



## LAMOILLE NEIGHBORS

Call Vanessa at 802-585-1233 if you need help registering for an event or need transportation.

**Noon Music in May, Stowe Performing Arts.** Free concerts. Noon to 1 p.m. every Wednesday during the month of May. Stowe Community Church has graciously offered the sanctuary for the Noon Music in May concerts since the inception of the series in the early '80s. This historic and beautiful building houses a restored 1898 Steinway Grand Piano and a W. B. D. Simmons Tracker organ. The acoustics and the intimate setting are perfect for the small ensembles presented in this series.

May 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th. Please let us know if you'd like transportation or would like to carpool. These concerts are a real treat.

**Our monthly Coffee Hour, May 5th, 10:00 a.m.** at the Congregational Church in Hyde Park. Our only goal is to talk and laugh. If you would like to participate, please call Vanessa at 802-585-1233 or register on the website [HERE](#) .

**Sunset Walk, May 2nd, 7:00 pm** at Pixie Loomis' ,1701 Cleveland Corners Rd. Hyde Park. This will be an easy 1.5 mile walk, and we'll take a break and watch the sunset together. We have had so much fun with our full moon snowshoes that we decided to keep the monthly tradition going. Register [HERE](#) .



**Bird Walk with Bird Diva, Bridget Butler. May 19th, 9 am at the Mississquoi National Wildlife Refuge.** Our outing last May with Bridget was a real treat. You don't have to be a "birder" to be fascinated by her knowledge and enthusiasm. We'll take a "Slow Birding" approach to the walk, focusing on mindfulness and being in the moment with the birds and the beautiful landscape. Bring your own binoculars - Bridget will have some to share with those who need them. If needed, we can bring walkers with seats and some small chairs. Bird Diva Bridget Butler is well known in Vermont and in the birding world and we are thrilled to have her do a bird outing for Lamoille Neighbors. Limited to 12 participants. We will carpool together and plan to have a lunch outing at the end. (We will let you know more about lunch as we get closer to the date.) Register [HERE](#) .

**Outdoor Potluck Lunch.** Join us for the first potluck of the season on May 20th at 12 p.m. at Pat Modzelewski's home. Let us welcome warmer weather back to our region with a gathering of friends and delicious food. Rain date May 21st. If you're unable to bring food, come anyway. We always have plenty. 543 Magoon Rd. Morrisville, Vt. 05661. This is a member event, but if you are a volunteer driving a member please stay and enjoy the potluck. Register [HERE](#).

### Ongoing Events

#### **Article Discussion Group on Zoom, every other Wednesday from 9-10 AM.**

We take turns choosing articles, and no matter the topic it's a lively discussion. We have space for a few more participants. If interested, e-mail [lisadimondstein@me.com](mailto:lisadimondstein@me.com).

#### **Yoga for members and volunteers.** Weekly classes are Thursdays, 9-10 a.m. at River Arts.

Faith Bieler is an amazing teacher. All levels are welcome. Please e-mail [lisadimondstein@me.com](mailto:lisadimondstein@me.com) if interested and not already registered.



Lamoille Neighbors member, Jeanette Louise Ring, 98, passed away March 13, 2023, at Copley Hospital. Jeanette was born on July 19, 1924, in Elmore, VT, the Daughter of Leland Ervin Ring and Mary Mae Martha (Scribner) Ring. Jeanette spent most of her working life at the Burlington Free Press in the Circulation Department and then retired to Morrisville, the town where she grew up. She lived at Copley Terrace for 14 years, where she made many good friends. She was a lifelong avid Boston Red Sox fan, rarely missing a chance to watch the game on tv. Jeanette was also a long-time member of the Puffer Methodist Church.

Mary, a volunteer for Jeanette, described her as having an independent spirit and a wonderful wry sense of humor, as well as a great deal of dignity.



## A conversation with Averill Loh, Lamoille Neighbors member



Classical music greets you when you arrive at 97 year old Averill Loh's. She sketches the broad outlines of her life as we sit in her beautifully serene home overlooking fields and mountains in Hyde Park. Her daughter, Barbara, visiting from Massachusetts, joins us for part of our conversation together.

Averill grew up, the youngest of three, in Westport, Connecticut. Her mother mothered full time and was very active in the Girl Scouts. Her father was the fiction editor of Collier's. Kurt Vonnegut dedicated *Cat's Cradle* to him as "a man of gallantry and taste". Averill appears pleased to describe him as an internationalist and fluent French speaker. She speaks of his joining the French before the U.S became involved in the First World War and then continuing fighting for the U.S. During the Second World War he worked in U.S. intelligence efforts before the U.S. entered the war.

Averill says her mother "liked being a flapper". Unfortunately, she died when Averill was 19. A year later, while at Simmons College, Averill married George Loh. He was studying fine art at Yale. Her father said she would never finish her degree, but she defied his expectation.

As part of her English major, she had an internship at Glamour Magazine in New York. This may have contributed to the sense of style her daughter says she imparted to her children.

After Averill finished Simmons, she and George were finally able to live together, in New Haven. He graduated in the winter of 1948. Barbara was born in 1949. After having lived in veterans' Quonset hut student housing, (George had been in the Navy at the tail end of World War Two), they moved to Norwalk, Connecticut until George was called back to active duty. Averill joined him some months later after their second daughter, Brecca, was born.

They subsequently left for San Diego, California, where he was to become Captain on a minesweeper going to Korea. For some reason, halfway across the Pacific, the minesweeper was called home, and George ended up once again in the reserves. Averill remembers fondly the car trip back East all four took with his discharge pay. She feels she got such a sense of the vastness of the country and calls it "one of the best things we ever did".

They then moved to Ridgefield, Connecticut for six or seven years. She was home with the children, and he was an artist/illustrator. When she became pregnant with their son, David, they decided they needed a bigger house. They found the ideal place in rural Redding, Connecticut (where the children were already in school), an old farm. They had dogs, cats, horses and chickens and ended up living there about 37 years. Redding welcomed artists. Near neighbors were photographer Edward Steichen, composer Charles Ives, and Eloise creator Hillary Knight.

Their place was a family hub with lots of gatherings over the years. Her daughter recalls that Averill was the center of these celebrations.

When she put her last child on the school bus for the first time, Averill went back to school through a unique Ford Foundation program for people with a BA who wanted to go into education. It took her two and a half years with in depth independent study, but she got her Masters in Education. As a life long learner, she loved this. She started out as an educator by substituting in 5<sup>th</sup>, then 6<sup>th</sup>, then 7<sup>th</sup> grades. After that, besides teaching English part time, she went into special education. Her particular interest was gifted students with what were then called perceptual disabilities (as in dyslexia).

She worked full time from the 1960's until she retired in 1992. When she was in her fifties, she earned a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Connecticut (so much for her father's fears about not finishing college). At the end of her career, she mentored and supervised teachers, utilizing all she had learned over the years about children and teaching. She is especially proud of the oral history project, *Redding Remembered*, written by her eighth grade class with her as their advisor.

The children grew up and moved away. Averill and George had always wanted to live in Vermont (they had skied here), and their son and his family lived in Morrisville. They bought a big house in Hyde Park with a pond and lots of land, room for the dogs to roam. There she would have a large organic garden, be able to knit for her grandchildren and great grandchildren, have horses, create delicious healthy meals with her own produce. Her daughter says that her mother is "an unbelievable role model for doing it all, way before her time".

George and Averill were married for 68 years. After he died about nine years ago, her children strongly encouraged her to move closer to the village. Although it was difficult to make such a move, she found the perfect house and location. Brecca lives with her.

Averill talked about the importance of her long term friendship with two close "likeminded" women. She says that they supported each other in developing their lives. They have each now died just before reaching 100. Averill reflects that "part of living long is losing your friends and family".

Averill said she would have liked to have traveled more, but what she enjoys most now is peace. She looks forward to "continuing to have a mind" and is grateful to be able to read and do "quiet things". Although she is worried about the state of the world at present, she describes her own life as "very fortunate". She feels content. Her daughter chuckles as she mentions that her mother's nickname was always Mary Sunshine. Admiringly, she says that her mother "dwells in possibilities".

(The conversation with Averill was with Olea Smith-Kaland.)



23 folks attended our “meet Vanessa” tea and cookie party on March 17th. A big thank you to Two Sons in Hyde Park for donating our door raffle. Congratulations to Caren Goodhue for winning the lunch for two. If you haven’t met Vanessa, stop in any time during office hours and introduce yourself.



Welcome to our new members: Jane Campbell and Ted Zilius from Morrisville

Our volunteers are the heart of our organization and we have four new volunteers joining us this month. A big welcome to: Geralyn Roscoe from Wolcott, Melissa Rose from Morrisville, Mary Chudzik from Stowe and Robert Grundstein from Morrisville.





**Save the date.** “Everyone Has A Story to Tell” will participate in the second annual Creative Aging Celebration on June 2nd from 2:30-7:30 at Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier. This is sponsored by the Central Vermont Council on Aging and here is their description: “Artwork will include watercolors, drawings, cartoons, crafts, and poetry by Creative Care Kit participants. Local artists and community partners will also share work, including pottery, photography, and writing from the “Everyone Has a Story to Tell” project through Lamoille Neighbors. Attendees can participate in live workshops and activities, including: a participatory collage project, a painting workshop, a “Seeds of Writing” workshop, an Ageless Grace program, a sing-along with the Green Mountain Strummers, an “Aging is Living” collaborative project, and more. A full schedule can be found at [www.cvcoa.org/creative-aging-celebration](http://www.cvcoa.org/creative-aging-celebration).”

## May Birthdays

Bob Malbon  
Helen McIver  
Sue Moore  
Michael Wickenden  
Jan Roy  
Dian Williams  
Sue Aikman  
Etta Parker  
Riki French

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