



Sharing Holiday Gifts, Memories and Traditions

By Dinah Frishling, Linda Bergholdt and Nancy Healey

This is a time of celebration and reflection. Herein we offer a few of our thoughts and some memories to help share the holiday spirit and get you thinking, what will you celebrate?

Our Winter Holidays

If you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali, Winter Solstice & Yule, or Kwanza, you know how powerfully they stimulate our minds, emotions, creativity, energy, ideals, and reverence! We look forward with expectations.

Historical religious roots pass through the family tree, establishing a rich medley of intertwined familial-spiritual connections. Through the ages, we have embellished the holidays, producing experiences that always work to raise our spirits high.

Our traditions heighten our senses. The eyes and nose (lights and beautiful decorations, the smell of fir trees and candles), the ears (music surrounds us, from the sacred to the playful.) Let us not forget the stomach! It is a time of gastronomical delights. The holidays are an opportunity to connect with our roots, celebrate our families and friends, to raise our voices in song by a fireplace, in a majestic holy place, or our own beautiful gardens. So much for which to be grateful. *Dinah*



Holidays Warm Our Hearts And Are Best When Shared!

Our Swedish Traditions

December has the shortest amount of daylight, which may be why there are so many candles in Swedish homes at Christmas. My parents were both Swedish, so we filled our home with candles and the smell of cardamom, roasted ham, meatballs, red cabbage, and herring every year.

My mother added twists to the traditional Christmas Eve celebration -- rice pudding with a hidden almond, which would make a wish come true to the person who found it. Over the years, there were more almonds in the pudding in the hope that even more wishes would come true.

She also claimed that the annual writing and sharing of poems before dinner was a Swedish tradition. Oh, how we labored over those poems, only to find out years later, it was her own clever way to get us all to laugh and cry together!
Linda

Remembered Holidays

When I was about 8, my dad started his own company and finances were tight. Mother and I were in a small store when I saw a tiny green metal frog that I fell in love with. It was 25 cents. I knew we could not afford it. On Christmas morning the frog was wrapped under our tree. No gift could have made me happier. He still is in my jewelry box.

New York, 1964, I was a new stewardess for American Airlines with no control over my December flight schedule and I was homesick. Miraculously I had 3 days off at Christmas. We flew standby. I knew my chances of getting a flight home and back were slim. Arriving at LaGuardia incredibly early, I was determined to stay until I got a flight. Lucky again. Getting off the plane, seeing my family for the first time in months, I knew I was the happiest, luckiest person alive.

My best and most wonderful holidays were in 1968 and 1970. The gifts Tom and I received were the most remarkable and perfect ever. Our son Tom was born on December 22, 1968. Our daughter Lynn was born on November 29, 1970. The happiness they have brought into our lives is incalculable. *Nancy*

To follow these ladies, sign up for their blog [We Are Proud Aging Women](http://WeAreProudAgingWomen.com).

See Insert for Upcoming Events

An Abundance of Gratitude



Villagers were all smiles and grateful to return to our favorite Country Harvest restaurant to celebrate our Friendsgiving, and the start of the Holidays! Over 50 people enjoyed the excellent dinner and pies and took the opportunity to catch up with friends. Top row from left: **Colette, Steve, Valarie, Kathy, Pat S, Joe and Dee.** Second row from left: **Nancy G, Nancy L, Nancy I, Bev, Mary Alice, Barbara J, Nick, Corky, Barb B, Jenny, Pat L** and to the right, **Steve.** Bottom row from left: Enjoying the Underwood Family Farms outing were **Sharon, Dinah, Mary Alice, Barb B, and Marv.** We are so thankful for everyone in CVV!



Photos courtesy of **Billie Sontag, Dinah Frishling and Sharon Bloom Chernoff**



JOIN THESE FUN HOLIDAY EVENTS!

Holiday Cookie Exchange - December 9th:

Bake or purchase one dozen cookies, then bring them to the event at Marv's house and exchange them with your fellow Villagers. Coffee and water provided. Bring a container to take home your holiday treats.



Holiday Party - December 14th:

Visit with your Village friends at our traditional holiday luncheon at the Los Robles Greens. Festive holiday photos, great food and lots of cheer to share.

Sign up/request ride by 12/7.



Sign up via the Events Calendar or call (805) 372-1826

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!



Rita W.
Susan W.
Mary W.
Tina T.

Stephen F.
Arlene B.
Brenda B.
Valerie F.

Sue H.
Judy B.
Steve H.

Join CVV's *StrongerMemory* Challenge in 2022!

By Loretta Allen

Beginning in January CVV will be presenting a new program – Building a Stronger Brain. We're seeking members to join a proven group effort to support brain health. *StrongerMemory* by Goodwin House provides a curriculum designed to stimulate the brain's prefrontal cortex, which governs our ability to retrieve memories.

Through consistent use of exercises, participants have noticed improvement in their ability to focus, find misplaced items and remember conversations. Improve your memory with just 20 – 30 minutes each day:

- Quickly doing simple math problems
- Writing or journaling
- Reading aloud



Rob Liebreich, president and CEO of Goodwin House Incorporated, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting, honoring and uplifting of the lives of older adults and those who care for them, developed the *StrongerMemory* program. In 2011, he was actively

working in the field of senior living and healthcare, Rob sought ways to address the challenge of improving cognitive memory. He was unable to find an existing program that was specific to his needs, so with help from colleagues and other experts, Rob and his family created their own. Since then, 15 Villages have participated in the program. Because of this participation and validation, the program will be available to Villages in nine states from coast to coast. The goal is to have as many people as possible learn about and use these tools to help improve their brain health.

In January we will hold an introductory class, both In-person and on Zoom, to explain the program in more detail and to gauge interest among our members to join this fun brain health challenge together. Formal classes are planned to start in February, with a 12-week commitment suggested for success. A workbook will be available to use to complete the daily exercises. Initially the invitation is open only to CVV members. Look for more information in January's newsletter.



Supporting Transitions: Medicare & Widow's Group

By Loretta Allen

The Ventura County Area Agency on Aging's Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program (HICAP) is tackling all questions and concerns related to Medicare Open Enrollment by hosting a variety of one-stops throughout Ventura County. HICAP services are free and offered virtually and in-person by appointment only through this year's enrollment deadline which is **December 7th**.

The transition to Medicare can be daunting and understanding plan options and the costs associated with each is often overwhelming. The VCAAA's HICAP team is made up of highly trained counselors who provide unbiased counseling services and assistance to Medicare recipients to determine eligibility for a variety of benefits and services.

Online and telephone options are available. No walk-ins will be accepted. All COVID-19 safety protocols will be in place. Please visit www.vcaaa.org to complete the HICAP Part D/MA Comparison Form or call (805) 477-7300 ext. 5 or email HICAP@Ventura.org for assistance or to make an appointment.

By Billie Sontag

Can Our CVV Widow's Support Group Be Helpful to You?



We are a group of CVV women who have been through the grief process for at least 2 years and are moving forward. Led by our very own Sharon Bloom (aka Chernoff), a licensed psychotherapist with years of experience, we meet monthly to discuss things such as transitions, resilience, aging, living alone, living without the support we once had, and any triggers of grief that may occur. We share what is going on in our lives plus positive and negative feelings that arise as we make necessary adjustments. We find we have many experiences in common, which makes it easy for us to understand and be helpful to one another. There is no judgment... we're just here to support each other. If you are interested in learning more, please contact a Call Manager at **(805) 372-1826** and Sharon will get back to you.



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

Place Stamp Here

P. O. Box 3162
Westlake Village, CA 91359

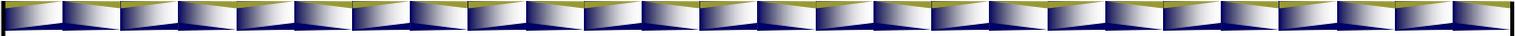
Phone: (805) 372-1826
Email: cvv@conejovalleyvillage.org
Website: www.conejovalleyvillage.org



Neighbors Helping Neighbors Stay Independent, Active and Connected



Conejo Valley Village is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). Donations are tax-deductible.



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!

CVV All Volunteer Meeting

**Wed., Dec. 8th, 4 pm
at Goebel Center**

Meet other volunteers, learn about volunteer opportunities, and share ideas and questions to improve member services.

Sign up online or call
(805) 372-1826

Do you know someone who enjoys helping people and would be a great CVV volunteer?



Suggest they contact our Call Manager at (805) 372-1826 to learn more!

VOLUNTEERS!

LOOK FOR NEW SERVICE REQUEST OPPORTUNITIES!

Service requests are increasing so there are new opportunities every day.



Check out the website for different ways to help improve members' lives, or call **(805) 372-1826**. Sign up and help members thrive!

We appreciate all that you do for CVV!