



In this issue:



Grantees  
Help Meet  
Needs



Gratitude for  
Protective  
Services



Ken  
Alpert  
Memorial

## Housing with Supportive Services

Jim and Annie are enjoying their retirement years living in congregate housing. This housing design provides residents with both privacy and the opportunity for companionship. Residents have a private area that they furnish themselves and they also have access to numerous common areas, including kitchen, living room, and dining room.

Jim had a long career in shipping and receiving at several large corporate warehouses. He stopped working to take care of his ill mother for many years. After she passed in 2007, he needed a new place to live and friends helped him connect with Springwell for the opportunity to live in congregate housing. Jim visited the residence, liked all the people, and moved in.

*“I am grateful to Springwell for finding me a place to live. I feel very secure and safe and am never alone.”*

Annie spent her career helping many people as a chamber maid, nurses aid, and bagger at a large grocery store. She lived with her sister-in-law and went to activities at a day center but her sister-in-law was often away for extended periods and Annie was lonely. She was introduced to the congregate housing option and after several visits, Annie moved in and has lived there for about 16 years. “I love having my own room and the ability to socialize any time I want to because there are always people around.”



Jim and Annie participate in the social activities in congregate housing. They often join organized group activities such as Bingo, Rummy and Cribbage games, and barbecues. Additionally, they love to just gather informally with their friends at the residence. Annie is especially fond of visiting with one friend who has an adorable little dog and the dog is a big fan of Annie. Jim shared that they occasionally go to the local mall with van service provided for the community. Most of all, Jim and Annie like being with each other. They started seeing each other, talking, and spending time together at their residence and got married in 2021! While not everyone who lives in congregate housing will find a spouse, the companionship and camaraderie are there for all.

“I am grateful to Springwell for finding me a place to live. I feel very secure and safe and am never alone. The weekly

housekeeping service arranged by Springwell helps me immensely,” says Annie. Jim shares Annie’s sentiments about having a secure, safe place to live and appreciates the transportation that Springwell arranges for medical appointments and physical therapy.

Springwell’s Congregate sites in Newton and Waltham have immediate openings. Call Springwell at 617-926-4100 for more information about applying.

# Springwell, Grantees Help Address Area Needs

*bringing resources*



Healthy Waltham's "Welcome to the Digital Age" workshop (left), virtual 2024 Grantee Meeting (center), Springwell FFY2022 AAA Advisory Council members Carole Katz, Yolanda Rodriguez, Laura Shaw, & Naomi Krasner (right).

In 1965, the Older Americans Act (OAA) was passed by Congress to "create a comprehensive and coordinated system of care for elderly Americans." The program, funded with federal grants, is administered locally across the country by Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). In part of its role as an AAA, Springwell works with community partners in our twenty-two-town service area to assess the needs of older adults and award grants to put services and resources in place to meet those needs. Needs are evaluated based on input from older adults in our service area via surveys, meetings at housing sites, online virtual and in person listening sessions as well as feedback from our community partners, such as Councils on Aging.

Springwell evaluates the data and prioritizes top needs with a focus on isolated elders who live alone, low-income elders, minority elder populations, and socially isolated populations (including limited English-proficient elders and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender elders). Once the needs are determined, a request for proposals is widely publicized. When grants are awarded, older adults age 60 and over are aided by the social services that help them live independently and safely. After the most recent assessment, Springwell awarded thirteen grants.

There are three health promotion grants, two focused on chronic disease self-management and one focused on diabetes prevention. Another grant provides subsidized residential hospice care for individuals who can no longer remain at home but cannot afford residential care. Resources and outreach for Chinese, Russian, Latinx and Ugandan older adults in the area is enhanced by grant support. A grant is continuing to meet the ongoing need for technology by providing

Chromebooks, internet access, and training to older adults.

Hoarding is a mental health and safety challenge for some older adults. A grant will provide several hours of heavy chore cleaning and decluttering to help multiple individuals be safe and avoid eviction. A social day program serving ten communities is offering respite for caregivers and socialization for their loved ones who have been isolated at home. Legal services that have been focused on assisting older adults with housing and benefits issues that have become more prevalent following the pandemic and much needed transportation to medical appointments are helping many seniors in our communities. Funding is providing a significant increase in the number of people who receive weekly farm produce vouchers June through October. All these programs support an individual's right to live independently in the community and reflect Springwell's commitment to the dignity and self-determination of those we serve.

The next Area Plan will kick off on October 1, 2025. We encourage all older adults and community partners to participate in the needs assessment.

## *grantees*

Congratulations to our 2024-2025 grantees! Each project is described at [springwell.com](http://springwell.com).

- EACH, Inc.
- Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center
- Good Shepherd Community Care
- Healthy Waltham
- Hudson Senior Center
- MetroWest Legal Services
- MetroWest YMCA
- Natick Senior Center
- Newton Housing Authority
- Weston Council on Aging

## CEO Notes

*march for meals*



Springwell has been a long-time member of Meal on Wheels America, and March has always been an important part of their efforts to support programs like ours. This year, Meals on Wheels program efforts, called #SaveLunch, will commemorate the historic day in March of 1972 when the Older Americans Act was amended to include a nutrition program for Americans 60 years and older. More than 50 years later, 12 million older Americans are still threatened by or experience hunger, and one in three seniors feels lonely.

In the face of continued high demand, increased costs, staffing challenges, and funding threats, Springwell is grateful for the efforts on Meals on Wheels America to bring us together as communities to bridge the gaps. I encourage you to participate by donating, volunteering, or speaking out for seniors throughout March. We can't do it alone – it takes all of us to save lunch for the older adults who are our neighbors, family, and friends."

-Trish Smith, Springwell CEO

## Protective Services Team Inspires Gratitude

*the help you need*

Often when people think about elder abuse, the first thing that comes to mind is physical harm. Elder abuse also includes sexual and emotional abuse as well as neglect, self-neglect, and financial exploitation. Money scams and fraud are forms of financial exploitation. Today, 1 in 10 Massachusetts older adults are reported to be victims of financial abuse. Springwell's Protective Services Program can help alleviate any type of abuse or neglect. In the past year, Springwell opened 885 investigations into reports of elder abuse.

One couple shared their story to help others have the confidence to seek assistance. They were victims of a scam investment opportunity that originated on LinkedIn. After the initial report of elder abuse was made and referred to Springwell, a Protective Services case worker reached out to the couple. At first, they were wary of working with Protective Services, but after a few conversations, they gained confidence, and the caseworker was then able to connect the couple to legal services to ensure that their other accounts were secure and that any tax implications were addressed. She also connected them with mental health services to help them process what they had been through.

When their case was closed, they followed up with this note, "Your guidance and expertise have made a significant difference in our lives, and we are truly appreciative of your commitment to helping us through this difficult time.... You offered us invaluable resources and advice and stepped in to ensure our safety and well-being. Your expertise and prompt response were instrumental in alleviating our worries and concerns and helping us navigate the situation with confidence. More than just your professional competence, it was the empathy and understanding that you displayed which made a real impact on us. We felt heard and supported throughout the process, which made all the difference in the world.



Knowing that we had you as our allies was a source of comfort during this biggest crisis in our lives. We want to express our heartfelt appreciation for your commitment to our safety and security and everything that you've done. We are in a better place now, thanks to your efforts and assistance."

The Protective Services Program is here to help with all types of elder abuse. Abuse may be reported 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week by calling the state-wide Elder Abuse toll-free HOTLINE: 1-800-922-2275 The HOTLINE will contact a Springwell Protective Services caseworker if necessary.

# In Memoriam: Ken Alpert

*helping people*



Ken Alpert – in an undated Springwell photo (left), at our 2021 summer picnic (center), and at the 2018 Opening Day pizza lunch (right) – loved every opportunity to help his consumers and socialize with his colleagues in his 42 year career at Springwell.

In September, 2023, after 42 years working as a Care Manager for Springwell, Ken Alpert died unexpectedly at the young age of 67. Like his idol, Carl Yastrzemski, who played for just one team, the Boston Red Sox, for his entire Major League career, Ken spent his entire Care Manager career at Springwell. Ken graduated from Connecticut College with a degree in sociology, and knew he wanted to work in human services. It wasn't long after Ken joined Springwell as a Care Manager in 1981 that he realized he wanted to devote his professional life to helping older adults through Springwell. He thrived in the role and especially loved the combination of engaging with staff in the office and building relationships with older adults in their homes.

Ken was the quintessential Springwell Care Manager. A Care Manager pulls together services for an individual, monitors and manages those services, and helps family members understand the role of services. Ken believed that one of the most important traits for a Care Manager is being a good listener, because building understanding can help older adults accept recommended services, even when they are reluctant. As Ken said, "I like to establish a relationship with

an individual by finding out more about their lives. I was speaking with a woman during a home visit and asked her if she had a favorite President. She said Franklin Roosevelt and told me why she liked him. It was fascinating. Establishing a relationship helps build trust, so that when we start talking about services, they are more receptive."

In 2019, Ken was awarded the Cathe Madden Case Manager award by the MA Home Aide Council. At the ceremony, he noted that, "It is an honor and a privilege to work at Springwell. I find it very rewarding working with my consumers. The work we do makes a difference in their lives. The services we provide help people remain in their homes."

In consultation with his family, in October of 2023, Springwell renamed our long-time Elder Independence Fund to honor Ken. The Ken Alpert Elder Independence Fund, supported entirely by donations, allows Springwell to provide seniors and caregivers help they need to alleviate distress, maintain independence, and improve their quality of life. A reception officially dedicating the fund will be held in the spring. Gifts may be made in Ken's honor at [www.springwell.com](http://www.springwell.com).



307 Waverley Oaks Road, Suite 205  
Waltham, MA 02452

33 Boston Post Road West, Suite 510  
Marlborough, MA 01752

[www.springwell.com](http://www.springwell.com)

Tel 617.926.4100

Tel 508.573.7200

## Solutions in Support of Health and Independence

Springwell is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to helping people who need long-term services and supports to remain independent and healthy in the setting of their choice. Services are made possible in part by contracts with or grants from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the Federal Administration for Community Living, MassHealth, insurance providers and health care entities. Generous philanthropic support from individuals and institutions is also critical to our success.