

THE Villager

◦ NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ◦

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Tom Davis to Assess Election Results at Village Quarterly Meeting

THE LAKE BARCROFT VILLAGE Quarterly Meeting will be held via Zoom on Monday, November 9, at 7:15 p.m. Cindy Waters will send out the link in advance by email.

Tom Davis, former Congressman from the 11th District, will be the featured speaker at the meeting. Tom will speak on “The 2020 Elections, What’s Ahead?” Questions from the audience will be taken in advance. These should be emailed no later than Saturday, November 7, to Sam Rothman, samrothman@verizon.net.

Afterward there will be a brief business meeting for Lake Barcroft Village with reports from the Executive Director, Cindy Waters, and the Treasurer, Ross Kory.

Lake Barcroft Village thanks Lake Barcroft Woods and the Rotary Club of Bailey’s Crossroads for their participation in this event.

Tom served 14 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, representing the 11th Congressional District of Virginia. He served as chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform from 2003 to 2007, where he led a number of high-profile investigations. In addition, Mr. Davis was elected chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee and served in that role from 1999 to 2002.

Prior to serving in Congress, Tom represented Mason District as a supervisor on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors from 1980 to 1994, and as the board chairman from 1991 to 1994.



Tom Davis

Tom has served as a director on the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and Rector (Chairman of the Board) at George Mason University, where he is also a distinguished professor of Public Policy at the Schar School of Policy and Government.

He is the author of a recently released book that he co-wrote with former Congressman Martin Frost (D-TX), *The Partisan Divide: Congress in Crisis*, along with columnist Richard Cohen, and is often asked to appear on Network TV political shows to discuss the current political landscape.

Davis is a partner at the Holland & Knight law firm, who focuses his practice on handling a variety of congressional and regulatory affairs, including congressional investigations, land use and legislative strategy. He holds a B.A. from Amherst College (cum laude) and a J.D. from the University of Virginia Law School. ■

Lake Barcroft Village Expresses Gratitude to Volunteers

Cindy Waters

THE LAKE BARCROFT VILLAGE is a member of the nationwide organization Village to Village Network, an entity established in 2010 as the village movement was evolving across the country with the purpose of sharing best practices and to provide guidance and resources to all villages. The Village to Village Network describes villages as “membership-driven, grassroots non-profit organizations run by volunteers and paid staff.” Further, villages “...provide volunteer services including transportation, home repairs, social and educational activities.” Certainly, the Lake Barcroft Village, 64 volunteers strong, was providing the services requested by its members.

Transportation—providing rides to doctor’s appointments, grocery stores, social events, beauty salons and barbershops—has always been our most requested service. Computer and technology assistance as well as home maintenance and repair were also popular requests. Then came COVID-19 and the Governor’s mandate for social distancing and closed public spaces including restaurants and salons. The Lake Barcroft Village, in order to abide by the Governor’s directive, suspended offering rides to members in April.

But we still had the need to get groceries and prescriptions. So the emphasis for our volunteers switched from providing rides to providing pickup services of groceries, take-out meals from restaurants and prescriptions instead. Several of our volunteers learned the easier ways to order groceries and taught our members how to use those services. There were requests for notary services that were provided in socially distanced settings by a volunteer wearing a mask.

Then the day came when we could offer transportation again and our volunteers are once more assisting in that capacity. Both the driver and the member wear a mask, the member sits on the passenger side in the back and, when possible, the windows are open to allow for circulating air. The number of requests has diminished from earlier days but, in every instance, those requests have been met by our volunteers.

The Lake Barcroft Village has always been appreciative of the efforts of its volunteers but perhaps never more so than during this past year. Our motto of “Neighbors helping Neighbors” has been met with enthusiasm and grace and we offer a hearty “Thank you” to each and every volunteer! ■



Nutrition Program Highlights Lake Barcroft Village Quarterly Meeting

Shirley Timashev

LAKE BARCROFT VILLAGE held its Quarterly Meeting September 14 via Zoom, featuring a program on nutrition, led by Jan Barrett, Registered Dietitian and member of the Village. Her co-presenter was Laura Walter, a former colleague from the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service. They made a clear case for optimizing good health through good eating habits. Although they noted that Americans in general do not eat enough vegetables and skimp on low-fat dairy products, they emphasized that portion control of sweet, salty, and fatty foods is important. Occasional treats are fine.

Where can one go to get good information about nutrition? Jan and Laura had three recommendations: (1) the website of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, www.eatright.org. (2) U.S.D.A website, www.choosemyplate.gov (3) HHS website www.health.gov which also has a section about physical activity. ■

THE Villager

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Book Review: *Fly Girls* by Keith O'Brien

Priscilla Weck

ARE YOU READY to read about something other than pandemics, protests and politics?

Here's a book that will do that. *Fly Girls: How five daring women defied all odds and made aviation history.* In 1926, a new generation of female pilots was determined to take to the skies and compete in airplane racing. They had to overcome incredible odds on the ground and in the air to make that happen.

Male pilots were racing airplanes in one of the most popular sports in America. Thousands flocked to their events in cities across America. Were they there to see the daring maneuvers or the dramatic crashes from the sky? Early planes were very undependable because they were made of wood and covered in linen. With speed or sharp turns they sometimes lost fabric or even whole wings. Propeller blades snapped and broke.

Engines stopped in midair. So competitions were exciting to watch. For the pilots, winning was lucrative. Prize money came from paying fans and businesses. Even cities fought to stage the races. New airfields were being built and airplane rides or flying lessons were being offered. All for men. Women were not in the air.

Female pilots were called ladybirds, flying flappers, girl fliers—finally fly girls: those who refused to be told what to do. And they were used as advertising in stunts where flights were advertised as flying women but were really flights with men doing the flying and women along as “baggage.” They were excluded from all the flying events across the country. They were unfit. They were ridiculed. They were hired to sell airplanes, fly in exhibitions and identify barns or factories with large roofs for painting the names of nearby towns to keep pilots from getting lost. But not to race.

They persevered. Within ten years they were competing against the men and winning. This is the history of how five determined women made that happen. Some crashed, some died. Their numbers grew. They earned their place in the sky. They braved all obstacles to achieve greatness. This is their story.

It's also the story of the development of better planes, better airfields, better training and safer flying. ■



Personal Picnic Six Feet Apart

Bethami Auerbach

VILLAGE MEMBERS eager to catch up with friends and neighbors in three dimensions gathered at the Barcroft Woods yard of members Beth Auerbach and Norm Stewart from 5-7 p.m. on Sunday, August 30. The Village's popular monthly happy hours have been one casualty, for now, of the Covid-19 lockdown, and the event aimed to combine the happy hour with a picnic in an open-air setting that offered space for distancing. Sixteen members took advantage of a beautiful, mild, late summer evening for a rare in-person social occasion. Guests were able to spend time together, each bringing along a personal picnic meal and beverage of choice. Everyone arrived with a mask in place, to be removed for eating and drinking. Speaking clearly through a mask takes some practice, but no one was shy about asking “What was that?” if needed. ■

ZOOM Together

Shirley Timashev

WHEN THE PANDEMIC slammed down on usual ways of socializing, the Lake Barcroft Village started a new program called Zoom Together. It is going strong as a once-a-week conversation group, usually focused on a video TED talk about a provocative subject. “Bring together interesting people who have background on a variety of subjects, and conversation can go in any direction,” commented organizer Shirley Timashev. Zoom Together is open to Village members only. Currently there are 24 people

on Shirley’s mailing list; usually about half attend any given event.

On August 14, the Zoom Together group went virtually to Chautauqua, New York for a live presentation on “The Human Algorithm.” Fourteen people attended. Polling afterwards was positive about the experience, so on August 21 the group “went back” to Chautauqua, where Pulitzer-prize winning historian Jon Meacham spoke.

Other Zoom Together meetings were based on TED Talks. Some of the topics were:

“How Language Shapes the Way We Think,” by Lera Boroditsky; “Are We in Control of Our Own Decisions?” by Dan Ariely; and “Emotionally Intelligent Technology,” by Rana el Kaliouby. On June 19 the group had a live presentation on the Village movement by Yi-Ting Chiu, Ph.D. candidate. The group has been meeting weekly since March 27, just around the time we in VA were given stay-at-home orders.

Shirley Timashev selects the TED talk or a podcast; all Village members are notified of the topic in advance. If a Village member has problems with the technology, Shirley is happy to help with a one-on-one tutorial. ■

Travel Vignettes ZOOM Program

Linda Woodrow

LAKE BARCROFT VILLAGE launched a new Zoom program in August, “Villagers’ Travel Vignettes,” for members to share interesting and fun facts related to their vast travel experiences. So many have been privileged to visit wonderful places in the world due to business, military or recreational travel. A few of the short vignettes explored in the first meeting were the surprising and shocking intruder Nancy Mattson encountered one night in an Icelandic hotel, and the marvelous visit Sheila Wayman had with a prominent dignitary on a commercial airplane trip out of Paris, France. If you didn’t attend the Zoom meeting, ask them about their experiences.

Another feature of the meeting was a mystery photo to be

identified by the group and then followed by a few facts about the subject.

Future Zoom meetings may find the Village members sharing day driving trips, funny travel stories, fascinating people they met while traveling, foods that trigger travel memories, collections they have pertaining to

travel and travel tips (when we can all go again).

This has been a great way to get to know fellow Villagers. Co-hosts Linda Woodrow and Nancy Mattson want you to remember: “Wherever you wander, Wherever you roam, Be happy and healthy and glad to come home.” ■



Taliesin West, Scottsdale AZ, Frank Lloyd Wright’s architectural school and winter home.

Photo by Linda Woodrow

New Art Roundtable Started on ZOOM

Bob Schreiber

BOB SCHREIBER, Mansfield Road, organized a new Zoom group for Village members, Art Roundtable. The first meeting had seven attendees; they displayed



works of art from their own homes, including: a huge beaded African tribal necklace; “street art” items made of local materials, such as waste metal, string, for example a dung beetle (metal, approx. 8” long), acquired on an African safari; a set of famous Hokosai prints, his famous views of Mount Fuji, acquired in Japan; an Australian aboriginal drawing made of bark, painted, representing termites, a native food; prints by artist Rob Gonsalves;

an oil painting by Canadian artist William Weston; and an old pastel painted from an old photo.

When Bob’s turn came around he showed the cover and one representative page of a “book” in his library, explaining that it was part of a set of four well-known volumes from the middle of the 19th century (reproductions, of course, not originals). The page was the title page of the full orchestral score of Richard Wagner’s *Die Walkure*. ■

ZOOM: Building the Metro Region

Rick Kerz

RICK KERZ hosted the first two Zooms on Building the Metro Region, with the participation of another dozen Villagers; there will be at least two more sessions in the offing. The idea was born of a casual interaction that Marcia [Grabowski] had several years back with a woman who opined that she had chosen not to live “all the way out there” in this place called Lake Barcroft, because she could not see herself living so far from town. Maybe it was too bad for her, since our dam is only a bit over six miles from the Washington Monument; but back some time ago that was a fair piece.

The comment stuck with us though, and stepping off to look at “how far out” we might be, the “Building...” project started by examining the roadways that have grown up, and out, into Northern Virginia, not just the old westward-pointing “spokes” from the DC and Alexandria “hubs,” but also the US-95 interstate and Shir-

ley Highway, and the “Washington Circumferential Highway” which became the much-more-easily-pronounced “Capital Beltway” even before it was completed in August 1964, on the very day of its first traffic jam.

All of the people using all those roads to get to where they were going, notably HOME to their suburban house, then back to work, led to our group’s second session—where does all the water come from for all these people, and who ensures the water (~165 MILLION gallons per day in Fairfax County alone) is safe, available, and leaves enough to share with our neighboring counties? The story is larger and even more complex than that last sentence, but the insights from multiple Villagers provided plenty of color.

And speaking of color, no story talking of water hereabouts in the recent telling would be complete without including the June 1972 Hurricane Agnes tales. Agnes may

have been “only” a tropical storm by the time she found her way up from the Gulf of Mexico, but she was brimming with precipitation, and her depositing it hereabouts not only did in our dam, but also flooded out much of the area from Richmond up to New York state. Several Villagers provided colorful vignettes, not only about our dam but about areas up and down the Potomac and the Chesapeake, where they had found themselves when Agnes came through.

Now, as for what comes next: all this water we have coursing to and past, and through more than 4000 miles of water mains, has to go SOMEWHERE...and by that we mean somewhere ELSE.... so our next session, on November 18, will look at our sewer systems, and then look to our topography to ponder a bit about the land we are standing on. To join the Zoom session, please let Cindy Waters know of your interest. ■

My Artistic Side

Jan Barrett, a member of the Memoir-Writing Group

BITS AND PIECES OF FABRIC were my creative materials when I was a young girl. I would gather them up and fashion clothes for my dolls, holding everything together with a pin or two. As a teen I sewed many of my own dresses. My mom and I had a ritual of going to a fabric store on a Saturday, drooling over the many bolts of fabric—heavy wools, lightweight cottons—in every color of the rainbow. After much consideration I made my pattern and fabric selection—carefully reading the information on the pattern package as to which notions (zipper, snaps, thread, etc.) were needed, and we made my purchase. I happily spent the rest of the weekend sewing on my mom’s ancient machine, and I appeared at school on Monday in a new outfit!

In college I majored in Home Economics and took my sewing skills to the next level. I had a class requiring me to make a mannequin to my exact measurements and then create a dress for myself without using a pattern—simply by draping the fabric on the mannequin. And there was also a textiles class where we identified fibers by looking at a small strand under a microscope. I was in my element with those classes!

As my life (marriage and two children), and my career as a Home Economics teacher, and later as a Nutritionist got busier and busier, I had less time for sewing or any other creative pursuits. I dabbled in making small quilts, but they took a lot of time and precision.

Fast forward to 2002 when I moved to Alexandria, Virginia. My children were adults and I had a less demanding career. I discovered the Art League in Al-

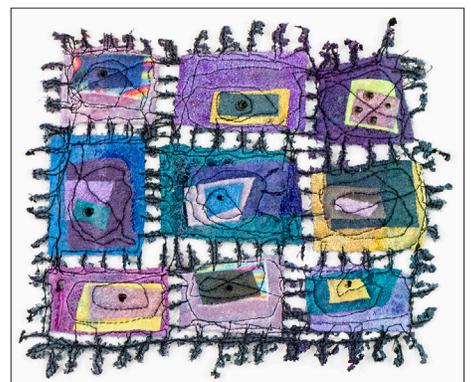
exandria and the Potomac Fiber Art Guild. Both offered a multitude of fabric and fiber classes and I enjoyed experimenting with weaving, felting, embroidery, and fabric painting. The classes that really spoke to me were on creating art from hand-painted and hand-stitched fabrics. Each class was a new challenge. I have created a “story quilt” that includes a map of the town where I lived when I was 8 years old, and also fiber landscapes inspired by my favorite Florida sunsets. I recently created a fabric book in honor of my mother, using pieces of fabric from her clothing that I had inherited. There are so many possibilities...and unlike in traditional quilt-making or weaving, there are no rules! A perfect art-form for me. I am only limited by my imagination.

During the time of Covid I have not been able to take any in-person classes. But a wonderful thing happened—a couple of British folks started an online Stitch Club. Instructors give a video presentation of their fiber art, along with an assignment for the “Club” members across the globe. The instructor is available



Photo by Jan Barrett

online to answer student questions, and students from England, France, Australia, and many other nations post photos of their work. In the time of the pandemic, when in-person classes have evaporated, it’s a wonderful way to explore new fiber art challenges. Without this Stitch Club I would never be exposed to such a variety of teachers the art of so many fellow fiber-lovers! ■



Photos by George McLennan



A Big Moment

Waltraut Nelson , a member of the Memoir-Writing Group

IN 1955, I arrived from Germany with a new passport and I started life in America. It was a difficult farewell from my parents. I was constantly thinking of them.

There came a time period that I really want to forget. In my mind I saw my parents waving handkerchiefs in the distance when the train was leaving. I saw them for a long time; my tears were blinding me.

I came to Minneapolis, a nice city of “ten thousand lakes,” to live with my new husband, Frank, whom I had not seen for six months because I had to get a new visa in Germany. It was the time of the McCarran act when all immigrants were “communists” or “Nazis.”

The reality settled in that I had broken with my homeland.

After law school Frank got a job with the US government in Washington. We had to move now. I was pregnant. We expected our first child, Peter.

After the delivery, my husband came to the hospital: no friends or parents could visit. We had just arrived in Washington and did not know anyone.

The weeks after the delivery brought me some happiness. I was able to take care of the baby because of my background in pediatric nursing. However, I got

depressed. That caused a problem for my husband and me.

I did not like it here. My negative attitude destroyed everything that could have been beautiful: the buildings were ugly, there was no concert hall or opera, no swimming pool etc., and many other items.

I really wanted to leave and go home to Germany.

But no—I was married, in love and had a child—this was impossible.

The next hurdle to happiness was in 1959 when I became a U.S. citizen. The requirement in Virginia was that only a U.S. citizen could teach in a public high school. I had to give up my German passport and break my legal bondage with Germany. My emotional connection never ceased; I wrote my parents every week for 25 years; I kept my friends from 1936, 1940 and later. In fact, I still have more living friends there than in the U.S.

During the summer of 1959, my husband Frank decided to show me parts of the U.S. and we traveled in an old car without AC. We saw the Badlands; there I met my first American Indian.

American Indians were people of interest in Europe, especially in Germany. They were described as pure people of nature whose land was taken by the white man.

The famous German writer Karl May wrote about them and his books were my favorite literature. Karl May described other natives, such as Bedouins, as people who made friends with the white man.

We saw one American Indian with a beautiful feather headdress and brown skin and leather pants. My little Peter started to scream so loud I became the center of attention. I spoke with him in German and I said, “Peter, be quiet. He does not hurt you.” The American Indian approached us and said in German, “Little boy, I do not hurt you.” I could not believe it! He continued in German, “I was in Munich during the occupation. I love Germany, but America is beautiful too.” I listened and looked at him and saw the background of Mt. Rushmore. We continued our travel to Yellowstone. The great falls, the lake, the geysers were wonders of nature. The Tetons, with the majestic ice-capped mountains, lakes, woods and animals were spectacular.

My eyes opened as if a shade had been pulled up. Yes, yes! America is beautiful too. I see it now! A big moment came. This trip made me become 100% American, but I still love my Germany too. ■

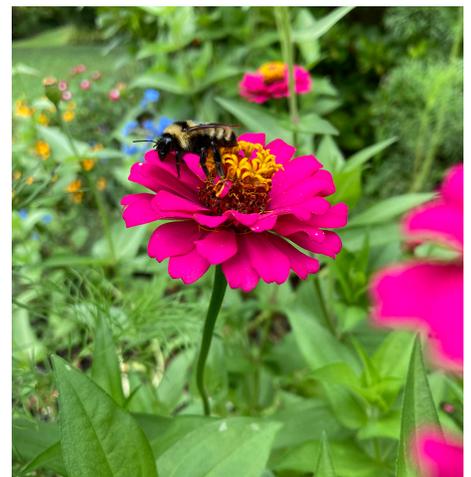


Photo by Waltraut Nelson

Movie Group Off to Successful Start

Sam Rothman

Another new Village Zoom event met with a favorable reception last month. The Village Movie Group, organized in response to a member survey circulated earlier this pandemic year, provided a forum for a lively discussion of members' film favorites and a few not-so-favorites.

More than 40 films were mentioned, some of which triggered members' feelings of nostalgia such as *National Velvet* and *Around the World in 80 Days*. Days gone by also were revived by talk of European films, mostly those directed by Francois

Truffaut and Ingmar Bergman. A bit newer was the work of Luis Buñuel and Pedro Almodóvar. And, of course, there was the obligatory discussion of classics like *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon*.

The group's offerings included several film genres, of which musicals played a small part, probably because there have been relatively few movie musicals produced over the past couple of decades. *Oliver*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Pajama Game* (♪ That's the game I'm in ♪) and the ever popular *Sound of Music* were

the most liked musicals. *Moulin Rouge* took honors in the movie-to-avoid category.

Interestingly, there were few relatively recent movies nominated by the group, recent being defined as the past five years: *Parasite*, *Pain and Glory*, *The Shape of Water*, *Loving* and *1917*.

The conversation wrapped up with a discussion of members' preferences as to home viewing versus the theater experience, the impact of streaming and the limited product being released by the studios. Among the topics for the November meeting will be a discussion of *Casablanca*. Watch your Village calendars for the announcement. ■

Big Moves of My Life

Slava Timashev

I HAD SEVERAL SHARP TURNS in my life — when my father died and I felt infinitely alone; when my family emigrated from China to the USSR; when I decided to get first a residence permit and then a second citizenship; when I decided to get a second profession and pulled myself by my hair to become (being a civil engineer) an applied mathematician (structural mechanics, reliability, safety); when I split off from an academic institute and became an independent research unit of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This list could be continued. Despite the different scales of the events, they all have a lot in common. To explain this I will cite a parable.

Once a son came to his father and said, "Dad, I am so tired of everything, I have constant difficulties at work and in my personal life, I just have no strength ... How to cope with all this?"

The father replies, "Let me show you."

He put three pots of water on the stove and brought a carrot, an egg and coffee, and put each ingredient in a separate saucepan. A few minutes later he turned off the stove and asked his son, "What happened to them?"

"Well, the carrots and the egg are boiled, and the coffee has dissolved," the son answered.

"That's right," said the father, "but if we look deeper, it turns out that the carrot, which was hard, after being boiled in water became soft and pliable. An egg that used to be fragile and liquid, became solid. Outwardly, they remained the same, but internally they changed under the influence of the same hostile environment — boiling water."

"The same happens with people — outwardly strong people can be unstuck and become weaklings,

where fragile and delicate ones can harden and get stronger ..."

"What about the coffee?" the son asked in surprise.

"Oh, the coffee is the most interesting! It completely dissolved in the aggressive environment and changed it — turned the boiling water into a wonderful aromatic drink."

"There are people who cannot be changed by circumstances - they change and turn them into something new, deriving benefit and knowledge from the situation for themselves."

What to become in a difficult situation is everyone's choice.

I think that it is not only a matter of choice, but also a matter of what is given to you at birth (God) and upbringing. In other words, if you are lucky and super-resilient, you may survive and thrive.

But the main problem (and there is no universal recipe how to solve it) is how to continue to be yourself despite all the difficulties and temptations. ■