

# THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With Thanksgiving in the rear-view mirror, it's now socially acceptable to put out your snow men, Christmas trees, menorahs and all the festive decorations that come with the season. No matter which holiday you and your loved ones celebrate, we at Vassar-Warner wish you a happy holiday season and an even happier new year!

As we spend the next month with family and friends, reflecting on the memories and experiences we've shared in 2022, it's important to remind ourselves that joy also sometimes comes with melancholy – especially for seniors. While it is tempting to focus on new holiday traditions, make sure you're spending time with – and giving extra support to – your elderly loved ones during this time of year. One way to do this is by joining in on the annual Adopt-a-Senior fundraiser where you can treat a Vassar-Warner resident to their very own holiday gift.

Along with the holiday season, this is also the time of year where we at Vassar-Warner issue our Annual Appeal. By donating to Vassar-Warner Home, you will help sustain essential services for those in need of assisted living in Dutchess County. If you would like to learn more about this initiative or donate, please visit: [vassarwarner.org](http://vassarwarner.org) and click on the "Donate Now" button.

Don't forget: the COVID pandemic is an ongoing and serious risk for our elderly loved ones. Be sure to take the necessary safety precautions when planning your holiday visits with your family and friends. Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday season!

Hugs,

*Erica Von Salews*

Looking for a simple way to give back this holiday season?

## VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S



# ADOPT-A-SENIOR 2022

Give the gift of compassion by donating to Vassar-Warner Home's annual Adopt-a-Senior Gift Giving Event.

Deadline is December 15!

### How It Works

There is a **\$50 minimum** to adopt a senior. Upon hearing from you, we will match you with a resident and provide a wishlist. Monetary donations are also accepted.

All donations go toward purchasing our seniors personalized holiday gifts.

### How To Participate

**Step 1:** Let us know you'd like to participate by emailing [publicrelations@vassarwarner.org](mailto:publicrelations@vassarwarner.org)

**Step 2:** Get matched with a resident.

**Step 3:** Deliver or ship gifts to VWH by **December 15. No wrapping required.**

# MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: AVOIDING HOLIDAY BURN OUT

The holidays can bring about a wide range of emotions, from extreme joy all the way to overwhelming stress. Keep the holiday burn out at bay by following the tips below.

## Know Your Priorities & Pace Yourself

It's easy to overextend yourself when surrounded by friends and family, many that we often only see around this time of year. In order to keep the stress away, take a few minutes before everyone arrives to make a list of all of the things you want to do during the holidays and then pair it down to only those that are the most meaningful. Once you've got that, spread out the activities to make sure you're fully immersed in the moment when you do them.

## Online Shopping

Many of your favorite stores offer free shipping and other incentives when you buy products from their website rather than the physical location during the holidays. Not to mention, many of these online retailers will even wrap the presents for you – saving you even more time and energy.

## Overcommitting & Learning to Delegate

It can be very easy to take on too much during this time of year with the abundance of social events and family gatherings appearing on the calendar. Make sure that with the plethora of time spent with others, you're also scheduling time for yourself to wind down. A way to make sure you're giving yourself breathing room is to delegate tasks to other friends or family. It's always okay to ask others for help—even more so during the holidays.

## Have Realistic Expectations

It's normal to want the perfect holiday with all of the trimmings but it's also important to make sure that we're not getting too stuck on the ideal to enjoy what's right in front of us. Setting too high of expectations can often lead to added stress, fatigue and holiday burnout.

## Stay Well Rested

Speaking of fatigue, ensuring you're getting enough sleep goes a long way to an enjoyable holiday season. It can be tempting to stay up late reconnecting with friends and family or spending a little extra time prepping a dish the night before a big dinner but in the long run, you'll have a lot more fun if you're fully present rather than nodding off into the stuffing.



## DECEMBER ACTIVITY LINEUP

December 8:  
Marist Flute Choir

December 11:  
Christmas Carols

December 21:  
Christmas Party/Birthday  
Party

December 22:  
Poughkeepsie High School  
Visit

*If you are planning on taking a resident home for the holiday, please contact us ASAP at [kcase@vassarwarner.org](mailto:kcase@vassarwarner.org)*

# BALANCING DYNAMICS

## *The Holidays and Family Expectations*

Spending time with our friends and family is, arguably, the best part of the holiday season. That being said, when we're around different personalities we don't see very often, it's normal to have a bit of tenseness.

If you're spending time with your children and grandchildren this year, check out the following tips from family therapists on how to balance these different dynamics.

### **Chat Ahead of Time**

Before your loved ones join you, make sure to talk through their expectations of the celebrations, i.e., who will be joining in, how long and where will they stay while visiting, etc. Once you've heard from them, make sure to vocalize your own desires for your time together.

### **Making Assumptions**

Remember – people inevitably change, even family that we've known most, or all, of their lives. It's important to make sure to keep an open mind when talking with them to make sure you're getting to know who they are now, not who they used to be.

### **Choosing Sides**

While you may be tempted to pick a side in a squabble between your children, stay strong and remain neutral. Often, when an argument arises and sides are chosen by those outside of it, the overall conflict will worsen. Make sure to lead with empathy for the situation and offer your support in a way that does not condone the infighting.

### **Time Apart is Okay**

When you haven't seen certain family members in a long time, it's normal to want to spend every waking moment together, but do your best to stave that feeling off. Oftentimes, such prolonged periods together can increase the rise of family conflict. It's perfectly okay to schedule time with individuals, rather than the whole group.



### **Support vs. Advice**

The two might appear to be the same, but they are actually quite different. Family therapists often note that the number one thing adult children look for from their parents is approval hence, when they come to you with problem or scenario, they'd much rather know you agree with their choices and support their decision-making process.

# SENIORS & THEIR EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY

## KEY POINTS FROM THE "GLOBAL LONGEVITY ECONOMY OUTLOOK" REPORT

With the holidays around the corner, you're probably getting lots of questions from friends and family about what you'd like to see under the tree. Well, consider adding a smart watch to your wish list. Previously, these devices were made with fitness tracking in mind however, the latest models have been designed with a focus on tracking your overall health instead. Still not convinced? Check out some of the cool new features below, gathered by AARP, before making your decision.

### Electrocardiogram

Apple took the first step in 2018 with its electrocardiogram app for Apple watches, but now many other companies are following suit. This ECG monitor, not to be confused with the more commonly known EKG, measures the timing and strength of the electrical pulses that keep our hearts beating. Many of the smart watch models on the market now can even detect A-fib, otherwise known as an irregular heartbeat, that is a known risk factor for blood clots and strokes.

### Monitoring Your Skin

You might not often think about how your skin affects your health, aside from the dreaded sunburn, but what if we told you that the sweat on your skin can help determine your stress levels? Fitbit has pioneered this technology that detects the subtle changes in the electrical current in your sweat, along with other information gathered from the device, to calculate a stress management score. Once it has this score, the device will send you recommendations, like breathing exercises, to help lower your stress.

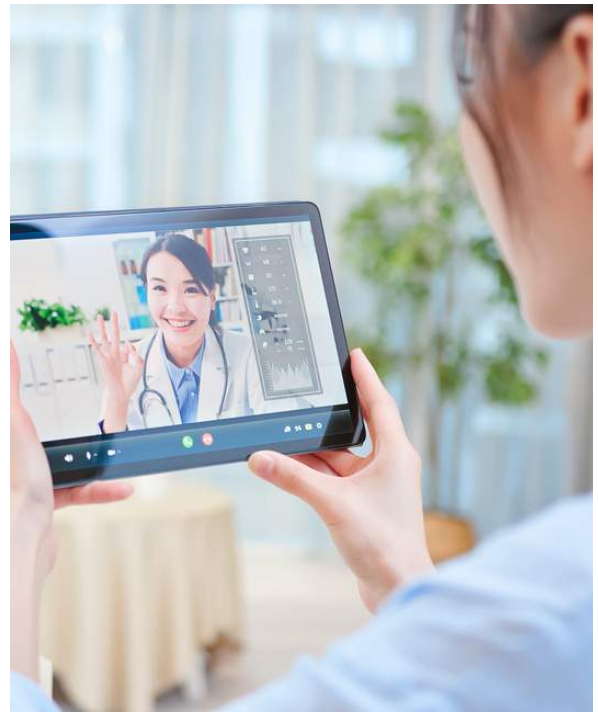
### Sleep Tracking

You might have heard of this function before, but newer smartwatches do more than just track how long you sleep. By breaking it down to the various stages of sleep, these devices allow you to see your quality of sleep, rather than just the quantity.

### Blood Oxygen Levels

Found in nearly every device on the market, your blood oxygen level is collected through sensors on the back of the watch throughout the day and while you sleep. By tracking these levels, you can be alerted to the early signs of circulatory, heart and lung function issues along with neurological problems.

Are you ready to add a smartwatch to your Christmas list?



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

### Residents

December 7:  
Rose "Betty" Allen-Clark

December 23:  
Janet Buell

December 29:  
Peter Galatis

### Staff

December 8:  
Christina De Souza

December 20:  
Karlie Scaglione

December 26:  
Jason Burnett

## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: JANET BUELL



Raised in Oneonta, NY, alongside her brother and sister, Janet always loved to make those around her happy. As a former 2nd and 6th grade teacher, she often did this for her students in the classroom, along with her own son and daughter at home. She loves to write poetry and even used to write plays for her community to be put on during her years teaching. In her free time, you'll often catch Janet cracking open a new book or listening to country music. She also enjoys camping and spending time with her three dogs, Sandy, Pete and Michael.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT: KALIN PEREZ



Never one to know a stranger, Kalin Perez has never had a problem making friends. Her friendly nature makes her the ideal fit as a case manager at Vassar-Warner Home. Kalin was born in Warren, Ohio and grew up in Canton, Ohio with her brother, Ryan. Being a mom to her son, Noah, is easily the greatest joy in her life; next to her marriage to her husband, Juan. In her free time, Kalin enjoys spending time with her family in the great outdoors, traveling across the globe and feasting on delicious Mexican cuisine. She loves horses and any other animal with fur, but her favorite has to be her 12-year-old greyhound, Poppy.

## COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

**December 14: Manheim Steamroller Christmas**  
at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center in Poughkeepsie

**December 18: The Nutcracker** at Tarrytown  
Music Hall in Tarrytown





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Effective October 2022

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**KEY:**

\* = Community Member + = Staff Member  
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