

THE LARK

January-February 2024 LARK

Meadowhill.net



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year everyone! I hope all have had a joyous and happy holiday season with time with loved ones. For me, the time is one of rest and reflection, spending time with my family, creating memories, laughing, and joy for my gifts that can't be bought at a store or on Amazon – friends and family.

Reflection brings the realization of how much the community has accomplished in 2023. We completed two major projects – the rebuilding of Units 6 and 10 with the return of our displaced residents and the completion of the aluminum wiring project. The supply chain issues of each project delayed its completion until the end of the year and put us under stress with payments of the two Special Assessments coming simultaneously. The strength of the Meadow Hill community shined through as the response to the financial obligations was met, and the projects were to be closed out at the end of December.

We also completed the final leg of updating our Condo Documents with the completion of the Rules and Regulations in August. The new rules are in effect, and we have started the annual inspection of high-risk maintenance items, which was noticed to the community in a mailing in December.

A Summary of the Rules will be developed and distributed to all Unit Owners. One key area is the Do's and Don'ts of what each Unit Owner can do in the four-foot area of their unit. The Board provided a "grace period" in 2023 with the understanding that 2024 would look for compliance with the Rules and Regulations, including Section 21, which covers the planting criteria in the four-foot area.

A significant majority of residents approved our 2024 Annual Budget. The approved budget is a significant milestone for Meadow Hill as it committed a path forward of investing in the future of Meadow Hill to fund our aging infrastructure and invest in improvements to maintain the curb appeal and attractiveness of Meadow Hill to increase our property values. Proper funding of our Operating Budget and Reserves is essential to achieving the path forward. The 15.4% increase in HOA fees for 2024 will allow us adequate budgeting for our Operating Account to pay our expenses without tapping into our savings as we have been forced to do the last four years where higher costs from inflation were not offset by HOA fees adequate to cover those increased costs. Coupon books for the HOA fees and Special Assessments for the Wiring project for those who chose the financing option were sent out at the end of December. Please get in touch with Imagineers if you have questions about the Coupon Books or making payments.

2024 will continue to be busy as we work on key short and long-term items to invest in the community. As an example, we will be looking for opportunities to increase revenue with the sale of the Hollister House. We will implement a Risk Management Committee to develop strategies to manage our risk and establish the Meadow Hill Community as a favorable risk to the insurance companies. A Capital Budget Committee working directly with the Long-Term Committee will be tasked with developing a strategy to replenish our Reserves and to define strategies for prioritizing Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

In closing, I thank the community for their trust in the Board as we navigated 2023. I thank my fellow Board members – current and past, the Committees, and all the volunteers who have sacrificed time, expertise, and love for Meadow Hill to create the community it is. We are "Better Together," and that spirit of commitment, pride, and sacrifice makes Meadow Hill a special place to live. Thank you all.

Happy New Year!

Connie Abbott: One Hundred Years In A Nutshell



It was a joy to visit with Connie and reminisce over her past 100 years! Yes, coming up on January 19th she will be a centenarian. One can see how her amazing energy comes from pursuing her varied interests and fulfilling her many dreams. As she admits, the body can be a problem, but it is clear that her mind never falters! Connie can clearly and passionately recall life experiences from childhood through present day. How many of us can say that?

After graduation Connie married and the couple decided to explore life on the west coast - Pasadena, CA. They were there for just a year and longed to return to the color and seasons of the East Coast. Luckily in 1949 her husband's business prospects brought them back to settle on Long Island.

She can remember back to her birthplace of Maplewood, NJ (just 13 mi from my home town of Clifton). At just 3 yrs old she fondly recalls the open space and farmlands from that time period. Growing up as an only child was lonely (as I can also relate). The family moved to Jamestown, NY where she lived until college (Syracuse as a Psych major).

That seemed to be a turning point for Connie, offering new opportunities. They both loved the architecture of the old New England homes and buildings. They researched and planned their future, building a business encompassing those styles. Glastonbury had the authenticity she loved, and so they settled here where, in 1950 Leslie, her only daughter, was born. Over the years the family grew to 2 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

Connie built, remodeled and decorated 100 houses from 1960-1984, when she built condos in the center of town. A bit of a coincidence, 100 houses and 100 year birthday! During that time she also raised horses, had a riding school and a saddle shop! On Saturdays she served coffee and donuts at the successful shop on Foote Rd, always decorated seasonally. One busy lady. Husband #2 was part of that time period.

She actually retired (if you can call it that) in 1965 and lived right here at 1550 Main St. From then on she was consulted on the future site for Meadow Hill. Of course Connie threw herself into the project, starting with the renovation of Hollister House for which she received the esteemed Heritage Award. Meadow Hill became a reality. Connie was given carte blanche; encompassing all of her ideas into making Meadow Hill the prime condominium complex it is today. She loved being her own boss, as all other principals involved trusted her talent implicitly. Tune in for a future article in The Lark detailing Connie's history of Meadow Hill.

The creativity and stamina Connie brings to her own life, she abundantly shares with others. She considers her friends her extended family and support system. Where will the next hundred years lead her? Thank you, Connie. You are an inspiration for a life well lived.

Meadow Hill has its share of centenarians. The AARP Bulletin (11/23) calls those individuals Super Agers. Here are their 7 Secrets of the Super Agers. Look for the full description in that article.

- Super Agers control their blood sugar and blood pressure.
- Super Agers talk to their friends - a lot.
- Super Agers avoid stress and prioritize mental health.
- Super Agers prioritize sleep.
- Super Agers protect their vision and hearing.
- Super Agers don't exercise more, but they push themselves physically.
- Super Agers do more than Wordle.

Let's all get on board! By Robyn Castano



Introducing Board Member Donna Whalen



We want you to meet Donna Whalen, our new Board member. She is Chairwoman of Meadow Hill's Social Committee and the perfect person for the job. Her middle name should be "Fun." Spend some time with Donna and you will suddenly be in a very good mood.

Donna and her husband John moved into Unit 66 in October 2021 after living in the Berkshires for 45 years.

She grew up in Seymour, Connecticut in a happy sociable family. In the Berkshires, Donna successfully taught 4th grade for 34 years which she loved. She was also President of the Teachers' Union. Donna has a degree in history from St. Michaels College in Vermont and a Masters Degree in Education from Westfield State University in Massachusetts. She and John have two accomplished daughters and two grandsons, age 10 and 7.

Donna and John stay active, walking at least two miles on a regular basis, playing golf and pickleball. Of course, Donna greatly enjoys giving parties.

Much of the summer is spent at their cottage in Narragansett, Rhode Island. They also spend some time in South Carolina at North Myrtle Beach.

We're confident that Donna will organize and support our social gatherings with joy and enthusiasm.

By Diane Sikorsky

Paddling the Length of the Connecticut River

John Vollinger (deceased) was a long-time resident of Meadow Hill. His son, Gary Vollinger, now owns his father's unit at 97 Hollister Way N. Last year, Gary, who is in his 70's, accomplished an incredible feat.

First, he made his own kayak using ancient methods and modern materials. The result was a craft weighing only 25 pounds, using red cedar, white ash and nylon cloth with resin. Gary then paddled his creation the entire length of the Connecticut River, from northern Vermont near Canada, all the way to the river's mouth in Old Lyme, CT. The trip was 275 miles long and took twelve days.

There are several places along the river where one has to portage, carrying your boat and all your gear. One portage required walking with his boat, paddles and gear for three miles before getting back in the river. His gear included sleeping tent, food, cooking equipment, clothes, light, etc.

Gary is an average-size man but he must be in excellent condition to have managed such a trip. He states that he met friendly people along the way. Inspired??

By Diane Sikorsky



Key Points from Transitional Living Seminar

Our October Senior Transitional Living Seminar was packed with great information. Here are some great tips from our speaker Liz Cornish, Senior Care Consultant, and owner of New Season in Life (newseasoninlife.com).

Don't wait: Even if you have no intention of moving from Meadow Hill, life sometimes takes us in unexpected directions. An illness, a fall or no longer wanting to care for the daily tasks of owning your own home. Don't wait until options are out of your control. Do your research now and be prepared. You'll have peace of mind knowing whatever comes your way – you know what direction you're headed.

Things you can do now: Start purging items you no longer need or want. If you're saving Great Aunt Hilda's table for your daughter, ask her if she wants it and give it to her now. Why hold onto these things when someone else can be enjoying them now? It seems like an overwhelming task, but one drawer, one closet at a time will help. Hand down, give away, throw away, donate.

Take a step: Look into some of the living options and take a tour. Remember that a salesperson will be showing you all the upsides of their community. But talk to some of the residents as you are walking around – they may give the advantages and possible disadvantages of their community.

Add it up: Look at your finances. Add up everything you pay now, that may be included in other living options. Many communities include 3 meals a day, snacks and beverages, utilities, internet, housekeeping, transportation and so much more. Many have movie theatres, gyms, hair salons (all under one roof) – what are you currently paying for these today?

The time is now, while you are healthy, can do the work and research to put you in the driver's seat of your future. If you need help, please contact Liz Cornish at 860-841-9504 or liz.cornish@newseasoninlife.com. Her services are free.

By Bonnie Brooks

Cutting the Cord on Cable TV

Thinking about finding an alternative to cable TV but not sure where to start? After thinking about it for a year, we just made the move, and it was a lot easier than I expected. Here are some of the things we learned from our experience.

You need to understand your reasons for wanting to give up cable. For us, we felt like we were getting very little value for our cable dollar. Like many people, the vast majority of our viewing was streamed content on services like Netflix, Prime Video and Hulu. Our “live” viewing (via cable) consisted mostly of local/national network news and some live sporting events. For \$57 per month, our cable service provided us with a handful of basic network channels and a bunch of non-English options that had little value to us. Our goal was to replace the meager cable offering with a service that would bring us a wider array of live channels over our wi-fi network instead of the cable. There are lots of these services, such as YouTube TV, Hulu plus Live, Fubo TV and many more. And we wanted to do this without substantially increasing our monthly bill.

One reason we hesitated is that, in the past, cable companies would often raise your rate for internet service if you unbundled it from other components, like cable TV or landline phone service. I was pleased to find that our provider offered a very reasonable internet-only price, due in part to the fact we moved to a lower internet speed. There are many internet providers in this area offering attractive internet-only prices, though not all of them are available at Meadow Hill. Oddly enough, one provider was available at our neighbor’s unit, but not ours, so you have to really check availability for your exact address.

In the end, we settled on 100 mbps speed and Hulu plus Live for streaming live TV. And we continue to use Netflix and Prime for other streaming content. The bottom line is that we now have many more live channels to choose from, and we can access them on to up to 2 TVs located anywhere in the house, since the TV is not tethered to a physical cable or cable box. The viewing experience has been smooth and blip-free and our overall cost is actually a bit lower than we were paying with cable.

If you’re considering such a move, here are some things to think about:

- Evaluate how much internet speed you really need. We downgraded from 250 mbps to 100, which easily runs 2 smartphones, 2 TVs, a laptop and a couple of smart speakers. Don’t buy more than you need. You can always upgrade if you need more.
- When looking at price, compare apples to apples. For example, we would pay for Netflix and Prime regardless of our live TV option, so they didn’t really factor into the price equation. But, since we were already paying for a Hulu/Disney+ bundle, it was cheaper to add the Hulu live TV component to that bundle than to source the live component from another service like YouTube TV.
- Nothing is irreversible. If you try streaming and don’t like it, your cable company will almost certainly welcome you (and your checkbook) back with open arms (but always check with them first, just to be sure about any “hidden” costs...).

By Mike Proulx

2024 Men’s Golf League



If you’re interested in joining our newly formed golf league, contact us. Play will begin in April. For Information contact:

John Whalen
413-429-6324
Jmwhyte@aol.com
or
Ron King
860-983-1685
cpgking@gmail.com

New Traffic Requirements on Dogwood Lane

In an effort to reduce the through traffic and increase safety for walking residents, new signage has been installed at each end of Dogwood Lane, the one-lane portion of Hollister Way West at the western end of the MH campus. Your cooperation in observing the new posted requirements is appreciated.



Holiday Party Was A Hit

MH kicked off the holiday season in style with a delightful dinner party at the clubhouse. About 62 guests enjoyed a delicious (and gluten free) meal catered by Emily's Catering Group, along with loads of desserts provided by attendees. Caroline Rhoades' daughter Delaney set the mood with holiday music played on the piano. Holiday-themed decorations, music, trivia and door prizes enhanced the festivities and added to the fun. Kudos to Social Chair Donna Whalen and her team for a great job!

COMMUNITY EVENTS



The [Sharing Tree](#) is a quarterly publication that is packed with important information about Glastonbury Senior Center events, educational courses, travel and much more.



Check it out!!

For **Library Events** click [here](#).

MEADOW HILL RESIDENT NOTES

Welcome New Residents: We welcome two new residents: Leslie Bernstein and her dog, Bailey in unit 108, phone 860-303-1980; and Janice and Tom Spada and their dog, Simba in unit 170, phone 860-301-2452. Please join in giving them a warm welcome. We hope they will enjoy our community, all its opportunities and amenities

Condolences go out to Roni Rottner and family on the loss of her husband Les.

Crafts and Needlework - If you enjoy knitting or crocheting and enjoy giving items to those in need, please contact Linda Fillion at 860-559-5504 for details. Items such as baby hats, booties, lap robes and prayer shawls are really appreciated by Middlesex Hospital.

MH Book Club - meets the first Tuesday of every month at 1:30 at the clubhouse.

- January 2: [The Horse Whisperer](#) by Nicholas Evans
- February 6: [Beyond This Harbor: Adventurous Tales of the Heart](#) by Rose Styron.

Lark Submissions: Please contact Gene Flynn at 860-212-7347 for more information on submitting articles and notices.

Hollister House -closed until further notice.

Car for sale: 2007 Lexus SC430, black, hardtop convertible, 94000 miles. Please call Ron King if interested 860-983-1685

Key Dates

January	February	
1 - New Year's Day	1 - Black History Month begins	14 - Ash Wednesday
15 - Martin Luther King Day	2 - Groundhog Day	19 - President's Day
17 - Board Meeting	11 - Super Bowl	21 - Board Meeting
27 - International Holocaust Remembrance Day	14 - Valentine's Day	29 - Extra Day for Leap Year!

MEADOW HILL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS



Advisory committees play an important role in Meadow Hill. They provide information and work that improves Meadow Hill beyond what the Board and Manager can do without assistance. Below are the committee chairs, liaisons from the Board and Committee members. Let's all thank these community members for their work to make Meadow Hill a great place to call home. Board president is Ex Officio on all committees.

Budget: Brenda Berk, Treasurer and Chair, Larry Abbott, Toni Dolan, Connie Liscomb, Deb Wellington.

Communications/Welcoming: Gene Flynn, Chair, Mike Proulx, Denise Weeks, Robyn Castano, Suz Fields, Diane Sikorsky, Luther Weeks, Board Liaison, Jim Fuda.

Grounds: Mike Proulx, Chair, Harris Berloe, Dick Brimley, Dave Fillion, Patti McNamara, Kathy McCarthy-Proulx, Peter Rothfarb, Susan Wallace, Judith Woodward; Board liaison – Ron King.

Long Term Planning Committee: Jim Fuda, President and Chair, Larry Abbot, Frank Cisz, David Faxon, David Hogan, Ed Litke, Reg Wellington.

Maintenance and Amenities: Walter Brownsword, Director and Chair, Bob Kolwitz, Roger Bouchard, Ray Dolan, Vin Liscomb, Eileen Swenson.

Stables, Greenhouse, Garden as subcommittee: Darien Covert.

Social: Donna Whalen, Secretary and Chair, Hazel Brimley, Jane Marcin.

Trees: Gene Flynn, (Chair), Bob Kolwicz, Roger Bouchard, Board Liaison, Ron King

Clubhouse Rental: Danielle Merritt, Imagineers

Future Committees:

Nominating

Finance

Risk Management/Insurance

MANAGEMENT COMPANY

IMAGINEERS, LLC
635 Farmington Ave.
Hartford, CT 06105

Property Manager: Sheila Duncan
860-768-3419

Asst: Property Manager: Danielle Merritt
860-768-3419

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
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860-729-0354

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Deb Wellington
860-306-4502

SECRETARY
Donna Whalen
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TREASURER
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860-463-8262

DIRECTOR
Walter Brownsword
860-633-0207

DIRECTOR
Ron King
860-983-1685

DIRECTOR
Paul Jenkins
860-990-3302

To Email Management staff or Board Member click on <https://tinyurl.com/MHillContacts>

BOARD MEETINGS

Monthly Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 1:30pm.

REGULAR MEETING
Jan 17 and Feb 21
at 1:30 PM
AT THE CLUBHOUSE

Current and previous meeting minutes can be found at www.meadowhill.net

Hard copy minutes are no longer available at the clubhouse due to the coronavirus.

Lark Editor: Mike Proulx; Lark Designer: Denise Weeks