



Potomac Community Village

PCV Village View

May 2023

*Helping Seniors in Potomac Successfully Age in Place
and Reduce Social Isolation*

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NEWS FROM OUR VILLAGE

Home & Fire Safety Program reveals helpful services

Jim Resnick has always had a passion for teaching fire safety to older adults. As head of Montgomery County's Fire & Rescue Senior Outreach Program, he has seen first hand the effects of fire when "things go badly." This passion led him to a 28-year career as a full-time fire fighter and paramedic. For Jim, it's also personal. His dad lost three relatives in the 1942 Cocoanut Grove nightclub fire in Boston, the deadliest nightclub fire in U.S. history.

PCV members marked Earth Day with learning and action

PCV members don't just learn, we also act to help our larger community. For Earth Day, this meant helping to clean up the C&O Canal during Canal Community Days.

His dad was invited to attend that night but had declined.

When Jim retired in 2014, he realized that "fishing and golfing in retirement were not for me." He was appointed to his current position teaching older adults about fire safety.

At our April 13 program, Jim shared some home safety tips with our Village:

- **Have a plan, so if there is a fire, you'll know what to do.** Know how you will exit and where you will meet up with the other members of your household.
- If you cannot exit, **put as many closed doors between you and the fire** while you call for help.
- **Close before you doze.** Sleep with bedroom doors closed.
- **Install smoke alarms inside and outside of each bedroom.** Check batteries monthly by pushing test button.
- **Always clean out your dryer lint after each use.**
- **Never try to put out a fire.** Leave and call 911.
- **Call 311 to schedule a FREE home safety inspection.**

PCV is planning a series of programs on *When Your Home No Longer Fits You*

In response to requests from members, and as a follow-on to last month's Washington Post article on the [very high costs of care for older adults](#), PCV is planning a series of programs called *When Your Home No Longer Fits You*.



The Canal Clean Up effort saw a dynamic group of PCV members volunteering to clean up trash along the Canal's trails. PCV volunteers not only received t-shirts for their efforts, but the satisfaction that comes from volunteering. In fact, research shows that older adults who volunteer can improve their mental health, reduce loneliness and enjoy new friendships. It was nice to see PCV members giving back to the community!

Honoring Earth Day: Learning and Action, was one of our Village's most enriching recent programs. Many thanks to PCV members Sylvia Diss, who organized our panel of speakers, and Eddie Rivas, who led PCV into action in the Canal Clean Up event.

Our program featured spirited speakers in partnership with Elders Climate Action. While members heard shocking statistics on the state of our earth, they also learned encouraging ideas about how each person can help, including:

- Eat less meat/dairy, more plant-based food
- Walk more, carpool, fly less
- Plant native plants
- Compost with Mom's or Montgomery County
- Recycle and Reuse
- Buy local

Our goal is to explore choices such as rental retirement and assisted living communities and continuing care facilities. We'll also look at using a geriatric care manager, and options such as shared housing, moving to a condo or rental apartment with no additional services, and staying in your current home by installing a stair lift, remodeling a bathroom or adding on a first-floor addition or hiring home care aides. We know there's **a lot** to consider!

For this series of programs to be as useful as possible, we'd like to hear from those of you who've already begun this exploration.

- What are the questions you should have asked but didn't?
- What questions are you glad you asked?
- What comes into play for those who are aging solo vs. those who live with a partner?
- What about when only one of the partners needs a higher level of care?
- What should we know about care for those with dementia vs. care for physical disabilities?
- Have you visited any local congregate living facilities? If so, will you share your experiences and tell us what you learned?

Stay tuned for these upcoming programs, and please [share your thoughts](#) on what we should include and the questions we should ask the speakers we invite.

SAFE HOME - a PCV program

Remember to take advantage of a rebate program offered to PCV members. With an approved safety upgrade to your home,

At the program, many people asked for extra copies of the hand-out fliers, so they could share them with friends - so many that we ran out of fliers!

[Click here](#) to see *Climate Change Resources* for references and links.



What could be more fun than chocolate!

"Sure I joined Potomac's Village for practical reasons, but I found so many activities that were fun too," said a member.

May's Speaker Series features PCV Member Sheilah Kaufman who will delight members and make history delicious with her talk, ***The History of Chocolate***, complete with a tasting, on **Thurs., May 18 at 3 pm** at the Potomac Community Center.

As a member of PCV herself, Sheilah epitomizes the depth of interesting skills and careers in our village membership. Sheilah has authored more than 20 cookbooks and is an acclaimed speaker on the traditions and history of chocolate, as well as on Turkish cuisine and Mediterranean cooking. Her frequent radio and television appearances and lectures include talks for Epcot's Food and Wine Festival, the Smithsonian, and Les Dames D'Escoffier, among others.

PCV will reimburse you for \$100 or 50% of the cost, whichever is less.

We will be exploring some of these options in our upcoming series on *When Your Home No Longer Fits You*. If you've implemented some of these changes in your home, please [tell us what you did and how it worked out](#). To learn more about our Safe Home program, please click [SAFE HOME](#).

We're sure that *The History of Chocolate* will be a popular event, so reserve your spot by clicking [CHOCOLATE](#). Those who attend will get a true taste of Sheilah's knowledge!

DID YOU KNOW? News from All Over

People need friends, especially as they grow older

A recent [article in the Washington Post](#) highlights the importance of social connections for older adults and emphasizes that it's never too late to develop a meaningful network of friends.

We all know that social isolation and loneliness create significant negative consequences to the emotional, physical and cognitive health of older adults. One antidote to that is to join a Village!

Whether it's attending a seminar, luncheon, art tour, walk, or even gathering on Zoom, members get to know each other, build essential social connections, learn they can count on other members for help when needed, find a renewed sense of community, and have fun too!

Learn how Potomac Community Village can help *you* create new social connections and a meaningful network of friends by clicking [MEMBERSHIP](#).

Updates on some government programs...



Home Sharing in Montgomery County

Home sharing is an innovative idea where homeowners in Montgomery County offer spare rooms or accessory dwelling units in their home for rent to home seekers who need affordable, healthy and safe housing.

Home sharing can reduce social isolation, create monthly income for home owners, and offer new affordable housing options. Offered through Montgomery County's Housing Initiative Program, Home Sharing provides certified counselors to help create long-term, secure and vetted matches. Click [HOME SHARE](#) for more information.

Covid vaccine update: CDC approves additional Covid booster for older adults

With FDA's recommendation in late April and CDC's quick approval, the next round of Covid vaccines are now available for older people who are at least 65, and for immune compromised people. Under these [new recommendations](#), eligible individuals are able to receive this latest protection four months after receiving the first bivalent shot. Those with a weakened immune system can get the additional dose two months after receiving the first. Additional doses for both groups can be given at intervals decided by their doctors. If you recently had Covid, wait at least 90 days after you recover before getting another booster. Anyone not vaccinated will get a single updated vaccine shot from now on.

Vaccines, including a second bivalent booster, can be administered at local pharmacies. You should be able to schedule an appointment online through the pharmacy or just walk in. If your regular pharmacy cannot schedule a booster shot, visit the CDC's [vaccines.gov](#) website. The site searches by ZIP Code to help you find locations with available appointments and specific vaccines. No-cost vaccination sites can be also be found through the CDC's [No-Cost Covid-19 Testing Locator](#).

MEMBER BENEFIT: PCV members can request volunteer assistance with setting up a vaccine appointment and/or getting a ride by contacting the Help Desk at 240-221-1370 or 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com.

TIP: *Although the national Covid State of Emergency ends on May 11, Medicare (as long as you have Part D) continues to provide free Covid vaccines, as do many private health insurance*

Active Aging Expo explores technology for aging

The Montgomery County Commission on Aging and the City of Gaithersburg are sponsoring an Active Aging Expo at Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg on Thursday, May 4, 9:30 am—2:30 pm. Click [EXPO](#) for information. No registration is necessary. As part of the Expo, a seminar will be presented about how technology can help older citizens remain safe and happy in their homes. Entitled *Smart Homes — Smarter Care*, the program will cover a wide range of electronic devices that monitor health care, help people stay connected with family, provide remote monitoring and education, and help with safety and financial security.

Click [TECHNOLOGY](#) to register for the seminar on Zoom, starting at 9:30 am, if you are unable to attend the Expo in person.

A vision for aging in Maryland

The Maryland Department of Aging Secretary, Carmel Roques recently introduced her vision for Maryland becoming a state serving its citizens throughout their lifespan with resilience, by making Maryland a place where people want to live and age. "As life expectancy in the U.S. continues to climb, we need to think differently about the impact of aging on all aspects of our society," said Secretary Roques. Her plan reflects a nationwide trend as the U.S. population ages in every state. To this end, Ms. Roques established a new Multi-Sector Engagement and Planning Initiative with stakeholders from government, non-profits and the private sector collaborating. Click [AGING IN MARYLAND](#) to find out more.

AARP 2023 scam update*



Laughter makes us feel better!

Laughter is indeed the best medicine....*

Whether a little chuckle or full belly guffaw, your last dose of laughter lifted your spirits, and doctors tell us it also benefited your health.

Studies show that the physical benefits of laughter are many. Laughter raises the oxygen level in the blood, and the release of cortisol, endorphins, and the immune system's T-cells (all health boosters). When one laughs or reacts to a joke, dopamine and other stress-busting chemicals in one's system are boosted and that reduces anxiety, according to Rebecca Abenante, a social worker and health aging coordinator for New Jersey's Atlantic Health System. Besides these great physical changes the takeaway from many current studies is that the social benefits of laughter are among the most beneficial.

Your newsletter editors agree. We think you'll have some fun just joining in the many PCV activities scheduled in May! Click [MAY PCV EVENTS](#) to scroll down to a list of May events that will make your day fun, and maybe funny!

*from ama-assn.org; American Medical Association, April 22, 2023.

Where do scams occur? On your phone, on your computer, in stores and in your home!

According to AARP's *Your 2023 Fraud Survival Guide*, fraud happens everywhere, but you can learn how to defeat these scams with some simple tips on how to recognize them, to prevent losing money and avoid identity theft. According to AARP, the nation's fraud statistics are staggering, with billions of dollars lost by consumers. Scammers continue to adapt to moods of the moment.

AARP lists 9 current scams to watch out for; among them, fake barcodes on gift cards, bank impersonators who get around 2-factor authentication, and package delivery scams. Here are a few of the tips for your first line of defense:

- Pick up mail quickly. Take mail to the post office instead of putting it in your mailbox.
- Install a front door video camera.
- Shred mail and papers with private information, including shipping labels.
- Edit your wallet; keep only one credit card if possible.
- Review your bills and financial accounts frequently for fraud.
- Never open email file attachments unless you know the sender.
- When shopping online, make sure to spell the URL correctly, as scammers take advantage of misspellings.

* Condensed from "Your 2023 Fraud Survival Guide," AARP Bulletin, April, 2023, Vol 64, No. 3.

OUR VILLAGE LIFE



Our Wonderful Marie Kramer

Marie Kramer currently serves on our Membership Team, but she's been helping Potomac Community Village in a variety of ways almost from our start in 2012.

"Sam and I were not in at the very beginning, but both of us were on the Steering Committee by the following year," Marie recalled. Now, she helps out with what she describes as a small job.

"I send out reminders every month to people whose membership is coming to an end, after they haven't responded to email reminders to renew. And I also send out letters welcoming new members, thanking people for renewing and I send out the membership cards."

When Sam passed away from Covid in April 2020, he and Marie had been married for 62 years. Sam had a debilitating stroke in 2015 that kept him in a wheelchair. This prompted construction of a first-floor bedroom and a bathroom with a roll-in shower in the Potomac home they moved into in 1966 and where Marie still lives.

Marie shared what she learned about renovations from that experience when PCV presented a 2021 program on how to make your home safer. But teaching others has been part of Marie's life for years. She taught mathematics at Queens College in New York City, after graduating from Mt. Holyoke and Yale graduate school with degrees in math. Later, after moving to Maryland, she worked at Hillel at American University.

What brought her to Maryland from Brooklyn, where Marie grew up, and the Bronx where Sam grew up?

"Sam was a civil engineer who was recruited to the Bureau of the Budget in 1966, as a budget analyst," she explained. Sam later worked at NIST, retiring in 1997 as deputy director.

Now 93, Marie continues to drive, takes walks in her neighborhood, and hopes to get back to her hobby of making stained glass. She recently completed 18 years of organizing a monthly Jewish film program at Congregation Har Shalom. She also enjoys seeing her two great-grandsons, age 3-and a half, and age 7-months, and her daughters and granddaughters, who live nearby.

The most important benefit of being part of PCV, says Marie, "is meeting interesting people who I would never have met otherwise."

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS

We walked on the Canal on April 14.



At our Home and Fire Safety presentation on April 13, PCV board member Joan Kahn with our speaker, Jim Resnick.

Our Book Group met on April 18, continuing to meet on Zoom for the convenience of being able to attend even when travelling.



Coffee and Conversation meets outdoors when the weather cooperates. Here we are at the Corner Bakery on April 19.



At our "Honoring Earth Day: Learning and Action" program on April 20, with our speakers, Sylvia Diss, Bruce Davis and Frances Stewart.



We continued our Earth Day efforts by volunteering to clean up on the C & O Canal, working with the Canal Trust, on April 22, Earth Day.





Thank you for your Generous Donations

Miriam Avrunin, Joan Laughner

Welcome New Members: Edith Black, Joan Laughner

Thank you for renewing your membership: Joan Levenson, Caroline Lewis

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 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 writers, interviewers, photographers, proofreaders and publicists.

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