



At Home  
IN GREENWICH

news

EMPOWERED TO THRIVE

Building a strong and supportive community in Greenwich of adults aging in place.

## MAKE THE CALL

- LISE JAMESON LCSW

The U.S. Surgeon General tells us that we post-Covid Americans now experience a loneliness epidemic. Mental health professionals report that depression and anxiety with their impact on physical health, including stroke and dementia risks have increased among Americans.

Though there's no "magic cure," there is an activity that can improve our everyday lives and impact our mental health: contact with others. Even an eight-minute phone call gives us a mental boost and relieves isolation, according to Jancee Dunn, in her January 2023 New York Times article. Studies show that interactions, quick or long, whether in person or on the phone with a long-time or new friend, can give us many benefits we crave at that moment. We can help ourselves just by picking up the phone.

At Home in Greenwich had the idea first, before the New York Times article! We established weekly check-in calls as early in the pandemic as March 2020. The calls

began because of rapidly climbing anxiety on how to get in touch with our members. Our At Home Board, volunteers and staff began calling each member weekly to offer a kind word and learn of problems that needed to be addressed.

Calls to every member continued and won overwhelmingly positive feedback. By summer, nearly half of our membership felt they were resuming life and their schedules enough to opt out of the phone calls. But the other half of members were delighted with the check-in, which continues to this day. Many of us welcome the phone to ring and to hear a friendly, interested voice on the other end of the line.

Disconnection affects communities, resulting in disengagement and low performance. Let's make a phone call, go out of our way to speak with someone, and reconnect with friends. Following those post-Covid life improvement measures will benefit us all.

**AT HOME IN GREENWICH makes life easier and more enjoyable for older adults who wish to age in their own homes.**

We are a vibrant group where adults 50+ form new, lasting friendships, and have a reliable safety net from a trusted organization.



Membership grants you access to a full calendar of social and educational activities, and responsive service to handle your health, safety and home management needs. Get involved!

Join us as a member, a volunteer, or a member who volunteers!

# The Shredder

- Barbara Martin

The last time I saw my brother-in-law he was sitting in his favorite recliner in the sunroom of their house in Myrtle Beach feeding paper into a shredder.

“His eyesight is bad, he can’t read much anymore, this relaxes him”, my sister explained. He had macular degeneration along with the lung disease (COPD) that would claim his life within a year. I wondered what it was that was so comforting about shredding paper. True, there has to be a sense of accomplishment after getting rid of a pile of unimportant papers that had been lying around the house but do they have to be shredded? There had to be something more to it.

As soon as I could after I returned home, I made a trip to Costco to buy a paper shredder.

It is a bulky, black thing on wheels and the only place I could find to store it was in a small open space between cabinets under the kitchen counter. In the morning, I sit on a bar stool at the counter, eating my breakfast and reading the morning news on my iPad. The shredder shares the space underneath with my dangling feet.

When I first got it, I couldn’t wait to find out if it would have the same relaxing effect on me as it had on my brother-in-law. I could see how the whirling sound of the motor was comforting but it wasn’t enough to make me want to spend time listening to it. For me, the machine did just

the opposite, it made me feel aggressive and revengeful. “Take this”, I would say to the machine, as I crammed junk mail and bills down the slot and watched them dissolve into tiny bits of paper. For a while, I went through stacks of old correspondence, canceled checks, minutes from meetings I would rather forget I attended and gleefully fed them into the machine. It was exhilarating but hardly relaxing.



*Left to right: Barbara's sister Mary, her brother-in-law Bill and Barbara*

After a while I stopped. It seemed like just too much trouble to drag the machine from its resting place and empty it of the remnants of paper once it had filled up. I returned to my old practice of cutting credit cards and financial statements up into small pieces with a scissors. “If someone wants to dig these out of the garbage and fit them together like a jigsaw puzzle, then they are welcome to them,” I reasoned, “there are

lots of easier ways now to steal someone’s identity.”

I left the shredder where it was, largely forgotten unless I accidentally kicked it with my foot when eating my cereal until the day I decided to minimize by taking some of my unused “stuff” to the thrift shop. My son came over the night before and saw the shredder sitting near the door, ready to go. “” Why is the shredder here?” he asked. “I’m getting rid of it,” I answered. “You can’t do that,” he said, like I was about to commit some heinous crime. Feeling guilty, I decided that, since it didn’t give me any trouble other than occasionally getting in the way of my feet, it could stay where it was under the counter.

I was glad the machine had been a diversion for my brother-in-law at a time when he was too ill to do little more than sit all day in his chair. I hope I will find some distraction that works for me in my final days: just not a shredder.



*Fun at the annual meeting.*

# A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS

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# AT HOME CELEBRATES 15TH YEAR OF OPERATION!

This year marks 17 years since At Home in Greenwich was first inspired by a *New York Times* article on how a few Beacon Hill residents in Boston had come up with an innovative program to help themselves and others to remain in their homes.

Several Greenwich residents who read the *Times* article agreed that they, too, would like to remain in their own homes — close to friends and favorite activities — as they grew older. Marylin Chou led the visit to Boston to find out more from the people involved in this “Villages” program.

With dedicated energy, Marylin became a spark plug for starting the formal organization in Greenwich to help residents with what was soon described as “aging in place.” She also became At Home’s first president, and with a small, passionate group of volunteers, forged a path for At Home’s existence and viability.

Raising money for At Home’s operational purposes took two years. During that time, Lise Jameson LCSW volunteered to help with the conception of the organization. After the position of Executive Director was funded, it was offered to and accepted by Lise, who has been Director ever since.

At Home held a Launch Celebration at the newly built First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich Hall in January 2008. Two hundred

and fifty people attended to hear about the organization’s plans. Before At Home had even opened its office the next month, over 40 people had offered their time and generosity. Our founders include members, Board, Advisory Council and volunteers.

In August of 2008, only six months later, the Second Congregational Church welcomed us to what has been our home office ever since.

Fund raising was helped by establishing the Benefit Committee in 2011. At Home held its first “Come to the Cabaret” benefit gala with Helen Maher as Cabaret Chair. In 2013, Diane Jennings joined Helen in this vital fundraising effort. Over the years, Suzy Kjorlien has assisted and Diane has given her considerable skill to this endeavor ten years later.

From a newspaper article about staying in a Beacon Hill home in Boston, to the establishment of our own At Home in Greenwich, we have thrived these 15 years because of such generous support from donors and volunteers. We can’t possibly thank you each of you – visionary members, volunteers and generous donors - enough.



The original founders in 2008.



# TRIBUTE TO FOUNDER MARYLIN CHOU

- Sam Deibler

Like Angels, messengers of old,  
who brought good news to broken worlds,  
these folk spoke in language bold  
of lives restored and homes preserved.

My office small, they crowded in  
Jane, Adrienne, Carolyn, Mimi, Andy,  
and in the lead, Archangel Marylin  
with vision clear of things that can be.

I'd read their news in morning Times  
of Beacon Hill and neighbors blessed  
by service marked by new designs  
by lives prolonged, enriched, progressed.

My morning thought, "Well good for  
Boston"  
didn't meet their hopes and dreams  
to change our Town with its forgotten  
to "Good for Greenwich" and what that  
means.

Marylin knew that we have treasure.  
We are Family-Centered here.  
And she did not let problems faze her  
in pursuit of what seems clear.

Clear to us now in our history,  
fifteen years, succeeding still  
to bless our aged and claim the victory  
of lives lived well and dreams fulfilled.

# FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY VERSE

- Mary Ann Hoberman



An anniversary arrives;  
At Home in Greenwich,  
How it thrives  
And what a difference  
In our lives!  
A mere fifteen years,  
It started small;  
The founders,  
Forty-two in all,  
All climbed aboard  
At Marylin's call  
(When Marylin calls  
you just say yes!);  
But way back then  
We couldn't guess  
It would enjoy  
Such great success  
(And everyone  
Of us agrees  
That we'd be lost  
Without our Lise!)  
So here we are,  
We aging folk,  
And though old age  
Is not a joke,  
AHIG  
Has helped us cope;  
And as we face  
Another year,  
It's great to be  
Together here,  
A toast to all  
Be of good cheer!  
With friends around  
A glass of wine,  
A smile, a hug,  
We're doing fine;  
So keep on truckin'  
Down the line!



*We celebrated and toasted our 15 years of success at the Annual Meeting.*

# THE AT HOME IN GREENWICH BOARD & ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Welcome new board members!

## SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL GALA



At Home in Greenwich  
 SAVE  
 the  
 DATE

September 29, 2023

Delamar Greenwich

## FY '22 IN REVIEW!

148

home  
visits

156

phone  
consultations

224

social and  
educational  
events

649

referrals to  
screened  
providers

560

rides  
given by  
volunteers

2435

check in  
phone calls

# YOUR LEGACY CAN LIVE ON THROUGH AT HOME IN GREENWICH

By supporting At Home in Greenwich with a legacy gift through your will, you will be helping to improve the health and vitality of the senior community. Think of the burden you can lift from others by ensuring that At Home continues to have:

- the ongoing services of a social worker
- screened, reliable referrals
- varied social and cultural activities
- financial assistance for those who qualify

There are many ways to make a bequest such as through your will, trust, insurance policy, stocks, bonds, retirement plan, or a simple codicil to your will. Your financial advisor or attorney can best advise you.

## IN MEMORIAM

Nan Burleson 4/2023  
Susan Cahill 2/2023  
Ann Hogan 10/2022  
Ellie Holt 1/2023  
Duane "Mac" MacFarland 10/2022  
Bruce Nicholas 10/2022  
John Roberts 3/2023  
John Whalen 5/2023

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR LEGACY CIRCLE DONORS

Marilyn Chou  
Bernice Nadel  
Doris M. Ohlsen  
Patricia Reaves  
Jack Smith & Ann Sethness  
Carla Wallach  
Horace & Ruth Walton  
Sarah Whittemore

When you support At Home in Greenwich with a legacy gift made through your will, you enable future generations to enjoy the peace of mind and sense of community from At Home in Greenwich...





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Lise Jameson, LCSW  
Executive Director

(203) 422-2342  
[www.athomeingreenwich.org](http://www.athomeingreenwich.org)

## THE AT HOME IN GREENWICH MISSION & VISION

Support a diverse community of aging adults living at home by providing trusted resources and services, enrichment opportunities and social connections.

We aim to build a strong and supportive community in Greenwich of adults aging in place

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AT HOME IN GREENWICH

Email: [director@athomeingreenwich.org](mailto:director@athomeingreenwich.org)  
Call: (203) 422-2342  
Visit: [www.athomeingreenwich.org](http://www.athomeingreenwich.org)

For tips, info, and to view pics from our events, follow us:

 [facebook.com/athomeingreenwichCT](https://www.facebook.com/athomeingreenwichCT)

 [@athomeingreenwich](https://www.instagram.com/athomeingreenwich)

## Join Today!

At Home is a welcoming, supportive community. Newcomers are never strangers for long, and the social network created here gives members the confidence to enjoy life at home.

### Membership cost:

- \$500 for individuals
- \$650 for households

Financial aid available to those who qualify.

### What's included:

- Monthly calendar of social and cultural activities
- Free home safety assessment
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Weekly check ins
- Meaningful volunteer opportunities
- List of 100 plus screened service vendors
- As needed consultations with a licensed social worker

### To join or learn more:

- Call (203) 422-2342
- Email [director@athomeingreenwich.org](mailto:director@athomeingreenwich.org)
- Visit [www.athomeingreenwich.org](http://www.athomeingreenwich.org)