



Newsletter

Summer

2015

President's Message...

On June 8th, many of us were shocked when the Shepherdstown area was hit by a freak wind and rain storm!

Did you have an Emergency Plan in place to address such a storm condition? To plan for emergency storm situations is one thing, but each of us has an even more critical planning consideration to address.

Question: Have you taken the time and effort to do the required advance planning about your own "life plans"? For example, have you prepared a health care advance directive? Have you taken the time to sit down with family or friends to discuss your plans and desires? Are you aware of the fact that WV has one of the most thorough and well-documented Health Care Directive Systems in the country?

If you need assistance with such an undertaking, help is on the way! Elsewhere in this Newsletter, SAIL Vice President Carolyn Rodis addresses information about a current best seller on this subject area – Being Mortal. Members will have the benefit of participating in several discussions and workshops in the coming months to address these important issues. Stay Tuned !!

On a separate note – a special welcome to new members : Joan and Bob Fisher; Kris MacNichols; and Donna and David Wright.

Jack
Jack Young



Happy Summer!

In This Issue...

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So, let's get to it!

VOLUNTEERS SHINE AT SAIL! One of the features of the Village

Movement is the concept of volunteering. As we say at SAIL, it's "Members helping Members"—but how does that work?

Linda O'Brien, our Volunteer Coordinator, explains it this way. "We ask new members what their interests are so that we can see who fills the bill when we need something done. It's part of every new member's interview process."

She goes on to praise the system SAIL has now. There are not only members, but non-members who help, as well. The total number of people who do some form of volunteer work for SAIL is 40. Of that, 30 are members.

Linda is proud of the results, too. She feels SAIL is building a caring community in which member and volunteer both benefit. She cites the 2014 figures: Volunteer hours added up to 2,614. Do the math and you see that's almost a full year of volunteer days—326 days, to be exact.

And what kind of things do SAIL volunteers do? Here's a sample. Reassurance calls—*did you get a call after that big snowstorm last winter to make sure you had everything you needed?*—monitoring the office phone, office help, driving members to doctors, SAIL committee work, grocery shopping, home visits, and simple home repairs.

Take a look at the SAIL website (*another volunteer job!*) for further details, and, if you don't already participate, give Linda a call at (304) 870-7245 to see how you can be a "Member helping Members"—you'll be glad you did.

One Useful Exercise for Seniors

To improve your ability to get in and out of chairs, cars and other seating, you'll need to build strength in your calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, hips and core. Start with a straight chair with no arms, placed behind you. **Without using your arms, slowly lower yourself into the seat. To stand up, place your heels directly under your knees, push through your heels while leaning forward and stand.** Repeat this exercise 10 to 15 times.



Leaf: Saved By a Frond

By Mary Bell

Elaine May said, “It’s easy to be funny; what’s hard is to be interesting.” She and Walter Matthau, along with a host of comedic actors, are both in the film, A New Leaf. It’s the story of Henry, a wealthy dilettante who cares about nothing but himself and his Ferrari. His charm lies in his self-knowledge and complete acceptance of who he is. As he says, “Being rich is all I’ve ever been good at.” Then, one day, his money is gone, and he finds himself in a real pickle! Along with his butler, Harold, Henry hatches a plan to restore himself to his former status before word gets around. Harold’s plan is a bit deceitful, but Henry’s take on it is nothing less than diabolical.

Enter Henrietta, played by Elaine May, a shy, eccentric botanist who is really awful at a tea party. Henry describes her as completely lacking in charm and devoid of social graces – but is she really?

In addition to starring in this 1971 film, May wrote and directed it. Clearly, she knew that this film was her vehicle. Comedy is about timing, timing, and timing, and it’s perfect throughout this movie. The supporting cast, which includes Jack Weston, George Rose, James Coco and Doris Roberts, is brilliant. Even the blocking is funny.

I must confess that if I’ve seen this movie once, I’ve seen it sixteen times. We have it on VHS and DVD, and it resides permanently on our DVR as a “protected” item. This is one of those rare films that will make you laugh even on a really, really bad day. I mean really bad!

So, check it out from Netflix, make some popcorn and sit back.

Food for Thought..for Us All

By Carolyn Rodis

More than a book review, SAIL Vice President Carolyn Rodis, introduces us to Atul Gawande's book, Being Mortal, by using another medium: the classroom. She recounts here the way a seminal book can lead to meaningful discussion and open dark corners. We are pleased to offer this thoughtful—and thought-provoking—essay.

Have you thought about how you hope to live the rest of your life? Have you discussed your end of life wishes with your loved ones and named someone to act for you if necessary?

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End is Atul Gawande's newest book. Gawande, a surgeon and author, explores American medicine's tendency to treat disease rather than the whole person. He observes that neither doctors nor patients want to talk about death.

Using this thoughtful book as a springboard, I facilitated discussions with Lifelong Learners, some of whom are SAIL members, to explore our hopes, goals, and fears, how we want to live the rest of our lives, and what we want to happen at the end.

Dr. Gawande describes aging as our body parts wearing out. “We may not be able to stave off the damage, but [medicine] can stave off death. . . . rarely is there nothing medicine can do,” he writes. *But do we want to stave off death?* These crucial conversations are vital and we must be clear about what we want. Making our wishes known to our loved ones is a great gift to them.

Class discussions were reflective, lively and thought-provoking. Everyone shared ideas about strategies for starting and continuing the conversations with our families.

In sum: All of us need to engage in thoughtful reflection and actions to maximize control over the rest of our lives and to give the gift of having these conversations to our loved ones so they understand what we want. I hope we were able to open the door to renewed exploration and continuing fruitful conversations. And, of course, I hope as a society we can move from denial of aging and death to examination of end of life issues.

This class will be given again in 2016. Contact me or Karen Rice, director of Lifelong Learning, at KRice@shepherd.edu for information.

SAILers Really Dig Kayaking



Our Official
Credentials

Your Newsletter Editor had the fun of covering a LIVE EVENT! Thanks to member Nan Johnson, kayaking has been introduced to our Activities Schedule. Here's our exclusive coverage.

As Town Run rushes its watery way home to the historic Potomac River, four SAIL members gathered on a recent Friday morning at the Princess Street boat launch area beside the gushing stream.

A foggy day with lowering skies greeted them, but there was no dampening of spirits. This was going to be a kayak outing on the river and fun. Paddlers included Leader Nan Johnson, with Marellen Aherne, Diana Eldridge and Suzie Patrick filling out the group. This was the third outing for SAIL members.

We asked Diana what the attraction was for her. “Oh, the enjoyment of being on the river” was her instant response. Scheduling was rain-delayed since thunderstorms kept interfering. Nan reckons there have been nine SAIL participants so far. She says she plans to keep offering the outings this summer and fall. SAIL will announce dates and times, so stay tuned.

No experience is necessary—a kayak is maneuverable and easy to sit in with a low center of gravity. Nan will brief any beginners and she encourages those who've never tried to come on out.



Left to right: Nan Johnson unloads the kayaks; Marellen, Suzie and Diana get set;

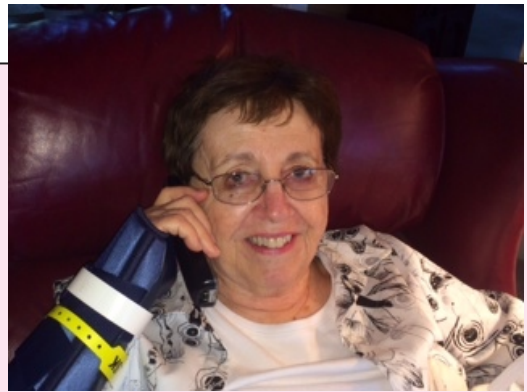
Marellen cries: “Where's the sun?!” as Nan launches Diana.

THE LIGHTER SIDE...

An elderly man was driving his Buick down the freeway when his cell phone rang.

Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him, "Herman, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on Rte 340. Please be careful!"

"It's not just one car," said Herman. "It's dozens of them!"



Martha Young showing off her surgically repaired wrist. After the storm of June 8, the Youngs were clearing debris. Martha fell and broke BOTH wrists. All is well and healing is underway. Our best wishes to her and Jack!

...and Finally

Photos of SAIL's "Senior Prom" Evening

