

The Voice of the West Village

WestView News

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Murder on Christopher Street

By Roger Paradiso & Anthony Paradiso

Dashawn Bush, 36, was murdered on Christopher St. in the West Village at around 4.20am on August 17th. His lifeless body lay out on the sidewalk in front of the Hudson Bagel shop on Christopher Street when police came upon the scene.

Bush was taken to the Lenox Health Complex but later died from his injuries, authorities shared.

"I'm still shocked," said Shamel Bush, Dashawn's brother. He told the *Daily News* on Saturday, "I'm still going in and out of crying. I can't believe it, it's just disbelief."

Bush had recently been hired at Amazon.

Some reports say he had been out with a woman and a friend at the time of the incident, authorities shared.

The assailant, thought to be a friend of Bush's according to his sister (*New York*



THE LOCATION ON CHRISTOPHER STREET, just off of 7th Ave., where Dashawn Bush was murdered at approximately 4:20 am on August 17th. Photo by Bob Cooley.

Post), fled from the scene and is still being sought after by police.

George Capsis, publisher of *WestView News* says: "I am in shock. This is normally

a very peaceful neighborhood."

The last murder recorded in the West Village was on New Year's Eve, 2019 when Jonathan Berlin, 62, was fatally shot in the chest at 110 Bedford Street. Police say Berlin may have been murdered during a drug deal gone wrong.

The *West Village Patch* has reported several disturbing incidents in recent months. There was a stabbing of a 52-year-old victim recently at 222 West 14th Street. And there have been several burglaries reported by the *Patch* recently in the West Village.

Speaking to local shop owners who requested anonymity, we heard that they thought the Village was not as safe as it was before the Pandemic and lock down. Many shop owners are closing their doors early at six o'clock because there is a lot of fighting and drug usage by homeless people and drifters who roam the Village. Many have been seen defecating and urinating on the streets.

WestView News will continue monitoring this sudden crime surge in the West Village.

Goodnight Newsroom

The office where the *New York Daily News* Produced Itself Has Permanently Closed After 101 years

By Amanda Mikelberg

I'd been given a company thermos, when I started as an overnight web producer in the *New York Daily News* newsroom at 4 New York Plaza in 2011, and it's now an artifact from a lost world.

My interview for the position had taken place at the newspaper's headquarters on West 33rd Street; they were in the process of moving from the congested midtown space into an open-concept office, furnished for the frontlines of the era's "digital first" initiative. The new downtown place, where I'd slung said coffee mug to stay alert until 4 am, was as big as a football field and about as competitive an arena. Around sundown, I would land at the South Ferry subway station, Water Street wind driving at my back,

to board the *Daily News* battleship.

Coincidentally, the day my *Daily News* mug surfaced in my parents' Isaias-visited basement, was the day I learned that their flagship newsroom had sunk. On August 12, Tribune Publishing, the owners since 2017, announced that the *News*' newsroom was permanently closed, and that its journalists would carry on remotely until further notice. The newsrooms of several other Tribune titles, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Pennsylvania's Morning Call*, and *Maryland's Capital Gazette* and *Carroll County Times*, would also cease to exist. Yet, the *Baltimore Sun* office as well as the *Chicago Tribune* at the publishers' headquarters remain open, belying the suggestion that a newsroom isn't possible to have right now. Pandemic is the excuse, but cost-cutting is

the reason.

At the time of my tenure, the vigorous push to grow the *New York Daily News* brand online was succeeding at making a name for itself with an internet audience, with a strategy to dominate the Google News algorithm. That effort aside, it was the newspaper's reputation fortified since 1919 that gave the *News* its potential to scale; respectful of this, the digital initiative sought to preserve the traditions of the print institution for productive coexistence. Maintaining a physical infrastructure to support a heroic news operation was as much of a priority in the digital expansion as big monitors and the Poloply web content management system.

The imposing infrastructures that housed

continued on page 8



ORIGINAL RENDERING OF THE DAILY NEWS BUILDING at 220 East 42nd St., Hugh Ferriss, 1930.



Save WestView

Contribute to our crowdfunding campaign to keep delivery of the print edition alive!

SEE PAGE 36



Cross Country

Traveling via motorcycle from California to New York, Bob Kroll documents his observations along the way.

SEE PAGE 11



9/11 Concert

A candlelight concert in memoriam of 9/11 live from St. Johns in the Village. September 11 at 5 pm.

SEE PAGE 33 FOR DETAILS

WestView

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WestViews

Correspondence, Commentary, Corrections

WestView News Fighting the Good Fight!

Dear George,
So when your guy approached me about an ad in your paper for my new gallery, I was a little reluctant. I hate to spend \$ unless it is on beer, or donating to progressive political candidates.

But when I realized I had gone to PS 41 with your son Doric, I said why not support a local business (and a newspaper at that!).

The ad looked great, and a few copies of the July edition were out and available to guests at my gallery, Art of Our Century, on 14th St.

Then, to my surprise, three separate visitors to the gallery commented to me about the paper they had picked up on my table. "This is pretty good," was the consensus. All then lamented the end of the *Village Voice*, and the total bastardization of *The Villager* by its new owner.

Not everyone who spoke to me agreed with every point of view in every article in your paper, but that is what makes newspapers great—spurring conversation, thought and community involvement. With newspapers dying off at an alarming rate, it is comforting that the Village has at least one local outlet still fighting the good fight, informing people, entertaining people, and bucking the awful trend of media consolidation and cutbacks. Keep it up. And maybe I'll see you up at the gallery sometime soon.

Voluntarily, and warmly,
Timothy McDarragh

Police Parking Attendants?



Why have cops from the 6th Precinct become the city's highest paid parking lot attendants this summer?

While the idea that Black Lives Matter made many in the NYPD retort with "Blue Lives Matter," the 6th Precinct's response to this summer's protests seems to be "Parking Spaces Matter." Soon after the protests over police brutality against people of color began, the 6th Precinct closed off both Charles St. and W. 10th St. between Bleeker and Hudson to all pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The important crosstown bus route along W. 10th St. has been re-opened but Charles St. remains closed to traffic, with cops guarding the barricades night and day. These blue uniformed attendants violate the city law that forbids

cars from idling for more than three minutes at a time by continuously running the engine of their Smart police car so its air conditioner can keep them cool while they peruse their phones.

Inside the precinct's new lot, and parked on the sidewalks, are the private cars of officers and various NYPD vehicles, most of which are decorated with three words: "Courtesy," "Professionalism," "Respect." The irony of this situation surely must be lost on the 6th Precinct, which has employed uncourteous, unprofessional, and disrespectful actions toward its West Village neighbors in its quest for easy parking.

It came as no surprise when the cops' union, the PBA, recently endorsed for re-election as president a racist, ignorant, sociopath. What is surprising, however, is that our local politicians have not raised any objections to the 6th Precinct annexing an entire block in our neighborhood for its personal use. What's going on?

—Charley McKenna

Buy Stamps

To the Editor:

Walking down Hudson Street the other day, I saw a bunch of stamps taped up to a store window. Underneath were the hashtags #buystamps and #savetheusps. With what's going on with the Post Office, this sounded like a good idea. I went into the post office on Hudson and bought 100 first class everything stamps and made a point of telling the worker that I wouldn't need the stamps until Christmas but I thought I should buy them "considering everything that's happening." He appreciated and nodded.

When I got home, I read a letter to the editor of the *NY Times* that to save the Post Office we should buy stamps. Is this becoming a movement? Buying lots of stamps won't dig the PO out of the hole it's in but maybe this can spread throughout the country, including the Republican states. If their own constituents are being screwed by the sabotage of the PO and complain to their elected officials then maybe the spineless Republican enablers in the Congress will actually do something about it. We can only hope. Buy stamps.

—Alec Pruchnicki

Hagia Sophia

I have enjoyed your *WestView News* for a number of years having lived in the west village for over 20 years and am now living in Chelsea. The several articles which you added in the August issue on Hagia Sophia were wonderful! I have always wanted to see this church, but have more frequently gone to other parts of Europe because of my interest in pipe organs. Now such a visit is becoming impossible as my age becomes 90 in September and I am not traveling as

I once did. Many Thanks for an interesting newspaper.

—Martin

To the Editor:

I've enjoyed the articles on the Hagia Sophia.

I used to have a big picture book on this building, part of a series on beautiful buildings—put out by either Time-Life or *Newsweek*. One of the things I noticed in the interior photos, and I see it in the *WestView* photo, too, is that those huge circular placards in Arabic with Muslim messages violate the gorgeous lines of the architecture. A real mosque would never have that, and there's much great Muslim architecture too, of course.

As I recall from my reading, someone who wasn't even Muslim put up those placards. They were left there when the building became a museum. They should be removed, no matter how the future of the building turns out to be.

A friend has written me that museums have never caused wars, but religions have. My response is that religions get their power by teaching love and kindness, each in a particularly inspiring way. No museum, which nonetheless is often full of great religious art, ever has that power or life-changing effect. It's only when religious power becomes corrupted, and people loyal to one religion decide to be intolerant of other religions, that war takes place. No true religion teaches war, but the opposite, and any religious war violates those principles that made the religion so loved in the first place.

—Carol Yost

I'll write this like I feel it. First, Hagia Sophia, built by Christians, was in Christian hands for 916 years, according to my calculations. Then, it was a mosque for 481 years. After that, it was a museum "established in 1935," as you indicated, for 85 years. Now, the Turkish hierarchy has switched gears to its being a mosque, once again.

I feel that this latest metamorphosis by the Turkish government is clearly bellicose saber-rattling directed at Christians, who might be erroneously considered "soft targets" because of some well developed concepts, like "Love your neighbor like yourself."

I call upon President Erdogan and government to make Hagia Sophia once again a museum for all peoples, and not to just give that lip service.

—John F. Early

Mark That Katie Keith!

Thank you for your article. For me, there was no skimming over sentences; my eyes were glued to each sentence. Nothing coy or ego driven about this piece. Only straight-on observation of Life's circumstance. Mark that Brilliant.

—Max

IN MEMORIAM



MIA SAYS: The better you listen the better your answer. Photo by Dusty Berke.

Remembering Mia



Photo courtesy of Tom Kulaga.

Dear Liza,
It is a sad day for the Village.

Mia belongs to the ages now.
But she continues to inspire us ... see her picture in our bedroom mirror.
With sadness and sympathy,

—Tom

Mr Capsis:
Would you be so kind as to pass along our sympathy to Ms. Whiting for the loss of her beloved dog, who was also no doubt, a community friend to many. We have enjoyed Mia's presence in the newspaper. She had many admirers and was quite the charmer. Wise, too.

Thank you. MLF

Flood Gates

Dear Editors,
Malcolm Bowman's thoughtful advocacy of flood gates stretched across New York harbor between Queens and New Jersey fails to address several essential corollary impacts on the lands flanking the gates.

These shoulders, well over 50 feet high and several miles long, would require millions of yards of fill to be trucked over local roads in suburban communities. The Sandy Hook National Seashore, a federally protected wildlife sanctuary where he and I cannot even walk, would be buried in possibly contaminated landfill. On top of that, this enormously expensive artificial barrier may leak at the edges along the Jersey Shore, allowing flood water to move up through Barnegat Bay into the harbor. Many houses along the shore were destroyed by the Hurricane Sandy tidal surge. The levees along the Jersey coast had been left with tunnels to allow parking on the beaches.

Preparing for the next tidal surge is important and I'm glad that Malcom Bowman is giving this challenge such thoughtful attention, but our approach as a city should be resilient, not defensive. For ex-

ample the city has proposed artificial oyster reefs at the foot of Manhattan to absorb the brunt of the storm.

Building a ten foot high berm around lower Manhattan blocking views of the harbor or a tall concrete wall around East River Park are not answers either. The city has carefully mapped the shorelines subject to flooding. Anyone who builds in those fragile zones has to either flood proof their facilities or build in such a way that the facilities can be dried and reused.

When the recreation piers along Hudson River Park emerged from the high tides of Sandy, some, because of poorly thought-out original construction, required rebuilding, while others did not. There were lessons to be learned here. We have to think long term and build resiliently. We will then have a more beautiful and affordable community.

—Barry Benepe



TWIN TOWERS OF LIGHT brighten the sky as the new WTC 1 was under construction in remembrance of the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001. After a recent reversal, the lights will be visible again this year. Photo by Bob Cooley.



THE FINAL PHASE of building Liberty Park as seen from the 92nd floor of the WTC construction site. Photo by Bob Cooley.

Memories of 9/11

By Toby Bellin

Tuesday, September 11, 2001 before 9 AM on the crosstown bus on my way to work. Passing Fifth Avenue, I see a few people standing in the street looking up at the World Trade Center towers. I see black smoke rising from the top of one of the towers. That's an awful place for a fire. How will the fire department be able to reach up there? At Fourth Avenue at the New York University registration office, Jenny tells me excitedly that a plane has crashed into the World Trade Center. A radio is on and we hear a second plane has crashed into the towers. The city has been attacked. By 9:20 Mayor Giuliani has shut down all bridges and tunnels into the city. Linda grabs her coat, rushes out to her daughter's school. How will people get home to Brooklyn and the other boroughs? I live on W. 15th St. in walking distance. The office is emptied out, the towers have collapsed, the city is in lockdown and in a crisis.

At home I find my Saint Vincent's Hospital volunteer ID, fasten it to a long sleeved white shirt. Out on 7th Avenue there is a human barricade: city police, state police and national guard block anyone from crossing 14th St. I'm passed through and walk the three blocks to the hospital. Inside a nurse meets me. Can I help you? "I'm here to donate blood." "Follow me." We are in a cafeteria, tables pushed aside. She comes back. "No donors are needed now. Listen at home for radio or TV announcements calling for volunteers."

Exiting onto 12th St., I see a woman sitting at a table. Many people have come to volunteer. She writes as she asks "Name, any medical or construction experience, phone number or contact information." "Do you need any help?" She pushes a chair towards me, slides over a pad of paper and pencil. A couple says we have an apartment across the street for anyone working at the hospital. Two young girls, students, want to help.

I say they're too young to donate blood and have no medical experience. One insists, "I'll do anything!" Time passes. Once I glance over to see flatbed trucks with heavy equipment rumbling down 7th Avenue. At the table five student nurses have arrived from Baltimore. A doctor in an open white shirt says he's an ophthalmologist, shows me a small case of instruments. He says he's an ER doctor at Saint Vincent's. "Put my name down anyway." A man announces he has just come from Canada and can set up a field kitchen to feed thousands. I ask how he can be reached. Puzzled, he says he came directly without plans. "Contact us again when you have a place to stay." A distraught young woman says she has walked from one hospital to another looking for her sister Victoria who works at the World Trade Center.

It is early evening; fewer people are coming. I stand and lead the woman to a small chair. She sits on one half indicating for me to share. To keep from sliding off, I try putting my arm on the back of the chair, ending by putting my arm around her shoulders. She keeps repeating, "I should be processing this." I wonder if she's a social worker. By arrangement, another sister comes to meet her here. Standing, "Take care of her," I say and go home.

At my building the Red Cross has posted a flyer offering help to anyone who needs it. There's a lighted candle at the top of the stairs. In my apartment there are messages on the answering machine. I change the outgoing one to say there's no phone service now for outgoing calls but I'll call as soon as I can. I put on the TV. Something is wrong with the picture. I sit on the edge of my bed in semi darkness listening to the news of the day.

Note: Victoria 31, mother of two young children, died September 11 in the North Tower.

Veteran State Assembly Member Faces Newbie Challenger

By Frank Quinn

Deborah Glick, the veteran Democratic state assembly member representing District 66, which includes Greenwich Village, Soho, and Tribeca, is facing a challenger in the upcoming November election. Tamara Lashchik, a longtime local resident, is the Republican candidate seeking the assembly seat Ms. Glick has held for nearly 30 years.

Ms. Lashchik agreed to be interviewed for this article, but Ms. Glick responded via her staff that she was unavailable for an interview due to numerous scheduling conflicts. *WestView News* has invited both candidates to join us for a recorded debate which we will present at www.westviewnews.org. Please see our October edition for further details.

Sixty-five percent of voters in District 66 are registered Democrats, with only 10 percent registered as Republican and 22 percent registered as unaffiliated. Like much of the country, election turnout in the district is significantly greater during presidential cycles, with the largest turnout in recent years being in 2008 when Barack Obama defeated John McCain. 2016 had considerably less voter turnout when Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton, but still greater than in non-presidential cycles. Preliminary results in this year's presidential primary suggest turnout this November could rival that of 2008 despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

Ms. Glick has a formidable electoral history, decisively beating her challengers in both primary and general elections. She last faced a Republican challenger in 2010 when she won with 80 percent of the vote. Her strongest opponent was 2018 Working Families Party candidate Cynthia Nixon who, surprisingly, released a statement before the election



THE CHALLENGER: Tamara Lashchik. Photo courtesy tamaraforny.com.



THE INCUMBENT: Deborah Glick. Photo courtesy deborahglick.com.

stating "please do NOT vote for me, vote for Deborah Glick." Nixon had recently lost to Andrew Cuomo in the Democratic primary for Governor, and for legal reasons reluctantly ran against Glick in the general election as the only way to get off the gubernatorial line. Interestingly, Nixon's challenge resulted in a larger than normal voter turnout in the district during a non-presidential cycle.

Tamara Lashchik has never run for public office. She is entering the race after a 26-year career on Wall Street and, more recently, establishing a professional coaching business. Born in the East Village, with family still living there, Ms. Lashchik vividly describes her childhood experience when her parents moved to New Jersey to escape the decline of their neighborhood in the 1970s. Considering the current turmoil in the city, including violence and looting near her Soho residence, she bemoans policies she believes are not serving residents but resulting in another mass exodus instead. She stated, "I'm upset with how politicized everything has become,

and policies being made around political agendas. I'm skeptical about how information is represented and open to differences of opinion, and plan to address issues based on my conscience and what I think is right for my constituents. I welcome differences of opinion because diversity of thought leads to the greatest innovation. And after a long career in a tough industry I have a sense of self and don't think I can be rolled over."

Ms. Lashchik believes the economic impact related to the pandemic will be permanent, and is anticipating a complete rebuilding of the New York economy. She thinks the legislature should focus on incentives that will attract businesses to New York and wants the state to pick industry sectors for special consideration. One such target she recommends is robotics. "The only way we can attract manufacturing back to the US from China is if we are further along in robotics, and this sector could benefit both New York City and the larger state. Tech talent available in NYC

will be attractive to the industry, with opportunities to create automated manufacturing plants statewide." Other sectors she believes would be wise to pursue include biotech and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Homelessness and mental illness are problems District 66 residents confront on a daily basis, and Ms. Lashchik believes the legislature should be lobbying the federal government to adopt a national strategy to confront these issues, then coordinate solutions at the state and local level. Through her coaching business she sees how pandemic-related isolation causes stress-related problems like depression and addiction relapse, and thinks those suffering with mental illness are similarly impacted but likely with more serious consequences. She considers problems like school shootings and homelessness to be aspects of a national mental health crisis, and she's extremely upset with the expensive failure of the ThriveNYC program. "I remember as a little girl, people urinating and worse in front of our building and my mother having to confront them in front of me. Now it seems like that period is returning. And while I still feel relatively safe on the street, I'm concerned that our mentally ill population is becoming more aggressive. Mental health problems show up in many different forms, and it's a problem that is affecting our entire country."

When asked about the city's request for the legislature to allow it to borrow money for operating expenses, Ms. Lashchik expressed a lack of confidence in the current administration's decision-making process. "We can't let the lights go out, but I could only be supportive if there is responsible oversight. We need to understand what incentives are being developed to solve systematic over-spending."

Manhattan's Vacancy Rate Soars *How Long Will It Be Before Renters Return?*

By Anthony Paradiso

Just days before the *WestView News* September deadline, I realized I could write about the decrease in residential rents. How would I be able to get quotes? I started calling the real estate agencies that operate in the West Village and telling them I was looking to rent an apartment. Douglas Elliman answered my call and put me in touch with an agent. I asked the realtor how rents have changed over the last five months in the West Village. The realtor texted me this: "The West Village has been somewhat protected because it is such a desirable neighborhood," and added that rents have decreased by "10% or 15 %."

Because this quote was all I was able to get out of the realtor, I wanted to see what I could learn on my own. So, I searched

"renting apartments in NYC." I scrolled down the page until I saw two tweets that linked to two stories written about the drop in rents. One was from the *New York Times*, which had the headline "Manhattan Vacancy Rates Climb, and Rents Drop 10%," while the second linked to an article in the *Daily Mail*, titled "Number of Vacant Rental Apartments in New York Surges to its Highest Point on Record and Rents Drop 10% as Residents Keep Fleeing the City Amid Crime and COVID Nightmare."

I guess a story just doesn't seem real until the *Times* smacks you in the face with it. Anyone knows that renters have left the city due to COVID-19. However, this disturbing trend was highlighted in the article, which said that there were "more than 67,300 units available in July across the city, according to *Street Easy*, the most

apartments available in any month since the listing started tracking rental inventory in 2010."

Street Easy is a popular listing site that makes it easy for people to go online and see what apartments are available to buy or rent. I went to the site and searched for rentals under \$5,000 in the West Village and Greenwich Village. Over a thousand results popped up, including a one-bedroom apartment at 16-18 Charles Street. In May, it had been listed for \$3,850, but as of August 20th its price had dropped almost 14.5 percent to \$3,295.

Then, I found a one-bedroom at 60 East 8th Street that had dropped 16.6% from April to July. The apartment's location was Georgetown Plaza on 8th Street between Broadway and Mercer Street. If it was so desirable, people would be willing to pay the \$5,400 it was going for in April, right?

Well not exactly. After looking through the apartment's price history I found that, since June, the realtor had lowered the price seven times and was renting it for \$4,500, as of August 20th.

In the *Times* article, Matthew Haag described how "the surge in supply has driven down rental costs across the city and forced landlords to offer generous concessions, including up to three months' free rent and paying the expensive fees brokers command." According to *Street Easy*, the Charles Street apartment was offering "no fee and one month free on a one-year lease."

In accordance with the principle of supply and demand, the residential rental market has seen a rise in supply and a huge fall in demand. Once the pandemic ends, I hope people who left during COVID-19 will feel safe enough to return to live and work in the city, but landlords and the government need to do two things first: we need more rent-controlled apartments, and we need reforms of commercial lease regulations. I hope we can all get together and make this happen.

The State of Our Health Care and Hospitals: Carlina Rivera Calls for Change

By Penny Mintz

These days the security of our health care should be a top priority. In light of the present economy it is also clear that our health-insurance system cannot be married to employment. Millions of people lost their jobs and their insurance as a result of the pandemic, and that puts all of us in danger.

There are many reasons why we lack the kind of universal single-payer health care that most other industrialized countries enjoy. Part of the problem is years of tax cuts to the highest earners. Another big part is that politicians rely on the billions of dollars that private insurance, big hospitals, and big pharma donate to their campaigns. The influence of such donations prevents needed reform. Controlling those donations is virtually impossible because, in accordance with the Citizens United decision of 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations are people, money is speech, and people (read: corporations) have freedom of speech (read: donations).

Meanwhile, we have a health crisis, unlimited health costs, unaffordable private health insurance, and 18 hospitals that have been shuttered in NYC since 2003. Our local St. Vincent's was one of those; and Mount Sinai has been planning to replace Beth Israel's 850-bed full-service hospital with a 70-bed facility.

On August 12, 2020, the New York State Legislature conducted a joint hearing on how hospitals have performed during the pandemic. Department of Health Commissioner Howard Zucker, SUNY Empire State President Jim Malatras, and New York City Council Member Carlina Rivera testified during the first session of the virtual hearing.

Assembly Member Dick Gottfried asked whether the reductions in hospital capacity over the years had gone too far. He suggested that perhaps we needed a "course correction." The answer was: apparently not. Despite Governor Cuomo's reports back in late March that New York State had 53,000 beds and needed 140,000 to deal with the pandemic, Dr. Malatras asserted that the system had the flexibility to ramp up in a pandemic. That would require a flexibility miracle.

Dr. Zucker testified that on March 1, 2020 all public and private hospitals had been directed to double their capacity. At that point Mount Sinai, fortunately, had not yet sold the Beth Israel building on East 16th Street. So it was quickly able to return 400 beds to use at Beth Israel, up from 200. Mount Sinai also increased its



CITY COUNCIL MEMBER CARLINA RIVERA, who is chair of the Hospitals Committee, testified on August 12, 2020, before a virtual State Senate and Assembly joint hearing on hospitals during the pandemic. *Photo courtesy of Penny Mintz.*

capacity uptown by 68 beds by enabling Samaritan's Purse to open a field hospital in Central Park. This move was widely criticized when it was found that Samaritan's Purse required volunteer workers to sign a "statement of faith" that disqualified gays and Jews, among others, from working for them. In any event, 68 beds is far from the requisite doubling of its capacity of 1,141.

No one addressed how capacity could be substantially increased within the other remaining hospitals. Dr. Zucker did speak about the USNS Comfort and the hospital that was opened in the Javits Center. These facilities, however, proved to be ineffective during the pandemic. Before the two facilities closed, only 1,095 were treated at Javits and 182 at the Comfort.

City Council Member Carlina Rivera took a different position. She called for an outright halt of the closure of "every hospital that had been slated to occur through the certificate-of-need (CON) process." A CON must be granted before a hospital can close, and the Department of Health relies on the Public Health and Health Planning Council (PHHPC) for its CON determinations.

Rivera wants to see a change made to the process. She said there should be "more patient representation and public input" than that provided by PHHPC—its members overwhelmingly represent corporate interests. Rivera reminded the legislature that a community-based planning process had existed in the 1980s. That process, she said, should be restored and integrated into the CON proceedings.

COMPASS

Scotty is a long time current West Village resident and local broker helping clients calmly navigate these challenging times. A loyal contributor to the WestView News since its inception.

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God's Love We Deliver

By David Ludwigson, Vice President & Chief Development Officer

God's Love We Deliver began in 1985 at the height of the AIDS pandemic. What began with one woman, Ganga Stone, delivering one meal to a man dying of AIDS has grown to an organization of thousands of people cooking and home-delivering more than 2.3 million meals a year to New Yorkers living with severe and chronic illness. So much has changed in these 35 years, but the core values of God's Love We Deliver have not. Every day our clients struggle with malnutrition, illness, hunger and isolation; and, every day more and more people reach out to us for help. When they contact God's Love they find a community that cares about them deeply.

Early in our history, almost all of our clients diagnosed with AIDS passed away. God's Love provided meals and comfort for them for days, weeks or months, whatever they needed. Their futures were short, their needs urgent, their gratitude and that of their loved ones profound. As their lives and needs have changed we have become increasingly focused on nutrition, and deliver the tailored meals our clients need to manage their illness and become as healthy as they can. Good nutrition can lower



DAILY MEAL PRODUCTION HAS INCREASED MORE THAN 25% DURING THE PAST FIVE MONTHS AND IS CONTINUING TO GROW: God's Love We Deliver in action during COVID-19. Photo by Rommel Deman.

health care costs, improve health outcomes, and greatly improve clients' outlook and quality of life. Food is medicine, and for so many who are living alone, food is love.

Every day we witness great strides in the health and well-being of our clients. Sometimes people start on our program close to

death, but with proper medical and nutritional care they become strong enough to no longer need our services.

In our earliest days, God's Love found a great deal of support from the fashion, design, LGBTQ, and theater communities, as these were communities that were great-

ly affected by the illness. So many wanted to help. We are grateful for the continued support we get from them, as well as from a broad range of other industries and communities, all united in the effort to ensure that our neighbors who are too sick to shop or cook for themselves can get the right nutrition they need, delivered with a smile.

This is a very busy time at God's Love. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our phones are ringing off the hook. In fact, daily meal production has increased more than 25 percent during the past five months and is continuing to grow.

Our challenges today are similar to what they were in the beginning: that we reach all those who need us, that we innovate to meet our clients' continually changing needs, and continue to meet growing demand.

Our team works to advance public policy that supports access to food and nutrition services for people in need.

How does one sign up for the service?

Clients get in touch with us through our website or through referrals by healthcare professionals.

Are they required to prove need?

Clients must be too sick to shop or cook for themselves, and they must have a health-

continued on page 7

Being sick and hungry is a crisis. We can help.

If someone you are caring for is living with a life-altering illness such as HIV/AIDS, cancer or Alzheimer's disease and has difficulty shopping or cooking, we can provide them with nutritious, delicious, home-delivered meals.

All meals are provided FREE to clients and FULL of love.



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Leading Through a Pandemic



WCBS-2 REPORTER MAX GOMEZ INTERVIEWING MICHAEL DOWLING, President and CEO of Northwell Health. Photo courtesy of Northwell Health.

By Northwell Health President and CEO Michael J. Dowling

On August 25, Skyhorse Publishing will publish what New York Governor Andrew Cuomo calls a “riveting account of the COVID-19 experience” that “captures the essential lessons for how to prepare for likely surges in the months ahead.”

As head of a health system that treated more COVID-19 patients (70,000+) than any other provider in the nation, Northwell Health President and CEO Michael J. Dowling and co-author Charles Kenney provide an inside look at what it was like at the epicenter of the pandemic. With the federal response lagging during the early weeks of the public health crisis, a limited understanding of best approaches to treating the virus, and severe shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and nasal swab kits needed to perform diagnostic tests, the book chronicles the clinical and administrative leadership strategies that sustained Northwell's hospitals, outpatient facilities and laboratories as they saw a record volume of severely ill patients in need of intensive care.

From the hospital front lines to the Northwell C-suite, *Leading Through a Pandemic: The Inside Story of Lessons Learned about Innovation, Leadership, and Humanity During the COVID-19 Crisis* details the preparation and response that enabled New York's largest health system to treat more than 15,000 hospitalized patients, as well as over 55,800 individuals seen in emergency rooms, urgent care centers, physician offices and other outpatient locations from early March through mid-July.

Governor Cuomo, who has relied on Mr. Dowling as one of his most-trusted health care advisors throughout the public health crisis, said, “*Leading Through a Pandemic* is a riveting account of the COVID-19 experience at New York's largest health system. More than anything else I have read, this account captures the essential lessons for how to prepare for likely surges in the months ahead. It brilliantly captures the emotion of the COVID-19 pandemic while offering a clear-eyed analysis of how to prepare for and respond to ongoing and future emergencies. It's a clarifying, must-read in these uncertain times.”

Leading Through a Pandemic offers guidance on how hospitals and health systems throughout the country can prepare more effectively for the next viral threat. The book includes dramatic stories from the front lines at the peak of the viral assault and lessons of what went well, and what did not. The authors draw upon Northwell's experience to prescribe changes in US health care for the next pandemic. Beyond the need for larger medical stockpiles is the far more challenging task of transforming the culture of American health care to enable robust emergency response in hospitals and health systems of all sizes nationwide. This is a must-have resource for health care professionals, policy-makers, journalists and citizens whose curiosity demands deeper understanding of modern-day pandemics.

Michael J. Dowling is president and chief executive officer of Northwell Health. Dowling grew up in Limerick, Ireland. He earned his undergraduate degree from University College Cork (UCC), Ireland, and his master's degree from Fordham University. He also has honorary doctorates from Hofstra University and Dowling College. He played hurling with Limerick and won a National League medal and a Fitzgibbon Cup medal with UCC. Before his public service career, Dowling was a professor of social policy and assistant dean at the Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services and director of the Fordham campus in Westchester County. Afterwards, Dowling served in New York State government for 12 years, including seven years as state director of Health, Education and Human Services and deputy secretary to former governor Mario Cuomo. He was also commissioner of the New York State Department of Social Services.

*Charles Kenney serves as the Chief Journalist at Northwell Health and Executive Editor of the Northwell Innovation Series. He is the author of many books, including *The Best Practice: How the New Quality Movement Is Transforming Medicine*, which the New York Times described as “the first large-scale history of the quality movement.” He serves on the faculty of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

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God's Love continued from page 6

care professional confirm this, but there is no financial need-based requirement.

Do you need volunteers and what might they be doing?

We are able to cook and home-deliver 10,000 meals each weekday because of the help of thousands of volunteers (17,000 last year), and yes, we always need help! To help cook, pack, and deliver meals, volunteers can sign up on our website.

What is happening differently because of the virus?

We have instituted social distancing measures across all our operations, and we have also streamlined our menu so that our kitchen can operate with fewer people. All of our meal deliveries are made from a social distance. Our drivers call our clients to let them know they are on the way; when they arrive, they put down the meal, ring the bell, and then step six feet away to confirm the delivery and say hello from a safe distance.

What are the future plans?

With demand growing unabated, we will be searching for additional office and production space in the near future.

How big an organization are you in staff, budget and persons served?

115 staff, 17,000 volunteers, \$22 million annual budget, 2.3 million meals/9,400 people served annually

Is the founder still alive?

Our Founder, Ganga Stone, is still alive and lives in upstate New York.

Have you won any awards?

The *New York Times* Award for Management Excellence. God's Love was chosen as a winner of the Social Determinants of Health Innovation Award in the Community-Based Organization category. We have received the top 4-star recognition from Charity Navigator for seven years running (joining the top six percent of the nation's charities). We are regularly called on as a model community-based organization by New York State.

Can you name some of your major donors?

Michael Kors, Aerin Lauder, Steve and Alexandra Cohen, Ariana Rockefeller, Neil Patrick Harris, and David Burtka

How many people are you serving today?

10,000 meals every weekday! This year we served 9,454 clients.

What are typical profiles of recipients?

We have an extremely diverse community of clients throughout the NYC metro-area. All are sick and living with a life-altering illness. Many of our clients live at or below the federal poverty line.

Are seniors now the principal recipients?

Although we have no age restrictions and our clients' ages range from 18-104, 70 percent are 60 or older. We also send meals for our clients' children who are minors or senior caregivers.

Newsroom continued from page 1

the *Daily News* in different locations during its 101 year history became closely associated with metropolitan might. Its first and second locations were based inside the authoritative stone buildings at City Hall park, constructed in the early 19th century during the founding of American governmental systems. From 1929 to 1995, the *News* lived at its most iconic location at 220 East 42nd Street—an Art Deco edifice specifically designed for the news publication by collaborators Raymond Hood and John Mead Howells. Howells had won the *Chicago Tribune* building competition (what's now called the Tribune Tower in Chicago and is primarily a museum) with a similar design in 1922. New York's version was commissioned by then *Daily News* owner Joseph Medill Patterson, and is still called the *Daily News* Building. So heroic the image of the press earlier in the 20th century, and the *News* so much a symbol of it, it is said that it was the inspiration for *The Daily Planet*, the fictional workplace of Superman's Clark Kent, and served as its setting in a couple of the Christopher Reeves films. A very nice piece of real estate for the Fourth Estate.

I also visited their saddest location change after Sandy rendered their two floors at 4 New York Plaza unsafe, flooding the building with oil and river water. In the wake of the storm, about half of the newsroom and admin were transplanted to an incredibly tiny space packed with grumpy people at the paper's regular printing plant in Jersey City. A portion of the editorial team were the pioneers of "remote work"—indeed a more technologically challenging thing for 2012 than it is today. Quite a few staffers swam with the fishes, supposedly for the boat to be saved. Sandy was the excuse, maintain-

ing continuous *Daily News* service was the reason. About a year later the newsroom returned to the downtown office.

In 2017, Mortimer B. Zuckerman, the paper's owner for 25 years, sold the farm (including *U.S. News and World Report*), to Tribune Publishing, which at the time was calling itself "tronc Inc.," for the historic sum of \$1.

Less than a year later, in 2018, Chicago-based tronc Inc. went ahead and truncated more than half of the remaining *New York Daily News* employees, around 93 people. Sadly, this was not the first time newsroom staff were substantially reduced. Zuckerman's paper lost people to overtly grim treatment of his burdensome asset's performance. Such brutality to the *News*' personnel had begun to win out against the mission of the press, and also created very cutthroat conditions among newsroom employees.

Tribune Publishing's Second Quarter 2020 results from Aug. 5, a week before its announcement that it was shuttering a bunch of newsrooms, reported a 40 percent year-over-year increase in its digital content revenues—quite good. Net income losses decreased by \$1.6 million—not bad either. The report states that operating expenses were down because "The decrease reflects the Company's ongoing disciplined cost management and aggressive efforts to reduce our overall costs." This line reads like a confession of guilt of their actually simply pursuing an agenda to deny people their employment and resources, tucked conveniently inside the excuse of the pandemic. Worse yet is that the digital expansion once blamed for company losses and punished with layoffs, has finally shown growth, but is again being used as the grounds for not properly staffing, paying and organizing

their editorial team members.

"Fixed costs including real estate and other infrastructure are under constant review. We believe that a reduction in infrastructure costs, coupled with substantial growth in our digital subscriptions business, has placed the Company in a position to succeed in its digital future," company leadership stated in the report.

The decision to make this announcement about bombing their own newsrooms, and chalking it up to digital expansion, makes it as blaringly obvious that Tribune Publishing knows as little about journalism now as they knew about branding during their "tronc, Inc." phase. Where digital expansion was once a *raison d'être* for a bigger office, it is now a very disingenuous excuse to potentially lay off workers and disenfranchise the survivors by denying them a place to cooperate effectively with their colleagues to produce on-brand daily news.

The company gave current staffers a glimmer of hope, an industry source told me, that a smaller newsroom may reopen, somewhere, after the pandemic. Yet the promise of a grand re-opening of the newspaper is currently about as guaranteed as hydroxychloroquine for the treatment of COVID-19.

News Corp.'s Rupert Murdoch was smart to keep funding the *New York Post*, his pride and joy, and make it clear that it won't profit unto itself, and yet is important enough to maintain. Without newsprint's foundation, the media would become unmoored from the traditions of journalism that are what give it its strength in a multitude of ways. Politics aside, Murdoch recognizes the importance of what happens inside of a newsroom, inside of the headquarters of a complex organization, as his business' most valuable asset. Without

a physical office there is no fortress. To lose the *NY Post*, News Corp. would lose its core. In creating a void at the center of a container, the container collapses.

The Daily News, "New York's Hometown Newspaper" is just as important to Murdoch as his pet *Post*. With its Pulitzer Prize winning journalism and courageous reporting of our shared experiences as New Yorkers, such as 9/11, and Sandy, the *News* is the *Post*'s only true competitor in the tabloid sector, setting the standard and the scene for properly reporting the city, checking the facts. But without the power from a solid center, will this star of free press keep shining a light of truth on the city?

Amanda Mikelberg is a freelance journalist and digital designer in Upper Manhattan. She has reported for several outlets including the New York Daily News, New York Post, Metro New York, and holds an MA from Columbia University in journalism, class of 2015. You can respond to her story at newnewspm@gmail.com



AMANDA MIKELBERG in Fort Tryon Park, New York City, April 2020. Photo by Joseph Faicco.

Free Groceries for Village Seniors

By Fr Graeme Napier
St John's in the Village

St John's in the Village has been running, and continues to run, a free grocery service for Villagers who have no access to the internet. It is one of the many services which have come into being to help particular groups hit hard by the pandemic. During this pandemic, to which St John's grocery project is a direct response, many seniors (and other vulnerable people) feel unsafe, even with masks and distancing, when in crowded indoor places such as grocery stores. Many seniors can, of course, either order their groceries online, or have non-senior friends or relatives shop for them. Seniors with no internet access and with no non-senior friends or relatives in the Village are in a difficult situation. That's where St John's steps in to help. Our volunteers staff the phone line (open from 11am to 1pm Monday-Friday), seniors call and say what they need (up to about \$80 for a

weekly shop of basics), and St John's volunteers place and pay for the groceries and have them delivered. It's as simple as that. The project is funded by St John's with the help of Episcopal Charities (NYC's Episcopal Diocese 'home' charity), some private donors, and significant grants from charities in the UK.

If you are a senior with no internet access, and are still apprehensive about visiting grocery stores, please do consider letting St John's help you in this matter. If you *do* have access to the internet but know seniors who *do not*, consider ordering for them or passing on to them this article and the number to call:

Call 929 292 9235

11am to 1pm Monday to Friday

You can consider these groceries to be a gift, or, if you might be in a position to repay St John's for part of the cost of the groceries you order, that would help us run the program for longer and help more people

in the same circumstances. The Village has one of the highest proportions of seniors living alone in all of the five boroughs of NYC. Charity begins at home!

St John's in the Village has a notable history, humbly worn, of helping Villagers in times of distress. St John's played a significant pastoral role in the Village's cholera outbreaks in the 19th century, in the Village's response to the so-called 'Spanish' Flu of 1918, and, of course, in the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s. It is in keeping with this long tradition of community care that St John's in the Village has begun new programs in this time of COVID-19.

In addition to helping seniors and other vulnerable people with their daily bread, St John's has also kept very close to the arts community, so much part of the life of the Village. Before the pandemic St John's presented at least four of five concerts each week, from early music, through Baroque, Classical, Romantic, modern, folk, jazz,

and more. Having invested in top-of-the-range audio-visual equipment, St John's now offers its fine acoustic and this equipment to musicians who wish to live-stream their concerts to online audiences. Recently these have become 'fusion' concerts with a limited in-person audience attending the live-streamed performance. This is to the benefit both of the musicians, who can continue to perform and earn revenue, but also to music lovers, who can hear live performances from a Village venue, and now, at last, attend concerts safely in person once more. St John's is delighted to be able to keep music alive in the Village despite the cost incurred in engaging professional sound engineers and other skilled personnel to enable this service to musicians.

Theater at St John's continues online, though St John's theater itself is closed, with a number of innovative community and cultural events curated by St John's

continued on page 24

Notes from Away: Gender Politics

By Tom Lamia

Two women are faced off in the race for U.S. Senator in this year's Maine general election. One, Susan Collins, is a 67-year-old four-term incumbent with all of the scars necessary to prove it. The other is Sara Gideon, a 48-year-old Speaker of the Maine State House of Representatives with a slim resume, both as Speaker (2016) and as Representative (2012). Why should this race attract any attention outside of Maine?

One reason is its great likelihood to decide who might succeed Sen. McConnell as Senate Majority Leader and de facto Congressional Dictator of what gets voted on in his exclusive domain. The President may have a veto power under the Constitution over any bill that survives passage in the House and Senate, but the President does not have the power to kill legislation in its crib. Without a Senate majority, a President is stuck in a bottleneck in which governing becomes not the "art of the possible," but a politically deadly

obstacle course in avoiding the "nuclear option" of gutting the will of the minority by action through a bare majority. The history of how it has come to this is itself both recent and horrific in its abandonment of rules and procedures that once ensured that the Senate would act only through consensus. Now we have the familiar zero good will, zero cooperation proceedings on all issues (legislation, of course, but also confirmations and oversight, no opportunity to create scandal hearings is missed). The nation holds its breath over the health of a Supreme Court Justice whose seat could become the linchpin for Constitutional erosion if it were to be open even for a few weeks before the end of the current President's term on January 20, 2021. We all know that Sen. McConnell would not shrink from a full reversal of his 2015 insistence that no Court nominee could be considered within one year of a Presidential election.

That is the unfortunate backdrop to this Maine Senate race that is now fully active. The campaign ads for the candidates are



SHE IS NOT FROM AWAY: Senator Susan Collins, above, was born and raised in Maine. Photo courtesy of U.S. Senator Susan Collins.

running (often one after the other) on television every day, to the point of (one would think) viewer exhaustion. Money is being spent at record levels. There is no shortage on either side of financial resources. Maine is a small state in population (1.3 million) and resources (GDP per capita: \$42,925) and, yet, together Collins (\$12 million) and Gideon (\$18 million), through June 30, spent at levels that suggest there is much more from

whence those numbers have come.

What is in store for the few months left before the November 3 election is not just norm shattering, it is forbidding as a projection of future Maine politics. Those politics have a proud history, especially on the Republican side, of recognizing and rewarding women with election success. Margaret Chase Smith and Olympia Snowe preceded Susan Collins as U.S. Senators from Maine. All, including Collins, have shown their independence of mind and their commitment to their Maine constituents, most from small towns and modest circumstances. Not only has Collins been elected four times to six-year terms in the Senate, she won most recently (2014) with 70% of the vote. What could she have done to deserve being in this situation where she is polling around 40% in her race with Gideon, a relative newcomer to Maine? This column, "Notes From Away," often suggests that a person not born and raised in Maine will always be an outsider. Collins was born and raised in Maine. She is definitely not from away.

Gideon was born and raised in Rhode Island. She got her start in politics in the 1990s as an aide to Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell. She moved to Freeport, Maine, in 2004

continued on page 12

Is Trump Guilty of Homicide?

By Alec Pruchnicki

Wait! Don't roll your eyes and think of this as another rabid anti-Trump rant. Even as a legal layman, I think there are possible arguments for answering this question in the affirmative. There are plenty of people in The Village with more legal training than me and more internet skills, so my rough arguments can be made more precise if at all valid.

Many people say the president should not be above the law. Here are three laws he shouldn't be immune from: criminal negligence, reckless endangerment, and involuntary manslaughter (sometimes described as murder or homicide in the 3rd degree). The exact definition and severity of each of these varies from state to state so the definitions I will use are approximations. But they are clear enough to be applied to our situation.

Criminal negligence occurs when a person ignores an obvious risk and acts significantly differently from those of an ordinary person under similar circumstances. When Trump ignored information on epidemics handed to him by members of Obama's staff, or by doctors and scientists in his own administration along with those from other countries, and refused to take any action but stated that COVID would just disappear or had to be handled by the governors, this was criminal negligence. There must be cases somewhere in the country when parents negligently ignored medical advice and it led to the death of their children, and resulted in charges and convictions for criminal negligence. Ignoring advice that contributed to the death of hundreds of thousands of people is also criminal negligence.

Reckless endangerment occurs when a person commits acts that create a substantial risk of physical injury to others, even if that was not the intention of the act. For Trump, this would include not wearing facemasks or distancing when with others, mocking mask-wearers, giving out false information on unproven cures, holding political rallies where facemasks were not encouraged, if not actually discouraged, and pushing to open work places and schools in locations where such openings would be life threatening. Again, there must be cases somewhere when a person with an illness was treated with a reckless unproven or irrational treatment and death resulted.

If a person causes the death of another, even inadvertently, as a result of a crime, like criminal negligence or reckless endangerment, that person has committed involuntary manslaughter. Trump's reckless and negligent behavior has inadvertently contributed to the death of about 200,000 Americans, with no end in sight.

Besides upholding the principle that no man is above the law, there is another reason for charging Trump with these crimes described in *WestView's* recent article on impeachment ("Impeach Him Again, Immediately." *WVN*, August 2020) Trump has raised the stakes for this election with unprecedented actions, like unidentified troops in American cities, suppressing peaceful demonstrations for the sake of a photo-op, implying the election might be fraudulent, criticizing mail ballots (like the ones he always uses), and even subverting the post-office. And who knows what his

enablers in the Republican Senate, the Bill Barr "Justice" department, or his friends in Moscow are thinking up? These crimes are often prosecuted on the state level. So,

Leticia James and Cy Vance, are you listening? No person, not even the president, is above the law is a nice theory. Let's put it into practice.

"Whose Post Office? Our Post Office!"



Jacqui Taylor Basker, leading a group of approximately 40 West Village residents, shouted this and other chants outside the Hudson Street station at a rally in support of the USPS, and against recent moves made by Postmaster Louis DeJoy.

DeJoy's actions have received bipartisan concern, and many have seen the changes implemented as an attempt by the Trump administration to interfere with mail-in voting rights amid a pandemic that disproportionately affects the elderly and disadvantaged communities.

This rally was one of over 700 that took place simultaneously across the US on Saturday, Aug. 22nd, organized by a coalition of civil rights, workers, and veterans groups.

"I feel that organizing gives all some hope", said Taylor-Basker of today's events, "We (Villagers) saved this Post Office branch ten years ago, and I believe that applying this type of public pressure really helps."

—Photo and Summary by Bob Cooley

Livable Streets



DINING AL FRESCO on Ninth Avenue and 14th Street. Photo by Barry Benepe.

By Barry Benepe

PART I: SUFFERING THE GRID

Manhattan is uniquely blessed or cursed, depending on your point of view. The rigid uniform rectangular street system was designed to maximize building development on the undulating landscape without thought for its natural topography, water courses, water bodies (including both the North and East Rivers, which Ann Buttenwieser aptly referred to as the “wide arms of the sea” that embrace the island of Manhattan’s farms, architecture, historic landscape, roads, piers and working shoreline, and transition to the surrounding region).

While this grid was adopted in the Commissioners Map of 1811, it was preceded by the Bernard Ratzer Map of 1776, the Peter Rushton Maverick Map of 1796, the Delaney Family Grid, the Mangin-Goerck Plan of 1803, and the 1807 Commissioners Map—none of which were officially adopted. The streets and avenues simply ended at the shoreline with no consideration of parks and recreation, public buildings, churches, commerce, factories, warehouses, industry, or rail lines. This was head-in-the-sand planning motivated by short-term financial expediency rather than long-term forethought. The simplicity of using the Cartesian coordinates of a school child reciting the alphabet and counting from one to three hundred may

have appealed to the Swiss architect Le Corbusier (When the Cathedrals Were White), but effaced the features that made the city unique.

To Frederick Law Olmsted, architect-in-chief of Central Park as well as landscape planner for Harvard University, Stanford University, and the city of Buffalo where “he showed how the burgeoning American industrial city could be made livable” (*A Clearing in the Distance* by Witold Rybczynski), “The grid had the dumb utility of a mason’s sieve and annulled the possibility to make architectural monuments” (The Greatest Grid presentation by the Museum of the City of New York). Olmsted added, when he was appointed along with architect Calvert Vaux to design Central Park in 1858, “The time will come when New York will be built up, when all the grading and filling will be done, when picturesquely varied rock foundations of the island will have been converted into the foundations for rows of monotonous straight streets and piles of erect, angular buildings.” The authors of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. concluded that he “had a sense of the necessity for a balanced relationship between man and the natural world.”

Of course, Olmsted was wrong and right. We did build our masterpieces—such as Rockefeller Center, Tudor City, London Terrace, the Public Library, St. Patrick’s

Cathedral, St. John the Divine, Columbia University, and many fine small parks and squares—despite the confines of the grid, simply by combining the 25 by 100-foot house lots. We’ve greened the grid with thousands of trees and are beginning to make the streets themselves into beautiful and useful spaces; but he was right about our spending huge sums to level the streets. Central Park alone required Olmsted to move over four million cubic yards of earth and stone. So much for retaining natural features. An opportunity was lost by not continuing the north edge of the park along the Harlem Meer and joining it with the Harlem River; however, opportunities to relate to the natural landscape were not lost north of 155th Street where the grid stopped.

PART II: GREENING THE GRID

As the commissioners laid out lands north of 155th Street they imbibed the lessons of Frederick Law Olmsted in relating to the contours, ridges, valleys, and shorelines. Avenues were placed in the valleys, parks were placed on the crests. My friend, mentor, and employer Robert C. Weinberg worked for Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, who wanted an automobile highway to leap from the crests of the hills across Spuyten Duyvil to Marble Hill in the Bronx. Weinberg insisted that the bridge flank the hills, not surmount them.

(He was fired by Moses for his intransigence.) Similarly, Frank Lloyd Wright said that a house should rest on the brow of a hill, not its crown. Thus, the roads above 155th Street laced through the valleys while the hilltops were graced with such parks as Fort Washington, Fort Tryon, Inwood Hills, and Highbridge.

Meanwhile, downtown, Van Ginkel Associates proposed a “woonerf” (street diversion) for 48th Street, a technique that both makes the street more attractive and safer by slowing down motor vehicles and providing more casual places for pedestrians to walk, cross roadways, sit and relax.

More recently, Janette Sadik-Khan was transforming the hard-surfaced grid into more pedestrian-friendly walking surfaces. In her book *Street Fight* she states, “Cities must adopt a more inclusive and humane approach to reshaping the urban realm and rebuilding it quickly to human scale.” A large section of Broadway north of Times Square was pedestrianized at great benefit to drivers, walkers and abutting businesses.

Outdoor alfresco seating for light meals across from the Union Square Greenmarket was provided with painted pavement, planters, and cafe tables and chairs. Creating these welcoming spaces, Commissioner Sadik-Khan exclaimed, “By following the footsteps and tracing an outline of the way people use the street today, we could uncover the design of the city we will want to live in tomorrow. These streets of tomorrow can be outlined today in paint.

Yes, “paint.” At comparatively low cost, paint has provided not only safer bicycling lanes, pedestrian crossings, reserved truck deliveries and emergency stopping, but space for pop-up parks and cafes. Free private automobile storage on public spaces—virtual walls of steel which are a major cause of congestion and pedestrian collisions—will be a luxury of the past.

WRAPPING UP

The former commissioner concluded, “When I think what streets will look like in the next two decades, I hope the differences will be visible in the way that space is used, with more people waking on more attractive sidewalks landscaped with trees and greenery, riding bikes in safe well-designed lanes, or riding on state-of-the-art bus rapid transit lines that crisscross the city.”

Our streets are our most directly accessible outdoor living space, and extensions of our private indoor ones. They should be designed with the same care.

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Coast to Coast Coronavirus Caravan



SNAKING THEIR WAY FROM WEST TO EAST: Robert Kroll with his wife, Rose, and their shih tzu Peedee. Photo by Susan Crosby.

By Robert Kroll

During the past six weeks, my wife and I and our 15-year-old Shih Tzu snaked our way through a virus-laden northwest passage, crossing over a dozen state borders, from California to New York City.

We are Brooklynites, who found ourselves sheltering for three months (since March 15th) in the Bay Area of California. We were stuck with the choice of returning to New York City as it became the epicenter of the pandemic, or becoming temporary refugees in (then) the less viral San Francisco—Berkeley area. We chose the latter.

After New York City flattened its COVID-19 curve in mid-June, we were ready to return home. With little more than a few changes of underwear we ventured north and east from San Francisco Bay to the Napa Valley. We loosely mapped out a simple curvy line from Berkeley, California to Brooklyn, New York...on a motorcycle... with two adults, one dog and three small travel bags, a longing for our New York home, and high hopes for survival.

We were well aware of the risks of travel during the pandemic. We looked at the national viral maps circulating on June 18th and plotted a route designed to avoid the “hot spots,” the COVID-19 transmission nodes that were then centered in the South and Northeast. We would adjust our path if the virus migrated.

We arrived in Brooklyn 44 days later, with

Notice

Our tavern is now open with the following guidelines in place:

1. All patrons must practice social distancing (6 feet minimum as a general rule).
2. Face Masks are required when entering and exiting the premises but not required while dining.
3. We can only operate at 25% of our occupancy rating. No bar seating. No standing anywhere.
4. Pool table is off limits as this activity requires standing and standing is not permitted.
5. No parties greater than 10 persons total. We can accommodate larger groups if seated at separate tables.
6. Alcohol for in-house consumption may only be purchased in conjunction with a meal. Take out alcoholic beverages do not require the purchase of a meal. The term “meal” is defined in section 406 of the Pennsylvania Liquor Code as “food prepared on the premises, sufficient to constitute breakfast, lunch or dinner.”
7. You may not continue to consume alcoholic beverages after the completion of your meal.
8. Deck seating is permitted, social distancing in outdoor spaces is the same as with inside spaces.

Our staff will sanitize all common area multiple times throughout the day following CDC guidelines. Our staff will continue to wear masks (exceptions for catering to handicapped individuals may apply).

Translation to above notice

1. Group hugs and orgies are discouraged
2. Cover your mouth when you enter and exit, but no worries when you are actually inside amongst the possibly infected.
3. The virus knows when we exceed 25%. It will get you when that happens. Also the brown shirts will fine us.
4. The virus only exists at altitudes of 5 feet or higher. If you remain seated it can't find you.
5. Think of the virus as a shark in search of a school of fish. It seeks out the larger schools. Keep your school small.
6. There is no explanation. This is just plain stupid.
7. Keep some of your meal uneaten while you sit and drink.
8. The deck is nice. Sit outside and soak in the sun on the rare occasion that it does not rain in Wellsboro.

SIGN ON DOOR OF RURAL PENNSYLVANIA BAR. Photo: Robert Kroll.

around 4,000 miles under our belt-drive Harley motorcycle. Our strategy to stay safe—keep out of the large cities and stay in hamlets and small towns—had worked. The two-star motels, where the staffs are said to be trained how to disinfect rooms between guests, were nearly empty. We stayed and slept in 40 different towns, 40 different motels (including two B&Bs). One motel in Alturas, CA emailed us a door unlocking code to let ourselves into the empty motel, get our room key, and stay in our room without security of any kind.

Today, several weeks since we left the West Coast, and after a week's quarantining in our Brooklyn studio, we are healthy and happy. We've not been tested as yet, and prior to the coast-to-coast trip hadn't had good reason to do so...we are healthy

and feel good. Zero symptoms. We were masked and distanced, with oft-sanitized hands. We were either on our motorcycle or in our motel room, except to walk the dog. We plan to take an antibody test to see whether we had the virus.

Our trip had three purposes: to get us back home; to get our new (used, 2005 model) Harley to New York; to do an informal unscientific survey of how the northern states (Oregon, Idaho, Montana, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio) and the eastern seaboard were adapting and adjusting to this novel coronavirus.

The take-away from the trip: small town and rural residents of northern states are far less concerned about the virus than coasties. They are, and have been, eating in

restaurants indoors since around April or May. Masks are rarely seen except on the waitresses and cooks inside eateries. There is an undercurrent of resentment, in nearly all age groups, at the suggestion that a mask is necessary. There is a half-hearted willingness to socially distance oneself, as long as it is not inconvenient. Unsurprisingly, government is the perceived problem, not the solution, in rural America, even during a health catastrophe. In some sense, they are correct in this case.

The primary evidence that the pandemic exists is in the silence of these towns. Most of Main Street is largely closed, or the store fronts are “for lease.” At mid-day, the sidewalks are bare—with hardly a pedestrian in sight. In Cresco, Iowa, at the Con-fection (sic) ice cream parlor, four women sit on the counter stools and kibitz, unmasked. One woman tells us, “We haven't seen a case yet.” She confided that she supports Trump and said, “If he wins, there will be fighting in the streets. If he loses, we will be goose-stepping down the street.”

American flags and Trump/Pence 2020 signs were plentiful throughout the small towns of the northern U.S. Biden signs were not in evidence except in cities like Akron and Toledo. Confederate flags were also seen regularly. Not surprising, but confirmatory.

It should be noted that as white folks in their mid-70s we were treated with the utmost respect by everyone, regardless of whether we wore masks, distanced, or brought our Shih Tzu into a café to soak up the cool air. Our politics were a subject of some quandary. Surely, we didn't believe anything we read in the newspapers.

These rustic northern states' attitudes toward the virus's spread has, one by one, come back to bite small-town people. In the main, they have fewer hospital beds per capita, less PPE, fewer ventilators, health workers, ambulances and morgues. Though we wore masks to the extent possible, we and other travelers and visitors could have been spreaders. Our small-town brethren may have to adjust their attitudes and perhaps experience the epiphanies of the new normal that most coastal people did last spring. Otherwise, COVID-19 could supplant opioid overdosing as a major cause of death in the hinterland. We can only hope that does not come to pass.



**Had Enough of Netflix?
The Libraries Are Now Open!
(For pick-up of reserved items)
So Get Reading!**

Mod Squad

By Jeff Hodges

In the summer of 1978 I heard about a news outfit called Broadcast News Service that needed video crews to shoot from midnight to noon on weekends, working out of a car with a police radio scanner. I was a cameraman shooting punk rock, modern dance, and performance art in downtown Manhattan, but this sounded like fun; and when they said I would have to videotape dead bodies, I told them I was a country boy and road kill didn't bother me.

I got teamed up with a guy named Joe. We sat in the car and waited for calls to come in on the scanner. Waiting was a big part of the job.

But when a call came in we took off fast. We ran red lights, we drove 100 mph on the expressways. Sometimes we got to the crime scene before the cops did. We carried a bright light—a “sun gun”—that could blind everybody. More than once we were threatened with arrest for interfering with an arrest.

A former girlfriend named Wendy started riding with us. She knew how to work the cops and EMTs to find out which precincts and hospitals were playing host to perps and victims so we could get follow-up footage, which meant more money for everybody.

We became known as the Mod Squad—after the TV show: two guys and a girl showing up at all hours in the worst parts of town. We got the name when we were on a job in Staten Island. A call came in about a murder in Brooklyn and we ran to our car, followed by a gang of teenagers. When we got to the car they surrounded us. Wendy spun around and snarled “Back off!” Surprised, they backed off. Someone yelled “Mod Squad!” and the name stuck. Soon enough, we'd show up on a job and kids would chant, “Mod Squad!! Mod Squad!!”

Once we were at a swimming pool in Harlem. A teenager was at the bottom of

the pool in a colorful pair of swim trunks. We all stared down at him—cops, EMTs, firemen—and Wendy turned to a young detective next to her and said, “Make sure you get those trunks when he comes up.” and everyone started laughing and hooting until it turned into something else and we were all wiping tears out of our eyes.

There was stuff you didn't write home about. Jumpers who looked OK until someone turned them over. The featureless face of a floater who'd been in the river for weeks. We shot a car wreck in the Bronx—a mom and two kids rear-ended and gone up in flames, and the drunk without a scratch who hit them. I went to get my shot and a fireman said, “Don't go inside the car.” When I zoomed in I found out why he said it—the three white orbs in the blackened wreckage were the skulls of the occupants. This threw me for a minute, and then Wendy grabbed me and said, “C'mon—they're booking the bastard at Fort Apache,” and we took off.

It ended for me in late August. One Sunday morning, after driving 110 mph in the rain to shoot a body coming out of the trunk of a Cadillac, it dawned on me: this is a stupid way to die.

I tendered my resignation. Joe took a job with CNN and Wendy went back to college. The Mod Squad was done.

Joe went on to win accolades and Emmys until he got into a contretemps that resulted in some legal problems. On the day he was sentenced to a short prison term I was sent downtown by *Entertainment Tonight* to cover the story and was part of the scrum that followed him into the street. He walked with his head held high and a thousand-yard stare. I sidled up to him and said, “Joe, I'm sorry for all this, it really stinks,” but he wouldn't turn his head. I don't know if he knew it was me, or just another newshound looking for more fodder to feed the folks at the news desk—or both.

Gender Politics *continued from page 9*

and got into politics through membership on the Freeport Town Council, where she was Vice Chair before election to the Maine House of Representatives in 2012. In a political nanosecond she was then appointed Assistant Majority Leader in 2014 and elected Speaker in 2016. She is dynamic and skilled in politics and has won over the national Democrats, who have anointed her as their choice in this race. She is ahead and the wind is at her back.

Maine has a Democratic Governor, Janet Mills, who in 2018 replaced Paul LePage, a two term Republican who often bragged that he was “Trump Before Trump.” Since Mills (Governor) and Gideon (Speaker of the House) have held office, the State of Maine has distinguished itself in the battle with COVID-19 (Maine now has a rate of infections of 0.9 per 100,000, second nationally

only to Vermont's rate of 0.8 per 100,000). Mainers are feeling proud, and competent.

Collins has suffered from the exposure she received in the Kavanaugh nomination hearings and from her reluctance to stand up to Trump on any but the most inconsequential issues. She has had the chance to show the independence for which she is known, but has not risked the backlash that independence from Trump might bring. She has managed to present herself to the American public as an apologist for Trump, and that is not good. I believe, however, that she may still win, because her Republican roots are deep and because her goodwill in Maine is solid and broad. Right now, I would say, she is calling in her quarter century of markers in exchange for crucial political help in the closing days of the campaign. I do not count her out, as much as I would like to.

The Sixth Precinct Builds the Block



OFFICER NOLAN CONNOR, standing in front of George Capsis (seated, in white shirt), listens to a neighbor voice her concerns. Sergeant Houlihan stands to his left. *Photo by Karen Rempel.*

By Karen Rempel

On August 13th, the 6th Precinct of the NYPD held a “Build the Block” community discussion at the AIDS Memorial Park at West 12th Street and Greenwich Avenue. About 40 masked neighbors attended, including half a dozen folks from *WestView News*, to speak with a handful of NYPD Neighbor Coordination Officers (NCOs). Police Officer (PO) Maureen Carey led the discussion, with PO Nolan Connor and Sergeant Daniel Houlihan also answering questions from the audience. In addition to complaints about noisy street restaurants and polluting car idlers, the main focus of discussion was about the homeless people's increased presence in our neighborhood.

I shared the story of what happened on July 1 at my friends' place on West 10th Street (see “Stoop the Poop” in this issue). Sergeant Houlihan said it was too bad the police just drove by. He explained that if a homeless person is committing a felony, the police must witness it themselves to lay charges, or have an eyewitness point to the person in their presence. For violations, they can issue a charge without witnessing. I'm not a lawyer—and I doubt very many in the assembled crowd know what constitutes a felony and what a violation—and the information didn't have meaning to me. But according to our good friend Wikipedia, open or public defecation is a criminal offense that can be punished with a fine or even imprisonment in some jurisdictions.

The NCOs said the city's Homeless Services is responsible for helping the homeless and responding to neighborhood complaints.

But if a crime is being committed, including trespassing on private property or blocking passage on a public property like a sidewalk, we should call 911. The attending officers will offer the homeless person shelter or a hospital admission. Of course, we all know that many homeless people don't want to go to the shelters now due to fears about COVID.

People in the audience were very concerned about the increasing numbers of incidents involving homeless people in our

community. Two other attendees reported problems they experienced with homeless people lying across a stoop or entryway and preventing passage. Another neighbor raised concerns about a homeless encampment at a nearby park. Another attendee commented that homeless people are taking over the AIDS Memorial Park and sleeping on the benches, making the park inaccessible to other members of the public. The police said anyone is allowed to be in the park, and occupy the benches, until 11 pm when the park closes.

PO Carey said there have been Black Lives Matter protests daily and the police are deployed to escort the bike protestors and guard the protest events, so the balance of officers remaining for other duties is thin. The bike protestors register with them ahead of time for police escort.

Now that these issues have been raised, the NCOs said they will tour the park more often.

The NCOs said if you feel scared or threatened, definitely call 911. I felt that their care for the neighborhood was genuine, in contrast to the NYPD's media contact. When I asked Richard J. Esposito, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Public Information, for an interview about what the NYPD's new role is in regards to homeless people, he sent a terse email reply: “Please direct your questions to City Hall.”

These homeless people are our neighbors and members of our community. I am sure many readers feel the same empathy I do for their desperate situation. How can we help them and keep our neighborhood safe for everyone?

Karen Rempel has been contributing to WestView News since 2017. She is a photojournalist, technical writer, model, and artist. Her words and pictures have appeared in the literary journal Room, TV Week Magazine, Vancouver Sun, and many other pubs. Her artwork has exhibited at New York's Salmagundi Club and Revelation Gallery. Visit her blog at loveaffair.nyc and her YouTube channel.



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Stoop the Poop—

NYPD Says Eff Poo to 80-Year-Old West Village Residents

By Karen Rempel

Have you ever had to clean up a large pile of stinking human poop from your doorstep? Not the flaming bag of poo Halloween prank (which is usually dog poo), but a pile of poo topped with a pool of urine that spreads across your stoop and welcome mat?

Whether you live in a classic brownstone or a NYCHA housing complex, no one wants to deal with human waste on their doorstep.

On the evening of July 1, the day after the Mayor's office announced NYC is defunding the police to the tune of \$1B, a homeless man continued his torment of my 80-year old friends, who live on West 10th Street. He had been sleeping on their stoop for a month, requiring the people in the building to step over him to enter or leave. He refused to leave when asked, and made mocking gestures at my friends. He would only leave if they could corral a burly man to help. Day after day, my friend had to clean up the human waste and food smears the mentally ill man, let's call him T, left behind. Vomit, urine, feces, and spit. Delivery people were afraid to step over him to make deliveries, and visitors to the building likewise. The church next door also cleaned up his human waste day after day. I saw T several times, as did many on the block, and he was always brushing at his arms. Neighbors heard him shouting sometimes, and muttering "No." Clearly T is ill and needs help, but his actions are also intimidating and frightening.

On July 1st, my friend was in despair,

and called me to ask for help. She asked if one of my imposing male friends could help get T to leave. I called a friend who lives nearby, and I asked my doorman, but neither was willing to get close in case T had COVID. My doorman said my friend should call the police. She called the 6th precinct, and they said they would send someone. I went over to my friend's place and we waited and waited for the police to arrive. Having polluted my friend's stoop, T was on the nearby church steps, another of his favorite places to hang and sleep. After waiting about 30 minutes, my friend called the police again. She explained the situation, that he had defecated and urinated on the stairs, and that she wanted to file a report. Again, the police said they would come, but didn't show up. After waiting for over two hours, she called again. This time, the dispatcher said, "We don't do homeless. You have to call the Homeless Helpline. We have budget cuts, we can't come over there."

I called the precinct myself while I strolled around the block. T was still on the church steps. The desk officer told me to call 911. I went back inside, and we talked about what to do. My friend was demoralized by the lack of police response, and reluctant to call 911. She was going to let it go, and decided to just clean up the mess since the police weren't responding. I helped her by handing her newspaper and other items while she cleaned up the feces and urine. It was getting late, so after we went in and had another discussion, I went downstairs to leave. I looked through the



HOMELESS AND MENTALLY ILL MAN terrorizes couple in their 80s and blocks passage to their West Village home. Photo by Karen Rempel.

glass doors of the building and saw that T was now spread out across the stoop. He had waited until my friend cleaned up his disgusting mess, and now he was ready to bunk down for the evening. At this point, my friend called 911.

We watched through the front window, and after a few minutes a patrol car went by. It didn't stop. I ran down and raced to the end of the block to speak to the officers. T had hidden in nearby bushes next to the church. I told the police he had been there a minute ago. They said they couldn't do anything unless they caught him blocking the entrance, but added, "Call us anytime. And shine a bright light on the stoop." My friend already had a 100-watt bulb shining on the stoop.

I went back in and told my friend what they said, and then went home, deeply troubled. I have no doubt T emerged from the bushes and went back on the stoop after I left. He continued his stoop shenanigans for another two weeks, during which time my friend repeatedly asked for assistance from an imposing male friend to

shoo T away. Finally T left for good.

We've all heard similar stories about increasing incidents where homeless people are frightening local residents. I was yelled at twice by mentally ill homeless men on the way to the grocery store last week, and one of them bashed and broke the exit door at LifeThyme. It seems that homelessness is an intractable problem in many cities in the US and Canada. I feel empathy for the people who are discarded by society, with nowhere to go and no one to help them. Homeless Services claims that they are available 24/7, but it seems their interventions take many months to complete, because it takes time to build trust, get to know the homeless people, and figure out the best way to help them. Obviously, people who are mentally ill, or struggling with addiction, or both, need more than just a place to sleep in a homeless shelter. These forgotten people need ongoing care in a safe place.

And what about our friends and neighbors? We all need a safe place to live.

THE 1930'S RETURN



THE OWNERS OF LILAC CHOCOLATES sent a batch of photos of people (some of them young) sleeping after business hours between the open outer door and the closed inner door at their shop on Bleecker Street and offer that this is a regular event and other stores on Bleecker are experiencing the same return to the 1930's depression scene. We guess this has to do with the mass firings of the pandemic but for young people to be doing this is something new. In the 1930s shanty towns made up of cardboard boxes and wood crates were all over—but they were all men and they were older. —George Capsis

'Murder Hornets and Killer Sharks Begin to Coordinate'



The Ellipse New Jersey: Turn Off Those Harsh Lights!



A NIGHT VIEW OF JERSEY CITY'S ELLIPSE apartment tower with the bright wave of lights, from Pier 45, Manhattan. Photo by Chris Manis.

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

This is a call to action!

In recent years, the entire Lower West Side of Manhattan has been plagued by the glaring harsh nighttime lights on the largest of the new apartment buildings that sprouted up in Jersey City. We call on you to write letters to the developer and the media to get them to turn off the damned lights.

Jersey City's transformation from an industrial railhead to a metropolis dates back over 30 years, with developers expanding this area's density, which currently claims to be the largest mixed-use community in the country. The city's growth is extraordinary, with 42 residential projects of 100 units or more each, totaling nearly 20,000 apartment units in five years, and another 13,400 units projected within 10 years after that, according to the Jersey City Division of Planning.

The LeFrak Organization's developments on Jersey City's northern Hudson River waterfront includes the 43-story Ellipse, with 363 apartments and 10,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor at 25 Park Lane South, Jersey City. Ellipse is the 17th residential building in the Newport section of Jersey City, with plans designed by acclaimed Miami-based architects Arquitectonica, approved back in 2007. One year after the leasing launch, the rental tower was fully leased, with a penthouse leased the day it hit the market for \$11,000 a month, and rent for a Studio at \$2500, 2-BRs for \$5000.

The LeFrak Organization is a New York City-based, privately-held, family-run company that owns, develops, and manages real estate. The company also operates a private equity fund, acquiring private businesses, a hedge fund that trades in securities, and an energy firm, through its holdings of oil and gas wells and mineral rights. The

company formerly specialized in no-frills residential developments, including Battery Park City, LeFrak City in Queens, and Newport in Jersey City. Main offices are at 40 West 57th Street, 23rd Floor New York, NY 10019, (212) 246-1172 Website info@lefrak.com Other offices are at 13720 45th Ave, Flushing, NY 11355 (718) 359-1746, and 9728 57th Ave, Flushing, NY 11368. Phone: (718) 271-0193.

Here is a letter example, if you choose to contact LeFrak and media.

Richard LeFrak
LeFrak Organization
40 West 57th Street, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10019

LeFrak Organization
13720 45th Ave, Flushing, NY 11355
Ellipse Leasing Office
121 Town Square Place,
Jersey City, NJ 07310

Various media outlets, local and national
RE: Ellipse bright lighting

Dear Mr. LeFrak and Associates:
The entire Lower West Side of Manhattan has been plagued by the glaring harsh nighttime lights on the Ellipse apartment building you have developed. The awful glare and reflection on the Hudson River nightly is an obnoxious and offensive insult to millions of people hoping to enjoy the skyline and tranquil scene on the waterfront. Do you have such harsh lighting on the west side of the building? Would your neighbors allow it to remain if you did?

NEW YORK CHEMISTS PHARMACY



Dina Andriotis, Chris Tsiamis, and Nikitas Andriotis (from left to right).

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Hear Ye! Hear Ye!



A CEDAR WAXWING shouts it out, “How ya doin’?” Photo by Keith Michael.

By Keith Michael

Congratulations to us. We’ve made it day by day to September of this most unusual year. And the next months are certainly poised not to be boring.

Contrariwise, one day is much like another for Millie. Sleep, walk, get a treat. Repeat. In her corgi life, I wonder if Millie has noticed any changes since lockdown in March.

Between the unrelenting heat of the late summer and the usual seasonal listlessness of our avian residents, most of my aural cues have been silenced. Birds are here but out of sight. Or maybe they too are wearing masks and social distancing.

On my morning walkabout to Hudson River Park, without Millie of course, the recent prime vocalists of second brood youngsters—young Robins, young Sparrows, young Starlings—and their parents, are absent. How did these tireless parents do it? They raised one family in the spring, then started again. Family Number Two is now on their own. The amount of energy it took to keep those demanding youngsters fed is unfathomable to me. Endless trips to the seed, bug, or worm store, and the kids

always wanting more.

One of my favorite sounds of this time of year is the toneless, repetitive thwack of the late Mockingbird chicks hidden away up in a tree, on a balcony, or in a window box.

As I cross West Street, a trio of Fish Crows is flying north with their characteristic nasal Nuh huh banter. They may be a posse bound to once again harass the adolescent Red-tailed Hawk that has entertained us this summer or a Peregrine Falcon patrolling the cornice of Westbeth. The only reliable way I can tell a Fish Crow from a Common Crow is this “crow with a cold” call. The Common Crow’s familiar, robust Caw Caw Caw has been, for some unknown reason, less common this year. Though I have heard a Common Raven’s unmistakable “nevermore” croaking from time to time, and have occasionally glimpsed one around Pier 40 and Little Island. I haven’t been able to figure out if or where they might have raised a family this summer.

The rattling of the summer cicadas greets me into the park while on the lawn a single silent Mourning Dove is parting the blades of grass to look for hidden tidbits.

One bird I’ve been disappointed not to see (or hear) so far this summer is the charming

American Goldfinch. The male is the very definition of yellow with black wings, tail, and forehead, spangled by white wing and tail accents—sartorial splendor. Adding to this sunniness, they have a cheerful bounding flight, and a boisterous four-syllable po-ta-to chip song that bounds along with them through the air. There’s still time this fall for a few to touch down for a snack. I hope that I’m there when they are.

I do stop by the Apple Garden hoping for some butterflies. Once again, it has not been a good year for them. I’ve occasionally seen both Tiger and Black Swallowtails, and a few Red Admirals, but Monarchs have been few and far between on the “ready, willing, and able” purple sprays of the butterfly bushes. I hope that there will still be a smattering passing through this fall on their migration to Mexico. Every time I see a Monarch, I am dumbfounded as to how it is possible for this nearly weightless bit of orange and black to traverse the vast distance between here and their over-wintering grounds thousands of miles away.

Looking out over the river, the usual cormorants and gulls are loafing on the pilings. No one is saying anything. A Common Tern surprises me by flying up right

in front of me and perching on the railing. We look at each other, and then the tern is off on its perpetual fishing expedition. I guess that I was a surprise too!

Above the racket of the cicadas, a thin conversational tsee tsee tsee drifts from the bosque of Honey Locust trees. Barely audible, but unmistakable (to me), I look up just in time to see a scribble of Cedar Waxwings take flight and head south over my head. A highlight of my spring Corona Birds was the flocks of dozens of them (eventually numbering in the hundreds), crested and sleek, tracing and retracing this same waterfront.

Heading south? Is the relentless turn of the seasons really upon us?

I think of Millie asleep at home. For her, one day like every other. Personally, I prefer the relentless change.

Visit keithmichaelnyc.com for links to ALL of my WestView articles, books, photographs, and the latest schedule of New York City WILD! urban adventures in nature outings throughout the five boroughs (currently on hold). Follow me on Instagram @newyorkcitywild for daily photos from around NYC.

Honor the Fallen by Transforming the Future

Statement from Diane Sare, Candidate US Senate

- NY 2022

In May of 2016, the late Lyndon LaRouche, in response to a question from a military veteran about how to honor the first responders who gave their lives on 9/11, said "We need to do something a little stronger: We have to set up some kind of memorial, a living memorial for people who died in that case. That would do something. Because the United States so far has failed to do anything about that—a few handfuls of people have been concerned with that. But we have to get the humiliation expressed by the people as a whole, for their failure to defend life, human life, when that life was needed."



Diane Sare, Candidate US Senate-NY 2022 Photo: SteveMack Photography

Nineteen years after that fateful day, we have yet to get to the bottom of what actually occurred, in order to ensure that such acts of terror and violence never occur again. Meanwhile, The world has not become safer, and people have not become better. We have nearly 3 million

veterans of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq since 9/11 and 22 of them are committing suicide every day.

2020 is also the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. President Franklin Roosevelt had a vision of the post war world which would be a world "free from want, and free from fear," a world of "freedom of speech, and freedom to worship God" according to one's beliefs. Somehow the attacks of 9/11 became the pretext to drive us further from those freedoms.

The memory of that fateful day in 2001 must become a turning point for our nation and for mankind. On that day, thousands of people, did heroic things, and acted selflessly to aid others. President Putin of Russia, called President Bush to not only offer condolences, but to inform him that Russia was taking down its automatic security and defense systems to make sure that global war was not accidentally triggered as a result of terrorist action.

Russia, which lost 27 million people in World War II, also donated the Teardrop Memorial, which stands in Bayonne, NJ to this day. On the 10th anniversary of 9/11 the Russian Red Army Chorus sang "God Bless America" to the NYPD Ceremonial Unit at a military tattoo in Quebec City, in a performance even more moving today because the Russian baritone soloist Grigory

Osipov was among the 64 musicians and dancers who died when their plane crashed in the Black Sea on December 25th 2016.

Imagine a future where the young people turning 19 this year could tell their children and grandchildren, "Finally, 19 years after 9/11 the American people grew weary of perpetual war, perpetual poverty, and perpetual surveillance and decided to fulfill the vision of FDR."

The Schiller Institute, founded by Helga Zepp LaRouche is holding a very special conference dedicated to convening a summit of the leaders of the world's most powerful nations where the great problems facing humanity can be addressed: the need for a global health platform to prevent pandemics, the need for a dialogue of cultures and poverty eradication to end war, a shared mission to explore the solar system and discover solutions for the many challenges facing mankind. This virtual conference will be joined by thousands of people from all over the world for two days September 5th and 6th. William Binney and I will be participating in that, and would like to invite you to join us. There is no fee to register at www.SchillerInstitute.com. It's time for mankind to move to a new paradigm before it's too late.

William Binney, former National Security Agency official, on 9/11:

"Leave no question unanswered."

When a Danish journalist asked William Binney in late August about the breaking story, "Intelligence scandal in Denmark: Defense Intelligence has been giving massive amounts of raw electronic data to the NSA," he responded: "This is exactly the problem I saw, that NSA, CIA, FBI and Bush, it started with Bush, Cheney, [former NSA director Michael] Hayden and [former CIA chief George] Tenet. They set up this process in 2001, and then they extended it to various other countries in the world, including the Five Eyes [U.S., U.K. Canada, Australia, New Zealand]." "In 2001" refers to the period immediately following the destruction of the World Trade Center, when a surveillance system that Binney had designed, and had been prevented from installing to protect American citizens, was then appropriated and used to conduct unwarranted surveillance against American citizens.

William Binney was the former technical director of the World Geopolitical and Military Analysis and Reporting section of the National Security Agency (NSA), where he worked for 30 years, until he resigned after the catastrophic intelligence failure of 9/11. Binney, whose work has been featured in documentaries such as PBS Frontline's two-part "United States of Secrets" and the movie "A Good American," was the designer of the "ThinThread" security system, which may well have prevented the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center from occurring, had he and his associates not been deliberately prevented from deploying it. "But the problem also was that it was a system that would've uncovered all of the criminal activity of our government employees and our secret intelligence agencies, and also others in the

world, too," Binney said. Instead, "universal surveillance" capabilities that he personally designed to protect Americans from terrorist attacks were deployed after 9/11 to illegally monitor virtually every citizen of the United States in possession of any electronic device.

"Denmark, I knew was involved, quite a long time ago," Binney continued. "And the point is, they are all basically pulling a sham on everybody on the planet. It has never been a problem to be able to find bad guys without giving up security anywhere. We proved it in 2000, and also 1999, was the earliest we were showing that, that it was possible to do that."

The 3000 that died at Ground Zero, the thousands more that died from medical complications originating from 9/11, and the hundreds of thousands, even millions, killed in combat and as "collateral damage" in its aftermath worldwide, deserve justice. The living, their surviving descendants, deserve the truth. Binney has further infuriated the "secret government" apparatus by asserting that he can prove that the 2016 hack of the Democratic National Committee, never occurred as represented.

"The Guccifer 2.0 data that we looked at, we clearly showed the speeds of downloads of that data to a thumb drive were possible, but it was not possible to send that



Former NSA Technical Director William Binney answering questions about the failure to prevent 9/11. Photo: CCYB-SA Miquel Tavera

data across the internet to Russia or anywhere else outside the United States, or even inside the United States to a lot of places. They couldn't get it because they didn't have these high-speed lines to carry that kind of rate transfer. We proved that. Not only did we show the speeds that were involved, but we also showed that you couldn't do it. We tried to do our transfer from Albania, from Netherlands, from the U.K.. The further east we got, the less speed we got. We

couldn't achieve the higher speeds going further east; it went down," Binney said.

Binney is now conducting what he calls the "Leave No Questions Unanswered" virtual tour. He has challenged anyone to prove him wrong. He has yet to hear back from former CIA Director Mike Pompeo, who interviewed him at the request of President Donald Trump on the "Russiagate" matter a full three years ago. Asked if he fears for his safety, Binney responds, "they're not after me—I'm after them."

Binney will be appearing at the virtual conference, "War Drive Towards Armageddon or A New Paradigm United Towards the Common Aims of Mankind" on Saturday, September 5, at the Schiller Institute. To RSVP for that conference, visit www.schillerinstitute.com.

Join: The Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry on:



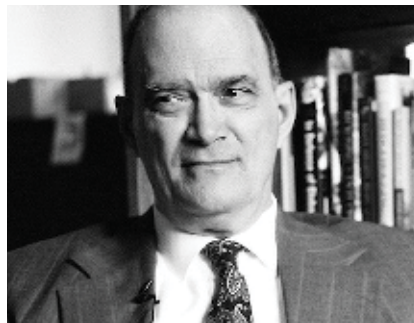
- 1. September 10th,** Jason Goodman's Crowd Source The Truth program where a **new Grand Jury Petition will be announced** with host Jason Goodman, and guests Dr. Meryl Nass, Dr. Graeme McQueen, Mick Harrison, Esq. and David Meiswinkle, Esq.
- 2. September 11th 8:15 p.m.,** Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth program with Richard Gage, Mick Harrison Esq., Barbara Honegger and David Meiswinkle, Esq.
- 3. September 13th 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.** Lawyers' Committee Zoom Conference with block buster speakers including Frances Boyle, Bill Binney, Ray McGovern, Dr. Meryl Nass, Dr. Graeme McQueen, and others **"Recognizing and Pushing Back the Police State"** (Go to web site Lcfor911.org Saturday night/Sunday morning for zoom link will be posted on Home page.)



Dr. Francis Boyle

Dr. Francis Boyle is an American human rights lawyer and professor of international law at the University of Illinois College of Law.

Dr. Boyle served on the board of directors of Amnesty International, as a consultant to the American Friends Service Committee, and on the Advisory Board for the Council for Responsible Genetics. He drafted the US domestic implementing legislation for the Biological Weapons Convention, known as the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989, that was approved unanimously by both Houses of the US Congress and signed into law by President George H.W. Bush. He served as an adviser to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) between 1987-89 and 1991-93.



William Binney

William Binney is a former intelligence official with the United States National Security Agency (NSA) and whistleblower. He retired on October 31, 2001, after more than 30 years with the agency.

In the 1990s, he co-founded a unit on automating signals intelligence with NSA research chief Dr. John Taggart. Binney's NSA career culminated as Technical Leader for intelligence in 2001. He has expertise in intelligence analysis, traffic analysis, systems analysis, knowledge management, and mathematics (including set theory, number theory, and probability). William Binney is an outspoken critic of illegal domestic surveillance programs and is the creator of Thin Thread – a surveillance system that would protect US Citizens privacy rights.



Ray McGovern

Ray McGovern is a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer turned political activist. McGovern was a CIA analyst from 1963 to 1990, and in the 1980s chaired National Intelligence Estimates and prepared the President's Daily Brief. He received the Intelligence Commendation Medal at his retirement, returning it in 2006 to protest the CIA's involvement in torture. McGovern's post-retirement work includes commenting for Consortium News, RT, and Sputnik News, among other outlets, on intelligence and foreign policy issues. In 2003 he co-founded Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS).



Dr. Meryl Nass

Meryl Nass is an internal medicine physician who is the first person to have shown that an epidemic ascribed to natural causes was due to biological warfare. This involved the use of anthrax during the Rhodesian Civil War. She has testified to 7 Congressional committees on anthrax, biodefense, vaccines, Gulf War Syndrome. She has written widely on the anthrax letters, Ebola and the Swine Flu and Covid-19 pandemics.



Dr. Graeme MacQueen

Dr. Graeme MacQueen is a retired professor of religious studies at McMaster University, Ontario where he taught from 1974 to 2003. He was also the founder and director of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster, which was active in several war zones. He has served as a co-editor of the Journal of 9/11 Studies, an organizer of the Toronto Hearings on 9/11, and a member of the 9/11 Consensus Panel.



**NYFD Commissioner
Chris Gioia**

Christopher Gioia, a 30-year member of the Franklin Square and Munson Fire Department has served as Chief from 2007-2012. He is also a veteran of the Marine Corps as well as an EMT for 25 years.

Jason Goodman Show: It will be live streamed and will be activated for 9/10 show.

Thursday September 10th 2020. 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. eastern time
<https://youtu.be/bpVsuYW8jFQ>

The Lawyer's Committee Plays an Historic Role: will announce a Second 9/11 Grand Jury Petition submission on September 10th

The Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry plays a unique historic role in the 9/11 Truth Movement. Unlike any other organization we are vigorously addressing the horrible 9/11 crimes through investigations and the creation of Grand Jury petitions. We want to hold accountable those responsible for the murder of the innocent. We are uniquely qualified to pursue this goal because we have gathered a remarkable team of attorneys and other professionals with the critical expertise and the patriotic passion to carry out the mission.

We will create five Grand Jury petitions concerning 9/11 crimes which will be presented to the United States Attorney, one of which has already been submitted in New York City containing 56 pages and 60 Exhibits conclusive of explosives and controlled demolition being used to destroy the Towers. This Grand Jury Petition is presently being litigated in the Southern District Court in Manhattan. A Second Grand Jury Petition is about to be submitted and will be announced live on the Jason Goodman show on September 10th.

The list of Grand Jury Petitions to be created includes:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. The World Trade Center attacks | 4. Shanksville |
| 2. Anthrax attacks | 5. The Pentagon attack. |
| 3. Government Misconduct/Obstruction, before, during and after 9/11 | |

We will continue to advance these Grand Jury actions, but we can only do so with your help in the form of financial support. Your financial contributions allows us to continue the fight. Please check out our web site: Lcfor911.org. and join the September 13th Zoom program with amazing speakers. The Zoom link to access the **September 13th program** will be posted on Lcfor911.org Saturday night 9/12/20

Thank you.

David R. Meiswinkle
President/Executive Director
Lawyers' Committee for 9/11 Inquiry
Lcfor911.org

The Lawyers' Committee for 9-11 Inquiry Board of Directors



Ed Asner

Ed Asner is a Vice President of the Lawyers' Committee and long time truth activist. He's an American actor, voice actor and a former president of the Screen Actors Guild. He is primarily known for his role as Lou Grant during the 1970s and early 1980s, on both The Mary Tyler Moore Show and its spin-off series Lou Grant..



David R. Meiswinkle Esq.

David R. Meiswinkle, Esq. President/ Executive Director of the Lawyers' Committee, is a criminal defense attorney, retired police officer of 23 years, and former U.S. Army veteran. Mr. Meiswinkle was a panelist at the unprecedented 9/11 Justice in Focus Conference.



William Jacoby Esq.

William Jacoby, Esq. is an Attorney admitted to the bar of NY, now retired. He has worked mostly in management positions in the nonprofit, public, and private sectors. He has his M.P.A. degree from the Univ. of Pittsburgh, J. D. from Duquesne Law School, and a B. A. in Government from Dartmouth College.



Mick Harrison Esq.

Mick Harrison, Esq., Director of Litigation, is a Public Interest Attorney, graduate summa cum laude of the University of the District of Columbia School of law. Attorney Harrison has a national practice focused on cases that involve whistleblower protection, government accountability, corporate fraud and false claims, and dangers to public health or the environment.



Jane Clark Esq.

Jane Clark, Treasurer, is in private practice handling Texas Workers' Compensation cases, Probate, and general legal practice including personal injury, collections, domestic relations, and criminal law with 26 years experience in these areas.

She has her law degree from the University Of Idaho Law School (Moscow), a Masters Degree from Texas A & M University in Biochemistry & Biophysics (College Station), and worked for the famed Professor Emeritus Dr. Joseph Nagyvary from Budapest, Hungary on cancer research at TAMU.



Barbara Honegger

Barbara Honegger, M.S. has served as White House Policy Analyst and Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, Director of the Attorney General's Law Review at the Dept. of Justice, and for more than a decade was the Senior Military Affairs Journalist at the Naval Postgraduate School, the premiere science, technology and national security affairs graduate research university of the Department of Defense.



John O'Kelly Esq.

John O'Kelly is a New York attorney, Member of the Lawyers' Committee Board of Directors, and co-counsel in the lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York which seeks to compel the U.S. Attorney to present the Lawyers' Committee's evidence regarding the use of explosives to destroy three World Trade Center buildings on 9/11 to a special grand jury.

Supported by Truth Action Project (TAP)



Justice Rising: An International 9/11 Conference September 11-13

The continuing struggle for
9/11 justice and the
destructive trajectory of
the post-9/11 world.

WATCH ONLINE!

JUSTICE FRIDAY

The Long Road to Justice | 6 to 6:45 PM Eastern

The conference gets underway with opening remarks by Richard Gage, AIA, who will look back at where AE911Truth has been and where it is headed. A video showing highlights of the non-profit's organization's 14-year history will be shown.

A UK Family Fights for Truth | 6:45 to 7:30 PM

Matt Campbell explains the fight to get a new inquest into the death of his brother Geoff.

Closing in on NIST | 7:30 to 8:15 PM

Discussing the "request for correction" submitted to NIST in April will be Ted Walter and Tony Szamboti from AE911Truth and Mick Harrison from the Lawyers' Committee or 9/11 Inquiry. The request points out falsehoods in NIST's 2008 report on Building 7's destruction and calls on the agency to correct them. Failure by NIST to comply opens it up to a possible lawsuit.

The Expanding Legal Front | 8:15 to 9 PM

Harrison is joined by David Meiswinkle and Barbara Honegger (also from the Lawyers' Committee) to address legal efforts to challenge the official story of 9/11, including both the Grand Jury petition filed with the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the lawsuit filed by the 9/11 family members, AE911Truth, and the Lawyers' Committee against the FBI for its failure to investigate 9/11 evidence.

SCIENCE SATURDAY

Lights, Camera, Building 7 | 3 to 4 PM Eastern

Day two begins with a discussion of the new AE911Truth documentary SEVEN with director Dylan Avery (also the director of Loose Change), producer Kelly David (who is chief operating officer for AE911Truth), and Dr. Leroy Hulsey, whose University of Alaska Fairbanks study on Building 7 is the subject of the film.

Global Failure: Evidence Engineers Can No Longer Ignore | 4 to 5 PM

Richard Gage and fellow AE911Truth board member Roland Angle will talk about the ongoing efforts to inform the engineering profession about the World Trade Center evidence.

Reflections from Three Pioneers of the 9/11 Truth Movement | 5 to 6 PM

Concluding the day are three 9/11 Truth Movement pioneers — David Ray Griffin, Niels Harrit, and Steven Jones — who will reflect on their efforts to expose the truth about this world-changing event. Neither Griffin nor Jones has spoken in public about 9/11 for several years.

BIG PICTURE SUNDAY

False Flags and Wars of Terror | 6 to 7 PM Eastern

Swiss historian Daniele Ganser will discuss false flags and resulting wars of terror.

9/11 and the Advancing Police State | 7 to 8 PM

Constitutional activist John Whitehead, founder of The Rutherford Institute, will address the subject of the advancing police state in the U.S.

The Library of Alexandria is on Fire: Internet Censorship from 9/11 to Today | 8 to 9 PM

The final day of the conference concludes with James Corbett of The Corbett Report, who will tackle ever-worsening internet censorship.

THE FIGHT FOR 9/11 JUSTICE

Online conference highlights effort to reopen inquest into the death of UK man killed in the North Tower

By Craig McKee

The fight for justice for a UK man killed on 9/11 is just one of the highlights of an important online conference being presented September 11-13 by Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth.

In addition to Matt Campbell, whose brother Geoff died in the North Tower of the World Trade Center, the Justice Rising conference features among its speakers some of the most respected 9/11 researchers from around the world. These include Richard Gage, AIA, the founder of AE911Truth; Dr. Leroy Hulsey, whose computer modeling study has proven that fires did not bring down WTC Building 7; and three pioneers of the 9/11 Truth Movement: David Ray Griffin, Niels Harrit, and Steven Jones.

An inquest into Geoff Campbell's death concluded in 2013 that he was killed when hijacked planes were flown by al-Qaeda terrorists into each of the Twin Towers, causing their

collapse. Since that finding, Geoff's brother Matt has been pushing to get a new inquest under Section 13 of the UK Coroners Act of 1988.

The Campbell family's application will be based on "the discovery of new facts or evidence." According to existing case law, substantial evidence that was not considered at the first inquest constitutes "new evidence." This would satisfy the Coroners Act in the UK and pave the way for a new inquest. If granted by the Attorney General for England and Wales, evidence that the three WTC towers were brought down in controlled demolitions could be introduced, and the coroner could rule that this was indeed the cause of their destruction. This would be a dramatic breakthrough for those who have been demanding a new investigation into what destroyed the three WTC towers.

With fundraising help from AE911Truth, Matt has hired barrister Nick Stanage to represent the Campbell family. Stanage specializes in human rights, judicial review, public inquiries, inquests, and complaints against the police.

GUEST SPEAKERS



RICHARD GAGE, AIA



MATT CAMPBELL



TED WALTER



TONY SZAMBOTI, ME



MICK HARRISON, ESQ.



BARBARA HONEGGER, MS



DAVID MEISWINKLE, ATTORNEY



DYLAN AVERY, FILMMAKER



KELLY DAVID, COO



LEROY HULSEY, PH.D., P.E., S.E.



ROLAND ANGLE, CE



DR. DAVID RAY GRIFFIN



NIELS HARRIT, PH.D.



STEVEN JONES, PH.D.



DANIELE GANSER, PH.D.



JOHN WHITEHEAD, ATTORNEY



JAMES CORBETT, JOURNALIST

AE911TRUTH.ORG/JUSTICERISING

**ARCHITECTS
& ENGINEERS
for 9/11 TRUTH**

West Village Original: Andrew Berman



ANDREW BERMAN, above, became aware at an early age of the perils of big public projects. Photo credit: GVSHP.

By Michael D. Minichiello

This month's honorary West Village Original is Andrew Berman, Executive Director of Village Preservation (formerly GVSHP) since 2002. Berman was born in the Bronx and grew up in Co-Op City. In 2013, he was named to the Vanity Fair "Hall of Fame" for his preservation work. Berman attended Bronx High School of Science and then Wesleyan University, where he received a degree in Art History with a focus on architecture. He has lived in Hells Kitchen since 1991.

Growing up in the Bronx, Andrew Berman became aware at an early age of the perils of big public projects. "My mother's family lived in one of the first apartment buildings demolished by Robert Moses to make way for the Cross Bronx Expressway," he says. "I heard a lot about that. There was definitely a consciousness about how that and other projects by Moses destroyed neighborhoods. My father was a hardware salesman who spent his days driving throughout the five boroughs and sometimes I would go with him. He had a very broad knowledge of the City: its different areas, what they were like, who lived there, and how they had changed. I think I absorbed a lot of that from him and, no doubt, my parents influenced my interest in preservation."

It wasn't long after college that Berman started an eight-year tenure with New York politician Tom Duane, who represented Greenwich Village, among other neighborhoods. It was, he admits, experience that turned out to be "incredibly useful" in his current position. "In order to be successful in New York City—in terms of historical preservation—you have to bring together both knowledge and history of the built environment," he says. "You also need to be effective at community organizing and understand how the levers of government affect these issues. You could have the most wonderfully argued and researched proposal for landmarking a building, but if you don't know how to organize people to lobby for it or understand how the system works in terms of the decision-making process, you're

not very likely to be successful."

Last year, GVSHP became Village Preservation to better reflect its mission. "We shortened and broadened the name to reflect the fact that we serve Greenwich Village and the East Village too," Berman explains. "And because our mission now extends beyond what you would traditionally call historical preservation to small business and cultural institution preservation as well. It was kind of an organic extension because these were things we cared about." As to his leadership of Village Preservation, Berman claims that it's a "dream job." "I actually get to do something that I love as my job and as the main focus of my professional life," he says. "I find the history, architecture, and culture of our neighborhoods to be wonderful. And I'm still learning new things. There are more layers to be peeled back and more information to be found. Finally, I get to work with a really engaged community that cares about things."

Since this is WestView, we encouraged Berman to express any special feelings about our neighborhood in particular. "I love the West Village," he readily admits. "It remains one of the most unique, charming, magical places not just in New York, but in the world. It faces incredible challenges, though, from enormous development pressure to the fact that it's become so incredibly expensive. I guess that's a validation that it is so desirable, which is what we've fought for. But you also don't want it to become a place that doesn't remain accessible to the broader world. I think many of the new residents, as much as the old, feel that way too. No one is moving here because they want to be barricaded from the rest of the world. They move here because there's a community that's a mixture of people, activities, places to shop, and things to do and learn."

So, does Berman feel the influx of monied residents into the Village will allow it to stay true to what makes it such a special place? "Certainly some people of great means who move into the neighborhood aren't really invested in the wonderful qualities of the community," he says. "And then there are those who very much are. Regarding preservation, though, there can be good and bad outcomes from the investment of money and there can be good and bad outcomes from the lack of money. I don't think money is by itself either the problem or the solution. Rather, it's how it's used. The West Village has always been about a sense of community. Maintaining this, along with a level of diversity, is definitely important to the soul of the neighborhood."

Do you know a long-time resident who would make a good "West Village Original"? Contact michael.minichiello@gmail.com

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All photos by Maggie Berkvist.

A View from the Kitchen

By Isa Covo

More than in any other times in recent years, we depend on others: The entire hospital staff giving all their skills and effort to help all who need them, and the pain they suffer when they cannot succeed even as their own lives are at risk. The bus drivers and train conductors who with good reason, are at risk of contagion, the store clerks, the restaurant staff, the cleaners, police officers, firefighters and more, too many to list here. We must thank them all, as well as, we the public, protect them and us by taking very simple steps that are not even necessary to repeat here; following those directives because, like Blanche Dubois said, we "depend on the kindness of strangers."

In my life many strangers showed me kindness that I should never forget:

- The gentleman who saw us, my husband and I, stranded in our disabled car in pouring rain trying to get help before the wide spread of mobile phones, who saw us from the opposite lane, exited the road to offer us assistance with his own.
- The gentleman who helped me up when I stumbled and fell on one of those uneven New York sidewalks, and walked beside me for some steps to see if I was OK.
- The well dressed gentleman noticing my distress as I was frantically searching through my purse for my misplaced MetroCard, offered his own, and waited patiently as I continued searching to see if I could find it. With profuse thanks, and for all our sakes, I accepted his offer.
- The lady who waited with me on a dark street until my wayward hired drive arrived. We had such a pleasant conversation.
- When my shopping cart, hitting a bump, overturned and some produce spilled, he came to my help to collect it while other pedestrians walked by indifferent.
- In Washington DC I was lost somewhere, under a blazing sun without any visible means of transportation and scant car traffic, when suddenly a car stopped and a lady popped her head out the window to ask me if I needed help. I accepted gratefully, and as she took me to my destination we chatted amiably as if we had known each other for years. We separated like sisters after a warm hug.
- The young woman who offered her seat in the subway who, as I was protesting, said to me firmly: "I insist." I sat down.

There are many more instances of kindness too long to list, but there is one encounter that touched me particularly and I still remember the way I felt, which, happened a long time ago, as I was summoned as a juror. After the jury selection we were dismissed and told to return the next morning. Meanwhile I had chatted with some prospective jurors, among them two Black ladies.

The next morning, like most of the panel, I arrived before the courtroom opened.

There was scant sitting space outside the courtroom, but the two ladies were sitting on a small bench. As I walked in they gestured me to join them: "Come, come," one said, "we saved you a seat." I was of course grateful for their kindness, but what I still keep in my heart is the fact that IT NEVER CROSSED THEIR MINDS THAT I WOULD REFUSE. I can't remember their names, and probably they do not remember mine either, or even the story, but I shall never forget it.

Most of those strangers were Black.



Photo by Isa Covo.

Cream Shortcakes

INGREDIENTS

2 cups cake flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
5 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon unsalted butter melted to brush the tops (optional)
¼ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon vanilla

DIRECTIONS

- Heat the oven to 425 degrees. Set the rack in the middle of the oven. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl sift the flour, baking powder salt and sugar.
- Cut the cold 5 tablespoons of butter into small cubes, and with a pastry blender or with fingertips blend it into the flour until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the cold cream and stir with a fork or a pastry blender until combined. Knead lightly until the mixture forms a dough.
- Pat the dough into an even circle, a half-inch thick.
- Cut rounds with a 2 ½-inch biscuit cutter. Gather the remaining dough and shape into a round and continue cutting the shortcakes until all the dough is used, while progressively arranging them on the lined baking sheet.
- Brush the tops with the melted butter, if used.
- Bake the shortcakes for 20 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.

Yield: 6-8 shortcakes

Employers Likely to Face a Wave of COVID-19 Class Action Litigation

By Samuel G. Dobre, Esq. and Gregory B. Reilly, Esq.

As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to drastically impact the U.S., class action lawsuits have been on the rise. Despite court closures, class action filings have increased and are expected to continue.

The risk to companies of class and collective action proceedings has been amplified. Below are the key areas that have already flooded the court system as well as issues that we expect to drive class action litigation arising from the pandemic:

WAGE AND HOUR: Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), nonexempt employees must be paid for all time worked including overtime rate for any hours over 40 in a given work week.

OFF-THE-CLOCK SAFETY PRECAUTIONS: Due to the impact of COVID-19, many employers require new tasks before or after work, including, but not limited to: temperature screening, health assessments and/or cleaning of workspaces. Class action litigation has been filed about whether time taken for these precautions is compensable time.

OFF-THE-CLOCK WORK FROM HOME: Many employees are now working remotely, which means they may be working outside of regular business hours. Again, there is a risk of class action litigation should employers fail to accurately record and pay for this time worked including work performed during any unpaid meal or break periods.

WORKER CLASSIFICATION: Independent contractors are generally not eligible for unemployment compensation or state-mandated paid leave during the pandemic. This has caused some workers and state governments to challenge independent contractor classification so these workers may obtain benefits.

For example: Rideshare drivers have filed class action lawsuits against Uber Technologies and Lyft Inc. alleging that they have

been misclassified and are owed pandemic-related paid leaves or unemployment compensation.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION AND DISCRIMINATION: Class claims that relate to reopening businesses may include disability discrimination claims, retaliation claims, whistleblower claims and privacy matters relating to COVID-19 diagnoses.


EMPLOYER CONSIDERATIONS: Employers must evaluate the legal implications as well as how their actions might be viewed in the “court of public opinion.”

WARN ACT: The federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (the WARN Act) requires advance notice to employees in instances of mass layoffs and qualified plant closings. Mass layoffs due to the devastating effects of the pandemic may lead to class-action suits.

While employers have the ability to assert the “unforeseeable” exemption to the law’s notice requirements, the exemption remains untried in federal courts in the context of COVID-19. Further, it will only become more difficult for employers to avail themselves of the unforeseeable business circumstances defense as more time passes since the novel coronavirus hit the U.S. in March.

Though it may be a challenge for plaintiffs to obtain class certification, once a case becomes certified, class action lawsuits have the power to inflict severe damage to businesses. Employers should take immediate action to reduce risk and exposure by reviewing wage and hour practices, record keeping procedures, contracts, handbooks and other policies to ensure that they are in compliance.


Please contact Bond, Schoeneck & King’s Class and Collective Action Litigation attorneys if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the potential scope of exposure, mitigation and/or other legal developments arising from class action litigation.



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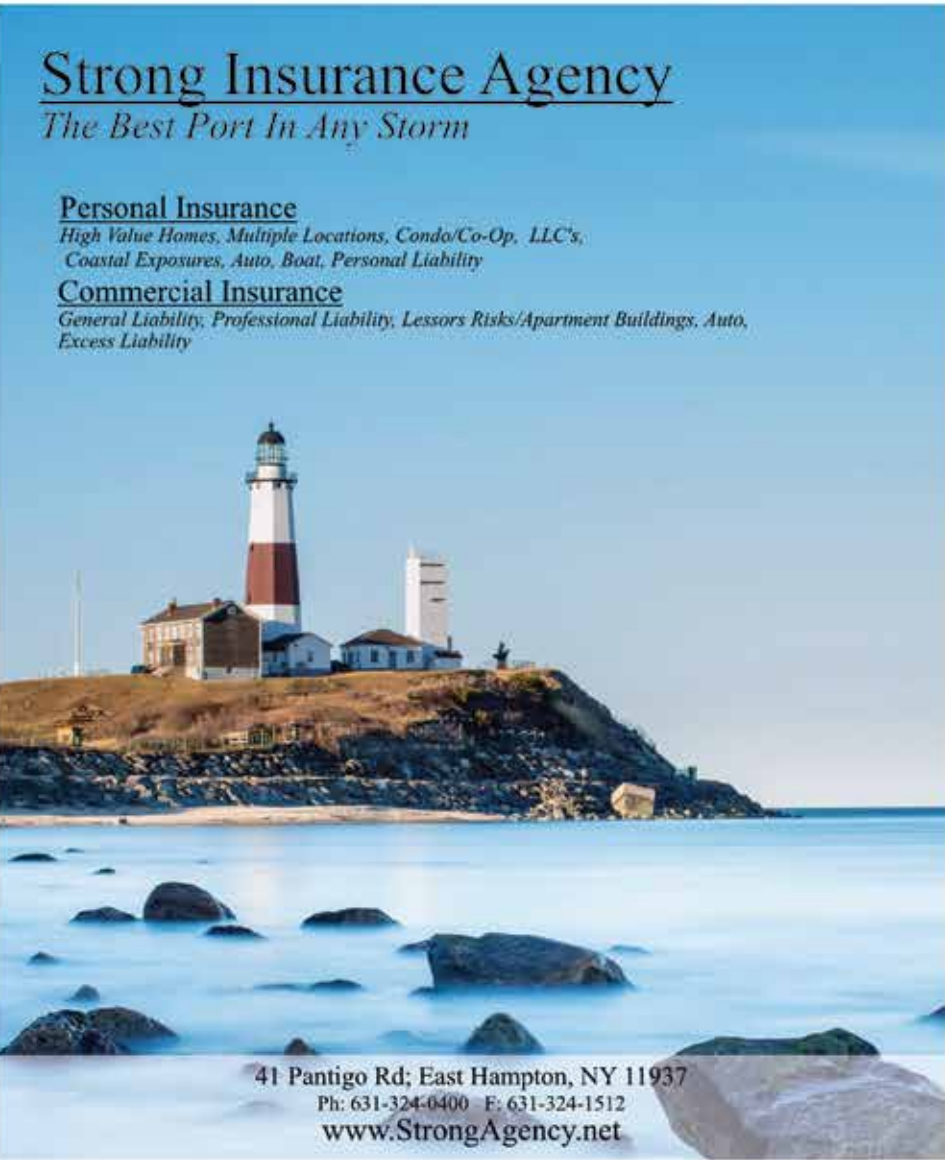
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Bond’s **COVID-19 Recovery for Business** is a multidisciplinary practice supporting businesses and organizations as they resume operations. Bond can help you assess the shifting legal landscape, avoid potential hazards and identify opportunities to get back to work safely and efficiently.

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HISTORIC MAPS OF MANHATTAN: 1775

By Brian J Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

I collected maps from the Brooklyn Historical Society, and made notes to relate them to Greenwich Village and waterfront changes.

To do justice to the maps and to the readers, we present one map at a time, so that they can be reprinted at a larger size that is more legible. Each map captures a moment in the development of Manhattan. Reader comments are always appreciated.

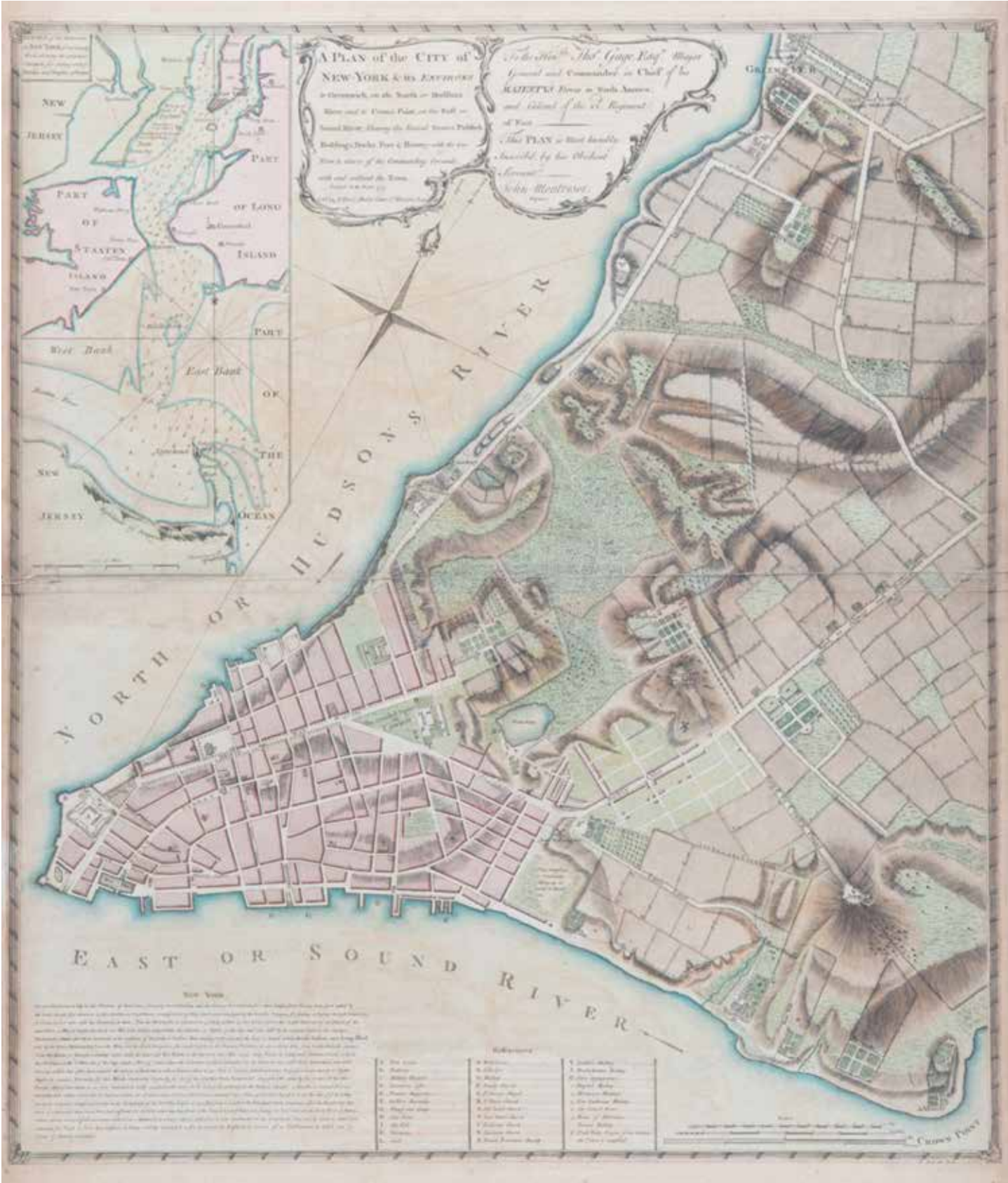
THIS MAP WAS ORIGINALLY DRAWN IN 1775, by John Montresor, dedicated to Major Gen. Thos. Gage. It includes descriptive notes, “References,” and existing streets, some buildings, farms, docks, and names of property owners and natural landmarks, listed and located.

Of the few streets named here, ‘Broad Way’ ends at the future City Hall Park, ‘Bowry Lane’ begins east of the ‘Fresh Water’ (Collect Pond) and soon becomes the ‘Road to Albany and Boston.’ The waterfront road to Greenwich is not named; and at the end of the “Road to the Obelisk,” I wonder what happened to ‘Gen. Wolf’s obelisk’ in Greenwich?

Relief (steep slopes, hills) are shown by hachures. This map was “Engraved from the original map by John Montrésor for D. T. Valentines manual for 1855 by G. Hayward 120 Water St. N.Y.”

Cecily Dyer, Special Collections Librarian and Manager of Reference and Outreach, said “Our online catalog is part of a consortium hosted by NYU that also includes N-YHS (New-York Historical Society), and the catalog has one record for both our copy of the map and N-YHS’s copy, even though it appears that their copy is an 1855 reproduction while ours is the original from 1775. The inclusion of the note about the N-YHS copy here is a bit confusing, and hopefully we can address the issue soon.” Credit: Maps at Brooklyn Historical Society

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “green” architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, is co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee, and is a journalist for architecture subjects.



Free Groceries continued from page 8

resident theater company Rattlestick.

It is important for the Village’s visual artists to be able to show their work at this time when many commercial and even not-for-profit galleries are closed. Revelation Gallery, St John’s own art gallery, has uninterrupted shows by Village artists this season: Maria Carla Genovesi (of Parsons School of Design) in September, Joyce Rezendes (of Westbeth) in October, Kazuya Morimoto (of W 11th St) in

November, and Barbara Braun in December. Kazuya Morimoto, known as ‘Kaz’ to Villagers, and a familiar sight on Village streets, is now busy painting the new Paris-like, table-lined, diner-filled streets of the Village for his November show.

As restaurants have now lost their indoor seating and some have very little outdoor space, St John’s has offered its lovely interior garden, St Benedict’s Courtyard, to its neighbor Taïm, the Israeli falafely on

Waverly Place. Taïm customers can enjoy shade, quiet, free wi-fi, the gentle splash of the water-fountain, and the chirping of St John’s two blue budgerigars as they eat. The courtyard is open to everyone (not just Taïm customers) between 11am and 3pm Monday to Friday.

Significantly also, when so many churches in the Village are closed, St John’s has re-opened for in-person worship, with a Eucharist (mass) at 6:15pm every Wednesday, followed by ‘distance drinks’ (champagne and soft drinks) in St Benedict’s

Courtyard: a time of prayer and fellowship much needed these days.

St John’s has done all this while at the same time experiencing, as have all churches and not-for-profits, a steep diminishment in its own revenues due to the pandemic. If you feel you might be able to help with either the grocery program or the concert-streaming (the two costliest of the new programs), please do be in touch (all details are on our website: stjvny.org) or pop in (the church is open from 11am to 3pm Monday to Friday) and say hello.

Boarded-Up is Canvas of Art Expression



NEW YORK CITY, JULY 12, 2020: In this photo an artist was kind enough to pose in front of her art work, tagged “@erinkostudios”. She was very friendly, and like all the other artists spoken to, very proud of their work. In the streets of Soho, artists came out and expressed their views through art. *Photo by Christiana Cintron.*

By Brian J Pape, AIA

A phenomenon of the pandemic, or a response to vandalism?

We are hard-pressed to decipher between them as we passed the boarded up business windows throughout the city.

First, the COVID-19 virus spreads throughout the world; governments began to lock down their cities in efforts to contain the spread and save lives. My city too was now locked down, and at first, it was just locked doors and gates.

Then, with the tragic death of George Floyd at the knees of police, many people were inspired to demand social justice. They held many rallies and went out to protest, peacefully. Unfortunately, some people took advantage of those crowds and used violence as a form of expression.

Soon many businesses were vandalized and looted, and they were worried when the next protest would be, and what might happen; they wanted to be ready, so they used plywood to board up their business windows. Block after block, all you could see was plywood; the streets looked like they were ready for a hurricane.

During this time, we began to see, on the plywood, some graffiti and some drawings. As the days went on, the art became more elaborate and bold.

I made an acquaintance with a photojournalist who is inspired to document and share what is happening around us, including at this time of a pandemic. I soon learned that she had talked to the street artists and photographed their art.

Here are excerpts from my interviews with Christiana Cintron.

“I took photos of the workers putting up the plywood. I photographed drawings in my part of town. I was casually telling a friend about the artwork, and she told me

that her neighborhood of Soho was covered up in drawings. When we parted, I decided to take a walk over there, in spite of being tired, and the 90-degree hot humid weather.

Block after block, the artists had made the most beautiful guerilla artwork, non-commissioned artwork, works of expression. It was truly amazing.”

“As I photographed these artworks, I knew that I was doing something very important, because who knew how long they would even be there? At times other guerilla artists will draw on top of someone else’s drawing, never mind also that the business owners themselves would remove the plywood. Unfortunately, all that great art is gone, except for the photos I and other people took to document a time when many talented artists came out to express their values, their beliefs in social justice and equality—that they told the world “we are here.” These artists used the plywood as their CANVAS, as a means of social justice expression. They took to the streets, to change the world.”

The time came when businesses felt it was safe to remove the plywood and once again open their doors. No one had been paid or commissioned to enliven our barren street walls during the lock-down; perhaps no one got to preserve the artwork. But we who stayed in the city got to enjoy our own outdoor art galleries for many months.

Christiana Cintron is working on a photo book of her work. She can be contacted at rockingyoudesigns@gmail.com

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “Green” Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee, and is a journalist for architecture subjects.

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To Shake or Not to Shake: The History and the Future of the Handshake

By Anastasia Kaliabakos

During my college application process, I had to prepare for a slew of interviews. I remember doing some practice interviews with a “specialist” who told me that one of the most important things that leads to a successful interview is having a good and strong handshake. Therefore, I attempted to achieve the perfect middle ground handshake—not too tight a grip, but not a limp one either. I think I gave a pretty good handshake at all my interviews, if I do say so myself. And, surprisingly, that was a significant part of the interviews. Each handshake opened a different door. The initial physical connection can alert you to what type of person you may be dealing with: a firm handshake could indicate a confident person; an overly tight one could mean the person is a bit intense; a flaccid shake may

Agathon and his brother Sosykrates. One of the reasons this gesture became so popular then and has now stood the test of time is that it suggested that the two parties shaking hands were equals in that moment. In fact, that is the main reason handshakes became a cultural stamp here in the United States. In the 18th century, the Quakers who settled in America popularized the handshake as a form of greeting. The quakers favored this method over the then-common bow, curtsy, or hat-tip because they believed that the handshake was more democratic, allowing for an egalitarian form of greeting that also offered both parties a sense of “fraternal equality.”

In the age of COVID-19 and social distancing, handshakes, as an intimate form of touch and contact, have somewhat lost their appeal. Back in April 2020, Dr. Anthony Fauci, one of the leading medical ex-



AN ANCIENT HANDSHAKE: Image of the 5th century Funerary Naiskos at the grave of Agathon and Sosykrates. Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons.

show the interviewer may not be as interested in being there as you are. A handshake also may be seen as a seal of trust—a type of “business deal” even. But where did this form of human connection first begin, and why is it worth writing and talking about?

It is acknowledged by historians that the handshake is a greeting custom that dates back to Ancient Greece—probably around the 5th century B.C. Initially, this practice, known as “Dexiosis” in English, which literally means offering one’s right—or “good”—hand in order to make amicable contact with another, was also meant to indicate that a person was not holding or concealing a weapon, making it safe to interact with and talk to them. In addition to being common in the everyday interactions of the Ancient Greeks, the handshake also grew in popularity in their artwork, such as amphoras, temple friezes, gravestones, and more. In fact, one of the oldest pieces of art depicting a handshake was found on an ancient sculpture from a funerary temple at the grave of Athenian poet

perts on the Coronavirus, NIAID Director, and advisor on HIV and AIDS to six U.S. presidents, said that we may have to do away with handshakes altogether, or at least in the United States. “You don’t shake anybody’s hands... I don’t think we should ever shake hands ever again, to be honest with you. Not only would it be good to prevent Coronavirus disease; it would decrease instances of Influenza dramatically in this country.” For now, Dr. Fauci may be right—it is important to limit the spread of germs (and Coronavirus) by wearing masks, social distancing, and definitely refraining from shaking other people’s hands. However, Dr. Fauci was also a Classics major in college. Therefore, although his perspective as a physician and Infectious Disease Specialist may seem to favor abolishing this ancient (Greek) tradition, it is more than likely that he understands that feat is impossible. This custom has existed for thousands of years, and I am willing to bet that after the ultimate decline of Coronavirus, the handshake will make a comeback.

Farewell to a Long Time Resident and WW2 Veteran



KY YEE HAND'S LAUNDRY WAS VERY POPULAR AND BUSY: Kwong Yee (KY), above, in front of the laundry. Photo courtesy of Yee family collection.

By Arthur W. Yee

If you lived in the West Village anytime during the 1950s–1990s, chances are you may have patronized the KY Yee Hand Laundry located on the corner of Bleeker and Grove Streets. To my recollection, there were about six other laundries in a six-block radius but KY’s was very popular and busy.

Kwong Yee, or KY, as he was called by his many friends, passed away peacefully on April 17, 2020 at the NYS Veterans Home in Montrose, NY at the age of 97. He was born in China and came to the U.S. when he was 14. He learned English, attended high school, and worked with his father in the laundry. Upon graduation, he was drafted into the armed services and served first in Africa, then in India, and then in China with the 14th Air Force Group, 407th Air Service Squadron as a mechanic with the famous Flying Tigers. When he was discharged he returned to the U.S. but was unable to find work as a mechanic, so he went back to China to get married. He brought his bride Mei back to the U.S. and took over his father’s laundry business.

He and Mei worked long hours, sometimes six or seven days a week, but because of his amicable personality, meticulous workmanship, and perseverance, word spread about the business and it took off. Some of its dedicated clientele included famous people like Dean Jones, Shelly Hack, Jack Warden, and William Kunstler. I recall customers who moved uptown, and even a few to New Jersey, but who would return on a Saturday to drop off and pick up their laundry. Now that’s dedication!

On the rare occasions that KY took time off on a Sunday, he was heavily involved with, and held leadership roles with, the

Yee Family Association and the American Legion Post 1291 (one of the largest in the U.S.) in New York’s Chinatown. He was highly respected and many would come to him for counsel and advice. For example, at the American Legion location he had a desk and a chair that he alone used. Even the post commander would yield the chair to KY if he was present! He had served his country with pride!

Recently, KY was featured, along with his best friend and war buddy John H. Wong, in a 2018 mini-documentary, “We Are American Soldiers,” which was produced by his granddaughter Katie May Porter and her husband Gregg.

KY and Mei “retired” in the late 1980s and passed the business along to relatives; but he was often seen there into the early 90s, helping out on the weekends. KY was loved by his extended family, other relatives, and numerous friends. He was always proud to have served his country and his community. He is survived by his wife Mei, their two children May and Arthur and their spouses, three grandchildren, and four great grandchildren.

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Leash Your Dog... Or Else!

By Alec Pruchnicki

One way to possibly live to a ripe old age in New York City, a city in which people get killed over parking spots, is to avoid unnecessary confrontations. They can sometimes quickly escalate beyond your control. Most dog walkers in The Village have their dogs on leashes, but not always. When I see someone walking a dog without it being leashed, I'm irritated but I never confront the person.

A recent event in The Ramble, an isolated area of Central Park, shows how confrontation can escalate. The Rumble in The Ramble started at about 8 AM when Amy Cooper was walking her unleashed dog in spite of signs reminding owners that leashes were required. Christian Cooper, a bird watcher who was there confronted her and asked her several times to leash the dog, and she apparently refused several times. He took out his phone and started to record her, at which point she became increasingly upset and threatened to call the police. When she did, and described him as an "African American man wearing a bicycle helmet threatening me and my dog," it was caught on tape, eventually sent to YouTube, and she was universally castigated as a racist for her description and

fired from her job. At first, I accepted this narrative since there are so many similar episodes documented on YouTube and TV news shows.

But, a column in the *New York Daily News* by Robert George on May 26th directed me to Christian's Facebook page where a much different picture developed. Here's the full story from his Facebook page and the video.

She was walking the dog without a leash and the two argued back and forth, as previously described. Then he said to her, "Well, if you're going to do what you want, I'm going to do what I want, and you're not going to like it." He took out some dog treats and attempted to give one to her dog over her objections. That's when she called the police. Eventually, she put on the leash, Christian politely said "Thank you", and it ended until it appeared on YouTube with the subsequent fire storm of comments.

The first comment that has been almost universally accepted was that she mentioned his being African American as a way of speeding up police response. How does anyone, sitting comfortably at home in front of their computers know what was in her mind at that time with such certain-

ty that they can accuse her of racism and fire her from her job? She didn't use the N word but actually the politically correct description of him.

Second, her phone call was a false report since she wasn't really threatened. There's no indication that Christian intended her harm, but how would she know that? It was 8 AM, in the middle of the woods with, apparently, nobody else around. Women do get attacked in parks. If I were in the middle of the woods and had an argument with somebody, of any race, and I heard "...you're not going to like it," I would take it as a potential threat, and a physical one at that. If I were on Hudson Street in the middle of the day, or in a crowded bar and someone said that to me, for whatever reason, I would take it as a potential physical threat. And feeding something to her dog, over her objections, can also be considered threatening since people simply don't do that under normal circumstances. As she said in a subsequent interview, it could have been poison as far as she knew depending on how angry he was at her dog.

Third, people haven't listened to the video carefully. Although she said she would tell the police he was threatening her life,

she didn't actually say that on the phone. She did appear more frantic (or frightened?) while on the phone but we don't know how the police responded to her call or if they appeared to be taking her seriously or ignoring her complaint.

Although she apologized when interviewed afterward, she lost her job on the grounds that the one-minute video indicated a previously undetected level of racism that her employer had not noticed in all the time she worked for them.

As an aside, Christian referred to her as a "karen" a sexual and racial stereotype in and of itself (see article in this issue "What is a Karen").

Jumping on the anti-Amy bandwagon, *The New York Times* wrote two long articles on the incident, both indicating that her accusation of threatening behavior was unfounded, although the same articles, at the very end, had his exact "...you're not going to like it" statement.

Don't start confrontations unless absolutely necessary. Don't walk your dog without a leash even if he is "friendly" and "doesn't bite." And don't make judgements about people based on one-minute videos without trying to get all the facts.

What is a Karen?

By Alec Pruchnicki

A new expression or meme has come into the English language. A "Karen" (sometimes described as a "karen" to turn it into an adjective from a proper noun) is an entitled, obnoxious, spoiled, often middle-aged white woman who believes she has the right to special treatment. She is the type of person who will call the store manager for what she perceives as a lack of recognition of the treatment she believes she is entitled to. It is also a racist, sexist, and possibly ageist stereotype which should be avoided like any other similar stereotype against any other group.

I've never used this phrase in my writings but I recognized the term and the ease with which it is used. Like many stereotypes, it is convenient and immediately recognized and I didn't think much of it. Often, it is a snap accusation people make on Facebook or Twitter after seeing a short video of some women acting this way. But my eyes were opened to the toxic nature of this term by a letter to the *New York Daily News* by a Karen Temple who complained about the racial and sexual aspects of this phrase. It became immediately clear to me that she was right. If an obnoxious black woman were described as an Oprah, or a histrionic black male were described as a Kanye, there would be universal condemnation.

A Karen Martin in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* bemoaned the fact that she would never have her name back without having a negative tinge to it. Misogyny and the desire to sup-

press women, and women in particular, made this phrase particularly unacceptable to her.

We've been through this before. When I first entered high school in The Bronx, I met many Jewish boys who used the phrase JAP, to describe a "Jewish American Princess" stereotype. Like all generalizations, it was often used aggressively and inaccurately, but widely used nonetheless. Eventually it was used to describe other women who were "JAPy" or sometimes even used against a similarly spoiled "Jewish American Prince". It eventually disappeared from common usage, maybe because its obvious anti-Semitism, even coming from other Jews, was unacceptable. I haven't seen or heard it in decades.

Recently, a much more profane phrase used to stereotype women was graphically described by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on the floor of Congress.

Whether a woman is described as a karen, a JAP, or a fucking bitch, they do have certain things in common. They describe behaviors in a woman that were they to occur in a man might be considered admirable. Aggressive, assertive, taking control, forceful, decisive, etc., male behavior can easily overlap with similar female behavior but without the negative implications. Criticizing the female version of this behavior, but not the male, can sometimes be used as a common, simple cultural tool to keep women quiet. The threshold for unacceptable obnoxious male behavior just seems a little higher than for similar female behavior. No more karens, please.



The Neighbor Network is a volunteer-based non-profit program aimed at diminishing isolation among the lower west side seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers are matched with seniors to have regular calls for friendly conversations, connect older New Yorkers with the resources they need, and build relationships that will bring joy and comfort to seniors and volunteers alike.

Older adults face a higher health risk due to COVID-19, these neighbors are likely to face many more months of physical isolation and the challenges that come with it—difficulty accessing food, medicine and mental health services, a lack of reliable information, and separation from friends and family. By volunteering to regularly make calls to seniors during this time, you can help connect your neighbors to the resources they need while building meaningful relationships.

Calls can last as short as 10 minutes and are as frequent as both the volunteer and senior agree upon.

Volunteers may match with as many seniors as they like and schedule allows for. Commitment duration is up to the volunteer. All that is required by the volunteer is a working phone and access to the internet for training and participation. Minimum age to participate 16.

If you are a senior who would like to receive calls or be a volunteer, come join us too!

Join the Neighbor Network and be a good neighbor to your fellow seniors!

For more information: <https://theneighbor-network.org/> Ready to sign up or have questions contact us at (914) 573-5526 or andrea@theneighbor-network.org.

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Karen's Quirky Style

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

You might wonder how a simple dress relates to women's empowerment. This month's photo series is an all-woman effort, featuring this stunningly simple bespoke dress by Engineered by Andrea T, photography by Tess Malone, and the bronze sculpture Fearless Girl by Kristen Visbal. Fearless Girl has had quite an eventful life for a three-year old. Tess captured us together at our girl's new location, staring down the New York Stock Exchange. The Equal Rights Amendment was passed in the U.S. Senate in 1972 and should have been ratified in January 2020 when the state of Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the amendment. With Kamala Harris making a run for Vice President, it's an exciting time for women and equal rights for all people.

For the full story and more Tess Malone photos of Fearless Girl and me, see westviewnews.org and karensquirkystyle.com.

STYLE NOTES

NAVY WAFFLE COTTON PIQUÉ A-LINE DRESS AND MATCHING MASK WITH BOW. Engineered by Andrea T. 147 West 35th Street (by appointment only).

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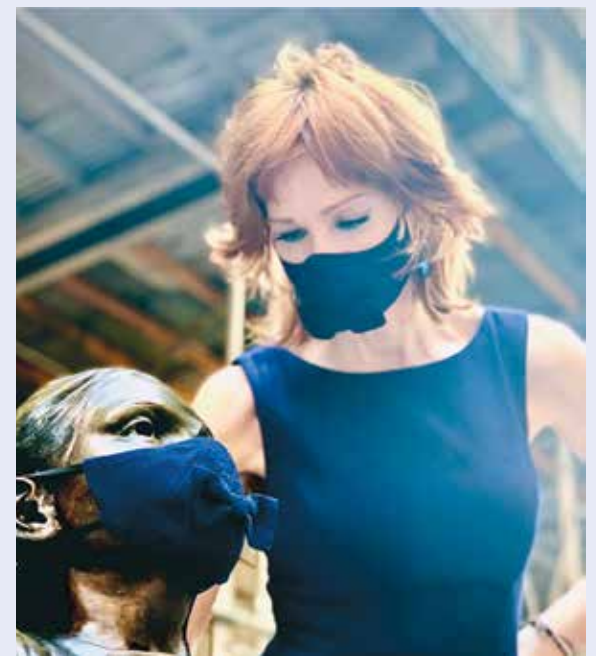
BLUE SAPPHIRE DROP EARRINGS. Whole Bead Show NYC. Hotel Pennsylvania.



WEST VILLAGE MODEL KAREN REMPEL in bespoke dress and mask by Engineered by Andrea T. Fearless Girl also wears mask with bow by EAT. Photos by Tess Malone.

UNODE50 AMETHYST, LEATHER, AND SILVER BEAD BRACELET. The Oculus at World Trade Center. 185 Greenwich Street.

Karen Rempel has been contributing to WestView News since 2017. She is a photojournalist, technical writer, model, and artist. Her words and pictures have appeared in the literary journal Room, TV Week Magazine, Vancouver Sun, and many other pubs. Her artwork has exhibited at New York's Salmagundi Club and Revelation Gallery. Visit her blog at loveaffair.nyc and her YouTube channel.



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Photos by Dusty Berke and Karilyn Prisco.

A Day in Sarah Jessica Parker's Shoes

By Karilyn Prisco

When the paper was brainstorming ways to boost subscriptions during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sarah Jessica Parker, our neighbor and loyal supporter of *WestView News*, volunteered to gift a pair of shoes from her SJP by Sarah Jessica Parker collection to the New Subscriber giveaway initiative. We announced our winner, Erin Mintun, in our July issue and took her to the street for some shoe shopping in August.

Erin was invited by Sarah Jessica to visit her SJP by Sarah Jessica Parker NYC flagship boutique which is located on West 54th Street in Manolo Blahnik's former store. The brand's new Midtown Manhattan brick and mortar boutique, across the street from MoMA, complements its other NYC location at South Street Seaport. The flagship store is outfitted with bold, rich-colored furniture that makes any customer feel luxurious, lavish, and energized. The space feels fresh, open, and safe. Hand sanitizer was provided on-site and Erin was greeted by the SJP iconic floor-to-ceiling glass shoe wall display and accented Lucite fixtures—immediately transporting her to a world of shoe heaven.

From playful to flirty, to street style, to black tie occasions, the SJP Collection covers them all. What is most impressive



ERIN, WINNER OF THE WESTVIEW NEWS GIVEAWAY, is shown around SJP by Sarah Jessica Parker by store representative Alyssa, helping her choose which pair of shoes will go home with her. Photo by Bob Cooley.

about the collection is that the majority of the shoes have the flexibility to be styled for multiple tastes and many occasions. After trying on numerous colors and styles from the SJP Evergreen Collection, Erin landed on the block heel Mary Jane named "Celine." With its unapologetic combination of crystal-embellished buckle, signature grosgrain detail, and scintillate body

it is not surprising this silhouette is a top seller. Think Dorothy meets Studio 54—it's comfortable like your house slipper and fun like a disco; it's pretty much like having a party on your feet without having to take your shoes off when you dance! Erin can easily pair these with her distressed boyfriend's jeans when running out to grab a coffee, or match them with a for-

mal evening dress for a night at the NYC Ballet—and everything in between. With the closed toe and exposed top-foot design, the Celine has versatility for any season. Rock them bare for the spring/summer months and layer them up with cute socks or patterned tights for the fall/winter. You'll be bringing the party wherever you go—which is exactly what we need in these times. Any chance to smile and shine. Great choice Erin!

Our drooling session doesn't just stop there. All shoes from the collection are proudly made in Italy by third and fourth generation Tuscan shoemakers. The SJP Collection has been thoughtfully detailed to include a wide array of styles. One thing remains consistent—the products' silhouettes are truly stunning. You may not even be able to recognize your own foot, as each design somehow makes every customer feel they should be a foot model for Disney's Cinderella. We won't lie, Sarah Jessica's designs make it hard to pick and choose. But who needs to make a decision when you can buy them all?

Well if you are like me, you can't buy them all...or even one pair. Unfortunately, these economic times aren't welcomed by my shopping wishlist but, no worries—

continued on page 31

The Choreography of Survival



"I AM FOR CELEBRATING THE DIFFERENCES OF PEOPLE as well as their similarities. Both have to be venerated," says Vija Vetra, above, when considering nearly a century of life across five different continents. Photo by Edgar Zalite.

By Stanley Wlodyka Jiménez

Vija Vetra, a dancer living at Westbeth, is exceptionally proud of her country of birth, which isn't India, in case you made that assumption after having watched her perform. It's surprising that she should feel so Latvian at her core, considering that she spent only a fifth of her life in that Baltic state, leaving when she was just a teenager. It's a testament to this idea that first impressions can last a lifetime. It follows, then, that Latvia must be an incredible country since, at 97 and a half (she insists that the half be counted) Vija has lived more life than most have.

As with a lot of things, Vija's perception of aging is different from the average viewpoint. For one, the minute her birthday ar-

rives she starts counting toward the next one, so eager is she to reach the next milestone. That's because she believes she accumulates wealth with the passage of time. However, despite the massive fortune of nearly a century of life, Vija still can find herself surprised. Asked whether, in all her life, she's witnessed something akin to the spread of COVID, she answers without hesitation, "Never ever, and I don't think anybody else has either. Because it has taken over globally. This way—it has never happened." Considering the variety of experiences she's had, that is saying something.

Vija has lived on five continents, given a command performance for the queen of England, and studied under arguably the most celebrated practitioner of Indian classical dance in history. She's the subject of two books (which you can find on Amazon) and three documentaries. With all that life, the only period that was more traumatizing for her than the current one was World War II, when she was a young woman studying ballet in Vienna.

During that time she found herself trapped in a building that was bombed by the Russians. With little air and less hope for survival, Vija considers her unlikely salvation from the rubble to have been her first encounter with the supernatural realm. She believes the fact that she is alive today to tell the tale is a miracle.

She fled Vienna with scores of other civilians anxious about the advances of the Red Army, and remembers with a chill the scene of her escape at the train station. It wasn't at all certain that the train would even leave the station, but when the pistons began to pump, the desperate crowd leapt into action, crawling through the windows and climbing up on top of the train, anything to get out and away.

"The masses pressed into me so much I thought that my ribs would crack, and before I knew it I was inside the train." And even if she was able to gather enough breath to breathe a sigh of relief, it was short-lived. Safely outside of Vienna, that trainload of civilians was targeted by American bombers. Running for her life, away from the stalled train in the middle of the countryside, she recalls, "The flyers came down so low until they could see we were not a military train. We were just people trying to get away."

It was in this way, running into the forests of Bavaria, that her life as a refugee began. After the war, her native Latvia fell under the rule of the Soviets. Scores of her fellow countrymen were removed to forced labor camps in Siberia where most of them eventually died. For the next 45 some odd years, she returned only once to her homeland before the Iron Curtain fell, to give a performance in 1979 in a theater filled with Communist officials. After the performance, her friends, family and even acquaintances were questioned by secret police. The Soviet government considered her an American Mata Hari—a dancing spy.

Though she's never shown up on any government's payroll, one would have done well to recruit her as she's learned a lot about humans through dance. At 97 (and a half), there's one thing that she's quite certain about: people are basically the same everywhere you go. Vija believes that environmental factors affect the way communities behave and are ultimately responsible for the differences that can be observed between one group and another. This is blaringly obvious when the trained eye considers regional dance styles. People who live in the mountains create dances that reflect the elevation, desert dwellers spin in ways that

recall sandy vales of wind, and inhabitants of villages by the sea will incorporate moves reminiscent of the casting of a fishing net.

It's all firmly based on logic, and for Vija it couldn't make more sense. She was taught by her Indian dance master that the supreme Indian deity Nataraja created the universe through a cosmic dance. This divine directive helped her accomplish her life's work. In the U.S., aside from teaching generations of dancers their power in a classroom environment, she was a pioneer of sacred dance—the act of dancing as a mode of worship in religious settings like churches. For her, dance has always been a way of elevating the soul to a higher plane.

The changes we've seen in recent months have been, admittedly, a challenge for Vija. Normally, she makes an annual trip to her homeland to perform for audiences filled with notable Latvians, including the president of that Eastern European country. It's always something to look forward to, and (a secret to her incredible longevity) something to work toward. This year, however, everything has changed. "Performance is something special, because you give it to the people. You share of yourself. So being in quarantine as I am, I feel left out and depressed," Vija laments.

Despite today's unprecedented challenges she does manage to find blessings to count. An original tenant of Westbeth Artists Housing, which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary as the largest artist residency in the world, she appreciates the network of support that this community provides for her. For example, she's able to stay safely quarantined because the man who lives on the floor above her at Westbeth gets her groceries for her and a few of the other seniors. "I've never met him before and I don't know what he looks like, because when he comes half his face is covered."

September 11, 7 pm

West View News is partnering with the Schiller Institute NYC Chorus to present a virtual 9/11 Memorial Concert at 7:00 pm September 11th.

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City Tails: Leroy Street's Mom-and-"Pup" Hidden Treasure



JOEL'S DAUGHTER, MILA, participating in doggy daycare chores while pups Moby and Walter supervise. Photo by Joel Bass.

By Karilyn Prisco

"The coolest job ever!" That's the reaction Joel Bass gets whenever he describes his job. Joel is a local dog walker who founded City Tails NYC in the West Village in 2007. If you live in the West Village, chances are you've run into this cute, laid-back Southern Cali guy with a baseball hat, shorts year-round, and playful pups in tow. Originally from San Diego, Joel moved to NYC on a whim, and stumbled upon a dog-walking ad on Craigslist to help pay the bills.

Over the past 13 years, Joel has grown City Tails from a one-man show to a full-scale pet care business offering dog walking, doggy daycare, overnights, puppy training and more. He founded City Tails as a mom-and-pop business and continues to run it like a small family business today. Joel and his staff are a tight-knit crew that offers the most loving dog care imaginable, and works with each client to fully customize their pets' needs. For example, each client gets their own "cubby" that includes anything from your dog's favorite treat and leash to storing a raincoat and hairbrush. The letter board the staff updates regularly with different messages is a nice touch and acts as a great photo op for birthdays and ice-cream socials!

In late 2019, City Tails opened its first doggy daycare facility, located at 55 Leroy Street (near 7th Avenue). Although City Tails briefly paused operations due to COVID-19, it is now fully re-opened. I visited the new space this summer and couldn't believe how clean and open it was. Unlike typical doggy daycare facilities that are often overly commercial, cold, and more prison-like than home-like, Joel stayed true to his roots with the Leroy space. City Tails daycare looks and feels like home—instantly, I fell in love with the living room-like décor, the cage-free mantra and, of course, the gregarious greetings and licks that I received from the pups when I arrived. As a dog owner for over 30 years I could tell these dogs were happy, well-behaved, and liked to have fun. They were all wagging their tails enthusiastically, playing fetch with the City Tails staff, and

dancing to the music (the staff takes turns rotating their favorite tunes throughout the day). Even though many dog parents are working from home due to COVID, it is clear that dog socialization is still important. Dogs need to get out and socialize as much as us humans do. At the end of the day, dogs are pack animals and its part of their emotional and physical wellness to play, run, and be around other pups. The City Tails pups play all day, come home happy, and are well-rested.

Joel and his wife Michelle love raising their family in the city, and have called the West Village "home" for the past 13 years. They were actually brought together by dog walking, thanks to Michelle's American Eskimo puppy, Luka. "We met when I started walking Luka," recalled Joel. "I had a strict no-client dating policy, so I'd try to set Michelle up with my friends, but quickly realized it was meant to be." In recent years, the Bass Family has expanded to include three little girls who love dogs just as much as their parents do. Joel enjoys giving an annual dog safety lesson at his kids' local West Village schools, PS 41 and Village Preschool Center. He also offers free dog health advice and safety lessons to any local families with new dogs. When Joel isn't dog walking, you can usually find him running on the West Side Highway with a double stroller or grabbing some ice cream with his kids at Bleecker or Horatio Parks. If you haven't checked out City Tails yet, you'll find it's the perfect option for anyone looking for a small-scale, personalized, and exceptionally caring experience for their pup. And don't be surprised if your dog has so much fun they really don't want to go home.

Joel has known most of his clients for years, and he and his staff treat each pup as a member of their family. The City Tails crew goes above and beyond to serve their clients, which even includes bringing a client's pup to their wedding ceremony for a cameo appearance during family photos. Speaking of photos, you can expect to get real-time photos, throughout the day, of your pup playing, napping, and being spoiled with affection. Even if you don't have a pup of your own but need a doggy fix, I highly recommend following their Instagram @CityTailsNYC. Their account is filled with adorable dog shots and funny captions. After spending a day at doggy daycare and exploring the West Village streets with Joel, I can definitely agree that he and his team do have the coolest job ever.

Get your free quote at citytailsnyc.com. Mention "WESTVIEW" and save 15 percent on your dog's first week of care.

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Sarah Jessica continued from page 29

perhaps paying homage and channeling her famous SATC character "Carrie" a bit, Sarah Jessica respects a girl on a budget. And that's why we love her! Characteristic of her usual thoughtful self, Sarah Jessica is able to accommodate everyone with something. The flagship store is accessorized with delicious fragrances, cute smartphone cases, the SJP x Sunglass Hut capsule collection, and a ton more. I found myself eyeing the iconic SJP shoe-wall grid design that is printed on canvas tote bags, cosmetic sets, beach towels, and S'well water bottles. I couldn't help but make a quick gift list for my SJP addict friends. Birthday gift, check. Christmas gift, check. Bachelorette gift, check. Oh! And just in case I need wrapping paper for that last-minute gift pick-up...yup! Sarah thought of that too. Forever fashionable and prepared—it's the true New Yorker in her.

Whether it was the gorgeous shoes or my socializing starvation seeping through, I just wanted to stay and hang out with Erin and the wonderful staff members that have become new friends. However, I didn't want to hold up the store operations as only three shoppers are allowed in at a time, ensuring strict safety measures are in-place for the well-being of customers. There is an outdoor garden at the back of the store that provides a waiting area. For customers that prefer less direct contact, the boutique has curbside pickup service. Sarah Jessica has also been spotted person-

ally delivering online and phone orders on her way home from a day of work at the NYC locations.

Just like our West Village neighbor, the store is beautiful, sophisticated, lovely, and grounded. It's the type of place that makes you feel like you are at a slumber party raiding your best friend's fabulous shoe closet instead of having an impersonal, stiff, typical retail store experience. Let's just say you won't feel judged if you haven't gotten a pedicure in five months and are trying on a \$400 pair of shoes. It feels like family and it's definitely worth the trip above 14th Street.

Thank you Sarah Jessica for your generosity, grace, and ongoing patronage of our "small but mighty" community newspaper.

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Karilyn Prisco is the fashion director of WestView News and social media manager for WestView News' "Style on the Street" (IG @styleonthestreet). Recently, after pivoting from her career as a project manager in advertising for 15 years, Karilyn enrolled in the FIT Fashion Styling Certificate Program to follow her true passion for fashion styling and visual expression.

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The Day the Village Stood Still: (Part 5) The Fog

By Roger Paradiso

There was a fog around the Village the past few weeks. It was the fog of war against this virus.

I talked to Vittorio, owner of the restaurant on MacDougal Street that bears his name. He said, "It's so bad here that it's almost funny," as a construction truck whizzed by his street-side tables. Not only are all shop owners in Greenwich Village suffering and losing money, but now they have to deal with a city government that has allowed major infrastructure work to take place on all the streets near Washington Square Park, especially Bleecker Street. How would you like to dine near a jackhammer or the beep beep beep of dump trucks and other construction equipment? As one observer noted, "Why couldn't they do this several months ago before we opened up?"

So, our tale of greed, gentrification, and a virus has delivered us to what seems like a war zone. These conditions are all related and they will continue to be hanging around us like buzzards flying around a dead carcass.

Our country and our villages are at war. This will only be resolved when we conquer the virus and kill it with a vaccine and/or a cure. However, every state is doing what they want to, and the virus lingers in the South, Midwest, and western states. Sadly, there is no national plan.

Jamal, owner of Village Music World on Bleecker Street, said, "Last week I called (the SBA) and I was a little mad. They are unreal. They keep deleting my application. So, I said I want an answer—yes or no. Yesterday I got cut off the phone three times. Waiting. Waiting. Then they came on and said, 'Call tomorrow we will give some good news.' I think they gave me the



JAMAL, OWNER OF VILLAGE MUSIC WORLD on Bleecker Street waits for customers. *Photo by Roger Paradiso.*

money, but I didn't get what I wanted, but every little bit helps."

He comes to his shop every day, but he starts later in the day, around 1:30 in the afternoon, and leaves at 6:00 p.m. "I bought some more merchandise for a lot of money but what can I do? I need to keep the shop going." He says that the Village is too dangerous and empty at night and he and a lot of his fellow shop owners close early. They used to close up after 10:00 p.m. But it is dangerous with people circling the Village who they haven't seen before. "There are a lot of arguments and fights and I don't feel safe anymore." Well, sad to say, as we got to press there had been a murder on Christopher Street a few days earlier.

I call Tory at the Half Pint, but they are closed until 3:00 p.m. It seems they don't make much money at lunchtime anymore; there are no students or faculty at NYU, there are no tourists who want to visit an Irish pub. When I reach Tory by phone she says, "It's

gone from bad to worse. The restaurant business is the second highest-grossing business in the state. We don't have a voice to guide us or protect us. Now we are trying to get together. You can go to a museum and have a hundred people inside, but not a restaurant. We're on very slim margins these days." As we get off the phone Tory tells me that her sidewalk café is being shut down for ten days due to work on the water lines.

I called my friend Nick the Greek, owner of several movie theaters. The gem of his collection is the Cinema Village at 22 East 12th Street. He was busy planning an opening. He would not be able to sell popcorn, candy, or drinks, and people would have to wear masks and sit six feet away from each other. But he said optimistically, "I have the perfect environment. People don't talk during a movie and they can sit by themselves."

Then I got an email from Nick. Cuomo will not open theaters in New York, and said, "Even if you are at 50 percent capac-

ity, with one or two seats between the two of you, this is a risk situation and...movie theaters are not that high on the list of essentials." "He's a politician," Nick explained. "He wants to keep his numbers low."

Nick goes into his theaters once a week with a small crew. He owns several theaters and a bar, and has some tenants above the bar. He keeps his three theaters clean and ready for opening. He keeps spending money and swears that he will never leave New York or sell his theaters. "That's what I love. How can I sell them?"

I usually love to walk around the Village. But on this warm summer's day I couldn't hang out any longer. The buzzards were flying. The Senate had left for summer vacation without passing a relief bill (though there is talk that the House and the president are talking). Our president has gone campaigning and left the virus battle up to the states. The mayor and governor are kicking the can down the road on the moratorium for evictions. The executioner's song (the moratorium) has been extended to September 5th. As Vittorio says, "What can Cuomo do? The state has no money." Neither does the city. Who has all the money?

The resilience of Villagers is amazing. All the residents and shop owners struggle to stay alive every day. As Tory says, "I think it is disgusting that the Senate takes a vacation in the middle of a crisis. Millions of Americans are living hand to mouth right now. Mental health issues are soaring, and to throw an added financial burden of uncertainty to people who are already on the breadline is just unbelievable."

If there is any justice in the world we will outlast this virus and this current government led by a president who spends so much time playing golf and tweeting. There will be a reckoning in November.

Guilty Transmissions: An Emotional Toll of COVID & AIDS

By Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D.

Whether it is to spare one's parents, friends or loved ones, the pandemic has changed our daily routines and customs. Some have put an end to family visits. Others subject themselves to two-week bouts of self-quarantine before visiting friends. Blurring the lines between germaphobes and the rest of us, some strip naked upon coming home followed by elaborate disinfection routines. And as always, some don't care.

COVID-19 and AIDS are diseases as vastly different as are our mechanisms to deal with them. They have different footprints across our populations. HIV/AIDS primarily affects marginalized and underserved populations including gay men, black women, those in our jails, injection drug users, trans women and sex workers, those with the fewest resources and/or the weakest voices. COVID-19 is more equal

opportunity. HIV/AIDS is life-long and deadly when left untreated. SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 is deadly in a small percentage of cases but has as yet unknown long-term consequences. It takes some doing to catch HIV/AIDS. Coronavirus/COVID-19 comes to us as easy as our breath. Despite their differences, both diseases create feelings of fear and guilt.

Like a COVID test, an accurate lab-based HIV test takes days to deliver results. During those days, people's thoughts often wander. If I tested HIV-positive, would I ever date any HIV-negative person again, fearing I might infect them? For that matter, if I tested positive, would anyone not already infected with HIV ever want to date me? "Serosorting" is a practice that developed among some gay men; HIV-positive and HIV-negative people would tend to have sex with only those in their respective groups. There may not be a rela-

tively straightforward way to fool-proof against the risks and fears of transmitting COVID-19, but in the case of HIV/AIDS, maybe there is.

Truvada/PrEP is an AIDS medication that provides a once-a-day pill to prevent HIV infection in people who do not already have it. By putting an easy HIV prevention tool in everyone's hands, some argued that HIV/AIDS would no longer be a big deal. Condom use, especially among young white gay men, is pretty much a thing of the past.

"If you do happen to contract HIV while taking PrEP (chances are you won't), you'll potentially go from taking one pill a day to taking one pill a day," or so says Grant Roth, an HIV peer counselor, ending his statement with an emoji shrug. And in response to the news of one of New York City's first cases of PrEP failure, activist physician Demetre Daskalakis said of Truvada/PrEP, "We should stand unapologetically together

in our role to make the serodivide a piece of history and not a part of our future."

No pill is a wonder-drug. Short of a cure and/or vaccine, single-minded embrace of Truvada/PrEP will only ensure that HIV festers forever among gay men. Did we jump into this new world with eyes completely wide open or were we also prodded by our emotions? Were we guilted into it by HIV/AIDS?

Let's keep in mind that our feelings about disease factor in our behaviors regarding treatment also. As the world pursues COVID-19 treatments, vaccines, and cures, let's make sure that eager embrace of possible early half-solutions does not scuttle our stamina for ultimate cures.

Rockefeller University graduate Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D. is founder and president of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS. Follow RFTCA on Instagram @RFTcureaids.

Stop the Press. Mugging on Cornelia St.

It's Monday night—the day after a tragic neighborhood incident. I call it stalking and grand larceny.

My husband, Anthony Blanche, who will be 88 in October, born of Thompson Street (long before SoHo) ultimately living on Cornelia Street for fifty years, I for 34, was mugged in front of our door at noon.

Yesterday we walked. A lovely Sunday walk that included Jefferson Garden. It was noon as we walked home. My husband is a wonderful local guy whose circle included many neighborhood famous artists, writers, restaurants and wiseguys. He was chosen several years ago to represent New York City in the international Ubuntu Project documentary film. More recently quoted in the *New York Times* about the neighborhood opening up and welcoming dining out.

The noon mugging resulted in a sacred, personally loved, blessed by the Pope, chain with all its charms—ripped so hard from his neck that it knocked him off balance and marked him. "Stop him, Stop him" we screamed. People were immediately frenzied. I must thank a selfless young man who took to the chase and never gave up. He returned valiant, a hero to us. We hugged, traumatized, and he handed me a chain. He quickly disappeared into the

crowd. As I opened my hand, we saw a bogus chain. That thief was a pro. What assails my thoughts and nerves the most is that he was a pro. A pro of stalking, awaiting his opportunity. He pounced on his prey like a stealth animal! 911, 311, call to the Sixth Precinct proved pointless at the moment of need.

The desk sergeant said she couldn't help me if I wasn't the victim. I explained that the victim was in shock, vision impaired and deaf and very difficult for him to come. He must go there as the end result. Not a bit of sympathy, no empathy, no community outreach. I need the police report in order to see if any neighborhood cameras caught anything. I was told by a neighbor that two police cars showed up long after we all hugged, some crying, some showing sympathy and support disbanded. No one rang our bell; had police inquired of anyone they would have been given that info.

Everyone at West Fourth, Sixth and Cornelia at noon on Sunday, thank you from the bottom of my heart. And, to the dear young man who gave chase, you are a true hero, a prince among men. We pray you have many blessings. And, to the stealth thief, who could have chosen track instead of thievery; we pray you will learn of Karma.



THIS IS US. Our neighborhood, our city, our country. Our lives. A decisive moment in the history of our country. Who do we want to be? Our choices will decide the future on November 3. Photo by Philip Maier.

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Great Art Returns to the West Village: Back to the Future

By Bruce Poli

Few galleries have a backstory like this one.

Art of Our Century, which opened at 137 West 14th Street in January, was named with a reverential wink at Peggy Guggenheim. It is located in the space that housed New York's first Spanish-language bookstore—*Librería Lectorum*—and run by a true child of the Village. It was also the first gallery to safely reopen after the pandemic.

"We were classified as a retail business, as we try to sell things—art—and we don't charge admission," said gallery director Tim McDarrah. "It worked out beautifully. People put on their masks and were so happy to get out of the house and see art in person again."

McDarrah grew up under the desks at the Village Voice newspaper, where his father Fred W. McDarrah was the paper's first picture editor and, for decades, its only photographer. Tim often accompanied his father to artist's studios, gallery openings, and other cultural events that were the bailiwick of the late alternative weekly paper. His childhood included crayon work with Andy Warhol, digging holes in Central Park with Claes Oldenburg, and asking Nam June Paik why his TVs didn't have any cartoons playing on them.

Last fall, after a career in journalism and



TIM MCDARRAH AND ARTIST SUZANNE SCOTT at Art of Our Century gallery in front of her work, "Self-Portrait: Scott's Great Snake" (54 x 54 inches, oil on canvas). Photo by Meryl Meisler.

then having been sidelined by a cancer diagnosis (now in remission), McDarrah was at the McBurney Y on West 14th Street with an artist friend who was lamenting that his pop-up show had been canceled. McDarrah explains, "I said to him, 'Well, I have a friend that inherited a building down the street and there's an open loft. I'll open a gallery for you.' He looked at me like I was bat-shit crazy." The friend was

the son of the couple that had opened *Librería Lectorum* in 1960 on what was then a Spanish-influenced strip of West 14th Street.

Long story short, Art of Our Century was born; the name is derivative of Guggenheim's legendary 1942-47 gallery.

Acknowledging he had zero experience running a gallery, McDarrah assembled a team to help insure success; the group

includes legendary gallerist Patti Astor of Fun Gallery fame (she put graffiti on the map and first exhibited Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat), curator and art advisor John Gagne of Gagne Contemporary, and young gallerists Ali Haselbeck and Katerina Levantis.

Like Guggenheim, McDarrah aims to showcase works by established artists, and also exhibit works of lesser-known artists, often for the first time, and always artists with some personal connection.

The August show, for example, was of solo paintings by Suzanne Scott who lives on Waverly Place and was an assistant to Bond Street resident and global art icon Chuck Close. "One of the first professional interviews I ever conducted was with Close. So it made sense that one of our first shows had a Close collection," McDarrah said.

Opening September 10th is a show by Uman, the Somali-born gender-fluid multimedia artist who has been friends with McDarrah for years.

"I am fortunate that I met my landlord at PS 41 when I was eight, and that he too believes in art, personal relationships and the bohemian and artistic legacy of Greenwich Village," said McDarrah. "And hey, if you can't champion your talented friends, then what's the point of having a gallery?"

Artists Collaborate With Seniors in Quarantine Through New Program at Greenwich House

By Celeste Kaufman

While restrictions are lifting around the city, seniors are still practicing strict social distancing as one of the populations that are most vulnerable to COVID-19. At the beginning of quarantine, Greenwich House quickly adapted their senior center programming to an Online Learning Center packed with Zoom arts and culture classes, exercise classes, and social groups to help combat the effects of isolation. Now, while the centers remain closed for in-person programming, the offerings for virtual programs and events continue to grow. In August, a new program was launched that pairs artists from around the world with seniors to collaborate on projects in their chosen fields.

Michael Leibenluft, an Obie award-winning director, created Inter/Generate as a way for artists to both give back and find connection with new creative partners. The art world has largely been put on pause, and these artists have also been stressed about their futures and feeling stifled by confinement. This project, funded by Asy-



PHOTOS BY INTER/GENERATE PARTICIPANT, WARREN WYSS, taken during the *Chronicles of Daily Life* photography class at Greenwich House by SUCASA. Photo credit: Warren Wyss.

lum Arts, helps artists across generations to support one another and create together, finding solace and hope in the process of making art again. Jesse Freedman, Julia Vogl, Noa Ginzburg, Rutie Borthwick, Sophia Janowitz, Victor Esses and Yehuda Hyman signed on from New York, Boston, and London. Then Leibenluft reached out to Greenwich House, who knew the proj-

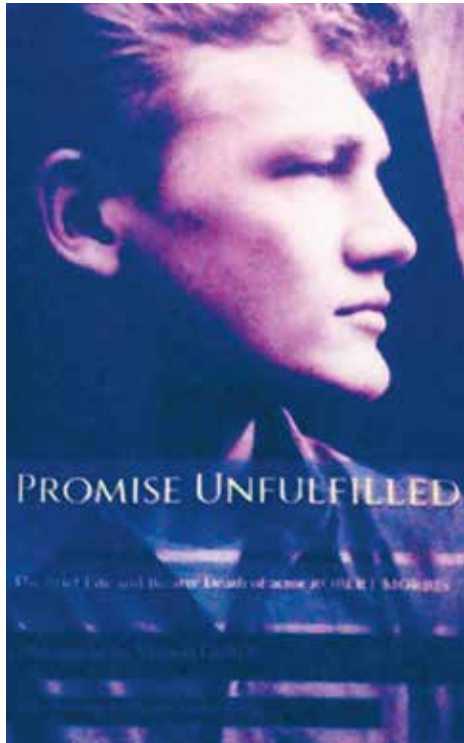
ect was a natural fit for their particularly creative community of older adults.

For eight weeks starting August 10th, groups of two to five artists are meeting weekly over video call to work on a project related to that session's theme, culminating in a final presentation of their creations. The artistic mediums range from writing and performance to painting and fiber

arts, with the seniors carefully matched to an artist from their same area of interest. Members of Greenwich House Senior Centers have been turning to art as a way to cope with the pandemic from the beginning, attending arts classes and showcasing the work they've created independently in a virtual art show, and were eager for a new creative outlet and to make some virtual friends.

"We have been so thrilled to add Inter/Generate to our arts programming," says Laura Marceca, Director of Center on the Square. "It's such a creative way to connect older adults with artists from different generations, and art can be a really powerful tool for healing that I think our members are needing right now." Virtual programming is not a perfect substitution for the supportive sense of community that can be found at the centers, but the enthusiasm for adapting to new technologies and creating innovative solutions for staying connected is inspiring. During a time when it's easy to feel isolated, projects like Inter/Generate help to remind us that we are not in it alone.

The Summer of 1956— The American Shakespeare Festival and Academy at Stratford, Connecticut



PROMISE UNFULFILLED: A biography by Vernon Gravely. Cover photo of Robert Morris by Van Williams.

By Robert Heide

Several months back this year I received a call from a writer named Vernon Gravely who lives in Murphysboro, Illinois. He told me he was finishing up a biographical book about an actor named Robert Morris who had been an apprentice in 1956 at the American Shakespeare Theater in Stratford, Connecticut. In the authors' research he had found my name in a list of apprentice/interns who worked at the festival that summer; and asked if he might interview me about Mr. Morris who many at Stratford called 'Bobby.' The book is entitled *Promise Unfulfilled—The Brief Life and Bizarre Death of Actor Robert Morris*. There is a foreword from Michael Lindsay-Hogg, one of the apprentices that summer who is the son of the famous British actress Geraldine Fitzgerald; in later life Lindsay-Hogg excelled as a stage and television director including directing the Beatles documentary *Let It Be*.

Gravely refers to Robert Morris as a 'blonde God' who had many women and men who were attracted to him. Harvey Grossman, a mime teacher at the Shakespeare Festival Academy told the author that "Morris did swing both ways" and there are accounts of many of his bisexual activities. There are pictures in the book showing Morawczynski (his real name) as a champion football hero both in high school and college in Pennsylvania. He was a competitive weightlifter and partici-

pated in many events with such people as Mickey Hargitay who was Mr. Universe in 1955 and Harry Johnson, a Mr. America in 1959. Attractive posing photos of Bobby in his speedo were featured on the pages of a popular physique magazine called *Tomorrow's Man* which in the 1950s had a print run per issue of 40,000 and was marketed for the gay crowd. Later, after a stint in summer stock Bobby enrolled in the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York where he was one of two students who received a scholarship to intern at the American Shakespeare Festival. I attended AADA for a short time before dropping out after finding that 'representational' acting was not what I was looking for. I had been to Northwestern University studying with the great Alvina Krause, who taught the Stanislavski method. Eventually I enrolled in a two-year course with the actress and teacher Stella Adler, also a proponent of Stanislavski. Both Stella and Alvina actually had been to Moscow and met with the great Russian master teacher and author of the actors' 'bible' *An Actor Prepares*. Later Stella recommended me to her colleague John Houseman, the producer and director of the Shakespeare Festival in 1956.

Of course I was enthusiastic to be an apprentice at the Festival in Connecticut (then in its second season after being constructed in 1955 along the banks of the Housatonic River), along with Peter Bogdanovitch (later the director of *Paper Moon* and *The Last Picture Show*), another of Stella's students, to work with the master, Houseman, who had been one of the founders of the Mercury Theater and a mentor to Orson Welles—and later went on to produce and/or direct major Hollywood movies, in addition to winning an Oscar as an actor in *The Paper Chase* (1973) as well as founding the drama division at Juilliard School. At Stratford I was able to act alongside some of the most talented people in New York theater at the time including John Emery, Mildred Dunnock, Fritz Weaver, Nina Foch, Kent Smith, Jacqueline Brooks, Jonathan Frid (who achieved immortality as a vampire named Barnabas Collins in *Dark Shadows* on television) and many others. Both Bobby Morris and I were among the interns cast in *King John* and *Measure for Measure* in the summer of 1956. I personally remember Bobby as a very sensitive and intense actor with a personality similar to that of James Dean whom I had previously seen on Broadway at the Royale Theatre in *The Immoralist*, an adaptation of Andre Gide's novel by Augustus and Ruth Goetz

starring Geraldine Page and Louis Jordan. In this, Dean played the part of a gay hustler.

I remember my part in *King John* was a 'walk on the wild side.' As an apprentice I was high up in the rafters with a very old actor, Whitford Kane, who in the 1920s had played the gravedigger in John Barrymore's *Hamlet*. We had to be raised up high on a platform with no backing, seated on chairs, forced to wait to be lowered down at the end of the play. I felt it was a very dangerous situation both for Kane and myself. Kane was born in Ireland in 1881 and had had a very lengthy theatrical career on Broadway. He died in December of 1956 and I presume our aerie in the rafters was his last stage appearance. Other memories of *King John* include John Emery, who played the title role, who was very displeased with the original costumes, they being too hot and heavily padded as well as tacky. At one point during a dress rehearsal of the play he ripped off his wig—a red one—and yelled, "You got me looking like a God damned Joan Crawford here!" Another time Emery escorted several apprentices, including Bobby Morris and myself, to see his ex-wife Tallulah Bankhead perform in her play *Welcome Darlings* at the Westport Country Playhouse. After the show Emery and we apprentices were making our way to a local restaurant, the Café Le Plage, when a trio of teenage girls approached us. One of the girls said, "Tallulah, please say dahling." Tallulah looked at the girls and said, "Fuck you...dahling!"

At Stratford I shared a cottage on Lordship Beach on the Long Island Sound with Stanley Bell whose family lineage purportedly extended back 18 generations to the Globe Theater at the time of Shakespeare. Once we were visited by Gladys Cooper, the great English actress, who stayed at the cottage for a time. One of the apprentices, Ted Otis, heir to the Otis Elevator Company, and his brother, found out that she was there and to draw attention to themselves, drove around and around the house, revving up the motor of Ted's 1955 green MG sports car. Gladys kept saying, "Who is that boy skulking around our house?" Also, before the summer was over, apprentice Clarence Burbage (aka Peter Burbage) declared himself to be Peter Burbage Bell and a relative of Stanley Bell and moved in forcing me to get a room next door in a larger house where Nina Foch was staying, which was fun anyway since she regaled me endlessly about her Hollywood experiences. In *Promise Unfulfilled*, the author writes that Stanley Bell, in 1958, was appearing

in *Much Ado About Nothing* with Katherine Hepburn in Washington DC and walked out in the middle of a scene. Three days later he phoned John Houseman, who was the director, and asked to be rehired. Several hours after that he leapt out of an eighth floor window at the Hotel Touraine in Boston, landing on the marquee and dying instantly. After a very slow, underfunded restoration, which began in 2012, the Stratford Shakespeare Theater burned to the ground in 2019 to the dismay of many in the theater community. Two teenagers were charged with arson.

According to the book Bobby Morris obtained representation with the William Morris Agency and appeared in several guest roles on television series including *The Texan*, *Studio One*, *The Lineup*, *Law of the Plainsman*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, *Death Valley Days*, *Deadline*, *The Defender* (a two-part show where he appeared with Steve McQueen, William Shatner, and Ralph Bellamy) and *Naked City* which featured Morris and George Maharis (an actor who later starred in Albee's *The Zoo Story*) in an episode which was a 'backdoor pilot' for *Route 66*. Morris missed out on the co-starring role in that famous series but the William Morris Agency finally landed him a contract with 20th Century Fox with the stipulation that he relocate from New York to California. In 1957 Morris met and married a teenage singer named Janice Caplin at the famous Colony Record store on Broadway, and in 1959 they moved to Santa Monica and soon after gave birth to a son, Paul. In May of 1960, Bobby Morris, aka Bobby Morawczynski, who had epilepsy, choked to death at a health ranch in the California desert after suffering a seizure. He was 25. His short career is a poignant story—that of an actor who almost made it big time.

Promise Unfulfilled—The Brief Life and Bizarre Death of Actor Robert Morris, a biography by Vernon Gravely, an illustrated paperback book (and a 'Kindlebook') can be ordered from the publisher Valigor Press (valigorproductions@gmail.com) and on Amazon. The book *The American Shakespeare Festival—Birth of a Theater*, published by Simon & Schuster can be ordered from betterworldbooks.com, at abebooks.com and on Amazon.

Most recently, Michael Smith, former drama critic of the *Village Voice*, edited Robert Heide 25 Plays published by Fast Books, P. O. Box 1268, Silverton, Oregon 97381—fastbookspress.com and is also available on Amazon.

Save the Voice of the West Village

Dear Readers, Neighbors, Friends, and Supporters,

We're asking for help because our beloved local newspaper is in danger of folding forever. With ad revenues sinking as our local businesses struggle to survive in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic, *WestView News* can no longer make payroll and pay printing costs. We have distributed the paper for free to 12,000 West Village homes, year after year, and to another 500 paid subscribers. Without your help, we can't do it anymore.

When I started the paper 17 years ago, I found myself giving it a subheading, "The Voice of the West Village." I wanted the readers to talk back—to ask the newspaper to use "the power of the press" to get things done. This paper has made incalculable contributions to the West Village community during the past 17 years, from holding free concerts for seniors to successfully campaigning for a Village Heart Lab at Lenox Hill Hospital—a vital local resource to save a heart attack victim in the 15-minute window from attack to medical treatment.

But the news for newspapers is not good:

The Daily News recently closed one of their offices. Hinting at the cost, the *New York Times* recently announced it will no longer print their TV guide. Shortly after the *Times* finished their gleaming new headquarters, they found the mortgage onerous and sold the building and rented back their offices.

A major New York real estate firm contracted to buy the expensive back page of *WestView* when the pandemic prompted a quick cancellation. Restaurant ad sales have fallen as well: you don't advertise a restaurant that can't be entered. The traditional way of funding a newspaper via advertising is dead and it is very easy to predict that the bankruptcy of newspapers will continue until they will only be found in museums...

We think that some of us still like the feel of a real newspaper, and would like to try to continue *WestView* for a few more years and maybe even make it a little bit better.

Today, we are reaching out to our neighbors and community. If you love the paper, we ask you to help save *WestView News*. We need community support to help us pay a backlog of bills and keep the paper printing for the remainder of the pandemic and the following year as our community rebuilds.

Your contribution will help pay our staff and our printer, but more importantly, you will help us bring the local news to the people of the West Village. Our stories, told by the people who live here. Which bird Keith Michael and his dog Millie spotted in the Village this month... How you met your husband... What the Village was like 40 years ago... The most exciting thing that ever happened in your life... This is your paper. Without *WestView News*, there will be no one left to tell these stories. Please help if you can.

Please support our crowdfunding campaign. Please give what you can afford, what you think the paper deserves. And please ask your friends and neighbors to give as well. Thank you. We greatly appreciate your support.

George Capsis, Publisher
And the *WestView News* Staff and Contributors

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