

THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jane Eleey



Yes, as we often like to say, “It does take a village.” But many times over I have found that it can be most helpful when there are many Villages and, indeed, many Villagers and Volunteers in the helping matrix. Last month, we talked about the support Penn’s Village enjoys as a member of the Village to Village (VtV) Network. Today, I would like to talk specifically about the value of plain, old-fashioned, face-to-face (virtual or actual) help from other Villages or from meeting with our own Volunteers and Members who are on the front line of delivering and receiving services.

The VtV Network features a Forum, which is an especially rich source of practical information and dialogue between Villages. When we are thinking about adding a new service or addressing an operations or policy issue, the VtV Forum can be a convenient go-to place for gaining insight, information, new ideas, and solutions. Recent Forum discussions have included such diverse topics as relieving stress on family caregivers, measuring well-being, what community means, notification when a member dies, and reducing social isolation.

At a recent Penn’s Village meeting for Volunteers, there were robust discussions on a number of topics such as

Volunteers shopping for Villagers, how to handle reimbursements, ways to make providing transportation services more efficient, and how to communicate to Volunteers that a Penn’s Village Member has died.

Another way to assess how we are doing is to study available research on what and how Villages across the country are doing. The Mather Lifeways® Institute on Aging periodically publishes survey data on a large sample of Villages. Their 2017 research brief on a 2016 National Survey of US Villages gives us some interesting information. Some of the insights have to do with ideas that we, too, are exploring: forming coalitions, increasing membership diversity, and advocating for changes to the larger community. The report notes that while social/educational events, companionship, and transportation were provided by ninety percent of Villages, there were significant increases in the percentage of Villages offering health promotion programs, housekeeping, and technological assistance.

In January 2019, we held a very productive and informative Town Hall meeting. We currently are completing plans for a repeat this coming January. We hope that you can join us for an evening of delicious snacks and stimulating exchanges, as we all continue to build on the successes of Penn’s Village. As we toast 2020, come learn about our future plans and share with us your questions and suggestions.

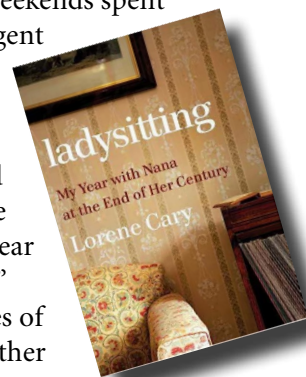
Penn’s Village Member, Lorene Cary, Reading from Her Recent Memoir

Lorene Cary, an American author, educator, social activist, and Penn’s Village member, will read from her new book, *Ladysitting: My Year with Nana at the End of Her Century*, at the First Presbyterian Church on December

4. From childhood, Lorene cherished memories of weekends spent with her indulgent

Nana. Later, as Nana became a frail centenarian, Lorene and her family were tasked with a year of “ladysitting.”

Through stories of their time together and the five generations of their African American family, she brilliantly weaves a narrative of her complicated yet transformative relationship with Nana—a fiercely stubborn and independent woman.



Lorene is the author of the memoir

continued on Page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 From the Program Committee
- 3 Active Aging
- 4 All Around Town
- 5 December Calendar of Events
- 6 Introducing: Pat Callahan
- 7 Book Review: *Women Rowing North*

FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee, under the leadership of Molly Lenowitz and Mario Oropeza, announces the schedule of programs for December. Please register at 215-923-7333 or info@pennsvillage.org. Check the website for up-to-date information.

December brings us cooler weather, earlier sunsets, and lots of holiday cheer to accompany a variety of programs for all your interests.

Wednesday, December 4, 2:00 pm. *Ladysitting: My Year with Nana at the End of her Century*. Lorene Cary, an American author, educator, social activist, and Penn's Village member, shares her cherished memories from a childhood of weekends spent with her indulgent Nana. MacColl Room, First Presbyterian Church, 201 S. 21st Street. (See p.1 for more information about Lorene and her work.)

Friday, December 6, 10:30 am. Draw Me a River: A River Restoration Project in Normandy, France. Landscape architect, Abdallah Tabet, shares the story of one of his favorite projects—restoring a stretch of a small river in Normandy, France, that was damaged by war, time, and neglect. Collaborating with engineers, his team implemented erosion control, and several species of plants and animals have since returned. MacColl Room, First Presbyterian Church, 201 S. 21st Street.

Tuesday, December 10, 2:00-4:00 pm. How to Take Photos on Your Digital Device. Penn's Village members and cell phone experts Brian Wengenroth and Mario Oropeza advise us on how to take photos on our mobile devices. This two-hour workshop is limited to thirty people. MacColl Room, First Presbyterian Church, 201 S. 21st Street.

Friday, December 13, 10:00 am. Simplify Your Life to Age in Place. Bode Hennegan, founder and president of Life Managers & Associates, is a seasoned community volunteer and passionate advocate for independent aging. She is a member of the National Aging in Place Council, American Association of Daily Money Managers, Philadelphia Financial Planners Association, and Philadelphia Estate Planning Council. This workshop will address assessing your home, organizing your papers, and your plan for living. MacColl Room, First Presbyterian Church, 201 S. 21st Street.

Two Easy Steps to Support Penn's Village And REDUCE Your Taxes in 2019

Step 1

You instruct your IRA administrator that you want to make a gift to Penn's Village.



INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNT

Step 2



IRA administrator transfers funds directly to Penn's Village.

If you have an IRA and are 70-1/2 or older, you probably have a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), which is taxable income.

But, if you rollover any amount up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to Penn's Village, the gift will qualify for your RMD and will NOT be added to your taxable income. It's better than a charitable deduction, and you can receive this benefit even if you take the standard deduction.

The trick to qualify is that the transfer must be completed by December 31, 2019, and go directly from your IRA to Penn's Village. So, instruct your IRA administrator to make a direct transfer to Penn's Village (see our Tax ID number below).

For more information on how you can support Penn's Village, please contact Jane Eleey (jane@pennsvillage.org) or 215-925-7333.

Penn's Village Tax ID number: 42-1745957.

Disclaimer: This information is offered for planning purposes. State law may affect how your contribution is treated. As always, you should contact your financial planner, attorney and/or IRA administrator to assess your own situation.

Lorene Cary

continued from Page 1

Black Ice, three novels, and one book for young readers. She founded Art Sanctuary and Safe Kids Stories, teaches at the University of Pennsylvania, and has written a one-act opera of *Ladysitting*. In October, *The New York Times* published Lorene's opinion piece about caring for caregivers. The world premiere of her play, *My General Tubman*, about the complex journey of Harriet Tubman and the impact she continues to have today, will open at the Arden in January.

Email info@pennsvillage.org or call 215-925-7333 to make reservations. The program is free of charge to Penn's Village members, volunteers, and donors.

How to Be a Good Dinner Guest During the Holidays

by Harriette Mishkin

Many of us have given up hosting big dinners at holiday time for a variety of reasons: our downsized kitchen and dining room can't accommodate many people; our children and grandchildren live far away and won't be joining us; it's too much work—shopping, cooking, setting the table, serving, cleaning up; or we just don't feel up to it.

Lucky you! You've been invited to someone else's home for dinner. What should you do to be a good (and repeat) guest? Here are some tips.

Pre-holiday Dinner Planning

- Ask what you can contribute, and only bring that item. Bring it in a ready-to-serve dish with proper serving utensils (you can find serving dishes and utensils at any dollar store and leave them with the host). I often bring dessert from a bakery and ask the host what he/she prefers.
- Unsolicited casseroles, appetizers, or desserts may not be welcome. Just because you like them doesn't mean that the host wants to serve them.
- Tell the host ahead of time, in case he/she doesn't ask, if you have any food allergies or concerns. I have two relatives and some friends who do not eat meat, and I prepare extra veggies or pasta for them.
- If you are told, "Just bring yourself," then bring flowers, wine, or candy. If they do not serve it that evening, be

assured they are saving it for another occasion.

- Have a snack before you leave home in case dinner isn't quite ready. A drink on an empty stomach may make you feel a bit light-headed, or you might wind up snacking on things you promised yourself you would only eat in moderation during holiday feasts.

Holiday Dinner Night

- Don't show up early. You could be in the way of last-minute chores and add pressure to the host who probably is already under stress.
- Stay out of the kitchen unless requested by the host. Most kitchens in Center City can barely hold the cook, let alone guests. You might want to chat, but that can be distracting.
- Even if you contribute a food item, bring a small hostess gift—candle, hand soap, bottle of wine.
- Avoid political arguments; they raise everyone's stress levels, and no one wins.
- Offer to assist with clearing the dishes or wrapping up leftovers. If your offer to help is turned down, join in the conversation with other guests.
- Be sure to send a short thank you note to the host—a forgotten art form but always very much appreciated. Even a short and quick text message can do the job.

Happy Holidays to You!

Penn's Village Happy Hour Hiatus

Our Happy Hour will be taking a break until Spring 2020. The Program Committee hopes that you have enjoyed the past Happy Hours and looks forward to seeing you next Spring.

Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire— Final 2019 Sessions



"Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire" continues its lectures exclusively in French, led by Eric Simonis, a native French speaker and private French instructor. Classes will meet on Mondays from 2:30-4:00 pm for Penn's Village members only, at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia. Regular attendance is not mandatory, but is encouraged. You are also welcome to attend as a listener if you wish to improve your French comprehension skills, but are unable to participate in the conversation.

December Class Schedule:

December 2 – *Marie-Madeleine-Marquerite d'Aubray, marquise de Brinvilliers (1630-1676)*: "L'affaire des poisons" (meurtrière parricide et fratricide)

December 16 – *Charles-Geneviève d'Éon de Beaumont, dit "Le chevalier d'Éon" (1728-1810)*: "L'espion androgyne" du roi Louis XV

December 30 – *Marie-Anne Charlotte de Corday d'Armont, dite "Charlotte Corday" (1763-1793)*: *Perpétratrice de l'assassinat de Jean-Paul Marat*



Future presentations on January 27, 2020, and February 10, 2020.

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Join Penn's Village

To become a member, visit www.pennsvillage.org and click on "Join." There you will find our membership information.

To become a volunteer, visit www.pennsvillage.org and click on "Volunteer." We have a variety of volunteer opportunities to suit different interests, skills, talents, and schedules.

Do you know that talking about Penn's Village to family, friends and strangers is the best way to grow Penn's Village?

Connect with Penn's Village

215-925-7333
info@pennsvillage.org
www.pennsvillage.org
201 South 21st Street
Philadelphia PA 19103

Follow us on social media:



ALL AROUND TOWN

Selected Cultural Events and Activities for December

On the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus: **Organ Demonstration** (free) on December 7; **Sittin' In Live Jazz** (free) on December 18 and **La Noche Latin Music Dance Party** (free) on December 16; Pennsylvania Ballet, **George Balanchine's The Nutcracker** from December 6-31; Broadway Philadelphia, **The Spongebob Musical** from December 3-15; Philadelphia Orchestra, **Wynton Marsalis Blues Symphony** from December 12-14; **The Glorious Sound of Christmas** from December 19-21; **Messiah** on December 22. The Philly Pops, **A Philly Pops Christmas** from December 7-21. For more information and additional family-friendly holiday events, visit kimmelcenter.org.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, **Vera Quartet** with esteemed violist and Curtis President Roberto Diaz on December 12; Astral, **Natalia Kazaryn**, piano, on December 15. Both at the American Philosophical Society.

Art Gallery at City Hall, Room 116, **Crafting Narratives**, featuring the work of thirty-four Philadelphia area artists exploring story-telling forms through hand-made art through December 31

Arden Theatre Company, **Tiny Beautiful Things** through December 8; Lantern Theater Company, **The Last Match** through December 15.

Winter Fun at Dilworth Park, Visit the Rothman Cabin for hot beverages and seasonally-inspired dishes and treats, and the Wintergarden with picturesque plantings and whimsically-created topiaries through February 23; the **Made in Philadelphia Holiday Market** for unique gifts and the **Deck the Halls Light Show** return, both open through January 1.

Authentic German Christmas Village in LOVE Park through December 24 features more than eighty vendors selling authentic European food, ornaments, and arts and crafts from around the world.

Save The Dates



Blood Drive
9:00 am-7:00 pm
Tuesday,
January 28, 2020
Society Hill Towers
Community Room
*Penn's Village members
Harriette Mishkin and
Barbara Nodine volun-
teer at the 3rd Society
Hill Towers Blood Drive.*

Lunch and Books
12:00 noon –
2:00 pm
Wednesday,
January 28, 2020
Positano Coast
Restaurant
**#1 NEW YORK
TIMES
BESTSELLER**



Penn's Village supports and actively encourages a diverse and inclusive community of members, staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers. Diversity and inclusiveness means excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs, or political beliefs.

Don't forget to read our blog on our website.

A very sincere thank you to The First Presbyterian Church for generously providing space to Penn's Village and for always being there for us.

DECEMBER 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 2:30 - 4:00 pm Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire Athenaeum	3	4 2:00 pm Lorene Cary reads from <u>Ladysitting</u> MacColl Room	5	6 10:30 am Draw Me A River MacColl Room	7
8	9	10 2:00-4:00pm Taking Photos on Your Digital Device MacColl Room	11	12	13 10:00 am Simplify Your Life MacColl Room	14
15	16 2:30 - 4:00 pm Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire Athenaeum	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 2:30 - 4:00 pm Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire Athenaeum	31			GREEN - Penn's Village Event PURPLE - PV Member Only Event	



INTRODUCING

PATRICIA CALLAHAN: Advocate

by Sherrill Cresdee

A Technical Services Librarian at the University of Pennsylvania Biddle Law Library for much of her career (some of that was prior to technology), Pat Callahan logged, ordered/received, cataloged, kept track of, and oversaw payment of invoices for every kind of legal publication from serials to one-offs, from hard-cover books to electronic resources. She was, of course, not the only one doing this; in fact, she supervised most of that work and emphasizes that “describing and maintaining a legal collection takes a huge amount of time, and each of us was always busy.”

By the time she retired from the Law Library in 2011, Pat had helped computerize the collection, as well as move everyone accessing it—students, faculty and the public—into the 21st century. Conversant with the software used to track library publications, Pat has in retirement serendipitously found herself

working as a part-time librarian for a local Philadelphia law firm.

Pat and her husband, Bill Double, were making plans to travel in 2012 when, as it does, life got in the way. Just before flying off to parts unexplored, they learned that she had Stage IV ovarian cancer.

Before chemotherapy, Pat reverted to doing what she’d done best and researched and cataloged her way into qualifying for a clinical trial with a maintenance drug that might keep her cancer from recurring. This was just the beginning of her Phase 2 life: cancer awareness and patient advocacy.

In 2015, Pat, with advice and help from a friend “...got through a rigorous application process and was approved...” to be a member of the Scientist-Survivor Program at the American Association for Cancer Research conference held in Philadelphia that year. That led to her current volunteer work with the Ovar-

ian Cancer Research Alliance Survivors Teaching Students program. The group speaks to medical students about their journeys with ovarian cancer and about the symptoms and risk factors, which are often difficult to detect.

Pat joined Penn’s Village in the fall of 2018 and immediately became a member of the Marketing and Communications Committee. She remembers her first meeting—reviewing various designs for the new logo. She also proofreads each *Village View* issue and program flyers before they are printed.

These days Pat and Bill, the author of *Charles E. Hires and the Drink that Wowed a Nation: The Life and Times of a Philadelphia Entrepreneur*, pay more attention to sunsets, the natural world, mindful meditation, and giving back. (You can read Bill’s January 24, 2019, blog on Charles Hires and Stewart’s root beer in the blog archives on our website.)

Celebrating Art on the Streets of Philadelphia

Conrad Benner founded the photo blog *Streets Dept* to discover and celebrate art on the streets of Philadelphia. He presented an overview of art in the public space at an October Penn’s Village program. And what a presentation it was! Great photographs showcased art that is free and accessible to all, that “has the power to prompt people. The power to inspire people. And the power, ultimately, to change the world.” (streetsdept.com).

Conrad grew up in Fishtown and was always interested in street art. As his passion grew, so did his collection of photographs of street artists, which are used to advocate for change and to fund-raise for social justice organiza-

tions. His newest project can be seen on the walls of the Fashion District, formerly The Gallery. It’s called “Streets Dept Walls,” and features ten new temporary murals by eleven Philly artists.



Murals in new Fashion District



Conrad Benner



Murals in new Fashion District

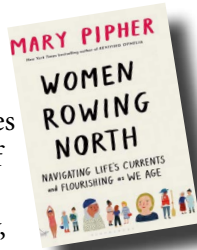
BOOK REVIEW

Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age by Mary Pipher

Reviewed by Bonnie Eisenfeld

Author Mary Pipher doesn't want us to be in denial. She acknowledges that aging is a process that many of us are not enjoying. The book is a mélange of philosophy, psychology, general advice, and a boatload of stories. She encourages us to find joy in life, even if it is only a moment of each day. Yes, you are getting old, so be the best old person you can be!

The title of the book, *Women Rowing North*, is a metaphor for navigating the current, alone or with a crew. Obviously, it's easier with a crew. So, navigating life is easier with a support network of friends and family. Make those connections! Meanwhile, accept



the inevitable losses; eventually each of us will fall out of the boat and drown.

Pipher encourages each of us to find a mission and purpose that best fits our interests. We should share our wisdom especially with younger people. Doing that helps us feel relevant and respected, not invisible. We need to build each day to fill our lives with meaningful and enjoyable experiences and connections.

Full disclosure, Pipher herself is about 70, living with her husband, has five grandchildren nearby, has an active career, and is mostly in good health.

So, she has a lot to be happy about. Still, there are people who have that and more and complain a lot. On the other hand, people who are suffering can often find meaning, relevance, and resilience. The Dalai Lama has said that as your body declines, your spirit soars.

There are many books about aging; reading them is not going to give you the secret formula to regaining your youth. Arthur Krystal in *The New Yorker*, November 4, 2019, reviews Pipher's book as well as countless others about aging and says "the 50 million Americans over age 65 could spend the rest rest of their lives reading such books." This one is a good place to start.

FREE LIBRARY NEWS

Library Advocacy – What Can You Do?

Are you upset by unexpected library closures and distressed by the short staffing situation? Come to the Philadelphia City Institute Library on Rittenhouse Square on Monday, December 2, at 6:00 pm for an important discussion about the critical need for advocacy for our public libraries in Philadelphia. Ask questions about how library funding works, how libraries operate, and how you can get involved in fighting for full funding!

Construction Set to Begin

The Philadelphia City Institute Library on Rittenhouse Square is excited to announce that we will be undergoing renovations soon to make our building fully accessible! Friends of Philadelphia City Institute Library has worked hard for a year to raise money for a much-needed Lift, and now their vision is becoming a reality. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for an important community meeting on Wednesday, December 11, at 6:00 pm

to discuss the planned renovations.

The library is expected to close for approximately eight weeks during major construction. At the community meeting, you will hear from library officials about the details of the project and what will happen while the library is closed. You will also learn how our after-school program for school-age children and teens will be able to continue while we are closed, thanks to the generous support of The Church of the Holy Trinity.

THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS SPONSORS

Please support all our business members. See www.pennsvillage.org for a complete list.

