

# Chatterbox September 2023



Hello Dear Members,

It's hard to believe September is here, a month I always equate with new beginnings. It marks the time of year when harvest is in full swing and a new academic year begins, bringing with it opportunities for learning and growth, celebration and giving thanks.

While gardening a large plot of land in Northern Virginia, I learned firsthand the patience and hard work necessary for a good harvest. I remember the selection of the right seeds, designing the garden, tilling the soil, and the continual process of weeding, watering and patiently waiting. There was always a surprise when a seed from a neighboring garden made its home in mine and something wonderful grew. I am always on the lookout for something unexpected!

I witnessed a very similar harvest with the slow, methodical planning for 15 Bay Ride Avenue. There was discussion of how the rooms would be laid out with staff and our architectural team, creating the design, revisiting these conversation, bringing in partners, fundraising, and endless zoom meetings. I remember the selection of material and paint swatches and how the furniture was tested and retested so it was ergonomically designed for older adults. It was a time that you might see stress balls in staff offices and all of us taking deep breaths. I personally am so happy that the person at the helm, Todd Fliedner, ED always has a generous supply of candy in his office and a welcoming smile.

How thrilled we all were when the walls started to go up and BRC was becoming a reality. What a bumper crop we had!

You can spend the day learning a new skill, acquire new knowledge, expand on your own expertise and receive guidance from experts. There are more than 50 classes to choice from, exercise equipment developed especially for you and to top it off a wonderful meal delivered from our four star kitchen staff.

I am feeling a sense of pride about how the Social Work Department has finally taken flight. We have a wonderful interdisciplinary team of case managers, social work interns, nurses and art therapist that offer a constellation of services from assistance with benefits, supportive counseling, to a range of lectures on ways to support your health and age creatively. We have become a place that students are gravitating toward to learn. We have become an example of aging services of the future!

And with so much happening, I always look for that element of surprise, that wayward seed that plants unexpectedly. I am seeing this by the wonderfully talented professionals joining BRC! We all have our individual voices and strengths but share the same goal of making life better for our members.

I look forward to seeing you in the halls and rooms of our new center slated to open in late October. Please stop in to see me in the Social Work office on the second floor! There is so much we can all celebrate and be thankful for together.

Warmly,

**Cathy King, LMSW**

Director of Senior Services



# SEPTEMBER IS HERE!

By Ashley Witherell, NNORC Director

Hello, Bay Ridge Connects Community! September is here, and it is time to embrace the magic of autumn at our neighborhood NNORC. We've got an exciting lineup of events and programs this month!

**SOUND HEALING MEDITATION** Prepare to embark on a journey of tranquility and self-discovery with our special 'Sound Healing Meditation' led by the enchanting High Priestess Saviii. Every Thursday at 2:00pm, allow the soothing sounds and vibrations to promote relaxation and inner harmony within. Join us for a unique experience of mind, body, and soul alignment, within a support group setting!

**BAY RIDGE CONNECTS CINEMA** Our 'Bay Ridge Connects Cinema' has been a huge success, and we're rolling out the projector screen every week. Join us every Tuesday at 2:00pm to enjoy some classic and contemporary movies. Popcorn, comfy seats, and a fantastic movie lineup await!

**BAY RIDGE ROCKS** Express your inner artist and join us twice a month for our 'Bay Ridge Rocks' class where we explore the art of rock painting. Unleash your creativity and leave your mark on the community by crafting vibrant, inspiring, and imaginative rock designs. These painted rocks can be scattered throughout the neighborhood, spreading joy and creativity wherever they go.

As we move into the month of September, I encourage you all to take a moment to appreciate the beauty in the changing leaves, the cozy warmth of a favorite sweater, and the promise of new beginnings. It's the perfect time to reflect, set new goals, and welcome the season with open arms.

We're excited to share these moments of joy, creativity, and wellness with you at Bay Ridge Connects. Our community succeeds with your energy, input and enthusiasm, and we can't wait to make September extraordinary together. Stay tuned for more details on these events, and feel free to reach out if you have any questions or need more information. We look forward to seeing you this September!

Best,  
Bay Ridge Connects Team

## HEALTHY AGING

By Mary Ann Coughlin PT, Health Care Coordinator

This month is Healthy Aging month, September 8th is World Physical Therapy Day and September 23rd is Falls Prevention Awareness Day. All of these topics are so important to me and I am proud to say that you are doing a great job in aging healthy and preventing falls through the exercises that you do. Whether you join the classes live or virtually, a few classes or one class, or even exercise individually, you are taking the steps to stay healthy, strong and flexible. Give yourselves a pat on the back because no one can do it for you. You have the determination and the discipline to show up for class or exercise on your own knowing that's the way you will stay healthy and keep moving. I am honored to be a part of your healthy aging!

### EXERCISE OF THE MONTH

This exercise can be done seated or standing. Since it is a balance exercise, it will help to prevent falls. Sit in a chair or stand. Stretch arms straight out in front of you, cross them at the elbows, palms down, elbows remain straight. Hands are reaching to the corners of your room. Open the arms out to the side and step out to the side with one foot. Recross arms and then open arms stepping out with the other foot. To make it more of a challenge mentally recross your arms alternating which one is on top. Try 10 reps, rest and then 10 more. **HAVE YOU EXERCISED TODAY?**



# DATES FROM SONIA!

By Sonia Adamski, Senior Advisory Council President

Dear members,

I hope that everyone enjoyed our recent fundraiser at Sirico's as much as I did. Thanks so much to everyone who was present and those who could not be, but still supported us. As a result, we were able to donate a total of \$2,000.00 to Todd for the Center which, I know, is greatly appreciated.

Our next Friday night bingo is scheduled for September 1, and again on October 6 with doors opening at 3:30 pm. At 4:30 pm, we will begin the bingo games and call with the final pizza count. The price of admission is \$15.00, at the door, which covers the price of 4 bingo cards, 2 slices of pizza and soda. We will play 15 games with a winning prize of \$10.00 for each game. The evening usually ends around 7:00 pm. Bring your family and friends for an enjoyable time. We appreciate your support.

Our Birthday/Crazy Sock Day is scheduled for Tuesday, September 19. We will celebrate September birthdays and Crazy Sock Day with a party from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Wear your craziest socks and have a chance to win a prize of \$15.00, \$20.00 or \$25.00. Purchase your tickets from Kathy for \$3.00 before Friday, September 15; no later please, as I arrange the seating over the weekend. Lunch donation on party day is the usual \$2.00.

Join us on Wednesday, September 20 to the Staaten for the Fiesta De San Gennaro with the fantastic duo of Julian and Dominique widely recognized for their "Show of a Thousand Voices." Added to this celebration will be Bill Trimarco and the Gondolier Show Band, plus a comedian. The price is \$61.00 per person (CHECKS ONLY), which also includes a one-hour open bar, and a four-course meal. The suggested transportation donation to Staten Island is \$10.00 (CASH) on the day of the trip. You will find flyers on the desk as you enter the Center. Please know that this is not a lottery trip. If you are interested, sign up with Sonia at the Center or call 718-833-3731 for information. If you have any trip suggestions, please see me. We welcome new ideas. Thank you and be kind to each other.

## NEW TEAM MEMBER!

Jennifer Panicali, Grants and Development Manager



Joining Bay Ridge Center as the Grants and Development Manager has felt like coming home. In 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, I was a graduate social work intern at BRC. I worked remotely making wellness calls, facilitating Zoom activities, and providing case assistance. Interning at BRC at that difficult time helped me clearly see the care and commitment within this community. Although the dangers of Covid were at their most severe, BRC drivers were on the road delivering hot meals door to door. On winter days made colder by isolation, members greeted each other on Zoom with warm smiles and encouragement. As businesses shuttered and shifted online, many older adults found themselves unable to meet basic needs—so staff and interns connected them to medical care and social services. The way this community persevered stayed with me after my internship ended, and I feel so fortunate now to join colleagues and members again, this time as a staff member. BRC has evolved so much over the past few years, but it's still the same at heart—a community center that centers care.

I look forward to drawing on my background in social work and development to support BRC. I have experience in social welfare policy, case work, and clinical social work, and much of my career has been in the world of fundraising—I formerly served as the Director of Membership at the New York Public Library and the Associate Director for Online Fundraising at the American Civil Liberties Union. Looking at BRC's diverse initiatives through the dual lenses of social work and development, there is so much to be excited about. BRC's core programs and services have grown significantly, there are beautiful new apartments for formerly unhoused older adults at Sunset Ridge, and the new building at 15 Bay Ridge Avenue meets older adults' biopsychosocial needs in a way that is sure to be a paradigm around the country. Extending impact and recognizing human dignity are core to every program and it shows. I look forward to supporting all that BRC does, and I hope you will join me in celebrating and sustaining this remarkable organization—a true home for care and community.



# THE NEIGHBOR NEXT DOOR

By Zaza Kandakai , MPA, Client Care Director



A neighbor supposed to be a fellow citizen or someone who looks and talks like you. But if you're residing in a diverse country like the US then your neighbor becomes someone who probably doesn't look or talk like you. In that case you began to wonder the type of person they're. But the real question is, what type of person are you? Because if you perceive yourself as a decent person, you will accord some decency to the neighbor next door. Unfortunately, some neighbors are just outrightly awful regardless you're a fellow citizen or not. The fact that you moved next door makes you a prime target even though you've not offended them. They alleged you're doing something wrong or about to do something wrong so, they've you locked on their surveillance. As you go about your business, they're busy watching you with disgust and hoping for the day you'll pack up and leave. How do you change the perception of such person toward you? Nothing you can do to change how someone thinks of you but you can do yourself a favor by showing them kindness. Frankly, it doesn't worth the time trying to befriend such a neighbor; just ignore the irrational behavior and keep on being kind. Maybe someday they will read between the lines and realize they've been wrong about you.

This is what I tell the tenants at Sunset Ridge Senior Housing the moment they moved in. Everyone around here will not like you. It has nothing to do with you, it has everything to do with their absurdities. It didn't take long before a neighbor begun making unfounded complaints against the tenants at Sunset Ridge Senior Housing. Instead of investing time and energy in a neighbor who's running a solo campaign to block homeless seniors from occupying Sunset Ridge Senior Housing, the tenants decided to unite. Despite these tenants don't look alike (mixed races), but have a common threat (a negative campaign against them). Once they became aware of the negative campaign to deny them affordable housing, they became good neighbors and mingle fairly well. The tenants at Sunset Ridge Senior Housing know what it means to be diverse, maybe because of the shelter experienced in common. That is, have stayed in shelter once before coming to Sunset Ridge Senior Housing. It's unbelievable how these tenants look out for each other. The remarkable part is that they're not from the same shelter, never met before arriving at Sunset Ridge Senior Housing but one'd think they knew each other prior based on the comradery and care. Whenever they visit the seniors' center, they bring back meals for those who couldn't go. Sunset Ridge Senior Housing is the place for anyone who wishes to know the true meaning of a good neighbor because in no time he or she will discover love from the bright smiles on the faces of the warmhearted tenants living there.

## GREETINGS TO ALL

By Daniela Breton, Program Director



I am thrilled to introduce myself as the newest member of the team - Daniela Breton, your new Program Director. The opportunity to be a part of this incredible team and contribute to the meaningful work we do has me brimming with excitement. My journey began in the vibrant Dominican Republic, where I spent my formative years before embarking on a new chapter in the United States at the age of 19. It's been a journey filled with growth, learning, and a deep appreciation for diverse cultures and experiences.

My dedication to serving the senior community has been a cornerstone of my career path since 2005. I started as an assistant and worked my way up, gaining invaluable insights into the needs and aspirations of our senior members. Over the course of 18 years, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the positive impact that well-crafted programs can have on their lives.

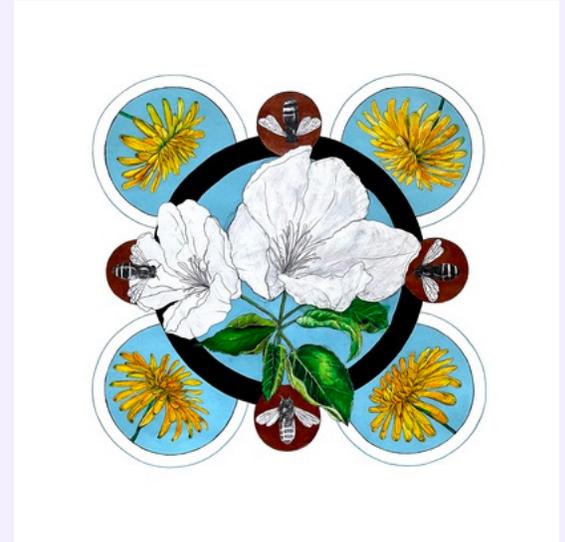
I am truly excited about the prospect of working closely with each of you to develop engaging and exciting programs that cater to the unique interests of our senior community. With every passing year, my passion for this field continues to grow, and I believe that we have incredible opportunities ahead to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Drawing from my years of experience, I am committed to fostering an environment of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity. I firmly believe that by working together, we can create a space where our seniors thrive and find joy in every activity and interaction.

I eagerly look forward to meeting each and every one of you, learning from your insights, and joining forces to elevate the quality of life for our cherished senior members. Let's embark on this exciting journey together and create something truly remarkable.

**Thank you for the warm welcome, and here's to a future filled with impactful programs and meaningful connections.**





Apple Blossoms and Dandelion

Connects art teacher, Kristin Reiber Harris is currently exhibiting six drawings at Narrows Botanical Gardens through September 15, 2023. The series of drawings, inspired by the flora and fauna at the gardens, is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. The series is in keeping with Kristin's career-long focus on celebrating the wisdom and beauty of the natural world. The drawings, originally created on paper and reproduced on vinyl for exterior display, reference sacred geometry, plant communities and biodiversity.

“As a relatively new transplant to NYC, I was very happy to discover how accessible nature is in this dense urban environment. I have volunteered at Narrows Botanical Gardens for four years and feel like it is my backyard. When I received the grant that proposed working with a park in NYC, it was my obvious first choice.”

Please join Kristin on September 9th at 2pm for her Artists Talk. Learn more about Kristin's work at [KristinHarrisDesign.com](http://KristinHarrisDesign.com). Narrows Botanical Gardens are located on Shore Road between 72nd Street and Bay Ridge Avenue in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.

### **Kristin Reiber Harris**

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**9/4 - LABOR DAY - CLOSED**

**9/15 - HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

**9/16 - FIRST DAY OF ROSH HASHANAH**

**9/21 - INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE**

**9/23 - FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN**

**9/25 - YUM KIPPUR**

# AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS!



Summer Beach Party!



Dinner and Dance Benefit at Siricos



Todd saying goodbye to David

Can you guess which room this is for at the New Bay Ridge Center?

**Hint:** It's on the second floor.



Amed at the Mayor's Arab Heritage event.



Candice and Mayor Eric Adams



Awesome day out at City Island!

# SEPTEMBER MENU

## 2023

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				<b>01</b> Baked Fish Orzo w/ Vegetables Baby Carrots w/ Parsley
<b>04</b> Italian Roast Chicken Brown Rice (1 cup) Cauliflower w/ Carrots & Parsley	<b>05</b> Pork Stir Fry w/ Vegetables California Blend Vegetables Roasted Peppers	<b>06</b> Homemade Hamburger Baked Onions Corn & Red Peppers Roasted Sweet Potato Fries	<b>07</b> Baked Ziti w/ Cheese Baby Carrots w/ Parsley Brussels Sprouts	<b>08</b> Baked Fish Orzo w/ Vegetables Kale w/ tomato
<b>11</b> Breaded Pork Loin Baby Carrots w/ Parsley Homemade Mashed Potatoes Roasted Peppers	<b>12</b> Chicken w/ Peach Sauce Egg Noodles Brussels Sprouts Steamed Cauliflower	<b>13</b> Vegetarian Chili White Rice (1/2 cup) California Blend Vegetables	<b>14</b> Beef Brisket w/ Tomatoes & Onions Pasta (1 cup) Roasted Mushrooms Sautéed Green Beans w/ Onions	<b>15</b> Baked Fish w/ Cream sauce Cous Cous Boiled Pumpkin Sautéed Spinach
<b>18</b> Italian Style Pork Loin California Blend vegetables Homemade Mashed Potatoes	<b>19</b> Beef Stroganoff w/ Noodles Sautéed Spinach Steamed Cauliflower	<b>20</b> Turkey Chili w/ Sweet Potatoes & Corn White Rice (1/2 cup) Sautéed Green Beans w/ Onions	<b>21</b> Spinach Mozzarella Quiche Baby Carrots w/ Parsley Brussels Sprouts	<b>22</b> Mango-licious Fish Orzo w/ Vegetables Roasted Broccoli
<b>25</b> Beef & Pepper Pasta Baby Carrots w/ Parsley Steamed Cauliflower	<b>26</b> BBQ Chicken Leg Quarters Braised Collard Greens Homemade Mashed Potatoes	<b>27</b> Baked Turkey Meatballs Tomato Sauce (pre- prepared 1/4 cup) Spaghetti (1/2 cup) Brussels Sprouts	<b>28</b> Three Bean Chili w/ Cheddar Cheese White Rice (1/2 cup) California Blend Vegetables	<b>29</b> Baked Flounder Cous cous Roasted Broccoli Sautéed Zucchini

**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.**

