

Village Voices



The first-ever Art Party, organized by the Social-Cultural Team, featured local artists in a variety of mediums.

Loneliness is no fun, and it is also bad for us. According to a recent Cigna survey, loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: Lack of social connections is a risk factor in early death comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day! In fact, loneliness is a greater risk than obesity and physical inactivity. Furthermore, according to a recent study by the AARP Public Policy Institute and Harvard and Stanford Universities, isolation among older adults costs Medicare an additional \$6.7 billion a year.

East Falls Village incidentally finds itself at the forefront of addressing this major risk. Along with its fundamental mission of providing volunteer support and services to members in times of need, it offers programs and social events, and especially, opportunities to decide upon and arrange such events as well as participate in them. Members run the village, and it's easy to get involved!



Organized for Participation

As organizations go, our village runs more smoothly than most, and thanks to Charlie Day's astuteness in its formative phase, no member need be far from the action, where things get decided or set in motion. East Falls Village has teams, rather than committees.

Committees tend to talk about things; teams typically DO things.



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East Falls Village – An Antidote for Loneliness

by Phil Hine

Loneliness is no fun, and it is also bad for us. According to a recent Cigna survey, loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: Lack of social connections is a risk factor in early death comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day! In fact, loneliness is a greater risk



NY Times reporter John Leland (right) with Frederick Jones, 87, World War II veteran, one of six "oldest old" people whose lives suggest ways to cope with advanced age.

HOW THE "OLDEST OLD" – 85 AND UP – ARE COPING

By John T. Gillespie

"Old age is a shipwreck," said Charles deGaulle. Fewer people would offer so blunt a prediction today, thanks to modern medicine.

More people are living past age 85 than at any time in human history -nearly six million in America up from under a million in 1960 and they are living longer once they get here.

New York Times reporter John Leland takes a look at the lives of six over-85 people – the "oldest old" he calls them in his best seller, *Happiness is a Choice You Make*. He found no elixir of life. But he did find that all adapted with varying degrees of success and in ways that achieved some happiness. All had a purpose.

"The challenge," he wrote, "is to find a purpose in life that will sustain you through the latter years." In keeping with the book's title, that choice might be anything from painting, political activity, and time with family, to feeding the hungry, playing the piano, or just recalling old memories.

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Social-Cultural Team members after the Art Party on December 4 - Fred Vincent, Karen Ingram, Glennis Pagano, Frankie Jueds, Roger Marsh, Wendy Moody, Kathy Seed. Not pictured: Katy Hine, Allison O'Callaghan, and Kathy Woods.

Organized for Your Participation

(continued from page 1)

If you'd like to help with the activities of any of the teams, be a volunteer driver, or a volunteer at Mifflin, email **info@eastfallsvillage.org** and your request will be directed to the appropriate team.

☎ = Supplementing the web site, the **PHONE TEAM** members take turns carrying a phone that substantially takes the place of a Village Office. The phone member on duty answers questions about the Village, relays requests for rides and registers members for events when someone is not comfortable using the web site.



C = COMMUNICATION is crucial for all the other parts of the village to be effective. This includes the Weekly Update, and this quarterly newsletter Village Voices, which has distribution beyond the membership.

VS = VOLUNTEER SERVICES

While additional member-to-member services are available, nearly all requests have been for transportation – currently provided by 19 drivers, who provide approximately ten rides per month, serving multiple rides for about a dozen people. An additional fifteen volunteers stand ready to assist with minor home maintenance, in-home assistance, and outdoor help.

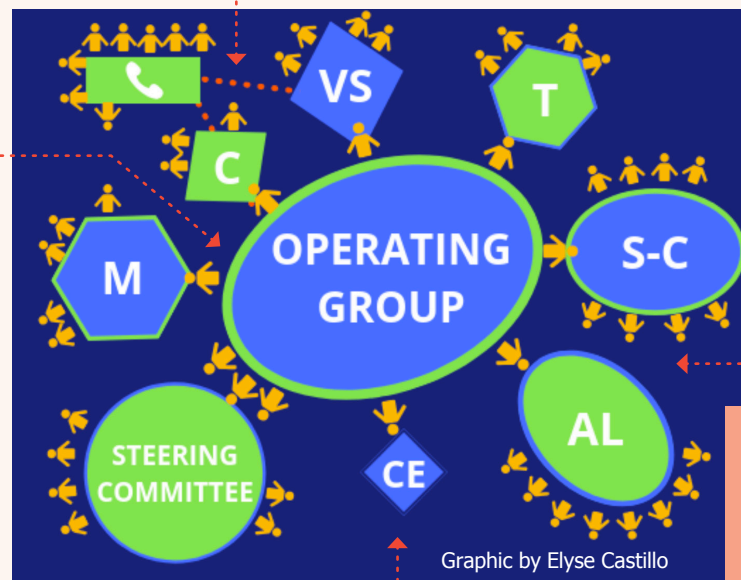
T = THE TECH TEAM

is a special category of member-to-member service, whose expert volunteers make house calls as well as sponsoring occasional gatherings, helping members deal with computer, email, and cell phone problems. As someone noted, "a single tech visit is worth the price of annual Village membership."

S-C (SOCIAL-CULTURAL) AND AL (ACTIVE LEARNING) TEAMS

are responsible for most of the visible activity of Village Members. Social-cultural sponsors neighborhood walks, various excursions and tours, lunch of the month in local restaurants, in-home musical events. Active Learning sponsors yoga, programs in the Falls Library on gardening tips, home safety and other healthcare issues, and even the recent trip to a glass-blowing studio. Team members of both groups handle the logistics and refreshments, if relevant.

At the center of this is the **OPERATING GROUP**, which meets monthly; each member representing one of the action teams, reporting the preceding month's accomplishments and plans for the upcoming season.



M = MEMBERSHIP TEAM

New members are invited to receive an in-home visit, resulting in about 20 such visits a year introducing them to the various Village services and activities, and to ways in which their skills and interests might enable them to become involved. Production of the Village Directory is an especially useful, annual accomplishment of this team.



THE STEERING COMMITTEE

meets three times per year to review the general direction of things and any concerns or issues, especially legal or financial, raised by the Operating Group or by individual members. Its guidelines are provided by a Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2013.

CE (CIVIC ENGAGEMENT)

has one coordinator but about thirty volunteers for the Mifflin Library Project as well as the popular 1-to-1 "Read To Me" program at Mifflin School. These projects are a likely source of recently improving reading scores by Mifflin Students.

Off the edges of the diagram, and thus not represented, are the many people affected by these various team activities: those who receive rides or other services, those who attend the programs and events, as well as those who volunteer as drivers or at Mifflin. It is these participations, as well as the camaraderie entailed in working on such activities, that enhance life in the East Falls community at large. East Falls Village is a network of social connections helping to make East Falls a special place.



The Oldest Old

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In his year-long journey of discovery, Leland uncovered as many approaches to aging as his subjects: a former decorator, 91, who wanted to die but still found life-affirming enjoyment in the latest operatic recording or piece of decorative art; a World War II veteran, 87, who spent his life as a bon vivant, had few regrets, and hoped to live to 110; a Jewish widow, 90, who found new love in a nursing home with a man 21 years her junior; a Cantonese widow, 89, who stayed sharp with a game of mah-jongg everyday; a filmmaker and scriptwriter, 91, who continued to find reward in work; a 91-year-old woman who kept herself busy reading books and newspapers and staying in touch with family.

None spent time wondering what the future would bring, reassessing their lives, or contemplating life after death. Some engaged in positive thinking, winnowing out the bad memories from the good. All, it seemed, were reconciled to their lives as lived. Complain some did, but only occasionally and incidentally. The term "chronic complainer" did not apply.

The emphasis was on the present and finding enjoyment in small, often inconsequential, pleasures such as a TV show, a dish of ice cream, a book, sharing fond memories, a visit from friends and family.

None fought their infirmities. They were instead accepting or resigned. "The lesson was to find happiness not in the absence of pain and loss but in their acceptance."

Ping Wong, the 89-year-old Cantonese widow fond of mah-jongg, "kept up her spirits by accepting her pains as a part of life – not barriers to happiness but accompaniments to it."

While there was no talk of an afterlife and in 91-year-old decorator John Sorenson's case, outright rejection, a recurring theme among the elderly was gratitude, recognized by all great religions as a virtue. For Fred Jones, the bon vivant who hoped to reach 110, "Giving thanks made him happy, which made him grateful, which made him happy."

Leland himself is grateful for what he learned from the elders. Patience, gratitude, purpose, camaraderie, love, family, and usefulness are his to receive, he writes. "Those days I'm kinder, more patient, more productive, less anxious, possibly closer to being the person I always should have been."

Welcome New Members!

- ▶ **Frances & Michael Baylson**
- ▶ **William Carter**
- ▶ **Marjorie Davis**
- ▶ **Freda Gowling**
- ▶ **Jack Murphy & Patricia Robinson**
- ▶ **Eileen O'Rourke**
- ▶ **Donna & Robert Perry**
- ▶ **Ed Ruback**
- ▶ **Mark Sciumeca**

For their contact information, log in to eastfallsvillage.org with your user name and password to access the members-only Membership Directory.

For help in logging in, see page 10 in the 2018 Member Handbook & Directory or email info@eastfallsvillage.org.

JOINING EAST FALLS VILLAGE

Encourage your friends and neighbors to join, too!

Pick up a membership brochure at the front desk of the Falls Library or print out a membership application from the website – eastfallsvillage.org.

BEWARE LATEST SOCIAL SECURITY SCAM

EFV member Peg Hallenbeck recently received an automated call from an agency claiming to be the Social Security Administration. The message threatened to withhold her social security payments.

As one who used to work for the Social Security Administration, Peg recognized the calling number as that of the SSA: 800-772-1213.

"I listened to the message and it was clear it was a scam," she says. Neither SSA nor the IRS uses the phone to threaten people. If there is a problem, taxpayers receive a letter, often by registered mail. "There's a long process to correct payment issues that's communicated by mail," she said.

In this particular case, the recorded message was abrupt: "This is the Social Security Administration. Your social will be withheld and your assets may also be attached. It is important that you speak to someone right away. Press 1 to speak to an official..."

Peg hung up. So should you.



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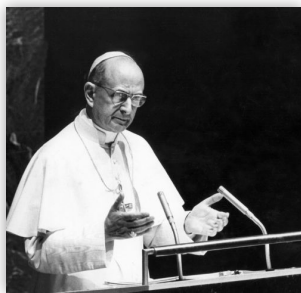
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Good Reads

A World in Disarray

By Richard Haass

Review by John T. Gillespie



Paul VI delivering his speech to the United Nations.

In his historic address to the United Nations in October 1965 Pope Paul VI paid tribute to the organization. "This edifice that you have built must never again fall into ruins," he said in an allusion to the failed League of Nations. "You mark a stage in the development of mankind. Henceforth, it is impossible to go back; you must go forward." It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe anyone in the Trump administration holding such thoughts. The United Nations, the very essence of globalism, is barely tolerated. And yet the UN was created to mediate disputes and maintain peace. *A World in Disarray* traces efforts to create a peaceful international order and avoid war from the Westphalian Peace in 1648 to the Congress of Vienna in 1815, to the League of Nations, the United Nations, NATO, the Cold War, and the fall of Communism, only to find the world backsliding into a resurgent nationalism and populism symbolized by Brexit, the attacks on immigration, and the Trump Administration's efforts to undo multilateral pacts on trade, the environment, and mutual security. Those who cherish the postwar liberal order, global trade and open borders, will find this a difficult book. "The world matters to Americans and the United States, and what the United States chooses to do and not to do in the world matters in return," writes author Richard Haass. In essence, there is no going back to a narrow isolationism without the risk of creating new disorders.

Good Reads

Fear - Trump in the White House

By Bob Woodward

Review by Louanne A. Stratton



Fear is an easy and compelling read at 357 pages. Each chapter is numbered and not named so you begin reading with no clue what it's going to reveal. With each chapter it's as though you've turned

your radio dial to a new station to 'listen' in. Much of the dialogue is in quotes so it is as though you are there. What strikes the reader is the complexity and variety of the topics or situations the President and his staff are discussing. For someone expecting thoughtful respectful dialogue what emerges is the chaos and gutter language. For example when John Dowd decides to quit as Trump's personal lawyer it is stated that Dowd had seen the tragic flaw in Trump, but could not bring himself to say to the President: "You're a f..king liar."

**Village Voices
Welcomes
Book
Reviews!**

WE WANT TO
KNOW WHAT
YOU'VE BEEN
READING!

- ✓ No more than 150 words
- ✓ Include: brief synopsis, reviewer's opinion, title and author
- ✓ Submit to john.gillespie1@verizon.net

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

September 1
December 1
March 1
June 1



East Falls Village

P.O. Box 12672
Philadelphia, PA 19129

Deliver to:



EFV Events

HOW TO REGISTER (AND PAY, IF REQUIRED) FOR EFV EVENTS

Members: Log in to the website (eastfallsvillage.org), then go to the Calendar of Events, and register under the date of the program. If payment is required, you may pay, safely and securely, with a credit card.

You may also register by calling the Village phone at **267-444-4507** and then sending a check to **EFCC, PO Box 12672, Philadelphia, PA 19129**. Please write the title of the event on the subject line of the check and make the check payable to EFCC (Community Council)

Winter Yoga Classes

Church of the Good Shepherd

3820 The Oak Road

\$ REG Required

Tuesdays
10 am - 11 am

January 8 - March 26

Thursdays
2pm - 3pm

January 10 - March 28

Register and pay for each series separately. Each series of 12 classes is \$84 for EFV members and \$102 for non-Village members. If paying by check, write Tuesday or Thursday yoga on the subject line.

Thursday
January 10
9:30am

Trip to Woodmere Art Museum

9201 Germantown Ave

Meet at the Library at 9:30 am to carpool.

View the special exhibition, "The Pennsylvania Landscape in Impressionism and Contemporary Art." Optional lunch afterwards in Chestnut Hill. **REG Recommended**

Saturday
January 12
2pm



Calendar Girls Theatre Party

Old Academy Players, 3544 Indian Queen Lane

This hilarious play is based on a true story of women in a small English town who raise money for a local hospital by creating an "alternative" calendar – with nude photos of themselves! It became the fastest-selling play in British history

and a 2003 movie starring Helen Mirren.

The Theatre Party is a fundraiser for the East Falls Village Assisted Membership Fund. Tickets are \$15 a person. To order tickets, send an email to info@eastfallsvillage.org with your name(s) and number of tickets requested. Then send a check, payable to EFCC, to East Falls Community Council, PO Box 12672, Philadelphia, PA 19129. **\$ REG Required**

Wednesday
January 16
11:30am

Lunch of the Month: Milo

3426 Conrad St.

Enjoy vegetarian and vegan specialties in the newest eatery in East Falls. **REG Recommended**



Winter Gathering

Sunday
January 20
3pm - 5pm

Tuttleman Center,
Jefferson University,
School House Lane &
Vaux St.

For EFV members, guests, and anyone interested in learning more about East Falls Village. Plan to stay for the wine and cheese social hour from 4 to 5! You may win a special door prize – a blue & white paperweight from East Falls Glassworks.

REG Required

(over for more programs)



EFV Events

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Wednesday
March 6
8am

Early Morning Tour of the Flower Show

Beat the crowds and get special insider information from an expert and knowledgeable guide! "This is the best way to enjoy the Flower Show – no crowds – and you have the rest of the day to go back to some of the exhibits and have lunch." Deadline to register and pay: February 1 (\$100).
\$ REG Required



Thursday Morning Walks & Stop at a Local Café

All are welcome to join us for some exercise, good company, and a snack. For same-day information, call 215-817-9430.

Every Thursday
9:30 am
*Meet at the Falls
Library Garden*

Saturday
January 26
2pm

Martha Graham Dance Company

Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3680 Walnut St. See "one of the greatest dance companies in the world". Deadline for payment and registration is January 11. Special group rate of \$37.75, payable to EFCC (online or by check). **\$ REG Required**

Wednesday
February 6
noon

Lunch of the Month: LeBus

4201 Ridge Ave
This new East Falls restaurant has an extensive menu, great breads, and a full bar.

Friday
February 15
10:23 am train

Explore Historic Philadelphia and Lunch at the Bourse

9201 Germantown Ave
Meet at the East Falls train station.
Fred Vincent begins a 3rd Friday series "Explore Philadelphia" combined with lunch. Visit the Independence Visitor Center, which has new films and exhibits. Have lunch at the newly restored Bourse, with 30 new stalls and many eating areas. **REG Recommended**

Thursday
March 7
11:15am

Lunch of the Month: The Fareway at the Chestnut Hill Farmers Market

8221 Germantown Ave. Meet at the Library at 11:15 am to carpool. Choose your own lunch (sandwiches, lobster roll, Middle Eastern or Jamaican food, craft beers, and desserts) and do some food shopping as well! **REG Recommended**

*Being
Planned:*

**Program on
Low Vision
Aids**

**Tour of the
Channel 6
Newsroom**

**Tour of the
DiSimeone Racing
Car Museum**

Post on your refrigerator!

PLEASE NOTE This is a partial listing. Details may change. Programs not listed here, such as bridge, memoir-writing, hands-on help with smartphones or tablets, are for members only and are scheduled month-by-month. For more information, check EastFallsVillage.org or consult the EFV Weekly Update, emailed to members on Tuesdays.

(over for more programs)