



## OUR STORIES

### BECKY CALVERT: ALWAYS BEEN IN THE CARDS

Though there had been some glancing contact with this petite creative dynamo prior to a recent Zoomed virtual visit, I really had only limited knowledge of her history. As TENT Volunteer of the Month, Becky Calvert, spoke with me of the major events in her life's journey from her Ranchos de Taos home studio, pieces of her beloved Taos Moderns art were visible in the cyber-streamed background. The art lent concrete affirmation to her narrative. As our conversation proceeded, words like "innovative," "irrepressible," and "intrepid" came to mind.

Ultimately residing in Taos and contributing to its community life seemed almost preordained for Becky. But given some thought, the culmination of her life journey should probably have come as little surprise. Indeed, most likely it had always been in the cards.

A native New Mexican with a deep love of this land of enchantment and a long-standing affinity for the art that was evoked and inspired by it, she and Carl, her husband of 57 years, lived for decades in near exile beyond New Mexico borders pursuing education and employment opportunities. Finally, in 2008, Becky and Carl realized the long-held dream of permanently "coming home" ... to Taos.

#### 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.

Perpetually poised to perceive pressing unaddressed problem processes, whether with her substantially on-the-job education as a paralegal, her creation of an annually published digital database providing an updated comprehensive legal community listing, or her responding to the need for a more effective means of communicating among TENT members, Becky seemed spot-on creative.



Photo from Zoom call.

As a case in point, stepping back from her experience transporting and interacting with TENT Members, Becky noted that her aged "customers" were often a digitally challenged demographic cohort. Email, texting, and Facebook would never be an effective means of reaching them. In response, she invented a series of personalized, appealing, creative

“cards” to be sent to TENT members via USPS, a communication medium with which her audience was historically conversant and comfortable. One more problem identified, another problem solved.

Though facing her own significant health challenges, Becky shared her belief that her full and rich life has conveyed a responsibility, in

her words, to “pay it forward.” But, for me, Bobby Kennedy may well have captured Becky Calvert best: “Some ... see things as they are and ask, ‘Why?’ I dream things that never were and ask, ‘Why not?’” That said, Becky Calvert’s contributions to our Taos community life has likely always been in the cards.

-- Robert J. Silver

## Hello TENT Community:



In spite of the continuing curse of COVID-9, our Volunteers continue to provide more services month to month —bravo! Because this curse will be with us for perhaps another year, we need

to keep wearing our masks, washing our hands, and keeping social distance. There are numerous noncontact services, such as phone calls and deliveries, which you can do without endangering yourself. For those Volunteers who have understandably stepped back from participating, please again review what you can do to support TENT administratively or to

support a Member by fulfilling a safe service request. We need to share the load. A small cadre of Volunteers are doing the lion’s share of work, and this is not sustainable. Please review your commitment to the Members of TENT who need your support.

And we need Volunteers for the following leader efforts:

Publicity

Member Care

Tech Support (see the “Help Wanted” article on page 5)

Outreach

– Jim Schultz, Board President

## Statewide Conference of NM Elder Villages

The statewide conference of New Mexico Elder Villages was organized by Parkland Village with help from Village in the Village and TENT. On September 8, about 30 people from nine N.M. villages met on the Internet for a two-hour meeting. The purposes of the conference were to introduce each village, to work together in the future on common problems, and to support each other. The participants agreed to hold quarterly meetings, with the next one to be in December. Attending the conference from TENT were Becky Calvert, Lana Green, Jim Ludden, Kate Harris, Linda and Terry Thompson, and Jim Schultz.

Villages included the following:

Taos Elders and Neighbors Together

Village in the Village (Corrales)

Jemez Aging in Place

Parkland Village (Albuquerque)

Viva Placitas

North Campus Community Project (Albuquerque)

Villages of Santa Fe

Santa Fe Neighbors

HOPE (Las Vegas) was unable to attend.

– Jim Schultz

## Loneliness Impacts of COVID-19

Being isolated reduces the spread of the COVID-19 virus, but that isolation certainly makes us more lonely. In some cases, this loneliness can have disastrous results. The incidence of suicide has climbed—and it is usually 50% higher in New Mexico than in the U.S. as a whole. Alcohol problems and domestic violence, too, have increased.

The State has set up or emphasized several tools that can help those who are desperate. For any kind of emotional crisis, mental health or substance use concern, you can find help:

- NM Crisis Line, 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 1-855-NMCRISI (662-7474)
- Call or text with a peer: 1-855-4NM-7100 (466-7100). You can call 3:30–11:30 PM or text 6-11 PM.
- If you are having a life-threatening emergency, call 911 immediately.

Those of you who are wedded to your cell phone can install an app, NMConnect, which will automatically connect the user to the crisis line or peer as described above.

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## Volunteer Coordinator Update

Another two months have gone by since the last issue, and is it just me? It seems like time is flying by! On the other hand, some days seem as slow as molasses . . . I hope everyone continues to stay healthy and connected.

Speaking of connections, everyone, Members and Volunteers, please check out the Events Calendar on our website. Yoga, Balance and Beyond, and Fall Prevention classes are continued through the end of December.

Other local activities are posted there as they become available.

Volunteers: you fulfilled a record number of requests from August 10 to September 13:

If you suspect that you or someone around you has the COVID-19 virus, you can call 1-855-600-3453 any time. Anyone can get free testing with results reported in less than a day.

If someone in a work environment gets the virus, New Mexico has a rapid response team to help test, clean, and train workers to prevent the spread in the workplace. You can phone 505-476-8700 to report hazardous working conditions. The rapid response has been very effective at reducing the spread of COVID in working environments. Rapid responses are carried out by all state agencies and the need has been dropping, indicating that employers and workers are being more careful. Employers are required to report known COVID cases within four hours to the NM Environment Department (505-476-8700).

“Three C’s” encourage virus transmission: Closed spaces with poor ventilation, Crowded places with many people around, and Close-contact settings. If you avoid these, you can reduce transmission. To chat with friends, you will need to be outdoors or in a well-ventilated space and all must wear good face masks and stay six feet apart.

– Jim Ludden

126! Congratulations! And our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

There has been some interest in getting a book exchange together. As much as I love the Taos Public Library, the inability to cruise the stacks challenges me as I like to pick books up to figure out whether or not I would enjoy them, and their current system requires a title or author search. We would need someone to take charge of this project. If interested, please let me know!

Wally Cox and Chuck Doughty of the Home Maintenance Volunteers have been working on clarifying those services. This group routinely goes above and beyond, and there is a need to

solidify what services are appropriate in terms of safety and expertise. The group is thanked for their commitment and dedication, and if there are others out there who would like to participate with them, please let me know!

[We would also like to be able to put out a list of local providers that can take on jobs that are not suitable for our Volunteers. This would be according to personal experience only, and not a recommendation from TENT per se. I am sure it would be helpful to all of us, and an email will be sent out asking for your opinions.]

To those Volunteers who are not currently providing services, there are other way to help the TENT community. Socialization phone calls are becoming popular, and some leadership positions still need to be filled: Events (this implies a working knowledge of Zoom or

Google Meet, since those are the only ways we can get together at this time); Publicity; and Tech Support (primarily learning how to switch the call management phones, from Jim Ludden). Please contact me if interested!

Pen Pals – Villages across the country are joining together to initiate a pen pal program involving Members, primarily, but Volunteers are always included, and I hope that many of you will want to participate. The introductory meeting will be held after this submission, so stay tuned!

As always, stay safe, healthy, engaged, and happy. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any reason.  
– Kate Harris

## LAUGHING UNDER THE TENT

There's a magnet on my refrigerator that reads: "My New Diet Goal...to weigh what my driver's license says." Same goal – old magnet.

For those familiar with the phrase "Freshman Fifteen," you know it refers to gaining weight in the first year of college when one is away from home for the first time. For me, it describes my freshman year in high school. And sophomore, junior, etc. Well, you can see the pattern forming here.

Over time, when I renewed my driver's license every few years, I added an inch or two to my height and subtracted several (many several) pounds from my actual weight. It seemed to have gone unnoticed until the day I had to appear in traffic court for a speeding ticket. The judge looked at my license and then at me. Then at my license and then at me. He took his glasses off for a closer look. He must have been thinking that I had been hit hard over the head and expanded from side to side. He finally

put his glasses on and gave me a \$200 fine for speeding. Looking back, I'm lucky I wasn't arrested for perjury as I am not now, nor was I then, 5'11," 145 pounds.

And now? Let's just say that I'm two-thirds of the way towards the Quarantine Fifteen I've been hearing about.  
– Sharon Bradshaw



Illustration: Linda Thompson

## HELP WANTED

We could use a somewhat technical person to monitor our Google Voice phones. This means switching the phones to a different Call Manager (receptionist) four mornings every week. The support person must also monitor our TENT email account several times every day and forward Google Voice messages to the Call Manager on duty. *– Jim Ludden*

## A SENIOR'S VERSION OF FACEBOOK

For those of my generation who do not, and cannot, comprehend why Facebook exists: I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog, and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day. I also listen to their conversations, give them “thumbs up,” and tell them I “like” them. And it works just like Facebook. I already have 4 people following me: 2 police officers, a private investigator, and a psychiatrist.

*-- Posted on a number of Internet sites*

## VOTING PROCEDURES FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION: 11/3/2020

All information is from the New Mexico Secretary of State's website: <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/voting-and-elections/> The last date to register to vote is October 6.

**If you are unwilling or unable to vote in person, requests for absentee ballots will be accepted until 5:00 PM on Tuesday, October 20.** You can apply by:

- (1) filling out an online form at <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/voting-and-elections/voter-information-portal/absentee-and-early-voting/>;
- (2) downloading the form from the previous link; or (3) contacting the Taos County Clerk's office at 575-737-6380.

If you do not receive your ballot, contact the Taos County Clerk no later than Monday, November 3. Mail your completed ballot (do not forget to sign and fill out the envelope as well!) no later than October 27 to ensure its timely arrival; the earlier, the better, considering the current problems with mail delivery. Ballots can also be delivered to the County Clerk's Office at the Taos County Courthouse on Albright Street, to any polling place during early voting or on Election Day by 7:00 PM. If your ballot has not been received by Election Day, you may still cast your ballot in person, but you will need to sign an affidavit at the polling place canceling the mailed ballot you submitted. (Check on its status here: <https://voterportal.servis.sos.state.nm.us/WhereToVote.aspx?tab=AbsenteeTracker>.)

**Polling Places: First day of absentee voting at the Taos County Courthouse is Tuesday, October 6, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.**

Early voting/absentee ballot delivery: At the Taos County Courthouse – Saturday, October 17, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM; Alternate voting site is the El Prado Water & Sanitation District Office, 1017 Paseo del Pueblo Norte, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. This continues Tuesday, October 20, through Saturday, October 24, and Tuesday, October 27, through Saturday, October 31, the last day of early voting.

Election Day voting in person is at your precinct; check here for your site:  
<https://www.taoscounty.org/174/Precinct-Sites>

Any member of your immediate family, or your caregiver, may hand-deliver your absentee

ballot provided that the voter has subscribed the official mailing envelope of the absentee ballot. An unrelated third party may not deliver another voter's absentee ballot.

Hope this helps!

– *Kate Harris*

## DEMENTIA FOR CARE-GIVERS

Who and what pays for all the costs related to having a dementia diagnosis? Doctor visits should be covered by your insurance, whether it's private, Medicare, or Medicaid. Costs associated with a memory care facility or home health care should be paid for by long-term-care insurance. In the absence of these types of insurance, bills are paid out of the patient's pocket. It is important to look into acquiring such insurance before you need it; afterwards is too late.

What's being done to help us reduce or even eliminate the problem of dementia? In 2011 the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease was adopted, which included having a cure by 2025. Since then, \$2.8 billion per year has been invested in research. Because of the current COVID-19 pandemic, clinical trials are on hold, but they will continue when possible.

Meanwhile, if you are dealing with dementia, either in yourself or in someone you love, there is help out there. The Alzheimer's Association has resources and suggestions for both patients and caregivers: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). Other types of dementia may have their own organizations and websites.

For now, here are ways to help you communicate with loved ones who have dementia:

1. Speak in short sentences using basic words
2. Speak slowly and clearly – less is more

3. Avoid baby talk, as they're adults and will not appreciate being talked down to
4. Answer repetitive questions cheerfully, as impatience is not going to improve their mental state
5. Avoid questions and quizzing, as the conversation can get too complex
6. Pay attention to your tone, as they're sensitive to it
7. Allow plenty of time for conversations, as they may need more thinking time
8. Limit distractions
9. Focus on feelings, not facts (the "facts" in their head are their reality)
10. Avoid criticizing and correcting what they say to keep from damaging relationships
11. Redirect the conversation to pleasant activities when upsets occur
12. Have more patience than you ever thought possible

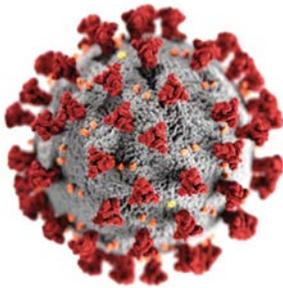
Here are additional tips for getting through the day successfully with your loved one:

1. Establish and stick to a daily routine
2. Create a calm environment
3. Play/sing music you can both relate to happily
4. Keep clutter to a minimum
5. Instead of forcing activities, make suggestions
6. Strive for a balance between over- and under-stimulation

7. Monitor interactions with children and pets
8. Adjust temperatures and lighting to their needs
9. Approach them from the front
10. One hour for us equals five hours for them (too much is stressful)
11. Go with the flow unless safety is involved
12. Be flexible and adaptable

This is the third article on dementia, taken from a webinar offered by AARP/Colorado. The information in these three articles will get you started in understanding the diseases under the dementia umbrella. Do use the suggested resources, as well as input from your medical professionals and library.

– Nancy Ewing



**STAY  
SAFE**

## UPDATE ON MEMBER SERVICES

Hope all is well with everyone. Due to the ongoing COVID dilemma, we have altered the membership application process. After a preliminary phone screening, prospective Members are put on a waiting list. At the monthly board meeting the board decides whether to open membership to those on the waiting list. Since the last newsletter we have added four new Members.

That's it in a nutshell.

– Gary Shapiro

## REST IN PEACE

On September 18, **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** died at the age of 87. She was only the second woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court and achieved many important victories there for women's rights. Thousands of people have gathered in her memory all over the country, and the Taos Democratic Party organized an impromptu memorial for her at the County Courthouse on September 19. In the photo, Erin Sanborn, one of many speakers, pays a tribute to RBG.



photo: Linda Thompson

## RESOURCES

Thanks to Mya Coursey for the following sources of important information.

See <https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/government-elections/?CMP=RDRCT-ADV-POLT071719> for information on guidelines for voting safely; the future of Medicare and Medicaid; impacts of the upcoming election on drug prices; and other issues important to seniors. And learn about contact tracing for those who have been exposed to the corona virus at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Contact-Tracing-Infographic-FINAL.pdf>

Create or update your will at <https://www.freewill.com/> And contact your senators and representatives in Congress, urging them to take action to protect residents of retirement homes from COVID-19. More than 70,000 residents and staff in nursing homes across the country have died from the virus. Go to: [https://action.aarp.org/site/Advocacy.jsessionid=00000000.app201111b?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=8443&cmp=EMC-ADV-NLC-null-EML-null-null-20200916&s\\_src=EIA&s\\_subsrc=EIA&NONCE\\_TOKEN=2E852668A59A10FBA037C55D80991FB8](https://action.aarp.org/site/Advocacy.jsessionid=00000000.app201111b?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=8443&cmp=EMC-ADV-NLC-null-EML-null-null-20200916&s_src=EIA&s_subsrc=EIA&NONCE_TOKEN=2E852668A59A10FBA037C55D80991FB8)  
 – 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**  
\$350/year or \$32/mo.

**Household**  
\$450/year or \$40/mo.

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

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