



OUR STORIES

NANCY HERRICK AND BILL HOFFMAN: A TENT DYNAMIC DUO

The ambient outdoor temperature was unseasonably high this sunny midwinter day as I arrived at what I would soon discover to be the warm and emotionally inviting home of TENT Volunteers, Bill Hoffman and Nancy Herrick. Having relied on 21st century GPS technology in this, our sometimes third world-like town, I had some difficulty finding their address.

Nancy and I had not met prior to my arrival. Nevertheless, she immediately welcomed me into the home that she and Bill share, save annual three-month summer stays at a treasured Fire Island New York cottage that has been in Nancy's family for over 50 years.

Though he is an experienced architect, the home's Southwest design was far different from Bill's pre-Taos work. Mirroring the inviting physical space he created is a warm, welcoming, comfortable social space—doubtless collaboratively constructed by both Bill and Nancy.

The two had not known each other prior to their nearly simultaneous, ultimately serendipitous 1996 arrivals in Taos. Coincidentally, they had attended the same college, Carnegie Mellon University (previously

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.

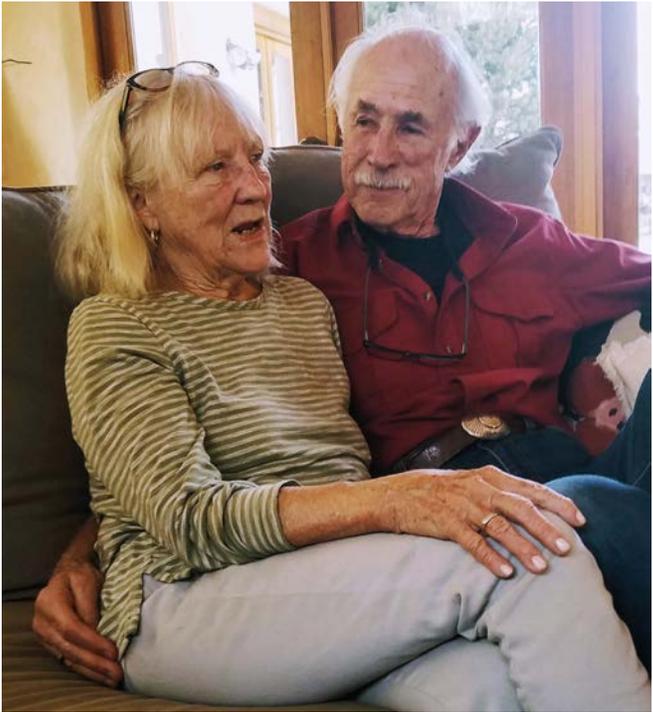


photo Bob Silver

Carnegie Tech), in Pittsburgh during the 1960s, but they had never met there.

Then, some five years ago, following the death of Bill's wife Georgia and a marriage-ending legal process for Nancy, their casual friendship gradually blossomed into a solid romance. Now they have been life partners for the past four years. Some of the magic of Taos? Confirmation that there are indeed some second chances in life? ¿Quién sabe?

Before relocating, Bill pursued a decades-long architectural career in the San Francisco Bay Area. Now nominally retired, he still takes on special interest projects as they come his way. He is delighted to be exploring designs inspired by our land of enchantment. An exciting current project has him incorporating a small, century-old, adobe home into a larger, truly historic hacienda. Though nearing 80 years of age, Bill energetically and graciously volunteers his repair and handyman skills to TENT Members.

Nancy characterizes her earlier major life's work as raising children, with substantial volunteer experience associated with that role. Her history seems to have prepared her well for the active Volunteer role she has assumed with TENT. Though a septuagenarian, she busily handles communications and transportation needs of Members, fielding service requests, dispatching Volunteer providers of TENT services. Although our visit had been scheduled, Nancy made clear that she was simultaneously on call, explaining that were she to receive a TENT call, she would have to interrupt our conversation and respond. That did in fact become reality when the phone rang.

But how does one reasonably characterize the intangible, ephemeral, fundamental core and *raison d'être* of a relationship, a partnering? What elusive essence or inchoate character would have suggested special interest and curiosity regarding the bond uniting Nancy Herrick and Bill Hoffman? What sort of language is applicable?

As they confided details of their personal histories, their consistent acknowledgement, support, and deep valuing of each other's special talents and skills, they clearly seemed kindred spirits, joined together in a shared mission of human compassion. Though each brings separate abilities to their Volunteer roles, they are a synchronized pair, acting in harmonic parallel for the benefit of TENT Members, friends, and neighbors. Pop culture has given us some noteworthy partners, among them Butch and Sundance and Thelma and Louise. The warmth, generosity, and commitment personified by Nancy Herrick and Bill Hoffman should render them reasonable candidates for recognition as a TENT dynamic duo.

-- Bob Silver

FROM THE BOARD: TENT Is Here to Help



Membership continues to grow by three to four Members per month. Our 50 members are receiving over 100 services per month. So, we are helping—but the question arises: how do we continue to fulfill our promise?

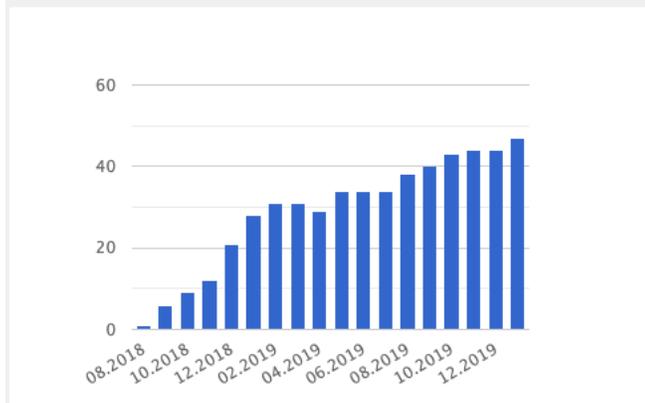
Remember that the energy enabling TENT to provide services is the action of our Volunteers. If Volunteer numbers do not grow—or if Volunteer activeness drops—then we will need to limit membership.

We now can see that about one-third of our Volunteer force fulfill most of the service requests. We need to change this. Reviewing what you can do or when you can do it could help. Your sincere intentions could also be fulfilled by taking on an administrative task.

There are many ways to help. Working together, let's find the way that works best for you. Please contact any board member or the Volunteer Coordinator, Kate Harris, to discuss what is the best fit for you.

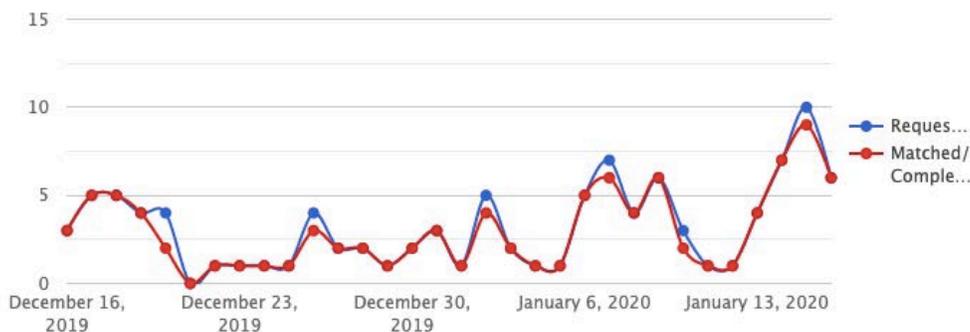
-- Jim Schultz, Board President

ACTIVE MEMBERS EACH MONTH



In 2019, 1200 services were completed. 1241 were requested but 41 not fulfilled. TENT now has 50 members and 60 Volunteers. This chart shows Member growth since August 2018.

NUMBER OF SERVICES COMPLETED



EVENTS: MEET ME AT THE MILLICENT

I am delighted to announce this very special series of events. Please join us for the introductory event of our monthly series at the Millicent Rogers Museum on Thursday, February 20, from 1:30 to 3:00 PM. Each month, a guided tour of a particular room at the Museum will be followed by tea (or coffee), snacks, and a hands-on activity related to the room just explored.

Due to the limited number of spaces available, an RSVP is required. Members are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible so that we may match you with a ride. Volunteers will be required to transport any Member who desires to attend. Please register by going to the Events list on the website

(<https://taoselders.helpfulvillage.com/events/90-meet-me-at-the-millicent>) and clicking on the red button "Register for this Event," or call TENT at 575-224-6335. *– Kate Harris*



TENT OUTREACH TALKS

On January 22, Bette Myerson, TENT's Fundraising Chair, spoke to a luncheon group at the Taos Retirement Village as part of the effort to inform residents and their families about TENT. She spoke of TENT's history and described the types of services we provide, such as transportation, minor home repairs, technical support, caregiver relief, and social contact.

Attendees asked questions such as "Can you help people in their homes organize their papers?" and "Can transportation consist of taking me to multiple places if I have many things to do?" Bette said yes to both, adding that such transportation would depend on the

driver's schedule and would have to be arranged in advance. Trips out of town, such as to Santa Fe or Albuquerque for a medical appointment, require an additional donation to cover the driver's fuel costs.

Bette is happy to reach out to such groups to inform them about TENT, and often this outreach brings in donations, which help cover costs for elders who are unable to pay the membership fees. Anyone interested in becoming a TENT Member or Volunteer should call Bette at (575) 224-6335.

– Linda Thompson

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR UPDATE

The BIG announcement is that Steve Tapia has agreed to become our Social Activities Leader. Those who came to the Storyteller



Event on January 15 will remember Jan Smith from SOMOS reading from his book. Copying other Villages' handbooks, I'd like to create some interest groups to facilitate more social activities, as some of you have asked in the past. This is the list I have so far: bridge/card

playing; book club; walking; gardening; music/talent show; yoga/tai chi; lunch/brunch; games. Please contact Steve at stapia63@hotmail.com, 719-466-9721 or call me at 575-741-6230 to discuss this idea and help it come to fruition.

Other positions still needing a Leader: Publicity, Outreach, Tech Back-up; Facebook

Administrator; Service Request Manager, and a Call Manager for one day a week. Please let me know if you are interested!

A reminder of our inclement weather policy—if you feel driving conditions are unsafe, please call the Member to reschedule. Same for if you are not feeling well.

Our Membership Coordinators have been very busy signing up new Members (thanks!) and we are getting more service requests. A popular rule of thumb in volunteering is the Pareto Principle, or the "80/20 rule": out of 100 volunteers, 20 actually perform all the services. TENT has a better record than this, but in the main, the same people pick up all the requests. For those who haven't been volunteering lately, we sure could use your help!

I would like to thank Jan Smith from SOMOS for her guidance in finding presenters for our very successful Storytelling Event. Sharon Bradshaw, David Perez, and Rob Wilder entertained us delightfully, and we SO appreciated all the audience members who told

their own fascinating stories. Thank you one and all! There was such a good response that we will be looking to do this at least semi-

annually. Deeply grateful for all you Volunteers!
-- Kate Harris, Volunteer Coordinator

“AGELESS LIVING”: NEW PBS SERIES

PBS kicked off its “Ageless Living” series on January 25 with author and visionary Lynne Twist speaking about *The Soul of Money—Living a Committed Life, Part I*. Twist is passionate in her belief that a committed life is key to an ageless life.

She found herself in “the right place at the right time” in 1997 when the Hunger Project was born, a bold initiative to eliminate world hunger. She learned that the commitment to actually end something created a context to how you worked that required energy, power, passion, and depth. A teacher and mother of three small children, Twist was swept up, inconveniently, but felt it a blessing to be called into a committed life. “To leave the planet better than you found it is more important than life starring me,” she said.

Fund-raising is one of Twist’s contributions to her committed path. While raising money is part of the nonprofit or not-for-profit sector, she prefers to call it the “social prophet sector,” generating profit for all beings. “I don’t call people poor anymore,” she said. “That’s a

disservice. They are whole and complete, intelligent people living in poor circumstances.”

Twist had a pivotal moment when visiting Mother Theresa in India, where she witnessed a couple treating the nun roughly and rudely. “But she was fine with them,” Twist said. “She saw Christ in every face.” In a later correspondence, Mother Theresa told Twist that while she was naturally oriented to those less fortunate, she needed to extend her circle of compassion to the wealthy and privileged, to open her heart to them as well. Twist then started to see her own dysfunctional relationship to money. Viewers will need to tune into Part 2 of Twist’s presentation on February 1 to learn more about that.

The series, which airs on NMPBS 5.1 each Saturday at 4:30 p.m. through April 25, includes episodes featuring 22 award-winning, best-selling authors and experts in their field—many of whom are multi-NY Times best sellers. Besides Twist, they include David Suzuki, Gregg Braden, Bruce Lipton, Thomas Moore, Joan Borysenko, John Gray, Dr. Larry Dossey, Dr. Eben Alexander, Anita Moorjani, Barbara Marx Hubbard, and others. — Helen Rynaski



TAX TIME HELP

Uh-oh, it's that dreaded tax time. Are you aware that AARP* can help you do your taxes correctly and minimize your tax-preparation costs? AARP Foundation's service called Tax-Aide offers free, individualized Federal and State tax preparation for low- to moderate-income taxpayers, especially people 50 and older, around the country. A search on their website shows that this service is offered at the Taos County Senior Citizen Center (Ancianos), 601 Lovato Place. They do not set appointments but work first come-first served on Tuesdays only from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. We recommend you get there early in case they're busy.

The Tax-Aide program is operated under an agreement with the IRS, and AARP provides all the services and information privacy that a private CPA would provide. In order to do your tax return, they need you to bring all the documents that you or your CPA would require for the task:

General:

- Previous year's tax return(s).
- Social Security cards and/or ITIN notices/cards or other official documentation that show the taxpayer identification numbers for every individual on your return.
- Government-issued photo ID for each taxpayer, e.g., driver's license or alternate ID.
- Checking or savings account information if you want to direct deposit any refund(s) or direct debit any amounts due.
- Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN) (for each individual if applicable).

* AARP is the American Association of Retired Persons

Income:

- W-2 for each employer.
- 1099-G form for unemployment compensation or state/local income tax refunds.
- SSA-1099 form showing the total Social Security benefits paid to you for the year, or RRB-1099, Tier I Railroad Retirement benefits form.
- 1099 forms (or other statements) reporting interest (1099-INT), dividends (1099-DIV) and/or proceeds from sales (1099-B), plus documentation showing the original purchase prices if you sold stocks or other assets.
- 1099-R form if you received a pension, annuity, or IRA distribution.
- 1099-MISC, 1099-K, or other 1099 forms. If you have a business, bring a summary list of all your income (cash and non-cash) and all business-related expenses.
- Information about any other income of any form, including cash or other than cash.

Other: Records of any federal and/or state and/or local income tax you have already paid during the year, including quarterly estimated payments.

If you have a lot of deductions and think you might want to itemize them on your return, bring the following information:

General:

- 1098 form showing home mortgage interest.
- A summary list of medical/dental/vision expenses including doctor and hospital bills and medical insurance premiums (including Medicare Parts A, B and C or Medicare Advantage), prescription medicines, assisted living services, long-term care insurance and bills for medical

related home improvements such as ramps and railings for people with disabilities.

- Summary of cash and noncash contributions to charity.
- Property tax bills paid during the year (frequently shown on mortgage statement).
- Dependent care provider information – name, address, telephone number and employer ID or Social Security number and amount paid to provider.
- 1098-T form for education expenses plus statement of account from the educational institution showing tuition and fees actually paid and scholarships, grants, etc., received. Also bring a summary of any other education expenses.
- 1098-E form for student loan interest.

- 1095-B/1095-C forms (optional).
- Any exemption correspondence from the Marketplace (if applicable).

Most of the forms above are sent to you after January 31, so don't throw away mail just because it looks as if it might be "junk." Open it to make sure.

You can also submit a question at the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Online Tax Assistance website. Type this in your browser's URL space: taxaideqa.aarp.org/hc/en-us.

– Nancy Ewing

APRIL 2020				
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
Palm Sunday			Passover	
12	13	14	15 TAXES DUE	16
Easter				
19	20	21	22	23

Health Insurance:

- 1095-A forms if you purchased insurance through the Marketplace (Exchange).

TECH NOTES: WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

Our website software, Helpful Village, has some recent changes. Members and Volunteers can now edit their personal profiles.

Anyone who has login permission will see a blue figure and ▼ on the upper right. Click on this to view your Profile, where you may add a personal photo and biography.

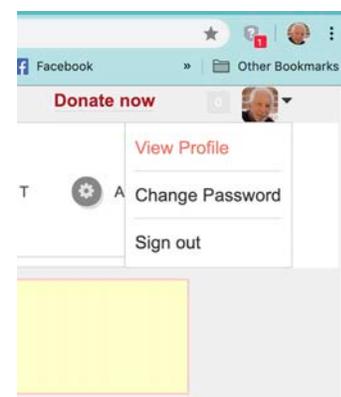
Volunteers can add or remove the services they offer, as well as the days of the week they are available and their vacation times.

(Some services require extra information such as driving availability. To add these, you'll need to use the application form.)

Members can see when their membership expires.

Some of this will be improved over the next few months.

-- Jim Ludden



RESOURCES

Dr. Caryle Zorumski refers us to an article in *The Advocate Magazine*, Fall 2019, by Joel E. Miller, Executive Director of the American Mental Health Counselors Association, called “A Letter to Congress: Pass a Law Now to Recognize LCMHCs as Medicare Providers.” LCMHCs stands for “licensed clinical mental health counselors.”

Apparently, many mental health providers are not recognized as authorized practitioners under Medicare, although they are recognized under the Medicaid program. LCMHCs are not psychiatrists, but all 50 states license them to treat mental and emotional health disorders. Because of the opioid epidemic, we have a national shortage of professionals qualified to

treat mental health and addiction problems. Mr. Miller says that 25 percent of Medicare beneficiaries have a mental health or substance use condition, which can exacerbate other illnesses such as heart disease or diabetes.

In his letter, he is asking Congress to pass Senate Bill S. 286 and House Bill H.R. 945, which would amend a part of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under the Medicare program. To see more information about this problem, go to <https://www.amhca.org/advocacy/medicare> and <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/286/all-info> (Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2019).

– Linda Thompson



TENT (Taos Elders and Neighbors Together)

Membership Levels

Individual Full services
\$350/year or \$32/mo.

Household Full services
\$450/year or \$40/mo.

Sustaining No services
\$150/year

3 Month Trial
\$150 or \$50/mo.

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