



Valley Village

Aging in My Home with Mutual Support

Member of
Village to Village Network

Vol. 11, No. 6 November - December, 2021

Quick Look

Every Tuesday
8:30 to 9:30 am
Zoom Yoga

Saturday, January 22, 2022
10:00 am
Annual Members Meeting

Thursday, February 3, 2022,
4:00 – 5:00 PM
Hands-Only CPR
PVMC Fireplace Room

Thursday, February 17, 2022
4:00 – 5:00 PM
The Friendly City?:
Two Harrisonburg Stories of Race
and Reputation
PVMC Fireplace Room

For details on all events visit
valleyvillagehbg.org

Newsletter

Kathie Kurtz, Editor
Earl Zimmerman, Assoc Editor
Denise Sauder, Layout Design

General Info - 540-705-0432
valleyvillagehbg.org

"Just One Call"
540-209-6484

The Blistering Morning Mist



Kathie Kurtz

Kathie Kurtz shared her memoir, *The Blistering Morning Mist*, with 28 members and guests at Parkview Mennonite Church's Fireplace Room. This was the first in-person meeting of Village members since the COVID-19 pandemic shut things down. Despite the mask and spaced seating requirements, it was an evening of friendly sharing and catching up with one another.

Kathie selected readings from her memoir that framed pictures (or vignettes) of several important stages in her life. It lovingly paints vivid pictures of different places and times beginning with her early childhood in rural Kentucky. As an adult she lived in another narrow Kentucky valley, and one can almost feel the mists she described drifting there. The surrounding mountains felt protective while, at the same time, confining. She drew inner strength from the nearby sycamore trees securely rooted in this place yet spreading their strong branches to reach beyond the mist.

Kathie viewed her caring Mennonite community in the same way—as protective yet constraining. While she drew comfort from its security, she wondered what life was like on the other side and she kept stretching herself to find out.

Kathie concluded by talking about the process of writing for people who are considering undertaking such a project. She said that writing is a unique experience for each individual, so another's process might not work for you. She found being part of a writing group extremely helpful. While discipline in writing is necessary, flexibility is important as well. Writing can feel overwhelming--remember that any project begins with the first sentence!

Greg Versen



Sitting together again



Visiting: Stan Godshall, Paul Yoder, Lowell Wenger, Susan Godshall, Lorie Merrow

Village to Village Network Annual Conference - 2021

This year's Annual Village to Village National Conference was held Virtually on October 5, 6 and 7 with 600 members from across the United States attending. Because the conference was streamed through Zoom, Valley Village was able to include eight board members, the newsletter editor, program coordinators, and our contract administrator as participants. In past years Valley Village had to limit that number due to the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and registration associated with in-person conferences.

Highlights included an AARP presentation, "[How Community Supports Implementation of the Six Pillars of Brain Health](#)". A second was "[Stronger Memory](#)" sponsored by Goodwin House based on programs developed in Japan designed to enhance brain function. It is built on research that shows the positive effect of brain exercise activities on memory. A third was a presentation on Ageism by Dr. Tracey Gendron, from VCU. She explored the negative impacts of ageism and the stigma against age present in our society. I hope Valley Village can have Dr. Gendron provide this presentation to our membership.

Across the country communities are responding to the needs of their older members by creating Villages. I was impressed that Washington DC has 12 village organizations that are recognized by the city government and collaborate to serve different segments of the city. Combined these villages provide services and cover a majority of the city. This was a reminder that our challenge is to grow Valley Village to serve more residents of the greater Harrisonburg area.

Keith Gnagey, President
Valley Village Board of Directors

StrongerMemory

Valley Village is pleased to be able to offer StrongerMemory, a practice designed to help people improve and retain memory. This program is being offered through Valley Village courtesy of a collaboration among Goodwin House, George Mason University and Village to Village. Although the practice is done on an individual basis, a Valley Village group will be formed to share about the experience and offer mutual encouragement. Our outgoing president, Keith Gnagey, will serve as the first facilitator.

StrongerMemory is a curriculum designed to stimulate the brain's prefrontal cortex, which governs our ability to retrieve memories. Participants spend 20 to 30 minutes a day engaged in simple reading, writing and math activities. Valley Village participants will have the opportunity to be part of research on the effectiveness of the practice through George Mason University by completing two short tests.

Watch your Village Happenings email on Sundays for the announcement of the StrongerMemory informational meeting in January! For more information on the program and its history, click on this link [Stronger Memory: The Fight Against Cognitive Decline](#).

Lorie Merrow

Vendor Spotlight



Blue Ridge Chimney Services is a local family run business that can provide a full range of chimney and wood stove services. They do detailed inspections of your chimney with a camera to evaluate the condition of your chimney liner and the possible need for repairs. Along with chimney repairs they also do chimney cleaning, cap installations etc. In addition to chimney services they sell and install wood stoves including fireplace inserts. They are located at 172 South Avenue in Harrisonburg. Learn more about their company and services on their [website](#).

Reminder

Please help us expand our recommended service provider listing by recommending a company or other provider from whom you have received outstanding services. It is also helpful to hear from members with evaluations of service providers on our list whom you have used.

Wayne Kurtz
Service Provider Co-ordinator
wdkurtz@outlook.com

Big Meadows Event

On October 28, a chilly, misty morning, 20 Valley Villagers drove up to Skyline Drive. With fog on the mountain, the focus changed from long distance views to nearby autumn colors shrouded in the drifting waves of mist. As we gathered outside the Big Meadows Lodge, we were pleasantly surprised to find a local group displaying basket and chair cane weaving. Inside the Great Room there was a cheerful fire and good conversation. We then gathered at tables in Spotswood Dining Room for an enjoyable lunch together.

The hike on the Big Meadows path was optional—a few stayed in their cars, some walked for short hikes, and others longer. Several deer rewarded us with appearances both near the trail and along the Skyline Drive on the way home. Despite the expressions of desire for more warmth and valley views, everyone seemed to enjoy the event.

Lowell Wenger



Watching crafts people at work



Ready to hike—(L to R) Ruth Zimmerman, Lorie Merrow, Kathie Kurtz, Vi Miller, Tom DuVal, Wayne Kurtz, Earl Zimmerman, Sam Miller, Mamie Mellinger



Off into the fog



We weren't the only ones out for a stroll.

Valley Village Board Planning Retreat and Board Meeting Update

The Valley Village board spent Monday morning with the Strategic Planning Committee (Susan Godshall, Pearl Lantz, Lorie Merrow-Chair, Helen Nafziger and Daryl Peifer) as they presented their report. Then in the afternoon board meeting the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan was approved in a unanimous vote. The board is excited to have this plan as the guide for the coming years. As part of the plan, new Vision, Mission and Values statements were adopted (as shown below in the newsletter).

In addition to the Strategic Plan, the board approved updated policies on everything from Grievance to Document Management.

More about Valley Village strategic initiatives will be presented at the Valley Village Annual Members Meeting on Saturday, January 22, 10:00-11:30 at the PVMC-Fellowship Hall. The inclement weather date is Saturday, January 29, same time and place. Please mark your 2022 calendar for this important meeting.

Special thanks to Clara Yoder for her board service since 2015. Clara has served as secretary and Social Committee chair and as a willing volunteer.

Board Elections:

Stan Godshall, 2022 term

Pearl Lantz, 2022-2024 second term

Elaine Zook Barge, new board member, 2022-2024 term

Keith Gnagey, Immediate Past President ex officio without vote, 2022 term

Officers/Executive Committee:

Lorie Merrow, President

Julia Aldefer Stauffer, Vice President

Daryl Peifer, Treasurer

Rich Sider, Secretary

We are grateful to these members for their service on the board and as officers.

Wishing you and your family a Happy Holiday Season!

Keith Gnagey,
Board President

Personal Note:

As of January 2022, I'm leaving the President role as a planned transition to serve Valley Village in other roles. It is inspiring to witness the growth and development of Valley Village since the launch in early 2011. Thanks to member involvement and the "can do" attitude, this village has grown in membership and grown in member services. With the active board and Lorie as president, Valley Village is committed to new initiatives that are relevant and add value to the members.

Vision: (what success looks like for Valley Village)

Aging at Home with Mutual Support

Mission: (our strategy to get to our vision)

Valley Village enhances the capacity of members to age in their homes and promotes the well-being of members by offering social connection, wellness activities, educational opportunities, mutual support, and guidance for navigating the transitions of late life.

Values: (beliefs that guide our choices in how Valley Village operates and deals with people)

- Collaboration: working together to make things happen
- Community: valuing fellowship
- Compassion: caring for and supporting each other
- Diversity: welcoming and appreciating each person's individuality
- Excellence: striving to do our best and evaluating results
- Independence: cultivating resilience and self-reliance
- Sustainability: building an organization that will serve generations
- Volunteerism: giving of ourselves to help others and community
- Wellness: promoting physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, environmental, occupational health.

New President Set to Take Office



Lorie Merrow was elected President of the Valley Village Board of Directors at the November Board meeting. Her term begins January 1. She succeeds long-time President and founding member, Keith Gnagey. Lorie joined Valley Village 5 years ago, after moving to Park View. She and her husband, Tom DuVal, have been living in the Valley since 1996. She hails originally from Connecticut and has her B.S. Ed. and M.A. in History from the University of North Dakota.

Lorie's varied career has included 12 years at the JMU Office of International Programs working on Special Projects, including a good deal of grant-writing and program management, as well as several years at the Fairfield Center working on fundraising and communications.

Lorie and Tom have a daughter and son-in-law, a son and daughter-in-law, and four grandchildren. She was privileged to be able to invite her husband's mother to live with them for the last five years of her life. Her own mother is still active and living in a Retirement Community in CT, although she and Lorie's father didn't move there until their late 80s.

We are grateful to Lorie for her willingness to serve and look forward to the continued expansion of Valley Village services under her energetic and creative leadership.

Introducing the Heatwoles



Roy Heatwole was born in Bridgewater, VA, and grew up on his parents' farm. He came from a large family of 12 children and is a lifelong Mennonite. He attended Eastern Mennonite College, Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland.

Roy began his career by teaching mathematics and statistics at EMC in the '60s. Following that he worked as a statistician for the USDA and Public Health Service in Washington, DC. After retiring to the Valley in 1999, he taught at JMU for ten years.

Roy particularly loves nature and visiting our national parks. He and his son went rafting on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon twice. His passions include Donna, his children and grandchildren.

Donna Heatwole was born and raised in northeastern Indiana. She attended Bluffton College in Bluffton, Ohio.

Donna and Roy married in 1970 and spent 32 years in the DC area, working and raising two children. In 1999, she retired from Sidwell Friends School, a private, Quaker school in DC, as Assistant Director of Summer Programs and Human Resources.

Donna has a degree in Music Ed and has sung and played the piano for several groups. As a member of The Washington Chorus, she sang at the Kennedy Center for many years. Other passions in life are sports, chocolate and helping others. She has served on the boards of Jubilee Association of Maryland (which serves people with developmental disabilities), the Pleasant View, Community Preschool, and the Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival.

Donna currently serves as the director of the Blue Ridge Threshold Choir. Most importantly, she adores her children and grandchildren.



Well-Being by Stan Godshall, MD



Dr. Stan Godshall
(retired) worked 40
years in Family Practice
in Elizabethtown, PA,
with five years of work
(three short terms
scattered among those
40 years) in Tropical
Medicine and Surgery
in Shirati, Tanzania. He
and Susan are mem-
bers of Valley Village.

Covid-19 Endemic

At the beginning of the summer 2021 we all had high hopes that we were almost through the Covid-19 pandemic—BUT, then came the Covid-19 Delta variant—one of the most contagious infectious diseases ever to infect the human species! The masks mandates returned, vaccines were given to a wider age group, and months later, we again looked hopefully toward herd immunity stopping the surges. But national divisions on masks, vaccines and even the reality of Covid-19 itself has stalled us again, and we are now watching as Covid-19 becomes an endemic infection. This means that the Covid-19 coronavirus will always be with us. It will just hang around as it appears that re-infections will become less serious.

How do we accommodate life with Covid-19? Influenza can serve as our model: As the 1918 influenza pandemic virus morphed into an endemic seasonal flu, we eventually developed an annual flu shot and accepted an annual flu death rate in the US of about 60,000/year, affecting largely the most vulnerable. The drug, Tamiflu, later became available to mitigate flu disease severity.

We now have great tools to handle endemic Covid-19:

- 1) Vaccination is the most important available Covid-19 stopper. Continue to be in touch with the recommendations by public health officials about boosters, etc.
- 2) Wear masks and practice social distancing when meeting in large groups, especially if reported caseloads are high in the community (greater than 10 new daily cases per 100,000 people) or if you are not sure of the vaccination status of attendees.
- 3) Use rapid in-home Covid-19 testing before gathering family together. In-home Covid testing should soon be widely available and inexpensive, although right now, Covid-19 rapid in-home tests are the new “toilet paper” of hoarders! (\$12/test)
- 4) Use medications, if infected with Covid-19: antibody infusions work to reduce severity of disease, if given early. We will soon have pills that will do the same—Paxlovid (Pfizer), molnupiravir (Merck) are especially promising.
- 5) Continue to wash your hands frequently

These guidelines are steps toward turning Covid-19 into a normal virus rather than one that becomes a world-stopper for us.

But what I write today (November 12, 2021) will no doubt change as knowledge of this novel Covid-19 virus is a moving target --- new learnings keep coming. It is a challenge for the lay person to be patient with scientists when new information so frequently changes public safety recommendations.

Stan Godshall

Record Your Vaccinations

Having an official record of your COVID vaccinations in more than one place is wise. The site below allows you to record that information in your phone if you have a smartphone. Even if you don't, you can print a record for presenting at places where proof is required. Click [here](#) to go to the website.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Local 2021 Holiday Events *Compiled by Earl and Ruth Zimmerman*

Thursday, December 2—JMU Arboretum Festive Greens: Walk & Make

Join Arboretum Director, Jan Sievers Mahon, at 12pm – 1:30 pm for an educational and creatively inspired walk through the Arboretum. Participants will learn about various evergreen tree and shrub species. \$15 registration fee.

[More Information.](#)

Thursday, December 2—EMU Jazz Ensemble

The EMU Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Kyle Remnant, will present a holiday concert of classics at 7 p.m. in the Lehman Auditorium. There is no charge for the concert. [More Information.](#)

Friday, December 3—JMU Treble Chamber Choir and University Choruses

This concert, in the JMU Concert Hall at 8pm features performances by the JMU Treble Chamber Choir and the University Men's, Women's and Combined Choruses. Senior tickets cost \$10 and can be purchased [here](#).

Friday, December 3 and Sunday December 5—Bridgewater College Holiday Extravaganza

This extravaganza of familiar Christmas carols will be held in the Concert Hall of the Carter Center for Worship and Music on the College's campus. Both concerts are free and open to the public. The Friday concert is at 7:30 pm and the Sunday concert is at 3pm. [More information.](#)

Saturday, December 4—Weihnachtsmarkt at Bluestone Winery

The event is from 11 am - 5 pm outside on the grounds of the vineyard. It follows Weihnachtsmarkets traditionally held in Germany and are known for their food, drinks, and seasonal hand-crafted items that are perfect for the holiday season.

[More information.](#)

Sunday, December 5—Christmas Market at Brix and Columns Vineyards

The Christmas Market at Brix & Columns Vineyards in McGaheysville is the perfect place to find a locally made gift for everyone on your list. [More information.](#)

Wednesday, December 8—Holiday Wreath Making Workshop

Amanda Tutwiler, the owner of Sparrows Flowers, will be the instructor in constructing your very own 18-inch holiday wreath. Location: Price Rotary Senior Center City | 6pm - 7:30pm. Cost: City Res \$33 | Non-Res \$38. [More information.](#)

Saturday, December 11—Heritage Christmas

Brethren & Mennonite Heritage Center, 1921 Heritage Center Way, presents the annual Christmas event from 4pm-7pm. In addition to the traditional candlelight tour, the celebration usually includes hands-on family crafts, live music and singing, and wonderful holiday refreshments. Admission fees (adults; \$10, students; \$5, children 5 and under free).

[More information.](#)

Saturday, December 11—Winter Wonderfest

Tis the Season to be Downtown, Court Square, 2 N. Main Street. The most magical day in Downtown Harrisonburg is back and bigger than ever. Join The Friendly City Merchants and Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance from 11am-8pm, for Winter Wonderfest. Enjoy carriage rides, photos with Santa, carolers, holiday shopping, performances, a holiday movie, and many more activities. Plus, make sure to check out the holiday lights as part of the Downtown Light Tour. [More information.](#)

Saturday, December 11—Holiday Market at The Perch at Magpie Diner

A pop-up market from 9 am to 4 pm with small local businesses for your holiday shopping. [More information.](#)

Saturday, December 11—EMU Chamber Orchestra/Wind Ensemble Concert

The EMU Chamber Orchestra, directed by Benjamin Bergey, and Wind Ensemble, directed by Kyle Remnant, will present a joint concert of classics at 7 p.m. Saturday, December 11, at EMU's Lehman Auditorium. There is no charge for the concert. [More information.](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

Join our volunteer corps: help a fellow Villager age in their own home.

Click [here](#) to sign up OR call 540-209-6484 and leave a message OR send a message of interest to vvjustone-call@gmail.com

Here is the list of tasks we help with:

- Cleaning/Organizing
- Computer Use Assistance
- House Check While Traveling
- Laundry
- Light Home Maintenance
- Light Snow Removal
- Light Yard Work
- Meal Preparation
- Shopping or Errands
- Transportation
- Vehicle Advice – 2nd Opinion

Serve on a committee: The following Committees are recruiting additional members:

Wellness Committee (see more below)

Membership and Communications Committee

Education Committee

If you're interested, please call Lorie at 540.908.1192 or email elemerrow@gmail.com

Wellness Committee Being Formed: Betty Shenk has agreed to be on this new committee and is looking for other individuals who might have an interest in wellness to join her! The committee will start small and see where it goes. There are already great wellness activities taking place in Valley Village and perhaps this new committee will coordinate with other committees, or perhaps go in some new directions. Betty comes bringing interest in the areas of wholistic health, mental health, healthy eating, and newer research related to keeping the brain healthy. Contact her at bettyshenk@gmail.com if you have time and possible interest.

Provide meals: Following the death of Yvonne Stutzman, Valley Village is currently helping her husband Marvin with evening meals once weekly. Thanks to those who have already signed up. We are glad to be able to help at this difficult time and we are grateful to the Stutzman family for asking for assistance. It isn't always easy to ask, but it's important and we are prepared to respond. If you'd like to help with meals for Marvin, sign up at this link OR call and 540-209-6484 leave a message OR send a message of interest to vvjustone-call@gmail.com

Transitions

John and Virginia Spicher have moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to family.

In mid-October Dwayne Martin moved to Harmon House at VMRC. His wife, Pat, is at home and waiting for an apartment to open up in Park Place.

In Memoriam

October 27th, long-time Village member Yvonne Stutzman passed away. Yvonne was a founding member of Valley Village and served on our Board of Directors. She stayed connected with us until the end and Valley Village is mentioned in her obituary. Eight Village members attended her funeral. [Yvonne's obituary](#)

Cliff Lind died peacefully in his home, surrounded by his family on November 24. A long-time, active member of Valley Village, Cliff had been an educator in Eugene Oregon before retiring here in Harrisonburg. In retirement, he was an avid bike rider, a woodworker, and an environmentalist with a passion for sustainable living and energy efficient housing. We extend our sympathy to his wife Hope and the Lind family. [Cliff's obituary](#)

Note: Please send any Transition notices directly to kathiekurtz@verizon.net



December

Susie Versen
Susan Godshall
Roveen Yoder
Phillip Helmuth
Greg Versen
Joseph Lapp
Daryl Peifer

January

Teresa Boshart Yoder
Alden Hostetter
Jean Smucker Fisher
Nancy C Faulkner
Wayne Kurtz
Dorothy Jean Weaver
Earl Zimmerman
Martha Sider
Aldine Musser

Find Valley Village on Facebook!

Valley Village Page: facebook.com/ValleyVillageHarrisonburg

Valley Village [private] Group: facebook.com/groups/vvhbg

Board of Directors

As of Jan 1, 2022

Lorie Merrow, President
Daryl Peifer, Treasurer
Rich Sider, Secretary
Pearl Lantz
Ann Bender
Stan Godshall
Julie Alderfer Stauffer
Elaine Zook Barge
Keith Gnagey, ex officio

Valley Village Committees and Members:

Education Committee

Greg Versen-Chair, Ann Bender, Keaton Shenk, Keith Gnagey, Rosemary King

Social Committee

Paul Yoder-Chair, Julie Alderfer-Stauffer, Vi Miller, Faye Yoder

Tour Committee

Pearl Lantz-Chair, Vi Miller, J. Lowell Wenger, Linda Gnagey

MemCom (Membership and Communication)

Lorrie Merrow - Chair, Nancy Faulkner, Daryl Peifer, Stan Godshall

Newsletter

Kathie Kurtz-Editor, Earl Zimmerman-Associate Editor

Just One Call-Volunteer Program, Tom DuVal, coordinator

Service Provider Program, Wayne Kurtz, coordinator

Wellness Committee

Betty Shenk, Keith Gnagey

Film Committee (on hiatus)

Steve Shenk-Chair, Chris Edwards and Robin McNallie

The Valley Village Newsletter supports the mission of Valley Village by publicizing events, services and opportunities, by educating members on topics of general interest, including aging-related, by connecting members through event recaps, profiles, birthdays, etc., and as a vehicle to promote membership.

Valley Village newsletter is published bimonthly (every two months). Deadline is January 19, 2022, for submissions to the January-February 2022 newsletter. Send items to Editor, Kathie Kurtz at kathiekurtz@verizon.net. New and recently new members:

May we please put you in the New Members' Spotlights?? As you'll see from the two articles above, you can be flexible in length. Please include at least one digital photo, and send to Kathie Kurtz. Thanks!!