



THE OFFICIAL

# *Heritage Hills Newsletter*

JANUARY 2025



# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

# Heritage Hills Society Information

Address ..... 8 Heritage Hills, Somers, New York 10589

Website ..... [www.hhsociety.org](http://www.hhsociety.org)

Television ..... Channel 21

## CONTACT INFORMATION - EMAIL

Society ..... [society@hhsociety.org](mailto:society@hhsociety.org)

Activities Office ..... [activities@hhsociety.org](mailto:activities@hhsociety.org)

## CONTACT INFORMATION - TELEPHONE

Security ..... 914-276-2592

Society Office ..... 914-276-2908

Activities Office ..... 914-276-2636

Society Fee

Financial Office ..... 914-276-2509

Bus ..... 914-276-2877

Library ..... 914-276-7655

Fitness Center ..... 914-669-5028

## EMERGENCIES 9-1-1

## Hours of Operation

### Activities Center

Building ..... 9 am to 11 pm

Activities Office ..... 9 am to 5 pm

Society Office ..... 9 am to 1 pm

Fine Arts Center ..... Group instruction and free time are scheduled by the Activities Office at 914-276-2908

Library ..... Monday thru Friday 10 am to 3 pm, Saturday 10 am to 1 pm

Fitness Center & Gym ..... Daily 4 am to 11 pm

Lake Lodge ..... 9 am to 11 pm

Meadowlark Park ..... Dawn to Dusk

Park Place ..... Dawn to Dusk

**Bus Service - Weekdays Only (except holidays) - 914-276-2877**

### Goldens Bridge MetroNorth Station Trips

Morning to/from: (out only) 5:15, 5:45, 6:45, and 7:45 - **Reservation Required**

Evening **PICK-UPS ONLY**: 4:45, 5:35, 6:35, 7:35 and 8:35 - **No Reservation**

### Midday Trips - Reservations Required

To/From Activities Center, Lake Lodge, Meadowlark Park, and off site, including Goldens Bridge MetroNorth Station

**Outbound**, hourly 8:45 am to 12:45 pm

**Inbound**, hourly 9:10 am to 1:45 pm (last train station pick up 12:45 pm)

To/From Pools 2 thru 5 / Tennis areas

**To**: 8:45 am (pool 4), hourly, 9:45 am to 1:45 pm

**From**: Hourly from 9:10 am to 2:10 pm

## UTILITIES CONTACT INFORMATION

Comcast ..... 800-934-6489

ConEd ..... 800-752-6633

NYSEG ..... 800-572-1131

Verizon ..... 800-922-0204

Water/Sewer (Veolia) ..... 877-426-8969

## SERVICES FOR SENIORS

### TOWN OF SOMERS SENIOR SERVICES - 914-232-0807

Princess Guerra, Director

#### Hot Lunch

- At Van Tassel House - **Free Transportation Available**

Monday thru Friday at noon

- Delivered to home-bound, Monday thru Friday

Meals leave Van Tassel House for delivery starting at 11:30 am

Suggested contribution: **\$3** per meal

#### Medical Appointments - Transportation Available

Tuesday thru Thursday, for appointments between 10:30 am to 2 pm

Suggested round-trip donation: **\$10**

#### Shopping Trips by Bus

Mondays and Fridays, pickups start at 10 am

Suggested round-trip donation: **\$2**

### OTHER SENIOR SERVICES

#### RideConnect - 914-242-7433

Transportation services seven days a week. Call to register.

#### Medicare - 800-633-4227 and [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov)

#### Medicare Rights Center - 800-333-4114

#### EPIC - 800-332-3742

New York State Senior Prescription Reduction

#### Westchester County Senior Programs and Services - 914-813-6300

Referral agency for senior services including legal - 914-949-1305

Social Services: 914-995-5889

## SERVICES FOR ALL AGES, INCLUDING SENIORS

**AA** - 914-949-1200. Info and literature National Council on Alcoholism

**Adult Protection Services Intake** - Natalie Siler 914-995-2259.

**Cancer Care** - 800-ACS-2345

**Northern Westchester Hospital** - 914-242-8115

**Putnam Hospital** - 845-279-5711

**The Dominican Sisters** - Family Health Service 914-941-1654

Long- and short-term registered nurses.

**Hospice** - 914-666-4228 - Visiting Nurse Association State-certified program providing home health care and emotional support for terminally ill patients and their families

**Project Time Out / Jewish Community Services** - 914-761-0600 - Provides in-home respite services matching families with trained sitters/companions. Contact Judy Fink, Coordinator, ext. 340; Carol Kobroff, Respite Specialist, ext. 310

#### Transportation for Cancer Treatments (free):

American Cancer Society Road to Recovery program. 800-227-2345

**Transportation for Disabled Residents** - County Office of Transportation 914-813-7777

**Para-Transit** - 914-995-7272 provides modified vans with ramp for curb-to curb service. Fare \$5 each way. Medical pre-authorization required. For eligibility call 914-995-2960.

#### Private Ambulette Services

Superior Brewster 845-278-6992

CLC Trans 914-241-0112

#### Ambulance: Westchester EMS 866-666-9367. Accepts Medicare.

Westchester County Office for the Disabled, includes hearing-defect

#### Lighthouse Inc. - New York City 212-821-9200. For sight impaired.

#### Veterans Guide to VA Health Care Benefits -

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System - 800-269-8749

Monday through Friday 8 am - 4 pm

#### VVNA Home Health Services, part of Northwell Health at Home

914-666-7616 - 8:30 am - 5 pm - Home care aides, nursing

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Contact Brett Freeman for advertising in any of our publications or online.

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOSTS OF THE BELOW EVENTS, SEE THE ACTIVITIES / CLASSES / CLUBS SECTION OF THIS NEWSLETTER. WHEN GUESTS ARE WELCOME, UP TO FOUR PER UNIT ARE ALLOWED**

**10-A-MEN CLUB**

*By Mike McBride*

**WEEKLY MEETING SCHEDULE**

**Wednesdays at 10 am in the Heritage Room**

- January 1**..... **No Meeting** – Happy New Year!
- January 8** ..... **Somers Police Officer Kim Maguire**  
Q & A
- January 15**.....**Anthony Messina Esq**  
Former Somers Town Judge
- January 22** .....**Piaget Solpiaget**  
Northern Westchester/Putnam  
Women’s Resource Center
- January 29** ..... **Serena Berger – Occupational Therapist**  
Advice on Aging in Place

All adult residents are welcome. Women are encouraged to attend. Doors open at 8:30 am. \$2 admission. Bagels and coffee are available until 9:45 am. Folks mingle and chat until 10 am, when the Pledge of Allegiance is said. That is followed by speakers and discussions until 11 am.

Come join us to meet your neighbors, ask questions, and find out what is happening in Heritage Hills and around Somers. As always, we respect, welcome, and listen to all.

\* \* \*



*By Joyce Spector*

If you have any questions regarding the following events, call Alan Tepper at 914-342-3279 or email him at [astepper@gmail.com](mailto:astepper@gmail.com).

**TRIVIA CONTEST**

**Sunday, January 19, at 1 pm in the Activities Center**

Our Trivia contest is back! Jewish as well as popular trivia questions will be featured. We are planning tables of six people; each table will play as a group. If you don't have six people, don't worry, we will assign people to your table.

Prizes will be awarded; light refreshments will be served. Admission is \$15 per person. **By January 15**, place your checks in our mail slot along with your name, phone number, and address. If you want to sit with friends, place all reservations in one envelope – we will do our best to accommodate your requests, but can make no promises.

**HERITAGE HILLS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

Chair/Editor in Chief: Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi  
Writers/Editors/Photographers: Patricia Adams, Rosetta Benson, Phyllis Bradbury, Dassi Citron, Terry Clifford, Cindy Kennedy, Karl Milde, Elizabeth Royston, Keri Reitman Schnapper

**FREE MOVIE – THE CHOSEN**

**Sunday, February 23, at 1 pm**  
**in the Activities Center**



*The Chosen* is a 1981 film – directed by Jeremy Kagan based on the book of the same name by Chiam Potok – starring Robby Benson, Barry Miller, Maximilian Schell, and Rod Steiger. It explores the dynamic between two Jewish kids in 1944 Brooklyn who become friends, despite their different backgrounds. One is from a very conservative family and the other's is more liberal. The importance of tradition, parental expectations, and the formation of Israel cause constant friction in this drama.

Light refreshments will be served. Look for our flyer with tear sheet to save your reservation. Place it in our mailbox **by February 18**. Seating is auditorium.

\* \* \*



**TED TALKS AT HERITAGE HILLS**

*By Karl Milde*

**Friday, January 17, from 3 to 5 pm**  
**in the Heritage Room**

Join hosts Ami Stokhamer and Karl Milde, both Heritage Hills residents, as they lead open discussions after viewing each of the following insightful, thought-provoking videos:

- *Why doesn't success bring happiness?* by Laura Gassner Otting
- *Want to be Happier? Stay in the Moment*, by Matt Killingsworth

*continued on page 4*

**ON THE COVER**

Cheryl Milde took the cover photo of the entrance to Condo 29's road to Units 708 and 714 off Westridge Drive.

Amy Saland provided the banner photo of the aurora borealis seen in our night sky on October 11, 2024.

**Table of Contents**

Activities/Classes/Clubs . . . . .	12 - 14
Classified Ads . . . . .	38
Columns . . . . .	35
Coming Events . . . . .	3 - 4
Community News . . . . .	4 - 8
Did You Know? . . . . .	34
Family Focus . . . . .	17
Features . . . . .	20 - 26
Poetry . . . . .	31
Sports . . . . .	27

This event is FREE for all residents. Light refreshments will be served. For further information, call Ami at 914-486-9677 or Karl at 914-342-3068.

The next TED Talks event will be held on Friday, February 21.

\* \* \*

**MORNING DISCUSSION GROUP**

*By Ken Benjamin*

**ON BEING BLACK AND LIVING IN SOMERS  
SPECIAL FOURTH ANNUAL  
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY EVENT**

**Monday, January 20, at 9:30 am  
in Rooms 2 - 3 in the Activities Center**



*By Kevin Colton*

Join Dr. Patricia Adams, author and activist, and Jay Wright, Heritage Hills Society Board member, and other panelists as they discuss their experiences living in Somers. Are we making progress or moving backwards? Are the reductions for DEI programs a setback? What are expectations and concerns around the new administration?

For more information, call Ken Benjamin at 914-617-9817.

**THE NEWSLETTER WELCOMES ARTICLES AND PHOTOS FROM HERITAGE HILLS RESIDENTS**

**OUR DEADLINE IS THE 6TH OF THE MONTH.**

Authors' names will be indicated. We cannot guarantee that every item will be used, and all submissions are subject to being edited for format, length, acceptability of language, and suitability of content. Submissions should be in email attachment format (preferably Word) or by hand or mail to the Heritage Hills Activities Office or Society Office at 8 Heritage Hills, Somers, NY 10589.



EMAIL ADDRESS: [HHillsNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:HHillsNewsletter@gmail.com).

**When Submitting Photos:**

If using your phone instead of a camera, please use the highest resolution. Unless it's a scenic vista, concentrate on faces. Most photographs are taken from too far away, and if the image is cropped, the faces will be blurred. Get closer.

Please do not incorporate art or a photo in a Word file. Attach it and Word files to emails as separate items.

**We cannot use anything taken from the internet without authorization from the source.**



**SOCIETY BOARD NEWS**

*Compiled by Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi*

**WELCOME NEW OWNERS**

*By Anna Milani*

*Society Office Administrator*

During the month of November, ownership changed for 12 units . If you're a newcomer, you should have received a *New Resident* folder when obtaining your photo ID in the Activities Office. The folders are also available in the Society Office, open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 1 pm.

**PORTIONS OF THE NOVEMBER 20 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

*Summarized by Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi*

This is a summary of some portions of the meeting. Videos of these monthly meetings have been posted on the Society Board website, [hhsociety.org](http://hhsociety.org). The minutes of the monthly meeting will be published after they are approved at the next monthly meeting on December 18 meeting.

**Board members in attendance:** Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Denise Elliott, Joe Kelly, Jack Mattes, Karl Milde, Patricia Ploss, Bruce Prince, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz, Art Singer, and Alan Tepper

**Board members absent:** Ann Harper and Jay Wright

**Also attending:** Rob Casasanta, Prosegur Security

**FINANCE & BUDGET, COMMITTEE - GENE ARCHER, CHAIR**

**Treasurer's Report**

**- October Financials**

Income .....	\$ 538,303.68
Expenses .....	(741,391.09)
Debit Balance .....	\$(203,087.41)

Cash on hand at month end: \$803,960.37

The big expense items included the second round of road paving - \$234,026.40, and storm water management - \$33,000. Year-end projection for storm water management is \$210,000, and for paving is \$592,000. Nonetheless, we should have a solid year-end.

*continued on page 5*

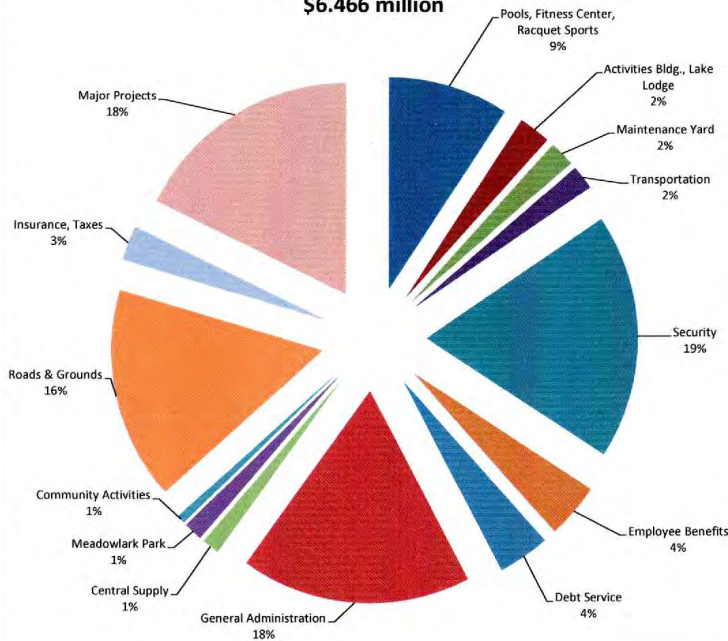


*By Joan DeFrancesca*

**- 2025 Budget**

The budget is \$6,465,643, representing a 3.5% increase over 2024. The full, detailed budget will be in the February issue of this *Newsletter*.

**Heritage Hills Society 2025 Budget**  
\$6.466 million



Pools, Fitness Center, Racquet Sp	\$ 596,458.00
Activities Bldg., Lake Lodge	\$ 156,500.00
Maintenance Yard	\$ 125,813.00
Transportation	\$ 119,953.00
Security	\$ 1,214,370.00
Employee Benefits	\$ 270,555.00
Debt Service	\$ 254,048.00
General Administration	\$ 1,139,628.00
Central Supply	\$ 85,000.00
Meadowlark Park	\$ 93,000.00
Community Activities	\$ 41,250.00
Roads & Grounds	\$ 1,050,745.00
Insurance, Taxes	\$ 171,323.00
Major Projects	\$ 1,147,000.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 6,465,643.00</b>

The top six areas are:

- 1. Security - \$1,214,000 - 19%:** One of the most important resources on the property, our Security Staff provides much more than just security services. All Security staff are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), providing the lowest EMT response time in Westchester County,
- 2. General Administration - \$1,139,000 - 18%:** Includes management fees, office equipment, legal fees, legal expenses, etc.
- 3. Roads and Grounds - \$1,050,000 - 16%**
- 4. Pools and Fitness Center (includes racket sports pickleball and tennis)- just under \$600,000 - 9%**
- 5. Employee Benefits - \$270,000 - 4%**
- 6. Debt Services - \$254,000 - 4+%**

Separate on the Budget are **Major Capital Projects - \$1,147,000 - 18%** [see, also OPERATIONS REPORT, below]:

- Rolling out the new Access Card System to another location
- Storm Water Management
- Road Paving
- Fitness Center Equipment
- Pool #3 Equipment
- New Shuttle Bus
- Door / Door Frame replacements
- Install split HVAC systems at Lake Lodge
- Redecorating
- Audio Equipment
- Pickleball Canopy

**REDECORATING COMMITTEE - GLORIA ANDERSON, CHAIR**

In addition to myself, other Committee members are Board members Deica Ruiz and Pat Ploss and resident Susan Atwell, a professional decorator and President of Atwell Staged Home, who has lived here for some time.

- For the Activities Center, in the reception area, we're keeping the current furniture, painting the walls and adding new lamps and artwork.
- At Lake Lodge we're changing some window shades and replacing some photo murals.

**FITNESS CENTER COMMITTEE - JOE KELLY, CHAIR**

- **October Usage**
  - Exercise room: 3,504 swipes
  - Gymnasium: 403 swipes
- **Free Consultations:** Certified Personal Trainers Mary and Jonathan did 18 of these in October.
- **Shoe Change Requirement:** Be mindful of the need to do so to avoid damaging the equipment with winter road treatment. [See OPERATIONS REPORT, below.]

**MEADOWLARK PARK - PATRICA PLOSS, CHAIR**

The UTV has been purchased for use by the maintenance staff to gain access to the entire park, especially useful in case of an emergency.

**SOMERS TOWN - BRUCE PRINCE, CHAIR**

- **New Sidewalks:** See page 7 regarding the new sidewalk outside our main entrance. Another one was installed on Route 202 to finish the outside edge of Baily Park.

**OPERATIONS REPORT - JOHN MILLIGAN, PROPERTY MANAGER**

- **2025 Budgeted Major Capital Projects:** Expanding on what Gene Archer listed above:
  - Storm Water Management relates to replacing underground pipes that have rusted over time.
  - Road Paving
  - Door replacements - the four outside doors on the Activities Center lower level are rusted.
  - Install split HVAC systems at Lake Lodge - a two- or three-year phased project eliminating the need for an oil-fired boiler there.

*continued on page 6*

- New Shuttle Bus – Each bus travels 150 miles per day/750 miles a week .Our oldest bus is up to 75,000, which we'll trade it in while it has value .
- Fitness Center Equipment – two of the eight treadmills purchased back in 2018 are being replaced (replaced another two last year) .
- **Storm Water Basin cleaning:** There are 16 of them on the West Hill which we've finished cleaning .
- **Meadowlark Park:** Markers have been placed on the trail extensions, using the new **UTV**.
- **Fitness Center:** Any shoes left in the cubbies beneath the bench outside the Fitness Center / Gymnasium will be removed by the overnight cleaning staff and turned into the Lost & Found in the Activities Center .

\* \* \*

**POST-MEETING DISCUSSION**

A resident addressed complex Garden Club concerns .There was a lengthy discussion which can be seen on the video of this meeting on the Society Board website .

\* \* \*

**DECEMBER 18 SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

The meeting took place after this issue of the *Newsletter* went to press . So the summary of that meeting will be in the January issue .A video of the entire meeting and subsequent resident inquiries/responses can be seen on the Society Board's website and on Comcast's channels 21 and 1070 daily at 2 and 7 pm until the February 19 meeting occurs (there is no January meeting) .The full transcript of this meeting's Minutes will be posted on the website after approval at the February 19 meeting .

\* \* \*

**2025 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Meetings take place in the Heritage Room at 1:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month except October, when the meeting will occur on the fourth Wednesday of the Month .There are no meetings in January and August .The June 18 meeting is actually two back-to-back meetings – the regular Monthly Meeting as well as the Annual Meeting .

February 19	July 16
March 19	September 17
April 16	October 22
May 21	November 19
June 18	December 17

Unit owners are welcome to attend and can raise matters of concern at the end of the meetings .The meetings can be viewed live on Channel 21 and daily thereafter at 2 and 7 pm until the next meeting occurs . They can also be viewed on the Society website, [hhsociety.org](http://hhsociety.org).

\* \* \*

**SECURITY**

*By Rob Casasanta, Prosegur Security*

**NOVEMBER SECURITY CALL REPORT**

During the month of November, our Security staff received and responded to a total of 276 calls including the following matters:

Service . . . . .	85. (47. lift assists, 7 persons locked out, 10 welfare checks, and 21 other)
Medical . . . . .	81. . . . .

Security . . . . .	51 . . . . .
Open Garage Doors . . . . .	19 (6 Somers, 5 State)
Police . . . . .	11 . . . . .
Maintenance . . . . .	11 (3 automatic fire alarms, 1 smoke/
Fire Calls . . . . .	9. CO2 alarms, 1 fire, 4 other)
Burglar Alarms . . . . .	4 (1.personal injury)
Motor Vehicle Accidents . . . . .	2 (in handicapped spaces, fire lanes,
Parking Violations . . . . .	1 A roads, or B roads)

If you have any Security questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to me directly either by phone at 914-276-2592 or by email at [Robert.Casasanta@prosegur.com](mailto:Robert.Casasanta@prosegur.com).

\* \* \*

**COUNCIL OF CONDOS**

*By Terry Clifford*

**The November 20 meeting** was attended by the following Condos: 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30 .

**Fire Safety:** The extreme drought had the Hudson Valley on Fire Alert . Condos were asked if they addressed the issue with their residents . Some sent email reminders or asked for a moratorium on fireplace and outdoor grill use .

**Gun Club Update:** Condo 22 continues to pursue charges against the Gun Club President for removing safety warning signs on Condo property .A new sound meter recorded forty-five minutes of gun shots exceeding the Town of Carmel's permitted level of sixty decibels .One hundred volleys had readings of seventy-eight decibels .

**Comcast Firewall Repair:** Comcast has set up firewall repairs and will contact residents to make appointments .

**Contractor Bidding Process:** Condos vary in this process .Some use one or more of the following:

- List of proposed vendors and proposals designed to make comparisons: experience, job specifics, vendor location, license, insurance, materials to be used and warranties on workmanship and materials .
- Some property managers will vet companies and then submit three or four to the board .
- Some property managers steer the work toward their subsidiary companies, which can be a conflict .
- If a board member recommends a friend or family member to the bidding process, they should recuse themselves from voting for the vendor selection .
- Many Condos rely on property managers for experience and knowledge base .Condos should be sure subcontractors have the required insurance .

We hope to see a president or representative at all the monthly 2025 meetings .The next meeting will take place on January 15 at 7 pm at the Activities Center .

**HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO ALL!**

**ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB START-UP**

*By Carrie Sears*

A group of residents concerned about the environment are interested in forming this club. Potential members are encouraged to attend an organizational meeting on **Friday, January 3, from 4:15 to 5:30. We will gather in the Activities Center Reception Area.** Heritage Hills residents only; teenage residents are welcome.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, email Carrie Sears at [carolynnsears@me.com](mailto:carolynnsears@me.com).

\* \* \*



**CIAO ITALIA  
2025 MEMBERSHIP AND SCHEDULE**

*By Michael Lanotte*

**MEMBERSHIP**

Ciao Italia Membership forms are available outside the Activities Office, or you can print them from an email blast. Dues are \$12 per person. Fill out the bottom of the form and place in the Ciao Italia mail slot along with your check.

**SCHEDULE**

Save the following 2025 dates: Sunday, February 9 (Super Bowl), Saturdays, April 5 and May 10 (members only events), Friday, June 13, and Saturdays, July 12, August 9, September 20, October 11, November 8, and December 13 (members only event).

\* \* \*

**FRIENDS IN THE HILLS**

*By Deb Ferrara*

Friends in the Hills will be on holiday from January thru May. We are now accepting 2025 membership applications. Membership is \$10 per person.

We have already started to plan events and are sure you will be excited with the lineup. Here is a hint of what we have planned:

- May 16: Bingo
- June 20: Elvis "will be in the building"
- July 25: Music Bingo – You can't miss this
- August 22: Murder Mystery with the hilarious Golden Girls

Thank you from our Committee for making Friends in the Hills a continued success!

\* \* \*

**WOMEN'S CLUB**

*Submitted by Phyllis Bradbury*

Reminder: The Women's Club does not meet in January; however, we look forward to your joining us in the Heritage Room on February 12. Flyers with more information will be available in the Activities Center.

In 2024, our events included a Wine & Cheese party, Irish program, Bingo, a dance group, and *United for the Troops*. We also hosted two luncheons – one in the Spring and a Harvest Luncheon. Both were held at local restaurants and very well attended. We thank members for their support and welcome any program suggestions.

**NEW SIDEWALK AT OUR MAIN ENTRANCE**

*Text by Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi, photos by Elizabeth Royston*



Taking advantage of our mild weather during October and November, a new sidewalk was installed leading from our main entrance on Route 202 to the Heritage 202 Center strip mall entrance. There's a crosswalk to it from the sidewalk in front of DeCicco & Sons. A pedestrian signal indicator can be activated by the push buttons on either side of Route 202. It is now safe for everyone to get across the road, especially students walking to the Heritage 202 Center eateries after school.

\* \* \*

**PROSEUR SECURITY  
ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

*By Gloria Anderson*

On December 5, Proseur Security held its annual awards ceremony in Stamford, Connecticut. Rob Casasanta nominated four of our Security Officers for recognition. The recipients for their acts of heroism here In Heritage Hills were:

Joseph Vitanza, EMT, and Brock Breiman, EMT - both for a heart attack / cardiac arrest save.

Lieutenant Paul Cirillo, EMT, for Heroism for pulling a woman out of the water when she crashed her car.

In addition, Brian Summer, EMT, was honored for all his years and dedication.

AND...to his surprise...Rob was awarded the *Security Account Manager of the Year Award*.



**COMMUNITY THEATRE**

*By Muriel Millstein Weiss*

Let it snow,  
 Let it snow,  
 Let it snow,  
 We want you to know  
 Weather or not,  
 After a short respite  
 We will be working on plans  
 For our forthcoming Spring Show  
 Till then, we wish you  
 Peace, Happiness, and Good Health In 2025

\* \* \*

**HLibrary**

**NYTIMES BEST 2024 BOOKS**

Several of the books we added to HLibrary's collection last year were cited in the *New Times Best Books of 2024* list. Among the novels listed were *James*, by Percival Everett; *The Women*, by Kristin Hannah; *Wandering Stars*, by Tommy Orange; and Liz Moore's *The God of the Woods*.



Our collection's non-fiction titles also are well represented in the best-books list. They include Salman Rushdie's *Knife*; *The Wide Wide Sea*, by Hampton Sides; and *A Walk in the Park*, by Kevin Fedarko.

**BOOK REVIEW**

For a review of *Karla's Choice*, by Nick Harkaway, see page 35. The new espionage thriller was written by John Le Carré's son.

**NEW ADDITIONS TO OUR COLLECTION IN JANUARY**

To reserve any of the following books listed below, stop by or call the Library at 914-276-7655.

**Fiction**

- Armfield, Julia. .... *Private Rites*
- Harvey, Samantha. .... *Orbital*
- Marakami, Haruki. .... *The City and Its Uncertain Walls*
- Roy, Nayantara. .... *The Magnificent Ruins*
- Steel, Danielle. .... *Trial by Fire*

**Mystery**

- Cook, Robin. .... *Bellevue*
- Harkaway, Nick. .... *Karla's Choice*
- Jonasson, Ragnar. .... *Death at the Sanatorium*
- Kane, Darby. .... *What the Wife Knew*
- Straley, John. .... *Big Breath In*

**Non-Fiction**

- Garten, Ina. .... *Be Ready When the Luck Happens*
- Grisham, John, and McCloskey, Jim. .... *Framed: Astonishing True Stories of Wrongful Convictions*
- Tan, Amy. .... *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*

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**914.273.3100**
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 268 Route 202 Somers, NY 10589  
**914.276.3718**





A photograph of two elderly women with white hair, smiling and laughing together. They are wearing light-colored sweaters. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with natural light.

*love*  
**I loved  
making  
new friends.**

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## GENERAL CLUB/CLASS INFORMATION AND REGULARLY OCCURRING ACTIVITIES

Produced by the Activities Office

Phone: 914-276-2636 or go to Activities at [hhsociety.org](http://hhsociety.org)

Advance registration is required. To book a space for your group/club, contact Andrew Kaplan in the Activities Office by email at [activities@hhsociety.org](mailto:activities@hhsociety.org) or by phone at 914-276-2636.

### ARTS & CRAFTS

**I LOVE ART CLASS:** After school Art in Heritage Hills for children ages K to 6. Hosted by Miss Judika, M.S. To register, call Judika at 914-438-6750.

**LEARN TO BEAD WITH ALLISON:** Join us on Mondays at 11 am in Room B for our beading class. Each class is \$25 including materials fee. You go home with a piece of jewelry that you made for yourself or for a special someone. Come and join the fun. To enroll or for more information, contact Allison Rubin at 914-629-3655 or [ahrubin521@yahoo.com](mailto:ahrubin521@yahoo.com).

**CRAFT CLUB:** Calling all crafters! Join us to explore new media, share traditional crafts, and meet other crafters. second Wednesday of the month from 1 to 3 pm and fourth Wednesday of the month from 6 to 8 pm. Email if you're interested in joining [craftclubhh@gmail.com](mailto:craftclubhh@gmail.com).

**NEEDLECRAFT GROUP:** Charitable needlecraft group meets Wednesdays at 12:30 pm in the Game Room. All skill levels welcome. \$20 annual dues. Proof of vaccination is required. For questions or to register, call Linda at 914-277-2776.

**PAINT & SIP WITH JUDIKA:** Create a different painting in each class once a month. Step-by-step instructions given, and everyone leaves with a masterpiece! \$40 per class includes all supplies. Bring your creative spirit! To register, call Judika at 914-438-6750.

**PHOTO CLUB:** Meets the second Friday of each month at 2 pm in Room 2 of the Activities Center. All are welcome to join regardless of experience in photography. For more information, contact Myra Hopper at 520-390-5523 or [myrahopper@gmail.com](mailto:myrahopper@gmail.com).

**SILK FABRIC PAINTING CLASS:** Fee \$135. Must sign up for a full 4-week session at the Activities Center. Space is limited. For more information, contact Evey at 914-276-0737 or email her at [evemusart@comcast.net](mailto:evemusart@comcast.net).

**SKETCH WORKSHOP:** Wednesdays 9:30 to 11:30 am in Activities Center's Studio A. Portraits, figures, still lifes. Bring your choice of paper, pen, pencil, watercolor, pastel, etc. Models are welcome to pose for 20 minutes (clothed!). No fee, no teacher, but guidance available.

**WOODCRAFT CLUB:** The shop at the Activities Center is available Monday thru Saturday from 9 am to 4 pm. For information and to register, contact Club President Ed at 914-276-0671 or 914-552-2303.

**CONTEMPORARY FICTION BOOK CLUB:** Openings are available for residents interested in joining this Club. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month from 2 to 3:30 pm. Contact Myra Hopper at 520 390-5523 or [myrahopper@gmail.com](mailto:myrahopper@gmail.com).

**CIAO ITALIA:** Membership, open to all residents, is \$12 per person for the year. Fill out a Membership Form available outside the Activities Office and include it in an envelope with your payment. Watch for flyers and TV notices announcing upcoming events.

**CLUB SHALOM:** You don't have to be Jewish to love Club Shalom, a Club dedicated to providing quality entertaining and educational Jewish cultural programs for the residents of Heritage Hills. Watch for information about upcoming events. All residents are welcome.

**CONCERT SOCIETY:** We present four classical concerts, featuring the best and brightest of classical music's Rising Stars, in May, June, September, and October on Sundays at 3 pm in the Activities Center's Heritage Room. Annual subscriptions are \$90 per person or pay \$26 per person per concert at the door. Subscription Forms are available at the Activities Center. If you have any questions, call Raina Lefkowitz at 914-262-4407.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION:** Our mission is to educate and entertain with monthly presentations by experts in the fields of art, literature, music, theater, history, and politics on specified Tuesdays at 1:30 pm in the Activities Center's Heritage Room. For more information, see the COMING EVENTS section of this *Newsletter* or call Ann at 914-617-9434.

**CULINARY CLUB:** We meet for dinner in the Activities Center once a month on a Wednesday evening at 6 pm. If you are interested, contact Barbara Gangemi at 914-617-9037.

### DANCE

**FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL DANCE:** The first Friday of every month from 7 to 10 pm in the Activities Center's Heritage Room. \$10 per person includes coffee and cake. BYOB. For more information, call Angela Viscogliosi at 914-393-8736.

### EXERCISE CLASSES

**MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION:** Mondays and Fridays from 9:30 to 10:30 am in Lake Lodge's 1st floor, Room 3. Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 8 pm in Lake Lodge. With Melanie Gambino BA BFA MA MSMT/Ed. RSDE. \$12 per class. Join me for a new kind of fluid fitness and mindful exploration in fluid movement meditation, breath, sound, and awareness into the interconnection of body/mind/spirit and nature. Contact Melanie with any questions and for more information by email at [melaniegambinocontinuumteacher@gmail.com](mailto:melaniegambinocontinuumteacher@gmail.com) or by phone at 914 588-2450.

**CHAIR ZUMBA/TONING WITH THERESA:** Mondays at 9:45 am by Zoom only. Zumba for anyone who prefers a seated workout. Contact Theresa for more information at [zumbawithme@aol.com](mailto:zumbawithme@aol.com).

**GENTLE YOGA WITH LISA:** Mondays at 11:30 am and Fridays at 10 am on Lake Lodge's 2nd floor. \$12 for a 75-minute class. [Lisaathomas@optonline.net](mailto:Lisaathomas@optonline.net) or 914-497-0243.

**TAI CHI AND CHI GONG WITH MASTER ELLEN:** Mondays from 12:30 to 1:30 pm in the Gym. \$70 per month. First class free. All levels welcome. Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothing. Contact [heritagehillstaichi@gmail.com](mailto:heritagehillstaichi@gmail.com).

**LINDA'S LAKE LODGE CLASSES:** Body Conditioning: 8:30 am Tuesdays and Thursdays. Rock & Roll Workout: 9:30 am Tuesdays. Yoga Pilates: 9:30 am Thursdays. Sports Conditioning: 9 am Sundays. All classes are \$10 per class. Register at the start of the month for the classes you plan to attend. Contact Linda Zeiss instructor at [Labzeiss@gmail.com](mailto:Labzeiss@gmail.com) or 718-541-0861.

**CARDIO/STRENGTH/STRETCH CLASS WITH LORI:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:30 am in the Gym. Join me for a fun, safe, effective workout. Low impact cardio, resistance training, balance, stretch and breath work – all set to great music! Appropriate for all levels. Resistance bands and weights available. No mats needed. Fee: \$10 per class. Try the first class for free! Class is also available on Zoom. Email Lori at [efyjig@gmail.com](mailto:efyjig@gmail.com).

**CHAIR YOGA WITH SATISH:** Practice Tuesdays from 10 to 11:15 am in Lake Lodge with Satish Gambhir, Registered Yoga (500-RYT) and acupressure teacher with over 20 years of experience. Chair Yoga aimed at toning the entire body and increasing flexibility. Breathing and meditation for relaxation and mind-body connection. Live music. \$10 per class. Call or email to register at 914-646-0887 or [Satishgambhir@gmail.com](mailto:Satishgambhir@gmail.com).

**BALANCE AND AGILITY FOR ACTIVE SENIORS:** Wednesdays at 10:30 am on the 2nd floor at Lake Lodge. Navigate obstacles; strengthen balance; move better for walks, hikes, or pickleball. Learn from a master teacher with years of experience, Elena Remais. \$80 for 4 weeks \$25 for drop-in. [Elenathetrainer@yahoo.com](mailto:Elenathetrainer@yahoo.com) and 917-848-3174.

**MOVE AND GROOVE WITH THERESA:** Wednesdays at 11 am in the Fitness Center and on Zoom. Easy-to-learn and easy-to-follow Beginner Line Dances to ALL music genres. Contact Theresa for more information at [zumbawithme@aol.com](mailto:zumbawithme@aol.com). On Hiatus Until Fall.

**ZUMBA GOLD WITH THERESA:** Fridays at 10 am in the Fitness Center and on Zoom, and Saturdays at 10 am on Zoom only. Fun, easy to follow, low impact dance fitness class. Contact Theresa for more information at [zumbawithme@aol.com](mailto:zumbawithme@aol.com).

**GETTING BACK ON TRACK (15-15-15) WITH THERESA:** Fridays at 10:50 am at the Fitness Center and on Zoom. Light cardio and balance, functional strength and stretch, and restorative breathing and relaxation. Great class to begin or continue your fitness journey. Contact Theresa for more information at [zumbawithme@aol.com](mailto:zumbawithme@aol.com).

**VINYASA YOGA WITH JOE:** Saturdays at 9 am in Lake Lodge's Upper Level. \$12 per class. To register, email Joe Ferrari at [josephferrari@me.com](mailto:josephferrari@me.com).

**FAMILY NETWORK GROUP:** Arranges organized family-oriented gatherings, days and evenings, several times a year. Go to [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) to join the group "Heritage Hills Family Network" or email [keri.reitman@gmail.com](mailto:keri.reitman@gmail.com).

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE GROUPS**

**FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP:** Meets the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month in Lake Lodge's Room 1 from 11 am to noon. Members should have a basic knowledge of French conversation but need not be fluent. Refresh your French language skills and laugh and learn with us. If you have any questions, call Carole Ellis 914-260-9182 or email her at [carellis14@yahoo.com](mailto:carellis14@yahoo.com).

**SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP:** Meets the 1st Thursday of the month in Lake Lodge's Room 1 at 11 am. Group is open to intermediate through fluent Spanish speakers. ¡Vengan! Contact Mike at [elprofesor55@aol.com](mailto:elprofesor55@aol.com).

### **FUN & GAMES**

**BRIDGE—DUPLICATE:** Mondays and Thursdays at 12:30 pm in the Activities Center. For information, call Marie at 914-277-4266.

**CANASTA CLUB:** Saturdays from 12:30 to 4 pm. Contact Doris Simon at 914-276-0111 or [Doris1121@me.com](mailto:Doris1121@me.com) or Nancy Heilman at 914-224-7180 or [Nancy.C.Heilman@gmail.com](mailto:Nancy.C.Heilman@gmail.com).

**CHESS CLUB:** Wednesdays from 1 to 3:30 pm in Lake Lodge's Room 3. We are a group of chess enthusiasts who enjoy coming together to play some friendly games of chess! Beginners are welcome! Bring your chess set if you have one. Some playing pairs may choose to use a chess clock; bring this, also, if you have one. For more information, contact Pat Posluszny at [patpugs@comcast.net](mailto:patpugs@comcast.net) or 914-276-6550.

**FRIENDS IN THE HILLS CLUB:** Open to all adult Heritage Hills residents. Each meeting will be a night of fun and socializing with your neighbors. See the COMING EVENTS section of this *Newsletter* for event details. Email us at [Friendsinthehills@aol.com](mailto:Friendsinthehills@aol.com) with any questions or contact Debbie Ferrara at 914-924-3003 or Mary Ann Walrath at 914-318-1227.

**MAH JONGG:** Mondays at noon in Lake Lodge (contact Sue Furino 914-617-9110); Wednesdays at noon in the Activities Center (Contact Carol Tocci 914-471-5689); Fridays at 1 pm in Lake Lodge, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 am to 1 pm (Call Cheryl Milde at 914-342-3068).

**SCRABBLERS:** Thursdays starting promptly at 1 pm in Room 2 in the Activities Center. Casual Scrabble game play. Play 1 or more games. All levels of play, including newbies, are welcome. For more information, just walk in or contact Susan at 914-617-9228 or [ciwhitestar@comcast.net](mailto:ciwhitestar@comcast.net).

**GARDEN CLUB:** For information, including questions on membership and use of the Community Garden, please send an email to [hhgardenclubsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:hhgardenclubsecretary@gmail.com)

### **HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Blood Pressure Screenings With a Smile:** Nurse Ellie Eidam offers screenings on the second Friday of the month from 9 to 11 am in the Activities Center's Game Room. Your temperature may be taken. Do not come if you have tested positive for Covid-19, were recently exposed (within 14 days) to the virus or traveled to areas that have experienced high levels of the virus. Contact Ellie at [elliebob1@gmail.com](mailto:elliebob1@gmail.com) or 914-617-2109 for more information.

**Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Support Group:** Caring for someone with Alzheimer's/Dementia is a difficult and painful challenge. A support group can help. Meetings take place the first Thursday of the month at 12:30 pm in Lake Lodge's Room 1. Fee: \$20 per session. Facilitated by Linda Ludwig, Psy.D. To register, call 914-617-9328 or email [ludwiglr@aol.com](mailto:ludwiglr@aol.com).

**Spousal Bereavement Group:** Led by Linda Ludwig, PsD, we will resume meeting in the Spring.

**HIKERS & WALKERS GROUP:** Weekly hikes from September to June. Information and our schedule are available in the Activities Center mailroom.

**INDEPENDENT AND FOREIGN FILM CLUB:** Monthly screenings in the Activities Center's Heritage Room, followed by a discussion. April thru December. \$20 for the series. Schedule is posted in the Activities Center and on the Society website. For information, contact Steve Klepner at 845-297-7066 or [spk010@yahoo.com](mailto:spk010@yahoo.com).

## ACTIVITIES/CLASSES/CLUBS

**LET'S TALK SENIOR CARE:** Join us the second Friday of every month at 1 pm. Stephanie Roberti, MHA, will be introducing different senior care topics to help educate us on this important subject. Next class, January 10. For more information, Stephanie Roberti at 914-357-3049 or by email at [Sroberti@Newbeginningsforseniors.com](mailto:Sroberti@Newbeginningsforseniors.com).

**LIBRARY:** Open Monday through Friday from 10 am to 3 pm and Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm. For information on the collection, visit the Heritage Hills Library webpage at [hhsociety.org](http://hhsociety.org) or call 914-276-7655.

**MORNING DISCUSSION GROUP:** Discussion group on current event topics. Meets Mondays from 9:30 to 11 am in the Activities Center. For information, email Ken Benjamin at [kenbenja@aol.com](mailto:kenbenja@aol.com) or call him at 914-617-9817.

**RAINBOW CONNECTION CLUB:** A group for LGBTQ members and their families, friends, and neighbors. All are welcome. We meet the first Thursday of each month at Lake Lodge from 5 to 7 pm. For more information contact Joanne at 914-450-5609.

**SHAKESPEARE GROUP:** Tuesdays from 10 to 11:30 am in the Activities Center's Game Room and on Zoom. See a film of a classic Shakespeare play, then read it and join in lively discussions. All are welcome! For more information, call Susan Ray at 914-391-6686 or Margaret Howlett at 973-746-7816.

**SINGLES CLUB:** If you are interested in joining the club, contact Pat Caruso at 914-649-3232 or [carusop515@comcast.net](mailto:carusop515@comcast.net). Membership dues are \$12 per year.

### SPORTS

**BOCCE GROUP:** Wednesdays and Saturdays (weather permitting) starting at 9:30 am. For more information contact Reno DiCristofaro at 914-500-5160 or Diane Purr at 914-617-9338.

**EAST HILL MEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION:** Enjoy weekly Thursday 9-hole casual competitions in a variety of formats, as well as Tuesday Stroke Play opportunities, from April thru November at Somers National Golf Club's course right here on Heritage Hills' West Hill. For more information, contact Membership Chairman Sandy Lieberman at 914-438-6762 or [golfer61345@gmail.com](mailto:golfer61345@gmail.com).

**PICKLEBALL COMMITTEE:** On the outdoor courts is open play, no reservations required. The Gym is also available for indoor play. For details on both, and about the Pickleball Committee and community, email [PickleballHH@Outlook.com](mailto:PickleballHH@Outlook.com). See you on the courts!

**PING PONG:** Thursdays at 10 am in the Activities Center's Game Room. Open to all residents. Come hang out and play!

**SHUFFLEBOARD GROUP:** October through March in the Gym on Wednesdays from 1 to 3 pm, and on Saturdays from 9:30 am to noon.

**TENNIS COMMITTEE:** All Tennis reservations are made via [www.playtomic.io](http://www.playtomic.io), or you can download the playtomic app, which offers many additional features. Once on the playtomic website, type "Heritage Hills" and click on "tennis" as the sport choice. For general information about the tennis group, call Dena at 914-589-3560. The Friday night Round Robin runs from May through September.

**TED TALKS:** On the third Friday of the month, from 3 to 5 pm in the Heritage Room, hosts Ami Stokhamer and Karl Milde (residents) present two thought-provoking TED Talk videos, after which there is open discussion. Free event with light refreshments. For more information, see the COMING EVENTS section in this *Newsletter*, or call Ami at 914-486-9677 or Karl at 845-545-1959.

**10-A-MEN CLUB:** Come to the Activities Center's Heritage Room on Wednesdays at 9 am and have continental breakfast for \$2. The meeting starts at 10 am.

**THRIVING IN YOUR PRIME:** Join us every other week on Thursday at 1 pm in Room 3 of Lake Lodge to discuss relevant topics and learn strategies that will help those over the age of 50 navigate the challenges they are confronted with. Each time we meet we will discuss a new topic, and you will learn strategies you can implement in your own life. The investment in each gathering is one hour of your time and \$5!

**WOMEN'S CLUB:** Meets the second Wednesday of the month, except for January, July, and August. See the COMING EVENTS section of this Newsletter for specific upcoming event details. We welcome new members! Des are \$12 for the year. Insert your check in an envelope with your name, unit number, phone number, and email address, and put it in the Women's Club mail slot. Application forms are available outside the Activities Office. For more information, call Membership Chairperson Alfreda Savarese at 914-617-2007.

**WRITERS WORKSHOP CLASS:** Workshop on *Google Meet!* Mondays at 1 pm and Saturdays at 10:30 am in Lake Lodge. Email Linda Spear, workshop facilitator, to arrange to join us! [Lindaspear211@gmail.com](mailto:Lindaspear211@gmail.com).

**YACHT GROUP ("HHYC"):** The HHYC is a fee-free social group of past and present water fans (swimmers, boaters, fishers, cruisers, surfers, whatever). At our monthly potluck "dock parties" on the first Friday of the month in the Lobby at Lake Lodge, we share our experiences and plan future ones (theme parties, day trips/activities, or even cruises). For more information, contact Commadorable Susan at [ciwhitestar@omcast.net](mailto:ciwhitestar@omcast.net) or 914-617-9228.

\* \* \*



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**CANDY CANE RUN**

*Submitted by Keri Reitman Schnapper*

The Somers Volunteer Fire Department's fire truck, carrying Santa and Mrs. Claus, stopped by the Activities Center parking long on its Candy Cane Run on Saturday, December 14.



*Billy, by Patty Kania*



*Juliet, Juliana, and Isabella Gjini, by Keri Reitman Schnapper*



*Luca and Matteo Robbins, by Keri Reitman Schnapper*



**CHARLIE, THE CHIPMUNK**

*By Karl Milde*

"Good morning, Charlie," his mother said brightly. "Time to get up!"

Charlie eased himself out of his cozy straw bed and quickly nibbled the breakfast his mom had left him: an assortment of nuts and berries she and his dad had gathered and brought back to their home under a stone wall. After breakfast, Charlie set out for the day's adventure. He first peeked out an opening in the wall. He saw no one so he emerged very carefully, stepped out, and quickly ran across the lawn to a nearby tree. "No one is coming. No one is coming" he repeated to himself. But someone was!

In the distance he heard the sharp "Yap" sound. Startled, he ran up the tree trunk to the first branch. He pressed himself into the crevice between the trunk and the branch, trying to make himself invisible. He squeezed in without moving. Hearing no further sounds he glanced down, and there he was. A small dog, frantically wagging its tail. Eying him, the dog barked again, twice this time: "yap...yap." The sound struck terror in Charlie.

Charlie remembered from somewhere he had three choices: fight, flight, or make friends. At the moment he was stuck in a fourth choice not of his own making: *freeze*. He pressed through his fear and tried the third choice. Looking down again, he said to the dog with a tremulous

voice, "Can't we be friends?"

The dog reacted enthusiastically, wagging its tail even faster than before and jumping, trying to reach Charlie. Dogs have no ability to climb trees, Charlie knew, so his fear melted a bit. He called out again, this time with a stronger voice, "Did you hear me? I'd like to be friends..."

"Of course I heard you," the dog replied. "See my big floppy ears? I'm a dachshund, dummy. And I'm wagging my tail as hard as I can. If that's not a 'yes,' what is?"

"Oh! Okay then. I'll come down halfway. You still scare me." Charlie came down the tree trunk, head first, to just above where the dog could reach. "What's your name?" he asked bravely.

"Name's 'Nathan.' Like the hot dog, get it?"

"What's a hot dog?" Charlie asked. He'd never seen one.

"Don't you know? They're long, thin, and they're brown like me. And they're good to eat."

"I'm long, thin, and brown too," Charlie said, "but I don't like to be eaten." Nathan howled with laughter. "I only eat dog food," he said, and he held out his paw in an offer of friendship. Charlie came all the way down and smiled up at his new friend.

He and Nathan played together until Charlie's mom called him in for lunch.

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### TOYS FOR TOTS

Text by Terry Clifford,  
photos by Terry Clifford and Elizabeth Royston

On Saturday, December 7, families gathered at the beautifully decorated Activities Center Heritage Room to view eight collection boxes of diverse toys and gifts generously donated by our community. Those who did not submit gifts wrote checks to the "Toys for Tots" organization.

Santa and his Elf (a/k/a Frank and Toni Collura) brought joy to the children by answering their questions, singing holiday songs with them, and giving each a gift. The children were served eggnog and cookies by our master eggnog maker, Reno Di Cristofaro. Terry read "The Night Before Christmas" and "The Night Before Hanukah" to all. The youngsters played games with each other. Families and friends enjoyed the event.

Thanks to Joe Kelly, Seth, and others who helped with set up and cleanup. And a big thank you to Jack Mattes for putting together another successful "Toys For Tots" event.



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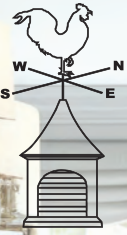
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**MICHAEL CAMERA,  
COORDINATOR,  
SPANISH CONVERSATION GROUP**

*Text and photo by Rosetta Benson*

Michael Camera comes from a large Italian family. That is an understatement. He tells me a wonderful story about his grandfather who emigrated to the United States from Italy in 1894. It seems this patriarch married three times, each wife bearing eight children. We are both smiling now. "That's a lot of 'begets'!"

High school was Mike's first opportunity to study a foreign language. He chose French. In college (St. John's), he decided to major in French and minor in Italian. His first job was as a bilingual guide in the newly completed World Trade Center. However, it became evident very early on that answering, "Where is the bathroom?" was not a *career* choice. What to do? Ah, yes. Teach.

He accepted a teaching position in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. He discovered that Spanish was the language most in demand. Seeing the writing on the wall, Mike returned to St. John's and got his Master's degree in bilingual education, *not* in French, in Spanish.

Mike taught for thirty-three years, retiring in 2010. To him, teaching a foreign language is far more than just teaching a skill. It is an opportunity to broaden a young person's horizons, to pique their interests in another country's culture and history.

Mike is a perfect example: the best language teachers never lose that curiosity; it makes them lifelong travelers! Mike took his first trip abroad in his sophomore year in college; his latest was to Poland in July; Puglia, Italy last month.

January 2021, Mike's world changed. Even now, Mike shakes his head in disbelief. Born and bred in Queens. Lived and worked in Brooklyn. He never thought he would ever leave the city. Then came COVID. Crowds meant contagion. Two of his friends had already moved. Heritage Hills, he found, was beautiful. It is also convenient: It takes 75 minutes, by train, to get into Manhattan. Let me report: one *city boy* now lives *happily* in a quiet, hidden gem of a unit with a spectacular water view of Lake Lodge.

Like many retirees here, Mike is busy – by choice! He was president of his Condo in Brooklyn for twenty years. A few months after he moved here, his Condo needed a treasurer. He volunteered.

The first activity he joined was the French Conversation Group. When he discovered no similar Spanish Conversation Group existed, he volunteered to start one. Open to intermediate through fluent Spanish speakers, the group meets the first Thursday of the month at 11 am in Lake Lodge's Room 1.

His last words to me before flying off to Italy were, "You know, there is no *Italian* Conversation Group."

**NEEDLECRAFT GROUP CELEBRATES  
ITS BOUNTIFUL YEAR**

*Text by Cindy Kennedy, photos by Linda Neira*



The Needlecraft Group held its annual pre-holiday luncheon on November 6 at Le Fontane. The festive outing was a fine time for the women to celebrate their productive year.

The Group had an especially busy fall season, crafting cozy knitwear for a variety of charitable organizations. In early October, Needlecraft leader Linda Neira delivered several bags loaded with 30 colorful baby blankets to the Community Center of Northern Westchester. Later in the month, the women donated dozens of child-sized blankets and scarves for teens to Blythedale Children's Hospital.



Throughout the year, while the women knit and crochet large projects such as blankets, they also use their skills to craft tiny premie and newborn hats for babies

in Northern Westchester Hospital's Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit. This fall, Needlecraft members made and delivered 105 little hats to the NICU.

Each holiday season, the Community Center of Northern Westchester conducts its annual "Share the Warmth" drive. For this year's endeavor, Needlecraft produced and donated bag loads of handcrafted hats and scarves.

With the price of yarn increasing yearly, Needlecraft sought help from the Heritage Hills community last summer. An article in the August *Newsletter* requesting acrylic yarn donations prompted many generous residents to contribute. One couple bought and donated 10 skeins of yarn. Others dropped off yarn at the Activities Center during Needlecraft's meetings or at Linda's home. "People continue to call me or pop into meetings," Linda gratefully noted, "to drop off yarn donations; sometimes a little, sometimes more. We very much appreciate the community's generosity!"



Needlecraft Group meets every Wednesday from 12:30 to 2 pm in the Activities Center. Acrylic yarn donations may be dropped off during their meetings. For more information, call Linda at 914-277-2776.

## WHO'S ON FIRST?

By Patricia Adams

Outside, the wind blew hard and blustery. Undaunted, a capacity resident audience filled the Heritage Room as the Heritage Hills Community Theatre presented its end-season offering.

*Murder Is A Game* is a two-act play by Fred Carmichael. The wildly layered story has actors in and out of character, as demanded by their host, who has invited all of them for the weekend to experience and solve a murder.

In the end, it's all a publicity stunt while two authors celebrate their wedding anniversary. The repartee is subtle and goes by quickly. All expected stereotypes appear: the two authors, played by Patti Gallan and Ken DeLuca; an agent, played by Helen Berman; a macho doctor and his travel agent wife, played by Jerry Quinn and Barbara Garber; a wannabe thug, played by Bill Hoare; the old maid, played by Antonia Gisolfi; and a party girl, played by Jane Ceraldi.

At the last minute, Antonia had to fill in for June Ripley, who had unexpectedly taken ill. Antonia read her lines with great credibility; and what she lacked in a memorized script, she more than made up for with animation. With players constantly referring to their character cards, no one even noticed Antonia never put down her script.

The play starts quickly enough with an author couple arriving at a dilapidated mansion at the request of their agent, who told them this trip was to honor the couple's 22nd Wedding Anniversary. When the butler fails to arrive, the author husband agrees to fill in. One by one, the characters show up. It's up to the audience to determine when players are in or out of character. First, there is the person, then the person switches to the part they are supposed to play. Then, there are the relationships among the guests and relationships among the characters they play. It is not easy to keep up, but it was lots of fun to try.

One must give these actors a huge round of applause for delivering credible, professional performances. Likewise their Director Dick Smith. Kudos to the set decoration crew and sound engineer for maintaining audio levels and mic placement in a room without echo. All players could be heard distinctly and clearly, quite an achievement.

Great job, cast!

\* \* \*

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The following was posted by Ed Gaffney on the Heritage Hills Family Network Facebook page on November 12, the day after Veteran's Day:

Yesterday, I found a paper bag in front of my unit. It had some writing on it: "Thank you for Your Service!" I thought that it may have been placed there by a neighbor. I went about my day, and last night I noticed that there was writing on the other side of the bag "(Red Heart) Troop 1455." Well, that solved the mystery. My gift of cookies was from Girl Scout Troop 1455. What a beautiful way to top off my Veterans Day. Thank you, Troop 1455, you certainly brought a smile to this Veteran's face.

## A WALK IN MEADOWLARK PARK Part 1 of 3

Text and photos by Karl Milde

In the summer of 1824, Heinrich Heine took a walking vacation in the Harz mountains near Goettingen, Germany, where he was a student. He wrote a book, called *Die Harzreise (The Harz Journey)*, with such freshness and wit it's become a classic in German literature. As a reader, you saw what Heinrich saw; his thoughts became your thoughts. You *were* Heinrich as he followed mountain roads and trails and encountered places and people along the way.



It was with this spirit of adventure, 200 years later almost to the day, that I took a walk in Meadowlark Park. My plan was daunting, at least to me. I wanted to trek upwards to the top of the very highest hill. Once there, I could walk leisurely downhill across a pasture and hook up with the Warren Trail. Following this trail, I'd circle back in more or less a bee line until I returned to my place of departure: Park Place. Here's my story:

I entered the parking lot and got out of the car. I immediately saw a forbidding sign, "NO VEHICLES BEYOND THIS POINT" in red letters. This is a *park* for gosh sakes (there are in fact roads for the maintenance crew). To stop other drivers from entering, there was a chain across the entryway, just in case they missed the sign.



I stepped over the chain, walked in, and looked around at the great green expanse. Except for one family on the children's playground area way off to the left, I saw no one. Great! I had the place to myself. I was loving it already BUT, I still had to climb an enormous hill.

There was a paved path straight in front of me so I followed it until I realized it went nowhere. After thirty feet it just ended. I took a photo.

Looking around I spied a nearby path lined with a row of young cherry trees on both sides. It aimed straight for the highest hill in the park, so I joined up with it. As I walked on, I looked left and spied a grove of maples. They looked so perfect I snapped another photo.



Continuing up the path I passed a flower garden on my right and then another larger one. The flowers blended in so well with the landscape I knew they were perennials, adding texture and color to the pathway.

Just at this point the path forked. I had to make a choice: Go left and walk straight up to the top or go right on an incline about as steep as an ADA walkway. I chose right.

*Continued next month*



## RESIDENT PARTICIPATES IN THE ADIRONDACK "90-MILER"

*Text and phot by Bill Abondi*



*Caption: The Hardy Girls*

My wife, Heritage Hills resident Nancy Mathiasen (picture in center), competed in the 2024 Adirondack Canoe Classic – known as the 90-Miler – with her sister-in-law and cousin. This 41st annual Adirondack tradition took place over a three-day period in September from Old Forge to Saranac Lake, New York. Over 600 paddlers in 322 boats from all over the country paddled on a route – with more than five miles of carries – originally traveled by early settlers and Adirondack guides.

Although severe weather cut the event short, Nancy and “The Hardy Girls” crew enjoyed the beauty and challenges of the wilderness that mother nature offered along their trek. Motivated by the camaraderie and spirit of the racers, crews, and spectators in this year’s event, Nancy and team are already planning to return for the 2025 race.

\* \* \*

## HECK...I WAS HACKED!

*By Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi*

I’m a bit of a cave dweller when it comes to computer stuff. Yes, I shop on line; but I don’t do any online banking or investing, etc. In fact, I still pay most bills using checks (and manually balance my checkbook). Well..in mid-November, for the first time in my life, I was hacked. I sure felt good about having made those choices. No anxiety...just anger.

Unfortunately, on that fateful day many of my email contacts received an email purportedly from me asking whether they used Amazon or an email concerning “my niece”(it’s called “phishing”). In fact, *both* of those hack emails from “me” even arrived in *my* personal email Inbox and even the Newsletter’s email Inbox!

Regarding my personal email (a *comcast.net* address), I was able to almost immediately speak with an Xfinity technician at 1-800-Comcast who recommended that I promptly move the emails to my Trash folder

and empty that folder. He then worked with me online for about an hour to tweak my Comcast email system.

All of that would help going forward, but as for what already happened, “the horse had left the barn.” I could only hope everyone who received those emails was savvy enough to realize what was happening. I *did* receive a plethora of email and phone inquiries from recipients.

I thought I was done. But the very next day an email arrived in my Comcast Inbox purportedly from Comcast advising that I needed to update my email *that day*. I knew something wasn’t right, so I again called and spoke with a live Comcast technical assistant. She confirmed my suspicion that the email was in fact *not* from Comcast, and repeated the prior day’s recommendation – that I move it to the Trash folder and delete that folder’s contents. But *first*, she recommended – before doing so – that I forward the phishing email to *abuse@comast.net*.

Of course, I did as she recommended, and have been taking those steps whenever I receive suspicious emails since then.

So there, hackers and phishers!!!

I’ll crawl back into my cave now.

\* \* \*

## SOLAR ENERGY WITHOUT SOLAR PANELS

*ByCarolynn Sears*

Did you know you can have solar energy without needing to install solar panels?

By signing up in a few simple steps, you can connect your electricity account to a nearby community solar project. The solar project injects energy into the grid on your behalf while you continue to receive electricity from your utility company. Each month you receive a solar credit that provides guaranteed monthly savings on your electricity bill!

Community solar is for everyone. The benefits of community solar include guaranteed savings on your monthly electricity bill, no solar installation on your property, no cost to join or cancel, it works with any electricity supplier, and allows you to support local renewable energy.

The Town of Somers supports this community solar campaign.

It’s easy to participate. For more information and to sign up, *visit [sustainablewestchester.org/solar/](https://sustainablewestchester.org/solar/)*. Select the “Lansing” Community Solar Project.

For questions or assistance, contact *[solar@sustainablewestchester.org](mailto:solar@sustainablewestchester.org)* or call 914-242-4725.

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**TENNIS NEWS**

*By Dena Goldstein*

**WINTER TENNIS SOCIAL**

This yearly event is coming up on Saturday evening, January 18, from 7 to 10:30 pm at Chestnut Ridge Racquet Club in Mount Kisco, New York. Food and fun. Dinner and Tennis.

Sign up for this great event! Flyers are available by the mail slots outside of the Activities Office.

Hope to see you there! Call me if you have any questions – 914-589-3560.

\* \* \*

**PICKLEBALL COMMITTEE**

**COME JOIN US - EVEN IN THE WINTER!**

*By Fran Boemio*

We are lucky to have use of the indoor gym during the winter. There are dedicated pickleball hours on a set schedule which is posted on the outside of the gym on the bulletin board. (Note that pickleball cannot be played during the "open play" hours listed on the schedule.)



*Pickleball Committee: Eric Scorzelli, Denise Elliott, Len Captan, Fran Boemio, and Kenneth Perry*

To schedule play time, our Pickleball community players here use the app

*TeamReach*, which they download to their iPhone or Android. It allows them to see communications from the pickleball community about play and much more, including the calendar of play times paired with skill levels and other events. They can even message other players privately. The app indicates who has signed up for a session for both indoor and outdoor play here.

If you are interested in playing especially indoors or have questions, please email the Pickleball Committee at [PickleballHH@outlook.com](mailto:PickleballHH@outlook.com). We will give you step by step-by-step instructions on how to download the app, the code to get into it, and a welcome email once you have provided your name, unit number, phone number, and email address. We hope to see you on the courts!

**EAST HILL MEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION**

*By Ken Freeman*

Apologies for my short-sighted reporting last month. At the time, I reported that the East Hill Men's Golf Association (which plays on the West Hill's Somers National Golf Course) had ended its official season with its October 31 round. Then Mother Nature miraculously brought us temperatures in the 70s. Even as the weather reverted to normal seasonality, however, our members insisted on one more "official" round on November 7. The results were:

**A Flight\***: Low Gross – Joel Greenspan  
Low Net – Ed Yee, 2nd Howard Weiner

**B Flight\*\***: Low Gross – Al Zaffiro  
Low Net – Bill Ablondi, 2nd Ray Ormerod, 3rd Bob Kenney

\* Our best golfers \*\* The rest of us

A few diehards just wouldn't give up, though, and played informal rounds for the next couple of weeks. The snow dusting the day before Thanksgiving fully ended the 2024 season without question. It's just too tough to find your golf ball in the snow!



President Al Longhitano Vice President Bob Sotoroff Secretary Ed Yee Treasurer Jack O'Hanlon

The club's recently elected officers for 2025, seen here, assure eager golfers that planning is well underway for the 2025 season. Stay tuned.

\* \* \*



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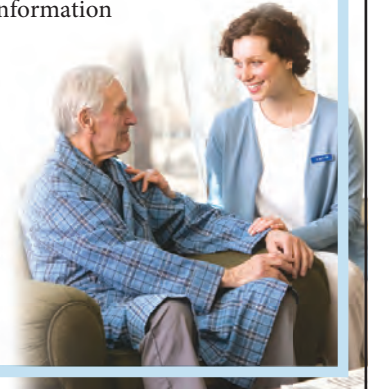
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## THE IMPOSSIBLE BOULDER

*Text by Karl Milde, photo by Cheryl Milde*

Just nine miles from Heritage Hills, in the Town of North Salem, there's a huge boulder that sits balanced atop several small football-sized rocks. Right there on the side of the road – Route 116! It's estimated to weigh sixty tons and is composed of a type of granite that's not found in Westchester County, so it had to be brought in from elsewhere.

It's been suggested it's a Celtic ceremonial stone used to memorialize the dead, brought there by unknown inhabitants of the area before the time of Columbus.

It's also suggested the boulder was brought in by a glacier and deposited there on top of those small stones, some 10,000 years ago.

It also may be a hoax, transported by truck, lifted out and carefully set in position by a crane. But no one's telling – least of all the folks in North Salem who love their Mystery Boulder.

It's definitely worth the 15-minute trip to go and see it.

### NOW YOU KNOW!

## SOMERS SENIOR SERVICES

*Submitted by Princess Guerra, Program Director*

For information on services and classes in addition to the following, see page 2, go to [somersny.com](http://somersny.com) and scroll down to "Senior Services", or call 914-232-0807.

### CHINESE NEW YEAR AT VAN TASSEL HOUSE

**Thursday, January 30, at noon**

Catered by Q's Garden in Somers, \$10 (no refunds) includes

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- (3) choice of white, brown, or fried rice
- (4) dessert

**Deadline to order is January 24.** Free transportation provided. Call 914-232-0807.

### JANUARY SHOPPING TRIPS

No more than four trips per month per shopper. Two bags per shopper. A \$2 donation per shopper is recommended. Bus pick-ups start at 10 am, you have 1 1/2 hours shopping time, and you return home early-to-midafternoon. Bus drivers provide assistance onto and off of the bus using a stepstool and handling mobility devices or using the wheelchair lift. They carry your bags to your door. An aide can accompany the rider. To make your reservations, call 914-232-0807.

#### MONDAY

- January 6....Target (Mount Kisco)
- January 13....Dollar Tree
- January 20...Holiday
- January 27....Walmart

#### FRIDAY

- January 3....ShopRite (Mount Kisco)
- January 10...Trader Joe's
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## Thought for Food

Submitted by Elizabeth Royston



### THANKSGIVING FUN TURKEY VEGGIE TRAY

As a centerpiece for the Culinary Club's "Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner," Joanna Regina created a Vegetable Turkey!! Composed of a variety of crunchy and green produce,

this turkey was the hit of the dinner – that is, until we deconstructed it to get the veggies and dip on our plates!

#### INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces sour cream
- 1/2 package dry ranch dip mix
- 5 ribs celery (or 1 stalk)
- 1 cucumber
- 8 ounces baby carrots (or rainbow carrots)
- 8 ounces sugar snap peas
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 2 cups cauliflower florets
- 1 carton cherry tomatoes
- 2 bell peppers, red and yellow

#### PREPARATION

1. Wash all vegetables and set aside.
2. Combine sour cream and ranch dip mix in a small bowl. Place it on the bottom edge of a large serving plate or platter.
3. Peel and cut cucumbers into spears, and cut celery into 4- or 5-inch sticks. (Note – totally optional: I like to leave some of the leaves on the celery ribs to make them look feathery.)
4. Arrange cucumbers and celery around upper 2/3 of the plate in a fan shape. You can arrange alternating each or in sections. Arrange so that about 1 inch of the vegetables are hanging off the plate edge. This gives it a cool effect and allows more room to work with on the plate.
5. Layer carrots on top of the celery and cucumbers; then place sugar snap peas below the carrots so they are slightly overlapping.
6. Arrange broccoli and cauliflower florets tightly around the dip container, then fill in the remaining space between the cauliflower and snap peas with cherry tomatoes.
7. Cut the bottom off of one of the bell peppers to make the turkey face and place at the top edge of the dip container. Add confectionary eyes (found in the cake decorating section of the grocery store). Cut off the tip of a baby carrot and cut off a wedge forming the beak.
8. Use remaining red or yellow peppers to make the top of the wings. Slice the rest of the peppers and arrange them over the "fan" between the tomatoes and snap peas.
9. Use the remaining carrots to make wings and arrange beneath the plate to make the "breast feathers"



### THE BOOK SHELF

By Cindy Kennedy

George Smiley, the late John Le Carré's iconic British spy character, takes center stage in *Karla's Choice*. The new espionage thriller, written by Nick Harkaway, Le Carré's son, features Smiley in the period following *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*.

*Karla's Choice* begins in 1963, with George Smiley in self-imposed exile from the

spy network known as the Circus. Still brooding about the botched Operation Windfall in Berlin which had cost another agent his life, Smiley was keen to spend more time with his wife Lady Ann. He now "lived in the daylight world and enjoyed the simple pleasures of other men. He had stopped paying attention to the minor and irrelevant doings of others."

Control, the Circus's enigmatic leader, requiring Smiley's skills, coaxes the reluctant spy back into service. Smiley is tasked with interviewing Susanna Gero, a young Hungarian émigré, who worked in London for a literary agent named Laszlo Banati. It seemed that a Russian agent came to Banati's office to assassinate him, after Banati had disappeared.

Smiley "once again was engaging in the exercise of paranoia, which had governed his former life. Intelligence work was not drawing room entertainment. The notion of constant danger was a madness that men in his profession must both inhibit and put aside...the world could change in an instant from clear and kind to desperate and cold."

Susanna Gero, first encountering Smiley while being driven to her interview, mistook him for a doorman: "a stout, hurried little man with pouchy cheeks and thick-framed spectacles who opened her door. She judged he was wearing a second-hand suit. It was well made but not for him." Gaining confidence in Smiley during her interview, she entrusted him with a packet of letters she had found in Banati's apartment.

Smiley's investigation into the missing Banati leads him to return to Belin, the site of the failed Operation Windfall. There, as he excavates Soviet spy networks, he will confront Karla: "Soviet agent, real name: unknown. Born, turn of the century, possibly just before, which made him a child of Tsarist times and a first generation Soviet. Rumored to be one of the original Moscow spies."

Nick Harkaway perfectly mirrors Le Carré's writing style, and his depiction of George Smiley is spot-on. Given today's cyber-spying, the cat-and-mouse espionage of the Cold War era may seem anachronistic to contemporary readers. Fans of Le Carré's thrillers, however, will revel in this new addition to the master writer's canon.

(Note: *Karla's Choice* is part of Heritage Hills Library and Somers Library collections. For a list of new books at Heritage Hills Library, see page 8.)

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