

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In This Holiday Season

At the start of a new year we often make resolutions that may fall short for one reason or another. A year ago our Village had great plans for 2020.

Our anniversary celebration at Michael's in February was filled with high spirits and anticipation of things to come. As it turned out, however, it was the last time we Villagers gathered together in 2020. Our plans for a Town Hall, a Potluck Social, the Lobster Bake, our monthly dinners, and other events were dashed by the onset of the virus and subsequent safety concerns. The Senior Center closed, and Zoom accounts opened. Our Program & Events and Member Care teams worked to create ways to keep us connected, stimulated, and entertained. The Virtual Village was born. Unfortunately, we could not have all those in-person events. We currently anticipate that our virtual activities will continue for some time in the new year.

It is for that reason that the Village board decided to offer a \$100 credit for each individual and household membership. This credit will apply to your membership renewal processed in 2021.

Our hope is that the New Year brings us mask-less visits with family and friends, with real, not virtual, hugs and kisses. We have gained a new appreciation of how much these embraces enhance our lives. Best wishes to you all!

Paul Harrington



Village Elves Deliver Gift Bags

Secret elves were hard at work early this winter to bring some needed cheer to Village members. In early December we members were first surprised and then delighted by gift bags that mysteriously appeared on our doorsteps!

Inside were an array of lovely gifts, including a wonderful calendar featuring local scenes (artwork by Paul Harrington), a Market Basket gift certificate for special treats, a jigsaw puzzle, and more. The gift bags came from the collaborative creativity and efforts of the Village's Member Care Team (in alphabetical order): Lois Ascher, Elizabeth DeGrenier, Lidy de Hollander, Pauline Derby, Bill Franz, Donna Franz, Susan Hammond, and Jeannette Isabella. Thank you all!

As the flurries and hurries of the holidays pass, remember the Village Writing Project—the reason for the blank notebook in the gift bag. Please share your experiences and ideas with other Villagers. The holiday letter in the gift bag has some ideas to help you get started. And also don't forget to submit a favorite recipe for our future Village Cookbook.

Remember: though physically separated now, we're still a community, and it helps us all to stay engaged.



Special thanks to Lidy, who because of the pandemic assembled the huge number of gift bags by herself. (Photoshopping by Paul)

Upcoming Events

The Village has suspended traditional programs and events for now. Check the Tuesday Update email for more information.

For members and volunteers:

Village Talk on Zoom:

Friday, Jan. 15, 3 pm,
"Boston's Molasses Flood: Municipal Planning in a Just Society" with Lois Ascher (see page 2).

Every Tuesday Chair Yoga 10-11 am: continuing on Zoom. No experience needed. Check your Tuesday Village Update email for how to enter the Zoom session.

Weekly Zoom Village Happy Hour, Fridays 5-6 pm, resuming Jan. 8. Please register by Tuesday if you plan to join on Friday.

Weekly Village Chat Room on Zoom, Wednesdays 4-5 pm, resuming Jan. 4.

To Contact the Village

For information:

call 978-206-1821

email:

info@greaternewburyportvillage.org

visit our website:

www.greaternewburyportvillage.org

For member services:

call 978-206-1821

email a service request to:

services@greaternewburyportvillage.org

Meet New Member Janet DelMare

Our newest member, Janet joined the Village during the pandemic and has yet to experience “live” Village events in person, but that hasn’t dampened her enthusiasm. Having turned 59, now single again, she joined for the spirit of community, for feeling part of something greater—or as she says, “like a substitute family.” She has lived on Plum Island most of 30 years, now with her adopted 14-year-old son. (Think you have it bad during the pandemic? Janet points out it’s really tough to be isolated at age 14.)



Janet works part-time now for the Newbury Council on Aging as an outreach coordinator, work she finds very fulfilling. With a Master’s degree in Public Health Management and Law, in her previous career she was a healthcare consultant and case manager in private and nonprofit healthcare agencies.

But ask her about her past and an adventurous streak reveals itself. In her 40s, after a second divorce, she took off to a folk dance camp at a monastery in Mexico ... and ended up teaching SCUBA diving in Belize, moving around through Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Honduras, meeting international travelers on walkabouts, diving, and climbing volcanos—a five-year adventure until she decided to return to Newburyport to start a family with a new husband and son.

Happy still to have a view of the sea, today she’s weaving on her loom and enjoying her French bulldog—and looking forward to meeting Villagers post-Covid. When you see her at our next Village party, perhaps she’ll tell you how her name came to be DelMare, “from the sea.”

Encore Village Talk on Zoom

Friday, Jan. 15 at 3 pm. “Boston’s Molasses Flood: Municipal Planning in a Just Society,” with Lois Ascher. ([Zoom link to come inm Tuesday Update.](#))

Thanks to Steve Puleo’s book, *Dark Tide*, many people have at least heard of the Molasses Flood. Yet as much as it appears to be a chapter out of the Twilight Zone, the Molasses Flood was far more. Lois’ talk will discuss both the flood itself and the cultural conditions that drove the catastrophe. The decisions made around the tank’s siting, its construction, lack of due diligence, and its maintenance, reveal local and global concerns of the time: war, recession, a pandemic, and particularly conflicts with immigration. The talk will conclude with some thoughts on why no real memorial exists, and some considerations in providing one.

Lois Ascher is a semi-retired professor in the Humanities Department at Wentworth Institute in Boston, where she was the first female professor. During her tenure she created and directed the English Honors program and taught courses in literature, art history, and contemporary art and theory. More recently, with the aid of two grants and a term professorship, she pursued her interest in urban culture studies. She has served as area chair in Urban Studies for the New England Popular Culture Association, and has published on the urban renewal tragedy of Boston’s West End, a particular interest of hers. Currently, she serves on the executive committee of the board of the West End Museum. She also serves on the board the Greater Newburyport Village and on its Member Care Committee.

We Want To Know

If you know a member or volunteer who is facing surgery, a loss, or an important milestone, let the Village know so we can acknowledge it appropriately and offer help as needed. Please call 978-206-1821 or email membership@greaternewburyportvillage.org

Our Mission

To promote living well and independently through community engagement and neighborly support.

In My Own Way

A poem by member Paula Wright

The mirror shows no face I know,
Where once golden tresses, now there's snow.

Tw'as soft skin once upon my face,
Now makeup tries to erase.....

The lines and spots which do connect
To fallen tissue on my neck.

The chin so fine with graceful curves,
Now numbers three, as down it swerves.

The body stands, though hardly neat,
Obscuring view of my feet.

A shape that once curved in at mid,
Now rolls around with waistline hid.

The breasts so firm and perky new,
Are near my waist, and saggy, too.

But that does not my spirit break,
For in my mind I still can make.....

Connection to the girl in me,
Who's virtual age I'll always be.

Though creaky bones and muscles ache,
My inner spirit will not break.

There's still a lot of life to live,
And much more love for me to give.

And years of lessons hard way learned,
That make life better, which I've earned.

So now's the fun part. Who cares that
I'm wrinkled, wizened, round and fat.

Life's too short to give a hoot,
That sometimes when I bend I poooooot!

Just take me as I am today,
Cause I'm quite happy in my way.

As life is now vacation week,
From now till then I still will seek.....

To grow and learn, and yes, to play
As I enjoy my every day.

This growing old's OK with me,
As I will age quite gracefully.

But, here's the thing 'bout this gray mare,
She really does no longer care.....

What others think about her pranks,
For it is time to just give thanks.....

That now I live each passing day,
Just as I want, IN MY OWN WAY.