



Across the Fence

May 31, 2019

From the Front Porch - Hospital Discharge Planning

Recently Palisades Village and Little Falls Village met with Sibley Hospital's case management staff and pre-operative staff to discuss ways to assist older adults when they have outpatient surgery and planned, or unscheduled hospital stays. Sibley's staff suggested that we develop a one-page information fact sheet on *How Villages Can Help You Remain Independent in Your Home & Community Including After a Hospital Discharge*. The flyer contains information on member services and social activities for an active and engaged lifestyle. In addition, contact information is listed for our villages as well as information on all of the DC Metro Villages. This information has been so well received that Sibley plans on expanding the distribution and providing the fact sheet to all older adults that are admitted for scheduled surgery. It's important for you to know that the Village is there for you before, during and after a hospital visit.

Planning a Visit to the Hospital: Don't forget to Call Palisades Village!
There's so much to do when you are scheduling surgery or have to go into the hospital. This can be a very stressful time as you prepare for your stay. You have to get your affairs in order pre-surgery and consider how you will transition back home and resume normal everyday living activities when you are discharged from the hospital.

Call the Village and let them know that you are having surgery. The Village can arrange people to visit you, have the social worker Barbara Scott stop in, they can water your plants, pick up your mail, etc. When you are released from the hospital, Village volunteers can pick up your medicine and groceries, help with meals and drive you to your post-operative medical appointments.

Make sure that when you are admitted that you tell the intake folks that you are part of Palisades Village and you give them permission to call the Village. Keep this number handy...Palisades Village...**202-244-3310**.

Wishing you good health and I leave you with a thought...In the movie *Funny Girl* Barbara Streisand beautifully sang *People*. "*People, People Who Need People, Are the Luckiest People in the World.*" Let's update this

song: "People...People Who Need Villages, Are the Luckiest People in the World!"

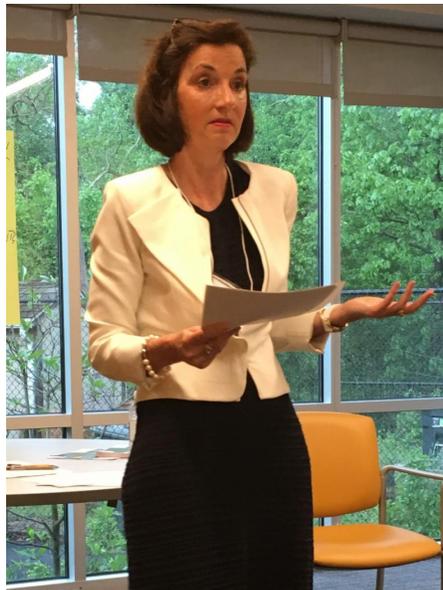
Photo Gallery



Tough Cases Author Talk with Frederick Weisberg and Greg Mize



Susan Elliott at the Retro Cocktail Party



Vera Wilhelm helped members

navigate a successful retirement



Udvar Hazy Center



Bill Iverson shares information on new alternatives in dealing with hearing loss.



Estate Planning Workshop



Wine Tasting for Villagers at Safeway



MaryAnn Griffin talks about the reality of "Observation Status"



Celebrating DC Villages and their Impact on Adults

Member Profile



Barbara Gardien: An Artist Breaks Free of Graphs

I stopped by Barbara Gardien's art-filled home on a wintry day in early spring, just in time to see her gigantic weeping cherry tree coming into bloom; she had planted it in the front yard in 1972 in memory of her father. After renting in Georgetown for three years she had been looking for a house to purchase (in a time when \$25,000 would buy a house in DC's Palisades) when she found what she wanted on Cathedral Avenue. Her offer was accepted and she was on her way to owning a home, until the bank's loan officer refused to authorize a loan for an employed, well-qualified person - who happened to be a woman. A stern letter from the male head of the company for which she worked solved that problem and she got the loan and her new home in a close-knit neighborhood, where, for 50 years she has lived happily ever since.

Long close to a series of neighbors who moved on but kept in touch, Barbara still has dear Cathedral Avenue friends around the country and the world with whom she keeps in touch. She's enjoyed visiting these former neighbors and her extended family in Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica,

Columbia, England, France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. In fact, her introduction to Palisades Village came via her neighbors, Judy Rosenfeld and Mary Baluss, two of the Village's founders who encouraged her to join the Village. Then, friend, Village volunteer and member, Margaret Lewis also encouraged her to join. But Barbara wasn't ready to join the Village - yet.

From a lifetime of enjoying the freedom and independence that driving offers, Barbara always associated herself with driving. She has driven across the country four times and has been in every state in the Union - and driven in all of them, except Alaska. So, like most people, she found it painful to give up her car, but a confluence of events rather forcefully suggested that the time had come: Macular degeneration made driving difficult, an accident (when avoiding being hit by a drunk driver) damaged her car beyond repair, a back injury slowed her down, and her growing concerns about hurting others on the road, added up for her. As she said, she "didn't have to be told to stop driving." That's when she decided she would need a village to continue her independent life - and fortunately, Palisades Village and our volunteer drivers stepped up to fill the gap. As she says, "I'm so grateful for the volunteers. They truly make it possible for me to live in my home." She can't say enough about how thankful she is for the drivers who take her to art classes, medical appointments, grocery shopping, and to Village programs and events. She particularly appreciates our staff, Andrea Saccoccia and Erica Blanton, and Barbara Scott, our Village social worker, who keeps her company on walks around the neighborhood as she stretches her boundaries and keeps moving in the world.

Barbara embarked on her college education intending to major in industrial design, but found that women were not allowed to get a degree in that field, so she graduated from Auburn University in Alabama with the more socially acceptable degree (for women in 1950) in art design. During the Korean War, she moved to Huntsville, Alabama, to work for Werner von Braun at the Redstone Arsenal, where she prepared visual presentations for his testimonies before Congress about the nascent space program. The Congress (and the country) displayed negligible interest in space until the Soviet Sputnik beeped overhead and started the space race. Barbara found von Braun imaginative and open to her artistic creativity, but the military, by and large, seemingly intent on stifling any color or creativity, even in something as rudimentary as charts and graphs. She was happy to decamp for San Francisco and a job in commercial interior design, which she loved until, unfortunately, the company moved to southern California, which didn't interest her. Her next job found her drawing maps for California's Division of Highways - not particularly creative work, but good enough for a while, though again, in a rigid atmosphere that appreciated neither creativity nor women. When she took the test for promotion to a supervisory position and got the highest score of the 458 people who took the test, she found the Division didn't hire women for top supervisory positions because, as she

was told, "men don't like working for women." And that was that. Barbara's next job was her best and happiest: She moved to DC and got a drawing board job as a head graphic designer in urban planning for a company here. For 10 years with that company, she was finally able to do the creative graphic design work that had called to her, but was denied in college and in her other jobs. That company did urban planning and design in numerous domestic and foreign cities and, best of all, creativity was valued and encouraged. She designed books, brochures, presentation graphics, and displays. She found the people with whom she worked "much smarter and more creative than the rocket scientists" she had worked with before and would work with again. Unfortunately, the firm was bought by Westinghouse, which soon sold off parts of the company and closed down the graphics component. At 50, she found herself unemployed.

Barbara had always been interested in houses and real estate, so she went into that field for the next 10 years while she kept her hand in in art and design. She began free-lance art work with Time-Life magazine, the Hirshhorn Museum, and an analytical firm with Air Force contracts, until she was hired at the latter. The last few years of her working life there were better and more satisfying; she had greater control over her work and more opportunity for creativity. She particularly enjoyed working on a newsletter with John Fabian, a former astronaut who became president of the company. Unfortunately, that came to an end when the company lost its Air Force contract and began work for Homeland Security. She found there the "obtuse and rigid atmosphere" she had encountered in the military, where innovation and creativity were actively discouraged. This experience reinforced what she calls her "undying dislike for the culture," where she had worked as a civilian employee for 20 years. She also encountered a certain age bias there: she found that the Pentagon encouraged and trained the younger employees, but not the older employees, to learn new technologies.

Retirement returned much-welcome creativity to Barbara's life. She had always taken art classes and continued to create art (she had a show at the Palisades Post Office nearly 10 years ago), but once she retired, she discovered and became a big fan of the University of the District of Columbia and its high-quality art professors. She discovered that UDC offers regular, non-degree courses free of charge (and half-price tuition for degree programs) to residents of the District who are 65 and older. UDC even has a Department of Gerontology that advises these senior students and helps them negotiate the University's offerings. For 15 years now, she has taken classes and explored a variety of subjects there, from French and Arabic (she attended language classes at a local mosque), to art and history classes. She remains particularly impressed with UDC's excellent Art Department, so much so that every year for the past 12 years, she has taken a painting class from her favorite artist/professor, Daniel Venne. Barbara's

interests continue to be wide and seemingly limitless: She recently ventured out to sculpture classes and is currently taking a world art history class, "Renaissance to Contemporary Art."

Barbara now works primarily in paints, using aqua oils (water-based oil paints), but she has worked with a variety of media, including soap stone, plaster, and masking tape (her self portrait in masking tape is unique!), as well as in mixed media and assemblage. Suggestive of the "Outsider Art" movement, she has also created works with "found objects," bits and pieces she comes across on her walks. They catch her attention and wait patiently at home until a complementary object is found, inspiration strikes, and a piece presents itself. Some of her assemblages bring out her puckish sense of humor: Ask her sometime to show you one of her compositions, "They Never Fantasize about Our Brains."

By Jude Michaels, Palisades Village Associate Member and Volunteer

Ode to our Community

The Palisades Village Boathouse scene
this afternoon was a great success
rendering good cheer and happiness.

How wonderful to meet and greet
and make friends new
out of people one never knew
all because of the likes of the two of you.

Anna-Stina Ericson is first generation American born
She from Swedish stock, and I from Filipino parents--
Five years away from a century young, her sister
celebrated her milestone birthday
with family and friends to celebrate her great day.
Both her sister, Anna-Stina, and I the piano play
in classical mode we learned it in our heyday

With Claudia de Coulston as she left for the day,
She and I spoke a little francais
We're due to parler vous another day.

Kent the distinguished gent
with what I thought was a British accent
was born and reared right here in DC
not unlike myself, a DC resident.

Mary Clark Clute and Peter Clute
were a couple quite cute

Mary wore purple for the 1st day of Lent
wearing a necklace of kimono silk pearls
what a wonderful gift
which gave the beholder and wearer a lift

Phillyis Gellar is an artiste
as picturesque as her art
She exhibited at the Palisades PO;
and is currently now in a Georgetown show.
Her husband Fred Pollack
himself a creative soul
writes poetry on Amazon
I hope to read him soon.

Janet Tersoff
with red hair and ready smile
reminded me of Elsa Lanchester
actress and wife of Charles Laughton
Her family name she thought is of Polish descent

I came, I met, I conquered
my timidity and fears
I enjoyed my time with all whom I met.
T'was a veritable Kismet.

Thank you, Erica and Andrea.
T'was an afternoon well spent.
I hope to meet and greet at another event.

by Maria Ferrara

What? Share My Space?

His name is Jack. He is a retired Army vet and widower living in Colorado. One windy day, after he emerged from the supermarket, his plastic grocery bag broke, and his groceries spilled onto the parking lot. A young woman rushed up to help him. In the process, an ad fell out of her handbag. It said something about "Home Sweet Shared Home." "What's that?" Jack asked. "It's about sharing your home with somebody else and using a matchmaking service to find the right fit," she said. "Here, take the ad." Jack did - and the next day decided to sign up for the service. A number of candidates got in touch with him after that. He chose a retired Air Force vet named Jon to be his housemate. "It was the perfect match!" Jack exclaims. "I make extra coffee in the morning, Jon goes to the supermarket for us. We love talking about the Armed Forces, as you can imagine, and since neither one of us can hear worth a damn, nobody complains when we turn our television volume sky high!" Jack is taking advantage of a trend that has been building

in the United States in recent years. Homeowners share their living space with somebody other than a family member or friend. In exchange, they want financial compensation; help with household tasks, or both.

All sorts of people - working professionals, single parents, empty nesters, individuals with disabilities, and seniors - are participating in this trend. Finding a housemate is possible through Craigslist, of course, but it's also feasible through online services designed expressly for that purpose. There are at least three national home sharing matching services targeted to seniors at this juncture. One is Roommates4Boomers. This home sharing matching site is designed for women age 50 and over.

Whether you have a home to share or want to find a place to call home, this site can help you find the ideal shared-housing solution. Using match criteria as a dating service might, it pairs women with similar preferences, attitudes, tastes, and habits. The service is free to join and offers subscribers credit and criminal-background checking resources. Although most subscribers are in California and Florida, the service is also available in many other states. Moreover, the national Village-to-Village Network is sharing information about this site with its members.

Another national home sharing matching service is Senior Homeshares. Its purpose is to match seniors who have more home than they can afford with seniors who are looking for safe and affordable housing. They do not screen postings and do not independently verify information posted. Any information used from the site is at your own risk. Membership is free.

And then there is a national homesharing matching service called Silvernest. Jack, described above, found his ideal housemate Jon through Silvernest. Silvernest matches home owners with housemates. The owners tend to be single women aged 50 or older, and the housemates run the gamut, from college students up to age 90. It costs \$25 a month. You can sign up for only one month or longer. It offers a two-way, cautious, and security-oriented vetting process. Subscribers can request background checks on candidates of interest, and lawyers affiliated with Silvernest are available to help subscribers draw up lease agreements and provide legal advice on any issues that may arise. Since Silvernest was founded three years ago, it has made some 72,000 matches, including some in northern Virginia and the District of Columbia. It even has the D.C. mayor's office seal of approval.

Like everything in life, of course, homesharing has both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages including companionship a la Golden Girls, the beloved television sitcom from the 1980's and 1990's; someone to check on you if you have a medical emergency; help with chores; help with disabilities. And perhaps most critically, homesharing can reduce living costs. It can thus be a powerful tool for aging in place, just as the Village

movement is. Disadvantages include a loss of privacy; the risk that a home owner may feel possessive about routines and belongings, causing a housemate to feel a loss of control; and a danger that a housemate is not an upright citizen, although background and reference checks should mitigate that risk. And what if the relationship between you and a housemate goes sour, and you can't get the housemate to move out of your house? Such a situation could be especially dicey under the District's especially stringent landlord/tenant laws. "Standard tenant laws do apply [to homesharing] in D.C.," according to Jennifer Hammer of Silvernest, "and that is something that has to be considered. We recommend doing extensive vetting on both sides prior to moving in - interviewing, background checks, reference checks, rental history, etc. to gather as much data as possible when deciding. We are also at work with the City to determine the best tools to put in place to assist with this issue."

Contact Information: Roommates4Boomers (www.roommates4boomers.com); Senior Homeshares (www.seniorhomeshares.com); Silvernest (www.silvernest.com). Another possible resource: National Shared Housing Resource Center (<http://nationalsharedhousing.org>).

By Joan Treichel. May Dupont Circle Village Newsletter

Helpful Village

Palisades Village is launching Helpful Village, an online management system. Designed for and by a Village volunteer, this intuitive system is a comprehensive software program. It will help our Village streamline operations. It includes a website platform, an interactive calendar that includes all event information and an RSVP function, member service requests, volunteer program and donor management capabilities.

Thanks to the generosity of our grantors including receiving the first ANC grant and an a DC Aging and Community Living grant, we were able to purchase the Helpful Village software and now are phasing in the online database. First step: the office has started accepting reservations to our upcoming events and automatically receives a listing of participants. We are looking forward to having access to all our information with just a few strokes of a keyboard or the phone. When the system is fully implemented, we will be able to quickly access information remotely including emergency contacts and a participant list. We plan to slowly implement changes and soon will realize its true capabilities. For years, we've relied on excel spreadsheets and having to use the "cut and paste" function. We are looking forward to using it to enhance the Across the Fence newsletter, our member services, volunteer management, House Tour ticket sales and on-line donations. We'll keep you posted on training opportunities.

DC Safe at Home Program

The DC Safe at Home (SAH) Program is into its third year and going strong. By the end of the last fiscal year (ending September 30, 2018), SAH provided complete services to over 1600 residents of the District. Data collected by the program has revealed an approximate 50% decrease in home safety hazards and a 90% satisfaction rating. At this time, the program is well funded and staffed. Clients are quickly provided services once they have submitted their complete documentation for enrollment.

The Safe at Home program's mission is to provide equipment and home modifications to decrease fall risks and improve home accessibility for DC residents age 60 and over or ages 18-59 with a disability who meet the income eligibility requirements per household as below:

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Income</u>
1	\$65,650
2	\$75,000
3	\$84,400
4	\$93,750

SAH is funded by the Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) through grants provided to Home Care Partners and Terrific, Inc. Once enrolled into the program, an occupational therapist (OT) visits the client to determine individual recommendations based on the client's home and specific needs. Vetted contractors, who specialize in accessibility modifications, perform the work. Upon completion, the OT returns to check on the work and ensure it meets the client's needs. Examples of common modifications include grab bars, interior and exterior railings and Stairlifts.

Clients are able to re-apply after 3 years, if they have had a significant change in their medical condition or if they move. There are no costs to the client. SAH provides services to renters, though permission from the landlord is required to install products.

For further information and to begin the enrollment process call DACL at **202-724-5626**.

DC Resources

Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB)

The DC Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (Medicare Savings Program) is available to any DC resident who gets Medicare and has a monthly income below \$3,123 for singles or \$4,228 for couples. It pays all Medicare

premiums, deductible, and co-insurance/co-payments. There is no asset limit.

Get Medicare Info on Your Cell Phone

Did you know that you can now get some of the most-used information from the **Medicare.gov** website on your mobile phone? The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has a new app, called "What's Covered," that is available for free in both Google Play and the Apple App Store. For more information, you can read about the app on the CMS website (www.medicare.gov).

Travel Training

Travel Training is a resource for any senior who is having difficulty getting around on public transportation in DC.

Travel training is a free service provided by WMATA for seniors over the age of 65 and for individuals with disabilities. They assist seniors with accessing a senior smart trip cards and provide one on one, customized training to assist with route planning, general orientation to the bus and train, and skill building techniques. They can meet the individuals where ever it is convenient for them (i.e. home, Iona, grocery store) and help get them where they need to go. For more information, click on the link, <https://www.mtm-inc.net/public-transit/travel-training/>.

Transportation Resource Guide

The Iona Citizen Advisory Group recently created a *Transportation Resource Guide* in an attempt to collect in one place transportation options available to DC residents. Here is the link: <https://www.iona.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CAG-Transportation-Resource-Guide-Final-052019.pdf>.

Pedestrian Crossing Signals

DDOT did a presentation on pedestrian signal crosswalk signal timing at the last Commission on Aging meeting. They are interested in gathering recommendations on key signalized intersections that may need more crossing time. The DDOT traffic engineering/signals division is looking to test longer flashing don't walk clearance intervals at select locations and possibly during certain times of the day. Any locations you can share where we can test slower walking speed for crossing times would be very helpful. If you have any suggestions, please contact Commissioner John Giacomini at jgiacomini@gmail.com by June 10.

Seniors & Persons with Disabilities Can Qualify to Repair or Replace HVAC system

The DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) is working with local heating and cooling contractors to repair or replace non-working heating and air

conditioning systems and water heaters for income-qualified seniors and District residents with disabilities who own or rent their homes. As temperatures start to rise in DC going into summer, we are also starting to help with repairing and replacing central air conditioning systems. To qualify for the program, DC residents must be over the age of 60 or aged 18 or older with a disability and meet certain income requirements.

Residents can apply online at: <https://doee.libera.com/portal> or in person. For questions about the Emergency HVAC Program for seniors and people with disabilities, please call **202-479-2222** or email EmergencyHCA@dcseu.com.

AroundTown DC

[Around Town DC](#), a new online directory, compiles ongoing programs, events, activities, and more in Northwest DC so that you can easily find activities to enjoy.

In Memoriam

Santo Pontiere (1915-2019)



Sandy Pontiere died on April 8, 2019 at age 103. He was the beloved husband of the late Ann Pontiere; son of the late Fortunato and Chiarina Pontiere; brother of the late Adelina, Antonia and Filomena Pontiere. He is survived by his devoted sister Teresa, sister-in-laws Geraldine Y. Campbell and Sarah H. Young, brother-in-law, William K.

Young and the late John W. Young. He is also survived by many caring nieces and nephews, and great-nieces and nephews.

He will be remembered most fondly as a true gentleman. Sandy was a long-time member of Palisades Village and we celebrated his 100th birthday with a big party. He was an active member of the storytelling group for years.

Joe O'Mara (1943-2019)

Palisades Village member Joe O'Mara died on April 27, 2019, at the age of 75. A graduate of the University of Maryland, Joe joined the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1966 retiring after 28 years as a member of the Senior Foreign Service at the rank of Career Minister (equivalent to a three-star general). Joe and his beloved wife of 52 years Susan, enjoyed postings in Brazil, Argentina and Switzerland while raising their family of Ellie, Stephen and Matthew. After retiring, he founded and operated the international consulting firm of O'Mara & Associates for 20 years. Joe loved being with his family and his many friends. Joe is remembered fondly by the



Palisades Village members who enjoyed his droll sense of humor at the Palisades Pan Handler catered events he attended with Susan. He is survived by his loving wife Susan; Children: Ellie (Paul) Miklich, Stephen (Erin) O'Mara, Matthew (Stephanie); 10 beautiful grandchildren and his three brothers. Condolences may be sent to Susan O'Mara at 5120 Warren Pl NW, Washington, DC 20016.

Village Corner



This is a bulleting board for Villagers to share intersts and information: Have a milestone birthday coming up? Have a sketch or a poem you want to share? Do you want to share some impurtant news? Submissions may be made by calling the office at 202-244-3310 or by clicking [here](#).

Welcome new members: **Janet and Richard Southby, Margaret and David Hensler, Lizzie Schueler, and Jan Schwartz** (also a volunteer).

Do you know of an interesting home that we should include in this year's House Tour? Particularly if it is in Berkley or Palisades. Let us know and we will forward it to the committee.

Have you had a great experience with a local business? Would they benefit from exposure in our House Tour Guide? Our advertising committee is lining up advertisers for 2019.

Missing: We have a nice navy/olive **jacket** that is looking for it's owner as well as a **single rhinestone earring**.

Members: Please let us know if you need help getting **groceries**. That little trip to Safeway may have gotten a bit longer.

Good article in the *New York Times* -- **Falls Can Kill You. Here's How to Minimize the Risk**. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults. Every 19 minutes in this country, an older person dies from a fall.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/well/live/falls-can-kill-you-heres-how-to-minimize-the-risk.html>

Editor's note: And the best way to prevent Falls is by attending one or both of the **free exercise classes** offered by Palisades Village on Mondays at the PCC at 3:30 p.m. or on Thursdays at the Palisades Rec Center at 2 p.m.

Fourth of July parade promotion and meeting on Monday, June 17 at 4:30 p.m.- immediately after Basic Training 4 your body!

If you love D.C. history or want to learn more about D.C. history, the **Association of Oldest Inhabitants of The District of Columbia** may be for you! Find out more about the organization on our web site at:

www.aoidc.org or call **202-342-1865**.

Aging in Style is a new Task Force that will explore modern solutions to transportation and technology issues for seniors. This Task Force is sponsored by the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and is co-chaired by Dr. Marjorie Lightman and Wilma Goldstein, both of whom are members of Waterfront Village. They have started a blog that will keep readers informed of their work as well as seek their opinions. The blog can be accessed by clicking: <https://mandw920160247.wordpress.com> . Sign up and let your voice be heard.

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