

VINE VILLAGE

Napa, California

Fall/Winter 2009

news



VINE VILLAGE CELEBRATION BEATS THE ODDS!

We raised approximately \$55,000 this year. Last year we raised \$59,000, so we consider this year's result to be excellent, given the state of the economy. Of this, a large majority of auction items were conceptualized and delivered by our wonderful Board member, Sylvia Klensz. Sylvia arranged for the 5 "Art Bottle" lots, plus a Tuscan Dream Vacation for Two, and a wonderful sculpture by renowned Suisun artist Phillip Glasshoff, based on a drawing by Twila Van Damme, an artist in the Vine Village Day Program.

GO GREEN! SIGN UP FOR OUR ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Please sign up to receive Vine Village News in your Inbox rather than your US Postal mailbox. You can do this online by going to www.vinevillage.org and using the sign-up form there (provided by "Constant Contact" – we promise we will NOT bombard you with "constant contact" but you will receive periodic updates and invitations beyond this annual newsletter) or simply send us an email (skerson@vinevillage.org) with a request to get your news via email.

Switching to email delivery will save Vine Village a lot of money, will save a lot of trees, and will allow us to keep you informed and up to date.



This whimsical painted metal horse, inspired by a drawing by Twila Van Damme, was created by renowned sculptor Phillip Glasshoff for the 2009 Vine Village auction

Vine Village Partners with Sustainable Napa County

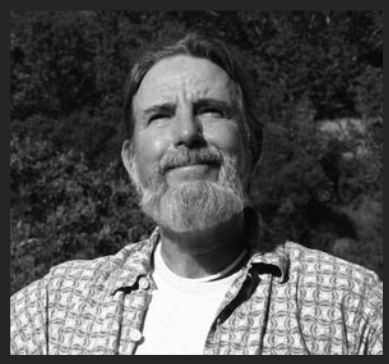
In an effort to lower our energy costs, take care of the environment, and be more self-sufficient financially, we are working with Sustainable Napa County (www.sustainablenapacounty.org) to undergo an energy audit. The findings from this audit will provide solutions for us to lower our energy costs through a combination of retrofitting lighting and/or heating and air conditioning systems through rebate programs and grant funding, and hopefully incorporating alternative energy sources in the future.

We have also implemented a more complete recycling program around the ranch. This includes the usual types of recycling: paper, plastic, metal, but also we will be participating in a pilot food scrap program that Napa Recycling & Waste Services has implemented for commercial customers. NRWS currently makes available certified organic compost for purchase. Vine Village's certified organic gardens have used this compost for years. This year, given our level of interest in the recycling programs, NRWS has donated a load of 20 cubic yards of organic compost to our gardens. We sure appreciate the donation and we feel good about participating in all ends of the compost program. Additional benefits of increasing the amount of recycling we're doing are: reducing how much of our waste goes into landfill and lowering our garbage service costs.

Vine Village, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization serving the special needs of people with developmental disabilities.

THE OUTDOOR GUY

By Tucker Crosby



Well, here come the holidays! Where did I bury that fruitcake?

We've had a terrific year at the ranch. Our grape crop was heavier than last year, and thankfully contracted to Sterling Vineyards. We stocked the new chicken house with five beautiful chicks: Buffy, Checkers, and the

Gabor triplets. Renee and I are impatiently waiting for eggs. The local farmers market has just wrapped up for the season, and Joe Hall did a stellar job selling just about everything but my truck! We've begun our fall planting of garlic, broccoli, and leeks. I've also had a great time this year framing beautiful artwork from our talented clutch of artists.

FUNDING CHALLENGES GROW

Much of Vine Village's history has included precarious financial footing. For the past several years, things had really begun to look up. We made a nice "go" of it. But lately, we're back to the Bad Old Days of economic woes. Everyone feels the pinch lately, and Vine Village is no exception. The loss of any funding from Auction Napa Valley is the largest and most obvious loss, but we have also experienced cutbacks from a major funding source, North Bay Regional Center. In addition to a 3% across-the-board cut, NBRC has also instituted "Furlough Days" for all day programs, which puts a great strain on our overall program, as we must increase residential staffing on those days to accommodate the clients who are home from their day programs, with no additional compensation. We are relying on our Yearend Campaign all the more this year. Please remember Vine Village in your yearend giving!

AUCTION NAPA VALLEY

Vine Village was not awarded a grant this year from Auction Napa Valley. Although disappointing, it's not a surprise, as we knew that the Napa Valley Vintners had adjusted their grant making guidelines this year to focus on basic safety net programs – i.e. food banks, mental health/crisis services, low income housing, shelter programs, etc.

The loss of this funding will, of course, require adjustments and perhaps sacrifices on our part.

FARM REPORT

Our grapes were harvested just before the first big rain of the year (relief!), and were sold to Sterling Vineyards as they were last year.

Tucker reports that the Friday-morning Farmers Market has started charging a 15% stall fee to non-profits (formerly free).

A CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) project is leasing a plot of land from Vine Village for their garden.

4th of JULY PARADE



Several members of the Vine Village Community participated in the local Napa Downtown 4th of July Parade.

At left, John Gallagher, an artist in the Day Program, carries balloons for Special Olympics. Below, our bookkeeper, Cheryl Kavicky, rides her donkey, Mariposa, with Bill Kavicky

as her outrider. Below that, The Kerson family, Nancy, Saanen, and Michael, with Sparky the Mustang and donkey, Max.



C.A.P. – CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT WILL FUND NEW BROCHURE

Vine Village is about to get a new, current brochure, thanks to a generous CAP (Capacity Building) grant from the Napa Valley Community Foundation, Gasser Foundation, Napa Valley Vintners and a private Family Foundation. The new brochure will feature the stunning photography of Napa's own professional photographer, Teri Blodgett. The brochure is an essential part of our fundraising and community outreach efforts. Our old brochure was lovely, but it no longer contains accurate information, due to changes over the years in our program offerings and focus.



FAMILY CLUB RAISES \$14,000!

This year, Sophie Freeman and the Family Club raised a whopping \$14,000 for Vine Village. Past years have averaged \$10,000, so this was exceptional! The annual picnic was tremendous fun as usual, featuring a wonderful barbecue. Way to Go, Family Club!!!

Reno Vacation

Each year, the Vine Village Residential Program plans a summer vacation for the residents. This year we went to Reno, our clients' favorite location, with their favorite activities, playing the slots and eating out! Everyone had a wonderful, thrilling time.

KIWANIS CLUB TO THE RESCUE!

Al Gillette reported at the recent Vine Village Board meeting that Kiwanis is generously donating \$2,500 in materials for future Vine Village projects, which will include sheet-rock repair, painting the interior of the Men's House and possibly for the Women's House. All of this is to be accomplished with Kiwanis volunteers.

THANK YOU, AL & KIWANIS!

Sometimes it takes a Village....



This spring, a feral cat with a litter of 4 kittens was discovered living under the Men's House back decks. House Counselors Tony Withers and Candace Davis started feeding them, and spending time trying to earn the cats' trust. Both Candace and Tony have experience with feral cats, and they soon reported that the kittens were starting to enjoy being handled, and the mother cat was allowing people a bit closer. Assistant Director, Saanen Kerson, adopted two of the kittens, now named Buster and Violet, and took them, along with their mother, to the Napa Humane Society Hospital for spaying, neutering, and shots. The mother cat is now a permanent resident at the Men's House, along with the other two kittens. All the cats are doing well, and the residents enjoy the ones living at the Men's House. Saanen's cats have moved home to the Kerson's, where they are enjoying life with dogs, donkeys, and horses.

YOU CAN HELP!

Holidays, birthdays, graduations, as well as the passing of loved ones or the loved ones of our friends, are opportunities to show we care.

Often we struggle to think of an appropriate tribute to send. Have you considered sending a donation to Vine Village, in lieu of a gift? It's a personal way to honor your friends' own generosity, and helps Vine Village provide services that bring dignity and well-being to the lives of our valued residents.

Call our office and we'll be happy to send a card notifying your loved one of your gift to Vine Village made in their honor. As always, thank you for all you do for Vine Village.

Here's another idea: Call Cheryl at 707-255-4006 with your credit card number and make a monthly pledge, which we will charge to your credit card each month. In this way you can make a very affordable contribution to Vine Village, and Vine Village will know we can count on it each month.

OUR CLIENTS' BUSY LIVES

Vine Village Residential clients spend their days at these local community programs:

- PSI – Product Service Industries - 3 of our residents work at this large day-activities program where they work on various work projects. This program is located on the grounds of the Napa State Hospital.
- Lixit – 6 of our residents work at this popular company on Coombs (Tannery Row) which makes pet feeders and watering devices, and employs many people with disabilities. Lixit has received many awards and commendations for its excellence in including people with disabilities in its work force.
- NVSS – Napa Valley Support Services – 5 of our residents work on cleaning crews for restaurants and office buildings through this supported employment program.
- Becoming Independent – 1 of our residents works at Mary's Pizza in Sonoma through this supported employment program
- The VINE Bus Greeter – 1 resident invented this job niche for himself! He rides the bus, helps people on and off, explains routes and schedules, etc.
- Vine Village Day (Arts-based) Program – 3 residents remain all day at Vine Village and participate in the Day Program.
- Napa Valley Adult Day Services - One senior resident divides his week between the Vine Village Day Program and Napa Valley Adult Day Services.

While most Vine Village residents go out to work and/or day programs, up to 20 developmentally disabled people from the Napa community come to participate in the Vine Village Day (Arts-Based) Program.



Pen & Ink by John Gallagher



LIFE INSURANCE:

A simple but important way to help Vine Village

At some time in our lives, most of us buy life insurance, to protect our loved ones in case, God forbid, something should happen to us. As time goes by, our dependents often grow up, become self-sufficient, and no longer need this protection. If your life insurance needs have changed in this way, why not consider adding Vine Village as a beneficiary of your existing policy? Or open a new one just for Vine Village.

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like more information about using insurance to help Vine Village, don't hesitate to call us.

SUMMER EVENTS:



Napa Valley Coalition of Non-Profits Lunch at Vine Village
 Left to Right: Suzanne Shiff, Kathryn Winter, Saanen Kerson



Center: Mike Kerson & Tor Kenward at the Vine Village Auction,
 assisted by Tenaya Jorgensen & Kate Callahan



For the Vine Village Celebration Auction last year, U.S. Congressman, Mike Thompson, and his wife, Jan, generously donated two dinner parties at Vine Village, which were purchased by Francis Mahoney and Bob Brown, and the other by Walt & Sylvia Klenz and friends.

At left, Mike at work in the kitchen. Below, clockwise from left top: Mike Thompson, Brian Bottari, Melissa Rodezno, Jan Thomspon, Mary Jane Bowker, and Max the Donkey.



Tor & Susan Kenward (foreground) also donated a dinner party to our Auction, which was purchased by Walt & Sylvia Klenz, Ed Matovcik and Jean Altobell. The theme was "Whole Hog! Barbecue and Country Dance.



New chickens now live in the newly-renovated Chicken Palace, thanks to Al Gillette & The Kiwanis Club, and Vine Village's Tucker Crosby.

NEWSFLASH: First egg gathered November 11, 2009!

VINE VILLAGE WILDNESS



by Don Gasser, Vine Village Board of Directors, Arborist, and Neighbor

Vine Village is home to more than its human residents. It also exists as an island of vegetation within a greatly modified landscape. Looking at an aerial photo (Map Quest or Google Earth at 4059 Old Sonoma Road), it is clear that Vine Village's surroundings hold few of the attributes needed to host the rich array of wildlife that we see at Vine Village.

Indeed, the "triangle" of forested land created by Vine Village's acreage, plus that of a few immediate neighbors, serves as a valuable ecosystem for

numerous species. The very tall eucalyptus trees are nearly surrounded by remnant oak woodland with a pond directly below on the north side, benefiting species such as Great Blue Herons, Snowy Egrets, various Hawks and Owls, which have these elements as requirements. The native Grey Fox and Bobcat are occasionally glimpsed as they go about their hunts in the evening and early morning. The sociable vocalization of coyotes creates music in the night.

To the south of most of the bustling activity that is VV, there is a shaded pond. If you quietly walk onto the bridge by the dam, you may scare a turtle - which you might only see as a splash in the water. Rarely, you may glimpse a busy Muskrat as it swims to its nest in the reeds.

Looking at the dense tall trees above the pond, the scene is impressive in its 'ruralness', despite the non-native aspects of the eucalyptus. During the day, raptors are never far off, and their cries and circling flights give warning to numerous songbirds and ground mammals. If you look toward evening, you may see a great horned owl swoop through the branches of the oaks on the hillside above.

What really captures your attention at certain times of the year, however, are the birds (or rather bird sounds, because you need to look sharp and step back) that inhabit the tallest branches of eucalyptus towering above. Starting each spring, great blue herons start to arrive into the already-built nests that number at least eleven.

Within weeks, the nests have been fought over and selected by the scores of herons that ultimately arrive. In the next weeks, eggs have been laid and further nest preparations are undertaken by the soon-to-be parents, all the while under a noisy clattering of these very social birds.

After the hatch, the noise and activity increases, as the parents need to both feed and protect the young, and this rookery can become a target for raptors. Lots of wing flapping and noises occur here at dawn and dusk. Summer brings the young to fledge and one would think that things would get quiet again. Not so, for then the egrets start their invasion - in fact, they often begin before the herons have departed, creating a visual and audio cacophony.

The herons occupy the site fully around Labor Day, and over one hundred have been counted flying in at the end of a days' hunting over the San Francisco Bay. Their bright white feathers make them easier to spot than the gray herons, although they probably make less noise.

The importance of VV for providing a unique ecosystem is little known, but for all the critters living there, its continued existence is vital. Certainly the surroundings help to keep VV as a refuge for many who cannot survive otherwise. May those of us interested and involved in VV do all we can to ensure that it stays thus.



Photo by Teri Blodgett

VINE VILLAGE FIXIT WISHLIST

Office:

12 conference room chairs
Projector for laptop computer
Conference table
Folding chairs

Day Program:

Orlon yarn
Cotton yarn
Water color paper
Gift Certificates to Napa Valley Art Supplies

Houses:

New beds for staff rooms

General:

9-passenger van
copy machine (professional office type)



Photo by Teri Blodgett

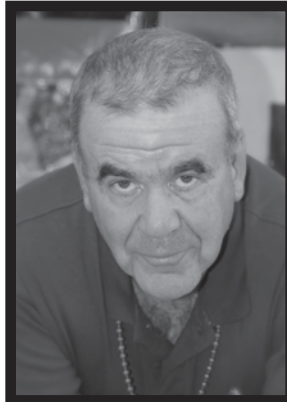


Photo by Teri Blodgett



Photo by Teri Blodgett

Everyone here at
Vine Village wishes you a
Wonderful Holiday Season
and a
Happy New Year

YES! I want to help Vine Village!

_____ Enclosed is my check for

\$ _____

_____ Please sign me up for a regular
monthly contribution of \$ _____

Credit Card Number:

Expiration: _____

Signature:



It's about people. www.vinevillage.org
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Napa, CA 94559

Vine Village, Inc. is a 501c3 Non-Profit Charitable Organization.

Our Federal Tax ID is 23-7296716

Keep up with Vine Village
through the year:

www.vinevillage.org