

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

Summer 2021
Volume 8, Number 3

Leadership View: Adding Up, Adding On

We are coming out of the long pandemic year, resuming most of our member services and getting back together—see page 7 for lots of smiles among our card-playing, puzzle-assembling, hiking, and socializing members and volunteers. We still have had a productive time during the “shut down”—when we never really shut down. In fact, our figures for the end of fiscal year 2021 (i.e., as of June 30) add up to 3,052 volunteer services compared to the last pre-pandemic year (up 40 percent) and 648 events (up 12 percent). Not much keeps a good Village down!

In terms of adding on, we have great news: We are joining forces with Kemp Mill Village. Our service area will soon include all of zip codes 20910 (downtown Silver Spring) and 20901 (between downtown and White Oak), the small part of 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, and the portion of 20902 currently served by Kemp Mill Village.

On or around September 1, Kemp Mill Village will formally dissolve, and its members and volunteers will be able to become part of Silver Spring Village. Leadership teams from both organizations will iron out details of the transition.

Our two Villages are very different in terms of membership size, services, programs, budget, and professional staff resources. Silver Spring Village has roughly ten times more resources in these areas than Kemp Mill Village. But we are very similar in important ways. We both believe in the unique power of peer-led Villages as an essential tool in supporting happy and healthy aging in our homes and communities of choice. We both are deeply committed to celebrating the diversity of the communities in which we operate. We both value the can-do spirit, creativity, innovation, and collaboration that builds excellence in Village life.

Building on the strong foundation that both our Villages have laid independently, we look forward to an exciting future of adventurous and engaged aging for all of our members. More to come!

—Connie Raab, President

In This Issue

- Village stats
- Pandemic poetry
- Board changes
- Book group updates
- The latest on YouTube
- Nuts About Berries Salad
- Helping the hungry
- LGBTQ group forming
- New plays underway
- How tos
- Getting together again
- Home modifications
- Volunteer corner
- Donation form



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 June:

- Members: 215 (84 full, 131 associate; includes 8 reduced cost memberships)
- Volunteers: 130

Volunteer hours

- April: 422
- May: 545
- June: 500

Volunteer help April to June:

- 190 one-way rides
- 450 friendly calls and visits
- 7 sessions of tech help
- 118 household assistance
- Telephone crew hours: 360

Events

- April: 53
- May: 59
- June: 59

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*

Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*

Matthew Carolan, *Operations Manager*

Board of Directors as of July 1

Connie Raab, *President*
Katherine Anderson, *Vice President*

Carolyn Lauer, *Secretary*
Sue Decker, *Treasurer*

Steve Durako
Cheryl Gardner

Jim Gormally
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

Pandemic Poetry

We invited our members to reflect on the past year and to submit a serious or silly poem in the form of a couplet or haiku. Here's what we got.

Couplet

Kay Johnson

*I can do it tomorrow or later or never.
It takes me a minute; it takes me forever.*

Haikus

Lynn Ebner

*What should we do now?
Let's see what's on tv
or we could eat cake*

Rick Foucheux

*Clock's tick seems slower.
Tock's click a beat belated.
Seconds count, not days*

Minnedore Green

*March onward to heal
but our bleak lives move forward.
May reveals a change*

Marge Hirano

*Oh isolation!
Alas the perturbation!
Blessed connection.*

Claire Maklan

*A hard year for us
but not so for cicadas
Sleeping down under*

Anne McHenry

*Silver Spring Village
Rich with friends and fun events
and people who care*

Sandy Morris

*Which was worse fear of
Trump or fear of COVID? Both
upset digestion.*

Connie Raab

*Social life in
little squares. Fun to talk but
better in person.*

Laurel Scheeler

*I'm Covid's E.T.
With that long, longing finger
Connection; phone home.*

Board Changes

Every year at the end of June, we say goodbye to people leaving the Village's board of directors and hello to those joining it and also elect officers. This year our departing directors included Anne McHenry, our last founding member with continuous

service on the board (planning was 2010 to 2013; startup of the board and the Village was 2013). Peggy Gervasi was also on the board since 2013, serving 7 of her 8 years as an officer (including two 2-year stints as president). Minnedore Green is leaving after 4 years but will stay active on important committees.

In terms of new board members, we welcome Jim Gormally and Joe Reinhard and re-welcome Sue Decker and Darren Vieira, who were on the board previously. Those elected to office are Connie Raab (president), Katherine Anderson (vice president), Sue Decker (treasurer), and Carolyn Lauer (secretary).



Book Group Updates

We need leader(s). The Silver Spring Village Book Group is going through some changes. Carolyn Lauer, who has been our “lead bookworm” and researcher for 8 years, is stepping down. We applaud her thorough approach and dedication to the group! She has served us very well. But Carolyn’s departure means we need a volunteer from either the Village or the public (the group serves both) to be responsible for the email list, send out Zoom links, if needed, and identify who will lead the discussion of each book. We would like members of the group to step up and claim a title or two and lead a discussion of their chosen book(s). That will reduce the work for the organizer and make the group more collaborative.



We have a new reading list. Five members of the group have spent several weeks choosing titles for the upcoming year, and more selections will be announced. So far, selections include “Behold the Dreamers” by Imbolo Mbue, “The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett, “Born a Crime” by Trevor Noah, “Interior Chinatown” by Charles Yu, and “The Sacrament” by Olaf Olafsson. Book information is posted on the Village calendar. We have been working with the Montgomery County Library to make sure that sufficient copies of these books are readily available.

Join us. The Book Group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 3 pm. Both members and the public are invited. We currently meet on Zoom but hope to go back to in-person meetings as soon as it is safe to do so. Check it out!

Note: New Phone Number(s)

The Village's phone number has changed. The new main number is (240) 833-5580. Each staff member now has a direct dial number, as well:

- Doug Gaddis, Executive Director (240) 833-5582
- Vanessa Ripps, Volunteer Services Director (240) 833-5584
- Matt Carolan, Operations Manager (240) 833-5586

If it's easier, you are welcome to call the main number (240) 833-5580 and listen for the recorded prompt to reach any of us or leave a message.



The Latest on YouTube

The Village YouTube channel, that is, at bit.ly/ssvillage-youtube, Three more videos were added recently. The first is a play by a Villager and the other two are part of the SPARKLE program, a series of monthly events cosponsored by the Village and Silver Spring Town Center.

- ***Parts of the Night* by Rick Foucheux.** Watch the dramatic reading of this original play by Village member and award-winning area actor Rick Foucheux. (See “New Plays Underway” on page 5 for more information.)
- ***Senior Women in the Arts.*** This program featured dollmaker Camila Bryce-LaPorte, mixed media artist Jamie Downs, poet JoAnne Grownney, artist Leslie Anne Hansley, artist Marjorie Hirano, and artist Cynthia Farrell Johnson. It was hosted by artist & poet Neha Misra. (Leslie Anne and Marge are Village members.)
- ***Baby Boomers, the Blues & Beyond.*** Hosted by WPFW Don't Forget the Blues radio host Ida Campbell, this program featured a panel of blues artists Bobby Rush, Millie Jackson, Jay Summerour, and Mark Wenner. This was an informal chat with some of the best blues artists around as they share their life stories and what it is like to be playing the blues and still going strong as senior artists.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conversations

The Village continues to conduct our monthly diversity, equity, and inclusion conversation series for members. We generally provide links to videos and readings in advance of the program. Recent topics include the following:

- **May:** *Let's Talk About Social Class (Part One)* was the first of a two-part series about social class in the US, a topic we are often reluctant to discuss. The video we watched ahead was a TEDx talk by Joan C. Williams, University of California, on how social class shapes our values and influences political polarization at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7I6D1i27Nw>.
- **June:** *Hearing from a Trans Woman* was an engaging discussion with Suzanne Ford, a trans activist living in the San Francisco Bay Area with her wife and son, Daniel. Suzanne's mid-life gender transition began nearly a decade ago. Suzanne is president of the board of the Spahr Center and serves on the boards of SF Pride and Trans Heartline.
- **July:** *Let's Talk About Social Class (Part Two)* will focus on money, with pre-reading of "Why So Many Americans Don't Talk About Money," a thought-provoking essay by Joe Pinsker in *The Atlantic* in 2020 at <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/03/americans-dont-talk-about-money-taboo/607273/>

Village Eats: Nuts About Berries Salad

A simply delicious summer salad with fresh fruit, tart cheese, and sweet, crunchy nuts.



Ingredients

- ☒ canola oil – ½ cup
- ☒ apple cider vinegar – 2 tablespoons
- ☒ salt – ¼ teaspoon
- ☒ honey - ½ tablespoon
- ☒ dry mustard – ½ teaspoon
- ☒ red onion – ¼ of an onion
- ☒ blueberries, blackberry, raspberries – 1 ounce or about ¼ cup each
- ☒ sliced strawberries – 4 ounces or ½ cup
- ☒ candied pecans* – 1-2 ounces or ¼ to ½ cup
- ☒ crumbled feta – 2 ounces or ½ cup
- ☒ mixed salad greens

Steps

1. Use a blender to combine the first six ingredients into a dressing.
2. Use about a cup of greens per serving and add dressing to taste.
3. Top with berries, then feta and pecans.

From the kitchen of Sarah Letnes

*To make your own candied pecans combine ½ cup chopped pecans with 2 tablespoons butter, ¼ cup brown sugar, and 1 teaspoon sugar. Heat in a saucepan over low heat until well combined. Keeps for months in the fridge.

Need a Village?

If you want to find a Village for someone who is outside our area, here are resources to use:

- The Montgomery County web site has a searchable map of local Villages at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/Villages/villagesmap.html>
- The Washington Area Villages Exchange web site includes 75 Villages in the DC area at <https://www.wavevillages.org/index.php/about-us/our-villages>
- The Village to Village Network is the national organization for US Villages. You can search for a Village here <https://www.vtvnetwork.org/villagemap>

Helping the Hungry in Our Community

Early in the pandemic, our Village joined a project organized by Silver Spring Cares (SSC) to donate food to the nonprofit Shepherd's Table and to needy families that SSC had identified. Enthusiastic Villagers participated week after week to help reduce the impact of the pandemic on needy individuals and families in our community.

Our involvement in this project was initiated by Joe Reinhard, one of our volunteers (and a new member of our board of directors). Fifteen Village members stepped right up to help, and, over time, the number of participants increased to 25 households. The initial request for homemade baked goods helped break the boredom of our confinement, created an opportunity to feel useful, and had the side benefit of excess cookies or banana bread. Soon our group was contributing sandwiches, fresh vegetables, drinks, spices, and lots of other groceries on Shepherd's Table's weekly wish list. The regularity and quantity of donations is all the more impressive when you recall how long most of us weren't setting foot in grocery stores.

For 57 weeks we prepared, drove, and delivered carloads of donated food. We are now considering new opportunities for our Villagers to engage with our larger community.



Donations for Shepherd's Table—photo by Claire Maklan.

Thanks to all our donors for making this project successful, to Claire Maklan for coordinating it, and to Joe, as well as Deanna and Jim Anderson, for all that driving and delivering. Said one donor, "watching Jim pack his car chock full is a treat! This has been incredibly rewarding."

New Plays Underway!

Villagers are writing and presenting original plays! The playwriting group meets every other Saturday to discuss the process of playwriting and to share their work.

In June, all Villagers had a chance to enjoy a Zoom presentation of a new play by Rick Foucheux. *Parts of a Night* is a comedy-drama set in a theater's green room (the place in a theater where actors relax when not on stage). The play follows an intimate and boozy late-night conversation between two longtime acting partners whose professional relationship is complicated by unspoken romance, worries about their upcoming opening night, and the fear of aging in an industry where age matters.

The reading included Village member Jeanne Adams, who also directed the show. Other members of the cast were professional guest actors Rick Kasten, Julia Rudgers, and Vince Eisenson. The stage directions were read by member Jane Gorbaty. The June reading was well-attended and included a "talk-back" where audience members could offer comments. The event was recorded and is available to view on the Village YouTube channel (bit.ly/ssvillage-youtube).

In July, the group presented another original play. Jeanne Adams' *Braving the Elements* is a comedy-drama about relationships, family, and UFOs.

LGBTQ Interest Group Forming

With the support and interest of several Silver Spring Village members, we are putting together a new interest group specifically for our LGBTQ members. This group is meant to be a safe space for LGBTQ older adults to socialize and share life experiences unique to their culture. As we're relatively few, we will extend an invitation to friends from Village of Takoma Park, Kensington Village, and Chevy Chase Village to join us. Members who are interested in participating can get in touch with our Executive Director Doug Gaddis at doug.gaddis@silverspringvillage.org for more information.

How tos

...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 and the adjacent section of zip code 20815 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 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 check, and you’ve attended our orientation training, you’ll be able to start making a difference in your community.

Continued on page 7, right

Older Adults in 20910: You May Qualify for Free Home Modifications

Silver Spring Village has partnered with Rebuilding Together Montgomery County (RTMC) through our collaboration with the Lifelong Homes Coalition, a group of County organizations and government departments. RTMC is a nonprofit organization that provides free home repairs and accessibility modifications to help income-qualifying homeowners remain safely and independently in their homes. Services include plumbing, roofing, flooring, carpentry, electrical, appliances, and more. To improve accessibility, modifications may include installing things such as grab bars, ramps, railings, and stairlifts. Depending on the nature of the job, work is performed by licensed professionals or by skilled volunteers.

RTMC was recently awarded a grant to provide home renovation services to older adults in the Village’s 20910 service area. To be eligible, applicants must have an income of roughly \$45,000 or less (one person) or \$52,000 or less (two people), must own and live in the home, and have less than \$400,000 in equity. Village members who might benefit from this exceptional opportunity should contact Doug Gaddis or Vanessa Ripps for more information and an introduction to RTMC’s staff for a consultation.

This program is for qualifying seniors in 20910, whether or not they are currently members of Silver Spring Village. In some cases, assistance from RTMC can be paired with a discounted Village membership to provide a much greater range of services than either of our organizations can offer independently. Please share this information with neighbors and friends who may be eligible, and ask them to contact Vanessa at (240) 833-5584 or Doug at (240) 833-5582.



Appreciation

Besides those with bylines in this issue, we appreciate the contributions of Jeanne Adams, Rick Foucheux, Claire Maklan, and Sandy Morris to the articles and photos that appear here.

Clip art in this issue is courtesy of CreativeCommons.org.

Getting Together Again!

Although we still have quite a few events on Zoom, some of our activities have resumed in person!

For example, here our Poker Dawgs show some exuberance—was it about winning or just finally being in each other's company after almost a year and a half?



Our Puzzles group was finally able to resume working on their 3,000-piece challenge.

Our hikers are tackling Sligo Creek Park most Wednesdays (weather permitting).

And we recently held a very enjoyable “happiest hour” gathering of volunteers. (Thank you, Mi Rancho.)



Photo credits: Poker Dawgs by Ben Lin, puzzles group by Adi Kanga, hiking group by Joann Thacker, and volunteer celebration by Claire Maklan.

Zooming with Our (Other) Best Friends



We continue many programs on Zoom (or a Zoom/in-person hybrid). We recently put pets or pet photos online, with or without their owners, and told stories.

Pets included a puppy, cats, a pigeon, a gecko, and even a cicada (who has since disappeared ;-))

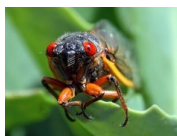


Photo credits: Spooky by Lynn Ebner, cicada by Rob Cantor, and Cynna and Godiva courtesy of Cynna Janus.



How tos, continued from page 4

..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!



Give Us a Try, Free

Not sure you're ready to join the Village? Our *trial membership* gives you three full months to get to know us with no upfront cost. You'll be able to attend the programs on our calendar and enjoy all the other benefits of Associate Membership. Please visit our website—silverspringvillage.org—or email membership@silverspringvillage.org for more information.

Quotes from the Time of COVID-19

A member said:

“We asked for their help. They delivered for us—literally. By the time the pandemic had reached its nadir, we learned we could count on Village volunteers to shop for our groceries, even our medicines, and get them to our door, no matter what, and somehow, always in good humor. There is no way to overstate how much that knowledge helped us get through the dark, dreary days.”

A volunteer caller said:

“I feel very lucky to have drawn these three SSV members for these wellness calls. Very much a blessing for me and a ray of light during these dark times.”



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

Volunteer Corner: Thank you!

As we begin to resume normal services, I'd be remiss if I didn't first acknowledge the many volunteers who stepped forward to help our members in new and different ways during the pandemic. While adhering to strict covid restrictions, we were able to make sure our members didn't feel alone and those that needed grocery-shopping help could get it.

Thanks to everyone who went to the grocery store with a member's shopping list, purchased their items, and made contactless deliveries. Twenty-five people did contactless grocery shopping for 18 members from mid-April 2020 to the end of April 2021.

Thank you to those who made regular wellness/check-in calls. What started out as a stranger calling a member to ask how they were doing quickly became a friend calling a friend for a conversation. In all, 37 volunteers called 65 members regularly from mid-April 2020 to the end of April 2021. Generally, calls were 15 minutes or sometimes longer; some volunteers called two or three times a week and others called every week or two.

We currently are recruiting new volunteers and inviting those of you who took a break from volunteering to join us again. The Village is looking for people to drive members to various appointments, to make friendly phone calls/visits, to help with tasks around the home, to run an errand, or to help with technology. The next volunteer training/orientation is scheduled for September 12. For more information on how to become a volunteer, please email me at Vanessa.Ripps@silverspringvillage.org.

—Vanessa Ripps

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 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.