

## A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Michael Rodriguez, Inventory Manager



Hello, my name is Michael Rodriguez. I am the Inventory Manager, and I have just celebrated my 18th year anniversary here at the Bay Ridge Center. I first started here at BRC as a stock person unpacking food supplies and recording incoming inventory. Currently, as the Inventory Manager, my responsibility is to ensure that all the essential food supplies that come into the center are of top quality and have the highest nutritional value for our members. In addition to the food ordering I handle all incoming invoices in regards to the food supply as well as office supplies; assuring vendors are paid on a timely basis.

Our Food Service Manager Omar oversees the entire kitchen operation to ensure hygiene, and quality in the preparation of the daily meals, that are prepared by our head chef Efrain. My coworkers include Jay, Sunday, Maria and Luis, who are an integral part of the team that assists in expediting over 600 meals a day for our Home Delivered Meals Program in addition to 50-100 congregate meals served here at the center daily. As we continue to thrive and grow we are now once again able to do the much anticipated monthly parties and special menus for our members.

During my tenure here at the center we have faced financial hurdles, as we struggled to keep the center open for our members. At one point, our credit line was suspended and we were not able to have food delivered to the center. I personally went to the local fruit and vegetable market, as well as our wholesale company to secure the much-needed supplies for the preparation of daily meals. With team effort, accountability and cooperation from the kitchen team we were able to bounce back.

Today, Bay Ridge Center is thriving on many levels thanks to the stellar leadership of our Executive Director Todd W. Fliedner. Many amazing things are unfolding and as we look ahead to the future, and the opening of our new site at 15 Bay Ridge Avenue, this is truly an incredible time for me.

On personal level, I am proud to be a part of an amazing and hardworking team here at BRC. I consider Bay Ridge Center my home away from home.



# Evolution of Technology: Janetta's Perspective

By David Dring, Director of Innovative Programs

My mom's mom was Janetta Farmer. No, she wasn't a farmer. She was a single-room schoolhouse teacher. She taught kids from kindergarten through high school in one room. She was born in 1900. I hear it repeatedly that older adults are unfamiliar with technological change. I disagree and will use my grandmother as an example.

When my grandmother was little, she rode on a horse-driven carriage from Pennsylvania to Kansas. In Kansas, they lived in a sod house before they were able to build a nice wood-framed home. She frequently told us how she had to walk miles to get to her school and how she would carry hot potatoes to stay warm in the winter. Life was definitely not easy.

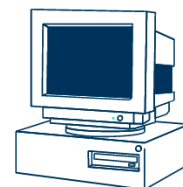
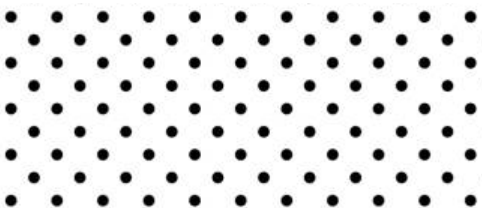
When she married, she moved to a small town called Eureka. Her husband, a civil engineer, was recognized as helping solve the dust bowl problem of the plain states. So, he had influence and was often given perks, such as their house being the first in the town to receive a generator to produce electricity. They were among the first to receive a car, a radio, and a black and white TV. They had a toaster, a gas stove, and a washing machine. These are all impressive innovations. Just the cooking was transformational for her: from a hearth to a wood-burning stove to a gas one, from spending hours preparing meals to being able to microwave them.

Ultimately, my grandmother traveled with my parents to Europe. Therefore, she experienced a tremendous transformation in travel from foot to horse to car to train to a jet plane. Flying was the furthest from her mind as she walked to town. The adjustment of these technological changes took effort, patience, and practice.

I believe you have also experienced many of these technological changes. Over time, you adapted; in fact, you excelled. The early days of driving were chaotic, yet you have updated your cars over time to drive (notwithstanding traffic) effortlessly. It took effort, patience, and practice.

Now, today's technological changes are happening faster than ever before. That makes it difficult, for sure. However, you've learned to adapt before, so I know you can be an active part of the digital economy. Once again, it will take effort, patience, and practice. And if you have any questions, please come to one of our Tech classes (shameless plug).

May is Older Adults' Month. Join us in celebrating you and the contributions of older adults everywhere. We will offer special classes to honor older adults and be providing access to classes that other organizations across the country are offering throughout the month. Please visit our online calendar for more details: [www.BayRidgeCenter.org/calendar](http://www.BayRidgeCenter.org/calendar).



# MOTHER'S DAY

By: Johanna Loizides, Executive Assistant



May 14, is a very special day as we commemorate one of the most important people in our lives our Mothers. It is a time to recognize the importance of the maternal figure and all that she embodies, love, strength, wisdom courage, patience. This day truly means something special to everyone one of us, as we reflect on all the extraordinary women who have nurtured us, who made an impressionable impact and guided us with indelible knowledge and insight.

On a personal note, my Mother who passed nearly 15 years ago, it feels just like yesterday. When I think of my Mother my heart swells with love, and pride for the woman and for the mother she was. Her devotion and unconditional love for myself and my brother was infinite it knew no bounds, as she struggled being a single parent an immigrant, raising two children at the time in a strange country..

My mother's name was Mary; she was extraordinarily talented and beautiful. She had a major soprano voice singing and acting on stage as a young girl back in her country. Mary was also a gifted artist and writer of poems. She was extremely intelligent, insightful, intuitive and quick witted. She was tenacious, resilient, and bold she had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge Mary was my rock, my pillar of strength, my friend and confidant. She was an amazing, incredible person and mother.

## A DEDICATION TO ALL MOTHERS

"A mother's love is like any other, and it is often said that it is the purest and most selfless form of love. A mother's love is unconditional and unwavering, and it can withstand any obstacle or challenge that comes her way"

"A mother's love knows no boundaries, no limitations and no conditions"

"A mother's love is a flame that never dies; it burns brighter with each passing day. A mothers love is the sun that warms our hears, the rain that nourishes our souls and the wind that carries us forward"

"A mother's love is a light that shines through the darkness, a beacon of hope that guides us through life challenges"

"A mother's love is a force of nature that cannot be tamed or contained. It is a true love that is boundless and infinite"

"A mother's love is a melody that echoes in our hearts forever. It is a song of comfort, joy, and peace."

"A mother's love is a flame that never dies. It burns brighter with every passing day" The love of a mother is the foundation that shapes and guides us into the people we become."

To all Mothers everywhere Happy Mother's Day!!!

## IMPORTANT DATES

MAY 5TH CINCO DE MAYO

MAY 14TH MOTHER'S DAY

MAY 20TH ARMED FORCES DAY

MAY 29TH MEMORIAL DAY

*We must be willing to let go of  
the life we planned so as to have  
the life that is waiting for us*

*Joseph Campbell*

# Meet a Member: Henry Bentsen

By: Lily Rosenblum – Social Work Intern

Recently I had the chance to sit with Henry Bentsen, a new member of Bay Ridge Center but a longtime resident of New York City. Together we explored some of his life story, both in the past and present.

Henry grew up in Sunset Park but has lived in all five boroughs in different parts of his life. At 15, Henry was president of his graduating class and entered college early, studying English and Education. When he was not in NYC, he also lived in Spain and took extended trips to other countries. In his travels and work across the city and the globe, Henry picked up several languages, such as Spanish, French, and Italian, and is still learning more. Along with the language theme, Henry taught English to students at the college level and even had his language school in Europe at one point.

Henry has a diverse resume; and has held far more jobs than just teaching! Henry owned a fishing business in Montauk, worked with computers for various organizations and banks, and hosted TV and radio shows in the U.S. and Spain. Among those roles, Henry is also a parent and grandparent and previously served as an owner to a LOT of pets (snakes, birds, dogs, cats - you name it!)

Today, Henry enjoys writing poetry, fishing at different piers in Brooklyn, and doing art, and he looks forward to continuing his global travels.

Henry noted that one of his favorite quotes comes from Rolling Stone's Angie, ***“Ain't it good to be alive?”***

If you see him around the center, say hi!



## ARTHRITIS AWARENESS

By Mary Ann Coughlin PT

So many times when I asked patients how they felt, they would say fine, except for my arthritis pain. They would let me know when it was going to rain, when the weather was changing, and how much worse they felt in cold, wet weather. For many years, the medical profession ignored these complaints. However, research started to show that these complaints were something to be considered. Changes in barometric pressure (which measures the weight of the air) can have an effect on your joints. Before it rains, barometric pressure tends to decrease so there is less air pressure exerting itself on your body. This then allows an expansion and contraction of tendons, ligaments, and cartilage within the joint, which can result in pain in the tissues that are affected by arthritis. A cold or warm front creates a drop in the barometric pressure. Once the weather has settled, arthritic pain usually decreases. A study from Tufts University showed that with every 10-degree drop in temperature pain from arthritis increased. Low temperatures may also increase the thickness of joint fluids, making them stiffer and perhaps more sensitive to pain during movement. During cold, wet weather, people tend to stay inside and have a decrease in their activity levels. Physical activity is known to relieve arthritic pain so this inactivity can also lead to an increase in pain.

As we have noted before, the mind/body connection is strong. Psychologically, warm sunny days generally make us feel better, which should help us feel better physically. As sunny and warm weather approach, and we head into May let us enjoy the times of high barometric pressure and hopefully less pain.

HAVE YOU EXERCISED TODAY?



**“Each time a flower blooms,  
the world is reminded of  
beauty in new beginnings.”**

**- Matshona Dhliwayo**

## **SPRINGING INTO MAY!**

**By Ashley W, Director Bay Ridge Connects**

There is no better feeling than watching the seasons change while getting our gardens and patios ready for the warm weather. It's a time to plant new flowers and see old ones re-emerge. It is a season full of growth, change, and new energy.

That said, Bay Ridge CONNECTs is also experiencing some changes this season. I am excited to announce that I am the new NORC Director at CONNECTs! While we're just getting started, we have some amazing ideas (thanks to our wonderful members) to make this place better than it already is. We have implemented a new program called 'Coffee & Chats with Sonja Roinestad, LMHC' on Mondays @ 12:00 pm. Additionally, we have changed the name of 'The Wanderers' to 'Connects Community Club'; as a way to support the wonderful neighborhoods that surround us. But we're not done! With your input and suggestions, our goal is to create a space unique to the needs of older adults within the Bay Ridge area. It is my hope that we can continue helping our members age in place by offering all the support they need at our storefront while having fun while doing so.

It is truly an honor to be a part of this wonderful organization in the heart of Bay Ridge while getting to know you all individually. I cannot wait to see what is in store next. Cheers to change and the future of Bay Ridge CONNECTs at 7609 3rd Ave!

## **MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**By Zaza Kandakai, MPA-HA, ACG Client Care Director**

I want to thank everyone for welcoming me into the family (organization) of Bay Ridge Center (BRC). I have worked in the human services sector for twenty-three years and served as an Assistant Pastor for Administration for the largest African community church on Staten Island for eleven years. Over the years, I have learned servant leadership (putting the peoples' needs first). In my last job as Housing Specialist with a nonprofit organization, I placed over 100 homeless New Yorkers into permanent housing. As a new member (employee), I bring with me to BRC a considerable amount of understanding of the homeless system of New York City and how to retain homeless New Yorkers in stable housing. In light of this, my goals are: (1) to expose BRC to the homeless system and (2) make BRC get on the list of organizations striving to reduce homelessness in NYC.

BRC may be new to the homeless system, but with time and the right people, we will secure a perpetual seat at the homeless reduction table in NYC. Loving what you do and doing what you love can make a difference. I am with the conviction that BRC will make a difference in NYC homelessness, which is why I am glad to be a part of BRC to bring this to fruition.





Dear Members,

I would like to send out a special “thank you” to Skinflints for remembering our Center year after year with their much-appreciated Holiday Dinner last month.

Also, many thanks to the members who decorated and showed off their bonnets in the parade. The winners were Loretta Rodrigues, first prize; Rita Russo, second prize; and Beatrice Carmen, third prize.

On May 5, we are scheduled to have our Friday night bingo with doors opening at 3:30 pm. We will order the pizza and start bingo promptly at 4:30 pm. We will not be able to admit anyone after that time as we are on a very tight schedule. The cost in May for bingo is \$12.00 at the door, which includes 4 bingo cards, 2 slices of pizza, and soda. We will play 15 games which can win you \$10.00 a game. Friends and family are welcome to join us.

On Tuesday, May 23, join us for our Mother’s Day/Birthday Party from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Please see Kathy for your party ticket no later than Friday, May 19; no exceptions, please, as dessert will be ordered that day, and seating will be finalized.

On Saturday, June 24, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, a picnic to benefit the Center is scheduled at the Lutheran School backyard. We will have this picnic, rain or shine, and, of course, we hope for shine. It is a wonderful afternoon event to be outdoors, enjoying friends, good food, and great music. The cost is \$60.00 by check payable to the Bay Ridge Center and given to Kathy Boyle at the reception desk.

Also, \$100.00 raffle tickets may be purchased from Johanna Loizides at the Center. Only 300 raffle tickets will be sold with one prize of \$15,000. You may join with your friends or family to purchase a ticket and, should you win, divide the prize. The winner will be announced at the picnic, and attendance is not necessary.

On Saturday, August 12, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, the Senior Advisory Council is hosting a dinner and dance at Sirico’s to benefit our Center. The cost is \$80.00, payable by check to the Bay Ridge Center and given to Sonia Adamski. We will be posting flyers with more information about this event. Again, this will be a perfect Saturday afternoon to enjoy yourself, dance your heart away, and support our Center. Friends and family are welcome to attend at the exact cost.

All these events are leading us right into moving day. Please join us in the fun and support the Center simultaneously.

Thank you and be kind to each other.

## Sonia Adamski

Senior Advisory Council President



# MAY MENU

## 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Beef Stroganoff with Noodles Broccoli and Red Peppers Steamed Yellow Squash	2 Cheese Ravioli (pre-prepared) Tomato Sauce (pre-prepared, 1/4 cup) Baby Carrots with Parsley Brussels Sprouts	3 Chicken Cacciatore Penne(1/2 cup) Corn and Red Peppers	4 Pork Stir Fry with Vegetables Brown Rice (1/2 cup) Cauliflower with Carrots and Parsley	5 Baked Fish with Cream Sauce Cous Cous Steamed Green Beans
8 BBQ Pulled Pork Polenta California Blend Vegetables	9 Chicken Stir Fry with Vegetables Brown Rice with Pigeon Peas Sautéed Green Beans with Onions	10 Beef Brisket with Tomatoes and Onions Egg Noodles Brussels Sprouts	11 Vegetarian Chili White Rice (1/2 cup) Winter Blend Vegetables	12 Baked Fish with Lemon Sauce Orzo with Vegetables Sautéed Spinach
15 BBQ Chicken Leg Quarters Italian Roast Chicken Baked Macaroni and Cheese Collard Greens with Tomato	16 Turkey Meatloaf with Mushroom Gravy Brussels Sprouts Homemade Mashed Potatoes	17 Vegetable Ratatouille White Rice (1/2 cup) Broccoli and Red Peppers	18 Beef Pot Roast with Mushrooms Egg Noodles Baby Carrots with Parsley	19 Baked Fish Cous Cous Sautéed Spinach
22 Breaded Pork Loin California Blend Vegetables Homemade Mashed Potatoes	23 Beef and Broccoli Egg Noodles Corn and Red Peppers	24 Baked Asian Style Honey Chicken Brown Rice (1/2 cup) Brussels Sprouts	25 Baked Macaroni and Cheese Baby Carrots with Parsley Broccoli and Red Pepper	26 Baked Fish Orzo with Vegetables Zucchini and Tomato
Closed Memorial Day Observance	30 Beef Stew Egg Noodles Broccoli and Red Peppers	31 Brown Gravy Roasted Turkey Breast Homemade Mashed Potatoes Steamed Carrots and Green Beans		

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.

