Cops That Hear Are Cheaper

By George Capsis

I read with a flick of surprise that Cory Johnson—now city council speaker and a pretty good bet as our next mayor—had joined with seven other council members in support of a bill to cut $1 billion from the police budget. A day or two later I got an email from somebody who wanted to write an article about it for the paper. Hmm, I thought, who is this guy—does he have a side in all this? And what is the total police budget, so we can judge what kind of impact a $1 billion cut might produce?

Sure, people are mad at the police, particularly that cop who sat on the neck of George Floyd. But will cutting $1 billion from the New York City police budget prevent an NYPD officer from making errors in judgment?

On June 20th the New York Times had an article on this subject, “The N.Y.P.D. Spends $6 Billion a Year. Proposals to Defund It Want to Cut $1 Billion,” and offered that 90 percent of funding was for salaries, including overtime and benefits, so at least part of the $1 billion cut would come out of salaries.

If you Google me you will discover that I have slapped state senators and cops. Let me tell you about the cop.

I was biking down Bleecker Street on my brand new bike and just after crossing Sixth Avenue a shabby police van cut me off and parked—bang—right in the bike lane, forcing me out into the traffic just as a young police officer emerged from the passenger side. When I suggested that the police should obey the law, a short, plump police officer and the driver came around.

LISTENING, THE BEST POLICE WEAPON— for weeks a mixed group of protesters from sympathizers to vandals marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to Washington Square joined by collective anger at the horror of indifference a policeman offered his choking victim—how should the police answer? Photo by Bob Cooley.

Between June 23rd and 24th, City Hall Park transformed from a quiet green space into an occupation for racial justice. I headed in to learn why New Yorkers were flocking in, and their goal was clear; spur the NYC city council and someone whose name rhymes with Pill le Clasio to defund the NYPD by 1 billion dollars (16% of their 2021 budget) and reinvest this money in resources like education and housing to eliminate socioeconomic determinants of crime. Some background: the NYPD leads the nation in police officers per 10,000 residents, and headcount increased by 3,000 in the last 6 years despite historically low crime rates, according to StreetBlog.

This demonstration was a microcosm of the protests occurring over the last 6 weeks. A protest is an opportunity to speak out against injustice, but it’s also a place to learn about different perspectives on the same systemic issues. I spoke with Q, a bright-eyed 20-year-old black man with something to say.

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Calls for a Billion Dollar Reallocation of NYPD Funding

By Drew Davis

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MIA SAYS: It takes a very good dog indeed to walk without a leash. Photo by Joel Gordon.

Delivery Delay

WestView News continues to excel with the writing of its contributors. Brian Pape's piece in the May issue on Michael Sorokin, an outstanding exponent of sound city planning, was exemplary on two counts. It celebrated the contributions of a talented mind, and also showed the deep and informed knowledge of Brian who has a wealth of facts at his fingertips to share with us.

I would have responded sooner, but unlike the apartment dwellers who receive their free hand-delivered copies on the first of the month, I, being a mere paid subscriber,receive mine at the end of the month and I do not read them right away.

—Barry Benepe

Thank you Barry for your kind words about WestView but let me explain why you, a paying subscriber, get your paper after your neighbors get their free copy delivered by Tim and Steve right to your lobby.

The Post Office will only give us First Class status if fifty percent of our distribution is a paid subscription so we ask our loyal "free" readers to subscribe so everyone can get overnight delivery. To subscribe right now go to westviewnews.org and click "subscribe"

—George Capsis

Notable Articles in WestView News

To the Editor:

This is about two well-written articles by Messrs. Stanley Wlodyka Jimenez ("A Nobel Laureate Crying Out in the Wilderness") and Drew Davis ("The Last Stand of St. Vincent's: Healthcare Heroes in Another Pandemic"), both in the June, 2020 issue.

First, in part of Mr. Jimenez article, he notes Nobel Laureate Paul Romeo's 2009 Charter Cities proposal. He describes it this way: "Criticized by some who viewed it as 'neo-colonial,' the charter cities proposal called for developing nations to invite outside investors to build cities within their borders that would be exempt from the host country's laws and constitution." The author writes that the project failed in Honduras, the first country where it was planned, because of the corrupt government. However, on the face of it the proposal was outrageous because of the plan to sidestep a country's own laws and constitution. Also, the United States is notorious for having its big corporations get their greedy hands in other countries for their own profit at the expense of the countries themselves; they are leeches. The great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda described this in a poem once. We've already seen what havoc their greed creates. The profiteers should get out and stay out.

Drew Davis's article vividly describes the courage of the St. Vincent's administrators in accepting patients stricken with AIDS at a time when other hospitals would not. My only disagreement is with his statement that St. Vincent's finally closed because it ran out of money. There are indications that the corruption of both politicians and hospital administrators, plus the greed and power of the developer Bill Rudin, brought about the downfall of this great, irreplaceable hospital. Manhattan DA Cyrus Vance investigated it briefly and told the New York Post the hospital administrators ran the hospital into the ground (I've heard they brought in a whole raft of do-nothing consultants drawing million-dollar salaries, for instance) because they wanted out, and nobody stopped them. After this he fell silent. Nothing more was said. Somebody needs to blow the lid off the whole rotten deal, and let no guilty person escape.

—Carol F. Yost

Bad Advice?

George, thank you for yet another great issue of WVN.

I am concerned about a health article that I think if anything should be considered an ad—Find Your Sparkle and Supercharge Your Immunity, written by Timothy Stahl. He tells vulnerable people, an audience who is now afraid of a deadly virus, how he can help people boost their immunity, and gives his contact information to set up an appointment. "If you are coachable, let us set up a free twenty minute immersion consultation by phone or computer and discuss how I can assist you towards better health; physically, mentally and emotionally. Check out my website at www.timothyssurerti\ion.com. You can also sign up for an appointment on my Facebook business page at TEN, Timmy Eric Nutrition.”

Take a look at another site that doesn't speak in that way, actually it warns people to watch out for such "promises." www.nutr\ritionaction.com/daily/immunity/foods-immunity-whats-the-catch/

I've been taught to watch out for "health articles" that have something to sell. Thank you for running Dr. Alec Pruchnicki's pieces, which to me are sound medical advice and articles appropriate for WVN readers.

—Joy Pape

Correction

Dear George,

Please note that in the section entitled "LGBTQ Life..." in the June issue of WestView News, the APA removed homosexual-...
The Last Slave Ship

George Floyd Echoed in Pride Parade
By George Capsis

On the very hot humid Sunday of June 28th, Dusty offered me a seat right in front of the Stonewall Inn to watch the hour long informal Pride parade which was heavily intermixed with the Black Lives Matter messages. Walking home to Charles Street, I was surprised to see four police had set up a barrier to cut off vehicle traffic to Charles. The officer who pulled back the barrier to let us in was a young Hispanic woman and Dusty quickly started to ask her how she felt about the parade’s anti-police message and, that very day, a cut in her how she felt about the parade's anti-police message and, that very day, a cut in

"We're Not Free Until Everybody's Free."

Indeed the parade hosted all of the new joined and once unspoken causes and a black transgender woman/man offered me the considerable expanse of her/his bare chest and two shriveled taped up breasts to "giggle"—I declined.

But it was not until the next morning that the black cause came together for me in a New York Times article by Charles M. Blow a professor of African American history at the University of Virginia. He offers a look at the writing of Rev. Robert Walsh recording the condition of enslaved people on board the Feloz (1829).

"The slaves were all enclosed under grated hatchways between decks. The space was so low that they sat between each other's legs and were stowed so close together that there was no possibility of their lying down or at all changing their position by night or day."

But the circumstance which struck us most forcibly was how it was possible for such a number of human beings to exist, packed up and wedged together as tight as they could cram, in low cells three feet high, the greater part of which, except that immediately under the grated hatchways, was shut out from light and air, and this when the thermometer, exposed to the open sky, was standing in the shade, on our deck, at 89°. The space between decks was divided into two compartments 3 feet 3 inches high; the size of one was 16 feet by 18 and of the other 40 by 21; into the first were crammed the women and girls, into the second the men and boys: 226 fellow creatures were thus thrust into one space 288 feet square and 3.36 into another space 800 feet square, giving to the whole an average of 23 inches and to each of the women not more than 13 inches. We also found manacles and fetters of different kinds, but it appears that they had all been taken off before we boarded.

The heat of these horrid places was so great and the odour so offensive that it was quite impossible to enter them, even had there been room. They were measured as above when the slaves had left them.

This is the most horrendous account of human torture I have ever read and it tells how the whites of that time formed an image of black Africans who had to endure being treated as less than an animal. Now we have a white man who sits on the neck of a black man but he does not hear his cry for air.

Village Residents Join in City-Wide Protests for Historic Social Change

By Bob Cooley

What started as a reaction to the murder of George Floyd, an African American man killed by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, quickly became the tipping point for residents, students, and activists of all ages and races who were protesting the long history of systemic inequality and police brutality against African Americans, other people of color, and many marginalized groups. The protests started in Minnesota and spread to numerous cities across the nation and abroad, including many originating in and moving through the West Village.

The West Village community has always been a leader in movements for social change, and many of our residents participated in the larger protests while others organized vigils and gave speeches at smaller venues like the Stonewall National Monument.

For several weeks crowds of up to 5,000 people gathered in Washington Square Park and other parts of Manhattan and the outer boroughs where the NYPD reported groups of up to 10,000 protesters. One student in the park said of the protests, "I think this is the first time I've seen everyone come together, all races, all nations around the entire world, come together to fight for us, for our people."

Protests in the West Village were mostly peaceful, with some minor incidents of vandalism and civil unrest. In other parts of the city, however, vandalism and looting occurred, instigated primarily by criminal elements and opportunists who used the protests as an excuse for the destruction of store windows and some police vehicles; other groups looted stores in Soho and Midtown where there was little police presence due to the large gatherings of protesters in other parts of the city.

During the first few days there were also minor clashes between protesters and the NYPD, with graffiti and minor property damage in the Village from protesters who were outraged by the unlawful killing of Floyd and numerous African Americans in prior months. Many restaurants and stores in the Village proactively boarded up their windows to protect their businesses; but after an 8:00 pm curfew was put into effect, looting and property damage stopped almost completely.

Mayor de Blasio lifted the curfew early; and the protests have continued peacefully in the Village and city as government officials have already enacted some minor police reforms along with promising to continue working with the community to find ways to establish trust between police officers and residents, including plans to redistribute some budget and community responsibilities away from the NYPD and into other more appropriate departments—a plan commonly referred to as "defunding the police."
Beehive Activity on Christopher Street Piers

PIER 46 ON A BEAUTIFUL MORNING attracts dozens of exercisers. Photo: Brian J Pape, AIA

By Brian J Pape, AIA

Even before the ‘soft’ re-opening of many enterprises in mid June, Pier 45 & 46 at Christopher Street to Perry Street had become a beehive of activity seldom seen before, more than the usual runners and walkers. During the pandemic closure of non-essential businesses, one industry category has discovered a creative outlet. Shut out of their gyms and clinics since March, physical trainers and therapists began appearing more and more.

At first, individual fitness enthusiasts would come down to work out alone or with one another; weeks later, boxing instructors would spend hours training with two or three novices. But by June’s mild weather, the pier’s flat recreation areas were filled with groups exercising in unison, or in clusters.

Early mornings have a dominance of body-builders with lots of rubber cords for tension-resistance. As the morning warms, groups of elderly or more frail bodies are getting tutored in stretching and light reps, under careful supervision.

Afternoons are a little different. On Pier 45, adult sunbathers crowd out everyone else on the luscious (real) green grass, while on Pier 46, it seems to be children’s playtime on its bordered artificial turf providing a smooth soft surface, accompanied by parents mostly, or an occasional nanny.

As the sun slowly sets over the Hudson River, adults return for brisk walks or runs, while others are socializing (at a generally proper distance) on the white circles painted on the green turf. For everyone coming down to the pier, morning, noon, or night, there is welcoming room for all kinds of active or passive sojourns there.

Raffle Winners

Many thanks to the generous donors who contributed raffle items, and to all the subscribers and donors who support WestView News with your wrinkled green love. And the winners are:

LUCKY ERIN MINTUN won a pair of SJP’s colorful shoes to celebrate Pride 2020 in style. Photo ©SJP by Sarah Jessica Parker.

Pandemic, Pride and Prejudice Shape a Cause

By Kambiz Shekdar

We are witnessing an awakening against ancient and profound prejudices as the world issues a collective outcry of #BLACKLIVESMATTER. The call is reverberating across the LGBTQ community and is pouring out as a single voice denouncing all prejudice.

George Capsis, the publisher of this paper recounts a telling story: in 1967, he joined a firm founded by two gay men who invited him—needed him—to join as a partner, because, as two gay men, they were ready and willing but not able to do business in the straight world of that time, and their firm became Robinson Capsis Stern. It took 53 years for the U.S. Supreme Court to rule that federal laws protect LGBTQ workers from discrimination in the workplace in its ruling of merely days ago on June 15 of this year.

While the celebrated events at The Stonewall Inn in 1969 (where patrons rioted when corrupt police came to collect on bribes to look the other way because it was illegal to serve liquor to gay men at the time) sparked the modern LGBT right movement, it was the emergence of the deadly AIDS pandemic in the early 1980’s that served as the fuel on the LGBTQ freedom rights fire.

AIDS was killing gay men at a rapid clip and no one cared, just as corrupt police are killing black men and no one cared until, seemingly, yesterday. It took the death of thousands of gay men and the silence of an unresponsive nation to make gay men come out of the closet in force to fight for their bare lives, just as it has taken the death of thousands of black men and depravity of our government’s lack of police reform—and another pandemic—for enough to be moved enough to say Enough!

Is there something about deadly pandemics that catalyzes action to improve the human condition? All eight minutes and 46 seconds of the George Floyd not being able to breathe through his compressed neck filling millions of eyes-glued-to-screens around the world under stay-at-home orders compelled fists of all colors to take to the streets and rise in anger, no longer black and brown alone. Does our collective experience of facing a deadly pandemic diminish our tolerance for death and depravity at the hands of own society—our own government, its offices, officials and officers—increase our resolve for freedom and justice?

Allyship is the human response to the shared experience of prejudice. Just as lesbian women, straight friends and loved ones joined as allies alongside gay men when they were dying of AIDS, we are now witnessing all stripes of the LGBTQ rainbow stand alongside our black and brown brothers and sisters who are dying today. Just as the response to AIDS led to an LGBTQ insurgence, carpe diem, the future is now, and the #blacklivesmatter movement is making it freer and more human than ever before.

Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D. is a biologist, a biotech inventor and president of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS (RFTCA). Contact kambiz.shekdar@rftca.org or go to www.FreeFromAIDS.org to support a worldwide cure for AIDS.
Cops that Hear continued from page 1

and asked me to stop and get off my bike which was pinned against their van by the young standing officer.

"Step away from the bike," the first officer repeated and repeated, while looking not at me but at the curb, while I repeated with increasing irritation and volume that I could not "step away." Blindly, he kept playing the "take command game," repeating "Step away from the bike. Step away from the bike." Then I slapped him.

Finally, he turned his head to look at me. And then, with pent-up hatred, he hauled back and hit me on my eyeglasses, breaking them and splitting open my cheek.

Now what? He must have thought—I hit this old man and cut open his face and now he is bleeding. What do I do? So he decided to arrest me and take me to the 6th Precinct station. But I would not go and a crowd gathered to watch this macabre pushing and repeating, "Step away from the bike," the first officer.

A nice woman looked at me plaintively and asked, "What should we do?" and I said, "Call the police." And they came running and repeating, "Step away from the bike," the first officer.

Because as a cop, your integrity doesn't matter when you willingly joining a system that doesn't tolerate speaking up to say 'that's not right.' At that point you do an immoral job for money. That's prostitution. That's a system we can't keep pouring billions of our dollars into."

The last thing I saw before leaving that day was a demonstrator take the megaphone and begin to organize occupiers. But I had no idea how comprehensive these efforts to build an occupation community would be. When I returned 2 days later I found a remarkably coordinated and sustainable community, equipped with stations for:

- Daily education sessions and speakers on systematic racism
- A shared library
- Artists for George Floyd
- Community gardening
- Calling representatives
- Laundry land, coffee town, snack land, hot food and clothing exchange
- 250+ socially distanced people listening to a talk on the community value in funding CUNY programs.

The other purpose of this occupation dawned on me. It's not just meant to shine a light on injustice. It's to enable black joy, its own kind of resistance, to take a moment from a life with darker skin that can be stressful and depressing. It's to set an example of a community taking care of itself without relying on police officers. The July 1 budget is worth watching.
Defund the Police—Movement or Folly?

By Frank Quinn

On May 14th the City Council published its report on Mayor de Blasio’s FY21 Executive Budget, announcing that “the NYPD budget has increased a minimal .07 percent.” On June 12th Council Speaker Corey Johnson joined seven other council members calling for a $1 billion cut to the NYPD budget. The eight members released a joint statement calling it “an unprecedented reduction that would not only limit the scope of the NYPD, but also show our commitment towards moving away from the failed policing policies of the past.” During those 30 days New Yorkers experienced civil unrest, looting, and sadness initiated by the unjustifiable death of George Floyd. So as residents ponder the future of the city, how should they comprehend such a sudden and drastic reaction by elected officials?

By the time this article is published the city will have adopted a budget, and as of this writing NYPD spokesperson Detective Denise Moroney would only say, “We will continue to work closely with City Hall during budget discussions.” What follows are contrasting points of view on this important subject; an ongoing debate is expected.

Speaking on 710 WOR Radio, former NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly acknowledged the need for better screening of officers and improved contract provisions allowing swift termination for misconduct. But he was unequivocal in his response to the $1 billion reduction, saying it “made no sense,” lacked any analysis, and would “punish” New York because a substantial reduction of police officers would negatively impact poor communities.

In contrast, the night before the council members’ announcement, the Village Independent Democrats met to review their resolution supporting the $1 billion cut. President David Siffert spoke for the group saying, “At a time when our city’s budget is stretched beyond its breaking point, it makes no sense to slash funding for education, youth employment, and other necessary services while keeping the NYPD budget intact. In the near-term, cutting $1B (or 17 percent of the NYPD budget) is necessary to preserve programs and services that invest in communities. In the longer-term, we must reimage how best to accomplish the necessary tasks we assign to NYPD.”

Tamar Lashchky is an entrepreneur and the Republican candidate for New York State Assembly District 66. After a 26-year career on Wall Street she thinks about the city in context of how big organizations operate. She’s not supportive of cutting the police budget, especially at a time when the city is experiencing civil unrest. And cutting any budget requires a plan, which should be part of the process of shifting funds toward investment in social programs in order to create reform. “Cutting the police budget should be a thoughtful, lucid decision based on proper analysis. And however reform is achieved you must empower the police. I think the NYPD has been disempowered by the de Blasio administration, and that’s not constructive.” She recalls the problems her family encountered at their East Village apartment during her childhood, and the evolution since that time when it was really unsafe. Although she feels the approach seemed too extreme at times, over her lifetime she witnessed the city become a desirable place to live. “There are politicians who look at the police budget in a vacuum and just bemoan how big it is, but police are a thin blue line between civilized society and chaos. Reducing the police force can lead to increased crime, particularly in lower income neighborhoods, so I don’t support cutting the budget to satisfy the climate of the moment.”

Reform is good, and change is necessary for anything to improve. The stakes are high, and it requires effort to understand the nuances and complexity of shifting resources away from police in favor of alternative solutions.

In a lengthy interview with the Washington Post, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Professor of History, Race and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, describes the current debate over police funding as an evolving set of ideas and demands spurred by activists and movement leaders rather than coming from academic research. “People should be thinking about defunding the police as both a process and an outcome. The process is empowering local communities to come to the table with city council members to redefine what police do, which leads to an outcome, which is—they do less of what they’ve been doing.” He notes there are many reform-minded police chiefs who agree that police do too much. But citing the bureaucracy of unionized police organizations, he insists reform must come from legislative bodies that govern police agencies. Asking the police to reform themselves “is as unhelpful as asking fossil fuel industry leaders to solve the climate change crisis.”

Eliza Orfins, a veteran New York City public defender and current candidate for Manhattan District Attorney, describes the challenge of working in a system that criminalizes substance use disorder and conditions of poverty. She believes the criminal legal system should focus on perpetrators of real harm and not petty crimes, thereby removing productive citizens from society. “As a public defender for over a decade I’ve seen too many instances where a client of mine was in the throes of a serious mental health crisis, and having an armed police officer show up escalates the situation. The police should not be performing functions that are never improved by someone who shows up carrying a gun. We over-rely on law enforcement and turn to police in situations where their involvement is not only unnecessary but actually makes things worse. Mental health and social work functions should be left to people who are professionals in those fields.”

How should New York reform the process of determining if police are needed or different responders are preferable? Investing in communities is imperative, but what’s the plan for shifting $1 billion dollars away from the NYPD and the analysis to support it? It’s reasonable to feel that the collective response from government and community leaders is that they’re not sure how to do this, because they’re still working on the plan, and they’ll get back to us with the analysis. The public is demanding it happen faster!”

Frank Quinn is a media executive, parent, and musician. LinkedIn.com/in/frankjquinn

White Horse Tavern Struggles with Compliance

Hi George,

Hope things are going well with you despite all that’s not going well in the world. Regarding White Horse, we were very overrun this weekend and frankly unprepared for the influx of traffic. In the year plus I have owned it we never had such crowds. I have taken the measures the police officers have asked me to in order to insure a safer and more orderly situation going forward. Having said that, I have been attacked by neighbors who go on the internet and rant about social distancing and lack of masks. I don’t know how people expect me to enforce this personally. I went up and down the block personally, asking people to clear the sidewalk and allow for a proper walkway. The argument is that anything by my property is my responsibility. How can I force mask wearing? I suggest it, and I even offer masks at my expense. As for distancing, again, how can I police this? People stand near each other and am I supposed to physically pull them six feet apart? I’m not a police officer. I don’t see how I can be held accountable for other people making the decision to ignore the warnings. I will hire a dedicated staff to keep the sidewalk and bike lane clear—that I can control. The officer’s argument is that there were too many people on the sidewalk. George, when I wake in the morning, G_d almighty doesn’t ask me how many guests I wish to have and then furnish me with that exact amount. I can’t control how many people show up. Even if I don’t serve them, many just congregate who aren’t my guests I wish to have and then furnish me with that exact amount. I can’t control how many people show up. Even if I don’t serve them, many just congregate who aren’t my patrons. In all my time of ownership I have never seen crowds like this. Clearly people are dying to get out and about after the long quarantine period. I am trying my best to be a responsible owner and neighbor while attempting to keep my doors open. The White Horse Tavern is in danger of not being able to stay in business. It would be a real tragedy to lose this landmark establishment, that you heard Mr. Dylan Thomas recite his poetry in, because of circumstances beyond our control, and frankly, people’s refusal to work with me and try to understand all my challenges to keep this place open. It’s been around since 1880. I would really hate to see it close now.

—Eytan Sugarman
By Karen Rempel

It’s time for marriage counselling, not divorce. Defunding the NYPD is not the answer, but education and dialogue is.

The police have been getting a lot of negative press; and it is justified, no question. The tragic murder of George Floyd by Milwaukee police officer Derek Chauvin and the resulting unprecedented worldwide protests have led to remarkable turns of events, such as members of the melting pot, “majority minority” NYPD kneeling in support of protesters. The incredible outpouring of support for Black Americans has led to legislation at the federal, state, and city levels to address the racism and dysfunction in America’s policing system. I would like to balance out the protestors’ focus on police brutality by pointing out that the NYPD helps people day in and day out with thousands of kindnesses and acts of service, big and small.

It’s human nature and part of our evolutionary survival instinct that bad things stick out in our minds, and the vast numbers of daily acts of service performed by police may go unnoticed and unremembered. Brian Downey, President of the Gay Officers Action League (GOAL), believes that the NYPD’s overarching presence in the city is a “constant, steady, good force.” He reminded GOAL members in a recent message, “We’re entrusted with protecting the public safety for a reason: we voluntarily stood and took an oath that we would devote ourselves to that mission.” Most of us living in the West Village have seen this firsthand, many times.

The 2020 Pride March was canceled, so let’s take a moment to remember the incredible role the NYPD played last year in keeping millions of people safe during the biggest Pride March in New York’s history. The success of last year’s parade was beautifully supported by the NYPD. There were an estimated five million people in attendance, with 150 registered groups and approximately 150,000 individuals marching. After the event Mayor de Blasio said, “Five million people and there was almost not a single incident.” Addressing an NYPD graduating class last July he said, “What I saw was extraordinary efforts by the NYPD to keep people safe.”

That is what I saw as well. The police were friendly and tolerant, and even ready to jump into a lineup for a photo op. When the parade finally ended, well past midnight, dozens of officers gathered on Seventh Avenue for the cleanup. Officials said the city collected more than double the trash than it normally collects after New Year’s Eve celebrations. Downey estimates there were well over 1,000 officers on duty that night.

On a recent night in late May, we all heard that there were 8,000 officers on duty—risking their lives to protect and serve. Let’s commend these frontline workers, and enter into dialogue with respect and compassion, as we work together to remedy the centuries-long injustices of this nation. The always-eloquent Downey put it very well: “The rhetoric needs to stop. It’s on all sides. It’s on the police side, the union side, the public side, on all sides. We need to start building what we want for the future, for our communities, for our children. What type of society do we want? Do I think we live in a racist, homophobic society? Absolutely. But we need to work together to bring that system down and build something better that works for everyone, that we can all agree on.” Well said. The dialogue begins.

Karen Rempel is a photojournalist, technical writer, model, and artist. She has published words and pictures in BC Woman, Intercom, Room, TW Week Magazine, Vancouver Sun, and many others. Her artwork was recently on exhibit at the Revelation Gallery in the West Village. Visit her blog at loveaffair.nyc and her YouTube channel.

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The Day the Village Stood Still: (Part 4)
The Plague and Pestilence

By Roger Paradiso

The plague is still with us. It is a natural born killer. In addition to researching other viral and bacterial killers, scientists, doctors, and disease control laboratories around the world are searching for a cure and vaccine for COVID-19. Until these are found, the Village will be lost in the fog of fear, despair, hope, and charity.

The pestilence has been caused by the same sins of the past and present that caused the racism, greed, and a lack of empathy towards our neighbors that have provoked the recent marches and protests. There are fires in the night and death in day's light. We heard stories from our ancestors of deadly plagues like smallpox, polio and HIV. We heard stories of the horror of war in our own country. Now, we know about the COVID-19 virus and a new kind of war at home.

This article is part four of a series that brings us into the heart of the West Village. When I last left Jamil, the owner of Village Music World—one of the few remaining "record stores" in the West Village—he was searching for ways to stay in business. "In my own opinion, we have to save small businesses... I've been looking for support from banks, investors, SBA private lenders, and many more. So far, I can say nothing solid about the above, even though some issues got fixed, such as the PPP—though it was unfairly distributed, it does still help the cause. Thank you for your help PPP. The most important skill in NYC is knowing how to keep a small business running. We all know the overhead to maintain a small shop, LOTS AND LOTS OF RENT."

Jamil got less than what he asked for from the PPP. He spends a lot of time alone in his store, cleaning and preparing for the day when he can bring customers in again. He can't get most of his former employees back because they make too much on their enhanced unemployment. In other words, they make more than they made before the pandemic. Does that make sense? So even though Jamil has gotten a partial PPP, he will have trouble finding employees who want to risk their health before we find a vaccine or cure. They can make more money staying home collecting unemployment. Only Washington could have concocted something as half-baked as this scenario.

The first PPP was a band-aid to stop some of the bleeding. It was not a well-thought-out bill. It ended up providing money for the banks and the big companies. The small businesses, defined as one who employs ten people or fewer was left out. The second PPP started to reach them, but it was only another band-aid.

Most of the people I have talked to say we need a bigger plan. The Marshall Plan resurrected Europe after the devastation of World War II. Back then, we were dealing with bombed-out cities and infrastructure in Europe. Now, we are dealing with a shatterer economy and a death toll over 120,000 and increasing due to a plague. Hello Washington, we need a Marshall-type plan to revive the USA.

In the middle of all our troubles with this plague we have had protests across the nation regarding the racist and senseless killing of George Floyd. Unfortunately, at any protest demonstration there are bad actors who want to politically charge the situation for their own political gain. There are also those who want to loot, riot, and burn down buildings to release anger or greed. Jim Drougas who has a bookstore on Carmine Street was a victim of this. He reported, "An eyewitness saw a car drive up to my storefront well after the protesters had gone home. Two women came out of the car with hammers and shattered my windows, then they drove off into the night. Fortunately, they didn't take any of my books." Jim is trying to survive this pandemic and he did not welcome having to spend thousands to repair his windows while his store is shattered and business income is zero. His future is in doubt as rent keeps adding up month after month, and his subtenants have fled the city.

I watched footage of the protests in Washington DC after our president threatened peaceful protestors and ordered that they be tear-gassed so that he could have a clear path to St. John's Church where he did a photo op with a bible held upside down. He made himself look like a banana republic dictator. Where is our leadership?

That very night, I got a text from Nick the Greek. Nick owns the great Cinema Village, the oldest continuously running art theater in Manhattan. He also owns two other theaters, which are the movie house in Bay Ridge called the Alpine, the oldest theater in New York, and the Cinemat, the oldest theater in Queens. He loves them, and his bar, but he is bleeding from having to pay city real estate taxes. Nick says, "I am a small landlord in the East Village with a bar and five apartments. However, the main income comes from the bar. I was kind enough to work with tenants and give them time to pay back-rent (pre-COVID-19). They are now taking full advantage of the courts, which are not taking any eviction cases, and have stopped making any payments at all. And since courts will be backed up even after reopening, they will likely get away with more than a year's + rent, which helps the pay the real estate taxes and water bills. This is a complete disaster. How can I pay $800,000 in property taxes for my three neighborhood cinemas and a bar when the amounts I receive from SBA are less than half that?"

If you consider a Marshall Plan approach to saving the Village and the rest of the country, you wonder why we don't make a deal with the landlords that is fair. Surely, we have enough economic experts who could figure out something. Instead of a band-aid approach, we can cure the rent problem by making rent disappear off the books for a period of time—from March to December of 2020. That would help everyone.

I talk to Tory at The Half Pint on West Third Street and Vittorio at La Lanterna di Vittorio on MacDougal Street. They both continued on page 9

Follow the (CARES) Money

By Sue Peters

In response to the shutdown of the economy, Congress passed the CARES Act. To date, Congress has appropriated $670 billion in funds to aid small businesses with Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. Also in the CARES Act, Congress appropriated $454 billion in funds for larger businesses, states, and municipalities. These funds, however, do not go to a federal agency like the SBA. These funds go to the Federal Reserve Banks (Fed Banks).

What has not been explained to the American people is that the $670 billion for small businesses is dwarfed by the $454 billion for larger businesses. How? The Fed Banks have the legal power to turn that $454 billion into $4.54 trillion! This is possible because our monetary system is based on debt creation: every time a commercial bank "lends," the bank is creating a deposit in the borrower's account. The bank simply types in the amount in the borrower's account. This is called bank credit, and we use it as money. The fact that our "money supply" is usury, generating interest every second to the banks, is a well-kept secret. The U.S. Constitution placed the power to create debt securities (MBS) for sale. Banks and their corporate customers bought them. When the underlying loans began to default, the MBS market price began to drop steeply. The Fed Banks now use the market to bail out our bank credit system and our debt securities outright. The reserves will go to banks, which will make the loans or buy the debt securities from issuers or investors using bank credit. This time, the debt securities will come from banks, corporations, money market funds, states, municipalities, hedge funds, and more. Some $450 billion from the Treasury becomes trillions to bail out our bank credit system and our debt economy. Again. But this time the debt burden has gotten much bigger. Hold on to your hats. We need a brand new system.
‘What Is Money?’

By Joe Bongiovanni

Let’s begin our study of money with this question—because everywhere, inquiring minds want to know—what is money?

What serves as money isn’t derived from either a natural or a man-made material of any kind, and its study is virtually absent from our entire education system. Like Political Economy and Civics.

The most commonly heard response throws a ‘curveball’ into considering our question. ‘Money ain’t real,’ they say. ‘Banks create money out of thin air.’ (fingers snap).

Hard to argue. This response is more valid than not, though hardly instructional. A better understanding is gained by knowing that money itself is indeed not ‘physical’, but socially-derived. Yes, We the People created it—by law. $US money is our ‘national’ agreement, our societal construct. It provides our nation the ability to exchange goods and services among wealth producers and consumers. What we call ‘money’ today is termed among money-scientists and historians as our ‘national circulating medium of exchange’. The ‘power of money’ ($US) is to impart real “purchasing power” to its holder, be it in the form of paper ($) notes or merely private bank account ‘credit’ balances—legally denominated in ($US).

Understanding money’s ‘social’ origin harkens us back to a new starting point for understanding money—that all money is, and must be, created out of nothing...or thin air. Otherwise we won’t have it to purchase our food and shelter.

So, if we agree, more questions might arise—“Who then should, create and issue the nation’s money? Why so? And how so?” Why is it that the private banks issue all our money today(?) Why does the government have to borrow its own money?

For later.

But, first, what does history teach us about what money is?

Money, according to Nobelist Dr. Frederick Soddy (The Role of Money, Routledge Publishing, 1934) first provides the (capital) means for wealth production, via debts. Later, fingers-crossed, money—via incomes—is available to pay those debts and to spread the national wealth. The role of money in the national economy, per Soddy, is to distribute the national wealth. For better, or worse.

In The Last Science of Money (The American Monetary Institute Charitable Trust (2002))—author Stephen Zarlenga presents some considered, historic notions on what money is, in the final Chapter (24). Zarlenga reviews the learned opinions on money by Aristotle, Plato, Paulus, Berkeley, Locke, Franklin, by American monetary historian Alexander Del Mar, and by German Chartalist author Georg F. Knapp.

Then, Zarlenga opines on the topic—“We accept these concepts and add: Money’s essence (apart from whatever is used to signify it), is an abstract social power embodied in law as an unconditional means of payment.”

This, then informs us on what is the essence of what we call money; the means of payment. An abstract, agreed-upon social construct with many special qualities—legalized by society under our national Money Statutes. That’s what our money is.

I hope this small collection of thoughts on money, along with my own ‘work-in-progress’ opinions can provide a semblance of understanding of what money is, today. From here maybe we can discuss the existing social, legal and political framework of our national money System. Hopefully a discussion of alternatives might arise. Or, perhaps not.

An email from Jamal states, “When a small business is already four months behind in rent, things get tough. The average rent in NYC is roughly $10,000 a month. I took it upon myself to investigate what the average rent of small shops in my neighborhood is and it came out to $15,000 or above. Now imagine the loss of sales and the price of utilities such as electricity, phone, etc. that I have to keep up with. We did not even mention taxes, insurance, and much more... So, I really believe that most businesses deserve at least an approval of a federal loan of $100,000 with a low interest rate. I believe small businesses are what make New York City great. We give the city diversity and importance. Save the small businesses of New York so the small businesses can save New York.”

Treat everyone as you expect to be treated. This simple thought, codified in all transactions in life, will end the plague and pestilence—now, and surely those that are forecast for the future. All the tenants ask me why America can help rebuild other countries but not their own.

Plague continued from page 8

ask why the federal government, courts, and regulators can’t make the insurance companies cover the loss of income from the pandemic. Right now, this is being treated as an exclusion similar to a nuclear attack or war. But this is a viral pandemic and must be handled fairly? Federal, state, and city agencies need to support the NYC Dept of Finance to allow property taxes to be paid over a period of time.”
**David Carter and the Meaning of Stonewall**

By Bruce Poli

West Village author David Carter, renowned for his detailed, truth-telling history *Stonewall: the Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution* (St. Martin’s Press, 2004) endured years of criticism and challenge to his decade-long researched book on the Stonewall Rebellion—its forelife, life and fallout. Raised in rural Jesup, GA, Carter—who moved to Greenwich Village in 1985—was a passionate follower of homosexual history—as it was once called—and became the source of the 2010 classic black-and-white PBS American Experience documentary *Stonewall Uprising* by David Heilbroner and Kate Davis.

The Stonewall book, as it is often referred to, despite others by Martin Duberman, Eric Marcus and a host of fine Gay authors and historians, places the long journey to Gay Rights in a societal context that helps readers (and viewers of the film) understand the truly complex road navigated over decades and ultimately culminates to the point of explosion on June 28, 1969 at a dingy dark bar at Sheridan Square in the West Village.

So the meaning of Stonewall which was celebrated throughout the world last year on its 50th anniversary is held high in the words and insights of our esteemed Village author and has spilled onto the streets over the past 50 years, culminating in our current 2020 50th anniversary of marches and protests in this time of quarantine.

The tragedy of David’s death at such a time and in the same month as AIDS activist Larry Kramer brings home the era of gay activism in two pillars of its foundation.

It’s time to celebrate the great accomplishments of these two dignified human beings who have brought high standards to the Human Rights era of Gay activism. The meaning of Stonewall is not in the sullen tortured rooms of the Mafia-dominated homosexual bar, but the leaders—Harvey Milk, Gilbert Baker, Laverne Cox, Frank Kameny, Quentin Crisp, Dick Leitsch et al who have given to us the great force and fight for dignity and equality. So in the end it was the David Carters who were the Stonewall riots’ most important products and benefits to our democracy... and the progress of human evolution.

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**Romolo Ferri April 17, 1931–May 1, 2020**

By Eve Zanni

Rom Ferri was born into a loving, musical family; the youngest of 5 children in New Jersey. His father was an opera singer who sang at La Scala in Milano and who also appreciated Louis Armstrong's singing. Two of Rom's uncles played guitar, mandolin and banjo in some of the major big bands like Red Nichols and his Five Pennies. Rom's oldest brother helped to get him a piano, then paid for his piano lessons. Rom accompanied both of his singing sisters on early radio broadcasts. At North Plainfield High School, Rom met Bill Evans and he was dazzled by Bill's exceptional talents, classical chops and appreciated Bill's encouragement. They became friends, and when Bill went south to study at Southeastern University in Louisiana, Bill helped Rom get a scholarship there. They opened the door and were followed by at least 12 other musician friends. Then Rom enlisted in the army and got a position teaching music theory at The Naval School of Music in Washington, DC.

Rom's interest in the esoteric teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas led him to study metaphysics at The Catholic University in DC. He was deeply inspired by a professor of Thomistic Metaphysics and formed one of the most illustrative mantras of his teaching and life philosophy: “Knowledge comes to the receiver in the manner of the receiver” which, as wife Linda remarked, “That's all you really need to know, in order to be a human being or a teacher!”

In 1962 Rom enrolled in Manhattan School of Music to finish his Masters' degree. He earned the respect of the classical faculty even though jazz was not considered “legit”? There he met star classical piano student Linda Kessler, winner of the prestigious Harold Bauer Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in Music. The school community of faculty and students rallied around these two extraordinary musicians in their respective genres: Jazz and Classical, and literally cheered when they announced their engagement! They married in 1964. Their son Matthew, born in 1965, inherited some incredible musical genes and is a consummate scat singer. Rom's musical soul is a deep vessel of Italian opera, the exquisite jazz genius of Bill Evans, Charlie Parker, Clifford Brown, Duke Ellington and many majestic jazz luminaries and a love of classical music that he always shared with his wife Linda, an exquisite concert pianist and teacher. To be received into their Greenwich Village apartment was to enter a Music Zone: you side between shelves of music scores, books, records, CD's, boxes with original music, theory, music history, all interspersed with photos of Rom and Linda, their son, with jazz luminaries, family and friends, and wonderful artwork by their adored granddaughter Elena. Then you are in The Piano Room; a small room completely dominated by a large Steinway Grand, lovingly tuned, buffed and polished and choice spot for a vibrating catnap by Trevor the Musical Cat. These two pianists; both top notch artists and master teachers in their respective genres were, for many years, a "One-Stop-Shop" for serious music students, both jazz and classical. In their busy lives teaching piano, whether teaching together at Mannes School of Music, The New School, die-hard jazz students crossed paths with earnest classical students. When one of Rom's jazz pianists had an issue with fingering or hand position, they could book a consult with Linda for her classical expertise. When one of Linda's classical students wanted to learn to play Bird's "Billie's Bounce" she could send him or her to Rom for an in-depth jazz improv lesson.

In brief, Open Streets proposes to temporarily close individual blocks to through vehicular traffic for specific hours each day, not unlike the Play Streets of the 1950’s. A community organization would have to be chosen to implement the program, utilizing its own financial and personal resources to prepare, place, remove and store temporary signs and barriers at both ends of every block in the selected street, allowing cross traffic to cross unimpeded every two or three minutes. The Open Street would have to be closed for a minimum of six hours a day. Overnight parking would continue to be permitted but owners would have to remove their cars during Open Street hours. Seats, plantings and other street furniture encouraging social leisure and gathering would be prohibited. Each time a motor vehicle need to enter to deliver oil, pick up garbage, pour cement, make deliveries such as Amazon or Fresh Direct, repairs or removal of parked cars, a staff person would have to be summoned to remove and replace the temporary barriers. Pedestrians would be required to keep moving, not linger or socialize. The daily removal of parked cars would result in more congestion as drivers searched for empty free parking spaces.

It is unclear to me what CB2 and NYC-DOT are trying to achieve with this enormous effort. Another technique by NYC-DOT called Shared Streets makes design changes requiring streets to wind through a landscaped zig-zag “wurmul” mixing with pedestrians at a safe speed of no more than 5mph. Community organizations can obtain Street Activity Permits to close a street for one to three days to put up tents and tables to hold block parties.

Streets are largely our only easily accessible public spaces. They are framed by our architecture, which also defines our history. The 1811 Manhattan Grid became the framework for much of what we experience today, brutally wiping out the natural terrain in the process. This grid also contains our utilities that heat, cool and light our buildings and provide us with water to drink, wash and flush away our wastes. Seniors like myself need to sit and rest often when we walk. Hudson River Park which accommodates cars, bicycles, joggers, walkers and just lazy tired sitters is a lovely example of a beautiful respite with an extraordinary view. There is much to be learned here.

Further information can be obtained from Edward F. Fincar Jr, Manhattan Borough Commissioner of NYC DOT at 212-839-0210.
1811 Street Grid Conceived in West Village

Ironically, the plan for the geometric and regular Manhattan street grid was conceived within the very irregular and eccentric streets of the West Village, at 329 Bleecker Street, corner of Christopher Street, in the office of John Randal Jr., who was 20 years old when he began his job as the surveyor and chief engineer for New York City’s street commissioners. It was here, between 1807 and 1809, that the commissioners met with Randal and came up with what would become the Commissioners’ Plan of 1811, the street grid of Manhattan from 14th Street to 155th Street, more or less as we know it today. The 1811 plan originated when the Common Council of New York City, seeking to provide for the orderly development and sale of Manhattan land between 14th Street and Washington Heights but unable to do so itself for reasons related to local politics and objections from property owners, asked the New York State Legislature to step in. The legislature appointed a commission with sweeping powers in 1807. Described by critics as encompassing the “Republican predilection for control and balance ... [and] distrust of nature,” the commission described the plan as combining “beauty, order and convenience.”

The commissioners’ plan has been called “the single most important document in New York City’s development.” By imposing a regularized plan upon the island of Manhattan it laid the foundation for the rapid development and look of its streets and neighborhoods. While street plans historically tended to develop in a more piecemeal, organic manner, the commissioners’ street grid plan, inspired by ancient Roman templates, was arguably influential, and later copied throughout the world.

The extraordinary maps drawn by Randal laid out the grid over the contours, farm lanes, stone outcroppings and walls, wood stockades, streams, wetlands, and other features in exquisite detail reminiscent of Egyptian wall paintings. Only a few public spaces, such as the Grand Parade (the precursor to Madison Square Park), four squares named Bloomingdale, Hamilton, Manhattan, and Harlem, a wholesale market complex, and a water reservoir, were included originally. The area of Central Park, from Fifth Avenue to Eighth Avenue and 59th Street to 110th Street, was not a part of the plan as it was not envisioned until the 1850s.

But we have an earlier example of a Manhattan street grid. The last Dutch West India Company director-general, Peter Stuyvesant, came to New Amsterdam in 1647 and purchased land for his farm from the company four years later. He remained in New York after he surrendered New Amsterdam to the British in 1664 and, eventually, the Stuyvesant farm was divided between Peter’s great-grandsons Petrus and Nicholas Stuyvesant. Nicholas called his portion of the land the Bowery; Petrus called his Peterfield. In 1799 St. Mark’s Church in-the-Bowery, at Second Avenue and Tenth Street, opened on the Stuyvesant site. Eight generations of Stuyvesants are buried on the church grounds.

In 1787 Petrus Stuyvesant laid out a street grid on his land, which he began to subdivide in 1789. It actually complies with the points of the compass, running true east-west direction (the commissioners’ street grid does not). A garden fountain at Third Avenue and Stuyvesant Street has a large compass showing the east-west axis paralleling Stuyvesant Street. Most of the Stuyvesant grid was eradiated by the city’s own grid plan of 1811, except for part of the Stuyvesant grid below “North Street” (approximately where Houston Street is now) and Stuyvesant Street; it was allowed to remain, city leaders said at the time, “both for public convenience and for the accommodation of a large and respectable congregation attending St. Mark’s Church as well as the owners and occupants of several large and commodious dwelling houses.” No. 21 Stuyvesant Street, which Petrus built for his daughter Elizabeth and her husband Nicholas Fish in 1803-04, is now included in the St. Mark’s Historic District. In recent years, the commissioners’ street grid plan has been viewed a little more favorably by urban planners, with lost natural features perhaps fading in memory and population growth demanding a rational order to ease the strain of dense urban life. Or, maybe it is because we have preserved some places of special character to sustain our souls?

By Brian J Pape, AIA, LEED AP

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

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Credit: Wikipedia.

THE STREET GRID WAS CONCEIVED HERE, AT 329 BLEECKER STREET, the building farthest to the right, at the corner of Christopher Street. Photo by Brian J Pape, AIA.

21 STUYVESANT STREET, the townhouse at the left, today. Other townhouses in the St. Mark’s Historic District have also been saved, such as 23 and 25 Stuyvesant Street on the right. Photo by Brian J Pape, AIA.
What Leadership Can Be

Erik Larson’s new book intimately explores Churchill and Britain during the Blitz

By Eric Uhlfelder

Erik Larson’s remarkable account of Winston Churchill’s first year as Britain’s Prime Minister—when Germany unleashed the Luftwaffe against England in 1940—is a read to be savored.

The Splendid and the Vile, Larson’s eighth historical book, proceeds like a thriller. He accomplishes this by shifting narratives told by a host of compelling characters, intertwining individual lives with the war, and breathing life into everyday events.

We hear directly from the most essential Minister of Aircraft Production Lord Beaverbrook, Churchill’s daughters Pamela and Mary, his wife Clementine, one of the prime minister’s personal secretaries, John Colville, German Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, German fighter pilot Adolf Galland, English diarists who brought us contemporaneous accounts of daily life during the Blitz, and, of course, Winston Churchill himself. This construct works because Larson understands so well what makes history engaging.

Chronology is the key to sequencing the story. He photographed and scanned reams of original source material, scribbling thoughts on each page to organize his cache. He didn’t really take notes; rather, he proceeded as if relying on osmosis to absorb and integrate raw material into storytelling that reads as if he had conjured up the tale himself.

When asked for a “Wow” moment during his research, he recalled discovering that the British had sunk a French battleship, killing nearly 1,200 sailors after their commanders refused the British request to sail to neutral ports away from the advancing German army.

France and Britain had gone at each other for centuries. Larson found certain British strategic military planners in the 1930s feared, as war was approaching, that France might turn against England. Such thinking is hard to reckon when Hitler’s explicit orders. The likely cause: Britain had discovered original first-hand material. While at the UK National Archives in London, he came across remarkably detailed interrogation reports of downed German fliers. He marveled at “Mass Observation,” a private initiative set up well before the war to encourage citizens to record ordinary day-to-day existence. “The effort had recruited hundreds of diarists to write about the most quotidian aspects of British life,” Larson explains, “and then comes the war; and these journals, to me, were just incredible.”

His single biggest coup was when he got permission to use Mary Churchill’s diary. (She was Churchill’s youngest daughter, age 17 when the war started.) “I secured access from her daughter,” Larson recalls. “It was unpublished, and I was one of only two people to have seen it. That was just extraordinary because it gave me insights into Churchill, and the war and the family, that I never ever would have had otherwise.”

EU: What inspired the title of your book?
EL: An entry from John Colville’s diary when he described watching a very intense raid through his bedroom window. He was struck by the beauty of the night, the clear black sky, the searchlights, the whole cataclysmic thing—the juxtaposition of natural splendor and human vileness. As soon as I read that passage, I knew what my title was going to be.

EU: What has been the response to the book?
EL: Its focus on good and evil has really resonated in the U.S., especially at this moment.

EU: What inspired you to write the book?
EL: I moved from Seattle to New York and began to better imagine what September 11th meant to New Yorkers. Then I thought what Britain endured during the war, at its peak, suffering 57 straight nights of bombing.

EU: What was your initial thought when you heard the U.S. presidential press secretary invoking the spirit of Churchill in describing Trump’s misadventure going to St. John’s Church after protestors had been gassed out of the way? EL: Nothing could possibly be more ludicrous.

The Splendid and the Vile contains remarkable pieces of history. We learn the first time central London was bombed on August 25, 1940, it was by accident, against Hitler’s explicit orders. The likely cause: Britain had discovered the Luftwaffe was relying on electromagnetic beams to direct bombers to their targets. Britain learned how to distort these beams, confusing Luftwaffe pilots.

Had this mis-drop not occurred, Churchill may not have responded by bombing central Berlin. Aerial attacks on cities may not have escalated, which devastated many British towns like Coventry and obliterated German cities like Dresden.

Then, in revealing the absurdity of Hitler’s war, Larson found a diary entry from early 1941: “What a glorious spring day outside. How beautiful the world can be! And we have no chance to enjoy it. Human beings are so stupid. Life is so short, and they then go and make it so hard for themselves.”

The author was Joseph Goebbels.

Thank you.

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It’s just as important as ever to stay healthy, because there’s so much ahead to cheer for—together.

Northwell.edu/SupportingTheVillage
Notes From Away:  
True Patriots

By Tom Lamia

The small gathering of Mainers on an inlet facing the open Atlantic near me bears the name of a Civil War General of great fame. A Medal of Honor winner and mild-mannered professor, Joshua Chamberlain did as much to preserve the Union and define grace in victory as well as courage in battle as any individual soldier in the course of that terrible War. As I pondered the likely origins of Chamberlain, Maine, I was struck by the understatement of having a small seaside village named after such a giant figure in Maine history. I looked into it.

Chamberlain is roughly three miles as the crow flies (and many do) from my house in South Bristol. It is directly across John's Bay and over the Pemaquid Peninsula to its spot on the open Atlantic. Chamberlain is a place of quiet beauty with a natural breakwater that shelters its cove. The local area is a tourist destination that offers spectacular views of offshore islands and crashing seas. New Harbor, just to the south, is a small commercial center built around a finger of the sea protruding into the rocky shore and forming a protected harbor for the lobster boats of those who live in houses ringing the harbor. New Harbor is also the embarkation point for ferry access to Monhegan Island. The ferry carries visitors and residents to Monhegan's colony of working artists seeking to do credit on canvas to the scenes of sea, sky, landscape, and off-the-grid life of the island.

Pemaquid Point Lighthouse Park lies a mile or so farther south, at the tip of the Pemaquid Peninsula. The lighthouse is the centerpiece of photos and paintings seen in the gift shops and galleries nearby. With patient research, however, I found no evidence that General Chamberlain was the progenitor of the village that bears his surname. Neither did I find evidence to the contrary.

Joshua Chamberlain was what I consider a true patriot: a volunteer soldier, a loyal and talented citizen, a scholar and, most importantly, a leader in all that he did, most of which was in public service to his state and his country. In August, 1862, at age 34, a newly appointed Professor of Modern Languages at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine (he spoke nine languages in addition to English), with no military experience, he appealed to Maine's Governor, Israel Washburn, for leave to recruit and lead volunteer troops for the Union Army. His pitch included the disarmingly honest statement that he knew little of military affairs, but what he did not know he was willing to learn.

Governor Washburn granted Chamberlain's request to recruit a regiment of volunteers from among his coastal Maine neighbors. In recognition of his inexperience as a soldier, Chamberlain declined a commission as Colonel in command of these troops (he preferred "to start a little lower and learn the business first"). In August 1862, he accepted a commission as Lt. Colonel and second in command of Maine's 20th Volunteer Regiment, which under the command of Col. Adelbert Ames, soon set off for Virginia and the Battle of Fredericksburg where it saw its first action in early 1863. There were battle casualties and smallpox infections that kept the regiment out of the battle at Chancellorsville in May. In June, Ames was promoted and Chamberlain became Colonel in command as the 20th Maine arrived at Gettysburg.

That great battle began on July 1, 1863. Chamberlain's troops were assigned to protect the Union Army's left flank at Little Round Top, where they stood firm against Rebel charges until their ammunition ran out. Chamberlain then ordered, "fix bayonets" and a downhill charge into the enemy, winning the day and the battle.

Maine became a state in 1820 (the Missouri Compromise, as you no doubt remember). Chamberlain and his recruits had been formed into a unit of the Army of the Potomac. Their homes and families were about as far from the theater of war in and around the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., as was possible in 1863. Moreover, Maine was mostly a rural backwater with a small population and a struggling economy. With draft riots soon to break out in New York City over opposition to the war, it is worth mentioning that Chamberlain's appeal to Governor Washburn included these words: "I fear, this war, so costly of blood and treasure, will not cease until men of the North are willing to leave good positions, and sacrifice the dearest personal interests, to rescue our country from desolation, and defend the national existence against treachery."

The enemy at Gettysburg was, of course, the Army of the Confederacy, the defenders of secession and champions of its institution of slavery. Chamberlain and the Maine Volunteers fought under the Union banner of the Stars and Stripes. The Confederate Army flag was the Stars and Bars. Over 600,000 lost their lives in the course of the Civil War. There was bravery on both sides, and a toll of horrible proportions in all parts of the American landscape affected by the battles. Soldiers and Generals alike were killed in the many battles for strategic advantage, perhaps none greater in casualties or strategic importance than Gettysburg.

Chamberlain having said that he was "willing to learn" to be a commanding officer sounds ridiculously Pollyannish today. Apart from his courage in leading his troops at Little Round Top, (for which he won the Medal of Honor), in the course of the War, Chamberlain was wounded eight times and had six horses shot out from under him. He was promoted on the battlefield to Major General after being grievously wounded and not expected to live more than a few hours. Of course, he did survive. On the day of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, General Grant conferred General Chamberlain the honor of commanding the Union Army at the surrender ceremonies. He is remembered for ordering his troops to "Present Arms" and for the band to play "Dixie" to honor the bravery and sacrifice of the defeated Confederates as they filed past.

On return to civilian life, Chamberlain went back to Bowdoin College to teach and subsequently to become its President. Later he was elected Governor of Maine four times. In 1914, at age 83, after fifty years of pain and disability he died from his war wounds. He was the last battle casualty of the Civil War.

Chamberlain was a true patriot. He fought and died for his state, and for his country and its flag. Those Confederate troops that he honored at War's end were also true patriots; they had a flag and a country for which they fought, as Chamberlain recognized by his respectful treatment on the day of their surrender.

Those who now use the Stars and Bars to identify individual causes whether youthful rebellion or organized hostility to their country or its government, are not entitled to the honor given to those who fought for the Confederacy. They accepted their rebellion as an act of treason against the United States. They were traitors, as they well understood. They accepted their fate as a defeated army and conquered nation. That nation ceased to exist with its Army's defeat, as did its institution of slavery. Homage to the flag and other symbols of the Confederacy is the antithesis of true patriotism and those doing so have no claim to be true American patriots. Such actions are the mark of anarchism, racial hatred, vigilantism and illegal use of force to subjugate peoples and beliefs entitled to the protection of the United States of America and its Constitution.
Independence Day—The People Take Charge

By Jesse Robert Lovejoy

The last time this happened was 50 years ago. The president and the generals appeared on TV nightly, reporting scores of victories and overwhelming body counts. The media bought the story. Vietnamese villages were incinerated, and towns were carpet-bombed. Thousands of young Americans bled and died in the rice paddies. The public's questions went unanswered. Anti-war protests started small and kept growing. Americans figured it out. The war was unwinnable, and the human cost was staggering. The government persisted, but public opinion swung around; millions marched. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated, the National Guard opened fire on protestors at Kent State, and the dam burst.

It happened again on May 25th in Minneapolis. After decades of witnessing unarmed African Americans tragically killed by police, the heartless suffocation of George Floyd horrified and galvanized the country. The dam burst, millions marched, and America changed.

Response to the coronavirus also reached the tipping point. When the virus hit last winter, people understood shutdowns were necessary to avoid the collapse of inadequate and undersupplied hospitals. Millions of Americans bore the cost in lost jobs and lost savings, but infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths plummeted. The media adored the experts, but the experts had forecast millions of deaths and were baffled. At least the governors did something.

Reopening has not gone well. The process requires flexible and courageous leadership by state governments, and a sense of what people have learned and how much pain they can endure. In New York, this has been handicapped by overreliance on experts, lack of common sense, rigid rules, and fear.

Governor Cuomo failed to perceive the frustration and anger of New Yorkers and didn’t push to get them back to work as fast as possible. Illogically, he applied the same litany of “metrics” in rural upstate as he did to dense New York City. The shutdown has stretched on for more than three months past the peak. With infection rates down to about 1 percent, what’s the point?

The governor lost credibility, dodging blame for his tragic nursing home blunders. He went to Washington, but rather than asking for reimbursement of New York’s costs, he argued for his party’s national priorities. He gave long-winded daily lectures on the importance of government, but failed to notice the burning frustration and anger of millions of out-of-work and locked-down New Yorkers. The tragic killing of George Floyd threw gasoline on the fire.

The suffocating shutdown of neighborhood businesses dragged on and on, while tens of thousands of protestors were permitted to march and looters dealt a crushing second blow to minority-owned businesses. Absorbed in his metrics, Cuomo maintained the lockdown. Mass protests were fine; work, worship and a beer with friends were dangerous and illegal.

Government at all levels has lost tremendous credibility. Reform of police practices has been delayed for decades by state and local politics and police unions. In Washington, congressmen and senators posture for the cameras but refuse to act. Racist attitudes persist with tragic results. The response by government to the virus has also been misguided. Public health officials overestimated the long-term impact of the pandemic, and governors ignored the long-term impact of personal isolation, unemployment, and recession. Now, they tell us the right to protest is more important than health considerations, but the right to worship or make a living is not. Is this public health advice, or is it just politics? On Friday, June 26th, a federal district court in Albany lifted the ban on religious assembly and gave us the answer: it’s politics.

As they did 50 years ago, Americans have figured it out, stepped in and taken charge. Millions are marching. Opinion has turned around. The George Floyd killing has already brought real change. Policing practices and legal protections are rapidly being reformed. The killings must end.

Government of the people, by the people, for the people is alive and well.

Jesse Robert Lovejoy, a lifelong New Yorker, worked in law and finance for over 50 years in Manhattan. Currently, he operates a personal consulting business.
A Radically Inclusive Proposal for the Future of NYC Pride

By Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D.

Since the first Gay Liberation marchers took their first steps in the West Village on June 28th, 1970, “Pride” has gone from a protest march to a glitter-filled sparkle parade. We are grateful for so much to celebrate, and are confident that re-focusing the energy of the annual NYC Pride parade will have a more powerful and lasting impact on the LGBTQ community.

The parade organizers, Heritage of Pride (HOP), and its leadership have successfully built and grown the parade into what it is today. While the organizers earn millions in sponsorships from corporate America, however, this money is not being used effectively to benefit the community. Organizers also charge non-profits so heavily to have a float or to pass out free literature that many of the smaller groups have stopped participating altogether. Some members of the LGBTQ community have become so disillusioned by the over-commercialization of NYC Pride that Reclaim Pride was mounted as a new counter-protest held on the same day as the larger parade.

LGBTQ organizations have fought hard to win the support of corporate America—support that remains vital for funding ongoing achievements. As custodians of the parade on behalf of the LGBTQ community, we believe the parade organizers need to give back to the community in a meaningful and significant way. With the parade canceled for the first time in 50 years because of the SARS coronavirus pandemic, this may be a good time to take another look at NYC Pride and examine where we go from here. Let’s see if we can find a new model which we can all get behind and support by the time we get back into action in 2021. Any improvements may help the LGBTQ community achieve its next 50 years of milestone successes, including an end to state-sanctioned killings of gays, a worldwide ban on conversion therapy, HIV and AIDS immigration equality, trans rights, and cures and vaccines for HIV/AIDS among other goals.

The goal is to engage the broader community in a search for solutions. We encourage WestView readers to submit proposals and ideas. You can share any fresh new ideas with our LGBTQ editor at kambiz.shekdar@rftca.org. In addition, NYC Pride is a public organization that encourages participation. For more information, to get involved, and to find out when meetings are taking place, anyone interested can email secretary@nycpride.org.

The proposed formula for greater LBTQ equity, unity, and corporate social responsibility for our continued and combined success:

1. At least 50 percent of all corporate donations in connection with NYC Pride must go directly to LGBTQ community and non-profit organizations.
2. The parade organizers can facilitate these partnerships by collecting and sharing information about each interested community group with interested corporate sponsors.
3. Corporate sponsors could then indicate which one or more groups they may be interested in supporting financially, and how much (possibly based on a menu of pre-set options), with mutual agreement from the organization(s) seeking support.

Any and all LGBTQ non-profit and community organizations would be encouraged to participate in establishing and implementing these proposals. Re-verified and established organizations such as God’s Love We Deliver and the LGBTQ Community Center may attract the larger sponsorship packages while newer organizations like TransNewYork or Research Foundation to Cure AIDS may get their first sponsorship dollars from smaller corporate donors, all of which would need to support a non-profit in order to participate in the parade.

The secondary and transformative effect of these proposals is that non-profits would have the funding and support they need to share their message during Pride, with spectators assembled to hear it. In addition, new relationships will be forged between the corporations looking to support the LGBTQ community and organizations that vitally need them. Our proposals allow sponsors to identify those organizations whose missions are in line with the priorities of their LGBTQ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and external community initiatives.

The parade organizers should be the first ones to support these changes, precisely because they are the guardians of a movement that is of, by, and for the LGBTQ community. HOP can also make the full list of participating organizations and their contact information publicly available, creating a database for use by prospective donors who wish to identify and support LGBTQ causes.

Because the devil is in the details, let’s consider these: More restrictions are needed. It must be stated bluntly that more funding of certain organizations does not alter placement in the parade lineup. Lawyers don’t get to lead the parade just because a major New York law firm throws a big bone to support gay lawyers. Those edgy moments, ACT-UP “dying” in front of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, are sure to be lost if marchers are afraid to interfere with cash flow. The Pride Parade is a buoyant and celebratory event, but please don’t let money remove the parade’s unifying community role. Consider the Super Bowl as your nightmare scenario: it used to be about football; now, it’s often only the advertisements that viewers remember. The plan also needs stronger steps to address how the funds are equitably distributed. A steering committee could be created, composed of organizers, leaders in the LGBTQ community, corporate representatives, and members of LGBTQ non-profits who could assist organizers and corporations in broadening the allocation of donations across non-profit groups.

Finally, with the surging #BlackLivesMatter movement in our vision, we hope these ideas may be encouraging and helpful as corporate entities begin to take responsibility and be accountable to the BLM movement as well. We are pleased to discuss these proposals with our brothers and sisters to hear their views as we all forge ever-expanding alliances in the fight for our constitutional rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Presented by:
Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D., President of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS (RFTCA), and Science and LGBTQ Editor at WestView News.

Supported by:
Alan Cumming, actor, author, and activist
Bruce Anderson, former president of the LGBT Community Center
Brian Downey, President of the Gay Officers Action League (GOAL)
Calogero Salvo, former board member of the LGBT Community Center, independent filmmaker, and creator of first PSA for HIV/AIDS
Craig M. de Thomas, activist, entrepreneur, former board member of Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC), and member, National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)
Ellie Covan, founder of Dixon Place

Father Graeme Napier, Rector at St. John’s in the Village
Gennifer Herly, Ph.D., founder and executive director of Trans New York
Karen Haggberg, board chair of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS
Lisa Cannistraci, activist, and owner of Henrietta Hudson
Lisa E. Davis, Ph.D., scholar, author, and activist
Patrick Gallineaux, Stoli LGBT manager and brand ambassador
Sherry Vine, international drag legend
Steven Marion, LGBTQ community organizer
Stanley Wiodyka Jiménez, community organizer and Executive Director of the New York City AIDS Memorial
Steve V. Rodriguez, executive producer/host of TAGPODCAST (aka Talk About Gay Sex podcast)
William Self and Kevin Uhrin, LGBTQ advocates
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It is written by people who live right here—around the corner or across the street—written about our very small but very special community known all over the world as The Village.

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New York City entered Phase 2 of its re-opening on Monday June 22nd. Among other things, during this phase, restaurants are allowed to offer outdoor dining. They did not have much time to prepare -- the mayor only confirmed that outdoor dining would proceed on Friday, June 19th. Restaurants wishing to participate in the program had to file an application with the Department of Transportation. Fees were waived for the application and for permits. Restaurants could apply for tables on the sidewalk, as well as tables in parking spaces on the street. Many restaurants took advantage of this program, and by mid-week, the Village looked quite different with certain areas having taken on the appearance of a block party. Readers wishing to see the full list of Village restaurants that have applied for outdoor dining licenses can check at the Department of Transportation website (note that some restaurants that have applied for outdoor seating are not open yet), but here, we are providing a partial list grouped by area. Expect more to open in the coming weeks.

Greenwich Avenue is an attractive option for outdoor dining: the sidewalks are wide, and there is less traffic than on some of the other avenues. Since a number of restaurants have opened in close proximity, there is a convivial air with street life that had been absent for months. Rahi, the well-regarded Indian restaurant has embraced outdoor dining and has set up a grill and a holli ice cream stand. Also on Greenwich, Fiddlesticks, which already had groups of people gathering in front for drinks, has set up tables, and Wogies, The Meatball Shop and Bluestone Lane are taking advantage of their existing outdoor terraces. Closer to 6th Avenue, Le Baratin has moved outdoors, but recently-opened American Bar is not showing any signs of life with plywood still covering the windows. The windows at Mah-Ze-Dahr are also covered with plywood, but the bakery has applied for outdoor seating and will hopefully be open again soon. Roey’s and Rosemary’s, two restaurants that used to have lively outdoor scenes, are only open for take-out so far, but sister restaurant Clau-dette on 5th Avenue will be open for outdoor dining soon. At Greenwich and 6th Avenue, Olio e Pia has added an additional row of tables to its already large flowery outdoor space, and all tables are separated by elegant loganoid dividers.

From there, heading north on 6th Avenue, there are a number of excellent dining options: Kubeh is offering its unusual and delicious Middle Eastern fare at outdoor tables, La Contenta Oeste has opened its spacious patio, and E.A.K Ramen has set up a few tables in front of the restaurant. Just east of 6th Avenue on 10th Street, Osteria 57, the Italian pescatarian spot, has a lovely set-up with, according to our fashion editor, “hip, festive curbside dining and a hopping scene late into the evening.”

Another nice street for outdoor dining is West 4th. French wine bar St. Tropez is open and looking very French, and Café Cluny has set up tables with plexiglass partitions. Sant Ambroeus and Extra Virgin are serving customers on their outdoor patios (Extra Virgin has a petition to close the street to traffic to extend their outdoor dining on their website). The Beatrice Inn has tables in front of the restaurant continuing to the corner where Blenheim used to be (now covered in plywood). The sight of waiters in long aprons serving the diners is somewhat incongruous. Corner Bistro has tables extending down West 4th Street and Jane Street, and the night I walked by, the owners were maneuvering large planters with exuberant flowers on Jane Street to further enhance the dining experience. On the corner of 4th Street and 14th Avenue, Bar Sardine is open for take-out and delivery, and Gabe Stuhman, the owner, has applied for permits for outdoor seating for it and nearby Fairfax, Joseph Leonard and Jeffrey’s Grocery, so hopefully those will be open soon. Jeffrey’s Grocery is currently operating more as a grocery and pantry. Hudson Street is perhaps the merriest spot for outdoor dining with lots of colors, movement and even music. Cowgirl Hall of Fame is open for business in all its kitschy glory, and Filipino taqueria Flipsig has gone all out with tables on the sidewalk, a tent in the street with rainbow banners and upbeat music playing in the background. Katana Kitten does not have outdoor seating yet, but is offering take-out cocktails and bar food. Upright Craft Beer and Cocktails is featuring a Portuguese menu in collaboration with Smorgasburg favorite Leitão. The traditional Portuguese dishes include the over-the-top Francesina sandwich and Pasteis de Nata (custard tarts). One block west, on Greenwich Street, local favorite The Left Bank has returned with sidewalk and street seating. The restaurant's side hustle, Poulet Sans Tete, a rotisserie chicken take-out venture kept the restaurant afloat during these past few months. Back on Hudson, Café Kitsune, ever elegant, has a number of high tops on the sidewalk, and White Horse Tavern, which already has lots of outdoor seating has added a platform on the street. Dante West Village, which had been under construction for a while, had not opened at the beginning of the week for outdoor dining, but a contributor alerted us that it did finally open on Saturday and that “it was quite a mob scene!” (The original the restaurant is featuring take-out and delivery only, with a pick-up window on 16th Street between 9th and 10th Avenues). One area that looks better than it did pre-pandemic is Christopher Street west of 7th Avenue. Northfork and Fiaschetteria Pistoia have tables outdoors, and in the middle, Red Paper Clip is offering takeout and delivery, but they have applied for an outdoor seating permit so they should be joining the others soon. The building housing these restaurants is owned by Cronan, and it often looked sad with its empty storefronts, but the bright colors of the outdoor dining set-up makes the whole thing look quite jolly.

Anchoring the 7th Avenue dining scene is Boucheerie, which always had a lovely terrace with lots of seating, but now there are custom dividers as well between the tables similar to the ones at sister restaurant Olio e Pia. Heading north, Ofrenda and Duplex are open for business, with Duplex sporting a large Black Lives Matter Banner. Agave, which closed a while ago because of a kitchen fire has re-opened and their pleasant patio is serving Mexican food, while to-go cocktails are available through a window at the front of the restaurant. Ruby Brasa is open with more tables than ever, but Mo-randi, which usually has quite a bit of outdoor seating is still not open (although they have applied for a permit). The 7th Avenue location of Fiaschetteria Pistoia is also open but has only a few tables on the side-walk in front of the restaurant. Across from Boucherie, Bar Pisellino is open. It is such a small space that the outdoor seating was always the main focus of this Italian wine bar. Also from Rita Sodi and Jody Williams, Via Carota and Buvette (both on Grove Street) are finally open. Via Carota has added tables in the street, but still expects a long wait for dinner. Continuing west on Grove to Bedford Street, Little Owl has reopened with outdoor seating on one of the loveliest corners of the Village. Suprema now has outside seating on Grove and 7th Avenue, and Caliente Cab Co., which has a party-like atmosphere outside is pouring margaritas and tequila shots again. Finally Rafele, always joyous, is serving its delicious Italian food under the stars.

14th Street is perhaps not as lovely as some of the other areas described above, but there are a few excellent and attractive dining options there that should not be overlooked. Chama Mama, the Georgian spot with a custom clay oven where bread dishes are baked has tables both in front of the restaurant and in a secluded backyard patio. Zu Sik is serving Korean food on the sidewalk, and La Nacional has set up a particularly inviting seating area complete with parasols in a little nook in front of the Spanish Benvolent Society. Finally, diner fans will be happy to hear that Good Stuff Diner is back serving large portions of classic coffee shop fare.

Closed/Closing

Some businesses have not survived the pandemic. Rags-A-Gogo (218 West 14th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues) is gone, and a sign in the window says: “Thank you for 30 years of Non-Essentel (sic) memories.” A reader informs us that Teich Toys (575 Hudson Street between Bank and West 11th Streets) is closing; DQ Grill & Chill (54 West 14th Street, between 5th and 6th Avenues) has removed all signage, and the location is no longer listed on the Dairy Queen website. Rip’s Magic Shop, the retro plant-based comfort food spot, appears to be RIP. It was open for less than a year. We’ve heard from a number of people that Golden Rabbit, a card and stationery shop (561 Hudson Street between Perry and West 11th Streets) will close at the end of the month. They had been in that location in a Cramon building for 30 years. And finally, according to a number of media outlets, Stonewall Inn (5 Christopher Street, between Seventh Avenue South and Waverly Place), which has been closed since mid-March, may not re-open.

The owners, Kurt Kelly and Stacy Lentz, have started a GoFundMe campaign for the Inn which was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2000.


**A View From the Kitchen**

**By Isa Covo**

How do we measure time?

8+ minutes: On my treadmill, and I am not a champion runner, 5 minutes, I begin perspiring, 6.5 my breath is a little labored, my pulse is faster, 8 minutes I am parched, 8.5 I have to stop and drink some water.

30 seconds: I start the coffee grinder which is set for 30 seconds, meanwhile I prepare the coffee maker, add the filter in its cone, then wait a few seconds until the coffee grinder stops.

5 seconds: At the ophthalmologist when I need to have pictures of the retina taken, if there was someone before me for the same purpose. When using the old machines, it took 5 seconds per eye, it seemed it was done in a blink. When it came my turn and I had to keep my eye wide open without moving, it felt like an eternity.

How long did time feel for Mr. Floyd?

**Pappardelle with Chickpeas**

This recipe is from the Veneto region and was certainly influenced by the cuisine of the Middle East. It is a great vegetarian dish for a main course. It can also be served as a first course if the portions are halved.

If the pasta is eggless and the cheese is not used, it becomes suitable for vegans.

In my preparation, the one in the picture, 1 replaced the rosemary with mint for an additional Middle Eastern touch with very good results.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 cup dried chickpeas
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 whole cloves
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh garlic
- 2 tablespoons parsley leaves finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons rosemary, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons tomato paste
- ¾ to ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 ounces fresh pappardelle
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Grated Parmesan (optional)

**DIRECTIONS**

- Soak the chickpeas overnight in plenty of cold water. The next day, drain well, rinse and transfer the chickpeas to a large saucepan. Add the bay leaf, cloves, and four cups of water. Bring to a boil; simmer uncovered for one to one and a half hours, or until the chickpeas are tender but not mushy.
- Slice the onion into thin half-moons and separate the layers.
- Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium high heat and add the onions and sauté stirring occasionally to prevent them from burning until the onions become translucent and begin to caramelize. This should take approximately 4 minutes. Add the minced garlic and the herbs and cook for an additional minute. Remove from the heat.
- Drain the chickpeas over a bowl and reserve the cooking water. Discard the bay leaf and the cloves.
- Transfer half the drained chickpeas to the container of a blender, and add ½ cup of the cooking liquid and blend to a puree. Blend in the tomato paste and the cayenne. If the sauce seems too thick, add some more of the cooking liquid. Transfer the whole chickpeas and the chickpea sauce to the saucepan with the onion mixture, season with salt and pepper to taste and simmer uncovered for ten minutes to blend the flavors. If the sauce becomes too dry add a few tablespoons of the reserved chickpea cooking liquid.
- Transfer the remainder of the reserved liquid to the saucepan where the chickpeas have cooked and add more water if necessary, to make two quarts. Bring to a boil. Add the pappardelle and cook two to three minutes until tender but still firm.
- Drain the pasta. But also keep some of the cooking liquid, and transfer it to the saucepan with the chickpea sauce; simmer for one minute. Add more of the cooking liquid if the sauce is too dry. However, the result should be a thick creamy sauce coating the pasta and the whole chickpeas, not a soup.
- Serve on heated plates.

**Yield:** 4 servings

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**The Window**

**By Lynn Pacifico**

Until the birth of my sister when I was four, my family lived in a little two-bedroom house that was owned by a great aunt. My brother, a year younger than I, shared a bedroom with me, his crib across the room from mine. A special relationship formed between us there, a security in each other's presence. In the early morning before my parents woke and the family day began, we entertained each other. I remember using my crib bar to do ballet and watching my toddler brother, in his crib, attempting to imitate me.

There was a window near my crib that overlooked the back yard and an apple tree that hung branches over the roof below. The tree tintaled my senses in the spring with beautiful pale pink blossoms that attracted birds and bees. Later in the summer, the tree magically grew delicious bright red apples. During the summer heat the window was left open providing a meditation on nature, and a sweet fragrant breeze.

Windows can signify many things such as a portal, (to another place), a differential (inside/outside), a view (picture windows), an understanding (a window to the world), an opportunity (a window of time). Windows have had a special meaning to me ever since, as a child I watched Peter Pan, Tinkerbell, Wendy and the boys fly out of the bedroom window to freedom and the fantastic.

As an adult, when taking my five year old on the Disney Peter Pan ride, I lost my breath as the ride began with us “flying” out of the bedroom window. I was surprised at how much this affected me. I don't remember anything else about the ride, only that my eyes and my mouth were wide open, and my hand held my heart at the thrill of flying out that window.

I believe that the window incident was the first time my parents spanked me—not hard, but they began paddling me as I was pulled inside through the window. Can you imagine their horror to walk into an empty bedroom and find the two of us outside the window on the roof? I also believe that that was when I began to understand that I was responsible for taking care of my brother and the concept of doing something wrong, even if I wasn’t trying to be bad by climbing out the window, my brother following me.

A few years ago, my mother and brother long gone, my father, sister and I drove by the little house. Sitting outside in the car, the three of us silently looked at our old home, each lost in our own thoughts. Mine was of my brother and me, outside the window, sitting on the roof, happy in the beauty and wonder of nature.

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For the Love of It

By Debra Camitta

Imagine you changed careers and started a new business and then suddenly the World and New York City went on pause. Like many others, that is what happened to me.

What didn’t go on pause was my great love for flowers and creating floral designs. My passion for flowers started when I was quite young, wandering in the woods picking wildflowers and arranging them in hollowed out pieces of wood. I let the flowers and branches dictate the design using their unique size, shape, color, twist and bend to determine the final arrangement.

Whether I am creating a seasonal bouquet for delivery, or a floral design for a small gathering or special occasion, the passion and excitement remains the same. The ability flowers have to create an atmosphere, a passion, an emotion, a place to pause for a deep breath, or, simply to make someone smile. What could be better to have in one’s life than living art? I have always believed that having beautiful flowers delivered to your home or office should be easy and affordable. Life can, at times, be so complicated and having something simple and beautiful to look at really can expand your joy.

Located in the West Village and ready to deliver affordable bouquets to you or someone you care about.

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90 Morton Street Renaissance

By Brian J Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

Development in NYC takes a long time, and it may also have to weather Great Recession. Such is the case for 90 Morton, aka 627 Greenwich Street, once an abandoned, eight-story printing warehouse. When architect and developer Peter Moore and KMG Partners paid $37.8 million for the site in 2005, they had planned to convert it into residences by getting the zoning changed in 2008. The Royal Bank of Scotland took the property back in 2012, but didn’t sell the property until mid-2014 when Criterion Real Estate bought it for $75 million. It was sold for $105 million to Isaac Heres Brack Capital Real Estate, a Dutch investment and development firm, later in 2014.

For years when walking by, one could smell the mold and damp air emanating from the empty loft building. Fortunately, as the loft building at 75 Morton Street across the street was finally transformed into a new community school, so too 90 Morton has had a renaissance.

Issac & Stern Architects began designing for 29 condominiums and three commercial units on the ground floor in 2015, but they were later replaced by Asaf Gottman of Gottsman-Szmelcman Architecture as the designer, with Marc Turkel of Leroy Street Studios (LSS) for interior designs. Sales began in April 2018 by Reveni Real Estate, with prices for the condominiums starting at $5.3 million.

Construction was halted for the pandemic, but now, as 90 Morton Owner LLC, its 35 residences, 122,000-square-foot area, twelve-story, 150-foot-tall, mixed-use project is getting its final details inside and out. While the original window openings have been reglazed with energy-efficient industrial-style windows, the two-story base masonry has been clad with large limestone slabs that cleverly conceal inserts of LED strip lighting on the vertical mullions.

Up above, a four-story addition of dark facades and railings for outdoor terraces play out as contrast to the light masonry walls, both cantilevering out in some areas, and receding in others. Residential units will range from 1,813 SF, 2BR to 5,820 SF, 5BR homes, with some 12 ceilings and original concrete columns, plus industrial-modern custom cabinet kitchens.

90 Morton Street amenities include a 24-hour attended lobby, a resident’s library, cold-storage room, a fully-equipped fitness center and yoga area located next to the main lobby, a children’s playroom, a 64-foot indoor pool in the cellar with clerestory windows, with direct elevator access, saunas, changing rooms with showers and individual lockers. To top it off, a common roofdeck, full outdoor kitchen, a barbecue station, a powder room, a gas fireplace, and 360-degree views will be available.

Previous to 2018, this was the empty, 8-story loft structure at 627 Greenwich Street. Photo credit: YIMBY.

The median price for condos in Greenwich Village is $5.775 million and $2,768 per square foot, according to brokerage CityRealty, so this seems to be priced right in there. Yes, it’s for the rich, but that’s all we seem to be getting in the West Village.

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By Brian J Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

Architecture consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, is co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee, and is a journalist for architecture subjects.
Operation CoviDance: Mia’s Pandemic Mission

By Mia Berman

Maybe I’m not as agile as Ginger Rogers. I admit it. I never partnered with Fred Astaire or Baryshnikov. And maybe I didn’t have the moves of Shakira. But what I did have was an idea. When the Covid pandemic hit, I began wandering the rather lonely streets of the West Village; I noticed the solemn expressions on the faces of many essential workers. Suddenly I thought, “What if I could make them smile in just a few seconds?”

Watching the scurrying, committed essential workers trekking tirelessly down Greenwich and Hudson, across Houston and Barrow, unpacking truck loads of furniture, produce, mail, and groceries, crossing paths with the endless Amazon cart drivers and Grubhub deliverers, I decided I couldn’t perform my comedy act. They were simply too busy to stop. So, as I pondered the possibilities, I proceeded to do my own daily form of Zumba (“Mi-umba”) to my selected rockin’ music... and then the bulb went off.

Since I love to dance, and dancing is contagious, why not put on some upbeat tunes (Beatles, Beach Boys, Sergio Mendes, Manu Chao) and ask one worker a day to dance with me—six feet apart. The goal? Merely to break up the day and honor the worker’s devotion and work ethic. Just for 15 seconds.

And so it began. I cautiously walked toward Jerrica, the USPS postwoman, and asked her. I blasted Chaka Khan’s “Aint Nobody.” And just like that, Operation CoviDance # 1 was on the map.

Every day I choose a new tune, a new band, and a new fun outfit with bright patterns of stripes and polka dots, matching scarves, head bands, gloves, socks, masks and scrungeys in neon pinks, turqoise and magentas to turn the gloom to sparkle.

As of now, I’m up to Operation CoviDance # 44... and still twirling. My West Village one-on-one dance partners have included building superintendents, small business owners, supermarket, café, pharmacy and restaurant workers from 11th Street Café, Hudson River Flowers, UPS, Amazon, FedEx, DHL, Chobani, Oriental Express, Imperial Liquors, MTA, Flat Rate Moving, Fresh Direct, Caviar, Leitao—Portuguese Street Food, Wild, Village Apothecary, Grubhub, Café Kitsune, Oak Beer Distributors, Dumbo Moving, Reis Contractors, La Contenta Oeste and St.

Relief During the Shutdown: Online Delivery Service

By Jennifer Brozost

Throughout this pandemic—this time of fear, uncertainty and frustration—I have been scared. Scared of what the future holds, scared of getting sick, and scared to leave my house to get groceries to feed my family.

At the start of the shutdown I went to the supermarket and had a complete panic attack as swarms of people walked by me through the aisles. Not wanting to subject myself to the risk these trips to the supermarket presented, I went online to arrange a delivery. However, I could not get a Deli Time delivery from anywhere, even a week in advance. My panic rose and I did not know what to do...I was at a complete loss, as were many of my friends, some of whom would not even leave their apartments at all.

A friend of mine told me about this “great find,” for groceries. Well, that was the understatement of the year! It was the easiest site in the world to use, where I could get my groceries that day, an hour later! Great, so what was the catch? What was this site and how come I never heard of it???

Enter MaxDelivery. Now, if you know me, you’ll know I’m a pretty steady person. Pretty calm, “in the know,” and I don’t get overexcited when it is unwarranted. I run my own business and am a problem solver who tends to be unfazed by hype. However, all that changed with the introduction to my new best friend: Max.

MaxDelivery is a straightforward, easy to use site, even for someone whose computer skills are average at best! The site has a ton of great features—including that when an item is out of stock they will email you once it is back in stock. AND...you when an item is out of stock they will email delivered perfectly—stable, secure, and fish are fresh and delicious, as is all the food! Not only are the deliveries on time, packed perfectly and always on point, but they email you when the groceries are on their way and what time they will be delivered to your door.

Wait—there is more! Max also has a pharmacy section from which I was able to order all the things I need to help develop my new mani-pedi skill. And the site even has sections to buy games, cards for special occasions, and unique gifts. It is a one-stop shop. MaxDelivery has been a lifesaver...and I will persevere until the pandemic is over.

I’ll twist, meringue and salsa my way through this. Perhaps now I should start branching out into tango. After all it only takes two...

SEYDOU OF GRUBHUB AND MIA BERMAN CoviDancing on Hudson Street. Photo by Alan Denner.

Luke’s Church Thrift Shop. Some are shy, some hesitant, but once they take the first step, they’re enchanted. And they smile. I’ll persevere until the pandemic is over.

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Wait—there is more! Max also has a pharmacy section from which I was able to order all the things I need to help develop my new mani-pedi skill. And the site even has sections to buy games, cards for special occasions, and unique gifts. It is a one-stop wonder that I do not know how I had lived without.

With free delivery, my friends and I order at least two or three times per week. After ordering, I wait excitedly for my new best friend, as I know everything will be delivered perfectly—stable, secure, and reliable. I may never go to a grocery store again!

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Your Groceries
Delivered?

www.maxdelivery.com

“Did a full grocery order and had everything within an hour! Fantastic service.”
- Kristen D

“Fast delivery and excellent customer service!”
- Jamar F

As seen in:
New York
Fast Company
Wall Street Journal

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The Rainbow Flag

By Bruce Poli

In 1978, Gilbert Baker—who called himself the Gay Betsy Ross—hand dyed the first LGBT Rainbow Flag to fly in the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade. He was rumored to have been inspired by Judy Garland’s Over the Rainbow, and the iconic symbol of the ‘nation’ of gay rights has had a profound lasting influence on the movement and the community we now know as LGBT.

Following Harvey Milk’s assassination one year later, the flag became in great demand and is now seen as the world’s best-known multicolored flag of diversity and inclusiveness. Its history ties to a Buddhist flag.

Baker assigned specific meaning to each of the colors:

- **HOT PINK**: sexuality
- **RED**: life
- **ORANGE**: healing
- **YELLOW**: sunlight
- **GREEN**: nature
- **TURQUOISE**: magic/art
- **INDIGO/BLUE**: serenity/harmony
- **VIOLET**: spirit

The Rainbow Flag became the de facto icon for all that the LGBT community needed: a colorful symbol with valuable life enhancing themes represented by colors to wave in front of the world.

In its mission to brand the Gay and Lesbian community, the multihued flag dramatizes the struggle with theatrical colors. Like an international security blanket, the Rainbow Flag touches the heart and soul of the LGBT community worldwide, and has become perhaps its most potent weapon, a force of good to be recognized everywhere.

Brown and black stripes—which have been added onto the flag for many venues in recent years (a controversial ongoing discussion) are currently represented on a flagpole overlooking the Stonewall National Monument as well as the Transgender Flag which features light blue and pink (see photo of it flying in the Park) adding to the diversity of celebrated communities and causes. Gilbert’s Tour de Force has inspired a great meaning for symbols of the fight for Human Rights and the world is a better place for it.

Dedicated to our great friend Gilbert Baker, 1951-2017

Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

**THERE’VE BEEN SOME CHANGES MADE:**

**SOME SAD** - like the many, many West Villagers we’re losing

**SOME HAPPY** - like the re-opening of the playground

**AND SOME ... a mixed blessing perhaps??**

All photos by Maggie Berkvist.

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WestView News July 2020

www.westviewnews.org

Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

A TRANSGENDER FLAG flying across from the Stonewall National Monument. Photo by Bruce Poli.

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Dedicated to our great friend Gilbert Baker, 1951-2017

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what a beautiful world it would be if people had hearts like dogs.
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Reboot 2.0

By Keith Michael

It’s the afternoon of the longest day of the year: Saturday, June 20th, the summer solstice.

With me safely typing at my computer, Millie has declared that she is off-duty: corgi-flat to the floor, eyes closed, ears back, nose to the corner. This is distinctly different than her various seemingly feng shui-inspired “I’m working” strategic posts around the apartment, based on the activities she has taken upon herself to monitor, and if need be, to curtail.

My day started at 4:30 am to watch and listen to Paul Winter’s 25th Annual Summer Solstice Celebration, normally a live concert at St. John the Divine Cathedral. Rather than the normally gloriously minimalist reverie of sitting in the dark of that vast space as it is slowly enlivened by the light of the rising sun, this year the concert was streamed from the “cathedral loft” of his barn in the hills of northwestern Connecticut. Beyond the ethereal, seemingly timeless melodies from his soprano saxophone, I could occasionally catch the harmonic accompaniment of woodland Hermit and Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Redstart, and Veery songs. Theoretically, these could have been the same birds that visited Abingdon Square Park in April and May. Statistically unlikely, but still comforting to contemplate with hands wrapped around a warm mug of coffee in the dawn’s early light.

At 5:30 am I left to watch the real sunrise from Hudson River Park. Millie raised her head skeptically as I got dressed and opened the door to go out hours before I’m usually out of bed. The river was mirror calm, owned by the geese and ducks (and goslings and ducklings). As the sun began to glint off of the Jersey City skyline, vertical reflections stretched across the water. No virtual bird songs here. Robins, Mockingbirds, Cardinals, and House Sparrows were well along in the performance of their dawn chorus fugue. Over the river, the quartet of Common Terns that have moved in for the spring were already calling to each other, swerving, hovering, and diving precipitously for their breakfasts. I saw a new corgi puppy owner with a corgi smile printed on his mask. I have to get one (a corgi mask, not a corgi puppy).

For tonight’s summer solstice sunset, I’m going on my first New York City WILD! outing in three months with ten friends (masked and distanced), taking a subway and a bus to Plumb Beach, Brooklyn, for the spectacle of the horseshoe crab new moon high tide mating and egg laying ritual. Horseshoe crabs have been successfully doing this for about 350 million years, so it seems a humbling lesson about resilience to be learned right now.

Rebooting, earlier this week I’d taken my first subway ride since March to see the new LaGuardia Airport Terminal B and, particularly, the new Sarah Sze monumental centerpiece art installation Shorter Than the Day. More ruminations on time, complexity, and the sublime. Don’t wait until you have to fly somewhere—just go.

As of April 20th, my list of Corona Birds for the West Village had grown to 41 species, by May 20th it had risen to 76, and now, by June 20th the count has increased incrementally to 79. The last three were all warblers: Magnolia, Blackburnian, and Canada. I tried to fluff the tally this week to at least 80 by travelling (by bus) to Bryant Park to see a comically-billed American Woodcock that had been reported there, ridiculously easy to find, in the shrubbery north of the carousel. But Bryant Park can’t be stretched to be a satellite province of the West Village, so my bird species total for the three months of this Corona Spring stays at 79. This evening I’ll move on to counting other birds in another borough!

Tomorrow the days start getting shorter. Soon restaurants and retail stores, playgrounds, tennis courts, and barber shops repopulate. Phase by phase, we return to a readjusted semblance of normalcy. The birds have faith in the future, raising families and sending them out into the world to continue being fruitful and multiplying. May the next six months begin to be better than the last. Something new is happening. Millie rolls over on her side, and sighs. Perhaps she concurs.

Visit keithmichaelnyc.com for links to ALL of my WestView articles, books, photographs, and the latest schedule of New York City WILD! urban adventures in nature outings throughout the five boroughs (currently on hold). Follow me on Instagram @newyorkcitywild for daily photos from around NYC.
The Plight of New Yorkers Who Have No Homes

By Carol F. Yost

On May 12, 2020, an op-ed appeared in the Daily News with the title, “Why I Slept on the Subways: They Were a Safer Refuge for the Homeless the Public Holds in Contempt.” It was written by Denis Dugan, who identifies himself as a homeless man.

One paragraph reads: “With too few resources and workers out there to help the homeless, Mayor de Blasio and Governor Cuomo are taking away the only safe place some people have at night. Everybody wants to talk about the ‘disgusting’ homeless population and how we are getting in the way of ‘essential’ New Yorkers, as if homeless people are expendable New Yorkers.

As a person who’s come close to being homeless at least twice, I feel very strongly about this. Denis Dugan is not exaggerating. I don’t know what I’d do if I lost my apartment.

I’m grateful to Yetta Kurland and the Kurland Group for saving my tenancy in 2015; before that, in 1976, I was lucky at the last minute to hear about an apartment I could afford after the Salvation Army kicked 220 of us women out of the Evangeline ladies’ residence hall because they wanted to change it into what they called a domiciliary care facility for senior women.

The possibility of homelessness is no joke. There was a time I was receiving food stamps; once I applied for welfare and I jokingly applied for food stamps? Good! The people forced to live on the Subways: They Were a Safer Refuge for the Homeless the Public Holds in Contempt.

By John F. Early

Many out-of-town visitors to the West Village, as well as locals, have seen the young man who usually sits on the sidewalk in front of the CVS on Sheridan Square. Tanned from homelessness rather than, sadly, the Hamptons, John is personable and charming nevertheless. He and I have been chatting for months. In that time, I have found that he is not addicted to alcohol or using drugs. Alright, he smokes, but, well, maybe you might smoke too, if your circumstances were as stressful as his.

Given John’s precarious homelessness situation, the truth that being nice and charming is advantageous certainly applies. I believe that John (his full name is John Raymond Elwell) is someone who would genuinely benefit some fortunate employer(s) from an upgrading of his situation. Seriously. A business and locale which would fit both his accomplishments and his presence would be ideal. (John has found his unemployment benefits office experiences unfailful.) So, we are hoping that someone reading this will give him a chance.

Come August, John will turn thirty years old. Born in Weymouth, MA, he lived in South Boston until he was nine. Then his family moved to Quincy, his parents divorced, and he went to Halifax.

In 2008, John graduated from Silver Lake Regional High School, a vocational high school in Kingston, Massachusetts, where he became CTE (career and technical education) certified in auto body and metal fabrication welding. Also, he became OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) qualified.

As a person of commonsense observing John, most recently at the requisite six feet distance because of coronavirus, I feel that I can vouch for him. For employers and lodgers, I do believe that he would most likely be a good risk.

As I have no other concrete knowledge of John’s habits other than seeing him from time to time on the street, and have never employed him, nor given him lodging, I cannot write knowledgeably about all aspects of John’s character. Nevertheless, as a person of commonsense observing John, most recently at the requisite six feet distance because of coronavirus, I feel that I can vouch for him. For employers and lodgers, I do believe that with this John is a likely one to do good work.

IF THIS PAPER MAKES YOU THINK

We will print your thoughts in the next issue

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"HAVE A NICE DAY. STAY SAFE!" Given John’s precarious homelessness situation, the truth that being nice and charming is advantageous certainly applies. Photo by Chris Manis.

His Name is John

John says about himself: “I am looking for a steady job and housing. While easy-going and laid back, I am, nevertheless, hard-working, well mannered, respectful, polite, and detail-oriented. I am knowledgeable in fields like carpentry, having learned from a master carpenter. I know how to do high-end car detailing (BMW, Ferrari, Mercedes, Pagani) and auto body and small engine repair, and metal fabrication. I also have experience as a house painter, both inside and out. In addition, I can perform kitchen prep. work, and can cook—somewhat, anyway.

I am also good with labor/management duties, meaning I can teach others exactly what to do, how much time a task should take, credit card processing—that sort of thing.

I am willing to relocate, within reason. Unsurprisingly, given what I do, I guess I tend to be more introverted than extroverted. I have no desire to do anything dishonest, having learned the hard way by having been incarcerated that crime does not pay. I do think of my time in prison as beneficial to the betterment of my much-improved character today; I believe I can honestly say that. Any potential employer and housing provider can be assured that I am finished with stealing anything. I have learned that just does not work.

As I have no other concrete knowledge of John’s habits other than seeing him from time to time on the street, and have never employed him, nor given him lodging, I cannot write knowledgeably about all aspects of John’s character. Nevertheless, as a person of commonsense observing John, most recently at the requisite six feet distance because of coronavirus, I feel that I can vouch for him. For employers and lodgers, I do believe that he would most likely be a good risk.

If you believe you can assist, talk to John Elwell when you see him. Otherwise, contact me by leaving a message mentioning this article at: (212) 691-3974, or by emailing me at: johnfeary1@gmail.com. (Cell/Phone number presently unavailable.) John Elwell will get your message.

Thank you.
Covid-19 and the Mental Health Crisis

By Christina Raccuia, MA, ED, LMSW

During the three months of dealing with the coronavirus we have had a daily dose of fear, uncertainty, grief, and death—compounded by physical distancing/isolation and economic devastation. These conditions can trigger myriad emotions and it is understandable that most of us are feeling either stressed, anxious, sad or angry. For many, this is an unprecedented situation—to deal with these uncomfortable and unfamiliar emotions. However, if they’re not dealt with or processed, they can potentially generate even greater depression, anxiety, trauma, and substance abuse, and even give rise to suicidal thoughts.

Negative emotions are part of being a human being, and it’s for our own good if we accept instead of refuse them and force ourselves to be content at all times. Try to give yourself permission to feel all those negative emotions right now, but do it with self-compasion and mercy. This pandemic situation is a marathon not a sprint, so try to accept all the uncomfortable feelings that go along with the uncertainty; and instead of feeling frustration facing uncertainty, try to hold on to hope.

Helpful coping mechanisms can be exercise, social support, mindfulness/meditation and engaging in relaxing and yummy activities such as yoga, taking a walk, or a long bath. All these can help regulate your emotions; however, if you have already tried those resources and still feel at a loss, or an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and helplessness, it may be time to try therapy and or medication to help you cope.

When to ask for help? You should consider professional help if you are feeling anxious, tense, or angry most of the time; if you’re unable to relax or take your mind off your worries and concerns; if you feel that you are spiraling and unable to stop your mind from feeding your worries and anxiety; if you’re experiencing panic attacks; if you’re having difficulty sleeping, concentrating, interacting with others, or even getting things done. If you can’t enjoy what you used to enjoy and are feeling depressed and tired most of the time, that could be a sign of clinical depression. Other signs include a change in sleeping and eating patterns; frequent crying; feelings of hopelessness, guilt and shame; difficulty making decisions and focusing; self-harming or suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Depressed people often experience difficulty accomplishing their work and socializing with others. Given the social distancing, this might contribute to avoiding virtual interactions as well.

How can therapy or medication help? Therapy offers a chance to speak freely and confidentially to a professional about what you are dealing with, the emotions connected to it, and what you would like to get help for. Good therapists establish a safe, compassionate, collaborative, and authentic relationship with clients, and make them feel heard and understood. They also help clients step back and figure out exactly why they are struggling and why their life is not working as well as it could be. Based on how you understand your particular problem(s), it’s possible to learn to think, feel, and act differently, leading to a resolution of your psychological symptoms and improvement in your personal and professional life. However, this process takes time, as changing patterns that took a lifetime to establish will require motivation, dedication, honesty, and hard work in and out of therapy sessions.

Psychiatric medication can also be helpful with or without therapy.

How can I see a therapist during the pandemic? Most therapists have transitioned to teletherapy due to the coronavirus lockdown. To ensure its success, you need to have a private space and a decent internet connection. Personally, I have found that video-enabled teletherapy is as effective as in-person therapy, and that the therapeutic relationship and satisfaction with therapy do not suffer. It is important, however, to distinguish between teletherapy conducted in a live 45–50 minute session with a therapist and the many mental health apps and “on-line therapy” applications that have popped up in the past few years. These apps typically do not provide traditional therapy with a licensed therapist. Additionally, if you would like to try medications for your psychological problems you can have an appointment with a psychiatrist who also conducts telephone or video appointments during the coronavirus crisis.

Don’t let a lack of resources hold you back from seeking help if you don’t have insurance or much money. There are several options for low-cost or no-cost treatment, such as:

- Open Path Collective, a national nonprofit network of therapists who provide sessions at a very reduced rate.
- Project Parachute, which uses telehealth to match pro bono therapists with frontline health care workers affected with COVID-19.
- Give an Hour, which serves military families and victims of natural or man-made traumas.
- NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline, which is only for residents of New York State. You can make a free phone appointment at 844-863-9314.

Our new West Village neighbors on Peru Street, Steve and Alexandra Cohen, have made many philanthropic efforts for their communities, especially towards healthcare including the Cohen COVID 19 Response Initiative, Cohen Lyme & Tick Borne Disease Initiative, plus numerous other programs including an arts initiative. They have been affiliated with the Cohen’s Children’s Medical Center in Queens, a division of Northwell Health, for nine years. The Center works with the Northwell Greenwich Village Center that when children come in to Greenwich Village, they are handled through the pediatrics service line in Queens.

I interviewed Executive Director, Dr. Charles Schleien in early June to understand what has been happening at the Children’s Hospital in terms of Covid-19 there. He has been Chair of Pediatrics for eight years and the executive director of the hospital for four years.

Although Covid-19 cases are being detected more and more in kids, there have only been 189 cases and three deaths in New York City due to Covid-19, none at this hospital. They have admitted 75 cases of Covid-19 and another 45 cases with MIS-C, the mysterious and syndrome that appears to affect most symptomatic and asymptomatic child carriers of Covid-19.

For more details about symptoms and statistics about MIS-C, please see the extended online edition of this article.

The hospital has not been overwhelmed with cases of children with Covid-19. At the height of the pandemic, it had 180 beds to the adult service to care for those patients. Their new recovery room, right now, is being used for adult overflow.

Dr. Schleien says there will be accommodations made for more isolation in the future, fewer people in waiting rooms, changes in visitation policies and whatever will be needed to face the pandemic effectively. The Cohen’s Children’s Medical Center in Queens, regardless of their financial means, is currently setting up a new cardiology program with recruitment of new cardiac surgeons. WestView News is delighted to have Steve and Alexandra Cohen as neighbors and welcomes them to our community newspaper, thanking them for the difference they have made and continue to make.

The Cohen’s Children’s Medical Center

By Hannah Reimann

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OLD BAGS

By Roberta Curley

How about those old bags?
Plastic shopping bags that are supposedly banished.
Supermarket baggers dole them out like life-preservers on the Titanic.
New York City is drowning in plastic.
Has the law prohibiting perilous plastic shopping bags been repealed?
Why not resuscitate more plastic bottles into reusable carry bags?
Pandemic or not—plastic must be intercepted.
Dr. Anthony Fauci states coronavirus can live up to three days on plastic surfaces.
Plastic bags wreak havoc from landfill to sea.
The bags clump together like battle-ready soldiers.
Beware marine biologists and all ocean pleasure seekers.
The bag proliferation maims sea creatures and entangles fauna alike.
Neither piranha, angelfish, nor anyone’s child—should have to wriggle free from reels of plasticity.

Be safe and be well.
New Yorkers Dazzle in Custom Masks

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

It’s amazing to me how quickly New Yorkers adapt. Masks seemed so alien at first, and now we do our patented second glance to dis someone for not wearing one. As we enter Phase Two, masks are as essential as ever in high-traffic areas and situations where we can’t maintain that magical six feet of distance. Not all masks are created equal, but these unique masks are created with love and panache.

Chelsea resident and renowned expert on synesthesia, Patricia Lynne Duffy, has been decorating masks and giving them to front-line workers in gratitude for their risky service. She recalls her initial inspiration. “At the beginning of NYC’s pandemic shut-down, everything seemed so bleak. I thought, ‘What happened to our vibrant city?’ Instead, we had empty streets with walkers wearing clinical-looking masks. I thought, we need some color to spark things up!” Pat decorated her personal masks with colorful glitter and stick-on jewels. Her playful masks drew positive comments and made people smile, and she decided to keep making more masks. “I was inspired to give the masks as gifts to our front-line workers—who were keeping the city alive with their daily work and amazing spirit!”

Another innovative New Yorker, bespoke designer Andrea Thurlow of Engineered by Andrea T, also began by making custom-fitted face masks for her own use. But soon her friends were clamoring for the masks, and Andrea was fashioning made-to-measure face masks for everyone she knew. Now she can hardly keep up with the demand. Andrea’s masks are made from 100% cotton and fully lined in 100% silk crepe de chine. The front is reinforced for more protection and structured to sit away from the nose and mouth for a little more comfort. The ear loops are adjustable. The masks are reusable and hand washable. These masks fit and feel like a dream. After trying various other varieties of masks that hurt my ears, slipped down off my nose, or made it hard to breathe, I now breathe a sigh of relief to wear Andrea’s comfortable, gorgeous masks.

As New York enters Phase Two, you might notice that restaurants are branding their masks. Not all custom designs are good ones. My sister Kim told me about a restaurant in BC that made the choice to use clear plastic face masks. This was unfortunate, as the masks displayed a disgusting collection of bodily fluids visible on the inside of the mask, and also strangely distorted the features of the wearer!

Karen’s Quirky Style

By Karen Rempel | Fashion Editor

A year ago in this column I told you about a stop-you-in-your-tracks dress by Engineered by Andrea T, based on a painting called Dominion Day by James Kerr. Recently when Andrea told me she was making couture face masks, I immediately asked her if she could make me one with the Dominion Day fabric. The golden, orange, and red tones of the fabric have been warming the memory chambers of my brain for the past year. The chance to own a scrap of art and garment history was a delight that almost masked the horrible reality covered by the need to wear masks everywhere we go.

Andrea’s mask designs are based on the same architectural principles as her dresses. She is a true artist, and brings her passion for creating beauty to the humble face mask, transforming a utilitarian necessity into a must-have wardrobe accessory. I think you’ll agree that this mask adds mysterious allure to the look, actually amping up the high fashion quotient of the art-as-dress. When I slipped on the mask, the silken lining lightly caressed my face with sensory pleasure.

A dress this exquisite demands an extraordinary setting, so I asked the NoHo photographer Philip Maier to come with me to the historic Garment District—while the Phase One streets of New York were fairly deserted—to do a shoot at Judith Weller’s famous bronze sculpture of a yarmulke-clad tailor. The accompanying 31-foot-long needle-and-button sculpture was under repair, with the Garment District Alliance’s information booth all boarded up, but the famous man at the sewing machine was still hard at work.

I felt a humbling mixture of wonder and sorrow, modeling these beautiful creations by an innovative New York designer, embraced by the influential history of New York’s Garment District. An impossible precious moment of fantasy as the city trembles with hope on the brink of political reform and recovery from the pandemic.

The ills of our day run deep, but the human spirit is complex and resilient. On my way to the shoot, I was standing on Sixth Avenue, waiting to hail a cab. A scruffy man wearing a backpack asked me for something to eat. I said no, and he asked me again for money. Again I said no, and he said “You can spend thousands of dollars on a dress but you won’t help me?” Ah, New York. Even the beggars appreciate a beautiful gown.

For more details and brilliant Philip Maier photos, see karensquirystyle.com.

Karen Rempel is a photojournalist, technical writer, model, and artist. She has published words and pictures in BC Woman, Intertwom, Room, TV Week Magazine, Vancouver Sun, and many others. Her artwork was recently on exhibit at the Resurrection Gallery in the West Village. Visit her blog at loveaffair.nyc and her YouTube channel.
Mid-Lockdown New York’s Artists Take Back the Streets

By Katie Cercone

As Black Lives Matter protests sparked by the May 25th police murder of George Floyd flared across the nation, with blockbuster images of looted Targets and shattered storefronts in their wake, Soho’s luxury brand retailers rested assured their fortresses of status-symbol high price tag rags stood protected. According to Elizabeth Peyton writing for the New York Times in the final days of March, luxury brands like Fendi and Chanel, “once-buzzing retail arteries,” boarded up their storefronts with massive cuts of plywood “in anticipation of riots and civil disobedience.”

If New Yorkers sheltered-in at the Covid-19 epicenter weren’t already on edge, amidst escalating media hysteria and a brutal economic fallout, the number of recent deaths of Black folks at the hands of the police force, more visible than ever before through the power of smartphones and social media, has catalyzed into a global reckoning. Whether qualified by the disproportionate number of people of color that have died from corona, suffered police violence or became unemployed as a result of the pandemic, the truth of 400 years of institutionalized racism in the United States has reared its ugly head in a massive way, signaling an urgent need for reform. Whether acted out through massive protests flooding the streets and overtaking roadways, artful interventions in public space or Instagram live, the people are taking their power back.

As the days of lockdown waged on, for artists of New York City, the massive blank wood panels lining the streets of historic Soho became the ad hoc canvas par excellence. What began as a few brazen folks venturing out of their homes with surgical masks, hand sanitizer and paint, quickly grew to what eventually amounted to hundreds of participating artists and thousands of works lining the quaint, cobblestone streets of Manhattan’s quintessential fashion promenade. The natural outgrowth by word of mouth quickly mushroomed to include families, children, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, Blue Movement and Black Lives Matter activists holding court with paint and pomp in the New Soho.

Some artists took to painting massive compositions, thrilled at the prospect of an opulent canvas and rapt viewing audience. In other areas we see common protest slogans like “Say Their Names” scrawled in haste, followed by a list of recent victims continued on page 28

For artists of New York City, the massive blank wood panels lining the streets of historic Soho became the ad hoc canvas par excellence. Photos by Scotto Mycklebust.
that the looters are not tied to the greater... have been peaceful, and it’s generally agreed... handles, others hooked commissions from borders. Many professional visual and... first-responders are framed by plywood...ing against a stark yellow background. A...lor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and...of police brutality such as Breonna Tay-...

All About Andy

By Robert Heide

The bigger than big book entitled simply Warhol by Blake Gopnik just published by Ecco, a Harper Collins imprint, is 39 pages short of 1,000, took over ten years to write, and is an astute comprehensive biographical study that is overflowing with practical, insightful information which focuses hard on the life and art of the man many regard cer- tainly as the most famous and probably one of the most important artists of the 20th cen- tury, Andy Warhol. This heavy-to-hold book covers everything about Andy, his super-sly personality, his sporadic up and down sex life, and his Carpatho-Rusyn family who lived in a down and out slum area of Pittsburgh. Yet Andy persevered—a sickly young man who dreamt of some kind of success that might offer him an escape into a better life. His mother Julia, who had artistic yearnings, doted on Andy who once told me and related to others as well, that Julia usually served him for lunch or dinner either a bologna, tuna fish or egg salad sandwich on Wonder Bread along with a bowl of Campbell's Tomato or Pea Soup. I learned in the book that in later life Andy was quoted as saying he preferred the more elegant Campbell's Mock Turtle concoction.

I first met Andy through the photographer Edward Walliswicht in 1958 at a Vil- lage restaurant and at that time he struck me as a real oddball who obviously had trouble communicating. Later, in the early sixties, we became good friends. I knew Andy was intensely artful and he made a good living in the drawing of ladies shoes and purses that he created for newspapers as an advertising illustrator in the early years before entering the world of Pop Art. As time went by, I began to hang out with Andy at The Factory where I happily joined in with the early ‘superstars’ including the glamorous, gorgeous Baby Jane Holzer who sported a golden blonde Lions mane hairdo. Andy proclaimed her ‘The Girl of the Year’. Following Jane, and taking her title, along came Edie Sedgwick, an elfin, child- like glowing baby-doll beauty who charmed everyone she met, including Andy. Later, after she dropped out of the scene, Ingrid von Sheven, a vulgar coarse imitation was found to replace her and was dubbed sim- ply, Ingrid Superstar. Andy, who was genu- inely fond of Edie, escorted her arm in arm everywhere he went to parties, nightclubs and theaters. She became the Top Superstar and Andy began to utilize her in many of his films. Often Edie asked me to join her to go along with her on shopping sprees at Bloomingdales. She would pick me up in a chauffeured Cadillier limousine and take me to lunch at a spot called the Ginger Man where we ordered up Bloody Mary’s which she either signed for or paid in cash or credit card. Later I learned that the limo actually belonged to Bob Dylan.

One summer day, as recounted by Blake Gopnik in his giant tome, Andy called and asked me to meet him at the Kettle of Fish on MacDougal Street. When I arrived there I found Edie sitting alone at a table in a baby blue, little girl outfit wearing silver shoes. A week or so before Andy had asked me to write a script for Edie where she commit- ted suicide at the end, and I gave him one entitled The Death of Lupe Velez which was based on Kenneth Anger’s account in Hol- bywood Babes of the suicide of Lupe Velez, the Mexican spitfire movie star from the 1930s. I asked Edie how it was going. To my astonishment she informed me, “Oh, we filmed that yesterday.” Sipping a bran- dy, black mascara tears rolling down her cheeks, she said to me, “I just can’t get close to him…I try but...I don’t know….but...” and at that moment Andy entered the bar wearing a blue suede jacket and matching pants he had just bought at the Leatherman on Christopher Street. There was a deadly silence and no one spoke as Andy ordered a dark ale and pulled up a bar stool, hovering over our table. A moment later, I glanced out the window at a big black limo pulling up outside, and suddenly bursting through the door, came Bob Dylan. It was his Blond on Blond period and he was sporting an Afro haircut dyed golden blond. He was all in black and wore dark, oversized shades. I could feel tension mounting, nobody utter- ing a word. Finally Bobby grabbed Edie and murmured, “Let’s split” and out they went. According to the book it wasn’t their last meeting, but Lupe, as the all-color film came to be called, was their last project to- gether. Andy, still silent, but with a pensive expression on his face, stared at the door. Finally he spoke, asking me to take him to 5 Cornelia Street. He wanted to see where one of his superstars, the dancer Freddy Herko, had committed suicide. It was from the fifth floor window of Johnny Dodd’s apartment, just down the block from the Caffe Cino where Johnny was the lighting de- signer, that Freddy danced out the window in a ballet leap while high on a combination of acid, methamphetamine and angel-dust laced pot. Staring up at the window Andy said, “I wish he had told me he was going to jump out a window so I could have filmed it.” Turning to me he bluntly stated, “I won- der when Edie will kill herself. I hope she will let us know so I can at least film that.”

Though I had forgotten it for many years, I also appeared in two of Andy’s films, Bat- man Dracula and Camp, both with the film- maker Jack Smith and I was also pleased to continued on page 32

Soho continued from page 27

of police brutality such as Breonna Tay- lor, George Floyd, Ahmad Arbery and Trayvon Martin... ending with “And too Many More.” Another painting features the faces of Floyd, Taylor and Arbery hover- ing against a stark yellow background. A COACH store looks more like Coachella, nearly a larger than life Floyd wheat-paste with a trippy neon background. A nearby tag reads “Vote Blue,” another urges view- ers to sign one of the many petitions. In another storefront a black mermaid stands poised adjacent a poem by Audre Lorde, famous poet and civil rights activist. En- larged black and white reproductions of first-responders are framed by plywood borders. Many professional visual and graffiti artists signed their works with IG handles, others hooked commissions from brands capitalizing on the New Soho hype.

Although the majority of protest actions have been peaceful, and it’s generally agreed that the looters are not tied to the greater protest movement, recent organizing on the luxury retail store lined streets of Soho sheds light on the quicksilver pulse of the collective consciousness. With the coun- try’s economy in dire straits, and nearly 40 million Americans now on unemploy- ment, the targeting of Manhattan’s luxury mall feels like a natural result of the grow- ing sense of inequality, including a deep- seated resentment against the 1%. In a vivid editorial showcasing images of luxury stores looted and vandalized during recent protests, complete with ‘eat the rich’ graff- iti tags, Dominick-Madori Davis reports that while Americans face unprecedented rates of unemployment due to coronavirus- related layoffs, CNNBc reported on May 21 that America’s billionaires had collectively become $434 billion richer.

For an article in The Atlantic, Olga Kha- zan reflects on the looting phenomenon as historically “a lashing-out against capital- ism, the police, and other forces that are seen as perpetuating racism.” She quotes a 1968 study by Dynes and Quarantelli not- in danger of being removed or trashed as the city enters phase 3, was also notable for mobilizing some of the first groups of art- ists to come paint. Groups such as Artport, Inc., a start-up connecting artists with col- lectors, have gone as far as to create an outdoor virtual tour scanning of Greene Street from Spring to Grand St.

Must we not forget that Soho was—before escalating rents and aggressive gentri- fication pushed most artists to the far reach- ing outer boroughs—as once the heart and center of the Art world. With New York City’s official reopening now well underway, and stores rolling out the red carpet to wel- come potential consumers back, including some that have already capitalized on the grassroots art movement through ephemeral commissions to artists, it appears as though the New Soho is in danger of being rendered obsolete. With artworks commenting on the protests for Black lives, the pandemic, and the state of the world in general, these radical interventions in public space deserve to be archived for future generations.
Pride Marches On:
Celebrating 50 Years
Group Photo Show

Open Thursday through Sunday, 12 noon to 6 pm, or by appointment.
137 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011 • @artofourcentury
Riding to Make a Statement: A History of Horses in Protests

By Anastasia Kaliabakos

Mankind’s relationship with horses dates back millennia to when a horse’s ability to carry a human was first discovered. This use of horses has had a tremendous impact on their relationships with man on an individual level, and on humanity’s progress as a whole. Horses have been used throughout history as assistants in hunting, building, and traveling. They were valued for their immense power in the past; in our current day and age they are valued mainly for their role in sports and offer of companionship. Additionally, riding a horse has traditionally been viewed as a status symbol and the privilege of riding has been known to often be restricted to the ruling elite in some areas. However, even though owning horses and horseback riding are thought of as leisurely pastimes of the elite, many people utilize horses in ways that contradict those assumptions — specifically through protest.

Over a century ago, horses were ridden during the women’s suffrage movement. In an age when women were thought to be lower in status than their male counterparts, this use of a horse was ingenious. Although today, many picture horse-riding as primarily a women’s sport (think of the often-mentioned stereotype of a “horse girl”), during the time when men were the ones with all the power, riding horses was mostly a man’s game. By taking the reins into their own hands, however, women were able to change the narrative, elevating themselves not only upon the backs of their gentle beasts, but in the eyes of society as a whole. In 1967, the civil rights movement in America was in full swing. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., known as the face of the movement, traveled to Louisville, Kentucky in the spring of 1967. Protesters there and elsewhere across the United States were calling for the institution of a law that would make it illegal to refuse to sell or rent property based on race. Housing discrimination was a huge part of the racial divide taking place in Louisville, and the people affected by unfair laws desired change. Their protests and demands for equality happened to coincide with the Kentucky Derby that year — an event of great renown that attracted people from around the nation.

Protestors organized marches throughout the city, and, eventually, they decided to interrupt the Kentucky Derby itself.

In the week leading up to the main race, riders were blocked by protestors, some of whom actually made their way on to one of the tracks during a race, forcing jockeys to bring their horses to a stop. On the day of the big race, Proud Clarison, a horse that had never won a stakes race in his two years of racing, and with odds of winning 30-1, rode to victory. Looking back on this event, one may consider an interesting parallel — an unexpected win took place at the Derby, and for the protesters and residents of Kentucky, less than a year later the Fair Housing Act was passed into law. By using an event like the Kentucky Derby, the civil rights activists were able to take a huge step forward in the fight against racism.

Even today, horses are being used in protest to fight against injustice, particularly in the Black Lives Matter movement. As people all across the country (and across the world) took to their feet to demand justice for the death of George Floyd, the Houston Non-Stop Riderz took to their steeds to make a difference and demonstrate their desire for change. Cassandra Johnson, known as the “first lady” of the Non-Stop Riderz trail riding group, knew Floyd personally and wanted to take action in a different way. The group of riders went viral on Twitter as they rode through downtown Houston during a peaceful protest. Another woman, Brianna Noble, took to the streets in Oakland with her horse Dapper Dan to demonstrate her solidarity with the movement. Both of these instances of horses used during the Black Lives Matter protests are extremely powerful, especially when one considers the history of the black cowboys that were an integral part of American history in the West. Although, unfortunately, many have forgotten the impact of black cowboys, groups like the Non-Stop Riderz and activists including Brianna Noble have taken it upon themselves to utilize this historical narrative to evoke change in the present. Riding high in the face of oppression takes tremendous courage, and these people are devoted to educating Americans while also demanding justice in a unique and powerful manner.

Change is not immediate — it requires a powerful message and voice in order to enact it. Horses, known for so long as man’s trustworthy companion, undoubtedly have and will continue to have a role in changing the world.

July 2020 Community Events from the West 13th Street Alliance

By Birgitte Philippides-Delaney and Chandra/Jo Sgambaro

The West 13th Street Alliance is grateful to continue serving our neighborhood and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic with Virtual Community Events in the month of July. Local residents, whether at home in New York, or far away, have enthusiastically participated in our events over Zoom during these past few months.

Our June events included a spa-like experience at home with Do It Yourself Hand and Foot Massage with Nina Priya David. One attendee wrote right after the event, “After that workout on my feet, I have to tell you my feet felt great and way better and still going strong. I must keep working on them.”

Another highlight in June, to celebrate Pride Month, was Drag Queen Story Hour, a collaborative Zoom presentation of the West 13th Street Alliance and Church of the Village. It was a delightful session of song, storytelling and love with Rev. Yolanda. “I had so much fun,” one participant said. We are planning to have this event at the Church in the future when our city opens up again.

The mission of the West 13th Street Alliance is to help improve the quality of life on West 13th Street between 7th and Greenwich Avenue and beyond. They were just awarded a Citizens Committee for New York City All In Neighborhood Grant, which will enable them to expand their already popular community programming among other things. The West 13th Street Alliance is working hard to help our neighbors at this time of crisis and are grateful for the support from Citizens Committee of NYC.

Community Sharing Zoom Gatherings
Tuesday, July 7th and 21st from 6:30-7:30 p.m. via Zoom
How Do You Feel? Come together for support and connection at this time. You may express your thoughts and emotions, or just listen.

Facilitated by Chandra Jo/ Sgambaro
Chair Yoga: 4-Week Series
Wednesdays, July 8, 15, 22 and 29 from 10 to 11 a.m. via Zoom
Everyone can do Yoga! And Chair Yoga is accessible to everyone. Come experience poses, relaxation, breath work, and meditation while sitting in a chair that holds you and supports your practice. This is a great way to see if Yoga is for you— even if you’ve never done it before. Certified Integral Yoga Instructor
Ask the Experts
Tuesday, July 14 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
An opportunity for the community to receive the latest updates about COVID-19 and how our local hospital, Lenox Health Greenwich Village, is dealing with the crisis. Bring your questions about coronavirus including transmission, treatment, or risks and prevalence.
Experts from Lenox Health Greenwich Village, Alex Hellinger, Executive Director and Dr. Lanny Lecy, Associate Chairperson for the Department of Emergency Medicine

Whitney Museum Virtual Tour
Tuesday, July 28 at 6:30pm.
All Roads Lead to New York: Immigration in American Art
From the Whitney’s founding, the collection has been enriched by artists who moved to the US from all over the world. This session will be a survey of émigré artists in the collection—Arshile Gorky, Churara Obata, Guadalupe Maravilla, Louise Bourgeois and Wilm de Kooning, among others—and their experiences in 20th and 21st-century New York.
Whitney Docent Roberta Krakoff

To RSVP for these events, please email Wayne Kawadler at Wayne@TheProjectNYC.org. You will receive an email response with the Zoom link. Please also email Wayne with any questions about using Zoom. Join our email list at w13thstreetalliance@gmail.com
By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

THEN: #1: Robert Moses’ Westside (aka Lincoln) Highway construction was built from 1929-1937, when the Hudson River docks were bustling with maritime and commercial activity. Prior to the elevated expressway, this stretch was known as “Death Avenue” for the many injuries caused by the trains and trucks on the streets. According to Police Commissioner Enright, who first proposed the highway, “During business hours, West Street [was] the most congested thoroughfare in the city.” Civic groups opposed the highway’s construction, supposedly because it would add ugliness to the waterfront. (Really?) Off-ramp streets were initially designed at 14th Street, but had to be relocated to 23rd Street due to the Gansevoort market’s congestion. This late 1930s photo looking north from the Manhattan Refrigeration Company loft building (ca. 1897-1935) roof at Gansevoort and West Streets, shows a hint of the intense vehicular chaos at street level, with trucks pulled up to the loading docks. The John Jacob Astor estate controlled up to ½ of all properties in the area until the 1920s. The John Jacob Astor estate controlled up to ½ of all properties in the area until the 1920s. On the left, the highway bends around a solid line of wharf fronts proceeding north from the Gansevoort peninsula off to the left. Smokestacks of huge ocean liners and cargo ships protrude above the roofs in the background.

#5: A small 3-story hotel sits at 51 Tenth Avenue and the Lincoln Highway.

#6: After a century of landfilling along its shoreline, the city had reversed that pattern by excavating riverfronts between Gansevoort and West 23rd Streets (ca. 1902-1910), for Chelsea Piers. This is where the Titanic would have docked. The virtually continuous façade of wharves was the western terminus of city streets from the Battery all the way to the Upper West Side. Citizens did not want to experience being close to the putrid polluted Hudson River waters in those industrial days except out of sheer necessity. The only desirable residential areas were as far from the waterfronts as possible.

NOW: #1: The Westside Highway, abandoned in 1973 and demolished in 1989, was replaced by a landscaped boulevard. (Briefly in the 1980’s, the Highline viaduct was proposed as a truck viaduct).

#2: The Nabisco bakery buildings, just barely visible to the left of the Standard Hotel straddling the Highline Park, are now office buildings incorporated into a shopping district around the Chelsea Market mall.

#3: A few old structures from the market past are used for bars, restaurants, and shops. The Standard Hotel replaced many old buildings.

#4: The waterfront area was subject to many proposals to revitalize that defining “front door” feature of this city of islands. Since 1995, the Hudson River Park Trust has been developing the waterfront into a linear park, free for all to use and to enjoy our waterfront views once again. The Gansevoort Peninsula, off to the left, will become a park, add access to the water, and include a large playing field so desperately needed by the neighborhood. The existing Marine Fire Station on Pier 53 will remain at the NW corner of the peninsula, while a new David Hammons sculpture is being built to re-imagine the historic outline of the old Pier 52 Wharf building on the south shore. Long-gone 13th Avenue will be memorialized as a pedestrian esplanade along the western shore of the peninsula.

#5: The old triangular building at 51 Tenth Avenue is now the Liberty Inn.

#6: The pier house facades are mostly gone except for a few examples seen here from a few examples seen here from upper left to lower left: the Chelsea Piers, and Pier 57, are repurposed as recreation and shopping piers.

#7: The iron frame of the old Cunard Pier 54 will soon serve as an entry to Diller’s “Little Island,” at Pier 55, providing recreation and performance spaces.

#8: The railroad tracks no longer penetrate the interiors of the loft buildings, but the Highline urban park highlights this unique viaduct, threading its way through the neighborhood up to Hudson Yards.

#9: Among all the new and repurposed buildings, this one-story meat distributing building adjacent to the Whitney Museum has protective covenants by the city, hanging on to a past soon gone.

If anyone has a map of the historic street layout with 13th Avenue prior to 1900, I would appreciate getting a copy.

Brian J. Pape is a LEED-AP “green” architect consulting in private practice, serves on the Manhattan District 2 Community Board, is co-chair of the American Institute of Architects NY Design for Aging Committee, and is a journalist who writes about architecture.
2020 Village Award: Village Apothecary

By Ariel Kates

Each year, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation honors the irreplaceable people, businesses, and organizations that make a special contribution to our neighborhoods at our Annual Meeting and Village Awards. On June 17th, 2020 we celebrated Village Apothecary as one of our outstanding awardees.

In 1983, Michael Konnon—pharmacist, businesswoman, activist, and community leader—decided that his West Village neighborhood was desperately in need of a dedicated, independent community pharmacy. And so, Village Apothecary was born. This lovely Bleecker Street shop located at the southwest corner of West 10th Street is everything that a community pharmacy should be: a place to run into neighbors, a place to find all the essentials, and a place to really feel seen, heard, and cared for by the pharmacists.

Just as New York City is the nation’s most diverse city, Village Apothecary takes great pride in employing the most diverse staff representing all different cultures, races, religions, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, HIV status, and physical disabilities. The one thing that the entire staff has in common is that they are all proud New Yorkers who live in the city and want to serve their community. As a matter of fact, the pharmacy staff’s dedication cannot be underestimated; the pharmacy has remained open through snowstorms, blackouts, Superstorm Sandy, 9/11, and now, 2020’s COVID-19. It is this community dedication, and a truly robust history, that won our hearts—and our Village Award! In the 80s, it was a scourge of AIDS; today it’s one of the top HIV/Infectious Disease specialists in New York City. Village Apothecary is a true gem of Greenwich Village.

At that time, the Village was the epicenter of the AIDS epidemic. Even so, AIDS patients encountered numerous obstacles in their healthcare. Prescription coverage in the 80s was limited, misinformation was rampant, and pharmacies did not want to be burdened with the expense of stocking AIDS medications, not to mention the social stigma. From the first day it opened in 1983, Village Apothecary was a safe haven for these patients—the stigma and the cost, the knew, were worth taking care of their loved ones and neighbors. AIDS-related medications are always stocked, and prices are kept as low as possible.

To this day, Village Apothecary is a strong advocate for patients, both with medical professionals and insurance companies, doing whatever possible to ensure that their clients’ healthcare is seamless and effective. From the daily details of each client to the national-level picture, Village Apothecary and its staff have made a real difference. One turning point that stands out amidst Village Apothecary’s distinguished history is its run-in with Merck, the pharmaceutical giant. Merck developed CRXIVAN at the time, a new and promising drug in the battle against HIV/AIDS. However, they were only allowing it to be filled by one place in the entire country. Village Apothecary went to bat for the community, petitioning congressmen and senators and appealing with passionate letters to Merck itself. They ultimately won the fight and earned the right to dispense the drug to the public.

Village Apothecary staff also intervene on customers’ behalf and help the poor and struggling to navigate red tape, write letters, or fill out paperwork. They also generously assist customers in referring them to places that offer needed services, such as Bailey House and Northwell Health Center. Some of the people who need to fight the mountains of paperwork in order to get their medication don’t have the wherewithal to go through the process, and Village Apothecary helps with that too. In 2019, Village Apothecary joined other independent pharmacies and pharmacy organizations in petitioning New York’s Governor to end the unfair policies that allowed health plans to steal millions of dollars from pharmacy patients, forcing many independent pharmacies out of business. After many protests at City Hall and Albany, they were finally able to convince Governor Cuomo to end these injustices. This was a great victory for independent pharmacies and for all New Yorkers who use pharmacies.

All of this is happening under the Apothecary’s new leadership. Mr. Konnon has since passed away and owner Vijay Desai is now at the reins. His commitment to maintaining the traditions and values that Village Apothecary is apparent. The pharmacy works closely with and supports many New York City institutions, including GMHC, Bailey House, God’s Love We Deliver, Greenwich House, Heritage of Pride, and Stonewall Veterans, to name a few. John Kaliabakos, Director of Pharmacy Services, has been a pharmacist at Village Apothecary since 1994. He closely monitors the prescription profiles of hundreds of patients and works closely with some of the top HIV/AIDS specialists in New York City. In 2018, Village Apothecary received a Proclamation from the Mayor of New York City. In 2019, they received a Proclamation from the Manhattan Borough President. These commendations honored their contribution to the healthcare field through 35 years of service. Village Apothecary has watched many of its neighbors on Bleecker Street pack up and leave the area due to rising rents. We also know that family-owned pharmacies struggle to stay in business with hefty competition from chains and the internet. Village Apothecary distinguishes itself by the personal touch of community and one-on-one service. They have been celebrated for their work and their staying power. According to Kaliabakos, “As with many past crises New York City has faced, Village Apothecary has remained open during the pandemic and continues to serve the community. Particularly during this unprecedented health crisis, it is paramount for patients to have access to pharmaceutical and medical care and we are committed to providing this to our patients.”

COVID-19 is one of many challenges faced by Village Apothecary, and we are grateful for their dedication and work. And it’s not just us: thousands of patients consider Village Apothecary a true gem of New York City. So, we were thrilled to be awarding them a Village Award.

Andy Warhol continued from page 28

Andy shot the action on one Auricon camera while his lover at the time, Danny Williams, wielded another at the same time, generating a two-viewpoint two-screen film.” It premiered at Jonas Mekas’ Filmmakers Cinematheque on 41st Street; Warhol’s film of The Bed is currently being digitized by the Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and the play itself has seen many iterations since. On June 20, 2020, the New York LGBTQ+ theater company TOSSOS streamed a new production of the play live on YouTube.

Andy was, like myself, an obsessive collector of things Americana. Once, while visiting me on Christopher Street after one of his Leatherman shopping trips, Andy pointed to the vintage metal Coke signs on my walls and declared, “those are the real Pop Art.” But after his second death in 1987 (he survived his first in 1968 after being shot by the disgruntled Valerie Solanas and revived by a fast-acting doctor) bags of diamonds were found amongst his collectibles. It seemed he and his friend, the movie star Paulette Goddard, were both diamond addicts and went shopping for them together frequently. Gopnik states that two years after his death an accounting of his worth set its value at $215 million. “Today,” he says, “just the art he left would be worth billions.” For me Andy Warhol was fun to be with and I related to his inner child because I grew up in a middle-class immigrant household where children were only to be seen, not heard. Of course I rationalized at one point that no matter how much money he made or how famous he had become, he was never a happy traveler. Deep inside he was always sad, deprived little boy. Blake Gopnik tells many, many more Andy stories—and there are probably many more yet to be revealed as time goes on, but for the moment Gopnik’s Warhol is the latest Andy bible.
I spent two weeks in June on Vinalhaven Island, Maine. Reachable by ferryboat from Rockland, it has a year-round population of 1200. The only guideline for out-of-state visitors at that time was to quarantine for 14 days. I could walk on the shore or wilderness near our family cottage, alone. I completed my hike, watching the seals, eagles and raccoons during their changing shifts of appearances in the tidal cove in front of the house in between my hours of remote musical work.

On my first Friday there, I saw on my Facebook page that about 60 local island people were marching a “Black Lives Matter” protest, walking from the town’s only shore with a small harbor to pick up his belongings and the town was on fire. Ashley told me that he wore a bulletproof vest for his ferry ride because they were concerned of what might happen to him on the journey back to the mainland. Later, I read in a local online paper that thirty protesters surrounded his former home, peacefully, waiting for him to arrive. According to the news report, he spat out the window in response and “was arrested Tuesday after he gave the finger to a crowd that had been protesting the homicide.” I wasn’t aware that giving the “finger” was disorderly conduct, however, I am sure that the consensus is unanimous that there are many reasons that this individual needs to be incarcerated. Perhaps the protests won’t stop until he is. They were still going on in Rockland when I wrote this.

What Will Happen When It’s Time to Pay the Piper?
FDR-Style Program Urgently Needed to Address Looming Post-Covid Housing Crisis

By Diane Sare, Candidate for U.S. Senate-NY 2022

The national news media is filled with stories about the extreme anxiety of renters and property owners wondering what will happen when it is declared that the COVID-19 Pandemic has abated and there is no more forbearance on rent and mortgage payments or property tax payments. This is a burning question which must not be left to the last minute, and really shouldn’t be up to a local town, county, or even state government to determine. The bad news is that the reckless early opening of states where the rate of infections had not even begun to decline, means that the nation has not even reached the peack of the first wave of the pandemic, let alone the second, so the end of the emergency is probably not as near as many would hope. Nonetheless, we all presume that at some point people will return to work (or not, which is a topic for another day), and then will be confronted with several months of lost income and no prospect of making up for it. Also, business is likely to be slow for months ahead, so what happens to property owners who can’t pay their taxes and mortgages in the meantime?

Imagine the situation which confronts millions of Americans. Take the case of a renter, who may owe a few months of rent. Will they be able to pay six months at once after one week back at work, if they are fortunate enough to still have a job? Unlike. If the landlord tries to force the issue of the back rents, which the landlord probably needs in order to pay property taxes and utilities, the renter will be evicted. Evicting the delinquent tenant is not going to result in collection of the back rent, however, because obviously a new tenant is not going to cover the back rents of the previous tenant, so either way, the landlord is out several months rent.

There are now 4.3 million Americans who are over 30 days behind in their mortgage payments. In the case of mortgages, it’s different from rent, because the property owner is paying off a specific amount of money and will end up owning the property. In that case, one might consider thinking of this period as a “pause” in payments, and just extend the mortgage another three or four, or however many months at the same rate. Again, asking the homeowner to double or triple payments will not work. There will also be an important question about the value of these properties in a few months from now. What about property taxes? Municipalities depend on property taxes to pay for schools, roads, police and firefighters, public libraries and more. If building owners cannot pay property taxes due to lack of income, is the town going to put a lien on their property? Will the town or city end up holding dozens of bankrupt, half empty buildings and homes which become a health and welfare hazard? How will the town then pay for those essential services? Obviously, the priority must be to stabilize the situation and keep people housed, while at the same time funding vital municipal functions. Also, everybody is not hurting equally. Some businesses, like grocery stores, hardware stores, gas stations and other “essential” businesses and construction firms have remained open, and it would be expected that they continue to pay their utility bills and taxes. Many unemployed people have been collecting unemployment compensation, plus $600 per week, so they should be paying at least part of their rent. All of this needs to be sorted out in an equitable fashion, or at least as fairly as possible, being conscious that it’s better to err on the side of protecting vulnerable people.

In 2007, when the mis-named “mortgage crisis” hit, American economist Lyndon LaRouche drafted legislation modeled on FDR’s “Homeowners Loan Corporation” program, and called it the “Homeowners and Bank Protection Act.” In 2007-2008, this draft legislation was officially endorsed by over 80 cities in public resolutions, including Buffalo, Philadelphia, Providence, Newark, Detroit, Indianapolis, Akron, Pittsburgh, and others. It was passed in one or both houses of five state legislatures including Rhode Island, Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, and Vermont, as well as being introduced in 15 other states, including New York.

The essential points of the Homeowners and Bank Protection Act are as follows: Congress must establish a Federal agency to place the Federal and state chartered banks under protection, freezing all existing home mortgages for a period of however many months or years are required to adjust the values to fair prices, restructure existing mortgages at appropriate interest rates, and...
Memories of Saint Vincent’s Hospital

By Toby Bellin

In 1985 I attended my first meeting as a supportive care volunteer at St. Vincent’s. The class of 24 was a very mixed group—a pre-med student, an actress, a writer, a lawyer, two nuns, a businesswoman, among others. The speaker at this first meeting was Marc, a classmate who had offered to tell the story of his partner who had died of AIDS. Marc described a dancer and stage manager in a children’s theater. Shaken, I recognized that Mark was talking about Robert whom I had known at that theater. This was my introduction to being a volunteer in the time of AIDS.

The class later attended a series of training meetings. We learned AIDS was a virus—in fact a group of viruses—for which there was no vaccine. Symptoms varied, as did treatments. There was no cure then. The diagnosis was a death sentence that had a stigma attached to it also. People were afraid of anyone known to be infected. Victims who were gay and diagnosed were afraid to tell families. Imagine saying “Mom and dad I’m gay and I have AIDS.” Women could get AIDS and children be born with it. Our volunteers learned about grief of patients (for loss of their health), grief of families and our own grief at the loss of a patient to whom we had become attached. Friendships formed among our class volunteers, some lasting several years beyond our hospital experience.

I was asked to meet Terry, described as a homeless man who could no longer live in a boarding house in Brooklyn. He had lived at the hospital for eight months when he died February 3, 1989. I knew him about 2 1/2 months. When we first met I said “I’m a volunteer from Supportive Care. He said he didn’t need a volunteer. I said I’d like to come back another time. What would you suggest?” Offhandedly he said “In about two weeks.” I returned and somehow we broke the ice. He was very ill with constant fevers, lung congestion that made breathing difficult, spasms of coughing, and painful leg swelling that restricted walking. His appetite declined and even talking took much energy. Nevertheless we connected. Pulling up a chair close to his bed he took my hand. “What’s this?” I asked. “Friendship,” he said. We held hands whether we talked or not. He talked about having been mistreated from a young age and misunderstood. He was not a blamer nor a complainer. Though sometimes he expressed contempt for hospital staff. Any impatience with me quickly passed. I brought a little radio for him to listen to music, sometimes soup or an omelette from outside. Small things. On February 2, a doctor told him he was failing. He became incontinent, his hands puffy, generally weaker. His family in New England were notified of his condition. No one came. He knew he was dying. The last time I saw him he said was not afraid because he did not know what would happen. He said he could feel spirits creeping along the sides of his bed. When I left I showed my ID at the nurses station. I told them to notify me if his condition changed during the night. No one phoned. Sleepless at home, I read a book about helping a dying person with mental exercises, an exhortation to look for the light and so forth. I finished reading. Morning had come and I lay down to sleep a little. A supportive care nurse called to say Terry had died at 4 am. Was this a coincidence or a connection? As I was reading, was I helping him in friendship until the very end? I would like to believe that’s what it was.

This Article Might Save Your Life

By Alec Pruchnicki

The dramatic, and sometimes deadly, confrontations between civilians and the police reminded me that growing up in The Bronx we also had a set of rules of engagement when dealing with police. I came from a working-class area, Arthur Avenue. We had no particular love of the police, and they returned the feelings. But we did fear what they could do, and so over the years we developed these rules.

First, do not argue with the police. Any argument should occur in the courtroom and not on the sidewalk.

Second, do not threaten the police either physically or verbally. During anti-war demonstrations I was warned to never let them see you looking at their badges, because if they think you are doing it to file a complaint, they will arrest you on some charge or another to neutralize your accusation.

Third, if arrested do not physically resist. There is a corollary to this rule in that if you do physically resist, they will assume you are criminal. You will likely be more word out of your mouth is a trick to escape. I can’t breathe, I’m having chest pain, I’m having a seizure, I’m having a low blood sugar attack, the handcuffs are too tight, I have to pee. They won’t listen until you are under their complete control either with handcuffs or in a cell at the station house.

These rules are universal and don’t involve race or politics. All of us teenage trouble makers were white as were all the police. And when we hung out in a playground after hours drinking Colt 45 or smoking weed, we weren’t doing it as a political statement in the early 60s. What was not universal, then or now, was the punishment for violating these unstated rules. If you were white, privilege or empathy might exist. If you were black, you might result in ignoring your transgression, or belting you with a night-stick, or a simple arrest. We see from current events that for minorities there can also be a free pass, or assault, or arrest, or death. Also, violating these rules doesn’t justify police brutality up to and including death. This is just how things are, not how they should be.

I thought these rules from my teenage years were somehow unique to my working-class neighborhood. But a few years ago, when Keith Wright was an Assemblyman from Central Harlem, he had a website which included a set of rules for surviving a police encounter. These rules were there, along with a few others (don’t say anything, get a lawyer, etc.).

From various talk shows I’ve heard parents of African-American children describe “The Talk”. This is when the parent must sit down and explain to their kids how to react to police. These brief descriptions in the media don’t make me an expert on raising minority, or any other, children. But the principles of being polite, don’t argue, don’t fight, etc. were frequently mentioned.

During the course of a heated demonstration, individuals will sometimes ignore these rules. Perhaps this is due to the justness of the cause, or perhaps it is lack of knowledge of these rules, or maybe just the feeling that these rules don’t apply to me, and the police will have to treat me in a manner that I believe is appropriate. Don’t bet your life on it.

Pay Piper continued from page 33

write off all of the cancerous speculative debt obligations of mortgage-backed securities, derivatives and other forms of Ponzi Schemes that have brought the banking system to the point of bankruptcy.

During this transitional period, all foreclosures shall be frozen, allowing American families to retain their homes. Monthly payments, the effective equivalent of rent, payments, the effective equivalent of rent, shall be made to designated banks, which can then use the funds as collateral for normal lending practices, thus recapitalizing the banking system. Ultimately, these affordable monthly payments will be factored into new mortgages, reflecting the devaluing of the housing bubble, and the establishment of appropriate property valuations, and reduced fixed mortgage interest rates. It is to be expected that this process of shakeout of the housing market will take several years to achieve. In this interim period, no homeowner shall be evicted from his or her property, and the Federal and state-chartered banks shall be protected, so they can resume the traditional functions, serving local communities, and facilitating credit for investment in productive industries, agriculture, infrastructure, etc.

State governors shall assume the administrative responsibilities for implementing the program, including the “rental” assessments to designated banks, with the Federal government providing the necessary credits and guarantees to assure the successful transition.

Unfortunately, this legislation was not passed by the U.S. Congress in 2007 or 2008. Instead, then Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson stampeded the Congress into approving the first $700 billion bailout, and this was followed by a decade of further bailouts, known today as “Quantitative Easing,” to the tune of over $23 trillion. Compounding that, since last September, when the big banks lost confidence in overnight interbank lending, the New York Federal Reserve has stepped in with more liquidity pumping, and now has acquired over $7 trillion in “assets” of dubious actual value. So while it is definitely the case that nothing will be gained by mass evictions of tenants and homeowners, and nothing will be solved by municipalities seizing properties for non-payment of taxes, just halting foreclosures and evictions, while a necessary step, will not solve this crisis.

What is required at this point is nothing less than a full-scale bankruptcy reorganization. The Glass-Steagall Act must be re-instated, and so-called “banks” and “bank holding companies” must be broken up by function. This includes reorganizing the Federal Reserve and creating a Third National Bank, which could issue necessary credit to keep states and cities functioning, while more importantly issuing credit for great projects that raise the standard of living and productivity for the population as a whole. This means creating a national high speed rail grid, of not less than 40,000 miles of rail, nuclear power for clean abundant energy, continent-wide water management projects like the North American Water and Power Alliance, plans for building new modern cities, and most importantly, funding for science driver projects like NASAs Moon- Mars mission and the development of fusion energy.

The global health crisis can be turned into a driver for employing thousands of young people who will produce the PPE and ventilators which are desperately needed in developing nations, not to mention building hospitals and sanitation systems. A program to employ millions of Americans in these desperately needed endeavors, including huge training and apprenticeship programs will do far more to stabilize our cities than either defunding the police or arresting more people.

The fact that we were caught so woefully unprepared for the COVID-19 pandemic should be a wake-up call that major change is needed. If you think such grand plans are pie-in-the-sky impossible, ask yourself whether you could have imagined shuttering the entire country down due to a pandemic. Bold action is needed now, and as FDR said, “The only thing to fear, is fear itself.” Millions of people worldwide are watching to see how Americans will respond to the crisis.
Teaching English Online to Kids in China

By Dan Schlesinger

The New York Amateur Computer Club holds free monthly meetings open to the public at NYU. Presentations cover computer technology and trends. Currently, during the coronavirus pandemic, NYACC meetings are online via Zoom.

At the April NYACC meeting, ESL (English as a Second Language) instructor Dina Schlesinger interviewed Elizabeth, her online student in Beijing, China. The time was 8:00 pm in NYC, 9:00 am in Beijing. They used WeChat, the social media giant in China with 1.15 billion active monthly users. A 10-minute video of the interview is on YouTube: ESL Live from NYU-NYC to Beijing. The interview was projected on a large screen at NYU.

Dina has been teaching Elizabeth weekly for three years. Dina recalls, “When we first met online, Elizabeth hardly knew a word of English. Elizabeth’s English gradually improved, and she was able to speak well enough to do the live interview at the NYACC meeting.”

In the interview, Elizabeth, a ninth-grader, noted that learning English is very important to her and that she likes learning online. Dina says, “In addition to grammar, vocabulary and American idioms, we discuss stories and cultures from around the world. Elizabeth is a fantastic artist. She sends me her drawings, paintings, and animations regularly. She said she may want to study art at an American university like NYU.” Elizabeth talked about her artwork and how she was inspired to create art by both of her parents. Examples of her artwork are shown at the end of the video.

Dina began teaching ESL online to Blanca’s son and other children in China using Zhumu, an interactive program similar to Zoom. The instructions for Zhumu were in Chinese. Blanca explained, via Skype, how to use the program. It took some tinkering and computer savvy. Using Zhumu, Dina teaches her students—on a shared screen at their homes—speaking, reading, writing, and drawing. Dina sends lessons to her students a week before teaching them.

Last week Elizabeth told Dina that she’s back at her junior high school after being quarantined at home for months and taking classes online due to the coronavirus. Elizabeth says that all students have to wear masks at school, except during exercising outside and while eating lunch with other students in the cafeteria, although the students aren’t allowed to talk to each other during lunch. Despite all these restrictions, Elizabeth is glad to be back at school.

Dina notes, “These ESL classes are bridges of friendship and understanding.”

Dina Schlesinger teaches ESL online to children in China. She also teaches ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) for adults at Community Impact at Columbia University and through her company. Her emphasis: cross-cultural conversations. Contact: dinatutoru@gmail.com.

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ESL Live from NYU-NYC to Beijing (YouTube video). James Yeargin and Dina Schlesinger interview ESL Student online via WeChat at New York Amateur Computer Club meeting. Photo by Brendan Kidwell.

Dina Schlesinger teaches ESL online to children in China. She also teaches ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) for adults at Community Impact at Columbia University and through her company. Her emphasis: cross-cultural conversations. Contact: dinatutoru@gmail.com.
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