

THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JANE ELEEY



Dear Members and Friends,

April is National Volunteer Month—thirty days dedicated to the recognition of the vital importance of volunteering. At Penn's Village, we value the importance of volunteerism every day, day in and day out, throughout the year—it is, quite simply, our lifeblood.

Our Volunteers—more than one hundred of them—are at the heart of Penn's Village services, programs, and activities. An eclectic and diverse group, about half of them joined Penn's Village because they were looking for an opportunity to serve in a meaningful way. The other half comprises folks who joined Penn's Village as dues-paying Villagers and Neighbors who needed our services and discovered that they wanted to give back and increase their Village involvement by donating their time and talents where they could.

If Penn's Village were a place, you would see a veritable beehive of volunteer activity. Imagine the folks, the time, and the effort involved to arrange for rides to/from medical appointments; arrange for rides to/from the grocery; pick up, drive, and drop off a passenger; grocery shop; plan, promote, and present timely, entertaining programs; record programs; support the PV website with content and design updates; post on our social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube; write, edit, proofread, and publish *The Village View* (the PV monthly newsletter); arrange for a volunteer to make small home repairs; actually make those small home repairs; chair four different committees; attend monthly committee meetings; plan and manage events, parties, and celebrations; brainstorm, develop, and implement fundraising strategies and campaigns; participate on task forces such as succession planning, strategic planning, and business-sponsor recruitment; provide computer/mobile phone trouble-shooting and advice; spend quality time with a Villager or Neighbor; form and convene new interest groups; facilitate a group; run errands; and sometimes, even more.

With no volunteers, there would be no rides to appointments, no programs (Zoom or otherwise); no tech support, no grocery shopping, no companions, no interest groups, no Blog posts.... With no volunteers, there would be no Penn's Village!

In my March *Village View* column, I repeated the amazing Townhall news that in 2021 our 100+ volunteers donated 8,800 hours of service, valued at \$240,000. Now, as we think about all that those volunteers do, the amount seems realistic. And, as impressive as the \$240,000 is, the value of that service to our Villagers and Neighbors may well be priceless!

Are we grateful every day for our Volunteers and for all that they do?

You bet we are!

Jane

Save The Date!

**The Penn's Village
Annual Garden Party**

JUNE 1

(Rain Date June 2)

*The Academy of Vocal Arts
Garden*

1920 Spruce Street

*We are planning to return
in person
to the AVA's lovely garden.*

*We hope you
will join us!*

Follow us on social media:



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To become a member or to volunteer, visit www.pennsvillage.org

Do you know that talking about Penn's Village to family, friends, and strangers is the best way to grow Penn's Village?

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INTRODUCING

Avalie Saperstein

by Sandra Sokol



Right now, there is a special joy in Avalie Saperstein's life, which must overshadow all else. Very recently, Avalie became a grandmother to her first grandchildren. She now has two tiny, precious twin baby boys to dote on! What's more, the twins and their parents live only three blocks away from Avalie's home. Congratulations, Avalie, on this wonderful addition to your family—enjoy every minute!

As was the case for many children of the 60s, Avalie's goal in life was always to do good for others, to make a difference, and to improve the world. As it turned out, she had huge success as she travelled along that trail. After leaving the safe haven of her childhood suburban home in Pittsburgh, Avalie discovered the importance of community during the time she was earning her graduate degree in social work in Seattle and then, post-graduation, in Philadelphia as she began her career. Her passion for serving the community forged a career that really did make a difference for countless people.

Along the way, as Avalie married and became a mother, she continued to give back to the community. She was instrumental in building, improving, and creating many wonderful community services through various local organizations. At the Philadelphia Geriatric Center, she was involved in social behavioral research. With the results of these research projects, she

developed innovative community and residential programs, such as in-home services, dementia care, caregiver services, adult day care, housing and therapeutic housing design, and more for Philadelphia seniors and their families. Key programs were adopted by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging and, soon after, were state legislated throughout Pennsylvania. These groundbreaking programs transformed many lives.

Penn's Village is the latest organization to have been lucky enough to entice Avalie Saperstein into helping develop it through its fledging status. In the early days, along with Pat Harner, Janet Burnham, Karen Lynch, Kristin Davidson, and others, the team worked on creating a clear mission, vision, and structure, while gaining outside funding. The mission and vision have endured to this day and the community of seniors in central Philadelphia and the adjacent neighborhoods benefits greatly from all the programming and services designed to make aging in place a possibility. Penn's Village owes a great deal of its success to this dedicated team!

Avalie's dedication to Penn's Village continues as a generous volunteer and contributor. She is a board member and co-chairs strategic planning. Currently, she is working on a member-satisfaction survey that will inform our strategic-planning process. Be sure to respond when you are contacted, in the very near future, to complete the survey.

Penn's Village welcomes and actively encourages an inclusive and diverse community of members, staff, Board of Directors and volunteers. Inclusiveness and diversity mean welcoming all and excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-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.

ALL AROUND TOWN

Daylight saving. Warmer weather. Exciting new events—indoors and outside. Who could ask for anything more?!

Kimmel Cultural Campus. Free events in the Plaza that suit every need: Lunchtime Unplugged, from 11:00 am-1:00 pm on April 1 and 22; Happy Hour Sessions, from 4:00 pm-7:00 pm on April 15; Nightlife, from 8:00 pm to 10:30 pm on April 11 and 20. www.KimmelCulturalCampus.org/InThePlaza.



The Clay Studio opens its new building and exhibition this month. Grand opening and ribbon-cutting is Saturday, April 9, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. On Saturday, April 23, the inaugural exhibition of *Making Place Matters* opens, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. 1425 N. American Street. www.the-claystudio.org.



Temple University, Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, *The Quest for Freedom and Dignity: Celebrating William Still and Harriet Tubman*. The exhibition tells the story of the courageous partnership between Still and Tubman to help enslaved people make their way to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Sullivan Hall, 1330 W. Polett Walk, through June 30. To arrange a visit, contact collection librarian Aslaku Berhanu. aberhanu@temple.edu or 215-204-4723.



Mural Arts Philadelphia. Take a guided tour and get to know Philadelphia's stunning mural collection. Celebrating their fortieth birthday, Mural Arts Philadelphia offers new neighborhood tours in Center City West (April 2 and 24) and South Philadelphia (April 3 and 30). Self-guided tours are accessible on your cell phone. Each tour lasts 90 minutes and begins at 2:00 pm. [Tours - Mural Arts Philadelphia](#) [Mural Arts Philadelphia](#).

BOOK REVIEW

***The Greater Journey* by David McCullough**

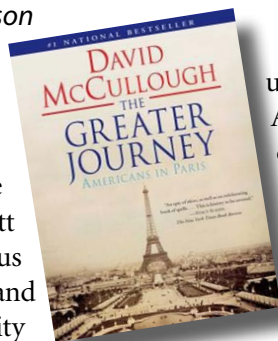
reviewed by Dick Levinson

Any mention of Americans in Paris always brings to mind the same scene. We imagine Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, and numerous other writers, painters, and wits, who made “The City of Light” their headquarters for a portion of the 1920s. However, as the eminent American historian, David McCullough, notes in this hugely entertaining book, Americans have been converging on Paris as a center of education, entertainment, and pleasure since the 1830s.

Among those who truly “found themselves” in Paris were James Fenimore Cooper, the first American writer to become an international celebrity; Samuel F.B. Morse, the great portrait painter, who invented the telegraph; and Charles Sumner, the radical Republican U.S. Senator and abolitionist, who was nearly caned to death by a congressman from the South.

As a young lawyer enjoying himself in Paris, Sumner had never given any thought to the terrible hatred and prejudice confronting Black people at home. However, when he became aware that Black students at the Sorbonne, the most elite university in France, performed as well as any of their classmates and enjoyed complete social equality with them, Sumner could never forget the cruel and artificial barriers that prevented African-Americans at home from reaching their true potential. He would devote the balance of his life to destroying as many of these barriers as he could.

Although the early 19th century may be foreign territory for many of today's readers, McCullough does a wonderful job of bringing this period to life for



us. When preparing to go abroad, Americans would, prior to their departure, make a special point of visiting all the relatives and friends that they loved—after all, they might never see them again! If the traveler was also a parent, it was customary to leave letters, up to thirty pages long, that focused on advice, moral instruction, and inspiration for children or grandchildren.

For those who made it to Paris, there were constant reminders that they had left Boston or Philadelphia far behind. American women were stunned by the sophisticated fashion sense of their French sisters. Museums and cultural institutions attracted huge audiences of every class and station, which was not the situation at home. Americans gasped when confronted by the naked bodies of those who had perished in the Seine overnight. While a few were murder victims, many more had used the iconic river to commit suicide. French authorities displayed these bodies outside the central morgue for several days, hoping that someone would claim these unfortunate souls.

Simply eating in Paris was a new experience for many Americans. At home, many boys and men simply devoured their food, paying little attention to what was set before them. In France, to paraphrase William F. Buckley, Jr., food was a luxury that could be enjoyed three times a day. Food was designed to be savored—and the subtle blend of sauces and spices often sparked discussion and debate.

This incredible book constitutes a wonderful feast for the mind. If it has been some time since you last saw Paris, you may decide that, given what we've all endured recently, Paris may be the best possible destination.

Two New Penn's Village Interest Groups

Penn's Village Walkers: As Spring springs, a group of members is gathering information on their shared interest in getting outside and walking. Walking has great health benefits for everyone, but especially for our generation. And what better way to meet new people and make new friends? We are exploring a wide range of possibilities—walking in small groups, walking with a partner, walking the dog, long walks, short walks, rigorous walks, ambles, walks to a coffee shop, and walks around the block. The goal is to create an independent, self-managed group that connects PV members with similar interests and encourages outside exercise to fit each person's needs. If you would like more information or are interested in being added to the group, please send an email to the attention of Sandra Sokol at info@pennsvillage.org.



Short-Story Discussion Group: The Penn's Village Short-Story Discussion Group held its inaugural meeting on March 23 to discuss Eudora Welty's “A Worn Path.” The group's purpose is to enjoy and learn from monthly discussions of finely crafted short

stories. Meetings are taking place via Zoom until vaccinated group members are comfortable meeting in person. If you would like more information or



would like to join the group, please send an email to mollyclifford@pennsvillage.org.

APRIL PROGRAMS

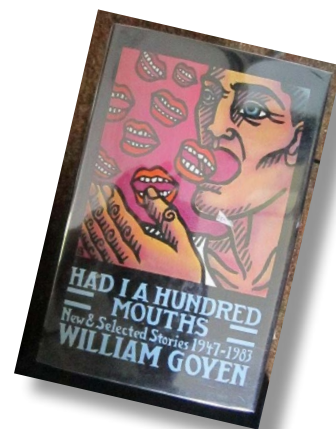
The Program Committee, under the leadership of Mario Oropeza, announces the schedule of programs for April. Registration is required, and you can register on the Penn's Village website or by emailing info@pennsvillage.org or telephoning 215-925-7333. Check the PV website and your email for updated information and/or newly scheduled program additions. All programs are offered as Zoom Teleconferences; members who register will be sent Zoom login information a day or so before the event.

Friday, April 8, 11:00 am. *Let's Talk: TED Talks with Group Discussion.* Maggie Schramm will host this month's TED Talk, beginning with a TED video presentation, followed by a facilitated discussion. The topic is *The Power of Vulnerability* by Brene Brown (June 2010).










Tuesday, April 19, 2:00 pm. *Do-It-Yourself Balance Screening.* Mide Babalola, Assistant Clinic Director at Excel Physical Therapy, will describe an app developed to allow users to self-screen for problems with balance and falling. The app, for phones and/or tablets, provides information on how to identify the potential for falls, along with tips on how to avoid them.

Wednesday, April 20, 7:00 pm. *Penn's Village Reads.* Penn's Village member, Polly McIntyre, will read "The Texas Princess" selected from *Had I a Hundred Mouths* by William Goyen. In the story, a woman struggles to explain how she inherited a Venetian palazzo, describing an improbable friend of hers—the titular figure—who had more money than taste, but a knack for ensuring everyone had a good time. Just as telling are the narrator's self-interruptions and digressive asides.



Friday, April 29, 2:00 pm. *Reflections on Culture and Growing Up in Haiti and New York.* Pierre M. Lubin, PhD, McGill University lecturer, author, international educator, and senior consultant to Breaking the Cycle Consulting Services, will discuss past and current events in Haiti where he grew up before moving to the Bronx. The discussion will also focus on Haitian culture.

APRIL 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<div>1</div> <div>New Moon</div> <div></div> <div>See CALENDAR NOTES on next page.</div>	<div>2</div>
<div>3</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div>	<div>8</div> <div>11:00am TED Talk Zoom</div>	<div>9</div>
<div>10</div> <div></div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div>	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div>	<div>15</div> <div></div> <div>Passover Begins Good Friday</div> <div></div>	<div>16</div>
<div>17</div> <div>Easter</div> <div></div>	<div>18</div>	<div>19</div> <div>2:00 pm Balance Screening Zoom</div>	<div>20</div> <div>7:00 pm PV Reads Zoom</div>	<div>21</div>	<div>22</div>	<div>23</div>
<div>24</div>	<div>25</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div> <div>HOLOCAUST Remembrance Day</div> <div></div>	<div>28</div>	<div>29</div> <div>2:00 pm Haiti and New York Zoom</div>	<div>30</div> <div>New Moon</div> <div></div> <div>See CALENDAR NOTES on next page.</div>
<div>31</div>						

CALENDAR NOTES



New Moon

Moon marks the beginning of a lunar cycle, which lasts about 29.5 days as the Moon orbits the earth.

April skies feature a fairly uncommon phenomenon—two “new” Moons occurring in one month. A new

But we probably won’t be able to see either of the new Moons this April, for a couple of reasons. First, when the Moon is new, we see the side not being illuminated by the Sun, so in the dark sky it may not be visible to the naked eye. And, second, because a new Moon rises and sets around the same time as the Sun, it crosses the sky during the day and often gets lost in the Sun’s glare.

This April, there will be two “new” moons, one on April 1 and the second on April 30.

This occurrence should not be confused with the Blue Moon, which is the name given to the second full moon to appear within a month.

The next Blue Moon will occur in August 2023.

Read more on [Almanac.com](https://www.almanac.com)

VOICES FROM THE VILLAGE

Pedestrian Pain

by Bill Double



Bill Double

Philadelphia is widely recognized as a “walkable” city. *SMARTERTRAVEL* recently rated it the nation’s fourth most walkable, lauding

our convenient historic districts and 10,000 acres of green space. Having trod Philly sidewalks since I was a Temple undergrad, I heartily agree.

Lately, however, walking in center city has become a more fraught experience. Let’s consider three sources of pedestrian angst: (1) aggressive driving abetted by a lack of enforcement, (2) the proliferation of careless bikers on city sidewalks, and (3) the city’s failure to treat pedestrian safety as a legitimate concern.

The recent spike in dangerous driving is not unique to Philadelphia. “Chaos on the roads,” *The Week* opined, “is a national problem, fueled by a growing disregard of safe driving practices.” Philadelphia recorded a stunning sixty-nine percent rise in pedestrian fatalities between 2019 and 2020 (twenty-nine to forty-nine), according to PennDOT.

Many drivers here regard stop signals as optional. At busy intersections, at least one vehicle or heedless bicyclist

is likely to run the red light. While crossing, a prudent walker must also contend with turning vehicles challenging his or her right of way. Assuming the motorist will yield could prove fatal.

In my years as a “foot-soldier,” I have never witnessed an offender being cited. I realize the police are stretched thin; hopefully, they are pursuing more serious matters. The bottom line: traffic enforcement is rare in center city.

While I applaud the city for promoting bicycle use, the popularity of two-wheeled transit has a downside: more careless bicyclers on sidewalks. Their common infractions—speeding, failing to signal when passing, and night-riding sans headlights—endanger pedestrians, especially the elderly and infirm. Penalties are sorely needed for careless biking. E-bikes and motorized scooters, the latest pedestrian menace, should be banned from sidewalks.

Other failures to prioritize pedestrian safety in Philadelphia are woefully obvious. Construction sites routinely preempt sidewalks, often illegally. Impossibly short crossing lights speed traffic while forcing walkers to literally run for their lives. A lack of standards for COVID-inspired “streeteries”

has resulted in dangerous sidewalk obstructions. Finally, pedestrians are imperiled daily by the abysmal condition of many streets and sidewalks

Two recent initiatives promise possible relief for the harried pedestrian. The Redlight Camera program reduces traffic violations, the Parking Authority reports, but its rollout has been slow. Thirty-two cameras had been installed by 2021, but only three of them were in center city. The city is also preparing to launch the Public Safety Enforcement Officer corps approved by voters in 2019. Officers will support the police in regulating traffic flow, although their specific duties have not been stipulated.

~ IN MEMORIAM ~

March 2022

John Politis

May His Memory Be a Blessing



Social Media and Penn's Village

by Harriette Mishkin

Love it or hate it, social media is a form of publicity that helps Penn's Village get the word out to a wider audience about our programs, services, newsletters and blogs. You hear about social-media platforms every day in print media and on TV, especially Facebook and Twitter. There's also Instagram, LinkedIn, and others. Each platform has a unique audience and focus.

Penn's Village has an account on many of these platforms. If you already have a personal account on a platform, all you need to do is click on the icon above the Table of Contents on page 1 to read our posts on that platform.

For several years, Penn's Village sporadically posted program announce-

ments on these social media platforms, but in the past year, we've significantly ratcheted up our activities with the help of several summer interns and an ad hoc social media subcommittee of the Marketing and Communications Committee. The results? Greater awareness and increased interest in Penn's Village. Hundreds of people have viewed our recent program posts.

Now, we not only invite you to join with us in subscribing to these platforms, but also hope that you will invite your children, grandchildren, and neighbors to look for us on social media and "like" and "share" what WE do and YOU do with us to *connect, engage, and thrive!*

News From the Medicare Team

More Free COVID-19 Tests

If you have already ordered four no-cost, at-home COVID-19 tests from [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov), now you can get **four more at-home tests shipped to you at no charge.**

Visit [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov) again to place your second order. As before, just enter your name and mailing address (you can also give your email address if you want status updates on your order).

If you haven't yet ordered any at-home tests, you can get a total of eight (8) tests shipped to your home. You'll just have to place two (2) separate orders — each order is for four (4) tests.

A Penn's Village Community Blog Preview



Last month, we landed in Uzbekistan with our international traveler and blogger, Clare Novak. This month, you are invited to join her for the culmination of her Uzbekistan adventure as she spends a day in fabulous Samarkand, a silk-road city, considered to be the jewel of Uzbekistan.

Discover the many surprises that were packed into that day as she explored Registan, a complex of three madrasahs around a central courtyard, and the mausoleums of the 14th-century Amir Timur dynasty—all with a driver who spoke no English.

Join Clare by selecting Community from the Blogs menu on the Welcome page of pennsvillage.org.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

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To us, it's personal

