



## President's Letter

Dear Members and Volunteers,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving this year. I think it's the least stressful holiday, as it's giving thanks—usually with friends and family—without presents, just good company.

**The over 80's** certainly had a great dinner at my place. What a lively group of people, with fantastic food from everyone. One of our members, Traudel, made heart cookies with our name on to put around our neck.



I hope you are all looking forward to a busy month in December. We have the **cookie exchange** on the third of December at Linda Barron's house. Make or bring cookies to exchange.

Then on the sixth we have another outing to **Trader Joe's**, where last month everyone came back with bags of goodies (except for me, who fell flat on the pavement outside!).

Then we have the **Holiday Party** on the eighth at the Veterans Hall on First Street, which should be lots of fun.

🙏🙏🙏 Thank you for donating to the **Adopt-a-family program**. We have two families in Vallejo. One is a family with four children plus in-laws. The other is a struggling single mom with two small children.

A big thanks to **Northgate Church** who sent out volunteers to help our members in their homes. They went to a couple of houses and cleaned their windows, emptied and cleaned out a hot tub, cleaned out gutters, weeded, and cut back bushes. What a fantastic crew of people!

Our **Annual Report** is available to read on our website. Please look at it and enjoy all the pictures of activities during this past year.

I do hope you all have a wonderful holiday. I look forward to seeing you in the new year, when I know we have lots of excitement planned for 2023!

Cheers for now,

Helen

## Two Great Opportunities for a Limited Number of Members

By Kathy Monroe

### The Kyle Hyland Intergenerational Interviewing

*The Kyle Hyland Intergenerational Interviewing* project is an opportunity to pair with a high school senior at the Kyle Hyland Center (across from Benicia High) to share generational perspectives on topics of mutual interest. We are looking for six or seven seniors to be paired with students eager to find out about your life experience as a teenager. Some of the discussions will be filmed and chosen to be part of a short film on the wonders and benefits of two people fifty or more years apart talking and listening to each other in a comfortable setting. This project will take place on two or three afternoons in January. Any needed transportation will be provided.



### Makerspace Project

The Maker Space is an incredible building on East 2nd St in Benicia with a wide variety of up-to-date equipment, including a 3D-machine, which takes a two-dimensional instruction and manufactures a three-dimensional object. This is an opportunity for five or six seniors (who will be paired individually on December 6 with a high-schooler who will help them navigate on a laptop) to choose a small personal project they would like to see come to fruition. Then, on December 13, everyone will visit Maker Space to see their two-dimensional choice become a three-dimensional object that they can take home or give as a present. No special training or machine knowledge needed. Any hands-on help or needed transportation will be provided.

If you are interested in finding out more about these opportunities or signing up, please call ASAP either Kathy Monroe (908-334-7024) or Susan Neuhaus (707-373-6879).

## Adopt a Family

by Susan Neuhaus

Today, after our Friday walking group, I had the pleasure of dropping off \$1000.00 worth of gift cards to Benicia's Family Resource Center. We donated five \$100 Safeway grocery cards and five \$100 Amazon gift cards. The grocery cards will go to five families for food. The Amazon cards will be given to five teens. At that age they prefer to pick out their own presents. When I dropped them off, Kendall Lara said that donations from groups like Carquinez Village really make the holidays brighter. She said that the city receives most donations from individuals and service groups, and there are no corporate sponsors. This year some forty-one families have been receiving services, down from sixty-four at the height of the pandemic.

Helen Hughes and Janice Magner will be dropping off a similar amount in cards and gifts to two families in Vallejo next week.

This is our third year of adopting families during the holidays. I am continuously amazed by your generosity to our communities.

# THANK YOU!

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## New Groups and Events

### Grief Group

by Barbara Engdahl

Following last month's workshop, "*Grieving: Life's Greatest Challenge*," there will be an on-going grief support group. It will be a safe space for discussion and the expression of grieving. The first meeting will be in person on **Monday, December 5, at 10 AM**. To register or just to ask questions, call Barbara Engdahl (707-747-5112). Registrants will be given the address.

### Diablo Regional Holiday Concert

John Furtado, one of our valued volunteers, would like to invite you all to the *Diablo Regional Holiday Concert* at the **Benicia Library on Friday, December 9, at 7:30 pm**.

## Welcome to Our New Members!

By Susan Neuhaus

**Barbara and John Feth** joined Carquinez Village to meet new people and for respite care while Barbara is at work as a physical therapist. They enjoy exercising, hiking, art, and poetry. You might meet them in our walking group.

**Laura Dorais** is a volunteer who decided to become a member. She enjoys singing, gardening, and is quite creative. In addition, she would like to make new friends and check out local cultural and educational events. You might have met her at November's speaker event at the library.

**Alvin (Al) Russell** was introduced to the Village by his fellow church members, the Plants and Mary Kienitz. He has low vision, so is hoping for help with grocery shopping and going to doctor visits. He sings and plays the piano. You may have met him at the November potluck.

**Margaret Fortunka** first heard about the Village from her workplace, the Benicia Herald. Currently on leave, she is looking forward to meeting new people. She lives very close to Raley's so she is hoping to be able to check out our Tuesday Café soon.

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## Member Profile: Marty Stockard

By Greg Plant

**Marty Stockard** has had such a whirlwind of a life that it is amazing she has slowed down enough to start volunteering.

"But I love to volunteer," Marty says. "I enjoy helping and being involved."

She has been involved, and doing things, her whole life, as stewardess, saleswoman, teacher, real estate agent, and financial planner. She also has traveled to over sixty-five countries, her favorites being Asian countries, New Zealand, and Turkey.

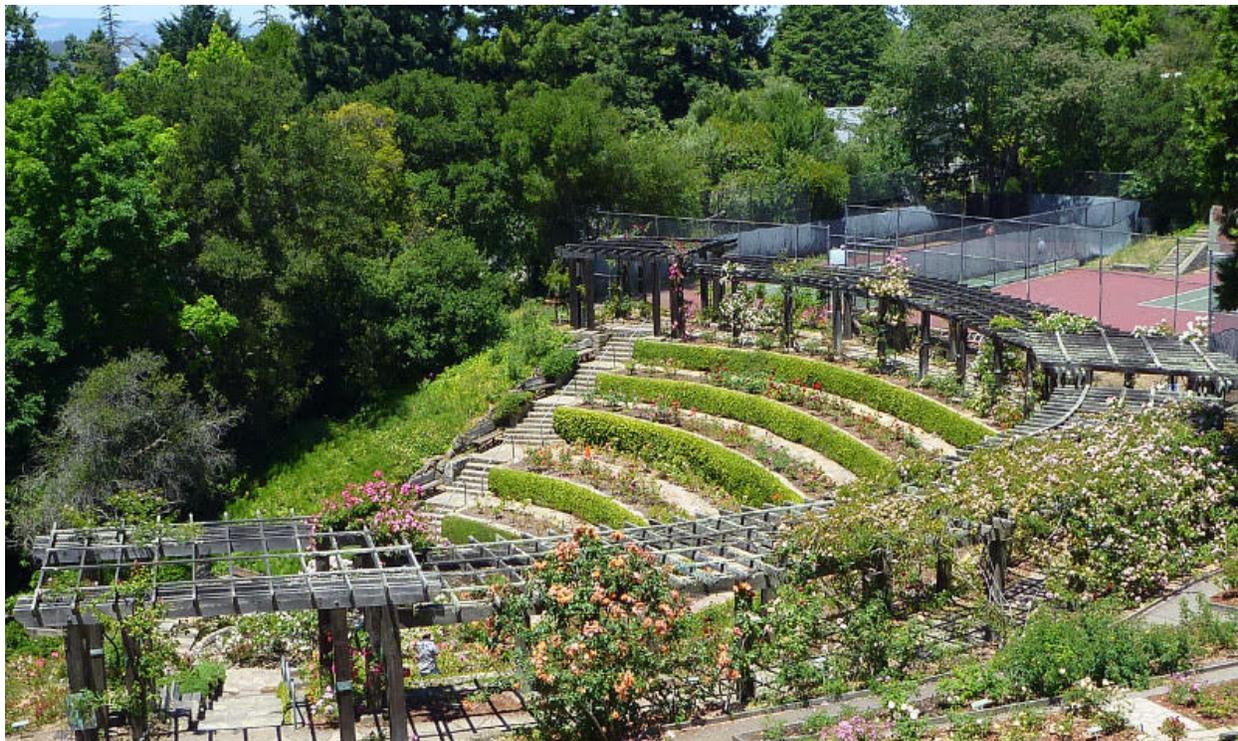
Marty is active, serving on the CV program committee and, as she says with a smile, she "is the maven of Vallejo."

"I promote Vallejo activities," she explains. "I drive folks around, gather our 20 Vallejo members for the activities. It makes me still vital and feels great because people depend upon us volunteers!"



## Berkeley Trip

*By Greg Plant*



One of the fun short trips Pat and I like to take is to Berkeley! OK, I'm an Old Blue, so I'm kinda prejudiced. Still, there are still unusual things to check out:

Berkeley Rose garden, up, up, up Euclid Ave. On the north side of the UC campus. To the left is a gorgeous view of the Bay and (in season) a spectacular rose garden in terraces down the hillside. There is a strolling pathway.

If you follow Euclid up, you find Grizzly Peak Blvd. Go left down Wildcat Canyon Rd. into Tilden Park. This park has many things to explore: the classic Tilden Park Merry-Go-Round (left on Central Park Drive), a small botanical garden with a GIANT Sequoia tree, and a beautiful man-made lake (a favorite of Cal students!).

Take a picnic basket—there are plenty of nice spots. Even in winter months it is lovely!

Afterward you can journey through the Berkeley hills to the Lawrence Hall of Science, and back down Grizzly Peak Blvd.

And we haven't even talked about Telegraph Avenue and our newest spot—Fourth Street. Another time!

## Surfing the Mind

by Nick Hughes



Photo courtesy of Pixabay

*“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”  
~ Jon Kabat-Zinn*

Do you find meditation challenging? Perhaps you became interested in meditation because you thought it would help you gain control over your mind. However, when you sat down, closed your eyes, and tried your best to experience the bliss of pure consciousness, you found yourself distracted by a constant stream of thoughts and feelings. Instead of an expansive, oceanic experience of universal oneness, it was more like floating helplessly on the surface of an angry sea—the waves and currents tossing you around and dragging you under. This experience can be very discouraging, leading you to believe that you’re doing it wrong. You might even feel like your inability to stop thinking during meditation makes you a failure. Meditation is just not meant for you.

Don’t give up hope just yet! You’re being way too hard on yourself. Trying to stop your mind from creating thoughts is like trying to stop the ocean from creating waves. It’s impossible! The ocean will always generate waves—that’s what the ocean does. Likewise, the mind will always generate thoughts because that’s what the mind does—that’s what the mind is. Meditation is not

so much about stopping your thoughts as it is about stopping your resistance to them. It’s not about striving for complete inner silence, it’s about training yourself to feel at ease with the passage of time—learning to breathe, relax and be at peace as time goes by. As the author Salzberg explains, “We don’t meditate to get better at meditating, we meditate to get better at life.”

If you are meditating and you find yourself distracted by a thought, instead of resisting it or feeling guilty about it, ask yourself where that thought came from. Why is it coming up now? How does it make you feel inside? What is the underlying emotional energy attached to the thought that needs to be recognized and released? As the saying goes, you’ve got to feel it to heal it. By going with the wave to the source of the thought, as opposed to shutting it out, you can begin the process of healing and letting go. Now you are free to move back into the infinite stillness of the eternal now, appreciating the precious space between thoughts...until the next wave arrives.

[wellbeingtahoe.com/blog](http://wellbeingtahoe.com/blog)

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## THE ABCs OF MEDICAL CANNABIS

Laurie Vollen, MD, Naturally Healing MD

Dr. Vollen separates the uses of cannabis into three categories: recreational, medical, and spiritual. In the category of medical usage, cannabis has been found to aid in pain relief, improving sleep and general functioning. In California, the liberal definition of “legal use” results in “complete patient autonomy,” which means it is up to the patient to determine what they need. Many older patients who have visited dispensing stores find young salespersons with at best a partial understanding of what form of cannabis is suitable for which symptoms. They leave without what they need, are disappointed, and end up not using the product.

An NIH study found that seniors tolerate Cannabis well. It found that 79% of those using it reported lowered anxiety and lowered use of opiates. It was found to be better for anxiety than commonly used benzodiazepines, with less risk of addiction. In a study of 1,881 Parkinson’s patients, many using cannabis had better sleep and lower anxiety, agitation, cramps, and rigidity. The general dose used was 5 mg of THC and 5 mg CBD. Potential users of cannabis need better guidance in determining what mixture of these two components and at what levels for maximum effectiveness.

Dr. Vollen referred those interested to the following websites: [healer.com](http://healer.com) and the Society of Cannabis Clinicians, <https://www.cannabisclinicians.org/>.

Dr. Vollen herself has a website, practices in Albany, and offers Zoom consultations. She said a complete treatment plan would cost between \$200 and \$500.

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by Lois Requist, Editor

This is the last newsletter of 2022! It serves to remind me of the closing of another year. I suppose we become more aware of the passage of time as we realize our own is limited. I’ve lost relatives and close friends this year. That will likely be the case in every future year. This realization can serve to make us appreciate each day and each year as it passes. Thank you to all my friends who keep me grounded and help me see the humor and humanity in everyday life.

Comments on the newsletter: [lois@requist.com](mailto:lois@requist.com).