



**CLEVELAND PARK  
VILLAGE**

# CLEVELAND PARK VILLAGE NEWS

*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

September 2013

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## Member Comments

*"Just chatted with the volunteer.  
She will call my mother later*

## Cleveland Park Village News -- Issue 2

Come see our new office! It's in the Broadmoor building, 3601 Connecticut Ave NW. Enter the main reception area through either the main or side entrance, and we're in Suite Six on the ground floor. Look for the Cleveland Park Village sign.

## We Include Woodley Park!

Initial plans for our neighborhood Village two years ago focused only on Cleveland Park. But lots of Woodley Park people expressed support and interest. The Board then reached its fundraising and membership and volunteer goals, and hired our Executive Director Susan Hester. These successes created the necessary energy and confidence to open it up. The Village expanded to include Woodley Park, and now we are all in this together!

## What Are We Doing?



Cleveland Park Village has been busy since we opened for action May 1. Most of our activities are typical of Villages nationwide - building community through conversations, mutual assistance, shared experiences and group outings. Our 70 members and 100-plus volunteers may have started with different expectations, but they say they benefit in the same ways: getting new perspectives, enjoying the city, being useful, being part of a cause that matters, and finding new friendships.

From May to August, 45+ volunteers delivered 164 individual services to our members. They provided transportation to appointments and cultural events, help with yard work and grocery shopping, computer tutoring, changing a difficult lightbulb, prescription pickup, cell phone tutoring, and a variety

today. You guys work fast!"

*"Met a lovely woman who drove me home from the doctor. Thank you. She even gave me homemade blueberry muffins: I'm sure that is not in the volunteer description!"*

*"I feel like I hit the jackpot. My volunteer spent two hours problem-solving with my Mac. I got a big education just from listening and watching. She solved some knotty problems."*

*"He helped me accomplish exactly what I needed skillfully and efficiently, and it was nice to chat and get acquainted at the same time."*

*"Great ride with my volunteer who is so much fun. She knows how to make a U-turn on 14th Street, and even to drive backwards. A very skilled person. The ride lifted great anxiety off of me, since the drop-off and parking worries me days in advance of going."*

### **Volunteer Profile: Keeping Track of Us**

## **Janet Cyphers**

of other forms of assistance.

We have had organizational support from 44 volunteers: they helped in the office, hosted events, served on committees, wrote the newsletter and staffed tables at farmers markets. We also got some good ideas for Village programs from members meeting at the homes of members Barbara Stevens and Rufus King in May, Elizabeth and Tom Fox in June, and Martha Baron in July.

## **Who Are We?**

We took a look at the paperwork we have for our 70 members, and what a varied group they are! Two-thirds are women and one-third men; two-thirds are household members and one-third are singles. Twelve percent are still working full time and 23 percent part time; the rest are retired.

While 44 percent of members are age 76 to 85, 17 percent are over 86. The oldest member is 96! Nearly a quarter are 66 to 75, while 16 percent are under 65 and the youngest is 52.

Fully 28 percent of members have lived in their current homes for 40 to 50 years and 12 percent for more than 50; one has stayed put for all of her 78 years! Only 14 percent have been in residence less than 10 years. And best of all, 32 percent of members (18 of the 70) are currently also volunteers!

## **Members Are Forming New Networks**

Every month, Cleveland Park Village members are invited to gather in a member's home to get to know each other and discuss Village operation and plans. Half the members have attended at least one of the three summer sessions so far.

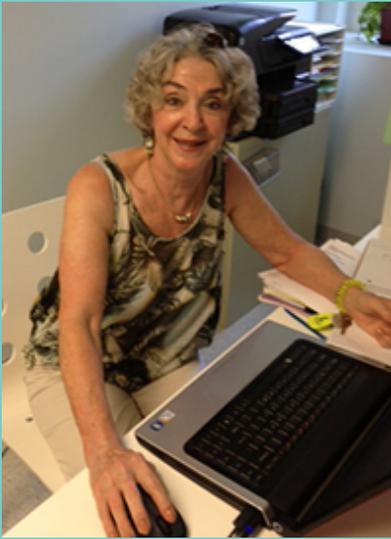
Conversations have been personal and heartfelt - about missing professional engagement and absent spouses, wanting to contribute to society, and using the Village to help build new connections. Members most want opportunities to get out and meet other people, so small dinners and excursions are high among favorite events.

In May, for example, 13 members and three volunteers attended a private tour of the Dürer exhibit at the National Gallery of Art, led by well-known lecturer Eric Denker, and many agreed it was the best art tour they had ever had.

In early July, six members ventured to a U Street cabaret to hear member Marcia Kass sing. Everyone had a great time, including urging another member onto the stage for a bit of karaoke. And in August a mix of 18 members and volunteers delighted in a tour of the Diaghilev Exhibit, including a lunch, a film, and a docent talk.

Members agree they need to work on calling others into their lives. Most have been independent in professional careers and are loath to admit it's hard now to climb the stepladder to change a bulb, or to figure out a new computer.

Some things are easy to do alone, like going to a movie or planning a trip, but would be more fun to do with someone else. And everyone, member or volunteer alike, wants to be useful and contribute in some way to something that matters. That's what the Village is all about.



Janet Cyphers got groceries and did laundry for a neighbor in her 90's when Janet was still working, and later, she read for an older woman whose sight had gone.

"I've always had an old lady in my life," said Cyphers. "I wanted to help out at Cleveland Park Village from the very beginning."

Cyphers, 70, volunteers at least twice a week at the Village office, doing various administrative tasks. Recently she has been organizing volunteer paperwork, making sure that all the required documents are on hand for each person.

"We have a lot of volunteers now and getting all the information we need is quite a job", she said. "We need the Volunteer Agreement, driver's documents for volunteers who plan to drive, and the driver's and general background clearances - for 91 volunteers!" What does she need? "More drivers," she said "Please!"

Janet retired from the General Services Administration in 2001

## Cleveland Park Village Calendar

**Oct. 3, 10:30 am:** Tour of the Washington DC Historical Society Museum. We invite village members, volunteers, and our donors to sign up for a tour by longtime docent Judy Hubbard of this exhibit at the Carnegie Library, including Cleveland Park artifacts and old photos and items from residents' personal collections. RSVP and members call for a ride 202-615-5853.

**Oct. 17, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm:** Volunteer Orientation Session. Methodist Home of DC, 4901 Connecticut Ave NW. Sign up to attend and learn what's involved.

**Oct. 22, 6:00 pm:** Member potluck dinner. Sign up to be picked up for the regular monthly gathering and conversation. Location to be announced closer to the date.

## How Does Cleveland Park Village Work?

With Cleveland Park Village, you can volunteer to provide members with rides to appointments and to cultural and social events, and get this help yourself when you need it later. With a little training, you can read aloud to a member, or help with grocery and other shopping, home tasks, yard work, editing, pet care, snow shoveling, or computer problems. You can help the Village with its office, the newsletter and management.

Other options include lunch and dinner outings, a Spanish conversation group, music-playing groups, museum visits, movie nights - tell us your ideas and we will make them happen.

Cleveland Park Village will be unique - just what our members and volunteers want it to be. Join now and see it grow!

## Operational Details

1. Volunteers must complete a background check and take part in a two-hour training and orientation session before providing service.
2. Members will have an informational interview to confirm understanding of procedures, available services and likely requests.
3. Contact the office to schedule an information gathering in your living room, building lobby, religious center, or clubroom. Email [info@ClevelandParkVillage.org](mailto:info@ClevelandParkVillage.org) or visit our website: [www.ClevelandParkVillage.org](http://www.ClevelandParkVillage.org) or call **202-615-5853**

## Volunteer Orientation Sessions Continue

Steve Elkin played a Cleveland Park Village member needing a ride to get groceries, and Minturn Wright played a volunteer driver. In between on the make-believe telephone was Executive Director Susan Hester, asking Steve questions to set up the appointment and giving Minturn instructions.

It was role-playing time at the first of six recent orientation sessions for Cleveland Park Village volunteers and members. "It's all about quality control," Hester said.

When Steve, a Village volunteer in real life, "forgot" to tell Susan that he also wanted to

after 39 years as a procurement agent and analyst, so she knows paperwork. She has lived in Tilden Gardens since 1989 and remains active as a bike rider and devotee of yoga and bodywork classes at City Fitness.

"I don't need Village services at this point, and I hope I die before I do," she said, "But if not, I know the Village will be there for me."

### Member Profile: Staying In Shape



#### Jean van der Tak

Jean van der Tak has to admit she's slowing down. At 86, she no longer climbs up and down the 94 Embassy Hill steps off Tilden Street eight times in a row. Now she only does them three times in a row.

She also does aerobics and strength training classes, and walks in the Melvin Hazen woods

stop at the cleaners and maybe shoot a little pool with his volunteer driver, she "forgot" to ask about other needs, and Minturn, a Village board member, played the role of being frustrated and unable to comply.

The skit demonstrated the importance of clear communication as Village volunteers begin delivering services to members. Variations of the skit entertained volunteers and members at three other Orientation Sessions before Opening Day and three afterward. More than 100 volunteers have attended these sessions.

Board President Barbara Stevens gave a survey of the global Village movement, now 12 years old "and already deep in its impact." Board member Elizabeth Fox outlined the origins of Cleveland Park Village, noting that the challenge now "is reaching across all the different communities" that make up our Village service area.

Volunteers function "to bring in fresh air" to senior neighbors who may be isolated and lonely even in upscale locations, said Lylie Fisher, director of community engagement at Iona Senior Services. "They bring themselves first, and then the outside world."

Fisher stressed the importance of listening to members, mirroring interests, and knowing where boundaries are: what a volunteer can do and what requires expert assistance. Iona's referral services are always available to volunteers and members, she said. "We're a team."

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Get in touch: [info@ClevelandParkVillage.org](mailto:info@ClevelandParkVillage.org) or **202-615-5853**

### Thanks for Your Support!

Cleveland Park Village sincerely appreciates the counsel, encouragement and generosity of all those who have helped us during our formation and early months. We are very grateful to:

- The Cleveland Park Citizens Association - especially its President, Susie Taylor, who answered the call for a neighborhood response to issues of aging in place;
- Our sister Villages for their generous mentoring, sharing of information, and passion for expanding Villages across our metro area - Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors, Capitol Hill Village, Chevy Chase At Home, Dupont Circle Village, Georgetown Village, Glover Park Village, Mount Vernon At Home, Northwest Neighbors Village, and Palisades Village;
- Washington Area Village Exchange (WAVE) and Village to Village Network (VtVN) for their collegial support of the Village movement;
- IONA Senior Services for its pioneering and premiere role serving seniors in our community;
- The ANC3C for its start-up grant, All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church for its grant to establish a fund for Supported Memberships, and Cleveland Park Congregational UCC and Cleveland Park Citizens Association for general support grants;
- Our Board of Directors, who laid the foundation, spread the word, raised the funds and recruited our first members and volunteers; and
- Most of all, the many individuals who have contributed their passion, skills, time,

by the Rodman Street house where she has lived for 51 years. "I'm very fit," she says, a major understatement.

But she joined Cleveland Park Village in March as a full member "because I was reaching an age when I should decide what to do with the rest of my life." Although one of her three sons lives in Bethesda, "I don't want him to have to worry about the old lady," she said. "And this is ideal-I can stay right here!"

A native of Canada, Jean worked in England for the Oxford University Press and traveled with her World Bank husband. Later, Jean earned a master's degree in demography from Georgetown University and worked as an editor for the Population Reference Bureau until retiring in 1987.

Jean attended her first Village member gathering in May, did organizing email and canvassing work, and was on the Village's inaugural museum trip May 29 to view the Dürer exhibit. She's an active past officer of the Cleveland Park Citizens Association and was the first editor of the Historical Society's newsletter.

A fixture at the local library, Jean tries to take a houseplant to every Rodman Street home where there's a new baby. "I'm the grandmother of the block," she says. "It's a wonderful neighborhood."

### People join a Village because...

*"I believe in the idea and want to surround myself with others who*

and financial support to create Cleveland Park Village!

### Special Acknowledgements go to:

- The Methodist Home of the District of Columbia, Stanford in Washington, and Cleveland Park Library for providing pro bono meeting space; and
- The Methodist Home of the District of Columbia and FireHook Bakery for providing pro bono catering for our inaugural Orientations.

Thank you one and all!

### Is Cleveland Park Village Right for You, or Someone You Know?

With luck, you love your home here in northwest Washington's Cleveland Park or Woodley Park neighborhoods. But will you be able to stay in your home as you age? A Cleveland Park Village membership will help secure you in your own home, and it will help keep you engaged in city life.

With roots in the nonprofit Village movement that now has some 100 groups operating or forming nationwide, our Village knows a satisfying urban life requires a home that's affordable, accessible and livable. With a full-time executive director, the Village screens, trains and manages a network of volunteers who help turn the home of each member into that satisfying place to stay.

### We're Out Talking to People: at Klinge Road Neighborhood Gathering



*Dorothy Goodman and Ellen Phillips*

Think of the Cleveland Park Village membership fee as "a bit like insurance," Board member Elizabeth Fox told a rapt group of area residents at an early informational neighborhood gathering, at the Klinge Road home of Lynn Bulmer.

The \$750 annual fee, she said, is a bargain buffer against the cost of future car trips to the store, the theater or the airport, or trips to the doctor. "How many times can you ask our friends to take you?" The Village will also send the computer techie you would otherwise have to hire by the hour, the snow shoveler you can't get out of the house to find, the service you need.

"This service is unlimited, whatever you need, when you need it. We will do the things you used to do," Fox said.

*share the goal of living both independently and in community."*

*"I want to make new friends and have new experiences - especially because in retirement I no longer have a large network of professional colleagues and the camaraderie of being at an office every day."*

*"I want to feel I am part of something, I want to help create community and add ease and pleasure to others' lives."*

#### **Board of Directors**

#### **Members of the Cleveland Park Village Board of Directors**

Barbara Stevens, President  
Mary Worstell, Vice President  
Virginia Stern, Secretary  
William K. Ince, Treasurer  
Carol Lynn Bamford  
Ruth R. Faden  
Elizabeth Fox  
Susan O'Sullivan  
Susie Taylor, Advisor  
Minturn Wright

#### **Staff**

Susan Hester, Executive Director

#### **Newsletter**

Joanne Omang, Editor  
Patti Maurer, Skinny Cat Designs

#### **Member Information**

#### **Join the Cleveland Park Village Now!**

#### **Membership**

Individual \$500 per year  
Household \$750 per year (max three people)

The 32 people in attendance, sipping wine and munching hors d'oeuvres, said they had come to the meeting to learn about the Village, to build community, to find out how to help and later to be helped themselves. "I'm a simple country boy so the idea of a village appealed to me," said Cyril Muromcew.

This was the first of four gatherings in Woodley Park to discuss the Village and its operations with interested residents. Some 21 similar neighborhood gatherings in private homes have been held so far. Village organizers this summer have also been at the All Souls Episcopal Church farmers' market on several Saturdays; the Idaho Avenue and Sheridan School farmers markets; at the Woodley Park Community Association meeting in May; and at the polls at the May citywide special election.

Questions at the house parties included insurance and liability issues, which Executive Director Susan Hester described in full, adding that other Villages had found the procedures satisfying and efficient. "We expect there will be good spirit on all sides here," she said. "We know it's going to take all of us to make this Village work."

### **PBS News Hour Coverage of Villages**

When Cleveland Park Village volunteers gathered on the evening of August 8 to socialize and talk about their experiences volunteering over the last four months - one volunteer said he felt like he was truly part of a national movement. Just as he left his home to come to the event he had seen the 10-minute PBS NewsHour special featuring Beacon Hill Village, the first ever Village, now 12 years old. Indeed we are part of a growing phenomenon guaranteed to expand over the next 10 years as our population ages and more and more people long for community involvement.

Reduced fee (call for information)

**Associate**

\$250 per year: Support the Village and stay informed about Village activity with your \$250 tax-deductible donation.

**Supporting Donor**

Make a donation to ensure the vitality of our village. Send a check or donate online at [www.ClevelandParkVillage.org](http://www.ClevelandParkVillage.org).

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