

Hand in Hand...
Linking Lives



March/April 2023

GOT — GROWING OLDER TOGETHER

570 630 0509

830 Main St. #574 Honesdale, PA 18431

GOT.clubexpress.com

*If you need
something, just ask!*



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Spring is just a few weeks away and my mind turns to seed catalogs, mud season, and the dreaded yard cleanup. Twenty-five years ago, I enthusiastically over-landscaped my property after I bought it. I was younger, fit, and had a partner at the time, never thinking of the overhead I was creating for my future self. A self that is now over 60, and living alone, save for my pooch Maude, who does her part by sneaking an occasional stick from the debris pile, but not much more.

Until last year, I did not ask for help during the cleanup and would find myself struggling with piles of cut-down debris requiring a haul off to one of two burn piles. Each year the piles seemed to get bigger, and my energy less so. I took the plunge in 2022 and started asking around for helpers. Fortunately, I found a friend that had two able-bodied sons eager to make some extra cash. Those young men saved me days of backbreaking labor!

In traveling around to do Growing Older Together roadshows with our president Diane Yadow, I have learned that asking for help is often a barrier for many of us as we get to an age where routine tasks become more difficult. We don't want to admit that we might need assistance.

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Perhaps it's pride, or maybe we just don't want to confront the inevitable – that our bodies can't do what they once did.

Of course, offering help and assistance is what our organization is all about. I am excited that both our member and volunteer base are increasing. Each new member represents an opportunity to help strengthen our community. For we are indeed part of an extended rural village. A village that I am proud to call home. So if you need something, please call us at 570-630-050. Our volunteers love to help. And we love having them!

As the months warm up, there will be more chances to get outside and have fun. Festivals and street fairs are a wonderful place to gather, and we are always looking for opportunities to pitch our new GOT tent and spread the good word about our mission and service offerings. If you hear of any outdoor events coming to your community, please let us know by dropping a note to our email at growinggoldertogether@gmail.com.

Wishing you and your loved ones an early Happy Spring 2023.

Thomas Cambridge



In the last issue of this newsletter, we invited our readers to share their thoughts about the attitudes, outlooks, and activities that have helped them grow in a healthy, positive, and meaningful way, despite the challenges that come with aging. We are happy to share these responses below, along with the person's initials and age.

- I don't let anyone, not my doctor, not my kids, not the clerk at the grocery store, make me feel old. You really are as young as you feel. Age is just a number, and I remember when I thought a 50-year-old was old. MR, 80
- Growing older provides a deeper sense of presence, gratitude, and wonder. PC, 69
- I am deeply grateful each morning when I wake up, regardless of any physical ailments that may be present. Some dear family members died at age 52 and 64. These losses have taught me that each moment of life is to be savored and appreciated. MN, 70

- At first, I hated the number I was adding each year. But after having lost several friends over the past few years, my attitude has changed to grateful to add years as it is a privilege. As long as I can keep active, upright and moving, traveling, the age does not matter. CB, 66
- Being an upbeat, friendly, non-judgmental good listener in whatever capacity I find myself. Staying physically active as long as possible; joining and/or volunteering where needed. Loving where I live! CC, 86
- Consulting, volunteering at Dessin and senior writing group sessions filled my first fifteen years of retirement. Now I love weekly dinner out and trivia contests with a fun team of retired teachers, and helping my wife keep up our 1930 farm house. RF, 79
- What has helped me on my journey is taking a yoga class once a week. That helps me stretch not only my body but my mind and spirit. I am also trying to get in the habit of doing a monthly massage. After my husband was diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy, it has been challenging to us both. I need all the support I can get and thanks to the kind people at GOT, I have one less thing to worry about in getting us to our appointments in a timely fashion. FT, 71
- I retired just before turning 61 and will soon be 75. I live alone and very far from family. I have a ritual of daily giving thanks and detail them in my head as I go for a walk. I plan my week with these four goals, and I write them down and check results throughout the week: 1) daily exercise; 2) reach out to friends and family; 3) deal with financial issues; 4) engage in activities for self or others that give me a sense of purpose. Fighting negativity: give myself a max of ten minutes to grouse about my own failings or the failings of others. DM, 75
- Growing older is admitting I'm not able to do some things. I've been independent for years, and now I have to ask for help. My pride sometimes gets in the way, and I have to remember the wonderful volunteers that are eager to help. It gives me a sense of being able to get things done. It gives me a chance to know some of the volunteers. I can accept my challenges and know that I have a great support system! DY, 73

- What helps me meet the challenges of aging? Moving my body. Continuing to work as a yoga instructor is a blessing. Meditation, which helps me to stay in the present, where things are good. Journaling. The time I take to reflect on my thoughts, feelings, dreams, intentions, is also helpful. And reading poems that gently, humorously, profoundly remind me of what is here. SS, 81



MEET THE CREAMERS

By Marileta Robinson

Bernie and Carol Creamer have lived in the Narrowsburg, NY, area since 1968. Carol's roots in this area go back even further. She grew up on the family chicken farm on the aptly named Cackletown Road, south of Narrowsburg. After high school, Carol enrolled in a nursing program at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City. Meanwhile, her future husband, Bernie, was growing up in Brooklyn. Bernie had a passion that was unusual for a city boy—fishing. He would carry his fishing pole to the far reaches of the

island. Perhaps he inherited his love of rivers from his Irish ancestors. But it was his love of fishing that brought Bernie and Carol together.

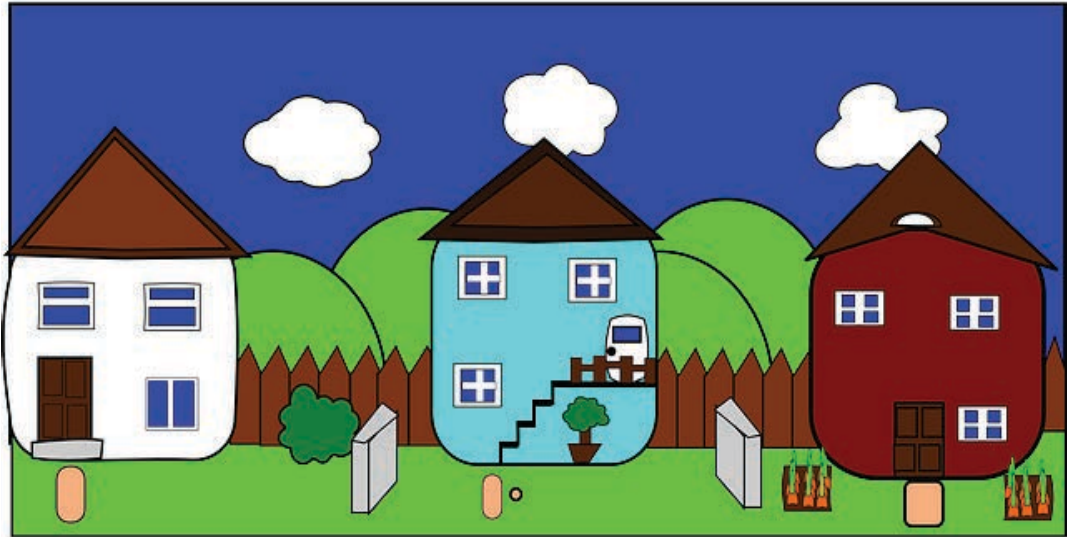
Visiting Lake Huntingdon with a friend, he went on a double date. One girl was short, and one (Carol) was tall. The boys also differed in height, and they quickly decided to switch dates. Bernie got Carol, and that was that. A few years later, they were married. They lived happily in New York City and New Jersey, until Bernie came out to visit Carol's family in Narrowsburg. "When he saw the river here, his face looked like this," Carol told me, opening her eyes and mouth wide. They decided to move to this area with their three children. Three more children were born here.

Bernie and Carol have been active in St Paul's Lutheran Church in Narrowsburg. Bernie served with the Narrowsburg Ambulance Corps and worked at the local bank. Carol worked in various doctors' offices, and of course their kids kept them busy with school activities. They never lived too far from the Delaware River, and presently it flows past their house with Peggy Runway Falls cascading directly across the river.

Two years ago, they realized that they weren't getting around as easily as they used to. A friend handed them a brochure from GOT. The organization was just what they needed. They became members and have been very pleased with the volunteers who take them to doctors' appointments and other errands they need to run.

Bernie is also a poet. The following poem seems especially suitable for the readers of this newsletter.

Ode to the Volunteers
The People Who Make It Happen
(You know who you are)
They save our lives, they plant our flowers.
They work for free for many hours.
They sort our books, they pick up our litter
and I've never seen them be bitter.
They feed our needy, they help the churches,
they never leave you in any lurches.
They help our town in every way and never ask for any pay.
They are all around us in every way and we should thank them every day!



NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania

By Melody Robinson

NeighborWorks Northeastern Pennsylvania's mission is to revitalize neighborhoods and create opportunities for individuals and families to improve their lives through quality housing and financial guidance. Having served northeastern Pennsylvania for over 40 years, NeighborWorks engages the community through direct services and community planning and revitalization.

Recognizing that northeastern Pennsylvania hosts one of the largest and growing older-adult populations, along with some of the oldest housing units in northeastern Pennsylvania, NeighborWorks formed the Aging in Place program in 2017 to assist older adults to remain safely and with dignity in their homes and communities. Recently, through a grant provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), NeighborWorks has expanded Aging in Place services throughout Wayne County. Through recommendations by a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) and occupational therapists, the program provides critical safety and accessibility modifications; small home repair; volunteer-led services; and resource connection and social-isolation prevention services to older adult homeowners in Lackawanna, Luzerne and Wayne Counties.

The Homeownership Center, a HUD-supported counseling program, provides educational and financial assistance programs that focus on assisting individuals and families through the process of purchasing and owning a home. When crisis strikes, loss mitigation and foreclosure

prevention advocacy from HUD Certified Housing Counselors support homeowners in reviewing options that can assist them in remaining in their homes.

To learn more about NeighborWorks visit www.nwnepa.org. To learn more about Wayne County Aging in Place services, reach out to the Wayne County Area Agency on Aging at 570-253-4262 or Melody Robinson, Certified Aging in Place Specialist for Wayne County at 570-229-5939.

JUST FOR LAUGHS...

I waved to a man because I thought he waved at me. Apparently, he waved to another person. So to get out of the awkward situation, I kept my hand up and a taxi pulled over and drove me to the airport. I am now in Paris starting a new life.

Your **tax-deductible donation** will go a long way in sustaining GOT as we continue to fulfill our mission: to give residents aged 60 and older who live in Wayne County, PA, western Sullivan County, NY, and surrounding areas both the practical means and the social connections to live independently in their homes. GOT is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

All donations in any amount are welcome. Visit the Growing Older Together homepage, www.growingoldertogether.com and click on the "Donate" button on the right, or mail your check to GOT, 830 Main Street #574, Honesdale, PA 18431. Thank you in advance for your support.

Please **help spread the word** about the benefits of becoming a member and/or volunteer for GOT. If you know a friend or neighbor who might want to offer a helping hand or might benefit from one, share our phone number, 570-630-0509, and/or our website, www.growingoldertogether.com.

Thank you!

Growing Older Together is supported in part by grants from Wayne County Community Foundation and Wayne Memorial Health Foundation, and from generous donations from these corporate sponsors:

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