



Golden Gate Village

Golden Gate Village
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Winter 2015-16 Newsletter

What Is Golden Gate Village?

Welcome to the Golden Gate Village inaugural newsletter! Back in the day when I was an 11 year old poet, I dreamed of writing for *The Village Voice* and being Abbie Hoffman's girlfriend. Today I am writing for Golden Gate Village, a program of the Richmond Senior Center (RSC), a voice for elder empowerment. Golden Gate Village started a couple of years ago when my friend Kaleda Walling and I were talking about how nice it would be to create little villages in the respective neighborhoods where we lived. It was one of those fanciful conversations that soft-hearted idealists have over a glass of wine.

In 2014 Supervisor Eric Mar's office asked me what programming I would like additional funding for at RSC. I said "a village!" Supervisor Mar has been to the RSC regularly during his time in office. The RSC has hosted candidate forums and hosted this year's D1 Mayoral budget coffee as well. Thanks to Supervisor Mar we received our second year of village funding this month! Our village is an opportunity to help maintain independence and meaningful social engagement for seniors and people living with disabilities in our Richmond District Neighborhood.

Village Stats Nationally

- 160 villages in development
- 170 open villages
 - 34% urban
 - 38% suburban
 - 22% rural

Villages take an average of one to three years of development before launching.

Golden Gate Village is one of the few villages in the nation based out of a senior center. It's a new model that is beginning to take root in other communities. Senior centers in Laguna Beach and Santa Barbara (California), North Carolina, and Washington State are all exploring Village-Senior Center partnerships. I've talked with directors at some of San Francisco's major senior centers about our concept. Partnering the existing community of our City's senior centers with the amplified program service and volunteer offerings of a village just makes sense! Other senior centers are looking to our success to help them develop their own programs.

I was at the National Village Conference in Seattle last week. 320 villagers from across the country convened to discuss the village movement. One of the founders of Beacon Hill Village, the first village in the nation, said "villages are not social service

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Upcoming Events

Community Meeting

Saturday, December 12, 11:00 am-12:30 pm

Join other village members and interested neighbors to learn how Golden Gate Village works, what we can do to grow and how you can join. Light refreshments provided. RSVP: Kaleda@ggvillage.org

Holiday Potluck/Cooking Cooperative

Wednesday, December 16, 5:00-7:00 pm

Bring a dish to share and enjoy a meal with friends and neighbors.

Space is limited so call now to reserve your spot.
or RSVP: info@ggvillage.org

The Gathering Place New Year Celebration

Wednesday, December 30, 2:00-4:00 pm

Let's celebrate the new year by learning how to play Mah Jongg! Or just come to eat and enjoy the company of friends as we wrap up 2015.

Tech-Support Day

Saturday, January 9, 10:00 am-noon

Questions or specific technology problem? We have volunteers ready to help with your computer, iPhone or tablet questions. Limited space at this members only event. RSVP with interest and a little information about the help you need.

Space is limited so call now to reserve your spot.
or RSVP: Kaleda@ggvillage.org

Golden Gate Village Speaker Series

Rochelle Towers, Connections for Healthy Aging, a Community Living Campaign Program

Thursday, January 28, 3-4 pm

Learn about the "Vial of Life": a program that allows individuals to have their complete medical information in their home for the use of emergency personnel, when a patient is not able to communicate the details of their medical needs.

Chinese New Year Celebration

Friday, February 19, 3-5 pm

Golden Gate Village will celebrate Chinese New Year and the Year of the Monkey. RSVP for an afternoon of festivities.

Golden Gate Village Newsletter

Issue #1: Winter 2015-2016

Editor: Eleanor Farrell

Contributors: Crystal Booth, Iris E.,
Linda Murley, Kaleda Walling

Photos: Tootsie Bellittera,
Noelle Swan Gilbert

We are looking for newsletter submissions from members and volunteers. Please share your thoughts and stories about maturing independently.

What Is Golden Gate Village? (cont.)

agencies.” As the Director of a social service agency I had to ask her why. She smiled a response. “Because social service agencies are top down.”

Villages are ground up. Golden Gate Village is not about me or Kaleda proselytizing over a glass of wine, and it’s not about us telling anyone what to do. It’s about us coming together in community and deciding our priorities and interests as peers, comrades, neighbors, friends. Another speaker at the conference, Edgar Cahn, a speech writer for Bobby Kennedy back in the day, equated the work we villagers are doing to social justice and the evolution of our democratic principles. WOW! Let’s do it!

Linda Murley
Director, Richmond Senior Center
ADRC, Golden Gate Village



November 2015 “One Hard Thing”

On Sunday November 8 a team of village volunteers rolled up their sleeves and worked together to help seniors living in the Richmond. Our first ever “One Hard Thing” event was a huge success. Gathering together in the morning at the Richmond Senior Center, twelve dedicated volunteers (many meeting for the first time) were paired up, assigned to a senior living close by and sent off to do tasks and chores that many of us do without thinking, but that can be huge obstacles to seniors and people with disabilities who live alone.

Each senior was asked to prioritize the top three things they could use help with and that could be done by two volunteers in about an hour and a half. The requests were varied and allowed for volunteers to tackle the jobs that best fit their skill sets. From repairing weather-stripping, hauling old furniture down to the curb, or washing hard-to-reach windows to replacing an old mattress, pulling weeds in the garden, or helping set up an iPhone, our volunteers did it!

Pat Smiley, member and volunteer with the village, said it was incredible to see how much light she now has

in her place after volunteers removed an old couch and moved a tall bookshelf from one side of her place to another. “They hung paintings I have been wanting to hang for so long now!” Smiley said, “You really should come take some ‘after’ pictures.” And so we did.



Before



After

Golden Gate Village will be offering “One Hard Thing” service days twice per year to coincide with the start and finish of Daylight Saving time. So, whether you are a senior needing some help or a neighbor with the inclination to help another neighbor, mark your calendars for our next day of service event scheduled for **Sunday, March 13, 2016**.

For more information, contact Kaleda@ggvillage.org.

Kaleda Walling

Recurring Events

(weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly)

Knitting Circle with Fong Toan
(presented in Cantonese)
Tuesdays 10:00–11:30 am
Info: wliu@ggsenior.org

Senior Walking Group
Tuesdays 10:00–11:00 am
Call ahead or email for meeting place.
Info: noliviak@yahoo.com

Jazz High Tea
Wednesdays 12:30–2:00 pm

Jazz Lunch
Fridays 11:30 am–12:30 pm
Remember to reserve lunch: (415) 752-6444
Live piano performance by Grant Levine

Sing Along with Eloise
1st & 3rd Wednesday 2:15–3:00 pm

Film Club
2nd Saturday 1:00–4:00 pm
Info: lmurley@ggsenior.org

Book Discussion Group
3rd Thursday 3:00–4:30 pm
Info: books@ggvillage.org

Golden Gate Village Open House a Success!

On November 18th, Golden Gate Village held an Open House, hosted at the Richmond Senior Center. We invited seniors, neighbors and community partners to learn about Golden Gate Village and anticipated approximately 60 attendees. By 4:30 pm we had surpassed 60 guests and estimate nearly 130 friends and neighbors joined us for the festivities! Live music was provided by pianist Grant Levin and saxophonist Noel Jewekes. Wine was donated by our neighbors at the Grocery Outlet. Village volunteers prepared a repast of guacamole and various taco bar fillings including chicken, beef, mango shrimp, spicy coleslaw, roasted potatoes and Brussel sprouts.



We were especially congratulated by attendees from other senior service organizations: NEXT Village, the Community Living Campaign, Curry Senior Center, Episcopal Senior Communities, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Institute on Aging, San Francisco Senior Centers, Project Open hand, a representative of the District attorney's Victim's Advocates program, and another from the Department of Public Health, the Richmond District Neighborhood Center. Our Richmond District Supervisor Eric Mar made a special appearance as well. Supervisor Mar has been instrumental in securing funding for Golden Gate Village and is an advocate for policies protecting seniors Citywide.

Peer support creates an obligation to succeed with our Village model. By succeeding we help give other community partners the opportunity to create villages of their own.

Linda Murley



Volunteer Profile: Greg Mora

Greg Mora has volunteered at the Richmond Senior Center for four years, leading our monthly drum circle without missing a beat. Greg is a native San Franciscan and is a Political Science graduate of San Francisco State University. He is dedicated to social justice and has worked with at-risk youth and victims of human trafficking in the Latino community throughout the Bay Area.



Supervisor Eric Mar presents the Certificate of Honor to Greg Mora.

Greg is intimately aware of the impact for good that volunteers can have on the community. He is not only a dedicated volunteer: he is a longtime manager of volunteers and volunteer programs. He has been Director of Volunteer Programs at Family House in San Francisco for six years. Family House serves as a home away from home for families of children with cancer and other life-

threatening illnesses. Family House provides physical comfort and emotional support, free from the overwhelming financial concerns that accompany a serious illness. Families stay together in 'suites' at Family House while a child undergoes treatment at UCSF. Greg is the co-founder of Family House's Young Professionals Advisory Council (YPAC).

At the recent Golden Gate Village Open House, Greg was awarded a certificate of recognition by Richmond District Supervisor Eric Mar. After receiving the award Greg spoke eloquently to the crowd of over 100 guests about the joy of service to others.

In his free time, Greg likes to write songs and play music with his friends. Greg was married to Karla in November and they are moving to Costa Rica in January to start a new life adventure together.

Linda Murley

Our Mission

We are a community based organization dedicated to helping seniors and people living with disabilities to age in community, safely in the homes they love and in the neighborhoods they know. Our village provides the resources to meet the practical as well as the social, cultural, and educational interests of seniors living in San Francisco's Richmond District neighborhood.

Film Club

The first meeting of our new monthly Film Club will be Saturday, December 12, from 1–4 pm. Each month we'll host a movie screening followed by a lively discussion, with snacks provided.

Our inaugural film will be a recorded performance of the 1989 Lincoln Center stage production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, starring Spalding Gray, James Rebhorn, Atticus Brady, Frances Conroy, Roberta Maxwell, Eric Stolz, Penelope Ann Miller, and Peter Maloney.

The play won the 1938 Pulitzer Prize and after its stage debut has been filmed three times. Wilder's estate had authorized an earlier version as the officially approved film of the play and had banned any later filmed productions. However, they were so impressed with this production that they approved its filming as being closer to Thornton Wilder's intentions than any of the other filmed versions. Wilder thought that elaborate sets distracted from the presentation of a play and he wanted *Our Town* to have minimalist sets, which this version does.

January's film offering will be Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu's 1953 masterpiece, *Toyko Story* (*Tōkyō Monogatari*), a story of a family and the relationships among the different generations. In Japanese culture there is a special category of literature, theater, and film that deals with family relationships and Ozu's films are sterling examples of this genre.



And in February, get ready for *Them!*, a 1954 atomic testing disaster flick chronicling the attack of giant ants. James Whitmore, Edmund Glenn, and Joan Weldon try to prevent the ravaging insects from destroying civilization.

If you share our love of movies (no genre is safe from our scrutiny!), please that join us for a fun afternoon.



Pomegranate Life

"Everybody must get stoned."

— Bob Dylan

"Damn everything but the circus... the full round life."

— ee cummings

May the Christ-Sophia hold you
in the palm of their, its hand
so that the roads may rise
to meet you.
And the winds may be always
at your back.
And that the sun may shine warm
upon your face.
The rain fall soft
upon your fields.
So that,
arriving at your doorstep,
you may find—
Abracadabra! Welcome!
The rubied honeycomb,
every nook and cranny bejeweled,
your Pomegranate life!
Abracadabra!
Rebirths. Many rebirths.
Ashes to ashes.
Trapeze to trapeze to trapeze.
And like the thousand-armed one, Kwan Yin
with her vase

v
e
r
t
i
c
a
l

or
t
i
l
t
e
d
pouring her healing oils
into
the world...

Just tip your vase
upside-down
and pour it
full of your Pomegranate life,
Divine nectar

into

this

wounded world

so that
it may rise

again

and again

and...

A ballerina balancing on a moving horse.
The extravagantly-trunked ones, the royal elephants
no longer begging

for

peanuts.

And a clown not crying.

— "Iris E.", Poeta (C.M.K.)
November 2015

*Abracadabra ("Irish slang": from the Gaelic!)
abra(rebirth) caed(many) abra(rebirths)



Volunteers Needed

Golden Gate Village has the following volunteer needs. Please contact info@ggvillage.org or (415) 752-6444 to sign up.

Volunteer Drivers: Help a senior get to/from an occasional medical or other necessary appointment by offering a ride. Let us add you to our village drivers list and we will notify you when rides are requested. Drivers will be subject to background and DMV check, must have a drivers license, proof of insurance and registration. (Typically 1–2 hrs. 9 am–5 pm)

Walking Partners: Is there a day during the week you are free for lunch? We have seniors who would love to attend lunch at the Richmond Senior Center, but need someone to walk with them from their home and back again. Walking partners provide security and reminders to neighbors who live within blocks of the center, by calling them in advance, meeting them at their home, and walking with them. (Typically 1–2 hrs. 11 am–12:30 pm)

Friendly Check-in: Golden Gate Village will begin offering regular check-in calls to requesting members. Check-in calls may occur daily or weekly to ensure our members who live alone are in good health, spirits and not in need of any specific assistance. Volunteers will be assigned a member to call either once per week or monthly depending on need.

Handyperson: Are you handy? We could use a few volunteers to call on when our members have minor household repair needs such as fixing leaking faucets or broken hinges, installing or repairing hand-rails, or other tasks.

Social Outreach Club: Once per month our social club will meet for snacks and a group effort to reach all village members by phone. Using a list of call topics (upcoming events, local issues notifications, and monthly topic themes), volunteers will spend an hour making phone calls and checking in to be sure our members are engaged and aware of village opportunities.

One Hard Thing: Home repairs and challenging projects that can be done in 1.5 hours are the focus of this semi-annual event. **Sunday, March 13th** volunteer teams will head back into the community to help our members with one (maybe two) tasks requiring assistance. Sign up early with friends and family to enjoy this fun team volunteer opportunity.

Aging in San Francisco

Did you know 10,000 Americans turn 65 years old per day? Or that around 123,000 seniors are over 65 in San Francisco alone? Our beautiful City by the Bay is home to some of the best and brightest, and our growing senior population is no exception. It is while we age that sharing our strengths and staying connected are as important as ever, which is why so many of us turn to post retirement activities to stay engaged.

Technology and social support have become imperative as our seniors are looking to stay connected and opting to remain at home as we age. San Francisco leads the way in advancing aging technology along with services and support, from the tech innovators and researchers at Aging2.0, to the computer and tech support donations of the Community Technology Network, to the first and only national friendship and suicide prevention hotline run out of the Institute on Aging on Geary Blvd, to our very own Golden Gate Village offering a one-stop-shop approach to comprehensive support, connectedness, teaching and learning with its members. It is with the help of these innovating agencies that seniors are more than ever staying engaged and living fulfilled lives!

Growing older in San Francisco yields more opportunities for engagement than ever before. Stay connected by stopping into your senior center, calling a friend to say hello, or sitting down at a computer to write an email. It's all possible here in our great City by the Bay! Here's to thriving with friends!

For more info on the companies listed above:

www.aging2.com/
ctnbayarea.org/
www.ioaging.org/

*Crystal Booth, MA
Intake Social Worker
Meals on Wheels*



Understanding the relationship between Richmond Senior Center & Golden Gate Village

A Village + Senior/Activity Center Hybrid

The San Francisco Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) definition of a Village is: "The Senior Village is a rapidly growing model of senior services programming that promotes independent living. The Village model is a membership organization through which paid staff and a volunteer cadre coordinate a wide array of services and access to socialization activities for senior members." The DAAS definition of Golden Gate Village + Senior/Activity Center is "a new concept blending the Village model with an Activity/Senior Center. This blend provides an opportunity to enhance the Village Model by incorporating some of the distinct features of a Senior/Activity Center: a dedicated location for programming, a distinct community presence, and increased access to non-Village services which may be offered by a Senior/Activity Center."

In San Francisco, Golden Gate Village is unique given it is a program of the Richmond Senior Center. The standard model for villages both city and nationwide has been independent membership-based nonprofit organizations that rely primarily on membership dues to fund programming.

Through funding provided by DAAS, GG Village is reaching out to seniors living in the Richmond District and inviting them to participate as members in our village program based at the Richmond Senior Center. Many in the field of aging think that coalescing villages and senior centers is the logical future for both program models.



Golden Gate Village

Golden Gate Village—Created by older adults, for older adults, has three simple components:

- **Volunteer Services:** Whenever possible we provide volunteer services in our neighborhood to help with transportation, groceries, light household repairs, technology support and socialization
- **Referrals:** We connect members to vetted, often discounted, providers and to available DAAS services they might want or need but are unaware of
- **Programs:** We offer members healthy living; exercise & cooking classes, educational/social group activities. Our village provides stimulating programs and seminars to the community to support growth, contentedness and friendships.



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