



Mount Pleasant Village Newsletter

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www.mountpleasantvillage.org

Message from Katie:

August in Washington can often be a slow and sultry time, with folks away on holiday, and the heavy summer weather keeping everyone indoors. While some of the Village activities are on hold until next month, others continue to be active and thriving. The Village leadership is using this quiet time to think about the future of the organization and is organizing, what we hope to be, a series of Round Table discussions with members on what is important to you. We want these forums to be free and open discussions about whatever is on your mind about the Village – programs and activities, services, the organization, membership, and so forth. I encourage you to attend and participate in the Round Tables. **For more information, see below.**

Another issue of importance to the Village is the involvement of members in its committees. One of the best ways of helping to guide the organization is to participate on the Board or on one of the committees. Fresh thinking helps keep the organization vibrant. Even those who have only limited time can make valuable contributions, so please consider volunteering to help the Village. **The committees are listed below.**

If you have a passion for painting, museums, gardening, antiques, or simply would like to be part of a lunch group, consider starting a Village interest group. For further information on how to start an interest group, please contact me at president@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Katherine Tyler

President, Mount Pleasant Village

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

Will resume in October

Coffee at Dos Gringos

Will resume at the end of August

Seniors Yoga at PastTense

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 am

Happy Hour and Game Night, Tuesdays, 5-7 at Marx Café

Will resume at the end of August

at Purple Patch's Habit Café

Will resume at the end of August



Upcoming Event: First Village Round Table

The Village is planning to hold its first Round Table in October to provide all 185 members a chance to gather, become better acquainted with one another, and share ideas and suggest next steps on how to take the Village and its programs into the future. We are eager to hear your thoughts and ideas. Please pencil in the tentative date of Sunday, October 1, at 1:00 pm, at the Mount Pleasant Library. Members interested in helping plan this free-flowing Round Table discussion, and those with facilitation skills are especially wanted, should contact Susan Rees, at susan.r.rees@verizon.com, or Bonnie Cain, at bonniejcain@gmail.com.

Meet the Villagers: Membership Committee Co-Chair Cecile Srodes



Cecile Srodes is the new co-chair of the Village Membership Committee, following Brenda Krieger, who recently moved to rural Virginia. Cecile and her husband, Jim Srodes, have lived in Mount Pleasant since 1976.

Cecile grew up in Annandale, Virginia, and was happy to move into the District after graduating from Duke University in 1964. She worked for several years on Capitol Hill, then attended law school at The American University. Following graduation, she served as counsel on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and later became head of Legislative Affairs for the Securities and Exchange Commission in the early 1980s. Her next job, from which she retired in 2005, was in the Washington office of the New York Stock Exchange.

Throughout this time, Cecile was an active volunteer, serving on the Board of Historic Mount Pleasant for many years. She also worked with various city offices to increase the planting of trees in the neighborhood, and to restore the triangle park at the intersection of Park Road, 17th and Mount Pleasant Streets.

One of her activities in retirement has been copy editing her husband's books. She and Jim also enjoy Washington's vibrant theater scene.

Neighborhood Additions: Little Free Libraries



Have you noticed those charming miniature houses crammed with books that are sprouting up in front yards around Mount Pleasant? There is a new movement afoot -- the Little Free Library. These Lilliputian libraries are a "take a book, return a book" free book exchange, designed to inspire a love of reading and community. Each of these little libraries reflects the reading preferences of its neighbors, and may include books for children, cookbooks, and travel guides, as well as mysteries, thrillers, poetry and some fine old classics. The books are available to all, and browsing is encouraged. These delightful libraries have been spotted at the following locations:

Δ 3114 19th Street

Δ 1643 Hobart Street

Δ 1722 Kilbourne Place

Δ 1822 Monroe Street

Δ 1725 Newton Street

Δ 1754 Park Road

Maintaining Independence by Preventing Falls – Village Blog #6

One of the most serious threats to seniors living independently are fall-related injuries. It is estimated that one of three older persons living at home fall each year. This month's Village Blog explores the leading risk factors for falls and strategies for fall prevention. **See the blog on pages 4 & 5 below.**

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, describing what you need; or
- **Online:** Login to the Village website at 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.
- The **Finance Committee** is seeking those with knowledge of non-profit accounting for a very small organization. Contact Rebecca Shannon at 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 It is looking for those with non-profit experience. Contact Tom Conway at thomasconway@gmail.com.
- The **Membership Committee** is looking for help with programs to increase and maintain membership. Contact Cecile Srodes at membership@mountpleasantvillage.org.
- The **Program Committee** is looking for leadership with cultural and social programs. Contact Bonnie Cain at events@mountpleasantvillage.org.
- The **Volunteer Committee**: is seeking help with volunteer management for the Village Helping Hands. Contact Elinor Hart at 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.

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 news@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Maintaining Independence by Preventing Falls – Village Blog #6

Falls are serious at any age, but in older persons they often lead to restricted activity, loss of confidence, disability, social isolation, and sometimes death. It has been estimated that one out of three elders living at home fall each year, making fall-related injury a major health threat and a primary cause for loss of independent living.

Risk Factors for Falling

There are many conditions that contribute to falling, and most falls are the result of a combination of factors. The more risk factors a person has, the greater likelihood of falling. The following are some of the leading age-related causes of falls:

1. Medical and physical causes of falling

- Muscle weakness in the legs and lack of flexibility and endurance
- Difficulties with walking and with balance, often related to lack of exercise, neurological conditions, arthritis, joint pain, osteoporosis, vascular disease and strokes, and other medical conditions
- Foot problems, painful feet, and unsafe foot-ware
- Slower reflexes that makes it harder to catch one's balance
- Vision problems, such as cataracts and glaucoma, can affect vision and depth perception
- Sensory factors that affect the inner-ear, sense of touch, and tactile sensation
- Medications, particularly those with side-effects that cause dizziness, unsteadiness, or confusion

2. Environmental causes of falling

- Wet or waxed floors and kitchen spills
- Inadequate lighting and glare, particularly on stairs, steps, and uneven surfaces
- Clutter and obstructed walkways and stairs
- Loose carpets and throw rugs
- Electrical cords trailing across the floor
- Hand rails and banisters in disrepair

3. Personal causes of falling

- Not using a cane or walker when indicated
- Walking while distracted and not attending to potential hazards
- Heat and dehydration
- Alcohol consumption slows reflexes and reaction times, causes dizziness and sleepiness, and alters balance
- Rushing to use the bathroom, particularly at night, or to answer the telephone
- Fear of falling may lead to a loss of confidence and doing less, resulting in a loss of muscle mass, weakness, and poor gait

Prevention of Falls by Seniors

Fortunately, falls are not an inevitable part of growing older; there are many ways to reduce the risk in older persons. While there are no guarantees against falling, there are medical, environmental, and personal ways to reduce the risk for a fall.

1. Prevention of the medical and physical causes of falling
 - Regular medical check-ups, vision testing, and hearing examinations
 - Review foot and balance problems with a podiatrist
 - Review medications with physician and pharmacist regarding side-effects that may increase the risk of falling and request alternatives (if they exist)
 - Take medication only as prescribed
 - Participate in physical therapy to increase strength and balance
 - Regular exercise will help maintain strength and balance
2. Prevention of the environmental causes of falling
 - Install slip-resistant floor tiles in the kitchen, foyer, and bathroom
 - Install carpet with short, dense pile
 - Install/repair stair railings
 - Use a color contrast to mark the first and last steps throughout the home
 - Use ramps instead of steps, where possible
 - Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairs
 - Install a telephone and lamp next to the bed
 - Increase lighting and reduce glare in lighted areas
 - Install additional electrical outlets to reduce the use of extension cords
 - Reduce clutter and keep pathways and stairs clear and in good repair
 - Use carpet tape and non-skid backing to secure loose carpet and scatter rugs
 - Install an elevated toilet seat and grab bars at the toilet, shower, and bath
 - Use non-skid bath rugs and rubber mats in tub/showers
 - Place night-lights in hallways and bathrooms
2. Reducing the personal causes of falling
 - Use a cane or walker, as recommended, to sustain balance
 - Eat healthy and nutritious food
 - Drink plenty of fluids and limit the consumption of alcohol
 - Maintain an active lifestyle
 - Do strength and balance exercises, such as yoga and Tai Chi, to prevent muscle weakening and stiff joints. Set a walking goal every day
 - Wear shoes and slippers that are well-fitted, flat-bottomed, and have a non-skid sole
 - Do not walk in socks
 - Wear clothing that does not interfere with walking or won't be a trip hazard
 - Keep a cell phone or medical alert device with you at all times to summon assistance

(Sources: AAFP.org; AgedCareCrisis.com; AgingCare.com; Center for Disease Control and Prevention; MyAgedCare.gov.au; NIH Senior Health; Merckmanuals.com; Senior Planet)