

June
2012

Senior Grapevine

Claire Teague Senior Center
917 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
413 528 1881
Polly Mann, Director
pmann@townofgb.org
Open from 8:00 - 3:30 M - F

The Senior Center bids a fond farewell to Rebecca Tillinghast and welcomes in our new Director, Polly Mann.



JUNE'S MOVIE THEME: Unforeseen Circumstances



Mon, June 4 THE TERMINAL

Viktor Navorski (Tom Hanks) is a man without a country; his plane took off just as a coup d'etat exploded in his homeland, leaving it in shambles, and now he's stranded at Kennedy Airport, where he's holding a passport that nobody recognizes. While quarantined in the transit lounge until authorities can figure out what to do with him, Viktor simply goes on living -- and courts romance with a beautiful flight attendant (Catherine Zeta-Jones). **Cast:** Tom Hanks, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Stanley Tucci, Chi McBride, Barry Shabaka Henley, Kumar Pallana, Zoe Saldana, Eddie Jones, Jude Ciccolella **Director:** Steven Spielberg

Mon, June 11 CHOCOLAT

A single mother and her young daughter move into a peaceful French village and open a chocolate shop during the height of Lent. At first, the shop's rich, sensuous desserts scandalize the town. But the villagers soon learn to savor the sweetness. **Cast:** Juliette Binoche, Johnny Depp, Judi Dench, Alfred Molina, Lena Olin, Carrie-Anne Moss, Aurelien Parent Koenig, Antonio Gil-Martinez, Peter Stormare, Leslie Caron, John Wood, Hugh O'Connor, Victoire Thivisol **Director:** Lasse Hallström

Mon, June 18 BEING JULIA

Estranged from her son, willfully ignorant of her husband's philandering and aware that her youth and beauty are fading, aging actress Julia Lambert (Annette Bening, who earned an Oscar nomination for her spirited performance) is in search of a way to regain the spark of passion. And that passion may lie in the smoldering attentions of a much-younger admirer (Shaun Evans) who might not be able to stay faithful to her. **Cast:** Annette Bening, Jeremy Irons, Bruce Greenwood, Miriam Margolyes, Juliet Stevenson, Shaun Evans, Lucy Punch, Thomas Sturridge, Maury Chaykin, Sheila McCarthy, Rosemary Harris **Director:** Istvan Szabo

Mon, May 25 IT HAPPENED ON 5TH AVENUE

Every year, when the O'Connors leave their lavish New York home to spend Christmas in Florida, hobo Aloysius T. McKeever (Victor Moore) takes up residence in the house in their absence. But this year, daughter Trudy (Gale Storm) shows up unexpectedly. Posing as a runaway, she keeps her identity a secret, as does her father (Charles Ruggles) when he arrives home. The confusion that follows ensures the O'Connors will never forget this Christmas.

Cast: Don DeFore, Ann Harding, Charles Ruggles, Victor Moore, Gale Storm, Grant Mitchell, Edward Brophy, Alan Hale Jr., Dorothea Kent, **Director:** Roy Del Ruth

CONTACT INFORMATION

Polly Mann, Director Email: pmann@townofgb.org

Sally Sanford, Assistant to Polly Mann Email: ssanford@townofgb.org

SENIOR CENTER: 413-528-1881 **HOURS:** Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM

DINING ROOM / RESERVATIONS OR CANCELLATIONS: 413-528-4118

SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE ELDERLY TRANSPORTATION CORPORATION: 413-528-4773

ON THE WEB AT www.townofgb.org/Pages/GBarringtonMA_COA/index

The first and only child of Raymond and Pauline Guppy was born on June 9, 1942 in the town of Beverly, in



Essex County on the North Shore of Massachusetts. The couple named their little red head "Sue." Raymond was a firefighter and his wife was a stay-at-home mom who had been crippled by polio as a child back in 1913. Each parent had their unique skills, talents and interests and each was able to spend quality one-on-one time with their little girl. Sue's earliest memory of herself was letting the "poor chickies" out of their chicken coop. She was quickly forgiven by her parents. This incident should have been a signal to her parents of Sue's strong sense of freedom and justice and her compassion for others.



Sue attended Charter Street School in the first and second grades and was very chatty even back then. She remembers her teacher would use brown grosgrain ribbon to tie her and three of her best chatty friends to the chairs in each of the four corners of the classroom. Her dad used to say that she had been vaccinated with a Victrola needle! He taught her many things about gardening and the outdoors.

Sue also got to spend wonderful quality time with her maternal grandparents who owned a bakery in Belmont, MA and a Tea House on white Horse Beach in Plymouth, MA. Her grandmother baked bread, cookies and donuts every day. Sue loved to help out and learned how to make things like lye soap and really good bread dough. One summer in the 1950's she went to Ipswich, MA with her cousin Richard to pick up lobsters and clams for the grandparents. She recalls getting 2 bushels of lobsters and 1 bushel of clams and getting change back from a \$10 bill!

Sue's mother went to work as a cook in a cafeteria when Sue was 13 years old. Sue's mom also became a Girl Scout Leader and she and Sue would go frog legging together at Girl Scout Camp. Fifty-three years later, Sue is a lifetime member of the Girl Scouts of America and still goes to reunions where she meets annually with the same girls that were in her patrol in the International Girl Scout Roundup in 1959. Over 12,000 girls attended that event. Unfortunately, Sue's mother passed away two days before Sue's 18th birthday in 1960.

All of the hands-on life experiences that Sue had learned from all the adult family members during her upbringing helped her to cope with a lifelong learning disability called dyslexia. As a child, she was put in remedial reading groups and teachers told her that she would "never amount to anything." She remembers seeing a road sign once that she thought said SCREWEY CURVE. What the sign actually said was SURVEY CREW. This is what dyslexia does in the brain....it inverts, changes around and even turns upside down letters you see. It makes reading *very* difficult. But Sue adapted by being able to remember almost anything that she ever hears. Knitting also helps her to concentrate and she can even do Sudoku puzzles. She can do almost anything with her hands.

In spite of this difficulty, from 1960-1963 Sue attended nursing school in Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge, MA. Thanks to their "hands-on" approach to nursing, Sue proudly graduated at the age of 21 with an R.N. degree. Her first two jobs as a nurse were in locked psychiatric wards in the State Hospitals in Worcester and Danvers Massachusetts. She loved the challenge of working with the very difficult female patients.

In 1963 Sue was a stand-in-bride at a cousin's wedding rehearsal. A handsome architect and draftsman named Rob Farnum happened to attend the wedding party later that day. He offered to take her out for ice cream and that was that, as they say! Rob gave Sue an engagement ring that had belonged to his great grandmother who had unfortunately been one of the many victims in the great flood of 1889 in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. In June of 1965 the couple was married in Danvers, MA. They had dreams of joining the Peace Corp, but Sue was turned down by the Review Board because of her allergies.

Soon thereafter, Rob got a job as shop teacher at Mount Everett School in Sheffield, MA and Sue worked as a nurse juggling back and forth between the schools and camp. At that time the couple lived near the airport outside of Great Barrington. Later Sue worked as a nurse for 3 years at Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington.

Rob and Sue Farnum had two children: Hilary in May of 1968 and Stephen in August of 1972. Rob took on a drafting career at Becton-Dickinson, a company that made medical products and syringes. From 1972-1979 Sue worked part-time with the elderly in nursing homes. After 7 years of night shifts, Sue finally gave this work up to become the Health Service Nurse in the Health Office of Simon's Rock College. Sue fondly quips that she exchanged "dentures and dementia for drugs and diaphragms" when she made this career shift.

Having always been surrounded by grownups as a child, Sue naturally developed a special ease and interest in serving seniors. Sue has worked a total of 37 years in nursing or in medical records with adults at Great Barrington Rehabilitation and Nursing Center.

In 1986 Sue discovered that she is a descendant of someone who was on the Mayflower, and ever since, she has been giving twenty to thirty presentations a year about the Pilgrims. In 1995 Sue joined the DAR First Resistance Chapter and for 39 weeks a year for 9 years, she was the volunteer genealogist at the Mason Library. Sue's strong interest in history has also gotten her involved in costuming. She was Wardrobe Mistress for a cast of fifty in a 200th anniversary musical and helped outfit folks for the Great Barrington Celebration last year.



Sue currently works summers as a nurse for Boston University students enrolled in the musical program at Tanglewood. She cheerfully spends many hours a week volunteering at the Claire Teague Senior Center, helping support the staff, bringing in the donuts, picking up Brown Bags for others, giving rides to doctor visits and shopping and doing a variety of other helpful tasks as they come up. We've grown accustomed to her friendly smile here at the Senior Center.

Sue is grateful for her rich and fulfilling life up to now and plans to continue serving others in her community day in and day out. When asked if she had any one philosophy that has guided her throughout her life, Sue Farnum answered,

"Anything worth doing is worth doing well."

~ ~ ~

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S HISTORY QUIZ

1 What was put on sale for the first time in May of 1886? Coca-Cola

4 Which of the following debuted on May 2th, 1885?
Good Housekeeping magazine, the first "female oriented" publication

2 Which holiday was made official on May 9th, 1914?
Mother's Day

5 Which of the following historical events occurred on May 13th, 1913? The first soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery

3 Which two signs of the zodiac share the month of May? Taurus and Gemini

June's Birthday Honorees

1	Connie Jardine Tom Shultis	6	Eugene Novicki Dean Amidon	11	Mildred Anarnic Kate Ryan Jane Coach	18	Harold French	27	Bill Feneley
2	Laura Ebling Betty Boutellier	7	John Marks	12	Rex Roberts	19	Harriette Sturges	28	Edith Leveille
3	Catherine Gray	8	Roger Gutwillig Bewjy Koloxs Richard Dellea	13	Harvey Kimmelman	22	Roger Elliott	29	Judy Baker Anna Bachetti June Williamson
4	Dan Sherman	9	Ellen Heath Sue Farnum	14	Alice Budarski Willard Platt	24	Ruth Phillips	30	Elisabeth Pizzichemi
5	Sue Miller	10	Diana Harwood Dorothy Cahill	15	Sandra Lane	25	John Polesak		

Birthstone: Pearl & Alexandrite Rose
Flower: Honeysuckle

Celebrate YOUR June Birthday by joining us for a free

Birthday Luncheon

Wednesday, June 27th



Please remember to make your lunch reservation in advance with the Dining Room. (528-4118)

Congratulations to everyone who has a Birthday in June!



MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS



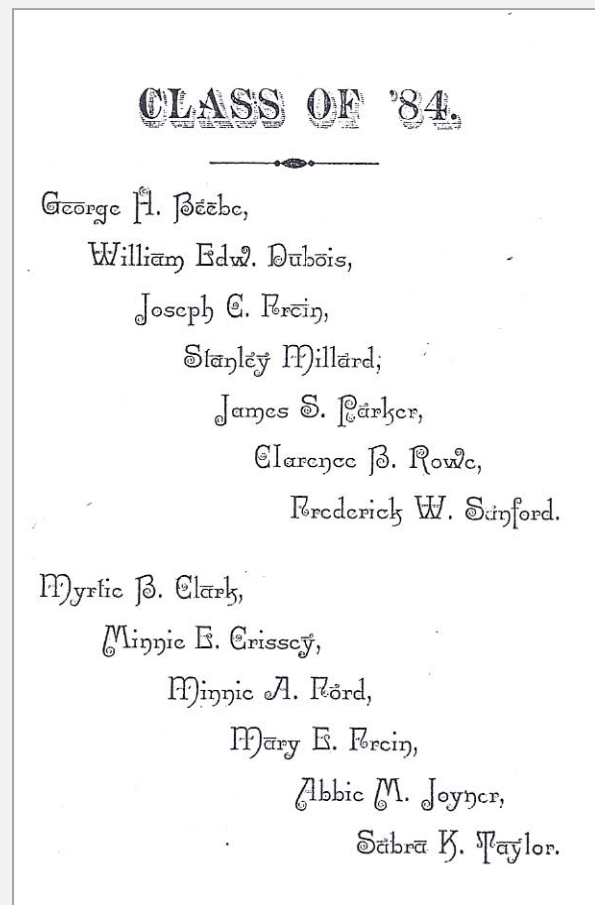
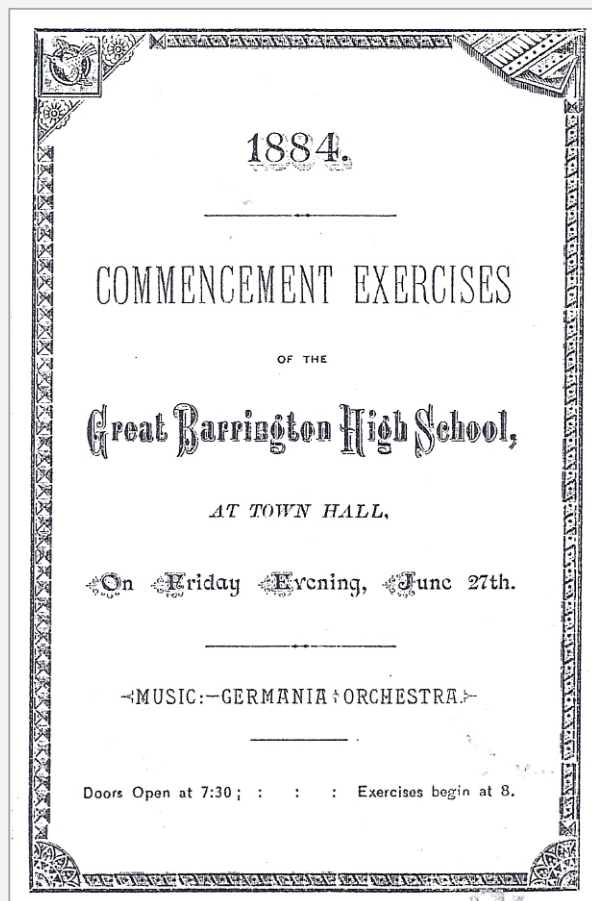
- ♦ Friday June 1 **RAIN DAY** for 2nd Annual Dog Show (if it rained on May 25)
- ♦ Tuesday June 5 - **AVADA** Hearing Aid Service with Herman Ogulnick
- ♦ Wednesday June 6 - Computer Class on “Email Basics” - Everyone is welcome.
- ♦ Friday June 8 - **FOOT NURSE** Day 1
- ♦ Monday June 11 - **FOOT NURSE** Day 2
- ♦ Monday June 11 - Monthly Out To Lunch Group going to G.B. Bagel, Inc.
- ♦ Monday June 11 - AARP Covered Dish Supper - Last meeting till September
- ♦ Tuesday June 12 - Quilting Guild
- ♦ Wednesday June 13 - **BROWN BAG** Distribution (please use/obtain a Senior swipe card)
- ♦ Wednesday June 13 - A.G.E. Triad Meeting
- ♦ Thursday June 14 - **FREE** Lunch for Veterans and spouses—Father’s Day Menu
- ♦ Thursday June 14 - **BOOK CLUB** - “*Edith’s Story*” Author, Edith Velmans will join us!
- ♦ Thursdays June 14 - Women With Cancer Support Group
- ♦ Monday June 18 - Fairview Commons joins Senior Center for lunch
- ♦ Tuesday June 19 - Monthly Breakfast
- ♦ Wednesday June 20 - Caregivers Support Group
- ♦ Monday June 25 - Free Meal at Berkshire South (bus \$3)
- ♦ Tuesday June 26 - Brain Fitness Presentation
- ♦ Wednesday June 27 - **BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON**
- ♦ Wednesday June 27 - **COA BOARD MEETING** (open to public)
- ♦ Thursday June 28 - **BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC** with VNA
- ♦ Thursdays June 28 - Women With Cancer Support Group

AS TIME GOES BY: Monthly Column by David Rutstein

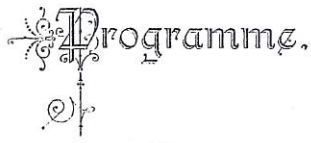
"The Tale Of An Old Bookcase, A High School Teacher, and Willy Du Bois"

For over a century, a large worn 19th century oak bookcase has been a permanent fixture in the Searles High School and the Searles Middle School. With the closing of Searles and Bryant schools in 2005, the school district decided to sell off everything inside both of these schools. Gary Leveille, Bernie Drew, and I scoured both schools for anything of local historic interest for the Gt. Barrington Historical Society collection and museum.

While on the search, I found myself in Searles on an upper floor in the music room. The first item I spotted was a huge empty bookcase and found it to be of no interest. On retiring from this room, I just happened to glance again at this bookcase and noticed a small black metal inscribed plaque at the top of the bookcase that I had previously overlooked. Upon reading the description on the attached plaque, I became very excited. It was a remembrance tribute from the former students of the Gt. Barrington High School to their very respected and dedicated teacher by the name of Ida V. Roraback. She had died in a tragic fire in Sheffield trying to save her father in 1893. And of great and special interest is that a former student of hers was a teenage Willy Du Bois.



David Levering Lewis, in his definitive two-volume biography of W.E.B. Du Bois, thought enough of her to mention Ida Roraback twice in regards to a young Du Bois' high school education in Gt. Barrington. Furthermore, Ida Roraback certainly had to have been present for the graduation ceremonies of thirteen seniors from the Gt. Barrington High School, including Du Bois, which took place on the second floor of the present town hall on Friday evening on June 27, 1884. All of these graduates had been her students, including William Du Bois (see Du Bois name mentioned twice in a copy of the graduation program).



Music:

- 1.—Defence of Andrew Johnson.
JAMES S. PARKER.
- 2.—Berkshire Scenery.
MARY E. FREIN.
- 3.—The Sun.
MYRTIE B. CLARK.

Music.

- 4.—Richard Brinsley Sheridan.
STANLEY MILLARD.
 - 5.—What to Read.
MINNIE A. FORD.
 - 6.—Application.
JOSEPH C. FREIN.
- Music.
- 7.—The Great Men of the Elizabethan Age.
SABRA K. TAYLOR.



- 8.—The Egyptian Question.
FREDERICK W. SANFORD.
- 9.—The Early Theatre.
MINNIE E. CRISSEY.
- 10.—Wendell Phillips.
WILLIAM E. DUBOIS.

Music.

- 11.—The Sin of Defalcation.
CLARENCE B. ROWE.
 - 12.—The Progress of Civilization.
GEORGE H. BEEBE.
 - 13.—Know-nothingism.
ABBIE M. JOYNER.
- CLASS HYMN. Composed by GEORGE H. BEEBE.
- MUSIC.
- PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS by Hon. J. DEWEY.

This forgotten bookcase had stood witness to all of the activities and events that this former high school had experienced. By the way, the Gt. Barrington High School was located where the current Wheeler & Taylor parking lot is next to the Berkshire Co-op Market. When the new Searles High School opened in 1898, this bookcase with the plaque was moved to its final location where we found it.

Since this bookcase was too cumbersome and large to be removed by us and to store elsewhere, it was left there. However, the tribute plaque to Ida Roraback was removed and is now in the collection of the Gt. Barrington Historical Society.



One last word: I want to wish Rebecca the very best in her endeavors to obtain her graduate degree at NYU. From the heart, Rebecca, we will miss you and thank you so much for what the Claire Teague Senior Center is today. You should be proud for all that you have accomplished in your short stay with us. And a big and warm welcome to our new director, Polly Mann.

David Rutstein



Bulletin Board

BRIDGE classes anyone?



Please let us know if you would like to learn how to play BRIDGE. We may start a new class for beginners.

Please call 528-1881 if you are interested.



BROWN BAG DISTRIBUTION
(Wed. June 13th 12:30—3:00pm)

Please remember to scan your MySeniorCenter swipe card and select "Brown Bag" on the touchscreen **BEFORE** you pick up your food. See Sally if you don't yet have a card.

Important

**VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED
IN SOUTH BERKSHIRE COUNTY**

Could YOU volunteer to drive a senior to a doctor's appointment?
If so, please call Elder Services at:
413-499-0524

AARP CHAPTER #89

Monday. June 11th—5pm

Please join us on June 11, 2012 for our last meeting until fall. We will be having a covered dish supper at 5:00P.M. at the Claire Teague Senior Center. Bring a dish and a friend to share with other members. Any suggestions for programs for the upcoming year would be welcome. Supper starts at 5:00 Public is welcome. 50/50 raffle to benefit scholarship fund. See you there!

FALLS PREVENTION FOLLOW UP CLASS

**Tuesday June 12 at 10am
in the Bingo Room.**

A follow-up class for evaluation is scheduled for all those who participated in the Falls Prevention Class earlier this year.

Please attend to receive and evaluation of your progress. Thank you.

Please drop by the Senior Center if you would like to have a **FREE large magnetic "File of Life"** to keep your emergency info right on your frig.

Available NOW.

FILE OF LIFE

KEEP INFORMATION UP TO DATE !!
Review At Least Every Six Months !!
MEDICAL DATA REVIEWED AS OF MO. YR.
Name: _____
Address: _____ Phone #: _____
Doctor: _____
Preferred Hospital: _____
EMERGENCY CONTACTS
Name: _____ Phone #: _____
Address: _____
Name: _____ Phone #: _____

CVS
pharmacy

CVS Pharmacy will no longer be charging for delivery of prescription medications. They are now offering **FREE next day delivery** on **Monday, Wednesday & Friday in Great Barrington and surrounding areas.** Call 1 day ahead & pay by credit or debit card OR the driver can collect cash or check upon delivery.

CALL (413) 528-2860 TO REQUEST A DELIVERY.

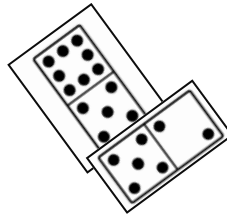


ADDITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Garden Plots Available at the Senior Center



Please call
528-1881
if you want to
maintain one.



WANTED!!

Domino Players

for Wednesday Afternoons
from 12:30 to 3:00pm.

Please join us.

Fun Guaranteed!

“PRESENTATION and PRACTICE” COMPUTER CLASS

The Senior Center Computer Class teachers are offering group instruction on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:30 in the Computer room. Each month they will cover only one main topic related to computer use.



Topic for June 6th: “Email Basics”

Anyone can come and you do not need to call ahead for an appointment on this day. You will receive handouts that you can take home for reference.

Please join us in the computer room at 12:30 for a great class followed by practice and individual help with computer basics.

Please call 528-1881 to schedule your individual session with our computer instructors Mimi and Sally.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOLUNTEER COMPUTER TEACHER, PLEASE CONTACT CORY, OUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR AN INTERVIEW. 528—1881.



BOOK CLUB

Thursday June 14th
1:00 pm

“Edith’s Story”

by Edith Velmans

The Claire Teague Book Group will next meet at 1 p.m. on Thursday, June 14, 2011 when author EDITH VELMANS will join us to discuss her memoir, *Edith’s Story*. We hope that you will join us, too.

Ms. Velmans was born in 1925 into a sophisticated Dutch family living in The Hague. In 1940, when she was 15, the Nazis invaded Holland and began restricting Jewish citizens, eventually deporting them to “work” camps. At that time, Edith and her brother went into hiding. She spent much of the war posing as a Christian while living with relatives of a family friend.

Edith’s Story is a heartfelt narrative that includes excerpts from the diary that she kept at that time, as well as letters that she saved. Don’t miss this opportunity to meet Edith Velmans and hear about her harrowing World War II experience.

Steve Strommer has been uncovering some very interesting ancestors in his “Diggin’ For Ancestors” Genealogy Classes. He recently traced one lady’s family back to the William Wallace clan in Scotland (remember Braveheart?) Another client of Steve’s discovered that he was related to a British Officer name Robertson who served in the Crimean War with Florence Nightengale. Another lady learned that she is a direct descendant in the Rathbun (Rathbone) family who settled primarily in Stockbridge, MA. Steve will be working with people one on one during month of June. Then he’ll be on vacation till the end of September. Call 528-1881 to schedule an appointment with Steve and learn how to find out who your ancestors are!

A Moment of Change At The Claire Teague Senior Center

Rebecca Tillinghast, who has been Director of the CTSC for the past three years, is enrolling in the NYU Silver School of Social Work where she plans to complete her Masters Degree.

The new Director Polly Mann, comes to us from the Berkshire Housing Authority, where she worked with senior housing communities county wide.

Cory Hines, Chair of the Great Barrington Council on Aging, the umbrella organization of the senior center, feels that the transition will be a smooth one.

"These two women each have a passion for working with elders, a knowledge of local resources and the ability to creatively match unmet needs with these resources. This is a critical time for seniors. With a longer life span and the desire to remain at home, many of our seniors are seeking easy access to affordable housing, transportation options to driving, and programs and services that support a healthy, happy lifestyle at home.

Rebecca has done a remarkable job elevating our community's awareness of this growing reality. We anticipate that Polly will keep that momentum going.

So, it's well wishes to Rebecca and best of luck to Polly!" C. Hines



Polly Mann and Rebecca Tillinghast are lovingly framed by the Claire Teague Senior Center family who will hold fond memories of their dear Rebecca and graciously welcome their new director, Polly.

New Behavioral Policy for the Claire Teague Senior Center Dining Room

**In support of our ongoing effort to have fairness and courtesy during meals,
please abide by this new code of conduct when you enter the dining room.**

1. To reserve a seat for yourself only, please place your coat, sweater or purse, etc. in an obvious and visible way on the chair you wish to sit in. The chair needs to be clearly enough marked so that a newcomer approaching the table would see beyond a doubt that the seat is reserved.
2. Each person (including guests) must reserve his or her own seat.
3. Reserving a seat for a guest is no longer allowed. If you expect a guest and want to sit beside them, please walk into the dining room with your guest and find two vacant seats side by side. Each person is responsible for reserving his/her own seat.
4. Please do NOT tell someone they cannot sit at your table. They should be able to see for themselves whether or not there are empty non-reserved seats if the above rules are followed. **ANYONE IS ALLOWED TO SIT AT ANY TABLE IN ANY CHAIR THAT HAS NOT BEEN RESERVED. PLEASE COMMUNICATE IN A WAY THAT WILL MAKE OTHERS FEEL WELCOME AT YOUR TABLE.**
5. To summarize the change in policy: **YOU ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED TO SAVE A SEAT FOR ANYONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF.**

Bridging the Gap - "Projects Between the Ages" Six Thursdays July 12 - August 16th Meeting at CTSC from 12:30 - 1:30pm

Both youth (ages 12-18) and older adults (age 60+) will work and play side by side, doing creative and fun things each Thursday for 6 consecutive weeks. Seniors will be mentoring the youth and learning from them as well. For additional information call Shelley Brooks, CHP-SBCC Program Coordinator at 413-528-1919 x14 or email her at sbrooks@chpberksires.org

Your generous donations made to the **Friends of the Claire Teague Senior Center** made the following possible. Thank you.

- ◆ May Day Flower Basket-making
- ◆ Mother's Day Carnations for women at the center
- ◆ Antivirus Software for computer lab
- ◆ Rent the Monday Movies

Brain Fitness Class Tuesday June 26th 10—11am

Today we know that "total fitness" includes physical AND mental fitness. We also know that diminished mental acuity is not a necessary part of aging. It is up to you: your brain is capable of continued learning, creating new synapses and growing dendrites, all you have to do is take the time to exercise it.

Our Brain Fitness classes are designed using an understanding of the different parts of the brain, how they work, and exercises that develop each area. Together we will do a "brain workout", and then discuss simple exercises you can do on your own to maintain a healthy brain.

Please join us on Tuesday. You will learn a lot!

IMPROMPT II WRITING CLASS SHARES A STORY!

“Dr. WHO” by Rita Valliere April 10, 2012

Introduction by writing instructor Belle Fox-Martin: Rita has been a member of the Thursday writing group for as long as I can remember. Her participation in terms of listening and responding to other members writing has been invaluable. With the writing of the following story Rita took a giant step forward in terms of her own creativity. In order to write this story Rita had to dictate it piece by piece into a tape recorder - recording, deleting, re recording and correcting as she went along. After this was done Rita worked with another group member, Robin, who listened to the story and typed it out bit by bit. When this was done Robin and Rita edited the story together. Voila! Enjoy this well crafted, charming story by Rita Valliere.



An article in the Popular Bluff, Missouri newspaper, The Press, got everyone's attention.

Dr. WHO, our one and only vet, after 35 years was retiring. He's going to be leaving us folks. And we don't know what we are going to do. He said he is going to take a vacation for three months and go away since he never had a vacation from the time he got out of school until now.

His wife died five years ago. She had worked by his side for 30 years; they were both veterinarians and they were both the best. Regardless of the time, day or night, the Doctors were always there to help their patients since this was also their residence.

People learned from them through their example that a little compassion and love can go a long way and this had a positive effect on the whole town. People changed their attitudes about those darn Yankees that moved to their town to start a business 35 years ago. They quickly learned to love the WHOs. The Doctor's were known to help people during hard times with the care of their animals. If you had a sick animal – farm or domestic, you could knock on their door and even if you didn't have the money for the needed services you knew you could come on in anyway. A lot of these people even ended up being volunteers for the WHOs. Over the years these helpers kept on coming even long after their own pets had gone on to their reward.

Dr. WHO, William Harrison Owens and his wife Myra were a lovely couple. He looked like a young Spencer Tracy when he started out and everyone said he looked a lot like him when he got older too. And Myra, she was just beautiful - such a beautiful woman; Doc with his red hair and Myra with her blond hair; what a striking couple! They never had children of their own so their children were all the animals that ever came through their door. Over the years the couple visited the local school to talk about pets, their care, treating animals well and loving them. They always did a lot of things in the community and for local functions.

Their first dog was Gentle Ben, their second dog was Lily and their third and last dog was Ginger. All three dogs were Golden Retrievers. They came like nursemaids, brothers and sisters, to all the sick animals who were recuperating. The dogs also soothed the pet owners and their children as they sat in the waiting room anxious for news. Lily – well, Lily, she was just the mother of all mothers when it came to dogs or kitties or anything. She even had a bird that liked to ride around on top of her head when she walked along the street. So that's doing pretty good as far as I am concerned!

Well, getting back to Dr. WHO and Myra. How do we say it? We always thought they would be there forever, they did so much for everybody. And now he is going to be leaving. Then there was the place called the Barkery Bakery that bakes cookies and treats for all kinds of pets. You name the animal, there were treats for all of them. Hey, I got news for you-- the treats are good for humans too. If it is safe enough for the animals to eat it, it ought to be good enough for us, right? The treats didn't have all that horrible sugar and other ingredients we don't really need, harmful to animals and humans; they were honest to goodness, delicious.

A lot of businesses grew up around them through the years, people came and went and as we know, this happens every day. Dr. WHO and Myra were always there and all of a sudden the news came out that Myra had cancer. She didn't want to have any treatment – she knew what she was up against and the treatment would only delay her problem. So she worked up until about two weeks before she passed away. Doc was with her all the time and everybody was coming around to help out. After Myra died everyone was devastated. Even after five years had passed Doc still hadn't gotten over his loss. Then Ginger, their last dog passed away three months after Myra left, but she was fifteen years old so she had lived a good long life. But as far as Doc was concerned they had both left too soon. So Doc went off on his three months vacation around the world to think about what he would be doing with his life when he returned home, because he didn't think he had the heart to continue with his practice. When Myra left, you see, she took half of his heart with her.

Well, UPDATE! Doc WHO comes home from his vacation and he's driving down through town and all of a sudden the road is blocked off and he can't get through. There are people everywhere. He gets out of his car and starts walking down the street. Ahead of him people are lined up on both sides. There are fathers with kids on their shoulders yelling "hey Doc! Welcome Home." There are kids with their animals on leashes, rabbits, dogs, cats, you name it, they were out there. Even birds were flying around in the air sort of welcoming Doc home. The dogs barked and the kids yelled and everybody was having a good time. There was every kind of sign conceivable and people were crying. They were over-when you are happy just as well as joyful. I guess there are tears when you are sad. Doc couldn't believe his eyes. Oh my God the love just made him cry. As he walked along and office was and there was a big flat-bed truck with a band playing music on it and placards saying "Welcome home Doc, we love ya! We missed you, please stay. We love you, we need you." Suddenly the truck started backing up slowly and lo and behold there was his three story home and office building. Through his tears and bewilderment he saw that his white house had been transformed, covered with graffiti, painting, whatever you want to call it. There were drawings of a horse, a cow, a donkey, rabbits, chickens, there was just about every animal known around there displayed on his home.



On the second floor there were all different kinds of birds flying around. Then he couldn't believe his eyes because on the right side of his building, somebody had painted a picture of Myra, Ginger the dog, and the Doc with big smiles on their faces. Hey, I've got news for you, even the animals that were on the house had a slight gleam in their eye and smiles on their faces. The people cheered and Doc just stood there, he was so bewildered that he did not know what to think of it all. Oh my God, he couldn't believe it, all that outpouring of love. His friend Bert came up in back of him, tapped him on the shoulder and said, "That's nice stuff up there on your house, but I'll send a crew over in the morning to clean it up for you, don't worry." Doc turned around slowly, looked at him and said, "Bert, you don't have to send any cleaning crew up here, I don't want to ever remove it, I'm going to stay in this place until my life is over. Then you can do what you want with it. You'll get new blood in here, new vets, I'll work with them, don't you worry, I'll make house calls; I guess I am not going to quit. After all how can you ever walk out on family." *The End.*