

# The Goddard Times



December 2015 Issue

## **Buon Natale! A Brooklyn Christmas Remembered**

**By Tony Scordato with Ginny Mazur**

Christmas was an elaborate two-day holiday for Italian-Catholic families like ours in the Brooklyn, New York neighborhood where my brother Al and I grew up some 70 years ago. Our mother's family was from Naples and our father's family was from Sicily so we celebrated in the Italian tradition – in a big way!

Preparations at our house began about a week before Christmas when a cut fir tree was brought in and trimmed with decorations and those old-fashioned, large multi-colored lights with replaceable bulbs. Remember those?! Applying tinsel was the next to last step. It began in a refined manner with Al and me setting individual strands and ended with us boys throwing fistfuls of the stuff at the tree before my father broke up the scuffle to set the star at the very top.



Crowds form around Macy's storefront, 1959

New York City was abuzz during the week before Christmas with holiday spectacles like lights at Rockefeller Center and the Rockettes holiday show at Radio City Music Hall. The "show" that lit up the eyes of children the most, though, were the animated window displays at the big department stores like Macy's and Gimbel's and at the toy store extraordinaire – F.A.O. Schwartz.

Festivities began on Christmas Eve with the Traditional Southern Italian *Feast of Seven Fishes*, a seafood and pasta extravaganza. You had to warn non-Italian friends who were invited about what they were getting into as this meal lasts three to four hours! Baccalao (dried, salted cod) with spaghetti, calamari, shrimp and fried smelts were part of this feast. An empty seat and place setting would be set at the table for Santa Claus as a hint of what was to come. When dinner wound down, we set out to church to attend midnight mass. Upon return, we had a small supper/breakfast at 2:00 a.m. of sausage and potatoes, then set a snack out for Santa before we retired to bed, but not necessarily to sleep, with a high level of anticipation!

**(Continued on Page 2)**

**Vol. 3 No. 12 – December 2015**

### **Newsletter Contributors:**

**John Moniz**

Executive Director

**Ginny Mazur**

Community Partnership Director

**Lance Chapman**

Marketing Director

**Jenna Henning**

Traditional Program Director

**Michaela Barrows**

Marketing Assistant

**Tim Donoghue**

Dining Room Manager

**Alice Tilton**

Olmsted Program Director

**Marie Curcio**

Director of Resident Support

## **Buon Natale! A Brooklyn Christmas Remembered (Continued from Page 1)**



Tony as a young child in Brooklyn

The rule held – no wake-ups until 7:00 a.m. on Christmas Day. At 7:00 on the dot, Al and I bound out of bed to open presents. My parents were “crafty types” and gifts in our family were all about making things from kits - log cabins, Indians sculpted from Plaster of Paris and airplane models. We loved these!

Christmas Day involved another big feast with guests. My mother served ham, Brussel sprouts, cranberry sauce and for dessert, her homemade cheesecake aged in brandy! As the meal went on, our family band set up in the living room with Dad on mandolin and an aunt and uncle on the piano and violin, respectively. Another aunt fashioned her own version of an upright bass with a washboard rigged up to strings and a bucket and they serenaded us into the evening. Food, music and family were the heart of our Brooklyn Christmas. It's such a wonderful memory! Maybe we can find a way to add a little Italian flavor to Christmas at Goddard House? (Hint. Hint. Wink. Wink.) Buon Natale (Merry Christmas) Everybody!

### **Celebrate the Holidays with Goddard House**



**The Olmsted party is scheduled for *December 3rd* from *5:30-7:30pm*. Families and friends of Olmsted residents are welcome to join us for dancing to the Winiker Brothers, New England's beloved jazz ensemble.**



**If you plan on attending the Olmsted party on December 3rd, please RSVP to Alice Tilton at (617) 731-8500x115 or [atilton@goddardhouse.org](mailto:atilton@goddardhouse.org).**

**The Goddard House annual holiday party is scheduled for *December 17th, 2015* from *5:30-8:00pm* for Traditional residents, families, friends, and Goddard House staff.**

**Guests can look forward to a delicious dinner, holiday themed cocktails, and a performance by The Figgy Puddin' Holiday Carollers.**

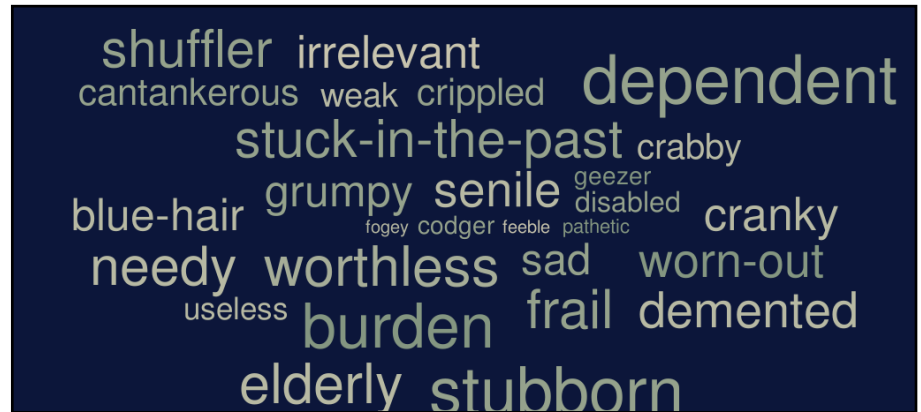
**If you plan on attending the Traditional party on December 17th, please RSVP to Jenna Henning at (617) 731-8500x152 or [jhenning@goddardhouse.org](mailto:jhenning@goddardhouse.org). In addition to your RSVP, please let us know how many people are in your party, how many children will be joining us that night, and the ages of the children.**

**We hope you join us in these festivities filled with warmth, comfort, and good cheer!**

## Ageism, Ableism, and Segregation: Creating an Inclusive Community

By Marie Curcio, MSW, NHA

The 2015 national LeadingAge Conference was held in Boston and its five day focus on services to older adults covered the spectrum of topics from creative care partnering, culture change, technology and staff development to Baby Boomer lifestyle issues in retirement. I was heartened to learn that there is an ever growing nation-wide hot topic on inclusivity in organizations and communities that provide services to older adults. While not a new issue, there is renewed effort to highlight the issue of **ageism, segregation and ableism** in retirement communities.



The LeadingAge 2014 Leadership Academy members facilitated an informative session on this topic, the gist of which was later shared with our Residents here at Goddard House. **Ageism** as defined by the LeadingAge Leadership Academy members is: *“Prejudice against our feared future self”* while **ableism** was described as *“prejudice or discrimination against someone living with a physical or cognitive challenge/disability”*.

Increasing awareness and sensitivity to practices and prejudices that ostracize and marginalize older adults every day helps to expose practices that have devastating effects on an older adult’s sense of self, image, memory, health and longevity. We all thrive on a sense of belonging and acceptance. Most of us are unaware that we inadvertently contribute to the ageism and ableism that isolates so many older adults in our society every day!

So...what does ableism, ageism and segregation look like in our communities? Think about the many ways that rejection is communicated. Indeed, we all talk about the continuum of needs that Residents may have but how many feel shunned by peers (or worse, bullied) when health begins to decline and the need for assistance or support increases. Rejection comes in many forms: “Sorry this seat is saved”, “our foursome for Bridge is completed”, “she is getting confused, she does not belong here”, “he/she needs too much help in the dining room—he/she should go to a nursing home”, “there are too many old people here”! *“Prejudice against our feared future selves”* indeed. How many of us have purchased a birthday card that makes fun of aging? How often have each of laughed at a joke or advertisement at some group’s expense?

Many examples of demeaning and devaluing images of older adults were shared to make a point. Negative images of aging are all around us—in print and in every day conversation. Fear of our future selves with physical and/or cognitive challenges is powerful. Do we really expect to segregate those whose needs are more complex than our own?

How do we create a culture of inclusion where each individual is truly valued regardless of age, health and cognitive challenges (to name but a few)? At Goddard House Assisted Living we have started with a conversation about ageism, ableism and segregation—we will continue coming together, to get to know each other better as individuals, not by age, limitations, physical or cognitive challenges. Residents will keep the conversation going, our leadership team will support the discussion and Community has begun the journey of inclusion through discussion, education and training. What will you do to help eradicate ageism, ableism and segregation?



## **Tea Time for Olmsted**

**By Alice Tilton**

Every two weeks Olmsted residents gather together for a semi-formal tea time, where they enjoy freshly baked scones along with their choice of coffee and tea. Staff members work together to create a special atmosphere with white tablecloths, “fancy” napkins, and centerpieces on the tables. It’s a nice opportunity for residents to take a break from more structured programs and socialize with one another in an environment that encourages warm and friendly conversation.

According to the residents, it’s the details that make the difference. Instead of the usual white paper napkins that we use during an energy break, we use decorative napkins with a patterned or floral print, which are always the talk of the table. We purposefully serve residents from an eclectic mix of tea cups to peak their visual interest and create conversation as they compare and contrast the china.



Sandy , Devora and Irma enjoy their afternoon tea



Pat and Bernice sip their tea as Kerry Sullivan serves tea

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## **A Very Goddard Thanksgiving**

**By Jenna Henning**

This past week residents, family members, and friends sat down to a Thanksgiving meal complete with all of the trimmings. Executive Chef, Nick Polinsky, Dining Room Manager, Tim Donoghue, and the rest of the kitchen staff worked tirelessly to prepare the crowd pleasing feast. From the delicious turkey and sensational stuffing, to mashed potatoes and delectable pies, there was much to savor. Resident Clementine shared, “the warmth and companionship that I felt during the meal made it absolutely wonderful.” This sentiment was felt by all, as the simple tenets of fellowship and food made for a special day that all enjoyed! A big thank you to all who attended, as well as the staff who helped to make this Turkey Day one to remember.



## Circling the Drums with Cornell Coley

By Lance Chapman

There is no such thing as a typical day at Goddard House Assisted Living. Picture a November afternoon with 20 people ages 16 to 96 inside a warm library room, walls brimming with bookshelves. Today however, drums are almost as plentiful as the books on the shelves. As I entered the room, a circle of residents and staff members seated in chairs with drums in front of each person flowed out in front of me. I'm greeted by a deep pulsating rhythm in the air. Smiles and looks of deep concentration light up on each face. In the middle of the circle Cornell Coley, our Drum Spirit Guide conducts, leads and directs with his voice and his hands. Assisted by three teens from his drum program at the Hyde Square Task Force, he narrates the music with his direction and encouragements. The volume rises and the rhythm continues – some using their hands to play drums others using sticks, beaters or scrapers to create the variety of sounds. I grab a small set of bongo drums and find an empty seat. I begin to play along---suddenly connected by the music - the beat. Connected to the drum circle.



Resident Peggy, Program Assistant Michala, and Cornell Coley

A week before the drum circle event, I called Cornell on the phone to talk about his thoughts and philosophies about music, drums and community. As a young boy growing up in Roxbury, MA near Egleston Square, Cornell first became interested in drums around the age of nine. He told me he was drawn to drumming because of the energy generated by the ways drummers moved when they played. As a drummer myself, I understood what he meant when he described the energy and sound that surrounds and emanates as drummers play. He explained how he became more deeply impacted as he watched some of the famous and influential drummers of the 60's and 70's such as Max Roach, Buddy Rich, Bernard Purdie and later Billy Cobham and Jack DeJohnette.



Music Therapist Deb Gromack dancing to the rhythm

As Cornell's interest in drums deepened, his father purchased his first drum set for him at age fourteen. Soon into his college years as an English major at Tufts, Cornell spent a year in Ghana and became interested in African dance. After college he moved to Berkeley, CA and continued pursuing his interests in both dance and music while joining a Ghanaian band, the *Hedzoleh Sounds*. He was seeking to explore the west coast culture and was interested in the vast differences in how they experience life. Concepts and beliefs in religion, art, music and community were more openly structured "out west." It was here in California that Cornell got turned onto Latin music, Mexican food and making his own clothing. It was also the first time he had seen a St. Patrick's Day parade with black and Latino people marching in it.

(Continued on Page 6)



## Circling the Drums with Cornell Coley (Continued from Page 5)

His first experiences as a teacher occurred after being hired by a community arts organization to perform and teach dance. In 1979, he moved south to attend grad school at the UCLA dance department. In 1980, Cornell taught dance again in the National Cultural Center in Kingston, Jamaica for a summer. His earliest memories of teaching drums was with an organization called *Spontaneous Celebrations* in nearby Jamaica Plain, MA about 10 years ago. First it was toddler drumming, then he started his own band and developed his own 1-hour educational music program called "*A Fascinating Rhythm*," which is a combination of drums, dance and from the Afro Latin cultures. He has presented this program over 300 times throughout New England.

Though he never stopped drumming, drum circles became a part of Cornell's life when he met Arthur Hull, a master drum circle facilitator, through the Earth Drum Council who ran weekly drum circles in Harvard Square many years ago. Cornell states, "It has been proven that drumming does have important therapeutic effects including mild exercise, mind/body alignment, the release of immune system-boosting white blood cells and the shift to stress-relieving alpha brain waves - plus, it's fun!" Drum circles can also create entraining rhythms and pulses that connect us all. It has also been documented that music and drumming can create new neural pathways in the brain and reconnect older ones that have been broken. "This makes drumming a wonderful activity for those with memory loss and neurological disorders," Cornell continued. "As a social activity, drumming together can help to build community and common bonds between participants."

We look forward to circling the drums again here at Goddard House in the future. We also hope for a continued partnership with Cornell and his wonderful guidance into this special therapeutic and healing world of the drum circle.



Residents, staff, Cornell, and his students making music



Residents Ed and Joe playing the drums



## Mint Chocolate Brownies

Submitted by Dining  
Room Manager  
Tim Donoghue

### Ingredients:

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 8 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 1 cup sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 25 small peppermint patties

### Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on all sides; butter parchment. Set aside.
2. Place chocolate and butter in a medium heatproof bowl set over (not in) a saucepan of gently simmering water. Stir occasionally just until melted, 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Remove from heat. Whisk in sugar and salt until smooth; whisk in eggs. Gently whisk in flour and cocoa powder just until smooth (do not overmix).
4. Spread 1/3 of batter in prepared pan. Arrange peppermint patties on batter in a single layer, leaving a narrow border on all sides. Top with remaining batter, and smooth surface. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out with moist crumbs attached, 35 to 40 minutes.
5. Cool completely in pan. Use foil to lift from pan; peel off foil and discard. Cut into 16 squares (4 rows by 4 rows).



# Featured December Events!

# Please Join Us!

We ask that Residents' families, friends and community guests RSVP  
by calling Jenna Henning at 617-731-8500 ext. 152



### Storytelling with Andrea Kamens

Tuesday, December 8th at 2:15pm

With skillful structuring and improvisational verve, Andrea opens up a dialogue between her listeners and the story, interacting and adapting on the spot. Today, she will present original material, as well as folk and fairy tales in recognition of Hanukkah.



### Concert with the Boston Conservatory Troubadours

Thursday, December 10th at 3pm

Known for its multi-disciplinary environment, the Boston Conservatory offers fully accredited graduate and undergraduate programs in music, dance and theater. Today we will host The Boston Conservatory Troubadours, a group of exceptional student opera singers.



### Concert with Lorraine and Bennet Hammond

Wednesday, December 23rd at 7pm

Lorraine and Bennett play and sing in perfect complement: blending their instruments with consummate skill, they create a new voice for music that ranges in style from classical to contemporary. The duo will be with us today celebrating Christmas with our favorite holiday tunes.



**Merry Christmas and  
Happy Hanukkah  
from Goddard House!**



For more information visit: [www.goddardhouse.org](http://www.goddardhouse.org)



165 Chestnut Street  
Brookline, MA 02445  
617-731-8500