

## THE HOUR

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# High schoolers teach seniors how to use technology

By Stephanie Kim Updated 12:28 am, Monday, February 27, 2017



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Larry Mauer learning how to transfer his music files to his MP3 player with help from Wilton High School junior Erin Sweeney at the Senior center on Wednesday, Feb. 22.

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WILTON — **Larry Mauer** came to the **Senior Center** Wednesday afternoon for help with transferring his music to his SanDisk MP3 player. He also needed help creating an email account.

In a matter of minutes, his problem was solved — after a one-on-one session with **Wilton High School** junior **Erin Sweeney**.

“She’s really great,” Mauer said.

"I can lend her, but I won't easily lend her," he laughed.

Sweeney is part of the Candy Stripers, a group of Wilton High School students who find ways to connect with and serve the senior community.

The club partnered with Stay at Home in Wilton to launch the tech class this year, meeting in the senior technology room twice a month for one-on-one sessions with seniors. The sessions last about an hour.

"Those of us who live in Wilton are fortunate to have very capable students who enjoy working with seniors in the community in technology instruction," said **Peter Dodds**, president of Stay at Home in Wilton.

The program also allows for the building of inter-generational relationships. Conversations about growing up in Wilton and life stories were shared between seniors and the high-schoolers, in the midst of tips on how to use the latest technology devices and platforms.

**NoraNoël Nolan**, a Wilton High School senior who founded the club last year, said she started the Candy Stripers for this very reason: to add enriched experiences and interactions in the lives of seniors who live in Wilton.

The club's name was inspired by the original Candy Stripers, started by a group of female junior high and high-schoolers who volunteered at hospitals in the 1940s.

"All of the members of our club, we all have an elderly member of our family who has been lonely or has needed help or been in a home," Nolan said. "So we just go around the homes in the community and throw events for them."

Nolan said the best part of the tech class so far is helping seniors connect to friends and loved ones, and to the world, overall.

"I know that my grandpa says that technology's left him behind, like everything's moving so quickly," she said. "So it's good for them just to sit down with us, and we go step by step."

**Giedra Tronccone**, who needed help removing closed captioning on a foreign film,

agreed.

"It's the best thing you could have ever imagined," she said. "These are answers to specific questions, and this way, we get the undivided attention."

For more information about the program, contact Stay at Home in Wilton at [info@shwil.org](mailto:info@shwil.org) or 203-423-3225.

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