

THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM ERICKA

Happy February!
As the season of love swiftly approaches we want to share our gratitude to all members of the Vassar-Warner Home family...

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MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

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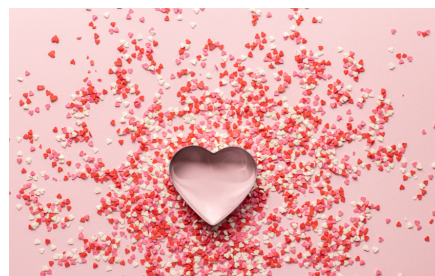
LET'S PLAY!

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SENDING LOVE TO THE VASSAR-WARNER FAMILY.

A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy February!

As the season of love swiftly approaches we want to express our deepest gratitude to all members of the Vassar-Warner Home family; without you, Vassar-Warner would not be the incredible place that we all know and love.

As you spend time reflecting on your loved ones, and ways that you may help out the Vassar-Warner family, you may consider an opportunity that allows you to experience the joy of giving back all year long: Vassar-Warner Home's Board of Trustees is looking for new members to join its ranks. Candidates with knowledge and experience in finance, marketing, and fundraising fields are encouraged to reach out to our Board Development Chair, Laurie Cohn at lcohn@aspireadvantage.com or 845-464-1066.

As a final note, we are still in the midst of cold and flu season and want to ensure that our residents, staff, and their families are staying healthy and well. Remember: COVID-19, the flu, and other winter illnesses are a serious risk for our elderly loved ones.

Please take the necessary precautions to stay safe.

Hugs,

Ericka Von Salews

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: JOURNALING

Whether you're happy, sad or somewhere in between, writing down your thoughts and feelings in a journal can help you process how you're feeling, ease your worries and improve your overall mental health. In a journal, you can work through challenges and express gratitude, or share memories and recap dreams. You can write whatever you want, whenever you want, and your words needn't be proper or polished. Whether you favor long-form entries, lists, poems or songs, a journal is your safe space to personalize however you'd like.

To some, this type of self-care can seem overwhelming at first. If you'd like to get started but are unsure of where to begin, here are some helpful tips:



Find your favorite forum. Do you prefer putting pen to paper and writing your musings in a physical journal? Or do you favor typing them out on your computer somewhere? Find what works best for you and branch out if you'd like to try more than one method.

Create a routine. You do not need to write every day to keep up with your journal, but consistency is a great way to form a habit. Perhaps a short period of time spent writing before bed helps put your mind at ease, or maybe you enjoy waking up and journaling as you enjoy your morning coffee? You could journal once per week or once per month instead. Find a rhythm that works for you and establish a routine.

Use writing prompts. If you are feeling stuck and unsure of what to write, consider using writing prompts to jog your creativity. Some examples: a list of things and people you're grateful for; your favorite birthday memory; one thing you hope to accomplish this year or daily affirmations. Let your words flow without filtering them. You are your only audience.

Reflect back. Journaling allows each author the opportunity to review and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, memories or emotions over a period of time. By looking back at previous journal entries, you can grow, heal and gain better self-understanding.

FEBRUARY ACTIVITY LINEUP



2/21:

Mardi Gras Party

2/23:

Resident Activity Meeting

2/25:

Bingo

2/28:

Flower Arranging

LET'S PLAY!

Five Fun-Filled Games to Enjoy This Winter



While the cold weather has most of us spending more time indoors, it can feel like there's a shortage of things to do to stay entertained. Reading, watching films and other hobbies can fill the time, but when you're looking to laugh or connect with others, there's no better way than by playing a game.

Over the last few years, especially during the peak of the global pandemic, many people turned to games and hobbies to fill the time, lighten the mood and stay close to their loved ones. As we move further into 2023, the popularity of board and card games continues to rise.

According to this article by Jaclyn Peiser published by The Washington Post in December 2022:

"The global board game market has an estimated value between \$11 billion and \$13.4 billion and is projected to grow by about 7 to 11 percent within the next 5 years, according to market research companies Technavio and Imarc."

From classic favorites like telephone and charades to more recent hits like Ticket to Ride, there are plenty of games to explore that are fun for all ages. We've narrowed down five of our favorites below but remember – it doesn't matter what you're playing or if you're following the instructions to a tee. The memories made and time spent connecting with others make all gameplay priceless.

Charades: A timeless classic, charades is especially fun because it allows you to use your own creativity, move around, and – an added bonus – it's free! Jot down some actions (ex: rowing a boat, washing a window, mowing the lawn), pull one at a time to act out without speaking and have your teammates shout out their guesses. If you need inspiration for prompts, Women's Day has you covered.

Big Letter Bananagrams: For fans of crosswords and word games like Scrabble, Bananagrams is a wonderful way to test your wit and stir up some friendly competition. The larger tiles in this version make the game more accessible for everyone and it's suitable for one to eight players. You can purchase the game on Amazon, among other places.

Telephone: Another nostalgic game that is easy to play with zero cost, telephone is sure to make you and your loved ones burst out laughing. Sit in a circle and have one person start the game by whispering a sentence or phrase into someone else's ear. The person they whisper to is tasked with passing the message along by whispering it to the next person. Didn't hear what the person before you said? No repeats in this game! Wait to hear the mixed-up messages that often come out when the last person in the circle shares what they heard and prepare to laugh.

Hook & Ring Battle: Target carries this simple, yet highly competitive game for two. The goal is to land your ring on the hook as many times as possible, as quickly as you can. Every time you hook your ring, you can push the scoring peg one notch closer to your opponent's side of the ladder. If you can get the peg all the way off of the ladder on your opponent's side, you've won the game!

Ticket to Ride: This game for two to five players focuses on the great American railways and connecting cities faster than your opponents. Each player starts with train car cards and destination cards, and players must secretly connect their cities. Longer routes get extra bonus points. Check it out on Amazon.

NAVIGATING WINTER ILLNESSES: SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR

After the last few years of living through a global pandemic, a stuffy nose or a tickle in your throat can bring added stress and concern. When you're feeling under the weather, your mind may start to race as various symptoms appear – could it be a cold? Influenza (flu)? Is it Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) or COVID-19? Talking to your doctor is the best thing you can do to receive the appropriate treatment and protect those around you from getting sick too, but it's helpful to know the common symptoms associated with each ailment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults suffer from 2-3 colds per year on average, and children even more. While colds are possible year-round, they are most common in the winter and spring. Symptoms usually include sore throat, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, headaches and body aches. Fluids, rest and over-the-counter medicines are recommended if you're suffering from a cold.

Typically, an RSV infection brings mild cold-like symptoms for adults, but some people may develop a lung infection or pneumonia. Average symptoms of RSV include runny nose, decrease in appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever and wheezing. RSV can cause more severe infections such as bronchiolitis, an inflammation of the small airways in the lung, and pneumonia, an infection of the lungs. Most RSV infections go away on their own in a week or two, but it's important to talk to your healthcare provider if you are experiencing these symptoms.

A 2018 CDC study published in Clinical Infectious Diseases found that on average, about 8 percent of the U.S. population gets sick from flu each season, with a range of between 3 percent and 11 percent, depending on the season. Flu can cause mild to severe illness and symptoms usually come on suddenly. They can include chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue and, in some cases, vomiting or diarrhea. Fevers can also occur with the flu, though not everyone experiences one. Tests exist to diagnose the flu and you may be prescribed an antiviral drug should you test positive.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and diarrhea. According to the CDC, this list does not include all of the possible symptoms, which have changed as new variants emerge and can vary based on individual vaccination status. Older adults are more likely than younger people to get very sick if they get COVID-19.

As you can see, these illnesses have many symptoms in common and the safest thing you can do is to contact your doctor if you're feeling unwell. They can test you for Flu/COVID-19/RSV and determine the best course of action to get you back to full health. If you have already tested positive for COVID-19, learn more about CDC's isolation guidance [here](#). And don't forget that you can protect yourself and others by regularly washing your hands, getting vaccinated and maintaining a safe distance from others in crowded spaces.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Residents

Michael May 2/14

Marilyn Gleason 2/16

Margo Shackelton 2/20

Ellen Ratine 2/27



Staff

Francisca Fontanez 2/22

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT:



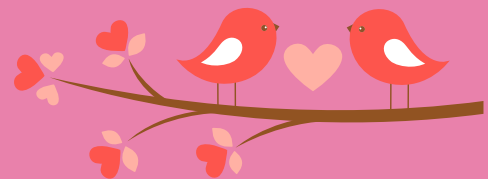
Born in NYC and raised in Peekskill, NY, Stella has always been a talkative, friendly woman. Her greatest life accomplishments include raising a great son, having a successful marriage, working for the church and winning a medal in the 6th grade for best student. Stella loves animals, namely her two dogs, Nikkie and Queenie. She is a talented sewer, a lover of travel (she drove across the U.S. in an RV with her husband) and enjoys seafood - especially lobster!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:



Evann Payne, Ev, was born and raised in Poughkeepsie, NY and currently works as a cook at Vassar-Warner Home. Aside from being an outstanding cook, Ev loves to listen to music, especially hip-hop. In his free time, you can find Ev relaxing, watching sports, or gaming. While Ev has traveled across the U.S., he has yet to be out of the country but dreams of going to Africa.

COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN



February 17-20: The Great Bird Watch: Watch and count birds from your home to help scientists obtain accurate information about bird populations.

[Register Here.](#)

February 25: Broadway Perspectives: A Concert Celebrating Diversity at the Paramount Hudson Valley Theater, Peekskill



2022–2023 Vassar-Warner Home Board of Trustees

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Gary Grandstaff	<i>Vice President</i>
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Effective February 2023

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Ellen Smyth	Wayne Quint
Gary Grandstaff	Bill Francis
Alice Dickey	Kim Ryder
Shari Hubner	Greg White
Ericka Von Salews	Brian Robinson

Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective February 2023

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KEY:

* = Community Member + = Staff Member

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