

THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM ERICKA

Now that Independence Day has come and gone, summer is in full swing. With so much happening...

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SUMMERTIME ACTIVITIES

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You'd be hard-pressed to find someone who isn't hopeful about the apparent waning of the pandemic. Especially during the summer...

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HAPPY SUMMER FROM VWH!

A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Now that Independence Day has come and gone, summer is in full swing. With so much happening in and around town, we have a few updates of our own that we'd like to share.

In the Garden: In April we removed a 3,000 gallon oil tank from underground in the back courtyard. This was done due to updated regulations requiring oil to be kept above ground. The soil was tested, and new above-ground tanks were installed in the boiler room. We now have a large space to play with! We are in talks with landscape designers and architects to create a "senior friendly" garden, using funds from a donor who would like to dedicate the space as a memorial for a loved one. Drawings are being prepared and we hope to have the project completed by the fall.

A COVID Thank You: 842 days ago (March 7, 2020), the New York State Department of Health declared a state of emergency due to the COVID pandemic. Vassar-Warner Home went 682 days, to January 18, 2022, before we had our first case, and ten residents tested positive for Omicron. Not one had to be seen by a doctor. Within a short amount of time, we were all clear! Thank you to all the staff, residents and families that stood with us in our line of defense against this terrible disease!

EQUAL: In December 2021, we received a grant from New York State Department of Health under their EQUAL program. EQUAL stands for Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living. Operators of Adult Homes and Enriched Housing Programs who provide services to individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Safety Net benefits (SN) are eligible for these payments. We received a total of \$32,107.69; 15,779.50 for Capital Improvement Projects (funds are used to enhance the physical environment of the facility and promote a higher quality of life for the residents) plus \$15,779.50 for Local Assistance Projects (funds used to support improvements to the quality of life). None of these funds can be used for items and improvements that we are required to make. We submitted an expenditure plan and it was approved. The capital expense plan included the renovation of the beauty parlor, new furniture for personal care rooms, and additional dining room tables. In the expenditure plan for the local assistance project, we included new lounge improvements for the 3rd floor lounge, new smart TV for the Personal Care area, and new items for activities and recreation.

Here's to a happy, healthy, and fun summer,

Ericka Von Salews

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

Mental health affects people of all ages. It's important to take the time to check in with yourself and your loved ones about mental wellness. The senior population commonly experiences a wide range of mental health struggles, but only a small percentage seek help or treatment. If you'd like to talk to a professional about your mental health, a meeting with a mental health professional can be arranged.

Wondering how to keep your mental health in tip top shape? **Join us for a workout** during one of our offered exercise programs. Even taking a short walk for some fresh air can bring some relief to those who are dealing difficult emotions or feelings.



VWH STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

Mark Jack,
Dietary
Assistant

Joined VWH: 2011

About Me: I am 58 years old and was born at St. Francis Hospital. I grew up in Millbrook. My family currently lives in Delaware.

In My Free Time: I like to read, try new recipes, attend sports events and I like to watch sports on TV. My favorite teams are The Mets and The Boston Red Sox. I love history especially WWII and things that shape our history. I love to relax in the evenings.

JULY ACTIVITY LINEUP

July 6:
VWH Spelling Bee

July 8:
Paint & Sip

July 15:
Music Trivia

July 20:
Resident Council

July 28:
Birthday Party

5 TIPS & TRICKS FOR HEALTHY AGING

The summertime is a great time to check in with your wellbeing, and we're compiling our best healthy aging tips for seniors. There are several health challenges that are unique to the aging population, but making your wellbeing a top priority can help you stay healthy and happy.

Aim for 2.5 hours of exercise per week, or 30 minutes per day 5 days a week.

Moving your body is excellent for both your physical health and your mental health. Physical exercise increases endorphins, which in turn can give your mental health a boost. Additionally, exercise reduces the risk of many age-related conditions like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, all while improving your strength, balance, and energy levels. There are many exercise programs for seniors available, and here at VWH we offer activities like stretching, yoga, daily walks, and dance sessions.

Visit with your doctor regularly.

It's important to visit your doctor when you're feeling well—not just when you're under the weather—to provide a good baseline of your overall health. Regular check-ups at the cadence that your doctor suggests will help to keep any conditions under control, and prevent new ones from cropping up unnoticed. It's especially important for seniors to see certain specialists, such as the optometrist, the dentist, the cardiologist, and undergo certain preventative procedures, such as mammograms and colonoscopies.

If you still smoke cigarettes, it's time to quit.

If you can't quit for yourself, quit for your loved ones. No matter how long you've been smoking or what your age is, quitting can add years to your life—and therefore increase the amount of time you can spend with your children, grandchildren, or other loved ones. Not to mention, quitting will help you save money and enhance the overall health of your lungs, making other positive habits like exercise much easier.

Eat a high-nutrient diet.

Women over the age of 50 are more than twice as likely to break bones than men, and this is typically due to brittle bone disease. Eating a diet rich in vitamin D and calcium will help keep your bones strong, and along with consistent exercise, you can dramatically decrease your chances of bone injuries. At VWH, there are plenty of dietary options for every diet and every palate. Work with a dietician at your residence or in your community to help decide the best diet for your health.



Check in with yourself and your caretakers about your mental health.

According to Mental Health America, more than two million of the 34 million Americans aged 65 and older suffer from some form of depression. This can be especially true for widows and widowers, or anyone who has recently lost a loved one. If you are struggling with your mental health, you are not alone, and you don't need to suffer alone. Aging is not an easy process, and with it can come bouts of depression, anxiety, hopelessness, or disconnection. Speaking with your caretakers or loved ones about your mental health is the quickest way to receive help and resources from a health professional.

COVID COLUMN: SENIOR SAFETY

EVEN AS THE PANDEMIC WANES, TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT SENIORS

You'd be hard-pressed to find someone who isn't hopeful about the apparent waning of the pandemic. Especially during the summer, when the warm weather allows for more outdoor social activities. Mask mandates have vanished in certain settings, and it can be tempting to put COVID in your rearview mirror. And although future strains may decrease in virulence, the elderly remain the most at-risk population for severe illness, hospitalization, and death. While vaccination has been a fantastic weapon in preventing these outcomes, the best way to protect your elderly loved ones is to exercise caution. Here are a few reasons why we still need to protect our elderly loved ones:

Masks aren't necessary outdoors, but they're still required for guests indoors at VWH, per New York State regulations. We know all about the gripes of masks—fogged up glasses, itchiness, pain behind the ears. And with warm summer weather here to stay, our hope is that our outdoor facilities can provide guests the opportunity to interact with loved ones mask-free. But until then, it's strongly recommended that guests continue to wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status. The reason for this is that many of our residents have underlying conditions, which could make a COVID-19 exposure a cause for alarm. Even aside from COVID-19, other nasty bugs like influenza or the stomach flu can wreak havoc on our residents' health. We like to err on the side of caution and ask that all guests mask up while visiting with residents indoors—and of course, please wash your hands frequently!

We're all excited that the pandemic appears to be fading, and we're hopeful for brighter days ahead. But it's in the best interest of our elderly loved ones that we continue to take measures to protect and preserve their health. We're hopeful that the summertime will provide you with ample opportunity to make memories with our residents—in the safest way possible.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Residents

July 6: Patricia Brady
July 7: Dorothy Schuster
July 10: Ross Lape

Staff

July 4: Mavis Kpenty
(Personal Care)
July 8: Anika Henry (Dietary)
July 20: Monquie Gibbes
(Personal Care)
July 23: Shirley Rochester-
Davis
(Personal Care)
July 29: Clayton Spruill
(Dietary)

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: ROSE "BETTY" ALLEN- CLARK

Rose Allen-Clark, affectionately called Betty, was born in 1926, but you wouldn't know it for this young-hearted 95-year-old!

Betty attended nursing school to be an RN at the Hudson River State Hospital. She and her late husband, Raymond, had three children who have now blessed Betty with six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Betty has traveled the world, and has visited Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales. Although Betty was born in Poughkeepsie, prior to moving into Vassar-Warner Home, she lived in Pennsylvania with one of her children. Fond memories of Vassar-Warner Home helped Betty make the choice to move back to Poughkeepsie and join the Vassar-Warner Home family.



Betty and Vassar-Warner Home have a long, storied history that began with her husband serving on the Board of Trustees for what was then the separate Men's Division. When the Men's Division merged with The Old Ladies Home of Poughkeepsie, he continued to serve on the Board of Trustees for the new Vassar-Warner Home, and witnessed the installation of the residential elevator. Betty took a seat on the Board of Lady Managers and was in charge of Shoppin' Place, where residents would come and purchase personal items. As part of the Board of Lady Managers, she was also involved in taking residents out for special lunches and fun group trips. She helped publicize the Home through these outings and by participating in on-site Card Party fundraisers and Ice Cream Socials where community members could visit. Betty was always proud of Vassar-Warner Home, and we're extremely proud of Betty, and can't thank her enough for everything she's done for us!



COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

SAT. JULY 9: Movies Under the Walkway: Sing 2 (7:00 pm to 10:30 pm)

SAT. JULY 30: Barton Orchards' 7th Annual Car Show (11:00 am to 5:00 pm)



2021–2022 Vassar-Warner Home Board of Trustees

Officers

Ellen C. Smyth	<i>President</i>
Gary Grandstaff	<i>Vice President</i>
Kim Ryder	<i>Treasurer</i>
Alice Dickey	<i>Secretary</i>
Shari Hubner	<i>Past President</i>
Laurie Cohn	
John Beale	
Susan Sullivan Bisceglia, Esq.	
Rena Ann Hill, CM, PA	
Nancy Slauson	
Jill Karn	
Rosemary M. Butts	

Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective October 2021

<u>Executive Committee</u>	<u>Foundation Board</u>
Ellen Smyth	Wayne Quint
Gary Grandstaff	Nancy Slauson
Alice Dickey	Bill Francis
Shari Hubner	Kim Ryder
Ericka Von Salews	Greg White
	Brian Robinson

Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective October 2021

<u>Board Development</u>	<u>Finance</u>	<u>Fund Development and Marketing</u>	<u>Quality of Resident Life</u>
Laurie Cohn – Chair	Kim Ryder – Chair		Shari Hubner – Chair
John Beale	Nancy Slauson	Rena Hill - Chair	Susan Sullivan Bisceglia
	Jill Karn	+Cheryl Holt	Ellen Smyth
	+Cheryl Holt		John Beale
<u>Property</u>	+Cora Motts	<u>Strategic & Long- Range Planning</u>	Rosemary Butts
Gary Grandstaff – Chair			+Kalin Perez
Laurie Cohn	<u>Personnel</u>	Rena Hill	+Luann Zadora
Nancy Slauson	Susan Sullivan	Ellen Smyth	+Christina DeSouza, RN
+Pete Molino	Bisceglia – Chair		
	Alice Dickey		

KEY:

* = Community Member + = Staff Member

Ex Officio, all committees: Ericka Von Salews and Ellen Smyth