

Volume II, No.1
Jan—Apr, 2020

A membership-based, non-profit organization supporting the efforts of mountain residents to remain in their homes for as long as possible by enhancing a vibrant, intergenerational community, and by connecting neighbors with a network of services and resources.

P.O. Box 10063
Huntsville, AL 35801

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

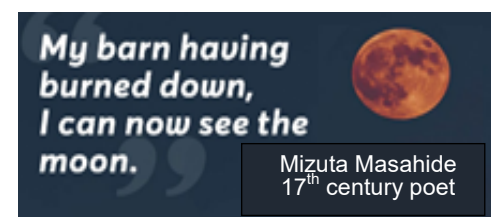
Delia Siegrist

You may notice that there is little mention of COVID in this newsletter because it simply wasn't on the radar when we began pulling together our material. Now, there seems to be little else in the news. I'd like to focus a moment on the lesser publicized stories of everyday citizens whose actions remind us to keep our perspective, hope, and appreciation for life.



We have all heard stories of neighbors reaching out to neighbors, the community, or the entire city. Projects have been conceived such as sewing homemade masks, offering light shows at hospitals from closed cars to celebrate the dedicated and at-risk medical staff, and placing personal artwork in windows or driveways. These actions of support bring us all pride, hope, and resilience. This is not to say that we

will not experience uncertainty, pain, grief, and stress as we live through this time;



Mizuta Masahide
17th century poet

but perhaps we can find steps that we can take to strengthen ourselves as we rebuild our lives post-COVID.

We want to hear your stories. Lue English is writing a diary of this time for the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library. Please send your stories to Lue and she will include them. Lue.english@gmail.com

Together, I know we will come through stronger on the other side.

Monte Sano Village Celebrates YOU - Our Volunteers

National Volunteer Week, an annual celebration to promote and show appreciation for volunteers, was established in 1974. This year it will be celebrated April 19-25. During this week, organizations around the country will shine a light on the people who serve others and their causes.

Board of Directors, Committee members, program facilitators, and speakers in Monte Sano Village, please know that your impact is huge. We thank you for lending your time, talent, and voice to make a meaningful difference in our community.

The number of services our volunteers have provided during this last membership year has been steady and robust. From January 2019 through



December 2019, you provided 1,025 services to Village members. Your timely services, including friendly phone calls, technology assistance, transportation (including rides to the airport), as well as many other acts of kindness made a difference in the lives of our members. The value of your passion and personal commitment to Monte Sano Village is priceless.



MSV Member and Volunteer, John Scales, provides transportation for Dorette Schlidt.

Let Us Applaud Our 2019 Volunteers

During 2019, Monte Sano Village offered a multitude of services in the categories shown below. We are proud to present this data to reflect the dedication and commitment of MSV volunteers in performing the many things they were called upon to do.



Number of Services

Home Maintenance	21
Illness Related Service	3
Personal Support	616
Referrals	12
Severe Weather Support	7
Technology	26
Transportation	134
Vacation Support	14
Village Assistance	20
Weekly Update Delivery	172

Total 1,025

Each time a call comes into the Village phone line, it is rewarding to know that several volunteers will respond to the request. Coming together as a community has highlighted Monte Sano's willing and generous spirit.

Pam Patrick, Volunteer Committee

Schedule for 2020 Mingles

Apr 16 and May 21 Mingles were postponed

Jun 18	Annual Tea, <i>The History of Tea</i>
Jul 16	No Mingle (Board Retreat)
Aug 20	Home health care representatives (Medicare-supported)
Sept 17	Home health care representatives (Daily non-medical assistance)
Oct 15	Annual Gala, Frances Akridge: <i>Huntsville Plans for Senior Living</i>
Nov 18	Holiday Celebration
Dec 17	No Mingle, Enjoy the Holiday

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Lue English

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*Delia Siegrist
Pam Patrick*

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Elsie Peterson

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Membership

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Publications

Bobbie Graham

Social

*Frances Cerro
Maggie Little*

Volunteers

Pam Patrick

What the Village Means to Me

by Michele Farr

Member and volunteer, Michele Farr, has taken on the important task of serving on the Village Call Committee following the retirement of Kay Heckman. We appreciate Michele's commitment to our village in this very important way.

Delia Siegrist

As I encounter more and more situations where friends and family are getting older and have loved ones who have died, (leaving them with no support system nearby) or are having health or cognitive problems, I become even more grateful for the inspiration that led to the development of the Monte Sano Village.

Indeed, we are blessed to live in the Monte Sano community, and the Village brings a whole new depth to the community. I am truly blessed to be a small part of it, and to realize each day the impact it is making in people's lives. Knowing that help is just a phone call away, and that a trusted neighbor will respond is huge, and provides a great sense of hope and security as we age.

Thanks to MS Village Volunteers and Members of Our Community!

On January 14, I had rotator cuff surgery. The first six weeks of recovery required that I wear an incapacitating shoulder immobilizer that I could neither get into nor out of by myself. Nevertheless, I was instructed to remove the immobilizer and perform a set of exercises three times daily. Except for those exercises, I was to wear the immobilizer all day and all night, and while I wore it, I was unable to use my left arm or hand to do common everyday things. As I live alone, this was going to take much planning and a lot of people.

Before the surgery date, I submitted a request for help to Monte Sano Village. Pam Patrick and I sat down with a calendar and she helped me define the services I would need, starting with transportation to and from the surgery by a volunteer who would stay all day with me at Crestwood Hospital. She later transferred the dates onto a spreadsheet showing the exact days and times each volunteer would come.

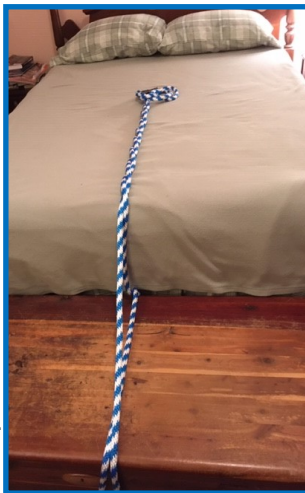
Volunteer services included 1) taking off the immobilizer, 2) walking Winnie (my dog), 3) putting the immobilizer back on me, and 4) attaching electrodes to my shoulder muscles, so I could use muscle stimulation for 20 minutes to help reduce atrophy. This series of tasks by the Village was repeated *three times a day, every day for four weeks*.

During the *six weeks* recovery period, the Methodist Church and several neighbors also assisted me, and for their help and support, I am very grateful.

My volunteer on the day of surgery was Bill Patrick who stayed nearby while I was prepped and taken into Recovery. That was just the beginning. After Bill brought me home, Pam came to fix dinner for me, and rotated ice packs on my shoulder every 20 minutes for hours. Pam also prepared a comfortable place for me to sleep, and reminded me when to take my pain medication. Other volunteers (6-7 of them) prepared meals, washed dishes, drove me to doctor's appointments, and picked up prescriptions and groceries.



A resident of Monte Sano for over 30 years, Dana is a talented artist, a teacher of art, and a loyal friend to many.



Using a rope attached to a heavy chest, friends devised a way for Dana to sit up and stand.

One unanticipated problem I had was getting out of bed on the left side. The surgery was on my left arm, and I could not use it to push myself up to sit on the side of the bed. Two helpful neighbors devised a unique solution that worked. They bought a thick nylon ski rope, wrapped it twice around a heavy cedar chest at the foot of the bed and extended the ends on top of the bed where I could reach them.

The ropes were too thick to knot, so to hold them together, they encircled both ropes with, what else?, *duct tape!* It kept them perfectly lined up, so all I had to do was grab the pair, wrap it once around the palm of my right hand, and pull. I could sit up--easy. Then I could safely turn to sit on the left edge of the bed and stand up.

The scope and length of the help I needed after surgery was substantial, continuing from week to week, and was essential in following my doctor's directions. I could never have done this alone. The Village came through for me with foresight born of their wide experience, with combined knowledge in different skills, and with unflagging good humor. They were punctual and dependable. I can't begin to express my thanks sufficiently.

Monte Sano Village is a tremendous asset to Mountain residents. I can fully attest to that! With great appreciation to all!

Dana Bathurst

Another COVID-19 Danger: SPAM

Be VERY cautious about phone calls, email, links, Medicare deals, and even websites that offer inaccurate coronavirus (COVID-19) information.

Often the websites or links look like normal ones, and may even have the name or logo of a well-known website, but have an extra character, space, or subtly incorrect spelling.

In an attempt to install malware or steal passwords, a newly discovered hack of home and small-office routers is redirecting users to malicious sites. These sites are posing as COVID-19 informational resources.

For safe links to COVID-19 information, go to montesanovillage.org where you will find links to reliable sources. **NEVER** give personal information on the phone or over the web unless you initiated the call or contact with a trusted source.



Health Risks of Social Isolation or Loneliness

by
Lisbeth Nielson, PhD
National Institute of Health

Human beings are social creatures. Our connection to others enables us to survive and thrive. Yet, as we age, many of us are alone more often than when we were younger, leaving us vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness—and related health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, and cognitive decline. Fortunately, there are ways to counteract these negative effects.

Social isolation and loneliness do not always go together. About 28 percent of older adults in the United States, or 13.8 million people, live alone, according to a report by the Administration for Community Living at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; but many of them are not lonely or socially isolated. At the same time, some people feel lonely despite being surrounded by family and friends.



People who find themselves unexpectedly alone, due to the death of a spouse or partner, separation from friends or family, retirement, loss of mobility, and lack of transportation, are at particular risk.

Conversely, studies show that people who engage in meaningful, productive activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose. These activities seem to help them maintain their well-being and may improve their cognitive function.

This article, drawn from the NIH website, emphasizes the positive effects of mental and physical activity on *loneliness*. The Monte Sano Village offers members and volunteers many opportunities to connect with others in meaningful and stimulating ways. These include the Book Club, movie afternoons, Mingles, daily calls, and Village volunteering.

The MSV Board encourages you to take part in at least one MSV activity, and welcomes any suggestions you may have on additional activities that interest you. Call 256-384-4177 or contact an MSV Board Member with your ideas.

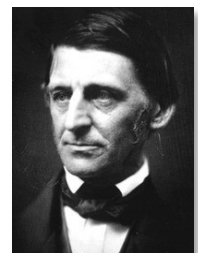
This young lady spent her childhood playing in the woods of Monte Sano. Do you know her?



Enter the Mystery Photo Contest, and guess who this child is. The first person to guess correctly will win a color print of an outdoors scene on Monte Sano. You can guess by calling 256-384-4177 and leaving a message. Using the same phone number, you can make arrangements to submit your own mysterious “little darling” or “handsome lad” photo. We will feature one Mystery Photo in each newsletter.

“The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1892)



SPOTLIGHT ON JOHN R. SCALES

by Bobbie Graham



Brig. Gen. John R. Scales
served 37 years in the US Army

John Scales made choices that led to a life of very commendable service and achievement. Having a grandfather who served in WWI and a father in WWII, both as officers, provided the early groundwork for a lifetime of learning, exploration, leadership, and invention. He has every reason to be grateful for his heritage, opportunity, and experience; and proud of his military, academic, and literary accomplishments.

Soon after graduating from Huntsville High School, John entered the University of Alabama/Tuscaloosa

where he graduated in 1970 with a BS degree in physics. As an ROTC Second Lieutenant, he reported the next day for duty at Fort Benning, GA. In 1992 he earned a PhD from UAH.

After completing several military schools, including the extremely rigorous Airborne and Ranger School at Fort Benning, he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC. From there he was assigned to Vietnam as an infantry platoon leader. "When I got there," he said, "the war was winding down for US troops. After the defeat of the North Vietnamese Easter Offensive in 1972, the US had essentially won the war, but our failure to sustain South Vietnam with supplies caused their loss three years later. Despite being bombarded by small arms fire, mortar rounds, and rockets, my time in combat was safe compared to most infantry soldiers' experiences."

Returning to the US after a year, John spent several years in the 101st Airborne Division before leaving active duty in 1975. He joined the 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) of the Alabama National Guard and rose to overall command of the group. At that time, he was promoted to Brigadier General. He was assigned as the Deputy Commanding General of the Army's Special Forces Command and assumed command of all Army Special Forces for six months.

Retiring in 2001, he was recalled to active duty later that year following the 9/11 terrorist attack. He served in the Joint Special Operations Command and led a Joint Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan in 2002.

John's experience in combat in Vietnam and Afghanistan led him to invent a device that would integrate the soldier's thermal weapon sight with his night vision goggles. Upon the soldiers command, the device displays the thermal weapon sight with crosshairs in the goggle field of view. This allows the soldier to instinctively point and

accurately shoot without raising his rifle to his shoulder or aiming through the weapon sight. The soldier can also stick the weapon around a corner and accurately shoot without exposing his body or head.

As a senior systems engineer, John took the idea to SAIC, where funds were provided to build a prototype and patent the invention. With a team of engineers, he developed the device called "Serval."

Improvements have resulted in five patents, and Serval is currently being fielded by the US Army under the name, "Rapid Target Acquisition."

Since retirement, John has authored three books:

- *"Sherman Invades Georgia: Planning the North Georgia Campaign using a Modern Perspective,"* 2006
- *"A Reluctant Hero's Footsteps,"* 2013
- *"The Battles and Campaigns of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forest,"* 2017

He recently developed a novel, *"In Search of a Nation,"* for which a publisher is being sought.



Dr. John P. Scales, John's grandfather, served in WWI as a First Lieutenant in "Sanitary Troops," the former name for medical troops.

John's life on Monte Sano began in the Spring of 1955 when his family moved from Montgomery, AL to Huntsville where his father had been working at Redstone Arsenal. They moved into a house which, he says, "was accessed on a gravel road." The house was a small pre-fab which his parents enlarged. It is still there at 3319 Wildwood Avenue.

He has fond memories of exploring the steep mountain slopes of Monte Sano. "I knew them very well," he said, "I was all over them." Some of his fellow explorers were Chuck Graham, Jimmy Farr, Jimmy White, and Chris Hoberg. Included in their mountain discoveries were remnants of old structures and relics left by early settlers; and he remembers well the loud and repetitive sounds of rocks dropped in Natural Well.

Monte Sano Village is most grateful for John's support as a founder, and currently as a member and volunteer.

Safe Practices in the Kitchen

Observing basic rules of kitchen safety is a good habit to develop. One slip can cause serious injury. To prevent serious accidents, remain conscious of the following:



- Be aware of who is in the space—for example, small children should never be left alone in the kitchen.
- Never cook in loose clothes, keep long hair tied back, and never cook while wearing dangling jewelry.
- Turn pot handles away from the front of the stove.
- Wipe up spills immediately to prevent falls.
- Adopt a plan for kitchen cleanliness.
- Keep raw meat and poultry separate from other items whenever you use or store them.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen; it can avert a disaster. Make sure you know how to use it!

Get Fresh Produce Delivered on a Weekly Basis

Did you know that once a week you can have produce delivered to various locations in Huntsville where



you can pick it up? Check out *Doe Run Farms* and *Mountain Sun Farm*, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) vegetable suppliers, by visiting their websites at doerunfarms.com and mountainsunfarm.com

Note: *Doe Run Farms* will deliver to *The Little Green Store* if 12 people subscribe. Their deadline for subscriptions has been extended to sometime in May.

CRITICAL ADVISORY

8pm is now the official time to remove your day pajamas and to put your night pajamas on

With Grateful Hearts, We Thank You

The Monte Sano Village expresses sincere thanks to the many individuals, companies, and organizations that contribute to our Mingles, meetings, social events, educational sessions, and that serve as advisors.

