

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.

OUR STORIES: AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATOR

Paula Claycomb's calm voice and easy smile give no clue to a life story that reads like the script of a thriller, though she assures us the reality is less dramatic. She was born in rural Utah to parents who worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and so began her lifelong commitment to intercultural communications.

After earning degrees in political science and public health policy, Paula went to work for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in New York City. From there, she transferred to Rwanda, where she produced daily reports for UNICEF's senior management during the country's globally witnessed genocide. On mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, she helped rescue abandoned and orphaned children, sometimes under the gaze of known murderers. From there Paula traveled to Mozambique, where she began the transition to a career-long focus on "social and behavior change communication" (SBCC), targeting group and individual behaviors. While stationed in Islamabad, Pakistan, she addressed the needs of children and families under threat of the Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan. She transferred to Brazil just before September 11, 2001. Later, she served in Khartoum, Sudan, during that country's genocide in the western region of Darfur.

Throughout most of these assignments, Paula was accompanied by her husband, Mark Jackson, an opera singer, stage director, and teacher who continued his own career, finding a following among the foreign embassies wherever Paula was stationed. The couple chose Taos as their retirement destination, drawn by its multicultural history, natural



Paula (right) helps Member Deborah with computer work

beauty, and proximity to family. Though officially retired from UNICEF, Paula continues to work as an independent communications consultant, while Mark serves as the music director at Taos Presbyterian Church, performs with the Taos Community Chorus, and was band director at Taos' middle and high schools for several years. They have a son, a

daughter-in-law and a 9-year-old granddaughter in California.

Paula continues to act on her belief that each of us is called to contribute to our community's wellbeing and that humans have more potential than we have shown. As a Volunteer providing clerical services to a vision-impaired Member, Paula has witnessed the realization of TENT's goal to support Members in maintaining comfortable, dignified, vibrant lives in their homes and community. Her work as a change agent doesn't stop with consulting and TENT, however. Viewing the

global climate crisis as the ultimate priority, she serves as Board Member and Treasurer of Renewable Taos, actively promoting its goal of a full transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency in Taos County. Asked what she would wish for the TENT organization in the next five years, Paula responds that she hopes membership will increase across all of Taos' communities. She also would like to see greater numbers and diversity of TENT Volunteers, especially from among younger Taoseños. --- Mya Coursey

FROM THE BOARD



I am hoping that all our Members and Volunteers enjoyed the incredible display of fall colors that we got this year. I am always reminded during Fall of the transient nature of life, and how deeply powerful change is, and can

be if we embrace it. As some of you may be aware, Jim Schultz has had to step down from the President position of TENT's Board of Directors to focus on his personal life. I have agreed to fill the Vice President position and, per our bylaws, act as President while the Board recruits for its vacant positions. Jim has been an incredibly dynamic leader who has forged the way, since its inception, for the TENT that operates today. We are indebted to him, his courage and foresight.

With this in mind, it is with great determination and joy that the Board continues its Mission and Vision. We feel a deep emptiness without Jim's leadership, but we know that change is often the fertilizer and catalyst of incredible new ways of being.

--- Jacob Crisp

Committee for Marketing Communications Formed

It has been some time since a plan for TENT strategic marketing communications was prepared. There are several actions that must be taken to bring this plan up to date. Among those has been the formation of a Marketing Communications Committee to review the plan and help suggest revisions. The new committee is being co-chaired by Marketing Leader Ron Furedi and TENT Board Member Caryle Zorumski. Other committee members are TENT Volunteers Julian Spaulding and Colleen Shaughnessy.

One of the first issues to be resolved is filling the position of Publicity Leader for TENT. This is a key role in the implementation of much of the communications plan. If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering for the position, please contact Ron Furedi at ronfuredi@gmail.com.

Also, the committee is interested in gathering Volunteer/Member "success stories." Any such testimonials to happy TENT outcomes should be forwarded to ronfuredi@gmail.com for potential inclusion in the inTENTions newsletter and other appropriate media.

--- Ron Furedi

Volunteer Coordinator Update

Hello to all! I hope you have been enjoying this beautiful fall weather and the glorious sunrises and sunsets—we are fortunate to live in such a beautiful place.

Our community continues to grow. I want to thank new Volunteers Justine, Andy, and Vito for their enthusiasm and willingness to be of service. Welcome!

For those Volunteers who have the new TENT car signs, please remove them when not on a TENT errand. I have a few signs left; call me if you would like one.

Our Member Activities Committee is up and running. (Don't let the name fool you, Volunteers are always welcome unless it is an activity with limited enrollment—then it's Members first...). See the article about our walking group in this edition ("Walk in the Park"). Good doggies are welcome too! Please check out the Events list on TENT's website periodically, as new ones will be posted as they become available. Members: don't forget to call the office if you need a ride.

TENT needs someone to be Publicity Leader. Anyone with an interest or experience in this field is welcome to contact Ron Furedi (ronfuredi@gmail.com). This position has been well researched, and we have excellent guidelines for it; you would not be starting from scratch. It will be most helpful in raising awareness about TENT in the larger community. This is an important position for us and I hope that several of you are interested!

As this very interesting and challenging year comes to a close, I wish all of you the very best in health and happiness, and that we find ever more ways to support one another! As always, my deepest gratitude to all the Volunteers who give so selflessly and generously of themselves and their time. You make this village possible.

--- Kate Harris

Wedding Under a Tent

Volunteers Lana Green (Call Manager) and Jim Ludden (Tech Support board member) married in July. Lana came to Taos from Michigan in 1996 to help raise grandchildren and Jim came from Seattle in 2015 to build a house, where they now reside.

Lana worked as the first executive director of Habitat for Humanity in Taos and cared for several elderly residents with dementia. Jim cared for his mother-in-law and his wife as they died from cancer.



Several relatives from Oregon and Michigan participated in the service and helped with the subsequent festivities, held under a tent in Lana's son's backyard. About 75 kith and kin celebrated with the new couple.

--- Submitted by Jim Ludden

LAUGHING UNDER THE TENT: Off the Table

On Thanksgiving one year, I was racing home from work because I had several guests coming



over for dinner. The only thing I still needed was a centerpiece for the table. I wanted a decorative

squash, so I rushed to my local store and hunted for them until I saw the store manager. Flustered and out of breath, I yelled, "Are you out of your gourds?" to which he replied, "Why, what did we do this time?!"

--- Sharon Bradshaw (Submitted by Jill Brooks of Bountiful, Utah, to www.rd.com/article)

LIFE MILESTONES: LOIS WEST

January 20, 1947 - November 13, 2021

I met Lois and her faithful companion cat, Miss Debby, as a TENT Volunteer helping Lois with questions that she had about her computer, smart TV and the internet. Her fierce, independent spirit amazed me since she was able to take care of herself in spite of ailments that limited her mobility and vision. Her quick mind immediately grasped my instructions on how to do various tasks on her computer and she never, ever complained. I regret that I did not meet her earlier and that I had such limited time with her while she was with us on this earth. I count myself lucky to have the good fortune to know Lois and to cuddle Miss Debby. They were a remarkable pair. I shall miss them both. --- Darrel Baumgardner



BOOKS ON THE NIGHTSTAND

Among the books on my shelf, *Die Wise: A Manifesto for Sanity and Soul*, stands out, many pages marked with strips of Post-it Notes. I was led to this book after reading *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande (recommended on the TENT website) and then *Knocking on Heaven's Door: The Path to a Better Way of Death* by Katy Butler.

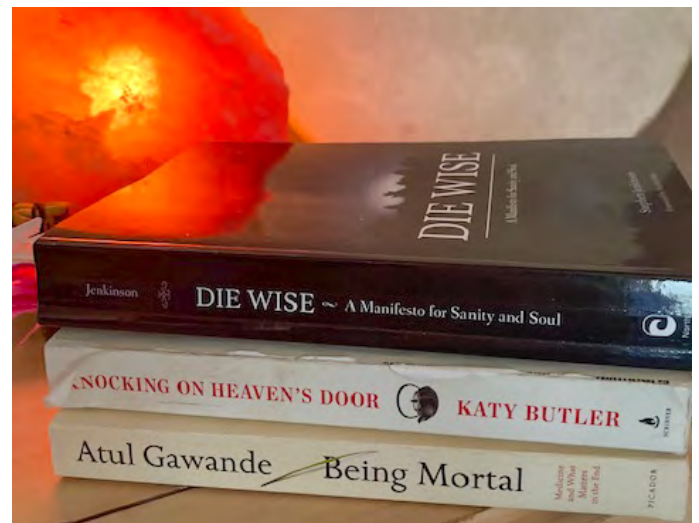
Die Wise was recommended by a bright young elder care worker. Subtitled *A Manifesto for Sanity and Soul*, it is not for everyone, but I found it remarkable. Written in a lyrical prose, it is a travel down a deep mysterious river that calls for alertness, wonder, and curiosity. Some call this book a tome.

Stephen Jenkinson, the author, has a rich personal history starting with a master's degree

in theology from Harvard and eventually working in palliative care and, as he calls it, "the death trade." He offers a compassionate, raw reframing of the attitudes and myths around medical intervention and points to the path of dying wise.

The book starts with a gorgeous introduction, "Overture: Night," with subchapters, STARS, RIVERS, TIME, LIFE WORK, and DEATH. Then, throughout the book, Jenkinson explores the twins of grief and the preciousness of life, woven with personal stories of working with dying people and their families.

From the back of the book:
"Dying well," Jenkinson writes, "is a right and



responsibility of everyone, it is not a lifestyle option. It is a moral, political, and spiritual obligation each person owes their ancestors and their heirs. *Die Wise* dreams such a dream and plots such an uprising. How we die, how we care for dying people and how we carry our dead: this work makes our capacity for a village-mindedness or breaks it."

As a companion to this read, I can also recommend the documentary film about facing death, *Griefwalker*, directed by Tim Wilson and featuring Stephen Jenkinson. — Jan Haller

Equine Spirit Sanctuary Offers Open Barns

The Equine Spirit Sanctuary (ESS), a horse rescue and rehabilitation nonprofit, will offer Open Barn events December 4, 11, and 18, from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. These Saturday events



are opportunities for the public to learn about the horse programs for adults and children from the dedicated ESS staff and volunteers. Visitors can tour the festively decorated classroom and barn, then meet some of the ESS horses in their equally festive barn. Pony rides will be offered for children, and visitors can also pet and groom the miniature donkeys.



The Equine Spirit Sanctuary is located at 13 Caballos Road, off Cuchilla Road, in Ranchos de Taos. COVID safety guidelines will be followed. ESS is an NM Safe certified venue.

In addition to horse rescue, rehabilitation, and training, the ESS has programs such as

therapeutic riding and equine-assisted learning and therapy services for children and adults. Programs are returning gradually, after being suspended due to COVID restrictions. Ruth Bourgeois (left in photo with her two donkeys) is the director of ESS, and the sister of TENT Member Joe Hughes.

If you can't attend one of the Saturday Open Barns, ESS welcomes visitors also on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. For groups, it is recommended to contact the ESS in advance: ruth@equinespiritsanctuary.org 575-758-1212.

--- Honore Maloney

WALK IN THE PARK

Strong winds, hail, rain, and snow made us run to the cars and abandon our first walk at Baca Park; the second walk was the opposite—50-degree sunny weather, perfect for a fall walk. The smell of hot cider and fresh donuts added to the merriment of the occasion. There were



A dozen or so TENT Members, Volunteers and Leaders showed up with a few frisky dogs for a nice walk in Baca Park on Friday Nov. 12.

15 people and four dogs happily getting outdoors and looking forward to the next walk. Weather permitting, we'll schedule the walks every Friday at Baca Park, meeting at 11:00 at the picnic tables. YES, even in the wintertime! Bundle up and to keep your body hydrated, bring water, coffee, or tea.

Come join us! We walk at our own speed, and some use a cane or walker. See you there.

--- Yvonne Hayes, the Activities Committee

Another Reason to Join an Activity Group!

Keeping active and engaged can keep dementia at bay by as much as five years! So reports a study published in the journal *Neurology*. This research followed almost 2,000 older adults in the U.S., mostly in their 70s and 80s, over an average period of seven years. The participants reported how often they engaged in stimulating cognitive activities such as visiting a library, reading print materials (magazines, newspapers, or books), writing letters, playing cards or board games, and completing puzzles. While approximately 24% of the individuals eventually were diagnosed with Alzheimer's, those whose activity level was the highest on average were 94 years old at that time. People with the lowest reported activity level were 89 years old at the time of their diagnosis. The findings were unrelated to level of education or early life cognitive activity. --- Yvonne Hayes Board Member/Activities Committee (575-770-9876)



Photo - Linda Thompson

Upcoming Activities Holiday Song Sing-along

This is in the planning for the third week in December; it will be an outdoor activity with refreshments and the warmth of friendship. Please check the TENT event calendar for date time and place—it will be posted soon.

<https://taoselders.helpfulvillage.com/events>

--- Yvonne Hayes, Activity Committee



Strength and Balance Sessions

Four weeks ago, TENT's Activities Committee organized what was to be an eight-week session of strength and balance with Bonnie Golden, our very competent and experienced leader. This successful eight-week session has turned into on-going weekly classes, every Wednesday at 10:30 am. We applaud Bonnie and our faithful participants for taking on the awesome task of easing the Covid blues. The class is open to both women and men for \$5 per class. Everyone must be vaccinated and masked.

We could tell from Day One that Bonnie was surely the woman for the job. Whipping us into shape after a long hiatus is no small feat, but everybody is so eager to get on with it. The group has quickly grown to 12 participants with just three spots left to reach our limit of 15. The Llano Quemado community has generously allowed us the use of their beautiful community center on Old State Road 382. For more info, interested TENT Members and Volunteers can contact me 575-613-5958.

--- Martha Guillory

RESOURCES

Some of our Members and Volunteers have asked for information about how to get rid of or minimize tinnitus. A hearing aid may help if you have a hearing loss. An audiologist can help you find solutions; see The American Tinnitus Association's [website](#).

At an earlier meeting this year, one of the most popular subjects that TENT people wanted more information about was recycling options in Taos now that the Town's center has closed. For recycling plastic, see the [website](#) of TILT (Taos Initiative for Life Together).

From NY Times newsletter,
11/17/21: If the current Democrat proposed

bill passes, the more than 25 million Medicare patients with hearing loss could get coverage for hearing aids. An overhaul of drug benefits would also reduce what patients pay for medicines, including a monthly \$35 cap for insulin and an annual drug spending limit of \$2,000. Around 2.5 million Medicare patients pay more than that now, and the ones who do [can face huge bills](#) for lifesaving treatments.



The legislation would for the first time allow Medicare to regulate the price of prescription drugs, which could drive down pharmacy costs for some patients. The details of that plan were [heavily negotiated](#) and remain the subject of intense lobbying. But the current version still represents [a significant change](#) in how Medicare pays for drugs.

Another part of the bill would [expand funding for home health care](#). That could help some of the 800,000 older and disabled Americans on waiting lists to get care in their community instead of in nursing homes.

Some of the services TENT offers are also offered by Taos County, although some limitations have been imposed during Covid. See: <http://www.taoscounty.org/154/Senior-Services>

--- Linda Thompson



Happy Holidays from Terry & Linda Thompson, *inTENTions* Publisher and Editor

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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