



WELCOME!

By Rev. Arnold Howard, NNC President

Northwest Neighbors Connecting — “to be an engaged diverse community of interdependent members who support each other towards healthy aging.”

Welcome to the world of Northwest Neighbors Connecting (NNC). It is a world that has shifted from primary participation that was “physical and hands on” to one that is now “virtual and eyes on” but still very personal and supportive. During this past year we have all had to make alterations to our “normal” and “usual” life routines. Change, especially change that we did not pre-terminate or decide on our own to make, is not always easy to accept, embrace and still thrive. Yet, your NNC has done exactly that. We have been able to meet the chal-

Staying CONNECTED

ISSUE 36 | WINTER 2021

lenges of this past year because of the generous, insightful and strategic support of Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. (CHAI) and its leadership, our NNC Board and circle leaders, volunteers, partnering organizations and you, the members.

NNC has continued to be a lifeline of fellowship, fun and food through a variety of interesting and engaging activities. We continue our fellowship in weekly and monthly gatherings hosted by our wonderful circle and group leaders. The experiences are filled with laughter, music, poetry, art, intense discussions, physical exercising and just plain fun. Our physical food, though limited because of our virtual gatherings, has not limited our mental and emotional intake through the courses and classes of instruction that have been made available.

Each according to his ability and each according to her need are the attributes that NNC strives to knit together in a virtual yet personal communal bond that enhances the overall healthiness of everyone involved.

I want to thank each of you for hanging in there with NNC—with your friends and neighbors. We can be each other’s closest and best support system in times like these in which we find ourselves living. Let us keep supporting NNC by keeping our dues current, actively joining and participating in NNC activities when able and sharing the great NNC story among your friends and neighbors. Our NNC is a light that is both a beacon and a lamp—a beacon drawing other neighbors into our support network and a lamp providing a space of comfort and security for all of us in these uncertain times.



Food Insecurity in Baltimore City & County

By Eileen Creeger and Shoshana Harris, NNC Members

What is food insecurity? It is the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. It is especially prevalent during the coronavirus pandemic. It is also not uncommon to hear about seniors, especially those living on fixed incomes, who are choosing between paying for food and medicine, and foregoing critical medical care. This article focuses on how this vulnerable population in Baltimore City and

Baltimore County is being helped and where and how the help is being offered.

Baltimore City: The Baltimore Food Policy Initiative is a division of Baltimore City’s Department of Planning. It is “comprised of city agencies and critical non-profit partners convened to guide the City’s food security response... The City continues to identify and assess the needs of residents and communities to leverage resources

and implement strategies in the ongoing response of COVID-19.” (<https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites>)

As of November 2020, Baltimore City was operating a food distribution location in partnership with CHAI at Fallstaff Middle School, 3801 Fallstaff Rd., on Thursdays, starting at 9 a.m. The boxes consisted of produce and shelf-

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stable food. Thanks to a generous grant from The Associated, a limited number of kosher shelf-stable food boxes were available to meet the needs of kosher families.

At this time, it is unclear if the City will continue food distribution beginning January 2021. Therefore, if you are over the age of 60 and need assistance with grocery or meal delivery, please call Maryland Access Point (MAP) of Baltimore City, 410-396-CARE.

Baltimore County: The Baltimore County Department of Aging (BCDA) is currently distributing boxes of food to the County's older adults. The program is supported by \$590,000 in funding provided through the Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) to specifically target individuals 60 and older.

Under this new program, each box of non-perishable food includes

three meals and a snack for six days, accompanied by a small box of fruits and vegetables. Boxes are distributed **by appointment only** at designated senior center locations around the County. Quantities are limited.

Baltimore County residents over 60 years of age should **call 410-887-2040 on Mondays and Wednesdays between 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., THE WEEK BEFORE THEY PLAN TO MAKE THEIR PICKUP.** Individuals with appointments will receive one box of non-perishable food and one box of produce per household. They will be asked to show proof of age through their BCDA Senior Center Membership Card or other identification. Anyone unable to travel to the pick-up locations should contact Maryland Access Point (MAP) at 410-887-2594 to discuss other food options with the staff. At this time, the closest

location in Northwest Baltimore is Liberty Senior Center, 3525 Resource Drive, Randallstown, Maryland 21133, Tues., 10 a.m.-12 Noon. For all other locations, go to food@baltimorecountymd.gov.

If you are a senior or contacting the County on behalf of a senior with food access needs, call 410-887-2594 or email aginginfo@baltimorecountymd.gov.

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

Ethical Legacies: A Way to Stay Connected with Our Loved Ones

By Susan Kurlander, M.Ed., Health Educator
for Jewish Community Services,
skurlander@jcsbaltimore.org



"There is no greater gift we can give our loved ones than the knowledge and understanding of who we are, what we represent and what are our hopes for future generations."

Until the pandemic, we could achieve this goal on a regular basis through timely conversations, shared experiences and opportunities for teachable moments to let our loved ones know what was

important to us. Schedules may have been busy, but times to be together could still be arranged and enjoyed. We still had control of many of our choices.

Had we only realized that we would lose that control and need to find other ways to provide that gift of knowing who we are for our loved ones. Creating an ethical legacy is one of those ways that can encourage our loved ones to know our values, beliefs and hopes for the future. In a written or visual format (video, etc.), it includes thoughts from our past, how we have chosen to live our lives, and what we hope will be meaningful and valued in the future.

What better time than now to create an ethical legacy that can be shared with our loved ones even while we are socially distanced. Part of the angst so many of us are feeling is that we don't know what the "new norm" will be as we struggle to stay connected with those we love. An ethical legacy is a timeless way to share who we are and, hopefully, how we can have an impact regardless of the challenges we continue to face.

Jot down your thoughts, talk with others and begin recording those words from the heart that will, without question, provide that gift of a lifetime. *"Words from the heart, enter the heart never to be forgotten."*

Neighbors in the Know

Scams and Fraud

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member



Author, journalist, assistant professor and entrepreneur Margit Weisgal spoke at NNC's October Village Gathering on a topic relevant to us all – scams and fraud.

Margit began by telling us that scammers are professionals, play on our vulnerabilities and work from all over the world. In the United States alone, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) receives 3.4 million reports of scams a year, with \$72.8 million lost by victims.

The five biggest scams are:

1. IRS, Medicare and Social Security – someone calls and says you owe money or there's a problem with your payment or account.

These agencies will never call you. Legitimate transactions are done through the mail.

2. Online dating – targeting lonely women, in particular, over many months to get money.

3. Family emergency – e.g., your grandchild is in jail and needs a wire transfer. Always verify with another family member if it's true.

4. Utility companies – e.g., your electricity is being cut off for failure to pay a bill.

5. Coronavirus – trying to get someone's stimulus payment.

Other common scams include sweepstakes, computer tech support, pending lawsuits, identify theft and elder financial abuse.

REMEMBER: Never click on a link or call a phone number provided in an email in case the message is from a scammer.

And scammers are always very creative, coming up with new ways to victimize.

Con artists have tricks, including forcing one to make a quick decision; threats; using fake caller ID numbers; pretending to be a government agent (IRS, in particular); and asking for personal information. Danger signals include being contacted by a stranger, offering a “great deal” and saying you need to “act right away.” **Hang up or just say no!** Don't let the scammer play to your emotions. And if an email looks suspicious, delete it.

Margit reiterated steps that we can take to protect ourselves:

- Make sure to get a free credit report once a year. Or order one every four months.
- Freeze your credit so that no one can apply in your name.
- Sign up for www.donotcall.gov to stop robo calls (though it's not 100% effective).
- Don't answer the phone if you don't recognize the call. Real callers will leave you a voice mail.

The pandemic has made many of us more vulnerable, lonely and somewhat depressed. **Be aware and if in doubt, verify. If it's too good to be true, it isn't.**

More information on protecting yourself can be found at www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov. You can file a consumer complaint on the Maryland Consumer Hotline, 410-528-8662. 🗨️

Medicare Blood Tests

By Joyce Wolpert, NNC Member, R-DMT, LCPC



When I walked into my local lab to have some blood tests last month, I saw a prominent sign: “Medicare will no longer pay for routine blood tests.”

I was a bit startled, then checked with several sources. While it has not been explicitly written out, what I have culled so far is that Medicare will only reimburse if a doctor sends in a diagnostic code with a blood test request. So, if you go to the doctor for a routine physical with no specific complaints, the doctor cannot just order blood tests “for the convenience of the doctor or patient,” as a Medicare agent on the phone reported to me. Instead, as stated, there needs to be some *potential diagnosis* listed for Medicare to reimburse, some clue garnered from the doctor's exam that it is worth checking out such as possible anemia, high blood sugar, infection or other malady. Of course, patients can pay out of pocket for blood tests.

A concern I have with this policy is that if a potential diagnosis is entered into a patient's record, would there be any possibility that this might affect future insurance premiums or coverage? I hope to investigate further and have already reached out to Cong. John Sarbanes' office. 🗨️

18 Days Exploring Racial Justice

By Heidi Schloss, NNC Member

The number 18 in Hebrew represents the word “life.” It was no accident therefore that the Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) used 18 in its recent conference

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

SERVING AND PORTION SIZES: HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

By Ilysa Cohen, NNC Member & Health & Wellness Chair

This content is provided by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health. Reprinted with permission from www.nia.nih.gov/health/serving-and-portion-sizes-how-much-should-i-eat

Eating a variety of foods from each food group will help you get the nutrients you need. The Dietary Guidelines describe three USDA Food Patterns, each of which includes slight variations in amounts recommended from different food groups. For example, people 50 or older following the Healthy U.S.-Style Eating Pattern choose foods every day from the following:

- Vegetables: 2 to 3 cups
- Fruits: 1½ to 2 cups
- Grains: 5 to 8 ounces
- Dairy: 3 cups (fat-free/low-fat)
- Protein foods: 5 to 6½ ounces
- Oils: 5 to 7 teaspoons

Does this mean you have to measure or weigh everything you eat? Not really. Some people find it helps to measure things carefully at first, but once you get used to your new eating plan, strict measuring probably won't be necessary. But, what exactly is a serving? And is that different from a portion?

A “serving size” is a standard amount of a food, such as a cup or an ounce. Serving sizes can help you when choosing foods and when comparing like items while shopping, but they are not recommendations for how much of a certain food to eat.

The term “portion” means how much of a food you are served or how much you eat. A portion size can vary from meal to meal. For example, at home you may serve yourself two small pancakes as one portion, but at a restaurant, you may get a large stack of pancakes as one portion. A portion size may also be bigger than a serving size. For example, the serving size on the Nutrition Facts label for your favorite cereal may be 1 cup, but you may pour yourself 1½ cups in a bowl.



Portion size can be a problem when eating out. To keep your portion sizes under control, try ordering one or two small appetizers instead of a large entrée. Or, you could share an entrée with a friend, or eat just half and ask for a take-out container for the rest. Put the leftovers in the fridge as soon as possible. Then enjoy them the next day for lunch or dinner.

More information about serving and portion sizes can be found at (1) Choose My Plate, www.choosemyplate.gov and (2) USDA Food and Nutrition Information Center, National Agricultural Library, 1-301-504-5755, fnic@ars.usda.gov, www.nal.usda.gov/fnic.

TIPS: SNACKING

Snacks are okay, as long as they are smart food choices. If you want an afternoon pick-me-up or after-dinner snack, have a piece of fruit, or spread peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese on whole wheat toast. Don't forget to include snacks in your daily food count. For example, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter spread on a slice of whole wheat toast counts toward the protein foods group and the grains group.

Some ideas for healthy snacking:

- Have an ounce of cheese with some whole grain crackers, a container of low-fat or fat-free yogurt, or a 1-ounce portion of unsalted nuts.
- Put fruit instead of candy in the bowl on your coffee table.
- Keep a container of washed, raw vegetables in the fridge along with hummus or other healthy dips.
- To limit your portion sizes, don't eat from the bag. Count out a serving, and put the bag away.
- When you are out and need a snack, don't be tempted by a candy bar. Take along homemade trail mix in a plastic bag when you go out. If you need to buy a snack on the go, pick up an apple or banana—most convenience stores carry them.

A WALK IN THE WOODS

By Joyce Wolpert, NNC Member, R-DMT, LCPC



A walk in the woods is time to get out, put one foot in front of the other and count those 5,000 steps. It allows us to stand tall, breathe deeply and pump that cardiovascular system. It offers a diversion from mundane errands and lets us hear and smell and touch Nature's glory of the season.

Or it can present a risky world of the unknown—the hot, the cold, the buggy, the bumpy. Thus, many seniors I know are content to walk on a paved path but fearful of going into the woods. Yet with the right gear and preparation, a world of beauty and discovery opens up. Within 15 minutes of our Park Heights neighborhood, we have Cylburn Arboretum and Lake Roland Park.

Ideally one would wear hiking boots or athletic shoes with a sole that grips. Thick socks help the shoe fit tightly, thus aiding balance. Hiking poles, which can be bought for about \$70, are also a lifesaver for balance, climbing and descending even small hills. The fear of falling is what keeps many seniors off the trails but with poles, the uneven, sometimes slippery terrain, is manageable.

And please, remember to carry water even for what may be planned as a short hike. I was at Lake Roland last week, a place I thought I knew intimately, yet I made a different turn and wound up walking another mile. So, you never know how long an outing may become. Whatever the season, wear a protective hat and clothes that cover your whole body to keep your temperature regulated and prevent scrapes and bug bites. A power bar, nuts or fruit are good snacks to carry. And yes, include your cell phone as needed for an emergency and for direc-

tions. While trails are usually marked with paint on a tree to show you the way, sometimes the marks are worn off.

Ah, the next problem to tackle: what if “nature” calls? Well, you're in Nature after all. My theory is that if you see a tree, you have a bathroom. OK, so gripe about gender inequality, and it is a bit indiscreet, yet it is possible to find a place off the beaten trail to seclude yourself. You probably won't need to go as much as you may think because when you walk, you sweat.

I know many women who will not hike alone because they are concerned about the “what if” of meeting a dangerous stranger. This is plausible, but in my years of hiking solo in these local parks, I haven't come upon any “suspicious characters.” Cylburn and Lake Roland are well traversed most hours of the day. Yes, I have met strangers, and we have talked, but people have been friendly and into enjoying the environment.

Since Nature is not obliged to follow the weather report, even sunny days have sprinkles, and the wind can blow up seemingly from nowhere. I lived in Oregon for eight years and actually love the woods when they are wet, everything glistening and smells heightened. The trees offer some protection from a downpour and strong gusts, and it can feel like you are moving along in a cocoon. A light poncho bought from the dollar store slipped into your pack is helpful in case the weather turns.

Some seniors have told me about their fear of animals on the trail. Nothing will bother you; we have no bears. My major complaint is

that I see more animals in my city neighborhood than on the trail where they keep to themselves. If you

see an occasional snake, non-poisonous, just allow it to slither away.

Then, we get down to the real joy of being in the woods. You are surrounded by beauty, sights, sounds, textures and colors, which, if fully absorbed, can be thought of as healing resources to expand and uplift one's mental attitude and physical being. Yes, I can wax poetic here and have.

Over the years I have written poetry with Nature imagery when I have felt so full and inspired. On a hike in the Oregon woods: *“The Fall Creek mist wound round Kelly green mosses laden onto forest pine boughs. Our steamed breath was louder than the trail's stillness.”*

Morning on a Western Maryland lake: *“Blue-gray mists enveloping, then rising ethereally unto their source. Now sunlight twinkles down on spindly blades of marsh grasses.”*

From a time when my mood was quite somber: *“You might hear how my words used that day by the stream when my distress was threatening the forest were so kindly crafted that the life of a tree frog overtook my angst and placed me back as a speck in the natural order.”*

John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, waxed poetic himself: *“In every walk in Nature, one receives far more than she seeks.”* Nature awaits at Yosemite and Denali, but it also is a 15-minute drive away and welcomes you into its ever-present world of delights. 🍄

Tasty Recipes To Try Out!

5-Ingredient White Chicken Chili

Ingredients:

- Chicken: Any kind of diced or shredded chicken
- Salsa verde: Either homemade or store-bought
- Beans: Two cans of your choice of beans
- Chicken stock or veggie stock
- Cumin: Plus a few teaspoons of ground cumin, to round out the flavors
- Toppings: top chili with some diced avocado and chopped fresh cilantro. But a crumble of tortilla chips, diced red or green onions, and/or extra jalapeños would also be delicious additions!

Directions: Stir ingredients together (except for toppings), bring to a simmer, ladle while it's hot. Then sprinkle on your favorite toppings and enjoy! It also freezes and reheats well if you would like to freeze the leftovers or make and save a big batch for another meal.

(<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/5-ingredient-easy-white-chicken-chili-recipe/>)

Enlightening Marinated Kale Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch curly kale, thoroughly washed
- 1 tablespoon natural almond butter
- 2 1/2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 - 2 tablespoons Bragg's Liquid Aminos, Tamari, or Soy Sauce
- 1 tablespoon agave nectar or pure maple syrup
- Optional toppings: pepitas, cherry tomatoes, diced avocado, goji berries

Directions: Gently pat the kale leaves dry. De-stem the kale and tear into pieces of desired size. Add the kale to a large bowl. Add the almond butter, apple cider vinegar, liquid aminos and agave nectar to a small bowl and whisk together for 30 seconds. Pour the dressing over the kale leaves, roll up your sleeves and massage the kale with your hands for 2-3 minutes. Transfer the kale to one large or two small salad bowls and top with desired garnishes.

(<https://www.blissfulbasil.com/enlightening-marinated-kale-salad/>)

Neighbors in the Know continued from p. 3

18 DAYS EXPLORING RACIAL JUSTICE

*The Baltimore
Jewish Community
Learns Together.*

title that explored racial justice. The program was a terrific opportunity for folks to gather virtually to wrestle with an important issue facing us all: racism. Although people of color and especially Jews of color have dealt with racism as long as their ancestors have been in the U.S., people of white privilege have been receiving a wake-up call.

This was not my first BJC series during the pandemic, nor was it the only one where I had the opportunity to learn with others. Previous BJC topics included dealing with the quarantine and Connecting Generations: Difficult Conversation About Race. Both these seminars were three days long, with participants grouped generationally. I also concurrently took a synagogue-sponsored course about policing called

“Untangling the Knot.” I zoomed in on a program sponsored by the Jewish Museum of Maryland entitled “Who We Are: Identity and Diversity in Our Jewish Community.” BJC’s program however was different. By being spread out over 18 days, our in-depth work seemed to have a deeper meaning.

Led by our cohosts, Tracie Guy-Decker, Assistant Director of the Jewish Museum of Maryland, and Yosef Webb-Cohen, Wesley Theological Seminary, we delved into the subject of racism in ways some of the 100+ participants did not expect. In between, we read articles, listened to podcasts and watched YouTube presentations guided by daily questions. The first presentation I viewed was entitled

“What Makes this Jew Different from All Other Jews? Race, Difference and Safety in Jewish Spaces.” This was an Eli Talk (kind of like a TED Talk) by Shias Rishon, a charismatic Jewish man of color, who was quite honest and open in his remarks.

Our small breakout sessions were particularly interesting. In one, we discussed one of our favorite selections, a long but in-depth article by Eric K. Ward in *Public Eye*, 2017, entitled “Skin in the Game: How Anti-Semitism Animates White Nationalism.” Its message was simple: where there is racism there is also anti-Semitism.

In another session we watched Rabbi Angela Buchdahl’s YouTube High Holiday sermon entitled “Are You Jewish?” Rabbi Buchdahl is the first woman Asian American rabbi in the US! She spoke about how to engage with the people of color you meet at synagogue. For some of my fellow attendees, this topic was new. I am lucky though in that I attend a synagogue dominated by the LGBTQ community, many of whom are also Jews of color. Justice is even in our name.

People of color. Jews of color. White privilege. New terms for some. But at the conclusion of the program, we were not expected to go and immediately change the world. Instead, we can listen incrementally, learn and take small steps in our new perceptions. 🗨️

Pandemic Ponderings

Quarantine Non-Activities

By Marcy Steingroot, NNC Member

I thought I would refine and improve a skill but it did not happen.

I thought I would learn a new skill but that too did not happen.

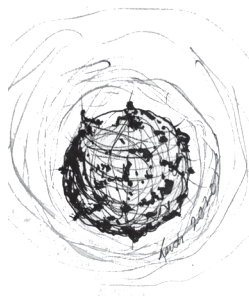
I thought I would become conscientious and diligent about getting into an exercise routine but again, it did not happen.

I thought it would be a great opportunity to get organized but it was not to be.

I thought it would be a good chance to express my creativity in some way but I never found a way.

I did find books that have patiently been waiting on shelves for my attention. I have been rewarding their patience and have been contentedly reading them.

I am most grateful for all the wonderful people in my life, for zoom classes and of course, for books.



My COVID-19 Beef

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

Wasn’t it wonderful to finally have access to the library this summer after several months of closure? BUT, the experience is far from ideal. Before COVID-19, I’d browse the shelves at my local branch, usually checking out five or six fiction and non-fiction books—anything that looked interesting.

Browsing is not an option now. Books are requested online, which means I need to know what I want to read. Finding a “good read” on the shelves was part of the adventure of going to the library. That pleasure is gone.

The library sends me an email when my books have arrived, but the selections dribble in. Let’s say I have six requests on my account. Two books come in on a Monday; another comes in on Thursday; the following Monday two more titles come in, etc. You get the idea. With only six days before the titles go back on the shelves for other patrons, I make multiple weekly trips to the library.

I don’t know....if we can go into grocery stores and “browse,” picking up and putting down merchandise, why can’t we—with extra precautions—return to browsing the library shelves? 🗨️

INAUGURAL QUIZ! Test your knowledge about past Presidential inaugurations!

1. Who was the first President inaugurated for a term limited by the Constitution?
2. Who was the youngest President-elect at the time of his inauguration?
3. When was the first televised inauguration?
4. Who became President as a result of the Compromise of 1877?
5. Who was the first President inaugurated on January 20th?
6. Which President wore a ring to his inauguration that contained a lock of hair cut from Lincoln's head after he was shot?
7. Whose was the Bicentennial Inauguration?

Check your answers on page 14!



NNC Events

Many NNC programs are now on Zoom. Check your monthly mail for the latest calendar (see page 9 for a sample calendar). If you need help with Zoom, call 410-500-5334.

WARM HOUSE

The Warm House group has been connecting virtually these past few months with Zoom and conference calls. Warm House looks forward to getting back together in person in the near future. For more information, contact Malka Zweig, 410-484-0399.

Dial-in Number: 712-775-7031;
Access Code: 486-021-498. Subject to change to Zoom. Call 410 358-4140 for more info; Dues: \$15/year

Mount Washington:

President: Ellie Mitchell,
mwiapresident@gmail.com;
Dues: \$25/year; Open meeting 2/9, 7 p.m.
Registration: <http://bit.ly/MWIAFeb2021>.

EDWARD A. MYERBERG CENTER

Join over 900 participants at Baltimore's leading Virtual Center for active adults!

NNC members always receive 50% off the annual \$59 Myerberg membership! Sign up for a membership before Feb. 28 and receive 30 days FREE of our Virtual Center Gold Subscription, which includes unlimited access to over 50 weekly live programs and recorded classes, including Fitness, Humanities, Technology, Art, Social Groups and more! Offer available for new subscribers only. Tech support is included. To get started, call 410-358-6856 or email info@myerberg.org.

Visit Myerberg.org to learn more!

Bagel Boys Virtual Program

Free for Gold and Silver subscribers or with a Bagel Boys subscription. Individual purchases to view a single program are available -- \$5 for members; \$10 for non-members. Upcoming programs include:

Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.

1/5/2021 Rabbi Dovid Fink, Jewish History

Fridays, 9:00 a.m.

1/8/2021 Derrick Lapp, Top 10 Battles in military history - part 1

1/15/2021 Derrick Lapp, Top 10 Battles in military history - part 2

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Support Group for Dementia Caregivers with Rachel Brodsky

1st and 3rd Mon. of the month (1/4, 1/18, 2/1, 2/15, 3/1, 3/15), 10-11:30 a.m., on Zoom.

Contact Rachel Brodsky, 410-843-7421 or rbrodsky@jcsbaltimore.org.

Parkinson's Disease Support Group with Caitlin Rife

2nd Tues. of the month (1/12, 2/9, 3/9), 2-3 p.m., on Zoom.

Contact Caitlin Rife, 410-843-7352 or crife@jcsbaltimore.org.

Low Vision Support Group

2nd & 4th Thurs. of the month (1/14, 1/28, 2/11, 3/11), 1:30-3 p.m., on Zoom.

Contact Rachel Brodsky, 410-843-7421 or rbrodsky@jcsbaltimore.org.

COME AND MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Cheswolde: President: Ron Rosenbluth, Dues: \$25/year

Cross Country: President: Avraham Sauer, avraham.sauer@gmail.com
Dues: \$10/year

Glen: Betty Cherniak
Conference call, 7 p.m. on 1/7, 2/24, 3/17
Number to call: 848-220-3300,
ID 641-9914#; Dues: \$20/year

Fallstaff: President: Sandy Johnson,
president@welcometofallstaff.org
Conference call, 7 p.m. on 1/7, 2/4, 3/4

SPECIAL DAYS

January 1 – New Year's Day
January 18 – Martin Luther King Day
January 20 – Inauguration Day
January 27 – International Holocaust Memorial Day
January 28 – Tu B'Shevat (new year of the trees)
February 12 – Lincoln's Birthday
February 14 – Valentine's Day
February 15 – Presidents' Day
February 17 – Ash Wednesday
February 25 – Fast of Esther
February 26 – Purim
February 28 – Shushan Purim
March 14 – Daylight savings time begins
March 20 – 1st day of Spring
March 27 – 1st Passover Seder
March 28 – 2nd Passover Seder
March 29 – Lent ends

Needed!

Caring people
for NNC's
Caring Hearts
Committee.



Help us
acknowledge members in their
times of joy or sorrow.

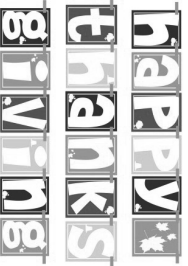


For more information,
call Anne at 410-500-5334,
ashimanovich@chaibaltimore.org.



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need help with Zoom, call 410-500-5334.**

November 2020

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2 Cooking Class 2:00 pm On Zoom	3 Art Class—Creating Zines (mini magazines)! 10:00-11:00 am on Zoom Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom	4 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom	5 What's New? 11:00 am on Zoom	6
9 Cooking Class 2:00 pm On Zoom	10 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom Village Gathering—2:00 pm on Zoom	11 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom Explorers Circle on Zoom 1:00 pm	12 Encounters Circle on Zoom 11:00 am	13
16 Diversity Dialogue 4-6:00 pm on Zoom	17 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom	18 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom	19	20
23 NEW CLASS!!! Tech Help with Melanie! 12:00 pm on Zoom	24 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom Needlers—2:30 pm on Zoom	25 Get in the Groove With Ilysa! 11:00—11:45 am on Zoom Terry's Book Club 2:00 pm on Zoom	26 	27
30			 NACHAI Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. STRONG COMMUNITIES FOR LIFE	 The Associated AN AGENCY OF Inspiring Jewish Community

What's Happening with NNC

Diversity Dialogue

By Susan Russell, NNC Member

Throughout my 40 years in Baltimore I have read Letters to the Editors from both the Baltimore Sun and Baltimore Jewish Times (JT) written by city resident Joyce Wolpert. A letter Joyce wrote about 25 years ago to the JT encouraged readers to join an interracial dialogue group sponsored by the organization Interfaith Action for Racial Justice (IARJ). Her letter inspired me to join an IARJ group. The experience was pivotal for me in my journey as a racial justice advocate.

I encountered Joyce again about eight years ago when NNC was getting started. An idea she had for our new “village” was to facilitate a monthly “Diversity Dialogue,” in which a self-selected group of 16 NNC members got to know each other “below the surface” of everyday conversation. I immediately joined the group, diverse by race, religion and gender. Joyce was our facilitator, and the group bonded through the creative exercises she designed.

Two years after Joyce founded the Diversity Dialogue, she was hired part-time as Community Wellness Coordinator of NNC. At that point, Rev. Arnold Howard and I became co-coordinators of the group, and members began assuming responsibility for choosing and presenting discussion topics. Rev. Howard helped facilitate, as individual members presented their topics. I agreed to email notices and reminders and develop the agendas for our monthly meetings, held at CHAI until they were suspended due to COVID-19.

When the Diversity Dialogue resumed virtually several months into the pandemic, most group

“regulars,” amazingly consistent over eight years, returned. Even some members without computer capability have telephoned into the conversations.

Since reconvening, we adopted the following Mission Statement:

The Diversity Dialogue is a forum where NNC members have a safe, confidential space to express feelings and opinions on matters derived from members' personal stories and experiences, studies of history and current events.

The goal is to become trusting enough to be honest but not hurtful, risk-taking but not divisive and to apply this learning process towards greater understanding and enrichment of one another, ourselves and the NNC community.

Joyce came back to our group when we reconvened — helping us craft the Mission Statement, thereby strengthening her legacy to the Diversity Dialogue and to NNC. We recognize you with thanks-giving, Joyce, and invite other NNC members, who value diversity, to join us.

Village Gatherings

By Eileen B. Creeger, NNC Member

NNC Village Gatherings (VG) began virtually in August. Our first get-together included thought-provoking words by NNC President Rev. Arnold Howard, a piano recital by Eileen Rosenbaum and exercise with Ilysa Cohen. It was wonderful to see each other after being apart for so long!

The September VG also began with words of welcome from Rev. Howard. Jerry Rosenbaum spoke about the meaning of the upcoming Jewish holidays, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and once again, Ilysa got us moving with exercise. Poetry recited by

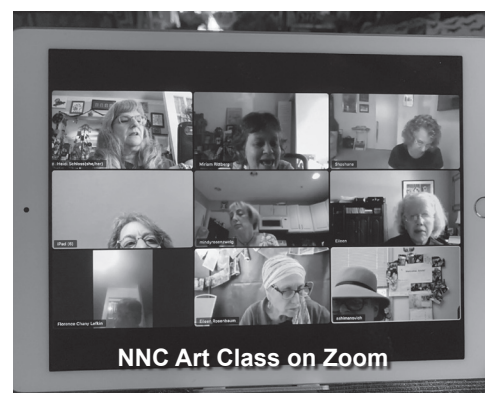
members Pauline Watson and Sylvia Eisenbeg and guest writer Lane Jennings was also on the agenda.

October's VG featured author and journalist Margit Weisgal, who presented an informative presentation about scams and fraud. Details of her talk can be found on page 3. The theme of November's VG was gratitude. We learned from guest speaker Bracha Goetz how to achieve gratitude and happiness, and how to attain these by being positive.

Art Class

By Heidi Schloss & Miriam Rittberg, NNC Members and Art Teachers

So...we were asked us to teach the NNC art class online. “Oh, my goodness,” we said. What about the cabinet full of art supplies at CHAI? We can't get to them. The building is closed. How were we going to help people with differing needs?” We really needed to brainstorm how to do this with minimal supplies folks might have at home, like paper & pencils! How were we

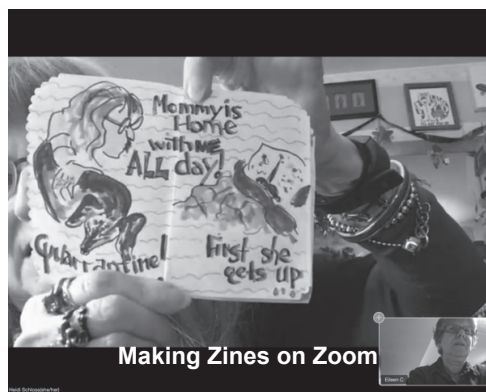


going to demonstrate so it could be seen? Professional teachers who teach online have access to special cameras that enable them to show their work as they create. “Oh, you will be fine,” was the answer. What about the technology? What about members who don't have access to computers? They won't

be able to participate. Are we all going to understand how to use it? “Oh sure, easy as pie.” How do we contact our students? Emails!

As Heidi had some experience with Zoom, she was designated the one to set it up. Which she did. But she and Miriam wound up having to be walked through the process again and rescheduled the first lesson.

Our first class was in October. Miriam taught the subject: zentangles was her baby. Heidi monitored the Chat, where folks can make comments or ask questions. She also kept attendance by taking pictures of the participants’ list—several, as folks drifted in. And she listened to the disembodied voices of those who weren’t on the maximum nine faces on the screen at one time. She also took screenshots of students working or showing off their work.



Miriam demonstrated how to make mini-magazines called “zines” in November. She learned from Heidi, who learned from a former student Catie and who also shared with “Lilith Magazine.” She, Heidi and Florence (in Denver!) showed us examples of the zines they’ve made. A good time was had by all. In December, Miriam taught us how to make holiday crafts from twigs, ribbons and other stuff around the house.

Art meets the first Tuesday of the month. Please join us! Contact Anne (410-500-5334) for more information.

Caring Hearts

By Miriam Rittberg, Caring Hearts Chair

At NNC, we care about our members, and so during a pandemic, we continue to remember and celebrate special occasions with a card and good wishes. Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor hail will stop Caring Hearts from sharing the love.

Circle Roundup

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

Curiosity: *Sharie Blum and Shoshana Harris*

Even though we cannot meet in person as the COVID-19 lockdown continues, we continue to stay connected with our members. Sharie dropped off handwritten notes, a poem and a packet of instant chocolate to help warm hearts and keep in touch.

Encounters: *Sharie Blum and Shoshana Harris*

Our August Zoom provided a joyful hour of seeing each other and catching up. We also discussed what types of programs we might want to do in the future. No meeting was held in September, so we looked forward to an October presentation by Judy Meltzer. Judy had planned a discussion to celebrate the life of Toni Morrison, but alas! Due to technical difficulties, the meeting had to be postponed. We hope to reschedule this event in the near future.

In November, we were treated to a wonderful program presented by “Veggie Annie” Marshall. Vegetables are her first love and always the stars of her cooking. She spoke about produce you can get from local farms (and give our farmers support); cooking with leftover food scraps; local food co-ops; and creative ideas for a COVID-free Thanksgiving celebration.

What’s New? *Sharie Blum and Shoshana Harris*

This new group made its Zoom debut on October 1st. It was purposely slanted to discuss timely “good news” as a way of counteracting the “difficult news” we hear almost daily. In that vein, participants talked about happy family events, such as the birth of a new (and first) great-grandchild; we heard about a beloved cat who passed away, but was memorialized by his owner with a shrine that included the cat’s pawprint; also mentioned was how a famous country music star and his wife pledged to donate 1 million nutritional meals during the month of September.

Surprisingly, no one showed up at our November meeting! We are not sure if our members were either “Zoomed out” or were busy with other activities. We plan on holding another Zoom in January and hope you will join us.

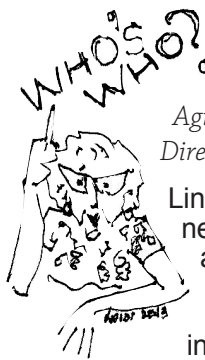
Baltimore Explorers and Needlers: *Eileen and Jerry Rosenbaum*

Baltimore Explorers has been meeting monthly on Zoom. We’ve been viewing short, 5-minute videos about Baltimore, including ones about Juanita Jackson Mitchell, the Civil War, George Peabody, the B & O Railroad, Graffiti Alley, Cylburn Mansion and Dickeyville. We plan to continue exploring Baltimore using this format until we can resume in-person trips. Please join us on our virtual travels.

Needlers also has been meeting monthly on Zoom. We continue to work on our individual projects. In addition, some of us are knitting scarves and hats for the Jewish Volunteer Connection. The scarves and hats will be given to homeless

continued on p.14

Who's Who?



Linda Howard

By Anne Shimanovich,
Aging in Community, Program
Director

Linda Howard is our newest NNC member, and we are so lucky to have her. She called our NNC office one day in August, inquiring about joining our village. Her friendly demeanor was apparent, and she was very engaging to speak with. During our initial phone conversation, she said she lives in Weinberg Gardens and had heard about NNC from other building residents. With COVID-19 still among us, she was looking for ways to meet people and to feel useful. I told her about all our many activities and volunteer opportunities, and she replied, "Sign me up!" She immediately became one of our check-in callers and has already logged into some of our Zoom classes.

Linda's grandparents owned Paul's Jewelry & Optical on Eastern Avenue in the heart of Highlandtown. The family lived in the upstairs of the building. When her father Milton

graduated high school and sought employment, Jacob Paul hired him on the spot. So that afternoon when Linda's mother, Florence (Shashe) walked in the door, Milton took one look at her, and the rest is history. They were married for 66 years.



Linda was born and bred in Baltimore. She grew up in Northwest Baltimore, living on Belle Avenue off of Dolfield Rd. and attended Forest Park High School. She has always been a go-getter. For example, years ago a salon opened on Rogers Ave. just below Park Heights Ave. A beautician at the salon recognized Linda's interest in the profession and hired her



as an apprentice and part-time receptionist. She remembers trying out new hairstyles on her cousin Marlene and went on to become a licensed beautician. She continued doing her mother's hair for many years, and she counts Councilwoman Rikki Spector as one of the store's clients. Linda still meets people whom she remembers from the shop!

Linda went on to raise four children in her home on Brattle Rd. She speaks with great pride about her children. Three of them attended Beth Tfiloh, and one was valedictorian at Randallstown High School. All four of her children are married, and she has eight grandchildren. Linda worked in property management while raising her children.

Living at Weinberg Gardens provides Linda with a happy and active life. She is President of the Tenant's Association, volunteers at the front desk and enjoys entertaining. She believes it is important to keep busy, and she tries to find activities for all residents to be involved in together. She enjoys baking and has been known to invite others to join her when baking challah for Shabbat or hamantashen for Purim.

Before COVID-19, the residents and Linda had a weekly pre-Shabbat get-together. They discussed the weekly Torah portion and then enjoyed grape juice and Linda's freshly baked challah. She feels that teaching and hosting is her calling at this stage of her life. She also needlepoints, knits

and bakes Forest Park Sticky Buns. As if this isn't enough, she also finds stimulation on Beth El's Soul Center website. She enjoys their online classes and has blown shofar during the morning gratitude group. This remarkable group of multi-generational people come together every morning to offer support and be there for each other during the pandemic. Linda appreciates the group and says that Rabbi Dana Saroken has been a phenomenal caring and involved leader.

When asked if she has a life's motto or philosophy, Linda says that she tried to teach her children to be "mentchen," (people of integrity and honor), and she strives to model this behavior herself. When asked what gets her through the day, Linda says that it is her strong belief in G-d. She knows she is being taken care of and that there is a master plan. She tries to be more optimistic than pessimistic and to know there is a reason for everything. Linda ended our talk by telling me that her children learned this lesson from her. If they ever complained about something that had happened to them, they knew that upon hearing about it she would say, "It happened for a reason, because there's a reason for everything."

I enjoy every interaction I have with Linda—she is bright, warm, giving and full of life—welcome to NNC! 🌟



individuals who need them to stay warm in the winter. Please join us as we work on our projects in the company of each other.

Staying Connected with Ilysa

By Ilysa Cohen, NNC Member, Health & Wellness Committee Chair

Happy Heart's Kitchen with Ilysa:

Most of us have experienced some sort of quarantine resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us for long periods of time. Even with concerns about the coronavirus and shelter-in-place, NNC provides a great opportunity for all of us to connect and enjoy incredible flavors together virtually. I love hosting our virtual Healthy Cooking Class because it is a fun way to keep our community together! The class meets the second Monday of every month, from 2-3 p.m. Everyone gets to watch as I cook a healthy recipe (or two) live! We have made some great

simple, healthy recipes that I share with everyone before the class so they can even cook along with me! The best part is you can show up in your sweatpants!

Get Into the Groove With Ilysa:

Have you been sitting all day? For many older adults, the coronavirus means living far more sedentary lifestyles than before the pandemic. But lack of activity can be dangerous. NNC's cardio chair aerobics class helps members focus more on their fitness goals while staying healthy. The class emphasizes exercises that train the body for everyday activities important for maintaining a good quality of life. Staying active improves our strength and balance, gives us more energy, prevents or delays disease and improves our moods. The class meets each week on Tuesday and Wednesday, from 11-11:45 a.m. The members who have tuned in every week have seen that not only keeping physically active, but being able to have social connections, helps to keep them healthier! Let's keep grooving along to the music!

Terry & Beah's Book Club

Our discussions continue to be lively. We welcomed new members, Eileen Creeger, Annie Shimanovich, Helene Weiss and Judy Stockell. Someone said, "The book club is growing by leaps and bounds!" In October we read *The Paris Architect*. A few members liked it as it was a page turner. November's selection was *An American Marriage* and provided lots for us to talk about. Our December meeting was postponed because the Pikesville library was closed due to COVID-19. We will meet in January and discuss *Educated* by Tara Westover. 🗣️

BIRTHDAY greetings to these members of our family!

December

- 1 Cheryl Cohen
- 3 Dorothy Komarow
- 7 Evelyn Goldman
- 8 Shoshana Harris
- 9 Rosalie Weintzweig
- Rosalie Cosgriff
- 11 Maurice Levie
- 13 Barbara Landsman
- 17 Barbara Barr
- Judith Sykes
- 20 Carmelita Wilson
- 24 Nancy Flanagan
- 29 Barbara Ravitz

January

- 1 Esther Weiner
- Malka Zweig
- 3 Susan Russell
- 4 Ruth Hoffman
- 5 Nina Whelton
- 9 Susie Wheeler
- 17 Veronica Fullwood
- 20 Patricia Hill
- 27 Myrtle St. Rose
- 29 Barbara Setzer
- Hinda Sokolow
- Roslie Johnson

February

- 6 Helen Davis
- 8 Ira Cortez
- 9 Janice Taylor
- 12 Marilyn May
- 17 Ofelia Apter
- 22 Barbara Scott
- Bella Balakirsky
- 23 Tracey Stulman

March

- 1 Eileen Creeger
- Pauline Watson
- 2 Agnes Eisenberger
- Ann St. Louis
- 7 Sybil Barer
- 12 Helene Miller
- 14 Phyllis Ribyat
- 15 Florence Seldes



Milestone Moments

Congratulations to

Eileen Creeger, for winning the Silver Wordsmiths essay contest sponsored by The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore and the Baltimore Jewish Times.

Nancy Lynn McDonald, daughter of Heidi Schloss, for passing her licensing exam and becoming a Licensed Clinical Psychologist.

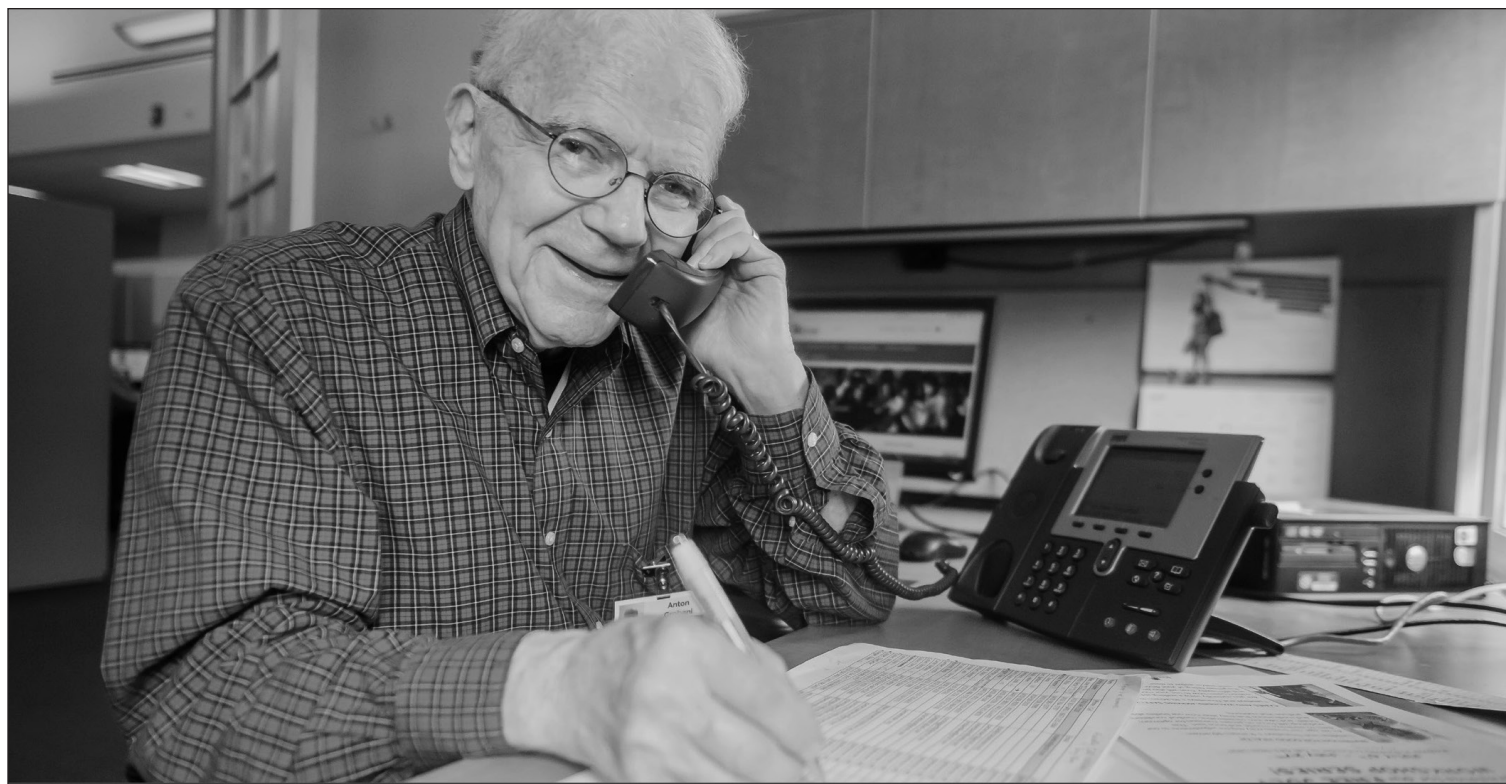
Janet Kotelchuck, on the birth of her first great-grandchild, Evelyn Estelle.

Shani Lerner, on the birth of her first great-grandchild, Asher.

Rev. Arnold Howard, on his special birthday.

Heidi Schloss, on the engagement of her daughter, Nancy Lynn McDonald to Travis Roderick.

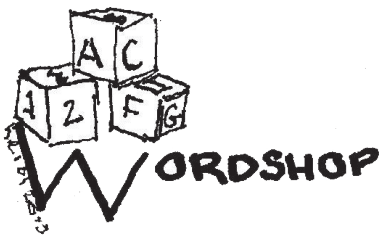
If you have a milestone moment to share (a special birthday, birth of a grandchild, graduation, etc.), please send to Cheryl, cherylcohen1919@gmail.com or Eileen, ebcreeger@gmail.com.



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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.

Heart Warming Thoughts

By Shoshana Harris, NNC Member

POTUS
FLOTUS
SCOTUS
And Covid.
Certainly not words from Ovid.

New words,
New world.
New future and Zoom.
It seems our days are filled with gloom.

But winter is nigh,
With thoughts aglow
Of snow angels,
And lights dimmed low.

And cozy nooks,
To read good books.
Stay toasty warm,
Eat chili, three-alarm.

So please don't fret,
And don't be sad.
Just count your blessings,
And try to stay glad.



It Must be Winter

By Ellen Carter Cooper, NNC Member

To the South the birds have all gone,
No longer do they wake us at dawn.
The bees around us no longer swarm.
We need sturdy coats to keep us warm.
It must be winter.

Wind briskly dances through the trees,
Attacking our old arthritic knees.
Darkness earlier and earlier sneaks in.
It must be winter.

Snow covers the earth with a
blanket of snow.
Outdoors we seldom go.
Children and the young at heart
frolic in the snow.
It must be winter.

Memories of spring and summer soothe us,
But enjoy the winter days and nights,
For they too quickly fly
and leave the stage.
And spring will replace it in
a number of days.
But for now, it must be winter.

November Night

By Lane Jennings

Taking the trash out,
evening chill
makes your breath steam.
Admire your grey
winter garden
by twilight's last gleam.

Through deepening night,
see the moon blossom
high overhead.
Check the doors are locked;
turn off the porch light;
slip into bed.

You drowse.
Dream of muddled adventures;
remembrances blend--
till confusion
resolves into music
and peace reigns again.

How many seasons of nights
in your life's
waking dream?
How many flowers and moons?
How much trash?
How much steam? ☹️



Inaugural Quiz Answers:

- 1) Dwight D. Eisenhower;
- 2) John F. Kennedy;
- 3) 1949, Harry S. Truman;
- 4) Rutherford B. Hayes;
- 5) Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1937;
- 6) Theodore Roosevelt;
- 7) George H. W. Bush

Northwest Neighbors Connecting
c/o CHAI
5809 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215



Newsletter Committee

Ellen Carter Cooper
Eileen Creeger
Veronica Fullwood
Shoshana Harris
Rev. Arnold Howard
Sheila Mentz
Heidi Schloss
Miriam Sperling
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ISSUE 36 | WINTER 2021

Dusty Roads, by Henry Westray Jr.

I've known dusty roads
Or is it that too many dusty roads have known me
Dust storms have often veiled my view
Road blocks to climb over, slide under, go around and push through
Although the blush of youth has nearly gone
Left on ancient roads I've traveled on
Unmourned memories of loving souls gone dust to dust
Caught in dust storms where they now lay to rust
My soul must confess that I've had a dusty time or two
Now my restless heart beats less than it used to do
Walking down roads that are almost nearly through
My eyes were sometimes blinded by the dust
Viewing the world from rainbows I so willingly drew
It was God's love that guided me safely through
And has placed me on this dusty road
To share a dusty moment with you



(This poem was inspired by the title of Zora Neale Hurston's Autobiography "Dust Tracks on a Road," and is dedicated to her posthumously.)

Henry Westray, Jr., a Baltimore native, is a retired mental health professional, has taught at universities in the country and abroad, and writes poetry and short stories.