

Our Village VOICE

A monthly publication of Clayton Valley Village September 2021 Edition

A Message from our President. Check out our Events held in August, Upcoming Events, and more. Also in this issue, we present the 6th installment of the Girl with the Topaz Ring, a story by CVV member Gary Carr. See our member Mary Esther's review on the book Premonition (A Pandemic Story)



Labor Day is a federal holiday in the United States celebrated on the first Monday in September to honor and recognize the American labor movement and the works and contributions of laborers to the development and achievements of the United States. It is the Monday of the long weekend known as Labor Day Weekend.



President's Message

Marilyn Wollenweber

As I write this message, we are making a road trip to Michigan, having stopped in Colorado for a week to help my daughter and family settle into their new home and visit friends and relatives. The smoke from all the fires in California, Washington, and Utah have followed us reminding us to care for our relationship with nature.

Dixie Allan, on liveabout.com, wrote that the name September comes from the Latin *septem*, meaning seven, since it was the seventh month of the Roman calendar, which began with March. There are 30 days in the month of September, which starts on the same day of the week as December each year but does not end on the same day of the week as any other month in the year. Pretty interesting, huh? It's also a month that is usually temperate. I look forward to the crisp mornings and warm afternoons.

Here are some interesting dates in September:

- **Labor Day** is the most well-known holiday in September. It is observed every year on the first Monday in September.
- **Eat an Extra Dessert Day** – September 4
- **Native American Day** is always celebrated on the 4th Friday of September.
- **Grandparent's Day** is observed in the United States on the first Sunday after Labor Day.
- **Constitution Day**, celebrating the ratification of the governing document of the United States, is observed on the 17th. Also, Citizenship Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, National Apple Dumpling Day, and National Monte Cristo Day
- **The autumn equinox**, which is the traditional transition from summer into fall, takes place on or around September 22nd, depending on the year.
- **September 30:** National Love People Day, National Chewing Gum Day, National Hot Mulled Cider Day

Don't forget to check our calendar for some other interesting and fun dates in September!

Welcome

New Members!



Donald Stranik

Anita Stranik

Sheila Driscoll

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Clayton Valley Village Volunteer Services

Our dedicated team of volunteers, Jim, Pete and Linda, assembled a pergola for Dorothy Bradt.

Linda kept the guys on target by deftly interpreting the grammatically challenged directions and preparing all the parts needed for each stage of assembly. Dorothy provided much appreciated snacks and lemonade. Even though the project was cool, the weather was hot.



P.S. Dorothy does not have a twin sister.

We Had Fun In Spite of our Car Trouble



By Mary Esther & Linda Pinder



Volunteer – Linda Pinder

On July 29, I drove Mary Esther Loranger to Kaiser Shadelands. Since I had an Audible book I was close to finishing, I waited in my car for her while playing my Audible book through the speakers in my car. About an hour later, Mary Esther was finished but when we tried to leave, my car battery had died. It was almost 4 years old, and nearing the end of its life, and guess it just couldn't survive running my accessory for my speakers for a whole hour. Luckily I am a long time AAA member, and was able to get a service vehicle specializing in batteries out within about 20 minutes. The AAA guy, Ryan, was very good and professional. He had a young man with him that he was training, so it took a little longer than it might have if Ryan was by himself. But he was an excellent trainer and the young man did very well.

Ryan is in the blue jumpsuit and the trainee is wearing the orange vest. It was a good thing this was in the morning, and we were parked under a tree with a nice breeze blowing through the open windows of the car. Mary Esther was very patient as we waited for AAA to arrive and change out the battery. I should now be good to go for another 3 or 4 years.

Member – Mary Esther

The volunteers of our Village are truly stalwart and generous and flexible. For many years I was one of those volunteers who drove many of our members to their locations and had fun doing so. However, now that I am without a car for awhile, I find myself in a very unfamiliar position! Now I also have to make service requests for transportation. Several times both the volunteer and I had reasons to fulfill similar duties and have some fun to boot! The latest was a trip to Kaiser for a lab draw and COVID test and pharmacy pickup. Volunteer Linda Pinder got me there on time. All was accomplished except the COVID test which had to be done the next day. I then met up with Linda who had wisely parked under a shade tree as it was so hot! She started her car- dead battery-totally. AAA was called. Meantime, we had such a great time talking together, the time flew by and AAA had arrived and all was good. She even insisted on taking me to my next day's COVID test. LESSON: It is all in how you look at things. Have patience, flexibility and a sense of humor and take a photo!

Did You Know?



Currently the Branch libraries are not presenting the in-person programs due to various COVID restrictions. However, we can take advantage of Contra Costa Library sponsored online programming.

Some favorite upcoming events are:

On Sept 16th, 4-5 pm, a program on Wildfires...Be Prepared! This will be presented by Con Fire, the insurance industry, PG&E and others. Participants are encouraged to bring their questions. With wildlands around and throughout Concord and Clayton it will be good to know how to be prepared should a wildland fire impact our neighborhoods.

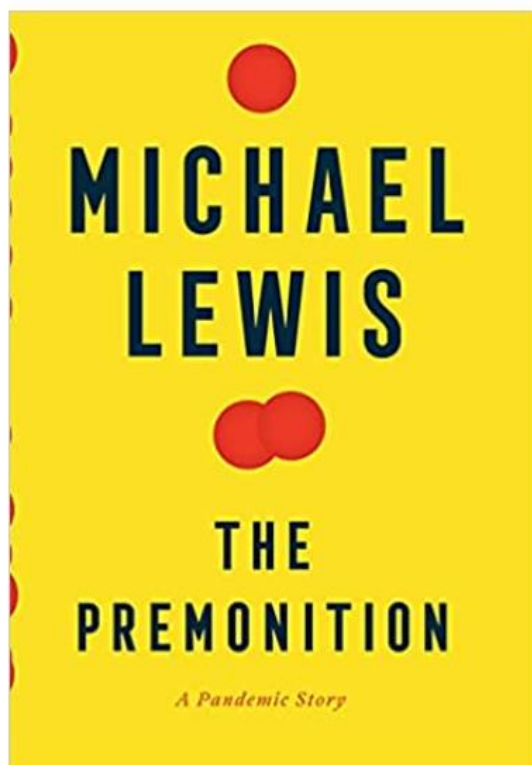
There will be two programs on Finance. (Sept 16, 7-8:30 pm) Cybersecurity (Partnering with the FBI), and (Sept 23, 7-8:30 pm) Trust & Estate Planning in Today's Environment including information on the new Proposition 19, Property Tax Transfers, exemptions and the effect on inherited properties.

In Sept & Oct there are three programs with Bob Lewis on birding: The Changing Seasons (Sept 14, 6-7 pm), Feathered Hunters (Identification) (Sept 28, 6-7 pm) and Shorebird Identification (Oct 12, 6-7 pm).

My favorite is a new book/author talk from Sweet Thursdays. Sept 30, 5-6 pm: Sweet Thursdays presents: Carol Edgarian, author of VERA The library description of the program says, "An astonishing feat of imagination, a grand adventure set in 1906 San Francisco—a city leveled by quake and fire—featuring an indomitable heroine coming of age in the aftermath of catastrophe and her quest for love and reinvention."

Visit the Contra Costa Library website at ccclib.org. Look for the Event tab to see even more programs than we put on our village calendar.

Favorite Books from CVV Members and Volunteers



Book Recommend by Mary Esther Loranger

This book is about the many back stories involved in the handling of the 2020 Corona virus pandemic and about our country's slow response to it. It was written during the unfolding of the pandemic. It reads almost like a detective novel except that the characters herein are real. It takes place principally in California. Some names stand out: Drs. Charity Dean, Richard Hatchett, Carter Mecher, biologist Joe DeRisi to name just a few. They were part of a group of doctors called the "Wolverines" who early on knew what was happening with this coronavirus outbreak in China. Having been thwarted previously by government inaction and bureaucracy they knew what our country was facing and set out to take the necessary steps to protect the population. This was not done in a vacuum. They were able to get help from the medical, scientific, technology communities to get the money, information, data, testing labs, chemicals, supplies and volunteers necessary to get moving. There are so many details in this story that are truly startling and relevant in regards to the situation that we are still in. It raises many questions regarding our country's public health system, the pre-planning for national emergencies, government's ability and willingness to help to cut through red tape and to override inaction to get things going in the face of a pandemic. What really intrigues me is the way author Michael Lewis has of taking complex and arcane subjects and breaking them down so that the normal person can understand them. He does that in most of his books, and again here, through the dramatization of ordinary people who steadfastly remain true to their principles. You will probably want to reread it!

The Girl with the Topaz Ring, a story by CVV member Gary Carr. Watch for more in succeeding issues!



The Girl with the Topaz Ring
by Gary Carr

Chapter Six

The story so far

Josh shocks his grandparents by telling them he knows their long-buried secret – that he has a sister, his mother’s older child who was given up for adoption five years before he was born. His grandmother leaves the room, unable to relive her daughter’s sad story. But his grandfather tells Josh how all this came to be and promises to help find his granddaughter.

As he drove back to San Francisco, Josh pondered all that his grandfather had told him. What happened to the red-haired quarterback who got his mother pregnant? Did his mother really love Frederick Williamson, the man who fathered him?

“Did she get to see me, to hold me before she died?”

And hovering over all his thoughts – where was his sister?

The next day at the radio station, Josh could hardly concentrate on his job, editing raw news copy into two-minute segments to be read on air every quarter hour. A quote from a Senator calling his opponents’ claims “a red herring” sent Josh into a reverie about red hair. He was always up against a time crunch, and he pulled himself back to the Senator before he lost another precious second.

Josh got a break at noon when the station carried an hour of news and talk off the network feed. On his way to the break room to pull his tuna sandwich out of the fridge, he walked past the office where his coworker Myrna was crouched in front of a pair of computer monitors.

The thought flashed before him that Myrna, a computer geek with a Marianas Trench of research knowledge, might be able to help him in his search.

Josh and Myrna weren’t close. Although Josh considered her cute, she was the station’s IT whiz and in her spare time, a gamer. Josh went to lunch with her once, and she spent the whole 50 minutes recounting, between bites of quinoa and tofu, the plots of a half dozen episodes of *Dr. Who*. Josh was into film noir and definitely not a vegan, so the lunch generated no sparks.

“This is purely business,” Josh thought as he popped into Myrna’s office. She was glued to a screen, sipping a kombucha.

"Hey, Myrna, I forgot my lunch and was going across the street to the deli. You want to come with?"

Straw still in mouth, Myrna sucked in the last of her kombucha with a gurgle.

"Sure. I need a break. These screens are starting to make my eyes cross."

They ordered at the counter and sat at the only remaining table. Myrna ordered the veggie bowl. Josh did the same, although he really wanted a pastrami on rye. He figured he should get on Myrna's good side, foodwise.

Josh asked Myrna if she could help him with a project he was doing "for a friend." He wasn't ready to disclose anything about his family secret.

"My friend wants to track down a student who graduated from Los Osos High School in 1992 or '93. Bill Leffler. He played quarterback and went back East on a scholarship. Don't know if it was athletic or academic. For what it's worth, my friend said Leffler had red hair."

"Sounds like fun," Myrna said. "Who's your friend?"

"Can't say."

"Hey, two mysteries for the price of one." Myrna stabbed at a chunk of avocado. "Why don't you go to Los Osos High School yourself and look this guy up?"

"I figured you could do that. But what we really want to know is where Bill Leffler is now and what he's doing."

Josh figured he'd start Myrna off chasing down the red-haired quarterback before he eased her into the search for his sister.

"I'm willing to pay you for your trouble," Josh said. "I've got-" He caught himself and rephrased. "I've been given a budget"

Myrna smiled at him. "I said this sounds like fun. You only have to pay me if it starts to get boring."

Next time: A dead end, but more clues.



Upcoming Events

Monday, Sept 6th - Labor Day

Saturday, Sept 11th - Concert in Clayton Park (Members & Volunteers)

Tuesday, Sept 14th - Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, Sept 21st - Ice Cream Social (Members & Volunteers)

Friday, Sept 24th - Events Committee Meeting

See all Events <https://claytonvalley.helpfulvillage.com/events>

Save the Date!

Clayton Library Book Sale

OCTOBER 15, 16, 17 2021

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15 4-7 PM MEMBERS ONLY
MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16 10 AM - 6 PM
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17 NOON - 4 PM

SUNDAY MOST BOOKS 1/2 PRICE

BAG SALE 2 - 4 PM \$5 ; BAGS ARE SUPPLIED

OUR BOOK STORAGE IS OVERFLOWING PLEASE HOLD ANY
DONATIONS UNTIL AFTER THE OCTOBER SALE IS OVER.

THANKS FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE CLAYTON COMMUNITY
LIBRARY FOUNDATION



Bocce Event - Aug 7th

We learned how to play Bocce – and had a BALL!

CVV Bocce team members showed us how.



Happy Hour at the Clayton Club - Aug 17th



Explorers Hike at Black Diamond Mines, Aug 21st

We took a short hike from the parking lot to the visitors' center. The museum located within the cave has interesting displays with lots of memorabilia from the active mining days. There was also a short video that explained how life was back then. The tour guide and the other park rangers were all very helpful and answered all our questions. The tour was well-worth the fee of just \$3.00.



CVV Summer Bocce League



CVV 2021 Summer Bocce League Team. They play every Sunday at the Ipsen Family Bocce Courts through October.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**Talent is God-given; be humble.
Fame is man-given; be thankful.
Conceit is self-given; be careful.**

– Harvey Mackay



Standing & Ad Hoc Committees

2021 CVV Board of Directors

Executive Committee:

Marilyn Wollenweber (President), Joanne Vanis (President Elect) Sue Manning
(Past-President),

Mary Esther Loranger (Secretary), Joanne Wasak (Treasurer)

Executive Advisory Committee:

Jim Whitfield (Past President)

Sonja Wilkin (Past President)

Members-at-Large

Diane Berger, Arlene Lewandowski, Kathy Geddes,

Volunteer Representative Member

Pete Bardea

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