



LAMOILLE NEIGHBORS

Call Janice at 802-585-1233 if you need help registering for an event or need transportation. **Office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30-1:00.** You're welcome to stop in and say hello.

We are thrilled that we have received a grant to offer another winter 6 week art program, **Celebrating Connections**. If you haven't signed up and want to participate, call Janice at 802-585-1233. If the session you are interested in is full we will place you on a waiting list. Songwriting and writing will meet on Mondays 10-12, iPhone photography will meet Tuesdays 1-3 and pottery will meet Wednesdays 10-12. Everyone will meet together on January 31st and March 6th at River Arts from 10-12. This project is supported in part by the Vermont Arts Council, the E. A. Michelson Foundation, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Our monthly Coffee Hour, February 2nd, 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, call 802-585-1233 or register [**HERE**](#).



February 13th, 4 PM. Glaciers and Lakes in the Lamoille River Valley. Presentation by Geologist Stephan Wright at the Morrisville Centennial Library in Morrisville. This will be in person and on Zoom.

While it might be difficult to imagine that 25,000 years ago Vermont was covered by a mile thick glacier, evidence of the glaciers' rise and fall have had a significant influence on the shape and ecology of our landscape. Come listen to Stephen Wright discuss the glaciers and lakes of our region. Stephen Wright is a recently retired Senior Lecturer in the Geology Department at the University of Vermont (now the Department of Geography and Geoscience). While his background includes experience

with a wide variety of geological phenomena, he has worked most extensively studying the glacial history of northern Vermont. He and his student interns are currently working in the Newport area. Register [**HERE**](#). Open to all.

February 16th, 1-2 pm. Aging Together Discussion/support group at the Morrisville Centennial Library meets the third Friday of every month. As we age, we need to adapt to many changes in our bodies, abilities and lifestyle. Join Maxine Adams, facilitator, who is a trained social worker and caregiver as well as a member and volunteer with Lamoille Neighbors, as

you talk and support each other through this process. Lamoille Home Health and Hospice has offered to do a series of programs for *Aging Together* on various aspects and issues of aging and how to get the help you may need as you age. Topics will range from hospice services, memory and cognition, PT/OT services, nursing homes and Medicaid, caregiving at the end of life. **Register [HERE](#).**

February 24th Full moon Snowshoe, 6:30 pm. Join the band of snowshoers under the full moon. Meet at the end of Davis Hill Rd in Hyde Park. We will be out for about one hour on an easy trail. Please register so we can notify you with any changes. If you have questions e-mail lisadimondstein@me.com or call 802-233-4179. Register **[HERE](#)**.

On-going Groups:Article discussion group, February 7th and 21st. We meet every other week on Zoom. We limit this group to 8 participants. The group is currently full. Let Janice know if you're interested in being on a waiting list. Call 802-585-1233.

Weekly Yoga with Faith Bieler, Thursdays at River Arts at 9 a.m. All levels welcome. E-mail lisadimondstein@me.com if interested and not already registered. Faith is an extraordinary instructor. We hope you'll give the class a try. Call the office if interested at 802-585-1233.

Thank you to all board members for your contributions as well as Mary Miller, Suzanne Boden, and Lori Woodruff.

It was a joy for the board to deliver to all our members and get to wish you a happy holiday.

The board elves preparing for our holiday deliveries.





Judith Wrend, Lamoille Neighbors Member – interviewed by Olea Smith-Kaland, January 2024

Judith, 82, was born in southern Illinois not long before Pearl Harbor was bombed. She grew up in rural, suburban and urban Michigan. The oldest of three sisters, she was always thought of as a tomboy and was interested in outdoor adventure. They lived self sufficiently on a farm without an indoor toilet or running water with a wood cook stove from the time Judith was three through second grade.

She attended five different schools growing up. No girls' sports were available ("of course", Judith adds). Being a Girl Scout, though, gave her a lifetime love of canoeing and camping and myriad skills to do it well. This fit nicely with her image of herself as running free ("even though I can't do that now").

Judith was the first in her family to have a college education. She majored in Spanish at Kalamazoo College and married right after graduating at 21. She then continued her education at the University of Chicago in the School of Education focusing again on Spanish and getting a Masters of Arts in Teaching.

She stopped teaching to stay home with her growing family – three daughters born within seven years of each other. Pivotal during this time was learning to weld and taking a sculpture class. When her youngest was three, in 1973, the family moved to Paoli outside Philadelphia. She started working in various jobs – plant nursery, map drawing in an environmental consulting company, eventually starting her own all women house painting business.

In 1975, her marriage ended, and her life changed. She met artists as she transitioned from trying to be "normal" most of her life to being who she felt she was (and is). She visited a friend in Vermont and decided to move to Morrisville with her daughters in 1981. She felt immediately at home here.

By then she had just met Joanne (Jo Harrison). Although Judith felt she wasn't interested at that point in a relationship and was focused on starting her own new life, Jo found ways of being present. Judith says Jo "persisted", and they have now been together for 42 years.

She eventually went back to teaching around 1986, starting the Spanish program at Peoples. She still had a huge urge to make art even though she could only concentrate on it during summer vacations. She liked kinetic work from the beginning and experimented with different arcs and mechanisms. She remembers that it took time to develop her own visual voice. An important part of making sculpture for her is the fun of learning the technology.

She resigned from teaching around 1993 to become a full time artist/sculptor. Jo supported this decision. The two of them began to go to art shows and festivals up and down the East Coast and as far as Texas and Chicago. They made some wonderful friends, built up a following over 25 years, and loved it. At the same time, starting in 1999, she and Jo became two of the initial founders of River Arts and met two times a week for ten years with other enthusiasts helping to sustain it from idea to reality.



As Judith got older, she needed to make some adjustments. She and Jo stopped going to major art shows about five years ago. Thus began a transition period Judith feels she is coming out of now. She's weathered the pandemic and a heart attack. She has questioned whether she has an artistic life left. The answer is affirmative. She has moved from making primarily very large kinetic sculptures to now making quite small pieces.

She loves that whatever she does has a learning component. She feels that this time of life is exciting and gives her so much freedom to learn lots of different things. She's watching birds, making friends with trees, learning about herbs, practicing Tai Chi and is spending a lot of time reading. She is enjoying making new connections close to home, and Lamoille Neighbors is an important part of that.

She is relishing what she considers a life well lived – a life of good friends, children and grandchildren, and outdoor adventure. Her memories of her canoe and camping trips are still really important even if she is not doing that now.

Taking the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test was affirming for Judith. She wishes she had taken it at a younger age than she did (when she was about 40). She always felt different, and when she took that she found out that she was, indeed, quite an introvert and that that was ok. Working with this newfound knowledge became a foundation for her own increasing self acceptance.



She is most proud of having made her way as a self taught artist finding new ways of being creative. Also, that she lives in a house where most of the things that surround her are handmade. She accomplished that particular early dream she had.

She is sure her younger self would like her older self. This younger self would like her friends and the life she has and the skills she has learned in making things as well as who their daughters have become.



On December 18th we enjoyed delicious hot chocolate and goodies in our office, provided by Beth Springston, Mary Miller, Kevin Bracey and Pat Modzelewski. It was a great night for the holiday light tour, helped by the reflections after the rain.

18 members attended the meet and greet at the office on January 8th. Thank you to Mary Miller and Pat Modzelewski for refreshments. If you haven't met Janice yet, stop by the office on Monday, Wednesday or Friday from 8:30-1 and introduce yourself.



Lamoille Neighbors Member Survey Results

Here are the results from our October 2023 member survey, compared to our 2020 survey.

The Social Experience

Members are more likely than before to say they feel less socially isolated since joining LN. 94% have attended at least one social event this year, and all respondents rate the social events as excellent or good. It appears no one is unhappy with the social events, although there were certainly plenty of write-in suggestions for other types of events to have.

The Services

Satisfaction - Members who use our services continue to be highly satisfied with the quality and the volunteers, whether they ask for them by phone or via the website. No one was "not at all satisfied".

Use of services - a higher percent of respondents this time said they had not used any services. This is likely due to the mix of members changing over time. More people this time said they had someone else able to provide services for them. Since a high percentage join LN for the social events/ties, this is logical.

The Organization

Information - A considerably higher percentage of members are now getting information from either the monthly newsletter or the website (83% vs 60%). There's less reliance on getting it from friends.

Why join - The primary reason is social events (75%), followed by a tie of "may need services in future" and "be part of my community". In 2020, the primary reason was "be part of my community" (50%). Since that survey was done in the middle of the pandemic, that makes sense.

Expectations - The level of satisfaction with LN is very high and almost all are very likely to renew membership and recommend LN to friends.

64% of you responded to our survey and we appreciate all of your input and suggestions. Your feedback helps the board to set the direction for LN over the next few years.



Eight members are attending the knitting group led by member Jan Roy. Next newsletter we can see the work in progress!



Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for Lamoille Neighbors. We commit to creating an environment that welcomes and values the contributions of each member, volunteer and staff person and respects their identity, culture, background, and abilities, thus enriching Lamoille Neighbors.

February Birthdays

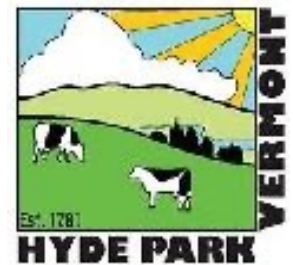
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