

August 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 medical appointments, errands, and community destinations, friendly visitors, computer help, and personalized referrals to community resources. Click [here](#) to view a 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



Re-opening News

Although the Sonoma County Public Health Department again recommends masks for everyone indoors, whether vaccinated or not, we are continuing all our Zoom programs, as well as outdoor groups and friendly visits. In the meantime, we are planning for future “hybrid” programs that could be attended in person or on Zoom, when it is safe.

Our office isn't open yet, but many volunteer services are available, with the understanding that everyone who meets indoors or in a vehicle will wear a mask. Fully vaccinated members who have submitted a copy of their Vaccination Record Card to the office can request rides to destinations beyond medical 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, with masks and social distance. Volunteers who offer face-to-face services are fully vaccinated and have sent in their vax cards. And more interest groups are now meeting outdoors – see below. We continue to plan for a safe and phased re-opening, in accordance with local and state public health recommendations.

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, 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

We are especially seeking handypeople and tech volunteers. To learn more, contact Carol Appel, Member Relations and Volunteer Manager, at 776-6055 or at [Village Network](#).



Petaluma People Services Center Seeks Volunteers

PPSC needs many, many volunteers to support the shelters of Petaluma in the event of a wildfire. (If you're willing to volunteer, please fill out the form even if you have volunteered in past years.) [2021 Disaster Volunteer Form](#)

Special Programs for August and September

Online calendar at 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, or contact the Village by calling the office at 707-776-6055, or email us at info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org If you are a member needing Tech Help, you can request 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, August 19, 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 volunteer drivers. **People with no computer can participate in the meeting by phone. Register by August 17 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 presented by the Petaluma Fire and Police Departments and the Red Cross. In July the "Peace of Mind Planner" presentation helped us gather important information about our belongings and finances in one place. It was so popular we are repeating it on September 13. And in August we'll see how the Five Wishes document helps state how you want to be treated and what you want your loved ones to know if you become seriously ill.

To join us, please register online at www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org/events, or call the Village office at 707-776-6055, or email us at info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org.

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** so we can deliver the booklet to you before the workshop date.

Workshop leader Zoe Sands has had 5 Wishes training and conducted a workshop for us in 2017.

Peace of Mind Planner

Monday, September 13, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, on Zoom.

Retired attorney and Village member Teresa Nelson will do a repeat of her presentation in July and 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 September 13, you must **register by September 6** so we can deliver it to you.

NEW The Story Behind the Song *Bésame Mucho*

Monday, August 9, 1:00 - 2:30 pm, on Zoom

A song written by a young Mexican woman in 1938 soon became one of the most popular songs of the 20th century in the U.S., especially as a song of the sadness of separation during WWII. It lived on long after that, eventually becoming politicized in regard to our immigration policies. Please join us -- it will bring back wonderful memories. **RSVP by August 2.**

Presenter Lindajoy Finley teaches Spanish to adults and children in Sonoma County. When she lived in Mexico she helped villages preserve their musical heritage.

Should Petaluma Join the 2021 Cool City Challenge?

Wednesday, August 18, 11:00 – 12:00 noon, on Zoom.

Time is of the essence. Climate scientists now tell us we must achieve by 2030 what we have been aiming to accomplish by 2050, if we are to avoid irreversible ecological tipping points. In other words, we must accelerate time by 3x. To achieve this, we need to change the way we think about change.

The 2021 Cool City Challenge offers communities an audacious goal, a challenge prize and a compelling path by which to achieve both. Specifically, it invites and supports early adopter cities to become a carbon neutral city by 2030. **Free and open to the public. Register by Aug. 13 online at [Village Network calendar](#), at 707-776-6055, or info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org.**

Presenter Dennis Pocekay is a Petaluma City Council member and a champion of this exciting proposal.

NEW Mindfulness-Based Meditation Group



Consecutive Saturdays, August 21 through October 9, 10:00–11:30 am.

This recurring 8-week series is currently continuing to meet on Zoom. Our shared goal is to hone our meditation skills and cultivate compassion, gratitude, and nonjudgmental awareness as we bring a measure of calmness and relaxation to our moments. Open to 10 Village

members and active volunteers, registration is on a “first come” basis. **Please sign up by August 13th – on the website, by phone at 707-776-6055, or email info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org.**

The group is led by Dr. Freeman Humphrey, a retired psychiatric social worker with many years’ experience in both guided meditation and group facilitation.

NEW! Social Justice Reading Group - new start date

Introduction: Monday, September 13, 4:00 – 5:00 pm.

Thereafter: 2nd and 4th Mondays, September 27 through January 24

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 will meet twice a month to discuss about 50 pages at a time.

*Open to all Village members and volunteers, the group will be convened on Zoom and facilitated by Village member Sarah Fleming, retired therapist, who has led several popular Village discussion groups. **RSVP by September 3** to register and receive the link.*

Might Homesharing Be for You?

September 23, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. on Zoom

Learn about SHARE Sonoma County which matches those who wish to age in place with those in need of permanent housing. Since 2014 SHARE has been creating genuinely affordable housing through home sharing, enhancing the health, wellness, and dignity of all. Open to members, volunteers, and the public. **RSVP by September 15.**

Presenter Amy Appleton is the Founder and Executive Director of SHARE Sonoma County.

Classes and Interest Groups



The Village Walking Group has resumed!

Thursdays, 9:00 am, meet at Walnut Park on 4th St., between D and E St.

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. For more information or if you would like to start a new Village walking group, especially on the East side, contact the Village at 707-776-6055 or email: info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org.

TED Talks Discussion Group

Friday, August 6 and 20, 11:00 am – noon, on Zoom.

In 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, August 13, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, on Zoom. (Meets 2nd Friday of the month)

Bring your favorite drink and have fun! We'll try several games – no special talents needed. Members and volunteers are welcome. Register online or call 776-6055. *Hosted by Fatima Lassar.*

Village Social Hour

Friday, August 20, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, on Zoom.

Bring your favorite drink and join us to relax together, share our lives, and have fun. For 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, August 4 and 18, 7:00 – 8:00 pm pm, Leghorn's Park bocce courts. (Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays)**

Bocce is a game everyone can enjoy! No experience necessary and newcomers are always welcome! We pretend to be competitive, but we really just socialize and have fun. If you are not yet fully vaccinated please wear a mask, but if you are fully vaccinated please send a photo or copy of your vax card to VNP and you do not need to wear a mask for this outdoor activity. If you are interested in coming, **please RSVP by email to George Beeler at 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 Group Now Meets in Members' Gardens Again!

Tuesdays, August 3, 17, and 31, 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!



Village Singing Group



Meets last Thursday of the month, 3:00 - 4:30, in a member's home.

No prior experience or talent necessary, just a love of making music. We try many kinds of music – and have a lot of fun! Email Sue Miller at 778-1344 or rmiller875@comcast.net for details.

*** Date to be determined by County Public Health recommendations**

Retired Nurses Group



Wednesday, Aug. 4, 10:15 – 11:45 am.

We discuss our nursing practices, education, and favorite stories while getting to know one another. If you're interested in joining, call 707-776-6055 or info.VillageNetworkofPetaluma@gmail.com

Events Around Town



More of Everything on OverDrive

Sonoma County Library has added thousands of eBooks and eAudiobooks to [OverDrive](#) and [the Libby app](#), and increased your holds to 10 at a time per borrower!

Also, their new [Digital Magazine Room](#) is on OverDrive! Digital magazines also available on the Libby app.

Check out OverDrive's [dashboard](#) to see what is popular right now, and get inspiration for your next read.

Explore their new and improved [OverDrive offerings](#) today!

Qigong Online

Teja Bell, Zen Master and committed practitioner of Qigong, offers a 12-minute guided Qigong practice at

<https://vimeo.com/qigongdharma>

Water Wise House Calls

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: Vina Breyfogle – an Independent Nature Lover



Several generations ago, Vina Breyfogle's family settled in Petaluma, where her grandfather purchased a chicken ranch during the poultry heyday. Her parents moved to Los Molinos and raised Vina and her two younger brothers there. Vina recalls spending much of her time pursuing solitary interests, with a sense of curiosity and an independent streak that led her to investigate and attend the nearby Methodist Church all by herself. When she left for college, her parents moved back to Petaluma.

Applying to UC Davis seemed a natural choice, as she had attended the campus spring picnic and parade each year with her uncle who was an alumnus. "I would have studied art, but I got a scholarship to pursue landscape horticulture," she said. "Plants had an artistic element, I thought, but I had no interest in gardening at that time." Adventurous and passionate about French, she decided to take time off and travel to France. Using money she'd saved from the yearly 4-H sales of goats and sheep she'd raised, she financed her own trip.

After returning from Europe, Vina completed her studies, as did her boyfriend, Jon. They planned to marry, but weren't sure how to earn a living. A serendipitous visit to a campus Peace Corps recruiting table provided the answer. They applied and were accepted, and since they both had French language skills, they expected to be sent to a French-speaking country. Instead they were assigned to Sierra Leone, a former English colony. "The experience of living in Africa – the cradle of civilization – for two years to provide agricultural and health education was transformative," Vina said. "We discovered people are wonderful everywhere."

While raising their three children in Penngrove, she completed her teaching credential at Sonoma State, and taught second grade for 18 years. She also completed the Conflict Resolution program at Sonoma State and worked with groups and in the courts with people needing help with their conflicts.

Today Vina and Jon live in Penngrove where they raise vegetables, fruit, and goats while enjoying a wide range of activities with their grandchildren. In addition to painting and sketching for her own pleasure, Vina provides art classes for her grandchildren, who are being home-schooled, and enjoys sharing her knowledge of the world and the environment with them. When her aunt "pitched the Village Network to me, I decided to join," she said. Since then, Vina has become active in the walking, gardening, and writing groups, as well as the TED talks. She hopes to do some hiking or camping trips this summer.

Hint: Ask Vina to whistle the tune "Summertime" for you. She's a pro!

- Mary Alden

*Soon after moving to Petaluma, I joined the Village to help create my new community.
When I needed my car maintained, I contacted the office for referrals from the Member Referral Database. I'm delighted with the referrals I received!*

- new Village member

Results of the Village Member Survey

We are deeply grateful for the 18 volunteers who called most of our members to ask how they are doing and what their needs might be, at this point and in the future, as we re-emerge from the pandemic. Our volunteers completed 96 phone surveys – or about 85% of our members. Since many are couples who responded to one survey, this is a true accomplishment.

Seventy-three percent of members said they have been actively involved with the Village during the pandemic, and 27% are waiting until we can meet in person again or until they can access more in-person volunteer services. Fourteen members would like to be matched with a friendly caller or visitor, and Carol Appel, our Member Relations and Volunteer Manager, is working on training new volunteers and matching those who want to be friendly visitors.

We were surprised at how many (73%) of our members use smartphones. More have desktops or other computer devices. Almost half of our membership would like more tech support! So our Tech Team, headed up by board member Robert Bailey, is training new volunteers and gearing up to offer in-person tech workshops again. It was surprising to learn that only 8% of the surveyed members know of our Member Referral Database of professional providers, recommended by satisfied members. We are seeking a volunteer interested in helping to update this database, as it has been growing since we launched in 2014.

- Carol Appel

10 Reasons to Become a Professional Caregiver - by Gabriella Ambrosi, Sequoia Senior Solutions



Professional caregiving is a highly rewarding profession. The work can be challenging, but most caregivers find the benefits far outweigh any occasional difficulties. Following are 10 reasons why you might consider a career in caregiving, and how to get started.

You'll make an impact – Perhaps the most important reason is that you'll make a tangible impact on the lives of people who need you. Most clients are incredibly appreciative of their caregiver's help and enjoy their company. Knowing you are making a difference is a huge benefit.

It's fulfilling work – You can feel great about caring for those who can't care for themselves. And people who find their work meaningful report greater mental health, life satisfaction, and a more positive outlook.

It can be good for your health – Physical health benefits are also associated with caregiving activities. Most caregivers are active throughout the day, walking with clients, doing light housekeeping, or grocery shopping.

You'll have flexibility – You'll probably be able to dictate your availability and choose your shifts; a great benefit for those with children or for students juggling their class and work schedules.

You'll work in different environments – Caregiving can be a great option if you don't like being stuck at a desk or behind a computer. The environment changes frequently, and you're often running errands, walking with clients, or providing transportation. If you like variety, this may be the job for you.

You'll make new connections and relationships – Caregiving provides great opportunities to meet and connect with new people. A good agency matches caregivers and clients who have similar personalities and interests, increasing the chances for friendships to form.

It can be fun! – How does getting paid to chat, play games, and do arts and crafts sound? Companionship and keeping clients' minds active with activities are among the enjoyable things most caregivers do.

You'll get paid to learn – Education is a big part of the job. Agencies not only provide training, but some offer continuing education opportunities – and raises and bonuses to go with it.

You don't need formal experience – Many agencies provide on-the-job training. If you've been a caregiver to a friend or family member, you're a viable candidate. Another bonus is that it can be a start in the healthcare field; many caregivers go on to become Certified Nursing Assistants or pursue degrees.

It's a job in high demand (and not going away anytime soon!) – As the population ages, in-home caregivers will be increasingly in demand. Training to be a professional caregiver promises future job opportunities.

- Kathy Lawrence

Looking for a fulfilling career you can be proud of? Join the team at Sequoia Senior Solutions, named "Best Place to Work in the North Bay" 12 times! We are actively hiring caregivers with all levels of experience for full- and part-time positions with flexible schedules. Pay starts at \$18/hour, with opportunities to earn up to \$2.50/hour in raises in the first few weeks. Paid training, vacation, sick leave, and medical insurance are provided. Learn more by visiting: [Caregiver job opportunity](#)

Gardening

Gardening with Succulents

It's taken some years for many of us to warm up to succulents, but now that we're experiencing an epic drought, it's time to get serious about their charms! Most succulents need direct sun, sandy soil, and good drainage – and are drought resistant. Here are a few who do well in our area:



Aeonium arboreum do well in Petaluma - the dark-colored varieties are striking in areas where you need a color contrast. Pair them with low-growing or bushy greens. They grow about 2-3 feet tall and wide and need occasional watering to keep the rosettes big. They can handle full sun and partial shade and prefer deep, infrequent watering. Deer won't touch them.

Sedum makinoi is an evergreen light-green ground cover that tolerates poor soil, heat, and drought. Allow soil to dry between thorough waterings. Looks great planted among higher growing succulents.



Echeveria is a genus with species in many colors – also called “hens and chicks.” They grow in rosettes which form pups and spread along the ground in clumps versus upright with stems. Most Echeverias tolerate some shade. They also do well on rocky slopes.

Agave attenuata is as easy-care as they get. They tolerate clay soil and life as a container plant. They don't like temperatures below 30°F (like many succulents), but are somewhat shade tolerant.



See these plants and many more in a beautiful setting in The Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek – open Tuesday – Sunday. See [The Ruth Bancroft Garden](#).

- Anne Greenblatt

What We Are Reading



Rescuing the Planet, by Tony Hiss. Does putting aside fifty per cent of the world's land into preserves sound like a doable method of saving the earth? In this delightful and inspiring book, the author details all of the worldwide efforts to do just that and comes up with a very optimistic prognosis, given more coalitions.

- Julia McMichael

Great Circle, by Maggie Shipstead. How refreshing to read a novel about a strong, fearless woman whose sole ambition is to excel at circumnavigation. The great circle is the large circle of the globe which the aviatrix will attempt to conquer by flying over both the North and South poles. This is a daunting task, but already in her young life, she has survived the sinking of a luxury liner and braved the terrain of rugged Montana. Full of surprises and quite well written. It is wonderful to see fully developed ambitious women given a starring role.

- Julia McMichael

Tears of Amber, by Sofia Segovia. This novel of two families fleeing the Soviet Army in the largest exodus in human history is hard to put down. They are united by the bonds of love and courage, as they recount enchanting folktales keep their minds off the cold, hunger, and horrors unfolding around them – stories which will prove to be crucial symbols of resilience.

Anne Greenblatt

Jerry's Film Column



Hulu: *The Age of Adaline*: A 2015 movie that tries to answer the question whether a woman who never ages beyond 35 and has not a wrinkle or a gray hair would or would not like to stay that way. Blake Lively, Kathy Baker, and Harrison Ford star. The protagonist's journey includes meeting her daughter (who looks like her grandmother) and confronting an ex-boyfriend from her 20s.

PBS/Passport Series: *Atlantic Crossing*: (You can join Passport for a \$60 donation.) Seen through the lens of Martha, a Swedish woman who married the Crown Prince of Norway, the story is inspired by true events. But given some players' interactions that imply salacious interest (e.g., FDR and Martha, for which there is no proof) and political intrusions, it's well done and worth watching.

Netflix: *Halston*: A talented fashion designer of the 70s-80s, played by Ewan McGregor in a convincing performance, the flamboyant and self-absorbed Halston created easy-to-wear outfits for the average woman. His artistic temperament influenced his business decisions and his risky lifestyle probably led to his early death.

in 1990 at age 57. It's an eight-episode series, tolerable if you can handle Halston's modus operandi.

Netflix: *Explained*: This docu-series is not a substitute for in-depth reporting, but it's a densely informative documentary series with the ability to disrupt the echo chambers that dominate the discourse. Each program covers topics such as money, sex, the COVID pandemic, the racial wealth gap, etc.



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.

info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org | 707-776-6055 | www.VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org

Location: 410 D St. Petaluma, CA

Mailing Address: Village Network of Petaluma, P.O. Box 442, Petaluma, CA 94953