



Friends of Newtown Seniors

2021 Annual Report

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Secretary — Mary Maday

Treasurer — Ellen Whalen

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*"You are never too
old to set another
goal or to dream a
new dream."*

C.S. Lewis



Affiliate Board Members

Tracy Brady - Founding Member

Anna Marie DeMattei - Honorary Member

Deirdre Dolan Nesline - Liaison to Senior
Service Professionals

Karen Smiley - Web Manager

Rose West - Founding Member

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Facebook: [facebook.com/friendsofnewtownseniors](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofnewtownseniors)

Chore Service: 203-430-0633

Email: fonschoreservices@gmail.com

Coordinator: Beverly Bennett Schaedler

MISSION: The mission of the Friends of Newtown Seniors is to provide advocacy and services to Newtown seniors (those 55+ who reside in Newtown). This will be accomplished in two complementary ways: through new initiatives conceived and developed by its board of directors and by partnering with various non-profit, for-profit, governmental, political and religious organizations serving the Newtown senior population.

Membership in Friends of Newtown Seniors (FONS) is free to anyone interested in advancing the interests of seniors in the community, through volunteerism, financial support or contribution as a resource specialist. [Sign up for our email list at our website www.friendsofnewtownseniors.org](http://www.friendsofnewtownseniors.org)

Message from the President :

The FONS Board of Directors has maintained a meeting schedule throughout the Covid pandemic by using Zoom. Our ability to continue the work of our mission was challenged by Covid, but I think we can all feel proud of the efforts made during this year of change and adjustment. We have continued the Livable Community work through our presentation and follow up with the Newtown First Selectman, Dan Rosenthal, with the assistance of the Director of Human Services, Natalie Jackson. Our email contact list continues to grow and we have improved our communication efforts through improved email messages to our membership. Our close affiliation with both the Commission on Aging and Newtown Senior Services has allowed us to identify and meet the needs of Newtown seniors effectively. Chore Services in Newtown has completed its first full year of operation with 111 requests, including everything from referrals for contractors to replacing roofs. Beverly Bennett Schaedler, Chore Services Coordinator, has continued to work closely with Newtown Senior Services and Newtown Youth and Family Services to identify seniors in need and promote aging in place. Chore Services has also taken on our transportation initiative through a grant provided by Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging. We were able to restart our social gatherings at local restaurants with an average attendance of thirty participants per event. We look forward to continuing these social events when COVID and/or weather conditions permit. Our writing and mosaic project was a remarkable success and the published book "Looking to the Future with 2020 Hindsight" was well received. The finished mosaic project now hangs in the Senior Center Multi-Purpose room. I would like to personally thank each of our board members for their role in support of FONS events and activities throughout this difficult year! **Sincerely, John S. Boccuzzi, Senior**

What's On the Horizon for 2022?

Goal 1 - Build Friends of Newtown Seniors to 100 active participants in activities and committees

Goal 2 - Improve services to seniors in Newtown

- * Expand funding for Chore Services
- * Direct grant funds in support of transportation initiative
- * Implement HomeFit program assuming COVID rules will allow
- * Begin planning for support of telehealth services
- * Continue to promote housing options for seniors in Newtown
- * Promote intergenerational activities as allowed by COVID restrictions

Goal 3 - Work as an advocacy and action group on behalf of the Newtown Seniors

- * Expand the reach of our communication
- * Develop fundraising strategies to support expanded services
- * Host social events for seniors, support events planned by others for seniors
- * Complete Livable Community plan for submission to AARP

Goal 4 - Support, fundraise and work with Senior Services and COA on senior programs

- * Provide guidance on tactical and strategic issues of importance to seniors
- * Pursue grants that will benefit Newtown senior residents

Goal 5 - Develop a committee structure to assure continuity of the above efforts

Goal 6 - Develop a succession plan/strategy to ensure the continuity of FONS

This work of course requires the efforts of a great number of people and the expansion and revitalization of our board along with our growing active membership will help us to move forward. The generosity of our members and the support of local businesses make it possible for us to continue these efforts. The most important ingredient in our recipe for success is not only an active, dedicated and involved board but a vibrant and informed membership. We look forward to 2022 with optimism and good wishes to all.



FONS Achievements, 2021

COMMUNICATION: We continue to be guided by our mission and use the energy and knowledge of community members to promote the welfare of seniors in Newtown. FONS maintains an ongoing connection to our email subscriber base through our Constant Contact weekly mailings. We also effectively use the Newtown Bee to keep seniors informed of special events and programs.

SOCIAL: FONS returned to monthly social events at local venues and offered an opportunity to all to get together over dinner and catch up with others, especially important during the time of COVID. These events were well attended and well received.

TRANSPORTATION: FONS applied for and received a grant to fund transportation for seniors in need. This grant was written in partnership with the Newtown Human Services Director, Natalie Jackson, and was funded in full. FONS provides funding for transportation needs on a case by case basis in cooperation with Newtown Human Services.

FUNDING: FONS funding comes from three sources, grants, fundraising and donations. Grants have supported Chore Services during 2021 and grants are in place for 2022 for Chore Services and Transportation. Fundraising initiatives included a paper shredding event, kettle corn sales, and coffee sale event. Donations are received, with much appreciation, through the generosity of our membership during our annual fund drive.

GRANTS:

Art Grant. Seniors were asked to write essays about their experiences during the pandemic, and then create a ceramic art piece that reflected their emotions, feelings, fears and joys of what they wrote. The essays were published in a book, and the ceramic art pieces were assembled into a larger display that is hung in the Newtown Senior Center.

Chore Services: This grant provided funding for Chore Services to help more than 100 seniors in need. Service included grocery shopping, railing addition, roof repair, leak repair, yard clean up, snow removal, holiday food baskets, and many referrals for assistance. Another grant is in place for next year.



CHORE SERVICES: FONS has implemented Chore Services program that responded to 111 requests for assistance. Service requests included yard work, housecleaning, help with organization, snow removal, check-ins for shut-ins, minor home repairs, and major home repairs including roof replacements. Much of the work was accomplished by volunteers, some by paid professionals and in some cases by professionals who donated labor and material to complete the work.

COLLABORATION: FONS maintains productive working relationship with Human Services Department and the First Selectman's office, as well other local business and nonprofit agencies. Two members of the FONS Board also served on the Commission on Aging, and officers of the COA are often included on communications within the FONS organization. All worked closely on the recently completed transportation survey as one example of this ongoing collaboration. First Selectman, Dan Rosenthal, and Director of Human Services, Natalie Jackson, continue to review and discuss the Livable Community draft plan presented to the Town by FONS President John S. Boccuzzi Senior. We continue the process of plan development. Natalie attends FONS Board meetings and providing advice and guidance.



CONTRIBUTORS & SUPPORTERS

Marjorie Aitchison
Jo Anderson
Arch Deacon Family Foundation (Albanesi)
Patricia Armstrong
Theresa Beilida
Eva Bevilaqua
LaVerne Blackwell
John & Vicki Boccuzzi
Mitch Bolinsky
Loretta Booth
Serge & Dorothy Champagne
Ellen Daly
Louise Deangelis
Natalie DeFrancisci
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Nancy Kessler
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Bud & Bernice Ullmann
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George & Ellen Whalen
Sharman Wheatley
Dolores Winans
Maryann Zacchea
David & Eleanor Zolov

Special Thanks to our

Corporate Sponsors

Who have provided on-going support to
Friends of Newtown Seniors ...
Maplewood of Newtown
Newtown Savings Bank
Old Glory Days- Adult Day Care

Local Partners

C.H. Booth Library
Edmond Town Hall
Newtown Chamber of Commerce
Newtown Commission on Aging
Newtown Human Services Department
Newtown Parks and Recreation
Newtown Savings Bank
Newtown Youth and Family Services
NYA of Newtown
Old Glory Days Adult Day Care
Newtown Community Center

**Heartfelt thanks also to all those who give so generously
of their time to make things happen for Newtown.**



Financial Update

Friends of Newtown Seniors (FONS) is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, effective September 26, 2016. We are proud of its all-volunteer status and conservative approach to fiscal management. Donations and fundraising activities provide for ongoing and new program initiatives in addition to funding annual operating expenses.

The FONS fund balance, held at Newtown Saving Bank, as of December 31, 2021, was \$7,609.63.

Thank you to our Board of Directors and the many donors whose generosity has helped to advance our mission.