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Chats with the Chair



Madeleine Appel

Those of you who read this column regularly know that my husband and I have five wonderful grandchildren.

Four of the five have now reached teenage. And they bring back memories of my own teen years...all the angst, the hope, the discovery of self.

There was the angst of belonging-or not belonging. Spin the bottle was "the" activity at seventh grade parties but my parents thought I was too young. So my mother and the mothers of my two best friends (and a few others) organized canasta parties and ballroom dancing lessons. Fun but not very "in!" The social separation lasted through high school, though there was some blending at the edges.

Then there was the embarrassment of being kicked out of middle school choir! I loved to

sing but it turned out I am basically tone deaf. I couldn't carry a tune. But after the tears came triumph: the only replacement class with an opening was the drama class. I was selected for the lead in the winter play and for a fleeting few days fame and stardom were mine. My two teenage granddaughters have also found happiness on the stage. Life repeats itself.

It was in middle school that I also began to write-a modest column in which I picked a topic and queried classmates. Later, in high school, a teacher and mentor pushed me into writing an essay on the merchant marine to enter in a contest. The essay won me a savings bond and a trip aboard an Alcoa aluminum tanker/passenger ship to Venezuela. Both my teenage granddaughters are beautiful writers whose prose often brings tears to my eyes. And the oldest grandson led a team of schoolmates who this past school year produced a magnificent electronic magazine on anxiety disorders, OCD and other mental health issues. Life repeats itself.

I was rejected by a girls' group sponsored by the YMCA-more tears. But I was asked by the YWCA to represent Y-teens as a speaker before the YWCA national conference in New York City. An incredible experience. Some of my friends and I also did a radio show for the YWCA. We went after Senator Joe McCarthy and his witch hunts that ruined so many lives. One teenage granddaughter campaigned passionately for Hillary Clinton this past year, marched in the Austin women's march and picketed at the Austin airport against the Trump immigration ban. The other teenage granddaughter has done fun runs for various causes and this summer is an intern at the Dallas Jewish Family Service. Life repeats itself.

I was (and am) a true klutz when it comes to sports. Always last to be chosen for a team. Broke my nose when a baseball hit me as I pulled my hands away instead of catching the ball! But one of my teenage grandsons is a baseball hero. He plays on two teams; he hits homeruns out of the field and onto the rooftops of neighboring buildings. Life has NOT repeated itself! But he has found a piece of himself in sports!

Of course there are all the physical aspects of adolescence: sleeping Saturday mornings away, the deep voice emanating from the backseat of the car where once a little one chirped; the grandsons who now tower over their grandparents and the granddaughters who also have inches on us. I don't remember that piece of my teen years-but I remember this from my sons' adolescence.

How the years have flown! I have no desire to be a teenager again. I hurt when my adolescent grandchildren hurt, and I rejoice in their achievements (which are many) and their joys. I look forward to watching the fifth grandchild reach the teen watermark in a few years. And I am oh-so-glad to be the grandparent and not the parent as they all traverse these oh-so-turbulent years!

A Purposeful Life

Several years ago The New York Times ran an article by Paula Span headlined "Living on Purpose." Its thesis is that those of us who have a purpose in life live longer and live healthier.

Those of us involved in Neighbors4Neighbors Network-both members and volunteers-have a purpose which may mean that in addition to lending a helping hand to each other, N4NN may add years to our lives!

Here is the gist of Ms. Span's article:

Purpose has long been associated with satisfaction, happiness, better physical functioning and even better sleep (although when I wake at 3 a.m. worrying about an N4NN member I cannot attest to that effect!). According to Patricia Boyle, a neuropsychologist at the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center in Chicago, "[Purpose] is a very robust predictor of health and wellness in old age."

In a study by Dr. Boyle's team of about 1,000 people (average age 80) for up to 7 years, it was found that the ones with high purpose scores were 2.4 times more likely to remain free of Alzheimer's than those with low scores; they were also less likely to develop mild cognitive impairment, too. "It also slowed the rate of cognitive decline by about 30 percent..." Dr. Boyle added.

Even among a subset of 246 people who died and whose autopsies showed Alzheimer markers, they had been able to tolerate those markers and maintain their cognition.

The study showed that people who had a purpose were less likely to develop disabilities and were less likely to die. In another study, Rush researchers found that those with high purpose had about half the mortality rate of those with low purpose.

Patrick Hill, a psychologist at Carleton University in Ottawa, told Ms. Span that



"purpose reflects a commitment to broader life goals that helps organize your day to day activities." In a study by Dr. Hill of 7,100 persons aged 20 to 75, those who died in all age groups scored significantly lower on purpose-in-life scales. Work status-working or retired-did not matter. Purpose or lack thereof did. The Rush and Carleton teams controlled for other factors, too, like depression, social relationships, chronic medical conditions, disability, demographic differences. The teams "report that purpose in life, all by itself, appears to have a potent ability to improve and extend lives."

N4NN is happy to be a vehicle to lend purpose to your lives! We are always looking for volunteers and for members. Just give us a call at 832-998-6466 (N4NN) or email us at info@N4NN.org and a staff member, member or volunteer will get back with you!

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Eat Your Veggies



I don't know about you, but more and more frequently I find myself searching for names and words. Eventually they come to me, but my memory is definitely not what it was 20 years ago (when it wasn't all that great either!).

So I thought we might all benefit from an online article on eat right, produced by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

It begins by noting that forgetfulness can have lots of causes, including a lack of sleep and genetics, level of physical activity and lifestyle and environmental factors. But the food we eat can play a major role, too.

The article touts The Mediterranean Diet, but also lists separately:

- Vegetables, especially cruciferous ones, including broccoli, cabbage and dark leafy greens like kale and collard greens.
- Berries and cherries--especially dark ones like blackberries, blueberries and cherries--are rich sources of anthocyanins and other flavonoids that may enhance memory.
- Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for good brain health, according to the article. It quotes Andrea Giancoli, RD: "DHA is the most abundant

fatty acid in the brain. It makes sense that if you have higher levels of DHA in the blood, then the brain will operate more efficiently." (DHA is an omega-3 fatty acid) Seafood, algae and fatty fish (salmon, Bluefin tuna, sardines and herring) are excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

- Walnuts may also help improve brain function (and they are good for heart health).

The next time you reach for a snack, think memory and snack on sardines instead of snickerdoodles!

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Fraud: Ringing the Alarm

The AARP Fraud Watch Network is ringing the alarm about fraudulent door-to-door home security sales agents. While noting that "many home security companies conduct legitimate business using door-to-door sales agents, be wary of anyone using high pressure tactics or creating a false sense of urgency-common traits of a scam!"

If it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck it may NOT be a duck; it may be a scam:

- If an agent knocks on the door offering a great promotion on a home alarm system but only if you act NOW, it may be a scam
- If you have a home alarm sign in your yard or on your window and someone knocks on the door saying he (or she) is a technician from that company and he's there to install system upgrades, it may be a scam

AARP warns that home security scams are hard to spot because the scammers work at making their sales pitch look legitimate.

The scammer may tell you that you will get a big insurance discount by purchasing an alarm system. AARP says that isn't necessarily so.

A legitimate alarm company would never send a technician to upgrade



equipment without first making an appointment.

Don't accept offers at the door. Get a recommendation from friends and neighbors and then reach out to that company(ies) yourself.

Research any company you are considering.

If you DO accept a door-to-door offer, read the fine print in the contract before you sign. The written contract should include everything you agreed to orally.

Please note: If you do sign up for a home alarm system or an upgrade and then regret it, you have a three day "cooling off" period during which you can cancel your purchase. This is a Federal Trade Commission rule (whether you sign the contract at home or at the company's place of business).

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Meet N4NN Volunteer Tammy Wolfe



Two years ago, Tammy Wolfe responded to an article in the Jewish Family Services' newsletter asking for volunteers for a new community service program-N4NN. It seemed the perfect fit-combining her interest in seniors with her faith's community services. In our society, Tammy says, "seniors are forgotten, and that's not nice. I always seek out the oldest one in a group," she continues, to make sure they are included.

At N4NN Tammy was assigned to two members, Sara and Donna, who both live in Meyerland. She visits with them weekly by phone to make sure they are okay. She also calls them after storms to check on them and has visited one of them several times. If she finds a problem she can't cope with, she will call the office to get help. One of them is quite active, involved in many activities, while the other is transitioning to assisted living. When that neighbor leaves her home, Tammy will remain in touch.

Born and raised in Tucson, AZ, Tammy has a degree in Food and Nutrition with a minor in hotel management. She came to Houston when her employer, Foley's, offered her a job managing the tea room, first at Greenspoint Mall,

and later at other area malls.

She met her husband, Gary, through the Jewish Community Center's Matchmaker Dating Service, which, before the days of the internet, consisted of two-paged files members wanting matches could come to the center and peruse. He picked her file, and then, during an interview with Channel 13 News on dating services, proposed to Tammy on the show.

They have now been married for 27 years and have two children whose degrees at the University of Houston closely mirror her own. Daughter Lauren has a degree in public health, and son Daniel, a degree in Hotel Management. Both live in the Houston area.

While raising her children, Tammy continued to work, later on with the Fort Bend ISD supervising 12 school kitchens. Now, she devotes her time to volunteer activities. Besides N4NN, she volunteers with Missouri City Green, helping to educate the public on ways to reduce waste, including, recycling, composting, and shredding. She loves teaching the children these basic strategies for a greener environment. She also heads the women's group for Congregation Shma Koleinu, bringing women together for community service projects as well as social ones.

When not volunteering, Tammy enjoys cooking, gardening, and traveling. She especially likes cooking plant-based foods-fruits and vegetables in season-and creating dishes that make eating an experience. Although she has no room for a garden, she grows lots of plants in pots and describes herself as having a green thumb. "When I travel," she says, "I like to go to places I've never been and learn about another culture." She and Gary have a trip to Ireland scheduled in September.

As an active participant in N4NN, she finds the newsletter a fantastic way to learn about seniors and what they are doing. She always reads it from top to bottom. She often goes to the monthly lunches to meet her senior friends and find out what's going on.

For those interested in working with seniors, she has this advice: "The best gift you can give to a senior is the gift of time-time to listen to them."

Mary Yurkovich, N4NN Volunteer

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On Aging

No matter what age I find myself, it seems I am always comparing myself to the rest of my age cohort.

In high school, I was a sports no-show, a klutz. Not everyone else was an all-star but they all seemed coordinated and relatively competent at hitting, throwing, catching, slam dunking a ball.

In college I was either too fat or too thin, too nerdy or not nerdy enough.

As an adult and a housewife, I never seemed to clean thoroughly enough, iron well enough, bake cookies without burning the bottoms or cook adequately gourmet meals.

And now, as an octogenarian, I often feel I am not aging "well." I am feeling "old" before my time.

So a welcome chord was struck when I came across the following article online in the 12/9/16 Senior Planet. Written by Erica Manfred, it made me smile and gave me comfort. I reprint much of it here to bring cheer to those of us who are NOT parachuting out of airplanes at age 90:

People used to think of growing old as part of the natural progression of life from birth to death. Not anymore. Now we go directly from middle age to you're-just-as-old-as-you-feel. "Old age" has been dropped from our vocabulary. "You're not old!" people say when I describe myself that way. I'm 74 with an assortment of age-related ailments and a generous complement of sags and wrinkles. If I'm not old, who is?

Today we're supposed to age "well." This term is fraught with expectations that I, for one, can't meet. If I'd belonged to an earlier generation, I'd have been expected to retire to the proverbial rocking chair on the porch-but my age mates are not going gently into that night. Older people in the 21st century expect to be able to ski, play tennis, run marathons, bicycle, swing dance and even sky dive indefinitely. These days, if you slow down with age it's your own fault. It means you're not eating right, working out, taking the right supplements, thinking positive enough...



I am assailed daily with stories of elders who do amazing things at advanced ages-run marathons at 85, teach yoga at 90, bungee jump at 96. These stories are supposed to be inspiring. I find them depressing. I will never do any of those things. The rest of us old folks-those who actually suffer from common ailments of aging such as arthritis, heart disease or emphysema-feel left behind in the mad rush to never get old. I wind up wanting to stay home, because in this age-well-or-you're-worthless world, struggling to keep up is humiliating.

Many people in their 70s [and 80s and 90s] do not have physical limitations. They can do everything they did at 50, and more power to them, but not being one of them makes me and a lot of other seniors feel like pariahs among our peers.

I have a 77-year-old friend with spinal stenosis...she is unstable on her feet and can't get around without a walker...[she] refuses to go out because she's ashamed to be seen with her walker. The ageism that makes her afraid to be seen with a walker winds up further marginalizing older people who are already segregated from the mainstream. It's no wonder that loneliness is becoming an epidemic among seniors.

Even retirement communities advertise themselves as for the "active senior." If you're not active you'd better find somewhere else to live.

It's time that the media stop fishing for clicks with their stories of older people engaging in extreme sports and focus on celebrating seniors who find a way to live well despite physical limitations...



It's also about time we seniors stop judging each [other] by how "youthful" we act or look.

I'm taking a page from Martin Luther King: "I have a dream that one day elders will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the tautness of their muscles but by the content of their character."

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Celebrate Summer N4NN July Luncheon

Happy Birthday ...



Best wishes for a happy July birthday and many more to come to N4NN member.

David Courtney [note that David has just moved out of town to live near his family. We will miss him.]

If we have missed a July birthday, please let Madeleine know (mgappel@comcast.net or 713-665-0770).

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Links to More Activities

(If you know a link to an entity that sponsors senior programs that are open to the public, please send the link to N4NN volunteer, Vicki Davison, at doinmypart@aol.com)

Platou Community Center: 713-726-7107, 11655 Chimney Rock (in Westbury) offers stretching exercise class, quilting, games, line dancing, ping pong leagues and a weight loss support group. The Center is open Monday-Thursday from noon to 8 p.m. and Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Call for class days, times and hours.



The **City of Bellaire** has a program that is open to anyone. It offers field trips, movies, lunches, bridge, bridge and games, advanced card games, crafts and conversation. To see the schedule go to www.ci.bellaire.tx.us/729/LIFE. Click on the Life Newsletter to see a full schedule of activities. Or contact 713-662-8290 or Victoria Arevalo at Varevalo@bellairetx.gov.

The **Weekley Family YMCA** at 7101 Stella Link Blvd., 77025, has a Silver Sneakers exercise program in which some of our members participate. Call 713-664-9622 or go to www.ymcahouston.org. On the left under "Find Your YMCA", select "Weekly Family", when the Weekly Family page comes up, click on Health in the menu across the top, select Active Older Adults, then you will see the description of the Silver Sneakers Program.



Bayland Community Center at 6400 Bissonnet has exercise classes at various levels, including Tai Chi. It also has other seniors programs, including MahJong. Go to www.pct3.com, click on Community Centers, Click on Bayland, scroll down to activities (on right side of page) or call 713-541-9951.

The Fonteno Senior Education Center at 6600 Bissonnet St. 77074, has a long list of classes in various areas of interest, including Legal, health, and General. Here is just a sampling of exercise type classes:

Zumba - Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 -9:00 AM

Senior Boot Camp - Monday, Thursday and Friday from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Hatha Yoga - Tuesday from 9:00 - 10:00 AM

Forrest Yoga - Thursday from 9:00 - 10:00 AM

Line Dancing - Thursday from 1:00 -2:00 PM

Tai Chi - Friday from 9:00 - 10:30 AM

The Center is just a little further out on Bissonnet than Bayland. To contact, go to FontenoSEC@pct3.com or call 713-981-4703.





Jewish Community Center: Join neighbors and friends at the JCC for fun and exciting programs including bus trips, cultural programs, lifelong learning courses, Kosher lunch program, films, Jewish learning, art classes, exercise, social programs and much more. Go to www.erjcchouston.org/adults/adults-60-plus or call the ERJCC at 713-729-3200

and ask for Senior Services.

West University Parks and Recreation Department:

www.westutx.gov

Once you are on the web page, hover over the Services tab and click Senior Services in the Parks and Recreation column, or call the West U Senior Services Division of the Parks and Recreation Department at 713-662-5895.



Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism Senior Chai Program: [HCRJ Senior Chai](#) sponsors programs dedicated to those 60 and over which is open to all in that age demographic. The programming of social, educational and recreational activities is generously underwritten in memory of Mozelle and David Barg and Esther and Robert Shelby. Contact admin@hcrj.org or call 713-782-4162 to learn more about the classes and trips currently being offered.

The City of Houston will offer FREE water fitness classes for adults at Westbury Pool, 10605 Mullins, Houston 77096, this summer:

- Adult Circuit Water Fitness, Tuesday 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. A combination of cardio, strength training and flexibility that takes you through a series of stations using effective circuit training principles and the latest aquatic equipment for a total body workout. The intensity is light to moderate
- Adult Aqua Zumba, Tuesday and Thursday from 9-10 a.m. and Thursday and 6:30-7:30 p.m. This class combines high energy and Latin music with movement in the water, a combination that helps participants

dance away their worries while staying it shape. The intensity is light to moderate.

Registration is online

(<https://apm.activecommunities.com/houstonparks/Home>) or you can register with the instructor on class days shortly before each class starts. The first day of class was Tuesday, June 6, and the last day of class will be Thursday, August 3, at the Westbury Pool. If you have questions, call the city Adult Sports Office at 832-395-7274.

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Coming Events

Monday, July 10, 2017, N4NN Steering Committee, 4:30 p.m., Madeleine's house, 5223 Ariel Street, for Steering Committee members

Tuesday, July 11, 2017, N4NN Monthly Luncheon, 11 a.m., Genesis Steakhouse and Winebar, 5427 Bissonnet (at the corner of Chimney Rock and Bissonnet, across the street from the Bellaire Triangle). Speaker will be Johnny Baker, former Houston Oiler, San Diego Charger, Coaches All AmericanFootball player and current humanitarian, successful businessman and world traveler.

Wednesday, July 19, 2017, monthly book group, 2:30 p.m., Madeleine's house, 5223 Ariel St. in Meyerland. Organizing meeting and discussion of current books participants are reading

Thursday, July 27, 2017, N4NN monthly discussion group, 2:30 p.m., home of Fran and Les Moore, 5551 Carew St. Topic: Government and health care-do we even know what we want?

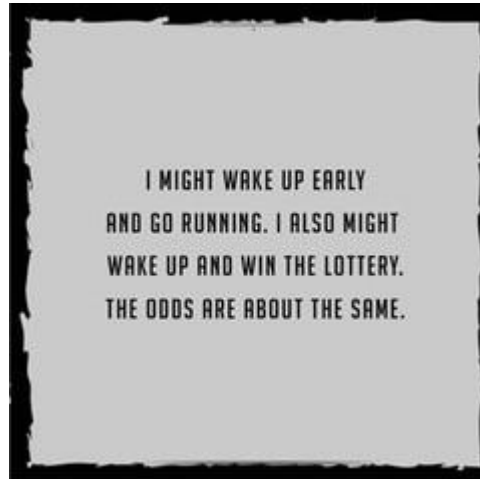
N4NN also sponsors three member-organized informal groups: Our Men's Koffee Klatsch meets twice a month (schedule changes from month to month) and several of our members get together to play Rummikub at members' homes a couple of times a month. Our Bridge Group meets a couple of times a month. For information on the Men's Koffee Klatsch, contact Jay Schaffer at js7984tx@gmail.com for the Rummikub players, contact Annette Novominsky at anovominsky@icloud.com and for the bridge group, contact John Varvaro at meyink@comcast.net.

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Laugh Outloud



Many thanks to member and volunteer, Annette Novominsky who gets us supplied with laughs.



For the rich there's therapy; for the rest of us, there's chocolate!



Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; YOU are the one who gets burned. --Buddha



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Think N4NN For Gifting, Honoring, or Memorializing

An annual membership to Neighbors4Neighbors Network makes the perfect gift for a 65+ parent, relative or friend.



N4NN helps members take care of their homes, their shopping, their technology

N4NN connects members to new friends, new opportunities to socialize and new ways to volunteer

N4NN helps members solve problems and get help when they hit a bump in the road

An annual membership costs \$175 for an individual and \$300 for a household. For information on purchasing a membership contact Michael Kahlenberg, Program Coordinator for N4NN at 832-998-6466 (N4NN).

If you wish to honor or memorialize a family member or friend and support N4NN at the same time, donations to N4NN may be made by check made out to JFS/N4NN and mailed to Neighbors4Neighbors Network c/o Jewish Family Service, 4131 S. Braeswood, Houston, Texas 77025, attn.: Michael Kahlenberg.

The Marketplace

N4NN Connect is most grateful to its ad sponsors, MEDIC PHARMACY and RELOCATE AND RENOVATE.

If you wish to sponsor an ad or an event, contact Michael Kahlenberg, N4NN Program Coordinator, at 832-998-6466.



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