

# News & Views

from Quarry Hill

## A Shot of Hope

FROM LORIMAN LOOKE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Whatever any of us might have thought a year ago about the probable duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's clear at this point that the fight has gone into overtime.

But now, there's hope, thanks to the recent arrival of safe and effective vaccines. In early January, representatives from Guardian Pharmacy of Maine administered the first of the Moderna vaccine's required two doses to every consenting Anderson Inn resident and care team member. In February and March, they returned to complete the process.

Ensuring that this critically important effort went safely and effectively involved many hours of detailed planning and coordination. Our nursing care and management teams, in consultation with Guardian, scrutinized every potential practical and logistical concern, with particular attention to residents' varied needs and COVID-safety protocols. When all was said and done, we successfully

inoculated nearly every resident of our main building, the Anderson Inn, along with the majority of our care team.

Of course, vaccination alone does not mean we're out of the woods. Public health experts remain generally reluctant to sanction the relaxation of protective measures in place at older-adult communities like Quarry Hill, citing seniors' particular vulnerability to the virus, as well as the potential spread of worrisome new variants and other concerns.

In recent weeks, we've been able to reintroduce certain inhouse resident activities, modify our admissions guidelines and allow more liberal visitation (see [quarryhill.org/covid-19-response](http://quarryhill.org/covid-19-response) for details). But the basic defenses we implemented last spring remain in effect. Masking, screening and hand-sanitizing protocols are vigorously enforced, and door-to-door meal delivery, temporarily replacing communal dining, remains the order of the day.

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Of Interest

# QUARRY HILL

*Midcoast Maine's Premier Extended  
Care Community for Adults 55+*

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## COVER STORY CONTINUED

Most importantly, we continue performing surveillance testing of all care team members and closely monitoring and implementing the evolving recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Maine CDC and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as pertain to senior-living communities such as ours. This past fall, the guidance coming from these trusted experts began increasingly to reflect individual counties' "transmission rates," i.e., the number of diagnoses happening within each county. Thus, we stay light on our feet, knowing that any changes we make are, themselves, subject to change.

The rigors of the past year have weighed heavily on the people we serve. As always, our number-one commitment is keeping them safe, while doing everything possible to brighten their days. Like people everywhere, we look forward to the day when we can finally say that COVID is behind us.



### WELCOME QUARRY HILL'S NEWEST RESIDENTS

Lynn Alberi

Mary Bok

Jack Brown

Chuck Collison

Marilyn Hotch

Hilary Matlack

Claire McLean

Gay Schueler

## from the Recipe Box



### Hot Buttered Rum Batter

Recipe submitted by our Dining Services team. Adapted from [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com).

With this mix, you can enjoy a delicious cup of hot buttered rum anytime. The batter will keep in your freezer for up to three months.

#### Ingredients:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 lb. butter                      | 1 T. ground cinnamon                        |
| 1 lb. brown sugar                 | 1 tsp. ground nutmeg, plus more for serving |
| 1 lb. confectioners' sugar        |   |
| 1 qt. vanilla ice cream, softened |   |

#### Directions:

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Blend in brown sugar and confectioners' sugar. Remove from heat and whisk in ice cream, cinnamon and nutmeg. Pour mixture into a plastic container, seal and freeze.
2. To make one serving, put 1T. batter and 1 fl. oz. rum in a coffee mug. Fill cup with boiling water and stir. Sprinkle top of drink with additional nutmeg.

# Protecting Against the COVID "Lonelies"

BY DEVON GALE SMITH, MARKETING

Today's social scientists and healthcare providers call it social isolation. Older folks call it just plain lonely. But whatever terms you use, spending days or weeks on end with little meaningful interaction with others or with the world outside one's own four walls disproportionately afflicts people age 65 and up in our society. And the current pandemic has made a bad situation even worse.

Physical distancing guidelines are, of course, essential, especially for seniors. But as the CDC and others have underscored, the resulting isolation significantly increases elders' risk of everything from heart disease (29%) and dementia (50%) to anxiety and depression.

The good news is, there's plenty we can all do to help "inoculate" the older people we love against the ravages of chronic loneliness. If you see red flags, such as losing weight, having trouble sleeping, skipping medications or letting household chores slide—first make sure the individual in question has adequate supplies of food and hygiene essentials. Then focus on the following key areas:

## Alternative Ways to Socialize

Set your senior up with the technology they need for virtual visits with family and friends. Consider "Zooming" at the same time every week, or checking in by phone at the same time every day, to give your loved one the added benefit of having something to look forward to. You can also help him or her find other safe ways to socialize online, like private Facebook groups and internet game clubs. Or, purchase a tablet

loaded with books or one that makes it easy to watch movies and TV shows.

Additional online resources include AARP's [Connect2Affect.org](http://Connect2Affect.org), offering assessment tools and information on reducing isolation; and the U.S. Administration on Aging's Elder Care Locator ([eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov) or 1-800-677-1116), with nationwide searchable listings that can help you connect loved one to local services.

## Physical Activity

Nothing boosts a person's mood like a little exercise. Encourage Mom or Dad to get outdoors every day for a walk (conditions permitting)—even if it's only to the corner stop sign and back. Help them find an appropriate online fitness or stretching class. Or suggest they get up and dance a few times each day to whatever music they love.

## Something to Think About

When it comes to keeping loneliness at bay, an active brain is almost as important as an active body. Mental stimulation can be old-school, as in reading a book or working a puzzle, or tech-based, such as using Google Earth to travel the planet, taking online drawing lessons or signing up with an online language-learning program. Explore options that match your family member's interests and encourage them to get involved.

In short, while it's true that COVID safety will likely require older folks to practice physical isolation a while longer, the harmful effects of social isolation can be avoided. All you need is a little tech and a bit of old-fashioned creativity.

# Turning Points

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## Heartlanders Bill and Barby Buss Take Root in Maine

If people were wines, reflecting the character of the grapes they're made from, then Midwesterners Bill and Barby Buss would taste of hay and cornfields. Growing up in the middle-class Ohio towns of Cuyahoga Falls (Bill) and Barberton (Barby) during the 1930s and '40s, they drank in Heartland values of family, fairness and frugality. And to this day, those are the values they radiate.

Barby came of age in the bosom of a close-knit clan that included grandparents, uncles and aunts and cousins, first, second and third. Huge, four-generation Sunday dinners at her grandparents' farm were de rigeur, and Barby loved going. She spent hours playing in her grandpa's barn, milking cows, jumping from the loft into piles of hay and "swimming" in giant bins of oats.

One day during her senior year, a wiry young fella named Bill (but called Bucky) showed up to paint her parents' house. It was instant chemistry—and not the kind Barby had studied in school. Even as she enrolled at Carleton College in Minnesota, and even after transferring the following year to Wellesley in Massachusetts, she couldn't get Bill out of her head, and it turned out the feeling was mutual. In December of Barby's junior year at Wellesley and Bill's first year in the Navy, the couple married.

Like his bride, Bill had grown up in a solid, working-class household. He was a natural athlete who excelled at football, basketball, baseball and lacrosse. But he also loved to learn, and when the time came for college, he aimed for scholarships at the Ivies, graduating from Yale in 1955. After graduation, he took up his naval assignment on board a destroyer escort in the North Atlantic, and he and Barby were married just before Christmas.

Those early years set the stage for decades of travel. After the Navy, Bill plunged directly into Harvard Law School. From 1960 to '64, he clerked for a Federal judge and practiced law at a firm in Boston, then was recruited by the Harvard Graduate School of Education to contribute his legal expertise to a school-desegregation project. He and Barby returned to their Midwestern roots in 1967, when Bill began a 43-year professorial career at the University of Iowa College of Law in Iowa City, but their time there was interrupted by long periods in England, New Zealand and Australia as Bill pursued various visiting professorships.

While Bill threw himself into his work (his Midwestern work ethic running full tilt), Barby struggled to make peace with her longings for





# Turning Points CONTINUED

permanence and continuity.

“It was difficult not being able to put down roots anywhere, especially once our girls [Sarah and Emily] were born. But I did enjoy exploring, and I developed some useful skills. In fact,” she jokes with her signature look-on-the-bright-side attitude, “I think it gave me one of my greatest strengths: the ability to find the best butcher in a new town in no time flat.”

Besides, it wasn't all go, go, go. During Bill's shorter overseas professorships, Barby remained in Iowa City and picked up a gig or two of her own. After teaching algebra at a community college in Iowa City, she followed her interest in plants (traceable to girlhood romps on her grandparents' farm) all the way to a first master's degree in botany, followed by a second in mathematics. In 1997, she fell head over heels for a local volunteer effort to turn 700 acres of degraded farmland back into the prairie land it had once been. Barby loved the outdoor, hands-on work. She helped eliminate invasives, clear the fields with selective burning and then spread seeds gathered from native plants. She and Bill even bought two old Iowa farms and donated them to the project.

Both Busses loved their life in Iowa, but, after many visits to Maine, starting in their Cambridge years when they stayed at places owned by the rich relatives of their poor fellow students, they decided to uproot themselves one last time and buy a cottage at Quarry Hill. Nowadays, they're retired—sort of. He's now professor emeritus at University of Iowa Law and travels there periodically, with Barby, mostly to work on a book about how the Australians used the American Constitution as a template for their own. Grown daughters Sarah and Emily have followed in Dad's footsteps—Sarah as a professor of philosophy at the University of Michigan; Emily as a lawyer and professor of law at the University of Chicago—and keeping up with

them and grandkids Claire, Lucy, Joey and Eliza is practically a full-time job unto itself.

Like good Midwesterners taught early on that there's always a tractor to fix or a problem to solve, Bill and Barby work to further the causes they believe in, saving the planet in Barby's case, fighting for civil liberties in Bill's. But they acknowledge that, for them, life has been kind.

As Bill says, “My life has been easy, really. I was given opportunities, and all I had to do was make the most of them.”



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# In Rehab, It's the Little Things That Count

If it takes a lot to get you excited, you probably shouldn't be a rehabilitation therapist, says Erica Flagg, OT-R.

Asked what thrills the team of occupational, physical and speech/language therapists she formerly headed at Quarry Hill, Erica says it's seeing the "tiny bits of progress" patients make as they work toward their therapy goals. It might be a gentleman who, after serious injury, can finally bend over and tie his shoes. Or a woman who's able to transfer a tennis ball from one hand to the other for the first time since suffering a stroke.

Small victories like those are often especially meaningful, Erica says, given the older-adult clientele that her department serves.

"With older folks, the littlest things—like being able to climb the steps to their front door or pour their favorite OJ—can make a big difference in terms of their ability to go back to living independently in their own homes. At Quarry Hill, we focus on finding out what's important to each person we serve and then tailor our approach to meet those specific needs. Being able

to pull on socks without help might be critical to one person's sense of dignity; another person might have entirely different priorities," she explains.

Quarry Hill's Rehabilitation Department, located in the Gardens nursing-care center at the Anderson Inn, serves mainly short- and long-term nursing care residents at Quarry Hill, plus individuals in the community's traditional assisted living (Terraces) and memory care (Courtyard) settings. The team of occupational therapists, physical therapists and a speech/language pathologist is at the ready and strives to meet the needs of each individual patient.

With short-term nursing care patients, most of whom come to Quarry Hill upon discharge

from a hospital with a physician's orders for rehab, the work often centers on recovery from joint replacement, stroke or injury resulting from a fall. "These folks might be with us for as little as two or three weeks, depending on the challenges they'll face when they return home and on how diligently they apply themselves to their exercises," Erica explains.

By contrast, therapy for assisted living and long-term



## Of Interest CONTINUED

nursing care residents tends to revolve around what Erica calls “problems of decline.” These include issues related to chronic conditions such as arthritis, Parkinson’s disease, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, and for these folks, Erica says, the goals relate primarily to improving quality of life and preventing further deconditioning.

Erica points out that working with seniors comes with considerations that might not apply to younger people. Among the concerns that arise are dementia and other cognitive issues, an individual’s ability to work through pain and, for short-term nursing patients, the amount of spousal or family support they’ll have when they go home. “We either teach at-home caregivers how to support their loved ones’ ongoing recovery,” she explains, “or, in the absence of family caregivers, set up home health services” to keep the recovery ball rolling.

“Therapy can be hard,” Erica acknowledges, “and not everybody loves us. But we do have some tricks up our sleeves for winning people over. We’ll try to distract them during treatment by cracking jokes, or it might be as simple as scheduling their appointments for a time of day when they have the most energy or feel most receptive. When it gets right down to it, we’re not above bribery. ‘If you bend just this much,’ we might say, ‘we’ll stop there for today.’”

But it’s clear that for Erica and team, the preferred approach is to get people talking about themselves and their experiences. Says Erica, “Most people love to talk about themselves—and we love hearing their stories.”

*Recently, Jennifer Novicka, PT, MSPT, pictured on page 6, was promoted to head of the Therapy team, replacing Erica Flagg, who has taken a new position within Coastal Healthcare Alliance.*

## ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Provides information and support to area residents who have loved ones coping with Alzheimer’s disease or related dementias.

Meets twice monthly:

- The **first Tuesday** of each month from **6:00 to 7:00 p.m.**
- The **third Tuesday** of each month from **3:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

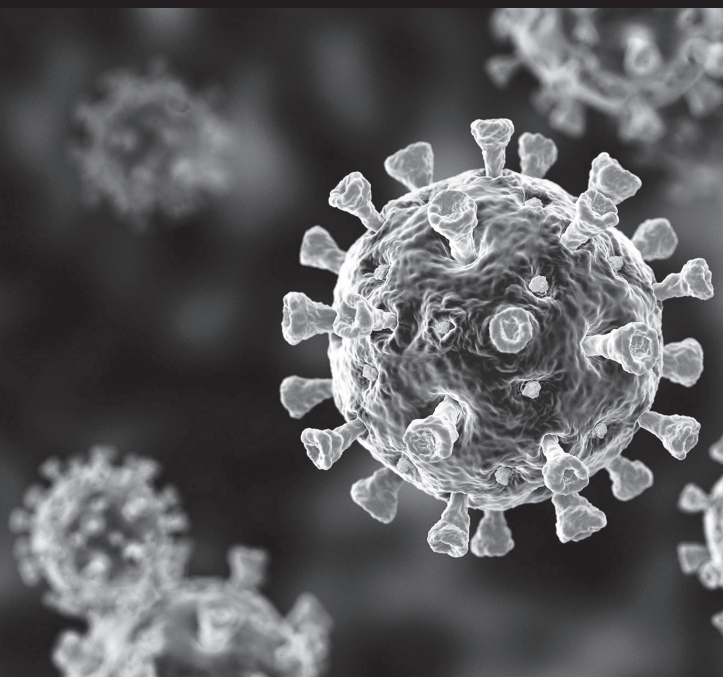
Currently the group is meeting via Zoom.

Those interested in participating should contact **Cheri R. Blouin, LSW**, at **207-301-6237** or at **cblouin@pbmc.org** for the Zoom meeting details.



## Covid-19 Updates

[quarryhill.org/covid-19-response](https://quarryhill.org/covid-19-response)







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## More Time for Good Times

Imagine a community that's purpose-built to free older adults from household chores while giving them just the right amount of day-to-day support they need. A move to assisted living at Quarry Hill means both of you worrying less—and enjoying the time you have together more.

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