

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: SARA JEAN AND GENE GRAY

Dateline: CHICAGO, The Drake Hotel's Coq d'Or restaurant, January 1956. The man stood tall and straight as his date entered the elegant, dimly lit room. Their introduction had been arranged by a mutual friend, and he had only spoken with her briefly by telephone. Watching her walk toward him, mesmerized by her "flaming red hair," he knew she was "the one." The pretty 25-year-old woman had kept their blind date despite mutual friends' warnings that he would break her heart. She wore her prescription glasses in self-defense. When she saw him stand to greet her, though, she had to admit to herself that he was quite attractive. They married four months later, beginning a shared adventure that has lasted more than six decades and eventually brought them to Taos.

Sara Jean grew up in the Midwest, where she attended college and majored in art and anthropology. By the time she met her match that evening in Chicago, she was working as a freelance writer and editor for businesses and nonprofit organizations. The tall guy was Gene Gray, who had seen quite a lot of the world in his 30 years. At the start of World War II, he had enlisted in the Naval Air Force and was inducted before he could attend his high school graduation. Aviation training took him across the country to several bases, and his service expanded his horizons. He is still grateful to

the older young men in his training group who mentored him through the experience. After the war he attended college in Chicago and was working as a traveling sales representative when he met Sara Jean.



photo: Pattie Traynor

As their family grew to include two daughters and a son, Gene gave up traveling and began his long career in real estate as a property manager and developer. Sara Jean continued her free-lance writing as motherhood allowed, and after the children were grown, she

returned to college to complete her degree. The couple designed and built beautiful homes for themselves in the Chicago area, then in Hanover, Illinois, in a forest overlooking the Mississippi. Each house included a dark room.

On a trip to Mexico they had made friends with another tourist who introduced them to creative black and white photography. The medium allowed Gene a vehicle for artistic expression that he enjoyed for decades. His “amazing eye” (his wife’s phrase) for composition is evident in the beautiful images on the walls of their Taos condominium. Sara Jean, after her retirement from child-rearing, began to exercise her own artistic talents in printmaking, sculpture, assemblage. In Taos she became active in the local “book art” group. Her art is on display in their home and in collections from coast to coast.

Two other avocations have played a large part in their lives—birdwatching and travel. They have driven to every state in the continental U.S. and traveled to Hawaii, Canada, and several countries in Western Europe. They vacationed many times in primitive accommodations in British Honduras (now

Belize). In all of those places, they watched and listened for birds. They drove back and forth across Texas three times to visit birding sites and still chuckle at the memory! Outside their picture window today, backyard birdfeeders provide a reliable source of entertainment.

It was their love of driving back roads that eventually led them to Taos. When their children were young, they went to a summer camp in Steamboat Springs for several years, and the Grays would drive different routes from Illinois, coming and going. One detour took them through Taos. In 2001, as empty nesters with grown children and grandchildren in the Southwest, they responded to Taos Mountain’s call and found a wealth of friends and inspiration here. Their daughter Julie moved to Taos in 2005 and last February was recognized as one of eight “Women of Impact” by the *Taos News* for her work with youth and families.

When asked the secret to their long, creative, satisfying lives, they shared the unexpected answer “curiosity”—about the world, art, each other, and what the next day will bring.

-- Mya Coursey

FROM THE BOARD



Dear Friends of TENT, Our Board and Leaders will have a retreat on June 3 where we will get to know each other better and learn how all the Leaders function. We will also look to the

future by working to improve TENT’s weaknesses.

On June 16, 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., we will hold our annual meeting at Kit Carson Park,

where all Members, Volunteers, and Friends of TENT are welcome.

Because we have so few Volunteers for these services and/or because there are complications which we think prudent to avoid, at our May meeting the Board unanimously approved a motion to redact the following TENT services: in-home assistance, help with meals, pet care/dog walking, snow removal, and light housekeeping. Thanks for your support of TENT.

-- Jim Schultz, Co-President

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR UPDATE

Our Volunteer meeting on April 24 at the Town of Taos library was very informative and included a presentation by EMS Chief David Varela (summarized in this issue), to whom I give thanks for his expertise and time.

Members and Volunteers, please take note—we are no longer able to offer “light housekeeping” as one of our services due to the lack of Volunteers available for it. We are so sorry! Perhaps we will be able to offer it again in the future. Members are reminded that all Service Requests must go through the office (please do not set them up with the Volunteers). Also, if you have fallen, the Volunteers have been instructed to call 911 for assistance since they are prohibited from giving help in this situation.

The Activities Committee is hard at work trying to provide activities for both Members and Volunteers. Please check out the Events page on the website. Currently, no Members are signing up

for activities. If you don't see anything you'd like to do, what would you like to participate in? Your ideas are most welcome! We thank Member Paul Duboff for offering his sketching class.

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 16, at Kit Carson Park (in the back by the “tennis court”) from 10 A.M to noon. All Volunteers and Members are invited; there will be snacks.

Registration is required, please do this on the website:

https://taoselders.helpfulvillage.com/events/553-annual-meeting/event_participations Members please indicate if you will be needing a ride...

Volunteers, I thank you for your unwavering dedication to our Members. We could not do this without your commitment, humanity, and passion to help others. Please know that you are extremely valued!

Until the next time, I wish you health and happiness!

-- Kate Harris

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

TENT has created social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram. From February through April, we received 23 new Facebook friends and 140 Instagram followers. There have been 87 posts since February 2023 relating to TENT activities, Volunteer call outs, Membership informational posts, links to articles related to aging, and articles from *InTENTions*.

Since February 2023, our Facebook page reach is 2,942; our Instagram reach is 605: that is the number of accounts that saw our posts in the last 90 days on Facebook and Instagram feeds. There have been 785 engagements (comments, likes, and shares) pertaining to TENT on Facebook. Our top performing post was a Volunteer call out on March 4.

Facebook displays data in a number of ways that help us evaluate our performance. Just one example is shown below.

-- Miriam Jones

Top-performing organic posts

Here are posts that have performed well over the last 90 days. Understanding what's working can help you decide what to create and share next, so you can keep up the great work.

Highest reach on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Volunteers needed! Do you have : to good use? The people who voli

Mar 4, 2023, 6:50 AM

This post reached **2,281%** more Accounts Center accounts (857 Accounts Center accounts) than your median post (36 Accounts Center accounts) on Facebook.

Highest reactions on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Volunteers needed! Do you have : to good use? The people who voli

Mar 4, 2023, 6:50 AM

This post received **700%** more reactions (48 reactions) than your median post (6 reactions) on Facebook.

Highest comments on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Justine Nauman-Greif's "A Life as Art" exhibition at the Taos Art...

Mar 22, 2023, 6:23 AM

This post received 6 comments compared to your median post (0 comments) on Facebook.

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Come join us at one or more of the activities currently being offered at TENT. A new Handwork Circle with Jan Haller will begin on June 19 and continue each Monday through July 17. (See article below.) All activities take place at the TENT office, 515 Gusdorf Road, Suite 1. Some are open to all, while others are open only to TENT Members and Volunteers.

A Sketching Class with Paul Duboff and Mexican Train Dominoes meet on alternate Wednesdays.

At the Weaving Class with Yolanda Rommel, you will learn basic weaving techniques. It takes place each Thursday afternoon.

The Book Club will next meet on Friday, June 16. The current choice is *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. For the August meeting, *The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish will be discussed.

A walk in Fred Baca Park on Camino del Medio is scheduled for every other Friday.

For details on these activities, to register and request a ride, go to the TENT website

www.taoselders.org, sign in, click on Events, then Event List and scroll down.

We hope to see you soon.

-- Honore Maloney, 575-776-8087
jmaloney@taosnet.com

NEW! HANDWORK CIRCLE

Bring your UFOs and WIPs! (unfinished objects and works in progress)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members and Volunteers:

You are invited to gather and finish (or start) all of those almost forgotten handwork projects and ideas. It could be sewing, embroidery, mending (visible or invisible), knitting, crochet (if you already know how), cross stitch, or quilting. Maybe learn to knit if you dare! Let's gather the circle to share and learn and show and tell. Space is limited so sign up early!

June 19 and 26; July 3, 10, and 17 from 1:00 to 2:30 PM. To sign up (for each week) log in to the TENT website. Go to Events then to Event List. See you soon! -- Jan Haller, 575-613-0921
Magicbrushstudio@taosnet.com

LIFE MILESTONES: WESLEY ALLEN RUSNELL

With the loss of Wesley Allen (Wes) Rusnell on April 26 and his wife, Elizabeth* on November 21, 2022, TENT and Taos have lost the perfect Taos couple. Both were independent, creative, caring, intellectual, giving people. We miss them both.



Wesley was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on November 27, 1934,

and the family later moved to San Diego, Calif., where he attended college. He graduated from San Francisco State College in 1961 with a B.A. degree in English. He played basketball in college and began a lifelong career as an artist in San Francisco, showing his art in the basement of "beat poet" Lawrence Ferlinghetti's City Lights bookstore.

Moving to Taos in 1963, Wes met Elizabeth Willard in a dance program and decided "That is the one," as he told friends. They were married in Taos in 1967. In 1973 they moved, with their two children, to Roswell, where Wes was accepted into the Artist in Residence

program through the Roswell Museum of Art Center and later became the Curator of Collections. Beth worked as a bookkeeper, preschool teacher, and taught at NMMI for 17 years.

Wes retired in 2006 and they moved back to Taos in 2008 where they were both very active in the artistic and civic community, serving as docents and volunteers for the Taos museums. Wes was regarded as one of the Taos Moderns, working in oil and watercolor creating landscapes, figures, and abstract work. He served on the Collection Committee of the Harwood Museum for many years. Most recently his paintings were shown at 203 Fine Art. His work can be seen at <https://203fineart.com/wesley-rusnell/>.

He also enjoyed biking, swimming, walks, and wood carving. His intellectual curiosity was a true joy as he was an avid reader and intellectual and loved travel, history, poetry, philosophy, and music, but most of all Beth and his family. Wes was a marvelous storyteller

entertaining everyone with whom he came into contact. TENT Volunteer Mya Coursey recalls that while driving him to physical therapy one day, he told her that Larry McMurtry was his favorite author and *Cadillac Jack* his favorite book.

Beth was a Call Manager for TENT while caring for Wes until she died. Both were TENT Members. Two TENT Volunteers, Dr. Sidney Bender and Wally Cox, helped Wes after he fell, and made sure he was sent safely to the hospital. He passed five months later.

Together Beth and Wes served the Taos community well with their love for each other and their relationship emphasizing independent, purposeful creative intelligence combined with caring and compassion. A celebration of their lives will be held on Sunday, June 18, 2023, from 2:00 to 5:00 P.M. at the Sagebrush Inn.

-- Becky Calvert and Sharon Seay

*See *inTENTions* December 2022, page 4



EMS CHIEF DAVID VARELA'S PRESENTATION TO TENT VOLUNTEERS

On April 24, David Varela, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Chief for Taos County, spoke

to TENT Volunteers about the various signs of heart attack and stroke, and the best ways to respond to each, as well as to falls and other emergencies. Here is a summary of his advice:

Falls:

It's fine to put a pillow under the person's head to aid comfort while waiting for the EMTs.

Heart Attack:

Symptoms: Male - left arm numb, chest pain, nausea: Female – mid- to lower back pain, Both - unexplained shortness of breath—don't overlook this!

- Give four low-dose aspirins. These **MUST** be chewed. Tell the EMTs you did this.
- Don't let them go to the bathroom. When in shock, the body wants to defecate, sweat, and/or vomit. They might become unresponsive if they go to the bathroom.
- They will likely be cognitive and speak normally.

Stroke:

The person will not be cognitive; they will be able to understand but not to speak.

(Subsequent correction by Helen Rynaski and Dr. Sidney Bender: a person's ability to speak depends on the site of the stroke. There may be no impairment.)

Generally, signs to be aware of are: numbness or weakness on one side of the face and/or body; sudden onset of confusion or impairment of speech; difficulty in seeing from one or both eyes; loss of ability to walk or impairment of coordination; sudden onset of severe headache.

- Give no meds, aspirin, or liquids
- Signs: side of face drooping; when asked to put their arms up in front of them and close their eyes, one arm will droop; gait problems—the paralyzed side will tilt; ask the person to smile, pucker up, or stick the tongue out—one side will not work.
- Tilt their head to the side if they are lying down.
- A CT scan or MRI is required to determine whether the attack is ischemic (a blockage) or a bleed. If there is hypertension plus a

stroke, a bleed is a high possibility; if it's a stroke plus a fall, followed by a sudden bad headache, then vomiting, blurred vision, lethargy, and falling asleep: call 911.

- If it is a mini-stroke (TIA - transient ischemic attack), there is confusion, and help is needed, call 911.

Diabetes:

Ask the person what meds do they take? What is their normal blood sugar level? If the face starts dropping and they get moody, edgy, and/or are hermiting, give juice or sugar water. Orange juice is best. The drink should be swished around in the mouth, then swallowed.

- The person may be hyperglycemic; if so, they will exhale a lot and have a huge water intake (if frequent urination, they should get tested). They could appear drunk, shaky, and have cold sweats. Ask when was the last time you ate?

Asthma/Allergy

Breathing will be audible; this is not the case in heart attacks.

Helpful information for the EMTs:

- The person's medication list, allergy list, physician identity, and any end-of-life paperwork; it's a good idea for all of us to have these visible, e.g., on the fridge or the nightstand.
- Have a key available for the EMT; hide it then call nonemergency dispatch (575-758-3361) to tell them where it is; also, if you live behind a gate with keypad entry code, give it to dispatch.

If 911 is called, the EMTs have a legal and moral obligation to give care even if there is a do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order signed by a physician. Further decisions will be made by the hospital.

-- Kate Harris

TECH TIPS: SAVE ENERGY IN YOUR HOUSE

I just audited the energy use at our church and had a few surprises. The church is much bigger than a typical house or apartment, but the same principles apply to both when it comes to saving energy.

Light Bulbs: older incandescent or halogen light bulbs use much more electricity than do the newer LED bulbs. LED bulbs come in many colors (the most popular are soft white and daylight). You will save not only electricity, but your house will be cooler in summer, because you are not heating it with electric light bulbs.

For light bulbs that are hard to reach, you get an added benefit. You will need to replace these much less often—maybe never if you are as old as I am! LED bulbs will not break, and do not contain mercury, as do all fluorescent lamps. They are also not made of glass, so don't worry about breaking them or getting cut.

Air Leaks: mostly around doors and windows, these are the biggest sources of heat loss in winter. If you can see under or around outside doors, you definitely need help, and these gaps are usually easy to fix. Recessed ceiling lights often lose a lot of energy and are hardly noticeable — until you have to refill your propane tank or pay the gas bill. Holes through the wall at electric switches and outlets are easily plugged.

Refrigerators: If yours is more than 10 years old and you can afford it, buy a new one. The newer fridges are much more efficient. Top freezers are more efficient than bottom freezers, and you can put the refrigerator on a custom box to raise the shelves to eye level.

Mobile Homes: If you live in one, be sure the skirt around your trailer fits tightly. More insulation on the roof will help considerably, too.
-- Jim Ludden

TECH TIPS A-Z

InTENTions publishes helpful information from time to time about using your telephones, laptops, desktops, or tablets. We will maintain a list of all the topics in each newsletter so that all the reader has to do to read a previous posting is to click on the link. This will pull up a copy of the information that was posted, along with the name of the person posting. We need your help adding new topics and will continue to update this list.

Alexa

This technology can be both helpful and annoying. Find out more here.

Disappearing Windows *

Unsteady fingers can cause your laptop window to disappear. This helps avoid that.

Navigating Your Web Browser

An introductory guide on finding “stuff” on your computer and on the web.

Password Management

Recommendations for creating, remembering, and storing your passwords.

Service Requests and Evaluations

A quick overview of how to ask for services from TENT Volunteers and evaluate their response.

Technology To Reduce Isolation

Living alone has its downside but here are ways to feel less isolated.

Don't get hacked! *

Getting “Hacked” can be painful but there are ways to avoid it. Here is some advice.

Voice Mailbox Tips *

Frequent “housekeeping” of your telephone mailbox is simple, as explained here.

-- Darrel Baumgardner

* Updated May 21, 2023

RESOURCES

AARP Advocacy reports that if you call the Social Security Administration, you may be on the phone for up to 35 minutes before your call is answered; and the waiting period for disability claims might be as long as 15 months. The website with information is too long to post here, but you can email: reply-fe841371726d007a7d-1502_HTML-88117611-1306810-7049@email.aarp.org

AARP's "Fraud Watch Network" keeps us up to date on what scams to watch out for, but again the website is too long to post here. Go to the sitemap on www.aarp.org and click on Fraud Watch Network. You can also call their helpline at 1-877-908-3360, Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.

TENT posted on Facebook a very informative article on aging. The website is long but the link should work: <https://www.healthline.com/health/aging-in->

[place?fbclid=IwARIMVz0GQYhKK0k49EIBFb4KuQvGFFAHM74lik6d8w5NAHdjFKUocsGHU0Q](https://www.healthline.com/health/aging-in-place?fbclid=IwARIMVz0GQYhKK0k49EIBFb4KuQvGFFAHM74lik6d8w5NAHdjFKUocsGHU0Q)

Consumer Reports defines a "heart-healthy diet" as including nine foods: oatmeal, apples (include the skin), sardines, walnuts, "pulses" (a name for beans and lentils), blueberries, dark leafy greens such as kale, beets, and tofu (made from soybeans). Read more at <https://www.consumerreports.org/healthy-eating/heart-healthy-diet-foods-to-eat-a4623468766/> -- 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

\$300/year or \$20-25/mo.

Household

\$400/year or \$30-35/mo.

3 Month Trial

\$150 or \$50/mo.

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