



the Village at Stone Ridge

THE QUARRY BULLETIN

VOLUME 5

ISSUE MARCH/APRIL 2008

The Volunteer IS VITAL IN CONDO COMMUNITY LIFE

by Louise O'Donnell and Shirley Chambers

*@*ur condo association could not exist without those who work on behalf of others not expecting pay or other tangible gains. To all of you who so unselfishly step up and offer our Village many hours of your precious time, your unquestionably valuable knowledge, and your unending energies, we salute you. We know you serve willingly and that your rewards are perhaps a little praise (often too little), a kind word here and there, your own personal satisfaction in serving, and our thanks. You trustees and you committee members and you subcommittee members – we thank you all so very much. Your leadership is needed. What other condo association has announced to its people that this year's condo fees are being reduced? Unheard of in this day and age!

Have you ever sat through a VSR committee meeting or an entire Board of Trustees meeting and witnessed the hard work (and at times grueling) that goes on sometimes for many hours? And they are there working for us.

Many other residents also contribute in various ways. For some years now two volunteers have been silently moving about the Village replacing burned out light bulbs and thus saving us many \$\$\$'s. Thanks Carl Erickson and Larry Anzivino.

Do you think our Quarry Bulletin would look as professionally attractive as it does without the expertise of Nany Diaz, a crackerjack graphic artist? And the 2008 Residents' Directory currently being distributed - she designed and produced it.

Setting up a library at our Clubhouse from scratch and keeping it running smoothly is no easy chore, but Linda Anzivino does it with a smile and without a wimper.

Richard Diaz has helped us in so many ways over the years, He has headed up the Communications Committee, started and edited the Quarry Bulletin, helped run our election of officers, and is currently Chairman of Data Management. Muchas gracias Richard.

Our Work/Play Day that was so successfully introduced last spring will be repeated this year on April 20, with a rain date of April 27th. All the volunteer workers will be treated to a cookout at the end of the day. The projects will include general trash and brush cleanup, clubhouse fix-up, window washing, and painting touch-ups. Please get in touch with Eli Demetri or Bill Townsend if you think of other projects that need tackling this year. Much of this is hard work (mixed with a little fun and camaraderie of course), which our volunteers do willingly. Again, this saves our condo association many \$\$\$'s. This kind of community bonding is one of the reasons we are a top-end condo group.

As time passes and the cycle continues, we are sure many more of you will jump in and offer your services too. In the meantime please join us in convincing these volunteers that we appreciate all they are doing for us.

T H A N K Y O U

VSR VOLUNTEERS

GRINDER PUMP DO'S AND DON'T'S



by **Bob Eddy**

The Village is served by a combination pressure/gravity sewer system. Key components of this system are the 36 grinder pumps scattered throughout the property. Each grinder pump serves several units and can be recognized by the round green cover in the lawn or in a mulch bed. A tank collects all waste from the units where a pump grinds the solids much like a garbage disposal system and then pumps the waste to the sewer lines that feed the treatment plant.

IF AN ALARM SOUNDS

Each grinder pump is designed to produce an alarm signal in the event of a high water level in the pump basin. The alarm box is mounted on the wall of a unit in the vicinity of the pump. A light and horn sound when the alarm is activated. If you observe an alarm, you should call Great North (800-221-0210) and report it. Do not ignore intermittent alarms for they are a sign of pump wear and should be attended to promptly.

Because of the nature of the grinder pumps and our sewer system, kitchen garbage disposals are prohibited in the Village.

CARE AND USE OF THE GRINDER PUMPS

The following items should not be introduced into the sewer system; they will clog the pumps:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Glass | Diapers, socks, rags or cloth |
| Metal | Plastic objects |
| Seafood shells | Feminine sanitary products |
| Fish tank gravel | Kitty litter |
| Kitchen grease or animal fat | Swiffer pads |
| Baby wipes | Dental floss |

In addition, NEVER introduce any of the following into any sewer:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Explosives | Strong chemicals |
| Flammable materials | Gasoline |
| Lubricating oil and/or grease | Paint |

Residents should periodically check for leaks in the flapper valves in their toilets and the faucet valves in sinks. Please repair these leaks promptly. Excessive running water causes the pumps to run more, and this contributes to pump and motor failures that are costly to fix. Each pump replacement costs about \$2,000, and multiple pump failures could result in increased sewer fees.

VSR WALKING TRAILS

by **Doug Craib**

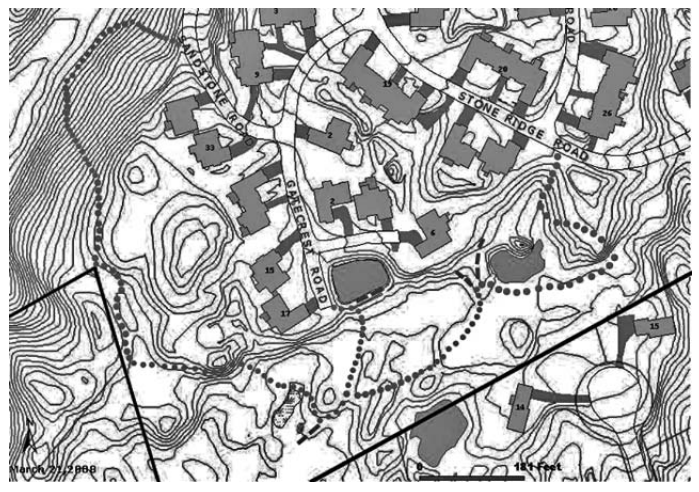
Did you ever try to walk the trails behind the signs? The Village builder marked three trails. Two go onto points of land that jut into the pond behind Stone Ridge Road. The third and longest connects access points on Sandstone, Gatecrest and Stone Ridge Roads. The builder used well-worn trails, less obvious animal trails, and some wishful thinking. The pond trails are fairly open. The long trail has become overgrown with small white pine and various types of underbrush.



Some village volunteers organized this winter and started to clear the trails for easier walking. To date, the Sandstone-Gatecrest-Stone Ridge trail has been cleared and marked well enough to follow. Once the remaining snow melts, a second pass at clearing will be made to improve footing. This trail is interesting in that it passes vernal pools, granite ledge, marsh, and some mini quarries. Although these are walking and not hiking trails, in some places the terrain is rough and walking them requires appropriate footwear.

Here are a few guidelines for using the trails. Long sleeves and pants are recommended because of ticks. Avoid any temptation to create spur trails. Join the trail maintenance volunteers instead. Please do not use the trails to discard unwanted plants and seasonal decorations. Respect property boundaries.

Trail maps similar to the draft below are in process and will be available.



BOARD RULES ON LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

At its February 18th meeting, the Board of Trustees accepted guidelines for Letters to the Editor for the Quarry Bulletin. These guidelines are now posted in the Policy and Procedure document in our library and are published here for your information.

These guidelines apply to all VSR residents who will be preparing a Letter to the Editor for publication in the VSR Quarry Bulletin.

In all cases the Quarry Bulletin Editor will have the responsibility and authority to determine the suitability of a Letter to the Editor for publication in the Quarry Bulletin. Writers should feel assured that their comments will not be edited or censored by the Board of Trustees. Letters to the Editor will be published in the Bulletin as and when space permits at the determination of the Editor. The Editor may also edit the content and wording of the letter as appropriate and notify the writer of the changes. Letters shall not exceed 300 words in length. The topic must be current, appropriate, and interesting to most or all VSR residents. Content shall express accurate information and the writer's opinion, not just a complaint. Letters shall not be personal in tone, nor engage in gratuitous name-calling. Letters cannot be submitted anonymously; the writer must sign them.

VSR



NEWS

by *Dianne Marston*

Our next book club meeting will be held on Thursday, April 10 at 1:00 pm. We will discuss two books about Tuscany, and Joyce Minosh will be our special guest for the meeting. The books are:

Under the Tuscan Sun

by Frances Mayes. "This beautifully written memoir about taking chances, living in Italy, loving a house and, always, the pleasures of food...it's so delicious!" (USA Today)

A Day in Tuscany

by Dario Castagno (who recently autographed his book at the Clubhouse). This book is a light, engaging jaunt into the Italian countryside by a Chianti tour guide.

We will welcome our own Joyce Minosh, of Westford Connection Travel Service, who will show her slides of Tuscany. All are welcome!

May 15th Meeting: *The Secret River*
by Kate Grenville

QUARRY SHORTS

Need a Notary?

If you need a Notary Public, we have one right here in our Village.

Lorraine Facella at 61 Stoneridge.

Telephone 978 496 1413

The Turtles Are Coming

Come May, our VSR Quarry turtles will ritualistically hear the notes of the Rites of Spring and begin crossing the road near the bridge either to mate or to lay eggs on the other side. Please watch the roadway near the bridge carefully as you drive by so that you don't accidentally run over one of our turtle friends.



May Village Meeting

The May Village Meeting will feature a short presentation on the Trail System at our Village. Doug Craib and others who work on the trails will talk about them, and maps will be available.

E-mail Address Changes

Several e-mail addresses have changed since the Residents' Directory was printed.

Please make the following notations in your copy of the Directory:

e-mail address for Peter and Kathryn Abate
pkabate@yahoo.com and kabate@yahoo.com

and e-mail address for Frank and Elaine Tino
ftino@comcast.net

First Thursday Village Meeting

Please join us at our Village Meetings on the first Thursday of each month. So far we've had some excellent programs, and our future presentations should be equally as good. These meetings also offer you an opportunity to speak up and to get some of your questions answered.

—Louise O'Donnell, *Communications Chair*

Fitness Center Reminders

When the treadmill was repaired recently the repairman reminded us that it is better for the machine if you stand on the rails while it starts up and step on the belt after it is moving. Also, to avoid additional cleaning costs as well as damage to our exercise equipment, residents using the exercise room are requested to wear clean exercise shoes to avoid sand, grit, ice melt, etc. from being tracked onto the carpet, mats, and equipment.

Mercury in Our Environment

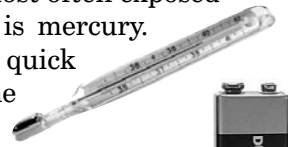


by **Richard Diaz**

Many of our Villagers know that I have been involved with hazardous materials and heavy metal research for many years. I don't dwell on recovery, handling or recycling of metals simply because I am not an expert in these areas. My focus has been on the little known effects of metals on the body. This article is about what the individual can do to minimize exposure with local assets that should be utilized.

Some experts say that we are exposed to heavy metals between 60 and 80 times each day, and we are unaware of it. I tend to think the experts are right. The heavy metal that we are most often exposed to, without regard to health, is mercury.

An inventory of the home is quick and easy because most of the mercury is concentrated in only a few items: thermometers, thermostats, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and electronics.



Since VSR is a relatively new construction, we don't have to worry about thermostats; those containing mercury were not used in our buildings. We do need to be aware of the (now out-dated) glass thermometers that contain mercury. These thermometers themselves are not hazardous, but when they are broken in the home and the mercury is released they will affect the health of everyone who enters that home, forever.

Button batteries are particularly vicious since we see them as small and of no specific threat. You would be correct in making this assumption when these power packs are used in the application for which they were designed. On the other hand, when you discard them you might tend to do so in a way that they will jump up and bite you in an unexpected time

and place. Old batteries are a nuisance. They are so small and yet you need to make special trips to dispose of them properly. In addition, how many of us know which ones are hazardous and which are not.

We all have fluorescent bulbs in our homes in one form or another. Recently there has been an environmental movement to replace all the incandescent bulbs with CFL (compact fluorescent light) bulbs. Even though there are valid arguments to do exactly that, if you break one in the home, like the broken thermometer, it will affect health forever.

Westford, via the Health Department, accepts thermometers and thermostats at the town's office between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm Mon-Fri. They also accept other mercury-containing devices, but they must be in sealed plastic bags.

Batteries can be disposed of at Sears, Autozone, Radio Shack, or save them for Household Hazardous Waste collection by the Town of Westford. The best way to deal with any battery is to tape both the positive and negative terminals and keep them in a jar. Store the "battery jar" in a cool dry place until you are ready to dispose of it. If handled improperly it could start of fire.

Fluorescent bulbs should not be disposed of with your regular trash. Residents may recycle straight, U-type, round, and compact fluorescent bulbs at the following locations: Ace Hardware (527 Groton Rd, Rt 40); MacKay Hardware (224 Littleton Rd, Rt 110); or the Health Department Office at Town Hall (55 Main St, collection hours Mon-Fri 8 am to 4pm).

To dispose of all other hazardous waste materials watch for announcements from Westford. Collection dates for this year are June 28th and September 20th, 2008.

There are many things about heavy metals that I know to be true, and one thing about human nature: "if you're unaware you will do nothing."

BATTER UP---

Three elderly ladies are excited about seeing their first baseball game. They smuggle a bottle of Jack Daniel's whiskey into the ball park. The game is very exciting and they are enjoying themselves immensely .. mixing the Jack Daniel's with soft drinks. Soon they realize the bottle is almost empty and the game has a lot more innings to go.

Based on the given information, what inning is it and how many players are on base? THINK!!!

ANSWER: It's the bottom of the fifth and the bags are loaded!

EYE AND BRAIN CORRELATION

Count every "F" in the following text:

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

How many? WRONG, There are 6, no joke. Read it again! The brain cannot process "of." Anyone who counts all 6 "F's" on the first go is a genius. Normal is 3 and 4 is quite rare.

PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK VSR WOMANS GROUP, YOU DID IT AGAIN

by Ann Sullivan

The man is talented, skilled, funny, and he can cook too! On January 11th the VSR Womens Group forgot the ice and wind outside our Clubhouse as Paul Split, a horticultural consultant, both lectured and demonstrated using humor throughout his presentation. We got hungrier and hungrier as his demo tables simmered with the wonderful perfumes of herbs, fresh and fragrant. He heaped fruits, veggies, and herbs with virgin olive oil, various vinegars, pasta, Italian bread and herb butter into a beautiful luncheon for 32 attentive students. Would that all learning could be this much fun!

Paul's website psplit@aol.com presents him as a teacher; we enjoyed him as a chef, performer and raconteur as well. Rolling stacks of basil leaves into tight balls, he chopped them into confetti-size pieces and tossed them over fresh quartered tomatoes simmering in an overflowing skillet. Then adding olive oil, peppercorns, and sea salt he tossed all together answering questions as he did so. Oh the scent! No ice sculptures or candlelight bouquets were needed as table centerpieces; the luncheon salad itself was bouquet enough. It had various lettuce greens accentuated with bright orange carrot curls and tomatoes cut into flower shapes that we later topped with Paul's salad dressing. The herb butter could be frozen into molds for formal dinners or rolled into logs to be frozen and sliced later, but we savored it creamed family style just in a bowl.

Pasta cooking methods vary, but Paul twice rinsed bow pasta in cold water, and we were ready to eat buffet style. What a truly wonderful menu – pasta with fresh sauce, a beautiful salad topped with choices of dressings, Italian bread spread with herb butter and, as we ate, bread slices seasoned with spoonful of bruschetta sauce were served. No need of dessert, but...of course our hostesses nevertheless went the distance by serving three beautiful cakes, the least of which was chocolate-dusted tiramisu!

Thanks to the gals who pulled all of this off: Jean Einarson, Jean Guthrie and Paula Townsend. It was a big job, but they turned our Clubhouse great room into a grand dining room and, like professional event planners, established an ambience of warmth, colorful table settings, centerpieces and gift raffles too. Behind the scenes were weather worries, shopping trips and finance juggling. Martha S was truly outdone.

Thanks dear neighbors!

FLOWER ARRANGING WORKSHOP

by Ann Sullivan

At our Clubhouse on February 21st midst ice and drizzle outside, our own master gardener Lois Frampton helped brighten the day for members of the VSR Woman's Group. What a wonderful job she did teaching us about flower arranging, balance of design, and making and caring for our own floral arrangements. Two hours of learning with fun flew by.



Lois is a master not only at gardening, but also at handling a workshop. All consuming was the time spent days ahead getting materials ready, working with the penny-pinch finances we allotted and with temperature concerns for the flowers. She and Ana Prip spent hours stripping leaves from flowers and thorns as well. Then they carried tubs of water, greenery and blossoms into the Clubhouse.

As the workshop progressed Lois made flower arrangements from the thinnest to the fullest, instructing as she went along. Then we tried. Each of us used the same materials and equipped with scissors, clippers and gloves we produced such varyingly different results. Lois' critiques were funny, teachable and tactful. We took our own flower arrangements home to enjoy and, at times, to laugh about. You taught us so well, Lois, and gave us all a gift of a beautiful morning.

This program was organized for the VSR Woman's Group by Joan Roy and myself. Joan, it was great working with you. How many phone calls did we share? And she's a great baker too. Our coffee time beforehand got us off to a delicious social start. It would be unforgiving if I didn't mention the great people who moved all that heavy heavy furniture at the Clubhouse. Bless



you Bill Townsend for appearing both before and after to heft tables and sofas without even being asked. Plaudits Bill and to your fellow furniture movers: Paula T., Jean Einarson, Judy Primm and Joan Roy. What a team!

"The Board of Trustees is very pleased that Ruthann Fisher and Dorothy Moran have volunteered to be co-chairs of the Social Committee. I have been totally overwhelmed with the enthusiasm and willingness of the many Village residents who give of their time in handling the busy and productive social calendar of this active community," Trustee Ron Caterino reports. This will introduce Ruthann and Dorothy and their new column, Absolutely Social. Welcome aboard ladies.

ABSOLUTELY SOCIAL



*by Ruthann Fisher
&
Dorothy Moran
Co-chairs*

Our schedule looks quite full and exciting, and we are all geared up for a great 2008. Some of your favorites will be repeated and some new ones added.

Hope you are planning of joining us on April 12th for our authentically Italian home-cooked spaghetti and meatball dinner. Come at 6:30 for appetizers (bring your own wine) and at 7:15 for dinner. All of our different techniques for eating spaghetti should be good for a few laughs.

The annual spring clean-up is April 20th, followed by a cookout for the hungry, tired workers. Rain date is April 27th. Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Write these dates on your calendar now:

- May 26 - Memorial Day Cookout
- July 4 - July 4th Cookout
- August 10 - Sunday Coffee
- September 1 - Labor Day Cookout
- October 18 - Harvest Hop
- December 6 - Holiday Party
- December 31 - New Year's Eve Party

In addition, Skip's planning on hosting his Karaoke event on November 8, and Larry will have already hosted his Wine Tasting Party on April 5, so it will be reported on in the next Bulletin issue.

We would like to remind all residents who may be interested in using the Clubhouse to host a social event for the Village that all social dates must be cleared through either Ruthann or Dorothy.

30 SECOND SKIP FORWARD FOR COMCAST REMOTE

by Doug Craib



This Comcast remote has Fast Forward and Skip Back buttons, but no Skip Forward button for the DVR. I found a technique online that lets you add this feature. It's great for getting past commercials. It appears to work for Motorola 6412 and 3412 boxes.

1. Choose an unused or unneeded button on the remote to be the 30-second skip command. I used the "A-lock" button. Other choices are the PIP buttons at the bottom, or the "help" button.
2. Press the "Cable" button at the top of the remote to put it into Cable Box control mode.
3. Press and hold the "Setup" button until the "Cable" button blinks twice.
4. Type in the code 994. The "Cable" button will blink twice.
5. Press (do not hold) the "Setup" button.
6. Type in the code 00173.
7. Press whatever button you want to map the 30-second skip command to.

The following technique can be used to restore the original function to all remapped keys for a device.

1. Press and hold the "Setup" key until the device button blinks twice.
2. Type in the code 994. A device key will blink twice.
3. Press the device key you are restoring twice. The device key will blink twice if successful.

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The Quarry Bulletin is a Bi-monthly newsletter to keep you informed of any events and information for The Village at Stone Ridge.

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