

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 –

Sharing stories of people's lives allows us to see through the eyes of others and thus creates community. One of our goals is to help create a livable community—happier and healthier residents of every age. This issue of our newsletter shares true stories of our neighbors. Their stories show a network of people at all stages of life—people who use our services, support us, work for us, serve as board members, and volunteer. We hope it is an interesting way for you to see how we are all connected and how we can help.

In addition to sharing these stories, we'd like to share some valuable information. Come learn the *Secrets of Successful Aging* at our Annual Luncheon on Tuesday, October 16th (see details to the right) which is free for all Darien seniors. Please also save the date of December 6th for our Annual Meeting (see details below). We look forward to sharing the latest news and working together towards a community that allows residents to age in place and stay connected.

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

Like us on Facebook

You're invited!

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

Annual Meeting
Thursday, December 6, 2018
at 11:00 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 November 30th **203.655.2227** or
info@AtHomeInDarien.org

Featuring **Dr. Michael Ego**,
University of Connecticut
Professor of Human
Development & Family Studies,
discussing the importance of
aging-in-place organizations
effecting inter-generational
communities.



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

At Home In Darien

Annual Luncheon

Secrets of Successful Aging

Featuring **Dr. Mark Lachs**
Co-Chief of Geriatrics and Palliative
Medicine at the
Weill Cornell Medical College,
and the **Director of Geriatrics**
for **The New York Presbyterian**
Health Care System



Join us for an interesting
and informative discussion
about the physiological
changes that occur when
we age and how to delay
physical decline.

Tuesday, October 16, 2018
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Darien Community Association
274 Middlesex Road

Free presentation and lunch for
all Darien Seniors

RSVP by October 5th
Space is limited, please respond early to
ensure a seat at this popular event.

203.655.2227

Or
info@AtHomeInDarien.org



Free In-Home Safety Evaluations

At Home In Darien offers free in-home
Fall Safety Prevention Evaluations to Darien
seniors through a partnership with Family &
Children's Agency (FCA). A registered nurse
or a specially trained caregiver will come to
your home and discuss potential hazards and
how you can help prevent a fall.

The FCA caregiver can also refer you to other
services to ensure you may remain safe and
independent in your own home.

Call **At Home In Darien**, **203.655.2227** for
more information and to schedule your free
in-home Fall Safety Prevention evaluation.



Bill has lived in Darien for over 35 years. He enjoys spending time biking, cooking and playing his newest role—grandfather to his one year old granddaughter.

After retiring, Bill became active as an EMT at Post 53. It was there he heard about **At Home In Darien** and decided to get involved. Bill became a volunteer three years ago as a Friendly Visitor and Shopper for Edna. Bill helps Edna with her weekly grocery shopping. Because of the time the two spend together, a true friendship has developed. A year ago Bill also began visiting John. Bill and John became fast friends and their relationship continues to grow. Both look forward to their weekly lunch date. “The best part of volunteering for **At Home In Darien** is the one-on-one relationships and long term friendships I’ve made,” says Bill.

Bill also volunteers as a Friendly Driver for **At Home In Darien**. He is “on-call” one morning a week and also makes himself available to drive at other times (when the professional drivers are busy, when someone requests a ride beyond the driving area, or when someone wants to be accompanied to an appointment). Bill enjoys giving rides to seniors, “It’s great to meet new people and have a nice conversation. The riders are always so appreciative. It’s especially fun when I am driving a long-time town resident and we discover mutual connections by playing the ‘Do You Know?’ game.”

Bill is looking forward to his wife’s retirement so they can travel more frequently but doesn’t foresee leaving Darien. He feels fortunate to live here and likes to think he is paying it forward through his volunteering. Bill knows **At Home In Darien** is there if he ever needs our services in the future.



Wanda grew up in Gainesville, FL and lived in Arizona and Washington, DC before moving to Connecticut. Wanda worked in Hartford for an insurance investment group for 8 years and then moved to Fairfield County where she and her husband John raised their 4 children. Wanda and John now live in Norwalk as almost empty-nesters with their Welsh Corgi, Coco. She enjoys cooking, walking, tennis, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

An active volunteer, Wanda credits her parents, who were also very active volunteers, with instilling her interest in giving back to the community. She’s been involved with many charitable organizations and is currently part of the Norwalk Public Schools Mentor Program. She enjoys being a positive adult role model and working to make a difference in the life of her third grade mentee.

In May of this year, Wanda joined **At Home In Darien** and enjoys assisting our members with booking rides, scheduling volunteers, and coordinating the monthly calendar of events. “I wish that every town could have an organization like **At Home In Darien**! My father hasn’t driven for years and is completely dependent on friends and taxis to get around.” She remarked, “It would change his life if he had access to a service like this in his community—he would be their number one rider.”



Peter has been a Darien resident for 50 years. He grew up in Fairfield and his wife grew up in New Canaan. Darien was the perfect place for them to purchase a home because of its easy commute to New York City and its proximity to family. It has also been ideal for raising their three children and remains attractive today with family and friends nearby, and numerous activities. Thirty years ago, Peter changed careers and began a long and frequent commute to Boston. When Peter retired 10 years ago, he knew he wanted to give back to Darien. He became a volunteer mentor for SCORE, a nonprofit association of business counselors and advisors to aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners.

Five years ago, Peter became a Board member of **At Home In Darien**, serving as Treasurer, and currently is Vice President of Development. As one of the older members of the Board, Peter feels he represents that part of the population which **At Home In Darien** targets but he questions how many people are fully aware of what **At Home In Darien** does. According to Peter, the biggest challenge for **At Home In Darien** is spreading the word to both young and old about all the great services we offer!

Peter remembers how his parents and in-laws lived into their nineties and remained at home. Peter’s motivation for becoming involved in **At Home In Darien** stemmed from his hopes that he too would be able to ‘age in place’. He knows “people lose independence and don’t have the necessary personal support to age in place and that is where **At Home In Darien** fulfills a true need.” Peter describes the vetted service provider program as ‘the jewel in the crown’ of **At Home In Darien’s** valuable services. All of the providers are thoroughly vetted and completely trustworthy. One of Peter’s goals is to increase awareness of the services **At Home In Darien** offers and to encourage residents to use and support them. He is continually impressed by **At Home In Darien’s** commitment to keeping seniors connected to the community.



Caroline, a Darien High School senior, moved to town 8 years ago with her family from Chicago. She’s a member of the cross country and golf teams at school, and is a huge soccer fan who enjoyed watching endless hours of World Cup excitement this past summer. Caroline also loves to cook. Her roasted strawberry ice cream and brie pastries have become family favorites.

Caroline first learned of **At Home In Darien** at the Darien High School Volunteer Fair and was intrigued because she has always loved senior citizens. Caroline is lucky to have two grandmothers who she is extremely close to. They speak frequently but don’t see each other very often as they don’t live in the area.

Caroline volunteers each week to visit Barbara who lives in an assisted living facility. Barbara was a school reading specialist for many years. Her greatest love is reading books, but Barbara can no longer read by herself due to health constraints. Caroline spends time each week reading to Barbara who is at her happiest when being read to. Caroline says, “Reading to Barbara has been a great experience. Reading was a source of joy for her and a big part of her life. When that was taken away, it was a big loss for her. It gives me a lot of satisfaction to know how happy I can make her.”

Additionally, Caroline has been helping in the office of **At Home In Darien** working on social media campaigns. Caroline has enjoyed this aspect of volunteering because it has exposed her to things she may want to explore in college. Caroline said, “I love working with **At Home In Darien**. It has been an awesome experience and I look forward to continuing.”



Martha has lived in Darien since 1964. She and her husband raised their two children in town. Martha stayed home with their children when they were young and became very involved in Children’s Aid, Junior League, and was a hospice volunteer for many years. Martha has also been very involved in her church serving as a Eucharistic Minister and Lector. As her children grew, she worked in the newspaper industry as a copy editor, interviewer and even wrote her own column.

Martha elected to take herself ‘off of the road’ 12 years ago as it became increasingly difficult for her to read road signs. Because of her vision trouble, she knew giving up driving was the best and safest decision for herself and others.

Martha recalls first calling **At Home In Darien** many years ago when it still operated under the name Gallivant. At the time, Gallivant was a large bus and Martha didn’t feel comfortable riding in it. She says, “I acted spoiled and wanted tailor-made driving.” So when her husband stopped driving about a year ago, Martha began using **At Home In Darien** transportation services. Martha commented, “I cannot say enough good things about **At Home In Darien**—the services, the office staff, and drivers are all terrific. It is hard to say how appreciative I am which is why I write a check every year in support of this organization. I feel a sense of family when I am riding around. It’s the caring that gives **At Home In Darien** its flavor. The drivers truly care about you and take the time to get to know you. **At Home In Darien** is not just a great concept, but it is also beautifully carried out.”

Theresa grew up in Westchester County, lived in Oklahoma, and has been a resident of Darien for the last 18 years. Theresa has been recovering from her second hip replacement. Theresa said she had to give up driving in 2007 because she was having trouble with her vision. She began using **At Home In Darien’s** transportation services back in the days of Gallivant. Theresa says, “Because I cannot drive, it’s wonderful to be given rides. I am impressed with how accommodating **At Home In Darien** is. I feel so safe and relaxed riding with the best drivers. The drivers always have a smile on their face and are very helpful, especially when I’m getting in and out of the car with my bags. The drivers, office staff, and volunteer drivers are so helpful and make everything so convenient.”

Recently, Theresa starting using the half-price taxi voucher program. Half-price taxi vouchers are available for purchase by any Darien senior 60+ or any disabled Darien

resident. This ensures that there is affordable transportation at all times on demand—including evenings, weekends and holidays when **At Home In Darien** is not operating.

Theresa said, “It is a real blessing to be able to use the half price taxi vouchers. It gives me greater independence and the freedom to attend social events, run errands and go wherever I need to go. It’s a wonderful service to have in Darien!” Theresa continued, “My long term goal is to become fully independent and possibly return to work part time. I definitely would like to volunteer for **At Home In Darien** so that I can give back.” With a big smile, she added. “I also want to be able to dance on New Year’s Eve.”



Ken is a Fairfield County native who grew up in Stamford and has worked as a driver for **At Home In Darien** for 2 ½ years. He served in the Army in Korea for 2 years and later received degrees in mechanical engineering and computer science. Ken settled in Norwalk where he and his wife of 31 years raised their two children. After driving a banana delivery truck for 3 years, Ken embarked on a very successful career at Pitney Bowes. After his retirement, Ken took on contract work for almost a decade. After that and a full year of being bored, he “wanted to do something to get out of the house a little bit.” And so he began his ‘third career’ as a part-time driver for **At Home In Darien**.

Ken thought this would be the perfect opportunity because it was part-time and flexible, but primarily because he enjoys meeting new people. Ken remarked, “The riders are so interesting! I love hearing stories about their lives and learning about their backgrounds and the things they have done in the past.” Working for **At Home In Darien** is “all about the people” according to Ken.

Ken finds Dan, one of his riders, especially inspiring. Ken frequently drives Dan to volunteer at Stamford Hospital and admires Dan’s energy and his dedication to volunteering. Ken is thrilled to call him not only a passenger, but a true friend!

When Ken is not driving for **At Home In Darien**, he can be found riding around on one of his Harley Davidson motorcycles. He still owns the original Harley bike he bought when he returned from the army over 50 years ago! Ken enjoyed playing racquetball until his knees stopped cooperating, but still enjoys golfing. Every year, Ken looks forward to vacationing in Rehoboth Beach Delaware with his family. He also has fond memories of traveling to China and the National Parks out west.



John moved to Darien in kindergarten, and grew up in town. After college, he and his wife returned to Darien to raise their two children. John’s siblings and mother still live in town, as well as many childhood friends. John remarked, “One of the best parts about living in town is running into people I know all the time.”

Two of John’s longtime friends were members of the Board of **At Home In Darien** and introduced him to the organization. He instantly knew he wanted to become involved because of his experience with his own father who was able to ‘age in place’. John is aware of the challenges the elderly face as they grow older and is glad that there is an organization in town that can help.

John’s goal is to bring more recognition to **At Home In Darien**. As a Board member, he visits medical offices in town to inform doctors, nurses, and staff about **At Home In Darien** and the services we provide. He finds most people have heard of **At Home In Darien** but don’t know about all of the services we offer. John feels it is important to spread the word to adult children

and family members of seniors so they know **At Home In Darien** is here to help them. John thinks a great first step is to encourage more people to use our services as they age. Ideally, **At Home In Darien** “needs to reach people in their sixties and seventies, so they know all about the services we provide if and when they need assistance later in life.”



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.

Half-Price Taxi Voucher Program



Telephone referral, advice and
counsel.



Communication and Programs —
Out & About newsletter.

Monthly calendar of events.

Membership Cards that provide
discounts with local businesses.

Home safety evaluations.

Social and educational programs.



Handy Services —

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

Referrals to discounted vetted
property and home maintenance
services.



*"Helping people
stay in their
homes is the most
joyful thing I've
done in my life."*

- Charlie England

This year we lost Charlie England, one of the founding members of **At Home In Darien**. Many of you may recall Charlie who volunteered his time and talent to assist seniors so that they could age in place. With a warm smile and a huge heart, he helped many appreciative people with small tasks around their homes.

A classic car enthusiast, Charlie was the founder of the Darien Collectors Car Show, a charitable event held every Father's Day to benefit **At Home In Darien**. He was also an active and beloved member of St. Luke's Church.

Charlie was a model of kindness and generosity and **At Home In Darien** was blessed to have his involvement and friendship. We are also very thankful for his enduring support as he thoughtfully left a bequest to **At Home In Darien** so that we can continue to provide important services to Darien seniors. We are forever grateful to Charlie for improving the quality of life for seniors in our community!

Thanks for your Support!

At Home In Darien is supported by hundreds of people from all over the town. 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 gift today to:

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

Remember us in your will or trust!

**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.**

Catch the Wave!

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

Please join parents and fans as they cheer
the team on during the 2018 football season.
Admission is free to those age 65 and over.

**We hope to see you at the games!
2018 DHS Football Captains & Team**

Home Game Schedule:

Friday 9/7 @ 7:00pm vs. Ridgefield
Saturday 9/29 @ 1:30pm vs. Stamford
Saturday 10/6 @ 2:00pm vs. Staples
Friday 10/26 @ 7:00pm vs. Trumbull
Saturday 11/10 @ 1:30pm vs. Bridgeport Central

**Make sure you know
what's going on around
town...subscribe to our
monthly calendar of
events!**

Email info@AtHomeInDarien.org or
call **203.655.2227** to request to receive
it by mail. If we have your email address
you will also receive our new BLOG
notifications where we share
important information on
various subjects of
interest.



MEMBER
Your Name Here

203.655.2227
AtHomeInDarien.org
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820

Stay Active and Engaged

Your free **At Home In Darien** membership card makes it very easy to get out and take advantage of discounts at local restaurants, shops, and services in town. Whether it's an afternoon shopping, or a meal out, bring your membership card with you to receive special promotions. Check out our website to see a complete list of participating businesses or call us at **203.655.2227**.

If you are 60 or over and have not received your free membership card, please contact us to receive it.

TAXI ANYONE?

At Home In Darien transportation services are safe and trustworthy, but are available only on weekdays. Our new Half-Price Taxi Voucher Program allows you to arrange transportation for yourself on-demand, around the clock, 365 days a year! Taxi rides are 50% off the regular price for Darien seniors 60+ and residents with disabilities. For example, a booklet of taxi vouchers worth \$25 is available for purchase for only \$12.50. Simply pay the taxi driver with your vouchers.

To purchase vouchers, residents must bring proof of age or disability. Please call **At Home In Darien** at 203.655.2227, or stop by the office at 2 Renshaw Road, for more information.