



**A monthly publication of Clayton Valley Village**  
**July 2022 Edition**

A Message from our President. Check out our Events held in June, Upcoming Events, and more. Also in this issue, we present the EPILOGUE of the Girl with the Topaz Ring, a story by CVV member Gary Carr. Save The Date "Brave Little Nell - The Eleanor Roosevelt Story"

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Independence Day is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the Declaration of Independence of the United States, which was ratified by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

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# *a Day in the Life of a Village Senior...*



**By Arlene Lewandowski**

I was having a bad day and remembered someone told me listening to music can lift your spirits. So, I decided, what would be more upbeat than John Phillip Sousa! So, I asked "Alexa" to play JPS music. She responded that I had to have the app for music requests, and I could get 30 days free, but it was \$14.95 a month thereafter. Being from the vinyl and radio age, I told her "no." She then responded that there was a similar station where I could listen to this music free. The price was right! The first song played was "Taps." I certainly got a much needed laugh from that and felt much better.

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## **Clayton Valley Village Volunteer Services**



**Minor plumbing, home repairs, landscaping, transportation**

### **This Volunteer experience may have saved a life**

**by Sonja Wilkin**

I volunteered to deliver a printed copy of the Newsletter to a member who has no internet access.

I knocked on the door Thursday around 11 am. When there was no answer, I went around to the garage door and noticed her newspaper in front. I called and left a message on her home phone. I returned after 4 pm and did the same thing - knocked plus called. Then I asked her neighbor if she was away. Another neighbor was put on alert too. Friday morning (around 8 am) the neighbor informed me a 2nd newspaper had arrived.

CVV keeps Emergency contact information for its members.

I notified the CVV call center. They immediately contacted her daughter who lives in Hayward. She and her husband entered the house and found Mom lying on the floor. They called 911 and Mom was taken to John Muir where she stayed a week in ICU. Mom is now in a rehab facility.

This brings to light the importance of immediate neighbors being aware of any "signs" out of the ordinary, and having each other's phone numbers, and emergency contact information.

Another important thing to consider – who watches the pets and waters the plants while she recovers?

The remarkable neighbors agreed to take on that responsibility.

Otherwise, such services, as well as daily check-in calls, can be requested as part of a CVV membership.

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# Did You Know?

Clayton Valley Village calendar has more events posted than just what is happening at CVV. There are events on Gardening, Travel, City of Clayton and Concord and Other Villages events and many more listed on the calendar. Here are links to some of those events to check out. You can also see these activities in the Sunday Blast emailed out every Sunday.

[RICK STEVES MONDAY NIGHT TRAVEL - MOROCCO WITH LUCAS PETERS](#)

[CLAYTON BBQ COOK OFF](#)

[CONCERTS IN THE GROVE 2022 -- CUT LOOSE](#)

[GATEWAY TO HEATHER GARDENS - 50TH ANNIVERSARY](#)

[Ashby Village IS A REVERSE MORTGAGE RIGHT FOR YOU? MYTHS AND FACTS](#)

**Also check out our Facebook page for Events and other interesting postings.**

[Clayton Valley Village Facebook Page](#)

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## President's Message

Kathy Geddes

As I was looking around at the 30+ people attending another great Clayton Valley Village Happy Hour at La Veranda on June 21, I was struck by the collection of people, mostly members and volunteers, plus a few guests. We come from so many different walks of life, with various ages, ethnicities, places of birth, interests, skills, faiths, and career paths... So many differences and yet there's something binding us together. I believe that it is our common need and desire to be part of a community that has activities and events to enjoy and where we can get support with our needs we are no longer able to do. And we can find this right in our neighborhood!

CVV makes every effort to meet the needs of its members. The ability to do that rests with having enough of the right people to meet those needs. As our membership continues to grow, so does the number of volunteers needed to meet the demand. We continue to recruit volunteers from the Clayton/Concord area as well as urge our own members to assist.

Have you thought about beginning to volunteer, or changing the way you volunteer for CVV? You might think that you have your own limitations of time and energy and aren't even aware of how you might be able to help. We have the answer--give us a call and just tell us that. By contacting us by phone or email, we can discuss the many possibilities where time and assistance are needed and see what you might be interested in. You can set your own schedule and some volunteering can be done right from your home!

Might you be the person who could make a difference in our members' lives? The appreciation that is felt and expressed by members for the events we provide, and the assistance given to them certainly is very satisfying.

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**Members and Volunteers**  
**July Birthdays**

July 6th Marilyn Wollenweber  
July 15th Joanne Vanis  
July 26th Dorothy Bradt  
July 26th Shirley Izard  
July 28th Bhishma Lashkari



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*Welcome*  
to our New Member!



Margot Nenzell

## Interesting Stories Around the Bay



### Mount Diablo State Park



#### Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



California State Parks supports equal access. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at (925) 837-2525. If you need this publication in an alternate format, contact [Interp@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Interp@parks.ca.gov).

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For information call: (800) 777-0369  
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711, TTY relay service

[www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)

*Each twist and turn  
leading up to Mount  
Diablo's summit carries  
visitors high above the  
crowded suburbs and  
low-lying hills to the  
tranquil vistas atop this  
prominent peak.*



Read the story about Mt Diablo State Park

<https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/517/files/MountDiabloFinalWebLayout2018.pdf>

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**The Girl with the Topaz Ring**  
by Gary Carr

**Epilogue**

Josh's place was larger and closer to downtown, so Sarah gave up her apartment and moved in with him. She brought her window box sprouting basil and thyme, and they acquired a cat, a female Russian Blue they named Ludmilla.

Sarah was pouring Saturday morning tea when Josh came in with the mail they had forgotten to retrieve from the box the day before.

"Anything good?" Sarah asked.

"Could be bad," he said. "A letter from a law firm. Maybe we're being sued."

The return address on the tan envelope said, "Jurndice and Jurndice, Attorneys at Law, Houston, Texas." Josh grabbed a table knife and slit it open. When he pulled out the single page letter, a smaller slip of paper fell out and fluttered to the floor. Josh started to read, making no sound, but only moving his lips.

"OK, what's it say?" Sarah asked.

"It's addressed to me. Dear Mr. Tanner. The estate of your father, Frederick James Williamson, has been settled, and as executor, Jurndice and Jurndice, LLC is authorized the send you the enclosed check as your portion of said estate. An equal amount will be available to your half-sister, Kristina Louise Larson (address unknown) at such time as she contacts us. If you are able to reach Ms. Larson, please ask her to contact us at the address below.

In accordance with the wishes of your father, the Houston house and all of its contents and the 1999 Jaguar XKE are passed on to Ms. Elise M. Crandall. If you have any questions, please contact us at the address below. Sincerely, Travis B. Jurndice, Attorney at Law."

Josh sat down so heavily that tea spilled from both cups. Sarah had picked up the slip of paper and was staring at it.

"What is it?" Josh asked.

"The check," she said and thrust it towards him.

Josh took the check from her, took a breath, and read it.

"Six hundred eighty thousand, nine hundred forty dollars and fifty cents."

Both of them gulped down what was left of their tea.

"There's a letter, too. From Houston. Better check it out," she said.

Josh tore open the envelope and pulled out a typed single-spaced letter wrapped around a sheet of lined yellow paper with writing in blue ink. He looked at Sarah as if for permission to start reading.

"It's from Elise, my father's caregiver," he said and began with the handwritten note.

"Dear Josh, this letter was dictated to me by your father shortly before he went into the hospital where you visited him. It was his wish that I say nothing to you about it while you were here since he wanted it sent after his passing and the estate was settled. I assume you have heard from his attorneys.

With my own best wishes,

Elise Crandall"

Josh stared at the typed letter.

"Read it, please read it," Sarah whispered.

Josh smoothed out the folds in the papers and began.

"Dear Josh, since I am almost at the end of the road, I want to clarify some issues that have been weighing on me for many years. First of all, I really did love your mother, still do, and not a day goes by that I don't think of her. I was away on a university-sponsored exploration trip to Venezuela when she sent me a message that she was pregnant. I left for the States as soon as I could to be with her. When I arrived, I found that she had suffered some sort of psychological trauma. She was staying with her parents who refused to let me see her. I should add that her father stood at the front door with a shotgun which I assumed was loaded.

"Early in our relationship, she had confided to me that several years earlier she had given birth to a child whom she gave up for adoption. That would have been your half-sister." At this point, Elise had entered her own note.

"[Your father's mind wandered and I was confused about what he said next, but I'll pick up where he got back on track. – Elise.]"

"I hope Elise didn't miss too much," Josh said.

"Keep reading," Sarah said impatiently.

"I quickly wrapped up my teaching duties and planned to stick around Berkeley in hopes that your mother would come back to herself, and I would be able to get back into her life. But in her eighth month she hemorrhaged and was rushed to the hospital. You know the rest – you were born, and she died. I tried to see her, but your grandparents wouldn't let me. I took the coward's way out and returned to Venezuela. I couldn't face what my life would be in California. I joined a Houston-based oil exploration company and cut all ties with the university. My twenty-three years in South America were very successful, moneywise, but played havoc with my health. I returned to Houston and retired on my earnings.

"I hired a detective who had connections with the FBI, and through him I was able to track down your sister living with her adoptive parents in Michigan."

"Geez, if only we'd had the money for a detective," Sarah said.

"Hey, you're the only detective we need. You did great," Josh said.

"Thanks, Babe," Sarah said, and Josh continued reading.

"To find a small measure of penance in being the primal cause of your mother's death, I paid Krissy's college costs for four years, but I lost track of her and her parents after she graduated from Carleton, so I will leave that task to you."

"Josh, I was not so generous with you. Your reward will be granted to you after my death. I have withheld it because I wanted you to fight for what you earn in life. As I said to you in the past, I don't want you to go soft, but to stay strong. I know your mother, fighter that she was, would agree.

When you visit the house, you will see a collection of my paintings. They are my attempt to honor the memory of your mother. She is the woman who appears in each of the paintings. I have left instructions to have one of these paintings shipped to you as a link to our shared past.

May you be blessed with success, Dad"

Josh dropped the letter on the table and shook his head as he searched for his voice.

"This is crazy. Just crazy," he said.

"No," Sarah replied. "This is what he wanted."

"And he signed it 'Dad'. Not 'Frederick G. Williamson' like all the other times. It's like a death-bed conversion," Josh said.

"And now you've won the jackpot," she said.

"No, Sweetie, we've hit the jackpot."

"You can change jobs, do what you want. There's nothing more for you at the station," she said.

"My head is spinning. The money, the painting. I just hope it's not the one I'm thinking of."

Sarah wrinkled her brows in puzzlement. "Why not? What's wrong?"

Josh grabbed Sarah and held her tightly for a long minute.

I've never needed you more," he whispered.

When he finally let go of her, he reached for his phone.

I can't concentrate right now," he said. "I've got to call Krissy. Where is she now?"

"Florida. They're playing in Orlando tomorrow."

Josh dialed Krissy's cell number and turned to Sarah.

"You think I've stayed strong?"

"You have, Josh, you have."

**END**

**Thanks to CVV, Diane Berger and to all of you for reading *The Girl with the Topaz Ring*. I would greatly appreciate any comments you may have.**

**Please send them to [carrpool@pacbell.net](mailto:carrpool@pacbell.net). -Gary Carr**



## Upcoming Events

**Monday, July 4th - Independence Day**

**Monday, July 4th - Clayton 4th Of July Parade & Pancake Breakfast**

**Wednesday, July 13th - Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, July 19th - CVV Happy Hour**

**Friday, July 22nd - Events Committee Meeting**

Scan the QR Code to View Calendar







### **Apr-May-Jun Birthday Celebration at home of Gloria Utley**

Delicious Scotch Eggs, bean casserole, salads and red velvet birthday cake were enjoyed by all!



## Happy Hour at La Veranda Cafe

CVV had it's monthly happy hour on Tuesday June 21st. There were plenty of positive vibes with ongoing friendly chatter, happy hour prices for drinks and appetizers or full dinner when wanted. Our familiar servers did a great job, kept us supplied with water, issued separate checks. Nick made sure we were happy with result... and we were. This was our largest Happy Hour group with several guests and one new member (Margot) joining us for the first time.













### **From Hope Walk**

The 8th Annual Hope Walk was its most successful ever event - raising over \$230,000 and our team building efforts resulted in over 900 Hope Walk participants.

#### **Thank You**

Andy Dunn, Donor Engagement Manager of Cancer Support Community San Francisco-Bay Area

"It was so inspiring to watch the community come together and raise funds for our critical services. We are grateful for your involvement in the Hope Walk and your generous support of Cancer Support Community."

We not only had our Clayton Valley Village Team but as Community Partner also had a vendor table at Heather Farm manned by Fiona and Jim of our Outreach Committee.

# Save the Date!

What: "Brave Little Nell - The Eleanor Roosevelt Story"

When: August 11, 2022 at 11:30 PM PDT

Where: Hoyer Hall, Clayton Library

## 'BRAVE LITTLE NELL - THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT STORY'

Created and performed by Laurie Strawn



**CLAYTON VALLEY VILLAGE  
INVITES YOU  
TO A  
LUNCH 'N LEARN**



*Bring your box lunch.*

*Dessert and Beverages will be served.*

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2022**

**11:30 AM-1:30 PM**

**Admission - Free; Open to Everyone**

**HOYER HALL**

**CLAYTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY**

**6125 Clayton Road, Clayton, CA 94517**

**Reservations required: [www.ClaytonValleyVillage.org](http://www.ClaytonValleyVillage.org)  
Or (925) 626-0411**

Beloved and despised, belittled and adored, Eleanor Roosevelt faced tragic losses and challenges as a child and as a young woman. Despite hardships, she went on to become a passionate advocate for human rights. Bay Area actress **Laurie Strawn** will bring Eleanor's story to life, sharing the former First Lady's personal history along with the remarkable life and times in which she lived.

*Come join us for a truly captivating performance  
about our  
32nd First Lady!*



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## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives.  
I like to see a man live so that his place will be proud of him."

– Abraham Lincoln

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### 2022 CVV Board of Directors

#### **Executive Committee:**

Kathy Geddes (President), Sue Manning & Sonja Wilkin (President Elect),  
Marilyn Wollenweber (Past-President), Arlene Lewandowski (Secretary),  
Joanne Wasak (Treasurer)

#### **Members-at-Large**

Diane Berger and Joanne Vanis

#### **Volunteer Representative Members**

Pete Bardea, Linda Pinder, Kim Brazill, Margaret Bachman

***Our Village Voice*** is a free, electronic publication of  
Clayton Valley Village.

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The editors welcome all submissions and reserve the right  
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Clayton Valley Village is a 501c3 Nonprofit: 81-3858223

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