



News

from the Villages of Kensington

Enhancing the quality of life in Kensington, one neighbor at a time!

Volume 2, Number 2 September 2018



Member Spotlight: Sandy & Lee

Everyone has an interesting life story!

VoK Members Sandy and Lee have lived in the Kensington neighborhood of Rock Creek Hills since 1972. They love the small-town atmosphere of Kensington and its proximity to many services and transportation options.

Sandy was born in Lynn, Mass., on a street called Kensington Park (life is full of coincidences!). She later lived in Swampscott, an oceanside town. Lee grew up in Brooklyn, NY, where he placed first in a national essay contest in high school that won him a back-room visit to the United Nations, which he still recalls vividly. The Epsteins met in Cambridge, Mass., while both were in graduate school: a blind date set up by friends resulted, two weeks later, in their engagement and wedding the same year!

Sandy and Lee have two children – a married son in California who has three children and is an attorney and a married daughter in Arlington, Virginia, who is a psychiatric nurse and was previously a photo journalist and photographic researcher.

Sandy has a lifelong interest in childhood health and early childhood intervention. She worked for many years in specialty programs at Children’s Hospital in D.C. While there, she helped create imaginable fictional stories about children with diabetes in family life, at school, and at play, for the *ADA Diabetes Forecast* magazine. Her second career has since been as a therapist for young children at the Willow Oak Therapy Center in Rockville, which she finds immensely satisfying.

Lee (his official name is “Lionel”) has a lifelong interest in books, which became his second career. For his first career, he worked many years as a staff economist for the US Department of Justice. During his lunch hours, he would walk to the nearby Salvation Army bookstore and peruse all the wonderful books for sale (for 10c each at that time!).



When he retired from the DoJ, he became (and still is) a book dealer, specializing in law and legal history and selling mostly to law school libraries. He also volunteered for many years at the Montgomery County Literacy Council, which he found extremely rewarding.

Both Epsteins have a lifelong interest in travel and meeting new people from different backgrounds and cultures. “We all have more in common with each other than not” is their philosophy. To feed these interests, they are long-time members of Servas USA, part of a “worldwide cooperative cultural exchange network of travelers and hosts working together to foster peace, goodwill, and mutual respect.” (www.servas.org) They have hosted many travelers over the years and have been guests in the homes of many Servas members, most recently in Denmark, Finland, Austria, and Canada. *cont’d. on p. 3*

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Be a VoK Corporate Sponsor!

Sponsors provide financial support so we can meet our budget and keep our membership fees low and available to all. For more info, contact us at VoK@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org. Please thank our sponsors by using their products & services!

VoK sponsor levels:

- Friends of VoK: \$1 up to \$249**
- Bronze: \$250 up to \$499**
- Silver: \$500 up to \$999**
- Gold: \$1,000 up to \$2,499**
- Platinum: \$2,500+**

Grants for VoK!

VoK has won our second grant from the County Executive’s grant program, for FY2019. In our next newsletter, we’ll tell you all about it and introduce the contractor who will implement this grant.

We also won a grant from Suburban Hospital that supported our May 20 seminar; see page 2.

We are grateful for these grants, which help support our programs and our outreach to the Greater Kensington community.

Upcoming Village Conferences



National Village Gathering, October 7-10, San Diego

VoK will be represented at this annual gathering of Villages from across the country – by Laurie Pross, VoK’s events coordinator. VoK won a drawing for free registration (worth \$450) to this conference, courtesy of the Washington Area Villages Exchange (WAVE), so our registration is paid-for! Thanks to WAVE for subsidizing this prize!

Montgomery County Villages 3rd Annual Gathering, October 22nd, Gaithersburg

Open to leaders of the County’s active and emerging Villages. Workshops, resource sharing, and networking with nonprofit providers and other Villages. Several VoK Board members will attend. In addition, VoK will be part of a panel presentation and discussion about services to Village members.

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**Support our sponsors from
the business community
& our partner organizations!**

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To join VoK and benefit from our Volunteers’
friendliness and expertise, call us at

301-509-0191

or click **JOIN** at

www.VillagesofKensington.org

Feedback from Members requesting multiple rides to their physical therapy appointments:

“I would like to find words that can express my deep feelings of gratitude to you and to the organization Villages of Kensington.”

“...After knee surgery.... the drivers were our heroes!”

How Can VoK Assist You?

VoK Full Members are eligible to receive assistance from our vetted & trained Volunteers. If you can think of it, we can probably help! For example:

- Rides to shopping, social outings, worship, or medical appointments
- Small household or yard tasks or repairs
- Carrying large items to the curb for pickup
- Short-term meal assistance while recovering from hospital stay or illness
- Picking up groceries or prescriptions
- Friendly visits and check-in calls
- Computer and electronics help
- Occasional or one-time, non-emergency assistance – just ask!

VoK Seminar: “Successful Aging at Home Safely”



On May 20, VoK sponsored a seminar on Successful Aging at Home Safely, with support from Suburban Hospital. This shared learning opportunity

explored issues and solutions for aging at home safely. Topics included confronting aging, available County resources that enable independent living at home, and age-related changes in physical and mental health. Speakers were Pazit Aviv, Montgomery County Village Coordinator; Ellen Lebedow, LCSW-C, Caregiver Support Group Facilitator at Metropolitan Oasis (a partner of Suburban Hospital), and Lylie Fisher, Executive Member of the Maryland Commission on Caregiving and Facilitator of the Montgomery County Caregiver Support Program. A good time was had by the 35 attendees, and we all learned a lot! 🏠

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VoK’s Mission

“The mission of the Villages of Kensington is to build a supportive, diverse, and inter-generational network of neighbors helping neighbors to remain in their homes and to be engaged in their community.”

VoK Ongoing Events!

VoK Lunch-Around. On the first Friday of every month at noon, we gather at local restaurants or for a potluck at a Member's or Volunteer's home. Fun, good company, and we get to check out various local culinary delights and our own creations. Check the VoK website calendar. For info, contact Events Coordinator Laurie Pross at events@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org.

Monthly book club. The Rock Creek Hills Book Club is a well-established group of book-loving residents in the Kensington area that meets once a month in the evening to discuss current and past releases of all genres. We gather at different homes and refreshments are provided. Interested? For info, send an email to jennifer@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org.

Intro to Meditation. An introductory class on Meditation for VoK Members. Relaxation and calm is so important in our busy lives! For info, contact Donna at members@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org.

Knitting blankets for Project Linus. Meets monthly to knit blankets for children seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need. For info, contact Carolyn at projectlinus.mc@gmail.com.



Got an idea for a one-time event or an ongoing program?

We're all ears! Contact us at events@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org or by phone at 301-509-0191.

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Sandy & Lee, cont'd. from page 1

Several visits with Servas members stand out in their memory: A retired pediatrician in Helsinki who founded a community for people of all ages who could no longer live at home; a taxi fleet owner in Aarhus, Denmark; and a family in Ottawa, Canada, who adopted two Inuit children. The most rewarding part of these encounters is living with a local family and having unique opportunities to discover commonalities with residents of different countries. "Ordinary days turn out to be much more than that" while living with Servas families, Sandy confided.

Sandy and Lee found out about VoK through email several years ago, when the Village idea was percolating in Rock Creek Hills (the "birthplace" of our Kensington Village). They are heartily supportive of VoK as Members, and hope to add VoK volunteering to their schedule in the near future. 

Thanks to Sandy & Lee for sharing their life stories with us! If you'd like to share your life story in future newsletters, please contact us at newsletter@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org.

Thank You to Our Partner Organizations!

We thank our partner organizations with whom we've coordinated this past year:

👉 **VillageRides**

sponsored by Jewish Council for the Aging, www.accessjca.org.

👉 **Kensington Park Senior Living**
www.kensingtonparkseniorliving.com

👉 **Suburban Hospital**
www.hopkinsmedicine.org/suburban_hospital

(click on Community Health)

👉 **Jewish Social Service Agency**, www.jssa.org

👉 **Temple Emanuel** <https://templeemanueldm.org/>

And thanks to the Town of Kensington and Kensington-area civic associations and businesses for their ongoing support of our mission! 

How You Can Support VoK!

-- Tell your Kensington-area relatives, friends, & neighbors about VoK – who we are and how to sign up as a Member or Volunteer. (Best way: go to our website at www.VillagesofKensington.org)

-- Participate in activities and suggest activities you'd like to see!

-- Appreciate VoK Volunteers (no financial remuneration or tips, please)!

-- If you're a VoK Member, let us know how we can assist you; please do not be bashful! If not yet a Member, tell us how we *could* assist you.

-- Donate money or items for events.

-- In the spirit of Villages, help your neighbors in any way you can!

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VoK Activities Survey



Thanks to all who responded to our activities survey of Members and Volunteers! The results are

in, and we'll be reporting the results, along with next steps, in the coming weeks. 

Maryland Senior Call Check – Free Pilot Program!



People 65 and older can now sign up to join Maryland Senior Call Check. Maryland is the first state in the country to start a free, opt-in, telephone service to check on Maryland's older residents. Seniors can enroll online or over the phone. Anyone 65 or older with a landline or a cell phone can specify one time per day to receive an automated call. If the senior does not answer after three attempts, the program will call an alternative person who is selected by the senior during program registration. Register online at www.aging.maryland.gov or by calling the Maryland Department of Aging at 410-767-3738. 

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To volunteer with VoK and offer services to your Greater Kensington neighbors, call us at **301-509-0191** or go online to www.VillagesofKensington.org and click on **VOLUNTEER**.

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Contact VoK:

...on the Web: www.VillagesofKensington.org
...email: VoK@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org
...phone: **301-509-0191**
...U.S. mail:
P.O. Box 118, Kensington, MD 20895-0118
...Facebook:
www.facebook.com/KensingtonVillages



Please join us in celebrating
Villages of Kensington
Sunday, Sept. 16, 2-4 pm
at Temple Emanuel, 10101 Connecticut Ave., Kensington

Enjoy goodies to nibble and a celebratory toast & drinks to sip.
Stroll and view exhibits featuring the Village Movement and VoK.
Listen to Gail Kohn, renowned expert in the field of Aging, give a captivating presentation - "Villages: Aging in Place, Fulfilling the Vision."
Catch up with Kensington neighbors!

RSVP to Laurie at events@VillagesofKensingtonMD.org