



Chatterbox March 2023



Hello, my name is Jo Ann Jarush and I'm proud to say I have been a BRC Home Delivered Meals driver for the past 5 years.

However, getting to this particular place in time was a journey over many years. I always led a life of consistency – born and raised in Dyker Heights/Bay Ridge, I've lived in the same house since I'm 12. My large, extended family has resided on this block for over a century. At 15, I met and fell madly in love with the handsome man I would eventually marry – we were inseparable.

After graduating from Kingsborough College, I began a 40+-year career in advertising placing commercials on TV. If you've ever seen a Cheerios, Pampers, or Toyota spot (just to name a few among thousands) ...yup, that was me. And for those of you who utilize the commercial break to get a snack or put in another load of laundry...

"You're welcome". Do you see a pattern here? Forty years with my David, and 40+ years in the same house and the same job; I loved my life and was very comfortable living in a world of familiarity. So, when I suddenly found myself middle-aged, widowed, and unemployed – the world as I knew it ceased to exist. Then one day I decided that I could either spend the rest of my days saying, "Woe is me" or I could face my fears and forge headlong into an unknown future.

I chose the latter. After all, it was that fork in the road that led me to the Bay Ridge Center where I met some of the most dedicated and compassionate people I have ever known. The Meals on Wheels team is devoted to providing our homebound clients with a nourishing meal and an assurance that someone cares about their well-being every day. In fact, there are instances whereby daily wellness checks have been responsible for saving clients from injury or death. This is why we endure inclement weather, traffic jams, etc. – Even knowing the risks of COVID would not deter us from our responsibilities (inevitably, nearly every one of us contracted the virus). I consider myself fortunate to be part of this special cast of characters and look forward to working daily with my Home Delivered Meals family.

So, here is where I make my point for this narrative of my life... I realized we all have an untapped well of potential and resiliency of which we may not even be aware. I've experienced it personally and I've seen it in others. For example, I went from being so afraid to drive a car to driving a truck in Brooklyn! – who knew? I've seen vibrant seniors who have chosen to live up to their potential and thrive by joining BRC's numerous activities. So, take that chance...whether it is trying a new recipe, taking a class, or simply having a cup of coffee with a new friend. Forge ahead; your potential may just surprise you. I am now learning digital art (exciting) and home repairs (scary), so I'm still open to new experiences. And if I fail, oh well, I'll just have a good laugh (and then call the plumber)



Jo Ann Jarush
Home delivery meals driver

IMPORTANT DATES

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| MARCH 1ST ZERO DISCRIMINATION DAY | MARCH 12TH DAY LIGHT SAVINGS |
| MARCH 3RD WORLD WILDLIFE DAY | MARCH 17TH ST. PATRICK'S DAY |
| MARCH 4TH EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY | MARCH 22ND BEGINNING OF RAMADAN |
| MARCH 8TH INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DAY | |



News from our NORC

By D. Lascel Parkinson, Director Bay Ridge Connects

Hello all! Seems like we just were just celebrating New Year's, and we're already in March! But, as all of you are reading this now, as an organization we have been busy putting together new things to keep our members busy and productive! As far as CONNECTs goes, we have brought on our new Case Manager Ashley Witherell to round out our team, and she is more than anxious to meet you! She has hit the ground running- so, don't hesitate to come by and say hello. Also, we have launched our Health Talk with Nurse Betty- available Mondays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm- to discuss trends and topics which affect you, our valued members, and friends. We also have launched our Game day- Fridays at 11 am- where we have Foosball, Pool, ping pong, and even Nintendo switch- so we can play virtual sports. I Challenge you to come over and have some fun with us!

We look forward to seeing as many of you can get through the door!

Ground Breaking Ceremony

Just in case you missed it, Bay Ridge Center had its ground breaking ceremony for their new space at 15 Bay Ridge Avenue. It will be a 21,000 sq ft space and will feature new programming and services for older adults in the community.

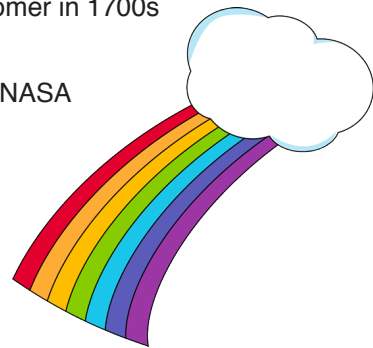
Women's History Month

By David Dring, Director of Inovative Programs



With Punxsutawney Phil predicting six more weeks of Winter, March will be the end of Winter. Then it's onto Spring and all of its glory. March will be a good transition month with our traditional programs as well as new ones. As March is Women's History month, Victoria Hofma will be hosting a class for us. Also, we'll be celebrating women throughout our classes. For example, our Art History classes will focus on women artists. As the Tech instructor, here are some important contributions of women:

- Nicole-Reine Lepautre, among the first in tech, was an mathematician and astronomer in 1700s
- Ada Lovelace recognized as the first computer programmer
- Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan were barrier breakers at NASA (see movie Hidden Figures)
- Susan Wojcicki is among the founders of Google
- Gwynne Shotwell is the President and CEO of SpaceX
- Reshma Saujani founded the non-profit, Girls Who Code
- Kimberly Bryand founded Black Girls Code



Some special classes that will continue through March: Healing Movement with Toni, Gardening & Plant Care with Janina and Short Story/Play Reading with Stuart. We hope that you'll enjoy these classes. And we hope you'll join us at the March St. Patrick's/St. Joseph's Day on Tuesday, March 21st from 1 to 3.

I'm always looking for recommendations and feedback about our programs. Please contact me with your thoughts at ddring@bayridgecenter.org or at 718.748.0650 ext 117.



Join the March

By Mary Ann Coughlin, PT CEEA



Every year in March we celebrate the fact that in 1972, President Nixon amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. The Bay Ridge Center’s Meals on Wheels program delivers over 600 meals a day to homebound seniors in our community. We were able to deliver meals daily throughout the pandemic and continue to deliver meals to more older adults than we did prior to the pandemic, even though operational and food costs are soaring due to historic inflation. Our Meals on Wheels staff are out in every kind of weather delivering meals but even more importantly checking to insure that the recipients are safe. They don’t only deliver a meal they pay a friendly visit as well. During this month we usually have an in person march in the community to raise awareness and funds for the Meals on Wheels program. This year we will be doing it independently and this is where your help comes in.

I am inviting everyone that is able to walk on your own, with a buddy or with a group and keep track of your steps, blocks or miles during the month of March. You will then call in or email your daily or weekly total and we will tally them up. The Center will then post our grand total of miles walked by the members of the Bay Ridge Center showing their support of the Meals on Wheels program. Raising funds and raising awareness is our main goal, so we ask you to help us do both. You might get a sponsor to pledge a certain amount for the miles or steps you walk. Won’t they be surprised at how many miles you have logged! Let’s get our sneakers on and show our support. Walking indoors, outdoors, tallying your steps at your exercise class- it all counts.

Call or email me at 718-306-2924 or mcoughlin@bayridgecenter.org

Or Joe D’Esposito at 718-748-0650 ext 210 Or jdesposito@bayridgecenter.org



Helpful hints:

The distance between avenues is approximately 7 blocks to a mile (east to west along the side street)

The distance between streets is approximately 20 blocks to a mile (north to south along the avenue)

Approximately 2,000 - 2500 steps equal a mile. (you choose)

MTA BUS REDESIGN



The MTA is making several bus route changes to upgrade service, support major improvements and improve the timing between stops. However, two changes impact the Bay Ridge Center.

These changes include the B9 and B64 routes. The route of B64 has changed so that it no longer takes passengers down Bay Ridge Avenue past 4th Avenue, which severely impacts transportation to the new Center. We encourage you to review the MTA’s Redesign plan and comment at: <https://new.mta.info/project/bus-network-redesign> As we learn more information, we will provide a class on the topic.

Ashley Witherell

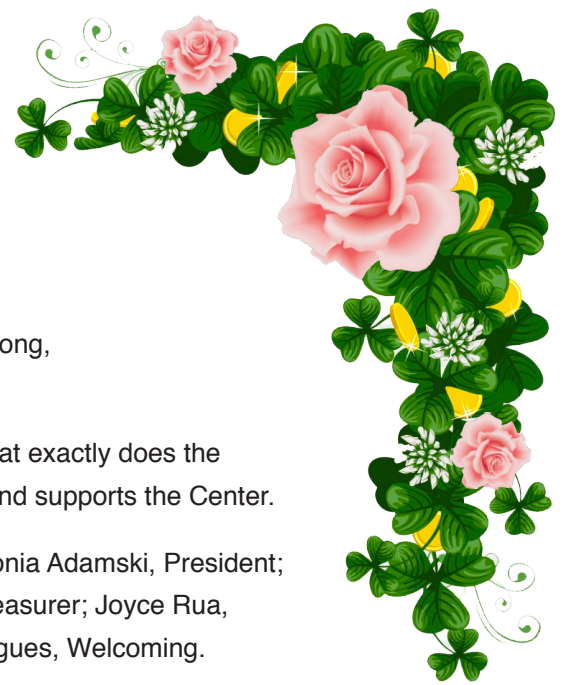
NORC Case Manager



Hi everyone, my name is Ashley Witherell. I’m the new NORC Case Manager at Bay Ridge Connects. I recently relocated to Brooklyn from a small city in Northern NY called Watertown. I obtained my BA in Psychology with a concentration in mental health at Southern New Hampshire University. Prior to this position, I worked as a Supported Housing Case Manager at Transitional Living Services of NNY. I provided advocacy and support to individuals suffering from mental illness, along with linking and referring them to safe and affordable housing. I am very eager to learn about and get more involved within this wonderful community! You can find me at Bay Ridge Connects M-F from 9:00am – 5:00pm. Please feel free to stop by with any questions or concerns, or to just say hello! I look forward to meeting and working with you all!

A MESSAGE FROM SONIA ADAMSKI

Senior Advisory Council President



Dear Members,

It is so nice to put pen to paper and write you once again. It feels that, after so long, we are finally getting back to normal.

In January, we had our Senior Advisory Council elections. You may wonder, what exactly does the Council do? To sum it up briefly, the Council acts on behalf of its membership and supports the Center.

So, thank you for your vote which resulted in the following Council for 2023: Sonia Adamski, President; Irene Teutonico, Vice President; Mary Todisco, Secretary; Rachel Gutierrez, Treasurer; Joyce Rua, Fundraising; Madeline Fryer, Fundraising; Judy Parris, Outreach; Loretta Rodrigues, Welcoming.

Just a few refreshers so that things run smoothly. Please sign up for trips by the last Friday before that Wednesday's trip. The lottery takes place on Friday morning and if you are not present, you will be called. On the day of the trip bring exact cash separately, to give to Sarah, for transportation, tours, and dining. etc. as noted on the trip page. Sarah will not be able to divide the money or make change for us. If you were chosen for a trip and need to cancel, please notify Sarah at the Center, as there is always a waiting list.

As well, please sign up for monthly parties by the last Friday before that Tuesday's party. The cost of parties is \$3.00 (exact cash) which includes the music and ice cream or pastry. Tickets for refreshments will be given, as you enter, by Rita on the day of the party. Volunteers serving refreshments will ask for your ticket, no exceptions please.

Please have exact cash for bingo and 50/50 chances, as it is vvery difficult to make the change. In March, unfortunately, we will have to raise the price for bingo cards to 4 cards for \$3.00, and 2 cards for \$1.50. Also, changing will be the 50/50 chances to 3 chances for \$2.00. We appreciate your support.

In closing, I am reminded that in May, I have been a member and volunteer at this Center for 20 years. I have seen many changes; good times, not-so-good times, and now the best time of all is yet to come. We look forward to the opening of our new Center and thank everyone who had a part in this overwhelming project.

Meet Kara Araujo

Social Work Intern

I'm Kara and I'm studying at NYU, working towards my master's degree in social work. I'm so pleased to be interning at Bay Ridge Center through August 2023 as part of that process, and I'm looking forward to getting to know many of BRC's members! Eventually, I plan to work as an LCSW (psychotherapist) with adults who are experiencing mental health challenges. I also have a degree in public relations and more than a decade of experience working in nonprofit communications and outreach, connecting New Yorkers to local enriching events, activities, and services. In my free time, I enjoy singing, musical theater, reading, and interior design. Please come say hello if we haven't met yet!





Meet a Member: Margaret Gilbert

By Kara Araujo, NYU Social Work Intern

Margaret Gilbert is from a place where, to her eye, the hillside is so beautifully green it doesn't look real; a place where the Christmas plum pudding is better than it is anywhere else in the world. She was born and raised in Cork, a large city in southwest Ireland, with her parents and three siblings. But all was not beautiful and serene. By the time Margaret was only 14 years old, her beloved parents had passed away and she was sent to New York City, a place she had never before been, to live with an aunt she barely knew, forced apart from her siblings who stayed behind with relatives in Ireland.

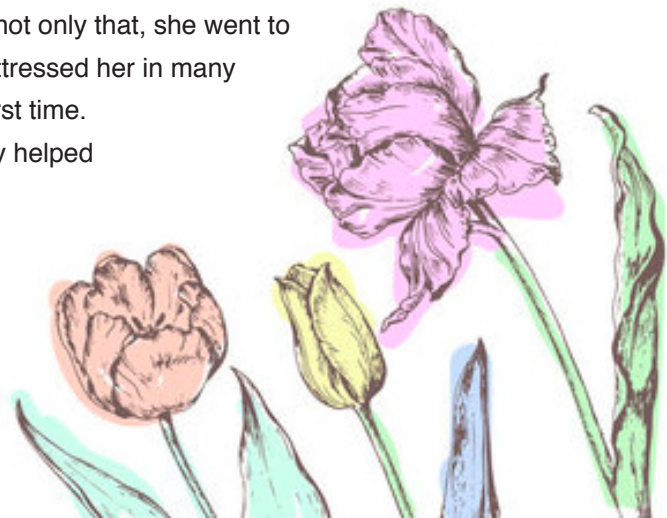
Margaret didn't want to move across the world, but she felt didn't have a choice in the matter. She interpreted that the cultural expectations were to follow the advice of her elders. Yet, she overcame her terror and made her way in a strange new country. At fourteen, just two days after arriving in New York City, she began to work as a waitress to make ends meet, but this meant she wouldn't be able to attend high school. She channeled the must-do attitude instilled in her from early childhood and persevered under difficult circumstances, because she had to. By age sixteen, her aunt had moved back to Ireland.

But Margaret wasn't alone for long. She met people along the way that saw something special in her, and she opened herself up to being supported and influenced by them. Several women in particular helped her change the trajectory of her life.

When Margaret decided to explore getting a GED at 27 years old, a woman at the GED center helped her study—for two years—to make up for the high school education she had missed. When this woman sensed Margaret was ready to give up, she strongly encouraged her to take the GED exam, and Margaret passed, setting the stage for her future growth.

Margaret's landlady in a private house was another woman who had a major impact on her development. Her landlady modeled what acceptance looks like: acceptance for oneself, and for all people, no matter how different from oneself they may be. In part because of this woman, Margaret carried the values of inclusivity, integrity, and respect for all with her throughout the rest of her life. These values served her well in the career she didn't know she would come to have later in life.

That career came, in part, because Margaret's landlady introduced her to another woman with whom she would end up sharing a very special friendship with for many years—a friendship that continues to this day. When Margaret was 45 years old, this friend encouraged Margaret to move on from waitressing and get a job with the New York City Department of Education. She saw the potential in Margaret, and Margaret accepted her support. She got a job as a paraprofessional aid helping elementary students with special needs, and not only that, she went to college at night for nine years to earn her bachelor's degree. Her friend buttressed her in many ways, including coaching her through writing college-level papers for the first time. Margaret's strength was magnified by that of her friend's, and together they helped Margaret create a career she loved and excelled in for 23 years.



MARCH MENU

2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 Baked Asian Style Honey Chicken Brown Rice Brussel Sprout	2 Baked Macaroni & Cheese Baby Carrots w/Parsley Broccoli & Red Peppers	3 Baked Fish Orzo w/ Vegetables Zucchini & Tomato
6 Caribbean Curry Chicken Yellow Rice Steamed Cabbage with Soy Sauce	7 Beef Stew Egg Noodles Broccoli and Red Peppers	8 Brown Gravy Roasted Turkey Breast Homemade Mashed Potatoes Steamed Carrots and Green Beans	9 Black Bean and Sweet Potato Chili Brown Rice (1/2 Cup) California Blend Vegetables	10 Baked Fish Penne (1/2 Cup) Brussels Sprouts
13 Apricot - Glazed Pork Chops California Blend Vegetables Homemade Mashed Potatoes	14 Shepherd Pie with Beef and Turkey Steamed Broccoli Steamed Cauliflower	15 Chicken Cacciatore Sauteed Green Beans	16 Cauliflower Chickpea Bulgur Bake Brown Rice (1/2 Cup) Baby Carrots with Parsley Steamed Zucchini	17 Homemade Fish Cake Brussels Sprouts Roasted Sweet Potato Fries
20 Beef Ströganoff with Noodles Broccoli and Red Peppers Steamed Yellow Squash	21 Cheese Ravioli Tomato Sauce (Pre- Prepared: 1/4 cup) Baby Carrots with Parsley Brussels Sprouts	22 Chicken Cacciatore Panne (1/2 cup) Corn and Red Peppers	23 Pork Stir Fry with Vegetables Brown Rice (1/2 cup) Cauliflower with Carrots and Parsley	24 Baked Fish with Cream Sauce Cous Cous Steamed Green Beans
27 BBQ Pulled Pork Polenta California Blend Vegetables	28 Chicken Stir Fry with Vegetables Brown Rice with Pigeon Peas	29 Beef Brisket with Tomatoes and Onions Egg Noodles Brussels Sprouts	30 Vegetarian Chili White Rice (1/2 cup) Winter Blend Vegetables	31 Baked Fish with Lemon Sauce Orzo with Vegetables Sauteed Spinach

Every meal comes with a protein, grain, vegetable, fruit, juice, whole wheat bread and low fat milk.
Please contact Bay Ridge Center with any concerns 718-748-0650. Menu is subject to change.

