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HG Lifestyle

Highland Green News, Personalities and Perspectives

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TRAVEL
ISSUE**

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Where in the World is Highland Green? HG residents easily enjoy trips nearby and globe-trotting adventures with friends

Cy and Gail Kendrick have lived joyfully at Highland Green for 11 years as of January, 2018. This anniversary occurred as HG continued to grow as a true national destination and the Northeast's premier 55+ Active Adult Lifestyle community. It has reached several new interesting benchmarks.

Ben and Maruta Ray from St. Cloud, Minnesota closed on their new HG home in October. This vaulted the total number of U.S. states from which HG residents have purchased to a remarkable 31.

Iris Owens and John Zapp recently decided on their newest Highland Green home. This was significant because they had



Iris and John return from NC to HG

previously lived here for seven years before moving “down south” to North Carolina. They resided in a large planned community there for three years, “came to their senses,” decided to return to New England and, after looking all around, chose to return to HG. “The sense of

community at Highland Green is amazing,” says John.

There are currently 193 single-family homes at HG with nearly 20 more either under construction or contracted for new friends from Maine and around the

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HIGHLAND GREEN

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country. There is a good selection of pre-existing resale homes available, and to custom build at HG and move in 2019 to 2021, your plans need to be made soon.

While HG continues to attract increasingly more new visitors and residents each year, the majority of its vast 635-acre campus remains in open space. This includes its 230-acre Cathance River Nature Preserve and the Heath Sanctuary.

For the Kendricks, formerly of Townsend, Massachusetts, some aspects of HG have remained constant during their 11-year tenure here. And they continue to see positive changes that enhance the lifestyle of its people.

“The number of activities that are available here keeps growing because of new interests and ideas that people bring,” says Cy, a retired chemical engineer who teaches bridge at the HG Community Center, sings in a barbershop quartet, volunteers at Maine Maritime Museum and does much more. By participating in social

events, educational opportunities, exercise, and nature based adventure, the Kendricks are very active along with many friends.

“One constant is the easy connections with people,” says Gail. “We help each other out and truly know each other. The sense of community is so strong, but because of how Highland Green is built, there is no problem maintaining privacy.”

Highland Green is by definition a 55+ Active Adult Community and people are coming here because of this fact. They appreciate living a lower-maintenance lifestyle through cooperative ownership yet having custom-built single-family homes unavailable elsewhere. They appreciate the wider age range of residents than would be present in a traditional retirement community. They move here by choice for the resident-driven nature of HG. They are not moving to a medical, service-driven needs-based environment.

A retired minister of the United Church of Christ, Gail served as HG Resident

Activities Chair for three years and as a “welcome greeter” for new folks arriving. She notes a contemporary spirit of wellness at HG:

“One thing we have definitely noticed is that people seem to become healthier and healthier through the encouragement of others in the community. They seem to become more engaged with new friends, exercise and fitness, the outdoors, and discovery of new interests.”

In 2016 Cy and Gail embarked on a “once in a lifetime” around-the-world trip. The 94-day journey was highlighted by stops in California, Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, New Zealand, Australia, Brunei, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, India, Dubai, Jordan, Greece, Italy, Spain, Morocco, Bermuda, and Florida.

Upon their return the Kendricks were “warmly welcomed home” and many HG residents were curious about their excursion. They decided to make a three-part presentation at the Community Center. Each session attracted more than 70 people so a fourth was added.

Around the same time Ellen and Peter Wood and Chris and Mary Meier, who relocated to HG from Yarmouth, Maine in 2003 and from Coral Springs, Florida in 2007 respectively, returned from a trip to Iceland. Many were inquisitive as to how they planned and executed their expedition.



Cy and Gail on around-the-world trip

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They prepared a slideshow and through word-of-mouth attracted over 60 HG residents.

The Kendrick's and Woods-Meier's presentations were the seeds of the new HG Travel Club. It is emblematic of activities here because it is not just one thing. It is a collection of ideas drawing from the experiences and expertise of various HG community members. It is a way for people to share their exciting adventures, to get ideas on various interesting ways to travel, to connect with others with whom to take trips, or simply to enjoy the entertaining presentations.

Ellen Wood became a driving force behind the idea of HG Travel Club. A former web coordinator for the Maine State Library, Ellen also helped develop and manages the HG Resident Website, along with a committee of other residents. It is accessible to residents as a go-to resource for community information, calendars, forms, slideshows of events, a guide to the endless day trips available within 25 miles of HG, and much more.

Ellen and Peter reached out to HG friends Marge and Larry Fitch, who moved to HG from San Diego in 2005 and had recently returned from a trip to Southeast Asia. The group sent out a survey to the community to gauge interest and obtain ideas.

In March of 2017 a larger group gathered and HG Travel Club was born. In April a series of presentations began with Ray Ramage, a travel concierge who can organize group travel through various outlets.

Gretchen and Jerry Davis, who moved to HG in 2010 from Portland, Maine, presented about Road Scholar, a not-for-profit educational travel organization. The Davises are veterans of nearly 100 Road Scholar trips including a most recent one to Portugal with 17 fellow HG friends.

Marge and Larry Fitch's presentation was titled Exotic Asian Cities. This highlighted their journey to China, Thailand, and



Mary, Chris, Ellen and Peter in Iceland

Vietnam, where Larry served in the military.

Karen and Lou Bragaw, who moved to HG in 2016 from Bedford, Massachusetts, presented European Christmas Markets. Karen is former global Director of Account Development for American Express Business Travel and is currently a consultant on global business travel and expense management.

Ellen and Peter Wood shared another of their adventures. This time it was about their voyage to Antarctica.

Ray Ramage appeared again, on this occasion to host representatives from two professional travel organizations. Collette Travel and Viking each offer unique opportunities.

Ed and Linda Wolcott, who moved to HG from Providence, Utah in 2012 presented about the Galapagos and Machu Picchu. When the Wolcotts first moved to HG they bought an existing resale home. They "liked it so much they bought another one," fulfilling their dream of building at HG beginning in

2013 and moving to their newest HG home on Red Maple Lane in 2014.

Cy and Gail Kendrick made a return engagement to Travel Club in early February. This time they focused on Winter Getaways showing four of their past Road Scholar Trips, including Big Ben National Park; San Antonio, Texas; Death Valley, California; and a Las Vegas forensic science tour.

The overwhelming majority of HG residents live here all winter. A recent informal survey indicated that only about 2.5% of HG households are "snowbirds." People love the winter here. They gather more. Many spend time snowshoeing on the five miles of trails in the Cathance River Nature Preserve and around the Heath Sanctuary or cross country skiing on the groomed trails on the HG golf course.

Cooperative Ownership at HG, much like condominium ownership, allows for collective maintenance so that people can spend

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less time with chores and more time enjoying life. One benefit of this is the in-house HG Grounds Services staff who remove snow from roadways, miles of sidewalks, driveways and walkways, right up to people's doors.

Christmas Day 2017 brought a "well-timed" storm. HG Grounds Services proved their dedication by giving up their holiday with family to make sure things were cleaned up at HG.

"THANK YOU to the grounds crew for an incredible job over the past few storms juxtaposed with the holidays and a weekend. With snow and ice the roads and driveways were kept in excellent shape and completed in a most timely manner. It is great that we have a private road system, Highland Green is first class," wrote an HG resident in an unsolicited email.

Travel is very important to Almudena and Bob Dettbarn, currently from East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, and who have contracted to build a custom home at HG starting in the fall of 2018. "We really like the fact that we can leave for any amount of time knowing that things are taken care of," says Bob, citing snow removal, low temperature alarms in homes, an available home check-in program, and the overall community setting.

The Dettbarns met in a tapas bar in Madrid when Bob was stationed in Spain as an Air Force F-16 pilot. Bob had been in the country just four days and Almudena, who had been born in her grandmother's house in a small town an hour outside the city, was working in town at an import/export company. They have been together ever since.

They were subsequently stationed in Korea, Germany, and Italy. When Bob retired they built a new home on the



Almudena and Bob in the HG Map Room

site of Almudena's birthplace with the intention of visiting as often as possible. They then relocated to Arizona as their primary residence. They quickly tired of the heat and sprawl of Phoenix. "Even though it is densely populated, we found it culturally isolated, and difficult to travel from," says Bob. "And we missed the real seasons."

They moved to eastern Massachusetts because of good schools for their son, and because it was equidistant to airports in Hartford, New York, and Boston. With their son now 24 and living in Atlanta, the Dettbarns find no reason to stay in their regular neighborhood in East Longmeadow.

"We looked all around New England before finding Highland Green," says Almudena. "Anywhere else we went, there was not enough open space or the homes were too close together, or they turned out to be retirement communities based on assistance. That's not what we want."

"We love Maine and could have built a home out in the middle of nowhere but we wanted some community appeal," says Bob.

"Highland Green offers a great formula. There is a lot of open space but it is right next to a college town (Brunswick), and it has easy access to the Portland and Boston airports, the ocean, and the mountains. And the staff and the residents who we have met are just very friendly people."

The single family homes at HG are diverse. They range from a little under 1,400 to well over 3,000 square feet of living space. All are based on one floor living with at least two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Some have basements; some have additional space on a second floor. They are not cookie-cutter in design, colors, siting, or elevation.

The Dettbarns will be building a home

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with about 2,000 square feet of living space on the first floor with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a third room that will be an office/study, an open kitchen and living space, and a large deck. Their full walkout basement will feature unfinished space plus a finished exercise room and a half bathroom.

Says Almudena: “Being in our late 50’s and early 60’s we wanted to move while we were young. We have moved a lot, but we never plan to leave Highland Green.”

Peter and Elizabeth Cole came to Highland Green for many familiar reasons and like everyone else have their unique story and interests. Having relocated here all the way from Los Alamitos, California in 2015, the security of HG and its community setting was a “big thing” for them.

“We don’t have to worry about leaving and we know things will be okay,” says Peter, citing their desire and need to travel for fun, education and professionally, plus the three months a year they spend at a summer home.

“When we were considering Maine, Peter really was enthralled by Camden but those picturesque Maine towns are isolated,” says Elizabeth. She adds:

“Highland Green has beauty and a natural setting but we are close to the airport and the end of the Amtrak line.”

The Coles know that when they are away things will be secure, the lawn mowed, and that their neighbors will be there. “We all watch after each other and this is a strong plus for us over a regular neighborhood,” says Peter. “It’s

perfect because people are around but not intrusive.”

Cooperative ownership at Highland Green extends not only to grounds keeping, but to maintenance of the exteriors of homes. Scheduled repainting and re-roofing, for example, are handled collectively through reserve funding maintained by the resident shareholders living here. This allows the appearance and value of Highland Green and its homes to be maintained in an orderly fashion, and without the individual effort and savings of each resident.

And despite the size and scope of the campus, a tremendous infrastructure is present. Underground natural gas, electric, cable and public water and sewer maintain aesthetics, efficiency and safety. During a wind storm in the fall of 2017 Maine endured a statewide record amount of electricity outages. Highland Green itself was an island of security, never losing a minute of power.

The Coles point out that in California something anywhere near similar to HG would be a gated community. But because it is in Maine, it does not have to be, and fosters a sense of welcome and connection to the greater community.

Peter received a Bachelor of Arts in History and a Masters in Educational Administration. In California he was an elementary school principal. Elizabeth has a Masters in Linguistics and was a Curriculum Leader for English Language Development. She wrote curriculum and instructed teachers who taught English to non-English speakers in inner-city Los Angeles high schools. Their educational and professional backgrounds are reflected in their participation in activities at HG, nearby HG, and their travel.



Elizabeth and Peter on the Dead Sea in Jordan

The Coles “don’t golf, and don’t want to golf.” So an important factor for them was that HG was not a “golf community.” The golf course here is a separate entity not tied to HG residents’ finances or equity. It is a nice perk for those who choose to play and it adds even more open space and beauty to the campus. Another informal recent survey indicated that approximately 17% of HG households are golfers.

The Coles enjoy choosing from the many activities available at Highland Green. They also appreciate there is no pressure to join in anything in particular. From book discussion groups, crafting, hiking groups, bocce, group exercise, or a New Year’s party featuring the all-HG resident rock band, the happenings organized by HG residents seem endless.

As a trained linguist, Elizabeth recently

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Where in the World is Highland Green?



Cy in Petra, Jordan



Gail in Australia



Gretchen and Jerry in East Glacier Park



John and Jane in Zimbabwe



Larry and Marge in Hong Kong



Ellen and Peter in Antarctica

Featured Custom Built Homes

There are a limited number of beautiful Highland Green homes for resale and immediate move-in.

OPPORTUNITY *17 Bittern Drive*

Highly elevated at the end of a cul-de-sac, backing onto woods; a cute and comfortable home as is; plenty of room to create your own look and feel; 1310 square feet of one-floor living; two bedrooms, two bathrooms; nice open concept; direct access to good storage. \$310,000



SOARING ELEGANCE *7 Finch Drive*

Over 3,500 square feet of finished living space with a spectacular vaulted ceiling; elegant woodwork and built-ins throughout; two bedrooms, two bathrooms, living room, dining room, study, and screened porch all on ground level. Lofted second floor open to below with bedroom, bathroom and more. \$770,000



taught a session of Etymology for Lexophiles at the HG Community Center. Both of the Coles are valued substitute teachers at nearby Mt. Ararat High School.

Peter joins in the HG “men’s breakfast” at a local restaurant when he can. “It’s nice to know it is there when I want to go,” he says, quick to point out the wealth of additional activities conveniently nearby HG. He has worked part time at L.L. Bean, is a member of the local Model Railroad Club, the Northeast Rail Riders Association, The United Nations Association of Maine, and the Civil War Roundtable Book Club.

Elizabeth is a member and presenter for T.E.S.O.L., Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages. Since living at HG she has been a keynote speaker at Ottawa Ministry of Education, at University of Vermont, at an international conference in Syracuse, and has been a trainer at Rhode Island College.

The Highland Green Community Center is not only the hub of organized activities; Highland Green residents can reserve it at no cost through the HG Resident Website for their own private events. Birthday parties, reunions, and meetings of many charitable organizations of which HG residents are volunteers and board members are just a few examples.

Being fluent in Japanese and Spanish and having taught English and Spanish at a high school in Osaka, Japan for 4 years, Elizabeth took special interest in the Chesborough Program when she moved to Maine. The Chesborough was a Bath, Maine built ship which sunk off the coast of Tsugaru, Japan in the late 1800’s. Many of the crew members were rescued and taken in by the local townspeople.

In 1990 a Bath, Maine–Tsuraru, Japan sister-city relationship was established along with a student exchange program. Elizabeth is currently the Acting President of the program and hosts their meetings at the HG Community Center.



Well-maintained neighborhoods and homes

Just two days before last summer’s arrival of the Japanese students and their adult chaperones, there were last minute cancellations by hosts in Bath. Elizabeth made a few calls and in no time, in true Highland Green fashion, several HG residents quickly agreed to the Japanese house guests.

The Coles are very interested in HG Travel Club. They recently made a presentation about their 2-week journey last year to Jordan. They had visited their daughter Sarah there at the beginning and end of their trip, and traveled the country with guide and driver in between.

Sarah followed in her parent’s footsteps, at least in terms of interest in language, education and travel. She currently studies International Policy Analysis with an Arabic specialty at Middlebury College’s Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California and is an advanced Arabic speaker.

The Cole’s visited Jordan during Ramadan, during which their hosts fasted from sunup to sundown. “It was really hard,” says

Elizabeth. “We found ourselves sneaking off to eat power bars because we did not want to eat in front of them. But it made for some spectacular meals once the sun went down.”

During various adventures, Highland Green residents do not forget their home community at Highland Green. And they are proud of their HG brand. Prior to leaving on the Portugal trip with 16 other residents, Jerry Davis came to the HG marketing office to secure a sign to hold up while pictures were taken. A picture of the group standing near their boat holding the sign speaks volumes. It is a great mix of couples and single folks, happily traveling together, having all originally met each other at Highland Green.

During one excursion in Jordan, Peter Cole convinced a guide to put an HG hat on one of his camels for a photo. The resulting picture exemplifies a spirit of active adventure and fun evident at HG. Or perhaps it is best summed up by the Arabic phrase “Ya’lla.” It means...

“Let’s Go!” ■



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Plan the future now...

If you would like to explore custom building at Highland Green; be a part of a neighborhood that is in the final HG area directly abutting the Cathance River Nature Preserve; move between 2019 and 2021; and be amidst interesting HG friends from around the country, you should begin your plans very soon. Contact Will Honan and Amber Grant to find out how, 1-866-854-1200. And come meet the neighbors!

