

President's Letter

It is autumn! That's what I keep telling myself, but aside from the cool mornings and evenings it might as well be summer.

Hope everyone had a busy month in October. Now we gear up for Thanksgiving and Christmas, when we can all join in with the numerous activities, including two walking groups.

On November 5th there is a special day planned just for seniors at the Benicia Lutheran Church. Carquinez Village will have a table there. Do sign up online as there will be lots going on.

Once again we will be collecting money so that we can help families over this Christmas period. Watch for information on adopting families in Benicia and Vallejo. It will be even harder for families this winter, so give generously.

For those interested in going to Trader Joe's in Concord, we will be carpooling the First Tuesday of each month, so sign up online at our website.

Also, mark December 8th for our Annual Christmas Party. I look forward to meeting you all there.

As ever, Helen

A Day for Older Adults Like Us!

You are invited! Mark your calendar: Saturday, November 5, Benicia Lutheran Church is hosting an event focused on topics of interest to older adults in the communities of Benicia and Vallejo.

Featured speakers will give talks on topics ranging from finance and insurance to caregiving options, estate planning, and health and safety, among others.

Carquinez Village leadership has provided some ideas and support through the planning stages, and the Village will be a featured part of the agenda, as well as having a resource table. Besides presentations of interest, there will be a resource bag of information, networking, door prizes, and lunch. The event will conclude with entertainment, highlighted by international performer, Ken Mederna.

Registration onsite begins at 8:30 am, with the program beginning at 8:50 and ending following the performance, around 2:30 pm.

Member Survey

By Susan Neuhaus

We want to thank everyone who responded to our Member Survey last month. We were not surprised that you love our volunteers. Many people spoke about the great activities offered.

We also appreciated the frankness and good suggestions about how we can do even better, as well as what you would like to see in the future. Based on your survey comments, we have already reinstated the walking groups. Each of the committees, as well as the Board, will be reviewing the report in detail and acting on your suggestions.

We will be sharing updates with you soon, as well as the Executive Summary. We were very pleased to hear that fifty-two of you said that, as a result of your membership, you feel like a part of a community.

Books by Yiyun Li

By Carolyn Fallon

Recently, I caught on NPR an interview with Yiyun Li about her new novel, *The Book of Goose*. Yiyun Li, born in China during the horrors of the Cultural Revolution, is a MacArthur Genius Grant award winner. Formerly a professor at UC Davis, and now at Princeton, she has written novels, a collection of short stories, and a memoir. I originally became interested in her not only because of her Chinese Communist background, but because she shared my wild enthusiasm for William Trevor, the Anglo-Irish author of fabulous short stories.

In the interview she alluded to critical times in her life: a long hospitalization for depression/attempted suicide and the later suicide of her eldest son—a sixteen-year-old. She wrote of her mad grief in a memoir, *Dear Friend, from My Life I Write to You in Your Life*, and a novel, *Where Reason Ends*. Her memoir is primarily an homage to other authors and their books—and what a wonderful, inclusive group of primarily European and American authors and poets—but surprisingly a little sparse on the inclusion of Chinese writers.

Where Reason Ends chronicles the conversations of a mother with her dead son, much of which is autobiographical.

Yiyun adroitly catches the timelessness of the son's existence in contrast to the now and how of the present time of the mother. Much like Joan Didion, she attempts to assuage grief with writing.

Set in a little country village, *The Book of Goose* is the story of two French girls, beginning with the time immediately after the Second World War and describing their postwar lives. I, of course, immediately rushed to Amazon to preview the book, and what a stunning beautiful book—seductively, gorgeously designed. I read the preview pages, requested it from our library, and will report on it when read.



PILOT PROGRAM FOR VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

A one-time allocation of \$3 million in general funds to promote and adapt the Village model of volunteerism and services to reflect the strengths of California's diverse communities.ⁱ

THE PROBLEM:

- 90% of older adults want to age at home yet don't have access to the supports and services they need ⁱⁱ
- 40% of older Californians, 3.4 million, are moderate and middle income older adults who do not qualify for publicly funded services but cannot afford to pay for services ⁱⁱⁱ
- Social isolation and loneliness threaten older adult's mental and physical health,^{iv} and Covid exacerbated the threat

THE VILLAGE RESPONSE:

Villages are peer-led, non-profit organizations that connect older adults to the community, the supports, and the expertise they need to continue living lives of purpose and meaning.

Built on principles of mutual support, Villages mobilize an intergenerational corps of trained and vetted volunteers to meet the everyday needs of their older neighbors. Villages reduce isolation, improve quality of life, health, and wellness, and expand choices at all stages of aging, empowering older adults to sustain independence and remain in charge of their lives as they age in community.

ⁱ Master Plan for Aging Goal 3, strategy 5, objective 90, 2021.

ⁱⁱ The United States of Aging Survey, AARP, 2012 <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/learn/research/the-united-states-of-aging-survey-2012-aarp.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ 2020 Income Data, Aging.ca.gov; Pearson, C.F., Quinn, C.C., Lognathan, S., Datta, A.R., Mace, B.B., Grabowski, D.C. *The Forgotten Middle: Many Middle-Income Seniors Will Have Insufficient Resources for Housing and Health Care*. *Health Aff.* 2019; 38(5):1-9.

^{iv} Holt-Lunstad, Julianne, Smith, Timothy B., Layton, J. Bradley. *Social Relationships and Mortality risk: A Meta-analytic Review*, 7.27.2010, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>

THE PILOT PROGRAM:

A three year one-time allocation of \$3 million in general funds for the CA Department of Aging to contract with the Village Movement California as a public/private partnership to:

- Build village infrastructure through multi-lingual materials, workshops, a learning community, coaching, and new partners
- Expand the number of new and existing villages in underserved communities
- Engage state of the art technology to capture village impact
- Integrate villages into the hubs and spokes system of aging services

THE SPONSOR:

Village Movement CA is a 501c3 nonprofit association, a coalition of grassroots village organizations founded in 2018. Currently 46 villages engage 10,000 members, volunteers, and caregivers. New villages are coming on line in response to the Master Plan for Aging. Village Movement California is part of the national Village to Village Network of 300 operating and forming villages.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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510-900-6380

October's New Members

By Susan Neuhaus

WELCOME!

Helen Jacks, 99, has joined from Rancho Benicia. She heard about us from several of her friends and thought she would try us out. Helen has family in the area, so she decided to move here from Oroville in the last couple of years. She is hoping to make new friends and connections and try out our cultural and educational programs. When she got to the section on the member application for health conditions,

she said she doesn't have any, only her legs get weak sometimes, so she uses a walker. We will be celebrating her centennial birthday next year.

Joy Innes moved to Southampton from San Clemente a little over a year ago. When I went to her home, I was amazed by all her beautiful fall decorations. She previously loved to entertain, and we talked about our great potlucks. She is looking forward to meeting new people and checking out our many activities.

Volunteer Profile: Rachel Brown



by Greg Plant

Rachel Brown fills a vital role for Carquinez Village as a volunteer, serving on the Village Marketing Committee and running our Facebook page. She also helps members when she can and is willing to teach members how to use Facebook and social media.

A native of Santa Rosa, our Facebook expert traveled throughout the US before settling in Benicia with her hubby and four kids—three of whom are teens!

“I worked for the Social Security Administration, but now work for the Department of Veterans Affairs in Human Resources,” she says. “Remotely,” she adds, which no doubt helps her, with a five-year-old in tow. Rachel also is a local Realtor.

Rachel clearly is a busy lady, and CV is fortunate that she makes the time to volunteer for us.

VOLUNTEERS ARE CENTRAL AND ESSENTIAL THANK YOU!

San Francisco Symphony

By Carolyn Fallon

There was great excitement at the Carquinez Village in the last two months—free tickets were made available for two San Francisco Symphony concerts at Davies Symphony Hall—both conducted by the new conductor, the Finnish-born Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Lucky Carquinez Village participants heard Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which also featured an all-black cast on an extravagantly designed set. This concert was performed for the symphony's opening night gala, so it was quite an occasion.

On a glorious, crystal-clear San Francisco day, the second concert, a Sunday matinee, featured Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, known as the "Resurrection." This ninety-minute performance was the most exquisite rendering of the work

that I have ever heard. Salonen's conducting gave it a magic twist with the symphony and chorus in absolutely tip-top, majestic form. At the close of the first movement, Mahler left a request that the conductor leave the podium for a five-minute break, a request that is usually ignored by the conductor. But not Salonen, who dutifully acquiesced, to the audible mystification of the audience, who redeemed itself at concert's end with a mighty, roaring, twenty-minute standing ovation, which is no easy task for the Sunday matinee crowd, who are mostly on crutches, walkers, and in wheelchairs.

What great introductions to the post-Covid time! Thanks to the joy of music, to the shared interest of the crowd, and to the generosity of the San Francisco Symphony and of the volunteers who delivered us all to these glorious times!

"This is a splendid, deeply researched, much needed book."
—Bethany Reid, poet, author of *Sparrow: Poems*

"Dancing with the Muse in Old Age gives this septuagenarian hope that I have many productive years ahead of me, more than I thought."
—Ralph Keyes, author of *The Courage to Write*

COMING SOON!
AVAILABLE 11.8.2022

Dancing with the Muse in Old Age

Available in Print or Ebook
5.5 x 8.5 • 220 pages • \$15.95 (trade paper) • \$9.99 (ebook)
ISBN: 9781684222204 (trade paper) • ISBN: 9781684222211 (ebook)
PUBLISHED BY COFFETOWN PRESS • www.coffetownpress.com

D*ancing with the Muse in Old Age* is a book about thriving in old age. While focusing on creative engagement, it is for everyone who is aging. It reflects the new ways of looking at old age as a potentially dynamic, happy, and productive time. It reviews the science on aging that shows that negative views of aging can actually cause decline. The book opposes ageism and reports the evidence that old age can be a time of great happiness. It challenges the widespread notion that "peak ages of creativity" are 39 to 42. It challenges the notion that the burgeoning number of elders will drag down the economy (in fact, we are holding up the economy). A chapter titled "Brilliant Old Brains" provides lifestyle guidelines that do not guarantee but do influence your chances of growing into a deeply satisfying old age. The book explores the old-age time of life of more than one-hundred dynamic elders—mostly but not entirely creators in the arts, both well-known and little known, both able-bodied and disabled. Their inspiring stories model for us all how to live in old age. The sections, "Composing Our Lives: Old Age" at the end of each chapter will help readers consider and better plan for a satisfying old age.

Dancing with the Muse in Old Age
PRISCILLA LONG

Restaurant Review: King Valley Tea House

By Greg Plant



If you are looking for authentic San Francisco-style Chinese food, Pinole has just the place: King Valley Tea House for dim sum.

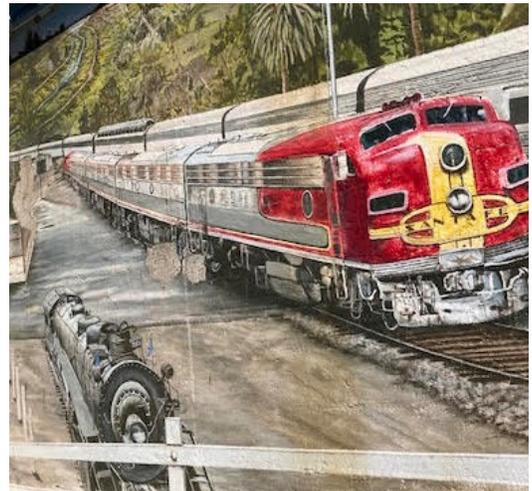
The town even throws in classic old homes and an historic mansion, a waterfront picnic area, and high-end shopping at Sprouts and Trader Joe's. It is a fun day—and on the weekend King Valley even does dim sum with rolling carts of dishes—just like SF!

Take Highway 80 across the Carquinez Bridge; the Pinole exit is a short drive away. Go right past Sprouts and stay on Tennant. At San Pablo go right, then right on Fernandez to the restaurant's large parking lot. Enjoy (and on Saturdays there is also a farmers' market across the street).

Afterwards, if you're in a curious mood, continue along Tennant toward the bay. As you go under the freeway, check out the murals depicting early Pinole! Then watch for the magnificent Fernandez Mansion on your left and check out the other turn-of-the-century buildings on your way.

You then come to Bayfront Park, where you can park and go left for a nice post-meal walk with tremendous views of San Pablo Bay and even benches where you can sit.

Go back the same way on Tennant for fun shopping, if you wish, at Sprouts and/or Trader Joe's (neither with locations anywhere near Benicia, so a trip bonus!). The freeway back home is easily accessed off Tennant, ending a fun, short trip.



CV Gives Back!

By Pat & Greg Plant

Carquinez Village gives back to our community in many ways. One way many members help out is by volunteering to distribute food collected by the Food Bank. It is fun and easy work, handing out bags of food to hungry folks! For more information, call the Plants (find us in the CV directory)!

Patience

From a well-being blog written by Nick Hughes

Sent by Helen Hughes

Are you good at waiting? If so, then congratulations! You have conquered the most challenging aspect of human existence. To master the art of patience is really to master the art of life. That's because impatience depletes your energy, robbing you of your sense of humor and your capacity to experience joy in the moment. While everyone knows that patience is the key to waiting, most people hate waiting more than anything else. What can you do to become a more patient person? It begins by understanding what patience really is.

As Joyce Meyer explains in this week's quote, patience is not so much your ability to wait as it is your ability to regulate your emotions while waiting. Next time you are feeling impatient, pay attention to how your body feels. If your stomach is in knots and your chest is tight, it can be very difficult to breathe. The same is true if your chin is tucked and your jaw is clenched. With all this inner tension, it's no wonder that waiting can feel so awful. When you are impatient, every minute that goes by feels like torture. However, you are not only the victim that has to endure this torture—you are also the torturer.

The secret to being patient is realizing that tensing up and holding your breath doesn't make time speed up, it just makes you feel bad inside as time goes by. Compared to impatience, patience feels nice. Instead of a heavy, constricted experience—as if the walls were closing in around you—patience feels light and expansive. So, stop tying yourself in knots every time you must wait. Impatient people want to move on to the next moment so badly, they completely forget to enjoy this one. Patient people, on the other hand, are just happy to be here, regardless of how long things take.

Patience is not the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting.”

~ Joyce Meyer



Note from the editor: I would like to hear from you if you have suggestions for this newsletter, or other comments. A special thanks to Mary Eichbauer, who edits the final copy, and to Barbara Fredericks, who does the layout! I used to do that, but it has become more complex, as it needs to be read across many different devices.

Happy Thanksgiving!
Lois Requist, Editor



Grieving?

Know someone who is?

When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful. Our ***Surviving the Holidays*** seminar helps participants discover:

- How to deal with emotions
- What to do about traditions
- Helpful tips for surviving social events
- How to find hope for the future

SURVIVING — THE — HOLIDAYS

Please join us for this encouraging seminar.



www.griefshare.org/holidays

Sunday, November 13, 1:00-3:00 pm
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www.BeniciaLutheranChurch.com