

# NEWSLETTER



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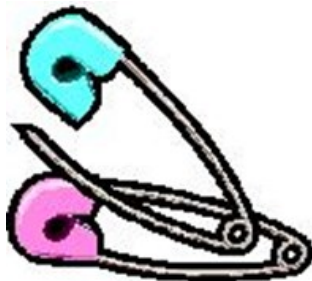
## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT:

### Living With Less Sight

There are about 7.3 million seniors (65+) who are blind or visually impaired. Of course, this creates limitations for them.

However, with planning, education with training, and willingness to change, many of these seniors retain their independence — as much as safely possible.

Oh, it may be a struggle at first. Denial, compensation and fear are common initial responses to the loss of sight. These reactions can lead to a lack of confidence,



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Contact Villages of San Mateo County at: 650-260-4569 or [info@villagesofsmc.org](mailto:info@villagesofsmc.org)

Sequoia Village and Mid Peninsula Village are two local villages under the umbrella 501(c)(3) nonprofit called Villages of San Mateo County

## COFFEE CONNECTION

Open to all Sequoia Village and Mid Peninsula Village members, volunteers, and guests. Light refreshments will be provided.



- **DATE:** Wednesday, March 21, 2018
- **TIME:** 10AM—11:30AM
- **LOCATION:** Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
1300 South El Camino Real, San Mateo  
(free parking is available in the back of the building)



Mark Church

- **PRESENTER:** Mark Church, San Mateo County Assessor, Recorder and Chief Elections Officer, will be accompanied by Jim Irizarry, Assistant Chief Elections Officer. They will present information and answer questions about the Voters Choice Act and how it affects you. An election booth facsimile will be on site for those who would like to reacquaint themselves with this tool.
- **RSVP:** If you wish to attend, please contact the Villages office by **March 15** at [info@villagesofsmc.org](mailto:info@villagesofsmc.org) or by calling 650-260-4569.
  - \* Please indicate if you do or do not need a ride.
  - \*\* Please indicate if you are bringing a guest.

## **OLDER ADULTS AND YOUTH: Connect With Technology?**

In an ongoing search for excellent volunteers, Villages of San Mateo County has recently begun partnering with youth organizations. Connecting older adults and high-school-age youth has many advantages. Youth can be positively impacted by seniors. Research shows that when a child is mentored by an adult, the child is 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol and 52% less likely to skip school (from LegacyProject.org, Susan V. Bosak). Seniors can also enhance a young person's understanding and respect for the older generation. On the flip side, interactions with the younger generation can provide seniors with a source of joy, a reconnection with youthful enthusiasm and assistance at home with many simple tasks.

VSMC has partnered with an organization called the National Charity League ([nationalcharityleague.org](http://nationalcharityleague.org)), a mother-daughter club with a focus on community service. Additionally, we hope to engage with high schools that encourage community service hours such as the Carlmont High School Key Club and the St Francis High School community service program.

With these volunteers in mind, we are forming ideas to assist older adults such as with technology help (laptop or cell phone issues, instruction on how to stay connected with loved ones and finding information on the internet, for example). What greater way to learn about technology than from our youth tech experts! If you are interested in receiving this kind of help or are interested in helping with this aspect of service, please contact Lisa Sharek: 650-430-0688 or [Lsharek2002@yahoo.com](mailto:Lsharek2002@yahoo.com).

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*(Sight: continued from page 1)*

depression, family arguments and accidents.

To overcome (or avoid) these situations, seniors and their loved ones need to understand their limitations, as well as what is possible. This can be done with the help of training classes, tapes and counseling and/or support groups. For example, when a person has little or no vision, in some situations their sense of touch may be able to substitute for their sight. Objects can be marked with tactile (feel-oriented) indicators to enhance recognition.

With crucial know-how and the use of adaptive devices (magnifying glasses, canes, etc.), families can usually create an environment that offers more independence than they initially expected. For more information on help for the visually impaired, please feel free to call the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Palo Alto, at 650-858-0202.

(Source: Braille Institute, American Foundation for the Blind, [www.KeepsakeCompanions.com](http://www.KeepsakeCompanions.com))

## HELP MAKE YOUR MEDICAL CARE SAFE

The responsibility for safe health care lies primarily with the leaders of health care organizations and the clinicians and staff who deliver that care, but patients and families can also play a role in preventing medical errors and reducing harm. Although barriers to patient engagement exist, being an active partner in your health care team is well worth the effort.

Simple things patients can do to help stay safe when receiving medical care include the following:

- **Ask questions about the risks and benefits of the recommendations made by your healthcare provider.** It is essential that they understand your goals, values, and beliefs. Any recommendations should reflect those.
- **Don't go alone to the hospital or to doctor visits.** Bring a sibling, spouse, friend, or neighbor—anyone you trust to be your ally. They can speak up, help you remember, as well as provide emotional support.
- **Always know the names of your medications as well as why and how you take them.** Ask about what a specific medicine is for, how and how long you should take it, any likely side effects and what to do if they occur, interactions with any other drugs you may already take, and if there are any foods or activities that should be avoided while taking your medicine.
- **Understand the plan of action for your care.** Medical information and terminology is complex, so if you don't understand something, don't hesitate to ask. Use these standards to ask:
  - What is my problem?
  - What do I need to do?
  - Why is it important for me to do this?
- **In your own words, repeat back to your clinicians what you think they have told you.** This may help you remember the instructions after you leave and helps your clinician know if you've understood what has been discussed.
- **Arrange to get any recommended lab tests done before a visit.** This way you can discuss the results during the visit.
- **Determine who is in charge of your care.** In large organizations, you may see many different health care professionals. Be sure to know who is ultimately responsible for your case.

*(Source: National Patient Safety Foundation's Lucian Leape Institute)*

## SHOPPING AT AmazonSmile

When you shop on *AmazonSmile*, Villages of San Mateo County can receive 0.5% of all eligible purchases. You just shop as usual, then VSMC and you both benefit!

Here is how it works:

- Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) (save this address in your bookmarks)
- It will ask you to write in your charity (Villages of San Mateo County)
- No special apps needed

Then, all future purchases automatically go towards VSMC until you indicate otherwise. The key is to always visit *smile.amazon.com* first and then...just go shopping!



### ADVOCATES CORNER

#### A new free service offered by VSMC

The Villages of San Mateo County has Volunteer Advocates who are available on your behalf. They will give guidance, give voice, and help you resolve problems.

Confusing and exasperating situations sometimes occur. It could involve a government agency, a utility bill, an insurance issue, a contractor, incorrect statements from a healthcare provider and more. Our VSMC volunteers are ready to offer guidance and referrals as an avenue to resolve these issues.

Call the VSMC office at 650-260-4569 to request an Advocate to serve you.

### DID YOU KNOW?

#### \$10,000 Grant Received February 7, 2018

We are delighted that Villages of San Mateo County (VSMC) has received a \$10,000 grant from the Peninsula Health Care District (PHCD) to assist us in providing Mid Peninsula Village (MPV) members in the PHCD service area with medical alert devices, home safety modifications, MPV membership scholarships for low-income individuals, and more.

The Board Chair of PHCD had much praise for the Village movement and all it involves. Congratulations and thank you to Susan Gerard, who did a wonderful job of connecting with the staff at PHCD and writing the grant proposal.

## VILLAGES OF SAN MATEO COUNTY CHAIRS AND COMMITTEES

### VILLAGES OF SAN MATEO COUNTY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Linda Burroughs*

### PRESIDENT

*Scott McMullin*

### MID PENINSULA VILLAGE CHAIR

*Eric Hanson*

### SEQUOIA VILLAGE CHAIR

*Linda Thomas*

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*Sandra Neff*

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*Patrick Brown*

*Victoria Kline*

### FUNDRAISING

*Susan Gerard*

### NEWSLETTER

### EDITORS

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*Wani Wynne*

### VENDOR

*Lisa Sharek*

### VOLUNTEER/SERVICE COMMITTEE

*Randi Kutnewsky*

*Irene Liana*

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In times like these, with unusual events occurring in such rapid succession, when all is calm is the time to make preparations. Planning ahead can help you recover from the devastation of a disaster. One step in preparation is to keep your tax records safe.

- **Use Electronic Records.** You may have access to bank and other financial statements online. You can also keep an additional set of records electronically. One way is to scan tax records and insurance policies into an electronic format. You may want to download important records to an external hard drive. Be sure you keep duplicates of your records in a safe place. For example, store them in a waterproof container away from the originals.

- **Document Your Valuables.** Take photos or videos of the contents of your home or business. These visual records can help you prove the value of your lost items. You should also store these in a safe place.

- **Count on the IRS for help.** If you fall victim to a disaster, know that the IRS stands ready to help. You can call the IRS disaster hotline at 866-562-5227 for special help with disaster-related tax issues.

- **Get copies of prior year tax records.** If you need a copy of your entire tax return you should file Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Return. The usual fee per copy is \$50. However, the IRS will waive this fee if you are a victim of a federally declared disaster. If you just need information that shows most line items from your tax return, you can call 1-800-908-9946 to request a free transcript. You can also get it if you file Form 4506T-EZ, Short Form Request for Individual Tax Return Transcript, or Form 4506-T, Request for Transcript of Tax Return.

Visit [www.irs.gov/disasterassistance](http://www.irs.gov/disasterassistance) for more information about disaster assistance. You can also type "disaster" in the search box. Get IRS tax forms and publications on [www.irs.gov/forms-instructions](http://www.irs.gov/forms-instructions) at any time.



## SEQUOIA VILLAGE DONORS

*Sequoia Village* extends its sincere appreciation for the generous financial support and in-kind gifts received from the following individuals and organizations:

- *Charis Fund*
- *City of San Carlos*
- *Danford Foundation*
- *Dignity Health*
- *Howard & Martha Girdlestone Foundation*
- *Kiwanis Club of San Carlos*
- *Mid-Peninsula Vineyard Christian Church*
- *Peter & Paula Uccelli Foundation*
- *Redwood City Parks and Recreation*
- *Rotary Club of San Carlos*
- *Sequoia Healthcare District*
- *Touchpoint Foundation*
- *Trinity Presbyterian Church of San Carlos*
- *Wells Fargo*
- *West Valley Federated Women's Club*

## READING PARTNERS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS



Would you like to spend one hour per week helping a child learn to read? Right now, Reading Partners (RP) Silicon Valley is recruiting volunteers from the Villages of San Mateo County. RP, a national nonprofit, delivers one-on-one tutoring sessions to children in underserved elementary schools. This year, they will serve 820 students in 14 elementary schools where there are still 90 students on the waiting list to receive a Reading Partners tutor.

Each volunteer uses RP research-proven, easy-to-use curriculum. In every school RP serves, there is a dedicated space for tutoring and a site coordinator to answer questions and supervise tutoring sessions.

The RP experience is unique because tutors work with the same student every week. As a tutor, you pick your student up from class, learn what kind of books he/she likes, how they learn best, and how you can help. Many tutors report that building a relationship with their students is one of the most rewarding parts of the RP volunteer experience.

To sign up to be a volunteer, go to [readingpartners.org/volunteer](https://readingpartners.org/volunteer). Select the "Silicon Valley" region, and follow the prompts. Reading Partners requires a tuberculosis test and a background check to volunteer. Please email [monique.garcia@readingpartners.org](mailto:monique.garcia@readingpartners.org) with any questions or concerns that you may have.

## TESTIMONIAL

*Applying Eric Hanson's research and Jim Shaul's willingness, this team together performed a heavy, onerous job at my apartment in their capacity as volunteers for the Villages of San Mateo County.*

*Wishing all the best to these two wonderful volunteers!*

*Sincerely, Polly A. Wyant*



Volunteers Jim Shaul (left) and Eric Hanson (right) teaming up to repair an antique bedframe for a member.

## KUDOS TO SCOTT!



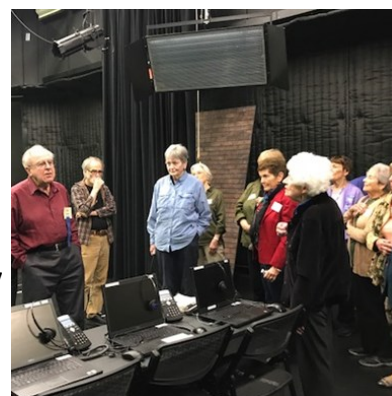
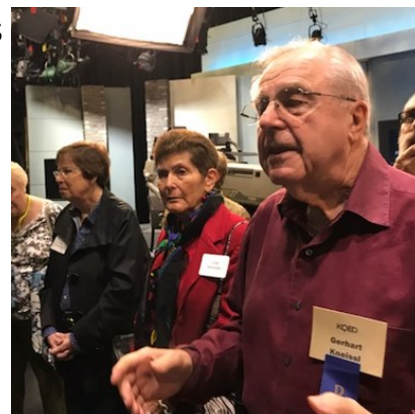
At a gala event on February 2, 2018, held at the Domenico Winery in San Carlos, members and volunteers from VSMC surround Scott McMullin (front center) who was recognized as the 2017 Citizen of the Year by the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce and the City of San Carlos at their 2017 holiday mixer on Dec.13.



Scott McMullin (r) receives congratulations from Tom Davids (l), a member of Sequoia Village and a past recipient of the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce and the City of San Carlos Citizen of The Year Award.

## A TRIP TO KQED

Members from VSMC go behind the scenes with KQED docent Gerhart Kneisal to learn about the state-of-the-art technology used in bringing distinctive TV and Radio programs to KQED viewers and listeners.



In Loving  
Memory  
Helen Nella