



Spring 2017 / Issue No. 24

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# atHome

with Seniors in the Eastern Monadnock Region



## Member Spotlight: Gerry Hallgrimson

By Sandra Faber,  
Member Services Coordinator

*Gerry and Barney, her chihuahua, in her backyard*

Photo: Marilyn Weir, Monadnock Shopper News.

MaH member Gerry Hallgrimson's story, written by Marilyn Weir and featured in the Monadnock Shopper News last October, told of her will to go to college and persevere against all obstacles. This issue's Member Spotlight features excerpts from Weir's article.

At 24 years old, Gerry joined a "Great Books" group which would eventually lead to her inspiration to go to college. Specifically, Gerry was inspired by Kierkegaard, the 19th-century Danish philosopher. He said you must develop yourself to your highest potential, taking those around you with you. "And I lived with that for many years. That's what it says to you, what it said to me, 'You must go to college,'" Gerry reflected. "When something inside you says you have to do this, you have to do it."

So the quest began. She started writing letters to get into college. Wellesley wouldn't take her because she was married. Brandeis granted her an interview, but ultimately rejected

her. With her new courage gained from "Great Books", Gerry knocked on doors of philosophy professors, persisting even though tired and worn down. Finally, the last professor wrote across her papers, "I think we should give her a chance." And they did.

With Special Student status, Gerry faced many more obstacles along the way, including having to re-apply each year. Finally, the fifth time was final, as Gerry was accepted as a degree candidate and was able to take a full-course load.

She was 40 when she graduated two years later earning a Bachelor of Arts degree. She went on to a teaching career in public school and became a pioneer teacher for the Waldorf School in Kingston, Rhode Island. While teaching, Gerry went on to earn a Master of Arts in Education.

We are so proud to have Gerry as a member of Monadnock at Home!

Thank you to *The Monadnock Shopper News* and Marilyn Weir for permission to use the above content and photo. 📷

## Dr. Atul Gawande Webcast

Dr. Gawande, the author of *Being Mortal*, was scheduled to speak about the value of community and opportunities as we grow older and answer questions from Villages around the country. Due to inclement weather, his live presentation in Boston as well as our local webcast, scheduled for February 13th was cancelled.



We have heard from the Village to Village network that Dr. Gawande has agreed to do the webinar as previously planned at a later date this year. It will most likely take place over the summer. When we have a date, we will be contacting those who signed up (50 people!) for the original viewing first and then open it up to others based on availability. If you paid the \$10 dinner fee, we will apply it to your registration for the rescheduled event. However, if you know for certain you will not be attending the re-scheduled event and would like a refund, include your address in an email to sandrafaber@monadnockathome.org or call 603-371-0809. ☒

## Program on Mindfulness

By Cynthia Sue Martell, Member

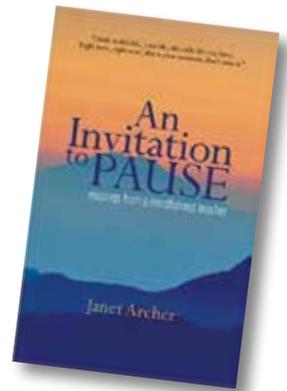
On January 19, 2017 Monadnock at Home members filled to capacity a meeting room at the SDE Building in Peterborough. Everyone was clearly eager to gain a better understanding of the increasingly appreciated practice of mindfulness.

Our presenter, Janet Archer, is a popular teacher of yoga, mindfulness and meditation. Her program was titled *Mindfulness: An Introduction*.

Janet is also a Master Life Coach. Her private practice includes helping women whose parent has dementia find a calm within themselves. She is also the author of a recently published book titled *An Invitation to Pause and subtitled Musings from a Mindfulness Teacher*.

Through Janet's knowledge, experience and guidance, members came to better understand the practice of mindfulness as a powerful path to better living. By "staying in the moment" through mindfulness, we maintain focus and increase our sense of inner peace – even amid the life struggles and anxieties we all share in a world of constant distraction.

A quote from Janet's book says it well, "Drink in this life, your life, the only life you have. Right here, right now, this is your moment, don't miss it." ☒



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# Monadnock at Home Initiates MedPals

By Chris Gallagher, Board Member

With the increasing complexity of medical care, it is often difficult to remember the vast amount of information received during a medical appointment. How often have you returned home and realized that you forgot to ask an important question or were not clear on follow up plans?

If so, MedPals, a new service of Monadnock at Home, can help.

MedPals are trained Monadnock at Home

volunteers who will support members with regard to their medical appointments and follow up care. The MedPal will meet with the member prior to the appointment, and help organize a list of symptoms, questions and goals for the visit. They will also provide a ride, if needed, and attend the appointment as a second pair of eyes, ears and note taker. Finally, the MedPal will clarify that the Member understands all follow up instructions, medication changes, and/or

future tests or procedures.

It is important to note that the MedPals do not replace the role of family or friends, nor become a Power of Attorney, administer medication, provide medical advice or interpretation of issues. This should be done directly with the provider and appropriate formal support or family member.

For questions or more information contact Cindy at the office at 603-371-0809. ☒

## Save the Date — 2017 Annual Meeting

Our seventh annual meeting is scheduled to take place on May 31, 2017, 4-6 pm at the Peterborough Players. Members, this is your opportunity to guide our organization with your comments and recommendations. Are there things you really like about your membership that you want us to continue? Conversely, are there areas you might suggest for improvement or new ideas?

As always, we will begin with delightful refreshments and time to socialize with your fellow members, volunteers and staff. We will follow with our business meeting which includes time for your valuable feedback. So mark your calendars – we want you there! ☒



## Cindy's Corner

By Cindy Bowen, Executive Director



Hello everyone and welcome to the spring 2017 issue of *at Home!* It's hard to believe that it's already been a year since we announced MaH's "Member Helping Member" program. The program matches member volunteers with other members who live alone and would like to receive regular telephone check-in calls. We now have a number of members participating in this program and some of the regular calls have grown into visits and lunch outings. "Member Helping Member" is one of the many services provided by MaH that demonstrates our mission to help seniors live and thrive in their homes and communities.

I'm pleased to announce another new addition to MaH's services, "MedPals."

MedPals was designed by MaH board member Chris Gallagher, a retired social worker from Cheshire Medical Center. He's already conducted volunteer training and we're ready to assist members as they need it. Please read the article in this issue as to how MedPals may be able to help you.

As the warmer weather approaches, don't let those spring chores overwhelm you! Your MaH membership offers you access to pre-screened service providers and volunteers that are ready to help. Simply call 603-371-0809 to find the help you need.

I hope this issue of *at Home* finds you healthy, safe and happy! Think Spring! ☒

### Monthly Coffee Hour

MaH members gather at 10 am on the third Tuesday of each month at the Parker Coffee House in Peterborough. Come join us for friendly conversation and delicious coffee! If you'd like a reminder call, please contact MaH at 603-371-0809.

**Monadnock at Home**

**OUR MISSION** *The Mission of Monadnock at Home is to provide seniors of the Monadnock Region with the support and practical means to live and thrive in their homes and communities.*

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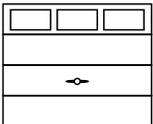
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