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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,

We are finally coming to the end of the 2014 Winter to Remember! It was long and challenging to all of us. Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who helped our members in so many ways. Let's hope that next winter is kinder and gentler!



A quick reminder about the Whole Foods 5% Day on April 29th at both the Newtonville Washington Street and Walnut Street stores. Five percent of all proceeds will be donated to Newton at Home. Start your shopping lists now, let your

friends and family know, and let us know if you need a ride to do your shopping.

I am pleased to tell you that we are exploring the development of several new affinity groups. Members are interested in computers, money matters, genealogy, and Scrabble. We will let you know as the groups begin.

The Program Committee is hard at work planning many wonderful events for the spring and summer. Be sure to check the NAH calendar for dates and times. The committee is thrilled to see many more members turning out for programs and

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Support Us at Whole Foods

On Tuesday, April 29, you, your friends, families and neighbors can support Newton at Home by shopping at either of the Whole Foods Newton stores. Whole Foods will donate five percent of that day's sales at both the Newtonville (Washington Street) and Newton Centre (Walnut Street) stores to Newton at Home.

We would like to see all members and volunteers participate in this fundraiser that will help to defray the costs of NAH projects and events. So please plan your shopping around that date while supporting the efforts of the staff, volunteers and members of NAH.

As an added bonus, NAH is sponsoring a contest for members and

volunteers. Whoever guesses the amount that is closest to the actual amount raised will win a \$100 gift card to Whole Foods. So guess soon and guess often! Email your best estimate to Julie Plaut Mahoney at volcoord@newtonathome.org by 5 pm on Monday, April 28th.



Charlie is part of our display this month at Whole Foods. He says "Things Might Have Been Different If I Had Newton at Home"

Almost a Best Kept Secret: the Preferred Provider List

By Naomi Shore

It is almost a best kept secret: Newton at Home maintains a preferred provider list for members looking for certain kinds of contracted services that our volunteers are not trained to provide. Yet it seems many NAH members do not know they can call the office (617-795-2560) and get vetted provider recommendations for these kinds of needs.

Rich Snider, our volunteer vendor coordinator, gets recommendations from people who have used a particular service. Before a vendor can be put on our list, Rich contacts that vendor, sends him/her an application, and carefully checks three references. We also require a certificate of liability insurance from vendors. Our list includes a variety of service providers and is updated regularly. For example, we have electricians, plumbers, construction contractors, painters, stonemasons, landscapers, locksmiths, roofers, and more.



Rich Snider

When Rich receives references that are very enthusiastic about the quality of the vendor's services, he feels good about putting them on our preferred list. An added bonus is that once they go through the clearance process, most vendors will give NAH

members a discount if asked – on average 10 percent. Most of the time if you use one of these people, you are using a service that another NAH member has recommended since that is how Rich receives most of his recommendations.

One of the recently added vendors is Guy's Healthy Home Cooking. The owner is Guy Rabinowitz. After learning what NAH does, Guy not only wanted to be on our list, but he offered to supply one full meal every other week to an NAH member chosen by Executive Director Maureen Grannan. Guy likes the idea that a non-profit helps people stay in their homes where they have their family history. "Donating something I feel is good for people to an organization that I connect to also makes me feel good."

Guy uses fresh, preservative free, locally sourced food in his family recipes. He cooks every other week and delivers the meals to his customers the same day.



(The meals donated to NAH members are delivered by our volunteers, organized by Carole Noveck, chair of the Food Matters Lunch Group.) Members who have received Guy's meals have been raving about their freshness and quality.

Some of our members have known about this NAH benefit and have used one or more of our preferred providers. Marguerite McDonald used Joe Cooper of Colonial Craftsmen when she needed her roof fixed. "I called Maureen and she gave me someone from the list, thank God." She was very satisfied with his ability and willingness to answer her questions. She felt that the quality of his work was excellent and he gave her the 10% Newton at Home discount.

Executive Director *(Continued from page 1)*

groups. We receive many comments about the interesting life stories that members tell each other and how new friendships are growing.

The Executive Directors of the Eastern Massachusetts Villages have been collaborating with the leaders of Road Scholar (formerly ElderHostel) to plan a group trip for our members and members who belong to other Massachusetts villages. We are considering several options and hope to choose a final destination soon. When the details are worked out, I will publicize the information. I would love to receive feedback from any members who have taken trips with Road Scholar and would welcome any suggestions for trips/destinations that we should consider.

So with spring in the air, get out and walk, breathe the fresh air, and watch the flowers bloom! It is the best time of the year.

Warm regards

Maureen Grannan,
Executive Director

Volunteer Spotlight

By Naomi Shore

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

Ellen Block

Even before Newton at Home enrolled its first members, Ellen Block was an active volunteer with us.

At that time, she worked with Bob Lerner and Tamara Bliss on a proposed financial plan and budget. She also was a member of the committee that looked for a space for our office.

As she looks back, she notes two things. The space worked out much better than she thought it might; their projections for how many members we would have when we opened and how fast we would grow were overly optimistic.

She figured that we would open with 150 memberships and grow at the rate of 6 - 10 a month. Once we opened, she was impressed with how well we operated with fewer financial resources at hand than predicted, and she continues to be impressed with the balance we maintain between dues, fundraising, and volunteer recruitment to fill such a high percentage of member requests. Of course, she is one of those volunteers! She is also enthusiastic about the results of the six months trial membership plan and thinks that it will become a major tool in our member recruitment efforts.

Ellen came to NAH with a background in business forecasting, budgeting, and financial reporting. For many years she worked in the travel industry. After she was laid off, she found her way to the local SOAR 55 office and spoke with its director, Jan Latorre-Stiller, about what might be a good match in terms of volunteering. Jan mentioned this newly organizing community group Newton At Home.

Now Ellen spends two afternoons a week in the office, entering checks, writing thank you notes for donations, trouble-shooting our Club Express computer system and generally being one of the office computer gurus (for our other office computer guru, see below).

Ellen also goes out to members' homes to help them set up and/or use their computers. She notes that she likes working in the office because she enjoys the company



of the office staff and other volunteers. She also admits that she relishes untangling computer problems which frequently occur in the office.

Ellen is also involved with other volunteer work through SOAR 55. She tutors two elementary school students in math, helps members of the military with tax preparation, and works as a SOAR 55 Nonprofit Management Consulting Group team member. She is also a member of a Watertown committee that is exploring the option of setting up a village similar to Newton at Home.

Alex Vogel

Alex Vogel is our other office computer guru. He came to us about a year ago after researching "volunteer work, Newton, MA." That brought him to SOAR 55, and through them, he came to Newton at Home.



When Alex came in to talk with Executive Director Maureen Grannan, he realized that "They could use my computer expertise, so I stayed." He, too, loves his "officemates" and is very happy doing anything he can to help out. Through his time in the office, he has met another volunteer who shares his love of music. He is an avid and talented clarinetist who now plays chamber music with other volunteers who are musicians.

Alex puts out the monthly calendar that members and volunteers receive via email. He also troubleshoots any computer hang-ups. He is in the office once a week. As one of our tech consultants, he goes to members' homes to help them with any technical devices, including computers, phones, printers, etc. Often, he offers to "clean-up their desktop" to simplify their experience. He is also delighted to show people more iPhone capabilities so that they can use this technology to enrich their lives. Using the right app is also a way to simplify life, says Alex.

Alex has a background in chemical engineering and worked for Dow Chemical Agro Sciences for many years. He was director of process research and development. He retired early to care for his late wife who was then terminally ill. Together they moved to North Carolina where he lived for a total of 11 years. He moved to Newton seven years ago.

He has very much enjoyed this last year of volunteering with NAH and has enjoyed both the work and the new contacts he has made. He says he plans to continue to stay around to continue to be one of our tech gurus.

Keeping Connected: The Latest on Hearing Solutions

By Rhonda Natanblut Ruby, M.S. Audiologist and Director, West Newton Hearing Center

Editor's note: Audiologist Melissa Mahaffey, from the West Newton Hearing Center, gave a presentation to our members at a workshop sponsored by the Health and Wellness Committee. Here is an overview of the topics she explored.



Rhonda Natanblut Ruby

You may be surprised to learn that hearing loss is the third most common health problem in the United States, and yet only 16% of family physicians routinely screen for hearing loss. More than 40 million Americans have hearing loss: 15% of “baby-boomers” (ages 45-64), and 30% of people over 65.

Hearing aids can help 95% of people with hearing loss. According to the National Council on the Aging (NCOA), hearing-aid users report an improvement in overall quality of life, relationships at home, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

NCOA also reports that compared to hearing-aid users, those with untreated hearing loss are “more likely to report depression, anxiety, and paranoia and were less likely to participate in organized social activities.” Untreated hearing loss also increases risk of falling and developing dementia.

To find out if you or a loved one could benefit from hearing aids, the first step is to get a hearing test from a licensed audiologist. If hearing aids can help you, your audiologist will review which options best suit your hearing loss, lifestyle, and preferences. Extended-wear hearing aids, an invisible solution, are now available.

Many of today’s digital hearing aids are Bluetooth compatible and have accessories that can stream from your television or a small microphone directly into your hearing aids. There are telephones that use innovative technology to display written, nearly instant captions of all phone calls. These may be made

available without cost for those who have documented hearing loss. These advancements maximize your ability to hear and interact in all environments, keeping you connected to the world around you.

How to Avoid Being a Victim of a Scam

By Cynthia Pill, Co-Chair, Health and Wellness Committee

The January Health and Wellness program was dedicated to “Identifying and Preventing Scams.” Presented in partnership with Century Bank, the discussion was led by David Leeds, Assistant Manager of the Newton Center bank branch.

The presentation focused on four major aspects related to scams:

- 1. Identifying Common Types of Scams:** investment scams; home owner scams; caregiver/family financial exploitation; telephone, mail and online scams.
- 2. Fraud Prevention Tips:** how to recognize fake websites that are made to appear legitimate; how to protect your personal information; how to recognize online and over the phone scams; importance of mixing up, changing, and using difficult passwords.
- 3. Steps To Recover If You Are The Victim Of A Scam:** how and where to report financial exploitation.
- 4. Identity Theft:** Helpful steps to prevent and detect identify theft, including checking your credit report. This can be done online, using www.annualcreditreport.com. By federal law, you are entitled to one free report a year.

For a copy of the program handouts, please call the Newton At Home office at (617) 795-2560 to request them.



Like Us on Facebook



Newton at Home now has a Facebook page. Please go on Facebook and press the icon to “LIKE” us. Facebook is a great social media tool that provides up to date information about programs and services at NAH. Additionally it can help your family and our community learn more about our organization. If you don’t have a Facebook page and are interested in creating one but don’t know where to start, call the NAH office and schedule an appointment with one of our computer-savvy volunteers. We need you to LIKE us as every “Like” increases our visibility!

NAH has a New Website

NAH has a new, easy to read and follow web site. The location is still the same <http://newtonathome.org/>. Please check it out. (See new front page below.) This is the culmination of two years of working with our web site vendor and our brainstorming ideas to improve the text, the visual elements, and the technical aspects. Several people worked under the leadership of Board member Dave Chosiad on this project and we salute all of them.

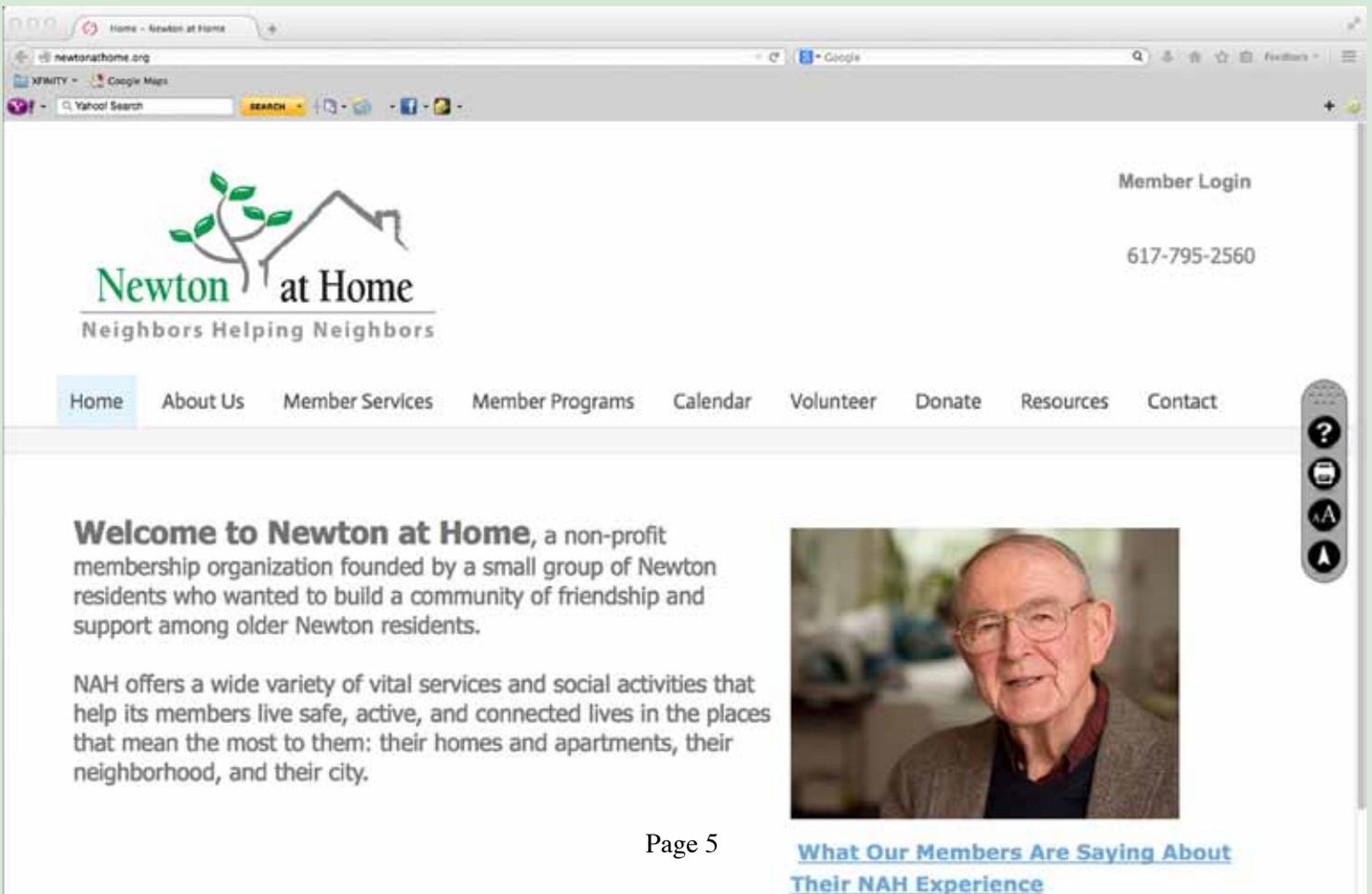
Annual Volunteer Brunch

April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month. It has become a Newton at Home tradition to honor our volunteers with a spring Volunteer Appreciation Brunch. We are very pleased to announce that this this year’s brunch will take place on Tuesday, April 29, from 10-11:30 am in the Cafe at the Whole Foods Market on Walnut Street. We hope that you can join us in celebrating and acknowledging your contributions to Newton at Home and to meet other volunteers. Please RSVP to Julie Plaut Mahoney: volcoord@newtonathome.org.



Help Us With New Thoughts and Ideas

We are always interested in creative ideas from members and volunteers. We encourage you to call, email, or use the U.S. mail to send your suggestions for programs, services, or feedback regarding Newton at Home experiences to director@newtonathome.org.





1 Student Charlie Booth carries a box.



Student Francis Shea delivers a box of goods from one of members.



Left to right: Mark Hansen, faculty member, Michaela Watson, Luca Vicinelli, Charlie Booth, and Francis Shea

Fessenden Lends Many Hands

Todd Eveleth, Fessenden Upper School Head and Varsity Hockey Coach, was looking for a community service project for students during Mudweek at Fessenden. (Mudweek is a week every March when students can go on field trips, do community service and engage in other activities that are not classroom-based.) On March 11th, two adult drivers in two vans and approximately 10 students went to NAH members' homes to pick up clothes and household items for Goodwill and the More Than Words bookstore in Waltham. After completing the route, the students dropped off the items.



For more information call 617-795-2560 or email info@newtonathome.org or visit www.newtonathome.org