

hudson's corner on the web

Village at Home

By Kathy Hudson
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Kathy
Hudson

Kathy Hudson is a freelance writer who lives in Roland Park. She's written for "The Baltimore Messenger" since 1995 and has had a bi-weekly column, "Hudson's Corner," since 1998. For "Style" magazine she writes spotlights on people and regular garden features.

Tuesday evening my husband and I went with other neighbors to hear a presentation about the [Village at Home](#). I wished that all neighbors, young and old, had been there. I had thought that this new nonprofit for North Baltimore, Ruxton, Riderwood and Lake Roland was primarily for seniors and those with disabilities, aimed at making it easier to age in place at home. Similar "Villages" are already successful in Boston and Washington, D.C.

The Village at Home, as it was presented, also seems like a great idea for area families and individuals of all ages.

Who doesn't need help finding quality, vetted contractors and tradesmen at reasonable prices? Who doesn't need a ride to or from the airport or doctor? Who doesn't need garden or computer help, babysitter referrals or a few delivered meals? Who doesn't need a volunteer cat, dog or house sitter? We most definitely could have used some "Village" help with snow removal last winter.

The more I listened to the plans to begin with 100 members in March, 2011, the more I realized that a \$399 individual membership might soon pay for itself with the 15 to 20 percent discounts from vetted contractors, trips to and from the airport, volunteer help with raking, paperwork or learning how to use a digital camera.

When I went home and checked out the website, I looked at the volunteer opportunities and saw that I had unwittingly already become a "Village Ambassador."

I've already shared the handsome brochures with my yoga group, as well as friends from other neighborhoods that will be served.

Now to write a check. The Village website says the first 50 to sign up prior to the launch date will receive a \$100 discount.