

By Eileen Fay

It is easy to assume that people over 60 are set in their ways and thus, less likely to make drastic changes in their lives. While this model may be true of some senior citizens, it is certainly not without exception. In fact, some persons of a certain age delight in expanding their horizons and trying new things.

One such person is Rosalyn Cherry, now happily residing in New Paltz after upping stakes in NYC to relocate to Ulster County in 2007. As Cherry put it, she traded a 31-year old ten-room apartment on the upper west side of Manhattan overlooking the Hudson River for a one-bedroom apartment in New Paltz overlooking the Shawangunk Ridge, and she's glad she did it. She feels that she has "de-cluttered" her life.

"Because I lived in a big apartment with lots of closets, I had a lot of stuff. Now I live in one-seventh of the space and I really like 'living smaller.'"

Living smaller and getting rid of life's clutter are not only

New Horizons

New Paltz senior Rosalyn Cherry downsized her 'cluttered' life... then wrote a book about it.

a way of life, but also the theme of Cherry's book, *be clutter FREE: Sorting Made Simple*. She wrote it after a lifetime of what might be called organizational experience.

Cherry had many careers over the years, including teaching math and computer consulting, and was able to use skills from her different jobs as she wrote her book. As a computer programmer, practice with flow-charting every step of a business application enabled her to use flow-charts to help in writing her book.

"I flow-charted every step you need to take when you get rid of clutter. To make it easy, I wanted the most minute steps." Conciseness was her watchword. "At first, my flow chart was too wordy, so I made many designs until I got it as succinct and basic as possible."

Basically, she coaches people to let go of anything that is holding them back. And true to her book's theme, it is itself de-cluttered. While most self-help books are 200-300 pages, hers is an easy-to-use 55 pages. She adds that it has big print and lots of white space on each page. It is even kid-friendly.

Cherry says she wanted to empower



Rosalyn Cherry "de-cluttered" her life. Her story, and advice for others (right), is available at most bookstores.

people with her book, so they can go through the de-cluttering process on their own, eventually. She gave them guidelines, with small steps that take only fifteen minutes here and there as they build up the strength to do more. "I call it building your de-clutter muscle," she explained. "You toss away some unnecessary stuff, give some away – there are a lot of options. You can't do it all at once. Give yourself a limit so it isn't too overwhelming."

It occurred to Cherry that people tend to slack off on an

emotionally tied to our clutter," she noted. "So the book replaces me as the 'trainer.'" One chapter is called, "Stay Engaged." It shows how to replace counter-productive self-talk with kinder words to inspire taking action and moving forward.

Ever the activist, Cherry threw herself into local life. "I decided I was going to learn how New Paltz worked. I went to everything, Town Board and Village Trustee meetings, events on campus, and joined the Lifetime Learning Institute. I even accessed online the calendars of events and went to meetings of many organizations at the town and village halls."

She got involved in the Village and Town Transportation Implementation Committee, who successfully established the Loop bus that goes through the SUNY campus and the village 5 days a week. Cherry also created a video about the Loop to get people who normally don't use buses to leave their cars at home. "Using the bus reduces our carbon footprint," she pointed out. She is pleased to see that students now often use it for quick local trips, too.

Cherry appreciates that many area residents are active in political issues. One cause near to her heart is being part of local groups starting a grass roots movement to mitigate and overturn the recent Supreme

Court decision that corporations have the same rights as people. She challenges herself to find ways to motivate others to get involved with quality-of-life issues.

About her new life in New Paltz, Cherry remains delighted that she found her natural niche. "I can't think of a more wonderful place to be," she

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



exercise regimen when their personal trainer is no longer with them, so she designed her book to keep readers on track. "We get

Life de-cluttered

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

enthused. "There are some amazing people here. I have had experiences I would have never had elsewhere, including finding a design company for my book and a publisher who got me into book stores and libraries."

Giving up her spacious NYC home for a cozy space in New Paltz has shown Cherry that a simpler life can be more satisfying. She is happy to share this philosophy with readers of her book. Meanwhile, retirement, for this savvy senior, continues to be a many-splendored adventure.

Anyone who'd like to de-clutter their life can find an award winning how-to video at www.beclutterfreebook.com