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Message from the President/Board Chair

by Emily Slunt

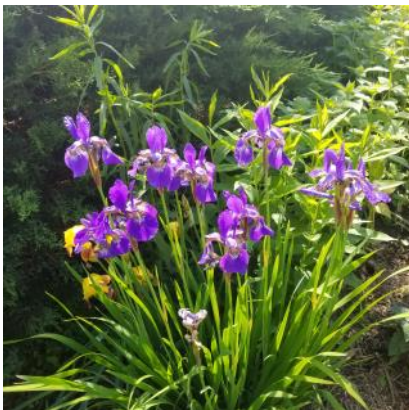
Spring brings new hope and beauty to our neighborhoods and with that thoughts of new possibilities. Feeling hopeful and saying goodbye to winter comes not only with flowers peeking through the earth, but also with a higher level of protection with the Coronavirus vaccines. We are thankful that so many of our LOWLINC family have been vaccinated. We are cautiously optimistic that we will soon be participating in social activities. We all miss seeing and being with one another. But now we have new hope!



We know our members and volunteers are eager to meet our new Member Services Manager, Christine Wagoner. In addition to assisting our members and volunteers, Christine is focused on learning our database management system and providing reports to help guide the organization and to manage communication. It is extremely helpful and hopeful to have a committed support person and manager to assist both members and volunteers.

LOWLINC is pleased to have celebrated our five-year anniversary during the past year. It is a service organization built on a firm foundation. Now we are planning for the future and building on that foundation. The Board is engaged in strategic planning to determine our direction for the future. We are fortunate to have the support of a virtual team funded through the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation (CACF). LOWLINC was awarded a membership in a capacity-building platform called Catchafire by CACF. Together we are exploring possibilities for serving our older adults and deepening our impact in the community.

We are asking such questions as “what are the emerging issues for older adults in our community, how can we maximize potential, and how can we support vibrant and purposeful aging?”. We have been contemplating dreams for LOWLINC and our cherished members. We want our older adults to live lives of purpose and joy – to live life to the fullest. Living life to the fullest also acknowledges a beautiful spring with daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips. Spring has sprung and we are following our dreams.



Who You Gonna Call?

by Mike Landers, Preferred Service Providers Committee Chair

Many of you take advantage of the incredible talents of our volunteers, who are ready, willing, and able to help with your basic home maintenance needs. But we know there are times when problems come up that need more specialized work or equipment than our volunteers can handle, or you have a large project that needs professional attention. When you have a problem or project like that, LOWLINC is still a good place to start! Through our Preferred Service Providers program, we can refer LOWLINC members and volunteers to several qualified contractors or vendors who are experts in many different fields.



Companies and individual contractors included on the LOWLINC Preferred Service Providers list have gone through a verification and feedback process to en-

sure they measure up to high standards in the areas of work performance, fair pricing, and customer service. While there is no such thing as a perfect business, we do the due diligence, so you don't have to.



Our home maintenance/handyman volunteers and our committee have been working lately to make our list and referral service even better. We are expanding our vetting process for new providers to add to our list using best practices, including State corporation searches, business credit reports, pro-

fessional trade licenses, State required insurance, and customer satisfaction surveys to name a few. We also monitor the list to make sure we keep up to date with any changes and to make sure our providers continue to meet our standards to stay on the list.

We rely heavily on feedback from our members and volunteers to make this program work well. When you use one of our Preferred Service Providers, we DO want to hear from you regarding your experience – good, or not-so-good. Just call us or send an email with your feedback. And if you use a vendor you feel should (or should not) be added to our provider list, let us know that too!



Depend on a process you can trust!

Call LOWLINC at 1-855-569-5462 for a referral when you need one.



Volunteer Spotlight

Call Handlers

by Mary Jane Oldham, Volunteers Committee Chair

Call Handler is a service that volunteers provide to members by taking members' calls, scheduling service requests, and adding other data into our ClubExpress computer system. Additional responsibilities include obtaining volunteers for a service request not claimed and creating monthly recurring service requests. This volunteer service does require training on the computer program and good communications, personal interaction, and problem-solving skills. Each volunteer works a 2 1/2 hour shift one day per week and attends a monthly status meeting. There is now a team of dedicated volunteers performing this service.

Being a LOWLINC call handler is an important and rewarding volunteer service. They are the voice members hear when they call to request a service, inquire about an existing service, or have other questions. They get a chance to get to know members in a new way, often providing important social interaction during their call. They work with other volunteers, answering questions about services, receiving reports about completed services, and occasionally arranging services.

Call handlers have a trusted role with LOWLINC. All volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement when they become LOWLINC volunteers. Confidential information gained in the course of call handler service is shared only within the Staff Notes Forum and with our Member Services Manager.



(l to r)

Gina Davies – Thursday morning
Debbie Beisheim – Wednesday afternoon
Mary-Jane Atwater – Substitute
Carleen Delio – Monday afternoon



(l to r)

Vicky Fleming – Friday morning
Charlotte Fuqua – Tuesday afternoon
Lyn Fogarty – Friday afternoon
Pat Unkle – Wednesday morning
George Seymour – Tuesday morning

Not pictured:

Connie Skelton – Thursday afternoon
Betsy Flanigan – Monday morning
Donalda Lovelace – Substitute
Christy Rappoport – Substitute

Meet Christine – LOWLINC's Member Services Manager

Christine Wagoner began her new position as LOWLINC's Member Services Manager, our only paid staff position, in February. Christine has lived in Locust Grove for 10 years since moving to Virginia from New Hampshire, most of that time in Lake of the Woods. She and her partner, Don, recently built and moved into their home in nearby Wilderness Shores. Christine has two children living at home, a daughter attending Orange County High School and a son who just recently earned his baccalaureate degree.



Christine serves as a Captain with the Lake of the Woods Volunteer Rescue Squad. Most recently she has worked as a Medical Assistant with a cardiology practice in Fredericksburg. Many LOWLINC members may also know Christine from the time she served as the executive assistant at the Lake of the Woods Church. No stranger to LOWLINC, Christine used her teaching skills to help LOWLINC train our volunteers to help members safely transfer between a car and a wheelchair in our early years.

With Christine on board, LOWLINC has extended the hours when calls to 1-855-569-5462 are answered to 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. "After working so many years in public safety, I've seen the good and the bad in terms of how our older community members are cared for, and in their own homes where things are familiar almost always is the best place for them," says Christine. "I'm so excited to be a part of LOWLINC, connecting with the members and volunteers, and helping to guide this organization into the future."

Members Corner

Charles and Gail Spruce

Gail was born in San Francisco and lived in California until her 60s, when she moved to Virginia with her husband, Chuck, to share a home with her youngest son, David, and his wife. David had attended graduate school at Duke and loved Virginia. They had a weekend home in Fawn Lake, which they offered to share with Gail and Chuck so they could hopefully start their own family. The Spruces were both semi-retired, working part-time: Chuck was a college administrator, and Gail worked in Sacramento. They each have children from prior marriages, Chuck with three, all living in other states, while Gail has two sons, the elder of whom lives in Saipan with her only grandchildren. She has traveled to China twice and once to Saipan to visit. "Skype is wonderful," she says.



This plan sounded good, so Chuck and Gail sold their California home and headed East with their aging Labrador Retriever, living in a hotel for a month until the house in Fawn Lake was ready. At that time (a little more than 15 years ago), they were still traveling, enjoying cruising and many tours of the East, but after about 6 months, Chuck got restless and wanted his own house. They started looking nearby, and LOW appealed to them. Gail's son David ended up making several job-related moves over the next several years and now lives in Texas.

After about 4 or 5 years at LOW, they moved to Haymarket in northern Virginia to allow easier access to care under their health insurance coverage. In 2014 they moved back to LOW, deciding to pay for their own health insurance because they preferred Lake of the Woods to living in Northern Virginia.

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Members Corner *(cont. from page 4)*

The Spruces moved yet again recently (near the end of last year) to a new home they had built here.

Some health and mobility issues mean traveling very far anymore is out. Before COVID-19, they attended many of the social functions of LOWLINC and others here in the community and were active in other LOW organizations and groups, including AARP, Newcomers, a gourmet group, and a wine club. "LOWLINC provides us with peace of mind, knowing we have a resource for emergencies," says Gail. "The social events have enabled us to get out of the house and meet other residents."

Elizabeth Wiley

A southern New Englander, Elizabeth was born in Rhode Island, went to high school in Connecticut, and graduated with a BA in Music from Mount Holyoke (South Hadley, Massachusetts). She earned her Masters Degree in Social Work from Western Reserve University. She spent most of her professional career as a clinical social worker with children and adolescents and also spent several years teaching music education in elementary and middle schools. Even after "retiring" and moving to Lake of the Woods, she worked for a few years as a child and adolescent therapist with Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services (RRCS), which at that time had an office in Orange.

Elizabeth spent many years living abroad, which started when she decided to move to the U.S. Virgin Islands following a vacation there. Once married, she lived in the British Virgin Islands where her daughter was born. In Tortola, Elizabeth spearheaded the creation of a school for special needs children. Bringing this to fruition involved recruiting participation from local citizens, the U.S. Navy, and even prisoners.

When Elizabeth's daughter was still very young, the family moved to Nova Scotia to go back to the land, where Elizabeth became known as the "egg lady," delivering eggs throughout the county until returning to social work. By that time, her marriage had ended, but she was soon courted, by mail, by an old college boyfriend who, as a foreign service officer, was posted to Saudi Arabia. He came to visit when his tour ended, and Elizabeth joined him in his posting to Paris where they lived for more than four years.

Living in France made traveling around western Europe, England, and Ireland easy. Other travels included Senegal, and Elizabeth's last travel adventure was to China to sing in four concerts with other alumnae from Mount Holyoke.

After living 21 years in Arlington, Elizabeth moved to LOW, having been introduced to it by a neighbor who looked after a friend's vacation home here. She chose LOW for the lake and for the tennis but says it is the community itself which has made all the difference. Before COVID-19, she still spent summers in her beloved Nova Scotia and hopes that she can visit again soon. She volunteers with the local library and was a volunteer with LOWLINC for many years. Since a few health issues cropped up two years ago, she has relied on the many helpful neighbors, friends, and recently, her LOWLINC membership to continue to manage on her own here. "I became a member in the fall and have benefited from help with transportation, home repairs, and being part of the walking group," says Elizabeth. "And of course, I truly appreciate the many new friends I have made through the organization."

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Did You Know?

... You Still Have Time To Do Your Taxes

Even though this issue of NewsLinc was scheduled right around “tax day,” there’s some good news for those of us who wait until the last minute. The IRS has extended the deadline for filing your 2020 personal Federal tax return to May 17, 2021. This extension does not apply to estate tax filings (those required to file IRS Form 1041). Following suit, the Commonwealth of Virginia also extended its personal income tax filing deadline to May 17 (from May 1).

... April Showers Bring LOWLINC’s Spring Planting Days!

We are pleased to be able to bring back one of our popular member services from 2019. LOWLINC volunteers will spend up to two hours at your home to plant cheery annuals or reliable perennials in your yard or garden areas or freshen up your flower pots and other containers with new plants. This year’s Spring Planting Days program will run from May 10 to June 4. To arrange a date for planting at your home, please call LOWLINC at 855-569-5462. Members will need to purchase their own plants, containers, potting soil, or other soil amendments and have them on hand in advance of the day our volunteer is scheduled to arrive. This year, some LOW Garden Club members may be joining us in this program and in those cases will be paired with a LOWLINC volunteer at members’ homes. Take advantage of spring and our Planting Days service to brighten up your home!



... May is Older Americans Month

Each May, the Administration for Community Living leads the celebration of Older Americans Month. This year’s theme is *Communities of Strength*, recognizing the important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities. This is one of LOWLINC’s core beliefs, and we are proud to be able to have a role in strengthening our community.

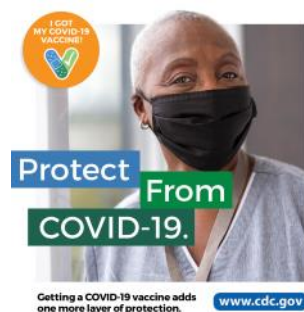


... If You’ve Received Your COVID-19 Vaccination(s)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued COVID-19 guidelines for fully vaccinated people that relax a few safety restrictions. Here is a short summary:

Fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or social distancing.
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk of developing severe COVID-19 indoors without wearing masks or social distancing.
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic.



As we were putting together this issue of NewsLinc, the CDC also announced that travel may be resumed as well following vaccination.

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Did You Know? *(Cont. from page 6)*

Fully vaccinated people should continue with all other precautions, including wearing a mask, social distancing, and avoiding medium to large in-person gatherings, and comply with any additional safety protocols or restrictions while traveling (international destinations in particular may have additional requirements or restrictions). The complete explanation of the guidelines, as well as additional documentation supporting them, is available on the CDC website (www.cdc.gov).

... Some Pandemic Restrictions Have Changed

Virginia has relaxed some additional pandemic safety restrictions as of April 1. For social gatherings, including weddings, the number of people permitted indoors has increased from 10 to 50, and the number allowed outdoors from 25 to 100. The 50 percent capacity limit on regular restaurant service remains in place, as do restrictions on gyms, hair salons and barbershops, bars, and other high-personal-contact businesses.

LOWLINC will resume hosting social activities and other in-person programs as we begin to emerge, slowly and safely, from the restrictions necessary due to the pandemic. We're starting with a few outdoor activities, including a social for members and volunteers at the Lions Pavilion at Sweetbriar Park on Wednesday, May 5th, at 3:00 pm. Watch your mail for the monthly LOWLINC Member Flyer for dates and details about our events as we begin to schedule them. We will continue to follow guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State, and LOWA regarding all our activities.

... LOWLINC Can Help You at Doctor's Appointments

Have you ever tried to remember all the things your doctor talked about at your last appointment after you got home? Sometimes it's a pretty complex discussion, and it's difficult to remember some of the details. Taking a trusted person with you to your appointment to take notes and help you recall appointment and test result details or questions that arise can help. LOWLINC has specially trained medical note-taking volunteers who can accompany you to such appointments. Several additional volunteers completed their training at the end of March, so if you'd like to have a medical note-taker with you for your next appointment, give us a call at 855-569-5462.

... Carolyn Rourke Elected to WAVE Board

LOWLINC Board member Carolyn Rourke has been elected to serve on the Board of the Washington Area Villages Exchange (WAVE). WAVE is a forum through which nonprofit villages in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, including LOWLINC, share experiences and ideas. WAVE works with senior-serving and intergenerational organizations and agencies, encouraging the growth and improvement of the village movement within the Washington area.

... Donalda Lovelace Recipient of "5 over 50" Award

LOWLINC Board member and volunteer Donalda Lovelace has been selected to receive the 2021 Aging Together "5 over 50" Award for Orange County. A virtual awards celebration will be held on May 30 at 6:30pm. This awards program honors individuals from each locality in the organization's five-county region who exemplify selfless service to their communities. Thank you, Donalda!

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Did You Know *(cont. from page 7)*

... the LOWLINC Website is Getting a Facelift

By the end of May, you'll notice a pretty big change in our website. We're refreshing the design and some of the navigation and menu choices to make it easier to find what you want on the website, as well as show new website visitors what LOWLINC is all about. Because we are changing the design template, we will need to go offline for a day or two in order to complete the update, and this is currently planned for the weekend of May 22-23. We'll remind you as we get closer to this date.

... National Volunteer Week is April 18-24

Thank You to all our LOWLINC volunteers and all volunteers.



You Can Support LOWLINC....

....when you shop on Amazon through [smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Amazon donates a small percentage of your purchase to LOWLINC...at no cost to you.

LOWLINC Board

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 John Beisheim, Vice President
 Carolyn Rourke, Secretary
 Jean McLallen, Treasurer
 Vicky Fleming, Member
 Steve Hein, Member
 Donalda Lovelace, Member
 Mary Jane Oldham, Member
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LOWLINC Committees and Programs

Communications: Steve Hein, Chair
 Fundraising and Donor Engagement: Carol Simpson, Chair
 Member Outreach: Ted Cryblskey, Carolyn Rourke, Co-Chairs
 Social Activities: Vicki Fleming, Chair
 Volunteers: Mary Jane Oldham, Chair
 Member Intake: Donalda Lovelace, Lead
 Community Outreach: Emily Slunt, Carolyn Rourke, Vicky Fleming, Co-Leads
 Art of Wine: Cheryl Brown, Chair
 Preferred Service Providers: Mike Landers, Chair

Newsletter: Steve Hein, editor
 Marilyn Davis, production and layout
 Elizabeth McGillicuddy, copy editor

LOWLINC (Lake of the Woods, Living Independently in Our Community) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit fee-based volunteer service organization whose mission is to enable LOW's older residents to remain safely and independently at home. Our operating model is based on the nationwide village model.

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