

AVON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS SEPTEMBER 15, 2020 - MINUTES

This meeting was held by Zoom Conference

HOST: Middlewoods of Farmington, Bianca Turcotte Reome

Middlewoods is not-for-profit and part of the United Methodist Healthcare system. They have 69 apartments for residents in assisted living and independently living. They do not do memory care or take residents requiring lifting either with 2 people or Hoyer lifts. They are still offering respite care as they have during the entire crisis. They have been Covid-free and never had to totally lockdown their residents. This is important because being able to maintain physical activity and to socialize is essential to cognitive function.

In response to the virus, they implemented programs intended to maximize socializing and fun—theme parties, fashion shows, cocktail parties. They brought these to the floors so distancing could be maintained while still engaging residents. Hands-on activities (e.g., crafts) were spaced out so everyone who wanted could participate but in small gatherings. They also did one-on-one visits to residents in their apartments if they were not comfortable coming out. Activities have been live streamed to assure social distancing on popular events so all residents could stay connected. A second dining area was created to facilitate distancing and residents have the option of tray service in their apartments.

They created a publication, Reflections, that came out of encouraging discussion of how people were feeling in this exceptional time. For Assisted Living Week, the focus will be on what the staff means to the residents.

Middlewoods also partnered with health professionals in the area to do telehealth. Transportation to in-person medical visits continue to be available, too. They have plexiglass walls, require residents to wear masks and do disinfection throughout the day to prevent spread of infection.

Families can now visit and entertainment is allowed inside the facility. Until recently, this was entirely outdoors.

Bianca says they focused on optimizing the “new normal” now because the state warns that the flu season, coupled with Covid, may require lockdown of facilities again in November or December. This intent is to get as much out of what they can do right now with precautions. Part of this is continual education of staff and residents. She also emphasized what a great team she has.

Liz Cornish said Bianca doesn’t give herself enough credit. A lot of similar facilities just shut down. Because some do not have the right staff in place, residents were sent outside for care that Middlewoods can provide in house exposing them to potential infection with Covid.

When asked what we can do for Middlewoods, Bianca said they would welcome cards with positive messages. They had been getting them and sharing them with residents but this has now tapered off. Residents really appreciated these.

30-Second Intros

SPEAKER: New Season in Life, Liz Cornish

Topic: Questions to Ask When Looking for Assisted Living and Memory Care

Liz helps seniors and their families find the best communities to meet their needs. She is also a physical therapist. She pointed out that there are about 30 facilities within easy reach of Farmington so selecting the right one requires knowing what is important to you.

1. Dining – There are a variety of options. Some places offer set times for meals, some offer anytime dining and some even have bistros where a snack can be gotten during the night. Dining has a

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meaningful impact on how happy a resident will be. Set times for dining means you will always be dining with others. But if breakfast is only served until 9am and you typically get up at 10am, this may not work for you. On the other hand, dining all day is flexible but may mean you are often dining alone if your personal schedule is unique.

2. Transportation – Is it anytime or only certain days? Does it go where you want to go for shopping and healthcare. So you need to know where you like to go and how it will be accommodated.
3. Amenities – There are communities that provide high end amenities like pools, golf simulators and state of the art fitness centers. Know whether this is important to you.
4. Culture – Each community has its own personality. Some are very family oriented with the staff knowing everyone there. Others are much more business-like. Middlewoods actually has tournaments where residents compete with residents from other communities. Some communities hold all activities in-house. Some have few activities. So consider how socially oriented a community is. This is very important and can be the reason residents are unhappy even if everything else meets their needs.
5. Levels of Service – You need to know what service is included, what additional services are available and how much they cost. Liz used the example of needing a bandage—some communities will give a resident a bandage for a minor injury while others will charge you \$11 for it. Some will help with small stuff, especially if it is temporary, while others will require you to hire an aid. Again, the example was the need to empty a Foley bag for a short while—some will do it where others will require 24-hour aids making it unaffordable to stay there.
6. Covid – Have they had any cases? If yes, how many and how did it progress? A couple of cases contained is a very different indicator of the community's ability to control infection than a few turning into many. How do they do infection control? Do they educate residents on doing their part? How did they adjust activities? While Middlewoods took activities to residents' floors and added microphones to help people hear, some just locked down perhaps leaving packets at residents' doors to keep them informed. Have they used technology to help—telehealth, live streaming, etc.

Member Announcements:

- **Forever Home**, Kathy Subasic, is adding a new service, Care for Dementia Caregivers. This is usually 3 sessions teaching how to care for a dementia patient at home including behavior management and self-care. She is doing Facebook live presentations on safety for National Fall Prevention Awareness Week – September 21 through 25—check out her Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ForeverHomeCT>
- **Tocara Jewelry**, Dana Culligan, was honored to speak at Tocara's annual international Conference, styling the new Fall/Winter collection and presenting sales training. She will be doing a new product launch, "The Joy of Sets," on Monday, September 28th at 8pm. Tuesday, October 27th she will be doing a fun fundraiser with **Avon Super Cellar Wine & Spirits** to benefit Alzheimer's. Like her page, <https://www.facebook.com/Tocara-Jewelry-Dana-Culligan-DirectorConsultant-USA-102837151380287>, to access the auctions she runs—this month to benefit FoodShare.
- **CT Psychotherapeutic Resources**, Jeanne Folks, has closed her office and moved entirely to telehealth. She offers free 10 to 15 minute virtual trials to see if this will work for prospective patients.
- **Women Reshaping Lives**, Susan Levine, has recently been certified as a telehealth provider. She also offers free consultations to prospective clients.

Chamber Announcements:

- New Benefit – when you bring in a new member, we will tape a 1-minute video of you describing your business that will be linked to your Featured Listing in our online Membership Directory, a \$140 value including the Featured Listing. This will also be available at an additional charge of \$65 to members with existing Featured Listings.

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- Local First – we are re-invigorating this program and the Town of Avon will be partnering with us to communicate the program.
- Chamber Chats – we are still doing these 10-minute videos in which Lisa asks 5 or 6 “softball questions” during your interview. If you are interested in sharing what you are doing in response to COVID-19 to keep your business going, contact Lisa Bohman.
- September 21 - Health Council meeting
- September 22, 8:30am – A virtual Education Program on Trademarks will be presented by member Jamie Sternberg of Saunders and Silverstein in partnership with the Avon Free Public Library
- September 22, 12:00pm – TLC (The Lunch Connection) will be held virtually with Wheeler
- October 14th - Miller Farms will host a live, outdoor Business After Hours modified from their annual Thanksgiving event. Registration is required by October 12. Temperature checks, masks and social distancing required.

Next Virtual AWE Meeting October 20:

- **Host:** Amanda Benecchi, Edward Jones, 152 Simsbury Rd., Bldg. 9, 2nd Floor
- **Speaker:** Dana Culligan, Tocara Jewelry

Hosts and Speakers for 1Q 2021 – We will need to select speakers and hosts for the first quarter of 2021. If you are interested or want to make a suggestion, please contact Lisa Bohman.

--Joanne Beers

FUTURE MEETINGS

- **November 17** – Holiday Showcase & Gifts of Love Toy Drive – Host: Avon Health Center, 652 West Avon Rd. – to participate, contact Lisa Bohman
- **December 15** – Host: TBD; Speaker: TBD