



Quarry Bulletin

November – December, 2019



Singing out the Old & Welcoming in the New

2019 was a busy year and really highlighted the altruistic sentiment that we share in our village...

In November we celebrated “Thanks for Giving” with a wonderful Ham and Bean Supper. We thank Buzz and Nancy McArdle for organizing and hosting this event once again.



The clubhouse was packed and neighbors chatted while waiting for the home cooked ham, beans and all the delicious accoutrements. All of our chefs did an outstanding job, again!





*Westford Food Pantry President Tim Baker and wife Tamara also attended the Thanks for Giving dinner. They were genuinely impressed with the number of VSR attendees and the incredible donations. The collection brought in approximately **\$890 and 40 bags of groceries!***



Past president Ken Hyle, who now sits on the Food Pantry Board as Vice President, confirms that on average, in last 12 months, Westford’s food pantry averaged 224 visits per month and helped to support approximately 7300 individuals. This figure has grown over the past year. Additionally, there were 320 Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner bags distributed. Westford residents make up 70-75% of the weekly visitors with emergency, short and long-term needs for quality fresh and dry foods along with personal care and household items.

School groups and girl scouts also help to provide items in need. One local troop recently decided to provide “Birthday Bags” to go to children celebrating a birthday. Each bag was filled with cake mixes, cake pans, birthday candles, plates, napkins, and other items to celebrate each child's special day.



The pantry is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt volunteer organization. that accepts year round donations from the community including churches, schools, civic organizations and businesses. A partnership with Merrimack Valley Food Bank enables them to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy and proteins several times per month.



During the holidays the pantry provided 155 Westford families with 2 bags of food plus a \$50 gift certificate to Market Basket. At Christmas they supplied 160 families 2 bags each and the gift certificate while also trying to provide toys to 56 families, trying to match the family’s requests.

With a close look you will recognize Ken Hyle, Linda and Tom Barry and at the center Ed Kern, who recently moved from VSR, but is still involved at the Food Pantry.

Did you know?

A local group of fifth grade girl scouts visited our clubhouse in November to see our food collection box. They met with Ken and Sandy to talk about their “Bronze Project” to build **new** food pantry bins for the Mill Works, Roudenbush and **VSR!** These three new bins are almost completely built, and will be finished over the next month. The girls also plan to refurbish the Market Basket bin as well. They report they received many generous donations from local stores such as: Littleton Lumber, Ace Hardware and Aubuchon which helped to defray the cost of their project. Watch out for our new box and thank you girls!



And the Giving Keeps on Going!

Toys for Tots at VSR...

Once again Judy Premru and Doug Keele organized Toys for Tots at VSR. Doug reports that he delivered more than 70 toys from our collection to the Westford Police department. Once again folks were overwhelmed and commented on the quality of toys that villagers donated to the children.



Holiday thanks for Morins...

And again... residents donated generously to show thanks to the workers from Morins who keep our grounds looking beautiful year round. This year we collected \$1750.

Along with helping people in need

Thank you to all who donated food for the *volunteer workers* that remodeled the home of Robinson School Principal Kevin LaCoste. In addition to daily snacks, we also provided a Saturday lunch for 36 laborers who were working that day. They were all extremely grateful. Mr. LaCoste is now in his handicap accessible home and working hard to recover from his fall. You can read more about his accident and recovery by [clicking here](#).



The LaCoste Family

Looking Forward ~ submitted by Sandy Kelly

At the January Trustee meeting it was announced that John Gustin has become our new Condo Association Manager with Evergreen. Property Committee membership has now dropped from 12 to 4 members. Dick Martel has assumed sole role of Chair. A gradual transition is anticipated but it is likely that work previously done by committee volunteers will now shift to Evergreen.

Trustees have been updating VSR Policies & Procedures along with Rules and Regulation documents to be consistent with each other. The latest docs are always available at the Evergreen website. New revisions were made to the exercise room usage policy and the Waiver of Liability form has been updated to reflect the Policy.

Property Update ~ submitted by Dick Martel ***2020 Winter/Early Spring plans***

MORIN'S - Morin's is in the process of completing their winter small tree trimming and will be completing the tree program trimming, which was scheduled for 2019, while the ground is frozen and weather permits. They will also be cutting and removing the brush in the five retention ponds around the property.

ROOF WASHING - We will again be washing 18 more roofs to eliminate mildew and mold growth which increases the life of the shingles. This is planned for the first full week in April. All of Gatecrest, Landview, Rockwell, and 29 Sandstone will be done this year. We will be in touch with you all as the time approaches.

RIVER BIRCH PROGRAMAs you may know our River Birch Trees have been doing increasing damage to our walkways, driveways and lawns. A program was set up to remove these and replace the 6 in the front of units with smaller ornamental trees over 5 or 6 years. In the fall we were asked to look into the possibility of completing the entire program in the 2020 calendar year. The program otherwise has not changed but the savings to VSR are expected to be substantial. We have reached out to a number of vendors for quotes and are now ready to implement the program. During the months of February and March, 26 clusters of river birch trees will be removed and 20 of the stumps will be ground. This is being done when the ground is frozen to minimize damage to the lawn areas. You may be asked to move your autos if they are in the way. First the trees will be removed. This will take 2 or 3 days. Next, the stumps will be ground and the grind removed. In the lawn areas, the ground stump holes will be filled with loam, and mulch areas will be back filled with mulch. In the spring, Morin's will be repairing the lawn areas, which will include some surface grinding of roots where required and reseeding. Morin's will also be planting new ornamental trees in the front of 6 units once the irrigation is up and running. Watering bags will be used to supplement the irrigation for the remainder of the growing year. We will also address damaged pavement and walkways once the removal and planting are complete. The detail schedules will be posted in the club house as we move along.

Our Irrigation System at Stone Ridge

~ submitted by Bob Murphy

The Clubhouse irrigation zone, which is the largest in the system, is finally repaired, tested, and good to go next spring. The Clubhouse well and zone went down in mid August and the diagnosis and remediation was not a simple matter. In the end a solution was found. With the help of Skilling's well service, Morin's, and an electrician, it was determined that the local rodents were not our friends and had done a number on our wiring which in turn likely caused the damage to our well pump. The wiring has been repaired, upgraded and securely installed and a traditional type pump, like the one being replaced, was successfully installed on October 21. The system has been tested by Morin's and deemed to be operating properly. All Village zones have been winterized and shut down for the season and good to go in the spring.

The following are a few interesting statistics regarding some of the major components our irrigation system requires to function:

- ~ We have 89 zones throughout the Village With 1,779 sprinkler heads.
- ~ There are 5.25 miles of pipe servicing the zones with water and 21 miles of wire supply the electricity.
- ~ 4 Clocks control the timing and 3 wells with pumps supply water.

All we need now is spring so we can turn the system on again.

Architectural Standards Committee – (ASR) Chair Barbara Leary will be stepping down in September. *Following is a summary of the Chair Job description which Barbara submitted.*

ASR Job Description ~ The ASR Committee was established at VSR to maintain the integrity of the community property and its buildings, both inside and outside. Currently there are 8 members plus a Trustee who is the liaison to the Board. Monthly meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month as needed. Occasionally that date has to be changed due to scheduling conflicts. If there are no new projects proposed or concerns from unit owners, then a meeting does not take place.

The job of the Chairman is to be the point person for unit owners to contact when they are proposing a change to their unit, i.e. addition of a railing to the front deck, installation of a gas generator, change in size or replacement of a garage door, etc. There are specifications available for most of these changes online through our VSR website. In addition to the specifications, all the forms necessary to file for a particular change are located there. The Chair notifies the Committee when a meeting needs to take place and an agenda is sent out. After the meeting, the minutes are submitted to the Committee. At the next Trustee meeting, the liaison submits any projects that have been approved by the ASR to the Board for final ratification. If a submitted project has not been done before and is approved by the ASR, then a specification has to be written and approved by the Board of Trustees and sent to the volunteer who posts new specifications on the website. A summary for the year is done and is submitted for presentation at the Annual Meeting in September.

Village Meeting ~ submitted by Sandy Kelly



A few silent tears were shed when many curious residents and our own VSR veterans welcomed 71 year old William Shuttlesworth and his wife Patty to our clubhouse. William, a former school superintendent, told the story of his 7½ month hike across America to talk to veterans and raise public awareness about the health care, housing and economic issues that many face. He was inspired while working last year at a California park where many veterans were camping because

they were homeless and struggling with addiction. Starting at his home in Newburyport, and walking 25 miles a day, he ended at Vandenberg Air Force Base in Lompoc, California accompanied by a veterans motorcycle escort.

Word spread quickly across the U.S. as William approached different communities. People from all walks of life helped him, fed him and sheltered him. Veterans followed him along parts of his journey, and one fellow even drove for miles going after him because a storm was approaching. He drove William all the way back to his own home. It was a truly moving and memorable evening for those who attended. I think many of us felt we had a real hero in our midst. Thank you to Joyce Minosh for coordinating William's visit.

Future event in the making... Another resident is working on an idea for a Village Meeting with the Westford Fire Department Chief to bring a session on fire safety and benefits and use of a home fire extinguisher.. Food for thought, "do you have a home fire extinguisher?" Watch for details and if you have an idea or suggestion for a Village Meeting, send your idea to the Trustees for approval.

Fire Safety Suggestion:

~ Thank you to Peg Martin for this reminder

Smoke detectors have a 10 year life span. They can last longer of course, but when they start getting well past their age limit they can malfunction. If you still have the original smoke detectors in your unit it is time to have them replaced.

Email hacking:

As you may be aware there was a recent breach of one neighbor's email and as a result everyone in her contact list, including the VSR Blast email list, received what is known as a "spear phishing" attack. This is a common practice used by hackers and in this instance anyone who responded got a request to purchase \$300 worth of Visa Gift Cards to help our neighbor. This type of hack is often successful and lucrative for the hacker, which is another way of saying that people often respond and do what is asked. Don't be a target, if in doubt, ask. Seniors are frequently vulnerable.



Online Safety Tips...

Beware of a hacker's email by:

In our neighborhood instance both the first and second tips would

have made the reader suspicious. It is best to call the sender directly on the phone to verify or send a direct email using the correct address from your own contact list.

- sender addresses that don't match with the sender's identity
- language designed to induce a sense of urgency
- requests to break established procedures
- wording inconsistent with the company's usual terminology

Also, and with thanks to Harriet Shanzer:

Check your settings: Scan your account settings and check if anything was changed. Hackers could have your emails forwarded to them, which could allow them to receive login information and obtain your contacts' email addresses. If you use an email signature, check for any dubious changes that might have been made.

Remember to: Send an alert message to your contacts informing them that your email has been hacked and to ignore any suspicious message or post coming from you, or bearing your name, until you let them know that you have resolved the issue. Warn them about clicking on sent links as well.

Scan your computer and other devices for malware: Regularly run a malware scan using a program like Norton Antivirus or MacKeeper. When your account gets hacked, immediately check for malware, or remnants of malware that might be active in your computer. If your scans detected malware, change your password again and re-check your settings. Changing your passwords without cleaning your system might not lock hackers out of your accounts if you have malware sending them your new keys

Tired of getting too many catalogs? This tip is from Linda Barry:

Catalog Choice's mission is to stop junk mail for good. For the past 8 years, Catalog Choice has been passionate about helping protect natural resources and helping you simplify your life. Use this free service to cancel specific catalogs and other types of paper mail you no longer wish to receive. Catalog Choice is a non-profit organization unaffiliated with the mail marketing industry. You can sign up and learn more at:

<https://catalogchoice.org/>

Sneak Peek: Dick Coleman ~ Ever Working to Save our Environment



Board of Health Amends Food Regulations; Limits Plastic Straws in Restaurants

"environmental activist Richard Coleman, the resident responsible for banning plastic bags in 2019."

From westfordcatnews

"As it is now written there is nothing that says a food establishment could not distribute plastic straws," Coleman said to the board. "...We need to be doing everything possible to reduce our carbon footprint, and plastic straws are part of our plastic footprint."

Plastic straws add toxins to the environment as they break down. They have also been found inside the noses of turtles with the potential to kill the sea animals.

2019 went out with lots of well attended Social Committee events



Thanksgiving flower arranging with our talented neighbor Thelma Shoneman, a National Garden Club Master Judge.



Rocking around the Christmas tree with our fearless leaders Ruth Ann Dillon on the piano with Susan Hill and Dianne Marston leading the singalong.



You can't put this party crew down when Skip Giles throws a VSR holiday party, with a full catered dinner from Harts Turkey Farm, and Annie and the Orphans to entertain us. Pure awesomeness!



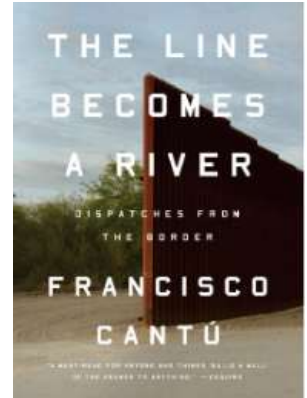
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020



BOOK CLUB NEWS
By *Dianne Marston*



On January 16 about 20 members of the VSR Book Club met to discuss *The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border* by Francisco Cantu. The discussion was one of the best we have had. This book is heartily recommended by the group.

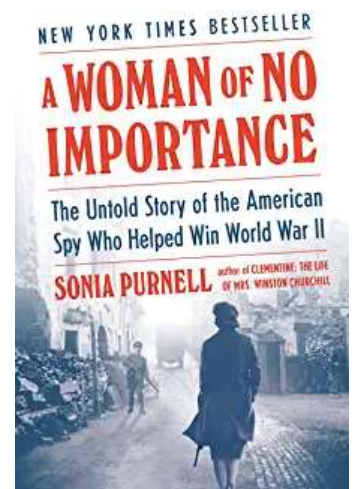


Our next meeting will be on February 27 when we will discuss *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict. This is "a powerful novel based on the incredible true story of the glamour icon and scientist whose groundbreaking invention revolutionized modern communication. Her beauty almost certainly saved her from the rising Nazi party and led to marriage with an Austrian arms dealer. Underestimated in everything else, she overheard the Third Reich's plans while at her husband's side, understanding more than anyone would guess. She devised a plan to flee in disguise from their castle, and the whirlwind escape landed her in Hollywood. She became Hedy Lamarr, screen star." [from the book cover]

A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win WWII by Sonia Purnell has been chosen for the April 9 meeting.

“An excellent biography... if Virginia Hall herself remains something of an enigma — a testament, perhaps, to the skills that allowed her to live in the shadows for so long — the extraordinary facts of her life are brought onto the page here with a well-judged balance of empathy and fine detail. This book is as riveting as any thriller, and as hard to put down” – *The New York Times Book Review*

“A gripping take... a compelling biography of a masterful spy, and a reminder of what can be done with a few brave people — and a little resistance.” — NPR.org



All are welcome to attend these meetings!!
Refreshments in the Clubhouse at 1:00. Discussion in the Library at 1:30.

Welcome to the Neighborhood!



Dorothy Gaumer and Fred Jean

Coming to 15 Gatecrest Road



Happy New Year from the VSR Knitting Group!
"What no yarn and needles?"

Check the online calendar for any changes
and times to verify upcoming events:

<https://www.villageatstoneridge.com/calendar/>

Upcoming Events at the Clubhouse

Social Committee Meetings are
2nd Mondays at 7:00 pm
Please join us!

Plan Ahead

February 9	Happy Hour
February 10	Social Committee
February 20	Property Committee
February 22	French Night
February 27	Book Group Discussion
March 4	Trivia Night
March 15	St. Pat's Happy Hour
March 24	Trustee Meeting
March 2	Kentucky Derby
April 9	Book Group Discussion



The Helping Hands Committee is updating our volunteer list. Sign up is in the clubhouse. If you wish to be removed from the past list please email Sandy.



QUARRY BULLETIN STAFF

Editor: Sandy Kelly
Proofreaders: Louise O'Donnell &
Frank Bashore

Contributors:

Linda Barry
Sandy Kelly
Barbara Leary
Dianne Marston
Dick Martel
Bob Murphy
Harriet Shanzer

Photo & Video Contributions :

Ken Hyle
Doug Keele
Barbara Leary
Debbie Rorke
Stephanie Tocci

*The Quarry Bulletin is a bi-monthly newsletter to help keep you informed about events and information at The Village at Stone Ridge.
Email articles and photos to the Quarry Bulletin*

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