

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

November/December 2018
Volume 5, Number 6

Leadership View: A Guiding Light

By now, I hope you have read our 2018 Annual Report where we recap the impact our Village has had on the lives of older adults in Silver Spring. Behind every ride, friendly visit, and other service we provide, is a story of friendship, perseverance, and lives lived to the fullest. There is no better example of that than Frances Goldstein, who was a guiding light for our fledgling Village. Within six months of our September 2013 launch, Frances needed intensive support after a hospital stay. A dozen Village volunteers helped her through the first 8 weeks at home, providing companionship, light cleaning, meals, laundry, and transportation. Here now was proof that our volunteers could meet the needs of neighbors determined to age in place. Frances' son was in Minnesota and kept in regular touch with his mother and with our volunteer coordinator. Gradually, Frances returned to her routine and for the next 4 years—except when her son was in town—she relied on Village volunteers for rides to exercise classes, doctor appointments, grocery stores, and Village events. Frances passed away in August at age 97, leaving a large gap in our community—especially among those volunteers who became real friends over four plus years. We are grateful that Frances' family chose to have donations made in her name to Silver Spring Village. But more importantly, they honored her wish to remain in her own home and thus gave us a chance to know this extraordinary woman.

—Peggy Gervasi, President

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It's a Match!

This year a group of generous donors have come together to offer a \$10,000 match! All new money donated from November 2 to December 31, 2018, over and above what was given in 2018, will be doubled up to \$10,000. When you get your appeal letter in the next several days, please donate and ask your friends and family to as well. The Village depends on it!! Thank you in advance for your generosity!!



Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit membership organization started in 2013 to help older residents living in and near zip code 20910. We strive to enable our members to stay engaged in their community and continue to live at home with support from neighbors and friends.

Progress Report

Totals as of end of October

- Members: 201 (86 full, 115 associate)
- Volunteers: 105

Volunteer hours

- August 698
- September 780

Volunteer help in Aug/Sept

- 195 rides
- 85 friendly calls and visits
- 53 requests filled for in-home support including errand running, meals, tech support, household tasks and repairs, yardwork, decluttering, and medical note taking
- Telephone crew hours: 252

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Board of Directors

Peggy Gervasi, *President*
 Anne McHenry, *Vice President*
 Leslie Hansley, *Secretary*
 Sue Decker, *Treasurer*
 Martine Brizius
 Minnedore Green
 Gary Klauber
 Claire Maklan
 Vern McLendon
 Darren Vieira
 Mary Ann Zimmerman

Executive Director

Debbie Billet-Roumell

Director of Volunteer Services

Vanessa Ripps

Committee Chairs

Development—
 Mary Ann Zimmerman
 Finance—Sue Decker
 Membership—Claire Maklan
 Programs—Gary Klauber

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

Thank you to submitters of text and photos for this issue and especially to member Sandy Morris for writing the stories on Minnedore Green and on the Talbot Avenue Bridge.

Celebrating Members, Volunteers, and Five Great Years

Again this year, the Village held an event to celebrate Village accomplishments and progress and just to get everyone together. This party recognized the fifth anniversary of the Village's founding. President Peggy Gervasi and Executive Director Debbie Billet-Roumell welcomed the group and recalled the progress that has been made since the Village was established in September 2013. An award was given to



Photo above by David Maklan, top and right by Erica Summers

this year's top volunteer Carroll McKown (see page 5) and door prizes were handed out: gift certificates from All Set Restaurant and Copper Canyon, and art (at right) from Lesancreates (our board member Leslie Hansley). We thank these donors, as well as Potomac Florist for the centerpieces and especially United Therapeutics for the venue, food, and beverages.



Welcome to the Board

For those of you who do not already know her, say "Hello" to Minnedore (pronounced "MIN - door") Green, our newest board member, who began her term in July. Among other things, she hopes to create a program featuring a series of speakers to address the diversity of our community. She sees this project as going beyond the subject of racial diversity. She says, eyes twinkling, how about a wide range of people who have odd and widely diverse jobs?

Born in South Carolina, Minnedore has lived in Silver Spring for more than 40 years and the DC area for 70 (but she will always say she is from South Carolina). Before retiring in August of 2000, she worked for the federal government as a budget and accounting specialist.

Minnedore has been a Village member since 2015. She went to one meeting, found the concept sound, and joined. She says she has not been disappointed. As a Village member, Minnedore's activities include mindfulness, Scrabble, the "charity stitchers" group, and socials for new members. As a volunteer, she visits less-mobile members, reads to children, and assists with program planning. She says that her association with the Village has been a good way to develop new and close friendships.



Minnedore Green—photo by Claire Maklan

Even with all of this Village activity, Minnedore still finds time for gardening and singing in her church choir. She is proof of that old adage, "if you need something done ask a busy person."

Welcome aboard, Minnedore!

A Celebration of Hope and Unity

The Talbot Avenue Bridge was turning 100 in style. Like any other birthday party, there were balloons, a cake, and an air of celebration. It also helped that the crisp, bright day was fine, and that music punctuated the festivities. Two of our Village members, Charlotte Coffield and Patricia Tyson, both longtime residents of Lyttonsville, played pivotal roles in organizing this memorial to the bridge.



However, beneath the jovial atmosphere of the festivities was the recognition of a darker history. During the first half of the last century, many neighborhoods north of the District line in Silver Spring, such as Rosemary Hills and North Woodside, had racially restrictive covenants, preventing black families from purchasing homes. Stores and restaurants in downtown Silver Spring also were racially segregated. The African American neighborhood of Lyttonsville was located just outside this suburban area. The Talbot Avenue Bridge, a modest wooden structure, was a major link connecting Lyttonsville with the segregated white neighborhoods in the greater Silver Spring community, where many Lyttonsville residents worked. Sadly, this civil rights landmark is scheduled to be demolished in 2019 to make way for the Purple Line Light Rail and a new railway bridge. Parts of the bridge will be salvaged and placed elsewhere.

But September 22 was a day of celebration. The emcee of the formalities, Reverend Doctor Ella Redfield, Pastor of New Creation Church of Silver Spring, described growing up in Lyttonsville when the bridge was her major link to the outside world for shopping and transportation. Coffield, Tyson, and Loretta Argrett (also a Village member) reminisced about the role the bridge played in their earlier lives. County Executive Isiah Leggett spoke briefly and was joined by several County Council members who delivered a proclamation honoring the bridge. David Cox, president of the North Woodside-Montgomery Hills Civic Association, spoke emotionally about how the bridge that once divided people now unites them. During

the ceremony, the Washington Revels' Jubilee Voices and folksinger-songwriter Lea provided stirring music, followed by an original guitar solo by Village member Jay Elvove.

At the end of the program, neighbors from both sides of the bridge brought dozens of homemade pies to share with the audience of about 200 people. As Reverend Redfield declared, sharing food surely is a symbol of unity.



Above: County Executive Isiah Leggett (fourth from right) celebrated with members of the Montgomery County Council as well as centennial committee (and Village) members Pat Tyson (far right), Charlotte Coffield (to the left of Mr. Leggett), and Joel Teitelbaum (second from the left). At right: The bridge is decked out for the festivities. Photos by David Rotenstein, historian and centennial planner.



More on the Centennial

For a video of the full program and photos, see the [Talbot Avenue Bridge website](http://www.talbotavenuebridge.org).

The event was also covered by [Montgomery County Media](http://www.montgomerycountymedia.com) with both a story and video.

Events Sampler

We had another couple of months of fun, learning, and enjoying each other's company. We had meetings of over a dozen member-led groups and scores of events coordinated by our programs committee. We learned about "memory matters" from certified memory trainer Jonina Duker and discovered new cuisines. We also had a professional trainer, Okinyi Ayungo from Fitness-wise, engage members in a variety of movements that can improve mobility (even the Ickey Shuffle*).



This Poker Dawg knew when to hold 'em!
—photo by Jane Gorbaty



Enjoying Haitian food at Port-au-Prince—
photo by Martine Brizius



Learning everyday fitness—photo by
Erica Summers

* A touchdown dance celebration made famous by football player Elbert "Ickey" Woods, it involves making a zig-zag with your feet.

Upcoming Events for Villagers—and the Community

The Village calendar of events includes something for everyone almost every day—educational talks, social gatherings, discussion groups, walks, and more than a dozen interest groups. Visit our website, www.silverspringvillage.org, for the full calendar. (Members can login to see full details.) While most are exclusively for our members, the events listed below are also open to the public. Join us!

- Sat., Nov. 3, noon – **Ceramics Exhibit.** This exhibit focuses on the work of Kanika Sircar, a D.C.-based ceramic artist, who layers images of natural landscapes on sculptural vessels. At Waverly Street Gallery.
- Wed., Nov. 7, 6:30 pm – **Girlfriends.** This 1978 indie film focuses on the ups and downs of female friendship, through a wryly humorous story of two young women in New York. Montgomery College arts professor Dave Rothman will lead a discussion. At AFI/Silver Theater.
- Thurs., Nov. 8, 2 pm – **Afternoon Book Group.** At the October meeting, we will discuss *Wild Thing*, by Bruce Handy. This book explores the classics of American childhood. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Fri., Nov. 9, 11 am – **Strathmore Museum Shop Holiday Market.** Come shop for the holidays. Find unique museum-quality gifts from the area's best museums and other non-profit organizations. At Strathmore Mansion.
- Wed., Nov. 14, 2 pm – **SPARKLE Program.** To be announced.
- Wed., Nov. 14, 6:15 pm – **My Brilliant Career.** This 1979 award-winning film focuses on the life of a young independent woman in late 19th century Australia. Montgomery College arts professor Dave Rothman will lead a discussion. At AFI/Silver Theatre.
- Sat., Nov. 17, 11 am – **Exhibition of Fine Art in Miniature.** Come to the 85th Annual Exhibition of the Miniature Painters, Sculptors & Gravers Society of Washington, DC., a juried exhibition where you can see more than 700 mini-masterpieces from around the world, many the size of a postage stamp. At Strathmore Mansion.
- Sat., Nov. 17, 8 pm – **The Crucible.** Arthur Miller's Tony Award-winning play from 1953 written as an allegory for McCarthyism. The theme relating to community witch-hunts retains a timeless quality with particular relevance to today's society. At the Silver Spring Stage.
- Wed., Dec. 5, 1 pm – **Talk on Josiah Henson.** Learn about Josiah Henson, whose torturous journey from slavery helped inspire Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and plans for a Henson park in Bethesda, near where he was enslaved. At Holy Cross Senior Source.
- Fri., Dec. 7, 8 pm – **Improv Comedy Night** featuring the DC improv group, *Thanksgiving 2007*, and stand-up comedian Sandy Bernstein. Come for a night of spontaneous fun! At the Highwood Theatre.
- Sat., Dec. 8, 11 am – **Takoma Park Holiday Art Sale.** Finish your holiday shopping at this annual art sale featuring only original, handmade work. At the Takoma Park Arts and Humanities Commission.
- Wed., Dec. 12, 2 pm – **Collage Exploration and Mixed-Media Madness SPARKLE Program.** Artist Marcie Wolf-Hubbard will lead a hands-on art workshop. At the Silver Spring Civic Center.
- Thurs., Dec. 13, 2 pm – **Afternoon Book Group.** The December meeting will focus on *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*. This best-selling publishing debut by J.D. Vance analyzes the struggles of the white underclass from the standpoint of the author, who grew up poor in a Rust Belt town in Ohio. At the Silver Spring Library.



Jump Right In!

On one of the last glorious days of summer, members gathered at the Silver Spring Y for a pool party. See our website for how to jump in and be a part of the Village community.

Photo provided by Martine Brizius

Progress and Enabling a Great Future

It's a very exciting time for Silver Spring Village. As we celebrate the completion of our fifth year serving seniors in Silver Spring, we reflect on our many accomplishments and what they mean.

Oh, have we grown. The Village officially opened and began enrolling members on September 29, 2013, with 16 members and 25 volunteers. Nine months later (at the end of our first fiscal year), we had 65 members and 55 volunteers. We had provided services to members 427 times (47 per month), including rides, friendly visits, and in-home assistance, and had offered several dozen programs and events. Now, at the end of our fifth year, we have over 200 members, and more than 100 volunteers. In twelve months, we provided services to members 1,926 times (160 per month) and offered 385 programs. Our once all-volunteer organization now employs two part-time staff and is joined by two consultants specializing in community outreach and program administration.

What does this growth mean for the Village and your community? In order to continue to provide the types of services and programs that we have offered for five years and to bring more seniors into the fold, we need your support. It takes far more resources to effectively manage a Village with 200 people than it did with 65. Not only is there growth in numbers, but members are aging and needing additional support. Also, we are less able to effectively conduct the day-to-day operations of the Village in home offices, coffee shops, and the public library; and many of these spaces are not handicap accessible, so not all members can attend. We expect to sign a lease soon for our own dedicated office space (675 square feet) located on Georgia Avenue.

Did you know that membership dues only cover about a third of our operating expenses? Our expenses go beyond the major costs of staff and office space. We also pay for insurance for staff and volunteers, background checks for all of our volunteers, software for our website and our volunteer/member interface, venue costs for large programs, printing and postage, and outreach to seniors in our service area.

Please be on the lookout for our annual appeal letter and thank you for giving generously to enable the Village do even more good work.

—Peggy Gervasi and Debbie Billet-Roumell

Recognizing Service

Many people make the Village work. Mostly they are unsung heroes. But we do recognize people from time to time.

For example, each year, the Village gives the “Roberta Gosier Award” in memory of our Founding President and in recognition of direct service to our members. Here, last year’s winner, Debbie Gilbert, presents this year’s award to Carroll McKown, who spends many hours (and many miles) driving members to appointments and events.



*Debbie Gilbert and Carroll McKown—
photo by Claire Maklan*

Sometimes recognition is informal—and fun. In October, the programs committee held a luncheon to recognize Gary Klauber for his long-time leadership. Gary (AKA “King of the Programs”) is a founding board member and has chaired the programs committee since its creation five years ago. Thank you, Gary, for continuing to ensure a great events lineup!



Board members Lesley Hansley and Gary Klauber—photo provided Leslie Hansley

Storm Buddies

We provide our full members all sorts of help, but in the fall of 2015, we realized that there are special circumstances that require sustained attention, such as bad weather and power outages. We determine the needs of members who enroll and match them with a nearby volunteer "storm buddy." The buddy can help the member be prepared, check in (by phone, email, or visit) during the storm, and help the member "pick up the pieces" (or small branches or groceries) afterwards.

If you are interested in this program as either a member or a volunteer, contact the Village at info@silverspringvillage.org or (301) 503-7401.



Villagers team up to improve a member's yard—photo by Vanessa Ripps

Please donate to the Silver Spring Village annual campaign.

Volunteer Corner: Spotlight on a Volunteer

After retiring in 2015, Debbie Gilbert became a Village volunteer. She learned about Silver Spring Village from her neighbor and friend, Claire Maklan, and decided it was a wonderful idea.

One of Debbie's first volunteer opportunities was helping a member who used a wheelchair. Debbie would greet the member when he returned home from his weekly program at Easter Seals to help get him into his house with his wheelchair. Debbie would then stay to visit with the member and his family. Sadly, within the last year, the member passed away. It has been a rough time, not only for the family, but also for Debbie (and other volunteers) who spent time with him on a regular basis.

Debbie also has been taking neighborhood walks with another Village member. As a result of their conversations during these walks, the two have become friends. Now Debbie regularly cooks meals for the member and spends time visiting with her. The member says that "our conversations have become as important to me as the direct services Debbie provides." When asked, Debbie said she has gained new friends from her time volunteering with Silver Spring Village. She calls it a rewarding experience, one that she enjoys very much. "It's important to have some way to spend your day and to find something that you like is even that much better."

Thank you, Debbie for all that you do! (For a photo of our award-winning volunteers, including Debbie, see page 5.) Contact us at info@silverspringvillage.org or (301) 503-7401 if you are interested in volunteering in any way.

—Vanessa Ripps

DONATE NOW—Help Silver Spring Village continue to provide programs and services that strengthen our community while helping neighbors age in place.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Amount: ☐ \$ 100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000 ☐ Other: _____

Please make your check payable to Silver Spring Village and mail it to Silver Spring Village, P.O. Box 8217, Silver Spring, MD 20907. To contribute by credit card, please visit the [donations page](#) on the Village website. If you would like information about how to leave a legacy gift, please contact Sue Decker at (301) 503-7401.

Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit, tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization. Your contribution is fully tax-deductible.