

HILLTOPPER



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Please send your news, views and photos to rlphprkns@yahoo.com or to mailbox #1. Thanks, Sue Jaggard, Onno Leyds and Diana Morris ,for input to this issue.

COMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, JULY 21 (July 22 Rain Date)

10 A.M., Hilltop House Patio

HPCA Annual Meeting - Due to Covid19, owners are encouraged to use the proxy alternative rather than to attend in person.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

5 P.M., Hilltop House Patio/Lawn

Annual Summer Party - "Celebrate Good Times" is the theme. Watch your mail cubby for more details about this outdoor event with music by Kearsarge Community Band.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

4 P.M., Location TBA

Hilltop Players One-act play readings performed by Hilltop residents and directed by Nancy Stone. Join the troupe of players! (See article, below right)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

4 P.M., Hilltop House

2nd Annual Oktoberfest -Returning due to popular demand! German music (by Vesilind Brass), food, fun...and beer, of course. More details to come.

"Sun is shining. Weather is sweet. Make you wanna move your dancing feet." Bob Marley



Stay Tuned

Like the rest of the state of New Hampshire, Hilltop is transitioning cautiously from "stay-at-home" to "safer-at-home" mode. The Tuesday morning crafts group gathered in person on June 30 for the first time in months. Our annual summer party (theme: "Celebrate Good Times") is on the calendar for August 1, featuring an outdoor concert by our hometown band, the Kearsarge Community Band. More gatherings and activities are expected to resume in the weeks ahead.

It's a challenge to adapt customary events and special celebrations to the realities of Covid19, and our Manager Jean Molloy, our Board of Directors, the Hilltop House Committee and others are working hard to make us happy and keep us safe. We each can do our part by continuing to wear our masks around others, wash our hands, stay 6 feet apart, and stay tuned for more information or changes to come.



Casting Call Nancy Stone is recruiting actors to participate in one-act play readings on September 9. Men are especially needed. Call Nancy at 526-2976 or (cell)603-620-1333 for more information.

Ralph's Field Notes: Invaders from the Moon?

The other day I scored a first. Never before did I get a “bug” in my mailbox. You may not think of insects as pretty, but this one has to be one of Hilltop’s prettiest residents: a **luna moth** (“luna” = moon).

Luna moths are members of the giant silkworm moth family, a name that is misleading as they are not closely related to silkworms, but they are giants: their wingspans can be greater than 6 inches. NH is home also to the slightly bigger cecropia moth, North America’s largest moth, and the slightly smaller polyphemus moth.

Although the luna moth is not uncommon in suitable woods, it’s largely unnoticed because it flies around at night in June. Adult luna moths live only a week or so, existing only to mate and lay eggs. If you want to see a luna moth, leave an outside light on all night in mid- to late June and check around it early the next morning.

Over 100 years ago, a tiny parasitic fly was introduced to control the pesky gypsy moth. However, it mostly ignored the gypsy moth and is now in the process of wiping out the giant silkworm moths. To me, the worst thing is that the problem was recognized in 1919, but the fly kept being released, with 30 states continuing to do so until 1986.



Community Server Abby

Morris Sweet, KRHS student and granddaughter of Diana Morris (Unit 118), is re-organizing our Hilltop library as a community service project. Besides her service to Hilltop, this is her third year as a junior technical intern at New London Barn.

Welcome, Newcomers! Lots of them! Chris and Kit Norris, new residents of Unit 41, are no strangers to the area, having lived in Andover and having served at Proctor Academy for years. Moving from homes right here in New London are David and Janet Royle (to Unit 33) and William and Helen Tucker (to Unit 6). Joanne Wilson and Nick Wood are moving to Unit 26 from Florida. Eugene Ward moved to Unit 84 in June. Mary Ellen Ripley has purchased Unit 11, but won’t be moving in until renovations are complete.

So Long, Neighbors

Cluster 1 residents gathered (6+ feet apart) on the lawn to say farewell to Gail and John Lawton just before they left for their new home in Florida.



Luna moth caterpillars are big green things (sort of like tomato hornworms), and they feed on trees such as hickories, birches and sumacs. I’ve never heard of any causing real damage. As for the life cycle, about 200 to 400 eggs are laid in June, singularly or in small groups. The caterpillars grow fairly quickly, overwinter in the leaf litter as pupae and “hatch” as adults in early to mid-June. The caterpillars are subject to a strange fungus which consumes their insides, then “explodes” from the pupae in orange protrusions called “saber blades”.

The adults have pale green wings, white bodies, and two long “tails” (presumably to deter bats, one of their predators). The moth in my mailbox was superficially undamaged (most I’ve seen have been mashed into car windshields or grills), as it likely had completed its life cycle. It had a 4-inch wingspan, long tails on each hind wing, an eyespot on each of its four wings, and the feathery antennae of a male.

