

THE Villager

◦ NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ◦

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A Brief Hello

Ellen Raphaeli, co-president

HELLO, EVERYONE.

Elizabeth Boris and I, co-presidents of the Village since April, plan to continue Walt Cooper's practice of taking a few lines in the Villager to summarize both what has been going on in the Village and what will be coming up soon. We want, also, to offer an overview of what the Board is doing. [Please note: if you want to explore the work of the board in greater depth, you will find very thorough minutes of its meetings posted on the Village website—lakebarcroftvillage.org.]

We want to thank everyone who responded to the member interest survey in March. You said you enjoy lunches, coffees, and happy hours. In fact, you enjoy all the legacy activities—our book groups, memoir writing, chess; additionally, you are exploring and enjoying our three newest groups, the bi-weekly Walking Group gatherings initiated at the end of COVID and two groups born during the past year—Musical Friends and the Vitality Group.

Recent events

(In case you missed them):

Singalong – On Friday, March 28, Ron and Wanda Martinson hosted a Village singalong at their home—an event organized by the Village Musical Friends. More than 20 people gathered around the Martinson pia-

no to sing oldies with Ron as piano accompanist. Light refreshments were served and song sheets provided. The group promises to hold another singalong in a few months. Watch for it.

Quarterly Meeting – Our spring Quarterly Meeting featured an informative presentation by Carol Stone, volunteer speaker with the Alzheimer's Association. The speaker noted that while genes, family history, and environment--elements largely beyond our control--undoubtedly affect our health, our lifestyle impacts it as well. The presentation highlighted several elements of "healthy living" that serve both the body and the brain. The essential message was that it is never too early or too late to adopt these beneficial habits.

Events Coming Soon (Don't miss them):

Wine Tasting – Join us to sample fine French wines in the company of Lake Barcroft friends and neighbors. On May 17th from 2:00-4:00 the Village will hold its third wine-tasting fundraiser. Fundraising events like these help the Village provide support and services to members.

Barbecue – The Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue will be held at the home of Cindy and George Waters

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President's Message

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on June 28th from 5:00-7:00. This event will be in lieu of Happy Hour, which was originally scheduled for that date. At the moment, we have 43 volunteers, and we're grateful for all they do.

Presentation on Invasive Plants – The Village Quarterly Meeting on June 26 will feature a presentation on "The Invasive Plants Crisis: What Can Be Done" by Fairfax Master Naturalist Wendy Cohen. All Quarterly Meetings are held at 7:00 at the Mason District Governmental Center on Columbia Pike in Annandale.

Finances:

Revenues for the first quarter of 2025 were approximately \$5,000, largely from acquisition of new members. This puts us on a good course to achieve our \$49,500 revenue goal for 2025. Our assets total more than \$65,000. However, our expenses exceed our revenue--a condition that, obviously, is not sustainable. We'd rather not raise dues: indeed, we've lowered them for social membership

THE Villager

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to make it possible for more people to join. You can help support the Village by assisting our excellent fund-raising committee chair, Lisa DuBois, generate ideas to generate funds. You can also help support the Village through your own tax-deductible donations.

What the Board is working on:

Revision of Bylaws – A committee chaired by Liz Gianturco is reviewing the Village bylaws and revising, as necessary, to clarify, to resolve contradictions, and to allow the descriptions to reflect more accurately the practices that have evolved since the Village's founding.

Working more closely with KIT – The Keeping in Touch group (KIT) is the very heart of the Village. It works to foster a sense of community emblematic of our defining concept of neighbors helping neighbors. The Board hopes to facilitate some of KIT's initiatives such as developing a process for welcoming new members.

Expanding activities – The board and, more specifically, the program committee, is seeking guidance from the recent interest survey plus the survey of 2023 to grow activities that will be of interest to members. Is there something new we should try? Contact us..—

On a different note: In March and April the Village lost three members: Richard Morton was a founding member and former co-president of the Village. Nazir Bhagat was our recently elected vice president and Ashraf Bhagat had graciously hosted us at events. All three friends are in our hearts.

Ellen Raphaeli, *co-president*

In Memoriam:

Richard Morton

Village member Richard Morton passed away at home with his life partner Dottie Bennett at his side. Richard was a founding member of the Village, served on its Board of Directors and as Co-President, and was instrumental in setting up and fine-tuning the database that the Village uses to this day. He was always available to help and did so graciously. He was a gentle man who will be missed tremendously. Richard is survived by his life partner, Dottie Bennett; his children, Jeremy Morton and Allison Addalia; their spouses and children.

Ashraf Bhagat Nazir Bhagat

Village members Ashraf and Nazir Bhagat were killed in a tragic car crash on Lakeview Drive. Both Nazir and Ashraf were committed to this community—Ashraf as a former co-president of the Barcrofters and quite active member of the Woman's Club and Nazir as a devoted member of the Village including serving as Vice President of the Board of Directors. They are survived by their daughter Alisha and son Zohar, their spouses and children and several cousins.





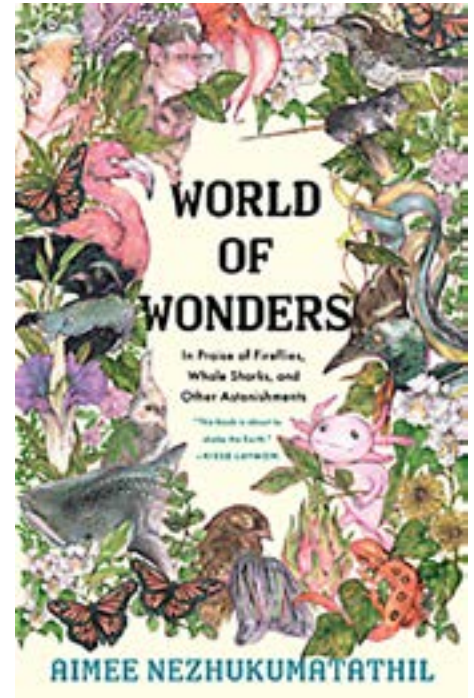
Book Reviews: ***World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments*** **by Aimee Nezhukumatathil**

Alice Lima-Whitney

I RECEIVED this beautifully written collection of essays by poet Aimee Nezhukumatathil as a gift, and it proved to be a tonic for winter doldrums. The collection explores the wonders of the natural world interwoven with personal reflections on identity, belonging, and family. The essays pair an animal or plant with moments from her life to draw connections between nature and our lives. She recalls childhood moments spent moving between

cultures, following her curiosity, and witnessing the resilience of nature. Her writing is complemented by lush illustrations by Fumi Nakamura.

The 28 essays could be a quick read, but I read one daily as a dose of wonder to boost my lackluster energy with reminders of nature's beauty. Readers who appreciate nature writing and lyricism will enjoy this delightful book.



The Ancient Wisdom of Baseball: Lessons for Life from Homer's Odyssey to the World Series **by Christian Sheppard**

Walt Cooper

WHEN I WAS A KID growing up in southeastern Connecticut I played Little League baseball and discovered the Boston Red Sox at the same time. I've been a Red Sox fan ever since. I also read a lot of books, like *Winnie the Pooh*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and all the Tom Swift stories. Flash forward about 65 years and I joined the Lake Barcroft Village Book Discussion group, where members share thoughts about books they've just read. Lately, I've have been once again reading the iconic classical Greek epics—*The Iliad*

and *The Odyssey* by Homer and *The Aeneid* by Virgil. So, it was a wonderful surprise when I came upon a just-published book that relates baseball with the cardinal virtues that the timeless classics address—*The Ancient Wisdom of Baseball: Lessons for Life from Homer's Odyssey to the World Series*.

What is virtue? What is happiness? How to raise a child? In this little book Sheppard asserts that insights into these and other basic questions can be found in both the ancient poems and on the green fields of a baseball diamond. He describes pivotal

moments from the histories of the Boston Red Sox and Chicago Cubs (both teams recently broke long curses to win the World Series) and from famous baseball players like Jackie Robinson and Babe Ruth. Then, he relates these moments to episodes in the classical poems. Example: Upon returning to Ithaca after the Trojan War, Odysseus shoots an arrow through ten axe handle holes to reclaim his wife, Penelope. In 1975, Carlton Fisk of the Red Sox homered in the bottom of the 10th inning to win Game

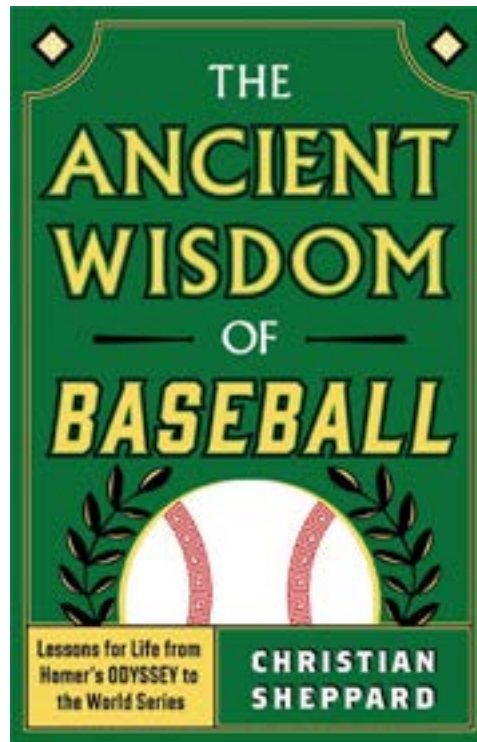
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Book Reviews

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6 of the World Series against the Cincinnati Reds. Both times we see virtuosity – excellence – rewarded with happiness and joy.

Sheppard's easy-to-read and enjoyable prose and the compelling way in which he connects baseball with the cardinal virtues made this a very difficult book to put down. It's a short book – just 167 pages – packed with wonderful stories and elevated thoughts. As it turns out, the great game of baseball can be seen as something far more than an athletic contest! ■



Keeping in Touch, Supporting the Goal of Our Village

Marcia Grabowski

KEEPING IN TOUCH (KIT) was started several years ago in an effort to organize the 80+ Lake Barcroft Village members into more manageable, smaller groups to give personal attention to each member, depending on their needs and wants. Our Village is divided into four KIT sections of 18-22 people each, largely based on geography, with two or three coordinators per section. The coordinators try to get to know each member in their group and understand their preferences as to how, and how involved, they want to be in the Village.

For example, co-coordinators Natalie Gluck and Lyn Gaffen recently polled their members as to their communication preferences, e.g., via phone, email, text, etc. Some members need little

help, have a lot of family in the area, or just want to be left alone unless they need a Village service. Others, especially our older single members, appreciate a call on a regular basis to make sure they're okay; this also makes a person feel more included in the neighborhood, particularly someone who might not be so outgoing.

Several months ago, one of our members fell in the garden; her calls for help were not heard for several hours. Devices which have a "fall detect" or some similar feature can be an enormous help in such a situation. Which such device could potentially be the most useful? There are many aspects regarding this, such as cost, ease of use. Some members have Apple watches with a "fall detect" feature; some have a device that hangs on the neck;

some have no such device. At the monthly KIT coordinator meetings, this issue has been discussed, although no recommendation has yet been made as to the most appropriate one for our seniors. Since each person has their own set of circumstances, one device might not necessarily be good for all.

Another section of KIT is coordinated by Paul Napier, Charlotte Flounders and Louise Ziebell. Paul and Charlotte have been hosting almost monthly coffees which are quite well attended (as are coffees of other section coordinators). They invite not only members of their KIT section, but their friends and the friends of their members. These are ideal gatherings for non-Villagers to meet members and to experience the outreach the Village provides.

Other KIT coordinators include Annemarie Russell, Carol Bursik, Ellen Raphaeli and Cathy Williams, all of whom foster regular communication, including phone calls, visits and coffees to their members. Marcia Grabowski is the liaison between the coordinators and LBV Board Member Elizabeth Boris. Recent monthly coordinator meetings have provided a jump start to KIT as it becomes a more cohesive and effective way to reach out to Village members. ■

Special note: Nazir Bhagat, who recently passed away, was a co-coordinator of a KIT group with Annemarie Russell. He had been becoming very active, in coordination with Annemarie, in reaching out to the members of his KIT group. He is already sorely missed.

About Sarasota

IN 2017 we decided to escape the winter cold of Virginia for a few weeks in Florida. Where to go? We had visited the Sarasota area and wanted to explore it further. We've now spent several weeks there every year since then (except during COVID-19). We've rented different homes each year, starting with a lovely bungalow right in the middle of town, then a house built in the shape of a boat, a condo on the beach, and spacious houses in residential areas. While some choose to purchase a home in Florida for their getaways, we prefer to rent. We can enjoy our time without worrying about hurricanes, home repairs and escalating flood insurance.

Sarasota lies on the west coast of Florida about 50 miles south of Tampa. The city is famous for its beaches, climate, easy lifestyle and its cultural opportunities. A lot has changed in the past few years. The population has grown significantly and where open spaces once existed there are now tall condominium buildings. Once, a few traffic lights managed traffic; now, drivers must navigate labyrinthine roundabouts. That said, Sarasota is small enough geographically that we can get from our home to downtown in about 15 minutes. Ancient Indian lore held that Sarasota Bay would be

forever protected from hurricanes. Then, last fall, Hurricanes Helene and Milton caused significant damage to the nearby barrier islands, and recovery efforts continue. However, the Sarasota downtown area was largely undamaged.

Why We Go

Sarasota offers experiences that compel us to return every year. **Culture.** This year, in the space of 30 days, we attended 10 special events. They included a concert by Itzhak Perlman, a circus (no animals) combined with an orchestra and a choir, The Marriage of Figaro at the Sarasota Opera House and the Mark Morris Dance Group at the Asolo Theater. At the Ringling Museum we attended a reception to mark the opening of a new exhibit, enjoyed the musical Five Guys Named Moe, admired quilts presented at a show by the local quilt guild and watched productions at local playhouses.



Photos by Jan Barrett

Beaches and Sunsets. Nearby Siesta Key beach was recently ranked as the #1 beach in America. While we're not "beach people," there are perhaps no more glorious ways to end the day than watching the sun set at a beach on the Gulf of Mexico. The sun seems to at first inch its way down to the horizon and then, sooner than expected or desired, it vanishes.

Uniqueness. Every Saturday morning the main streets of the city metamorphose into a world class farmer's market featuring fresh fruits and vegetables, flowers, candles, soaps, and clothing. Then, every Sunday evening, just before sunset, people gather on Siesta Key for what is known as the Drummers' Circle. Drummers from throughout the area gather and play their drums in captivating rhythms. We have lost track of the number of art shows that take place throughout the



Ringling Museum Courtyard

area virtually every weekend. **Spring Training Games.** Sarasota has long hosted major league baseball teams during the spring training season. What a great way to see players up close as they either try to make the Major League roster or sharpen up for the regular season. The green outfield grass on a warm spring afternoon and the smell of hamburgers being cooked on open grills makes for a wonderful experience, even for those who aren't baseball fanatics.

Conclusion

With so much to do and see, Sarasota has become our "must do." We've already booked our place for next year -- demand for rental units continues to increase. Family and friends have stayed with us in the past and have shared our enjoyment of the city. We must be onto something good! ■



Sunset in Sarasota



Photo by Marcia Grabowski

IN AUGUST of 2024 a "Musical Friends" group was initiated by a small group of Villagers. The first meeting was held at the home of Marcia Grabowski, Waterway Drive, and initial goals and purpose were discussed.

The mission statement of the group is: "The Musical Friends group of the Lake Barcroft Village (LBV) gathers together community members to explore, appreciate and share music in all its forms. Members learn about music and instruments, attend musical events, and have opportunities to perform. Open to all LBV members, the group welcomes everyone, regardless of musical experience or ability."

The group got off to a spirited start with a holiday show in December at the Lakeview Drive home of Will O'Neil. Several Friends members sang a list of inclusive-of-many-religions holiday songs, accompanied on piano by Doug Meyer, who grew up at the Lake. This was followed by a singalong of diverse tunes by the audience and Friends members. It was a spirited and lively event with light refreshments provided by Friends members.

In March, the group organized a Village Singalong of oldies and spontaneous requests, at the Martinsons' on Waterway Drive,

accompanied by Ron's excellent, very lively piano playing. About 20 Villagers attended, and Wanda generously provided snacks and drinks. One attendee who had attended many such events pre-Covid remarked that everyone was singing unabashedly, even those who might have been told, while growing up, that they "couldn't carry a tune." No one seemed shy about singing, even when Ron took out his accordion and played the "Beer Barrel Polka." (This also prompted two members to dance a few measures of the polka.) The singalong was patriotically closed by a heartfelt rendition of "God Bless America."

There are tentative plans for another one or two singalongs at the Martinsons' by year's end, and also for a possible karaoke/singalong at Pistone's Restaurant, accompanied by Doug Meyer; dates for both to be determined.

The singalongs are reminiscent of groups of years past. If you want to experience cheerful camaraderie at its best, keep your ear tuned for these next events. In general, you must be a member the Village to attend. However, you may attend up to two Village events per year for free. Come join us! ■

Lake Barcroft Village Musical Friends Group

Marcia Grabowski

The LB Village Vitality Group: Broadening our quality of life—at any age

Ken Trotter & Daisy Birch

THANK YOU, everyone, for keeping the concept of Vitality alive. Just bringing up the concept of Vitality as an icebreaker anywhere can boost a mood, unleash ideas, and draw folks closer. To explore and hear what Vitality means to a neighbor, colleague or loved one can be fun. And it can change us.

How Our Gatherings Go...

At 6:30—we meet & greet:

We begin with light, yummy, healthy fare and share recipes. Engaging in person and with folks who have joined in on Zoom, we focus our chatting on the foods and recipes or on the month's topic. Last month we shared three kinds of crackers that had either two or three ingredients each. The easy hummus recipe had: 2 cups soaked & cooked chickpeas blended with juice of 1 lemon (including the pulp bags & avoiding all seeds!), 1 tsp. lemon zest, 1 sm. onion,

2-5 Tbsp. olive oil, 1 tsp. vinegar (optional), a handful of fresh chopped celery, and no tahini! (salt & pepper optional). We post recipes, research, films and even playful resources that come up in our gatherings to Vitality's private, secure FB page (email daisykbirch@gmail.com and we can get you in).

7-8pm—Sharing & Inquiry:

We explore together the month's topic. Last month's topic was *Unique & Easy Spring Cleaning for Brain Body and Mood*: clearing out environmental toxins from clothing, air, water, brain etc. can dramatically change your VQ: Your Vitality Quotient (one piece on VQ is at PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36356628/>). Sometimes we explore or demonstrate a simple posture, stretch or movement that folks can engage in if they choose. We shared our deepening awareness of the benefits of clear-

Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue

The Volunteer Appreciation Barbecue will be held at the home of Cindy and George Waters on June 28th from 5:00–7:00. Call the Village office for information on the location: 703-424-1299.

ing and avoiding plastics, PFAS and toxic media. Some explored and adopted new forms of clearing/cleaning.

Together we pondered and answered the three monthly “what if” topical questions as our sharing unfolded.

We closed with a personally chosen *Vitality Game* for the month. Some form of cleaning or that naturally fits into daily life. Our last topic was Easy Spring Cleaning for Brain Body, Mood and Home (from microplastics to toxic media and conversations). Some changes members mentioned were: Increasing their HIIT exercises (that have been found to help clear out microplastics and PFAS), replacing processed with fresh foods, cutting toxic media and conversations down or out, and switching over to some of the 2 and 3-ingredient crackers, and simple recipes we shared.



Since the Vitality group began, we've received many questions. We'll answer some here...

Q: When do you meet?

A: Monthly, every third Tuesday evening from 6:30–8pm (in-person and virtual options). We

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A meeting of the Vitality group.

share, demonstrate, and learn, so time flies. Healthy refreshments are provided. Meetings are announced via email.

Q: Where do you meet?

A: In Lake Barcroft homes. We're open to local venues. We invite participants to become hosts.

Q: Can we offer to host a Vitality event in our home?

A: Please contact ktrotter@ttrsir.com to offer your space for an hour or two.

Q: Do you have a private research & infotainment page?

A: Yes. We've curated a private, interactive resources Facebook page with much (vetted, science-backed) research, healthy recipes, lectures, interviews and infotainment reflecting the topics we cover. Our mission, and award-winning, mood-boosting films are also there. Vitality is not sponsored, so, no ads. Just email daisykbirch@gmail.com with the subject line: Vitality FB, and we can get you in.

Q: Is there an age limit? How do I join?

A: Yes, no age limit. Village members (full and social) can participate. For further information, call Executive Director Cindy Waters at 703-424-1299 or email her at lbvcoord@gmail.com.

Q: What are some of the topics covered?

A: Anything Vitality: Independent science, longevity, humor, agility, emotions & mood, meditation, foods & intake, sleep, community, and many more. Some speakers/experts are scheduled. We end each

Photo by Daisy Birch



Crackers for easy-recipe snacks

event by choosing our personal, topic-based challenge that fits smoothly into our daily life.

Q: Is it OK if I can't fully participate?

A: You're welcome to attend in person or online. If someone demonstrates or leads a posture or a movement, folks take full responsibility for how/when they participate.

Many members also participate with us via Zoom: This is similar to how the memoir group includes folks on Zoom and in person. We have a laptop in the room where folks are sitting around. Members who have RSVPd and requested a Zoom link get on their computers and click on the Zoom link we've sent them via email. Then we all share and discuss (often round-robin style) with everyone in the room and on the computer. It's lovely to see and share with everyone.

From wherever you are on your committed vitality journey; welcome: Feel free to join us for dynamic discussions, interactive activities, Vitality challenges and change, as we build a healthier, more resilient and vibrant community together! ■

In Memoriam:

Renee Gholz

Former member Renee Gholz passed away on April 5. She was 108 years old. When Renee first joined the Village, she greatly enjoyed attending the CoEd lunches and had wonderful stories of her life to share. She was made an honorary lifetime member of the Village by the Board.

Renee is survived by her son, Village member Charles "Chico" Gholz and his wife Barbara, with whom she lived for more than 20 years, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER

Join us to sample fine French wines in the company of Lake Barcroft friends and neighbors. On May 17th from 2:00-4:00 the Village will hold its third wine-tasting fundraiser. The wine tasting will be held at Beach 5. Call the Village office for information: 703-424-1299.