

Staying Fit with Nordic Walking: A Report from Villager Darlene Meskell in Ireland

Greetings from Meskell summer quarters in County Limerick, Ireland (where summer officially begins on May 1). I try to stay fit here, and it helps that I've connected with the local International Women's Organization to get some exercise by "Nordic walking."



It's like power-walking with poles, or cross-country skiing without

skis. The idea is to get both arms and legs moving...and burn more calories. In Ireland,



there's a saying "giorraion beirt bóthar" which means "two walking together shorten the road." It's so true!

If you add the Nordic walking sticks, the time flies even faster.

My friends meet once a week at the University of Limerick, just down the road, to walk about 6 kilometers along the bank of the beautiful Shannon River. At the start, we do some quick warmup exercises, arm-raising and toe-touching. Since I arrived without sticks, the Englishwoman in our group lends me hers, and gives me a quick lesson in how to use them. Step one: insert your hands in the straps—marked "L" or "R", in case you're clueless, like me—and click them into the sticks via a quick-release mechanism. Step two: relax your grip and let the sticks trail behind you, bouncing gently along the path. Step three: swing your arms naturally in time with their opposite legs. Make sure to stand up straight, looking into

Upcoming Events

Gala Theatre: "FAME – The Musical"

May 8 (see details on page 2)

Know Your Neighbors, Know Your History

May 19 (see details on page 3)

For Activities and Events

see the calendar on the Village website

www.mountpleasantvillage.org

or the weekly *Village Announcements*

the distance. After about 10 minutes of tripping over my feet, I begin to get it. When the sticks seem to catch on the path, I can propel myself forward while working my arms. And I'm off...

Picking up speed brings to mind images of race-walking through Rock Creek Park with the Mount Pleasant Village Walking Group. Then I hear "click-click, click-click" behind me, and I'm quickly overtaken by my Chinese companion, who has had years of practice at this. A little farther on, we reach the halfway point, where, thankfully, we can turn back after enjoying a lovely view of the ubiquitous Shannon swans with an historic bridge in the background. I return the sticks to their rightful owner and fall back beside my American compatriot for the return journey at a Mount Pleasant pace. Then it's cool-down exercises, coffee and a scone at a local Starbucks, and promises to meet again "next time." I hurry home for a desperately needed nap. Later, I'll take the advice of my English partner to watch the YouTube video (click below) and learn the proper Nordic walking technique. Next time, I might even have my own walking sticks.

(<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=nordic+walking+technique+on+youtube&view=detail&mid=F4003BEB5E2FCF391B2BF4003BEB5E2FCF391B2B&FORM=VIRE>). (For more on Nordic walking, see page 4)



Meet the Artist: David Greenfieldboyce

One of the perks of being a Villager and the newsletter editor is getting to meet people like David



Greenfieldboyce, the artist who created the striking Mount Pleasant Street cityscape (above) that will grace the Home Page of the Village's new website and is decorating Village's new t-shirts (right). The inspiration for the cityscape goes to Judy Byron, Board member and Diversity Committee Co-Chair, who was looking for an image for t-shirts Village volunteers could wear



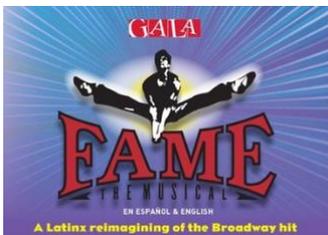
to help publicize our organization. Her friend, David Greenfieldboyce created the image.

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, David has lived in a turn-of-the-century row-house in Mount Pleasant for twenty years. While attending art school, he realized that he wasn't interested in becoming a studio artist, with the commissions, exhibitions seeking, and the commercial drive that this often entails. David takes a multi-faceted approach to creativity and is currently involved in puppet theater, with BloomBar (www.bloombars.com), as well as with his graphic work and gardening. David is known in Mount Pleasant for his long-time community involvement and for leading the annual "Lantern Walk," held in November at the end of daylight savings time. Walkers can bring their own lanterns to the event or join in the fun of making their own before the tour.

When arriving to interview David, I knew I was at the right address – the walkway, stacked bricks, and porch balustrades were all decorated by chalk designs, drawings, and scribbles created by his budding artist 6- and 8-year olds. His wife Nell is a NPR science correspondent, which allows David to be a stay-at-home parent and have the flexibility for his creative activities. To see a delightful video of David singing with children, click on: [ABC Song & Trot Ol'Joe @ Songs, Stories & Puppets - YouTube](#).

Member Benefit: Discount Tickets to Gala Theatre – *Fame: The Musical*

Gala Theatre is offering Village members a discounted ticket price of \$25, **for one night only – Wednesday, May 8, at 8:00 pm** (normal ticket price is \$65). The only way to purchase discount tickets



is by calling the box office (202-234-7174) and telling them you are a Village member. Gala is at 3333 14th Street NW.

In this Latinx reimagining of the long-running Broadway Hit, a group of ambitious, young hopefuls dream of stardom as they deal with life, love, and a tragedy at a prestigious high school for the performing arts. A bittersweet, but uplifting show. Bilingual, with surtitles in English and Spanish.

Upcoming Events at Bancroft Elementary School

The Bancroft Elementary School has two upcoming events with an opportunity for Mount Pleasant Village neighbors to volunteer to help out – The ***Bancroft Spring Fair on Saturday, May 4***, and the ***Bancroft House and Garden Tour on Saturday, May 11***. If you would like to volunteer for either of these events, please sign up using the following links:

Spring Fair sign-up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c4baeab2ca4fc1-bancroft>

House & Garden sign-up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080e49a8a722a02-mtpleasant>

Upcoming Event: Know Your Neighbors, Know Your History

The Diversity Committee is sponsoring the first in a series of **Know Your Neighbors, Know Your History** programs – “Hear Mount Pleasant” – on Sunday, May 19, 3-5 pm, at the Mount Pleasant Public library. You can take part in a conversation with some of the people involved in the successful effort to bring live music back to the restaurants on Mount Pleasant Street and who helped begin dismantling the “voluntary agreements” that Mount Pleasant Latino restaurants were forced to sign.

The conversation will be anchored by the leaders of the movement, Village members Claudia Schlosberg and Wayne Kahn, along with Mount Pleasant restaurant owners Alberto Ferrufino (Don Juan’s) and Haydee and Mario Vanegas (Haydee’s Restaurant), who were committed to bringing live music back to their venues. Also participating will be jazz musicians Roger St. John and Eugene Stevanus, both active in the campaign. Village member Olivia Cadaval, former Smithsonian Folklife curator and former Director of El Centro de Arte, will serve as program moderator.

Claudia Schlosberg is a lawyer who has worked with Federal and D.C. governments in health care, focusing on Medicare/Medicaid Policy and Operations. She is the founder of a new health care policy consulting firm, Castle Hill Consulting. More germane, she is a lover of live music and avid social dancer (currently learning the Tango!).

Wayne Kahn is the founder of *Right on Rhythm*, a record label which recorded and documented music performances in small rooms and restaurants in the area. He is now with the radio show “D.C. Roots of Music,” dedicated to the area’s music legacy. You can also catch him playing washboard at Haydee’s Restaurant on the second Friday of the month, when local zydeco band *Little Red* fires up.

Following the conversation, all are invited to Haydee’s Restaurant, 3102 Mt. Pleasant NW, where we will be joined by Mariachi Cuscatlán. Some of the group’s musicians used to play at Trolley’s and, prior to the “voluntary agreements,” at Haydee’s.

Member Benefit: Discount Tickets to Woolly Mammoth Theatre

As part of our efforts to partner with other institutions in D.C., we reached out to Woolly Mammoth Theatre and they were excited to connect with the Village. They have offered a generous benefit to Village members: effectively immediately, the members of Mount Pleasant Village may purchase reduced price tickets for the last two shows of this season, as well as next year’s full season. Woolly has granted us a code (MTPV) to get a 20% discount on any ticket, any day, any seat. Please DO NOT SHARE THIS CODE with third parties who are not members of the Village.

From the Membership Committee

The Village is delighted to welcome three new members:

- Carmine Rioux-Bailey, Harvard Street
- Josephine Escalante and Camilio Arbelaez, Newton Street

Interested in Trying Nordic Walking?

If Darlene Meskell's report on Nordic walking and watching the YouTube video whetted your interest in trying this fitness approach, Villager Rob Fleming has volunteered to help start a Nordic Walking Group. In addition to being healthy fun and an active social occasion, it may be possible to obtain a group rate for the purchase of the walking poles. Those interested can contact Rob Fleming at RHFDC@comcast.net.

Website Update

Progress is being made in the Village's transition to the new [Helpful Village](#) website platform. Joseph Carbé, our website designer, was recently hired to redesign our new website Home Page and to install features which will make the site easy to navigate by all users. We will keep you updated on when the transition to [Helpful Village](#) will take place.

A Tribute to Mary Oliver

The beloved poet Mary Oliver died in January at age 83. She was known for her poems that contemplate the relationship between nature and spirituality. Here are two of her poems that are so appropriate to spring:

The Summer Day

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
this grasshopper, I mean—
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

May

May, and among the miles of leafing,
blossoms storm out of the darkness –
windflowers and moccasin flowers. The bees
dive into them and I too, to gather
their spiritual honey. Mute and meek, yet theirs
is the deepest certainty that this existence too –
this sense of well-being, the flourishing
of the physical body – rides
near the hub of the miracle that everything
is a part of, is as good
as a poem or a prayer, can also make
luminous any dark place on earth.

Helping Hands Ready with Assistance

Villagers who want help with a task should contact *Helping Hands*, and the Service Coordinator will try to find a helpful volunteer. For more information about what Helping Hands can, and cannot, do, contact Rob Fleming at rhfdc@comcast.net or phone 202-797-2388.

You can request *Helping Hands* assistance by:

- **Phone:** Call the *Helping Hands* Hotline 202-854-8381 to leave information about the help you need;
- **Email:** Send an email to helpinghands@mountpleasantvillage.org, describing what you need.



JOIN MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE

Membership Fee: \$50 annually for an individual; \$100 for a couple. For more information, contact Cecile Srodes at membership@mountpleasantvillage.org.

Donor: Make a tax-deductible donation to Mount Pleasant Village at 1735 Lamont Street NW, Washington, DC 20010.

Contact us. If you have questions, comments or news to share, contact news@mountpleasantvillage.org.