

THE VILLAGE NEWS

Northwest Neighbors Village

Volume 8, Issue 5

A Community Network of Support

May 2016

New executive director starts May 1

Stephanie Chong has wide experience working with seniors and village movement

NNV'S new executive director, Stephanie Chong, brings a wealth of experience working with seniors. "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to work with all of the Northwest Neighbors Village members, volunteers and staff," she said. Stephanie starts May 1 following her appointment by unanimous vote by the NNV board of directors.

Prior to her just-completed stint as community education and outreach director with the home care company LifeMatters, Stephanie worked for nine years with Seabury Resources as assistant director, then director of care management, which operates Seabury at Friendship Terrace in Tenleytown.

Seabury, a local nonprofit organization, offers a variety of programs and housing alternatives for seniors and their caregivers. This position gave her a solid grounding in the issues confronting older D.C. residents and the resources available to assist them.

Stephanie previously held a variety of positions at the Residences at Thomas Circle, including assisted living, resident services and social services directorates. She also brings expertise in helping individuals return home after hospital stays, having spent six years as a discharge planner at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in Rockville.

Nor is she a stranger to the village concept.



OLIVIA CHONG

Stephanie Chong was chosen as NNV's new executive director on April 18.

She volunteered as a member of the health and wellness committee of Dupont Circle Village and is a member of the Arlington Neighborhood Villages. "I believe that villages are at the forefront of defining what it means to age well. I'm excited to be a part of the village movement," she said.

She holds both undergraduate and master of social work degrees and is a board member of the National Association of Social Workers. Stephanie will share with us her vision for NNV in the June *Village News*.

—Janean Mann

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) is a nonprofit organization created to help the residents of Northwest Washington live comfortably and safely in their neighborhoods and homes as they age. Founded in 2007 and opened in 2009, NNV is part of the Senior Services Network, supported by the D.C. Office on Aging.

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.

NNV Board Members

Officers

Steve Altman, *president*
Elinor Stillman, *secretary*
Stewart Reuter, *treasurer*

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David Cohen
Judie Fien-Helfman
Merilee Janssen
Jon Lawlor
Beverly Lunsford
Frances Mahncke
Janean Mann
Dennis O'Connor
Jo Ann Tanner
Ann Van Dusen
Robert Parker, *emeritus*

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Stephanie Chong,
executive director
Leah Penner, *volunteer
coordinator*

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Janean Mann, *editor*
Doris Chalfin
Pat Kasdan
Danielle Feuillan
Tom Oliver

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

NNV hits two homers on April 18

BY STEVE ALTMAN

April 18 was a big day for Northwest Neighbors Village. We hired Stephanie Chong as our new executive director and we scored a big success with our Healthy Aging program—the biggest event we have ever undertaken.

The forum's 183 participants learned about skills and opportunities to improve the quality of their lives and met with 50 vendors of services to seniors. With four workshops in the morning, lunch, a keynote speaker, and four workshops in the afternoon, NNV and co-sponsor Washington Hebrew Congregation (WHC) intended to bring the message of the keynote speaker, Mindy Greenstein, that there are virtues and strengths that we develop that help us enjoy our lives more as we age.

Of course, we do not do this alone. We do it in the community and with the help of others. To emphasize this, we offered a range of workshops such as wise aging, music and brain health, movement and mindfulness, and home safety. We also offered a wide range of services that were provided by the vendors. These varied from home care, technology, residential living options, estate planning, medical advocacy, decluttering, and exercise/massage opportunities.

The event had a wonderful energy throughout the day. Evaluations from participants were extremely positive, citing the quality of the workshop

presenters, the variety of the vendors' services, the venue and even the food as reasons for the success. And the vendors were thrilled with the opportunity to explain their services to so many potential beneficiaries.

The event was underwritten in part by Charles E. Smith Life Communities, Grand Oaks Assisted Living, the Estate Planning and Elder Law Firm and Glover Park Senior Living. Other partners included the D.C. Office on Aging, Home Care Assistance, Iona Senior Services, Tech Moxie, the Beacon, the Retirement Living Sourcebook, Sibley Seniors and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Working with WHC was a great partnership. We share a commitment to ensure that seniors are treated with dignity and that their talents are continuously used on behalf of the community by showcasing innovative and compelling tools in the field of aging.

Finally, and equally as important, was the number of vendors and professionals that made presentations in the workshops who told me how lucky we are and how thrilled they were that Stephanie Chong is our executive director. The message was that in Stephanie we have someone who is known and respected in the field and someone who brings to NNV extraordinary skills and caring for our issues. We look forward to opportunities for our membership and Stephanie to meet.

MEMBER PROFILE

Gail McColl and her music-centered life

By JANEAN MANN

No, Gail McColl does not play her violin with a trowel. But the photo that accompanies this article reflects the many interests that keep this NNV member busy since her retirement. Music has been a core aspect of her life since early childhood, when she learned piano in kindergarten, then the violin in third grade. Through a variety of jobs in adulthood, music has been her constant harbor.

Fortunately, she grew up in Seattle with a public school system attuned to meet her musical interests. In junior high she was encouraged to play viola rather than violin to join the senior orchestra; she taught herself the instrument, saving up enough to buy her first viola. Summer youth programs through junior and senior high at the University of Washington musical institute got her interested in chamber music. "Once you get hooked, you are really hooked," she said. Though her college did not have much of a music program, she was able to maintain her interest through impromptu groups. "It has become a wonderful part of my social life. You get such a range of people from kids out of college to people well into their 80s."

In college Gail started out as a science major, but soon found she was more interested in the social sciences. After earning undergraduate and graduate degrees, she taught organizational behavior at Cornell University, where she was the only woman on the business faculty. She later taught political science at Ithaca College. She moved to D.C. to take an educational research job



ALAN CAMPBELL

Gail McColl plays the violin, gardens and knows how to swing a hammer, usually not at the same time.

at the National Institute of Education. After a stint with a Beltway bandit firm, she joined the General Accounting Office (GAO), from which she retired. A research project there enabled her to help fellow musician and NNV member Susan Lieberman get better health insurance.

It was in D.C. that Gail met and married her late husband, Al, when he began giving her rides home after Community Orchestra rehearsals. "At first I was not all that impressed," she said, "but then I saw a really kind, sensitive, talented person. Music was a big part of our life together."

It was her love of music that prompted Gail to retire as soon as she was eligible. She joined the Friday Morning Music Club, formed in 1886, at a time when there was no outlet for women musicians. All its concerts are free and its outreach program touches people who otherwise have no access to live classical music. "These are the most rewarding programs I do," she said. "After every concert someone always says, 'You don't know what this means to me.' " She also performs with several chamber music groups and with the Washington Conservatory Orchestra, where she is personnel director.

The photo also reflects Gail's other endeavors. For 20 years she has helped Habitat for Humanity construct homes, and she uses her trowel to make her garden more wildlife-friendly. She helped her husband with his photography and has enjoyed being a grandma. The apron reflects her love of cooking.

NNV plans to schedule a concert featuring Gail and one of the groups in which she plays.

Healthy Aging Forum draws a large crowd

BY BARBARA B. OLIVER

The April 18 “Healthy Aging Forum: New Challenges. New Possibilities,” a collaboration of the Northwest Neighbors Village and Washington Hebrew Congregation, drew an avid group of 183 to the WHC building on April 18.

The keynote speaker was Mindy Greenstein, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and co-author of *Lighter as We Go: Virtues, Character, Strengths and Aging*. Her talk emphasized a paradigm shift in how we view aging. Instead of seeing “aging in a binary way: on or off, young or old,” she suggests aging is a continuum. “You can’t spell joy without the oy,” she said.

Our sense of wellbeing increases as we age, she noted. We care less what others think; live more in the now; focus more on things that matter to us individually and laugh more.

Greenstein’s book explores character strengths or virtues of how, over a course of a lifetime, we learn who we are as we go. Traveling lighter is really being who you are, she said.

Workshops

Four morning and four afternoon workshops emphasized positive, proactive steps each person could take to enhance his or her life. A participant could choose two.

See **FORUM**, Continued on Page 5



TOM OLIVER



TOM OLIVER



JUDIE FIEN-HELFMAN

Scenes from the forum, from top: attendees from NNV and Washington Hebrew Congregation gather for lunch; keynote speaker Mindy Greenstein with NNV President Steve Altman; Sandy Grant and Phyllis Belford staff the help desk.



TOM OLIVER

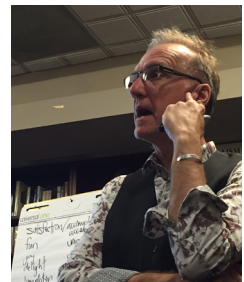


TOM OLIVER



JUDIE FIEN-HELFMAN

Clockwise from upper left: Ralph and Barbara Alterowitz, Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell and Amy and Charles Miron conduct the "Intimacy and Sex" panel. Cerlene Rose plays the piano with Leanne Belasco and Jeanne Kelly onstage as part of the "Music, Improvisation and Brain Health" panel; Greg Finch speaks on "Cultivating Creativity"; and Jill Berkman of Charles E. Smith Life Communities, one of 43 vendors, describes her company's offerings.



BARBARA OLIVER

FORUM, Continued from Page 4

Morning workshops focused on Aging at Home; Difficult Family Conversations; Intimacy & Sex as We Grow Older; and Movement, Mindfulness & Meditation.

Afternoon workshops were on Cultivating Creativity; Music Improvisation & Brain Health; Navigating the Health Care Maze; and Wise Aging.

Here's a sampling of key points from a few.

Aging at Home: Organizing is about taking care of yourself. Getting and staying organized is a routine, not a project. Put things near where you use them most often. Say no to junk mail. If an item has expired, throw it out. Make appointments with yourself to manage mail, do laundry, tidy the kitchen, etc.

Intimacy & Sex: There is no age limit for sex. Intimacy and sexuality are an integral part of life. They keep couples connected. Drops in hormonal level, medicines, surgeries and illnesses can change it. The biggest sex organ is between your ears, not your legs. Work with what you've got. If sex is good, it's 15 percent of the relationship. If sex is bad, it's 85 percent.

Music Improvisation: Music can stimulate interest and involvement in life. It can be a balm, and the "social benefits are enormous." Listening to music or learning to play an instrument can reduce anxiety, depression and pain. It can rejuvenate memories.

Cultivating Creativity: Creative expression helps individuals flourish across their

life spans. Creativity takes one toward possibility and away from decline. Creativity moves a person out of the normal and generates possibilities. Creativity engenders positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and mastery.

Exhibitors

Fifty providers offered advice and literature about senior living options, home care, estate planning, village benefits, exercise, transportation, etc. For more information, here's access to a few:

www.creativeaging.org

www.washingtonear.org

www.paradigmexperts.com

(appraisals of personal property)

www.elli-dc.org (classes)

www.just-that-simple.net

(decluttering and/organizing services)



PHOTOS BY JANEAN MANN



Where in the world?

Janean Mann's recent trip to the Amazon offered plenty of subjects for her camera lens. Clockwise from upper left: Janean (right) and fellow travelers pose beneath a mighty buttress tree, whose wood may someday be made into oars. Blue and gold parrots oversee their domain. An improvised bridge for the group. Members head into the mist by motorboat along the Roosevelt River, where Theodore Roosevelt famously explored.

More pictures on next page



Clockwise from left: A copaiba tree serves as a jungle pharmacy; the group's jungle lodge as seen from the air, on a site where Theodore Roosevelt once camped; and dinner, fresh caught.



NNV CALENDAR

Rides are available for NNV members to all NNV events.

Sun., May 1, 3-5 p.m.

Driver Town Hall for NNV volunteer drivers, to collect driver experiences, provide member feedback and discuss safety measures as we age. Conference Room, Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Mon., May 2, 2-3 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Sandi Rothwell. Assembly Room, Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Mon., May 9, 2-3 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Sandi Rothwell.

Sun., May 15, 2 p.m.

Village Knitting Group—Beginners and experienced; Mary Peckiconis, master teacher. Library Alcove, Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Mon., May 16, 2-3 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Sandi Rothwell.

Mon., May 16, 3:30 p.m.

New NNV Book Club to discuss *In the Garden of Beasts* by Erik Larson. New members welcome. Assembly Room, Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW.

RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Wed., May 18, 2 p.m.

NNV Book Club to discuss second half of *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson at the home of NNV member Lois Berkowitz. Closed. RSVP by May 16: 202-777-3435.

Mon., May 23, 2-3 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Sandi Rothwell.

Tues., May 31, 3-4:30 p.m.

NNV Men's Book Club to discuss *Alexander Hamilton* by Ron Chernow at the home of NNV member Bernie Hillenbrand. RSVP: 202-777-3435.

Is our drinking water safe?

BY JANEAN MANN

Have the recent events in Flint, Mich., given rise to worries about our own drinking water? Do the substantial increases in water bills have you scratching your head? D.C. Water and Sewer CEO and General Manager George Hawkins addressed these issues at an April open forum on the city's water.

First, the good news. The city does regular monitoring to ensure that our drinking water is safe, and lead levels in the District's water—currently 4 parts per billion (ppb)—are at the lowest levels in 10 years. This figure is well below the EPA action level of 15 ppb.

But if you are concerned about levels in your own home, you can obtain a free testing kit from D.C. Water by calling 202-354-3600. "We take this risk very seriously," Hawkins said.

Participants also expressed concern about the levels of so-called "emerging compounds"—pharmaceuticals, cleaning products, insecticides, etc.—getting into the system. Hawkins said the levels are currently low, but that D.C. Water is monitoring them to ascertain whether additional steps need be taken.

D.C. Water, an independent agency since 1996, is

There's some good news and some bad news

undertaking a series of major improvements to the city's system. Old water and sewer lines—some dating back to the Civil War—are being replaced; others are being repaired. The average age of mains in D.C. is 79 years. A 20-year, \$2.6 billion Clean Rivers Project to control sewer overflows is



well underway. A \$280 million nitrogen removal program was implemented in 2015 to meet current standards.

D.C. consumers can also get some of their old pipes replaced free of charge. D.C. Water and Sewer will replace pipes on city property leading to your house, but residents wanting the pipes on their personal property replaced will have to do so at their own expense, estimated at about \$100 per foot. For most homes, this is usually a \$2,000-

\$2,500 expense. Customers can check with D.C. Water to see if they still have old pipes serving their homes, though Hawkins warned that these records are not always up to date.

Now the bad news. All these improvements will cost rate payers more, though the increases will be less than originally planned, according to Hawkins. Increases in the 5-6 percent range are scheduled for the next two years, down from the originally planned 7 percent increase. Many of the costs in your water bill are fixed and not affected by water usage increases or decreases.

There is an assistance program for low-income individuals. Once you are accepted into D.C.'s heating discount program, no further application is necessary for the water discount.

Income limits for singles are \$26,144 and \$34,188 for two. Go to DOEE.D.C.gov or call 1-800-253-0846.

Additionally, D.C. Water has a high-usage alert program to let consumers know if there is a spike in their water usage. To sign up go to the [My DC Water](http://MyDCWater) overview page; or call Customer Care Associates at 202-354-3600 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday; or send an email to custserv@dewater.com. Make sure you have your account number handy.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Events are free unless otherwise indicated.

Wed., May 4, 7 p.m.

Author Talk—Joe Riener on high school teaching, *Teach Me How to Work and Keep Me Kind*. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Thurs., May 5, 7:30 p.m.

Police Service Area 201—Community meeting. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Fri., May 6, 13, 20, 27, 11:30 a.m.

Museum tours—New subject each week. Katzen Arts Center, 4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW.

Sat., May 7, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Lafayette Elementary School Spring Fair—Episcopal Center for Children, Utah and Nebraska Aves. NW.

Mon., May 9, 7-9 p.m.

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

Tues., May 10, 2-4 p.m.

Constituent Services: Who Do You Call? Reporting problems, crimes, nuisances, etc. Register: 202-895-9448. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Wed., May 11, 1-2 p.m.

Sleep With Ease—Dr. Pavel Klein, director, Mid-Atlantic Epilepsy & Sleep Center, discusses sleep disorders, treatments. Register: 301-896-3939. Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 S. Park Ave., Chevy Chase, Md.

Thurs., May 12, 7 p.m.

Navigating the Food Label Mumbo-Jumbo—Workshop. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Thurs., May 12, 7:30-10 p.m.

ANC 3E—Public meeting. Embassy Suites Hotel, Chevy Chase Pavilion, 4300 Military Rd. NW.

Mon., May 16, 6:30 p.m.

Candidates Night—Ward 4 and At Large D.C. Council candidates meet and greet. **7 p.m.**—Forum, hosted by Chevy Chase Citizens Association and ANC 3/4G. St. Johns College High School, 2607 Military Rd. NW.

Tues., May 17, 7:30 p.m.

ANC 3F—Public meeting. Forest Hills of D.C., 4901 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Tues., May 17, 7:30 p.m.

Chevy Chase Citizens Association—Annual election and public safety meeting. Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Wed., May 18, 7:30 p.m.

T'ai chi with Susan Lowell—Chinese martial art of meditation, relaxation. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Thurs., May 19, 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.

Sat., May 21, 6-7 p.m.

Gallery talk on artist Kevin MacDonald. **7-9 p.m.**, jam session with guest artists. Katzen Arts Center, 4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW.

Sun., May 22, 2 p.m.

Hearing needs assessment—Dr. Larry Medwetsky, chair, hearing, speech and language sciences, Gallaudet University, discusses technologies, strategies; real-time captioning and looping system available. Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

Mon., May 23, 7-9 p.m.

ANC 3/4G—Public meeting. 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 and Western Aves. NW. 202-364-7602.

Every Tues. & Thurs., 10:30 a.m.-noon

Club 60+—Exercise basics and muscle strengthening with Will Yates. Auditorium, Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Every Fri.

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

Farmers Markets

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

Sat., 9 a.m.-1 p.m.—Chevy Chase, 5625 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Movie Mondays, 2 and 6:30 p.m. Chevy Chase Library, 5625 Connecticut Ave. NW.

May 2—*Steve Jobs*, U.S., 2015, rated R (Michael Fassbender, Kate Winslet)

May 16—*Crash*, U.S., 2004, rated R (Terrence Howard, Sandra Bullock)

May 23—*In the Heart of the Sea*, U.S., 2015, rated PG-13 (Ron Howard, dir.)

Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

What! Me Move? Workshops—\$85 for 5 workshops (scholarships available). Iona, 4125 Albemarle St. NW. Enroll: 202-895-9420; community@iona.org.

May 3—Orientation

May 10—Aging in Place, Housing, Long-Term Care Options

May 17—Aging in Community, Staying in Existing Home

May 24—Financial Matters, Preparing for Now and the Future

May 31—Aging in Community, Moving to a New Home

It's spring. The zucchinis are coming.

BY BARBARA B. OLIVER

NNV member Fradel Kramer shares her easy-to-make and universally enjoyed recipe for a year-round soup. She suggests using small, tender and fresh zucchinis. They have better flavor than the large ones. She serves this first course hot, warm or cold.

Zucchini Soup

*3 medium zucchini (about 1½ pounds)
1 medium onion, sliced
1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
2½ cups fat-free or*

*regular chicken broth
(bouillon, canned or powdered)
Salt, to taste
Ground black pepper, to taste
Cayenne pepper, to taste*



TOM OLIVER

Wash the unpeeled zucchini and slice into rounds about ¼ to ½ inch thick.

Add zucchini, onion, garlic, chicken broth, salt and pepper to a soup pot and cook until vegetables are soft, 15 to 20 minutes at most.

Purée the mixture. Then add cayenne pepper to give it kick. Start with a very small amount (a few grains) until the soup is just spicy enough for your taste.

This recipe makes 5 cups of thick soup or 6 not-too-large initial servings.

If you prefer a less dense soup, use 3 cups of liquid.

RECIPE ADAPTED FROM A NEWSPAPER
WHOSE NAME HAS BEEN LOST TO THE AGES