



Caring Hearts



and

Helping Hands

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Here's to Hope and New Beginnings



The Keys to Finding Love at Any Age



Photo illustration by Elena Scotti; Getty Image

Successful dating requires sensible expectations, says expert Francine Russo

By Christine Fellingham
Published June 24, 2021

When she says that finding love is possible at any age, twice-widowed Francine Russo speaks from experience.

"You don't have to be young, highly attractive or rich. You just have to be emotionally ready and willing to work at it," says Russo, 74, who, as a journalist focusing on psychology, has written for *Time*, *The Atlantic* and *Scientific American*. Her book, *Love After 50*, shares her journey, intertwined with anecdotes and research culled from interviews.

We caught up with Russo to learn her insights on finding and keeping love.

Q: A year of isolation has many people feeling socially awkward. What can you say to help them?

A: If you decide you're emotionally ready, then I say, get rid of that old pandemic hair and those sweatpants! Get a great outfit that makes you feel fabulous. And enjoy the fact that, hey, you're going to have a lot of adrenaline flowing and everything will be new again. Go to restaurants, be across the table from another human being — you're going to enjoy that, even if this person isn't someone you're going to fall in love with. Just enjoy life unfolding again.

Q: So, it's not superficial to focus on the hair and the outfit before you get back out there?

At this stage of life, you don't have to pick a mate who'll be a good parent or who can help you provide financially for your family. Your only consideration is to pick someone with whom you can have a truly loving relationship for who you are now, the person you have become.

A: No, because you don't need to be thin or gorgeous or young to be dating, but you do need to feel like your best self. I'm past 70. Sometimes I look in the mirror and I say, "Oh, no." But sometimes I will get a new haircut, I will put on some makeup, and I will wear a great blouse and go out feeling confident. Whatever your best self is, go for it.

Q: Do you think that some people, having lived through the isolation of the early pandemic, may experience more joy in dating than they'd felt before COVID hit?

A: I think people will definitely feel this. Many have experienced loneliness through COVID and are missing what a real partner could have given them. They miss companionship and just talking to someone else and seeing another face. And if you get to the point where you hold hands and hug, that's even better.

Q: You say that we can have our best sex after 50. But how is this possible?

A: I don't mean movie sex! I mean the most intimate, collaborative sex of your life. You and your partner work together. You talk more. You tell each other what you can do and can't do. It's more vulnerable, more intimate and more caring. Younger sex is performative; it's not necessarily an intimate act. But it's incredible the kind of sensations you can have if you explore each other's bodies. It doesn't have to involve intercourse. Sex is about fun and touching and being erotic. It's

amazing what you can experience. The more I talk to people, the more I find there is hope for all of us.

Q: You write that we can widen our dating pool by narrowing our demands. But doesn't that mean we'd be compromising?

A: Suppose that you're with someone who does not check off a whole bunch of the boxes you have. This person does not have an important job, doesn't share your love of travel or baseball. But suppose this person really gets you and doesn't judge. This person is somebody who actually wants to hear about your day. Is that settling? I don't think so. I think you've found a great relationship.

Q: Why do you believe we're more likely to find deep love after 50?

A: Research has found that older adults are more emotionally stable and more focused on the positive. At this stage of life, you don't have to pick a mate who'll be a good parent or who can help you provide financially for your family. Your only consideration is to pick someone with whom you can have a truly loving relationship for who you are now, the person you have become.

Q: Where is the best place to find someone?

A: I have heard stories of accidental meetings — on an Uber ride, at church or at a gym. So being out in the world, and emotionally open, is good. But most people find that online dating gives them the greatest choice of people they wouldn't have met otherwise.

Q: How do we figure out which traits we require and those we can live without?

A: There's a hilarious chapter in the book about two 70-year-old guys. One had a short list and met someone immediately. The other wanted a woman who was attractive, 10 years younger than he was, outdoorsy, cultured, educated. He had a very particular list. And he had no luck. And women do exactly the same thing. Well, he eventually went back to one of the also-rans. She was a little older. And he said, "Well, she's outdoorsy." And guess

what! They're still together; they've been together for three years.

Q: How do you know it's right?

A: At our age we often say, "Let's be monogamous for a while to see how we work together." I call it try-a-relationship. It doesn't take very long. Because at our age you find out very quickly whether this person is right. As one therapist told me, "Older people get better at catch and release."

Q: What about those of us who are in long-term relationships? How do we continue to keep those growing and exciting?

A: There's a limited amount of time we have left with our partner. Neither of us is going to change our basic character all that much. We can grow and we can renegotiate, but we need to be forgiving of each other's flaws. You've experienced so much life — maybe divorce, illnesses. You've had losses.

You've seen what the big blows are in life. So, with any disagreement, any annoying habit, you have to ask yourself, "How important is this particular thing compared with the relationship I have?"

Happy couples tell me over and over:

"I let it go."



Read this article online:

<https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/info-2021/finding-love-at-any-age.html>

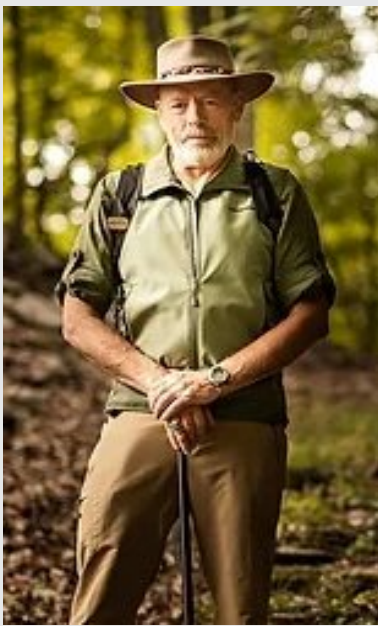
Thanks to AARP

HALFWAY TO SPRING, Waghkonk Notes, February, 2024

with

“Ranger” Dave Holden

Woodstock Trail Master



POLAR WINDS PLUNGE over the southeast Catskills, freezing all before them and casting frosty whiteness about as they continue to bring real winter down to Waghkonk.

The desiccated and sere husks of last season’s Beebalm, Goldenrod and Milkweed, bent by those gusts, seem to nod in agreement. The peaceful White Pines and the wise northern Oaks also bow before the all-powerful North Wind - for it rules this time. It is both King and Queen here and now and all pledge obeisance to its frozen might. Even us supposedly all-powerful humans cannot stop the Power from the Pole. The most that we can do is to deflect its wrath with our little ramparts of wood or stone, desperately chinking our walls - our armor, as it were - trying (with varying degrees of success) to defend our little dwellings from one of the unstoppable forces of nature.

Considering that December had mostly above-average temperatures, January has been somewhat of a shock, slamming us with the

afore-mentioned winds and snows, as well as below-average temperatures thus far. Who knows? Maybe this is the coldest weather that we’ll see. Right. Think positive I always say. One thing is for sure - we’ll find out.

HALFWAY TO SPRING -

We are at the halfway point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. The Celts celebrated this time as *Imbolc* (February 1-2), the years First Cross-Quarter Day. It is a time for celebrating the visible lengthening of days. Also celebrated as *Groundhogs Day* or *Candlemas*. The Mayans noted this moment on the Great Wheel as did Native Americans at Cahokia and at Anasazi.

THE SNOW MOON -

February can still be as challenging as January for all creatures. In North America and the other coldest parts of the Northern Hemisphere, this is traditionally the time of the greatest snowfall (though Climate Change is throwing its monkey-wrench into it, as it is with everything). Even though the days are noticeably longer, and they bring more light, it is still at a low enough angle that it doesn’t have much effect for melting and warming. Many tribes in the northeast called this month the Snow Moon, but it is also appropriately called the Hunger Moon because many creatures (people included) could go hungry in these harsh conditions. It was also called the Bear Moon because this is when Black Bear cubs are usually born, their mother still

asleep. The cubs know where to find her milk (even though their eyes aren't open yet) and they all wait in the den for a few more weeks.



ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS - Insects hide half-frozen under bark and leaf, also waiting (like us) for warmth and light. Sometimes in winter thaw, insects will hatch, responding to sunshine, providing a momentary change in menu for myriad small-birds, fluffed up with down. Beneath the protective snow-cover (White-tail Deer will decimate any bud, no matter how small, if not sheltered by frozen white), the wildflowers, the Spring Ephemerals, are just bursting to jump back into life. The snow also provides warmth and shelter to populations of small rodents. One detrimental effect of this - as many growers of fruit-trees well know - is that the small creatures love to gnaw off the delicate bark of shrub and tree, girdling them. This is why people have learned to wrap these saplings preventatively.

The true hibernators are out there, too, - turtles and Woodchucks, for example - just biding their time. Wild Turkeys hole up in thickets, on branches above the ground, venturing out during the day to scrounge seeds (or anything else edible) on the surface of the snow. Their

biggest threat are the Coyotes and Foxes who will try to grab an ill, old or very young bird. It is hoped that any extreme cold will slow the spread of certain serious regional invasive insects: the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, responsible for large Hemlock die-offs (see www.hwa.org) and Deer Ticks, the main host for Lyme Disease. Unfortunately, it probably has not been cold enough to negatively impact Emerald Ash-Borer (EAB), which is destroying most of our beautiful White Ash trees.

Now is the time for us to give the Small Birds a helping hand by putting out bird-seed, since many of their winter foods are covered in ice and snow. Black Bear, which only naps (not truly hibernating) may wake hungry during a thaw and home in on one's bird-feeder, so please pay attention and consider bringing your feeder in if the weather warms. Hard to believe right now but spring probably is literally just around the corner.

IT'S THE JOURNEY, NOT THE DESTINATION -

I love my journey with you all, us spiraling around the Sun, Homeward-bound on our beautiful, blue orb. I'm not sure exactly what our destination is but I believe the journey itself - and how we conduct ourselves on that journey - is what is important. And winter is the time that is the greatest challenge to all of us, the time when our conduct in how we treat



each other - and ourselves - is the most important. It is a challenging time for us all, some more than others. The challenge for the strong is to help those that are weak and the challenge for the weak is to let those that are stronger at the moment help them. Next time someone is angry or upset seemingly over nothing, or the other driver is rude or inattentive, they might be depressed from family problems (common in this season) or from SAD (seasonal affective disorder) - also not uncommon right now. We all need to be a little extra patient with each other. Just because someone else goes off on us, doesn't mean we have to respond in kind. Again, I believe it's not the destination that's important but how we get there - the Journey.

THE START OF A NEW YEAR, THE EDGE OF A NEW TIME, THE LIGHT RETURNS -

It's true. Not only is the last year past, after another spin around the sun, but also a new solar year has begun as the days get noticeably lighter. Alright, I admit that I'm probably making it a little better than it is, but that's how I see things. Someone once asked me if I looked at "the glass" as "half-full" or "half-empty". I said, "what glass?". No, really. I'm an eternal optimist. I see the glass (if any) as full, believing that life is brimming around us, even in winter, lying dormant, just waiting for a chance to grow. Yes, it's another Catskills Winter Roller-Coaster of Chills, Thrills and Spills, offering us not only danger and perils aplenty but also a starkly-beautiful landscape, sculpted sometimes in gleaming ice and curving snow. So let's all enjoy it as best as we can, getting into the woods and onto the trails and observe our yearly frigid desert and its landscape of alternating drabness then sparkling whiteness and light.

Thank you all, "Ranger" Dave Holden

"Ranger" David Holden, is a New York State DEC Licensed Hiking Guide and has many years experience on Woodstock trails, old and new.

His love of nature and living off the land was fostered by his father, Hu Holden, from whom he learned at an early age to appreciate natural living and nature in its fullest sense.

He will show you beautiful places in Woodstock that regular trail hikers miss.

You can reach Dave in many ways:
(845)594-4863

woodstocktrails@gmail.com



Woodstock Trails on Facebook



rangerdaveholden on
Instagram

Dave's Book "Dreams & Visions" can be purchased at the Golden Notebook, H. Houst & Sons in Woodstock or directly from him by email.

DREAMS & VISIONS



Art & Poetry by Dave Holden



Serving the
Mid-Hudson Valley's
Elder-Communities
of All Faiths

- *Elder-Abuse Advocacy (E-MDT)*
- *Home-Based Therapeutic Services and Advocacy*
- *Support Groups for Caregivers*
- *Bereavement Support Groups*
- *Relief for Caregivers (REST Program)*
- *Compassionate Phone Calls*
- *Grocery Shopping Assistance*
- *Driving to Medical Appointments (Neighbor to Neighbor)*
- *Holocaust Survivor Advocacy*
- *Yard/Home Maintenance Assistance*



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF ULSTER COUNTY

280 WALL STREET, 2ND FL. ♦ KINGSTON, NY 12401
PHONE: (845) 338-2980 ♦ FAX: (845) 331-4875
JFS.ULSTER@GMAIL.COM ♦ WWW.JFSULSTER.ORG



The E-MDT Corner

With Nick Morris
E-MDT HUB Coordinator

Dear Colleagues,

We are proud to introduce the **Elder Abuse Enhanced Multidisciplinary Team (E-MDT)** initiative, a significant step forward in our commitment to safeguarding the well-being of older adults in our community.

Understanding E-MDT

The E-MDT is a collaborative effort designed to address and prevent all forms of elder abuse, including financial, physical, psychological, sexual abuse, and neglect. This initiative brings together professionals from Adult Protective Services, the Office for the Aging, law enforcement, district attorney's offices, and specialty service providers such as forensic accountants, mental health

professionals, and civil legal attorneys. The composition of each E-MDT may vary based on local community programs and services.

The Role of the E-MDT Coordinator

Central to the E-MDT is the Coordinator, who oversees administrative and clinical operations, reviews cases, and determines the appropriate course of action. Cases can be referred by any professional or agency working with individuals over the age of 60 suspected or known to be victims of a crime.

E-MDT Process:

From Referral to Resolution

The E-MDT follows a structured process:

Referral:

Cases are referred to the E-MDT Coordinator by professionals or agencies aiding victims over 60.

Intake:

The Coordinator assesses each referral for E-MDT review.

Notification:

Eligible cases are presented to the E-MDT.

Case Presentation:

The referral source presents the case at an **E-MDT meeting.**

Case Discussion:

E-MDT members discuss, request information, and suggest potential interventions.

Recommendations:

The team adopts recommendations, including resource and referral options.

Summary and Follow-Up: The Coordinator summarizes the team's recommendations and members follow through on identified actions.

Our Commitment

This initiative underscores our dedication to the safety and dignity of elderly individuals in our community. We encourage all team members to familiarize themselves with the E-MDT process and actively participate in this crucial effort. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of those who have contributed so much to our society.

Aging is a process, and we're here to help.

- Jewish Family Services

The E-MDT has unique partnership with forensic accountants, forensic geriatric psychiatrists, and civil attorneys. It also draws upon the expertise of professionals from aging services, Dept. of Social Services, community agencies, law

- Forensic Accountants
- Forensic Geriatric Psychiatrists
- Civil Attorneys
- Office for the Aging
- Adult Protective Services
- State and Local Law Enforcement and Sheriff's Department
- The District Attorney's Office
- County Department of Social Services
- Jewish Family Services
- Financial Institutions, and
- Non-Profits and other Community Agencies.

Contact Nick at:

Main Office: (845) 338-2980

NMorris@jfsulster.org



Remote Patient Monitoring Scams: The New York StateWide Senior Action Council's “Medicare Fraud of the Month”

ALBANY, N.Y., Jan. 16, 2024 /PRNewswire/
— The New York StateWide Senior Action
Council (StateWide),

“Remote patient monitoring is the use of digital technologies to collect health data from patients in one location and electronically transmit that information securely to providers in a different location (data can include vital signs, blood pressure or pacemaker information). Equipment can include glucose monitors, blood pressure cuffs, cardiac rhythm devices, and other devices,” explained Maria Alvarez, Executive Director of StateWide.

Some RPM tactics Scammers may use
Include:

- Scammers sign up Medicare enrollees for RPM services and deliver monitoring equipment regardless of medical necessity.
- Contact may include using text, phone, email, internet ads, and often are from a durable medical equipment company or pharmacy.

Billing might be listed under different care management services or behavioral health services.

Most often, the monitoring never happens, but the enrollee is still billed monthly.

To protect seniors from RPM scams Alvarez advises the following:

- Check Medicare Statements for claims that reference “remote monitoring” or office visits that did not take place.
- If unordered medical equipment is delivered, refuse delivery
- Keep a record of the sender’s name and date you returned the item.
- Do not disclose Medicare information to anyone except for your provider’s office.
- Be sure YOUR doctor has assessed your condition and prescribes the services or equipment being provided.

Seniors or their caregivers can report Medicare Card Scams by calling the NYS

Senior Medicare Patrol at 800-333-4374.

Make sure you have any information relating to the violation including the name of the person you spoke to, the date, and any other details about the incident.

Seniors can also call an Outreach Counselor for a free and confidential appointment to discuss their situation and review plan options. The New York StateWide Senior Action Council can assist with Medicare questions, plan comparisons, appeals and billing issues, Medicare Fraud, and Patient's Rights by calling StateWide at 800-333-4374 for free.

It is estimated that Medicare fraud costs taxpayers over \$60 billion dollars nationally per year. To help combat this illicit industry StateWide announced its Fraud of the Month program in 2022 to highlight these scams being perpetrated on the State's seniors.

View original

content:<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/remote-patient-monitoring-scams-the-new-york-statewide-senior-action-councils-medicare-fraud-of-the-month-302035065.html>

SOURCE New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc. an organization dedicated to advocacy for the rights of seniors in New York State, today announced its Medicare Fraud of the Month for January, Remote Patient Monitoring Scams (RPM)

Speak to one of StateWide's certified counselors today. **Call 800-333-4374.**

The StateWide Fraud of the Month is a component of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), the definitive resource for New York State's senior citizens and caregivers to detect, prevent, and report healthcare fraud, errors, and abuse. StateWide is New

by New York StateWide Senior Action Council Team



The Gift of RESPITE

The Importance of the REST Program

Respite programs provide planned short-term and time-limited breaks for families and other unpaid caregivers of children and adults with disabilities or cognitive loss in order to support and maintain the primary caregiving relationship. Respite also provides a positive experience for the person receiving care. When you look after someone who's sick or disabled, it's a 24-hour job. You need a break from time to time to look after your own needs. That's where respite care can help. Your breaks can be as long or short as you need them to be.

The Gift of Respite

Since so many are already providing respite to members of their own churches and/ or community organizations, in order to recognize and respect existing communities, the REST Program has a gift of free training and ongoing resource support to offer to all.

The Respite Training

The three content areas of the Respite Training are the Role, the Tools and the Rules. The Role discusses the professional approach to providing respite. The Tools provide tips and tried strategies to make the role effective. The Rules



provide both federal and state guidelines for the role as well as the organization's own requirements. The training is very interactive as it is designed to be a team builder. It is about 6 hours in length and can be held in person or on zoom. Quarterly or semi-annual follow-up sessions with participants have a theme based on feedback to address issues that arise.

The Resources:

Participants can always reach out to the REST Program Coordinator who is a Master's prepared nurse for advice. The Coordinator will assist participants in accessing local resources.

Contact: Judith Bromley RN, MS

REST Program Project Manager

1-845-559-5656

judithbromley417@gmail.com



Our Support Groups:

Shared Stories and Shared Healing

with Judith Bromley

What do people talk about at these groups (caregivers and grief)?

- ◆ They share their stories of the journey through the often difficult to map and difficult to negotiate caregivers' path and that of the newly bereft.
- ◆ Shared stories of strategies to work with care recipients' resistance with humor and understanding.
- ◆ Shared stories of where and how to find resources such as help with the endless paperwork required to access any additional home care
- ◆ Shared stories of their impressions of nursing homes they have visited and used for respite or ongoing care
- ◆ Shared stories of anticipatory grief for the loss of their loved one and actual grief when their loved dies
- ◆ Shared stories of how to downsize and consciously distribute belongings
- ◆ Shared stories of how to negotiate the new role of a single person and thoughts about what to call this role
- ◆ Shared stories of days that seem endless until some small and random act of kindness brightens it again
- ◆ Shared stories of days that seem endless until some small awakening or return consciousness of the person they care for occurs
- ◆ Shared stories of finding themselves and their inner resilience while being part of these groups

One Caregiver's Story:

"I am OK. The waves of sadness are softer now. Something has been bothering me though. When I am filling in forms now for things I need or things that need to be done after he died, they give you choices that don't fit. Am I single or married or divorced?"

I was single so many years ago before I was married. I was just a kid then and that's not who I am now. But now it is just me. So what is that going to feel like, to be like? So much of who I thought I was had to do with who he thought I was.

He died so am I still married? We had been married for 54 years so am I no longer married?

We need to find a new word for this new state of being.

What does it mean to be a widow in 2023? Widows were avoided in the past. Are they still removed from society? I want to join in again. As a caregiver, I have been divorced from society.

We need to find new ways to describe this place"

Judith Bromley is a Masters prepared psychiatric nurse with more than 30 years of experience in the field. She has been a professional staff developer as well as an adjunct professor of nursing at the Associates and Bachelor's levels. She developed and directed a women-to-women mentoring program currently known as Raising Hope.

In 2019, she became Director of the REST Companion Program through Jewish Family Services. The REST Program trains volunteers to become in-home companions for elderly persons. The mission of the program is to restore dignity to elders who are isolated in the community and reconnect them with meaningful relationships that honor their stories and the richness of their lives. We are in the process of recruiting volunteers as well as interviewing new participants.

Judith is a consultant for the Office of Aging, Jewish Family Services and Catskill Neighbors. She facilitates caregiver groups and a grief group. These groups are currently via zoom and open to all.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Each group will be conducted by Telephone or Zoom.
The Group Leader will provide you with the number or the link
once you have signed up for a meeting.



Caregiver Support Groups

Zoom Conference - Judith Bromley

Every 1st and 3rd Monday each month
9:30- 11 a.m.

Every 2nd and 4th Monday each month
12:30 PM- 2:00 pm

Telephone conference - Donna Weintraub

1st Thursday each month
2 PM



Bereavement Support Groups

Telephone Conference - Donna Weintraub

Every 1st & 3rd Monday each Month
4:30 PM

Zoom Conference - Judith Bromley

Every 2nd & 4th Thursday each Month
1:00 PM

Contact: Judith Bromley MS, RN
1-845-559-5656
judithbromley417@gmail.com



SUPPORT GROUPS TESTIMONIALS

There are so many things that our parents and communities prep us for as we are growing up. Caregiving is not particularly one of those items. Occasionally we have the opportunity to see others do caregiving but generally it is from afar, perhaps watching a caregiver or nurse helping as we are coming and going during our day to day routines.

It wasn't until 6 years ago that I became a caregiver. This time to my post-stroke husband. The experience has been nothing like child-rearing which was my only personal experience caregiving.

It was a shock to me at how ill-prepared I was for the task and how alone I felt while my family and friends were all still immersed in their careers. Where do you turn first? How do you learn the skills that you need? And how do you help your care receiver, not with the medical issues, but with social issues that are day to day.

I joined the JFS Caregivers Support Group at the urging of a friend. It has been life changing for me. Not only have I learned to negotiate the difficult medical and social paths, I have bonded with an amazing collection of empathetic and strong individuals who help celebrate the victories, and lift me up when I feel defeated.

Though we meet biweekly, I am so grateful for this group and our facilitator everyday.

Sincerely,
Hannah Scarpati

I have been attending the Bereavement Support Group with Judith Bromley for about 8 months, since the passing of my beloved life-partner in December of 2020. His loss, and the grief that followed, has ushered in perhaps the darkest period of my life. I felt as if I was dying alive and helpless and hopeless. However, the sharings of others at the Zoom meetings enabled me to see how much in common I had with others' losses, even though the circumstances may have been different. After a while I began to find ways to see I had inner strength and resources that I had forgotten I had - and have since learned to live with the grief while putting one foot in front of the other and finding new joys in friendships and the daily, necessary tasks of life. I am so grateful to Judith and all the participants who attend the Bereavement Support Group.

- Jay

I first met Judith Bromley in the caregiver group that she was leading back in 2017. My husband was in a nursing home, and her support and wisdom in leading this community group was

Just knowing that a group of strangers come together as caregivers to support, listen, share and uplift one another is very inspirational for me. I've found a voice with fellow caregivers. While our situations are all very different, our empathy and dedication to purpose are lightning rods to help us as we journey forward.

Kathleen Furman

My JFS support group has been like a lifeline to me. Our group has developed a strong caring bond among the members and it is a wonderful feeling to have such a safe place to speak twice a month while going through this awful process of watching someone disappear.

Sara

Our caregivers' group has saved my sanity for years. The guidance and knowledge of our facilitator along with the support of women in similar situations is invaluable. It provides time for exchanging resources, comfort, close listening and tears. And love.

Lady T.

instrumental for me, in getting support and guidance. When he was able to come home in 2020, and was able to pass in our home, in 2021, I was able to benefit again from joining the Grief group that she was offering. The way she makes sure that each person is given the space to report and reflect on this personal grief journey, and holds the container space with respect and compassion for each person, is again a great benefit to me at this time. Thank you for supporting her to provide this care for the community - all the participants who attend the Bereavement Support Group.

- MH

I feel very safe to speak openly about my experience with members in the grief group. Everyone has been very kind and participated in active listening and acceptance. They are a very supportive group of people who understand and relate to the various pains and experiences that we go through in life after the passing of a loved one. It means a lot to be seen, heard, and understood.

- S

The Writer's Corner



*Jill Rachel Jacobs
and
Carole Bergman*

Confessions of a Reluctant Zebra

by Jill Rachel Jacobs

“When you hear hoofbeats in the night, look for horses—not zebras.”

—Dr. Theodore Woodward



I can see the teapot from my bed, about ten steps away, another eight to the bathroom. Normally this sort of information would be of little interest to me, but more recently, my world has gotten very small.

In fact, most days my world is not much bigger than the six-by-four-foot bed I've been relegated to. It's not a bad bed, really. It's clean, comfortable. Yet, it's becoming dangerously close to defining the parameters of my existence.

And that's the problem.

Come to think of it, I never really would have spent much time thinking about beds at all.

But then again, why would I?

Still, beds are rather amazing, don't you think? Each possesses a unique history all its own—in which lives are conceived and lost, vows are made, promises broken and spirits renewed.

But back to the bed that concerns me most, my bed.

So here I am, having spent days, weeks, months (years) in this bed plotting my escape.

But illness demands more than a floor plan when it comes to successful egress.

Anyway, lying here horizontally seems to lend itself more to dreams and metaphors than to pragmatic agendas.

Like today, if I wasn't stuck in the supine position, I never would have thought twice about that spider on my ceiling. I probably wouldn't have even noticed it was there.

Instead, I have spent considerable time in the wee hours of this crisp, November morning considering the fate of a little bug that made a wrong turn and somehow ended up here.

And I found myself identifying with an insect stuck in a spider's spindly web.

Because I do feel trapped in a circumstance that seems devoid of anything remotely certain, most importantly, a future.

Of course, it's my life I'm rooting for, and my glimpse of freedom that I must hold onto.

And I try to hold onto dreams, too, beautifully woven, tightly wrapped; those forgotten gifts that allow the soul to breathe once more.

Is it better to dream in color, or not to dream at all?

I don't know. I'm beginning to wonder if dreams are merely a luxury reserved for those living in the well world.

For now, these drifting thoughts weave in and out, like billowy, marshmallow clouds, hovering just

above the surface of my make-shift entombment, as I try to imagine life outside the front door, just 12 steps away.

But I still believe it's possible for that little bug to disentangle itself from the spider's proverbial web, even though the odds may seem dramatically against it.

Of course, it's my life I'm rooting for, and my glimpse of freedom that I must hold onto.

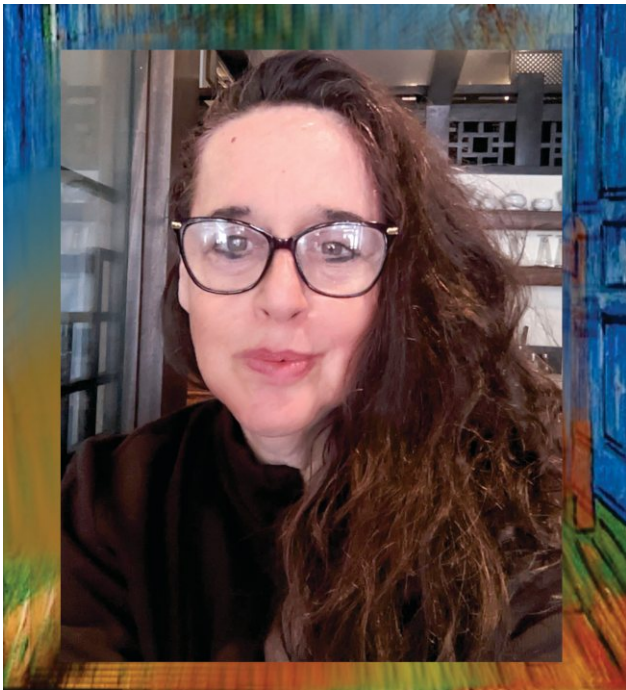
And I try to hold on to the promise of tomorrow, which will surely arrive as it did today, in all its glory and splendor, as the winter's night sky begins to peel back and opens wide, light pours in, enveloping the earth like warm butterscotch.

Illumination.

Anticipation.

Resignation.

We begin again.



Jill Rachel Jacobs

Ms. Jacobs is a New York based writer whose publishing credits include:

The New York Times, Reuters, The NY Post, The Independent, The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, The Los Angeles Times, The San Francisco Chronicle, Newsday, The Chicago Sun Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Huffington Post, Thrive Global, Organic Style, The Chicago Tribune, NPR's Marketplace and Morning Edition.

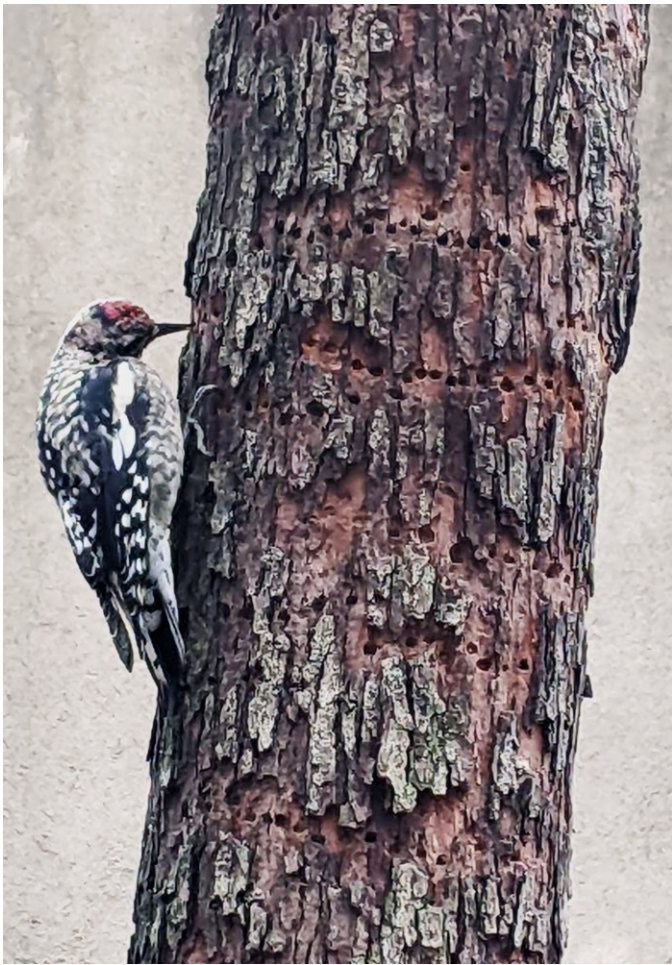
Contact Jill: jillian3335@gmail.com

The Writer's Discerning Lens ...

A sampling of writer Jill Rachel Jacobs' beguiling photographs



Wilbur's Eye, Noble Pigeon Portrait, Pigeons Take Flight, Hazy Summer Harbor Pigeon Approaches, Mega Dog balances a car



Woodpecker creates face sculpture, Tulips in Garden, Pigeon greets us
Wilbur's soulful face





Good Morning Writers! with Carol Bergman

An advanced Writing Workshop on Zoom

My advanced private writing workshop --on Zoom, once a month-- will have an opening in January. Criteria for admission: workshop experience, six month commitment, time to read and critique submissions.

This group is limited to 6. I am in touch with everyone throughout the month, assign readings, and provide individual support. Ten pages a month, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt. and a 250 word work-in-progress statement.

At \$190 a month this is a bargain for those working on long projects, stuck in the middle of one, or eager to jump start something new in the presence of experienced writers and readers.

Testimonials can be found on my website and/or for those who do not know me, references upon request from current students.

I am also going to gather a new workshop of beginning/intermediate writers with less workshop experience, if any, who are eager to tell a story. If you are rusty, out of the writing habit, or have never tried writing as both a pleasure and a discipline, this less intense group may suit you. I will limit the number to 10. Introductory offer of \$185 a month.

Just a note that all the writers in my workshops experiment in different genres: memoir, haiku, dramatic writing, fiction, narrative nonfiction, op-eds, blogs, etc.

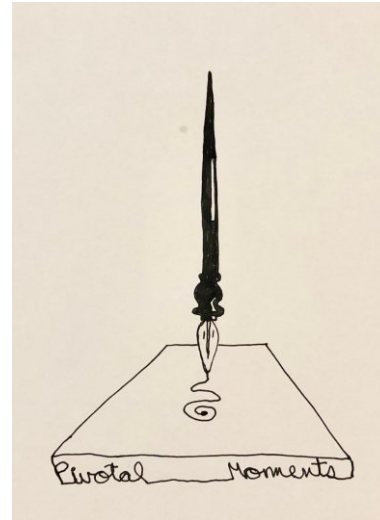


Illustration by Alex Baer, with thanks

Feel free to pass this announcement along and/or email me to set up a telephone interview if you are interested.

*All very best,
as ever,
Carol
Carol Bergman
www.carolbergman.net
www.mediacs.com*

Carol Bergman's journalism, narrative nonfiction, fiction and poetry has been published in numerous publications in the US, the UK, Australia, and Canada. "Objects of Desire," appearing in Lilith and Whetstone Literary Review was nominated for a Pushcart Prize in nonfiction. Another Day in Paradise; International Humanitarian Workers Tell Their Stories was nominated for the prestigious J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize. She is one of the founding faculty at Gotham Writers Workshop and taught in the NYU/SPS/CAIA writing from 1997-2020. She moved to the Mid-Hudson Valley in the spring of 2018 where she writes the occasional column for HV1, keeps a blog, and is the co-owner of Mediacs, an independent publishing company.

How To Recognize the Signs of Stroke

Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke. And, every four minutes, someone dies of a stroke. The sooner you receive treatment, the better your chance of survival. Knowing the warning signs of a stroke can be life-saving.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain becomes blocked or bursts. There are two different types of stroke: ischemic and hemorrhagic. About 87% of strokes are ischemic strokes. They occur when a blood clot blocks blood flow to the brain. A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a weakened blood vessel ruptures and bleeds into or around the brain. The blood builds up, and creates swelling and pressure.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for strokes. Being physically active, making healthy food choices and not smoking can help lower the risk for stroke.

Both types of stroke can deprive brain cells of oxygen. This can lead to permanent loss of speech, movement or memory. But, receiving prompt medical treatment may reduce the risk of these effects.

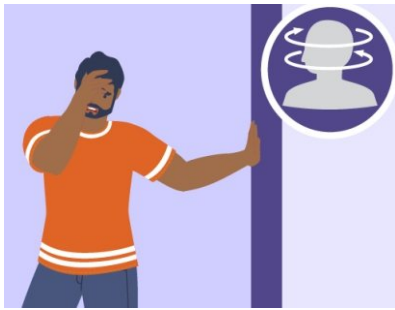
There is an easy acronym to help you spot the signs of a stroke: B.E. F.A.S.T.*

***BE FAST was developed by Intermountain Healthcare, as an adaptation of the FAST model implemented by the American Stroke Association. Reproduced with permission from Intermountain Healthcare. © 2011 Intermountain Healthcare. All rights reserved.**

B.E.F.A.S.T.

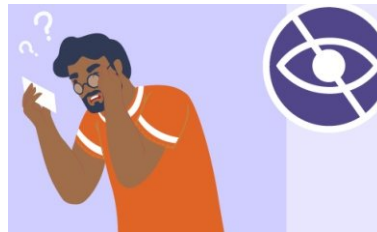
How To Recognize the Signs of Stroke

More than 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke each year. When you know what signs to look for, you can help someone having a stroke get the emergency medical help they need.



B: BALANCE

Do they have loss of balance or are they dizzy? Are they walking differently?



E: EYES

Can they see out of both eyes OK? Ask them if they have sudden vision loss or blurry or double vision.



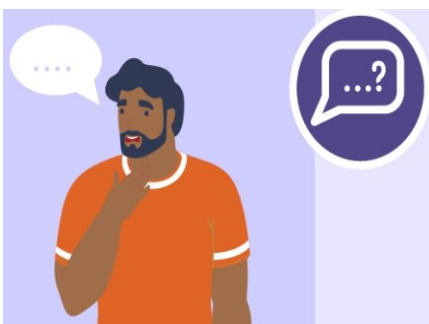
F: FACE

Does one side of their face look uneven or like it is drooping? Ask them if their face feels numb. Tell them to smile and check if their smile is uneven.



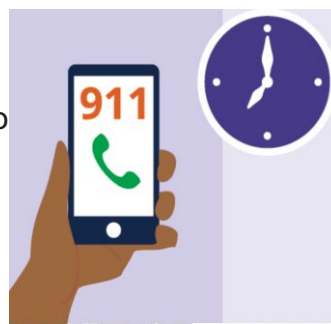
A: ARMS

Does one of their arms feel numb? Ask them to raise both arms and see if one arm drifts downward.



S: SPEECH

Is their speech hard to understand? Do they seem confused? Are they having trouble understanding you?



T: TIME TO CALL 911

If someone has any of these warnings, call 911. Note the time the first symptoms appeared, and share that information with the first responders.

B: Balance. Do they have loss of balance or are they dizzy? Are they walking differently?

E: Eyes. Can they see out of both eyes OK? Ask them if they have vision loss, or blurry or double vision.

F: Face. Does one side of their face look uneven or like it is drooping? Ask them if their face feels numb. Tell them to smile and check if their smile is uneven.

A: Arm. Does one of their arms feel numb? Ask them to raise both arms and see if one arm drifts downward.

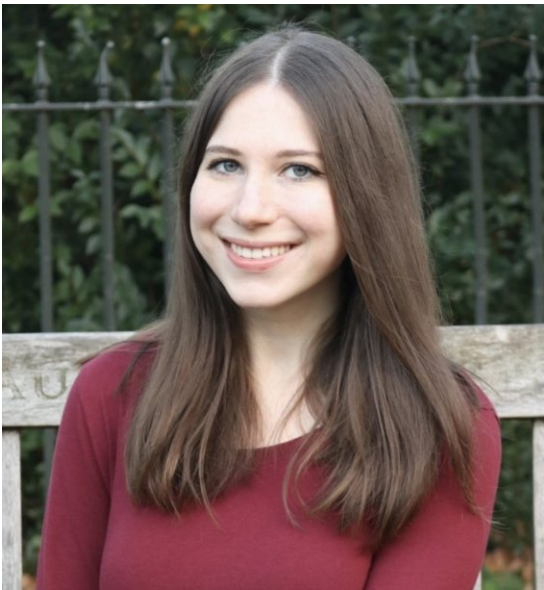
S: Speech. Is their speech hard to understand? Are they confused? Are they having trouble understanding you?

T: Time to call 911. If someone is showing any of these signs, call 911 right away. Note the time their first symptoms appeared, and share that information with first responders.

Courtesy of NorthWestern Medicine <https://www.nm.org/healthbeat/healthy-tips/stroke-warning-signs>

Meet Our Interns

JFS Ulsters welcomes new interns into our organization each new calendar year. They are students from local universities and become integral members of our team. They each bring their own diverse talents and skills and share their focus, dedication, and commitment to serving the community. We are grateful for their being with us.



EMILY SCHAFFER.

Emily is a graduate student at SUNY Albany pursuing her master's degree in social work. She has previously studied psychology at Vassar College and has been involved in various research studies. She is working toward becoming a psychotherapist to help her clients through any challenges they may face.

At JFS, Emily provides compassionate home visits/phone calls and participates in multiple support groups. She has gained an appreciation and passion for caring for older adults and looks forward to incorporating this population into her future endeavors.

SHANTI GRUMBINE

I am completing the MSW program at Ualbany in three years. This is my second year and my first field placement. At JFS, I see clients through the Home Visit and Compassionate Calls program. I also received a grant through AmeriCorps called SurvivorLink where I receive training through Arizona State University on Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. Through this program, I will be conducting three training sessions at JFS on the topic.



Becoming a social worker is a second career path for me. I have worked as a freelance visual artist in various media for the past twenty years. I aim to go through Somatic Experiencing training, build a private practice, and run groups using the Open Studio community art process developed by Pat Allen, Ph.D. while continuing my practice as an artist.

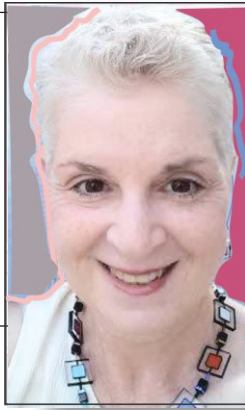
ERIN KENNEDY

I am a Social Welfare/ Public Health graduate student at the University at Albany (SUNY), in the last year of my program. I received my Sociology bachelor's with a minor in Deaf culture & heritage from SUNY New Paltz in 2021. My interests include rural public health, quality of life, and Deaf culture/community. I hope to stay in the Hudson Valley after graduation to pursue rural social welfare and public health concerns. At Jewish Family Services I work with the Neighbor to Neighbor program, getting donations for our volunteer drivers from Stewart's Shops for example. I also participate in compassionate calls/visits in the community.

RICHARD STAINES

After 23 years of teaching it was time to pursue my lifelong dream. I am enrolled at University of Albany for my Masters of Social Work with an expected graduation date of May 2026. My family and I live in the Kingston Area. We have resided in the Mid Hudson Valley for 9 years.





Gina's Vegetarian Kitchen

With Gina Valente

TASTY AND REFRESHING LEMON SNOWBALLS

A perfect light and sweet bite. With only four ingredients and no baking, it's easy too.



- 1 large lemon
- 11 oz. bag white chocolate chips
- 1 ½ cups almonds
- 1 ½ cups unsweetened coconut

STEPS

1



Grate the zest and juice the lemon into a large bowl.

2



Process the almonds to a fine flour

3



Melt the chips over a double boiler

4



Whisk the melted chips into the lemon

5



Add the almond flour and one cup coconut and stir until smooth

6



Roll the dough into 1 inch balls and roll into the rest of the coconut. Line up on a sheet; they will not spread. Refrigerate or freeze for at least one hour.



SERVE COOL OR COLD FOR BEST TEXTURE

It's Spring!

ACROSS

1. Big, heroic stories, such as "Lord of the Rings"
6. Nodded off
11. Courtroom event
12. Join together, like states
13. Spring
15. Spider's work
16. "Enchanted" girl in a 2004 movie
20. One who hands out poker cards
25. Spring
27. "The Addams Family" uncle
28. Former husbands or wives
29. Cheering word
31. Spring
39. "Once upon _____ ..."
40. Pizza or burger topping
41. Pastry for Homer Simpson
42. "Glory be _____ ..."

DOWN

1. And so forth: abbr.
2. Paid athlete
3. Three in Roman numerals
4. Baseball's Ripken
5. Like a snail's pace
6. More idiotic
7. "We're number _____!"
8. Pimple
9. Pilot's announcement of arrival time: abbr.
10. Biden's state: abbr.
14. Indiana Jones hats
16. Santa's helper
17. Big name in jeans
18. _____ Vegas
19. Tenant's one-room place: abbr.
21. Sense of wonder
22. Not at all strict
23. Before, to a poet
24. Ave. relatives
26. Weasel-like pet
30. Owl sound
31. Chewing gum glob
32. From _____ Z
33. The _____ Man from "The Wizard of Oz"
34. Tall, flightless bird
35. 7-Down in Spanish
36. Manipulate, as an election
37. Dove sound
38. Finish

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10
11						12				
13						14				
				15						
16	17	18	19		20		21	22	23	24
25				26						
27							28			
				29		30				
31	32	33	34				35	36	37	38
39						40				
41						42				

Answers on
page 29

Favorite Foods

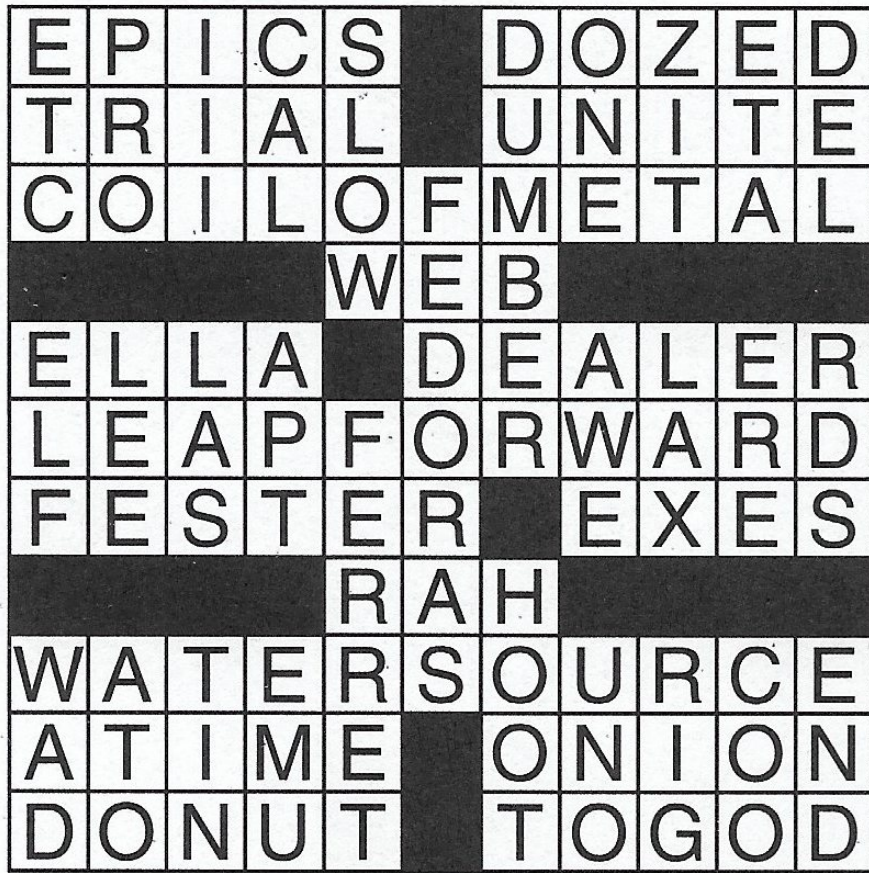
Every delicious treat listed is contained within the group of letters. Words can be found in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. They may read either forward or backward.

Bon appetit!

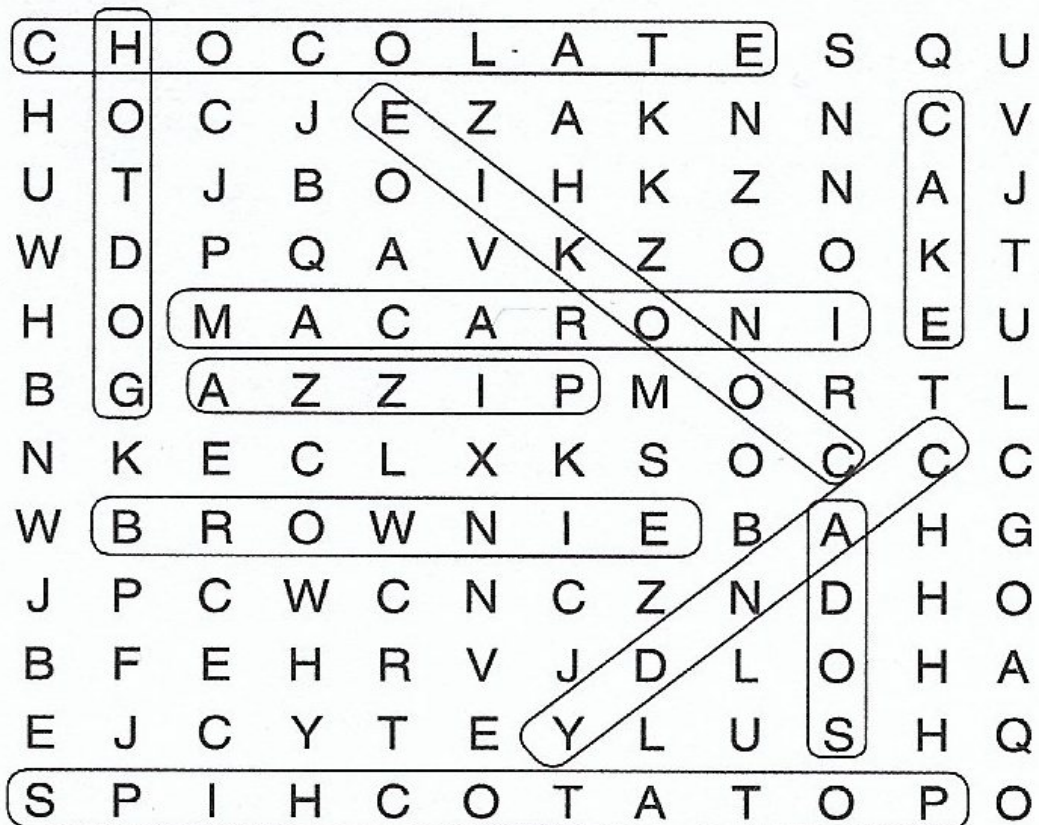
- BROWNIE
- CAKE
- CANDY
- CHOCOLATE
- COOKIE
- HOT DOG
- MACARONI
- PIZZA
- POTATO CHIPS
- SODA

C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	S	Q	U
H	O	C	J	E	Z	A	K	N	N	C	V
U	T	J	B	O	I	H	K	Z	N	A	J
W	D	P	Q	A	V	K	Z	O	O	K	T
H	O	M	A	C	A	R	O	N	I	E	U
B	G	A	Z	Z	I	P	M	O	R	T	L
N	K	E	C	L	X	K	S	O	C	C	C
W	B	R	O	W	N	I	E	B	A	H	G
J	P	C	W	C	N	C	Z	N	D	H	O
B	F	E	H	R	V	J	D	L	O	H	A
E	J	C	Y	T	E	Y	L	U	S	H	Q
S	P	I	H	C	O	T	A	T	O	P	O

It's Spring!



Favorite Foods



Home & Yard Maintenance Program for Vulnerable Seniors at No Cost

Are you or do you know a senior, 60 years and above in the Ulster County region who is fiscally and physically in need of help in maintaining their yard, grounds or home?



Volunteers needed

grass cutting
weed-wacking
hedge trimming

brush & debris clearing
leaf raking
snow removal (as available)

small home maintenance repairs

Contact:

Dennis Williams

Intake Phone: (845) 338-2980

Jfs.Ulster@gmail.com (Re: Yard Maintenance)

**Volunteers -
late teen and older**

**Program
Recipient
of
\$50,000
Foundation
Grant**



Yard Maintenance Program

Success Stories



I am a retired disabled Senior and can no longer do the yard work that needs to be done like mowing and hedge trimming. My worker at Office for the Aging told me about a program offered by Jewish Family Services called the Yard Maintenance Program. I contacted them and sthey made arrangements to come to my home to do some yard work. They mowed, used a weed wacker where needed and trimmed my Forsythia bush with a hedge trimmer. I am very happy with the results. I would highly recommend this service.

- Barry

The Yard Maintenance Program and the staff are wonderful; kind, intelligent, considerate, and I have deep appreciation. I realized my prayers for "God's goodness in the land of the living have been answered by charity from a number of people. And each night I pray for blessings for you all. Thank you for another blessing."

- Ms. I



Before



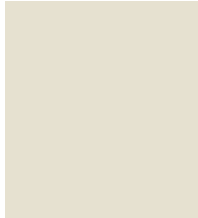
After



Before



After



Before



After



Before



After



Volunteer and Employment Opportunities

Make a difference in an aging neighbor's life this year ... their independence can depend on YOU!

Help our team of professionals with:

- Home Visits and Advocacy
- Compassionate Phone Calls
- Relief for Caregivers
- Grocery Shopping Driving/Assistance
- Yard Maintenance (ask for Dennis)
- Drivers for Medical Appointments
- Fingerprinting

If you're interested in any of these, contact:

JFS: (845) 338-2980

Grocery Shopping Assistance

Volunteers Needed. Can You Help?



“As a graduate intern at Jewish Family Services of Ulster County, I have had the opportunity to participate in the Grocery Shopping Assistance program with local seniors. The experience is immensely rewarding and has a direct and immediate impact on seniors in our community. The need for shoppers is robust, but we do not have the volunteer base to meet this demand for services. As a volunteer shopper, you make an immediate impact on those in our community and support a core mission of JFS to keep seniors living healthy and independent.” Nicholas Bona. JFS Intern

For more information:

Contact JFS at: (845) 338-2980

Drivers to Medical Appointments

Volunteers Needed. Neighbor-to-Neighbor



Are you a licensed driver, insured, vaccinated and in good standing - who would like to assist seniors in getting to their necessary medical appointments? For more information on how to be part of our Neighbor-to-Neighbor Team:

Contact JFS at: (845) 338-2980

Job Opportunity

Help Office, Civil and Law Enforcement Agencies
by Fingerprinting:

Become a Certified Fingerprinter

State-of-the-art computerized, ink-free methods



\$15 per hour

**Flexible hours/
schedule**

Contact :

JFS Ulster - (845) 338-2980

jfs.ulster@gmail.com

Jewish Family Services of Ulster
is an equal opportunity employer



Wanted for Per Diem Independent Contract Work

- ◆ **Licensed Clinical Social Workers**
- ◆ **Licensed Mental Health Counselors**
- ◆ **Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists**

Home-Based Family Support Program

Summary

JFS provides in-home social work services for older adults, of all faiths, in the community who could not otherwise access more traditional office-based mental health services.

- In-home supportive counseling and psychotherapy
- Assessment and referral
- Educational/support groups for caregivers and those grieving (currently online due to pandemic)

Job Responsibilities

- Make regular (weekly or bi-weekly) home visits to a minimum of 4-5 clients (elders and/or caregivers) participating in Home Based Family Support Program
- Conduct assessments of the clients' level of functioning and need for community services or interventions, which includes use of assessment surveys
- Provide information and referral about community resources and programs that will meet needs of clients or enhance quality of life
- Follow Task-Centered model of intervention utilizing goal setting, intervention strategies and evaluation
- Be available to meet with agency/program director for regularly scheduled supervision
- Complete required paperwork in a timely manner.

Due to COVID-19, this position is currently operating on a hybrid schedule of in person and remote work.

Qualifications

- Current License through NY State Department of Education in good standing
- Graduate degree from an accredited College or University
- Malpractice Insurance
- Computer Literacy

\$45 per client session
Regular hours/Per Diem

Contact :
(845) 338-2980

Jewish Family Services of Ulster is an equal opportunity employer

We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.



Ulster County Contacts:

Helpful numbers for you

Jewish Family Service of Ulster County

(845) 338-2980

(845) 331-4875 (Fax)

jfs.ulster@gmail.com

JfsUlster.org

911 - Universal Emergency Phone Number

988 - National Suicide Prevention Hotline

211 - Essential Community Services

National Domestic Violence Hotline

(800) 799-7233

ULSTER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

(845) 338-9373

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/sheriff/>

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES OF ULSTER

(845) 334-5400

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/social-services/children-and-family-services>

PEOPLE'S PLACE

(Food Pantry and Distribution)

(845) 338-4030

<https://www.peoplesplace.org>

CITY OF KINGSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

(845) 331-1671

<https://www.kingston-ny.gov/police>

NEW YORK STATE POLICE

(845) 338-1702

<https://www.troopers.ny.gov>

E-MDT HUDSON VALLEY HUB:

(Regarding Elder Financial/Physical Abuse or Neglect)

Nick Morris: (Ulster, Orange, Dutchess, Rockland & Sullivan Counties)

NMorris@jfsulster.org

(845) 338-2980

OFFICE FOR THE AGING, ULSTER CTY.

(845) 340-3456 or TOLL FREE at
1-877 914-3456

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/aging>

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICE

ULSTER COUNTY

(845) 697-3505 between 8:30am and 8pm
to report abuse

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/adult-svcs/aps/>

FAMILY OF WOODSTOCK

(845) 679-2485

<https://www.familyofwoodstockinc.org>

JEWISH FEDERATION - ULSTER COUNTY

(845) 338-8131

<https://www.ucjf.org>

ULSTER COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

<https://ulstercountyny.gov/arp>





Greetings *from the* Editor



Hello!

My name is Jonathan Dobin, editor of the quarterly JFS Newsletter.

I would love to hear any suggestions you may have about what you'd like to see in our future Newsletters.

(Submissions for the next editions should be sent to me no later than March 10th).

- *Senior Citizen Success stories*
- *General Human-Interest Stories*
- *Testimonials about how JFS services have impacted and helped your/ a loved one's life*
- *Your experiences with JFS Support Groups and other programs*
- *Places worth visiting, accessible to seniors, in the Ulster County area*
- *Ulster County Civic Events*
- *Recommended Local Businesses*
- *Articles about Medical Initiatives*
- *Recipes, crafts, puzzles, etc. ...*

Contact me at: Editor.JFSNewsletter@gmail.com

Please let me know of others who might like to be on our mailing list.

We look forward to reflecting you, our community and serving you in the best way we can.

Sincerely,


Jonathan

If you wish to **UNSUBSCRIBE** - write me with that in the "Subject" line.



When You Donate to JFS ...

*Your gift directly
supports our mission.*

Visit our website to securely donate through  [Qgiv](https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jfsouc)
[JfsUlster.org](https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jfsouc) (and click "Donate")

or copy and paste this direct link into your browser:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jfsouc>

Any contribution is appreciated and welcome.

Or you may choose to donate in a more structured way:

Friend: 1-time or monthly contribution of \$10; or a yearly contribution of \$120

Supporter: 1 time or monthly contribution of \$50; or a yearly contribution of \$600

Advocate: 1 time or monthly contribution of \$175; or a yearly contribution of \$2,100

Colleague: 1 time contribution or monthly contribution of \$200; or a yearly contribution of \$2,400

Protector: 1 time contribution or monthly contribution of \$300; or a yearly contribution of \$3,600

Benefactor: 1 time contribution of \$5,000 or more; or a yearly contribution of \$5000
or more

Please let us know if we have permission to publish your name in the Newsletter.



On This Valentine's Day

*Won't You Open Your Heart to
Help Us Serve Our Community*

**JFS ULSTER DEPENDS ON YOUR GENEROSITY -
NOW, MORE THAN EVER.**

*Your generous tax-deductible contribution
directly helps us realize our mission -
to help seniors and their caregivers
throughout the Mid-Hudson Valley:*

- ♥ Elder-Abuse Advocacy (E-MDT)
- ♥ Home-Based Therapeutic Services and Advocacy
- ♥ Support Groups for Caregivers
- ♥ Bereavement Support Groups
- ♥ Relief for Caregivers (REST Program)
- ♥ Compassionate Phone Calls
- ♥ Grocery Shopping Assistance (Neighbor-to-Neighbor)
- ♥ Driving to Medical Appointments
- ♥ Holocaust Survivor Advocacy
- ♥ Yard/Home Maintenance Assistance

To Donate Go To:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jfsouc>

Jewish Family Services of Ulster County is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, Federal Tax ID# 30-0309286



Jewish Family Services of Ulster
280 Wall Street, 2nd Floor, Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 338-2980 (o) (845) 331-4875 (fx)
jfsulster.org (web)