

SEPTEMBER 2019

East Rock Creek Village — 202-656-7322
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Steady into Fall



Autumn is a time of transition. As summer fades away, cooler breezes begin to blow, and our wooded neighborhoods start turning brilliant shades of red, yellow, and orange. We begin setting aside our summer clothes and reaching for warmer wear. Something similar happens as we transition to the autumn of our lives. What once came easily may now take some extra time or require some extra help. That's why I am so pleased to be part of the ERCV community. We are here for each other, in every season, so we can all more fully enjoy our lives.

While we may love the brightly-hued fall, few of us are fans of *falling*. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a fourth of all Americans over the age of 65 fall each year. Among people who are older, falling is the leading cause of fatal injury and one of the most common reasons for emergency room visits and hospital stays. Also, the fear of falling can take a toll on our quality of life, causing us to limit our activities, which in turn can lead to declining health and social isolation.

The good news is that falling is NOT an inevitable consequence of aging. ERCV is preparing to launch a new ongoing program to help members reduce their risk of falling. Thanks to a grant from the DC Office of Aging and Community Life, in September (which has been designated National Falls Prevention Month), several ERCV volunteers will be professionally trained to teach the Otago Exercise Program, a series of strength and balance exercises. Classes will begin soon after. For more information, see the **"Spotlight"** item below.

In addition, ERCV will offer a Volunteer Training on Sunday, September 22nd. Please come if you would like to get started helping fellow ERCV members directly. This is the first step towards becoming an official Village Volunteer -- and includes a background check at no cost to you. You'll enjoy food and drink, find out about the volunteer opportunities we offer, and have the chance to make new friends. See the **"Opportunity Calling!"** section below.

As a final note, the ERCV Board and I want to thank Nancy Foster as she steps down after three years of service as our Board Secretary. We are grateful for all her notes and reminders, as well as her wisdom. Luckily, Nancy will continue as the able editor of our monthly newsletter. I'll stop here, so she doesn't delete this last paragraph!

--David Mackoff



SPOTLIGHT: EXERCISE FOR FALL PREVENTION

Are you concerned about falling? Each year 1 in 4 older adults will fall. Falls lead to hospitalizations, loss of independence, and even death. Otago is a series of exercises that improve balance and strength, leading to a significant decrease in falls in older adults, and is approved by the Centers for Disease Control as an effective fall prevention program.

Registration is now open for an eight-week Otago course led by volunteers trained and supervised by Tiffany Shubert, PhD MPT, of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Sessions will be twice a week; participants must be willing to practice the exercises one day a week at home. The group sessions will be held at the Shepherd Park Library on Wednesdays and Fridays at 2:00 pm, beginning September 25. Classes are free. Registration will be on a first-come basis, with a limit of 15 participants. Sign up while there is still space!

Please contact the office (info@eastrockcreekvillage.org or 202-656-7322) to sign up. For questions contact Susan Learmonth (susan.learmonth@gmail.com or 202-271-1309).



OPPORTUNITY CALLING!

- **ERCV Volunteer Training — Sunday, September 22, 3-5 pm:** At Sunrise of Chevy Chase, 2201 Colston Dr., Silver Spring (just over the DC line, off Washington Ave. between Grubb Rd. & East-West Hwy). This training, offered by the ERCV Volunteer Committee, is required to qualify volunteers to fill service requests from Village members or work with members in Village administration. After the 2-hour training, volunteers will complete a background check at the Village's expense. Any adult may volunteer; you do not need to be an ERCV member. East Rock Creek Village is a volunteer-managed organization which uses volunteers in many capacities. Our greatest need is for drivers available during the workday to transport members to medical appointments and other engagements. ERCV volunteers also make friendly visits and check-in calls to members, complete small tasks around the home and yard such as changing lightbulbs and carrying boxes, and assist members with organizing and downsizing. Volunteers with IT skills are needed both to assist members in using technology and to assist with the ERCV Village data platform. Volunteers help organize

ERCV social events both large (a yearly fundraiser) and small (monthly lunch outings). Volunteers set their own schedules, though weekday availability is very helpful. **Please let us know if you would like to attend the training by emailing info@eastrockcreekvillage.org.** We are glad to answer any questions you may have.

- **ERCV Training to Provide Respite Care — Sunday, November 10, 3-4:30 pm:** At Sunrise of Chevy Chase, 2201 Colston Dr., Silver Spring (just over the DC line, off Washington Ave. between Grubb Rd. & East-West Hwy). Conducted by Barbara Scott, Social Worker, and the ERCV Volunteer Committee. We know that people with dementia are being cared for by family in their homes and that respite for the caregiver is essential for the caregiver's health and well-being. Training will provide the volunteer with useful information for understanding the characteristics and types of dementia and for providing care and stimulation for the caregiver's loved one. Volunteers will meet the caregiver and the family member before providing respite service. **Completing a regular ERCV volunteer training is a prerequisite for the respite care training;** the next volunteer training is September 22 (see above item) if you have not already taken the training. **While registration is not required, we would like you to let us know if you are interested in attending: info@eastrockcreekvillage.org.** We are glad to answer any questions you may have.



ERCV PORTRAITS - Meet Rima Shaffer



Rima Shaffer, a native of Seattle, came to DC from the other Washington in 1962 as a transfer student to American University. While studying part time and working in the university's admissions office, she met and married her husband. They moved to Shepherd Park in 1973. As a young mother, Rima worked as a fiber artist — weaving, spinning, vegetable dying, and helping implement fiber into school art programs. She even raised silkworms in her dining room, using mulberry leaves from her backyard! Even now, you might see her picking up walnut hulls to be used in vegetable dye.

When her marriage didn't work out, the first thing Rima did was dig up her front yard and plant a garden, which started a neighborhood trend. It was a great outlet for mental stress, and relieved her of lawn mowing! Next, Rima pursued an advanced degree, and in 1994, she earned a PhD in education with an emphasis on organizational change and adult learning. She went to work at the National Fire Academy, providing leadership development training for fire departments all over the US and the world.

She also worked for the US Government Accountability Office on their public policy curriculum and was a professor of Applied Behavioral Sciences at Johns Hopkins University. She finished her career at the US Department of Defense. Her last, and favorite, assignment was leading their diversity initiative.

As a relatively recent retiree, she says "I don't know how I managed to do everything before, but I love it!" She volunteers with ERCV, and is currently learning the Otago Exercise Program, which helps seniors with balance (see "Spotlight" on page 1). She'll be part of a group offering free classes to ECRV members. She's also working on a memoir and is hoping to get back to her artwork and do some coaching work.

Rima is grateful to live in such a friendly community and is amazed that so many people in other places don't know their neighbors. She's intrigued that so many members of ERCV were also members of an area babysitting co-op a few decades back. Talk about coming full circle!

Like all of us, she's wondering what changes the Walter Reed development will bring to our neighborhoods, especially in terms of how it could impact our diversity. One thing that hasn't changed, as she sees it, is the commitment to community, neighbors helping neighbors, and commitment to diversity so prevalent here.

-- Our thanks to ERCV volunteer Brenda Mejia for this interview



PLEASE JOIN US FOR SEPTEMBER EVENTS --

Mondays, September 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30: 8:00 am

ERCV MORNING WALKERS

- Meet at the home of Susan Davis, 1202 Hemlock St NW. We will walk at a leisurely pace to the Shepherd School lower field where we can walk around the track or sit a bit and rest before walking back. Walkers are invited for lemonade or water and conversation afterwards, at about 10:00 am.
- Open to all – no reservations needed. Email info@eastrockcreekvillage.org or phone or text 202-656-7322 to be added to the weekly reminder email/call.

Wednesdays, September 4, 11, 18, & 25: 4:00 pm

ERCV AFTERNOON WALKERS

- Meet at Susan Learmonth's home (1309 Floral St. NW) and walk for an hour, followed by tea or lemonade.
- Email info@eastrockcreekvillage.org or call or text 202-656-7322 if you have a question.

Fridays, September 6 & 13 (no 20 & 27): 3:00-4:00 pm

CHAIR YOGA FOR SENIORS

- At the Juanita Thornton/Shepherd Park Library, Conference Rm. 2 upstairs. There is an elevator to the second floor. Limited parking at the library – 7420 Georgia Ave. NW – and metered street parking on Georgia Ave. as well as 2-hour parking on the side streets.
- Antonia teaches this free 1-hour gentle movement class suitable for everyone. Stretching, centering, strengthening, & balance poses are done sitting on or standing beside a chair. Wear loose clothing. All are welcome! Reservations are not required, but email info@eastrockcreekvillage.org or call or text 202-656-7322 to be added to the weekly reminder list.

Wednesday, September 25: 12:00 noon

ERCV LUNCH BUNCH – ALL ARE WELCOME! JOIN THE FUN!

- At **Nile Restaurant**, 7815 Georgia Ave. NW (going north on Georgia Ave., on the right just before Eastern Ave.). Parking behind the restaurant; totally accessible entrance – both accessed by the driveway on the north side of the building.
- We'll be enjoying Ethiopian fare, hosted by the restaurant for a special \$10 served meal which will include vegetarian options and some with mild spicing.
- **Please RSVP by Monday the 23rd** to info@eastrockcreekvillage.org or phone or text 202-656-7322 so we can reserve a place for you. Service members may request a ride.

Saturday, October 5: 3:00-5:00 pm

ERCV OPEN HOUSE & GAME DAY – ALL ARE WELCOME!

- At the ERCV Office, 7707 13th St. NW; entrance at the rear off the alley beside the house
- Join us for conversation and light refreshments, play some games if you wish, and learn more about how to enhance your quality of life or that of your loved one or neighbor. All are welcome – current members and friends -- and bring your neighbor!
- For more information, contact us at 202-656-7322 or info@eastrockcreekvillage.org. Please let us know of potential members you would like us to invite!



-- and events sponsored by other DC Villages:

Tuesday, September 10: 1:00-2:00 pm

THE VILLAGE MOVEMENT: AGING WELL IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- At Chevy Chase (DC) Library, 5625 Conn. Ave., NW. ERCV President David Mackoff will represent volunteer-led Villages in this panel organized by Northwest Village Neighbors.

Wednesday, September 25: 9:00 am

RECENT RETIREE COFFEE

- At Firehook Bakery, 3411 Conn. Ave. NW, in the back garden. Conversation facilitated by Barbara Scott, social worker, who writes: Following our coffee, there is a seminar series at the Cleveland Park Library beginning at 10:30 am on "Wise Aging" dclibrary.org/node/64519. For those interested, we can walk together after coffee and attend the seminar together. If you are interested in this series, you need to pre-register. It is limited to 15 participants. Questions? Call Barbara at 202-441-7290.



COMMUNITY EVENTS OF INTEREST

~ **Monday, Sept. 9, 6:30-8:30 pm: DDOT Rock Creek East Livability Workshop** – DC

Metropolitan Police Dept., 4th District, 6001 Georgia Ave NW, Wash, DC. The DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) will host its third and final public workshop for the Rock Creek East Livability Study. "Livability" refers to community quality of life as experienced by the people who live, work, and recreate there. Working with community and key stakeholders, the study evaluates the transportation network and seeks opportunities to improve accommodations for pedestrians, bikers, drivers, and bus riders. The Rock Creek East area of study is defined by Rock Creek and the MD border (west), Eastern Ave (north), New Hampshire Ave NE and the Red Line Metrorail tracks (east), and Military Rd NW, Missouri Ave NW, and Riggs Rd NE (south). For information, visit www.rceast1.com or contact Cynthia Lin at 202-671-2381.

~ **Monday, Sept. 16, 5:00-7:00 pm: Medicare Part D** – At the Tenley-Friendship Library, 4450 Wisconsin Ave NW. This presentation by Cheryl Smith from the DC Dept of Aging and Community Living will help prepare seniors with the information they need to know in advance about Medicare Part D Open Season. The Health Insurance Counseling Project provides free health insurance information, education, and counseling services to Medicare beneficiaries and seniors who live in the District of Columbia. Registration is requested, but not required: <https://www.aroundtowndc.org/> Free event.

-- Our thanks to ERCV volunteer Rosalind Palmer for helping to compile events for the calendar