

# Greenwich Time



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## Senior Program Grows

By Meredith Blake

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When Louise Herz, 76, was faced with the prospect of seeing a doctor about knee surgery recently, she was overwhelmed. As a widow who lived alone, Herz contacted Lise Jameson, executive director of At Home in Greenwich, who hopped in her car to go with her. "She took notes and then typed them up and gave them to me," Herz said. "I really needed that."

Herz is a member of At Home in Greenwich, a nonprofit which, nearly a year after its founding, has grown to offer more services and activities to make it easier for seniors to stay in their homes longer.

Herz initially looked into the program after reading about a similar organization in Boston called the Beacon Hill Village, which provides both

social activities and basic help with items such as groceries.

"I thought we should have something like this here," she said. And then she heard that there was a small group of seniors in the community working to put one together.

Founded by Marilyn Chou, 75, and some of her friends, the organization was set up to provide seniors everything they would need from rides to doctor's appointments and meal delivery to social activities, said Chou.

Chou, a widow who was homebound after a life-threatening intestinal blockage, said she feared the prospect of losing her home and moving into an assisted-living facility. "I love the feeling that I can walk everywhere," she said.

So she began contacting town agencies to find out what services were available to seniors and finding ways to reach out to the community, she said. And after more than a year, she could not be more pleased with the organization's growth, she said. "We have so many great activities and so much going on," she said.

At Home in Greenwich has more than 120 members and a group of volunteers. The organization offers trips to museums, poetry readings, dinner at local restaurants and movies. "It's such a great concept for an organization," said Jameson, who has worked as a social worker for more than 25 years.

Any problem that a senior is facing, whether it is a need for a plumber or someone to cook, Jameson and the At Home in Greenwich volunteer network can solve it, she said. "It really builds a support network," said Jameson.

Jameson also makes house visits and works closely with members to make their homes safe and give them what they need, she said. Now Herz also volunteers with the organization and is very active, helping members with computer issues and offering rides. "I just really enjoy it," she said.

For more information about At Home in Greenwich, or to become a member, call 203-422-2342.

Membership costs \$500 for an individual and \$650 for a household.