

# the art of living

SPRING 2018



## Parkinson's Won't Keep Kingsley Manor Stand-Up Comedian Down

"Did you hear the one about the man who robbed the bank in a wheel chair? He made an easy escape because the security guard jumped up to hold the door open for him."

From anecdotes about bank robbers who slide past bank security in their wheelchairs to observations on by-stander's reactions when one takes an unexpected fall, comedian and Kingsley Manor resident Mark Siegel has an unusual source for much of his stand-up routine: his Parkinson's disease.

"I figured if I'm going to get on the stage people are going to wonder why I'm talking softly and slurring my words," Mark said. "I decided I'd talk about the Parkinson's at the beginning and see

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## Make the Move to Kingsley Manor Today and Save!

Spring is a time of renewal. Our rose garden will soon be in full bloom! Now is the perfect time to make the move to Kingsley Manor an oasis in the heart of the city. We have a limited number of accommodations available and if you reserve one when you visit we will waive your application fee upon move-in, a savings of \$300. Call 323-661-1128 for details. Or you can join our VIP wait list for the specific accommodation you desire. Don't wait. This offer expires April 30, 2019.



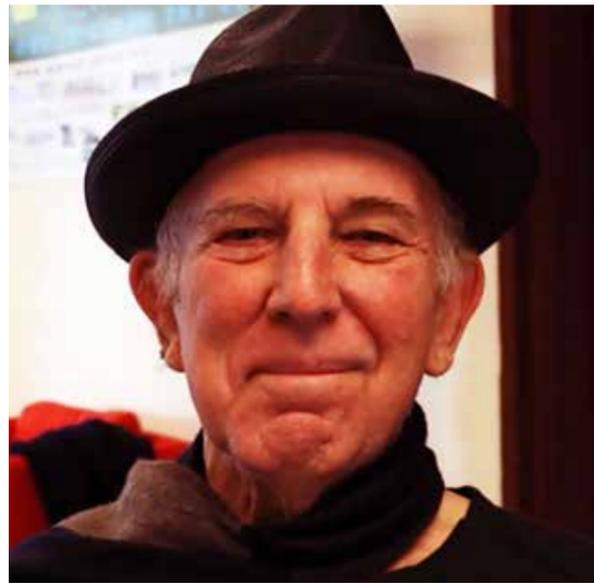
## Lewis MacAdams: Always Searching for the Impossible

"If it's not impossible, I'm not interested."

It's a phrase that Lewis MacAdams, poet, journalist, filmmaker and activist has become known for over the years. Often repeated by friends it is now forever etched in the base of a seven foot sandstone sculpture of him overlooking the Los Angeles River - his muse and mission for over 40 years.

Lewis' relationship with the LA River dates back to 1985 when an impromptu stroll along its banks led to a vision: that the concrete entombed waterway could once again become a flourishing oasis for wildlife and recreation.

"Essentially, I asked the river for permission to speak for it in the human realm and the river didn't say no," explained Lewis.



co-directed documentaries and has authored dozens of magazine articles and books. He is currently 200 pages into a memoir project, *Poetry and Politics*. At Kingsley, a community that attracts many artists, intellectuals and like-minded lovers of the "impossible,"

## Kingsley Manor Residents Tutor Local Elementary School Students

"Hi Miss Roberta," exclaims an enthusiastic 5-year-old, arms outstretched for a hug. "I'm glad you're here."

The child, Amber, a kindergarten student at Kingsley Elementary school in Los Angeles, is ready for an exciting morning with her volunteer tutor, Kingsley Manor resident Roberta Siegel.

"I enjoy being with the children and I think they enjoy being with me," said Roberta, a retired high school teacher, who volunteers at Kingsley Elementary school helping children K through 3 with math, English and art. "It's been my first experience with elementary school kids but I love it. Once a teacher, always a teacher." Roberta is one of five Kingsley residents who volunteer their time each Thursday at the elementary school across the street from the retirement community. Most of the volunteers are retired teachers who continue to be enthusiastic about learning.

The tutoring partnership between Kingsley and Kingsley began in September, 2017. For years, Kingsley Elementary students would visit the retirement community around Easter, Christmas and Halloween and participate in games, events and crafts.

"Residents really enjoyed the intergenerational interaction and they were getting to know the students and teachers," said Kingsley Manor Life Enrichment Director Viktoria Selmsler. "A few of



Kingsley Manor resident Roberta Siegel helps kindergarten students with their reading skills using a word game.

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Since then, *Friends of the River*, an organization he co-founded, has made significant strides toward returning the river back to a more natural state.

"An unexpected pleasure has come to me knowing just how many people have responded over the years," Lewis said. Last year *Friends of the River* mobilized 10,000 volunteers to help remove 100 tons of trash. Along the way he's penned dozens of books of poetry,

he's found many kindred spirits, including a few fellow river enthusiasts, who share his desire to connect regularly with the thriving metropolis all around.

His favorite spot is Kingsley's rooftop deck which he visits on a daily basis to take in its expansive view of the city, Hollywood Hills and surrounding attractions. Like the river, his view reveals itself slightly every day: magnificent, impossible and ever inspiring.

the residents came to me and asked if they could volunteer at the school as tutors. I thought it was a great idea."

Viktoria worked with Principal Karina Salazar to make it happen. Every Thursday morning, Kingsley Manor drives residents to the school at 8:30 a.m. and picks them up at 11 a.m.

"I feel so fortunate to be able to do this," said Kingsley resident Helen Thomson, a 40-year veteran teacher who is bilingual in Spanish and English. "The school is very well organized and I'm glad I can help."

"I like Miss Roberta," said Sophia, a 5-year old who is working with her tutor on a word game. "She makes me laugh and she wears pretty bracelets."

Teachers also appreciate the classroom help.

"The kids love Kingsley volunteers," said Kindergarten teacher Eddy Pozuelos. "Some of my students need one-on-one or small group support and volunteers like Ms. Helen provide that assistance."

"Opportunities like this are part of Kingsley Manor's life enrichment program," Viktoria said. "We want our residents to experience what is meaningful to them."

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where it goes. I think I got a good response." Let it never be said that Mark lets his Parkinson's get in the way of good "shtick."

After a long career as a communication officer for a labor union, he decided to pursue his childhood dream: comedy. "It's not that hard," he said. "There's little risk involved other than a little humiliation." So far he's performed for a year and a half at L.A clubs and, of course, Kingsley Manor.

"He gets some good laughs," said Kingsley Manor's Life Enrichment Director Viktoria Selmsler. "He's not afraid to put himself out there."

Mark chose Kingsley partly for its great location. He loves having ready access to all that the city has to offer, including the local comedy clubs.

"Of my closest friends, one's a dancer, one is a poet and another is in publishing. They give me the extra push to do something positive and creative," he explained.

He encourages others with Parkinson's to explore the things that interest them. "There's a resiliency if you don't give into the disease," Mark said.

In addition to participating in regular dance and exercise classes offered at Kingsley, Mark runs a political discussion group and is very involved in the Parkinson's community.

And just in case you were wondering ... "After the robber escaped from the bank, a police helicopter spotted his wheelchair abandoned in an empty lot. He figured he could elude police by switching wheelchairs," Mark quipped.

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