

inTENTions

TENT

TAOS ELDERS & NEIGHBORS TOGETHER

February 2019 Issue # 8



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.

Next Public Event

Monday March 4, 2019, 3 - 4 PM (doors open at 2:30 PM)
Taos Bridge Club,
1350 Paseo del Pueblo Sur, Taos

Say Yes to New Adventures!

Marcia Winter, longtime travel consultant in Taos, will tell us to "Say Yes to New Adventures." We will listen to her advice regarding planning our next trip, avoiding possible problems, and realizing our dreams of discovering the world. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions. Join us for this fun afternoon.

Membership Levels

Individual Member - \$350/year or \$32/mo.

Full services

Household Members - \$450/year or \$40/mo.

Full services

Sustaining Member - \$150/year - No services,
(Tax deductible, per Household)

Visit Our Website to learn more:

www.TaosElders.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have lots of wonderful news at TENT so far this year. Since we opened on October 1, 2018, each month we have welcomed, on the average, six new service-level Members.

We have formed a powerful association with the Taos Community Foundation, and are building an endowment fund to ensure our future. See TCF Director Lisa O'Brien's article.

Paula Claycomb is our new Outreach Coordinator—see her article in this issue. In addition, Reggie Mosser has joined our leader team as Accountant.

In this issue, we launch a feature called "Deja View," where we discuss cultural subjects such as movies. To suggest topics or participate, contact Judith Hetem through the editor. Also, we are inaugurating "TENT City: Our Stories," because we realized that our readers might like to know each other better. The current story features our Publisher, Terry Thompson. Feel free to contact editor@TaosElders.org to recommend the fascinating story of a TENT camper.

Thank you all for your support in keeping the TENT up.



-- Jim Schultz

STAND STILL -- BE FIT

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released some disturbing data on falls for the year 2017. More than one in four seniors experienced falls. Among Americans, falls were the number one cause of injury and death from injury. The CDC recorded 29 million falls and 3 million emergency room visits, resulting in \$31 billion in Medicare costs. Most alarming was the fact that two thirds of those who fell, fell again within six months.

Fall prevention remains a major focus in the home care environment. I had some trepidation when I first transitioned from hospital work to home care. I had to learn to think on my feet when home safety and fall prevention were issues. There was no exercise equipment or additional personnel to rely on. What could I do for a patient who couldn't walk because of weakness and poor balance? I posed this question to my supervisor. She said the most effective thing that I could do was to wheel the patient to the kitchen sink, and help them stand.

At this stage of my career, I didn't know why this simple intervention would be beneficial. My supervisor was very experienced, so I had no reason to doubt her. Somehow, intuitively, I knew that she was right. I also knew that many martial artists supplemented their training by holding static postures/stances up to 30 minutes at a time. Anecdotally, they reported increased leg strength, balance, and improved body usage as a result.

I told my patients that the sink was their "ballet bar," a place for them to build a solid foundation. They would use the sink to stand, and keep holding on if their balance was poor. Standing time would be gradually lengthened, and trials of unsupported (grip-free) standing would be added to stimulate the body's own reflexive balance reactions. This progressive standing appeared to improve balance, leg strength, coordination, and even alertness. I believed that these changes resulted from improved nervous system function.



Photo – Charlene Shapiro

Years later, I came across studies that explained what I was witnessing. An article in the *Journal of Physiology* proved to be a game changer for me. A group of volunteers was recruited to undergo six weeks of bed rest to assess changes in leg size and muscle strength. As expected, the volunteers lost considerable muscle girth and strength. Surprisingly, the strength loss was far greater than could be accounted for by the loss of muscle size. The researchers hypothesized that the reason was decreased "neural drive." Just as an orchestra requires a skilled conductor to produce coherent music, muscles require uninterrupted nerve impulses from the brain to function properly. The prolonged period of bed rest (non-weight bearing) appeared to have impaired communication between brain and leg muscles.

Another study, published in *Science Daily* as "Leg Exercise Is Critical to Brain and Nervous System Health," removed any doubts that I may have had. After mice were restricted from using their hind legs for 28 days, researchers found that the area of the brain (sub-ventricular zone) that maintains nerve cell health and causes the growth of new nerve cells was severely compromised. The researchers concluded, "Our study supports the notion that people who are unable to do load-bearing exercises, such as patients who are bed-ridden, or even astronauts on extended travel, not only lose muscle mass, but their body chemistry is altered, and even their nervous system is adversely impacted. **Neurological health is not a one-way street with the brain telling the muscles to walk, run, etc.**" In other words, weight bearing sends nerve impulses back to the brain, ensuring its health. My supervisor was spot on.

I am an ardent Tai Chi practitioner. I wholeheartedly believe that this is the best activity to help one age gracefully. Part of aging gracefully is preventing falls. Tai Chi has proven to be a solid evidence-based activity to improve balance and prevent falls. As much as I encourage people to take up this practice, I've come to realize that Tai Chi is not meant for everyone. It takes patience and persistence to reap its benefits. Some find considerable difficulty memorizing the choreography. Others may desire a more vigorous form of exercise.

What are other ways to maintain good balance and prevent falls? The most logical way is to spend less time sitting and more time upright and moving with activities such as walking, hiking, and even dancing.

Above, I mention that many martial artists practice holding static postures. The Chinese call this Zhan Zhuang -- "Standing Like A Tree." Practitioners attempt to relax their weight into the ground: legs become the roots of a tree, arms the branches. Stance time is gradually increased while the practitioner continually monitors bodily tension and releases it. I've found that this practice has similar benefits to Tai Chi and may be easier for many to incorporate into their daily routine.

Master Fong Ha, a prominent Chinese martial artist describes Zhan Zhuang as "The fine art of doing nothing but achieving everything." You can find an excellent resource for Zhan Zhuang on YouTube: type "stand still, be fit" in the search box for a very informative, user-friendly tutorial by Master Lam Kam Chuen. It may change your life.

– Gary Shapiro

DEJA VIEW *Rififi* (1955)

Awards: Cannes Film Festival, Best Director; National Board of Review, Best Foreign Film In French with English subtitles, available on DVD.

Rififi is the classic film noir heist, considered the first in the genre, directed by Jules Dassin, an American filmmaker who turned to France after being blacklisted in Hollywood.

A parable of honor among thieves, *Rififi* (loosely translated French slang for “rough and tumble”) is tense, thrilling, intelligent, and brutal--although the worst violence is discretely off-camera--with enough plot twists to keep you guessing till the end. However, you do have to set aside your millennial sensibilities sometimes.

Four thieves plan the perfect jewel heist, but they are ultimately betrayed by their passions and by sheer bad luck and timing. Honor among thieves? Yes and no. The actual heist is a half-hour scene that takes place without dialogue or music. The crime is so meticulously planned and executed that the French police considered banning the film. The superb cinematography makes the wet streets of 1950's Paris a character in their own right.

The DVD includes an interview with Dassin in 2000, a bonus in which he discusses the making of *Rififi* and the absurdity of the Hollywood blacklist and its impact on him and others.

Modern critics still rate *Rififi* one of the greatest works of French film noir. It has been rereleased several times, most recently by Clarion on DVD, available on Amazon. Ignore the reviews that mention illegible subtitles: Clarion has fixed them and everything is crisp.

Cast: Jean Servais, Carl Möhner, Robert Manual, Janine Darcey, Pierre Grasset, Perlo Vita (the character Cesar is played by Jules Dassin).

– Judith Hetem

OUTREACH TO STRENGTHEN TENT MOVES INTO HIGHER GEAR

You notice that the headline to this article says our outreach is moving into a HIGHER gear. We are not yet in a high-gear mode, but with your help, we can reach a nice cruising speed in the first half of 2019.

What is outreach, anyway? For us, outreach is developing relationships with organizations in and around Taos with a view to help elders remain in their own homes or place of choosing. You might think that would be an easy task, but in 2010, the federal census indicated that, of the 25,000 residents living within five miles of the center of Taos, over 4,000 were 65 years or older. I'm sure that number is now higher, as throughout the U.S., the elder population is growing rapidly.

We believe that the more local resources available to provide support for this population group, the better. We want to collaborate with other local organizations to expand opportunity, choice, support, and care for older people in our community. We also want to provide even short breaks for the hundreds of caregivers who may welcome the opportunity to have a couple hours to go see a movie or stay at home with a good book.



Judith Lockwood, 4th from left, introduces TENT to the Taos Medical Group. Photo – Terry Thompson

In November, I agreed to be TENT's Outreach Coordinator, building on much excellent work that had already been done. So far, our results have been modest but steady. We have spoken with and left brochures with several government and private health care service providers. We want to do more of that with our community's diverse groups, including the dozens of churches in and around town.

Thanks to donations, TENT can offer memberships at reduced fees to some individuals and households so they can benefit from TENT's services and contribute their own skills and experience, such as teaching *colcha* embroidery or making bread in an *horno*.

Please contact me at outreach@taoselders.org if you would like to visit one or two groups or have ideas on whom we might contact. And if you have already spoken with an individual or a group, let me know so I can add it to my list. Rhonda Wyche and Judith Lockwood have been excellent in reaching out to potential TENT partners and supporters.

Thank you for your support to this membership-based, grassroots initiative we call TENT.

– Paula Claycomb

TENT Wish List

We are looking for volunteers to lead the following areas:

Newsletter Content Coordinator, Fund Solicitor, Webmaster, and Social Media Maven.

If you will help, write to us at: TaosElders@gmail.com

RESOURCES

A reader suggests the following might be helpful information for individuals with disabilities and their families. Not many of us have heard of ABLÉ accounts, tax-advantaged savings accounts that do not affect eligibility for government assistance programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid. Check out www.ablenrc.org

TENT Opens Endowment Fund at Taos Community Foundation

In late December, I had the pleasure of meeting with the TENT Board of Directors to share some of the work that Taos Community Foundation (TCF) is expanding on. Community foundations as nonprofit organizations play a unique role in that we provide services to individuals to meet their charitable interests, both during their lifetimes and beyond, while also supporting our nonprofit organizations as they strive to meet the ever changing needs of their communities.

In the past year, we've pushed out our programmatic work with a focus on partnering with nonprofit organizations to set financial goals for long-term sustainability. We see endowment funds as an effective strategy for the future, and are thrilled that the leadership of TENT saw the benefits of partnering with us. The TENT Endowment Fund is in place to accept charitable gifts from any individual donor. Working with TCF allows receipt of both cash and more complex gifts such as stocks, securities, IRAs, art, and real property, all with the purpose of supporting TENT well into the future. In the philanthropy world, there is loud buzz pertaining to the "transfer of wealth" expected in the next 10-15 years. With an aging U.S. population, an estimated \$9 trillion will move as part of inheritance! Although most of this transfer will be to children and grandchildren, charitable giving can also be part of the pie. TCF sees this as an opportunity for nonprofit organizations to become confident with donors about their legacy and estate plans, and we are working side-by-side with our Agency Endowment Fund partners to make it easy. TCF is eager to discuss all questions about legacy gifts and/or other giving options to help grow TENT's Endowment Fund. Give us a call or drop on by--I look forward to meeting you!

-- Lisa M. O'Brien, Director, TCF www.taoscf.org www.taoscf.org/tent/



Lisa shows Jim Ludden the TENT plaque that's going up on the wall.

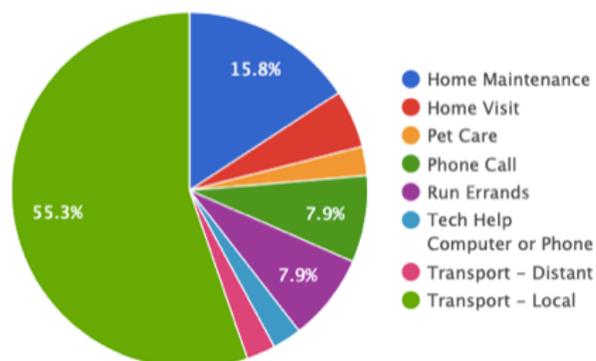
Photo – Terry Thompson

OH VOLUNTEERS!

We have much to be proud of! We're growing, learning, delivering! And by the faces I see and the voices I hear, we are well pleased.

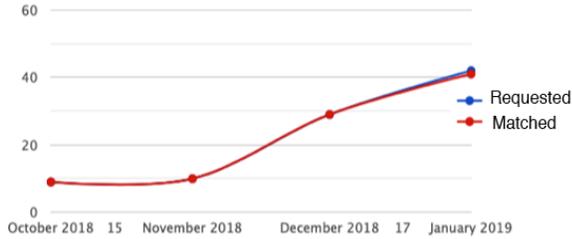
There are currently 52 of us Volunteers comprising TENT; 33 of us are fully vetted and providing services; 11 are going through the orientation and vetting process; several focus on creating our newsletter, *inTENTions*, and three fulfill essential non-Member functions. And it is due to the work each of us does, the time and the effort each Volunteer offers, that TENT has been able to accomplish what the graphics below attest to! Services provided just in January 2019:

SERVICES COMPLETED BREAKDOWN



What is truly amazing and gratifying is how quickly you, our Volunteers, have responded to Members' service requests, and how, with very few exceptions, you have fulfilled the requests. When a TENT Member puts in a request, I usually say that we will try our best, but we can't guarantee that we'll be able to meet the need. However — we have indeed far exceeded my cautious expectations.

NUMBER OF SERVICES COMPLETED



feedback. With warmest regards and great thanks,

Looking ahead: we will be assessing what other activities the TENT community might be interested in.

Shall we pursue any social, cultural, artistic, recreational activities? As we have acknowledged again and again, all of us have something to give. There is a wealth of talent and abilities among us. How best can we access and support these gifts? We will be calling to check in with everyone “under” our TENT as to what might appeal. Many virtual villages offer social gatherings — lunches, teas, crafts. Would the TENT community like to expand our activities in that direction? We look forward to your

-- Marianne Furedi, Volunteer Coordinator

TECHNOLOGY REPORT

We have moved from ClubExpress to Helpful Village (HV) as our operating platform, which is now TaosElders.HelpfulVillage.com. (For now we keep our separate marketing platform. If you wish to help with either the graphic or marketing aspects of improving our web site(s), please contact webmaster@TaosElders.org)

A group of the technically willing Volunteers met on 4 January to gain an introduction to HV. We concentrated on the Service Request process, as that will affect the Members and Volunteers the most. I prepared a slide show to show both the process overview and screen shots of the website and various email communications.

We still have online application forms for Volunteers and Members, as well as the ability to accept donations.

The next pair of Volunteer meetings will introduce HV to a broader audience. If you have questions, phone 575/224-6335 or send a message to the Webmaster as above.

Reggie Mosser will take over the bookkeeping functions, using QuickBooks Online.

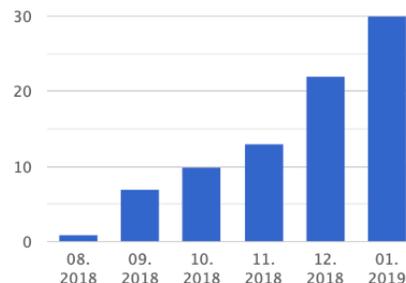
Helpful Village does provide some useful management tools, such as graphs of activity.

And it is possible to export all the data from HV into a database, where I can create any kind of report that we need.

HV is not perfect. I have submitted suggestions to the programmer to make the user experience smoother or easier to learn. I have not had a chance to analyze these to see overlap with requests from other villages.

-- Jim Ludden

ACTIVE MEMBERS EACH MONTH



TENT City: Our Stories

FROM THE DEEP TO THE MESA

I wasn't at the wrap party in the Bahamas when Terry Thompson picked up Priscilla Presley and threw her into the swimming pool. A few weeks earlier, I had been on the boat in Nassau watching Ms. Presley and co-star Michael Landon dive into the clear water while film crewmembers herded a tiger shark their way. The 1983 film, *Love Is Forever*, presented a real-life story about an American journalist in Laos who must cross swift, debris-filled waters to rescue his love from the Communist Pathet Lao. When I asked Terry how he had the nerve to pick up Elvis's widow like that, he replied, "It looked like nobody else was going to do it."

I wasn't in Hawaii when Terry had to generate hordes of bubbles from his scuba tank underneath federal investigator Debra Winger as she wrestled with "bad girl" Theresa Russell, who was trying to drown her in a 1987 movie called *Black Widow*. I had accompanied the crew on an earlier mission to find humpback whales and film them underwater in 360 degree Circlevision for Disney. When Terry told me about the bubble episode (bubbles added more drama to the underwater fight), he said, "When we planned scenes after that, if Debra was going to be underwater, she'd say, 'And please put Terry down below me—I want to feel those bubbles again!'"

I did arrive in Gaffney, South Carolina, hoping to watch some of the filming of James Cameron's 1989 movie, *The Abyss*, which, supposedly taking place 2,000 feet underwater in a search for a lost nuclear submarine, actually was filmed in a never-used nuclear power plant's cooling tank. I arrived just as Mr. Cameron had decided to film at night because too much daylight was making the underwater scenes look less authentic. For a week or so, underwater unit production supervisor Terry worked while I was sleeping and slept while I explored Gaffney with our dog.

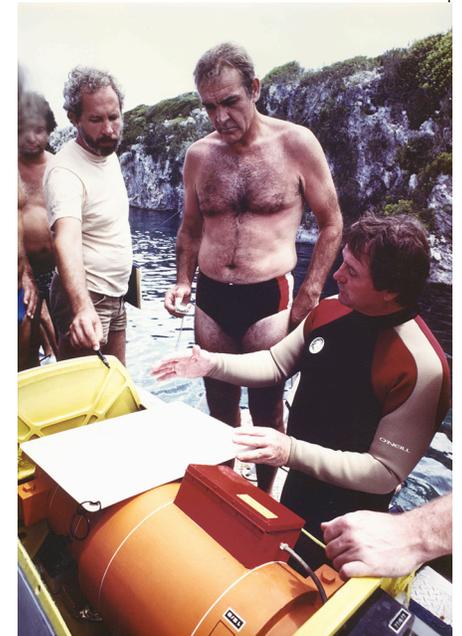
At some point during his 14-year career with Ocean Images, owned by underwater cinematographer Al Giddings, Terry began taking still photos, called "production stills." And when Al retired, Terry struck out on his own to pursue still photography as a new career. He also noticed that online learning was beginning to develop, and applying his film producer skills, Terry helped make several CD-ROM programs, including "Get Ready for School, Charley Brown," on which he worked with famed cartoonist Charles Schultz.

Having always shot 35-mm film as a hobby, now he wanted something more challenging. He became adept at using the panoramic format, which produces a 3:1 aspect ratio wide-frame image. Panoramic Images, a Chicago stock photo agency, accepted his work, and he has shot stock for PI for 20 years. His work also sells through art agents in various states, and it is hung in conference rooms, hospital lobbies, and visitor centers throughout the Southwest.

Pursuing photography, we had been travelling to the Four Corners area, Utah, and New Mexico so often that in 2001 we moved to Taos, one of our favorite places to visit. Terry continues to find subjects in this region, but he remains nostalgic for the ocean depths. Recently we were watching videotapes of a five-part 1985 TV series, *OceanQuest*, on which he served as a producer. In the background of one scene, Terry is shaking hands with Fidel Castro; the team had travelled to Cuba to dive on shipwrecks in Havana Harbor. In a documentary called *Titanic, Treasure of the Deep*, the voice of narrator Walter Cronkite reminds us of Terry's role in bringing such projects to successful realization. *Ocean Symphony*, a 1986 video for MCA, won him a Joey Award for Best Consumer Video.

Lately, he has taken up video and can make even snow falling on sagebrush a worthwhile subject to post on YouTube. Taos is the opposite of coral reefs and rolling waves, but it's home—and to a photographer's eye, everything in nature has promise. He is one of 12 photographers featured in *24 Hours: A Day in the Life of Taos*, a *Taos News* special supplement coming out February 28. Much of Terry's work can be seen at <https://www.terrythompsonphoto.com>.

Terry worked on two James Bond films, *For Your Eyes Only* starring Roger Moore and *Never Say Never Again* with Sean Connery. Other projects included a Circlevision tour of the oceanic world for Disneyland; *The River Wild* (filmed in Oregon in 1994) with Meryl Streep, David Strathairn, and Kevin Bacon; *Never Cry Wolf* (1983) with Charles Martin Smith; and TV documentaries narrated by Leonard Nimoy and Gregory Peck. One morning I was making breakfast when the phone rang. "May I speak with Mr. Thompson?" said the voice. "It's Mr. Peck from Los Angeles." "Uh, he's in the shower, just a moment," I mumbled, and ran to get Terry. "How was your shower, Mr. Thompson?" said Gregory Peck when Terry answered the phone.



Terry, left, on the Bahamas set of *Never Say Never Again* with Sean Connery, center, and filmmaker Al Giddings, right.

– Linda Thompson

Corrections

Both are for the Dec. 2018 issue of *InTENTions* (changes are underlined)

"Public Transportation in the Taos Area"

Author Judith Bronner asked that we publish the following update on this article.

Paragraph 4: "In addition, a new service (call 866-206-0754, one day ahead of time) picks up people at their door for \$1.00 and carries them within town limits to their destination."

"HEALTH INSURANCE"

Below are revised sentences from author Nancy Ewing. The following revisions apply to Paragraphs 9-10 on Pages 6-7 of the newsletter:

You probably already know this, but it's so important: Basic Medicare includes Parts A and B. Part A is the basic hospital coverage that everybody gets at age 65 at no cost. If you opt to get Part B (basic doctor visit coverage), the monthly premium is automatically deducted from your monthly Social Security payment. (If you're not collecting Social Security yet, you'll have to pay the premium yourself.) For more detail on how to make sure you get and pay for Basic Medicare, use <https://www.medicare.gov/>.



In addition, you may purchase a Medicare Supplement—or Med Supp or Medigap—policy. If you have a Med Supp (highly recommended!), you select and pay for it individually . . . You can use <https://www.medicare.gov/> or your health insurance agent of choice to compare plans, companies, and premiums and to choose the right Med Supp plan and company/policy for you.

And these revisions apply to the second to last paragraph on Page 7: Instead of Medicare Parts A, B, D and a Medicare Supplement, you may choose to get Medicare Part C—a Medicare Advantage Plan. Part C combines Parts A, B, D and the Medicare Supplement, and it requires that you receive treatment from the doctors and hospitals in a specific Health Maintenance Organization (HMO). Often the premiums are more reasonable than the Medicare Parts A/B/D/Med Supp combo, and if you like the doctors/hospitals in the HMO, have at it!

TENT

(Taos Elders and Neighbors Together)

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