

THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM ERICKA

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CELEBRATING GRANDPARENTS

A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Earlier this month, on September 10, National Grandparents Day was celebrated. The holiday was initiated in West Virginia by Marian and Joseph McQuade who had 15 children, 43 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

It was not until 1979, however, that President Jimmy Carter officially proclaimed the day. Since then, Grandparents Day, and the entire month of September, are intended to honor grandparents, allow grandparents to show love for their children's children, and so on, and help children become aware of the strength, information, and guidance that all older people can offer.

This year, Generations United, a nonprofit intended to improve the lives of youth and older people through intergenerational connection, invites us all to #DoSomethingGrand with a grandchild, fellow grandparent, or other loved ones. If you aren't sure where to begin, here are a few suggestions:

- Share stories of your favorite memories, your family's history, or look through a family photo album.
- Take a walk together.
- Have a virtual or in-person coffee or lunch date.
- Write handwritten notes to your grandchildren or "grand" friends.
Include a photo in the letter if you have one!
- Call or video chat with a loved one to convey the love and appreciation you have for them.

If you are not a grandparent, I encourage you to consider performing one of these activities with a friend or other family member. It is proven that intergenerational collaboration promotes unity and improves our communities; we are stronger together.

Hugs,

Ericka Von Salews

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: STRETCHES TO IMPROVE MOBILITY AND WELLBEING

It's inevitable - getting older takes a toll on the body; simple tasks such as picking up a dropped item, taking the stairs, and other household chores that were once a breeze may have become a challenge. To mitigate the difficulties of these everyday tasks, stretches can be integrated into a daily routine to reduce stiffness and increase flexibility, alleviating the pain and impairments caused by aging.



The American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons explains that muscles, tendons, and ligaments are all affected by aging, resulting in difficulties with strength, movement, and flexibility. It is vital to remain active as you age and stretching, in addition to increasing overall mobility, can improve your mental health. Adding a few stretches to your daily routine has been linked to increased serotonin, resulting in a decrease in symptoms relating to anxiety and depression. Additionally, stretching can slow down the onset of certain diseases, like arthritis and diabetes.

Try these stretches to promote to a healthier and happier lifestyle.



Standing Quadriceps Stretch: While holding onto a chair or surface, bend your right and lift it towards your right hand, grabbing it at the ankle. Do this for 30 seconds, then switch to the other side.



Soleus Stretch: Using a wall for leverage, get into a lunge position and place your hands on the wall. After 30 seconds, switch your lunge position to have your opposite foot closest to the wall.



Shoulder Stretch: Standing or sitting, take one arm and pull it across your chest with your other hand near your wrist. Hold the stretch for 30 seconds, and then switch to the opposite arm.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Residents:

9/15 Audrey Zindler

9/20 Ruth Borkowski

9/26 Laura Strother

Staff:

9/1 Luann Zadora

9/5 Lori Allen

9/28 Jordan Creque



9/29 Sarah Atanasio

BACK TO SCHOOL: HOW TO BE A LIFE-LONG LEARNER



With back-to-school season upon us, you may find yourself reminiscing on your days in the classroom. Maybe you regret never learning a second language or have always dreamed of learning to paint. The good news is, that it's never too late to learn a new skill, pick up a new hobby, or discover something new.

In fact, according to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 55% of Americans over the age of 45 are actively learning new things, pursuing passion projects, and investigating individual interests. Furthermore, continuing your education later in life can improve overall cognitive functioning, create opportunities for socialization, and more.

Thanks to technology, it is easier than ever before to access educational resources. There are countless online courses available for free. Senior Planet hosts webinars specifically designed for those over the age of 60. Its offerings include: Online Health Resources, Smartphones at a Glance, Introduction to Social Media, and much more.



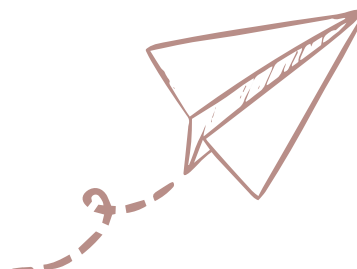
You can call the free Senior Planet Hotline at **888-713-3495** for more info or help to register for a class.



If you're interested in quick, informative videos, you may explore TED Talks. From aliens to art and 3D printing to veganism, there is something for everyone. And the best part? The majority of videos are less than 20 minutes long.

There are also a variety of in-person educational opportunities in Dutchess County. Marist College offers educational, intellectual, and cultural growth opportunities for those over 55 years old. While the College also hosts virtual classes on Zoom, its in-person offerings are held at the Locust Grove Estate. Vassar College also offers opportunities for community members over 55. Offerings for Fall 2023 include Pickleball 101, Mansions of NY State, and Psychology and Film, among others. At Dutchess Community College, adults over the age of 60 may audit courses on a space-available basis, meaning they can, if there is space, attend the course but will not receive credit or a grade.

This changing of seasons is the perfect time to reflect on your life and consider what tip, trick, or talent you would like to learn next.



WHY LEAVES CHANGE COLORS: THE SCIENCE BEHIND FOLIAGE

As autumn approaches, our lush, green trees prepare for their annual transformation, creating a show of beautiful, bright colors. In New York, we are fortunate to get to watch this enchanting phenomenon of fall foliage from the comfort of our homes. But have you ever wondered what causes this mesmerizing transformation?

Subtle hints from nature, such as shorter daylight hours and cooler temperatures, initiate this transformation. These cues signal to the trees that it's time to begin their color-changing journey.

At the heart of this transformation lies a substance called chlorophyll. During spring and summer, chlorophyll turns leaves a vibrant green as it converts sunlight into food for the trees through a process called photosynthesis. However, as the days grow shorter and temperatures dip, chlorophyll begins to fade away, revealing the hidden colors that have been present in the leaves all along.



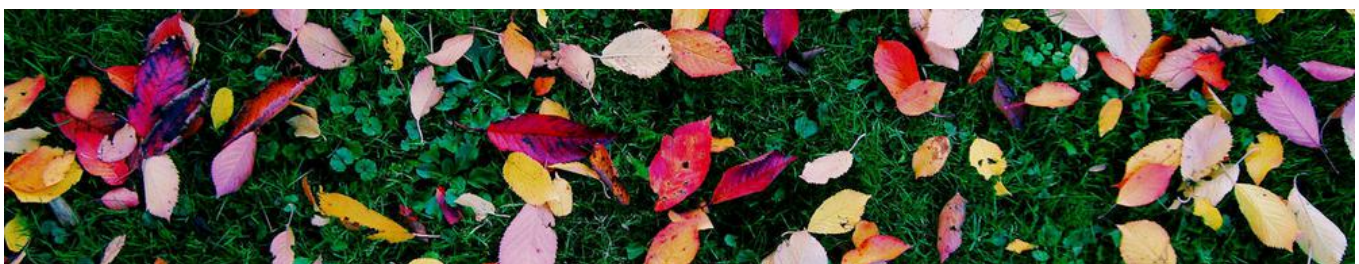
Yellow and Orange

Beneath the green color, a different set of colors called carotenoids makes their appearance. Carotenoids produce yellow, orange, and brown colors in things such as corn, carrots, daffodils, and more. These pigments are responsible for the warm yellow and orange tones that become visible in the leaves.

Red and Purple

In some lucky tree species, such as Maple and Dogwood, a unique touch of color variation is displayed. This dramatic color shift is caused by pigments known as anthocyanins, which come to life under the right conditions—sunlight, cooler temperatures, and the presence of certain nutrients. Anthocyanins give color to things such as cranberries, red apples, concord grapes, and more. The result? A breathtaking display that ranges from fiery red to deep purple.

Autumn is a beautiful time of year, and knowing the science behind the fall foliage adds a new layer of appreciation to the grand transformation. From the warm yellows and oranges brought forth by carotenoids to the fiery reds and deep purples caused by anthocyanins, the science behind leaves changing colors is a testament to the beauty and wonder of the natural world!



SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY LINEUP

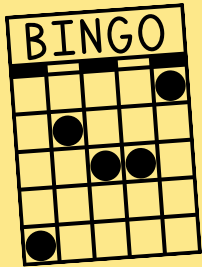


9/19, 2 PM
Birthday Party



9/26, 2 PM
Trip to **Walmart** ✨

9/23, 3:30 PM
Bingo Extravaganza



9/27, 10:30 AM
Pet Therapy with Levi



9/29, 10:30 AM
Balance and Stretch

We are honored to share that **Vassar-Warner Home** has once again been recognized by *Hudson Valley Magazine* as the “**Best Assisted Living Service in the Hudson Valley**”. This achievement would not be possible without the Home’s incredible staff and you, our Vassar-Warner family.

Thank you to all for your continued support.



RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: BESSIE POPP



Bessie Popp was born and raised in Staten Island, New York. A happy and friendly woman, Bessie lives her life with the following in mind: "I don't know how long I'll live, but I want people to know I'm a good person".

Bessie held a variety of jobs throughout her lifetime, including a banker and a newspaper carrier, though her greatest achievement is being "just a normal housewife". A favorite memory of Bessie's is teaching her son how to make an apple pie.

Bessie enjoys reading, crafting, and watching movies. Her favorite musician is Elvis because the pair share a birthday. Bessie used to frequent the Adirondacks where she would go on walks in the woods with her husband. A happy-go-lucky spirit, Bessie enjoys surrounding herself with others and always tries to laugh through the misery.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: PETE MOLINO JR.



Pete Molino Jr. was born in the Bronx. A Facility Manager at Vassar-Warner Home, Pete has previously worked as a plumber, mechanic, and painter. A multi-talented man, Pete, who plays the guitar, also works as a D.J. for special events.


When he isn't working, you can find Pete at home in his garage, or doing work around his house. He enjoys auto restoration, as well as metal detecting, in his free time.

A lover of Pink Floyd and Chinese food, Pete dreams of traveling to Italy. He owns 2 dogs, Bella and Lola. His greatest accomplishments in life are his family and making it to 50 years old.

COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

Thursdays, 2 - 6 PM, through Oct. 26 | Arlington Farmers Market
123 Raymond Avenue, Poughkeepsie

Mondays and Fridays, 9 - 10 AM | VIRTUAL Gentle Yoga
To register contact, Sue Wixon at 914-523-8400
or email swixon@pinehillcommunitycenter.org.



2022-2023 Vassar-Warner Home Board of Trustees

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Ellen C. Smyth – *President*
 Gary Grandstaff – *Vice President*
 Michael A. Craven, Ph. D. – *Treasurer*
 Alice Dickey – *Secretary*
 Shari Hubner – *Past President*

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Effective October 2022

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KEY:

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

For 152 years, Vassar-Warner Home has served the Hudson Valley community, providing a welcoming and caring environment for more than 2,000 seniors.

We treat everyone who walks through our doors with compassion. Thanks to the ongoing support of the Vassar-Warner Home Foundation, an independent private foundation, and you, the Vassar-Warner family, we are able to offer services to all, even when an individual's income no longer covers the cost of their care.

Recently, we have seen **an increase in demand for our services** as our constituency of **long-term supporters continues to dwindle.**

We need your support now more than ever. Please share this message with your family and friends. Together, we can ensure that Vassar-Warner Home continues to thrive.

[Donate Now](#)