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BY RHODA GOLDMAN PLAZA

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My Children, My Urge to Inspire by Jan O'Dell

We were sitting together. I'm not remembering the time or place, but I know the subject was inspiration. When I said it had always been my wish to help inspire creativity in you two, I'm afraid I didn't do a very good job. I didn't mean to imply they weren't creative, but it was not because of me. They replied almost in unison, "Oh, Mom, but you did." Then Frank spoke of the many road trips we took and how I had gathered things to keep their young minds occupied during the long, boring miles. "Remember the paper bags you had us put our hands in without looking inside and identify one of the objects you had put there, like a jack or a kernel of popped corn or a can opener." Jamie added, "I couple of new books. I was introduced to the Hobbits, and I was transfixed with this whole, four of us— Dad, You, I, and Jamie— laughter at the same moment. I remember the shrunken head from some museum, remembering it as one of those things you find in Kansas City but a private museum built on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River." "It was the igloo that I liked," added Frank, "It had been built right around the corner from the shrunken head. I think the igloo had a small fan blowing inside meant to simulate cold, Arctic wind." He paused for a moment. "It missed by a wide mark." Jamie joined in, "Then one summer you taught church school, remember, Mom? You brought a couple of bags of dried beans that we kids were to paste onto a drawing you had made of our stone church, each bean representing a stone."



remember you always had a That's when we were introduced to the Hobbits, and we were immediately transfixed with this whole, exotic tribe of people. The four of us— Dad, You, Frank, and me— all burst into laughter at the same moment. "What I loved was the shrunken head from some South American location," I said, remembering it as only four or so inches across. "That museum was an oddity itself. Not a major one in Kansas City but a private mansion that had been turned into a museum built on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River."

Looking back on it now, I guess my efforts to inspire creativity were successful after all. My kids turned out great and they are both extremely creative. I don't think it was anything specific that I did - I doubt there's anything particularly effective about putting beans on a drawing or feeling items in a bag. What mattered is that they recognized that creativity was something that was important to me, something mysterious and hard to explain that I wanted to share with them. Perhaps, at the end of the day, what my children were inspired by was my urge to inspire them.

Inspiration & Renewal

We reveal our profound connection to Nature and its Creator by the joy we feel when spring arrives. It is the ultimate confirmation of re-birth, of the world regenerating yet again.

Shir ha Shirim, The Song of Songs tell us:

*For lo! the winter has passed
the rains are over and gone
Flowers appear on the Earth
The time of song has come
And the voice of the turtledove
is heard in the land.*

Our primary Jewish celebration in the Springtime season is Passover, when the Angel of Death “passed over” the Israelite homes on the eve of their escape from slavery in Egypt. If escaping from slavery is not renewal, what is?

We might ask ourselves what slavery we need to escape with the passing of winter and what inspiration yet beckons us with its life force as it blossoms in this Spring of 2026.



Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky
Community Rabbi, Rhoda Goldman Plaza

Eileen Simpson



Eileen Simpson was born in Baltimore, Maryland where she had a happy childhood. She earned a degree in Administration from the University of Maryland and then moved to Washington D.C. which upset her parents but was the start of discovering the world.

While working in H.R. for General Electric, she met her future husband, Ray. Ray’s work in the Aerospace industry transferred them quite a bit- they spent a few years in Israel moving to Jerusalem during the Yom Kippur War. Next back to Baltimore, after that California and then Seattle. She made good friends everywhere they settled and continues to keep those friends close.

Eileen and Ray retired to Southern California and lived in a retirement community. Before retirement and after, they traveled the world. Eileen is hoping to take one last big trip to Australia.

Her one son and grandson live here in San Francisco. She was an avid bocce ball player, and enjoyed Mahjong and Canasta. Today her interests revolve around reading. Plus her circle of friends here at RGP.

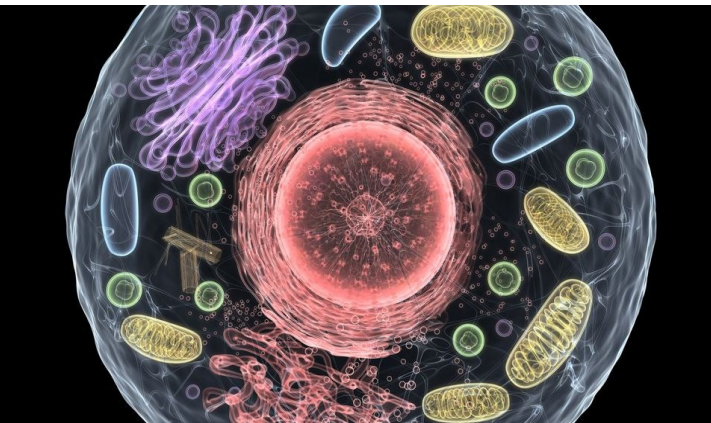
Cellular Renewal

There is a common conception that the human body renews itself approximately every 7 years. This is fascinating to consider, especially for our centenarian residents: there are currently 9 residents at RGP who have reached 100+ years of age. They have, in theory, regenerated most of their cells over 14 times!

Some of our cells last a whole lifetime: neurons, nerve cells, and heart muscle. Other cells are replaced very rapidly – like neutrophils, a type of white blood cell, that only last a couple of days. Our skin cells regenerate more slowly over time – lasting about 30 days in middle age and 80+ days in older age. (1)

The body has approximately 30 trillion cells! This does not include water which makes up about 1/3 of our body mass. Erythrocytes (red blood cells) are tiny but plentiful in the body – and they make up the highest number of cells that regenerate on any given day (about 280 billion per day). (2)

I see these regeneration factoids as a metaphor for our lives. We dramatically renew, change, and improve – while maintaining the core of who we are.



(1) Sender, R., & Milo, R. (2021). The distribution of cellular turnover in the human body. *Nature Medicine*, 27(1), 45–48.

(2) Fischetti, M., & Christiansen, J. (2021). A new you in 80 days. *Scientific American*, 324(4), 76.



Adrienne Fair, MSN, RN
Director of Health Services

Leaning into Delight

I have long found the ability to delight in small things to be an important life skill. I saw this modeled by my mom who would exclaim over the smell of honeysuckle blooming in our backyard or the contentment in the first sip of tea on a cold morning.



The residents who can find sincere pleasure in their day-to-day life are also the ones who seem to age with the best quality of life, even in the face of truly difficult circumstances. I am inspired by those who continue to choose joy and am reminded that this choice gives real agency in how we experience the world. I aspire to be like the centenarians who bask in pleasure of a flaky croissant or relish the feel of the sun on their face.

I think this ability is something we all possess and can foster for ourselves. I see it comes naturally with my kids and hope to continue to cultivate that attitude for them both. There is so much joy in watching them notice things and appreciate the world, whether it's noticing a beautiful flower while we're driving or remarking on the colors of a sunrise.

One of my colleagues regularly tells me that I am pretty easy to please, and I think that's a pretty high compliment. I will continue to lean into delight where I can.



Elizabeth Wyma-Hughes
Director of Resident Services

The Freedom to Be



Be On The Look out for New Classes, Lectures and More!

NEW Life Enrichment Classes in April

Qi Gong with Instructor Lois Brady
Movement for health and healing.



Friday mornings at 9:30 am.

SF Ballet
First Thursdays of the month



NEW Frommcast courses start in April!

THE ETHICS & POLITICS OF NEW TECHNOLOGY -



PROF. DAVID PERITZ

Exploration of how to better understand new technology changes through both ethical reflection and political action.

THE LIFE & WORK OF VINCENT VAN GOGH -



PROF. ERNEST NEWBRUN

This course examines Van Gogh's life, artistic development, and how he endured his impact on the art world.

NEW!
Mah Jong with Molly

Mah Jong coaching and tournament programs in April with expert Molly



Geoffrey Washburn
Director of Life Enrichment

RESIDENT OUTINGS



Bouquets to Art at San Francisco De Young Museum



Tour of Temple Sherith Israel

Tour of Oakland's Paramount Theater



San Francisco Botanical Garden Cherry Blossom Time



Sweet Heart Dance



St. Patrick's Day Party

A Night at Casablanca



Lunar New Year Celebration

IN-SYNC by Cathy Fiorello

All my adult life I have been out-of-sync with the women of my generation. Though we were the same age, they were always years ahead of me in reaching life's milestones. It took me longer to do the things a woman does, in the right order, at the right time, I was a late bloomer.

I was retired for ten years when I got one last chance to be in-sync with the world I live in. We had moved to San Francisco from New York and I was desperately lonely. As I had always done in times of stress, I sought solace in my local bookstore. Two or three times a week, I sat next to a window that looked out on San Francisco Bay. A steady stream of ferries plied their way to and from Sausalito and Tiburon. I relaxed in the flutter of gulls, squawking and strutting the promenade. With each visit, a feeling of well-being washed over me.



The store manager and I often chatted about what we were reading. She invited me to events where I met authors promoting their new books. One day, as I was checking out a purchase, she invited me to join her staff. My age was not an issue, she was looking for a reader and she knew she had found one. What she didn't know at the time was she had also found a writer. After a year on the job, it was my book that was being introduced at the store; I was the author the packed room had come to meet. I was fulfilling a lifelong dream at an age when many have put their dreams to rest.

Being welcomed back into the workplace after a ten-year hiatus, knowing that I still had something to contribute, I felt relevant. It was a turning point in making peace with my move to the west coast. I was no longer in transit, I was home.

Stories of Renewal & Inspiration

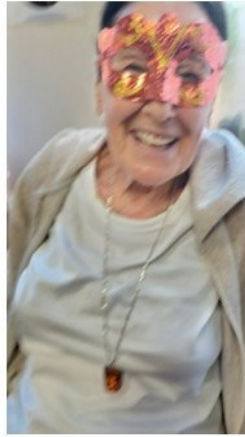
by Kimberley Jebeles Rodler

Driving home from teaching art at RGP, I was taking in the spring foliage. Spring is the season of new leaves, of renewal and inspiration. A pink dogwood here in our valley's blossoms dance in spring breeze. Some springs ago RGP resident Hedy Krasnobrod painted its pink blossom in her 100th spring. Her painting will be on exhibit at RGP starting April 12th. At San Francisco Interfaith Council breakfasts, Rita Semel has led my understanding of renewal expressed in many faith traditions. With each palette of color in paint artists receive in Tuesday art studio, I find inspiration. A white canvas surface sets the artist on an adventure. A family friend Alysa Liu, who I met as a little girl, inspired when she figure skated on Olympic ice receiving a gold medal. A few years back at 16 she quit skating, studied in college, and trekked in Nepal with my family. She returned to the ice renewed and skated to inspire! Wishing all renewal and inspiration!



"What One Does With The Truth Is More Difficult Than You Think."





PURIM 2026 !





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"Freedom is within our
grasp, and Pesach
reminds us that we need
to reach."

Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

ANNUAL RESIDENT ART SHOW RGP ART GLALLERY

OPENING RECEPTION

Sunday, April 12th 2:00 to 4:00
Food & Beverages, Live Music

FIRST FLOOR GALLERY

Resident art: paintings, ceramics, paper art, beadwork
photography and more.

RGP Art Program: 4 accomplished artists / teachers
Kimberley J. Rodler, painter Andrew Mills, painter , AWE
Nancy Gittleman, ceramist Monica Lee, paper arts

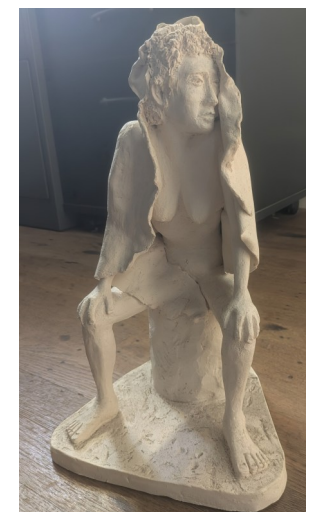
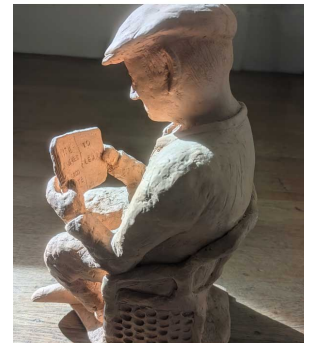
SECOND FLOOR POP UP GALLERY

Gianni Colamarino, an Artist's Retrospective:

Sculpture & Painting

Lifelong artist Giovanni (Gianni) Colamarino was a shoe
designer until retirement, when at City College he studied
sculpture and painting. He celebrates his 101st birthday this
year.

*Below is sculpture by Gianni that will be
featured on the Second Floor Pop Up Gallery*





RESIDENTS

2	Jack H.	22	Margaret B.
6	Earl B.	22	Charlotte P.
8	Priscilla S.	22	Doris C.
16	Joan L.	28	Alice Y.
17	Tim C.	30	Evelyn A.
19	Anita W.	30	Barbara B.

STAFF

Aiqin Y.	James W.	Perriesha B.
Alfonso H.	Kimberly M.	Samorah W.
Bainian J.	Man Wai M.	Samuel F.
Christine L.	Masako M.	Santosh C.
Enat M.	Miroslava M.	Shaoling S.
Ha T.	Ofelia B.	Youlian J.



Honor a Birthday

Celebrate the birthday of a friend or loved one with a gift in their honor to RGP! With a tribute gift. JFCS will send a card with your greeting by email or postal mail.

*To make a gift online, donate jfcs.org/rgp
Or gift envelopes at the RGP Front Desk.*



The Olive Press

A theme focused monthly newsletter for RGP.
Contributions from RGP residents, staff and guests
Production Team: Managing Editor, Allison Rodman
Copy Editor: Ivy Wu
Comments are welcome. allisonr@jfcs.org

Perriesha Byrd, Sous Chef



Born and raised in San Francisco Perriesha Byrd comes from a family who loves good food. Her mother and aunts are excellent home cooks of American and Soul. Her father is a BBQ Master and knows his fish. From an early age Perriesha was the house sous chef along with her brother, who went to culinary school in Italy. Today, he lives and works in Italy as a chef and Perriesha goes and visits him in Liguria as often as she can. Enjoying the family Sunday dinners with her brother's in laws. Homemade manicotti being her favorite.

Perriesha went to UC Davis in Anthropology. While working a part time job for Campus Dining Services she was the only helper that could jump onto the line and cook. From that start, she is here at RGP under Chef Tsitsi who has taught her to use artistic eye.

When not at RGP she enjoys sci-fi and especially Star Trek. She confided that many of the captains were good cooks.

2180 Post Street 415.345.5060
San Francisco, CA 94115 rgplaza.org

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