



## Meet Ellen Marram, DOROT's new Board President

*Ellen Marram shares thoughts about DOROT's work during the pandemic as well as how she spends her time during this period of uncertainty.*

### What impressed you the most about DOROT's response to COVID-19?

I was most impressed by the staff's unswerving focus on fulfilling DOROT's mission in a very different and difficult environment. Because of that passionate commitment, people sprang into action to serve seniors in new ways, modifying existing programs to fit the current realities and developing new offerings. Today, the DOROT team is stronger than ever. It's an organization with new experience, expertise and confidence in its ability to fulfill its mission.

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## DOROT's Response to COVID-19

This issue of the newsletter is full of what we've learned this year, from how to make powerful social connections for older adults via Zoom, to the importance of maintaining ritual and tradition – such as moving ahead with our successful Summer Teen and College Internship Programs and Rosh Hashanah Package Delivery. More than 250 volunteers made a contactless 9/11 Day of Service and Rosh Hashanah package delivery to eagerly awaiting seniors in September! We have made great strides adjusting to our new reality and modifying our programs all while the staff is working remotely. Home visits have become weekly calls, onsite classes have moved online and meals are being delivered to those who need them most. We received an outpouring of support from our volunteers. Our community is still connected and still growing.

# DOROT

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear DOROT Community,

How we navigate a crisis, like the pandemic, depends in large part on how we work and learn together. We accomplished all we did by learning from one another and having a laser focus on operational excellence.

As for leading in times of crisis, I am eternally grateful to DOROT'S lay leadership. Donna Jakobovitz served as DOROT's president for the past five years and she brought fresh ideas, a strong business mind and a passion for our mission. It was a real privilege to work with her.

Ellen Marram became DOROT's new Board president on July 1, 2020. A member of the DOROT Board of Directors for the past 12 years and former chair of the DOROT Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Ellen has been a great mentor to me. At the helm of Nabisco and Tropicana as CEO during her corporate years, she now serves on the boards of some of the most respected corporations and organizations in the country.

This issue of Generations showcases the resilience of the entire DOROT community. I hope you sense in it the strength of our commitment to the DOROT mission and organizational values.



**Mark L. Meridy**  
Executive Director



“  
I learned  
throughout  
these months  
that my  
colleagues at  
DOROT are  
some of the  
most creative  
and resilient  
people I could  
ever hope to  
work with.

”

# Volunteer Spotlight

## HPP Volunteers: Let's Get Cooking Again

by Marsha Cohen

As a committed DOROT volunteer, I have been thinking about what's missing from my life during the pandemic. DOROT has done a fantastic job moving many of its programs online and over the phone, but I have to admit I do miss the face-to-face, in-person connection.

For several years, I have been a member of the team of volunteers that prepares and serves meals at DOROT's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). Two Thursdays a month, pre-COVID, we would gather, tie on our aprons, and spend several hours slicing, dicing, chopping, stirring, baking and finally serving a multi-course dinner often to 30 people or more. Elazar Stephansky, Director of HPP Aftercare program, said our Thursday evening dinners offer critical social connections for the residents as well as the volunteers.

I wondered how the other volunteer cooks were coping without this vital connection. What follows are the responses of volunteers Suzanne Berman (**SB**), Amy Goldstein (**AG**), Susan Kurtz (**SK**) and Gloria Leschen (**GL**).

### How long have you been cooking at HPP and what do you miss the most about not being there?

**SK:** I started cooking about five years ago at DOROT. I miss the camaraderie of the other women. I miss doing something hands-on that helps other people. I miss the structure of having a place to be and something to do. I found that very satisfying.

**AG:** I knew about DOROT because I was a donor. I started cooking at HPP two years ago. I like to cook and I enjoy the people I cook with and I enjoy the people I serve.

“

**I miss just walking into the building. The receptionist knows my name. DOROT is like a family to me.**

”



### Have you continued to do volunteer work during the pandemic?

**SB:** I have had a regular Family Visiting friend for the past five years. She is now 101 and until the pandemic, we would go to museums or shopping. We still speak on the phone every week or two.

### Overall, how have you been coping these past few months?

**GL:** I recently attended my first DOROT Zoom program, a Chopped Cooking Class. I listen to concerts and lectures online but I don't find them a great substitute for the real thing (although a nice break from TV). As I have become more aware of what DOROT does, I see what an asset they are to the older community.

**SB:** Psychologically, I think I have come through the pandemic in good shape, but lately I am feeling more pessimistic about the world, especially the economy. I think DOROT has done an amazing job at remaining viable during this difficult time.

# Volunteers Stay Safe and Socially Distant During 9/11 Day of Service & Rosh Hashanah Package Delivery



Writing poetry together over Zoom brings smiles to all faces

To learn more about weekly programs email [DOROTprograms@dorotusa.org](mailto:DOROTprograms@dorotusa.org).

## DOROT's Virtual Chopped Cooking Challenge with Chef Smokey Joe

Chef Smokey Joe challenged volunteer and older adult chefs to come up with recipes of their own.



Riverdale  
Y Teens in  
Summer  
Internship  
Program  
wishing  
everyone a  
virtual Shabbat  
Shalom.



A big Thank  
You to all who  
participated in virtual  
intergenerational  
programming

To learn more call (212) 769-2850.

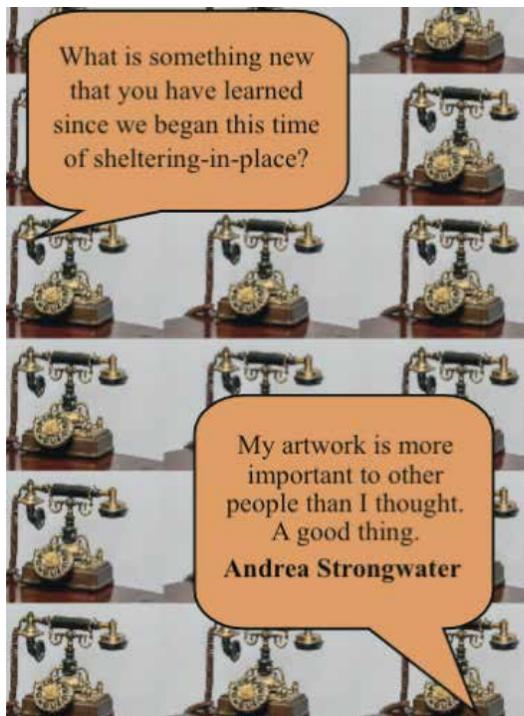
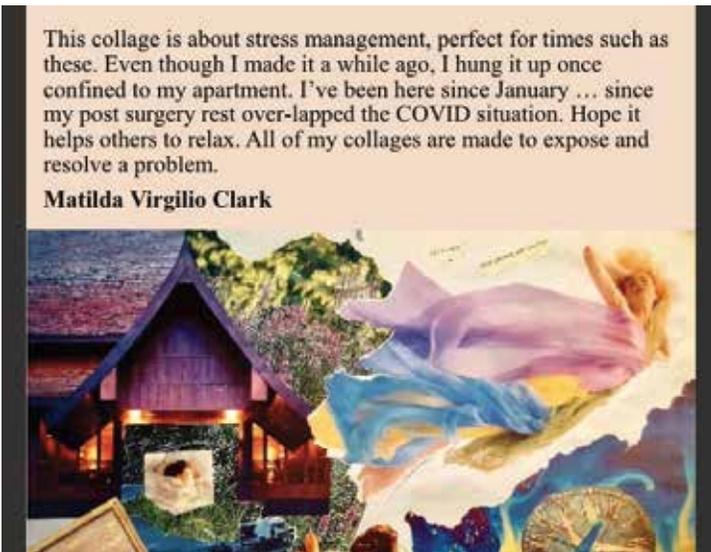
DOROT Westchester's  
popular online summer  
chess program was  
a hit with teens and  
older adults.

To learn more about Westchester  
programming call (914) 485-8354.



## Reflecting & Remembering During COVID-19

DOROT's Lasting Impressions team asked seniors to reflect on their experience during the pandemic and compiled the collection of essays, poetry and art in a self-published Zine. DOROT summer college intern Marion Wolloch spearheaded the project, Reflecting & Remembering During Covid-19.

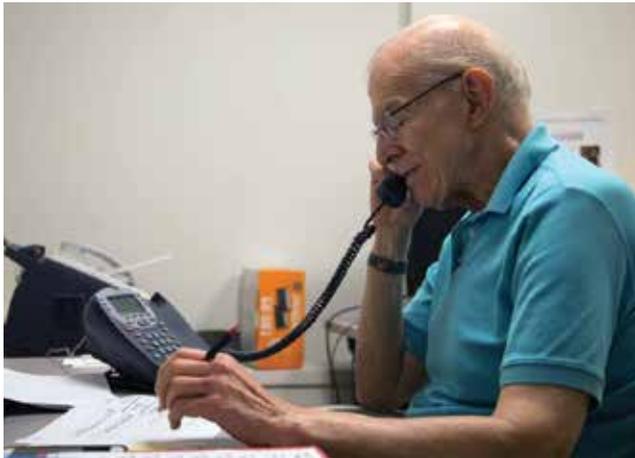


Millions of viewers shared in the intergenerational friendships of DOROT Friendly Visiting pair Ben Goldstein and Robert Brajer on CNN and of Summer Teen Internship Program's Ted Comet and Olliver Hollman, on Now This News. DOROT's work was also featured in recent months in The Times of Israel, The New York Jewish Week, Gothamist and on Spectrum News LA, MSNBC and NY1.



## A Lasting Gift to DOROT

Eleven years ago, post-retirement, Harold Forbes decided to put his time and energy into DOROT. Like many older adult volunteers who find community here, he's never looked back.



“  
**I don't know anyone who doesn't smile (at DOROT).**  
”

Harold is the friendly voice on the phone to adults in the Kosher Meals at Home (KMH) program, sharing the weekly menu, taking orders and checking in. He's the embodiment of personalized service offered by KMH, which now, during COVID-19, provides more than 900 meals a week to more than 200 people who depend on them. On any given day, one might also find Harold attending remote Onsite@Home programs.

Seeing firsthand the impact that DOROT has on people's lives, he made another important DOROT-related decision. He became a monthly donor and then went one step further and left a bequest to DOROT in his will. That makes Harold a DOROT trifecta: donor, active program participant and volunteer.

*To learn more about giving options contact Mallory King, Director of Development, [mking@dorotusa.org](mailto:mking@dorotusa.org)*

## Meet Ellen Marram...

*continued from page one*

**What role does resilience play in DOROT's ability to navigate this crisis?**

Resilience is the strength and ability to persevere and adapt to new circumstances.

“  
**There's no question that the DOROT team is a model of resilience!**”

**You have served on numerous corporate and non-profit boards. What interests you most about DOROT?**

Two things are important to me when I consider any board – the institution's mission must be something that resonates with me, and that I believe I will be able to contribute.

I was first attracted to DOROT because it provides critical services to people in my neighborhood and I've been awed by DOROT's amazing volunteers of all ages. Over the years, I've seen the DOROT staff's relentless commitment to serving seniors as well as the organization serving as a model across the country.

**What do you see as DOROT's priorities in the coming months?**

DOROT's priority will be to serve older adults well and safely. In the months ahead, circumstances will continue to evolve and the team will be focused on evolving its programs and integrating the learning of the past months as it plans future activities and outreach. Support for DOROT will be more important than ever and telling our success story to current and potential donors will be critical.

**How did you personally manage through this pandemic? What strategies worked best for you?**

I've stayed in contact with family and friends, both virtually and by phone. I read a lot for pleasure. The biggest change is that, like many New Yorkers, my husband and I rarely cooked before the pandemic. Now we share the cooking and, in the past six months, have cooked more meals than in our past forty years together!



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## DOROT Generations

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A copy of DOROT's most recent financial report may be obtained through the Office of the State Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271, 212-416-8000. It is also available on DOROT's website, [www.dorotusa.org](http://www.dorotusa.org).

## Ways to Give

**DOROT's Generations Society** is built on the generosity of compassionate individuals. A planned gift ensures that your support will make a real difference for the older adults in our community. Consider these three simple ways to support DOROT through your long-range financial planning.

1. **THROUGH YOUR WILL:** Include DOROT in your will or living trust.
2. **THROUGH YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN:** Name DOROT as a beneficiary.
3. **THROUGH YOUR LIFE INSURANCE:** Designate DOROT as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy.

*To discuss any of these options and to learn how to join DOROT's Generations Society contact Mallory King, Director of Development, [mking@dorotusa.org](mailto:mking@dorotusa.org)*

**A one-time or monthly donation can make all the difference. Please consider a donation to DOROT today.**

Help us to reach thousands of seniors during the COVID-19 emergency, who now more than ever need our services. Give today!

[dorotusa.org/donate](http://dorotusa.org/donate)