



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

**Leverett + New Salem +  
Shutesbury + Wendell**

**1-413-345-6894**

[pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org)

[www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

# Village Neighbors

*Working Together to Create Community!*

---

January / February 2024, Issue 29

---

## We've Made It Easier to Volunteer

### Volunteer Self-Signup

Village Neighbors has recently added **Volunteer Self-Signup** to our website

[www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org). This option allows all member volunteers and non-member vetted volunteers to:

- sign themselves up for an open service request
- report the date and hours it took to complete a service
- mark the service as completed
- see all open requests
- see the services that you have committed to
- see your history of completed services

The volunteers can also add their weekly schedule, block off vacation time and add important contacts.

Please look for an email from [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org) explaining the login procedure for both member volunteers and non-member volunteers. If you have any questions please call **413-345-6894**.

***Become a Village Neighbors volunteer*** Our next orientation for those interested in volunteering will be **Thursday, February 20** on Zoom. Email [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto: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.





## An Increasing Need in Our Village

*35-40% of the population in all four of the Village Neighbors' towns are age 60 and over. An ever greater fraction of those are now age 75 and older.*

There are more households coping with various levels of memory loss and dementia. While not “normal” in aging, the incidence is greater the longer we live. As **Dementia Friendly Communities**, we want to offer support and acceptance to our neighbors facing such challenges. How can we as individuals help with this, as an organization whose mission is to help each other age safely in our homes?

***Increasing our knowledge is a great first step!*** Take some time to learn a little more about dementia- what it is and isn't, how to more skillfully interact with someone who has memory or language loss, what each of us might offer to support a caregiver. If you haven't already done so, please attend a **Dementia Friend Info Session** to gain a basic understanding. ***All are welcome!*** Take part in a live or zoom session to learn how to best communicate with someone with language loss due to dementia, and some activity suggestions.

The next **Dementia Friends Info Session** will take place on **Tuesday January 23** from **6:30 to 7:30pm** in hybrid format at the **Wendell Senior Center** or by **zoom**. Call **Nancy** at **978-544-6760** if you want more information. RSVP to [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org) to obtain a zoom link.

*Stay tuned for March events.*

The **Northfield Senior Center** is starting a monthly **Dementia Cafe** series to provide socialization and support for adults and their caregivers from any town who are dealing with memory-related issues. This will start on **December 27** and continue on 4th Wednesdays each month from **12:30-2:30pm**. A light lunch is included. RSVP by calling the **Senior Center** at **413-498-2901 ext 114**.

**LifePath** offers a weekly **Dementia Caregiver Support Group**

**Thursdays 10am – 11am** (virtual group with phone call-in option)

A FREE support group for those caring for someone with a memory disorder, including but not limited to Alzheimer's Disease. Led by **Linda Puzan, LICSW, LifePath**. For more information call **413-773-5555** or visit <https://lifepathma.org/events-workshops/support-groups/>

## Volunteering

Village Neighbors is receiving increasingly frequent requests for a volunteer to spend some time with a person living with dementia, doing an activity or going for a walk. And as our membership continues to grow, we even have the capacity to organize a series of **Dementia Cafes**, which offer small social events for folks with dementia and their caregivers, providing a fun activity in a non judgemental, low stress atmosphere.

If you are a volunteer who would enjoy the rich experience that such one-to-one visits might offer, or would like to learn more about Dementia Cafes, contact **VN's Member/Volunteer Committee** by email at [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org) or by calling Village Neighbors **413-345-6894** to leave a message.

---

Alzheimer's Association, MA/NH Chapter offers a

**24/7 HELP LINE**

**1-800-272-3900**

- A No-Cost service
- 24 Hours a day, 7 days a week
  - Confidential
- Experienced counselors
- Up-to-the-minute information
- Links to programs & services
  - Ongoing guidance

## Upcoming Events

### Beginning Genealogy Workshop Series

**January 11, February 8, March 14, April 11** (second Thursday of the month)

**4:00-5:00 pm**

**New Salem Public Library**

23 S. Main Street, New Salem

The workshops will be hands-on and focused on the particular interests of the participants, but will cover topics such as: how to begin research; how to create a family chart; recommended software and sites for research (free and paid).

Led by **Philip Johnson**, assistant State Genealogist, Pomeroy Chapter of Sons of the American Revolution, with 30 years of experience.

Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop or tablet to the sessions.

**Space is limited.** To register, call **978-544-6334**

or email [n\\_salem@cwmars.org](mailto:n_salem@cwmars.org).



## Wendell Full Moon Coffee House Is Back Again!

**Wendell Old Town Hall**

6 Center Street, Wendell

<https://www.wendellfullmoon.org/>

**Saturday, January 13 7:30 pm**

### **The Gaslight Tinkers**

African, Caribbean, Funk, Reggae, and Latin grooves meet traditional fiddle music. It's the genre-bending future of the music of the past. The Gaslight Tinkers' blend of global rhythms creates a joyously danceable sound around a core of traditional New England old time and Celtic fiddle music, merging boundless positive energy with melody and song.

**Shows Start at 7:30 with Open Mic;** and the Main Act Around 8:00

All ages, Non-Smoking and Alcohol Free

Sliding Scale Donation \$6 – \$15 (cash only) at the door.

Decadently Delicious Dessert-o-rama

## An Inside Look at a Local Makerspace

**Thursday January 18, 2024, 4-5:30pm**

### **Launch Space**

3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Orange Innovation Center

If you have **creative energy** and would like to experience a tour and demonstration designed for Village Neighbors members and volunteers, jump on this great opportunity! **Launch Space** in Orange is a local 12,000 square foot space where local makers of all ages can get instruction, have use of well outfitted studios or even produce and sell products they make without having to own the space and tools to do so! There is a huge **ceramic studio, wood shops, metal shop, fabric arts, leather, jewelry, stained glass, laser cutting machines, 3D printers, and more!** We plan to have a guided tour with plenty of time to answer questions, as well as a demonstration using a laser cutter to make a useful item for VN.

There will be opportunities to sign up to receive Launch Space's monthly newsletter with a variety of classes and events offered each month. You may even sign up to join a class to get creative during the cold season! Some Village Neighbors folks are incredibly talented and may see an opportunity to teach a class.

Join us at Launch Space, you will not be disappointed! ***Call Village Neighbors if you need a ride to this event.***

## Continuing Events

### Next Meet-Ups:

**January 24th and January 31st**

**2:00 - 3:30 pm**

**Leverett Co-op**

### Great Fun at the Leverett Co-op



If you happened to walk into the **Leverett Co-op** the previous 3 Wednesdays, purposely because of VN or by accident, you would have heard laughter and a variety of music performed by 2 musical VN members and 2 local musicians who shared their playing with us. ***Thank you Craig and Geno, Jeannette and Ann.***

**December 6th** Accordionist extraordinaire **Craig Hollingsworth** played with fledgling accordionist **Jeannette Stockton**, and afterwards he let loose with Brazilian Choro music. A lively Q & A ensued.

The following week, **December 13th**, **Ann Ferguson**, a local folk singer and Leverett Co-op activist was joined by **Jeannette** performing Beatles tunes Let it Be and In my Life. Like Craig, Ann then performed some of her favorites singing and playing guitar.

This last week, **Ann** and **Jeannette** played together again and then **Geno Stamell**, another local folk singer performed both solo and with Ann.

We have started these VN Meetups with the hopes they will be eventually held in each of our 4 member towns of Wendell, Shutesbury, Leverett and New Salem. The first 2 were held at the **New Salem Cider House** in November.... We have two more Meet-Ups scheduled for the **Leverett Coop, January 24th** and **January 31st**. It was nice to see different VN members at each, maybe you will join us next time. If you plan ahead, often VN can provide rides.

***Get out and PLAY!***

---

## **Free Wednesday Matinee Movie**

**Every Wednesday at 1:00 PM.**

**Wendell Library**

7 Wendell Depot Rd, Wendell

1-978-544-3559

<https://www.wendellmass.us/wendell-free-library.html>

We will be showing a variety of critically acclaimed and award-winning feature films for adults, ranging from light comedy to intense drama, including both classic and recent films.

All are welcome, and friendly informal discussions after the movie are encouraged.

### **January**

**1/3** *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*; **1/10** *Moonrise Kingdom*;  
**1/17** *The Heiress*; **1/24** *Mr. Holmes*; **1/31** *Waking Ned Devine*

### **February**

**2/7** *Belle*; **2/14** *Laura*; **2/21** *Chocolat*; **2/28** *Father Goose*

---





Village Neighbors sponsored

## CRIBBAGE Continues

**Mondays Jan 8th, Feb 5th, Mar 4th, and  
Apr 1st • 2:30 pm**

### **Wendell Senior Center**

31 Wendell Depot Road, Wendell

Although, cribbage has been enjoyable for attendees, we've had uneven attendance. So, please sign up in advance. Contact Elizabeth for more information [pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org) or call **1-413-345-6894** and leave a message for **Public Relations**. You'll get a notification. We need at least 3 participants.

---

## MahJong

**Thursdays, 1:45pm – 4:00pm**

### **Leverett Library**

75 Montague Rd, Leverett

1-413-548-9220 • <https://leverettlibrary.org/>

email: [leverettlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:leverettlibrary@gmail.com)

Come play the fun and fantastic game of MahJong at the Leverett Library. No experience necessary! Interested parties should contact Judi Kolenda at: [kolendajudi@gmail.com](mailto:kolendajudi@gmail.com)



---

## Veteran's Tuesdays at the Leverett Village Co-op

***Come by for free coffee and  
camaraderie between 11:00 and 1:00.***

Delicious bakery items available daily: fresh pastries, muffins, cookies, breads. Our cooler cases are stocked with freshly made food to take home or eat in. Seating indoors or outdoor patio and picnic tables.

**180 Rattlesnake Gutter Rd, Leverett**



## Stay Healthy and Engaged in Your Community This Winter

Our local libraries offer a wealth of fitness classes and events available on-line, in person and for free. Contact your library directly for more information.

### Leverett

(413) 548-9220 - [leverettlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:leverettlibrary@gmail.com) -  
<https://leverettlibrary.org/>

### New Salem

(978) 544-6334 - [n\\_salem@cwmars.org](mailto:n_salem@cwmars.org) -  
<https://www.newsalempubliclibrary.org/>

### Shutesbury

(413) 259-1213 - [library.director@shutesbury.org](mailto:library.director@shutesbury.org) -  
<https://sites.google.com/site/mnspearmemoriallibrary>.

### Wendell

1-978-544-3559 - [wendell@cwmars.org](mailto:wendell@cwmars.org) -  
<https://www.wendellmass.us/wendell-free-library.html>

## VN Rides Available

Contact **VN Services** 4 or 5 days advance if you need a ride or company for a night out. Call VN to make a request at **413-345-6894 ext.1** or email [servicerequests@villageneighbors.org](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org)

## Village Neighbors News

### Request a Visit with a Village Neighbors Volunteer

***As winter brings cold weather, and shorter, less sunny days, many people are housebound and may have less social contact.***

Please know that Village Neighbors has volunteers who would love to provide friendly visits and/or check-in calls to you. We can read to you, some can play piano, do a craft, play a game, or just chat. If you have



something particular in mind, it's helpful to list it on your request! Please call **413-345-6894** or email [servicerequests@villageneighbors.org](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org) to take advantage of this wonderful service. It helps keep us all connected and happier.

---

## Village Neighbors Promotes Age Friendly Communities!

*Since opening in October of 2018 as the first in Franklin County to organize under the Village to Village model, Village Neighbors (VN) has been building capacity to serve our mission as “caring neighbors helping aging adults lead independent and engaged lives at home”.*

With over 1/3 of our 4 towns being over 60 years old, many with low incomes, and many living in isolated homes; and infrastructure challenges such as little public transportation, inadequate access to in-home care and other elder services, we find strength in a growing collaboration among our 4 towns and in Franklin County.

**Age Friendly Communities** is a network established by the **World Health Organization** in 2010 to encourage local communities to take actions that foster healthy and active aging. In the US, the **American Association of Retired People (AARP)** oversees Age Friendly States and Communities under the **Liveable Communities** program. You are encouraged to check the website [AARP.org/Livable](https://AARP.org/Livable) to see how states, and towns large and small are inspired to create community projects that make a difference.

The **Franklin County/ North Quabbin** initiative, led by **LifePath**, our area agency on aging, and the **Franklin County Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)** obtained a 3 year grant from Massachusetts in 2020 -2023. VN has met with officials in all 4 towns to urge joining as Age Friendly Communities and has been building relationships with our town's **Councils On Aging** as well as taking part in the creation of a **Regional Action Plan for 2024-2028** for our area. This plan, a collaborative effort

by many, was presented in November of 2023 at a community event in Greenfield. You may read the Action Plan or watch a video of the presentation by going to <https://lifepathma.org/what-we-offer/health-and-wellness/age-and-dementia-friendly-program/>. You can familiarize yourself with the goals and action steps for each of AARPs eight Livability Domains. You can even check out survey results from your town!

***Village Neighbors looks forward to welcoming more volunteer and member participation in developing ways to enhance aging in our communities.*** There is money and muscle available for some projects for those of us who can participate in activities that foster safer, healthier, more engaged aging in place. That is, indeed, what we want most. ***Please join together with others in your town or in VN to initiate something that you wish to see happen in the place you choose to age!***



## **Dementia Friends Info Session**

**January 23, 2024, 6:30-7:30pm**

**Wendell Senior Center, 2 Locke Village Road,  
Wendell**

***All are welcome!*** Take part in a **live or zoom session** to learn how to best communicate with someone with language loss due to dementia, and some activity suggestions. Join in person or by zoom. RSVP to [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org) for zoom registration.

## **Understanding Caregiver Respite Scholarships: Support for Those in Need**



**Caregiver Respite Scholarships** are a valuable form of support provided by **LifePath** directly to unpaid caregivers who provide assistance to support individuals to remain in their homes. The caregivers might be caring for a person with a

developmental disability, dementia, or complex medical conditions. Caregivers may also be grandparents caring for grandchildren. The scholarships aim to alleviate the pressures experienced by caregivers and simultaneously enhance the quality of care provided to the recipient. Contact **LifePath** for more info **413-773-5555**

<https://lifepathma.org/stories/understanding-caregiver-respite-scholarships-support-for-those-in-need/>

---

## Would You Like a 2024 Paper Calendar?

**DA Consumer Protection** has offered 2024 calendars with valuable information on every page, for free to our members. If you would like one, please leave a message for Public Relations at 413-345-6894 ext. 4, or email [pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org).

---

## Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) Available Programs For Wendell, New Salem, and Shutesbury

### *New Salem and Wendell local transportation for seniors*

#### **Demand Response**

This senior transportation program is a curb-to-curb service using fully accessible vehicles for anyone that is 60 years or older.

Service operates **Monday to Friday from 5:30am-7:30pm and Saturday & Sunday from 9:30am-5:30pm**. Fares range from \$1.75-\$2.75 each way. Our fleet vehicles for the Demand Response program are fully accessible.

### *New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell long distance medical transportation for seniors*

#### **MedRide**

A volunteer transportation program that is specifically for residents of FRTA member towns in Franklin County that have long distance medical appointments outside of Franklin County. This is open to **New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell** and we charge a per-mile fee of \$0.40. These are volunteer drivers using their own personal vehicles to transport, so

riders must be ambulatory.

To obtain a copy of the **FRTA** fixed-route bus schedule or if you have questions related to our ADA Complementary Paratransit service, Med-Ride Program or StateWide Access Pass program, contact the FRTA at **(413) 774-2262** or visit our website [www.fрта.org](http://www.fрта.org)

---

## 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](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org) or call **413-345-6894**

## VN Volunteer Opportunities

### HELP WANTED:

### 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](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org) or call **1-413-345-6894**

### Looking For Vaccinated Drivers

We are eager to hear from **volunteers** who want to resume driving our members. Please contact us at **413-345-6894** or [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org) for more information.

### Are You interested in Providing a Seminar or Activity to VN Members?

Please contact [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org). We can provide technical support to get your seminar up and running.

---

***Find ways you can help your neighbors and have some***

***fun. Many of our Volunteers are also Members. Be part of the Village Neighbors Team!***

# VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

# Thursday, February 20

**6:30 PM**

## on Zoom

At the orientation you will learn about the organization and find out about the wide range of volunteer activities that you can choose from.

Email

**volunteers@villageneighbor**  
**s.org** or leave a phone  
message with a contact  
number at

**413-345-6894 ext.3** to receive  
a Zoom link and additional  
information.



Village Neighbors is a  
volunteer run non-profit  
dedicated to helping our aging  
neighbors to lead independent  
and engaged lives at home.

**Please consider  
DONATING to Village  
Neighbors and Support  
Free Membership.**

You can donate online at  
[www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org)

or mail a check to

**P.O.Box 501**

**Shutesbury, MA 01072**

# Your Village Neighbors Need YOU!

Village Neighbors has grown quickly while meeting the new challenges posed through CoVid in our elderly community. We need Volunteers to assist members at home, and also behind the scenes in the committees that keep our organization working! Contribute as much or as little time as you want. Match your interests and skills to what's needed in the community.

***Join the fun and make a difference...***

## Membership / Volunteer Committee

[membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org)

- Recruit and welcome new members and volunteers
- Do new member intake visits
- Conduct volunteer orientations and trainings
- Create and coordinate social activities and programs
- Develop Dementia Friendly community outreach and training

**Volunteer Orientations** are run by the **Membership/Volunteer Committee**. Join us at the **VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION, Wednesday, May 15th, 6:30 pm on Zoom**, if you would like to experience this committee in action and find out more about what we do.

## Service Committee / Call Managers

[servicerequests@villageneighbors.org](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org)

- Answer requests from Members and connect them with Volunteers waiting to assist
- Assess needs and services
- Train and oversee Call Managers
- Handle vendor services
- Work with the Membership/Volunteer Committee to triage concerns for members and volunteers

**Call Managers work from home to manage member requests.**

## Events / PR Committee

[pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org)

- Events
- Promotions
- Tabling at community events
- Newsletter
- Outreach and Press
- Social media
- Event Calendar

**Contact the Events/PR Committee to learn about opportunities to be involved in planning our next exciting event and connecting with our community.**

## Fund Raising Committee



[fundraising@villageneighbors.org](mailto:fundraising@villageneighbors.org)

- Provide the money for Village Neighbors to function and grow
- Research funding
- Develop fund raising events
- Develop funding circles (sources) - donations, members, volunteers, and contributors
- Research and apply for grants
- Recruit local sponsors -banks, businesses

***With Free membership, Village Neighbors counts on voluntary contributions, funding and grants to meet our income needs.***

***Volunteers are needed to make this happen!***

### IT Committee

[volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org)

- Provide assistance to members with all things electronic
- Website maintenance
- Email & Zoom communications

***In the 21st century, internet has become integral to daily life. IT assists members and committees to navigate the challenges.***

---

### Contribute to the Village Neighbors Newsletter

If you are interested in contributing articles or information to the Village Neighbors newsletter, please contact the editor Dina Polizzi -

[dinawriter22@gmail.com](mailto:dinawriter22@gmail.com). We are looking for information of interest to persons over 60 in our four towns: **Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell**. As of this mailing, **Village Neighbors News** has a mailing list of 350 and is growing with every issue.

### Do You Wish to Discontinue Home Delivery of the VN News?

The VN bimonthly newsletter is emailed to all members and volunteers who have listed their email contact with us; it is direct mailed only to our members. If you no longer wish to receive the hard copy newsletter to your home, please let us know by emailing the VN Newsletter editor, **Dina Polizzi**, at [dinawriter22@gmail.com](mailto:dinawriter22@gmail.com). Please include the word

"Newsletter" in your subject header.

*Special Thanks to:*



Massachusetts  
Councils On Aging

VILLAGE NEIGHBORS | [villageneighbors.org](http://villageneighbors.org)



© 2023 Village Neighbors  
Newsletter editing and design - [Dina Polizzi](#)

Village Neighbors | P.O.Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072

[Unsubscribe pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data](#)  
[Notice](#)

Sent by [pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org)