Rage, Rage Against Croman

By Cynthia Chaffee and Mary Ann Miller

Whenever a New York restaurant closes, look under the nearest rock and you’ll usually find Steve Croman, the notorious landlord who just spent several months in jail—not at Rikers where he was supposed to go, but at the Manhattan correctional center, a.k.a. “The Tombs.”

Add to the mix Eytan Sugarman and Anthony “The Mooch” Scaramucci, and this toxic trio may close the White Horse Tavern, the much beloved bar at Hudson and 11th streets in the far west Greenwich Village.

Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, probably it’s most famous patron, wrote, “Do not go gentle into that good night...Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” He had his last drinks there and later died at St. Vincent’s. The White Horse Tavern, with its rich cultural, political and social history, is where artists, poets, painters, writers and musicians gathered.

The late Norman Mailer held a Sunday writers’ salon there years ago. Other notable

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Do Not Legalize Sex Work!

By Carol Yost

Two op eds about the current state of affairs in the field of sex work appeared recently, a week apart, in the Daily News. The one published March 1, 2019, by Melanie Thompson, a sex trafficking survivor, was given the title “Hell no to legal prostitution.” On March 8, 2019, the op ed by Heather Robinson, a journalist, was entitled, “Stand up for powerless women.”

The first one argues compellingly against a drive by state senators Julia Salazar and Jessica Ramos, joined by State Senator Brad Hoylman and Assemblyman Dick Gottfried, to legalize what is called prostitution—a term considered dehumanizing by some activists, who prefer to call it commercial sexual exploitation. The other op ed argues strongly for programs to give women job training and protection from situations in which they are tricked and trapped by unscrupulous employers into doing sex work.

This is not a victimless crime. Nor are the women caught up in this institution criminals; they are victims. They should not be arrested; but those with money and power who participate in this sordid and abusive trade, taking advantage of women who are given no means of escape, should be.

Ms. Robinson focuses on shady massage parlors such as the one Patriots owner Robert Kraft is accused of frequenting. There are 9,000 massage parlors in the U.S., and many of them, though not all, are likely to be sex trafficking dens, according to experts. A typical scenario is that Asian women are lured from overseas with the promise of legitimate jobs and then are forced, with threats of violence, into letting their bodies

continued on page 32

All We Can Afford Is Memories

By George Capsis

Perhaps nothing has so suddenly dramatized the loss of the “old” Village as the sale of the building in which the beloved White Horse Tavern has sat unchanged since 1880. Generations and generations of young and not so young people have eased their way into a chair or booth there to sip a lager or two and talked—just talked—“Meet you at the White Horse.”

Now, we have learned that Steve Croman, the caricature of an ice-blooded landlord, fresh from eight months in the Tombs prison and still owning over 100 tenement buildings housing anxious rent-stabilized tenants, has bought the building in which the White Horse sits. Will he kill it? The dead-faced landlord may just do that—mordantly seeking revenge for the slurry of hatred he has stirred from his decades of heartless harassment of tenants who, for protection, have had to form

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It's Not Illegal If You Have To Do It?

State Senator Brad Holyman and State Assemblyman Dick Godfrey want to make prostitution legal because, as they say, it is practiced by impoverished women who have no other choice but to sell their body and perform beastly sex acts.

If we follow this logic all crimes performed by people who have no money should be legal. Why not jump over the subway turnstile, slip a steak into a handbag while shopping at the supermarket? This single act of jaw dropping stupidity has crossed these two politicians off my list for the few years I have left to vote.

—George Capsis

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Film Festival

Running concurrent with the Tribeca Film Festival, the Manhattan Festival has its home in The Village.

SEE PAGE 27

My Favorite Restaurant

Submit your favorite to receive a FREE subscription.

SEE PAGE 14

Good Friday Concert

WestView concerts continue at St. John’s in the Village
Friday, April 19 at 7:30 p.m.
Drug Dealing in Washington Square Park

George,
I appreciate your coverage of the drug dealings in WSP. Perhaps it was overlooked that dealing and usage does occur in the SW corner by the chess tables, which is adjacent to the children's playground (“the mounds”) which is also directly across from the rest rooms. There is little if any activity on the east side of the park by those other playgrounds. Also, that activity starts as early as 6:30 a.m., before much of the park staff arrive, and continues well into the night after staff is gone.

Moreover, I think the far bigger story is the lack of prosecution by the judges, especially in the case of repeat narcotics offenders. Arrests are made, however even multiple time offenders are released! Check those facts with our local precinct, which has made dozens of arrests only to see releases overnight. Weed is not a monumental issue in my mind, hopefully it will be legalized, just don’t smoke it (or cigarettes or cigars) in a public park. The dealing is more than weed, you certainly are aware of the deadly consequences of fentanyl and harder drugs. Additionally the trickle down effect of shoplifting and similar crimes by that clientele contributes to the overall crime in the area.

Anyway I do appreciate your coverage. Please leave my name out of this for fear of retribution. Many of my neighbors are on a campaign to eliminate this blight but wish to keep our names out of the spotlight.

Thanks, Steve

Dear Bike Lane Complainers

The next time you step into your automobile, you might stop to think about the amount of space your car wastes in this already-congested city and consider the damage you and your indulgent, gas-guzzling car are doing to the environment. You might also then consider if, given those factors, you are in any position to complain about things such as sustainable, eco-friendly bike lanes.

Pay to park your car in a garage or take the subway like everyone else. The City does not owe you a free parking space.

—Your Bike-Lane-Loving Neighbor

14th Street

The 14th Street Coalition (I recently saw it referred to as the “14th Street Coalition for Parking”) would have us all believe that the new bike lanes on 12th and 13th Street are ruining the neighborhood, and that they are standing up in opposition on behalf of “the community.” My apartment faces 12th Street and I’m convinced that the overall conditions have improved since these lanes were implemented.

As a practical matter, there’s not been much of a change, other than the loss of parking space, which I concede must be frustrating to local car owners that use the streets for storing their personal vehicles. Arthur Schwartz, a leading opponent of the 14th Street changes but also the bike lanes, pointed out in last month’s WestView that there are frequent occurrences of delivery vehicles blocking bike lanes. This is still an improvement—before they simply double parked and were more likely to cause traffic slowdowns, resulting in the inevitable crescendo of honking, swearing, and general proliferation of noise and negativitiy on the block. I’ve also never been kept awake at night by an empty bike lane…a car alarm alarming the neighborhood to a phantom break-in, that’s another story.

Mr. Schwartz frequently mentions Jane Jacobs in his opposition pieces and talking points, citing her as a voice for “local planning” and opposing measures imposed by City Hall without community input. But among Ms. Jacobs most notable work was her opposition to the Lower Manhattan Expressway, which would have further proliferated roadways designed to accommodate private automobiles, making the city even more car-centric, despite the fact that single rider vehicles are the most inefficient means of urban transportation.

The Village was never meant for most residents to own private vehicles and park them on the street. The majority of us who use other forms of transportation to go about our daily lives should not have to underwrite street parking for those who choose to purchase cars, or refuse to give them up. Sometimes a car is considered necessary for personal or professional endeavors; this is not to suggest no one should ever own one, only that it will be a significant burden in a densely populated city like New York, especially in Manhattan. In life there are trade-offs: those desiring both a Village address and a private automobile at their disposal may have to sacrifice convenient parking unless they’re willing to pay for it.

The priority of urban transportation should be the efficient movement of people. That is accomplished most effectively by protecting pedestrians, boosting mass transit solutions such as buses and subways, and offering ride services that accommodate those with physical limitations. Private automobiles are very low on the priority list—that’s why most people come to the logical conclusion not to own one if they live in lower Manhattan. Maybe there aren’t that many bicycle commuters yet (I am not), but these lanes are far less intrusive and a more optimal use of street space than accommodating parking for many of these modern day “living rooms on wheels” that are once again popular with drivers.

It’s hard to reconcile the intense opposition to improving access for a much more desirable and sustainable method of transportation (bicycles) in favor of one on the decline (private cars). Consider how the city is likely to evolve and how future generations will move about it; is the priority to preserve street parking which benefits very few, or are their other things to focus on to improve the lives for many?

—Bill Pullano

KEEP OUR FRUIT VENDOR, BUT GET RID OF HIS VAN! Photos by Jane Asche.
**BRIEFLY NOTED**

The Community Starts on Your Block

Think about it—a city block in New York can have a larger population than a small town in Kansas, and problems can start right at your door.

Yesterday, as I walked up Charles Street to West 4th Street, I discovered to my disgust that somebody had painted his name in comic book script across a newly painted wall—and very big, like eight feet of balloon script.

Or consider my widowed neighbor who discovered that her real estate tax had jumped to a crushing $51,000.

Your block—your street—is your living room and it can look as bad or as good as neighbors collectively want to make it look, as we did on Charles Street. We planted 110 trees and covered ugly massive concrete blocks (set out by the police department to prevent officers from parking their private cars in front of the bomb squad exit door) with handsome wood planters.

If you don't have a block association I can guarantee that you know very few of your neighbors. That's the New York culture—we don't impose on the guy who lives next door.

We started a block association on Charles Street 40 years ago when the city offered to dig a hole if a block association would buy a tree. And then we had block parties, Christmas parties, summer rooftop parties, and meetings to discuss garbage pickup and spring planting. And a funny thing happened: we got to know some of our neighbors who are still our friends after 40 years.

—George Capsis

George Capsis is the publisher of WestView News. (westviewnews.org.)

Spring Gardening

This morning I met with my old pal Susan Sipos, of Distinctive Gardens, to inspect our co-op’s backyard garden. She comes to visit us about this time every year. We walk through several levels of the backyard and inspect the damages that have been caused by the ravages of winter. We are lucky to have her help us with this rite of passage.

Susan is well-known in the West Village as well as other parts of Manhattan but I think her heart is with us West Villagers. I met her through an old friend who has been the guiding hand behind the flora and fauna at Abingdon Park. He introduced me to Susan three years ago and it has been a delight to work with her and map out our garden.

This column, unlike most of my others, is more of a tutorial. So, here are the basics that Susan has taught us: First, be careful in doing a deep dive in assessing your garden areas. Look for damaged trees and plants. Assess their health. Remove what Susan calls the “winter blanket,” which is old leaves, twigs and broken branches, etc. Of course, there must be a general cleanup and pruning. Susan has explained that how and when to prune, and which plants you prune, are critical to the health and look of your garden. Examples: don’t trim forsythia until after it blooms, clear the old blooms off your hydrangeas before the greening begins, and so on. You get the idea—be cautious. Also, I’m told to be on the lookout for pests that can kill plants by eating the root systems as the plants are coming into season. Now that the un-fun work has been completed, the color is about to start. Go to your garden centers or, better yet, the flower market at Abingdon Park, and pick out Johnny Jump Ups and pansies as they are hardy and great for early spring.

Now that your garden is clean and the color is coming back there is still one more step. Susan will be back in May to plant all the really colorful annuals like snapdragons. Now you can sit back in your garden with a light jacket (it’s still a bit chilly on an April morning), enjoying a takeaway cup of joe from Cafe Panino Mucho Gusto, and bask in the colors of the flowers—and as Susan tells me, look for all the many shades of green. You have to look carefully, but once you focus on them you will be delighted. Yes—it’s spring again in the Village. Thank goodness.

—Gordon T. Hughes

An Open Letter to Corey Johnson

Corey, greetings

Great news to know you’re going to be ‘getting us moving’ so to speak!

And as long as you’re looking at future plans, may I put in a word on behalf of the ‘senior riders’:

Do you think we could get the bus shelters back? For instance, there used to be one here on the #14 route at Union Square—a busy stop—but it was removed some time ago.*

So now, because the 14As to Abingdon Square are so few and far between, the solution for the A rider is to take a 14D to 8th Avenue and 14th Street, where they can sit and wait in the last remaining shelter...for an eventual 14A!

On this particularly cold March day, however, there was no bus at all for nearly half an hour! (But that gets us into another familiar problem with the #14!!)

Thank you for listening—and for all you’re doing for NYC.

—Maggie B

*Because, we were told, of a tendency for the homeless to settle in them. But would have thought a different design might manage to discourage permanent residency.

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**Drug Dealing—A Washington Square Park Industry**

Oh wow, we did a short piece on large population of drug dealers in Washington Square Park last month and received some daring photos of their congregating every afternoon for what we guess is the pay off. Seems one guy is the boss and gives out the cash.

It is disturbing to see how well established the trade is and how relaxed and indifferent to the police they are and how many sellers are involved. Years ago we recommended an annex of the 6th Precinct should be set up in the park—we will recommend it again.

The heavy set man with the dark vest and black and grey sweats is the same man that was handing out money in a prior picture...he seems to be in charge from my observations. Also, he’s smoking. Park rangers ticket unsuspecting tourists for smoking but ignore smoking, drinking, gambling and drug dealing by these guys...no tickets for them! Photos by Anonymous.
Corey Johnson’s Vision for City May Need Glasses

By J. Taylor Basker

Corey Johnson, City Council Leader, delivered his State of the City speech presenting his proposal A Case for Municipal Control and a Comprehensive Transportation Vision for the Five Boroughs’ telling us what every New Yorker already knows. “Smart, well-developed transportation policy can significantly improve economic conditions and enhance public safety and climate outcomes. Poorly crafted policy can be devastating.”

Statistics provided in the Executive Summary of the proposal reveal that subway and bus ridership has DECREASED from 2016 to 2017, while Taxis/For-Hire Vehicles have increased. Only 55.8% of New Yorkers take mass transit to work. Ask any New Yorker to explain this, and you will receive a litany of public transit horror stories. Perhaps for NYC the Bible verse should be edited to “It is easier for a New Yorker to ride through the eye of a needle than to get to work on time on a bus or subway!” Subway ridership has dropped 15% between 2012–2018 and continues to drop as does bus ridership. The MTA—Metropolitan Transit Authority—is responsible for our public transit and it is run by the State of NY.

We also know the streets of NYC are in terrible shape with potholes damaging cars and sometimes people. I fell in one running last year on W. 12th Street. In 2017, there were approximately 60,712 complaints regarding potholes and NYC is financially liable for damages to cars—in 2015 they paid $32 million. The City is also responsible for slip/trip injury on sidewalks, motor vehicle property damage as well as medical malpractice and police action. In 2017 the City paid out over $675 million, almost six percent more than in 2016.

Neither New York State nor New York City have been good administrators of either subways and buses or streets and sidewalks. The roads are congested and NYC streets are dangerous. There were 10,561 pedestrian injuries in 2017 and 108 fatalities from motor vehicles. Yet there was an increase in 2018 to 114 fatalities despite the Mayor’s Vision Zero initiative to reduce vehicle speed. You are not safe from bikes either. Many of us have had close calls with speeding bikers who ignore traffic signals or signs. Last year there were 315 pedestrians injured by bikes and one was killed. If you are disabled, a senior, a mother with a stroller or carrying suitcases, riding public transportation is difficult or impossible. The recent death of a young mother struggling to carry her stroller on...
Suzy Chase's cookbook podcast is very West Village-centric. Photo by Suzy Chase.

By Michael D. Minichello

This month’s West Village Original is cookbook podcaster Suzy Chase, born in Illinois in 1967 and raised in Prairie Village, Kansas. Her podcast, “Cookery by the Book,” airs from her dining room table. She also recently wrapped up a six-year happy hour DJ residency at Trophy Bar in Williamsburg. A neighborhood resident for 23 years, Chase lives on West 4th Street with her husband, Bob, and son, JP. Visit her website at cookerybythebook.com.

As a girl growing up in the Midwest, Suzy Chase would lie in the dark at night, trying to tune into far-away stations on her radio. “I’ve always loved radio,” she says. “My parents, who were both born in 1929, grew up with radio so as a child when I said, ‘I can’t sleep,’ my mom would say ‘Turn on your radio!’ If the weather was good, I could get WLA in Chicago, which was a biggie, or WCCO out of Minneapolis. Even back when I was a kid I loved Sally Jesse Raphael. Larry King was so good on the radio! Art Bell was another one I listened to. I love the intimacy of conversation over the radio and just listening to two people talking.”

After high school, Chase went on to study at the University at Kansas in Lawrence. “It’s really a good journalism school,” she says. “I studied broadcasting there. In fact, after my sophomore year I got a job offer while I was interning at a radio station in Kansas City. My Mom let me quit college and take the job.”

“How did the marriage between podcasting and cooking come about? “I was doing radio in the evenings in Kansas City,” Chase says. “I wanted a daytime job as well, so I started doing publicity for a cookbook publishing company. That’s where I got the background. I’m not innately a great cook and that’s why I like a good recipe that I can follow. I love reading cookbooks and recipes and discovering the stories behind them. It’s always interesting to me why the author wrote them.”

Chase does her podcast from her dining room table via audio Skype. “Since 2015, it’s been the only podcast devoted to cookbooks,” she says. “I interview the author after I’ve cooked a recipe out of their book. I do the cooking in my tiny kitchen and then we talk about it, discussing not only ingredients and my success or failure with the recipe, but about them as well. I feel like I get a lot of information about an author when I cook one of their recipes. I think that every cookbook has a story.”

According to Chase, response has been great. “I get approximately 7,000 downloads per episode and I have over 10,000 subscribers to the RSS feed. Food is so hot now. Everyone’s into food!”

What brought Chase to the West Village? “I just always had this thing about New York City;” she says. “One day in 1995 I looked up and thought if I don’t get out of Kansas City now, I never will. I always loved watching the intro to Saturday Night Live where they show images of the City. I was like, ‘Everyone’s up and doing things. And here they’re all asleep!’ On a whim, I started looking for jobs here and I found one doing publicity for a publisher. I kind of crow barred my way into it. I asked them why didn’t they start a cookbook division and they said I could do that when I got here!”

“When I arrived, my broker showed me apartments in different parts of the City,” she continues. “Then he showed me something on Perry Street. I didn’t know where I was, but it just hit me. ‘This is it! I love it!’ It just felt right. And you know what I did? I asked him if it was a safe neighborhood!”

“Even back when I was pregnant I didn’t see many other pregnant people, who were nice and super interesting.” Has it changed much? “Oh, my gosh, yes,” Chase responds. “Since I moved here in 1996, so many families have moved in. It used to be a single haven. Even twelve years ago when I was pregnant I didn’t see many other pregnant gals here. That’s definitely changed!”

What hasn’t changed is Chase’s fondness for this part of town or her delight in being here. “Who needs to go above 14th Street? That’s what I say,” she says, laughing. “My podcast is very West Village-centric. I’m always talking about how I cook in my tiny West Village kitchen and I include numerous West Village photos on my Instagram page. It’s sort of my unique love letter to this neighborhood.”
Jackson Square Park Reopens After Extensive Renovation

By Michael D. Minichiello

On April 2nd at 11:00 a.m., City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and others will preside over a newly renovated Jackson Square Park, the triangle formed by Horatio Street and Eighth and Greenwich Avenues. Among other events at the ceremony, three new pin oaks will be planted to join the older ones already there. Under reconstruction for a year, the park now features not only a beautiful cosmetic facelift and restored fountain, but state-of-the-art infrastructure as well.

The last major renovation—when the park attained its current layout as well as the large central fountain—was in 1990. In the ensuing years, time and nature had taken their toll. According to Harlan Bratcher, president of the Jackson Square Alliance, a 501(c)3 charitable organization that was formed in 2008 to support the maintenance and greening of the park, the timing of this initiative was perfect. “While the park might have looked good thanks to our fundraising and softening the pin oaks,” says Bratcher, “That’s the big investment.” In addition, JSA does many seemingly small but essential tasks such as paying to have the garbage bins emptied every afternoon, so they don’t overflow (the City only empties them in the morning). “There are so many things that JSA does that really make Jackson Square Park livable,” Bratcher says. “We’re just trying to augment this little oasis so it’s enjoyable for everybody.”

To find out more about Jackson Square Alliance, please visit their website at www.jsa.nyc.

Why I Am Supporting Bernie—Again

By Arthur Z. Schwartz

On a cold Saturday, the first weekend in March, I trekked out to Brooklyn College to attend Bernie Sanders’ announcement that he was running for President in 2020. I had been Bernie’s NY State Council in 2016 and had attended the Democratic Convention as a Sanders’ pledged delegate, but I wondered for the next 2.5 years whether the astounding, energetic movement which so magically flowed out of his candidacy would survive. I got there at 8 a.m. (for an 11:30 a.m. program) to help register voters, and to get people to switch from No Party to Democratic (to help register voters, and to get people to switch from No Party to Democratic), but essential tasks such as paying to have the garbage bins emptied every afternoon, so they don’t overflow (the City only empties them in the morning). “There are so many things that JSA does that really make Jackson Square Park livable,” Bratcher says. “We’re just trying to augment this little oasis so it’s enjoyable for everybody.”

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Food Scrap Collection

By Ede Rothaus

As one of the most environmentally aware neighborhoods in New York City, the West Village continues to further its efforts to ‘reuse reduce recycle.’ A strong example of this is our local food scrap and curbside organics collection program.

Funded by the New York City Council (and its Speaker, Corey Johnson) for our area, this is a combined municipal and non-profit project by the Department of Sanitation and the Lower East Side Ecology Center.

For those residents who do not live in buildings large enough to have their own brown food scrap bin and/or curbside collections, neighbors are encouraged to save food scraps at home and drop them off at convenient sites in the neighborhood.

Food scraps can be saved in many ways—yogurt tubs, plastic bags, paper bags, take-out containers, milk cartons, mini garbage cans, perforated metal containers, and coffee cans are good examples. The closed containers can be frozen—or not—left out on a kitchen counter or wherever there’s room. A helpful hint to keep odors down is to place layers of newspaper in the containers. They will absorb some of the smells and can be recycled along with the scraps.

Lower East Side Ecology Center worker Susan Shaw has been manning the Sheridan Square/Christopher Street Tuesday 8-11am drop off site since November 2018. Shaw has been watching as participation steadily grows. Currently two barrels—each weighing between 75 and 80 pounds—are being filled every three-hour collection morning. Approximately three months after food scraps have been collected, rich high-quality compost is produced and then distributed to city parks and gardens.

MATERIALS ACCEPTED FOR COMPOST

• Fruit & veggie scraps
• Rice, pasta, bread, cereal
• Stale beans, flour & spices
• Coffee, filters, tea
• Eggshells, nuts, fruit pits
• Flowers & houseplants
• Potting soil
• Food-soiled paper

MATERIALS NOT ACCEPTED FOR COMPOST

Meat, fish, poultry, bones, shellfish
Cheese & dairy products
Fats, grease & greasy foods
Pet feces, litter or bedding
Coal or charcoal ashes
Diseased or insect infested plants.
Metal, glass or plastic (recycle it!)

The West Village furthers its efforts to recycle: Susan Shaw of the Lower East Side Ecology Center with Christopher Street resident, Amy Haus, recycling at the Sheridan Square collection site. Photo by Ede Rothaus.

On the Market

56 Jane Street, Apt Unit 3ABH
2 Beds | 2.5 Baths | $2,500,000

Recent Transactions

In Contract
208 West 11th Street | $9,695,000
300 West 14th #203 | $2,695,000

Sold
25 Columbus Circle | $8,200,000
84 Charles Street Unit 14 | $999,888
23 Bethune Stret #4F | $525,000

Thomas Lee
Lic. Assc. Real Estate Broker
University of Virginia ’04
Men’s Division I Golfer
O: 212.447.1888
M: 201.988.1222
thomas.lee@compass.com

COMPASS
By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

Have you adjusted to the “Sharing Economy” yet? In NYC, the Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) is supposed to control the ride-hail world, but what has happened? Well, this has been a year, or decade, of turmoil in the ride-hail/ride-share world.

The TLC oversaw 143,674 for-hire vehicles in 2015, including taxis, “black cars”; “ferry cars”; commuter “dollar vans”; luxury limousines; and paratransit vehicles. Black cars and the other vehicles cannot be hailed by the public. Green Taxis, which began in 2013, can only be hailed in the outer boroughs.

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By 2018, over 80,000 such vehicles were licensed through these four companies, for Manhattan and beyond. No wonder we have congestion!

The shift of ridership spelled bankruptcy for many Medallion Taxicabs and drivers; some shifted to the other companies. Fast-growing companies like Uber started treating their drivers so badly, a major scandal ensued, and now we have legislation in-keeping with the state legislation, meaning, vehicles strong enough to pass “Congestion Pricing” state legislation, meaning, vehicles strong enough to pass “Congestion Pricing”. The City imposed $2.50 added for each trip. On-time service was spotty, according to complaints to MTA.

A pilot program begun October 2017 has now passed its test, and as of March 2019, Curb Mobility has a 3-year $116.5 million contract to route Access-A-Ride requests to taxis, green cabs, and other drivers for the first time, when the vast majority of requests do not require wheelchair-accessible vehicles. For drivers, their fares will be 50% higher than their average regular fare, and it will cost the state an average of $54 per trip. On-time service was spotty, according to complaints to MTA.

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Way back in 2015, there were 13,587 Medallion Taxicabs in Manhattan, and 14,000 for-hire vehicles associated with one of four ride-sharing companies: Juno, Lyft, Uber, and VIA. By 2018, over 80,000 such vehicles were licensed through these four companies, for Manhattan and beyond. No wonder we have congestion!

The shift of ridership spelled bankruptcy for many Medallion Taxicabs and drivers; some shifted to the other companies. Fast-growing companies like Uber started treating their drivers so badly, a major scandal ensued, and now we have legislation in-keeping with the state legislation, meaning, vehicles strong enough to pass “Congestion Pricing.” The City imposed $2.50 added for each trip. On-time service was spotty, according to complaints to MTA.

A pilot program begun October 2017 has now passed its test, and as of March 2019, Curb Mobility has a 3-year $116.5 million contract to route Access-A-Ride requests to taxis, green cabs, and other drivers for the first time, when the vast majority of requests do not require wheelchair-accessible vehicles. For drivers, their fares will be 50% higher than their average regular fare, and it will cost the state an average of $54 per trip. On-time service was spotty, according to complaints to MTA.

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

Have you adjusted to the “Sharing Economy” yet? In NYC, the Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) is supposed to control the ride-hail world, but what has happened? Well, this has been a year, or decade, of turmoil in the ride-hail/ride-share world.

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Youth Is 1,000 Eyes

An attempt at self healing by George Capsis,
Publisher of WestView News

The paper was an accidental happening—I tried to restart the Charles Street Block Association paper started by my neighbor John McAllister perhaps 40 years ago. John was an old time New England newspaperman. I remember him wearing suspenders but he may not have—he just looked like he should. When I knew him he was an editor for Newsweek.

In those days without computers doing a paper was very primitive—John had to paste up the articles on pages and send them to the printer—we still have a few of those archaic reminders in the basement.

When I started the present paper about 15 years ago I was still a consultant to The United States Council for International Business and had no idea of retiring but I got a casual note from my boss that they did not need me anymore (he later sent me a fuller note to say he should have called in person). But anyway, here I was in my seventies with no real job.

The kids were gone and we had income from rentals so there was no need to find another job, and who would hire me at that age?

I wasn't really absorbed with getting out the new Charles Street Association paper and it was pretty crude. I just went once a month to Your Neighborhood Office and had it photocopied and I can even remember Maggie and I doing some of the door to door distribution and then one day I went to pay the bill for 1,000 copies and I was told it was $1,000. Being a child of the depression this was an unacceptable price, so I called a printer who printed on old fashioned newsprint paper and asked how much 1,000 copies would cost and was told $1,000. Then he said we have a minimum run of 2,000 so you get 2,000 copies for $1,000 and we became a newspaper.

But wait—we only needed 1,000 copies for Charles Street so we had to get rid of the extra papers on West 10th and Perry Streets and then we had by default become a Village newspaper—we called it WestView News to say we were the West Village and by "View" I meant to say we had an "opinion."

Now if I were a good reporter I would go to the basement and go through years and years of the paper to tell some of the good stories but I am too old and too tired to do that and that is not the purpose of this article.

Years ago as the paper took more and more of my time and attention I would say "it keeps me alive." That was not quite true then, but now it is.

OK, just think, you have reached an unacceptable age and you have run out of people to talk to and if you should be invited by your son for dinner out on the Island and they have invited some of their age group, what do you say and do they want to hear you?

Now your view of the world, your opinions, come from the New York Times, WNYC and channels 13 and 21. If you are able to remember what you heard and then recite it, well the look you receive from the polite guests is "he is doing pretty good for his age)—and that's it.

We read that primitive societies valued, respected and even deferred to age. The head of the tribe was often one of the oldest but now, well I don't have to tell you how young people feel about age.

But wait. I am going to introduce and make a case for a very old fashioned word—"wisdom." Boy, just writing it out it seems so hopelessly old fashioned but I think I have some of that stuff even though I can't quite define it.

When our local politician says we should make prostitution legal because the women who have to do it are poor and they have no other source of income I know that is wrong and here is the point of this article. I can write my opinion and perhaps 1,000 people will read it—that is power—that is the stuff of life—that is still being young.
Two by Two

By Keith Michael

Honking and braying, a Canada Goose family flies across the promenade in front of us onto the lawn. Millie seems nonplussed as the geese immediately get industrious at their grass maintenance routine. Corgis are herding dogs, but maybe the geese are already orderly enough that Millie doesn’t feel the need to intervene, or maybe she knows better than to take on a flock of geese at this time of year.

It’s a blue-sky early Sunday morning in Hudson River Park. The big city is sleeping in. Looking out over the glass-smooth Hudson River, it occurs to me that I’m witnessing what it might have been like the first day of ticket sales for entry to Noah’s Ark. It’s spring, and all the waterfront are travelling in twos. Along the river wall there is a Mallard pair—he with his glistening emerald-green head and curly tail filigrees, and she in a harmonious array of modest browns with a brilliant blue patch on each wing. Out hobnobbing with the pilings is a Black Duck couple. One moment they are clearly bobbing in the waves and the next they are indistinguishable from the dark pilings themselves. Confusingly, American Black Duck is the full formal name for this species which is really a deep brown color with a mottled grayish head and distinctive darker cap. Though when compared to the more common Mallard, they do look nearly black, particularly at a distance. Except as a rare vagrant in other parts of the world, why its formal name includes American, and why simply Black Duck doesn’t suffice, I don’t know.

Also hide-and-seek among the pilings are two Bufflehead. The guy of this pair looks like a black-and-white cartoon of a bathtub ducky but with a masked swashbuckling demeanor: standing up in the water to flaunt his wings, competition diving, and disappearing under the waves for a minute at a time. The gal is, again, browner, but with a white patch below her eye (maybe he finds this sultry). She is equally Olympian in her diving style. When they both pop up at the same time, he’s in full courting mode, stretching his neck and tossing his head straight backward nearly to his tail. The percussiveness of a bathtub ducky but with a masked swashbuckling demeanor: standing up in the water to flaunt his wings, competition diving, and disappearing under the waves for a minute at a time. The gal is, again, browner, but with a white patch below her eye (maybe he finds this sultry). She is equally Olympian in her diving style. When they both pop up at the same time, his head comes to life as an iridescent green-and-purple sheen. From this distance I can’t tell whether or not she’s being wooed by his athletic chutzpah.

Closer to the center of the river, yet another pair of winter ducks is cruising, preening, and diving. The Red-breasted Merganser always looks in high fashion with teased-out feathers on the backs of their heads as though they’re facing into a hurricane gale. The male is dandied up in a forest-green tailcoat with a white collar above a rust-red vest, while the female is turned out in a fetching warm-siena ensemble over a white shirtwaist. They both look like they’re decked out for a fancy spring equinox dress ball.

A CANADA GOOSE pair checks out the spring competition. Photo by Keith Michael.

A CANADA GOOSE pair checks out the spring competition. Photo by Keith Michael.

City Council Takes Legal Action Against Two Bridges Proposal

By Brian J. Pape, AIA

In the Two Bridges area of the Lower East Side, a collection of five new residential towers are planned to include over 3,000 apartments, with retail stores at the base of each project, with 700 affordable units in the mix. However, in December 2018, City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, and Council Member Margaret S. Chin filed a suit against the Department of City Planning (DCP), the City Planning Commission (CPC) and the Department of Buildings (DOB) to stop construction on the Two Bridges site, and a Manhattan Supreme Court Judge ordered a halt on work.

The Lower East Side Organized Neighbors (LESON) joined the lawsuit, because the towers violate the Zoning Resolution that governs the area, therefore should not be built. Their joint lawsuit would ensure full ULURP public review process for proposed developments in the Two Bridges neighborhood.

The existing deed restriction at one of three properties at the center of the dispute, meant to ensure housing for low income people with disabilities and the elderly in perpetuity, was never disclosed by DCP or the developers. The potential lifting of this restriction is akin to the city’s disastrous decision to lift a deed at the former Riverton House in the same Council District in 2015, allowing affordable housing to be converted to market-rate. The lifting of the deed would negatively impact a community struggling to remain affordable for New Yorkers, the court papers allege.

“I thought the city had learned its lesson from Riverton, but it appears that would be too much to ask for since it is making the same mistake again with Two Bridges” said City Council Speaker Corey Johnson.

“The Administration says that massive new development does not need a ULURP; then it slips out that there’s an affordable housing deed restriction for a portion of this development that they never mentioned” said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.

Extell’s OMS building at 252 South Street rises 847 feet, plus a smaller new building on the north side of the tower podium containing 205 affordable units. Other sites are 247 Cherry Street, 260 South Street, and 259 Clinton Street. 247 Cherry Street will be the tallest building in the neighborhood if completed, and is developed by JDS Development and designed by SHoP Architects. At 260 South Street, two towers 728 and 798 feet tall are designed by Handel Architects and developed by L+M and CIM. A 724-foot-tall residential tower is planned for 259 Clinton Street, designed by Perkins Eastman and developed by Starrett.

Plans for flood resilience measures against future storms, a $12.5 million dollar investment in a local NYCHA apartment complex, and a new subway entrance to the East Broadway station for better ADA accessibility, helped convince the City to approve the earlier proposals.

Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP, is an 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 WestViewNews.org Architecture Editor.

Visit keithmichaelboy.com for the latest schedule of New York City WILD! urban-adventure-in-nature outings throughout the five boroughs, and visit his Instagram @newyork-citywild for photos from around NYC.
Keeping Ancient Greek and Latin Alive

By Anastasia Kaliabakos

Latin and Greek are dying. These beautiful languages, once studied by the most elite and forward-thinking scholars, have been pushed into the background in schools across the globe in favor of “more useful” modern languages; however, it is of vital importance to maintain, if not increase, the world’s passion for classics. Knowing Greek and Latin make it easier to learn other languages and understand some of the most significant events in ancient history that are fundamental in the history of Western civilization—as seen in medical terminology, the architecture of cities, and democracy as we know it.

The Paideia Institute, inspired by the late and esteemed Latinist Reginald Foster, strives to teach students and teachers alike the value that classical languages hold in society today. Paideia is a gem in terms of opportunities regarding the classics. The Institute offers an extremely wide variety of programs for students to take part in, including Living Latin in Rome, Living Latin in Greece High School, Living Greek in Greece High School, Living Latin in Paris, and Caesar in Gaul. Paideia’s programs in Rome and Greece include separate opportunities for college and high school students to travel to Italy and Greece to practice Latin and ancient Greek. Paideia’s style is unique, as the instructors at each program teach students how to speak these ancient languages—an uncommon phenomenon in regular classrooms. Additionally, students are able to travel to cities that hold such great significance in human history, thereby connecting the texts they read in school and the programs themselves to real-life ancient relics and sites.

There are also options for younger children who have a desire to explore Latin. The Paideia Institute has extended its hand to schools and community organizations through their Aequora program, which offers Latin classes for children in elementary and middle schools. Not only does Aequora educate students about Latin syntax and grammar, but it also makes learning Latin enjoyable and fun for students, teachers, and volunteers. There are over 30 Aequora sites throughout the United States. Volunteers are always welcome at any site to help teachers share their love for Latin with students.

The Paideia Institute, along with Fordham University’s Department of Classics, hosts an annual two-day Latin and Greek conference called Living Latin and Greek. This conference is open to anyone interested in the classics, from high school seniors to experienced teachers. Speaking the classical languages is encouraged at this conference, especially during the special Cena Latina (“Latin Dinner”). Additionally, lectures given entirely in Latin or ancient Greek are available to participants throughout the course of the conference. This approach to learning more about Latin and Greek ultimately leads to a greater appreciation for these intricate and important classical languages.

I am personally able to attest to Paideia’s ability to foster love for the classics. I, myself, wish to spread the joys that Latin and Greek bring to the classroom and have found that this is possible through Paideia. I participated in Living Latin in Rome High School this past summer. It was my first experience outside America and I am so grateful and thankful that I was able to travel with Paideia for it. I learned more than I could ever have imagined, and not only about the Latin language itself. While writing a play about Ovid’s Pyramus and Thisbe I was able to put my knowledge of Latin grammar to the test. When walking around Rome, Florence, and Sperlonga, I was able to see the places in which the texts and speeches I’d read had taken place. Additionally, I have served as a volunteer through the Aequora program, which has brought me such joy and happiness. Sharing my passion for Latin with others has only increased my own love for the language. I have cherished every second of my experiences at Paideia—so much so, that I plan to participate in Living Greek in Greece High School this coming summer.

You can find applications for Paideia’s programs, events, volunteer opportunities, and scholarships on their website, www.paidieainstitute.org. I hope that you, with the help of the Paideia Institute, will keep Latin and Greek alive.

Anastasia Kaliabakos took part in the Living Latin in Rome program last summer. Currently, she tutors underrepresented students in Latin and plans to study the classics as a freshman in college next year.
If I Were Pope

By Donna Schaper

I would pray, pappally, about what it means to be a Christian. I would take all of my fears of fraud with me. I would ask about the end game—and whether revenge or punishment ever got anybody, anywhere, closer to Jesus.

I know the punishmentalists and literalists love to “get back” and get even. Since I can’t imagine what full payment would be on the debt of one pedophilic act on one child, the rest of the calculations are beyond my calculator’s capacity. Most sin costs the perp and the perp-upon-immeasurably. Pedophilia, on the scale that we now know is taking place in the church, is beyond data in its multiplication of misery. It gives new meaning to the word immeasurable.

Likewise, say we purporting Christians, God’s grace is immeasurable—as wide as the sea, as uncountable as the sand on the shores. If I were Pope, I would find a number—like ten years—and lock up all those convicted of child abuse for ten years. Of course, this number would be meaningless—long enough to hurt and short enough to imagine a future. This very act would undercut the current refusal of grace and forgiveness by naming an endgame, a positive outcome, a spirit-driven metanoia.

Talk of hopeless revenge, banning people whom we can’t stand, putting them “away” forever, imitates the very kind of incarceration systems we oppose. They say you are a sinner and you can’t be forgiven. Nothing could be more opposite of Christianity or the Jesus way as this revenge. Punishmentalists, progressives and fundamentalists all argue, in different ways, that Jesus died to save us from our sins. Incarceration argues this foul theology as well. Why would the Pope put a lie to the very tradition he proclaims?

During this arbitrary time, former priests would be offered the chance for full repentance. They would be offered the chance to return to humanity, but never to the priesthood. There would be beautiful worship, superb counseling, group work that would make AA look unso- phisticated. There would be vocational retraining.

Westbeth Announces Opening of Wait List After 12 Years

By J. Taylor Basker

Westbeth Artists Housing, the largest artist housing community in the world with nearly 400 units, is located between Bethune and Bank Streets and Washington and West Streets in the former Bell Labs. It has closed its wait list in 2007 since there were many on the list, and the wait could be as long as 20 years to get a unit where artists could both live and work. It just announced it has reopened its application process to be placed on the wait list for 65 days, until May 31. Applicants will participate in a lottery, and if selected be added to the wait list. As original residents age and die off, apartments are becoming available. Also, many apartments have been warehoused for a variety of reasons and are vacant.

There are income restrictions since the idea of Westbeth was to provide inexpensive housing for low and middle-income artists, whose creative life styles may contribute to the cultural life of the world, but with modest financial gain or stability. The permitted income has risen so one person can earn a maximum of $69,445 up to $114,950 for a family of six persons. These units formerly under HUD, now are under city Rent Stabilization, so rents will continue to increase. There are Section Eight subsidies for low-income residents available from HUD. Studios begin at $900 to $1,200 up to three-bedroom apartments (determined not by space but the number of windows) that cost $2,000 to $2,400. Apartments are not supposed to be market value according to the Westbeth founding 501 (C) (3) documents, however rents have been raised to market values in Section 8 units, with low-income residents paying rent according to their incomes, and the government paying the difference.

Westbeth hired the Actors Fund to administer the program, and David Arnow, Director of Affordable Housing Initiatives presented information to the residents about this development in their Community Room. Along with filling out the application form, applicants must submit tax returns for the past two years, a current CV certifying creative achievements and an artist statement in an essay explaining the applicants’ work and professionalism.

The application can be obtained by:
1. Downloading it online at http://www.westbetharts.org/waitlist
2. Sending a letter requesting it and including a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Management, Westbeth, 463 West Street, NY, NY 10014.

All applications must be mailed using only REGULAR mail by May 31, 2019 to: Westbeth Artists Housing, PO Box 665, Village Station, New York, NY 10014.
Should Abner Be Deported?

By Stanley Wlodyka

In the waiting area of the offices of Judson Memorial Church by Washington Square Park, a boy of around three or four sits on the floor, diligently creating a work of art with crayons for the wall behind him, which is filled with children’s drawings of houses, animals, families, and other happy scenes. His hair, a deep black, is cut in that bowl shape that looks precious on children, but ridiculous on anyone over the age of, say, 7. His skin is the color of burnt umber, as if his face were molded from a mineral-rich clay soil that has absorbed the sun's rays over countless days, holding the power of the sunlight at the ready for when it is needed most.

He doesn’t speak any English, but he doesn’t need to. The woman young in her 20’s who is minding him speaks Spanish with only a hint of an accent that betrays that she isn’t a native speaker. “Cats eat rats,” the boy says.

“But dogs don’t eat cats,” she adds, looking over his shoulder at the drawing. “Do you know where penguins come from?”

“The other side of the world,” he answers smartly.

“Antarctica,” she smiles.

“I learned it from a cartoon,” and when a young man approaches, the boy turns to him. “I have a fighting chance of staying in this country. An immigration attorney, speaking on background, said that immigration authorities used to look at those applications with a certain measure of charity—their eyes were trained to look for the strengths of an application. More recently, what with the policies enacted by the current administration in the White House, the review process has become much more aggressive, where allegedly a typo is reason enough for the slam of a rubber stamp: “Denied.”

Ravi Ragbir is determined to keep that from happening. He is the Executive Director of the New Sanctuary Coalition, an organization that advocates on behalf of immigrants and operates out of Judson Memorial Church, a sanctuary church in New York City.

“We believe no one should be deported. For us, we don't draw lines. Whoever comes to us we help them. Because of our vision, we are able to help everyone,” says Ragbir.

Though the determination and passion is evident in his voice, he harbors no illusions of what he and his team are up against: “The majority of the people who come to us don’t have a lawyer, but they still have to go to court. The consequence of going to court without a lawyer is deportation. With just filling out an application, it means their time in court is extended. Without that, the judge has no choice but to order them deported. We give them an opportunity to find more time to get an attorney, but during that time, we also work with them to prepare their paperwork. Private lawyers are very expensive. Pro bono lawyers are free, but they are overwhelmed. It is extremely hard to find good representation even if you are paying.”

The free resources his organization offers have found many takers. The New Sanctuary Coalition benefits immigrants from all over the city, throughout the state, and has even attracted a couple of calls from across the country from people in desperate straits. Given the volume of the workload, Ragbir and his team eagerly welcome New Yorkers looking to volunteer. Lawyers, paralegals, anyone with professional legal experience will have a red carpet rolled out for their arrival.

The New Sanctuary Coalition also needs bilingual volunteers, particularly for Spanish-speakers. But, really, anyone who wishes to express their support for immigrants in an active way is most welcome, especially on Tuesday nights at 5:30 pm when the Coalition plays host to the Pro Se Clinic.

“Every Tuesday, we have over 120 people come to us for help who do not have representation, who are facing this crisis,” Ragbir explains. One of those people was the wife of Baba Sillah, 47, a Bronx resident who emigrated from Gambia 26 years ago. Working as a porter on the Upper West Side, Baba was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.). However, because of the activism done on Baba’s behalf by the New Sanctuary Coalition, Governor Cuomo caught wind of the situation and issued a pardon that eventually swayed the immigration judge to release him last month.

“Mr. Baba Sillah’s detention by I.C.E. threatened to take him from his wife and five children and was a profound injustice that undermined everything we believe in this country,” Governor Cuomo told the press.

None of that would have happened if Baba’s wife hadn’t come to the Pro Se Clinic. Ragbir realizes New Yorkers are always on the go, so he hopes the timing of the clinic will make it easier for those with a busy schedule. “After their jobs, if they want to volunteer, they can come to us on Tuesday nights. They can help noncitizens fill out their 589’s (the asylum application), or any of their other documents, or just by talking to them. We are here for them and we need people there to help.”

In addition to filling out documents and providing company, volunteers can expect to make calls, write letters, and care for children while their parents are busy securing their futures. There are also opportunities to accompany immigrants to their court hearings and I.C.E. check-ins, a practice known as “accompaniment” which shows community support to immigration authorities.

If you would like to volunteer, you can call (646) 395-2925 or email Supervising Coordinator Sara Gozalo at Sara@NewSanctuaryNYC.org.
My Favorite Restaurant

We asked you and you answered! We received many responses to our query for your favorite neighborhood restaurants. Our first winner is Dee Vitale Henle, who enjoys EN Japanese Brasserie. The winner receives a FREE one year subscription to WestView News. Please submit your local favorite to: westviewarticles@gmail.com

GRAND PRIZE WINNER
Dee Vitale Henle Recommends
EN JAPANESE BRASSERIE
Hudson and Leroy Streets

As a long time resident of the West Village (almost 50 years), I have been fortunate enough to enjoy dining out at the many fine restaurants formerly and currently in the Village area. One that stands out for both me and my husband is EN Japanese Brasserie on Hudson and Leroy Sts. Of course, not everyone loves Japanese cuisine as much as we do. The food is beyond delicious, the service is extremely friendly and most accommodating, and its lovely vast interior provides a selection of comfortable tables at which to dine, including private rooms for special occasions. We prefer to sit in the dining area in front of the restaurant but many seem to enjoy the larger dining room where you feel a part of the dining public. The dishes we enjoy most are the Salmon Sashimi, Sakiko Miso Black Cod, EN Garlic Shiso Fried Rice, their steamed tofu, chilled bamboo shoots with miso vinaigrette, Truffle Mousse or Truffle Chawanmushi...(I could go on and on with favorites!). Their collection of sake is also excellent and the wait staff knowledgeable about all that is available. Everyone we’ve introduced to EN has now become a regular customer and is most grateful to us for the initial introduction. A wonderful selection of Jazz is always playing as Reika, the owner, loves this music and obviously knows it well. (She once had a fundraiser for the preservation of the John Coltrane house in Dix Hills, Huntington L.I.)

I could write more reviews of other great places to dine in the West Village—Beer Zaar, Coco Pazzo, Nix, all relatively new and excellent, but I will leave you here.

If you should ever have a column for “Where Was a Good Place to Eat?” I would, sadly, have even more to write about.

Runner-Up Barbara Chacour Recommends:

ELEPHANT & CASTLE, Greenwich St just east of 7th Ave

I’m so glad this cozy, friendly place survived the closing of St. Vincent’s (my MD still comes there even though he is now at NYU Hospital). I go for lunch and dinner whenever I’m back in the neighborhood (I moved to Battery Park last year). Everything is delicious and I like the the wine specials. Reasonably priced too. Friends say “I had forgotten about it.” I recommend they return.

Remembrances of the Lost Village:

Judson Memorial Church

By Roger Paradiso

On a cold and brisk October day in the Village, I made my way through Washington Square Park passing many fellow strangers. I wondered if they knew? I wondered if they knew that Judson Church and the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) were going back in time to celebrate the greatest cultural revolution in our time? It took place at Judson Memorial Church on the corner of Thompson and Washington Square South in 1960s. And it took place all throughout the Village. And it spread all over the country and world. Greenwich Village was the epicenter of this cultural revolution so great that it overtook the mainstream culture in less than a decade and has influenced our culture to this very day. I wondered if they knew?

As I wandered through Washington Square Park, I saw strangers speaking and texting into cell phones. And on the bench near them sat an old couple wondering where it all went. I couldn’t help noticing the salmon colored monolith that houses NYU’s Bobst library on the opposite corner of historic Judson Memorial Church. I went past the fountain and I noticed the older couple walking and I saw the Reverend Micah Bucey, the son of this community, holding back the tide of darkness that has grasped our current digital age whose god is speed and greed.

The event was called “Judson Dance Theater Reassembled” but it was much more than dance. According to their brochure, MOMA and Judson wanted to talk about “urgent and persistent questions about creative expression and community organizing.” As I entered the Judson, I was met by a smiling volunteer who allowed me to place postcards of my film, The Lost Village, on her table as she waved me in without a ticket thanks to an invitation from the Reverend Donna Schaper. Again, this gesture of sharing my postcard was of another era when artists roamed the Village.

I interviewed Donna, the Senior Minister at Judson Church, a few years back for another film called Searching for Camelot. She explained the mission of Judson to me. “Judson is a church…built to be a church that’s a social action center, a sanctuary for immigrants, founded to occupy faith here and we did occupy Sandy here.”

“As I made my way up the steps to the Church I passed those wonderful stained-glass windows by John La Farge. The beauty of these massive windows was enhanced by the sunlight. On the east side of the church the beautiful stained-glass windows were declined light by the monolithic Bobst Library and the beautiful stained-glass windows of these massive windows were declined light by the monolithic Bobst Library on the opposite corner of historic Judson Memorial Church. I went past the fountain and I noticed the older couple staring at me. They smiled perhaps because I was walking without talking into a phone or headset connected to a phone. I passed more strangers speaking to someone inside their phones. They were speed walking and talking. Did they know? I looked ahead and there was Judson Church, the true bedrock of this community, holding back the tide of darkness that has grasped our current digital age whose god is speed and greed.

The Judson has never changed. It continues to serve the community with programs and the arts. When the AIDS crisis hit, Judson was there. And now with immigrants threatened, the Judson is there. In this moment on a partly cloudy day in October I see the sun peeking through the dark clouds. And the sun light was shining on Judson Memorial Church and its stained-glass windows. It made me remember Greenwich Village was once the epicenter of a cultural revolution. I wondered if they knew? As Senior Minister Schaper said: “Social Action. Arts. Worship. All together.” That’s how it was and is today.
IN
and OUT
by Caroline Benveniste

The title of this month In & Out could be “Delayed Gratification.” There were just two openings, a number of closings, but lots of projects in the works. There continues to be increased activity in the Bedford/Downing/Carmine area, and a couple of Korean restaurants are coming, replacing Do Hwa which closed last month.

Open
Chama Mama—149 West 14th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues
Finally, the Georgian restaurant Chama Mama has opened. The focus is on bread, baked in a custom tave (a traditional clay oven). Khachapuri or Cheese Breads are the best known Georgian dish, and Chama Mama offers five varieties, including the Adjarian, a boat-shaped bread filled with cheese and an egg (the restaurant helpfully suggests “instagram moment here”). The menu also features small plates that are reminiscent of middle eastern food, and larger heavier-sounding “Shared Plates” that are mostly meat-centric. The restaurant carries a large selection of Georgian wine which could be interesting. The Guardian recently ran an article entitled: “Why Georgia is a hotspot for natural wines” and it was a discussion of how some Georgian winemakers have returned to making wine in qvevri, a traditional, earthenware winemaking vessel. The article concludes that “the qvevri renaissance has put Georgia at the forefront of winemaking fashion.”

Ardyn—33 West 8th Street near MacDougal Street
Chefs Ryan Lory and Adam Bordonaro had cooked together at Charlie Palmer Steak in 2014, and later went on to other projects. Two years ago they decided to open a restaurant together, and after a few failed lease negotiations on West 8th Street they finally found a space and opened their local ingredient/farm-to-table restaurant in March. Their press release explains: “The 1,900 square foot space draws inspiration from the restaurant’s name and evokes the tones, textures and depth of a forest with jewel green tiles and white countertops, accented by natural woods in the floor and ceiling.” The restaurant has a bar/lounge area where cocktails and small dishes are available, a dining room with an à la carte menu, and soon, a six seat chef’s counter will open serving a seven course tasting menu. The regular menu includes burrata, pickled beets and octopus which have increasingly appeared on restaurant menus around town, as well as some large format dishes (Duck, Wagyu, Fish).

Closed/Closing
We reported in the October issue of WestView News that Café Loup had closed, seized by the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for non-payment of taxes. The closing was widely reported since the restaurant was a known literary hangout. A week or so after the closing, the restaurant reopened, much to everyone’s surprise. Since we are a monthly publication, we reported the reopening in the November issue at 501 Avenue B (in 2016, there had been an angry letter from Harry deBari, who accused us of inaccurately reporting the closure. We explained that we had reported it closed when it was closed, and re-opened when it re-opened, but he continued to hound us and insisted we remove any reference to the closure in our online edition and we complied. In addition we once again mentioned that the restaurant had re-opened in the February issue. However, he was still not happy and continued to send emails, saying “I think that we deserve more than a retraction.” In March, once again, Café Loup was seized for non-payment of taxes, and emails to Harry deBari have gone unanswered. Grub Street reported that the owners Ardes Quinn and Lloyd Fleet had handed over the management of the restaurant to deBari and blamed him for the debacle. Stay tuned. Trattoria Spaghetti (232 Bleecker Street at Carmine Street), an inexpensive old-style Italian restaurant which had been around since the 1980s has closed. Petland Discounts (389 6th Avenue between 8th Street and Waverly Place) has closed, and according to employees at the store, all Manhattan locations have shuttered as well. The West Village location of Ricky’s (466 6th Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets), the edgy NYC-based beauty shop, will be closing in April. Venetian restaurant Giulietta’s Cantina Club (13 Carmine Street at 6th Avenue) is no more, and a Marsha’s Legal Possession notice adorns the window. Also seized by the marshall is the del/salad bar spot Café Water (519 6th Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets).

Coming Soon
I was sad when Maison Kayser closed, mostly because it meant no more freshly-baked baguettes. That may change now that Marie Blachère, a French bakery, sandwich and pastry shop is opening in the space vacated by Jean le Gourmand Creperie and Kuti (301 6th Avenue near Carmine Street). The company has over 500 stores in France, and just opened in October. The loaf of bread is as beautiful as any you would find in Paris. A sign on the door where he provides some details about the coming restaurant: “I am so excited to invite you to be part of a new neighborhood spot. I grew up eating Panzerotti, and I hope you will love it! It’s a savory turnover, typical to Puglia in the southeast of Italy. It’s kind of like a small calzone, but healthier—especially with the fresh and organic ingredients we will be using.” I’m looking forward to knowing my neighbors at a small neighborhood place after many years as owner of bigger operations including the world-famous resort Cà Del Conte, located near Milan Italy.” Sales of panzerotti support a charity called Mary’s Meals which helps feed hungry children. Over at 27 Bedford Street, expect Marble Dessert Bar to open in the future. Taboonette, the fast casual Mediterranean restaurant specializing in pita sandwiches with a branch near Union Square is opening a second location at 84 Carmine Street (near Varick). Taboonette was conceived by Israel-born chef Efi Naon as a follow-on to the full-service restaurant Taboon in Hell’s Kitchen. A taboon is a traditional Middle-Eastern oven, and at Taboonette, breads and other ingredients are cooked in it. In the space where La Caravella used to be (202 West 14th near 7th Avenue), a Korean restaurant called Zu Sik will be opening. According to employees there, fusion-style Korean tapas will be served in the evening, Frevo, a restaurant serving contemporary French cuisine will be opening at 48 W. 8th Street (between 6th Avenue and MacDougal Street) in the old Il Bambino spot. L’Accolade, a French Bistro, is applying for a liquor license at 300 Bleecker Street (between Barrow and Grove Streets) where until recently Nisi used to be. Ever since Spice Market vacated the space at 403 West 13th Street (between 7th and 8th Avenues), there has been talk of plans for Dean and Deluca to open there. Almost three years later there is a sign in the window for Dean and Deluca Stage, and an apostrophe-challenged job posting for the new enterprise reads as follows: “Calling all Servers, Aspiring Chef’s, Barista’s, Supervisor’s and Brand Ambassador’s! DEAN & DELUCA STAGE will be holding open calls for experienced Hospitality Professionals for our new Restaurant concept opening this Spring.”

Other
We previously reported on the future opening of Windrose (39 Downing Street) which will offer “a spin on Korean food.” A new sign in the door promises that the official opening will be on April 5th. Llamita (80 Carmine Street near Varick Street), the tiny Peruvian fast-casual spot closed for renovations in February and has re-opened with a slightly different format. While sandwiches and roast chicken are still available, in the evening there is a larger menu of plated Peruvian dishes. Pork Chop, Chicken Leg and Hangar Steak are featured in the new offerings. Beloved bar White Horse Tavern was sold to Steve Croman (well known to WestView News readers), and the operation has been turned over to Eytan Sugarman who also owns Hunt & Fish Club in Times Square in partnership with Anthony Scaramucci. This change has the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (recently re-branded to Village Preservation) concerned that the historic interior will be altered, although the new owners have stated that that is not their intention. Andrew Berman, the executive director of Village Preservation, in the organization’s weekly newsletter explains: “The storied White Horse, opened ca. 1880, is world-renowned as a gathering spot for luminaries as diverse as Dylan Thomas, James Baldwin, Jack Kerouac, and Jane Jacobs, among many others.” Village Preservation has written to the Landmarks Preservation Commission urging them to landmark the interior as well. Fedora (239 West 4th Street between Charles and West 10th Streets), Gabe Stulman’s revamp of the classic Italian Village restaurant has applied to expand the restaurant by building into the rear garden. At a contentious March 14th Community Board 2’s SLA Licensing Committee meeting, proponents and opponents of the plan testified. According to the New York Post, Sarah Jessica Parker appeared and testified in support of Gabe Stulman and his Little Wisco empire, calling the group “responsible, respectable and hospitable.” According to The Villager, at a March 21st full Community Board 2 meeting, members voted against the proposal anyway.

Thank you so much for your continued help with tips. Don’t stop now! Please email us your observations at wwwContentView@gmail.com. Photos by Danielle Smolian.
Frank Romano: No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

By J. Taylor Basker

Frank Romano, part-time resident of Greenwich Village, peace activist and professor of law in France, was arrested and deported from Israel recently. He is on a team of lawyers preparing a complaint for the ICC (International Criminal Court) accusing Netanyahu and Lieberman of criminal violation of the rights of Bedouins whose village will be demolished by the Israeli Government. Many international leaders, such as Dries van Agt, former Dutch PM recently called Netanyahu a ‘war criminal’ who should be tried in The Hague.

In September Romano was arrested standing in front of a bulldozer in the village of Khan al Ahmar then beaten by Israeli police and by Israeli criminals in jail when they learned he had been working with Palestinians. The military tried to illegally deport him before his trial but an Israeli judge interfered and released him. He continued working in Ramallah on the ICC brief staying past his visa date at great personal risk since he was the only lawyer on the team with criminal law experience. His contribution was invaluable. He managed to stay in Palestine for five months, avoiding Israeli authorities. Finally through deception, the Israeli government nabbed him. Someone posing as the well-known French journalist, Olivier Pirone, from the influential journal, “Le Monde diplomatique”, contacted him and asked for an interview. Romano, eager to publicize the struggle for survival of Khan al Ahmar, agreed to a meeting. Lured out of the village across the highway next to an illegal settlement, he met the fake journalist in his car; a few seconds later he was surrounded by police cars and arrested.

Held overnight at the harsh Ma’ale Adumim detention center, he was flown back to France, with none of his personal possessions or papers. This happened on the anniversary of the mass shooting in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron by Baruch Goldstein in 1991, a follower of Mazer Kahane, labeled terrorists by both Israel and the US. Ironically nearby this mosque in Hebron is Beit Romano, land purchased by a Turkish Jew in 1870 (who may be Romano’s ancestor) to build a home for the elderly but is now an illegal settlement housing an Ultra-Orthodox school and a military camp for Israeli Occupation Forces. His arrest and deportation coincided with the merger of the far-right wing Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) party with Netanyahu, which supports violence against Palestinians, expulsion of Arabs from Israel and a ban on relationships between Jews and Arabs. This move is greatly criticized by Jews in the diaspora since this party has ties to Kahane and right-wing extremists. In his sermon this week the ultra-Zionist Rabbi Benny Lau in Jerusalem likened Kahanism to Nazism.

Netanyahu, now under indictment for corruption, is desperately courting the far right in Israel for survival. Israel’s election committee had voted to permit Kahanian Michael Ben Ari, head of Otzma Yehudit, to run for Knesset. The Supreme Court recently overturned this, citing his racism and incitement to violence. However his party has not been banned. Americans such as Frank Romano, along with Israelis who oppose Israel’s harsh occupation policies, are demonized, abused and jailed. Unfortunately Zoubir Bahloul, Palestinian member of Knesset now just resigned after the controversial nation-state law was passed, which moves the Jewish state further from the democracy it claims to be, giving Jews privileges above non-Jews. All this serves to enable extremists rather than those who seek non-violence to remedy injustices.

Israel-Palestine

By Carol Yost

When Israel became a nation in 1948, just a few years after the unspeakable Holocaust was finally over, it seemed to many like a great new beginning. Thousands of Jews and Christians thought it would be a blessing after everything the European Jewish survivors had experienced, though nothing could bring back the millions of dead or erase the memories of what no one should ever have had to see. Now, when religious Jews ended their traditional Passover celebrations (as they always had) with the declaration of the hope to be “next year in Jerusalem,” they knew it was finally a real possibility. At last, no fear, no persecution, no need to conceal one’s Jewish identity! And they could be celebrating Passover in Jerusalem, to them the holiest place on earth. The ancient stones on which their people had walked, worshipped and danced many centuries before were in Jerusalem.

Many people aren’t aware that Jews had been persecuted in various parts of the world for thousands of years, and it had been an issue during the life of Jesus; the Nazi Holocaust under Hitler was not the beginning. The developments leading to the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state had taken decades, beginning in the last part of the 19th century—although Jews have said that the Bible had established that part of the world as a Jewish homeland. Jews and Arabs had lived side by side in Palestine, but now the Jews would have their own state.

One of the tragic mistakes made by the British government in its negotiations with Jewish Zionists to establish Israel as a Jewish state was not taking into account the wishes of the Arabs also living there. Now Israel presides over a land with a steadily diminishing amount of territory allotted to the Palestinians. Thousands of Palestinians were driven out of their homes at gunpoint while the state of Israel was being established, and many Palestinian families still hold the keys to their original homes. Thousands were driven into exile, and others were confined in the Palestinian Territories. Hundreds of Palestinian villages were obliterated. Now Israel freely confiscates more and more land from the Palestinians to build settlements for Jews only that are illegal according to international law. Olive trees are uprooted and farmers are fenced out of their plots. Palestinian homes are destroyed without any compunction.

In the United States, a false picture has been created to make it appear that the Palestinians are all terrorists who threaten Israel, which must then defend herself. The fact that Israel has an army, navy and air force with nuclear warheads while the Palestinians have none of these is not known, or not acknowledged, by many Americans. Israel never ceases to commit crimes, including murder, against the Palestinians. It unjustly detains Palestinians indefinitely without charges. It maintains checkpoints that delay Palestinians from getting to hospitals, even in medical emergencies. It has a Trumpian wall to keep them out of Israel; they cannot move freely.

Gaza is in the worst situation. It has been called the largest open-air prison in the world. It occupies 140 square miles, with 2.2 million inhabitants. It is very hard to get out. There is electricity only a few hours a day. The water is contaminated. The occupants cannot get enough nourishing food. There are no jobs, no medical care. Israeli soldiers shoot Palestinians randomly, and recently snipers have killed hundreds who went, unarmed, to the fence to demand the right of return to their homes. The March of Return has gone on for the past year. Uniformed medical personnel, journalists with clear designations, and children have been specifically targeted for killing in connection with the March; the UN has confirmed this.

It appears that Israel actually hopes there will be Palestinians who will be angry and frustrated enough to stage an attack with an improvised rocket or bomb. Israel is endangering her own people to provoke the Palestinians in order to justify bombarding Gaza with horrific bombs, including white phosphorus, killing thousands. Then she can accuse the Arabs of being terrorists while she is utterly silent about her own crimes. This has occurred repeatedly.

The UN many times has introduced resolutions condemning Israel’s acts, but the US always votes them down; our country provides billions in military aid to Israel, which our leaders consider an important ally.

Netanyahu, who is being charged by his own country of fraud—not mass murder or land theft—has declared Israel as a state for Jews only. That only establishes what has been true all along. Israel has more than 60 laws specifically discriminating against Arabs. This country has never been a democracy. Bigotry is always accompanied by hypocrisy. The Nazis in Europe worshipped in churches lined with art—in stone, glass, wood and oil—portraying the Jews who founded Christianity, including Jesus himself, as they may have looked. The Last Supper was a Passover Seder transformed into exhortations by Jesus to his apostles, and this Seder continues to be commemorated in Communion. Christian clergy quote the prophets of the Old Testament as they exhort the Hebrews to be righteous, and Christians take their words to heart as addressed to themselves. Now the appropriate regard for Judaism as a great religion, and the great regret of Christians everywhere that not more was done to stop the Holocaust sooner, have been turned into blindness and utter dishonesty about the plight of the Arabs under Israeli control.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions—the peaceful BDS movement—has been launched in response to a call by Palestinian rights groups. It is modeled after the movement that helped bring down South African apartheid. Now it will help bring down the apartheid Israel is imposing on Palestinians.

Both Arabs and Jews in the Holy Land can only benefit when the truth is known and justice prevails.
Notes From Away: Spring Break

By Tom Lamia

It’s mid-March in South Bristol, Maine. The flora and fauna have not yet shown themselves to be into the resurrection-of-life phase of the calendar year. Well, let me qualify that—this morning two deer were seen foraging on the far side of the ice and snow encrusted pond that lies behind my house. That could be an early sign of many changes that will soon arrive.

Maine has more than long winters to deal with in its competition with other northern-tier states for the economic activity that brings taxable revenues from their own residents and from hoped-for waves of summer visitors with their eyes on a good time, good eats and the exhilaration of adventure in unspoiled places—on the water, in the mountains and far from the madding crowd. All of that requires preparation. Calendars must be cleared for the performance of the annual task of making ready. March, the time of tenacious ice and snow, is the first of several visitor-forbidding winter-recovery months set aside to prepare facilities for visitors, commercial and family alike.

There are similarities to spring training in the world of baseball: Every year is a new season; new people and new ideas are given playing time. Some succeed; most do not. But the need to call the roster and slot in new talent is part of the ritual. If you don’t do it your neighbor will. Where do you think the lobster roll came from?

In this annual bazaar, March is a prime time for metaphorical and actual scraping and painting. March is the cold, wet shoulder between winter escapes to Florida and the arrival of the good weather that will bring Maine-loving visitors. It is “mad season” that will lead into “black fly season.” There are no strangers about, but their imminent presence, with associated demands, needs and spendable income, is palpable. What better time for spring cleaning than the month that offers reliable snow melt, mud, basement flooding and insect mass arrivals?

The above mention of baseball allows me to insert this further observation on Maine and March: Waldoboro, the birthplace of Clyde Sukeforth and many other Sukeforths, is a typical small coastal Maine town near me. Clyde, a baseball legend, was born there in 1901 and died there in 2000. He played catcher for the Reds and Dodgers when young enough for that, then scouted and signed Jackie Robinson (and many others) for the Dodgers. A hunting accident early in his career damaged an eye. He continued to play, but his ability to hit was compromised. The fact that Clyde played baseball in the major leagues at all is surprising. The baseball season does not begin here till June, when the ground warms enough for grass to grow.

Beginning in March, the local papers advertise for help wanted for the coming needs of tourist service businesses for June, July and August when camps, marinas, restaurants, gift shops, farm stands and supermarkets will strain to keep up with the good fortune of having their raison d’être validated by another spike in demand. There is always greater need for than local supply of these seasonal workers, who are mostly young, mostly students, otherwise unemployed, and lacking the qualifications for high-paid summer internships elsewhere. They are the counterbalance to a more privileged and older Maine swarm behavior group: summer visitors. Both are essential to the Maine economy. Some four-season residents speak ill of these summer people, but do not be misled—they are the social window on the rest of the country that they open to us each year.

“SORRY YOU WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE NEXT BENCH—WE ARE DOG TIRED!” Photo by Chris Manis.

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Tuesday April 2, 7 pm
**Gallery Opening**
The Paintings of Joyce Rezendes will be in the exhibit in the Revelation Gallery. Free, but registration is welcomed.

Friday April 5, 8 pm
**Ferrara International Piano Concert**
Sophia Zhou and Daniel Schreiner play works by Claude Debussy, György Liget, Olivier Massian, and Gyorgy Kurtág.

Saturday April 6, 2 pm
**Sacred Harp Singing**
Sacred Harp is a vibrant, living tradition of sacred choral music, sung a cappella, that has been handed down for generations. Singers of all levels of experience and ability are encouraged to attend. Everyone is welcome!

Saturday April 6, 3 pm
**Jazz Concert—Arctic Circle**
The jazz quintet Arctic Circle will performing the music of John Coltrane in connection to that of Philip Glass and Arvo Pärt. Open Donation.

Saturday April 6, 8 pm
**Vier Letzte Lieder**
An evening featuring one of Richard Strauss’ most sumptuous works alongside works from Wagner, Korngold, Chopin, Joplin and Paisiello! Soprano Julianna Milin will be performing alongside Master Pianist and Coach William Hicks. Admission $20

Sunday April 7, 3 pm
**Concert: Juilliard at St. John’s**
Back by popular demand, Yaegy Park is joined by her fellow Juilliard concert artists in a beautiful chamber music concert.
Program:
- Schubert Violin Sonata in D Major Op. 137
- Brahms Scherzo in C major from FAE Sonata
- Clare Schumann Three Romances
- Vitali Chaconne
- Chopin, solo piano

Tuesday April 8, 7 pm
**Singer-Songwriter Soirée**
A truly Greenwich Village evening of song and verse in which local artists share their talent with one another and with you. Cabaret-style seating. Space is limited so early booking is advised. BYO wine—no spirits or beer) Admission $10.

Thursday April 11, 7 pm
**Concert: French/German Opera Night**
German soprano Katrin Bulke and French mezzo-soprano Emma Lavandier return for a night of songs, arias and duets from their native countries
Admission $20. Family and group prices available.
Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

The Signs are All Around—At Last!

All photos by Maggie Berkvist.
Corey Johnson's Vision continued from page 4

mid-town subway stairs was possibly an avoidable tragedy. Out of 472 stations only 118 (25%) are somewhat handicapped accessible.

Johnson admits that much of the problem is attributable to poor communication between the State and the City with their separate systems and controls. He proposes that the City take over the transit governance to be run by a new mass transit system—the BAT (Big Apple Transit). The Mayor would be in charge. Johnson hopes to be Mayor one day. The BAT Board would consist of diverse New Yorkers who actually use public transportation. BAT would be part of the city budget reviewed regularly by an engineering firm to assure the financial plans are adequate to keep the system viable.

He advocates following the methods of the NYC Water Board, however moving water through the city’s pipes may be easier than moving people through 850 miles of subway tracks. There are problems with the Water Board as well, including contamination, incorrect billing and rude customer service. The MTA would continue to service its debt before the transit revenues could flow back to BAT and the commuter railroads. BAT could then issue bonds, not the MTA, and free the new system to be created needed capital investments.

BAT would inherit the MTA operating deficit. Johnson believes Congestion Pricing is the magic bullet to raise the money to pay off the MTA debt, run the system and control traffic congestion. However the Proposal reveals that the $11.1 billion anticipated will not be enough funding and a 10 Year Capital Plan will be needed and approved by the State Legislature. Even with this, BAT will start out with annual budget deficits of $600 million anyway.

However BAT promises to reduce the costs of the current MTA procurement process. The explanation of how this works is unclear. It is suggested the BAT follow the model of the City’s School Construction Authority. Yet there has been much criticism of the school building process. In April there were hearings with parents to address the City’s dysfunction that results in substandard education for many students. BAT also would address labor costs of the MTA, suggesting they could be lowered through collaboration with unions reducing health care benefits, overtime and other cost saving areas. Yet reducing salaries and benefits of MTA workers could have a negative effect on their performance and hiring qualified personnel.

If enough money is not made by the above strategies, BAT would require the State to give the city authority to tax more, rather than raise fares. Revenues that are deductions to Federal taxes would be the vehicle especially for corporations who can still deduct items as MTA payroll mobility tax, the MTA corporate tax surcharges and the city’s two business taxes. These could help fill in the gap, along with other potential taxes, especially since the Federal government has been using BAT funds to invest into their infrastructure to date. But mining details in the report reveals BAT would raise sales tax in NYC from 8.875 to 9.25 percent. Suggested revenue-raising policies such as raising the Transfer Tax for commercial buildings, eliminating business tax loopholes, collecting payments from schools and hospitals instead of taxes do not guarantee that these monies go to transit.

Corey wants shared control with MTA over commuter railroads, but the details would need to be worked out. He believes BAT’s model could bring in $200 million more annually. He proposes a new organization for regional cooperation.

City control of the fare system would be committed to ending the practice of funding transit on the riders’ backs. He proposes to have the capital budget follow the City’s process, with public hearings and public review, extending major projects from five to ten years. Installing bus lanes and cameras, route redesign and TSP (Transit Signal Priority) should improve bus service. Expanding the city Plaza program for pedestrian-only public spaces to further “green” NYC, along with adding 50 miles of bike lanes and increasing bike ridership to 14% of trips are his goals.

Congestion would be reduced not only by making NYC too expensive to drive to, but addressing placard abuse and overhauling commercial loading zones, truck routes and parking. His proposal to get rid of the congested BQE says it should incorporate public opinion. Yet the city’s proposal to turn the Brooklyn Heights Promenade into a temporary six-lane highway during repairs was broadly denounced. Getting rid of it entirely could force its truck traffic and pollution into the streets. The goal to reduce private car ownership by half by 2050 may not be realistic. He plans to reduce the number of NYC’s vehicles, making them 100 percent renewable. The City would be required to use permeable pavements, and consider the installation of green infrastructure, especially in communities of color.

Well, it’s not easy being green. Many questions arise from just a cursory examination of these schemes. I interviewed a variety of people for their opinions. One doctor diagnosed the plan looking at these sick patients’ histories and wondered if the City would be any better than the State administering the subways given that the schools were given to the Mayor under Bloomberg, not necessarily to their advantage. And NYC Public Housing is an embarrassing example of inept City control of public space. A driver for Access-a-Ride, well familiar with the disabled, felt that it was unfair to tax people whose handicaps make it impossible for them to ride the subways, and who have to drive in and out of the city for doctor’s appointments etc. Many of them are low-income seniors whose population increased 19% in 2017. Some residents of Greenwich Village felt it was outrageous for them to be taxed to return home to lower Manhattan if they had to drive uptown or to another borough or out of the state. A taxi driver complained the fees would make a trip to the Airport as well as local travel more expensive. He also suggested that residents of Manhattan be exempted from congestion fees and receive resident status as Staten Islanders who use the Verrazzano Bridge have. All interviewed felt these congestion fees would fall hardest on the poor and middle class, struggling to make a living. Rich people in limousines could care less. Taxiing trucks and making it difficult to drive and deliver their goods in NYC will negatively impact the city’s economy and raise prices. Much of the current congestion is caused by endless construction on the streets, reducing traffic to one lane or less.

We have the money and technology in this country to address the pollution problem, but lack the will and vision to implement the vast changes we need. Planting trees alone would greatly improve air quality. Urban trees perform a number of ecosystem services. Canada created urban forests in 86 cities that removed 16,000 tons of air pollution in one year, with significant health benefits. The EPA finds that congestion pricing can reduce pollution to 10% to 30%. A more equitable and fair congestion pricing system, combined with other energy-saving measures, are needed.

Both the state and city are culpable for the current situation. NYNY owns the transit system and leases it to the NYC Transit Authority, an agency of the state MTA. History suggests some of the problems are inherent. Perhaps the MTA or the NYCT. Perhaps we should wait to see how SAP does before implementing BAT. Johnson’s Proposal grudgingly acknowledges there has been progress, although there is controversy over who is responsible, the MTA or the NYCT. Perhaps we should wait to see how SAP does before implementing BAT.

Establishing new bureaucracies as BAT is expensive but incorporating some of its good ideas could be possible, as appointing a Mobility Czar, a Deputy Mayor level position, with staff to coordinate the various transportation policies and activities. This could help communications between the city and the state. Also helpful is its proposal to eliminate the exemption from city business taxes for insurance companies that would have earned the city $550 million in Fiscal 2018.

However the Proposal has no clear timeline for its projects or financial strategies. Declaring war on cars and trucks (increasing due to internet shopping) including doubling parking meter rates, without safe and reliable public transportation is unbalanced and unrealistic, despite the need to remedy the crimes of the urban villain Robert Moses, the enemy of public transportation. The list of indictments against the MTA administration is long, but NYC government has walled in corruption and ineptitude. Neither has achieved fiscal stability or public trust. Most of the transit system’s problems stem from lack of funds. Mayor de Blasio in his State of the City speech proclaimed that a millionaires’ tax could generate $800 million and be the magic bullet to pay for improving the transit system, earning almost as much as congestion pricing. Yet his idea has been banished to page 46 of Corey Johnson’s proposal. Perhaps the Speaker needs to get stronger glasses, find it and make it a priority. We need all the help we can get.
Sex Workers continued from page 1

be used for sex so that the men controlling them can collect the profits. The women may lack English language skills and are usually poor; they lack support systems and job skills. One survivor of such exploitation is cited by Ms. Robinson as estimating that about 90 percent of the women in those places are coerced. Some are doing "survival sex," so called because they have no other option. The survivor, an Indonesian named Shankar Woworuntu, says, "Men, you don't know the woman you are buying…It's not a happy ending for [her]." ("Happy ending" is a term for sex after a massage.)

Ms. Robinson says the U.S. Department of Homeland Security definition of human trafficking is "modern-day slavery involving use of force, fraud or coercion to obtain labor or commercial sex acts." Ms. Thompson, the sex-trafficking survivor who wrote the other op ed, argues that this "is neither sex nor work, but an inherently harmful practice, rooted in gendered violence and discrimination based on sex and race." Most of the women are black or brown "like me," she says. Describes what it’s like for American-born black or brown women: "Black women and girls represent about 7 percent of the U.S. population, yet by some measures are more than half of those in the sex trade." Many of them are violently abused: "I can't describe on this page what these men have done to me. Why would New York want to legalize indescribable violence?" Her life as a trafficked human began when she was only 12.

She counters a common argument for legalization—that it would empower sex workers to come out of the shadows and report crimes against them. Since it is, in fact, an inherently abusive, violent and exploitative trade, no legalization would empower these women. They need the means to get out of the business.

"New Yorkers should know," she explains, "that the vast majority of people in prostitution were sex-trafficked as children, homeless, sexually abused, in foster care or otherwise racially and economically marginalized. When they turn 18 they don't have any opportunity that would enable a person to break completely free of sex work. The trauma they experienced never goes away."

Ms. Thompson was often arrested as if she were a criminal; she says, "I was blamed for my agony."

Ms. Robinson, the journalist, cites other activists and those working to help victims of trafficking who say that the MeToo movement, the Robert Kraft case and the increased recognition of women as achievers have created a moment when sex trafficking can be brought to national attention and combatted, Job training and other means of assistance are desperately needed by these women.

Then there is the situation of people who engage in sex work to pay excessive college tuition, as highlighted in the Roger Paradozo film The Lost Village. They are well educated and apparently not disadvantaged, but are caught in a dilemma with seemingly unavoidable choices that will haunt them for the rest of their lives. They are not unusual, though. They, too, need help through pressuring colleges to lower their tuitions and provide other forms of help. Can lower-cost schools provide good schooling? Maybe.

Popular dramas on film and stage have sometimes romanticized sex work, making it appear carefree and happy. If we looked at them in a different light we might see such a career, if it can be called that, would ultimately not be fulfilling; but even more important, how in real life the "oldest profession" is dangerous, demeaning and prone to be run by crime syndicates.

Has anyone ever heard of a kind and honest pimp?

An inquiry to state senators Hoylman and Gottfried received the reply that currently there was no bill on this subject. However, Hoylman also wrote: "I carry legislation to repeal a section in New York’s penal code (240.37) that criminalizes loitering in a public place by anyone whom the police determine is present for the purposes of prostitution. Under the law, "purpose" is not defined, leaving the reason of one’s presence up to the discretion of the arresting officer. That means that on any street, sidewalk, bridge, plaza, park, subway or inside a vehicle, New Yorkers can be arrested for repeatedly beckoning or attempting to engage passersby in conversation, if police interpret these actions as an intent to engage in prostitution. They can also be surveilled, searched, and detained if any officer[s] takes issue with their clothing. Communities of color, LGBTQ people, and other vulnerable New Yorkers have long said that they are disproportionately targeted under the law, just because of who they are.

"No bill has been introduced yet by the sponsors of any broader decriminalization effort, Senator Ramos (D-Queens) and Senator Salazar (D-Brooklyn), so I can't speak to the details of the proposal, but I agree that the goal of any decriminalization legislation must be to empower and protect sex workers, not enable those who would seek to exploit them."

Ms. Thompson had been under the impression that the proposed legislation covered considerably more. News articles on this subject have been somewhat confusing, but also conveyed a similar impression. This may be due to the fact that some activists seem to have pushed for full legalization of sex work.

I hope that by saying he advocates for protection and empowerment of sex workers, Hoylman means "empowerment" in the sense of counseling, training and job opportunities that would enable a person to break completely free of sex work. The sex trade itself should not be legalized.

Let us oppose legalization of sex work and do what we can to promote all the kinds of assistance needed by these women—NOW. Sex work is not the choice of women who are able to do anything else to support themselves and find happiness.

And let’s not forget that there are also men who need help getting out of the sex trade.
New York City: A Tale of Two Cities

Billionaire's Row and Habitat's Habitat

By Siggy Raible

Last week I spent some time visiting with a good friend; she’s 96 years strong, lives alone in her rent-stabilized apartment in Gramercy Park and loves having company. We got to talking about life in New York City; more specifically Manhattan. (When I was growing up in Brooklyn, Manhattan was The City.) Truth be told, I’m a young senior and also live in a rent-stabilized apartment; I live in the formerly bohemian enclave called Greenwich Village. I say “formerly” because, like everywhere else in the city, two penthouses on Leroy Street were listed and I presume sold for the asking price of $51 million and $31 million. Certainly not for the starving artist class!

As the afternoon wore on neighbors stopped by and we got around to talking about senior housing, and the topic turned to Haven Green, the proposed Elizabeth Street development for seniors in Little Italy/Lower East Side. The brouhaha over this development comes about because Habitat for Humanity, an otherwise well-regarded humanitarian organization, has taken upon itself a cause by which it will benefit from backing this affordable housing project. The cost to the community: it will lose its one-of-a-kind garden. The benefit to Habitat: it will get 11,000 square feet of office space at a below-market rate. (Why shouldn’t it benefit from the new development?)

In return the community will get roughly 123 miniscule apartments (375 square feet per unit). The apartments will be rent-regulated for a fixed number of years, and after that time will revert to market rates. There will be no kitchens and they will be rented to single seniors. (Sort of like the SROs built in the early part of last century. In fact, I live in a former SRO building that was rehabbed in the late 1970s under the J51 Program in which owners were granted generous tax breaks for new rent-regulated housing developed under that program.) If you want your daughter, grandchild or friend to sleep over, forget about it; there isn’t a square foot to spare for anything, never mind a bed. Because the market for these rare affordably priced apartments numbers in the thousands, residents of New York City have a chance to win one of them by entering a lottery. So should this plan go forward, eligible seniors can enter a lottery; and should they be picked, they can then decide whether or not they want to move into their new closets.

The lottery reminds me of a scene in On the Waterfront, a movie released in 1954 about corrupt unions. In the scene I’m thinking of there’s a shape-up for jobs on the New Jersey waterfront. The boss tosses out chits to an eagerly waiting crowd. The workers, all men, fight one another for a chance to work for one day’s wage. The shape-ups were offensive then, as these housing lotteries are today. The only difference between these two degrading practices is that today’s housing lotteries are held at some mysterious drawing in the ether where the groveling is done out of sight.

Then we got to talking about billionaire Ken Griffin’s new digs at 220 Central Park South, long known for its exclusivity and just two blocks north of Billionaire’s Row (West 57th Street for those not-in-the-know). The purchase of this behemoth set a jaw-dropping record even for hard-core billionaires: $238 million for 24,000 square feet, or roughly $10,000 per square foot. This castle in the sky is comprised of four stories with 16 bedrooms, 17 bathrooms and five balconies, but, sadly, only one of the terraces faces Central Park. My friend finds the transaction—the enormity of it, the fact that one person would deign to make such a purchase—vulgar.

What does a person who owns two other apartments that cost what some would consider Trump change—$58 million in Chicago and $60 million in Miami Beach—need with another mansion? I guess today’s billionaire’s mantra is you just can’t have too many million-dollar pied-a-terres. It’s a new twist on what my aunt used to say to me: “You can never be too thin or too rich.” I call it outrageous because we eventually all end up in the same place. As Rose Castorini tells her husband, Cosmo, in the 1988 romantic comedy Moonstruck, “I just want you to know that no matter what you do, you’re still gonna die, just like everybody else.” And guess what… in the end Mr. Griffin’s ashes will be stuck in an urn or he’ll be buried in less space than those seniors lucky enough to win one of those 375-square-foot shoeboxes will be living in. It just dawned on me: could it be that that’s why the Egyptian god-kings erected pyramids? Who knows, maybe Mr. Griffin and his ilk will revive an old architectural design, pyramids… American style! (After all, our fly-over space is vast and undeveloped.)

Anyway, as for me and my 96-year-old friend, we both agree that we would not be able to afford to live in the Big Apple were it not for our rent-regulated apartments. And believe me, we’re both happy with what we have! Without the rent regulations we would have to move (where, we have no idea)… priced out by millionaires or, now, billionaires impressing each other with their multimillion-dollar pads. But it truly is beyond my comprehension. What does one person do with 24,000 square feet of space? And, on the other hand, I’m miffed as to how someone lives in 375 square feet without losing his or her mind.

IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE FORMER FLORENT: Restoration Hardware’s interior decorations include gilded columns and statuary, crystal chandeliers and a profusion of elegantly furnished display areas. Photo by Martica Sawin.

Restoration Hardware Transforms Historic Market District Wagon Shed

By Martica Sawin

No doubt many West Villagers received, along with the Saturday, March 16th, New York Times, a glossy 360-page publication whose cover featured the former wagon shed in the Gansevoort Market Historic District. This was once the location of Pastic—also the former wagon shed. Five years ago I spoke, along with many others, at the Landmarks Preservation Commission’s favor of preserving this remaining building of the Gansevoort Market facing the wide open market place. We objected in particular to the glass and steel excrecence the developer planned to put on top of the building, adding three stories to make it the most visible feature of the historic zone. The Landmarks commissioners decided it would be an enhancement and approved the project.

Not only does the exterior of the now completed replacement building look pathetic, with its band of preserved 19th century bricks, but the real offense is the six-story glass-topped, balcony-lined atrium that replaced the demolished building behind the brick facade. Walk through one of the two sets of double doors and you are in a pastiche of a baroque interior, all gilded columns and statuary, crystal chandeliers, and a profusion of elegantly furnished display areas. Take the glass elevator to the sixth level and you land in a rooftop restaurant, “inspired by the classical landscaped gardens of Europe with pleached London plane trees, Japanese boxwood hedges, and the sound of trickling fountains.” Hard to believe that this is just around the corner from the former Florent, a restaurant that stayed open all night to cater to the truck drivers delivering to the meat market as well as to an after-theater and late-night crowd—there was no better place in the city for mussels and French fries.

The owner of the new vertical emporium in the meat market is RH New York—which turns out to be Restoration Hardware, a company focused on interior design and high-end furnishings—which is planning an adjacent “concept” hotel. The arrival of this grandiose multi-storied shopping mall coincides with—and certainly is dwarfed by—the unveiling of a 720,000 square foot, seven story vertical mall at Hudson Yards. In the March 15th, New York Times Michael Kimmelman described the Hudson Yards shopping mall and its companion gated condo community as ‘a kind of surface spectacle, as if the peak ambitions of city life were consuming luxury goods and enjoying a smooth, seductive mindless materialism.’

These two West Side events signal a growing manifestation of shopping as a driving force in an American society obsessed with the accumulation of goods whose eventual disposal is becoming a death threat to land and sea and the creatures therein. Apart from the planning questions this fiasco raises, i.e. what is the purpose of designating an historic zone and what justifies the destruction of a building designated as historic, there is the more general question of the priorities and values embodied in the chaotic socially and economicallylopsided way New York builds today.
Caffe Reggio:  
92-year-old Café in the Heart of the West Village

By Anthony Paradiso

Caffe Reggio is a 92-year-old coffee shop nestled right in the heart of the West Village at 119 MacDougal Street between Thompson and Minetta Lane. I walked down from Sixth Avenue and walked over to MacDougal Street, where I came across a coffee shop that looked different from the rest.

You can’t miss the creamy light-green paint, and a dark green fence around the entrance that says “Caffe Reggio.” Above the front door is a big sign that says, “Original Espresso machine” that had me intrigued. I asked myself—Is this the place where the first cappuccino was sold in America?

Domenico Parisi was an Italian immigrant who opened Caffe Reggio in 1927. Parisi cut hair for “forty years” until he took “$1,000 of his life savings and sent for an espresso machine.” Caffe Reggio was the first shop in America to serve cappuccino.

I sat down at a table, where I could relax and appreciate that I was sitting inside a very historic Village café. I noticed some of the walls were adorned with a few large paintings. According to Caffe Reggio’s website some of these paintings “date back to the Italian Renaissance period” including “a dramatic 16th century painting from the school of Caravaggio and an antique bench which once belonged to the Medici family bearing the Florentine crest of the illustrious Medici family are among the works that impart a feeling of grace and warmth to Caffe Reggio.”

I started reading the orange menu on my table and learned about Caffe Reggio’s prized espresso machine. I read that the espresso machine on display in the café “was built in 1902 and was the very first of its type made.” That’s some history right there!

Two famous films from the 1970s—The Godfather: Part II and Serpico filmed either in or outside Caffe Reggio and in Serpico, Al Pacino’s character lived just one block east of Caffe Reggio at 5-7 Minetta Lane and Bleecker Street.

I met with Caffe Reggio’s general manager, Lena Batyuk, and I asked her how the café started.

She told me about the original owner, Domenico Parisi, who she said “was a barber who started serving espresso to his guests who were waiting for a haircut.”

Lena told me that Niso and Hilda’s son, Fabrizio Cavallaci, now owns the café. “We’ve had the same owner since the 1950s,” Batyuk said. “[Fabrizio] grew up here and then he took [the café] over in 1978.”

Lena added that the Caffe might have closed if Fabrizio had not acted. “I think in the 1980s, Fabrizio bought the building, because he knew that [would be] key, if he wanted to keep the café.”

Batyuk told me what it was like to be a guest who was waiting for a haircut.

“Welcome Refugees and Immigrants—Arab-American Center, Brooklyn.”

“In March on Washington Street near Westbeth someone threw red paint over the sign in my car rear window that said “Welcome Refugees and Immigrants—Arab-American Center, Brooklyn.”

“In January, same street, someone threw white paint over my Bernie Sanders Bumper Sticker.

In December in Westbeth someone slashed the poster on my door with a picture of Rachael Corrie asking Israel to make peace with Palestine. Also ripped was a poster showing immigrants in a boat in the Mediterranean from UNICEF. All reported to Sixth Precinct.

Beware! We have a mad fascist loose in our neighborhood.

Photo and text by J. Taylor Basker.
Our Lifetime in The Village

By Carol and Richard Quigley, as told to Brian J. Pape, AIA

This is the story of Carol and Richard Quigley (CQ and RQ), life-long residents of Greenwich Village. Part of the “Baby Boomer” generation, they grew up during the economic and cultural changes of the 1950s and ’60s right here in the West Village.

WVN: Born and raised in Greenwich Village would seem to be a diminishing quality in a city of transients and newcomers; what is your personal story; what kept you here?

RQ: Not driving! Everything I needed was around you. I’ve grown up by the Chinese laundromat and we wore clean uniforms to school laundered at Spotless Dry Cleaners.

We had three grocery stores within thirty feet of my house, and I could walk out alone anytime and bring home groceries for my family. Almost every block on Bleeker had stores. Zito’s Bakery for a treat; they made the bread, rolls and stuff at twelve or one o’clock in the morning, and they would give us some fresh out of the oven. Bleeker used to have pretty much every block east of 7th Avenue with fruit and produce vendors. It worries me there’s fifteen to twenty shops closed between 6th and 8th Avenues.

CQ: Now we have to take buses to shop for food. The neighborhood markets are too expensive.

WVN: And the gas stations are just one example; what strikes you as the most beneficial changes to The Village?

RQ: Elliott would whistle; I could hear his whistle three blocks away and I knew I had to go home. I don’t know whether it’s for dinner or to go to the store or something; I had to drop everything I was in the middle of. I would never take [away] my childhood for anything; if I had to go back to it, I would want it to be the same way anyway; to be so active, it was insane.

CQ: Yes, it really was an important aspect of just being a kid growing up.

Reminiscence

By Judy K. Gilbert

I met my husband sixty years ago on a transatlantic crossing. We were on the steamship SS Liberté, both of us off to Europe, but for very different reasons. Elliott had finally amassed enough money to take his first European trip, and I had received a scholarship for intensive study of piano and music theory in Paris for an academic year. There had been three requirements for this grant: an audition on my instrument, a submitted recording of a performance in recital (in which I acquitted myself was regarding my speaking of French), and I could walk out alone anytime and bring home groceries for my family. Almost every block on Bleeker had stores. Zito’s Bakery for a treat; they made the bread, rolls and stuff at twelve or one o’clock in the morning, and they would give us some fresh out of the oven. Bleeker used to have pretty much every block east of 7th Avenue with fruit and produce vendors. It worries me there’s fifteen to twenty shops closed between 6th and 8th Avenues.

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CQ: Yes, it really was an important aspect of just being a kid growing up.

JUDITH AND ELLIOTT GILBERT, above, met sixty years ago while on a transatlantic crossing. Photo by Elliott Gilbert.

agreed to meet the next day. Walking back to where I was living, we were on the Right Bank near the École Normale de Musique and we could hear the sounds of students practicing their instruments. I said, “Isn’t it wonderful to hear Mozart on this lovely evening?” He replied, with what I found to be a total lack of tact, “Yes, though actually that’s Haydn.” I concealed my embarrassment and rage as best I could; he appeared (needless to say) totally oblivious, which was at that moment, convenient. For the first time, I knew that I wanted very much to see him again.

I heard nothing more from Elliott. He’d returned home shortly after our evening together that September. And from then on, until I returned to New York in June, I thought only about my courses, (including music analysis with the formidable and completely merciless Nadia Boulanger) and practicing furiously in preparation for my piano recital.

Back in New York, I wasted very little time before calling Elliott, who seemed glad to hear from me although in all those months he had not written a single word. We set a date to meet, went to a concert, and the rest is history.
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**Caruso’s Quips**

By Charles Caruso

A woman’s touch is always a signal.

If the passage from life to death is as painless as the passage from waking to sleeping, we have little to fear.

Congress: From oversight committees to overlook committees.

The shadows of snow.

The inevitable orneriness of the inert.

There’s a silent click in the air when early afternoon turns late.

One man’s nostalgia is another man’s crushing bore.

Paying with a credit card is pathetic. Cash is the thing.

What did people do with their hands before cell phones?

Of all the delicious things we drink the most delicious is water—cold clear water.

You’re a drunk when you know the number of your liquor store.

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Mademoiselle Mirabelle
Brings Ooh La La to Bleecker Street

By Karen Rempel

Mademoiselle Mirabelle alighted on Bleecker Street in mid-January, with a Parisian cocktail party to say “bienvenue” to her new neighbors. The store is owner Nicole Nicholson’s second location. The mother store, Boutique Mirabelle, at 1310 Madison Avenue, has become so successful after 30 years that it practically runs itself. Ready for a new adventure, Nicole decided to bring la French touch to the West Village. She says the store in the West Village is a little bit younger. “Uptown is more for the mother, and here it’s more for mother and daughter.”

“I think it’s the right time for something completely different from what it is on Bleecker. There is this touch, la French touch, which is a little je ne sais quoi, and très chic, and I love to help the customer to improve on their look.” Nicole has a talent for bringing out a woman’s unique style to make her look and feel terrific. “Right away I know exactly what is right for each person. This is my gift, my diplôme,” said Nicole.

I asked Nicole for her advice on older women wearing younger fashions. She said, “We cannot be ridiculous, we have to know our limits. A little touch of youngie, said, “We cannot be ridiculous, we have to know our limits. A little touch of youngie, but not the whole look. You have to balance the limit, not go over the dose, not good, but not the whole look. You have to balance the limit, not go over the dose, not good, on anything. Moderation.” What about short skirts? “An older woman can do a short dress with an opaque hose and high boots, or booties. It’s sexy. Or you could use a printed or patterned hose. Balances the nudity of your legs. We have to be sexy and elegant, not sexy and trash. Voilà!”

Mme. Mirabelle carries women’s clothing by classic Canadian, French, and Italian designers. The Canadian design house Joseph Ribkoff (pictured) has evolved about $245 to $540. Their prêt-à-porter couture is beautiful.” Nicole describes a classic cocktail dress from French fashion house Marie Elie, “It’s chichi poo-poo, very Frenchy.” Tricot Chic is a luxury Italian line for super fun, à la mode outerwear, and the Italian line VLT’s by Valentina provides crisp shirts in linen and other natural fabrics. Mme. Mirabelle sources fresh, edgy, elegant style at moderate prices. Dress prices range from about $245 to $540.

Mme. Mirabelle is the exclusive New York vendor for Kilame shoes by Italian fashion designer and shoe artist Pamela Quinzi. Nicole also carries unique beaded handbags from a California designer, and a gorgeous selection of jewelry.

Karen’s Quirky Style

The National Arts Club celebrated Jo Weldon’s new book, Fierce: The History of Leopard Print, in March, with a leopard-spotted event that had stylish New Yorkers turning out in truck-loads of faux pelts adorning every imaginable garment from boots to hats. Touted as a “neutral,” leopard prints might have been invented as nature’s camo, but in the urban jungle, these spots are hot and make us stand out from the crowd.

The popular animal print has an impressive lineage, from Egyptian priestesses to Aztec warriors. Since attending the NAC event, I’ve noticed women and men everywhere evoking the power of the leopard print. See if you spot it too.

MOTHER OF PEARL & BLACK DIAMOND CHIP EARRINGS, WITH MATCHING PENDANT & PEARL NECKLACE
Mademoiselle Mirabelle, 330 Bleecker St.

PEARL NECKLACE WITH APPLE CLASP
Variazioni, 323 Bleecker St.

METALLIC CUFF BRACELET
Street vendor on 6th Avenue

PLUM BEADED FLOWER PURSE
Mademoiselle Mirabelle

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www.westviewnews.org
13th Annual Manhattan Film Festival Returns to West Village

The 13th annual Manhattan Film Festival will take place April 24th-May 5th, 2019. Since 2015 the festival has run concurrently with Tribeca, giving filmmakers an alternative opportunity to screen when the entire industry ascends upon New York City! Every year we pride ourselves in programming a diverse film lineup featuring student, emerging, and established filmmakers. The festival is covered by local, national, and international media outlets including The New York Times, USA Today, The Hollywood Reporter, and Good Morning America. MFF has been honored by MovieMaker Magazine as one of “The Coolest Film Festivals in the World” and as one of “25 Film Festivals Worth the Entry Fee.”

The Manhattan Film Festival was founded by Philip Nelson and Jose Ruiz in 2007. The Festival moved to the heart of the Village in 2012 and showed films at the old Quad Cinema. They moved to Cinema Village located at 22 East 12th in 2014. I talked to co-founder Philip Nelson recently on a snowy day in New York.

Philip, what makes your festival stand out from the rest?
We are not easily intimidated. After the screening of Vaxxed: From Cover Up to Catastrophe, a controversial documentary about a link between the MMR vaccine and autism was canceled by Tribeca, we reached out to the filmmakers about picking up the screening. They accepted the invitation and the screening was set for the same time and date of their canceled screening. It worked out perfect because they all had travel arrangements in place. The Q & A that followed was moderated by award winning investigative journalist Sharyl Attkisson. It took place at The Players Theatre. We were inundated with many angry people. It didn’t stop us, it actually strengthened our resolve. We later found a lot of those people attacking us online were paid by large corporate. At the end of the day the post announcing the selection went viral because the voices of the people were much larger than paid lobbyists. We won’t cave to corporate or political pressure.

Why did you move to the Village in 2012?
In a way it was by chance. We were looking to book a commercial theater and received an email from The Quad. We followed up on their email and later booked the venue. When The Quad was sold and was under renovation we decided to stay in the neighborhood and booked The Players Theatre which is a great venue with a great history. The following year we booked Cinema Village and have been there happily ever since.

In this day and age of big corporate festivals and big corporate films why do you choose to go the other direction and promote different and provocative indie films?
We like to have the ability to give filmmakers a platform without being worried who is going to try to suppress their voice. How is your festival experience different than say a bigger corporate Festival like Sundance for instance?
In one way it is similar. We work to book great venues such as Cinema Village and offer the experience of screening in a commercial theater. It is different because projects we screen do not have to be signed off by corporate sponsors. You are going to see a diverse range of films from all points of view.

What do you think is the future for independent Films and Independent Film Festivals?
I think one of the keys for both independent filmmakers and festivals alike is to create and program audience engaging films and know who your audience is.

Tell us a little bit about this year’s festival?
As with every year, we work to program a diverse film lineup featuring student, emerging, and established talent. We have the pleasure of welcoming back festival alumni such as Roger Paradiso, Alyssa Rallo Bennett, Jamison M LoCascio, and Angela Atwood. Our Film Heals programming is going to focus on addiction, prison reform, and coping with grief after loss. The festival will open with the sports documentary Making Coco: The Grant Fuhr Story and close with the sports biography Extra Innings.

How do people buy tickets and read about your festival?
People can go to www.manhattanff.com and browse our event calendar.

Searching for Camelot
The Queen of Camelot

The lines he loved to hear were:
“Don’t let it be forgot, that once there was a spot,
for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot.”
—Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy

Manhattan Film Festival Special Screening
May 2 from 3-5 PM
Cinema Village Theaters, 22 East 12th Street
For tickets go to www.manhattanff.com or Cinema Village box office
Hudson Yards Wants to Grab My Photograph’s Rights
By Joel Gordon

The “Vessel,” a public structure of interconnected stairways, is the centerpiece of Hudson Yards. It is a free public art sculpture space, but climbing it comes with a high cost. In layman’s terms, a photographer retains copyright ownership; but the photos taken of, and on, the Vessel belongs to the company in perpetuity and with no “compensation” paid. Hudson Yards, this is how I make my living—from leasing reproduction rights!

Anyone who signed up for the Vessel’s free entry ticket will automatically have granted Hudson Yards the right to their “photos, audio recording, or video footage depicting or relating to the Vessel” for “any purpose whatsoever in any and all media (in either case, now known or developed later).”

This action has prompted an outcry from the news media, photographers, and their professional associations. It is not over yet and Hudson Yards will have to revise the language of their terms and condition.

I entered the Vessel with my press pass and did not have to sign any form; therefore, the restrictions are not legally binding.

#HelloHudsonYards

By Maria Hadjidemetriou

At last you have arrived. You greeted us with art, music and performances, but most of all you greeted us with innovation, imagination and that everything is possible in New York City.

It started Thursday eve, the opening of the mall to all... well to 13,000 invited guests. It was a night of entertainment from various artists while we walked the seven levels of diverse retailers and restaurants catering to all budgets; something some malls have ignored is to have retailers that everyone can experience on their budget. The eclectic choice of music electrified and amplified, creating an energy you do not find in other malls.

This is not your mom and pop mall. The interactive art alone makes you want to return to experience it over and over, like the flip sequence canvas where you can create messages of positivity like the photo below: #BeKind—yes, I wrote that ; or the Feeling Fabulous—just brings smiles to everyone. Then you see the lighted message “WE BELIEVE THE FUTURE IS Ours”—and hasn’t Hudson Yards made that come true. The future is ours, friends, and in every sense of what Stephen Ross, Founder and Chairman of Related, envisioned: a future of a new city that brings people together to experience something different, something extraordinary.

And extraordinary you will feel when you experience the Vessel. At first the sheer size makes you feel overtaken by this honeycomb structure, but then you see your reflection in the glow of the polished steel. As kids we would make funny faces when we saw reflections… go ahead, make your best funny face, take a photo and hashtag #HelloHudsonYards, because structures are to make us feel a connection—NO MATTER WHAT THE SIZE.

As you climb the top of the Vessel, you notice how the honeycomb shape frames our city. Each level and each landing frames our iconic buildings differently, creating connection and intimate moments with the views. This oversized structure now feels like something you can hold and hug—a feeling you want to feel again and again. Thank you, Thomas Heatherwick, for thinking out of the box and creating something unique where we will all experience something special.

To everyone who worked so passionately on Hudson Yards, thank you.

DowntownMom™—Maria Hadjidemetriou is a downtown mom living in TriBeCa with her 10-year-old daughter, Julia. She is a freelance writer and a speaker on her rare genetic blood disease, thalassemia.

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WEST VILLAGE IMAGES BY JOEL GORDON

The Vessel Arrives
The $200 million centerpiece of Hudson Yards, The Vessel comes from British designer Thomas Heatherwick and is an inverted honeycomb-like structure of platforms and stairways. There are 75 pieces in total, each piece weighing about 93,000 pounds. It has 2,500 stairs and is 150 feet tall.

Other examples can be found at https://joelgordon.photoshelter.com/archive
Photo credit © Joel Gordon 2019—All rights reserved.
A New Book of Dogs, Cats, Horses and Other Animals

By Robert Heide

A new book arrived in my mailbox entitled *Lucky Can Be* with a color cover photograph of a big dog staring out a window, ostensibly waiting for his master. The subtitle of the book is *A Literary Collection about Our Animals* and is edited by LouisMcCune and Teresa Miller, a Quality Paperback published by the Kirkpatrick Foundation. This anthology includes thirty essays, poems, and stories written by well-established authors like Joyce Carol Oates, Delia Ephron, Dean Koontz, S. E. Hinton, and Michael Wallis. There are also 30 splendid photographs of the celebrity authors, each with their beloved pets. Out of the 30 photographs, 17 are of dogs. There are four cats; horses number three; and there are donkeys as well as one each of a frog and a grouping of backyard geese. A photo of a massive elephant is startling, as is one of a woman oddly sporting an outfit with big butterfly wings. Michael Wallis, the noted author of *Route 66* and other books about the Wild West, some of which are super bios of outlaws like Pretty Boy Floyd, writes about his encounter with a Monarch and poses with his two cats, Martini and Jupiter. Bears, birds, rhinos and bobcats are all included in this book.

In the introduction editor Louis McCune, who has been a long-time friend and ally of myself and John Gilman, lists her favorite animal books as *Old Yeller*, *Charlotte's Web* and *Beautiful Joe*. She writes about Ernest Hemingway in Key West, where he had a house filled with cats, and tells us there are now 54 descendants of these felines prowling the streets and beaches. Louisa is Editor in Chief of *Art Desk*, a top glossy art magazine, as well as being Executive Director of the Kirkpatrick Foundation which contributes to many animal charities, including the proceeds of this book, which sells for $19.95 on Amazon. McCune began her career as editor of *Oklahoma Today*—the official state magazine to which I myself contributed several illustrated articles on cowboys, cowgirls and Indians drawn from my book *Box-Office Backwater* published by Abbeville Press, NY.

A personal note: In the town of Irvington, New Jersey, where I grew up in the ’40s and ’50s, everyone knew any dog and often these canine pets ran freely around the town, sometimes in packs. In Greenwich Village where I live now there are pure-breed and mixed dogs on leashes everywhere. In the 1840s building I live in my neighbor James has two pug dogs named Swee’pea (from Popeye) and Sebastian. A dog owner friend of mine told me, “As a therapist dog at St. Vincent’s and Cabrini Nursing Home, I am working as a volunteer at the Children’s Reading Room at Jefferson Market Library.

The View from the Kitchen

By Isa Benveniste

My kitchen is small. After all, I live in a Greenwich Village apartment—but not very small, as I can comfortably fit in a table where I have breakfast and other meals and where I can do prep and roll out pastry dough. I always do these things standing up, for no other reason than I am used to doing so. My kitchen has a window, and I face it as I prepare food, usually listening to music or the news; and when I read, which I do at the kitchen table. What I like very much is to look out the window from time to time; watch the traffic, the people, the trees, the buildings; and muse. What I shall be offering in this column is recipes, some advice—mostly culinary, and some thoughts, right out of the kitchen.

When preparing a recipe, especially from scratch, it’s useful to read it thoroughly the day before to make sure you have all the ingredients at hand. When you start cooking, keep the recipe handy and set all the ingredients on or near your work surface.

As soon as you use an ingredient, either store it immediately or set it in a different place in your kitchen to keep track of what you’ve used and what you haven’t. Once you’ve used all the ingredients, it’s always a good idea to check the recipe again to make sure you haven’t missed anything.

That said, as everything, food is a matter of personal taste, and if you feel you would like to make changes to fit your palate, by all means do so, but note the changes so you can repeat them the next time you use the recipe or discard them as not a good idea.

For today I chose a very luxurious and rich soup. Serve it with some brioche toast slathered with a foie gras mousse, or duck rillettes. Add a delicate green salad seasoned with vinaigrette, using fruit-flavored vinegar, and a light dessert, and you have a great meal. I’m thinking of a dessert I had once in a French provincial home, consisting of shortbread cookies with strawberry jam and whipped cream. Delicious! And orange marmalade is a good alternative for the jam.

CREAM OF CHESTNUT SOUP (Velouté aux Châtaignes)

**INGREDIENTS**

1 leek, trimmed of all dark green parts
1 medium carrot, scrubbed
2 to 4 garlic cloves, peeled, the green center removed
2 tablespoons olive oil, or more if needed
1 1/3 pounds chestnuts
3 cups vegetable or chicken broth
2 tablespoons brandy
1/4 cup Madeira wine
3/4 cup heavy cream
2 leeks, trimmed of all dark green parts
1 1/3 pounds chestnuts
3 cups vegetable or chicken broth
2 tablespoons olive oil, or more if needed
1/4 cup Madeira wine
3/4 cup heavy cream

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Chop the leek, carrot, and garlic.
2. In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat, add the chopped vegetables, and sauté until the leek has softened, about five minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the chestnuts and the broth, bring the mixture to a simmer, and lower the heat to very low. Stir.
4. Cover the saucepan and cook for about 40 minutes, or until the chestnuts are very soft. Stir a few times to prevent it from sticking to the saucepan.
5. Stir in the heavy cream, the Madeira wine, and the brandy. Season with the nutmeg, cloves, salt, and cayenne. Simmer, covered, another 10 minutes. Add the chopped sage leaves.
6. Transfer the soup to a food processor; or, for a smoother, velvety consistency, to a blender, in two parts if necessary, and puree.
7. Return the soup to the saucepan and taste for seasoning. If it seems too sweet, add a tablespoon or two of lemon juice.
8. Reheat, and serve in soup plates or bowls, topped with the toasted walnuts.

Yield: about 6 cups

Note: This soup tastes even better if served reheated the next day, which allows the flavors to develop.

Photo by Timothy Bissell.
9/11—My Survival and Memories of Mysterious Visitors

By J. Taylor Basker

April is my birthday month. I have an opportunity to celebrate another year of life due to my third graders in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, to whom I am very grateful. I should have been killed on 9/11 while working with Fiduciary Trust in the South Tower on the 95th floor, trapped ten floors over the impact area of United Airlines Flight 175.

I had a summer job working as a paralegal for Fiduciary Trust, helping wealthy people give away their money to worthy causes. I worked with arts groups, which as an artist I particularly enjoyed doing. This was during my vacation as a Special Education teacher at P.S. 305 in Bedford-Stuyvesant. It was a good gig, close to my home in Westbeth. I could bike to work in ten minutes, enjoy gourmet coffee and corporate perks, as well as have a gorgeous view of NY Harbor, a thick carpet in my office, a good salary and nice people to work with. I was offered a permanent job, but I had promised my anxious third graders fearful of losing me that I would return after the summer.

I had a special relationship with these kids whom I loved dearly. I took them on many wonderful trips including the Plaza Hotel while we were reading a book about the fictional Emily who lived there. We were taken on a full tour and placed in a luxury suite for tea and snacks. The students subsequently wrote wonderful book reports! But the school was difficult to work in and I frequently thought of leaving. I was tempted by Fiduciary’s offer, but I had reassured my anxious third graders fearful of losing me that I would return after the summer.

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During the summer we had mysterious visitors on our floor, non-WTC center workers, who appeared a few times in yellow jackets carrying large black bags. They were not the usual WTC maintenance men or staff; they had no badges with names or ID. They spoke to no one, and entered a section on the floor that was prohibited to everyone, even if you had a pass to everywhere else. There were about 4 or 5 men, and we called them “ghost visitors” since they would appear suddenly and silently. After 9/11 when people suggested the WTC buildings collapse was a controlled demolition, I immediately thought of those strange men with large bags. Had they planted devices for demolition? I watched videos showing explosions from the sides of the building, and I became convinced these shadowy guests had something to do with this. I was in the hospital a few days after 9/11 with inhalation pneumonia from walking through lower Manhattan to get home from Brooklyn and soon developed asthma, breathing in all the dust that floated into my Westbeth window facing the toxic cloud of death and destruction for months. Paralyzed as an artist for over a year, I finally was able to make a film about the impact this event had on artists: “Aftermath: 9/11 and New York Artists” interviewing many Westbeth residents, now seen on YouTube.

One of the artists in the film, Joan Hall, had done collages with her students, some showing the Towers with an airplane aimed at it, and a figure in a white robe in front. Following the incident, she was convinced these images were prescient of the disaster. The day before, on 9/10 while walking my dogs early in the morning, I noticed a rainbow colored cloud circling the WTC, and I told my dogs there were angels dancing around the towers—again a strange omen.

I lost most of my fellow workers in Fiduciary Trust, and it is still difficult for me to go near the site, or think about what happened. However, I am very grateful to my third graders for saving my life.
Both Sides Now: Celebrating the Legacy of Joni Mitchell

In Celebration of Joni Mitchell’s 75th birthday, the 50th anniversary of Woodstock, and in continuation of her ongoing seven-year celebration of the music of Joni Mitchell, West Village resident Hannah Reimann will present concert performances of Mitchell’s music, entitled Both Sides Now, from April 22th through May 4th as part of Fort Green, Brooklyn’s Irondale Center arts festival, On Women.

Both Sides Now features Reimann on lead vocals, piano, and dulcimer with guest guitarist Michele Temple. Expanding on multiple collaborations with Temple, the duo will present a program that will feature over a dozen classic singles from Mitchell’s 1966-1974 catalog, including Woodstock, Big Yellow Taxi, River, Rainy Night House, A Case of You, Court and Spark, California, Blue, and of course, Both Sides Now.

Reimann and director Austin Pendleton (taking on a new role as music director for this concert performance) have chosen which of Mitchell’s songs to present at this retrospective of her excellent early work. This is an exciting collaboration, built upon their 20-plus years of knowing each other and working together professionally. Because of the poetic and long descriptions of the songs, often akin to monologues and speeches in plays, Reimann felt that Pendleton was a good fit for the project.

In 2010, Both Sides Now offered inspiration to Reimann during her painful and exhausting experience of providing weekly caregiving and, eventually, end-of-life care for her aged and Alzheimer’s-stricken father. As a means to cope with the stress, Hannah began to learn—song by song—Mitchell’s timeless album, Blue. She discovered that the music provided a profound emotional release, spurring her on to engage more deeply with Mitchell’s entire catalog. Both Sides Now gave voice to Reimann’s growth as an artist, a daughter and a human as she looked to Joni Mitchell’s work for hope and guidance.

Reimann explains, “Audience reactions have been surprisingly moving to me. Some listeners come to tell me that hearing them makes them feel better, others request particular songs that they love and feel very strongly that they need to hear them. I took on the project for my own healing and found that I could also help others. The healing power of music resounds in Joni Mitchell’s music; player and listener alike benefit, a gift that I will never take for granted.”

Hannah has been performing since the age of two, as a vocalist, instrumentalist, educator, composer, actor and filmmaker. Her pedagogical lineage, via multiple generations, can be traced back to Beethoven. She has played classical music and sung in rock bands since she was a child. Over the course of her varied and multi-genre career, Reimann has played concert piano at Lincoln Center, directed the documentary My Father’s House: A Journey of Love and Memory (terranova.org). She is also a composer and filmmaker. Her pedagogical lineage, via multiple generations, can be traced back to Beethoven. She has played classical music and sung in rock bands since she was a child. Over the course of her varied and multi-genre career, Reimann has played concert piano at Lincoln Center, and then we got the following from him which re-minded me that plays are not written for theater critics but for those who are buying a ticket. —George Capsis

Tickets available at: http://irondale.org/show-both-sides-now/

By Cal Smith

Gary Sherball’s “Two Suspects” an Unexpected Joy

By Joel Gordon

Judge Gary Sherball came to 69 Charles and sat and talked about the upcoming reading of his play with music at the Bitter End. He implored several times “come, come, and bring people.” I failed to put it in my calendar and only recalled it when our photographer Joel Gordon called from the theater to say our theater editor John Gilman had not shown up and what was he to do? I asked him to write it up and got back instant protests of “I am a photographer, not a writer,” and then we got the following from him which reminded me that plays are not written for theater critics but for those who are buying a ticket. —George Capsis

I attended only to photograph Two Suspects by Gary Sherball, a staged reading with music performed at the Bitter End. I did not expect to stay long, but ended up staying for the whole show which was funny and very enjoyable. During the two 15-minute intermissions crime theme music, such as the Godfather theme, was played. The play is a dark mystery comedy about crime, greed and lawsuits. The outcome of a lawsuit depends on which of two burglary suspects is guilty of the crime. Two lawyers on either side of the lawsuit use sex to influence the district attorney and the defense lawyer. Twists and turns of the case are revealed at the surprise ending. Photo © Joel Gordon 2019 —All rights reserved.
Memories continued from page 1

A staple of the downtown new music scene since 2015, the Uncharted Concert Series at Greenwich House Music School (GHMS) has emerged as one of New York's most exciting and unpredictable live concert series, and it’s right here in Greenwich Village. This year is different though. What’s the same is a commitment to supporting New York City-based artists premiering new projects or meeting new collaborators on stage. What’s different: for the first time in the five-year history of Uncharted, Greenwich House Music School is joining forces with fellow nonprofit arts organizations Joe's Pub and The David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center in the curation of its 2019 season, under the auspices of the newly created New York Presenters Consortium. The NYPC is a network of presenting organizations designed to leverage the collective resources of New York’s most innovative arts presenters in creative and financial support of performers developing new and existing work. All three organizations that make up the New York Presenters Consortium are proud to announce a solo performance by all-female mariachi band Flor de Toloache, founding member Mireya Ramos on April 18 and new work from singer-songwriter-multi-instrumentalist Celisse Henderson on May 2, both exclusively to be heard first as part of this season of Uncharted.

We're excited to be collaborating with two of New York's most prominent arts presenters for Uncharted,” says Rachel Black, Director of GHMS. “Following their one-time-only concerts at Greenwich House, Mireya and Celisse will have the opportunity to continue developing their work for future performances at both partner venues.

Series curator Jennie Wasserman (John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, SFJAZZ, Jazz at Lincoln Center) says, “This partnership is intended to provide a mechanism for musicians to develop evergreen programs that can potentially function as a source for longer-term financial stability. By providing this kind of curatorial support for artists, we’re aiming to sustain not only individuals’ creative output, but also to improve the health of the entire cultural ecosystem.” Sponsors are provided with free rehearsal space at Greenwich House Music School to workshop their productions, as well as marketing and promotional services to promote their concert.

Along with Ramos and Henderson, the 2019 Uncharted season promises a continuation of the series’ signature high-quality and genre-eclectic programming. Featured artists include Afrocentric soul collective Lady Moon and the Eclipse on April 4, global percussion wizard Scott Kettrn with his band Nation Beat on April 11, and the Russian-born jazz composer, pianist and vocalist Alina Engibaryan on April 25. Additionally, this year’s Uncharted will include a benefit concert on Monday, May 6 to support Greenwich House Music School’s role as a true community resource and center of music, featuring the beloved, recently-revived improv musical theater troupe Freestyle Love Supreme, fresh off a wildly successful, New York Times Critics’ Pick run at Greenwich House Theater. Freestyle Love Supreme will be joined by a special guest, Hamilton star James Monroe Iglehart.

All Uncharted shows will take place on Thursdays from April 4 to May 2 with performances beginning at 8pm. Non-benefit shows are $15 for advance tickets. Complimentary beer and wine will be served at all shows. Uncharted takes place at Greenwich House Music School’s intimate, 100-seat Renee Weiler Concert Hall. For info call 212-242-4770.

White Horse continued from page 1

regulars who frequented the White Horse Tavern were Bob Dylan, Jack Kerouac, the Clancy Brothers and Jim Morrison. This is where labor organizers, community activists, housing activists like Jane Jacobs and social activists from The Catholic Worker, including Dorothy Day, gathered. This is where the locals, laborers, longshoremen and other members of the working class came together and drank.

All this literary history might be replaced by a pizzeria. We’re not sure about this yet, but one of the toxic three, Sugarman, is the owner of Made in New York Pizza, a knockoff pizza place that recently made the headlines when the Pizza Wars erupted between Sugarman and Prince Street Pizza as to who had the best pizza in New York. Enter The Mooch... Scaramucci and Sugarman are partners in the upscale Hunt & Fish Club. Scaramucci, it must be pointed out, is not a partner in the White Horse. Although Sugarman says that he’s going to keep the White Horse Tavern as is, rumor has it it will definitely be a pizzeria. The White Horse Tavern opened in 1980 as a bar for the men who worked at the docks. The building is landmarked, but the tavern is not, so all that history might soon be reduced to “a slice with pepperoni please.”

The White Horse Tavern is the latest casualty to be "Cromanated," that is, closed by Croman. The Amato Opera opened in 1948, and closed after 60 years when Croman bought the building in 2009. The fabled Caffe Vivaldi opened in 1983, but was forced to close after 35 years in business when Croman bought the building in 2011. Local bars and restaurants throughout the city were forced to close when Croman doubled or tripled the rent. If Croman couldn’t get them out by raising their rents, there was always the convenient fire, which is what recently happened to Bruno Pizza at 204 East 13th Street. The restaurant and all the apartments above it were destroyed, another business closed, and all the tenants were made homeless.

Cromans insatiable greed has led to the destruction of many lives, businesses, neighborhoods, history and culture, and for these reasons and more we urge you to rage, rage against Steve Croman.

Cynthia Chaffee and Mary Ann Miller are co-founders of the Stop Croman Coalition.

Greenwich Village Staple Collaborates with NYC’s Music Venue Darlings to Feature Emerging Artists

See them Up-Close and Personal thanks to the New York Presenters Consortium.
Five Cosmopolitan Artists at Westbeth Gallery in April

By Jane Heil Usyk

“Worlds Seen and Unseen” is the name of this show featuring five well-traveled women who have been practicing their art for many years. It opens Friday, March 29th, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and will run from March 29th through April 20th, 2019. The hours of operation are 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday to Sunday. The show is curated by Maggie Hinders, who is doing it for the first time.

The Westbeth Gallery, at 55 Bettehune Street, is a very large space that has been hosting art shows for nearly 50 years. Other mid-level galleries have gone under due to rising Manhattan rents, thereby making Westbeth, simply by remaining a space to show, increasingly desirable. Additionally, whereas it was once in a less-popular location, by staying where it is, it now has the Whitney Museum as a four-blocks-away neighbor, as well as the Highline and the revitalized waterfront.

Now, Westbeth has a rule that an individual artist or group of artists can only show there once every three years, to give others a chance. Last year, 60 applications were received for eleven places. The woman running the gallery is Karin Batten, who has been the director of the gallery for three years. She selected the women in the upcoming show, all women in their sixties, all from the New York area, all in full command of their media.

KARIN BATTEN was born in Hamburg, Germany, and came to New York by way of London, where she studied art at Central Saint Martins College. She has an MFA from Hunter College. She arrived in New York City in 1973 and moved to Westbeth in 2001, two months before 9/11. At that time she had been awarded a grant to paint views of New York. The grant provided for a studio on the 91st floor of Tower One. She would have been up there on 9/11 but was detained that day because she wanted to vote in the New York mayoral primary election and the voter lines at Westbeth moved slowly. All her work was lost, and someone she had been planning to meet that morning had to walk down 91 flights of stairs and was never the same after that.

Fortunately, Karin’s work was not among the artwork that was lost when Hurricane Sandy overwhelmed Westbeth in 2012, where ten feet of water accumulated in the basement, but she has lost other works due to leaking water in old buildings.

Some of Karin’s works are representational and others are abstract. She repainted some of her representational views of Manhattan from photos and memory. She is represented in New York by the June Kelly Gallery on Mercer Street. She has been with that gallery for thirty years. She has had numerous shows there and elsewhere, and has won many painting awards. Just recently she was in the news for having won a second Pollock-Krasner Award.

Karin’s abstracts are influenced by her trips to Costa Rica, Vieques, and the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean. She taught an art class in the Dominican Republic and was an art teacher at Parsons for twelve years. She uses collage elements such as cloth, sand and lava in her work. “I love texture. I have a lot of texture in my work,” she explained. She mentioned a museum in the Dominican Republic dedicated to the Taino people; they have been an inspiration to her.

BARBARA RACHKO’S influences include Man Ray, Mexican and Guatemalan cultural objects like masks, papier-mâché figures, toys, and carved wooden animals. She collects masks made by indigenous people, and then paints them. She uses pastels with sandpaper as a surface. Her work shows a unique, very private landscape. She retired as a commander in the army, and was not at the Pentagon on 9/11; her husband was, and he was killed.

CAROLINE GOLDEN, transfixied by the fairytales of childhood, makes three-dimensional collages using found objects, emphasizing the scary forces that enter our lives. Her work explores familiar stories and legends from a unique perspective. She creates surreal new worlds and invites the viewer to investigate these narratives again.

CAROLYN OBERST was a dress designer and worked in fashion. Her dreamlike paintings are colorful—with designs, flowers, and geometric shapes all floating in the picture. She works in paint, drawing, mixed media and wood relief. She is also inspired by sock dolls, and paints them into her pictures. She has lived in Southern Spain, Morocco, and London. Some of her work recalls the Spanish modernist Miro.

MAGGIE HINDERS has been a book designer at Alfred A. Knopf Publishers for 27 years and is now a senior designer. She paints exuberant stripes and splashes of color. She is also a talented, witty, and charming cartoonist with a blog called little-pix.com.

A Historic Renovation for Jefferson Market Library

By Frank Collerius

For 50 years, the Jefferson Market Library has been a staple of the Greenwich Village community, offering traditional library services and innovative programs such as Jefferson Market University, popular storytime programs, and exhibitions that celebrate the history of our neighborhood. The building—originally a courthouse well known for its role in notable criminal offenses—is over 100 years old and in need of an update.

I am thrilled to share that the Jefferson Market Library will be undergoing an exciting project that will refresh our much-loved branch, making it more accessible and better able to serve our community. Library patrons will be happy to learn that the $10 million project will include:

- A new, second entrance at 10th Street, designed to support patrons with mobility challenges, parents and caregivers with strollers, and others
- Improvements to the front entrance on Sixth Avenue with more manageable access to the front doors
- Highlighting original details of the building, such as its beautiful stained glass windows
- Adjustments to the lobby, creating a flexible, open space that can be used as a programming space that supports the interests and needs of our patrons
- Updated, accessible bathrooms, as well as modernizing the branch’s technology infrastructure
- The Library will close temporarily on April 1st for three months to prepare the building for renovation, after which it will remain open throughout the improvements

We know that patrons may be concerned about Library access during the temporary closure and the renovation; many of Jefferson Market Library’s staff, including myself, will remain nearby at the Hudson Park Library, Hudson Park will have increased hours during the closure and will offer several programs that Villagers have grown to love at Jefferson Market.

Projects like the one at Jefferson Market Library are possible due to the support of the City, which is currently deciding the budget for next year. The Library is calling for funding to support our branches, and you can voice your support for New York City’s libraries, too! Visit NYPL.org/speakout to learn how you can help.

All of us at Jefferson Market Library are extremely excited about this renovation of the branch! We look forward to seeing all of our patrons when we reopen in July, and invite them to celebrate with us when the project is completed in late 2020.

Special thanks to Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, New York City Council Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, New York State Senator Brad Hoylman, New York State Assembly Member Deborah Glick, and the New York State Education Department.

Frank Collerius is the branch manager of Jefferson Market Library.
**CITYWIDE SPECIAL EVENTS.**

- **April 24-May 5: 13th Annual Manhattan Film Festival** Called one of “The Coolest Film Festivals in the World” by MoFi/MoFi Magazine, the festival will be at Cinema Village, 22 East 12th Street. For more information, go to www.manhattanff.com.

- **Thursday April 25-Sunday April 28, 8 pm: Westfest Dance Festival** A cutting edge, curated dance festival presenting established and emerging movement artists at the Westbeth Artists’ Residence. Tickets $20. For information on schedule and tickets, go to westbeth.org.

- **Saturday April 13, 12-3 pm: Greene Village Historic District 50th Anniversary Celebration** A celebration of the golden anniversary of the Greenwich Village Historic District at Washington Square Park, Garibaldi Plaza. There will be folk and jazz music, art-making, speakers, and festivities.

- **Saturday April 13 and 14: Historic District Open House Weekend** Access to many of the treasures of the historic district, and doors will be open to the public with special tours, access, activities, and deals. For more information, go to ghvhp.org.

- **Saturday April 27, 12-2 pm: Dachshund Spring Fiesta** The annual dachshund parade brings together this breed’s lovers and owners for a meet and greet. Everyone is welcome! St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

**SCREENINGS.**

- **Thursday April 4, 2pm: The Hours** Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore, and Meryl Streep star in this story of how the novel Mrs. Dalloway affects three generations of women who have had to deal with suicide in their lives. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

- **Thursday April 11 @ 2pm: To Catch a Thief (1955)** A classic Hitchcock movie starring Cary Grant as a retired cat burglar trying to catch a copycat. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

**EVENTS.**

- **Thursday April 11, 7 pm: Matewan** a 1987 American coal mining drama film at Westbeth Community Room, 155 Bank Street. Free.

- **Saturday April 13, 2pm: A Star Is Born (2018)** A musician (Bradley Cooper) helps a young singer (Lady Gaga) find fame and fortune although his own career has hit the rocks. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

- **Thursday April 18, 2pm: A Night at the Opera (1935)** A Marx brothers classic about A business manager and friends help two opera singers to achieve success. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

- **Friday April 19, 16pm Film Screenings to Celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month** Ralph Fiasella: Song of the City (1980) directed by Jack Ofied, and ItalianAmerican (1977) directed by Martin Scorsese will be shown at Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

- **Saturday April 20 @ 2pm: Green Book (2018)** An unemployed Italian-American is hired as the driver of an African-American classical pianist on a tour of venues throughout the 1960s American South, and must refer to the Negro Motorist Green Book, a safe-travel guide to move safely. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

- **Thursday April 25 @ 2pm: Creed II (2018)** Michael B. Jordan and Sylvester Stallone star in this installment in the Rocky franchise. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

**MUSIC.**

- **Thursday April 4, 7:30pm: Lady Moon & The Eclipse** The group creates inspirational music with R&B/afrobeat-influenced rhythms in their Uncharted performance at Greenwich House Music, 46 Barrow Street. Complimentary beer and wine will be served. Tickets $15; go to greenwichhouse.org.

- **Friday April 5, 8 pm: Ferrara Internatio nal Piano Concert** Sophia Zhou and Daniel Schreiner play works by Claude Debussy, György Ligeti, Olivier Messiaen, and György Kurtág. St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

- **Saturday April 6, 2 pm: Sacred Harp Singing** Sacred Harp is a vibrant, living tradition of sacred choral music, sung a cappella, that has been handed down for generations. Singers of all levels of experience and ability are encouraged to attend. Everyone is welcome! St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

- **Saturday April 6, 3 pm: Jazz Concert—Arctic Circle** The jazz quintet Arctic Circle will performing the music of John Coltrane in connection to that of Philip Glass and Arvo Part.Open Donation. St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

- **Saturday April 6, 4:30 pm: Lieder—Master Pianist and Coach William Hicks. timberline Artist Pianist and Coach William Hicks.** Admission $20. St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

- **Saturday April 6, 9-11 PM: Gospel Night** Spirituals by African-American singers of all levels of experience and ability are encouraged to attend. Everyone is welcome! St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

**WELCOME TO THE WEDNESDAY**

- **Saturday April 6, 7:30 pm: Michael Attilas Solo and Quartet** The alto saxophonist will be performing a jazz concert as part of the Sound It Out series at Greenwich House Music, 46 Barrow Street. Tickets $20; go to www.greenwichhouse.org.

- **Saturday April 6, 8:45pm: Symphony—Leonardo Da Vinci, the Musician and Scientist** How Leonardo Da Vinci’s musical knowledge and skills informed, and was informed by his scientific inventions and knowledge of the natural world. St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.

**MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC TOGETHER.**

Lay Gaga and Bradley Cooper play a young singer and anurnician who coaches her to fame in A Star Is Born, at Hudson Park Library on April 13.

**Important Announcement.**

There are no events listings for Jefferson Market Library this month, as it will be closed for approximately 3 months beginning on Monday, April 11, for important renovations. During this time, Hudson Park Library at 66 Leroy Street, will be taking care of holds and returns ad will have extended hours.
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
- Wednesday April 24, 7:30 pm: 6th Precinct Community Council Meeting A dialogue between the 6th Precinct and the community, discussing serious issues facing the neighborhood. Our Lady of Pompeii, Father Demo Hall, Bleecker and Carmine Streets. All are welcome.

LITERATURE
- Saturday April 13 @ 10:30am: Baraccoon: The Story of the Last ‘Black Cargo’ Zora Neale Hurston’s book will be discussed at Hudson Park Library, 66 Hudson Street.

VILLAGE HISTORY
- Monday April 22 @ 6pm: Greenwich Village History - 16mm Film Screenings about The Village at Hudson Park Library, 66 Hudson Street. Free.

LGBTQ
- Thursday April 4, 7-9pm: Twisted Olives - A staged reading of a one-act play by Everett Quinton. As part of Theatre at St. John’s Stonewall 50 celebration we highlight the work and legacy of the West Village’s own iconic Ridiculous Theatre Company. (Free, will offering). St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, 81 Christopher Street.
- Sunday April 14 @ 5pm: Stonewall 50th Anniversary Event - Intergenerational Queer Friendship – a Community Conversation, Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.
- April 10-16: Stonewall50 at Village Preservation NYC Pride celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. Village Preservation is hosting and collaborating on a slew of special events marking the anniversary. For more information, go to gsph.org.
- Sunday April 28, 3pm: Stonewall 50th Anniversary Event – Queer Nightlife Through the Years A storytelling workshop at Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street. Free.

LEARNING
- Fridays April 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 6pm: We Speak New York A half hour TV show created to help people practice English. Each story is about everyday situations. Intermediate Level English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Hudson Park Library, 66 Hudson Street. Free.
- Monday April 15, 2pm: Build a World Wide: A film screening and collage workshop at Hudson Park Library, 66 Hudson Street. Free.

KIDS
- Sunday April 7, 11am and 2:30pm: Penny Jones & Co. Puppets - Toby’s Silly Tales Mother Goose’s dog Toby presents his favorite stories - The Three Stiffs, and Chicken Little. There are games and participation. Each child gets to make a puppet to take home after the show. For ages 3-8. Tickets $10 for all ages. Westbeth, 155 Bank Street.
- Saturday, April 13 4:30pm: Bird Box Building A workshop for children of all ages in building homemade bird feeders for our feathered friends, taking place in the courtyard of St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street. This is followed later by a concert of bird-themed vocal music.

NOT FOR YOUR EASTER BASKET
Paul Wurth’s painted eggs, eggshells and eggshell montages will be in the show Circle of Friends at Ivy Brown Gallery through April 27.

MUSEUMS, GALLERIES, EXHIBITS
- Tuesday April 2 through Saturday April 27: A Circle of Friends The works of Paul Wurth at Ivy Brown Gallery, 675 Hudson, 4th floor.
- Tuesday April 2, 7pm: Gallery Opening The Paintings of Joyce Rezende will be in the exhibit in the Revelation Gallery, Free, but registration is welcomed. St. John’s in the Village, 220 West 11th Street.
- Through April 20: Worlds Seen and Unseen The work of 5 contemporary women artists: Karin Batten, Caroline Golden, Maggie Hinders, Carolyn Oberst, and Barbara Rachko at Westbeth Gallery, 55 Bethune Street.
- Through April 20: That Which We Do Not See The works of Patrick Martinez are shown at Fort Gansevoort, 5 Ninth Avenue.
- Through April 6: Fritz Ascher - Expressionist An exhibit of the German-Jewish artist we lived through the Weimar Republic and the Nazi Regime, will be on exhibit at Grey Gallery, 100 Washington Square East.

ONGOING EVENTS
- Kids Mondays at 4pm: Family Storytime and Craft Children 4 and up get to make simple crafts and hear favorite stories at Hudson Park Library, 425 Sixth Avenue.
- Nature Tuesdays 7-10pm: Stargazing at the High Line Starting April 2 at the High Line at 14th Street.
- Music Every Second Tuesday of the Month, 7-9:30pm: From September through June, Christopher Street Coffeehouse hosts an open mic with special guest performers from the folk and bluegrass community. Sign-up starts at 6:30. (free event), St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, 81 Christopher Street.
- Health and Wellness Wednesdays, 10 am: Movement Speaks Celebrating moving in strong and creative ways with Dances for a Variable Population. All sessions recommended, but not required. For adults and seniors of all ages and abilities. Tony Dapolito Recreation Center, 1 Clarkson Street.
- Kids Wednesdays, 11:15 am: Toddler Storytime Interactive stories, action songs, finger plays and more at Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street.
- Crafts Wednesdays, 12 pm: Knitting Circle All created items will benefit a local charity—some experience necessary. Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street.
- Kids Wednesdays at 4 pm: St. John’s Choristers Free Musical Education Training in music fundamentals and vocal technique for children 8 and up. The program is open to kids from all over the city, but is made up primarily of neighborhood children. As part of the program, they sing once a month at a Sunday Eucharist. St. John’s in The Village, 224 Waverly Place.
- Health and Wellness First and Third Wednesdays of Every Month, 5:30-7:30 pm: Northwell Health Caregivers Support Group 200 West 13th Street. Free.
- Arts First Wednesday of Every Month: Bailout Theater Free potluck-style meal served at 7:15pm, followed by a free music, dance, or spoketn word performance on the Meeting Room or in The Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square South.
- Arts Second Wednesday of Every Month: Dead Darlings Writers’ favorite work is often edited out or unpublished; a chance to showcase that play, novel, story or song at Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square South.
- Kids Thursday, 4 pm: Toddler Storytime Interactive stories, action songs, finger plays and more at Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street.
- Games Thursdays, 5-8 pm: Jigsaw Puzzle Night Hudson Park Library, 66 Leroy Street.

Please contact Stephanie Phelan at sephean@earthlink.net if you have any new events or have further information on something I’ve listed here or on westvillegoword.com.
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