

Wilton loses 2 advocates for seniors

By Pat Tomlinson, Wilton Villager

WILTON, 8-26-16 — It is a rare afternoon for late August. A cool breeze is blowing and there is hardly any humidity as a group of senior citizens prepare for a boat ride around the Thimble Islands in Branford. The weathers amenable and the water is calm. It is a perfect day for boating, but something just doesn't feel right. This daylong outing for members of Stay at Home in Wilton is simply missing something, or somebody — two somebodies, to be precise. Stay at Home in Wilton lost two of its pioneering members last week when its president, Barbara Quincy died on Saturday, Aug. 13, followed by co-founder Kenneth Dartley on Wednesday, Aug. 17.

They were both perfect examples of the kind of people we need in this town," said Second Selectman Michael Kaelin, "They were the same kinds of people — they weren't looking for credit or recognition, they were just looking to make a difference and do some good, and they both did a lot of that". Kaelin said without the influence and hard work these two advocates affected in the community, Wilton would unlikely be as hospitable a home to the vibrant community of senior citizens it is today. Dartley and Quincy grew concerned as they saw more and more of their friends move out of town as they grew older because the area was unaffordable and their homes grew harder to maintain. In response, Dartley and Quincy banded together with a small group of fellow Wiltonians and led the charge to create Stay at Home in Wilton in late 2009. The purpose of the program was to provide a range of services to the elderly, including household repairs, transportation, organizational events and a host of others.

Dartley took the movement to accommodate the area's senior citizens further. Seeing how high living costs were plaguing seniors, Dartley began a new crusade to provide affordable housing for senior citizens in the form of the Wilton Commons living facility. To ensure seniors' concerns were listened to and acted upon, Darfley even joined the Board of Selectmen as a replacement for James Saxe in September 2015. Although his time with the selectmen was short, all who knew him said it wasn't any shortage of effort that held him back. "If you knew him then you would know that it would really hurt him if something wasn't right, to the point where it was almost physical. He wanted everything to be the best that it could be, and he really, really cared genuinely. Everything with Ken came from the heart," state Rep. Gail Lavielle, R-Wilton, said. Dartley's concern for other's well-being was so intense, he would



often lie awake at night worrying about others and thinking of ways that he could try and help them Lavielle said. This concern manifested itself in his efforts to bolster support for veterans, senior citizens and just about any cause that he felt was worthy.

For instance, when Dartley — a Korean War veteran — heard about the death of Wilton resident Nick Madaras in Afghanistan while serving in the U.S. Army, he joined the Madaras family and the American Legion to start Kick for Nick. The program, which picked up national acclaim, sent over 40,000 soccer balls to the underprivileged and displaced children of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Quincy, like Dartley, also made her herculean efforts felt all across the community. In addition to being president of Stay at Home in Wilton and a member of the board for Wilton Commons, she also held a number of positions throughout her time in Wilton. Former commissioner of the Planning and Zoning committee, member of the Conservation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Committee, and volunteer tutor for special education classes — these were but a few of the titles Quincy held in Wilton.



Under Quincy's watchful eye, the Stay at Home in Wilton program has flourished, said co-founder Phil Richards, once we lost her we lost a lot of those activities that she was carefully running. It's going to be extremely difficult to find a single person who could handle all that she had on her plate, so now we're just trying to delegate her responsibilities amongst each other," said Phil Richards.

Even in death, both Quincy and Dartley are contributing to the program they dedicated the latter part of their lives to. In lieu of flowers, -Quincy's family members are asking people to consider a donation to Stay at Home in Wilton. Similarly, Dartley's family is asking that donations be made to Stay At Home in Wilton and the Wilton Historical Society for programs and activities encompassing embroidery and other needle arts in conjunction with the Fairfield County Chapter of the Embroiderers' Guild of America.

A memorial service will be held for Quincy at the Wilton Presbyterian Church, 48 New Canaan Road, on Sunday, Aug. 28 at 2 pm. A reception will immediately follow in the Parish Hall. Dartley's a memorial service win be held on Wednesday, Aug. 31 at the Wilton Presbyterian Church, 48 New Canaan Road. Friends may call on Tuesday, Aug. 30 from 4 to 8 pm. at Hoyt Funeral Home, 199 Main St., New Canaan. Dartley will be buried with military honors on Aug. 31 at 10 a.m. in Hillside Cemetery in Wilton prior to the memorial service.

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