

Park View Village

Newsletter – Vol. 6, No. 3

May-June, 2016



PVV

CALENDAR

Annual Spring PVV Picnic/Potluck -- Friday, June 24 at 6:00 PM, Morrison Park

Save the date! At Morrison Park (off Chicago Ave. between Waterman School and Red Front Grocery), join PVV members for a picnic/potluck. More information will follow.

The Park View Village Program Committee is organizing this always-popular event. We thank Greg Versen for re-joining the committee, working with Peggy Landis and Robin McNallie. Hope to see you all on June 24!

“How To Live And Die In Your Own Home”:

VIOLA STAHL AND HER FAMILY SHOWCASE PVV’S MISSION



Above, from left: Viola Stahl with daughter Ramona and granddaughters Brenna and Genevieve; with Brenna at her Harrisonburg High School graduation; and with a friend, Caritus (mother-in-law of her caregiver, Janie Myers). Photos c/o Ramona Stahl

Viola Stahl seemed a model of cheerful independence while wheeling her chair around Park View to shop, visit friends or attend neighborhood concerts, church or PVV programs. Yet her daughter, Ramona Stahl’s, warning to her, “Remember, you could end up in a ditch,” proved literally true more than once, due to blackouts caused by her irregular blood pressure. Since an auto accident in 2000 left her paralyzed, Viola needed help with daily activities including getting in and out of her chair and even turning over in bed.

Yet our late PVV member was able to continue living in her home throughout her 15 years following the accident. That was thanks to family, numerous friends, service

agencies and hired assistants, along with other fortunate circumstances. Viola's courageous and upbeat personality played a big role, her family told about 30 PVV members and guests at our April 6 program.

"The story really helps the mission" of Park View Village, said PVV President Keith Gnagey. Our mission statement reads, in part, "promoting independence, convenience, safety and well-being, for those who wish to live in their own home in a multi-generational community."

Ramona said her mother, while able to access state programs to pay for some services, needed to augment her caregivers' pay out of pocket in order to pay living wages. Additionally, Viola for years made most contacts and completed most paperwork for both public funds and her paid caregivers. Her mind remained quite clear until her death in November 2015, at 85, following a decline in energy over the past year.

"It was all good. It wasn't all easy," said Ramona. She and husband David Cowardin were best able to help because, prior to the accident, they had relocated to Harrisonburg, first moving into the upstairs apartment of the "home place" in Park View and later purchasing that home from Ramona's parents, Viola and Milo.

Immediately after Viola's accident some changes were made to make life easier. Milo and Viola acquired an old-model wheelchair-accessible van. Additional work was done to make the house more accessible. This included building a ramp into the house with the help of Lindale Mennonite Church volunteers, and family and friends. Additionally they removed the lower kitchen cabinet doors so that Viola could access the sink. Both projects were done with the help of friends and family. A number of years later a more complete renovation to the house included creating a suite for Viola that included rebuilding the floors in her suite to a uniform level and adding a roll-in shower, kitchenette and automatic front door entrance. With the blessing of the rest of Ramona's siblings, Viola and Milo helped financially with this part of the renovation. The roll-in shower was donated by Valley Associates for Independent Living (VAIL).

Milo (now deceased) was Viola's primary caregiver for two years after the accident. The stress proved too much for him, said Ramona. After two hospitalizations, he agreed to enter VMRC, where his health improved for some time.

"We definitely had a new normal," Ramona recalled. In addition to VAIL, the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center and RMH Home Health provided services. Many of Viola's and Milo's friends helped at first with rides and care, but could do less as they aged.

Long-time aide Janie Myers proved "an amazing find," Ramona said. She was paid by various programs, plus Viola's personal resources, because the wages provided by state programs were "never enough to support her." Respite care by Ramona's sisters Sonya Eberly, a registered nurse, Milonica Stahl-Wert and her niece Hannah Eberly, made vacations for Ramona, David and their girls possible.

David worried about Viola being alone during work and school days, but she and her two granddaughters grew close thanks to her being home after school. Ramona recalled Viola's younger granddaughter, then 5, hitching rides on her chair.

Family, friends and other caregivers reminisced about Viola enjoying the 1000-piece puzzles she bought at Gift and Thrift – then counting the pieces before returning them for re-sale. She sang in the VMRC choir, although her voice had lost its earlier strength, and enjoyed writing. During a major illness, PVV's Ann Yoder found comfort in a long letter from Viola, typed with "Dragon-Speak," a voice-recognition software.

“Mom and I had some really candid conversations. She wanted freedom,” said Ramona. They did not make long-term promises, but she says, “I’m grateful she could be with us up to the end.”

Viola, a retired nurse, advocated with local facilities for accessibility improvements and gave talks about her experience. Ramona said her mother would advise, “Don’t go to the hospital when you’re sick, if you’re 85.” She had “Do not resuscitate” signs placed prominently, and refused to be hospitalized for her final illness. She accepted hospice care on her last day.

“She was very gracious,” one guest said as others concurred – adding that not everyone can cope so well with adversity. “What a blessing to have children like that,” was another observation. Family and friends said Viola herself was a blessing.

By Chris Edwards, with Ramona Stahl

Below, at April PVV program: Ramona Stahl ... Sonya Eberly, David Cowardin and Ramona ... David and Ramona ... and about 30 PVV members and guests.



VENDOR SPOTLIGHT

Garage Door Repairs/Replacement

In the event you are contemplating fixing or repairing an aging garage door, your PVV service provider coordinator has a recommendation – Jeff Hobbs.

Jeff specializes in repairing, replacing, adjusting and servicing garage doors. His touch makes the doors track smoothly, fit tightly and keep out the weather and vermin.

Your satisfaction is his goal.

E-mail – Phyllis.jeffhobbs@gmail.com.

Phone [540-433-0254](tel:540-433-0254)

PVV Movie Nights are on summer break. We’ve seen and discussed a film each month in John and Mary Ann Heatwole’s home theater. The movie committee (John and Virginia Spicher, Steve and Karen Shenk, Robin McNallie and Chris Edwards) expects to start this adventure up again in September.

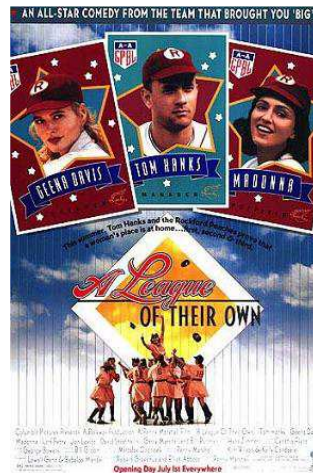




Photo by Paul Yoder

Ruth Clatterbuck

A PARK VIEW CENTENARIAN

Paul Yoder recently reported, "After several years wondering about **Ruth Clatterbuck** as I kept going by her place, I finally stopped in today. She is being taken care of by First Choice, through VMRC, and has 24-hour care, but still gets around. She is very alert and remembered me from several years ago. Of course, I wanted her to renew her membership at that time, but could not persuade her to do so. She still does not think she needs PVV, though at age 100, I'd still love to have her re-join."

Ruth, who has two children, lives on North College Avenue and enjoys visits.

To contact Park View Village:
540-705-0432; website,
<http://parkviewvillageva.org/>

To learn more about the "Village to Village" movement (of which Park View Village is a part):
www.vtvnetwork.org/

PARK VIEW VILLAGE BOARD

Evelyn Driver – Vice President
Keith Gnagey – President
Nancy Gunden – Treasurer
Peggy Landis – Program Committee
Robin McNallie – Program Committee
John Spicher – Vendor Services Chair
Clara Yoder – Secretary
Paul Yoder – Member Recruitment
STAFF: Denise Sauder,
Administrative Assistant

Deadline is **July 18** for submissions to the **July-August issue** of **PVV's bimonthly newsletter**. Send items to **Chris Edwards, editor, 434-0457; chrisedwardshburg@gmail.com**.

Happy birthday, PVV members!

June Shirley Yoder Brubaker, Edna Brunk, Sarah Marie Weaver, Edwin M. Yoder, Paul A. Yoder, Nancy Gunden

July David Cowardin, Robin McNallie, Ann L. Yoder

"What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know, it's what we know for sure that just ain't so."

-Mark Twain

bobchoat.com

