

our mission:
“Helping Darien seniors
live independently,
comfortably and with
dignity in their own
homes and the community
as long as possible”

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Dear Friends –

At Home In Darien connects seniors to community and this issue of our newsletter consists of profiles of just a few of the people who are connected to us! We hope you enjoy reading about some of the people who use our services, support us, work for us, serve as board members, and volunteer. We hope it demonstrates, in an interesting way, the many ways we can help.

The need to feel connected is a basic one and we value how important it is. Whether it is taking a ride, finding an event to attend from our monthly calendar of events (if you don't receive it every month give us a call), getting a referral you can trust for a home repair project, using your membership card for a discount at a local business, accepting volunteer services, or simply calling when you have a question, we welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

I hope you will join me in attending our Annual Luncheon on Tuesday, October 18th which is free for all Darien seniors (see information to the right). You are also invited to our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 6th (see information below). We are excited to celebrate another great year of connecting seniors to community!

We are here to help you – give us a call! **203.655.2227**

All the best,

Gina Z Blum, Executive Director, **At Home In Darien**
Gina@AtHomeInDarien.org



You're invited!

Join the **At Home In Darien** Board of Directors at their

Annual Meeting
Tuesday, December 6, 2016
at 10:00 a.m.

Darien Library Community Room,
1441 Post Road

Join us for refreshments and learn more about how we meet the needs of seniors in Darien.

RSVP by December 1st **203.655.2227** or
Sandi@AtHomeInDarien.org

At Home In Darien and The Darien Community Association invite you to attend the

At Home In Darien Annual Luncheon

Featuring **Betsy Lerner**
Author of
The Bridge Ladies

Betsy Lerner, in conversation with her mother Roz, will share their story about the Bridge Club Roz was a part of for fifty years.

At turns funny and deeply moving, *The Bridge Ladies* is a thought-provoking journey of self-discovery. Weaving together the histories of the Bridge Ladies, insights to the Boomer generation, and the discovery of the subtle but seismic shift in Lerner's relationship with her mother, the result is a touching and profound look at cross-generational divides and mother-daughter relationships.

Please visit the Darien Library to borrow a copy of the book. Books will be available for purchase at the event.

Tuesday, October 18, 2016
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

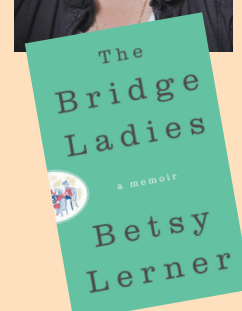
Darien Community Association
274 Middlesex Road

Free presentation and lunch for all Darien Seniors

RSVP by October 7th
Space is limited, please respond early to ensure a seat at this popular event.

203.655.2227

Or
Sandi@AtHomeInDarien.org



Betsy Lerner is the author of *The Bridge Ladies*, *The Forest for the Trees* and *Food and Loathing*. She received an MFA from Columbia University in Poetry and was the recipient of a Thomas Wolfe Poetry Prize, an Academy of American Poets Poetry Prize and was one of PEN's Emerging Writers. After working as an editor for 15 years, she became an agent and is currently a partner with Dunow, Carlson and Lerner Literary Agency.



Lillie has worked for **At Home In Darien** (and Gallivant) for 9 years. She is originally from Fayetteville, NC and came North in 1956. She retired from CT Transit after 25 years, but retirement has not slowed her down one bit! Lillie holds another transportation job, plus she teaches adult bible school, is a licensed real estate broker, and a licensed minister who performs weddings and funerals.

Family is important to Lillie. She has 4 children, 14 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. Her home is the place people always want to gather and celebrate holidays – she hosted 150 people this past 4th of July! Lillie loves to cook, read, and travel, and most of all she loves people.

Driving for **At Home In Darien** is something Lillie enjoys as it comes natural to her since she is a people person. She chats with all the riders, they have become her friends. She recalls a rider who wouldn’t say anything. She kept trying and trying and he finally came around – he talks all the time now. He even sings in the car!

Some of Lillie’s fondest memories of driving for **At Home In Darien** are the daily load of people she used to bring home from the old Senior Center each evening. She recalls there was always someone who was a comedian on the bus and they all had so much fun telling jokes and laughing. There was a man who stopped driving just so he could take the bus because they had such a good time!

At Home In Darien is lucky to have Lillie as a driver. Lillie says it’s good to be here and that people ask her when she is going to retire to which she responds, “As long as I feel good, and things remain the same, what am I going to do if I go home? Most people stop, go home, and die. I’m not ready for that!”

Joe served as a naval pilot in Vietnam. After leaving the navy, he flew for United Airlines, flying Tiger Line, and ultimately retired a chief pilot for Federal Express. The airline moves brought him and his wife Marie to Darien in 1974, where they raised their two sons. He was active with little league when his sons were young, served on the Obie Harrington-Howes Foundation, and has always enjoyed boating, fishing and flying. He is a member of The Country Club of Darien where he occasionally gets to play some golf. Marie was a school teacher, teaching middle school in Greenwich and Stamford and was honored as ‘Teacher of the Year’. She loved her job so much that she continued working even after Joe retired. So often young people would stop her and say “You were the best teacher I ever had!”



Marie had a knee replacement in October of 2009, and while the knee replacement was a success, the anesthesia significantly accelerated her Alzheimer’s symptoms. After surgery, she didn’t even recognize Joe or remember any of their six grandchildren. Last year Marie fell and broke her hip and due to complications she is bedridden and unable to walk anymore. Getting her anywhere is a huge deal that requires multiple transfers. Joe is fortunate to have assistance in the house but when he is by himself he realizes what a difficult job being a caregiver is, and has so much respect for the hard work they do. Joe tries to do as much as he can, and he does not want to put his wife into a facility, “I want Marie at home as long as I can keep her there.”

In rehabilitation after the broken hip, Joe turned to several ambulette services to transport Marie. He understood the cost he had to incur but what bothered him was that he couldn’t count on their timeliness. They were late to important appointments, and very often at the end of a medical appointment Marie would have to wait in discomfort for hours. He was so frustrated that he even looked into purchasing his own handicap accessible vehicle. Joe didn’t know about **At Home In Darien** until one day he got something in the mail, and gave **At Home In Darien** a call. He has found services to be such a convenience. The transportation service has been a lifesaver for Joe. He can count on it, and says “It’s been a Godsend for me.”

Joe is a generous donor and supporter of **At Home In Darien**. He loves Darien, his friends, and especially his home in Noroton Bay, which is a tightknit caring and helpful neighborhood. He thinks it’s the best place to live in town, and smiles as he says, “This is home”.



Carol has been a volunteer visitor with **At Home In Darien** for over 5 years. She’s lived in Darien for 13 years – a relative newcomer! After being widowed, she came to Darien to be closer to family. She has 3 sons, and 7 grandchildren. Carol was drawn to Darien because of the smallness of the community and its proximity to New York City.

A retired social worker, Carol had enjoyed volunteering for other organizations in a similar capacity. She heard about **At Home In Darien** from the local newspapers and thought she would focus her efforts in the community where she lives.

Considering all the relationships she has had as a volunteer, she’s learned that the relationships do have an end. When one relationship ends, another begins, as she accepts another assignment right away. Carol has also been fortunate to maintain friendships with some of the caregivers of the seniors she has visited with – whether it be an adult child or a spouse. This speaks volumes for Carol’s friendliness and compassion.

Carol’s found volunteering to be a broadening and valuable experience. **At Home In Darien** tries to match a volunteer with someone who might have some common interests, but Carol sees the bright side of the alternative. She remarked, “There is a real growth opportunity for the volunteer visitor to be part of the life of someone whose entire life experiences have been completely different from one’s own.”



Alyce is 93 and has lived in Darien for almost 40 years. She’s been widowed for 13 years, and has a son and grandchildren who live out of town.

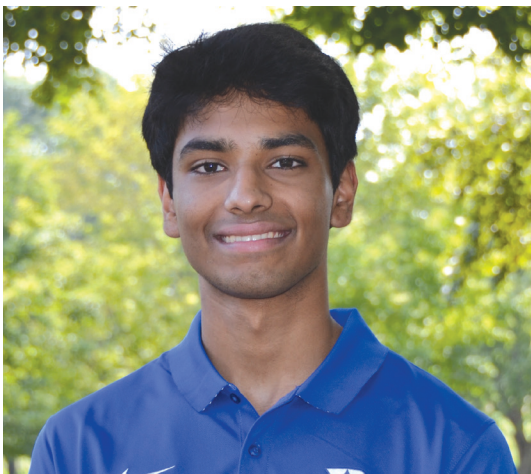
She is an accomplished artist who graduated from Parsons School of Design. She has taught art, worked as a freelance fashion illustrator, and has shown her award winning work on both coasts. In recent years Alyce has shown locally at The Darien Arts Center and has enjoyed working from a home studio.

Alyce enjoys reading and drawing, and formerly played a lot of tennis and golf, but has had hip replacements and is now somewhat limited, although she gets around well using a cane. She follows her mother’s advice of ‘you’ve got to keep moving’.

So as not to miss any of the wonderful events happening in Darien, Alyce loves receiving the mailing of the monthly calendar of events that **At Home In Darien** organizes. She enjoys reading about the interesting events and learning the useful information for seniors. She tries to attend events of interest, and is looking forward to the upcoming **At Home In Darien** Annual Luncheon this fall.

Alyce and her son call **At Home In Darien** when they need a referral to a vetted service provider who can help with things around her house. From plumbers to home safety, it gives them peace of mind to have a trusted local source for assistance.

She is proud to support the effort to assist seniors to remain living independently. “Darien is warm and friendly” says Alyce who was drawn to it because it is a small town. Her only wish is that there was an art store!



Rohan moved to Darien several years ago because of his father’s employment. He is a bright student who enjoys soccer and first learned of **At Home In Darien** at the Darien High School Volunteer Fair.

His decision to volunteer to help seniors in Darien can be attributed to the good relationship he has with his two grandmothers who live in India. When he was younger he visited with them a lot enjoying their company and also the great food they prepare!

Each week Rohan visits with Larry, a senior who lives with his wife who has Alzheimer’s. Larry was a high school teacher of literature and history, who favors the Renaissance era. He reads a lot, and especially enjoys Shakespeare. While Larry and his wife have family in Darien, he particularly enjoys Rohan’s visits where they have detailed discussions about literature. The two of them are reading and discussing Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. Larry makes it humorous and current, and the two of them have a mutually rewarding relationship.

Volunteering gives Rohan useful experience. As a teenager he sees the value of working and interacting with people of all age groups and backgrounds. Rohan tries to expose himself to diverse opportunities also volunteering at Person to Person in their clothing area. Volunteering with **At Home In Darien** has been particularly satisfying for Rohan. Appreciatively, he says “Larry comes from one of the golden ages in US History” and Rohan welcomes learning about this first hand.



Tamsin came to Darien in 8th grade and went to Mather Junior High School – the same building where **At Home In Darien** now has their office. After graduating from Darien High School and going off to college she and her husband moved back to town in 1991, where they have raised their 3 children.

Through her involvement at the YWCA and her participation in a needs assessment study, Tamsin first heard that the town’s population was growing and that there was an unmet need for the aging. She was delighted when she later learned that The Community Fund was following through with an aging in place effort that eventually became **At Home In Darien**.

Her husband’s parents had to relocate to Darien from Florida due to her father-in-law’s Parkinson’s. Tamsin found getting assistance to be complicated and difficult to understand. She learned a lot and became more aware of senior needs. Then last year she and her husband attended a benefit for the Darien Foundation for Technology & Community, where **At Home In Darien** Board President Annie McGuire addressed the crowd to gather support so that money could be raised for the purchase of a new vehicle. Appreciating the generosity of people in Darien, Tamsin remarked, “In 10 minutes they raised enough money to buy a car, and we participated in that, and it was pretty awesome.”

Tamsin joined the Board of Directors of **At Home In Darien** this year. “As my involvement in this town continues, volunteer wise, my interests have changed, this is the next step,” notes Tamsin. As a Board member she wants to spread the word about what **At Home In Darien** does. Tamsin believes the challenge is getting people to use the services, and also to raise money to continue to provide services. She tells people, “This is a free service, but has nothing to do with your socio-economic situation. It is not charity, it’s important and useful, and should be taken advantage of.”



Sandi grew up in New Jersey, has lived in the suburbs of Philadelphia, New York City, Norwalk and now lives in Westchester County where she and her husband moved in 2000. They have known each other all their lives as they grew up together in the same town in New Jersey. They have two children, a 15 year old son and 13 year old daughter who keep her very busy when she is not at work.

Working for **At Home In Darien** for the past 4 ½ years, Sandi loves to assist and help out seniors and their families. She had very close relationships with her own grandparents growing up and into her adult life which drew her to working for **At Home In Darien**. Her children also have special bonds with her parents and in-laws, as she and her husband have instilled in them the importance of relating to, sharing and learning from your elders.

Sandi has done various volunteer work over the years and currently is co-chair of the local FARE (Food Allergy Research and Education) Walk for Food Allergies and organizes the FARE community grant program. She also does food allergy coaching. Over the years, she has volunteered for the PTA, her children’s schools and The New York Soccer Club.

An avid tennis player, Sandi has been playing since the age of 7 when she couldn’t even see over the tennis net. During college, she played on the Lehigh University tennis team and continues to play competitively. She also enjoys working out, running, reading, traveling, being outdoors, and spending time with her friends and family. Her favorite season is summer because she loves the sun and loathes being cold. She really hopes to find time to play a game of mahjong and pickleball at the Mather Center sometime soon.



Pat lives in the same house in Darien that she first came home to when she was born 91 years ago. She is a registered nurse who joined the United States Cadet Nurse Corps, a program to alleviate the critical shortage of nurses during World War II. She had to commit to stay in nursing as long as the war lasted, but she continued much longer, working at Stamford Hospital after the war, and then on to California and Hawaii. She heard a Red Cross plea for polio nurses on the radio and responded, joining the US Army. She then had the opportunity to be a registered nurse on board military flights and continued in that role flying all over the world for 40 years.

Pat always came back to Darien. She says, “It’s my home, my roots are here.” She appreciates that **At Home In Darien** provides important services for seniors. Although she doesn’t need many services right now, she knows that things change and needs may arise, so she is glad they are available.

Attending educational lectures, including the **At Home In Darien** Annual Meeting, is of interest to Pat. She says “I go to learn. That’s the great advantage we all have, and with all the blessings of age, I am grateful that in this period of my life that I am still eager to learn.”

Volunteers coordinated by **At Home In Darien** come to Pat’s home and do leaf raking and snow shoveling of her public sidewalk. While she is grateful for the services, she also thinks of what volunteering is doing for the children, “Planting the seeds of someone outside yourself. That is so important. Looking at the big picture. The big picture isn’t ‘I’, the big picture is ‘us’ and the true gratification is knowing what it is doing for the growth of our children.”



At Home In Darien provides the following free services to all Darien residents age 60+:



Transportation within Darien, Stamford, Norwalk and New Canaan, Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Telephone referral, advice and counsel.



Communication and Programs —
Out & About newsletter.

Monthly calendar of events.

Membership Cards that give seniors discounts with local businesses.

Home safety evaluations.

Social and educational programs.



Handy Services —

Volunteers including Friendly Visitors, Shoppers, Helpers and Drivers along with seasonal services such as snow shoveling of public sidewalks and leaf raking.

Referrals to discounted vetted health and home care professionals, and property and home maintenance services.

Need help with leaf raking this fall or shoveling snow from your public sidewalk this winter?

Please call
At Home In Darien
at 203.655.2227
for an application.



Thanks for your Support!

At Home In Darien is supported by hundreds of people from all over the town of Darien. Are you one of them? We depend on your support to continue to serve Darien's senior citizens. We are a private, tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Please send a generous gift today to:

At Home In Darien
2 Renshaw Road, Darien, CT 06820



Nancy was on the first board of directors of **At Home In Darien**, then called Aging in Place in Darien. She remembers an early meeting where they discussed...*How is this going to work? Are we going to charge a fee? Is this something people will join?* They considered other aging in place organizations in other communities and ultimately decided it should be available for everybody in Darien without fees. She is thrilled and excited to see how **At Home In Darien** has grown and where the organization is today.

Using **At Home In Darien** services herself was not something Nancy anticipated until suddenly she realized she needed a ride. She had to get to a medical appointment with short notice and called **At Home In Darien**, who was very responsive. Her pleasant experience was solidified by a personable driver with whom she had a wonderful conversation.

Nancy was deeply impressed and pleased to have had the opportunity to be supportive, and to promote **At Home In Darien** from the very start. It made her realize how much the organization means to this community and how valuable it is that **At Home In Darien** is there for someone when they really need a service.

She and George have been in Darien for 61 years. They raised their children here, and their daughter has raised her family in Darien as well. They have been involved in community activities, serving on several committees and boards, being part of Noroton Presbyterian Church, and have made deep connections and friendships. Therefore they never considered the thought of retiring and moving away from Darien.

People may turn to their friends or children when they need help, but a lot of people don't want to do that. There's a hesitation to take advantage of friends or inconvenience them. Nancy remarked "It gives me a sense of independence to be able to call **At Home In Darien**. You are calling someone who offers rides professionally. I'm grateful for friends that have been incredibly supportive, but it's also nice to have a sense of independence and be able to call At Home. That's why it's there!"



Dan has lived in Darien for 45 years, worked for Union Carbide for 30 years and has been volunteering at Stamford Hospital for more than 20 years. He's a member of the Darien Men's Association, an avid bug of the financial markets, and loves to go out to lunch with friends.

Dan came to a crisis where he decided to give up his driving license. He thought, 'Oh no, I will be crippled by giving up driving — I won't be able to get around!' And then his common sense said 'I am too old to be driving — traffic bothers me — I am going to give it up.'

With great trepidation he gave up his keys, and thanks to **At Home In Darien** and some dear friends, the transition has not been that bad!

Dan calls on **At Home In Darien** in order to continue doing all the things he enjoys - volunteering at the hospital, going to the Y and to the Library, and also to go to medical appointments. He used to wonder how he would be able to continue being involved but it has worked out perfectly.

"I am amazed more people don't know about **At Home In Darien**", says Dan. When he brings it up people ask, 'Who are they, what do they do?' Dan agrees word of mouth is the best way to get the word out about **At Home In Darien** services. He says people, like himself, who use **At Home In Darien**, are the best salespeople!

A neighbor told Dan about **At Home In Darien**. His first reaction was 'You're kidding me!' But he came to realize that cabs are so expensive, and people are living so much longer that they are concerned about how long their savings will hold out. Dan has been generous with voluntary donations for rides and appreciates that **At Home In Darien** is a safe transportation option as the professional drivers are alert, good, and dependable.

Dan likes the concrete results of **At Home In Darien**, he says "The services are very tangible and it's useful and it's needed."



Catch the Wave!

The Darien High School Football Team
invites YOU to become a Blue Wave Football Fan!

Please join the parents & fans as they cheer the team on during the 2016 football season. Admission is free to those age 65 and over.

We hope to see you at the games!
2016 DHS Football Captains & Team

Home Game Schedule:

Saturday 9/17 @ 1:30pm vs. Stamford
Saturday 9/24 @ 1:30pm vs. Greenwich —
Homecoming
Saturday 10/1 @ 2:00pm vs. Norwich
Saturday 10/15 @ 1:30pm vs. Brien McMahon
Saturday 10/29 @ 1:30pm vs. Wilton