

Dear friends and neighbors,

As we get ready to wrap up 2021, we want to wish you all a very Happy New Year! We are looking forward to turning the page and welcoming a new year with hope and gratitude.



While we had hoped this would be a purely celebratory time, and there is indeed much to celebrate, recent health news reminds us that there is more work to be done, even here in Marin where vaccination rates are some of the highest in the nation. In this recent update from Matt Willis, Marin County Public Health Officer ([watch here](#)), he communicates a clear message that vaccination and booster shots continue to be our single best strategy for protecting ourselves and our community. If you have not yet gotten all your vaccinations and a booster, he recommends you do so as soon as possible. We all thank you.

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



It has been a long hiatus but we have resumed our “Coffees at the Sweetwater” and are planning, unless there are further changes to guidance, to resume the monthly luncheons that were so popular and we so missed over the last two years. We hope you will join us. We will of course keep aware of and keep you apprised of any changes. And please also take a look at our many other ongoing programs listed at the end of this newsletter.

For those of you who have not come in a while (or ever) we would enjoy your company at one of our upcoming no-host luncheons. It is a great way to catch up with or get to know other villagers. If you are not already a villager it is also a great 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). We each then add our bit to the pot. It's that easy.

Here are the dates and locations of our upcoming first quarter lunches. We hope you will put them on your calendar and keep 4th Mondays free in future.

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, 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!

A Movie to Recommend
The Other Son



This movie, *The Other Son*, was the recommended monthly selection a while back for the Movie Group and was one of our favorites so far. The movie, a French film from 2012, begins as Joseph is about to turn 18 and serve in the Israeli Defence Forces. Here is an excerpt from a review by Ella Taylor on NPR:

What if you woke up one day to find that you were someone other than whom you thought you were? Upping the ante, what if that someone belonged to the tribe you'd been raised to think of as Enemy No. 1?

Joseph, a mop-headed hipster from a comfortable Tel Aviv family, is rejected from service in an elite Israeli army unit when a test reveals that he is not the biological son of his parents, French-born physician Orith and military commander Alon.

The film goes on to untangle the mystery and explore the practical and emotional fallout of the findings. We were intrigued from beginning to end and found this both a satisfying and well-acted drama. It is available as a DVD or to stream on Amazon Prime Video.

Recently Read and Recommended *The Travelling Cat Chronicles* by Hiro Arikawa



A recent gift, this book had me hooked on the first page. A best seller in Japan, it is written by Hiro Arikawa and translated by Philip Gabriel. Here is an excerpt from the dust jacket:

We take journeys to explore exotic new places and to return to the comforts of home, to visit old acquaintances and to make new friends. But the most important journey is the one that shows us how to follow our hearts...

And to give you further insight into the book's style, a few reviews:

"It's the wisdom and stoicism of the feline narrator that makes this book such an engaging read. It provides a fascinating insight into Japanese culture and traditions, but ultimately it doesn't matter that it's about a man and a cat. Like *Of Mice and Men* or *The Kite Runner*, Arikawa's central concern is friendship and the things we'll do for the people, or animals, that we love" — *The Irish Times*

"Gentle, soft-spoken and full of wisdom." — *Kirkus Reviews*

"A book that speaks volumes about our need for connection - human, feline, or otherwise" — *The San Francisco Chronicle*

The Travelling Cat Chronicles is widely available at bookstores, both online and local. It is also available to borrow from Mill Valley Library. Hope you give it a try.

MHz Choice A Streaming Option for International Mysteries



If you have not heard about this already it is worth checking into. We have been watching it for years and are huge fans. MHz features international mysteries, crime dramas and more, broadcast in their local language with subtitles in English. There are many options from “movies of the week” to popular series such as Detective Montalbano and Beck that have spanned many seasons of broadcasts. You may recognize some of the stars, especially if you were a fan of Game of Thrones. Actor Kristofer Hivju starred as Tormund Giantsbane, the first Norwegian in the international cast of Game of Thrones. Hivju then joined the cast of Beck, as Steinar Hovland, replacing actor Mikael Persebrand who played Gunvald Larsson, for nearly 20 years! That is staying power for any drama.

Some of the standout offerings include Montalbano, Beck, Murder In..., Bannan, Varg Veum, Capitaine Marleau and The Art of Crime. New episodes and series are added each month. They offer a 7-day free trial and subscriptions are \$7.99/month. Check it out [here](#).

Neighbors to Appreciate From the Kitchen Window



These two species are known to most of us in Mill Valley as common visitors. But we had never counted so many hummingbirds on our feeder before. There were more hummers than perches so a couple were sharing when we took this shot. And while we often hear coyote at night it seems we have been seeing more ambling up the road or down our driveway these last few years. Amazing to both hear and watch.

Events for January

Here is the rundown for January. 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.

Mondays, January 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, “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, January 4, 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, January 4, 11, 18 and 25, 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.

Wednesdays, January 5 and 19, 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. 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, January 5, Movie Group, 4pm

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, January 7, 14, 21 and 28, 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.

Wednesday, January 12, "Coffee at the Sweetwater", 10:30am

We have resumed our monthly get-togethers on the second Wednesdays of each month in the Sweetwater Music Hall. 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. **Please be vaccinated and boosted.** Bring your id and proof of vaccination if you have not already provided it and be sure to wear a mask.

Thursday January 13, 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 villagers.

Wednesday, January 19, 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, January 20, 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.

Monday, January 24, Lunch at The Cantina, 1pm

We are resuming our village lunches this month. We meet the 4th Monday of the month for a no-host lunch at a local restaurant. This month it is local favorite **The Cantina**, at 651 East Blithedale Avenue. Known for their extensive menu including soups, salads and sandwiches as well as traditional favorites, it is a comfortable, welcoming spot. Contact Cathy Dunlap (millvalleyvillagenews@gmail.com or 415-388-2066) by the week before so she can make sure there are enough seats reserved. Everyone is welcome. **Please be vaccinated and boosted.** Members may call the office (415-457-4633) to request a ride from a volunteer. Hope you can join us.

Stay well and be safe
We look forward to seeing you in the New Year

