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atHome

with Seniors in the Eastern Monadnock Region

An Afternoon of Irish Folk Music and Member Readings



Members enjoying Irish ballads.

By Cynthia Sue Martell, Member

Twas a fine gatherin' indeed, when MaH Members celebrated St. Patrick's Day at the Jaffrey Civic Center on March 16, 2016.

Once again, Good Shepherd Healthcare Center's Chef, Damon Anthony, presented a delectable variety of dishes – each with a distinctive Irish flair. These included beef stew cooked in Guinness Beer, and brownies also made with Guinness!

MaH member Larry Foley maintained the Guinness theme by sharing the long and colorful history of Ireland's famed brewers of beer. We learned the Guinness family is not only renowned for their beer, but for their ongoing philanthropic generosity as well. Larry also played a CD, which featured an Irish Tenor and commemorated in song the experience of Irish immigrants

arriving at Ellis Island and their longing for home.

Member Kathy Graves movingly read several poems written by two of Ireland's most famous and cherished poets: William Butler Yeats and Seamus Heaney. Her final reading was one of her own delightful poems titled, Twenty-Five Years After Graduating.

I did a dramatic reading of my original poem, The Abandoned and my accompanying short story, Candlelight Dinner. Both were based on my curiosity regarding those who were unable or unwilling to emigrate from Ireland during the great potato famine of 1845-1849.

Following the readings, MaH members had the pleasure and privilege of hearing the gifted Irish Folk Music singer/guitarist, John Sullivan. John's Irish Ballads, sung only as he can do, were charming and bittersweet. It was a

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Upcoming MaH Information Sessions

Have you ever needed a hand with something at home and didn't know who to call for help? Or, have you seen write-ups or photos of our fun outings and wished you were there too? Finally, do you want to learn how

to email or use FaceBook so you can stay in touch with your tech savvy grandchildren? If you've answered yes to even one of these questions, you could benefit from a MaH membership!

Find out more about MaH by attending one of our information sessions:
April 27th, 10-11:30 am at the Hancock library
or June 9, 4-6 pm at Sharon Arts, Grove Street, Peterborough

Join the MaH Coffee Group!

The MaH Coffee Group meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10am at the Bagel Mill in Peterborough. This is an informal social gathering. The group would like to encourage others to attend! Join us and get to know fellow members! The next gathering will be on April 19th.

Annual Meeting - Save the Date!

Our annual meeting for members is scheduled for June 1st at the Shattuck Golf Club in Jaffrey. Plan to come and enjoy news about our organization and delicious refreshments. We highly value your input regarding your membership – please be prepared to tell us what are we doing well and, on the flip side, how can we improve our service to you. Looking forward to seeing all members!

MaH Volunteer Gatherings

By Bill Graf, MaH Volunteer Committee Chair

On February 3rd the Volunteer Committee hosted a coffee at SDE for all volunteers who provide direct services to our members: drivers, computer technicians, handypersons, and friendly visitors. Thirteen out of eighteen volunteers were able to attend. Our first activity was a group photograph taken by Board Member Annie Card (see photo). As is evident in the picture, this proved to be an effective ice breaker for the group.

Sandra Faber, MaH Member Service Coordinator, provided a variety of delicious refreshments while we got to know one another and shared our volunteer experiences. The goal of the meeting, in addition to becoming better acquainted, was to explore working more as a team and to better meet the

needs of the membership. One major area of discussion was the transition of transportation services from the Red Cross to CVTC (Contoocook Valley Transportation Company). To date everything has gone smoothly, and our volunteer drivers are committed to ensuring that the needs of MaH members are met. MaH member Dwight Schenk accepted the responsibility of coordinating a communication system for our computer tech volunteers to ensure the best service possible for our members with "tech" questions.

At our volunteer coffee gathering, member Owen Houghton introduced a new program that he was proposing for MaH members. Titled "Members Helping Members," the program matches volunteers with members who

live alone and would like to receive regular telephone check-in calls. An announcement went out soliciting volunteers for the new program, and on March 9th a training session was held at SDE for the ten volunteers who responded. Owen, Sandra and Cindy conducted the training and six members who had requested check-in calls have already been paired with a volunteer caller. Some members have also expressed an interest in an occasional visit from their caller.

Since many of the volunteer callers are also members, this program helps reinforce our sense of MaH as a true community. Monadnock at Home is fortunate to have both members and non-member volunteers to support our membership! 📧



A Happy Group of MaH Volunteers Ready for Action!



Volunteers for our Member Helping Member Program

The Village to Village Network

In the Spring 2015 issue of our newsletter, then Board Chair Rick Harnden wrote in part:

Our homegrown organization has stepped onto the national stage to enable the Village to Village Network (an affiliation of more than 200 "Villages" like ours across the country) to continue its pivotal role in expanding the Village Movement.

Rick now finds himself serving as President of that national Network and wants to let our members know a little more



Left to Right: Cindy Bowen, MaH ED and Russ Armstrong, MaH Chair joined Kirby Dunn, VT Homeshare ED and Natalie Galucia, VtoV ED at the UVM Gerontology Symposium

about "VtoV," which has grown to over 350 "Villages" since last year!

Monadnock at Home (MaH) exemplifies the Network's Village definition as "community-based networks that expand options for older adults so they can live fully and independently in their communities." MaH's vision is closely aligned with that of the Network's: Through cutting edge innovation, collaboration, advocacy and inclusion, the Village to Village Network expands opportunity, choice, support and care for all older people. The Network is committed

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Cindy's Corner

By Cindy Bowen, Executive Director



Hello everyone and welcome to the spring 2016 issue of "at Home!" MaH's staff and Program Committee have been busy planning for late spring and summer! Just the sound of those words, "late spring and summer" brings a smile to my face! Speaking of MaH's programs and events, members occasionally ask why we offer the programs that we do and why we move them from town to town. The answer is directly related to our recently revised mission statement, "Provide seniors of the Monadnock Region with the support and practical means to live and thrive in their homes and communities."

The Program Committee has continued to respond to program suggestions and requests from our members, including local and out of town venues (approximately 1 hour or less). Over the past year we have stayed more local, providing programs

that are more easily accessible and reasonably priced, if not free! In addition, we try our best to move the program locations among the ten towns that we serve. Rotating our programs between towns provides members with an opportunity to meet and get acquainted with one another. It also helps us to create a sense of community within our membership. The member coffees at the Bagel Mill on the third Tuesday of the month is another good example of our response to member requests. If you have any ideas for programs or events, please do not hesitate to give MaH a call. I also encourage you to attend this year's Annual membership meeting, on June 1st which will provide a venue for member input.

Don't forget, MaH is always ready to accept new members. If you're

happy with the services and benefits of membership, please continue to spread the word to your friends and neighbors whom you think would benefit from our support. Our best form of membership recruitment continues to be word of mouth, by our members sharing their experiences with others. For more information, interested folks can call 371-0809 or visit our website www.monadnockathome.org.

As the spring weather approaches do keep in mind that your MaH membership offers you access to pre-screened service providers and volunteers that are ready to assist you. Don't let spring chores overwhelm you! Do remember that MaH has vetted service providers and volunteers ready to help! All it takes is a single call to 371-0809 to find the help you need. We are here for you!

I hope this issue of "at Home" finds you healthy, safe and happy! 🍷

Irish Music *Continued from page 1*

special treat to join him in singing (and foot stomping) the rollicking chorus from his rendition of the Irish Rovers' song, The Unicorn:

There were green alligators and
Long-necked geese, some humpty-
back camels
And some chimpanzees,
Some cats and rats and elephants,
But sure as you're born,
The loveliest of all was the
unicorn. 🐾

VtoV *Continued from page 3*

to empowering individual Villages to:

- Help their members live and thrive in a place of their choosing;
- Be closely connected to their communities and with the supports and tools they need to create "a good life" of their own design;
- Create opportunities to use the talents of their individual members to improve Village impact as well as benefit the overall community; and
- Provide social activities that minimize isolation and promote interaction and trust between members, enabling them

to offer their help when possible and to ask for help when needed.

In the Monadnock region we're fortunate to have MaH already accomplishing these objectives. The Network's purpose is to make this possible for communities all across our country.

Note that MaH participated on a panel in March with VtoV in Burlington, Vermont to "spread the word" about villages in New England. The event was the 2016 University of Vermont Burlington Gerontology Symposium held to help educate students and professionals on "the Village model." 🐾

Member Spotlight: Jo Putnam

By Sandra Faber, Member Services Coordinator

I had the pleasure of visiting with MaH member, Jo Putnam, recently. Having lived in many places in the U.S. and abroad, Jo has led, and still leads a life of learning, fun and observation, passing on lessons learned through her writing.

Jo is a writer, but she was also a school teacher. She brought creativity and a unique perspective to teaching, as she believes in integrating storytelling into the curriculum. "Learning should be fun!" she says. She was lucky enough to be given the freedom to apply this to her own classroom and ultimately go on to write and publish her own curriculum.

As we sat talking in her cozy home, in front of a large picture window, we paused several times to watch a red headed woodpecker feeding just outside. Suddenly, Jo laughs and points out the very large squirrel that

has come to visit the feeder. Sometimes she shoos him away, she explains, but other times she watches his tricks and antics. "I love writing AND nature", she says. "When I write, I think of nothing else." In college, Jo was encouraged by her professor to nurture her love for writing. She went on to publish poetry and other works. When asked what project she's currently working on, Jo says, "Memoirs for my children and grandchildren, 'Grandma Jo Stories'". She shows me the National Geographic sent to her from her grandchild - a thoughtful gift from a grandchild who knows her Grandmother's love for writing, nature and travel. It is clear that Jo has a wonderful family support network, even though loved ones are spread all



over the country and even abroad.

Jo was a member of MaH years back and found she just wasn't able to get involved the way she wanted to, but recently Jo has come back and rejoined MaH. She now attends a lot of programs and the monthly coffee group. She has

made many connections with other MaH members, some that she knew previously through mutual interests in writing and nature. Jo explains she really likes the program offerings, but she says, "most importantly is the reassurance that when I need something, I can call you and I know the person coming to my home to help me is fully vetted. Living alone, I'm weary of having just anybody come to the door and into my house." And MaH is so happy to have you back as a member, Jo! The photo of Jo, captures our visit well...vibrant, happy, laughing, smiling Jo, outside and always ready for a new adventure! 🐾



OUR MISSION *The Mission of Monadnock at Home is to provide seniors of the Monadnock Region with the support and practical means to live and thrive in their homes and communities.*