



Village Holiday Spirit - Home is Where the Heart Is

By Vanessa Renna

Nothing wakes you up and gets your adrenaline going like emergency phone alerts or first responders telling you to evacuate your home. Nearly everyone in the Village was evacuated for a time last month as a wind-driven firestorm tore across our neighborhoods. Our village responded with volunteers and members reaching out to see if people were safe, offering shelter and other forms of help. We are thankful that everyone in our Village is safe. With the fire coming on the heels of the loss of 12 residents in the Borderline shooting, we enter the holidays as a community in need of healing, very grateful for our first responders, even more determined to help others who need support.

Our experiences of the last few weeks have had a lasting impact and make us think about what is



most important to us. The lives of our family, friends and pets, of course, top the list. The opportunity to create new memories and reminisce about old ones with those we care about is a powerful motivator that brings us together and keeps us connected as a Village

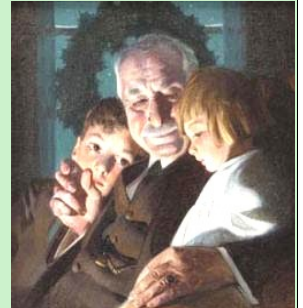
family. Seeing each other's smiles, telling stories about our daily adventures, sharing new experiences, celebrating our successes and supporting our challenges, enjoying satisfying meals and conversation, comforting others in times of need, being wrapped up



in a warm hug, lending a helping hand, experiencing the unconditional love of a dear pet, laughing just because we can.....**all expressions of a joyful heart. This is where "home" is and these are the things we can't replace.** This holiday season, we treasure the uniquely personal experiences and memories with others that fill our hearts with joy and gratitude. We are very grateful that our Village has created an extended family and caring friendships we can rely upon in good times and bad.

Perhaps this year we have a sharper focus on all that we are celebrating, and a heartfelt appre-

ciation that every day we get another chance to enjoy and cherish it all over again. Grateful hearts, indeed.



We wish you and your families peace, joy and comfort this holiday season! Happy Hanukah and Merry Christmas! We look forward to seeing members and volunteers at our Holiday Party on December 13th at Buca Di Beppo's (see insert). Remember to drop off donations for the Senior Concerns gift baskets at the Goebel lobby by December 11th (see pg. 2).

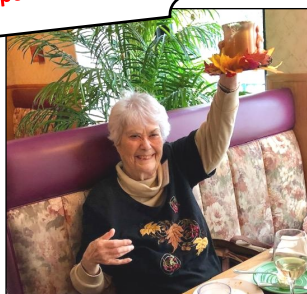
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See Insert for
Upcoming Events

An Emotional Time for the Village



Thanks to our newly formed Decorating Committee who created the beautiful centerpieces given away as door prizes to adorn tables at home. Below left: Committee members Val, Mary K, Delores and Mary H. Not pictured: Susan A, Susan W. Prize winners above included Emerald, Susan, Joyce, and Steve (below right).

More than 40 members, volunteers and guests gathered at Country Harvest for our CVV Thanksgiving. It was a time to reflect on the recent emotional events in our community and how we were all impacted. Many of us were displaced from our homes needing to seek shelter elsewhere and a few had damaged homes or neighbors' homes destroyed. Following a moment of silence for the Borderline victims, we expressed thanks for our first responders and all that we have. We enjoyed a traditional turkey feast, wine and pie for dessert while catching up with everyone. While it has been a tough time, we will recover and continue to support our community together.



Left: Vanessa greets everyone at Thanksgiving dinner.



At our Octoberfest potluck we celebrated Halloween with great food, friends and costumes. Top: Nancy, Vasu, Susan, Yvette, Mary K. Below: Toni, Dena; costumed Events Committee: Maryann, Carr, Deborah, Sharon, Nancy, Barbara & Lori.

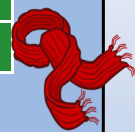


Photos courtesy of Maryann Gitt

Giving Back: Holiday Reminders

Holiday gift basket donations for Senior Concerns due 12/11 - place in the CVV donation bin at Goebel Center Lobby or call Vanessa at (805) 630-4761 for pickup. Requested new unwrapped items:

Socks for men or women	2019 Calendars	Toothbrushes and toothpaste
Hand lotion	Kitchen towels	Large-print
Stuffed animals	Pen and stationery	Scarves



Shop at Barnes & Noble - let us wrap your gifts to help us raise money for CVV on 12/9 from 1-5 pm, 12/20 from 5-9 pm and 12/22 from 5-9 pm!

Helping Our Community Heal

In honor of the twelve lives lost on November 7th at the Borderline and in support of those impacted by the fires, CVV made a donation to the Ventura County Community Foundation's Conejo Valley Victims Fund for the families of the shooting victims and Hill/Woolsey Fire Sudden Urgent Needs Fund for fire victims. Information about how you can help was sent by email last month but can also be requested from a Call Manager at (805) 372-1826.

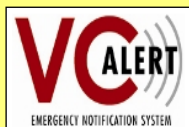


Must Have: Emergency Alerts



If you have a cell phone and did not receive any alerts for the recent fires, you should sign up to receive these alerts on your phone so you can be informed about weather, fire or police emergencies in our area. Local websites below also provide updates about evacuations, shelters, road closures, and resources.

If you live in **Ventura County**, you can sign up for alerts at www.readyventuracounty.org/vc-alert or for help signing up call (805) 648-9283. For emergency updates and information, call (805) 465-6650 or go to www.VCemergency.org.



If you live in **Westlake Village**, you can sign up for the Notify Me alert program at www.wlv.org and the Connect-CTY program at www.wlv.org/189/Emergency-Preparedness. For help signing up, call (818) 706-1613. Get emergency updates and information, at www.wlv.org/AlertCenter.aspx.



Easy Fundraising for CVV

SUPPORT CVV WHEN YOU SHOP

There are two easy ways you can help raise funds for CVV when you shop at Ralphs or online at Amazon. Here's how:

Go to www.ralphs.com and register Conejo Valley Village (#82606) as your charity on your Ralphs Rewards Card. Ralphs will donate 1-4% of your monthly qualifying purchases to CVV. Remember to swipe your card at the checkout!



Go to www.smile.amazon.com and logon with your regular Amazon account ID and password. Register Conejo Valley Village as your charity to support, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to CVV. Be sure to make your future Amazon purchases via www.smile.amazon.com.



For detailed instructions, call (805) 372-1826 or email cvv@conejovalleyvillage.org.

THANK YOU!



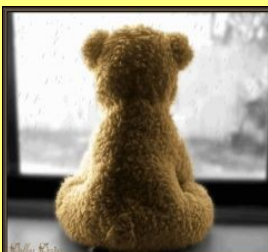
Ways to Leave Those Holiday Blues Out in the Cold

By Loretta Allen

Below is an excerpt of a helpful article by Margarita Tartakovsky, M.S about ways to cope with holiday blues. The full article is at <https://psychcentral.com/blog/coping-with-loneliness-during-the-holidays/>

Loneliness is common during the holidays.....Expectations are high, and comparisons run rampant. Many people feel tremendous pressure to be happy and socially connected. There's a prevailing sense that everyone is living a Hall-mark movie with the ideal family and perfect celebrations. That is, everyone but you. And this can trigger feelings of isolation. Loneliness lies on a continuum, and it can be painful. It may lead you to turn to unhealthy habits and toxic people. Suggestions for coping healthfully with loneliness (more detail in full article):

Seek company	Avoid social media
Share your feelings	Honor your feelings
Ask for what you need	Practice self-care
Have realistic expectations of support others can give	Choose a social group that appreciates you
Volunteer	Seek therapy if needed



Increase natural light and bring in plants to tend to in your home to help lift your mood. Decorate with cheerful colors. Cook or buy something that fills your home with wonderful aromas.

Come to a CVV event, meet new people and have a great time! See the insert and call (805) 372-1826 to sign up.

It's been said that emotions are like rooms in a house. It's fine to visit the rooms of loneliness or depression at times and acknowledge their presence, but since they aren't very useful or enjoyable rooms, make it a short stay then move on to the happy, comforting and functional rooms of the house and be sure to linger there!

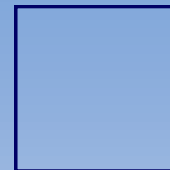
Try an exercise our journaling leader Barbara Jimerson calls "evening reflections" - a process of recalling the events of your day and focusing on the special moments that occurred no matter how small and what made them memorable. Reflecting on these sweeter experiences for a few moments before the day ends helps pave the way for positivity the next day. Jot them down so you can enjoy reading them again if you need them.



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Phone: (805) 372-1826
Email: cvv@conejovalleyvillage.org
Website: www.conejovalleyvillage.org

The mission of Conejo Valley Village is to help seniors remain independent in their homes and stay active in our community.



*Say 'Thank You' to our local
First Responders for protecting
our lives and property*



Neighbors Helping Neighbors Stay Independent, Active and Connected



Conejo Valley Village is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). Donations are tax-deductible.

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS

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Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteers: Please email your total volunteer hours estimated through the end of the month by the 25th to volunteerhours@conejovalleyvillage.org. Thanks for all you do for CVV!

Volunteer Wish List

- Invest in the community I love
- Share my life experience and skills
- Help my neighbors live better
- Support the needs of our seniors
- Meet others with similar interests
- New friends and new experiences
- Make a positive impact on others
- Stay active and involved
- Help shape our Village



*Volunteering is the
gift you give to
someone else and
yourself at the
same time!*

**REGIFTING IS
ENCOURAGED!!**

*Call (805) 372-1826 for more info
Members make great volunteers!*

**SAVE
THE DATE!**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22

**CVV All Volunteer
Program Meeting**

4 - 6 pm

Goebel Center

More details to come in
our January newsletter