

Introduction: The Village Guide

This Guide was created for to provide insight, support, and encouragement to community leaders interested in creating a grass roots organization to benefit the quality of life of those living in the community. The Guide is a collaboration of village leaders in the metropolitan Washington Area (DC, Virginia, Maryland) who have shared their experiences creating their own villages.

The village movement started in 2001 in the Beacon Hill community of Boston. It was born of a desire of Beacon Hill residents to age and remain in their own home. As they faced the challenges of aging in place, they began to look for solutions to remaining in their own homes. Since 2001 the village movement has become a national movement with villages located throughout the country.

This Guide, while comprehensive, is not definitive. The village movement is organic, it changes and adapts to the needs of residents in each village community. The overarching theme for all villages is a desire of neighbors to help neighbors sustain a high quality of life.

The Village Guide, is just that, a guide. It is a compendium of a variety of information and experiences. It is meant to provide information and background, it is up to you and your leadership and resident members to decide on the model that best suits your community. A word about how to use The Guide; each chapter is a stand-alone resource. The chapters should be considered specific references. As you move along the development process of your village, refer to the chapter that relates to where you are in your village development.

In addition to The Village Guide, another important resource in the DC Metro area is the Washington Area Village Exchange (WAVE). This regional organization is comprised of members from the region's villages. WAVE provides networking opportunities and as the name suggests, a vast variety of information exchange (www.wavevillages.org). We hope you find The Village Guide a useful tool in your process of creating and launching the lifestyle option of "village" living in your community.