



Your neighborhood for a lifetime.

MAKING CONNECTIONS, BUILDING COMMUNITY

2011

Mill City Commons was built to create community. As we enter our third year of programming, we are truly seeing results. The seven stories below are just a few examples of the connections our members are making and rewards we're reaping – as individuals and as a collective community. We hope you enjoy reading these stories and encourage you to share yours. Thank you for being part of this wonderful group of like-minded members!

DISCOVERING MILL CITY COMMONS

When Lloyd Beebe discovered Mill City Commons (MCC) in 2009 he was 87 years old, living alone and coming to the realization that he would soon need some support. Not ready to move, he began researching resources for aging in place. Lloyd liked what he learned about MCC; he discovered it was not just a neighborhood, but a community of people interested in helping and supporting each other. Within a month of joining, Lloyd had open heart surgery. MCC helped him arrange home health care and provided member volunteers to help with daily chores, like grocery shopping and house cleaning. "I was profoundly impressed by the fact that I was a total stranger to Mill City Commons, yet the community took me in," said Lloyd. Last fall, Lloyd decided to follow his dream of living on the ocean near one of his favorite places: Acadia National Park in Maine. He remains a loyal Mill City Commons member.



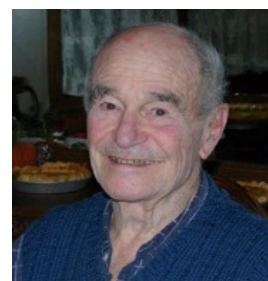
REACHING OUT, REAPING REWARDS

Carol Jordan and her husband, Bob Callahan, had only been MCC members a short time when Carol took on the member-to-member project of helping Lloyd Beebe with his impending move to Bar Harbor, Maine. Carol spent a couple of weeks helping him organize for his move, as well as providing assistance and transportation for his pre-move errands. During this time, Carol and Lloyd became well acquainted as they worked together to resolve issues and overcome obstacles. For Carol, it was challenging but incredibly rewarding. In the process, Carol said, "Discovering Lloyd's commitment to lifelong learning has been an inspiration to me, something I truly value and strive for." A priceless reward.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

Jock Bishop loves his condominium in Winslow House. Several of Jock's neighbors are also MCC members, and when he started having trouble with his mobility due to knee pain, they offered to help. That led to a meeting with Jock's daughter, Nina Tuttle. With a full knee revision scheduled in January, Jock's preparation included physical therapy three times a week at Jones Harrison. Without an easy way to get to and from his appointments, MCC reached out to our volunteer drivers for help. MCC member and volunteer Bob Callahan answered the call. Driving is just one way Bob participates in the member-to-member volunteer program. As a retired human resources professional, Bob continues to work with people in career transition and now supports MCC members with life transitions. Jock appreciates Bob's commitment to helping others and the connection through Mill City Commons.



DEVELOPING CONNECTIONS

During their 50 years of marriage, Dick and Martha Olson have lived all over the world. With each promotion, they set up a new home, eventually numbering 25 in all, giving them a unique perspective on the value of building relationships and community. In 2008, the Olsons decided Minneapolis was truly “home” and purchased a condominium in the Riverfront neighborhood with the commitment to make this their last move. They learned about Mill City Commons from neighbors and soon joined. The Olsons’ ties with the Alzheimer’s Association led to a very successful series of MCC seminars on brain fitness, improving memory and cognition through diet and physical and mental exercise. Dick says he’s learned, “...that dealing with the challenges of aging is better within a supportive environment, that there are nearby resources available to help, and that paying back by volunteering is an excellent way to improve life for everyone.”



BUILDING COMMUNITY

While Mary Margaret MacMillan was an early advocate of Mill City Commons, her husband Larry Neumann was skeptical, watching from the sidelines while she recruited members and attended the first events. Mary Margaret recognized the value of building an organization that would give its members educational and social programming, as well as support and access to health and wellness services. Even more valuable was the idea of connecting with other neighbors – a commitment to “living in community.” Somewhere along the way, Larry “got it” and started telling friends about “this neat neighborhood organization we belong to.” Although Larry’s conversion was a bit slow, it took hold. He was instrumental in starting the MCC men’s group, Coffee and Conversation, a biweekly activity exclusively for male members.



FITTING PARTNERSHIPS



Ella and Dick Slade have a long history of community involvement. Both grew up in the Twin Cities and now call the Riverfront their home. Ella learned about Beacon Hill Village at a college reunion. One of her former classmates was a founding member of the innovative nonprofit. Both Ella and Dick thought the village concept “just made sense” and joined in 2009. When Ella learned about Mill City Commons’ partnership with 501FIT on an exclusive Strength, Balance and Stretch (SBS) class, she called the office for more information. Ella keeps active, but

after two knee replacements and back surgery, she wanted to make sure she could keep up in a fitness class setting. Since the SBS class launched in September, Ella hasn’t missed a session and says, “My balance has improved, and I feel more confident on steps and stairs.” Her tenacity and smile are appreciated by the 501FIT instructor, Rachel, who calls Ella one of her favorite “students.”

LASTING FRIENDSHIPS

John and Sabina Sten love to dance. Since John has been in a wheelchair, they haven’t been able to enjoy this activity together. When Mill City Commons celebrated its first birthday last summer, members threw a Hootenanniversary that included music and square dancing. John’s good friend Peter Heegaard recognized that both John and Sabina were on the sidelines and walked over and grabbed John’s wheelchair. Soon both Sabina and John were part of the circle of friends and neighbors dancing to live music and enjoying the celebration. A little adjustment by the dance caller and dancers made for an extraordinary day.

