

MARIN  
VILLAGES



Our Paths - Our Choices

# San Rafael Village

Empowering older adults to remain active, connected,  
and independent in the place they call home

## Autumn Quarterly Newsletter

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### HOLIDAYS IN THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC: STAY SAFE!

This 2020 Holiday Season will be unlike any other in our lifetimes. While enduring Shelter-in-Place restrictions and observing the safety recommendations of top scientists, we must limit our gatherings and celebrations to very small safe “pods” of family, friends and relatives – or go virtual. We hope that our many SRV activities and virtual gatherings will help fill the void of missing large Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas and Hanukkah parties, and New Year’s celebrations. SRV wishes you all a happy and safe holiday season with highest hopes that 2021 will see us all back together – in-person – once again.

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### WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS!

Members: Helen Dennis, Jo Ann Kirkhart and Edward Bosco

Volunteers: Nicole Mezo

Thank you for giving your time and energy to our village. We look forward to seeing you all at an event soon!

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## EMERGENCY KIT FANNY PACKS

Plagued by a global pandemic, state-wide wildfires, and intermittent power outages, our San Rafael Villagers are living through trying times. We are therefore especially grateful to be the recipients of a generous \$5,000 grant from the Harbor Point Charitable Foundation which funded purchase of “Emergency Kit” fanny packs for our entire Village.



The bright red fanny packs are generous in size and stuffed with all the kinds of items necessary for an emergency.

The fanny packs were delivered to us already fairly full, but SRV always goes one step above and beyond. There were a few additional items we thought should also be included.

So on Friday, September 18, the SRV Steering Committee gathered – mostly distanced and fully masked – in a lovely yard at the home of Suzie Pollack, to add more items to the fanny packs and ready them for distribution to our members.

Fanny pack modeled by SRV Program Chair Carole Sherick

### The Emergency Kits came with:

First Aid kit	Waterproof poncho
6 emergency water envelopes	Emergency survival blanket
A large block of emergency food rations	Packet of tissues
Small hand-squeeze LED flashlight	

### SRV added:

List of emergency numbers / places to call	Face mask
Booklet to list all critical personal contact info	Small scissors

The Emergency Kit stuffing task became a delightful combination of a party and a job. The kits were delivered to Suzie’s house in large cardboard cartons and stored in her garage. There was quite a stack – as you can see!



As we finished stuffing the fanny packs, we piled them back into the cartons and divided them up for distribution. Grouping SRV members by address location, the steering committee, with help from volunteers Joy Bloom and Donnalee Wells, personally delivered 81 kits to the homes of every one of our members. We fervently hope we never need to use this gift!

## SRV VILLAGERS – WORLD TRAVELERS

On August 6, about 17 SR Villagers joined in a virtual Happy Hour to talk about our travels. While none of us is going anywhere during the pandemic, we enthusiastically shared past travel experiences while dreaming of more to come. Here are a few of the travel memories our Villagers treasure.

### Joy Bloom in Antarctica



Joy at Port Lockroy Station



Penguins on an Ice Shelf, Neko Harbor

Joy says Antarctica is not just all white ice and snow. She found it truly beautiful with all shades of green and blue reflected off an azure sky and off water that looked like glass. She saw penguins that mate for life taking turns caring for and feeding their young, humpback whales swimming under her rubber zodiac boat, and seals lazing on icebergs. Joy says she finished each evening with a crème de menthe nightcap made with glacier ice. She lucked out with reasonably “warm” weather (28 -48) and a smooth crossing of the usually turbulent Drake’s Passage.

### Lorraine Voskanian in Benin, Africa

On another continent, Lorraine went to Benin, a small country in West Africa, while visiting her son in nearby Accra, Ghana. It was a somber and sad experience, she says, seeing the fort where slaves were held in small cages before walking to the beach to be shipped out. A piece of history we rarely learn about and a powerful experience.



This bleak scene shows the “gate of no return” which commemorates an arch the slaves were forced to pass under to reach the river and the ships that would take them across the sea to an unimagined new and terrible life.

### Dinah McClure in the Sierras

From one extreme to another – here we have Dinah in her favorite area of Desolation Wilderness, getting ready to descend from Lake Aloha.



Dinah and a friend did a 6 day-5 night backpacking trip before fires ravaged the area. Under blue skies, in clear air, they camped along 3 different lakes and did daily hikes from their campsites. She says hiking up the granite trails was hard and their packs heavy, but the reward was worth it! Dehydrated meals were delicious, with Luna bars and dried mangoes for dessert. A peaceful and soul-restoring

journey which she hopes to repeat next year.



### Chris Asimos and the Island of Ikaria

Ikaria, a Greek island in the Aegean Sea, is not only a place Chris has visited: It is where she hopes to live one day. It's one of the 3 "Blue Zones" on earth – spots where populations living measurably longer lives than anywhere else on the



planet. She says Ikaria is mountainous, making physical activity a necessity. The setting is tranquil, with diet, lifestyle and also genetics contributing to the incredibly long lives of residents. A walk down the road to the local café for an afternoon cup of coffee or glass

of wine with neighbors, a home-cooked dinner with fresh vegetables and olive oil, and Greek music all contribute to an idyllic island and a wonderful life awaiting Chris's next visit – or move!

Our villagers may live in San Rafael, but they sure get around the world! We all look forward to days when we can safely travel, explore and enjoy the wonders of the wide world once again.

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## HAPPY HOURS ARE HERE AGAIN!

SRV is now having virtual Happy Hour events once a month instead of once every 3 months as in the past. Our first event during the pandemic was focused on travel and was such a success that we decided to have a "theme" each time. So as we sipped our wine (or other beverage of choice) – our Happy Hours for the next two months focused on two decades that were meaningful and, in a lot of cases, transitional in our lives. We are all "of an age" – generally between late 60s and early/mid-eighties – and together, we have lived through tumultuous times of generational, social and attitudinal change. Sharing reminisces about those two decades demonstrated how very similar – and how wildly different – many of our experiences were. It was fun, rewarding and revealing. We learned a great deal about one another in the process, discovering fascinating bits of unexpected history and background.

### September 17 Happy Hour: The 1970s

Some of us were living in CA, many in other states across the country, a few even abroad. But all of us were aware of a rising wave of feminism, the Equal Rights Amendment, the launching of Ms. Magazine, the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd, and of course Watergate, Richard Nixon and the ending of the Vietnam War. It was an intense decade. Many of us had young families, careers were beginning, and consciousness was being raised, triggering lots of questions about women's place in society. We wore bell bottoms and beads, polyester and all-natural fabrics, hippies flourished, men had long hair and bushy sideburns, and young people smoking dope were everywhere. All the while, most of us were struggling or juggling kids, jobs, husbands and careers. It was fascinating to compare notes.

Also please note: While our virtual Happy Hours are NOT for women only – so far, only women have participated so our discussions have been perhaps more focused on the impact on women of those years. We hope some of our male villagers will join us in the future.

### October 22 Happy Hour: The 1960s

Our reminiscences about the 70s led us back to the previous decade, to focus on the 1960s for our October Happy Hour. That decade was equally tumultuous. Some of us were still in high school, others in college or just graduating, several living abroad – igniting the travel bug, no doubt! Every one of us recalled exactly where we were when Kennedy was assassinated, and then Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King were also killed. In an environment that included the Vietnam War and riots across America, most of us were also dealing with major changes in our own lives – marriages, babies, teaching or other careers – new adventures. We enjoyed recalling some of our favorite 60s TV shows – from those that depicted the life of the 50s (Ozzie and Harriet) to the harbingers of the future (Mary Tyler Moore). We smiled as we remembered our first cars – including VW “bugs.” And we all shared realizations that we were sort of “on the cusp” of a massive change in America's social structure and expectations for women.

### Next Happy Hour: November 17: Topic – Maintaining Sanity in the Pandemic

Please join us for more fascinating conversations and feel free to suggest additional themes if you have some ideas!

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## INTERGENERATIONAL PILOT PROJECT

San Rafael Village is sponsoring an intergenerational pilot project organized between Marin Village members and Dominican University students. The goal is to promote sharing experiences and life challenges across several generations. Our partnership is with Dominican's Department of Philosophy where the students, many of whom are preparing to go into nursing, are taking an ethics class and participating in a community service program.

Chris Asimos and Patti McWilliams, the SR villagers who initiated and managed this project, interviewed and recruited Marin Village members who volunteered to be contacted by students on a weekly basis for 14 weeks. Then Dominican students were interviewed, and each was individually paired with a Village member. The working group consists of 18 pairs who are having very interesting weekly exchanges on a variety of topics. Their interactions are being conducted primarily by phone since this project began during the pandemic. The work will be concluded in early December and we are all looking forward to hearing the results from Chris and Patti. They will review the interview notes and coalesce the information into a report describing the results of this unique pilot in learning, understanding and sharing experiences across generations.

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## HELP US HELP OTHERS

If you know someone who could use our services, is interested in volunteering, or would like to donate to an organization serving older adults in Marin, please have them call the office at (415) 457-4633, or visit our website ([www.marinvillages.org](http://www.marinvillages.org)) for application forms and online donations.

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