

Mill Valley Village
a branch of

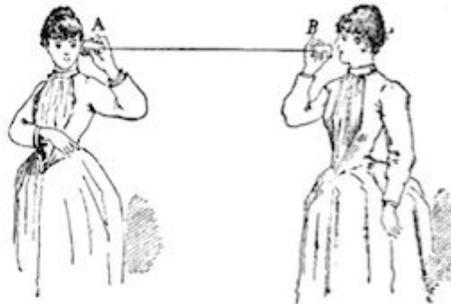
MARIN
VILLAGES



Dear friends and neighbors,

We here in Mill Valley are surrounded by uncommon beauty and extraordinary resources. Not only the natural resources of Mount Tam and Richardson Bay but the resource pool of amazing residents that make Mill Valley and Marin County so unique. And despite today's challenges nothing has changed that. Every day we are seeing examples of heartfelt kindness, thoughtfulness and appreciation. It is encouraging and inspiring.

Much of our energy as a village has historically gone to creating opportunities to foster connections among those in our community. Many of those "opportunities" were in the form of hikes, lunches, walks, coffees, the book group, memoir group, men's group...where it was easy to pursue friendships and share our thoughts. A challenge for sure in these times. But many creative alternatives are emerging, as well as the old-fashioned ones.



As we have been checking in with you we have noted how much we all just need to connect, to talk, to process and to keep on balance. We are social creatures and our spirits are nourished in many ways, not least by our connections with others. We continue to cherish and appreciate the connections that make us neighbors. We know that those will remain intact and grow if we all keep working at ways to be good neighbors whether it be by email, snail mail, calling over the fence, groups of neighbors yodeling down the canyon at night, an online meet-up or a song over the phone. We remain one lucky and connected community and are grateful for it.

On that note, here is a link to one of our all-time favorite songs, in video format. It is from an old collection "Playing for Change" that was made into a CD several years ago. It features musicians around the world on guitars, drums, washboards and more. This particular song feels like it could be our village anthem: **Stand by Me**.

Hope you like it and enjoy thinking of your neighbors singing along.

**[So click here, turn up the volume, go full screen
...and hum \(or belt out\)...a few bars !](#)**

What We Have Heard From You When We Check In



While we don't want to be mistaken for Pollyanna nor downplay the seriousness of our situation, we wanted to share some anecdotes that have emerged from our check-in calls with members. Many have shared positive bits that have run through their heads as they deal with all the other less sanguine thoughts about where we find ourselves today. So here are some of those that, as the old song says, "accentuate the positive".

Thank goodness the children, while not immune, are not the most vulnerable...this time

The air is clear and fresh, the atmosphere "getting an overdue Sabbath"

Between the rain and getting more attention my garden has never looked so good

We DO have electricity, heat, hot water and refrigeration, I'm not cold this time

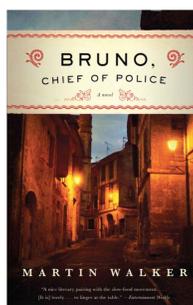
Here in Marin we are so lucky to have exceptional leadership and communication from Marin Health and Human Services (sign up [here](#) for bulletins from Marin HHS)

The birds, buds and blossoms are oblivious and at their Spring best

Kindness and fellowship abound as we are all in the same boat

Book Ideas to Pass Along

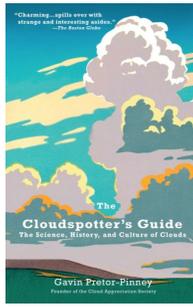
"Bruno, Chief of Police" Book Series, by Martin Walker



This is a favorite detective series with MANY entries. I was introduced to it by picking up the first in the series at the book swap at the Coffee at the Sweetwater a couple of years ago. Chief of Police, Bruno Courreges, is on the job in the Perigord region of southwestern France in the fictional town of St.-Denis. The New York Times refers to Martin Walker's series as "the delicious world of Bruno, Chief of Police". Despite his ever-changing official duties and challenging cases, Bruno grows vegetables, trains his basset hound, keeps chickens, hunts truffles and is an easy-going but accomplished chef and host to his wide circle of friends. Author Martin Walker spent nearly three decades writing for the Guardian and served as bureau chief in Moscow and Washington. In the mid-80s he and his wife discovered the corner of France where the series is set and moved there in 1988. As the

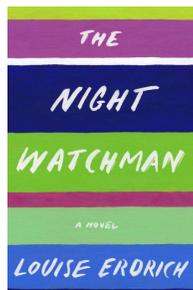
Times notes, “as much as he is enamored of the food and wine, Mr. Walker is at heart a historian and a storyteller who is drawn to the Perigord by its layered, copious history”. That history, prehistoric to recent, is on full display in the Perigord (Lascaux, Font-de-Gaume) and woven into the intricate story lines. This is another series where the wide cast of characters and their development, as well as rich and compelling plots makes it especially enjoyable to start at the beginning.

The Cloudspotter’s Guide: The Science, History and Culture of Clouds By Gavin Pretor-Pinney



As we find ourselves with a bit more time to be outdoors, to catch a sunrise, sunset or just gaze at the sky for a few minutes, this book may give us more insight to what we are seeing and how it comes about. Pretor-Pinney, the author of **The Cloudspotter’s Guide: The Science, History and Culture of Clouds**, is the founder of the Cloud Appreciation Society which has over 47,000 members in 120 countries, including some here in Mill Valley. He also co-founded the Idler, a magazine that argues for the importance of downtime in creative thinking. Kirkus Reviews says of the book, it is “lively, literate and great fun to read.” One reviewer on Amazon said “A real pleasure to read: I am reading the book in small doses and I am in a good mood for a while after each dose.” Another says “Author’s wit is fantastic, making this a wonderful read.” A book for our times for sure.

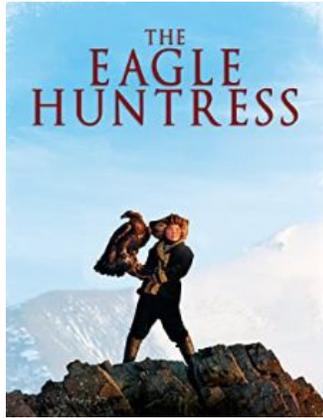
The Night Watchman, by Louise Erdrich



This very recent book, **The Night Watchman** by National Book Award-winning author Louise Erdrich, was featured on NPR the other night as one of the books that will not get the attention it deserves given the terrible timing of its introduction. So their aim was to correct that and we will do our part. One review says “Based on the extraordinary life of Erdrich’s grandfather who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington D.C. this powerful novel explores themes of love and death with lightness and gravity and unfolds with the elegant prose, sly humor and depth of feeling of a master craftsman”. With that and my enjoyment of many of her other books it’s on my list for sure.

And a Few Favorite Movies (available to stream or purchase)

The Eagle Huntress



We saw this movie in the theater when it came out in late 2016. We were smitten. IMDB describes it as a “spellbinding documentary that follows Aisholpan, a 13-year old nomadic Mongolian girl who is fighting to become the first female eagle hunter in twelve generations of her Kazakh family. Through breathtaking aerial cinematography and intimate verite footage, the film captures her personal journey while addressing universal themes like female empowerment, the natural world, coming of age and the onset of modernity.” All that is true and amazing, but what made it most compelling was the depiction of the family dynamics. Along with the sweeping vistas this film captures beautifully the traditions of Aisholpan’s family, juxtaposing scenes of natural beauty and individual fortitude with those of a mom cooking and a young girl painting her fingernails, just like many mothers and teenage girls. This is a beautiful and uplifting movie, good for all ages.

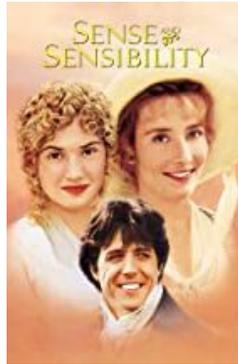
Trouble in Paradise



This is a wonderful movie if you are a fan of movies of this time and genre. It has been a long time favorite at our house. Since others can say it better I will quote from IMDB and Amazon to try to convince you to take a look as I really think you will like it. “**Trouble in Paradise** is the supreme example of “the Lubitsch touch,” that mastery of comic timing, diamond-cutter precision, and Continental sophistication that made Ernst Lubitsch a household name and the real star of every movie he directed. A pair of prodigiously talented, utterly charming scoundrels (Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins) become personal assistants to an aristocratic Parisian widow (Kaye Francis). Their target is her fortune, but she’s such an elegant lady, and so agreeably smitten with her new right-hand man that he’s tempted to pursue a secondary objective. Marshall, Hopkins and Francis aren’t remembered as major stars, but in this enchanting moment they are sublime. Likewise the peerlessly pixilated Everett Horton and Charlie Ruggles as the widow’s stuffed shirt

suitors. ***Trouble in Paradise*** is one of the best comedies ever made. There's not a line, word or pause that doesn't belong exactly where it is, when it is, as it is."

Pride and Prejudice



This wonderful 1995 version of Jane Austen's book is utterly satisfying for those yearning for a bit of a romance. Starring are Emma Thompson, Kate Winslet, Hugh Grant and the wonderful Alan Rickman as well as a rich cast of supporting actors. Need we say more?

A New PBS Special - *World on Fire* Starting Sunday, April 5th at 9pm



This new PBS drama, "set in the first year of WWII follows ordinary people in five countries as they learn how to survive in their new reality. This 7-part series stars Helen Hunt, Sean Bean and Helen Manville, among others. Some of our favorite actors.

A Streaming Option for International Mysteries, Dramas, Comedies and More



An option you may not be familiar with, MHZ Network was broadcasting "international mysteries" through select PBS stations across the country until earlier this month when they decided to make their content available solely through their streaming service MHZ Choice (<https://mhzchoiceblog.com>) and their DVD shop. We were introduced to their

series of shows several years ago and have been hooked ever since. The dramas are from around the world in many languages (French, Swedish, Italian and more) which means we get the benefit of subtitles. Some of our favorite series have been Beck, Montalbano, Commissario Brunetti (Donna Leon's books), Maria Wern, Captain Marleau, Murder in ... (each set in a different French city). You can check it out [here](#).



And an option if you miss the library, are running out of books and still like the feel of a book in your hands. Abebooks is a source of reasonably priced second hand books from a broad set of book dealers across the country and beyond.

“Supporting Our People A 94941-wide Guide to Local Businesses”



And lastly, a truly timely resource for what is open or not in Mill Valley, created and maintained by the Mill Valley Chamber of Commerce to inform us of the latest status of local businesses. The list includes Takeout, Delivery, Markets, Pharmacies and more:

<https://www.enjoymillvalley.com/-blog/coronavirus-social-distancing-mv-businesses-whos-open-closed-shifting-gears-to-best-serve-customers>

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Until next month.....

As you know, our usual newsletter is full of upcoming village events, but for obvious reasons that is not so this time. We look forward to resuming those programs when it is safe to do so. In the meantime the ongoing group leaders have been and will continue to check for ways to keep you connected by email, video meetings or otherwise.

Please check in with us online where information about our village including past newsletters, membership and volunteer applications and more may be found at www.mvillage.org. Hope you will take a look, keep in touch with us and keep on reaching out to those around you. We need each other now more than ever.

Be safe. Be kind. Stay well.