

## Are You Like Jeff?

By Mark Devlin, Home Safety Program Director

Jeff Blomstedt is one of our caring community members who has opted to share his time and talents as a volunteer within LifePath's Home Safety program. Jeff jumped in with both feet early in 2022 and the program is better off today for his participation. Jeff contacted us at the prompting of his wife Susan LaScala, who is an active LifePath volunteer in our Grocery Shopping program. A veteran, a retired nephrologist, a beekeeper, a wood-turning craftsman, and an accomplished Hickory golfer, Jeff is a patient, practiced, critically-thinking, home-improvement-minded handyperson.

Jeff Blomstedt (right) with Home Safety consumer Doris B. (left).



The Home Safety program was created in the fall of 2021 largely from grant funding through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's creation of the Older Adults Home Modification Program. Rather than focusing on home repair, the program prioritizes prevention of serious and avoidable home incidents such as falls and fires. Through Home Safety volunteers like Jeff, LifePath performs minor home modifications that remove hazards,

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increase functional access, and improve the safety and satisfaction of individuals who are aging at home. Like many of LifePath's programmatic options for independence, the Home Safety program supports lower income older adults and people living with disabilities. Common home modifications include bathroom grab bars, raised toilet seats, handheld shower heads, and fire prevention equipment.

While I find Jeff's breadth of activities and accomplishments amazing, what I value most is his bedside manner, so to speak. Jeff embodies the compassionate approach to construction that is the foundation of our program service. Our process is to listen and observe before making recommendations, then to collaborate and modify for improved safety. You might say we "listen twice, cut once."



Jeff making a repair.

So, you don't need to play golf, make honey, or be a doctor of medicine to join our team of Home Safety volunteers. What you do need is a kind heart, a desire to positively impact your community,

a base level of home repair skill, and an inclination to collaborate as a member of a caring and competent team. I like to think of our program volunteers as Safety Buddies to the consumers we serve. If you are like Jeff in these ways, please contact me, Mark Devlin, Home Safety Program Director, at 413-829-9256 or [mdevlin@lifepathma.org](mailto:mdevlin@lifepathma.org). A sincere thank you to Susan LaScala and Jeff Blomstedt for helping enable LifePath to deliver our volunteer-powered program services.

## Sponsors: The Backbone of LifePath's Annual Walkathon

By Amanda Carter, Event Coordinator & Charity Day, Associate Director of Client Services

The countdown is on: There are only a few weeks left before our "Path for Life" Walkathon happens on Saturday, May 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

LifePath is gearing up for a fun-filled and very meaningful day. It is because of a collective effort from our sponsors, walkers, and donors, that this event has a legacy and is so successful. Ongoing support and commitment that continues year after year is what helps to make LifePath the incredible organization that it is! Because of the variety of services LifePath offers for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers alike, the organization touches a large and diverse population in our communities.

We'd like to recognize these Walkathon sponsors at the \$1000+ level



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Sponsorship is the backbone of this event. When businesses and organizations come together to demonstrate their commitment to the residents in our community, that is when the magic happens!

When asked why LifePath is such an important organization to her, Wendy Marsden, Firm Principal at ProsperiTea Planning explained: "I am not really a religious person, but LifePath exemplifies

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angels doing God's Work, you are all doing the work that needs to be done in the world." Her company has been a proud donor since 2013. Wendy provides comprehensive financial services to individuals. She assists people during all financial stages of their lives and at the end of life, making sure that their affairs are in order. By assisting people to manage their finances better, Wendy makes it possible to age at home with care. She believes LifePath is a meaningful organization to be a part of, stating, "People are most happy when living a meaningful life, and LifePath helps people to do that."

Similar to ProsperiTea Planning, Bete Fog Nozzle is a fourth generation family-owned company founded in Greenfield in 1950. Its partnership as a LifePath supporter started in 2003 and they were honored as a "distinguished donor" for LifePath's 45th anniversary event in 2019. Bete Fog Nozzle does their due diligence in researching a variety of organizations and how they benefit Franklin County and surrounding communities. When asked how LifePath made the cut as one of the organizations they are passionate about supporting, Matthew Bete, CEO and Chairman of the Board, responded, "LifePath has demonstrated a certain ongoing stability which continues to help older adults in the community." Although not requiring the aid of LifePath's services at this time, Matthew feels that it will be needed in the future for friends and family alike, and is comforted knowing that these important services are available when the time comes.

If your organization would like to make a difference in your community, you can donate online at [LifePathMA.org/Walkathon](http://LifePathMA.org/Walkathon) or contact us at [giving@lifepathma.org](mailto:giving@lifepathma.org) / 413-773-5555.



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413.773.5555 | 978.544.2259 | 800.732.4636  
[Info@LifePathMA.org](mailto:Info@LifePathMA.org) | [LifePathMA.org](http://LifePathMA.org)

