

Introduction to Bloomingdale Aging in Place

FAQs for New Members

What makes BAiP tick? BAiP has grown and flourished for a number of reasons. First: we are a network of neighbors cooperating to improve our lives and enhance connections. Next: our flexibility; we have an ear out to the needs of our community and try to adapt accordingly. Third and most of all: our wonderful members who come forward with administrative help or with new ideas and projects that they volunteer to lead. Like any cooperative, without our members who volunteer, we are nothing. We hope and expect that our members who are able will find a way to give their time to make a difference in our organization.

Who can be a member of BAiP? Adults age 18 and over who live within our “neighborhood” defined as: **W. 96th to W. 110th Streets between Riverside Drive and Central Park West.**

What is the cost? Membership and directly sponsored offerings are free. Note: if we have a drink or meal together, or take the bus, or go to a cultural institution, you pay your way, ie., cost of your meal, admission and transportation fare.

What about people living outside of the membership neighborhood? BAiP’s mission as an all-volunteer organization is to create community among close neighbors and for that purpose we need to put limits on our growth and our geographic boundaries. To participate, you must live within the membership neighborhood.

What is BAiP’s purpose? BAiP’s mission is to help older adults lead vital, safe, connected, and comfortable lives as their needs change. An all-volunteer, intergenerational network of neighbors, BAiP builds community by organizing social activities, sharing information and extending a helping hand to neighbors as they continue to live at home.

How does BAiP fulfill that mission?

Through Activities: BAiP believes in building community and connecting people. Thanks to our many volunteers, we do this by organizing small group activities, some weekly (such as a variety of walking groups and wellness classes), some monthly (such as our many reading and outings groups), some from time to time (like our Show+Go offerings). BAiP also has occasional Blooming Hour events where people meet and socialize. We launch and fill groups quickly. Once you sign up, you’ll receive information on open groups and upcoming events. To lead a new group or express your interest in joining an existing group, write to activities@bloominplace.org or call 212-842-8831, extension 16.

Through Presentations: BAiP offers a monthly series of free presentations by experts on topics of interest to older adults and the people who care about them. These presentations are open to the general public. If you have a great idea for such a program, send us an email: BAiPresents@bloominplace.org. We announce the events approximately two weeks in advance; keep an eye on your email.

Through Neighbor-to-Neighbor: N2N is our outreach to older adults who may need assistance; someone to walk with, an escort to the doctor, emergency shopping, a friendly visit. Like everything we do, N2N is comprised of volunteers so assistance depends on their availability. To contact N2N, email n2n@bloominplace.org or call 212-842-8831, ext. 1.

Through Community Outreach: First and foremost, our members serve the community by their commitment to BAiP's mission to help one another. This comes in many forms! BAiP has a corps of building representatives who are our direct liaisons in many of the buildings in our neighborhood. We also are a distribution point for seasonal farm fresh food bags in the growing season. And we share information about flu shots, CPR instruction, scams, hearing, and more. For more information, reach us at community@bloominplace.org.

Through our ResourceXchange: BAiP keeps a list of resources recommended to us by our members: doctors, lawyers, window washers, manicurists, handypeople, etc. We do not vet the reliability of these people, that is up to you, but the ResourceXchange is a good place to start if you need someone to do something. Help strengthen the list by sending in a recommendation or use this resource by contacting us at ResourceXchange@bloominplace.org.

Through our Tech Squad: Our Tech Squad is comprised of BAiP members who can fix things (computer glitches, lamps, etc.). The Tech Squad tries to solve problems but is limited by the level of its members' expertise and their availability. Email us with your issue, and we'll let you know if we can help: techsquad@bloominplace.org.

Through the TriBloomingdale Initiative: BAiP grew from the efforts of two block associations. We have teamed up with them to form this tri-organizational initiative. A fast walking group, a SciFi reading group, and a neighborhood climate change group are currently offered. Send us an email to let us know what is of interest: info@bloominplace.org (and put "TriBloomingdale" in the subject line).

How is BAiP funded? BAiP is an all-volunteer organization, which means that we have no paid staff. Our members volunteer to do everything, from working behind the scenes to administer the organization to leading groups of all kinds. Currently, about 200 of our members serve as volunteers and we very much would like to increase this number. Our funding is raised through donations and bequests from our members and from occasional small grants. Funding is spent on our wellness program, insurance, space rental, website maintenance, refreshments, postage and printing.

How can I volunteer?

We need people in all roles, people with one hour (or ten!) a week to spare, to serve as the following:

- helping hands for neighbors who need assistance;
- walking/book/outing/dining group leaders;
- building representatives to be a liaison to your neighbors;
- greeters at events; administrators, data entry and communications specialists
- Tech Squad members who can hang pictures or fix glitches in computer software;

In other words, we need people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and do what they can for the community. To talk to us about volunteering contact us at info@bloominplace.org or 212-842-8831, ext. 0.

I love BAiP. How can I make a donation or bequest? We are grateful for the support of our members. Here are all the ways to support us: <https://www.bloominplace.org/donate.html>. To make a contribution, you may send a donation to P.O. Box 497, New York, NY 10025 or make an online gift by credit card at our web page above. To leave an even more lasting legacy, you may make a bequest to BAiP and ensure its existence in years to come. To support BAiP by making a gift or bequest, please email or call us: treasurer@bloominplace.org or 212-842-8831, ext. 52. A copy of our most recently filed financial report is available from the Charities Registry of the New York State Attorney General's website (www.charitiesnys.com) or, upon request, by contacting the New York State Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 29 Liberty Street, New York, NY 10005 or (212) 416-8401, or us at Bloomingdale Aging in Place, PO Box 497, New York, NY 10025 or info@bloominplace.org or (212) 842-8831, ext 0.

We hope this information is useful! If you don't see the right email above, you may reach us at info@bloominplace.org or phone us at 212-842-8831, ext. 0.

THE GOLDEN RULES OF PARTICIPATING IN BAIp ACTIVITIES

By participating in our offerings, you are agreeing to the following rules of the road:

1. Prioritize.

If you belong to an ongoing group, we expect you to prioritize that commitment, hold meeting dates in your calendar, and attend much more often than not. If infeasible, consider instead our one-time offerings like our Show+Go outings, neighborhood meals or happy hours (aka Blooming Hours).

2. Read BAIp activity leaders' messages carefully as soon as you receive them.

These often contain critical information about routes, dates, meeting locations, books, etc. No one likes to spend their day on emailing back and forth. A leader is often communicating with 10 people. That's a lot of emails. Think and read before you ask your leader a question about logistics.

3. Reply! RSVP! Get back to your leader.

Your prompt reply to your leader's message is **expected**. People open their homes. They want to prepare for your arrival. It is courteous to let them know your response as early as possible and not to leave them hanging. Do it in an email or by calling; leaders have a lot of balls in the air when running groups and may not remember something you mention in passing.

4. Just can't help it and have to miss something? Cancel!

If you are not coming to an outing, a group meeting, a meal, or a happy hour organized by BAIp, you **must** send a cancellation notice to the organizer. Think of that person as your host; it is rude not to inform him or her of your absence. Plus we'll worry about you if you don't show up. Also, many of our offerings have long waiting lists, and notification of your absence may mean someone else may participate.

5. Arrive on time.

Please don't keep your exercise instructors, outing leaders, and fellow group members waiting.

6. Overcommitted or underwhelmed? Drop out!

If you are dropping a group, be explicit. Tell your leader that it's not for you any more. If he or she is communicating with you, you are probably considered a group member even if you have moved on. So, please don't leave your leader guessing. Dropping the group is fine; just be clear so someone else may have a chance to participate.

7. Dote.

Notice that one of your fellow members is not coming regularly or feeling unwell? Please help us build our community by taking the initiative to check on him or her with a friendly email. We've seen this happening all over BAIp and consider it to be our essence.

8. An occasional "thank you" goes a long way

Volunteers, group leaders, tour guides, neighborhood partners (the New Jewish Home, Anshe Chesed, the library, the hostel, the Marseilles, the Ellington and other restaurants...) all make BAIp go round. Your thanks is music to our ears. We all share equity in this organization, and that makes it unique.

If you have any questions about these rules of the road, please contact BAIp's Activities Committee co-chairs, Phyllis Sperling and Caitlin Hawke at activities@bloominplace.org and 212-842-8831, extension 16.