

# Silver Spring Village



## Village Vibe

Winter 2020  
Volume 7, Number 1

### Leadership View: Gratitude and Genuine Kindness

Celebrating New Year's twice, once in July at the beginning of our fiscal year and again alongside everybody else in January, is one of those little perks of working in a nonprofit organization. Each of the two new years is a time for reflection on what has been and hope for what might be.

Over the past few weeks, I've looked back with tremendous gratitude for those who make the Village possible. Even the finest automobile, under its hood, is nothing more than a curious assembly of pistons, valves, belts, and injectors, all laboring in perfect unison to create something remarkable. Your Village is no different. Under our hood are donors, volunteers, members, partnering organizations, board members, employees, and more, each performing their essential roles that keep the Village purring along. Each of you—whether you're a piston or a valve—deserves a huge **thank you** for the part you played so well in 2019!

Looking forward—not just to the start of a new year, but to that of a new decade—I'm filled with hope. Every news cycle feels a little darker than its predecessor, and hope is something that perhaps seems a little scarce these days. As a senior-in-waiting, I'm heartened by the wisdom, engagement, calm, and generally positive outlook demonstrated by my older friends. All who managed in a depression, labored in wartime factories, stemmed totalitarianism's spread, created abstract expressionist art, marched in Selma, or banned pesticides did so by navigating life in the company of and with the support of friends and neighbors.

Life is very much a group project—as is the Village. At the cusp of a new decade, hope abounds that the Village will continue to set an example of what is possible when people care for, respect, and support their neighbors with genuine and kind actions and thoughts.

—Doug Gaddis, Executive Director

#### In This Issue

- Village stats
- Stitching, swapping
- Be counted
- Village eats
- Community events
- How to join, volunteer, donate
- Volunteer corner
- Fun and friendship
- Donation form



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.

## Village Stats

### Totals as of end of December

- Members: 213 (88 full, 125 associate)

- Volunteers: 130

### Volunteer hours

- October: 723
- November: 656

### Volunteer help in October/November

- 154 one-way rides
- 96 friendly calls and visits
- 141 other fulfilled requests including medical note taking, technology support, meals, household tasks, and errands

- Telephone crew hours: 246

### Events held

- October: 52
- November: 49

## Silver Spring Village, Inc. Board of Directors

Peggy Gervasi, *President*

Connie Raab, *Vice President*

Claire Maklan, *Secretary*

Katherine Anderson, *Treasurer*

Martine Brizius

Sue Decker

Cheryl Gardner

Minnedore Green

Anne McHenry

Vern McLendon

Mary Ann Zimmerman

## Staff

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*

Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*

Ana Carrión, *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

## Stitching Together to Help Out

One of the Village's community service projects makes good use of members' creative skills to help those in need. Participants in our "Stitchers for Good" interest group enjoy getting together monthly to knit, crochet, and sew blankets, scarves, and hats. Their most recent donations occurred in December, when the Stitchers provided 14 items to the Linus Project and 11 to A Wider Circle. Project Linus is a national nonprofit dedicated to donating handmade blankets to children in need of comfort;

the local chapter collects and donates blankets to Montgomery County hospitals and shelters. The mission of A Wider Circle is to end poverty for one individual and one family after another.



Handmade items for A Wider Circle—photo by Connie Raab



A Stitchers label is sewn on each item—photo by Connie Raab

## Swap Meet

The recent "swap meet" is an example of a fun social event that provides opportunities for Village members to get better acquainted. This now annual event lets participants give away some no-longer-loved items and receive some things that were not fully appreciated by their owners.

Members snacked, schmoozed, and swapped about 100 very good, but no longer wanted, items. This year's array included costume jewelry, scarves, a silver teapot, framed original art, kitchen tools, baskets, a tv wall-mount, a shower curtain, and more. Everyone had a chance to see what was available and make selections. When more than one person wanted the same item, the fun got serious. Conflicts were resolved by this year's judge, Kay Johnson's capable granddaughter Zoe. Sometimes contestants had to state their case and the judge picked the winner; sometimes the judge called for a more sophisticated decision-making method like rock-paper-scissors. This year's best tie breaker was to challenge contestants to identify the bright green item shown in the photos in this story. Can you? See answer upside down on page 5 of this issue.



Pondering swaps—photo by Claire Maklan



This is NOT a jello mold, a drying rack, or a foot massager—photo by Claire Maklan



## Joining the Parade

Silver Spring Villagers had a grand time participating in the Montgomery County Thanksgiving parade. Our theme was “We are the silver in Silver Spring.” We wore silver garlands and passed out candy to the kids. There were lots of smiles and applause from the crowd. Thank you to all who donated candy, made garlands and signs, and marched with us!

This was a great event for increasing awareness of the Village. And it was also fun!



Photo by Al Jaso

## Events Sampler

This past couple of months members have gallery hopped, been mindful and philosophical, considered election issues, broken bread at several old and new local restaurants, attended fireplace socials in each others' homes, and much more. Community events are listed on page 5 and all events are listed on the online Village calendar.

Below are photos from the new gardening group's trip to the US Botanic Garden, an afternoon of putting a puzzle together, and an open house at our Silver Spring office.



Photos (top to bottom) by Cynna Janus, Jeanne Adams, and Claire Maklan.

## Stand Up and Be Counted! The Village Can Help

The 2020 national census kicks off this spring. The requirement for a census is enshrined in our Constitution. The US Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)) says that the plan of the country's founders “was to count every person living in the newly created United States of America, and to use that count to determine representation in the Congress.” The census, which is conducted every 10 years, is used for many important purposes—everything from drawing Congressional districts to determining how much of a share of government resources is allotted to each community. It is therefore essential that all Village members stand up and get counted.

You've all lived through a census or two in your lifetimes, but the process is very different this year. Households will receive census information by mail over a period of several days starting March 12. Most people in Silver Spring **will not receive a paper questionnaire**. Instead, most of you will receive instructions about how to submit your information online. It's very important that you keep the instructions until you've completed the entire process.

Members: The Village is here to help! We're planning to have volunteers available to individually assist any full members who aren't comfortable with navigating the new online system. By mid-March, full members will be able to request support by calling (301) 503-7401 and asking for Vanessa, or by emailing her directly at [Vanessa.Ripps@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:Vanessa.Ripps@silverspringvillage.org).

We're also planning a “lite” version of census group assistance for associate members who want help in late March or early April. We will announce this available help and also put it on the Village events calendar. If you're interested in volunteering to help members complete their census forms online, please contact Vanessa.





## Upcoming Community Events

The Village calendar of events includes something for everyone almost every day—educational talks, social gatherings, discussion groups, walks, and more than twenty member-led interest groups. While most events are exclusively for our members, the events listed below are also open to the public. Join us! To see the full calendar of events, visit [www.silverspringvillage.org](http://www.silverspringvillage.org). (Members can log in to see full details.) Check out page 8 for ideas.

- Wednesday, January 8, 2 pm — **SPARKLE**. Come to a screening of *Sensei Fran Kicks Ass*, a film about the life of Fran Vall, an octogenarian who is a master teacher of judo and Japanese sword fighting. Vall and filmmaker Simone Fary will be at the screening to answer questions. At the Silver Spring Civic Building.
- Thursday, January 9, 2 pm — **Afternoon Book Group**. Join us in January to discuss *Anything is Possible*, by Elizabeth Strout. Strout's novel, a series of interconnected short stories about people in a small town, centers around Lucy Barton (the heroine of Strout's earlier novel, *My Name Is Lucy Barton*) who returns home to visit her siblings after seventeen years of absence. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, January 23, 11:45 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.
- Wednesday, February 12, 2 pm — **SPARKLE**. Come listen to a presentation from Colonel Charles McGee, a centenarian who is also the oldest living Tuskegee Airman. (See story on the right.) At the Silver Spring Civic Building.
- Thursday, February 13, 2 pm — **Afternoon Book Group**. At the February meeting, we will discuss Octavia Butler's novel, *Kindred*. This book, which is a combination of slave memoir, fantasy, and historical fiction, follows the black female protagonist as she is repeatedly transported through time between her home in 1976 Los Angeles to a pre-Civil War plantation in Maryland, where her ancestors once were slaves. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, February 27, 11:30 am — **Techno Club**. See January 23. At the Coffield Recreation Center.
- Wednesday, March 11, 2 pm — **SPARKLE**. Topic: Decluttering. More details to come.
- Thursday, March 12, 2 pm — **Afternoon Book Group**. At the March meeting, we will discuss *The Bluest Eye*, the first novel by the late Nobel and Pulitzer Prize-winning American novelist Toni Morrison. This book is the story of a young dark-skinned black girl growing up during the years following the Great Depression. Pecola Breedlove longs for lighter skin and blue eyes so that she will be accepted by her family, schoolmates, and neighbors, all of whom have convinced her that she is ugly. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, March 26, 11:30 am — **Techno Club**. See January 23. At the Coffield Recreation Center.

dog food bowl," designed to keep dogs from gulping down their chow.  
**Page 2 swap meet mystery item:** That bumpy, green, round thing is a "slow

## February 12th SPARKLE Celebrates Black History Month

To celebrate Black History Month, the Village will welcome Colonel Charles McGee as the guest speaker at our February SPARKLE event. Col. McGee, the oldest living member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, will share his experiences as an African American pioneer in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He was a career officer in the United States Air Force and flew 409 combat missions, starting with 137 in World War II, and including missions later in Korea and Vietnam. Col. McGee is a member of the National Aviation Hall of Fame and is the proud holder of a Congressional Gold Medal. His most recent time in a cockpit, incidentally, was in December 2019 to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday—on Pearl Harbor Day.

This program will be held at the Silver Spring Civic Building on Wednesday, February 12, 2—3:30pm. It is likely to fill up, so sign up early via [programs@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:programs@silverspringvillage.org), or (301) 503-7401. SPARKLE is a partnership between the Village and Silver Spring Town Center, Inc.



Col. Charles McGee in 2012—photo courtesy the US Air Force.



## New Interest Group for Members: Caregiver Support

One of many great things about our Village is the ability of members to initiate and lead a group focused on a particular personal interest. We have more than 20 such groups, ranging from games (bridge, poker, and many others) to philosophy, poetry, memoir-writing, mindfulness, and movies. A new group has just been formed for individuals who are the primary caregiver for a spouse, other relative, or a friend. The group welcomes members who would like to share their experiences, questions, and wisdom among supportive neighbors who understand the challenges of being a caregiver. Caregivers sometimes feel overwhelmed or just want to meet other people in a similar situation. This is a group where they can get some of the support and company they deserve. For more information, contact Village member Shannah Koss at [kossoncare@starpower.net](mailto:kossoncare@starpower.net).



### This Just In

The Vibe is going quarterly, instead of bimonthly. This issue covers January through March. The next issue will be out in early April and will cover April through June.

## There's Room for You Here

The photos below represent just two of the dozens of social events available each month. See page 8 for a fuller sense of what we offer.



Enjoying each other's company at the monthly men's group meeting and the weekly canasta game—photos by Tony Sarmiento and Martine Brizius

## How to

**...join:** We offer two levels of membership, full and associate. Both levels include invitations to all Village events, exclusive discounts, *Washington Consumers' Checkbook*, access to our information service, and referrals to professionals. Full members (only) can receive volunteer services like transportation, home repairs, tech support, and friendly visits and calls. Full membership is for residents of zip codes 20910 and 20901 plus the adjacent section of zip code 20815 that is east of Rock Creek Park. Associate membership is open to all. Annual dues: *Full* - \$350/individual, \$450/couple; *Associate* - \$150/individual, \$250/couple. Reduced cost memberships (Full: \$60, Associate: \$25) are available for those who qualify. For information, please contact us at [info@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:info@silverspringvillage.org) or (301) 503-7401. To apply, please print and complete a membership application from our website and mail it with your dues payment to: Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910. Or send a note indicating your interest and including full contact information, to [membership@silverspringvillage.org](mailto: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 as often as you want. Potential volunteers can find application materials on our website. After your initial application is approved, you've cleared a simple background check, and you've attended our orientation training, you'll be able to start making a difference in your community.

**...support:** To keep our Village strong, we need funding from organizational and individual donors, in-kind contributions, and grants. Your tax-deductible 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 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!

## Volunteer Corner: Always Improving

In January, Silver Spring Village is conducting a survey of our volunteers. The primary purpose of the survey is to help ensure that our volunteers have an opportunity to share their feelings and opinions about the volunteer experience and, especially, how to make it very rewarding. The survey (which will be distributed by email soon) covers a range of topics and will take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

Village leadership pays attention to and takes steps to address what we hear from respondents. For example, based on responses to last year's survey, we created a buddy/mentor program for new volunteers and now offer advanced training on topics relating to direct service. We also plan to start refresher training and to provide more opportunities for volunteers to get together to meet and discuss their experiences.

Village volunteers have a wide range of opportunities from which to choose. They can provide direct assistance to members by making friendly calls and visits, providing rides, helping with technology, making small household repairs, serving as storm buddies, and more. Volunteers can also provide important administrative assistance by answering the office phone, working in the Village office, participating in committees, planning programs, organizing interest groups, and serving on the Village board. The Village encourages every volunteer to engage in whatever tasks and activities they prefer.

Silver Spring Village believes in always striving to do things better. We would love to get input from every volunteer, to help us make the volunteer experience successful for all. So, **volunteers**: please watch for the survey in your email and be sure to respond!

—Vanessa Ripps

## Drive More Safely, Save Money

Did you know that you might qualify for a discount on your auto insurance? You are eligible if you complete AARP's online safe driver course for drivers 50 and over. You can learn at your own pace and take up to 60 days to complete the course. The fee is \$24.95 and there is a \$5 discount for AARP members. Check with your insurance company to ask about potential savings and visit [aarpdriversafety.org](http://aarpdriversafety.org) for enrollment information.

## Need a Valentine's Day Gift?



How about Village Membership? For \$150 (associate membership) or \$350 (full membership), you can give a year of something special to someone you love. For more information, contact [membership@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:membership@silverspringvillage.org).

Visit our Facebook page!

<https://www.facebook.com/silverspringvillage/>

## Did You Get Your Annual Flu Shot Yet?

It's that time of year again. That's right, it's flu season. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that most years flu peaks between December and February, but illness can occur as late as May.

It is not too late to get a flu shot. Flu shots are available in many locations, often without an appointment, in places such as walk in/urgent care clinics, drugstores, and large grocery stores, as well as your doctor's office. The cost of a shot is covered by Medicare Part B and most other types of health insurance. CDC recommends an annual flu shot for everyone 6 months and older, and especially for older adults. According to the CDC, the flu shot is the best way to help protect against flu. Even though the shot does not provide total protection from the flu, it can reduce the severity of illness if you do get the flu. And remember, last year's shot will not provide adequate protection against this year's flu.

To find locations where you can get a flu shot, visit <https://vaccinefinder.org/>

This reminder is for all members, volunteers, staff, and anyone else older than 6 months.

Full members: need a ride to get a flu shot? Give us a call.



## Program Offers Free Tax Preparation Help

From February 4 through April 15, 2020, the RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Program will provide free federal and state (Maryland) tax preparation services to low-to-moderate income taxpayers who live or work in Montgomery County. Special attention is given to those 60 years old and older. The RSVP/AARP Tax-Aide Program prepares taxes at more than 20 different locations across Montgomery County including the Silver Spring Library, the White Oak Library, the Schweinhaut Senior Center, and the Takoma Park Community Center.

Help is provided by appointment only. The scheduling office, which opens January 27, will set up an appointment time with you. Call them at (240) 777-2577. Visit the program on the web at

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/tax-aide/](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/tax-aide/) for more information about locations and hours for the program and about what information you need to bring to your appointment. Tax-Aide is a collaboration between Montgomery County's Senior Corps RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) and AARP Foundation Tax-Aide.



## Fun and Friendship for You?

If you were a member of the Village, you would have more than a hundred social events to choose from between now and the next issue of the Vibe. You could:

- Play games (bridge, canasta, chess, mah jongg, poker, rummikub, Scrabble) or do a puzzle
- Write your memoir, tell a story, share a poem
- Take a walk
- Share information about gardening, current affairs, or elections
- Explore a philosophical issue
- Participate in a talent show
- Go bowling or enjoy a play, a movie, the theater, a symphony, or an art gallery
- Go out to dinner, lunch, a happy hour, or a birthday ice cream social
- Participate in a women's group or a men's group
- Do some good by making a blanket, reading to children, or serving a meal to someone in need

Getting out and interacting with others is not only enjoyable, it's good for your health. The Village helps our members and volunteers make new friends, enlarge their social network, and support each other.

Want to be a part of our Village community? Check out how to join, volunteer, and donate on page 6.



**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 fully tax-deductible.

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 Katherine Anderson at (301) 503-7401.

Silver Spring Village, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Maryland corporation. 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.