

IN THIS ISSUE: Avalon celebrates Valentine's Day with surprise singing and sweet dining / New Feature: Wildlife Corner / Avalon profile: Mac McCullough / Blast Off at the Challenger Learning Center of Maine in March / Manor House concerts present fine performers for all to enjoy



Valentine's Day brings together the Ladies and a New Lottery

Two Avalon residents received a sweet surprise on Friday, February 12th, when four finely dressed gentlemen appeared on their doorstep carrying long stemmed pink roses, ready to spread the spirit of Cupid with song.

The quartet came calling because Mainely Music Chorus member Russ Van Arsdale had recently stopped by the Avalon office to drop off flyers promoting "Singing Valentines." Avalon Village Cooperative Director Andy Stewart read the flyer and said, "Why don't we draw a couple of Avalon addresses out of a hat (aka basket) and send singing Valentines?" As the co-conspirator, Administrative Assistant Kim Parsons carried out the plan by insuring that the unwitting recipients would be home when singers came calling!



Singers Gene Grindle, Merle Campbell, Wayne Leighton and Russ Van Arsdale serenade lottery winners Geneva and Grace

The lottery idea became providential when addresses for Grace Bagley and Geneva Allen were pulled. When the quartet arrived at Grace's home, her son, Rick, a barbershop singer

himself, answered the door and then joined the group! Rick's voice blended beautifully with the others and Grace was moved beyond words to hear "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," "Heart of My Heart," and "My Wild Irish Rose" sung to her.

Around the bend at Geneva's cottage, she reported that she had been having a particularly difficult day and the singing was just what she needed. "If I'd known you were coming, I would have dressed up," she laughed.

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Ladies Luncheon on February 11 brought together a smiling group of lovely ladies who were ready for the occasion, dressed in festive colors to brighten the mid-winter day. Penny Lehman shared vintage photos of two of her favorite Valentines, including her sweet hubby Bernie, who supplied a bottle of champagne for all to enjoy. Avalon Chefs Veronika and Lynn served a delicious luncheon, finished with adorable (and equally delicious) Valentine cupcakes.

Lynn Rothemich pours champagne for Donna Ross

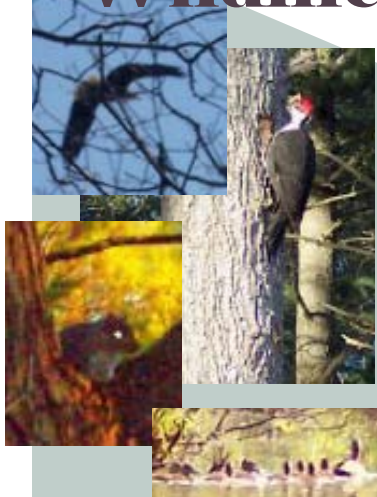


Wildlife Corner

By now you may have heard about the recent sightings of a bobcat within the Avalon community one morning in early February. Our shy feline visitor joins a lengthy and growing list of wildlife sightings that include birds, plants, trees, critters, creatures and once upon a time, a MOOSE! One of the things that we love most about Avalon's beautiful surroundings is the chance to share it with a bounty of wildlife that some Mainers and tourists have to travel far and wide to enjoy.

With walking trails that extend through the woods, the beautiful Penobscot River and its 150 ft. high river banks, tall pines and the quiet serenity that distinguishes Avalon, we're happy to know that wildlife enjoys our space as much as we do! If you have a digital photo of something you've spied at Avalon and a little story to go with it, this space is dedicated for sharing. Please send by email to: susan@avalonvillage.com. Photographs may also be submitted for scanning. Until our next issue of Avalon News, keep your binoculars handy, your camera and writing utensil close by and your eyes and ears open!

Photos: bald eagle, woodpecker, squirrel and mallard family taken near Manor House and at the pond in 2009





Mac proudly displays a painting depicting the Little River Lighthouse that he helped restore from 2001-2009. Mac is a member of the America Lighthouse Foundation and enjoys talking about the restoration project in Cutler.

Mac McCullough's Busy, Caring Hands

by Susan Jonason, AV News Editor

When one visits the McCullough cottage two things immediately draw the eye. First is the beautiful color palette that Bette McCullough chose for their walls and furnishings. Second is the finely crafted coffee, butler and end tables adorning the living room. Upon admiring the fine craftsmanship, Mac shared that he built the pieces himself. Thus begins a conversation that takes us from Mac's passion for wood to his greatest passion, for people.

Mac grew up on a farm in Hudson, 15 miles north of Bangor, where his father was a superb blacksmith and woodworker. "My dad could fix anything," Mac said. "That was during the days when if you couldn't fix things you had to do without." There was no electricity available in the area of Hudson where the McCulloughs lived, so with no refrigeration Mac's mom canned all the produce from the family's gardens. "There was a bean cannery in Corinth, so we primarily grew beans," Mac recalled. During the war, Mac remembers his dad bartering with the fresh butter and eggs from the farm. "We also received gas coupons because of the dairy farm, but we mostly used horses, so Dad traded a few gas rations as well."

Upon graduating from high school Mac went straight into the Navy in order to go to college on the GI bill. When the time for college came, Mac realized that he was better off staying in the Navy. "Thanks to the Navy I earned an engineering degree." He retired as an officer after 21 years of service and then entered the pulp and paper industry as an electrical

engineer. As in the Navy, Mac and Bette and their three children, Brian, Scott and Amy, continued to move around quite a lot. When Mac retired from Champion Paper in Clyde, NC, he and Bette retired home to Maine. "Because we moved around so often, I always kept up with my woodworking, restoring the homes that we bought through the years with Bette and making things for the children like cribs and rocking horses. I love the feeling of wood in my hands," Mac shared with a smile. He helped others with repair projects, too, including fixing a boat for a friend, who in exchange gave him a beautiful piece of wood from the Brazilian rainforest. The prized wood was used to craft the set of tables in the McCullough's living room.

Not one to rest on his laurels, in 1988 Mac was appointed to the State of Maine Apprenticeship Council under Gov. McKernan, integrating apprenticeship programs into technical colleges. His was the first of many apprenticeship programs that were started in the State. In 1997 he was a founding member of the Elder Care Network in Lincoln County, a non-profit started by a small group. "We'd buy old homes and fix them up, converting them into dwelling units. I was the Clerk of the Works, overseeing all of the work to make sure needs were met."

Currently, Mac volunteers with the Eastern Area Agency on Aging (EAAA) where he expanded the Rides for ME program to Hampden. As a volunteer driver he enjoys delivering groceries for the needy. He is also involved in the EAAA Fix-it Program, doing small repair jobs for folks who need assistance. His primary role, however, is driving for Cancer Care of Maine whenever he is needed (a recent trip with a patient required a three day stay in Portland).

Mac and Bette are also known for helping friends at Avalon whenever extra rides are needed. At Avalon, Mac is Chair of the Building & Structure Committee and also serves on the Finance Committee. He helps out as an Avalon Ambassador, too, answering questions from a resident's viewpoint during Open House events. "If we could just figure out where to put a wood shop at Avalon, I'd be all set," Mac says, slowly rubbing his hands together as if polishing a piece of wood.



Among the many finely crafted pieces of woodwork made by Mac's skillful hands.



March goes up and out like a Rocket

Strap in for a trip to outer space when Avalon's Activities Committee takes you to the Challenger Learning Center of Maine (CLC) on March 25th, hosted by CLC Executive Director Susan Jonason and Center Coordinator Jennifer Therrien.

See how Maine students apply their knowledge of science, engineering, technology and math when they fly simulated NASA space missions at CLC, working as scientists and astronauts at Mission Control and the Space Lab.

While you're at CLC enjoy the many NASA artifacts and unique items on display in the spacious lobby and in each room. You'll be amazed by what you see and hear as you tour the Challenger Learning Center in nearby Bangor. Count down to launch!

Manor House Music



Fabulous music making happens at the Manor House when talented artists gather to perform. From internationally known artists such as pianist Masanobu Ikemiya and singer/songwriter Walter Strauss to Avalon's own Andy Stewart with friends Denise O'Connell and Doug Ronco or ivory tickler John "Reno" Runden, when music is in the air, hearts are filled with joy.



NEXT CONCERT:

Mainly Music Chorus
Monday, March 22 - 7 pm

Contact the Activities Committee and let us know if there's a particular style of music you'd like to hear!