

## July 2021 Newsletter



Transforming how we age in our community, the Village Network connects us with one another, offering support and opportunities for meaningful, engaging experiences.

Village Network membership offers online wellness programs, interest groups, educational and social events - as well as volunteer services including rides to med appointments, errands, and community destinations, friendly visitors, computer help, and personalized referrals to community resources. Click [here](#) to view the video on the nationwide nonprofit Village Movement.

**We are now offering many more in-person volunteer services and more in-person outdoor interest groups – for members and volunteers who are fully vaccinated.**

## Village News

### Next Steps in Re-opening



Although our office isn't open yet, fully vaccinated members can now request rides to destinations beyond med appointments, in-home or phone tech help, minor home repairs, and help with yard/garden projects! Friendly visits between fully vaccinated volunteers and members can also take place indoors. Volunteers who offer face-to-face services are fully vaccinated and have also sent in their vax cards. And more interest groups are now meeting outdoors – see below. We are very excited about our plans for a safe and phased re-opening!

If you want to attend Village programs in person, or take advantage of in-person volunteer services, please send a copy or photo of your Vaccination Record Card to [info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org](mailto:info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org), or mail to VNP, P.O. Box 442, Petaluma, CA 94953. (Our staff handles this info in confidence.) Or request a volunteer to photograph your card to send to the office – call 776-6055.

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Volunteers Needed for Re-opening!

#### Volunteer Introductory Training

**Tuesday, July 6, 10:00 – 12:30 pm, on Zoom.**

**OR Friday, July 9, 1:00 – 3:30 pm, on Zoom.**



Volunteers are involved in many wonderful aspects of the Village. We have immediate openings on the Driving, Call Response, Program, and Handyperson teams. For further information, contact Carol at 707-776-6055, or at [info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org](mailto:info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org). Attending this training is a good way to learn more about our many volunteer opportunities and a chance to decide if you want to join us. **Please RSVP by July 2.**

## Petaluma People Services Center Seeks Strike Team Volunteers

These volunteers will be the first volunteers called in the event of a disaster and will staff the shelters for the first 24 hours of an event. To be in this role you need to be truly flexible on timing (ie., you can be called at 2am to immediately serve as a volunteer) and can attend our Strike Team Volunteer Training on July 17th.

Additionally, they would like to be prepared with a list of medical, animal and bilingual volunteers. Animal volunteers will also get a special training with Sonoma Marin Fairgrounds staff in the near future.

If you don't fit in the "strike team" volunteers or medical/animal/bilingual category, and want to volunteer, please still fill out the form. They need many, many volunteers to support the shelters of Petaluma. (Please fill out the form, even if you have volunteered in past years.) [2021 Disaster Volunteer Form](#)

## Special Programs for July and August

Online calendar at [www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org](http://www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org)

**NEW!** To join us for any of the programs listed below, please register for the event online at [www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org/events](http://www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org/events), or contact the Village by calling the office at 707-776-6055, or email us at [info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org](mailto:info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org). If you are a member needing Tech Help, you can make a request for one of our Tech volunteers to call you. Programs on Zoom can be joined by phone as well.

### Get to Know the Village Information Meeting

Thursday, July 15, 10:00 – 11:00 am, on Zoom.

Have you been thinking about learning more about the Village or volunteering once we open up more? Join us to get your questions answered! We offer a trusted community of mutual support, ways to re-engage with our community, explore new interests, and make new friends. This is an online or phone meeting for potential members (ages 50+), their loved ones, and those interested in volunteering. We are especially seeking drivers. **People with no computer can participate in the meeting by phone. Register by July 14 online (see above) or by phone at 707-776-6055.**

### *"Get Ready Summer" is here!*

We started off in June with a program on emergency preparedness. The article below summarizes highlights of this important program. In July the "Peace of Mind Planner" will help us gather important information about our belongings and finances in one place. And in August we'll see how the Five Wishes document helps you state how you want to be treated if you become seriously ill and what you want your loved ones to know.

To join us for any of these programs, please register online at [www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org/events](http://www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org/events), or call the Village office at 707-776-6055, or email us at [info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org](mailto:info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org).

### Peace of Mind Planner

Thursday, July 8, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, on Zoom.

Retired attorney and Village member Teresa Nelson will help us get our affairs in order and give you and your loved ones peace of mind, using the workbook. Learn how and where to enter vital details about your contacts, legal matters, health, financial affairs, your wishes, and more. In order to have the **free** workbook in your hands at the workshop on July 8, you must register by July 1 so we can deliver it to you.

### **NEW!** Social Justice Reading Group

Introduction: Monday, July 19, 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Thereafter: 2nd and 4th Mondays, July 26 through November 8

4:00 to 5:00 or 5:30 pm (depending on size of group)

Our group will explore issues of social justice in America by reading and discussing pertinent literature. We'll begin with Isabel Wilkerson's book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, and meet twice a month to discuss about 50 pages at a time.

On July 19, we'll get acquainted and talk about our shared approach to this challenging subject. On July 26, we'll begin discussing the book, responding to selected questions in the Reader's Guide.

*Open to all Village members and volunteers, the group will be convened on Zoom and facilitated by Village member Sarah Fleming. **RSVP by July 12** to register and receive the link.*

### 5 Wishes Workshop

**Thursday, August 12, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, on Zoom.**

You and your family will have greater peace of mind if there is someplace where you can state the kind of decisions and treatment you want when you can't do those things yourself. Using the **free 5 Wishes** booklet, you will be able to state whatever you want your loved ones to know. You must register as soon as possible (no later than July 28) so we can deliver the booklet to you before the workshop date.

*Leader Zoe Sands has had 5 Wishes training through hospice and conducted a workshop for us in 2017.*

### Classes and Interest Groups



**NEW! The Village Walking Group has resumed!**

Thursdays, 9:00 am, meet at McNear Park, 11<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> St. (near the picnic table cluster)

We walk neighborhood streets for about an hour. Also, we're planning to branch out to some local parks like Helen Putnam Park in time, for those who enjoy hiking.

### TED Talks Discussion Group

**Friday, July 9 and 23, 11:00 am – noon, on Zoom.**

Each meeting we view TED Talks on Zoom together and then discuss them. The specific talks will be announced to members and volunteers a few days ahead of time.

### Game Night

**Friday, July 9, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, on Zoom.**

Bring your favorite drink and have fun! We'll try several games – no special talents needed. Members and volunteers are welcome. *Hosted by Fatima Lassar.*

### Village Social Hour

**Friday, July 16, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, on Zoom.**

Bring your favorite drink and join us to relax together, share our lives, and have fun as we enjoy our free summer! Members, volunteers, and those interested in learning more about the Village are welcome. *Hosted by Paul and Anne Greenblatt.*

### Bocce Ball in Leghorn's Park

**NEW SUMMER HOURS Wednesdays, July 7 and 21, 7:00 – 8:00 pm pm, Leghorn's Park bocce courts. (Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays)**

It takes only about five minutes to learn this simple game, but it takes a lifetime to master.

We pretend to be competitive, but really we just socialize and have fun! If you are interested in coming, please RSVP to George Beeler at [agbcomm@sonic.net](mailto:agbcomm@sonic.net) by Wednesday 12 noon.



### Gentle Chair Yoga – Stay Healthy During Stressful Times

**Mondays and Thursdays, 11:00 am – noon, on Zoom.**

We practice yoga asanas, Eden Energy exercises, breath work, and meditation to improve strength, flexibility, and inner calm. Beginners welcome. The class is currently conducted

over Zoom, and you will have the option to be seen or only heard, if you choose. Donations by non-members welcome.

*Pat Martin, CMT, EEM-CP, CYT, is a State Certified Massage Therapist, Eden Energy Medicine Certified Practitioner, and Certified Yoga Teacher.*

### The Joy of Writing Group



**Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 am, on Zoom.**

We write for fun, in fiction, nonfiction, memoir, poetry, etc. We write original stories in a noncritical environment. Come have fun with us, whether you are a veteran writer or a nervous beginner. All are welcome. Members free, non-members \$5 donation.

### Men's Discussion Group

**Alternate Tuesdays, 11:00 am, on Zoom.**

We get together with other men via Zoom to discuss our lives in a spirit of fellowship. The group is limited to eight Village members and volunteers. Let us know if you want to be on the waitlist.

### The Village Garden and Chat Group Now Meets in Members' Gardens Again!

**Tuesdays, July 6 and 20, noon – 1:00 pm. (Meets on alternate Tuesdays)**

In this group, we talk about anything from sharing seeds, plants, fruits, and vegetables, to art and jigsaw puzzles. Join our friendly group!



### Retired Nurses Group



**Wednesday, July 7, 10:15 – 11:45 am.**

We discuss our nursing practices, education, and favorite stories while getting to know one another.

## Events Around Town



### New Open Hours at Petaluma Public Library

Monday and Tuesday 1:00 - 6:00 pm. Wednesday through Saturday 11:00 am. - 4:00 pm.

No reservations needed. Curbside service is still available. Returns can be made during open hours.

Questions? Call 707-763-9801. <https://sonomalibrary.org/locations/petaluma-regional-library>

### Water Wise House Calls – Be Prepared for the Draught!

The City of Petaluma offers free house calls to help you use water more efficiently both inside and outside your home. Call (707) 778-4507. See: [Water-Wise House Calls](#)



## Contributions by Village Members and Volunteers

### Member Profile: Elaine Stevick – A Singer Who Helped Others Find Their Voice



A second-generation San Franciscan and an only child, Elaine Stevick overcame her extremely shy persona in the 1990s when a choir director gave her some solo parts that involved singing, dancing, and costumes. "It was the joy of my life!" she said. Today, Elaine sings in two church choirs and with The Petaluma Chorale, the Rivertown Voices, and the Village singers.

Voice has been a constant theme in her life since she decided at age 14 to be a speech therapist. "My aunt was a special ed teacher who told me about her students. A friend's mother was deaf and the father lost his hearing and, as a result, his business. He had corrective surgery and it changed his life. The surgery was like magic," Elaine said. "I was interested in working with the deaf and those with other syndromes. At an eighth grade job fair I heard people talking about speech therapy. It involved all

the things I was interested in: psychology, language, and biology.” At that moment she set her sights on a career helping those with speech limitations.

Over the years, Elaine worked mainly with children, using play therapy. A memorable client was a 3-1/2-year old boy who did not speak or relate to anyone but his parents when she met him. By age 4, to his mother’s amazement, he held hands with Elaine. Later, when he was about 12, he said, “Elaine, I’m doing pretty well, but I don’t know how to make friends. Tell me what to do.” She encouraged him, saying, “You’ll find things you like to do – and others who share your interests. They will be your friends.” To her amazement, this young man graduated from college as an engineer and also took up ballet dancing and singing. He was diagnosed with Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD), now called autism spectrum. With Elaine’s help and encouragement, he overcame this condition and became a productive adult living a full life.

Six years ago Elaine retired early when she was diagnosed with brain cancer. Once in remission, she realized that she longed to help others and have more adult interactions. “A friend was a Village volunteer, so I became a driver around 2017, then a friendly home visitor, and now I’m a Village ambassador,” Elaine said. “One of the women I often drove to appointments had an emergency and needed a ride home from the hospital. They asked her for family contacts, but she had none. Instead she told the hospital staff to call the Village for a ride because “They are really my family.”

Elaine and her husband, son and daughter and baby grandchild hope to spend time in Hawaii soon. After a year of lockdown, she will sing for joy on this family trip!

- Mary Alden

## Waste Not, Want Not: Try Thrifts



Moving to the next chapter of life presents interesting challenges: downsizing from larger homes, giving up family heirlooms nobody wants, and, sometimes, finding new furnishings for new spaces that can’t accommodate our current furniture. We may want items for grandchildren or craft supplies for hobbies, or a new CD, DVD, or book to read. Rather than pricey or trendy items, we may prefer modest, timeless objects to serve our needs. Maybe we just want to swap out old standbys and add some pizzazz to our wardrobe – or get used clothes that messy projects with paint and glue won’t ruin. Petaluma’s thrift shops are the answer!

Most shops accept a wide range of items that are “gently used” and list what they won’t take. All provide donation receipts for tax purposes. Thrift shops actively cull and curate donations and display clean, lightly used items, from kitchen and dining supplies to furniture, picture frames, lights, linens, and more. Some have clothing, hobby supplies, jewelry, and games, and most have 20% senior discounts each week. There are even small sections of children’s books and toys, perfect for entertaining grandchildren.

Since store hours, donation times, and unaccepted items vary, call first to learn which one best meets your needs. Here are some of Petaluma’s best:

**Alphabet Soup Thrift Store** (proceeds to Petaluma schools).

32 Liberty Street, 707-778-4818. Men’s/women’s clothing, children’s items, jewelry, accessories.

203 Western Avenue. Housewares, home decor, linens, lighting, books, some furniture.

**Sacks Thrift Store** (proceeds support Hospice).

128 Liberty Street, 707-765-2228. Housewares, linens, lighting, frames, craft items, cards, accessories, jewelry, men’s/women’s clothes, some kids’ items, small tools, some furniture.

**The Thrifty Hippy**

218 Petaluma Blvd. No., 707-214-6748. Eclectic collection of 60s memorabilia, albums, clothes, funky nostalgia.



## Goodwill Redwood Empire Thrift Store

1000 Lakeville Street, 707-778-7485. Large quantities of men's/women's clothes, some kids' items, lots of baskets, housewares, some decorative items, some audio equipment, no furniture.

- Mary Alden

## Meadowlarks



When standing open, the all sliding doors on the north end of the barn frame a view of a rolling pasture with a thick windbreak of pines on its eastern edge.

To the west is a smaller dilapidated abandoned barn that is now home to owls and pigeons.

An old grove of ragged wind-blown ash trees outlines the northern boundary of the farm.

I pull out a folding canvas camp chair and set it up next to my mare's box stall to watch the evening light spread across the hills.

Out in the pasture a group of young geldings gallop along the eastern fence line

White tail deer leap and bound across the prairie grass on their way to the old grove for the night.

Farther off in the distance Angus cattle can be heard gently lowing.

A coyote wanders through the draw at the bottom of the hill looking for water.

A spider drops down from the top of the frame of the barn doors swinging on its silken thread in the soft breeze. I wonder if she is enjoying the view too as she hangs suspended with no apparent desire to go elsewhere.

Sally sitting by side announces with a short bark that she is ready for the best part of her day when we head out into the pasture where she runs with abandon, her tail wagging furiously when she finds a gopher hole.

I prefer the chair in the doorway of the barn as I gaze out on the evening, listening to the songs of the meadowlarks as the sun begins to set.

- Martha Helland

## Getting Outdoors



## East Washington Creek Trail: an Eastside Walk

Start this walk on McGregor Avenue a few dozen feet from the corner of Sutter Street. Here's where the trail becomes wooded, and early in the morning is filled with birdsong. The wide path is covered with gravel and bordered on one side by creekside willows, 6-foot-tall fennel, and grasses, and on the other side by the vine-covered fences of the adjoining neighborhood. From one of the yards a German Shepherd might bid you a raucous good morning and you'll pass by a coop of fat, well cared for hens. Soon you arrive at Ely Blvd. South. At each end of this part of the trail you will find trash collection bags. Ely can be heavily traveled at certain times of the day, so use the crosswalk and activate the yellow warning light.

Now we come to a dirt path shaded by large oaks, eucalyptus, willows, and a huge buckeye tree. This spring I spotted a Cooper's hawk nest near the top of one of the oaks. Along the creek are several bird houses on tall poles, one of which was inhabited by a titmouse pair a couple of months ago. Black phoebes hang out around here and I occasionally spot a mallard couple.

Cross quiet Garfield Drive and in a about 100 yards come to the paved walkway bordering Petaluma Municipal Airport. Turn left to continue to East Washington Street, which you can cross to join a path that will meet up with the Lynch Creek Trail. Turn right to enjoy the lush lawns and mature trees of 21-acre Wiseman Park, named after Fred Wiseman, the pilot who delivered the first airmail in 1911. Catch his memorial plaque on a boulder at the top of a rise. Here you will find plenty of benches, walking and bicycle paths, a playground, and lovely views of the hills and vineyards to the east.

- Jane Merryman

## Gardening

### Gardening for Hummingbirds



Hummingbirds are beautiful, entertaining, and feisty. They can fly backwards, hover in place, and fly upside down! Their wings beat on average 70 times per second, which means they need to eat a lot. They remember which plants give nectar, when they last drank from a flower, and how long that flower takes to refill its nectar.

Encourage hummingbirds to visit your garden by selecting plants that will provide them with nectar-filled flowers with little to no fragrance. These birds, like many, have a poor olfactory sense — the flowers that attract them tend to produce lots of thin, easy-to-drink nectar, but have little aroma. Flowers that hummingbirds pollinate tend to be tubular and hang down, making it hard for most insects to land in them while still being accessible to creatures capable of hovering in the air.

While they frequently visit red flowers, hummingbirds will visit all sizes, colors and shapes of flowers — wherever they can get nectar. They also pick small insects from flowers, from the air, off leaves, or even off spider webs, sometimes along with the spiders themselves.

Plastic hummingbird feeders need cleaning every other day to avoid mold. Commercial hummingbird products for plastic feeders are expensive, can spoil and cause illness for the tiny creatures. To make nectar for hummingbirds, mix 1 cup water to 1/4 cup table sugar (never use honey). Since this is high maintenance and can cause problems for them, why not plant a hummingbird flower garden you will both enjoy?

To get started on your hummingbird garden, plant a variety of species that bloom in sequence over the course of the year. It is also important to select plants that grow different heights and widths so these territorial birds can find a variety of locations to perch and place their nests.

See: [UC Davis Arboretum Hummingbird Plant List](#)

## What We Are Reading



### ***Autrefois to Today: Laure Reicheck Stories* by Laure Reicheck**

This is a gem of a book set right here in our neighborhood. It contains stories from the author's life in Petaluma and growing up in France. She is an interesting and delightful writer; her stories are charming. The stories and great pictures will definitely create a longing for travel and perhaps a nostalgia for *autrefois* or "another time." It is a wonderful escape and enjoyable reading.

- Julia McMichael

### ***The Girl from Yamhill* by Beverly Cleary**

Beverly Cleary's recent death at the age of 104 inspired me to finally read this memoir of her childhood.

Having read many of her books I was expecting a lighthearted story of a spunky girl. She *did* have spunk, but growing up during the Depression was not always cheery. Her grit and positive attitude led her to hop on a train for college in California, ending one chapter of her life and beginning another. - Janet Clover

### ***Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro**

How far can we go toward satisfying basic social-emotional needs with AI (artificial intelligence) and robotics? Ishiguro imagines a time when artificial friends can be bought off the shelf. In fact, a made-to-order robot that might seamlessly replace lost friends and family members seems possible by the end of the book, making one wonder what authentic emotion is, if there is such a thing. This first novel is short listed for the Booker Prize. - Nancy Sullivan

### ***Burnt Sugar* by Avni Doshi**

This first novel from Avni Doshi, also short-listed for the Booker, is a tale of an often hostile mother-daughter relationship. The mother was a neglectful parent, and now her resentful and at times vengeful daughter, who has a baby daughter herself, has become her mother's caretaker. Doshi transports us to modern India with details of daily living, sometimes in a comfortable middleclass apartment and sometimes in a cultish ashram, with glances at life on the streets. - Nancy Sullivan

## **Jerry's Film Column**



**Netflix: *The Girl on the Train*.** This is basically the same movie that came out in 2016 except that it's set in London. It's an Indian production with just enough Bollywood music and dance to give us a taste. It starts out as a love story but devolves into a murder mystery, fraught with enough deception and lies to confound us about who really killed Nusrat, the lover of Mira's (the protagonist) ex-husband. If you can hang in there for two hours, it's worth watching for all the surprises.

**Netflix: *Lady J*.** Three sayings apply to this movie: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," "Be careful what you wish for," and "All's well that ends well." This French period piece (late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century) is a clever film that's devoid of violence but fraught with intrigue and deception. A woman whose love is spurned takes revenge by getting her ex-lover to fall for a former lady of the night. With French movies, you need a lot of patience, but this one is worth it.

**Netflix: *Miss Sloane*.** This is a well-choreographed competition between two lobbying firms that are trying to influence gun legislation. Jessica Chastain plays the no-holds-barred member of the team supporting gun control. Her take-no-prisoners persona is nailed by her boss, who asks her, "Were you ever normal as a kid?" Don't miss this one; you will be astounded right up to the very end by how Miss Sloane beats her adversaries.

**Netflix: *Fatherhood*.** A widowed new dad copes with doubts, fears, and dirty diapers as he sets out to raise his daughter on his own. Inspired by a true story.

**PBS: *The Indian Doctor*.** This comedy drama is set in the 1960s following a high-flying Delhi graduate and his wife Kamini's new life in a Welsh coal mining town. Once in Wales, they quickly become embroiled in the lives of the villagers, although the regal Kamini is determined they are leaving as soon as possible.



**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.**

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