

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

September/October 2019
Volume 6, Number 5

Leadership View: Reflection

In the next few days, we will release our fiscal year 2019 annual report in which we describe the progress we have made over the past year and recognize the people who made that growth possible. We also engaged in a strategic assessment and, as a result, the board of directors voted to expand our service area to include all of zip code 20901 (see story page 2). The board also voted to engage a professional care coordinator to help connect our frailest members to resources that supplement Village services and to assist our staff and volunteers. More on the care coordinator initiative as plans solidify.

In other momentous news, this month we say goodbye to our brilliant Executive Director, Debbie Billet-Roumell, and hello to her successor, Doug Gaddis. The announcement is in this issue (page 3). You will hear from Doug in the next issue.

We want to take this opportunity to thank Debbie for her four years of dedicated service to the Village members, volunteers, and the Village movement itself. Under her leadership we've grown in every dimension of Village life—members, volunteers, programs, staff, and services. The quantitative numbers are impressive, but we are equally grateful for the *quality* of Debbie's leadership. It's no easy feat to take the operational reins from a founding board. It's not always easy to accommodate the opinions, desires, and needs of a large (and sometimes vocal) membership and volunteer corps. Debbie has met these challenges with thoughtfulness and respect—I think because her deep concern for our members, volunteers, and mission was firmly at the heart of every decision and interaction.

Benjamin Franklin said, "Energy and persistence can conquer all things." Debbie's energy and persistence—not to mention her humor and creativity—have brought us this far and for that we are extremely grateful.

—Peggy Gervasi, President

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GREATER WASHINGTON

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.

Progress Report

Totals as of end of August

- Members: 214 (92 full, 122 associate)
- Volunteers: 130

Volunteer hours

- June: 730
- July: 803

Volunteer help in June/July

- 235 rides
- 63 friendly calls and visits
- 59 other requests filled including tech support, errand running, medical note taking, preparing and delivering meals, and household repairs,
- Telephone crew hours: 252

Events held

- June: 52
- July: 48

Silver Spring Village, Inc. Board of Directors

Peggy Gervasi, *President*
 Connie Raab, *Vice President*
 Leslie Hansley, *Secretary*
 Katherine Anderson, *Treasurer*
 Martine Brizius
 Sue Decker
 Cheryl Gardner
 Minnedore Green
 Claire Maklan
 Anne McHenry
 Vern McLendon
 Mary Ann Zimmerman

Staff

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director (as of Sept. 16)*
 Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*
 Ana Carrion, *Operations Manager*

Committee Chairs

Development—
 Mary Ann Zimmerman
 Finance—Katherine Anderson
 Membership—Claire Maklan
 Programs—Gary Klauber
 Board Recruitment and
 Nominating—Martine Brizius

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

A Caring Community

A big focus of the Village is building community—a community in which people enjoy each other's company, learn from each other, have fun together, and look after each other. This can be key for people whose social network is shrinking after retirement and who may not have family nearby. We track indicators of community building such as numbers of members, volunteers, and services, and level of program participation. Sometimes what happens is just not captured by these indicators. Above are three members who met at weekly Village Scrabble games: two of them affectionately support the third member who has been spending many days in rehab. The Village fosters this kind of friendship and encouragement.



Two Villagers visit a third who is in rehab—photo by a facility nurse

Expanding Our Geographic Boundaries

Soon, we will expand our service area (which has been zip code 20910) by welcoming as full members people who live throughout zip code 20901. (Note: This change affects full membership *only*, since we have never had a geographic boundary for associate [social] membership.)

Why? We receive inquiries from people living in 20901 seeking Village services and have been unable to assist them. This expansion will fill the need for a Village in an area where there is no Village. It allows us to have greater community impact, increases our long-term sustainability, and enhances our mission of helping seniors age in place. The Board's decision to expand our service area is based on the recommendation of a strategic assessment group that consisted of six Village members and volunteers who held extensive interviews with leaders from eight other Villages nationwide to learn how they managed growth and met the changing needs of their members. After hearing what leaders had to say, we were satisfied that we can expand our geographic area while sustaining the same level of services and sense of community that we currently enjoy.

When? We are beginning this fall by recruiting volunteers who live in zip code 20901. We will actively recruit full members from the new area when we are confident that we have enough trained volunteers to maintain our current levels of satisfaction and service fulfillment. If you know someone who might be interested in volunteering, please send them our way!

What does this mean for current Village members and volunteers? Current Village members and volunteers should not experience changes—except the opportunity to meet more people and make more new friends.

Together we have built a solid foundation and the necessary infrastructure to bring Village benefits to even more of our Silver Spring neighbors. We are excited and proud to implement this change.

Upcoming Community Events

The Village calendar of events includes something for everyone almost every day—educational talks, social gatherings, discussion groups, walks, and almost 20 interest groups. While many are for members only, the events listed below are also open to the public. Join us! To see the full calendar of events, go to our website, www.silverspringvillage.org. (Members can login to see full details.)

- Wednesday, September 11, 2 pm — **Montgomery County's Sister Cities. SPARKLE Program.** Join Bruce Adams, former director of the Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships, on a tour of the County's five sister cities: Morazán, El Salvador; Gondar, Ethiopia; Xi'an, China; Hyderabad, India; and Daejeon, South Korea. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, September 12, 2 pm — **Afternoon Book Group.** At the September meeting, we will discuss, *A Light of Her Own*, by Carrie Callaghan. This novel re-imagines the life of Judith Leyster, a real-life woman painter who lived during 17th century Dutch Golden Age—the period of Rembrandt van Rijn and Rubens. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, September 26, 11:30 am — **Techno Club.** Participants help each other improve, learn, practice, and expand their use and knowledge of smart phones, tablets, and laptop computers. At the Coffield Recreation Center.
- Thursday, October 10, 2 pm — **Afternoon Book Group.** Join us to discuss *The Switch Elm*, by Tana French. In this suspenseful novel, Toby is a happy-go-lucky charmer who has dodged a scrape at work and is celebrating with friends when the night takes a turn that will change his life. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Wednesday, October 16, 2 pm — **Wine Tasting at Locavino. SPARKLE Program.** All pay for their own wines and snacks. At 8519 Fenton St.
- Thursday, October 24, 11:30 am — **Techno Club.** See September 26. At the Coffield Recreation Center.

Announcing Our New Executive Director

Silver Spring Village has named Doug Gaddis as our new, full-time Executive Director.



Doug Gaddis—photo by Gary Begin

Doug brings more than 26 years of experience to this role, having served in small and large agencies in the human services, disabilities, performing arts, education, and political arenas. A native Kentuckian, he has lived in Montgomery County since 1994 and currently resides in Kensington. Doug has been an active volunteer in the community, serving on various County-wide work groups, through his church, and with other organizations. He looks forward to getting to know everyone and to partnering with the board of directors in strengthening and growing the opportunities enjoyed by our members. Doug will report for work on September 16th.

In making this selection, the board was impressed not only by Doug's credentials but by his energy, enthusiasm for our mission, and extensive community connections. He has many of the same personal qualities that made Debbie Billet-Roumell a creative and successful Executive Director and we expect that, with his leadership, the Village will continue to thrive.

Welcome, Doug!

Scenes from a Summer

Village members visited Strathmore (at right), went swimming at the Silver Spring YMCA (lower right), and enjoyed the annual membership get together (lower left). These are a few of the 100 events we held in June and July. Need to get out more? Visit our website to check our calendar and how to join us.



Enjoying arts at Strathmore—photo by Ed Lee



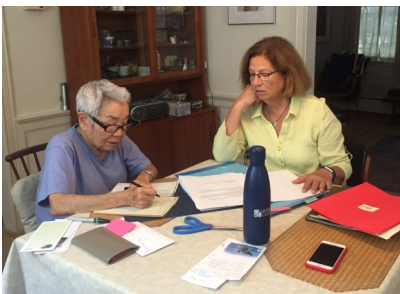
Bonding over BBQ—photo by Claire Maklan



A cool time at the Y—photo by Jeanne Adams

Over 70½? Here's a Way to Give and Save on Your Taxes

If you are older than 70½, you can save on your taxes by giving to charities directly from your IRA, even if you take the standard deduction and don't itemize. This is known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). Making a QCD as opposed to a normal charitable gift has at least two tax advantages. First, a QCD can count toward satisfying your required minimum distribution for the year. Second, the QCD is not included in your income. (However, if you itemize deductions, the QCD would not be considered a deduction.) You may also be able to indirectly use this strategy on required minimum distributions from a defined contribution retirement plan, such as a 401(k) or Thrift Savings Plan, by first completing a partial rollover of these funds to an IRA and then making a QCD from the IRA. Consult your tax preparer to determine if a QCD works for your individual situation and to learn how to implement this strategy.



Working on decluttering and paperwork, a member gets help from a Village volunteer—photo by Ana Carrion

Volunteer Corner: Making Connections

Brighten someone's day. Make a friendly visit or phone call.

One of the most frequent requests we receive from Village members is to receive a friendly visit or phone call on a regular basis. The members who make this request often are unable to get out of their homes regularly, don't have many family members in the area, or just want to meet new people. Some members live alone and appreciate having someone to check in on them every now and then. Visiting or calling a member is a way to be social and show that someone cares.

A visit can include a variety of activities based on what the volunteer and the member want to do, such as walking in the neighborhood, playing cards or board games, or just chatting over a cup of tea or coffee.

If the volunteer is unsure about what to discuss when meeting someone for the first time, whether over the phone or in person, we have fact sheets with suggestions that can help: [Ice Breakers for Friendly Visits](#) and [Friendly Phone Calls and Visits](#). But generally, the conversation just flows if it starts with hello, a self introduction, and basic questions about the member. If a volunteer is not confident about the first contact with a member, we can arrange to have a more experienced volunteer join him or her on the first meeting.

Volunteers can do as much or little volunteering as they want and are able to do. If you are interested in learning more about making friendly visits or phone calls, or if you want to help with any other Village work, contact me at volunteers@silverspringvillage.org. There is a lot of good to be done.

—Vanessa Ripps

DONATE NOW—Help Silver Spring Village continue to provide programs and services that strengthen our community while helping neighbors age in place.

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, P.O. Box 8217, Silver Spring, MD 20907. 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 Sue Decker at (301) 503-7401.

Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit, tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization. Your contribution is fully tax-deductible.

Making Silver Spring a great place to age in place!