



WELCOME!

Staying CONNECTED

ISSUE 54 | SUMMER 2025

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

"Summer was our best season: it was sleeping on the back screened porch in cots, or trying to sleep in the treehouse; summer was everything good to eat; it was a thousand colors in a parched landscape; but most of all..." —Harper Lee

Dear Friends,
As the sun reaches its zenith and the days stretch long and golden, we are delighted to bring you our summer newsletter. Whether you are basking in the sunlight, exploring new horizons or relaxing

on your porch, we hope to add a little extra joy and inspiration to your summer.

This issue is packed with articles of interest. Included are tips on saving money at the grocery store, information on organizing our lives and possessions, Park Heights updates and learning how patients with chronic pain cope. NNC's ride program, CHAIway, is very important for our members, and in this issue, we offer an update as well as an introduction to Jeffrey Arenberg, CHAI's new CHAIway Program Manager.

And what's *Staying Connected* without its NNC updates—Who is Who, Milestone Moments, Welcome New Members, What's New with NNC, Wordshop and more.

As you read through the pages of this newsletter, we invite you to embrace the vibrancy of the moment and find inspiration to make this summer unforgettable. We wish you a season filled with warmth, laughter and memorable moments. 🍷

CHAIway Update

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

NNC is pleased to welcome Jeffrey Arenberg as CHAI's new CHAIway Program Manager. Jeff oversees the day-to-day operations of CHAIway and is working on building out the volunteer driver program to offer another option for program riders.



But first, a little bit about Jeff. Jeff graduated from Towson University with a degree in Psychology. He began his career

at Best Buddies International, the largest non-profit organization in the world that offers services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

His impressive resume includes working for the following local institutions and nonprofits:

- Baltimore County Public Schools, as a research assistant, collecting research for their inclusion program
- Kennedy Krieger Institute as part of the autism research team
- Mosaic Community Services, a nonprofit mental health organization, as a psychiatric counselor, and then being promoted to program coordinator.

Perhaps Jeff can best be described as a renaissance man. When he left the field of psychiatric counseling, he "morphed" into an entrepreneur by owning and operating yoga studios and opening a successful

vegan donut shop called Donut Alliance. He sold the business in 2019. Now, besides working at CHAI, he continues to teach yoga at both the Park Heights and Owings Mills JCCs.

Since he started at CHAI, Jeff has focused on the volunteer driver program for CHAIway. NNC members and other older adult clients have been able to access discounted rides from Uber and Lyft through CHAIway On The Go (OTG). Jeff's goal is to supplement this ride option through a revitalization of CHAI's volunteer driver ride program.

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Park Heights Updates

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

Lots of exciting activities took place in the greater Park Heights neighborhoods recently. Take a look at two, brought to you by One Park Heights!

Fun and laughter echoed through the halls all afternoon at the One Park Heights Family Festival held on Sunday, March 23, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. More than 600 people participated in a myriad of events at the Baltimore City Public Training Facility. It was an ideal location with plenty of space for friends and neighbors from Northwest Baltimore to come together and participate in shared experiences and activities in three different rooms.

One room contained a variety of community organizations such as Park West Health System, Department of Public Works, CHAI, Glen Neighborhood Improvement Association and Plantation Park Heights Urban Farm to name a few. As part of NNC's membership outreach, volunteers at the NNC table greeted many eventgoers and dispensed information to help "spread the word" about our many activities.

A second room, a formerly used gym, offered youngsters a chance to jump around in a Moon Bounce and shoot hoops. Family members enjoyed watching their kids have lots of fun, and the bleachers afforded them some time to sit, relax and shmooze.

The third room became quite crowded with kids lining up for the face-painting activity and receiving balloon twisters. Professor Quark also excited his young audience with science experiments, and the storytelling was a big hit. Of course, the youngsters loved



Filling bags at the Blessing Bag Event

munching on the cotton candy, popcorn and other snacks that were available.

The Blessing Bag Event, held from 6:00-7:30 p.m. on Tues., May 27 at the Langston Hughes Community Center, closed out the year of One Park Heights activities. More than 50 attendees participated, including five high school juniors and seniors from the Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel and their families.

The program began with a presentation by Megan Brantley, Director of Community Relations, Baltimore Jewish Council. She gave an overview of the complex factors that cause homelessness: poverty, lack of affordable housing and the mental health challenges many people in our society are facing.

We then heard from Jeffrey Bingham, who shared a moving story of his own experience of homelessness: what led to it and how he was able to get his life back

on track. He is now a powerful and effective advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves. He does this in his role as Chairman of the Prince George's County Lived Experience Committee and as a speaker for the National Coalition of Homelessness.

Following Mr. Bingham's presentation, eventgoers were treated to a delicious kosher buffet and were encouraged to discuss a series of questions provided at each table. The questions were thought-provoking, such as "What are some common stereotypes about unhoused people and how can we challenge them?"

Lastly, we proceeded to fill 250 men's and 250 women's blessing bags containing toiletries, hygiene products, first-aid kits and non-perishable snacks. Equally important was an information sheet listing helpful services in Baltimore City and Baltimore

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AGENCY FRIENDS

Maryland Association for Parkinson's Support (MAPS)

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

According to the Maryland Association for Parkinson's Support (MAPS), "Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive neurological disorder that affects movement, characterized by symptoms such as tremors, stiffness, slow movement and impaired balance. It results from the loss of dopamine-producing brain cells, leading to difficulties with tasks like walking and talking. Treatment focuses on managing symptoms through medications, therapy and sometimes surgery, with ongoing research aimed at improving treatments and finding a cure." www.marylandparkinsonsupport.org/, 1-443-470-0279.

MAPS is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing meaningful programs that will support the entire PD community. It promotes the well-being of people with PD, their families and friends, through



Maryland
Association for
Parkinson
Support

support groups, informational resources, exercise programs and related services. The website has developed into a "one-stop-shop," non-biased central source of information to help the PD community find local resources and support.

Two MAPS exercise programs are offered at the Myerberg Center, 3101 Fallstaff Road. Individuals diagnosed with PD can have a complimentary Myerberg membership and take these classes (specific to supporting those who live with PD) at no cost.

For more information, contact the Myerberg at 410-358-6856 or info@myerberg.org.

The Parkinson's Exercise Program (PEP), led by Ken Jones

1. In person, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
2. On Zoom, Tuesday & Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Rock Steady Boxing at the Myerberg with Innie

1. Monday and Wednesday:
 - 12:30-1:30 p.m., Upper Cuts (Lower Intensity)
 - 1:45-2:15 Shake, Rattle & Stretch
 - 2:30-3:30 p.m. Hooks (Higher Intensity)
2. Tuesday and Thursday: 1:45-2:15 p.m. 🗣️

County, such as medical care, case management and therapy, along with phone numbers, location and MTA accessibility. We were encouraged to take several bags with us at the end of the evening to give to those in need as a tangible way to show compassion and demonstrate that they are valued and cared for.

The Family Festival and Blessing Bag events were sponsored by the Samuel I. Rosenberg Foundation and were part of the *One Park Heights* campaign, a collaborative effort led by nonprofits including CHAI, faith leaders and local organizations to promote unity and pride in our communities. 🗣️

Mark Your Calendars:

Be sure to mark your calendar for the fourth annual Taste of Northwest festival being held on August 10, 2025, from 2:00-7:00 p.m. at the Pikesville Armory. As in previous years, the event is sponsored by the Northwest Baltimore Partnership and is an outdoor festival celebrating "Northwest Baltimore as a wonderful place to live, work, eat and play." Once again, NNC will have a table, so we hope you will stop by and say hello.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Living Well (Enough) With Chronic Pain: A Zoom discussion with Michele Cohen, LCSW, FIPA; Anne Brazer Ciemnecki, MA; and Janet (Jan) Stubbs*



By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC member

(*Presented in May, this program was funded by the Orthodox Union, which offers virtual programs of interest to the 60+ demographic through SPIRIT: Stimulating Program Initiative for Retirees that Inspires Thought.)

Did you know that 20% of the US population is in chronic pain? This eye-opening statistic was given by Michele Cohen, LCSW, who herself and the two other presenters listed above, suffer from chronic pain.

Michele, Anne and Janet belong to a pain support group (run by Michele), and while this discussion did not offer specific treatments for chronic pain, they discussed what they have learned over the years dealing with this problem.

They touched on four questions.

1. What does it mean to live well (enough) with chronic pain?
2. What supports are helpful to people with chronic pain?
3. What is not helpful?
4. Who needs a support group?

Jan spoke first and emphasized, as did Michele and Anne, that pain is subjective. In addition to her diagnosis of trigeminal neuralgia, she was diagnosed in 1962 with rheumatoid arthritis. She is also a left leg amputee due to a MRSA infection. She has lived with pain since 1962. She spent many years seeking the correct diagnosis and physicians to treat her ailments. Prescribed medications helped but usually for a short time.

Yet, she's cheerful. Her attitude is blunt: those with chronic pain must learn to live with it. Plus, we must recognize that people deal differently with their pain. What works for one might not work for another. Being in a pain support group has helped her find her "community."

Anne was diagnosed with trigeminal neuralgia when she was 42 (she is now 73). Her maternal grandmother and mother had it as well, so there is a genetic component. It took her doctor 11 years to come up with a diagnosis. Seeing what her grandmother and mother went through made her vow to live a full life—and she has! She keeps busy and gives back. Similar to Jan, she recognizes that everyone has pain of some sort at some time.

Anne acknowledged that it is much harder for a spouse or child to watch someone in pain than being the one in pain. That was her experience when coping with her mother's illness. Now, with support from her group, she understands her husband's and children's reactions to her condition and can accept that they might feel helpless.

As a psychotherapist and a chronic pain sufferer, Michele offered many insights into the challenges of coping with pain. For instance, dealing with doctors can be challenging. A physician's job is to help patients get better, something not always possible. Doctors, if they can't find a reason for the patient's pain, get frustrated and might give up, saying, "It's all in your head."

Michele is a big advocate for support groups for many reasons:

- One must learn how to deal with physical *and* emotional pain, which are connected.
- Chronic pain is exhausting, difficult and takes a lot of energy.
- Loneliness is another reality in the person's life. After all, who wants to be around a person in pain?
- Some people in pain don't know how to talk about it and need to hear from others with similar problems.
- Chronic pain sufferers cope better when interacting with people who believe in them.
- A group can help find tools that work for you.
- Groups can help you learn what to say to people who mean well but say things that are not helpful

However, many people with pain don't attend a support group. Somewhat like AA, the first and most difficult step is to acknowledge that you have a problem—in this case, learning to live with your pain.

Jan, Anne and Michele all agreed that pain is part of being human. But it adds an extra challenge to living. Doing something you like (such as listening to music) and receiving help through a group are important coping mechanisms.

Michele finished by giving out her email—cohen.michele701@gmail.com. She is open to assisting anyone who needs help coping with chronic pain. 🗨️



TIPS & TRICKS: Aldi's

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

In the Spring 2025 issue of *Staying Connected*, Eileen Creeger wrote how to save money by shopping at Trader Joe's. I want to share another supermarket option to help lower the cost of groceries: Aldi's.

After shopping at the "Gucci" Giant for many years, I was initially hesitant to go to Aldi's for several reasons. I did not like having to deposit 25¢ each time I needed a shopping cart (although it's returned when you bring back the cart), and I did not care to travel 15 minutes (5.3 miles) to get to the Owings Mills location from my home. I also discovered that I often needed to go elsewhere to find less common grocery items. However, I soon got over these minor inconveniences once I saw how much

money I saved per week. Take a look at some price comparisons made on June 5. In each case, the price represents the store brand.

Shopping at Aldi's would have saved you \$7.30. Keep in mind that like Trader Joe's, most products are under Aldi's private label. However, I find the taste and quality as satisfying as name brands. Their produce has also been consistently fresh, and I was very pleased to find so many kosher items.

You won't hear piped-in music, and the store layout has a bit of a warehouse feel to it. Although there are usually only two open registers, the cashiers whisk everything quickly down the conveyor belt, and the staff is always very helpful in finding products.

So even though you wouldn't shop at Aldi's for the ambience, it is comforting to know that there is an alternative way to save money on groceries in these times of economic uncertainty. 🗨️

	Aldi's	Giant
1 dozen eggs	\$2.96	\$3.49
Instant coffee	7 oz. jar: \$4.15	8 oz. jar: \$7.49
Orange juice, 52 oz.	\$3.19	\$4.59
Almond milk, 52 oz.	\$2.19	\$3.29
2% milk, half gallon	\$1.32	\$2.49
Bananas, per pound	\$0.53	\$0.59

CHAIway continued from p.1

In putting together the volunteer service, Jeff has reached out to other organizations in Baltimore that offer a similar program. He has been pleased with their support. He also has networked with cities that offer a similar service, learning what works and what does not. When I spoke with him in mid-May, his goal was to have an up and running, fully functional pilot driving service this summer.

Jeff has recruited several volunteer drivers who are in the midst of training for the program. Many are retired, and driving someone to an appointment is a way to have a human connection with others. Of course, the same is true for the

riders, many of whom live alone and would be further isolated without these rides. Importantly, a volunteer ride service is crucial for seniors on a limited budget.

Jeff also wants to make the scheduling process as efficient and easy as possible. Besides having clients call CHAI to schedule rides, he envisions an online dashboard for scheduling and payments.

Jeff's enthusiasm and excitement regarding the changes to CHAIway are infectious. If you know someone who is interested in being a volunteer driver, he can be reached at jarenberg@chaibaltimore.org or 410-500-5498. 🗨️

In Memory of Ruth Saperstein

By Anne Shimanovich

Many of us will remember and miss Ruth's humor, forthright and no-nonsense, can-do attitude, which served her and NNC well. We were fortunate to have celebrated her 100th birthday last year at one of our Village Gatherings, and her family joined us for the celebration. She was an inspiration to all of us in so many ways. May her memory be a blessing.

Neighbors in the Know

My Family's Measles Legacy

By Rosalind Griffin, LCSW-C, NNC Member

In 2000, measles was declared eradicated in the U.S. since no cases had been reported in the previous 12 months. However, the past year has seen a resurgence of this deadly disease. A measles vaccine was approved in 1963, leading to the eradication. The current upsurge of the infection has been primarily among unvaccinated persons. These individuals are likely skeptical about the vaccine's safety or efficacy. They tend to choose folk remedies or other alternative treatments that have not been scientifically validated.

Measles, also known as rubella, is a viral infection that produces a contagious rash if one comes in contact with an infected person. The normal course of the disease is 14 days. Most people recover. Its low mortality rate conceals its potential for serious complications, such as ear infections, encephalopathy, death, pneumonia and risk to the fetus of pregnant women.

My family's legacy reflects the negative outcomes from measles as recounted in the following narrative.

I recall sitting on my grandmother's back porch beside my younger sister while we rocked back and forth in our blue and white straw rocking chairs. The porch faced a corn field where we watched the yellow corn tassels sway gently in the warm summer breeze. Our brown bodies were smeared with pink calamine lotion to cover the reddish skin rash. Our grandmother warned us that scratching the blotches would cause sores. We may have been exposed to measles due to the belief that

having measles was a harmless childhood ritual conferring natural immunity. The notion was invalidated in my family's history.

As we rocked, we noticed Dr. Willis walking up the red clay hillside carrying his black satchel. We joked that his face resembled a pink, white rabbit. Now, I am aware my grandmother's home remedies had failed, and she knew we were very ill. Dr. Willis spoke to us gently, examining our arms and legs. Then, he and my grandmother huddled in the kitchen, nodding back and forth. Separately, my sister and I were escorted into a bedroom where Dr. Willis placed his stethoscope on our chests. I do remember him saying to our grandmother, "You will have to hold them down," followed by a large needle piercing my buttocks with penicillin. I screamed loudly while my grandmother whispered, "It will make it better." We had pneumonia, a serious consequence of our bout with measles.

Related to this development was my mother's arrival from Baltimore to accompany our grandmother to the DeKalb County Health Department for administration of our chest x-rays. The waiting time in the colored waiting room was prolonged. Our mother dared to ask the white attending nurse why we were waiting so long to be served. The nurse replied, "You must not be from around here." My mother's assertiveness violated the Georgia southern caste system. I dread to think what might have happened had she been a Black male. Her behavior is a part of family lore that she risked receiving severe repercussions for the love of her daughters.

Our well-being was important because she lost two children in infancy due to measles.



After overhearing murmurs of other siblings as we got older, we inquired whether we had brothers and sisters; sketchy information

was divulged. We learned our mother had contracted measles during her first pregnancy while working as a nurse's aide. The disease was transmitted to our brother, who died a few days after birth. Her last child, a girl, also succumbed to measles soon after birth. Neither of our parents discussed these losses. I can only imagine their pain and unresolved grief during a period when they were expected to resume their normal lives. It was taboo to display suffering for infants. Today, we realize the death of infants matters to survivors, and they should be offered memorial services and grief support rather than be encouraged to bury their feelings.

In summary, my family's measles legacy is a mixture of resilience, pain and survival. My sister and I survived to have healthy social relationships, financial stability and solid careers. Our parents supported our development and were able to experience our success. Yet, we were never able to share our loss from this disease. I hope those who are resistant to get the measles vaccine will view our legacy as an example to reconsider that decision.

Information about measles can be obtained from the CDC and Mayo Clinic's web sites. 🗨️

Patria Hill on NNC's Art Class

By Annie Shimanovich, Aging in Community, Program Director



Patria Hill wants everyone to know that she loves NNC's art class! I spoke with her a few weeks ago, and she listed the variety of topics covered:

1. Origami
2. Radial paper relief sculpture
3. Notan Japanese paper cutting
4. Greeting card embellishments

Pat noted that not only do class participants go home with stunning projects, but teachers Heidi Schloss and Miriam Rittberg also give information and background before beginning each class. For example, when doing a class on the artwork of Frida Kahlo, students learned about the artist's life.

Pat is equally enthusiastic about calligraphy class, which she says is not just writing; it is another artform. Pat is looking forward to future classes, which will explore egg carton portraits and Zen tangles. She says once a month art class and twice monthly calligraphy just aren't enough – she needs more!

Let's Get Organized—A SPIRIT Program

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

(*Presented in January, this program was funded by the Orthodox Union, which offers virtual programs of interest to the 60+ demographic through SPIRIT: Stimulating Program Initiative for Retirees that Inspires Thought.)

SPIRIT's January Zoom featured Gayle Gruenberg, CPO-CD, CVOP. Gayle is the "chief executive organizer" of her company, *Let's Get Organized (LGO)*. (<https://lgorganized.com/peaceful-home-program/>)

Gayle has found that many (but not all) of her clients struggle with brain-based conditions that affect their ability to be organized. In 2011, she decided to specialize and became a Certified Professional Organizer in Chronic Disorganization (CPO-CD®). She also found being disorganized and addressing the organizing process can bring up many deep and uncomfortable feelings about one's self-worth and self-esteem. She helps these clients by doing the following:

- Clarifying their goals for wanting to be more organized
- Identifying the underlying issues that may have led to their current situation (such as brain fog, an out-of-control life, family/work stress and others)
- Working through the barriers that may have held them back in the past.

These goals are achieved through seven steps Gayle calls the 7Cs: consult; consider; clear; categorize; contain; control; and coach.

Consult: Figuring out what's not working. Does the client have too much stuff? Doesn't know how to get rid of it? Have things that are no longer relevant? And importantly, why does the client want to organize?

Consider: Figuring out what is disrupting one's ability to organize, such as time, space, money, energy or mobility.

Clear: Emptying out a space (e.g., a closet). Everything must be laid out for the next step to be successful.

Categorize: Putting "like with like." Do these items fit your life now? Have they overstayed their welcome? Could someone else benefit from these items? Trust your gut, Gayle says.

Contain: Keeping these items organized using plastic bins, a new filing system, drawer separator and/or color coding.

Control: Scheduling chores for control and organization. Consistency for staying organized is the key. And stay mindful, be present and make conscience decisions.

Coach: Self-care is essential to the organizing process. Use the "triple A approach"—acknowledge, accept and act.

In summary, Gayle's approach to organizing involves a mindful approach, rather than just throwing out clutter and unneeded items. She lives in New Jersey and consults virtually as well as in person. Her phone number is 201-613-2733 and website <https://lgorganized.com>.

This was an interesting talk, but I had to wonder what she charges for her services! 🗨️

Staying Connected is a group effort supported by Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. (CHAI) but produced by the community. The views and opinions expressed here are those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of CHAI, The Associated and/or their respective staff or any other contributor.

BIRTHDAY

**greetings to these
members of our family!**

July

- 5 Yvonne Archer
- 8 Toba Falk
- 10 Elaine Schwartz
- 13 Bonnie Cohen
- 14 Dolores Purzitsky
- 15 Jeffrey Marks
- Elaine Rowland
- 22 Beah Zander
- 24 Rae Guttman
- 29 Joan Babiker

August

- 3 Joan Venick
- 11 Marcia Eisenstein
- 12 Esther Liebes
- 16 Dorothy Camper
- 23 Deborah Mondell
- 26 Shirley Novograd
- 27 Shirley Brice
- 31 Vivian Wiggins

September

- 1 Cora Bigger
- 20 Sharie Blum
- Barbara Carter
- 22 Gladstone Smith
- 23 Eileen Rosenbaum

WELCOME NEW NNC MEMBERS

Murray Green
Reuven Poupko
Margreta Rathbauer
Ruth Rose

NNC Membership

NNC DUES: NNC dues are \$12/month. Membership entitles you to many free in-person classes and events, as well as access to our volunteer services.

For more information, please call Anne Shimanovich, 410-500-5334, ashimanovich@chaibaltimore.org.

WARM HOUSE

The Warm House group is up & running, either meeting at the Jewish Community Center Park Heights or Shomrei Emunah Cong. on Greenspring Ave. For more information, please call Malka Zweig at 347-517-5587.

COME AND MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Cross Country Cheswolde:

Presidents: Alan Goldfeder/Caren Cutler
Meets 7:30 p.m., 1st Wed. of month
Email: cccbalt1@gmail.com

Fallstaff:

Joshua Richardson
Meets 6 p.m., 1st Thurs. of month
Myfallstaff@gmail.com

Glen: Betty Cherniak, President
cherniakb@gmail.com, meets 4th Wed. of the month; myglen.org

Mount Washington:

president@mwia.org; Meets 7 p.m., 2nd Tues. of month; www.mwia.org or on Facebook @mwiasociation

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

When Your Loved One has Parkinsons

3rd Tues. of the month, 10 a.m.
Contact Beth Hecht, 410-843-7456

Living with Parkinsons

2nd Tues. of the month, 2 p.m.
Contact Michelle Goldberg, 410-843-7355

Living with Low Vision

2nd Thurs. of the month, 1:30 p.m.
Contact Rozi Rice, 410-843-7325

When Your Loved One has Dementia

1st and 3rd Mon. of the month, 10 a.m.
Contact Alison Lynch, 410-843-7514

JCS Memory Café (for individuals with memory changes and their care partners)

3rd Tues. of the month, 2-3 p.m.
RSVP at jcsbalt.org/memory-café or Amy Steinberg at 410-843-7457

SPECIAL DAYS

July 4 – Independence Day

July 13 – 17th of Tammuz Fast

August 2 – Erev Tisha B'Av

August 3 – Tisha B'Av

September 1 – Labor Day

September 13 – Selichot

September 22 – Erev Rosh Hashanah/
1st day of Autumn

September 23 & 24 – Rosh Hashanah

September 25 – Fast of Gedaliah

September 27 – Shabbat Shuvah

October 1 – Erev Yom Kippur/Kol Nidre

October 2 – Yom Kippur

DONATIONS To NNC

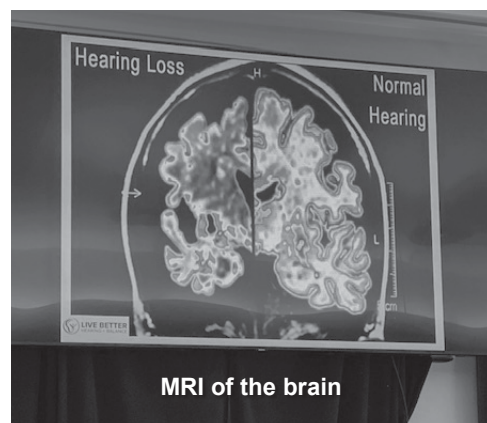
Toba Falk in honor of volunteer handyman Mike Schneider.

What's New with NNC

Village Gatherings

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

March: Our guest speaker was Dr. Abigail Katz*, Au.D., an audiologist from Live Better Hearing. Hearing loss is the 3rd most common physical condition humans experience. Abi went on to discuss how hearing loss affects our daily lives—isolation, cognitive decline and fewer signals to the brain. Surprisingly, untreated hearing loss can lead to dementia. She showed us an interesting MRI of the brain, one side with normal hearing and the other with hearing loss. We also



learned about two types of hearing loss—(1) conductive, which can be treated (caused by fluid in the ear, ear wax, etc.) and (2) sensorineural, permanent hearing loss that cannot be treated (caused by medications such as chemotherapy and too much ibuprofen, age, noise exposure and heredity).



Abi then spoke about the connection between hearing loss and balance difficulties. Hearing loss can affect balance because the inner ear, responsible for both hearing and balance, is interconnected. When hearing is impaired, it can lead to a decrease in one's environment, making it harder to maintain balance and coordinate movements, increasing the risk of falls by three times. She summed up her presentation by showing us different types of hearing aids. Rechargeable ones are available. They do not require batteries and can connect to one's phone or smart watch. **daughter of our own Annie Shimanovich.*

April: Award-winning educator and author, Liza Weimer, spoke about antisemitism and its prevalence. Antisemitism is at its highest rate since the Holocaust. Many people, especially younger generations, rely on the internet for news and information, and unfortunately, much of what is on the web is not true. The internet makes antisemitism easy, and hate has become normalized. *Informed speech* is the key to learning the truth, according to the speaker.

Liza's talk was timed to coincide with Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memory Day). She is this year's Jewish Library of Baltimore author in residence.

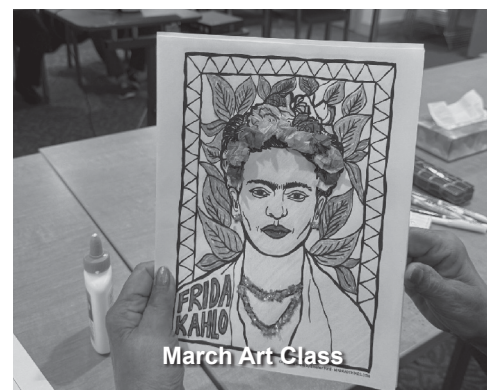
May: We were entertained by Cantor Avi Albrecht, a member of Tobias's Tent, a non-profit whose mission is to bring music and entertainment to those with special challenges. The organization is named after Tobias Vogelstein, a young man from Baltimore who died in 2023. At the age of six, while he miraculously survived life-threatening brain cancer, Tobias became legally deaf and blind. He never felt limited by his disabilities; to the contrary, he



only saw possibilities! He loved entertaining children and adults with his fantastic storytelling, fun games, clever songs, raps and poems, awe-inspiring magic shows and his razor-sharp wit and humor. Following Cantor's Albrecht's beautiful singing, we all enjoyed schmoozing with each other and catching up with friends.

Art Class

Taught by Heidi Schloss and Miriam Rittberg, NNC Members



March: It's always a pleasure to see the people in our art class, but it was especially joyful for me after coming back from a long illness. We often try to introduce our students to an artist, and today our "star" was a Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. The class was familiar with her, which meant my favorite kind of discussion, one where all were

continued on p.10

able to contribute. Both Miriam and I had made samples of Frida's work. Also, I brought two books, one with vibrant examples of her artistry. We talked about how her life impacted her life's work. I also brought examples (a coffee bag and two ornaments) of how companies have capitalized on her image in advertising and objects.

I printed out examples of how our class might work and as always, their creative responses were very different from one another! Everyone worked very hard using crayon, color pencils, water-color and color tissue. And as I



always say, the best part was the comradery! *By Heidi Schloss*

April: One of the basic principles of art is recognizing positive and negative space. Using black and white paper, participants cut out a variety of positive shapes. When the shapes were flipped, they created a negative space. Each project was unique, and each member successfully filled her paper with unexpected designs. It is always rewarding to see how everyone helps each other and admires the efforts made by the class. Another challenge successfully fulfilled. *By Miriam Rittberg*

May: Wow! How exciting it was to have a full class, including a new



student! Over the past months, our students learned about two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects, using drawing, painting and clay techniques. In May's art class, we faced a new challenge: manipulating paper, which is 2D, to create a 3D paper relief sculpture.

First, we looked at examples of relief sculpture throughout history. Then, we learned some techniques - rolling a cylinder, fringing, crushing paper, cutting and rolling a circle to make a cone, spiral cutting a circle and bracing. Should the pieces be glued flat to a background or be free standing?

One of the things I most enjoy is watching the different ways our class members choose to create their pieces. There are no wrong ways. Also, it is so enjoyable to see how they help one another. And finally, when we are finished with our creations, we get a good look at everyone's work. As I said before- Wow! *By Heidi Schloss*

June: To end our year, Lynn Jacobson led our art class, making



paper flowers. Step by step, we folded, cut, rolled and assembled lovely flowers. Directions were printed, and beautiful papers were distributed to recreate them at home. As always, we had an afternoon to catch up, laugh and help each other complete our project. Thanks, Lynn. *By Miriam Rittberg*

Explorers

By Eileen Rosenbaum, NNC Member

Our NNC Explorers group continues to meet via Zoom on a periodic basis. One of our latest adventures was a trip to Southeast Asia. While most of us are not travelling there in person, one of our members was recently in Vietnam and was able to supplement the video we watched. The videos gave us a picture of Vietnam, Thailand (in general) and Bangkok in particular. What lovely sites - tree covered mountains receding onto beaches, crowded cities and lots more to see.

Come join us on our adventures from the comfort of your home. And maybe we'll encourage you to get on a plane and actually travel to these places! Contact Eileen or Jerry Rosenbaum for more information, ejrosenbaum@gmail.com or jerry.s.rosenbaum@gmail.com

NNC Trips

Jewish Museum of Maryland (JMM)

by Heidi Schloss, NNC Member

In May, we were very excited when we got on the AIM bus to go to the Jewish Museum of Maryland (JMM)! We hadn't been there for a year or more because it was closed for renovation.

The new structural changes of the JMM incorporate a very clean, very modern look. Special lighting and technology enhance the exhibits. Earphones were provided at some of the exhibits so that

visitors could also hear the history. This was especially helpful in the gallery that featured Jewish music, some of which was Sephardic.*

Before its renovation, JMM had a mockup exhibit of East Baltimore from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. The remodeled museum has a much different look. A large wall screen projects photos of the history of Jewish emigration to Baltimore. It begins with the first group from Germany (arriving in the mid- to late 1800s). The second wave of Jews to emigrate to Baltimore came mostly from Eastern European shtetls.* The two groups did not mix, and each established their own synagogues, two of which are situated on the same block as the JMM.



Jewish Museum of Maryland

When we were finished with the JMM exhibits, we went outside and viewed all three buildings on the block—the JMM, the Lloyd Street Synagogue and the B'nai Israel Synagogue. Unfortunately, we were unable to go into the Lloyd Street Synagogue as it is under renovation. Instead, we saw photos of the inside and admired the outside structure.

However, the B'nai Israel Synagogue was open. The ground level consists of a big room used for study and social events. Two elegant, curved stairways, each with 18 steps, lead to the sanctuary. A balcony, where the women worshipped, circles the sanctuary. Today's congregation is a lot smaller; the women pray in

the sanctuary with the men, separated by a mechitzah.*

Colored lights surround the front of the sanctuary and the bima.* However, the fabulous set of stained-glass windows that date back to the beginning of the synagogue left us breathless. In the center is a large, gorgeous Star of David, flanked by one small window on each side. These are lit from within so that they can be seen at night from the outside.

Our docent was very pleasant and knowledgeable. A few of us had problems walking those 18 stairs, so we used a chair lift, but she stayed with us the entire time.

Despite the beautiful renovation of the JMM, some of us missed the old look and its exhibits. As for me, I'll always miss the carp in the bathtub!*

*Definitions:

- Sephardic—Jews that lived in Spain, Portugal and countries of the Middle and Far East. Their customs and prayers are slightly different than the Jews who came from European countries.
- Shtetl—Yiddish word for small villages inhabited by Eastern European Jews. They were usually forced to live there by the respective rulers of these countries.
- mechitzah—Hebrew for the structure that separates men and women in the sanctuary.
- Bima—Hebrew for pulpit.
- carp in the bathtub—before refrigeration, women would buy



Jewish Museum of Maryland

a whole, live fish to use for gefilte fish (fish cakes) usually eaten on the Sabbath and Passover.

Trip to the Smithsonian

by Heidi Schloss, NNC Member

Finally, in June, after waiting for 10 years, we were able to hire a private bus company to drive us to Washington, D.C., drop us off at the Mall and then visit the Smithsonian. Splitting into groups of two or more, we picked different buildings to tour.

My group went to the American History Museum. Some of us began with the First Ladies Dresses, which are not replicas, but the actual gowns, some with accessories. Eileen R said this was her favorite exhibit, especially the dresses from the 20s, which had a very slim look. I thought the early gowns, where the tops and skirts could be exchanged to create more than one outfit, were fascinating.



Smithsonian Museum

The beading and embroidery featured on some of them was incredible.

Miriam and I were fascinated by the exhibit on the history of

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entertainment in our country, going all the way from the Wild West shows to present day movies and television. Photos and items from different performers were featured. Dorothy's red shoes from the *Wizard of Oz*, quotes by Mae West and even a tiny shoe belonging to one of P.T. Barnum's little people were amongst the older items. A small exhibit on Jim Henson's Muppets made me smile. We enjoyed watching the movie clips on the big screen and agreed that we could have stayed longer provided we had seats!

We then met up at an exhibit entitled *How Did We Become Us?*, a history of the many people who have come to the U.S. Eileen and I were tickled to find some Jewish items, including a menorah and a child's book in Hebrew!

It was great that some of those who came on the trip were "first timers" on NNC trips. I hope they enjoyed themselves as much as the "old timers."

A note about our driver, Dovi. He dropped us off and picked us up at the same spot, so there was no confusion. When entering or exiting the van, he placed a stool for us "shorter than average" folks. On the way home, he drove through an enormous rainstorm with flooding and some bad drivers. However, we were safe with Dovi! Some of us were so tired we even fell asleep on the way home!

NNC Book Club

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

There is no friend as loyal as a book. – Ernest Hemingway. If you love to read as much as we do, please consider joining the NNC Book Club. We are a very informal, friendly group who likes to read many kinds of books – fiction, non-fiction, mystery, historical

fiction, etc. Except in the summer, we usually meet at 1:30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of the month. For more information, contact me at ebcreeger@gmail.com.

Curiosity Circle at Weinberg Woods

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

Lane Jennings, NNC's poet laureate, returned to Weinberg Woods in March to regale everyone with his own poems of spring. He also read spring-themed poems written by others. With preparations for Passover in full swing, we did not meet in April. We returned in May for a fun afternoon of Bingo and prizes. The last meeting before our summer break will be held in June. Details will appear in the Fall issue. Have a wonderful summer!

Diversity Dialogue (DD)

Susan Russell, DD Co-Coordinator with Rev. Arnold Howard

During our Diversity Dialogue (DD) meeting in March, I mentioned being friends with a Muslim family that lives in my apartment complex. I met Dieneba, a wife and mother, at the pool four years ago when her firstborn son was 10 years old, and her second child was newborn. I have visited the family in their apartment over time, and now there is a third son.

In hearing the evolution of my friendship with the Traore-Fofani family (they are originally from Mali in West Africa), one of our members asked whether Dieneba might be a guest at one of our DD meetings. I was delighted at the suggestion, and Dieneba was willing. Together, the two of us developed some questions for her to address at our April meeting that would enlighten DD members about her culture and her experi-

ence living in Northwest Baltimore. During the Zoom, Dieneba's son Mohammed, now 15, shared a little about his experience at Baltimore City College High School. DD member Florence Seldes has also written her impressions of Dieneba's participation in our April meeting (page 13).

After the Zoom with Dieneba, DD member Phyllis Hersh suggested a topic for our May meeting, which members embraced enthusiastically: reparations for formerly enslaved African American Marylanders. Phyllis was fascinated by an article in the March 25, 2025, *Baltimore Sun* about companion bills introduced in the 2025 Maryland Legislative Session to create a commission to study future reparations to African American Marylanders. Phyllis shared the compelling article written by the bills' sponsors, Delegate Alethiea McCaskill of Baltimore County and Senator C. Anthony Muse of Prince George's County.

April 2nd saw historic passage of this bill. In prior years, bills proposing a study of reparation measures were debated but did not pass. This year, however, within several days of passage, Governor Moore vetoed the bill, defending his position in an open letter to the full legislature. McCaskill and Muse's elation quickly turned to dejection.

Therefore, in May, DD member Roz Griffin spoke at our meeting, making the point that reparations to formerly enslaved African Americans is not a new concept. Our DD expert on African American history, Roz's presentation cited the Freedman's Bureau, an agency created by Congress during Reconstruction to provide aid to four million freed African Americans in their transition from slavery to freedom.

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Among the recompense to be given was “forty acres and a mule.” Wikipedia notes that “Some land redistribution occurred under military jurisdiction during the war and for a brief period thereafter. However, federal and state policy during the Reconstruction era emphasized wage labor, not land ownership, for black people. Almost all land allocated during the war was restored to its pre-war white owners.”

Ten years into Reconstruction, the Imposition of Jim Crow laws negated political strides some African Americans made following the Civil War, some having even been elected to serve in Congress.

When the DD resumes in September, we will look at reparation programs that have been instituted in Evanston, Illinois, and in Boston. By September, we may also know whether discussions by legislators to override Gov. Moore’s veto of this bill will continue.

On a lighter note, DD members gathered on Rachael Glick’s porch on June 9 for a delightful potluck repast. Lunching at a Chinese restaurant over the December holidays and for a potluck meal in June have become DD traditions!

April Diversity Dialogue, cont.

By Florence Seldes, NNC Member

In April, the DD group welcomed Dieneba Taore, a friend and neighbor of our Co-Facilitator, Susan Russell. Dieneba is of the Muslim faith from the West African country of Mali. This was the first time sharing a meeting with a Muslim person, and the discussion with Dieneba was lively and enlightening.

Dieneba came to live in Baltimore with her husband and two sons due to her husband's business, and has since given birth to a third son, who is now around seven months old. Her other sons are 4 and 15. For part of the meeting, we were

able to meet the baby as well as 15-year-old Mohammed. We were even able to speak to Mohammed briefly, but he was apparently not that keen on hanging out with a bunch of seniors! I asked him what kind of music he listens to, and he responded that he doesn't listen to music. Perhaps he was just letting me know that he preferred not to discuss the subject with me.

Dieneba, however, seemed eager and proud to share her culture and experiences. Susan experienced Ramadan with Dieneba and her family. We discussed some aspects of that holiday, which involve a month of fasting during the day and feasting in the evenings. Of course, prayers are also involved. Then Dieneba explained the four Tenets of Islam: declaration of faith, prayer, almsgiving and fasting during Ramadan.

Susan has helped Dieneba and her family navigate their lives and rights in the US, including Mohammed's right to pray during the school day at given times according to the Muslim faith. This means he has the right to carry with him a small prayer rug, which he can take into a private area to kneel and pray facing Mecca, even in school.

Dieneba shared a disturbing fact that Susan is the only person in their apartment complex who has extended friendship to the family. This is an important message for us to be more aware and sensitive to those around us whom we may unintentionally ignore.

We learned that Mali's primary languages are French (due to previous occupation) as well as several native languages. We also learned that Mali is famous for its great music and musicians. Our meeting ended with Dieneba playing some of this beautiful music for us. 🎵

In Memory of NNC Member Jeannette Goldstein

By Florence Seldes, NNC Member

Jeannette Goldstein passed in and out of my life for many decades. Neither one of us remembered how we met, but it was in the 1980s when we were both divorced mothers with young children, struggling to balance our lives between earning livings and raising our children. Jeannette was always more freewheeling and unconventional in how she went about earning a living and her lifestyle. When I first met her, she was employed as a cosmetician. She was originally from Egypt. Her mother was Armenian, and her father was an Egyptian Jew. Although not Catholic, she attended French Catholic schools as a child. I gathered that her life was comfortable until her father died when she was a teenage. Life changed abruptly for the family. They left Egypt, lived for a few years in France, and then moved to the US and Baltimore.

Jeannette's life was not easy when I met her, making it on her own with two children. But, it was clear that she was accustomed to and committed to surviving independently with whatever it took and with gusto!

Sometimes years would go by when we had no contact. Then, we would run into each other somewhere, accidentally, and catch up with each other's lives. And we would take it from there--no recriminations, no apologies.

Once, around Thanksgiving, I was going through a rough time. It was one of those times that I ran into Jeannette. When she found out that I had no plans for Thanksgiving,

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Who's Who?

Sherrie Cohen

By Anne Shimanovich, Aging in Community, Program Director

Sherrie Cohen and I started our conversation for this article at NNC's May Village Gathering, and it was such a great talk that we had to continue with Part 2 the next day. It was suitable that the interview began at a Village Gathering, because it was one year ago that Sherrie first spotted NNC while she was walking the hallway of Myerberg. She saw our sign-up table outside the Frosberg Room, asked what was going on and was invited to join us. She says she had such a great time and felt so welcome that she joined NNC on the spot! Sherrie has been an indispensable NNC member ever since. Her warmth and her willingness to help and befriend others makes her someone we all want to know.

Born and bred in Baltimore, Sherrie grew up in Silver Creek and graduated from Milford Mill High School. She recalls having a very happy

childhood, belonging to B'nai B'rith, attending dances, dinners and overnights. There were not many restrictions in those days; times were more carefree than they are today. After graduating from Catonsville Community College, she began work as a medical secretary. That career spanned more than 40 years, and she worked in a variety of fields including OB/gyn, cardiology, pediatrics and orthopedics. If you have any medical questions, talking to Sherrie might be a good place to start!

Sherrie is married with four grown children, and her family is her pride and joy. She tells of the truly "bashert" (providential) way she met her husband, Steven. Her mom was looking to purchase a house at the same time Steven was searching. Unbeknownst to the other, they were using the same real estate agent. The agent suggested that this man meet Sherrie. Mom took it from there, and they've been together ever since.

Their family has a tradition of passing down recipes. Her grandmother taught her mother how to cook, who passed those recipes down to Sherrie. Sherrie passed those same recipes down to her own children.



Sherrie Cohen

Now they all share the delicious food together for the holidays.

Now retired, Sherrie and Steven enjoy taking cruises. They have been to Alaska, Curacao and the Caribbean. They have plans to visit Australia and New Zealand once Steven retires.

I asked Sherrie what she has learned that allows her to go through life with her warm smile and positive outlook. She said she thinks we need to be patient and listen to one another and move through and accept what can't be changed. She says that she thinks she was blessed with broad shoulders and a big heart. I think we can all agree with that. 🗨️

Jeannette Goldstein continued from p.13

she invited me to a ceremony in the country for the "Blessing of the Animals." It was amazing. From there, she invited me to Thanksgiving dinner with her large extended family and friends, none of whom I had ever met.

The next time Jeannette and I ran into each other, she was involved in selling merchandise, such as jewelry, scarves, hats, trinkets and other accessories, at fairs and other events. It was hard work, traveling to New York to pick up merchandise, loading and unloading her car and setting up tables and kiosks. The work was physically taxing and tedious. But she was truly in her element. Maybe it was her Middle

Eastern roots, which cultivated an appreciation for sparring in the art of wheeling and dealing. I think she was very reluctant to give it up when she finally retired.

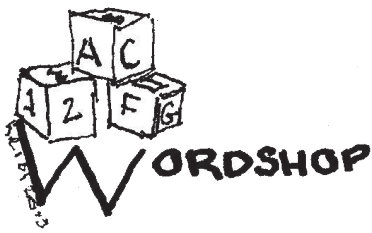
But retirement did not slow her down. She continued attending as many parties, concerts, museums and karaoke sessions as she could fit in each 24-hour day. And she was everyone's social director. She would call me up, beginning with her iconic, "Listen!" Then, she would rattle off all the upcoming events. When attending one event, she was already planning for the next event.

Jeannette continued her "energizing bunny" persona till the very end. As she grew older, she faced the inevi-

table numerous illnesses, falls and broken bones that we all face as we grow older. But after each illness and fall, she picked herself up and kept on going--to the parties and concerts and museums--and maybe her favorite: karaoke! She was so relentless that we all thought that she was indestructible--that she would go on forever.

And maybe most important, Jeannette was unpretentious. She did what she wanted to do and did not seem to worry about others' opinions, which is truly rare.

Jeannette is someone I always expected to have somewhere in my life; it is difficult and unnatural not to have her around. 🗨️



Wordshop is your chance to share your creativity and inner thoughts with the community. Send your poems, jokes and stories to Northwest Neighbors Connecting, care of Eileen Creeger at ecreeger@chaibaltimore.org or 5809 Park Heights Ave., Baltimore, MD 21215.

Oh Little Bumble Bee*

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

Oh, little bumble bee
Flitting in my tree
Why won't you leave
And let us be?

Can't you see
Its flowers are gone
But you knew this
Would happen all along

And yet you persist
Flying in and out
Upsetting the neighbors
And hearing them shout.

Making your nest
In our eaves
What other tricks
Are up your sleeves?

Here comes hubby
With his can of Raid
Oh, little bumble bee
Aren't you afraid?

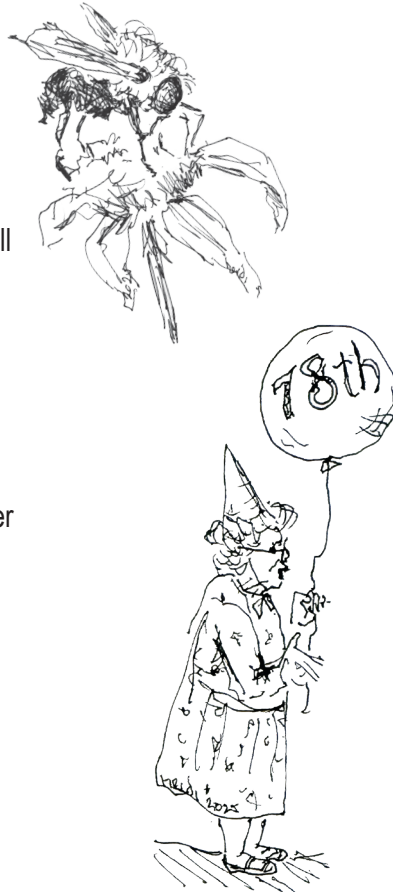
If you resist
And continue to thrive
Who else should we call
To rid us of your hive?

Exterminators abound
And they hate pests
Should they kill
My unwanted guests?

Or, let you live
Nature's organic wonder
So you can continue
Your nectar plunder.

And will you live
Another season?
To harm you
What is my reason?

Letting nature
Take its course
Your existence
I should endorse.



On My 78th Birthday*

By Ada Strausberg

Today's my birthday, I'm 78
At least I'm good, if not quite great.
Parts of me are somewhat flabby
The rest of me is not too shabby.
I'm upright, moving, still alive
All quite a feat, means I've survived.
Many are not in a very good state
Some passed through the pearly gate
Or are not well and doing poorly.
Perhaps their lives are lacking sorely.
I'm very grateful; say thanks most days
Then go about my usual ways.
Each day is a new blank page
I try to fill it, kind and sage.

**reprinted from womensmusings.com*



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ISSUE 54 | SUMMER 2025

Correction from Spring issue: Congratulations to Helene Miller, on celebrating another happy birthday (81!) in March, loving life and keeping active!

Eli Creeger, son of Eileen & Ken Creeger, on being nominated as a 2025 Outstanding Educator by the Jewish Educational Services of Baltimore.

Jack Creeger, grandson of Eileen & Ken Creeger, on being selected to play on the Wellwood Baseball Little League All-Star team.

Sadie Creeger, granddaughter of Eileen & Ken Creeger, on graduating from Beth Tfiloh kindergarten.

Ofelia Apter, on the birth of a great-grandson, Teddy, and marriage of her grandson Harrison Cohn.

Brandon Scott, grandson of Barbara Scott, is currently in Dallas, Texas for the summer. He was selected by Wells Fargo for an internship!

Rosalind Griffin for being recognized again by the Pro Bono Counseling Program on May 14, 2025, at its annual gathering. She received a gift certificate for \$50 from Home Depot for gardening supplies and plants (just what the doctor ordered!). At the auction, she bid and won a gift package from Mission Barbecue. In addition to grilling tools, she received tickets for two sandwiches. Most important was being recognized for having provided services for over 100 clients during her work with Pro Bono Counseling!

Milestone Moments