

# The Village News

## Morgan Gopnik named NNV's 2023 Volunteer of the Year

*By Stephanie Chong*

Each year, members and staff nominate volunteers whose service goes above and beyond. We are delighted to announce that volunteer Morgan Gopnik has been named our 2023 Volunteer of the Year!

There's a very good chance you've had an opportunity to get to know Morgan through one of her many roles at NNV. While serving as board president and vice president, Morgan has kept active with our members, helping with nearly 300 volunteer services during her leadership tenure. Not only has Morgan provided crucial rides to medical appointments and NNV events, she has watered plants, provided tech support, taken members to the grocery store, shared holiday meals, and hosted lunches in the community – offering caring support and interesting conversations along the way.

Morgan is often the first to raise her hand to help with hard-to-fill requests. She's braved the Medstar Georgetown campus gauntlet a myriad of times, and we are rather certain that the concierges at the Barlow Building, 5530 Connecticut, and Foxhall know her car! Always eager to meet our members' needs, Morgan was a phone buddy to several members during the pandemic, dropping off favorite treats or helping with important errands during the initial shutdown.

Morgan has done it all! Her commitment to our organization's viability is invaluable. She has actively participated in the creation of not one, but two strategic plans. Morgan

played an integral role in establishing NNV's volunteer and [member-led Working Groups](#), which are essential to our Village's ability to do more for more older adults in our community. Morgan is very involved in NNV's work to become a more inclusive and diverse organization as an active member of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, engaged participant in NNV's Racial Equity Book Club, and a regular participant in educational opportunities on equity focused topics.

Morgan's reach extends beyond our local community. Morgan has volunteered hundreds of hours of her personal time to create and support the newly established [D.C. Villages Collaborative \(DCVC\)](#). As the inaugural chair of the DCVC Collaboration Council, Morgan is bringing her strengths as a compassionate leader to help strengthen existing Villages and expand Village services to unserved areas of our city. It's safe to say that Morgan's volunteer service will have a lasting impact on the lives of older adults in our community and citywide.

Volunteers are the key to NNV's success. We hope you will join us in thanking Morgan and all of our volunteers for their commitment to building a generous, inclusive, and supportive community where all older adults can age well.



*Stephanie Chong*  
**Morgan Gopnik**



a **community network of support** serving upper NW DC including American University Park, Barnaby Woods, Chevy Chase, Forest Hills, Friendship Heights, Hawthorne, Tenleytown, & Van Ness

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### NNV Board Members

#### Officers

Gene Sofer, president  
Susan Crawford, vice president  
Rosemary Marcuss, treasurer  
Merilee Janssen, secretary  
Morgan Gopnik, immediate past president

#### Directors

Richard Avidon • Jamie Butler • Shanti Conly • Judie Fien-Helfman • Ann Ingram • Gretchen Jennings • Monica Knorr • Lenore Lucey • Sam Smith

#### Directors Emeriti

Frances Mahncke • Janean Mann • Robert Parker • Stewart Reuter • Jo Ann Tanner

#### Team

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

#### Newsletter Team

Pat Kasdan  
Janean Mann  
Pat Mullan

## NNV Board Changes

*By Stephanie Chong*

As we ring in a new year, we are also welcoming three new NNV Board Members:

**Jamie Butler** has a long and deep history of volunteerism including visiting older persons in assisted living to her own personal experience helping family members with challenges as they age. Her other volunteer efforts have included leading the Social Action Committee at Adas Israel Congregation, serving on its Board and Bereavement Committee, and doing hands-on volunteer work with area non-profit organizations that work with people experiencing homelessness. Jamie taught low-income children at For Love of Children (FLOC) in Washington, DC and managed projects using the arts to educate children with disabilities through a Kennedy Center affiliate organization. Most of her professional life was as an educational diagnostician and consultant, completing evaluations to help children, their parents and teachers be successful. Jamie has Masters' Degrees in Elementary Teaching and in Special Education. She co-founded the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) Ward 3 Congregations Affordable Housing group and is active supporting affordable housing in Ward 3 and across the District. She also currently serves on the Board of Friendship Place, which provides housing services for people experiencing homelessness.



**Ann Livingston Ingram** reports, I was born almost 92 years ago in San Francisco, where I lived until moving to San Diego in 1954 with my newly acquired husband, John Ingram. After 14 years and the birth of three children, we moved to DC in 1967 where my husband had been hired for the newly formed Mayor/Council Government of DC (at that time appointed by Congress) as Assistant to the Deputy Mayor. I worked as a substitute teacher in DC's then Junior High Schools for two years then became Director of Volunteer Services for The Travelers Aid



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**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 visit [www.nnvdc.org](http://www.nnvdc.org).

# Four seasons of creativity for elders

*By David Oldfield*

It is not common knowledge, but elderhood is a wonderfully creative time in the human life cycle. Like a coal breaking into fire, the imagination is inflamed by the experience of being old, of nearing the end, and wants – needs – to give expression to what we're thinking and feeling.

The creative imagination is a terrific source of fresh energy, and a faculty perfectly matched to the “work” of being old. It is the bringer of options and new possibilities. It helps us wonder about life's great mysteries. It is a natural story maker at a time when we need to “connect the dots” and describe the experiences that have led us to become the people we are today. It is playful, and helps us live lightly, to find joy in the commonplace and peace in difficult times. It gives us a language to express our hopes and fears, our awe and sorrows; and it is the only thought form free enough to contemplate the big existential questions that arise at this time of life.

In elderhood we need occasions to reawaken our creative imaginations. We need them to help us reflect on the whole of our lives and find the story-thread that runs through all our days. We need others going through similar life changes with whom we can share. And we need creative tools to help us give expression to the private paths that make each of us unique, and to the common ground we all share.

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NNV hopes to help you meet these needs through an ongoing new series called Four Seasons of Creativity for Elders. Each season you'll be invited to engage in a creative experience designed specifically for elders and our shared need to tell our stories in new and imaginative ways. These workshops will run for 4-6 weeks (depending on the activity), and will be

guided by David Oldfield, director of The Midway Center for Creative Imagination, who has led several such groups for us in the past.

Each season we will engage our creative imaginations using a different form of creative expression.

David Oldfield has been inviting older people to construct maps of their lives for many years. He will share stories and illustrations from his recent book, *An Atlas of Aging*, which features the life maps of 20 older adults from around the world. He is the founder and director of *Farther On*, a movement dedicated to reframing the later years of life as an adventure to be lived rather than a problem to be solved. David has spent the last 35 years designing transformational experiences and toolboxes to help people through threshold times in the life cycle – adolescence, midlife, retirement, and the final threshold of our deaths.

David's guidebooks and programs address these profound transitions and have been used around the world. Additionally, he is devoted to helping corporations and organizations through their own threshold moments of growth and renewal. His work is grounded in the timeless wisdom of world mythology.

David recently did a Virtual Speaker Series presentation where he introduced the new series and discussed creativity in elderhood. [Watch the video here](#). NNV Members - Look out for an announcement of the first class in the coming weeks!





# Middle-aged Urban Naturalist

By Heather Hill

Our beloved “Old Urban Naturalist” columnist is sitting out this issue, so I am going to try to fill her very big and knowledgeable shoes with some of my winter bird observations. I have no professional expertise about the natural world, but even amateurs can appreciate our unique backyard winter birds. Migration is long completed, and our spring and summer warblers are enjoying the warmth (and bugs) of Mexico and Central and South America; breeding and nesting are paused until the spring (except for bald eagles if you’re lucky enough to find a nest). With the leaves off the trees, birds are easier to spot, and we have plenty of year-round residents to enjoy.

We have a seed feeder up in the winter, and one of my favorite birds, the [black-capped chickadee](#), is a frequent visitor. Chickadees prefer sunflower seeds (we buy the ones in black shells, but if you’re worried about the mess, they sell shelled ones for a bit higher price). Our chickadees land lightly on the feeder, take one small seed, and usually go to a nearby branch to crack it open and eat it. Weighing only about half of an ounce (imagine how small their little stomachs must be!) and easy to spot with their black caps and bibs, these are some of our smallest backyard birds and they must eat frequently. I love chickadees so much I got one tattooed on my arm.



**Black-capped chickadee and matching tattoo**



Chickadees are often joined by a [tufted titmouse](#) or two. A bit larger than the chickadee, with their big black eyes, gray and buffy feathers, and little mohawk,

seeing them always brightens my day.

[White-breasted nuthatches](#)

will often visit the feeder and they eat upside down! They’ve carved out a little food niche by seeking out the bugs on trees which are best located by hopping upside down on the trunk. They demonstrate the same behavior at our feeder!



**White-breasted nuthatch**

here year-round, but they really bring joy during the gray days of winter with their bright red plumage and plucky little personalities. Don’t miss the females, who are often nearby, with their lovely rich brown and orange coloring. If you study them closely, the red males will no longer steal the show.

And, hawks abound—[red-tailed hawks](#), [red-shouldered hawks](#), and [Cooper’s hawks](#) are our most common. I can’t leave the house in the winter without seeing several (our location near the National Institute of Health’s large campus and nearby Rock Creek Park is good habitat, just a little north of NNV’s neighborhood). Look for them perched on lower tree limbs in the morning or at dusk. On particularly cold mornings, hawks like to sit in the sun and warm up.

[Turkey vultures](#) and [black vultures](#) will often do this too, sometimes with their wings spread. Shorter days mean fewer daylight hours to hunt, which means



**Red-tailed hawk**



**Tufted titmouse**

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**BOARD CHANGES**, *continued from Page 2*  
Society, where I worked at National and Dulles Airports and Union Station for 20 years. Having graduated in Psychology from Stanford, I probably ended up working more closely to my major than many women of that era! I don't remember what year I signed up with NNV, but it was at a desk presided over by an enthusiastic NNV member at New Morning Farm's truck on a Saturday morning. Am I happy I did! I was a volunteer and supporting member until knee surgery encouraged me to become a full member and take advantage of the many services offered to non-mobile members!

**Gretchen Jennings** is a museum educator, administrator, and exhibition project director who worked at the Smithsonian for almost 15 years. She was a project director or senior staff member on the traveling exhibitions *Invention at Play* and *Psychology*, both of which received American Alliance of Museums awards of excellence. Since retiring from the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in 2007, she has been an editor of museum publications, founded a consortium called the Empathetic Museum [www.empatheticmuseum.com](http://www.empatheticmuseum.com), and taught museum studies in India. She continues to work on issues around race and inclusion in museums. Gretchen enjoys gardening in Cleveland Park Community Garden, lives in the area with her husband Jim Fallon, and has family here in the city, in the Southwest, and in Montana.



As we welcome our new members, we also want to acknowledge the tremendous contribution of two outgoing Board Members - **Jan Solomon** and **Karen Zuckerstein**. We thank them for their dedicated service to NNV, which will have a lasting impact. We are fortunate that both will continue to volunteer with NNV after their board terms have ended.

**URBAN NATURALIST**, *continued from Page 4*

they are more visible to humans during the day. Migration brings more hawks to our area, too, so the population swells. [Red-winged blackbirds](#) (with their bright red and orange epaulets), who migrate locally, start calling from the nearby pond around Valentine's Day, so perhaps Spring is closer than we think!

(All links take you to the [Cornell Lab for Ornithology's excellent and free website](#).)

**Thanks to YOU, we are starting 2024 with an overwhelming sense of gratitude!**

As we begin the new year, we want to express our sincerest gratitude to you. Our volunteer services, professional guidance and engaging programming would simply not be possible without your support.

On behalf of the board and staff at Northwest Neighbors Village -

**Thank you for your caring support.  
We wish you a very healthy and happy new year!**

**New Members Q4**

Jordan B.  
Beryl B.

Estelle B.  
Winfield C.  
Marianne D.

Rhonda F.  
Sandra H.  
Susan H.

Linda M.  
Eugene M.

**Welcome!**

# Maintaining pelvic floor health...it's more than Kegels!

By *Stephanie Chong*

Pelvic floor dysfunction, which typically presents as urinary incontinence, fecal incontinence, and/or pelvic organ prolapse is a common, but not normal part of aging. Here are some helpful takeaways from a recent NNV program.

There are two types of incontinence. Each can be treated with different exercises:

- **Stress incontinence** occurs when abdominal pressure from a cough, laugh, or jump causes leakage. This is typically a symptom of tight pelvic floor muscles that require stretching.
- **Urge incontinence** causes leakage upon feeling the urge to urinate. This is typically caused by weak pelvic floor muscles that require strengthening.

In general, most people could benefit from a combination of both strengthening and stretching exercises. [Inger Schafer of Vanderhoof PT](#) walked us through a series of strengthening and stretching exercises for the pelvic floor. These exercises are offered for demonstration purposes. A physical therapy consultation is recommended to ensure correct form, and that the exercises and treatment plan are tailored to your unique needs.

## How to do Kegels:

- Take a deep slow breath in to relax the pelvic floor muscles.
- Engage the pelvic floor muscles as you exhale slowly. The sensation should feel like you are squeezing and lifting your muscles, a similar sensation to holding gas.

## Other Strengthening Exercises: Bridge

While lying on a firm flat surface with knees bent to 90 degrees, squeeze buttocks and raise off table approximately six inches, then slowly lower buttocks back down.



## Hip Abduction – Side Lying

While lying on your side, slowly raise your top leg towards the sky. Keep your knee straight and maintain your toes pointed forward the entire time. Keep your leg in line with your body. The bottom leg can be bent to stabilize your body.

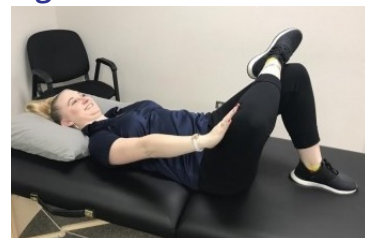


## Clam Shells

Lie down on your side with your knees bent and legs one on top of the other. Keeping your ankles together, slowly separate your knees (to look like a clam shell) and then return to the starting position. As the exercise gets easier, add an elastic band around your knees for resistance.



## Figure Four Stretch



## Butterfly Stretch



## Happy Baby



I highly encourage you to watch the full recorded program, which [is available by clicking here](#). It is full of useful information that can make a difference in your quality of life.

Please feel free to pass this along to others who could benefit!



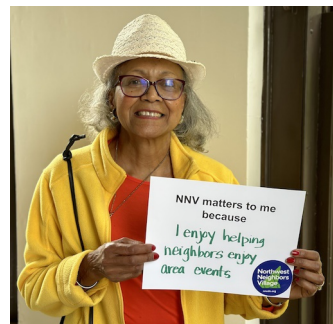
# 2023 in Pictures - How we spent the year



*Visit to Windridge Vineyard*



*Life Mapping Class*



*Volunteer Appreciation Event*



*NBC 4 Interview*



*Matt Frumin's Workday in Ward 3*



*Lunch at Steak 'n Egg*



*Working Group Meeting*



*Ice Cream Social*



*Vaccine Clinic*



*Blue 44 Dinner*



*Capital Jewish Museum Tour*



*Village to Village Network Conference*



*Holiday Party*



# A delicious alternative to hamburgers

By Barbara Oliver

Keema Matar, English Mince and Peas, is believed to have originated in the Mughal courts in South Asia (16th-19th century). It is usually made with lamb or mutton but sometimes with beef. This recipe forms the ingredients into patties which can be broiled or grilled for a year-round main course that is tangy but not too spicy. Serve them with freshly squeezed lemon juice or your favorite bottled chutney.

## Spiced Indian Lamb Patties with Peas and Tomato (Keema Matar)

- 1 ¼ pounds lean ground lamb or beef
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- 2 teaspoons coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 medium plum tomatoes, seeded & diced into ¼-inch pieces
- 1 cup frozen petite green peas

- ¾ cup low-fat plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro (or flat-leaf parsley) chopped
- 1 medium lemon cut into 4 wedges

### Directions

Line a large baking sheet with plastic wrap.

Using your hands or a wooden spoon, mix all ingredients, except lemon wedges, in a large bowl until thoroughly blended. Form 12 3-inch patties; place on prepared baking sheet and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

Preheat broiler or grill to high. Move patties from plastic wrapped baking sheet to broiler pan or grill rack and cook, gently turning once, about 4-5 minutes per side. Serves 4; yield 3 patties each.

*Source: adapted from Weight Watchers*

Note: These are filling. Uneaten patties can be portioned out and frozen cooked or uncooked for future meals. This recipe is easily halved to make 2 servings.



Barbara Oliver