



*In loving memory of*  
**Judie Donaldson**

"The key to life is loving-kindness."



*Co-founder*  
 Carquinez Village

## President's Letter

I want to wish a happy New Year to each and every one of you.

It seems we're through the worst of this year's winter storms, yet, for a while, every time I went out it was still raining! I just kept saying "We need every drop, so don't even start to complain."

I feel refreshed and ready for 2023, having spent my first Christmas in England with my family since Covid began. As much as I love England, I was ready to come home to Benicia.

We have a very exciting year planned, from potlucks to picnics, educational talks to coffee morning. In order to do all these amazing things, I will need your participation and enthusiasm.

Do check out our events programs and keep reading our newsletter.

Lastly, I want to say how much we are going to miss Judie, who always came to our events, to encourage us with our ideas and dreams for Carquinez Village. I will miss her as a friend as well as someone I admire greatly, always helping me with a positive, caring attitude. We here in the Village will be honoring her. I would love to hear from you, how she touched your lives, and we will share these wonderful things she did for our members.

I can be reached at: [helen@carquinez.org](mailto:helen@carquinez.org)

Thanks again,  
 Helen

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You may have noticed that the Carquinez Village newsletter has run articles recently featuring volunteers like Harold Weaver. Here's why:

**“Don't ever question the value of volunteers. Noah's Ark was built by volunteers...the Titanic was built by professionals.”**

– Dave Gynn, CEO, LinkedIn.

## January New Members

By Susan Neuhaus



It's a New Year and four amazing new members have joined us.

**Sandy Grey:** Sandy, as a long-time volunteer and Volunteer Services Committee member for six years, is not new to the Village. She and her husband and rescue dog Zack moved from San Francisco to their forever home here in Benicia upon retirement.

**Paula Daniels** is our first “snowbird” member, living part of the year in Florida and the rest of the year here in Benicia. She is originally from Garden Grove in Southern California. She had a varied career as a dental assistant and then as a health-care consultant. She is most proud of the non-profit she was involved in starting—Forgotten Children, Inc.—which fights against the victimization of women and girls through an anti-human-trafficking campaign.

**Anne Olmstead** moved to Benicia from Davis, where she taught French Literature at UC Davis. She is interested in the Villages’ many offerings. She is willing to practice conversational French with others. She is also an antique doll expert and even has her own kiln.

**Nora Bergman** is our newest member. She has lived in Benicia for forty years and was encouraged by several of our members to join.

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## Solano Gleaning Initiative

By Susan Neuhaus

Many neighborhoods have fruit trees that go unharvested. Let's get that food out to those in need.

If you have a tree that is ready to harvest, email us at [CGallegos@foodisfreesolano.org](mailto:CGallegos@foodisfreesolano.org) or fill out the “Please Come Pick My Tree!” at the site below and they will coordinate a volunteer team to pick.

Visit the **Food is Free Bay Area** website at: <https://fifbayarea.org/gleaning>



## Harold Weaver, Volunteer

by Greg Plant

Harold Weaver is a “people” person, which makes him perfect as a Carquinez Village volunteer. “I like meeting new people, and volunteering helps me give back,” he says.

Harold was headed in an accounting academic direction in college, like his parents, when his advisor noticed Harold’s outgoing nature and persuaded him to change majors to marketing—definitely a more people-oriented move!

“This has rewarded me my entire career!” he recalls.

Born in rural Oregon (“Our recent rainstorms remind me of my youth”), Harold graduated from college in 1985 and settled into a newspaper advertising career, selling and buying ads in newspapers for his business customers. In 1999, he moved from the Pacific Northwest to Sacramento.

Harold was a confirmed bachelor and joined the Little People of America organization in 1998. He

is still active and is a National Co-Coordinator for their “Older Wiser Little Seniors” group. He met his wife Donna in 2001 through mutual friends from LPA, and they married in 2004, after a three-year courtship. He moved to Benicia in 2002 and the San Francisco Chronicle hired him in 2005.

When Harold retired from the Chronicle in 2021, “I wanted to fill my new-found freedom with meaningful activity,” he says, “so I started to volunteer.” He helps the Village by giving rides and providing tech support and other services. Harold also gives rides for Faith in Action. In addition, he volunteers at the Vallejo Kaiser Hospital Information Desk.

For fun, Harold and Donna like to take short side trips around California, and he is now an avid Bingo player at the Benicia Senior Center. “I was driving folks there,” Harold explains, “and one day I thought, ‘Why not try it?’ And I liked it!”



From left: Tony Failla, Al Russell, Lars, Bob Rickman, Jack Weaver, Leonard Caves, Dr. Alan, Barrett Vogel, Doug Snyder, Armand Seguin

## How Many Men Does It Take To Open A Beer Keg?



## Judie Donaldson

(A reprint of the nomination application for Judie as Senior Citizen of the Year, 2021. She won. Linda Chandler wrote the letter.)

Always fascinated with people, Judie Davidson has worked with nonprofit organizations, serving as a founder, a board member, and a beacon for change wherever passion led her. Her leadership has benefited organizations as diverse as homeowner's associations and career/life skills for women; as far reaching as non-profit management and the Buddhist Insight Meditation.

Retirement was not a slowdown. Settling in Benicia in 2011, she engaged in several community initiatives. During that time, she and a friend investigated a growing effort called the village movement. Grappling with the personal and societal changes, they both witnessed changes occurring for the retiring/aging population around them. The question they asked: "So what's next?" They knew that support for aging adults to choose to remain in their own homes meant figuring out answers to safety, transport, social and educational opportunities, modification of existing systems and creation of new ones. For Judie, life must have purpose. Up went Judie's hand.

The effort required structure. A dream turning into reality called on Judie's excellent skills at networking, her persuasion, and passion. Up went her hand; the other one began passing the hat. Initiatives take resources: connected people and funds. Never shy, Judie applied her skills. The resulting scaffold now needed members, legitimacy, policies and procedures, deliverables and volunteers. Through personal investment, and strong personal networks, Judie headed up letter-writing campaigns, speaking engagements, events, and home teas. Starting slowly, the idea gained momentum in the eyes and hearts of community members.

Judy served as co-chair of this fledging organization as it gathered momentum, organizing and guiding. Volunteers were trained; publications created; web-site and newsletter developed. Membership grew; funding through donations, grant applications and a dues structure provided monetary resources. As President, Judie received recognition daily from grateful members and fulfilled volunteers. Judie has served as chair/ active members of several committees, including several committees of one. She is easy to spot: her hand is up. She is yet again ready for another task.

Through her leadership, that dream is now a thriving 100-member nonprofit. Over 40 committed volunteers offer their time to drive, pick up a grocery order, make check-in calls. Judie contacts members, meets city officials, serves on committees. She collaborates on grant applications, writes bi-monthly columns for the local paper and encourages members, volunteers, and board members through her reflective input. She does all of this with one hand, for the other is always raised yet again to volunteer.

CARQUINEZ VILLAGE

# NEEDS YOU!

CARQUINEZ VILLAGE IS  
ACTIVELY RECRUITING  
VOLUNTEERS

SCAN TO LEARN MORE  
AND FILL OUT AN  
APPLICATION



## “The Lessons” by Ian McEwan

Review by Carolyn Fallon

British author Ian McEwan had an absolutely fabulous short story, “*The Lesson*,” which appeared recently in the *New Yorker*. I was blown away by it. I particularly love his impeccably, exquisitely written works because they often feature themes associated with music. When I read *Saturday*, I tried to imagine how it could have been read accompanied by a DVD of the music cited in the book. Out of his 18 or so works, his novel, *Atonement*, became a hit movie and another, *Amsterdam*, won a Booker Prize.

Well, McEwan has developed the *New Yorker* short story into a weighty tome called *The Lessons*. This is not to be read at a galloping pace, but at leisure with great thought.

We meet the protagonist, Roland Baines, as a new student in a British boarding school. His parents are anxious for him to learn the piano and, alas, his young piano teacher is the catalyst for a lifetime of misery and deep reflection through World War II, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Suez Canal debacle, and the Berlin Wall rise and fall, to contemporary life. It is a mixture of plot and psychological–political reflection. In an interview on a Sunday TV show, McEwan said some of the turns in the plot were autobiographical.

Visit his website to learn more:

<https://www.ianmcewan.com>

## Editor’s Note

by Lois Requist



About Judie, Pat Plant said to me, “Judie was a force of nature. I know you were old/good friends and she was your buddy, writing your wonderful *Benicia Herald* articles. She will be missed by many.

Suzanne Awalt: “This is difficult news to process. And yet, I think of the strong, gracious, and wise example Judie puts before us.”

Wherever I went, after news of Judie’s accident became known, people stopped me to talk about Judie. It is good to talk about losing our wonderful friend, to remember her, to cry, and to repeat her motto about loving kindness. We gained so much from knowing Judie. We miss her every day.

You can read more about her at our website, [carquinezvillage.org](http://carquinezvillage.org) or go to [Caring Bridge](http://CaringBridge)