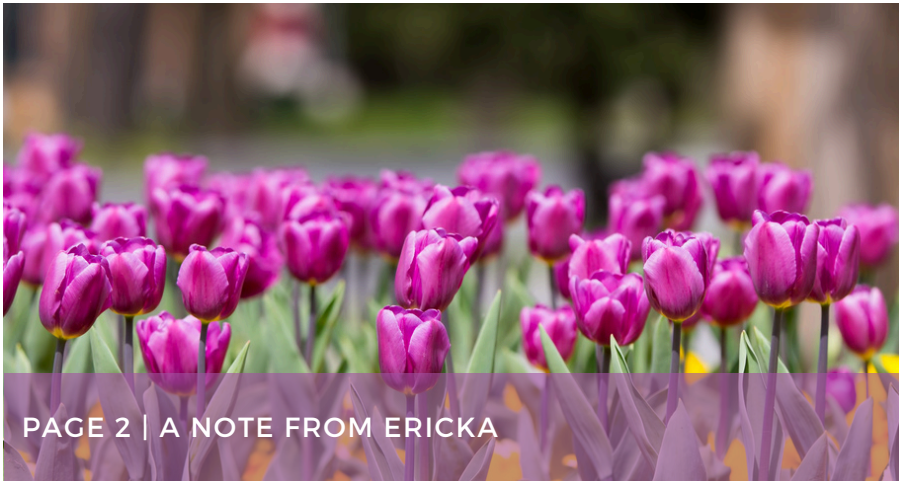


THE COLUMNS



VASSAR-WARNER HOME'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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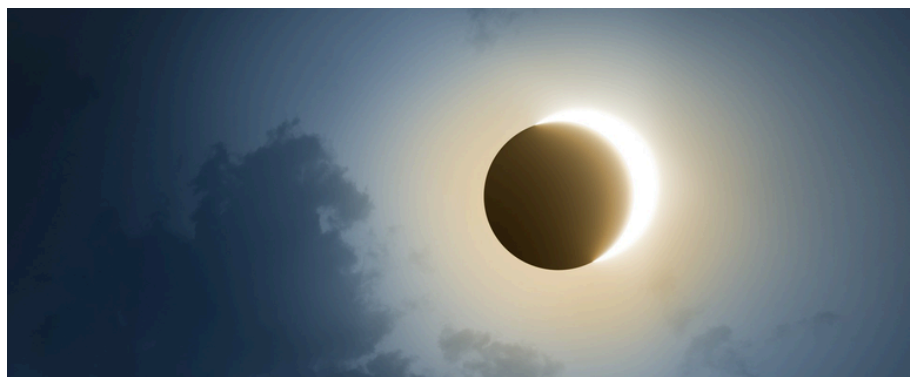
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SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

A LETTER FROM ERICKA VON SALEWS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April has arrived, bringing with it a fresh breeze of excitement and opportunity here at Vassar-Warner Home!

As we bid farewell to March, we reflect on a month filled with celebration, renewal, and honoring remarkable contributions. But now, it's time to embrace April's unique charm and all the wonderful possibilities it holds.

This month, we're gearing up for some exciting activities and events that will spark joy and bring smiles to everyone's faces. From fun-filled spring-themed parties to engaging educational workshops, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

April is also a time to celebrate National Volunteer Month, and we're grateful for the incredible volunteers who bring warmth and kindness to our home every day. We'll be recognizing their dedication and generosity with special events and heartfelt gestures throughout the month.

As the days grow longer and the weather becomes milder, we're eager to embrace the outdoors and soak up the sunshine. Whether it's taking leisurely walks in our beautiful garden, enjoying picnics on the patio, or simply basking in the fresh air, we're ready to make the most of every moment.

So, let's welcome April with open arms and hearts full of joy and gratitude. Together, let's make this month one to remember, filled with laughter, love, and wonderful memories that will last a lifetime!

Sending Love,

Erica Von Salews

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO: MAINTAINING BRAIN HEALTH



It's natural for our health to change as we age, especially the health of our brain. The term "brain health" includes cognitive health (thinking, learning, remembering), motor function (making and controlling movements), emotional function (ability to interpret and respond to emotions) and tactile function (how you feel and respond to sensations of touch). Fortunately, we can easily take proactive steps to maintain and enhance our brain health.

Stay Mentally Active. Engaging in mentally engaging activities is the perfect way to exercise your brain. Consider challenging yourself with a puzzle, crossword or brain teaser. Reflect on activities you currently or previously enjoyed - reading, playing chess, scanning the newspaper, etc. These hobbies help sharpen quick-thinking skills, such as processing speed, decision-making and short-term memory.

Eat a Brain-Healthy Diet. A nutritious diet is essential for brain health. Eat various fruits and vegetables, which are packed with antioxidants - blueberries, strawberries, broccoli, spinach and carrots are all excellent options. Additionally, fatty fish like salmon and tuna are high in omega-3 which not only supports brain function but helps reduce inflammation.

Stay Social. Participating in social activities is integral to brain health and emotional well-being. Connect with friends, family or community members through in-person visits, phone calls or virtual chats. Attend our daily group activities to engage with peers or find time to meet up with a neighbor. Talking to others exercises language and communication skills, which support functions like memory and attention.

Manage Stress and Practice Mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness reduces stress and promotes relaxation, protecting the brain from the harmful effects of chronic stress.

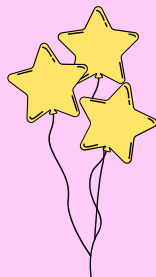
Exercise Regularly. While exercising your brain is important, so is exercising the body. Whether you go for a walk down the hall, attend one of our stretching sessions or perform chair yoga, some light exercise will improve blood flow to your brain, thereby reducing the risk of cognitive decline and enhancing memory skills.

Maintaining brain health is essential for leading a fulfilling life as we age. By incorporating these tips into your daily routine, you can support your brain's vitality and enjoy sharper thinking, improved memory and enhanced overall well-being. Remember, it's never too late to start prioritizing your brain health - your mind will thank you for it!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Residents:

4/4 Mona Bargahiser



Staff:

4/18 Octavia Sterling

4/21 Cheryl Holt



THE ORIGINS OF THE FUNNIEST HOLIDAY: APRIL FOOLS' DAY

April Fools' Day - a day of pranks, jokes, lies, and a whole lot of shenanigans - is celebrated around the world. Behind all of these pranks is a history lesson, and quite possibly the biggest April Fools' joke of all: historians are not sure when this holiday originated!

Historians agree that this day of pranks dates back to the Renaissance; however, it is rumored that this holiday could have first occurred during ancient times. Since then, countries and cultures have introduced April Fools' Day celebrations to commemorate multiple centuries' worth of pranks

It is possible that April Fools' Day first began in Ancient Rome. Many believe April Fools' Day could have stemmed from the festival of Hilaria, meaning "joyful" in Latin. During this festival, members of the cult of Cybele dressed up in costumes to mock others - influenced by the Egyptian legend of Isis, Orisis and Seth. However, other theories on the origins of April Fools' Day have mentioned the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere or the vernal equinox; it was believed that the vernal equinox was the day Mother Nature pranked people by changing the weather.



Further down the historical timeline, following the Council of Trent in 1563, France transitioned to the Gregorian Calendar. Previously, France used the Julian Calendar, implemented by Julius Caesar, which began the new year around April 1st, or at the spring equinox. Many were unaware of this change in calendars, or that the new year would begin on January 1st, and continued to celebrate the new year on or around April 1st.

This resulted in others "poking fun" at them or calling them "April fools". Eventually, this joking grew to include pranks; people would tape a paper fish on someone's back and call them a "poisson d'Avril", meaning "April fish", or a gullible person.

As decades passed, this holiday continued to be celebrated throughout the world. For instance, in the 18th century, residents of Scotland celebrated April Fools' Day for two days. The two-day event began with "hunting the gowk", which refers to a cuckoo bird, symbolizing a fool. This tradition began with sending peers on foolish errands; the next day, known as Tailie Day, people would stick fake tails or "kick me" signs on the backs of others.

Despite its unknown origin, April Fools' Day has continued to be a well-loved and celebrated holiday, full of mischief and good fun!

COLUMNS CORNER: WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

Friday, April 26, 9 AM - 5 PM | Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center presents Liliana Washburn in the Victorian Gallery | FREE

Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center: 9 & 12 Vassar Street, Poughkeepsie

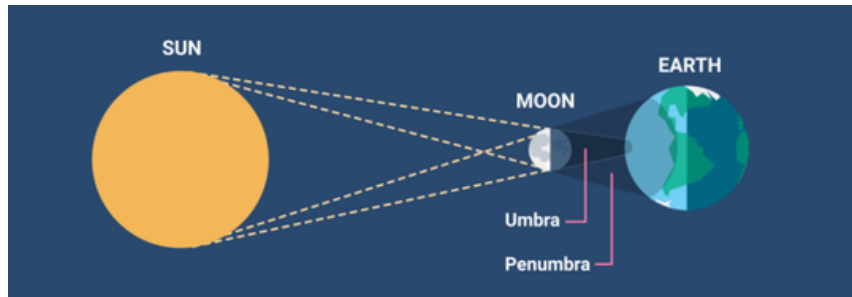
Monday, April 29, 12:30 PM - 1:15 PM | Cooking For Your Health: Protecting Your Heart from Peripheral Vascular Disease | VIRTUAL | FREE

[Register here.](#)

WHAT IS A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE?

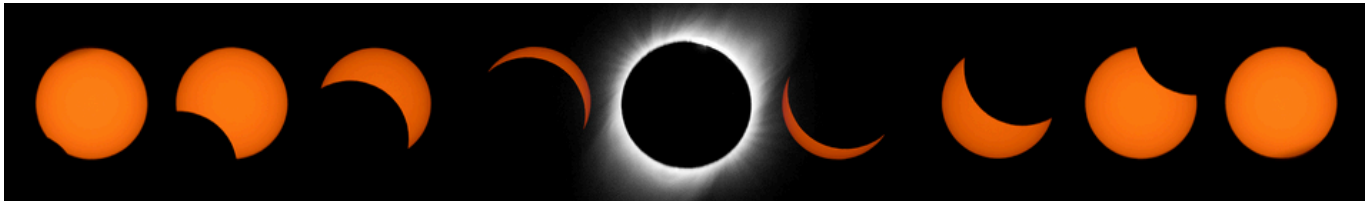
Did you get the chance to see the total solar eclipse that graced the sky on Monday, April 8th? Whether or not you witnessed it firsthand, there's so much to discover about this celestial event. Let's find out what a total solar eclipse is, why it happens, and when it will happen again!

So, what is a total solar eclipse? A total solar eclipse occurs when the moon passes directly between the Earth and the sun, obscuring the sun completely from view for a brief period. This alignment results in the moon casting its shadow on Earth, creating a temporary twilight-like darkness known as totality in the regions where it is visible.

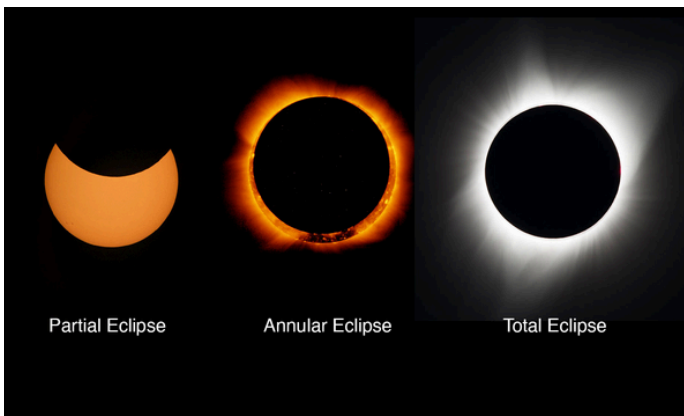


The moon's shadow consists of two parts: the umbra, where the sun is completely blocked, and the penumbra, where the sun is only partially obscured. When the moon's umbra falls on a particular area on Earth, observers within this region experience the complete darkness of totality.

During a total solar eclipse, the sun's outer atmosphere called the corona, becomes visible as a glowing halo around the darkened moon.



Although the Hudson Valley was not in the path of totality, we were able to view a partial solar eclipse. This means that only a portion of the sun was blocked from where we are in the U.S. Partial solar eclipses are more common than total solar eclipses because the alignment required for a partial eclipse is less precise. However, they still offer a remarkable astronomical event for skywatchers to observe.



You might be curious about when the next occurrence of a solar event like this will be.

Following April 8, 2024, the next total solar eclipse won't happen in parts of the U.S. until 2044, so be sure to mark your calendars for this rare celestial event!

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: NANCY O’ROURKE



Nancy O’Rourke, also known as Nancy Jane, was born and raised in Staten Island alongside her brother and sister. She ventured upstate to Beacon in 1952 and has been a resident of the Hudson Valley ever since.

A true craftswoman, Nancy loves to sew and crochet; she also enjoys watching TV in her spare time. An all-around happy individual, Nancy loves animals, especially dogs and fish.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: LESONDRA RODRIGUEZ



Lesondra, or LeLe, Rodriguez was born in Poughkeepsie and raised in Beacon, New York.

LeLe brings her cheerful presence to Vassar-Warner Home, where she currently works as an activities assistant.

After graduating high school, LeLe worked as a barista.

LeLe enjoys reading, listening to R&B music, and relaxing during her free time. Her favorite animals are dogs and monkeys; she has two dogs of her own.

LeLe favorite cuisines are soul food and Spanish food. She dreams of traveling to Bora Bora.

APRIL ACTIVITIES



4/26, 4 PM Nails



4/27, 4 PM Creative Art



4/29, 1 PM Name that Bird!



4/30, 3 PM Gardening

2023-2024 Vassar-Warner Home Board of Trustees

Officers

Ellen C. Smyth – *President*
 Rena Hill – *Vice President*
 Laurie Cohn - *Past President*
 Elizabeth Corcoran - *Secretary*
 Rosemary Butts - *Member*

Vassar-Warner Home Committees of the Board

Effective October 2023

Executive Committee

Ellen Smyth
 Rena Hill
 +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
 +Cheryl Holt

Finance

Laurie Cohn
 +Cheryl Holt
 +Cora Motts

Property

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.

