

# Silver Spring Village



## Village Vibe

September/October 2018  
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### Leadership View: Building Lasting Ties

I'm sitting at Reagan National Airport waiting for my flight to Bangor, Maine, to attend the memorial service of the mother of my best friend. We've been close friends for over 45 years. As is my wont, I buy a couple of magazines for the trip and in the September issue of *The Atlantic* I find an article entitled "Make Old Friends: How To Build Lasting Ties." Here in the *Vibe*, and on our Facebook page, we've talked before about the health effects of isolation. We know that isolation and loneliness can be as detrimental to health as diabetes or smoking and that having strong social connections improves well-being. But how to get from here to there? The article offered practical advice for making acquaintances into close friends. It says: "Building deeper friendships may be largely a matter of putting in time. A recent study out of the University of Kansas found that it takes about 40 hours socializing to go from acquaintance to casual friend, an additional 40 hours to become a 'real' friend, and a total of 200 hours to become a close friend." So, if you're already a Village member, join one of our interest groups (or start one that interests you). If you're not a member, consider joining our Village and meet your next best friend. Read the full article [here](#).

—Peggy Gervasi, President

### Executive Director's Note: Celebrating Our Five-Year Anniversary!

September 29<sup>th</sup> is the FIFTH anniversary of the launch of Silver Spring Village! Now, with more than 200 members and more than 100 volunteers, we are one of the largest Villages in Montgomery County. We are proud of our growth and of our earned reputation for a vibrant, engaged membership; compassionate, devoted volunteers; and a thoroughly dedicated Board of Directors and staff.

The Village is working! According to our 2018 member survey, as a result of belonging to the Village, respondents indicated the following: 97% felt more strongly that they belonged to a community where

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Garden-partying recently in a member's yard—photo by Claire Maklan

Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit membership organization started in 2013 to help older residents living in or 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 August

- Members: 202 (92 full, 110 associate)
- Volunteers: 105

### Volunteer hours

- June 787
- July 872

### Volunteer help in June/July

- 188 rides
- 111 friendly calls and visits
- 66 requests filled, including yard work, errands, household repairs and tasks, tech help, and meals
- Telephone crew hours: 249

## Silver Spring Village, Inc.

### Board of Directors

Peggy Gervasi, *President*  
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 Leslie Hansley, *Secretary*  
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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

## Documentary on Josiah Henson

On August 10, the Village bought tickets for 30 Village members and staff to go to AFI Silver Theater to see *Josiah*, a documentary on Josiah Henson, an author, abolitionist, Methodist minister, and former slave, who lived and worked in Montgomery County for a time.

Born into slavery in 1789 in Maryland, Josiah Henson escaped to Canada in 1830, where he founded a colony and trade school for fugitive slaves. In 1849, Henson wrote his autobiography, *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada, as Narrated by Himself*. The film traces Henson's torturous journey from slavery to freedom in Canada, his work in the abolitionist movement, and his contributions to the historical forces that led to the Civil War. Some historians believe his work helped inspire Harriett Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Following the film screening, Village members heard a panel discussion (shown at left)



with Anthony Cohen (historian, Menare Foundation), Jamie Kuhns (county parks historian), Dennis Green (Henson descendant), Catherine Leggett (First Lady of Montgomery County), and filmmaker Jared Brock.

Photo by Martine Brizius

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people look out for one another, 93% were more confident of their ability to continue to live independently as they grow older, and 87% reported that they were able to get out more for things that they want to do. Many members are also volunteers, donors, or both. Thank you, members!

Should anyone wonder how Silver Spring Village grew so strong in five years, consider the gratitude and passion reflected in these member comments: "Joining as an associate member is 'an investment in my future... I believe in it.'" "So pleased that you fell into my life . . . [the Village] is exactly what I prayed for." "The Village is a big asset to the community." "I could not survive without the Village!" "Thanks to all the volunteers who make the Village so effective." "The Village is just a great gift. Wish more people could have access to this great resource in Silver Spring." To mark our five-year milestone, we'll be celebrating with an array of activities. Watch for announcements!

—Debbie Billet-Roumell



## Fresh Inspiration at the Koiner Farm

For the final SPARKLE event before taking a summer break, on June 13 Silver Spring Village and Silver Spring Town Center hosted their second annual garden talk and potluck picnic at Koiner Farm in downtown Silver Spring. The farm, established in 1983 by Charles Koiner, now 98, is a landmark for fresh produce and neighborhood interaction, within blocks of the busy commercial area. Kate Medina, Founder and Director of Education at the Charles Koiner Center (CKC) for Urban Farming, spoke to the group on *Preserving the Legacy of an Iconic Montgomery County Farmer: The Charles Koiner Center for Urban Farming* and her work to inspire food innovators both nearby and across the county through greater access to urban farms.



Kate Medina speaking about urban farming—photo by Martine Brizius

This nonprofit, which operates out of Koiner Farm, also assists Mr. Koiner's daughter Lynn in fulfilling her vision of maintaining the property as a working farm in perpetuity. Attendees were also able to tour the farm and enjoy a relaxed and breezy potluck picnic under the trees. The picnic was a fitting finale to this year's series of ten SPARKLE events, which are designed to serve Village members and to reach out to other local seniors. For more information about CKC, visit [www.ckcfarming.org](http://www.ckcfarming.org).

## Profile of Our 200th Member

We welcome each new member to our Village, but the 200<sup>th</sup> member is extra special. Alicia Pfund is the newcomer who put our membership number over the 200 mark in August. The Village concept struck a chord with Alicia when she first learned about it, and she has been one of our active volunteers for over two years, giving members rides, running errands and helping with household chores. She continues in that role and now, as a member, especially looks forward to widening her social circle and improving her "relationship" with tech devices.



Alicia Pfund—photo by Claire Maklan

Born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Alicia came to the United States for a job at the Inter-American Development Bank. She earned a Masters degree in Anthropology at American University and moved up in her career. Her work in the Bank's Department of Program Evaluation included assignments like assessing a micro-loan program in Latin America and other projects that entailed extensive travel throughout the region. Now retired, Alicia remains involved in inter-American affairs and continues to enjoy international travel, with Africa and Eastern Europe still on her bucket list. Closer to home, she enjoys theater, museums, gardening, and volunteering at Brookside Gardens. Hoping to improve her fluency in German, Alicia plans to lead a new interest group for Villagers to converse "auf Deutsch."

## Events Sampler

Members had dozens of events and activities to choose from this past summer. Just a few are pictured below (top to bottom): a session on Medicare, a poetry reading and discussion, a deck party on a sunny afternoon, and a post-show chat with cast members of the play, *The House of Blue Leaves* at Silver Spring Stage.



Photos by Claire Maklan (top and second), Gene Luttenberg (third), and Martine Brizius (fourth)



## Let's Celebrate at the Bridge!

Please join your neighbors at a centennial celebration of the Talbot Avenue Bridge on Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2-5 pm, at Talbot and Fourth Avenues. Silver Spring Village members Pat Tyson and Charlotte Coffield are leading the planning of this event to commemorate the bridge's century-long historical significance, especially to the African American families in Lyttonsville, a community founded in 1853 by a free black laborer. The bridge provided a critical connection to downtown Silver Spring where many of Lyttonsville's black residents were allowed to work but not live.

Besides refreshments, the celebration will include storytelling, music, kids' activities, speakers, and a community art project. For more information or to volunteer for the celebration, go to <https://talbotbridge100.org/>.

A short 2017 documentary about the bridge (including interviews with Pat Tyson and Charlotte Coffield) can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/232023048>

## 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. While most are exclusively for our members, the events listed below are also *open to the public*. Join us! To see the full calendar of events, go to our website, [www.silverspringvillage.org](http://www.silverspringvillage.org). (Members can login to see full details.)

For example, join Village film lovers at one or all of the following classics at the AFI Silver Theater:

- Saturday, September 8, 3 pm – ***In the Presence of a Clown***. In this 1997 made-for-television film, written and directed by Ingmar Bergman, Death makes an appearance in the form of a white-faced, female clown.
- Monday, September 10, 7 pm – ***Saraband***. Bergman's final film (2003) is a sequel to his 1973 *Scenes from a Marriage*. Liv Ullmann and Erland Josephson return in the roles of Marianne and Johann.
- Wednesday, September 12 – ***Network***. This is the film that brought us the memorable line: "I'm as mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore." It was written by Paddy Chayefsky and directed by Sidney Lumet, with Academy Award winning performances by Peter Finch and Faye Dunaway. Montgomery College film professor Dave Rothman will provide an introduction to the movie at 6:15 pm.

Other upcoming public events include:

- Thursday, September 13, 2 pm – **Afternoon Book Group: *The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears***. The 2007 debut novel by Dinaw Mengestu focuses on the life of an Ethiopian immigrant in Washington, D.C., after leaving his country in the wake of a military coup and uprising. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Friday, September 14, 2 pm – **Community Drum Jam, SPARKLE Program**. Grab a drum and join right in for this family-friendly event, led by Katy Gaughan, professional drum circle facilitator, percussionist, retreat leader, and event organizer. This is an event that is fun for all ages. No experience necessary! Drums provided! At the Silver Spring Civic Building, RSVP via [programs@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:programs@silverspringvillage.org), or 301-503-7401.
- Thursday, September 20, 11:30 am – **Techno Club**. Participants help each other improve, learn, practice, and expand their use and knowledge of smart phones, tablets, and laptop computers. At the Coffield Recreation Center.
- Wednesday, October 10, 2 pm – **Everyday Fitness for Every Body, SPARKLE Program**. Okinyi Ayungo, experienced health professional and the Executive Director of FitnessWise, will present a demonstration program for older adults of all abilities. Learn exercises to strengthen your body and enable you to perform ordinary tasks, like getting up from a chair, carrying heavy objects such as groceries or a small grandchild, taking the stairs up and down, and avoiding falls. At the Silver Spring Library. RSVP via [programs@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:programs@silverspringvillage.org) or 301-503-7401.
- Thursday, October 11, 2 pm – **Afternoon Book Group: *The Left Hand of Darkness***. This award-winning novel by Ursula K. Le Guin belongs to the genre referred to as feminist science fiction. The action in the novel takes place on the planet Gethen, which is inhabited by a population of androgynous beings. At the Silver Spring Library.
- Thursday, October 25, 11:30 am – **Techno Club**. See September 20. At the Coffield Recreation Center.



## Getting Together

Enjoying creative camaraderie at a meeting of the Village artists (left) and “guy talk” at brunch with the men’s group (right), two of several Village interest groups led by members.

*Photos by Leslie Hansley and Claire Maklan*



## How to . . .

**..join:** We offer two levels of membership, full and associate. Both levels include invitations to all Village events, exclusive discounts, *Washington Consumers’ Checkbook*, access to our information service, and referrals to professionals. Full members (only) can receive volunteer services like transportation, home repairs, tech support, and friendly visits and calls. Full membership is for residents of zip code 20910 (or nearby). Associate membership is open to all.

Annual dues: *Full* - \$350/individual, \$450/couple; *Associate* - \$150/individual, \$250/couple. Reduced cost memberships (Full: \$60, Associate: \$25) are available for those who qualify. For information, please contact Debbie Billet-Roumell at (240) 200-4290 or [executivedirector@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:executivedirector@silverspringvillage.org).

To apply, please print and complete a [membership application](#) and mail it with your dues payment to: Silver Spring Village, PO Box 8217, Silver Spring MD 20907. Or send a note indicating interest in membership to [info@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:info@silverspringvillage.org).

**...volunteer:** We welcome applications from anyone 18 or older who supports our “age in place” mission. All sorts of skills and interests are needed. Please start by completing a [volunteer application](#) and an [interest form](#). We will require you to complete a background check, submit references, and attend our training session. All applicants must be officially accepted and enrolled by the Director of Volunteer Services before performing tasks for the Village.

**...support:** To keep our Village strong, we need funding from organizational and individual donors, in-kind contributions, and grants. Your tax-deductible contribution—in any amount—will be gratefully accepted. Checks should be payable to Silver Spring Village and mailed to Silver Spring Village, PO Box 8217, Silver Spring, MD 20907; or [donate online](#). Also consider donating appreciated stock, including the Village in your will, 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!

## Charitable Deductions and Taxes: Possibility for Donors Over 70 1/2

We know that our donors give to Silver Spring Village primarily for reasons other than tax savings, but we want to make sure our donors know that recent changes in tax law may impact some benefits of charitable giving. One important change is the doubling of the standard deduction. As a result of this change, more people are expected to take the higher standard deduction rather than itemize deductions, including for charitable gifts.

What has not been as widely reported is that there are still tax savings by giving to charities directly from an IRA after age 70 1/2, even for people who take the standard deduction. This is known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), which is a tax strategy that has been around for years and remains in place under the new tax law.

Making a QCD as opposed to a normal charitable gift has at least two tax advantages. First, a QCD can count toward satisfying the individual’s required minimum distribution for the year. Second, the QCD is not included in the taxpayer’s income. So, for those over 70 1/2 who own an IRA, a QCD is a way to still get an income tax-reducing charitable deduction even if the taxpayer does not itemize deductions. However, if deductions are itemized, this may not be the best strategy because the QCD would not be included in the deductions. There are several other considerations, so you should

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consult your tax preparer to determine if this strategy works for your individual situation and to learn how to implement the strategy. For example, you may also be able to indirectly use this strategy on required minimum distributions from a defined contribution retirement plan, such as a 401(k) or Thrift Savings Plan, by first completing a partial rollover of these funds to an IRA and then making a QCD from the IRA.

## Community Partners

The community helps our members as well. In a collaboration with the Village, teens from the nonprofit Community Bridges program for girls designed and built the prototype of a device to improve mobility of a Village member (just below). Also, several staff members of Sunrise of Chevy Chase did yard work for a Village member moving back into her home after a long period of rehabilitation.



Photo by Debbie Billet-Roumell



Photo by Wanda Howard

## Volunteer Corner: Looking Out for Each Other

I'd like to share an actual interaction between a volunteer and member, so that you can learn firsthand about the type of relationships that can develop.

On a blustery Saturday morning in late February a storm watch was in effect. An email went out to all Storm Buddies to check on Village members to make sure they had what they needed to make it through the impending storm. A volunteer, who is also an associate member, contacted his Storm Buddy who is a full Village member and has a history of health issues. The timing could not have been better.

The volunteer remembers that the member "didn't sound like his usual, energetic self." The member said that he'd been having chest pain for more than five hours when the volunteer called. The volunteer offered to, and then drove the member to the hospital where the member rode out the storm under medical observation. Four days later, the volunteer returned to the hospital to bring the member home upon being discharged.

Before becoming a part of Silver Spring Village and being matched as Storm Buddies, these two men, who lived about a block apart, did not know each other at all. Now they see each other often and look out for each other.

There are many similar stories that Silver Spring Village volunteers and members have shared. If you would like a similar meaningful experience, contact me at [volunteers@silverspringvillage.org](mailto:volunteers@silverspringvillage.org).

—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: \_\_\$ 500 \_\_\$250 \_\_\$100 \_\_\$50 \_\_\$25 \_\_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.

**Making Silver Spring a great place to age in place!**