

NEWSLETTER



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May/June

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT:

The Power of Music

Part I: Who doesn't love music?

Shakespeare, in "The Merchant of Venice," had this to say:

"The man that hath no music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night, And his affections dark as Erebus. Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music."

So, there – you'd better like music, or else.

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Contact Villages of San Mateo County at: 650-260-4569 or info@villagesofsmc.org

Sequoia Village and Mid Peninsula Village are two local villages under the umbrella 501(c)(3) nonprofit called Villages of San Mateo County (VSMC)

COFFEE CONNECTION

Open to all Sequoia Village and Mid Peninsula Village members, volunteers and guests. Light refreshments will be provided. **SAVE THE DATE!**



DATE: Monday, May 6, 2019

TIME: 10:00 AM—11:30 AM

LOCATION: Silicon Valley Community Foundation Conference Center
1300 South El Camino Real, San Mateo



PRESENTER: **Robert G. Hall**, retired clinical psychologist and co-president of Peninsula Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America, is also President of the San Mateo County Commission on Disabilities. He will be discussing the topic of impaired hearing/hearing deficit, while highlighting various resources and devices that may address your needs or those of a friend or family member.

RSVP: Please contact the Villages of San Mateo County office **no later than April 29** via emailing us at info@villagesofsmc.org or by calling us at 650-260-4569 if you wish to attend. Please indicate whether or not you will need a ride.

MEET A VOLUNTEER!

I had the pleasure of sitting down for coffee, a cookie and conversation with Lorraine Lew-White in a café in downtown San Mateo on a sunny Friday afternoon in late March. Lorraine started volunteering with the Villages upon retiring at the end of 2017. She learned about the Villages from one of her former co-workers. Lorraine says the baby boomer generation grew up helping neighbors; the flexibility of Villages' volunteers being able to help others without a rigid schedule appealed to her.

Lorraine's career was with San Mateo County in environmental health. She grew up in Belmont and in San Mateo, where she still lives with her husband of 29 years, Wade. Lorraine and Wade have a son, Derek, who lives and works in New York City. Besides volunteering with MPV, she is currently a volunteer for Girls on the Run and has volunteered for the City of San Mateo at the annual Summer Concert Series and the King Cafe Summer Program, which is a community center a block from her childhood home. She enjoys gardening, cooking, working out, taking classes, traveling, knitting, playing golf and the freedom of retirement.



She states the Villages has enriched her life in that it “feels good to give.” She admires the creative energy of the other members of the special events committee, which plans social events for Mid Peninsula and Sequoia Villages. She also enjoys meeting members while responding to service requests. “Being able to assist another person is so rewarding. One of my favorite positions with the County was assisting residents with home safety and maintenance. It was a community service that people appreciated.”

Lorraine recently took on a new role of assisting with the transition of new Mid Peninsula Village volunteers. She provides support and guidance regarding volunteer opportunities, especially for non-driving volunteers, and help with using the volunteer self-signup. She says this is a work in progress. She does not see herself as very creative, despite her apparent out-of-the-box approach!

~ by Mary Ann McKay

LIFE STORIES SHARED HERE!

Do you have an interesting life experience that you would like to share with our readers? We are collecting these stories for an archive of our Villages of San Mateo County members.

Below, share the experience of Robert Kirchgatter. Then, please feel free to share one of your own with the Villages by contacting the VSMC office at: 650-260-4569 or info@villagesofsmc.org. Maybe you will see yourself in print!

It was the summer of either 1953 or 1954 and I was a substitute mail carrier in Denver, CO. I was assigned to cover a regular carrier's route during his vacation.

I was assigned a route that included #750 Lafayette St. The houses on that block were all built on a bluff, so each house had 8 to 10 steps to get to the top of the bluff to deliver the mail. Most of the houses were separated by small, low hedges.

One day in June, I was doing my daily deliveries when I decided that going up and down those steps was for the uneducated, so I decided to hurdle each of those hedges, going from house to house. All went well until the day I came to the 750 block and saw TV trucks. As I was hurdling along, a man who said he was from the Secret Service approached me and said that I would be delivering mail to President Eisenhower on his porch at #750, and I was to walk up the steps and hand him the mail. And that it would be filmed and aired on the evening news to welcome the President for his usual stay at the Summer White House. Even still, all went well. The president and his wife, Mamie, were on the porch, took the mail, and we exchanged gentle banter.

July 2 was a hot day and I was feeling the heat. I was carrying a registered letter for Mamie Eisenhower — the kind of letter that had to be signed for by the recipient and no one else. Well, the secret service man met me, ready to take the mail. I told him that Mamie had to sign for it. He said he was authorized by the Secret Service to act in her stead. I told him that I represented an agency that was much larger than his and that I was going to carry out my orders.

About that time Mrs. Eisenhower came to the door to see what the commotion was about. She agreed to sign for it and then invited me in for a little refreshment, since it was so hot. I obliged and she sat me at a table in the entry hall and went to get my drink. She came back with a drink and a piece of cake, which she said came from the Brown Palace Hotel in honor of their Wedding Anniversary celebrated the day before. She sat down with her cake and drink and we exchanged pleasantries. I left a little giddy and could not wait to tell my fellow carriers about my day. Incidentally, the cake was superb!

~ by Bob Kirchgatter; edited by Linda Thomas

HAPPY BIRTHDAY VSMC!

Four years ago--on July 10, 2015, to be exact--Sequoia Village opened its virtual doors, with Mid-Peninsula Village soon to follow. Today, with nearly 200 members and 100+ vibrant volunteers, the two Villages have truly met their promise to fulfill our members' needs and wants in the areas of transportation, minor repairs in and around the home, tech service, social activities, and much more. With so many talented, warm, and friendly members and/or volunteers, the Village concept has grown into a virtual community.

The Village community begins immediately when a Village member opens their door to welcome a volunteer into their home to fulfill a recent handy-person request or to provide a ride to an appointment. Conversations begin; common interests are discovered; a connection is formed; and soon a new friendship blossoms. These early connections are compared to a magical experience by our Villagers, where a sense of purpose and a feeling of belonging enrich everyone's quality of life.

This virtual community wouldn't be complete without the planning and executing of the many social activities organized throughout the year. For instance, the monthly Coffee Connection provides the opportunity to meet other members/volunteers and enjoy delicious refreshments while listening to a guest speaker talk on an interesting topic or a musician provide toe-tapping songs.



Nancy Batten (right), member of Sequoia Village and retired 2nd grade teacher from the San Carlos School District, meets up with one of her past students, Linda Burt, and her mother, Harriet Anderson—the Coffee Connection guest speaker.

Village members and guests exchange pleasantries as new and old friends enjoy the lovely spread of food and beverages before a Coffee Connection lecture.



Several major parties a year bring more than 100 guests into a room where harmonious

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sounds of lively chatter and laughter can be heard. Big smiles on all the faces light up the room!



What's a Mardi Gras without singing and dancing to the "Saints Come Marching In" ... and indeed they did! The 'Saints' being the hard-working and spirited volunteers who made the fun happen!



Face painting of a National Charity League volunteer done by Jacqueline Knapp; Dixieland music and the main dish of Jambalaya and other Cajun foods catered by Steven Gurka were in perfect harmony with the chatter, laughter and satisfaction experienced by all who attended Mardi Gras!

With all the joy being spread in and around the Village community, the need to get up and go out of town has been satisfied by the monthly excursions that fulfill the cultural appetites of our members.



The Villagers from VSMC visit the art exhibit of "MONET: The Late Years" at the de Young Museum on March 21. What a great way to bring in the first day of Spring!

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VILLAGES OF SAN MATEO COUNTY DONORS

VSMC extends its sincere appreciation for the generous financial support and in-kind gifts received from the following individuals and organizations:

- *Charis Fund*
- *City of San Carlos*
- *Danford Foundation*
- *Dignity Health*
- *Intero Foundation*
- *Kiwanis Club of San Carlos*
- *Mid-Peninsula Vineyard Christian Church*
- *Peter & Paula Uccelli Foundation*
- *Redwood City Parks and Recreation*
- *Rotary Club of San Carlos*
- *San Mateo Rotary*
- *Sequoia Healthcare District*
- *Touchpoint Foundation*
- *Trinity Presbyterian Church of San Carlos*
- *Wells Fargo*
- *West Valley Federated Women's Club*

(Power of Music/continued from page 1)

But, seriously, who doesn't enjoy hearing a long-ago tune, or turning music on while doing chores? (In high school, I listened to classical music every night while attending to my math homework.) Music lightens our load, lifts our spirits and connects us in uncountable ways.

Generally speaking, people in every generation are connected by the music they heard while growing up. Remember the Beatles' tune, "When I'm Sixty-Four"? I'm precisely that age today. "My" music is the rock sounds of the 1960s and early 1970s – the Beatles, the Beach Boys, the Doors, Joni Mitchell, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Tower of Power, Chicago and, yes – I admit it – even that made-for-TV group, the Monkees. Plus, through osmosis, I acquired my father's lifelong love of jazz. I can remember being seven years old, lying awake at night and thrilling to the strains of the Dave Brubeck Quartet floating in from the living room. I had never heard anything like the music of Brubeck's alto saxophone player, Paul Desmond. If Johann Sebastian Bach could swing, that's what he would have sounded like.

For my parents, it was the Swing Era, with bands such as those led by Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey. For my 26-year-old son, it's groups like Green Day and Flogging Molly. (Yes, there really is a band called Flogging Molly.) For the high school students I teach, it's rap and hip-hop, with performers with names like G-Eazy and Juice WRLD. And with every new sensation, there also seems to be a feeling of déjà vu. When the Beatles attracted crowds of screaming young girls, my mother said, "Been there, seen that," with Frank Sinatra and the bobbysoxers of the 1940s.

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It's precisely those memories that help tie each generation together. If I meet someone who grew up in San Francisco in the 1960s, there are two things I can always talk about – the incredible 1962 World Series between the Giants and the Yankees, and the Beatles' last public concert, at Candlestick Park in August, 1966. And it's those memories, too, that contribute to our own identities. I'm defined in part by being a Beatles fan, just as my parents were defined by being Sinatra fans. (I'm a big Sinatra fan, too, by the way; one of the wonderful things about music is that people of different generations can share it.)

To Be Continued next issue: Part II: Music Can Be Therapeutic

~ by Scott Dailey

This unique community furthers its connections by forming partnerships with other nonprofit organizations and businesses that, in turn, provide Village members access to meaningful resources. Buses are chartered and trips are made to interesting locations in San Francisco and other Bay Area counties. Members find themselves immersed in the worlds of art, music, and history followed by memorable feasting on scrumptious foods at interesting restaurants.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Villages of San Mateo County for creating a warm, friendly and safe community!

~ by Victoria Kline, VSMC Board Member

GRANT WRITER NEEDED FOR VSMC

VSMC volunteer Susan Gerard is retiring from her role as grant writer for VSMC. For the past 2 years, she has done an exceptional job in securing funds that have allowed us to provide important services and outstanding program activities for our members. Please join me in thanking Susan for a job well done! Her excellent writing skills, determination, and organized approach have been an inspiration!

Now, we are looking for another volunteer to step forward to continue this important endeavor. If interested, please contact Linda Burroughs at lindab@villagesofsmc.org, or myself, Scott McMullin at mcmullin.scott@gmail.com.