



Ross Valley Village

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

December 2023 – January 2024 Newsletter



Dear valued members and volunteers,

The holidays are upon us! It's time to cozy up in your favorite sweater and listen to the rain on the roof. Whether your holiday plans include meeting up with family and friends or staying home with a good book, know that we are thinking of you all and sending our love.

From the Ross Valley Steering Committee xo

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS!

Members: Maureen Williams, Sara Robinson, Jo D'Anna

Volunteers: Joanne Miller, Amanda Fox

Thank you for giving your time and energy to our village. We look forward to seeing you all at an event soon!

ROSS VALLEY VILLAGE EVENTS

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

Food & Drink

Table for 8

Tuesday, January 16, 12:00pm

Pho Viet, 555 E. Francisco Blvd., San Rafael

Experience a wide variety of Vietnamese food with us! There is ample parking and a rich menu. We would love to have you join us. Please RSVP to Kathleen at (415) 419-5360 or kathleenhj417@gmail.com by January 12. We ask that participants pay \$20, and Marin Villages will pick up the rest.

Coffee and Conversation

We will resume our coffee date in January. Please keep an eye out for more information in the future.

Exercise

Walking Club



Our walking group meets once a month for a flat, easy walk. If you are interested, please contact Carolyn Golden: goldenink@hotmail.com or (415) 300-5106. If you need a ride, feel free to reach out and we'd be happy to pick you up.

Books

On the Same Page book club

Wednesday, January 17, 10:00am

Emporio Rulli, 464 Magnolia Ave., Larkspur

We will be reading *The Library Book*, by Susan Orlean, available at the library as a book, audio or downloadable audio, and large print. It is also in hardback and paperback at Book Passage. Ms. Orlean writes about the massive and devastating fire at the LA main library in 1986. This is a most engaging telling of the event, its fallout, its reconstruction, and the accused arsonist. Please RSVP to Joanne Vidinsky at joannevidinsky@gmail.com or (415) 608-2346.

OTHER MARIN VILLAGES EVENTS

Bocce

Friday, December 15, 1:00 – 3:00pm (note earlier date this month!)
Bocce Federation of Marin, 550 B Street, San Rafael



What better way to spend a day than on the bocce court?! No prior bocce experience necessary, just soft-soled shoes and your presence. Come for the company and watch others play if you prefer. Either way, join us! Bring a snack to share with the group. Questions? Call Larry Meredith. (415) 860-2535 Need a ride? Call Marin Villages' office. (415) 457-4633 **Note that this will be weather-permitting!**

Men's Coffee

Wednesday, December 20, 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 the first and third Wednesdays of the 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).

Technology/Computer Help Office Hours

Wednesday, December 20, 4:00 – 5:30pm

Zoom



Issues with your printer? iPhone not syncing properly? If so, join our volunteer tech support group for the answers to these and all of your other burning technology questions! We look forward to continuing to help solve your frustrating tech problems. This is a space where you can "drop in," ask questions, and receive personalized, individually focused, expert tech advice from some of our wonderful tech volunteers. Even if you'd just like to sit in to learn a little more about technology, we'd love to have you participate! So bring your questions about your computers, tablets, phones, etc., and our dedicated tech volunteers will do the rest. This opportunity is available to all Marin Villages members and volunteers. Please join us at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89289995207>!

Choose your Not Home Alone holiday event—one, two, or all three



Join Donnalee Wells and other villagers and volunteers for one, two, or three of these holiday events at different restaurants. Always a fun time and a great opportunity to share the holidays with old and new friends. First come, first served, space is limited. PLEASE BRING CASH for your meal. RSVP to Donnalee Wells at donnaleewells@comcast.net or (415) 302-9244. Marin Villages rides are **very** limited for these holiday events.

Christmas Eve Early Supper

Sunday, December 24, 2:00pm

Pacific Catch, Town Center, Corte Madera

Open menu

Christmas Day / Donnalee's Birthday Early Supper

Monday, December 25, 2:00pm

Royal Thai Restaurant, 610 Third Street, corner of Irwin, San Rafael

Fixed menu

New Year's Eve Early Supper

Sunday, December 31, 2:00pm

San Rafael Joes, 931 Fourth Street

Open menu

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Academy of Sciences outing with the San Rafael Goldenaires

Monday, January 29

The Goldenaires have a wonderful opportunity to go on a day trip to the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. Rides will be provided at either Smith Ranch Road Park and Ride or San Rafael Community Center. Members pay \$89 while non-members pay \$99. For more information, please contact the San Rafael Goldenaires at (415) 485-3348.

ROSS VALLEY VILLAGE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthdays

Many happy returns to all our special members with December and January birthdays.

Alice Bachelder, December 22

Roberta Dillon, December 3

Jaylee Nash, December 27

Judithe Nicolai, December 15

Ginny Turner, December 12

Loraine Berry, January 3

Robert Berry, January 15

George Salo, January 31

Josephine Tringale, January 5

Toni Weingarten, January 29

Recent events

Since the last newsletter we've been able to meet up with many of you at our assorted Ross Valley Village social events. Some of them are described below, with photos.

Trip to Santa Rosa

In October a group of members and volunteers took a day trip to Santa Rosa on the Smart Train.



Table for 8

Table for 8 continues to be a popular event! Most recently Suellen Lamorte generously welcomed the group to her beautiful home.



Holiday party

Our annual holiday party was a smashing hit! We had full hearts and joyful smiles seeing those of you that were able to make it to Mac's to celebrate with us.





AND MORE...

Getting to know you...



Advice Taken: An Interview with Loraine Berry

Interviewed by Kathleen Jackson

Because Loraine Berry heeded the advice of her first boss and two of her dental clients, she not only met her husband Bob but developed a home-habit relationship with him that has lasted over the years.

Advice 1: “While traveling on a bus as a single person, never sit with your traveling companions.” Because Loraine loved to ski, in her early twenties she went on a bus trip to Heavenly Valley with the Young Republicans. Bob Berry took the same bus and when he saw a vacant seat next to Loraine he asked if the seat was taken. She told him no, but in truth there had been someone sitting there who had gotten up for some reason. So Bob sat down. They began talking, started seeing one another in San Francisco, and married in 1963.

Advice 2: “When you arise in the morning, stand on one side of the bed and have your husband stand on the other side. Say to him, ‘Honey, let’s make the bed!’” And that’s what they have done together every day of their marriage. If it doesn’t happen right away, Bob reminds Loraine, “Honey, let’s make the bed.”

Of Polish descent on her father’s side first generation, and her mother’s side second generation, Loraine was born in 1938 in central Detroit, which she says was a beautiful city until the demographics changed in the late 1950s. She had a Catholic education from kindergarten through university, all of which she said ‘was fabulous.’ Loraine developed an intense interest in science, ignited by Sister Marie Loretta, with whom she stayed in touch for many years.

Following their graduation from the University of Detroit, Loraine and two friends decided to ‘see America.’ In a ’57 Chevy, they drove to Fort Lauderdale and got temporary jobs in a large, cafeteria-style restaurant. There she learned how poorly Blacks were thought of and treated. The three also toured the New England states. Loraine joined a friend on a trip to San Francisco; but instead of the proposed two weeks, she stayed for good, passed the California State Dental Hygienist Board, and went to work in several dental offices at 450 Sutter Street.

After Loraine and Bob were married, they moved into a San Francisco apartment, paying \$50 – 55 a month for rent. While still working, Loraine pretended to be a stay-at-home wife, putting the money she earned into a savings account. With the money they saved, Bob and Loraine were soon able to buy a pair of flats in the Castro district of San Francisco. They had two sons, Noah and Jason, and eventually moved to Ross where they have lived for fifty years.

Loraine developed a deep interest in mushrooms after picking them with her grandparents when she was a child. She participated in many mycological conferences and events and was elected president of the Mycological Society of San Francisco in 1969. In order to educate people about mushrooms, she created and put on the Fungi Fair at the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and at the Oakland Museum, a yearly event at both. The proceeds from these events went to a fund for mycological students. In June 2023 Loraine put on a mycological event in Chester, California, where the couple has a second home, to raise money for the Chester Hospital.

Loving adventure and learning about people and environments, Bob and Loraine have travelled the world over, often for fungi events and to areas they wanted to explore. They have been to all seven continents, going to places such as Antarctica before such destinations became popular.

Loraine not only heeds advice, she also gives it. Advice 1: “If you take care of the small dollar bills, then the thousand-dollar bills will take care of themselves. A person is only a daily latte away from a downpayment.” Advice 2: “If you can travel, do so. Take advantage of opportunities.” Loraine and Bob are glad they have taken the time to travel; they have found a happy balance of experiences and financial stability.

Loraine maintains a sense of curiosity, of benevolence, AND a sense of humor. She claims, “I used to say that my life is not determined by the dreams that I may dream, but by the choices that I make. Now I say that my life is not determined by the dreams that I may dream, but by the doctors’ appointments I have.” Despite those doctor appointments, Loraine Berry continues to give much of herself to alleviate the needs of others.

Recipes from renowned chef Judithe Nicolai



FLAN NICOLAI (gluten-free)

Ingredients

1 can condensed milk (about 14 oz)
1 can (use condensed milk can to measure) whole milk
3 extra large eggs or 4 large or medium eggs

Preparation

Beat eggs in a bowl. Slowly stir in milks and set aside.

Line a loaf pan or ramekins with caramelized sugar (see recipe below or on Youtube).

Stir egg/milk mixture and pour into pan containing caramel

Put pan in a water bath pan...water about half way up. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.
Cool and refrigerate, covering with a paper towel and then plastic wrap.

To unmold, put base of pan containing flan in hot water, loosen sides with butter knife, cover with plate and turn upside down.

Caramel sauce: Stir 1 cup sugar and 1/4 cup water together in a medium, light-colored saucepan until the sugar is completely moistened. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, without stirring. Continue cooking until the mixture begins to turn golden. Gently swirling the pan, continue to cook until sugar is a dark honey color.



WHITE BEAN SOUP (gluten-free)

Serves approximately 4 – 6 people

Ingredients

- 1 pound of white northern beans.
- 4 oz. diced pancetta*
- 1 qt. organic chicken broth**
- 1 qt. organic bone broth**
- 1 large chopped onion
- 1 chopped red pepper
- 3 medium diced carrots
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- Salt + pepper to taste
- 1 ham hock or smoked pork shank (optional) ***

Preparation (non-veg. version)

1. Soak beans overnight in 3 qts. of cold filtered water.
2. Drain, discard the water and rinse.
3. Over medium heat sauté the onions, garlic, pancetta and ham hock (or shank) in a large heavy pan for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Add the drained and rinsed beans and sauté for another 2 minutes.
5. Add carrots and red bell pepper.
6. Add the two broths.
7. Stir well and cook until the beans are tender.
8. Add salt and pepper here to taste.
9. Once cooked, remove 1/3 of the mixture and blend it.
10. Serve warm with bread.

Vegetarian version notes

* Substitute with vegetarian bacon and/or 2 portobello caps, diced, or 12 – 14 crimini mushrooms, if no portobello available (6 to 8 oz. total).

** Substitute 2 qts. vegetable broth

*** Can substitute with ½ teaspoon liquid smoke (may add this when the broth is added)

HELP US HELP OTHERS

If you know someone who could use our services or is interested in volunteering with an organization serving older adults in Marin, please have them call the office at (415) 457-4633, or visit our website (www.marinvillages.org) for application forms. We always welcome donations to support our work! Please visit <https://marin.helpfulvillage.com/pages/10049-marinvillages---donate> to contribute.

Marin Villages 4340 Redwood Highway, Suite F-142 San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 457-4633 www.marinvillages.org