



Change is Good - CVV Board Leads by Example

By Barbara Jimerson

Life is full of transitions for each of us, including the dedicated leadership of Conejo Valley Village. **And if there's one thing we know in the Village, it's that change always brings new opportunities.** Stepping down from their positions with the CVV Board, but not stepping away, are two notable women: **Vanessa Renna** and **Brenda Birdwell**.



Vanessa Renna



Brenda Birdwell

Vanessa and Brenda were both original village enthusiasts prior to the formation of Conejo Valley Village in November 2015, and continued as part of the group that helped our Village open its virtual doors in April 2017. Vanessa's new career in Ventura as well as the end of her term have resulted in her leaving her board position as director of marketing. Brenda's full-time career and local community interests resulted in her resignation from her board position of director of outreach.

Vanessa's role on CVV's board was marketing where she was adept at creating unique ways to advertise CVV and its benefits, including producing our monthly newsletter. To her credit, Vanessa was able to combine clever ideas with conscientious use of funds

that displayed our "product" of good will and compassionate community caring. Of her service on the board, Vanessa said "In just a few short years, CVV has made a lasting, posi-

Progress is Impossible Without Change

tive impact in the lives of seniors in our community. I am honored to have played a role in building our Village and thankful to have met and learned so much from the many caring, talented, and energetic people in our Village family." Vanessa will remain a CVV volunteer and continue as newsletter editor and newsletter team leader.

As director of outreach, Brenda scheduled speakers to introduce our non-profit organization to the community, she enrolled our village in local street fairs and wellness events, and she sought a variety of avenues to herald CVV's benefits and purpose. Brenda expected that people new to the village concept would think about its purpose in one way. She discovered they had other reactions. "I thought what we would hear is that people were interested in receiving services, but what came out loud and clear was that people wanted to feel like part of a community." Brenda intends to remain a CVV volunteer and a social member. After

all, what led her to be a part of this organization was that her upbringing nurtured this type of commitment. She said, "I am originally from a small town in Tennessee. We were always taught to do the right thing...there was always a 'grandma' who was no relation whom we would visit with and bring food. The sense of doing the right thing has stuck with me."



Chris Jones



Danny White

Departures from these vital board positions would normally present gaping holes in any organization; however, **CVV was fortunate to have two distinctly valuable members eager to step into these leadership roles, Chris Jones and Danny White.**

Chris Jones, whose heartfelt article on what drew him to the CVV organization was published in an earlier newsletter, saw firsthand the blossoming effect that CVV services had

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See Insert for
Upcoming Events

Village Happenings



Julia Osborn-Gourley Memorial Hike

Sunday March 15, 1pm
at Hill Canyon

If you would like to join the Village in celebrating Julie's life with a hike to one of her favorite spots, contact Barbara Balke at (818) 991-8110 or email Barbara.a.balke@gmail.com for more information. See the tribute to Julie on page 3.

SAVE THE DATE: Wed., April 22, 4:30

CVV 3rd
**ANNIVERSARY
PARTY**
for Members and
Volunteers



Details in the April newsletter and online soon

Below: Fusion Grill was the place for lots of smiling Village faces - Lilo, Hazel, Mary Kay and Dick enjoy visiting.

Right: Chris and Delores ready to dig into some delicious Fusion Grill specials



Left: Marv seems very happy with his handmade creations he gets to take home!

Below: Bunnie, Billie, Marv, Sue and Tom try their hand at making chocolates at locally-owned Newberry Candy shop



Whether it's food, fun or friendship, there's always something for everyone at CVV! Join us at any of our upcoming events in March and get connected with a great group of folks!

Photos courtesy of Maryann Gitt



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on his mother Emerald. Chris will be heading up outreach in his board position. When asked what piqued his interest in becoming involved with this board responsibility, he said, "prior to becoming a member, my mom had very limited social interaction with anyone close to her age. As a member she has over a dozen opportunities every month to socialize with peers and forge friendships....The village is a movement of neighbors helping neighbors." Chris' career background as a systems engineer, project manager, and senior technical manager will enhance his role on the board.

Another gentleman who has been with CVV since its inception, Danny White, will continue to supply cogent statistical data as well as review trending patterns to add to CVV's community contributions. Danny's background in mathematics and his varied careers in teaching and computer programming will serve to keep CVV growing and expanding its services. When asked about the future of the Village, Danny noted, "CVV is steadily growing and evolving to better meet the needs of its members, especially as an important social network for many elderly members. Thousand Oaks, itself, is becoming much more of an aging retire-

ment community as people like my wife and I decide to retire here. Conejo Valley Village will become an even more important organization in the future by being able to support the independent living goals of these retirees."

On behalf of our CVV board, chairperson Val Fitch said "We extend our sincere gratitude to Vanessa and Brenda for their immense contributions to the Village since our inception. And, we enthusiastically welcome to the board Chris and Danny, whose diverse talents will continue to move us forward." **The Village family is rooted in a solid foundation, ready for new growth and in great hands!** Change is good.

In Memoriam and Admiration of Julia Osborn-Courley

By Lois Barberio

John Muir said that "Everyone needs beauty as well as bread, places to play and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike." This is knowledge that Julie knew in her heart. She lived it.

And it is also the gift and legacy that Julie leaves behind. She respected nature and was committed to the preservation of trails and open spaces in the Conejo Valley.

For twenty years, as president of the Conejo Valley Open Space Foundation, Julie coordinated the establishment and maintenance of multi-use trails. Julie was also an educator and shared her love of nature across generations. She was instrumental in enacting a trail education program that has brought environmental education to thousands of school children. Through education and example Julie led the fight to remove non-native plants and restore our open spaces.

As many of you know, as a Village volunteer, Julie introduced and hosted monthly gentle hikes and ensured that each person, regardless of



physical abilities, was able to fully engage in the beauty and healing of nature. As Dena S so beautifully said of Julie, "This woman enabled me and others to revisit the outdoors, the beauty, the sights, the smells and the wind without fear or limitations...She brought light and love into my soul..." Julie's passion changed lives. When some members could

not get out to nature, she quietly brought nature to them.

But there was more to Julie than just her love of nature. Her impact will be remembered by many members who she truly cared about. Julie championed not only women's rights but, human rights for all. She was a leader with a streak of tenacity and determination and yet Julie could appear reserved - but I think that was just a shield to protect her gentle and giving heart. She carried herself as if she was of royal heritage. Perhaps her regal bearing was due to her

love of people and nature, for as Thoreau wrote, "I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees." Julie you are missed. Good-bye my friend. There will be a local hike in Julie's honor on Sunday, March 15th (see page 2).



Meet Member: Delores Dubbs

By Billie Sontag

Delores comes from a medical family who enjoy helping others. She worked at the old Thousand Oaks Hospital for a year and then at Los Robles Hospital for 34 years, starting there 5 months after it opened. At first she was an LVN for 25 years and then went back to school to become an RN for 19 years. She spent 20 years in general surgery and orthopedics and 14 years in outpatient surgery. Her sister is also a nurse, her daughter is an occupational therapist, her daughter-in-law is a nurse mid wife, and her oldest granddaughter is working on her master's degree in health management. Both her sister, Arlene, and granddaughter, Jesslyn, are CVV Volunteers.

Delores joined CVV early on in May of 2017 after attending a meeting in the Library. She volunteers on the Outreach Committee, where she has arranged for speakers to visit churches to talk about CVV and recruit new members and volunteers.

As a representative of the Care Committee, she makes calls to several members to chat and see how they are doing. She enjoys going to social

events like Meet and Greets, parties, and Potlucks.

Delores is also an active co-leader of the TOPS Club (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), a national non-profit organization which meets once a week. She loves to read, bake quick breads and cookies, and do paper crafts, including making her own greeting cards and decorations. She tries to walk every day. She enjoys going on cruises. In August she went on a nine country Baltic cruise with her sister, niece and nephew and has also taken cruises to Bermuda, the Panama Canal, Mexico, and Alaska.

Delores was one of 4 children and originally from Minnesota. Her family moved to Thousand Oaks in 1948. She watched Los Robles and Thousand Oaks constantly grow and change over the years. She has been widowed for 29 years and has 2 sons and 1 daughter, 6 grandkids, and 1 great grandson. Thank you, Delores, for sharing your talent and your caring with your community and CVV.



"There is little success where there is little laughter."

~Andrew Carnegie

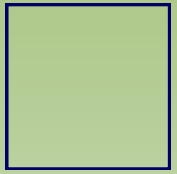




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Website: www.conejovalleyvillage.org

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



**Reminder: Turn
Your Clocks
AHEAD one hour
Sunday, March 8**



Neighbors Helping Neighbors Stay Independent, Active and Connected



Other Helpful Spring Reminders:

Check batteries in smoke detectors

Restock your emergency supplies:
water, non-perishable foods, pet
food, month's supply of prescription
and other medications.



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!



FRIENDLY DRIVERS NEEDED



You drive and members thrive!

Volunteers are needed to give members rides to medical appointments and important errands. A reliable and friendly ride helps CVV members maintain their health, households and social connections and reduce stress.

Benefits for Volunteers:

Instant gratification of helping members!

Quality time spent making new friends!

Select requests that fit your schedule!

\$0.58/mile reimbursement!

For more information, call (805) 372-1826

Background check process required to provide transportation.

**CVV All Volunteer
Meeting**

TUES, MARCH 24

4 - 6 pm

Hosted at Volunteer home

Join us to share your volunteer questions, experiences, and ideas and to meet fellow CVV volunteers!

Sign up online or call

(805) 372-1826