

# inTENTions



A community of elders and neighbors supporting one another.

## Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 22nd at 2:30 Rose Gordon will speak about end of life issues. She is the Hospice Volunteer Coordinator and Chaplain at Mountain Home Health Care. See page 4 for more information.

## Board of Directors

**President:** Jim Schultz

**Treasurer:** Jim Ludden

**Secretary:** Bette Myerson

### Members at Large:

Caryle Zorumski  
Marianne Furedi

**Editor:** Paul Richard

Send Submissions to:

[TENTnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:TENTnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Opening for business October 2018

### By Board President Jim Schultz

There is BIG NEWS we want to share with YOU—one of the almost 400 people who has in one way or another shown interest in Taos Elders and Neighbors Together (TENT).

Enthusiastic response from a wide spectrum of Taoseños who “want to make the Village work,” an offer 60 Volunteers have made to serve, and the progress our Board of Directors has made in building a solid organizational foundation has led us to set October 1, 2018 as our launch date!

As you can imagine, a smooth and successful start requires funding. We are in the process of applying for start-up grants and we are asking you to join us now to help get us going. To be financially sound and support an on-going operation, a sufficient

number of memberships are essential. Signing up with TENT now, at a membership level that’s right for you, will greatly help set TENT on solid ground—and your membership will be activated at launch. (We will be announcing the membership levels very soon.)

In addition—we need people power! Your power! There are some key jobs that need doing. We on the Board have been gratified and stimulated working together and have been enjoying the experience tremendously. We’d very much like to share the experience and fun with like-minded folks.

We urge you to spread the word—talk to people who might like to join and if any of our Board members can provide information or help in any way, please let us know.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

### Board Member Marianne Furedi

A nurse in Community Health, Chronic and Long-Term Care, and Psychiatry, I have seen the importance of social support as well as concrete practical assistance to the comfort and well-being of individuals and families. My appreciation of the particular needs of the elderly has deepened as I experience the processes of aging. Through family and work experience I know the significance of independence and the consequences of dislocation.

I was born in Germany to a family fleeing the former Soviet Union and arrived – a 5-year-old immigrant – in New York City in 1950. Lifetime New Yorkers, my husband Ron and I, transplanted ourselves to Taos County in 2005 and our dream is to continue living here “happily ever after.”

I hold a B. A. degree in Russian Language and Literature from the College of the City of New York, a B. S. from Downstate College of Nursing of New York, and an M. A. in Nursing from New York University.

I recently started working as the Community Coordinator for TENT and look forward to learning about all the different organizations in Taos County that provide services to our aging population.

## Make Amends: Before it's too late

By Gary Direnfeld, MSW, RSW

[www.yoursocialworker.com](http://www.yoursocialworker.com)

The reason Erik Erickson is written into every introductory to psychology textbook is because he was the first developmental psychologist to discuss life across the entire life span. He states that life has a number of challenges. They are described as tensions or push-pulls to be resolved. How one resolves the tension at one developmental stage determines how one enters the next stage.

Erickson discusses the final stage of development as “Integrity versus despair.” Accordingly, in our final stage of life, we take stock of all that has gone before. There will be things from our life about which we will feel good and about which we will feel bad.

When added up, if the good outweighs the bad, we are said to die with integrity, a feeling good about life and ourselves. If the bad outweighs the good, we are said to die in despair, believing our lives may have been wasted and without merit. The goal, according to Erickson, is to die with integrity.

Is it ever too late to make amends? The answer is yes. However, one still has up to the final hour.

Interestingly, children, even of the middle age variety, benefit when a parent makes amends. Life is such that when young, we are prone to make mistakes, behave in ways that are harmful, hurt our children. The scars and estrangements can last seemingly forever, but the truth be told, until death, can still remain repairable.

Scars and estrangements hurt not only the directly affected, but also those around the affected person. The scars and estrangements trickle into other relationships and like a cancer, spread to hurt others.

Scars and estrangements also run both ways. When children are hurt, often, the parents are also hurt. Even in their old age, they too may be suffering not only the scars and estrangements from relationships before them, but also by the hurt of unresolved matters with their offspring.

This is an interesting time in recent history. The army of baby boomers is aging and their parents are passing on. Legacies are being determined right now. Some parents will pass with integrity, surrounded by family and friends and others will die in despair, with nary a soul to comfort them.

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There is a profound opportunity that comes with age. We can prove ourselves not only older, but wiser too.

If you are hurt or estranged from a loved one, consider what is left of life's opportunities to make amends. While hurts may still abide, time has a way of placing behavior in context, an historical context.

We come to understand we are products of our place in history and of the family life we experienced. We come to recognize our own foibles as well as those of our parents. We come to appreciate we may have done better but for the tools we are equipped by life. We come to appreciate relationships that matter.



Ellen Wood spoke January 30th at Valverde Commons on Think and Grow Young. (Photo by Terry Thompson)

## Technology Tips

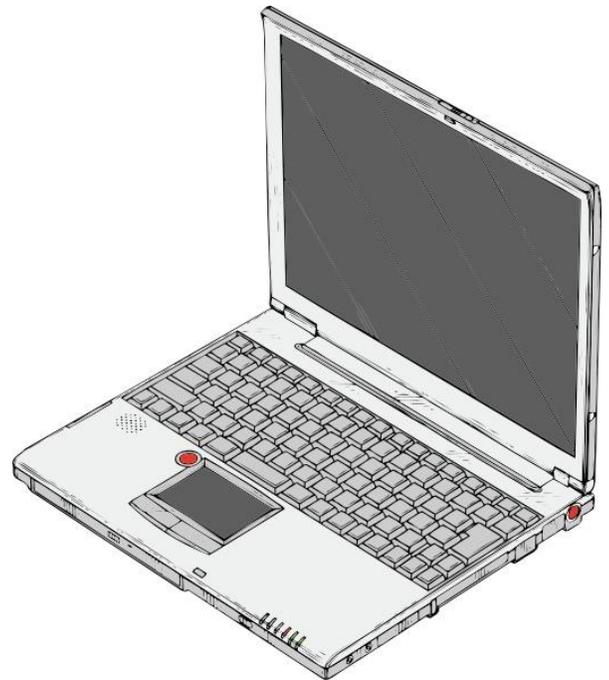
By Jim Ludden

Are you mystified by computer technology? I am too, at times. There is help available for both of us — at no cost other than some of your time.

I have a basic principle about computer use: if something seems too hard, there is probably an easier way. But how do you find this easier method? I can think of two ways to go about learning the foibles of computers and their smaller cousins: cell phones and tablets.

- If I have a 'simple' question, I ask my search engine. I type my question the same way I would ask my nephew. "How to I set a tab stop in Microsoft Word?" or "I lost a file. How can I find it?" (I use Google because the screen is simple and loads quickly.)
- If I want to learn more, I use one of several free tutorials on the Internet. One of these is [www.gcflearnfree.org/subjects/technology/](http://www.gcflearnfree.org/subjects/technology/). (You can click on the underlined text and your browser will open on this web page. This site has other tutorials, too. Just click on their logo in the upper left.)

If all else fails, phone your grandchild or me at Taos Elders at (575) 224-6335.



## “Don’t let your heart get small...”

By Rose Gordon,

[www.circleofcompassionatecare.com](http://www.circleofcompassionatecare.com)

This advice was given to me during a visit with a Bon Geshe in India this December.

They’re the words he recommended I say to a friend who had been unexpectedly diagnosed with cancer during a routine procedure.

I’ve been thinking about what it means to let our hearts get small and how it impacts the life we lead ever since then. I suspect it will be a lifelong question. It’s easy to pull into ourselves and shrink our interactions with the world when times are challenging; when we don’t get what we want, or we get what we don’t want!

But does it help? Or do we run the risk, like the Grinch who Stole Christmas, of living painfully with a heart that is ten times too

small? What wakes us up to the fact that our heart is shrinking? What keeps us open-hearted, thriving, and fully engaged with the world, in all its beauty and terror?

*Gordon came to Taos in 1969, left in 1972 and joyfully returned in 1978. She is a Restorative Justice facilitator and trainer and the Program Coordinator for the Taos County Juvenile Justice Board. She co-produced the award winning documentary, Bon-Mustang to Menri and is the author of “The Gatekeeper” based on the life of a Bon monk. She has facilitated retreats on Compassionate Care of the Dying, Creating Sanctuary and Dreamwork in Boston, Colorado, New Mexico, and Dubai. Gordon has a special degree in Hospice and Grief Counseling and is a member of the Spiritual Care Alliance.*

