

THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JANE ELEEY



Dear Members and Friends,

In April, individuals and organizations like Penn's Village will be gratefully marking National Volunteer Month and Week to honor the efforts and stress the importance of all those who have given of themselves to make their communities better. Kristin Davidson, Chair of our Board of Directors, recently sent a letter to several congregations in the Philadelphia Faith Community applauding the efforts of our amazing volunteers and suggesting that they encourage their members to join our volunteer efforts. As Kristin points out, the benefits just might transcend the giving. Please take a few minutes to read her letter, partially reprinted below, to discover hidden benefits of volunteering that just might surprise you.

Penn's Village Recognizes the Physical and Emotional Benefits of Volunteering

We at Penn's Village are profoundly grateful to all our volunteers and, we thank them for the 8,800 hours they dedicated to the organization during 2020. As we approach National Volunteer Week, April 18-24, we also want to draw attention to the physical and emotional benefits personally accrued by volunteers because of their contributions to others.

The theme of Penn's Village is Neighbors together—connecting, engaging, thriving. Recent research shows that individuals, including older adults, thrive when they connect and engage through volunteering. Here are just a few examples:

- *A 2016 study in Psychosomatic Medicine: Journal of Behavioral Medicine pooled data from ten studies and found that people with a higher sense of purpose in their lives—such as that received from volunteering—were less likely to die in the near term.*
- *Another study, published in Daedalus, an academic journal established by MIT Press for the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, concluded that older volunteers had reduced risk of hypertension, delayed physical disability, enhanced cognition, and lower mortality.*
- *“People who are happy and engaged show better physiological functioning,” said Dr. Alan Rozanski, a cardiologist at Mount Sinai St Luke's Hospital, a senior author of the Psychosomatic Medicine study. People who engage in social activities such as volunteering, he said, “often showed better blood pressure results and better heart rates.”*

If you are a Penn's Village member and are interested in learning how you might become even more involved with volunteering, email us at info@pennsvillage.org. And, of course, we would love to hear your stories about how being a PV volunteer has enriched your life!

Jane

Send Us Your Ideas!

In Spring, young-at-heart Penn's Villagers' thoughts seriously turn to Happy Hours!

Help us identify a second home for this noble cause—perhaps even west of Broad. Last Tuesday of the month, up to thirty attendees, handicapped accessible preferred. Contact Michele Brogan at mkeltz3@gmail.com with suggestions.



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ACTIVE AGING

Understanding Blood Pressure - Part 1

by Hannah Roni Troutman, D.O., and Harriette Mishkin

In February, we learned from Dr. Jay Pomerantz's *Aging as a Treatable Disease* presentations that activity and getting a good night's sleep are all part of a healthy lifestyle as we age. Also important are knowing and monitoring blood pressure. Keeping blood pressure under control is possibly one of the most important self-care activities that we can undertake. To help us understand just what blood pressure is all about, we invited Dr. Hannah Troutman, a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Division of Nephrology at Jefferson Health, to join the Penn's Village ACTIVE AGING conversation.

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the blood vessels. To live and function properly, tissues and organs need the oxygenated blood carried by blood vessels throughout the body. When the heart beats, it creates pressure that pushes blood to the entire body through a network of blood vessels that includes arteries, veins, and capillaries. High blood pressure (also called hypertension) is when this pressure is too high.

What do top and bottom numbers mean?

Systolic blood pressure is the top number. It indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls during heartbeats.

Diastolic blood pressure is the bottom number. It indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic (Top Number) mm HG		Diastolic (Bottom Number) mm Hg
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure Hypertension Stage 1	130-139	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure Hypertension Stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis Consult your physician immediately	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 100

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure>

What is the correct way to measure blood pressure on a home monitor?

Before your reading at home

- No food or drink for thirty minutes and empty your bladder

During the reading

- No talking
- Arm resting at chest height
- Cuff against bare skin
- Back is supported
- Sit with feet flat on floor

What can affect blood pressure readings in the doctor's office?

Several situations that may contribute to an elevated reading

- Stress/anxiety
- Rushing to get to appointment
- Layers of clothing in the way
- Recent intake of caffeine or smoking just prior to office visit
- Lack of proper procedure by office staff
- Not one's usual environment
- Using a stethoscope when using a manual cuff

Why do the numbers sometimes differ between home and doctor's office?

Stress can result in higher numbers in the doctor's office. Also, if you take your blood pressure at home, take your monitor with you to the doctor's office to compare readings. This will establish that your monitor is properly calibrated.

In our next issue of *The Village View*, we will discuss the possible effects on the body of high blood pressure and some of the lifestyle changes that may help keep your pressure at an acceptable level.

Our Community Blog Sneak Peak



The Fish Monger's COVID Flip

A year ago, Small World Seafood faced extinction when COVID-19 shuttered Philadelphia restaurants.

Read Sandra Sokol's April post to our Community Blog to find out how a struggling Philadelphia business staged an amazing reincarnation to become a fresh fish and seafood legend in Center City and Fairmount.

Subscribe to the Penn's Village Community Blog to automatically be notified when a new blog is posted.

ALL AROUND TOWN

Warmer days. Brighter sunshine. Hope and optimism abound. As a vaccinated friend recently said, "Think positive, test negative." If you are two weeks past your final vaccine dose, it may be time to take a peak outside, meet up with your grandchildren, and take in a few exhibits in a socially distanced way.

Museums/Public Space

The Barnes Foundation



Chaim Soutine. *Steeple of Saint-Pierre at Ceret*. c. 1922



Willem de Kooning. *Woman as Landscape*. 1954-55

The world premiere of *Soutine/de Kooning: Conversations in Paint*. Organized by the Barnes and the

Musées d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie. This collection of forty-five paintings explores the affinities between the work of Lithuanian artist Chaim Soutine (1893–1943) and Dutch-American abstract expressionist Willem de Kooning (1904–1997) and considers the creative connection between these two artists, plus the artists with Dr. Albert Barnes. Through August 8. The Barnes is open Friday through Monday. Advance tickets required. barnesfoundation.org.

Hidden City Self-Guided Walking Tour, highlighting Underground Railroad sites in Upper Darby. Born in Upper Darby, Thomas Garrett Jr. was a Quaker abolitionist who was a conductor along the Underground Railroad and assisted Black freedom seekers making the journey from Wilmington to his brother's home in Upper Darby. The four-and-a-half-mile tour visits seven historic stops in Upper Darby. Accessible by public transportation. <https://hiddencityphila.org>.

Belmont Mansion in Fairmount Park is now an Underground Railroad Museum and hopefully, will be open soon for visitors.



Maja, a bronze sculpture by Gerhard Marcks that survived the Nazis and has been in storage for nearly thirty years, is now installed on the grounds in front of Park Towne Place apartments at 22nd Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

Virtual Programs

Philadelphia Orchestra Digital Stage.
Aaron Diehl Plays Rhapsody in Blue.



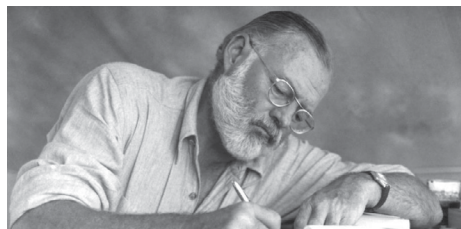
April 15, 8:00 pm. Celebrated pianist Aaron Diehl joins the orchestra to play Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. Composed in only five weeks, *Rhapsody in Blue* was an instant success upon its premiere in 1924, celebrated for blending classical music with the modern rhythms and sounds of jazz. <https://www.philorch.org>.

The Tri-State Jazz Society hosts a streaming event on April 18, at 2:00 pm (free, but any support is appreciated), featuring Domingo Mancuello, a composer and pianist with a passion for ragtime. tristatejazz.org

Television

WHYY-TV. *Hemingway: An Intimate Portrait of the Man and his Work*.

April 5, 8:00 pm. A documentary co-directed by Ken Burns, narrated by Peter Coyote, and featuring an all-star cast of actors portraying Hemingway, his family, and friends. Three-part, six-hour film.



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Join Penn's Village

To become a member, visit www.pennsvillage.org and click on "Join." There you will find our membership information.

To become a volunteer, visit www.pennsvillage.org and click on "Volunteer." We have a variety of volunteer opportunities to suit different interests, skills, talents, and schedules.

Do you know that talking about

Penn's Village to family, friends, and strangers is the best way to grow Penn's Village?

Connect with Penn's Village

215-925-7333

info@pennsvillage.org

www.pennsvillage.org

201 South 21st Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

INTRODUCING

Barbara Clark

by Karen Orman



Penn's Village has been fortunate to attract so many wonderful people. Barbara Clark is certainly an excellent example.

After leaving their home in New York City, where Barbara and her husband Bob had lived for thirty-three years, the couple moved to Philadelphia in November 2019. Although sorry to leave The Big Apple, the attraction of having their daughter, son-in-law, and two young grandchildren in Philadelphia sealed the deal.

Barbara retired from her extended career as a social worker shortly before arriving in Philadelphia. During the fifteen years before the move, she had a part-time private practice and worked two days a week at an independent living facility for low-income residents at the Jewish Home and Hospital. Barbara felt more fulfilled working directly with individuals than in being employed in hospital administration, as she had been for many years.

Although COVID-19 greatly restricted activity after lockdown, the Clarks early on were able to take advantage of going to the PMA, the National Museum of American Jewish History, Philadelphia Orchestra concerts at the Kimmel Center, and the Flower Show, as well as joining the Barnes Foundation. Barbara especially enjoys Philadelphia's architecture, its parks, the magnolia garden, and Headhouse Farmer's Market. The

big draw for her is a walkable city where she can spontaneously choose activities of interest, whether it's a movie at one of the Ritz theaters or dining at one of Philadelphia's notable restaurants. Biking, playing tennis, walking and swimming currently occupy much of Barbara's time.

Barbara and Bob have enjoyed many trips to countries such as Japan, China, India, Turkey, Egypt, and Argentina. They also savor memories of adventures on a small boat exploring parts of the Galapagos and a singular family trip to Colombia. One special travel memory involves their China tour guide. When the woman visited the U.S., she spent time with the Clarks. Because of the bond formed, the woman surprised Barbara by sending her five hundred surgical masks at the outset of the pandemic because she was worried about her and Bob's well-being.

Based on the recommendation of her daughter, Barbara joined Penn's Village shortly after her arrival. She would like to volunteer as a health pal or assist members in organizing their affairs. She will be a very fine addition to our volunteers.

Although Barbara misses her good friends in New York, I know that she will make fast friends at Penn's Village. I certainly hope to be one of them. Please introduce yourself to Barbara and Bob as soon as the opportunity presents.

My memory's not as sharp as it used to be.

Also, my memory's not as sharp as it used to be.

Penn's Village welcomes and actively encourages an inclusive and diverse community of members, staff, Board of Directors and volunteers. Inclusiveness and diversity means welcoming all and excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs or political beliefs.

A very sincere thank you to The First Presbyterian Church for generously providing space to Penn's Village and for always being there for us.

APRIL PROGRAMS

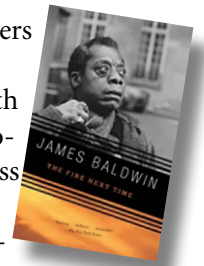
The Program Committee, under the leadership of Mario Oropeza, announces the schedule of programs for April.

Self registration is now available; for members, please review the [Self-Registration Instructions](#) on the website. You can also register by emailing info@pennsvillage.org or calling 215-925-7333. All programs are offered as ZOOM Teleconferences; registrants will be sent ZOOM login information a day or so before the event.

Nonmember guests may attend up to three free programs before being asked to join and/or volunteer with Penn's Village. Check our website and look for emails for up-to-date information, a fuller description of each program, and any additional programs scheduled in April.

Thursday, April 8, 2:00 pm. *Does a Reverse Mortgage Belong in your Retirement Plan?* Jack Guttentag, former Chief of the Domestic Research Division of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and retired from the Wharton School, will be joined by his colleague Allan Redstone to discuss reverse mortgages and why they are stand-alone products rather than integrated with annuities and financial asset management. Illustrations will be provided based on the Retirement Funds Integrator (RFI) software.

Tuesday, April 13, 2:00 pm. *The Fire Next Time*, by James Baldwin. Lori Dumas and Mike Pulsifer, members of the Inclusiveness and Diversity Committee, will discuss this short, best-selling book. Baldwin describes his experiences as a Black man with both Christianity and The Nation of Islam. He exhorts Americans, both Black and White, to turn away from the terrible legacy of racism and turn toward creating a multi-racial society of equals. Written almost sixty years ago, the essays in this book in some ways reveal how little progress has been made, yet still offer hopeful ways in which Americans still can achieve progress toward becoming "a more perfect union." Reading the book beforehand will be helpful, but is not necessary. Prior to the program, registrants will receive a selection of quotes from the book for consideration and discussion.



Hahnemann Hospital, 1898

Thursday, April 15, 1:00 pm. *From Minimal Dose to Maximal Height: A Philadelphia Medical Story.* Steven J. Peitzman, MD, is a partly-retired professor of medicine at Drexel University College of Medicine, where he teaches basic clinical skills, diseases of the kidney, and history of medicine. In recent years he has cultivated an amateur's interest in architecture and historic preservation. Dr. Peitzman will recount how German physician Samuel Hahnemann's alternative therapeutic system, known as homeopathy, gained immense popularity in the United States in the nineteenth century; it relied on the theory of the *similia* (minimal doses), and some nearly mystical processes. Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia was founded in 1848 to teach this new system in the United States. But by 1928, Hahnemann opened to the city and the world a nineteen-story hospital tower on North Broad Street—Gothic on the outside, high-tech inside. What became of the minimal dose?

Wednesday, April 21, 2:00 pm. *How Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected You?* It has been a year since we went into general lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Join us for a general discussion of participant experiences in dealing with the pandemic over the past year: how has your life changed, what were the challenges, and what new opportunities emerged? The program will be moderated by Mario Oropeza, with an introduction by Dr. Jay Pomerantz. Please note that we **will not** discuss the medical aspects of the virus or the current vaccination efforts.



Penn's Village Special Interest Groups

Several groups formed around common interests are currently active within our Village. At this time, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all groups meet via ZOOM. If you are interested in learning more about any of the groups, please email info@pennsvillage.org or telephone 215-925-7333.

Chat Group

Every other Tuesday 11:00 am – Noon

History Book Group

3rd Wednesday 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Intergenerational Book Group

4th Wednesday 4:30 – 5:30 pm

Men's Group

Mondays 10:30 am – Noon

Spanish Conversation Group

Mondays 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Support Group

1st Monday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Writers' Group

3rd Wednesday 11:00 – 12:30 pm

APRIL 2021 ~ Volunteer Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Sunrise 6:45 am Sunset 7:24 pm April Fools' Day	2 Good Friday	3
4 Easter	5	6	7	8 2:00 pm Reverse Mortgages Zoom	9	10
11	12 Ramadan Begins	13 2:00 pm James Baldwin Book Discussion Zoom	14	15 1:00 pm Hahnemann's Origins Zoom	16	17
18 National Volunteer Week Begins	19	20	21 2:00 pm COVID-19 Pandemic Impact Zoom	22 Earth Day	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Sunrise 6:02 am Sunset 7:53 pm Arbor Day	31

CALENDAR NOTES

April is the cruellest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing / Memory and desire, stirring / Dull roots with spring rain.

T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* 1922

According to former English Professor, Michael Austin, last April may have been the first in anyone's memory where these opening lines of T.S. Eliot's poem—written in the aftermath of the world-closing 1918 pandemic—made much sense.

In 2021, as hope is being rekindled with increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates, let us welcome this April with a newfound sense of *cautious optimism*.

On April 1, we are enjoying one hour and fifteen minutes more daylight than we did on March 1. Spring has sprung!



Photo courtesy of Margo Villanova

BOOK REVIEW

***A Promised Land*, by Barack Obama**

reviewed by Dick Levinson

Let's be honest. When I was offered the opportunity to review a 700-page book by the 44th President of the United States, my initial inclination was to offer the honor to someone else. Today, I'm pleased to report that I was wrong.

If you've ever wondered what it's like to live in the White House, attend an international summit meeting, or simply to face Vladimir Putin, one-on-one, this is the right book for you. As someone who was raised by a working single mother in a middle-class household, Obama has an instinctive understanding of the kind of detail for which average Americans are



hungry. He is an excellent guide to the rarified spaces in Washington and around the world that most of us are never going to enter.

He is also the kind of honest reporter who gradually earns our trust as readers. The President reports that the morning after he won the Nobel Peace Prize, the big news as far as his young daughters were concerned, was that their dog, Bo, was about to celebrate his birthday. Obama is an excellent companion because he has both an excellent sense of humor and a commitment to truth that includes his own mistakes.

President Obama had hoped to have cordial relations with a number of Senate Republicans, but this proved to

be an expensive illusion. Of Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Obama concludes that he would betray anyone to advance his career. Following weeks of fruitless negotiations with Iowa's Charles Grassley over the language of the Affordable Care Act, the President finally gets the crusty octogenarian to admit that he would never support the bill no matter what compromises the administration was prepared to offer.

As most readers know, Obama is an old hand at speaking to—and pleasing—readers. This after all, is his third book. He is quite good at providing brief, but memorable portraits of the people he encounters, both high and low. His memories of the past are undiminished, and he openly enjoys the many small pleasures that life offers.

Joe McCarthy Philadelphia Free-Library Lecture Series Continues

The Free Library series, *Trust No One: Joe McCarthy and the Politics of Fear*, continues with two new Zoom lectures in April and a final Zoom program on the second Monday in May.

Wednesday, April 7 at 7:30 pm.

Prize-winning biographer Dr. David Nasaw will discuss "Dangerous Friends: How the Friendship Between McCarthy and the Kennedys Blighted the Lives of John and Robert Kennedy." Dr. Nasaw has written the definitive biog-

raphies of William Randolph Hearst and Joseph P. Kennedy; he recently published a book about the plight of displaced persons during World War II and the Cold War. [Click here](#) for more information and to make reservations.

Wednesday, April 28 at 7:30 pm.

Arcadia University Professor, Dr. Peter Siskind, will discuss "Death by a Thousand Cuts: How a Broken Promise Destroyed Joe McCarthy." Dr. Siskind is an expert on 20th-century American

politics and the rise of the suburbs. [Click here](#) for more information and to make reservations.

Monday, May 10 at 7:30 P.M. *Vanity Fair* contributing writer, Marie Brenner, will discuss "The Strange Afterlife of Roy Cohn." Brenner has succeeded in turning so many of her feature articles into movies that she is now also working as a Hollywood producer. [Click here](#) for more information and to make reservations.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Marketing and Communications

Member Communications Research

An *Ad Hoc* Committee was formed last November to look at Penn's Village communications with our members and other constituency groups. Committee members included Molly Clifford, Sherrill Cresdee, Kristin Davidson, Jane Eleey, Stephanie Grupe, Mindy Mozenter, Donna Murphy, Mario Oropeza, and Marianne Waller.

In January, we conducted a survey to provide data to guide our communications strategy to achieve our goals and meet the needs of our membership and friends. Eighty-eight PV members and thirty nonmembers responded to the survey. Results indicated that respondents prefer communication via email and *The Village View* newsletter, followed by the website and program announcements, with less preference expressed for social media and our blog. Most respondents indicated that they use either a computer or a laptop to learn about programs and services and that the frequency of our communications seemed to be appropriate.

The Marketing and Communications Committee will continue to address how to most effectively leverage communications to build community and

build support and awareness among donors and sponsors.



Social Media Update

In a time of social distancing, it's never been more important to stay connected, and one of the best ways to do that is through the Penn's Village social media channels.

We're currently refreshing our social media pages so that we can keep you current on all the latest member updates, volunteer news, event programming and relevant happenings. If you haven't done so already, please take a moment to follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) and help us grow the Penn's Village community. Think of it as a great way to socialize from a safe distance.

If you are unfamiliar with some of these social media, watch for an announcement for a Zoom program we are planning for later this spring. Our new summer intern, Jailyn Diaz, will help us understand how to navigate these platforms.

Are you on the Annual Mail-in Pennsylvania Voting List?

If you voted by mail last year, you should have been mailed a new application to do it again this year. You will have received the application IF you checked the "Yes" box to the following question on last year's application form: "Would [you] like to apply to receive mail-in ballots for the remainder of this year and would [you] like to automatically receive an annual application for mail-in ballots each year?" Checking "Yes" put you on the Annual Mail-in Voting List. Not sure if you're on the list? Check online.

If you do want to vote by mail again in 2021, you must reapply: Do it online! (Processing online applications is easier and cheaper for election staff than dealing with paper.) The application deadline for the May 18 primary is May 11.

Note: You can cancel your Annual Mail-In status, but you have to download a form that must then be delivered to your local election office.

I very quietly confided to my best friend that I was having an affair.

She turned to me and asked, "Are you having it catered?"

And that, my friend, is the definition of old.

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Please support all our business members. See www.pennsvillage.org for a complete list.



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