



LAMOILLE NEIGHBORS

It's been a busy month as we try to organize ourselves for our launch date of April 1st. There is a lot to do and we are sometimes overwhelmed but mostly energized. Any help would be appreciated.

- ★ Lamoille Neighbors has a logo, which we're thrilled about, thanks to Carrie Cook.
- ★ We received our first grant from Ben and Jerry's, \$1,000 for general use. And we are working to obtain further grants for cultural events, send 2 board members to the national conference, hire a part time executive director and to be able to give scholarships. If you'd like to be a donor go to lamoilleneighbors.org.
- ★ You can now go on our website lamoilleneighbors.org to sign up as a member, a volunteer or a donor. We will be testing our software in March to make sure it works smoothly before our launch date.
- ★ We welcomed 6 new founding members . We now have 20 founding members!
- ★ Our outreach committee has been busy meeting with community resources, doing presentations and house parties.
- ★ The social/cultural and educational committee is busy planning a full calendar for when we go live in April.
- ★ We have a generous donation of a computer, printer, desk and filing cabinet for when we find an office space.

Article by board member Sue Moore

MAINTAINING OUR HEARING HELPS US KEEP OUR INDEPENDENCE

We used to think that hearing loss was a normal aspect of aging and that there wasn't much that could be done about it. Recent and ongoing improvements in hearing aid technology have made it easier for people with hearing loss to maintain their hearing. There is cause for optimism as research on aging and advancements in hearing technology combine to make a strong case for getting our hearing tested and for wearing hearing aids when they are recommended.

Long term studies show that people with hearing loss who wear hearing aids are more likely to stay socially engaged and avoid many of the medical costs associated with isolation and cognitive decline.

An article in *The Wall Street Journal*, "Hear Better, Think Better" by Bonnie Miller Rubin (February 7, 2019) cites recent studies in which scientists "are finding increasing evidence of a link between hearing loss and declines in thinking and memory. Two studies published last year found that using hearing aids slowed or reversed cognitive decline in elderly participants, ... a large trial is under way to learn more."

Jane Brody, writing in the *New York Times* on December 31, 2018, "Hearing Loss Threatens Mind, Life, and Limb" makes the point that hearing loss can be responsible for increased medical costs as it is associated with more health issues.

Hearing loss affects approximately one-third of adults between the ages of 60 to 70 years old, fifty percent of people over 70, and more than 80 percent of people over 85 years. After hypertension and arthritis, it is the third most prevalent health problem in older adults.

As the baby boomer generation has aged, there has been more focus on hearing loss as a significant factor in people's lives. What was once considered an inevitable inconvenience that was under-recognized and under-treated, hearing loss is now being studied with greater emphasis on how to prevent and treat it. As greater numbers of people seek support for continued good hearing, there will be less stigma attached to wearing hearing aids.

Age related hearing loss (also known as presbycusis) is a decrease in hearing ability that worsens gradually over time. It may begin as early as in someone's forties or fifties, but usually the loss in hearing is so gradual that the person may not be aware of it. The hearing loss first affects the high frequency sounds of speech. An affected person may begin to find it increasingly difficult to understand what people are saying. They may find it difficult to understand speech when in a group, such as at a family gathering or at a party.

Often, people with presbycusis say that they can hear well enough but other people are mum- bling. The effect of presbycusis is that certain speech sounds cannot be heard while other low- er frequency sounds are still heard. When there are enough sounds that are missing, only “snatches” of speech are heard. The effects of this can be frustrating for both speakers and listeners.

If information is not heard accurately, our brains have to work to “fill in the gaps” to make sense of what we think someone is saying. This can be exhausting. It can also affect memory. Information must be clear to be processed and stored in our memory for later recall.

As hearing loss worsens, people may find it difficult to speak with unfamiliar people or participate in social gatherings. Hearing loss affects the quality of life for many people. It can contribute to depression, feelings of loneliness and loss of self-esteem. When asked about their greatest fears about aging, most people identify loneliness and cognitive decline. Hearing loss and its effect on social participation and memory is related to both of these fears.

Getting our hearing tested and wearing hearing aids are choices we can make that have positive impacts on our quality of life.

Medicare covers the cost of hearing tests by licensed Audiologists (MS or PhD Aud. CCC). After testing for hearing acuity, audiologists can advise whether or not hearing aids are needed. They can also recommend specific hearing aids, fit them and adjust them as needed.

Susan A. Moore, MS, CCC-SLP

Pitts, Donna, Ward, Kathleen, “Do you Think Hearing Loss in Aging is Normal? Think Again!”

American Speech-Language-and-Hearing Perspectives on Gerontology (pp 26-31), July, 2010. Rubin, Bonnie Miller, “Better Hearing Can Lead to Better Thinking”, *The Wall Street Journal*,

2/06/2019.

well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/09/28/hearing-loss-costs-far-more-than-ability-to-hear/

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/31/well/live/hearing-loss-threatens-mind-life-and-limb.html>



Board Member Sue Moore

Sue is a Speech and Language Pathologist who was lucky enough to fall into a career that is endlessly interesting (to her). It has provided opportunities to engage with people of all ages, from infants to elders and across settings of homes, schools and college.

She loves spending time with her family and is constantly amazed at how quickly grand children grow up. Her advice is, "Spend as much time with them as you can!"

Sue loves being with her friends and talking about everything. She fits in time for reading, walking and doing crosswords.

COMMUNITY CORNER: Calendar of Events that might be of interest

Lanpher Memorial Library is sponsoring 3 events that are free and open to the public. They are all at 12:00 at the Sterling View Community Center

Monday, March 18th: ABLE Library staff will visit to talk about and demonstrate their primary services: (Audio, Braille, Large Print, E-Books) They will bring equipment to demonstrate, including audio books, with cartridges.

Monday, April 8th: Advance Directives

Monday May 13th Better Business Bureau Speaker on Scams, Fraud and Identity Theft.

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Lamoille Valley Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) Winter Lecture Series 2019 at the Commodore Inn, Stowe, 1:30. Admission: \$5 per session or \$30 for Winter 9-session Series. Coffee & refreshments follow presentation. Questions: Ruth Hamilton, 802-825-8325.

February 20th Connections of a lifetime

February 27th Salvation Farms

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Lamoille County Civic Center:

February 27th, 1:00 PM Tales from the Wild, presented by Eric Nuse, retired Fish and Wild Life Warden

March 13th, 1:00 PM Resources for Seniors, presented by various social service and health agencies

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February, 2019

Second Feast Friday for Founding Members

Getting to know each other while sharing outrageously good food



The main goal of Lamoille Neighbors is to make connections and be in a supportive community as we age, the speaker below might be of particular interest to all of us.

Lamoille Valley Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) Commodore Inn, Stowe, 1:30. Admission: \$5

February 20th

CONNECTIONS OF A LIFETIME

Dr. Rick Barnett, Psy.D., M.S. LADC., is a clinical psychologist and addiction specialist in private practice in Stowe. He has served on a number of State boards and is Legislative Chair and a Past-President of the Vermont Psychological Association. Connecting with others, above all else, enhances our lives. This talk will review recent research on connecting as we age as well as what this means in an increasingly digital world.

February, 2019

If you have a calendar event that you would like us to list in our monthly newsletter and on the website that would be of interest to “seniors” let me know at lisadimondstein@me.com. Starting in April we will be able to offer transportation to members for these events.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN THIS CULTURE OF CARING

Become a founding member or a volunteer go to lamoilleneighbors.org

Make a donation to Lamoille Neighbors by going to lamoilleneighbors.org

Serve on a committee, contact Lisa Dimondstein at lisadimondstein@me.com

Take over our monthly newsletter, lisadimondstein@me.com

Know of a space we can temporarily use as an office? Contact lisadimondstein@me.com

Board Members

Lisa Dimondstein, president
Joan Greene, vice-president
Kathy Geiersbach, treasurer
Olea Smith-Kaland, secretary
Judy Clark
Maxine Adams
Sue Moore
Ellen Gibbs

