

Greetings from our President



Dear Villagers,

This year, feeling very smug that I had once again mastered my iMac to create another Christmas card featuring our eight grandchildren, it occurred to me that I really should do a

card featuring our children. After all, aren't they the ones who made the eight possible?

It then struck me that, while the VOICE usually focuses on activities in our Villages – members, volunteers, and successes – it is a good time to recognize our generous DONORS who are the fuel that keeps our financial fire burning, and thanks to them, our fire has been burning brightly.

Donors continue to be a key source of our revenues. Like start-ups in the technology field, we too, need donors to support our efforts and spread the word of our mission. In the past year, we have decreased the reliance on donor contributions in proportion to our total revenue – that's a good thing – but we shall always need our donors to help us grow and expand.

Our recent Silver Circle Major Gifts fundraising drive, recognizing donors who contribute \$1000 or more, was a resounding success. In addition, we received more donations of all amounts, indicating a larger base of support. To all of you, thank you for caring about the enrichment of seniors' lives in Marin as much as we do. As DONORS, you have helped Marin Villages grow to be in the forefront of Village models across the country.

Loulie Sutro

Executive Director Corner

If it were left to the nightly news and Internet feeds, I think one could become worried and depressed pretty quickly. The world seems to be on speed dating mode, changing alliances, partnerships and

policies at lightning speed – with little comfort of feeling like we know where we are going or even if we're heading in the right direction.

There is some comfort, however, in seeing how Marin Villages is taking root countywide, expanding into new areas and increasing the awareness that seniors' lives matter.



Lisa with Lucy - office security officer

I would like to thank all of those individuals who have supported us through their financial contributions. These contributions have allowed us to staff a full-time operations manager, who consistently and gracefully manages the 200+ requests received from members each month, coordinates activities with volunteers and ensures our programs and workflows run smoothly. Your donations have funded pilot emergency response programs, volunteer manuals, driver training programs and more.

Most importantly, through your financial generosity we are making a name for Marin Villages within the county and increasing awareness of the need for a community-based and operated effort to help seniors remain independent in their own homes. And yes, in the crazy world around us this does bring comfort. Thank you!

Lisa Brinkmann



"Something to make the world look sane again - is there an app for that?"

Around the Villages

Novato Village - It's time to officially welcome the newest addition to our organization – Novato Village!! As of this publication, over 20 members and volunteers are actively engaged in making Novato Village a thriving option for seniors. To help increase awareness throughout Novato, they are partnering with the Buck Institute to hold a *Welcome to Novato* reception on Saturday, June 6th. Members, volunteers and the Novato community at-large will be invited to attend this reception.



Marge Jackson, Beth Livoti, Lisa Brinkmann and Gloria Dunn at a presentation to Novato Rotary

Tiburon Peninsula Village – Tiburon Peninsula Village (TPV) received a generous donation from the Acacia Foundation to help promote TPV. We are using this grant to improve communications, develop a volunteer recruitment campaign and identify programs and events that address enhancing social connections within the community. TPV recently hosted a well-attended class on *Introduction to Balance* led by Thomas Attardi BS, MA, who teaches healing rehabilitation at the Onsite Restoration Center.

Mill Valley Village – At the monthly *Coffee at the Sweetwater*, Sue Steele was delighted to announce that in January, Mill Valley Village welcomed their 100th member; a milestone! In addition to the monthly coffees, birding walks, lunches at local restaurants (La Cantina, Piatti, Piazza d'Angelo, Robata Grill & Sushi) and the memoir group continue. And the Friday all-day hikes are being joined by a once-a-month (for now) Wednesday morning walk. All are welcome. Come join us.



North San Rafael Village - North San Rafael Village is making a name for itself with its lunch and event programs. Member and volunteer, Ruthe Hirsch arranged a lunch and sing-along at Yet Wah and a brunch with art tour up at Hamilton. In addition, they



North San Rafael Villages at the Marin Museum of Contemporary Art

hosted guest speaker David Herlocker, Interpretive Naturalist for Marin County Parks. David's talk focused on the "changing of the guard" of our local bird populations.

Ross Valley Village – You never know when you might need help – this rang true for the steering committee in RVV in 2014. Between unanticipated medical issues and long-planned extended vacations, RVV's steering committee was challenged with organizing events. But they are back and the calendar is filling up. Come to the *Third Monday Get-Together* and meet other members and volunteers at St. John's Fireside Room in Ross – we would love to have ideas on programs. If you can't make the Monday gathering, join RVV for one of their famous hikes with Helen Heitkamp.

Homestead Village – The Community Center has been the focal meeting point for Homestead Village and, after a long renovation, it is open again. And as such, Homestead was quick to schedule its first program of the year –Brain Power, a subject that modern neuroscience is increasingly studying, with Dr. Charles Vella giving an informative, up-to-date and humorous presentation.



Homestead Villagers and friends - Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain

Marin Villages – We've moved!!! If you haven't heard already, we are now located at 4340 Redwood Highway Suite F-142, in San Rafael. Claire and Lisa can't believe they actually have space to move around! Come by and say hello if you are in the area. Also, don't forget to dial 1-415-457-4633 to reach us.



Claire at work in the new office.

Spotlight on our Donors

In the last issue of the VOICE, we focused on volunteers. In this issue, we are taking time to thank our donors. In doing so, we asked Dellie Woodring to give her reflections on *Why Marin Villages?*

From child care to aging in place – Dellie Woodring has demonstrated unique insight, focusing on and making an impact upon key issues facing Marin

County – specifically those issues affecting our social and community fabric.



Dellie and her husband, Doug, settled in Marin over 50 years ago. Raising two boys in Kentfield, Dellie was very involved with the local school system. In 1975, with a firm nudge from a fellow parent, Barbara Boxer, Dellie worked on a survey to determine the need for childcare in Kentfield. Little did she realize at the time, that this would lead to her starting one of the first K-5 daycare centers in the county and eventually accommodating 150 children per day with a staff of 15 teachers, both before and after school.

Now if you think operating a child care business would be enough to keep someone occupied, think again. During this time, in an available space next to her office, Dellie decided to open California Collectors' Gallery, representing Marin County plein air artists. She knew how to have fun!

Dellie became aware of the Village Movement reading articles about the Beacon Hill Village and then the Civil Grand Jury report of 2007. As she said "it clicked" – she was living in the middle of an aging population and creating a neighborly community like

the Villages was a great idea for addressing some of the challenges of aging.

When asked "with so many organizations to which you can donate, why Marin Villages?" Dellie responded, "Creating and supporting the Village concept in Marin just made sense. The need is here (and was reinforced in the 2014 Civil Grand Jury Report) and Marin has a growing, untapped pool of potential members and volunteers. I believe that donating locally allows one to have immediate impact and actually see the results of your contribution."

Dellie, though, is more than just a donor. She is a member and a volunteer driver. "Driving members has provided me the venue to meet wonderful people, learn much about local history and see firsthand how our seniors are tackling the aging process," Dellie commented. "Unless we support today something we believe is necessary and we may want ourselves, it may not be available to us down the road. We have the unique opportunity of creating our own options for aging in our own communities."

Marin Villages would like to thank all of its donors for 2014. We cannot express our gratitude for your support and faith in our mission. THANK YOU!

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