

## The village needs YOU!

By MORGAN GOPNIK, NNV PRESIDENT

**N**orthwest Neighbors Village—our village—is composed of many different elements. First and foremost are the people: full members, supporting members, volunteers, staff, board members, donors, and the community around us. But there are also many tasks that must be completed to keep the village running: member and volunteer recruitment, website and database maintenance, fundraising, personnel management, newsletter articles, member surveys, program planning and evaluation, and much, much more!

To keep all these tasks moving forward, the NNV board has created five working groups composed of board members and other volunteers from our community. The working groups support and supplement our amazing, hard-working staff. At the moment, there are five active working groups (described briefly below), each with its own goals and tasks. As you look at these, please think about where you might fit in.

Do you have skills and interests that might advance the work of one of these groups?

Would you like to meet others and have some fun, while making our village even stronger and more effective?

Would you like to help shape the future of our village and ensure that it continues to serve your needs?

If so, please contact Stephanie Chong ([schong@nnvdc.org](mailto:schong@nnvdc.org)), let us know your main areas of interest, and we'll put you in touch with one of the working group leaders. Let the fun begin!

**Member & Volunteer Outreach:** We work with NNV to track membership and volunteer engagement, periodically survey members and volunteers to assess program effectiveness and changing needs and interests, and launch new

outreach efforts designed to enhance NNV's reach and effectiveness.

**Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:** We aim to develop a plan to bring more diversity, equity, and inclusion to our organization, its volunteers, and members. We seek to become more accessible as an organization, and to be of greater service to a wider range of older adults in NNV's catchment area. Specifically, we seek to reach more persons of color, as well as those vulnerable owing to low incomes, food insecurity, lack of access to technology, or physical disabilities.

**Fundraising:** We plan and implement NNV's annual fundraising event, and educate and reach out to NNV supporters about the advantages of including NNV in their planned giving efforts.

**Community Outreach:** We understand that thriving local businesses are important to helping our members age well in our community. We liaison with the Chevy Chase Citizens Association and three area Main Street organizations: Chevy Chase, Tenleytown, and Van Ness, to identify opportunities for partnerships that support the local business community, and engage older adults.

**Program:** We are just getting started and plan to meet for the first time in Spring 2022. We encourage members to join the Working Group in time to participate in our first meeting. The focus of our Working Group is to increase member engagement with NNV through social, cultural, and wellness programming. We will plan small gatherings and large events based on member interest, and will adjust for in-person and virtual programming based on Covid protocols.

If you are interested in helping out with one of our Working Groups, please contact Stephanie Chong via [email \(schong@nnvdc.org\)](mailto:schong@nnvdc.org) or phone - (202) 935-6060.

## NORTHWEST NEIGHBORS VILLAGE

a community network of support  
PO Box 39135  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-935-6060  
[www.nnvdc.org](http://www.nnvdc.org)

Northwest Neighbors Village (NNV), founded in 2007 and opened in 2009, is a nonprofit organization created to help the residents of Northwest Washington live comfortably and safely in their homes and neighborhoods as they age.

### Join or volunteer

NNV welcomes new members and volunteers. For more information, call the office at 202-935-6060 or go to [www.nnvdc.org](http://www.nnvdc.org).

### NNV Board Members

#### Officers

Morgan Gopnik, president  
Sam Smith, vice president & treasurer  
Merilee Janssen, secretary

#### Directors

Richard Avidon  
Jessica Berenson  
Shanti Conly  
Judie Fien-Helfman  
Bert Foer  
Monica Knorr  
Lenore Lucey  
Gene Sofer  
Jan Solomon  
Ann Van Dusen  
Karen Zuckerstein  
Janean Mann, emerita  
Frances Mahncke, emerita  
Robert Parker, emeritus  
Stewart Reuter, emeritus  
Jo Ann Tanner, emerita

### Team

Stephanie Chong, executive director  
Heather Hill, volunteer and member services coordinator  
Leslie Pace, communications coordinator  
Mustafa Bahar, programming coordinator  
Barbara Scott, village social worker

### Newsletter team

Pat Kasdan  
Janean Mann  
Pat Mullan

# NNV and G4G join forces to help older adults

By ANN VAN DUSEN

**N**orthwest Neighbors Village is committed to building a generous and supportive community where older adults can thrive. In February, Northwest Neighbors Village had an exciting opportunity to expand our reach by partnering with [Goods for Good DC \(G4G\)](#) to support [We Are Family Senior Outreach](#), a nonprofit organization that serves hard-to-reach older adults in underserved parts of the city. This was a great way for our Village to share acts of kindness with seniors throughout the city.

Eight NNV members and volunteers baked treats and assembled 100 “We Care” gift bags with fun things such as books, soaps and lotions, decorative items, chocolates and more to raise the spirits of vulnerable seniors in DC. As Judie Fien-Helfman - NNV volunteer and supporting member - said after dropping off her gift bags, “it was so fun.” Supporting member Mike Van Dusen and neighbors Wes and Virginia Egan (pictured below) clearly agree.

Northwest Neighbors Village welcomes younger volunteers who want to make a difference in our community. William Hardee, a senior at St. John’s College High School (pictured below), volunteers with NNV for his community service requirement and has helped with a variety of tasks, including delivering holiday meals and gifts to our members. This project was a great fit for William who set aside time last weekend to prepare “We Care” gift bags for vulnerable seniors.

There is a strong spirit of generosity at Northwest Neighbors Village. The partnership with Goods for Good DC was a great opportunity for our Village to extend our generous spirit to seniors throughout the city.



(L. to R.) Virginia Egan, Wes Egan, and Mike Van Dusen



William Hardee

# Local programs help fight food insecurity

By STEPHANIE CHONG

Some Northwest Neighbors Village members who live in the ANC3E neighborhood enjoyed free lunches prepared by [Le Kavacha Bistro](#). The lunches were generously provided by [Tenleytown Main Street \(TMS\)](#) through a grant TMS received from ANC3E. NNV volunteers were instrumental in delivering 15 lunches to members every Friday for five weeks from late February through March—a total of 75 meals! Many thanks to our volunteers for their help with the deliveries. As part of the grant, meals were also provided to residents at [Seabury at Friendship Terrace](#), an independent living community in Tenleytown.

COVID-19 has taken a toll on the restaurant community. Le Kavacha is an independent, minority-owned restaurant that has been financially impacted by the pandemic. Executive Chef and owner Eugene Ndjiki-Nya opened during the pandemic and quickly had to pivot his business model and learn how to prepare and package French cuisine for takeout. According to our members, Chef Eugene and his team have figured it out! “The meals are very well done and very appreciated. It’s something really nice to look forward to”, said one NNV member. This grant was a wonderful opportunity for local community partners to come together to support local seniors and a local restaurant.

For our members, these meals came at a good time - grocery prices are rising, and cold weather and the pandemic have kept many indoors. Older adults are increasingly at risk for food insecurity. According to the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, nearly 120,000 seniors in D.C. are currently food insecure, and D.C. has the highest rate of seniors facing the threat of hunger in the nation. Food-insecurity rates tend to be higher among older adults who are low income, less educated, Black, Hispanic, separated, divorced, or never married. Chronic disease, living alone, changes in physical and/or cognitive function, and caregiving are other risk factors associated with food insecurity. Food insecurity can lead to poor health and other challenges that can impact one’s ability to live independently.

Addressing senior hunger is a priority for the Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL).

If you or someone you know is experiencing, or is at risk for food insecurity, DACL can help. Call (202) 724-5626 to learn more about DACL’s home-delivered meals program, or to sign up to enjoy meals at a [Community Dining Site](#) near you. NNV members who are experiencing food insecurity can call the office at 202-935-6060 to arrange a meeting with NNV’s case manager.



(L. to R.) Merilee Janssen, Eilene Robb, Eugene Ndjiki-Nya, and James Robb at Le Kavacha

Susan Crawford (R.) delivers a meal to Helen Sebsow



## First Quarter 2022

### New Members:

John A.  
Christine L.  
Ellen S.  
James H.  
Suzanne H.  
Jane S.  
Edward L.  
Tom K.  
Susmita D.  
Kathleen M.  
Nora B.  
Debbie G.  
Joan L.  
Holly C.  
Anne R.  
John R.

Bobbie M.  
Dorothy M.

### Welcome Back:

Sakina M.  
Mini M.  
Nancy W.  
Dorothy L.

### New Volunteers:

Edward L.  
Jake F.  
Rosemary M.  
Nancy C.  
Jeannie O.  
Tom K.



# NNV's TICKETS FOR A CAUSE – Friday, June 3rd at 7PM

By JUDIE FIEN-HELFMAN

NNV's annual fund-raiser, Tickets for a Cause is back! This year, the virtual gala will feature an "Up Close and Personal" conversation with Robert Siegel, retired long-time host of NPR's All Things Considered, as well as an opportunity drawing of fabulous prizes. The party will be on Friday, June 3rd at 7:00 PM. Attendees will have the opportunity to submit questions to Mr. Siegel in advance by emailing [schong@nnvdc.org](mailto:schong@nnvdc.org).

Tickets for a Cause supports the heart of NNV's operations – our valued volunteers! Every one of NNV's 100 plus volunteers are trained and screened before providing any services to our members. The cost associated with this training is

almost \$100 per volunteer! Tickets for a Cause aims to raise at least \$10,000 to support volunteer service coordination, outreach and training for new volunteers. Volunteers provide over 3000 hours of support and service to our members every year. We couldn't do what we do without our volunteers!

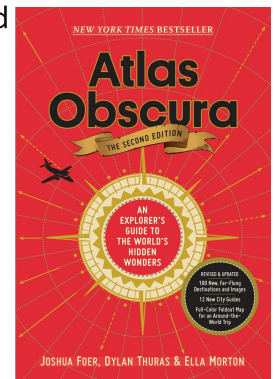
Please mark your calendars for June 3rd. You can register and buy tickets to the gala here ([LINK](#)). Please encourage your friends, family, and neighbors to buy tickets even if they can't attend the gala. Everyone who purchases a ticket is eligible for the prizes below. On behalf of everyone in our village, thank you for supporting our mission to enable older adults to thrive and

remain engaged with neighbors, friends, and in their communities, as they age.

The Tickets for A Cause fund-raiser has several extraordinary prizes, with a few more in process. The prizes, valued from \$200 to \$2,500 include:

1. One Hour Artifactual Appraisal with Sarah Reeder (value \$250)
2. Two Nationals Baseball Tickets to Two Different Games (value \$200)
3. Atlas Obscura Trip Voucher (value \$2,500)
4. Atlas Obscura Course and Signed Book (value \$300)
5. Case of Wine and Private Tasting at Total Wine and More in McLean (value \$600)
6. Four Nationals Baseball Tickets and Parking (value \$325)
7. Private Cheese Tasting in your home for 8 people (value \$400)
8. Museum Musing & Hopping (value \$225)
9. Friendship Heights/Chevy Chase MD - Dining Out #1 (value \$325)
10. Chevy Chase DC - Dining Out #2 (value \$375)
11. Gourmet - Dining Out #3 (value \$300)

The prize drawings will take place during NNV's Gala, on Friday, June 3rd beginning at 7:00 PM. You need not be present to win.



# Old Urban Naturalist

BY JANE WHITAKER

So you thought cicadas were bad. Prepare yourself! The giant Joro spider, *Trichonephila clavata*, is coming. It's from southeast Asia and was first spotted in Georgia around 2014. It has since then been gradually spreading up the East Coast and is expected to be in our area this year.

The creature has a large bright yellow and black striped body with legs so long that it is bigger than the palm of your hand or a large tarantula. The females are larger than the brown males and are 3-4 inches wide including their leg spans.

The webs look shimmering gold in the sunlight and are huge. They can cover trees and have depths of three feet or more. Fortunately, the spiders prefer to spin their webs in trees or on telephone poles generally 6-10 feet above the ground.

Spiders have fangs and these are no exception. The fangs are rarely sharp enough to pierce skin but are effectively used to pierce insects they catch to inject venom to paralyze them. The venom is not poisonous to humans but could cause some reaction and soreness for a few days.

They have migrated to our area by hitching rides in vehicles. The tiny offspring can also balloon. They are so small they can attach themselves to a piece of web and be carried via the wind over fairly long distances.

In Japan the Joro is called Joro-gumo which means "whore" spider, as it is believed to be a shape-shifter that can change her appearance into that of a beautiful woman. She then seeks men to seduce, whom she then binds in her silk and devours. Koreans call it Mudang-gumi which means shaman or fortune-teller spider.

Scientists do not know what ecological effects the Joro will have. It is hoped to be positive as its native diet includes several invasive insects from Asia including mosquitos, marmalade stink bugs, invasive ladybugs, and spotted lantern flies. Time will tell. Since hummingbirds are known to get caught in spider webs I am concerned they may be in some danger from the large high webs.

It is spring so try to learn a new bird song and look out for our spring wildflowers.



Female Joro spider (L.) and much smaller male (R.)



Joro spider on an adult's hand



Watch this [video on Youtube](#) for a glimpse of the size of the Joro's web.



# Introducing new NNV programming coordinator

By STEPHANIE CHONG

I'm delighted to announce that Mustafa Bahar, beloved NNV computer and tech support volunteer, has joined the NNV team as our programming coordinator. Mustafa brings his patient and kind demeanor, as well as a wealth of non-profit and planning skills, to his new role (don't worry—he will also continue to share his technical expertise in his volunteer capacity!). This is a contract position that will be piloted through the end of the year.



PHOTO BY DAVID COHEN

In his new role, Mustafa is helping NNV offer more opportunities for social engagement and enhancing NNV's member-driven programming. Mustafa is excited to get started and says, "I can't wait to meet and learn about each one of you!"

Mustafa was born and raised in Turkey and came to the United States in 2007 to study English in Columbia, S.C. He was accepted to Clemson University to study Materials Science for his Ph.D. Mustafa met his wife Rachel at Clemson where he was active in volunteering for intercultural and interfaith organizations. He was the president of the Intercultural Dialogue Club and the Turkish Student Association, and was a founder of the South Carolina Dialogue Foundation (now known as the Atlantic Institute), a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote philanthropy, educational activities, and dialogue for peaceful coexistence. In this role, Mustafa brought students and community leaders together by organizing activities including art and essay contests, dialogue dinners, educational trips to Turkey, book talks, and panel discussions.

Mustafa moved to D.C. in 2018. At the dawn of the pandemic, he was seeking ways to get involved with the local community and found NNV. He quickly became indispensable as a tech volunteer, helping our members stay connected virtually via

computers, tablets, cell phones, and on Zoom.

Mustafa likes meeting new people and learning about their different cultures. He also enjoys mushroom foraging, cooking creative whatever's-in-the-fridge recipes, traveling, and coffee of course. Outside of NNV, Mustafa is busy running his business, Baharson Consulting, an IT and social media company.

We are thrilled to welcome Mustafa to our team! If you are interested in sharing your ideas for future programs, please let us know at [info@nnvdc.org](mailto:info@nnvdc.org).



"If you struggle to remove your ID or credit cards from your wallet, place a tab of masking tape or painters tape on the edge to make it easy to pull out."



Do you have any time saving or safety suggestions to share? Send them to Leslie ([lpac@nnvdc.org](mailto:lpac@nnvdc.org)).

# Celebrating National Volunteer Appreciation Month at NNV!

By STEPHANIE CHONG

**V**olunteers are the heart of our Village. Every day, Village volunteers are providing our members with the support and confidence to live well in our community. None of our work would be possible without the dedicated work of our 150 caring volunteers who help our members:

- **Get Around** – For many seniors in our community, transportation can be a barrier to accessing basic needs like groceries and medical care, and can increase the risk for social isolation. Each year, NNV volunteers provide over 1,000 rides so our members can receive timely medical care, get groceries, visit with friends, and attend places of worship.
- **Household Support** – There's an app for that, but do you know how to use it? NNV tech volunteers are here to help! Need a ladder to change a lightbulb? An NNV volunteer can do that for you. Volunteers help with a variety of household tasks, from watering plants while you're away to moving trash cans to the curb while you recover from an illness.
- **Stay Engaged** – Volunteers are helping to combat social isolation one service at a time. Each and every volunteer service is an opportunity to engage with your neighbor. Our volunteers genuinely get to know our members and care about their wellbeing. In fact, our volunteers find great satisfaction in the friendships they make through the Village.

*"I look forward to my volunteer's regular phone calls when we talk about everything. But she goes way beyond phone calls. She has helped in a number of practical ways, like picking up prescriptions and important items I need. We have become friends."*

-NNV Member



## NNV

### Virtual Speaker Series

Northwest DC is home to numerous dynamic, informed individuals. Join us for one or all of these discussions, designed to engage and inform you.

Please check our website for the most up-to-date listing of future [Virtual Speaker Series](#) programs.

Many past speakers have given permission to record their programs. These are available on [Vimeo](#).

NNV volunteers help in so many ways. On behalf of the NNV board and staff, I extend our sincerest thanks to all of our volunteers for building a caring community where older adults can thrive. You are the heart of NNV!

Please join us in thanking a volunteer:

- Send a message of thanks to the NNV office – we will make sure it gets to your favorite volunteer!
- Recommend a volunteer for the NNV Volunteer of the Year Award. The awardee is announced at our Holiday Party in December but we take nominations any time!
- [Make a donation in honor of a special volunteer](#)

Messages and nominations can be sent to [info@nnvdc.org](mailto:info@nnvdc.org) or by calling 202-935-6060.

There's no time like the present to become an NNV volunteer. Enjoy the personal reward of helping others in your community. [Visit our website to learn more about our volunteer opportunities.](#)



2021 Volunteer of the Year Merilee helps member Claartje access a virtual yoga class.

## Calendar

NNV's calendar of events is regularly updated.

Please check our [website events page](#) for current listings.

# Be a magician in the kitchen

By BARBARA OLIVER

Billed as “the world’s easiest banana bread” by creator Jill Nystul of OneGoodThing, it certainly lives up to its name. Although I see it as more of a cake than a bread based on crumb, density, and texture.

The recipe calls for four ingredients that can be kept on hand. Ingredients can be instantly converted to satisfy gluten-free or diabetic dietary requirements. The finished product freezes well. (I sealed it in plastic wrap and then in aluminum foil.) It can be sliced while frozen with a serrated knife, although this takes a bit of pressure. Better just to freeze in smaller portions and thaw before slicing.

## World’s Easiest Banana Bread

**Ingredients:** 1 box yellow cake mix • 2 eggs • 3-4 overripe bananas • 1 cup chocolate chips (optional)

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease two small loaf pans, or one large loaf pan.

Put the cake mix, eggs, bananas, and chocolate chips into a large mixing bowl or the bowl of your stand mixer. Mix well. Spoon the batter into the pan(s).

Bake in two small pans for 35 to 40 minutes—a few minutes longer if using a single large loaf pan.

Cool in pan for 10 minutes; turn bread out on rack; slice. Makes 18 servings.

**Notes:** Toss regular or mini chocolate chips in a little bit of flour before adding them to the batter to keep them from sinking to the bottom of the pan. • To make gluten free: use a gluten-free yellow cake mix. • To make sugar free: use a sugar-free yellow cake mix and sugar-free chocolate chips. • To make a different shape: bake batter in a muffin pan, a mini-muffin pan or a Bundt pan. Adjust baking time—test doneness with toothpick until it comes out clean. • To freeze overripe bananas until you have enough to make the recipe: toss them into a plastic bag, peels and all; freeze. Thaw when ready to use. Or peel the bananas, put them in a sealable bag, smash them until they lie flat, then freeze.

Source: Adapted from [onegoodthingbyjillee.com](http://onegoodthingbyjillee.com)



BARBARA OLIVER