but Brisk thinks one or two more would be welcome. They meet on the last Wednesday afternoon of the month from 3:30 - 5 pm at 1330 Centre Street in Newton Centre. Any Newton at Home member interested in joining should contact Brisk at [billbrisk@briskelderlaw.com](mailto:billbrisk@briskelderlaw.com) or phone Jennifer Duhaimé at 617-244-4373 x10.



## From Farmers' Market to NAH Homes

By Naomi Shore

This summer and fall, Newton at Home has been able to bring Farmers' Market bounty to some of our Newton at Home members. Thanks to the friendship between our Volunteer Coordinator Julie Plaut Mahoney and the founders of Food to Your Table, Joan Balaban and Amy Silberstein, Newton at Home arranged to be one of the recipients of this unique program.

The goal of Food to Your Table is to get food from the people that grow it to the people who need it such as Second Step and food pantries. Early in the summer, Amy and Joan asked Julie if she had ideas about how to find more recipients for the food that they collect from the market vendors after the market closes for the day. Julie immediately answered that NAH could find people who needed the produce and volunteers who would help collect and sort it and then deliver it to those members' homes. Thus, we have been able to make these welcome deliveries once a month.

Julie and Maureen Grannan, our Executive Director, have been able to come up with a flexible list of about eight to ten households where food help is welcome. Maureen knows the membership, notes Julie, and is aware when circumstances change. She knows how the stress level can increase when someone falls ill and is facing major medical bills or when a child and grandchild move back home. She had already initiated the phone check-up program that has volunteer Ellie Kritzman calling members to find out how life is going for them and to ask where we can help. Ellie also calls people on this Farmers' Market list to ask if they would like a delivery of vegetables.

Each month, our volunteers have gone to the Newton Tuesday Farmers' Market at 6 pm to sort the donations into bags. Then they deliver at least one bag to each household.

## When You Are In or Just Out Of The Hospital

In July, Executive Director Maureen Grannan wrote to our members about all of the services we can provide while a member is hospitalized or convalescing at home after being hospitalized.

The response was overwhelming. Maureen received over 20 emails back asking questions or requesting some of the services. Some people also wrote to thank her for drawing all these things together and for being there for members.

We are printing below Maureen's original email.

"I would like to encourage all of our members to please notify (or have family or friends notify) Newton at Home if you have been hospitalized. We are available to provide many services that you may need even if you are not home.

"We can provide pet care, trash removal, bringing in mail, watering plants, and more. It is important for you to know that your home is safe and secure while you are away and we can help!

"We will also help to prepare your home prior to your discharge from the hospital by restocking refrigerator, cooking light meals to freeze, and picking up prescriptions.

"After you are discharged from the hospital or rehabilitation facility, transportation can be provided for follow up laboratory, radiology, or physician appointments. We can run errands for you until you are feeling well. We are here to provide as many services as you need whether you are unwell or well. Please call the office at 617-795-2560 if you need any assistance."

### Save the Date: Volunteer Appreciation Brunch

Newton at Home will hold its Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on Wednesday, January 16, from 10 am – 12 noon. Please add this to your 2013 calendar.

## Suffolk Downs

At the end of July, a large group from Newton at Home attended "Senior Day" at Suffolk Downs. Members and volunteers enjoyed a buffet luncheon while listening to a talk about the history of Suffolk Downs, how to read the program, and what criteria to use when placing a bet. The talk was informative, but Lady Luck only helped one member who won \$4.10!



Patricia Generazio - Owner  
Brenda McCarthy - Trainer  
Augusto Marin - Rider  
1 Mile 1:48 3/5

NEWTON AT HOME  
**Coronado Charlie**



Festivo - 2nd  
Ace In Hand - 3rd  
July 25, 2012  
©CB Photography



From left to right: Bob Read, Helen Reiskin, Edith Goldberg, May Pothier, Fran Kadinoff, Eleanor Ames, Maureen Grannan and Jockey Augusto Marin.

## Rockport Adventure and Thank You

*Editor's Note: On one of our trips to Rockport's Shalin Liu Performance Center this summer, Newton at Home members ended up having an adventure. To acknowledge the help given by various Cape Ann residents, Executive Director Maureen Grannan wrote a letter to the Gloucester Times that was printed in the paper. Here are excerpts from her letter.*

"To the editor:

"You don't often find a happy ending in news stories these days, but here is one in which several Cape Ann Good Samaritans turned an unfortunate mishap into multiple happy resolutions.

"It happened when a group of four Newton senior citizens were driving to a concert at Rockport's Shalin Liu Performance Center. All of them were members of Newton at Home, a nonprofit organization designed to help people remain in their own homes as they age by providing a wide range of programs and services and many recreational outings.

"Shortly before the Essex exit on Route 128 North, the car wobbled to a halt with a flat rear tire. What to do? No one knew how to fix a flat and things in the car were beginning to heat up.

"Enter Good Samaritan No. 1, a local motorcyclist who happened to be on the road and stopped to see if he could help. Change the tire? Piece of cake.

"But the ladies and gentleman also looked pretty parched with no water on hand. A quick call to his wife, Good Samaritan No. 2, brought her out to the scene with the much needed refreshment. Then, when the tire was changed, the couple insisted that the entire group follow them to their home for lunch — an invitation they could not refuse!

"After lunch, the group set off again for Rockport,

arriving in time to catch the last half of the concert. And that leads us to the second part of this story. After the performance, they decided to purchase a thank you gift certificate from the Causeway Restaurant for their luncheon hosts, asking that it be mailed to the couple's home. Enter the restaurant manager, Good Samaritan No. 3, who insisted that he knew the couple and would personally deliver the certificate to them.

"This episode could easily conclude here with a more than happy ending, but for the actions of Good Samaritan No. 4, an employee at The Rockland Mortgage Company. It happened that the motorcyclist's wife was concerned that her new Newton at Home friends, through no fault of their own, did not get to hear the entire Rockport Music Festival concert. Knowing that her boss at The Rockland Mortgage Company had a connection at Rockport Music, she asked if he would see what he could do to get them a refund. He was happy to ask, but unfortunately it was not to be. So he arranged for Rockland Mortgage to make a generous financial donation to Newton at Home.

"As Newton at Home's executive director, I wanted to share this extraordinary incident with you not just because of the extreme kindness and concern shown to our members that day, but also because it really illustrates what Newton at Home is all about. We are a "neighbor helping neighbor" organization in which more than 90 percent of our member's requests for services are filled by a cadre of dedicated volunteers.

"What happened on that sunny summer day shows us, however, that Newton at Home doesn't have a corner on Good Samaritan deeds — or happy endings, either. Thank you, Rockport and Gloucester for extending yourselves to our members and our organization."

Maureen Grannan, R.N., M.S.  
Executive Director, Newton at Home

