



Photos by George Drake

# *LIBRETTO*

## **SYMPHONY VILLAGE NEWSLETTER**

**FEBRUARY 2021**

**VOL. XVI No. 2**

*MISSION STATEMENT:* To enhance the quality of life and promote a harmonious community through the timely publication of accurate information about residents, events, and activities in and around Symphony Village.

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### **Welcome to the Neighborhood!**



T.J. and Dora Colihan  
and Thomas P. Colihan (T.J.'s father)  
343 Overture Way

Bill and Donna Ray  
106 Concerto Avenue

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## **2021 HOA BOD**

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### **SYMPHONY VILLAGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, FEBRUARY 5, 2021**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – SNOW REMOVAL POLICY**

**PAT FOX, PRESIDENT**

Below are the bullet points I used to make our SV Snow Removal Policy Report at the BOD meeting on February 5, 2021. I have outlined the SV historic removal policy, contract terms, snow depth monitoring, snow removal cost, budgeting process, dues impact, and policy alternatives should there be a community-wide preference for reducing the snow threshold where we start the removal process. *AUTHOR'S NOTE: Since the Board meeting, a long-standing resident provided snow removal history from SV's early days. See Note below.*

- Some comments have come in asking about snow removal.
- Historically, for 16 years, SV has always removed snow greater than 3" from your driveway and walkway but not at a lower level. Please refer to Appendix B in the Terms of Reference. See Author's Note below.
- We have never removed snow from our roughly 7–8 miles of sidewalks around the village.
- We budget for snow removal at this 3" threshold.
- For this recent storm, several of us measured regularly at multiple different sites during the hours of precipitation. Although I am on the shady side of the street, my site never exceeded 2".
- In 2017, a 3.25" snowstorm cost \$19,000 to remove. This did include streets from SV Phase 4 not yet turned over to the town; BUT even if we cut that bill in half to remove them, that is about \$10,000 to remove 3".

- We do not pay a set price per storm; the rates are hourly.
- We can reduce the minimum amount of snow for when we will initiate plowing, BUT it will increase your dues.
- If the community is willing to pay for it, we can do this and include the anticipated cost in the budgeting process for 2022.
- We are already budgeted for this service in 2021. To cover all other expenses and NOT raise the dues this year, we have reduced the standard snow removal allotment. If the cost of the service is greater than \$36,000, we can cover it with other surplus or unobligated SV cash; however, this is not good fiscal practice to continuously operate under. Budgets are set to cover planned expenses.
- The Board has discussed this matter and preliminarily feels that if we were to raise dues specifically for reducing the snow removal threshold that this should be determined by a community referendum. Management and the Board can work with the contractor to try to come up with an average cost for plowing a lower amount. This will not be easy to do since it is hourly manpower based (not lump sum price per event), but it could give the Board a rough idea.
- If people are interested in this being pursued, you can talk to neighbors and start a petition to see if there is a groundswell of support but please be open about the fact that our monthly SV dues will increase.

**Author's Note:** In the SV early days, snow was removed on driveways and walkways at a 2" depth. Only a small portion of the 395 homes that make up SV today were built out at that time. During the winter of 2009/10, there were a number of snowstorms depositing more than 40" of snow. The final removal tab for that season was over \$150,000! Caruso—the developer—covered the cost, but the SVHOA needed to reimburse them for the expense. Shortly thereafter, the snow removal threshold was raised to 3". Were we to experience the same magnitude today, it would completely wipe out our unobligated cash and part of the “rainy day” fund our auditors strongly suggest we maintain, which is 20% of our annual budget. We cannot use our Reserve funds to remove snow. Hence, the great care in handling this service.

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The following new business motions were made and approved unanimously by the Board of Directors at the February 5 HOA community (Zoom) meeting:

- *Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Treatment:* 71 common area ash trees will be treated; Cost: ~\$5K to \$5.8K from the 2021 approved L&I budget.
- *Tree Maintenance:* 109 common area trees will be treated for disease control; Cost: Not to exceed (NTE) \$6.1K from the 2021 approved L&I budget.
- *Tree Pruning:* 153 common area trees will be pruned to maintain long-term health; Cost: NTE \$12K from the 2021 approved L&I budget.
- *Shrubbery Restoration:* Renovate landscaping around the Clubhouse; Cost: NTE ~\$16.3K from the 2021 approved L&I budget.
- *Drainage Repairs:* Repairs to Drainage Areas 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12, each with a different scope of work; Total cost: ~\$14K
- *Clubhouse HOA Staff Office Floors:* Replace worn carpet in the General Manager’s and Executive Assistant’s offices; Cost: ~\$2.4K.
- *Outdoor Pool Use for Queen Anne’s County Emergency Medical Services (QAC EMS) Training:* Emergency services personnel will train for four Wednesdays in June, 8 a.m. through noon. CERT volunteer residents will audit training from outside the gated area.
- *Committee members:* 2021 volunteer names were presented on behalf of each Committee and approved by the Board.

Details for the approved proposals and motions listed in this report can be found online

(<https://symphonyvillage.net/governance-landing-2021>). The community was notified several days prior that all proposal and motion materials for the February 5 HOA meeting were published on the Symphony Village Website to ensure residents were aware of decisions being voted upon by the Board.

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## **SV COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

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### **BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION**

**DEBORAH J. JONES-MILLER**

February marks the start of Black History Month. It evolved from the original Black History Week, which was the brainchild of historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans in 1926. By the late 1960s, the week evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses. In 1976, President Gerald Ford officially recognized February as Black History Month and called upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often-neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”



In the wake of civil unrest, the murder of African Americans around the country and the start of a new administration, Black History Month should mark not just the recognition of African American contributions in this nation, but the understanding that people from all ethnicities working together can bring about a positive change for the future of our country.

These changes may be evidenced by equality in the areas of justice, education, housing, and access to healthcare. Citizens working together at the grassroots level of our government can demand that these essential rights be translated into Congressional laws resulting in an improved quality of life for every American.



Although the process toward change may be arduous, let's not grow weary! Instead, during this month of February, let's make every effort to live together peacefully, learn from one another, work together, and help each other when we can. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."

## COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

JOHN OLSON – CERT COORDINATOR

### YOU CAN BE A CERT VOLUNTEER

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates individuals about disaster preparedness and trains and organizes teams of volunteers who can support their communities during disasters.



Since 2009, over 50 Symphony Village residents have completed CERT training. This valuable training enables people to be prepared for various emergencies—whether terrorist, weather, fire, vehicle accidents, or natural disasters. The course includes subjects such as creating emergency supply kits, fire safety, disaster preparedness, light search and rescue, first aid, disaster psychology, and other preparedness subjects.

We are always seeking additional community members who would be interested in receiving this training and be willing to assist our own residents in catastrophic accidents/conditions before emergency responders can arrive. All training is FREE. CERT training is spread out over seven days and is taught for 2–3 hours each day, usually in the evening.

If you are interested or know of someone who is, please call John Olson at 443-262-8458. This is an excellent opportunity to help yourself as well as your community. If you know someone who is interested in CERT but not a Symphony Village resident, have them contact the Queen Anne's County CERT administrator, Joseph Cichocki, 410-758-4500 ext. 1119. Thanks in advance for your interest.

The logo for KDR Contracting LLC features a stylized house with a chimney and a roof, with the letters "KDR" in large, bold, black font below it. To the right of the house, the text "Exterior Specialist" is written in a serif font, followed by "Roofing\*Siding\*Gutters\* Skylights\* & More!" in a smaller font, and "Licensed & Insured MHC #91285" and "20+ Years of Experience" in a sans-serif font. Below the "KDR" logo, the text "CONTRACTING LLC" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by "Call: 443-722-2760" and "Email: KDRContracting@gmail.com".

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The logo for United Real Estate features the word "United" in a large, bold, blue font with a white outline, and "Real Estate" in a smaller, bold, blue font below it. The word "Infinity" is written in a smaller, italicized font below "Real Estate".

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A portrait of Art Potts, a man with white hair, wearing a dark suit jacket and a light-colored shirt, smiling.

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The logo for U-Haul features the word "U-HAUL" in a bold, black font with a white outline, and "AUTHORIZED DEALER" in a smaller font below it.

Anita Gruss  
Manager

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As more and more of our interactions move to platforms such as Zoom, we should learn to enter a remote meeting as if it were a conference room. Here are a few suggestions from the pros.



**Don't Be Late** – Video meetings make it obvious who shows up late, wasting the time of those who log in promptly.

**Turn on the Camera** – Avatars and stock photos are not acceptable stand-ins. They're difficult to take seriously and make everybody wonder what you're up to.

**Mute Your Microphone** – when not talking.

**Sit Still** – Don't pace. People stop listening because they're watching you. If you need to change location, don't just grab the laptop and go, making everybody else feel like they're on a wild amusement ride. Turn off the video momentarily so you don't make them dizzy.

**No Eating** – Don't eat on a video call—and especially don't eat chips. As Zoom becomes a way of life, more and more attendees are using high-fidelity headsets that amplify the sound of chewing.

**Get Good at Interrupting** – Conventional wisdom has been don't interrupt. But that makes it too easy for grandstanding by the so-called loudest voice in the room. Anticipate and watch for signals; coming off mute means "I'm about to say something." A good moderator is also a gatekeeper, drawing people into the conversation or giving them the hook.

**Close the Door** – Turn off your phone. Stop notifications and alerts. Arrange for family (and pets) to stay out of the way.

**Don't Multitask** – It's really tempting. It's also really obvious. Close all other windows on your screens so you can be fully present.

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## COMMITTEE REPORTS

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### ARTISANS GUILD

SUE CANFIELD, CHAIR

We hope you have been enjoying our show, *Artist's Choice*, virtually or in person. Our next show begins on March 29. It is called *A Sense of Home*. This can be interpreted in many ways—our homes, animal homes, homes for collections, etc. Please consider joining in and submitting your own work of art. We will be collecting art pieces in the Clubhouse on Monday, March 29, from 10 a.m. to noon. Questions? Email [suecanfield20@gmail.com](mailto:suecanfield20@gmail.com)



Displayed: *Still Life of Daffodils* by Sue Canfield and a *Cityscape* by Peggy Decker.



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**EXTERIOR PAINT COLORS REMINDER**

For regular maintenance, repainting with the same color scheme as the original is permitted. Exterior house trim and window trim will remain white.

If a homeowner decides to change the original color scheme on the front entry door and/or the shutters, the new color choice must be selected from the approved paint color binder that is available in the HOA Management Office. Changing the color scheme requires an Exterior Modification form.

Please refer to Appendix D in the Architectural Requirements document for details or call the HOA Management or a Covenants member for additional information.

**ROOF REPLACEMENT**

When you are replacing your roof, the approved color selection is available in the HOA Management Office. An Exterior Modification form is required.

**LANDSCAPE AND IRRIGATION COMMITTEE****TOM MCMANUS, CHAIR****WINTER INJURY ON LANDSCAPE PLANTS****GARRETT DICKEL, GUEST EDITOR**

A wide variety of injuries to landscape plants can result from winter weather conditions.

Low temperature injuries are common on shallow rooted plants, container plants, and marginally hardy plants. Prolonged freezing temperatures during open winters (no snow cover) can cause root damage. Symptoms of root mortality are usually evident in late winter or spring. Foliage may brown, buds may die, and the entire crown may wilt and die suddenly. This generally affects non-native or marginally hardy plants.

Desiccation of plant tissues or “winter drying” generally affects broadleaf evergreens such as Camellia, Rhododendron, Azalea, and Holly. This injury results from transpirational water loss during warm days in winter when the soil is frozen. Water lost through the foliage is not replaced from the frozen soil, which results in desiccation of the foliage. Symptoms resemble that of frost injury but tend to be localized on the south and southwest portions of the plants. Plants that are located in exposed or windy locations and recent transplants tend to be prone to winter drying.

Give your plants the best chance for surviving the winter. Promote healthy plant material by maintaining soil fertility, watering during dry spells, and monitoring/treating for damaging levels of insect or disease. Non-hardy varieties can be protected with burlap fencing or covering for wind protection. Care should be taken when constructing this type of protective barrier. Consider what may happen if excessive amounts of snow accumulate on the barrier and make sure your system can take the weight of that snow and ice.

Mulching will help protect the root system. Make sure that the root flare is left exposed. Mulch out to the drip line if practical. Do not perform heavy pruning in late summer, especially on shrubs. Sometimes this will cause plants to put on new tender growth that does not have enough time to harden off and is then more sensitive to winter burn.

There are anti-desiccant products available to spray on plants to prevent winter drying. This treatment has been used for years with moderate success. It is a preventative therapy that would be performed before the cold season arrives.

If spring comes and you have some winter burn, do not be anxious to cut the damage out right away. In some cases, stems may still have viable tissue. Wait until new growth emerges to prune out the damaged portions that fails to emerge.



Garrett Dickel  
Arborist Representative

ISA Certified Arborist  
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Stem splitting or “frost cracks” generally occur on young, thin barked trees such as Maple, Sycamore, Linden, and Zelkova. This injury results from sudden temperature fluctuations. A sunny daytime high to very low nighttime temperature can cause shrinkage of stem tissues or can freeze sap within the cells, resulting in a frost crack. The damage is evident as a vertical seam, usually on the south or southwest side of the trunk. In some cases, the cracks may enter deep into the heartwood. This could cause serious structural concerns by opening wood tissue to drying and providing entry points for wood decay organisms.

The best treatment to prevent frost cracks is a screen on the south, southwest side of the stem prior to extreme cold periods. Avoid attaching a permanent wrap around the trunk. This could lead to future girdling issues. If your plants have frost cracks, treatment for surface damage is bark tracing to promote sealing of callus growth around the wound. For deep injuries, bracing rods may need to be installed to address structural deficiencies.

Snow and ice accumulation can cause breakage of limbs or entire plants. Plants that have poor branch structure, “V” shaped branch unions, overextended and overweight limbs, or structural defects are most commonly damaged. Evergreens that tend to “hold” snow (especially White Pine) are especially prone to breakage. Foundation plants near the overhang of structures also tend to accumulate heavier snow and ice loads.

Pruning, cabling, and bracing are maintenance therapies that should be used to keep your trees in top form. Qualified arborists will be able to identify potential hazards on your property and make recommendations to reduce the likelihood of storm damage. These inspections should be performed on an annual basis. Safety should always be priority one. Other winter-related trauma for plants are salt damage and animal injuries. These are extensive topics worthy of individual articles. I plan to cover these issues in future articles.

Garrett Dickel is an arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture and a tree expert licensed by the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service. Send questions or comments to: [gdickel@bartlett.com](mailto:gdickel@bartlett.com)

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## LIFESTYLE COMMITTEE

MARY COLLING-OFFICER, CHAIR

The Symphony Village Lifestyle Committee held its second Zoom meeting for 2021 on February 1. Chaired by Mary Colling-Officer, the committee is continuing to brainstorm ideas for the health, education, and fun of all SV neighbors.

Janet Leister has been in contact with Edward's Pharmacy over the past few weeks in an effort to form a COVID-19 vaccine clinic at Symphony Village. However, the representative from Edward's Pharmacy has informed her that distribution of vaccines to their pharmacy is on hold for the foreseeable future. The Queen Anne's County Health Department is taking reservations and administering the COVID-19 vaccine. For those individuals who have been unable to register with the QAC Health Department due to challenges in using the computer, several members of the Lifestyle Committee will be available to assist individuals in online registration and provide transportation to the vaccination sites. Look for an eblast to identify the volunteers who will help with registration and rides.

Please reach out to the Symphony Village Lifestyle Committee's own "Vaccine Angels" if you need:

- Assistance signing up for the QAC COVID-19 vaccine "Interest List"
- Assistance in scheduling your COVID-19 vaccine
- Assistance in arranging transportation to and from your vaccine appointment

Please contact: Janet Leister [Zoomjan@aol.com](mailto:Zoomjan@aol.com) 410-382-3885  
Carol Peed [Carolpeed@gmail.com](mailto:Carolpeed@gmail.com) 443-223-0359


Because the goal of the Lifestyle Committee is to "bring joy and raise the spirits of our community, and bring the community together by sponsoring various social, fun, educational, charitable, and creative activities and events," efforts are continuing to find activities that will meet this goal. Some proposed activities include:

- Virtual trivia games, poetry readings, and jokes
- Virtual educational session on native and invasive bird species
- Virtual exercise classes
- Virtual cooking classes to include breadmaking, cake decorating, and instruction on making a Smith Island Cake, etc.
- Virtual armchair travel



As these ideas come closer to becoming a reality, neighbors will be provided with more information.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Symphony Village Lifestyle Committee, please contact Mary Elizabeth Colling-Officer at [maryelizabethcollingofficer@gmail.com](mailto:maryelizabethcollingofficer@gmail.com) or go to the SV Website to register.



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## OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**JOE SIKES, CHAIR; FRED KURST, VICE CHAIR**

The Operations Committee is responsible for aiding the HOA Board of Directors and the General Manager regarding management and operation of community common property. We share this responsibility with the Landscape and Irrigation Committee and focus on such things as the Clubhouse, swimming pools, and sidewalks. We meet on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. Since the COVID-19 crisis, we have started to meet virtually using Zoom technology.

Operations held its initial meeting for 2021 on January 21. We welcomed Karen Kram as our new Board Liaison, and after an exhausting campaign, I was narrowly reelected as Committee Chair by less than 2% of SV residents. Fred Kurst was unanimously elected as Vice Chair and Jinny Guy ended our three-year journey in Secretarial Wilderness by her election as our Secretary.

An initial site visit was held with J.D. Hynes Associates on January 12 to plan their engineering assessment of our Clubhouse parking lots. We expect to review their recommendations in the next few months regarding proposed actions.

The committee winnowed proposals for upgrading our Bocce Courts from three to two contractors and plans follow-on contractor meetings before final recommendations to the Board.

A major focus of our first meeting was to welcome new committee members and start developing goals for the new year. We hope to complete that for our February meeting. Items discussed include parking lots, bocce courts, tennis/pickleball courts, more sidewalk repair, signage upgrade, review of swimming pool recommendations from Anchor Aquatics, reviewing condition of stormwater ponds, and general condition of the Clubhouse following a year of COVID-19.

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**NEW CHAIRMAN FOR P&C**

Please welcome MaryKay Kerr as the new chairman for the P&C Committee. Her many years of experience with newsletters includes editorship of her quilting group publication and those of other sewing and fraternal organizations. We wish her much success. Thank you, MaryKay.

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**WEBSITE UPDATE**

You may have noticed the SV [Website](#) has a fresh look to it. Since it was created, the SV Website has strived to communicate timely and accurate information to our residents. Over the years, the Website has grown in size and complexity and was at the point that it needed an overhaul and redesign.

The primary goal of any website is to communicate efficiently and effectively to its audience. While having an attractive website is good, it is really the information presented that can make it excellent. As a result, the primary goal of our Website overhaul has been all about information. We asked ourselves questions like *Do we have the right information on it that SV residents want to see? Is the information relevant and easy to find? Is the information updated in a timely and accurate manner?* These questions needed to be answered before we gave any consideration to how attractive it would look.

The first step in the project was reorganizing the behind-the-scenes infrastructure of the Website itself.

Webpages have been created over the years including many that were no longer used. Some webpages were



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“live” but had dated information on them. Some webpages contained so much information that it was hard to find what a resident might be looking for. The pages have been organized and prioritized so that the focus is now placed on the information itself.

The next step was to create a “landing page” concept for the Website. What that means is if a resident wants to find out something about a particular major topic, clicking on the topic link (e.g., Landscape and Irrigation) launches a landing page that serves as a central hub to get to any subtopics a resident might want to find and view. Its purpose is to allow information to be found easily and quickly. The Home Page is the main landing page for any website and was the first focus of our Website overhaul. The new Home Page, which was rolled out in early January, contains four major sections: Important SV Forms & Deadlines; Current and Upcoming SV Events; Committee and Community Program Information; and Local Happenings and Information. The initial rollout provided the foundation of the central hub but was not complete.

The second rollout in late January had two main focuses: 1) build-out a new Governance landing page designed to act as a true hub for all governance information and 2) begin to build-out the Committee section of the Home Page by adding a new Budget & Finance Committee page. A link to upcoming Committee Meeting Agendas as well as the introduction of a Suggestion Box completed the rollout.

The third rollout came out today with two main focuses. First, the Important SV Forms & Deadlines section of the Home Page has been fully built out with the addition of a link to a page that contains *every* form currently in use in SV. Each form has a short description of its use and a link to the form itself. This provides a resident looking for a form to find it in one central place. Second, we continue to build-out the Committee section of the Home Page with the addition of an updated Landscape & Irrigation landing page and the introduction of a new Operations Committee page.

As the Website overhaul and redesign continues, we would love to hear any ideas, improvements, and feedback you would like to see. To provide feedback, use the Suggestion Form at the bottom of the P&C Committee page.



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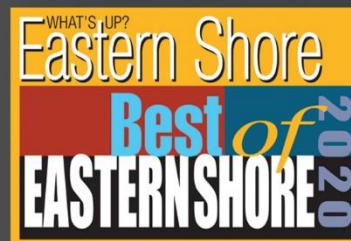


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## CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

### ARE YOU A COUCH POTATO OR A PICASSO?

CATHY OLSON, ARTISANS GUILD MEMBER

A few years ago, the Symphony Village Artisans Guild was created. Our main task was to provide our new extended Concert Hall with residents' artwork. We update our exhibits quarterly throughout the year. Our goal is to welcome aspiring artists, photographers, and textile art enthusiasts in our SV community. If you have ever had a desire to explore your creative side, we are inviting you to join in on the fun.

Some of our artists and photographers have provided YouTube introductory videos below to help you discover your creative instincts and to get you started. Because they are free, they contain ads.

Textile videos recommended by Janet O'Connor:

- <https://BustleandSew.com/>
- <https://BedeckedandBedazzled.com/>
- <https://SarahKBenning.com/>

Photography videos recommended by Len Saltiel

- <https://youtu.be/V7z7BAZdt2M> photography basics in 10 minutes
- [https://youtu.be/My1Z2\\_e4EPI](https://youtu.be/My1Z2_e4EPI) photography basics
- <https://youtu.be/iGp8Z97F1CY> practical photography

Painting demos and videos recommended by Cathy Olson

- <https://youtu.be/oYjX-jmTmco> acrylic basics
- <https://youtu.be/000Q2UMMYcY> watercolor beginner
- <https://chesapeakefineartstudio.com/> for free demos



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Although it is not a requirement to join the SV Artisans Guild to exhibit your art pieces, we are always looking for new inspiration and fun people. We know you will like us. Please consider whether you are a couch potato during COVID times or a Picasso working in your choice of medium. I hope you have seen our latest “Artist Choice” exhibit in the Clubhouse. This is one example of one wall in the Clubhouse.



For more information about the SV Artisans Guild, contact Sue Canfield, Chair, [suecanfield20@gmail.com](mailto:suecanfield20@gmail.com) or Peggy Decker, Vice Chair, [phdeck700@gmail.com](mailto:phdeck700@gmail.com). Next Artisans Guild Zoom meeting is March 11 at 3 p.m.

## BLUEBIRD TRAIL COMES TO SYMPHONY VILLAGE

KATHY MCMANUS



Thanks to Pete Zerhusen and his wife Cele with some assistance from George Drake, we now have a bluebird trail in Symphony Village. Recently installed on the far side of Pond 1 along a path bordering the woodland, the trail consists of a series of nesting boxes approximately 50–100 feet apart. Pete got approval from the HOA Board after consulting with the Chairs of Landscaping and Operations. The project was all done at his expense.

Bluebirds start looking for a nesting site in February. The male usually scouts for a site and the female actually builds the nest. First nesting usually occurs from mid-March to mid-April. Nests consist of grasses or pine needles. They usually produce one to three broods (families) during spring and summer. Each clutch contains one to five eggs. The eggs hatch in about two weeks.

Bluebirds typically eat a wide variety of insects during the summer months. In winter, bluebirds subsist on wild berries of many kinds. They will come to bird feeders for freeze dried meal worms.



Unfortunately, they are susceptible to predators: snakes, cats, raccoons, and most commonly, other aggressive birds such as starlings, crows, and house sparrows. The boxes will be checked weekly for

interlopers, especially house sparrows, and, if found, removed and the box cleaned out.

Bluebird populations have been in decline for years, but recently as a result of volunteers establishing and maintaining bluebird trails, their numbers are on the rise. One of the leading causes of bluebird decline is nest-site competition from the more aggressive European house sparrow, an introduced species.

If anyone has a bluebird box in their yard, it is essential to prevent house sparrows from nesting successfully by simply removing the nest and or nest and eggs (population control). There are an excessive number of house sparrows in the SV community, according to Pete. Pete developed an interest in birds in his early teens. He describes himself as a ‘military brat’ who moved frequently and would erect bird feeders in each location.

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He has put up hundreds of bluebird houses over 30 years, mainly in Howard, Worcester, and Carroll Counties. As a school psychologist in Carroll County, he worked with special needs children and erected bluebird houses as a group project. He and Cele have travelled extensively and some of their favorite places for birding are Costa Rica, Chile, and Pete's favorite—the Galápagos Islands.

We do hope residents will come and take a look; we will let you know when the bluebirds are present. The boxes will be numbered one through eight for reporting purposes.

A big thank you to Pete for all his efforts!

*Bluebird photo courtesy George Drake.*

## NWF IDEAS FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION

It's easy to create a winter refuge for birds and other wildlife in your yard, plus make it an inviting nesting site in early spring. Here are recommendations by the National Wildlife Federation.

1. Native trees, shrubs, and perennials provide food including cones, seed heads, and berries for native and other birds.
2. A small birdbath or shallow dish can provide a much-needed water source (with a special plug-in heater during winter if possible).
3. Densely branched shrubs and evergreens offer protective cover.
4. Including a nesting boxing in your yard will create a safe place to build a nest and raise a brood at springtime.
5. Native perennials, such as milkweed, will attract the appropriate insects to provide caterpillars for the newborn birds.



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## OPEN BOCCO RESUMES

**PATTI CIPRIANO**

Weather permitting, Open Bocce resumes on March 3, 5:30–6:30 p.m. Join in by simply showing up at the bocce courts each Wednesday evening. Zero experience is necessary since bocce has simple rules making the game fun and easy for everyone! Expect COVID-19 protocol to be adhered to: mask wearing, social distancing, and hand sanitizing. Looking forward to seeing bocce regulars and new players at the bocce courts this year! Let the good times roll!

## PICKLEBALL...ARE YOU READY?

**ROSEMARY ROSENBERGER**



HAPPY FEBRUARY 2021! Ahhhh, the month where everything seems to take a pause. The hustle and bustle of the holidays is over. We enjoy watching the beautiful snow fall and glisten from the windows of our warm homes and watch it nestle softly in the trees. We start to long for that first sign of spring. The month of February gives us time to pause and focus on the upcoming warm weather and what we especially love—once again getting out to play pickleball in our beautiful Symphony Village!

For February, please feel free to gather a group of your fellow SV friends and play on

the courts whenever Mother Nature will allow (which doesn't appear to be very much this month of February)! Please remember that you must bring your own balls for play.

I know there are many, many new folks who have joined our community. To them, I'd like to say "Welcome" and I hope you will entertain the thought of joining us to learn the play this fun game! If you'd like to see what it's all about, visit the following website for an insight: <https://usapickleball.org/what-is-pickleball/>

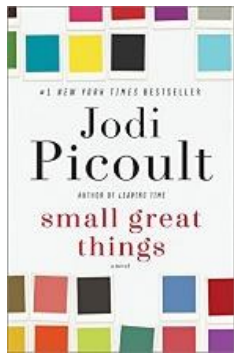
In addition, I noticed that Pickleball Central is having an awesome President's Day sale. For those who may be interested, the link is: <https://www.pickleballcentral.com/default.asp>

Check out the new paddles, ball, etc., and get ready for some pickleball March madness! My hope is that March will bring us better temperatures so we can get back to our regularly scheduled play. But until then, whatever it is that you choose to do, be safe, stay warm, and enjoy our beautiful Symphony Village! Please feel free to reach out to me should you have any questions or concerns!



## READING FOR FUN – JANUARY 2020 REVIEW

JOE SIKES, CHAIR



The SV Book Club met virtually on January 19 to discuss *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult. Our literary shindig included: Joe Sikes, Jan Withers, Bob Nilsson, Jim & Kathryn Buckheit, Sue Goldberg, JoAnn Walker, Peggy Decker, Cathy Olson, Celia Love, and Charlotte Kurst. JoAnn's daughter Jennifer also listened in.

After reading about Tangier Island last month, I was excited to find this book did not mention crabs even once. However, I look forward to reading about them on a menu when the weather turns warm.

The author uses her three main characters to narrate her story in *Small Great Things*. Ruth Jefferson is a labor and delivery nurse with a spotless record after twenty years at Mercy-West Haven Hospital in New Haven. Turk Bauer is an avowed white supremacist (with a swastika tattoo on his head) whose wife is about to deliver their first child at Mercy-West Haven. Kennedy McQuarrie is a young public defender who eschewed working at prestigious law firms to help balance the scales of justice for the poor and needy. If you deduced that the story would end up in a courtroom, you get a gold star.

The story is set in motion when Ruth attends to the Bauer's newborn son as part of her normal rotation. Ruth is the only African American in her hospital and Turk demands that she be replaced by a white nurse. The charge nurse accedes to the request and puts a note in the baby's record that Ruth is not to attend to the newborn. The next day, the baby goes into distress and Ruth is the only nurse in the immediate vicinity. While the other nurses rush to aid the child, Ruth is alone for a couple of minutes and hesitates briefly. The baby subsequently dies.

The Bauers blame Ruth for their son's death. The hospital, seeking to avoid liability itself, does not come to Ruth's defense despite her stellar record. She is eventually charged with murder and Kennedy McQuarrie is assigned as her defense attorney. The prosecution paints Ruth as an aggrieved African American whose hatred of the Bauers may have influenced her treatment of the baby. Kennedy recommends that she focus Ruth's defense on the actual medical evidence and avoid discussion of how race may have affected events. She fears discussion of race will influence the jury to be receptive to the prosecution's allegation of retribution against the white supremacist family.

The trial is complicated when a local black minister goes to the press and makes the exact argument that Ruth's lawyer wants to avoid. While Ruth sees the lawyer's reasoning from a legal standpoint, she is buffeted from all sides to speak out against the clear racism that was exhibited by the hospital and the Bauers. She accepts the legal strategy but demands a chance to testify before the trial is over.



As with any good novel, the author introduces a number of unexpected twists as the trial draws to a close. Accordingly, right and wrong became complicated and caused heavy ponderation about race, bias, and hate in our society. The Book Club had a lively discussion without solving any mysteries of the universe, except possibly this quote which rang especially true. *“Hatred erodes the container it is carried in.”* The Club enjoyed the book very much and scored it 8.15 out of 10.

We updated our list of future books which are listed below. We plan to continue meeting virtually, using Zoom technology, until vaccines can make us safe. Luckily that process has started for some SV residents. Invitations will be sent directly to those wishing to attend. If you wish to participate, contact me at [sikes.withers@yahoo.com](mailto:sikes.withers@yahoo.com)

February 16    **Ordinary Grace** by William Kent Krueger

March 16        **Don't Ever Get Old** by Daniel Friedman

April 20        **Dear Edward** by Ann Napolitano

May 18         **The Mission Song** by John le Carré

June 15         **Quiet Cadence** by Mark Treanor

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# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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## NEIGHBOR OF NOTE

MARGE STRANO

Carol Hodges has been a vital part of the SV Community for over 14 years. When Carol first arrived at Symphony Village, she decided to attend a Publications and Communications Committee meeting. Ann Walsh was the chair of the committee at that time. Somehow, while attending that meeting, Carol was asked if she would like to consider chairing the committee. By the end of that meeting, she found herself as the Chair, and has never looked back.



Early on, the committee was small, and Carol worked on her own—compiling and editing the *Libretto*, seeking ads from local businesses, and planning the welcoming of new residents. The position evolved over the years along with the expansion of the community and so have the responsibilities. Although the Chairmanship has taken a good deal of her time over the years, Carol has enjoyed being a part of Symphony Village and is very happy to have been able to serve the community in this capacity for such a long period of time. Carol says that she has great memories of visiting new residents—“it was such fun to watch them get involved and to greet them by name.” The SV Community has been the benefactor of Carol’s enthusiasm and expertise. Although she turned the chairmanship over to MaryKay Kerr last month, Carol continues to edit the *Libretto* and serves as a committee member.

Although Carol was born in England as a “war baby,” she lived in Maryland for most of her life. Her love of children and the encouragement of a math teacher while she was in high school set her on a career path. She went to Kansas State College of Pittsburg (now Pittsburg University) where she received her degree in Math Education.

Carol and Larry met at a caroling party at the Wesley Foundation on campus. Larry went to Los Angeles to teach after he graduated but returned to Kansas to do graduate work. They were married and both moved to Los Angeles to teach. At the end of the school year, they moved back to Kansas when Larry was offered a position with the Government Accounting Office (GAO). Carol started her teaching career in Bowie, Maryland, when Larry was transferred to Washington, DC.

Carol and Larry have two children, a boy and a girl, and six grandchildren. She taught math for 34 years in Prince George’s County Public Schools. Although Carol taught math on several levels, she favored teaching calculus, which she taught for many years.

She spent two years in Saudi Arabia a little later in life when her children were older. She took the opportunity to teach math at the International School while her husband was on assignment. The International School gave her the opportunity to experience and learn about many different cultures. The time in Saudi Arabia sparked an interest in travel. Carol and Larry embarked on a style of life that took them to all 50 states and beyond with Switzerland and Alaska being two of their favorite travel locations.

Eventually, Carol and Larry retired and moved to the Eastern Shore in the Ocean Pines area of Ocean City, Maryland. However, they missed seeing their family on a regular basis and began to look for a place with better access to the western shore of Maryland. Their travels often took them past Symphony Village; they decided to look at the homes and the community. It did not take very long for them to make the decision to move to Symphony Village. Carol describes her initial impression of Symphony Village as a first-time experience on a cruise ship. The opportunity for meeting people, participating in various Clubhouse events, and enjoying the Clubhouse amenities made their decision easy.

Carol’s interests after retirement are not limited to committee work. She enjoys eating out on a regular basis; every restaurant is a new adventure. Her memories of her grandmother’s love for gardening piqued her avid interest in working in her own garden throughout the years. She also immerses herself in crafting, puzzles, computers, playing cards, and in construction and building. Yes, that’s correct; she and Larry built a two-bedroom house on 100 acres in the Pennsylvania woods and used the cabin as their getaway until they moved to SV. We thank



Carol for all of her service to the SV Community throughout the years and look forward to her continued committee work in the future.

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## CENTREVILLE HAPPENINGS

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### LOCAL EVENTS

LINDA BLUME

- **Kent Island Farmers' Market**: Thursdays, year-round, winter hours (1/7 – 2/25) 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.: Outside Cult Classic Brewery (1169 Shopping Center Road, Stevensville): [KI Farmers' Market](#)
- **Chestertown Winter Farmers' Market**: Saturdays, 8 a.m. – noon, weather permitting: Fountain Park, Chestertown: [Chestertown Farmer's Market](#)
- **Cabin Fever Film Festival**: Wednesdays, December 16, 2020 – March 24, 2021, 7 p.m.: Online via Zoom or YouTube: [Cabin Fever Film Festival](#) (Free)
- **The Annapolis Shakespeare Company Cabaret Series presents “Be My Baby: Best of the Girl Groups”**: On demand, February 3 - 25: [Be My Baby](#) (\$)
- **The Annapolis Shakespeare Company presents “All That Jazz”**: On demand, February 8 - 28: [Annapolis Shakespeare Company](#) (\$)
- **The Annapolis Shakespeare Company Cabaret Series presents “My Funny Valentine”**: On demand, March 1 – April 1: [My Funny Valentine](#) (\$)

Please check websites for any updated information on the above events.

### Upcoming Events “at” the Centreville Branch of the QAC Library

- **Thursday, March 11**, 1–2 p.m.: Zoom: [Quilt Pattern History](#) (Preregister on the website)

Note: Please confirm that the event is still scheduled before going to the library. Just check the indicated web page above.

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### SYMPHONY VILLAGE CONTACTS

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