



## Independence from Her Dependents - A Son's View

*Below is an article by son Chris Jones, sharing what his mother's participation in CVV has meant to him.*

**By Chris Jones**

My adult daughter was diagnosed with a rare cancer called chordoma and I was her primary caregiver

from 2013-2018. I know firsthand the toll, taking time off from work driving to what feels like endless doctor appointments, to numerous treatments and physical therapies, all while juggling my responsibilities at work. Add to that, my mother, Emerald Jones, is in her 80s, she lives alone, and has lost most of her eyesight so she's unable to drive.

I noticed that my mom stopped calling me for various rides about a year ago. When asked why, she casually mentioned that a neighbor was driving her to the grocery store, to the doctor, and even going to her house to help her sort her mail and walk her dog. I asked my mom who these new neighbors were and how did they suddenly surface. She said they're from 'the Village.' While appreciative, "trust but verify, right?!" I have to admit that I was a tad concerned about who these new people were.

I know how my mom's seemingly endless doctor appointments including follow-ups from recent knee surgery could burnout a friend or a friendly neighbor very quickly. While I was extremely grateful that a neighbor was able to drive my mom here and there, I was fairly certain it wouldn't last and her transportation needs would become a huge gap and likely fall on me since my sister lives out of the area.

I learned 'the Village' is actually the Conejo Valley Village; a non-profit organization with a team of vetted and background-checked volunteers who provide services to seniors like my mom enabling her to live alone without my feeling the sole responsibility of driving her everywhere she wants and needs to go. The volunteers are not caregivers, but what they do very effectively is enable my elderly mother, who's legally blind and requires a walker, to continue living



Emerald with son Chris

alone by taking her to the grocery store, driving her to doctor appointments, and even going by her house a few times a week to walk her dog. After a deeper dive in to the Village's website, I was even more impressed! They have numerous planned member outings each month like a trip to the mall, games, group lunches and dinners, movie nights and more, even providing transportation to these planned social events that I would crave if I lived alone and was unable to drive.

I know my mother is extremely thankful and very fond of the village volunteers such as Anne, Carr, Deborah and others as well as fellow members. Not only do they help elderly people like my mom who can still safely live in her home alone, the Village provides a huge sense of relief and comfort for people like me. My wife and I recently took an extended vacation abroad, which would have been impossible without the Village, or without my sister pulling her daughter out of school, taking vacation time from work, and traveling to Newbury Park to help our mom with grocery store runs and getting to doctor appointments.

I'm proud of my mom and I sense that she's proud too! She seems to have a sense of independence now that would have been impossible without the Village volunteers, its tribal elders/leadership, and the people who donate to this outstanding non-profit. I can't begin to express the levels of gratitude and appreciation my sister and I have for everything the Village does for our mom, which ultimately benefits us significantly.



Emerald with volunteers (from left) Anne holding Emerald's dog Bella, Carr, Deborah

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See Insert for  
Upcoming Events

## Lucky to Celebrate Together

Oh so  
**LUCKY**  
to have  
you!  
in the  
**Village!**



We celebrated St. Patrick's Day at Brendan's Irish Pub. Top: Ann, Barbara, Billie. Bottom left: Barbara, Rosalee, Marty. Bottom right: Tis, Mary Kay.



Lucky charms below in clover, from top left clockwise: Tom, Bunnie, Dick, Toni



Photos courtesy of Deborah Mason

## 2nd ANNIVERSARY SPRING FIESTA!

**April 7th, 4-6 pm**

Members & Volunteers - Join us for fun with your Village amigos and a delicious Mexican Feast catered by Cisco's!

Where: Oak Forest Estates Clubhouse



Call (805) 372-1826 or go online to register! Full members needing a ride should call by 4/1. Non-member volunteers call to register.

## Welcome

### New Members & Volunteers!

We are happy you have joined the Village! We look forward to serving you and seeing you at upcoming events. Join us at our Spring Fiesta!

#### New Members

Ann K.	Patricia L.	Nancy G.	Eva C.
Judith S.	Valerie G.	Charles V.	Karen V.
Maria K.	Irving C.	Meredith B.	Stephen F.
Bonnie B.	Diana C.	David M.	Beverly F.
Barbara S.	Sharyl F.		

#### New Volunteers

Meredith B.	Stephen H.	Judith S.
Maria K.	Karen I.	





## Traveler's Series: Penny Explores Morocco

### Exotic Adventure, New Cultural Experiences Penny Smith's Exciting Trip to Morocco

By Loretta Allen

Known by all for her adventuresome spirit, in December 2017 Penny Smith was off to Morocco. She says Morocco's contradictions were amazing, not like any other country she had visited. Ancient and modern, Arab and Berber, European and African, religious and secular – it really is the proverbial land of contrast and captivating extremes.



Imagine spending nights in a tent being a speck in the vastness of the Sahara with sunrises and sunsets that are sheer beauty!! At sunrise one morning she sees a speck in the distance moving toward her – oh my, it is a little girl coming to sell her wares. Of course she buys something!!

Her unique lodging experiences included the tent in the desert and a stay in a Riad, a palatial tiled home converted to a hotel. While not having the modern amenities of elevators, phones and room service she was content with the exquisite architecture, stairs, tiles and fountains.

Many of the cities she visited had bustling outdoor



markets contained in a maze of streets without cars. Cafes, shops, donkeys and people surrounded her. The exotic cuisine consisted of fruits, vegetables, lamb, chicken, spic-

es cooked in an earthen ware pot called a Tagine. The food was delicious.

Sitting outside a Mosque watching the noon Muslim prayer service was another moving experience. And yes, in Marrakesh, there was the proverbial Snake Charmer! Nine hours on a bus through the winding Atlas Mountains brought her to the 3.5 million miles of the Sahara desert. Glamping (glamorous camping) on the sand in freezing weather and riding in a camel caravan all part of her Moroccan experience.

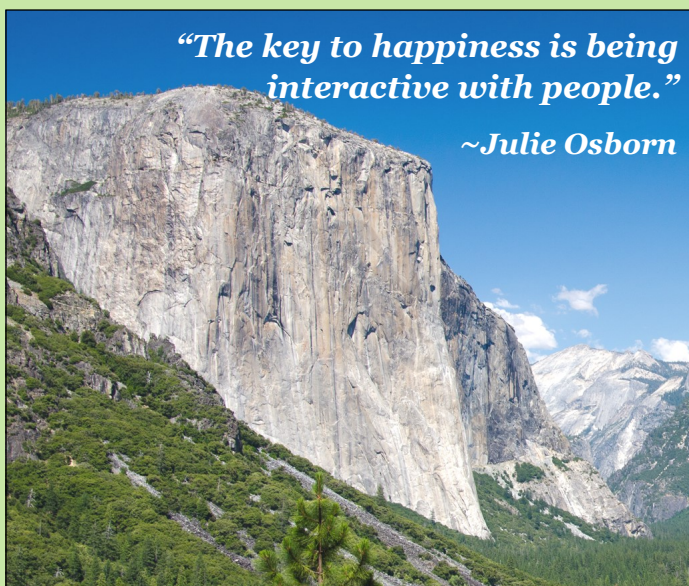
Penny says she came away with a greater understanding of the people, the diverse scenery, the way of life - opening her up to a new culture and an appreciation of their unique traditions. Doesn't it make you want to go??



## Meet Member & Volunteer - Julie Osborn

By Billie Sontag

You may have seen photos of Julie in our *Village Connections* newsletters with different groups of members she has led on open space walks in our lovely surrounding areas. It combines two of the things she likes best about belonging to Conejo Valley Village – socializing with people and volunteering. She enjoys sharing her love of the outdoors with members. She arranges these walks once a month to include



*"The key to happiness is being interactive with people."*

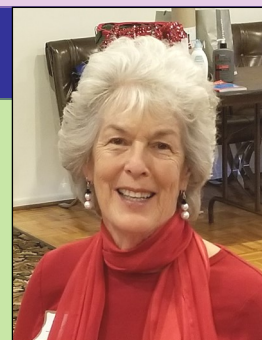
~Julie Osborn

everyone, no matter what their physical ability is. She encourages all members to try regardless of how fast or slow you walk or if you use ambulatory equipment. It's a fun way to get together while enjoying the scenery and fresh air.

Julie retired from her job as a Labor Attorney for the National Labor Relations Board over twenty years ago because she preferred to be outdoors doing the things she loved and wanted to be free to be useful to her community. As a person who loves nature and outdoor activities, she enjoys hiking two or three times a week and working in her garden. She volunteers for Conejo Open Space to help beautify our landscape.

Julie believes the world is very interesting so she embraces adventure. She has travelled extensively, and especially enjoyed archeology related trips to Jordan, Turkey, Cambodia and Mayan ruins. She has an upcoming Volunteer Vacation planned to Yosemite to work on plant restoration to help the valley remain as beautiful as it is. This is particularly important to her since that is where she was born.

We're so lucky to have Julie sharing her love of nature and friendship with us. Come join us on a future walk and meet Julie and other Villagers!

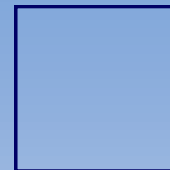




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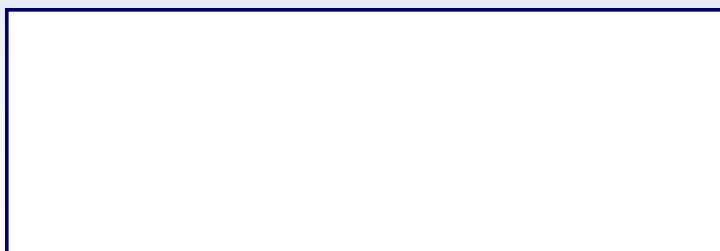
The mission of Conejo Valley Village is to help seniors remain independent in their homes and stay active in our community.



Sign up for our  
2nd anniversary  
Spring Fiesta on  
April 7th!



### 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](mailto:volunteerhours@conejovalleyvillage.org). Thanks for all you do for CVV!



**Share Your Talents with the Village!**

**We're looking for people to help with:**

- Light Gardening
- Electronics Set Up
- Dog-Walking
- Minor Repairs

**Call (805) 372-1826**

**CVV All Volunteer Program Meeting**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 23**

**4 - 6 pm**

**Goebel Center**

Join us to share your experience, questions and concerns as volunteers and to meet new volunteers!

Sign up online or call

**(805) 372-1826**



**CVV VOLUNTEER SURVEY**

*We are interested in learning how your CVV volunteer experience can be improved. Watch for more info in April!*