



Village Network of Petaluma

Aging Better Together

September Newsletter



Good News – The Village Is Moving Soon!

We are very excited to let you know we are homing in on a wonderful new location for the Village office that we anticipate will be a long-term community partnership. We hope to make an official announcement in the next issue of our newsletter. Our move will cost approximately \$2500 for IT transition, movers, re-printing brochure, signage, etc. Donations toward the move are gratefully accepted at www.VillageNetworkofPetaluma (click on “Donate.”) Or by check to VNP, P.O. Box 442, Petaluma, CA 94953.



Wish List for our new home (gently used is fine):

Five comfortable group chairs with arms and eight conference table chairs

PROGRAMS

Online calendar at www.villagenetworkofpetaluma.org

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Information Meeting: Get to Know the Village

Thursday, Sept. 12 and Saturday, Sept. 28, 10:00 – 11:00 am, Village office, 955 Petaluma Blvd. South.

Learn how adults ages 50+ enjoy connection with others through the Village Network in Petaluma and Penngrove. We believe a better experience of aging is possible when we can grow with, laugh with, and rely on each other as we navigate the opportunities and realities of aging.

Village membership offers social programs and connections as well as volunteer services including transportation, note-taking at medical appointments, friendly visits, computer help, and personalized referrals to community resources. Bring a friend and get your questions answered. Meet Village members and volunteers. Questions: call the Village office at 776-6055 or info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org.

Volunteer 101 Training

Monday, Sept. 16, 1:00 – 4:00 pm, Village office.

Volunteers are involved in many aspects of the Village. We especially need volunteers for our Technology Workshop, which helps people address problems with their computers or phones; the Publicity Team, which gets the word out about the Village through the newsletter, articles, and talks in the community; and Driving, to help people get where they need to go. For information, call Joanne at the Village office, 776-6055, or see [Volunteering for the Village Network](#) .

Tour of Petaluma Health Center

Tuesday, September 17, 10:00 – 11:00 am.

Have you been curious about the Petaluma Health Center and what it offers? Village members and active volunteers are invited to a private behind-the-scenes tour. Limited to 15 people, RSVP by September 10 at info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org or 776-6055. Members: don't forget to request a ride if you need one.



Driver Training

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 1:00- 4:00 pm, Village office.

Drivers are one of our most popular volunteer positions and most requested service.

There is no minimum time commitment. To RSVP call 776-6055, or email

info@villagenetworkofpetaluma.org if you would like to attend.

INTEREST GROUPS FOR MEMBERS AND ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Weekly Walking Group

Tuesdays, 8:30 – 9:30 am. Meet at Walnut Park on 4th St.

We share fun, great conversations, and exercise while exploring neighborhoods. Everyone welcome. Email Sue Miller at rmiller875@comcast.net to let us know you're coming.

The Joy of Writing Group

Tuesdays, 10:15 – 11:45 am, Village office.



We write for fun, in fiction, nonfiction, memoir, poetry, etc. We write original stories in a noncritical environment. So come have fun with us, whether you are a veteran writer or a nervous beginner. All are welcome. Members free, non-members \$5. For more info, email info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org.

Film Discussion Group

Fridays, Sept. 5 and Sept. 19, 10:15 am, in a member's home. (Meets first and third Friday of the month.)

Join a group of film lovers who get together to discuss the latest hits. We agree on a movie to see on our own and discuss it at the next meeting. Please RSVP to Freeman Humphrey at drfreemanhumphrey@gmail.com for the location. Or call the Village office at 776-6055. For Village members and volunteers.

Gentle Chair Yoga – because wellness takes work!



Thursdays, 11:00 am – noon, Village office.

We practice yoga asanas, Eden Energy exercises, breath work, and meditation to improve strength, flexibility, and inner calm. Beginners welcome. Village members free, non-members \$5. Pat Martin, CMT, EEM-CP, CYT, is a State Certified Massage Therapist, Eden Energy

Medicine Certified Practitioner, and Certified Yoga Teacher.

Wednesday Morning Village Drop-In Coffee Hour

Wednesdays, 9:00 – 10:00 am, Aqus Cafe, 189 H St.

Village Network members and active volunteers are invited to a weekly Wednesday drop-in. Village member and volunteer Tiaga Liner facilitates.

Retired Nurses Group

Wednesday, Sept. 4, 10:15 – 11:45 am, in a member's home. (Meets first Wednesday of the month.)

We will discuss our nursing practices, education, and favorite stories, among other things. In the process we

will get to know one another. Contact lolly.burns@me.com for the meeting place and any questions.

Gardening Group

Tuesday, Sept. 3, 12:00 – 1:30 pm, at a member's home. (Meets first Tuesday of the month.)

Join our monthly gardening interest group, meeting in each other's gardens or on field trips. This is not about having a showplace, but about seeking suggestions, new ideas, and having fun. This month we will go to Western Hills Garden in Occidental, leaving at 10:00 am for a tour of the gardens, followed by lunch at the Union Hotel in Occidental. RSVP to Tiaga at 707-583-5877 or tiagananda@gmail.com.

Village Game Night

Friday, Sept. 13, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, Village office. (Meets second Friday of the month.)

A great way to relax and have fun at the end of your week. You can bring a game you like, finger food snack, or drinks (optional). Or just yourself. Newcomers welcome. RSVP: info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org, or [776-6055](tel:776-6055).

Bocce Ball - New Location at Beer Garden

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, Brewsters Beer Garden, 229 Water St. N. (Meets third Wednesday of the month.)

The game anyone can enjoy. We have a lot of fun, and our new venue means you can have a beer or other refreshments while playing! No experience necessary. Newcomers welcome; feel free to just show up and join the fun. RSVP to George Beeler at agbcomm@sonic.net. Parking on Water Street with stair down entry on Petaluma Boulevard North just north of Washington.

Tech Workshop

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 3:00 – 4:30 pm, Village office. (Meets last Wednesday of the month.)

Just got a new device (smart phone, tablet, computer, TV, etc.) and have questions about how to use it? Want to be able to do more with your iPad or smart phone? Take, send, and receive pictures? Check your email? The Tech Workshop's tech-savvy volunteers have experience helping Village members understand and successfully use their devices. Contact the Village office describing your question/issue several days before the workshop, so we can do necessary research ahead of time. *Note: For issues that can't be addressed in the workshop, Village volunteers still make home visits when needed.*



Village Singing Group

Thursday, Sept. 26, 3:00 – 4:30 pm, in a member's home. (Meets last Thursday of the month.)

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.

Potluck for Village Members and Volunteers

Sunday, Sept. 29, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, in a member's home. (Meets last Sunday of the month.)

We get to know each other better, share good food, enjoy our “conversation café,” and have fun. For members and volunteers. RSVP: 776-6055 or info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org for address.

Men's Discussion Group

Alternate Thursday afternoons, Village office.

We get together with other men on a regular basis to discuss men's lives and other topics in a spirit of fellowship. If you are interested or even curious, RSVP to 776-6055 or info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org. The group is limited to eight members and volunteers.

COMING IN OCTOBER

Annual Medicare Choices & Changes

Thursday, October 24, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Petaluma Health Center, 1179 N. McDowell Blvd.

Get your Medicare questions answered by a state-certified counselor trained to provide free, up-to-date, and unbiased information. Open to the public and offered at the beginning of Medicare's annual enrollment period (Oct. 15 – Dec. 7), this seminar details changes to original Medicare, Advantage plans, and Part D plans that take effect in January 2020. Space is limited. Advance registration at info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org or 707-776-6055 is strongly encouraged to reserve your seat.

Presenter Frank Nelson is the Regional Program Manager of the North Bay Medicare Health Insurance and Advocacy Program (HICAP). He works out of the Petaluma office of Senior Advocacy Services.

EVENTS AROUND TOWN

- Monday, September 9: Fall classes offered by Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). Classes begin at Sonoma State University (SSU). Schedule at www.sonoma.edu/exed/olli. Call 707-664-2691 to register. New students receive a \$20 discount.
- Monday, October 14, 7:00 pm: How the West Was Really Won in Northern California. At Petaluma Regional Library. Local author Will Gorenfeld presents "a tale of displacement, slavery, and genocide." More info at <https://sonomacounty.libcal.com/event/5513929>.
- Thursday, October 17, 7:00 pm: End of Life. A "thought-provoking theatrical event about end of life decisions" at SSU's Weil Hall. View video at theaterofwar.com for an example of this powerful format. Call Green Music Center at 707-664-4246 for tickets. All tickets are \$10, and are selling fast!

Online calendar at: www.VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org

We gratefully acknowledge Xandex for becoming a Diamond Sponsor of the Village Network!



Volunteer Opportunity with Schools of Hope

Volunteer as a Schools of Hope tutor at a local school and make a difference in a child's life in as little as 30 minutes per week. Schools of Hope is an early intervention program for children who are struggling with reading. By focusing on one-to-one tutoring, volunteers can achieve results that enrich children's – and their own — lives. For more information and to view a list of upcoming orientations, visit unitedwaywinecountry.org or call 707-528-4485 ext 103.

- Ariel Vipond, Community Benefit Coordinator, Education, United Way of the Wine Country



Living Alone and Liking It



Despite the profusion of images depicting cheerful, robust, silver-haired couples enjoying their "golden years" together, the reality is that many older people live alone. About 26% of people over 65, of whom 69% are women, live on their own in the U.S. What many observers might find surprising, however, is the number of people who report living alone by choice. Even when presented with an opportunity to cohabit — with a romantic partner, a friend, family member, or a house- or roommate — many people prefer to be solitary.

Several Village members shared their thoughts about their own solo living, and their attitudes were overwhelmingly positive. Tiaga Liner, for example, said it is “a great joy to live alone.” She enjoys her own company and appreciates being able to create a living space that completely suits her. Although she likes having occasional house guests, she relishes the peacefulness when she is again alone. Tiaga acknowledged that she sometimes wishes she had help with “heavy lifting” around the house, but the ability to control her own environment and to be present in her own space is paramount, she said.

Jane Merryman mentioned the importance of a space for her practices of meditation, tai chi, and qi gong. She also sketches and paints, and her dining room table has become the locus of those pursuits. And she enjoys listening to classical music all day without worrying that it might annoy someone else. The freedom to do as she wishes in her home is the central advantage of her living situation, though Jane does sometimes worry about coping with a health emergency on her own.

The importance of a quiet place in which to be creative was echoed by Jerry Spremich. He enjoys writing and appreciates having the time as well as the space to think about stories and other creative pursuits. Jerry acknowledged that being in a relationship can provide companionship as well as financial advantages, but he has found that living by himself leaves more time and freedom to pursue his creative interests.

The benefits of total privacy and complete autonomy in lifestyle choices clearly rank high among these Village members – and many others. Fortunately, the disadvantages they mentioned can be mitigated by Village services and social opportunities. As long as are confident of a support system, whether it be family members, friends, neighbors, or the Village, living alone offers pleasures and satisfactions that many of us enthusiastically embrace.

- Kathy Lawrence

Older Adults Without Children Can Face Unique Issues

The time-honored paradigm in which parents take care of their children as they’re growing up and the children then take care of the parents when they’re growing old does not, unfortunately, pertain in many cases these days. People who never had children or whose children are unable or unwilling to help them may have to navigate the issues of aging on their own. The absence of caring people who can advise and support older people often puts them in jeopardy if they are in failing physical or mental health. They are more likely to be taken advantage of and less likely to seek the healthcare interventions they may need.

There are steps that people who are aging without assistance from adult children or other family can take, however, which will help them stay safe and healthy. Social connections such as the Village Network ensure that people living alone always have someone they can call on in emergencies or just for friendly advice, assistance, and social interaction.

Adjusting their living situation may be another smart move for “solo” people: they might consider a residence for independent seniors (see ["How to Choose an Active Adult Community"](#)), an assisted living residence (see ["Planning Ahead for Assisted Living"](#)), a group home with friends, or a co-housing situation (see [CoHousing.org](#)) in which residents live separately but socialize and look out for one another. Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC’s), although expensive, offer an attractive option for some (see ["Sizing Up a Continuing Care Retirement Community"](#)). And while it’s important to ensure oversight, non-profit homesharing programs can help match a homeowner with space to rent with someone seeking a rental, often in exchange for some services (ex., [ShareSonoma](#), or 707-766-8800).

It’s also important that people who don’t have children on whom they can rely keep legal documents in order in case they become unable to make decisions for themselves. An estate planning attorney can support one in

preparing a medical power of attorney and other essential documents. An attorney can also assist in finding a licensed fiduciary — a person who takes over decision making if a person is incapacitated and has no one else to assume that responsibility. There are local nonprofit organizations also offering these services (see [Council on Aging](#) and [Seniors at Home](#)).

Advance care directives offer a more complete approach to discussing and documenting one's care and comfort choices in advance of a health crisis. Kaiser offers a Life Care Planning Workshop for its members. The Village Network offers an excellent document published by [Five Wishes](#) (free for members or \$1.00 donation for non-members).

These are challenging issues to contemplate, but they are especially important for people who live alone and cannot depend on adult children for support. Further information and assistance is available from The National Council on Aging, AARP, www.nextavenue.org, and PACE (Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly).

- Kathy Lawrence and Anne Greenblatt



Anne and Paul Not Leaving the Village!

You may have heard a rumor that we are leaving the Village. So we want to let you all know that we're not! We did move to Pleasant Hill to live in the same co-housing community in which our kids and grandchildren live — and live closer to all our family in the Bay Area. HOWEVER, we're commuting back to Petaluma (it's only a one-hour trip) two days/week to focus our in-person involvement with the Village into two days — staying over on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. And of course telecommuting the rest of the week.

So we may not see Village folks as much at weekend potlucks, but we're still very much involved. The many wonderful people in the Village — and the success of our community — are very near and dear to our hearts. Warmly, Anne and Paul

FRAUD ALERT

A spam call is going around, claiming social security numbers have been stolen and will be suspended with no further benefits. The FTC recommends that you hang up and dial the Social Security Administration yourself at 800-772-1213. This robo call appears to come from this number, but it does not! For more info, see <https://www.consumerreports.org/scams-fraud/fake-calls-from-social-security/>



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 our own homes and apartments as we age.

Village Network office: 955 Petaluma Blvd. South
info@VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org · 707-776-6055 · www.VillageNetworkofPetaluma.org