

President's Letter

Hi Everyone,

Well, we were off to a great start until the dreaded new Omicron arrived and since then friends and relatives are all going down like flies and testing positive for Omicron/Covid. Most of us are vaccinated and boosted, so what else can we do besides keep wearing that mask every time we step out and be careful who we invite into our home.

This means that most of our activities are back on Zoom, and so if any new or old members need a lesson on how to join a Zoom program, please let me know and we will help you. We are very excited to have, we hope, a part-time Tech person join us in the near future, who can help with all your electrical devices, PCs, Macs iPads, Laptops, TVs, radios, video doorbells, alarm systems, etc. Watch this space!

As you all know, we need more volunteers to better service our members. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we had to cancel our Volunteer Training and Recruitment Drive. Still, as things settle down, we will have them set up again.

I know this is hard for all of us right now, but they predict the Pandemic will slow down, so, until then, come join us for our programs on Zoom—our monthly speaker series, meditation group, movie group, Vallejo and men's groups, and End-of-Life Planning series.

Happy Valentines on the 14th to all members!

Helen



Please Come Pick My Fruit!

By Susan Neuhaus



My citrus trees are full this time of year and there are more than we and my neighbors can eat.

Many neighborhoods have fruit trees that go unharvested. Let's get that food out to those in need. If you have a tree that is ready to harvest, email FoodisFreeSolano@gmail.com.

Solano Gleaning Initiative sends out teams of volunteers throughout the county to pick trees, share the harvest with the homeowner, and distribute the excess to those in need.

You can read more about Food is Free Solano and Solano Gleaning Initiative at FoodisFreeSolano.org

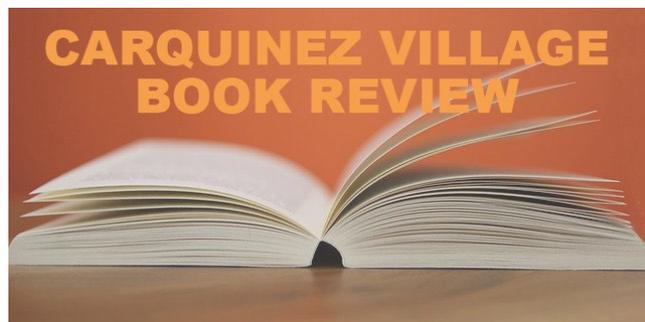
Photos Sought

By Barbara Fredericks

Do you have photos of Carquinez Village people or activities? If so, please send them to photos@carquinezvillage.org. We are trying to gather images in a central archive for easier access.

The Boy, The Mole, The Fox And The Horse

By Charlie Mackesy



Review by Carolyn Fallon

At the end and beginning of each year, I find, almost all publications post their individual lists of the “best books of the year.” Those of us who are obsessive or compulsive about these literary adventures find ourselves scanning these lists as if knowledge of them is required for sheer existence. Where is our favorite book? What, why didn’t we read that one?

The Boy, the Mole the Fox and the Horse didn’t appear on any of the lists that I read—BUT it has been on the lists of best-seller non-fiction for months—even last

Sunday’s list in the San Francisco Chronicle. I was so intrigued, I previewed it on Amazon, expecting a Wind in the Willows storybook, only to find that it was a hand-written and illustrated little book. Aw, how sweet, but my compulsion kicked in—it must be had! And so, voilà, the next day it was in my expectant hands, courtesy of dear Amazon.

What a charming, fey, whimsical, philosophical, little book! Sixtyish, English Charlie’s illustrations, drawings, and sketches are irresistible. His dedication of the book is “...to my lovely kind mum and my wonderful dog Dill.” Well, with that, you have got to love the guy. In his introduction, he says, “It’s surprising that I’ve made a book because I’m not good at reading them. The truth is I need pictures.” The four protagonists just wander through the pages, exchanging their philosophies on life, their conceptions of the power of love, self-awareness and self-forgiveness. Fred Nietzsche it ain’t, but it’s a whole lot of fun. Enjoy!!!

Intergenerational Program

By Kathy Monroe



As part of our grant from Benicia, we have partnered with the Kyle Highland Foundation, which is a center serving teenagers in Benicia. We are designing a series of after-school programs where the kids in SENIOR high will be paired with our SENIOR members doing different activities approximately once per month, such as cooking, art projects, crafting, life stories, technology, etc. The emphasis is on developing ONGOING

RELATIONSHIPS between the senior members and the senior high schoolers, so the participants may benefit and learn from each other.

If you think you might be interested in this commitment, please call Susan Neuhaus at 707-297-2472.



Member Interview, Linda Barron

By Greg Plant

Linda Barron is a woman of passions: for her family; for theater as an actress, and now “professional” audience; for her home state of Texas and its Tex-Mex cuisine; for working for the good folks of the Food Bank; and for Carquinez Village.

Born in Texas, Linda remembers that “while I lived in an urban area, I was privy to the hills and country area.” She always had theater in her: “I performed my whole time in Texas in community theater and in professional productions.”

Then, right after college—with a degree in Theater—Linda had a choice: “I had an audition with a studio in Hollywood, but my husband Bill had a job in Dallas, so I had to make a decision...and you know what happened: love won out!”

Linda continued following her passion for acting with theater work in Dallas. “My first job was as a casting agent,” she recalls, “and not only did I work for them, but I took part in auditions and got my Screen Actors Guild card.”

When they moved west in 1974, Linda “directed” the show. “Bill had to come out West early, and I had to pack up, fly out—pregnant!—and find a house and a doctor to deliver the baby!” They found a new home in Southampton, later moving to K Street (by the Ninth Street boat launch).

Theater remained in Linda’s life. She played roles like Nellie Forbush in “South Pacific” and Mama Rose in “Gypsy” at local theater groups in and around Benicia. She performed two roles in “Company,” her favorite musical.

Linda also worked in sales (“it was natural, after all my acting experience”), but eventually work and theater rehearsal conflicts meant she had to let acting go by the wayside to become a “professional audience because theater is a collaborative art,” she notes. Linda also sponsors an acting scholarship for Benicia High School students.

Linda still has tickets for ACT in San Francisco,

Berkeley Rep, and makes regular trips to Ashland. Linda says one of her proudest accomplishments was helping found CV and remaining on the board (she is on the program committee). “It’s been a real joy, and, after my husband passed away, Lois Requist helped get me involved.”

Other fun activities include becoming a master gardener to revitalize the children’s garden program at Mary Farmer Elementary School, teaching yoga classes for 25 years, and sharing with neighbors her passion for Tex-Mex with dishes (she taught how to make one on the Carquinez Village zoom cooking show!).

Volunteering for the Food Bank of Contra Costa/Solano, another real passion. Anyone can volunteer—at a warehouse (Fairfield or Concord) to bag and sort produce, or to help distribute food at locations around the county. Sign up at volunteer.foodbankccs.org.

Linda’s passions are fulfilling her life—and, through Carquinez Village, helping to fulfill ours!

Adopt a Family

Through the kind generosity of Carquinez Village members and volunteers we raised over \$1400.00 to adopt families in Benicia and Vallejo. The organization we gave to in Vallejo was a local church and, in Benicia, was the Family Resource Center (FRC). This is the note we received from the FRC:

“I wanted to take the time to thank each of you for helping with the 2021 Christmas assistance program at the Benicia Family Resource Center.

Due to the changes that had to be made this year, and the fact that gift cards are not as fun, nor as personal, the FRC lost over 60% of its usual holiday sponsors. I am extremely grateful to those of you who recognized that the need was still there, no matter how the assistance was provided. The generosity of this small group allowed the FRC to provide holiday assistance to over 50 families!

I look forward to the Adopt-A-Family program returning to its original form in 2022, but please know that you have all played a huge part in making the holidays bright for so many in our community.

Thank you, and best wishes in the new year.”

Kendall Lara, Coordinator, Benicia FRC



by Lois Requist, Editor

Thanks to all who contribute by sending articles! Notably, Greg Plant sends something nearly every month. I look to Carolyn Fallon for literary recommendations.

And thanks to Barbara Fredericks, Mary Eichbauer, and Rachel Ann Latosa Brown who edit, format, and post each edition.

Pictures are always welcome.