



Village Vibe

Fall 2021
Volume 8, Number 4

Leadership View: Change Can Be Good

Things are proceeding well with the incorporation of Kemp Mill Village into what we do. As of the end of September, nine former Kemp Mill members have joined us, along with one volunteer. The new members are starting to attend events, interest groups, and committee meetings. We have archived Kemp Mill Village's documents and posted their event videos on our YouTube channel. Our individual contracts from Montgomery County have been combined, providing important support.

Our goal is to provide the same level of member engagement and service as we have offered in our original geographic area. In fact, this new relationship has prompted us to improve and update some of our materials and to think more about how we can become more efficient and responsive to the needs of our members.

We recently held an outdoor welcome event on a brisk, beautiful Sunday afternoon for the Kemp Mill community to explain what Silver Spring Village has to offer. Getting people from the two Villages together felt like a big friendly family.

Change is in the air. Fall is the time that the leaves, the weather, and the time change, and activity gears up around end of the year holidays. It is also the time of our biggest fundraiser of the year—Giving Tuesday—which this year falls on November 30. You may hear from us but even if you don't, please consider making a donation of any size. Our goal of helping older adults stay happy, healthy, engaged, and in their own homes is made possible by the generosity of our donors. We can improve lives and help individuals avoid isolation, loneliness, and the expense and trauma of moving, while providing fun, friendship, purpose, and assistance.

Be a part of this great mission.

—Connie Raab, President



Having a happy birthday with a few family members and a lot of Village friends—photo by Jeanne Adams

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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 October:

- Members: 230 (90 full, 140 associate; includes 6 reduced cost memberships)
- Volunteers: 115

Volunteer hours

- July: 411
- August: 557
- September: 491

Volunteer help July-September

- 156 one-way rides
- 122 friendly calls and visits
- 13 sessions of tech help
- 67 household assistance

Events

- July: 60
- August: 49
- September: 57

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*

Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*
Operations Manager (vacant)

Board of Directors

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

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

Jim Gormally
Gail McDonald

Joe Reinhard
Darren Vieira
Jacqueline Wallen

Committee Chairs

Finance—Sue Decker
Governance—Martine Brizius
Membership—Claire Maklan
Programs—Gary Klauber

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

Getting Together Again

We continue to have a lot of fun and interactions. Many events are still occurring on Zoom but some are in person. For example, members got together for a wine tasting led by our sommelier Executive Director. Our weekly hiking group gets together to tackle trails in Sli-go Creek Park and Rock Creek Park every week that weather permits.



Tasting six fine French wines—photo by Sue Decker



Savoring some fine fall weather—photo by Claire Maklan

Stitchers Update

Our “Stitchers for Good” have made many a blanket, hat, and scarf (and last year, lots and lots of masks), and we will continue to do so. But we are getting into making other helpful items as well. We have begun experimenting with making “fidget sleeves” and “fidget lap blankets.” What are you those, you ask?

Fidget sleeves or muffs and lap-sized fidget blankets can provide sensory and tactile stimulation for the restless hands of people with Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia. The sleeves and blankets usually are very colorful and are decorated with beads, buttons, zippers, ties, ribbon, strings, elastic, snaps, pom poms, braids, and other items. They often have a variety of textures such as smooth, ribbed, silky, fluffy, and velvety. Fiddling with the different objects attached to the blanket or sleeve can be soothing. It can keep the person focused on an activity and lessen agitation and boredom. These items are sometimes called “busy” or “fiddle quilts,” “fiddle” or “twiddle muffs,” and other colorful names and sometimes take other forms, like aprons.



Colorful sleeves to fiddle with created by Cecilia de Kanga —photo by Connie Raab

Making these sleeves and blankets—as well as baby and adult hats, scarves, blankets, and other useful items—is keeping the Stitchers busy. We look forward to donating our fidget articles to nearby memory care facilities and will continue to create other items for the Linus Project, the obstetrics clinic at Holy Cross Hospital, A Wider Circle, and other worthy local causes that help the community.



Stitchers collaborating on fidget blankets—photo by Jane Gorbaty

Making Silver Spring a great place to age in place!

New Technology Coaching Program Launched

As a way to help our members and volunteers better use technology in their daily lives, the Village has embarked on an exciting new pilot project in partnership with A Little Help (the Village serving the entire state of Colorado) and New York-based DOROT, a nonprofit with a very strong tech education program for older adults.

The pilot program for our Village and Colorado's includes 90 minutes of training for volunteer technology coaches by experts from DOROT's New York office. Their coaching sessions will be one-on-one and will use a written workbook designed for a member's specific device, whether it's a Samsung tablet, an iPad, an Android phone, or an iPhone. Depending on the coach, the member may also be able to ask for help with laptops, smart home devices, and other technology. Aside from learning all the basics, the sessions are geared to creating opportunities for members to use new knowledge in practical ways. Are they planning to go to a movie? The coach can help the member learn how to order their tickets ahead of time. Do they need to pick up groceries or have them delivered? The coach can help with that. And how about WhatsApp or Zoom calls with friends or family? The best technology is the technology that keeps people connected to community and living independently!

The program will be called "Connect Through Tech." Four volunteers have already been trained as technology coaches and nine members are interested in being technology learners. Coaching will start in early November.

Members and volunteers: For information about participating as a learner or volunteer coach in this exciting new pilot, please contact Vanessa.Ripps@silverspringvillage.org or (240) 833-5584.



Learning a new skill: talking to a grandchild on your cell phone—photo from Creative Commons

Have questions about the Village?

Explore our website or give us a call—see contact information on the bottom of the page.

Friendly volunteers providing information and answering questions at a recent event in Kemp Mill—photo by Connie Raab



Check Out Our YouTube Channel

Thanks in part to our merger with Kemp Mill Village, we have added several videos to the Village YouTube channel at bit.ly/ssvillage-youtube. Available programs focus on web savviness and fraud avoidance, gardening, Medicare, aging in place, financial advice, climate change, and more. Take a look!

Community Events

The Village offers events almost every day. Most events are exclusively for our members, but some, like those below, are also open to the public. Join us! Visit our website for the full calendar of events.

- Wednesday, November 10, 2:00-3:30 pm—**Autumn Collage Workshop, SPARKLE Program** with local artist Lauren Lay. By Zoom.
- Thursday, November 11, 3:00-4:30 pm—**Silver Spring Book Group** will discuss "**Born a Crime**" by Trevor Noah. By Zoom
- Wednesday, December 8, 2:00 to 4:00 pm—**Broken Scales: Race and the Crisis of Justice in a Divided America. SPARKLE Program.** Village member and acclaimed scholar/author Tom Diaz will discuss his newly-published book "**Broken Scales: Race and the Crisis of Justice in a Divided America.**" Tom sees that humans naturally categorize one another and erect boundaries to create 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. By Zoom.
- Thursday, December 9, 3:00-4:30 pm—**Silver Spring Book Group** will discuss "**The Great Alone**" by Kristin Hannah. By Zoom.

For Zoom links, RSVP to [programs](https://bit.ly/ssvillage-youtube) @silverspringvillage.org.

Helping Shepherd's Table

Last year, at the beginning of the pandemic, I really wanted to help those in our community who might be struggling. It was the pandemic lockdown, so I wasn't going anywhere. But I don't bake or sew. However, I can shop (mostly online during the lockdown). Thus began my love affair with Silver Spring Cares Neighborhood Ambassador Program, providing weekly food donations to Shepherd's Table, serving the most vulnerable people in our neighborhoods. Silver Spring Village has participated in this program since spring of 2020 and, after a break, recently renewed participation in late September. Contributing can be easy. Each week the Village coordinator receives a list of the requested items from Shepherd's Table. Anyone who wants to contribute can choose items from that list (items that can be purchased or made at home). The contributor then bags the items and can either place the bag outside his or her house to be picked up by a driver or bring it to a drop-off location. Contributors can opt in or out each week.

Village members and volunteers: We would love to have more contributors. If interested, please contact me at ppassikoff@gmail.com (preferred) or (301) 585-5722.

—Penny Passikoff

Congratulations, Reemberto!

Dozens of friends, neighbors, and officials gathered at the end of September at the Koiner Farm to celebrate our amigo Reemberto Rodriguez who just retired after serving for 12 years as Silver Spring Regional Service Center Director.

We celebrated and sang his praises through shared memories, poetry, as well as various citations, awards, and good wishes from Senator Will Smith and Delegate Lorig Charkoudian of District 20, Council Member Evan Glass, the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, and the Lyttonsville community. County Executive Marc Elrich also joined us for the festivities.

Silver Spring Town Center, Inc. (SSTCi), also presented Reemberto with a portrait in his image made via hot wax painting (encaustic wax) by artist Marcie Wolf-Hubbard. A special mention to our friends at Nothing Bundt Cakes in Silver Spring for providing us with a delicious cake! Special thanks to Lynn Koiner for welcoming us to her wonderful farm— an oasis in downtown Silver Spring.

Muchas Felicidades, Reemberto!

Lisa Martin, Executive Director, SSTCi

Note: Reemberto and his wife have been members of Silver Spring Village since its very beginning in 2013. Before that, he was very helpful in advising our founders in the planning of the Village. Reemberto: Thank you for your help and your leadership of the Regional Office. Enjoy!

Connie Raab, President of the Village Board



At left Reemberto enjoys a laugh with Village members Pat Tyson and Charlotte Coffield. At right, he is surrounded by well-wishers at the happy event—photos by Lisa Martin.



The last of eight food pick ups before delivery to Shepherd's Table—photo by Bill Hole

Book Group Plans for the Year: A List, an Invitation

Please join us for the Silver Spring Book Group, jointly sponsored by Silver Spring Village and the Silver Spring Library for adults who love books! We enjoy thought-provoking discussions that help us delve more deeply into our books than we could on our own.

The book group meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 3:00-4:30 and is open to Village members and other interested library patrons. We are meeting on Zoom while we work closely with our librarian to return to meeting in person at the library as soon as possible.

Our books, chosen annually by vote of the group, are all available free from the library. Many come in a variety of formats, including electronic, print, audio and compact disk. As you will see from the list below, we enjoy books that reflect the great diversity of people, places, and experiences. We usually have about a dozen participants, and we welcome new members. Please contact Sarah Letnes at scletnes@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us.

The book schedule for the remainder of this year is:

- **November 11: “Born A Crime” by Trevor Noah**—This is a moving, funny book by the host of “The Daily Show” on his childhood in South Africa during Apartheid and afterwards.
- **December 9: “The Great Alone” by Kristin Hannah**—A family tries for a fresh start in the Alaskan wilderness, but finds human nature more unpredictable than the environment.
- **January 13, 2022: “Interior China” by Charles Yu**—This satiric novel about race, pop culture, and escaping the parts we play follows the “Generic Asian Man” who dreams of having a bigger role for himself.
- **February 10: “House of Stone” by Novuyo Rosa Tshuma**—In a turbulent Zimbabwe, a family and their lodger (who is trying to get too close to the family) try to find a missing teenager.
- **March 10: “Talking to Strangers” by Malcolm Gladwell**—If we were better at talking to strangers, there would be fewer clashes and less misinterpretation.
- **April 14: “The Giver of Stars” by Jojo Moyes**—Based on a true story set in the 1930’s, this book is about five brave women who deliver books as part of Eleanor Roosevelt’s new traveling library.
- **May 12: “The Mountains Sing” by Nguyen Phan Que Mai**—This vivid book reveals the human costs of the Vietnam War in terms of the Vietnamese people. This is the first novel by famous Vietnamese poet **Nguyen Phan Que Mai**.

Continued in the column on the right

- **June 9: “The Sacrament” by Olaf Olafsson**—In Iceland, a nun returns to face her past when she is asked to investigate rumor of abuse and an unexplained death.
- **July 14: “Deacon King Kong” by James McBride**—One day, a 71-year-old deacon for a church in the projects of South Brooklyn gets drunk and shoots a local drug dealer. None of the witnesses talks about the shooting. This book examines repercussions of the shooting and its effects on people in this part of New York.



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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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Highlights of Our Annual Member Survey

During July 2021, we conducted a survey to assess member satisfaction with various aspects of Village membership and to identify areas for improvement. The survey was sent electronically or by post to 205 members. One hundred and sixty-three members completed the survey, for a response rate of 80%. Survey respondents were representative of the total Village membership on most demographic variables including gender, ethnicity, race, and household composition.

Highlights of findings include:

- 93% agreed that "Being a member makes me feel like part of a caring community;"
- 96% of respondents believe the Village is a welcoming organization that treats them with care and respect;
- 91% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their membership and are satisfied with the Village response to the pandemic;
- 93% of respondents are likely or very likely to recommend Village membership to others; and
- 96% are likely to continue their own membership.

To improve, the Village should:

- Encourage more in-person participation to reduce isolation;
- Find and mount more programs that provide intellectual stimulation and fun; and
- Expand the work to diversify the Village and better represent Silver Spring.

Seventy-two members offered comments. These were overwhelmingly positive, such as: "SSV is a great organization," "The organization is run beautifully," and "Keep up the wonderful work!" Others expressed thanks for the "peace of mind" knowing the Village is there.

Regarding specific benefits of membership, several respondents noted the staff's extraordinary effort and success in keeping members informed of the latest information related to the pandemic and staff's assistance in helping members get vaccinations. One said: "The Village response to the pandemic lockdown was quick and amazing." Several mentioned wanting the Village to continue to provide programs, either on Zoom or hybrid, offer catered meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas, and work toward a more diverse membership and board of directors.



We appreciate the work of the membership committee in carrying out the survey and producing this report, particularly Cheryl Gardner and Claire Maklan, all the members who responded, and the staff and volunteers whose good work respondents acknowledged.

Dollars and Sense

We are very proud of how Silver Spring Village has grown from a few friends gathered in a living room to almost 230 members strong! Our success comes from the dedication of our volunteers and staff, as well as financial contributions from our generous donors. As we approach our annual fundraising drive, we thought we'd address several questions you may have about our financials:



Question: Since services to our full members are provided by volunteers, are there any monetary costs with fulfilling member requests for a ride, a friendly visit, medical note-taking, etc.?

Answer: Yes. Our volunteers are indeed the backbone of our Village, but we do incur costs to effectively manage our volunteer network. We pay staff to match the right volunteer to the member request and we have to purchase insurance for both our staff and volunteers. There are also costs for software to operate the volunteer sign up process and for background checks and training of volunteers. We also host events specifically geared to engaging and acknowledging our volunteers and sometimes offer special training, such as the tech training described on page 3.

Question: Since member volunteers plan and run many programs, including the interest groups, does the Village have any monetary costs for these programs?

Answer: Yes. While a main objective of our Village is for fellow members to start and lead interest groups, we still incur costs to ensure the success of these programs as well as to coordinate our larger events. These costs include staff time to manage the process, website maintenance and printing fees to communicate events, Zoom and other internet costs to hold the events, and in some cases, refreshments and room or equipment rental fees. We also pay for an office lease that provides workspace for our staff and sometimes meeting space for our programs.

Question: Given that we collect membership dues, does the Village really need to depend on individual donations?

Answer: Yes. Membership dues provide a relatively small part of our funding—20% last year. In fact, our largest source of funds is individual donations, which accounted for 34% of our revenue for the last fiscal year. Other major sources of funding are government (30%) and foundation grants (14%). These grants take considerable staff time to research, prepare applications, and meet ongoing reporting requirements.

To continue to be successful, we must continue to raise the projected funds in all income categories, including individual donations. Please consider making a donation today or on a regular basis, such as monthly.

Thank you to all those who provide financial support (and time) to sustain the Village's mission to help our members stay engaged in their community and continue to live at home with support from neighbors and friends.

—Sue Decker

How to's, 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 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 up-front cost**.

For information, contact Claire Maklan, via member-ship@silverspringvillage.org or 301-588-5535.

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 Silver Spring? Here are ways to locate one.

- Montgomery County: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/Villages/villagesmap.html>
- The DC area: <https://www.wavevillages.org/index.php/about-us/our-villages>
- The United States: <https://www.vtvnetwork.org/villagemap>



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.

Volunteer Corner: What Do We do?

Are you unsure about what kinds of things our volunteers can do? The answer is: *Almost anything that nonprofessional people can do to help each other.* Need help with de-cluttering? Getting a package to the post office? Picking up a prescription? How about help with your computer or programmable thermostat? Do you need a ride? Or would you just like somebody to talk to? These are examples of the things Village volunteers can do—and want to do. All of these services, and many more, are available to our Full Members.

We also can help when members need to find licensed professionals (including home health aides, electricians and plumbers). All members get online access to *Washington Consumers' CHECKBOOK*, and they can use the members-only listserv or call the Director of Volunteer Services to ask for recommendations.

In addition to the important ways volunteers provide direct service to members, volunteer activity is critical to the operation of the Village. All members of the Board and committees, as well as other members, serve in a volunteer capacity, amounting to hundreds of hours every month. They plan and implement programs, run interest groups, recruit and enroll new members, maintain the website, create the *Vibe*, help with fundraising, stuff envelopes, and do much more.

Volunteers work when, and as much, as they like, doing the things they choose to do. We provide initial training and ongoing support, and we are always looking for more volunteers. To learn more about volunteering for our Village, please contact Vanessa Rippas at (240) 833-5584 or vanessa.rippas@silverspringvillage.org.

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.