

Message from the Executive Director: AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR ADULT CHILDREN



With this note, I officially welcome you to the *HomeHaven News*, our monthly newsletter written by our members! Let me say at the outset: I am irked that we don't have a word for human offspring who are fully matured and grown – it seems ridiculous to refer to you as children – but there's no alternative. That said, we are introducing a new column for you, the adult children of our members!

We want you to know what HomeHaven is, and what we do for and with your parent (or parents). You may wonder why they joined this organization. For some of you, it's entirely obvious: your parent talks about the friends, parties, programs, and resources they access through their local village and the HomeHaven Office. But some of you may never have heard of HH and you're wondering why this newsletter is sitting out on your parents' coffee table.

HomeHaven is a community of older adults ("members") throughout greater New Haven who are living independently in their own homes or apartments. There's no handbook for growing older in our society. Life is different for your parents than it is for you. Some of their priorities and options are different as well. Aging brings new opportunities, but

it also brings challenges that aren't easy to overcome on your own. So HH members figure things out together and help each other when needed, with support and resources from the Office. Our excellent presentations on organizing and downsizing, health & wellness, and arts & culture are widely enjoyed. Our IT workshops and how-to articles are much appreciated, as are our many walk & talks and so much more, geared toward the older adult. Check out the Events Calendar on our website: www.homehavenvillages.org.

When the unexpected occurs and a member needs help navigating home maintenance or home health services, for instance, Kate Hay, our Operations Manager, and I are available with information and ideas. In an emergency, I will get in touch with you, as recently

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Happy Holidays!

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Message from the Executive Director *continued from page 1*

happened when I let a son know that his mother was on her way to the hospital. Please remember that under stressful conditions, even the most “with it” 80 year old may benefit from assistance communicating with loved ones. That’s why it’s so important for the Office to have your contact information – including your *cell number* and *email address* – so we can reach you quickly when needed. There is a confidential section in each member’s online profile where we keep such info, including names of other key contacts, such as one’s primary care physician.

In addition to these benefits, our members enjoy socializing together and come to trust and depend upon one another. HH is an active, caring community where many members put in a few hours of volunteer time each month, helping each other, or serving on committees. As one member told me recently, “I feel my membership in HomeHaven has enriched my life. I have met an entirely new group of people whose accomplishments, interests and community involvement have continued to fill my life with meaning beyond the facts of aging.”

There’s so much more to talk about with you. Please look for upcoming “Children’s Corner” (just kidding – we’ll find an appropriate name!) messages from me in future issues of this newsletter. Your interest and involvement will help us to better serve your parents. You are most welcome to call the Office – 203 776-7378 – or email me at HHJlowell@gmail.com.

Wishing you – and your parents – happy holidays and a healthy New Year!



Lauri J. Lowell

HomeHaven News

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HomeHaven’s Mission Statement

We help our members remain active, independent, and productive as they grow older in the comfort of their homes and communities. We provide social and educational activities, companionship, volunteer opportunities and services, and referrals to qualified professionals.

JOIN US!

For information, call the
HomeHaven office at 203.776.7378
or email us at
info@homehavenvillages.org

“The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

- Mohandas Gandhi



... AT YOUR SERVICE!

In the past three months, HomeHaven provided members with:

- 8 rides by volunteer drivers
- Numerous phone or socially distanced visits by volunteer visitors and Village Leaders
- 4 computer assists and numerous Zoom assists by volunteer computer helpers
- 15 referrals for household maintenance, information, and nursing services

Note: Members often call a service provider more than once or share names of providers with other members. You can help us keep accurate records by always letting the office know each time you use a provider originally recommended by HomeHaven. ***Thanks so much!!***

Look for monthly reports giving rolling three-month totals.



IN MEMORIAM

May her memory be a blessing.

MAE FESTA

May 16, 1928 - November 26, 2022

On November 26th, at the age of 94 years, Mae Festa left this world, surrounded by friends and family at her home in New Haven, Connecticut. After a long and rich life, she died from complications of Parkinson's Disease, and will be remembered in the hearts of those she touched.

Mae grew up on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, close to the riches of New York's art museums and galleries. Spending untold hours wandering the halls of these great institutions was invaluable in her formative years, as she developed a strong aesthetic sensibility and deep appreciation for the decorative and applied arts from a young age. She attended an architectural drafting course at Columbia University, where she met her future husband Gene.

She began her professional career in the world of modern design, working for Knoll Associates. She and her husband left New York for Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, where he worked as an architect in the office of Eero Saarinen. They spent these years immersed in the midcentury modern movement.

In the early '60s, while living in Athens, Greece, she developed an appreciation for ethnographic weavings and early textiles. After returning home and becoming a mother, she spent several years devoted to her son Christopher. She later began working as an interior designer for Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates, where she was able to apply her passion for textiles in curating permanent art collections in large corporate projects and The U.N. Plaza Hotel.

Soon after returning from a trip to Turkey in 1979, she realized she had become a collector. She then began traveling extensively to regions of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and South America, where tribal and ethnic textiles

were still being made by hand and used in their native settings. She also enjoyed being active in several textile societies and academic groups, and traveled with many like-minded people, having visited 28 different countries.



After retiring from a successful interior design career in 2006, Mae put together a catalog of her impressive textile collection, which was well received by her community of peers. After seeing the catalog, a prominent oriental rug dealer offered to put on a show of her collection at the New York Design Center in 2012, which was very well received by the art and design community. Mae also donated a large number of pieces to the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. and the Rhode Island School of Design.

While Mae was a vigorous professional of high standards during her working career, those who knew her well will remember her as a warm, caring, knowledgeable, and generous person. At home, she enjoyed entertaining friends and family, inviting them to share in the wonder of the unique world she had created with her husband, where they enjoyed sharing their appreciation for the visual world.

She will be sorely missed by friends, collectors, and family. Mae was predeceased by her son, Christopher, and is survived by her husband, Gene, of over 70 years, her daughter-in-law, Denise, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

HomeHaven 2022 Annual Meeting



HomeHaven held its 12th Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday, October 23 at the Unitarian Society of New Haven's social hall. About 75 members and staff enjoyed delicious snacks accompanied by wine, water, and soft drinks.

Members in attendance who had joined since October 2021 were invited to rise and introduce themselves, which they did, to much applause. President Kerry Triffin spoke of his pleasure in being a member and volunteering for HomeHaven. He thanked outgoing Board officers Sheilah Rostow, treasurer, and Pam Stanton, secretary, and directors Frank Estes and Kaye Maggart for their service. He also welcomed incoming Board officers Al Atherton, treasurer, and



Celeste Markle, secretary, and directors Laura Altshul and Judith Colton. Kerry noted that 33 people had joined since October of last year, bringing wonderful new energy into the organization.

Executive Director Lauri Lowell thanked the chairs and members of the three Board committees: Bill Brainard, chair of Finance; Frank Estes, chair of Fund Development; and Hans Bergmann, chair of Governance, for their work for HH. Lauri also recognized the management committees and chairs for their hours of service to the organization: Pat Jackson Allen and the Health & Wellness Committee; Hal Spitzer and Household Services; John Sawyer and IT; Kaye Maggart and the Membership Committee; Rick Allen and Judith Colton and their cadre of Visitors; the folks on our Activities Committee; and Mary Barnes and Harriet Bergmann on the Website Task Force.

Special recognition went to our 12 Village Leaders for keeping in constant touch with members, troubleshooting all kinds of issues, and planning get-togethers: Amity – Rick Allen and Judy Moore; Downtown – Kem and Phoebe Edwards; East Rock Village – Karen Schneider and Kerry Snyder; Hamden/North Haven





– Judith Colton, Patty Langdon, Carolyn Gould, and Annelies Sheehan; and Westville – Susan Feinberg and Celeste Markle.

Lauri thanked our wonderful newsletter editor of the past few years, Francie Irvine, and our brave new editor Jean Spencer, as well as our dedicated copyeditor Ellen

Ryerson. Leaders of interest groups were recognized, with special thanks to Harriet Bergmann, who has a devoted following among members of her three Memoir Writing groups, and Peggy Atherton, for planning the popular Walk & Talks which get people out walking and socializing no matter the weather.

Kaye Maggart and Judith Colton talked about the activities of the Membership committee and urged everyone to join in our fall membership drive.

Frank Estes described our successful fundraising efforts this past year. He recognized the letter HomeHaven had received from Louis Audette's daughter Alexis, who wrote of her family's gratitude for their father's membership in HomeHaven, for the support he had received, and his satisfaction in volunteering to help others in the roles of Board president and on several committees. HomeHaven invites the children of its members to share how HH has enhanced their parents' lives.

Bill Brainard remembered two very special people whom we had lost this past year: Joe Dolan, who was in his 6th year as treasurer and had chaired the Budget and Investment subcommittees, and Jim Maggart, who had served on the Finance committee and the Budget subcommittee, chaired the IT Task Force, and did numerous special tasks for the Membership committee.

Operations Manager Kate Hay stepped up to give this year's *Can't Live Without You Award* to the indefatigable and irrepressible Judith Colton for her extraordinary efforts and success bringing new members into our community, and her ongoing work as a co-leader of Hamden Village, co-chair of Visitors, and now, serving on the Board! The applause was deafening.

Finally, we came to a highly animated part of the meeting, the Shout Outs! Celeste Markle, John Sawyer, Kate Hay, and Bill Brainard were recognized with clapping and whooping, for going the extra mile for our community.

Photos by Rick Allen



Happy Birthday to HomeHaven members with a birthday in December

Steve August Hans Bergmann
Henry Binder Franz Douskey
Sue Eisner Constance LaPalombara
Lauri Lowell Barbara Mikolajewska
Carol Nardini Carolyn Paul
Alec Purves Charlotte Rea
Ron Rozett

or in January

Laura Altshul Karen Baar
Ann Feinstein Carolyn Gould
Judy Hickey Franco Iachello
Wayne Meeks Judy Nugent
Chuck Paul Prish Pierce
Rosemary Plotnick Bob Sandine
Mary-Jo Warren



HEALTH MATTERS: First Aid Course

by Pat Jackson Allen, APRN

The Health & Wellness Committee would like to inform you of an excellent, *free*, online First Aid program that you can access from your home and complete at times that are convenient for you. The program is called ProTrainings (www.protrainings.com/courses). The training adheres to the American Heart Association and Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA) guidelines for content and approach to first aid. The total time to complete both the First Aid and the Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) course is 4 hours.

The First Aid program divides into short segments of 15 to 20 minutes each, with video re-enactment training and brief lectures. The content includes accessing care for medical emergencies; universal precautions; dealing with choking, bleeding, skeletal, and soft tissue injuries; sudden illness; heat and cold injuries; and poison control and treatment.

In January 2023 we will review the content for Cardiopulmonary resuscitation for infants, children, and adults. This content will also cover the use of automated external defibrillation (AED) devices. If HH members are interested in having some hands-on practice in CPR, we may be able to arrange a brief training session with mannequins in early 2023.

The Health & Wellness Committee believes knowledge of first aid and CPR are important for the safety and wellbeing of our community. It may be beneficial for small groups of Village members to commit to completing the course work together so questions regarding content and skills can be discussed. Pat

Jackson Allen is willing to meet periodically via Zoom with Village groups to discuss the content and answer questions.

To sign up to take these courses, please do the following:

1. Go to the <https://www.protrainings.com> site
2. Once on the homepage, click on "Sign Up" in the top right corner
3. Provide the information requested to create your account. Your account can be accessed when you want and will track your progress through each course.
4. Once you create your account, a dashboard of courses will appear. Click on Courses at the top of the page.

I recommend first taking the separate First Aid Course, not the combination CPR/First Aid, and then proceeding to the separate CPR Course once you complete the First Aid course.

<https://www.protrainings.com/en/courses/cpr-first-aid/first-aid-only> **First Aid Course**

<https://www.protrainings.com/en/courses/cpr/all-ages> **General CPR for All Ages**

5. You do not need to pay for the courses unless you want a certification of completion.
6. Follow the prompts to complete each segment of the course.

Pat Jackson Allen, R.N., retired APRN, is the chair of the HomeHaven Health & Wellness Committee and a member of Amity Village.

Welcome, New Members!

Julianne Griffin – *ERV*
Peggy Myers – *Hamden*
Fred Ziegler – *Hamden*



CONTRIBUTIONS IN RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Judith Colton gave
in honor of
Kerala Snyder and Lauri Lowell

Wayne Meeks gave
in memory of
Dick Snyder

Wondering If A Memoir Group Is For You?

by Harriet Bergmann

Curiosity abounds concerning HomeHaven's Memoir Writing Groups organized and led by Harriet Bergmann. The following is Harriet's whimsical interview of herself, asking and responding to questions which have been asked about them:

What made you think of suggesting memoir groups for HomeHaven?

People our age have lots of memories, and the process of writing about them is a good way to recover them. Writing always assumes an audience. That can be children or grandchildren, or other family members, but it is always, first, you yourself.

Why are people sometimes hesitant to join a memoir group?

Often people fear that their writing will be criticized, but people in the memoir groups tend not to be judgmental. I didn't know, at first, what they'd be like, but the members made it what they wanted it to be. We don't talk about any of the formal aspects of writing; people don't seem to need or want that. Rather, members respond to each other's writing with more questions, with affirmations, or with examples from their own lives.

Hmmm...Sounds like group therapy!

I know it does, though I'm no therapist! I believe in writing as a way to find ideas and then to organize them. Some write chronologically, some by topic, some by locale. Some are inspired by another's writing, and some by recent experience. There's a quote attributed to E.M. Forster: "**How can I tell what I think til I see what I say?**" It's true! Writing is discovery. A memory floats around in your head,

and you think you know it. Sit down and write it, though, and you'll discover more about what it was, what it is, and what it means.

Well, how does it work?

We meet on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Two people each bring a piece of writing. One person reads his or her memoir, and we talk about it, and then repeat that with the next one. In pre-Covid times we met at my house. Everyone would come in and get a cup of tea and go into the living room—now you have to get your tea on zoom!

What background and experience do you bring to the memoir groups?

I've been teaching writing for a little over forty years—maybe fifty—and I've always enjoyed it. I was a professor of English at the Naval Academy for most of that time, and now I teach creative writing at Yale.

What's the best thing about memoir groups?

The members of the groups become very close, and I think that's quite rewarding. I like hearing people say, "I didn't know I was going to write about this, but..." I find every meeting absolutely absorbing, and I think other members feel that way, too. One person said recently, "Remembering is restorative," and I think she's right. Your memories are restored to you, and you are restored to yourself.

Thank you, Harriet.

Harriet Bergmann is the organizer and leader of the Memoir Groups and a member of East Rock Village. She is also a member of the IT and Activities Committees.

Bittersweet

by Trish O'Leary Treat

October 13, 2021 (My son Bill died November 19, 2020.)

That's memory for you:
Stumble on a stone and
Suddenly there stands your son
A year ago, still living.
Laughing at a darting
Bird as we walk this path
Marveling at the pointed dahlias
And bursting bittersweet.

Trish O'Leary Treat is a member of the Membership and Activities Committees and a member of Amity Village.

Hamden-North Haven Coffee



A convivial crowd including Margaret Mann, Jean Rozett, Ron Rozett, and Martha Peterson enjoyed a coffee hour gathering at Best Video in November.

Photo by Patty Langdon

Breaking The Age Code by Becca Levy, PhD

Book Review by Barbara “Bobbi” Miller

“Getting old sucks!”

Not necessarily, according to the intensive research done by Dr. Becca Levy.

This is a common mantra that can and should be changed according to Dr. Levy, a Yale professor and an authority on the psychology of successful aging. The negative notions in our heads can derail us, but a positive mind-body attitude can give us a better way.

We can change how we think about aging while at the same time helping society rethink what successful aging can mean, and we can be positive examples to our peers. Agism is a societal issue. Instead of looking at old age as a downer, we can choose to view it as a gift, and change the way we perceive aging.

We have all heard of positive thinking. Dr. Levy explains the profound difference it can make for longevity, mental health, physical health, and issues such as memory. We form our attitudes about aging from observations that begin in childhood. These attitudes, held over a lifetime, may affect the way we perceive ourselves and the notion of our ability to age well.

While the book is useful on many levels, one important *caveat* occurs to me. I do not believe that if we succumb to the issues inherent in our inevitable aging process, or in one specific illness, we are somehow to blame for not being positive enough. We should do the best we can to live well with an emphasis on positivity.

Bobbi Miller is a member of the Health & Wellness Committee and a member of Amity Village.

November Walk & Talk



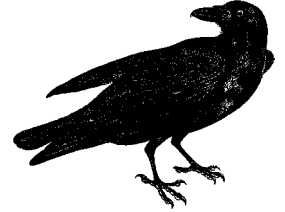
Walkers in Woodbridge on November 18 included Karen Schneider, Judy Moore, Kerry Triffin, Peggy Meyers, Nan Bartow, and Peggy Atherton.

Photo by Diane Dolan

Crow

by Celeste Markle

Blue black and green glinting
Ever alert
Head hunched between feathered shoulders
Swooping wide winged or
Startling low from tree limb
Six o'clock wake up crow
On the tenement roof top
White cross of the steeple crow
Black on the back yard fence
Thorn in the rose garden crow
Wading in murky beach shallows
Spearing minnows
Graveyard crow a black stone on the Hebrew tomb
Crow worried by three small birds flying
Low over the changing evening tide
Lone crow inhabitant of small island
Raucously claiming the treetop
Black noise in the raspberry patch



Sentinel crow
Deciding crow
Clip-winged guarding dead queens
Crow in the warning of seven
Crow flapping in from our ancient nightmare
Heathen
Puritan
Condemned to reincarnation
Sulking on highway carrion
Screaming through thunderclaps
Crow black stitching pale sky and water
Barking from winter white boughs of dark green
Fir tree crow splitting quiet blue afternoons
Following manured dirt furrows plowed
Dry in field of cornstalks

Blue black and green glinting
Satin feathered bird
Short lived and wing
Free
Of maybes and what ifs
Crow driven to eat to mate to shelter
Shrill
Bow legged
Beady of eye
To drop into green nothing
And rise again
Somehow
Next Spring

Celeste Markle is a Village Leader of Westville Village and Secretary of the HH Board.

HH ONGOING EVENTS (members only)

All HHers attending in-person events should be fully vaccinated and boosted.

BOOK GROUP

Monday evenings at 7pm, every 6 weeks.

The next Book Group is Jan. 16 at 7pm on Zoom. Contact Mary-Jo at warrenmaryjo1635@gmail.com for the Zoom invite. All genres welcome! Please contact Mary-Jo Warren for the current title and meeting time.

COOKING/DINING GROUPS

Cooking in Different Languages:

Homemade Holiday Cookie Share

Monday, Dec. 12. 4-6pm

It's the return of Cooking in Different Languages! Bring three dozen of your favorite cookies (homemade) to share. **Registration is required – Limit of 25.**

Cooking in Different Languages: Provence

Monday, Jan. 9. 4-6pm

Each month a different cuisine is chosen, members suggest what they would like to prepare, and a host coordinates the menu to make sure all courses are covered. **Registration is required – Limit of 12; the deadline is December 26.** CiDL is a cooking group that picks a country/region on which to base a delicious meal.

Dining Out Around the World: TBA

Tuesday, Jan. 24. 6pm

A monthly dinner group that meets at a different local restaurant that offers international cuisine. The next restaurant is chosen by the diners. **Registration is required by January 17.** Space is limited to 10.

MEMOIR WRITING GROUPS

The groups meet every second and fourth Monday of the month for an hour and a half. We're Zooming these days, and it's working beautifully. For more information or if you would like to attend a meeting to see how it works, please email Harriet Bergmann at hfb183@gmail.com.

PINS AND NEEDLES

Monday, Dec. 5 & Monday, Jan. 2 at 3pm

The December meeting is at Jeannie Drury's home. RSVP to Jeannie at jeannedrury@aol.com or 203-281-3227. The January meeting place is TBD. Bring a project and enjoy good company and lively discussion. New members are always welcome at these monthly gatherings. If you would like to join the group, please contact Kathy Denardo at Vivian.denardo@att.net or 203-687-8835. You must be fully vaccinated to attend.

PLAY READING GROUP

Wednesday, Dec. 14. 7pm

Riders to the Sea by John M. Synge and

A Child's Christmas in Wales by Dylan Thomas.

Tuesday Jan. 10 & Wednesday, Jan. 25. 7pm

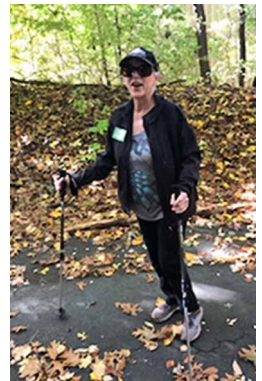
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare.

There is a limit of 12 readers. **Registration is required.** Please register as a Reader or an Audience. The Zoom link will go out prior to the program to those registered.

Happy Holidays!

HomeHaven Intrepid Walkers Hit the Farmington Canal Trail

Organizer and leader Peggy Atherton met 11 walkers on Thursday, October 27, at the head of the trail, behind the Hamden Middle School. It was a beautiful day, a beautiful trail, and we took photos. Attendees included Judith Calvert, Kerry Triffin, Nan Bartow, Annelies Sheehan, Carol Nardini, Cindy Crooker, Carolyn Gould, Diane Dolan, Nancy Ruddle, and our guest of honor, Lily Forbush, who introduced Peggy to the location for the hike, across a footbridge behind the Hamden Middle School.





Events: December 2022 - January 2023

The office will be closed Monday, December 26 through
Friday, December 30, and Monday, January 16.



All HHers attending in-person events should be fully vaccinated and boosted!

Tuesday, Dec. 13. 1pm

Nutrition Concerns for Seniors

Join Jason White, dietetic intern from Yale New Haven Hospital, for a zoom presentation on nutrition concerns for older adults and the impact on health and well-being. Topics such as keeping at a healthy and fit weight, physical activity, challenges of meal planning for one or two, and addressing sensory changes to taste and smell of foods that can alter food intake will be addressed. A Zoom invite will go out prior to the program and be posted on the HH calendar. **Members Only.**

Thursday, Dec. 15, 3-6pm

The HH Holiday Party — Louis Audette's Home

It's a potluck party – finger food, of course! Beverages and music will be provided. Come and celebrate the season! **Family is welcome.**

Friday, Dec. 16. 7-8pm

A Christmas Carol, a reading with Traugott Lawler

Get in the spirit of the holidays when Traugott Lawler (Hamden Village) does a 1-hour reading of the abridged story; written by Dickens for his public speaking engagements. A Zoom invite will go out prior to the program and be posted on the HH calendar. **Members Only.**

HOMEHAVEN OFFICE

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info@homehavenvillages.org

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Village Gatherings

AMITY

Thursday, Dec. 1 & Jan. 5. 5pm

Virtual Happy Hour!

Join us once a month on the first Thursday @5pm.



DOWNTOWN

Friday, Dec. 9. 5:30pm

Downtown Village Holiday Party!

Let's celebrate the holidays together at Terry Flagg's home. See HH website calendar or your Village Leaders for details.

Open invite – ERV invites us to join any of their happy hours/coffee meets. See below.

ERV

Saturday, Dec. 3, 10, 17. Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28. 5pm

Virtual Happy Hour using Zoom!

Join us every Saturday!



Wednesday, Dec. 14 & Jan. 11. 10am

ERV Coffee Hour!

We are going to the Neighborhood Café. (947A State St., near Marjolaine) Contact Kerry or Karen for more info.

Thursday, Dec. 22 & Jan. 26. 4pm.

Happy Hour @East Rock Brewery!

We are meeting outside at the brewery (285 Nicoll St). Contact Kerry or Karen for more info. All are welcome!



HAMDEN/ NORTH HAVEN

Tuesday, Dec. 13 & Jan. 10. 10:30am

Hamden/No Haven Coffee!

We meet at Best Video. See you then!

WESTVILLE



Thursday, Dec 1 & 15. Jan. 12 & 26. 5:00pm.

Westvillain BYO Happy Hour!

On Dec. 1 @6pm, we will dine at RAWA (838 Whalley). RSVP to Susan Feinberg and register on the HH calendar. For the other dates, check with Susan or Celeste because if the weather is good, we'll meet at a Villain's backyard! *Pack some victuals &/or wine for sharing.* Join us every other Thursday!