

A-HOME to Celebrate 25th Anniversary!

Since 1985 the world has changed, but for the last 25 years A-HOME has answered the call of hundreds who know “there’s no place like home”.

Join event chairs Janet and Peter Harckham, co-chairs Peter and Lynn Russell, Sabin and Beverley Streeter and vice-chairs Dick and Starr Lawrence and Pam and Dave Waill as they invite you to celebrate not just a 25th anniversary, but an organization that is an essential part of the northern Westchester community. Raise a glass in celebration of the silver anniversary and honoree Joan P. Arnold at the Salem Golf Club on April 24th. Ticket and journal information can be found on page 7.

And there is no place like A-HOME, the primary provider of safe, affordable, permanent rental housing in northern Westchester.



Peter Russell and honoree executive director Joan P. Arnold



Janet and Peter Harckham

Beverley and Sabin Streeter



Lynn and Peter Russell

Giving Opportunity

25 years, 17 houses, lives renewed, hope regained. It’s impossible to put a dollar value on living in a safe home, not being afraid to turn the light out at night, knowing your children can attend a good school and having your faith in people restored. But these are the very things that your donations help support. At A-HOME it’s not just bricks and mortar, but lives reclaimed and the promise of a better future.

Please support our milestone 25th year with an anniversary gift. Make it more meaningful this year by donating in honor or memory of a loved one, or placing an ad in the gala journal celebrating an anniversary in your life.

From the Executive Director

Joan P. Arnold

Recently, CBS's Sunday Morning Show featured a family from Atlanta. Riding with her father in the family car, the teenage daughter sees the "great American divide" – a luxury car on one side and a homeless man on the other. She asks, "How much personal sacrifice could address this man's most basic human need"? If one man were

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Upon request, a copy of the most recent annual report may be obtained from A-HOME at 141 Tompkins Avenue, 3rd Floor, Pleasantville, NY 10570 or the Attorney General at New York Charities Bureau, NYS Department of Law, 120 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10271.

to give up his BMW, could the homeless man be taken care of?

Over the last several months, I have been addressing different groups of people at A-HOME gatherings; groups organized by A-HOME board members and friends designed to raise awareness about A-HOME.

My talk for the gatherings varies depending on the audience. I talk about the three-legged stool that represents A-HOME's income. I show a map depicting the wide area that A-HOME serves and a graphic showing our very handsome properties. I describe the environment in which A-HOME was created; the United Way Community Survey identifying housing as the most pressing community need and the Gannett Foundation's early support. Sometimes I reveal how my own mother's situation prompted my desire to find a solution for affordable housing for seniors. To others, I discuss the implications of Westchester County's affordable housing settlement agreement. But the basic message is that A-HOME has been an essential and successful part of the community for 25 years by addressing the basic human need of shelter; and how we must continue to provide

housing for the most vulnerable among us.

On the evening of a recent Coalition meeting, a man stopped by the office. He had lost his job and house, his car was unreliable. He had been sleeping at the Interfaith Council for Action shelter since October. Without permanent housing, constantly seeking shelter, he was unable to secure a job.

What about the family from Atlanta? They sold their \$2,000,000 home and donated \$800,000 to charity. They addressed a basic human need – food. Oh, how I wish it was housing! A house for a house. But housing is a large scale investment. Their \$800,000 could provide housing for four individuals in four studio apartments (\$800) for twenty years. Or possibly purchase a large house in Westchester that could be converted to shared housing.

Another way to look at it would be the current A-HOME solution. The homeless man could pay 30% of his income (if he had any) – or a "shelter allowance" of \$271 from Westchester County Department of Social Services towards one of our A-HOME properties renting for \$660 per month. A-HOME would carry him with an A-HOME subsidy until he could get

a job and pay more rent, or get another type of subsidy (more likely to get a job than a subsidy). A-HOME would absorb the difference between the Department of Social Services shelter allowance and what the A-HOME unit should get (\$660 per month). A-HOME will subsidize him because it is part of our mission. He will live in safe and affordable housing, and be able to address the other issues in his life. His rental subsidy: \$389 per month or over \$4,600 per year.

A-HOME's sacrifice of almost \$5,000 a year with this one subsidy (there are currently 17 individuals who A-HOME subsidizes) means that the organization must forgo other purchases or opportunities which are needed: energy efficient appliances for one house, a handicapped ramp for another, a new hot water heater, or an emergency generator to heat a house during a power outage.

We're robbing Peter to provide housing for Paul.



Photo: Margaret Fox

Subsidies for Low-income RESIDENTS

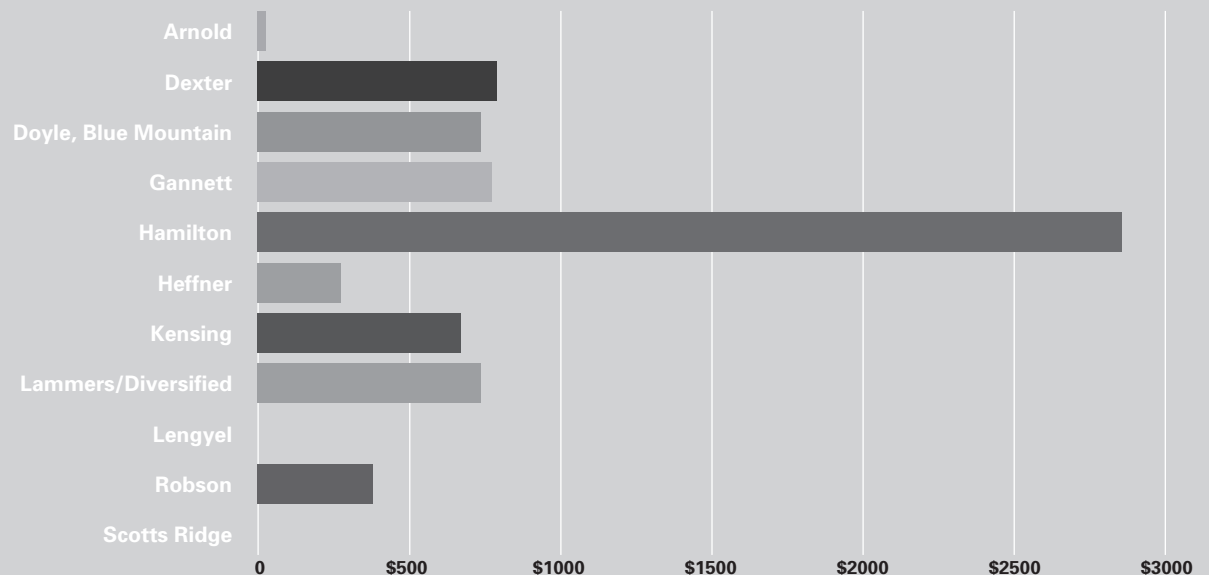
A subsidy is a grant or gift of money, a grant by a government to a private person or company to assist an enterprise deemed advantageous to the public. Currently A-HOME subsidizes the rent for a number of residents whose income is too small for them to afford even a modest rent.

For example, a senior at Dexter House is responsible for rent of \$674 monthly, including all utilities. That individual, Jack, can afford no more than 30% of his income or \$224 monthly. Jack qualifies for, and receives, a subsidy of \$396 from Section 8, bringing his monthly rent payment to \$620 or \$54 less than needed. That \$54 is subsidized monthly by A-HOME.

The maximum rent that can be charged at apartment 2A in Marchigiani House is \$1180. That figure, like most of A-HOME's rents, is determined by the funding we received to develop the property. Patricia, a single mom, lives in the one-bedroom apartment with her child. She is eligible for Section 8 and has been waiting for three years to receive that subsidy. In the late summer of 2009, Patricia lost her full-time job, but found part-time work in a local store. Her current rent is \$300 with a monthly deficit of \$880, subsidized by A-HOME. She recently found full-time work.

As state and federal budgets constrict, social service funding declines, the job market shrinks, and the cost of living soars; the need for subsidized affordable housing continues to grow.

A-HOME Subsidies by Property



Songs from the heart, Renu Kurian, A-HOME gatherings, & Resident statistics

They're Singing His Songs

In January as part of The Chappaqua Chamber Series, the Chappaqua Orchestra presented "Songs for my Mother", songs written by composer (and A-HOME resident) Marion "Doc" Davis, and the music he loves, including Duke Ellington, Gershwin, Dvorak, and traditional spirituals. The concert featured soprano Deborah Horne and pianist Michael Shapiro.

A chance meeting on Metro North was the starting point for the concert. On his daily commute to the city Michael Shapiro, musical director and conductor of the orchestra, regularly works on a laptop composing music. Doc saw the computer screen and, fascinated, introduced himself.

A singer-songwriter since childhood, music has been a constant in Doc's life. The first songs he sang were a cappella, in a church without a piano in Savannah, Georgia. He recalls writing a song, while in second grade, to a childhood sweetheart. The strong influence of his mother, his military service, the death of a young son to bone cancer, and the disastrous aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, all have led to spon-

taneous and deeply personal lyrics. Presently Doc is working on lyrics to a song about the earthquake in Haiti.

"Serenity", a song featured in the concert, was written about his mother and evolved from a visit to his mother's grave – her "quiet place" as Doc calls it.

"A lot of his work is almost spoken and comes into melody through the lyrics," Michael stated, "it's quite fresh." Doc agrees. The words usually come first and he forms the melody to go with the words.

Donna Camadeco, Katonah, gardens at Dexter House with the Hopp Ground Garden Club and takes great pleasure in visiting her Dexter House friends. Recently Donna took three of the Dexter ladies to Doc's concert. "We loved the concert, the music was beautiful," Donna said, "and it warmed my heart how he embraced his mother." After the concert the four friends went out for coffee and donuts and, as Donna said, "lots of laughs."

Doc is grateful to A-HOME for providing a safe and caring environment. His daughter found A-HOME online shortly before he was sched-

uled to move to a senior residence that both he and his daughter had reservations about.

The concert will be repeated on Sunday, April 25th at ArtsWestchester in White Plains. Details were not available at press time, but will be posted on A-HOME's website www.a-homehousing.org when available.

Renu Kurian

Renu Kurian had a career in the telecommunications industry before returning to school to obtain a degree in nursing. As a nurse with experience in case management, Renu was hired in November 2009 to work with the residents of Lengyel, Gannett and Heffner Houses. Her goal for the individuals she works with is to help them be more independent and to be better able to advocate for themselves. Renu lives in Mohegan Lake with her husband, son and daughter.



Marion "Doc" Davis



Renu Kurian



New Friends and Old

This fall and winter A-HOME board members and friends have been opening their homes and inviting friends and neighbors over for an A-HOME Gathering. Armed with a timeline of A-HOME houses and a map of their locations within northern Westchester County, Joan P. Arnold tells a very personal story of founding the organization, celebrating 25 years of positive growth and her plans for the future. In this intimate setting guests have the opportunity to ask questions and delve into the complexities of building affordable housing.

**Lonna Kelly, Judy Aydelott,
Joan Arnold**



A-HOME Residents at a Glance

A snapshot of A-HOME residents illustrates the importance of providing safe, affordable rental housing in Westchester County. As a comparison, according to information on the county's website, the median income of a two-person family is \$84,250. The median income for an individual is \$73,700.

Single parent families

Total number of families: 12
Head of household: Female 100%
Median age: 42
Number of Children: 18
 7 - one child families
 4 - two children families
 1 - three child families
Median household income \$16,044
Education:
 1 - No high school diploma
 3 - GED
 4 - high school graduates
 2 - some college
 2 - college graduates
Employment:
 4 employed in occupations such as day care worker, receptionist, human services, NYS employee
 4 living with disabilities
 4 seeking employment

Disabled

Total number: 20
Female: 45%
Male: 55%
Median Age: 50
Median Income: \$10,800
Physically Disabled: 2
Oldest resident: 68
Longest current residency: 25 years
Employment:
 3 employed in occupations such as grocery store carriage man and stock clerk

Seniors (over 55)

Total number: 50
Female 66%
Male: 34%
Median Age: 68
Median income \$12,780
Veterans: 5
Physically Disabled: 22
Oldest resident: 88
Longest current residency: 16 years
Employment:
 16 employed in occupations such as bookkeeper for landscaper, church maintenance, department store, supermarket, hospital staff

Joan P. Arnold, A-HOME's Executive Director, to be Honored

For 25 years, Joan P. Arnold has provided leadership, vision and a commitment to build and manage affordable housing. In March Joan received the Citizen of the Year Award from the Westchester Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. In April she will be honored at A-HOME's 25th Anniversary Gala.

Providing permanent, safe, affordable housing with supportive case management has enabled many A-HOME residents to achieve independence, set and achieve goals, contribute to and participate in their communities. Joan's work has enriched many lives and she has involved a diverse committed Coalition of civic and religious groups to achieve her goals as well as to insure the continued growth of A-HOME and its services.

While an undergraduate at Chatham College and later Columbia University, Joan's interest in architecture was born. An earlier stint with Headstart had opened her eyes to the deplorable housing where some of the children lived. Livable cities with good, affordable architecture became a lifelong interest.

A passion was kindled when Joan's mother, Mildred Wedekind Potter, a single-mother and former fashion industry executive, faced a retirement with very little income. After depleting her savings, Mrs. Potter's only income was her Social Security

check. She was terrified of finding herself homeless.

At the time Joan lived in Katonah with her husband, Fred Arnold, and their three children. Joan was partnering with Peg Normann, A-HOME co-founder, in a grant-writing service. Community members repeatedly asked them why not write a proposal for affordable housing? The need was there as was the housing stock. Northern Westchester was full of older, rundown houses. The area hadn't been discovered yet.

Inspiration came from Brooklyn. Faith-based organizations in East Brooklyn had joined together to help solve the area's problems. Safe, affordable housing was one of their targets. With the Nehemiah Project as their blueprint, Joan and Peg brought together a coalition of community groups, churches and synagogues to take on the challenge. In 1985 Apropos Housing Opportunities and Management Enterprises, dba A-HOME, was incorporated. In 1993 Joan was hired as the first paid Executive Director. Her involvement has given A-HOME stability and a coherent vision. Joan believes that everyone has the right to decent, affordable housing and loves the challenge inherent in developing housing.

Joan's achievements are many; A-HOME is the only organization in northern Westchester providing permanent affordable rental



Joan Arnold, Duo Dickinson architect

housing and currently offers shared housing to low income older adults and individuals living with disabilities, studio apartments and suites with shared kitchens for seniors, apartments for single-parent families and, most recently, apartments for individuals. As the leader of an innovative organization, Joan brought the first affordable housing to Pound Ridge and found ways to bring affordable housing to towns as varied as Chappaqua and South Salem.

Community backing is needed to build affordable housing. In 1985 when Joan built the Coalition of organizations to found A-HOME, she laid the foundation for success. Comprised of 26 religious, civic and service organizations that support A-HOME with volunteer activities, financial contributions and the advocacy of affordable housing, the Coalition is the foundation that makes A-HOME a true community-based organization.

Getting a project off the ground can be daunting. Land is scarce. The fear of

diminishing property value creates panic in neighbors. Funding must be pieced together in a patchwork of grants, loans, and mortgages. Yet, in a county considered difficult to build in, with high land costs, restrictive zoning and a lack of infrastructure, Joan has been successful in developing 13 properties with 17 houses.

Joan's commitment to personal and professional growth is a hallmark of her administrative abilities. Staff development and a positive work atmosphere are a priority. Staff development opportunities have included property development, clinical issues and challenges for residents – resulting in a greater understanding and appreciation for different departments within the organization.

Under Joan's leadership A-HOME grows steadily, one house at a time, giving low-income older adults, disabled individuals and single-parent families the opportunity to live safely and affordably.

**JOURNAL ADVERTISING OPTIONS FOR
A-HOME'S 25th Anniversary Gala**

Honoring Joan P. Arnold



Saturday, April 24, 2010

Salem Golf Club
18 Bloomer Road
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Pleasantville, NY, 10570

914-741-0740

www.a-homehousing.org

25 Years: Making a House a Home

Corporate Sponsorships:

Sponsorships will receive an A-HOME newsletter listing (distribution of 3200), Annual Report listing, and Constant Contact e-newsletter mention.

- \$6000 Gold Journal Page: 7½" (h) x 4½" (w)
Includes 4 complimentary tickets and cocktails with special guest, mention in event press release, link on A-HOME website, and the opportunity to provide a favor at each place setting.
- \$5000 Silver Journal Page: 7½" (h) x 4½" (w)
Includes 2 complimentary tickets and cocktails with special guest and mention in event press release.

Journal Ads:

- \$5000 Gold Page: 7½" (h) x 4½" (w)
- \$4000 Silver Page: 7½" (h) x 4½" (w)
- \$1200 Full Page: 7½" (h) x 4½" (w)
- \$750 Half Page: 3¾" (h) x 4½" (w)
- \$250 Quarter Page – Business Card 1⁷/₈" (h) x 4½" (w)
- \$150 Friend: Name only

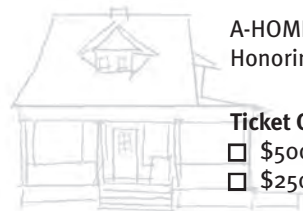
Text/file to be inserted – **Deadline April 1st.** Please type/print clearly or attach copy.

- Camera ready art attached High resolution jpg via email Design help needed

Name	Affiliation/Business		
Address			
City	State	Zip	
Phone	Email		
Check payable to A-HOME enclosed \$	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	<input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Discover
Card #	Security Code	Exp. Date	

Mail or fax to Lisa Dashman, Telephone: 914-741-0740 Fax: 914-741-0777 Email: ldashman@a-homehousing.org

25 Years: Making a House a Home



A-HOME's 25th Anniversary Gala
Honoring Joan Arnold

Ticket Options

- \$500/person
- \$250/person

Table Options

- Table of Ten: \$5,000
- Table of Ten: \$2,000

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Security Code: _____

I am unable to attend but would like to make a donation of: \$ _____

No. of Reservations: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

- Enclosed is a check made payable to A-HOME.
- I want to pay by credit card.

Please print your name exactly as you would like it to appear:

Please list seating requests on a separate piece of paper. For matching gift opportunities or information on A-HOME, please call the office at 914-741-0740.

At Home with A-HOME

A Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2010

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www.a-homehousing.org

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Moving Out and In

Although we were sorry to see her go, we were very happy for a resident of Dexter House who recently moved to her own apartment in Peekskill. Her successful stay at A-HOME helped prepare her for the challenge of living on her own. Soon after her move our maintenance department got busy painting and carpeting her room for a new resident. While prepping the bedroom, they took the opportunity to replace the carpeting and paint throughout the second floor common areas and to repaint the kitchen.

Maintenance assistant
Mary Anne Clampitt

