

MARIN  
VILLAGES



Our Paths - Our Choices

## THE VILLAGE SQUARE

*A monthly gathering place for all our news*

January 2024



What is it about time that makes the new years seem to come faster and faster? The idea that we are almost a quarter of the way into the 21<sup>st</sup> century makes my head spin. Using the above photo as a metaphor for decreasing our speed and finding the positives: as we head down the path on which this year will take us, let's carry the optimism of the beginning as far into the year as we can. We don't know what lies ahead, but let's enjoy each tree and shrub we pass as well as the entire forest, walk thoughtfully enough to notice the metaphorical (or real) lizards and slugs and birds, and have faith that whatever lies around the bend could be a source of joy. The years might seem to come faster and faster, but we can always slow down and fully experience them. *Danielle, Marin Villages staff*

### MARIN VILLAGES NEWS

A very happy birthday to our New Year's nonagenarians



Happy New Year in more ways than one to our 90+ Club members! **Earl Burgess** turns 93 this month; **Robert Hart** celebrates 95; and **Elizabeth Atkinson** marks 97 trips around the sun. We're wishing you all a marvelous year!

### Join Marin Villages' Legacy Circle

A legacy gift, such as a donation of cash, real estate or personal property, is one you can make at any level, and in a way that suits your estate planning. If you choose to designate Marin Villages as a beneficiary of your estate, you automatically become a member of the Legacy Circle and help ensure our future. There are many ways to do so, and no required dollar amount. Our generous donors give in many ways. **If you don't have an estate plan, you can get started by tuning in to hear what Brendan Brewer has to say in his Marin Villages Zoom briefing next week—see details just below under Marin Villages Programs.** If you'd like to find out more about our Legacy Circle, or legacy gifts in general, call me at (415) 457-4633 *John Power, Executive Director*

### COVID UPDATE

Not too much new to report on this front, but those winter viruses continue to spread. Covid concentrations in Marin County wastewater are the highest they've been since last April, and the latest local surveillance data shows that the JN.1 strain is rapidly replacing prior strains in active circulation. RSV is also spreading. As always, vaccination remains the best defense against these viruses, and the current monovalent Covid vaccine is effective against JN.1. To find vaccine clinic locations, please click here: <https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/vaccinefinder>.

### MARIN VILLAGES PROGRAMS

#### **Estate Planning with Brendan Brewer**

Wednesday, January 17, 10:00 – 11:00am

Zoom



Join us for a zoom session to hear tips on estate planning from an expert. Many of you have done estate planning but may be interested in knowing whether and/or what to update, others may want to learn how to get started. Our speaker is **Brendan Brewer** who is an attorney with his own firm in San Rafael. Brendan helps clients get their affairs in order so that they can achieve a sense of comfort. He prepares estate plan documents, including wills and revocable living trusts, among others. He'll address any of your general questions time permitting. Don't put off your planning, join us! RSVP here:

<https://marin.helpfulvillage.com/events/5789-zoom-event---estate-planning-with-attorney-brendan-brewer>

### **Men's Coffee**

Wednesday, January 17, 11:30am



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 restaurants and coffee shops around Mill Valley the first and third Wednesdays of the month. To get more information or to be put on the reminder list for upcoming meetings contact Irv Gubman ([irvgubman@gmail.com](mailto:irvgubman@gmail.com) or (415) 250-6155).

### **Technology/Computer Help Office Hours**

Wednesday, January 17, 4:00 – 5:30pm

Zoom



Issues with your printer? iPhone not syncing properly? If so, join our volunteer tech support group for the answers to these and all of your other burning technology questions! We look forward to continuing to help solve your frustrating tech problems. This is a space where you can "drop in," ask questions, and receive personalized, individually focused, expert tech advice from some of our wonderful tech volunteers. Even if you'd just like to sit in to learn a little more about technology, we'd love to have you participate! So bring your questions about your computers, tablets, phones, etc., and our dedicated tech volunteers will do the rest. This opportunity is available to all Marin Villages members and volunteers. Please join us at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89289995207>!

### **LGBT Coffee—a social gathering**

Thursday, January 25, 10:00 – 11:30am

A member's home—register for details



Come to share coffee, conversation, and friendship among LGBT members and volunteers from all villages and their allies. This informal, social gathering is hosted by a San Rafael villager in her Terra Linda home. There's no agenda but to meet and enjoy the company of others. Please RSVP on our website at <https://marin.helpfulvillage.com/events/5686-lgbt-coffee---a-social-gathering> and contact the office if you need a ride. (415) 457-4633

### **Protect Yourself from Financial Scams, Fraud, and Abuse**

Thursday, January 25, 1:00 – 2:15pm

Zoom

Marin County's Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) was created to protect the public from financial abuse and threats that exist online, by phone, or in-person from strangers and also people you may even know. Learn how to spot warnings and protect yourself from becoming a victim—knowledge is power. This FAST session will help you to make more informed choices with your finances and protect what you've got. Presenters from this multidisciplinary team of public agency representatives and private professionals from the financial services industry will be able to answer your questions in this interactive session. Register here: <https://marin.helpfulvillage.com/events/5800-zoom-event---protect-yourself-from-financial-scams,-fraud--abuse>

### **Bocce**

Friday, January 26, 1:00 – 3:00pm (weather permitting)

Bocce Federation of Marin, 550 B Street, San Rafael



What better way to spend an afternoon than on the bocce court?! No prior bocce experience necessary, just soft-soled shoes and your presence. Come for the company and watch others play if you prefer. Either way, join us! Bring a snack to share with the group. Questions? Call Larry Meredith. (415) 860-2535 Need a ride? Call Marin Villages' office. (415) 457-4633

## **SAVE THE DATE! Not Home Alone Valentine's Day**

Wednesday, February 14, 2:00pm

Location TBD



Join your hostess Donnalee Wells and other Villagers to celebrate Valentine's Day at a location to be decided! All Villages members and volunteers are welcome. First come, first served, space is limited, and RSVP is required. Please bring **CASH** for your meal, no credit cards. Please RSVP to Donnalee Wells by email, phone, or text at [donnaleewells@comcast.net](mailto:donnaleewells@comcast.net) or (415) 302-9244.

## **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

### **A couple of events for history buffs**

#### **The Early History of the North Pacific Coast Railroad—Part 3**

Thursday, January 18, 7:00 – 9:00pm

San Rafael Community Center, 618 B Street

In the late 19th and early 20th century, a picturesque narrow-gauge railroad ran from Sausalito to Point Reyes and beyond, carrying freight and thousands of San Francisco sightseers eager to explore the forests and streams of Northern Marin and Southern Sonoma counties. By the mid-1930s, it was only a memory. In Part 3 (of 4) of this series, NWPRRHS President Charlie Siebenthal will discuss how the railroad provided scheduled service to Tomales and commuter services between Marin County and San Francisco. The presentation will be illustrated with photos and maps from the Society's archive. Free to the public but donations gladly accepted.

#### **Marin History Museum Speakers Series—19th-century Bay Area actor, M. B. Curtis**

Tuesday, January 23, 7:00pm

Elks Lodge, 1312 Mission St., San Rafael

Richard Schwartz will give an illustrated talk on the unbelievable, but forgotten, life and escapades of 19th-century Bay Area actor, M. B. Curtis. An immigrant himself, Curtis was catapulted to fame overnight in his comic play, *Sam'l of Posen*, about an awkward Jewish immigrant who became a traveling salesman. This was a time when immigrants were pouring into the country and this play changed the way the nation related to them. M. B. Curtis personally paid to light the Statue of Liberty in 1886 when Congress refused to do so right after the statue was dedicated. He is the only person in

American history to do that. If it wasn't for this forgotten immigrant actor's timely actions, the Statue of Liberty may never have been lit again. Entrance fee \$10.

### For our vision-impaired members

Marin Villages has a partnership with Vision Impaired of Marin. We have trained and knowledgeable Marin Villages vetted volunteers who are available to support and refer our vision-impaired members to services specifically to meet their needs. Please contact BJ Slater at the Marin Villages office if you would like to speak with one of these volunteers. (415) 457-4633

Vision Impaired of Marin supports those struggling with their vision, offering programs, support, information, resources and activities. For more information on programs, visit their website, [www.bvim.org](http://www.bvim.org). To contact them, call (415) 459-5066 or email [info@bvim.org](mailto:info@bvim.org).

### **Ongoing events:**

First Wednesday of every month – **Zoom support group** <http://www.bvim.org/support-groups>

Every two-three months – **Luncheon meeting** <https://bvim.org/luncheons>

Second Saturday of each month – **Talking Book Club** <http://www.bvim.org/talking-book-club>

### **CHECK THIS OUT...**

Ok, we're starting off 2024 on a good note! A cheerful one, in fact. This compilation from the wonderful newsletter *Reasons to be Cheerful* lists **177 really positive stories from 2023**—the kind that will make you think the world is perhaps not as badly off as it's easy to believe. Read one, two, or more. I guarantee you'll feel better. <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/the-year-in-cheer-2023/>

Golfers and wildlife lovers, here is a good one for you: this **golf course in South Africa** has no fences and allows wildlife to roam freely, even if that means closing down a couple of holes or the entire course when the animals refuse to leave. So your links day could include lions, hyenas, elephants, crocodiles, hippos, and more. A whole new definition of course hazards! <https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/15/travel/skukuza-wildest-golf-course-kruger-park-intl/index.html>

Two stray dogs in Minneapolis are brought to a shelter and **refuse to be apart**, even if it means scaling kennel walls. <https://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2023/06/07/shelter-dog-buddies-moos-cprog-orig-bdk.cnn>

At a recent celebration of **Dick van Dyke's 98 years**, JoJo Siwa performed a rollicking version of *Step in Time* from *Mary Poppins*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=riwnljt5E0A>

This past holiday season, John Travolta recreated the **opening scene of *Saturday Night Fever***, but in a Santa costume and with a Capital One credit card in his hand (yes, it was an ad). He even hits the dance floor and performs some of his iconic moves from the film. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQJ6Xc93-wY>

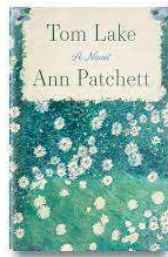


This **adorable little boy knows just where he wants to stay**—with the family dog, not with Dad, who wants to go home. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW05bvdH21A>

Singer and songwriter **Jon Batiste** sings *I Need You* in this energetic and fun video.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXT00sWwuTQ&list=RDAXT00sWwuTQ&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXT00sWwuTQ&list=RDAXT00sWwuTQ&start_radio=1)

## BOOKS, MOVIES, OR TV WE CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT

### Books



#### **Tom Lake**, Ann Patchett

During the early months of the Covid pandemic, Lara's three daughters return home to their family's cherry farm in Michigan. In the quiet of evenings stuck at home and while picking cherries to fill in for workers who can't come to work, they ask Lara to tell them the story of her long-ago summer romance with the famous actor Peter Duke during a summer stock theater at Tom Lake. This book illuminates lives parents lead before kids are born, and the small ways we stay human and happy when tragedy is all around us. It's a beautiful read, full of rich characters and quiet but profound truths. *Danielle, Marin Villages staff*

### Movies



#### **Maestro**, Netflix

I really, really enjoyed this movie. It was hard to miss the promotion for it, the “hype” about the performances, and big debate over Bradley Cooper's prosthetic nose and whether actors should pretend to have what they haven't got. You'll never notice Bradley's nose, because you'll be so drawn instead to his portrayal of Leonard Bernstein, dazzled by the visuals—that he, as director, writer, producer created—not to mention a cast that delivers real and memorable performances. In my opinion it lives up to the hype. That's especially true of Carey Mulligan who shines as Leonard's wife

Felicia Monteleagre, at every age and every stage of their romance. Watch on a big screen if you can and turn the music up. The scenes of Cooper as Bernstein conducting are as good as the actual footage of Bernstein himself as the end credits roll. *John, Marin Villages staff*

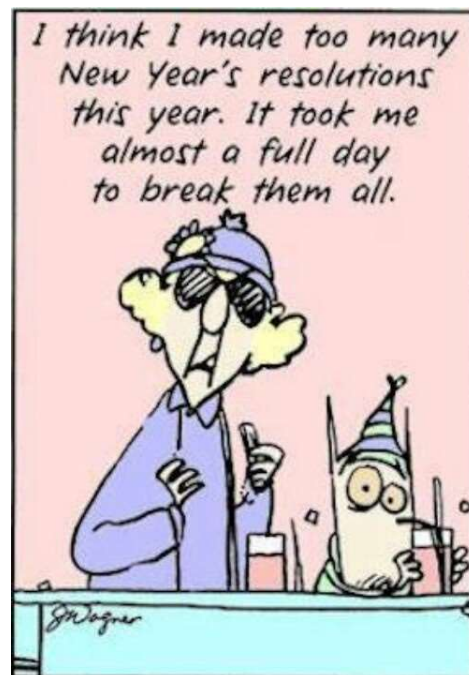
## TV



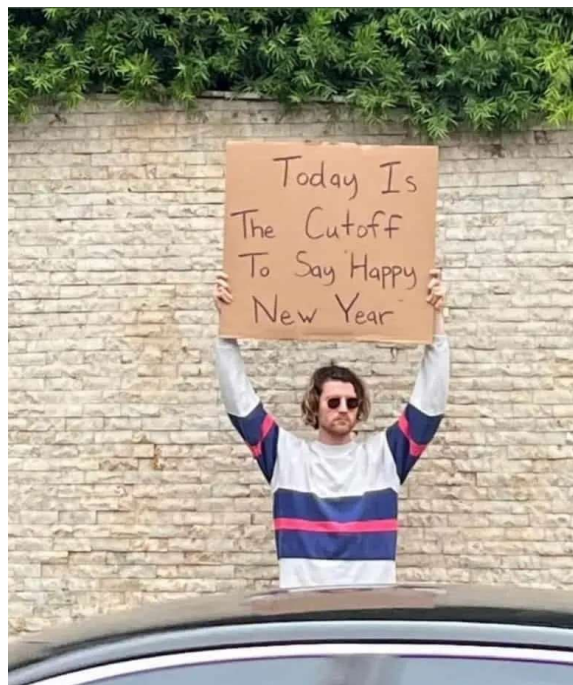
### **The Crown, Netflix**

Yes, it's been around for five seasons (now six), and I've even included it in this newsletter before, but this season is the last, and I've been hooked since the beginning. Whether you like royalty or not, the drama is well written and excellently acted, and knowing that it is likely not terribly accurate in the details (who could know what conversations go on behind palace walls?) doesn't detract from the storytelling. If you need a binge watch and haven't started on this series, it's not too late. All six seasons are streaming on Netflix. *Danielle, Marin Villages staff*

## HUMOR







## BEFORE WE GO

In the recently concluded season of *Dancing with the Stars*, singer **Jason Mraz** became quite a dancer. Here is his rousing finale dance, combining several styles and impossible to sit still to. (He came in second in the competition, which shows how strong the field was!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6K6KKVNg8yo>

*If you know someone who might be interested in Marin Villages or this newsletter, please forward it on to them. Word of mouth is one of our biggest sources of new members and volunteers! And, as always, if you have ideas for the newsletter, please send them to [communications@marinvillages.org](mailto:communications@marinvillages.org).*

*If you know someone who could use our services or is interested in volunteering with 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.

*We always welcome donations to support our work! Please use the button below to contribute. Also consider joining our Legacy Circle of donors who have designated Marin Villages as a beneficiary of a gift of cash, real estate or personal property in their estate planning. There are many ways to do so, and no required dollar amount. If you'd like to find out more about our new Legacy Circle, or legacy gifts in general, call Executive Director John Power at (415) 457-4633.*

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