



President's Letter

Thank you all for coming to the five-year celebration in the park last week. It was a great gathering, and the cake was delicious but very blue.

Linda Barron spoke about how the village got started. I told everyone about our program—including educational programs, exercise and balance classes, meditation, monthly speakers, outings, and tech help, to name a few!

Don't forget our Auction on May 1st at the yacht club. You can sign up online and even pay online. You can

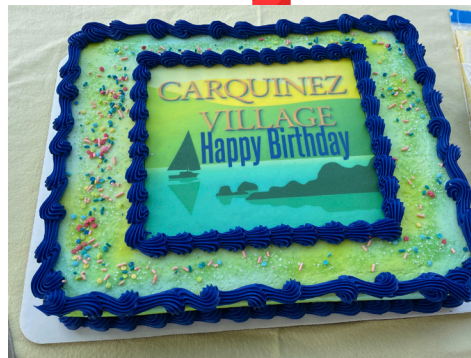
also pay at the door. We will have a silent auction as well as a Live Auction and finger food to eat with drinks.

We also will be having another Potluck in May, and, again, I want to encourage all our new members to join in the fun as well. I look forward to meeting you all at the speaker's series, live at the Benicia Library.

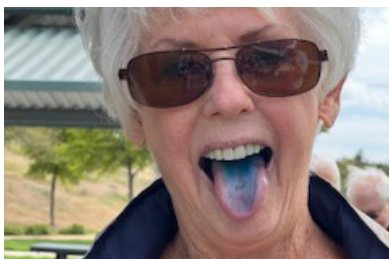
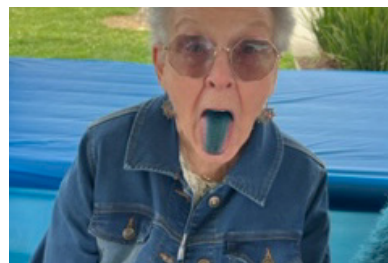
Be safe,
Helen



*Carquinez Village
Celebrates 5 years!*



*and the very colorful cake
turned all who ate it
blue-tongued!*



Member Story: Ursula Malloch **Happy 100th Birthday!**

By Greg Plant



As a four-year-old girl in Prussia, Ursula Malloch loved ballet lessons. After graduating from high school, she became a ballerina, dancing in the local opera house. Then, in an instant, bombs hit the opera house and World War II destroyed Ursula's dreams and those of so many others.

Ursula looks back now, as she approaches 100 in May, and remembers being determined—this

would not be the end of ballet for her. In 1953, after she moved to Canada, Ursula returned to the ballet studio, as a teacher of a new generation of ballet dancers.

Eventually Ursula met and wed an American, who brought her to America and Kentucky. In 1962 she moved with her second husband to Vallejo.

"We bought a little house, worked in a business together, and raised a family," she says.

Ursula remains in that house, enjoying her family of two sons, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren, including a 10-month-old. Despite losing much of her eyesight and hearing, she often meets with friends for lunch as one way she can socialize.

"When we go out to lunch, my favorite thing is tuna salad!" Ursula says. "I eat healthy. That is how I have lived so long!"

Ursula joined Carquinez Village after a caregiver told her about our "village." She likes to use Village volunteers for rides.

Never Miss an Episode of the Speaker Series

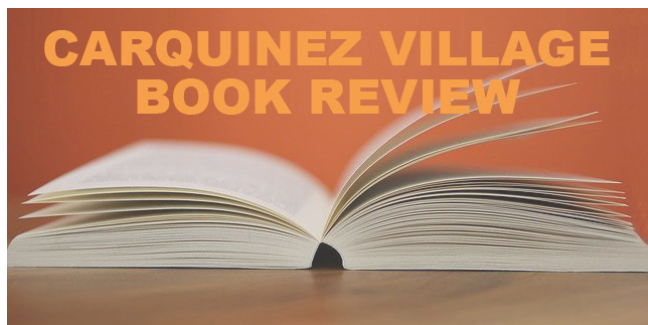
All of our recorded events can be found on our YouTube Channel.

Click the button below to go there. Once there, subscribe to the channel and you'll be automatically notified each time a new video is posted.



Book: Between the World and Me

By Ta-Nehisi Coates



Review by Carolyn Fallon

Ta-Nehisi Coates' book is a letter written in 2015 to his only son, an adolescent. In 150 pages we get indictments of white people's racism, expressions of existential terror, great rage—almost hatred—and Coates' personal history, all written so unbelievably beautifully.

"This is required reading."
—Toni Morrison

Coates is a correspondent for the Atlantic Monthly, a National Book Award winner, author of several books, and the recipient of a MacArthur fellowship. He stands as a respected writer for Black and white people. Almost all Black writers and thinkers state that if society really wants to know about the life of Black people in this country, ask the people who live that life. This book is that answer!

Coates begins with descriptions of his young life in Baltimore—violence on the streets; his disenchantment with school; no consolations from church; a strict home environment that includes beatings with a belt; a grandmother who encourages him to write essays; and a book-filled house—quite a set of contradictions. As a youth, Coates embraces Malcolm X's philosophy, eschewing the idea of passive resistance. At last, at Howard University—his "Mecca"—he has his first encounter with Black intellectuals by the dozen in an environment that is safe, stimulating, and embracing.

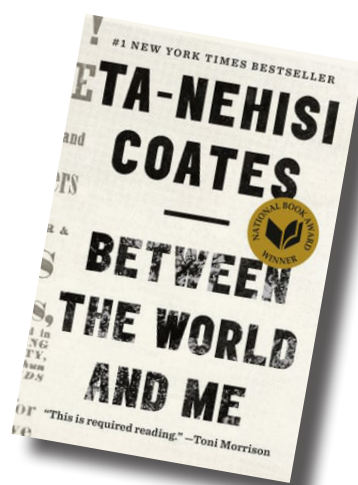
After college, he sets off to New York to break into the writers' game, and we can see that he eventually succeeds. He describes a trip that he makes to Paris. While walking Paris streets he is hit with the feeling that he could walk without looking over his shoulder, without fear of a sudden police encounter, of terror or violence—a true emancipation as a Black man.

I must say that, for me, these mere 150 pages metamorphosed into a thousand pages of thoughts, conjectures, new knowledge, new perspectives. Succinctly, he says to his son, "This is your country, this is your world, this is your body, and you must find some way to live within the all of it."

Buy it at:



Bookshop Benicia



This month of May We Celebrate Ourselves!

National Older Americans Month

By Linda Chandler

May Day and little baskets left at doors—at least that is what used to happen in my childhood neighborhood. We would place the basket, ring the bell, and wait for one of our elderly neighbors to peek out and grin. It is a fun memory of the simple joy of giving and remembering those who, back then, were usually rather invisible, occasionally peeking out the window at us, and remaining indoors most of the time—at least in my community.

Times have changed. We are now the older adults in our community, and we are active: taking painting class, writing memoirs (and news articles), hosting cooking classes online, tweeting, and zooming. We are healthier and busier than our counterparts in any generation before us. And there are more of us! So, let's CELEBRATE!

May is National Older Americans Month. Every May, the Administration for Community Living, a national organization, leads the celebration, and, this year, we at Carquinez Village will join them. The theme for this year is “Age My Way” since we are all choosing how we do it. Should we play mahjong or bridge, take walks or balance class, volunteer to help at the polls, or drive another member to an appointment? Or of all the above! We are on the go!

“Age My Way” looks different for each of us:

- **Planning:** What you need in your future from home, community, and activities that interest you.
- **Engaging:** How you want to stay involved and contribute through work or through volunteering.
- **Accessing:** Making home improvements and modifications; customizing your space for comfort and ease.
- **Connecting:** choosing social activities and relationships to keep growing, learning, and connecting.

Carquinez Village is getting the word out about how vital and energized we are. We want to share with the community how we contribute, how we laugh and play together, and what wisdom and experience we have to share.

This month, join the celebration!

We have asked the Mayors of both Vallejo and Benicia to issue proclamations announcing this special month as “Our Month.” We have written a press release. We are visible proof of the power of older adults as we move through our days—this month and every month—promoting, leading, volunteering, recruiting, influencing.

Visit our fun collages and puzzles at the libraries in both Vallejo and Benicia. There is a chance that your photo is part of the puzzle! While there, view the special display of books that highlight aging and the creative talents of older adults. All our lives are enriched by reading of others' successes and tales of lives well-lived!

Stop by the Benicia Community Center and see the joyful mural created through the collaborative efforts of Benicia teens from the Kyle Hyland Center and some of your fellow members of Carquinez Village—maybe some of you! Through this visual project, the two generations have created a community landscape that combines youthful energy and the wisdom of age, an inclusive and shared vision for now and the future, and an age-friendly community many of us call home. And most of all, celebrate yourself! You are full of stories to tell, skills to share, gifts to give to those you know and those you are about to meet. Enjoy your basket. Maybe you can deliver one to that new neighbor down the block.

We're Celebrating Older Adults!

By Judie Donaldson

Do you remember when it was assumed that when someone retired, they folded up their tent and faded away? Fortunately, that view of aging is definitely “old school,” as the common saying goes.

Instead, women and men are viewing the last phase of life as a time of new opportunities, a time to pursue interests they couldn't consider when they were immersed in family responsibilities or consumed by career demands. Their pursuits are evident everywhere. Some older adults are producing beautiful art, while others are writing memoirs. Many are volunteering to help others in need and a vast number have become leaders in their communities. Collectively, they are making a difference in the quality of life across the country.

It is not surprising, therefore, that organizations across the country are celebrating May as “Older Americans Month.” Carquinez Village is joining in the celebration as well. We are proud to honor our older adult members as well as all older adults in Benicia and Vallejo. **We invite you to join us at our May Senior Speakers Program on May 19, at 10:30 a.m., in the Doña Benicia Room of the Benicia Public Library,** when we will hear from a panel of Carquinez Village members who have each embraced this new view of aging in different ways.

Notes from Member Services Committee

By Janice Magner

Just a reminder to members:

Bridge fares have risen dramatically in the past few years, and we'd like to remind you that members receiving a ride from a volunteer are responsible for the cost. Currently it costs \$7.00 to cross our bridges, so please remember to reimburse our volunteers. Thank you.

Our committee is looking for volunteers to make personal calls to some of our shut-ins—members who are isolated, most of whom have little or no family.

If you would like to connect with these members, please give me a call at 707-980-1781.

Commitment would be a minimum of one phone call a week.

Sonoma Square

By Greg Plant

When you think of Sonoma, you think of wine, or maybe cheese—Jack and other local cheeses. Sonoma Square, this month's short trip, offers so much more!

The square is at the end of Highway 12 (on Broadway), heading north through rolling hills, lush with vineyards and wineries—small or mansion-sized—dotting the way.

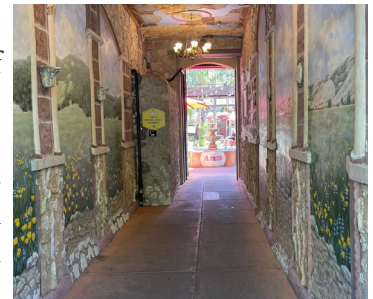


Gen. Mariano Vallejo built Sonoma Square in 1836 to house his home (when California was part of Mexico). It is also where Mission San Francisco Solano's priests lived. Both home and mission are historic monuments.

Walking around the square reveals, on every block, little alleyways, like this one with murals of Sonoma on each wall, leading to little patios filled with wonderful surprises.

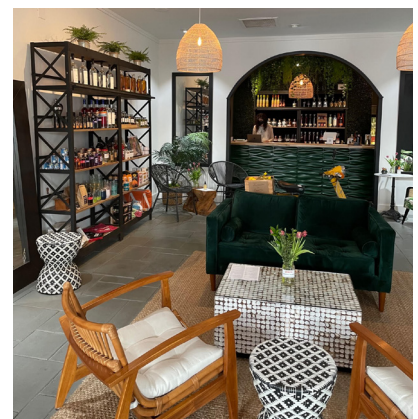
We found homemade donuts and chocolate in one patio, and jewelry and galleries and gardens and hidden-away restaurants in others, and, of course, plenty of wine tasting!

Making the trip around the square led past shops in every block. Restaurants were on every stretch, many part of storied hotels from historic times. The El Dorado Hotel, for example, is in the landmark Salvador Vallejo building, built in 1843 for General Vallejo's brother.



In the center of the square stands Sonoma City Hall, a tall stone building built in 1908. A little park, with amphitheater and babbling brook, surround the city hall.

After a leisurely tour of the plaza, and maybe lunch or a snack of Sonoma cheese from The Cheese Factory, make your way home via Highway 12—but take a designated driver to avoid the allure of endless wineries on the way home!



Blue tongues aside, Remembering our beginnings

By Lois Requist

Published in the Benicia Herald

April 22, 2022

Carquinez Village just celebrated its fifth anniversary with words from Helen Hughes, President and a cake that turned all our tongues blue. We were outside and were lucky to have a bit of warmth, since our weather has turned chilly and even rainy! What is that wet stuff that falls from the sky? Its gold to us by now.

Weather aside, I thought about the process it took to get us here. Way back in 2014, Judie Donaldson and I were (and still are) in a breakfast group. That's where our conversations about villages began. We had seen articles. I attended an event in Lafayette that highlighted organizations that support older people. By the fall of that year, Judie and I were meeting, talking about the possibility of having a village in this area. Nationally, the Village-to-Village Network, vtv-network.org, provides information and we also talked with some Bay Area sources.

We decided to have a public meeting in January 2015 and arranged to have it at the Benicia Public Library. I was in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, for Christmas, 2014, when a reporter called me to ask about the press release, we'd sent to publicize the meeting. We'd arranged for Ruth McCann, a leader

in starting the Lamorinda Village, to speak for us.

The day came. We arrived early to set up the room, unsure of how many chairs to put up. 20? 30? By the time we started, every available chair was used, and people were standing. About 80 people attended. We discussed what a village is about. A membership organization, it would provide support through direct services for seniors such as transportation and help with household chores, plus offer information and socialization opportunities.

I remember saying that day, "We can't do this without you. You need to sign up to be part of establishing a village, if it is to happen."

Many did. That was the beginning. Alan Plutchok signed up, though he said he doesn't like to attend meetings and can't write because he's a retired doctor and someone else always did the writing for him. He's turned out to be one of our strongest members and supporters. Along with his wife, Alice, they participate in many of the events, bringing warmth and kindness with them. Linda Barron, who had been my yoga teacher and became a friend, signed on. With her organizational skills, her voice, and her home, she offered help especially with event planning.

Diane Choquette also enlisted. She was soon part of an assessment

team to find what services were already available and what others were needed. Lars and Jeanne Ekdahl soon were active. Lars led a governance group, to determine what steps we needed to take, legally and organizationally, to become established. He would eventually handle the incorporation process. Jeanne would lead our technology team to create a website, storage of membership records, and more.

Gerald Forcier became our financial "go to" person, plus an always friendly, smiling, and helpful person. Judie Donaldson—well she was everywhere, doing everything. You may have noticed that Judie and I take turns writing this column. Though I'm a writer, I think of myself as a creative writer, and don't enjoy writing manuals, the kind of information every organization needs. Judie does it and does it well. That's just one place she filled a need. Anyone want to become a member? Judie would come to visit you, bringing the necessary paperwork and her warm and caring personality. Those are only a few of the reasons to love her.

We went to the city council to tell them what we were doing and ask for their support. We went to local organizations and churches to tell our story.

We were also soon meeting with Robert Fuentes, the leader of

continued from page 7... Remembering our beginnings



Who said committee meetings are boring?

Faith in Action in Solano County. They'd been providing for years some of the same kinds of services we wanted to provide, so their experience was important to us. Until we became incorporated, we operated as part of FIA. We still work with them. They answer

the phone when someone needs a service and schedule the request, so it is funneled through to our volunteers. Recruiting volunteers was another major part of our efforts. You can't offer services without volunteers who provide them. Each volunteer must be trained and certified through the county.

In April 2017, we became officially open for business with a celebratory event at the Commanding Officer's Quarters, at which then Mayor Elizabeth Patterson and many other city officials greeted our beginning and offered good wishes for our future.

Many others have joined the leadership team since. Susan Neuhaus served as president for two years, bringing diligence and kindness to the office. I'm not part of the leadership team anymore. I've always

believed that if we started something effective, it wouldn't revolve around me. Others would come along and would take up the responsibilities.

While it felt like we were filling a need when we started, it has turned out to be a joy. The people involved are interesting and energetic, kind and funny. I've driven people to appointments and in the process got to know them a bit. There's such a variety of backgrounds in our membership and among the volunteers.

Congratulations to everyone who has been part of this extraordinary effort and to all those who continue to work to keep it going. If you have questions or wonder if it might be a fit for you, visit our website, carquinezvillage.org.



Lois Requist, Editor

Thanks to all who contribute by sending articles! Notably, Greg Plant sends something nearly every month. I look to Carolyn Fallon for literary recommendations.

And thanks to Pat Plant, Barbara Fredericks, and Rachel Ann Latosa Brown who edit, format, post and send each edition.

Pictures and stories are always welcome.
Contact Lois at loquuu@gmail.com