



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.

TENT needs POE!

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary. . .

Oh! Do you think we meant Edgar Allen Poe and his famous “stately Raven”? While there are plenty of ravens in Taos, that’s not what we are referring to. We mean Publicity, Outreach, Events (and Social Activities)!

I recently stepped away from being Outreach Coordinator after a year. I enjoyed the work tremendously, as I was able to meet with individuals and groups, businesses, and religious congregations. I informed them about TENT’s services, and we explored ways to establish formal and informal partnerships.

Are you or is anyone you know – maybe even including someone younger than, say, 50 years – interested in helping out? The jobs involve a few core activities, but then it is up to you to develop them as you like.

- 1. Publicity – Getting announcements and articles on local radio and into the *Taos News* calendar about TENT activities;
- 2. Outreach – Talking with representatives from other Taos organizations that have audiences and missions similar to TENT, with the goal of collaborating to improve the lives of elders;

- 3. Events – Organizing occasional events on topics that are open to the public. And now, we have decided to have another category:
 - 4. Social Activities – Organizing time for Members to play cards or games, watch movies, discuss books or other group activities. This could also be open to Volunteers.



So you see, our No. 3 became more complicated. Public Events, as conducted in the past, consist of gatherings on topics of interest to the elderly. Social Activities is a new

category, designed especially to provide opportunities for Members and Volunteers to get together. Clearly, we now need FOUR leaders for Publicity, Outreach, Events, and Social Activities. That isn’t exactly POE any longer but has morphed into POESA!

Please contact Kate Harris at 575 741-6230 if you would like to know more about these Volunteer leader functions. You will meet some lovely people, I guarantee it, and you won’t be wondering upon any midnight, be it dreary or happy, whether a raven will be tapping at your window!

– Paula Claycomb, TENT Volunteer

FROM THE BOARD



Your Board meets once a month to keep the ball rolling, to see if we are doing it right, to see if we could do it better. We are a working board in support of our one paid employee, Kate Harris, and our cadre of Leaders and Volunteers. Studying board best practices, we learn that we need one Volunteer, one Member, and perhaps someone under 50 to be added to the TENT Board. If you are interested, please contact me and we can discuss the expected duties and responsibilities.

TENT is here to help -- you could help. For example, you could be the person who helps our seeing-challenged members get connected with talking books (see the article about the National Library Service on page 5.) You could be the person who explains to a confused member about how not to answer the phone. (See the article "Is Your Phone Driving You Nuts?" on page 6.) You could be the person who checks to see if someone's important papers are all in place. (See article on page 4.)

Thanks for reading *inTENTions* and for all you do to help our community.

– Jim Schultz, Board President

UPDATE ON MEMBER SERVICES

Charlene and I are grateful for the opportunity to serve in the community. It gives us boundless joy to be able to apply what we know in a helping capacity. Since assuming the positions of TENT membership coordinators in September, we have been extremely busy. We have had 29 inquiries which resulted in 19 visits and 13 new memberships to date. Some requests have been for services that we do not provide; others failed to return multiple calls from us. We have also had requests from out-of-town children concerned about their elderly parents, and we await their visiting Taos to make home visits.

We recently met with the new business manager of Mountain Home Health Care, who is very progressive and energetic and definitely sees the value of partnering with TENT. We have subsequently gotten two referrals from the agency. We are going to do an in-service for their nurses and are planning to contact Holy Cross's discharge planners to make them aware of our presence in the community.

We were happy to receive a grant from the Taos Jewish Center that is enabling us to serve low-income members of the Jewish community

in Taos. The need in Taos for TENT is great, and it's wonderful that our organization helps people maintain their dignity.

– Gary and Charlene Shapiro

OCTOBER EVENT

On October 2, Dr. Steve Fox gave a presentation on Christopher Columbus and the "Doctrine of Discovery" that led European explorers and "conquistadores" to take over lands in the New World by considering the natives "occupants," never rightful owners. A number of states and many cities have recently changed "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous Peoples' Day," although so far, New Mexico has not done so.



YOUR HOME: DOES IT MEET YOUR NEEDS?

How do you assess that? How do you decide what to do?

Can you get in and out, and reach what you need – safely, with “manageable” stress (minimal curses)? Do you feel secure about the systems that give you good air, water, light, heat, and security?

Are there things that you worry may need maintenance, repair, replacement, or upgrade-- and how you might arrange it (or afford it)?

Most of us elders need help at times to assess how well our homes match our changing needs and abilities (physical, emotional, mental, and financial). Maybe we lost a life-partner or friend or a trusted neighbor or handyman, someone we used to count on for consultation and advice about housing stuff. Maybe our income goes lower while costs go higher.

The TENT “Home Mechanics” are discussing how they might help Members address such housing questions. They are the Volunteers providing some Home Maintenance services, and they meet monthly at the Farmhouse Café to talk about how things are going. They are considering offering some informal, but

systematic Home Assessment and Consultation services to Members, if Members let us know they want it.

While TENT Mechanics may have great experiences and skills in building, technical systems, construction, etc., they don’t/won’t



act as licensed professionals or paid employees. They can’t make formal referrals to specific providers. However, they might help Members survey and clarify the options, trade-offs, priorities, and resources about housing needs, including what TENT mechanics might be able to do.

What do you think about this? Send suggestions, concerns, and wishes to Jim Ludden at james.r.ludden@gmail.com.

Stay tuned! – Charles Doughty

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR UPDATE

You Volunteers have been very busy! From October 1 to November 14, you fulfilled 162 service requests! Bravo! Brava! This is quite admirable, and all of us are extremely grateful.

Please welcome our three new Volunteers: Willis (Bill) Blackmore, Lisa Sharp, and Sally Mayer. Remember that the Village to Village Network (<https://www.vtvnetwork.org/>) has wonderful videos about other villages and

helping elders age in place. TENT has, during its relatively short lifetime, done extremely well for such a small community.

As of this writing, plans are in the works for an article in the *Taos News* about TENT, including interviewing some of our Members. Plans have not been finalized, but I want to acknowledge and thank Sharon Bradshaw for her contributions to this project. There is an exciting potential collaboration with the Millicent Rogers Museum for a monthly social/educational activity/outing for Members

and Volunteers. And Volunteer Honore Maloney reports that the Taos Bridge Club (next to Hillcrest Bank at 1350 Paseo del Pueblo Sur) offers free bridge lessons on Mondays from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. to anyone interested in playing bridge, from beginners to intermediate players. Contact Honore (776-8087 or jmaloney@taosnet.com).

As the busy winter season (holidays! feasting!)

approaches, we will need more Volunteers signing up for service requests, especially since the membership coordinators, Gary and Charlene Shapiro, have signed up quite a few new Members (thank you!). TENT is hungry for volunteer support, and if you haven't picked up a request lately, please consider doing so. As always, I thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart.

– Kate Harris, Volunteer Coordinator

SERVICE REQUEST COLORS

When a Volunteer goes to the TENT website to respond to a Service Request, the status of each is indicated by a color. If you have wondered about the meaning of these colors, I have the answers to these burning questions.

White - An "Open" request (if it's in one of the services you signed up for, check it out!)

Also *White* - "Not fulfilled" (confused? no worries, it gets better): no Volunteer has picked up the request due to unavailability or because it was late. To me, this means "Open," but the following designations could also apply:

"Cancelled" -- for a number of reasons, e.g., Member no longer needs the service; Member no longer resides here; my mistake.

"Cancelled and fulfilled" -- What does this mean? We don't know, and I will not be using this designation.

"Deleted" -- Yep, usually my mistake of

duplicating the Call Manager's entries. Jim Ludden trained me to resist this temptation.

Red - A request entered by a Member, which needs to be changed to "Open" by an Administrator. Newsflash! No Members have, to date, entered their requests in this way. So forget this Red, but please pay attention to:

Also *Red* - "Open" but past the due date. These requests can still be picked up (please try), but make sure to confirm with the Member to determine if it is still necessary.

Blue - The request was entered within the last 24 hours.

Light Blue - Service Request was matched and completed (thank you, Volunteers, SO much!). BUT - Even if unfulfilled, the status will change from "matched" to "completed" once the request date has passed. What?! yes, confusion reigns, but no matter, since . . .

Green - Matched. My favorite color, thank you all!
– Kate Harris

FREE LEGAL RESOURCES FOR THE ELDERLY

I, along with Jim Ludden, attended the Legal Resources for the Elderly (LREP) fair put on by the New Mexico State Bar Foundation on October 30 at Bataan Hall. During a workshop

presented by Natalie Meyers from LREP, the most common issues were discussed: Powers of Attorney (POAs), Advanced Health Care Directives, and Probate. POAs -- A financial POA gives an agent of choice the power to handle finances upon your behalf and avoids guardianship or conservatorship. This agent

does not need to reside in-state. Even if married, a POA does not automatically confer responsibility upon a spouse or partner, but a particular person must be named and must be someone you trust! There are two different kinds of POAs: Immediate, where the power is given right now; or Springing, which does not go into effect until you lack capacity.

It is recommended that, since this is such an important document, you consult with an attorney before signing one. POAs must be notarized, can be revoked at any time, and are only good while you are alive (your agent cannot handle the estate afterward).

Advanced Health Care Directive -- These have three optional parts: (1) appointing an agent with a POA for health care decisions; (2) instructions for end-of-life care (formerly called a Living Will - these are still valid); and (3) naming a primary physician for capacity determination. (Capacity means your ability to understand, to make a decision and communicate it; these are often determined by health care professionals). There is no need for a witness or notary, and changes can be made at any time. Copies should be given to doctors and family. If you don't have one, the law will determine who decides for you.

Probate -- The legal process to transfer assets and pay debts after death. It is best to have an attorney draft a will to make sure that it is valid. If you have no will, the property goes to the closest relatives in equal shares. Probate can be avoided with "non-probate transfers" initiated before death, arranging title to property transference by other means than probate and not requiring a will.

For FREE legal help for New Mexico residents aged 55 and older (there is no income limit), please call 1-800-876-6657. The website is <https://www.nmbar.org//LREP>. -- Kate Harris

PLAN AHEAD

We are all getting older. Have you planned for when you can no longer make decisions for yourself? AARP provides a brief note about planning documents that you really do need:

- A Living Will informs loved ones and professionals about the medical treatment you want (or not) if you can't speak for yourself.
- A Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care designates who can make medical decisions for you.
- A Durable Power of Attorney for Finances allows someone to make financial decisions for you.
- A Will dictates what happens to your assets after you die. Some of this may be covered by investment beneficiaries or by a living trust.

Five Wishes is an easily understood form that you can fill and sign. It covers all but the Will to distribute your assets after you die. When you become a member of TENT, we ask where you keep your medical directive (the Living Will and Power of Attorney for Health Care). We are more comfortable when you have these documents. We need to know whom to contact if you no longer can make decisions for yourself.

-- Jim Ludden

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE (NLS)

If you enjoy reading but suffer from low vision, blindness, or a physical disability that prevents you from holding a book, there is a remarkable

program just for you, thanks to the Library of Congress! The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled will provide what you need to enjoy the latest mystery by your favorite author, or novels, memoirs, poetry, or

even the latest book on history, politics, or travel that a friend just told you about. And it all comes to your door free of charge.

This remarkable service started in the 19th century with small collections of books embossed in braille at the Boston Public Library, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the New York Public Library, among others. In 1931 the Pratt-Smoot Act became law wherein the Library of Congress designated regional libraries to help distribute books for the NLS program. (If you want to know more about this fascinating history, see the NLS web site: <https://www.loc.gov/nls/about/organization/history/>)

In New Mexico, contact the State Library to apply for enrollment in the NLS program.

New Mexico Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped; New Mexico State Library; 1209 Camino Carlos Rey; Santa Fe NM 87507-5166 (Librarian: John Mugford) Telephone: (505) 476-9770 Toll-free: (800) 456-5515 E-mail: sl.lbph@state.nm.us Web site: <http://www.nmstatelibrary.org/direct-and-rural-services/lbph>

IS YOUR PHONE DRIVING YOU NUTS?

Are you tired of answering your phone, only to find out there's no one there? Or it's a recorded message that you've heard before? And it sounds so urgent that you're afraid not to call the phone number they leave for you? Or it's a caller from a very important place (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, the IRS, your bank, your "computer support office") wanting to know your personal information or to tell you owe them money? DON'T DO IT! If these callers are so important, they'll leave a message or send you an email or an actual letter by snail mail.

Upon approval, playback equipment and accessories will be supplied to eligible persons on extended loan, and then the fun begins. Talking books and magazines are circulated by libraries via postage-free mail. Digital audio and ebraille materials are available through the NLS **Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD)** online service. BARD audio materials can be downloaded onto cartridges and USB flash devices. Whatever your comfort level with technology, there are books and magazines out there just for you, even if you have difficulty seeing the printed page or holding a heavy book! Happy reading, and please tell us what you think of the NLS program when you get signed up.
– David Farmer

LOCAL PARTICIPANTS:

The director of the Taos Public Library, Kate Alderete, once worked for the National Library Service program in Colorado, recording books so NLS patrons could listen to them on tape. Carol Farmer, a Taos resident and member of TENT, also recorded books for the NLS program in Dallas, Texas, before moving here.

We've been assured that our governmental agencies (Social Security, Medicare, IRS) will always communicate by sending a letter and will never ask for our personal information or money over the phone. If someone claims to be one of these agencies and asks those questions, it's a scam. Chances are, your bank follows the same procedure. Your "computer support office" – well, that's such a scam, it isn't worth even considering a conversation with them, and, as of this month, they don't send emails or letters.

Best actions to take:

- *Put your phone number on the National Do Not Call Registry for free and forever by calling 888-382-1222. This will stop most

legitimate businesses from calling you if you are not already their customer. Scammers don't care and won't check the list.

- *If you receive an unwanted call, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at www.donotcall.gov. Report the number that shows up on your caller ID and any number that you're told to call back.
- If your phone service provider allows it, block any number that you don't want to hear from again.
- When you get a call from a number you don't recognize (even if it's in your area code), don't answer it. If they need to talk to you, they'll leave a message. (This probably won't work if you use your phone for business, as you understandably want to answer hot prospects' calls.)
- If they do leave a message, listen to it, then decide whether to respond. If they want you to call back, they probably want your

money or your personal information, which would lead them to your money.

- If you accidentally answer one of these scammer calls, it may be a recorded message. Do not speak beyond "hello," do not press any buttons or answer any questions and hang up now. This is when your deceased mother will forgive you for being rude. Same goes if it's a real person who asks for personal information, time, money. "Personal information" is anything they don't know about you. If you're still on the phone and they want you to confirm your information, ask them what they already have. Be glad if they hang up on you.

Scammers will always be trying new tricks, but now you're armed to combat the usual ones!

*Thank you to AARP for providing this information. For more information on fraud: <https://search.aarp.org/gss/everywhere?q=fraud%20network>
-- Nancy Ewing

TECH NOTES: REQUESTING SERVICES

At least five times a day our Members ask for a service from our Volunteers. Most requests come to us in a phone call (575-224-6335) forwarded to a Call Manager, who enters the data (what, when, where, how long) into our computer. The Member can leave a message, and we'll always call back. Members with computers can either enter their request into our system (under the menu item: Members > New Service Request) or send us an email message. We may call back to clarify.

The next morning, around 10 a.m., the computer gathers all the "open" requests (those not matched to a Volunteer) and sends emails to Volunteers who have offered the specific service asking them to provide that service. A willing Volunteer clicks the red button in the email message and phones the Member to reassure them that someone will help and clarifies the schedule and location.

The day before a request is due, another message goes to the Member and Volunteer, reminding them of the request and asking for a confirming phone call. Over 10% are cancelled so this confirmation is important. Only 2% of the requests are not filled, mainly because of short advance notice or because we don't have enough Volunteers for the specialized services.

The combination of telephone forwarding and our computer system allows us to handle and fulfill requests smoothly and efficiently, so that our Volunteers can concentrate on fulfilling our mission to our Members, rather than on office work.
-- Jim Ludden

POETRY CORNER

At the suggestion of Sharon Bradshaw, *inTENTions* is opening a column for your poetry submittals that center on the aging process. Sharon's poem "Of An Age" won first place out of more than 1,200 entries in a contest sponsored by the *Orange County Register* in the

1990s. The other poem, "Get Up and Go," is sometimes attributed to Pete Seeger but it was

published anonymously in a newspaper in the 1950s.

Of An Age

I'm "of an age"
And I'm a cliché.
I'm a woman with cats
And young people say:
"They all live alone
And still use placemats,
Their clothes are loose-fitting
In the sun they wear hats.
They're usually pudgy
They wear comfy shoes
And right after breakfast
They're likely to snooze.
They read all the time
And do what they please.
They laugh way too loud,
And sometimes they wheeze!"
To the young it looks boring
And yes, somewhat sad
But I want them to know
Before they feel bad,
It was years in the planning,
I worked hard every day
To accomplish my dream
And become this cliché!
--- Sharon Bradshaw

Get Up and Go

How do I know my youth is all spent?
My get up and go has got up and went.
But in spite of it all I'm able to grin
And think of the places my get up has been.

Old age is golden so I've heard said
But sometimes I wonder as I crawl into bed
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup
My eyes on the table until I wake up.

As sleep dims my vision I say to myself
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?
But though nations are warring and business is vexed
I'll stick around to see what happens next.

When I was young my slippers were red,
I could kick up my heels right over my head.
When I was older my slippers were blue,
But still I could dance the whole night through.

Now I am older my slippers are black,
I huff to the store and I puff my way back.
But never you laugh; I don't mind at all,
I'd rather be huffing than not puff at all.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
Open the paper and read the obits.
If I'm not there I know I'm not dead
So I eat a good breakfast and go back to bed.
--Anonymous

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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