



Quarry Bulletin

November - December, 2011



'Tis the Season

Have you driven around our Village after dark to see the wonderful Christmas and holiday lighting? We have never looked so beautiful. And we have so much to be thankful for this year. Our condo fee went up only 4.94% over last year's fee. Think how little (relatively) our fees have increased over the years. And let's give thanks to all the behind-the-scenes volunteers working to help us keep expenses down.

How wonderful to live in a community where neighbors are always ready to help one another! We give thanks to this year's created group called *Helping Hands* – their name says it all.

Wishing you all the old fashioned joys this holiday season can bring.



Singing So Long, Farewell, auf Wiedersehen

As I dance off the stage for this is my last issue of the Quarry Bulletin as your editor. Granted, some of it has been grunt work, but I have patiently (usually) sweated (often) to get out 38 issues since August of 2005 and I have truly loved doing it. Admittedly, it has been "my baby" and an important part of my life here at VSR for neigh on 6 years, and I shall truly miss it.



I thank you all for accepting my breezy and chatty style of writing. Before retirement I worked for many years as a technical writer/editor most recently in the fields of physical optics and photographic chemistry, so swinging from these fields to the lighter fares here in our village has been a relaxingly fun-filled long stretch. And so you ask – what will I do now to fill this void – work on the book I've been writing forever. They say we all have one in us, but at my age I had better darn sight get going.

I wish to thank all of you who wrote regular columns for the Bulletin and also those who willingly accepted "assignments" to review parties and special village events such as work/play day, and recommendations for dining out in our area.

And last, but not at all least. I thank the two special ladies who worked so hard to put all my words into a presentable format and make the issues look so great. They too are professionals. Nany Diaz was my graphic artist for many years, and I'm so very grateful to Sandy Kelly for taking over this Production Manager's job for all of 2011. We all worked so well together.

Shirley Chambers, Editor Retiring



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The Music of New Orleans Resounded Loud and Clear in Our Clubhouse by Shirley Chambers

Bedecked in baubles and beads in the Mardis Gras colors of purple, green, and gold, both our villagers and our clubhouse were oh so ready for the wonderful toe-tapping music played by the five-piece band, the Squeezebox Stompers, on the night of Nov. 5. I knew our villagers would love the energy of this band when I first saw them 2-1/2 years ago. Although I booked the band, was the event organizer, and acted as hostess for the night, a party like this one doesn't happen without a really big team effort from beginning to end. My very special thanks go to our wonderful Social Committee members and the furniture jockeys.

THE CABARET SETTING -- The little round tables with their neatly nestled chairs (rented) were dressed with purple tablecloths on which sat wine glasses draped with bead necklaces. The "moving crew" had to assemble all these little tables, and then they had to be carefully arranged (thanks to Dave's direction) to allow us space for dancing and moving about.

THE DECORATIONS -- Described by most as "awesome." These were done by the very clever crew of Judy Gilmartin, Elaine Tino, Nany Diaz, and my friend Pat from Maine. The chandeliers were dripping with strings of beads and each had a very low-hanging star centerpiece column that shimmered brightly. And Nany's special twisted crepe-paper streamers added another stunning dimension.

THE DANCING -- I quote from an email sent to me by Ralph, the band's leader: "We had a lot of fun watching your members dancing between the tables and forming conga lines around the room." The band played several Cajun and zydeco waltzes, and Frank Tino became "the waltz king."

THE MUSIC AND THE BAND -- Although their music is fun-filled and they play the part of humorous characters (how about that fiddler with the top hat!), the band members are serious musicians. As veteran performers for the past 27 years, several members of the band (especially Ralph Tufo and guitarist Larry Plitt) have distinguished themselves as music award winners. Zydeco is best played on the squeezebox, and Ralph plays an assortment of these Cajun accordions. I was pleased that he included the zydeco hit *Don't Mess with My Toot Toot*. It's one of my favorites.

OUR VILLAGER'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE ZYDECO RUBBOARD (FROTTOIR) -- A number of villagers took center stage with the band's zydeco rubboard (also called a vest frottoir). This percussion instrument, unique to Louisiana music, is usually made of pressed, corrugated aluminum and is worn conveniently over ones shoulders and played rhythmically by scratching, tapping, or stroking it with bottle openers, spoons, thimbles or whatever. Check out the photos here of the VSR rubboard stars.

Thank all of you for your many after-the-party emails trumpeting its success. This one best sums up the general sentiment: "Tonight will go down in my memory book as one of the most lively and most enjoyable since I've lived here. I didn't want it to end. This place was really jumpin'"



Photos by Roni Hubbard and Dave Auld



INTRODUCING SOCIAL/GAME NIGHT EVERY FRIDAY IN OUR CLUBHOUSE

TGFOC – Thank God For Our Clubhouse. We learned that taking haven in our clubhouse to keep warm was not only judicious but also lots of fun. Our nightly gathering there proved to be very sociable: talking, wine, games, coffee, wine, picture puzzles, dominoes, wine, bridge. So why wait for another blackout (oh please, no)?

Starting in January we will have Social/Game Night in our clubhouse every Friday. A notice on the bulletin board will remind you. We understand that the poker game in the library is now also a weekly event.



ABOUT BRINGING ENTERTAINMENT TO VSR

We know that this is Skip’s specialty. He is motivated by wanting so much to please us.

The trouble is – after bringing one successful sound-alike look-alike after another to our village, each one better than the last, how do you top yourself? Well, he will surely do it with Jim Barone who will perform his Elvis Presley Tribute here in our village on April 28, 2012. Put a big red circle around this date. Jim is described as one of the very best Elvis impersonators – he has “the total package.”

It takes a super sleuth to find performers like Jim Barone. We’re lucky to have Skip who is willing to track down great entertainment for us, negotiate a fair fee we can all afford, arrange for the date and time, sign ‘em up, and then act as the emcee. We conclude that Skip is also a “total package.”



VSR’S MATRIARCH REACHES CELEBRITY STATUS

...with Westford Eagle’s front page lead article touting her life’s achievements. WHO, you ask?



DOTTIE HALL, of course.

A copy of the article has been on the BB, hope you read it.

CELEBRATING THE YULETIDE SEASON AT VSR

Phyllis Duggan singing with her 4-piece band created an elegant mood for VSR's annual Holiday party. The cheerily decorated clubhouse was a perfect backdrop for the music, the dancing, and the singing that enchanted the evening.

Many of our ladies found their groove dancing with Barry, who teaches ballroom dancing in Carlisle. He was Kathleen Silvia's guest (you may remember him and his partner from last year's Holiday party). And multi-talented Phyllis (in those spike heels) showed us her dancing abilities doing a really swinging jitterbug number with Barry.

One of the highlights of the evening was the Village Chorus, dressed in cheerful scarves and Christmas bow ties, singing in canon (in round) Christmas is a-Comin' In and Here in My House. The fabulous team of Donn Hill, Susan Hill, and Ruth Ann Dillon shared the responsibility for rehearsing them and then elegantly leading them in these renditions. The Chorus also sang Joyce Minosh's newest Stone Ridge version of Silver Bells, with the rest of the party goers singing along.

We sang the Twelve Days of Christmas with that many villagers lined up taking turns translating the motions and antics of laying geese, swimming swans, milking maids, dancing ladies, leaping lords, piping pipers, drumming drummers and giving everyone a good chuckle.

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah to all.



Photos by Dave Auld

WHAT A RACK!

George Heiter recently photographed this buck leisurely meandering alongside his house. We surely live with nature here in this village. This one seems to have a fairly classic rack. Count the points – are there ten? Five on each side?



Did you know...

- Deer live in their established territories for life—it is said that they prefer to starve than to leave their territory.
- The deer lifespan is about 10 years in the wild.
- Deer can easily swim across lakes or rivers at over 10 miles per hour.
- Well-nourished bucks begin sprouting new racks each April. Antlers can grow more than 1/2" per day.

VSR HIKERS CONQUER THE “AT”

by Dean Hubbard

Early in November Carlene and Doug Craib, Frank Bashore, Joyce Minosh, and I traveled to Maryland to hike portions of the Appalachian Trail (the “AT”) in four states. Our hiking party consisted of 20 hikers, some friends and relatives of our VSR contingent and other program participants from as far away as Illinois.

The AT is 2,180 miles long and goes from Springer Mountain, Georgia to Mount Katahdin in Maine passing through fourteen states. The dream of many serious hikers is to “thru hike” the trail in a single season. Since the trail was completed in the 1920’s, an estimated 12,000 people have successfully done just that.

Our assault on the trail was going to be much less ambitious. We chose a Road Scholar program that allowed us a taste of the beauty and rigors of the trail with the added benefits of a warm bed, showers, prepared meals, and some education. Our base lodging was Shepherd’s Spring, located on the Potomac River outside Sharpsburg, Maryland. The personnel there served us healthy, hardy, home-cooked breakfasts and dinners. Once our gear was ready we boarded vans for the trip to the trailhead, and after the day’s hike the vans would return us to the retreat where we would have dinner and sleep.

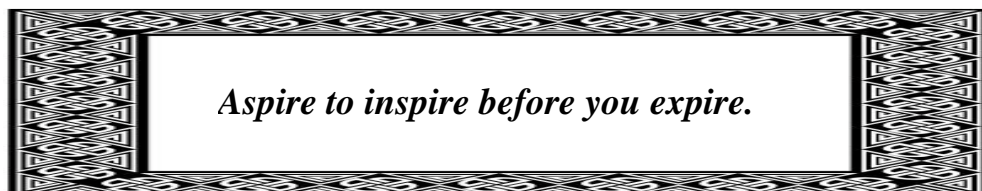
Our hikes consisted of 8.5 miles in Pennsylvania, 10 miles in Maryland, 7.3 miles in Virginia, and 6.5 mostly in West Virginia. The Pennsylvania hike passed through the midpoint of the AT trail and ended at the Pine Grove Furnace State Park and the AT Museum. Cast iron was manufactured in furnaces in this area from 1764 to 1895.

The Maryland hike started at the first monument built to honor George Washington and traversed three gaps in a ridge line where the civil war Battle of South Mountain was fought. The most difficult hike was Wednesday in Virginia overlooking the Shenandoah Valley where we tackled a portion of the AT known as the “rollercoaster” – four individual peaks with numerous ups and downs in between.

Our last day of hiking covered the four miles of the AT that lie in West Virginia and ended at historic Harpers Ferry where the Shenandoah River flows into the Potomac. Harpers Ferry was an important staging point for the B&O railway and the C&O canal and is best known for John Brown’s raid. After a rainy morning we enjoyed the warm headquarters of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in Harpers Ferry where we had our lunch in their cozy hikers’ lounge.

On our last evening we were treated to a meal of chili and grilled cheese; it was very good as were all previous dinners. We then rode to Shepherdstown, West Virginia to listen to some Appalachian music. The ten-piece band played to a full house and was enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

On our final day we toured the Antietam Battlefield. This was the bloodiest one-day battle in American military history with about 23,000 deaths on both sides. We then embarked the vans and returned to our last lunch at Shepherd’s Spring. It was a time for farewells and making plans for next year’s Road Scholar adventure. I believe that it will be difficult to excel the hospitality of Shepherd’s Spring and the enjoyment and education that came from hiking the AT.



SIMPLY SOCIAL

by Loretta Auld & Joyce Minosh, Co-chairs

We wish to thank all of you for your support during the past two years. The Social Committee has a great group of members. Not only is it a pleasure to work alongside them, but they are also fun. Please consider joining this committee.



NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

Thirty three of our villagers went on a tour of the Haystack Observatory in Westford. This is an MIT Research Center focused on radio astronomy, geodetic studies, radar and atmospheric sciences. All the structures on the extensive grounds here, many weirdly shaped, are a marvel to behold.

Joyce Minosh arranged this trip for us with Tom Sangiolo, friend of Barbara Leary and long-time Radar Systems Manager of MIT Lincoln Laboratory. Although Tom is now semi-retired, he remains in partial command. He explained the various radar systems that are located there. Lynn Matthews, who is a research scientist for MIT, spoke on the radio astronomy aspects of the Observatory.

This, the world's most sensitive radio antenna, is a huge aluminum dish named Haystack, which is balanced like spokes on a bicycle wheel, protected from the weather by a golf-ball looking dome that is the world's largest space frame radome. And just think, we got to go inside it. What a treat this was!

Amazingly, many of our group on this tour have lived in Westford for numerous years but somehow were never able to visit Haystack previously. The engineers among us seemed to understand all the scientific details, while most of the women were more interested in the "architecture."



HAVE YOU BEEN TO ANY OF THESE PLACES? I HAVE -

But I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go there alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there. Nor have I yet been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there.

I would like to go to Conclusion, but you have to jump there, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore. I have been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit there too often. I've also been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm. Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older. One of my favorite places to be is in Suspense. It really gets the adrenaline flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get.

Today is one of the many National Mental Health Days throughout the year. You can do your bit by remembering to get in touch with at least one unstable person. My job here is done!



DON'T MESS WITH SENIORS



My wife and I went to breakfast at a restaurant where the 'senior special' was two eggs, bacon, hash browns and toast for \$1.99. "Sounds good," my wife said, "But I don't want the eggs." "Then I'll have to charge you \$2.49 because you're ordering a la carte," the waitress warned her. "You mean I would have to pay for not taking the eggs?" my wife asked incredulously. "YES!" stated the waitress. "I'll take the special then." my wife said. "How do you want your eggs?" the waitress asked. "Raw and in the shell.," my wife replied.



She took the two eggs home!
Don't mess with seniors!
We've been around the block more than once.

A UNIQUE FIND, INDEED!

Written across the wall of a cave were the following symbols:



It was considered a unique find and the writings were said to be at least 3000 years old! The piece of stone was removed, brought to the museum, and archaeologists from around the world came to study the ancient symbols. They held a huge meeting after months of conferences to discuss the meaning of the markings.

The President of the society pointed to the first drawing and said:

"This is a woman. We can see these people held women in high esteem.

You can also tell they were intelligent, as the next symbol is a donkey, so they were smart enough to have animals help them till the soil.

The next drawing is a shovel, which means they had tools to help them.

Even further proof of their high intelligence is the fish which means that if a famine hit the earth and food didn't grow, they would seek food from the sea.

The last symbol appears to be the Star of David which means they were evidently Hebrews."

The audience applauded enthusiastically.

Then a little old Jewish man stood up in the back of the room and said, "Idiots...Hebrew is read from right to left.



It says: "Holy Mackerel, dig the ass on that chick."

"It's paradoxical, that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of getting old doesn't appeal to anyone."

Andy Rooney



VSR BOOK CLUB NEWS

by Dianne Marston



Would you like to share an afternoon with some interesting and informed Villagers? Then plan to come to Book Club! We meet every 6 weeks to discuss a book that has been chosen by the group. Some folks come only once or twice a year, while others attend regularly. Feel free to try it out!

We recently met to discuss *The Widower's Tale*, a family drama, which provided us with many interesting issues to discuss. The next meeting will be held on January 5, at which time we will discuss Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay. The author fictionalizes the 1942 Paris roundups and deportations of thousands of Jews, most of whom were eventually transported to Auschwitz. This book was made into a popular film and is now out on DVD. If you have seen the movie, but have not read the book, you are most welcome to join us.

Originally the group had chosen *Caleb's Crossing* for the Feb.16 meeting. However, since the book will not be published in paperback until later in the spring, we have decided to delay that discussion. Instead, we will read and discuss *House Rules* by Jodi Picoult. Picoult is a popular author who writes about contemporary family issues.

In the novel *House Rules*, "Jacob Hunt is a teen with Asperger's syndrome. He's hopeless at reading social cues or expressing himself well to others, though he is brilliant in many ways. But he has a special focus on one subject—forensic analysis. A police scanner in his room clues him in to crime scenes, and he's always showing up and telling the cops what to do. And he's usually right. But when Jacob's small hometown is rocked by a terrible murder, law enforcement comes to him. Jacob's behaviors are hallmark Asperger's, but they look a lot like guilt to the local police. Suddenly the Hunt family, who only want to fit in, are directly in the spotlight. For Jacob's mother, Emma, it's a brutal reminder of the intolerance and misunderstanding that always threaten her family. For his brother, Theo, it's another indication why nothing is normal because of Jacob. And over this small family, the soul-searing question looms: Did Jacob commit murder?" (from Amazon.com review)

VSR 2011 – 2012 SNOW PLOW ROUTES

by Bob Eddy & Doug Craib
Snow Removal Co-chairs



We have changed the snow plow routes for this winter to reflect more accurately how the plow equipment will be used and to make the routes a bit more equitable. The following snow plow routes will be used by our contractor TruGreen for the 2011-2012 season.

When snowfall total reaches 2 inches or greater, the streets will be plowed and the priority driveways will be plowed and sanded. When the storm is over, the first priority will be to clear the streets and the priority driveways.

Priority Driveways:

15 Sandstone, 21 Sandstone, 7 Stone Ridge, 23 Stone Ridge, 53/55 Stone Ridge, 61 Stone Ridge (Vol. FF), 10 Highland.

Plow Routes:

- ❖ Storm # 1: Start at Rockwell, then 3-61 Stone Ridge, then 1-33 Sandstone, then Gatecrest, then Landview, then 28-1 Highland.
- ❖ Storm # 2: Start at Landview, then Gatecrest, then 33-1 Sandstone, then 1-28 Highland, then 27-3 Stone Ridge, then Rockwell, then 61-24 Stone Ridge.
- ❖ Storm # 3: Start at 1-28 Highland, then 24-61 Stone Ridge, then Rockwell, then 1-33 Sandstone, then Gatecrest, then Landview, then 3-27 Stone Ridge.
- ❖ Storm # 4: Start at 61-3 Stone Ridge, then 1-28 Highland, then Gatecrest, then Landview, then 33-1 Sandstone, then Rockwell.

Snowplow Damage Reporting Procedure:

If your unit has been damaged by snow plowing – that is, garage, siding or fencing – please contact Elaine Devlin at Great North Property Management. Elaine's phone number is 1-800-221-0210. Each telephone report should be followed by written confirmation sent to her at Great North Property Management, 76 Northeastern Blvd. #28, Nashua, NH 03062, or email at elained@greatnorth.net.

We will request a snowplowing damage report from you at the end of the winter for snow plow damage to your landscaping, driveway, or sprinkler system.

DID YOU MISS THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION?

Please take the time to go back and read all the attachments to our Board of Trustee's Nov. 22 letter to all residents. There's a lot of very important information in those attachments that you may have missed. Particularly important is much of the insurance information and procedures for unit owners.

And in case you don't remember from year to year, the winter hints are excellent. Don't miss the helpful reminders of the important areas that need to be monitored on a continuing basis. Remember, as we age, so do our units. See the list of items to be checked.

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