



## Message from the President

Politics and the COVID plague have marked this year, along with other stresses, but things are looking up. For example, we had electricity for two days the week before last, and now we've had it continuously for a week and a half! Okay, it is true that the temperature in Death Valley was 130 degrees last week and the fires this month are in California instead of Australia. But I remain confident that if we get through these current trials, we will be better equipped to deal with the next wave, due any minute. My advice: focus on those we can see around us, those we can help. Among those are, we hope, people who would enjoy becoming members of HomeHaven, people who would contribute to and benefit from our community.



Viewed from a wider angle, we are pleased to report that HomeHaven is functioning as fully as the pandemic allows. The Office remains open, though not for face-to-face business. Lauri and Kate are showing up and continuing to fight the good fight against invisible demonic forces and the inescapable pall that legally enforced loneliness creates. We will emerge from this

darkness united, thanks to the continued efforts of our Village Leaders and our intrepid staff. We are taking action to enlarge our membership and enhance our financial stability, and to secure HomeHaven's future in the Greater New Haven area.

Our effort to achieve these goals is now primarily embodied in a limited time offer of an introductory 6-month membership available during the month of September. Those who may have some interest but have declined thus far to make a year-long commitment now have another option. To ease any undecideds or other potential members into the flock, we are offering during September an "Introductory Membership" whereby one may join HH at the reduced rate of \$270 for six months for households, and \$210 for individuals. This works out to \$45 and \$35 per month, respectively, and permits people to explore the benefits of membership for a reduced initial financial and temporal commitment.

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**HomeHaven is offering an  
Introductory 6-Month  
Reduced Fee Membership  
during the month of  
September!**

**Call the office for details.**

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Generous support for HomeHaven provided by:



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If the new members wish to continue at the end of the six months, they have the option to continue at the regular rate. We are sure most will experience the obvious benefit of staying on board. We will be featuring some special programs for members only during this 6-month period, as well as the usual activities of membership (hopefully freed soon of the limitations imposed by the pandemic this year).

Meanwhile the Tenth Anniversary Campaign team is working along several tracks to buttress our organization's financial status. It remains a fact of life that our membership dues cannot sustain our operations without supplementation. That help is being sought from various sources in various ways, and we are seeking to develop revenue streams that we can depend on long-term, via planned gifts and bequests from those who want their positive experiences in HH to be shared with others in the future. We're also seeking other donations from members and other socially perceptive folks in the hope of establishing a long-term, self-sustaining, economic reserve.

We have now experienced the virus and the storm-related power outages in just the past few months, and there will be an election soon which looks like it may be something of a scrum. The level of disturbance to our normal lives has made our previous routines and activities seem impossibly blessed and delightful. Even an anti-social curmudgeon like me is muttering, "Where is everybody? I miss them." One hates to see the better part of a year embezzled from an already dwindling store of future days by microbes.

But we shall persevere, we shall endure, and we shall keep on truckin' — with our friends and neighbors and the dreary but necessary Zoom, our next fiscal year is almost certain to be better!



Fred O'Brien

## HomeHaven News

Francie Irvine, *Editor*  
[irvmcl@gmail.com](mailto:irvmcl@gmail.com)

Published by HomeHaven, Inc.  
291 Whitney Avenue, Suite 103  
New Haven, Connecticut 06511  
203.776.7378  
[info@homehavenvillages.org](mailto:info@homehavenvillages.org)

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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  
or email us at  
[info@homehavenvillages.org](mailto:info@homehavenvillages.org)

*"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:

- 0 rides by volunteer drivers (suspended for the time being)
- *Unknown* # of home visits by volunteer visitors (members and village leaders have been in phone or socially distanced contact with most of the villagers)
- 2 computer assists and numerous Zoom assists by volunteer computer helpers
- 8 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 accurate records by always letting us know each time you use a provider we recommended. **It's important!** Thanks.

*Look for monthly reports giving rolling three-month totals.*

## ALAN TRACHTENBERG (1932-2020)

### A Friend Reminisces

Some of the details of Alan Trachtenberg's remarkable life as student, scholar, husband, father, and grandparent are found in his [obituary](#), as well as elsewhere. They provide a mere glimpse of a vibrant, hard-working, creative, and innovative scholar. We profited by his presence among us. He now rests in the Grove Street enclave.

His guises were as impressive as they were numerous: Birder, photographer, professor, canoeist, maven of movies, and voracious reader of what qualifies as American Studies. An enviable conversationalist, he listened carefully; he pondered; he offered ideas, often wise ones. He wasn't just waiting there to say the obvious next thing.

One way to learn about Walt Whitman was to hear Alan discuss or quote that poet. I think Alan was lured by Whitman's love of American democracy. Nothing appalled Alan more than the turn taken by the United States when the Electoral College, in 2017, placed a president with a minority of the popular vote in the White House.

Cameras, preferably larger ones, were dear to Alan. He owned an older, much-touted "eight-by-ten." With it he took riveting portraits. Many of them were seen in a Henry Koerner Center (for Emeritus Faculty) exhibition of his work. Two of his portraits proudly adorn one of our walls.

He also watched birds, concerning which I am largely ignorant. But I did cash in on Alan's extensive knowledge of motion pictures. With him, I could inaugurate the film series, which continues to run, at Yale's Koerner Center. Alan was supremely and impressively expert regarding "noirs." Along with reams of Yale students, I exploited Alan's exceptional knowledge.

Then there were the canoes. Alan had one of his own. It accompanied him, as well as his wife Betty, to places like Maine where fast streams abound. There he could show off his admirable skill at remaining afloat.

We were lucky to know Alan. We miss him.

— Joseph LaPalombara

## HOUSEHOLD COMMITTEE ACTION

by Hal Spitzer

From its very beginning, HomeHaven has offered members access to reliable tradespeople to properly repair, improve, or maintain their homes. Over the years, we have tried many different formulas to keep people on call for your needs, some more successful than others.

With the onset of the coronavirus, we face different and difficult circumstances for our population, who are for the most part vulnerable. In the last newsletter, we gave you advice about seeking help during this time. We think it is fair to say that the virus is not leaving us any time soon, so we need to think about what we can and should be doing during this time.

The major step that the Household Committee took was to engage the services of ServiceMaster. We decided that we needed a reliable company, one able to bring the right service people to your homes when all of us are wary of letting workers in, and workers

are just as leery of going in! However, certain repairs need immediate, on-site attention, and we need a company that can provide that. ServiceMaster is our home service company. They offer a wide variety of services to our members and they are our after-hours emergency response group. Drew Kufta, their Director of Operations, has assured us that for any home repair needed, his staff will take the proper precautions before entering a member's home. ServiceMaster has always offered a decontamination service, so their employees are experienced and educated in wearing proper attire when entering a home to do repairs. We have now been working with ServiceMaster long enough to know that they are responsive and responsible, and we are very happy to have them on board.

When you call the office for any maintenance, repair, or renovation request for your home, Kate will arrange

*continued on page 4*

# COMPUTER CONNECTION: Diving for Documents

by Christa Sammons

I know, I know. I've written so many times about the HomeHaven website that I risk becoming a bore, but we're keen to help more members access and use the site. This time I'm concentrating on the **Documents** section because big efforts are underway to improve and expand it.

As I wrote last November, the Documents section of the website provides access to a wealth of resources—all back issues of the newsletter, for instance, and the third edition (2017) of the *Life Care Alternatives* report, with its detailed information about continuing care and assisted living communities, at-home programs, and Hospice care. Elaine Piraino-Holevoet's *Downsizing Donation Guide* is there,

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## Household Committee *continued from page 3*

to have someone call you back within the hour to understand what's needed in order to start the process of getting the job done to your satisfaction.

We still keep a vetted list of handymen for tasks that do not need a professional for the task. We are also working on the possibility of volunteers to help with such small tasks as changing a light bulb or a battery in your smoke detector, or other tasks that do not need expertise but may be hard for some of you to do yourselves.

We will keep you posted about these plans.

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*Hal Spitzer is a member of Hamden Village and serves on the Household Committee.*

### PLEASE TAKE A MINUTE!

If you've been helped by HomeHaven's referrals to service providers, please call the office or drop us a note and tell us about the experience.

We'd like to know how things turned out.

**203-776-7378**

offering advice about where to donate all that still-useful stuff you don't need anymore. There's no paper version of this one: you have to read it here! Elaine, an ardent environmentalist, designs our newsletter.

Another rich resource in Documents is *Aging in Place: A Guide to Resources*, 29 invaluable pages compiled by then HomeHaven member Peter Wells. Here you'll find all manner of helpful information, from a list of elder lawyers to the names of caregiving and support groups, to podiatrists, barbers, and hairdressers who make house calls, along with much more. On page 15, you'll find a useful list of the average cost for various services, such as homemaker, companion, and live-in companion in Connecticut as of 2017. (Look under "Putting a Plan in Place" in the Publications folder.)

These three guides have links on the homepage: you don't even have to go to Documents to access them. But you'll find additional items when you click on the menu tab Documents—reliable COVID-19 information, for instance, as well as two Yale studies on dementia and a list of additional resources. There's the latest annual report, and Kate's wonderful curated lists of virtual happenings to inform and entertain while we stay at home. And—wait for it—you can read the dramatic minutes of your hard-working IT Committee going back to June 2018!\*\*

The Documents screen displays an array of yellow folder icons. Click on them to access the documents they contain, then click on the documents to download. Most documents will load automatically for viewing, but on my desktop PC, I had to save some documents to my computer to view them. On my iPhone and iPad, I had a choice of viewing or downloading.

The IT Committee stands ready to answer your questions about the HomeHaven website's Documents section, or any other tech issue you may encounter.

\*\*You must be logged in as a member to access many of these documents\*\*

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*Christa Sammons, a member of East Rock Village, serves on HomeHaven's Information Technology (IT) Task Force. Suggestions for topics are welcome and may be sent to Christa at [christa.sammons@gmail.com](mailto:christa.sammons@gmail.com).*



# HEALTH MATTERS: Influenza Vaccines for 2020-2021

by Pat Jackson Allen

Vaccines are some of the most cost-effective preventive health care tools available. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), during the 2019-2020 influenza season 39 million to 56 million cases of influenza occurred in the United States, leading to 26 million medical visits, 740,000 hospitalizations, and 62,000 deaths. People 65 years-of-age and older are at higher risk of serious influenza infections, complications, and death, but despite this, only 54% received an influenza vaccination last year.

The World Health Organization monitors influenza strains around the world and provides guidance on vaccine development and production to the CDC and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Yearly changes in influenza vaccinations are necessary because the strains of influenza circulating are always changing. Influenza viruses are named based on virus type (influenza A or B), geographic origin of the virus, strain number, year of collection, and virus subtype or lineage. For example, two of the virus strains found in this year's vaccines are named A/Hong Kong/2671/2019(H3N2)-like virus, and B/Washington/02/2019(B/Victoria lineage)-like virus.

Seven different strains have been identified for this season's vaccines but only three or four strains are combined in a particular vaccine. Influenza vaccines are either trivalent, containing two influenza A strains and one influenza B strain, or quadrivalent, containing two influenza A strains and two influenza B strains. Vaccines are also varied in strength; pediatric strength, "regular" strength, and high dose for people 65 years and older. Although older adults may receive the "regular" strength vaccine formulation, the high dose vaccine is thought to give older adults a

better immune response, higher antibody levels, and hopefully, greater protection against the influenza viruses in the vaccine. The high dose formulations contain inactivated viral proteins that cannot replicate or cause disease. You cannot get the "flu" from an inactivated influenza vaccine. They are safe even if a person is immunocompromised. The vaccine may cause mild side effects such as redness and swelling at the injection site, headache, muscle aches, and malaise.

In addition to the multiple influenza vaccines already on the market approved for people 65 years and older, the CDC and ACIP have approved two new vaccines for the 2020-2021 season: Fluzone high dose quadrivalent (Sanofi Pasteur), and Flud quadrivalent (Seqirus). The CDC and AICP have not expressed a preference for any influenza vaccine indicated for people 65 years or older.

The high-dose influenza vaccines should be available by early September 2020. It is more important than ever to be vaccinated against influenza this year because of the concurrent COVID-19 pandemic. Being vaccinated for influenza will reduce, but not eliminate, your chances of acquiring an influenza infection. Infection with a strain of influenza virus not in the current vaccine is always possible, but being vaccinated reduces your chances of developing influenza, being sick, being hospitalized, and even dying. Health centers and hospitals are very busy during the influenza season from October to April caring for people with influenza-like illnesses, and this year may be worse with the concurrent coronavirus pandemic.

How you obtain a "flu" vaccine this year may be different than in the past, as health care providers limit in-person visits and pharmacies face the challenge of keeping customers and staff members safe from possible exposure to the COVID-19 virus while continuing to provide influenza vaccinations in the pharmacy. Alternative models for influenza vaccinations may include drive-through programs, open air mini-clinics for vaccinations, or limited health clinic visits just for vaccinations at times that the clinic is not open to other customers.

Plan on getting vaccinated in September before the "flu" and illness season becomes significant. Protect yourself and those around you.

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*Pat Jackson Allen is a member of Amity Village and chair of HomeHaven's Health & Wellness Committee.*

## Introducing New Members

*HomeHaven is delighted to welcome the following members who recently joined us.*

*Christina Schenker ~ Hamden Village*

*Jean Spencer ~ Westville Village*



# November 3, 2020: A Most Unique Election Day

by Lydia Bornick and Virginia Wilkinson

This year's elections are among the most critical we have faced in our lifetimes, and there have never been so many challenges or roadblocks on our path to the polls! First is the pandemic, which means that waiting in lines at the polls is risky; second is the option — and the need — to use absentee ballots; third are the additional demands that a nationwide mail-in ballot will put on the Postal Service. Thank heavens the budget reductions have been postponed until after the election!

We all need to vote. How do we do it this year? First, we need to be sure that we are registered at our current legal address. Many of us have moved in recent years to senior-friendly facilities or more comfortable, more economically feasible locations. At a time when so many states are purging their voting lists, we could lose our access to voting because of an address change. Furthermore, if we choose to vote in person, we need to check our polling place, because in New Haven there have been changes in polling locations. We can only vote at our designated poll.

Thanks to pressure put on Congress and on the Connecticut state government, all citizens are eligible to vote by absentee ballot because of coronavirus. That means we have to apply for the ballot and make sure it gets returned in time to be counted. Applications for absentee ballots are scheduled to be mailed to every registered voter in our state by mid-September. We'll need to fill them out and return them as quickly as possible. Absentee ballots will then be mailed to applicants starting October 2. Again, it is important to vote and return your ballot as soon as possible. Delays in mail delivery are likely this year, so the surest way to get your ballot in is to take it to the drop box that is outside your Town or City Hall. The question of who can collect the signed and sealed absentee ballots for a group of people, not all of whom can get to the drop box, has not been answered clearly as of this writing.

Even though everyone has now been declared eligible to vote absentee, we are required to check the COVID-19 box on the application and the ballot indicating our concern about the virus. It doesn't matter whether or not we have had it or whether or not we have been exposed.

For more information, please visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Voter-Information/Voter-Fact-Sheet>

Poll workers are needed, and volunteers are being sought, but the HomeHaven age group will not be considered for these roles — for safety reasons.

Get ready for an historic election! Let's show that we cannot be daunted by this year's complications.



## UPDATE

### From the New Haven City Clerk's Office

*If you do not live in New Haven, please check with your Town Clerk's Office to see if you can follow these directions, especially concerning the drop box option.*

You can now print out your own Absentee Ballot Application! AND voters can use the Absentee Ballot drop boxes to drop off their applications from this point forward!

Here's how to get your Absentee Ballot application: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Absentee-Ballot-Application-ED-3/ED-3-Rev-20-Final.pdf>

Put your application in a sealed envelope. If you are concerned about your application and ballot making it in time, drop boxes are the best option! There are two drop boxes in New Haven, both at 200 Orange Street at some distance apart. Both are checked daily.

Absentee ballots become available at the City Clerk's Office Friday October 2, and they will also be mailed to every voter who requests one.

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*Lydia Bornick and Virginia Wilkinson are members of Downtown Village. They are both active in local political action.*

## INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST MEMBERS: Christina Schenker and Jean W. Spencer by Francie Irvine

**Christina Schenker** was born and raised in Kraków, Poland. She came to New Haven 50 years ago and married Alexander Schenker, professor in the Slavic Department at Yale. For the first few years, she was busy caring for their daughter and her husband's two sons from his previous marriage. Christina also enrolled as a part-time student at Albertus Magnus College to continue her interrupted studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, earning a B.A. and then a M.L.S. at Wesleyan University.

Foreign cultures and languages — in her case French and Russian — have always been a passion, and for many years she taught English as a second language in Hamden's Adult Education Program, coming in contact with students from some 30 countries. Christina and her husband travelled widely, mostly in Europe, but that came to an abrupt end when Alex broke his hip. In spite of two surgeries, he never fully recovered. For the next 12 years, until his death in August 2019, Christina took care of him.

Music is her other passion. For more than 15 years, she was a member of the Piano Performance class coached by Rebecca Raffaelli at the Neighborhood Music School in New Haven. This past year, because of her husband's passing and COVID, Christina couldn't join the group, but she plans to play with them again in the near future.

Some current members of HomeHaven have been good friends for many years, but she's looking forward to meeting more of them when it's possible to get together again. Let us hope that such a day will arrive soon!

**Jean W. Spencer** grew up in the midwest, moved to New York after the University of Michigan (Honors in English, 1961), and lived and worked in New York until she moved to New Haven in 2010 in anticipation of retirement. Jean chose Westville to be near her daughter Nicole Fluhr and son-in-law Matt Higbee, and especially to spend time with her grandchildren Tessa, Miranda and Jed Higbee while they were little. They're now tweens and teens. Westville is much like other neighborhoods where Jean has been happy — Park Slope in Brooklyn, Sunnyside Gardens in Queens — lively and diverse neighborhoods of old trees, old houses — and new ideas. Perfect for her, "a progressive since my days on the *Michigan Daily*."

In New York Jean worked as an administrative assistant to heads of companies: law firms, a securities firm, and a crisis consulting firm. Here in Westville, after retiring at 71, she volunteered for a few years at the Agency on Aging's excellent "Choices" program, providing information by phone to elders with questions on Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs and resources.

When she retired, Jean had a number of paintings from different art classes and projects over the years — most were not what she would call "finished," but she had hung onto them. She has taken to painting again now she has time, and she's making progress with those old paintings and some new ones. She spends time reading and re-reading, has been in a book club, and would like to find another one. She also likes watching movies, catching up on good ones she missed when they first came out. Jean wrote: "I need to overhaul my electronics, and I look forward to HomeHaven as a resource to learn what new devices I need and how to efficiently use and understand the ones I already have." The IT Task Force will be just what Jean's looking for!

Welcome to Jean and to Christina!



### ***Happy Birthday to HomeHaven members with a birthday in September***

Louis Audette   Bob Berner  
Cecilia Berner   Nancy Carrington  
Sylvia Garland   Bob Gifford  
Margot Kohorn   Patty Langdon  
Marc Mann   Margaret Mann  
Sarah Pace   Pam Stanton  
Flora Van Dyke





# PANDEMIC PASTIMES AND PURSUITS

a look at how some members are keeping busy these days...

## IRENE FISS

*Irene has been an educational consultant and a teacher of teachers. Her work in New Haven schools alone includes serving as the first director of Cold Spring School, working with Yale students to mentor third graders in New Haven schools, and acting as a consultant to Amistad Academy, the first Achievement First charter school in New Haven. She is now writing about her experiences in education.*

### Writing

Thanks to the pandemic I have more free time. Once I accomplished all the household projects I had put off and viewed more films than anyone should, I realized that I needed to tackle something meaningful and distracting. Adding writing to my daily schedule is just that. Over the years, countless parents have asked me whether a school was good. I am writing about my answer. Hopefully, my piece will serve as an overview of currents of reform, a memoir, and a call to action.

## LYNDA HAMMOND

*Lynda became a Rotarian in 2001. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Orange and an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She serves as the Rotary District 7980 grants chair, president of Rotary District 7980 Gift of Life Foundation (a 501(c)3), Club International chair, editor of the Foundation D-7980 newsletter, and proud advisor for St. Martin's de Porres Academy Interact Club. She is also a member of the Rotary Disaster Action Group and Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group.*

### Rotary Club

COVID-19 has brought changes in the way we do and don't do things. In my world, the activities that occupy me have continued, with a few new twists and turns, just to keep life interesting.

I continue to work on several Rotary-based international projects. However, the arrival of COVID-19 in March changed our priorities. Rotarians worldwide sprang into action to respond to the needs of our local communities. In southern Connecticut, 57 Rotary Clubs, with an estimated 2000 Rotarians, continue to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for our first responders, while also supporting local food pantries, soup kitchens, and daycare centers.

Thus far, with a combination of club and individual donations, and grants funded by Rotary District 7980 in partnership with Rotary International Foundation, Rotarians have provided an estimated \$500,000 in humanitarian support. I've always been proud to be a Rotarian, but it's been amazing to experience a pandemic with Rotarians worldwide, each lending a helping hand locally, while providing emotional support to each other globally.

## SAM PETERSON

*Dr. Sam Peterson, an Islamic art historian, was for most of his adult life either a city dweller or traveling on research grants throughout the Middle East and Europe... in either case with few chances to garden.*

### Gardening

I always gardened during the summers I was not living in cities or traveling. Once settled in our Hamden home in 2012, I went on a campaign to uproot hedges and old bushes to put in flower beds. Sometimes, as the



morning silence was broken by birds greeting the rising sun with song, I sat in awe of the wondrous results of the labor a gardener knows well: coreopsis, phlox, Roxanne everblooming geranium, Swedish hollyhock, Russian sage, bee balm, to mention but a few plants that stun us with their miraculous growth and blooms.

For my birthday two years ago, I asked Martha to complete my morning rituals with nature with the gift of two beehives and a keeper to maintain them.

And now, 2020! With its historic pandemic changing our lives forever, my fenced-in Eden with flowers, birds, and bees reminds me of the natural order and stability of an old world we will get back to once we correct our follies. It is the same garden, but in 2020 it provides me even greater assurance that all will be well with the world again.

*continued on page 9*



## PAULA RESCH

*Paula and Dick moved their family here from the Midwest in 1986. Paula was the writing tutor at Ezra Stiles college at Yale for 25 years, and taught writing courses for 29 years in the English Department. They have two children who are health professionals and three wonderful grandchildren, divided between Hamden and Medfield, MA.*

## Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) during a Pandemic

For several years, Jean Blue — known to many in HomeHaven — and I have taught ESOL at the Schweitzer Institute on Quinnipiac's campus as part of Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven's program. The enrollment fluctuated, but since moving to Zoom in March, we have had between three and five students log in for an hour and a half of reading and discussion. Our students are well on their way to being fluent in American English, so we are able to discuss idioms and some challenging vocabulary, as well as topics from food to travel to health to art to history and more. Because we know most of the students from in-person classes, we have been able to make an easy transition to the online class. If our students were not advanced, or if we had more than five or six, teaching online would probably be much more challenging. Now, at least for Jean and me — we each teach every other Tuesday — it's really fun and, in fact, almost as delightful as in-person classes.

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## Reflections on Growing Older:

**WILL ROGERS**, who died in a 1935 plane crash in Alaska with bush pilot Wiley Post, was one of the greatest political country/cowboy sages this country has ever known. Some of his sayings on the theme of growing older are featured below and on page 11.

***“Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.”***

***“The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.”***

***“Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me. I want people to know ‘why’ I look this way. I’ve traveled a long way, and some of the roads weren’t paved.”***

## Alzheimer's Disease Presentation

by Phil Pierce

Maria Tomasetti, from the CT Alzheimer's Disease Association, spoke to HomeHaven members on July 15th via Zoom. Over 50 members and guests attended this highly interactive session, sponsored by the Health and Wellness Committee. Maria's presentation, *The Ten Warning Signs of Alzheimer's*, provided a list and examples of warning signs that can help identify changes in memory, thinking, or behavior that may be related to Alzheimer's Disease or other dementias. The key elements are that the concerning symptoms are changes for the individual. Importantly, and reassuringly, most of us experience typical age-related changes that should not be confused with dementia. These include sometimes forgetting names but remembering them later, making occasional errors managing household bills, and periodically misplacing things and retracing steps to find them.

### The Ten Warning Signs\*:

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks
4. Confusion with time or place
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood or personality

Warning signs should trigger a discussion with a healthcare professional. Sometimes, there are physical issues like medication interactions, nutritional deficiencies, or an untreated thyroid disorder that can present with these warning signs. These can be addressed and treated. The Alzheimer Association has a Helpline (1-800-272-3900) open 24/7 and a local office number: 203-230-1777, ext. 9706.

Ms. Tomasetti hosted a question and answer session for HomeHaven on Zoom on August 20, and she welcomes calls from individuals and caregivers at the local office number.

\*This list was developed by the Alzheimer's Association and is available at: [alz.org/10signs](https://www.alz.org/10signs)

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*Phil Pierce is a member of Amity Village and serves on the Health Committee.*

# The Birds and The Bears

by Pat Allen with photos by Rick Allen

Early this spring, Rick's brother sent us a bluebird house for our garden. We had a bird feeder outside our kitchen window and enjoyed watching a variety of birds... but we never saw a bluebird and we certainly did not consider ourselves "birders."

Then, with COVID, we all started to stay home. We watched more, and the birds became a daily source of entertainment and inquiry. We contacted our HomeHaven Amity Village neighbors, Werner and Liz Wolf and Judy Moore, who we knew were avid "birders" to ask for help. How do we attract bluebirds and where do we find supplies for establishing a bird-friendly area off our front deck? The answer: Fat Robin in Hamden. We started swapping stories, pictures, and hints on attracting specific bird species, i.e. grape jelly for Orioles... really! And wonder of wonders, a bluebird couple set up housekeeping in our new bluebird house!

Five eggs soon followed.



Two weeks later baby blues hatched, and three weeks after that they fledged!

Our bluebirds flew the coop!! Gone! Just like that!

We felt like proud grandparents but were hoping we would have new tenants soon.

Other birds became regulars, and with photos and descriptions to our HomeHaven friends we determined

we had cowbirds, grackles, goldfinches, a variety of woodpecker species, and many more. Our single bird feeder had to be expanded to accommodate our growing population. Now we had daily suet feedings, bags of dried mealworms, and yes, a special bowl for grape jelly.

But one morning, Rick went out to feed the birds and found the feeders bent, broken, and empty! Something big attacked our feeders.

We sent pictures of the destruction to Werner, Liz, and Judy and they all agreed a bear had destroyed our feeder! They both had experienced bears at their bird feeders so knew the telltale signs of a hungry bear.

Now what? Rick consulted with Werner to devise a "bear-proof" feeding set-up by hanging the feeder over a branch from a tree so that it could be raised and lowered by a pulley. The trick was getting the pulley systems up around the branch without climbing a ladder and risking life and limb...the tree limbs and his limbs! Their devised aerial system worked, and the new set-up has survived so far!

We are thankful for our Amity Village coming together to teach us all about The Birds and The Bears!





# Theater in the Age of COVID

by Patty Langdon

Edith Meeks, daughter of Hamden Village member Wayne Meeks, gave an informal presentation at a recent Hamden/North Haven Village Coffee hour. She is Executive and Artistic Director of HB Studio in New York, one of the original New York acting studios providing training and practice in the performing arts. Edith mentioned some of the former students at HB — Al Pacino, Steve McQueen and Robert De Niro, just to name a few, and spoke about the ups and downs such an organization is experiencing in the time of the virus. They lost 50% of their students in the early spring but regained half that number back by late July. Imaginative exploration of the possibilities of Zoom and other theatrical innovations have stood them in good stead.



HB's mission statement describes it best: *HB Studio is a school created by theater artists... We believe in a process of training that is essential to all the performing arts... Working in partnership with the HB Playwrights Foundation and Theatre, we uphold a standard of performance that can play a significant role in shaping today's contemporary and classical theater – a standard envisioned by our founder, actor/director Herbert Berghof, and championed by the actor and master teacher Uta Hagen.*

Edith's talk and her response to our questions were both fascinating and inspirational. It was a most happy coffee hour.

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*Patty Langdon is vice president of the board of HomeHaven and co-leader of Hamden Village.*

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## Old Friends Enjoy a Summer Lunch



*The hat ladies... Patty Langdon and Francie Irvine.*

## ONGOING EVENTS

### MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The groups meet every second and fourth Monday of the month for an hour and a half. We're Zooming these days, and it's working beautifully. For more information or if you would like to attend a meeting to see how it works, please email Harriet Bergmann at [hfb183@gmail.com](mailto:hfb183@gmail.com).

### PINS AND NEEDLES

**Monday, September 7, at 3:00pm**

Meetings are currently being held via Zoom. Bring a project and enjoy good company and lively discussion. New members are always welcome at these monthly gatherings. If you would like to join the group and be included in the group Zoom invitation please email Kathy Denardo at [vivian.denardo@att.net](mailto:vivian.denardo@att.net).

### PLAY READING GROUP

**Tuesday, Sept. 22 & 29, 7:00pm**

***Lysistrata* by Aristophanes**

Via Zoom. A bi-monthly gathering of literary souls for group reading of a play. Join as a reader or a member of the "audience." Group size limited to 15. Please register online or call the office. For more information, contact Bob Sandine at [rdsandine@yahoo.com](mailto:rdsandine@yahoo.com).

## More from Will Rogers:

*"You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks."*

*"I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top."*

*"One of the many things no one tells you about ageing is that it's such a nice change from being young."*

*"One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been."*

*"Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable and relaxed."*

*"If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old."*



# Events: September

*The office will be closed on Monday, September 7.*



## We're Still Zooming!

While "social distancing" remains in effect, meetings and events continue online using Zoom. It's not quite the same as "being there," but it's a lot better than being home alone.

**Wednesday, Sept. 2, 10:00am**

***Frost in September. Via Zoom.***

No, not the white stuff—the poet! Robert Frost is of course very familiar, and Harriet Bergmann will lead a discussion of well-known poems and some that are new to us as well. We will send out a list of some poems to read before the meeting along with the Zoom invite.

**Thursday, Sept. 10, 1pm**

***Who Says We're Not Sexual? Via Zoom.***

In this informative talk, Barbara Beitch (Hamden Village) will address topics of interest to seniors regarding sex and sexuality at this stage of life. Be prepared to explore ideas and share concerns in a safe environment filled with humor. This frank, compassionate, and wise discussion will leave you feeling enlightened and grateful that you came. A Zoom invite will be sent prior to the program. All are welcome!

**Thursday, Sept. 17, 1pm**

***Lunch & Learn: Tombs and Temples of Egypt, part II. Via Zoom.***

A photographic tour of Louis Audette & Jeannie Drury's trip to Egypt in March 2020. A Zoom invite will be sent prior to the program.

**Wednesday, Sept. 23, 11am**

***HH Poets & Writers presents: Liz Wolf. Via Zoom.***

Liz Wolf (Amity) will be reading some of her poems, parodies, and nonsense rhymes. A Zoom invite will be sent prior to the program.

**Wednesday, Sept. 30, 3pm**

***The Supreme Court's Challenge to Civil Society. Via Zoom.***

Former NYTimes correspondent Linda Greenhouse will speak on the Supreme Court, with Q&A. Members only.

## In Your Village

*Please check your email or the HH calendar for details and updates on these gatherings via Zoom.*

### AMITY

**Thursday, Sept 3 & 17, 5pm**

**Virtual Happy Hours.** Join us every other Thursday!

### DOWNTOWN

**Saturday, Sept 5 & 19, 5:30pm**

**Virtual Happy Hours.** Join us every other Saturday!

### EAST ROCK

**Saturday, Sept 5, 12, 19 & 26, 5pm**

**Virtual Happy Hours.** Join us every Saturday!

### HAMDEN & NORTH HAVEN

**Tuesday, Sept 8, 10:30am**

**Virtual Coffee.** Join us every 2nd Tues of the month!

### WESTVILLE

**Saturday, Sept 5 & 19, 5pm**

**Virtual Happy Hours.** Join us every other Saturday!

**HOMEHAVEN OFFICE**

**📞 203-776-7378 📞**

**[info@homehavenvillages.org](mailto:info@homehavenvillages.org)**

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