



## Message from Village President Katie Tyler

As December is almost upon us, we will soon be mailing our year-end donation requests. We hope you will consider making an end-of-year donation to the Village. Your donations make it possible for the Village to conduct its day-to-day operations, provide the programs and activities that enrich our community, and expand our ability to address such new issues as those raised in the recent Roundtable. Without your donations, the Village couldn't be as engaged in helping older adults remain and thrive in their own homes. (We are now able to accept on-line, credit card donations. Please click [here](#) for a direct link to our website.)

We also want to help you meet the IRS requirements for charitable deductions, and urge you to read the text box on page 3 regarding IRS rules for how charitable contributions can be applied in this current calendar year.

A related issue is **membership renewals**. We realize that it is easy to overlook renewals in the midst of the hectic pace of life. As a reminder, membership is for one year, based on the anniversary that member originally joined, not by calendar year. We will soon be sending reminder notices to those whose renewal is due.

We are delighted by the turnout for the first Village Roundtable and the many helpful suggestions given by participants. We plan to make this a regular event. Several of the Board Committees will be working over the next few months to implement the suggestions we received. Photos and Information on the Roundtable are included on page 2.

The Village's *Helping Hands* program has organized a training on "Medical Note Taking," to be offered at the end of the month. As we age and often must deal with multiple physical and medical issues, managing the various instructions and medications becomes quite challenging. This session will teach family members and volunteers the skills needed to accurately record important medical information. More information on the training is provided on page 3.

### Upcoming Events

#### **AARP Safe Driver Training**

Tuesday, November 14, 9:15 am-3:00 pm

#### **Medical Note Taking Training**

Wednesday, November 29, 7:00-8:30 pm

### Village Regulars

#### **Walk with the Walking Group**

Meet M-W-F, 8:30 am, Lamont Park

#### **Mindful Meditation**

Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30, tba

#### **Mah Jong**

Monday, November 20, 5:00 pm  
1735 Lamont Street, NW

#### **Coffee at Dos Gringos**

Thursdays, 9:30—11:00 am

#### **Senior Yoga Classes at PastTense**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 am  
Corner of Park Road and Mt. Pleasant St.

#### **Happy Hour and Game Night – Marx Cafe**

Tuesday, November 14, 5:00-7:00 pm



## First Village Roundtable a Success

The first Village Roundtable was held on October 1 in the Mount Pleasant Library, with more than thirty participants. This was rare opportunity for Villagers to become better acquainted with other members and to discuss Village priorities, activities, and possible new directions. To help the discussion flow well, attendees divided into four facilitated groups (see photos below) to address three primary questions: what we like about Mount Pleasant; our expectations and desires related to the Village; and our talents, skills, and interests that can be shared with the Village. Here are a few highlights from the discussions:

What participants like about Mount Pleasant: convenience, public transportation, the woods and access to the Zoo and Rock Creek Park, diversity in the community, activism, a friendly community, and restaurants.

Expectations and desires related to the Village: assistance with aging-in-place; expand diversity in membership; expand opportunities for social, cultural, educational engagement; more activism (related to transportation and services); programs/training in computer literacy; and increase the number of interest groups.

Talents, skills, and interests to share with the Village: sewing group, history of Mount Pleasant, computer/iPhone literacy, social and government contacts, and community organizing.

The Village leadership remains open to your input on these issues. Please send your thoughts and ideas to Board members Susan Rees, at [susan.r.rees@verizon.com](mailto:susan.r.rees@verizon.com), or Bonnie Cain, at [bonniejcain@gmail.com](mailto:bonniejcain@gmail.com).



Village President Katie Tyler addresses the Roundtable



Instructions from Bob Hoffman



L to R: Annie McDonald, Sheila Sontag, Louise Meyer, Many Rojas, Mazie Holland, Judy Byron & Bonnie Caine



Sharon Conway, Diane Model, Judy Fisher, Mary Joy Progozzi & Elizabeth Young (backs to camera)



Maria Ibanez, Laura Breedon, Ann Wood, Larry Rickards & Paddy Meskell



Gerry Fitzgerald, Richard Hogg, Polly Donaldson, & Elinor Hart

## **IRS Rules About Year-End Donations to Mount Pleasant Village**

Mount Pleasant Village has been fortunate to receive many end-of-year donations in the past, which greatly help our ability to provide programs and activities to members. As the year end approaches, we ask that you please help us to accurately account for your donations by following the IRS rules and -- if at all possible -- making your donation in time to process it by credit card or check before December 31. IRS rules are as follows:

- Charitable contributions are deductible in the year that you make the donation.
- When you mail a check, the mailing date of the check determines when the donation can be claimed.
- Card donations are deductible in the year that the charity charges your card.

For more information, please see IRS publication 526 (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-prior/p526--2016.pdf>). The current online version of this publication is dated 2016, but still applies. For other questions about donations, please contact Board Treasurer Rebecca Shannon, at [shannonr20010@gmail.com](mailto:shannonr20010@gmail.com).

## **Upcoming AARP Safe Driver Program**

The traffic congestion in DC can make driving a challenge in the best of times, but can be more difficult for those experiencing the limitations posed by increased age. Capitol Hill and Northwest Neighbors Villages are hosting a Safe Driver training, developed by AARP, to update older driver's knowledge of traffic hazards, driving practices that reduce accident risks, and how aging can affect our driving experience. And, there is a bonus for participants – the District mandates a car insurance discount for those who complete this training, with the amount determined by each insurance company. This is a win-win situation for all of us. However, space is limited and advance registration is required. The program will be held on Tuesday, November 14, 9:15 am to 3:00 pm, in the Forest Hills of DC assembly room, 4901 Connecticut Ave., NW. To register, send an email with your name and identify yourself as a member of Mt. Pleasant Villager to [info@capitolhillvillage.org](mailto:info@capitolhillvillage.org), and write "AARP 11/14 Training" in the subject line. Lunch will be provided and off-street parking is available. Participants must attend the full program in order to receive the AARP Safe Driver certificate.

## **Upcoming Skill-Development Session: Medical Note Taking Training**

Doctor and hospital visits are often stressful times for all of us. It's no wonder that we sometimes leave confused and unsure about the doctor's instructions about our care, procedures to follow, and medications. It can be helpful to have a second pair of ears available when attending a medical examination – a friend, family member, or volunteer to help record important information. The Village *Helping Hands* program is sponsoring a training for Village members on "Medical Note Taking," on Wednesday, November 29, 7:00 to 8:30 pm, at the Mount Pleasant Library, Large Meeting Room. This skill-development session will be given by Lynn Golub-Rofrano, MSW, Executive Director of the Georgetown Village. Please RSVP by calling *Helping Hands* and leaving a message – (202) 854-8381.

## **Mount Pleasant Village is Seeking Nominations for the Board of Directors**

The Village Governance Committee is seeking nominations for membership on the Board of Directors. Collaboratively with the Village officers and committee Chairs, Board manages the business and other activities of Mount Pleasant Village. Ideally, the Board will include individuals with a range of backgrounds and skills, including management, communications, education, aging, public relations, public interest, and government. We encourage interested individuals to self-nominate and for Village members to forward suggestions for Board membership. For further information, and to submit nominations, contact Tom Conway at [thomasbconway@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbconway@gmail.com).

## **Village Website Undergoing Improvements**

In response to Village members' comments that they found our website difficult and confusing to navigate, the Communications Committee has taken several steps to improve the appearance and functions of the site. Some of the changes include: simplifying the layout of the site, better links between pages, bigger type, brighter colors, and more consistent page design. Although most of the website is open to the public, there are sections available exclusively to Village members. To see the members only sections, go to the website and click on "Members Get More." Please review the new changes at [www.mountpleasantvillage.org](http://www.mountpleasantvillage.org). To provide comments or suggestions for additional improvements, please go to [communications@mtpleasantvillage.org](mailto:communications@mtpleasantvillage.org).

## **Report from the National Village to Village Network Meeting**

Two Mount Pleasant Village Board members attended the annual meeting of the National Village to Village Network. This gathering, entitled Enhancing the Power of Aging, was held in Baltimore, Nov 6-8. Village leaders from over 200 Villages from across the country attended, including 12 from DC. A wide variety of topics addressed, including technology issues, recruiting volunteers, fundraising, partnerships, diversity outreach, and more. Attendees were impressed with the growth of Mt Pleasant Village to nearly 200 members in less than three years. Additional conference Information will appear in future newsletters.

## **The Village Blog**

As many members have been unable to read the Village blog on our website, we are attaching the blog on page 6 of this newsletter. "Tips for Having 'The Conversation' About Needed Assistance: Negotiating with the Elder – Village Blog #3" addresses ways to approach older family members about accepting services that may help them remain living in their homes and community.

## **Helping Hands Program: Ready for Jobs Large and Small**

*Helping Hands* volunteers are ready to provide that helpful assistance that can help your life move more smoothly. If you are a Village member and need a ride to medical services, gardening chores, or small home repairs, and so forth, you can request assistance by:

- **Phone:** Call the *Helping Hands* Hotline 202-854-8381 to leave information about the help you need;
- **Email:** Send an email to [helpinghands@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:helpinghands@mountpleasantvillage.org), describing what you need; or
- **Online:** Login to the Village website at [www.mountpleasantvillage.org](http://www.mountpleasantvillage.org), and click on the blue "Get Help" button on the home page.

## Help Wanted for the Village Board's Committees

Mount Pleasant Village is operated on an all-volunteer model. This means that all Village programs and administration are managed by board members. Now that we have grown to serve 185 members, we need your help to keep up the pace. Working on a Village committee provides an opportunity to meet and make new friends, share your experiences and help build our vibrant organization. Please contact someone listed below to help keep the Village running smoothly:

- The **Communications Committee** needs help managing the Village website and with the monthly newsletter. Contact Larry Rickards at [communications@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:communications@mountpleasantvillage.org).
- The **Finance Committee** is seeking those with knowledge of non-profit accounting for a very small organization. Contact Rebecca Shannon at [finance@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:finance@mountpleasantvillage.org).

The **Governance Committee** would like help with writing policies and procedures and to develop the Village governance structure. The committee has also begun work to form a **Development Committee** to raise the Village's visibility/funding, and is looking for those with non-profit experience. Contact Tom Conway at [thomasbconway@gmail.com](mailto:thomasbconway@gmail.com).

- The **Membership Committee** is looking for help with programs to increase and maintain membership. Contact Cecile Srodes at [membership@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:membership@mountpleasantvillage.org).
- The **Program Committee** is looking for leadership with cultural and social programs. Contact Bonnie Cain at [events@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:events@mountpleasantvillage.org).
- The **Volunteer Committee**: is seeking help with volunteer management for the Village *Helping Hands*. Contact Elinor Hart at [volunteer@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:volunteer@mountpleasantvillage.org).

### JOIN MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE

**Membership Fee:** \$50 annually for an individual; \$100 for a couple. For more information, contact Cecile Srodes at [membership@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:membership@mountpleasantvillage.org).

**Donor:** Make a tax-deductible donation to Mount Pleasant Village at 1735 Lamont Street NW, Washington, DC 20010, or on-line by clicking [here](#) for credit card donations.

**Contact us.** If you have questions, comments or news to share, contact [news@mountpleasantvillage.org](mailto:news@mountpleasantvillage.org).

## Tips for Having “The Conversation” About Needed Assistance: Negotiating with the Elder – Village Blog #3

By Lawrence Rickards, Editor, Mount Pleasant Village Newsletter

Once the family has gained clarity, and hopefully agreement, on the issues and concerns to be addressed with the older family member, thought should be given on how best to approach the conversation with them. There are a variety of approaches to successfully navigate the conversation about assistance. These include:

- Being mentally prepared for the discussion; know what issues or points you want to raise, the tone you want to use, and how you want to steer the conversation. It can be helpful to rehearse the discussion head of the meeting.
- Timing is important. Choose a time when there are no distractions or other obligations. Give the conversation your undivided attention.
- Choose the setting carefully. Plan where you want the conversation to take place, again, free of distractions.
- Speak calmly and clearly. Be sure you are being heard and avoid raising your voice or shouting during the conversation. Be respectful and don't patronize; no one likes being talked down to or bullied. Confrontation and overstepping boundaries are usually counter-productive, increasing the elder's resentfulness and resistance, and the likelihood that care suggestions will be rejected.
- Share your observations, concerns and feelings. If you have noticed a problem, be clear about what you have observed. You may need to be persistent, empathic and strong as you talk with your loved one to find the right solutions to their care needs.
- Put yourself in their shoes. Be aware of the elder's need for freedom and independence, and that their initial response to those trying to help them may be hostile and rejecting of assistance. Expect and accept disagreement, especially when discussing difficult topics. Describe the benefits derived from the assistance. Try to come up with compromises that everyone can accept.
- Practice patience. For an older adult, acknowledging that they are no longer capable of being completely autonomous can be emotionally charged; accepting help can feel like a loss of status and their parental role. Thus, acceptance of the need for help may not happen immediately. It is important to allow the older person the time and space they need to come to terms with how their situation is changing.
- Listen to their concerns and wishes. To validate their concerns, and to be sure you are listening closely, make a list of their concerns and apprehensions. Asking the older person what they need help with gives them control and may increase their willingness to accept assistance. This is valuable in helping to find the most appropriate solution based on their preferences.

- Emphasize your role as their partner and advocate. It helps to express your concern for their welfare and wellbeing. It also helps to be explicit about wanting to understand and fulfill their wishes and that they can depend on you.
- Prioritize the elder's needs and address them over a series of conversations.
- Start early with small issues that aren't of great concern. This is a way to slowly build trust and cooperation about areas of their life without pressure or crisis.
- Understand that not all concerns can be addressed in only one conversation and that it may take time to reach to appropriate solutions.
- Discuss who will provide the assistance – a family member, homecare agency, or other arrangement – and how this may alter daily routines.

Of course, every older adult is a unique individual, with their own wishes, viewpoints, and abilities. Thus, their engagement in the conversation and willingness to receive assistance will reflect their own personality and circumstance, as well as the particular history and dynamics of the family.

Sources and additional information. The following guides are recommended for those involved in care planning for older persons: *Care Plan Assessment*, *Home is Where the Help Is*, and *The Caregiver's Survival Guide* are available at no cost from AgingCare.com; and *Guide to Having Tough Conversations Over the Holidays* is also available at no cost from aplaceformom.com.