

Hand in Hand...
Linking Lives



May/June 2023

GOT—GROWING OLDER TOGETHER

570 630 0509

830 Main St. #574 Honesdale, PA 18431

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*If you need
something,
just ask!*



Photo by Valeria Boltneva

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, Spring was snoozing and when “she” woke up it was Summer—time for new beginnings and catching up with old tasks. It is hard to sit at the computer when it is so nice outside, but there is so much to do. After serving one year as president, I was elected to serve for two more years at our annual meeting in April.

Some of our members no longer drive, and our volunteers provide the essential service of transportation. I recently volunteered for a member, and when I took her home, she said, “Thank you! You are so much fun.” That made me so happy.

We are continuing to grow, increasing our presence in Sullivan County, NY and Pike County, PA, but we can’t accept members in areas where we don’t have volunteers. If you know anyone who is looking for a gratifying volunteer opportunity, tell them about us and share our contact information.

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To contact us about any of the above, or with any other questions, concerns or comments, email growingoldertogether@gmail.com or phone 570-630-0509.

With best regards,
Diane Yaddow



Photo by Thomas Cambridge

Workshop participants Diane Yaddow, left, Paula Roos, Nancy Wells, Cass Collins, Karen Peters, Greg Triggs, and Mary Handler. Not pictured, Thomas Cambridge.

MEMOIR WRITING WORKSHOP

By Thomas Cambridge

Commencing March 4, Growing Older Together sponsored a memoir writing workshop for its members and volunteers at the Callicoon branch of the Western-Sullivan Public Library, taught by local author Greg Triggs. Conducted over two sessions, the first session focused on the "Who, Where, When" components of writing a story. Greg asked each participant to share about themselves and to name their favorite author. This led to a lively conversation and a commitment to produce a memoir essay to be read on April 4.

The second session proved to be a powerful and meaningful experience. The quality of work was superb, with many styles of writing offered. Some memoirs told a single story. Others were more poetic in their approach. And others took the opportunity to tell histories that spanned decades. There were laughter and tears. Heartache and joy. Participants knew they had a safe space to share intimate details without judgment. And in those moments, the atmosphere was imbued with a sense of comradery. There

was a call to have more sessions or to do another workshop soon. Everyone praised Greg for his inclusive, humorous style and creative leadership. And everyone got a signed copy of Greg's newest book, a semi-autobiographical novel titled **That Which Makes Us Stronger**, available locally at One Grand Books in Narrowsburg, NY, and amazon.com.

Growing Older Together would like to express sincere appreciation to Greg for leading this inspired workshop, and to the staff at the library for graciously offering their second-floor workroom for us to conduct the workshop.

If you are a member or volunteer and have interest in future memoir workshops, please let us know by dropping an email to growingoldertogether@gmail.com.

[Thomas Cambridge is the executive director of Growing Older Together.]



Photo by Marileta Robinson

MEET MEMBER HOWARD CORSON

By Marileta Robinson

Howard Corson moved to the Honesdale area from Philadelphia in 1997 because he was tired of living in a big city. Why did he pick Honesdale? His email "handle," "bikerhobo," explains it. The biker part is easy to guess—he used to enjoy exploring the country on his motorcycle. He fondly remembers deciding to take a trip to Las Vegas. "I just rode out there, looked around, and came back. I didn't even go into any of the casinos." Hobo? "I love trains. I always have. I even collected trains when

I was a kid. I love riding on them.” And what is Honesdale’s chief claim to fame? The Stourbridge Lion, of course, and the Stourbridge Line train excursions, on which he has been a frequent passenger. But has he hopped freight trains, as “bikerhobo” suggests? “No. I wish I had, though.” He also regrets that he never got to travel on Route 66. But Howard doesn’t dwell on regrets. He’s a loyal Eagles fan (“Don’t ever call me on a Sunday during football season”) and a loyal Grateful Dead follower, with a tiny Grateful Dead bus pin attached to his cap.

Wheels are a recurring theme in Howard’s life. Before his disabilities grounded him, he was a truck driver. Now he sticks closer to home, and lives in the senior apartments in Honesdale. Even though it’s a convenient location, he has still found it difficult to get to doctors’ appointments and other errands. Wheels, again—but a lack of them this time. Fortunately, he learned about Growing Older Together and found a solution to his transportation problems that allows him to live independently. Howard is a sponsored member and receives rides from volunteers to get where he needs to go.

Although he faces challenges that come with growing older and dealing with diabetes, Howard hasn’t lost his sense of humor. “I’ll be around for a good while yet,” he says. “I have a lot of people left to torture.”

[Volunteer Marileta Robinson is a frequent contributor to this newsletter.]

SPONSORED MEMBERS

Growing Older Together is an inclusive community and will partially or fully waive membership dues if a prospective member is unable to pay and can show proof of participation in at least one of the following programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Pantry, Medicaid, Section 8 Housing, State Rent Subsidies, or Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a sponsored member, or if you would like to make a donation to sponsor a member, please contact us at growingoldertogether@gmail.com or call 570-630-0509.



THE BENEFITS OF SPRING CLEANING

By Marcia Nehemiah

At this point in our lives, we might be both astonished and frustrated by the state of our closets, attics, and basements. How did all that stuff get in there? And why do we procrastinate every time we think of sorting through it? [Articles online](#) and [best-selling books](#) tell us it's easy to declutter: just make three piles—"keep," "discard," "give away," and start sorting. It's simple!

It's not so simple. While it might be fairly easy to toss out old magazines, old clothes, or objects you haven't touched in a few decades, you hesitate when you consider Grandmother's brooch, Uncle Henry's war medals, or the silk scarf you brought back from Paris in 1978 even though you haven't worn it in over forty years.

But clearing out clutter can bring a sense of freedom and relief, not to mention physical and mental health benefits. Clutter can impede your ability to move freely around your home, increasing the risk of falling. Those ceramic figurines and teacups aren't called dust collectors for nothing. They expose you round-the-clock to dust, mold, and other allergens. Clutter is also a fire hazard, and disordered, disorganized surroundings are associated with depression, anxiety, and insomnia, making it difficult to focus and affecting memory. One's embarrassment about cluttered surroundings may make one reluctant to have visitors, increasing isolation.

And perhaps most importantly, clearing out your closets, attic, and basement will relieve your loved ones of the burden of having to do it themselves when the time comes.

An effective incentive to clearing out unneeded and unused items is to consider the joy an object will bring to someone you give it to, either by donating it or gifting a meaningful possession to someone you love, provided they have heartily expressed that they will cherish it. In the latter case, you can share stories about your memories of the object and how you came to have it, either in writing or in conversation. Called “safe passage” by some theorists, the goal is to disperse the item to an appreciative heir so that its history and meaning is not lost.

[Marcia Nehemiah is a frequent contributor to the newsletter.]



Photo by SHVETS production

SPINACH PIE AT HOME

By Mary Greene

You may have tried spinach pie (Spanakopita in Greek) at your local Greek restaurant or diner, but it is a fairly easy dish to make at home using puff pastry. It is great with summer sliced tomatoes or a fresh salad, and it freezes well.

INGREDIENTS for the FILLING

3 tablespoons butter

2 medium onions, chopped

3 garlic cloves, chopped

2 (10 ounce) boxes frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry, or 2-3 pounds of fresh spinach.*

1 cup feta cheese, crumbled

3/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated or shredded

4 large eggs

1 tablespoon dry breadcrumbs

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

INGREDIENTS For the CRUST

2 sheets Pepperidge Farm puff pastry

1 egg, beaten with 1 tablespoon water

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cook onions in butter for several minutes; add garlic and cook another minute.

Beat 4 eggs in medium bowl. Add cooked onion, spinach, cheeses, bread crumbs and spices. Mix well.

Place one unfolded sheet of thawed puff pastry on the parchment.

Spread the spinach mixture over the pastry, leaving a border of one inch all around the edges. Brush the edges with the egg wash made with the last egg.

Using a rolling pin, roll out the second piece of pastry evenly until edges are one inch bigger than bottom sheet. Place it on top of spinach mixture and press pastry edges together with fingertips or a fork, making sure the mixture is sealed well.

Brush the top with egg wash and cut a few slits in the top with a sharp knife to allow steam to escape.

Bake 30-40 minutes, until golden brown. Can be served hot or at room temperature.

*NOTE: Most spinach pie recipes call for frozen spinach, but you can also substitute fresh spinach. One pound of fresh spinach equals one 10-ounce package of frozen, so you will need a lot of spinach! But it cooks down quite a bit. (It is a good idea to buy more than you think you might need, and you can process it the day before you plan to cook the spinach pie.)

To prepare fresh spinach, remove any long or tough stems. Rinse in a colander and place in a large pan or pot over medium heat. (You may need to do this in several batches.) Cook 3-4 minutes until the spinach is cooked through, stirring occasionally. Place on a cutting board and chop. Squeeze as much liquid as possible from the spinach, or let drain and dry in a colander. Now it is ready to use!

[Member and call manager Mary Greene is a frequent contributor to the newsletter.]

JUST FOR LAUGHS...



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. Any amount, large or small, is welcome. Please 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 web address, got.clubexpress.com. Thank you!

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