Mill Valley Village
a branch of
MARIN VILLAGES
Our Paths - Our Choices

Dear friends and neighbors,

With December nearly upon us we are ready to enjoy the holiday season. There is a lot to celebrate and we are very much looking forward to seeing you at one event or another.

Mill Valley Village Holiday Party
Thursday, December 8th, 3:00 - 5:00pm

Well, the countdown has begun. The recipes are chosen and our ovens are getting a workout. The wreaths and lights are assembled, the tunes chosen and the corkscrews lined up. We cannot wait to welcome you to this year's Holiday get-together at the Clubhouse. This party is great fun. A time for catching up and sharing food, libations and good cheer. Please join us to share the holiday spirit with friends.

The party is from 3:00 - 5:00 at the Mill Valley Golf Course Clubhouse at 267 Buena Vista Drive, a 3-minute drive from the corner of East Blithedale and Carmelita Avenue. At the end of Carmelita turn right onto Buena Vista Avenue. Continue past the Tennis Club until you see the Golf Course on your right. The Clubhouse is up the hill on your left with plenty of parking. Villagers will be waiting to greet you. No RSVP needed, just come by. And if you can, please offer rides to those you know could use a lift, as many who would

normally offer to drive will be busy cooking and setting up awaiting your arrival. Village members may call the office (415-457-4633) to request a ride from a volunteer. Calling early is always a good idea. We look forward to seeing you there.

Coffee at the Sweetwater
Second Wednesdays
Next up: Wednesday, December 14th at 10:30

“Coffee at the Sweetwater” returned to the line-up last month and it was such a pleasure to see you all again. The Music Hall has been brightened up a bit with better lighting which made the space even more comfortable and welcoming. The book collection was on display again. You are invited to borrow them and/or drop off favorites you think others might enjoy. We are planning to make this a regular event again and hope you will put the second Wednesday of the month on your calendar going forward. Do bring your own “cuppa” of whatever suits as the coffee bar will not be open when we are there. You are equally welcome to bring your own “nosh”, though the usual donuts will be provided.

Winter Open Studios at ICB
One Fine Art Destination - 100 Studios to Explore
Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4, from 11am - 5pm

This is such a fun destination. For those of you who do not already make this an annual pilgrimage, it is time to do so. This is a fabulous event. The variety and quality of work on display is pretty phenomenal. The ICB building is home to over 140 artists who work in various mediums. There is FREE admission and parking. The ICB Studios (click here) are at 480 Gate 5 Road in Sausalito. Elevators are available to navigate between floors with an accessible entry at the entrance nearest the water.

For a special treat visit the studio (#302) of Mill Valley Village member Ingrid Butler (http://ingridbutler.com). Ingrid plans to be there from noon to 4 both days. Several of us have been lucky enough to see Ingrid's work up close and encourage you to stop by. Ingrid is an innovative and multi-faceted paper artist, with something for everyone. She will have her gorgeous marbled papers, artist books, paper purses, unique greeting cards, bookmarks, and more for us to peruse. Hope to see you there.

'Tis the Season…for Cookies

These delicious cookies made an unexpected but very welcome appearance at our last Steering Team meeting. They were delicious so we thought you might appreciate a new recipe to add to your cookie options this year.

The cookies we ate were made gluten free by using Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free all purpose flour. The cook also chose to cut back slightly on the sugar in the dough, skipped the step that says to roll the cookies in sugar before baking, and added ¼ teaspoon of nutmeg to the dough. Read on (or go to this link) for how to make these delicious cookies.

Chef John's Gingersnap Cookies - from Allrecipes.com

"The amazing spicy-sweet flavor and irresistible texture of these gingersnap cookies will please even a non-cookie eater like me. I like to add candied ginger, ground ginger, cayenne and black pepper. You can adjust the spices and cooking time to suit your tastes, but remember, they're called ginger snaps for reasons other than texture!

Ingredients:

2 c. all purpose flour
2 T. all purpose flour
2 t. ground ginger
1 ½ t. ground cinnamon
1 ½ t. baking soda
½ t. fine salt
¼ t. ground cloves
¼ t. ground black pepper
⅛ t. cayenne pepper
12 T. unsalted butter, softened
⅔ c. white sugar
⅓ c. finely minced candied ginger
¼ c. molasses
½ t. vanilla extract
1 large egg, beaten
½ c. white sugar, or as needed, for rolling cookies

Directions:

Whisk 2 c. plus 2 T. flour, ground ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, cloves, black pepper and cayenne together in a large mixing bowl until thoroughly mixed.

Cream together butter and ⅔ c. sugar in a separate bowl until pale yellow and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add candied ginger, molasses, vanilla and egg. Whisk until well blended. Add flour mixture to butter mixture and stir just until the flour disappears. Cover dough with plastic wrap and refrigerate until chilled, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350'. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Pour ½ c. sugar into a shallow dish for rolling cookies.

Scoop out about 1 ½ t. dough with a small scoop or teaspoon. Form dough into balls and roll in sugar. Place cookies on the prepared baking sheet. Slightly flatten cookies to about ¼" thick; sprinkle with a pinch more sugar.

Bake in batches in the preheated oven until cookies are your desired crispness or chewiness, 10 - 15 minutes. The timing depends upon the size of the dough balls and how crispy or chewy you want these. Makes 4 ½ dozen.

Rumor has it these will also be making an appearance at the Holiday Party

Be Aware and Wary
‘Tis the Season for PHISHING

Along with being the season for good cheer and shopping, it also appears to be the season for scams and fraud. While you have likely seen similar, the volume of deceptive messages coming to my devices this past week prompted me to put out this reminder to you to be wary. In my case, in a single day I received messages purporting to be from both Amazon and Paypal that my account had “suspicious activity” and if the link provided was not utilized promptly they would be obliged to close my account PERMANENTLY 😱.

My first thought was ”Oh NO, not now, while I am trying to place an order, feed the dog and get out the door to…” This is just what they are counting on to make you click that link!

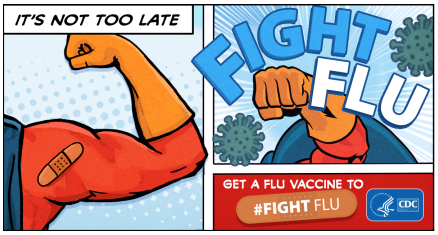
This is Phishing – Don’t Bite – Just DELETE

In case you are lucky enough not to have been a recipient, here is an example, though the links and identifying information have been changed:

> Info - account - id02233@rulismion85.org
> Customer notice [Case #VC6624]
> Your Amazon account has been suspended,
> Because we have found some suspicious activity
> on your account. Restore your account immediately
> via the link click below: http://ar.to/Payment-222
> Verify before 48 hours or your account will be
> permanently suspended
>
> Kind regards
> Amazon security

This is likely “preaching to the choir” but do be careful as the volume of these messages seems to be increasing. If you do get one, hold tight, breathe and DELETE!

No Flu Shot Yet?
Now is the Perfect Time!!!
Same with Covid Booster Shots - PLEASE



If you haven't gotten your Covid booster or flu shot yet, now is the perfect time. Don't hesitate. And please spread the word. This is just one more way you can take care of your health and concurrently protect others in the community. Thank you.

S A V E T H E D A T E
A 27 Year Wildflower Journey:
California Wildflowers and Climate Change
Thursday, March 2nd, 1pm at the Sweetwater Music Hall

We are delighted to announce a new date for a long-postponed presentation, California Wildflowers and Climate Change, by internationally acclaimed conservation photographers Rob Badger and Nita Winter. On Thursday, March 2nd, Rob and Nita, life partners and creative collaborators for more than three decades, will take us behind the scenes of their 27-year journey photographing wildflowers throughout California and the West. It began in 1992, when they discovered and fell in love with California's spectacular wildflower blooms in the Mojave Desert's Antelope Valley Poppy Preserve. Photographing these beautiful landscapes and individual flowers evolved into a documentary art project and their award winning, truly gorgeous coffee table book "Beauty and the Beast: California Wildflowers and Climate Change". Please save the date and plan to join us on March 2nd at the Sweetwater Music Hall. Feel free to invite interested friends, family and

neighbors. Rob and Nita will share their stories as they show us slides of their stunning images as well as how they captured them. They plan to bring copies of their book for purchase, or you may find it at https://wildflowerbooks.com.

Events for December

Below are the Mill Valley Village activities for December. You can also find these events on our website at **www.mvvillage.org** under either the **Events** or **Calendar** tab. We hope to see you at one of these programs.

Fridays, December 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 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 or 415-845-8392) for more information.

Mondays, December 5, 12, 19 and 26, "Back Before Lunch Hikes", 9am
These hikes, aimed at those looking for a shorter hiking option than our Friday hikes, have typically been 3.5 to 5 miles long, with an elevation gain of 600-800 feet and lasting about 2 hours. The group meets early Monday mornings and is "back before lunch". The hike is very popular, not only for the wonderful hiking venues but for the connections forged on the trail. Sara Byruck is the long-time group coordinator and hike leader. For more information or to get on Sara's email list contact her at sbyruck@gmail.com.

Mondays, December 5, 12, 19 and 26, "Leisurely" Hikes, 9:30 am
This hiking option is for those who would like to get out on the trails but at a more leisurely pace than the "Monday Back Before Lunch" or Friday hikes. The hikes are about two hours long with varying degrees of difficulty based on feedback from the group. We meet in Mill Valley to carpool and at 9:30 head to the hike starting point. If you are interested, please contact Sara Byruck at sbyruck@gmail.com. She is looking forward to hearing from you. As always sturdy shoes and water are essential equipment.

Tuesday, December 6, Recent Articles Group, 10:10am
Do you sometimes read a great article and want to discuss it with interesting Villagers? Join the Recent Articles Group on the first Tuesday of the month from 10:10 to 11:30. We explore any topic except politics and religion. For details contact Sue Steele (xerty.10@gmail.com or 415-388-7832).

Tuesday, December 6, 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 at a home near downtown Mill Valley. 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 or 617-599-8116). Sara would be delighted to chat with you to see if it feels right. Give her a call.

Tuesdays, December 6, 13, 20 and 27, 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 meet weekly to discuss potential projects, enjoy each other's company and encourage each other as progress is made. 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 or 617-599-8116) for more information.

Wednesdays, December 7 and 21, Men's Coffee, 11:30am
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. The group meets at restaurants and coffee shops around Mill Valley twice a month. To get more information or to be put on the reminder list for upcoming meetings contact Irv Gubman (irvgubman@gmail.com or 415-250-6155). The group meets the first and third Wednesdays at 11:30 am.

Wednesday, December 7, Movie Group, 4pm
Once a month we get together via Zoom to meet, greet, enjoy each other's company and talk about that month's selected movie. In advance, we watch the 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. Mill Valley Village volunteers and members who are interested in joining this group, please contact Seela Lewis (seelalewis@gmail.com).

Thursday, December 8, Book Club, 1pm – POSTPONED (See you on January 19th)

The monthly Book Club, now several years old, is being led by long-time group member Ginnie Job. The group, for local village volunteers and members, is kept small to encourage discussion and camaraderie. Occasionally space becomes available. If you would like to be placed on our waiting list or have questions please contact Ginnie (ginniejob4@gmail.com). She looks forward to talking with you. Starting in January the group will meet the third Thursday of the month instead of the second.

Thursday, December 8, Mill Valley Village Holiday Party, 3 - 5pm

Please come join us. The party is from 3:00 - 5:00 at the Mill Valley Golf Course Clubhouse, at 267 Buena Vista Drive, a 3-minute drive from the corner of East Blithedale and Carmelita Avenue. No RSVP needed, just come by. It is a great time to catch up with friends while enjoying some food and libations. And if you can, please offer rides to those you know could use a lift, as many who would normally offer to drive will be busy cooking and setting up awaiting your arrival. Looking forward to seeing you.

Wednesday, December 14, "Coffee at the Sweetwater", 10:30am

Please join us once again at our monthly get-togethers on the second Wednesdays at 10:30 in the Sweetwater Music Hall. It is a casual plan, you come and go as you have time, sit and chat with friends and meet new ones, peruse the "lending library" for books to borrow and generally catch up with other villagers. If you are new to the village it is a great opportunity to get to meet other villagers. Or if you have only heard about the village and would like to know more, dropping by is an easy way to put a toe in the water. Please bring your own "cuppa" as the coffee bar will not be available. You are also welcome to bring your own "nosh" but donuts will be provided.

Thursday, December 15, Memoir Writing Group, 3pm

Everybody has stories to tell and it can feel affirming to tell them. So we have reconvened the Mill Valley Village Memoir Writing Group. Meeting on the third Thursday of the month, via Zoom for now, we read our writing out loud and honor each other's need to be heard and appreciated. Villagers, please contact Gloria Sparrow (gloriasparrow@comcast.net or 415-377-2037) with your questions or suggestions, or simply to get on the list.

Wednesday, December 21, Third Wednesday Walkers, 10am

We hold 2 - 3 mile flat terrain walks and/or excursions in varied places of interest, urban or rural, ocean or mountain, often carpooling to destinations

and staying for lunch at local restaurants. We love to “get outta town”...but mostly within 20 to 40 minutes’ drive, or ferry or bus or train ride. Gathering in Mill Valley at 9:30 or 10 am we are usually home by 2. For more information or to get on the list to be sent details one week before the walk, contact Karen Robbins (karobbins@comcast.net or 415-519-3420).

Monday, December 26, Lunch - POSTPONED

We are postponing this month’s lunch due to the holidays but we will be back in January. Please save Monday, January 23rd at 1pm for another enjoyable lunch with villagers. More to come in next month’s newsletter.

Until next month, stay well.
We look forward to seeing you soon