LATE SUMMER 2026
VOLUME 18 ISSUE 2

At Home in Darien

Stay in Home. Stay Active. Stay Connected.

OUT & ABOUT

2 Renshaw Road • Darien, CT 06820 • 203.655.2227 • www.AtHomeInDarien.org

A New Mission and Look Reflecting Our Continued Commitment to Darien Seniors

For more than 13 years, **At Home in Darien** has been dedicated to helping older adults remain in their homes by providing dependable transportation, trusted services, and compassionate support. During that time, our organization has grown alongside the needs of the seniors we serve.

As we have listened to our members and the community, one thing has become increasingly clear: while transportation remains at the heart of what we do, fostering meaningful social connections has become equally important. Bringing seniors together to build friendships, stay engaged, and remain connected has become an essential part of our mission. This was a key factor in the development of the Out & About Eats and Trips programs that have resulted in over 30 opportunities for our members to get together for lunch and other activities in the past year.

To reflect this evolution, we are proud to introduce a refreshed brand identity featuring a new mission statement, logo, and tagline. Our revised mission statement explicitly states our goal to enable more social interaction for our members: *At Home in Darien supports Darien seniors with rides, services and activities to better enable them to remain in their homes and stay socially connected.* Our new tagline speaks to our mission: *Stay in Home. Stay Active. Stay Connected.* And our new logo builds on our current version to better reflect our updated mission. But, while each of these are changing somewhat, our commitment to Darien seniors remains stronger than ever.

These new brand elements better represent who we are today—an organization that not only helps seniors age in place but also creates opportunities for them to remain active, connected, and engaged in the community they love. It captures the warmth, compassion, and sense of belonging that we strive to provide every day.

We think our new mission, tagline and logo reflect the exciting changes in the direction of **At Home in Darien** while honoring the values that have guided us since our founding. We look forward to continuing this journey together as we expand opportunities for Darien seniors to live fuller, more connected lives.

We extend our sincere thanks to Darien resident, AHID volunteer, and Darien Men's Association member Richard Shear, for engaging his amazing team at Invok Brands and for providing their strategic guidance, creative expertise, and unwavering commitment throughout our branding refresh journey. Their partnership has been instrumental in bringing our new brand to life.

A Great Day on the Links benefitting Darien Seniors

The 2nd Annual Darien Men's Association Golf Tournament benefiting **At Home in Darien** was another great success! Held July 13 at Oak Hills Golf Club in Norwalk, the event brought together 80 golfers for a beautiful day of golf, camaraderie and community support. The tournament has quickly become a wonderful tradition and an important source of support for our mission to help Darien seniors remain in their homes and stay socially connected. We are incredibly grateful to the Darien Men's Association for its continued generosity and commitment to **At Home in Darien**.

A special thank-you goes to the dedicated members of the DMA Golf Committee—Frank Gallagher, John Craft, Frank DeLeo, Jay Bennett, Bob McGroarty, Bog Conologue and Jerry Crowley. Their hard work, enthusiasm and attention to detail helped make the day such a success.

And, of course, congratulations to this year's winning team: Frank Gallagher, John Karcher, Dave Frank and John McLean!

We are fortunate to have such a generous and engaged community supporting **At Home in Darien.** The DMA's ongoing partnership makes a meaningful difference in the lives of Darien seniors, and we look forward to many more rounds together in the years ahead.

DMA Golf Committee Chairman Frank Gallagher thanking all participants

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Our New Mission:

"At Home in Darien supports Darien seniors with rides, services and activities to better enable them to remain in their homes and stay socially connected."

Out & About Eats

Our **Out & About Eats** program, launched last year, continues to bring Darien seniors together for good food, conversation and connection at local restaurants. Over the past 12 months, we have hosted 16 separate dining events, welcoming more than 250 attendees.

These gatherings have become a wonderful way for seniors to enjoy a meal together, meet new friends and strengthen existing relationships—all while supporting our local restaurant community.

We are incredibly grateful to the following restaurant partners for their enthusiastic support of this program. Their generosity and commitment have played an important and growing role in helping **At Home in Darien** create new and meaningful opportunities for seniors to stay socially connected and engaged within our community.

PAPARAZZI ITALIAN RESTAURANT

POST CORNER PIZZA

Zucchero CAFE

THE GOOSE American Bistro & Bar

Antonio's ITALIAN BISTRO

HUNAN KITCHEN Exotic Asian Gourmet at its Best

Convent of St. Birgitta Vikingsborg Guest House

Nino's

Atria DARIEN

ESTD 1999 COROMANDEL CUISINE OF INDIA

THE GRANOLA BAR

MOLTO RISTORANTE

SCENA

Bareburger EST. 2009

Celebrating Elizabeth McNiff

Elizabeth McNiff (right) at The Community Fund volunteer awards with AHID Board member Sue Okie (left)

At Home in Darien was proud to announce Elizabeth McNiff as its Outstanding Adult Volunteer of the year, in recognition of her extraordinary commitment to helping support Darien seniors. Elizabeth was honored along with volunteers of other Darien organizations at The Community Fund of Darien's volunteer awards event in April.

Elizabeth initially reached out to volunteer with AHID in 2024 and was paired with a Darien senior whom she has visited faithfully every week for nearly two years. Her visits have become a treasured part of her friend's week, and according to the seniors' daughter, Elizabeth is "a constant in my mom's life," always arriving with a big smile and happy demeanor. At 92, her mother's world is small, but Elizabeth's visits bring friendship, joy and meaningful connection—and have made Elizabeth part of their family.

We are deeply grateful to Elizabeth for her compassion, dependability and dedication to making a difference.

A Perfect Summer Day at the Beach

On August 5, more than 60 Darien seniors gathered at the Paddle Hut at Weed Beach for **At Home in Darien's** 3rd Annual Summer Beach Party—and it was a wonderful afternoon of friendship and laughter.

With beautiful summer weather as the backdrop, guests enjoyed each other's company while listening to music, being challenged with a Darien-themed trivia contest, and sharing sandwiches, soft drinks and cookies. More importantly, the afternoon provided a wonderful opportunity for seniors to meet new friends, reconnect with familiar faces and simply enjoy being together in one of Darien's most beautiful settings.

The Summer Beach Party was co-sponsored by **At Home in Darien**, Darien's Mather Center and Seniors Helping Seniors, a wonderful organization led by owner Alexandra Sabe. We are grateful to all of our partners for helping make this special event possible and for their shared commitment to creating opportunities for Darien seniors to stay active, engaged and socially connected.

The smiles, conversations and laughter throughout the afternoon were a wonderful reminder of what happens when our community comes together. We look forward to continuing this summer tradition and welcoming even more friends to next year's beach party!

Making Memories, Together

Our Out & About Trips program is all about bringing Darien seniors together to enjoy new experiences, explore wonderful destinations, and share time with friends. From cultural attractions and concerts to beautiful outdoor destinations, each trip offers an opportunity to get out and have some fun. As these photos show, the smiles and friendships along the way are just as important as the destinations themselves!

Summer sun at Greenwich Point Park

Enjoying tea during visit to Grace Farms in New Canaan

A tour of hidden gem Olson Woods in Darien

Watching the play Primary Trust at the Westport Playhouse

A Special Surprise for Our Riders

During two separate weeks in July, **At Home in Darien** riders received a special surprise when they boarded our vehicles: gift bags filled with thoughtful treats and small gifts, courtesy of Sterling Care Home Staffing and Atria Darien.

Bags included items such as breakfast bars, fresh fruit and water to enjoy along the way, in addition to a variety of small gifts that brought smiles to our riders and made their day a little brighter. The thoughtfulness behind the gift bags made this gesture especially meaningful.

At Home in Darien is grateful to have such wonderful community partners who recognize the importance of supporting Darien seniors and helping them feel valued and connected. Acts of kindness like this are a wonderful reminder that our riders are surrounded by a community that cares about them.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jorge Cortizo and Krystianne Lee at Sterling Care Home Staffing and Monica Lynn at Atria Darien for their generosity, kindness and support. We truly appreciate their partnership and the joy they brought to our riders!

Save the Dates: A Fall Full of Connection

As summer winds down, **At Home in Darien** is looking forward to a busy fall filled with events and activities designed to bring Darien seniors together, create new connections and enjoy time with friends. Please mark your calendars for these two special events:

Annual Luncheon — Thursday, September 24

Join us once again at the Darien Community Center for **At Home in Darien's** Annual Luncheon. This popular event is free for Darien seniors and includes lunch and an engaging guest speaker. Space is limited, so be sure to reserve your spot! Registration details will be included in AHID's September Monthly Calendar of Events. You can also call AHID at (203) 655-2227 to register.

2nd Annual Pickleball Event — Saturday, November 14

We're bringing back one of last year's most successful new events! Our 2nd Annual Pickleball Event will once again be held at Pickleball America. The inaugural event was a tremendous success, bringing the community together for a fun-filled evening while supporting **At Home in Darien.** We're excited to build on that momentum and make this year's event even better.

Stay tuned for more details—and keep an eye on your calendar for these and other opportunities.

Thank you again to the following sponsors of last year's inaugural pickleball event

ACE SPONSOR

Jim & Belinda Metzger

RALLY SPONSOR

Bankwell

The Residence at Selleck's Woods

Healthcare Pathfinder
Your guide to managing healthcare
In Memory of Judy and Paul Rodriguez

Fox Hill Construction

VOLLEY SPONSOR

Ring's End Since 1902

BMW of Darien
Family Owned. Customer Driven.

Matthew R. Dougherty Architect, LLC

Atria Darien

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

- Transportation within Darien, Stamford, Norwalk and New Canaan, Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m; Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Half-Price Taxi Voucher Program.
- Social connections through special events and activities.
- Communication and Programs — *Out & About* newsletter.
- Monthly calendar of events.
- Monthly blog.
- Membership Cards that provide discounts with local businesses.
- Social and educational programs.
- Handy Services —
- Volunteers including Friendly Visitors, Shoppers, Helpers, Callers, Drivers and Leaf Raking.
- Referrals to discounted vetted property and home maintenance services.

AHID Named a 2026–2027 Age Well Across Connecticut Site

At Home in Darien is proud to announce that we have been selected as a 2026–2027 Age Well Across Connecticut site, recognizing our ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive, accessible, and connected community where older adults can thrive at every age.

Age Well Across Connecticut highlights local organizations and community efforts that are making a meaningful difference by prioritizing inclusion, accessibility, and opportunities for older adults to remain engaged in the communities they call home. We are honored to have **At Home in Darien** recognized among organizations across the state that share this important commitment.

This recognition reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board members, community partners, and supporters who work together every day to help Darien seniors stay connected and engaged.

AHID will be formally honored at a special event this fall alongside the other 2026–2027 Connecticut honorees. We are grateful for this recognition and proud to represent Darien as we continue working to make our community a place where everyone can age well.

MESSAGE FROM AT HOME IN DARIEN

Dear Friends,

As we complete another wonderful summer, there is an unmistakable sense of energy and excitement at **At Home in Darien**. One of our top priorities continues to be creating meaningful opportunities for Darien seniors to connect with one another, build new friendships, and enjoy shared experiences throughout our community.

Our Out & About Eats and Out & About Trips programs continue to exceed every expectation. Already in 2026, we have coordinated nearly 20 group events, including lunches at eight local Darien restaurants and memorable outings to concerts, theatrical performances, museums, and parks throughout the region. These gatherings have become much more than enjoyable excursions—they are opportunities to strengthen connections, reduce isolation, and create lasting memories.

The smiles, laughter, and friendships that have emerged from these events remind us why this work is so important. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has participated, volunteered, and partnered with us to make these experiences possible.

Our recent rebranding, highlighted on the cover of this newsletter, represents more than a new look—it reflects our continued growth and our unwavering commitment to helping Darien seniors stay socially connected. As we look to the future, we are excited to build on this momentum by creating even more opportunities for seniors to engage with one another, explore our community, and enjoy meaningful shared experiences. We have many exciting initiatives on the horizon, and we look forward to sharing them with you in the months ahead. Stay tuned!

Debbie Parnon
President of the
Board of Directors
At Home in Darien

Chris Jones
Executive Director of
At Home in Darien
Chris@AtHomeInDarien.org

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AHID Looking for Another Car to Support Darien Seniors

Transportation remains at the heart of what we do at **At Home in Darien**. Last year, we provided more than 5,000 one-way rides, helping Darien seniors get to medical appointments, shopping, errands and other important destinations.

Our primary vehicle is a 2025 sedan, which handles the majority of our trips. When necessary, we also rely on our accessible handicap van as a second vehicle. We would like to change that by acquiring a second, reliable vehicle specifically for passenger transportation—allowing us to reserve our handicap van for riders who need its accessibility features.

If you or someone you know has a reliable used vehicle that might be donated to **At Home in Darien**, we would be extremely grateful. We would also welcome the opportunity to purchase a suitable vehicle from someone in our community. If you may be able to help, please contact us!

A "Walk" through Darien's History

At Home in Darien was proud to be part of Middlesex Parish's special celebration of America 250 on June 13, an event honoring our nation's history and the many stories that have shaped our community.

As part of the celebration, AHID provided transportation for two groups of seniors in our passenger van, giving them the opportunity to visit several of Darien's historic landmarks featured on the tour. Stops included the Mather Homestead, the First Congregational Church of Darien, and Highland Farm.

For our seniors, the day was more than a chance to explore these important local sites—it was an opportunity to connect with the history of the town they have called home and to share the experience with friends and fellow community members.

Participants thoroughly enjoyed this special walk through history, and AHID was delighted to help make the day accessible and memorable for our seniors.

Viewing historical documents at the Mather Homestead

Learning about the history of the First Congregational Church