

THE VILLAGE NEWS

Northwest
Neighbors
Village



Volume 9, Issue 11

A Community Network of Support

December 2017

Time for fun and food at NNV's annual holiday party

You're invited to have fun and enjoy a wide variety of foods and good company at NNV's annual holiday party.

Bring a side dish, salad dessert or beverage to share and join us from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10 at Forest



Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW. Call the NNV office at 202-777-3435 to confirm your participation and indicate what dish you plan to bring.

The NNV board and staff wish you a very happy holiday season.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

A new language and a life change for Rachel Hartig

By JANEAN MANN

“When we went into the classroom, it was sink or swim,” said Rachel Hartig. She was speaking of her early days at Gallaudet University (then Gallaudet College).

Though she had substantial experience as a French teacher, this was her first time teaching French in sign language. “I thought I might last a year,” she said. She retired as a full professor after 38 years.

Raised in Brooklyn by Russian emigre parents, Rachel pursued her interest in French and Spanish, earning her B.A. with honors from Brooklyn College, an M.A. from Rutgers and her Ph.D. in modern

languages and literatures with a concentration in 19th-century French literature from Catholic University.

She began teaching in New York but wasn't sure she wanted to remain in that profession, so she moved to Baltimore. There she took a job in food service at Johns

Hopkins University before becoming a counselor to nursing students at Mercy Hospital. Those students encouraged her to return to teaching.

Having taught at D.C. Teachers College (now a part of the University of the District of Columbia) and working on her doctorate at Catholic University, Rachel liked D.C. When she saw a job opening at Gallaudet teaching French to deaf students, she applied and was accepted, although she had no idea how to teach French to the deaf. She had become intrigued by the issue of marginality while at D.C. Teachers and saw similar challenges at Gallaudet.

She and other new recruits took an eight-week crash course in American Sign Language, a course she found particularly challenging for a southpaw. Her teachers were a chemist and a poet, both the children of deaf parents.

“I loved the work,” she said. “I



JANEAN MANN

Rachel Hartig

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NORTHWEST NEIGHBORS VILLAGE

a community network of support
4901 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20008
202-777-3435
www.nwnv.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 neighborhoods and homes as they age.

Join or volunteer
NNV welcomes new members and volunteers. For more information, go to www.nwnv.org or call the office at 202-777-3435.

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Judie Fien-Helfman, *co-president*

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FROM THE CO-PRESIDENT

Villages grow, but challenges remain

BY STEVE ALTMAN

Last month Stephanie and I attended the Village to Village (VTV) annual conference. VTV is the nationwide association of villages. It provides support, education and research to assist both existing villages and those in formation. The 2½-day programming included keynote speakers such as the Maryland secretary of the Department of Aging, a professor specializing in Alzheimer's, a speaker on the neuroscience of loneliness, and one on how villages can address people's varying interests throughout an aging lifespan.

There were also reports on studies of villages across the country and many workshops on topics ranging from technology to fundraising and to intergenerational programming. Stephanie was a presenter at two of the workshops.

It was great to meet with village members from diverse settings and to learn the latest information on aging and the role of villages in addressing the communities' role in developing strategies for positive aging.

My principle take-aways included the following:

► The village movement continues to grow and mature. There have always been a great variety of villages. Some have paid staff, some have minimal fees, some focus on social activities and some single villages cover entire mid-size cities. This variety has produced the saying that "If you have seen one village, you have seen one village."

Nevertheless, I came away with a sense that there is more in common among the villages than previously



emphasized. Most of those commonalities involve challenges and opportunities. As villages mature they face issues of sustainability, loss of founding board members, addressing the needs of members who require services beyond the scope of the village, the management of substantial

transportation systems and the need for better technology among the villages and their members.

► Despite the variety of villages, Northwest Neighbors is a "typical" village with regard to its size, governance, staffing, tiered fee structure, programs, services and challenges.

► NNV is fortunate to have a strong base of leadership including the staff, board, committee chairs and the great cadre of additional volunteers that carry out our mission.

We cannot be and are not complacent. Managing and growing a village is a real challenge. Some villages have closed. Others struggle with the ability to engage their communities and members in a way that energizes the delivery of services. It takes some luck and a lot of hard work and cooperation to make a village a long-term success.

NNV must continue to engage both its members and the community at large with the energy that has gotten us this far. We have a great board, staff and volunteers but must continue to renew that energy with new people and new ideas.

As I complete my tenure as president of NNV I want to thank the board, membership and community for the privilege of serving in that capacity and I look forward to helping to maintain that energy in the future.

NNV CALENDAR

Rides are available for NNV members to all NNV events.

Sat., Dec. 2, 8 p.m.

"The Dining Room"—Play by A. R. Gurney. NNV special price, \$8. St. John's College High School, 2607 Military Road NW. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Mon., Dec. 4, 10 a.m.

Coping With Grief—Workshop with grief counselor Sara Moore Kerai. Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M., 5428 MacArthur Blvd. NW.

Wed., Dec. 6, 20, 10-11:30 a.m.

Caregiver Support Group—Moderated by licensed clinical social worker. 1st and 3rd Wednesdays every month in Chevy Chase. Limited to eight participants. Call 202-777-3435.

Sun., Dec. 10, 4-6 p.m.

NNV Holiday Party—Bring appetizer, side dish or dessert to share. Location to be determined. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Tues., Dec. 19, 9:30 a.m.

Coffee with Stephanie—Chat with

NNV executive director. Soapstone Market, 4465 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Wed., Dec. 20, 2:30 p.m.

NNV Book Club discusses "Our Souls at Night" by Kent Haruf. Location to be determined. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Save the Date

Sunday, Feb. 11, 3-5 p.m.

Tuesday Brass Ensemble—Performance. Assembly Room, Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Sign language gave her a new voice

PROFILE, Continued from Page 1

very much enjoyed being a teacher. Gallaudet is wonderful community," she added. "I felt so grateful for it. I couldn't have had a nicer job." In addition to teaching she was a member of the Faculty Senate.

Teaching the deaf expanded her writing career. Her first book, "Man and French Society: Changing Images and Relationships," dealt with the methodology of foreign language teaching. Her second, "Struggling Under the Destructive Glance," discussed the shifting patterns of victimization in the books of Guy de Maupassant.

When students asked whether there were any deaf French writers, Rachel traveled to Paris and met the late French deaf biographer Yvonne Petrois, who helped open the door to deaf French writers. Her third book, "Crossing the



JANEAN MANN

Rachel Hartig taught for 38 years at Gallaudet University.

Divide," was the result. It explores how three French biographers faced the challenges of being deaf in a hearing world.

At Gallaudet "we became like a family, it was so hard to retire," said Professor Emerita Rachel Hartig. Despite her retirement, she remains busy. She established the Rachel Hartig Excellence Award at

Gallaudet, which hosts an annual conference to recognize noteworthy work in the field of deaf cultural studies, with a focus on French and Hispanic deaf studies. She is also contemplating a fourth book, one that grew out of her association with Petrois and her journals. It will focus on the challenges of deaf women in World War I.

She is also active in the Washington Ethical Society, which this year is focusing on marginality. "For each of us, we need to find a corner—something that we can do that helps your friends and others." This, Rachel said, is also one of the reasons she became an NNV volunteer.

Holiday hours

Please note special holiday hours between Dec. 25 and Jan. 2. The NNV office will be closed Dec. 25-26 and Dec. 29 through Jan. 1. Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday, Jan. 2.

All ride requests for Monday, Dec. 25 through Wednesday, Jan. 3 must reach the office by 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 19.

Myths and facts about NNV's fundraising

BY JUDIE FIEN-HELFMAN

Northwest Neighbors Village is a jewel in our community and a phenomenal success because of the amazing efforts of our volunteers, professional staff, program committees and leadership. Their shared commitment allows NNV to provide more services to our members than villages three times our size. To maintain our current level of service effectively, we must continue to grow NNV's financial resources.

No one likes talking about money. No one particularly loves fundraising or asking others to financially support a cause, however near and dear to their heart. NNV's mission is to assist

seniors and those with physical limitations to remain engaged in and connected to their neighborhood while living independently in their own homes for as long as safely possible. This is the heart of why NNV was established and, the mission we are charged to achieve. We are a village, and everyone has a responsibility to help secure the financial resources needed for our community.

As chair of NNV's fundraising this year, and co-president, I am concerned at the many misconceptions surrounding NNV's finances and our programs. For NNV to remain strong and vital and to grow, it is critical that we all understand the importance

of every dollar obtained, and the many pulls on each dollar received.

► **MYTH:** Because volunteers provide services, there are no costs incurred with member requests for a ride, a friendly visit, tech help, pet care, shopping trip, other personal help, etc.

► **FACT:** Every volunteer is vital to providing NNV services to members. Did you know that every volunteer has a background check (at a cost to NNV) before being assigned to help a member? Additionally, each volunteer receives training and a volunteer manual. Every time a member requests a service or ride from NNV, the professional staff start the behind-the-scenes office work. This sometimes takes more than an hour or two to harness the right volunteer to meet the individual member's need. Approximately 62 percent of NNV's operating costs are personnel-related because staff are needed to link members with services and NNV programs.

► **MYTH:** Members' dues provide most of the income needed to provide NNV's programs and services.

► **FACT:** Membership dues and supporting members combine to provide just under 38 percent of NNV's income. This underscores how and why the three critical

See **FUNDRAISING**, Page 5

SERVICE OF THE MONTH

Holiday helpers

How can you have a happier holiday at home this year? Here's a hint: Get some help. Northwest Neighbors Village can provide you with volunteers who will remind you of Santa's elves.

They can help you drag your artificial tree from the attic or basement, or they can deliver a real tree to your door and set it up. They can hang your special holiday decorations. Then they can come back to take down lights and

ornaments, carefully packing them up for next year. They can take your tree out to the curb. And best of all, they can listen to your holiday reminiscences.

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve or anything else, you will find joy in the holiday season with your new NNV friends. Just call the office and bring on the elves!

—Lois Berkowitz

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JON LAWLOR

Visiting Hillwood

Alice Hayes and Jewel Hill called their trip to Hillwood, the mansion of the late Marjorie Merriweather Post, a “must-see.” Here they admire some of her dresses following lunch at the mansion’s cafe. The NNV event was held Nov. 15.

Fundraising 101: Myths and facts

FUNDRAISING, *Continued from Page 4*

streams of income for NNV—dues, outside donations and grants—all combine to create a strong financial base of support. NNV offers reduced membership fees to seniors on limited incomes, but this assistance reduces available operating income from membership fees.

► **MYTH:** I donate my time as a volunteer or support NNV through my membership dues, so I really don’t need to provide any additional financial support.

► **FACT:** Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization and services. However, training and assigning volunteers costs money. Individual donor contributions account for some \$70,000 of NNV’s \$200,000 budget. These funds, raised through the ongoing efforts of the board and staff, as

well as NNV’s annual end-of-year appeal to the community, represent a vital lifeline for NNV’s operations. Average donations range from \$25 to \$250, with a few in the \$1,000 to \$5,000 range. Without these funds, NNV could face reducing our current services, because of reduced income.

Donor contributions take many forms: annual giving, gifts in memory or honor of a person, a legacy gift in a will to NNV. Even if you cannot afford to give, perhaps you have friends or family members who would contribute in your honor.

► **MYTH:** The NNV Gala made money so there is no need for any more fundraising this year.

► **FACT:** Yes, the October Gala made approximately \$19,000, which was close to what the 2017 budget called for in terms of income. But, NNV’s budget has

Renew your exemption for snow shoveling

The D.C. government requires all homeowners to remove snow and ice from the paved sidewalks, curb ramps and curb cuts abutting their property after snowstorms. There is an exemption from this requirement for all individuals over 65 or those with disabilities. This exemption must be renewed annually.

You can download the application at dpw.dc.gov/service/sidewalk-shoveling-exemption.

The application requires that you provide proof of age or disability.

three key funding streams: fundraising, contributions and membership dues. We must successfully raise the projected budgeted funds in all income categories.

What can you do? Dec. 31 is fast approaching. NNV must raise \$54,000 in donor contributions to meet our 2017 approved budget. If we do not raise adequate funds by Dec. 31, NNV will have a budget shortfall and we may have to reduce some services in 2018. To meet our needs, we count on all these income streams being realized, not just one of them.

People tend to make end-of-year gifts, especially if asked by someone they know. Reach out to your family and friends.

Tell your “village” about NNV, what it means to you, how you benefit from it, why you volunteer, why you give. Thank you; your support means the world to all those in NNV’s village—members, volunteers and neighbors.

Coping with the holidays while grieving

By SARA MOORE KERAI

For those of us who have suffered the death of a beloved family member or friend, the very thought of the holidays approaching can stir up feelings of dread and anxiety. “’Tis the season to be jolly?” It may feel like the season to escape or ignore until next year.

So many of our family memories and traditions are tied up with the holidays. Our senses are constantly reminded of the sights, smells and sounds of the season, even if we would rather hibernate until it’s over.

So, what can we do to cope with the holiday season when we are also in a season of grief? Here are some suggestions.

► First, take pressure off yourself. Recognize this year as a year of transition, and eventually you will reach your “new normal.” Accept that you may not have the physical or emotional capacity to do what you have always done, and that’s okay.

► Make your plan. Allow yourself a full range of options, from celebrating the holiday in a simpler way, on a different day, at a different location, or not at all. Planning ahead and making a decision can lower the sense of anxiety about the day itself. Communicate your plan to your family and talk with them about your different needs this year.

► Make healthy choices. Try to limit your alcohol intake this year, to prevent yourself from falling into a more depressed or vulnerable state. Make plans for having independent transportation so that you can leave a gathering early if you need to.

► Contemplate the role your loved one played in your family holidays. What might be a meaningful way to incorporate his best qualities, her unique spirit, and/or their legacies, into the holiday season? What are small but significant ways you can remember them? Perhaps it’s lighting a candle, laying a wreath at the gravesite,

making a toast in their honor and/or donating money or time to a special charity in their honor.

► Finally, it’s most important to take care of yourself in this time of potentially heightened grief. Put some form of self-care on your calendar, whether it’s simply visiting a sacred space for some quiet time, setting aside an afternoon to watch your favorite movie, booking an appointment for a massage or haircut, politely declining an invitation or two and planning some extra time for rest.

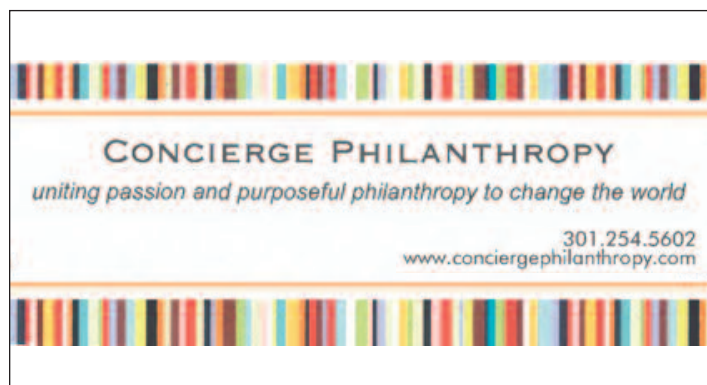
If these concerns are relevant for you, and you’d like to discuss them with others who are grieving as the holidays approach, please join us for a presentation and discussion at 10 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 4, at Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M., 5428 MacArthur Blvd. NW. The workshop will be facilitated by me, Sara Moore Kerai, MA, LPC, MPH, a grief counselor from Capital Caring’s Point of Hope grief counseling program in Washington.



STEPHANIE CHONG

Doggy treats

NNV Executive Director Stephanie Chong’s daughter Olivia smiles over the contributions she collected for the Arlington Animal Rescue League for her middle school service learning project. NNV members and volunteers donated 95 percent of the items, which included a pet carrier, dog beds, blankets, cat food and pet meds.



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The 'turkey must go' sandwich

By BARBARA B. OLIVER

Looking for a way to use up leftover holiday turkey? You can customize this sandwich to match your dietary needs and tastes. For instance, the bread can be gluten-free, light whole wheat or hearty white. Substitute regular or Dijon mustard (or regular or light mayonnaise). Instead of mixed greens, try arugula or spinach. A tart apple such as Granny Smith or McIntosh will have more presence than Honeycrisp or Gala. Add a



BARBARA B. OLIVER

You can use leftover turkey or deli sliced turkey from the market.

slice of cheddar cheese for a little tang.

Turkey and Apple Sandwich

2 slices bread, toasted
2 teaspoons honey mustard
½ cup mixed greens
1/8 small apple, cut into 2 slices
1 thin slice red onion

2 ounces (5 slices of Oscar Meyer or Giant brand) deli sliced turkey

Spread 1 piece of toast with mustard. Layer with mixed greens, apple, onion and turkey; top with remaining slice of toast. Slice in half and serve. Makes 1 sandwich.

ADAPTED FROM WEIGHT WATCHERS 2017

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Events are free unless otherwise indicated.

Fri., Dec. 1, 8, 15; 11:30 a.m.

Gallery Tours—Late fall exhibitions, docent-led. Katzen Arts Center, 4401 Massachusetts Ave. NW.

Tues., Dec. 5, 7 p.m.

Author Talk—Ken Wilcox, "A National Jaunt: Footster's Guide to Washington, D.C.," the best walks in the area. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Mon., Dec. 11, 7 p.m.

ANC 3/4 G—Meeting. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Tues., Dec. 12, 7 p.m.

Sector One Police—Community Meeting. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Wed., Dec. 13, 1-2 p.m.

Healthy Aging—Workshop to improve cognition, exercise, nutrition, social life. Register at

events.suburbanhospital.org.

Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 S. Park Ave., Chevy Chase, Md.

Thurs., Dec. 14, 7-9 p.m.

Funding Meeting—On Chevy Chase Community Center improvements. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Thurs., Dec. 14, 7:30-10:30 p.m.

ANC 3E—Meeting. Embassy Suites Hotel, 4300 Military Road NW.

Sat., Dec. 16, 1-4 p.m.

Chevy Chase Citizens Association—Cookie decorating, crafts. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Mon., Dec. 18, 7 p.m.

Tenleytown Memoir & Essay Writing Club—Supportive feedback. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Tues., Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m.

ANC 3F—Meeting. Room A-03, Bldg. 44, UDC, 4200 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Thurs., Dec. 21, 10:30 a.m.

Avalon Senior Cinema—Patrons 62 or older pay less than the usual senior rate of \$8.75. Avalon Theatre, 5612 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Every Mon., 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Club 60+ —T'ai chi. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Every Tues., 10-11 a.m.

Club 60+ —Line dancing. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Every Tues. & Thurs., 11 a.m.-noon

Club 60+ —Exercise basics, muscle strengthening. Auditorium, Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601

Connecticut Ave. NW.

Every Tues. & Thurs., 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Walking Club—Sibley Senior Association. Mazza Gallerie, Concourse Level, Wisconsin & Western Aves. NW. 202-364-7602.

Every Fri.

AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly—Self-help office. Assistance with legal questions, claims reports, consumer complaint letters, benefit checks, etc. Call 202-895-9448 (option 4) for appointment. Iona Senior Services, 4125 Albemarle St. NW.

Farmers Markets

Sat., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. — New Morning Farm, Sheridan School, 36th St. & Alton Place NW.

Sat. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. — Van Ness, 4340 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Sat., 9 a.m.-1 p.m. — Lafayette, Broad Branch Ave. & Northampton St. NW.

Movie Mondays

2 & 6:30 p.m. Chevy Chase Library, 5625 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Dec. 11—"Genius," U.S., 2016, rated PG-13 (Nicole Kidman).

Dec. 18—"The Sense of an Ending," U.K., 2017, PG-13 (Charlotte Rampling).

Holidays bring out the crooks

By JANEAN MANN

“If it looks too good to be true, it probably is” is an old adage that takes on additional meaning this time of year. The advent of online shopping has given rise to a plethora of scammers, but those hoping to take advantage of you during the holiday season are not limited to the Internet.

One of the biggest Internet scams is the setting up of phony websites. These folks offer just what you are looking for: incredibly low prices. They may look good, but buyer beware. If you are not familiar with the website, check it out. They might take your money for products that never arrive. They may use detailed information from your credit card to make their own purchases.

Some of the items being offered

online or on the street may be counterfeit. Phony Rolex watches are big sellers. Even though eBay tries to prevent counterfeit goods from being sold on its site, they sometimes get bought. Be sure to check out the seller’s reliability and any guarantees that are offered. Particularly if you are buying pricey items, be sure they are from a reputable dealer so that any defective items can be returned.

Crowded malls and stores are also prime sites for pickpockets. Your money and your credit cards are prime targets, as are recent purchases in your shopping bags. Keep your purse closed and your wallet in an inside pocket.

Holiday shoppers may also face being short-changed, either intentionally or accidentally, in the rush of shopping. Make sure to review your bill and count your

change.

Seniors often make donations to charities at Christmas. But phony charities also proliferate at this time of year. These are most common on the street or at your front door, though there are phony charity ticket sales online as well. If you are not sure about the alleged charity, skip it. You can always do more research later and give to a legitimate agency. Door-to-door solicitors must be licensed in D.C. Ask to see that license. If they don’t have it, don’t contribute, regardless of how innocent the solicitor appears.

Scammers are also at work in the neighborhoods during the holidays, offering to do projects around the house. While some are legitimate, others will take your money and do nothing or do a poor job. The first thing to do is to make sure the individual at your door is licensed in D.C.