



The

Lodger

March 2014
Issue 4

NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

Limericks

Our call for limericks in the January edition of *The Lodger* did not produce any original results, but Sue Renard of Ridges provided a wonderful collection that her Scottish mother passed along to her. Sue tells us that her mother enjoyed playing with words her whole life. We chose several of the “ditties” to share with you.

*There was an old man of Blackheath,
Who sat on his set of false teeth,
Said he, with a start,
“O, Lord, bless my heart!
I’ve bitten myself underneath!”*

*A fly and a flea in a flue
Were imprisoned, so what could they do?
Said the fly, “let us flee!”
“Let us fly!” said the flea,
So they flew through the flaw in the flue.*

Note how the spelling of Cologne influences other word spellings in this one.

*An unpopular youth of Cologne,
With a pain in his stomach did mogne.
He heaved a great sigh
And said “I would digh,
But the loss would be only my ogne.*

Thank you, Sue.

RESIDENT FOCUS

Although he is 90 years old and has been retired for 39 years, Captain Al Tatman still exhibits the confidence and bravado of a uniformed commanding officer. In fact, he served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Coast Guard for 22 years, rising to the status of a step short of rear admiral. He and his wife, Naida, are now “stationed” in the Piedmont neighborhood of The Lodge, having moved there nearly one year ago.

It was during World War II that Al Tatman, too young for the draft but eager to become a commissioned officer, applied to and was accepted by the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. A graduate of the class of 1947, he was commissioned as an ensign, and, as is customary, was immediately assigned to a Coast Guard cutter as a Deck Watch Officer. All larger ships with permanent crews in the Coast Guard are called cutters, a term that has its roots in a maritime tax collection agency established in 1790.

But Al’s interest was in aviation and he put his name in as a candidate for flight training. After two years on the USCGC Mendota (named after a lake in Wisconsin) stationed in Boston and later in Wilmington, North Carolina, he got what he wanted and was ordered to report for flight school training in Pensacola, Florida.

Cont’d on back page

The Lodger in Color

If you have access to the Internet, you can see each issue of *The Lodger* in color. Here are the steps to take.

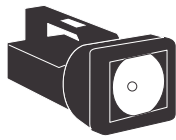
- Type lodgeatoldtrail.com in the Internet address window of your browser.
- Click on “ABOUT THE LODGE.”
- Click on “News and Press Releases.”
- Click on “The Lodger” to open the issue you want to see.



Capt. Al Tatman



Naida Tatman



STAFFER SPOTLIGHT

Chad Gates and Harold Weakley can be considered old-timers. They were hired in May 2012 as drivers just before The Lodge opened its doors to residents. Since then, Chad's job was broadened to include concierge duties.

Chad is especially pleased with the extra resident contact that he gets as concierge. While at the front desk, he can schedule transportation for medical visits as they are called in, hoping to correctly factor in times for doctor delays. He reschedules doctor visits and confirms any changes with residents when transportation conflicts occur. From the desk he can arrange for caregivers to accompany those needing assistance, remind residents of their appointments, and sometimes alert a family member of an upcoming trip.

Schedules are reviewed in advance by Chad and Harold, who share the driving, to assure workable times and routings.

Besides transportation for medical visits on Mondays and Thursdays, shopping trips to Crozet, Charlottesville, and Waynesboro are provided on other days. Special outings have included trips to as far as Harrisonburg and Lexington. To meet an early morning airplane flight, a driver has been known to rise at five a.m.

One resident remarked that the transportation provided by



The Lodge far and away beats taxicab service—taxi fare once cost him \$100 for a round trip to Charlottesville.

Last year, The Lodge limousine and bus transported passengers a total of 20,000 miles.

Chad's attraction to public safety, an interest apparent from his preoccupation for security at The Lodge, stems from the admiration he had for his grandfather, a 6-foot-4-inch Arlington County police officer. Chad holds degrees in both police science, earned while he was with the Virginia State Police, and in business management. Besides reading books and watching TV shows on criminal investigation, his other pastimes include astronomy, model railroading, the saxophone, and pressure point self-defense tactics.

Harold was an over-the-road professional driver tallying over 3.5 million miles during his 40-year career. Working both for a trucking company and as an owner-operator, his travels took him to every one of the lower 48 states where he



experienced every imaginable traffic incident—including the close call with an airplane that crash landed on the road just behind his truck. A fan of NASCAR, Harold has also been a member of auto racing pit crews. He and his wife have resided in nearby White Hall for the past 14 years.

These skilled men provide Lodge residents with that extra sense of security.

This and That

Backyard Profiling

This image taken with a long lens is no statue, but rather a living bird of prey perched on the weather station behind The Lodge. Commonly seen circling the open area, the red-shouldered hawk, with the keenest vision of any living animal, will often station himself on an elevated perch



to watch for unsuspecting victims. They will catch on the fly small animals such as chipmunks or snakes and frogs with their powerful talons and eat them on the ground or carry them to an elevated perch. They have wing spans of up to four feet and are recognizable by their long dark tail with narrow white bands.

The Lodger

Issued every other month for residents and friends of The Lodge at Old Trail.

Jim Clark, editor

Advisory Committee

Sue Clark

Fred Lach

Gae Lach

Ideas for publication are welcome by contacting Sue, Gae, Fred, or Jim.

Kudos to our fellow resident Mike Orend

(Ridges) who was featured in the February 1998 *Washingtonian*. He pursued a seven-year humanitarian crusade as director of an inner-city mentoring program for school children that intimately involved his daughter and son-in-law. Copies of the engrossing article are available in The Lodge's Betty Shelburne Library.

Financing is the hold up for the proposed boutique hotel adjacent to The Lodge. Lodge owner David Hilliard says financing remains a challenge due to the restrictive lending policies in effect since 2008.

Appreciative and astonished, Sue Clark (Ridges) won raves from railroad buffs for her recent painting of a railroad caboose. She reciprocated by donating digital images to the excursion railway that owns the rail car and to the Rivana chapter of the National Railway Historical Society which hope to raise funds by selling reprints. Until recently, the caboose was at Red Hill where the local chapter restored it over a six-year period.



Nearby Get-Away

A Trail Keeps a Fascinating Railway Legacy Alive

Constructed 100 years ago, the Virginia Blue Ridge Railway no longer exists, but its legacy lives on. The railroad was forced to close down over 30 years ago for lack of business, but were it not for the rail-bed that remained, the trail created for hiker, biker, and equestrian use in Nelson and Amherst counties would not have been possible. The Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail is an outstanding example of a rails-to-trails project and an ideal get-away for Lodge residents, 45 minutes from Old Trail Village.

The smooth, flat trail paralleling the Piney and Tye rivers passes through a varied landscape of woodlands and open areas. The first quarter mile of the seven mile route is suitable for people with wheelchairs and walkers. The entire trail is an easy ride for bicyclists and a popular spot for birding. With no exit at the end, travel over the whole trail requires a round trip.

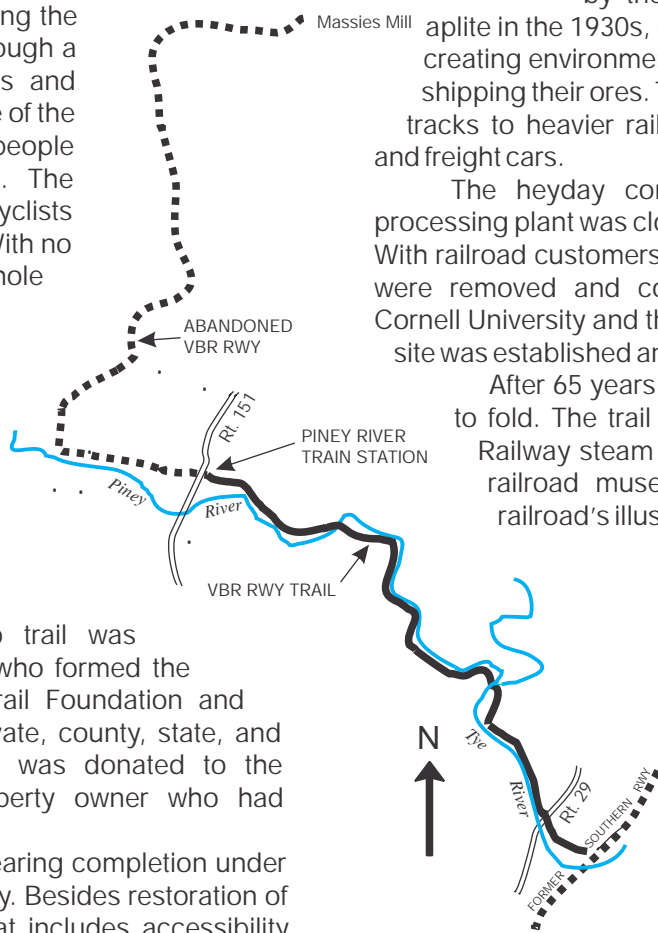
The trailhead at the village of Piney River has a large parking area and portable toilet alongside the original Piney River train station. It is accessible by driving south on VA Route 151 through Nellysford, a distance of 28 miles from U.S. Route 250.

The transition from rail to trail was spearheaded by local citizens who formed the Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail Foundation and helped gain financing from private, county, state, and federal sources. The roadbed was donated to the counties by an adjacent property owner who had purchased it from the railroad.

Added enhancements are nearing completion under the supervision of Nelson County. Besides restoration of the Piney River train station that includes accessibility



The Piney River trailhead sign is framed by track crossties and rails salvaged from the railroad. Part of the trail is suitable for people with wheelchairs or walkers.



additions and the installation of interpretive signs, a traditional railroad cover is being added to the bridge that crosses Naked Creek toward the far end of the trail. All construction will be completed in May.

Built in 1915 to transport chestnut logs to a junction with the Southern Railroad (now Norfolk Southern) at the village of Tye River, the 16-mile railroad extended to Massies Mill through Piney River. Hastily built inferior track work caused frequent derailments, toppling locomotives and freight cars on to their sides.

But derailments and flood washouts were nothing compared to the calamity faced by the railroad when the chestnut blight wiped out nearly every chestnut tree in Virginia. Passenger traffic and what little else could be hauled were insufficient to support the enterprise.

Then, much to the surprise of the railroad owners and as if staged by some super power, the railroad was resuscitated by the discovery of titanium dioxide and aplite in the 1930s, ushering in a new industry that, while creating environmental damage, relied on the railway for shipping their ores. The railroad responded by upgrading tracks to heavier rail and purchasing more locomotives and freight cars.

The heyday continued until 1980 when the last processing plant was closed and transport of the ores ended. With railroad customers having vanished, rails and crossties were removed and corporate records were donated to Cornell University and the University of Virginia. A Superfund site was established and contamination cleanup followed.

After 65 years in operation, the railroad was forced to fold. The trail and two former Virginia Blue Ridge Railway steam engines on display in a New Jersey railroad museum are the only remnants of the railroad's illustrious past.



The newly constructed covered bridge across Naked Creek is a replica of a traditional railroad cover.

Resident Focus (cont'd from front page)

You name it and Al probably piloted it: two engine and four engine airplanes, helicopters, and seaplanes. His trips involved logistical ferries and searches for boats in distress or overdue airplanes. He remembers flying to a remote radar station in Canada to deliver huge tractor tracks to a waiting maintenance crew. One of his search missions along the rocky western coast took four days before the remains of a lost airplane could be found.

Another assignment was to sight, locate, and measure icebergs from Greenland to the Grand Banks, information that was communicated by radio to ship captains navigating in those waters between March and the spring melt in June.

One unforgettable experience occurred after being named the chief operations officer in Honolulu, a "desk job" says Al, but one with awesome responsibilities. A yacht was stolen and reported to be sea bound for a destination unknown. Due to its law enforcement authority, the Coast Guard was expected to find and apprehend the perpetrators. Operations officer Tatman ordered a search. After a Coast Guard airplane found the "pirates," he deployed a boat crew with orders to "gun them down" (code that was understood to make the craft unsteerable). The criminals apparently knew they had zero chance and surrendered without resistance to the Coast Guard authorities.

Al was able to breath a sigh of relief but he knew that the incident could have had a different ending. That is why officers in charge always evaluate whether to clear their actions with higher authority. If the incident had been the crash of the *Andrea Doria*, says Al, you would wake up the Admiral first.



Capt. and Mrs. Tatman, 1970.

"Long hours and a fun way to make a living," is how he recalls his career. Fun is what he had in mind when circumstances offered him a chance to invoke the RHIP axiom. As the senior officer in charge, he gave himself the weekend off (Rank Has Its Privileges) to visit Naida, the girl who dazzled him on a recent blind date. A United Airlines stewardess, she had a layover in Seattle. Two weeks later they were engaged to be wed. They were later married in Williamsburg, Virginia, near where her parents were living. They celebrated their 60th anniversary in 2013.

Reminiscing his career, Al thinks about some of the radical changes occurring since he left active duty.



Al's first duty station was aboard the USCGC Mendota; commissioned in 1945, decommissioned in 1973, and scrapped in 1974.

Airplane reconnaissance of shipping lanes for the presence of icebergs is no longer needed. Satellite imagery has taken that over. And, on the other hand, he feels for the coast guardsmen who could face the enormous task of rescuing passengers and crews from a troubled cruise ship, now megaships holding literally several thousands of people.

Living in New Orleans and Travis City, Michigan during retirement, the Tatmans enjoyed sailboating and snow skiing. Al honed his woodworking skills with a full set of power tools. Naida thinks like a nutritionist, a discipline she acquired while studying for her degree in home economics from Ohio State. Not surprisingly, Al fancies the writings of Tom Clancy, an author of espionage and military science novels. He has in print and on his computer 92 of the works of George Alfred Henty who is known for his historical adventure stories. Naida's other pastimes included masterful basket weaving and painting still-life in oils.



Exhibited at an art show, this painting by Naida was "the star of the show," says Al.

They are both native Pennsylvanians, she from McKeesport and he from Johnstown.

Although Al gives Naida sole credit, the Tatmans raised two sons and a daughter. Their daughter lives in Australia and is head of the philosophy department at the University of Tasmania. Their younger son is a hardware salesman in upstate New York. Lodgers know their older son as bartender for the thematic socials he hosts at Greg's Pub. He is a retired army colonel and a civilian employee of the National Ground Intelligence Center in Charlottesville.

You would be right to think a coast guardsman can be taken out of the Coast Guard but the Coast Guard cannot be taken out of a coast guardsman. Ask Al what floor he lives on and he would tell you the third deck—and Naida would agree!

WEATHER EXTREMES

Now that The Lodge weather station has operated for eight months since June 2013, here are some facts to mull over.

Maximum temperature	92.9°F, July 16
Minimum temperature	3.5°F, January 7
Average 2013 temperature	60.8°F
Average January 2014 temperature	29.4°F
Maximum wind speed	44 mph, December 31
Dominant wind direction	WNW
Maximum daily rainfall	2.67 inches, June 17