

Hand in Hand...  
Linking Lives



Sep/Oct 2025

# GOT—GROWING OLDER TOGETHER

570-630-0509 830 Main St. #574 Honesdale, PA 18431 [www.growingoldertogether.org](http://www.growingoldertogether.org)

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*If you need  
something, just ask!*

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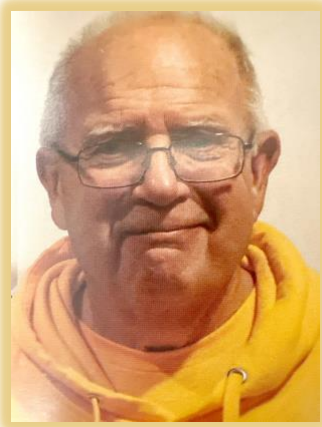
## ***Mind Over Matter: Tips for Aging Gracefully***

Growing Old Together has its name because there are so many of us who are part of the rapidly changing U.S. population of 65 and older adults. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, it will double in size from 40.5 million in 2010 to 88.5 million by 2050. We are a force to reckon with and society will be profoundly affected. Not only will we have more seniors around us, but an increasing number will also exhibit both subtle and more profound aging changes.

Not surprisingly, some older adults will be able to manage their daily lives, regardless of age, while others will require intervention by family, friends or society. However, it can often be a shock as we see it happening for fellow seniors in real time. Understanding the evolution of aging helps prepare us for this eventuality.

We each have 13 trillion body cells, which, over the decades, slowly stop dividing and functioning. At some point in time, signs of aging emerge in changes to blood pressure, bones/joints and digestion. Central nervous system problems can develop over decades causing diseases like Parkinson's. For aging adults, cognitive changes begin to be experienced as early as 50 years of age. The concept of cognition is very complex, even for healthcare professionals who study the brain. Quite simply, it relates to conscious intellectual activity -- thinking, reasoning, communicating or remembering.

Physical illnesses and chronic diseases if they are out of control will affect our cognition, which usually returns when these conditions are treated. Some of these conditions include diabetes control, smoking, depression, obesity and obstructive sleep apnea. More short-term effects can be from excessive fatigue, respiratory infection and medication side effects. What can be done for suspected cognitive loss? The most important thing to do is bring your concern to a family doctor caring for that individual. There are a number of standard written tests, labs and X-rays to help make a diagnosis.



We all may have mild lapses of memory as we age, lose threads of a conversation, or have problems with recalling. The good news is that we can take charge of our aging process. There are ways we can address them by maintaining cognition and physical health. It is important that we work with our primary care and specialist healthcare providers. In order to prevent errors in medication, there needs to be open communication between all parties in your health care team that you are taking medication as prescribed.

***By James D. Lomax M.D.,  
retired geriatrician and  
GOT board member***

And remember, most of us will not experience significant losses as we age or get Alzheimer's and we will still be able manage our lives.

These are the habits I recommend seniors adopt to slow down the effects of aging. I hope you will try them in your daily life:

- a) Limit the volume of alcohol intake
- b) Reduce risk of head injury
- c) Do not smoke and avoid air pollution
- d) Manage chronic health conditions
- e) Practice good sleep hygiene
- f) Follow a nutritious diet
- g) Stay socially active
- h) Moderate exercise on most days of the week
- i) If you have hearing loss, wear a hearing aid when outside your home
- j) Consider trying mind games and memory training (+/-)

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*"Aging is not for the weak. One day you wake up and realize that your youth is gone, but along with it, so go insecurity, haste, and the need to please... You learn to walk more slowly, but with greater certainty. You say goodbye without fear, and you cherish those who stay. Aging means letting go, it means accepting, it means discovering that beauty was never in our skin... but in the story we carry inside us." **Meryl Streep***

## **Never Able to Say Goodbye**

The date 9/11 is one graven in Rosemarie Hoesly's mind and on her heart—the day she lost her beloved younger brother in the World Trade Center tragedy. Joe Mangano, then 55, was a software analyst at Marsh McLennan Insurance on the 96th floor of the first tower hit. Their offices were located on floors 93 to 100 of the North Tower of the WTC, the impact zone of American Airlines Flight 11.

At the crash site, where Joe was working, and above, 1,360 people died. No one survived. Rosemarie, then 60, a senior credit rep at the time, was at a business meeting that morning. "My boss was pushing all the zoom-type buttons for folk in different locations when suddenly one yelled: 'My god, a plane just hit the World Trade Center. Turn on the television.' We did, just as the second plane hit the south tower. I screamed: 'My brother works there. Get me to a phone.'"

Her son Jim, who knew where she was, picked up Rosemarie. "When we got to my home in Rockaway, NJ, most of the family was there going crazy. Few people had cell phones in those days. We were glued to the TV all day and night. I kept saying 'Joe's okay, he will be fine. Relax. We will find him. He's trying to get out of NYC. The city is in lockdown.' "

Her parents, in their eighties, living in Florida, were so frightened, they couldn't eat. To comfort herself, her mother said, "Joe has a hearing aid, the battery will die and bleep, and someone will be able to find him." But Joe's wife, Kathy, sensed that when that first plane hit, her adored husband was gone. He and Kathy had a wonderful marriage of 33 years with two biological children; they also fostered 20 others. Grabbing Rosemarie's shoulders with both her hands, Kathy told her, "Rosemarie, Joe will never be able to walk in that door again." Remembering this, Rosemarie tears up as we speak.

Her son Jim went into NYC to look for Joe. "I don't know how he got there. So much was sealed off. He was gone three days. As he was walking toward the WTC, a truck of workers told him: 'You don't have to walk, get into the truck.' They gave him a security vest." Jim worked with the rescue teams passing buckets of debris, looking for survivors and bodies. "After three days, my son came home and told me: 'Don't you ever go there.' And I have never been able to."



*Joe Mangano, an ardent fisherman,  
who died in 9/11*

Back in NJ, just 21 miles from NYC, the family was going through hell. Rosemarie heard there was someone in a hospital with a name like Joe's. She called them, and was told, 'Sorry we can't give out patients' names.' She phoned Mayor Giuliani's office. A woman there said she would check and call her back. She did. It was not her brother, but a man whose eyes had been damaged from the toxic fumes.

"It was horrendous trying to get information. But we were just one family. Thousands of other families were going through the same thing. We never found out what happened to Joe. Never got any information that he was truly dead. As a family, we had to accept that he was gone. I was five years his senior. We were very close. I remember trying to teach him spelling when we were kids. When I had my three babies, he would babysit for me.

"Kathy organized the first memorial for Joe four months later in Jackson, NJ, where they lived. My parents flew from Florida. The church was so crowded, people were outside during the service.



"We were invited to go to NYC to sit on a panel, to give an interview. We were bombarded by newspaper and television reporters, But we never gave interviews. This is my first. The next year, we held a memorial in the Carteret, NJ, which is our hometown, where we were all raised. Joe knew so many people there. It was standing room only. For 24 years, we have been doing this on 9/11.

*His sister Rosemarie Hoesly, one of the most  
generous of GOT volunteers with her time*

"Carteret, NJ, is opposite Staten Island and when I look over at it, there is a large flag on top of a big mound, a small mountain of all the debris from the WTC bombing. It is where my brother is. I look at it every year. It is sacred ground. Never a day goes by when I don't think of Joe. I see and think about him every single day."

*The September 11 attacks were the deadliest terrorist attacks in human history, killing 2,996 people, injuring 6,000, and 400,000 have long-term health effects after exposure to the 9/11 toxins.*

*The Staten Island site still releases more than 40,000 cubic meters of methane per day from the decomposing debris brought there. Once it is safe, New York authorities plan to open a memorial park there in 2035. To ensure the park is safe for visitors, the landfill will be covered by a soil layer, a gas vent layer that traps methane, a layer of thick vinyl, a drainage layer, another barrier layer, and then a layer of soil.*

**By Jan Goodwin, who covered the War Against Terror in Afghanistan, which was started because of 9/11. She is also editor of the GOT newsletter**

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## ***Nature Meditation***

Consider a slow afternoon walk in late September, wandering through the woods or along the river, watching sunlight gleam and sparkle on the water. The day is crisp and the sky is blue. Summer's shimmering greens are softening and transforming day by day to the golds and rusts of early autumn. Outdoors, away from the making and doing of our lives, we become quiet and meditative, losing track of time in the immediate beauty of an afternoon in early fall. When we are so deeply immersed in the primary experience of our living world, we also discover opportunity to come home to ourselves and our sense of being alive and fully present. This is a unity with nature in a most fundamental and personal sense.

As we are coming to understand with increasing clarity, we humans are not simple observers of the complex interdependent systems that generate and sustain life. Nature is the totality of all living things and living systems, including the human. Whether we are sequestered in our homes or hiking the high mountaintop ridges, we are significant members, participants, and contributors to the complex and ever-changing nature of life on Earth.

It's from this perspective that the Unity with Nature Meditation series was created in 2021 by members of the Unity with Nature Committee of Goose Creek Quaker Meeting in Lincoln, VA, of which I remain a member now that I live in Sullivan County. We wished to provide a deeply reflective forum for exploring our humanity in the context of the care of our world and of each other.



The guiding theme of these meditations is to nurture within each of us our kinship with each other and all that we share in this life: the care of our planet, the bond of our human family, the deep and restorative nature of loving kindness and compassionate witness in the service of peace.

And let's be honest. The day-to-day world of human effort is often stressful and perplexing. The market for products and practices that will help us maintain good health and emotional equilibrium is a booming business. It can seem

that well-being is more a commodity that can be acquired than an inherent quality of our species.

But it is well documented that when the body becomes calm and quiet, the mind follows, becoming likewise calm, serene, and we become more open to perceiving both the world around us and our inner being with clarity. While there are many formal meditation practices, The Unity with Nature Committee determined that these meditations would be nonsectarian and offered to anyone who wants to participate, inclusive of any, all or no religious affiliations and spiritual practices. The form of these meditations is an adaptation of traditional *yoga nidra*, a state in which the body and mind rest while consciousness is awake.

Practice consists of getting comfortable and relaxed and then allowing the speaker to gently guide awareness through a series of prompts related to a chosen theme. No specific beliefs, special language, posture adaptations, or training in meditation techniques is necessary.

The Unity with Nature meditations are offered online through Zoom on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 - 8:30 pm. If you're interested in joining us to see if this contemplative practice appeals to you, email me at: [huntington.ea@gmail.com](mailto:huntington.ea@gmail.com) and ask to be put on the contact list. You will receive the Zoom link each month a few days before each session.

**Liz Huntington is a poet and editor of Rising Lark Press, an independent publishing project situated in the foothills of the southern Catskills.**

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### ***Poet Mary Oliver – Song for Autumn***

In the deep fall  
don't you imagine the leaves think how  
comfortable it will be to touch the earth instead  
of the nothingness of air and the endless  
freshets of wind? And don't you think  
the trees themselves, especially those with mossy,  
warm caves, begin to think  
of the birds that will come – six, a dozen – to sleep  
inside their bodies? And don't you hear  
the goldenrod whispering goodbye,  
the everlasting being crowned with the first tuffets of snow?  
The pond vanishes, and the white field over which  
the fox runs so quickly brings out  
its blue shadows. And the wind pumps its  
bellows. And at evening especially,  
the piled firewood shifts a little,  
longing to be on its way.

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## ***From a War Zone, to a Beloved Bakery to Delicious Edible Donations***

If you are not familiar with Beach Lake Bakery, a surprisingly cosmopolitan bakery nestled off Milanville Road in Beach Lake, PA, you are missing a treat. Long lines of customers wind out the door on a Saturday morning (the only day the bakery is open to the public) to pick up some crisp baguettes, flavorful pies, succulent brownies, tender chocolate croissants and even fresh-baked dog biscuits for the weekend. But even if you haven't been to Beach Lake Bakery, you may have seen their baskets of plump, crusty artisan loaves of bread on the counters of various markets throughout the area.



But what also makes this bakery very different from others is their current loaf--their boule round bread with a map of Texas baked on it, see pix, with 100% of profits going to the recent devastated flood victims in Kerr County, Texas. For the Michael J. Fox Foundation, their boule loaf carried the Parkinson's fox logo. "When we financially support an issue or organization, we stencil the appropriate logo onto our bread," says co-owner Lisa Rubin-Woods.

*Their boule loaf with the Texas map baked on it*

How did she and her husband meet? In 1980, Brian Woods, a young master baker from England decided to follow his fiancée to volunteer on a kibbutz—a communal living and farming center--in the Golan Heights in Israel. A young woman from New York, studying Hebrew at another kibbutz, wanted to try the language program at the kibbutz in the Golan Heights. The young man discovered that his fiancée had changed her mind. But the language student and Brian both loved to bake and became good friends. Life on Kibbutz Merom Golan was rewarding, but conditions were tense because they were just half a mile from the Syrian border. There was a constant threat of armed raids and landmines snuck into Israel. The couple decided to move to the United States.



*Brian and Lisa inside Beach Lake Bakery Shop*

Brian Woods and Lisa Rubin were married in 1981. Brian opened a bakery in Manhattan with a partner. Lisa worked in Manhattan. In 1988, they discovered the Poconos and opened the Catskill Cookie Company in Narrowsburg, NY.

Eventually Brian and Lisa found a home in Beach Lake, PA. Using only untreated flours and no preservatives, they create European-style breads and pastries and traditional American pies, cookies, and cakes. The couple acquired a devoted following of customers. Their son, Ian, delivered to all the restaurants and markets carrying their products.

Their daughter, Jamie, then in middle school, suggested they build a shop in the front of the bakery to sell to local customers, and offered to run it. Beach Lake Bakery became a family affair.

In 2019, Brian retired due to a diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease. In order to allow Lisa to spend more time with Brian, Jamie moved home from Spain, where she'd been studying Spanish and interning for a baking equipment distributor, to take over the operation of the bakery along with her husband, Alberto Diez Vives, whom she met when living in Spain. Alberto, an industrial engineer, keeps a menagerie of different types of machines running, from one that divides dough into equal pieces, shapes them into rolls, and bakes them, to an oven that can bake 600 loaves of bread a day. Jamie keeps the books and tends their social media.

Brian and Lisa joined GOT a year ago. They appreciate the transportation services GOT offers, which allow Brian to attend fitness sessions at Rock Steady Boxing in Honesdale, a program designed specifically for people with Parkinson's Disease, which also provides a community of support and an opportunity to meet new friends.

You can find more information about Beach Lake Bakery's hours, their products, how to order for Saturday pickup, and how to buy their products at other outlets at [beachlakebakery.com](http://beachlakebakery.com).

**By Marileta Robinson, GOT volunteer and author of *The Toe Snatchers* book**

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### ***ELDERLY CHECKOUTS FOR THE LONELY***



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*A Dutch supermarket introduced slow checkouts for lonely, elderly people who want someone to talk to. The move has proven so successful they have installed the checkouts in 200 stores. They have also added a "chat corner" where locals could meet for a cup of coffee and a chat.*

## ***Healing Horsemanship***

For centuries, horseback riding has been a pleasure and a necessity for people of all ages from every walk of life. Grooming and caring for horses teaches life skills while providing pleasure and purpose for many riders but there is a place where it becomes so much more and makes all the difference in lives. Fair Hill Therapeutic Riding Center offers adults and children with physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs a safe and fun way to access the therapeutic benefits of horseback riding. Learning to ride improves balance, coordination and muscle strength and builds confidence and self-esteem. It can take focus off their challenges and show them what they can achieve.

Sally Wasylyk, 69, President of the Board of Directors, says that Fair Hill's two locations, Wynsum Equestrian Center in Damascus, PA, and Maplewood Farms in Waymart, PA, currently serve 22 students. Asked why she thought that interaction with horses was so beneficial, she cited their intuitive nature and non-judgmental manner. She mentioned that they're actually able to feel and connect with human heartbeats from several feet away. When horses synchronize their heartbeats with humans, it can lead to a decline in heart rate for stressed or anxious individuals. Being out in nature, away from the clinical environment, is also a bonus.

Volunteers are crucial to Fair Hill's mission. An interest in learning more about horses and a desire to adopt a calmer demeanor, a more relaxed way of looking at life as a senior led Maureen Mouton to Fair Hill. She wanted to explore the way that horses interact with each other, including the "gentle nudge" they use to communicate. "You have to be calm around the horses," she says, explaining that the animals pick up on a human's attitude.

"And volunteering gives a strong sense of purpose," Sally says. "I first connected with Fair Hill while I was teaching special education, bringing my students there for visits and seeing the powerful impact of equine-assisted services. When I retired, I wanted to stay involved."

Virginia Kassay, another senior volunteer, started out as a Fair Hill student. After surgery, she began therapeutic riding to aid her recovery. "I felt more confident, my body felt stronger, I was braver about trying things." She found that helping out at Fair Hill, "opened up my world to horses...and I have this whole new aspect in my life now. Volunteering is very enriching." More hands are always welcome in the barn. "I don't want people to be afraid to volunteer," explains Maureen. "The instructors know exactly what they're doing. They know their objective, they know how they want to take care of the horses." Inexperience in a helper isn't a negative if the person is eager to learn and willing to follow directions.



*Virginia & Smarty*



*Grooming Smarty*

Numerous success stories encourage the staff. "Individuals with autism, for example, tend to look down and be slumped over," Sally said. "Leading a horse, you have to look up, to see where you're going. When you're on the horse, your eyes have to be up to help with your balance." Improved eye contact and socialization became second nature to one autistic student.

Another boy with cerebral palsy found that learning to post (to rise from the saddle and return to it in rhythm with a horse's trot) strengthened his legs to the point that his reliance on leg braces was reduced.

Donations are essential to keeping student fees affordable. "We try to keep our lesson fees low enough so that everybody would be able to participate," Sally says, "We don't turn anyone away for financial reasons."

Lessons can be a highlight in a student's life. Hearing a parent tell the staff that the only thing their child looks forward to is their days at Fair Hill, and that the only time their anxiety disappears is when they are astride a horse, makes the hard work well worth it.

**By Dawn MacIntyre, author of the book *The Paper Pirate*, available on Amazon.com**

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## ***A Glimpse into a Life's Work – Leading Artist and GOT Member Nancy Wells at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance***



Growing Older Together is proud to celebrate our remarkable member, **Nancy Wells**—a painter, printmaker, digital artist, photographer, sculptor, doll-maker, mixed-media artist, and poet. Nancy turned 90 this past January, and to honor this milestone, the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, with support from GOT, presented a special exhibition of her work, which opened on Saturday, August 9.

While not a full retrospective, the exhibition spans decades of Nancy's extraordinary creativity, from the 1960s through today. Opening night was nothing short of magical—Nancy, radiant and surrounded by her artwork and devoted admirers, was warmly celebrated. Many of her pieces sold immediately, and in a gesture of generosity, Nancy has pledged to donate a portion of the proceeds to support GOT's mission.

We are deeply proud of Nancy and invite you to experience her artistry at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance in Narrowsburg, NY, before the show closes on **September 10**. Don't miss this rare opportunity to witness the breadth and brilliance of a life devoted to creative expression.



*On opening night, it seemed everyone was snapping up Nancy's pieces, including this one purchased by GOT Executive Director Thomas Cambridge, entitled "Holiness of Trees 10 Benedictions"*

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## **Senior Gatherings Have Come to Honesdale!**



GOT is excited to promote the latest partnership between The Cooperage Project and Tusten Social, and announces a new bi-monthly programming option – **the Senior Gatherings**. Based upon the successful model of the Sage Sessions in Narrowsburg, Senior Gatherings are now offered the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, 1:30PM – 3:30PM, at The Cooperage Project, 1030 Main Street in Honesdale. These welcoming afternoons are for all residents of the area, 60 years and up, to socialize in a warm and friendly setting.

Bring a friend, and enjoy light refreshments, engaging conversation, and curated programming covering a range of topics from nature, art, entertainment and local history. The events are free of charge, and no registration is necessary. We hope to see you there!

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## **The GOT Family Cookbook is Here!**



We are excited to announce that the GOT family cookbook - *Recipes to Remember* - is published and ready to order!

This special collection of over **150 cherished recipes** from our members, volunteers, and neighbors showcases the incredible diversity of our community. Inside, you'll find everything from appetizers and soups to main dishes inspired by global flavors and hometown favorites—plus an incredible selection of baked goods and desserts. Each recipe tells a story and brings generations of tradition to your table.

Proceeds from the **\$15 sales price** directly support Growing Older Together’s mission—helping seniors stay independent and connected in their own homes. Funds raised will help sustain our operations and provide sponsorships for members who need assistance with their annual dues.

Whether you’re cooking for yourself or gifting to a friend, this cookbook is a meaningful and delicious way to support our cause. You may order securely online (+\$6 added for shipping and handling) at:

<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/HZ4T8ZZRSSQAL>

If you live in our service area, you may also call the GOT Hotline at 570-630-0509 and arrange for one of our volunteers to drop a copy by your house.

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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, northern Pike County, PA, 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 visit our website and click the **Donate** button, or mail your check to GOT, 830 Main Street #574, Honesdale, PA 18431. Thank you in advance for your support.

Looking to plan your estate or make provisions in your will or beneficiary designations? Making bequests to non-profit organizations like GOT are a great way to ensure your legacy makes an impact in your community, benefitting future generations.

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:

[www.growingoldertogether.org](http://www.growingoldertogether.org) Thank you!

Growing Older Together is supported in part by generous grants from the Honesdale National Bank Foundation, Moses Taylor Foundation, Robert H. Spitz Foundation, Sullivan County Legislature, Wayne Memorial Health Foundation, and Wayne County Community Foundation, as well as with support from the following corporate sponsors:

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Growing Older Together collaborates with and is supported by numerous organizations in the area to fulfill our mission, including:

**Delaware Valley Arts Alliance / Tusten Social**  
**The River Reporter / WJFF Radio Catskills**  
**Wayne County Area Agency on Aging / Sullivan County Office of Aging**

Diversity is a Source of Strength, Creativity, and Innovation. Growing Older Together is committed to fostering an environment that welcomes and values every person and respects all identities, cultures, heritages, and abilities.

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