



The Eastside
Village VOICE

December 2020



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Eastside Village Grows*

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EVEN DURING COVID-19, EASTSIDE VILLAGE GROWS!

Many of us longtime Eastside Villagers miss the easy camaraderie of our pre-pandemic activities: the potlucks, movie dates, Ted Talk Lunches, walks with friends, the easy gatherings over coffee and croissants. Even as we recognize the necessity of our Zoom interactions, we feel short-changed and deprived.

And feeling this way, we might wonder why anyone would want to join our ranks now? What would motivate someone to become part of our Village during such a perilous time?

EV members Marnie McPhee and Carlotta Richard set out to solve the mystery. Here is what they found.

Eastside Village has welcomed **14** new members so far this year. What a time to join Eastside Village! As these new EVers attest, despite the pandemic, we resilient EVers have kept our Village relevant, interesting, useful, and fun.

Eleven of these new members told us why they joined EV and what it means to them, COVID-19 be damned: Ruth Bolliger, Jackie Lemieux, Zelda Lowery, Mickie and Gerry MacNeill, Joan Murphy Cremer, Mark Oshin, Roy Porter, Merry Reed, Marjie Takei, and Kaye Veldhuisen. We welcome them to Eastside Village and thank them for speaking with us.

How has EV affected you so far, especially during COVID19?

Some new members were very vocal about how



Kaye Veldhuisen



Jackie Lemieux

helpful EV has been during this stressful time, with its isolation and lockdown restrictions. Jackie said, "EV has provided a link to others, a way to reach out to others. Because of the pandemic, my other social contacts are limited, and this has been a wonderful opportunity to meet other people." Mickie and Gerry stated, "We've been so grateful that people have called to check in on us and ask if we need any help."

Kaye said that finding a walking companion through EV was a "big plus" and even encouraged her to walk more on her own. She said, "I can't wait to tell my doctor."

For new members who are also new to Portland, EV has been especially helpful. Marjie told us, "Since I'm new here, I don't know whom to call for help. I'm so grateful that EV has vetted service providers.

I've [also] gotten [EV

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volunteer] help with three projects. In all cases, the process was so great. I just called or emailed the office and Jenny asked, 'When would you like someone there?' They arrived promptly! I'm sure that the money I saved from that help already exceeds the value of my EV membership."

How did you hear about Eastside Village?

Most new members said they had learned about EV from friends and family members; EV informational sessions often convinced them to join.

Ruth and her partner, Joe Hickerson, attended an EV info session a few years ago. While Joe joined immediately, Ruth felt she didn't yet need EV services. "That changed on March 11, when Joe and I learned about COVID," she explained. "He gave me a full-service membership on my birthday, March 18. I'm so glad he did."

Jackie's story is similar. An article about EV in *The Oregonian* intrigued her and her husband but they didn't sign up right away. After he died in January, Jackie said, "The imposed isolation



Merry Reed



Joan Murphy



Roy Porter

[due to COVID] and the loss of my life partner spurred me to join. I attended an info meeting and became a member the next day."

Mickie and Gerry also were drawn to EV through a presentation they attended two years after moving to Portland from Rhode Island. "The presenters, Anne-Marie and Lucien Dallaire, are from Connecticut, and we had fun discussing New England with them," Mickie said. "We joined on my birthday, February 26. I was the 100th EV member!" *[Editor's note: See their profile in the August 2020 issue of this Newsletter.]*

Marjie and her husband learned about EV five years ago, soon after they relocated to Portland from Yachats, a small town on the central Oregon coast. Recently, Marjie had to move her husband to a memory-care facility; she joined EV soon after.

What do you hope to gain from your EV membership?

Most new members said their top reason was to meet new and diverse people. As Joan put it, "I'd hoped to find people to share eating out, movies, and theater, and get

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to know someone who speaks French, because I'm fluent." Merry noted, "I truly enjoy people and learning their thoughts, opinions, and life stories." Kaye said, "I needed to increase my dwindling number of friends and ramp up my social involvement."

Several interviewees were drawn to EV's services to help them live independently and stay safe during COVID.

Marjie, an active volunteer, anticipated that EV would help her "make a contribution to the community." She's already picked up and delivered a member's UPS packages and looks forward to more opportunities to serve EV members.

Which EV activities/services have you participated in? Are you interested in trying others?

Although COVID has limited in-person get-togethers, new members are enjoying EV's diverse activities, including virtual book groups, the Climate Crisis Crew, coffee hours and happy hours, men's lunches, and meetings of their neighborhood circle. Kaye hopes to become active in a



Gerry MacNeill



Zelda Lowery



Marjorie Takei

book group and Friday coffees "after I'm Zoom-ready."

Jackie said she'll join the cycling group and begin volunteering as soon as she recovers from a recent knee injury. About half of the members we talked to mentioned the pandemic as the reason they have not participated in EV activities.

One new member said she had participated in some online activities but was discouraged by the lack of personal contact. Among those who had not participated are members who do not do email or Zoom.

Like all of us, our new members are looking forward to life after COVID. For Jackie, that means joining or creating a hiking/camping group. Mickie and Zelda are eager to play games such as mahjong and buncó. Joan anticipates being able to share meals, movies, and theater.

As for services, Ruth is grateful that Evers have bought and replaced her watch batteries, fixed timers on lights, and brought her groceries. Jenny did those last two. She adds that, "I also had a wonderful gardening person come and weed; dig up some dock;

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LET'S SPREAD SOME "EV" HOLIDAY CHEER

EV Members Jim Houser and Liz Dally write of the fun they had a couple Christmases ago. At that time, they still owned and operated their longtime business, Hawthorne Auto Clinic. See the article on p. 11 for more information on how you can participate this year.

In early December 2018, EV activist Cary Hixon reached out to Liz and me with a request to participate in a Hixon/Paluso family tradition. Kelly Paluso, one of Cary's daughters is a caseworker at the Oregon Department of Human Resources and the family tradition is to recruit sponsors for foster family holiday gift-giving.

I will quote a snippet from our introduction with Kelly, so that you get a sense of how the project lays out:

"I am giving you guys a foster family that has taken in two sets of siblings in order to keep them together. The family consists of the two parents and their college-age child who moved back home to help out. They have two teenagers that are siblings and then three younger siblings. They also recently took in a baby because DHS is so desperate for placements.

"You don't have to get everything on the list, but if each child could at least get *one* thing that would be great. I wanted to make sure there were options

available. I am also including some requests of the caretakers (foster parents and adult child) since they often aren't covered in any of these requests. Again, no pressure, just letting you know.

"Wrapping is completely optional. If you decide to wrap, they do need to be labeled with the initials I provided. Thanks again."

So that all our staff could participate, Liz and I asked each of our employees to choose a family member. We recommended a budget amount for each family member (paid for by our business). All of our staff

enthusiastically became involved.

Liz and I chose the foster parents and eldest daughter and did our shopping at the Columbia Sportswear Outlet Store in Sellwood.

When all the gifts were wrapped

and assembled, we delivered everything to the DHS office near Lloyd Center.

To quote from Kelly's email to us following the holiday season: "I wanted to thank you again for supporting a foster family for the holidays. I heard back from your family that they were in tears on Christmas over the donations and support of their family. It has been a rough year for them, and they really appreciated the support. So thank you!"

*By Jim Houser and Liz Dally
EV Members*



It's A WIN-WIN: HELPING EASTSIDE VILLAGE CAN HELP YOUR BOTTOM LINE, TOO.

Year's end is a traditional time for making charitable donations, as evidenced by the pleading letters flooding our mailboxes these days. And there certainly is no shortage of worthy causes, what with rampant wildfires, rising numbers of COVID-19 cases, racial injustice, and much more.

With so many causes and organizations vying for our attention, it might be easy to overlook one that's very close at hand: Eastside Village, of course!

EV is currently able to cover its expenses primarily through membership revenue. But as we grow, we'll want to expand support for our low-income neighbors, fund our office manager to work five days/week instead of her current four, and lay a better foundation for our long-term sustainability. Your donation will help greatly.

This year is a particularly good one for donors: thanks to \$2,000 in matching funds, your gifts will go twice as far!

Did you know that you can reduce your taxable income by making a donation from your IRA? If you pay taxes on

a portion of your Social Security benefits, such gifts might also lower the level of your taxable income.

Choose the amount you'd like to donate from your IRA—a portion or all of a distribution—and ask your financial manager to make the gift for you. To

villagesnw.org or call 503-515-1948.

Shop at Fred Meyer and Help EV, Too!

If you have a Fred Meyer Shopper's Card, you can link it to Eastside Village: you'll continue to get your discounts and EV gets a



be counted for the 2020 tax year, distributions must be transferred to Eastside Village by December 31st.

Checks should be made out to "Villages NW fbo Eastside Village" and mailed to Eastside Village, 3915 SE Steele St., Portland OR 97202.

If you have any questions, please contact Villages NW at info@

little something, too.

Just sign into your FM account online, click on "My Account" under your name in the upper right corner, then choose "Community Rewards" from the list on the left. In the "Find an Organization" box, enter "KG758" to bring up the box for Eastside Village. Click on "Enroll" and you're in!

HEADS UP, BOOK LOVERS!

Greetings, fellow EV book lovers! If you're currently a Book Group member — or if you'd like to be one next year — please join us for a special Zoom meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 8, at 10 am.

Please come prepared with the title, author, and a short description of no more than three books that you've already read. These can be a tried-and-true classic or one fresh off the best-seller lists. You will have two minutes to "pitch" your choices to the rest of us.

And yes, we know that there will be a lot of people on that Zoom call, but only one person will be speaking at a time, so it should be manageable.

Whether you can attend this meeting or not, please email your three recommendations



(including the title, author, and a short description of each) to Phyllis Wishnie and Judy Ringenson by Dec. 10th. They'll gather them all into a single document and mail it out to everyone by Dec. 12th.

Now comes the hard part: You will need to look the list over carefully, choose the 11 books that you would most like to read, and email those 11 titles to Phyllis and Judy by Dec. 14th.

The top 11 vote-getters will form the 2021 Book Group schedule, which will be published in the January EV Newsletter.

So review your reading lists, check your shelves, and dive deep into your memories to find those three books you know we will all love as much as you do!

HELP WANTED: ZOOM FACILITATOR

Eastside Village is looking for a Member or Volunteer to facilitate the bi-monthly Current Events Luncheons, held every other Tuesday, from 12-2 pm. No special tech skills are required, although you must be set up to participate in Zoom calls yourself.

Duties include opening up the meeting, admitting participants as they arrive, and closing the meeting at its conclusion.

Please contact Judy Ringenson if you would like to help the Village in this way.

EV READS: “THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER”

Eastside Village’s own Ellen Howard will be reading Barbara Robinson’s humorous short novel, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,” in three installments this month.

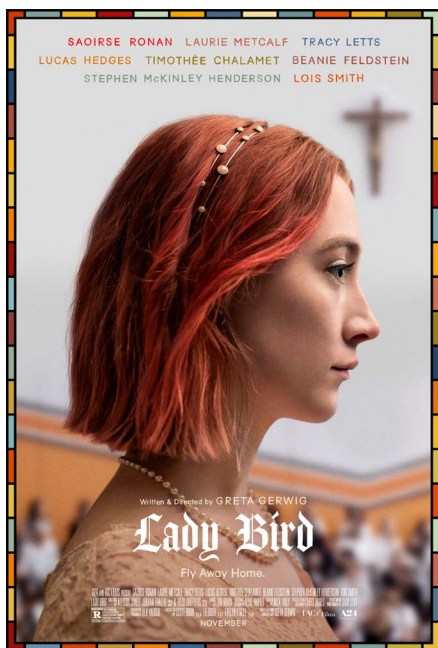
A delightful exercise in bad manners, poor behavior, poignant revelations, and universal truths, Robinson’s book is the story of a traditional event that is given new life when the incorrigible Herdman children get involved. Ellen’s reading promises to bring Robinson’s characters—with all their flaws—to life.

Check the Calendar at the EV website for further details. You won’t want to miss this!



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EV GOES TO THE MOVIES... DURING COVID!



Like many of us, Jin Darney missed going to the movies with her Eastside Village buddies. Sure, she could have watched any number of films by herself or with her husband, Craig Johnson. But she decided that that wasn’t enough, and with that, the “EV Movie Club” was born!

For their inaugural meeting, members were encouraged to watch “Lady Bird,” an award-winning film written and directed by Greta Gerwig, about a fiercely independent Sacramento teen. The film was available on Kanopy (a Multnomah County Library affiliate service) as well as Netflix. Future films will also widely available.

Gathering over Zoom rather than their preferred restaurant tables, EV movie fans discussed Gerwig’s movie with gusto.

Contact Jin Darney to get on the mailing list and check the online EV Calendar for future showings.

Online

AUCTION

Eastside Village is holding a pre-holiday fundraiser auction on Dec. 5th. Our amazing volunteers and staff have gathered a variety of fun donated items to create over 30 spectacular auction packages. We hope you will bid on these packages *and* spread the word to your friends and family that they can find some wonderful Holiday gifts there, too.

What sorts of things can you look forward to? There's our "Home Cookin'" package, which includes six jars of homemade jam, a certificate for two homemade soup deliveries, and six tea towels—all housed in a Revere Ware soup pot.

And who could resist our "Sweets for the Sweet" package, with a generous gift certificate to Papa Haydn and a bottle of Bogle Vineyards Pinot Noir?

Or maybe you'd prefer the "Beer Ye, Beer Ye!" package with bread, beer, and a gift certificate to one of several local McMenamins.

Wine, handmade items, personalized family genealogies, lessons in Chinese and knitting... We've got it all!

What a perfect way to find great holiday gifts without ever leaving home.

Here's how it will work: (Don't worry; if you need help with any of this, the Auction Team will be standing by on the day of the event to assist you.)

Jenny Rockwood, from the EV office, will send an email to all Eastside Village members, volunteers, and our non-member database on December 5th that will include a link to the auction site, which will be "live" from 9 am to 9 pm. Members are encouraged to forward Jenny's email to any friends and family who might have an interest in the auction.

Each package will have a minimum bid as well as a "Buy It Now" option which will lock in the winner of that item. EV will notify package winners following the event and arrange for pickup/delivery. Payment for purchases will be made when packages are retrieved/delivered.

Please help us reach our maximum audience by spreading the word to family and friends NOW.

See you on Dec. 5th, from 9 am to 9 pm!

Continued from p. 5.

and pick up some gravel for me and spread it over an area that was full of weeds, collecting water, and obstructing the gate so it didn't open. Problems solved! I must add that Jenny is fabulous! She's personable, talented, available, patient, and clear."

Would you recommend EV to a friend based on your experiences so far?

Our new members were almost unanimous in saying that they would recommend EV to a friend. Roy told us, "I'm impressed with the goals of



Mickie MacNeill

EV and have recommended it to friends and to my [Oregon Project Independence] case manager." Merry said, "I have been talking up the concept of Villages for years, so of course I would recommend it to others."

Jackie summed it up nicely: "I have recommended EV and other Villages under the Village to Village (national) network to a number of friends. It is a wonderful way to connect with others, in a world that is increasingly isolated, even without the pandemic."

*By Marnie McPhee
and Carlotta Richard*

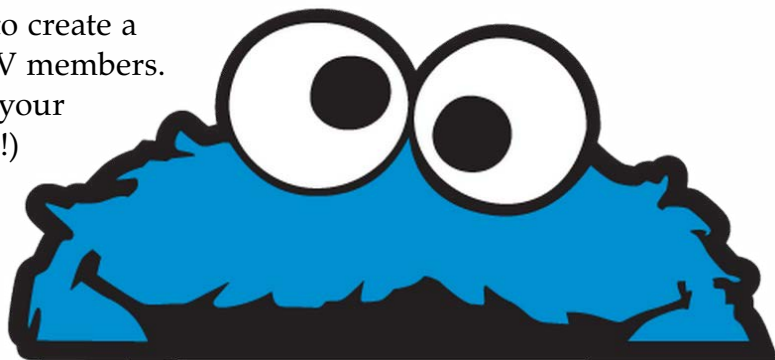
The friendships, camaraderie, and support of Eastside Village might be just what you've been looking for. Reading this newsletter is the first step. When you're ready to take the next one, we encourage you to come to one of our monthly EV Info Sessions. (Check with the office for the details.) Like our newest members, you'll be glad that you did.

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COOOOOOOKIES!!

Because the Book Group won't be holding its usual holiday cookie exchange this year, EV Member Wendy Orloff thought it might be nice to create a Holiday Cookie Recipe Booklet for *all* EV members. If you'd like to take part, just email her your favorite (and maybe second favorite, too!) holiday cookie or treat recipes. Please make sure to get them to her no later than Dec. 9th for them to be included in the booklet.

Happy holiday baking, everyone!



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EASTSIDE VILLAGE? THE CIRCLE OF REPRESENTATIVES IS FOR YOU

Lee Lancaster is a member of the EV Council and is also one of our two representatives to the Circle of Representatives (COR). The second position is coming open next month. We asked Lee to help us understand what the COR is and why it's so important.

The Circle of Representatives is a monthly get together to talk about this network of villages that is Villages NW (VNW). The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that each Village signs expands on this relationship: "The Circle of Representatives is the forum where Village leaders and the Board of Directors meet to discuss priorities, and develop and implement strategic initiatives for the well-being and sustainability of current and future Villages and our local Village Movement. This body will review recommendations for any changes that would affect more than one Village."

In addition to the two representatives from each Village, several VNW Board members (the Board Chair, finance person, and a couple of others) also attend.

The meetings are at 7 pm on the first Wednesday of

each month. They are Zoom meetings now, of course. Because there are eleven active or forming Villages, there are usually about 25 people in attendance.

The discussions are about things that affect all the Villages such as our COVID-19 response and partnerships with other organizations such as Meals on Wheels, or Kaiser Permanente. Sometimes there are reports or requests from an affinity group or a Village.

Like the affinity groups, the COR is a mechanism for sharing information and initiatives between the Villages and VNW. The representative's role is to convey that information both ways.

From the MOA again: "Designated representatives shall be responsible for:

a. Keeping the Village leadership informed of matters, as outlined above, providing feedback and communicating approved changes.

b. Keeping Village members and volunteers updated as needed.

c. Bringing matters of import to their governing councils and designated

representatives so these topics can be discussed and addressed at COR meetings."

Occasionally, the COR is called on to resolve questions or provide a solution. In that case, there is a formal vote of the representatives to make a policy or resolution. Typically, that would entail a discussion of a proposal and then time to take it to the Village Governing Councils for input. Then a vote would follow in a subsequent month after input and revision are done. The representative is supposed to convey their Governing Council's position at the vote.

I enjoy the people at the COR meetings. There are amazing people involved in doing this Village scene. I like the different perspectives of the various Villages. I also enjoy getting a glimpse of all these people dedicated to helping each other out. It feels good to take part in something bigger than myself.

If you think you might be interested in serving as Eastside Village's second representative or would just like more information, please contact me.

*By Lee Lancaster
EV Member*

THIRD ANNUAL TOY DRIVE FOR KIDS IN FOSTER CARE - DECEMBER 7TH DEADLINE!

This year has been tough on all of us, but it's been especially hard on Portland's foster families. My daughter, Kelly Paluso, is a caseworker for DHS in Portland's Eastside, working with kids in foster care. A few years ago, after hearing her stories, I asked members and volunteers of Eastside Village to help. The response was impressive. I asked again last year and was overwhelmed with the generosity of Eastside Village.

Hoping to make this a tradition, I am asking everyone to jump in and help kids in foster care. The service area of the DHS office where my daughter works is very similar to the boundaries of Eastside Village, so these kids and their foster parents are really our neighbors. This is a great way to give locally.

There are plenty of ways to contribute.

First, DHS partners with Toys for Tots to try to ensure that every (younger) foster kid has at least one present to open on Christmas. But because these gifts are only for kids under 12, we've been collecting gift cards for the kinds of stores kids 12+ would like. Some favorites are Target, H&M, Nike, Adidas, etc. You know, teen stuff. Local businesses are good, too! Increments of \$25+ are appreciated, because it's hard to get much for less than that.

Secondly, if you'd rather give toys for younger kids, those are great as well! Just make sure they're new. Foster kids get lots (and lots) of hand-me-downs, so let's give them something new. We had several members who have both donated toys and canvassed local businesses for additional toy donations.

Finally, want to go big? Get together with friends or family members to sponsor

a foster family! [See Jim Houser's story on p. 6.] Lots of foster families are doing a lot with very little all year round. Some are new foster parents and adjusting to life with a new child. Anyone with kids/grandkids knows how much stuff that takes! Let's lighten their load a little.

If you choose this option, we'll match you with a family (you won't meet them; their info is private) and give you a list of things they really need/want. You can do as much as you can/like to help meet their needs. Our extended family is sponsoring a family this year; it's a great way to help meet their needs and share some holiday-giving/spirit with your own family or friends!

Here are the details:

Our deadline for receipt of the gifts/etc is December 7th. We will deliver everything to the DHS office near the Lloyd Center on December 8th. Caseworkers will distribute the gifts to their families.

Drop-off is easy. You can drop your toy / gift card / check off at Cary Hixon's house. Just email her to arrange a time. You can also call the office to arrange for a volunteer to do a contact-free porch pickup. We are happy to come to you. Please don't drop gift cards in the mail!

Most of us won't get to write off these donations on our taxes, but if you plan to, please include your name, address, and the value of your gift and the caseworkers will send you a receipt.

Please feel free to email/text/call me if you have any questions. Help us help make a child's Christmas a bit brighter this year!

By Cary Hixon
EV Member

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2020

R = Register online or with office. MV = Attendance limited to Eastside Village Members or Volunteers.

Please note: ALL Eastside Village events will be held via the virtual Zoom online meeting platform. See the Events Calendar for each event's link.

1, 15

Current Events Luncheon

(R, MV) Join us for lunch and a great discussion of the current events in our ever-changing landscape. 12-2 pm.

3, 10, & 17

EV Reads

(R, MV) Ellen Howard reads "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" (See p. 10.) 2-3 pm.

4, 11, & 18

Coffee Hour

(MV) Join your friends and neighbors for coffee and conversation. 9:30-10:30 am.

5

EV Online Auction Fundraiser

(R) Do your holiday shopping from home and benefit EV at the same time! (See p. 8.)

7, 14, 21, & 28

Happy Hour

(MV) Share stories and chat with fellow EV Members and Volunteers. 5 pm.

8

EV Book Groups

(R, MV) Come share your suggestions for our 2021 Book List. (See p. 9.) 10-Noon.

9

Men's Lunch w/ Adult Beverages

(R, MV) Join the EV men for a hike/walk, bag lunch, and conversation. 12-2 pm.

10

EV Council Meeting

(R, MV) Please contact the office if you wish to attend. 10-Noon.

12

Virtual EV 101

(R) Join a virtual introduction to Eastside Village. Please sign in with the office to get the link. 10-Noon.

28

EV Climate Crisis Crew

(R, MV) Join us to share ideas, from small and energizing changes in how we live our lives, to what we can do together. 12-2 pm.