

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

January/February 2022
Volume 9, Number 1

Leadership View: Supporting and Celebrating Villages

Good news! A record total of 78 members and 10 nonmember volunteers were among 143 donors for calendar year-end giving (November through mid-January). This year's budget calls for nearly \$76,000 in gifts from individual donors. Year-end giving was \$46,000 of \$54,000 raised in this category thus far. A big thank you to everyone who participated so generously in the Village's Year-End Giving Campaign. Every gift makes something remarkable happen in the life of a Village member.

In 2022 the Village movement is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Since a small group of Beacon Hill neighbors established the first Village in Boston in 2002, Villages have evolved into a thriving network of more than 300 nonprofit, community-based organizations across the country.



The Village model is now established as a cost-effective, sustainable solution for healthy, vibrant aging. On February 15th, there will be a national webinar on how the Village movement began in Boston and developed throughout the country. There will be a national proclamation in the House of Representatives, sponsored by Congressman Stephen

Lynch (D-MA), designating February 15 as National Village Day and recognizing Beacon Hill Village and the Village movement.

The national nonprofit, the Village to Village Network (of which we are a long-time member), describes Villages as follows: "Villages are intentional caring communities of neighbors helping neighbors. Each Village reflects the community it serves and responds to the needs of its members. While their business models may vary, Villages share certain features. As nonprofit, grassroots initiatives, they are volunteer-based, member-driven and self-governing. Villages mobilize volunteers to provide programs and services that older adults need to remain safe and independent in their homes, such as transportation, light home maintenance, tech support, friendly visits and check-in calls. Villages also offer social and educational activities that reduce isolation and create interpersonal connections and social support."

We are proud to be a part of this movement and will be celebrating our 10th anniversary in the fall of 2023. Stay tuned!

—Connie Raab, President

*Thank you,
donors!*

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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 December

- Members: 237 (96 full, 141 associate; includes 7 reduced cost memberships)
- Volunteers: 115

Volunteer hours

- October: 563
- November: 441
- December: 562

Volunteer help October-December

- 201 one-way rides
- 104 friendly calls and visits
- 23 sessions of tech help
- 48 household assistance

Events

- October 68
- November 55
- December 63

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*

Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*

Will Tiwari, *Operations Manager*

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Membership—Claire Maklan
Programs—Gary Klauber

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

Interest Group Sampler

Our interest groups are important examples of how Village members make the Village their own. Some of our 50 or more events a month are planned by our Programs Committee, but most are meetings of our member-initiated interest groups. All scheduled interest group meetings appear on the events calendar on our website.

Most groups are limited to Village members, but interested prospective members may, with prior approval from Village staff, attend one session to try it out. (Please call the office a few days in advance.) Also, for members who would like to start a new group, we explain how on the next page. Here we provide descriptions of just a few of these groups, with more to be featured in future issues of the *Vibe*.

- **Book Group:** Our book group is jointly sponsored by the Village and the Silver Spring Library. Unlike our other groups, this is open to the public. It has been meeting for over 5 years on the second Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. Currently, the meetings are conducted on Zoom, but the group plans to return to in-person meetings in the library when possible. The group reads diverse books and considers the stories and the characters through lively, thoughtful discussions. Participants help with selecting books and leading discussions. Sarah Letnes (sletnes@gmail.com) is the contact person. The current reading list is in the Fall 2021 *Vibe*, page 5.
- **Poetry Group:** This is one of our longest-running interest groups.



Pondering a poem—photo by Claire Maklan

Participants share and discuss contemporary published poems, including serious, funny, long or short ones, usually with no particular theme. Reading the poems aloud triggers interesting and often educational conversations. Monthly meetings are 10:30 on Thursdays and are organized by Claire Maklan (claire.maklan@gmail.com).

- **Rummikub Group:** It's like rummy with tiles! It's very easy to play; the group leader can help. For now, the group is meeting on Zoom at 2 pm every Friday afternoon but hopes to have monthly in-person meetings in the future. For Zoom meetings, the group is playing with Rummikub App (the original app by Kinkajoo is not available for computers.) There are four players per game, but we can play several games at once. The lead is Cecilia de Kanga (cdekanga@hotmail.com), who started the group in 2019 after she learned to play Rummikub in Peru.
- **Stitchers for Good:** Participants of this group create things by knitting, crocheting, and sewing, generally giving them to local causes. They make blankets, hats, fidget sleeves and lap blankets (for individuals with dementia), bags for wheelchair users, and more. They have been meeting once a month since late 2018, currently at 3:30 on the third Monday of the month by Zoom. The lead is Connie Raab (raabcd@gmail.com).



Photo by Connie Raab

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Welcome to our newest board member, Dion Hamilton.

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- **Walking Group:** The Village walking group meets every Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m., at different spots along the Sligo Creek Park trail. The organizer sends Villagers an email message announcing each walk, specifying where to meet and how long the walk will be, usually between two and five miles. The group, which started last May, has had as many as 12 members some weeks. The group expects to continue through the winter months, weather permitting. The intrepid group leader, JoAnn Thacker



Enjoying the park—
photo by Claire
Maklan

Starting an Interest Group

About two dozen member-initiated “interest groups” are a big part of our Village’s educational, social, and recreational programming. Participants discuss books and current events, play cards and games watch movies, create art, work puzzles, read plays and write them too, take walks, write memoirs, read poetry, stitch items for donation, and more. The monthly men’s brunch and “getting-to-know-you” groups are among the oldest and most popular groups.

To Village members (and prospective members): Is there something you would like to do with a group of other people that the Village doesn’t currently offer? Or are you interested in a group that is currently at capacity or that meets farther away than you want to go when the meetings are in person? Create a new group. There is no end to the possibilities.

To start a new group, here is what a member needs to do:

- Put a message detailing your idea on the Village Chat, (i.e., the members’ listserv). (Call the office for assistance if you’re not sure how to post to the Chat.)
- After you have identified a handful of interested Villagers, find a date, time, and way to meet. To use the Village Zoom account, ask staff; that is likely to influence the day and time. Eventually, you can host the group in your home, in a public place such as a café or library, or at a pre-scheduled time at the Village office.
- If you’re still not sure how to approach setting up a group, we can connect you with an experienced mentor to help you figure out the details.
- Then set your schedule, invite people, and get your meetings going!

New on YouTube

Miss a program? Don’t worry, we often record them and post them on the Village YouTube channel at bit.ly/ssvillage-youtube. New postings:

- **Six-Liners.** Village playwrights read and act out monologues and other material they have written in the Village’s playwriting group.
- **SPARKLE: Social Media Safety, Privacy & Etiquette with Tech Moxie.** Pam Holland offers important advice on using social media. She explains how to set up privacy settings, discover who can see your posts, and develop best practices for avoiding scams and fraud.
- **SPARKLE: Broken Scales: Race and the Crisis of Justice in a Divided America.** Village member and acclaimed scholar/author Tom Diaz discusses his newly-published book. Tom sees that humans naturally categorize one another and create boundaries to develop a sense of orderliness, but that the categorization also creates “otherness” that too often results in racial, ethnic, and religious stereotypes. He argues that everyday actions of ordinary people, in the context of extreme political and cultural polarization, distort the criminal justice system and betray the lofty ideals expressed in America’s founding documents.

For upcoming community events, see page 5.

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 20910 and 20901, 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, and 20902 east of Wheaton Regional Park (the area previously served by Kemp Mill Village). 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 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 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

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Halloween Fun

It was a beautiful day in Montgomery Hills Neighborhood Park when some strange folks arrived and said, "Let's put on a show!" With a natural setting and simple props, costumed Silver Spring Villagers entertained a small crowd of about fifteen. Six of the pieces performed were written and read by the Village's own playwrights, Jeanne Adams, Tom Diaz, Rick Foucheux, Alicia Pfund, and Bill Schauman. The subjects ranged from witches, creatures, wolves, and talking candy bars to pensive pumpkins, cooks, and kids visiting from another planet! Lynne Ebner shared a personal story and Jeanne Adams performed a monologue. A neighborhood boy, Elliot, joined in the fun by turning a cartwheel for us. Cecilia de Kanga graced us with her talents as mistress of ceremonies and Tom Diaz gave out prizes. The grand finale was a wild dance party featuring Halloween tunes. We hope to see you at next year's Halloween celebration!



Cooks, witches, and candy bars, oh my!—photos courtesy of Cecilia de Kanga

Follow us on Facebook

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

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/index.php/about-us/our-villages>
- The United States: <https://www.vtvnetwork.org/villagemap>

Upcoming Community Events

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 for the full calendar of events.

- Wednesday, February 9, 2 pm—**Civil Rights Bus Tour. SPARKLE Program.** Join us for a virtual tour of the civil rights freedom trail. Eric Rasch, operations manager of the Silver Spring Civic Building, experience a weeklong tour of the South visiting historic sites and retracing the Freedom Riders' journey to end segregation in America. Join us for a presentation and conversation about Eric's trip and the people he met along the way.
- Thursday, February 10, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** At the February meeting, we will discuss *House of Stone*, the best-selling debut novel by author Novuyo Rosa Tshuma. This sweeping epic explores Zimbabwe's troubled history, from its revolution to be free of colonial rule through the turmoil that followed.
- Wednesday, March 9, 2 pm—**Panel on Women and the Arts. SPARKLE Program.**
- Thursday, March 10, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** Join us in March for a discussion of *Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know*, Malcolm Gladwell's most recent book. *Talking to Strangers* is a series of case studies that examines the "default to truth" theory—the idea that human beings are by nature trusting and automatically assume people are telling the truth, often with disastrous consequences.
- Thursday, March 24, 3:30 pm—**On the Life and Works of Jane Austen.** Distinguished scholar and expert on the author Jane Austen, Dr. Laura Dabundo will provide an in-depth discussion of Austen's work, including material from her new book, *Jane Austen: A Companion*.
- Thursday, April 14, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** In April, we will discuss *The Giver of Stars* by best-selling author Jojo Moyes. Based on a true story of Eleanor Roosevelt's Pack Horse Library Initiative, this novel is set in Depression-era Kentucky and follows the lives of five women who become traveling librarians delivering books by horseback to people in rural areas of that state.



How to, continued from page 6

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 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!

Give Membership a Try

The Village is recruiting new members in all parts of our service area—zip codes 20901 and 20910, the part of 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, and now the part of 20902 east of Wheaton Regional Park that had been supported by Kemp Mill Village.

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 upfront cost.

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

Volunteer Corner: Step Up for the New Year

A new year brings new resolutions. If volunteering is one of yours, here are a few ways you can help!

- Being a **Storm Buddy** is an



intermittent, but ongoing way to help. When heavy rain, snow, extreme temperatures, or other dangerous weather conditions are predicted, Storm Buddies contact the member with whom they are matched to make sure preparations are in place. After the weather event has occurred, the Storm Buddy reaches out to the matched member to offer help such as running a vital errand or checking to make sure the home is undamaged. Storm Buddies can also help locate other sources of needed help such as a neighborhood teen who can shovel a walk. Often, just being a calm, friendly voice on the phone is what is needed most.

- **Connect Through Tech**



trains Village volunteers as technology coaches and pairs them with members who need assistance using smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers. Silver Spring Village is partnering with DOROT, a nonprofit in New York, to provide this program to members as part of a nationwide demonstration project. *Continued on right*

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Tech Coaches learn how to approach older learners and how to make best use of comprehensive coaching workbooks to provide individualized help to members who would like to become more confident in their use of technology. Learners working with smartphones and tablets have matching learners' editions of the workbooks. While there are no workbooks for laptops or desktops, the coaching and practice methodology can be adapted by an experienced coach.

- **Home Organizers** will be rolled out later this year. Volunteers will be trained in proven techniques that help members organize areas of their homes as small as a closet or as large as a basement.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these programs, or any other ways to volunteer with Silver Spring Village, contact Vanessa Ripps at vanessa.ripps@silverspringvillage.org.

Silver Spring Village is a member of the [Washington Area Villages Exchange](#), the national [Village to Village Network](#), and the [Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce](#).



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. 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.