

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

September/October 2022
Volume 9, Number 5

Leadership View: Mission, Vision, Values

Our Village activities are looking more and more like the pre-COVID days. I'm cautiously optimistic that we can continue to move in this direction. After a long hiatus, we are looking forward to what had been an annual event: a picnic for all our members and volunteers. This promises to be a fun social event in the great outdoors. We are also kick-starting our outreach efforts, which were curtailed by the pandemic. As part of that effort, our Board of Directors formed an ad hoc task force that includes Laurie Ekstrand, Sarah Letnes, and Sara Daines. They are updating our neighborhood contacts list, reaching out to diverse organizations, and developing an outreach plan. This effort is important to ensure the sustainability and vitality of the Village. We will succeed by steadily enlisting active volunteers, future Village leaders, and new diverse members from our community. (For more information, see the story on "Reaching Out" on page 4.)

At our July meeting, the Board also updated and approved our mission and vision statements (shown on page 2). The mission statement is a short description of why our Village exists, and the vision statement projects what we want the Village to be now and in the future. We updated the statements to provide more specificity on what "aging in place" means. These statements will continue to guide our daily decision-making and long-term strategies and present a consistent message when we are conversing with potential members, volunteers, donors, and partners. The Board also approved a set of values that serves as a moral compass to advance the mission and vision across the organization. The Board and staff have always operated under a professional code of ethics, but the Board also wanted to communicate a set of values that reflect the culture we want to reinforce across the entire organization. I hope you will join me in embracing these values.

—Sue Decker, President

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Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit membership organization started in 2013 that helps our members to stay engaged in their community and continue to live at home with support from neighbors and friends.

Village Stats

Totals as of end of August

- Members: 257 (109 full, 148 associate)
- Volunteers: 120

Volunteer hours

- June: 629
- July: 625

Volunteer help June/July

- 167 one-way rides
- 63 friendly calls and visits
- 14 sessions of tech help
- 52 household assistance

Events

- June: 72
- July: 65

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*
 Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*

Board of Directors—as of July 1, 2022

Sue Decker, *President*
 Cheryl Gardner, *Vice President*
 Katherine Anderson, *Treasurer*
 Connie Raab, *Secretary*
 Laurie Ekstrand
 Jim Gormally
 Dion Hamilton
 Carolyn Lauer
 Beverly Lunsford
 Gail McDonald
 Joe Reinhard
 Darren Vieira
 Jacqueline Wallen

Committee Chairs

Finance—Katherine Anderson
 Governance—Martine Brizius
 Membership—Claire Maklan
 Programs—Gary Klauber

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

Events Sampler

Village members tend to thrive on interacting with each other: being social is good for your health, after all. For example, the Men’s Group meets regularly to share stories and, you know, solve the problems of the universe. Members Cecilia and Adi de Kanga recently had more than a



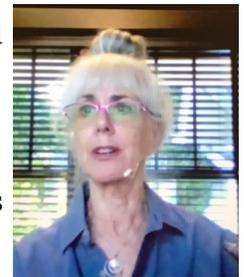
Just the guys at the Lemon Slice Café—photo courtesy of David Maklan

dozen members over on a beautiful summer evening for a patio party.



Enjoying an evening together—photo by Cecilia de Kanga

The most recent Playwrights Present evening took place with 30 attendees in late August. In the photo below, Barbara Mirel is reading from Tom Diaz’s “What’s What.” Other pieces presented were by Rick Foucheux, Bill Schauman and Jeanne Adams. The results



Barbara Mirel—photo by Jeanne M. Adams

are on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/UDaG5k2P9-M>.

See the how to’s on pages 4 and 5 for how you can join the fun.

Silver Spring Village

Mission Statement:

To sustain a robust neighbors-helping-neighbors network that supports older adults who wish to live as independently as possible and be fully engaged in their community as they age.

Vision Statement:

To be an essential partner in building and sustaining an age-friendly and diverse community where engaged and caring members look out for one another and enjoy a sense of purpose and connectedness.

Values:

- Celebrate aging as a part of the human experience
- Respect older adults and their desire to be independent and in control of their own lives
- Foster a sense of ownership and mutual support among members
- Affirm diversity as an integral part of community life
- Promote safe, healthy living and lifelong learning
- Partner creatively and collaboratively with neighbors and community organization
- Act with kindness and compassion

Approved by the Board of Directors, July 2022

Yoga: A Member Gives Back

This is yet another example of the wonderful way that our community provides support to each other. In this case, Cheryl Gardner, vice president of our Board of Directors, is a woman of many talents, including teaching yoga. Since early in the pandemic, she has led a weekly yoga class for Village members.

Cheryl Gardner, the instructor of the Village's weekly yoga class, started practicing yoga in 1983 and teaching in 1997. She is mostly focused on a style of yoga known as Sivananda. She has taught in various studios around this area and for 12 years in her home.

Cheryl has studied at various institutes, including taking teacher training at the Sivananda Ashram Yoga Retreat in Nassau, Bahamas. She has also taken workshops from visiting masters as well as workshops specifically focused on teaching yoga for older adults.

Several people who live in Cheryl's neighborhood have taken yoga from her in her home including one current Village member. With the COVID shutdown, when many Village events moved onto the Zoom platform, a member of the Village programs committee suggested that Cheryl teach an online yoga class for members. After agreeing, she drew upon her years of in-person teaching experience to develop new teaching strategies to ensure the safety of students she could only view online. One of these strategies was to increase the level of detail in her verbal instructions.

In every class for this group of older adults, Cheryl focuses on longer warm-ups, poses that strengthen the hips, twists that are good for the spine and for strengthening bones, and forward and backward bends, as well as poses that strengthen core muscles and that work on balance. In response to student requests, Cheryl also incorporates an opening relaxation in addition to the usual closing relaxation.

Her class raves about her. One member says "Cheryl is an excellent yoga instructor. She tailors the class to us older folks. Always feel better after class than before." Another member says, "Wonderful to continue the practice with Cheryl on Zoom."

To thank Cheryl for her weekly lessons, her class recently took her out to Zinnia's. Happily, the class continues.



A thank-you lunch for Cheryl, third back on the right. Photo by Cecilia de Kanga.

Winning at Scrabble

Jane Gorbaty was recently delighted to win a Scrabble game at long last. This was a four-way game too.



Jane holding the winning scorecard—photo by Jeanne M. Adams

Members play Scrabble Monday afternoons at Parkway Deli.

Theatrical Fighting

A recent SPARKLE program held outdoors at Koiner Farm covered the choreography of fights and intimacy in theatre. Fights and Intimacy Directors Jonathan Ezra Rubin and Malory Shear performed choreographed fights and kisses and discussed how they put together a swordfight for the theatre.



Showing how a theatrical swordfight is done—photo by Jeanne M. Adams



Helping Neighbors Age In Place

How to . . .

...join: We offer two levels of membership, Full and Associate. Both levels include invitations to all Village events, exclusive discounts, and access to *Washington Consumers' CHECKBOOK*. Full members (only) can receive volunteer services like transportation, home assistance, tech support, and friendly visits and calls. Full membership is for residents of zip codes 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, all of 20901, 20902 east of Wheaton Regional Park ("Kemp Mill"), and all of 20910. Associate membership is open to all. Annual dues: *Full* - \$380/individual, \$495/couple; *Associate* - \$180/individual, \$295/couple. Reduced cost memberships (*Full* - \$60, *Associate* - \$25) are available for those who qualify. For information, please email membership@silverspringvillage.org.

...volunteer: We welcome volunteers 18 or older who support our mission of assisting seniors to age in their homes and communities of choice. Whatever your skills or interests, we have a place for you!

Our volunteer program allows you to help as much as you want, when you want. Potential volunteers can find application materials on our website. We will do a brief interview. After your initial application is approved, you've cleared a simple background check, and you've

Continued on page 5, right

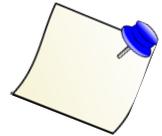
Reaching Out

Silver Spring Village is committed to being an engaged, contributing, and diverse part of our community. The support that we have provided to each other and our neighbors in spite of COVID restrictions is strong evidence of the need for and benefits of that commitment.

In order to continue the work of connecting seniors with each other to build a supportive and inclusive community, the Board of Directors has created an outreach task force. The task force is working to develop a framework that all of the groups, committees, and individuals associated with our Village can use as a guide for contributing to the long-term, continuing success of the Village.

We are looking to reconnect with existing neighborhood groups and to establish our presence in community activities, such as the farmer's market, local festivals, and other events. To those who are part of the Village (members, volunteers, donors, and others):

- Do you belong to a neighborhood association or live in an apartment/condo that would let you post information about the Village electronically via a listserv or put printed information on a bulletin board?
- Do you know of activities or events in which the Village could participate where attendees might be eager to learn about the Village?
- Are you willing to help represent the Village in your neighborhood or building at events?



If you can help with any of these items or if you have other ideas that would help Silver Spring Village share its vision of a diverse, inclusive, and engaged community, please email Sarah Letnes (scletnes@gmail.com), Laurie Ekstrand (ekstrand99@gmail.com), or Sara Daines (sadaines@gmail.com)

Not Using That Old Jalopy?

You can now support the Village by donating your used car, truck, motorcycle, recreational vehicle, or other vehicle. Proceeds from your donated vehicle will support the Village's work to provide volunteer services; arrange social, educational, recreational, and cultural events; and so much more! You may even qualify for a tax deduction; ask your tax advisor about this.

There are four easy ways to donate your unwanted vehicle:

- Visit the Village's website at silverspringvillage.org and click on the "Donate Your Vehicle" tab.
- Fill out an online form at bit.ly/ssv-vehicle-donation.
- Call (855) 527-2232 to speak to a customer service agent. The call center is open Monday-Thursday 8 am-7 pm, Friday 8 am-5 pm, and Saturday 9 am-4 pm.
- Call the Village office at (240) 833-5580 for personalized help.



Medical Note Taking

Information about a medical diagnosis, procedure, or treatment can be very confusing, with doctors often speaking fast and using technical language. Sometimes, the amount of information coming from the provider to the patient can be overwhelming, and in the heat of the moment, it's easy for a patient to miss important details or forget some of the questions they meant to ask.

Through the Village, specially-trained volunteer medical note takers can help members organize their questions and then accompany them to appointments to take careful notes and help make sure the appointment has a two-way flow of information.

Volunteer note takers are not patient advocates and have no medical training, but they can be helpful companions at medical appointments. If a patient forgets to ask a question, the note taker will remind them. If they see confusion on the member's face, the note taker will ask the provider to clarify. Volunteers often take notes the old-fashioned way, with pen and paper, and confirm some of the main points with the provider before leaving. After the appointment, the note taker transcribes the notes and provides them to the member, who can then share them with family or others. The Village has 13 volunteer note takers trained and ready to help our members.

I have personally accompanied two Village members through serious illnesses as their note taker. It's an extremely gratifying volunteer experience and important and comforting for the member.

—Peggy Gervasi



How to, continued from page 4

attended our orientation training, you'll be able to start making a difference in our community.

...support: To keep our Village strong, we need funding from organizational and individual donors, in-kind contributions, and grants. Your contribution—in any amount—will be gratefully accepted. Checks should be payable to Silver Spring Village and mailed to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910; or donate online via our website. Also consider donating appreciated stock, including the Village in your will or other estate plans, or making contributions in someone's honor. We also love to hear from local businesses that wish to contribute or provide in-kind contributions or member discounts. Contact us!

Community Events—Come Talk About Books

The Village calendar of events includes something for everyone almost every day. Most events are exclusively for our members, but some, like those below, are also open to the public. Join us! For Zoom links, RSVP to programs@silverspringvillage.org. Visit our website to see all of our events.

The Silver Spring Book Group is a partnership between Silver Spring Village and the Brigadier General Charles E. McGee (Silver Spring) Library. The group meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 3:00-4:30 and is open to the public. At present the group meets on Zoom. Please contact Sarah Letnes at scletnes@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us. Here are the next few books.

- **October 13: “She Come by It Natural: Dolly Parton” by Sarah Smarsh**—This tribute is an in-depth examination into gender and class as viewed through the life of a beloved country singer whose songs embody feminism for working class women.
- **November 10: “The Sentence” by Louise Erdrich**—The Pulitzer Prize winning writer's latest novel is a ghost story set in a Native American bookstore in a Minneapolis dealing with both the pandemic and the murder of local resident George Floyd.
- **December 8: “Bookshop on the Corner” by Jenny Colgan**—The main character in this book is a down-sized librarian determined to make a new life for herself by starting over with a bookmobile. This novel celebrates the power of books to bring people together.

Need to Find a Village?

Have a friend or loved one who would benefit from being part of a Village but who does not live in our service area? Here are ways to locate one.

- Montgomery County: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/Villages/villagesmap.html>
- The DC metropolitan area: <https://www.wavevillages.org/>
- The United States: <https://www.vtvnetwork.org/villagemap>

Give Us Try

The Village is recruiting new members in all parts of our service area—zip codes 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, all of 20901, 20902 east of Wheaton Regional Park ("Kemp Mill"), and all of 20910.

If you have a friend or neighbor who might be curious about Village life, please let them know about our trial membership program. Trial members get all the benefits of associate membership for three months with no up-front cost.

For information, contact Claire Maklan, via membership@silverspringvillage.org or (301) 588-5535.

Clip art in this issue is courtesy of <https://creativecommons.org/>

Silver Spring Village is a member of the Washington Area Village Exchange, the national Village-to-Village Network, and the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce.



Volunteer Corner: New Directions

There are so many ways volunteers can become involved in Silver Spring Village—something for everyone. Volunteers can participate on committees, lead interest groups, host events, and help with office work. And, of course, volunteers provide a wide range of services directly to our members.

From the start, our volunteers have provided companionship to members by making friendly phone calls and visits; driven members to appointments and events; shopped and run errands; and helped with minor repairs and other household tasks around members' homes.

Over the past year or so the Village has begun to add some new services. Now we provide both support with technology and regular technology coaching for members who want to become more confident in their use of computers, cell phones, and other smart devices. Volunteers are taking a new approach to home organizing and improving small areas of a member's home. A few of our volunteers are willing and able to help members with gardening work. Recently, we trained a new group of volunteers in medical note taking. These volunteers can attend doctor visits when requested and help members better communicate with their health care providers. (See the article on "Medical Note Taking" on page 5 of this issue.)



If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Silver Spring Village volunteer or know someone who would be interested in getting involved, please contact Vanessa Ripps at vanessa.ripps@silverspringvillage.org for more information and to join the team.

DONATE NOW—Help Silver Spring Village continue to provide programs and services that strengthen our community while helping neighbors age in place. Your contribution is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Amount: \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other: _____

Please make your check payable to Silver Spring Village and mail it to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910. To contribute by credit card, please visit the [donations page](#) on the Village website. If you would like information about how to leave a legacy gift, please contact Doug Gaddis at (240) 833-5580.

Silver Spring Village, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Maryland corporation; the EIN is 46-0723926. You will receive no goods or services in exchange for this contribution, so it is tax-deductible as allowed by law. A copy of the organization's financial statements may be examined upon written request to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910. Documents required by the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available for the cost of copying and postage from the Secretary of State, 16 Francis Street, Annapolis, MD 21061.