



The

# Lodger

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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

## Maureen Davis Named Lodge Executive Director



The newly hired Lodge Executive Director started on a path to senior living administration before she ever saw a classroom. Beginning at the age of three or four, Maureen Davis visited the nursing home where her grandmother was Director

of Nursing, fascinated with the way she did her job. Her path continued through formal education and other leadership positions in senior care bringing her to The Lodge in April when Lodge owner David Hilliard announced her appointment.

“She is an ultimate professional with some wonderful new and exciting ideas about The Lodge and senior living in general,” said Hilliard.

Before coming to The Lodge, Davis was Executive Director of Otterbein SeniorLife in Cridersville, Ohio, a continuing care retirement community that includes skilled nursing care. She was previously marketing coordinator and assistant administrator for senior care communities in Northern Virginia. She is familiar with Hilliard’s reputation and vision for establishing The Lodge and jumped at the chance for joining the leadership team. “I knew from walking in the front door that it was unlike other senior communities,” says Davis.

One of Davis’s aims is to avoid institutional mindset and to help establish a more home-like environment for all residents. She believes that will be accomplished by providing residents with a wide variety of choices and amenities. She plans to develop new concepts and strategies with the help of her staff.

Employing her staff to help with problem solving impresses Hilliard. “She really listens and asks questions to get everyone on the same page so as to find solutions,” says Hilliard.

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## RESIDENT FOCUS

Talk about breaking glass ceilings. Frank and Judy Mueller can each claim being first among their peers. The public works director with the city of Charlottesville for 32 years, Judy became the first woman hired in the eastern United States as the director of a male-dominated city public works agency. Frank is the only student from his high school in Missouri to ever be nominated as a Naval Academy plebe. The civic-minded couple also have a history of helping young people cope with life’s needs. After Judy retired and Frank left a second career as teacher, they moved from their Charlottesville townhouse to The Lodge in 2018.

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Frank was one of five children whose mother became head of household when his father died an early death. He recalls his father as a talented draftsman who was employed by aircraft manufacturer Curtis Wright and later McDonnell Aircraft Corporation.

Judy was born and raised half a continent away in Niagara Falls, New York. Judy’s father was one of the once common milk men, delivering glass bottles of milk daily to city homes. Her mother provided accounting services for a small local business. Judy majored in human ecology and received her BS degree at Cornell University. She also holds an MBA from Old Dominion University.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1967, Frank attended gunnery school, served one year shipboard, and volunteered for service in Vietnam. He was assigned as skipper of a Swift Boat, seeing action in the Mekong Delta, and later assigned to

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## Resident Focus (cont'd)

command a detachment of six boats. Swift Boats were 50-foot shallow-draft vessels especially created for patrol and interdiction of coastal areas and interior waterways during the Vietnam War.

After duty for one year in Vietnam, Frank served in a variety of assignments before retiring in 1987 with the rank of Commander. Other assignments included testing and certification of new ship systems purchased by the Navy, processing cases of disciplined naval personnel in advance of official inquiries, and conducting seminars at the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, now the Joint Forces Staff College. He served a year in Jubail, Saudi Arabia with the Saudi Navy Expansion Program.

Frank met Judy through a friend in Virginia Beach and they dated for several months before he shipped to Vietnam. While Frank was gone, Judy took a job in Atlanta, doing radio and TV work for the American Dairy Association. They married at the Naval Air Station Chapel in Norfolk upon his return in 1970. During the 1970s, Judy worked for Virginia Beach Public Works and Utilities, while Frank served on four surface ships.

Judy was appointed as Public Works Director for the city of Charlottesville in 1985. She supervised over 300 employees, nearly half of the city's work force. Her appointment was not quick and easy. City managers deliberated long and hard, knowing a female had never been hired in Charlottesville to build, operate, and maintain the city's infrastructure. An added concern was employee acceptance of a woman boss.

But with her social and management skills and the confidence placed in her by the City Manager and the City Engineer, Judy excelled in managing city traffic engineering, snow removal and school and street maintenance, water and sewer, the public bus system, and garbage disposal.

An active member of the American Public Works Association (APWA) local chapter, she was elected president of the international association, traveling as far as Australia promoting the role of public works. The Judith M. Mueller Local Government Service Award, named in her honor, is given to APWA members in recognition of honorary character.

Her distinguished service gave her the entree for appointment by President George W. Bush to the committee advising the new federal Department of Homeland Security on emergency services. She takes pride in having convinced Secretary Tom Ridge, the first head of the newly found department, of the role of public works in emergency response.

"Now there are enough women in high level positions that they have to take you seriously," said Judy to *American City*

and *County* magazine. "Fifteen years ago, any woman who called you was assumed to be a secretary. Early in my career, I had problems with people who would say they didn't return phone calls from a woman."

Judy found time in her active schedule to be House President for the Delta Delta Delta sorority at UVA for six years, a women's fraternity that includes Katie Couric and Doris Kerns Goodwin as two of its notable members.

After retiring from the Navy, Frank worked 17 years for the Charlottesville school system at Venable Elementary, first as a teacher assistant in kindergarten through grade four and later as a reading teacher for below grade level children. He was a long time volunteer with First Tee, a program that teaches golf and life skills to children.

The Muellers have a son, Aric, and daughter-in-law, Sandra, who live outside of Richmond. Aric is self-employed as a computer technologist. The Muellers have a 16 year-old granddaughter, Afton, and grandson Rowan, age 14.

"I have read more books in two years than I read in the last 25 years," says Judy who reads both fiction and non-fiction. Franks says that he devours two books a week and completes every crossword puzzle he gets his hands on.

"We love the people at The Lodge," says Judy, "and have more friends now than ever before."



*Clockwise from upper left, Fred and Judy in about 2005, Judy in 1985, the couple at a Naval Ball in about 1982, and the Mueller's wedding in 1970.*

### The Lodger

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### Maureen Davis (cont'd)

"The staff is like a big family," says Davis. "They get along well with each other and work to settle differences when they occur, just like a real family"

Raised in Fairfax County, Virginia, Davis attended lower grades at county schools and graduated from Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School for girls in Washington, D.C. She holds a BS degree in Health Services Administration from James Madison University and an MS

degree in Gerontology from George Mason University.

Fond of both animals and the country, Davis lives on a two-acre tract near Greenwood that she calls her farmette. "It has a lovely brook and I have already spotted a perfect location for a chicken coop."

We add our welcome and extend our best wishes for every success in meeting the requirements of this demanding job.

# Riding High, Amtrak Hit With New Challenge

Is intercity rail transportation at a threshold of success or will it become a government boondoggle? The Lodger, after traveling the nation's highways by car and using air transport as an alternative now and then in past years, tried a trip by rail for a first-hand look at Amtrak train service. After all, the 50-year-old Amtrak had for the first time completed a near breakeven year in 2019 and was projecting revenue to fully meet 2020 operating costs, so the railroad was doing something right.

Then the pandemic hit. Ridership plummeted by 95 percent. Passenger coach seating and crowded stations conflicted with personal distancing rules. Many trains were canceled. A must-wear mask order on all trains was instituted at the time of this writing. Many analysts are wondering whether public transportation can ever recoup the riders it has lost.

Our trip to Savannah, Georgia and back was made in the nick of time. A week later, pandemic warnings began circulating. An unaware public filled every one of the 60 seats in our car as the Palmetto departed the Richmond, Virginia Staples Mill station. Seating was spacious with ample leg room, reclining back rests, and adjustable foot rests. Nine hours later, the train rolled to a stop in Savannah, within a minute of scheduled arrival. Five days later, we returned to Richmond, precisely on time.

Liberal carry-on and checked baggage rules are far superior to airline requirements. You can expect an attendant waiting to hand over your checked baggage, quickly offloaded at your destination station.

Wi-Fi service on our tablets was spotty, but following our progress using Amtrak's train tracking website was fun. Speeds were clocked at up to 70 miles per hour.

Two restrooms were convenient and relatively clean at one end of our train car. The next car was equipped with a snack bar and table seating where a 20-year Amtrak veteran in white shirt and tie worked as the Service Attendant. Too bad the food offerings were not as accommodating as the Service Attendant. The menu is limited and little attention is given to nutritious dieting, although a wide assortment of alcoholic beverages is offered. Some people bring their own snacks aboard. The venerable dining car was recently phased out of existence in a cost-cutting move.

An alternative to driving fatigue and a boon for people with physical limitations, railroad transportation offers overlooked



*Amtrak's daily Palmetto at the Richmond, Virginia station.*

environmental benefits as well. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, Amtrak travel is 47 percent more efficient than car travel and 33 percent more efficient than air travel on a per-passenger, per-mile basis. A single commercial airport occupies as much land as 300 miles of railroad. Commercial air generates 37 percent more CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger-mile than passenger rail.

Prior to the Great Depression, some 20,000 passenger trains were in operation. By 1970, they had nose dived to just over 400 as automobile use soared, highways were modernized, and air travel was inaugurated. The mighty New York Central and Pennsylvania Railroad merged in 1968 in an attempt to salvage passenger service, only to declare bankruptcy two years later.

Awakened to the plight of American passenger rail, Congress finally acted with the creation of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation in 1971, a quasi-public national carrier owned by the federal government called Amtrak, named after the words **A**merica and **tr**ack. "I guarantee you, Amtrak will not last more than five years," said one railroad executive, a fitting prognosis for an entity starting with hand-me-down equipment and no promise of subsidies.

But ridership steadily grew and experienced leaders of Amtrak convinced Congress to cough up money for the past 50 years, including \$1 billion in relief money to keep the system running and workers paid during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, Amtrak operated more than 300 trains a day to over 500 destinations in 46 states and three Canadian provinces.

After celebrating a record ridership of 32.5 million passengers in 2019, Amtrak in 2020 is suddenly faced with devastating losses of passengers and revenue amid the coronavirus crisis. Restoring the 95 percent loss in ridership will be exceptionally challenging. Cleaning crews aboard all trains are under consideration as is maintaining more distance between passengers, more contactless services, and advance food purchases. Robust marketing will be needed to remind people of the societal benefits of intercity rail. But will people travel together on trains like before? Maybe not until a coronavirus vaccine is developed and distributed. Can Amtrak last until then?



*Seating on Amtrak passenger cars includes spacious leg room.*



*Amtrak's café cars replaced dining cars on the 21,000 mile system.*

## BRIEFS

**HOUSEPLANTS ARE BECOMING MORE APPRECIATED** as we spend more time inside during this stay-at-home period. Besides providing better aesthetics, they recycle carbon dioxide, add humidity to dry environments, and contribute psychological benefits.

According to NASA, "Houseplants scrub indoor pollutants making air safer and cleaner."

Increasing humidity can be especially beneficial during dry winter months.

University studies even claim that working or studying around plants can increase memory retention and quality of work results.

Some of the best houseplants include Anthurium, spider plants, or orchids for filtering pollution and snake plants or orchids for producing oxygen at night instead of throughout the day.



Anthurium



Snake Plant



Spider Plant



Orchid

**MARKET ANALYSTS EXPECT THE PANDEMIC WILL ALTER FUTURE BUYING HABITS.** Among the potential changes in consumer habits are more stockpiling of staple items and greater use of BOPIS – buying online and picking up in store or curbside. The views are mixed on whether spending will rebound to pre-pandemic levels, but many agree that specialty retailers will continue on the decline that had begun prior to COVID-19 as people switched to online shopping. Several recent major retail bankruptcies include 100-year old J.C. Penney. Once operating a chain of over 2,000 stores, Penney plans more store closings to reduce the total number of stores down to around 600. The Charlottesville and Staunton outlets have thus far been spared, but their futures are all but certain.

A new burden on all retailers will be to develop more effective infection prevention strategies that will better prepare them for any future health crises. Grocers will need to establish more appropriate procedures to prevent hoarders from buying out a store's stock.

**WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.** Weather could add to the covid concerns of the 2020 fall season. University of Arizona atmospheric scientists are forecasting above average Eastern hurricane activity. The model they have developed has proved to be accurate in the past. They predict 10 hurricanes with half of them as major category 3, 4, or 5 storms. Average annual hurricane activity over the past 30 years has included only two major events. The researchers are attributing the increased activity to Atlantic Ocean surface temperatures that are expected to be the warmest they have been since 1993.

Both NOAA and a slew of private forecasters agree. Colorado state forecasters anticipate "an above average probability for major hurricanes making landfall." This will be the first time the federal government has had to plan for a pandemic and major storm at the same time. Among the unparalleled challenges it faces is planning for reduced capacity evacuation centers to assure that personal distancing can be maintained. The Arizona forecast was released earlier than the normal June announcement to give government agencies and the general public more time to prepare for an unusually challenging time.

**A 570-GALLON BATCH OF PAINT IS NEEDED TO KEEP THE WHITE HOUSE WHITE,** according to the National Park Service owners. Originally called the Executive Mansion, the U.S. president's place of residence was renamed by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1902 to distinguish it from state governors' residences that were also called executive mansions. It is thought the sandstone facade has been painted white ever since the stains of the fire by British troops were covered over in 1814.

The amount of paint needed is for more than one building because the White House is actually a complex of structures – the Residence plus the east and west wings connected by colonnades. Each wing is two stories high, while the residence is four. Some 40 layers of paint were removed in 1992 in preparation for the refurbishment of exterior walls.

The ground floor in the Residence connects with the first floors of the east and west wings. The residence first floor is designated the state floor. It contains rooms used for ceremonial purposes including the Green Room, Blue Room, and Red Room. The second and third floors are the first family's living quarters.

The basement of the East Wing is a bombproof underground bunker used as the Presidential Emergency Operations Center. The East Wing serves as office space for the first lady and her staff. Visitor tours pass through the East Wing before entering the Residence.

The Oval Office, Cabinet Room, and Situation Room are in the West Wing. The Rose Garden borders the west colonnade.

Public tours of the White House are temporarily suspended due to public health concerns.



*An aerial view of the White House with Pennsylvania Avenue to the north in the foreground and the West Wing to the right. Note the roof of the Oval Office on the southeast corner of the West Wing.*

### **Unnamed Adventurer Was The Lodger Editor**

*Jim Clark, editor of The Lodger, kept his identity hidden in his Adventure column in the last issue of The Lodger. His adventure took place in an eastern Pennsylvania zinc mine where he served as a geochemical prospector and mine surveyor before earning degrees in civil engineering. The mine was shut down in 1983 due to the excessive cost of dewatering, despite a significant amount of zinc ore remaining underground. Jim is the founder of The Lodger he has produced over the past seven years.*