



WELCOME!

Staying CONNECTED

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

As the crisp air and gentle snowflakes signal another winter's arrival, we are delighted to welcome you to our latest edition of NNC's *Staying Connected*. Whether you find yourself cozying up with a warm cup of cocoa, enjoying the winter scenery or reflecting on the joys of the past year, this season offers a perfect moment to gather, reconnect and appreciate the warmth of togetherness.

Winter is a time for sharing stories, embracing cherished memories and looking forward to what lies ahead. Our village continues to shine, even in the chilliest months, thanks to the kindness, resilience and friendship found among each of you.

In this newsletter, revisit Vietnam with our member who took her second trip to Asia this summer, determine if a warehouse membership is worth it for you, read a Thumbs Up book review, catch up

with NNC and community news—and more! Of course, finish off our issue with Wordshop.

As winter descends, we encourage you to participate, reach out and share your own winter experiences with fellow members—after all, our stories are what make NNC truly special.

Wishing you a wonderful winter filled with warmth, laughter and good health!

The Staying Connected Team 🍷

Return to Vietnam

By Miriam Rittberg, NNC Member

“So, when can I see you again,” I asked my son, Lenny (who lives in Vietnam). He said, “Since last year you got to see Danang and the central part of Vietnam, this time, let's head north to Hanoi.” So, in August, I landed at Hanoi airport.

After getting off the plane, the three of us, (Lenny, his friend Ly and me) drove about 3 hours north to Ninh Binh, which is in the beautiful, rural part of the country. High cliffs, valleys, rivers, limestone mountains and temples make up the terrain. The limestone dissolves over time and creates caves and interesting formations. Quiet, natural beauty with the sounds of cicadas and birds made for a very soothing and relaxing boat ride on a river, which we took the first day. We passed under the

mountains into caves where you needed to duck under the natural formations. Also, the paddlers used their feet to navigate the boats. We stayed at a charming village inn and were visited by a calico cat and her two rambunctious kittens.

On our second day, we went on another, larger river. Here, the paddlers were mostly women who used their arms and showed their strength, paddling for long periods of time. We stopped to visit old Buddhist temples on the islands. The serenity of the river invites feelings of peace and meditation. Often, hundreds of water lilies lined the river. We were offered embroidered handicrafts that reflect the culture of the inhabitants who live there.

A word about the food. Except for one night of pizza, we ate authentic Vietnamese food. Lenny and I avoid meat, but I do eat some fish and seafood. We mostly ate vegetarian: fresh vegetables, rice noodles or rice and fresh fruit. Pho (pronounced “fuh”) is one of the most traditional dishes. It is often eaten for breakfast. It consists of broth, rice noodles (not wheat) and slices of beef. The version we got used slices of tempeh. I hadn't practiced using chopsticks since the last trip, so I had to use regular utensils.

Every morning began with a trip to one of the many coffee shops, each unique and full of charm. I became addicted to egg coffee. It origi-

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Honors To Henrietta Lacks and Park Heights Plantation Founder, “Farmer Chippy”

By Rosalind Griffin, NNC Member and LCSW-C

The 15th Annual Henrietta Lacks Memorial Lecture occurred on October 4, 2025. I have attended the event several times. However, I was unaware this year’s ceremonies would include recognition of an esteemed dynamic leader from the Park Heights community, “Farmer Chippy.”

These lectures are held to memorialize and honor Henrietta Lacks by educating the health and scientific community and uplifting Lacks’ contributions to ongoing scientific research. Henrietta Lacks was an African American woman whose cervical cancer cells were harvested during a biopsy. Her cells were unusual in that they reproduced at a very high rate and could be kept alive long enough in culture to allow for more in-depth examination. This quality prompted the pathologist to sell the cells to prominent research centers and pharmaceutical makers without Lacks’ knowledge or consent. The cells were named HeLa cells. These cells have become the basis for developing polio, HPV and AIDS breakthroughs and large financial gains for their use. The Lacks family was unaware of the scientific progress from the cells while unable to pay for their own medical care. The work of science writer Rebecca Skloot was pivotal when she joined with the Lacks family to pen her book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (2010).

The outcomes from the publicity of Skloot’s work, combined with the Lacks’ family advocacy, resulted in the creation of the free annual Henrietta Lacks lecture series in collaboration with the Paul Laurence Dunbar High

School health sciences scholarship program, the student science mentorship at Johns Hopkins laboratories, engagement with HBCU Morgan State University and enhanced outreach to east Baltimore residents for training. Finally, construction is on the way for a science building dedicated to Lacks.

A major component of the Johns Hopkins Urban Institute is the Henrietta Lacks Memorial Award of \$15,000, which was bestowed to the Agri Hood Baltimore Food Box Delivery Program led by Richard Francis, better known as “Farmer Chippy,” for its work during the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this recognition, in 2024, “Farmer Chippy” created the Plantation Park Heights Urban Farm, situated at 3811 Park Heights Avenue. The urban farm is in an area below Northern Parkway that has been identified as a food desert because the outlets to purchase chicken boxes and snack foods rather than healthy foods have been normalized. The grant’s goal is to develop a permanent outlet for food distribution and education beyond the Park Heights Plantation.

During my interactions with “Farmer Chippy,” I have learned that his philosophy of community development involves listening to residents’ expressions of their needs instead of imposing preconceived solutions, and building on community strengths while teaching organic urban gardening. In his gardens, I observed companion planting, with herbs and vegetables flourishing.

I am looking forward to witnessing how “Farmer Chippy’s” endeavors represent Henrietta Lacks’s scientific longevity, expanding beyond

biological cell growth to support human networks to strengthening resilience and self-sustainment. I hope to attend the 16th Annual Henrietta Lacks Memorial Lecture in 2026.

Sources: Wikipedia: Henrietta Lacks & Rebecca Skloot

HBO Movie 2017, starring Oprah Winfrey *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

15th Annual Henrietta Lacks Memorial Program October 4, 2025, Johns Hopkins Institute for Clinical & Translational Research Eds., Cyd Lacanienta, et al. 🍄





Why Are More Older People Dying After Falls? (summarized*)

By Paula Span, 9/15/2025,
Kaiser Health News

Earl Vickers was accustomed to taking Molly, his shepherd-boxer-something-else mix, for strolls on the beach or around his neighborhood in Seaside, California. A few years ago, though, he started to experience problems staying upright.

“If another dog came toward us, every single time I’d end up on the ground,” recalled Vickers, 69. “It seemed like I was falling every other month. It was kind of crazy.”

Most of those tumbles did no serious damage, though one time he fell backward and hit his head on a wall behind him. “I don’t think I had a concussion, but it’s not something I want to do every day,” Vickers said, ruefully. Another time, trying to break a fall, he broke two bones in his left hand.

So, in 2022, he told the oncologist who had been treating him for cancer that he wanted to stop the cancer drug he had been taking, off and on, for 4 years.

Among the drug’s listed side effects are higher rates of falls and fractures, compared with those given a placebo. His doctor agreed that he could discontinue the drug, and “I haven’t had a single fall since,” Vickers said.

For decades, public health experts have warned of the perils of falls for older people. In 2023, the most recent year of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 41,000 Americans over 65 died from falls. More startling than that: Fall-related

mortality among older adults has been climbing sharply.

Death rates from fall injuries among Americans over 65 have more than tripled over the past 30 years. Among those over 85, the cohort at highest risk, death rates from falls jumped to 339 per 100,000 in 2023, from 92 per 100,000 in 1990. The culprit might be Americans’ reliance on prescription drugs.

That same 30-year period saw a flurry of research and activity to try to reduce geriatric falls and their potentially devastating consequences—hip fractures, brain bleeds, restricted mobility, persistent pain and institutionalization.

The American Geriatrics Society adopted updated fall prevention guidelines in 2011. In 2012, the CDC unveiled a program called STEADI-Older Adult Fall Prevention. And in 2012, 2018 and again in 2024, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended exercise or physical therapy for older adults at risk of falling.

According to Donovan Maust, a geriatric psychiatrist and researcher at the University of Michigan, “It’s a bad problem that seems to be getting worse.”

But are prescription drugs driving that increase? Geriatricians and others who research falls and prescribing practices question that conclusion.

Many factors contribute to falls, including physical impairments and deteriorating eyesight associated with advancing age, alcohol abuse and tripping hazards in people’s homes. Some researchers, however,

believe that our increasing use of medications—like benzodiazepines, opioids, antidepressants and gabapentin—that act on the central nervous system are a reason for the increase in falls.

Problematic drugs are numerous enough to have acquired an acronym: FRIDs, or “fall-risk-increasing drugs,” a category that also includes various cardiac medications and antihistamines like Benadryl.

Such medications play a major role in falls, agrees Thomas Gill, a geriatrician and epidemiologist at Yale University and a longtime falls researcher. But, he said, “there are alternative explanations” for the increase in death rates. He cited changes in reporting the causes of death, for instance. “Years ago, falls were considered a natural consequence of aging and no big deal.”

In the 1980s and 1990s, death certificates often attributed fatalities among older people to ailments like heart failure instead of falls, making fall mortality appear lower. Also, today’s over-85 cohort may be frailer and sicker than the “oldest-old” were 30 years ago because contemporary medicine can keep people alive longer. Their accumulating impairments, more than the drugs they take, could make them more likely to die after a fall.

Whether or not medication use outweighs all other factors, “nobody disputes that these agents are overused and inappropriately used” and contribute to the troubling increase in fall death rates among seniors, Gill said.

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CHAIWAY *My Way*

POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS

By Jeffrey Arenberg, CHAIway Program Manager

CHAIway is doing great! Our new volunteer program is in effect, and we are encouraging riders to use the volunteer program if they know their plans at least a week in advance. We are also always looking for more volunteer drivers, and I can be a point of contact for anyone who may be interested in this opportunity.

We have also updated our department names! The overarching program is called “CHAIway My Way” and under it we have “CHAIway On Demand” for more immediate rides and “CHAIway Volunteer” if you know your plans at least a week in advance. Want more information? Contact me, Jeffrey, at 410-500-5498 or jahrenberg@chaibaltimore.org.

One Park Heights – New Library

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

In the words of Yolanda Jiggetts, Chief Executive Officer of Park Heights Renaissance, groundbreaking of the new Park Heights library on August 27 was a “celebration of collaboration.” Thanks to the combined efforts of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, Baltimore City Department of General Services and Park Heights Renaissance, Baltimore City will be getting its first new library in 15 years.

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott, who was raised in Park Heights close to where the new library will be built, was especially grateful to all who joined together to make this happen. In his remarks before a large crowd, he said that “anyone who grew up in Park Heights knows you had to walk two miles just to get to a library, but today, it’s a new day in Park Heights.”

The library will be located in the 3800 block of Woodland Avenue.

Delegate Sean A. Stinnett of the 41st district noted that “the new Park Heights library will serve as a foundation for education, community building, and growth, providing residents with access to books, technology, educational programs and a welcome space to gather. This project represents not only an investment in equity and opportunity but also a testament to the resilience and advocacy of the Park Heights community, whose voices and vision made this day possible.”

Construction of the new branch is set to begin this winter and open sometime in 2027. The branch will feature a dedicated children’s reading room, a variety of lounge and study spaces and public access to computer areas and wi-fi. 🗨️

Health and Wellness continued from p.3

Thus, the ongoing campaign for “deprescribing” (stopping the medications whose potential harms outweigh their benefits) or reducing their dosage.

“It’s easy to start meds, but it often takes a lot of time and effort to have patients stop taking them,” says Michael Steinman, a geriatrician at the University of California-San Francisco and co-director of the US Deprescribing Research Network. Harried doctors may pay less attention to drug regimens than to health issues that seem more pressing, and patients can be reluctant to give up pills that seem to help with pain, insomnia, reflux and other common age-related complaints.

Steinman urged older patients to raise the issue of FRIDs if their doctors haven’t. “Ask, ‘Do any of my medications increase the risk of falls? Is there an alternative treatment?’” he suggested. “Being an informed patient or caregiver can put this on the agenda. Otherwise, it might not come up.” 🗨️

**Republished with permission from kffhealthnews.org. Read the full article at <https://kffhealthnews.org/news/article/new-old-age-paula-span-falls-mortality-death-older-people-prescription-drugs/>*

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TIPS & TRICKS:



Warehouse Clubs: No versus Yes

By CHATgpt, an artificial intelligence (AI) program (but edited by a human)

CHATgpt was asked: Does it pay for a single senior or a couple who live in a small apartment in north-west Baltimore to belong to a warehouse club, such as Costco (\$65/year) or Sam's Club (\$50/year)?

Answer: I gathered updated local/national numbers + made a sample calculation for a senior adult (or a couple) in Pikesville, MD. These are estimates; your actual usage and local deals might differ, but this should help you see whether a warehouse membership like Costco might pay off for you.

Sample Scenario: Senior Living Alone or Couple in Northwest Baltimore

I made the following assumptions:

- You live in an apartment with a small pantry + freezer
- You use paper products moderately: toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, etc.
- You use cleaning supplies, detergent, etc. moderately
- You buy some canned/frozen foods/staples/non-perishables in bulk, but still buy fresh food (produce, meat) weekly.



September Art Class

What You Might Spend Without Warehouse Shopping

Item Category	Monthly Cost Estimate at Regular Stores	Annual Cost
Toilet paper	~\$25	~\$300
Cleaning supplies	~\$20	~\$240
Bulk frozen/canned goods/staples	~\$40	~\$480
Fresh groceries	~\$200	~\$2,400
Toiletries, over-the-counter meds, etc.)	~\$30	~\$360
TOTAL	~ \$315	~ \$3,780

What you might spend for the same items at Costco would cost \$3,314 annually, including the \$65 membership fee.

Comparison & Net Savings

- Without membership: ~ \$3,780/year
- With membership: ~ \$3,314/year (including membership fee)
- Estimated savings at warehouse: ~ \$466/year

In this scenario, having a Costco-type membership *could* save you about \$400-\$500 per year, if you use it as assumed.

What Could Change This

- If you use less paper goods/cleaning supplies (e.g., live very simply, don't need big packs), the savings shrink.

- If you don't have enough storage (pantry, freezer), you might not be able to take full advantage of bulk purchases.
- Transportation costs (warehouse stores are usually farther away).
- If you don't buy many bulk items and can't get to the warehouse store often, you might barely cover the membership cost or even lose money vs. shopping at regular supermarket sales.
- If there are local grocery sales/coupons/discount programs, you might duplicate many of the warehouse savings without needing the warehouse membership.

My Suggestion for You

Given the cost of living and typical grocery prices in Maryland, I believe:

- If you buy paper goods/cleaning supplies regularly (which most people do), and
- If you can store a few big items (bulk toilet paper pack, big detergent bottle, some freezer space for packaged/frozen items) and
- If you are willing to go to Costco or a similar store maybe once every couple of weeks

Then, Costco membership *likely does pay off* by several hundred dollars a year for you. If, however, you use small amounts, have very limited storage and mostly buy fresh food in small amounts, the

continued on p.7

Neighbors in the Know

Sukkot 5786

By Heidi Schloss, NNC Member

There are many ways that Jews worship and celebrate God. I live in a neighborhood that is very, very Orthodox Jewish and I am not; I am Reconstructionist. I have worked hard for 30 years to make friends with my neighbors. For the last few years, I've had a helper. His name is Karl--my dachshund. All the neighborhood kids and their parents love Karl. Through Karl, I have been invited to Shabbat dinners, lunch and dinners in sukkahs, backyard barbecues, a wedding and a bar mitzvah. There has been a degree of acceptance of one another.

Today, something happened that was very unusual and so beautiful. Karl and I were taking one of our walks on the first day of the Sukkot holiday when three young Orthodox men approached. I wished them "*Chag Sameach*" (happy holiday), and they wished me the same. Before they completely passed us, one said, "Hey! Have you had a chance to shake the lulav and etrog* today?" (*palm branch and citron)

"No, I have not," I replied.

"It's the first day of the holiday," he said. "Would you like to?"

"Yes!" I answered emphatically. He took the lulav and etrog out of his bag and placed it in my hands the way you're supposed to. He told me to hold them together and repeat the blessing after him. He had no way of knowing that I not only knew this prayer but knew that on the first day of the holiday, one says a second special prayer.

However, I went along because he felt so good about doing this. We

said the two blessings together, and he could hear by the time I got to the second one that I knew what I was doing.

"Hey! You know that one!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I do. I'm Jewish; I just don't celebrate the way you do."

He replied, "This is a *mitzvah!*" (A *mitzvah* is a good deed.)

"Yes, it is," I answered.

"What are you doing this time tomorrow?" he asked.

I said, "Hmm, let me think," and told him that I had a doctor's appointment. He then asked what time I'd be home. I told him the approximate time, and he said either he or one of his friends would stop by so that I could say the blessing again, on the 2nd day of Sukkot.

I put my hand on my heart because I felt so very special. I said, "You know, I feel this in my heart; this was beautiful! I thank you so very much!"

He said, "Well, you know we Jews do feel things in our heart."

I responded, "Yes we do, don't we."

And they went on their way.

Thank you

By Helene Miller, NNC Member

I wanted to speak up for NNC's volunteer Mike Schneider. Mike has been helping me with moves from my home to apartments since 2015. He is the *best volunteer*. He is direct and honest, always pleasant, polite and very professional. He goes above and beyond to help; he recently helped me organize some space in my kitchen!



NNC is fortunate to have a volunteer such as Mike, who has helped for many years. I want to thank Annie and NNC

for offering this wonderful service via Mike to us and our community. He has helped me many times. Annie and NNC's services and volunteers are invaluable. Thank you for always being there for me.

A Life Lived— Revealed

By Joyce Wolpert, Senior Advocate

As seniors, many of us have become frequent attendees at funerals. And I would daresay we may have realized after someone is gone... "I had no idea they did that or were that way."

As a white, Jewish woman, I have interacted with many Black persons in my life as co-worker, therapist, artistic partner and close friend to male and female. Yet if I had to pick one milestone that indicates a basic difference in the white Jewish to Black Christian culture and approach to life, it would be the funeral.

As a high school mental health therapist, I attended funerals of young lives cut short by violence or disease. As an expressive therapist in nursing homes, I attended funerals of patients I had known for years. As wellness coordinator at NNC, 2014–2016, I attended funerals of members.

Jewish funerals either take place in our one funeral home in Baltimore or at the gravesite. Rarely is a funeral longer than half an hour unless it is someone well known in the community. The rabbi

does requisite prayers and family members or friends speak. Music is rarely heard or sung outside of prayerful chanting. Then, a hearse comes, and it is off the burial site where also brief prayers are uttered. The time to discuss the life of the deceased, comfort the mourners and express one's own feelings comes in the next few days or week, as people gather in the surviving family's home during Shiva. There are also Jewish practices that occur 30 days from the death, in ongoing one-year intervals and during holy day synagogue services to mark the person's memory.

I have attended Black funerals at various churches and funeral homes. None was shorter than 1½ hours. Some lasted 3 hours. There is usually music, sometimes a piano or organ, other times a New Orleans style brass band, sometimes a solo singer, other times a gospel choir. Pastors, family and friends speak, usually with great conviction and heartfelt energy. More often the mood is uplifting and quite affirming that the soul and spirit of the deceased is now going forward into life everlasting, a place where all the toils and burdens of this world are erased.

Such was the funeral I attended in September of Rosalie White, a neighbor of mine here at Windsor House, though not an NNC member. Rosalie, 87, was

uniformly a pleasant and smiling person. She was kind, welcoming and quick to see if I or others had a need that she could help meet. She had children and grandchildren who regularly visited her, and she took buses all over the place even though she was warned this was quite risky. Rosalie was involved with her life and cognizant of others until her stroke last May.

She then spent the next few months in hospitals and nursing homes receiving treatment until she passed. At her funeral, Rosalie was extolled for being an angel, a truly beautiful person whose kindness was her essence. At the same time, her life of hardship was revealed. Rosalie raised her children on her own, working as a nurse's aide, proudly not reaching out for government aid yet very much relying on her strong spiritual beliefs to carry her through. She seemed to be a model of faith in action, and the speakers and songs made the point that we, too, could be encouraged to live a life of deep faith and practice.

For myself, I was roused emotionally as I have seldom been at a Jewish funeral where emotions are often contained. I felt the expressed fervor and am not sure I have ever been as convinced of anything as the solid belief system of earthly suffering leading to eternal reward being put forth. Rosalie, born in Baltimore in 1936,

of course experienced discrimination and hardship in ways probably indescribable, yet the litany of her woes and injustice was not the message put forth. Instead, we were left with the image of a spiritual warrior and yes, an angel who endured travails and was now entering a space of Divine Love.

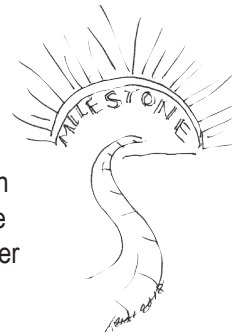
This funeral experience was deeply cathartic for me, an outsider, so I can only imagine how it might affect those who live closer to it. 🕯️

Milestone Moments:

Janet Kotelchuck, on the marriage of her granddaughter Megan Kotelchuck.

Sylvia Eisenberg, on celebrating her special birthday in November.

Jerry and Eileen Rosenbaum, on the birth of a new great-granddaughter, Adi Chana, born in Israel. Parents are their granddaughter Tamar and her husband Noam.



Tips and Tricks continued from p.5

benefit will be smaller and might not outweigh the inconvenience.

Summary

Let me do a simplified scenario for a senior couple, living in an apartment with moderate storage (one pantry + small freezer and typical usage).

- Suppose they spend \$40/month on paper goods at the local grocery store. Buying at a ware-

house might reduce that to \$30/month = saving \$120/year.

- Cleaning supplies at the local grocery store: maybe \$20/month.
- Bulk buys might drop it to \$15/month = saving \$60/year.
- If they buy frozen or non-perishable foods in bulk, they might save \$20-\$40/month.
- However, a senior living alone, who uses approximately half of

what a couple uses, might find that the warehouse membership and storage inconvenience might not be worth it.

(I priced a pair of prescription glasses at a hospital-owned optical shop. The price without frames was \$800. The same prescription at Costco, with frames and transition lenses, cost \$268! Editor) 🕯️

AGENCY FRIENDS

National Council on Aging (NCOA), <https://www.ncoa.org/>

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

Mission: The NCOA is a non-profit organization focused on measurably improving the lives of 40 million older adults by 2030. Its strategy is simple: empower older adults, strengthen communities and advocate for lasting change. NCOA provides resources, tools, best practices and advocacy to ensure that every person can age with health and financial security.

Since 1950, NCOA has made improving the lives of older adults its passion and mission. NCOA was the first national voice for older adults. It helped end mandatory retirement. It advocated to secure Medicare, Medicaid, the Older Americans Act and the Affordable Care Act. Local organizations turn to NCOA for support as they serve older adults every day. And the organization has built digital tools that empower aging Americans with knowledge.

The NCOA website contains “everything you wanted to know about aging but were afraid to ask.”

Across the top of the webpage are two dropdowns of interest. The first is “Aging Well,” and provides detailed information on multiple topics such as

- caregiver support
- chronic disease
- fall prevention
- health and wellness
- nutrition and exercise
- aging in place
- benefits and assistance
- Medicare
- personal finance
- work and retirement resources

The next dropdown is “Professional Resources,” which offers information on

- benefits access
- economic well-being
- health aging programs
- senior centers
- workforce training

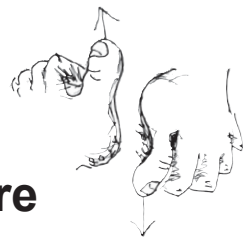


CELEBRATING A LEGACY OF IMPACT

Click on any of the above bullet topics, and NCOA provides detailed information. For example, below is a small sample of the articles found under “chronic disease.”

- The Top 10 Most Common Chronic Conditions in Older Adults
- Chronic vs. Acute Medical Conditions: What's the Difference?
- What Is Chronic Disease Self-Management?
- How to Lower Blood Pressure
- Care and Treatment Options for Common Chronic Conditions

One other important feature of NCOA’s website is its use of large fonts! Articles are easy to read, and the depth of information is impressive. 🗨️



THUMBS UP or THUMBS DOWN?

A Book Review: *The Wealth of Shadows* by Graham Moore

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

Graham Moore’s historical novel, *The Wealth of Shadows*, tells the true, page-turning story of how, in 1939, a small, clandestine group within the U.S. Treasury Department began working tirelessly to defeat Hitler’s war machine through economic means, i.e., crashing its economy.

Moore focuses on an unassuming, obscure, modest historical figure member of the team, Ansel

Luxford, a seemingly ordinary Minnesota tax attorney who saw the threat of Nazism, not only in Europe but in the U.S. On his own initiative, he reached out to Harry Dexter White, an economist in the Treasury Department who specialized in international financial affairs. White is described as a crude, paranoid and unpleasant man who was not afraid to use whatever means possible to undermine the German economy. Importantly, he had the support

of his good friend, Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr., while Morgenthau had the ear of his good friend, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR).

White puts together the team of Luxford, John Pehle (a Treasury Dept. lawyer), Joe DuBois (a lawyer and pacifist), James Saxon (a statistician and the youngest member of the group), Herman Oliphant (the Treasury Department’s general



nated in Hanoi in the 1940's when there was a milk shortage. Strong coffee is blended with whipped yolks, condensed milk and sugar. It is decorated with cocoa powder or cinnamon on top. We even visited the shop where the brew originated. Interestingly, Vietnam is the second largest exporter of coffee.

The next part of the trip was a visit to beautiful Ha Long Bay. The bay consists of almost 2,000 islands. We enjoyed an overnight cruise and drifted through this landscape, watching the sun set and rise among the cliffs. There was a pause in the afternoon for people who wanted to swim or kayak in the waters. As part of the trip agenda, we took part in a 6 a.m. tai chi class and a cooking demonstration of Vietnamese spring rolls. In a previous trip, Lenny and Ly saw the endangered monkeys that live on some of the islands.

The third leg of our journey was a visit to the capital, Hanoi. We stayed in the Old Quarter, buzzing with activity, noise, traffic, crowds and people selling street food. It was a distinct contrast to our last few days but filled with the promise of seeing how people live and interact in this city.

The many diverse faces we saw showed how tourism has made Vietnam a favored destination. So many coffee shops are a "must stop," where people socialize, meet friends and do business. The Note

Coffee, for example, was literally filled with handwritten notes by visitors and displayed on all the walls of its several floors.

We often saw pretty, young girls dressed in fashionable outfits posing for each other and posting their pictures on social media. Tube houses, tall, narrow facades are common. Property taxes were based on the widths of homes, making this style popular.

A visit to the Vietnamese Women's Museum showcased the role of women in war, heroes on the home front and on the battlefield. Costumes, customs (a rural minority lacquered their teeth in black) and handicrafts were on display. Another display showcased letters written by Vietnamese couples writing about the sacrifices that had to be made during times of war.



We also attended a Water Puppetry performance. This is a uniquely Vietnamese art where lacquered wood puppets are controlled by long bamboo rods in a waist-deep pool. It was originally held in rice paddies dating back to the 11th century. The stories originate from folklore and legends and are part of the harvest celebration. They also entertain the children. Music and storytelling are part of the performance.

And the monsoons came, summer being the wet season. The rain was intermittent; therefore, we hopped in and out of places and used "Grab" (a version of Uber) to get to anywhere. At one point, I had to ride on a Grab motorbike. I hung on for dear life and moaned over every bump. Next to us was a fashionable young lady sitting side saddle in a skirt on her motorbike and barely holding on. It is amazing to see how many people can be packed on one motorcycle. A group of four is not uncommon. Multiple boxes of stuff and equipment are also transported this way.






And alas, the trip ended. Every day was packed with new adventures (thanks to a thoroughly well-planned agenda by Lenny), wonderful food and insights into another culture that has weathered a history of difficult times. Despite the hardships, these people have shown amazing resilience and have become a dominant force in the global economy. And they remain gentle, kind and welcoming, eager to help us learn about their country. 🇻🇳



For more information,
call: 410-500-5334

October 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
		<p>1 Erev Yom Kippur</p> 	<p>2 Yom Kippur—CHAI Closed</p>	<p>3 Needlers Contact Info: Eileen Rosenbaum at efrosen- baum@gmail.com</p>
<p>6 New Class!! Yoga with Jeffrey! 11am at CHAI</p>	<p>7 Sukkot—CHAI Closed</p> 	<p>8 Sukkot—CHAI Closed</p>	<p>9 Cardio Drumming with Ilysa @ Myerberg 2-3:00pm Happiness Group Conference Call at 1pm: 848-220-3300, 641-9914#</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>14—CHAI Closed Shemini Atzeret</p> 	<p>15—CHAI Closed Simchat Torah</p>	<p>16 Cardio Drumming with Ilysa @ Myerberg 2-3:00pm Happiness Group Conference Call at 1pm: 848-220-3300, 641-9914# University Group! @ 100pm @ Weinberg Woods</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>20 New Class!! Yoga with Jeffrey! 11am at CHAI</p> <p>Diversity Dialogue On Zoom 4-6pm</p>	<p>21 Art Class—2pm at CHAI Playing with Paper; Accordion Books!</p>	<p>22 Calligraphy—10am at CHAI</p>	<p>23 Cardio Drumming with Ilysa @ Myerberg 2-3:00pm Happiness Group Conference Call at 1pm: 848-220-3300, 641-9914#</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>28 Village Gathering/ AgeWell Special Greatest Gift Event!</p>	<p>29 Calligraphy 10am @ CHAI Book Club, 1:30, at the home of Klara Margaretten New Series with CHAI's Rona Gross—Exploring Quality of Life 2:30-3:30 at CHAI</p>	<p>30 Cardio Drumming with Ilysa @ Myerberg 2-3:00pm Happiness Group Conference Call at 1pm: 848-220-3300, 641-9914#</p>	<p>31</p>



SAMPLE

October 2025

What's New with NNC

Village Gatherings

Attendees were welcomed to the Sept. 9 Village Gathering by Co-Presidents Ilysa Cohen and Sharie Blum. After spending time greeting each other and enjoying a pizza lunch, members were asked to complete surveys that were on the tables. These surveys will give our Board members a better idea of the members' needs.

The Gathering's main event was meeting and learning about yoga from Jeffrey Arenberg, the CHAIway Program Manager. Jeffrey has been actively learning, teaching and pursuing yoga since 1999. As was explained in a video, yoga began several thousand years ago, and has evolved from pre-classical yoga, classical yoga and post-classical yoga into modern yoga. We learned that yoga is more than physical exercises and poses, but also incorporates mind, body and spiritual dimensions. Jeff will be teaching yoga to NNC members on the first and third Mondays of each month at CHAI. At the end of our meeting, we had our traditional split-the-pot raffle, which was won by NNC member Sherrie. *By Miriam Rittberg and Eileen Rosenbaum, NNC Members*

In October, NNC partnered with AgeWell, Myerberg, Lifebridge, Sol Levinson and the Associated for our Greatest Gift Program: Discussing and Planning for the Future. Community members received binders that included documents for planning ahead. Speakers included Jan H.K. Cardin, Esq., who talked about the importance of estate planning; Beth Land Hecht, LCSW-C spoke about the importance of having open communication about end-of-life-planning while we are still in good health; and Eliza Feller,

Director of Advance Planning at Sol Levinson's, answered the question of why we should plan funerals in advance. Attendees learned valuable information and had the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the presentation. *By Anne Shimanovich, Aging in Community, Program Director*



November Gathering

Art with a Heart brings interactive visual art classes into schools, community centers, group homes, shelters, permanent housing facilities, hospitals and senior day care and housing facilities. Two members of the staff were our guests in November. Using the supplies they brought, we each made glass mosaic "flashies." One table of NNC members was tasked with making thank you cards for the Art with a Heart staff and volunteers. Our 50-50 raffle was won by Judy O. And in honor of Thanksgiving, we were treated to slices of pumpkin pie! *By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member*



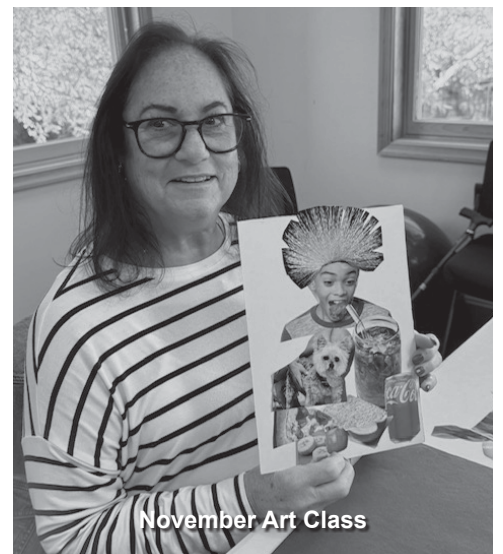
September Art Class

NNC Art Class

Lions and Tigers and Bears; Oh My! In September, having met with these students before, I knew that many already had some kind of clay experience. We talked about functional and ornamental types of ceramics, and I challenged our group to do both. As usual, our members helped one another, such as when Sherrie showed Toba how to use a tea ball to make tiny strings of clay for decoration. In the end, everyone created a series of delightful pieces! *By Heidi Schloss, NNC Member & Art Class Co-Coordinator*

It's amazing how paper, scissors, glue and magazines can be combined to create your own little world. In October, using the structure of accordion books, our crafty group created pockets, pop-ups and collages from a variety of sources. Each was unique, colorful and interactive. Of course, there was a lot of banter and catching up to do since we last met. We let the artist and kid in each of us play. *By Miriam Rittberg, NNC Member & Art Class Co-Coordinator*

Our November art class was presented by NNC member, the very talented Patria Hill. It was a lesson called Surrealistic Collage



November Art Class

and focused on juxtaposing unlikely images using art principles such as focal point and good composition. Everyone received their own packet of magazine clips and let their imagination create unique pictures. They even surprised themselves. Great job, Pat! *By Miriam Rittberg, NNC Member & Art Class Co-Coordinator*

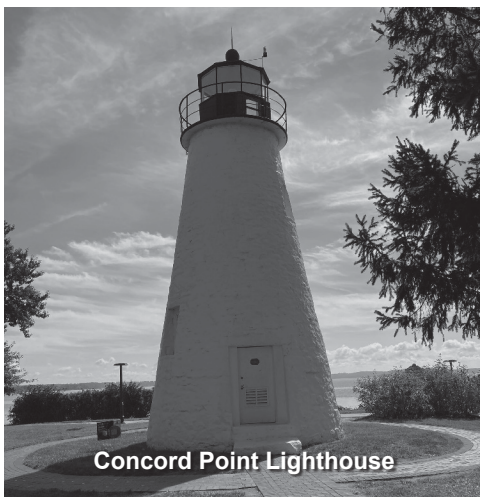


Concord Point Park

NNC Trips

Concord Point Park, Havre de Grace

Our September trip was to Concord Point Park, Havre de Grace. It was a perfect day for a day trip! The skies were blue with puffy clouds! Immediately after descending the bus steps, we saw the lighthouse and the first of many signs that explained its historic significance. As someone in our group said, “Oh my goodness! The British burned the whole city of Havre de Grace to the ground!” Indeed, this area, where the Susquehanna River meets the Chesapeake Bay, was involved in the War of 1812. Today, it is a lovely park.



Concord Point Lighthouse

During our visit, some of us headed to shops, others to the park boardwalk along the water. As we looked towards the water, we saw ducks and geese. The park has several piers, but the most interesting ones have carved wooden birds at the top pylons, each representing the birds of the area. Suddenly, we saw a bird unlike the others—a blue heron! Apparently, he’s a regular resident.

Further along, we met a woman up to her hips in vegetation. She was part of the conservation group that keeps the area healthy. She was pulling out invasive plants. While she worked, she explained what she was doing, and which plants should and shouldn’t be there. She gave Eileen R some seeds with instructions to plant them at her house.

A carry-out restaurant is at the end of the boardwalk, where some of us were enticed by the aroma of fried green tomatoes and hush puppies in addition to the usual diner-style food. There were several places to sit, and we checked them out while waiting for our food. Ending the day with a fresh milkshake was very satisfying! *By Heidi Schloss, NNC Member, Trip Co-Ordinator*



Concord Point Park

Enoch Pratt Main Branch, Cathedral Street

What kind of trip is a tour of the Enoch Pratt Main Library? NNC wanted to find out! And so, we did in November. Erin, a librarian who works there and my friend, connected me with John. He became our tour guide, along with Heather, who runs the monthly art program.

We learned a lot of new things, one of which is that the library used to be located in a smaller building across the street. The current building was built in 1932 and sits on one solid block of land. If you think it resembles other libraries in the country, you’re right. The same architects who built our library built several others in the same style.

The building was constructed out of marble with many open space inside. The ceiling is coffered (a new word), referring to its inset shapes. When the library was



Enoch Pratt Main Branch

modernized in 2019, many historic paintings were removed; the Pratt still contains lots of art, including relief, marble sculpture and bronze sculpture. The children’s section still has the mosaic-covered fish-pond where koi actively swim and a posing figurine overlooks the water. The building’s original water fountains are carved out of marble. In addition, some interior walls are painted with murals.

Some other interesting facts:

- The first floor main gallery features changing exhibits. The one we saw is dedicated to Carmelo Anthony, a basketball player who lived in Baltimore.
- The original Dewey Decimal card system that many of us grew up

continued on p.14

with has been replaced with the same type used by the Library of Congress. The catalogue card system has been replaced by a set of computers that the public can access.

The first floor contains old magazines, newspapers and various interesting items.

Below stairs are three levels of "stacks," where old books and ones not currently in use can be found. The average visitor is not allowed to view them, so we were lucky!

The second floor has many activities for young adults, including an entire section of computers. Also, bronze sculptures were displayed in the hallway, several by the renowned Baltimore sculptor, Reuben Kramer! In an enlarged enclosed area, there are places used for making art and music. Pratt's once-a-month art program is open to the public; supplies such as paint, crayons, and yarn are provided.



Our docent John sadly told us the usual spots where people can eat lunch were not available, but he sneaked us into a back office. There, we happily rested our feet and backs and had a little something to eat.

This was a fascinating place! Who knew this special building on Cathedral Street was just waiting for us to explore! *By Heidi Schloss, NNC Trips Co-Coordinator*

Diversity Dialogue

At September's Diversity Dialogue, Florence Seldes facilitated a discussion about antisemitism on college campuses and in the U.S. in general and its relationship to the Trump administration.

In October we addressed the question "What issues related to this stage of the life cycle occupy my emotional life?" Some common themes were: physical decline in ourselves and people close to us; deaths in our personal networks; what type of living arrangement we wish to be in going forward; the challenges of being alone.

At our October meeting, we also recognized Veteran's Day by sharing our connections to the military. Reverend Howard spoke of how serving as an Air Force officer impacted his life. Having obtained a degree in aerospace engineering, he had long aspired to become an aviator. He said, "I traveled the world from the air." Serving during the closing years of the Vietnam War, he noted there were few African Americans officers. Although he intended to make a career of the military, the calling to the ministry resulted in his change of course.

Barbara Scott and Susan Russell both shared their experiences as military wives, Barbara for 16 years and Susan for 13 years. Barbara pursued a career as a federal employee at the same time her husband was in the Air Force. For Susan, one of few Jews in the Navy environment (submarine service), it was the first time in her life she was isolated from a Jewish community.

Shoshana Harris noted that for the first five years of her life her father was away from home, serving in World War II. His absence during her formative years made it difficult for them to bond thereafter. He didn't talk about his wartime experiences during his life.

While the Diversity Dialogue is open to all NNC members, the group membership has remained fairly consistent over time. A small group - usually 8-10 members on our monthly Zooms - we have gotten to know each other well. A relatively new NNC member joined us in November, and we welcome others to try us out. Our December and June meetings are in-person social gatherings. At this writing, we are looking forward to lunch at Jumbo Seafood in Pikesville, which has been our December venue the past several years. *By Susan Russell, NNC Member & DD Co-coordinator.*

NNC Book Club

After a summer hiatus, we met in September to discuss Emma Donoghue's novel, *Akin*. It's the story of a 79-year-old widower, Noah, who becomes the legal guardian of his great-nephew, Michael, a streetwise boy. Noah doesn't want Michael in his life, but with Michael's mother in jail and his father and grandmother dead, Noah is the boy's only chance to avoid being placed in foster care. Through adventures and misadventures in France, the two finally bond and connect. We all enjoyed the book and recommend it.

In October we discussed *The Housekeeper and the Professor* by Yoko Ogawa. Translated from Japanese, this touching novel tells the quiet, tender story of a housekeeper hired to care for a brilliant former math professor whose memory resets every 80 minutes. Through numbers, baseball and small daily rituals with her young son, fleeting presence becomes meaning, intimacy and dignity, proving deep connection can exist inside impermanence. *By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member* 🍷



Wordshop is your chance to share your creativity and inner thoughts with the community. Send your poems, jokes and stories to Northwest Neighbors Connecting, care of Eileen Creeger at ecreeger@chaibaltimore.org or 5809 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21215.

Winter Jumble Fun!

Unscramble the words below to find five common items or activities associated with winter. A little hint is provided by the cartoon clue below!

The Jumble

1. VLOESH
2. SKETAS
3. TEIMTNS
4. AZLRBID
5. FOESLKNAW



Jumble Answer Key 1. Shovel 2. Skates 3. Mittens 4. Blizzard 5. Snowflake

My Beautiful Cardinal*

By Marlene Wolff Solomon

At first light,
the red bird flew
to our brown bird feeder
in our back yard,
to dine on a breakfast
of mixed bird seeds,
we provide year-round.

A beautiful male cardinal,
its sanguine red plumage,
topped with a crimson crown.

Its vermilion beak,
surrounded
by a jagged black line
with two beady black eyes above,
placed on each side of his head.

Its wing feathers,
of a different ruddy hue
have longer and shorter lengths.

Many times, I see the vivid cardinal,
throughout the day,
feasting on delicious wild birdseed.

Again, in the morning,
at first light,
I spot my cardinal,
beautiful and blazing.
It is then that a smile appears on my face!

*Reprinted from www.womensmusings.com

Thumbs Up/Down continued from p.8

counsel) and Mabel Newcomer (a professor of economics at Vassar College). Their mission—to take down the Nazis using money as a weapon.

Moore takes the reader inside real-life secret meetings in Washington, D.C., Panama, Cuba and Great Britain. Ansel and his team encounter well-known personalities such as Morgenthau, John Maynard Keynes, financier J.P. Morgan, Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles and Randolph Paul (the most esteemed finance attorney in the country). The reader is drawn into a world where the enemy's next move is not only

measured in tanks and troops, but in balance sheets and ledger entries. But at its heart, the novel is also a story of character and conviction.

Moore knows how to write a page-turning story. He won an Academy Award as the screenwriter for the *Imitation Game*. His ability to weave fact and fiction keeps the reader on edge. He recounts real-life events and meetings but explains in his Author Notes that the actual dialogue is his own creation (unless recorded in archives) and timelines are sometimes manipulated for the enhancement of the story. (My suggestion: read the Author Notes

first and when reading the chapters, refer back to his comments on truth or fiction.)

In short, *The Wealth of Shadows* is a masterful achievement. It expands our understanding of what war can look like, it celebrates the power of ideas and strategy and reminds us that history's great battles aren't always fought with rifles or bombs. For lovers of historical fiction, espionage thrillers and stories where brains triumph over brute force, this novel is a standout! I cannot recommend it highly enough.

THUMPS UP! 🍷

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Winter, a Poem

– By CHATgpt

When winter arrives with its frost,
We remember the days we have lost.
Yet December night air,
Has a shimmer so rare,
Like a gift that was always worth cost.

Snow hushes the world into slow,
And we savor the softest white glow.
With a candle and tea,
Time is finally free,
And there's nowhere that we need to go.

Yes our knees and the stairs may complain,
And the forecast is snow mixed with rain.
Still the beauty is clear,
When each hour this year,
Lets our hearts take a long unhurried lane.

Winter teaches a tender reset,
A permission to pause and reflect.
And the cold in the air,
Makes the memories flare,
Of the faces we never forget.

So we toast to the ice and the chill,
More grateful than ever we still... still.
Through each season and age,
We continue this page,
And the story keeps blooming at will.