



Summer 2016

We Dig the Village



VOLUNTEER

Courtney Bell and Neighbors Shoveling Neighbors



The Blizzard of 2016 gave way to a sunny Sunday and Courtney Bell, a Village volunteer since last August, set out with her fiancé and two roommates to shovel some snow for a housebound Village member. “The member’s house was in a cul de sac off Newark Street that hadn’t been cleared at all,” she recalled, “so we shoveled from the porch to the driveway, the two cars there and the driveway.”

Then at the request of a neighbor, also a Village member, the four and more neighbors cleared a path through the hip-deep snow past several houses all the way to Newark Street. The neighbor brought out cookies and cider, and residents cheered the group on from their porches. The work took an hour and a half. “It felt like a little community,” Bell said.

Bell is a full-time NIH management analyst who has provided tech help and paperwork organizing for other members. “These non-driving options are a little more flexible for me and it works really well,” she said. “Volunteering for the Village is a great way to help people in a tangible way and have a personal relationship.”

THANK YOU! You have helped our Village reach many people in Cleveland Park and Woodley Park in its first three years. In this newsletter, we celebrate the connections we have made with you and among you. We celebrate the creativity and friendship that has flourished in our community. We celebrate your gifts of time, money, ideas, skills and compassion.

YOU ARE INVITED! To share your ideas for new program ideas and new ways to reach out to people who would enjoy and participate in the Village. Together we can build a better community for all of us.

Setting the Tone for 2016!

The Village has just celebrated its third birthday. While much has been accomplished during these initial three years, we cannot simply rest on our laurels nor take our accomplishments for granted. Accordingly, the Village board and staff engage in a planning process each year to establish organizational priorities for the coming year. On Saturday morning, February 6, nearly 25 Village members, volunteers, board and staff members met at Forest Hills Assembly Hall for an exhilarating and productive meeting with facilitator Candace Baldwin. We extend our thanks to Forest Hills of DC for complimentary use of their beautiful meeting space and for the delicious catered breakfast that sustained us as we grappled with priority setting for 2016.



One month later the Village board, staff and select volunteers reconvened to sift through all of the notes from the retreat to identify and agree upon three principal priorities for attention over the next fifteen months. The three priorities identified are: 1) Membership Growth; 2) Leadership Growth/Succession Planning; and 3) Community Engagement.

As we move through the year, you will hear more about these priorities and how you yourself might play a role in helping the Village continue to flourish. Perhaps you can suggest a friend or neighbor who might benefit from joining the Village? Or perhaps you can recommend a volunteer who can help drive our members to appointments, or help as a technology tutor? Do you know of someone who can play a leadership role on one of the Village’s committees or on the board of directors? If so, please let us know.



Thank you all for playing your part in nurturing and supporting the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village! Sending my very best wishes for the summer months!

Mark W. Ohnmacht
Executive Director

The First Village Book Group



Ruth Merryman and the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village Book Club



Village Book Club Members

Ruth Merryman had been back in Cleveland Park for exactly two days last August when she told Executive Director Mark Ohnmacht she wanted to start a book group. "He said 'Great!'" she reported.

The group of Village members and volunteers started up in November and now meet at Merryman's McLean Gardens apartment. The seven or eight regular attendees recently finished *Golden Spruce*, historical fiction about Native Americans, by John Vaillant, and *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*, a novel by Gabrielle Charbonnet about a harried bookstore owner.

New members are welcome! "It's great fun and a wonderful group," Merryman said. "It's a great way to get to know other members." The member who chooses the book outlines the author's history and book highlights and opens discussion until snack and socializing time, she said.

Merryman lived and worked in Washington for 35 years before moving to Washington State for 20 years. She came back to be close to her daughter and because vision trouble limited her driving. "I'm really happy and beyond" with Village driving services, she said. "Not driving after so many years is life-changing, but I'm OK thanks to the Village.

The Peace Corps Joins the Village

Since the Peace Corps became reality in 1963, more than 200,000 Americans have served in 139 countries, and now some of them are reconnecting in the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village.



Three returned Peace Corps people discovered each other at the same table during February's Lunch Bunch at Raku restaurant on Wisconsin Avenue, and another one turned up later.

One was Joanne Szafran, a Village member for about three years, who was a medical technology volunteer in provincial Lampang, Thailand, from 1965-1967. "Wonderful serendipity at the lunch," said Szafran, a longtime publications expert who has done volunteer editing for the Village and now uses its driving services. "You couldn't plan that kind of connection."

Another was Trip Reid, who was deputy director of the Peace Corps in Lima, Peru from 1964-1966, and previously did evaluations for the Corps in Asia. Reid, a former Vista regional director and government attorney, joined the Village in 2013. "I'm a strong believer in volunteerism, one reason I put a lot of stock in the Village movement," he said.

The third PC veteran was Tom Fox, who was Peace Corps deputy director in Togo from 1965-67; director in Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso, from 1967-69; and Deputy Director of the Peace Corps' Africa program in Washington for two years. Fox made his career with international development in USAID and various nonprofit groups, and now supports and volunteers for the Village alongside his wife, Village co-founder Elizabeth Fox.

A fourth returned PCV is your volunteer newsletter editor Joanne Omang, who tried to teach English in Gaziantep, Turkey from 1964-66 and afterward spent 25 years as a journalist with UPI and then The Washington Post. Any more of us ex-PCVs out there??

Tech Tutor Day

At the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village, requests for help with technology are second only to those for transportation to doctor's appointments or the grocery store, said executive director Mark Ohnmacht. Village volunteers provide one-on-one help to members.



Ohnmacht says he gets about two to three requests per week for technology help, like assistance setting up email or online bill paying accounts. "A recurring theme from members is that they received an iPad or Kindle as a gift from family members and they want to learn how to use it," Ohnmacht said.

Under the leadership of volunteer Sarah Holt, the village hosted a tech tutor fair at the Cleveland Park Library on February 7th, and another is planned for July 17th from 1:00-3:30 pm. Neighborhood seniors can stop by and get one-on-one help with any mobile devices they bring in or ask questions about products they are considering purchasing, like smartphones, tablets or laptops. More than 20 people attended the first drop-in session and we hope for even more on July 17th. Village members may also request individual tech help on their home computers for improving their skills with email, websites or documents.

"It was an opportunity for people to get free on-site consulting," Ohnmacht said. "One of our best volunteers was also our youngest: Parker Bath, a student from Edmund Burke High School. He was a big hit." Deeming that event a success, the Village now plans to offer tech fairs quarterly, Ohnmacht said. If you need tech help or if you are tech savvy and would like to share your skills, just contact the office.

“What I didn’t expect was that I’d be making so many friends through it, or that it would be so social—we go to plays, we visit museums and galleries, we have the Lunch Bunch together once a month,” she said. “It’s such a good mix of ages, men and women—it’s been a delightful surprise. We really have a good time.”



All Souls for the Village



Linda Mahler and Nancy Morgan and All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church

The power of personal connection has again strengthened the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village and our local community. All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church, at 2300 Cathedral Avenue, has for the fourth consecutive year awarded the Village a grant, this one for \$5,000 -- and it happened because Linda Mahler and her wife Nancy Morgan helped make the connection between their church and their Village.

“We’ve been doing everything we could to build the bridge,” said Mahler. She and Morgan, both living with cerebral palsy, are church members and have been Village members since it opened in 2013. Their bridge-building included setting up meetings, informing Village leaders of application deadlines and requirements, writing letters of support and keeping church officials updated on Village activities.

“Anyone could do something like this,” Mahler said. “Most

The Second Annual Spring Fling

The Cleveland & Woodley Park Village did it again! On May 5th from 6:30pm-9:30pm at the historic Kennedy-Warren, 3133 Connecticut Avenue NW the Village celebrated Cinco de Mayo style.



“For the married, otherwise-partnered, widowed, single, young and old and not-yet-old, it offers our community precious opportunities to take care of and be cared for by each other,” writer and guest speaker Judith Viorst told the crowd.

More than 150 guests celebrated the Village and the Woodley Park and Cleveland Park communities at the fiesta, which included music and dancing to the band of Doc Scantlin and his Imperial Palms Orchestra, margaritas and sumptuous appetizers by Occasions Caterers.

Honorary Chair Mary Cheh, D.C. Council member for Ward 3, welcomed the guests. Viorst, a charter Village member, longtime Cleveland Park resident and esteemed author, kept everyone laughing while revealing poignant stories about the challenges and delights of aging in place. She conveyed in vivid terms the importance of the Village and its volunteers to our community, and especially to her and her husband, Milton.

“Aging over the years as a married couple offers special challenges all their own,” Viorst said. “These are not like those torrid times on that beach in New Jersey—but a date is a date. Yes, a date is a date, connection is connection. And the Cleveland & Woodley Park Village does such important work in building these connections.”



With proceeds from ticket sales, sponsorship, a wide-ranging silent auction and “salon” tickets for celebrity talks and dinners, the event raised over \$50,000 to support Village operations!

Thanks to our Spring Fling Sponsors for 2016!

GOLD

Bernstein Management Corporation
Home Care Assistance, LLC
Thomas E. Clark Plumbing Heating AC
Marjorie Dick Stuart, WC&AN Miller

SILVER

Paula Atkeson
Cathedral Commons
Compass Real Estate, Sheila Mooney
and Ty Hreben
Elizabeth and Tom Fox
Giant Food
Barbara Stevens and Rufus King III
Margot Wilson,
Washington Fine Properties

BRONZE

Astech Security
Capitol Title Insurance Agency, Inc.
CroppMetcalf
Evergo Landscaping, Inc.
Ruth Faden and Tom Beauchamp
Forest Hills of DC & Forest Side
Paul Frick
Wendy Garner

BRONZE, cont.

Gilday Renovations
Grand Oaks Assisted Living
Steve Hunsicker & Anne Shelbourne
William K. and Danny Ince
Anne Keiser & Doug Lapp
Charlotte Kuenen, CFP, Morgan Stanley
Maryann & Rick Nash
Bill & Louisa Newlin
Mark W. Ohnmacht
Joe & Edith Oppenheimer
Palisades Georgetown Lions Club
Elizabeth & Cameron Sanders
Susie and Bill Taylor
Tenleytown Painting
Town & Country Movers, Inc.
Judith Viorst
Peggy & Ted Weidlein

WARM THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

B.F. Saul Company
Subject Matter
Kwik Copy Printing

people have a connection with an organization of some kind that might be really helpful.” The grant will underwrite Village memberships for nine individuals and two households that could not otherwise afford them, as well as some of the annual cost of volunteer background checks. The church also lends the Village its space for meetings and events.

Our grant is one of 17 the church made this year that total \$79,000 for “meeting needs in medical care, housing, education and meal programs for the less fortunate than ourselves,” the Endowment Board said in its announcement. The Village is grateful to All Souls, and to Linda Mahler and Nancy Morgan as well.

Village Staff

Staff

Mark W. Ohnmacht, Executive Director, Claire Thompson, Office Manager

info@
clevelandwoodleyparkvillage.org
202.615.5853

Newsletter

Joanne Omang, Editor

Cathy Crouch, Communications & Outreach

Cleveland & Woodley Park Village is a welcoming Village. Call us to learn how you can be part of our community.



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

[ClevelandWoodleyParkVillage/](https://www.facebook.com/ClevelandWoodleyParkVillage/)



In Memoriam

Mary G. (“Mimi”) Bliss

Raymond John
Goodman

Evelyn S. Lieberman

David Wheelwright

Volunteers and Members Connect!

Penny Conaway and Joyce Myers: Cooking Together

It was Super Bowl weekend and Village member Joyce Myers wanted to make vegetable soup and a meatloaf for her friends. But her failing peripheral vision made the knife work hazardous, so she asked the Village to help. “Member wants help with cooking,” the notice said, and Volunteer Penny Conaway responded.

Myers didn’t know that Conaway is a professional caterer. Conaway didn’t tell her. Instead, the two chopped vegetables and mixed the meatloaf at Myers’ Woodley Park apartment, talking all the while. “She had the recipe out and all the ingredients ready, and I just kind of followed her lead and helped her do it the way she wanted to do it,” Conaway recalled. “She wasn’t just sitting there watching me cook.”

Some two hours later the meal was ready “and she was really happy,” Conaway said. Myers called her the next day, she added, “to say how delicious everything was, and it was her own recipe!”

Conaway said she was delighted with the chance the Village gave her to help create a little more community feeling in the neighborhood. “It’s fun for me to do this kind of thing, and I’d be happy to do it again,” she said.

Eric Kravetz: Driving and making Friends

Village members and volunteers connect at our events in many unusual ways, but volunteers who drive members to their appointments say the prize is theirs: they meet the most interesting people.



“I met one of the two people who founded the Washington International School, and then a British Army engineer who was in Iraq after World War II,” said Eric Kravetz, who drives for the Village several times a month.

“Then there was a diplomat who worked in the US embassy in Iran, and by sheer luck just missed being there at the time of the takeover [in 1979], then a woman who waited in Greece with her children to see if her husband had escaped from that revolution,” Kravetz continued. “So many diplomats and people who’ve been everywhere!”

Kravetz, well-traveled himself, volunteered with the Village after retiring from 13 years of high school teaching and 31 years of lawyering. “I had a feeling it would be a good thing to do and a good way to meet people,” he said. “They make it easy to set your own schedule: you see the choices and if you don’t feel like it you don’t do it. No pressure!”

Kravetz said one delight is taking his regular “clients” to standing appointments and sharing continuing conversations – about gardening, children, jobs, politics. “One woman who grew up here told me that when she was young she captured fireflies and released them in the balcony of the Uptown Theater,” he said.

“There’s so much experience, sharpness, history, interest in life in this group,” he said. “Everybody has something interesting to talk about, and they’re unfailingly nice. I haven’t regretted a moment of it.”

The Village always needs more drivers. Contact the Village office to volunteer.

2016 Priority: A Village Membership Campaign

We are pleased to announce our 2016 membership campaign. We are proud of our efforts over the last 3 years, but to remain vital and strong we need to grow our membership. We need your help to reach our goal of 25 new members!

Contact us if you can help with: arranging a talk at your apartment building or faith community; inviting neighbors to tea with Village members at your home. Join our Campaign team at community events. Volunteer to help stuff envelopes and make phone calls as part of two large mailings we will do in the fall. Call or email the office and direct your offer or question to “Campaign Team.”