

# THE VILLAGE VOICE

Rocky Mountain Village Estates • February, 2019

## Welcome Margarete Taylor

With her lively, outgoing personality and candid sense of humor, Margarete Taylor joined the Genesee community in October of 2018 and immediately began getting acquainted and finding her way around in the Evergreen community. She'd purchased the unit earlier in the year but wanted to spend her last summer at the lake in Minnesota – "and to have one more gigantic garage sale."

Margarete was born in Bavaria before World War II in a suburb of Nuremberg. Her father was drafted into the army in 1940, spent much of his military assignment in Poland, and was detained as a prisoner of war until 1947, leaving Margarete and her mother to fend for themselves. He never spoke of the war after he returned home.



"The Americans fed him so well he got gout!" she says of his time in a prison camp.

"People ask 'Didn't you know what Hitler did with the Jews?'" she volunteers. "No, not really. We were blue-collar workers, and families didn't usually get involved with politics." Until after the war, that is.

Despite the air raids and sudden dashes to the bomb shelters, Margarete and her mother (and later a younger sister, conceived while her father was home on leave) lived comfortably in an apartment house near Nuremberg throughout the war. It wasn't until the war was over that things got to be difficult. She remembers experiencing "total anarchy" after the end of the war when prisoners went on a rampage and looted the town. "There was no German police force or government.... My mother and I were afraid .... We had no valid currency. Even if we had

money, there was nothing to buy .... There was nothing available in the stores... Mother took items from my hope chest to trade for food" with farmers.

The Americans finally issued a curfew, and the Military Police patrolled the streets at night. For awhile she and other kids learned they could secure leftover food from the army mess hall surrounded by barbed wire, but that didn't last long. The Americans began to issue the equivalent of food stamps.

Margarete and her mother took in doing laundry for GIs in return for 2 or 3 packs of cigarettes. "I always asked for Pall Mall's because they were a little longer and you got more for them (on the black market). You could get anything for cigarettes.... I had to check the pockets of the pants in the event they left anything in them but mostly I found condoms, which we blew up for [my baby sister] to play with."

Margarete learned to be frugal.

To keep her father from smoking the hard-earned Pall Malls, she collected cigarette butts, which he'd make the most of, rolling bits of tobacco into his own cigarettes, a nightly ritual.

Upon graduating from 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Margarete applied to become a bookkeeping apprentice, showing up at the interview by herself, chosen over the other candidates because she'd shown spunk and arrived without her mother, unlike the other young applicants. The three-year apprenticeship involved attending business school two days a week and working three ten-hour days. After a test, she graduated as a full-fledged bookkeeper.

A few years later she met and married an American serviceman, much to her father's disapproval. "Aren't there plenty of Germans to choose from?" he'd belittled when hitting the ceiling.

The war bride and her husband traveled to the US on a ship carrying 5,000 passengers. "Our dining table was set for four every day, and we ate every morsel. It was wonderful."

Their first post was Fort Carson, Colorado, but upon discharge from the army, the couple settled in Minnesota.

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**"Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change cannot change anything**

**—George Bernard Shaw**

## Memo from the Manager

The annual owners meeting was held last Friday, January 25 at the Bergen Park Church. 69 owners were represented, and the meeting went smoothly. The 2019 proposed budget was approved, Brian Vitello was elected to the Board to serve a 3-year term and Pat Eskew was elected to serve a 2-year term. We are very appreciative to all the volunteers who facilitated the check-in and vote counting and made everything easy!

The Board will be meeting soon to set the schedule of regular Board meetings for 2019 so watch the bulletin boards and the website for this posting.

Because of some complaints about others handling their packages and items put in their cubbies, we've implemented a new rule: **If it is not addressed to you or unless you have an explicit agreement with the recipient, leave it.** Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

The ice buildup has posed some problems in recent weeks. The snow plowing company has been asked to put out sand and snow melt in the problem areas even when they are not plowing, including weekends when staff is unable to monitor the situation.

-- Kathy

## Water conservation tip of the month

Take short showers instead of baths if you're able.

## Reminders from René and Kari:

The Evergreen Chamber Orchestra Guild will meet February 16th at Genesee Building's Mountaineer Room. 9:30 coffee, 10:00 program — Gregory Dufford Clarinet and Peggy Lyon Piano, 11:00 short meeting. The program is free.

Aces Bridge: February 13th 1:00-3:00 p.m. in Bergen's Evergreen Room. All levels of experience are welcome. Please contact René Kilmer at 303-679-4907 if you'd like to participate to ensure tables of four can be put together.

"Stabilizing and Strength Exercise Class" will begin February 6, led by an outreach person who works at Elk Run. The class will be held in the Genesee Mountaineer Room, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, from 1:30-2:30. The class is free! Come give it a try!

On March 4, at the 10:00 HOA coffee in Genesee, a representative from Comcast will be available to give information on the services it provides as part of our HOA dues. Watch for more information on your lobby bulletin boards and in your cubbies.

## Margarete Taylor continued

She had to learn English quickly, as her husband never allowed her to speak German at home. "I became an American citizen so I could vote for John F. Kennedy."

After her two children were grown, she worked as a secretary in the school system, and upon retiring knew she needed to be doing something besides staying home. Applying to volunteer in a school cafeteria caused her to find a new career when the administration offered her a paid job substitute teaching in German classes at the high-school level. She also worked in the computer lab and library "wherever they needed me" without any experience in any of those fields. "But I always figured there's got to be a kid there who's smart enough and knows what to do." And that's the way it worked until she turned 80. She "absolutely loved working with high schoolers."

With glaucoma and the sudden onset of macular degeneration, she moved to Evergreen to be closer to her son and daughter and their families. "I'm happy to have found a place like Rocky Mountain Village. Evergreen is one of the best towns to be a senior in," she says, pointing out the many services available from transportation to personal shoppers at the Seniors Resource Center, a huge help since her limited vision keeps her from grocery shopping. "They help with everything!"

Determined to get out and take advantage of what there is to offer, she enjoys the day trips offered as well as events at RMVE like the pie tasting. She uses the exercise room daily in Genesee and walks the halls in cold weather.

A self-proclaimed news junkie (and political junkie too), Margarete keeps abreast of what's happening in the world. Like her mother, she believes in "giving with a warm hand." Let's give her a warm welcome.

*Profile and photo by Linda Kirkpatrick.*

**WELCOME!**  
Peggy and Allen Bonk - G204