



In Remembrance: Susan Rees



It is with heavy hearts that we say “good bye” to our dear friend, neighbor, and Village member Susan Rees, who died at home on February 1 after a long illness. Susan was a founding member of Mount Pleasant Village and served two terms on the Board of Directors.

She was instrumental in negotiating partnerships between the Village and local Mount Pleasant organizations, such as Bancroft Elementary School, and was a founding member of the Meditation Group and the Diversity Committee.

Born and raised in Quincy, Illinois, Susan earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Marquette University. After working seven years as a reporter for the Quincy Herald-Whig and volunteering for the McGovern campaign, she returned to college, earning a Master’s degree in urban planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana. Committed to social justice issues, Susan moved to D.C. to take a policy position with the National Association of Social Workers. In 1983, she was appointed Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs, an alliance of national organizations working together to promote public policies which address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations. In 1991, Susan left the Coalition to focus on research and writing on social justice issues for such organizations as the Rockefeller Foundation, Center for Community Change, and the Aspen Institute. She later served in senior leadership positions at the McAuley Institute and Wider Opportunities for Women. Although Susan retired in 2013, her dedication, energy and enthusiasm found an appropriate outlet in the Village.

Susan is survived by her spouse Mary R. (Polly)

For Activities and Events

see the calendar on the Village website

www.mountpleasantvillage.org,

the Monday **Village Announcements** or

the Wednesday **FYI About Town**

Donaldson, their daughter Florence, many other cherished family members, and a host of Village friends and colleagues. The following are remembrances from those who knew Susan:

Not only a founding member of the Village, but Susan was also a founding member of the Village Diversity Committee. Her concern for an inclusive membership permeated who she was. As a Diversity member, she was our Keeper of the Rules, making sure in our programs stayed true to our mission and acknowledged our place as part of a larger organization, The Village. A gentle and intelligent woman. We are grateful for the privilege of knowing her and will continue to incorporate her values and spirit into our continuing work. The Susan Rees Rules Keeper Chair will now be occupied by our member Olivia Cadaval. Susan would be pleased.

Judy Byron

Diversity Committee Co-chair

The Village, and especially the meditation group, were a big part of Susan’s life in recent years. Knowing her and Polly has enriched my life. I look forward to finding ways to honor her.

Laura Breeden

May comfort and peace be with family and all who’ve had the privilege of knowing Susan!

Vedoster 'Spike' Ingram

(Remembrances continued on page 6)

Meet the Villagers: Vivian Ling



Vivian Ling began life in wartime China. Her parents were born and raised in Hong Kong, but when the Japanese occupied Hong Kong during World War II, they escaped inland to Chongqing, where Vivian was born. Both her parents had been teachers, but during the war her father became a journalist/war correspondent, and later a diplomat. Following the war, the family moved to Nanking, where her father worked for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1949, with Mao's "Red Army" victory, the Ling family moved back to Hong Kong, and eventually to Taiwan, which had become the Republic of China (vs. the PRC – People's Republic of China – on mainland China). Her father's first major diplomatic assignment was in 1955-1963, during which he was in Washington as the *de facto* cultural attaché with the Embassy of the Republic of China. With this posting in 1955, the Ling family moved to Washington, D.C. Vivian's parents left the U.S. when her father's U.S. assignment ended, but she and her siblings became immigrants.

Though both of her parents were fluent in English, Vivian arrived speaking Mandarin and Cantonese, but little English. While language was initially a struggle for her, she excelled in math. She earned a BA in math from Swarthmore College, but within a few years changed her focus to Sinology and pursued studies at the University of Pennsylvania, Washington University, and the University of Michigan. In the midst of launching her academic career, Vivian also gave birth to two children.

Vivian was a professor at Oberlin College for 24 years, teaching Chinese language and literature. With the re-opening of China after Mao's death, she made her first trip to the new China in 1979 and returned almost annually thereafter. In mid-career, she left her tenured position at Oberlin to take a new professional direction in directing Chinese language study programs abroad for graduate and undergraduate students. Among the programs that she has directed are the Inter-University Programs in Taipei and Beijing, under the sponsorship of Stanford University and UC Berkeley. Being out in the field, she enjoyed a front row seat to observe China's transformation as well as the ups-and-downs in U.S.-China relations for over three decades.

During periods of semi-retirement, Vivian served as a court interpreter in Santa Barbara, a Chinese language examiner for the FBI, and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*. In 2011-2013, she directed the Chinese Flagship Program at Indiana University, an intensive professional-level language training program that prepares students for global careers. Vivian has published numerous books and articles throughout her professional career. A recent book she edited and contributed to, *The Field of Chinese Language Education in the U.S.: A Retrospective of the 20th Century*, is a first-hand account and reflection on the development of Chinese as a focus of language study in the U.S. The book's contributors are among the most influential pioneers in the field.

Currently, Vivian and husband James Dew are enjoying Mount Pleasant, living close to her daughter Andrea – a producer for NPR, their son-in-law, and grandson. Her son Steve lives in London, so that is always a good excuse for a trip to Europe. For the Village, Vivian is the organizing force behind the creation of the new Family Caregivers Support Interest Group.

Village and All Souls Series *Preparing to Grow Older Successfully* Begins SUNDAY, March 1, for 3 Sundays

Join us at the Village's second significant collaboration on an aging-related information series with the Silver Souls of All Souls Church. It begins March 1 at 1:00 pm in the Eaton Room at the church, 1500 Harvard Street. Each session is \$10 [online](#) or at the door.

The first session, ***Getting Your Affairs in Order***, will be presented by financial planner **Timothy McDonough**, who will address various issues to consider in planning for retirement. What decisions and documents do you need to protect your interests as you grow older? Can you afford to remain retired and what do you need to be financially secure?



The series continues on Sunday, **March 8**, with a presentation on ***Paying for Elder Care*** by **Chris DeYoung**, an experienced consultant on senior healthcare issues with the DC Department of Aging and Community Life (DACL). He is the former director of the Health Insurance Consulting Project at George Washington University Law School, and will address the various healthcare insurance programs available to seniors, including Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, and long-term care insurance. He will also provide information about the DACL programs and services for seniors.



Dixcy Bosley-Smith, a case manager for Iona Senior Services, will present the the third joint-session on Sunday **March 15**— ***Housing Options: More Choices than You Think***. She will discuss various options available for aging in your home, co-housing, cooperative living, multigenerational living, independent and assisted living and nursing homes. She will also offer some tips about how to assess the locally available options, their costs, and eligibility for government support.

Village Winter Party A Grand Success

The Village's post-holiday Winter Party drew a house-full of Mount Pleasant neighbors and friends. More than eighty Villagers and guests enjoyed catching up with one another, supporting the raffle from local businesses, and the wonderful pot-luck supper. Fun was had by all and the raffle brought in more than \$1000 for the Village.



Rob Fleming & Linda Low Catch up



Jan Fenty, Polly Donaldson & Laura Breeden



The Pot-Luck Buffet





Josephine Escalante & Raffle Winner
Ross Hamory



Marianna Ohe & Gerry Fitzgerald



Photographers Xueying (Ying) Chang &
Rick Reinhard

The planning committee would like to recognize and thank Josephine Escalante and Jan Fenty, Partnership Committee Co-Chairs, for their work with the Village's partners and the following partners for their contributions to making the Winter Party a success.

**Thank you to our friendly neighborhood businesses
for their support of the Mount Pleasant Village!**



Mola!



AddisParis Cafe

Ellē

Marx Cafe
revolutionary cuisine

Argyle Market & Deli



FIT360° 



BESTWORLD



DOS GRINGOS **SABYDEE**

SPORTSMAN'S WINE AND LIQUORS



Please Patronize These Wonderful Supporters of the Village!!!

Peer Partner Connection Program Aids Seniors

The *Peer Partner Connection Program* is a FREE, city-wide service for seniors and adults with disabilities in Washington D.C. Run by Capitol Hill Village, program is designed for older adults and adults with disabilities who are looking for different transportation options and want to improve their overall health and wellbeing. Program participants will be matched to a Peer Health Educator who will help them identify and work towards achieving health and transportation goals. Peer Health Educators are also seniors and understand the unique challenges that older adults face. They will work one-on-one with their Peer Partners and can meet them in their homes.

Examples of what they can help with include: navigating transportation options, medical note taking, and identifying resources for seniors that improve health and wellness

The partnership between Peer Health Educators and Peer Partners will last for approximately four months until Peer Partners have the tools and resources needed to meet their individual goals. **You do not have to be a member of Capitol Hill Village to enroll.** The program is offered through a grant for Innovative Coordinated Accessibility and Mobility solutions through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). For questions and to enroll in the program, please contact Meghan Wrinkle, Care Services and Programs Specialist for Capital Hill Village, on 202-543-1778.

Nominations for 2021 Seats on the Board are Now Open

The Governance Committee is soliciting nominations of Village members to serve on the Board of Directors. Directors may serve three two-year terms.

The first step in this process is seeking nominations. Please volunteer to serve or suggest a Board candidate. There are no specific qualifications for Board membership beyond enthusiasm for the Village mission, willingness to prepare for and attend meetings and special events (annual meeting, picnic, and party), and general commitment to the Village. There are many benefits to serving on the Board, such as making new friends and deepening old relationships, watching members enjoy themselves at Village events, and going to bed tired from mental or physical work that you know is meaningful. To put a hat in the ring, contact the Governance Committee Co-Chairs: Judy Byron, at judy@judybyron.com or 202-422-2307, or Rebecca Shannon at shannonrl20010@gmail.com or 202-745-5808.

Helping Hands Program

The Village's *Helping Hands* program continues to be a pillar of support for Villagers, providing a wide range of assistance, from transportation to medical appointments and shopping, to help with household issues, such as decluttering, setting up electronics, simple home repairs, changing lightbulbs, and errands. Keep in mind that requests for *Helping Hands* services are now being handled by our website manager. Contact Claire Thompson at volunteer.mountpleasantvillage@gmail.com or by phone on 703-635-5114.



Continued from Page 1: Additional Remembrance of Susan Rees

Susan became my friend through our weekly meditation group. My recollection is that Susan was new to learning about meditation and Buddhism. Many of the teachers that we listen to weekly practice "Insight Meditation" and often incorporate tenets of Buddhism. Susan was always inquisitive and wanted to know more and to understand new concepts. She soon found that she was listening to the various teachers on her own via podcasts or recorded dharma talks and sharing them with us in our weekly meetings. In our sharing of what we were learning, Susan was always ready to discuss or ask questions in the group.

The last year of Susan's life she and I walked weekly with other Village members. Her favorite spot to walk to was Malcolm X Park on 16th Street. It gave her such pleasure to admire the beauty of the park and its sculptures. She was determined to stay strong through walking. She always carried her iPhone so that she could listen to upbeat music to help walk faster.

Susan enjoyed talking of the "Kenyon Street Vortex" where we live and meet for meditation. She never complained to us about her illness or treatments. I will miss her bright spirit and her enthusiasm to try something new. I will always feel her loving presence in our weekly meetings and feel so blessed to have been her friend. — Jan Fenty

Now and then we meet people who touch us deeply, almost inexplicably. It may be their words that reach us, or perhaps just their being. For me, Susan was one of these people. She carried a kindness about her and a gentleness and centeredness that was beyond mere words. But she was also astute and able to get things done; she could negotiate Village partnerships and was an effective Board member. I truly admired Susan and missed her when illness prevented her from being more active with the Village. She was a beautiful spirit. May she be at peace. — Lawrence Rickards

Welcome to New Village Members

The Membership Committee welcomes the following new Village members:

- Rose Audette, Kenyon St.
- Meredith & Rick Bielke, Kenyon St.
- Shannon Egger, Kenyon St.
- Jordan Holt, Monroe St.
- Vedoster 'Spike' Ingram, Monroe St.
- Edward Rejuney, Irving St.
- Elizabeth Shrader, Irving St.
- Laverne Taylor-Saleh, Park Rd.
- Anita Visser, Kenyon St.

JOIN MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE

Membership Fee: \$50 annually per individual. For more information, contact Michael Burke at membership@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Donor: Make a tax-deductible donation to Mount Pleasant Village at 1735 Lamont Street NW, Washington, DC 20010.

Contact us. If you have questions, comments, or news to share, contact: information@mountpleasantvillage.org