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Our Mission

Newton at Home is a grassroots organization currently in the planning stage. Our mission is to enable Newton residents to age at home comfortably, safely, 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.

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President's Letter

We are making great progress at Newton at Home as we build our capacity to provide programs and services to members. As you know, our founding executive director Arlene Lowney started on November 8 . . . and there is much more!

January will be an exciting time for NAH: member sign-ups begin with identical events on Sunday, January 23 and Wednesday, January 26. On either date, you will have an opportunity to sign up for membership, to learn about the events we are planning for the next few months, and to hear about our excellent vendors. This is not our formal launch, but some services will be available as of this date, and we will be adding services month by month. We will send out a formal invitation with details soon.

This month, we will be piloting two programs. The first is a series of events that require registration and payment. Transportation will be arranged for those who need it. We want to iron out the kinks before offering trips to members, so we will invite our volunteers, donors and individuals who made deposits to participate. We will also begin a pilot program of referrals to approved vendors. Initially, we will test this with our volunteers, so that we are ready when our members sign up.

We've been reaching out to tell our story to potential members and volunteers; we had eleven house parties/information sessions in

October and November. We continue to speak at other homes and organizations. Please let me know if you would like to host an NAH house party or arrange for a presentation at a local organization that you belong to.

We have begun to recruit drivers, office staff, and other direct service volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these positions, please let me know. Initial training for volunteers will take place in December. As residents of Newton, we are committed to helping improve the quality of life for all our older fellow residents. We welcome your help!

Approximately 125 generous donors have already committed over \$70,000 towards our goal of raising \$100,000 for start-up costs, with contributions ranging from \$10 to \$7,500; over twenty-five Founding Donors have each given a minimum of \$500.

Please consider making a donation to NAH before the end of the year; you can send a check to PO Box 590033, Newton, MA 02459 or call us at 617-610-6502. We are also asking for donations of office equipment and furniture. Thank you, as always, for your continued support and contributions!

With warm wishes for a peaceful and happy holiday season.

Tamara J. Bliss, PRESIDENT



Welcome, NAH Executive Director Arlene Lowney!



Newton at Home's newly appointed executive director, Arlene Lowney, has lived in Newton for almost 40 years. She lives in a three-generation home in Newtonville with her daughter, Kathleen, her son-in-law, and her two grandchildren.

Arlene's vision for NAH includes harnessing the power and wisdom of younger and older adults in Newton. As she says, "None of us can do this alone. The sheer numbers of Newton residents who are aging and would like to remain in their homes safely and comfortably show that we will need more services and will want to collaborate with the remarkable array of service providers already working together in Newton.

"We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon the work that NAH's Board and cadre of talented volunteers has already done. Everybody is on the same page and everybody wants it . . . all the studies show that people want and prefer to be in their own home. Anything we can do to support this and advocate for them is a plus."

Arlene is an adjunct faculty member at Tufts Medical School and until recently served as the executive director of Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc. Previously, she was the director of Forge Hill Senior Living Community. During a portion of her tenure at these last two organizations, she was also executive director of Mass Compassionate Care Coalition, a statewide organization dedicated to improving

healthcare for the seriously ill through education, partnerships and community building. As a member of the Alzheimer's Association Board, she supports their education, fund-raising, research, and caregiver support efforts.

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S TO COME

Doing It Your Way

by Dorothy Anger

This is the third in a series of articles highlighting various services and opportunities that Newton at Home members will enjoy.

Ever wish you could find a group of people to share one of your favorite activities? People who live in the neighborhood and are free to pursue that activity when you are? Well, if you are one of the hundreds of potential NAH members who dream of finding "soul mates" through the organization, you've come to the right place.

One of the most attractive aspects of NAH will be our ability to bring like-minded people together to do the things they love to do. Enjoy fine dining and want to experiment with new restaurants in the area? We will put you in touch with other members who like to do that too. Always wanted to organize a local current events discussion group? What about an investment club or sports viewing group? Welcome to the membership network, where you'll find others eager to join. Or perhaps your interests run to crafts—quilting, embroidery, or knitting. We're sure to find you fellow NAHers who would love to work on projects together and share their skills.

"There is no limit to the kinds of interest groups that NAH can facilitate," says Joanna Schwartz, chairwoman of NAH's Program Planning committee, "and we are eager to do so." Just one phone call or email to NAH will get the ball rolling. You'll tell us what you want to

do and we'll get to work to find other members who want to do it as well. We'll already know who they are, because every new NAH member will complete an interest profile that will go into our database so that we can connect them to others with the same inclinations.

Once we have identified those members, we will provide you with their contact information, so you can take it from there. We envision all kinds of special interest groups sprouting up in local Newton neighborhoods, with members getting together for a broad array of activities ranging from wine tasting to walking, book discussions to bridge games, DVD parties to dog-walking groups.

So what are you waiting for? Start thinking about the kinds of activities you want to pursue with like-minded NAHers. And just wait until we open early next year to find others happy to share them with you. It's a great way to make new friends while doing what you love to do—and another glimpse of what's to come from NAH.

If you have any thoughts or ideas about “doing it your way” activities or just want more information about this aspect of NAH, contact us at info@newtonathome.org or 617-610-6502.

It Takes a Village . . .

by Verne Vance

Verne Vance has lived in Newton for nearly 39 years. In those years he practiced law as a partner in Foley Hoag LLP in Boston, he and his wife raised three children in Newton, and he engaged in many civic activities—most notably twenty four years as an elected public official. Verne is the only person in Newton's history who served as president of the Board of Aldermen and chair of the School Committee. He maintains that those professional, familial, and civic involvements provided him with a wonderful network of associations that sustained and enriched his life in many ways.

With my children grown and gone and my communities of law practice and city government packed into retirement, I have found, like so many seniors, that I need a new community to sustain and enrich the many hours of free time that retirement gives me. I have found that not only does it take a village to raise a child, but it also takes a village to sustain and support a senior.

Some seniors have found such a village at retirement communities such as Lasell Village in Auburndale or North Hill in Needham. But many others prefer to remain in the homes where they have lived and raised their families. Such homes, with their many cherished possessions and memories, exert a powerful emotional attraction to many seniors but, unlike retirement communities, do not provide a ready source of necessary support services and social network. That is where Newton at Home comes in.

I joined the Board of Directors of NAH this year after my retirement from the Board of Aldermen. NAH is part of a growing nationwide network of organizations designed to provide the “village” that many seniors who prefer to remain in their homes need to stay active and connected. It will thus provide an important option for many seniors at a time of both fearful vulnerabilities and exciting new opportuni-



ties. I am involved in NAH because I want to ensure that the at-home option in Newton becomes a truly valuable and meaningful one. The organization seeks

to provide critical services such as transportation and home maintenance, as well as educational and cultural opportunities.

NAH plans to open its doors for business early next year. We hope it will then become the village that many Newton seniors need to sustain and enrich their lives.

Dr. Iolanda Low, Future NAH Member

by Naomi Shore

Dr. Iolanda Low has lived in the same house in Newton for the past 56 years and is looking forward to the opening of Newton at Home.

Dr. Low and her husband came to Newton in 1954 for their careers and because they had friends here. Newton was welcoming to European immigrants, and it provided easy access to downtown and the airport. After retiring as a specialist in internal medicine and infectious diseases, Dr. Low became a volunteer instructor at Tufts Medical School, where she teaches interviewing skills to medical students.

As Dr. Low says, “I am comfortable here in this house; it has a lot of good memories and I really want to stay here. Also, I’ve seen that seniors need something to prevent them from becoming completely isolated. You can get closed in.” By joining NAH she’s sure she will be able to solve a number of the issues arising from her determination to stay in her home. “I know as I get older, I will need a considerable amount of help and may need even more.”

Chores like putting out and taking in her barrels are sometimes difficult for her. In addition, she finds it hard to find competent repair people to deal with the special problems presented by an old house. She looks forward to having access to NAH’s service provider list and the chance to hire fully vetted and recommended workers.

Among Dr. Low’s interests are traveling, life-long learning (particularly of history and geography), and attending opera and other performances. She says she will look to NAH to help her find other people interested in the same activities, particularly evening performances, since she no longer drives at night. Just recently, she had an extra opera ticket and thought to herself that “it will be easier to find someone to go with me when NAH opens.”



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