



Dear friends and neighbors,

Wishing you all a Happy Thanksgiving as we get ready to welcome **December** and all the special joys, memories and traditions that come with it. This month feels like a turning point, as we wrap up this complicated year and get ready to move on to the next. These last few months we have happily found ourselves re-acquiring social skills we were wondering if we would ever need again. Vaccinations for young people are underway, as are booster shots, fire season is over, rain is here, and on it goes. A perfect time to give thanks and appreciate the upcoming holiday season.

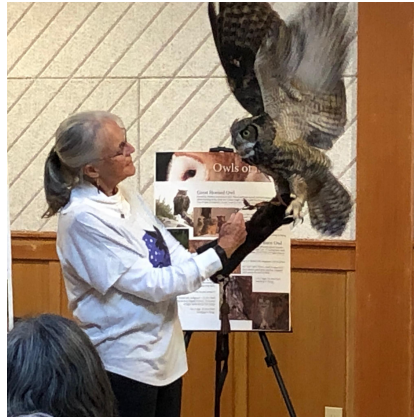
Winter Open Studios at the ICB Studios in Sausalito
Stop by Studio #302, Ingrid Butler, Mill Valley Village Member



It's time. This is a fabulous event. The variety and quality of work on display is pretty phenomenal. More than 75 artists who work in various mediums will open their studios for this event. Admission is FREE as is parking. The ICB Studios ([click here](#)) are at 480 Gate 5 Road in Sausalito. Elevators are available to navigate between floors with an accessible entry at the entrance nearest the water.

For a special treat visit the studio (#302) of Mill Valley Village member Ingrid Butler (<http://ingridbutler.com>). Several of us have been lucky enough to see Ingrid's work up close and encourage you to stop by. Ingrid is an innovative and multi-faceted paper artist, with something for everyone. She will have her gorgeous marbled papers, artist books, paper purses, unique greeting cards, bookmarks, and more for us to peruse. We are looking forward to it and hope to see you there.

We Came, We Saw, We Learned An “All About Owls” Program



This was such a fun program, our first in a long time. We are so grateful to this organization for the work they do. We met two owls, a Western Screech and a Great Horned Owl. The low-key but informative presentation was especially impressive as we got to see these marvelous creatures up close. “All About Owls” has a great website ([click here](#)) that has both a lot of good information about some of the threats to owls as well as what you can do to help. We were so pleased to host those of you who could make it to our first in-person program in a LONG time. Thank you everyone who attended. And now on to the next...

Please Join Us “Coffee at the Sweetwater” Wednesday, December 8 at 10:30



“Coffee at the Sweetwater” resumed last month! We hope to see you there as we reconvene this monthly “coffee” on 2nd Wednesdays going forward. It has been a long time coming. Thanks to all who have contacted me to provide your proof of vaccination. The list is growing. For those who hope to come down in future, make it simple and contact me, Jane Matthewman (janeandkev1@gmail.com or 415-609-4622) and we can “pre-approve” you. You only need to do this once and you are all set to join future village coffees at the Sweetwater. Otherwise, please bring your photo id and vaccination card (or copy) at the door the first time you join us.

And don’t forget to bring your mask, as it is required for indoor entry.



SAVE THE DATES
Mill Valley Village Luncheons are COMING BACK!!!
4th Mondays at 1pm, Starting January 24th



For those of you who have not come in a while (or ever) we would love to welcome you to one of our upcoming no-host luncheons. It is a great way to catch up with and get to know other villagers. If you are not already a villager it is an easy way to learn more about Mill Valley Village and what we are all about. All are welcome but please RSVP.

Luncheons are scheduled the 4th Monday of the month at 1pm. Our hostess, Cathy Dunlap, makes the reservations at the chosen local restaurant and keeps track of RSVPs. On the day of the lunch, we have a routine that seems to work well. We each order what we want to eat and drink and when the bill comes Cathy and friends figure out what each of us owes (including tax and tip). Each of us then add our bit (in cash) to the pot. It's that easy.

Here are the dates and locations of our lunches for next quarter. We hope you will put them on your calendar and keep 4th Mondays free in future. We will of course keep you posted if any changes are required. More details in upcoming newsletters.

Monday, January 24th at 1pm



Monday, February 28th at 1pm

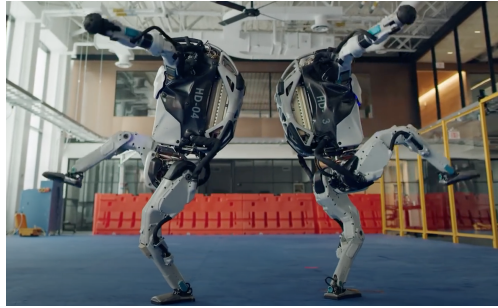


Monday, March 28th at 1pm



Contact Cathy Dunlap (millvalleyvillagenews@gmail.com or 415-388-2068) as soon as you know you can come, but no later than the week before each lunch, so she can make sure there are enough seats reserved. Carpooling is always encouraged and members are welcome to call the office (415-457-4633) to request a ride from a volunteer. See you there in 2022!

So....Do You Love Me? Now That I Can Dance



Pure fun sent from a friend nearly a year ago now. Amazing what technology can bring. Fun to watch the 'human' workers observing the filming. Take a look [here](#) and turn up the sound for a good laugh. My college roommate was marveling that these guys dance better than we EVER could. Such a hoot. As well as truly remarkable.

Black Bean Soup - A New Favorite Perfect for Winter



This is a new household favorite and we are looking forward to making it again now that the weather has turned cooler. It is hearty and flavorful, and especially delicious when paired with cornbread. The recipe is shown below and can also be found [here](#).

The recipe says it is EASY, takes a total of 40 minutes to prepare and serves 8 - 10.

Ingredients:

- 10 slices bacon, finely chopped
- 2 medium onions, chopped (about 2 ½ cups)
- 6 garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 (14 ½ ounce) can chicken broth
- 2 T ketchup
- 2 t Worcestershire sauce
- 1 T chili powder
- 4 (15 ½ ounce) cans black beans, drained but not rinsed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 bunch cilantro
- Juice of ½ lime
- Thinly sliced scallions, for garnish
- Sour cream, for garnish
- Grated cheddar, for garnish

Directions:

Put bacon into a large heavy pot and place over medium heat. Cook until it starts to give up its fat, about 4 minutes. Stir in the onions and cook, stirring, until they start to turn translucent, about 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook until you can smell it, about 1 minute. Add the broth, tomatoes, ketchup, Worcestershire and chili powder. Stir in the beans, turn the heat to high and bring to a boil. Adjust the heat so the soup is bubbling gently and cook for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, pick off the thick stems from the cilantro. Wash it and shake dry. Chop the cilantro coarsely and stir it into the soup when it has been simmering for 10 minutes. Cook until the soup is thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the lime juice. Serve with the garnishes.

This made a full meal and more when served with cornbread. Hope you get a chance to try it out. It only gets better after the first meal. We also had some of the leftovers on soft tortillas, which was another treat. Enjoy!

Events for December

Here is the rundown for December. You can also find these events on our website at www.mvvillage.org under either the **Events** or **Calendar** tab. Keep in touch and we hope you can join us for either a “virtual” or in-person program soon.

Wednesdays, December 1 and 15, Men’s Coffee at the Sweetwater, 11:30 am

This is an informal “gathering” with no particular agenda beyond the company of friends. We encourage you, whether a volunteer or member, to come join us. The group meets at the Sweetwater Music Hall’s “Rock N Rye” restaurant twice a month. To get more information or to be put on the reminder list for upcoming meetings contact Irv Gubman (irvgubman@gmail.com or 415-250-6155). The group meets the first and third Wednesdays at 11:30 am.

Wednesday, December 1, Movie Group, 4pm

Inspired by the popularity of similar programs in other local villages, we have launched a Mill Valley Village Movie Group. Once a month we get together via Zoom to meet, greet, enjoy each other’s company and talk about that month’s selected movie. In advance, we watch the movie and then talk about what struck us about it, what we liked (or not), what it made us think about, remember or yearn for...and on and on. Mill Valley Village volunteers and members who are interested in this group, please contact Seela Lewis (seelalewis@gmail.com).

Fridays, December 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, Hiking Group, 9am

Our hiking group is for serious hikers wishing to spend the day on the wonderful trails of Marin County. Hikes are scheduled weekly on Fridays and vary from moderate to strenuous. We take 45-60 minute lunch breaks with some of the most beautiful views around. What a great way to get some good healthy exercise and get to know your Village neighbors better! If you are interested in joining us on the trail please contact Julian Brandes (jjb94941@gmail.com or 415-845-8392) for more information.

Mondays, December 6, 13, 20 and 27, “Back Before Lunch Hikes”, 9am

These hikes, aimed at those looking for a shorter hiking option than our Friday hikes, have typically been 3.5 to 5 miles long, with an elevation gain of 600-800 feet and lasting about 2 hours. The group meets early Monday mornings and is “back before lunch”. The hike is very popular, not only for the wonderful hiking venues but for the connections forged on the trail. Sara Byruck is the long-time group coordinator and hike leader. For more information or to get on Sara’s email list contact her at sbyruck@gmail.com. And do remember to bring water and sturdy shoes.

Tuesday, December 7, Caregiving and Family - Challenges and Rewards, 1pm

Are you caring for a family member or friend? This group meets the first Tuesday of the month at a home near downtown Mill Valley. First convened in early 2015, the group has as its goal providing ‘support that recognizes one’s inner strengths and resiliency, no matter the circumstances’. If such a group might appeal to you, villagers are invited to contact Sara Byruck (sbyruck@gmail.com or 617-599-8116) for more information and directions. If you have considered this group but have hesitated for any reason, now may be the time. Sara would be delighted to chat with you to see if it feels right. Give her a call.

Tuesdays, December 7, 14, 21 and 28, Knitting and Needlework Group, 3pm

Have a knitting or needlework project you would like to undertake in the company of friends? If so this group might be for you. We typically meet weekly to discuss potential projects, enjoy each other’s company and encourage each other as progress is made. This group has been meeting regularly and is enjoying the camaraderie around their efforts. Beginners are welcome. Mill Valley Village members and volunteers, as well as those interested in finding out more about the village, are welcome to contact Sara Byruck (sbyruck@gmail.com or 617-599-8116) for more information.

Wednesday, December 8, “Coffee at the Sweetwater”, 10:30am

We have resumed our monthly get-togethers on the second Wednesdays of each month at 10:30 in the Sweetwater Music Hall. For those of you who have joined us before it will be the same general format. It is a casual plan, you come and go as you have time, sit and chat with friends and meet new ones, peruse the “lending library” for books to borrow and generally catch up with other villagers. If you are new to the village it is a great opportunity to get to meet other villagers. Or if you have only heard about the village and would like to know more, dropping by is an easy way to put a toe in the water. Bring your id and proof of vaccination if you have not already provided it and be sure to wear a mask. Looking forward to seeing you!

Thursday December 9, Book Club, 3pm

The group, led by Trish Hibben (t.hibben@me.com or 415-215-8394), meets monthly. The book group, aimed at local village volunteers and members, is currently full. We will announce when a second group is being formed and can take new members and volunteers.

Wednesday, December 15, Third Wednesday Trail Walk Group, 10am

We hold 2 - 4 mile trail walks on relatively flat terrain the third Wednesday morning of each month. We get together for local, and sometimes further afield, walks. It is great to see one another in the open air and catch up. For more information or to get on the list to be sent walk details by email, contact Karen Robbins (karobbins@comcast.net or 415-519-3420).

Thursday, December 16, Memoir Writing Group, 3pm

Everybody has stories to tell and it can feel affirming to tell them. So we have reconvened the Mill Valley Village Memoir Writing Group. Meeting on the third Thursday of the month, via Zoom for now, we read our writing out loud and honor each other's need to be heard and appreciated. Villagers, please contact Gloria Sparrow (gloriasparrow@comcast.net or 415-377-2037) with your questions or suggestions, or simply to get on the list.

Wishing you a joyous and celebratory holiday season

