Corey Johnson Drops Mayoral Bid

By George Capsis

The always smiling and articulate City Council Speaker (who I thought was next in line to become the mayor) announced on Thursday, September 24th, that he would drop his run for mayor.

This came as a surprise to me because whenever I offered his name in an article I would suggest with complete conviction that he was most likely going to be the next mayor; and then the reason for his quitting was a real shocker—the ever-smiling, ever-articulate Corey was a victim of depression.

When Corey first attempted to run for the city council he rang my doorbell and asked if WestView would endorse him. I explained we didn't endorse politicians as we might have to criticize them later.

The morning after Corey's unannounced visit, the doorbell rang again. My wife, Maggie, went to the front door and then escorted two slight elderly women dressed in matching black to the garden. They were Corey's mother and aunt from Boston who wanted to plea for him: “He's a nice boy and deserves the job.” (Later, Corey would remind me of this visit and smile).

Corey had been a football player in a Boston suburb. In the last game against their arch rivals, his team won and stormed into the dressing room shouting with elation. Corey climbed on a bench and shouted for silence. He disclosed that because his family was poor, he, unlike the others, would not be going to college. He further explained that as this was perhaps the last time he would see them he wanted there to be no secrets; and then he announced he was gay.

Corey has confessed easily to all the vices, alcohol, and drugs. But when seeing him on TV speaking before the City Council, I've been struck by his knowledge and easy, effective delivery—as if he were born to the job—so I was sure he would be our next mayor. But yesterday he announced that he was suffering from a “loss of joy,” from depression. He quit.

I only wish that WestView could afford him—he would make a good editor.

Corey Johnson Cites Depression for Quitting Bid for Mayor.

COREY-JOHNSON CITES DEPRESSION FOR QUitting BID FOR MAYOR. Corey Johnson, now City Council Speaker, in a surprise statement cited depression for quitting the race to become the next mayor of New York. Seen here with George Capsis, publisher of WestView, shortly after winning his seat on the council. Photo by Maggie Berkvist.

Crowdfunding Campaign Update:

A Reward Greater Than Cash

A Message from George Capsis

The pandemic became real to me when the Northwell medical complex on Seventh Avenue attached a truck to their building to discreetly remove the bodies of virus victims. How it would financially impact the business if they can't open the front door.

Offerings; and a restaurant does not advertise if they can't open the front door.

Paper became very real when a leading real estate firm sent a polite letter backing out of a contract to advertise on the back page of a very expensive 36-page color-replete newspaper for free each month, when the former three cents per copy New York Times now costs $3.00, could not go on very much longer and something had to give.

WHY IS WESTVIEW NEWS FREE ANYWAY?

Not only is WestView News free, but it is delivered to the lobbies of many apartment buildings each month; and every once in continued on page 20

We Need You

By Stanley Wlodyka Jiménez

Hello WestView readers! Local papers have long been charged with championing community first and foremost. As one of the last few, truly independent local newspapers in the country, WestView News is proud to back this effort to preserve the Village AIDS Memorial in NYC and the only one in a church anywhere in the world. Please consider becoming a Caretaker of the Village AIDS Memorial by signing this open letter addressed to Pope Francis, the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Supreme Council of Apostolic Signatura, the highest judicial authority in the Vatican, is currently hearing the case of whether or not to reopen the Church of Saint Veronica, an essential part of the West Village community for the past 130 years. This case was brought before them by former parishioners of Saint Veronica's who have had generations of baptisms, marriages and funerals performed at this historic Christopher Street church.

WestView offers practical advice to facilitate making your vote count in a very complicated 2020 environment.

Tamara Lashchyk

In an attempt to inform our readers, WestView tried to arrange a debate between Assembly candidates. Only one answered.

Voting

SEE PAGE 3

2020 Halloween Surprises

SEE PAGE 17
Advertorial Issues

Dear Editors,

I would like to respond to the four-page untitled “Advertorial” which was placed by Barbara Honegger’s “Lawyers’ Committee” in the September issue of WestView, which sorely needs the $4000 advertising income (as much as 2000 monthly subscribers, which we don’t have).

The committee is desperately striving to have our readers believe that over 3000 lives plus the entire World Trade Center were destroyed, not by two hijacked passenger air liners, but by government agents in black suits scurrying around secretly at night planting little bombs in three or more of the buildings 1-7. They refuse to believe that buildings 1 and 2, the North and South Towers, were struck so violently as to cause them to collapse and cause fires that spread throughout the entire World Trade Center site. Virtually, every standing building on the entire site burned or collapsed to the ground. Since World War II, there have been no attacks of this magnitude.

In the current case of fires in Oregon, there are also conspiracy theorists that those fires were ignited by Antifa members. President Trump blames them on states not raking the leaves or removing the accumulated brush. It is a profound insult to the memories and losses experienced by the families and friends of those who died during the crash and collapse of the towers and the fires that followed to look for conspiracy theories rather than the facts behind the tragedy. What is the Lawyers’ Committee seeking? Some compromise, saying that thought the twin towers probably did collapse because of the planes, but the collapse of Building 7 “resembled” controlled demolition. In fact, films showed to me by Dusty Berke showed almost the entire non-fireproof building containing large quantities of inflammable interior partitions, furniture and materials in flames before collapsing. She pointed out the presence of thermite in the ruins, a molten material which is a product of welded steel buildings, which is just the way Buildings 1,2 and 7 were constructed.

Why is so difficult to accept this evidence?

—Barry Benepe
Voting Can Be Easy: DO IT!

By Brian J. Pape, AIA

Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 2020
Early Voting: October 24-November 1, 2020

Many of you may have concerns about the coming election and New York’s absentee ballot laws. In August, the governor signed a law allowing all New Yorkers to vote absentee in this election, which means, starting right now, you can (and should) request your absentee ballot. It’s easy to do and takes less than a minute. I recommend requesting your absentee ballot early, to give the NYC Board of Elections as much time as possible to process your request.

You can order a ballot online at www.ny-cabsentee.com, or you can call 1-866-VOTE-NYC (1-866-868-3692) to request a ballot.

If you request an absentee ballot, you will be able to vote even if you cannot get to the polling place on Election Day. You are still eligible to vote in person (early voting or Election Day), as long as you haven’t mailed your ballot yet. Do not do what President Trump suggested—sending a mail-in vote and then voting in-person; that is a crime.

When is a request for a ballot due? You must postmark, apply online, email or fax a completed application for the general absentee ballot until October 27, 2020; you may apply in person by November 2, 2020. (Ballots will be mailed, on a rolling basis, beginning on or after September 18, 2020.) Here’s what you need to know:

To vote by mail, you must request an absentee ballot.

You can select the reason as “Temporary illness or disability” due to the risk of contracting the coronavirus.

If you do not want to mail your ballot, you can drop it off at any early voting site during early voting period, at your polling site on election day, or at the New York City Board of Elections at 200 Varick Street, 10th floor.

The election and your vote are very important. Only by participating can you influence how our government is run.

Perhaps equally important, consider helping as a poll worker on the election days. To do so, go online to: nyc.elections-dayworker.com. You will need to log on and register, or go to www.vote.nyc to view:

• Basic Poll Worker Manual
• Accessibility videos also available on YouTube
• Scanner opening and closing videos.

Generally, West Village and Chelsea residents are in the following electoral districts (you will get specifics with your absentee ballot):

City Council, 3 or 6 respectively
Assembly (State), 66 or 75 respectively
Congressional (US), 07
Senatorial, 27
Municipal Courts, 01 or 03 respectively.

Vote please!

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 focuses on architecture subjects.

It’s Hard to Vote If You’re Old or Sick in NYC

By J. Taylor Basker

New York State has a long list of “Your Rights as a Nursing Home Resident in New York State and Nursing Home Responsibilities” on the Dept of Health website, yet your right to vote is not included. You have a right to dignity and respect, quality care and treatment, but nothing is mentioned about your right to vote as an American citizen. There are 17 Medicaid/Medicare Nursing Homes and Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) in Manhattan alone with approximately 14,730 residents.

Finding out how residents can vote in these facilities is quite a challenge. These include both private and public institutions, as well as some run by the US Veteran’s Administration.

Several calls to the Upper East Side Rehabilitation Center on E. 79th Street led to mixed and contradictory information. One person said they provide absentee ballots for all the residents; another said they would only request an absentee bal-

lot if the resident requested it and would still be present in the facility on November 3. This could be something difficult to predict in advance, since it depends on medical conditions and doctor’s decisions.

When I mentioned I had already requested an absentee ballot for my 101 year old friend from Westbeth, Edith Stephen, they told me to just bring it to her. However, nothing was mentioned as to whether they would mail the ballots in for the residents.

I called Village Care in Greenwich Village on Houston Street and Bob Goldman of their Communication Dept. was supposed to return my call to answer my inquiries about residents’ voting, but I never heard from him.

Located in the East Village, New Governor Hospital/SNF told me to contact their social worker, and I left a message. She also has not returned my call.

The Veterans Administration at first did not respond to my inquiries, directing me continued on page 4

Skip the Crowds: Vote Early by Mail or in Person

November 3, 2020 is General Election day. WestView News wants to ensure you know how, where, and when to cast your ballot for the upcoming election. Here are all of your options amid the coronavirus pandemic. We encourage people to have a voting plan. Decide which way you’re going to vote and when you’re going to do so.

REGISTER TO VOTE
To vote in the 2020 General Election, New Yorkers must mail or submit their registration by October 9, 2020.
Register here: vote.nyc/page/register-vote
DMV customers register here:
https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application
Check your registration here: vote.nyc/page/am-i-registered
If you need help registering to vote, call Karen at 347-362-5677 by October 7.

VOTE EARLY
Early voting in New York runs from October 24 through November 1. Remember to wear your mask and maintain six feet of distance.

Early Voting Locations
Our early voting poll sites for the Village:
Skirball Center for the Performing Arts — 566 LaGuardia Place
The Church of St. Anthony of Padua — 155 Sullivan Street
Voter entrance 154 Sullivan Street. Accessible entrance: Houston Street.
Find other early voting sites here: https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/

Early Voting Days and Hours
Saturday, October 24, 2020 10 AM to 4 PM
Sunday, October 25, 2020 10 AM to 4 PM
Monday, October 26, 2020 7 AM to 3 PM
Tuesday, October 27, 2020 12 PM to 8 PM
Wednesday, October 28, 2020 12 PM to 8 PM
Thursday, October 29, 2020 10 AM to 6 PM
Friday, October 30, 2020 7 AM to 3 PM
Saturday, October 31, 2020 10 AM to 4 PM
Sunday, November 1, 2020 10 AM to 4 PM

VOTE BY MAIL (ABSENTEE VOTING)
Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a law August 20 that allows registered New York voters to request absentee ballots because of the pandemic. If you do not want to vote in person because of COVID-19, you must request an absentee ballot by October 27. Don’t wait, do it today.

Request Your Absentee Ballot
Request your absentee ballot here: nyabsentee.com
Or call 212-886-2100
If your reason for voting absentee is the pandemic, check the box for “Temporary illness or physical disability” on the absentee ballot application.

Cast Your Absentee Ballot
Once you fill out the absentee ballot and sign the envelope properly, you must return it by mail no later than November 3. Or you can drop off the ballot at the New York Board of Elections office: 200 Varick Street, 10th Floor.

VOTE ON ELECTION DAY
If you choose to vote on Election Day, remember to wear your mask and maintain six feet of distance.
There are several West Village poll sites.
PS 41 at 116 West 11th Street, PS 3 at 490 Hudson, and PS/MS 297 at 75 Morton
To find other locations for Election Day: https://findmypollsite.vote.nyc/

MORE INFORMATION
New York State Board of Elections website: vote.nyc
New York County Board of Elections: http://www.elections.ny.gov

continued on page 4
Hard to Vote continued from page 3

The NYC Board of Election’s website does not mention the last day to request an absentee ballot and when I finally reached the Manhattan office the gentleman answering the phone was not sure, and transferred me to another phone that never answered. However, it does provide information on how to obtain one:

Online—https://nycabsentee.com/ Email application to: Apply4Absentee@boe.nyc "Applications must be saved in a (.pdf) format to avoid delays."
Fax application to 212-487-5349 Mail application to local borough office Calling 1-866-VOTE-NYC (1-866-868-3692)

I believe these residences resist providing information to the press due to their inefficient or non-existing voting policies. Absentee voting is now a politically hot issue, and one wonders if some administrations of these facilities are reluctant to provide absentee ballots to their residents. And the Board of Elections also does not provide information on how these residents can vote. Do they need to change their addresses and re-register? Who will distribute these ballots safely if they are sent to a residence? Who collects and mails them? Are there election officials provided for these sensitive tasks, or is it left up to the nursing home staff? What can happen if they change their residence?

The danger is losing their homes when they register to vote from a facility. Arthur Schwartz, tenant and election lawyer, warns that “One of the biggest problems that long-term nursing home residents face is the fact that they have lost their residence. Even if rent is paid, landlords will assert that the nursing home is the person’s primary residence and that they can be evicted. They do this because most long-term nursing home residents live in rent controlled, or fairly low-rent stabilized apartments, and the landlords want them back. In order to vote, the long-term nursing home resident must re-register (this is not true if their old residence stays in place and someone picks up their mail.) Registering and then arranging for receipt of an absentee ballot (absentee ballot applications have already been sent to most voters) requires assistance. Family members and friends have to help, since all of this requires filling out forms, receiving mail, and sending mail. Those reading this article who do not have family around to assist are urged to call their local elected officials, whose staff can be of assistance; or send me an email at arthur@arthurfornyc.com, or call 212-285-1400.”

Schwartz is the Greenwich Village Democratic District Leader and candidate for NY City Council. I have not heard back yet from Jerry Nadler or Corey Johnson.

If you have a friend or relative in a hospital or residential facility, be sure they request an absentee ballot as soon as possible. The resident’s Social Worker should be helpful, but good luck reaching them. You can order a ballot for them if you know their name, official address and date of birth, and can get access to their mail to retrieve the ballot and get it to them. Ballots should be sent in immediately, as soon as they are received. COVID has placed more obstacles in the voting process for the elderly and infirm. Some residences have banned in-person visits, or even mail to their residents. As soon as a COVID case appears, the residence goes into lockdown and it is impossible to visit or bring things to residents. I received a call from the Upper East Side Rehabilitation Center stating that any visitor now needs to have a COVID Test within 7 days mandated by the NYS Dept. of Health. This will make it more difficult for residents to have visitors and receive assistance in the voting process. Absentee ballots will be absent for many. At present it appears that voting if you are old or sick is a train wreck in NYC. Imagine what it is like in other states!

Please America, Not Again

By Alec Pruchnicki MD

Definition of Dukakised: loss of a political contest by acting unethically when the opponent is acting unethically or cheating. (see presidential elections: George H. Bush vs. Michael Dukakis, 1988, and George W. Bush vs. Al Gore, 2000)

You won’t see the above definition in Webster’s since it’s rarely been used (above is my explanation). But it describes what we have seen in many past elections. Will it happen again?

With a month to go, there is lots of time for unethical behavior, cheating, and general mischief before November 3rd. We have seen some of this already. Undermining the US Postal Service to suppress mail voting, conservative-packed courts helping voter suppression in states like Florida, doctors videos of Biden, appeals to fear and racism to scare suburban voters about threats to their communities, Republican support for Kanye West and Green Party diversion of Democratic voters, and lies about Biden’s positions on a variety of issues are just a few examples. There is no telling what October surprise Trump will try—such as martial law under the Insurrection Act, a foreign military action, or just refusal to accept election results—again backed by conservative-packed courts. The “Justice” Department of Bill Barr and hearings and investigations by the Republican-dominated Senate are likely, if they have time while forcing us to accept another conservative appointment to the Supreme Court. And, of course, there is no telling what the Russians are doing, as reports on their activities by the Department of Homeland Security have been suppressed as of this writing on September 20th.

Even at this late date there are ways to counteract these actions. There is always getting everyone you know to vote, or donating to one of the countless emails and snail mail pleas for donations. The Village Independent Democrats (villagedemocrats.org), the local West Village club, is conducting phone banking and postcard writing to remind people to vote in swing districts and other states besides New York. The Downtown Independent Democrats to our south and the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club to our north are conducting similar outreaches. Although Biden is acting ethically and cautiously enough, that type of upstanding behavior didn’t help Michael Dukakis or Al Gore. Support for Biden is widely distributed throughout the country, including in swing states, but it’s not overwhelmingly deep. In 2016 Clinton was leading Trump also, until then FBI director Comey gave a misleading press conference just ten days before the election. It has been said over the years that all politics are local. Those of us following national issues like COVID response, abdication of international leadership, reproductive rights, anti-racism initiatives, police reform, and global warming environmental damage, along with many other concerns, can also see the hyper local damage that can be done. Will attacks on the USPS threaten the postal sub-station on Hudson Street? Will global warming make the next hurricane Sandy flood and destroy more of the Hudson River side of the neighborhood? Will Trump anti-New York and anti-blue state vengeance undermine our economy at this critical time? You can probably think of more, but this is just a taste of what might come.

When walking to work recently, I saw a home with the title of this piece, “Please America, Not Again” embalmed across its front (see last month’s WestView News, page 22). Our future depends on it. Act now.
Voter Fraud—Not Bloody Likely

By Robert Kroll and Rose M. Ray, PhD and poll worker

Anyone out there thinking of voting more than once at the upcoming General Election? Think again. The chances of getting away with it in the city of New York or any of its five boroughs are slim to none.

Firstly, no mailed or handed in ballots will be counted at the polling places. They go into a box inside an envelope with the voter’s signature on the outside of the envelope.

Vote-by-mail ballots are verified before they are counted, and one check is whether the voter already voted, according to the Associated Press.

The Associated Press also states: “all states have checks in place to avoid voters casting two votes. In some states, a poll worker may be able to void the mailed ballot if the voter prefers to vote in person.

In other states, the voter may be given a provisional ballot and election officials will determine if the provisional ballot should be counted.” It’s not clear which of these procedures are followed in New York City.

Further, the AP provides this assurance from NYU: “States have different processes, they have their own ways of making sure that two ballots don’t get counted,” said Myrna Pérez, the director of voting rights and elections at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law.

Voters who cast their ballots inside the booths of the polling place will have been checked against a list of people who have already voted early or at a polling place.

Absentee voters can track their ballot online using either the confirmation number on the ballot envelope or with personal information.

In other words, if you have a longing to be criminally prosecuted for voter fraud, which could be a felony that would void your future voting rights, go ahead and attempt to vote more than once. It could be your last opportunity to vote.

If there are any shenanigans committed in the upcoming election, it won’t be by individual fraudsters trying to up the vote count for their favored candidate. There are many ways to “rig” an election and one of the political parties has exploited them assiduously in the past four national elections.

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

Enjoy useful information about New York City real estate, Coronavirus in New York City updates, and supporting local businesses by visiting the new westvillagenews.com.

“Small Individual Acts, Compounded by the Millions, Can Help Change the World:

By Erik Bottcher

“In a gentle way, you can shake the world.”

With these words, Mahatma Gandhi wanted us to understand that each of us has the ability to make a difference in the world, even through small actions.

We live in a chaotic time, dominated by screens that flash terrible news before our eyes, morning to night. Feelings of helplessness abound, especially while we’re at the mercy of a pandemic that seemingly has no end in sight. It’s enough to make someone want to curl into a ball and wait for it to be over.

None of us can change the world by ourselves. But the truth is that small individual acts, compounded by the millions, will do just that.

Here are some simple but important things you can do, right now.

JOIN A COMMUNITY CLEANUP

Every Sunday at 11:30a.m, my neighbors and I have been meeting to pick up litter in our neighborhoods. These Community Cleanups have been a great way to help our neighborhood during this challenging time, while also meeting neighbors and new friends. In the Village, we meet up at NYC AIDS Memorial Park at St. Vincent’s Triangle (at Seventh Ave & Greenwich Ave.). We focus on a different section of the neighborhood every week. When times are tough, New Yorkers roll up their sleeves and come together. Be a part of these efforts and join us on Sunday! Email me at info@erikbottcher.com to RSVP and for more information.

ATTEND A MARCH OR PROTEST

One extra person at a march or protest may not seem like a lot, but it makes a big difference. We are living through a historic movement against police brutality and for racial justice, and people are still in the streets, making their voices heard. People are marching for environmental justice, against the Republicans’ unconscionable effort to ram through a Supreme Court nominee, and in defense of democracy itself. Find an opportunity to show up, even if it’s just for a little while. It makes a difference.

JOIN A PHONE BANK (OR RECRUIT A FRIEND)

I don’t need to tell you that the future of the planet is on the ballot this fall. Don’t freak out; get involved! For the past two months I’ve been hosting a virtual phone bank via Zoom every Monday night at 5:30 p.m., where we make phone calls to voters in swing states. We’d love to have you! To sign up, visit www.mobilize.us/joe-biden/event/295910. If you’re not a phone banker, recruit someone who is. Send an email about this or other opportunities out to your neighbors. You’ll feel great knowing you recruited someone who made hundreds of calls. The impact of this is huge, and it’s how we’re going to defeat Donald Trump in November.

DONATE GOODS TO A HOMELESS SHELTER

In one of the richest cities in the world, a heartbreaking humanitarian crisis is unfolding before our eyes. Every night, nearly 60,000 New Yorkers sleep in New York City municipal shelters. Thousands sleep on the street and in other public places. These New Yorkers are among the hardest hit by this pandemic. Nearly all shelters have a basic set of goods that they always need, including toiletries, new socks and new undergarments. Shelters for women and children often request donations of feminine hygiene products, baby wipes and children’s books. Donations can be brought directly to shelters, like the Bowery Mission. Also consider making a monetary donation to an advocacy organization such as Human.nyc, which is fighting to change the system. These simple acts can make a difference in people’s lives.

This is an incredibly difficult time. So much is out of our control. But remember that whether it’s picking up one discarded coffee cup, helping a fellow New Yorker, or making your voice heard on an important issue, each of us can change the world.

By Erik Bottcher

Erik Bottcher is Chief of Staff to New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and is a candidate for New York City Council, District 3. His website is www.erikbottcher.com.
Super Hero VII: The Sociable Democrat—
What Can a Super Do to Get Out the Vote?

By Robert Kroll

The Super of a tenement building is generally viewed as a servant, an underling, a middle person between the tenants and the building owner whose job is to refuse to make repairs, ignore tenant needs, and be sure all rules and regulations are slavishly followed.

But there is another less understood, less followed, model for the Super—the role model and conscience of the building. The Super can serve as an organizer of the political energies of a building. Before you fall on the floor laughing uproariously, consider that a Super has a natural advantage in communicating with the entire building as he or she has a database of contact information. So why not employ that information for a good (non-partisan) purpose: getting out the vote?

Naturally, the Super should not interpose his or her politics on the building. He or she would likely be terminated for trying to abuse their power in that way. And it annoys the peasants, i.e. tenants. But what co-op board or building owner could object to a Super making efforts on behalf of the cause of democracy by reminding the tenants to vote in an upcoming election? The answer to the last question is easily forthcoming: the Republicans try to suppress the tenants to vote in an upcoming election?

As soon as you are reading this, put up a notice or send out reminders of when early voting begins, in the case of the West Village, October 24 or three weeks from the date of this newspaper.

Urge unregistered eligible voters (citizens) to register, either online and mailing their registration form to the address on the form; or register at the office of the election official in their borough. The online forms can be turned in at libraries, post offices and the borough’s DMV office. If mailed, it must be postmarked by Oct. 9 and received by Oct. 14.

Organize your efforts to communicate when, where and how to vote in that notice of early voting. If the building has a bulletin board, put up a notice that provides the location of early voting sites, the times of day that voting is allowed, and the fact that early voting goes through Nov. 1, a Sunday. Voters can either bring an absentee or mail in ballot to the early voting place or get a ballot at the polling place.

If you’ve voted in New York before, there’s no need to provide ID to vote.

If you are a first-time voter, who registered by mail, and didn’t provide a copy of your ID with your registration, you may need to show ID to vote. Identification means either a current and valid photo ID, Driver’s License or NYS identification card; or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address.

Election day is Tuesday November 3. Republicans have been known to send bogus notices to known Democratic voters urging them to vote on Wednesday, Nov. 4. It would be wrong of them to do so.

The notice should include a reason why it is important to vote in local, state and national elections, and there are many. One of the best: it’s the right, moral and public-minded thing to do. Whether you think of our government as a republican form or a democratic form, lower case r and d, voting is the way of letting the government know how you feel about the job it is doing.

Clear all of the above with your co-op board or building management. Be sure they get the fact you are non-partisan in this effort and are only trying to get people to participate.

Be a super Super and motivate your building’s occupants to participate in the upcoming national election. It’s the right thing to do.
Britain and the Elgin Marbles: How Brexit Can Restore Greek Artifacts and Honor

By Anastasia Kaliabakos

In the aftermath of Brexit, a debate has arisen over whether Britain should return artifacts that had been “unlawfully removed” from their countries of origin. One specific case that many people feel strongly about is the “Elgin Marbles,” which are remnants of the Parthenon from ancient Greece. In order to fully understand the gravity of the situation and why Greece has persistently advocated for the return of the Elgin Marbles, it may be helpful to turn back the clock and examine the history of these great artifacts.

More than two millennia ago, after their victory in a Persian invasion, the city of Athens, led by the famed Pericles, built the Parthenon in the location of a previously destroyed temple. Literally, the word “parthenon” means “the virgin’s abode.” The building was dedicated to Athena, the patron goddess of Athens. Originally, the temple held hundreds of sculptures, carvings, and friezes by the famed artist Phidias, one of the greatest artists of ancient Greece. The decorations in the Parthenon were mainly allegorical, telling the stories of Greek heroes and histories of epic battles. At the very center of the temple stood an awe-inspiring gold-plated statue of Athena herself, called the Athena Parthenos (unfortunately, the fate of this statue remains unknown).

By the time the Parthenon was completed in 438 BC, many famous works of art were lost for over a thousand years, including the Parthenon sculptures. In an effort to save the statues from the Ottomans, who were replacing the existing Larisa Temple with a new mosque in 1687, Lord Elgin, a Scottish nobleman, journeyed to Greece and, with a “mandate” from the Ottoman empire, took many marble sculptures, friezes, and art from the ruins of the Parthenon. He, along with a team of assistants, brought these important Greek artifacts back to England. In 1816 the British Museum bought the Marbles from Elgin, and they henceforth became known as the “Elgin Marbles,” or the “Parthenon Sculptures.” Although the Elgin Marbles’ display in the British Museum was indeed breathtaking and beautiful, it was also the source of much controversy. Even back then, it was almost shocking for one to see pieces of an ancient monument stripped from their place of origin and displayed thousands of miles away in a cosmopolitan museum.

When Greece won its independence in 1832, its campaign to reclaim the Elgin Marbles began. However, to this day, the British Museum has refused to give back what rightfully belongs to Greece. One argument put forward is that the document that Elgin had acquired before pillaging the Parthenon allowed him to take debris that had already fallen from the building and even to remove some of the works that appealed to him. Some say that Elgin was an original conservator and hero. In the early 1800s, when Elgin traveled to Greece, the Ottomans were using the Parthenon as a type of military base, sometimes using the ancient statues for their target practice. Therefore, some believe that Elgin’s subsequent actions were heroic, saving many artifacts before they could be destroyed. However, now that time has passed and Greece is fully autonomous, it may be time for the Parthenon Sculptures to be returned.

The British Museum has justified its possession of the Elgin Marbles by stating that they are preservers of the sculptures, protecting them from incoming environmental damage such as that which is caused by oil refineries and acid rain in Greece. Additionally, global institutions like the British Museum argue that art achieves its true potential through magnificent public display, labelling the removal of some artifacts from their home countries to museums as “creative acts.” Opponents of returning the Marbles also say that the repatriation of the Parthenon Sculptures may lead to the gradual emptying and decline of popular “encyclopedic museums.” The British Museum also has other famous artifacts in its possession, such as the Rosetta Stone, that have not been returned to their rightful countries of origin.

In the EU’s negotiating mandate for Britain, the return of “unlawfully removed cultural objects” to their places of origin is called for. Although the Elgin Marbles were not specifically mentioned, it is clear that this clause can be applied to their repatriation. As one of the main ideals of Brexeters is that of sovereignty, Britain should abide by this clause and restore the Parthenon Sculptures to Athens. Not only would this establish a fully legitimate relationship between Britain and Greece, acknowledging Greece’s strength through so much opposition and strife over the past centuries and economic suffering during past decades, but it would also demonstrate that Britain is able to resolve a past injustice.
Deborah Glick Hasn't Debated Her Opponent

By Frank Quinn

As we reported last month, WestView News invited both candidates for the District 66 State Assembly seat to debate the issues with us. The challenger, Tamara Lashchyk, accepted our invitation but the incumbent, Deborah Glick, did not.

As a result, instead of a debate we are providing an interview with Tamara Lashchyk. Please visit our website www.westviewnews.org and follow the link to watch our discussion of the issues with her.

Ms. Glick's chief of staff, Tracy Jackson, provided the following response to our invitation: “The assembly member appreciates the invitation, however, at this time she is focused solely on addressing community and small business needs, and ongoing legislative priorities as the state faces its biggest financial crisis of a generation.”

We appreciate that Ms. Glick is busy, but as constituents we want to hear a debate between the candidates. We made the effort to provide one for the benefit of voters, and as a well-read source of information in District 66, WestView News had an opportunity to present the candidates to the community.

As a monthly publication, our next chance to reach voters will be right before the election; there's still time for Ms. Glick to meet with Ms. Lashchyk and the public.

Visit www.westview.org to view our interview with candidate Tamara Lashchyk.

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Perils of the Lonely Census Taker

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

Our founding fathers established our post office and the decennial census as vital instruments for the benefit of our citizens and government. Throughout wars and economic turmoil the census has been taken, to help us know what this country has become and where our resources may need to be allocated.

The 2020 census planning began in 2019 with high hopes that technology would allow us to get a truer picture of who lives here and where they live. The pandemic and politics have changed all that.

First, the recruitment and training of census takers that began in December was halted in February and March as the nation began closing down gatherings. When the training resumed in July, social distancing meant many days of very small groups gathering in classrooms. Although millions initially responded to questionnaires sent to every postal address, field workers, called enumerators, needed to go to all addresses that had not replied, in order to have forms filled out in person or to leave notices reminding occupants to please do it asap. Almost 250,000 people needed to be organized into an army of information gatherers.

Equipped with smartphones programmed with addresses, forms, questions, and protocol, this intrepid army of citizens was sworn to a lifetime of secrecy to never reveal any of the personal information requested from those they contacted (citizenship status is not asked). Details were sensitive, such as birthdates, race, ethnicity.

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The Census as Metaphor for America’s Future

It was the Worst of Times, It was the Worst of Times

By Bruce Poli

The US Census is an enormous, complex, decade-by-decade constitutionally mandated national undertaking. You could call it a behemoth. We take it very seriously for a good reason…it shapes who we are as a country.

But—wait a minute—it’s also a metaphor for America’s future… And WHAT a dysfunctional metaphor it is!

I’ve been walking the beat as an enumerator for this year’s count.

Here are some unbelievable roadblocks to completing a fair and equitable census in 2020 (it just ended Sept 30th):

1) Covid. New York is a ghost town. I would guess that of the millions of New Yorkers who didn’t respond, one out of 20 (five percent) are actually here and can be contacted and interviewed...

2) Immigration paranoia has been a prevailing theme of the Trump administration. Tens of thousands are scared to be interviewed.

3) New York is filled with confusing housing units—hidden living quarters, rented storefronts, a mishmash of buildings and places where people stay, including shelters—and, of course, the proverbial Airbnb to confuse things further...

4) April 1st is the Census date of record. So, we are four-five months removed from the determining date of the American population—the VERY TIME that so many New Yorkers had fled the pandemic... So many West Villagers, for instance, have second homes they escaped to, which complicates the process.

5) Election frenzy and the great distrust across the country.

The bizarre and unrelenting news from the media affects everyone; and very few residents, for instance, are willing to give information about a neighboring apartment, let alone their own phone number. We are living in the throes of a frightened continued on page 9
Billionaires of the World Unite!

By Alec Pruchnicki, MD

"A billion here, a billion there, and before you know it, you’re talking real money."

—Attributed to Senator Everett Dirksen.

Former Mayor Mike Bloomberg recently pledged $100 million for Democratic election efforts in the swing state of Florida. That is a lot of money for one state. Very rough estimates indicate that the Biden campaign will spend about one billion dollars on the election, with the Democratic Party spending another billion on House and Senate races. For Trump, the figure will be about 1.5 billion dollars on his hoped-for re-election, and another billion will be spent on the Republican House and Senate races.

But it might take a lot more to crush the Trump death cult previously known as the Republican Party, and the cult’s enablers in the Senate. Where will this money come from? In the last four years Trump and his followers have demonized a lot of billionaires with very deep pockets. Now is the chance to return the feelings.

Jeff Bezos, head of Amazon, is worth about $200 billion when this is being written on September 20th, and probably a lot more by the time you read this. He has been a constant target of Trump because he also owns the Trump-critical Washington Post. Trump has attempted to interfere with the Post Office to raise rates dramatically to undermine Amazon. Isn’t stopping that worth a few billion?

Bill Gates is worth about $120 billion, from Microsoft. He has given a great deal to charities such as medical foundations. But he is a target of the QAnon conspiracy believers who think he helped cause COVID-19. Trump is soft on QAnon, and they love him, so who knows what conspiracies will be imagined with another four years of this administration. Gates can hope QAnon goes away or he can put up a little cash, let’s say a few billion, to get their ally out of the White House.

Mike Bloomberg (worth about $55 billion) has started to fight back against the president who loves to label him “Mini Mike.” Warren Buffett ($80 billion) knows the unfairness of the tax system and economic inequality and is in a secure position to donate a goodly amount. George Soros (a mere $8-9 billion) is a constant target of Trump and his followers, so this is a golden opportunity to fight back.

There are many other relatively low-profile billionaires in the $50-60 billion range who are in the computer and internet fields, such as Google, who are having a hard time recruiting tech workers from overseas because of Trump’s increasingly restrictive immigration policies. These could get much worse during another four-year administration.

If conservatives can’t stand the idea of donating to Democrats, there is another option. There are many anti-Trump Republican groups like the Lincoln Project that have gone after him and his spineless Senate enablers. Christy Walton, of the Walton family, has been reported to donate to the Lincoln Project and anti-Trump campaigns.

How does this affect the West Village? There are rumors that there are billionaires, whose names I don’t know, living locally. When the next hurricane Sandy sends flood waters across the West Village to their doorsteps, as it did to mine, they might decide the time has come to do something about global warming other than just deny that it’s occurring and continue to undermine every public policy and scientific attempt to curtail it (as the president does).

Some rich folks like Thiel, the Koch family, and maybe even Zuckerberg (who might have a truce of convenience with the president) might be beyond hope. But you have to start somewhere.

It’s pretty easy for me to ask people to donate billions of their dollars. But there is one more good reason that was explained in the movie Chinatown as follows:

“What can you buy that you can’t already afford?” J.J. Gittes (Jack Nicholson).

“The future Mr. Gittes, the future.” Noah Cross (John Huston).

Instead of jockeying to see who can get higher on the Forbes list of rich people, a legacy to the future—for their own posterity and that of their own descendants—might be in order. It only takes money, lots of it.

Census continued from page 8

public’s response at a time when we need everyone’s help. In this month’s WestView News Brian Pape wrote about his experience as a census taker. When considering whether it had been “worth the effort and hassles” he concluded, “...yes. Encourage everyone to complete the census.”

But the REAL problem is:

The President has ended the census September 30th (it was originally supposed to continue through October) so he can Make America White Again by limiting the outreach. He wants sole control over America’s future; neither Joe Biden nor anyone else should have any decision-making powers.

To put all this in perspective, I refer you to a phrase I have used since 2016: “Karma is NOT Fake News.” If we don’t get this right, we are in serious trouble.

This census, if it is properly managed and completed, will take at least six months to finish. And then it needs to be reviewed and considered by a non-political administration. GOOD LUCK WITH THAT!!

Like the election, the census outcome is a LONG way off. In the meantime, be optimistic, be good to others, and follow democracy’s journey. WE CAN do this!
The Story Behind the Parties at Washington Square Park

Assessing the Recklessness of Hundreds of Student Protesters Having a Party

By Anthony Paradiso

New York University's student newspaper, Washington Square News, published two articles that provided insights into the enormous dance parties that took place in Washington Square Park on Labor Day Weekend and the following weekend. WSN described the party: “The crowd, numbering well into the hundreds, was packed tightly together between the fountain and the eastern edge of the square.”

As far as the behavior of the participants, most were not wearing masks and “nobody was social distancing,” and that is not a good thing. No.

Washington Square News interviewed some of those who started the parties and asked them why they were taking part in a dangerous activity. One participant interviewed in the article detailing the first parties that took place on Labor Day weekend, identified by WSN as “Shaman,” was an organizer with “Refuse Fascism.” Shaman helped lead a protest march from Union Square to Trump Tower and back down to Washington Square Park, where the group met up with those who had already started a dance party, or “rave,” in the park in the early evening on September 5th. The article states, “Shaman told WSN that on Saturday night at around 9:30 p.m., an NYPD officer and he made an agreement to end the party at 1:30 a.m.”

The activist group organizer explained why he and his disciples were not wearing masks or social distancing at the party. “Our message means more than worrying about our masks, we die every day on the streets and really get brutalized by police if they hear it should have said, ‘Stop it,’ send the NYPD security, break it down. It’s not tough by the New York City enforcement unit which worked to help identify him.”

COVID. So we’re not worried about that.” NYU students, and/or young people were not the only ones responsible for the partying. According to Washington Square News, four activist groups—All Matters Matter, Refuse Fascism, America’s Peaceful Resolution, and NYC Revolution Club—joined the party, which transitioned the large gathering with live music into a full-blown disaster.

Governor Andrew Cuomo blasted NYU’s administration and New York City’s law enforcement for not breaking up the party sooner. He stated, “That is not tough by the NYU administrators, who as soon as they heard it should have said, ‘Stop it,’ send the NYU security, break it down. It’s not tough by the New York City enforcement unit which worked to help identify him.”

THE COMBINATION OF WARM WEATHER, the return of NYU students, and the continuing Black Lives Matter rallies have contributed to Washington Square Park drawing huge crowds of visitors every weekend. Photo by Bob Cooley.

Glick and Hoylman Introduce Legislation Over Police Objections

By Frank Quinn

Assembly member Deborah Glick and State Senator Brad Hoylman have introduced legislation to ban the use of facial recognition technology by police departments regardless of its current use as a crime-fighting tool.

Last year former NYPD Commissioner James O’Neill published an article titled “How Facial Recognition Makes You Safer.” He described the value of using the technology to fight crime, acknowledged the concerns it raises, and provided insight as to how the NYPD uses it. “The public should know how the New York Police Department uses its system, and the safeguards we have in place,” wrote O’Neill. With respect to prohibiting its use he said, “Keeping New York City safe requires enormous and relentless effort. It would be an injustice to the people we serve if we policed our 21st-century city without using 21st-century technology.”

Identical bills sponsored in the Assembly and Senate, by Glick and Hoylman respectively, would prohibit the current use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement. Instead, they would establish a task force to evaluate whether law enforcement should be permitted to use such systems, and specify that the task force should not report its findings until 2024.

Recently, police reported how facial recognition helped identify a violent suspect. On Saturday, August 29th, at 11:00 a.m., a 25-year-old woman was attacked on the platform of the Lexington Avenue/636th Street subway station. The next day police held a news conference announcing the arrest of 31-year-old Jose Reyes for attempted rape. Chief of Detectives Rodney Harrison reported that an image from a video was submitted to the NYPD facial recognition unit which worked to help identify Mr. Reyes. “Some Good Samaritans took a video to capture his face, which was very instrumental in us being able to identify him.”

The Glick and Holyman bills would prohibit an extensive category of security apparatus known as biometric surveillance technology. A broad definition refers to analyzing a range of human physiological features including appearance, behavior, and even cognitive state. According to a report by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, biometric technology has grown into a substantial industry since the 9/11 terrorist attacks; not surprisingly, this raises privacy issues.

There is an abundance of information and commentary available about the potential uses and abuses of facial recognition and other biometric identification technologies. The NYPD published guidelines for how it uses the technology, but critics warn of too much leeway in the policy and the lack of a formal legal framework. Commissioner O’Neill writes that the NYPD’s use of the technology is “carefully controlled, and invaluable contributions to police investigations are achieved without infringing on the public’s right to privacy.”

Mayor Bill De Blasio said recently, “There is a place for facial recognition, but with really clear checks and balances and really limited use.” Assembly member Glick did not make herself available to comment on this or other issues ahead of the November election, and Senator Hoylman did not respond to an email requesting comment.
The Day the Village Stood Still: “The Reckoning”

By Roger Paradiso

On January 28th President Trump was briefed by Robert O’Brien, his fourth national security advisor, who said, “This will be the biggest national security threat you face in your presidency” (referring to the pandemic, from Bob Woodward’s book Rage).

As autumn starts to come to the Village, we see more people walking around than we had in the darker days. Not as many as before the plague, but more than in previous months. People are getting confident, some say over confident, as evidenced by their not wearing masks or keeping appropriate social distance. Recently, students partied in Washington Square Park ignoring the health experts. NYU and New School officials are calling for help from the police to keep their students from partying and possibly spreading the disease. Fox News reported six cases at New York University that were probably due to the partying.

This is not good news for the local shop owners and elderly residents. Tory from the Half Pint on Thompson says, “This whole industry is screwed. Sorry to put it so bluntly. The sidewalk café barely covers payroll. There is no money in (our type of) food once you pay for product & labor. The café has cost me over 10g to get it up and running.”

And yet, as students around the country party, the Congress fiddles about like Nero while the economy (and California) burns. It’s not just students. This president holds rallies in middle-American states where the virus is devouring people. And yet those attending won’t wear masks or keep a social distance.

When we spoke of the do-nothing Congress, Tory told me, “Another stimulus is absolutely necessary or more doors will close and unemployment will rise again.”

But at the end of the summer, Becky announced that she wasn’t going back to preschool because she was “too old.” We began re-exploring our options for pre-K which, at that point, appeared to be provided only by the Seventh Day Adventists or The Little Red Schoolhouse. Little Red agreed to take Becky just days before school started. They are sick liars, it is beyond belief. I call them a lot.” They keep him on a string, which is cruel. They keep making him submit the application over again. His landlord offered to help, and is now negotiating for Jamal. Of course, he would like to get his five months back-rent. Jamal got a small part of the PPP benefit, well under 10k.

“We’re still not in a normal situation. A friend of mine, a doctor, was giving me a ride home to Brooklyn. These motorcyclists were weaving in and out of traffic and they even stopped traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge. I called the police and they did nothing about it. The city is losing control and we are near chaos,” said Jamal.

I speak to Jamal of Village Music World, on Bleecker Street, where he sells vintage records. He is no closer to getting his SBA loan than he had been months ago. “They are sick liars, it is beyond belief. I call them a lot.” They keep him on a string, which is cruel. They keep making him submit the application over again. His landlord offered to help, and is now negotiating for Jamal. Of course, he would like to get his five months back-rent. Jamal got a small part of the PPP benefit, well under 10k.

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I ask Jamal about the students partying without a mask. He doesn’t like that situation but all he can control is his store. “No one gets in the store without a mask. We can control that. But outside we can’t do anything.” Jamal is worried about getting sick. Usually, he travels on the subway to and from work. As for business, he says, “In some cases I am getting more customers like on Friday or Saturday. But on weekdays you’re gonna find it empty.”

There are no customers at the historic Cinema Village on East 12th Street. There has not been a movie shown there in almost six months. I call Nick “the Greek” who owns this gem of a theater. “My best friend is 91 years old and he drives me around” says Nick. “He’s worked in theaters all his life. He started out in Union City working for KRO theaters. I worked for him when I was 15. Back then prices were reasonable.” Now, Nick says, “Cinema Village is almost a million dollars a year in real estate taxes. No one is talking about this. The city has cleaned us out. If we don’t pay, they threatened to fine us. They should be giving us a deferment on payments.” Governor Cuomo has still not greenlit the opening of movie theaters as we go to press.

By the time you read this we will pass 200,000 Americans who died from COVID-19. There are those who say that figure is not accurate and is higher, with more deaths to come. There are over 13 million unemployed and 11 million jobs that have been lost because of the virus (Boston Herald).

On March 19th Woodward taped a subsequent interview with Trump who said, “I always wanted to play it down. I still like playing it down because I don’t want to create a panic…” “It goes through air,” he’d told Woodward in a February 7th phone call not previously reported. “So that’s a tricky one. That’s a very delicate one. It’s also more deadly than even your strenuous flu.” At another time, Trump told Woodward, “maybe five times more deadly” (NPR Book Reviews).

Tory of the Half Pint has just come back from a Pint to Pint blood drive at Amity Hall on West 3rd Street. She says, “25 percent indoor (occupancy) is a joke. The mayor should resign. He has ruined New York.”

I pass by Jamal’s store. He says, “On Bleecker, from 6th Avenue to Thompson, there are about seven people I know that went out of business, and there are more to come.” He looks at me and I detect some fear. But then he smiles and says, “but not me. I will stay in business.”

The plague will not leave our Village until the pestilence leaves. And that day is coming closer and closer. There will be a reckoning.

PS3

By Jeff Hodges

When our daughter Rebecca was born in the 1980s, my wife Emily and I were living on Charles Street. The Village was still home to a generation of aging bohemians and vestigial Italians and Irish. There was no question but that our Becky was going to thrive, even if it meant growing up in a bedroom the size of a walk-in closet.

When Becky was four, we took the tour at PS3 for the pre-K program. The school was founded in the 1820s as the Charrette School but reborn in 1971 as a progressive, experimental institution often referred to as the “hippie school.” Near the end of the tour, one of the teachers told us he didn’t bother correcting all the questions on a math quiz as long as he felt the kid was getting the general idea. Horrified, we stalked out, vowing our Becky was never going to that school.

In 3rd grade, Themi had a collection of snails. Each student owned a gastropod and the word “estivate” was in constant use. In 4th grade, Joane gave a lesson about Ellis Island. She shouted at her students in an unintelligible language and herded them roughly into groups around the classroom. They were confused and traumatized. Such was the immigrant experience upon arrival in America.

In those days the 6th floor was empty, except for Killer Clown. No one would go up there. But Killer Clown made an appearance during the 5th grade graduation ceremony, when speech giver Lily told her fellow graduates it was time to leave Killer Clown behind and march boldly toward the new schools that awaited them.

That was PS3. A teacher may not have corrected every math problem, but the test scores were among the highest in the city. And you can shake any graduate of this inclusive, visionary institution awake in the middle of the night and they’ll shout, “PS3!”
A View from the Kitchen

By Isa Covo

Ruth Bader Ginsburg died. No one can say it was not expected; after all, she was in and out of hospitals in recent months. She resisted death as much as she could. She was tough—she was from New York, more specifically, from Brooklyn, NY.

In her last decade Ginsburg became as popular as a rock star. She visibly enjoyed it, and handled it well with intelligence and humor.

She deserves her fame, not just for her stage presence and interviews where she spoke in a soft, almost halting voice. Who would have guessed that she was a steely litigator?

In the courts she was a successful champion of gender equality. Many current changes that are now well-anchored parts of our lives are the results of her efforts: labor laws, gun laws, reproductive rights, protections of the environment. When she started her professional life, any jobs a woman could find (even a well-educated woman) were not on the level that a man could aspire to. But now, we are not surprised when women are CEOs. OK, there are still not enough women at the top, but that is coming.

What did you think of the feminine touch she brought to the drab judicial robes, wearing those various collars, some frilly, some more severe? I found them charming. In street clothes she was elegantly and perfectly groomed.

Did you attend any of those spontaneous celebrations of her life around town? I did. The participants were loud and passionate, celebrating her life, and at the same time it was all very sadly clear to us that we were mourning her. Masks were de rigueur, but, unfortunately, there was not much distancing. Wear your mask, and don’t stay too long in a crowd. Appreciate an event from a distance.

One song that was repeated often was Amazing Grace. The title of this song described Ruth Ginsburg well, for she had an amazing grace.

Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg was known to be a bad cook, so to honor her there will be no recipe this time.

Wear your mask in public, keep social distance, wash your hands, get a flu vaccine now, keep the air circulating in your home. We must get past this plague, and I beg you to follow the rules that will slow down its spread until there is a vaccine or cure for it.

RUTH BADER GINSBURG, 1933-2020
May her life be an inspiration.

If you want more information on Ginsburg’s judicial path, accomplishments, and life, I recommend Jill Lepore’s excellent New Yorker article: “Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Great Equalizer,” September 18, 2020.

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ROLAND LEVIN LIGHTS A CANDLE during a vigil held at Washington Square Park for Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg who passed away on September 18 at the age of 87. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Ginsburg was the second woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, and prior to her appointment to the court in 1993, spent much of her legal career as an advocate for gender equality and women’s rights, winning many arguments before the Supreme Court. She had a storied and historic career. Photo by Bob Cooley.
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Northwell.edu/ForTheVillage
While we have written extensively about the difficult retail scene on Bleecker Street, I was pleasantly surprised that many of the stores there had re-opened, and that three new stores had joined the ranks. Rothy’s (407 Bleecker Street between West 11th and Bank Streets) actually opened on Monday, March 9th, but closed three days later, and did not re-open until September. The company sells washable shoes and handbags (and now masks), made from marine plastic (found within 30 miles of coastline and marine environments) and single-use plastic water bottles. They use an innovative technique to make the fabric: the plastic is crushed into chips which are then made into pellets, and the pellets are combined to make a string which is woven into fabric. Unlike most shoe manufacturing, where fabric is cut into patterns, Rothy’s uses sustainable 3D printing to make its shoes and handbags, so there is no wasted excess material. Everything is made in a factory owned and operated by Rothy’s in Doguann, China, and the factory workers are Rothy’s employees. The business is based in San Francisco, and like many stores on Bleecker Street, was mostly online. Because of this, they have not suffered as much as some other businesses in the last 6 months, although the staff and store hours have been curtailed. Rothy’s chose Bleecker Street because “We were charmed by Bleecker Street’s iconic townhouses, cozy restaurants, and diverse retail scene. In the heart of West Village, Bleecker Street has evolved into a premier shopping destination for customers interested in discovering new brands.”

Something Navy, which was previously a style blog, morphed in 2020 into an independent fashion line. This fall they opened their first flagship at 379 Bleecker Street (near Perry Street). Over at 376 Bleecker Street (between Perry and Charles Streets) Stoney Clover Lane, a store that sells customizable travel accessories has opened.

While a number of places re-opened, and some new shops appeared, this month saw even more closings than I have ever observed. Outdoor dining continued, with restaurants adding tents and canopies, just in time for the mayor’s announcement that outdoor dining would now continue year-round. And in early September the governor announced that indoor dining could begin again on September 30th at 25% capacity. Some gyms have also re-opened with reduced capacity.

**Bleecker Street Openings**

**White Horse Tavern. Photo by Maggie Barkwist.**

The big re-opening news this month is the White Horse Tavern (567 Hudson Street at West 11th Street). The bar/restaurant was closed by the SLA back in July for social distancing violations. To re-open, the owner, Eytan Sugarman was forced to pay a $50,000 fine. Prior to re-opening, the island seating on Hudson Street was removed, and replaced with a more sober, but attractive terrace abutting the restaurant, complete with White Horse logos. Mr. Sugarman had taken over the restaurant in March 2019, and at the time there were protests by neighbors who feared that he would alter the historic interior, something that did not happen. (This stretch of Hudson is home to a well-organized NIMBY group who are quick to call 311 on restaurants and bars in the area, and religiously attend Community Board meetings to oppose the granting of liquor licenses.) The White Horse will offer indoor dining when it resumes at the end of September, and with the 25% occupancy limits, this translates to an additional 37 seats inside. When I spoke to Mr. Sugarman he sounded tired, alluded to how his restaurant along with most other city restaurants were at their most vulnerable point, and said “we may or may not survive”. The pandemic has been particularly hard on bars: as we reported earlier, another historic West Village bar, Chumley’s, appears to have closed for good. Two restaurants with large outdoor spaces had not re-opened previously for outdoor dining, but recently they did: American Bar (33 Greenwich Avenue between Charles and West 10th Streets) and Morandi (211 Waverly Place at 7th Avenue South). I was delighted to see that McNulty’s (109 Christopher Street between Bedford and Bleecker Streets) was open for in-person shopping. In March, the store closed, but was still fulfilling orders. Before the pandemic hit, many of the city’s Le Pain Quotidien locations had closed, including the three in the West Village. The Belgian company declared bankruptcy for its US locations, and they were purchased by Aurify, a company that operates Five Guys and Melt shop locations in New York City. Since the acquisition, some of the Pain Quotidien stores have been re-opening, including the location at West 8th Street (10 5th Avenue). Aurify also purchased all the shuttered and bankrupt Maison Kayser locations, and I am hoping that some of those return as well.

**Closed/Closing**

Gabriel Stulman, whose Happy Cooking group owns a number of popular spots in the Village, recently announced the closure of two of his restaurants, Bar Sardine and Fedora. Bar Sardine had re-opened as a take-away seafood counter called “The Corner at Bar Sardine” in May, but failed lease negotiations caused it to close in August. According to Mr. Stulman, Fedora, which provided an experience marked by conviviality, was not able to take advantage of outdoor dining given its narrow frontage, and moreover, “Delivery and Take Out have never matched the experience that made Fedora compelling and the already competitive marketplace and onerous fees made it a losing proposition.” I spoke with Matthew Kohn, the company’s COO/Managing Partner at Happy Cooking who explained that while outdoor dining is a lifeline, and indoor dining at 25% will generate some revenue, for most restaurants that won’t even come close to a break even scenario. He went on to echo Gabriel Stulman’s points in his letter to the city council that things are further complicated by a lack of a clear plan from the city or state or material assistance on the federal or state levels. Happily, the remaining Happy Cooking restaurants in the Village, Joseph Leonard, Fairfax and Jeffrey’s Grocery are open for business with lovely outdoor set-ups. I am sad that innovative cocktail bar Existing Conditions (35 West 8th Street between 6th Avenue and MacDougal Street) has closed. The bar used molecular gastronomy to produce highly unusual and delicious drinks, but according to the owner, Greg Boehm, “the mandated shutdown has taken many options off the table and the bar is not sustainable financially.”

**Good Stuff Diner** (109 West 14th Street near 6th Avenue), a neighborhood favorite, has also closed. According to a sign in the window, one of the reasons was that the landlord did not give any breaks on the rent. A quirky store that sold only salt, chocolate and bitters called The Meadow (523 Hudson Street between West 10th and Charles Streets) is gone. The store embodied the small, unique, independents shops that the Village used to be known for. Another Village classic that has been around for 40 years, Nusrat Afghani Imports (85 Christopher Street and previously at a number of other locations in the Village) is calling it quits. According to one of our readers, Abdul, the owner said he would take a six-month break and then decide what to do. Also closed are the following: Sammy’s Noodle Shop & Grill (453 6th Avenue between West 11th and West 10th Streets (according to a tipster, a store owner on the block told him that the landlord wanted $34,000 a month in rent), Hu Kitchen (78 5th Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets), although their chocolate bars are still available for purchase, Azu (125 Greenwich Avenue between Jane and West 12th Streets) a lingerie and swimwear outlet.

While the color palate is pastel, and can lead passers-by to the erroneous conclusion that the store sells candy and cakes.

### Also Open

**Biryan Kitchen** (48 Greenwich Avenue between Charles and Perry Streets), a new restaurant specializing in biryanis has opened in the space that was most recently vegan comfort food spot Rip’s Malt Shop. There are a number of delicious-sounding biryani options, each from a different region of India. This is the second biryani-focused restaurant on that stretch of Greenwich Avenue: Rahi also offers biryanis for delivery and pick-up via its partner biryanibol.com website. **Planted** (361 6th Avenue at Washington Place) is now in the space where Seabird used to be. While the name makes it sounds like it is a vegan restaurant, there are also ovo-lacto vegetarian and fish dishes on the menu. Over at 7th Avenue South (22 Perry Street), Hudson Wellness has finally opened. They offer holistic integrated care, including things like chiropracy, massage therapy and platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections.
October 2020 WestView News 15

www.westviewnews.org

In and Out continued from page 14

spot, Bio Blow Dry Bar (113 W 10th Street between 6th and Greenwich Avenues), The Meatball Shop (64 Greenwich Avenue between 7th Avenue and West 11th Street), newish Champagne bar The Riddler (51 Bank Street at West 4th Street), Hudson Barber Shop (543 Hudson between Charles and Perry Streets), UK shoe maker Fly London (375 Bleecker Street between Charles and Perry Streets), Anthony Thomas Melilio (405 Bleecker Street between West 11th and Bank Streets), Fi- ascetteria “Pistoia” 7th Avenue (167 7th Avenue South near Perry Street) however the Christopher Street location remains open, French homegoods spot L’Objet (370 Bleecker Street between Charles and Perry Streets), children’s clothing store Yoya (605 Hudson Street between Bethune and West 12th Streets), wine bar Vin sur Vingt (201 West 11th Street west of 7th Avenue), The Pho 3 (154 7th Avenue South between Perry and Charles Streets), Otto’s Tacos (131 7th Avenue South between Charles and West 10th Streets), and the short-lived kids’ activity and craft shop Wishberry (35 7th Avenue between West 12th and West 13th Streets).

Coming Soon

Yamada Japanese Supermarket (450 6th Avenue between 10th and 11th Streets) is coming to the old Jefferson Market space that was supposed to become a Shakespeare & Co. A worker let me peek in the door and it looks larger and airier than Dain-obu, a couple of blocks north. Arcteryx is coming to one of the Brookfield Property-owned storefronts at 367 Bleecker Street at the corner of Charles Street.

Pop-ups

In front of High Street on Hudson (637 Hudson Street between Horatio and Gansevoort Streets), a pop up seafood and cocktail bar called SANDBAR on Hudson has materialized. It is a collaboration between High Street on Hudson and Pizzeria Brunetti across the street. The well-known Philadelphia sister restaurant to High Street on Hudson, High Street on Market, has closed. Parcelle Patio (632 Hudson Street between Jane and Horatio Streets), a pop-up wine bar operated by the wine store Parcelle will be open Wednesdays-Saturdays through the end of October. Wine will be available by the glass or bottle, and small plates can be ordered to accompany the wine. Before the pandemic, the space was rented out mostly for weddings.

Featured Business

ELITE SHOE REPAIR
105 West 10th Street between 6th and Greenwich Avenues

In May 2019, Village Preservation chose Elite Shoe Repair as their business of the month. I had been looking for a good shoe repair with reasonable prices so I figured I would give them a try. The owner, Richard An is lovely and does great work. Recently I saw a discussion of the store on Nextdoor Greenwich Village, and lots of neighbors chimed in to say how much they liked the store. Like many businesses, Elite Shoe Repair has been having a tough time, so I would encourage anyone who has shoes or even bags that need some work to visit Richard.

We love to hear from you, and you’ve been a great help! We would miss so much were it not for you. Please keep up the good work and email us your observations at wvnews-inout@gmail.com

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A Kind Word for Journalists

By Tom Lamia

In mulling over possible topics for yet another column melding the virtues and fates of small town life on the coast of Maine and the essence of life among the residents of the West Village, I chose this topic as one that celebrates community. My thoughts have the virtue of being complimentary to both communities and the urgency of the need for praise of each.

The trigger for this is my sincere and deep respect for George Capsis, the Publisher of this newspaper and my admiration of his skills as a journalist. My praise is not, and should not be taken to be, sycophantic or uncritical, but even if it were it is needed and deserved. Without George and his bulldog qualities, the West Village and our place in it would be diminished.

In the August issue of WestView News, George wrote of his family connection to Izmir, once Smyrna, an ancient center of trade and culture on the west coast of Turkey, and the ancestral home of all who go by the name of Capsis. The story was well told and timely. What it was not was bitter or vindictive—qualities that are characteristic of much of what is written by Greeks and Greek émigrés. George is a professional. It must have taken several hard swallows of ethnic pride to lay out the detailed description of his experience with his cousin, who opened the door for the 1988 visit that he and George made to Izmir without demeaning any Turk, past or present.

These thoughts came to me as I read George’s recent appeal for financial support for this newspaper. The appeal is certainly justified on the merits of the product and its importance to our community. One wonders why it is needed, notwithstanding the obvious devastation wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic in the world, and in our nation, city and community. The pandemic has sucked much of the life out of the local news because of the dominance of that news in every news market. How much attention can be left over from the daily inundation of excellent product from newspapers, television (in all of its varied forms), podcasts, magazines and all media? We do know, from the many media sources seeking our attention, all manner of fact and opinion about the pandemic, much of it false or repetitive. What we need and do not have is more of what is happening within a several block perimeter of our homes, whether or not pandemic related. That news and opinion is what WestView News offers, as its readers well know.

In the ten-mile radius of my home in South Bristol, Maine, there are, I suspect, more local news sources than there are in the West Village. There is, for example, a weekly newspaper that is delivered to my door in the post every Thursday. It also fills the newspaper racks of local stores and sells out within a few days at 75 cents per copy. My yearly subscription is $35. This week’s Lincoln County News carried, on its front page, in addition to interviews with local COVID-19 victims and political profiles for the coming election, the news that the Seagull Shop on Pemaquid Point had burned to the ground the day before. That shop had stood for 83 years and was known to visitors from across the country and beyond because it was adjacent to the Pemaquid Point Light, a tourist mecca. But for the local newspaper, the loss of this local shop, and its place in the conscience of my neighbors, would have had the impact of one hand clapping.

There are many newspapers that circulate in my Maine community: Some are free, like The Coastal Journal (for island residents) and The Working Waterfront (covering commercial fishing). Both are well written, timely and popular. They appear to subsist off ads, but not entirely. There are community interests that subsidize their publication.

Daily newspapers of high quality are also sold locally: The Portland Press Herald, The Bangor Daily News, The Kennebec Journal, the Lewiston Sun-Journal, and others are published within 70 miles of my home. Each is available for purchase on the day of publication at local stores. The major New York and Boston dailies are on the newsstands daily as well, but their news is often a day late. Of course, none of these papers carries news local to South Bristol, Maine.

Like politics, all news is local to those directly affected. To have any community’s moments in the sun (or the shade) go unreported for lack of a local news source inflicts an insidious cost on the community, at once or over time.

The WestView News coverage is worthy of the attention of even the most sophisticated reader. The West Village has welcomed and nurtured great lives and great institutions that have left indelible impressions on our streets, buildings and memories. George Capsis has correlated and cultivated a staff of writers that have earned your attention and respect. Let’s keep them at their task by supporting the enterprise.

I would like us all to reflect on the importance of our monthly newspaper and act to sustain it. A subscription would be a good place to start. Pay for it and it will survive. Other actions include improving our local coverage by your comments, ideas, and reporting, by letter or email. These are my suggestions. They have not been shared with George or his news or editorial staff. If you have your own suggestions, I urge that you provide them directly.
2020 Village Halloween Parade Offers Surprises

By Kambiz Shekdar

The Village Halloween Parade is a symbol of New York City. In 2018 the parade’s theme was “I am Robot.” In 2019 it was “Wild Things.” This year’s theme was to be: “BIG LOVE! BIG EMBRACE!” Alas, 2020 is not the year of the Big Embrace; the parade is canceled, but it is still dedicated to one of its strongest volunteers, Oscar Williams of Port of Spain Steel Drum Band, who died of COVID-19.

George Capis, publisher of this newspaper, recalls the beginnings of the parade when Ralph Lee, one of the original residents of the West Village artist community Westbeth, began organizing a parade of puppets for children on Halloween. The two men’s daughters were friends, and before George knew it, people and puppets of all sorts were dangling from the windows of his 69 Charles Street home.

Forty-seven years later, Mayor Bill de Blasio has this to say, “It’s no secret that Chirlane and I love Halloween, and I applaud the Village Halloween Parade for the creative spirit it brings to our streets each year. I am confident that the 47th annual celebration, while different from previous years, will be both safe and full of the same ingenuity.”

The Village Halloween Parade teamed up with my organization in 2018 for RFTCA’s parade afterparty, THE MASCUREAIDS BALL. I had a chance to catch up with a quick Q&A with Jeanne Fleming, director of the parade, at her home in Rhinebeck over Labor Day weekend, as well as master parade puppeteer, Basil Twist. Maybe coronavirus will have its way with us this year, but just you watch out, Oh Mr. Corona, we have a rare blue moon coming our way this Halloween, and come next year—just you wait—perhaps we may march to the theme of “Biology: Virus...and its CURE!”

Q&A with Jeanne Fleming, head of the Village Halloween Parade

KAMBIZ: Was the parade ever canceled before?
JEANNE: Yes, the parade was cancelled once before. Hurricane Sandy was the reason. There were no lights in Greenwich Village. If you remember, pretty much everything south of 23rd Street was dark and areas were flooded; and so that year the parade was canceled. The parade was not cancelled—we were the first major event—after 9/11.

KAMBIZ: So, after the 9/11 attacks the parade was not canceled, you went ahead that year?
JEANNE: We were the first large-scale event that happened after 9/11, just six weeks later. Mayor Giuliani, at the time, wanted to show the world that New York City was not going to curl up and die, that we were going to survive, we were going to keep on going. Much like there was a terrorist attack right before the Halloween Parade two years ago—like three hours before—and the same thing happened, both Cuomo and de Blasio came to the parade. I walked with them at the head of the parade, again to show that Halloween wasn’t going to stop, New York City wasn’t going to stop, because of something terrible that happened. But, in this case, there’s really no choice for the safety of New Yorkers, we really have to cancel.

KAMBIZ: Can you give us any hints about what to expect this year?
JEANNE: Well, the reason I can’t give you any hints is because we can’t cancel a gathering. We can’t cause a group of people to gather. It’s a promise to the governor, it’s a promise to the city, that we will not do anything that will cause a crowd to gather. However, what we are planning to do will be something that lots and lots of people will be able to see. So if people are out, not caused by us calling them out, but if they’re out (which we fully expect, that there will be a lot of people out in the Village and the city on Halloween night), they will get to experience what it is that we are doing. And it’s really for New Yorkers, it’s about New York City. It’s something that people will be able to see, large numbers of people will be able to see. But I can’t talk about it because if I do, that will cause a crowd to gather at various locations, because it’s going to happen in more than one place.

KAMBIZ: How is your team taking it this year? How are you guys handling the cancellation of the parade?
JEANNE: I think everyone is just extremely sad. People who make puppets for the parade normally work at costume houses or they work at places that put on special events. They build props and sets. Some of them are Broadway scenic painters and designers. It’s their primary way of making a living. And no one has any work. So it’s just extremely sad—the situation that so many people are in. I do have a plan to gather a lot of those folks together on Halloween night and take them out to dinner, and make sure that my team is together and that we do get to see one another and celebrate a little bit with one another so that we don’t go another year without that kind of connection. Some of the people who work with me have been doing so for over 25 years.

KAMBIZ: What will your costume be this year?
JEANNE: I think everyone is just extremely sad. People who make puppets for the parade normally work at costume houses or they work at places that put on special events. They build props and sets. Some of them are Broadway scenic painters and designers. It’s their primary way of making a living. And no one has any work. So it’s just extremely sad—the situation that so many people are in. I do have a plan to gather a lot of those folks together on Halloween night and take them out to dinner, and make sure that my team is together and that we do get to see one another and celebrate a little bit with one another so that we don’t go another year without that kind of connection. Some of the people who work with me have been doing so for over 25 years.

KAMBIZ: What will your costume be this year?
JEANNE: This year I guess I don’t necessarily have to wear that costume anymore—because if I were to wear it, it would be a costume not a uniform! I guess I won’t be in my official role. I think I will probably wear it as a comfort piece. But also, the Halloween Parade isn’t about me, it’s about me being in costume, it’s not about me showing off, it’s really about everybody else. So I’ve never felt like I needed to be costumed; this is my job. This is when everybody else can let loose; but I’m responsible that night.

Q&A with Basil Twist, puppeteer of Zohra the spider who will once again dangle up and down Jefferson Market clock tower:

KAMBIZ: How did the idea of having a Spider go up and down the Jefferson Market clock tower come about?
BASIL: Well, actually when the parade was originally begun by Ralph Lee, who is a puppeteer who lives in Westbeth and founder of the parade, the parade was a smaller—a much smaller affair that went through the small streets of the Village. There were decorative elements all along the way like a witch that crossed the street. It ended in Washington Square where at the arch, there was a skeleton in the arch, and there was a spider on the tower. But that was stopped when Ralph had stopped doing the parade and the parade had gotten so big it moved to 6th Avenue. When I joined the parade and I knew about that and I really—I like spiders—I thought that was a cool thing that should be done again. So it was it’s an homage to the origins of the parade. Ralph Lee is the one who first had the idea. You’d have to ask him how did that idea come about.

KAMBIZ: So you like Spiders, you said?
BASIL: I do.

KAMBIZ: Are you scared of any insects, or you’re a friend of all bugs?
BASIL: Haha, No! I don’t like mosquitos or roaches. I like spiders though because I find them incredible creatures and I have a kind of a mystical connection to them. The way that they weave webs and what they build, I think they’re amazing.

KAMBIZ: How much does your Zohra weigh?
BASIL: Oh gosh, she doesn’t weigh much, she’s made out of Styrofoam, so she’s probably 25 pounds or something?

KAMBIZ: And, has she ever fallen down onto someone’s head?
BASIL: No!... What a horrible thought! No. :)

KAMBIZ: One last question I have, what do you think makes Halloween such a special time in New York City?
BASIL: Well, there’s definitely something about the change in seasons at the end of October that we go when it gets colder and when its winter so there’s something about that sort of last hurrah before we go into the indoors. And in New York, there’s so many creative, fabulous people here, New Yorkers just turn it out for Halloween! It’s amazing.

Rockefeller University graduate Kambiz Shekdar, Ph.D., is founder and president of Research Foundation to Cure AIDS. Follow RFTCA on Instagram @RFTcureaids.
by Vija Vetra, who carries the weight of an entire people on her shoulders. Like Vija Vetra, who carries the weight of dissidence. The Soviets developed a foolproof method for dealing with such people: proof of guilty maladies as serious as cancer. Excellent evidence of the danger of PFOA is that the corporate source of the water contamination is handing out free bottled drinking water in a local market. The suspicion of one town resident about the death of his father led him to get a test of his drinking water. What was discovered led to frustrating conflicting announcements (!) from both the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Health about the danger of PFOA and related chemicals in the town’s drinking water. Both agencies depend on laboratory results, but much too often problems of this kind are not first detected or evaluated by analytical chemistry, but rather by the observations of people living in affected areas. Such observations belong to the category of epidemiology, or to put it in other terms, how coal miners have protected themselves. Many years ago, coal miners, fearing noxious gases, including deadly carbon monoxide in the mine, would carry canaries with them. The bird with its rapid respiration and small size would keep on living long after the miners were affected allowing time for escape. Unfortunately, the residents of Hoosick Falls were the “canaries in the coal mine” for the presence of PFOA in the supposed potable water in their town. All too often laboratory tests involving minute amounts of chemicals that nevertheless are dangerous to health do not reveal the danger. It takes the effort on our bodies to reveal the problem.

Epidemiology, as I learned from Wikipedia, is constructed from the Greek words epi—upon; demos—people; logos—study. There are some very interesting historical examples of the value of epidemiological studies, which are the foundation of the discovery of the value of vaccination first proposed for this problem by Edward Jenner (1749–1823). There is so much more demonstrating the continuing value of this science. For one example, did we understand the reason why people who smoked got lung cancer among other maladies? We were the canary that demonstrated the danger of smoking long before medical research could find the reason for this danger. We are hearing much about epidemiology to understand the pandemic we are now suffering from as helping to understand what behavior leads to outbreaks of the disease and how the disease affects those who unfortunately get it. So much can be learned from going to the web under the heading “epidemiology of the COVID-19 pandemic.” The medical professionals are tuned into this ancient understanding of disease.
Release from Jerusalem Prison Inspires Bestseller

By J. Taylor Basker

Long time peace activist, Frank Romano, was released from prison in Jerusalem last year, where he was held on two felony charges: one interfering with Israeli government activity, and another for pushing a policeman. In prison he suffered physical as well as psychological injuries. He was expelled from Israel/Palestine and forbidden to return for ten years. Upon his return home he completed the fifth edition of his best-selling book, Love and Terror in the Middle East, adding a new chapter (Epilogue 1) to describe this experience. He held a book signing at Barnes & Nobles in Union Square and will conduct more around the country. He stays in the West Village when in New York City and has presented many events here in the past years.

He was first arrested while defending the endangered Bedouin Village, Khan al Amer, where I visited last summer. Israel was planning to destroy it in order to expand an illegal settlement adjacent to it. He stood blocking the bulldozers in Sept. 2018 and was arrested. Many Israeli peace activists came to his aid, including the famous activist lawyer, Gaby Lasky, whose brilliant defense got him freed by the Israeli judge, who was furious at the military’s legal violations. Romano decided to go underground as well as Palestinians. His book is riveting. Romano is an American, from Oregon, with dual US-French citizenship. An international lawyer, he has taught law, economics and philosophy for over twenty years in a university in Paris. He is passionately dedicated to Palestinian rights. After his expulsion from Israel and Palestine he moved to Lebanon where he worked in Palestinian refugee camps. Fortunately, he was in France when the explosions occurred last month, since the cafes he often frequents were caught in the fires. He has the fearless guts of the frontiersmen from the American West, dedicated to a vision of peace in the Middle East. He wants a genuine peace, not the fake Trump peace deal with the UAE and Bahrain—which is not peace between Israel & Palestine, but just a chance for these Arab countries to obtain financial benefits and more weapons to keep their repressive regimes in power, help support war in Yemen and a possible one with Iran.

His name, Romano, is an ancient Jewish family name that has a street in Hebron named after it. In the face of the murders of his activist friends in Israel and Palestine, and the Paris and Nice massacres, he continues to believe in the possibility of a durable peace in the Middle East and is willing to put his life on the line for it. He plans to picket the Israeli Consulate, 800 2nd Ave. off 43rd Street on the morning of Friday, Nov. 13 from 9-11 AM, in case anyone wants to join. Since the “Peace Deal,” Israel has been relentlessly bombing Gaza.
Dear readers, neighbors, friends, and supporters,

We asked you to help because our beloved local newspaper is in danger of folding forever. You answered with a surge of donations, messages, and even ad requests! George and the folks at WestView News are overwhelmed by your love and support for the paper.

You donated over $17,000 to date. Wow! Thank you!

You’ve helped us keep the lights on, pay the printer, and pay our small staff their modest salaries. And you’ve brightened the hearts of everyone who contributes to WestView News. Your kind and generous responses to our request for help is such a strong message that our efforts matter to you.

To donate today, go to https://www.gofundme.com/save-westview-news

Or view this QR code with the Camera app on your mobile phone:

SUPPORT FROM OUR DONOR COMMUNITY

Your comments and well wishes mean the world to us at WestView News. You’ve really shown us how much the paper means to you. Thank you for sharing your heartfelt appreciation. Your compliments are the real gold...

Barbara Ruether:
WestView News is dedicated to covering our Village neighborhood. George Capsis has brought the neighbors to us on every single page and in every single issue. We cannot afford to lose this unique, timely vehicle that helps us care for all and each other. We deserve it. Let George keep keeping on along with us for a long long time.

Gordon A Gilbert jr:
We NEED a hometown newspaper!

Ricki Fier:
We really appreciate your efforts and expertise at bringing issues to the forefront to all in the West Village.

Norman Kahn:
I have always found the articles informative and interesting. They often covered subjects of interest to West Villagers and not to be found elsewhere.

Nelly Godfrey:
Hi Jorgito. You know I would love to put an extra two zeros to this donation. It’s totally worth it to save WestView, the beautiful, colorful paper that comes to my door with the latest news about the community and the world.

Gary Tomei:
WestView gives us the truth, and is our community life preserver in these dystopian times when we are living under a malignant regime which drown us in lies and distortions.

Christine Tralongo:
The Village isn’t the Village without WestView News. A great newspaper with information you can’t find anywhere else.

Ellen Synan:
I’m sure it’s the best community paper in the nation, and I would miss it sorely if it were no longer published. I am very grateful to George for whom I have the greatest respect and admiration.

Barbara Liddy:
I read the paper every month and love learning about my community. Who is doing what and what is opening and closing.

Daniel L Clay:
Absolutely adore the local coverage! I hope to keep reading, cover to cover, for years to come. Thanks for all you do.

Roger Paradiso:
The WestView News is the Voice of the West Village and beyond. And George Capsis is the “unofficial Mayor of The West Village.” I support the paper and I hope you can too.

Bruce Trigg:
Absolutely vital source if you want to know what’s happening in the hood! Save WestView News!

Will and Elizabeth Margaritis:
Let’s keep the West Village the West Village.

Patricia Duffy:
West View News is a neighborhood treasure! As a long-time resident of the Village and West Chelsea, I want it to remain part of my world!

Howard Glener:
IMBY = in my back yard

Diane Robbins:
I love this newspaper and George! As I’ve aged it’s been harder for me to get around. But WestView helped me feel connected to the community. Losing it at a time when so many of us have already lost so much would be devastating.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO HELP WESTVIEW NEWS SURVIVE AND GROW:

1. SUBSCRIBE TO THE PAPER
Even if you can’t afford a six-month $12 subscription, fill out the form and ask for a free subscription.

2. TALK TO US
If your super throws out the papers, let us know.

3. DONATE
Visit our gofundme page.

4. ADVERTISE
Yes, we know how much money you have lost: we have special survival ad rates!
October 2020 Community Events from Project NYC/West 13th Street Alliance

By Birgitte Philippides-Delaney and Chandra/Jo Sgammato

Project NYC/West 13th Street Alliance is proud to continue our virtual community events with these October programs to serve our block, our neighborhood and all New Yorkers, wherever they may be.

Autumn is a good time to revisit your skin care routine with beauty experts Todd Harris and Brian Underwood and to find ways to feel better physically with Integral Yoga's Yoga for Arthritis and Chronic Pain©.

Feeling better physically can encourage you to adopt other healthy habits like more nutritious meal preparation so we've engaged Mandy Suarez, certified health coach, to guide you through a blueprint for living in these extraordinary times. Finally, get some artistic inspiration from Nina Priya David, with a workshop on poetry and music.

Staying Healthy At Home with Mandy Suarez
Tuesday, October 6, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Join certified health coach Mandy Suarez for an informative session to learn tips and tricks for creating and maintaining healthy habits for you and your family during COVID-19 and beyond. Mandy will address universal challenges such as how to cook nourishing meals with limited time and how to fit movement into your (already busy!) day. She will provide practical solutions to help make these wholesome habits part of your everyday routine. Healthy recipes will be shared with everyone who attends the session.

Yoga for Arthritis and Chronic Pain with Ken Stec
Wednesdays, October 8, 15, 22, and 29, 10 to 11 a.m.

Certified in Yoga for Arthritis and as a Yoga Therapist, longtime Integral Yoga teacher Ken Stec will guide you safely in gentle postures geared for chair and standing practice. Rooted in traditional yogic principles encouraging a healthy body and a peaceful mind, postures are presented in light of current scientific research for chronic pain and stress relief. With regular practice, classes are effective in the management of arthritic pain and related symptoms.

Skincare and Beauty to De-stress the Body with Todd Harris & Brian Underwood
Tuesday, October 13, 7 to 8 p.m.

Learn from two beauty experts who have decades of acclaimed experience working with celebrities and national brands. Todd is the co-founder of Trans Beauty Clinic and a makeup artist and professional groomer. Brian is the beauty director for O (Oprah) Magazine. Discover the secrets to vibrant, beautiful skin and be inspired to adopt scientifically based solutions to skin care challenges especially in this time of wearing masks.

The Poetry of Music with Nina Priya David
Wednesday, October 21, 6:30 to 7:30

This one-hour program presents text and music as creative partners in terms of artistic expression as well as the messages that are meaningful for our times. Lyrics are presented as text, as poetry, as human experience. The pianist shares elements of music history and composition that are relevant to the lyrics. The singer/actor explains how they go about performing the lyrics vocally and physically—as spoken word and as song. The pianist plays selected passages to illustrate the key points that have been made. The program culminates with pianist and actor/singer joining forces—perhaps with a bit of audience participation.

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.
The Long Life of Mills House No. 1

By Brian J Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

1896 witnessed a new building inaugurated at 156-168 Bleecker Street, a full block long and wrapping the corners at 187-191 Sullivan Street and 187-201 Thompson Street, that replaced a row of formerly fashionable houses called Depauw Row. The double-height recessed limestone on the entrance and lobby features a modillioned cornice supported by scrolled brackets, a frieze sculpted with “Mills House No. 1,” and a broken pediment cartouche decorated with the initials “DOM” for owner/founder Darius Ogden Mills. Mills was a banker and philanthropist particularly concerned in his retirement years with the problems of housing certain elements of the (white) urban poor. He emphasized that his hotels were run efficiently, so as to make a modest profit for investors, and also “[not to offend] the pride or praiseworthy independence of those I serve.”

Mills House No. 1 was the prototype of the philanthropic hotel movement, one of a number of similar residential hotels established by moral reformers as safe, clean, and wholesome alternatives to the city’s supposedly licentious rooming houses, transient hotels, and the like. At a time when more single men than ever were migrating to New York City, Mills intended to keep single men away from women and families in the crowded tenement districts.

With clean rooms, restaurants, laundry facilities, lounges, and interior courtyards, it was considered “a palace at twenty cents a night,” according to Scribner’s Magazine. With no income limits, a frugal man with a relatively decent-paying job could save for other things too.

Meals cost 15 cents, and were considered excellent fare. Mills House hotels were closed during the day to encourage residents to seek work or be at their jobs. The residents were required to pay in advance, and could not gain entry after midnight. If they arrived drunk at the hotel, they were refused entry even if they had prepaid.

Mills House No. 1 was conceived as a wholesome residential hotel for working-class white men but, eventually, it became, ironically, desirable for gay men (of all ethnic groups) because they could live and socialize undetected more easily. In the latter half of the 20th century the Village Gate nightclub and Top of the Gate performance venue played host to a number of LGBT notables.

Mills had commissioned Ernest Flagg, a young architect who published ideas about low-cost urban housing on 100-foot-wide lots incorporating central light courts. Flagg is credited as the architect/builder of Mills House No. 1, basically a large tenement with commercial floor leased spaces. The 11-story Italian Renaissance Revival Style structure of brick with quoins of limestone at building corners features a primary facade divided into two wings by a central light court. The light court and south yard setback enabled each room to have a window, required by the 1879 Tenement House (old) Law. The 1,554 tiny 20 cents/night rooms were 7.5 by 6 feet or 5 by 8 feet. Each had only a bed with a mattress, two pillows, a chair, and a clothes rack; the walls stopped about a foot below the ceiling, allowing air flow but no acoustic privacy. There were four toilets and six washbasins on each floor (for 162 rooms) and bath facilities only on the ground floor. Annex buildings were erected on adjacent lots, with architect Ernest Flagg again designing 183 Thompson Street, ca. 1897, and with J. M. Robinson in charge of 183 Sullivan Street, ca. 1907. This was also the first of three model residential Mills hotels for single working men (Mills House #2 by Flagg, at Rivington and Christie Streets, has been demolished, while No. continued on page 23
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Joan’s Shanghai

By Joan Klyhn

“Joan’s Shanghai” is a memoir of a childhood in Shanghai in the ’30s and ’40s of the 20th century. I am writing it primarily for myself, extending it to my friends, and now to the many people who have shown themselves fascinated with this period in the past.

Home

I was born in Shanghai before the Second World War, the only child of well-off parents. They were distant from me and from each other; my father was a man with several businesses, and my mother was occupied with managing the household and her many personal needs. My father was out most of the time, and my mother received a stream of service providers all day long. These included the psychiatrist, the masseur, the cosmetologist, the dressmaker, the manicurist, and more. She also had a regular mahjong group as well as a bridge group. My father, my mother, and I each had our own suite of rooms, and we were taken care of by a crew of servants who inhabited our large house more fully than we did. For me, the vibrant center of the house was the kitchen. I’m told that, starting as a baby, I would crawl around the tiled floor, picking up bits of detritus and usually eating them. I grew up in that kitchen. Later, I’d head there as soon as I got home from school.

Hong, our cook, was a handsome irascible man who always seemed to have a cleaver in his hand which he wielded furiously upon live chickens, ducks, and big pork joints. In the Chinese style, he chopped right through bones. I loved the crunching sounds as I ducked the splatter.

continued on page 25
Greenwich Village 1934 Highlights Map

By Brian J Pape, AIA

A map that captures a moment, as all maps do, in a simple and fun way, highlighting some historical structures, is part of the Brooklyn Historical Society Library's new digital collection.

Do you think you know Greenwich Village? Ask yourself if you can identify the locations on the map above, and which of the sites still exist today.

We are fortunate that the Village residents have a strong preservation attitude, so that many structures have been repurposed instead of demolished. On this map, starting at the upper right-hand quadrant and moving generally clockwise, the “Society Library” was transformed into The Public Theater, and Wanamaker’s warehouse is now office and commercial spaces, (the smaller department store building burned down in the 1950s). NYU remodeled the former industrial loft buildings in that neighborhood. Further down, the “Ellin Prince Speyer Hospital for Animals” is now mixed-use residential units.

Swinging over to the left side, the “Federal Building/US Navy 3rd Naval Dist and PO” is now the Archive rental apartment building. Moving towards the middle of the map, the “Northern Dispensary” on Waverly Place still sits empty, waiting for an appropriate re-use, while the nearby “Washington Sq. M.E. Church” and the “Greenwich Presbyterian Church” have had their interiors transformed into apartments.

Up at the top-center, we see “Hearns” on West 14th Street, one of the more popular department stores in the city until acquired by a corporate chain of stores; without proper documentation, it’s hard to know if the building continues to serve smaller commercial enterprises on this stretch.

Of course, we have lost some of the highlighted structures. The “House where Washington Irving and Mark Twain Lived—21 5th Ave.” is now where the modern Brevoort apartment building is located.

“Our Lady of Mercy Chapel” and “Province-town Playhouse” have been replaced by NYU buildings. “Spring Street Church,” “Our Lady of Vina Church,” and the “Duane M.E. Church” have been demolished for new buildings near Broome Street.

Back at the top, the “Chapel of the Comforter” is gone, and the “9th Regt. Armory and Civic Repertory Theater” is now a modern YMCA building. Finally, “St. Vincent’s Hospital” was lost, replaced by luxury condo buildings.

Nevertheless, Greenwich Village still has a lot of historic and new structures to appreciate. Enjoy a walk around.

We always welcome your comments.
Letter from a NYC Ex-Pat in Maine During COVID

By Hannah Reimann

The blackberries are late this year because there was no rain for many days in July and August. It’s September 13th and I’ve got four hand-picked pints in my fridge now and a huge handful covering my buckwheat ploys for Sunday breakfast. I’m looking out at the cove 20 feet away from the deck where I sit and I see a seal catching two flopping fish and eating them, his cute face peering over to me now and then. A large bird of prey, an eagle or an osprey, soars high above eying the fish in the cove. The pogie have been literally jumping out of the water this year, splashing about, attracting the kingfishers who dive like torpedoes then dart back onto the top branches of the spruces. The call of birds from far away and the flapping wings of those creatures unless there’s pouring rain. In that case, the wildly moving water, churning clouds and ever-changing colors provide a spectacle from the picture window.

After two alarming positive cases came and went earlier this summer, there is zero infection and zero death from COVID-19 on this island. Everyone wears masks, there is a limit to number or persons in the four or five stores that are open and there is hand-sanitizer in every business. Even though no one is sick, we are all asked to use it every time we go into any business. It’s uncrowded, it’s pretty, it’s safe.

I promise you I’m not writing this to make you jealous. George asked me to write after we spoke on the phone a number of times about my life here. I know New York is a great city. I have faith that all will be well there, again. I will be back and I look forward to being with my Village community when it gets too cold to live in my seasonal Maine home. The pandemic will not always be like this—we will all get through this and life will change for the better eventually even if it takes a couple of years.

Most of the time, I’m on my own here. I have not been lonely since I left New York on July 31st or when I was here for two weeks in June. I have learned to enjoy being alone. In my case, nature has helped me to do that. I was terribly lonely in my apartment in the Village, dodging the coronaviruses wherever I thought it might be, hiding from it, taking on preventative measures every waking hour, strategizing the equipment I needed, the right way to buy food, to eat, to avoid congregating, or moving around the city very much. I learned to care for others with the help of the technology that I have come to depend upon as if my life would be lost without it.

Here in Maine, I don’t have a TV. I listen to NPR and BBC radio every day to know news all over the world. I listen differently than when I was in New York.

Please create an opportunity to spend a little time in nature; a day, a week, a drive to NPR and BBC radio every day to know news all over the world. I listen differently than when I was in New York.

Please create an opportunity to spend a little time in nature; a day, a week, a drive to the city. Even a day in Central Park or Prospect Park, unplugged from your devices, could change the entire week. I have found it has rejuvenated me to reflect on this unique time surrounded by nature, thinking about what we have, what we need and what we can actually do alone and for each other. If every human suddenly disappeared from the planet, the planet would be fine. My wish is that, when I return to New York, I can make a more balanced and insightful contribution, that I’ll be stronger this fall than I was last spring.

Heron Sunset on Mill Creek, Vinalhaven Island. Photo by Hannah Reimann.

Home continued from page 23

Hong's favorite chopping block was a section of a tree stump, aged into a shallow bowl from constant use. Teenage Xiao Liu ("little Liu") cleaned up after Hong with various cloths and mops, or squatted on the floor plucking chickens after Hong had beheaded them with a mighty thwack. Chickens DID scuttle around the kitchen (minus their heads), but were quickly caught by Amah, and their blood was drained into a bowl and saved.

Amah, who had been my mother’s nursemaid, came from a time and a family where nothing was wasted. She could spend hours meticulously scrubbing and cutting up chicken intestines which were later served up as rubbery little tubes in soup. You always knew she was coming because her bound feet sounded like hooves on the tiled floor. Our kitchen was modern, but no one stood at a counter if a job could be done squatting on the floor. Amah or one of her helpers would fill a large chipped enamel tin pan with water. Then she would lower herself on to the floor with a groan and drag the pan to her side with whatever cleaning job needed to be done.
When I had to give up running after 22 years, I thought nothing else would keep me in such good shape. But I was wrong. B3 challenged me and provided a super-fun, full-body workout that has kept me in the best shape of my life. In March when I had to quarantine in a hotel room for 14 days, I started doing the B3 online workouts. These classes truly saved my sanity. There are dozens, ranging from 10 minutes to an hour. When B3WV started livestreaming classes, this brought the best of the in-studio experience and online workouts together. With Zoom, I could see my friends from class and my beloved teachers, and we could work out together and chat after. I truly wept the first time I worked out via live stream, and now I am truly happy to see everyone again after the strange and fearful first months of the pandemic. B3WV is a positive, supportive, welcoming fitness community.

Come meet some of the teachers and check out the appealing Barre3 workout gear at their sidewalk sales, Saturday afternoons at 28 West 8th Street. Now they have outdoor classes every Saturday on West 8th Street too, socially distanced and sanitary to keep everyone safe. Check out all their offerings at

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By Karen Rempel

Is the Quarantine Fifteen getting you down? Has your fitness lifestyle been disrupted due to restrictions during COVID? Are you yearning for a more active you, but don’t know where to start? Barre3 West Village (B3WV) has inspired an empowered fitness community since 2014. I became one of their devoted members in 2017. Like so many local businesses, they have been struggling to stay afloat, since group fitness classes are as impossible to get into as a Broadway show in NYC.

When I had to give up running after 22 years, I thought nothing else would keep me in such good shape. But I was wrong. B3 challenged me and provided a super-fun, full-body workout that has kept me in the best shape of my life. In March when I had to quarantine in a hotel room for 14 days, I started doing the B3 online workouts. These classes truly saved my sanity. There are dozens, ranging from 10 minutes to an hour. When B3WV started livestreaming classes, this brought the best of the in-studio experience and online workouts together. With Zoom, I could see my friends from class and my beloved teachers, and we could work out together and chat after. I truly wept the first time I worked out via live stream, and now I am truly happy to see everyone again after the strange and fearful first months of the pandemic. B3WV is a positive, supportive, welcoming fitness community.

By Karen Rempel

Join Barre3 West Village’s Dynamic Fitness Community

Barre3 West Village
Balanced in body Empowered from within
Livestream classes daily Outdoor classes weekly

KAREN REMPEL HOGS ALL THE BALLS at the Barre3 West Village fitness studio. Photo provided by Karen Rempel.

I was so happy to see everyone again after the strange and fearful first months of the pandemic. B3WV is a positive, supportive, welcoming fitness community.

Come meet some of the teachers and check out the appealing Barre3 workout gear at their sidewalk sales, Saturday afternoons at 28 West 8th Street. Now they have outdoor classes every Saturday on West 8th Street too, socially distanced and sanitary to keep everyone safe. Check out all their offerings at https://barre3.com/studio-locations/west-village. The B3 teachers give plenty of options to adjust the workout to your fitness level and capacities, every class you take, with props optional. Try the B3 15-day free online trial. I guarantee you will feel a good burn, and feel balanced and positive about life after your workout.

Apologies continued from page 18

known as GULAGS in remote sections of nearly uninhabitable Siberia.

They felt they had the right to do such a thing because of the explosive Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 24, 1939. On the surface, this was to be a simple non-aggression treaty between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Unbeknownst to onlookers from throughout the world, there was a secret portion to the pact in which these two dictatorships divided up Europe between themselves. The west caught a breeze of this eerily wind during the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, however, Stalin obliged that the draft be ignored and the true, all-important implications of this pact was not revealed until the Iron Curtain finally fell in the 90’s.

The Nazi occupation between 1941 and 1944 provided a short respite from the fatal deportations, replacing them with other horrors. By 1944, the Soviets were back, and by the end of the War, Roosevelt and Churchill effectively legitimized their presence in the Baltic states at the Yalta Conference. And so, the deportations resumed uninterrupted, with another 136 thousand Latvians deport between 1944 and 1952. Eyewitness accounts speak of so many bodies littering the side of the tracks into Siberia, that the wolves and the bears soon had eaten more than their fill and would take to only chewing on the cartilage of noses and ears.

By 1952, the objective had been accomplished. The loudest voices in opposition in Latvia had been silenced, in unimaginably terrible ways. Vija remembers hearing about the neighborhood boy scout leader who was found with his head bashed in. By then it was a familiar tale: “You may have heard, when the Russians came into Poland that they killed Polish officers in Katyna? Exactly the same happened in Latvia. Hundreds of officers of the Latvian army were rounded up, told they were going on some excursion. Military. They were taken to a forest, where a dug out grave waited, and then they were shot, and they were falling into the grave and they covered them up.”

Katyna, of course, refers to Katyn Forest, the site of an infamous massacre of over 20 thousand Polish military officers by the Soviet Army in Spring of 1940. Strangely, on the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre, in April 2010 an airplane carrying the Polish president, the first lady and dozens more top Polish government and military officials crashed and killed everyone on board as they were flying to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin to commemorate the tragedy. According to some accounts, the Polish president’s twin brother, who also happened to be the Prime Minister at the time, and who now is the president of a rather more nationalistic Poland, receded because of the tragedy into a deep and troubling seclusion, harboring secrets, going so far as to lie to his elderly mother for many years afterwards: “He’s on a trip.”

Vija might say this is one of life’s many circles (“There are no accidents”): fate’s funny way of making her children reckon with the past. She is more prone to believe that it was a conspiracy, however, a conspired event perpetrated by the same old Soviets going by a different moniker:

“They just exchanged the flag from red to now red, white and blue. They have not changed at all. And Putin is from the old method. He is a KGB man. He never changed, he never will. Look! He’s a dictator, like Stalin. He is a dictator. He has made the law such that he will be the president of Russia for another 30 years. That’s what he did right now. He changed the law.”

Vija bears no false illusions, however. Just because Putin is a bad guy doesn’t mean there needs to be a good guy. Things are never so simple as appearances suggest. Even reminiscences of her grandfather, who painted, is tainted. He was from Dresden.

“The Americans bombed Dresden completely. And there were thousands and thousands and thousands dead. It wasn’t a military goal. There was nothing military in the least. Just to raise terror. That’s all.”

While on the topic of American guilt, the conversation inevitably dives to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The official narrative is that such drastic steps were necessary to end the war, even if it meant the deaths of perhaps more than 70 thousand Japanese children under the age of 14.

“They will always say that they needed to do it. Because they did it. So, therefore, they needed to do it,” Vija spits.

Poetically, Vija’s last few rays of naivete are held in one of her earliest childhood memories as a girl in Latvia, before the war and so, too, before a lifetime of challenges as a refugee commenced.

“When I was a little child in Latvia, I would spend always the summers with relatives on the farm from the country. I always knew when the full moon is going to come up and where. I secretly went there and danced for the moon. Because, that was like a face you see. He still is my best friend and oldest friend. I always felt that he was the best audience for my dance because he understood me. I still feel that way.”

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Northern Parula’s wardrobe.

SPRING:

and olive illustrations with their black and white accents. By contrast, the gaudy colors and patterns of spring warblers might as well have been fantasy birds. Even though I’m sure warblers passed through our Pennsylvania yard, I never recall seeing them before I took up birding as an adult.

So far this fall I’ve only seen seven of the nearly thirty species of warblers that could pass through the West Village. Let’s look at them. In the spring, the Blackpoll is a tidy black and white bird with a jaunty black cap that could, perhaps, be confused with a Black-and-white Warbler though they have very different dining styles. The Blackpoll also has a helpful tss tss “Here I Am” call that I frequently confuse with the brakes of a taxi slowing down at a traffic light. But the one I saw last week had a cryptically striped olive back, no black cap, no call, and foraging on the ground rather than up in the trees. I sent photos to expert neighborhood bird watcher Andrew Rubenfeld for a second opinion because I wasn’t confident naming it on my own.

Another head scratcher had an olive cap and a smudge of rust coloring at the sides of its white front. I only caught glimpses of it as it darted through the Juneberry branches just above eye level. My initial thought was that it was a Chestnut-sided Warbler, but it might have been a Bay-breasted. What would fall migration season be without mysteries?

Hudson River Park has also hosted multiple Black-and-white Warblers. Crawling up and down branches like a Nuthatch they look unconfusingly black and white striped like their spring selves—if a tad blurry from the ordeals of the summer.

Next up were a pair of Common Yellowthroats playing hide and seek through the undergrowth. The male still had his helpful black mask (and was keeping socially distant from the female or maybe he just needed his personal space after one too many Zoom meetings.) The female, though boasting her namesake yellow throat, gave me wishful pause that she might be a similarly yellow-throated Nashville, Wilson’s, or Yellow Warbler.

That same morning, a Black-throated Blue Warbler popped out of the shrubbery right after the Yellowthroats. This is one of the least confusingly named warblers. It is, in fact, noticeably blue with a black throat. (Millie looks up suddenly as if to suggest that she is a White-throated Red Corgi, equally, conveniently and correctly named.) Black-throated Blues get the Best Dressed Award, spring or fall, for never going out without a crisp “pocket square” on their wings.

A female American Redstart, bounding athletically high through the elm trees, displayed her non-seasonal name confusion. The male Redstart does have orange-red flashes on his wings and tail which he flicks repeatedly to distract insects from their becoming his next meal. However, the female is more suitably a Yellowstart with her bright yellow highlights which she employs with equal aplomb as the male to startle up lunch. At least neither turns to a Redstart of a different color in the fall.

And finally, my cover bird, featured more because it’s pretty than because it’s confusing! In the spring the Northern Parula has a jaunty orange and yellow cravat, blue head and wings, and with a green back. Their fresh molt into fall features a more au naturel look sans the neck bling and with an overall subtler palette. It’s cheerful to ponder whether the bird I photographed in May could be the same bird returning for the photoshoot of his fall collection.

Hearing my typing slowing down, Millie looks up. Maybe it’s time for an unconfusing treat.

By Keith Michael

“They ain’t called confusing fall warblers for nothin.”

I don’t know who I’m quoting here. Maybe myself. But I think the reassuring phrase “Confusing Fall Warblers” can be soundly attributed to Roger Tory Peterson from his game changing 1934 A Field Guide to the Birds. Paged through endlessly, this guide was the staple in my house when I was growing up in Pennsylvania.

You may wonder why I find the CFW sobriquet “reassuring”? Across the room, Millie is giving me her skeptical corgi-eye as if to say that she doesn’t wonder why, frankly doesn’t care, and would rather nap as if to say that she doesn’t wonder why, though they have very different dining mysteries?

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Karen’s Quirky Style

By Karen Rempel

I looked at dozens of apartments in the Village in 2017 when I was searching for my dream New York home. One of my favorite apartment viewing experiences was a co-op with loft bed that caught my eye on StreetEasy because it had a vintage chocolate poster on the living room wall. When I viewed the charming apartment on West 10th Street, I was a little hungover from dancing and partying with my designer friend Michelle Runden at PIECES Bar the night before. But it was a sunny Sunday morning, and I kept my appointment to view the apartment. The current owner had an elegant drinks cart with a sparkling silver high-heeled pump on it. I was more than intrigued, and I soon discovered that the Cinderella behind this single shoe was a drag performer whom I’d seen the night before at PIECES! What a delightful coincidence! It affirmed my decision to move to New York City. I was dazed in!

So when my friend Dorothy Bishop, the incredibly talented star of the hilarious Dozen Divas show, gave me this elegant sequined dress from her drag queen friend, I immediately thought of wearing it in a shoot at PIECES on Christopher Street. Phil was amenable, and we got to the location just before they started setting up outdoor tables for brunch. But the iconic PIECES window cast too much glare, so we moved a dozen yards east to a dingy doorway marked Private Property. I cannot believe how perfect the mottled colors of the wall were with the tones of the dress. Magical art! I felt like I was flying. Of course, these incredible Kurt Geiger gem-embedded platform boots would make any drag queen feel like she’s flying! Fun times in the pandemic.

For more fun Philip Maier photos, see karensquirystyle.com.

STYLE NOTES

KURT GEIGER LONDON BLACK VELVET, GEM-EMBEDDED PLATFORM BOOTS. Designer Shoe Warehouse. 40 East 14th Street.

A.B.S. BY ALLEN SCHWARTZ glamorous sequined drag queen dress. Gift from a friend.

ESTETICA PURE STRETCH CAP WIG. Gift from a friend.

DANGLY HOOP EARRINGS WITH APRICOT AND PEACH BEADS. Gift from a friend.

METALLIC CUFF BRACELET. Street vendor on Sixth Avenue.

“SIN” MAC LIPSTICK AND “BIG APPLE RED” OPI NAIL LACQUER. Drag queen makeup inspired by Miss Fame.

Play On: Music In The West Village During The Pandemic

By Fr. Graeme Napier

Orsino in Twelfth Night commands his minstrels:

If music be the food of love, play on; Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting, The appetite may sicken, and so die.

—William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night

For $300 you can sponsor a concert, attend in person, and invite selected guests (up to sixteen units, where a unit is either an individual or two people who share a home). Some sponsors do this to mark a birthday, an anniversary, in memoriam a departed loved one, or as a gift to another. Some bring a group of friends together to sponsor and enjoy a “private” concert.

If you are interested in sponsoring a concert, simply contact Fr. Graeme the Rector (rector@stjvny.org) and he will work with you on finding a suitable concert that corresponds to your tastes. Most of St. John’s concerts are early music, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, contemporary, or jazz; one example is a beautiful concert of Renaissance music for harp and viola da gamba on Saturday 17 October, a program WQXR called “sensately beautiful.”

It is good to know that the West Village is one of the places in NYC where in-person audiences can again enjoy the acoustics of our great New York venues and the talents of our musicians in full safety and comfort. Play on!

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Style on the Street: *Back to School!...kinda, sorta...*

Photos by Dusty Berke and Karilyn Prisco.

Follow us on Instagram @styleonthestreet_WestViewNews
Submit your favorite neighborhood fashion looks for a chance to be featured.

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Curated by Karilyn Prisco

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**GOORIN BROS. HAT SHOP**
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Hibiscus and the Cockettes

JOHN ROTHERMEL, NY cabaret singer and Cockette star, was an avid collector of 1930s 78 rpm records—here on the cover of Zoom magazine, 1971. Photo courtesy of Fayette Hauser.

By Robert Heide

2020 is the 50th anniversary of the famed Cockettes, who made an acid drenched splash in San Francisco while living commune style shortly after the Summer of Love in the Haight-Ashbury, with their trash shop vintage, fabulously collaged and assemblaged outfits barely covering their nudity with a profusion of accessories, including bakelite bracelets and jewelry, immense headresses, manly beards and tons of glitter pasted all over themselves. The group performed their way-out musical extravaganzas at the North Beach movie theater, the Palace, and were a midnight sensation for several years from 1969 to 1972. A big, glossy, and exquisitely put together art book entitled The Cockettes with the subtitle Acid Drug and Sexual Anarchy by Fayette Hauser, a photographer as well as a member of the tribe has just been published to anticipate by all of New York’s hoi polloi as well as uptowners and celebrities like Bianca Jagger and Truman Capote. They were axed by the press, and people stormed angrily out not getting the drugged absurdity at all. They were probably on very different drugs, or none at all. Waters concluded that in San Francisco “It was such a radical audience because it wasn’t just gay people. It was a complete mix of men and women that didn’t fit in anywhere, not even in the Hippie movement.” Many people in the Village will remember the glittering billboard over United Cigars in Sheridan Square, advertising ‘Hibiscus and the Screamimg Violets,’ a hilarious club act with his talented sisters which sadly turned out to be Hibiscus’ swan song. He became one of the first 100 people to die of AIDS, and passed away in 1982.

**AIDS Memorial continued from page 1**

only person who can influence or overturn a Signatura ruling is Pope Francis himself.

If the letter published in these pages can attract 100 thousand online signatures, one for every life lost to AIDS in New York City, we believe that will be enough to open hearts to the truth that this memorial- and what it stands for- is not only wanted, but needed now more than ever before, especially when considering the parallels the COVID Pandemic has had with the AIDS Epidemic. To be clear, there has yet to be a cure for HIV and over 700 thousand people continue to die from it, with another 1.7 million new infections globally each year. The HIV drug market is estimated to be a $30.5 billion industry, and is expected to continue growing.

To virtually sign the open letter online, and to check out our star-studded #SayTheirNames Social Media Campaign which has attracted support from the likes of Dame Emma Thompson, Nathan Lane, Karamo Brown, and many more generous souls, please visit: www.VillageAIDSMemorial.org

Dear Pope Francis,

We respectfully ask you to preserve at its current location and make open to public visitation the Village AIDS Memorial, the first AIDS memorial in New York City and the only one in a religious building anywhere in the world.

This memorial, made up of 580 plaques honoring AIDS victims, is installed in the sanctuary of the Church of Saint Veronica. In 2017, the Archdiocese of New York closed the Church of Saint Veronica and has since made plans to remove this memorial.

The Village AIDS Memorial is miraculous because it brings worlds together that otherwise are seemingly incompatible, as evidenced by the fact that both Saint Mother Teresa and Saint Veronica's Cathedral on December 10, 1989, that saw a man standing on a pew during Sunday mass repeatedly screaming, “Stop killing us!” That protest, organized by AIDS rights organization ACT UP, ended with the arrests of 111 people.

When Jesus handed Veronica back her veil, his face was miraculously imprinted upon it, and when Saint Mother Teresa accomplished her mission at the Church of Saint of Veronica, her own face was likewise miraculously imprinted upon that church in the form of the 580 plaques that constitute the Village AIDS Memorial. This memorial, created in 1992, is a direct descendent of the LGBTQ Community Marathon, and the only one in a religious building anywhere in the world.

In 1985, AIDS was understood to be a “gay disease”, and while it seemed the rest of the world would shun this community, Saint Mother Teresa wanted to send a different message, one characterized by compassion—a trait she shares with Saint Veronica. Indeed, it was a message that perhaps the most Vulnerable in times of need, the Village AIDS Memorial is a refuge for the most vulnerable in times of need.

Christopher Street church, which has been proposed AIDS hospice in their neighborhood, if even a single plaque is removed from this Christopher Street church, which has been a refuge for the most vulnerable in times of trials and tribulations, it would be sacrilegious and certainly will diminish this memorial’s holy power.

Please, Pope Francis, remember the way of Saint Veronica, and of Saint Mother Teresa, whom you yourself canonized, and do the same for Lisa Carrascosa, the five-year-old Bronx girl whose plaque is joined by those of her parents. If, for no other reason, do not let that disturb little Lisa’s home, for it seems she’s finally found some rest. Who knows what happened to her, but worse than the tragedy of little Lisa’s death would be if it were all for nothing. Please use this opportunity to remember, rather than forget.

Remember, for example, that other parishes rejected the opportunity to provide a church home for St. Mother Teresa’s worthy mission.

The New York Times reported that a year earlier, in 1984, Upper West Siders made the Orwellian decision to protest a proposed AIDS hospice in their neighborhood. Perhaps the sight of plaque-stricken bodies was too much too bear. Nevertheless, if even a single plaque is removed from this Christopher Street church, which has been a refuge for the most vulnerable in times of trials and tribulations, it would be sacrilegious and certainly will diminish this memorial’s holy power.

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No more crowded openings, like this one for Franz Kline at the Sidney Janis gallery, March 7, 1960. Ours are now socially distanced.

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