

Submitted by:

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SEAGLASS VILLAGE TO THE RESCUE

Isolation and its accompanying loneliness is a public health issue and a predictor of poor health in seniors. According to an AARP study, social isolation is as dangerous as obesity or smoking for seniors. Seaglass Village, celebrating its first anniversary on December first, is helping to alleviate loneliness while assisting its members with the small chores to enable them to age in their own homes.

Maureen has lived in her home for 40 years, and so it is very important to her to be offered a helping hand to be able to remain in her home. Over the past 10 months, it has been Dale's pleasure to take Maureen grocery shopping, to the Post Office, veterinarian, tailor, manicurist, hairdresser, and even to Bocce. Dale's husband Clark has also helped Maureen with Tech support. Dale and Clark live in Nahant and have helped Seaglass members in Marblehead, Nahant, and Swampscott. Dale says, "Seaglass Village has had a positive impact on Maureen's life, and on mine too."

Seaglass Village, one of more than 350 Villages in the U.S., opened for business a year ago, during the pandemic. It now has nearly 100 members and 60 volunteers. Volunteers have helped members with pesky technical challenges, gardening chores, transportation to appointments, and indoor tasks like changing batteries in smoke detectors and swapping screens for storm windows. One of the more unusual requests was getting rid of mice in a member's home!

Seaglass Village also offers its members a long list of social and educational events, including trips, lunches, performances, and classes. There's a book club and a group that plays bocce and another playing pickleball. At pickleball in late September another volunteer met Joy who was also new to Marblehead and wanted to learn pickleball as a way of meeting people and making friends. "You're my first friend in town," exclaimed Joy. She and that volunteer are now friends, with a plan to get together later in the fall.

The goal of Seaglass Village is to help seniors live independently and safely in their own homes. Well-equipped retirement villages and assisted living homes are nearby and provide excellent care, but many seniors would prefer to stay at home, getting a little help now and then, perhaps to shovel snow off the steps to the front door or to make a few meals when a member gets home from the hospital. Sometimes all a member needs is someone to walk his dog occasionally or help her on with her coat before driving her to a doctor's appointment. Seaglass Village's web site is www.seaglassvillage.org.

Sometimes those members are feeling isolated and are thankful for the social outreach; and sometimes they just need a ride to the veterinarian or someone to eliminate the mouse problem.