

HELP US KEEP **THESE LIGHTS** ON

You are invited to join a dynamic group of neighbors, community leaders, and devoted caregivers who work together to make the Mystic Valley region a place of welcome, hospitality, and joy for all older adults and adults living with disabilities. Because of the commitment of our supporters, thousands of older adults and adults living with disabilities receive the services they need to live in their own homes, neighborhoods, and communities — and to otherwise live the way that they want.

BECOME A GUARDIAN OF HOPE,

Not only is home care significantly less burdensome (both emotionally and financially) than nursing home care, it prevents painful separation of people from their families, their friends, and their sense of home, stability, and comfort. When people receive the supports they need to keep everyday life going the way it should, they can remain at home in the Mystic Valley, in every sense.

WELLBEING, & INTERDEPENDENCE





KEEPING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Home care means just that: a person with skills and training visits your home to help you with the tasks that feel difficult, fatiguing, or unsafe.

Help in and out of bed or the shower. Shopping. Meal preparation. Cleaning.

Home care can cost just a few dollars a day, significantly less than expensive nursing homes.

But more importantly, **home care keeps people in their own homes, in their communities and their neighborhoods.**

It keeps couples together.

It keeps families together.

And for those who may live alone, it keeps dignity, autonomy, and wellbeing **within reach.**

The [home care program at Mystic Valley Elder Services](#) supports 5,000 people every month. Home care is central to our mission and the focus of our considerable expertise.

Every year, we send 150 care advisors into people's homes to assess pressing needs and to work one-on-one to develop a tailored home care plan. This individual attention is what every person deserves, and what everyone receives.

When government funding falls short of meeting specific needs, Mystic Valley Elder Services steps in with resources — with the resources provided to us by *donors like you* — to close the gap.

With your help, we will strive to connect every one of our neighbors with the care and assistance they need.

**KEEPING
FAMILIES WHOLE**





I NEED TO KNOW I AM WELCOME.



When the time comes for community members to seek services, they need to know how to find us. We reach broadly across our Mystic Valley region and deeply into marginalized communities to ensure **we are accessible to everyone.**

Geography is no longer destiny, but for those with limited mobility or limited access to resources, it may seem that way. We counter the isolation that many in our community experience by conducting targeted outreach in each of our 11 cities and towns. We work to make the agency's services known and accessible to every older adult and adult living with disabilities, whether they live in a suburban North Reading neighborhood, along the beach in Winthrop, or around the corner from where we first began in Malden.

We ensure that people know our services are available regardless of economic status, personal wealth, or income.

Certain populations of older adults have been traditionally excluded from mainstream elder services. [We're committed to reversing this pattern and placing our services within the reach of those with limited English proficiency;](#) people of all ethnicities and races; and [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender members](#) of our senior community.



I FEEL STRONGER WITH MEALS ON WHEELS.



Without daily lunch delivery, **over fifty percent** of [Meals on Wheels](#) participants would skip their meal altogether.

Every weekday, our team of drivers disperse across the Mystic Valley region to deliver 2,750 nutrient-rich meals to older adults and adults of all ages living with disabilities. And once a month, volunteers deliver free groceries to older adults in need.

When the doorbell rings, it's not just a meal but a warm smile, a kind word, and a concerned friend. This visit is a highlight of many days and the human touch that provides seniors with critical

reassurance — that neighbors watch out for each other's wellbeing.

Solid nutrition builds strength and supports the heart; solid relationships build community and strengthen hope.

At our monthly food pantries, seniors collect nutritious ingredients in a dignified setting. And at our dining sites, community members join together to celebrate good food and welcome companionship.



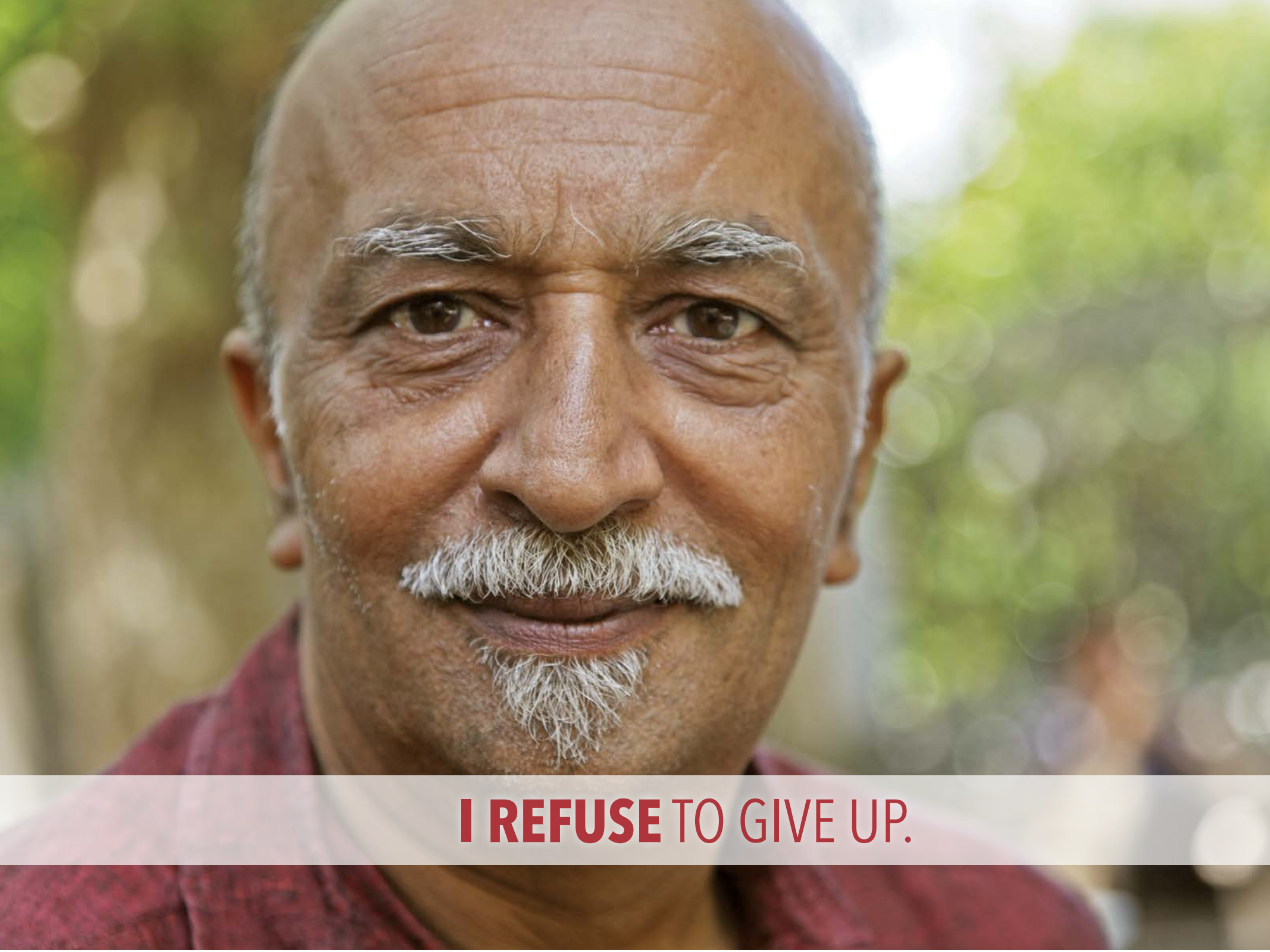
I DESERVE TO UNDERSTAND MY OPTIONS.



Having options is meaningless if you don't understand them or can't access them. Our [multilingual experts](#) offer community members the guidance they need to set their own course.

Each year, thousands of older adults, adults of all ages living with disabilities, and caregivers (children, grandchildren, siblings, friends) take advantage of the in-depth, wide-reaching [counseling programs](#) that Mystic Valley offers. Whether you are exploring options such as home care, personal care aides, and adult day care, or demystifying Medicare enrollment and prescription drug plans, our trained and seasoned experts are equipped to handle just about any challenge, quandary, or question.

When struggles with managing money and bills threaten to interfere with an older adult's independence, our qualified [Money Management assistants](#) step in to help organize bills, sift through confusing offers, and maintain a balanced check book. When changes to Medicare coverage endanger an older couple's ability to access medical specialists or life-saving drugs, our [Medicare counselors](#) take them through their options, one step at a time. Our commitment to personalized, one-on-one problem-solving never wavers.



I REFUSE TO GIVE UP.



[Transportation](#) can be an overwhelming barrier for many older adults and adults living with disabilities. We work to dismantle that barrier and **keep community members engaged in the things that matter most to them.**

For those who don't drive, simple appointments such as the doctor's office, the hairdresser, or lunch with an old friend can cause tremendous stress. No one should feel alienated from community, family, or the necessities of life because of transportation issues — which is why [Mystic Valley's transportation program](#) works to keep everyone moving.

Our approach to solving transportation challenges is multi-faceted. We offer intensive referral services

and options counseling; provide mileage reimbursement to neighbors or friends who give community members a lift; negotiate lower rates with local transportation companies; and we even give people rides to critical appointments.

These essential efforts are only partially funded by government grants. The support of our community members — of folks like *you* — is needed every year to keep this program rolling — and to keep seniors engaged in their lives and world.



I WILL SEE THE SUN AGAIN.



Without appropriate, in-home mental health counseling, older adults who wrestle with depression are at an extremely high risk for self harm or suicide. **Our [Mobile Mental Health](#) program saves lives.**

Our innovative [Mobile Mental Health](#) program provides home-based mental health counseling and treatment to older adults and adults living with disabilities. For those who suffer from mental illness, including depression, anxiety, trauma, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and substance abuse, this program represents compassion and hope.

It may surprise you to learn that the highest suicide rates are among adults ages 45-64 and

85 and over. Over ninety percent of those who take their own lives are suffering from a mental health disorder. Intervention with our vulnerable community members is critical to save lives, restore hope and dignity, and begin the intensive process of healing.

We work on an ongoing basis with 170 older adults facing mental health challenges and receive 12 new referrals each month, a number that continues to increase. Only support from donors like you can sustain this essential program.



I CELEBRATE LIFE'S SMALL JOYS.



We're the only resource in the area for older adults who seek the modest necessities that make life manageable: rubber treads for slippery stairs, new dentures, hearing aid batteries.

Imagine having to move out of your home over something so small as a sturdy pair of shoes.

While no one doubts the essential nature of health coverage or home care, many forget the needs for smaller, yet *critical*, items, such as a wig to address the hair loss that comes with chemotherapy, new dentures, or up-to-date prescription eyeglasses.

Much of what keeps a person independent can be lost when it is difficult to read and sign medical

forms, walk downstairs to the mailbox or laundry room, or leave the house in comfort and dignity.

We ensure that people can get what they need, as well as the things that make life rich — because we know how essential a positive outlook is to maintaining good health. We can even help when a loving pet owner is in danger of sacrificing her own medicine for the needs of her pet. We know that small necessities like these have a vast impact on our community's wellbeing, health, and joy.



I AM MAKING MY COMMUNITY VIBRANT.



Mystic Valley is more than a resource—we're a gathering place and a force for community improvement. We provide the opportunities, and our program participants—your friends, neighbors, parents—embody the spirit of positive change.

Our community members have so much to share—with each other, with young people, and with the world at large. With personalized opportunities and ongoing, responsive support, older adults and adults living with disabilities can and will [become volunteers](#) who improve the world.

We build [opportunities for volunteers](#) to share experiences and talents, and we provide ongoing support so that our volunteers can receive the warmth and fulfillment that come from service.

[Our annual art show and workshop series celebrate talent and the spirit of learning.](#) Our [money management](#) and [Medicare counseling programs](#) provide community members with the in-depth, tailored training they need to become skilled advocates for their peers. And our reading partners program pairs older adults with schoolchildren who need extra attention, patience, and one-on-one help to keep up with their classmates.

In Mystic Valley, no one is left behind.



I AM THE EXPERT ON MY OWN LIFE.



Adults of all ages living with disabilities select the amount and frequency of assistance they receive through Mystic Valley. The decision-making power is always right where it belongs—in their hands.

When we partner with [adults living with disabilities](#), our goals are in sync: to get the community member the amount and type of support they need to live in their own homes, on their own terms.

Mystic Valley works closely with adults of all ages to assess the most appropriate, respectful approach to providing solutions that promote independence. We connect community members to [Personal Care Attendant](#) services, [home care](#),

companionship, [meal services](#), and adult family care programs.

Most importantly, we respect the expertise and decision-making authority of every adult who participates in our programs.

We're committed to providing everyone with the keys they need — information, support, and resources — to keep themselves comfortable, independent, and healthy at home.

WAYS TO GIVE

- **MEET THE PRESSING NEEDS OF YOUR NEIGHBORS**

Your gift to Mystic Valley goes right to work where it's most needed — helping to pay for new dentures, covering costly prescription co-pays, providing a few hours of home care to someone recovering from surgery, paying the salary of a new bilingual care advisor serving people who might otherwise slip through the cracks.

You make a gift to Mystic Valley so that your neighbors can access the type of help that can save a life, prevent an injury, and increase peace of mind, wellbeing, and safety. Your support makes Mystic Valley Elder Services an agile responder to the needs — big and small — of our community members.

- **SUSTAIN RESPONSIVE, LIFE-SUPPORTING PROGRAMS**

The phone at Mystic Valley will ring 900 times tomorrow. When the person on the other end asks for help, for a month of home care visits or six months of [Meals on Wheels](#), **we know we can say yes**. And we can say it because our sustaining, monthly donors have made a promise to us so that we can fulfill our promise to the communities we serve.

When you join your neighbors as a monthly donor to Mystic Valley Elder Services, you make it possible for us to increase staffing to meet growing needs. You join a movement that is dedicated to making the world welcoming and respectful to every single person, of every age and ability. You commit to one of your central beliefs: that all our lives are better and richer when people get what they need to live in dignity and comfort.

• JOIN THE PARTY: BECOME AN EVENT SPONSOR

Several times a year, Mystic Valley hosts events to raise necessary funds to support [Meals on Wheels](#) and provide services to elders without resources, including our [Bellyful of Laughs](#) comedy night and our Annual Theatre Benefit. We also put on community enrichment events, such as our [annual ART+experience](#), an exhibition and workshop series that celebrates seniors in the arts, and programs and workshops for caregivers and community members.

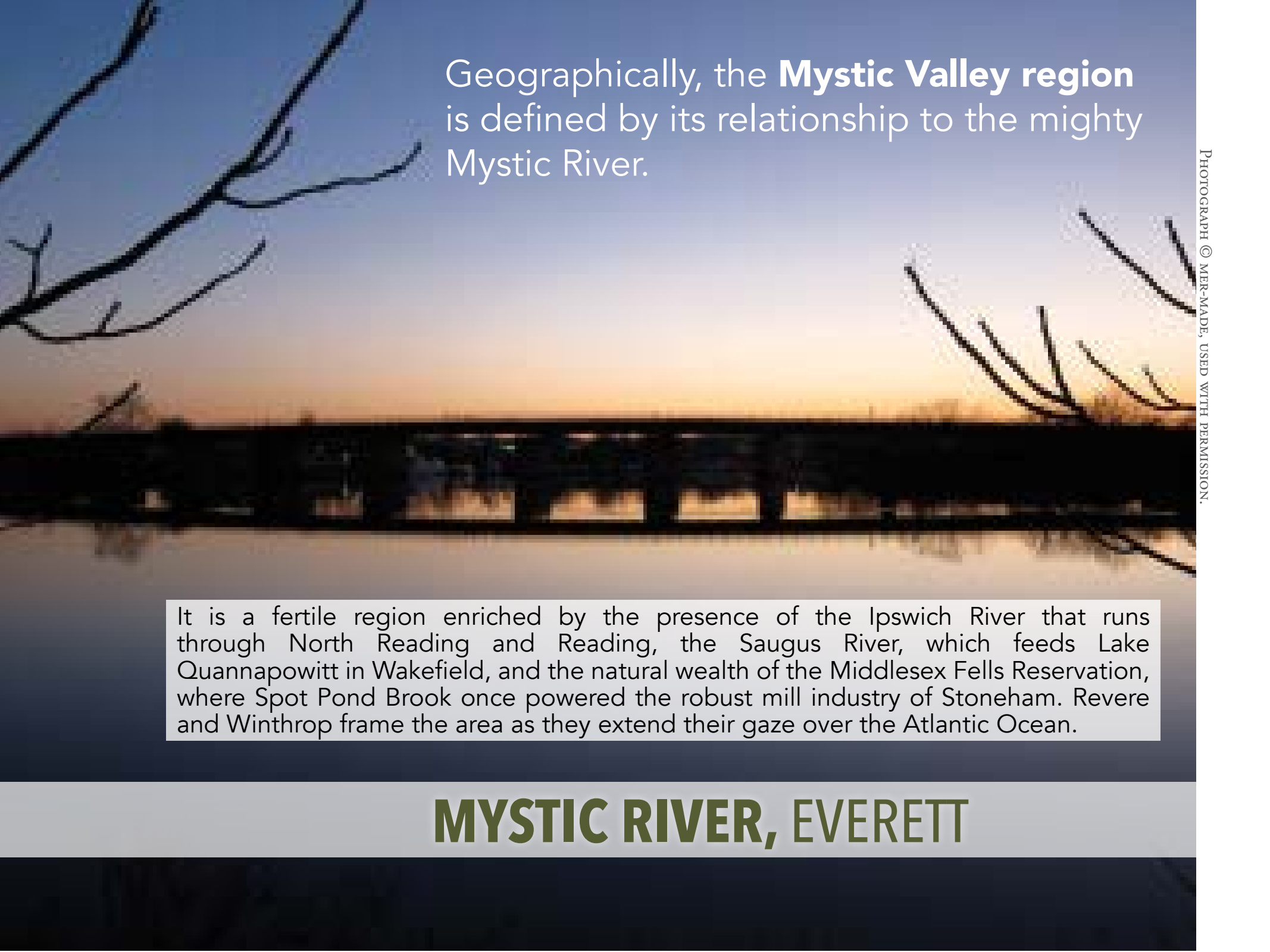
Our [event sponsors](#) compose a group of dynamic and dedicated local businesses, partner agencies, and individual friends of the organization who are fantastic at doing something pretty incredible: showing up when they are needed.

• BUILD A LEGACY OF COMPASSION

Deciding upon your legacy is no small matter. How will you be remembered? How will your dedication to wellbeing, dignity, and community live on after you are gone?

Many of our devoted supporters have designated [Mystic Valley's programs in their wills](#), and in doing so have worked to ensure that generations of older adults will have access to the vital services that we provide. This week, we will serve 200 meals that were furnished through the forethought and generosity of a local veteran, a benefactor from Reading. Next week, we will install a grab bar above a gentleman's bed so that he can lie back with ease, due to the compassionate legacy of a schoolteacher from Medford. The effects of your commitment, and your life, will be felt and remembered for generations.

GIVE

A photograph of a bridge over a river at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with the sun low on the horizon. Bare tree branches are visible in the foreground, framing the scene. The bridge has several arches and is reflected in the water.

Geographically, the **Mystic Valley region** is defined by its relationship to the mighty Mystic River.

PHOTOGRAPH © MER-MADE, USED WITH PERMISSION.

It is a fertile region enriched by the presence of the Ipswich River that runs through North Reading and Reading, the Saugus River, which feeds Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield, and the natural wealth of the Middlesex Fells Reservation, where Spot Pond Brook once powered the robust mill industry of Stoneham. Revere and Winthrop frame the area as they extend their gaze over the Atlantic Ocean.

MYSTIC RIVER, EVERETT

These waterways continue to move,
to bend, to influence the landscape
that surrounds them.

SPOT POND, MALDEN, MEDFORD, MELROSE & STONEHAM

The Mystic Valley community, as a whole and as a congregation of individual cities and towns, is further defined by its people, its commitment to shared growth and progress, and its embrace of neighbors and friends.

And like the evolving landscape of the Mystic Valley region, we are shaped by the community resources that define our relationships with each other.

PHOTOGRAPH © BRAD BRADSHAW, USED WITH PERMISSION.



IPSWICH RIVER, READING & NORTH READING


In the Mystic Valley, there are no strangers — only friends we haven't met yet. And we take care of our friends, as they take care of us.

LAKE QUANNAPOWITT, WAKEFIELD

When a neighbor needs a hand, we offer it.
When a friend needs a smile, we give one.

A scenic photograph of Water Tower Hill in Winthrop, Maine. The hill is covered with numerous white houses, some with colorful roofs. A prominent water tower with red, white, and blue sections stands out against the sky. The foreground shows a body of water and a rocky shore. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds.

WATER TOWER HILL, WINTHROP



The generosity, integrity, and compassion of this region **builds bridges**: between generations, between deeply rooted families and hopeful newcomers, between resources and those who need them.

TOBIN BRIDGE, CHELSEA

When you give to Mystic Valley Elder Services, you honor the tradition of your region, as well as your own commitment to community, interdependence, autonomy, and *hope*.

With your support of older adults and adults living with disabilities, we can continue to ensure that **Mystic Valley means home...for everyone.**

PHOTOGRAPH © JOHN TRAVERS, USED WITH PERMISSION.

REVERE BEACH, REVERE

This booklet is available for download at our website, www.mves.org. A limited number of print booklets are available. To request a copy, please contact our development office at 781-324-7705 or development@mves.org.



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Partnering with older adults, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers residing in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield, and Winthrop.