

Village Calendar for Spring

by Shirley Chambers

That Wonderful Aroma Permeates the Whole Clubhouse and Environs

It's the home-made spaghetti sauce on Italian Night! Do you remember how delicious it was last year? On April 25 we will once again be treated to Spaghetti Night, and what a night it will be! You're in for some surprises such as a side of eggplant parmegiana! This year it will be necessary to charge \$15 each. Ruthann would like to have the money in no later than the 20th. Checks are ok, and she will be at the Clubhouse from 6:30 to 8 pm on the 20th to collect. See sign-up sheet on bulletin board.

Annual Spring Cleanup and Cookout

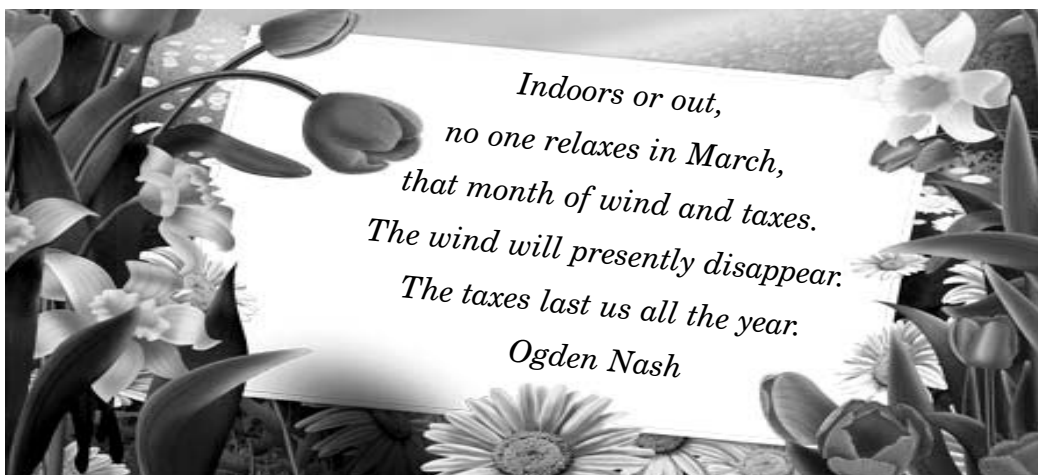
We Villagers don't just eat; we work too, and hard. But working together can be fun and bonding and, besides, it saves us all some \$\$\$\$. You will soon see some of our Trustees (yes, they roll up their sleeves too) and the ever-present Bill Townsend moving about our Village making lists of what needs to be done this year to spruce up our grounds. And then there's Clubhouse window washing! This will be the third year for this volunteer effort, the first two having been highly successful. Keep your fingers crossed for good weather on April 26th and mark it on your calendar.

Bus Leaves From the Clubhouse at 10 am

Enough interest in Westford's history was aroused by Ellen Harde's presentation at the Village meeting on 5 March that Joyce Minosh has kindly arranged for a private VSR bus tour of this town (with Ellen guiding us) on April 18th from 10:00-11:30. The sign-up sheet for the 36 bus seats filled so rapidly that Joyce has now had to line up a larger bus (48 seater this time), and this too is about full.

Bird and Wildflower Walk

On a Saturday in May (date announced later) the Westford Conservation Trust will lead a bird and wildflower walk on VSR property. This is a truly unique opportunity for you nature lovers and one that shouldn't be missed.



WESTFORD HISTORY Subject of March 5 Village Meeting

(Taken from Carlene Craib's NEWS YOU CAN USE)

An enthusiastic group of residents gathered at Thursday's Village Meeting on March 5 to hear Ellen Harde, Town Moderator, give an overview of Westford's history. Using a copy of the Roudenbush Map of Westford (available for purchase at Roudenbush Community Center) she told us how Westford got its name (when the "west" portion of Chelmsford was incorporated as a distinct town in 1729) and then delineated the three major influences on Westford's growth: farmland, mills, and the construction of Rt. 495.

In a fascinating tour of the villages that make up the town, Ellen recounted many wonderful anecdotes from our history and introduced us to some of the key participants in Westford's development. She also told us about some books that make excellent reading and are invaluable references if you are interested in local history.

I know many of you who were away would have loved this presentation. Happily, we recorded most of the talk, and a DVD is available for you to borrow. A copy will be on the shelf in the library. Please return it promptly after you look at it or just enjoy a half hour in the easy chairs and look at it there in the library!

I also have a few copies of the Roudenbush Map that Ellen brought for us. Give me a call if you would like one - first come, first served. (Carlene Craib 978-692-7387).

As a follow-on, this presentation aroused enough interest that VSR has arranged for its own bus tour of Westford (led by Ellen) on April 18th (10:00-11:30).

TAKING OFF SOON?

Thanks to volunteer Gail Eddy we have a new VSR "transportation swap" initiative. Gail has been compiling a list of residents who are willing to drive neighbors to and from Logan, Manchester, a train station, or bus depot in exchange for a ride when they need it. After you sign up you will receive a copy of the guidelines and a list of fellow volunteers. You will then make your own arrangements with someone on the list. Don't know if she is still accepting names, but email or give her a call to find out. (978-392-1101) or gail@bearhut.net.

THOSE DOGGONE DEER!

by Lois Frampton



If you looked outside shortly after the snow melted you were likely to have seen deer tracks across your lawn. Until their natural food source becomes more accessible in the woods they will eat our shrubbery. In fact you may have noticed the deer have been munching away on the arborvitae on the right side of our entrance off of Tyngsboro Road.

Deer are especially fond of tulips and roses. Since daffodils are poisonous to deer, the best long-term way to protect your tulips is to surround them with a barrier of daffodil plants. Another method is to spray the tulips with products such as Liquid Fence or Ropel, both available at Cataldos on Rt. 110 in Littleton. You will have to spray the tulips repeatedly as they grow. The deer usually wait until the buds are fat and strike just before they open up; however, you cannot depend on this. I have also heard that spreading the fertilizer Milorganite around plants works, but I have not tried this.



The idea for repelling deer is to use a product that has a smell that deer find disagreeable such as garlic, blood meal, and human hair. Trouble is these do not retain their odors for very long. Years ago I was told that hanging smelly soap such as Irish Spring would keep the deer away, but I tried this and it simply didn't work. Liquid Fence and Ropel will last for about three months, but you do need to spray new growth more frequently.

The Landscape Committee has been replacing shrubs that do not recover from deer browsing. The problem is there are only a few shade-giving shrubs that deer do not eat, and we would rather not use the same shrub throughout the village. Since deer are becoming an ever-increasing problem, new products are appearing on the market. We will try to keep abreast of these developments.



THE COLORFUL GEMS OF BIRDDOM

by Shirley Chambers

Have you noticed the bird circus that goes on at the feeders in your yard and the unique personalities of the different species? Ms. Hummingbird is a flitter.



She has so much nervous energy her wings seem to hum her theme song: "much to do, much to do, much to do." She actually could conserve a lot of her strength if she didn't worry about what the other hummingbirds were doing. If even one of her own kind comes near the feeders she gets herself in a dither. Ms. Flit divebombs any bird that attempts to drink the sweet water. She stops for a moment to take a sip herself, but then starts all over again monopolizing the handiest food source.



Then there's Mr. Woodpecker. What a guy –always seems to be beating his head against a dead tree. He's a handsome devil - a classy dresser with every feather in place. He taps his message repeatedly: "picky, picky, picky." It seems kind of sad to see him knock himself out over the teeniest matter.

Watch out, here come those bold Blue Jays. Boy, what squawkers! When they fly in with their harsh "jeer" call, everybody knows it. A flash of blue, and then they start bossing. They think they should be in charge of the whole seed scene. The Jays, part of the crow family, have much to offer. They add a lot of color and variety to nature, but it's a shame they are so pushy and demanding.



Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal are a real study. Their plumage is rich, their motion elegant, and their song strong. She's a real dear and is content to share the feeder with all who are hungry. But that husband of hers is so brazen. Many times he won't even allow her to eat until he's done. A real chauvinist, if you ask me. They make such a good looking couple, and it's said they mate forever. I just wish he were more thoughtful of her.



VSR BOOKCLUB NEWS

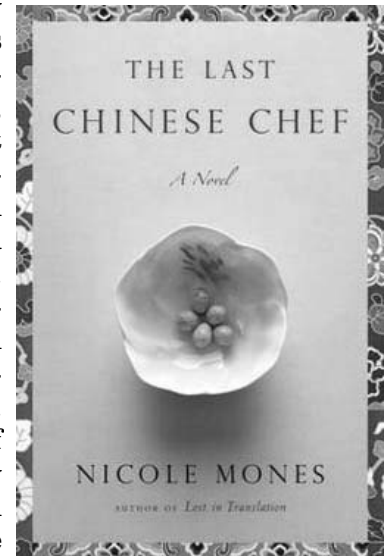
by Dianne Marston



On April 2 the VSR Book Club met to socialize and discuss the novel *The People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks. The next meeting will be at 1:00 pm on Thursday May 14. We will discuss *The Last Chinese Chef* by Nicole Mones.

"*The Last Chinese Chef* tells the story of the cultural & historical aspects of Chinese cooking within a story about an American food writer, Maggie McElroy, who is desperately trying to figure out her own life. At one point she describes a soup she will remember all her life... 'it nurtured every part of me.' This book is engaging, inventive, and incredibly informative. It nurtured every part of me, as well." DEBBIE BURTON, Rediscovered Bookshop, Boise, ID (Book Sense commendation)

In an interview Nicole Mones states that "the highest lesson of Chinese food, its single most important characteristic is the focus on community. All food in China is shared. Nothing is ever plated for the individual – the opposite of cuisine in the West. Through the ritual of eating together every day, the human bonds that hold the world together are



forged and reinforced. That's the journey at the heart of *The Last Chinese Chef*. Cuisine in China does so much more than sustain the body. It heals; it nourishes the heart, stimulates the mind, and even calls back the soul. So while the novel does lift the curtain on a previously hidden world, its story is universal. We all have times when we need a little help in calling back the soul."

People sometimes ask me if they can come to a discussion of a certain book they have read without being a "member" of the Book Club. The answer is: yes, of course! There is no membership requirement. We do have "regulars" who come much of the time, but if a certain book appeals to you, feel free to come at any time. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

The date of the June meeting is the 25th. Watch the bulletin board for an announcement of the book we'll be reading.

ABSOLUTELY SOCIAL



by **Ruthann Fisher**
&
Dorothy Moran
Co-chairs

In late January about 25 residents gathered at the Clubhouse for a simple Sunday breakfast of juice, bagels, and coffee, which was an enjoyable low-key event after the busy holiday season.

On February 15th about 30 of us were again at the Clubhouse for a superb pancake breakfast. Lois and Jayne presided over the grills and produced a trio of delectable pancakes—sour dough, buttermilk, and traditional. These were accompanied by maple syrup, juice, bacon, sausages, coffee and, of course, lively conversations everywhere. It was a lovely morning.

On Sunday March 8th about 25 of us (so many residents away at warm locations!) enjoyed another one of our great brunches – juice, wonderful winter fruits, quiches, French toast, scrambled eggs, assorted rolls and pastries, and coffee.

Be sure to mark your calendars for Italian Night scheduled for Sunday evening April 25th. Our Village's annual Work/Play Day will be May 3rd. Check the Clubhouse bulletin board for details as the dates approach.

The next Social Committee meeting is on Monday, April 13th at 7 pm. New members are always welcome.

A Prelude to Spring

The first tender shoots from the garden and we smile inwardly knowing the seasons are turning again. We welcome spring's promise while also remembering winter's lessons, that nothing lasts so that everything can begin fresh, bright and new again. Editor

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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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NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

by **Louise O'Donnell**



Is there anything lovelier than driving up the hill toward our Village and seeing the beautiful American flag waving in the breeze!

This winter "Old Glory" took a hit with the terrible storms that struck New England. The "winter" flag became tattered and torn and was hanging limply. Thanks so much to Sharon Erickson for taking on the awesome task of mending it and restoring it to its former beauty. Sharon has also previously made repairs to other "winter" flags, but nothing as daunting and difficult as this one.

Thanks, too, to Tink and Bill Nussbaum for becoming the "keepers of the flag" while Harry also tries to be restored to his former glory.

We will soon have a new flag for the spring and summer seasons waving proudly, and it's wonderful to know that we can count on neighbors like these to help out when needed.

LIBRARY NEWS

by **Linda Anzivino**



"I cannot live without books."
-Thomas Jefferson

Obviously, many VSR residents share this thought with our former President. Since the influx of new titles coming into our library creates a space issue, each month some older less-read books are moved out and replaced by the new ones. So if you have not visited our library for awhile, you might be pleasantly surprised by the ever-changing choices.

If you missed the movie *The Reader*, the book by Bernhard Schlink is now available. Some other new titles to check out are:

The Oath by John Lescroart – a medical malpractice/murder mystery

Healthy Women, Healthy Lives – a guide to preventing disease from the Landmark Nurses' Study

Riding Lessons by Sara Gruen a poignant novel in the tradition of *The Horse Whisperer* by the author of *Water for Elephants*

The Associate by John Grisham – another by this perennial favorite.

If there are any books or authors you would like to see added, please drop a note into the New Additions basket on the Library shelf. Happy Reading.