

Silver Spring Village



Village Vibe

November/December 2022
Volume 9, Number 6

Leadership View: Much to Be Thankful For

Did you realize Thanksgiving is the most popular holiday in the U.S. (per Statista)? It's one of the reasons it's my favorite holiday because it is universally celebrated, uniting us across race, ethnicity, and religion. I also love the spirit of Thanksgiving, which is about inclusiveness, gratefulness, and of course, delicious food. Thanksgiving is also a time when we kick off our annual donor drive which is very important to the sustainability of the Village. Individual donations represent about a third of our total funding. I hope you will include Silver Spring Village in your "giving" this year. See page 5 on ways to give.

In Board news, we recently reviewed the results of our member survey, which are highly favorable. We also found the many written comments to be inspirational. The administration of the survey is a lot of work, and we are fortunate to have volunteers whose professional careers involved survey design and analysis and who assured the integrity and privacy of the survey. For a summary of survey results and full credit to all who assisted, see page 4. The Board also reviewed our key operating indicators (KOIs). While our survey provides a subjective assessment of our progress, the KOIs are a set of objective measures regarding membership, volunteers, services, and fundraising. Our KOIs remain largely on target, but we continue to be challenged in our quest to increase the diversity of the organization. We have had many successes, but we are pursuing other avenues to move the needle further. The many suggestions members offered in the survey are most appreciated.

The Board also recently approved changes to our volunteer policy. The updates include more streamlined back-office procedures and incorporation of the new "support team" concept. This new program is led by four support coordinators who manage the short-term needs of members



A cozy time (see p. 2)—photo by Doug Gaddis

who are recovering from surgery or a major injury. A coordinator works with the member to create a support team made up of Village volunteers and friends of the member. We have already created support teams for two members who had been hospitalized following injuries. Both members appreciated not

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Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit membership organization started in 2013 that helps our members to stay engaged in their community and continue to live at home with support from neighbors and friends.

Village Stats

Totals as of end of October

- Members: 259 (111 full, 148 associate)
- Volunteers: 120

Volunteer hours

- August: 542
- September: 555

Volunteer help August/September

- 148 one-way rides
- 63 friendly calls and visits
- 15 sessions of tech help
- 44 household assistance

Events

- August: 73
- September: 87

Silver Spring Village, Inc.

Doug Gaddis, *Executive Director*

Vanessa Ripps, *Director of Volunteer Services*

Brooke Kenny, *Operations Manager*

Board of Directors

Sue Decker, *President*

Cheryl Gardner, *Vice President*

Katherine Anderson, *Treasurer*

Connie Raab, *Secretary*

Laurie Ekstrand

Jim Gormally

Dion Hamilton

Carolyn Lauer

Beverly Lunsford

Gail McDonald

Joe Reinhard

Darren Vieira

Jacqueline Wallen

Committee Chairs

Finance—Katherine Anderson

Governance—Martine Brizius

Membership—Claire Maklan

Programs—Gary Klauber

Vibe Editors

Connie Raab, Erica Summers

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having to ask for help each time they needed something. Thank you to the people who took this from concept to working model, namely Katherine Anderson, Vanessa Ripps, Anne Gavin, and Steve Durako.

On a final note, I want to give a shout-out to our staff for their leadership in presenting at the national Village-to-Village conference in October. Doug Gaddis gave a presentation on LGBT inclusion and Vanessa Ripps gave one on our tech coaching program. Each session attracted 200 participants and was well received.

As you can tell, we have a lot to be thankful for in our Village. May you all have a happy Thanksgiving!

—Sue Decker, *President*

Village Picnic—Having Fun, Recognizing Service

Despite some residual rain from Hurricane Ian, more than 50 members and volunteers gathered in early October at Seneca Creek State Park to get reacquainted with one another, play games, and enjoy delicious fried chicken and potluck sides and desserts. The temperature was in the low 50s, but with the addition of a roaring bonfire inside the covered pavilion, we were all as snug as a bug in a rug!

A highlight of the afternoon was recognizing five of our outstanding volunteers. Our four “Star Volunteers” for the last fiscal year (July 2021-June 2022) with the greatest number of hours directly serving members were Jane Brown, Steve Durako, Brian Eggleston, and Mary Millar. The Roberta Gosier Award, given in memory of the Village’s founding president and recognizing the person who contributed the greatest number of direct service hours, was presented to Nancy Caporaso.

Special thanks are due to our organizing committee volunteers, Sue Decker, Laurie Ekstrand, Carolyn Lauer, and Gail McDonald as well as to other volunteers, Gary Begin, Jay Elvove, Art Jaso, and Joe Reinhard.



Two of our star volunteers, Brian Eggleston and Steve Durako—photos by Sue Decker



Cold day, friendly crowd—photo by Art Jaso

Community Events

The Village calendar of events includes something for everyone almost every day. Most events are exclusively for our members, but some, like those below, are also open to the public. Join us! For Zoom links, RSVP to programs@silverspringvillage.org. Visit our website to see all of our events.

- Wednesday, November 9, 2:00 pm—**John Sullivan, Director of documentary film on Archie Avedisian, SPARKLE program.** John Sullivan, a former print journalist, has directed his first documentary, *Archie: An American Journey*, focusing on the life of the late Archie Avedisian. Archie was a disrupter long before the term gained cachet. But rather than move fast and break things, Archie moved fast and built communities. During his 47-year career with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, he integrated clubs during the era of segregation, introduced clubs to the DC housing projects during the crack cocaine crisis, and brought girls into his boys clubs long before the national organization was ready to do that. This documentary follows Archie's career and offers lessons today for bringing communities together even in our modern-day divided society. The documentary is available at these two websites Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/394178538> and Columbia Arts Channel via Columbia Arts Festival: <https://watch.eventive.org/columbiaartschannel/play/60566adfb03cca00cbc263fa>.
- Thursday, November 10, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** Join us to discuss *The Sentence* by Louise Erdrich. The Pulitzer Prize winning writer's latest novel is a ghost story set in a Native American bookstore in a Minneapolis dealing with the repercussions of both the pandemic and the murder of local resident George Floyd.
- Thursday, December 8, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** Come talk about *Bookshop on the Corner* by Jenny Colgan. The main character in this book is a down-sized librarian determined to make a new life for herself by starting over with a bookmobile. This novel celebrates the power of books to bring people together.
- Wednesday, December 14, 2 pm—**William H. Johnson & the Harlem Renaissance, SPARKLE program.** Virginia Mecklenburg, senior curator of 20th century art at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, will discuss the life and work of William H. Johnson, one of the foremost African American artists of the Harlem Renaissance.
- Thursday, January 12, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** In January, we will discuss *Five-Carat Soul* by award-winning author James McBride. This collection of stories, described by the New York Times as a "set of brilliant miniatures," explores the ways we learn from the world and the people around us.
- Thursday, February 9, 3 pm—**Afternoon Book Group.** Join us for a discussion of *The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson. On his 100th birthday, Allan Karlsson climbs out the window of his nursing home in his slippers and embarks on a hilarious and entirely unexpected journey.

A member says

☞ *I'm happy to be a part of the Village. It is nice to be affiliated with people who share some of the same interests as I have and an organization that offers a plethora of activities. It gives me encouragement that I am able to age in place & have fun doing so.*

Event Sampler

We set a record in September with 87 scheduled member events! Clearly Villagers enjoy being together.

Several of these events involve regular member get-togethers to play cards and other games; discuss books, current events, or life in general; get a little exercise on the trail or the pickleball court; and share a meal or have a birthday ice cream cone. We also offer many one-time educational, social, and recreational events. For example, members recently visited United Therapeutics, a world-class pharmaceutical and manufacturing company in downtown Silver Spring where they enjoyed a tour and a happy hour. Members also took a boat tour of the Anacostia River to explore the ecological and historical changes that have occurred in the river and in the communities around the river.



Touring United Therapeutics—photo by Sue Decker



Boating on the Anacostia—photo courtesy of Doug Gaddis

Members of Many Talents

Recently, on a warm clear fall day, dozens of Village members came for the Fall Talent Show. Many were in costume and they got together to tell jokes, perform in a playlet, make music, and otherwise enjoy each other's company. A great time was had by all.



Some of the talented members who attended included (from top, then left to right): Beverly Moss, Cecilia de Kanga, Adele Biancarelli, Martine Brizius, Jeanne Adams, and Rick Foucheux—photos by Tom Diaz.

2022 Member Survey Results

This summer, we conducted a confidential survey of our members to assess their satisfaction with Village programs and services and to identify areas that may call for improvement. This year's survey was sent to 225 individuals who had been members for at least three months (and in some cases, many years). The high response rate (73%) supports our confidence that the findings are a good representation of all Village members. Some of the key findings are reported here.

Overall, members are extremely positive: 98% agree that they are treated with care and respect, 94% are satisfied with their Village membership, 95% are likely to continue their membership, 94% are likely to recommend Village membership to others, and 95% agree that the Village makes them feel like part of a caring community.

Other important findings include positive responses to survey items, such as membership in the Village "improves my quality of life" (86%), "is a good value" (87%), and "makes it easier to get assistance I may need" (80%). The vast majority (82% and 83%, respectively) also said that since joining, they have made new friends and know more people in their community. Also, 68% agreed that the Village "gives me confidence that I can remain in my home as I get older."

Loneliness and isolation are major health risk factors that the Village seeks to reduce via social and educational programs and with services like friendly calls and visits. Between 35% and 41% of respondents indicated that before joining the Village they sometimes felt "lonely," "isolated," "left out," and/or "lack of companionship." Substantially fewer reported negative feelings on these four aspects of isolation after joining the Village (ranging from 19% to 29%).

Most of the narrative suggestions and comments received were general, laudatory comments about how the Village has helped them enlarge their social circle, make new friends and more connections, and feel supported regarding current or future needs. Others suggested specific program ideas, ways to improve Zoom calls and the website, and requests to establish additional interest groups. When asked how the Village could achieve the goal of reflecting the diversity of our community, several members offered suggestions, including expanded outreach to groups that are currently underrepresented relative to our community. The Board of Directors and relevant Village committees will follow up on the suggestions made.

Thank you to Cheryl Gardner for her leadership of the member survey project. Cheryl Gardner, Laurie Ekstrand, and Claire Maklan produced the full report. The Membership Committee reviewed and tested the survey questions, reminded members to respond, conducted phone interviews for members who preferred that option, and reviewed the draft report. (The committee is chaired by Claire Maklan and includes Kay Johnson, Cheryl Gardner, Jim Gormally, Minn-dore Green, Sarah Letnes, Penny Passikoff, and Denise Sherer.)

Ways You Can Give to the Village

Your financial support of Silver Spring Village is essential to our work. It makes our mission possible: *To sustain a robust neighbors-helping-neighbors network that supports older adults who wish to live as independently as possible and be fully engaged in their community as they age.* Here are some ways you can support us.

- **Cash (Monetary) Gifts**—You can donate by credit card via our web site or send us a check (note that we have a donation form on page 6 of this newsletter).
- **Gifts from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)**—People who are 70½ and older can roll over funds from their IRA to a qualified charity, such as Silver Spring Village. This rollover portion of your required minimum distribution is tax-exempt. To learn more, google IRS Tax Tip 2022-171 and consult your tax advisor to see if this rollover works for you. If it does, instruct your IRA plan administrator to make the gift to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Avenue, Suite 306, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Our tax identification number is 46-0723926.
- **Gifts of Appreciated Securities**—If you have stocks and other securities, some of them may have increased in value significantly since you bought them. Giving securities that have increased in value can be a good way to support your favorite organizations and avoid capital gains tax. If you plan to donate securities, it is important to instruct your broker to transfer the stocks “in-kind” directly to the following: Account Holder: Silver Spring Village, Inc., Account #: X96662021—DTC #: 0226, Fidelity Investments, Attn: TOA Receives, PO Box 770001, Cincinnati, OH 45277-0036
- **Gifts of Vehicles**—The proceeds of donated vehicles can also support the Village’s work. There are four easy ways to donate your unwanted vehicle: 1) Visit the Village's website at silverspringvillage.org and click on the "Donate Your Vehicle" tab. 2) Fill out an online form at bit.ly/ssv-vehicle-donation. 3) Call (855) 527-2232 to speak to a customer service agent. 4) Call the Village office at (240) 833-5580 for personalized help.
- **Spreading the Word**—Do your siblings, children, and grandchildren know how much the Village means to you? Please take a moment during the giving season to share with them the things you like about the Village and ask them to invest in our mission, too!

Please donate however you can and let us know if you have any questions by contacting us at (240) 833-5580 or doug.gaddis@silverspringvillage.org.



How to . . .

...join: We offer two levels of membership, Full and Associate. Both levels include invitations to all Village events, exclusive discounts, and access to *Washington Consumers' CHECKBOOK*. Full members (only) can receive volunteer services like transportation, home assistance, tech support, and friendly visits and calls. Full membership is for residents of zip codes 20815 east of Rock Creek Park, all of 20901, 20902 east of Wheaton Regional Park ("Kemp Mill"), and all of 20910. Associate membership is open to all. Annual dues: *Full* - \$380/individual, \$495/couple; *Associate* - \$180/individual, \$295/couple.

Reduced cost memberships (*Full* - \$60, *Associate* - \$25) are available for those who qualify. For information, please email membership@silverspringvillage.org.

...volunteer: We welcome volunteers 18 or older who support our mission of assisting seniors to age in their homes and communities of choice. Whatever your skills or interests, we have a place for you!

Our volunteer program allows you to help as much as you want, when you want. Potential volunteers can find application materials on our website. We will do a brief interview. After your initial application is approved, you've cleared a simple background check, and you've attended our orientation training, you'll be able to start making a difference in our community.

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Clip art in this issue is courtesy of <https://creativecommons.org/>

How to, continued from page 5

...support: To keep our Village strong, we need funding from organizational and individual donors, in-kind contributions, and grants. Your contribution—in any amount—will be gratefully accepted. Checks should be payable to Silver Spring Village and mailed to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910; or donate online via our website. Also consider donating appreciated stock, including the Village in your will or other estate plans, or making contributions in someone’s honor. We also love to hear from local businesses that wish to contribute or provide in-kind contributions or member discounts. Contact us!

Silver Spring Village is a member of the Washington Area Village Exchange, the national Village-to-Village Network, and the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce.



Volunteer Corner: Storm Buddies



Are you aware of Silver Spring Village’s Storm Buddy Program? Volunteers who want to be Storm Buddies are paired with full members who live in their neighborhood. When heavy rain, snow, extreme temperatures, or other dangerous weather conditions are predicted, Storm Buddy volunteers are asked to contact the member with whom they are matched, either by phone or email, to make sure they are prepared for the upcoming weather conditions. For example, a Storm Buddy might ask if the member has water during a heat wave or flashlights if there is a possibility that the area might lose power (electricity). A Storm Buddy might also remind the member to make sure their cell phone is fully charged in case of an emergency. After the weather event has occurred, the Storm Buddy may contact the member to offer help with running a vital errand or checking to make sure the home is undamaged. Storm Buddies can help locate other sources of needed help such as a neighborhood teen who can shovel a walk. Often a Storm Buddy provides a calm, friendly voice on the phone letting the member know that someone cares.

For more information about becoming a Storm Buddy volunteer, or for a member to ask to be matched with one, contact Vanessa Ripps, vanessa.ripps@silverspringvillage.org or (240) 833-5584.

Members say

- ☞ *Since joining the Village, I definitely have made more friends (and acquaintances on the way to becoming friends), attended many more social events, gotten help with rides to appointments and felt very supported by this caring community.*
- ☞ *[The Village is] the most important bedrock I have now.*

DONATE NOW—Help Silver Spring Village continue to provide programs and services that strengthen our community while helping neighbors age in place. Your contribution is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Amount: \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other: _____

Please make your check payable to Silver Spring Village and mail it to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910. 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 Doug Gaddis at (240) 833-5580.

Silver Spring Village, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Maryland corporation; the EIN is 46-0723926. You will receive no goods or services in exchange for this contribution, so it is tax-deductible as allowed by law. A copy of the organization’s financial statements may be examined upon written request to Silver Spring Village, 8700 Georgia Ave., Suite 306, Silver Spring MD 20910. Documents required by the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available for the cost of copying and postage from the Secretary of State, 16 Francis Street, Annapolis, MD 21061.