



THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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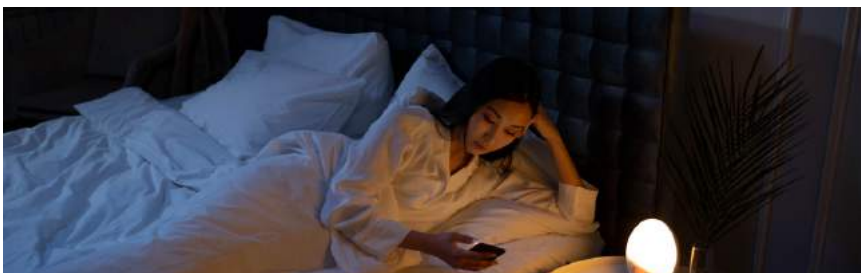
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HAPPY SPOOKY SEASON

A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's that time of year again--the temperatures begin to drop, the days grow a bit shorter, pumpkins appear on the front steps of your neighbors' homes. Fall is officially in full swing, and for lots of us, that means raking leaves, cheering on our favorite football teams, and partaking in the Halloween spirit.

But with the fall season comes a few things we all need to be wary of, especially those who are seniors or are the loved ones of seniors. As we're sure you've already heard, it's time to get your annual flu shot and COVID booster, if you are eligible to do so. Getting vaccinated early in the season can best prepare you for the inevitable spikes of flu and COVID cases that ends to come at the end of the month.

Additionally, it's important to begin thinking about cold weather safety. For senior citizens, cold weather safety plays an important factor in health and wellness throughout the fall and winter months. When the temperature outside is 65 degrees or less, it's crucial that the indoor temperature of a senior's living quarters remain monitored at a minimum of 68 degrees.

Consider equipping your senior loved one with a generator, or transporting them to a home with a generator, during an impending winter storm in which power outages are likely. It's also important to note that during the cold weather months, seniors may be at risk for cold-related conditions. Elderly residents and those with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, circulatory, or thyroid disease are at increased risk for hypothermia and frostbite. Shivering, fatigue, loss of coordination, numbness, or slow pulse are all signs of these conditions.

Here's to a happy, healthy and certifiably spooky fall season.

Hugs and best wishes,

Ericka Von Salews

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

There are more resources than ever to help you take care of your mind, from meditation apps to virtual counselors and growing resources. But many are left with the question: **when** should I ask for help with my mental health? Aside from serious warning signs such as self-harm that require immediate attention, there is no "right" time to ask for help. There's no need to wait until a crisis to get support--many people begin talking to therapists due to a nagging feeling of discomfort about a big decision, a struggle in a relationship, a general and increasing sense of worry, or due to a desire to grow as a person. If you're interested in exploring your mental health, a VWH staff member can help you get started.



VASSAR-WARNER DAY



Vassar-Warner Home Day was first proclaimed in 1996 on VWH's 125th anniversary. Every year, we celebrate the history, present, and future of VWH on September 19. In the past, these celebrations have featured special guests such as Marus Molinaro and Sue Serino. As the only non-for-profit senior home in Dutchess County, we're proud of our legacy and the people that make it possible.

OCTOBER ACTIVITY LINEUP

October 5:

Yom Kippur

October 6:

Music Therapy

October 11:

Paint & Sip

October 19:

Resident Council

October 26:

Halloween & Birthday Party

SWEET DREAMS: HOW SLEEP CHANGES WITH AGE

The fall has its fair share of sleep deprivors: scary movies, Daylight Savings ending, the buzz and subsequent stress of the holidays. Even if you've managed to avoid Freddy Krueger-induced nightmares and adjust well to the time change, there's another factor that can greatly affect your ability to get a good night of sleep: age.

Like so many other aspects of our lives, our sleeping patterns change with age. As infants and children we require lots of sleep to grow. As young adults and adults, we're expected to run on fumes. And then we retire, and suddenly have all the time in the world to collect the decades of sleep debt we're owed. But many seniors find that quality sleep is difficult to come by.

People over age 60 commonly report sleep complaints. These range from poor quality sleep with frequent night awakenings to snoring, daytime sleepiness, restless legs and more-- and sleeping during the daytime typically only perpetuates the cycle.

There are a slew of reasons for these issues, many of which can stem from medical or psychological illnesses. Beta blockers (used for high blood pressure and other types of heart disease) can cause nightmares, and diuretics (water pills) increase awakenings to urinate. Most medications have fatigue and daytime sleepiness on the list of common side effects.

The good news is that many sleep disorders such as insomnia, restless leg syndrome, and sleep apnea are easily treatable with a medical consultation.



However, there are also plenty of tricks to try on your own that can enhance your ability to get that desired slumber. Here are a few tips that have worked for others:

- Establish a sleep routine--this can include meditation, reading, or another non-electronic activity.
- Limit consumption of caffeinated beverages like coffee, tea, and soda to before noon.
- Avoid large meals, alcohol, and tobacco at night.
- Exercise daily, but not too close to bedtime.
- Do not lie awake in bed for more than 30 minutes. If you cannot fall asleep, leave your bed and do a quiet activity, such as reading or a crossword puzzle.

If your sleep problem persists even after trying these tips and tricks, it may be time to talk to your doctor about a medical solution to your issue.

Sleep is an incredibly important facet of our lives--it's when our bodies rest, repair, and reset for the next day. According to the National Sleep Foundation, people 65 years of age and older should have at least seven or eight hours of sleep per night!

MORE THAN JUST DOORSTEP DECOR: THREE HEALTH BENEFITS OF PUMPKIN

THE SEASON'S STAR CROP IS PACKED WITH IMMUNE-BOOSTING VITAMINS

It's officially pumpkin season: from jack-o-lanterns to pumpkin-spiced lattes, the squash is a beloved symbol of the fall and Halloween seasons. But did you know that beyond its role as a decoration or seasonally sweet flavoring, pumpkin has a myriad of health benefits? Read on to find out why you should incorporate pumpkin into your diet--and a few ideas on how to do so!

Pumpkin packs an immunity punch.

Loaded with important immune-boosting vitamins like vitamins A and C, pumpkin can help you stay healthy this season. It's high in beta-carotene, which our body turns into vitamin A to help us fight off infections. Pumpkin's boost of vitamin C can increase our white blood cell production and help our immune cells work more effectively.

It's nutrient-dense.

Nutrient-dense foods contain tons of nutrients, vitamins, and other important components, but remain incredibly low in calories. In other words, pumpkin is an excellent "bang for your buck"--eating it will increase your nutrients but not increase calorie intake. This is important for those looking to maintain a healthy weight.

Pumpkin is a heart-healthy choice.

With nutrients like potassium and fiber and a high antioxidant content, pumpkin is excellent for maintaining heart health. Studies have shown that people with higher potassium and fiber intakes appear to have lower blood pressure and a reduced risk of strokes — two risk factors for heart disease.

Pumpkin is versatile!

Wondering how to incorporate pumpkin into your diet? Roast it in the oven and season with salt and pepper. Make a creamy pumpkin soup. Mix pumpkin seeds into your trail mix. Puree and bake into breads or pies.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Residents

October 4: Thomas Way

October 25: Doris Bennett

October 29: Stella Anstett

Staff

October 22: Cora Motts

October 28: Brenda Richardson

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: GAIL MYKER



Gail was born and raised in Middletown, NY. After graduating from college, she worked as a librarian at Pace University, one of her greatest achievements. A nature-lover, Gail has always loved bird watching and collects anything that has to do with birds. While she has had cats, dogs and birds as pets, birds have always been her favorite animal. In her free time, Gail enjoys reading and watching TV, spending time outside in nature, and listening to 60s rock & roll.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MONIQUE GIBBES



Monique "Momo" Gibbes is a personal care aid at VWH. She was born and raised in Montego Bay, Jamaica where she grew up with her two brothers and four sisters. Momo migrated from Jamaica six years ago and currently attends BOCES School of Practical Nursing, where she has one year remaining in her journey to become a Licensed Practical Nurse. When Momo is not helping the residents, you can find her cooking, enjoying a good suspense movie, or spending time with her daughter and family. She also enjoys singing, dancing and DJing, all of which are made better by her outgoing, jovial personality. Momo's favorite musical stylings are reggae, 80s hits and 90s music.

COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

October 8: Dutchess County Irish Festival
12:00–9:00pm, Lagrangeville

October 22: Boos and Brews
11:00 am–6:00pm, Barton Orchards





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Effective October 2021

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Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective October 2021

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+Pete Molino			+Luann Zadora
			+Christina DeSouza, RN

KEY:

* = Community Member + = Staff Member
 Ex Officio, all committees: Ericka Von Salews and Ellen Smyth