



The Greystone Connection

A Monthly Newsletter

Building the Greystone Community Together!

A Publication for the Community by the Community



DECEMBER 2024

PUBLISHED BY SUSAN SCHWEITZER & BILL NAEDLER

A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Let your heart be a light that guides you through the darkness of winter, like Holiday lights in the night.

December is a month steeped in paradox, marked by the year's longest nights as it approaches the winter solstice on the 21st, yet it is equally recognized as a month of radiant light. Across the globe, varied traditions and celebrations in December embody the universal human longing to illuminate the darkness, bringing warmth, hope, and unity. These cultural practices span diverse beliefs, weaving together a rich tapestry of resilience and connection.

Hanukkah, starting on December 25th this year, is one of the celebrations of light in December. Known as the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah commemorates the historic victory of the Maccabees over the larger Syrian army and the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Central to this story is the miracle of the oil: a small quantity that should have lasted just one day kept the Temple's menorah lit for eight days. This enduring flame has become a powerful symbol of faith, resilience, and the victory of light over darkness. The nightly lighting of the menorah, where one candle is added each evening until all eight are aglow, serves not only as a reminder of the miraculous past but also as a testament to hope and unity in times of adversity.

Another widely celebrated tradition is **Christmas**, which reaches its culmination on December 25th but begins with anticipatory festivities such as the lighting and decorating of the Christmas tree. Many will start these traditions as early as December 1st. The modern Christmas tree has roots tracing back to Germany, where it was known as the "paradise tree" and associated with the feast day of Adam and Eve on December 24th. Its evergreen branches symbolize eternal life, and the tree is seen as a representation of the birth and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The lights strung on these trees today are more than simple decorations; they symbolize hope, joy, and the divine light that Jesus is believed to have brought into the world. Thus, the Christmas tree transcends its

decorative purpose to become a beacon of spiritual promise and renewal.

Kwanzaa, celebrated from December 26 to January 1, is a relatively recent addition to December's traditions, but it holds significant cultural importance, particularly among African American communities. The name Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase meaning "first fruits," and it celebrates the principles of community and shared heritage. The kinara, a candle holder with seven candles, is the central symbol of Kwanzaa, each candle representing one of seven core principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Each day, a new candle is lit, fostering reflection on these values. Kwanzaa's focus on gratitude, community, and cultural pride reminds participants of the importance of connectedness and shared values.

These celebrations highlight that light in December goes beyond its physical presence, taking on a metaphorical meaning of hope, enlightenment, and renewal. **Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol** encapsulates this through the character of Ebenezer Scrooge. His journey from a life shrouded in darkness to one illuminated by compassion and generosity, guided by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future, symbolizes personal transformation. It is a reminder that even the most hardened hearts can change, emphasizing the power of empathy and the enduring impact of kindness.

December's diverse celebrations, whether marked by the glow of menorahs, the sparkle of Christmas lights, or the vibrant flames of the kinara, collectively remind us of what truly matters: unity, compassion, and shared joy. The light of December, therefore, is more than seasonal decoration, it is a symbol of the resilience of the human spirit, guiding us through the darkest nights and encouraging us to share warmth and kindness with those around us.

Susan and Bill



GREYSTONE COMMITTEES, ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

 *Celebrate the Holidays with Greystone!* 

This holiday season, we're spreading joy and cheer with a variety of festive events right here in Greystone! Whether you're looking for family-friendly fun, chances to meet your neighbors, or simply a way to get into the holiday spirit, we've got something for everyone.

Let's come together to make this season magical and memorable. Don't miss out on the fun, laughter, and community spirit that make Greystone such a special place to celebrate!

Let's make this holiday season one to remember.

GREYSTONE HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE



We are beginning our annual Holiday Toy Drive on **November 30th to December 14th**. There are decorated boxes in the lobby (thanks to Frank and Helena Caliendo) waiting for your toy contributions. Please contribute an unwrapped toy for a child from Birth to 12 years old so that all can have some joy on Christmas this year. We are sure that you will

get great pleasure from spreading joy to those less fortunate.

Thank you in advance for your continued generosity!

HANUKKAH AND CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTINGS



December is always a busy month, and, in addition, there are many activities planned for all to enjoy. Please make a note of the following special days and plan to

attend. The Greystone Elves have been busy arranging events of celebrations for our community. .

The Greystone Holiday Door Decorating Contest has begun! Those who decorate every year or who may want to join us to let the holiday spirit flow through our hallways this year, sign up until

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony
– Sunday, December 8th at 6 PM

Café Greystone Holiday Sing-along
– December 15th, 4-6 PM, Community Room

Hanukkah Candle Lighting
– Monday, December 30th at 6 PM

Greystone Holiday Door Decorating Contest
Registration at doorman station from November 18th to December 6th
Decorated by December 16th

Doors photographed December 16 – 17
December 16 - 23rd residents judge door photos displayed in lobby and cast their vote in box provided
(only one vote per apartment)
Winners announced December 27th

For events go to www.Greystoneconnections.com

ALL ARE WELCOME!

**WE HOPE THAT NEW RESIDENTS WILL JOIN US
ENJOY WHAT THE GREYSTONE HAS TO OFFER!**

GREYSTONE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Info provided by Rita Walton



We've closed up the garden beds and put away the hose, in preparation for the winter.

There are still some tasks to do, as it's not a good idea to leave bare soil - it invites weeds and erosion. We might plant cover crops or we might put some mulch on the beds. We hope to have a few garden meetings this winter to discuss further garden projects.

Gardeners can keep busy even in winter - at least by reading and thinking about what to plant in spring!

A couple of interesting gardening notes came in my gardening newsletter this month. First of all, there is a right way and a wrong way to water vegetables. Wrong strategies include giving the plants a light daily sprinkle. It's better to water deeply and less often, as this prompts the plants to develop a robust root system and makes them more resistant to drought.

Second, did you know the weed purslane, that mass reddish stems with teardrop-shaped, succulent leaves that pop up all over our garden, is a nutritious superfood? I didn't!

For many years, purslane was known as a remedy for skin conditions like inflammation and redness. Its value was recognized in ancient times when ancient Greeks named purslane as one of seven herbs for summer eating and advised wearing it as an amulet to ward off evil. In modern times, studies show that purslane is a good source of calcium and magnesium, and also show that eating purslane can reduce fasting blood sugar - important for those with Type 2 diabetes. I'm certainly going to treat this "weed" with a bit more respect now!

There's always something new to learn about gardening! If anyone is interested in joining the gardening group and would like a 1/2 garden bed or a container next spring, please email ritajejanwalton@gmail.com or Greystone1085Bill@gmail.com.

THE GREYSTONE READERS' CIRCLE

Info provided by Diane Rosen



In November, Readers' Circle enjoyed a visit via phone from author Mary Louise Wells. She discussed her reasons for writing the book, Good Town, and

answered questions from readers. This was followed by an animated discussion of the Nov. book, a memoir from former ambassador to Ukraine, Maria Yovanovitch, Lessons from the Edge. **Readers' Circle will not meet in Dec. due to all the holidays.**

The Greystone Readers' Circle will meet on

DATE: Tuesday, January 14, 2025

TIME: 7:30 PM

PLACE: Community Room

BOOK: The Overstory

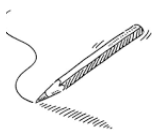
AUTHOR: Richard Powers



All are WELCOME!!

SNACK N' SKETCH ART GROUP

Info provided by Rita Walton



The on-site garden sketching event in October inspired us to keep drawing and painting!

During the Monet in the Garden event, we had so much fun sitting down together with paintbrushes and pencils and taking the time to work on creative projects! We want to keep those creative juices flowing at the Greystone, so we are organizing an art get-together, a snack and sketch!

Our first meeting will be Wednesday, December 4 at 7 PM in the community room. BYOB and bring your own art supplies and snacks for this first meeting. We're open to ideas for the new group: where and when to meet (we hope to meet twice a month but are open to suggestions), drawing/painting from models/still life, focus on projects/themes?

Painting and sketching are becoming more popular, as people are trying to slow down and reconnect to human-created art and tap in to their artistic sides. There's even a global community called "Urban Sketchers," based in Italy, that organizes sketching walks, meet-ups and international trips for painting enthusiasts.

We're hoping to create a space for people to create art, without judgment and with encouragement!

We welcome beginners and experienced artists, whether you want to come once or come regularly - please join us at the first meeting Dec. 4 at 7 PM in the community room to discuss and draw or paint! For more information contact Minda at minda.chipurnoi@gmail.com

GREYSTONE LECTURE SERIES

The Six Pillars of Brain Health: A Resounding Success! Our lecture on The Six Pillars of Brain Health, held on Saturday, November 16th, was a fantastic success, drawing a large and engaged audience from our community. Special thanks to Sharon Olong and the AARP members who shared invaluable tips on maintaining a healthy, sharp mind. Stay tuned for the next series of enlightening lectures coming in the new year—don't miss the opportunity to learn and grow with us!

Café Greystone Harvest Dance

This year, the Fall Harvest Dance was a great success! Howard Schatz and the Eric Lesser band played an assortment of music, the dance floor was in place, and residents bought potluck goodies to the table for a few hours of fun, dancing and meeting friends and neighbors. Our new super, Bismark Agbanyo, brought his lovely family to the event and residents were able to meet and speak with them. We had over 50 residents stop to enjoy something to eat and drink, listen to the music and have a dance on this pleasant afternoon. Thank you to Howard and "Mike" for arranging this event and decorating for the occasion. A special thanks to Berlie and Gjon for all their efforts in their work behind the scenes in making this a huge success.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Info by Sue McAnanama



Some winter reminders from the environmental concerns committee. Open curtains on the south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat the home and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold

windows. Turn heat down at night.

Please RECONSIDER the reasons if you're not participating in the GREYSTONE Food Scrap project!

Whether we cook a lot, or not much, we all make food scrap waste. Coffee grinds, orange peels, banana skins and more! The City of Yonkers and our staff do all the heavy lifting. We have VOLUNTEERS in the building who will pick up your bucket if you are unable to. Imagine how clean our chutes will be when we have 100 % participation.

REDUCE, RECYCLE, & REUSE.

NEW! All small used batteries can be put in the recycling bin with metals and our staff will sort it out. Please don't put in the garbage.

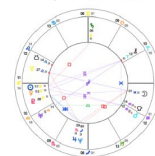
Happy, Safe, and waste free holidays!

THE ASTROLOGICAL CHART OF THE GREYSTONE

Info provided by Sharon Deep

December 2024

Greystone Greystone!
Sunrise Chart
Saturday, September 4, 1971
Tropical Koch True Node



Looking at the astrological chart of The Greystone, which was constructed based on the working assumption that The Greystone was as if "born" on the day that the doors opened for an open house on 4 September 1971 (53 years ago).

This month, we have Pluto transiting into Aquarius. This is a BIG shift in the quality of the energies befalling our little planet.

Pluto will stay in Aquarius for the next 20 years ... big shifts in the evolutionary journey of humanity are expected in the next 20 years. Pluto is about transformation and/or regeneration. Aquarius is about that which rises as if from between and among all of humanity.

The Greystone is well positioned to understand (stand under) the blessings befalling.

Our Sun/Venus in Virgo, aligned with the constellation of Vela (representing the sails of a ship) are being challenged by both Saturn transiting in Pisces and Jupiter transiting in Gemini, both of which are aligned with the constellation of Eridanus (a long and twisting constellation, representing the waters flowing from the Aquarian water bearer).

So, what does all this mean?

Pondering it all, the thought comes to mind that we may not be able to control which way the wind blows ... but we can control the direction of our sails. The Greystone, being a cooperative, is positioned to be able to respond to the change in the wind by falling back upon the underlying roots or purpose of living in a 'cooperative.'

The prevailing energies are inclining us to more fully realize the promise and the potential of building a strong sense of community within The Greystone.

It is as if "Building the Greystone Community Together" is heard being sounded by the stars above while also being worn on some of our shirts.

And as I shared last month, which seems to be worth repeating this month:

"The prevailing energies are as if inviting us to not only understand the cultural roots of cooperatives but to also choose to align ourselves with the values. And, in doing so, a degree of relief in tension is afforded to us in truth."

THE GREYSTONE WALKERS

Info provided by Minda Finklestein

We usually walk MWF and occasionally Saturday at 8:30.AM

Usually our walk is into Hastings & back, sometimes on the aqueduct. About a 3.5-mile trek.

We walk all year round, except in rain or if it's icy.

Contact minda.chipurnoi@gmail.com for more information.

All are welcome!

HOLIDAY LIGHTS AT UNTERMYER GARDENS

2024 Grand Holiday Illumination: Dec.7 through Jan. 1

Inaugurated in 2015, the Untermyer Gardens Conservancy's Grand Holiday Illumination has quickly become a Yonkers tradition, and thousands of visitors come to enjoy the spectacle. Come for FREE and see the Walled Garden lit with more than 100,000 lights and listen to holiday music from many traditions.

The 2024 Grand Holiday Illumination opens on **Saturday, December 7 at 5:30 p.m.** and is then **open every night through Monday, January 1, from 4:30 until 8:00 PM** free to the public with **NO RESERVATIONS** required. Illumination is **OPEN** on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

REMINDERS...

✓ ***Railroad Elevator***

The RR elevator does not automatically return to G5. Please remember to send it back after using it. This small action can make a big difference for someone trying to catch or missing a train, and it's the most considerate thing to do. Thank you for being a good neighbor!

✓ ***Mail and Package Alert***

It is just approaching December and, yet the increase in holiday mail and packages is obvious. Please make sure that you pick up all deliveries and check your mailbox daily to make things easier for our mailman and doormen. Our mailboxes are small and after only one day of not checking, the mailbox may already be filled to capacity. We also have limited space for packages, so please check with the doorman for packages daily and help make their job a little easier at this busy time of the year. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

If you want to share your unity and appreciation of the community that is "the Greystone"...

you can order a T-shirt with the motto "*Building the Greystone Community Together!*"

The shirts are all short sleeves, crew neck, and range from Small - 5X.

Your choice of shirt color.

The cost is \$17.40, which includes tax and shipping.

It takes several weeks to arrive.

Please find order forms at the front desk, or feel free to email Rachel at RachelLevine55@gmail.com



December Open Board Meeting

Monday, December 9th at 7:00 PM

In person and Zoom

The link will be emailed to you.

