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Chats with the Chair



Madeleine Appel

My husband and I recently watched *All the Way*, the critically acclaimed HBO bio drama about LBJ's presidency in the immediate aftermath of John F. Kennedy's assassination. In every good sense of the word, it is an incredible portrayal of the man and the times.

The movie took me back in time and history...and reminded me that I-and you-lived that history, were a part of that history.

It reminded me of that awful afternoon when the world stood still as we heard the news of President Kennedy's death. Where were you at that moment? I was home sick, lying in bed, watching TV. The next days were surreal for all of us. I was to be a bridesmaid in a friend's wedding in Corpus Christi. The rehearsal dinner at the Naval Air Station Officer's Club went on as planned but the guests spent most of the evening crowded around the TV set watching the news. Toasts to the bride and groom were an after-thought. The wedding took a backseat to the shooting of Ruby. The wedding march was overshadowed by the funeral dirge.

The movie was a reminder of the awfulness of the South's reaction to the Civil Rights Movement. My brain is forever seared with the scenes of police clubbing black and white Civil

Rights advocates; police setting dogs on them and hosing them with powerful fire hoses. The movie showed me the angst and the "sausage-making" that most of us never knew about that went on behind the scenes in the Oval Office, in the halls of Congress, in hotel rooms where Martin Luther King Jr., Roy Wilkins, Bob Moses and other black leaders met. But the clips of the violence brought flashbacks of the horror I felt watching them originally.

I remember how shocked we all were when Walter Jenkins, loyal Walter Jenkins, LBJ's closest aide and right arm in the White House was discovered in the restroom with another man and arrested. I had forgotten, until the movie reminded me, that LBJ-who considered Jenkins as "the son I might have had"-deserted his friend and confidante of many years. Lady Bird defied Lyndon and stood by Mr. Jenkins.

The movie shows the dichotomy that was LBJ-a man of vision, a man who truly recognized and believed that the time had come to ensure blacks their equal rights under the law. He viscerally hated poverty and what it did to people-having endured it in his hardscrabble childhood. But he was a man for whom the ends justified the means. And he was mean. He was mean to those around him. He was mean to Lady Bird, to staff, to supporters and enemies. It reminded me of the stories I heard from fellow journalists as a reporter at The Insider's Newsletter in New York about the mistresses he flaunted in front of Lady Bird.

The movie reminded me over and over again why Lady Bird is one of my heroines. She was smart, She was loving. She was politically savvy. She was honest and genuine. The presidential press conferences at the ranch depicted in the movie reminded me of one of Lady Bird's press conferences at the ranch that I attended also as a young reporter for The Corpus Christi Caller Times. After we toured the ranch house, we all gathered in the yard around the front porch. Lady Bird came out and answered questions. As the time drew to a close, a staff person announced that Lady Bird would be handing out jars of marmalade she had made herself. Lady Bird shook her head and laughed. "No," she said. "I didn't make the marmalade." Zephyr, the Johnson's cook of many years, made it, she said, noting that she didn't have time to cook on the campaign trail. Even on so little a point, Lady Bird was Lady Bird-honest, kind, thoughtful, tough.

The movie takes us through LBJ's run for his own (as opposed to finishing out Kennedy's) term as president. Barry Goldwater was his opponent. Remember the ad of the little girl plucking petals from a daisy as a nuclear bomb explosion wipes out the screen? I didn't vote for Goldwater because he was going to defoliate the jungles of Vietnam, which was the ad's implication. LBJ, of course, went on to defoliate the jungles.

The movie ends with LBJ's victory party, celebrating his ultimate election to his own term. But a summary paragraph at the end notes that he would not run for a second term four years later. Do you remember where you were when he made that speech that announced he would not run again? I was in Corpus Christi's Spohn Hospital having just given birth to our oldest son. Michael sat beside my bed as we listened to LBJ and said "he is going to say he isn't going to run again,"-and a moment later that is exactly what LBJ did say.

That was on March 31, 1968. On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated. On June 5, 1968, Robert Kennedy was assassinated.

And so, in the end, this movie reminded me that there have been other times of great division, great acrimony, great distrust, great uncertainty and even violence in this country. We have survived because, as LBJ said in giving his reasons for not running for re-election, he felt he had to "put the unity of the people first," because he felt "a house divided...is a house that cannot stand."

I hope, in this summer when so many feel so split asunder, that we can be mindful of those words and put our unity first, that we can find some common ground that will bring us together, determined that our house WILL continue to stand, a beacon to the world.

- *Madeleine*

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Technology at Your Fingertips

Today's technology is both a blessing and a curse. It connects us instantly to the world, enables us to turn on the lights in our homes with the push of a button or the clap of a hand, can tell us where our children are at any given moment (and tell them where WE are at the same given moment) and keep us entertained.

But it can also be frustrating, puzzling, intricate, sensitive, intrusive.



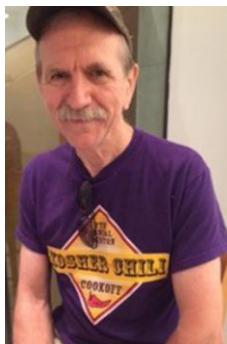
On July 5 The Dallas Morning News on its online site, Dallas News, ran a story in its LIFE section describing 10 free smart phone apps that might make your life easier. So, despite the technology's drawbacks for some of us, N4NN Connect is sharing the list for those of you who love a tech challenge:

1. **CareZone.** This app helps you manage your medications and caregiving through a calendar feature; create a journal, a to-do list and a list of contacts. Email help is available.
2. **Elevate.** This is a brain-training app that lets you customize a game-based program to strengthen your analytical and communication skills (apropos of staving off memory loss)
3. **bSafe.** Helps you create your personal safety social network which will let people know where you are, send out an SOS in an emergency and ask a friend to walk with you
4. **AARP Now.** Provides daily newsbriefs, videos and local events. Some features, such as discounts, are only available to AARP members.
5. **Shopwell.** This app was created by a dietitian and helps you find healthy foods when you grocery shop. You scan a code on the product with your smart phone, and then the app scores the food and, if appropriate, suggests a better option.

6. **MapMyWalk.** This app tracks your workout time whether you are walking cycling or otherwise "traveling" in your exercise. It helps you create or find a route.
7. **Lyft and Uber.** Both these ride-sharing programs have apps geared to seniors or if you don't have a smart phone or don't want to give them your credit card number, they have programs where you can call rather than using an app.
8. **Skype.** This app enables you to talk with your children or grandchildren worldwide using your computer's or smart phone's web cameras.
9. **Personal Capital.** This read-only money management app links all your accounts and bills and provides email notifications, cash-flow reporting and customer service, It has a retirement fee analyzer and retirement calculator. A demo shows how it works.
10. **Rain Rain.** This app acts as a sound machine to soothe you to sleep. It offers a variety of sounds from thunderstorms to a cat purring.

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Meet N4NN Volunteer Phil Rivers



About three months ago, architect and contractor Phil Rivers was attending a meeting of the Houston Congregation for Reformed Judaism, whose building addition he designed in 2012. There he met Madeleine Appel and Michael Kahlenberg of N4NN. Madeleine asked him if he would be willing to become a resource for N4NN members who had home repair questions. Phil agreed and so became a N4NN volunteer.

"I grew up in the trade in Texas," he says. Phil physically built his own house in the Museum District in 1982 where he lives with Laura, his wife of 33 years. It took him a year and three months to build his house, and the trick, he says, is to get the necessary contractors lined up to contribute their parts at the right time. He received his degree in architecture at Texas A&M and is still working as both architect and in construction management.

"Construction work is unique," he says, "because every site is unique and poses different problems requiring different solutions." Because of this, people in construction work either get out quickly, or stay in and thrive on the challenge. Over the years, he has developed a data base of skilled workers in the trade. Construction also has its own language, and if you don't understand the language of construction, you can be confused. He tells the story of a new office girl who was told she had to remain in the office because 24 studs would be showing up that afternoon. Her face brightened at the news. "You bet I'll stay," she said.

To date Phil has advised three different N4NN members on projects for their homes. For a member who wanted a door repaired, Phil introduced him to handyman /carpenter Alfonso, who did the work. Phil is now working with a woman who wants to replace her tub with a walk-in shower. He tells her it will take two people to do the job, a plumber and a tile contractor. "I will introduce her to several that I know, or she can find someone and I'll give her my opinion on whether or not the quote is complete and reasonable," he says. He can also help members analyze a project so they will know what is required.

The most common question he gets, he says, is whether or not the owner needs a building permit. The advice he gives is that new construction requires a permit; most repair work does not. Electric work and plumbing always require permits.

For years, Phil rode a bicycle in the MS 150. He still rides, but the rides are shorter now. He believes in being active. He and his wife have a dog that requires exercise, he works on the committee for the chili cook off, a JCC fundraiser, and regularly visits his 92-year-old mother in a retirement home in Groesbeck, TX. For 5 years he has been dealing with Parkinson's disease but takes a medication that allows him to function in a fairly normal way.

Phil also reads quite a bit. History is his favorite subject, and he now is exploring that time period after WWII-the rebuilding of Europe, the atrocities after the war, and the revenge and repercussions that went on.

So if N4NN members have a home repair project on which they need help, call the N4NN office and ask the office to assign Phil Rivers. When you meet him, I'm sure you will agree with me that N4NN has found a treasure.

- Mary Yurkovich, N4NN Volunteer

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AARP's Fraud Watch Tips

A recent AARP Fraud Watch Network email warned about a "free money from the government" scam:

This is not a new scam but now it has taken to social media in addition to your telephone.

It works this way:

A post on Facebook claims the person has been awarded tens of thousands of dollars in a grant from the federal government and notes that you might be eligible too.



You call the listed phone number, give requested personal information, and are told you qualify-all you have to do is send a money-order or provide your bank account information to cover processing fees.

Clues to look for:

Government grant applications and information about them are free.

The agency the scammers say they work for-The Federal Grants Administrator-doesn't exist.

If you didn't apply for a federal government grant, there is no way you would receive one. If you are offered a grant that you didn't apply for, you can pretty much know it's a scam.

So don't ever...

Pay money for a "free" government grant.

If you think you're being targeted for a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov/complaint or 1-877-382-4357.

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Time to Take Stock, Clean Out



I don't think I'm a hoarder in the true sense of the word...but recently I filled an entire green recycling can with the contents of various file drawers.

My years as synagogue board member and president, my years fighting billboards, my years as a member and president of a children's foster home and behavioral education non-profit-dumped in a day. There is still a drawerful of unpublished children's stories and another drawerful of League of Women Voters notebooks and a shelf filled with huge scrapbooks of every article I ever wrote for The Corpus Christi Caller Times and The Houston Chronicle and two shoeboxes full of letters I wrote home during my college years. My mother was always certain they would make a good book! My children will just have to deal with those drawers and shelves of memories; I can't!

But I AM on a clean out the house binge, room by room. Knick knacks, clothes I haven't worn in years, books. It's hard but necessary. For some, it is more than hard.

My husband's aunt was a true hoarder. A Los Angeles newspaper once wrote a story about her. When she died, her sister showed us through her apartment. There was a

narrow passageway from front door to back. Every inch of the rest of the apartment was filled with stacks of newspapers and magazines...columns literally rose from floor to ceiling. I am not sure where she slept.

So my eye was caught by a story in the June 30, 2017, New York Times in the Real Estate section. It talked about the problems the general manager of a 2,820 co-op apartment complex in New York City had when he needed to do a repair survey. A variety of residents refused him access to their apartments-and 50 of those tenants were compulsive hoarders.

Kaya Laterman, who wrote the article, notes that "The American Psychiatric Association estimates that 2 to 5 percent of the population could be classified as compulsive hoarders, people who suffer from a disorder that impedes their ability to discard things, regardless of value."

Randy Frost, professor of psychology at Smith College in Massachusetts, says that "Some are collectors and compulsive buyers...some are perfectionists and environmentalists." They have one thing in common: "The item usually has an experience or emotion attached to it. They think, 'If I get rid of it, I lose that memory or feeling.'" Or, writes Sharon Begley in her book, *Can't Just Stop: An Investigation of Compulsions*, they don't want to lose an item's potential. Clothing could be recycled as a craft project or empty cardboard boxes could be used for storage or newspaper articles have vital information.

How can you help a hoarder? Contact a family member. If the person is elderly, suggest a geriatric care manager. Or, in any instance, involve a licensed clinical social worker. We at N4NN are fortunate because we can call on Jewish Family Service for help. We also have volunteer Adele Segel who has professionals who can help with sorting, organizing, divesting.

Whatever the solution, it is not becoming adversarial, says Ms. Laterman. She quotes Jackson Sherratt, a licensed clinical social worker and the director of Project ORE at the Manhattan-based nonprofit Educational Alliance who "warns that the more adversarial a board or landlord or neighbor is in dealing with an individual who has hoarding tendencies, the bigger and more protracted the battle."

Mr. Sherratt also "warns against using disparaging or stigmatizing language-including words like 'hoarder,' 'garbage,' 'dirty,' and 'disgusting.'" He notes "hiring a professional cleaning crew...is also a mistake. The resident needs to feel some control over what gets discarded or donated and how things are organized in the cleared apartment...otherwise you have people fetching things from the garbage, and it comes right back into the apartment."

For now I, myself, am taking it a room at a time, a drawer at a time. And nagging my grown sons to come sort through THEIR treasures...the ones they don't have room for

in their current homes but can't bear to part with in the home that used to be theirs!

- *Madeleine*

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Happy Birthday ...



Best wishes for a happy August birthday and many more to come to N4NN members.

Sue Gill
Fannie Higgins
Lili Gordon
Joan Granoff
Audrey Weiss

If we have missed an August 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.

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Coming Events

Monday, August 7, 5 p.m., Movie event sponsored by the Senior Program at the Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center. Enjoy The Second Time Around which tells the story of Katherine Mitchell and cranky Isaac Shapiro who find love among a nosey bunch of seniors in the residence where Katherine convalesces after breaking her hip. The unlikely couple warm to each other over their shared love of music, but family problems and unforeseen illness threaten both their blossoming relationship and Katherine's lifelong dream of going to the opera in Milan. Cost is \$5 for ERJCC members and \$8 for the public.

Tuesday, August 8, 11 a.m., Monthly Luncheon at Genesis Steakhouse and Winebar, 5427 Bissonnet, across from the Bellaire Triangle. What are your favorite memories of summer and childhood? Members will have a chance to share mental snapshots from the past.

Thursday, August 24, 2:30 p.m., Discussion Group. Location and topic TBD

Wednesday, August 30, 2:30 p.m., Book Group, Madeleine's house, 5223 Ariel St. in Meyerland between Chimney Rock and Manhattan, Braeswood and Beechnut. Bring a recent or favorite read to discuss

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.



Knock, Knock
Who's there?
Beets!
Beets who?
Beets me!

Knock Knock
Who's there?

*Turnip.
Turnip who?
Turnip the volume, it's my favorite song!*

*Knock, Knock
Who's there?
Aldo!
Aldo who?
Aldo anything for you!*



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Thanks to Our Generous Donors

Neighbors4Neighbors Network is so grateful to the generous donors who support our organization and make it possible. Donors in June through mid-July, 2017, include:

*Debby and John Dreyfus
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Carolyn Litowich
Donna Siegel*

*Marcia and Dr. Irv Wishnow
Karen and Thomas Wolff*

To these kind benefactors, our heartfelt thanks.

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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.

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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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