



Message from the President

Yesterday my brother sent a copy of a letter my wife-to-be sent him just before our wedding in 1978. Such optimism — and generally vindicated over 41 years! Then last night we saw *A Doll's House, Part II* at Long Wharf. Whew! Safe to say that we've had a better run than Nora and Torvald Helmer, and that our era is more conducive to a satisfying marriage than 19th century Denmark's.



Nora's prediction that marriage was on its way out was both overbroad and impatient, but families differ in many ways from what they were for our parents and grandparents. For example, my grandmother was born in 1872, Ibsen's era, married once and lost her husband in his 50s. She outlived him by 20 years and spent those years (indeed her whole life) within five miles of her children and grandchildren. Such a life is rare in New Haven in 2019. I've found some interesting studies that show this changing state of familial ties generally.

This is where HomeHaven comes in. There are three groups of people who can benefit from membership: married, formerly married, and single.

The first group has seen its children grow and move along, many to distant locales. Retirement further exacerbates isolation, which is likely more acute for the widowed and divorced, and perhaps most acute for those who have never married. Even those who prefer solitude need human contact and assistance in old age. It is that which HomeHaven addresses.

Most of us get quite set in our ways by the onset of our seventh decade and may not be looking for a singles cruise or other radical changes in our lifestyle or households. But "Loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, making it even more dangerous than obesity," according to Douglas Nemecek, MD, Cigna's chief medical officer for behavioral health. The antidote is companionship, and HomeHaven provides that for all three groups.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3293163/>

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2013/04/marriage>

Fred

Fred O'Brien

IN THIS ISSUE:

Meet Our Members	page 3
Advance Directives	page 4
Local Lawyer List Project	page 5
Health Matters	page 6
Activities & Village News	page 7
Computer Connection	page 8
Events	pages 8 & 9

**Please join us for
HomeHaven's Annual
Summer Picnic**

**Wednesday, June 19, 5-7 PM
Edgerton Park**

See page 9 for details.

HOMEHAVEN SEEKS A PART-TIME MEMBERSHIP AND PROGRAM MANAGER!

We seek an energetic, smart, warm-hearted individual to interact with our members, staff activities, and work cooperatively with our office administrator and executive director. The position requires excellent communication, interpersonal and time-management skills, attention to detail and accuracy, and computer and web proficiency. Please send a cover letter and resume to info@homehavenvillages.org.

VILLAGE VERSE The Emerald Ash Borer

They came on a shipping crate made of hard wood,
From an ash tree in Asia, a transfer not good!
Larvae and eggs that had bored through its bark
Had landed in Michigan, and the fallout was stark.

The Emerald Ash Borer has spread to all states.
Including our own where it now replicates
In all of our ash trees, destroying their soul,
Avoiding all efforts and means of control.

We had a huge ash in our yard near the house,
Injected it yearly in hopes we could douse
The larvae within with a final death blow.
But sadly they proved an unbeatable foe.

So we took our tree down at major expense.
But the problem for others remains immense,
For all ash will be gone, killed by a borer,
Unless science can find a lethal restorer.

— Bob Gifford, Doctor of Doggerel

HomeHaven News

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HomeHaven's Mission Statement

We help our members remain active, independent, and productive as they grow older in the comfort of their homes and communities. We provide social and educational activities, companionship, volunteer opportunities and services, and referrals to qualified professionals.

PLEASE JOIN US!

For information, call the
HomeHaven office at 203.776.7378
email info@homehavenvillages.org
or stop in at
291 Whitney Avenue, Suite 103
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

*"The best way to find yourself, is to lose
yourself in the service of others."*

- Mohandas Gandhi

... AT YOUR SERVICE!

In the past three months, HomeHaven provided members with:

- 69 rides by volunteer drivers
- 28 visits by volunteer visitors
- 23 computer assists by volunteer computer helpers (including two smartphone workshops)
- 27 referrals to volunteers or vetted providers for household help

Note: Members often call a service provider more than once without informing the office. You can help us keep records by always letting us know each time you use a provider we recommended. ***It's important!!***

Look for monthly reports giving rolling three-month totals.

MEET OUR MEMBERS: A Conversation with Peggy and Traugott Lawler

by Patty Langdon



Peggy and Traugott Lawler live on Swarthmore Street in Hamden, a street of beautiful houses by “Mrs.” Washburn, as the neighbors used to call her. She became Alice Washburn after Martha Yellig’s graduate study research educated the neighborhood about this woman who built such elegant homes in the 1920s. The Lawlers had been to a dinner party in the house when it was owned by Sterling Professor of English Louis Martz and, shortly after Traugott had been invited to return to Yale from Northwestern as a full professor, they got a call from Professor Martz saying he was leaving Hamden and suggesting they buy his house. Although they carried two mortgages for a year, the Lawlers have never looked back. The house is gorgeous and comfortable, in a neighborhood full of friends and good schools and close to Yale, where Traugott goes in to his office every day. He had just been to Yale’s graduation the day before our interview; an honorary degree recipient happened to say to him as he passed by, “Thank you for wearing your Harvard robe.” That turned out to be Lawrence S. Bacow, president of Harvard, where Traugott received his PhD in 1966.

Peggy met Traugott when she was 18 and rooming at Marymount College with his sister — he was 17 and a senior in high school. They started dating several years later and married right after Traugott’s graduation from Holy Cross. He was in the NROTC during college and they spent three years in the Marine Corps at Camp Pendelton in California. We agreed it was a good way to start a marriage. The Lawlers had three children when they were in their 20’s, and a fourth eight years later;

they have eight grandchildren. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last summer with a family party at their house on Cape Cod with a Big Game Day. A Wiffle-ball home-run derby was the hit of the party, especially after two of their grandsons produced individual “walk up” music from their iPhones as each person came to bat. The family gathers every summer at the Lawlers’ 1758 Cape Cod house.

The Lawlers have quite a history with Yale. They first came in 1966, went to Northwestern in 1972, and returned to Yale in 1981. From 1986 to 1995 they were co-masters of Ezra Stiles College, where they still host “their” classes during reunion weekends. A medievalist, Traugott retired in 2005 but still teaches in the Yale Alumni College where, as Peggy noted, he has a following. He also teaches occasionally in Yale College and has recently published volume four of the *Penn Commentary on Piers Plowman*, “a font of knowledge, critical, historical, literary, theological, and bibliographical,” as one review put it. He has led many Yale alumni trips to various parts of the UK and Ireland and elsewhere. He is an avid golfer and enjoys playing with his brothers and his children at the two public courses near their summer house in East Dennis.

Peggy is an artist with many genres. It all started once her youngest child was in school. She wanted to try many forms, and she certainly has: drawing, watercolor (with Lora-Lee Bell and Graziella del Solodow), pottery, pastels, oil painting, and “fast sketching” (which she uses to put together travel books with her photos, paintings, and notes). But for the last few years her passion has been weaving. She enjoys working with her grandchildren on various artistic endeavors. There is an “art room” in their house on Cape Cod, where works by all her grandchildren are displayed. Traugott and Peggy joined HomeHaven in 2016 and enjoy many of the activities whenever they are in town.

LINKING UP

*Links to items of interest recommended
by newsletter readers. We welcome your comments
about these links and your suggestions for others.*

An article from the *New York Times*, by Paula Span: “Many Americans Will Need Long-Term Care. Most Won’t Be Able to Afford It”: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/10/health/assisted-living-costs-elderly.html>

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES – A HomeHaven PPP* Presentation

by Jane Jervis

On April 25, about 35 HomeHaveners joined Attorney Ingi-Mai Loorand for a conversation about Advance Directives and other essential documents that will help you make your wishes about your own future care known. Ingi divided the documents into two categories:

- Those that should be given to your primary care physician, and
- Those that should be given to your Health Care Representative.

All should be discussed with your spouse, children, and significant others.

Documents for your primary care physician include:

- An Advance Directive or Living Will that instructs physicians and caregivers about what kind of treatment you wish to have if you are unable to give consent or instruction, and especially if you wish to end futile life-sustaining treatment.
- Appointment of a Health Care Representative, whom you authorize to make health care decisions for you if you are incapacitated.

These documents are essential to making sure that your wishes are carried out, and they can also protect your caregivers if you want them **not** to give you every possible treatment or to keep you alive without consideration of the financial, emotional, or physical costs.

Ingi shared various forms which can be used to memorialize wishes about your care in the event of disability or at the end of life, including forms titled Medical Directive, Quality of Life Statement, and Health Directive for Dementia. However, any written statement prepared by you can be helpful to your Representative, providing guidance in making difficult decisions for you about your care.

In response to questions, Ingi clarified that a Do Not Resuscitate Order (“DNR”) is a medical order that can be issued only by a physician – not by you or through your lawyer – and only if medically appropriate. Connecticut has also implemented a new medical form called MOLST (Medical Orders for Life Sustaining

Treatment) which is also available only through a physician and only for individuals who are becoming increasingly frail or are approaching the end of a life-threatening illness. The form stays with you and sets out specific orders concerning the types of medical interventions you want (or don’t want), including CPR, ventilation, and hospitalization. Connecticut law requires health care providers to honor the DNR bracelet and the MOLST form. Ingi emphasized that if 911 is called for you, the emergency responders must attempt resuscitation and transport you to an emergency room unless you have a DNR bracelet or a MOLST form immediately available.

Most important, Ingi emphasized that conversations about end of life wishes should be ongoing. She encourages us to take the lead in starting and continuing these conversations with doctors and those nearest and dearest to us. Take charge! Let people know your wishes and that you want your wishes to be honored.

NOTE: Copies of these documents and instructions for their use are available at the HomeHaven office.

*Putting a Plan in Place



Happy Birthday to HomeHaven members with a birthday in June

Jim Barnes Julie Crowder
Martha Dobrowolski Steve Feinstein
Jane Jervis Adrienne Lewis
Lois Sackrider Anne Schenck
Reva Schwartz Annelies Sheehan
Hal Spitzer Virginia Wilkinson



**If HomeHaven helps you,
help HomeHaven with a bequest.**

Local Lawyers Specializing in Trusts & Estates or Elder Law

by Richard Snyder

Although sometimes lumped together in nonlegal references, including one cited by our own HomeHaven, these two legal practice areas are distinct specialties with separate bar and other professional associations. Both may involve wills, trusts, property transfers, powers of attorney, and advance directives. **Trusts & Estates** is focused on general or more sophisticated estate planning, often including complex estate and income tax planning. In contrast, **Elder Law** includes disability, social security, and veteran benefits planning, issues with nursing homes, elder abuse, conservatorships, and Medicaid planning. In particular, Elder Law attorneys are frequently consulted about methods that will avoid disqualification from Medicaid coverage, for

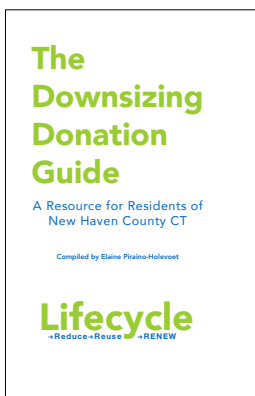
preserving assets from being exhausted by a family member requiring skilled nursing care.

HomeHaven would like to compile a list of reputable local lawyers in both specialties. It is evident that many HH members already have a lawyer in one or the other of these practice areas with whom they are satisfied. Indeed, in some instances these members have engaged their lawyer based on the recommendation of another HH member. In any event, if you do have legal counsel specializing in one of these areas with whom you are satisfied, we encourage you to call or email HH Executive Director Lauri Lowell at 203-776-7378 or HHLjLowell@gmail.com to identify that lawyer. Your name will not be included on the list.

Ready to Go!

by Elaine Piraino-Holevoet

It's online! *The Downsizing Donation Guide* was funded by a grant I received from RecycleCT one year ago. *The Downsizing Donation Guide* is available on the home page of the HomeHaven website (www.homehavenvillages.org) for all to read and download.



The Downsizing Donation Guide's goal is to keep useful items being removed from people's homes or businesses as they downsize out of the waste stream and out of recycling bins. Its broader mission is to help residents of New Haven County find a new life for these items with groups that will use them.

Forty-three organizations from across New Haven County participated in the project. Each supplied a wishlist of needed items and instructions on how to donate them. Most wishlists are very specific. Some are very short, others long. Some items are for immediate consumption (food); others are meant to provide a lifetime of joy (musical instruments, golf clubs). Most requests are for goods for use in ongoing programs. Some will be sold to raise funds for programming.

Wishlist requests range from alarm clocks to violins, from garden tools to wheelchairs, from bicycles to pickup trucks [on three wishlists!]. Some wishlists contain such challenging to donate items as musical instruments, pet supplies, medical equipment, and knickknacks! Many

requests are items to fulfill basic human needs: bed linens, canned goods, cleaning supplies, diapers, paper products, toiletries, and towels, all items likely to be left behind if a person is making a long-distance move, transitioning to assisted living, or settling an estate.

The project proved useful even before *The Downsizing Donation Guide* was completed. One of the participating organizations contacted me to ask if I knew of anyone who might be interested in 200 chair covers they had been offered but could not use. I was able to connect them with someone who was looking for that very thing!

The primary purpose of this guide is to find new life for still useful things. But as you explore *The Downsizing Donation Guide*, it is my hope that you may also discover some new organizations of interest, or even of service, to you or someone you know.

If you make a donation as a result of *The Downsizing Donation Guide*, please tell the organization how you heard about their needs. Please tell me about your donation as well: downsizingdonationguide@piroet.com. Comments are also welcome.

Please share the *The Downsizing Donation Guide* with friends and colleagues whenever you have the opportunity. Happy downsizing!

"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together."

- Vincent Van Gogh

HEALTH MATTERS: Hypertension, Part 2

by Robert Gifford, M.D.

Hypertension affects one-fourth of the world's adult population and is the leading cause of death in the world. It is the most common cause for an outpatient visit to a physician, excluding pregnancy care. At present, about 54% of all strokes and 47% of coronary heart disease are attributed to high blood pressure.

Last month, I explained what is meant by systolic and diastolic blood pressure in humans, how it is generally measured, and that a desirable reading in healthy persons should be around 120/80 mmHg. Since blood pressure can vary depending on emotional stress and other transient factors, **it is essential to determine an accurate baseline blood pressure** before making a diagnosis of high blood pressure. It should never be made from a single reading in a medical office. **A proper diagnosis should be based on multiple readings over time, using appropriate technique, and should include baseline measurements taken at home.** It is an important diagnosis because sustained high blood pressure can injure small blood vessels over time. Studies have shown that for every persistent systolic increase of 20 mmHg and/or diastolic increase of 10 mmHg, the risk of death from heart disease or stroke doubles. For those over the age of 50, the systolic rise is the greater predictor, while for those under 50 years of age, the diastolic level is the better predictor. For this reason, all adults should be screened at least once a year. **People with consistent systolic levels between 130 and 139, or diastolic levels of 80-89, have what is known as pre-hypertension.** Consistent readings of at least 140 mmHg systolic, or at least 90 mmHg diastolic, indicate definite hypertension.

Primary Hypertension: Persons with both systolic and diastolic hypertension are said to have primary hypertension. Although the precise cause is still not entirely clear, one underlying process is a generalized **vasoconstriction of small arteries** (arterioles) requiring the heart to develop more pressure to push blood through to the tissues. Another underlying

process is the **retention by the kidneys of excessive salt and fluid**, leading to expanded body fluids. Both of these processes cause blood pressure to rise and are the result of various hormones and neural influences acting on blood vessels and kidneys.

Risk Factors for Primary Hypertension: A **family history** of hypertension is an important risk factor for primary hypertension, especially if one or both parents also had documented hypertension. There are also several **behavioral determinants** that are associated with the development of primary hypertension. **Obesity or recent significant weight gain** and a **high sodium diet**, are definite risk factors. **Excessive alcohol use** and **physical inactivity** are also important risks. There are also several **non-prescription drugs** that can cause significant hypertension. Agents such as **oral contraceptives**, **non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** (such as Ibuprofen), **some antidepressants**, **decongestants**, **weight loss medications**, and drugs such as **amphetamines or cocaine** are all well recognized secondary causes of hypertension in some people.

Systolic hypertension alone: As I mentioned last month, some individuals, especially elderly persons, have systolic hypertension without a significant diastolic rise. As we age, large arterial walls eventually begin to stiffen and do not expand easily. These physical changes are responsible for this common type of pure systolic hypertension. However, because there are also definite cardiovascular risks for isolated high systolic levels, treatment may be indicated.

Once hypertension has been diagnosed and categorized, your physician can recommend a number of treatments that may be helpful, such as weight loss, physical activity, decreased salt intake, and discontinuation of other drugs that might be playing a role. Most patients also end up with an anti-hypertensive medication of some sort. A **mild diuretic** such as hydrochlorothiazide will often help to reduce excessive fluid retention and can work in concert with a variety of more potent drugs, many of which act as **vasodilators** to directly combat the underlying process responsible for primary hypertension.

LAUGHTER: The Best Medicine

A woman answered the doorbell and saw a man standing on her porch.

"I'm terribly sorry, ma'am," the man said. "I just ran over your cat and I would like to replace it."

"Well that's nice of you," the woman replied, "but how are you at catching mice?"

Dr. Gifford (aka Bob or the Doctor of Doggerel) is Professor of Medicine Emeritus at Yale University School of Medicine and former Chair of HomeHaven's Health Committee. He writes this column in collaboration with members of the Committee. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and may be sent to Bob at bobbygi32@gmail.com.

HOMEHAVEN ACTIVITIES & NEWS FROM OUR VILLAGES

by Patty Langdon

The Beyond: Georgia O'Keeffe and Contemporary Art

Eight HomeHaveners recently car-pooled to the New Britain Museum of Art for a guided tour of a wonderful exhibition of paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe, along with works by 20 contemporary artists whose work she influenced. Many of us were familiar with O'Keeffe's large flower paintings but did not know her extraordinary works featuring New York City buildings. We enjoyed those, as well as her paintings featuring simple and elegant buildings in the Southwest, and some delicate drawings. After lunch at the café, we explored other treasures the Museum has to offer: Thomas Hart Benton's mural, *The Arts of Life in America*; Frederick Church's large view of West Rock; illustrations by Norman Rockwell and Stevan Dohanos; and American Impressionism. It was the perfect way to spend a cool, rainy Tuesday in May!



Joan Prum, Shulamith Chernoff, and Helen Robinson

Hamden Village Garden Party



Jim Maggart with Irene and Owen Fiss



Jean Rozett and Terry Blackhawk



Kaye Maggart with Elin and Herb Brockman



The Hamden Village hosted a most successful garden party on May 22 at the home of Jim and Kaye Maggart. Nine prospective members joined thirty-seven Hamdenites on a glorious day.

Wayne Meeks and Franco Iachello

Introducing New Members

HomeHaven is delighted to welcome the following members who joined us last month.

Terry Blackhawk ~ Hamden

Irene Miller ~ Amity



COMPUTER CONNECTION: Dictation Software

by Christa Sammons

Have you ever wished you had a stenographer to take dictation? Now there's software that will do just that—translate spoken words into word-processing documents or other sorts of text, such as email messages. There are many reasons a person might want to dictate instead of type. Perhaps a hand injury makes typing difficult. Maybe it's just faster once you get the hang of it. And some folks simply speak more fluently than they write.

There are a number of free dictation programs. On an iPhone, all you have to do is launch an app that uses a keyboard, tap the microphone icon next to the emoji button, and speak. Dictation.io is associated with Google Chrome. Google Docs also has a free tool for dictation, and so does Windows ("speech recognition" in Settings). With some programs, you need to install an external microphone on your computer.

The industry standard among purchased software appears to be Dragon, which comes in various versions priced from around \$100 to much more for legal and medical professional versions. There is also a version for mobile devices. Dragon works on both PC and Mac, and the program "learns" as you use it, adapting to your speech patterns and vocabulary. HomeHaven member John Bett has been using Dragon for some years. Here's what he

has to say: "A dictation program is good, especially for creative writing where pauses to think are longer than typing time. The program can be annoying to get used to, for example when you want to say cap it will capitalize the last letter rather than write cap, but on the whole it is worth persevering."

Most dictation programs are highly accurate, but, as John suggests, you still have to proofread and correct. (We should all proofread anyway, even emails!) Background noise can apparently be troublesome, and each system has specific spoken commands, for instance for punctuation, spacing, or beginning new paragraphs. I've never used dictation software, but I sometimes wonder how I'd fare with my Massachusetts accent, with its dropped r's after vowels and other peculiarities: in my dialect "khakis" and "car keys" sound exactly the same!

If you're interested in dictation software, a member of the IT committee can help you determine your best options. Call the office to set up a consultation.

Christa Sammons is a member of HomeHaven's Information Technology (IT) Task Force. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and may be sent to Christa at christa.sammons@gmail.com.

ONGOING EVENTS

COOKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES:

French (Provence)

Monday, June 17, 6:30 pm. Sign-up deadline, Friday, June 7. Join us for delicious food and engaging conversation. New members are welcome. To enable planning, be sure to RSVP by the sign-up deadline to Celeste Markle at c_markle@yahoo.com or 203-397-0492, or call the office. Please call Celeste for other information.

DINING OUT AROUND THE WORLD

Tuesday, June 11, 6:00 pm

Lalibela Ethiopian Restaurant, 176 Temple St, New Haven, CT 06510

Sign-up required by **Friday, June 7. Limited to 10 participants** Call the office to register and to ask for a ride if needed.

MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The groups meet every second and fourth Monday of the month (no meetings June through August) for an hour and a half. For more information or if you would like to attend a meeting to see how it works, please call or email Harriet Bergmann at 203-776-0703 or hfb183@gmail.com.

PINS AND NEEDLES

Monday, June 17, 1:30 pm

At the home of Jeannie Drury

Bring a project and enjoy good company, lively discussion, and refreshments. New members always welcome at these monthly gatherings. RSVP to Jeannie at 203-281-3227 or jeannedrury@aol.com.



Events: June



Monday, June 3, 3:30-5:00 pm

Smartphone Workshop

**At the home of Pam Stanton & John Sawyer
35 Pelham Lane, New Haven**

Get help with your Android, iPhone, or other tech device from our knowledgeable IT committee. Please login to the HH website and register online, or call the office. **Limited to 8 participants.**

Tuesdays, June 4, July 16, 23, 30, August 6, 13

10:00-11:15 am

Dancing with Parkinson's

**Whitney Center, Cultural Arts Center
(except June 4, 6th Floor North Building)**

200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden

Dancing with Parkinson's class with instructor Laura Richling of The Neighborhood Music School. Classes are for those with Parkinson's & other movement related disorders. Free & open to the public. Caregivers are welcome. Registration not required. For more information contact Laura Richling: lrichling@nmsnewhaven.org

HOMEHAVEN OFFICE

☎ 203-776-7378 ☎

hhkateh@gmail.com

Generous support for HomeHaven provided by:

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(203) 772-1944



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203-298-9700

Tuesday, June 11, 2:30 pm

Ancient Mesopotamia Speaks

Yale's Peabody Museum

170 Whitney Avenue, New Haven

Private tour of the special exhibit from Yale's Babylonian Collection with Professor of Assyriology – Eckhart Frahm. Museum entrance fee: \$9.00, Peabody member or Yale ID: free. Please login to the HH website and register online, or call the office. Parking information is in the event description in the HH website calendar.

Monday, June 17, 4:00 pm

A Film about Living with Dementia:

To Whom I May Concern

Best Video Film and Cultural Center

1842 Whitney Avenue, Hamden

A beautiful video of five individuals with an early diagnosis sharing what it means to them to live with dementia. Introduction and discussion with Elizabeth Dreyer, member of Hamden Village. Showtime: 53 minutes. Discussion to follow. Please login to the HH website and register online, or call the office.

Wednesday, June 19, 5:00-7:00 pm

HomeHaven's Annual Picnic

The Carriage House at Edgerton Park,

Cliff St. & Edgehill Rd. in New Haven

(at the Hamden town line)

Parking: There is street parking only. You may enter the park on Edgehill Road to drop-off food or passengers but must park on the street. Only handicap parking on the park grounds. Carpooling is great, and registration is recommended.

Please bring a dish to share (enough for your crew +3) and nothing that needs heating. Beverages will be provided. Family and friends are always welcome! Please login to the HH website and register online, or call the office.

Tuesday, June 25, 1:00-4:00 pm

Beading Group with Vivian Lowell

Whitney Center Art Studio

North Building, 6th floor

200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden

Beads, findings, and tools will be supplied. You are welcome to bring anything you have to work on: remake a necklace, repair some earrings. Or make something new! Please login to the HH website and register online, or call the office. **Limited to 8 participants.**