



PCV Village View

February/March 2024

*Helping Older Adults in Potomac to Successfully Age in Place
and Reduce Social Isolation*

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NEWS FROM OUR VILLAGE



Jane Levey, second from left, presented a talk about the history of D.C. With her, left to right, are PCV president Joan Kahn, Lynette Ciervo and Eleanor Sorbello.

Historian Jane F. Levey entertains us with the fascinating history of our nation's capital

On a chilly afternoon, a large gathering of PCV members and friends packed the community center to hear D.C. historian Jane F. Levey give an illustrated talk on the development of our nation's capital. She engaged the group with interesting stories and facts while also busting a few myths, for instance telling us that Washington was NOT built on a swamp.

We learned that Washington grew after each national crisis it faced, such as the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Cold War. And she told us that since DC is not a state, Congress was free to "experiment" with new ideas like desegregation of the schools, even before many states followed suit.

In 1862, Washington developed a system of African American schools that attracted families from across the country who traveled here to have their children enrolled in these D.C. schools and be taught by prestigious black scholars who could not teach elsewhere.

Jane has a special interest in talking about D.C. neighborhoods and was instrumental in developing the D.C. Neighborhood Heritage Trails, self-guided walking trails where residents and visitors are invited to explore the rich culture of D.C. neighborhoods. Learn more about the trails and how best to explore them by clicking [Heritage Trails](#). And Click [DC Heritage](#) to learn about the experience of the Heritage Trails.

And you thought social media was just for Millennials...

Connect on PCV's FaceBook and Instagram pages & sign up for AARP's Senior Planet Community



Don't miss the flower show...

Feb 4th is the deadline to sign up for our **March 4th** trip to the fabulous Philadelphia Flower Show. We'll travel together by chartered bus leaving from the Potomac Community Center.

The Philadelphia Flower Show is the longest-running horticultural show in the U.S. and features the nation's top florists and plant designers. For information about signing up to go by chartered bus with the PCV group Click [TRIP](#). And, Click [FLOWERS](#) for more background on the show.

County Leadership Addresses Growing Fraud against Older Adults

The fastest growing crimes in America are scams aimed at older adults. That's why members of Potomac Community Village and other villages were invited to a January fraud warning presentation event from Montgomery County Attorney General John McCarthy, Consumer Protection Agency's Eric Friedman, and County Council President Andrew Friedson.

Fraud is becoming more prevalent and more sophisticated, according to the speakers. These scammers and hackers are skillful professionals who do this for a living and are sometimes part of a larger organized crime network.

If you are active on FaceBook, don't forget to "LIKE" PCV's FaceBook page, and Follow us on Instagram. Search for "Potomac Community Village." You'll find ways to comment and connect with other members and see our latest event photos.

For tech help don't forget that PCV Members can always call the PCV Help desk for assistance at [\(240\)221-1370](tel:2402211370)

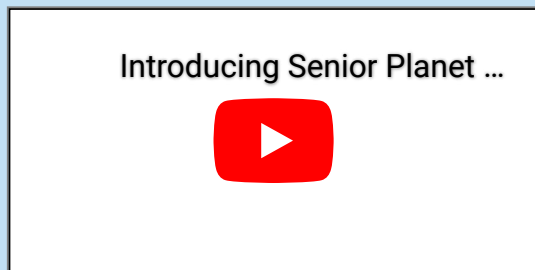
or 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com.

Click here to visit our FaceBook page [PCV Face Book](#). And, visit our Instagram by clicking [PCV Instagram](#).

And, from AARP is a social media platform called [Senior Planet Community](#) — a safe, ad-free online social hub built exclusively by and for older adults. Senior Planet Community provides a digital space to join interest groups, share updates, and make genuine connections.

Popular groups include "Fitness Enthusiasts," "Decluttering Tips," and "Fun with Photography." There's something for everyone on Senior Planet Community!

Create your free account today!



And, you can learn more about Senior Planet from AARP by visiting www.seniorplanet.org/welcome

Our December holiday party was a hit!

Over 70 people joined PCV to enjoy holiday music, dancing, great company and treats!

Also, with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), scams are becoming more convincing and can fool even the most discerning person. One example is a family member's voice can be cloned and used to call you for help or money.

Older adults may be particularly susceptible. To protect yourself, stay alert and be informed. And if you are scammed, *don't* be embarrassed. Act immediately!

Be aware of how to protect yourself from these scams:

- o Don't answer your phone unless you know the incoming phone number. Your voice can be cloned.
- o No banks or agencies, like the IRS, will ever call you or email you for personal information. If you are asked to do something from someone who says they are from your bank, hang up immediately and contact your bank directly.
- o Beware of door-to-door contractors. They may take your money and run. Use only vendors you have properly vetted through trusted resources like Washington Consumer Checkbook and make sure they are licensed.
- o Don't share your personal information when connected to a public WiFi.
- o Do not click on pop-up ads and unsolicited messages. Cybercriminals send bogus email messages (some which may look legitimate) and when you click on these scam messages, they allow viruses to steal personal or account information.
- o Make sure your home email password is unique from all other passwords that you use.
- o Safeguard your computers with the same care as locking front doors and car doors.



Thanks to Walter Ware whose music got us up on the dance floor!



and, thank you for your donations...

Our members and guests donated a total of 69 pounds of food to Manna Food Center, to help others in our community over the holiday season.

If you have been scammed, act immediately by contacting:

AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline, 877-908-3360

Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection 240-777-3636

Federal Trade Commission,
ReportFraud.ftc.gov

Volunteering is fun!

Being part of a village means you can help create our events and determine future activities. Our volunteers find that helping with Potomac Community Village is one of the most rewarding aspects of what they do each week or so, and it builds connections and community!

From helping drive a member to an appointment, writing an article about your hobby, setting up for a party, offering your home or backyard for an event, answering our Help Desk phone line, or helping a member organize their home, you can choose your level of involvement. Many small jobs can be done from your home, and don't require the commitment of a lot of your time.

The post-pandemic growth of our village means that we need even more helpers to keep our engine running. Please consider helping with one of the following, or initiating your own volunteer idea. Contact our help desk (listed below at the bottom of this newsletter) to volunteer or to get more information.

Drivers to appointments

Tech Help

Friendly visits and phone calls

Writing an article for our newsletter

Planning a program

Members love our virtual docent art tours

"I have frequently attended the blockbuster exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art, but have neglected to tour the regular exhibition galleries," said member Peggy Davidson, "The excellent docents who have presented virtual tours at the Potomac Community Center have helped me to fill that gap in my knowledge and to educate me more about art, well-known artists and the treasures of the National Gallery."

You'd be surprised - Death Cafe is not what you think...

PCV re-launched Death Cafe in January

Does joining a monthly group to talk about what a "good death" means to you sound morbid? You are not alone. But surprisingly, those who attend find that Death Cafes are informative and comforting. Not only have Death Cafes caught on, they are something of a "global phenomenon." There are now over 9,000 Death Cafes that take place in over 66 countries.

The Death Cafe movement was started in 2011 by Jon Underwood of England who was inspired by the ideas of Swiss sociologist Bernard Crettaz who had run cafe "mortal events" in France and Switzerland. Death Cafes are a monthly event where people can gather to socialize and talk openly about death.

And PCV is on the cutting edge! We offer our members our own Death Cafe via a monthly Zoom session hosted by a qualified facilitator Patricia DuBroof and sponsored by PCV Board Member Steve Lorberbaum.

Participants set their own agenda at the beginning of the year. Do we want to talk about decluttering? Advance directives? Legacy? Wills? Green Burials? Death Cafe is a way to promote "death positivity" and *have those conversations among ourselves and with our families so our wishes are understood and honored.* Consider dropping by our next cafe scheduled on Zoom for **Fri, Feb 23rd at 3:00.** Click [CAFE](#) and sign up.

Read this article about Death Cafe from *The Washington Post*. Click [CAFE](#).

Yardwork and small home repair chores

Errands like grocery shopping

Outdoor walks with a member

Sharing your talents and interests



PCV Members warmed up at a winter "Happy Hour," gathering at Whelan's on January 30 to enjoy each other's company along with beer, wine and snacks.

Help us help you, a reminder...

Potomac Community Village is all about community, and we are pleased when members are inspired to help each other. We remind all members to call the Help Desk for service requests including for medical appointments, home tasks, computer help, rides, etc. Our village can only receive state and county grant money and support by tracking and reporting on the volume of our needs and our volunteer activities that go through the Help Desk.

And, if a member is driving, they should be part of our vetted driver program. If you receive a ride to an event on your own, please then report it to us so it can be documented. We are proud to be a village of members helping members, so please make sure to start by making your service request through the Help Desk at **240-221-1370** or 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com.



Member Sylvia Diss reports that our Green Group is up and running. This month they present **Empowering a Local Movement for Clean Water, with the Potomac Conservancy**, for our monthly Speaker Series program on **Thurs, Feb. 15** at 3:30 pm at the Potomac Community Center.

Our speaker, Anna Mudd, the Conservancy's Director of Policy, will talk about the Potomac River, a "wild wonder" that 5 million of us depend on for drinking water as well as for outdoor enjoyment, and her organization's efforts to make the river swimmable and fishable in the next ten years.

The program, as is always the case with our Speaker Series programs, is free and open to all.

Did you know that action by older adults on climate issues is politically powerful? According to a report by the Environmental Voter Project entitled "Grey is the New Green," older voters are among the strongest proponents of climate activism. It reports that 1 in 6 voters aged 65 and older view climate as a top priority.

Member survey coming up...

PCV is your village, so step up and tell us what you think. A member survey will arrive in your email box sometime this spring. Your feedback is critical to helping us figure out how we can grow as a village and offer what is important to you!

In the past, member suggestions have led to new and popular offerings, such as the the monthly docent-led Cultural Arts programs, and the addition of more social gatherings like the Holiday Party.. Keep an eye out for more information.



We all know there are many benefits when we make new social connections, no matter what age we are. Conversely, we know about the negative effects of social isolation, but also know it's hard to sustain these social connections when it's cold out, or gets dark early, or the weather is iffy.

With this in mind, we invite any member who feels a bit isolated, or a little bit on edge or depressed as darkness falls earlier, and the weather gets colder, to contact the Help Desk to ask for a friendly phone call or a friendly visitor - or, if you don't feel comfortable driving, to ask for transportation to our PCV-hosted events.

Come to our Cultural Arts program on **Feb 9** to learn more about the Salem witch trials, or our Movie and a Meal on **Feb 6** and **March 12**, our Valentines Day gathering on **Feb 14**, or join our popular Coffee and Conversations on **Feb 8**. Get ready for our annual Lunar New Year Lunch

on **Feb. 22**. This is what our Village is all about — making new friends, learning something new, having good conversations and a good time, and enabling you to successfully age in place. Click [PCV EVENTS](#) to view all our upcoming activities. And, please call on us at 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com or [240-221-1370](tel:240-221-1370).

DID YOU KNOW? News from All Over

Loneliness, life's challenges and the joy of community - a touching essay

A meaningful op-ed by David French in *The New York Times*, exemplifies the purpose of our village in many ways. To quote a Swedish proverb cited in this lovely article, "Shared joy is double joy. Shared sorrow is half sorrow." Read the op-ed by Clicking [FRIENDSHIPS](#)



Governor Moore Signs Executive Order Establishing Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative

by Rachel Shuster, PCV volunteer

Driving: When is it time to stop?

read [Preparing to hang up the car keys as we age...](#)

We should all be planning for our changing transportation needs in our 70s, 80s and 90s. The hard part is that driving is associated with independence, and this is such an emotional issue. But the more people look ahead, the more choices and control they can have.

Are there guidelines to objective measures that can tell us when it's time to stop driving? Yes. Here's a guide from AAA. Click [KEYS](#) to read it.

Free Zoom yoga classes from the DC Office of Aging and Community Living

In partnership with the DC Office on Aging & Community Living, Dupont Circle Village offers free hour-long seniors yoga classes on Mondays and Tuesdays. The Monday class, "Accessible Mat Yoga," is at 3:30 pm. The Tuesday class, "Chair Yoga," meets at 11:30 am. Sign up at the Dupont Circle Village calendar, [YOGA](#). Then click on the class you wish to attend. You must register no later than the Sunday before each class at midnight. You will be sent the Zoom link on the morning of each class. Dupont Circle Village also offers a free Zoom meditation class on Thursdays, at 9 am. Click here for the listing [MEDITATION](#).

Winter Vaccination Update:

News articles report that flu and Covid cases in Montgomery County continue to rise. In fact, Maryland is among states with the highest levels in the nation, due in part to a lower than expected percentage of older adults getting their updated Covid and flu vaccinations. Consider wearing a mask when you go out. Some institutions are reinstating mask requirements. And please get both

With more than a third of Maryland's residents over the age of 50, and some 14 million over the age of 60, Governor Wes Moore (D) is prioritizing the well-being of a growing older adult population with the executive order titled Longevity-Ready Maryland Initiative.

Maryland's Department of Aging will build upon existing efforts across the state to address such real-life challenges for older adults as employment opportunities, equitable health care and caregiver support.

"If we are going to meet the twenty-first century needs of this rapidly changing demographic, we must evaluate our programs, advocate for change, target resources and formulate data-driven policies with a whole-of-government approach," Moore said.

Recommendations will be developed and published in a final Longevity-Ready Plan in mid 2025. To read the article, click [LONGEVITY](#).

and, two research studies about longevity in our neighborhood communities...

Along those lines, two academic articles address sense of purpose and cognitive benefits of an active neighborhood community for older adults.

In a study published in the journal *Psychology and Aging*, the authors examined how closely social support and loneliness are tied to feeling purposeful and goal-oriented through an adult's lifespan.

Using a sample of Swiss adults, the authors concluded that sense of purpose appears related to more positive social well-being and relationships, and consistently linked to lower loneliness.

And in a study published in *Social Science & Medicine*, the authors coin the term "Cognability" to understand how neighborhoods may benefit cognition and help buffer against cognitive decline—for example, looking at how friendly an area is to walkability.

your Covid and Flu vaccinations through your health care provider, or click [MD Vaccine](#) to sign up with local pharmacies and hospitals.

RSV (*Respiratory Syncytial Virus*) cases are also rising, so older adults are advised to receive the RSV vaccination. Check with your health care provider and the link above to schedule this important vaccine.



News on Heart Health:

The heart surgery that isn't as safe for older women

Coronary artery bypass grafting (C.A.B.G.), the most common cardiac procedure in the United States, has been studied primarily in male subjects. Women are paying the price, reports a *New York Times* article. When patients who need this surgery head into an operating room, the outcome has a lot to do with their sex, a recent study in *JAMA Surgery*, reported.

C.A.B.G. (pronounced like the vegetable) restores blood flow by taking arteries from the patients' arms or chests, and veins from their legs, and grafting them to bypass the blocked blood vessels. 25 to 30% of C.A.B.G. patients are women. Female mortality rates for C.A.B.G., though low, are much higher for women (2.8 percent) than for men (1.7 percent), the study found. You can read about the study by clicking [CABG](#).

Knowing your heart risk

People who have a low risk of coronary artery disease live an average of 10 years longer than those with a high risk. However if you know you are at high risk, you can do a lot to lower it. Click [HEART](#) to read an article with tips on lowering your risks, from John Hopkins Medicine.

And, from Suburban Hospital,

Love your heart: steps to protect yourself from a heart attack, an event on Feb. 14.

In honor of Heart Month, Greg Kumkumian, medical director in the cardiac catheterization laboratory at Suburban Hospital, will discuss the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and how you can prevent this life-threatening event. Please register here, [SUBURBAN HEART](#).

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS

Making it easy to find new social connections, or learning something new to enhance your life. These are key goals of our village, as seen in the photos from some of our recent events. Directly below, two pictures from our Jan. 17 lunch at Fontina Grille.



Below is our Cultural Arts program on Dec 8, where we received a "gift for the season" from our National Gallery of Art docent. She gifted us images and stories about her favorites from the gallery's collection, and we heard from our Cultural Arts program director, Barbara Goldberg, about her plans for future docent talks.



Below, more evidence of Holiday Party fun on Dec 14! With over 70 members and guests attending, the smiles say it all!



Thank you for your Generous Donations

Mary Jane Alexander, Laura Bach, Vic Cohen, Shirley Dominitz, Nancy Huang, Marie Kramer, Rosemary Lange, Karen Lechter, Cecile Plost, Eddie Rivas, Merlyn Rodrigues, Joyce Rudick, Debbie Stevens, Terry Vann

Welcome New Members

Regula & George Guess, Judy Lubin, Neil & Joan Waldman,
Lois & Jean Wishnia

Thank you for Renewing your Membership

Miriam Avrunin, Marjorie K & Jeffrey Bender, Dan & Robin Gordon, Joan Muller, Jean Polatsek,
Eleanor Sorbello, Robert Younes & Anne Mathews-Younes

Click here for the full [Calendar](#) of upcoming PCV events.

We look forward to your joining us.

We will continue to share a list of upcoming events in our weekly Sunday morning emails and at our in-person events. If you have any questions, please contact us at [\(240\)221-1370](tel:(240)221-1370) or at 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com.

From the PCV Communications Team: Caroline Lewis, Chair; Sheila Moldover, Sheila Taylor; proofreaders Marcia Akresh, Peggy Heller, Karen Lechter and Linda Perlis; resources team Richard Gorman and Allan Wang. Please join us as interviewers, photographers, proofreaders and publicists.

www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org

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