

PCV POST March 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This month, PCV is offering some exciting programs. From our own Potomac community, resident Bernie Lubran will present a **March 23rd** program about his father who was a member of the WW II Ritchie Boys. See the listing below to learn about this fascinating story. We are also pleased to host a speaker from the Office of Consumer Protection on how to avoid scams (**March 8**). And looking ahead to **April 28**, mark your calendar for our Home Safety Program kick-off. Our speaker, Louis Tenenbaum, is a nationally-recognized expert on aging safely in place. These programs are listed below, and are free and open to all. I encourage you to tell your friends and neighbors to register.

With the spread of the coronavirus less of a concern, and state and county restrictions easing, we are exploring how our Village can best serve our members with both safe indoor and outdoor events. We were delighted that twenty members gathered for our recent outdoor "Coffee and Conversation," so we know you are looking forward to getting together in-person again! We're looking for people to offer their back yards for outdoor members' events, to offer to lead walks for our members and friends, to plan trips to outdoor locations, such as nearby gardens, and plan some indoor restaurant events, such as brunches, lunches or desserts. Please share your ideas and

let us know how you can help by contacting us at info@PotomacCommunityVillage.org, or 240-221-1370.

Thank you to all our Members and Volunteers for their continued support of the Village.

Owen Ritter,

PCV President

UPCOMING PCV EVENTS

Advance registration is required for PCV-hosted events. PCV Members log into your accounts and click on the "Register" button for the desired event. If you are a Member without a login password, please inform us at info@potomaccommunityvillage.org and the password creation email will be sent to you. Non-Members should click on the "Register for this event" link and follow instructions to provide the required information and then again click "Register for this event." The Zoom link will be provided in the confirmation email.

How to Outsmart the Scammers, a Program for National Consumer Protection Week March 8

PCV presents "How to Outsmart the Scammers," a program presented on Zoom on **Tuesday, March 8, 1 - 2 pm.** The

program will be presented by Lorena Bailey, an investigator with the Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection.

March 6 - 12 is National Consumer Protection Week. We're all looking for ways to be safe from those who want to take our money, steal our identities and make mischief.

During this program, you'll learn how to protect yourself against scams that target seniors by email, telephone, hacks of your email, misleading offers on Facebook, identity theft, etc. We know the scammers are out there. Learn how to recognize their tricks and what you need to do to protect yourself.

To register for this free event, click [SCAM](#).



PCV's Book Discussion on March 15

This month's **PCV Book Group** discussion is on *News of the World*, a novel from 2016 by Paulette Jiles. This book was made into a 2020 film starring Tom Hanks.

We will meet on Zoom on **Tuesday, March 15, from 1:30 - 3 pm** to discuss the novel. Read a review from the *New York Times* by clicking [REVIEW](#). To register click [BOOK](#).

Book Group is free and open to all PCV Members and Volunteers and is open to non-Members to try out once.

Upcoming Book Discussions

April 19 *The Guest Book* by Sarah Blake

May 17 *The Girl with the Seven Names* by Hyeonseo Lee

June 21 *Snow in August* by Pete Hamill



The Ritchie Boys

March 23

PCV presents "The Ritchie Boys," a program about the special intelligence force of immigrants, refugees and others who were recruited by the U.S. Army during WWII for their knowledge of enemy lands and cultures. The Ritchie Boys kept their oath of secrecy, and only now, 70 years after the end of the war, has

their story emerged. Our speaker is Bernie Lubran, president of the Friends of Camp Ritchie. Bernie's father, Walter Lubran, was a German emigre whose job, as one of the Ritchie Boys, was Interrogator of Prisoners of War.

Register for this free presentation which is open to all on **Wednesday, March 23, at 7 -8:30 pm.** Click [RITCHIE BOYS](#).

Welcome New Members

Peter and Emma Jean Mettam

Thank you for renewing your membership

Gertrude Bernstein

Sylvia Diss

Rhoda Hornstein & Sheldon Kravitz

Kurt Kohn

Ellen & Stewart Share

Debbie Stevens

PCV Members Enjoy Coffee and Conversation

Twenty PCV members celebrated an unseasonable burst of warm weather by getting together for "Coffee and Conversation" on February... in Potomac Village. 20 Members joined together outside, in what PCV Member Sheila Moldover described as, "a delightful time, enjoying the lovely weather and seeing PCV friends smiling and laughing and in good conversation." We hope this is an omen of more in-person get-togethers in PCV's future!

See photos of our "Coffee and Conversation" by clicking [PCV PHOTOS](#)



Valuable Resources

Estate Planning Tips and Tricks Many people do not have estate plans or even simple wills. Planning for end-of-life concerns is sobering and requires multiple decisions. A Washington Consumers' Checkbook article helps make it easier. Author Kevin Brasler offers help with creating your estate plan and avoiding mistakes while saving money. Click [ESTATE](#).

Holy Cross Health publishes a health and wellness newsletter with loads of information and classes. Among them in the current Winter issue are free caregiver support groups for adult children caring for aging parents, as well as for caregivers of ill or aging spouses. For the newsletter, click [CAREGIVER](#).

Montgomery County Offers Free Home Safety Checks Jim Resnick, Program Manager for the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service reminds PCV Members that they can register for a safety check of their homes. Click on [HOME](#)

[SAFETY](#) and scroll down to click on Request a Home Safety Check, or call 311 and request a "home safety check."

DECLUTTERING

A valuable article from The New York Times

Journalist Ronda Kaysen, *The New York Times*, writes about a spike in decluttering, as people come out of the pandemic. Here is the first part of her article. Click [DECLUTTER](#) to read the entire article.

"Cleaning out a home can be a morbid, depressing task, often best left until after you're gone, when it's no longer your problem. But what if you decide to tackle the chore now, while you're still here to make the decisions? As we begin to emerge from a long and deadly pandemic, some older Americans have decided to do just that.

Professional home organizers are reporting a spike in calls from older customers asking for help sorting through their belongings, seeking to dole out the heirlooms and sentimental items and toss the excess. The mood, organizers say, is largely upbeat, with people eager to part with china, furniture and photographs. In some cases, the inquiries come from grown

children on behalf of their aging parents, keen to get ahead on the task so they don't have to do it alone later."

OF NOTE...

Montgomery County Libraries Expand Hours

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) has expanded hours of branch service to include Sundays, effective Feb. 27. The hours of operation had been reduced during the COVID-19 health crisis.

Metro's Oldest SmartTrip Cards Are No Longer Accepted at Fairgates

How To Replace Them

The oldest Metro SmartTrip cards are no longer being accepted at faregates and fareboxes (as of **Tuesday, March 1**). Metro riders will need to replace these cards to travel on Metrorail or Metrobus going forward.

SmartTrip cards purchased before 2012 are no longer compatible with new, faster, modern faregates already installed in many stations. While the ability to use the old farecards was phased out on March 1, there still is time to trade in the cards. Any remaining balance on the old cards will not be lost and can be transferred to a new card at any time. Metro will continue to

offer free replacement cards through the mail, by phone or online for a limited time.

Anyone, including Senior SmarTrip holders, who has recently used Metro can get a free replacement card within a few days via phone at 1-888-SMARTRIP (1-888-762-7874) or [online](#). Customers also have the option of purchasing a new SmarTrip card at fare vending machines, retail locations or by using [mobile pay on Apple iOS and Android](#). The balance can then be transferred to the new card using at the customer's [registered SmarTrip account](#).

View [Metro's Card Replacement page for step-by-step instructions](#) on how to get a replacement card and transfer the balance. SmarTrip cards purchased before 2012 can be identified by the serial number on the back. All newer card numbers start with "0167" and are active, and no further action is needed. SmarTrip cards that start with any other serial number need to be replaced.

BILLBOARD

Other Events of Interest

Area organizations are presenting programs for varied interests. Among events included on the PCV Calendar of Events for the month of March are:

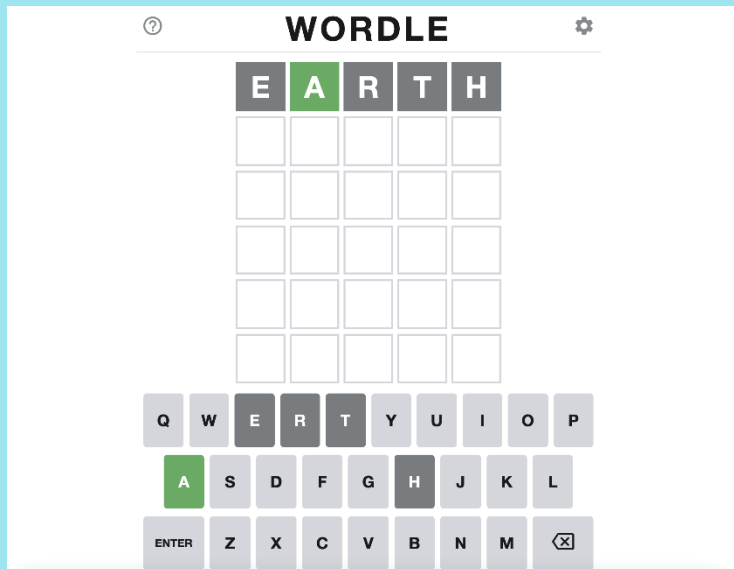
- The National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremony, co-sponsored with The Japan Foundation (**March 20**). Click [CHERRY BLOSSOM](#).
- Go Fly a Kite and celebrate National Kite-Flying Day (**March 26**) on the grounds of the Washington Monument. Click [KITE](#).

The PCV calendar has details for these events, as well as others. These events are free and open to all. To see all the events click [Homepage](#) and select the EVENTS tab. Generally advance registration is required. Please see the individual listings for further relevant details.

Activities with Nearby Area Villages

With so many Villages nearby, there are many activities and programs open to all. Why not participate and possibly meet people from other area Villages? The Silver Spring Village has created a website with events for everyone. To peruse upcoming events and to register, click [AREA VILLAGE EVENTS](#).

Wordle is All the Rage!



For anyone not familiar with the online game Wordle, the aim of Wordle is to guess a five-letter word in six tries. If you guess the right letter in the word in the correct place the letter turns green. If it is the right letter, but in the wrong place, it turns yellow, and if the letter turns grey it is not in the word at all. According to *The New York Times*, the game was invented by Josh Wardle, a software engineer in Brooklyn who created it for him and his partner to play. Releasing the game to the public in mid-January, today, according to *The Guardian*, the game has over 2 million players. Here is a good YouTube video explaining how to play Wordle. Click [WORDLE](#). To play Wordle on your phone, tablet or computer go to [Wordle](#).

LOOKING BACK, and AHEAD on COVID in MONTGOMERY COUNTY

From County Executive Marc Erlich,..."Next week marks two years since the beginning of the COVID-19 health crisis in our county. On March 5, 2020, the first three cases of COVID-19 in the State of Maryland were identified in Montgomery County. Since then 1,980 Montgomery County residents have died due to COVID-19, and the vast majority died before vaccines were widely available."

He continued, "There are few among us who has not been touched by this virus and the tragedy it has inflicted. Reflecting on all those who perished from this virus is a solemn reminder of the seriousness of this virus, as well as our personal responsibility to mitigate future fatalities. We must also remember the thousands of residents who will be impacted by long-term medical conditions, some of which may seriously compromise their health."

and, "Throughout the next month, we will take time to remember those who have died from COVID-19 and recognize the many residents and organizations who helped save lives over the last two years. While this pandemic is not over, the month-long recognition effort will also be a look back at all we have done over the last two years and thank those who have helped get to where we are now. Each week, we will focus on a different theme. Next week will be our 'Memorial Week' from Feb. 28 to March 6. We will remember the nearly 2,000 residents lost over the last two years to COVID-19 and we are

encouraging County residents to share their stories using the hashtag #MoCoRemembers. I hope you can join us for a vigil to honor them."

COVID UPDATE

County Indoor Mask Mandate Lifted... but with Caution

EFFECTIVE: Feb. 21, 2022 | 11:59 p.m.



• • • MONTGOMERY COUNTY • • •

MASK UPDATE

Indoor Mask Mandate Lifted

Montgomery County will suspend its mandate requiring masks or face coverings indoors in locations accessible to the public.

Does not impact mask requirements for Public Schools.

COVID-19 Information Portal:
www.MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/COVID19



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
MARYLAND

In an update from County Executive Marc Elrich on February 24, "The indoor mask mandate in Montgomery County was lifted this week in accordance with the decision by the County Council. Nevertheless, I will generally continue to wear a mask in indoor public spaces because wearing a mask, as well as being fully vaccinated and boosted, are the best ways to reduce the risk of transmitting and getting COVID-19. With substantial transmission, people who are unvaccinated or not boosted should continue wearing masks in order to stay as safe as possible."

He continues, "It is also important to remember that businesses and other organizations can continue to require

customers or visitors to wear a mask in their establishments. The County also is strongly recommending that front-facing staff, who have not received their booster, and visitors in County Government offices and facilities, continue to wear masks or face coverings in publicly accessible areas. We will continue to monitor the situation, and if there should be another surge, our experience over the last two years has shown us, we know what we need to do to reduce risks to our residents. To read the updated face covering guidelines, go to <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/face-coverings.html>."

and further, "Although case rates are dropping in Montgomery County, we currently remain in the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention's defined category of 'Substantial Transmission' for the second straight week. Please note that the county's test positivity rate continues to drop as well as and we are about one-third lower than the State's test positivity rate. Hospitalization and deaths also continue to decrease. Although we have made great progress over the past month, we are still seeing higher rates than last fall."

Current guidance on what masks are recommended can be found by clicking [CDC MASK](#). CDC details about the omicron variant are available by clicking [OMICRON](#)

Third Doses/Booster Shots. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services along with private organizations such as pharmacies and health care providers, offer booster shots to everyone over the age of 18. A helpful link for appointments for all three vaccines (Pfizer, Moderna and J&J), can be found by clicking

[VACCINE ELIGIBILITY](#). Additionally, to access the easy-to-use Maryland State COVID Vaccine/booster site, click [MD VACCINE APPT.](#)

For complete County information visit the County's Multi-lingual COVID Site by click [COVID INFO PORTAL.](#)

If you need help to make an appointment at a County-operated vaccination site, please call the COVID-19 call center at 240-777-2982 Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Free Taxi Cab Service. For residents 65+ and those with disabilities, free taxi rides to get vaccinations or testing are sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. Instructions to get a free taxi code can be found by clicking [TAXI.](#)

PCV Help Desk is Here for You

PCV has received accolades about our volunteers who telephone Members on a somewhat regular basis. Many have developed great friendships, and both caller and recipient have received much fulfillment from the resulting conversations. In other cases, the recipient and caller found they have similar interests or have lived abroad in similar countries and have much to reminisce about. Occasionally, they both know a foreign language and maintain their ability to communicate in that foreign tongue,

together. In other cases, it is a simple chat to find out how the other is doing and if PCV can help in any way!

Please call the PCV Helpdesk at 240-221-1370, or email 20854Helpdesk@gmail.com if you would like to be connected in this fashion.

The Help Desk can be called on for short-term or one-time help. PCV can help with errand running or occasional meals if you're dealing with, for example, an arthritis flare-up or recovery from surgery. Please call, so PCV can connect you to a friendly volunteer.

PCV Help Desk 240-221-1370 Mon-Fri 9 am-5 pm
20854helpdesk@gmail.com
<https://www.potomaccommunityvillage.org>
info@potomaccommunityvillage.org