



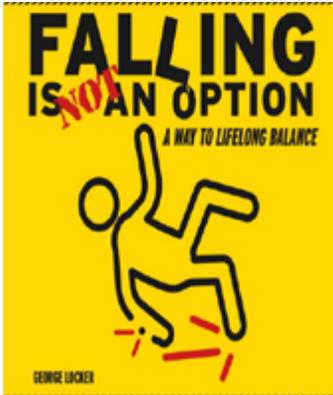
Presidents Letter

Soon it will be the first day of summer and a time of new beginnings and endings. June graduations are happening and Father's Day. June is also Mental Health month. Vaccine clinics are occurring everywhere. Benicia's vaccination rate, for example, is over 73%. Hope you are enjoying being able to get out a bit more. We are responding to the desire of many of us to get out and see our friends in person. We will continue to have monthly picnics. It has been so great to see so many of you turn out. We are moving the picnic location around to different neighborhoods. The June 9th picnic will be at Highland Park on the Benicia/Vallejo border. I'm looking forward to seeing you and checking out all these great parks.

In April, Carquinez Village celebrated its fourth anniversary. We had to put our annual party on hold for now. Your board has been working throughout the spring and early summer on thinking through our direction for the next two to three years. Our goal is to remain meaningful and sustainable for our members and the community. You may remember that we did a member survey and then some focus groups right before the shutdown last spring. We have taken that information, and some additional interviews, and have spent a lot of time on Zoom sorting it all out. We are looking forward to sharing that plan later this year. Stay Tuned.

– Susan Neuhaus





New Exercise Class

Qigong is a gentle exercise to support health. It can be done standing or sitting. The class works on balance, stretching muscles and joints and simple self-massage to enhance energy flow. If you'd like to join, the class is from 10:30-11:30, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Come when you can. I highly recommend it. It really helps balance and flexibility. It is on Zoom, and there is no cost to you. [Sign up here!](#)

I also recommend the book, *Falling Is Not an Option: A Way to Lifelong Balance*, by George Locker. It contains great exercises to help your balance.

– Janice Magner

Sherry Lee Richardson Coffey

December 9, 1947–May 6, 2021

Sherry Lee Richardson Coffey died unexpectedly of an aggressive and previously undiagnosed autoimmune disease. She was born to Rowena Coleman Richardson and James Albert Richardson in Grand Junction, Colorado. Her father became a National Park Ranger and she considered herself lucky to have lived in National Parks, growing up in Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. She attended Chico State (CSUC) for her MA and four teaching credentials.

She taught at Benicia Middle School for over thirty years, was the head of the English Department, the leader of her union, and an inspiration to thousands of students, some of whom are teachers at the Middle and High School now.

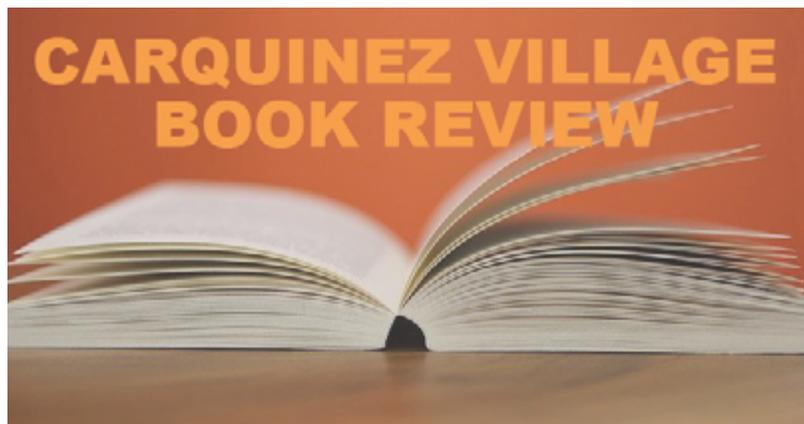
She was an early board member for Carquinez Village and served diligently on the Governance Committee. She was active in AAUW, Friends of the Library and several bridge and book clubs.

She was preceded in death by her parents and two previous husbands, Bob Goodrich and Jeff Knight. She is survived by her daughter, Georgina Coffey Turner (Chris); granddaughters Harper and Harriet; good friend Jim Coffey; stepsons Miles and Sebastian Goodrich (Talese); brother Shane Richardson (Linda); three nieces and a grand nephew; dozens of cousins; and many friends.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, family services will be private. A memorial service for friends and former coworkers will be held later. Scholarships in her honor have been established by AAUW and Benicia High School. There will be a special presentation about her at the Benicia School Board Meeting on May 27, at 7 pm.



Memoirs



A Tale of Love and Darkness
Amos Oz (1939-2018)

My friends and acquaintances have been scurrying around with Proustian eyes. Are they looking for a madeleine? Searching for lost memories? Meditating on Kierkegaard's, "Life must be lived forwards but can only be understood backwards"? In any event, since Lois Requist's class on memoir writing, there has indeed been a metamorphosis in their ranks.

For me, it led to very happy thoughts on memoirs that I've loved—Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*; Ann Frank's unbelievable diary, written when she was fourteen; Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*; Mary Karr's *The Liars' Club*; Siegfried Sassoon's WWI memoirs; all of Oliver Sacks, etc. Note that I do not include Scandinavian Karl Ove Knausgård's six dense, dark memoir books.

There are, of course, fictional memoirs. Touted and lionized, Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* contains this introduction to Charles Ryder's "memoirs": "My theme is memory, that winged host that soared about me one gray morning of war-time. These memories, which are my life—for we possess nothing certainly except the past—were always with me. Like the pigeons of St. Mark's, they were everywhere, under my feet, singly, in pairs, in little honey-voiced congregations, nodding, strutting, winking, rolling the tender feathers of their necks, perching sometimes, if I stood still, on my shoulder or pecking a broken biscuit from between my lips; until,

suddenly, the noon gun boomed and in a moment, with a flutter and sweep of wings, the pavement was bare and the whole sky above dark with a tumult of fowl." What a way to start a memoir.

Now to the extraordinary memoir of Israeli Amos Oz. Oz chronicles so many things in this memoir—the life of European immigrants in British-ruled Jerusalem, the inception of Israel as a nation, the immigration of holocaust survivors, the Palestinian problems and conflicts, and life in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

His recount of his personal life, growth, and development, from childhood to life in a kibbutz, is touching and poignant. A quote from the *New Yorker* review is perhaps the most succinct description of this book. "What made *A Tale of Love and Darkness* an event is the power with which it entwines the history of an immigrant family—a lonely, depressed mother, a distant father, and their son—with the larger historical story: Europe's rejection, the frantic search for refuge among the Arabs in Palestine, the idealism and the disappointments, the establishment of Israel and the war that followed..."

It had been long thought and hoped that Oz would be given the Nobel Prize for literature, but, alas, he died in the year when they were most hopeful. I found this book a very compelling read.

– Carolyn Fallon

Offer from Northgate Church



Carquinez Village once again has received the gracious offer of willing volunteers from Northgate Church. As part of their outreach, some congregation members will be available on a Saturday near the end of June (we think June 26), to assist our members with household needs.

Pre-Covid, we greatly benefitted from their help with picking fruit, trimming, clearing debris, moving items, light painting, and repairs. Work must be tasks that can reasonably be completed in a few hours not to exceed one day. The workers have tools but will need details about the project so that they can match labor and skill-needs with the task.

Please look around your homes and yards and notify Linda Chandler by phone at 707-344-3042 or email at tiffally@sbc-global.net of your needs. The volunteers have limited capacity, but we will schedule what can be done in the timeframe of their workday.

More specifics will be sent to those selected when we are closer to finalizing the schedule. **Please get your request in prior to June 15.**

– Linda Chandler

Remembering Everett Dirksen

When I was a child, Sunday morning in our house was anything but religious. But we did have a ritual. Dad and I would watch Meet the Press, and then he'd quiz me on what the politician had just said. It was a great way to learn about politics and politicians. And it trained me to listen to politicians not only for what I wanted to hear, but also for what was actually said.

As a child, one of my favorite politicians was Everett Dirksen, not necessarily for what he said, but for what he looked like and how he sounded. Fuzzy-headed, with big eyes, a big nose, and a foghorn voice, he was a master of rhetoric. Of course, Dad would never have a good word for him because he was a Republican. But on those mornings, with mom making pancakes, dad and I would watch and listen. I learned to separate the meaning from the dross.

– Joseph Athey



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Bottling that wine!

(Continued from last newsletter.)

We left you tasting—and testing for sugar/alcohol content, using that valuable hydrometer—and now you can bottle when the fermentation stops. (Note alcohol content for your wine label!)

Back to Oak Barrel for corks, bottles, and a bottle corker. Composite corks are \$35 for 144, and you can rent a floor corker for \$20/day. Bottles are \$14/case; be sure to get colored bottles to protect wine from sunlight. Buy a \$3 racking cane.

Soften and sterilize corks by soaking them overnight in a sulfite solution—1/2 tsp for 1 quart water. Store in a Ziplock bag to cover all corks with liquid.

Use sterilized plastic tubing to run wine from the carboy into each bottle, making a kink in the tubing to stop the flow. Put the bottle into a flat pan to catch spillage. Suck to start draining the wine; go slowly!



After each bottle is filled, cork it! Lift the corker plunger completely, put a cork into the cork chamber, stand the bottle on the base and hold the corker vertically on the neck of the bottle.

Depress the plunger firmly until the cork is completely driven into the neck of the bottle.

Go back and fill the next bottle, then cork it. When you near the bottom of the carboy, where the wine is murky, attach the tubing to the racking cane, insert the cane into the bottom of the carboy, and start the sucking process again.

Once all bottles are filled (about 24), clean off the corked bottles with a sterilized rag, then put them into the cases the bottle came in. Look what you did!

Don't forget to make hand-drawn or computer-made wine labels. And drink with great, responsible joy!

– Greg Plant

Better World Program

On Wednesday, June 23, at 7 pm., the program will focus on a big, local environmental problem: litter. We will hear from Steacy Sadler, the leader of Benicia Litter Pickers. They've accomplished many ways to clean up Benicia, including mobilizing many groups on the recent Earth Day and bagging up over 1,000 lbs. of litter!

Visit their website at: benicialitterpickers.org



Editor's Notes

We will be coming out of the restrictions of the pandemic this month. Watch for changes in scheduling and new opportunities.

Thanks to Joe Athey, Janice Magner, Carolyn Fallon, Greg and Pat Plant, Linda Chandler and Susan Neuhaus for their contributions this month and to Mary Eichbauer for editing. I welcome anyone who wishes to contribute to send their writing to me at lois@requist.com.

One final note: what do you think of this newsletter? What would you like to see added or changed? Any thoughts? Let me know at my email address lois@requist.com.

- Lois Requist
