

# NOV Newsletter -- January 2015



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## North Oakland Village

## Monthly Newsletter



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ONGOING EVENTS

>> Monday Menders

### Happening in January

Monday Menders Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26

Walking Group Jan. 14, 21, 28

Organization Jan. 15  
Workshop

Bridge Group Jan. 16

Village Meeting January 25

Pot Luck January 25

Book Group January 30

### President's Letter

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope that the holiday festivities were full of laughter, fun and good food! It's very special when there are opportunities to get together with family, but it's often just as special to get together with new and long-time friends. May you be left with a wonderful sense of being appreciated, valued and loved. And, may you have contributed that feeling to all of those you were with and may your souls be nourished by that feeling.

I love the holiday season, and go all out to see that there is no corner of my home that

>> The Walking Group

>> Monthly Bridge Game

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS

>> Movie Night!

#### COMING ATTRACTIONS

### Village Meeting

January 25, 2015

Village Meeting

3:00 PM

### Monthly Potluck

4:30 PM (or so)

NOV Headquarters

First Congregational Church

25th at Harrison

Need a ride? Call

510/547-8500

is not decorated. We have a wonderful, fake Christmas tree that has fiber optics worked into it so that the ends of each branch light up. On top of that are ornaments that represent our whole lives. There are a few from our childhoods which have not yet broken; there are straw ornaments that we bought when we lived in Sweden; there is a reindeer head that one of our grandchildren made and a plaster of Paris plaque that one of our children made; there are symbols from many of the countries that we've visited; and across the passage between the dining room and living room are stars and snowflakes from the Metropolitan Museum of Art that I have been collecting for 30 years. Since all of the major religions have a celebration of Light at this time of year, we have a small "altar" for each religion with a saying on Light from its Holy Book and one or two representative symbols. The decorating and putting away are yearly rituals that add to the joy and meaning of the season.

It is now well into 2015; did you ever think we'd get this far into the 21st Century?! The Village is looking at a year full of activities -- social, educational, entertaining and nourishing. The "nourishment" will begin with our potluck on January 25, but the format will be a bit different. We are going to have an all-Village meeting to start off at 3:00 PM. We want to hear your ideas for programs that you would like to have, your ideas for improving our services and your ideas for what needs to happen so that we can thrive as we continue to grow. The Board and the Volunteers will be there to share their ideas and to listen to yours. After we have

exhausted our "brainstorming" powers,  
we'll all join in our regular Last Sunday of  
the Month Potluck. Be sure to let us know  
if you need a ride!

– Sandra Coleman  
President

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## Passing of a Member and Friend

Barbara Wolf: January 2, 1924 – November 21, 2014

Shortly after I became the regular Monday office volunteer and established Monday Menders so that I could help people with sewing things and other involving needles, Barbara was delivered to the office at 51st and Broadway by Paratransit. She was carrying a bag in which there was a sweater that needed to be finished. Her daughter had given it to her and she had valiantly set about adding the final touches. She got stuck and brought it in. I showed her what to do; she stayed to talk, so I ended up driving her home, and we became fast friends.

She was a delightful woman. She was born in Chicago, attended Catholic schools, studied nursing, married a brilliant man with whom she had three children and then divorced. She was left to raise the children and launch them into adulthood and then pursued her love of nursing in many places, ending up in the Bay Area. When she joined the Village she lived in the Temescal area. She came regularly to Monday Menders and particularly enjoyed it when other members came in. She often came to our monthly potlucks. Over time she needed another place to live so went to live with a daughter in Pennsylvania. The winter was hard and she longed to be back in the Bay Area. She returned and moved into The Point, where she was able to meet new friends. She quickly acquired a circle of friends, many with medical backgrounds. Her son visited her every day, and she was really quite content. But her health failed, and on November 21 last year she died peacefully in her room at The Point.

We had many wonderful conversations about life, religion, art (she was an artist), travel, pets, and children (both hers and mine). She was always happy to see me, and I her. She was a woman with a lifetime of will, and she will be greatly missed.

– Sandra Coleman

Board Member Profile: Paul White

Paul was walking around Rockridge Shopping Center with his wife one day when they passed the North Oakland Village office. "That looks like a group I'd like to be involved with," he said and he has been a presence ever since.

A Board member for several years, the job demands have kept him from being as active as he wanted to be. But that will change as he phases out his insurance business and gets even more involved in community activities. Besides NOV, he volunteers with East Oakland Boxing Assn. and Junior Achievement, both youth groups, where he encourages kids to develop job skills. "Don't let low income get in the way of your getting job training," he tells them. "You can get an entry level job and go to community college at night. That can be the first step on the ladder to higher education and a better job."



He knows what he's talking about. When he came back from Europe after having joined the Air Force at seventeen and living in Europe for eight years, he got a job and started going to college part-time. Having been discharged when he was stationed in Las Vegas, it was natural to come to California for its generous educational possibilities. Eventually, taking a course here, a couple there, but always staying employed, he found himself with a B.A. in Fine Arts and an M.A.M. in Management. Meanwhile, he retired from the Air Force Reserves as a Chief Master Sergeant.

Along the way he met his wife, Gerri, a fellow multitasker, in San Francisco. They've been married for 41 years. With their two adult children now living lives of their own, Paul and Gerri use their considerable combined energy to collaborate on creating websites and blogs that address health issues. They're hopeful these sites are a source of information for seniors.

Paul grew up in Florida. He took his first job at nine years old when he got a newspaper delivery route. Intent on his purpose and focused on his task even at that age, he politely refused regular offers from housewives to come inside and have a cookie. Some of that focus may have come from advice his dad gave him. "Always listen to others," Dad told him. "Everyone knows something you don't know." If you've ever been in a meeting with Paul you know he has taken that advice to heart. He sits back, with little to say, as he takes it all in while paying close attention.

Paul thinks North Oakland Village has a great opportunity to serve Oakland and

is happy to be part of its guiding body. He'd like to see our organization expand to reach more people and grow into a group with a wider generation base and more political support. Perhaps with his participation that could happen. NOV is fortunate to have this persistent, energetic man and the vision he brings to the Board. Thank you, Paul.

– Ruby Long

## Special Birthdays Abound

November and December seems to be a time of special birthdays at the Village.

At the November potluck the highlight of the evening was the celebration of



Om turns 95

member Om Aggarwal's 95th birthday. Arranged by his wife Saroj, there was a wonderful cake. Volunteer Paul Shepard helped Saroj out and was able to get a cake done in the colors of the national flag of India. According to Lynda Pike "Om told the funniest two jokes at his birthday potluck...he had EVERYONE, everyone in stitches including himself to the point that he could barely finish the punch line." She would love him to

repeat his performance sometime.

At the December 12 Holiday Sing Along member George Hickman was honored for his 95th Birthday. There was also a cake for him. Member Bob Field, who also had a birthday around that time, was saluted at the same event though he has to wait some years for that special 95th birthday. It was a great event. Check below for other photos of the tuneful event.



George Hickman

## Getting Organized Workshop

Is 2015 the year you will finally get organized, clear out clutter, simplify and use your space more efficiently, maybe even consider whether it's time to downsize? Is it your closets, your kitchen, a spare room, or your desk that desperately needs to be organized?

Joanne Devereaux of Mindful Transitions ([www.mtransitions.com](http://www.mtransitions.com)) is offering a free workshop to help you jump-start January and get going on those resolutions.

Mark your calendars: the free workshop is on Thursday, January 15, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the North Oakland Village Office.





# All Village Meeting and Potluck

Sunday, January 25

3:00 pm

Meeting to hear and share ideas

4:30 or so - Potluck

at the NOV Office

First Congregational Church

1501 Harrison (at 27th)

Oakland

Parking around to the back of the church

## Non-Fiction Book Group

Do you enjoy reading and discussing non-fiction? Have you read something recently that raised issues you'd love to talk about? Let's meet monthly for a Non-fiction Book Group and start by discussing *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande on Friday, January 30, 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the NOV office.

Bring your ideas for books to discuss, and ways to structure meetings to foster lively and enjoyable discussions. Dates, times, places of future meetings are open for the group to decide. RSVP to the office at 510-547-8500 or contact Judith Coates at [jdcoates13@yahoo.com](mailto:jdcoates13@yahoo.com) for more information.



Members and Volunteers, join us in this great way to start the New Year.

## Incident in Siena

We should have listened! Rob and I, along with our friends Tom and Nancy, had spent the day driving from Lucca to Siena. It was a glorious route through the Tuscan countryside as we stopped in a few of the little hill towns along the way. We arrived at the city walls of Siena later than we had planned and were weary after a full day of climbing the hilly streets and sampling the local gelatos of San Gimignano, Volterra and others. Dusk was rapidly approaching and we wanted to get to our hotel as quickly as possible.



"Mario," our GPS voice, told us to turn right at the intersection. I was reading the map and was pretty sure that the voice was wrong. If we turned left into the city gate, we'd be at the hotel quicker. We pulled over to consult, and the vote was to turn left. We shortly discovered how quickly a democratic decision could go awry.

We soon ended up on a one-way pedestrian, restricted street. We weren't exactly driving on the sidewalks, but since it was a Friday night, the streets were full of strollers, wall-to-wall, savoring the late October evening. We were committed and there was no turning around, so we slowly nudged our way through the throngs of people in our paths. Tom and Nancy, sitting in the back seat, tried to scrunch down and pretend they didn't know Rob, who was driving. In retrospect, I'm sure all the Sienese were just thinking, "Another four crazy Americans!" We could see the hotel on the GPS, and knew we were only 1.5 km away, but I will tell you that was the longest 1.5 km I have ever endured. Of course, when we got to the hotel, the debonair front desk manager gave a casual shrug offering that it happens all the time, and they would notify the police to discard our 100EUR fine. And, so far, so good!

In the end, I think if I had to pick a favorite of all the towns we visited during our month in Tuscany, Siena would be at the head of the list. Siena is a beautiful city that has maintained its charm through the centuries. But now I know how valid the Greyhound Bus slogan is – "leave the driving to us." (And, next time, listen to Mario!)



## **The Village Shares the Holidays**

In the spirit of community, some of our volunteers and members opened their homes for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Volunteer Joan Hall-Feinberg and her husband Abe invited everyone without family in the area to her house to share a meal on Thanksgiving. She cooked the turkey and others all brought a delicious dish. Seven people with bountifully loaded plates shared stories and opinions that stimulated minds and fed spirits, (without the burden of family issues).

On Christmas evening, Judith Coates (member/volunteer) opened up her home for dinner. Judith made turkey, mashed potatoes, and dressing and provided cookies that she had made with her grandchildren. Between Judith's friends and Village members and volunteers, there were nine people and plenty of food. It was a treat for everyone to spend unhurried, celebratory time together.

## **Holiday Celebration**



The group gathers to sing.

**North Oakland Village  
Holiday Sing-Along  
At St. John's Episcopal Church  
December 12, 2014**



Bob Field and guest flutist/singer, Nancy Hall catch up on the latest news.

Sara practiced for the carol sing.



– collage by Sara Evinger

## Senior Alternatives

At Senior Alternatives, we provide home care and care management services. Masters-Level Care Managers are paired with experienced caregivers to assure a smooth transition with every care plan. Our highly skilled multidisciplinary staff ensures successful implementation of the care plan. Since our company is locally owned and not a franchise, we pride ourselves in being able to offer personal, immediate attention to all of our clients. Our team approach results in the highest quality of home care and care management available. Visit our website at [www.bayareaseniorcare.com](http://www.bayareaseniorcare.com) . We offer a free initial consultation. 888/451-4290.

Fiduciaries: Jennifer Keystone, 510-206-7366, Karen Fisher, 510-393-9046 and Linda McHugh, 510-521-4470.

Lectures and Trainings are also offered by Janet Brush, LCSW, MSW, MSG:

References are available upon request.

## Ongoing Events

### Monday Menders

**Sewing with Sandra Coleman**  
**Mondays January 5, 12, 19 and 26**  
**11:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Just drop by with your sewing, quilting, crocheting and other stitchery projects. Bring any mending you need help with. We do not provide actual instruction, but do offer support, advice and good company. A fun way to get that project done while spending time with other folks.

### Walking Group

**Led by Linda Joslin**  
**Wednesdays January 14, 21, and 28**  
**9:00 AM**

After a break, we are back to our regular 40-45 minute walk for exercise. Meet in front of the Church. We leave promptly at 9:00 am. Everyone welcome. Best to contact the office to let us know you are coming.

### Monthly Bridge Game/New Players Welcome

**Monthly Bridge Game**  
**Organized by Paul Shepard**  
**January 16**

Looking for an entertaining way to socialize? Join our bridge Game. You do not have to be a great player. Held at members home.

**Call Paul at 510/547-4575** for time and address.

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## Community Events

### Movie Night!

Friday, January 16, 2015

Doors open 6:00 PM – Event starts 7:00 PM

Collins Chapel

First Congregational Church

**FREE MOVIE! FREE POPCORN! FREE PRIZES!**

Enter through the blue door from back parking lot.

Ronnie Casey hosts a movie night at the First Congregational Church of Oakland on the 3rd Friday of each month. This is a great time for NOV Villagers to meet people from the other organizations who share space with us.

This month's presentation: Sister Act 2– With the arrival of the new year Movie Night celebrates it's second anniversary with Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit.

Sister Mary Clarence answers her calling once again and delivers her special brand of habit-forming fun.

## Coming Attractions

### Musical Concert

Shades of Gray

date to be arranged

North Oakland Village

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### "What to Do with What's Left"

Thursday, February 26, 1PM

A panel discussion of end-of-life options: traditional burial, cremation, body donation and green burial

Watch this space for details on these and more upcoming events.

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