



Quarry Bulletin

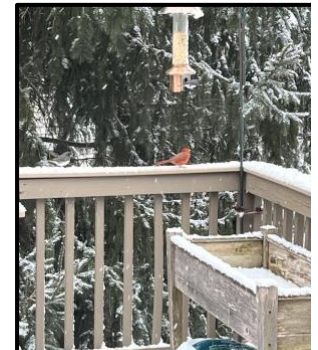
January - March, 2024



Welcome to 2024

The Northeast had its 10th warmest March since records began in 1895, with an average temperature of 39.8 degrees, 5.3 degrees above normal. Massachusetts also ranked among the second wettest Marches on record. (Source: National Centers for Environmental Information)

***What did the residents of VSR do to stay occupied?
We had fun, of course!***



***Social Committee Events
organized by Debbie Rorke
and Stephanie Tocci***

Appreciating Nature



Enjoying the Eclipse



***Each year the Village ladies enjoy a PJs and Movie Night.
80 FOR BRADY.
Is a movie inspired by the true story of best friends living life to their fullest by taking a wild trip to the 2017 Superbowl to see Tom Brady play.***

THE VILLAGE WANTS YOU...

~submitted by Carlene Craib



Are you new to the Village? Newly retired? Been here a while and feeling like you would like to be more involved? Have we got a deal for YOU!

As you might have gathered, VSR runs on volunteers. This has worked well for 20+ years, but lately it has seemed harder to find new folks to fill in as the OGs step back. Here are a few opportunities that might interest you.

In July we will begin the process of choosing two new Board members for three-year terms beginning in September. Serving on the Board is a very rewarding and interesting job. As you learn how the Village works you develop such an appreciation for all the work that has gone before and feel satisfaction in keeping us moving forward and initiating changes as needed. Whatever your background or interests, there is a place for you on the Board. The time commitment is not onerous because everyone works together to do the tasks thoughtfully and efficiently in a collegial atmosphere. We have recently been working on documentation of how we do our jobs on the Board and in Committees, and that effort will make it easier for new Board members to slide right into their positions. Please get in touch with me or any other Board member for more information about their roles and step up and volunteer when the opportunity comes!

We also have openings on the Architectural Standards Review Committee. The name might be daunting, but the Committee is a very important and interesting one to serve on. They have two main jobs, approving requests from residents for changes to their units and developing new specifications for novel requests. This group is committed to maintaining the beauty of the Village for everyone to enjoy.

How are your computer skills? Would you like to put them to use to help with Outreach in the Village? We are looking for a new *Quarry Bulletin* editor (Sandy Kelly will work with you in a transition period) and a new webmaster (Harriet Shanzer would like to hand over this job). It is a great opportunity for you to shape our face to the world as well as help with neighbor-to-neighbor communication. Call either of those ladies to offer your services.

Are you interested in how our wastewater treatment plant works? Important subject, for sure! That Committee would love to have you join them to learn the ins and outs (pun intended) as they prepare for a new Department of Environmental Protection certificate renewal. Call Marsha Wyman for more information. All Committees welcome new members. Check the list at the back of the Resident's Directory and make your choice!

Future Condo Budget Challenges

~ A Message from the Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee

Every year the Village has financial issues facing it. However, we believe that the Village will be facing more than the usual financial challenges in the coming years. We are a twenty-plus year-old complex looking at new roofs, road resurfacing, porches and deck repairs, and other items that will need repair or replacement at some point in the future. The question is not if but when.

The Village annually funds a Capital Reserve account by depositing monies into savings accounts (mostly Certificates of Deposit at local banks). These Capital Reserve funds are meant to cover the cost of capital asset replacements such as roofs, roads, decks, and other assets, when needed.

The Village conducts a Reserve Analysis Study (RAS) every five years to update the remaining useful lives of our assets as well as the estimated costs to replace them. The 2020 reserve study estimated roof replacements starting in 2032 and finishing in 2035. These dates are now in serious doubt. The Village was scheduled to have a RAS done in 2025, but we have recently moved the study to April 2024 because members of the Property and Finance Committees are concerned about the condition of VSR's aging roofs. We replaced four roofs several years ago, a roof in 2023, and have already signed contracts to replace four roofs in 2024. We expect the 2024 Reserve Study will give us a guideline on the timing and estimated costs of roof replacements going forward.

A second major concern is the cost of resurfacing of our roads which is currently planned for 2027. The 2024 Reserve Study will also give us a guideline on the road repairs. This projected cost may be increased from the 2020 estimated cost due to inflation's effect on the costs of contract labor and the petroleum products used in asphalt.

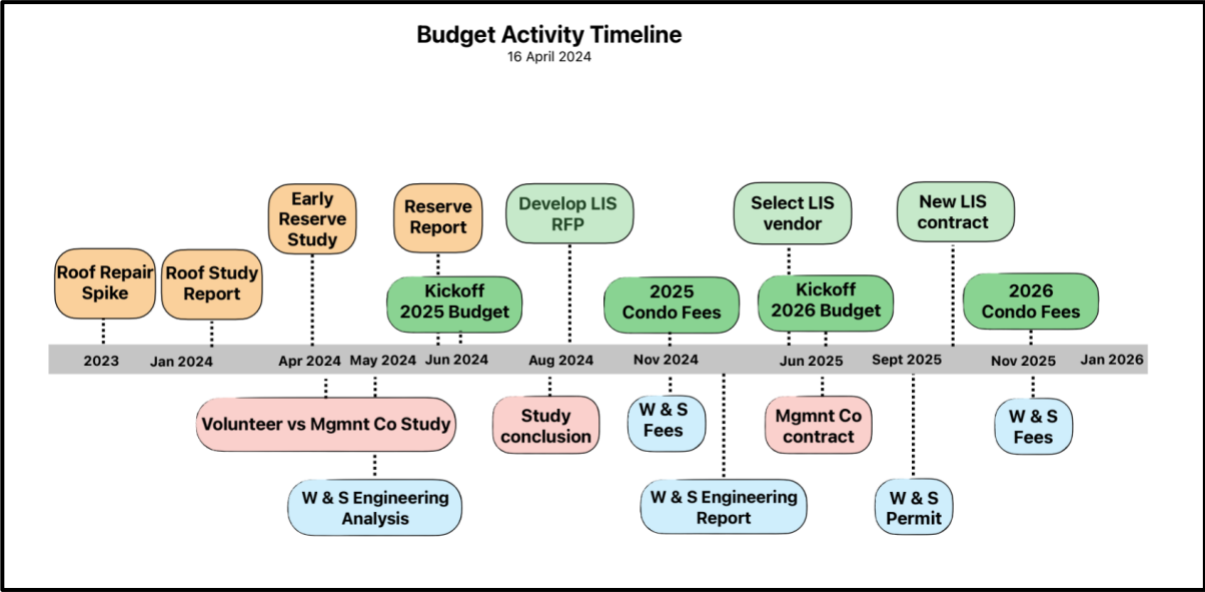
The upcoming Reserve Study report will also project when other capital assets such as driveways, siding, etc. need to be replaced and at what projected cost. Looking several years ahead, an additional concern is the future cost of landscape maintenance, irrigation, and snow removal. These contracts will end in the fall of 2025. We are fortunate that several years ago volunteers negotiated a 5-year fixed-fee contract. We hope to have something similar going forward, but we must expect cost increases. These two contracts are almost one third of our operating budget.

~ continued

Insurance costs have also gone up dramatically in the past two years, and we have no reason to expect these increases will not continue. The Village also has a fund for Water & Sewer expenses. Each year we establish a W&S fee based on these costs. This fund has two major expenses: the purchase of our water from Tyngsboro and the operation and maintenance of the wastewater treatment plant and its related facilities (at the clubhouse). The age of the equipment (for example, some of our grinder pumps are twenty-two years old) and inflation could result in higher W & S fees going forward.

Our Water & Sewer operations are governed by rules and regulations established by the Massachusetts DEP. Beginning later this year, we will have an outside engineering firm prepare the renewal license paperwork for our 2025 renewal. Based on the information we provide and inflation over the last five years, the DEP could require us to increase our replacement reserve. We are now fully funded with funds held in escrow through August 2026. If we must increase this DEP reserve in the future, it will come from interest earned on the fund's CDs and higher Water and Sewer fees.

As you can see, there are major financial challenges ahead. You can be assured that the Committees concerned with managing these are thinking about them and planning for how to meet these challenges. One way to keep costs down is to maintain our cadre of volunteers, and you will hear more about that in a few days in a letter and checklist from the Trustees. We will be keeping unit owners well informed over the coming months and welcome unit owner input on any of these topics.



Interested in Hanging a Flag on your home?

~submitted by Paul Currier

At the June 2023 Board of Trustees meeting a proposal was made requesting the Trustees to modify the regulations for displaying the American flag. The proposal was to allow unit owners the option to display the American flag on their units. The Trustees asked the Architectural Committee to draft a set of specifications/rules regulations for displaying the US flag on



units in the village. The ASR committee invited unit owners with an interest in helping draft the regulations to volunteer for the assignment. Paul Currier, Eli Demetri, and Ken Hyles volunteered.

The Flag proposal committee met through the summer/fall and presented a final flag display specification proposal to the Trustees in December 2023. The Trustees voted to accept the flag specification proposal at the January 2024 trustee meeting.

The ASR committee established two overarching guides. Flag displays must be identical so that VSR's uniformity of appearance is maintained. The flag displayed must be a current US flag.

The committee felt strongly the display of the American flag on our homes would embrace the ongoing goal of the village to beautify the community while maintaining continuity throughout.

Below are regulation highlights.

- US flags only will be displayed on homeowner's units.
- Displaying the flag is voluntary.
- Flags should be made in America.
- Flags may be displayed 365 days of the year or at the homeowner's discretion.
- Flags are flown from dawn to dusk. However, if a unit owner wishes to display the flag dusk to dawn the flag must be illuminated. Front porch lights are acceptable for illumination.
- Flags will be displayed at the front step landing/entry to the unit.
- There are specifications for each model unit in the regulations.
- ASR must approve any exceptions to the regulations prior to installation.
- The dimensions of the flag to be displayed are 3 ft X 5ft.
- The unit owner is responsible for cost of material & labor to install the flag.
- Unit owners are responsible for any damage caused to the unit as a result of the installation.
- Homeowners must complete the flag display request form found in ASR documents. Request forms must be approved by ASR prior to installation.

Catching the Eclipse On April 8th...
~ submitted by *Larry Leif*



2:40 PM



3:32 PM



4:16 PM

These are 3 of the 90 photos Larry Leif took in southern Maine during the 2.5 hour solar eclipse. The first photo was taken approximately 23 minutes after the moon began covering the sun. The second photo shows the maximum coverage of the sun, about 96%, at about 3:32 pm. The 3rd image was taken at 4:16 pm. One can see several sunspots, the so-called small darker spots on the sun, which are slightly cooler than the rest of the surface (3,500 degrees vs 5,800). It's an amazing coincidence that the sun which is over 400 times the diameter of the moon appears to be exactly the same size in the sky. If that were not the case, one would not see the beautiful corona of the sun visible during a total eclipse. You can see more of Larry's pictures at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fotofellow>

Recycle your Eclipse Sunglasses...
You can drop off the glasses until April 19 at the Town Manager's office at 55 Main Street. They will be donated to Astronomy Without Borders and be redistributed to Northern Africa and Middle East countries for 2027. Town Hall is open Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm.

Recycling in Westford...

Our recycling vendor is currently Waste Management. Recycling and trash must be at the curb no later than 7:00 am. NO Plastic Bags or packaging.

EMPTY, CLEAN & DRY: Empty all liquids, clean out any food residue, and ensure the material is dry before placing in curbside recycling bins. Bottles, cans, plastics, paper, and cardboard can be mixed together.

Cardboard must be flattened and cut into sizes no greater than 3 x 3-foot sections, bound with string or tape, or stacked inside another cardboard box not exceeding 3 x 3 ft.

Also, a **Household Hazardous Waste Collection** will be held on May 4th, 9 am – 1 pm at Westford Highway Garage, 28 North Street. Proof of Residency is required. Fees Apply (Checks Preferred).

Additional information can be found on Recyclopedia: www.RecycleSmartMA.org

Hope we see you there...

Why Put Native Plants in Your Garden?

MONDAY MAY 13 7PM AT THE CLUBHOUSE



- ◆ Come and marvel at the sights and learning from **Amy Meltzer**, co-chair of Steering Committee of Mass Pollinator Network
- ◆ Question and answer period
- ◆ Refreshments



The Environmental Resource Group welcomes new members. If interested contact Paula Wood or Nancy Till.

Did you know?

The USDA reports that there are more than 3500 species of bees alone increasing crop yields, and estimates that one out of every 3 bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators such as bees, butterflies, moths, birds, bats, beetles, and other insects?



Environmental
Resource Group



Info from
Paula Wood



New Logo
design by Jack
Gilmartin

Dining Out

~submitted by Paul Currier

For those looking to explore other Asian Cuisine restaurants in the area, try the Purple Bamboo.



Jayne & I travel Rte. 3A quite often and we pass the Purple Bamboo in North Billerica. Every time, we've noted the parking lot is often full. So, one night we decided to stop for a bite to eat.

The bar and lounge area are lively. There is a lot of socializing, playing Keno and watching sports on TVs above the bar. Off the bar and lounge area there is a separate dining area for those looking for a quieter experience. The dining area has booths for seating. The lounge area has high top tables and the bar for seating. We headed for the bar and luckily found two seats.

We ordered drinks immediately, while looking over the menu. The menu is huge! Appetizers of course with house specials, and beef & pork, chicken, seafood, Thai cuisine, Cantonese hot pot, Moo Shi plus they serve combo plates all day. Also, I must add the drink menu is extensive with many of the typical tropical drinks, popular martini's, beer, and wine. I had a Mai tai. Jayne had a Pina Colada. Special note: the drinks have a generous pour.

After socializing with our neighbors at the bar and enjoying our drinks, we ordered. My neighbor told me the Crab Rangoon is great as is the Mongolian beef. Jayne loves Crab Rangoon and ordered it as an appetizer with chicken Lo Mein as a main dish. I opted for a combo plate. I wanted to try a little of everything. I decided to go with a plate of chicken wings, beef teriyaki skewer(s), Crab Rangoon and pork fried rice. The plate was massive with (3) Crab Rangoon & chicken wings, (2) beef teriyaki skewers with the fried rice. We both thought the food was great.

Purple Bamboo is located at
265 Boston Rd, North Billerica, Ma.
978-294-8994 or 978-877-5176

And..check out the...
Dam Grill 142 Main
St. Pepperell, Ma. (978) 650-1122
Submitted by Judy Culver



Rick & I recently visited Dam Grill in Pepperell for a late breakfast. Formerly Charlotte's Cozy Grill, we had eaten there frequently and were disappointed when it closed. Under the new owners it reopened with breakfast, lunch grill and dinner. Breakfast was very good, the coffee cups are huge, and the décor has been updated. Prices are a bit higher than in the past but what isn't?

They have long tables for large parties, regular tables and a few bar stools. The screened room in back is open during nice weather and the ice cream window will also be open for rail-trail bikers and other ice cream fans.

Open for Lunch, Dinner, Late Night and Brunch on the Weekends
Open: Sun: 8-2, Tue - Thu: 11:30-9:00, Fri: 11:30-10, Sat: 8-10



BOOK CLUB NEWS

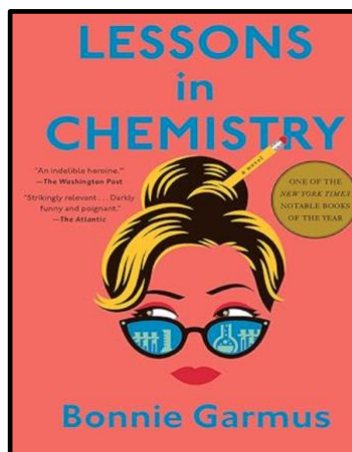
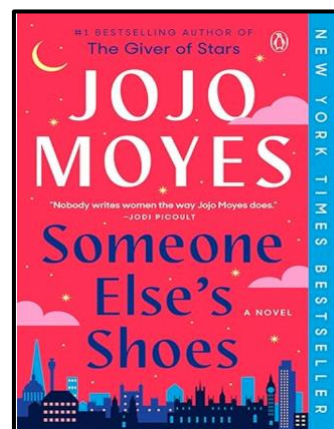
By Dianne Marston



Our VSR Book Club meets in the Clubhouse. If you would like to join us, our refreshments and socializing begin at 1:00, followed by our book discussion in the Library at 1:30.

The April 18th meeting will feature *Someone Else's Shoes* by JoJo Moyes. The question to be answered is, "Who are you when you are forced to walk in someone else's shoes?" Two very different women are featured in this story. It is a book about these two who swap lives and shoes after a mix-up.

"Full of Jojo Moyes's signature humor, brilliant storytelling, and warmth, this is a moving, heartfelt story about how, for any of us, just one little thing can suddenly change everything." [from the book cover]



On May 30 we will discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. "Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an average woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results. But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single

mother but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ("combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride") proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist." [book cover]

As always, all Villagers are welcome to attend!
A special welcome goes out to those who are new to the Village.



***Our Volunteers Make
a Difference and
help us save \$\$\$\$
You can help too!***

FOR INFORMATION

All Committees welcome new members.
Check the list at the back of the Resident's
Directory and make your choice!

~ Upcoming Events ~

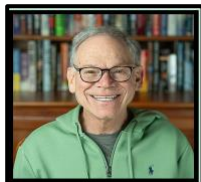
*(some events require sign-up – watch the
mailroom bulletin board)*

- April 30 Taco Tuesday
- May 13 Environmental Group
- May 21 Social Committee Meeting
- May 27 Memorial Day Cookout
- June 5 Men's Steak & Ale Night
- June 5 Ladies Night out at Bamboo
- June 9 Coffee & Donuts at the Quarry
- July 4 Ice Cream Social
- July 17 Simple Summer Supper

*Events are also listed on the calendar at
villageatstoneridge.com*

Our resident photographer Larry Lief has updated the Village Photo Directory recently with about 25 new photos. Larry created the original directory which has become a popular reference, especially for new residents. Can't remember somebody's name? Take a look. You can find it on our webpage under resources. The directory is password protected for VSR privacy. If you need the password contact ms.sandyk@gmail.com. If you weren't able to make the in person photoshoot you can email a photo to Larry Lief at kbklarry@gmail.com. When Larry receives more photos he will update the directory again.

"Thank you Larry"



***Who should you call in an
EMERGENCY?***

***Evergreen Management at
(800) 973-4300 or (603) 622-7000***

***If a Grinder Pump Alarm goes off or
a Red Light is on, this is considered an
EMERGENCY***

Call:

***Evergreen Management at
(800) 973-4300 or (603) 622-7000***

AND

***Marsha Wyman
(978) 857-9200***

Evergreen Management Group

(603) 622-7000

Monday – Thursday 8:30 - 5:00

Friday 9:00 - 3:00

John Gustin - Association Manager

jgustin@evergreenmgt.com

Donna Bettez - Association Administrator

dbettez@evergreenmgt.com

QUARRY BULLETIN

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*The Quarry Bulletin is now a quarterly
newsletter to help keep you informed about
events and information at The Village at
Stone Ridge.*

*Email articles and photos to
QuarryBulletin@gmail.com*

Volume 21 Issue 1