



Village Neighbors

Working Together to Create Community!

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

Leverett + New Salem + Shutesbury + Wendell

1-413-345-6894

www.villageneighbors.org

P.O.Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072

generalinfo@villageneighbors.org

May / June 2023, Issue 25

Village Neighbors Welcomes New Board Member



Barbara Bodzin

I have lived in Leverett with my husband Larry for the past 35 years and recently retired from my position as Executive Director of LifePath. I am delighted to join the board of Village Neighbors and shift my passion to more grassroots volunteer efforts in supporting the independence and quality of life of older adults.

Meet your Village Neighbors board members and committee chairs at the Annual Member Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Day on May 21st. Read more about this on page 2.

A Letter from Jeannette Stockton

VN President and New Volunteer Coordinator

Dear Village Neighbors Volunteers,

Village Neighbors runs on volunteer efforts, and offers a Volunteer Orientation every other month. Volunteers are of all ages and enjoy offering a few hours a month to provide direct services such as rides, yard care, organizational assistance, respite breaks for caregivers, small home repairs and more, and also assist the organization itself in meeting these goals.

Doing a volunteer activity that you choose warms the soul, gives valuable support to our elders, and is an opportunity to build a grassroots community support system that will be there for all of us who choose to participate.

I got involved with Village Neighbors about 2 years ago, joined the board, then became president.

Realizing how much our organization needed a Volunteer coordinator, I recently decided to take on that volunteer position allowing me to meet and work with all of our volunteers and volunteer/members. At present, I am slowly but surely reaching out to our volunteers. So if you see your phone identify Village Neighbors, please take the call, and spend a few minutes with me to discuss services you may wish to volunteer for.

And I will also thank you for what you do to help Village Neighbors run, we couldn't do it without you.

All the Best,
Jeannette Stockton

Upcoming Events

Village Neighbors Annual Members Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Day

Shutesbury Athletic Club
Saturday, May 21, 2023

MEMBER ANNUAL MEETING

12:00-1:00 pm *All are welcome*

Committee reports and annual Board elections.

Up for election:

Barbara Bodzin

Up for re-election:

Jeannette Stockton

Elizabeth Fernández O'Brien

Judy JR Raphael

Donald Stone

Please let us know if you are interested in running or serving on our various committees.

Spring Fling VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY

1:00-3:00 pm

Food and entertainment for all members, volunteers and guests.

Join us in celebrating our many volunteers who make service calls, do small repairs, give rides, tech support, and help in so many ways. Come meet and mingle with our wonderful members, our thoughtful volunteers, as well as some very special invited guests: local town officials, legislators and VN service affiliates.

Plus, you will learn about all the many ways that Village Neighbors supports seniors to age in place. We will have information about the services that we, and our partners such as our Franklin County's social service agency lifepathma.org, provide.

5 themed **Gift Baskets** of very useful items such as "Green" and "Emergency Preparedness" will be raffled off.

Members can receive 3 FREE raffle tickets by answering the following 3 survey questions with your RSVP or at the event:

- In the next 5-10 years, do you think you will need more public transportation? Yes or No.
- Our goal is to provide in-person outside events. Would you like to attend? Yes or No. You can note any type of event you'd like.
- Are you ready to do a monthly 10 minute task, mostly from your home, to help Village Neighbor members? Yes or No.

A volunteer will call to offer you a ride and/or assistance in filling out the FREE raffle ticket form.

RSVP by May 4th call 413 345 6894 and leave a message at Public Relations or General.

Or Email pr@villageneighbors.org

Or mail a note postmarked by May 4th to Village Neighbors, PO Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072

If you would like to bring a dessert, please let us know when you RSVP.

Successfully tested Covid safety protocols will be used: outside under the pavilion rain or shine, masking at food serving, rides with a masked volunteer and hand sanitizer.

Volunteers are needed to help with setting up, greeting, serving food or cleanup. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering for the event.

Need a Ride? Contact **VN Services** one week in advance if you need a ride and/or company to run your errands. Email servicerequests@villageneighbors.org or call **413-345-6894**

The Path for Life: LifePath's 31st Annual Walkathon

Saturday, May 6, 10 AM to 1 PM • 101 Munson Street, Greenfield • Rain or Shine

Find out more at the LifePath website <https://lifepathma.org/stories/walkathon-two-weeks-to-go-and-a-new-memorial-sign-option/> or call **413-773-5555**

Upcoming Events

Village Neighbors is Dementia Friendly!

DEMENTIA FRIEND INFO SESSION

Tuesday, June 13, 6:30 at the Wendell Senior Center or Zoom

As we journey through aging in place in our four towns, we are aware of the special challenges faced by those with dementia and their caregivers. Greatest among these may be gradually increasing isolation and a need for caregiver support and respite. Village Neighbors (VN) can offer inclusion and support for those of us experiencing these challenges, as many do and will. Some volunteers are already gaining great satisfaction by taking someone with dementia for a walk or spending time with a member so their caregiver can have a needed break

Dementia Friendly Massachusetts tells us that there are now 150,000 folks in Massachusetts living with dementia, which will grow to 250 000 by 2030. They state, "By working together, we can make great strides in supporting individuals living with dementia, as well as their friends and families. A 'dementia friendly' community is informed, safe and respectful, and enables people living with dementia and those who care about them to live full, engaged lives".

VN can help increase the level of information and awareness within our communities, as well as increase our skills in communicating and engaging with those with dementia. **All members and volunteers are encouraged to attend one of our one hour Dementia Friend Info Sessions** to gain some basic awareness of normal aging vs dementia, tips on communication with folks having language and memory difficulties, and come away with five key messages that lead to improved quality of life for those affected. We can encourage our towns to adopt this awareness, and we can all learn how to reach out to other community resources.

Our next **Dementia Friend Info Session** is planned for **Tuesday June 13 at 6:30** in person at the Wendell Senior Center at the town center, or can be attended by zoom. Please respond by email to **volunteers@villageneighbors.org** or call **413-345-6894** if you plan to attend, and whether by zoom or in person, for zoom link and more information.

VN News

VN Four-Town Fundraising Appeal Letter

The 4-town appeal mailing went out to about 2450 households in early March. So far, we have received 75 responses, including 10 requests for membership information, 8 requests for volunteer information, and many generous donations. This is a good response, and we are actively following up the requests for membership and volunteer information.

All donations are greatly appreciated and will be used to grow our vision to help our elders age comfortably and safely in their own homes, while remaining actively engaged within their community.

Small Home Repairs Beginning Work in May

Please understand that safety requests are priorities. Due to many requests for this service, some may be filled in the Fall.

Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement

VN will reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage at 25 cents per mile. Contact **VN Services** for more information or to apply for this: email **servicerequests@villageneighbors.org** or call **413-345-6894**

Village Neighbors is actively recruiting new volunteers now!

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION Wednesday, May 15, 6:30 PM

Hybrid meeting both on Zoom and in person at the Wendell Senior Center: 2 Locke Village Road, Wendell

Email **volunteers@villageneighbors.org** or leave a phone message with a contact number at **413-345-6894 ext.3** to receive a Zoom link and additional information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact Us To Learn More

Events and Public Relations Committee Needs Volunteers

The VN **Events and PR committee** is responsible for all event planning prep and promotions, press releases, public outreach, newsletter and monthly news emails, and social media. We need creative and sociable volunteers to help. Computer savvy is a plus, but not necessary.

If you're interested please contact **pr@villageneighbors.org** or call **1-413-345-6894**

Village Neighbors is a community volunteer-run organization, part of the Village-to-Village national network, dedicated to helping aging adults lead independent and engaged lives at home.

**We offer FREE Membership for anyone over 60 in our 4 Towns:
Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell.**

Call or email today to find out more about membership, services and volunteering.

1-413-345-6894 or email generalinfo@villageneighbors.org

Visit our website to view the list of free services we offer **www.villageneighbors.org**



Is Your Garden Springing?

Volunteers from your town are available to help with gardening and spring plantings! They will bring their own tools and maintain safe social distancing protocols. ***Give us a call 1-413-345-6894 ext.1***

or email servicerequests@villageneighbors.org



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Visit VN's

Facebook Page

for new weekly posts,
information and activities.

<https://www.facebook.com/VillageNeighbors>

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