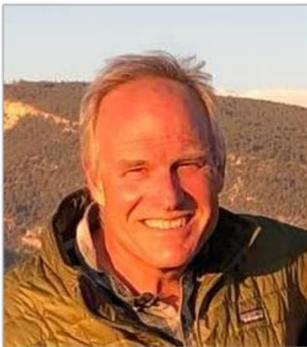




DAN FREIHOFER

IN THE LYME LIGHT MARCH, 2021



One year into the COVID pandemic, life for our community and also for our nation and world has changed dramatically. However, one thing has remained strong: Lyme's extraordinary sense of community. One lifelong volunteer who has worn many hats over the years stepped up to help reinforce our community values and build new neighborhood bonds at this most important time. He guided the development of Lyme's Neighbors Network, a model for other communities, nearby and across the country.

Dan Freihofer is In the Lyme Light!

For years, Lyme emergency response leaders and volunteers collaborated to communicate important messages and make personal visits to neighbors who might be at risk, in the wake of a storm or other event that disrupted services. Covid-19 made communication and connection more important than ever, since *everyone* was at risk and information was evolving rapidly. As a member of the Lyme Covid Response Team, CommunityCare of Lyme, took on the organization of a neighborhood-driven approach. Dan joined the team to lead the effort and helped recruit a Neighborhood Captain for each of thirty mapped groups of Lyme households. In less than two weeks, Lyme had a functioning Neighborhood Network! The Captains' first task was delivering masks and basic information and instructions about staying safe, healthy, and connected. Neighbors were comforted, and Captains were pleased to make a safe and meaningful contribution when most activity had been shut down. Dan has held a pivotal role, providing clear and concise information for distribution and supporting the Captains in neighborhood-specific approaches. The Network served the community through the pandemic, and it continues to help neighbors reach out and connect with one another in a way that is safe, supportive and caring. Going forward, this will not only facilitate urgent communications, but also make it easier to ask for and to offer help. That's good for our individual and collective well-being.

Dan has been actively involved in Lyme community volunteerism since settling in town over 35 years ago. He has served as volunteer recreation director, a youth sports referee, and during the pandemic as Lyme School cross country ski program director. As a tribute to a dear friend, each year Dan helps organize a crew to cut, split and deliver 8-10 cords of firewood to neighbors who can use it. Dan also jumps at opportunities to be a hands-on helper across town, especially when there's some heavy lifting or a need for some of his (many) skills. Dan encourages everyone to get involved directly in the community, to take some responsibility to do what each of us can. If there is something you would like to see happen, or see improved upon in Lyme, Dan's advice is to volunteer, to take ownership, and be the positive change you'd like to see. There's nothing too "bureaucratic" to stop any of us from helping to move this community forward. Thank you, Dan!

Our Mission To build on Lyme's heritage as a warm, welcoming and service-oriented community, by building partnerships, embracing new ideas, and designing systems that improve our individual and collective sense of well-being, as we help transform health and healthcare in our town and beyond.

