



A BIT from BITSIE: HomeHaven's Activities Committee Has Gone BANANAS!

After this absolutely horrible winter, our wonderful Activities Committee members just could not contain themselves and have put together, for the month of June, something for everyone—and almost all OUTDOORS!!!! Music, a riverboat tour, WPA art, massive peony gardens, Charlie Chaplin, Roz Chast AND HomeHaven's Annual Picnic in the Park – this year at EDGERTON!! How can you resist???

We start off the month on **Tuesday, June 2, with an 11:00 am arrival** by car pool at a magical place — Peony Heaven at **Cricket Hill Gardens** in Thomaston, CT. Kasha and David Furman have spent the last 25 years transforming a rocky wooded hillside into a six-acre peony display garden. Japanese, late Chinese, American tree peonies, herbaceous and intersectional peonies—ALL will be in spectacular bloom when we go—a sight not to be missed. Bring your own lunch for a picnic afterwards at Black Rock State Park. *(For more, see Events, p 8.)*

On **Thursday, June 11, at 10:45 am**, we are scheduled to arrive by carpool at the **Connecticut River Museum** in Essex for the exhibit, *New Deal Art Along the River*, works by Connecticut River Valley artists supported by the Federal Arts Project, which promoted American art and culture and employed thousands of artists during the FDR administration. The guided tour will be followed by a box lunch, set up by the museum indoors or out, depending on the weather, and at 1:00 pm we go on board for a guided cruise on the Connecticut River. *(Details, page 8.)*

Handel's Messiah: More than the Hallelujah Chorus. A talk on **Saturday June 6 at 10:00 am** and a performance on **Sunday June 14 at 4:00 pm**, both at Bethesda Lutheran Church 450 Whitney Ave., will highlight rich parts of this work not usually heard in traditional December performances. *(For more, see page 8.)*

continued on page 2



Bitsie and Activities Chair Sophie Powell

IN THIS ISSUE:

Village to Village Survey	page 2
Member Birthdays	page 2
HomeHaven Shreds	page 3
On Balance	page 3
Health Matters	page 4
Laughter	page 4
Computer Corner	page 5
New Members	page 5
Linking Up.....	page 5
ERV Garden Party	page 6
Home Matters	page 6
Ongoing Events	page 7
ERVerse	page 7
Upcoming Events	page 8

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The Activities Committee does not want us to forget that June in New Haven means the **International Festival of Arts and Ideas** and has come up with several suggestions for not-to-be-missed events! On **Saturday June 13 at 3:00 pm**, award winning cartoonist **Roz Chast** discusses and shows her drawings from the *New Yorker* and her acclaimed novel, *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* Yale University Art Gallery, FREE, no ticket required, but GET THERE EARLY.

On **Sunday, June 21, at 4:00 pm**, **Orchestra New England Silent Movie Concert** at the Co-op High School Theater. The orchestra, under Maestro James Sinclair, will provide live accompaniment to classic films of the 1920s: Buster Keaton's *The Play House* and a Charlie Chaplin film. **Please call the office to secure your discounted ticket: \$21, payable in advance.**

Saturday, June 27, at 7:00 pm, meet fellow HomeHaveners on the Green to hear the music of the **Plena Libre Band**. This multi-Grammy award nominated band stays true to Puerto Rico's unique African-based pulse while flirting with sounds from across the Caribbean. Bring a picnic and chairs and look for the HomeHaven banner.

ALL THIS AND... HOMEHAVEN'S ANNUAL PICNIC AT EDGERTON PARK! Monday, June 8, 5:00-7:00 PM. WATCH for invitation in the mail.

For additional details on these activities and more, see Events calendar, page 8.



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National Village-to-Village Survey: Early Results

by Jane Jervis

*"It's like having a wagon train set up
to take us over the next set of mountains."*

Thanks to terrific work by 23 HomeHaven volunteers and even more terrific cooperation by our members, we are close to completing our first ever all-member survey. Early results are coming in. So far we have a more than 90% return rate, which is astonishing, and we have learned that 79 of us fell to the ground at least once in the past year alone.

We asked you what you liked best about being an HH member. The top two reasons were insurance (see the quote above) and friendships. As more information becomes available, including comparisons with other villages, we will keep you informed. Stay tuned.



***Happy Birthday to HomeHaven
members with a birthday in June***

Jim Barnes Pravin Bhatt
Julie Crowder Martha Dobrowolski
Steve Feinstein Beth Gilson
Henry Harrison Jane Jervis
Dwight Johnson Elise Kenney
Aimlee Laderman Adrienne Lewis
Barbara McGhie Julia Merkt
Curtis Patton Lois Sackrider
Anne Schenck Reva Barez Schwartz
Annelies Sheehan Hal Spitzer
Virginia Wilkinson Israel Zelitch

HomeHaven Shreds!



Remember those wooden discs called Tuits? (*When I get around to it*). About 30 members finally got around to bringing their decades-long accumulations of old tax files, bank statements, bundles of cancelled checks, love letters and de-accessioned children's refrigerator art to HomeHaven's first Shredding Event. There was a shared sense of release and accomplishment as we watched a big commercial grinder

reduce shopping bags and banker's boxes full of outdated confidential documents into secure, tiny paper scraps for recycling. The event was so successful that Prish Pierce, whose committee conceived and managed the event, has already started planning another shredding party for those members who still have to get "a round tuitt."



Shredding: It feels so good!

On Balance, by Libby Meyer

A large audience gathered at Bethesda Lutheran Church on May 7 to hear physical therapist Bill Chapin (*right*), of Chapin & Havlicek Physical Therapy, speak on "Fall Prevention Strategies: Staying Strong and On Your Feet." If there were any doubt about the importance of his topic, Bitsie announced in her introduction that of 190 respondents to the recent Village-to-Village Survey, 79 reported having fallen to the ground at least once during the past 12 months.



Chapin provided a list of factors that may increase the risk of falling. Some obvious ones are loss of strength, balance, flexibility, unfamiliarity of environment, presence of conditions such as Parkinson's, positional low-blood pressure, or neuropathy, and use of alcohol or recreational drugs. Proper shoes, ones that are suitable for the activity and the walking surface, are essential. Chapin recommended lace-ups, rather than slip-ons, and a wide sole, rather than a narrow one, for better stability. Posture, keeping the various parts of the body in alignment, makes the body work better and thus contributes to stability. Activity level is an important factor: inactivity contributes to weakness

in other systems. Interestingly, Chapin targeted bi- and trifocals as possible factors in falls because the wearer may receive distorted images of his or her surroundings or walk with head bowed to see the ground through the distance rather than the reading portion of the lens. He spoke strongly in favor of single-purpose lenses.

Various assistive devices all have inherent risks, but Chapin focused on the walker as the most dangerous because it increases the risks of falling: the user becomes dependent on it and spends too much time looking down, affecting balance. Chapin recommended trekking sticks or two canes because they allow the user to stay upright. If a single cane is used, he prefers the crookneck type with a tripod base. He stressed the importance of exercise to improve strength, balance, and posture. Among the interesting statistical facts he offered were that people using four or more medications have an increased risk of falling and that there is growing evidence suggesting that those taking Vitamin D₃ have a lower risk.

Throughout, Chapin emphasized the importance of keeping in good physical shape, remaining alert to your surroundings, and keeping your focus on where you're going and what you're doing. Be mindful, he said— and remember that gravity is our enemy.

HEALTH MATTERS

Outwit Poison Ivy, by Nissa Simon

This article appeared originally in the July-August 2013 issue of HomeHaven News and has been updated by the author.

Poison ivy tends to share the seasonal spotlight along with baseball games and fireworks displays—but certainly isn't any fun.

Oddly enough, poison ivy isn't a true ivy but a member of the cashew family. Every part of the plant—leaves, stem, roots, and sap—contains a compound called urushiol, a colorless, resin-like oil.

Urushiol itself isn't poisonous, but once it touches your skin, it causes a red, itchy, blistering allergic reaction known as contact dermatitis. The severity of the rash partially depends on the sap's ability to penetrate the skin. Tough layers of skin, the palms of your hands and soles of your feet, are more resistant and react less than the thinner skin of underarms and eyelids. Seven out of ten people are allergic to poison ivy, making it the most common allergy in the U.S.

An Ounce of Prevention

Avoiding poison ivy is your best defense. Minimize your exposure by wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts when you walk in the woods or garden, and wear gloves if you're going to pull weeds or dig in a flowerbed.

When you come in, wash your outdoor clothes and take care to avoid getting oil on your skin when you put your clothing in the washing machine. Use a clean towel to pick up the items and then throw the towel in with your clothing. Shower with cool or warm water; use a soap that doesn't contain moisturizers (a dishwashing liquid is fine); and skip the washcloth, which can spread the oil around your body.

Urushiol can also stick to gardening tools, sports equipment and even Fido and Fluffy's fur, so you may develop a rash if you touch anything that's been contaminated by the oil. Wipe down items you can't toss in the washing machine with isopropyl alcohol and wash with soap and water. As to your pets, a bath is in order. If you're sensitive to poison ivy, let the veterinarian handle it.

Help from Your Kitchen

If your efforts fail and you develop a rash, home remedies can help: Mix half a cup of white vinegar with two cups of water and chill in the refrigerator, then moisten a cloth with the solution and gently press it on the rash. Or make a compress with ice-cold whole milk to soothe the itch; it's the fat in milk that helps.

Or try a warm bath with a cup of baking soda added to the running water.

Don't use antihistamine creams or lotions, anesthetic creams containing benzocaine, or antibiotic creams containing neomycin or bacitracin, advises UpToDate, an evidence-based resource for physicians. All of them could make the rash worse. Over-the-counter steroid creams such as 1 percent hydrocortisone usually don't ease the itch, but a stronger prescription formula may help.

See a doctor if your face, mouth, or eyelids swell; if the rash covers a large area of your body; or if the rash shows signs of infection, such as pain, swelling, or warmth around the infected area.



Poison Ivy in early June.

Laughter, The Best Tonic

NEW YORK — A public school teacher was arrested at John F. Kennedy International Airport as he attempted to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a set square, a slide rule and a calculator.

At a morning press conference, the Attorney General said he believes the man is a member of the notorious Al-Gebra movement. He did not identify the man, who has been charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction.

"Al-Gebra is a problem for us," the AG said. "They desire solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in a search of absolute value. They use secret code names like 'x' and 'y' and refer to themselves as 'unknowns,' but we have determined they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country. As the Greek philanderer Isosceles used to say, 'There are 3 sides to every triangle.'"

When asked to comment on the arrest, the President said, "If God had wanted us to have better weapons of math instruction, he would have given us more fingers and toes."

COMPUTER CORNER: Getting Friendly with your iPhone

by Christa Sammons

On May 12, six HomeHaven members gathered to learn more about their iPhones. Hosted by Jane Lederer, the meeting was facilitated by Jane with help from Mary Barnes, both members of HomeHaven's Information Technology Task Force.

"It's all about touch," Jane began. "Don't jab at the thing. Tap it lightly, stroke it gently." Maybe pretend it's a cat? After practicing our tapping and stroking, we explored Accessibility (Settings → General → Accessibility), in particular the zoom function that makes text and images larger on those tiny screens. We soon determined, however, that this path led to perilous waters better navigated individually with an expert pilot, lest one become marooned in a permanently zoomed-in or zoomed-out state.

The Control Center proved a more fruitful tack. This screen, which appears when you stroke upward (gently!) from the center bottom of your iPhone, provides quick access to several features. (Control Center may not be available on iPhones older than 4 and 4s.) The button with the little airplane at top left of the Control Center puts the phone in "airplane mode" by turning off Wi-Fi and Bluetooth (the next two icons), which can of course be regulated separately. The fourth icon on the top row ("do not disturb") stops the phone from ringing at night, while the last one locks the display in portrait mode, which you may want to do so that text screens don't jump around from up-and-down to sideways. It's better to

have the Portrait Orientation Lock off, though, when you're taking or reviewing photographs, which often look better in landscape mode.

In the middle of the Control Center screen are two bars for adjusting the brightness of the iPhone's overall display and the volume of its sounds. Moving the dots to the right increases brightness or volume. Between the two bars are arrows for playing music. (iPhone may try to sell you some.) Next comes AirDrop, a way of sharing files between newer generation Macintosh devices in the same vicinity.

The first button at the lower edge of the Control Center activates the flashlight, which can come in handy in dark restaurants. Then comes a button that brings up all your timing devices: world clock, alarm, stopwatch, and timer. And finally, the last two icons give quick access to a simple calculator and the iPhone camera.

We were not without moments of frustration with our little phones, which often seemed to have minds of their own. It's a comfort to know, though, that other people also bumble around with these devices, and in the end we all learned a few new things while having a good, friendly time together. If there's enough interest, Jane is willing to host another session. Call the office (203-776-7378) to let us know and watch the newsletter and e-mail for announcements. HomeHaven's IT Committee is also experimenting with other forms of "neighborly" information technology help, such as fast computer aid delivered by *First Responders*. Watch for future announcements soon.

In the meantime, there are some good online tutorials about the iPhone [here](#).

Introducing New Members

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

Anna Bresnick ~ East Rock

Carolyn Kovel & Janet Rozen ~ East Rock

Ruth Schmitt ~ East Rock



LINKING UP

*Links to items of interest recommended
by newsletter readers.*

"As We Age, Keys to Remembering Where the Keys Are," an article by Jane Brody in the *New York Times*, recommended by Jane Jarvis, can be found at [this link](#).

We welcome your comments about these links and your suggestions for others. Send responses to the editors (page 2) or the office.

Scenes from the ERV Garden Party



Hosted by Kerry and Dick Snyder on a perfect May afternoon, East Rock Villagers mingled with friends and welcomed new members. The party was enlivened by May wine, tasty finger food, and the latest fashion in sunhats!



HOME MATTERS

by Louis Audette

Early June is a time of transition when we start to move outdoors into nice weather and our attention is focused on yard projects and exterior improvements. But it's also a good time to address the problems that reared up last winter and couldn't be dealt with in the cold weather, or ought to be looked after to make a fresh start into late spring and summer.

Remember the ice dams? Now's the time to have a qualified electrician install heating tapes on your roof's eaves, or have a roofer put a wide band of sheet metal flashing along the northerly eave at the place where ice forms--the area between where attic heat warms the underside of the roof and the overhang, where snow melt can freeze into an obstructing ice barrier. Get started soon because early summer is the peak time for engaging roofers, before they get REALLY busy.

Remember that a benefit of membership in HomeHaven is a free assessment of the condition of your house. Bruce Lawler can visit and offer recommendations about safety improvements, sensible energy saving modifications like window replacements and ceiling fans, and warm weather work like concrete repair and mold detection and remediation. Call the office (203-776-7378) to set up an appointment.

TAKE A MINUTE!

If you've been helped by HomeHaven's referrals to service providers, please let us know how things turned out.

203-776-7378

Ongoing Group Meetings

PINS AND NEEDLES

Monday, June 8, 3:00 pm, meeting place TBA

For further information, please contact Jeanne Drury at jeannedrury@aol.com or 203-281-3227. Meet for sewing, mending, handwork of any kind, wide-ranging conversation, and refreshments. New members are always welcome.

Monday, June 22, 3:00 pm, see above.

BOOK GROUP

Monday, June 1, 10:00-11:30 am at the home of John Wilkinson, 100 York Street, New Haven, for discussion of *Redeployment* by Phil Klay. A collection of 12 stories, each with a different narrator, this 2014 National Book Award winner is based on Klay's own service in Iraq, and research and interviews with other veterans. **Please RSVP to the office if you would like to attend this meeting.** New members are always welcome.

The **next meeting** will be in September, for discussion of *The Assassination of Margaret Thatcher*, by Hilary Mantel (twice winner of the Booker Prize). This is a collection of short stories from the author of *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up the Bodies*. Reviewers call the individual stories breathtaking, flawless, penetrating, and rascally.

COOKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES: Cooking the Books—a dish served up in a work of fiction or non-fiction (excluding cookbooks!). Think Proust's madeleines.

Monday, June 15, 6:30 pm. Sign up deadline, Thursday, June 5. (*Calls after that go to a waiting list.*) Newcomers are always welcome at these lively explorations of the cuisines of the world.

RSVP to Celeste Markle at c.markle@yahoo.com. Those without email may call her at 203-397-0492 or call the office. Once groups are set, they will work with the host(s) to determine the menu.

MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The two ongoing groups meet at the convenience of their members. New members are always welcome. For information, please contact Harriet Bergmann at 204-776-0703 or htb183@gmail.com.

ERVerse—and REVerse?

As a nonpartisan publication, we welcome all points of view. We invite your responses—as long as they rhyme and you sign!

ERVerse:

THE EVENING NEWS

In the evening time at seven, I watch
the evening news.
But I also see my wife, who soon begins
to snooze.
The messages on screen are enough
to make me weep.
Quite frankly she is lucky to be falling off
to sleep.

She doesn't have to look at leader
Mitch McConnell's face,
Nor listen to our congressmen whose
work is a disgrace.
She will not see the bodies of the tortured
in Iraq,
Because she will be sleeping with her
lovely head thrown back.

Yet, I remain awake to endure the hour
of news.
My stomach does a turn when they
interview Ted Cruz.
It bothers me as well to see policemen
that maltreat,
Causing protest and disorder, and great
violence in the street.

While my lucky napping partner is
protected from it all,
The doleful press reporting leads *me*
to alcohol.
And soon I'm feeling sleepy as another
glass I quaff,
To join my wife in dreamland as I turn
the TV off.

— Bob Gifford, *Doctor of Doggerel*

If HomeHaven helps you, help HomeHaven with a bequest.



Events: June



Tuesday, June 2, 10:00 am departure for 11:00 am arrival at Cricket Hill Garden, Thomaston, CT
 Peonies will be in bloom at this small family run specialty nursery dedicated to producing the highest quality plants in an environmentally sustainable manner. FREE. After the visit, a bring-your-own-lunch picnic is planned at Black Rock State Park.

Since this is a carpooling trip, **please call the office to see if there is space available or to let us know if you will drive** (*For more, see page 1.*)

Saturday, June 6, 10:00 am

Talk on Handel's *Messiah*: More than the Hallelujah Chorus

Bethesda Lutheran Church, 450 Whitney Avenue

Brett Judson will speak on the background and textual aspects of Handel's *Messiah*. (*See box below.*)

Monday, June 8, 12 noon to 1:30 pm

Lecture on Diabetes by Dr. Robert Gifford

Community Action Agency, 419 Whalley Avenue

Dr. Gifford, Professor Emeritus of the Yale School of Medicine, will speak on "Diabetes: What is the disease? What are its effects? What can you do about it?"

Coming Soon... Handel's *Messiah*: More than the Hallelujah Chorus

Did you know that the premiere of the *Messiah* was NOT in December but in April, 1742, in Dublin? Although usually presented before Christmas, a summertime performance is a good occasion to include rich parts of the work that are seldom heard live. Learn—and hear—more in this two-part presentation by the Bethesda Music Series and Emanuel Lutheran Church of Manchester, CT.

On **Saturday, June 6, at 10:00 am**, Brett Judson, Director of the Emanuel Lutheran Church choir and of the performance, will speak on the background and textual aspects of Handel's masterpiece.

On **Sunday, June 14, at 4:00 pm**, Judson will direct the choirs of Bethesda and Emanuel Lutheran Churches, with a professional orchestra and soloists from the internationally recognized Yale Voxtet, in a 90-minute program featuring both well-known and rarely heard selections from the *Messiah*. A reception will follow.

(*For more information, see listings this page.*)

Monday, June 8, 5:00-7:00 pm

HomeHaven Annual Picnic

Carriage House, Edgerton Park

For more, see Bitisie's lead article and watch for your invitation in the mail.

Thursday, June 11, 10:45 am arrival at Museum; carpool departure time TBD.

Connecticut River Museum, Essex, guided tour of the Exhibit: *New Deal Art along the River*, box lunch at the Museum, followed by River Cruise.

The cost for the trip is \$28 (\$23 if 30 members sign on) and \$11.95 or 12.95 + tax for box lunch from Olive Oyl. Lunches, ordered in advance, will be set up at the Museum. **Please call the office by Friday, June 5**, so that car-pooling and lunch can be organized and departure time determined.

Sunday, June 14, 4:00 pm

Handel's *Messiah*: More than the Hallelujah Chorus Bethesda Lutheran Church, 450 Whitney Avenue

Directed by Brett Judson and presented by the **Bethesda Music Series and Emanuel Lutheran Church of Manchester, CT**. A reception will follow. Admission is free. An offering will be taken to support the work of the Bethesda Music Series. Free parking is available in the church lot off Whitney Ave.

(*See box at left for more information.*)



INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS

Suggested Events (*See page 2 for full details.*)

Saturday, June 13, 3:00 pm

Talk by Roz Chast: "Cartoons as Family Memoir"

Yale University Art Gallery. Free.

Sunday, June 21, 4:00 pm

Orchestra New England Silent Movie Concert

Co-op High School Theater (enter at corner George & York streets). Call the office for a ticket at the discounted price of \$21, payable in advance.

Saturday, June 27, 7:00 pm

Plena Libre Band

New Haven Green. Free.

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