

inTENTions



OUR VISION:

A community of elders and neighbors supporting one another.

OUR MISSION:

To connect members to resources needed to maintain comfortable, dignified, vibrant lives in their homes and community by providing appropriate services, activities, and programs that will further this purpose.

EVICTED? WHERE DO I LIVE NOW?

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy; I awoke and found that life was service; I acted, and behold, found that service was joy."

Rabindranath Tagore



L to R David, Jewel & Meredee

photo: Tiegian Kurtiz

It began with the eviction notice from the lawyer. I picked Jewel up from the crumbling adobe condo which she called home for the past 18 years. We were to do her weekly shopping as usual. Today, something was different, Jewel looked a bit pale. I asked how she was feeling, and she showed me a letter from the Russo Law Firm in Tucson. It stated that the owners of her condo (her friend and benefactor's two children) were requesting her eviction by August 31st.

My husband David and I took the eviction warnings more seriously than Jewel did. Her faith that it all would work out for the best never wavered. David and I started checking

out local resources. We called Legal Aid in Taos and Santa Fe who informed us that since she had not been paying rent, Jewel could be legally ordered out with just three days' notice. Her friend Ellie had financially supported her since she became blind. Now, having been diagnosed with dementia, Ellie was removed from the board of the charitable foundation she had started. That is how her children came to take over the fund.

Next came the paperwork: finding the correct figures on income, insurance, social security, her expenses, etc. Since Jewel is sight-impaired, she had lost track of important information. We spent many hours speaking with different agencies and applying for Medicaid. Now we needed to find her appropriate accommodations.

We applied to low-income housing: Tierra Montosa, Mariposa, Ochenta. One day, with Jewel, we visited Taos Enchanted Village (formerly Plaza de Retiro), where she exclaimed "This is where I want to live." But it seemed out of her price range.

All the affordable housing units were full, with waiting lists. We consulted with Adult Protective Services, Northern Regional

Housing Association, Taos County Housing Authority, New Mexico Coalition for Ending Homelessness, Taos Elders Benevolence Service, and Taos Healthcare (formerly The Living Center), where no beds were available. We got approval for U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 rental support, though no units were available at any location for two to three years. We revisited Taos Enchanted Village, and found that Unit 13 was available in September, rent only, for \$1,850/month, ouch! How can Jewel manage that on Social Security alone?

Meanwhile, more emails with the attorney. We pleaded and asked for \$1,000/month for two years. Begrudgingly, the attorney and Ellie's children complied with this request. Though we will need to continue to find support for Jewel, we got a reprieve for a few years. Another blessing: B'nai Shalom Havurah, a 501(C3) endowment fund of the Taos Community Foundation (with an angel named Bette Myerson at the helm) offered to act as fiscal agent for tax-free contributions for

Jewel's cause.

Even though a safety net might not have been evident, and at times we became discouraged as we neared the move-in date, TENT angels and others appeared. Days of packing and sorting, a rented U-Haul, a new donated bed—and in a few days Jewel was settled in with pictures hung and things unpacked. She said: "How much more spacious this place feels, such good energy!"

Jewel now has a Medicaid helper three times a week to bathe her, clean the apartment, and help organize. She claims, "I feel younger and ready to go help others!"

We are grateful to all those who generously supported Jewel and helped make the move: Julian Spaulding, Terry Brown, and Judith Hetem gave countless hours; Kate Harris; Kate's grandson, Tiegan; Julie Sabia; Jane Starks; Barbara Berge; and Marianne Furedi. In the end, Jewel's dream was realized, with TENT Members residing on either side of her enchanted apartment. -- *Meredee Vaughn*

FROM THE BOARD



Happy Fall! Isn't it gorgeous?! Yes, the year is speeding by. Enjoy it while you can.

Those of you who've been involved with TENT for a long time remember that in the beginning (2017 and 2018,

before Covid came along) we used to hold bimonthly meetings on subjects of interest to our Members and Volunteers and the general public. We have begun this again. On September 12, Gary Shapiro spoke about preventing falls and safe practices for us all. Our next public meeting will be in November, presented by Darrel Baumgardner, on the subject of climate change, the drought, and cloud seeding. Stay tuned to our [website](#) for date and time and place.

Many activities are happening at our new office, and Kate can meet you there for individual or group conversations.

We are making a big effort to get the word out about TENT. We know that many people in our community don't know about us. Look for our ads on the TCA and the Storyteller Cinema screens, and in the *Taos News*. We also have a wonderful Social Media Leader, Miriam Jones, who has been posting on Facebook, Instagram, etc., about TENT and our activities, programs, and services.

If you have friends or colleagues who don't know about TENT and might want to join us as a Volunteer or a Member, please tell them or give us their contact information and we'll reach out to them. All best wishes,

-- *Bette Myerson* Co-President

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR UPDATE

I hope everyone is enjoying the fall weather as much as I am!

A big story in this issue is about the Herculean efforts put forth by TENT Volunteers who helped a Member move. Spearheaded by Meredee and David Vaughn, and including Judith Hetem, Julian Spalding, Terry Brown, Jane Starks, Barbara Berge, Julie Sabia, and others who donated funds and material goods, this was a two-month long effort, which included finding a new space, sorting through belongings, and moving everything. This required a huge amount of their time, which they gave selflessly. These Volunteers have embodied the true nature of a village and shown us how, with cooperation and good hearts, our TENT community can pull together to help someone in need. You are all heroes and our gratitude goes out to you! Also, a big shout-out of thanks to Mattress Mary, who donated a mattress and frame!

Welcome to our new Volunteers, Georgiana and Sue; your help will be invaluable and extremely welcome as we continue to grow our membership. We always need Volunteers, so everyone please tell your friends about us!

Volunteering can reduce stress, combat depression, provide a sense of purpose, and keep you mentally stimulated—a wonderful way to stay healthy! Plus, it feels good...

We also need a few more distant transport Volunteers. You are reimbursed for gas, and we have raised your compensation by adding extra on top of what the Member gives for this service. These requests are usually for important medical services that cannot be obtained locally. If you already transport TENT Members, please consider expanding your range.

Thanks to Gary (and Bette for organizing) for his Fall Prevention Strategies event, which was very well received. Check out the article about it in this issue. I also want to welcome back intern Cyndee Gustafson, who will be helping us again this semester, many thanks from us all!

And, always, much gratitude to all Volunteers for their ongoing service to this community. Although you might not ever know the difference you have made in someone's life, rest assured that your contributions have, one step at a time, helped immensely, and TENT is fortunate to have your participation.

-- Kate Harris

LIFE MILESTONES: LEONARD KASZA



TENT Member Leonard Kasza, 86, passed away on August 9, 2023. Born in Wiley, Colorado, in 1937 to Paul and Gertrude Kasza, Leonard is survived by his wife, Katherine; a

sister, Berna Rehyer of

Rocky Ford, Colorado; son William and wife Vangie of Buda, Texas; son Daniel of Hayden, Idaho; a daughter; eight grandchildren; eight great grandchildren, and numerous nephews and nieces. He is preceded in death by his

parents; a sister, Marge Shoaf; and a brother, Ed Kasza.

Leonard grew up on the family farm in Wiley. In 1952, at age 15, he was hired as the steel guitar player for the Ark-Valley Wranglers. They were regulars on a live radio broadcast, The KLMR Shindig. This began his lifelong passion as a musician and entertainer. Following high school graduation in 1955, Leonard joined the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in 1958. Leonard returned to Colorado, where he met the love of his life, Katherine Conty. They were wed on

December 2, 1961, and were married for 62 years.

Settling in Austin, Texas, in 1964, over the next 30 years, Leonard perfected his skills as a musician and artist. His career was as Systems Analyst for the Veterans Administration, but his love was music. Teaching himself to play the Dobro, he became a master of the instrument, playing and recording with bluegrass legends of

his time. Leonard's art was exhibited in Texas and New Mexico.

Retiring to Taos in 1995, Leonard had continued success as an artist, winning the People's Choice Award of the Taos Fall Art Festival. In retirement, he rediscovered his love of the steel guitar and joined Kim and the Caballeros in 2006. Leonard remained active in the local music scene for the remainder of his musical career. -- From his son, *Bill Kasza*

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

All TENT Members and Volunteers are invited to a potluck get-together at Kit Carson Park in the picnic shelter, on Friday, October 20, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. This will be a social gathering to meet, greet, chat, get to know one another and enjoy the surprises of a potluck meal. Sandwiches and drinks will also be provided. You are invited to bring a dish to share. Meredee and David Vaughn will give a short presentation on laughter yoga.

The weaving class with Yolanda Rommel resumed in September after a short summer break. It meets every Thursday from 1:00 to 2:30 PM. Mexican train dominoes is meeting every other Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 to 4:00 PM.

Paul Duboff started a new eight-session sketching class on September 6. It meets every other Wednesday.

The book club's next meeting is on Friday, October 20. The book choice is *Born to Run* by Christopher McDougall. The club's November meeting will be on Friday, November 17, and the selection is *The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris. Both meetings are 1:00 to 2:00 PM.

The walks in Baca Park will continue to be offered every other Friday morning from 9:30 to 10:30 AM until early November.

It is easy to register for any of these events. Go to the TENT website, TaosElders.org, click on EVENTS, then click "Events list" and scroll down to your choice, click and register. You can request a drive at the same time. All of the above activities take place (unless otherwise indicated) at the TENT Office, 515 Gusdorf Road, Suite 1. The Activities Committee welcomes any suggestions for activities and new Members as well. -- *Honore Maloney*
575-776-8087, jmaloney@taosnet.com



L to R: Anne Marie, Catrin, instructor Paul Duboff, Randie, Carmen photo: Tiegian Kurtiz



An activity idea:

Buy a pumpkin and carve it into a funny face for Halloween! Not a new idea but still fun ...

Fall Prevention Event at Taos Enchanted Village on 9/12 presented by Gary Shapiro

Gary started his presentation with some disturbing statistics from 2020: falls among seniors in one year equal 36 million: 300,000 hip fractures, 3,000,000 emergency room visits, and 36,000 deaths. Falling leads to hospitalization, which leads to more complications: lack of movement leads to bed sores and pneumonia, immobility changes the brain, and in elders, one day of bed rest is roughly equivalent to one week of bed rest for those in their forties.

Seniors are most prone to falls, with inactivity a major cause. Balance is a skill, and the mechanisms we rely on for balance are vision (dark rooms are problematic), the inner ear, joint sense (nerves in joints alert the brain to spatial recognition), and peripheral neuropathy conditions prevent messages from getting to the brain. The less you move, the more your balance is impaired; and the stiffer you are, the more likely you are to fall without being able to protect yourself ("falling like a tree" is how Gary put it). Strategies for dealing with these issues are: make sure you have proper shoes; get your vision and hearing checked; and use an assistive device such as a cane or walker.

Most falls occur at home, and many things can be done to alleviate this: install rails next to stairs, clear pathways, secure rugs with non-slip pads, provide adequate lighting, and stay aware of pesky pets getting in the way! Because the bathroom is the most dangerous place, it is wise to install grab bars in the tub/shower (don't use the suction type) and use a shower chair and non-skid mats; raised toilet seats are also helpful. Medicare won't pay for bathroom items, but Medicaid will, and it is possible to find less expensive items online.

How to improve your balance: move! Walk, dance, practice yoga, and/or tai chi. Exercises



that improve balance and strengthen the legs: practice getting up and down from a chair without using your arms (you can use a pillow to raise the height of the chair if you need to); stand with one foot in front of the other and shift your weight onto the front foot—hold for one to two minutes, then shift your weight to the back foot, hold for one to two minutes. Doing this slowly helps with going down stairs. A Medical Alert button is highly recommended.

Many thanks to Gary for sharing his expertise! (Any mistakes in this article are entirely my own.) And thanks to Taos Enchanted Village for hosting the event; to Emily Lee and Amy Montoya for helping set up and clean up; and to all those who attended. -- Kate Harris

WHY I WAS LATE

My last position was as an admin for a high ranking executive in a high profile investment management company. Because of his position, it was important to my manager for me to set an example for other admins with regards to arriving on time: 7:00 AM.

This is the letter I drafted after reacting to a rather harsh dressing down for being late. I believed I was justified in being less than five minutes late, but he was not having it. And no, I did not share my sarcasm with my boss, and I retired several years later. . . on time.

To My Boss,

Please forgive my tardiness this morning, but my store-bought hair flipped into the cat litter box and I couldn't find the spare

I spent my lunch hour online purchasing a replacement hairpiece; therefore, I am relatively confident this was an isolated event.

Apologies for any inconvenience you may have experienced due to my late arrival at 7:03 AM.

Yours truly,
Sharon Bradshaw

TECHNICAL UPDATES:

Recently, I sent an email to a small group of friends about a somewhat controversial topic. We all received a "reply" from a person not on the distribution list. How could this happen?

It appears that the sender of this reply has taken messages from one of our computers or smartphones (unless one of us forwarded it to him) without our knowledge or permission.

It is possible that one or more of us on the original distribution list has "malware" — software on our computer (or smartphone) that allows an outsider to read our messages. (It is also possible that a nefarious party has

broken into the email service, but that is beyond our control.)

I suggest each of us scan our computers for malware when we see very suspicious behavior. Here are some products that will help:

- Mac — I use [Malwarebytes](#) free trial
- Windows — [Avast](#) is highly recommended.
- Android — [Clario](#), then skip down to "How to check for malware on Android."
- iPhone — malware on iPhone is extremely rare.

No matter which tool you use to scan for malware, you will probably have to remove it after the initial "free" use, or you will be asked to pay for a subscription. I must add that I have personally had trouble with someone capturing my email (I had to change the password) and with undesired advertisements, but never in 40 years have I experienced malware on my Apple products.
-- Jim Ludden

TECH TIPS A-Z

InTENTions publishes helpful information from time to time about using your telephones, laptops, desktops, or tablets. We will maintain a list of all the topics in each newsletter. Click on the link to pull up a copy of the information.

Alexa

This technology can be both helpful and annoying. Find out more here.

Disappearing Windows

Unsteady fingers can cause your laptop window to disappear. This helps avoid that.

Navigating Your Web Browser

An introductory guide on finding "stuff" on your computer and on the web.

Password Management

Recommendations for creating, remembering, and storing your passwords.

Service Requests and Evaluations

A quick overview of how to ask for services from TENT Volunteers and evaluate their response.

Technology To Reduce Isolation

Living alone has its downside but here are ways to feel less isolated.

Don't get hacked or conned!

Getting "Hacked" can be painful but there are ways to avoid it. Here is some advice.

Voice Mailbox Tips

Frequent "housekeeping" of your telephone mailbox is simple, as explained here.
– Darrel Baumgardner

TENT CLASS IN CPR

On August 5, TENT and Project Heart offered a class in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the attendees practiced CPR techniques described by Shane Johns and Chloe Slator, second year medical students at the University of New Mexico. Following their instructions, we learned the signs of a heart attack and how to save a choking victim, then practiced compression CPR and using an automated external defibrillator (AED) on mannequins.

-- Linda Thompson



Asters on the mesa

RESOURCES

The National Institute of Health has a “National Institute on Aging” website that provides lots of information about how to age at home. Click this [link](#).

MoveOn is one of the nonprofit organizations that offers assistance in creating a legal will. Check it out [here](#).

AARP’s “Senior Planet” offers a variety of ways to connect with other seniors and join a support group on their website. Groups focus on various subjects such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer’s Disease, and other conditions. Learn about these [here](#).



Medicare.gov reminds us that Medicare will never call, text or email you asking for your Medicare Number. Don’t ever give your card or number to anyone except your doctor. Check your Medicare Summary Notices or statements carefully for any suspicious charges. If you suspect fraud, report it at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). See Medicare.gov for more information about preventing fraud. Feel free to send me ideas at

Editor@taoselders.org -- Linda Thompson

Please click [here](#) to make a charitable contribution so that TENT can help our elder community.

TENT needs your help to help others.

TENT (Taos Elders and Neighbors Together)

Memberships Receiving Services

Individual

\$300/year or \$20-25/mo.

Household

\$400/year or \$30-35/mo.

3 Month Trial

\$150 or \$50/mo.

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