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### It's the month to get organized

By Dan Tuohy  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

STONEHAM — Sarah Carter Clunan's work space was not so much an office as it was an obstacle course. "You'd have to weave your way through boxes," she said.

The Brookline lawyer and mother took stock of her busy life — a life complicated by a recent move. The missing link — an organizing system.

A friend recommended that she call Dawn Link, owner of Resolutions in Stoneham. "She had an absolute, gung-ho, never-say-die attitude," Clunan said of the professional organizer. Everything, including Clunan's closet and her bookshelf, is now better organized.

More than 25 percent of all Americans say they want to be better organized, according to the National Association of Professional Organizers. The group reports that executives waste six weeks a



DAWN LINK

year searching for lost documents.

On Tuesday, Link will share some tips in a free session, "How to Organize Your Space, Time and Life," hosted by the Friends of the Stoneham Public Library.

Everyone could use a little organization, said assistant library director May Forkin. "I guess I could organize my desk better."

The event is occurring as the professional organizers association celebrates January as national Get Organized Month.

"Getting organized is one of the top five [New Year's] resolutions people make," Link said.

According to Link, compassion, patience, a good sense of humor, and a knowledge of business organization are important. Professional organizers can make \$50 to \$100 an hour, depending on the organizer and the nature of the project, she said.

Link visits clients at their home or office to assess their environments. "It's kind of like a private investigator going out and looking for clues."

In Clunan's case, Link created a plan that played to her visual strengths. Important items were positioned on shelves, or in see-

through drawers.

Organizing does not have to be agonizing, Link said. A little clutter is not a tragedy, she said, at least as long as one can find an important document when it's needed.

Her organizer tendencies began in childhood. She recalled that all her toys were neatly lined up, and her dolls' clothes and accessories were organized — even color coordinated. When she learned to read, she created a card catalog.

Link, who received a master's degree in printing technology, began Resolutions nine years ago. She is now vice president of the national group's New England chapter.

Link said there is hope for anyone with a messy desk or closet. "Being organized isn't something you are born with. It's something you can learn."

*Dawn Link's session will begin at 7 Tuesday evening in the Stoneham Public Library at 431 Main St. More information may be obtained by calling May Forkin at 781-438-1324, or Link at 781-279-4643.*