

THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JANE ELEEY



Dear Members and Friends:

During the summer of 2019, a new Penn's Village committee was formed to explore how best to support and promote diversity and inclusion as a core value for our organization. Last January, a diversity and inclusion statement was presented to members at our Town Hall meeting; the next order of business was to make clear our commitment by incorporating the statement in all Penn's Village communications.

Penn's Village welcomes and actively encourages an inclusive and diverse community of members, staff, Board of Directors and volunteers. Inclusiveness and diversity means welcoming all and excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs or political beliefs.

But of course words, not followed by action, often fall on deaf ears. We are continuing to actively recruit minority members for our Board of Directors and Advisory Council and are currently conducting a *Bias Mitigation Workshop* for PV leadership. Behind the scenes, we have been exploring the formation of partnerships with diverse organizations such as the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia and the Dream Camp Foundation. We also are continuing to reach out to form relationships with minority-owned businesses and to investigate recruiting in new ways, with new partners, in parts of our community that we have not yet reached.

And, check out the website! Each month in the Resource Section (accessible from the Welcome page) the Inclusiveness and Diversity Committee will recommend four new resources to help our members and friends be more informed (and perhaps even inspired to action), about racial biases. There is also a blog on how to support black-owned businesses.

Then, take a look at the Events Section to find descriptions of both current and past events (many of which have been recorded). Some examples include *How to Be an Antiracist*, a groundbreaking approach to understanding and uprooting racism and inequality in our society and in ourselves; *What is Race?*, exploring the history of race, the physical diversity of the human species, and some of the evolutionary biology of that diversity; and a Lunch and Books discussion of *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Thank you to all who have participated in moving this effort forward over the past months, and congratulations on the amazing scope of what you have accomplished.



A Thanksgiving to Remember

by Marianne Waller

In the ACTIVE AGING column on page 2, we wondered how you are planning to celebrate Thanksgiving. With the predicted increase in COVID-19 cases, that question is anything but simple for me. Being somewhat risk-averse and more than old enough to be considered at high risk, with no close family within a few thousand miles, my options seem limited.

Rather than allowing myself to star in a pandemic victim story, I needed to come up with a way to celebrate kinship, reduce risk, and maybe even build some unique memories for myself and my far-flung family. SO—remembering that November is National Family Stories Month, and thanks to Penn's Village and my new love affair with Zoom as a platform for programs, discussions, and courses, as well as several fun Zoom breakfasts and lunches with small groups of family and/or friends, I almost have a plan!

*The Bagnall, Modell, Waller 2020
International Thanksgiving Day Feast*

- The Feast will begin simultaneously in Philadelphia (at 11:30 am), in Manchester, England (at 4:30 pm), and in Vienna, Austria (at 5:30 pm).

[continued on page 4](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Active Aging: Celebrating Thanksgiving During a Pandemic
- 3 Introducing: Mary Rucci
- 3 Book Review: *The Senator's Children*
- 5 All Around Town
- 6 November Calendar of Events
- 7 November Programs

ACTIVE AGING

Celebrating Thanksgiving During a Pandemic

*Even Macy's Parade will be a Virtual Event!**

by Harriette Mishkin



Thanksgiving 2020 will be one for the history books. Never did we celebrate a universally loved

American holiday having to follow CDC guidelines for social distancing.

Over the years, my own plans have gone through many iterations, from immediate family dinner hosted first by my mother and then by my sister, to family dinner at a restaurant, to dinner hosted by extended family, and then to dinner hosted by friends. This year, however, it seems that my husband and I will be having dinner with one other couple, our “bubble” friends.

All of us will be reinventing how to celebrate this year, not just Thanksgiving, but Christmas, Chanukkah, and New Year's. We asked a few Penn's Village members to share their thoughts and

plans for Thanksgiving. Here are some of their comments.

Only my “pod,” which is local family. No out-of-town guests or family. Sadly. (Jane)

My husband Brian and I are going to have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at home and then FaceTime with Brian's sister in California. (Mark)

Dinner at home with husband and children is a must, with the usual menu. No plans to spend time with extended family. Usually we rotate between traveling and hosting. (Donna)

Virtually international cooking, feasting, and story telling (England, US, and Austria). See page 1 for details. (Marianne)

Our respondents are not alone in downsizing their plans; forty-seven percent of consumers surveyed say they are downsizing their holiday plans, while seventy-five percent say they are not traveling at all (<https://morningconsult.com/form/2020-holiday-shopping/>).

According to CDC guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>), even gatherings that are small and socially-distanced (six-feet apart)—especially indoor events—have a moderate risk of spreading infection. The more people an individual interacts with at a gathering and the longer that interaction lasts, the higher the individual's potential risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 and then spreading COVID-19 to others.

If loved ones and neighbors are not able to join you this year, consider cooking a traditional dinner for them and delivering it in a safe, contact-free manner. Or, consider a Zoom or FaceTime dessert course with them. And if you are on the receiving end of this generosity, just say, “Thanks!”

Have a safe holiday.

**See All Around Town, page 5, for details.*

Time Is Like a River;
You cannot touch the water twice
because the flow that has passed
will never pass again.
Enjoy every moment of life.

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Nova Scotia back country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost and, being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions.

I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There



were only the diggers and crew left, and they were eating lunch. I felt bad and apologized to the men for being late, then went to the side of the grave and looked down; the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I

played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And, as I played *Amazing Grace*, the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head was hung low, my heart was full.

As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, “I've never seen anything like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years.”

Apparently, I'm still lost....it's a man thing.

When you have stopped laughing, be sure to share this with others who might enjoy a good story.

INTRODUCING

Mary Rucci

Marketing Expert Extraordinaire!

by Sherrill Cresdee



Somewhere within 2014/15, Mary Rucci was invited by Marion Rector of Rector Communications in Philadelphia to sit in on a Penn's Village brainstorming, com-

munications, and strategy meeting. She did, and her takeaway was that Penn's Village was "a tremendous effort for a volunteer-based group to support aging in place." Since she enjoyed the people she met, when asked if she was available to volunteer with PV's nascent communications and marketing committee, she said yes. Yay!

As a former Communications Director at Aramark (our locally headquartered

~\$16 billion global food, facilities, and uniforms services company), Mary knows a little bit about how to get a message out.

Starting her career as a newspaper reporter, she spent seventeen years in the energy industry with several mid-Atlantic energy companies. After that, she leapt into the fire of communicating about state government stimulus accountability in Harrisburg prior to joining Aramark. Mary's communications universe crossed many disciplines at Aramark, from sports arenas, to uniforms to healthcare, and more. In the COVID-19 environment, she worked virtually, Zooming, Microsoft Teaming, or Skyping with groups across the company.

With her Penn's Village involvement and the knowledge that it can be very challenging to identify and recruit new members within a particular geographic boundary because people have "grown into it," Mary feels it is important to get the word out now to the population that is aging in place; they may not need or know about PV's services now, but may find that they will need them in the future. Yay, again.

In 2005, Mary, her husband, Michael, and their two then-young daughters put down roots in Chester County. Still there, they are currently quarantining with their younger daughter and her husband, some horses, and a cat. And, while they are living on a COVID-19 enforced schedule, they are training dogs that they hope will someday be therapy pets.

BOOK REVIEW

***The Senator's Children* by Nicholas Montemarano**

reviewed by Clare Novak

The complex dynamics of the Senator's family keep the reader turning pages, unwilling to put the book down. A presidential candidate imploding is a familiar story. Philadelphia and Lancaster County are familiar settings. What keeps the reader engrossed in these familiar places is Montemarano's truthfully written characters. These people are beautifully complete in their flaws, hesitations, and ultimate choice to try to be just a little bit better. While the reader might want to dismiss the Senator for his cheating, the reactions of his loved ones draw us back in. We see why they love him and feel empathy for their pain.



The Senator's children, half-sisters Betsy and Avery, shared having lived under the scrutiny of the media that came with their father's fame, then notoriety. But it is as adults that the sisters meet for the first time and begin to reveal the complex feelings they have for their father. Betsy had the family life as the Senator's child with his wife, Danielle, a college professor. Avery was the child of an affair quickly gone wrong who was never acknowledged by her father. Slowly, these two women begin to develop as sisters. While initially disagreeing, the two form a bond in caring for the Senator, who by then is suffering failing health. These relationships are

beautifully written, with respect for the real feelings and humanity of each character.

In a world in which we often write people off because of a sound bite or an ill-conceived social media post, this novel draws us into the larger story. The reader sees the impact of media scrutiny on children and the unintended consequences of our thirst for expecting to know everything and know it right now. Betsy's and Avery's suffering leads us to ask ourselves if we really need the details of people's lives to be lived out in public. Montemarano's well-written prose allows us to care about the people behind the news. He invites us to take a breath and realize that news is about people, real people.

Village View Editorial Board

Editor:

Marianne Waller

Design and Layout:

Linda Karp

Contributors:

Sherrill Cresdee
Patricia Callahan
Kristin Davidson
Dick Levinson
Harriette Mishkin
Clare Novak
Marianne Waller

Newsletter Editorial Board:

Sherrill Cresdee
Kristin Davidson
Linda Karp
Dick Levinson
Harriette Mishkin
Marianne Waller

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:



The Athenaeum of Philadelphia Presents Le Cercle Francophone D'Histoire



Penn's Village volunteer Eric Simonis leads this French lecture series at the Athenaeum via Zoom. This special interest group was founded by Penn's Village several years ago under Eric's leadership (see an interview with Eric in the April 2020 *Village View* in the newsletter

archives).

The group focuses on French history and historical facts; all lectures are in French. The lecture is free and open to members and guests. Registration is required:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/le-cercle-francophone-dhistoire-november-meeting-tickets-117662520767>.

Login information for the lecture will be sent with your reservation notification.

A Thanksgiving to Remember continued from page 1

- Each site will have received a centerpiece Yankee Candle Pumpkin-spice candle for shared Thanksgiving ambience. (It is a plus being able to order gifts from Amazon for direct delivery to European countries.)
- Menus will vary to suit each family unit, except for pumpkin pie, which will be simultaneously baked at each site via Zoom a few days prior.
- We might have a story-generating scheme, perhaps a "Story Basket" with prompts for the telling of stories by one and all, such as, "If you could eliminate one Thanksgiving dish forever, which would it be and why?" "If you could invite any famous figure, living or dead, to our Thanksgiving, who would you choose and why?" "What was the best dish you ever ate on Thanksgiving?"
- As an alternative to the Story Basket idea above, we could have a family Show and Tell, where everyone brings

an object they want to share a story about—for example, a photo or letter, a piece of jewelry or artwork, a hobby or craft, a family heirloom—and tell where it came from and why it means so much to them.

Other ideas still under consideration include watching a movie together and playing a real-time group cell-phone game of *Scrabble* or *Words with Friends*. It has also occurred to us that most of these ideas could be tweaked to serve other holidays such as Chanukkah, Christmas, Winter Solstice, or even a family or friends' New Year's Eve dinner.

I hope that maybe I have sparked some ideas for you to think about. In spite of pandemic limitations, there are still all kinds of things and ways to celebrate. I will let you know in December how all of this worked out for my family. Whatever you do, please enjoy and stay safe!

New Penn's Village Website Feature

Check out the "Resources" tab in the menu on the Welcome Page of the Penn's Village website (www.pennsvillage.org)! This new tab provides easy access to up-to-date information on current issues of interest to PV members

and volunteers such as the upcoming election, inclusiveness and diversity, and the coronavirus. You will find a variety of blog posts, articles, and links to other helpful sites. We hope you find it useful!

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

Penn's Village welcomes and actively encourages an inclusive and diverse community of members, staff, Board of Directors and volunteers. Inclusiveness and diversity means welcoming all and excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs or political beliefs.

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.

ALL AROUND TOWN

Fall-Season Openings and Spectacular Displays by Mother Nature

More museums have opened, and restaurants have expanded their indoor seating capacity. Outdoor dining will continue into the late fall with heat lamps dotting the sidewalks. Restrictions at all venues remain in place for safety, so it is wise to check the websites for detailed information.

The Barnes Foundation. *Elijah Pierce's America.* Special exhibit by a self-taught artist and virtuoso woodcarver. Through January 10.

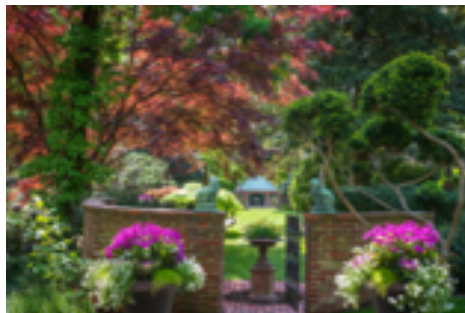


Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. Veronica Swift, Vocalist. An original live-streamed jazz concert with interactive Q&A, on November 12, at 7:00 pm. Also, virtual performances of *Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo* on YouTube. Through November 6.

Philadelphia Museum of Art. *Gross Clinic.* Thomas Eakins' monumental local favorite of Dr. Samuel Gross returns to PMA (ongoing). Also, *The Art of Care* exhibit examines the ways artists have pictured and envisioned acts of caregiving as observers, practitioners, patients, and activists. Through January 3.



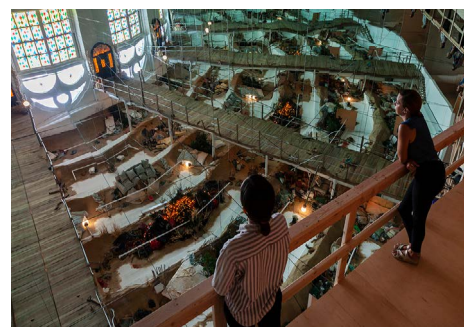
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Gardens to visit while still in bloom include the Azalea Garden at the PMA, Eastern State Penitentiary Gardens, Logan Square and Swann Memorial Fountain, The Navy Yard, Rodin Garden at the Rodin Museum, and the Sidewalk Garden at the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society headquarters.



Henry Botanical Garden. A nonprofit 50-acre botanical garden located in Gladwyne, it was established in 1948 by botanist and plant explorer Mary Gibson Henry for plants that she collected from remote areas of the West, Midwest, and Southeast. Guided tours only.



Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. *Taking Space: Contemporary Women Artists and the Politics of Scale.* Explores how female artists have used size, repetition, and space in their work. November 19-April 11.



Fabric Workshop and Museum. *Samara Golden: Upstairs at Steve's.* Mirrors on floors and walls transform space into a landscape. A grand illusion. Through January 31.



Our neighbors at the **American Philosophical Society** in Old City invite you a Zoom presentation of the Keynote address at their Fall General Meeting. Delivered by Lawrence D. Bobo and entitled *A Failure to Heal: Race and Politics in the United States*, the presentation will be at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 11. Register at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TwImzH1C-TA-ZW6lZGgmjIg.

Now celebrating its fortieth year, the **Gershman Philadelphia Jewish Film Fall Fest** begins its season virtually November 7 through 21. New Media Day is on November 15, from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm; watch binge-worthy TV and participatory events.

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade will not be live this year. Instead of the parade, performances will be pre-recorded in front of Macy's flagship store in Herald Square for television and broadcast on NBC (channel 10 in Philadelphia) on Thanksgiving Day from 9:00 am to Noon. The celebration will be a mix of giant helium balloons, floats, street performers, clowns, and the one-and-only Santa Claus.

NOVEMBER 2020 ~ Family Stories Month

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

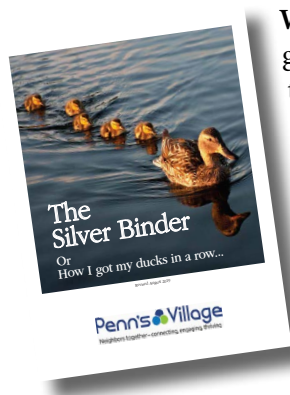
1  Daylight Saving Time Ends	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 2:00 pm Avoiding Frauds and Scams Zoom	11 2:00 pm The Silver Binder Zoom 2:00 pm Le Cercle Francophone d'Histoire Zoom	12	13	14
15	16	17 2:00 pm Fun in Philly Zoom	18	19 2:00 pm Phila. Poison Control Center Zoom	20	21
22	23 2:00 pm All About Vegan Foods Zoom	24	25	26  Happy Thanksgiving	27	28
29	30					

NOVEMBER PROGRAMS

The Program Committee, under the leadership of Mario Oropeza, announces the schedule of programs for November. Please register at 215-923-7333 or at info@pennsvillage.org. Members can also self-register by logging into their Penn's Village account on the website and selecting the program they want to attend from the Welcome page. All of the listed programs are offered as ZOOM Teleconferences. Registrants will be sent login information after they register and again a day or so before the event.

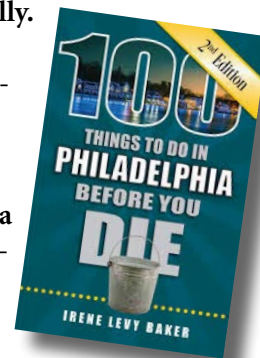
Check the PV website and watch for emails with up-to-date information, a fuller description of each program, and/or any additional programs scheduled during November.

Tuesday, November 10, 2:00 pm. Avoiding Frauds and Scams. Speakers Daniel Milloy and Dan Lewis, volunteers with the Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE), will address potential fraud and best practices within Medicare, Social Security, and COVID-19.



Wednesday, November 11, 2:00 pm. The Silver Binder. Penn's Village volunteer and chair of the Program Committee, Mario Oropeza, leads this workshop which he personally developed on organizing the vital details about your contacts and legal, health, and financial affairs. Binders are available for purchase after the program.

Tuesday, November 17, 2:00 pm. There's No Place Like Home: Fun in Philly. Author Irene Levy Baker will share stories about local adventures that can enliven your staycation plans, including secret destinations that even long-time locals do not know about. Based on the second edition of her book, *100 Things to Do in Philadelphia Before You Die*.



Thursday, November 19, 2:00 pm. Making the Right Call—Philadelphia Poison Control Center. Dr. Fred Henretig, who helped found the Center and served for twenty years as its medical director, will describe the Center's development and review the specific risks associated with older adults and their most-prized visitors, their grandchildren.

Monday, November 23, 2:00 pm. All About Vegan Foods. Penn's Village volunteers, Margherita Abe and Olivia Walling, will discuss alternatives to a meat-based diet. We will learn about vegan diet options, recipes, and the health benefits of a vegan diet. Just in time to plan your Thanksgiving dinner!

THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS SPONSORS

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



SILVER LININGS™
Home Healthcare Inc.



Penn Medicine

Center City
Home Care



Grubb & Grubb
ADVANTAGE
real estate real advice.



Jefferson™

**THE ATHENÆUM
OF PHILADELPHIA**

**M.C.T.
MY COMPUTER TECHIE**
You Got A Techie? By Your Side!

**BERKSHIRE
HATHAWAY**
HomeServices

**Fox & Roach,
REALTORS®**

cecil baker + partners
ARCHITECTS

AVA
ACADEMY OF
VOCAL ARTS

**Home
Instead**
SENIOR CARE®
to us, it's personal.

excel
physical therapy

The Clay Studio

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

