



## Village Neighbors

*Working Together to Create Community!*

September / October 2020, Issue 9

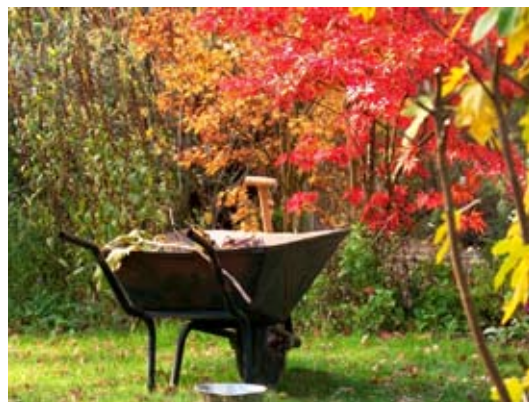
A rural community of neighbors helping aging adults lead independent and engaged lives at home.

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

**1-413-345-6894**

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

P.O.Box 501, Shutesbury, MA 01072  
[generalinfo@villageneighbors.org](mailto:generalinfo@villageneighbors.org)



### Autumn is Coming! Need Some Help With Your Garden?

Volunteers are available to help with light yard chores and raking! They will bring their own tools and maintain safe social distancing protocols.

*Give us a call, volunteers are waiting to assist you!*

**1-413-345-6894**

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

### 2020 Quarantine Update

***Massachusetts has slowed its quarantine re-opening plan.***

Governor Baker has said that people over 65 and those with underlying health conditions - who are at higher risk for COVID-19 - should continue staying home.

***VN members and volunteers should expect we will proceed with an abundance of caution.***

Our volunteers are still available for

- **check-in and friendly visit calls**
- **grocery, library or medicine pick-up and delivery**
- **outdoor yard work and small repairs**

Contact VN for more information

**413-345-6894**

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

### VN Has A New Board Member

#### Calla Crafts

Calla Crafts has lived in Leverett for 37 years. Jesse, her son, went through the elementary school. She is married, has two cats, loves gardening, crafts and being active.

As Senior Consulting Partner for The Ken Blanchard Companies®, Calla has more than 30 years of consulting and training experience in the area of organizational development.

She holds a bachelor's degree in business from the University of New Hampshire and a master's degree in organizational development from the University of Massachusetts.

***We are so grateful and excited to welcome Calla Crafts as our newest Village Neighbors' Board Member and Volunteer.***



## Community Outreach

### DEMENTIA FRIENDS INFORMATION SESSION

**Dementia Friends** is a global movement that is changing the way people think, act, and talk about dementia. Developed by the Alzheimer's Society in the United Kingdom, the Dementia Friends initiative is underway in Massachusetts. Dementia Friends are folks who have attended a one-hour information session to learn five key messages about living with dementia, and the simple things we can all do to make a difference for people touched by dementia.

**Presenter:** Nancy Spittle, RN, Village Neighbors  
**Tuesday, September 29, 2020, 6:30-7:45 pm**  
**Zoom RSVPs:** [generalinfo@villageneighbors.org](mailto:generalinfo@villageneighbors.org)



## Get Out To Vote

A small group of Village Neighbors volunteers, led by Anne-Elise Olsen, reached out to VN members to make sure that folks are aware of deadlines for requesting mail in ballots, upcoming election dates, and to share town-specific CoVid related voter safety information about drop boxes, etc. All together this group made contact with about 60 members.

We were pleased with the volunteer response for this project as well as the outcome of being a well informed community.

**Village Neighbors Is Now FREE to Members over 60 in Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell**

View a list of available services on our website [www.villageneighbors.org](http://www.villageneighbors.org).

Contact [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org) or call **413-345-6894** to become a member or learn more.

## Life in a Pandemic

*Article contributed by Nancy Spittle (VN Membership/Volunteer Committee)*

Here we are, nearing 6 months since the COVID virus led our governor to close down schools, many businesses and all but "essential" services. ALL village Neighbors members are in the "at risk" group. We have had to make new decisions, often with conflicting or changing information. Travel is very difficult or impossible and shopping can be fraught with anxiety. We have had to develop new habits to keep ourselves and others safe. How have you been managing in this strange time?

It can be a challenge to keep life interesting when we are isolated and limited in how much we can socialize. Here are a few ideas; please share with us your own by letter or email.

- ♥ Take a socially distanced walk around your neighborhood or town center
- ♥ Write a note or send a card to an old friend or distant relative
- ♥ Rearrange old photo albums
- ♥ Write a story of how you cope with this pandemic. We are living through a historic event and each of us are affected differently. Save your story, this may be something you will share with children/grandchildren or at a future gathering of Village Neighbors members

**The North Quabbin Trails Association** develops and maintains a wide variety of trails in many North Quabbin towns, offering maps and guided hikes, among other activities. Check out their website at [NQTA.org](http://NQTA.org), to see some examples, or call **978-549-1747** for more information. Socially distant walks are a great way to get some exercise in a safely distant and soul-nourishing environment.

**VN Activities Survey** will be in the mail to you soon. Please fill it out and return. Let us know what activities you would be interested in being part of, as a member or volunteer. You can email [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org) or call **413-345-6894** if you have activities or activity ideas you want to share.

### What to Know About Contact Tracing - *A Message from Medicare*

If you've been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you may be contacted by a contact tracer or public health worker from your state or local health department in an effort to help slow the spread of the disease. Here's what to know if you get a call:

- **A contact tracer may call** to let you know you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. All information you share with a contact tracer, like who you've been in contact with and your recent whereabouts, is confidential.
- **You may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.** This means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distance from others at all times.

**You may be asked to monitor your health and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.** Notify your doctor if you develop symptoms, and seek medical care if your symptoms worsen or become severe.

**Be aware of scammers pretending to be COVID-19 contact tracers.** Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your financial information. If someone calls and asks for personal information, **hang up and report it to us at 1-800-MEDICARE**

### Gentle Qigong for Health and Well Being

*Free Zoom Class from Village Neighbors Member*

Peter Schein has been a student and teacher of Qigong for many years.

No experience is required, and it's suitable for seniors.

If you are interested, email Peter [pjschein@gmail.com](mailto:pjschein@gmail.com) to receive a zoom invitation before the class.

**It was brought to our attention that the article in the VN July newsletter Senior Mobile Nutrition Program - Amherst Survival Center needs to be amended.** ASC does not serve all four of our towns, only Shutesbury.

If people from Leverett, New Salem, or Wendell would like information about options they should email the coordinator, Jen, at [pantry@amherstsurvival.org](mailto:pantry@amherstsurvival.org). She will do everything possible to get information and food assistance to any one in need.

### Inter-Library Loan Program

Inter-library loans are available again. Most libraries are now open for curbside pick-up. You can contact your library directly for more information.

***Village Neighbors volunteers can pick up and deliver your library requests to your door.*** Contact us at **413-345-6894** or email: [servicerequests@villageneighbors.org](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org)

#### Leverett Library

**1-413-548-9220**

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

<https://leverettlibrary.org/p/41/Calendar>

#### New Salem Library

**1-978-544-6334**

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

<https://www.newsalempubliclibrary.org/news-events>

#### Shutesbury Library

**1-413-259-1213**

email: [library.director@shutesbury.org](mailto:library.director@shutesbury.org)

<https://sites.google.com/site/mnsparmemoriallibrary/>

#### Wendell Library

**1-978-544-3559**

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

### VN VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

**Zoom Meeting, Wednesday, Sept. 16, 6:30 pm**

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

During Quarantine we are still doing grocery and medicine pick-up and delivery, wellness check-ins for our members, and outdoor handywork.

***To join the Zoom Volunteer Orientation you must RSVP by September 7th:***

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

A Volunteer Handbook and Application packet will be sent to you by email, or sent by mail if you can't print it.

**Please DONATE to Village Neighbors** and support our 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**



## VN Volunteer Stories

*Sometimes Village Neighbors members come up with a service request that leaves Call Managers scratching our heads....*

Often it is a request for something our Village doesn't offer at this time. If we think and hope the requested service might exist elsewhere in a form our members can access, we go searching. We recently made a successful match along these lines between a member who called looking for a daily check in call that included follow-up to specific people if she did not answer. This is made more complicated because she lives alone and does not use the internet or have a cell phone, so the system would need to be landline based. It is important to note that she needed a service she could access and maintain by phone or mail, not the internet.

A call to LifePath was helpful for providing more information and specific vocabulary about exactly what to look for; some online research and a dip into discussion groups for independent elders and caretakers was especially helpful. I was able to locate a resource that matched this member's specific need. The service I found is called 'I Am Fine'. Our member had a hard time reaching them by phone at first, because I was curious to know what she would encounter once she made contact I called myself and after a few tries managed to get through. I discovered they are a small business that has really taken off because of CoVid, and they are sometimes swamped with calls. So many elders have been isolated from family and looking for new ways to maintain independence at home and also have sensible support measures in place in case they need help.

**iamfine** called the VN member directly and she was able to initiate service without using the internet. The service was more affordable than I expected and there is a free trial. Here is the website if you want to learn more:

<https://dailycall.iamfine.com/>

*Article contributed by Dina Stander (VN Service Committee)*

### A Letter from a VN Member

#### I Don't "Do" Computers - But "I AM FINE"

*First, I want to thank Nancy Spittle for initiating me into Village Neighbors. Also, Kathleen Leonard for being a dear friend and letting me call her everyday for 3 months, so I could let her know I woke up alive. And thanks to Dina Stander, for researching what I needed.*

*I realized that as a senior living alone with four cats, I needed to be responsible to them. I was looking for a service that I could call (since I don't 'do' computers) everyday by a certain time.*

*If I didn't call in- they could call my care circle- my 'house boy' who also happens to be an EMT to check on me, call my cat sitter-feeder and call my daughter.*

*It made me feel so good to know the service called "I Am Fine" could do just that.*

*Now I don't worry about my cats being cared for. I just have to remember to make the call every morning when I wake up alive!!*

*Thanks,*

*Deva Skydancer*

**Village Neighbors Quarterly Meeting** will be **Thursday, September 17, 12 Noon** on Zoom. This is an opportunity for all members and volunteers to hear reports from each committee and interact with active volunteers and other members. Please **RSVP** by **September 10th** to **pr@villageneighbors.org**.

## Volunteer Opportunities

*Be Part of the Village Neighbors Team!*

**Volunteer Orientation!** *Anyone can attend!* **Zoom Meeting, Wednesday, September 16, 6:30 pm**

### Membership / Volunteer Committee

- Welcome and interview new members and volunteers
  - Social activities, trainings and programs
- CONTACT ---  
[membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org)

### Service Committee

- Answer requests from Members and connect them with Volunteers waiting to assist.
- CONTACT ---  
[servicerequests@villageneighbors.org](mailto:servicerequests@villageneighbors.org)

### IT Committee

- Home assistance with electronics
  - Training volunteers and members
  - Database and web updates
  - Social media
- CONTACT ---  
[it@villageneighbors.org](mailto:it@villageneighbors.org)

### Events / PR Committee

- Event planning
  - Newsletter
  - Event Calendar
  - Outreach
  - Social media
- CONTACT ---  
[pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org)