

How to Talk with Your Neighbors about the Village *by Kate Derrick, Village member and volunteer*

Our neighbor recently returned home after years of travel. I mentioned a Village event we were attending, and she exclaimed, “I’m looking for things like that to do!” I was surprised, as she’s high-energy and social, and I’d assumed that her life was already fully active and busy.

When I retired after years of commuting and work travel, I had few friends nearby. My retirement grew quiet—too quiet. Like our neighbor, I was looking for things to do and new people to meet. I joined the Greater Newburyport Village.

What I now understand is that one of the biggest benefits of the Village is getting to know the people who are in it! As both a member and volunteer, I feel a part of this wonderful community that believes in giving back to each other.

Our neighbor is now interested in the Village. From conversing with her, here’s what I’ve learned about how to talk about the Village:

Explain what it is: The Village is really a neighborhood of people doing neighborly things for each other. Volunteers offer a variety of help to members—rides to the doctor or grocery store, help at home, dog walking, tech help with TVs, light gardening, and more. All this helps members stay in their homes as they age. Many members are also volunteers.

Talk about what we do: We get together for outings, Village Talks, dinners, and other meetups. We enjoy each other’s company—we’ve done a lot in our lives and have a lot to share!

Describe volunteering: Anyone can become a volunteer, and the Village needs volunteers. There is no minimum time requirement, you choose what kinds of help to offer, when and how often.

Suggest they join you at a Village event: Ask them to come with you to a Village Talk or a dinner—they’ll see a friendly group of interesting people. Assure them that we would love to meet them!

The Danger of Social Isolation

How to spot it, fight it and prevent it

Excerpted from AARP magazine article by David Frank, July 2018

Being socially isolated could lead to serious health problems. It could start suddenly with the death of a spouse, or a fall that leaves you homebound. It could begin more gradually as you become a caregiver to an ailing family member, or as you step away from a longtime career. Social isolation occurs when people withdraw and become disconnected from family, friends and community. Any number of changes that are common to aging can trigger this issue. So perhaps it is not a surprise that nearly 1 in 5 Americans 65 and older are socially isolated.

Experts on aging say it is important to spot signs of social isolation in ourselves and in others and to take steps to combat it early, because it can become a serious hazard not only to mental health but physical health, too. Social isolation has been linked to higher blood pressure, greater susceptibility to the flu and other infectious diseases, and earlier onset of dementia. [\(continued on page 2\)](#)

Upcoming Events

See Website for more info!

Village Talks Open to the Public at Newburyport Senior/Community Center:

August 15, 1-2 pm, “A Tale of Two Cities: Urban Renewal – Newburyport and Boston’s West End” with Professor Lois Ascher.

Greater Newburyport Village Members & Volunteers Only:

August 12 (rescheduled), 3:30 pm, Meet-Up for 4 pm event, Theater in the Open production of *Medea* (free), Maudsley State Park.

August 14, 11:45 am, Village Lunch (separate checks), The Deck, Bridge Marina, Salisbury, RSVP by August 11.

August 26, 2:45 Meet-Up in lobby for 3 pm event, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (ticket required), Firehouse Center for the Arts, Market Square, Newburyport.

How to Contact the Village

For member services and RSVPs:

call 978-206-1821

or email a service request or RSVP to: services@greaternewburyportvillage.org or RSVP online at www.greaternewburyportvillage.org (click Event Calendar, double-click the date, and click registration button)

For information:

call number above or **email:**

info@greaternewburyportvillage.org or visit our **website:**

www.greaternewburyportvillage.org

or visit us on **Facebook** at:

fb.com/NewburyportVillage

Village Talk: A Tale of Two Cities: Urban Renewal

**Wednesday, August 15, 1-2 pm,
Newburyport Senior/Community Center**

The West End of Boston has been the poster child for some of the more disastrous urban renewal decisions, an unexpected consequence of the Housing Act of 1949. The callous destruction that followed the wrecking ball created vacant lots out of what had been homes and anonymous high-rises out of what was once a neighborhood. By contrast, shortly after the destructive demolition of the West End, the city of Newburyport engaged in a far different urban renewal project from the West End of Boston. Rather than destroying a neighborhood and its people, Newburyport

elected to renew itself, through a process which honored the common good as well as the common man and woman who lived and worked there.

Ultimately, both cities became models: the West End for how not to do urban renewal; Newburyport for how to successfully renew a city. Today, while both neighborhoods are flourishing, the West End has no visual or actual connection to its original roots, history and inhabitants, while Newburyport retains the essence of what it once was, reworked into a desirable community.

This talk will examine the two

approaches to urban renewal done in a time span very close to one another, along with its very different results.

Professor Lois Ascher teaches a course about Boston at Wentworth Institute, Boston Voyages By Book and Foot. She is also a member of the West End Museum's program and exhibits committee, and a member of the Greater Newburyport Village and its Program and Events Team.

Finding the Village Spirit on Mount Desert Island

by Donna & Bill Franz, Village members and volunteers

How lucky we were to find that the opening of We Are One, a show at the Gallery at Somes Sound on Mount Desert Island highlighting the work of Greater Newburyport Villager artist Sarah Seabury Ward, coincided with the last day of the Franz's annual family vacation in Bar Harbor. The Gallery's location at the top of Somes Sound was a perfect setting for reconnecting with Sarah and Alan Ward and enjoying the art, music, and champagne that accompanied the celebration of Sarah's work.

Sarah's inspiring bronze and cast glass pieces reflect her deep connection to and appreciation for nature's forms. In her own words: "Nature guides and inspires me in my search to share the wonder of shapes, transitions and animal essence. When I was a child, I played along the tidal shores below the Nantucket bluffs and stopped to play with the cliff clay. I made animals with my hands and felt part of the rabbit, deer and bird world. The impermanence of shape changing back to sand and water let me 'see' under the surface. I didn't know that later in life my early beach and bluff explorations would find expression through my art in stone, wood and clay. I am always called back to the sea, the landscape that shapes me."

Although there is no substitute for seeing Sarah's work first-hand, you can get a good sense of it by visiting <http://www.sarahseaburyward.com>, where you also can learn of other shows that display her work.



Our Mission

To promote living well and independently for a lifetime through community engagement and a network of neighborly support.

Social Isolation (cont'd from page 1)

Signs that a person might be isolated include deep boredom, general lack of interest and withdrawal.

For those shown at risk of isolation, experts say senior and community centers [and Villages] can play a very useful role in building healthy connections. "People come for the activities, and they develop friendships," [one senior center director] says. She notes that in the case of several married couples at the center, when one spouse dies, the other returns to group activities and keeps that connection.

"Our communities are healthiest when older adults remain engaged," [one expert] notes. "Putting their knowledge and life lessons to work in a way that retains their sense of purpose—and strengthens those communities at the same time—benefits us all."

Village Meetups!

What exactly is a *Village Meet-Up*? It's a new type of Village event based on the idea that as much fun as it is to attend a community event, it's even better in the company of friends! Check the schedule on the first page for two upcoming Village meetups. With both events, Village members and volunteers are invited to meet up with other Villagers first to enjoy the experience together—and perhaps to converse more after.

