

THE OLIVE PRESS

BY RHODA GOLDMAN PLAZA

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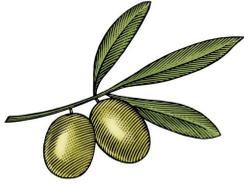
VOL 23 NO 2

Our Favorite Places



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Our Favorite Places—67.3 °N

Because I am a cat, place is important to me. I choose a place for its warmth, light, color, and ambiance. As a cat, my favorite place is a sunny warm room, near a open window. Creature comfort.

While that kind of comfort is enjoyable, there are other aspects of what makes a place favorite; I am rethinking what “favorite” means...

Some places are so unusual and uncomfortable that they force a person to reconsider and reflect. As a result of that reevaluation, a previously ignored place may become favorite—a translated “favorite.” From that perspective, my favorite place is the Canadian Arctic. Not for warmth and good restaurants, but for the rearranging experience of being near the top of the world.

We spent ten days visiting friends in late October in Tsiigehtchic, a village on Red River in Canada’s Northwest Territories. Here, on this tributary of the Mackenzie River, 67.3 °N, almost a degree above the Arctic Circle (66.6 °N), the sunsets and sunrises are v e r y , v e r y l o n g ; “days” can be dark, and “nights” can be light. The sun has its own schedule up there. Time takes on an entirely new meaning.

The Arctic is eye-stretchingly immense. In the more than 1.5 million square miles of the Canadian Arctic, there are fewer than 150,000 inhabitants. From a city-dweller’s perspective, the land looks empty. But it is filled with diverse wildlife and taiga forests of tough arctic spruce, pines, fir and low-growing willows. Permafrost. Extreme cold. Wind. Hundreds of shades of grey. Pure spring waters... Inexplicable northern lights. The Arctic—an astounding place—forced me to live differently.

Of course, there are other fascinating places—Samarkand, Tashkent, Lagos, Istanbul, Yazd, Jerusalem—each one has its own story and history. Very favorite-able, but in a completely different way.

Did I enjoy the Arctic? Yes. Have fun? Not really. Not a place a cat would choose. But it remains the most memorable and life-affecting place I have ever been.

What about you?

Resident of the Month—Ruth Goldberg

I grew up in Manhattan and went to Walden School. I attended Joan of Arc Middle School—and leaned toward art classes in the ninth grade. In high school, I applied and was specially selected to attend the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan which lifted my self esteem. When I arrived there in the tenth grade, the students and environment were completely new to me. The girls would sit around with pierced ears and sandals and the boys wore beards. It was a shock; but after a while, I started dressing like that too. It was a very competitive school and my parents were thrilled that I was studying there; I graduated in 1960 with a major in art. I went to Hunter College in Manhattan which, at the time, was not co-ed. I switched to City College of New York (CCNY) where I majored in early childhood education and minored in art. I was a member of the Art Honor Society. Later on, I got an MA in Art Education.

As for traveling, I never went anywhere except the Catskills mountains with my parents. I remember that the vacation spot was kosher and there were a lot of *yentas* (a busybody or gossip, usually a woman). It was not my favorite vacation; one year I went back home a week early and stayed with my grandmother...

In the summer of 1982, my future husband said “I really want to go to Europe, and I want to take you with me.” This was my first time I had traveled abroad and flying so far. We went to Italy staying in *pensioni* and visited Rome, Florence, and Venice. It was nice to hear people speaking Italian. We prepared for the trip by taking a crash course in Italian... We visited the museums, the churches, took a *vaporetto* in Venice. I was overwhelmed seeing the original art and Michelangelo’s sculpture of David... I loved it. I was surprised that in Italy, people eat the salad after the soup and main course.... None of the pizza tasted as good as the pizza in



the Bronx where I taught school. In 1983 we got engaged. After five years we got married! I became Mrs. Goldberg.

The next summer we went to Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. We took a crash course in German too before we left. I already knew some German; my parents spoke German, so I understood a little. My mother was

born in Munich. When we were there we looked for the place where she lived, but it had been destroyed in the war. I was surprised that I could understand a lot of what people said and knowing a little of the language gave me a feeling of being able to manage better. We enjoyed classical music concerts that were held on the street. We were guests of my husband’s colleague’s cousin in Prague and stayed there for almost a week.

Another year we went to France. I liked getting fresh bread wrapped in paper, loved the museums. The French women seemed all to be thin and fashionable in contrast to the German and Austrian women who were generally plump and frumpy. I was afraid I would gain weight while traveling, but we walked so much that I lost weight...

I liked traveling; I liked all the places we visited because they were all new. I loved the food. I loved everything. My future husband bought travel guide books and planned our visits with the books and maps. Eventually, after arriving at hotels which were all booked up, he realized the benefits of making hotel reservations in advance...

My advice to people who want to travel is to read about the country and the places you want to visit; decide where you want to go; make reservations; and keep a diary (having a diary will help you organize the photos when you return home). Traveling enriched my life tremendously. In addition, traveling with someone is a good way to get to know them well; because of our travels, my husband and I became very close....

OUR FAVORITE PLACES

Rose Hane

“Tokyo is my favorite place,” Rose Hane said. “I’ve been there five times; every time I go, I feel more at home. The fourth time, I lived there for nine months; the fifth time, my sister and I went together and I was able to show her around the city. I love the celebrations—the Cherry Blossom Festival, the Chrysanthemum Festival in the fall, the Iris Festival in May—that made being there so wonderful. During the cherry blossom time, everything reflects cherry blossoms—they are in the food, in the tea, in the colors... I lived near Ueno Park, a very famous place for viewing cherry blossoms; people would stake out their place near the trees, sit, eat with friends, and watch the blossoms open. And there are *onsen*, natural volcanic spring water baths which are very popular. Because of the time I spent in Tokyo, I grew to appreciate the Japanese observance of the seasons and close relationship with nature.

I love opera and when I lived in Tokyo, I was able to attend traditional Japanese theaters—Kabuki plays (which were translated into English), Noh theater, and Bunraku—traditional Japanese puppet theater. Although they were not like Western opera and theater, I appreciated them very much.

I have my Japanese background, but because of the war and relocation, I lost the connections. I knew Japanese and spoke it with my mother and grandmother when I was a child. I was even learning to read and write, but when the war came everything changed. Reestablishing my connection with my parents’ homeland and culture has become important in my life.



Loutro Beach in Crete

Jeanne Halpern

In 1998, at the end of a week-long hiking trip in Greece, I was sharing a glass of Retsina with the hike leader and asked: “If you had a few extra days and wanted to visit the most beautiful spot in Greece, where would you go?” “Loutro Beach,” he answered immediately, “on the southern shore of Crete. Behind you, green mountains a few thousand meters high; in front, the turquoise Mediterranean and farther south, on a clear day, you’ll see a white mirage. That’s Libya.”

A few days later, I took a small plane to Chania, Crete. At a hotel, I got into my hot-weather hiking clothes, boots, and sun hat, readied my backpack for a day of swimming, picked up a copy of Mary Renault’s historical novel set in Crete, *The King Must Die*, and started out. By bus, by climbing down a long, challenging trail, and finally by ferry, I reached Loutro. I stood on that white sand beach in the middle of nowhere.

Turning around, I noticed a low-rise, motel-looking building, which couldn’t have been a motel because Loutro had no roads, no cars. There were a few families, a pair of people on beach chairs, and, except for the waves splashing the sand, nothing but over-whelming quiet. Settling in at the quasi-motel in a room facing the sea, I lost my heart to Loutro Beach.

For a few days I ate, swam, read, explored and slept in the nude so I could wash and dry my one set of clothes in the sun. I met an Iraqi family with two children, an English woman who shared her newspaper with me, and an Italian couple who let me practice my Italian with them. If you wonder why I chose Loutro Beach as my special place in the world and not one of the other contenders—belly-sliding with my partner Louis and some Adele penguins down the snowy slopes of Antarctica or canoeing down rivers in Venezuela from Caracas to Brazil with college friends—I think it’s because Loutro was the most beautiful place in the world I visited *alone*. My own independent decisions, surrounded by such beauty, convinced me that adventures of many kinds could be mine—with or without others.

OUR FAVORITE PLACES

Dr. Paul Ekman

“My favorite place to visit is Bali; the people are very friendly, the women beautiful and have a lovely grace about them. The climate was quite nice. It is a wonderful place to visit, but I never dreamed of living there. There are no jobs for a research psychologist; I couldn’t make a living there,” Dr. Ekman explained.

I’ve been all over Europe, enjoyed Milan and loved Florence—the whole city is like a museum.... But of the places where I have spent time, I have greatly enjoyed London. England is a remarkable country—people speak English, the theaters are spectacular; the museums are excellent; politics are understandable, and the newspapers readable. I was in London three times, spending three to four months there, once on a Fulbright scholarship, other times on sabbaticals. We rented a house there so we lived like locals; it was very enjoyable.

I’d say that if people were going for a holiday, then a place like Bali would be enjoyable. However, if people were going to spend time, at least a few months, then a place like London would be my first choice.

The least desirable country, for me, was the Soviet Union which I visited when Soviet dissidents—*refuseniks*—were trying to leave. I didn’t like the way the government treated its people. I was there as a Fulbright Exchange lecturer and spent six months in St. Petersburg. I met a lot of students and dissidents who had lost their jobs and wanted to emigrate. Most countries have rules about who can come in, but the USSR had rules about who could go out. I didn’t want anyone to get in trouble for speaking with me. But I would get quizzed by government agents who asked lots of questions including who were you with. I never revealed who I was with.... I returned later to help, to get people out... The Russian people were very nice; it was the government that was so despotic and oppressive. I don’t recommend Russia.

Bernie Haas

Unhesitatingly Venice. So sensational. You have to know history to appreciate what happened here. How did people back then have the skills to build in the marshes?? The 1600-year-old Venice was built on 116 small islands, joined by bridges and connected by canals. The builders drove millions of piles—alder trees—into the mud until they rested on a hard clay layer. A layer of limestone was added; buildings were built on limestone.

In building any city or country, people need to have either natural resources or skills. The Venetians had great craftsmen skills. Venice supplied ships that carried some crusaders to Jerusalem and must have been very talented shipbuilders. (That must have been a lucrative venture.) Venetian glass was much prized....and still is. Venetians were great traders and Venice was a great financial center for three or four centuries. Palazzos on the Grand Canal had warehousing space on the ground floor; merchants and families lived above.

The architecture is a mixture of East and West probably due to its long relationship with Byzantium and Silk Road trade.

We were there three times; the last time in 2008. We spent a week and got a room in a hotel whose outdoor breakfast room overlooked the Rialto bridge... *al fresco!* We took a long gondola ride. By the time we returned the water had risen and we had to walk over a plank to get back into the hotel.

I love the *vaporetto*, the public water bus transportation system. The *vaporetto* drivers, using only one finger, can bring their “bus” to land more smoothly than any Muni driver. An amazing transport system. Good restaurants.

We took an eighteen-day cruise from Venice back to the US. We saw our ship come into Venice.... this huge ship in the Grand Canal dwarfed the gondolas and other small craft. Next day we had a thrilling ride on that ship as she exited Venice.

OUR FAVORITE PLACES

Herbert Scholder

I have been to Russia five times—I enjoy the country immensely. Having Russian friends in Russian ballet and opera companies has given me more intimate experiences than I would have had as a tourist. On one of the trips, we visited during White Nights, a period during the summer (April through August) when the sun hardly sets. The White Nights Festival in June features classical ballet opera, and orchestra performances, as well as many other events in venues all over the city. We visited museums in the daytime and attended opera and ballet performances every night. The magical effect of the light “night” sky, the quality of the light, the events, music, opera were unforgettable...

I was overwhelmed by the opulence of Russian royalty’s life and culture during Czarist times. We visited the Yusupov Palace on the Moika Canal in St. Petersburg which had been turned into a museum. (Rasputin was killed this Yusupov palace in 1916.) On the exterior, the palace appeared as a large, fairly unadorned building, but inside it was sumptuous; it was designed by Italian and European architects, and even included a private theater. We were astounded by the lavish lifestyle of the wealthy royalty who employed the best European craftsmen to design their homes and furnished them lavishly. Although the French and Italian influence exists, Russian taste demanded additional tone, color, and drama.

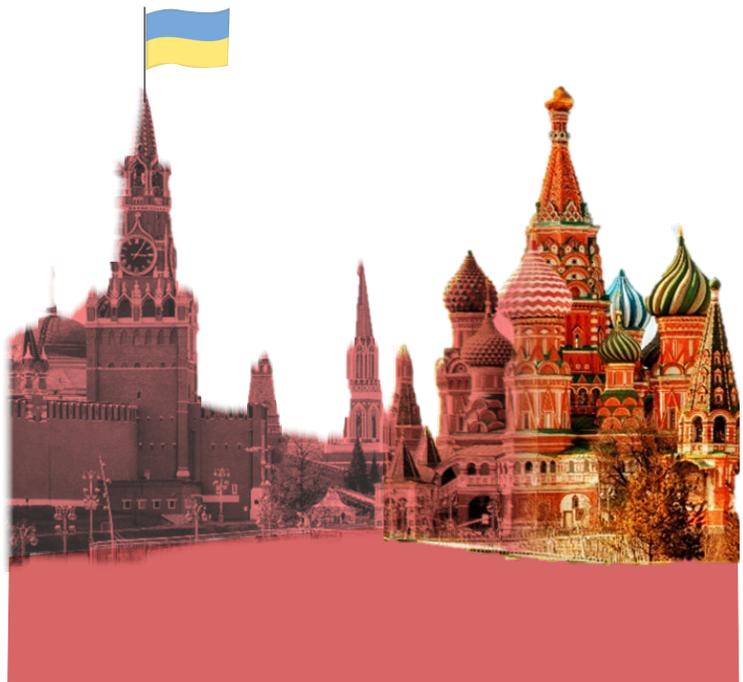
The Russian Orthodox cathedrals—in Moscow St. Basil Cathedral on Red Square, in St. Petersburg, The Cathedral of the Spilled Blood (together with St. Basils’ was the most impressive of them all), Kazan, St.

Isaacs Cathedrals, with their colors and domes, icons, gold leaf, and frescoed interiors were of another world.

In Moscow, we ate a special Sunday brunch at a restaurant which was part of a gambling establishment, and found mountains of caviar, cheeses, meats—a huge buffet meal for only \$20. And of course, we visited the enormous Hermitage in St. Petersburg which houses a vast collection of European and Russian art.

Russia is immense... We took a boat trip from Moscow to St. Petersburg, through a series of canals, part of the Russian Canal System which includes the infamous Volga Canal. A Russian friend of ours said, “It is miraculous what two million slave laborers can do.”

Unfortunately, vastly wealthy Russians and political prisoners still exist today.



A Country I Visited

Maxene Kotin

I knew that when our tour included Morocco it was going to be special because I remembered as a teenager the steamy love story in the movie “Casablanca” between Humphry Bogart and Lauren Bacall. The entire place was romantic.

The foreign tour offices are all targeting Morocco as the place for newlyweds to spend their honeymoon, at least, I'd say, for the adventuresome. Sand in ones shoes is no big deal in this land of towering pillars and caverns of sand remains from ancient times.

After the earthquake in 1755, the country didn't have to rebuild itself much—maybe some souks and Robot Tower but it looks good. The alleys looked dark and ominous in spite of people living in hovels there. The souks were very interesting and challenging because there are so many merchants who want your attention to buy their products. Leather goods jewelry and rugs are main attractions. We bought a lovely Berber tribal rug that I enjoyed in our family room in Chicago. I also bought an antique Moroccan large camel leather bag belonging to a family of water carriers, the front flap covered in old coins that came from various countries. You can see it pictured in the Rhoda Goldman Plaza 2023 calendar that was distributed to residents here.

I was also inveigled to ride a two-hump camel on a trek to the desert, a flaming mountain of sand that was gorgeous to behold. An interesting story evolved at a souk (very picturesque) where I was browsing some handmade necklaces when the merchant got friendly. I called for Merritt who was looking at some handmade knives and told him to come quick as I was concerned about this scene. He came and the merchant proceeded to make him an offer—two camels for me! (I guess my blonde hair appealed to him). I said to my husband let's get out of here, fast, which we did. Jack Benny the comedian might have replied, ‘wait I'm thinking about this!’

Otherwise, Morocco was great and I'm glad we went to the land of intrigue and sand.



We Left Our Heart in San Francisco....”

After You've Seen the Golden Gate Bridge here are some other places to remind you how wonderful SF is....

1. DimSum Takeout and WALK to Pier 5
2. Grant Avenue to Bush to Pine; Large Art shops
3. Privately Owned Public Open Spaces, lovely gardens....
4. Mission Bay (walk from ballpark, have lunch at the Ramp)
5. Bus Ride #22,#33, #43, #7, #39
6. Ferry ride from SF to Larkspur, Sausalito
7. Golden Gate Transit 150 to Sausalito
8. Fort Mason, Building A
9. Fairmont hotel (Nob Hill, Grace Cathedral, Big Four, Mark Hopkins)
10. Union Square but Chancellor Hotel, Grand Beacon Hotel, lunch at Sears
11. Upper Grant, lunch at Mo's, oldest bar, Washington Square, Coit Tower

Suggestions courtesy of Bernie Haas,
intrepid traveling San Franciscan.





Health Notes

Adrienne Fair, MSN, RN,
Assistant Executive Director

Taking the Waters

Semuc Champey is an indescribably beautiful natural monument hidden deep in the jungle near Lanquin, Guatemala in the Q'eqchi' Mayan area of Alta Verapaz. The name means “where the river hides under the stones.” The Cahabon River passes under a long natural limestone bridge, and then cascades through a series of limestone pools. The light turquoise water is very clear. There are jungle flowers, orchids and begonias, hanging down over the pools, and brightly-colored birds flitting through the trees.

Lanquin is a tiny remote town a couple of hours outside of Coban, which is about five hours from Guatemala city. It's not easy to get there or to the Semuc Champey monument; there is one tiny dirt road down into the ravine.

We were traveling through Guatemala for a month when our daughter, Yasmina, was three. It was an amazing adventure through indigenous areas with few tourists. Travelling with a 3-year-old was fabulous—she met kids to play with everywhere and allowed us the chance to meet families and feel less like outsiders. We couldn't take our rental car down that final stretch of road into the ravine; we relied on the monument's transport service—a 4-wheel drive cattle truck with benches in the back. It was hot and loud and the road was incredibly steep and bumpy.

Stepping out of the dusty truck into the paradise of Semuc Champey, we found pool after limestone pool of turquoise water. The area is sacred to the Q'eqchi' people of the area who maintain and protect the site. At

least when we were there in 2007, it was not developed for tourism, but was a natural, hidden wonder, very much off the beaten track. You could swim from pool to pool with the sound of the river echoing under the limestone bridge, and orchids hanging down from the trees and rocks. It was really magical.

I love swimming out in nature. When I think about my favorite places, I focus where I spent time swimming, snorkeling, and relaxing. The old-school expression of “taking the waters” in hot springs really makes sense to me. In addition to Semuc Champey, there are various volcanic springs that are incredibly gorgeous in Guatemala, and also the gorgeous Tabacon springs in Costa Rica.

One summer, we hiked eight hours down into the Havasu Canyon, where the Havasupai tribe maintains the turquoise waterfalls that feed into the Grand Canyon. Here at home, I sneak off sometimes to Harbin Hot Springs north of Calistoga which was a sacred site for the Pomo people which later became a Victorian era retreat and then a hippie enclave. Even in urban areas, you can find oases of relaxation. When I lived in Paris, I relaxed at the hammams, which are a unique tradition unto themselves. You can also find a great hammam and saunas at Banya in San Francisco's Bayview area.

There is truly something very healing about taking the waters. Maybe, growing up in Missouri, skinny-dipping in various swimming holes, makes me a particular fan of being in water. Of course, in Missouri, lakes and ponds, you have to trudge through a certain degree of muck in your bare feet before you luxuriate in the waters. It's all part of communing with nature and giving thanks to our amazing world.



Emma Davis
Director of Programming and Counseling

Prince Edward Island, Canada

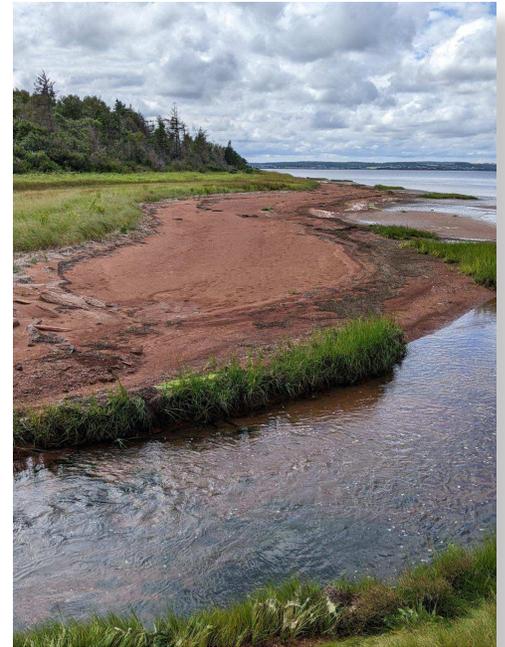
First, it is impossible to pick one favorite place. However, when I consider the places I've been, one stands out in my mind. From the time I was born until I was about fourteen, my family took a yearly summer vacation to Prince Edward Island (PEI), an island off the eastern coast of Canada known for its beaches, wildlife, and distinctive red soil.

Since I grew up in Maine, instead of flying to Canada, every summer we would drive about eight to nine hours. It wasn't until I was almost ten years old that construction was completed on a bridge that connected New Brunswick to PEI. Prior to that, you would wait hours to drive your car aboard this huge ferry that would carry you across to the island.

We always stayed at the same place—a family-run resort of little red cottages in Stanhope. It was rustic, family-friendly and about a five-minute walk to the beach. There was a general store with snacks, including pickle-flavored potato chips and bubblegum ice cream. But what made this place especially wonderful were the friendships.

I had an aunt and uncle who also traveled every year to the same place at the same time. They introduced our family to another family from their home city in Maryland. The family had a daughter, Michelle, the same age as myself, and a son, Philip, the same age as my brother. From that time on, we always vacationed at the same time. We would go to the beach together, eat together, play board games, and visit the amusement park. We would travel to Charlottetown to see plays and visit the COWS Creamery with the biggest ice cream cones I've ever seen. We would have epic Monopoly tournaments that would last the entire trip and take nighttime walks on the beach and try and spot the foxes in the dunes. It was a special time every year shared with family and special friends.

One particularly special memory I have is every summer my aunt would take Michelle and I to Dalvay by the Sea for fancy tea. Dalvay by the Sea is the former vacation home turned



resort of Alexander McDonald, one-time president of Standard Oil. We would get dressed up, have cucumber sandwiches and *petit fours* on the patio. I felt like a princess all afternoon.

I would look forward to our vacation every year. Throughout the school year I could earn extra money by doing extra chores and my father would pay us in Canadian currency that we would save for our trip. The Island felt like such a magical place; I made memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life.



Elizabeth Wyma-Hughes
Director of Resident Services

Abhaile (Home in Gaelic)

If pressed, I would say that my favorite place is Ireland—the place I grew up hearing about, have visited many times over the years, and find myself seeking out its distinctive elements in other places that I visit.

All four of my dad's grandparents were born and raised in Ireland and emigrated to the US. They settled in New York, raised their kids there, and lived within blocks of their grandkids (including my dad). They maintained close ties with their family back in Ireland and facilitated those connections for the next generation.

This continued connection to family land and history made for a unique introduction to an incredible place. In my many visits to Ireland, I've had the opportunity to see the expected and incredible sights pictured in travel brochures. The Cliffs of Mohr really are breathtaking and Giants Causeway is a geological wonder. However, the more impactful stops have been the visits to the towns that set the scene for family stories and the homes that my great grandparents left behind. In one of my first visits to Ireland, my family (about thirty of us) trekked out for a wedding and a bit of a family history tour, traversing the island tip to toe.

In the north, just below the River Blackwater that separates Ireland for Northern Ireland, we visited the Hughes home that is frozen in time from when the family moved to the States in the early 1900s, with a cracked kettle still hanging in the fireplace and vines climbing in through the windows that blew out sometime over the past hundred years. The land (and home) is still owned by distant relations who left the home standing rather than tearing it down.

Toward the southernmost part of the country we visited Long Island, which is actually an island off the southern



coast of Ireland, and we walked the road past where the great grandmother whom I was named for grew up. Today, the permanent population of Long Island is no more than ten people and it is a wind-torn, rugged island with stunning views when not obstructed by dense fog, accessible only by ferry.

In my visits over the years, I've had the great pleasure of hiking mountains, boating along the coast, and enjoying piping hot tea and brown bread in the homes of our cousins who are scattered across Ireland. I remain in awe over just how green it is (the pictures that look surreal don't begin to do it justice) and humbled by the power of the surrounding ocean. More importantly, I feel the connection to the places that I heard about growing up and were described in songs that were the score to my childhood.

I find myself drawn to similar things in my local travels and think perhaps my affinity for such things are just another part of our family legacy. After punishing rains here at home, the green rolling hills have come alive in the East Bay and I'm venturing out to enjoy the sunny days. I look forward to a trip to Mendocino and breathtaking, rugged Northern California coast later in February. These small things will tide me over until I make it back to Ireland again.



Candiece Milford,
Managing Director of Marketing

“Be Still, My Beating Heart”*

I have been fascinated by the Middle East since a child, drawing the Gardens of Babylon, over and over again. In the 70s, I travelled to Kuwait several times and learned that Kuwait is very likely the original location of the Pishon River which watered the Garden of Eden. In that Kuwait is located where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run into the Persian Gulf, historians give credence to this theory.



I was profoundly moved, even changed, by my experiences in the desert more than any other place in Kuwait. One winter, clothed in a heavy wool disdasha (a long coat) to keep me warm against the cold, I was driven in a big Cadillac towards Saudi Arabia and teased by the five Kuwaitis in the car that they were going to sell me to the Arabs. I kept silent and didn't let on how terrified I was at the thought. The actual goal of the trip was to visit their friends in a Bedouin camp.

Without any warning, the driver made a sharp, right turn off the paved road

onto the hard sand, not at all what I anticipated. As I studied the landscape, I could see nothing but flat sand for miles and miles and little to no vegetation. Despite no discernible landmarks, after about fifteen minutes of driving, we came upon tents, camels, and a water truck. We were invited to tea in a beautifully colored tent, with equally colorful, woven rugs placed on the sand. While I didn't understand Arabic, it was comforting to hear the music of their voices and I was quite content to just be. I was nineteen at the time of this first visit.

The visit over, we got back into the car but instead of recovering our tracks, we drove deeper into the desert for another fifteen minutes. It seemed like hours as I became concerned about being alone with five Kuwaiti men** in the middle of nowhere. This time they just sat on the sand, smoked cigarettes, and talked. Sitting directly on the sand, once my heart slowed down, I was able to tune into where I was and absorbed the profound silence. As my fear evaporated, I oddly began to feel rooted in the vast, monochromatic landscape. Keeping the group within eyesight, I went for a walk. The feeling of walking on the sand where so many had roamed for hundreds of years, reflecting on how they navigated such bland terrain, found water, used the few plants to extricate colors for the wool they dyed for their clothing, tents and camel



gear, was deeply peaceful and very humbling; I felt as infinitesimally small as a tiny star in a galaxy yet, I never felt so whole and startlingly alive in my life.

“Be Still, My Beating Heart”

continued.

While I’ve always been adventuresome (I hitchhiked around Europe for three months by myself when I was sixteen), this desert experience opened my heart to the deep spirituality imbued in these great expanses of open space. Being absolutely still seemed to reconcile my entire life in that short span of time. I felt a deep peace that I have rarely felt since that time.

* The earliest instance of the full ‘be still, my beating heart’ appears in William Mountfort’s *Zelmane*, 1705: “Ha! hold my brain; be still my beating Heart.”

** One of them was my good friend, so I knew I was going to be fine. Much later I learned that he was captured by the Iraqis. Watching the MacNeil-Lehrer Report by chance, I discovered that he survived, but was so emaciated, it was only by the tagline with his name that I realized who he was.

February Birthdays

Stephen Cohen	4
Barbara Goldman	7
Paul Ekman	15
Walter John	16
Peter Balint	26

Employee of the Month—

Thelma Jensen, PCA



“If I could clone Thelma, I would,” exclaimed Liza Manuilova, Health Services Charge Nurse. “She is very responsible, professional, very kind. I tell her once and I know it will be done. More than that, if an area is not clean or is disorganized, Thelma, will sanitize, organize. With her, I know

that everything will be documented and done right.”

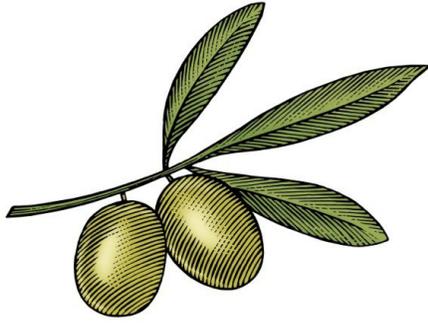
“I try to give residents a feeling that things will get done properly,” Thelma said. So much of the residents’ day depends on getting up, and getting ready for breakfast—starting the day right—getting them ready is an important part of my job.

“I like working at RGP,” explained Thelma. I spend a lot of time here; I care a lot about the residents and think about them. Even when I am on vacation, I think about them.”(As a testament to her sense of responsibility, when there was a temporary short-staffing issue, Thelma changed her vacation days and came in to work.) “I like to use my vacations to rest a little.... During the week, I get up at 4:30am to be at work at 6:30am; I commute from Pinole on BART. But it was more important for me that the residents be properly taken care of, so I decided to come to work instead of taking a vacation.”

“I like my job. I care about people and know that they need help. One day I will be old too and I will want to be well taken care of and have a place where things are organized and clean. It is important to me that everything is clean. And I have the habit to be very organized and orderly. It’s true—I will clean and organize the nursing office every day, and pick up paper from the floor. I want residents to feel good and know they are taken care of. I tell residents who don’t like taking a shower in the morning, “You will feel alive after a good shower”... and they do!

Year End Tax Letter

RGP prepares a year-end tax letter outlining Health Services proportion of RGP’s operating expenses; this information may be requested by tax preparers or accountants. If you would like to receive a copy of this letter, please contact Christine Leung (ChristineL@rgplaza.org) or Eric Luu (EricL@rgplaza.org).



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*Founded by Jewish Family and Children's
Services and Mount Zion Health Fund*

RHODA GOLDMAN PLAZA

The appeal of Rhoda Goldman Plaza is undeniable. Older adults and their families prefer our unsurpassed assisted living and memory care community enriched by culture and tradition.

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Our Terrace Memory program provides specialized memory care to residents through therapeutic activities that enhance physical, mental, and emotional health. Both privacy and companionship are afforded on our self-contained Terrace.

Living Well With Assistance is more than a promise, but a way of life for our like-minded residents and staff who share the vision of our upscale community.

Visit Rhoda Goldman Plaza today by calling 415.345.5072.

Founded by Jewish Family and Children's Services and Mt. Zion Health Fund in 2000, Rhoda Goldman Plaza (RGP) was established as a non-profit assisted living facility to provide a better and more secure life for older adults.