

CELEBRATING 71 YEARS

COMMUNITY • FAMILY • HERITAGE



THE SELFHELP HOME



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

HERITAGE



COMMUNITY



FAMILY



Bill Kaplan – *A Life in Music*

Bill Kaplan has been a familiar face – and a welcomed and welcoming presence – at Selfhelp Home for nearly six years.

Bill is The Piano Man. He launched his relationship with Selfhelp volunteering with violinist Howard Weiss (now a resident too) to present the monthly sing-alongs that are so enjoyed by residents and staff alike.

“Music is something very deep in our existence. It is fundamental, unlike anything else I can think of,” he said. “So I’m very fortunate, blessed, that I discovered music at an early age and have stayed with it and was able to make a living doing what I love. I am proud that through my work I give people pleasure.”

Bill and his two older brothers were born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin, where his Russian immigrant parents had met and married. His parents recognized his passion and talent early on. “I could go to the piano and pick out a tune; my mom realized there was something there. While we had no special musical environment in the home, and not much money, my folks worked very hard and made it possible for me to study.”

After high school Bill continued his education at The Juilliard School in New York, where he studied clarinet. He added bassoon to his repertoire, calculating that his chances of employment were far greater because so few people played. While still an undergraduate he began playing professionally.

He graduated from Juilliard in 1951, one year into the Korean War. His army service was at Ft. Sheridan, north of Chicago, where he played in the band. Following his service, he began graduate study at the University of Chicago, where he met his wife, Shirley, a psychiatric social worker. Bill received his master’s in 1956.

Bill played in the Denver Symphony for six years and then decided to further his studies, taking advantage of scholarship assistance to pursue a doctorate at University of Michigan. While living in Ann Arbor, he successfully auditioned for the Detroit Symphony.

Bill and Shirley married in 1961, and thoughts turned to family and stability.

The new University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus (UIC) was searching for qualified faculty to staff their Department of Music. Bill, now with a doctorate, was ready, willing and able to answer the call, bringing the couple back to Chicago.

At UIC, Bill taught courses in theory, counterpoint, analytic techniques, ear training, music literature and music appreciation, and served as department chairman from 1979 until his retirement in 1992.

He continued to perform as a free-lance artist in symphonic ensembles as well as theatrical productions. “I got lots of engagements. A free-lance musician relies on the telephone, and that was fun.” He also played with the critically acclaimed Music of the Baroque for 30 years, an affiliation of which he is particularly proud.

Bill and Shirley raised their two daughters in Wilmette, joining a local synagogue and following Shirley’s more observant upbringing and beliefs. Bill’s connection to Judaism had been cultural. “My family was not religious. I didn’t study Hebrew and I and was not Bar Mitzvah. But there was an organization, The Workman’s Circle, a



progressive Jewish social justice organization where my brothers and I went to study Yiddish.” Bill’s embrace of Judaism once he had a family of his own resonated deeply, leading him to pursue the necessary study and achieve adult Bar Mitzvah in his 60s.

Six years ago Shirley died. It was around that time that Dr. Howard Weiss, whose wife was a Selfhelp resident, reached out to Bill to launch the sing-alongs. “The gift that I have always had is that I did not need to read music. I could sit down at the piano and fake it. Someone calls out “play ‘Night and Day,’ and I could just do it. I didn’t have to be a great pianist to do that. But it is loads of fun.”



A few years ago, Bill realized that it was time to move from the family home. “I was alone. It wasn’t terrible, but little by little I realized I could do something else. Selfhelp was the right place for me.”

“Life can be very challenging when you are over a certain age,” reflects Bill, “but the Home’s staff works very hard to make this a community; that’s one of the reasons Selfhelp is very successful. All the residents have a sense of being supported and there are lots of activities. It is also very nice being in a Jewish environment, having Friday services and events around the Jewish holidays. There are good vibes here.”

“Without music, I don’t know what life would offer,” Bill mused. “Even if people don’t play, they listen. They enjoy. Music speaks like nothing else. Where would our world be without music?”

“Music is something very deep in our existence. It is fundamental, unlike anything else I can think of.”



Eva Sandberg – *Across Three Continents*



“Stay connected to the world. Keep asking questions, keep reading, keep learning.”

Eva Sandberg might attribute her independent spirit and ability to navigate whatever life throws at her to her mother, Maria.

Maria lost her own parents at an early age, worked to support her siblings and married Eva's father – 11 years her junior – at a time when such a match was even more unusual than it would be today.

The non-traditional young couple, both of Hungarian heritage, lived in Vienna, Austria. Eva, their only child, was born in 1932. “My father was just starting in business,” Eva said. “It was my mother's salary that kept us going in a very nice style in Vienna. I had a very comfortable childhood.”

In 1938, their world fell apart. The Anschluss occurred in March, followed by Kristallnacht on November 10. The next day her father was arrested and taken to an internment camp. He was released, but the family knew it was time to leave. Unsuccessful in their attempt to obtain emigration papers for the United States, they located a cousin in Buenos Aires who was willing to sponsor them. In December 1938 they fled to Trieste, Italy, and then to Argentina and safety.

When Eva was 16, her father died of a heart attack, leaving her and her mother penniless and in debt. Ever resourceful, Maria got an administrative job with one of the creditors and Maria learned that they could register for emigration to the U.S. under the Czechoslovakian quota. In 1952, they arrived in Chicago and settled in Hyde Park.

Eva arrived fluent in German, English and Spanish. She began her career with a medical journal, where she worked her way up to production manager. She spent a few years as an editor at Encyclopedia Britannica and then worked for the president of the United Packing House Workers. Over the next seven years, Eva was a single young career woman, taking advantage of the rich cultural life of the city. One chilly night in March, she attended a concert at Orchestra Hall.

“My friend and I were enjoying each other's company at intermission when an acquaintance of hers approached. It turned out that the gentleman also lived in Hyde Park and the three of us rode the IC home after the concert,” Eva recalled. “My girlfriend said ‘you are going to hear from Mr. Sandberg again!’” Indeed, one thing led to another, and in September 1960 Eva and Bob Sandberg were married.

Bob was bright, creative and well educated, with a degree from the University of Chicago. He and Eva enjoyed lively conversations about music, art, books and politics. Unfortunately, he was not the stable “provider” that a traditional mid-century family required.

Their 26-year marriage was riddled with frequent job changes and a long period during which Bob stayed home to write a musical based on a play by Henrik Ibsen, which was never produced. They had two children, first a son and, six years later, a daughter, both of whom attended Akiba Schechter, a Jewish day school in Hyde Park. Eventually, the marriage foundered due to financial difficulties, but the two remained friends until Bob's death.

In order to stabilize finances, Eva went to work full-time in 1968. “I got a job as an administrator in the office of the Dean of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, helping to shepherd psychoanalytic candidates through their training. I also took on extra work for many analysts in private practice who had no secretaries.

Eva rebuilt her life as a career woman and moved to the North Side in the mid-1990s to be close to her son and three grandchildren, of whom she is very proud. (Her daughter, with her husband and own daughter, lives in Portland, Oregon). Eva worked until 2015, when a series of health issues forced her to retire. After a spell in the hospital and rehab, she consulted with her family. They decided that assisted living was in order.

“I have never been an observant Jew, yet Selfhelp was the only place I wanted to be,” Eva said. “I felt I would be comfortable here, with people with similar backgrounds and interests. There are even a couple of Selfhelp residents who, like me, were in Latin America before they came to the U.S.”

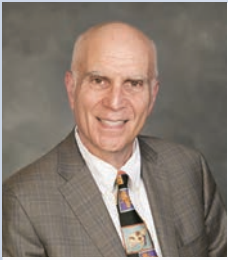
“My daughter advised me to consider my apartment my bedroom and the rest of the facility my living space, and that was good advice. I enjoy the communal meals. I attend the excellent concerts and the lively discussions



after the concerts. Everyone just loves the music! I also go to the art history group and the poetry group with Wallie (Dayal), where we sing the oldies with Bill Kaplan at the piano. And Jewish Studies with Jonathan (Schwartz), who is remarkable in his open-mindedness toward people with a broad range of beliefs from atheist to Orthodox.”

“I moved from a two-bedroom apartment to a studio and I was a bit anxious about that,” she said, “but my apartment is spacious enough for me to have many of my books and, most importantly, my computer, which keeps me curious and connected to the world. And that’s what I would tell people as they age: stay connected to the world. Keep asking questions, keep reading, keep learning.”





The Selfhelp Home today celebrates 71 years as a unique Chicago institution. Selfhelp

was created by refugees fleeing Nazism as a refuge for the survivors as they entered their senior years.

Our roots run deep. Our passion and purpose is unflinching. Our values are rooted in Jewish tradition: Honor thy mother and father.

In the award-winning documentary *Refuge: Stories of The Selfhelp Home*, director Ethan Bensinger captured the voices of residents past and present, all of whom had suffered the atrocities of persecution. The film opens with the survivors singing and dancing in our Social Hall as the narrator explains the meaning of the German word *Gemütlichkeit*: a feeling of comfort in your own surroundings.

“I feel at home here,” is an oft-repeated phrase. In fact, feeling like a home is the most valued goal of The Selfhelp Home.

To grow from a small resident home to an institution that has cared for thousands of older adults from Chicago — and all over the world — is a remarkable accomplishment. We are inspired by the wisdom of our founders, Selfhelp’s dedicated staff and volunteers, a committed board of directors, and the generosity of our

friends who have made Selfhelp a priority in their giving. We will always strive for excellence. Once again, for the sixth year in a row, Selfhelp has been named “Best in Class” by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid and *U.S. News & World Report*, and our accreditation by the Joint Commission is an unusual achievement for a continuous care community. In 2019 we adopted a five-year strategic plan to guide us toward the future. It is a future where older adults will outnumber kids for the first time in U.S. history, according to the Census Bureau, and we want to be ready for those who will need us.

Our donors, **you**, are helping to shape that future, while still honoring our roots. The last generation of survivors is still with us. Your gifts help us care for them. They are joined by others with fascinating lives and stories — people who still have so much to give. Collectively, their voices shape The Selfhelp Home. In these pages we are proud to celebrate our community, our family and our heritage, and to extend our deepest gratitude to all who strengthen our Home and propel our mission forward.

Sincerely,

Austin Hirsch
President

Sheila Bogen
Executive Director

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COMMUNITY



Social Hall of tomorrow

Social Hall Gets a Makeover!

The hub of our home, the Social Hall is host to more than 1,000 programs a year, from the outstanding Sunday concerts that draw residents, family and friends, to the daily lectures, study groups, and holiday celebrations. More than 5,000 people every year gather in the Social Hall, and everyone agreed that it was time to rethink this essential space and give it new life and functionality to better meet the needs of our community.

That's exactly what we're doing!

A lead gift from the family of Selfhelp founder **Gerry Franks**, which includes **Debbie Lipsett** and **Dan and David Franks**, has made this possible. In 2019, Selfhelp commissioned AE Designs to create an entirely new modern look, from wall-to-wall and floor to ceiling. Improvements will be completed in 2020.

The improvements are not just cosmetic: Gifts from **Jonathan and Jeremy Strauss (in memory of Helmut and Irma Strauss)**, **The Werner and Phoebe Frank Family Foundation** and the **Abt**

Family Foundation jumpstarted our campaign to outfit the space with state-of-the-art technology, including listening devices that will aid and enhance the communal experience for the hearing-impaired.

We invite you to join our campaign for the Social Hall today! To make a gift, **please contact Jeryl Levin at 312-271-0300.**



Social Hall today

Ulrike Sacks – *A Well-Traveled Life*

The daughter of a Swiss engineer and a Dutch pianist, Ulrike Sacks spent ten happy years in Florence, Italy. “But my father was an outspoken critic of Hitler and in 1939 we had to flee overnight,” said Ulrike. “It is one of my biggest memories as a child.”

They found safe haven in Switzerland, where Ulrike graduated high school. After the war, her parents returned to Italy and she moved to Paris. She met her first husband, Yannis, while studying psychology and philosophy at the Sorbonne. The couple had a daughter, Yael, spent two years in Munich and then settled in Greece, where their son Christophe was born. “My husband was very traumatized from the war and the German occupation,” Ulrike said. “He was a wonderful husband and father, but had difficulty making it in the world.”

Ulrike did not find work as a psychologist in Greece. “There was no use for psychologists at that time; the country was too happy,” she said. “So I taught languages in various high schools.” At that point she was fluent in French, Italian, German, Dutch and Greek.



When Yael completed high school, she attended Oxford and International University in Geneva, studying international law

and politics. In Geneva, she connected strongly with the beliefs of a circle of Jewish friends, converted to Judaism and moved to Israel. She lived in Jerusalem for six years, where she worked in public relations for the city's mayor. Yael now lives in Paris and is studying Chinese medicine.

When Christophe completed high school, at 16, he wanted to follow in his grandfather's footsteps and become an engineer. His sights were set on a prestigious university in Paris, but he needed to attend preparatory school, so Ulrike moved to Paris with him. “He was not going to live in Paris on his own at 16!”

“In Paris I couldn't get a work permit, so I went back to the Sorbonne and completed a degree in Russian,” Ulrike casually explained. “I then worked with Russian dissidents, making several trips to the USSR on their behalf.” During Ulrike and Christophe's residency in Paris, Yannis died of a sudden embolism.

It was through her connection with the Russians that Ulrike's life path led to the U.S. “One of them was heading a research project under the Carter Administration that involved building a computer game that Americans and Russians could play together to increase cultural understanding. It never received funding.

While attending a psychology conference, she met James Sacks, a psychologist and leader in the field of psychodrama, a therapeutic modality that incorporates role playing and group dynamics.

It was a great match between two educated, creative, cosmopolitan individuals with many shared interests. The only problem was that Jim hailed from a strongly observant Jewish family. “My father-in-law would have been very unhappy to have his son married to a *shiksa*. But I was always interested in religions and here was something new to study and learn,” Ulrike said. “So this is when I became Jewish. I converted, married Jim, and we settled into our life in New York.”

Ulrike got a job at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, working with severely disturbed Russian and Italian refugees. With Jim's encouragement, she also completed coursework at the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research and added a private psychoanalytic practice to her schedule.

In 2001, Jim was diagnosed with ataxia, a degenerative neurological disease. The malady does not affect intellectual functioning, but compromises both voluntary and involuntary muscle movement. Major life changes ensued, beginning with adjustments to both their professional lives and to their housing, as

Jim could no longer navigate stairs. Without family in New York, the couple considered another base of operation. Aside from Ulrike, Jim's closest associations were still in Chicago, where he had lived and studied at the University of Chicago for 12 years. In 2006, they relocated to Hyde Park.

It was during this time of transition, that Ulrike found her spiritual home in Tibetan Buddhism, taking precepts from the Dalai Lama himself in 2008. Her spiritual path, her intellectual vigor and her resiliency have sustained her over the years.



strength and your vibrancy. Try to see the positive side of things. Don't just ask for help, help each other."

"I took care of Jim for ten years at home, but he was getting worse and worse and I couldn't give him the care he needed. His mind was still completely sharp, but we needed more help with the physical challenges, so in January of 2017, Jim moved into Selfhelp Home." Ulrike spent lots of time with Jim at Selfhelp, assisting him with writing the articles he still authored, sharing meals and attending discussion group. She decided to move to Selfhelp to be with him full time.

But Jim died suddenly in June 2018, literally days

before Ulrike moved in.

"I waited too long, but I had no choice because I had given up the apartment," Ulrike explained. "In the beginning it was very strange being here by myself, but staff has been very supportive. There were a number of residents I already knew, and Sophie (Selfhelp's dietary director) was so nice and sat me at the table with those people, and accommodated my vegetarian diet. I really miss Jim, but I am accepting and adjusting."

Ulrike stays active and involved both mentally and physically at Selfhelp, attending book club, concerts, movie programs, Jewish studies and tai chi. "I like Jonathan very much and often go to his Torah study on Friday nights." She would love to see Jonathan start a Hebrew language group because, well, why not add an eighth language to her repertoire? It's never too late!

Her major piece of advice to people is: "Be less kvetchy.

"Be less kvetchy!

It is very negative always complaining about this, about that. Complaining takes your

It is very negative always complaining about this, about that. Complaining takes your strength and your vibrancy. Try to see the positive side of things. Don't just ask for help, help each other." Taking her own advice, Ulrike puts her expertise to use volunteering as a lay counselor for residents on the seventh and eighth floors.

"I do think the community here is good, it is very holding and supportive," she said, "but everyone has to find their own way to peace and contentment."

Hal Bergen – *Witness to History*

“My mother was born here. My father came over when he was about three years old from Kiev. I don’t know what country it was at the time, Russia or Ukraine. Mom’s family came from Bialystok, which is in the same general area,” said Hal Bergen, a member of the Selfhelp Home since August 2019. “So the country depends on which army was there at the time,” he laughed, noting that things have not changed so much in the nearly 120 years since his parents were born.

Hal was born in 1927, spending his first 10 years in the Lawndale neighborhood and then moving with his parents and brother to Albany Park. He graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1945, a month after Germany’s surrender. The war in the Pacific Theater was still raging and Hal went directly into the military. “The mood of the country was you couldn’t get in fast



“I asked defendants Hermann Goering and Rudolf Hess if their audio headsets were functioning properly. I didn’t realize the significance at the time. They were just guys to me.”

enough. I asked for accelerated induction and went in two months after my 18th birthday, going to Texas for basic training. We were told that if we were lucky we would come home wounded, but with all that there was still a rush to serve.”

Basic training was winding up in August when Japan announced its surrender. Bases needed to be cleared for homecoming combat troops and the new soldiers were given extended furlough. Finally, selected soldiers were tapped for specialized training and Hal found himself in Fort Benning, Georgia, receiving training as a Signal Corps Military Occupations Specialist. This training intersected a major event in world history.

“I was supposed to go to Panama, but missed the shipment because of the flu and went to Europe instead. I was on a train to Frankfurt when special orders came through and I was tapped to go to Nuremberg. A radio operator serving as a sound

technician at the trials was mustering out and they needed a replacement ASAP. I was the replacement.”

In a 2016 interview in the *Chicago Tribune* (written by his daughter Kathy, a career journalist who is now retired and working on a novel), Hal recalls that as a teenager he was unaware of the significance of his experience, as he asked defendants Hermann Goering and Rudolf Hess if their audio headsets were functioning properly. “They were just guys to me,” he said. “Now I wonder how much the world has learned. Did the trials deter similar acts? How many dictators didn’t make it or how many concentration camps didn’t get built?”

Hal did not have a Jewish upbringing. As Eastern European Jewish immigrants, his parents were part of the assimilationist culture prevalent during much of the 20th century. “It was a big mistake, although my parents were well-intentioned enough,” he said. “But

I was not Bar Mitzvahed. I was only at a Seder once, when I was sent to a cousin's house because my brother had whooping cough and it just happened to be Passover. I was what you might call a 'gustatory Jew.' I knew from gefilte fish and borscht. I never heard the four questions until I was 30 years old.

"This was a great regret in my adult life. My (first) wife was from a more observant family and we made sure that our sons and daughter were Bar Mitzvahed or confirmed."

After completing his military service, Hal attended IIT on the GI Bill, receiving his degree in electrical engineering. But he never worked as an engineer.

"Back in the 1950s, engineers were a drag on the market. There were three for every job opening," he explained. "But I had been on the college paper and the yearbook, and I had my military experience and landed a job with Stevens and Marsh writing technical manuals for International Harvester's armored troop carrier."

When the Korean War ended, so did the job. Hal chose to go to work for a trade magazine in St. Joseph, Michigan, where he made contacts in the public relations field, working first at Burson-Marsteller and then moving on to run the Chicago office of Ruder Finn.

Hal's first wife passed away from cancer in the mid-1970s. His second wife, Sharon, was Hal's colleague at Ruder Finn, working out of the New York office. Sharon recalls that "never did I think I would marry Hal, but the hand of fate intervened." They have been together 44 years.

One of Hal's proudest PR accomplishments was his work that resulted in lead-free gasoline. One of his clients built refineries and had developed the catalytic converter, which reduces exhaust emissions. However, in order for the catalytic converter to work, gasoline had to be lead free. "Most people don't know, or don't remember that gasoline was originally lead free. Lead was put into gas to increase mileage. It was never a necessary thing," Hal explained.

Hal developed a PR program to change public opinion in favor of getting lead out of gasoline. He wrote testimony and lobbied legislatures, starting in "trend setting" California, working with Jesuit based environmental activists, and making his way east to DC, working with the newly formed Environmental Protection Agency. In 1990, with the Clean Air Act,

lead was banned from gasoline. "Public relations was used to change people's ideas in the public interest. I'm very happy that this work resulted in a plus for the environment."

Hal came to Selfhelp for rehab after a stint in the hospital and he and Sharon decided that his health issues demanded a level of care that she could not provide at home. "Selfhelp was a godsend," said Sharon, whose daily visits include decorating Hal's new apartment and making sure he is comfortable in his surroundings. "I cannot tell you how thankful we are for this place and this level of care. This is truly Hal's second home and my home away from home."



Hal Bergen, April 1946

Farewell Ella

Nineteen-year-old Ella Neumann was the 21st intern to join the Selfhelp family through our partnership with Action Reconciliation Service for Peace – Germany (ARSP). In July, we bid her a fond farewell, as she returned to her hometown in Nürtingen near Stuttgart, to reunite with her family after a year-long absence.

This was Ella's first time in the United States, and she came to love Chicago—swimming in the lake, the Cubs, the exciting variety of ethnic food from Puerto Rican to Vietnamese, the theater, (especially Shakespeare), and the freedom of living on her own in her cozy studio at The Selfhelp Home. Ella exits our home with cherished memories of celebrating Hanukkah with the residents, sharing Shabbat dinners, and picking up her saxophone for an impromptu jam session in the Social Hall, with resident Bill Kaplan at the piano.

"In the beginning, it was totally overwhelming," said the trilingual martial arts student, who holds two brown belts in karate. "I first walked into Selfhelp just hours before Yom Kippur dinner and resident Finny Rosner was sitting at the entrance greeting me in German. I wasn't expecting that!. Immediately, everyone was asking 'How do you like it so far?'"

"I am a student of politics, interested in world events since the 10th grade. My parents always took me to museums and I've been all over the French countryside as an exchange student, but never to Paris. In Germany,



I was always stumbling over Holocaust history, and I felt so ashamed. I found Selfhelp to be an incredible community because it preserves history. It's here that I've worked and lived among so many older people willing to share their lives, to talk about the Holocaust and the lessons they've learned."

Through travel with her ARSP peers, Ella was able to see a broad swath of the country from east to west. "This country is so huge, she reflects, "with endless landscapes and seemingly unlimited resources." And while she loved the diversity of people and places, she was saddened by a climate of hatred against "others."

"This system is designed for a clash of opinions instead of consensus," she said.

Her future plans are college in Munich, studying chemistry and biochemistry to prepare for a career in environmental conservation.

"I am much more confident working with people as a result of my time here," Ella said. "I will miss the friendliness I've experienced at The Selfhelp Home. There is always someone here to talk to. And I'm already thinking about when I can come back to visit."

Willkommen Felix!

We welcomed Felix as our 22nd ARSP intern this August, and he eased right into the rhythm of The Selfhelp Home, ecstatic to be living on his own in his “huge comfortable apartment” on the second floor, and to continue his acting studies in his spare time.

Felix is a native of Goslar, Germany, a UNESCO city notable for its beauty, medieval tunnels, palaces and rich mining history.

“There was a small Jewish population in my hometown,” says Felix. “The synagogue was burned down in 1938, on the site where the town’s newspaper now stands. I always thought about this and was always confronted with it.”

“It is unbelievably important to me to take a stand against anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination.”

Goslar to Chicago was a mandatory journey for Felix, who has just finished high school. “My mother told me I had to take a gap year. I spent three weeks in Israel in 2016 on a trip with my mother, and I lived with an American family in 2017 for two weeks, so when I



applied to the U.S. and Israel programs through ARSP, I wanted to dive deeper into Jewish culture and religion. I have always been extremely interested in the many different aspects of American society and even more fascinated by the Jewish American community. I see the Jewish religion as a culture, so different from the traditions of my own Christianity.

“I had a good relationship with my grandparents and I lived with them for a few years. Working with elderly people, planning activities, and lending an open ear to those in need is a dream come true. My mother works for a rehab clinic (his father owns a hotel in Rahden) and when the opportunity opened up at Selfhelp, I was thrilled!. I hope to mature here and become more independent.”

Our Enduring Partnership with ARSP

Two decades ago, one of Selfhelp’s founders, the late Gerry Franks, proposed that Selfhelp undertake a partnership with Germany’s Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP).

Founded in the 1950s by German Protestants, ARSP’s charter reads in part that “the first step towards reconciliation has to be made by the perpetrators and their descendants” and that “other nations, who suffered because of us, will allow us with our hands and with our means to do something good in their countries as a sign of reconciliation and peace.”

Gerry Franks was a bridge builder. He envisioned that through ARSP a new generation of German youth could heal themselves and help us heal, an incredible story, really, given the home’s history of caring for more than 1,000 traumatized survivors. It was difficult work in those early years of our partnership, but those friendships have endured time.

ARSP Selfhelp interns have built loving, lasting bonds with our community, opening their hearts as we have opened ours. Many return for a visit in adulthood, some with families of their own.

For them—and for us—it is transformational.

COMMUNITY

Celebrating the Arts

The Selfhelp annual tradition is to celebrate the arts, an essential part of our ethos. Each year our community comes together to raise essential funds for the Home, to greet friends old and new, and to share an afternoon of excellent entertainment.

On May 5, we celebrated 200-strong — our best year ever — with a cocktail brunch at Rivers and great seats at the Lyric's critically acclaimed and sold-out production of *West Side Story*. The best part: Many of our residents and family members were able to join us and everyone was smiling. Together, we raised \$100,000 for The Selfhelp Home's programs and services.



Thank you for your wonderful support!

**JOIN US NEXT YEAR FOR THE LYRIC'S PRODUCTION
OF 42ND STREET, SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020.
SEE YOU THEN!**

Nate Hartmann

Nate Hartmann is one of Selfhelp's newest board members and, at age 28, one of our youngest. As a boy, he often visited his grandfather, resident Henry Horst Hartmann, who lived at the home from 2005-2012.

When approached by fellow board member Steve Nechtow to volunteer, Nate did so without reservation, serving on the marketing committee and launching through Yellow Box Studios — the digital marketing company that he founded at age 18 — *Generations: Our Stories* (formerly the Last Whispers project). *Generations: Our Stories* is a collection of survivor stories recounted on video in first-person by residents and family members.

"I had a very personal interest in recording these stories for The Selfhelp Home digital archives," says Nate, who earlier this year was named by *Oy! Chicago* as one of the "36 Under 36" young leaders. "My grandfather was on one of the last Kindertransports out of Germany. At only 15 years old, he led an anti-aircraft battery in the British Home Guard, which he said helped give him a refreshed sense of purpose as the majority of his family did not make it through the war."

Grandfather Henry Horst Hartmann was part of the Shoah project and he narrated the documentary, *The Double Crossing: The Story of the St. Louis*, the German liner carrying more than 900 mostly Jewish refugees who were denied entry into North America.

The Fund for Survivors at The Selfhelp Home

Ours is the last generation; most of our survivor population is well into their 80s, 90s and beyond. To ensure that Selfhelp can adequately provide the high levels of care these individuals so richly deserve until the end of their natural lives, we ask for your generous support.

Through the Selfhelp Foundation and the open hearts of our donors, we have provided more than \$3M to survivor care in the last decade. We will not turn away survivors who can no longer live alone. Through a partnership with people of good will, sympathetic to Jewish suffering and the needs of our community, survivors live out their natural lives with us in an environment created by and for them, and which uniquely understands their needs.

Please help us meet this critical need through a cash, stock or legacy gift.

To speak directly with our development staff, **please call Jeryl Levin at 773-596-5862.**

THE FUND FOR SURVIVORS CONTRIBUTORS

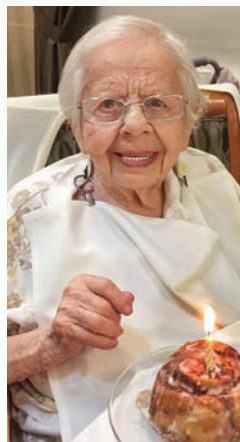
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Selfhelp resident and Holocaust survivor Hannah Messinger celebrates her 99th birthday.

***“The past is gone. My life is a miracle!
With gratitude to God, I am still here to
remember and to tell what happened to
me during the Holocaust of WWII.”***

— Leah Cik Roth, Author *My Eyes Looking Back at Me: Insight Into a Survivor's Soul*

“My grandfather was 85 when he died. He was always an inspiration and a role model for me. That is why



I like to tell diverse stories and make them accessible through digital strategies.” Nate’s agency, Yellow Box, now has a 13-member team and clients ranging from large corporations to government agencies.

In addition to being our youngest board member, Nate is also the youngest member of our Legacy Circle.

“Selfhelp never has felt like an old people’s home,” he says. “As a kid, I always liked coming here, and my family credits the home for the excellent quality of life my grandfather had in older age. I very much want that legacy to continue.”

To watch *Generations: Our Stories*, go to generationsourstories.org/stories/

HERITAGE

Thank You To Our Donors Our wonderful donors, through annual giving and membership, bequests from wills and trusts, and special gifts for capital improvements, contribute to the life of the Home in so many ways. As a not-for-profit, we are committed to the community. Keeping our prices fair so our home is accessible to Jewish seniors is a priority, even as costs skyrocket. Please help us continue to be “best in class.”

Reflects gifts from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

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THIS DONATION IS IN THEIR HONOR.

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CREATE A JEWISH LEGACY CIRCLE 2019

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JUDITH WOLF



We love our volunteers, even when they bark!

Warren has been visiting Grandma Roz and the residents of Selfhelp since he was a puppy. He makes the rounds, first to Roz, and then around the Home, charming everyone. "He's better behaved here than anywhere else," said Warren's person, Bess, Roz's granddaughter. "He just has such good, happy energy."

Before Warren there was Nate, Bess' first golden retriever. "I called Grandma Roz and told her I was bringing Nate to meet her. She got really excited and put out a big spread. She thought I had finally met someone special. Boy, was she surprised when I showed up with a dog!"



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Thank you, Lila, for helping out in the Gift Shop for your Bat Mitzvah project!



Many of the photos in this publication, including our cover, were shot by Walter Mitchell. "I love The Selfhelp Home," said Walter. "It's a paradise for seniors. The residents are cared for like relatives. Bravo."

HERITAGE



Anne and Keith Moffat

Every culture must look after its elderly, say Anne and Keith Moffat, who have been supporting The Selfhelp Home for 16 years and have also made Selfhelp part of their legacy giving by naming The Selfhelp Home in their estate plans.

Anne's mother, Herta Greenbaum Simon, fled the Nazis in 1938, and made her home in the Bronx. In her later years, Herta moved to Chicago and into Selfhelp to be closer to Anne, a retired science writer specializing in biology, agriculture and biotech, and Keith, the Louis Block Professor of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology at University of Chicago.

WHY CREATE A JEWISH LEGACY WITH THE SELFHELP HOME?



When they needed us, we were there. Seventy years ago in Chicago, The Selfhelp Home settled over 1,000 Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler's Europe. People of goodwill across our city joined together to build a retirement home for the older survivors and filled it with love, compassion, understanding and purpose. Today, The Selfhelp Home is a five-star residential and skilled nursing community nationally ranked at the top of its class. We still care for the survivors—and our doors are open to older adults in the wider community, those who want to age in a unique Jewish environment that feels like family. When you include The Selfhelp Home in your will or estate plan, you honor your loved ones and you affirm the spirit and resilience of the Jewish people. Through your gift, you can fund the current and future needs of The Selfhelp Home, leave a permanent legacy to our Jewish community, and you may receive a charitable tax benefit. ***Thank you!***

The couple toured many facilities but chose Selfhelp because they wanted a community that could handle all stages of care as Herta aged, from assisted living to skilled nursing. "There are a variety of choices out there," says Keith, "but they differ widely in care. We knew that any move would be a disruption, but Selfhelp was an extremely good match for Herta, and soon she became engaged in all the activities."

"The three of us spent a lot of time together in the home, eating together, listening to music and experiencing a full Jewish life."

Herta passed away in 2002, but Anne and Keith have remained close to Selfhelp. Their family story was most recently captured in Selfhelp's survivor story testimony organized by board member Nate Hartmann, which can be viewed at generationsourstories.org/stories/

In addition to their annual gifts and Legacy Giving, Anne and Keith supported construction of the 9th Floor Solarium, the sun-filled meeting space that leads out to the rooftop terrace.

"Much of our giving is to the arts and education," says Anne. "But we feel very committed to The Selfhelp Home. It was, is and doubtless will be an excellent institution."

4 SIMPLE WAYS TO CREATE A JEWISH LEGACY

1. Make a gift through a bequest in a will, trust or estate plan.
2. Add (or change) a beneficiary designation on an IRA, pension fund, or life insurance policy. Your legacy commitment can be expressed as a specific dollar or percentage amount.
3. Give an outright cash gift to the endowment.
4. Increase your current income while making a gift through a Charitable Gift Annuity or Charitable Remainder Trust.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

First, reflect on and discuss your Jewish passions with your loved ones, and then with your personal financial advisor or attorney. When you are ready, contact Jeryl Levin and sign a Declaration of Intent.

Jeryl Levin Director of Development - 312-271-0300
jlevin@selfhelphome.org www.selfhelphome.org

Dr. Howard Weiss – *The Gift of a Lifetime*



“There are some things you just have always wanted to do. For me, it was playing the violin.”

“I can’t live without music, and this is a gift to everyone at The Selfhelp Home: residents, their families, our volunteers, and all of our friends.”

This year, Dr. Howard Weiss made the “gift of his lifetime,” a tribute to one of the things he values most at The Selfhelp Home, the music. In 2020, the Sunday concert series will be named in honor and memory of Howard and his late wife, Marillyn.

Selfhelp took care of Marillyn in her later years of deteriorating health. Howard was living independently but was a fixture at the home, helping to care for his beloved wife, joining her at every meal, at every Sunday concert, and leading the sing-along in the Social Hall, with volunteer and now-resident Bill Kaplan at the piano (for more on Bill, check out our story on pages 4-5).

After Marillyn’s death, Howard moved in. Selfhelp was his family and he belonged here.

Many Chicagoans are familiar with Howard, a pediatrician and co-founder of North Side Pediatrics. He founded the practice with Pearl Gollin, M.D., - a

partnership that was ahead of its time, when few women were practicing medicine or equity partners in a medical practice. The practice was sold in the 1980s to an all-women medical team.

In their day, Marillyn Weiss kept the books and ran the reception area, and all who knew her remembered her striking red hair and assertive but kindly demeanor at the front desk, keeping order in a crowded waiting room of mostly mothers and their restless children. Marillyn was also an accomplished pianist.

Howard’s father emigrated from Lithuania to Pennsylvania with little education. Outside Pittsburgh, he opened a furniture store and raised a blended family with his second wife. The three brothers, Allen, Benny and Howard, played violin or piano and all became doctors. Howard gave up his violin when he entered medical school, but his passion for the arts never diminished. The symphony and the opera were his and Marillyn’s respite from full and chaotic lives.

“Everything happens for a reason,” says Howard. “I’ve picked up my violin again and this gift to Selfhelp represents a cycle in my life that is my destiny.”



“I can’t live without music, and this is a gift to everyone at The Selfhelp Home: residents, their families, our volunteers, and all of our friends.”

The Selfhelp Home, founded in 1938,
originally established a refuge for older survivors of the Holocaust. Today, Selfhelp honors its
legacy of empathy and state-of-the-art care as an urban, independent, not-for-profit community
offering the continuum of services from residential living to skilled nursing.



THE SELFHELP HOME
A TRADITION OF CARING

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The Selfhelp Home is a not-for-profit Jewish retirement community with a tradition of caring for more than 70 years.

