



A GATHERING PLACE ON CHINCOTEAGUE

EDITION

DECEMBER 2022

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Message from the Director

Dear Friends:

The 2022 Village Neighbors Volunteer Luncheon was held at the Island Community House on

November 17th. It was a great opportunity to get acquainted, learn about each other's experiences, and enjoy what an extraordinary group we have.

While I've only been in my role here at the ICH for a short time, I marvel at how YOU are making this Village possible! When it comes to living life on your own terms, you are raising the bar and setting the example for others. I see the capacity to care, and not just for each other.

To our Village Neighbors and ICH Volunteers:

Thank you for every call you've made, detail you've tended to, policy you have created, for every card you have mailed, dollar you have helped us raise, for every event you have helped with, for every person you have made smile, every trash you've emptied, for every person you've told about us, and so much more.

In short, THANK YOU for making us who we are, and thank you in advance for

where we're going. We are all part of this beautiful puzzle, and I am grateful and honored to be on this journey with you.

May 2023 bring gifts beyond our imaginations,
Katie

Here for the Community

The Island Community House is a community-driven, gathering place. Check out some of our recent events held at the ICH:

Community resource groups explain services of the Alzheimer's Association and how they are working to expand the reach of local programs and services in our area. *In case you missed the Alzheimer's and Dementia Information Forum at the Island Community House we've gathered some resource links to share:* [Click here!](#)



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10 | NOON – 2PM





Pancakes before Santa Arrives!



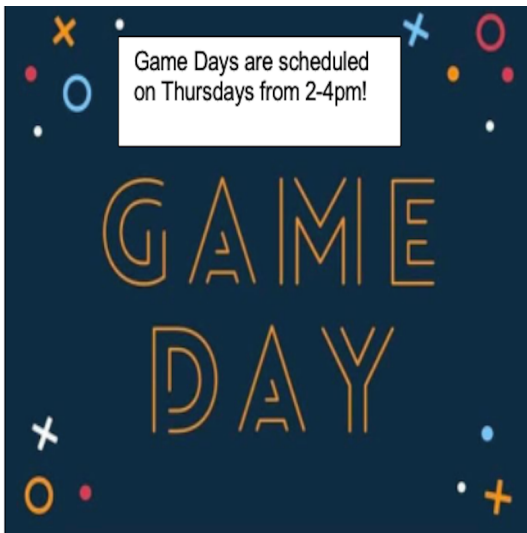
Scarlett works hard on her wish list before seeing Santa!



Believe!

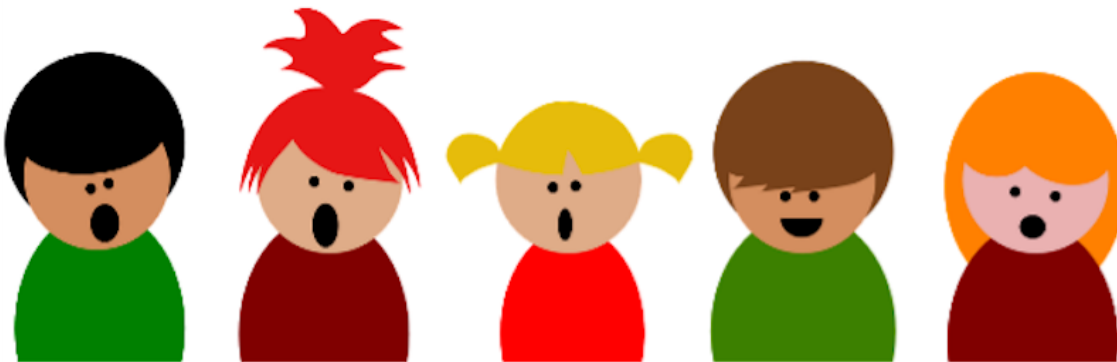


Island Community House Board Members eagerly await to find out if they on Santa's Nice List!



Carols & Cookies

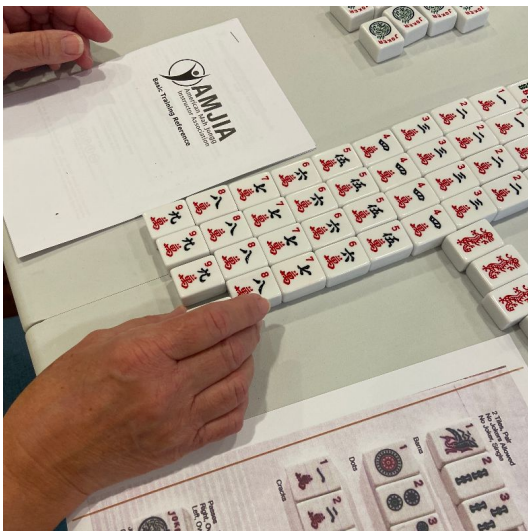
Chincoteague Elementary School PreK and K Students led attendees in Christmas carols on 12/12/22! Students handed out their holiday artwork and stayed for cookies and a visit after.





American Mahjong Class

Students in the American Mahjong class are taught theory, strategies, rules, and practice play with Instructor Carol!



UPCOMING EVENTS



REST RESTORE RENEW YIN YOGA

TO BENEFIT THE ISLAND COMMUNITY
HOUSE

JANUARY 1, 2023 4:00 PM

COST: \$25.00 in advance to reserve your
spot

Sign Up at
Island Community House
6246 Mumford St
Chincoteague

A flyer for a Yin Yoga event. The background is a serene sunset over water. At the top, the text "Yin Yoga" is written in a large, elegant font. Below it, in a smaller font, is "to benefit the Island Community House". A stylized sun with rays is positioned above a green wave-like line. Below this line, the date and time "January 1, 2023 4:00 PM" are listed. The next line states "Cost \$25 in advance to reserve your spot". Below that, it says "Class held at the Island Community House Mumford St.". The following line is "Sign up at Island Community House". At the bottom, the text "Rest Restore Renew" is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font.

Yin Yoga
to benefit the Island Community House

January 1, 2023 4:00 PM

Cost \$25 in advance to reserve your spot

Class held at the Island Community
House Mumford St.

Sign up at Island
Community House

Rest Restore Renew



LUNCH & LEARN

meet · eat · discover

How to Stay Physically Fit & Mentally Active

Tuesday, January 17th
11am-1pm

Instructors: Rachel Sengenberger
(Rachel.Sengenberger@rivhs.com) and Sarah Chew
(sarah.chew@rivhs.com)

Students will learn strategies for maintaining not only physical health but mental health as well. Information will be presented through lecture as well as participation in fun interactive cognitive games/activities.

Open to all. RSVP required.



Use the QR code or RSVP at Village-Neighbors [here](#)

Chipper's Chat

A Few Words from Village Neighbors

*Lyrics from Step by Step, by Chuck Pyle

Step by Step, side by side,

Hand in hand, this old world's a better ride

Step by step, side by side,

*Take a little step with your neighbor, side by side**

The words above are from a song that was shared at our recent Volunteer Luncheon, held November 17. The words ring true for the **Village Neighbors** program. In offering services to our members, we are demonstrating that life is better when we walk through it together.

And it reminds us to take a step, reach out, try something new, with our neighbors.

The Village Neighbors program plays a vital role on Chincoteague Island, providing support to our seniors. It is so heartwarming to hear volunteers tell of the connections they've made and how rewarding it is to know they've made a difference in the life of another. It is a privilege in my role as Coordinator, to hear the tributes from family members. Our service gives them peace of mind, and brightens their day, knowing their loved one is forming new relationships and being supported.

Winter Blues Buster

As you know, Chincoteague can be very quiet in the winter, and isolation is of concern for seniors everywhere. So, to help combat the seasonal isolation, we're offering our volunteers the opportunity to be a Winter Blues Buster. You will be provided with the name and phone number for a member. We ask that you call once a week or so, just to check in, see how they're doing, determine if they are in need of any service, and to bring a bit of companionship to their day.

For most Americans, staying in their home, even as they are aging, is of the utmost importance to them. Home is where memories were made, where they watched their family grow, where they feel most secure. Our support enables them to live independently longer, in the place they love most. Dorothy said it best when she said, "there's no place like home!"

During this holiday season, I wish you time around the table with those you hold most dear, and time near the tree, celebrating the gift of family. And have yourself a merry little Christmas!

If you, our members, know of someone who could benefit from the Village Neighbors program, please share our information with them. They may visit our website at www.village-neighbors.org to learn more about us or call us at 757-336-1993. They can also submit an application by clicking the link [here](#).

5 Tips for Reducing Loneliness in Seniors During the Holidays

The focus of family, friends, and togetherness during this holiday season can leave socially isolated older adults at a higher risk for depression. It's more important than ever to be supportive of and attentive to our loved ones, but in ways that keep everyone as safe as healthy as possible. If you believe that an aging parent, friend, or neighbor may be feeling lonely or depressed, here are steps you can take to help lift their spirits:



1. Make a point of actively listening when your loved one wants to talk, even if the discussion is negative. An honest and empathetic conversation can help them process what is bothering them, whether they are mourning a loss or coming to terms with new challenges in life. It may also reveal why they are feeling down and inspire other ways of lifting their spirits.
2. Remind them how important they are as a part of your life, your family members' lives, and these annual holiday celebrations. They may feel useless or burdensome if they cannot contribute to or fully participate in the festivities like they used to. Encourage them to do what they are capable of and be especially careful not to act like what you do for them is done out of a sense of duty. Show them they are loved.
3. Help them add festive touches to their home or room in the long-term care facility. Ensure that these items do not present a safety hazard and try to decorate in stages to prolong the fun and give them something to look forward to. Many seniors enjoy reflecting on past holidays as they unpack cherished decorations, so be sure to listen to their stories and ask about special pieces. If you can't be there in person, at least phone or video call while they're decking the halls. Some small, easy-to-use decorations in senior apartments include removable window clings, garland, and artificial wreaths or floral arrangements.
4. Cook traditional baked goods or treats with your loved one if it is safe to get together in person. If they reside in an assisted living facility or nursing home, bring familiar treats that represent your holiday customs for your elder to enjoy and share with their friends. Try to make their dining table festive, too, by offering to send themed decor, appropriate colors and seasonal flavors.
5. The most important thing you can do with a senior to make them feel loved and

included this season is to simply spend time with them in a safe way. Look at family photos, watch home videos or holiday movies, listen to seasonal music, or do crafts together. For some, these traditions may need to take place outside (weather permitting), via FaceTime or Zoom, or while you social distance and wear masks. Regardless of what you decide to do together, any time you can spare is a precious gift.

Article in its entirety: <https://www.agingcare.com/articles/elderly-loneliness-during-holidays-148441.htm>

CELEBRATING 8 MONTHS

If you are receiving this newsletter, you know we had a baby last May at the Island Community House. We decided to call her Village Neighbors...and she has been growing, slowly but surely. Before we brought her into this world, we reached out with a survey to the whole community to see if she would be useful here, and we got a big YES!! Yes, families, neighbors, and churches increasingly are unable to meet all the needs of seniors. Yes, seniors need and want more social connections and more support to age in place with dignity.



We put the word "village" in the name because this is how we think of Chincoteague, and because we are glad to be part of the village movement spreading across the whole U.S. We don't want to compete with or replace any of the wonderful things being done for seniors here, only ADD to them. Village Neighbors is getting loving attention from many wonderful people who have chosen to be volunteers, members, or both. Please visit our website at village-neighbors.org or call us to learn about what we offer.

Eight months ago, we launched Village Neighbors into the world with the help of generous donors who believed in the idea, and dedicated volunteers who organized it.

I'm happy to share that the baby is thriving, and we're looking forward to her future growth!

Lisa Cannon, Board President

Island Community House First Annual Giving Appeal

The Island Community House, a 501(c)3 non-profit, has many programs for seniors, including, Village Neighbors - a program dedicated in assisting seniors in aging well in place. Island Community House invites you to enjoy lunches, lectures, exercise classes, games, and special events. We know that when we feel connected, inspired, engaged and supported we are healthier, more confident and more independent. Donations from

supporters like you play a major role in sustaining and expanding our ability to assist seniors and the Chincoteague community at large.

We would like to thank those that have donated in 2022 to our cause. Your end of year, tax deductible donation can be mailed to Island Community House, Inc. 6246 Mumford Street Chincoteague Island VA 23336 or online by clicking on the donate button.



From all of us from Island Community House and Village Neighbors....



*Copyright © *Island Community House, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 2019. Village Neighbors is a program of Island Community House.*
You are receiving this email because you opted at an event, presentation or via our website(s).

Our mailing address is:

Village Neighbors - Island Community House
6246 Mumford Street
Chincoteague Island, VA 23336