

# THE COLUMNS

VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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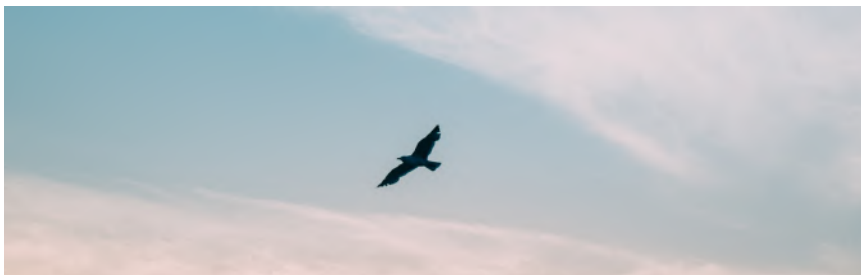
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## GIVING THANKS

### A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we bid farewell to Halloween and the beginning of autumn, we are quickly approaching the holiday season! We have a variety of exciting programming planned for the next several weeks, including our annual Adopt-A-Senior fundraiser. For more information, please see the next page of the newsletter, which details how to donate gifts to Vassar-Warner Home. This program ensures that all of our residents receive something special around the holidays and, without you, it would not be possible.

But, I'm getting ahead of myself. Much like the stores that are fully stocked with holiday-themed decorations and apparel, it is easy to overlook Thanksgiving!

Thanksgiving is a great time to reflect on the year we've had and the year to come, giving thanks to the family, friends, experiences, and memories that we've made along the way. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, the holiday season can prompt feelings of loneliness or isolation for those who are estranged from family and friends. It's important to pay special attention to your senior loved ones this time of year. I encourage you to make an effort to reach out to family members, whether it be a phone call, video chat, or an in-person visit. If you can bring your loved one familiar holiday treats or baked goods, you will surely lift their spirits, but a simple "Hello" is guaranteed to put a smile on their face.

Please remember that the COVID pandemic is an ongoing and serious risk for the elderly, among other prominent viruses. Ensure that you take the necessary safety precautions when planning holiday travel or time with family. Together, we can all have a happy and healthy holiday season!

Hugs,

*Erica Von Salews*



**Are you looking for a simple, yet meaningful, way to give back this holiday season?**

**Consider Vassar-Warner Home's Annual Adopt-A-Senior!**



### **How It Works:**

During the holiday season, we like to ensure that all of our residents receive something special. Adopt-A-Senior helps us make this happen!

Upon hearing from you, we will match you with a resident and provide a wishlist. You will then deliver or ship the gift(s) to Vassar-Warner Home and we'll take it from there.

Monetary donations are also accepted; all donations go toward purchasing personalized holiday gifts for our seniors.

Please note, there is a **\$50 minimum** to adopt a senior.

### **How To Participate:**

1. Send an email to  
[info@vassarwarner.org](mailto:info@vassarwarner.org)
2. Get matched with a resident.
3. Deliver or ship gifts to Vassar-Warner Home by December 1, 2023.

No wrapping is required.



## MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AWARENESS

November is Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month, a time to reflect on the prevalence of this disease and increase everyone’s awareness of the illness, its symptoms, and more.

### What is Alzheimer’s Disease?

Alzheimer’s Disease is a type of dementia that affects memory, thinking and behavior. It is a progressive disease, meaning symptoms worsen over time.

### What are the symptoms of Alzheimer’s?

The first stage of Alzheimer’s includes mild cognitive impairment (MCI); which involves forgetting names and misplacing objects. These symptoms typically appear in those in their mid-60s. Though rare, others experience early-onset Alzheimer’s and begin to show symptoms as early as 30 years old. The middle stage is typically the longest, it can last for many years. During this time, symptoms become more pronounced; a person may confuse words, become frustrated or angry, and act in unexpected ways, such as refusing to bathe. When symptoms become severe, individuals often struggle with activities of daily living.



If you or a loved one are struggling with Alzheimer’s Disease, you are not alone. There are over 6 million Americans currently living with some form of the condition. While there is no cure for this disease, **there are other resources and support available:**

- If you are interested in learning more about Alzheimer’s Disease, visit the [Alzheimer’s Association’s website](#).
- Adopting a healthy lifestyle can help those with Alzheimer’s Disease live well for as long as possible. [Click here to read tips on taking care of yourself](#).
- Living with Alzheimer’s or any form of dementia can introduce more stress to your life. You can learn about warning signs of stress and ways to reduce these symptoms [here](#).
- The Alzheimer’s Association also shares coping skills to help manage your diagnosis [here](#).
- If you need support but are not sure where to begin, call the **Alzheimer’s Association’s 24/7 helpline: 800-272-3900**.

## NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES



11/21, 2PM Trip to Walmart

11/22, 10AM Pet Therapy with Oliver

11/25, 3:30PM Bingo Extravaganza

11/27, 2PM Ball Toss

11/28, 4PM Word Boggle

11/30, 3PM Shoppin’ Place



## DISCOVERING THE BIRDS OF POUGHKEEPSIE

From a bald eagle soaring high above the Hudson River to a vibrant cardinal adding a splash of color to the winter landscape, Poughkeepsie is a haven for bird lovers. In this article, we will embark on a delightful journey, exploring the diverse bird species that call this city their home.

### Pileated Woodpecker

One of the most iconic birds that can be spotted in Poughkeepsie is the pileated woodpecker. With its distinctive red crest and bold black and white markings, this woodpecker is often heard before it's seen. The resonating sound of its drumming echoes through the trees, making it a true symbol of the wilderness right in your backyard.



### Bald Eagle

The presence of bald eagles soaring gracefully over the Hudson River is a testament to the natural beauty of Poughkeepsie. These birds of prey, with their impressive wingspan and sharp eyesight, are a sight to behold. Their return from near-extinction is a success story that resonates with the community, reminding us of the importance of conservation efforts.

### Cardinal

During winter, when everything looks dull, the cardinal stands out with its bright red feathers. It adds warmth to the cold, snowy landscape, and can often be seen perched on branches or foraging for seeds. The cardinal's cheerful presence is a welcomed sight for any backyard birdwatcher.



### Barred Owls

As the sun begins to set and the moon rises, the hooting call of the barred owl fills the night air. These nocturnal hunters, with their distinctive "Who cooks for you?" calls, often go unnoticed but are an integral part of Poughkeepsie's natural ecosystem. Their silent flights and keen hunting skills make them fascinating creatures to observe, especially during the quiet hours of the night.

### Gray Catbird

Known for its exceptional ability to mimic the sounds of other birds, the gray catbird is a delightful visitor to Poughkeepsie's gardens. With its gray feathers and curious behavior, this bird brings fun to backyard birdwatching. Its melodious tunes make it a favorite among bird enthusiasts.



The birds of Poughkeepsie are a testament to the rich biodiversity that thrives around us. From the drumming sound of the pileated woodpecker to the graceful flight of the bald eagle, each bird adds to the city's natural beauty. By observing and appreciating our feathered neighbors, we can gain a deeper understanding of the delicate balance of nature and the importance of preserving it for generations to come. So, grab your binoculars, step outside, and let the enchanting world of Poughkeepsie's birds amaze you!

# AMERICA’S FAVORITE THANKSGIVING TRADITION: THE MACY’S DAY PARADE

Thanksgiving morning is all about entertainment; floats, giant balloons, music, and celebrities flood the streets of New York City. Families around the nation watch the parade on their televisions and spot their favorite balloons or floats. This NYC tradition has been around for 99 years, but does anyone know why?



During the 1920s, Macy’s was growing in popularity; the famous department store began to open more locations. Macy’s primary store, located in Manhattan’s Herald Square, was so successful that it expanded to over 1 million square feet of retail space, an entire city block! To celebrate, Macy’s hosted a parade. Although the parade date fell on Thanksgiving, the event was initially a Christmas-themed parade intended to encourage the public to begin their holiday shopping.


The first-ever Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade began on November 27th, 1924 at 9 AM. NYC police led the parade, which stretched for 6 miles, from Harlem to Herald Square. The theme was nursery rhymes, based on a Macy’s window display, and the floats consisted of Little Miss Muffet, Little Red Riding Hood, and more. Macy’s employees dressed as clowns, cowboys, and knights to add some magic to the event.




The parade also featured animals from the Central Park Zoo, including monkeys, elephants and camels! Music, performers and more all added to the atmosphere, making the event more like a circus than anything else.

Macy’s saved the best for last, introducing Santa Claus at the end of the parade. As the 6-mile ride came to a close at Macy’s Herald Square store, 10,000 people cheered as Kris Kringle exited his snow-covered sleigh. “After being crowned “King of the Kiddies,” Kris Kringle scaled a ladder and sat on a gold throne mounted on top of the marquee above the store’s new 34th Street entrance near Seventh Avenue.”

The success of Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade continues to pay homage to its commencement almost a century ago. Although the parade no longer consists of animals, the giant character balloons are a highly-anticipated tradition. Now, the 2.5-mile walk rather than the 6-mile walk is filled with balloons, floats, dancing and music, celebrities, and Santa Claus at the end of the parade to commemorate his arrival at Herald Square.



## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS



<b>Residents:</b>	11/5 Doris Dunnigan	<b>Staff:</b>	
11/1 Clara Pelton	11/12 Frances Sincerbeaux	11/1 Patsy Hunter	11/6 Kyla Baylor



## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: BETTY MAZZUCA



Elizabeth, Betty, Mazzuca was born and raised in New York City alongside her two sisters.

Betty swapped the city streets for the countryside, moving to a 17-acre farm later in life. Betty and her husband, who were married for 35 years, raised 3 children together, in addition to the farm’s sheep and horses. A true businesswoman, Betty sold the sheep’s wool at a local fair. This was not her only endeavor, however; Betty also proudly served as a medical secretary for many years.

A lover of Italian food, Betty enjoys sewing and constructing handcrafts in her free time. She also loves to spend time with her friends and family. She dreams of taking a trip to Hungary.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT:



Cora Motts was born in Huntington, Long Island, and raised in White Plains with her brother, Greg. As a young adult, Cora attended Mercy College, where she received a degree in finance. Currently, she works as the business office manager at Vassar-Warner Home.

When Cora isn’t working, she enjoys spending time with family and friends. You can also find Cora out on a walk, hiking, or at the gym. Her greatest achievement in life is becoming a mother and raising her son, Michael.

A kindhearted soul, Cora believes that things always work out; maybe not the way you want, but it will work out nonetheless. She is a Board Member of the nonprofit “The JustinTime Movement”.

### COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN



**Wednesday, October 22, 6 - 7:30 PM | VIRTUAL Qi Gong | FREE Event**

To register contact, paulbloomck@gmail.com

**Tuesday, 10:30 - 11:30 AM | VIRTUAL Chair Exercises | FREE Event**

To register contact Sue Wixon at 914-523-8400 or email swixon@pinehillcommunitycenter.org



# 2023-2024 Vassar-Warner Home Board of Trustees

## Officers

- Ellen C. Smyth – *President*
- Rena Hill – *Vice President*
- Michael A. Craven, Ph. D. – *Treasurer*
- Laurie Cohn - *Past President*
- Elizabeth Corcoran - *Member*
- Rosemary Butts - *Member*

## Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective October 2023

### Executive Committee

- Ellen Smyth
- Rena Hill
- Michael A. Craven, Ph. D.
- +Ericka Von Salews

### Foundation Board

- Wayne Quint - Chair
- Bill Francis
- Greg White
- Brian Robinson

### Quality of Resident Life

- Ellen Smyth
- Rosemary Butts
- +Kalin Perez
- +Luann Zadora

### Board Development

- Laurie Cohn – Chair

### Fund Development & Marketing

- Rena Hill - Chair
- Jill Karn
- +Cheryl Holt

### Finance

- Michael A. Craven, Ph. D. – Chair
- Laurie Cohn
- +Cheryl Holt
- +Cora Motts

### Property

- Gary Grandstaff – Chair
- Laurie Cohn
- +Pete Molino

### Strategic & Long-Range Planning

- Rena Hill
- Ellen Smyth

### **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. This dedication to service has led to us being recognized as the Best Assisted Living Service in the Hudson Valley.



We continue to see an increase in demand for our services as our constituency of long-term supporters dwindles. **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.

