

Dear friends and neighbors,

This sure has been a tough year so far and keeping anxiety at bay a challenge. But amid the frustrations and worries some real glimmers of hope are now presenting themselves. Keeping those thoughts foremost, we wish you a hopeful and celebratory December as we continue to give thanks for this community and our many blessings.

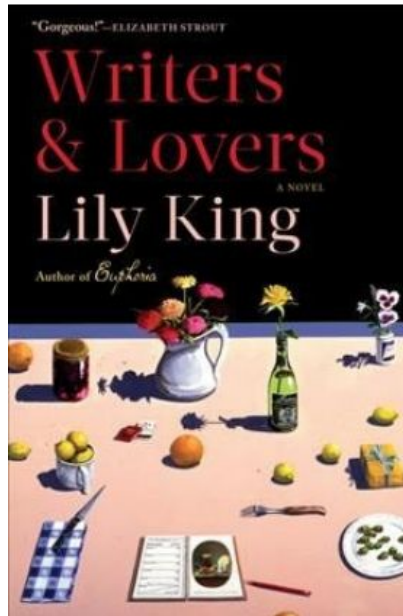
As has been clear in recent weeks, we are in a new phase of dealing with Covid-19. While the news regarding vaccines is exciting and hopeful, it remains critical as cases proliferate that we remain vigilant. We strongly encourage you to keep doing what you have been doing so well and continue to carefully consider what activities to pursue, whether with friends, family or other villagers. We urge everyone to stay current with rapidly changing county guidance. To help, Marin Villages not only sends weekly updates but posts guidance regarding village events and services [here](#). For those participating in any in-person village activities, your group leader checks guidance and will be in touch regarding any new protocols or cancellations as called for. So please use your very best judgment. Be patient. We are indeed tired and missing each other, but now more than ever we need to be safe and keep those around us safe as well.

### **Watch This Snowball Fight from 1897 for a Jolt of Pure Joy...**



This 52-second clip has been circulated widely after being featured in an article in the New York Times Magazine in early November. It is a recently colorized version of an energetic and high-spirited snowball fight captured by the Lumiere brothers in Lyons, France in 1897. For the full article about this delightful “jolt of pure joy” click [here](#). The author, Sam Anderson writes “This is my favorite film of 2020 - a tiny masterpiece...”

## Recently Read and Recommended *Writers & Lovers* by Lily King



We owe this recommendation to Sue Steele who offered this gem for our enjoyment.

A review in the Washington Post, began with “Lily King’s ‘Writers & Lovers’ delivers pure joy”. More joy? How can you resist that?

The review, written by Ron Charles, continues:

“Please don’t do this. Don’t write a novel about trying to write a novel. It’s cliché and insular and lazy. Just don’t do it.

Unless it is this novel - this wonderful, witty, heartfelt novel by Lily King titled “Writers & Lovers”.

The narrator of “Writers & Lovers” is Casey, a 31-year-old woman clinging to her dream of a creative life after all her MFA friends have settled down, married up or sold out.

With Casey, King has created an irresistible heroine - equally vulnerable and tenacious - and we’re immediately invested in her search for comfort, for love, for success: a triple prize that seems entirely impossible.

Casey is determined to hold out for a plot on her own terms. The result is an absolute delight, the kind of happiness that sometimes slingshots out of despair with such force you can’t help but cheer, amazed.”

This sounded like a perfect read and so timely for those of us ready to cheer for any and all good news. With Sue’s recommendation and this review as motivation the e-book was quickly downloaded, thanks to our wonderful library. Over the last few days chores have been ignored, the Thanksgiving shopping list languished and the couch beckoned repeatedly as the book’s characters and plot proved irresistible. Thanks Sue. Two thumbs up and still cheering. Hoping you get the chance to enjoy it too.

## Extraordinary Encounter with Gorillas in Bwindi



We search out and dust off this video every couple of years because it continues to make us smile. It was forwarded to us by friends who were working hard to convince us that Bwindi needed to be on our radar for an upcoming trip. Bwindi, or Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, in Uganda, is a sanctuary for colobus monkeys, chimpanzees as well as many bird species. But It is most well known for the 400 Bwindi gorillas there, half of the world's population of the endangered mountain gorillas. This is a great video of a wonderful encounter between a guest and a group of gorillas that unexpectedly visit the lodge grounds early one morning. Another example of “joy” as we watch the movements, inquisitiveness and expressions - of all. To view, click [here](#).

## Delicious, Easy-to-Make Granola



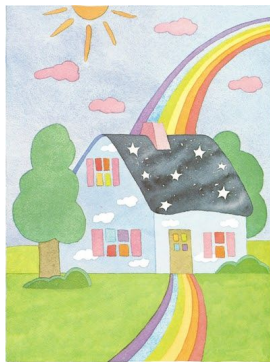
This granola has been a staple for years since a friend forwarded her recipe after we admired the results during a visit. The ingredients are often in the pantry and the hour it takes to toast up yields a batch, especially when doubled, that will last a while. For how it has evolved for us over the years see further below. But here is the original recipe:

- 5 cups oats
- 1 cup all else (flaked coconut, sesame seeds, pecans, almonds, wheat germ...)
- 1 cup canola or olive oil (or less)
- 1 cup maple syrup (or less)

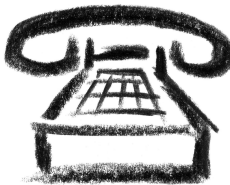
Combine all ingredients in a pan and stir well to cover oats with oil and syrup. Bake in a 325° oven for 20 minutes, stir and return for another 20 minutes, then stir and return to the oven again for as long as it takes (10 - 20 minutes) to achieve the color you want.

Doubling the batch is no more work or time and lasts better in our household. A 15"x10" pyrex dish works well for the double batch. If you purchase bulk oats, 10 cups is about 2½ pounds. Otherwise a 32-oz bag of Bob's Red Mill Old Fashioned Rolled Oats from Mill Valley Market works well. The 2 cups of "everything else" for us means ~1½ cups of pecans and almonds, toasted for 8 minutes and chopped, with the remaining ½ cup made up of flaked coconut and wheat germ. Then a cup of maple syrup and ~½ cup of canola oil stirred in, less than the recipe, just enough to moisten the oats to toast well.

This is not a fussy recipe and hard to go wrong, so add what you like and tailor the proportions as you figure out what works for your taste. Enjoy!



### **'Tis the Season - Always Help Us Help Others**



Have you appreciated some aspect of the village? We are always eager to spread the word about Mill Valley Village and the five other local villages around the county that fall under the umbrella of our parent organization, Marin Villages. If you know someone who would like to get our newsletter by email, could use our services, is interested in volunteering, or would like to donate to an organization serving older adults in Marin, please have them get in touch. We would be delighted to chat with them and answer any questions about Mill Valley Village and how it works.

Connie Dubin, Chair - 415-381-7606 or [millvalleyvillage@gmail.com](mailto:millvalleyvillage@gmail.com)  
Sue Steele, Membership Chair - 415-388-7832 or [xerty.10@gmail.com](mailto:xerty.10@gmail.com)  
Karen Robbins, Volunteer Chair - 415-519-3420 or [karobbins@comcast.net](mailto:karobbins@comcast.net)

## Marin Catch-A-Ride A Discounted Taxi-Service Program For Marin Residents



As many of you know, Catch-A-Ride is a terrific option to have “in your pocket” for a last minute ride request. This service is one of a family of transportation services offered by Marin Transit and funded by Marin’s voter-approved vehicle registration fee, Measure B.

Eligible riders can request up to eight discounted taxi rides a month.

To be eligible for Catch-A-Ride you must be a Marin resident and meet one of the following criteria:

- Age 80 and older
- Age 60-79 and no longer driving
- If under 60, be eligible for ADA paratransit

Once you are accepted into the program you request rides within Marin by calling the scheduling number anytime between 9am and 6pm seven days a week. They recommend calling a minimum of three hours in advance for the best chance of taxi availability.

When you call for a ride, you are given an exact price for the discounted ride so you know in advance the trip cost. Catch-A-Ride will pay up to \$14 of the cost of a taxi ride within Marin. For riders who qualify as low-income, Catch-A-Ride will pay up to \$18 of the cost. Quite a deal.

For more information on this and other programs,  
or to request an application  
contact Marin County Travel Navigators  
415-454-0902 or [travelnavigator@marintransit.org](mailto:travelnavigator@marintransit.org).

Or click [here](#) to see the “Marin Access At-A-Glance” brochure of transportation services.

Having worked with the Travel Navigators many times on behalf of village members we have found them extremely knowledgeable and keen to help make sure residents know all of their transportation options. Give them a call if you haven’t already.

### Events for December

Here is the run down for December’s village events. You can also find these events on our website at [www.mvvillage.org](http://www.mvvillage.org) under either the **Events** or **Calendar** tab. The **Events** tab will give you a list in date order. The **Calendar** tab shows you the same events in a traditional calendar format.



### **Tuesday, December 1, Caregiving and Family - Challenges and Rewards, 1pm**

Are you caring for a family member or friend? This group meets the first Tuesday of the month. First convened in early 2015, the group has as its goal providing 'support that recognizes one's inner strengths and resiliency, no matter the circumstances'. If such a group might appeal to you, villagers are invited to contact Sara Byruck ([sybruck@gmail.com](mailto:sybruck@gmail.com) or 617-599-8116) for more information and directions. **For now the group is meeting via Zoom at the same time.** If you have considered this group but have hesitated for any reason, now may be the time. Sara would be delighted to chat with you to see if it feels right for you. Give her a call.

### **Tuesdays, December 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, Knitting and Needlework Group, 3pm**

Have a knitting or needlework project you would like to undertake in the company of friends? If so this group might be for you. We typically meet weekly to discuss potential projects, enjoy each other's company and encourage each other as progress is made. **For now we are meeting via Zoom.** This group has been meeting regularly and is enjoying the camaraderie around their efforts. Beginners are welcome. Mill Valley Village members and volunteers, as well as those interested in finding out more about the village, are welcome to contact Sara Byruck ([sbyruck@gmail.com](mailto:sbyruck@gmail.com) or 617-599-8116) for more information.

### **Wednesdays, December 2 and 16, Men's Group, 11am**

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. **While this group has historically met at the Sweetwater, we have been meeting online via Zoom since March.** To get more information or to be put on the reminder list for upcoming meetings contact Alan Hayakawa ([alan.hayakawa@gmail.com](mailto:alan.hayakawa@gmail.com) or 415-384-8998). The group meets the first and third Wednesdays at 11am.

### **Wednesday, December 2, NEW Movie Group, 2pm**

We hope you will consider joining us for our new movie group. The idea is to get together via Zoom to meet, greet, enjoy each other's company and talk about that month's selected movie. In advance, we will each watch the selected movie and then talk about what struck us about it, what we liked (or not), what it made us think about, remember or yearn for...and on and on. If you are interested in being part of the group or getting more information, please contact the group coordinator, **Seela Lewis** ([seelalewis@gmail.com](mailto:seelalewis@gmail.com)), to be put on the list to receive the monthly movie recommendation and Zoom link. Seela is looking forward to hearing from you and welcoming you to this new group.

### **Thursday, December 3, Book Club, 3pm**

The group, led by Trish Hibben ([t.hibben@me.com](mailto:t.hibben@me.com) or 415-215-8394), meets monthly. **Until further notice the group is meeting online via Zoom.** The book group, aimed at local village volunteers and members, is currently full. We will announce when a second group is being formed and can take new members and volunteers.

### **Fridays, December 4, 11, 18 and 25, Hiking Group, 9am**

Our hiking group is for serious hikers wishing to spend the day on the wonderful trails of Marin County. Hikes are scheduled weekly on Fridays and vary from moderate to strenuous. We take 45-60 minute lunch breaks with some of the most beautiful views around. What a great way to get some good healthy exercise and get to know your Village

neighbors better! If you are interested in joining us on the trail please contact Julian Brandes ([jjb94941@gmail.com](mailto:jjb94941@gmail.com) or 415-845-8392) for more information.

### **Mondays? More?, “Back Before Lunch Hikes”**

These hikes, aimed at those looking for a shorter hiking option than our Friday hikes, have typically been 3 to 4 miles long, with an elevation gain of 500-800 feet and lasting about 2 hours. The group used to meet early Monday mornings and be “back before lunch”. The hike was very popular, not only for the wonderful hiking venues but for the connections forged on the trail. While the once-a-week large group format is no longer feasible, new guidance from the County and Marin Villages opens the door to small group outdoor activities. To encourage you to keep on hiking, Sara Byruck, long-time group coordinator and hike leader, has offered to help you keep in touch with each other and out on the trail. And if you need a hiking companion she will put you in touch with others in the group who are also looking for someone to hike with. For more information or to get on Sara’s email list contact her at [sbyruck@gmail.com](mailto:sbyruck@gmail.com).

### **Wednesday, December 16, Third Wednesday Trail Walk Group, 10am**

We hold 2 - 4 mile trail walks on relatively flat terrain the third Wednesday morning of each month, occasionally heading elsewhere for an outdoor adventure. We get together in small groups with local walks on wide open paths, keeping our distance and wearing masks. It is great to see one another in the open air and catch up. For more information or to get on the list to be sent walk details by email, contact Karen Robbins ([karobbins@comcast.net](mailto:karobbins@comcast.net) or 415-519-3420).