Big Victory for All Tenants

By Arthur Z. Schwartz

The plight of renters, both rent-regulated and non-regulated ones, has long been part of New York City lore—steep rent hikes, shoddy maintenance, fear of being blacklisted and evicted, and a general sense of powerlessness against a landlord who doesn’t care.

The State Senate and Assembly’s landmark deal on New York’s rent regulations, adopted on June 21st, will introduce a new normal for the 2.4 million tenants in the city’s rent-regulated system, and add some new protections for tenants who are not rent-regulated (“market rate”). After decades of living under landlord-friendly rules like vacancy decontrol and renovation increases, the city’s rent-regulated system is poised to become newly empowered, armed with more financial security due to the elimination of sharp rent hikes and increased accountability for landlords.

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But buried in the 74-page bill is an expansive patchwork of new protections that apply to all renters statewide, including 43 percent of New York City renters who live in unregulated apartments.

Taken together, the new laws—on everything from evictions to security deposits—represent a significant power shift away from landlords. But while the new rules may seem dramatically different, they actually represent a reversion to what the city’s rent-regulated system looked like more than 30 years ago.

New York City tenants may never again have to hear the words “vacancy decontrol” and “vacancy bonus.” These two provisions don’t affect current tenants while they are living in rent-regulated units, but rather, future tenants. The elimination of vacancy decontrol, which enables landlords to deregulate apartments once the rents reach a certain threshold, currently of $2,774, is one of the biggest steps forward. After all, the provision has been blamed for the deregulation of more than 155,000 units.

Same with another measure known as “high-income deregulation,” which allows a landlord to deregulate a rent-stabilized unit if the tenant makes more than $200,000 a year for two straight years. No longer will the landlord have the right to ask for your tax returns.

That boiler update or kitchen renovation your landlord elected to perform is no longer going to cost you a fortune in perpetuity.

Renovation increases in the form of major capital improvements (MCIs) and individual apartment improvements (IAIs) were a big target of rent reform activists. These measures, which allowed landlords to use renovation spending to exact permanent rent increases on tenants, were loopholes that invited fraud and tools of displacement. Landlords, on the other hand, said they encouraged investment and maintenance in older housing stock.

Currently, landlords who performed

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PARK MANAGEMENT FAILS—PIER 40 BECOMES OFFICE: Under the original charter Pier 40 was to be leased to a developer who would provide a public park-like use, and the lease revenue would help pay for the operation of the park. But long neglected corroding steel piles and crumbling concrete roof slabs are forcing management to covert the pier to an 88-foot high, 15-acre office building.

By George Capsis

Robert Moses’ career ended when he wanted to build an elevated highway across Canal Street, and we locals rose in protest and closed his book forever, but in his early days when he was casually condemning bungalows in the path of the LIE he did so with imperial immunity because the car was king and Long Island was just scrub growth.

When the Federal government wanted to unroll a super highway right down the West Side over the clutter of old docks and a rusting elevated highway, we same protested. The Feds got so mad they took their billions and left. Nike, Dick, and Long Island was just scrub growth.

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George Capsis, Local Hero

Hi George,
Hope you are doing well and still giving ‘em hell.

Loved the Trigg, MD article about Pier 40. St. Vincent’s screw job all over again. And the usual brilliant planning to have the meeting just after Memorial Day. Surprised they didn’t do it on the Friday before, but of course that would have ruined the moguls and politicians’ long beach weekend. Disgusting and so abusive of the people that actually live in the Village.

And then there was the piece on the Lenox Hill redevelopment. This is exactly what the upper east side needs since we all know there is a desperate shortage of hospital beds and acute care access up there. Just watch how much the city, the state, and feds kick in for this renovation and remember how generous they were with St. Vincents Hospital.

This crap never stops. Very sad and infuriating. I particularly loved that Glick and Hoylman—two supposed progressive liberal demi—were part of the Pier 40 meeting. Never ceases to amaze me how fast these politicians get bought out.

Keep fighting George. You are a hero.
—David Kaufman

Praise for WestView

Dear Mr. George Capsis,
Thank you for daring to go where the controlled mainstream media will not dare to tread. Your newspaper is fabulous. I don’t know where to start with the praise.

I came upon your newspaper when I went down to the 6th Street Community Center. I am an upper west sider. Your front page story of stopping privatization of Pier 40 really caught my eye because I have been writing and signing petitions for it. And when Bruce Trigg exposed Bezos and Amazon (whom I have been telling people about for a couple of years now as to Bezos’ takeover of as much as he can take over) and Google, I was shocked “Yes! Show the truth!”

I was also very happy that you put a very eye-catching ad in for the event I attended on Saturday, “Living with 5G Radiation.” Excellent! I am so happy that you presented that. I work with 5G Wake-up Call and have been working on educating people for the last year on the dangers of smart meters. It is my passion right now. I saw your ad and brought a few people with me to the event. It was absolutely fabulous. I can’t rave about it enough. I wish every body I had told to attend had attended. Dusty Berke was there. I was so impressed with her knowledge on the subject. Again, thanks for the ad. You don’t hear about issues this important in the mainstream media, which is owned by the corporations. I’m just now getting to the article “Let Us Now Praise Judson Church.” The first sentence and the history that follows is a real grabber. From what I have read, I again give praise for enlightening your readership. Thank you.

In browsing I see coverage of spaces, events and issues dealing with those of mature age (to me, that’s better than saying elderly); you and the Westview Bookstores look very enticing. In general you make me want to check in, come down again to the Village.

Thank you very much for your courage to educate your readers. You all are truly journalists.

—Donna Gianell-Romo

PS. I’m taking a subscription

Pier 40

Dear WestView,
I really appreciated the articles in your June edition by Bruce Trigg and Bunny Gabel regarding the Pier 40 development plans. I understand the call from the author to write to local representatives. However, I am an Australian living in the West Village and do not have the right to vote, so my letters may not be very impacting. As a daily user of the Hudson River Park, I have always found it concerning that there is not greater city investment in support of this essential public asset.

Could you please provide any information about whether there will be other public meetings regarding the proposal?

—Nicola Carson

Not on My Wall

At 10pm on March 5th, Webster Stone, who lives at Charles Street and West 4th Street, kept hearing a loud buzz. “I couldn’t place it, couldn’t figure out what it was, and it irritated me.”

Getting up from his couch, Stone checked to see if it was the washing machine or the dishwasher, and then checked every electronic gadget in the house. “I couldn’t figure out from where it was coming. Then abruptly it stopped.”

An hour later there was a loud knock at Stone’s front door. Thinking it was a friend, Stone opened the small door window to shout “Boo!” But it was two police officers from the Sixth Precinct. “Is this your property?” asked one officer. “You’d better take a look at this.”

The side wall of the townhouse had been “tagged” with three-foot-high graffiti. Stone quickly put it together. “That was the vibe I kept hearing. It was the spray can, but from outside.” The officers took Stone’s details for their report.

“I wish I could have caught him,” Stone told them, “I wish I had just gone outside.” “Actually he was caught,” said one officer. “Someone saw him, told him to stop, and he took off. Apparently the witness then chased him down, all the way to 22nd Street, caught him, and now we have him in custody.”

Stone pulled out a business card. “Can you give this to the guy who caught him? Let him know I owe him a couple drinks.”

The townhouse is often a target of graffiti, such that nearly two years before the co-op had decided to simply paint the side of the building instead of leaving the original 1866 brick. “It was a shame to paint over that brick,” explained Stone, “but getting graffiti off brick is much tougher than simply painting the wall over.”

Weeks later Stone was asked to sign a supporting deposition for the office of the New York District Attorney, which he did. Subsequently all records have been sealed, presumably due to the defendant’s age. The district attorney refuses to release any information regarding the case.

The townhouse was painted two weeks after the incident, in a color Benjamin Moore refers to as “Charles Street Red.”

—Anonymous

NYT Editorial Shock

Dear editors:
I was shocked to see the New York Times editorial “Hudson River Park Needs Help” June 7, with a comparison of the Hudson River Park Trust proposals for office development on Pier 40 with the Westway superhighway plan of more than 20 years ago. Saying office development is ‘not that bad’ compared with a Westway superhighway, (pardoning the gender language) is like saying the woman-beating boyfriend who changes to being verbally and mentally abusive is not so bad.

Hudson River Park has been made a beautiful partner to a robust developing city of buildings, especially along the west waterfront. Yet today, Pier 40 is an ugly obstruction to the sweep of the harbor views from the pedestrian piers. To justify even more obstruction by building development on the water, because the park was established with no public funding, is to say we can’t solve our problem without further corrupting the waterfront park.

If there is going to be a push to amend the act, that should be to provide public funding, as it should have been from the very beginning. I encourage everyone to insist on public funding for our public park.

—Brian J. Pape

14A Bus

Dear Mr. Capsis,
We in the West Village are trying to keep the Abingdon Square 14A loop. The MTA wants to cut service, which for many is a lifeline. Also, sometimes the M11 stops at 23rd Street instead of completing the run to Abingdon Square. Both of these buses are infrequent at best. I am hoping you might consider posting this in WestView. Thanks for your consideration.

—Maxine Glonsky
The New School Turns 100:
An Interview With Mary Watson, Executive Dean, Schools Of Public Engagement at The New School

What is important about the school that Mary is now the Dean of is that it was the school that emerged from the Columbia University break away—there have been many singing phrases and angry words that crackled and sung about as it emerged—oh, oh I wish I had some of these. Can you give me a few?

“The New School was founded a century ago in New York City by a small group of prominent American intellectuals and educators who were frustrated by the intellectual timidity of traditional colleges. The founders, among them Charles Beard, John Dewey, James Harvey Robinson, and Thorstein Veblen, set out to create a new kind of academic institution, one where faculty and students would be free to honestly and directly address the problems facing societies in the 20th century. Their vision was to bring together scholars and citizens interested in questioning, debating, and discussing the most important issues of the day.”

(source: The New School History)

There are many examples in the founders’ original proposal for the university. Some excerpts include:

“The founders envisioned that The New School “would become the center of the best thought in America, would lead in emancipating learning, and would be a spiritual adventure of the utmost significance.”

The university would seek to “secure from the various universities of the country a small corps of selected specialists in the several branches of social science, relieve them from administrative responsibilities, grant them self-government, and set them free to investigate, publish and teach;” and it would “make them responsible for the correct and impartial use of their several specialties in interpreting the issues of current life in the classroom, through publications and public lectures.”

Do you have a short statement or a manifesto from one of the founders that captures the breakaway rational?

“In the original mission statement, the university’s originators state: “Nothing like it has ever been attempted; this is the hour for the experiment; and New York is the place, because it is the greatest social science laboratory in the world and of its own force attracts scholars and leaders in educational work.”

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Regulations continued from page 1

MCIs are entitled to raise rents by as much as 6% a year, in perpetuity. But under the new law, they will now be able to raise rents by only 2% a year to help pay for those renovations. On top of that, those increases can only be for 30 years.

Similarly, the proposed law caps spending on IAI's by limiting the renovation amount to a maximum of $15,000 per unit, every 15 years. As an example, under the present rules, a landlord of a building with fewer than 35 units could apply for as much as $40,000 on IAIs and pass 1/40th of the costs to renters through a permanent monthly increase. Now, the same landlord can only apply for $15,000 and can pass along only 1/168th of the costs.

The lease renewal process for tenants on preferential rent will be a whole lot less stressful. Roughly one-third—266,000—of the city’s one million rent-regulated units receive preferential rent, which means a rent lower than what is legally permitted. Under the old law, landlords who grant tenants preferential rents have been able to raise rents to the maximum allowable amount during lease renewals. In practice, this has meant that preferential rent tenants have faced the possibility of large and unexpected rent hikes during lease renewals.

Going forward, preferential rents will become the base rent for the entire occupancy of the tenant, meaning landlords can only raise the rent according to amounts determined by the Rent Guidelines Board, the NYC agency that sets the increases for rent-stabilized units.

Co-op and Condo conversion process is going to be a lot harder.

Over the decades, co-op and condo conversions have been a common investor strategy in the city's rent-regulated market and, as a result, contributed to the loss of rent-regulated units. Currently, 15% of apartments have to be sold (to either residents or outside investors) in order for a building to convert to a co-op or condo. But now, the new law sets a much higher bar: 51% of tenants who live in the building must agree to buy units for a conversion to happen.

Security deposits

Security deposits will now be limited to one month’s rent for all tenants (even market rate tenants), and it will be easier for all renters to get their security deposits back. There was already a similar rule for regulated renters in New York.

Notice of Increases and Non-Renewal

Landlords of market rate apartments are now required to provide tenants with notice if they intend to raise the rent by more than five percent. They must also notify tenants if they do not intend to renew a lease.

If a tenant has a lease of less than one year, a 30-day notice is now mandatory. A 60-day notice is required for tenants who have lived in an apartment for more than one year, but fewer than two years, or have a lease of at least one year, but less than two years.

Tenants who have lived in a unit for more than two years, or have a lease of at least two years, must get a 90-day notice.

Landlords of regulated apartments were already required to give 90- to 120-day notices.

New eviction protections

One of the most significant changes is a new protection that bolsters a tenant’s defense against a landlord pursuing a retaliatory eviction. The change applies to all renters.

A judge may now stay an eviction for up to one year, rather than six months, if the tenant cannot find a similar dwelling in the same neighborhood after a reasonable search.

And a court must also consider how an eviction may exacerbate a tenant’s health condition, affect a child’s enrollment in a local school, and other factors.

Unlawful evictions, such as when a landlord illegally locks out or uses force to evict a tenant, would become a misdemeanor punishable by a civil penalty of $1,000 to $10,000 per violation.

These new protections would complement a 2017 law that made New York the first city to implement a universal right to counsel, guaranteeing free legal assistance for tenants facing eviction (supposedly—more on this next month).

Notices to Cure

One of the scariest things a tenant faces is a Notice to Cure posted on her apartment door, giving her 10 days to correct some condition the landlord is complaining about or be evicted. Tenants now have 30 days to fix lease violations, rather than 10 days under previous rules.

Other changes

Application fees, including fees for a background check, are now limited to $20.

Blacklists. Tenants who were seen as troublemakers by landlords—perhaps for standing up for their rights in court—sometimes end up on blacklists that would be shared among rental agencies. That practice is now banned, prohibiting landlords from discriminating based on a tenant’s history in housing court.

If a tenant needs to move out mid-lease, a landlord is now required to try to rent the apartment to someone else, making it harder for owners to keep a unit vacant and charge the tenant for the remainder of the lease.

Right to investigate overcharges. Previously, rent-regulated tenants had what was known as a four-year “look back” rule, where they could hold a landlord accountable for overcharges for four years. Now a tenant who suspects fraud can request a full rent history and can make the state investigate and penalize landlords for overcharges made over the last six years.
Lawsuit Stops DOT 14th Street Corridor Plan—For Now

By Arthur Z. Schwartz

FLASH—Just as Westview was going to press, Supreme Court Justice Eileen Rakower granted a Temporary Restraining Order barring the NYC Department of Transportation from implementing its plan to bar all cars and vans, and most trucks from 14th Street, a move DOT says it wanted to make to “speed up bus service.” The lawsuit was brought by a coalition of block associations, who are represented by Westview contributor Arthur Schwartz. Essentially, Judge Rakower said that DOT, which represented that it had statistics and modeling to measure the impact of the closure, had not given that data a sufficient “hard look” as required by the State and City Environmental Quality Review Acts. Her injunction is in place until at least August 6, when the block associations and the DOT are due back into court. The article below was written by Arthur Schwartz several days before the ruling.

As WestView goes to press, the entire community awaits a decision by Supreme Court Justice Eileen Rakower about whether she will issue an injunction to stop the City’s plan to turn 14th Street into a “Busway,” barring cars from the street unless they are making pick-ups or drop-offs. A coalition of over a dozen block associations, led by the Council of Chelsea Block Associations, have joined with several of the larger buildings in our community, the Vermeer (at 77 Seventh Avenue) and the Victoria (at 5 East 14th Street) to file suit in NY State Supreme Court to stop the plan cold, and to force reconsideration of the bike paths which threaten to turn 12th and 13th Streets into traffic nightmares. The Busway is scheduled to go into effect July 1, along with the elimination of numerous bus stops by the MTA in the name of “bus speed up.”

These eliminations, which include the M14A stops on 9th Avenue and Horatio and 8th Avenue and Jane Street, are the subject of a second lawsuit filed under the NYC Human Rights Law—more on this next month.

Here is an excerpt of what the Busway Petitioners argued to Judge Rakower: “Petitioners bring this suit pursuant to the NY State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”), and the NY City Environmental Quality Review Act (“CEQRA”) ... and the New York Freedom of Information Law. Petitioners also assert, pursuant to Article 78 of the CPLR, that the plan to eliminate one lane of traffic on the north and south sides of 14th Street, and to establish a “bus and truck” lane (“hereinafter the “14th Street Plan”), and the adoption of a related plan to make permanent 16 foot wide bike lanes on 12th and 13th Streets in Manhattan (hereinafter “The Bike Lane Plan”), are arbitrary and capricious actions by the DOT.

Neither Plan has been properly vetted under SEQRA or CEQRA, the DOT has refused to release any studies or data supporting its decisions, and both plans are ... actions by government which threaten the wellbeing of residents of the Greenwich Village, Chelsea and Flatiron communities in Manhattan, and threaten the character of those neighborhoods...

“Such suit is brought in order to stop the implementation of the 14th Street Plan, and to bring about the restoration of the 12th and 13th Street streetscapes to their former condi-
tion unless these interrelated plans are evalu-
ated in accordance with SEQRA and CEQRA, until all FOIL requests are lawfully responded to and unless the plan reveals some modicum of rationality.”

These actions by the DOT were originally envisioned in 2017-2018 as part of a mitigation plan to remediate what was expected to be a lack of subway service on 14th Street at a time when the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (“MTA”) was planning to shut down L Train service from Brooklyn, and across 14th Street, for a 15 month period. The 2017-2018 plans were designed to accommodate a projected massive increase in cross-town bus service, a number exceeding 85,000 riders a day (MTA’s estimate) and 2-5,000 cross-town bike riders a day (DOT’s estimate). The subway shutdown will no longer occur, and service will only be slowed down on the L Train late at night and on weekends. Despite prior unresolved litiga-
tion about the applicability of SEQRA and CEQRA, several “community meetings,” and all sorts of obscure “modeling” and addi-
tional meetings after the shutdown was called off, the DOT has refused to evaluate either the interrelated 2019 14th Street Plan or the Bike Lane Plan (which we call, collectively, the 14th Street “Corridor Plan”) pursuant to SEQRA or CEQRA, which means that any actions made by DOT have been done without taking a legitimate “hard look” at the impacts, and without con-
sideration of various alternative proposals. Not only that, DOT has come up with a new “rationale” for the Corridor Plan, since the original rationale was no longer viable. That continued on page 22.

Use It or Lose It

STILL IN JEOPARDY: Continued M14A bus service may be determined by a continued or/and increase in ridership. Photo by Maggie Berkvist.

By Maggie Berkvist

So, dear readers, despite posters that started to appear around the neighborhood in May, and my Open Letter to Corey John-
son in our June issue, the fate/future of our vital 14A is still in jeopardy.

On June 10th a Daily News story, headed Cars To Be Banned From Most of 14th Street In Manhattan Starting July 1, went on to add “The Metropolitan Transportation Au-
thority will also launch its new M14 select bus service on July 1, hoping to speed up buses by eliminating 16 existing stops and requiring

riders to swipe their MetroCards at curbside machines before they board. The new service will replace the M14A and M14D routes cur-
rently operating along 14th St.”

So, knowing he was already bringing a suit against the MTA because of the large elimination of stops on the east side, I wrote Attorney Arthur Schwartz, saying “Anything we can do?” (see Arthur’s re-
cap above). Despite numerous news sto-
ries of late about the ever larger percent-
age of Senior Citizens in the population (certainly true in this neighborhood!), the MTA—obessed with speed—seems not to have gotten the message...that as well as Express buses for those in a hurry (certainly true in this neighborhood!), the new Select Bus Service (SBS) service on Monday July 1st.

The final route is available on our website (see box below), demonstrates.

We contacted our elected officials requesting they get involved (Johnson, Brewer, Hoylman, Nadler, Glick, Williams). All returned our requests, except Wil-
liams. For some reason, Jamaane Williams didn’t respond to ANY request for assis-
tance.

So, dear readers and residents of the neighborhood—time to get on the bus. “Use It—Or Lose It!”

West Takes Up the Cause

As soon as the MTA announced the cuts, George Cominskie, former President of the Westbeth Artists’ Residents’ Council, and I, the current President, started a campaign.Here’s a brief timeline of our efforts:

APRIL 26. We organized over 160 (mostly senior) tenants to write letters to CB2 urging the M14A loop be kept at Abingdon Square.

MAY 5. We contacted our elected officials requesting they get involved (Johnson, Brewer, Hoylman, Nadler, Glick, Williams). All returned our requests, except Wil-
liams. For some reason, Jamaane Williams didn’t respond to ANY request for assis-
tance.

MAY 17. Elected officials (Johnson, Brewer, Hoylman, Nadler) wrote letter to Andy Byford on our behalf.

MAY 29. Westbeth held public meeting in Community Room, gave a PowerPoint presentation, and organized letter-writing campaign as well as online campaign to daily contact MTA Byford and Mayor DeBlasio.

MAY 29 - JUNE 12. Westbeth tenants posted personal videos, created songs, memes, posters...putting a face to the issue.

JUNE 11. Nine month decision announced by MTA, following Corey Johnson meet-
ing with Byford.

JUNE 11. Poster made showing new stops and new actionable items.

Roger Bramon, President, Westbeth Artists Residents Council | 917.701.3679

www.westbeth.org
New School continued from page 3

Arts, Dean Hans Simons of the School of Politics expresses optimism that the returning soldiers will bring a heightened awareness to the national perspective:

All of us are going to ask, why did we have to fight—what did we fight for? The real answer to these questions must come from society as a whole. But it will be composed of the answers millions of individuals are able and willing to give.

The Bulletin takes stock of The New School’s first twenty-four years, celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the University in Exile, providing and expounding upon the calendar of current courses and lectures, and announcing the latest issue of Social Research, as well as faculty art shows by Berenice Abbott, José de Creeft, Camilo Egas, Stanley William Hayter, Yosuo Kuniyoshi, and Louis Schanker. Among other highlights are performances and a new division, ‘a Radio Workshop for the radio actor, announcer, and director’, from the Dramatic Workshop.

In 1972, The New School establishes the Freshman Year Program, which offers advanced high school seniors the opportunity to complete their first year of college before enrolling, as sophomores, in a more traditional college or university program. Three years later, The New School introduces a full four-year program, the Seminar College; the Seminar College is basal to Eugene Lang College, which The New School dedicates in 1985. Counter to a normative history of colleges and universities, The New School’s first undergraduate degrees are offered long after the school’s first graduate degrees; with a curricular identity already in place, the formation of Eugene Lang College is met with excitement and optimism.

Eugene Lang, the college’s benefactor, was born in 1919, the year of The New School’s founding. In 1981, Lang founded the ‘I Have A Dream Foundation’; in 1996, for his contributions to education and social causes, President Bill Clinton would award Lang the Presidential Medal of Freedom; in 2012, five years prior to his death, Lang was honored, according to Swarthmore College, thirty-eight honorary degrees. October 1985, in his heartfelt founder’s address of Eugene Lang College, Lang speaks to a vision that takes up the ideological mission of education set forth by the founders of The New School in 1919:

For me, for my family, this is an awesome, incredible—and deeply sentimental—occasion...It seems so eminently appropriate and fortunate that the newly titled college should be embraced by The New School. Where else could one find all the circumstances of an outstanding tradition of educational innovation and enterprise, a richness of faculty and educational resources inviting more intensive employment, a vibrant seminar college ready for a quantum leap into the future? ... What will the Seminar College, under its new name, become? Building upon the character of its past, I see the college growing steadily for some years with many more students, each eager to extend horizons of academic enterprise, with their teachers no less eager to teach and to encourage them. I see a college whose focus is clearly directed to individual student development. As envisaged, that means small classes, working in the seminar format, calculated to stimulate intellectual interaction among students, and between student and teacher. It means broad curricular scope and flexibility so that, under sustained faculty guidance, students can create study programs related to individual objectives and abilities. It means a curriculum that will enable students to draw enriching vitality and educational adventure from the cultural and socio-cultural aspects of New York City. In recent months, my family and I have heard many kind words and have rejoiced in some wonderful, heartwarming reactions to our commitment. We have been excited by the enthusiasm with which all constituencies of The New School have clasped the fledgling college to their collective bosom. However, beyond joy and excitement, my family feels a humility and profound gratitude. Our hopes for Eugene Lang College, and its transcendently important mission, rest with administrators who will give it purpose. Our family commitment, however it be recognized today, truly counts for very little. You who will carry the burden will give it real meaning.

THE NEW SCHOOL MILESTONES

1934 – The New School for Social Research offers its first graduate degree programs.
1943 – The first undergraduate degree programs were offered. They were designed to make bachelor degrees accessible to veterans.
1970 – Parsons merges with The New School. Achieving permission to grant a bachelor of fine arts degree was central to Parsons merger with The New School.
1972 – The Freshman Year Program was created, offering high school seniors the opportunity to complete their first year of college before enrolling as sophomores. In 1975, The New School introduced a 4-year liberal arts program, the Seminar College, that was the precursor to the current Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, formed in 1986.
2015 – Mannes School of Music relocates to Greenwich Village, uniting The New School’s physical campus downtown. Under President David Van Zandt, The New School continued its consolidation in the Village, part of an effort to integrate academically the university’s various parts so that students can benefit from all of The New School’s innovative programs.

Today, The New School has 10,000 students and offers more than 135 degree programs.
Whither the Village?

By Senior Minister at Judson Church

The Village can't be what it used to be any more. Been there, done that.

It may be that the times have changed. Since 9-11, most people are more concerned about safety than we are about freedom. We even say good-bye with the words “Be Safe,” as though safe were a legitimate or even possible objective.

Or it could be that the place—the village—has changed. We can't be as gentrified as we are, with rents as high as they are, and still be Avant, bohemian, weird, open, free, experimental, edgy, birkenstocked.

The values of freedom and safety are in pretty direct competition with each other, for most people, most of the time. In these cliched binaries, we imagine it takes more poor people and edge people and unemployed people to manage the job description of the hippie. Starving artists have artistic nobility; people with jobs don't.

Our purpose in the panel hosted by Alec Baldwin on May 20th at 4 at Judson was to bust these cliched binaries. Of course, of course we can do so. But we can also dust ourselves off and brush ourselves off and lift ourselves up from fundamentally static stories.

Greenwich Village has done what every other place, in every other time, does. It changed. The Village changed. Oh, my. The Village changed primarily by the extraordinary success of NYU. At the lecture by architectural historian Francis M. Roney at Judson in April, a surprise slide was shown. It was from 1951 and it showed NYU as the only institution around Washington Square Park. Judson was disappeared from the photo. We just weren't there in the consultant's proposal. Robert Moses is said to have understood that Judson was already "gone" when he put together his infamous proposal to drive through the park. Note that such centralizing was a part of the NYU success then and never appeared. Might similar things be happening with the proposed 14% footprint increase, projected earlier and now contested, by the dominant institution in our village?

Or could something different happen than 14% or with 14%? When the last rerun of Washington Square park happened, people wrung their hands and then re-wrapped their hands. How could a park change? All the poor people and drug dealers would be gone. They are not.

There is absolutely no question that NYU raised the rents in the village, forcing out a lot of wannabe, if aging, Bohemians. That economic fact cannot be ignored. Simultaneously, what is wrong with the success of an urban academic institution? Does it always come with so much higher rent that nothing can be good in its wake? The benefits to our lives here and now are incalculable. The fundamental one is the global diversity that is at our doorstep. We are much less white because of NYU.

I taught a small course at NYU in the spring called "Marrying Outside Your Tribe." Through our doors marched Muslims, Greek Orthodox, Baptists, Hindus, Coptic Christians, Catholics, Dutch Protestants, and a lovely array of unbelievers who had fallen in love with true believers. That kind of diversity cannot be found in many places. That diversity is what truly makes villages and cities great.

Likewise, there is merit in the intellectual project. Stand quietly in the park some nights (if you can, so vibrant are the competing musical offerings) and you can hear the sound of thousands of minds humming their way to something like understanding. Then there is the green. NYU has extraordinary investments in its own energy, most of which make environmentalists proud.

All of that being said, is there such a thing as too much of a good thing? NYU's very desire to increase its footprint causes untold suffering to innocent people, the kind of people who used to be part of our many congregations and coffee houses and local businesses' success.

"Whither," the panel, asks the question of gentrification and the village: how do the two fit together? Could NYU and its own liberal values not be corralled for something edgy and interesting, before we all just go to sleep in our nostalgias for different pasts, pasts which are no longer possible?

I am hoping that our little panel, hosted by Villager Alec Baldwin, shed a little light on these big matters. I hope someone will show up and be funny and think a thought that hasn't yet been thought. Can a great university be as creative in a community as it can in a classroom or power plant? What kind of housing in the village would magnify the beauty of our small scale, keep sun and light in our windows AND be affordable? How could economic diversity be a learning advantage to the students NYU is preparing for the world? How could NYU self-tax on behalf of the teaching it does? How could NYU see missional value in economic diversity?

Bohemians are best when we manage the tension between freedom and safety so well that we become interesting. Interesting lives beyond static thinking. Interesting is open to the new and the next which are always built within the tales told about the old and the beautiful.

Suketu Mehta, who teaches at NYU, has written a book THIS LAND IS OUR LAND. NYU is much more of a colonist than its board understands. NYU is also a tremendous asset to Greenwich Village. What could it and we do together?

We could become the greenest urban village and university in the world. We could close off University and Waverly and more streets to cars and link a genuine footprint between the two great parks near us, Union and Washington. We could also tax or recommend self-taxing the other footprint. If NYU must grow, how much affordable and low-rise housing would it like to build or rehab or turn into small houses? How much economic diversity would be good for the educational mission? What days do non NYU residents get at the new gym? Or when can seniors or poor people ride the buses? How could NYU turn community board meetings into interesting conversations instead of group therapy sessions, where everybody yells at everybody else?

Big questions of value—freedom, safety, justice, change—matter to people and institutions and to villages. Static has little truth and no value. Static just sits around complaining. People who are edgy go to the edge of reality and think together.
Robert Heide At The Newark Museum

By John Gilman

West View News writer Robert Heide will be featured on a panel about Pop Art at the Newark Museum in downtown New-ark on Saturday, July 13 at 2 PM. The Museum, at 49 Washington Street, is a few short blocks from Newark’s historic Penn Station—best way for Greenwich Villagers to get there is by the PATH train which you can get at 9th Street and 6th Avenue or from Christopher Street between Hudson and Greenwich Streets.

After architect Michael Graves’ $22 million renovation in 1990 the Newark Museum became a masterpiece of a museum building and in it I noticed many new Pop Art and Art Deco acquisitions since we first started visiting back when we were working on our guidebook O’ New Jersey – Daytripping, Back Roads, Eateries, Funky Adventures for St. Martins (new third edition available at Amazon). Known for its Tibetan and Native American holdings the beautiful Newark Museum is connected to the whole and actual fully furnished and restored Victorian townhouse of the founder of Ballantine Ale.

Robert, our friend and photographer Timothy Bissell, and I attended the museum in May where Robert had been invited to talk about, among other things, his old friend Andy Warhol, and to conduct a tour of the Pop Art Gallery at the museum. The helpful and knowledgeable program staff integrated the tour with their Thursday Night special ‘event’ which was a party celebrating the ‘crazy’ 1970s and everybody, it seemed, was in costume, dancing to the period hits played by a DJ in the spectacular marble lobby of the institution. We had a lot of fun eating and drinking and afterwards we drove on out to Bloomfield (hometown of the ‘Empress of New Jersey’, Connie Francis) to Holsten’s Ice Cream Parlor (site of the last segment of the Soprano’s) where we indulged in hot fudge sundaes with home-made ice cream and home-made chocolate—and with hand whipped whipped cream on top.
THEN: This March 1933 photo (matching an earlier 1927 photo) of the once four-story-corner-building-next-to-a-3-story-mixed-use rowhouse, describes both as 501 Hudson Street and 131 Christopher Street.

Even the GVHD Designation Report of 4/29/69 describes these addresses as one lot, though clearly they are not one building. The 12 over 12 double-hung window sashes are nicely proportioned and spaced for residential rooms, complete with fire escapes on the exterior. The Cigar Store was a fixture in this working-class neighborhood for many years.

It was reportedly the site of a Volunteer Fire Company station for Engine No. 34 in the second quarter of the Nineteenth Century, but evidence of it is elusive. Using investigative reasoning, the options seem to point to the western 'end' of the building, the rowhouse, with its on-grade entry and wide storefront. (More on carriage houses and stables in the area are in the WVNews series "When Horses Ruled NY" from previous years.) Another former neighborhood fire station at 70 Barrow Street has similar scale, purpose, and entry from the street. (From the GVHD report: "Built in 1852 as a firehouse for the City, the handsome four-story brick building, now an apartment house, has undergone extensive alteration." The fire company may have moved here from their 1820's building on Christopher?)

At #133 Christopher St., a brick three-story building represents the alteration of a Federal house erected in 1819 for William Austen, originally two and one-half stories high with dormers, and only three windows wide. The house was enlarged, ca. 1850, to three stories, and widened at the left where once was a horse alley (quite common even today in the Village); the windows, railings and the roof cornice date from that period.

#135 is a four-story brick loft building erected in 1911, designed by Jardine, Kent & Hill, distinguished by a judicious use of symmetrical brickwork fenestration.

#137 was erected in 1906 for the New York and New Jersey Railroad Company, now the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) entrance and the Hudson Terminal Powerhouse, and is the tallest structure on the block (farthest left in photo).

In 1788, The Earl of Abingdon had sold the land north of Christopher and almost to Bleecker Street from the river, to Richard Amos, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, who built his house at the northeast corner of Greenwich Street and Amos (10th) Street (he deeded the ROW to the city in 1809).

Hudson Street first appears on a city map of 1797, when it extended only from Duane Street to Hudson Square. The street was extended the next two decades until it reached Bank Street; north of this point it became Eighth Avenue.

All the land south of Christopher Street was land-granted to the Trinity Presbyterian Church; thus, Trinity's St. Luke's Chapel and the residences built nearby in the 1820's helped inaugurate the development of the area.

After Amos' death in 1837, his daughters married men who also helped develop the area, such as Joseph J. Van Buren and George B. Thorp, the latter Keeper of the nearby State Prison from 1824-29. Credit: NYC Department of Records.

NOW: Butchered in 1963, the upper stories were demolished to make it a two-story taxpay- er. This inferior remodeling added wide metal-sash windows with brick soldier-course lintels of thin tan brick and walls capped by slender coping stones for the second-floor offices at the time of 1969 district designation. Since then, further violations lost the uniform brick faces, while the ever-changing cacophony of signage and awnings and entrances often violated building regulations in the process, some on record from the 1980's. No provision to provide 1990-ADA-compliant access to the storefronts is planned.

Today, the north side of Christopher has building heights of two to five stories. The residences in 133 and 135 Christopher maintain some Federal-style appearances, as the other buildings down the block keep many original features. Hudson Street between Christopher and West 10th Streets offers an interesting contrast between the low Federal-style buildings, and large Twentieth Century structures. To the right in the photos, the building at 503, 505 and 507 was built in 1911 as a six-story concrete loft by Lorenz P. Weiher, contrasting the horizontality of the triple windows against the verticality of the supporting piers. No con- cession to neighborhood character was made, and now even the loading entrances in the 1933 photo are filled in, offering no entrances in the façade, for the condos behind it.

The current 501 Hudson landlord, since 2014, has submitted plans to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to clean-up violations, and update the facades for this remnant building in the Historic District. The previous owner had an approved demolition permit prior to 2014.

Perhaps one day an owner will sympathetically rebuild the character lost on the north- west corner of Hudson and Christopher? Credit: Brian J. Pape, AIA/
There was an exciting and promising development in Albany that bears directly on the Lower Manhattan community’s struggle to save Beth Israel Hospital. It may come to nothing this year, because the legislative session ends on June 19th. But as of this writing, there is still a possibility that both the Senate and the State Assembly will pass a bill that will make it impossible for hospitals to close or reduce services without public review and an independent study of the health-care impact of the closure.

According to Health Care for All, NY, a statewide coalition of over 170 organizations focused on achieving quality, affordable health care for all New Yorkers, 41 hospitals have closed in New York State over the last 20 years. Since 2000, in Manhattan alone, we have lost Cabrini Medical Center, Doctor’s Hospital (acquired by Mt. Sinai, now condos), North General Hospital in Harlem, St. Vincent’s Catholic Medical Center (now condos), St. Vincent’s Midtown (residential rental), and Stuyvesant Polyclinic. Scores of other small hospitals were closed during the 1970’s and 1980’s.

Hospital closures and reductions in hospital services are essentially unregulated by the Department of Health (DOH). Although hospitals need State authorization to open new facilities and enlarge services, reductions in services can be authorized 30 days after the closure has occurred. This statutory “limited review” is really no review at all. It is a rubber stamp.

That was the level of “review” that authorized the surprise loss to the Lower Manhattan community in 2017 of four highly profitable Beth Israel units: maternity, neonatal, pediatric intensive care, and adult cardiac surgery.

Under Albany’s proposed legislation, entitled “Local Input in Community Healthcare (the LICH Act),” surprise closures would no longer be possible. The LICH Act will require the DOH to look into the needs of the impacted community and conclude that those needs “can be adequately met” before the state could authorize the closure of a hospital, an emergency department, or a maternity department. In addition, at least 60 days prior to a proposed closure, the DOH will be required to give stakeholders an opportunity to speak on the proposed closure at a community forum. The bill states that DOH “would not be allowed to close a hospital without a significant and thorough community input process.”

Transparency. Community input. Consideration of the needs of the community. These are among the demands that the Community Coalition to Save Beth Israel has been articulating.

During a meeting in August, 2018, among members of CCSBI, State Senator Brad Hoylman, and State Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, the two legislators agreed to look into prior versions of the current bill that had failed to be passed into law. The current bill was introduced in the Senate on April 11, 2019 by Senator Brian Kavanagh. On May 30, 2019, it was approved by the Senate Health Committee and sent to the Finance Committee. Since the new law is expected to have minimal fiscal impact, it should be referred out for a full vote—if all goes well.

The Assembly version was introduced on January 28, 2019 by Jo Anne Simon. It was referred to the Assembly Health Committee, where it remains.

On Wednesday, June 12, 2019, four members of CCSBI spent an hour and a half speaking with people outside of Beth Israel Hospital on 16th Street and First Avenue. The support for the LICH Act was enormous. CCSBI had names and telephone numbers of downtown legislators, and scores of people eagerly took the information and promised to call to demand support of the legislation. Scores of other people from Brooklyn and Queens promised to telephone their state lawmakers even though CCSBI could not provide the names and numbers of the legislators.

People are hungry to take action to save their hospitals.

Postscript: The legislature failed to vote on the LICH Act. Yet again. Hopefully, we won’t lose Beth Israel before the legislature addresses this issue.
A Requiem For Celeste

Celeste Martin:
November 11, 1927—December 13, 2018

By Denise Marsa

How many times have you heard about a New York City landlady giving every tenant in her multiple landmark rental buildings a special gift bag filled with Christmas goodies? Every year Celeste Martin looked forward to taking her staff, including her driver, carpenter and super, shopping at Macy's Herald Square to help her fill 39 gift bags for her tenants. These were no ordinary gift bags, just as she was no ordinary landlady. As a tenant in one of her buildings, I was always thrilled with my gift bag’s content. One year I received a 1997 Perrier-Jouët (which I still have) and another year a 2011 Rose Veuve Clicquot. Yes, champagne! Accompanying the champagne was a bottle of Johnny Walker Black or a Johnny Walker variety pack. There were also always imported sweets and chocolates along with the spirits.

I wish to honor the memory of the late Celeste Martin, who passed away on December 13, 2018, and the enduring legacy she maintained running her landmark properties on Christopher and Gay Streets in Greenwich Village, Manhattan. She lived in a pink house on Waverly Place near Washington Square Park and also managed seven two-hundred-year-old homes that have endured intense car and truck traffic and the nearby rumbling subways for decades. (Incidentally, she stood up against, and stopped, the city's plan to put a Path station too near her buildings for fear it would compromise and crumble. For more about this, there is an article from the New York Times, written by Penelope Green, originally published December 21, 2003.)

Celeste also fought to keep her glorious wisteria from being cut down. It was at least 100 years old and grew abundantly from the courtyard between and over her buildings on Gay and Christopher Streets, just as it had done for decades. She put lights on the plants every Christmas, an amazing sight and a spectacular highlight in the West Village. When the wisteria was in full bloom in spring, it was as if you had stepped from the crowded streets of the most populated city in our country to a garden in seconds. It was magical and mythical and all things West Village. Unfortunately, several years ago part of the wisteria was cut down. Luckily, some of the beautiful flowers still remain outside her two commercial spaces on Christopher Street. There are many things I do not know about Celeste and there have been stories about her going around for years— including her romances and being a Rockette. She was truly a beauty in her prime. Perhaps she trusted the wrong people in the past and that left her very mistrusting of all. Perhaps she trusted the wrong people in the past and that left her very mistrusting of all.

I am a transplant from New Jersey. I came to this amazing city over 40 years ago and looked at only one apartment, on Christopher Street, where I still live today. I met Celeste’s father Edmund Martin that one time; he was still managing all the properties back then. My studio apartment is my sanctuary, my fortress. I feature it in one of my vignettes in my new one-woman show THE PASS, A Musical, in which I speak of Celeste, my guardian angel, and how grateful I have always been to have her as part of my story. In my show, after I describe my first day of apartment hunting in the West Village, as an aspiring singer/songwriter, I perform my song, City Skies. It is an ode to this spellbinding city. I was so lucky to have Celeste as a landlady; and my studio, though small in square footage, is tremendously large when it comes to charm, character, history (including my own!), and love.

Celeste was 94 when she passed. In her final years as a landlady, reputed to be one of the most eccentric in NYC, she was unbelievably sweet, yet occasionally neglectful in the buildings’ maintenance—mostly because she was plagued by financial disarray. She’d fallen a few years prior; not only were her mobility and cognitive abilities affected, her financial situation changed drastically. (She had rarely been sick and never believed in health insurance.) Previously, when she renovated an apartment she worked with skilled individuals. The most recent had been Robert, a carpenter from Poland. Together they planned how they would renew, yet maintain, the charm, details, and history of each small apartment they worked on. She oversaw all his work, which was comparable to photographs I have seen in Architectural Digest. After her financial circumstances changed Celeste did her best and still handled emergencies promptly and with grace. But some tenants took advantage of her kindness, and some took her to court for her neglect. There were others, including myself, however, who helped her and did our best to comfort her, bring her food, and get support for her during the final months before she was taken from her home.

Court-appointed guardians were in control of her life and property during her final months. She did not live very long after she was taken away. The course of events that led to that state of affairs started with Celeste being removed from her home, involuntarily and against her will, by Adult Protective Services in March, 2018. She was placed in a nursing home, the Hebrew Home in Riverdale, where I visited her several times. The last time, she sat with me at the piano in a communal area and I quietly played and sang City Skies, which I dedicate to her in my show. We were both moved to tears, an ever-lasting moment between us.

During our visits she would always tell me she had to get home and look after her business—her buildings. These had been her life for decades. The current circumstances have presented us, her tenants and staff, with many questions that we are still trying to answer. I have been told so many things and I am not sure what the truth is. When a lawyer first had temporary guardianship, we were told she had relatives who were to inherit the buildings. Now it seems they will not, as the city is in control of her estate. Her own home on Waverly Place was totally cleaned out and then put up for sale while she was still alive in the nursing home. The communication from the once temporarily appointed guardian, who then became the court-appointed guardian, has pretty much stopped since Celeste passed. I hear there is another guardian. There is also a management company involved now, appointed by the first guardian. Her tenants wonder, with great trepidation, what will happen to her buildings, where many of us have continued on page 12
We’ll See What Happens

By Tom Lamia

With the late arrival of spring here in Maine, there are smiles, greetings and courteous conduct among all about me. The world is right again. Snow tires off, door and window screens on, lawn furniture and Weber barbecue laid out in a circle awaiting family and friends. What’s wrong with this picture?

The inescapable black spot that spoils the scene is once again the man in the center of the picture who will not let us alone, who seems not able to let any calm moment or friendly act pass without pushing it aside to celebrate himself and belittle others, shamelessly, irreverently and, of course, wrongly.

Donald Trump sees an essential investigation of an attack on our 2016 presidential election by a historic enemy as the result of treason on the part of our intelligence community. The investigation has ended, but its result is still unclear. The line between national security and political gamesmanship has been blurred to the point of extinction.

I blame myself for pussyfooting around the obvious in this matter of Donald Trump. I have not spoken out in plain, unmistakable language. With the confusion spread by Attorney General Barr’s election to summarize, interpret and, essentially, overrule the Mueller Report, a political stalemate now exists. Special Counsel Mueller interpreted an internal Justice Department rule as preventing him from indicting the President. The Attorney General now advises that the Attorney General was mandated to stand apart from the executive and legislative branches that enacted it. It worked too well, perhaps. With no political control, an independent counsel, once appointed, was unrestrained, having too much power for one person, especially in the eyes of those who have sought and acquired the power of elected office (or who could see themselves as future targets).

Then the law was changed; a special counsel who acts within the Justice Department, with a specific mandate, was created, making this special counsel subject to the control of the attorney general. The result: When the President is under investigation, ultimate control lies with the President, acting through an obedient, crafty, partisan and learned Attorney General.

Our constitutional system has survived and served us well for 230 years. It was bent and then broken by slavery and civil war, but survived intact, if not triumphant. Had Lincoln lived to administer his plan for Reconstruction, a fully successful reuniting of the nation could have followed, with hard feelings assuaged. His Vice President, Andrew Johnson, the Trump of his day, prevented that and paid with impeachment, though not removal from office. A single vote in the Senate saved him. Consider that not only did Johnson not follow the charted path of his predecessor on Reconstruction, but he was not even of the same political party as Lincoln. When the war started he was a Democratic Senator from Tennessee, a state that seceded from the Union. Senator Johnson was the only senator from a secessionist state who did not give up his seat, for which Lincoln rewarded him with the vice-presidential nomination. Impeachment of Johnson for his southern sympathies and confrontation with Congress close on the heels of civil war was a great trauma for the nation and its Constitution. The system, bruised and battered, survived.

Are we again at such a point? As our President often says when he, like me, has no idea where events will lead: “We’ll see what happens.”

Skullduggery

By Roberta Curley

Growing older makes me hanker for an anesthetic. At 6 a.m. I spy a chubby crease wend its way from my lower-eyelid to my upper lip. In the past, those ‘sleep lines’ would have vanished by breakfast time.

Neither coaxing nor scrubbing erases the propagating interlopers. These intrusive keepsakes operate like indelible markers.

Once imbedded in your body parts, they’re squatters by eminent domain.

People tell me I look good ‘for my age’—what does THAT mean?

My proboscis droops and grows wider with each passing year.

Long ago, my face wrinkled at the mention of rhinoplasty—today, I’m all ears.

I never imagined tucking my breasts into my waistband, either.

Cruelly, laughing or sneezing incites jitters.

No section of the human anatomy is immune to softening with age.

Folks beset by the curse of time typically long for a heating pad—or a dog.

One perk of maturity is freedom to nod off without fear of chastisement.

Napping (a longevity aid), is deemed an accrued entitlement, (like Social Security.)

Some covet sleep as a tranquil way to permanently ‘pop off.'

Every morning I pinch my cheeks to check whether I’m alive.

If they throb, I begin the creakingly tedious process of bed dismounting.

I never imagined tucking my breasts into my waistband, either.

Politics is the highest form of trickery, but growing old waltzes in a close second.

Thrilled to be a four-decade-plus West Villager, Roberta Curley draws her often wry poetic inspirations from NYC based issues, infusing threads of love and nature with the fact that one can feel alone amidst throngs of people. Words and music serve as her revered muses.
Country Mouse, City Mouse

By Gordon Hughes

One morning while sitting in my favorite coffee joint, Cafe Panino Mucho Gusto, I overheard a couple talking about Southern Chester County, Pennsylvania. Now that’s not something one is likely to hear about while sipping a cup of joe with a little skim milk here in the West Village. So ears perked up, I listened in.

The young woman was talking about her folks’ farm. Well now I was hooked, as my wife and I own a horse farm in historic Unionville, which is in Southern Chester County. Unionville is home to Mr. Stewart’s Cheshire Foxhounds, founded in 1912. It’s also the reason we bought a horse farm there. So I asked the woman if she was aware of the hunt, and she said yes, as a little girl her parents would take her out to the kennels to watch the Thanksgiving Day festivities. This event was complete with pink coats—most people call them red, and formal regalia—most people call it top hats and veils, and even in the ’60s and ’70s of some of the women road side-saddle. The hounds—most people call them dogs, would come bounding out of the kennel ready for a day of sport—most people would call it fox hunting.

Crowds of landowners and people from all over Chester County would come out, and they still show up for hot cider, coffee and a variety of pastries while watching the hounds and the field—most people would call them fox hunters or the gang—move out to find the scent, and then the mayhem begins.

Celeste continued from page 10

made long-term homes. She did not make any plans regarding her estate from December 14, 2018 onward. She did not put together a will or living will. Our fate as tenants who wish to honor Celeste’s legacy, and stay in our homes, lies in the hands of the City of New York. Just before I finished this story I saw on the real estate website that is handling Celeste’s estate that her buildings on Gay Street are not something one is likely to hear about while sipping a cup of joe with a little skim milk here in the West Village. So ears perked up, I listened in.

By the way, if you want to have this remarkable lifestyle, contact me through West View News, the farm is about to go on the market. Country mouse, city mouse could be yours along with some java at Mucho Gusto.

Regardless of what will happen in the future, I already miss Celeste terribly and will always celebrate her life. Things aren’t the same without her smile, charm, and child-like magical ways. Celeste Martin and her spirit will live on forever on these city streets in the heart of the West Village.

Back at Mucho Gusto we talked about the good old days in the ’60s and ’70s when the Cheshire Hunt was the largest and fastest hunt in the country. It still is. The field is 125 riders on any given Saturday. This is as close to insanity as one would dare go.

At the time I moved to The Village I purchased a horse farm in Unionville, and we joined Cheshire. What a thrill! We had belonged to Golden’s Bridge Hunt and Pickerel Hunt in the ’80s and ’90s, but they were nothing like Cheshire. Our Chester County farm is a 1978 French hunting lodge on 50 acres and is located right in the heart of hunt country. Cheshire Hunt is now a conservancy, and rarely—I mean very rarely—is a fox ever killed. Pennsylvania’s state income tax is 3.01 percent, and the property tax for our 50 acres, which is made up of nine fields, a 13-stall barn, an indoor riding ring and an outdoor sand riding ring, with tractor, hay barn, swimming pool and stone deck overlooking the horses and fields, not to mention the French hunting-lodge house, is $12,000 per year. Think what your property tax is in New York, New Jersey or Connecticut for two or three acres. Now that is a lot to think about. It’s the primary reason we left Connecticut.

But here I was, sitting in The West Village that day being a city mouse, talking to an advertising designer who shared my country-mouse lifestyle.

Update: As of the time of this article being published, sadly, almost all the wisteria on Christopher Street, that brilliantly glorified our little block, has been cut down. There is, nevertheless, a shadow of its former self still left on Gay Street.
New Pop-Up Park on Thompson Street

By Jane Heil Usyk

We have fond memories of the pop-up park that was on Sullivan Street for a few years. We waited every April for the park’s sponsor to take it out of his basement in big pieces and set it up. He had gone through a lot to get permission to put it up every year in the spring and take it down and store it every winter in November; he had to go to board meetings and argue as to its value every year. The car owners didn’t like it because it took up one-and-a-half parking spaces; the traditionalists didn’t like it because it invited all kinds of people—even the homeless—to sit on it all day and relax.

But we loved it; it provided an opportunity to chat with the neighbors at length. Some of those neighbors turned out to be Hollywood stars like John Leguizamo and Daniel Day-Lewis, and actresses like Famke Janssen and Jane Lynch. Others were neighborhood residents we had seen on the street for years. They had interests, lives, professions, dogs. We got to know them because of the park.

My husband had a stroke in 2011. When he got home from rehab I was working and unable to care for him, so he staggered over to Sullivan Street and sat in the pop-up park for several hours a day. This gave him access to passersby, conversation, people to communicate with, and their dogs. In this way he knitted up the synapses in his brain and returned to the neighborhood.

The pop-up park on Sullivan Street isn’t there any longer. But now, on Thompson Street just above Houston Street, there is another pop-up park. It is already making a very neighborly and friendly impression, with smallish tables and chairs, dogs, people, a good feeling. It has many plants all around it, and is generally quite pleasant. In good weather people are there from morning until about five in the afternoon, chatting, relaxing, reading, checking their phones, and enjoying themselves. One woman recently set up her computer on one of the park’s tables.

Chris Taha is responsible for the park being on Thompson Street. He was a surfer in Southern California, has lived on Thompson Street for 10 years, and opened Summers, a sort of surf shack in the city, in 2015. He imagined it as a meeting place for neighbors to meet neighbors, fostering community. The addition of the park certainly encourages that.

The idea for Summers was conceived while Chris was on a surfing trip with pals in Nicaragua. The idea was to serve simple, healthful foods they liked, such as smoothies, coffees, sandwiches, and tacos, all with a Southern California twist. The pop-up park on Sullivan Street inspired him. He told me, “The program, called Street Seats, is a DOT [Dept. of Transportation] sponsored activation to promote more public open space in New York City. The process is quite simple, as long as you have the support of your neighbors.”

First, an organization such as a restaurant or school applies to the DOT for the park. If the DOT approves the location and the situation (clear of hydrants, bus stops, and other streetside necessities), the future park has to get community board approval. Then it is installed in about a six-foot by 20-foot space on a not-too-heavily-traveled street. It can be up from March to November; then it must be deinstalled for the winter.

On a recent weekday, two musicians entertained passersby at the park: they were Bob Saidenberg and Kat Minogue. Bob has lived on Thompson Street for 35 years, has a music studio nearby, and gets many of his meals at Summers. There are more concerts planned.

With the addition of the pop-up park, more life is coming to Thompson Street, and more opportunities for interactions with one’s neighbors and friends. In a small way, the parks are a counter-effect of the loss of most of our local diners, which have not been able to withstand the increase in rents of recent years.
Another new Asian stand in Gansevoort Market is **Snowy Village**, which sells Bingsoo and Tayaki. Bingsoo is a Korean shaved-ice dessert with toppings like fruit, condensed milk, matcha, crushed cookies, and more. Tayaki, or Crossant Tayaki, is a sandwich where two pieces of a crêpe-like substance are filled with different items such as adzuki, ham and cheese and Nutella banana, then cooked in a press that produces sandwiches shaped like fish.

**Additional Opening**

**Dig Inn** (615 Hudson Street between 12th and Jane Streets) opened in the old Tavo space. After a fire destroyed Tavo, signs on the door indicated that it would re-open, but it never did. The restaurant will be another all-day café (others in the area are Fairfax, Roey’s and Pisellino), but like Pisellino, at the moment, it is just open in the evening. The menu has Italian and California influences, and in addition to the dinner menu there is a bar snacks menu to pair with the ambitious cocktail program.

**Closed/Closing**

**Ancolie** (58 West 8th Street between 6th Avenue and MacDougal Street) opened a little less than three years ago and sold French-inspired food in custom reusable glass jars that had wider mouths than mason jars. If you brought your jar back you received a discount on your next meal. Unfortunately, the concept did not catch on and now Ancolie is closing. **Wallflower** (235 West 12th Street, just west of Greenwich Avenue), the tiny wine and cocktail bar that featured elevated bar food closed on June 15th. They had been around since October of 2013. In a letter to patrons, the owners wrote: “We have some bad news. We are closing Wallflower. It was a gut-wrenching decision, but one that we needed to make for several reasons, none of which are interesting or important.” Simultaneously, the owners closed their East Village restaurant **The Eddy**.

**Chelsea Market and Gansevoort Market Update**

Hot Bread Kitchen, the organization which sells ethnic breads made by immigrants has a food incubator to help people interested in food entrepreneurship. **Chelsea Market** (759 9th Avenue between 15th and 16th Streets) will have a permanent Hot Bread Kitchen-sponsored pop-up, where graduates of that program will sell their food.

The first occupant of the space is Hiyaw Gebreyohannes. His fast casual Ethiopian food stand, **Gorsha**, sells bowls with different Ethiopian toppings. Chelsea Market lost Giovanni Rana Pastificio & Cucina, the Italian pasta store and restaurant over a year ago, but now, coming soon to a different location in the market will be **Pastificio G. Di Martino**. This will be the Italian pasta maker’s first pasta bar in the U.S., and will feature an open kitchen where diners can see their pasta being prepared. Like Pisellino, it will be an all-day affair with coffee in the morning and diners can see their pasta being prepared. Like Pisellino, it will be an all-day affair with coffee in the morning and diners can see their pasta being prepared. The projected opening date is July 1st.

**Ancolie** (775 Washington Street at West 12th Street) recently closing was widely mourned, but we were excited to see that the owner, Jonathan Wasmann, is applying for a liquor license for a new Barbuto’s (269 9th Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets) has over 160 locations in China, but this is the first U.S. location. The subterranean bar space will feature Asian Fusion cocktails and dim sum served from a cart. The projected opening date is July 1st.

**Restaurants Rebaptized**

**La Ventura** (615 Hudson Street between 12th and Jane Streets) opened in the old Tavo space. After a fire destroyed Tavo, signs on the door indicated that it would re-open, but it never did. The restaurant will be another all-day café (others in the area are Fairfax, Roey’s and Pisellino), but like Pisellino, at the moment, it is just open in the evening. The menu has Italian and California influences, and in addition to the dinner menu there is a bar snacks menu to pair with the ambitious cocktail program.

**The White Horse Tavern. The only thing we have changed is the menu...**

---Eytan Sugarman
A View From The Kitchen

By Isa Covo

Summer is here: Time to enjoy the outdoors, the beach, time to travel. It is also the time to look at our bodies and decide that it may be a good time to consider if there is a need to slim down a bit. The advantage now is that with more feliciteous temperatures, we spend more time outdoors and moving, which allows us to burn calories, and in turn give better shape to our bodies. But that may not be enough, we also need to reconsider our eating habits. And that is what I did, and it worked.

After long years of battling fat with diets, I realized, as perhaps many of you did, that diets only help if you keep on dieting. Once you stop, at least as far as I was concerned, the weight creeps up again. The diet programs advertised on TV also can help, however I do not recommend them, because they make you focus on food. Another caveat is that you do not control the ingredients, their freshness, or the seasonings. I find that a home redolent with fresh and good ingredients coming from the kitchen is soothing and comforting. That does not mean that you should avoid restaurants, to the contrary, cooking at home, even if it is only a few times a week, makes you aware of the ingredients and the flavors when you eat out.

So, let’s begin: Losing weight demands some discipline, and some clear-eyed awareness of how you consider yourself, that is, are you fat, or just overweight? The best way to find out is to consult with your doctor who can tell you if need to lose weight, and if so, how much.

Keep in mind that the fleshy parts, such as breasts, abdomen, hips, buttocks, the inside of the knees, store more fat than almost all the rest of the body. However, once we start losing fat, we lose it all over.

Don’t try to lose it too fast because your skin will become flaccid. One to two pounds a week is the healthy way to go. Walking and some exercise will contribute to keeping you fit. It is also recommended to use body lotion after the shower or bath to keep the skin supple. 

Even if this should not be considered a diet, there are directives to follow:

- Never eat standing or walking, except when you attend a reception or while tasting samples at a food store. Never snack at the movies or while watching TV.
- Do not drink sodas or fruit juices. Sugar has a lot of calories so consume candy in moderation. A little dark chocolate can be satisfying, and some say, healthful. If you can, do not put sugar or even sweeteners in your coffee, tea, or other infusions.

Eat three meals a day only. If you feel you need to eat something between meals, drink a glass of water first, and then eat some fruit, and once a day, a small tumbler of dry roasted nuts, or a cookie, or a biscotto. I find that half a cup of yoghurt with a teaspoon of honey, some raisins, a sprinkling of walnuts and a bit of powdered cinnamon is very tasty and very good for digestion, as are dried prunes and apricots, but eat them sparingly as the dried fruit is laden with calories.

Consider that it is calories that make you put on weight, therefore, reduce the consumption of high-caloric foods, essentially fats and sugar.

In France, although you do see overweight individuals, you rarely encounter any obese ones. And that is because you don’t often see people eating in the street, and there is hardly any snacking. The only time I saw potato chips or other nibbles is with an “aperitif” served to guests at a party before dinner.

For me, breakfast is a slice or two of toasted artisanal bread with a smear of butter and a teaspoon of preserves and coffee or tea. It is very satisfying and holds me till lunch. The same with a croissant. Add some fruit, if you like, especially now with all the low-calorie berries.

Keep portions moderate and eat slowly, take small bites and chew them thoroughly. Let the food settle in your stomach, and don’t take seconds. The idea is to teach your stomach not to have cravings, and if you are like me, after a while you will forget it is mealtime.

Sauté or roast your foods with a minimum of oil, but with as many herbs and spices as you wish to use. Think taste, not volume. If you like ice cream, have a couple of scoops a week, not more.

There are many recipes on the web to help you enjoy your meals. The one below is a French classic, and one of my favorites. Bon appetit, and don’t forget to move your body as often as you can, and if you like, drink some wine occasionally.

**DUCK BREAST (MAGRET) WITH RASPBERRIES**

**INGREDIENTS**

- ¼ to 1-pound duck magret from D’Artagnan
- Sea salt
- Pepper
- 1 cup raspberries, rinsed and dried

**PREPARATION**

1. Take the magret out of the refrigerator and wipe it with a damp cloth or paper towel.
2. With a sharp knife cross hatch the fat into small rectangles, being careful not to pierce the skin. Season both sides with salt and pepper.
3. Place the magret, skin side down on a heavy bottomed unheated skillet. Put the skillet on the burner and turn the heat to medium high. When the fat begins to melt, pour it in a container for future use, or discard it.
4. Place the skillet on the burner and turn the heat to medium high. When the fat begins to melt, pour it in a container for future use, or discard it.
5. Transfer the magret to a plate and cover loosely with a foil, while you prepare the raspberries.
6. Add a teaspoon of the duck fat, or vegetable oil in the skillet where the magret has cooked, and turn on the heat to medium low and cook for a minute or two, just to heat and soften the fruit. Cut the magret into thin slices and arrange it on two plates, distribute the raspberries on top of the meat, or on the side.

**Serve with lightly oiled roasted vegetables, such as carrots, cubed celery ribs, or sliced potatoes.**

**Yield: 2 servings**
In 1916–1919, five Greek families raised $25,000 to buy a tavern at 155 Cedar Street, a three-story rowhouse built around 1830 as a private residence, and transformed it into a church in the bustling immigrant neighborhood populated by large numbers of Greek, Lebanese and Syrian immigrants. It was destroyed in the September 11th attacks.

For the second time since 2001, the church is in a stalemate. Despite a construction stoppage, the Archdiocese remains committed to rebuilding St. Nicholas altogether; the Port Authority said the church and had canceled building permits for St. Nicholas Church.

The World Trade Center's new Liberty Park, the one-acre public park featuring 19 planters, a half-dozen species of plants, seating made out of recycled teak, and a 300-foot-long “Living Wall” of greenery along its northern base, was to remain the site of the church.

In response to this challenge, in 2012 architect Santiago Calatrava "set out to provide a building and sequence of spaces that would directly address the traditional Greek liturgy while creating a spatially varied architectural procession." Calatrava was inspired by the Hagia Sophia and the Church of the Holy Savior in Istanbul, Turkey. The drum-shaped structure is designed with white Pantelic marble, from the same vein in Greece that was quarried to construct the Parthenon in Athens.

Site restrictions included the location, footprint, and volume of the church with no modifications to the space below the church's 4-foot thick concrete ‘mat’ which the Port Authority provided, and must incorporate utility locations and a vent shaft within the building footprint. Construction on the glowing church design began in 2014, and the structure 'topped out' in 2016. The original fundraising goal was between $40 and $50 million; donations came in from the flock, and from wealthy Greeks, the Greek government and even from other faiths, including the American Jewish Committee and the Catholic Archbishop of Boston.

By December 2017, the GOA had amassed $49 million in pledges, of which $37 million had been collected. The Port Authority was that the rebuilt church will be the most visited church in the United States. Million, people are hoping the church will be completed sooner, rather than later.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP "Green" Architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, is Co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee.
Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

IT WAS THEIR SILVER JUBILEE—so, on June 15th, Abingdon Square Greenmarket threw a party, and offered cake to the many regulars who came to celebrate, including Erik Bottcher from City Council Speaker Corey Johnson’s office, top right. All our usual favorites were there, offering their fresh fruit and veggies, fish, cheeses and baked goodies—and even BookBook, which has a stand there now their Bleecker Street store has closed. Here’s to the next twenty five years! All photos by Maggie Berkvist.

Six Patients Thank Their Northwell EMS Providers

Six patients who received life-saving care from the first responders of Northwell Health’s emergency medical services (EMS) came back during EMS Week to personally thank the medical professionals who helped save their lives.

Sam Swartz (center), who was shocked back to life after his heart stopped while en route to Lenox Health Greenwich Village during a harrowing day in 2018, said during the Northwell Health Second Chance Luncheon on May 22 that he feels “very, very lucky to have had this crew that day” referring to Paramedic Sonny Hodge and Paramedic Christopher Foote. As he was being wheeled into the cardiac catheterization lab to have a procedure, Mr. Swartz said of the paramedics, “I felt like we were all on the same team that day—we were all on team ‘me’ that day.”

Mr. Swartz has survived three cardiac events to date. “One day, I’ll figure out how I survived these events. But I know I couldn’t have done it without you.”

The six patients and their family and friends, as well as the emergency medical services providers, gathered at Northwell’s corporate headquarters in New Hyde Park. Twenty-four Northwell first responders were recognized at the luncheon for their efforts to save these patients’ lives. Northwell’s EMS is the largest hospital-based mobile health program in the New York City and Long Island region. More than 800 staff are on this team who respond to more than 180,000 calls each year. Photo courtesy of Northwell Health.

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The Dignity of Work

By Siggy Raible

I am retired now and have been for almost eight years. But when I worked I found what I did to “earn a living” dignified and fruitful—I managed my husband’s small law firm. We did not make a ton of money, but we earned our keep.

I was floored by the news earlier this year when I read that a baseball player signed the biggest deal to date: $325 million for a thirteen year contract with the Miami Marlins. So if you divide 325 by 13, then Giancarlo Stanton will average $25 million per year. But that deal does not out-rank Manny Machado’s deal with the San Diego Padres which came to $300 million over 10 years or $30 million a year! I will not accumulate anything close to those amounts in this lifetime or the next or the one after that, if there are lives other than the one we now know of.

Now compare these “earnings” with what public school teachers are paid. In my hometown, New York City, according to the 2018 agreement reached between the UFT (United Federation of Teachers) and the City, teachers will earn from $56,711 to $128,657. Checking with NYC’s Department of Education’s on-line website, starting salaries for a new teacher with a four years Bachelor’s Degree is $56,711 and the salary for a teacher with a Master’s Degree, eight years of prior teaching experience and some kind of “additional course work” is $85,794. (By 2021 the starting salary of a new teacher without experience will be $61,070; a $4,359 increase over three years.) After 10 or 13 years these professionals will have earned somewhere in the range of $567,110/$737,243 and $857,940/$1,115,322 respectively. Over a lifetime the best a teacher would likely earn would be a fraction of what a star ballplayer would receive in one year.

Now I know what you are going to say, “The average professional baseball player makes nowhere near the amount star ballplayers are paid,” So, not being savvy on salaries pro ballplayers are paid, I went to the Oracle (the internet) and queried: What is the average salary of a pro baseball player? I found an article by Maury Brown that appeared in the Forbes issue of November 30, 2016. He reported that for the five-year contract period of 2017 to 2021, “The Major League minimum salary will increase from $507,500 in 2016 to $535,000 in 2017; $545,000 in 2018; $555,000 in 2019 and be subject to a cost of living adjustment in 2020 and 2021.”

Mind you, professional baseball players do not have to go to college, so the minimum a player can expect to receive in 2019 dollars is more than six times what a teacher with a Master’s Degree (that’s six years of collegiate studies) and eight years of experience is paid. Baseball is America’s favorite pastime, or so it is said. Kids play baseball during the summer and dream of making it to the level of say an Alex Rodriguez. So, think about it. We are paying adults hundreds of thousands of dollars to play what is considered a child’s summer distraction. We have teachers who are passionate about their vocation, but the best they can hope for after fourteen years of combined study and experience is $85,794. Keep in mind that we place in their hands our most precious assets, our children and their future. I am told by friends who are teachers or know teachers, that they often hold down two jobs during the school year, teaching and some other job, and many hold summer jobs to make ends meet. So I guess what I’m getting at is, what is work if there is no dignity in the sense of dollars and cents? I mean dignity in the sense that a person should be adequately rewarded for the time spent qualifying and the training for the vocation he or she has chosen. Do we dignify a teacher by paying him or her a minimum starting salary of $56,711 when we pay a baseball player, basically an entertainer, a minimum starting salary of $555,000?
Nicky and Me

By Webster Stone

I am not the guy you'd expect to know a 1970s heroin kingpin. But I knew Nicky Barnes pretty well.

I first met him fifteen years ago. He didn't go by Nicky Barnes, not anymore. He was in the U.S. Federal Witness Protection Program. He went by Clayton “Clay” Williams. The name had no special significance, he just liked that way it sounded.

Getting to Nicky had not been easy. It took over a year of pestering the U.S. Marshal Service. Then one day I got a call, “You will be receiving a call at this time tomorrow from a man whose former name is Leroy “Nicky” Barnes. Do you understand?”

“Yes,” I answered.

“You are not to ask his current legal name. Do you understand?”

“Yes.

“You are not to ask where he lives, his phone number, what the weather is where he lives nor his occupation—DO. YOU. UNDERSTAND!”

The next day, with marshals monitoring the call, I had a talk with the former Nicky Barnes. Not long after that I went out to meet him.

Nicky lived in Minneapolis. The Marshal Service must have figured no one would ever think to find him there. But he dreamed of moving to Arizona, only he was still on parole so he wasn't going anywhere.

When I first met Nicky, he had just turned "Clay" worked at Walmart, and it frustrat-
ed him. When it came to sales, distribution, product display, he felt he could do a much better job. And he may have been right.

But he was a damn good story teller, and he had a lot of stories to tell. We started work on his book, Mr. Untouchable.

The first problem I faced was executing a contract. It couldn't be with Nicky Barnes because he no longer existed. It could be with Clayton Williams but then we couldn't keep the contract in our office. Lots of people still wanted Barnes dead — there was a genuine fear that a bad guy might come to the office, put a gun to an editor’s head in order to reveal Nicky’s new name, and then track him down in Minneapolis. We used a third alias for his contract, Remi Davis.

Contrary to what has been reported, by 2005, Nicky Barnes was no longer in the Witness Protection Program. They kept tabs on him, sure, because he was on parole. Otherwise, he was on his own. The Federal Marshal Service cut him loose when he decided to publish a book. That was policy. They had learned the hard way when Henry Hill published Wiseguy—taking in all that money while the government spent resources protecting him. Of course, it was neither in Nicky’s, my, nor the Federal Marshal Service’s best interest to let anyone actually know this.

If anything surprised me about Nicky, it was the anger, decades later, that still ran hot regarding the betrayal of his protegé, Guy Fisher (who is serving life without parole in Ray Brook Federal Prison, NY). Nicky’s book’s dedication says it all:

For Prisoner # 05404-054
Everything you had came from me. I turned you on to making money, and then I showed you how to spend it. You drove a Benz because you ruled in mine. You lived in a penthouse because you had

I wanted you to read every word of my story. And when you finish the last page, I want you to look up, see where I put you and ask your-

Keep this in your cell as a reminder. I dedic-

You disrespected me. You betrayed me. I want you to read every word of my story. And when you finish the last page, I want you to look up, see where I put you and ask yourself, was it worth it? Ask yourself that every day until you die.

Our last call was in 2011 (maybe even 2012). I sat in a Mini-Cooper with my fi-
cœur and we all chatted on speaker. Nicky was always optimistic and hard charging. He only called me by my last name to relish it, “Stone! How you been? Listen, Stone . . . ”

He wanted to know when his movie would get made. The idea that Frank Lucas who considered a low-life nobody, had a big movie (American Gangster) and he did not rankled him greatly. That he was portrayed in the film as a minor character in Frank’s life bothered him even more. “The only people who ever got it right was The Wire,” he told me. Nicky said nothing of his cancer. I didn’t know he had died six years ago. But I thought of him whenever I walked by the Washington Square Diner on W. 4th Street where he exchanged car keys with Matty Madonna—suitcases of mon-
ey in the trunk for suitcases heroin in the trunk. I tried calling Nicky/Clay these last few years—the phone number I had for him was disconnected. I figured he might have finally made it to Arizona. He hated Minneapolis, “Much too cold most of the year and almost everyone is white.” I fig-
ured if I really had to get in touch, I could go through the Marshals again. It would be a chore, but I knew the drill.

Back in the day, Nicky was not a “good” guy, personally nor professionally. He re-
quired that his girlfriends learn to “stand and hold”—this meant she must be able to carry his loaded pistol under her skirt, muzzle held inside her vagina, and then be able to walk that way so that the weapon would not be found by police if they were pulled over.

A former heroin addict himself, Nicky knew addiction, rationalizing away any re-

See where that got you?

For Nicky, revenge was not a dish served cold. Why was he still so angry? With his own malignant family life growing up, he wanted a “family” to call his own. So he tried to build it, to invent it. His answer was seven drug-dealing “brothers”, known as “The Council”, very much a mafia-style family. But this is what Nicky wanted most. When he was betrayed and learned this “family” was no more than a naïve delu-

He considered a low-life nobody, had a big movie (American Gangster) and he did not.

In the 1970s, as blacks emerged as leaders in politics, society, and culture, Nicky Barnes did the same, only for African-American organized crime. The mafia, who Nicky had studied so deeply, became both rivals and partners; only now, the nation's first black godfather dictated to them. His life inspired the film characters: “Mr. Big” (Live and Let Die); “Nino Brown” (New Jack City); “Mar-

Mr. Untouchable: Cover of the book

BARNES WITH THERMA GRANT, his wife and mother of his children who he put in prison for life.

he has been name-checked by countless hip-hop artists.

With an unfinished elementary school education, Nicky Barnes had few opportu-
nities. (His real degree came in 1965 in 1970s heroin kingpin. But I knew Nicky Barnes pretty well.

I first met him fifteen years ago. He didn’t go by Nicky Barnes, not anymore. He was in the U.S. Federal Witness Protection Program. He went by Clayton “Clay” Williams. The name had no special significance, he just liked that way it sounded.

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Mr. Untouchable: Cover of the book

BARNES WITH THERMA GRANT, his wife and mother of his children who he put in prison for life.

70. He was a short, chiseled, compact man—a bantam rooster with a strut to match. He still did sets of push-ups and pull-ups to stay in shape, a habit acquired at United States Peni-
tentiary, Marion. He ate healthy, only drank beer, had a girlfriend, a car, and he liked to go ice fishing. Oh, his girlfriend had no idea.
New School continued from page 3

Please see pages 10-11 in the founders' original proposal which highlight in great detail the rationale and purpose of the university.

You said that for the first years there was no tuition. What was the given reason for this? The founders' original 1919 proposal titled "A Proposal for an Independent School of Social Science," argued that the circumstances in the late 19th and early 20th century called for a "new type of leadership in every field of American life."

The founders brought in specialists to come and teach including Emily James Putnam, the "historian and leader in women's education"; John Dewey, the "great philosopher of democracy and reform"; Horace Kallen, the "important student of ethnicity and cultural pluralism," and many other progressives and pragmatists. In 1919, the University charged $15 per course. The founders declared that most of the money coming to the school would be spent on research and education rather than administration. Their goal was to secure a "sufficient endowment on the understanding that the greater part of the income shall be spent on research and education and the least possible amount on administration."

When the graduate faculty was established in 1933, the fee for each lecture course or seminar was $20 a term; for full time registration with access to all courses and seminars the fee was $100 a term.

As of the 1934-35 academic year, The New School granted the Master of Social Science and Doctor of Social Science conferred by the University of the State of New York.

In 1943, The New School offered its first bachelor's degree, focused on meeting the needs of returning veterans. A 15-semester course cost $10. Graduate courses ranged from $4.50 to $20 depending on number of sessions.

Where did the money come from to buy the first buildings and allow for free tuition? The early buildings used by The New School were provided from generous benefactors in New York City who shared the mission of the university's originators.

When The New School first opened its doors, it was housed in several converted townhouses on West 23rd Street, paid for by Dorothy Straight, former president of the Junior League of New York and driving force of the Junior League Hotel. Along with the buildings on 23rd Street, Straight pledged $10,000 a year to The New School for its first ten years.

A decade into its existence, Alvin Johnson decided it was time to expand the space available to New School students and approached Daniel Crawford Smith, a benefactor and supporter of The New School, who owned three houses on West 12th Street. Smith agreed to support The New School's efforts by donating the three lots, with the agreement that on the top floor would lay a penthouse apartment for himself and his wife. With the purchase of one more adjoining lot, this gave the university eighty feet of frontalage on West 12th Street. The building was the first to be constructed solely for use by The New School at a cost of about $1,000,000.

With the help of Clara Mayer, one of the university's early champions (as both a visionary administrator and benefactor), The New School achieved its goal of creating a space that would place it on the map as a center for modernism in the arts and experimentation in education. Mayer helped organize a student committee in 1922 to raise funds for the 66 West 12th Street project, and her father, Bernhard Mayer, contributed $100,000. Her brothers' construction company, J.M. Taylor, built the building at 66 West 12th Street, which was designed by Joseph Urban.

How many refugee professors were brought to the school over what period of time and was this program paid for by a charitable organization or grants—who's idea was it? In 1933, when Hitler came to power in Europe and began to remove Jews and those perceived as "politically hostile elements" from German universities, Alvin Johnson, then Director of The New School, responded. With the financial support of philanthropist Hiram Halle and the Rockefeller Foundation, he obtained funding to provide a haven in the United States for scholars whose careers (and lives) were threatened by rising Fascism, called the University in Exile. This University in Exile was given a home at The New School and sponsored more than 180 individuals and their families, providing them with visas and jobs. Some of these refugees remained at The New School for many years, while others moved on to other institutions in the United States, but the influx of new people and new ideas had an impact on the U.S. academy far beyond any particular university or institute.

The University in Exile was fully incorporated into The New School in 1934; it was later renamed the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science and was eventually called The New School for Social Research (NSSR). (source: The New School for Social Research History)

Every time we talk about the history of The New School a cascade of famous names is spilled like John Dewey—can you pick a few of these names and give a phrase or two that they offered in shaping the rationale for creating the New School and the philosophy of teaching? Quote from John Dewey in the 1925 document The New School for Social Research: "I know from personal experience that the work done by the New School is serious and important. It deserves attention and reflection by those interested in the improvement of the intellectual habits of the community, especially that large and growing class who, having had some higher school training, now feel the need of continued intellectual contact and stimulus. Its work competes with that of no other educational agency, and it supplements, in an efficient way, that of all other agencies."

Quote from Alvin Johnson, first Director and first President of The New School, in the circa 1943 document To the Living Spirit...

"We of the New School, students, teachers, trustees are resolutely laboring for the advance of American civilization. As students we are putting aside the base fears that deter too many of our fellow citizens from making a serious attempt to understand the world we live in. As teachers we are carrying forward our work of instruction and research, convinced that though the world be in flames the values of truth and freedom and human dignity will come through unscathed. As trustees we give ourselves with a heartfelt devotion to the maintenance of the moral conditions under which an educational institution may live and thrive."

And "This does not mean that either the School or its students undervalue the traditional material in philosophy, history, the sciences and art. The students of the New School may be assumed to possess a fair degree of familiarity with this material. On the other hand the newer material in social science, psychology, pure and applied science, literature and art, has necessarily received inadequate attention, if any attention at all, in the college and training school. But this is the material on which the mature adult is most frequently required to pass judgment. It is the adult public that will decide whether new forms of architecture, painting, literature, music, new tendencies in education and psychological practice, new philosophy and social attitudes are to go down in history as real contributions or passing fashions."

Dean Watson commented on the problem of high tuition—how does the tuition differ from other comparable learning facilities? The cost of higher education remains a systemic challenge across the United States and beyond. The New School continues to increase financial aid and merit scholarships to reduce the cost of attendance. As we have done throughout our history, we are developing new models of delivery to enable more students to study at The New School. Our Open Campus unit continues to expand online and continuing education offerings for the broader learning community.

We continue our mission to create spaces of informed dialogue among our broader communities. Each year The New School offers more than 1,000 events, discussions, and panels open to the larger public, most of which are free.

OK, this is very important—you are at the 100th anniversary (wow) that a lot of time and during that time a school has emerged that attracts a sufficient number of students to fiscally stay in business but what is more important, can build a multi million dollar new building on 5th Avenue and 14th Street. Wow—there has to be more about this school than we know...What is in this new building? how will it be used?

The University Center, located on Fifth Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets, opened in January 2014 and is a campus hub with living, academic and performance space. The New School's largest building project to date added 375,000 square feet of space to the university's West Village campus, including 57 state-of-the-art classrooms, studios and instructional spaces; nine floors of dormitories housing 600 students; and a two-level library and student study center, the Arnhold Forum. The 800-seat John L. Tishman Auditorium features a convertible stage for theater productions, fashion shows and lectures. The University Center is one of New York City’s greenest buildings, with a LEED Gold rating and industry-leading solutions to curbing energy use. Using state-of-the-art lighting and window placement, sustainably sourced materials, and a rain-capturing green roof (funded in part by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection), the building simultaneously advances urban conservation while acting as a teaching tool for the next generation of sustainability leaders.

And now the next century.

The Centennial marks a moment to engage in a thoughtful process about The New School’s next 100 years and the kind of institution we want to pass on to future generations. In the months ahead, the Provost’s Office is leading a far-reaching project to imagine a renewed vision for The New School’s future. We anticipate all members of the university community will participate in this transformative endeavor.

During our Centennial “Festival of New” in the first week of October 2019, we will open the campus to attendance by the general public. In addition to access to classes, the public is invited to attend events, panels, and presentations that discuss topics related to the future of education, learning, and pressing social issues of our time.
Duck Tales

By Keith Michael

Disclaimer: No ducks have been harmed in the writing of this article. However, be forewarned that all my duck tales are not warm and fuzzy.

I need to write this quickly while Millie is napping. Any mention of something potentially cuter than a corgi (such as a downy duckling) starts her off on a barking jag that makes it difficult to think much less type.

In most places along the West Village, even after only the dozen or so years that I’ve been noticing, I still find seeing a duck family a miracle.

First of all, in the upscale West Village housing market, imagine finding a secluded spot to sit on a nest of six to ten eggs for three weeks (that’s right: three weeks!) relatively undisturbed by traffic, joggers, picnickers, bicyclists, birthday parties, and dogs. Then, once your family has included spot to sit on a nest of six to ten ducklings with black butts), and Black Ducks (they have pied a terre for the previous three summers when one year she showed up with only one leg—perhaps a casualty from an encounter with a snapping turtle in some otherwise idyllic country pond. Nevertheless, she managed to raise a family that year. I never saw her again after that summer.

One Sunday morning someone rushed up and told us excitedly, “There are ducklings in the grass!” We hurried to the lawn north of the Charles Street entrance, and there, indeed, was a mother Mallard with her clutch of very fresh-looking ducklings. This was likely their first venture from a clandestine nest under the yew bushes beside the bike path. She finally stood a little taller, looked around, and seemed to say, “Let’s go!” Off they did go in a Make Way for Ducks parade! Walter and I stopped foot traffic as the procession crossed the promenade. The mother “ducked” under the railing and jumped down off the river wall to the low tide water far below. The balls-of-down ducklings ran back and forth at the edge of the wall, chirping, in understandable chagrin from the top of the equivalent of a 20-30 story building, what seemed easily translated as, “Mom! Mom! Help!” Mom, was, likewise, calling out from the river, “Come on! Jump! You can do it! Just jump! Yes, NOW!” A small crowd was gathering on the promenade. One by one the little ones made their first leap of faith and DId jump. Applause. Within hours these ducklings had emerged from the confined darkness inside an eggshell to the wide, wide world of bobbing on the vast Hudson River. Imagine.

One dark and stormy morning, it hadn’t started to rain yet, but the clouds were churning, winds were turning the leaves to silver, and waves were smashing into the river wall. A small Mallard family was trying to make their way north to safety. While they disappeared south into the darkness under the pier, but upon exiting, they sailed back into the sunlight in a regimented single-file flotilla line. Super-cute.

Right now on the river there’s a Mallard family with six ducklings (they started off with seven). I hope by the time you read this they will still be there to be cooed over. Oh no, I must have been sending out competitive cuteness vibes. Millie rolls over and looks at me, her eyebrows furrowed in consternation. But maybe she’d just like to go out and see the ducks.

14th Street continued from page 4

original rationale was no longer viable. That rationale (making bus service faster) amounts to no more than PR material. The result, Petitioners contend, will be increased vehicular traffic on all east and westbound streets between 12th and 26th Street, with it air pollution, noise, and vibrations endangering the 19th century buildings which line these blocks, challenging the character of the Greenwich Village, Chelsea, and Flatiron communities, and likely causing delay in the cross-town transit of emergency vehicles.

“This shifting rationale, despite meetings with various community boards, several of which have denounced some or all aspects of the plan (see Exhibit A, resolution of Community Board 4, and Exhibit B, resolution of Community Board 3), is not how government in New York City, or anywhere in New York State, is supposed to function.”

Thirty-three years ago the Court of Appeals addressed this kind of planning in Chinese Staff and Workers Assn. v. City of New York, where the City at least acted like it wanted to comply with SEQRA by doing an environmental review of the effects of a construction project on the “physical environment,” but ignored broader environmental questions, set forth in language that should guide us today:

“Initially, we note that there is no basis here to rely on any special expertise of the agency since all that is involved is the proper interpretation of statutory language. It is clear from the express terms of the statute and the regulations that environmental is broadly defined … and expressly includes as physical conditions such considerations as existing patterns of population concentration, distribution or growth, and existing community or neighborhood character [situation omitted] … That these facts might generally be regarded as social or economic is irrelevant in view of this explicit definition …”

“A significant effect on the environment may be found if a proposed project impairs the character or quality of … existing community or neighborhood character … It is not relevant whether the proposed project may affect these concerns primarily or secondarily or in the short term or in the long term since the regulations expressly include all such effects.”

Not only does the DOT ignore the impacts, the two interrelated actions result in a myriad of non-enforceable or confusing rules. Some passenger vehicles will be allowed on 14th Street for some purposes, but some will not. For-hire vehicles can pick up and drop off passengers, but yellow cabs cannot do pick-ups. Enforcement will be “achieved” through tickets given out by cameras, which somehow will peer into the inside of vehicles and track them, not by live traffic agents stopping vehicles to check for a for-hire order. There is no statutory definition of a “truck” here. The action epitomizes arbitrary and capricious decision making.

Sixty years ago Jane Jacobs fought Robert Moses and his plan to run an expressway down 5th Avenue. She established the notion that the key to rational planning is the involvement of communities. Now 60 years later, DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg is the new Robert Moses, imposing her “progressive” notion of the NYC streetscape. She has been DOT Commissioner for six years, but traffic, noise and pollution are worse, and bus speeds slower. Now she wants to make every cross street in the Village and Chelsea a cross-town auto thoroughfare.

Mark my words—she will be stopped!

Arthur Schwartz is the Male Democratic District Leader in Greenwich Village.
WestView Comes ALIVE!

Right now you can go to whitehorse.com and see and hear an interview with the new, young owner of the White Horse Tavern, Eytan Sugarman, as he describes his wish to keep the best of the oldest continuously run tavern in the West Village, and how he hopes to make it even better.

Why are we doing this?
The answer starts with the oft repeated question "Where's my iphone" (the iphone for communicating with the "what's going on" generation has become as needed as reading glasses).

But seeing news being made is different than reading it. When I asked young Sugarman if he planned to change the venerable White Horse he gently explodes in a cascade of disclaimers—no, he wants to keep it as it was. He even took out the TV sets. "This will not be a sports bar."

We can see the truth or a deflection of it when we ask a question before the video camera.

So each month we will try and choose an important story and interview a person who should know the truth and help him or her tell us. Oh, this was a lot of work and we would really appreciate it if you told us if you like the idea of ...

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Karen’s Quirky Style

By Karen Rempel
Fashion Editor

The drag queens and fashionistas in The West Village will laugh when you hear about my awkwardness with ballgowns. I may have worn a ballgown when I was seven years old and playing dress-up with my neighbor friend’s lovely box of treasures. Certainly I dressed my Barbie in lovely floor-length gowns when I was a child. But until I moved to New York a couple of years ago, I’d never worn a real grown-up evening gown.

The first two times I wore a floor-length gown to a gala (at the United Nations to honor humanitarian Joe Biden and then at the National Arts Club to honor author John Irving), I was a bit nervous about it. I wasn't sure how to walk with the long skirt clinging to my legs and a train flowing onto the ground! Unless I did a goose-step to kick the pooling skirt out in front of me before taking a step, I literally had to lift each side of the skirt by hand. It was very difficult to hold up the skirt with one hand and juggle my clutch purse and a glass of champagne, all the while trying to look poised and glamorous. My date didn’t understand that I needed a few moments to prepare myself before walking even a few steps.

But on a sunny Friday in June, I walked all over The West Village in this gorgeous, rich amethyst-purple gown by Engineered by Andrea T. Of course, I lifted the train on the sidewalks, but hours of picking it up and letting it down, and arranging the gown in every conceivable way during two separate photo shoots, in multiple locations, made me feel like this gown is my best friend. At the end of the day I sat down to relax on the stoop, so happy to have finally learned how to wear formal evening gowns. Alright Mr. DeMille, I’m ready for the next gala!

Silk Faille Ballgown, Fully Lined in Silk Charmeuse. Engineered by Andrea T, 147 West 35th Street (by appointment only).

Vintage Amethyst and Turquoise Bracelet. Mirabelle Boutique, 1310 Madison Avenue. Amethyst bracelet by Susan Blakely Designs, LA.

Black, Silver, and Rhinestone Bracelet. CVS, 476 Sixth Avenue.

7” YRU Lace-Up Goth Boots. Trash and Vaudeville, 96 E. 7th Street.

Beaded Rose Handbag Edged with Silver Studs. Mirabelle Boutique, 1310 Madison Avenue.

Style on the Street

Paris Pairs

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

Paris is a walking city, much like New York. With very few exceptions, people wear sneakers, flats, and low boots of every variety. The man center right was an exception of sorts in socks and sandals. I love his friend’s look with the patterned shirt tucked into beltless trousers. The two young women on the left show another major trend for walkers: cross-body bags. I especially like the blonde’s way of putting her backpack across her chest. And finally, the couple on the right illustrate casual chic to the max. The woman’s leather jacket and scarf are Parisian touchnotes I saw everywhere. For more photos and stories from my summer vacation, see bcwildernessvisions.com.
Transformation
Engineered by Andrea T

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

Engineered by Andrea T is the design studio of transformation artist Andrea Thurlow, a bespoke tailor with a flair for the dramatic. She designs evening wear, day wear, and Broadway costumes with a personal aesthetic using top-quality natural fabrics and an engineer’s precision methodology.

My favorite piece by Andrea T is a dress that she created from an abstract painting by New York artist James Kerr. The genesis of the idea came at a West Village dinner party when she saw Kerr’s painting Dominion Day. She thought, “OMG, look at this pattern!” She said, “That would be fantastic! It would lend itself to a fabric print so amazingly well.” James said, “I’ve been thinking the same. I’ve always wanted to do something with this painting.” They kicked the idea around for a while.

About six months later, the impetus came to actualize the inspiration. Alexandre Gallery on Fifth Avenue was holding a one-day exhibit for James’s 60th birthday. Andrea thought, “Okay, now I have to really get this fabric printed.” But all the commercial printers she found could only print onto polyester. Andrea said, “If I’m gonna make this dress, I want it to be a fabric that’s true to what I do. I like using natural fibers, wool, silk.” Then she found a textile printing company called Dynamix Inc., operated by Raylene Marasco, that specializes in digital textile printing. Andrea was able to print the painting onto a wool-silk blend, which has a lovely sheen to it. With the fabric on the way, the race was on to create a dress in time for the exhibition.

Andrea had five days from when she started cutting the pattern until the exhibition. She recalls thinking about the shape of the dress. “Initially I had it much narrower, but then I thought, no, it has to be more; it’s going to be in a room, it’s going to have a painting next to it, it needs to have presence.” She created an architectural curving shape that would display the print to full advantage. She angled the seams to confuse the eye and disguise where the print starts and finishes. She explained, “Since it’s based on the painting, every inch of the fabric is different, so you can’t match it at the seams. It’s impossible. Of the three yards I had, not one spot of it is the same!” The result was a work of art that equals its original inspiration.

Andrea’s clientele includes Broadway performers, priests, and Pride celebrants. Last month, Broadway performer Ann Kittredge wore an Engineered by Andrea T dress to the Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall. Andrea created a red satin drag costume for a friend for Pride festivities and a sexy pinstriped navy blue robe for a priest to wear while officiating at weddings. She also created the Joan Crawford dress for Dorothy Bishop to wear in Mommie Dearest: The Musical for a one-time June 10th performance at Birdland based on the 40th anniversary edition of Christina Crawford’s memoir. I personally feel transformed from pedestrian to princess when I wear Andrea’s creations.

IG: engineeredbyandreat
Web: engineeredbyandreat.com
147 West 35th Street, Suite 1203
(By appointment only) 646 776 3230

Caruso’s Quips
By Charles Caruso

Too much is just right.

The one who calls is the one in need.

From the cosmic to the comic to cognac.

Sign outside geriatric clinic: Geezer Diseases.

Tea is a slap on the wrist. Coffee is a punch in the nose.

Delay is death to the petitioner.

The one who calls is the one in need.

Never sit with your back to the waitresses’ station.

Every departure is a little death.

Am I the only one who still misses Anthony Bourdain?
A Banner Year for Terrence McNally

By Robert Heide

The year 2019 has certainly been a banner year for playwright Terrence McNally. He won a Lifetime Achievement Tony Award, has a Broadway revival at the Broadhurst Theater of his 1987 two-character play, Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune, starring Audra McDonald as Frankie and Michael Shannon as Johnny; and to top it all an American Masters documentary entitled Terrence McNally: Every Act of Life, starring Terrence himself discussing his theater work, his life with his family of origin, his father’s alcoholism—as well as his own battle with alcoholism, and his “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” relationship with his mother after outing himself as gay. You can order the American Masters documentary from PBS. It was released in 2019 and was first shown on PBS (channel 13) on Friday, June 14th, and is one of the most amazing, startling, and brilliant career?" From then on Terrence was off the booze.

I first met him through Edward Albee when Edward’s full-length play Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? was opening on Broadway. I met Edward in 1958 when his first play, The Zoo Story, coupled with Beckett’s Krapp’s Last Tape, opened at the Provincetown Theater in The Village to great acclaim. I became an intimate friend of Edward’s after hanging out with him at gay bars like Lenny’s Hideaway on 10th Street and Mary’s and The Old Colony, both on Eighth Street. During The Zoo Story days Edward liked to hold court at the San Remo Tavern on MacDougal Street.

In the early sixties Terrence showed up in The Village and was soon living with Edward. Shortly thereafter Terrence wrote his first play, And Things That Go Bump in the Night, which was produced on Broadway by Ted Mann, who was known as a producer Off Broadway, which included O’Neill’s The Iceman Cometh at the Circle in the Square. When I saw Bump I was very impressed. Eileen Heckart starred and it seemed to my mind to have come directly out of the Theater of the Absurd movement that was being presented at many Off Broadway theaters, which would include Edward’s one-act plays. Bump was panned by the uptown critics and I never could understand why. The night I saw it I thought it was terrific, as did most of the audience in attendance.

Terrence came to New York from Corpus Christie, Texas, in 1956, and as a student at Columbia he wrote a variety show in 1958. When I had my play Moor produced at the first Manhattan Theater Club Play Festival after a run at the Cafe Cino, I was delighted to find myself next to playwrights I admired such as Terrence, Maria Irene Fornes and Julie Bovasso. It was great fun and the theater producer Lynn Meadows was supportive of everyone.

Recently I saw the current production of Terrence’s Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune directed by Arin Arbus, and enjoyed the vivid acting of Audra McDonald and Michael Shannon—yes! Go see it at the Broadhurst Theater on 44th Street. It runs through August 25th.

My purpose in this article is not to review a play, but I’m happy to list my favorites among the many plays and books for musicals written by Terrence, and they include four that won Tony Awards: Love! Valor! Compassion!; Master Class (which focuses in on the life and career of opera diva Maria Callas); and his musical books Kiss of the Spider Woman and Ragtime. More plays include Mothers and Sons; Lips Together Teeth Apart; It’s Only a Play; Next; Liaisons Traviata; Bad Habits; and the musical The Ritz.

Terrence’s output over a lifetime in the theater is prodigious, and he states in the documentary that his main quest in his lifetime has always been his quest for love. He had many up and down relationships, as with the actor Bobby Drivas (who died of AIDS), who would not have an out-in-the-open gay relationship with Terrence because he thought it would destroy his acting career. Terrence turned 80 this year and he has at last found true love and happiness for many of the past years with his producer husband, Tom Kirdahy.

Robert Heide is the author of Robert Heide 25 Plays and many books, all available at Amazon. For a video of Robert discussing his relationships in The Village with some of these people, as well as his long friendship with Andy Warhol, go to robertheideandjohngilman.blogspot.com.

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For a video of Robert discussing his relationships in The Village with some of these people, as well as his long friendship with Andy Warhol, go to robertheideandjohngilman.blogspot.com.
The White Horse—A Pub with Food

By David Porat

Having spent a good bit of time in London and England (having visited many times over four or so decades), I have seen and tasted some very poor English food. But I have also had some very good meals in rustic pubs in unassuming, unpretentious, settings. These meals can be straightforward and prepared with an earnest attitude, made with local ingredients that are not inexpensive, and the whole delivers and satisfies.

Knowing of the White Horse Tavern and often passing it by with many people enjoying drinks outside, I too have enjoyed a drink there but it is not a place where I would choose to eat. The neighborhood has many good places and the pub with (good) food concept is not one that is prevalent locally.

My experience on a quiet rainy week night, having been asked to write something about this very old, storied place with some recent twists, did very pleasantly surprise me. The front main room is quite large and well cast as the local watering hole but we sat in the dark adjoining room where we were very well served by an enthusiastic waitperson who in fact joined the White Horse with the new young chef, Ed Szymanski. Ed is from England, and previously worked at the Spotted Pig, and more recently at the Beatrice Inn and Cherry Point in Greenpoint.

The simple-seeming and limited menu is somewhat meat-focused, with a British accent. We started with oysters, a Scotch Egg ($9) and Smoked Mackerel Pate ($14), which we paired with a local draft, and all delivered great flavor. The Scotch Egg was a six or so minute egg, runny yolked, with a pork sausage package that was savory, rich and had a pleasantly crunchy exterior. It was very freshly prepared, as was everything we tasted. The pate, spread thickly over a toasted slice of whole grain bread also had a rich and savory flavor that seemed to be well designed as an accompaniment to beer.

Our main course was the Chicken & Morel Pie to Share ($42), a very mushroom rich, nutty and ever so slightly sweet chicken-filled pie. Topped with a just baked pastry which included beef suet to give it a delicate and nuanced flavor, it arrived after the bit of time it took to bake and was picture perfect. It was enough to share but in fact if you were really hungry, do not feel shy about ordering it for yourself. We had perfectly grilled asparagus along with the pie.

I felt I needed to order dessert for the sake of the review, but at this point I suspected they would do a good job with it. My dining partner was thinking more prudently, and seemed to like the idea of the lemon cream with meringue, dusted with some Earl grey powder, a take on an Eton Mess. We also got the Sticky Toffee Pudding. Both desserts ($12.95) were very good but their rendition of the popular date sponge with caramel sauce stole the show and my prudent partner shared the generous portion, dusted with whole hazelnuts, and that alone is worth a detour. For Eytan Sugarman, the new owner, and Ed Szymanski, White Horse Tavern is a work in progress. It is not expensive but it is proper food that is not inexpensive. I will be back and sitting outside on a summer night, having a cold beer with food, that might make me feel like I was in a very modern British place in the country and yet it is ever so close to home.

www.westviewnews.org

The White Horse, 567 Hudson Street at 11th Street   |   212 989-3956
WhiteHorseTavern1880.com
(website not updated with the new menu)

Rockyman Launches Taron Egerton into Stardom

By Raphael Carty

Rocketman is an audacious reimagining of Elton John’s life as a musical set to the Elton John/Bernie Taupin songbook, with touches of whimsy and surrealism creating a fantastically entertaining film. Beneath the Stardust and sequins is a darker story than I had gleaned from the headlines over the years. From his parents who could never love or accept him to his manager who manipulated him through sex and withheld affection, we see the demons that haunted John and almost destroyed him despite his outsized musical gifts.

Director Dexter Fletcher and screenwriter Lee Hall have shaped the tale into the archetypal “plucked from life as a musical set to the Elton John/Bernie Taupin songbook, with touches of whimsy and surrealism creating a fantastically entertaining film. Beneath the Stardust and sequins is a darker story than I had gleaned from the headlines over the years. From his parents who could never love or accept him to his manager who manipulated him through sex and withheld affection, we see the demons that haunted John and almost destroyed him despite his outsized musical gifts.

I enjoyed Egerton in Kingsman: The Secret Service and other movies, but Egerton’s earlier roles didn’t prepare me for his accomplishment in this lead performance, especially since he appears to be cast against type. It’s not just his chill, understated personality versus Elton’s over-the-top persona. Egerton is too thickly built to be the young adult Elton, who was rail thin, and Egerton’s vocal range is closer to that of the middle-aged Elton of “I’m Still Standing,” without the brightness and easy vocal leaps of Elton’s early ’70s hits. What’s more important is that Taron captures the fragility and underlying sadness of a young boy who never felt loved and makes us believe that this fueled so many foolish adult decisions and the self-destructive diva we see him become. If Egerton, the young tough from Kingsman, couldn’t make us feel the broken child inside Elton, we would never get the payoff when rehab leads to self-reflection and catharsis. Egerton pulls it off nicely.

Some will argue that Egerton’s voice is not up to simulating Elton’s, and he does use his falsetto to reach high notes in the tenor range that Elton hit effortlessly in his 20s. But hearing Taron really sing the songs provides a deeper level of artistic authenticity. There are even times when you close your eyes and believe it is Elton, so deeply does Egerton immerse himself in the role. Fletcher’s decision to have Egerton sing the songbook pays off beautifully.

Egerton is surrounded with a finely tuned supporting cast led by Richard Madden, showing a great deal of range as John Reid, Elton’s manager, who beds Elton to control him. This is not the wholesome prince Madden played so well in Disney’s Cinderella. As John Reid, Madden is convincingly seductive and menacing. Jamie Bell gives the story its heart, playing Bernie Taupin in a beatific performance of a role that is unfortunately written as one-dimensional. I liked Charlie Rowe’s work as the lovable, loyal Ray Williams, who gave Elton his first break but was frozen out by John Reid. Gemma Jones is sweet as Elton’s loving grandmother. Bryce Dallas Howard is unrecognizable and believable as Elton’s narcissistic mum. Taron Egerton is a beautifully shaped piece of storytelling. It’s heartbreaking, fantastical, and cannily designed to leave you feeling good as the lights come up!

Raphael Carty is a film buff, business consultant and adjunct professor at a Greenwich Village university.
50th Anniversary of Stonewall: Remembered through Dramatic Work

By Celeste Kaufman

Phoenix Lindsey-Hall, a ceramicist, photographer, and mixed media artist, has a story to tell; and what better time to share her story than during the celebration of the Stonewall uprising? She explores themes related to queer communities, and the violence perpetrated against them. Originally focusing on photography, earning degrees from Parsons School of Design and Savannah College of Art and Design, she has been drawn to new mediums more recently—particularly ceramics—and is currently a fellowship artist at Greenwich House Pottery.

During a discussion at her studio, Lindsey-Hall explained, “The picture plane was too flat and distancing for the more conceptual work I wanted to do.” She began experimenting with clay, which seemed like a natural medium for her. “I’m here. I can also scale up and work on larger sculptures with access to the Pottery’s studio technicians have a deep wealth of experience. I’m remaking an old sign that used to hang out the bar as a large-scale clay sculpture.” Lindsey-Hall will continue to work at Greenwich House Pottery through June 28th. During her stay there she will be building on her years of working in photography and experimenting with the Pottery’s diverse collection of glazes to see how far she can push her unique technique of screen-printing photographic images onto clay. “I’m building up layers and playing around with different combinations of colors and techniques. The studio technicians have a deep wealth of knowledge that has helped guide me while I’m here. I can also scale up and work on larger sculptures with access to the Pottery’s studio and kilns.” Her work will be on view at the Jane Hartsook Gallery’s annual Ceramics Now exhibition later this year.

In early collections of work, Lindsey-Hall created ceramic sculptures portraying everyday domestic objects that had been used in hate crimes against LGBTQ victims. The use of clay allowed these objects to be contorted to reflect that violence, and the evidence of human hands that shaped them created a sense of intimacy with both the physicality of the crime itself and the act of remembering those who suffered.

The timing of Lindsey-Hall’s fellowship coincides with Pride Month and the celebrations of the Stonewall Inn—fitting perfectly with both her work and residency at nearby Greenwich House Pottery. “I’m steps away from Stonewall here. Even when I’m not in the studio, being in this neighborhood gives me a chance to really connect with my community. I’m not isolated like you sometimes can be with other residencies.” Spending time at a place that integrates into the community as much as the Pottery does is already reflecting in her work. “One of the projects I’ve been inspired to do is to remake historical elements of the structure of Stonewall. I’m remaking an old sign that used to hang outside the bar as a large-scale clay sculpture.”

Lindsey-Hall is currently pursueing her undergraduate degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Michigan.

The Psychology of Perpetrators, By-standers, and Victims of the Holocaust

By Leila Amin

Attempting to explain human behavior during an event as unfathomable as the Holocaust can seem like an impossible task. However, although a nation of bystanders was crucial to its implementation, too was an army of active perpetrators, each of whom had to undergo a transformation of their own in order to carry out the tasks allotted to them.

The psychological concept known as doubling heavily influenced the effects and duration of the Holocaust, because it allowed the Nazis to split their emotional and psychological selves into only a fraction of their previous beings, and in so doing hid themselves of the urge to be compassionate or kind. Doubling, as explained by psychiatrist Robert Lifton, is “the division of the self into two functioning wholes, so that a part-self acts as an entire self.” Without even realizing it the Nazis had split themselves into mere shadows of their previous beings, discarding the emotions that made them human such as empathy and concern, and replacing them simply by doubling up on the equally human emotions of anger and neglect.

This transformation, however, did not happen overnight. Many early accounts of Nazi behavior reflect increased mental instability and a reluctance to follow orders, suggesting that time played a crucial role in facilitating the process by which the Nazis adapted to their crushing surroundings and occupation. The perpetrators and their victims may have been diametrically opposed, but there was one thing they had in common—they were both prisoners. For the Jews it may have been physical, but for the Nazis, it was psychological. And each group had to adapt to their own terms of imprisonment in order to survive.

Just as the Nazis had to undergo extreme psychological shifts in order to invoke terror, so too did their victims in order to survive it. The prisoners, like the perpetrators themselves, had to cut themselves off from their established perception of reality and replace it with one far more malleable in order to withstand such inconceivable brutality. Doubling was an integral aspect of this transformation because it allowed both the Nazis and their prisoners to confront the unimaginable and accept it as the norm, a process which would not have been possible had one part of the self not disavowed the other.

In its pre-World War II usage, the term holocaust typically referred to a religious sacrifice involving material consumption by fire, which reflects the true nature of the Nazi self-image. The Nazis saw themselves as guardians of the German people; they were completely incapable of confronting their reality. The weight of the Swastika bore down not only on its prisoners, but on its perpetrators as well. The only means of survival was to mask observation as impotence, torture as research, and murder as sacrifice. And when the world finally lifted that intrinsically constructed mask seven years later, Jews, Nazis, and ordinary citizens alike were forced to look themselves in the mirror and collect the broken shards of a nation that was once whole.

Leila Amin is a nineteen-year-old student from Los Angeles who is currently pursuing her undergraduate degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Michigan.

Cell Phone Free Restaurants, Please

By Jill McManus

Can anyone tell me of a good restaurant where I can be spared the self-absorbed conversations of cell phone users all around me, and rest my body from microwaves?

Many people are trying to fight a robotic addiction to their cell phone. And many others are becoming EMF-sensitive from an overload of electromagnetic radiation in their homes, offices, schools, libraries, and in trains and buses. Some are getting cancer.

Utilities are replacing older analogue electric and gas meters which required employees to read them with new digital “smart meters.” Unless you opt out in advance, these will be sending out thousands of one-way or two-way pulsed signals a day to communicate your usage data.

For the coming of 5G this fall, “small cell” towers and antennas are now being installed on buildings and utility poles in every block. Unless the much-touted 5G Rollout—faster connections, the internet of useless things, self-driving cars etc.—is stopped (it promises $12 trillion in profits for the telecom industry), these towers will be silently and invisibly blasting data-rich “millimeter wave” frequencies past walls and objects they can’t penetrate. Some of these frequencies are used by the military for “non-lethal” crowd control.

All this adds up to higher continuous exposure than a civilian population has ever experienced.

Exposure is cumulative. The risk to living things depends on proximity and duration. We will be getting close-up exposure 24/7. No health testing is being done by the FCC, the agency that ordered this “visionary” project without any public input. Here is a new market for forward-thinking venue owners: a new kind of place to hang out in the West Village—“NO CELL PHONES/ NO WIFI”—a restaurant where one can enjoy a good dinner without sitting in harmless crossfire from a roomful of phones, even if only on certain nights, or a tea/coffee room where one can read paper work or get into a good novel while lowering one’s daily exposure to microwave fallout or dirty electricity.” Wifi-free meeting rooms? It probably wouldn’t hurt if there was one computer in the place to write up checks, especially if its wireless router is shielded by a Faraday cage. A safe place to park phones (turned off or in “airplane mode”) is not hard to arrange. Storefront locations near rooftop arrays can use microwave-resistant curtains or special blocking paints.

Maybe some “smart people” will realize the growing need for such places. There is such a restaurant in Queens, one in LA and in a few other cities. How ‘bout Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island too? If you are creating one, please let WestView readers know!
Envisioning Its Future: Challenges for the Country’s Only Music School for the Blind

Interview with Dr. Leslie Jones, executive director of The Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School (fmdgmusicschool.org)

By Barbara Chacour

**SURPRISING HISTORY:** The New York Lighthouse for the Blind was started in 1905 by sisters Edith and Winifred Holt (of the Holt publishing family), who had been inspired by a group of blind schoolchildren’s enthusiastic attendance at a concert. Decades later, philanthropist Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg provided the school funding and an endowment (hence the name change).

**SURPRISING DEVELOPMENT:** Lighthouse Guild terminated the school’s residence last year.

**INSPIRING VISION:** The school, with its dedicated staff, donors, students, and parents, is moving ahead as an independent organization.

The latest concert promoted by WestView News took place on May 25, 2019, at St. John’s in the Village and included Schubert’s “The Trout,” sung by soprano Elizabeth Tarr, a student at the school for the blind and visually impaired. Tarr was introduced by Leslie Jones, executive director of the school, who told the audience that last year Lighthouse Guild severed its relationship with the music school and evicted it from its studios on 64th Street and West End Avenue (along with its Braille and large-print music library and its instruments, including 14 grand pianos). Jones told of how they have carried on and she expressed optimism about the institution’s future as an independent school.

**Subsequent Interview with Leslie Jones**

Jones said Lighthouse Guild had decided to orient its services to health and social services for the broader visually impaired population and away from arts education. She said she prefers to look forward rather than dwell on the rupture, difficult as it has been. She feels that today’s climate of inclusion and mainstreaming is very positive for people with disabilities—and that students are empowered by learning musical skills and presenting themselves to the public.

The school was able to open on schedule for its spring semester in four locations: Saturday children’s classes at the 92nd Street Y, adult lessons at the Kaufman Music Center and Funkadelic Studios, and rehearsals at VISIONS at Selis Manor. At the moment, the organization’s office work is being carried out from the homes of the three administrators—Jones, Dalia Sakas, music director, and Amanda Wheeler, music administrator.

One casualty of the rupture with Lighthouse Guild was last year’s annual concert at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which had been held for 21 years. Happily, the concert will be back at the Met in April 2020.

The school’s staff and faculty of 19 remain intact. As to the attrition in student enrollment, a drop of about 30%, to 75 students. Jones pointed out that it takes time for students with vision loss to learn how to access unfamiliar locations.

Tuition payment, heavily subsidized, is a small percentage of the school’s revenue, with grants and donations the major portion. Transcription of Braille and large-print music for other organizations is another revenue stream. Outside of the Library of Congress, the school has the largest Braille and large-print music library in the United States.

Given rental prices in Manhattan, the organization is not currently looking for studio space of its own but settling into its current partnerships and concentrating on expanding its donor base. Jones feels that they are at least stable, a big achievement indeed.
The Grey Marrow

By Loraine Gibney

The 20th century saw many advancements in the medical field; however, many people in Greenwich Village, New York experienced much loss and calamity. In the West Village, the Northern Dispensary was established for the treatment of the poor in 1791 in the neighborhood of City Hall. As the West Village grew the Northern Dispensary could not adequately treat the emerging population of immigrants. In Greenwich Village, the peculiar triangle of land formed where the y-shaped Waverly Place runs into Grove and Christopher Street.

During the epidemic of polio (infantile paralysis) in 1916, the city placed a stipulation on the property: it was to be used solely for the purpose of treating the indigent who could not afford hospital care. To prevent the pandemic of polio, citizens with polio were prohibited on the streets, and public venues of Greenwich Village.

My family lived on Perry Street, my grandparents, Jeanette O’Brien and Stanley Gibney had twelve children. The first born was Raymond Gibney, and he developed polio at age two years old. During the earlier years of the polio epidemic, the virus took the lives of 6,000 Villagers, and left thousands more paralyzed, doomed to life in a wheelchair, leg braces, or crutches.

In the literary classic, *A Christmas Story*, written by Charles Dickens, one of the main characters, Tiny Tim, was maligned with polio. Tiny Tim is characterized as a young boy with leg braces, and crutches.

English polio epidemic took the lives of many adults and children. Raymond Gibney was born August 15, 1914. He was a beautiful fair-haired boy with reddish hair, and freckles. Ray was a sick little boy who had contracted polio in childhood, and was made to wear cumbersome metal braces with leather straps, and awkward wooden crutches. Even though Ray was a sickly child, his parents adored him; he was the sunshine of their lives. As parents of a child with infantile paralysis, the Gibneys could not bring Ray outside in public places; it was prohibited. John Purroy Mitchel, the Mayor of New York City, enforced health laws and prohibited children and adults with polio to mingle in public with healthy citizens.

The medical term for polio is poliomyelitis, which means “grey marrow” in Greek. The Greek name is logical since it is the effects of poliomyelitis virus on the spinal cord that causes the characteristic paralysis of this disease.

Franklin Roosevelt was adored by the people of the West Village. During his time living in the West Village, he developed polio at age thirty-six, and became paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. Needless to say, Franklin was determined to overcome his handicap. In 1943, Franklin Roosevelt became the 32nd President of the United States. Franklin Roosevelt and Eleanor, his second cousin, were beloved by West Village people. For so many sick children and adults, the Roosevelts were heroes for a United States at war with Europe.

During Franklin Roosevelt’s presidential campaign, my grandfather Stanley Gibney worked to have him elected to the presidency. My grandparents adored Franklin because he never allowed his illness to impede his life. Their son was given a true role model; Mr. Roosevelt set the new standard for the disabled. Of course, Raymond did not go into politics; however, he worked for Bethlehem Steel, and lived a normal life. Raymond Gibney was married to Teresa Ciosi at Guadalupe Church on 14th Street. As a married couple, they lived on Bedford Street with their four children: Raymond, Jackie, Katherine, and Louis.
Bleecker Flower Shop

By Salvador V.

Bleecker Flower Shop opened in March 2019 as a flower studio located on Bleecker Street in the West Village in Manhattan. It was founded by two Spanish friends, Valeria Castillejo and Bebés Ferrer, who bonded over a passion for flowers, nature and artisan work. When Valeria was looking for an apartment they saw this little townhouse which had a hidden jewel in its backyard: a terrace which would later become Bleecker Flower Shop.

Upon moving into the townhouse, Valeria and Bebes brought the Mediterranean style to this space and invited friends to enjoy themed dinners, later using it to prepare flower arrangements which their friends ordered as gifts. They were amazed at how, in a concrete and crowded city like New York, they could source the most stunning flowers and branches from all over the world—Holland tulips, Spanish fig branches, Japanese ranunculus, Colombian roses—which they combined to create unique pieces. The success of these arrangements was such that shortly thereafter they set up a small flower market, selling at the house front door to people from the neighborhood. Many local residents would come and buy them for their homes; and several nearby shops and pop-ups asked to start collaborations with them, now becoming their most loyal customers.

EVERY ITEM AND EVERY ARRANGEMENT THEY CREATE IS CAREFULLY SELECTED TO BRING COLOR AND JOY TO PEOPLE’S LIVES.

Valeria and Bebes’ relationship with nature comes from an old heritage of growing up surrounded by nature in Spain and a generations-old flower business. They believe there is something special and important about bringing nature into people’s lives. It’s very common in Europe for people to bring flowers into their homes. The best luxury hotels, the most tasteful homes, and careful artisan workshops all share something in common—being surrounded by flowers. New York is a non-stop city, but everyone can have flowers.

Bleecker Flower Shop combines the tradition of the cultural importance of flowers in Europe—creating floral arrangements that are elegant and sophisticated yet wild and seemingly effortless (as you might see them growing in your garden)—with the dynamism of New York City, wrapping the work of art in a chic and to-go packaging using a color scheme inspired by the West Village area. The studio offers an entry into a sumptuous world of colors, journeys, and textures. This is where the story of each flower creation will begin—drawing inspiration from the historical, the cultural, and the crafted, and from places where the flowers have grown. Every item Valeria and Bebes sell and every arrangement they create is handmade using traditional techniques carefully selected and arranged to bring color and joy to people’s lives.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

IT WAS A VERY PROUD DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD and everyone came out in their true colors, including the local pets - like Spencer, this jolly little pooch in the handsome cravat .....
WE’RE NOT FREE UNTIL EVERYBODY’S FREE

JOIN THE FIGHT TO CURE AIDS

FreeFromAIDS.org
A Celebration of Pride

Research Foundation to Cure AIDS

Dozens of Pride Parade spectators stopped by for a photo op at the Research Foundation to Cure AIDS (RFTCA) display on Seventh Avenue, near the 9/11 Memorial Tiles display. All genders and no-genders were welcomed to wear the crown and carry the torch for the cure to AIDS.

RFTCA President and Founder Kamal Sheikdar believes that when it comes to AIDS, too many stay silent, and now is the time to talk about the cure. RFTCA is using the latest stem cell research to build on the remarkable event that occurred 10 years ago, in which a man was cured of the virus using stem cells. With his background as a cellular biologist, Sheikdar is convinced that cell therapy technology holds great promise in curing AIDS. RFTCA is working to build on the stem cell breakthrough, conducting research and development for a universal cure.

For more information about this roadmap to a universal cure, or to make a donation, visit RFTCA.org. Instagram @rftcureaids
and a Race for the Cure

WorldPride NYC 2019 in the Village

Marchers and spectators from around the world brought a rainbow of color and sparkle to New York City on June 30 to celebrate and support each other at the 2019 LGBTQA+ Pride March. NYC Pride was the official host of WorldPride NYC 2019 and Stonewall 50. These events meant unprecedented millions of people took place in the festivities. The parade began at noon with a roar, as Dykes on Bikes revved their motors to lead the parade. After another motorbike group, we saw a troop marching with flags of the world. Over 130,000 marchers stepped off at 26th Street and galvanized with multitudinous beautiful, fierce, and creative expressions of Pride down Fifth Avenue to West 8th Street, along Christopher Street, and up Seventh Avenue to West 23rd Street.

With marchers participating many from countries around the world, the parade lasted until well over midnight. This must be a record for New York City parades. It was certainly the largest LGBTQA+ Pride event in history. Cities around the world held simultaneous parades, bringing an inspirational avalanche of awareness and support for our LGBTQA+ communities around the world.

NYC Pride worked closely with the New York Police Department, Mayor Bill de Blasio’s office, and Council Speaker Corey Johnson to organize and manage the event. The New York Police and Fire Departments did a remarkable job of crowd control, bringing this historic and gigantic event to a safe close and cleaning up the streets by the next morning. Kudos to an incredible effort on their part.

WestView News is proud to work with the Research Foundation to Cure AIDS to bring you this photo celebration from Pride 2019.

Photo credits: Dusty Berke, Ismael Rosuere, Karen Rempel, Kambiz Shekdar, Deborah Strofella
Carrying the Torch for the Cure
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