



# Twin Cities Village Voice

Empowering older adults to remain active, connected,  
and independent in the place they call home

December 2021

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## EDITORIAL

By Sue Sommer

Oranges and auburns have transmogrified to reds and greens, silvers and blues, and swaths of gold. Frost and fog bedevil the days, but the holiday hullabaloo is taking solid hold, as we anticipate the togetherness we weren't able to have last year. Beyond all the negative issues of supply ships languishing in harbors, late deliveries, rising prices, and a COVID upsurge, we in Marin seem to be inured to much of it. We are jabbed to a fare-thee-well, giving us the permission and the freedom to celebrate, regenerate, and decorate!

I'll be extracting those large boxes from the back shelf in my garage (after I move my car!), and I'll find the box that holds the tiny village pieces I collected as my mom and I shopped in my pre-kindergarten days. I have written about it as a meaningful remembrance of that time. Here is an excerpt from my story, "Growing Up, L.A."

*On certain days, after we escorted my sister Patty safely onto the school yard, we would walk to downtown Lynwood. With each sojourn at Christmas time, I was allowed to choose a little hand-painted, often lightly glittered cardboard house or church, some bigger than others, with a hole in the back to put through a tree light. Some were three cents, some five, many made either in Occupied Japan or Germany. We'd create a tiny village every year, complete with straw trees and cotton snow, Mom and Dad wisely too fearful of a fire to put the decorative little edifices on the tree. I still have the charming, tiny town, but now it features a forest of trees, small people, ponds, arbors, a gazebo, and a mailbox—it covers the entire center length of my dining room table during the holidays, providing sweet nostalgia.*

Lately this is the festive center of my house, instead of a tree—it's easier and more intriguing to see, especially for the neighborhood children, who are as enchanted with the miniature village as I was.



Others of us will honor a Menorah and the traditions of Hanukkah—all of this as we have done in years and generations past. Others will prepare for Kwanzaa. Whatever you celebrate, this year the festivities will no doubt be more jolly than last (wouldn't anything be so?), but still may be modulated, as we watch, ever diligently, the dreadful virus—ironically looking like a small ornament—madly flying through the air, like Santa's sleigh.

However, a week or so later, we will turn over the calendar yet again; spring will be waiting in the wings; the sun will come up, and it will set; the seasons will roll by, and our gardens will bloom once more.

So, we on the Twin Cities Village Steering Committee wish you the best of everything for the holidays and the new year—health, contentment, joy, prosperity, and, perhaps most of all, peace. Peace within, peace for our families, peace for our own little village, for our country, and for our world.

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## WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS!

**Members:** **Judi Provence** and **Jan Jones** have lived in Larkspur since 1974 and met as flight attendants. Welcome to both of you; we hope to meet you soon.

**Volunteers:** **Barbara Janis** has been a Corte Madera resident for 22 years. She paints and is learning to refinish furniture. Welcome, Barbara!

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## TWIN CITIES VILLAGE EVENTS

If you need a ride to any of the events below, please call the office. (415) 457-4633

### Food & Drink

#### **Men's Coffee Group**

Wednesdays, December 1 & 15, 11:30am  
Sweetwater, Mill Valley

A bi-monthly gathering to meet and discuss life while enjoying coffee at the same time! Join the Men's Group on the first and third Wednesday of each month for conversation about various topics. Men from all local villages are invited to participate. Contact Irv Gubman ([irvgubman@gmail.com](mailto:irvgubman@gmail.com)) with questions.

#### **Sip 'n' Chat—Cocktail Hour**

Because of the holidays, we will wait until January for our next Cocktail Hour. There will be much to share by then.

### Fun & Games

#### **Bocce Ball**

Friday, December 3, 1:15 – 3:00pm  
Marin Bocce Federation, 550 B Street, San Rafael



Any level of athleticism is fine! Just wear soft-soled shoes and join us for fun and some exercise. Hat and jacket are a good idea. Drinks and snacks will be available.

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## OTHER MARIN VILLAGES EVENTS

Because of the holiday gatherings and the spike they are likely to bring, the mask mandate is still up to you in many indoor areas, but at least things are open and available. Check the Marin Villages' *Village Square* for updates, as well as suggestions for films, books, events, and activities.

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Discover events and activities on other local websites:

- Library ([marinlibrary.org](http://marinlibrary.org))
  - Buck Center informational lectures and events ([buckinstitute.org/events](http://buckinstitute.org/events))
  - Age Friendly Corte Madera ([agefriendlycortemadera.com](http://agefriendlycortemadera.com))
  - Parks and Recreation departments of our sister cities
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## TWIN CITIES VILLAGE ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Birthdays



Richard Kalish, December 11—Happiest of birthdays to you!

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## INVITE TO WRITE



Lee Smith recalls a surprise from a Christmas of long ago.

*The Toy Box*, by Lee Smith

It was the Great Depression and nearing Christmas, 1933. We lived in a small house next to the Gaskills, who had four boys. We formed a gang: The Gaskill Gang Plus One. They had an old shed in back which became our club house. I was the youngest and the mascot. They convinced me there was no Santa Claus. I told my mom and she said "Really? I think they are wrong."

A week later we were getting ready to go to Grandfather's farm for family Christmas. My favorite cousin, Althea, would be there, and Grandma would make lots of pies, including her favorite, mincemeat. Mom and Dad were packing the old brown Chevy with everything we needed to stay a few days, plus simple, handmade gifts for everyone—including another doily for Grandma. Suddenly Mom said she forgot to turn the tree lights off, and she asked would I please go in and do that, and pull the door shut tight when I left. I sighed as I looked at our little tree with a few colored lights and strings of popcorn adorning it and nothing else but a cup of cold cocoa with a marshmallow for Santa.

When we returned a few days later Mom handed me the keys and asked me to go turn the Christmas lights on while she and Dad would bring everything else in. As I entered, I saw the tree lights were ablaze with color, and a beautiful wooden toy box, lid open, was filled with "real" store-bought toys! I clearly remember a yo-yo, a bag of 30 marbles, Lincoln Logs to build an entire little cabin, wood blocks with numbers and letters embossed, and dominos, but I especially remember a set of metal toy soldiers with the paint and brushes to finish them myself. The box was emblazoned with my name on the top! I was overjoyed and certain that Santa was real.

It was years later that I realized Mom had asked a neighbor to sneak in while we were gone and play Santa Claus, and today the box also has my son's name and my grandson's name carved on it, waiting to bring joy with the fourth generation's name, be it boy or girl.



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## BITS AND PIECES

### Hazard of the Month

Because we're all eager to learn about safety, we're adding this new feature of things to be aware of.

#### **Don't leave items on the stairs**

I'm tempted to put something on the stairway to take up next time I'm ascending or descending so I don't have to make a special trip. But trips can happen! If you don't see it, or go downstairs in the middle of the night to turn up or down the furnace, or to get another bite of that chocolate layer cake, or you hear a noise, that item can be dangerous.

**BONUS:** And while we're talking stairs, always...ALWAYS grab the handrail.

Email me with other ideas: [ssommertime@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ssommertime@sbcglobal.net)

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## AND MORE...

In November we met for Sip 'n' Chat at Boca, a pleasant venue and fun gathering. Cozy under the heat lamps, yet blossoming flora to envelop us! Affable staff and affordable prices, too.





*The CEO figures out the bill!*

### Puzzle!

Here are the answers to last month's word scramble. How'd you do?

#### Words related to this season

stuffing – fitsfung

cranberries – breareicrsn

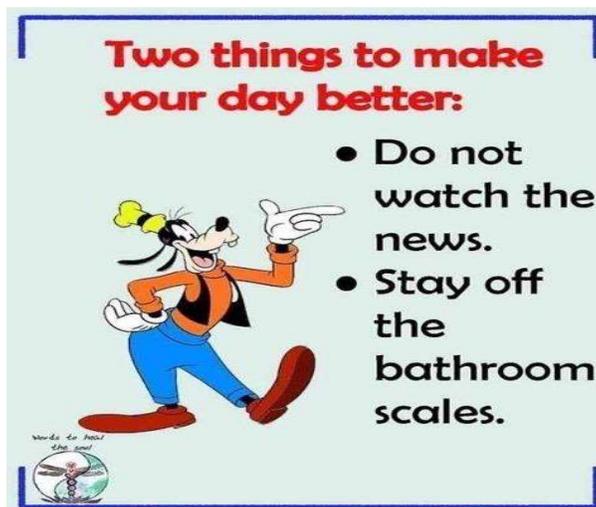
sweet potatoes – esottepawsote (2 words)  
autumn – unutam  
leftovers – feltresov  
turkey – kretuy  
vegetables – bletevgeas  
mashed potatoes – tapeteamshoods (2 words)  
gravy – rygav  
turkey sandwiches – weedstrackshinyu (2 words)  
yams – masy  
gratitude – turagdiet

### The two sides of joy!

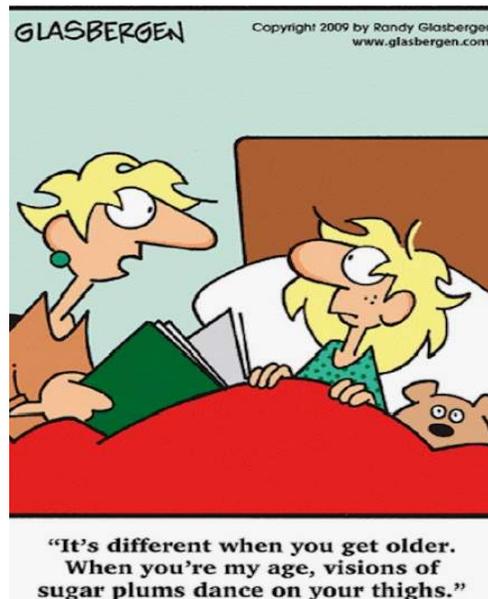


### Happy New Year!

It's the end of the year—and time for the poppycock of a new year's resolution. Here's some advice from that great sage, Goofy.



## The other side of Christmas



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## HELP US HELP OTHERS

For more than two decades the belief that it takes a village to raise a child has become embedded in our culture. Not as embedded but equally important is the village it takes to provide a comfortable, nurturing, and safe environment for people as they age. You can help.

We need more caring volunteers to be part of this thriving nationwide movement, a movement that's dedicated to strengthening bonds between generations and building strong, vibrant communities that provide continuity to all ages.

Marin Villages is looking for volunteers to provide a variety of support to older adults. Our goal is to match skills from volunteers with the needs of members. Volunteers sign up for visits that fit their life and lifestyle, but we ask for a commitment of two assignments a month.

If you know someone who is interested in volunteering, could use our services, or would like to donate to an organization serving older adults in Marin, please have them call the office at (415) 457-4633, or visit our website ([www.marinvillages.org](http://www.marinvillages.org)) for application forms and online donations.

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**Marin Villages** 4340 Redwood Highway, Suite F-142 San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 457-4633 [www.marinvillages.org](http://www.marinvillages.org)