

Village Newsletter

www.VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org | 410 D Street, Petaluma, CA. | 707.776.6055

April 2024 – National Volunteer Month

The Power of Volunteerism

Volunteers are motivated by values like those of justice, equality, and freedom, as expressed in the United Nations Charter. A society that supports and encourages different forms of volunteering is likely to be a society which also promotes the well-being of its citizens.

More than one billion people volunteer globally, most of them serving in their own countries. Many are in the forefront of efforts to improve the way they and their fellow citizens are governed and engaged. Moreover, volunteers are playing a vital role in making governments worldwide more accountable and responsive to their citizens.

They are working with governments and civil society to hold those in power to account and to represent the voices of those who are often left out of development decisions, such as women, youth, and marginalized groups. The end result is more inclusive –and ultimately more effective – development.

Volunteerism is a basic expression of human relationships. It is about people's need to participate in their societies and to feel that they matter to others. We strongly believe that the social relationships intrinsic to volunteer work are critical to individual and community well-being.

The ethos of volunteerism is infused with values such as solidarity, reciprocity, mutual trust, belonging, and empowerment, all of which contribute significantly to quality of life.



UN Volunteers

<https://www.unv.org/power-volunteerism>

Village News

- *Welcome New Village Members:* Fred Bethke, Patricia Chiapellone, Patti Wagner, Alison Williams, David Galin, Catherine Luther, Steve Hubert, Nancy Samuels
- *Welcome New Village Volunteers:* Eileen Hammer, Ashley Howitt, Malati Murthy, Barbara Crowley
- *Village Calendar* - For all Village events and activities, [CLICK HERE](#). Please note the following activity time or location changes:
 - On Friday, April 19, Coffee Drop-in returns to Aqus Cafe at 189 H St., Petaluma.
 - Bocce Ball now meets at 3 pm on Wednesdays.
 - East Side Walkers now meet at 9 am on Thursdays.
- *Casting Call for Pets*

Please share your favorite pet stories and photos of you with your pet. Why is s/he special, unique, helpful, essential, or funny? Just click [EMAIL](#) with your name, photo(s), and information – we'll do the rest.



- *Lunch & Learn: I Need Help! What Are My Caregiving Options*
United Methodist Church Social Hall, May 3, 12 – 2:00 pm

Aging in place means staying in the comfort of your own home for as long as possible, rather than moving into a care facility. Aging in place is a viable option if you need assistance with your daily activities, enjoy a close network of family and friends nearby, and can utilize the right home care services to cover your needs. By exploring the range of services available, you can decide if aging in place is the best way for you (or your loved ones) to maintain your independence and quality of life.

Bring your bag lunch and join us for an informative, interactive session presented by Gabriella Ambrosi, president and owner of Sequoia Senior Solutions, on the many options available for in-home care and when it's time to consider senior living options. Registration required, please call 707.776.6055.

- *Newsletter submission deadlines are the 15th of each month.*
- *The Village Newsletter is looking for people to write content, share artwork, and take photographs that will be used in the newsletter. If you are interested, please [EMAIL](#) Carol Appel.*

- *Do you speak Spanish?*

The Village Network of Petaluma is conducting an informal survey, as we are considering printing some of our brochures in Spanish. Are you a fluent Spanish speaker? If so, please [EMAIL](#) Carol Appel so we can develop a better idea of who our cultural ambassadors are.

- *Petaluma Village Relaunches MedPals Service*



The Village is preparing to revitalize our medical advocacy program, called MedPals. This volunteer service is staffed by trained volunteers who accompany Village members to medical appointments upon request. Each MedPal serves as an extra set of ears for the member and as a note taker, writing down member and physician communications, as well as facilitating questions when clarification is necessary. A doctor's visit can be stressful, with so much to remember – but it doesn't have to be. A MedPal can be a valuable ally. All patient information is confidential, and MedPal complies with privacy laws. If you would like more information about the program, please call 707.776.6055 or [EMAIL](#).

Classes and Interest Groups

The Village Network of Petaluma offers more than 1000 opportunities to learn, socialize, and get active each year. To see our Calendar of Events, [CLICK HERE](#). To learn more about our diverse array of educational programs, activities, and interest groups, both online and in person, contact the office by email at info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org, or phone 707.776.6605. All public events require registration.

- *New Men's Group.* We've received several requests to open up a new men's group – which is fantastic! Would you like to help establish a new group (with the assistance of Village staff) to serve the social/emotional needs of our marvelous menfolk? We are looking to form a group of six to eight participants, including a duo willing to share the duties of creating a group charter and facilitating meetings. If you are interested or have questions, please [EMAIL](#) Carol Appel.



- *New Women's Circle.* This spring, we will begin a second weekly women's circle on Zoom. The format includes a brief meditation and a round of participant sharing, responsive to the needs and interests of the group members and facilitated, by the participants, for equal sharing and conversation. The women's circle is facilitated by the participants. Themes emerge from conversations, such as: *Aging * Being Alone * Money Management * Adult Kids * Being in the Caretaker Role * Finding Purpose * Bereavement * Sexuality * What Really Matters.* If you are interested, please call 707-776-6055 or [EMAIL](#) Carol Appel.

- *Beyond Driving: Staying Safe at any Age*

Thursday, April 18, 1 – 2:30 pm, Petaluma Regional Library, Public Invited

Do you worry that a loved one's diminished driving skill is putting them at risk? This presentation was developed specifically for older adult drivers, and can best be described as a practical, entertaining, and realistic approach to the issue of "senior drivers vs. the aging process."

Our speakers will take a direct yet compassionate approach to the recognition that some day it may be necessary to relinquish that treasured driving independence. The ultimate goal is not to take away driving opportunities for older adults, but to offer suggestions about how to recognize and compensate for diminishing skills in order to remain on the roadways as safe drivers. Registration is required. To save your place, please call 707.776.6055 or [EMAIL](#).

- *How much economic value do volunteers add to our communities?* It's National Volunteer Month and most Americans agree: Volunteers are priceless, whether mobilizing Americans against the British Redcoats in 1772, comforting the dying, mentoring traumatized children, or risking their



lives to stop toxic dumping. So much of the work that nonprofits do in our communities is done by volunteers: Volunteers outnumber staff at nonprofits of all sizes, and an amazing 70% of California nonprofits are all-volunteer organizations. In 2017 nearly 77.4 million Americans donated 6.9 billion volunteer hours.

A 2013 report by economists at Columbia University demonstrated that for every dollar invested in national service, almost \$4 is returned to society in higher earnings, increased output, and other community-wide benefits. Every year the Independent Sector calculates the average value of one volunteer hour and publishes a national average as well as state-specific averages. This year the national average is \$25.43, and California's average is \$29.95 per hour. Nonprofits can use this information to demonstrate community support for their work.

CalNonprofits

[https://calnonprofits.org/publications/article-archive/644-how-much-economic-value-do-volunteers-add-to-our-communities](https://calnonprofits.org/publications/article-archive/644-how-much-economic-value-do-volunteers-add-to-our-communities#:~:text=And%20every%20year%20Independent%20Sector,average%20is%20%2429.95%20per%20hour.)
#:~:text=And%20every%20year%20Independent%20Sector,average%20is%20%2429.95%20per%20hour.

Fun Fact: About 100 Villagers contribute about 500 volunteer hours each month. Those numbers enable the Village Network of Petaluma to offer many diverse and interesting programs and activities.

Spotlight On Members & Volunteers

- *This is the second of a five-part series about Village members' housing choices.*

If we plan to live with our family, it's important to consider the realistic capacity of a partner or family member to provide more hands-on care in the future. Unpaid family caregivers are the backbone of our nation's long-term care system [Multi-generational Living](#).



Village member Onalee "Onzie" Stevens chose this option, with its joys and pitfalls. As a retired psychologist/psychotherapist in Port Townsend, WA, Onzie realized that while she was in very good health at age 90, there would come a time when she couldn't live alone. Knowing good relationships are important for healthy aging, she decided in 2022 to change her living arrangements.

Onzie had owned and rented homes and apartments in rural and urban locations and knew that access to both rural environments and suburban services was important. First, she discussed options with all seven of her children. They all agreed that living with her widowed oldest daughter in Petaluma was the best choice. She and her daughter, Andrea "Andi" Nottz, a retired middle-school science teacher who now has a small psychotherapy practice and is an involved grandmother, felt that they were the most compatible. Andi has lived in her East Side neighborhood for over 40 years.

"Many people say they can't live with their kids," Onzie said. "I think our situation works because we did a belief and values systems review at the start. We're not alike, but we share common beliefs and values. We both agree that this arrangement hasn't turned out exactly as we imagined, and it's been our commitment to make it work despite sometimes annoying, challenging, but also fun and funny experiences."

One of her best friends also lives in Petaluma, and that helped Onzie quickly join the community. Her friend introduced her to the Village, and Onzie joined immediately, taking responsibility for her own social life and activities instead of expecting her daughter to assume that role. "My daughter and I had a long talk after six months, and we outlined what wasn't working," she explained. "We both had lists, and we discussed things together and decided to make it work. We each decided to change our way of being."

Ozie's final advice: "Take time to vet all choices carefully. Change the things you can, and be aware of what you can't. Learn that you can actually change. Be honest and direct, never keeping secrets from each other. Finally, maintain a sense of humor. This, too, is another of life's wonderful adventures."

-Mary Alden

Relationships

- *When a Grandparent Becomes a Parent*
This is the second in a series about grandparenting.

Starr Rohrman, a founding Village member, has been raising her 12-year-old grandson, who has high-functioning autism, full-time for the last five years. Neither parent is able to raise him. After a long struggle, Starr is immensely relieved to have become his legal guardian.

In Starr's words: "When Thureaux first came to visit me in the summers, he was unable to read or write and was very withdrawn. When he started living with me full-time five years ago, I immediately enrolled him in a special ed class. He blossomed, and he's now advanced to the regular math class."



“Because my son can’t spend much time with him, I’m hoping to find him a male mentor with a Native American background to help him connect with his Navajo heritage.

“He has been an unexpected blessing in my life – we are really a team. I’ve loved every moment of my life with him. He keeps me on my toes, energized, and fully engaged with life – and I need a daily nap! I most enjoy introducing him to new experiences that open doors so he can soar. He loves drawing, so I’ve enrolled him in a comic art class at his school

and he absolutely loves it. Perhaps he takes after his famous great-grandmother, Dale Messick, the creator of Brenda Starr in the comics.

“When people ask me how I managed to do this at age 81, I say, ‘You do what you need to do as long as you can. I don’t want him to miss out on becoming educated and finding his own purpose in life.’”

-Anne Greenblatt

[The Nine Unwritten Rules of Grandparenting](#)

[Grandparenting in Unique Circumstances](#)

Events Around Petaluma

- *United Methodist Church Pop-up Sales*

On the second Saturday of every month, the Petaluma United Methodist Church, on the corner of 5th and D Streets, holds fundraising pop-up sales from 10 am to 2 pm. Items for sale include a variety of handmade crafts, jewelry, plants, and baked goods. Whether you’re looking for unique gifts or want to sell your crafts, check it out or call 707.762.9785 for more information.



- *Magic Shop Gallery & Studios*

429 First Street, Fridays and Saturdays 11 am – 4 pm

This artists’ collective operates in the Watershed Building in the Petaluma Warehouse district. Enjoy free member shows in its downstairs gallery, and quarterly popup open studios. The new show, “What is Love,” will continue to evolve over three months, with contributions from visitors. The main gallery offers a group exhibit titled “Connections.” <https://www.magicshopstudios.com>

- *Music at Aqus Café*

Friday, April 12, 6 – 8 pm, 189 H Street

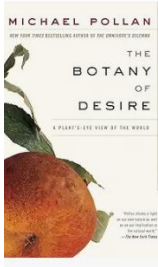
Music with Barry Bisson & Friends, special guest Amy Hogan

Barry Bisson & Friends’ music includes favs from Elvis to Roy Orbison to Leonard Cohen and the Eagles. Award-winning singer-songwriter Amy Hogan will perform original songs and unique covers. For the second set, Barry will be joined by other local musicians and vocalists.

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

Books We Are Reading

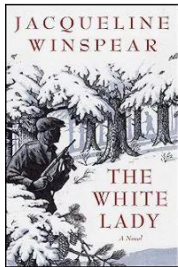
- *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World* by Michael Pollan



The first book by Berkeley professor of journalism Michael Pollan examines the relation between humans and plants. He uses fascinating stories about the development, value, and popularity of four disparate crops to show the interdependence of all living entities. Describing how the four plants – apples, tulips, cannabis, and potatoes – have affected human behavior, and vice-versa, Pollan engages and educates. The charm of this book stems from the author's ability to combine science, history, and literature into a strong environmental message while consistently entertaining and delighting the reader.

-Kathy Lawrence

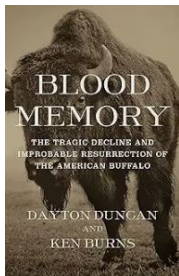
- *The White Lady* by Jacqueline Winspear



This fast-paced novel takes place circa 1947 in Kent, England, where Eleanor is known to neighbors as the mysterious “Miss White.” Though striving for anonymity, Eleanor can't resist offering help to a young family threatened by mob violence. Her early resistance activities as a child in Belgium and her WWII role as a British spy reopen painful memories and old relationships. Driven by her feelings for a child and a desire to atone for past actions, she discovers many surprises in her quest to protect others. Winspear provides well-developed characters and unexpected twists and turns that keep the reader engaged.

-Mary Alden

- *Blood Memory* by Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns



Mass animal extinctions are tragic. This book features compelling photographs illustrating a reprehensible story from this country's early years. To learn that a single shipment from America to the East contained 10,000 pounds of buffalo tongue and 750,000 buffalo robes defies credulity. In addition to the demand for buffalo product, the government believed that by destroying the buffalo they could drive Indigenous peoples from a hunting to an agrarian economy. However, Native Americans spiritually identified with the buffalo and were interdependent with them. Therefore, the extinguishing of one resulted in a loss of human life as well. The

book does shift to the rebuilding of buffalo populations, initially to support sport hunters, and then with the realization of the interdependence we all have with nature and these beautiful, powerful animals.

-Julia McMichael

Hikes

- *Eastside Walking Group*

As we shrug off the colder winter months, on the beautiful days when it is nice and mostly dry, the Village's Eastside Walking Group meets Thursday mornings alongside the east or west Lynch Creek Trail. We usually walk for an hour or more.

During warmer months we often head over to the wetland parks on the Petaluma River or Petaluma River Park. In those months we meet at Lynch Creek parking lot on the north end, then carpool to wherever we choose. Sometimes we gather at the



Jerry Pozo, Rick Genstil, Cindy Wilder, Janet Clover (back), and Nancy Samuels

Two Niner Diner in the Petaluma Airport, walk, and return to have breakfast together.

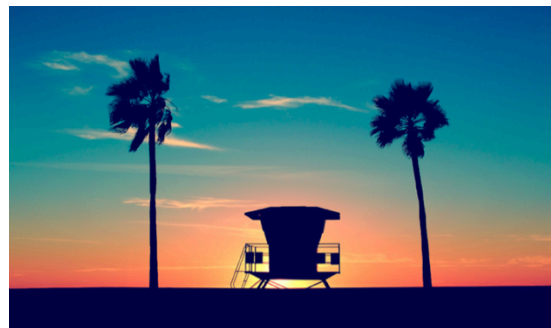
As a co-volunteer who likes to walk and talk about nature, I encourage the group to allow time to talk – about nature or whatever is of interest. Warning: Avid walkers/hikers may find our pace too slow, but we enjoy all the natural sights during our outings and hope to see you on our next one!

-Jerry Pozo

Travel

- *Family Adventure in San Diego*

San Diego is one of our favorite places on earth, with its stunning beaches, wild beach communities, places to visit, and fabulous restaurants. Near the end of 2023, our adult daughter had a great idea: She suggested that we meet in San Diego for a family vacation. She brought her husband and two kids, one of whom is four months old, and his big sister who is three-and-a-half. We visited San Diego's world-renowned zoo and walked all over the park until big sister got tired. It's a



great zoo, but you need to bring your walking shoes – and be ready to have a great time. On the day we visited the beach it was a little cool and breezy, but that didn't deter us or spoil the views and sounds of the ocean. If you like a Mediterranean climate, beautiful beaches, and a location to die for, San Diego is your spot.

-Harley Christensen

Food

- *Try the Exciting Flavors of Southeast Asian Indian Cooking*

"Tadka/Vaghar": These two words, referring to spices and tempering, are, along with seasoning, essential to southeast Asian Indian cooking. Village member Malati Murthy has kindly shared a recipe for one of her favorite dishes from this delectable cuisine.

Vegetable Curry

1. Warm some oil, butter, or ghee (clarified butter), or a combination of all three, in a pan.
2. Add ½ tsp. black, brown, or yellow mustard seeds and ½ tsp. cumin seeds.
3. When seeds become aromatic and begin to pop, add a pinch of asafetida powder.
4. Add sliced or diced onions and ½ tsp. turmeric; stir till onions are softened.
5. Add any vegetable or combination of veggies, such as diced Anaheim or bell pepper, cauliflower florets, fresh or frozen peas, sliced tomatoes, or potatoes cut into pieces.
6. Cover and cook to desired degree of doneness.
7. Add salt to taste and 1 tablespoon or more of lemon juice, and serve.



Gardening

- Mention the word "spring," and everyone will smile. This is the time of year when you benefit from the bulb planting you did last November. Remember to let the green stalks die down before you remove them, so that all the energy in the leaves and flowers can go back into the bulb next year.

- Suzanne Clarke



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We acknowledge our Newsletter Team:
Mary Alden, Harley Christensen, and Kathy Lawrence

The Village Network of Petaluma offers more than 1000 opportunities to learn, socialize, and get active each year! To see our Calendar of Events, [CLICK HERE](#). As part of a national movement, the Village Network of Petaluma is a nonprofit membership organization empowering adults 50+ to live active, independent, and connected lives in the places we call home.