

2020 - JULY/AUGUST | ISSUE 4

# Villages Update

The Newsletter of Villages of the Berkshires, Inc.

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Summer 2020  
Newsletter



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## GRANT UPDATES

We are in the News!

Watch the Video Now



SPECTRUM NEWS BROADCAST



Exciting  
News!



VILLAGES OF THE  
BERKSHIRES

is awarded a

# GRANT

from the



[read more](#)



## Villages of the Berkshires Volunteer Initiative

The Community Care Corps program funds are to support proposals for innovative local models in which volunteers assist family caregivers or directly assist older adults or adults with disabilities with non-medical care in order to maintain their independence and toward a goal of “aging in place”. The Community Care Corps is under the auspices of the Federal Administration for Community Living/ Administration on Aging.

As Villages of the Berkshires (VoB) begins its launch a key component is to have a corps of volunteers with the skills and services needed by our members. These services run the gamut of assistance that will enable people to remain in their own homes as they grow older and to reduce the loneliness and isolation often experienced by this population.

VoB's grant request focuses on building an innovative model for volunteer recruitment, training and service delivery. It includes collaboration with Berkshire Community College (BCC) and specifically with Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Berkshire Community College (OLLI at BCC) and the Division of Student Affairs. As we seek volunteers to provide the services to our members, we will look to OLLI at BCC to offer their members an opportunity to work with us and/or OLLI as volunteers. Increasing the involvement of OLLI members in the community and with both organizations is a key to the success of this project.

In addition, BCC's service learning component as part of its curriculum for students with interests in many aspects of community, health and nonprofit services will now include VoB. BCC's academic program will offer students the opportunity to participate as volunteers as part of

(Continued on next page)

## Villages Grant Cont.

their course curriculum in areas that connect to VoB's operations and services. BCC will engage faculty and students that are using course based Service Learning, a credit bearing, educational experience in which students participate in organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

VoB's collaboration with BCC is quite unique within the Villages movement. VoB is the only village in the nation that has formed a partnership with an OLLI organization.

With these grant funds, a Volunteer Coordinator will be hired who will oversee volunteer activities and VoB's relationship with key collaborators. She/he will work under the supervision of VoB's Program Director, Carolyn King. The grant also provides funds for developing a marketing plan for volunteers and members as well as aspects of the program at BCC.

# A meaningful partnership.







Click Here for Survey Monkey

# VOB QUICK 3

Answer three survey questions. A little bit of feedback, a lot of help. Thanks!

## *Up Coming Meetings - Register in Advance*

### **1. Villages of the Berkshires General Assembly Meeting for Members, Volunteers, Supporters and Friends.**

**A meeting to talk about August 1st launch and related topics. We need your input. All are welcome!!! [<Click Here>](#)**

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: Jul 22, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvduqpqT0uH9Y912oR3urFsZdcMcsYAo8x>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

### **2. Villages Volunteers - Group Meeting.**

**Already signed up? Thinking about it? We are targeting Aug. 1 launch-specific topics. Join the conversation. [<Click Here>](#)**

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: Jul 24, 2020 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

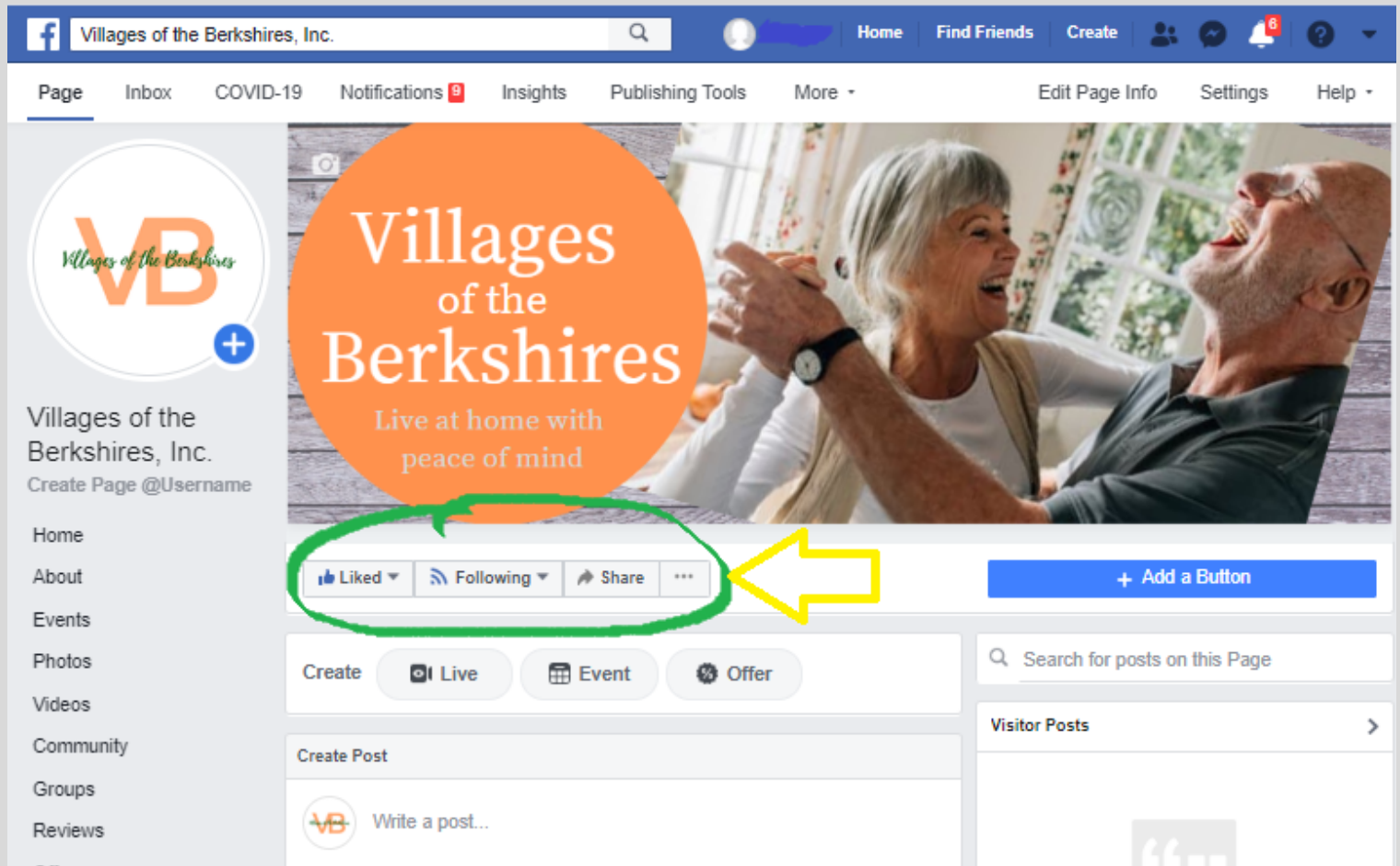
Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYtdeqopjstHd0jiqnaLby-sY>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Be one of the first people  
to LIKE us and FOLLOW us on Facebook.  
Click the photo below and hit the  
"Like" and "Follow" buttons to keep informed about  
member services and volunteer activities.

*Like Us!!*



GOAL - FALL 2020

**50**

**NEW MEMBER  
HOUSEHOLDS**

Help us reach our goals

GOAL - FALL 2020

**50**

**NEW ACTIVE  
VOLUNTEERS**



# Have Access to a Newsletter?

Recently, this wonderful article written by Barbara Viniar was published in the Temple Anshe Amunium newsletter. Do you belong to an organization or group that publishes a newsletter? If so, let us know and we'll give you print-ready media!  
[info@villagesoftheberkshires.org](mailto:info@villagesoftheberkshires.org)

Let us know!

A great

EXAMPLE

THANKS,  
BARBARA,  
HOWARD,  
SHIRLEY AND  
TEMPLE ANSHE  
AMUNIM

## Under the TAA Spotlight -

### ***Our June Spotlight: Howard and Shirley Shapiro - Establishing a 'Villages' of the Berkshires***

***An Interview With Barbara Viniar:***



**Can you describe how Villages of the Berkshires works?**

Villages is not a group of buildings; it is "neighbors helping neighbors" so that members can enjoy life in their homes safely, successfully and affordably. Members have access to information, volunteer services and social opportunities that contribute to a healthy, vibrant and meaningful life. Volunteers provide everything from transportation, to friendly check-in calls, to reading aloud, to minor household repairs and technology assistance. Villages is funded by membership fees, donations and grants.

#### ***How did you and Shirley find out about the Villages model and what made you decide to bring the Villages model to the Berkshires?***

Several years ago Shirley and I began thinking how we wanted to live in the next few years. We knew that we did not want to become part of a senior living arrangement and, if we could, we wanted to continue living in the home we've been in for the last 15 years. We loved living in the Berkshires and felt certain we wanted to remain here. During this time, we read the book by Atul Gawande "Being Mortal." In that book he discusses the village concept as an option for people as they grow older and find that their needs change in significant ways. We knew that nothing like "villages" existed in the Berkshires and began to explore with others who were in similar circumstances their interest in moving in this direction.

#### ***Starting a non-profit can be daunting. Tell us a little bit about the process over the last three years.***

First, we began with inviting a group of people (15 - 20) whom we knew to an organizing meeting to further explore their interest and willingness to participate in this endeavor. From that meeting we formed a steering committee that began investigating the need, interest and process for beginning a village in The Berkshires. We learned there was a national Village to Village Network which could provide direction and insight for getting a village started. By 2019, we formed a Board of Directors from the Steering Committee, registered in the Commonwealth, sought our 501(c)(3) status and became a functioning nonprofit organization.

#### ***What were your biggest challenges? Successes?***

One of the biggest challenges was getting the resources to do what we wanted to do. Our biggest success was getting a grant from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation that provided funds for our start-up. This allowed us to hire a part-time Program Director. The other big challenge has been getting the word out in a productive and positive way that would encourage people to join our effort. While we have been quite successful identifying volunteers, we have not been as successful identifying members. Frequently, people tell us "we're not ready yet" for this concept. What they don't realize is that if they don't join and support this effort now, it may not exist when they are ready. We now offer an Associate Membership for people who want to be connected to the Villages community, but do not yet need the range of services we provide.

#### ***You had to delay the official launch of VOB because of the Covid-19 crisis. What has Villages been doing in the last few months and what are your plans?***

This current crisis has very much affected our plans to launch, add members and start volunteer services, which is unfortunate in light of the needs people have while confined to their home. During this pandemic our

*(continued on page 9)*

To our mind, Villages of the Berkshires is a clear example of tzedakah, not only in terms of it being a philanthropic organization, but in the kinds of services and support it brings to people who may no longer have the ability to manage certain aspects of their living.

# Forms! Forms! Forms!

VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS NEED  
TO FILL OUT AND SUBMIT CORI  
FORMS. BACKGROUND CHECKS KEEP  
OUR COMMUNITY SAFE. PLEASE  
PRINT OUT, FILL OUT AND MAIL IN.  
THANKS.



**living at home  
with peace of mind**

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