9/11 Twenty Years
By George Capsis

Everybody has a 9/11 story; here is mine...

I was working as a consultant for the United States Council for International Business, and there was a going to be a conference way up on one of the higher floors of Building One of the World Trade Center. I toyed with the idea of attending the meeting, but an opportunity to attend a much fancier trade conference in Colorado Springs was offered. I chose that instead, and arrived there on the afternoon of September 10th.

The following day I awoke in my hotel room, showered and dressed, and made my way to the first floor where I expected to see the early bustle of the conference, only to be met by silence and TV-like sounds coming from an auditorium off the lobby. I discovered a transfixed audience watching a passenger plane fly slowly into the World
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Generation Z’s View of a Post 9/11 America
By Anastasia Kaliabakos

When I was sixteen years old, I traveled on my first international flight on a trip to Italy. I had been to airports a few times in my life, but could never shake the awe of how secure New York airports like Laguardia or JFK were. There were endless lines, bag checks, and security guards with their dogs roaming the aisles of eager Americans excited to travel, whether for business purposes or family vacations. As I, a petite, nerdy teenage girl finally got in line to enter the plane, I was roughly pulled aside by a woman saying I had been selected to be “inspected.” I was brought to a small room and instructed to take off my shoes and open my small carry-on bag. I remember slipping off my green polka dot converse and unzipping my bag to reveal a much-too-large selection of books. A burly man used a stick to poke around my bag, while the aforementioned woman gently patted me down. When they were finally done, I was told to put my shoes back on and get back in line. I was rattled to say the least, and full of questions. Later on, I asked my parents how I could ever be considered a threat. My parents explained to me that this new normal of travel had come about in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001.

Although it may seem cliche, as a native New Yorker, 9/11 has been woven into the fabric of the person I am today. Despite not being born yet (my mom was about five months pregnant with me at the time), I have grown up in a generation that has only known life post 9/11. The effects of the terror attacks are still palpable in today’s America—especially in New York City. For example, every year on September 11th, the atmosphere of the city noticeably changes.
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Open Restaurants
The upside of outdoor dining—Village residents delighted to sit outside and enjoy their neighbors—and bring their pets!
SEE PAGE 20

Barry, Barry Sad
A tribute to Barry, the charismatic Central Park Barred Owl.
SEE PAGE 10

Digital Age
Mobile devices and social media keep us more connected, but too often at the cost of in-person, human interaction.
SEE PAGE 28
Open Restaurants

I’m reading the August Issue of WestView and am really upset by the headlines: Open Restaurants: An Assault on Quality of Life, and Paris or Shanty Town? If either of these articles present a thoughtful view of a complex issue, it would be irrelevant. The headlines are so loaded with purpose. That purpose I presume is to persuade city officials that residents are unhappy with the allowances given to restaurants, and the oversight of those allowances. And that is an incomplete telling of what’s going on.

The headlines don’t address the overwhelming support that we have seen from our neighbors regarding our roadway dining, and the sacrifices we’ve been making. The headlines dismiss by omission the efforts we—and many—restaurants have made, at great expense, to add beauty to the neighborhood. The headlines are careless, incendiary, and destructive to our business. My only hope is that next time, WestView might more roundly consider who they are fighting against.

Thanks for your time.
—Laurence Edelman
Chef/Co-Owner
Poulet Sans Tête & Left Bank
117 Perry St. at the corner of Greenwich St.

Response to Letter to the Editor

Dear Mr. Laurence Edelman,

You wrote of your reaction to our August headlines Open Restaurants: An Assault on Quality of Life, and Paris or Shanty Town? as being loaded with purpose and that we don’t address the overwhelming support from the community.

The paper and the community did in fact support the restaurant industry when there was no indoor dining allowed. The headlines are an introduction to important, relevant information, and Assault on Quality of Life is a direct quote from public testimony. In this month’s issue, more vital information is given on the subject, including issues concerning the structures at Left Bank and Poulet Sans Tete.

Kudos to all those hard-working restauranteurs who took the responsibility to learn the rules of building structures or placing tables and chairs on public right-of-way. But these stories are about those who do not abide by those rules, and residents who are suffering the consequences of that.

We need the community and the city to work together to find an equitable solution to the chaos now prevailing, not to allow it to continue indefinitely.

Sincerely,
Brian Pape

Say No to the Corner Bistro Street Parties with Amplified Music

From Concerned Residents of 31 Jane Street

As longtime residents of the West Village, we support our local restaurants, celebrate live music and cherish our neighborhood. Unfortunately for months, the Corner Bistro, at the corner of West 4th & Jane Street, has disturbed the peace of our West Village neighborhood during the week and on Sundays by having a live band play amplified music to create their own non-permitted loud street party with a crowd that regularly exceeded the permitted capacity for their restaurant and spilled drinking guests across the street, sidewalk and crosswalks. After months of our neighbors calling the Corner Bistro and being told directly by the Corner Bistro management that they did not care about the complaints or what the neighborhood thought, the Corner Bistro finally acknowledged that their street parties were illegal and stopped playing amplified music. Perhaps they stopped due to the effects of residents filing complaints with the State Liquor Authority, 311, the 6th Police Precinct, Speaker Corey Johnson’s Office, Senator Brad Hoylman’s Office and the Nightlife Czar, Ariel Palitz, but now the Corner Bistro is seeking permits to permanently disturb the neighborhood with amplified music and crowded street parties. The Community Board should support our neighbors and urge the State Liquor Authority to deny a permit to change our West Village into a regular outdoor concert and street party zone. We hope the Board - and the Corner Bistro - will do the right thing and stop the amplified music. As a community, we should voice our concern by writing emails or letters to the offices of Speaker Johnson and Senator Hoylman and also attend the Community Board meeting — information on meeting dates is here—cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb2/event/sla-licensing-2-robert-cly-co-chair-and-donna-raftery-co-chair-10/. A petition will also be in-play for the community to sign to show unified concern about the application for the amplified music permit.

The Corner Bistro has alternative options if they actually care about having a band play for their patrons. They could have the band play inside the restaurant. That way patrons could enjoy the music if they wanted to hear it without forcing the music upon the entire neighborhood and those who do not want to hear it. But it seems that option is not enough for them and doesn’t create the additional crowds that gather and drink in the streets above their permitted capacity. As another option, recently the Corner Bistro had the band play acoustic without being amplified. For a moment, it seemed like maybe the Corner Bistro cared a little bit about the neighborhood—or maybe just cared about stopping the complaints to the State Liquor Board about illegally hosting amplified concerts and constantly serving standing patrons above their permitted capacity —and had finally wanted to acknowledge and work with their neighbors. But again, it seems that also wasn’t enough for them as they didn’t have the extra crowds gathering to disturb our neighborhood, buying drinks and occupying the street, sidewalk and crosswalk.

But enough is enough. And the Community Board and the State Liquor Authority must not allow the Corner Bistro an amplified music permit. It is not right for the private Corner Bistro to disturb our public neighborhood and it should not set a precedent for restaurants to turn all of our streets, sidewalks and crosswalks into their private music venues.

There is a large sign bolted to the wall outside of the Corner Bistro that asks their guests to “Please Respect Our Neighbors. Keep the Noise Down.” The sign may be old and leftover from when the Corner Bistro used to care about the neighborhood, but it’s still hanging. Maybe the current management hasn’t read that sign in a while. But we hope they’ll look at it and remember how they used to feel about respecting their neighbors and being part of our community and that they’ll stop the amplified music and street parties.

Best regards,
Lani Tarozzi & Cindy Niedoroda

FREE PIANO

Amerling of NY spinet with bench, good condition, needs tuning. free if you transport it from 355 Eighth Ave. Contact Paul at pnkbx@yahoo.com.

MIA SAYS: One step does more to complete a journey than the most detailed map. Photo by Dusty Berke.
Refugees in Our Own City

By Jeff Hodges

On the night of September 10, 2001, I was shooting the Marc Jacobs Spring Collection at Pier 54. Actually, I was shooting the celebrity arrivals, and when that was finished, I walked to the end of the pier to shoot some video of the Twin Towers. Although the client only needed a shot or two, I became entranced with those bright, shining monuments to Western hubris, zooming and panning and tilting like there was no tomorrow.

Which, of course, there wasn’t.

The next morning, I was at a fashion show in Bryant Park when the police threw us out. Sixth Avenue had become a surreal, apocalyptic landscape with people praying and crying on the sidewalk, cars creeping or roaring up the street, and long lines at every phone booth. I watched the second tower crumble and understood for the first time how something completely incomprehensible can seem like a hallucination.

The next day I teamed with a producer from German television and we went from hospital to hospital searching for victims. There were no victims, but there were scores of people holding pieces of paper with photographs and biographies of those who were missing. They talked about their loved ones as if they could turn up any minute. Meanwhile, the doctors were waiting in line a construction worker accosted a gentleman in a turban: “I hope you’re happy now, you terrorist bastard!” he snarled. “Stop touching the women!” he hissed into my ear.

We went to the Javits Center to shoot the construction workers that had come to help with the gruesome work of excavating the ruin. They were three-deep on the sidewalk; we drove completely around the building, shooting the grim men in hardhats and overalls armed with picks and shovels. At one point I turned to my producer and said, “These racist, sexist, homophobic guys you see here are the ones that clean up the big messes, build the infrastructure, and fight all our wars. These are America’s heroes.”

Every night the Village went to sleep with a strange gray blanket of ash in the streets. The Hebraic logo couldn’t be seen. I was determined to show everyone that not all Americans had a knee-jerk animosity toward Islam after what had happened. I tousled the hair of the children and was attentive and comforting to the mothers. Several times, between interviews, the soundman turned to me and said something in his thick accent that I couldn’t make out. Finally, he put down his microphone and grabbed my shirtfront. “Stop touching the women!”

The next day Dusty announced that I would have to leave. It was almost the end of our Colorado conference as well; it took so many hours of TV viewing and calling families. But it would have been difficult to reschedule that important Colorado event that had attracted international trade specialists from around the world. The hosts hesitantly talked about the attack, not knowing how to deal with the all-powerful U.S. being brought to its knees by a handful of religious fanatics.

At the formal start of the Colorado conference I shook hands with smiling representatives from a kaleidoscope of nations, including some from Muslim countries. (Later it was said that the devout suicidal Muslim crew had been promised 100 virgins as their reward.)

It took two days to get a nightmarish flight back to New York where I discovered a strange gray blanket of ash in the garden.

But we are not finished with my 9/11 story...

Trade Center building at just about where the conference for my New York meeting was to have taken place.

It was almost the end of our Colorado conference as well; it took so many hours of TV viewing and calling families. But it would have been difficult to reschedule that important Colorado event that had attracted international trade specialists from around the world. The hosts hesitantly talked about the attack, not knowing how to deal with the all-powerful U.S. being brought to its knees by a handful of religious fanatics...

Every night the Village went to sleep with the smell of death and smoke that never seemed to dissipate. The posters of the missing hung everywhere, as ubiquitous memorials to those who would never escape the Foul, as the ruin came to be called. We had to show ID to return to our homes if we traveled north of 14th Street, and further downtown the streets were governed by a strict semblance of martial law. It seemed that New Yorkers had never been kinder or more considerate of each other than we were in those first shell-shocked days when we were refugees in our own city.

After two weeks I heard a taxi horn—“I hope you’re happy now, you terrorist bastard!” he snarled. “He’s a Sikh,” I said. “I don’t care what he is,” the guy yelled. “They’re all the same.”

We drove to Queens to shoot in a mosque that had received a bomb threat. Our Israeli soundman turned his shirt inside out so its


~ 9/11 Remembered ~
To commemorate 9/11, there will be an event on 9/12 at Westbeth Artists Housing. A poem written by Griselda Steiner will open the event. After that there will be a digital presentation of photos from 9/11 by Westbeth photographers (David Plakke, David Seccombe, Judy Lawne, and others) who spent months documenting the WTC disaster site. This will be followed by a screening of the film “Aftermath: 9/11 and New York Artists” in which artists, photographers, writers, and musicians from Westbeth are interviewed about their experience of 9/11 and its impact on their art, lives, and careers. The brainchild of Salvador Peter Tomas, who just passed away at 101 years of age, and myself, the film was videoed, edited and co-produced by filmmaker Ernie Mortzans, a friend of many at Westbeth. It includes a collage created on August 23, 2001 by Alyta Adams, student of Joan Hall, under Hall’s guidance, a few weeks before 9/11. Its imagery shows a plane flying by the WTC towers, above a mosque, and a man in a white robe with outstretched arms in prayer!

Fascinating interviews reveal deep connections between Westbeth and the WTC on 9/11. Artist Karen Santry was on the phone talking to a former student who was working at the Pentagon as an illustrator for a navy magazine. While they were speaking, the phone went dead. She found out later that her student had died during the attack. Sculptor Tom Duncan revealed that he had worked as an architectural model maker for the Port Authority and produced the original study models for the WTC, paying his way through art school. Kate Walters, a writer, was teaching at Borough of Manhattan Community College, which later became part of the crime scene as one of its buildings was destroyed. I exhibited art at the WTC also, along with other Westbeth artists, and saw circles of multicolored clouds surrounding the towers on 9/10 and thought they looked like angels dancing around them. Salvador Peter noted that Westbeth had just opened when they were building the World Trade Center, the residents watched it grow and later watched it collapse from their roof. Some Westbeth residents had a close call with death on 9/11 and relate their stories. I was working as a temp for the summer at Fiduciary Trust on the 95th floor. Although I had been offered a full-time job there, I’d promised my special education students in Bedford-Stuyvesant that I would return to them. Leaving this comfortable job to return to teaching saved my life; most of my co-workers perished. I had noticed strange men coming in over the summer, carrying heavy bags, who never spoke with anyone and went into locked hallways. My co-workers and I were suspicious of these individuals, and after 9/11 I thought they may have been involved in planting explosives that brought the building down.

Westbeth residents were active in bringing food and support to the rescue workers, police, fireman, and other volunteers, cheering them from West Street. Singer Valerie Ghent volunteered and collected specific supplies with WTC Ground Zero Relief, asking the needs of people working on the pile. She wrote the song “We’ll Carry On” that became the theme song for firefighters, police, and volunteers at Ground Zero, and later formed a support group using music therapy for firemen, survivors, families, and volunteers. Musician Isaac Basker worked with his hip-hop group, the Impossebulls, and produced a song with Chuck D based on an Annie de Franco poem about 9/11. But artists’ careers suffered a great deal in the post-9/11 economy; Salvador Peter Tomas noted that artists are always the first to be disposed of after a crisis.

The stories are riveting. Several artists in the film will participate in a panel discussion following the film. The event will be held at the Westbeth Community Room, 155 Bank Street, at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, 9/12/21. Seating is limited to 35, but it is free and open to the public.
The Tallest Buildings in the World

By Eric Uhlfelder

Twenty years ago he was in Hong Kong working on the AIG tower. He was having dinner with colleagues when he had first heard the news.

It wasn't the first time Leslie Robertson's towers were attacked. When he surveyed the damage the day after the 1993 bombing, he got up from dinner and found a TV where images of Lower Manhattan were streaming across from the other side of the globe. "I didn't think the towers would fall. As designed, the weight of the floors above where the planes had hit was being transferred around the breaches to the columns below. But as I watched, fearing for all those still inside, a decade of work flashed back across my mind."

The World Trade Center was born out of a desire to rebuild Lower Manhattan. Chase Manhattan Bank Chairman David Rockefeller, founder of the Downtown Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, New York State Governor Nelson Rockefeller, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey envisioned a massive project to return attention to the City and Lower Manhattan.

The Authority—which was in charge of the project—successfully lobbied for the 10-million-square-foot development to be shifted from the East River to the Hudson, providing its PATH trains running beneath the Hudson River direct access. In 1962, the Authority selected Minoru Yamasaki as the architect. After considering various models, the Authority eventually decided two 110-story towers would anchor the 16-acre site. "What we provided Yama," Robertson recalls, "was something he never dreamed of—a closely-spaced small columns on the perimeter of the building made into a gravity and lateral-force system that was very redundant and robust. It was exactly what was needed for his architecture."

In many ways, Robertson was an anachronism. He seemed to have belonged to the grand Victorian age of innovation. When I interviewed him a decade ago, his deportment was calm and pleasant. He enjoyed entertaining friends, listening carefully, speaking softly and precisely. At 83, his eyes still radiated passionate interest in things around him and ambitions still to be realized. And he fully embraced all the advantages that have accompanied him into the 21st century.

Like youthful tech innovators, he often did things differently, unconstrained by accepted doctrine or norm. He approached problems with defiant logic, believing that man's greatest accomplishments are achieved not simply through close adherence to principles, but in their judicious expansion.

The task facing his team was beyond anything builders had ever contemplated. "We had already worked well with Yama on a half a dozen projects," recalled Robertson, "and to me the Trade Center was a matter of expanding the basic ideas of structure."

It was to be a lot more. Robertson was going to rewrite that limitation with each tower containing nearly twice the floor space contained in the Empire State Building.

Unlike traditional skyscrapers based on a grid of columns set apart at 30-foot intervals, Robertson's and Skilling's solution thoroughly reconfigured the structure. He designed a dense row of columns around the perimeter of each tower and another set of columns circumscribing the building's core. The two sets of columns were then connected by prefabricated floor trusses.

This created far more open floor space than traditional skyscrapers. "But with this structural configuration," explains Robertson, "the exterior walls carried extraordinary weight, requiring them to be even more robust than traditional skeletal walls to counter the lateral force of the wind."

And having used computer modeling, Robertson confirmed his design could withstand a hit by the largest plane of the time—a Boeing 707.

After September 11th, there was extensive study of how the Towers performed and why they ultimately fell. The National Institute of Standards and Technology's investigation of the collapse of the World Trade Center—the official government study—concluded the high-speed impact of the jet knocked off the fireproofing that wrapped around the columns and beams, combined with the super hot fires, caused the towers to collapse. Without the inferno, it believes the Towers would likely have remained standing.

Berkeley Professor Robert Bea—one of the country's leading forensic engineers who led investigations into the Challenger disaster, Katrina, and Macondo Oil Well blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, and who heads the Center for Catastrophic Risk Management—describes Robertson's design as excellent. "One part of me as an engineer looks at that efficiency achieved and says, well that's exactly what we should be doing. However, it has taken me my entire professional life to learn that anyone's structural system cannot, will not be perfect. Things will not perform as you expect them to. Things will not be built as you expect them to. The system has to have a level of protection called robustness that allows it to tolerate damage and defect."

The fate of the World Trade Center ultimately came down to a simple fact: The level of hate driving a handful of individuals exceeded the imagination, intelligence, and commitment that had led tens of thousands of men and women to create two remarkable towers, which had the audacity to reach a quarter mile into the sky.

This is not much solace for the families of the thousands who perished on September 11th or for Robertson. Many did come to him in the months that followed, looking for some kind of answer, which he knew he could not provide.

"The first was a young woman, perhaps 13 or 14 years old. Her brother was working on one of the high floors. We met in a park at the foot of Manhattan. The tears came as her body shook. And as we cried together, words were not required."

And maybe through embraces and tears shed with strangers he too partially came to terms with what he could not comprehend.

Robertson thought his career was over. "I was ready to pack up my bags, not because I felt I let anybody down, but simply due the suffering associated with my work. I thought afterwards I had no chance at securing new contracts and felt that even existing jobs were going to get pulled at any moment."

But to his surprise, he received an outpouring of support.

He went on to design some of the world's tallest skyscrapers. The 100-story Shanghai World Financial Center rises 492 meters. A 100-story tower in Kuala Lumpur ascends 500 meters. And the Lotte Jamsil Tower in Seoul South Korea soars 123 stories or 555 meters.

Time had distanced that terrible morning. However, until his death this past February, Robertson had quietly carried the burden of those that may then have realized a more brazen act. Robert Bea—one of the country's leading forensic engineers who led investigations into the Challenger
IT’S NOT TOO LATE FOR TRUTH
Gen Z continued from page 1

There is a quiet sombreness to the typically bustling city—one of mourning and remembrance. Every year, the Tribute in Light also reminds the city (and the world) of what transpired on 9/11. The 9/11 Museum and Memorial website reads, “Tribute in Light is a commemorative public art installation first presented six months after 9/11 and then every year thereafter, from dusk to dawn, on the night of September 11. It has become an iconic symbol that both honors those killed and celebrates the unbreakable spirit of New York.”

It is said that about 97% of Americans who were eight years old or older on September 11, 2001 can recall exactly where they were when they heard the news of the attacks. Additionally, New Yorkers themselves have unique perspectives when it comes to stories of where they were that day and how they were feeling. Individual stories that humanize 9/11 are hugely important for leaving a lasting impression on those who either did not have a personal connection to 9/11 or those who did not live through the events of that fateful day but have lived through its consequences.

My mom was working as a pharmacist at the Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital on September 11, 2001. Her day began as any other typical day would, but once the news that the towers had been hit broke, the hospital went into full Code Red. Stretchers and IV bags were brought out, filling the first floor of the hospital, so the injured would be able to seek treatment. I witnessed first hand the collapse of the Twin Towers and immediately joined hundreds of other New Yorkers in lines to donate blood. He then went back to Village Apothecary, the pharmacy where he still works today, to help frightened and stunned West Villagers who needed medicine and care, until the late hours of the night. He drove home alone in the dark, passing the emergency vehicles patrolling the streets of Manhattan, across the eerily quiet bridge.

Stories like these are jarring for someone like me who did not live through the attacks, but the effects of 9/11 are not just evident in the impact they had on people like my parents, but also on how the society I have grown up in has functioned. As I mentioned before, September 11th led to a tightening of security implemented all around the country. Not only is it noticeable in airports, but it is also evident in the nation’s capital, Washington D.C., and in many major cities across the country. Most buildings (governmental or just privately-owned) require intense procedures to be allowed in. Typically, one must present a valid form of identification, along with a reason as to why you are visiting; a pass through a metal detector and a thorough bag checking are commonplace as well. It is interesting to hear from those who grew up before 9/11 that these strict measures used to be rare.

It also goes without saying that, for my entire life, the United States was engaged in a “War on Terror” in Afghanistan. To have your country wrapped up in a war for your whole lifespan is an experience shared by relatively few people alive today. Recently, that fight came to an abrupt end—but not the end that anyone really wanted. I think that, for those impacted on 9/11 (in the U.S. or abroad, alive at the time or born after the fact), the end of the war has brought up many emotions, memories, and opinions about the “War on Terror” itself, along with what was accomplished in Afghanistan and how much has been lost since 2001. But, ultimately, it is important to remember that unity in the face of hardship is what is most valuable to the country right now.

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**Why Exposing the Truth About 9/11 is Still So Important**

By Craig McKee

Gen Z continued from page 1

It’s hard to believe it has already been 20 years since the world was stunned by what we were told was a terrorist attack by Muslim extremists.

We remember the images, the feelings, the disorientation we experienced on that clear Tuesday morning as we watched something unfold that we would never have imagined was possible. And nowhere was the horror of that day more deeply felt than in New York City.

Those of us who were around on September 11, 2001, remember it vividly. But is that enough?

Do we actually know what happened, or have we just accepted a story that we’ve been told? Is what we think we know about this act of mass murder true, or are we being deceived?

After 20 years, and with the world appearing to be descending more and more into insanity around us, does it matter whether we understand what happened on September 11, 2001? Or has the issue been eclipsed by recent events?

One way to decide whether 9/11 still matters is to review what it has cost us. This horrifying event has precipitated (or been the excuse for) several wars, launched under the guise of fighting “terror.” These wars have, directly and indirectly, killed hundreds of thousands if not millions and displaced tens of millions more.

Many in New York lost friends or family in the destruction of the World Trade Center. Many more have died from being exposed to the toxic air at Ground Zero.

The country has spent trillions of dollars on wars that could have been spent making life better for people. Instead, we have seen civil liberties steadily clawed from us based on the claim that we simply can’t afford such luxuries during a “time of war.” This has helped the surveillance state to grow massively since 9/11. The same thing has happened in countries around the world.

In bringing their annual focus to 9/11 once again, the major media will, of course, ignore challenges to that official narrative, preferring to focus on the very real courage and sacrifice of those who died and their families. This is a critical part of the 9/11 story, but we also need to hear about the unanswered questions and the evidence that proves conclusively that the official story of 9/11 simply can’t be true.

Those who believe we have been denied the truth about this crime can only applaud the openness and courage of the very few media entities that have reported fairly on questions still being asked after 20 years. It is fitting that the WestView News is one of those outlets since it covers the very area that was the scene of most of the destruction that occurred that day.

Meanwhile, committed activists—including those at Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth—work all year long to raise awareness of the World Trade Center evidence and the need for a new investigation of 9/11. We invite New Yorkers to visit AE911TRUTH.ORG to learn more about the evidence and why a new investigation is so badly needed.

Craig McKee is a writer for Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth.
THE VILLAGE COMES BACK TO LIFE: After a long, hard year of isolation and social distancing, The Village is full of life again as residents and visitors enjoy the summer in the neighborhood’s parks, streets and restaurants. Photo by Bob Cooley.

By Kieran Loughney

The summer of 2020 never really happened in New York. With concerts cancelled, theatres shuttered, business conducted remotely and travel deferred, the city became a hallowed-out shell of its usually vibrant self. Plywood covered shop windows. Favorite restaurants and stores closed. Deemed a risk to public safety, movies and music in the parks, Pride celebrations and street fairs vanished. Ubiquitous facemasks revealed only worried and fearful eyes as we passed each other on the street or allowed ourselves a short rest, socially distant from others on a park bench. We began to wonder if summer could ever be the same again. A recent stroll through the West Village provided evidence that in 2021, summer had made a comeback.

The fractured melody of nonsense syllables reached me nearly a block before the toddler in a stroller came into view. His full-throated singing echoed off the brownstones lining West 12th Street as his expressionless nanny wheeled her charge. With her earbuds in place, she missed the child’s caterwauling and a man on the street exclaiming, “Great song.” I agreed, remarking, “I smell a hit.” At West 4th, bass notes pumped a dance beat among tables outside the Cubby Hole, its patrons in cheerful animation, their hair buzzed, dyed or spiked. The smell of dog droppings confronted me as I crossed the cobblestone street near Café Chauny, though the face of the maître’d at his podium betrayed no awareness of the foul odor. As I passed an open door, a rich, roasted scent drifted from the kitchen. Diners chattered under the café’s canopy in various foreign dialects, the clink of flatware on plates punctuating their conversation. Just steps away, the piquance of ground horseradish drifted from another restaurant, its clientele sipping wine in a streetside enclosure. A whisper of pot smoke accompanied a passing young couple’s laughter. A raucous tuba, trumpet and drum backed a gruff voice on a megaphone at nearby Tartine. Al fresco diners bobbed heads and tapped feet to the strolling combo’s energetic take on, “It Don’t Mean a Thing If It Ain’t Got That Swing.” I had once complimented the combo’s singer for channeling Louis Armstrong’s voice. “Oh, no man, I’m trying to sound like Tom Waits,” he insisted. On West 11th Street, flowers entwined the facade of a local supermarket. These and countless others who give of themselves each day have surely been our heroes now, a new perspective on what really matters. We see those we may have once ignored: the sanitation worker, the delivery person, and appreciate the truly essential role they play in maintaining our city, supplying us with so much. Consider the custodian mopping a hospital corridor, the overworked nurse who has seen so much loss, the cheerful checkout clerk at the local supermarket. These and countless others who give of themselves each day have shown us what should have been clear all along: that their efforts enhance our lives in a thousand ways, every day. An undeniably positive effect of the pandemic is that we’ve acquired a finer-tuned sense of life’s richness. After the loss and isolation of the past, an appreciation for all we’ve missed may stay with us and we’ll understand more profoundly the treasure each moment can hold.

An Extraordinary Life

By Randee Mia Berman

It’s nearly impossible to wrap up a life in 100 words. Ilona Royce Smithkin was, in a word, extraordinary.

Ilona was a painter, dancer, author, hat designer, sketch artist, cabaret singer, eyelashes creator, and divine friend. As a teenager in the ’60s, I admired her as a radiant Provincetown summer fixture; in the ’80s, as a West Village icon living above the beloved Beatrice Inn. She turned 100…smack in the middle of the pandemic. A fellow performer and artist, she marveled at our shared passion for polka dots, ocean waves, clouds, solitude, our kindred spirits, desire to make people smile, snail mail correspondence, the weekly turkey sandwiches I’d order for her long-distance from Angel Foods Market (I was in NYC, she was in Ptown), and my colorful Ilona-ish Operation Covidance outfits.

“If we’d met earlier we would have danced and acrobated in the streets,” she said. She loved connecting exuberant people, and taught me to slow down and savor the moment. “Look for good. Inhale deeply. Listen for those you can help. And speak with kindness.” Ilona, who did full splits on stage at 95, epitomized celebrating life to the fullest. She died on 8/1, the reverse of 18, or chai, which in Hebrew means life. At the bitter end she said, “Stop the morphine—get me some vodka.” I’ll drink to that.

To watch my podcast interview with Ilona (on Mia’s World), go to youtu.be/36ms16m6JYg.

The Best Secret About Property Insurance Claims That You Need to Know


When the little newspaper that could suffered water damage, first from a suddenly leaky sink drain, and then from an abrupt roof failure, they did what millions of New Yorkers have done before them—they turned to their property insurance carrier for help. And just like the millions of others before them, to their surprise, when disaster struck, the insurance carrier was less than helpful.

We are all inundated daily with false messaging by insurance carriers: “We are on your side,” “You're in good hands,” “Your helpful neighbor.” More recently, we’ve seen the trend switch to convincing policyholders that the value of their insurance is saving money on premiums: “Surprisingly great rates,” “Fifteen minutes can save you 15 percent,” etc. Though we see and hear these messages everywhere, from our phones and radios to billboards and TVs, far too often, policyholders are left with little help in the one area they need it most, getting their claims paid fairly and quickly.

When I was contacted by this newspaper to review their property damage claims, I can’t say I was surprised. The review illustrated avoidable delays, improper denial of claims, and underpayment of those claims that the insurance carrier did accept for coverage. Faced with having to incur tens of thousands of additional dollars for repairs beyond the insurance proceeds to restore their property, this newspaper did what far too many New Yorkers and consumers across the country do not do; they turned to a little-known industry that serves to help consumers resolve property damage claims without litigation.

A professional public adjuster is a property insurance claims expert, bonded and licensed by the state to serve strictly to protect the rights of homeowners and businesses by helping them prepare and resolve their claims when disasters strike. Unlike an “independent” adjuster (a misnomer) or “company” adjuster, a public adjuster represents only you, the insured, and never the insurance carrier. Unlike their alleged counterparts, public adjusters are often highly trained and experienced claims experts who are required to maintain yearly education standards; and, unlike the other types of adjusters, public adjusters only get paid when you get paid.

Ideally, a reputable public adjuster should be your first call following any significant property damage. The experienced public adjuster will provide valuable resources to respond to any emergency to help mitigate the damage, will review your insurance policy to understand its strengths and weaknesses, and will help manage every step of the recovery process in a knowledgeable and thoughtful manner. Perhaps most importantly, a public adjuster will have the experience needed to deal with the insurance carrier’s efforts to delay, deny, and underpay claims when they become necessary.

When disaster strikes, don’t fall prey to the insurance carrier’s endless attempts to convince you that you are “in good hands.” Call a professional public adjuster, get your claim assessed, and avoid the nightmare that so many other sophisticated consumers have not. Or, go it yourself and know that when the time is right, there are professionals out there to help you who won’t require a courtroom.
Barry, Barry Sad
By Keith Michael

The beginning of August was a bad time for rare birds in New York City. Early Friday morning August 6th, Barry, the charismatic Central Park Barred Owl, fatedly collided with a park maintenance vehicle, and a few days later, on Tuesday, August 10th, a visiting young Wood Stork, which had been inspiring birder pilgrimages to western Staten Island, succumbed to a length of tube-like trash, perhaps mistaking it as a snake for lunch.

Barry had arrived ten months earlier in October 2020, first spotted by the Loch of Central Park's North Woods. Owls are frequently a one-day or few-days wonder during the fall and winter months in NYC. Wood gets out through the ether and birders miraculously teleport for an adrenaline-fueled glance at the latest wide-eyed celebrity. Last year, COVID boredom seemed to have relaxed the usual reticence about revealing the specific location of owls. Early on, s/he was named Barry, and daily reports of his/her whereabouts were gleefully reported by those in the know. To ease the pronoun conundrum, during the fall and winter months, Barry was named Barry, and her parade of ogling admirers, she was positively a limelight performer, often conjuring poetic juxtapositions of 'the call of the wild in the city.' Not only did Barry seem to be unfazed by her parade of ogling admirers, she was also frequently active during the day, giving more than the usual "owl snoozing" views. Come dusk, while warming up for her nocturnal hunts, she was positively a limelight performer, often conjuring poetic juxtapositions of 'the call of the wild in the city.'

I first saw Barry on October 20th near the upper lobe of the Lake. Later, I paid homage to her again near her initial roost by the Loch, and then, over months, paused multiple times below her familiar spot nestled on an upper branch of a hemlock near the Boathouse. Her plush-toy physique, impeccable camouflage feather patterns, the black portals of her eyes, and a seemingly infinite repertoire of yoga-like preening contortions, made her an instant Instagram personality. Her faithful longevi- ty made it possible for a few devoted photographers to document her residency nearly daily, capturing this singular Central Park owl in a range of behaviors, weather, and moods rarely so lovingly observed.

It has oft been noted that the Year of COVID inspired many New Yorkers to become enamored with the city's avian personalities for the first time, and many attributed Barry with the honor of being their muse. This personal connection made her much more than just a photogenic cover girl. If such a glamorous Queen could be "right here" what other wonders might be nearby? Well, a competitor Snowy Owl stole the top Twitter feeds for a February interlude. Great Horned, Long-eared, the "Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree Saw-wet," and Screech Owls competed for attention throughout the season. A Virginia Rail stalking the lawn of Bryant Park entertained birders for a spring day. Summer headliners included a southern debutante, a pretty-in-pink Roseate Spoonbill holding court a short LIRR ride away in Cold Spring Harbor while a flashy Purple Gallinule, another usually southern species, skulked at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens, and the ill-fitted, unnamed juvenile Wood Stork spent ten days on an obscure Staten Island retention pond before meeting its abrupt demise. These birds all came and went, but The Baroness stayed.

If you Google "Barry Central Park Owl," dozens of media articles will be instantaneously cued from around the world, reporting eloquently on her ignominious death during her nightly hunting expeditions. I heard the news while shorebirding with friends on the East Pond of JBWR in Queens. "What? Oh no! Not Barry!" My search for Red-necked Phalaropes was put on extended Pause. A remembrance vigil in Central Park that weekend drew hundreds of mourners who had been touched by her presence.

Many knew that The Baroness would eventually leave, one hoped, to rule a vast domain in the far north with her heirs. But for her to live most of her short life as glor- terati in the center of New York, and then die here, was an unexpected blow in a year already laced with confounding loss.

Before Millie's sudden departure in March, she and I had already discussed via corgi-telepathy (perhaps martini induced on my part) that Barry should be bestowed with a special 2021 Bird of the Year "Millie" Award for her contribution to elevating NYC's morale during the pandemic. But now, a posthumous Lifetime Achievement accolade is in order. Likewise, the Wood Stork shall receive an Esteemed Visitor citation. Stay tuned for the end of year ceremony.

Visit www.keithmichaelnyc.com or follow @ newyorkcitywild on Instagram.
Salvador Peter Tomas Sang His Farewell Aria at 101

By J. Taylor Basker

Operas often have tragic endings. Some of their greatest music has been written for characters who are dying. Death is seen as a dramatic opportunity, a moment of truth about our human condition. It is not feared or denied, but celebrated with powerful heartbreak music. Gospel music also celebrates death—as a transition to resurrection and life immortal. Jesus, saints, and sinners are all affirmed with Amazing Graces as souls fly away and Mary doesn’t weep or mourn.

Salvador Peter Tomas, opera singer and actor, sang his last arias and gospel songs four days before he passed on to sing with celestial choirs on August 9th. On my last visit to him at the Veterans Administration Living Community in St. Albans, Queens, with his dear singer friend from Westbeth, Eve Zani, we sang opera and gospel songs with him. The chaplain was visiting at the same time. She was a gospel singer, who joined us along with his aide who also sang in a gospel choir. Peter was able to sing with us, and the visitors’ room was rocking with loud music affirming life, faith, and hope.

This joie de vivre was Peter’s constant gift to us who knew and treasured him at Westbeth Artists Housing, where he lived for almost 50 years until his health condition and lack of other options resulted in his moving to the VA Community. He complained that the Valleyires were there, and he longed to return to Westbeth. But his health deteriorated and COVID arrived, so he was stuck. Some of us were able to take the long trip to visit him, especially his lawyer and friend, Jesse Kasowitz, who was his pro-bono legal adviser; many others sent him cards and letters. In this way Peter never lost touch with Westbeth. He was not treated kindly there at times. His apartment was robbed of valuables, including his jewelry, computer, sound systems, CDs, videos, and memorabilia of his distinguished career—they all disappeared somehow. But his spirits were kept up by his niece, Maria Reed, who sang to him nightly during phone calls from Georgia.

Born in Mississippi in 1920, later moving to Queens, NY, Peter lied about his age and entered the army during WW2. He served in the infantry, seeing action in Italy, France, Germany, and North Africa. Like most veterans, he didn’t talk much about his wartime experiences. After the war he studied acting at the Fontainebleau School of Acting in France and at Trinity College in London. His mother had inspired him with a deep love for classical music. In London he’d often been AWOL temporarily, hiding in a cramped hidden passage under a stage to hear opera. After returning to the U.S. he studied voice at the Juilliard School and at the Teachers College of Columbia University.

Peter’s sonorous bass/baritone voice bought him the roles of Scarpia, Amonasro, Papageno, The Toreador, Lescaut, Figaro, and Elijah in oratorios by Bach and Handel. He also performed in Amahl and the Night Visitors. This was especially impressive since as an African American, there were few opportunities to perform in opera.

His talent as a narrator bought repeat opportunities to perform in opera. His satirical sense of humor was the result of his deep study of issues that challenged mainstream narratives. He was a master of one-liners, along with his close friend Edith Stephen, who passed away a few months ago at 100 years old. The two of them would hold court over a spellbound audience at Edith’s famous salon events. Peter’s Westbeth family misses him dearly, and treasures memories of his Creole gumbo and other gourmet dishes he provided for Edith’s weekly dinners along with his extraordinary wit and wisdom. He was honored with a military burial at Calverton Cemetery; there will be a memorial for him next spring at Westbeth.

The Children’s Free Opera

By Michael Feldman

Recently, Terry Stoller, writing for the Westbeth, “Profiles in Art” series, interviewed me about my life’s work, which naturally centered on St Luke’s, China, the New York Collegium and the more recent St Veronica project and my admitted responsibilities in its demise.

Somewhat forgotten were my early years in 1570, an amazing time, formative, yet productive, a place in which a group of talented, eccentric educators, led by an even more unconventional principal, Blanche Schwartz, mirrored the milieu of the late 60’s and early 70’s in the creation of a splendid, revolutionary, middle school, devoted to the arts, excellent academics and a philosophy of saving the souls (of the children) of whom it served. The saving of adults’ souls was also on the agenda, mine being a prime example.

It was a fascinating time… I always considered it (and this is not an original thought) that in the mid-60’s adults, parents, especially in neighborhoods such as ours, had lost confidence in their own values; consequently their ability to influence the moral compass of their adolescent offspring was suspect. In countless cases they dumped that task on us. It was a big responsibility.

For me, two most influential colleagues (beside Blanche), true giants in their field who shaped my philosophy and bolstered my output, were Tad Tsufora and Jerry Sheik.

I met Tad on that day I came to be interviewed in spring ’68. His official title was Math Chairman, but he was a one-man stabilization agent. All the youngsters (his favorite one-word description of our students) both loved and feared him… his reputation as a world-class protagonist of Judo and his rich Japanese accent which when bellowed double forte, tended to put the fear of god into anyone within yards, adults as well as teenagers, were legendary.

He had heard of my exploits in a sleepy Junior High in Queens, where an unofficial small choir of 16 youngsters had met before school every morning to memorize the complete Neue Liebeslieder set of Brahms and performed it (with the requisite 4-hand piano accompaniment) to a bemused, incomprehending PTA in Spring ’67 (German/English texts, not provided…my bad). This sort of work belonged in the Village, not in Woodside.

Tad remarked to me, as we drove home to Queens that day (in his unique, ethnic version of English), “Sometimes I think, music, more important than math…’ I thought to myself…this is the school for me.”

And so, when the O’ Henry Intermediate School opened in Fall ’68, I was one of the prized recruits. Mind you, I was pretty neurotic myself, recently having completed a three-year army stint in the West Point Band (a very unnatural, unworliday place) and had been through a failed relationship with a brilliant, beautiful young woman, which affected me for years. Throwing myself into music and my students blunted the pain, and was useful for my students as well. The strength of the school was the similar devotion of the many superb teachers, both to their craft, but just as importantly, to their charge’s complete life and personal needs; a task which rarely ended when the bell rang for dismissal at three o’clock.

The second of my two friends and mentors was the band teacher Jerry Sheik. Much has been written and proclaimed about this unique guy; a fine classically trained percussionist and jazz drummer, and an even better molder of youth. He had a way about him, so easygoing, loosey-...
The City’s Oldest Homeless Organization, the Bowery Mission, Addresses Issues of Increasing Homelessness

By Anthony Paradiso

The Bowery Mission’s flagship location is in the East Village and is one of eight campuses interspersed throughout New York City’s five boroughs, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The East Village location opened its red doors to the public in 1879, making it the oldest Christian rescue mission in New York City. Nearly 150 years later, the mission is still one of the city’s most progressive charities, and one of the most respected because of its determination to not just feed the homeless, but also nourish their souls.

Cheryl Mitchell is the Bowery Mission’s chief programming officer. She spoke about how the pandemic affected the community programs and homeless services the mission has offered for more than a century.

“I remember going to work and seeing all these services, public toilets to shelters for the homeless, disappear overnight. We went to work trying to secure things we could do, like to-go meals and mobile showers. We kept our doors open to preserve our essential services,” Mitchell said. “While all in the city were encouraged to stay home, doors open to preserve our essential services,” Mitchell went on to say that before COVID, the Bowery Mission would provide its homeless visitors three meals indoors each day. When the pandemic started, it began offering “to-go meals” instead. There had also been a “chapel service” that was held before each meal at the East Village location. Recently, the mission’s chapel, which was established in 1909, reopened. Cheryl Mitchell reported the reaction of one special person who attended one of the first services since 2020.

“Someone raised their hand and said, ‘Thank you so much for opening back up. Of all the food that you serve, the spiritual food that you give is most important to us. Having a community that can provide for the emotional need is at the heart [of what the Bowery does].’”

According to the Bowery Mission’s website, about one in five adults living in New York City are “below the poverty line” (almost 1.7 million people.) In addition, about 80,000 people are homeless and 3,857 live “unsheltered in the subways.” The mission can give the homeless a new lease on life, only if they choose to “walk through our red doors” at 227 Bowery Street in the East Village.

Many hard-working New Yorkers have lost their livelihoods and some have joined the thousands who were already living unsheltered in the subways or alleyways. When writing about the mission, I was directed to a link to an article on Bowery’s website, titled “Peter’s Hope Story.” Peter was a chef at a Manhattan restaurant and had a good income before COVID struck. In March the restaurant closed. Peter lost his job, and then his grandmother, father, and brother to the virus. In September, Peter lost his apartment because he had been unable to afford the rent. He was “sleeping on subway trains” and, while there, was robbed of his ID and his backpack that contained all his belongings. At the Bowery’s emergency shelter on the Lower East Side, Peter walked through the red doors.

Cheryl Mitchell told me about the Bowery’s “robust” mental health program, which employs licensed social workers and mental health counselors for the Bowery’s program that trains students seeking to become mental health counselors. She explained that “[the Bowery] partners with schools and universities that train mental health counselors so we can supervise graduate interns as they’re entering that profession. Mental health [services] is a program that we already had in place [before the pandemic] and I’m glad that we’ve been able to provide it, even using people not on our clinical team.”

The Bowery did not just give Peter a full night’s rest, a pat on the back, and send him on his way. The staff was capable of rehabbing Peter—not just emotionally, but in a practical sense. The Bowery did this through their vocational team, which helped Peter complete his training for a real job and earn a food-handler’s license.

Peter’s life was nearly ruined by COVID-19, and for a while he thought that he had nobody. However, the Bowery Mission is a special organization that really cares about people. They not only provide emergency food and shelter, but also have programs that are “holistic in nature” and focus on “the needs of the whole person” on an individual basis.

For nearly 150 years, the Bowery Mission has been a lifesaver for thousands of the most vulnerable people in the city during crises such as the pandemic. With eight locations in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, people who need help getting back on their feet will always be able to count on these magical places to help them reclaim their lives no matter how dire their circumstances may be.
Greenwich House Proposals for Senior Center Sites and Services

By Darren Bloch

The past 14 months have been difficult for our entire Greenwich House community, and particularly for neighbors who have relied on our senior services for meals, support, comradery, and enrichment. While I could not be prouder and more impressed with the services our team was able to provide from a distance, we know it isn’t the same as being together. We’re thrilled that we’ve recently been able to begin connecting with many of you in person once again.

Beyond all the COVID-related efforts, and as some of you might know the City’s Department for the Aging (DFTA) agency recently invited senior service agencies (like Greenwich House) to submit proposals for the senior center sites and services they will consider supporting for the next three years.

As part of our proposal development, we turned to community members through town halls, Joint Advisory Council meetings and more informal conversations, to develop ideas. Our team also carefully thought through what we can do better to serve even more of our neighbors in new and different ways.

We want to share the ideas we have submitted to DFTA for their review and consideration:

• Continue to utilize all four of our current locations serving older adults—three as dedicated spaces for seniors (Center on the Square, Our Lady of Pompei, and Independence Plaza), and one location (27 Barrow) as a new site for intergenerational adult programming related to employment services, skills education, volunteerism, and a “business center” for members. All of these sites are within a short walk and we are confident our members will continue to receive the services and support they want and need, while we also work to bring new programming and services to the area.

• Add a new dedicated Older Adult Center in our district (as part the Westbeth campus).

• Expand mealtimes and healthy meal offerings, hours of operations into evenings and weekends, and add new programming options across our network of sites.

• For the first time provide an integrated transportation network that would link all of our service sites, as well as strengthen connections to other key partners and resources in our area (such as, Little Island Park, Tony Dapolito Rec Center, and the LGBT Community Center).

While we are excited about these big ideas, we also know our successes, as always, are the result of close community collaboration and support. That is why we have already spent hours in consultation with our members, staff and teams; and why we are committed to continuing that process over the months to come.

In addition to the broad strokes of our proposals we also included a number of other noteworthy approaches and suggestions offered by participants in our town hall and Advisory Council meetings that we are exploring:

• Hire a system wide coordinator to support volunteer and community service projects, which is a planned aspect of our proposal for 27 Barrow.

• Provide more afternoon physical activities and broader/intergenerational physical programming including subsidized membership to local City recreation centers, Expand member-lead programming and group work, supported by Site Directors

• Expand of our “Theater Desk” with more staffing supports.

• Expand outdoor programming to places like Little Island and Governors Island.

• Create a new “business center” to help members with copies, scanning, shredding, etc.

• Improve and expand collaborations with GH Music, Theatre, and Pottery programs.

• Expand case assistance and legal service supports.

• Better integrate and coordinate with Greenwich House Senior Health and Consultation Clinic and GH’s new Wellness and Resiliency Center.

Though many of the improvements described above depend on support from the Department for the Aging, we are optimistic about these plans and approaches and we hope that you will start seeing some of these changes in the months ahead.

We also know that everyone will not be happy with every choice we are proposing to make, but we hope everyone feels heard. My responsibilities that first year were 6th grade introduction to music and 7th and 9th year chorus.

A few words about that first-year group: years later, when I was into the formation of the Children’s Free Opera, and the initial, huge Con Edison grant came through; signed, sealed and delivered (a Capis production); seemingly endless foundation money was offered on all sides. And I thought to myself, “It will always be this way. Everything I touch will turn to gold.” How wrong I was; the spigot opened, the spigot closed.

That first year in IS 70, the seventh year recruiters included a number of vocally-gifted talent the likes of which I had not foreseen nor expected. Of course, I thought to myself, it’s the Village; there will always be such youngsters. But like the initial funding of The Children’s Free opera, it never happened again.

Opera continued from page 11

goosey, so at ease with teenagers. Virtually a person, they adored him, and gave him their best. Consequently, he achieved wonderful results from his instrumental program, especially his Jazz band. There was this wonderful afternoon (has 10 years gone by so quickly?) when he was dying of cancer and his kids (no longer) threw an enormous celebration of gratitude and remembrance in a downtown club—a heartfelt special tribute to a unique educator and human being.

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Why I Have Great Expectations for Eric Adams

By Arthur Schwartz

For the last seven years New York City has suffered through one of the most ineffectual Mayors in its history. That even includes Abraham Beame (remember him?) the Mayor who reigned over the collapse of New York City in the 1970s, and the takeover of New York City’s finances by a State Board. Under Beame we had massive hospital closures, municipal employee layoffs, and we gave our subway system to the State (and the MTA) which was the start of the rise in fares to the ridiculous number it sits at today.

Bill de Blasio started out as a Mayor with lots of promise. He had married a Black woman who had identified as a lesbian, fathered two mixed-race children, denounced the horrid “stop and frisk” policy of the Bloomberg era, promised hundreds of thousands of units of “affordable housing,” and promised to close the gap between rich and poor New York. He started with a bang: instituting free pre-K for all, and ending “stop and frisk,” even consenting to an enforceable injunction in Federal Court against it. And he seemingly owed nothing to the Democratic Party establishment. But it was downhill from there, capped off by utterly ineffectual leadership as we moved into the Coronavirus pandemic. No matter how badly Andrew Cuomo performed, de Blasio was worse. Think back to early March last year, when Covid had been rampant in Wuhan, and was beginning to unfold in Seattle. De Blasio was a hold out about taking extreme measures in the NYC Public Schools, which he kept open until March 20—the date both Cuomo and Trump declared a national emergency.

Why bring this up? When COVID hit, the most hands-on City official was Eric Adams. He slept on a cot in Brooklyn Borough Hall and directed operations in his Borough. He was on top of ambulances, hospital capacity, the distribution of PPE, food distribution, and he was doing this 24 hours a day. I have known Eric for many years. While he is not a ravishing leftist, he is hardly a person who was ever considered a conservative. In March I interviewed him for a podcast, which is accessible at wbai.org—On Demand (my July 31 show which is at https://wbai.org/archive/program/- episode/?id=23497, and discovered a very complex human being who has fought his way up from the bottom.

Eric Adams was the child of a single mother. His mother scrubbed floors to feed her family. He grew up in a poor neighborhood in Brooklyn, and he tells a story about his mother saving enough money to buy a house in Queens. When she showed up at the bank to sign the mortgage papers, the banker turned out to be one of the people whose house his mother cleaned. He sneered at her and said, “If you have enough money to buy a house, you don’t need the job at my house. Don’t come back.” She bought the house, and moved her family to Queens.

But young Eric did not stay out of trouble. At 15 he was running numbers in order to have money in his pocket. He got arrested and was brought down to the basement of the precinct and was punched, kicked in the groin, and beaten by a cop. He spent the night at Spofford Juvenile Detention Center, and was bailed out the next day by his mother. He urinated blood for a considerable time.

Several years later, having attended CUNY, he began working with Reverend Herbert Daughtry, the leading civil rights leader in NYC at that time. Daughtry was recruiting young men to go into the NYPD, which was then almost exclusively white, in order to increase the presence of Black officers. His notion was that it would be a way to lessen the police violence directed towards members of the Black community. He rose through the ranks, but along the way helped create a civil rights group within the NYPD called 100 Black Officers. In that group he often found himself at odds with the racist leadership of the PBA. When a woman named Eleanor Bumpers was brutally killed by a cop in her apartment, Eric Adams spoke out against the killing. When Abner Louima was brutalized by a cop who shoved a nightstick up his anus, Adams spoke out in support of Louima. It is telling that not a single police union endorsed him for Mayor.

If you listen to my interview you hear an Eric Adams who favors a responsible police force, with officers held liable for their actions AND emphasizes the importance of public safety. I experienced Eric Adams as a supporter of the most radical supporter supported radio station in the country—WBAI—and who appeared in court and on the steps of City Hall when the station went off the air in 2019. I experienced Eric Adams standing with me and leaders of the Transport Workers Union at the West 14th Street Station back in March when we filed suit to stop the MTA from cutting one-third of the service on the C and F trains. And I believe that we will experience an Eric Adams who grew up in NYC (not Boston) and who will value the input of local communities and community boards in accomplishing City planning, unlike our outgoing Mayor, who has paid less attention to local input than any Mayor. Robert Moses was defeated by Jane Jacobs in the 1960s.

I have high hopes for this compassionate, down to earth Mayor (once he beats a clown named Curtis Sliwa), who has worked his way up from the basement of a police precinct to one of the most important positions in the world.

Arthur Schwartz is the Democratic District leader for Greenwich Village.

Beth Israel Hospital Has Been Saved

By Siggy Raible

It’s mid-August and we Manhattanites with no summer retreat are living in the city during the dog days of summer… you know, “those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer.” With time on my hands, I’ve decided to respond to the article by Arthur Schwartz, “Beth Israel Hospital Staying Open—What Should It Look Like,” that appeared in the August 2021 issue of WestView News.

First, a huge thank you to Arthur Schwartz for fighting the good fight, for his activism, for getting into good trouble. As he states in the article, had Mt. Sinai proceeded with its plans, Manhattan, south of 17th Street (on both the east and west sides) would have been left with one 180-bed hospital at the South Street Seaport to serve the needs of the communities of Chelsea, the West Village, Greenwich Village, the East Village, NoHo, Chinatown, Tribeca, SoHo and the Financial District. (My apologies if I didn’t list all communities that would be affected.)

“To protect our health at a revived Beth Israel,” here’s what I think Lower Manhattan needs:

Although I am not a doctor or hospital administrator, I am, however, a consumer of health and hospital care. I cannot list in full detail all the services that are needed to provide excellent hospital care. But as a consumer of health and hospital care, I know that my community, Greenwich Village, and the adjacent communities on the west side of the island—Chelsea, the West Village, and SoHo—need a full-service hospital. Let me explain.

When I was diagnosed with COVID-19 in August, 2020 at Northwell Health’s “free-standing emergency department” at a/1 Lenox Hill Greenwich Village, I was not treated at that facility. I was taken by ambulance, more than three miles north, to its full-service hospital, Lenox Hill, located at East 77th Street and Park Avenue, where I was admitted for a six-day stay. When I succumbed to pneumonia three months later, I was again treated at Lenox Hill Hospital, not at the free-standing emergency department in the Village, where I live a stone’s throw away.

We do not need a facility that will treat some emergencies and ship others to full-service hospitals, whether to Bellevue, Lenox Hill, or to Mt. Sinai Hospital at 101st Street and Madison Avenue. As stated by Mr. Schwartz in his article, in 2017 he was treated for a heart attack at Beth Israel and was told by a nurse that had he been sent to another facility he might have lost his life.

So, in my opinion, Mt. Sinai Beth Israel, which will be a hospital for a good part of southern Manhattan, should, at a minimum, provide services for all kinds of emergencies—appendectomies, heart attacks, strokes, etc. Especially now, at a time when so many are infected by a deadly novel virus requiring intensive treatment from various specialists.
PALM’s Focus: Housing and Health Insurance

By Penny Mintz

Now that the primary elections are over, Progressive Action of Lower Manhattan (PALM), a chapter of the statewide New York Progressive Action Network (NY- PAN), is once again focused on effecting grassroots change that matters to the residents of Lower Manhattan.

On August 17th, PALM held a meeting in Jackson Square—the first live meeting since COVID arrived. Mark Levine, the Democratic Party nominee for Manhattan borough president, joined us and spoke for an hour, mostly about the Delta variant and affordable housing. The takeaways, basically, were that vaccinations are critical, the current spike is a pandemic of the unvaccinated, and the East River Park resilience plan and the Soho/Noho rezoning plan are done deals. People are still fighting against the East River Park and the rezoning plans.

So, perhaps more can be done to alter those plans than the “small changes around the edges” that Levine predicts are possible.

Levine also said that once he is elected Manhattan borough president, PALM members and others will have to be vigilant in pressuring him to move forward on progressive housing solutions. When asked if Mitchell-Lama type projects could be built, he said that there aren’t many publicly owned sites in Manhattan that would be available for that type of residential middle-class housing, which had been built in the 1950s and 1960s.

Right now, however, there is a site being developed at 5 World Trade Center on publicly owned land. The State has given over development of the land to two private real estate companies. They plan to put up a 900-foot-tall building with a total of 1,325 residential units; 75 percent of those units will be market-rate apartments, and 25 percent will be “affordable.” A group called Coalition for a 100% Affordable 5WTC is working to change that plan to 100 percent affordable apartments. They want preference given to 9/11 first responders and their survivors.

The other major issue on PALM’s August 17th agenda was passing the New York Health Act. NY- PAN is making a concerted effort, in coordination with the Democratic Socialists of America and New York Health, to get the act past the goal posts in the next legislative session. To that end, NY- PAN has created five working groups, and they seek participation from all interested people.

Labor Working Group is developing strategies and outreach materials to overcome lingering opposition to the NY Health Act among labor unions, particularly the large public-sector unions that wield significant influence over Democratic leadership and the legislative process. This group’s last meeting was on Tuesday, August 31st. To join, contact Jeff Mikkelson, jeff@ny-pan.org.

People2People Working Group is canvassing union groups and working with them to create materials for different regions of the state. It is also scheduling events and phone-banking to get the word out. Contact Naomi Zewde, naomi@ny-pan.org to join this working group. The next meeting will be on September 2, 2021.

Electoral Working Group is in the process of mapping every one of our state senators and finding the levers that will move them to pass the NY Health Act. The next Electoral meeting is on Wednesday, September 15th, at 7:00 p.m. To join, contact Ting Barrow, tingb@ny-pan.org.

Research Working Group looks for information to assist the Electoral Working Group with power mapping our senators, to create county tax savings numbers, and to help create forceful flyers. Their last meeting was on Sunday, August 29th. Contact Jeff Mikkelson, jeff@ny-pan.org.

Medical Professionals Working Group will work on building support among medical professionals. Their first meeting was on Thursday, August 19th. Contact Donald Gardner, donald@gardnerproject.com.

Phone Banking about the NY Health Act is being coordinated by Erl Kimmich, erlendkimmich@gmail.com. Phone banking is conducted every Sunday.
Lorraine Hansberry
Lesbian African American Playwright and Civil Rights Activist Who Died Too Young

In the sun, completed in 1961 and starring Sidney Poitier, received an award at the Cannes Film Festival.

Hansberry attended the University of Wisconsin–Madison, but left in 1950 to pursue her career as a writer in New York City. She moved to Harlem in 1951 and became involved in local activist struggles, such as the fight against evictions, while attending The New School in Greenwich Village. She also joined the staff of the progressive Black newspaper Freedom—edited by Louis E. Burnham and published by Paul Robeson—where she worked as a writer and associate editor (and with W.E.B. Du Bois) from 1950-1953.

Although Hansberry had also worked part-time as a waitress and cashier, writing in her spare time, by 1956 she had quit her jobs to commit all of her time to writing. In 1953, Hansberry married Robert Nemiroff and they moved to Greenwich Village. (It was while living in the Village that she wrote A Raisin In the Sun.) She and Nemiroff quietly separated in 1957 and divorced in 1964, though they remained close until her death in 1965 and he was the executor of her estate. In later years it was revealed that Lorraine Hansberry had joined the early lesbian group the Daughters of Bilitis in 1957, and had written several anonymously published letters to their magazine, The Ladder, in which she discussed feminism, homophobia, and her struggles as a closeted lesbian.

Politics and rallies have always been an integral part of the DNA of Greenwich Village; and Hansberry was a speaker at a particularly significant rally on June 13, 1959. Dubbed “Village Rallies for NAACP,” it took place in Washington Square Park. It was intended to increase membership, raise funds, and start a Greenwich Village NAACP branch, with which Hansberry was intimately involved as the co-chair of the NAACP’s Life Membership Committee.

After the success of A Raisin in the Sun, Hansberry used her prominence in myriad ways: challenging President Kennedy and his brother to take bolder stances on civil rights, supporting African anti-colonial leaders, and confronting what was considered to be the “romantic racism” of some of the Beat poets and Village hipsters.

A candle in the wind, Lorraine Hansberry’s range of Village attributes over her short life places her squarely at the forefront of our Greenwich Village legacy and heritage.

St. John’s Lutheran Church:
The Progressive Anchor of Greenwich Village Turns 200

In the long and varied history of New York City, no institutions have had more influence than churches. And there’s a good reason: they serve to heal and strengthen our communities.

Churches are found throughout the Greenwich Village Historic District. They were built as early as 1821 and as late as the 1970s, after the district’s designation in 1969.

It was Trinity Church—the Church of England—whose downtown members first pleaded with their pastor for a country parish to escape the Yellow Fever epidemic. The year was 1821, considered part of the most significant period in the development of our neighborhood, and the result was St. Luke’s in the Fields. That same year the Eighth Presbyterian Church was built on the newly named Christopher Street (formerly Skinner Road) as businesses were beginning to shape its pathway. A federal-style building with a domed cupola, the sanctuary served the Presbyterian congregation for about 20 years.

In 1842, the property was sold to St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, whose members worshiped there until 1858 when it was purchased for $13,000 by German Lutherans. (Although Germans had settled primarily in the area east of the Bowery, some comprised a community that existed in Greenwich Village until the end of World War I.) Victorian features were added to the church in 1886 by Berg & Clark, and the pediment was inscribed, “Deutsche Evangelische-Lutherische St. Johannes Kirche.”

Known today as St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, a progressive sanctuary for diverse communities—with programs and safe spaces for transgender, LGBTQQA, 2-step, and arts communities—the congregation is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Among the events at the two-day celebration will be J.S. Bach’s Goldberg Variations, poetry and theatre performances, a jazz concert, an Inspirational Gospel Showcase, panel discussions, a festive liturgy with Bishop Paul Egensteiner sermonizing, and an historic panel discussion with Anna Marcum of Village Preservation.

St. John’s Lutheran Church, one of the oldest and most progressive religious congregations in Greenwich Village, is within the Greenwich Village Historic District as designated by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. It is an architectural jewel of religious, cultural, and social services devoted to the Village community for the past two centuries. Pastor Mark Erson has been continuing this enlightened tradition for the last 10 years.

St. John’s Lutheran Church Bicentennial Celebration: Saturday, September 18th, and Sunday, September 19th. The doors to the church will be open throughout the weekend, beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, while the church hosts the events celebrating the bicentennial. All attendees are requested to wear masks. For more detailed information, please visit the church website: stjohnsny.org.
200 Years:
A Sacred Space
September 18th & 19th

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 18TH

Open House: 10 am-6 pm
Doors will be open all day. Please come by and take a look around. There will be a display of images and artifacts spanning the Sanctuary’s 200 years.

Panel Discussion: 11 am-12 NOON
Witness to 200 Years of Village History
Our sanctuary has gone from a village church surrounded by quaint clusters of homes and farms to an urban oasis in the midst of tireless activity and inspired creativity. And it never moved an inch. Built when the nation was just 33 years old and the city was beginning to expand, this sanctuary has witnessed a lot of history. Join us for a lively discussion on history’s effects inside and history’s mad dash outside. Special Guest: Anna Marcum from Village Preservation will join us.

Concert: 3 pm-Bach’s Goldberg Variations
St. John’s Director of Music Dr. Janet Sora Chung will be presenting THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS, a monumental work by J.S. Bach consisting of 30 contrasting movements on a single theme. It is presented as part of our celebration to mirror the way that St. John’s has meant so many different things to all the people who have come to this space. The scale and structure of the piece lends itself to contemplation and meditation and we invite you to an afternoon on St. John’s Austin organ.

Panel Discussion: 4 pm-5 pm
The Evolution of A Sacred Space: Architectural Theology
Some will say that the church never changes, it is stuck in the past. And while traditions certainly do stand strong and enduring, the changes to the St. John’s sanctuary over the past 200 years tell a story of ever growing theological understandings, renewing liturgical practices and evolving social conscience.

Inspirational Gospel Showcase: 9 pm
Any celebration of this space has to include one of St. John’s most recent unique expressions. Join us for our monthly night of praise engaging the joy and traditions of the ballroom community.

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 19TH

Worship: 11 am
Festive Liturgy, Bishop Preaching
We celebrate this milestone engaging in the primary activity for which the building was built—worship of the God of love, mercy and grace.

Lunch: 12:30 pm
A celebratory lunch will be served between worship and the afternoon program. RSVP to Office@stjohnsnyc.org by September 13, RSVP required.

Outdoor Concert: 1:30 pm-2:00 pm
Come early for the afternoon program and enjoy some outdoor jazz on the steps. Music from the 1920s: 100 years ago and 100 years after the church was built.

Celebration of Sacred Space: 2 pm
Through the years many have found a home in this sacred space. This interfaith expression will use music, reflections, poetry, and theatre to celebrate what has been, what is, and what will continue to be, as the living spirit that welcomes all is celebrated.

(At this time we are requiring masks for all indoor activities. Also, seating will be limited to allow for social distancing.)
Notes From Away

Hedge Trimming

By Tom Lamia

In one of my early columns for WestView News, I critiqued the practice of using talk- ing points as crib notes in political speech. The essence of the critique was that distill- ing communications to their supposed es- sence was an injustice to both communica- tion and truth in messaging. I now have a new bone to pick with those who aspire to guide me in my thinking about preserving what is left of our democracy.

My target is what I see as a growing trend to massage the message by making language opaque. The apparent objective is to obscure rather than to enlighten. An example of one such growing usage is, “not necessarily” as a qualifier to a plain statement of fact. One often hears that a fact is not necessarily the case as a hedge against some possibility, however remote, that this fact is either not a fact or that someone the speaker does not wish to confront may disagree.

My recollection is that I began to hear this particular hedge within the last five to ten years. My first thought at the time was that this was just another device for the weak and defensive to avoid confrontation, that it was both wrong and ineffective and would soon disappear from the public sphere. Clearly I was wrong. The “not necessarily” trope is still with us; it has become an unthinking reflex with us; it has become an unthinking reflex opaque. The apparent objective is to obscure what is left of our democracy.

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There is a difference between obfus- cation and an unresponsive self-serving statement. Neither meets the test of utter frankness, but the unresponsive statement will do less harm, but not necessarily.

Brass Bands: Sounds and Smiles on a Summer Night

By Ede Rothaus

Walking through the hot, still, and damp air of an August summer night in Manhattan: the unmistakable melody of La Vie en Rose.

I followed the music, towards the river, see- ing glints of gold shining in the fading light. The glittering came from two of the instru- ments being played by a small brass ensemble. In front of a newly opened Northern Italian restaurant, four musicians stood in the street in front of a newly opened Northern Italian restau- rant, four musicians stood in the street in front of a newly opened Northern Italian restaurant, four musicians stood in the street.

One constant is that, like other such growing usage is, “not necessarily” as a qualifier to a plain statement of fact. One often hears that a fact is not necessarily the case as a hedge against some possibility, however remote, that this fact is either not a fact or that someone the speaker does not wish to confront may disagree.

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There is a difference between obfuscation and an unresponsive self-serving statement. Neither meets the test of utter frankness, but the unresponsive statement will do less harm, but not necessarily.

The relatively recent emergence of brass bands on New York City streets can also be partially traced back to how Hurricane Katrina's destruction affected the New Or- leans music scene. Over the last 15 years, a significant outflow of musicians post- Katrina brought many musicians from the “Crescent City” to New York, and with them, the tradition of brass bands. It’s difficult to know exactly how many such bands are now in New York, as players drop in and out as opportunities present them- selves, and if the weather gods are cooper- ating. Best guess: 45 citywide.

As a result of the seemingly permanent change in New York's restaurant laws, al- lowing year-round outdoor dining makes the likelihood of hearing Louis Armstrong and Luis Fonsi, soul, salsa, Katy Perry, rock n' roll and the Great American Song book, all with a brass twist, very likely, especially in the streets of the West Village. Photo by Ede Rothaus.

Sabrina Walch, saxophone, plays and repairs reed instruments. Andrew Dolgon is a tuba player and teacher. Mark Rucci, drums, is a sound engi- neer and professional drummer. The drum he carries around for street gigs is a large plastic paint bucket bought at Home Depot.

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Throughout the pandemic, our team safely delivered a wide range of emergency, primary and specialty care for all ages. And now, with the COVID-19 vaccine widely available, we’re helping vaccinate as many New Yorkers as possible. We’ll continue raising our neighbors’ health—so we can keep moving forward, together.

Northwell.edu/ForTheVillage
When Village residents received the August issue of WestView News, the first article screamed out at them “Open Restaurants: Assault on Quality of Life”. The Open Restaurants program, which was launched early in the pandemic on an emergency basis is currently undergoing reviews to determine whether it will become a permanent program, and if so, what changes will be made. Not surprisingly, a group of Villagers turned out at the public hearing on July 19th and complained bitterly about the program. And rather than consider how changes might be made to address some of the residents’ concerns, a small but vocal group are calling for the entire program to be scrapped. One argument is that, while the Open Restaurants program might have been necessary early in the pandemic, now that indoor dining has restarted, there is no excuse to continue it. However, as we have seen in the last month or so, the pandemic is not over, and it is smart to have the ability to serve food outside where the risk to diners is smaller. Also, others have portrayed the patrons of the Open Restaurant program as mainly rowdy tourists, while Village residents cower in their apartments in hopes of avoiding the noise and filth. But of course, many of the patrons of these outdoor set-ups are Village residents who are delighted to be able to sit outside and enjoy the conviviality that did not exist before. And as someone who is an avid window box gardener, I really appreciate the time and effort that has gone into creating some of the elaborate floral decorations that dot the landscape. While some changes will need to be made (and some reasonable recommendations have already been presented in a report by Corey Johnson’s office), it is unfair to give the impression that all Village residents are against the program. It may seem that way, but that is only because the opponents of the program are the most vocal, complaining loudly on Nestdoor and at CB2 meetings, while those on the other side of the argument are spending their time enjoying the outdoors with friends and family over a drink or a meal.

Open
Two Brooklyn imports have recently opened in the Village: Beer Garage (118 Christopher Street near Bedford Street) and Hungry Ghost Coffee (315 Bleecker Street at Grove Street). The first Beer Garage opened in Park Slope, Brooklyn last year. The interior is modeled after a vintage garage, and locally sourced beer and bar food are on the menu. Hungry Ghost Coffee, which serves Stumptown coffee, was founded by a Turkish immigrant in Brooklyn in 2012, and now has 13 locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Daily Provisions, the Danny Meyer café and take-out spot has opened a third location at 29 Bedford Street (at Downing Street). Breakfast is served from 8 AM to 2 PM, and lunch is served from 10:30 AM to 5 PM. There is also a selection of pantry items available for purchase.

Coming Soon
More information has come to light about the new restaurant opening at 99 Bank Street (Greenwich Street between Bank and Bethune Streets): the name will be The Mary Lane, and it will be part of the Blackfoot Hospitality group which also runs other popular Village spots such as Market Table, The Clam and Little Owl. Two Hands Comedogs will open at 95 MacDougal Street (between Bleecker Street and Minetta Lane). This national chain operates over 30 restaurants across the United States, and it is the second Korean coated hotdog on a stick to arrive in the Village. Do Not Feed the Alligators (337 Bleecker Street between Christopher Street and West 10th Street) will be a coffee shop and bookstore with a focus on photography books and coffee related events. Daisies Burgers is opening in the old Benedicts space at 516 Hudson (near West 10th Street). Saigon Market, a Vietnamese restaurant, will be opening at 202 West 14th Street (near 7th Avenue) where Korean fusion restaurant Zusik used to be. Saigon Market also has a location on University Place which has been closed during the pandemic.

Other
There has been a lot of press about the opening of the Marvelous by Fred flagship in the Bryant Park area, but West Villagers have been enjoying the meringue concoctions at the smaller Aux Merveilleux de Fred (37 8th Avenue near Jane Street) for years, as well as the delicious brioches.

We love to hear from you! Please keep the tips coming. Email us at wvnewsinout@gmail.com
Maggie B’s Quick Clicks

SIDEWALK DINING...

As most people in the neighborhood are already aware, in recent weeks an unfortunate community conflict has been brewing—between the locals who want the sidewalk restaurant scene to become a permanent social neighborhood fixture, and the rest who want it totally closed down ... too noisy, etc. Frankly would hope they can all sit down together like the civilized adults they’re supposed to be (in this neighborhood particularly!!) and organize a working compromise—between ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL. PLEASE!

—maggie b

All photos by Maggie Berkvist.
2021 Anniversary Event
Coming up September 11, Global Live Stream from the Lawyers’ Committee

The 9/11 Anniversary Event Will Be LIVE STREAMED on
Saturday, September 11, 2021

SPEAKERS

MC: David R. Meiswinkle, Esq.
Introduction
Criminal defense attorney, retired police officer, President/Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee

Ed Asner Tribute
Actor, 9/11 activist, former President of Screen Actors Guild, Board member of the Lawyers’ Committee

Kevin Ryan
Focusing on 9/11 Suspects
Scientist, author and 9/11 Whistleblower

Graeme MacQueen PhD
Before the Tale of Structural Failure — What Journalists Actually Witnessed on 9/11
University professor, author and 9/11 expert

Mick Harrison, Esq.
Lawyers’ Committee Legal Actions and Future Possibilities
Whistleblower, environmental protection attorney and Litigation Director of the Lawyers’ Committee

Dr. Francis Boyle, Esq.
How to Indict Individuals and Organizations for COVID 19 Pandemic
Attorney, professor of international law, and drafter of implementing legislation for Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989

Meryl Nass, MD
Road from 9/11 and the Anthrax Letters to World Takeover
Internal medicine physician and activist with expertise in anthrax and bioterrorism

William Jacoby, Esq.
Resistance on the Grass Roots Level
Attorney, retired, coordinator of national grass roots efforts

Fred Whitehurst
Lawyers’ Committee Grand Jury Petition Exhibits and Evidence of Controlled Demolition
Retired FBI-Explosive Chemist, Whistleblower

Cynthia McKinney, PhD.
My Fight Inside and Outside Congress for 9/11 Truth
Former six-time Congresswoman from Georgia, 9/11 activist

Barbara Honegger
Anthrax Links to 9/11 Itself
Former White House and Justice Dept. Official, Researcher, Author, Board member of the Lawyers’ Committee for 9/11 Inquiry

Dr. Reiner Fuellmich, Esq.
The Corona Pandemic and the International Legal Approach
Internationally known trial attorney, promoting civil liberties, investigating pandemic

James Corbett
9/11 20 Years Later. Lessons Learned?
Independent journalist, writer and producer of The Corbett Report

Christopher Gioia
9/11 Then and Now
Former Fire Commissioner in Nassau County, NY

Whitney Webb
Parallels of 2001 Anthrax and COVID 19
Investigative writer, researcher and journalist

TO CONTRIBUTE
go to LCfor911.org
If you prefer to mail a check, please send to: Lawyers’ Committee for 911 Inquiry • P.O. Box 14125 • Arlington, TX 76094
Please include your email
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I recently asked my former Greenwich Village tenant-friend and Trump-authority, Michael Wolff, why there are so many Trump supporters and zealots. Amazingly, even after the year in the White House he spent writing the ground-breaking Fire and Fury (2018), followed by Siege (2019) and most recently, Landslide (2021), the third in a Trump exposé trilogy, Wolff did not have an answer to my question.

"I have no answer! And no explanation how so many people could remain so enthralled by a crazy man—and such a hopelessly distracted and incompetent crazy man...," he replied.

There are reasons, though. For one, there’s the sticky issue of political correctness. "I have no answer! And no explanation how so many people could remain so enthralled by a crazy man—and such a hopelessly distracted and incompetent crazy man...," he replied.

People are sick of it. The zeal to correct the cruel prejudices and unjust persecution of minorities that we see live and historically on TV, with remedial racial quotas

for reverse discrimination against Asians and Whites, Biden subsequently dropped the case. Nevertheless, there are those who find that Trump's politically incorrect stance speaks to them, even if they do not admire the man.

Yes, there is real discrimination and real prejudice, but there are also real racial differences. Has the equalizing pendulum swung too far? According to Nicholas Wade, author of A Troublesome Inheritance, Genes, Race and Human History (2014) at every Olympic game since 1980, every finalist in the men's 100-meter race had West African ancestry. No one is correcting this total racial imbalance by making quotas for Caucasians and Asians, nor should they be.

To make racial adjustments even more damaging and absurd, this year in the 2021 Olympics in Japan, authorities decided that two African female athletes with too much testosterone, apparently a racially correlated hormonal difference that occurred naturally, had an unfair advantage. That "advantage" bizarrely had to be corrected by such means as birth control shots, hormone pills or surgery or they were not eligible to run. They did not run.

According to Wade, the idea that human populations are genetically different from one another has been actively ignored by academics and policy makers for fear that such inquiry might promote racism." (p. 248)

"It is not necessarily racist to consider racial categories as a possible explanatory factor." (p. 221)

Jews make up .2% of the world’s population, but despite social discrimination and the Holocaust, “as of 2007 they received an amazing 32% of the Nobel Prizes awarded in the 21st century.” By testing the genome at 550,000 sites, researchers were able to distinguish with complete accuracy between Ashkenazim and non-Jewish Europeans. Apparently, individuals with an Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry carry a discernible signature of their Jewish heritage.

We, as a human race, are still evolving. We should learn what is true, in order to do what is right.


Photo by Roberta Russell.
DOT Fails Enforcement of Open Restaurants

By Brian J. Pape, AIA, LEED-AP

In a damning report issued by Council Speaker Cory Johnson’s office in August, the long-standing safety rules for street rights-of-way are routinely violated with no apparent enforcement.

At a time when the mayor’s office and its Department of City Planning (DCP) are pushing to adopt new zoning laws that shift the responsibility of safety and quality of life issues for the Open Restaurants program to the Department of Transportation (DOT), the prospect of allowing bars and restaurants to have permanent outdoor as well as indoor service has created a “wild west” atmosphere of shanty towns on our streets.

The city is required to conduct studies to determine whether a land use action will create adverse affects on the community, known as City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR). The CEQR study of the proposed rezoning provided by the city to date simply makes broadbrush statements of “no adverse affect” concerning safety, sanitation, character of the neighborhood, or quality of life issues. No backup surveys or in-depth studies are provided in the CEQR.

In contrast to the careless attitude of city departments, Speaker Johnson initiated a “Temporary Open Restaurants Program Survey Analysis” that sent interns into the field, walking every street in Johnson’s district 3 below 15th Street, to document actual conditions of the outdoor dining facilities.

Even for residents already exposed to the chaos of conditions, the report revealed shocking data.

93% of all outdoor seating facilities in the surveyed area, out of a total of 352, failed to meet at least one of the applicable street regulations. This area, from Canal Street up to 14th Street, and generally west of Fifth Avenue, has statistically the highest concentration of bar and restaurant licenses of any neighborhood in the entire five borough city. The survey was conducted in June and July during open business hours of 10am to 7pm, and not on rainy days or night times. No distinction was made between bars, coffee shops, delis and restaurants, so it refers generally to “restaurants” inclusively. Despite these limitations, this survey stands out in a void of data.

To get a glimpse of the severity of the safety violations, the report itemizes DOT Guidelines that have been established for generations, based on necessary precautions to protect the life and welfare of the population, no matter what neighborhood.

“(Do) not place seating or barriers within 15’ of a fire hydrant.” Violating this rule means fire fighters waste valuable time locating and clearing the hydrant to hook up their equipment; lives and property are endangered. Of 70 restaurants surveyed with hydrants in front, 37 of them, or 53%, block them with seating or structures.

“Must leave 8’ clear path for pedestrians.” A clear walkway is necessary for passage of wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, canes, and walking with children; obstructed paths can cause injury. Of 298 surveyed restaurants with sidewalk seating, all but 18% of them failed to comply.

“All items for outdoor dining must be pressed against the wall of the business or as close as possible.” The 2’ along the curb is called an “amenity zone”, reserved for hydrants, kiosks, sign and light poles, bus stops or tree pits. 133 restaurants had seating in the amenity zone.

“Install a platform...to flush height with the curb” or “Provide a ramp for ADA compliance.” If structure floors are not flush with the curb or don’t provide ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramps, persons with disabilities face dangerous or incapacitating conditions. Of the 220 roadbed facilities, 91 are in violation of this rule (41% of total).

“Roadbed barriers may be placed no more than 8’ from the curb.” The intention is to maintain adequate traffic lanes, and especially the 15’ emergency lane. That 15’ emergency lane is a standard requirement even for temporary street closures for pop-up displays, street fairs, or commercial events. Of the 220 roadbed facilities, 71 extended more than 8’ from curb (32%). Of those 71 beyond 8’, 19 also lack the 15’ emergency lane in the road. Previous reports attest to the danger when fire trucks or first responders cannot maneuver those tight spaces.

“(Do) not place seating or barriers within 8’ of a crosswalk.” This common sense rule allows sightlines for pedestrians and vehicles, to detect danger and avoid injuries. Of the 220 roadbed facilities, 118 extended closer than 8’ from a crosswalk, blocking visibility.

Seating “may be set up in a floating parking lane in front of an approved business.” A buffer between the bike lane and the seating must be provided. Note that many seating areas extend way past the “front of the business” defined by their property lines. There were ten restaurants with seating across bike lanes; very dangerous.

Packets Designations: Commercial Loading Only, No Parking, Alternative Side, No Standing, Bus Stop; there are many restrictions for parking. Of the 220 roadbed facilities surveyed, 37 violated the posted signs (17%).

Recommendations included in the study spoke to obvious corrections, starting with immediate enforcement of the existing regulations, and eliminating the self-certify method of approvals for outdoor seating. Re-establishing meaningful public review of applications, such as the previous process before the community boards, is an essential part of enforcing the regulations. The DOT has proven to be incapable of enforcement, so why give them more responsibility?

Next steps were confirmed by many written comments from the public at a recent CB2 meeting, including that the survey should include night-time quality of life report in collaboration with DEP, NYPD, SLA, and FDNY, to address the terrible noise, infestation, pollution, and historic district violations that are existing in our neighborhood, then “sunset” the shed structures, and return to community oversight over neighborhood matters.

Credit: Brian Pape
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 primarily writing it for myself, extending it to my friends, and now to the many people who have shown themselves fascinated with this period in the past.

The Imperial Seal: Joan’s story

A week after the Japanese occupation, a group of armed militia arrived at our house on 36 Boissezon and conducted a thorough search of the premises. What they found of interest was a stack of copper pipes stored in the flood cellar. These were to be replacements for some old piping. Six small, pungent bags hanging from the rafters also intrigued them. One fellow stabbed a bag with his bayonet, only to puncture and knock down one of Aunt Grace’s brandy soaked Christmas puddings, which needed to age until Christmas. They poked around some more, but turned up nothing but a couple of old bikes. Luckily, Wang, our chauffeur, had not yet dismantled our Rover sedan, or the parts would have probably been confiscated.

With some ceremony, the Imperial Seal was stuck onto door to the cellar, over the jambs. We were told not to remove it under any circumstances, or we would suffer serious consequences. All the servants were called to witness and then the group marched off.

The seal itself looked like a sheet peeled off of a book of cheap notes. The pattern was impressive, but the quality of the paper was flimsy. Countless thousands of these seals were posted all over the city, over doors, cabinets, closets, drawers, to prevent their owners from accessing their possessions. They were only removed when the occupiers decided to confiscate the contents. Our large second home on 131 rue Boissezon had been requisitioned and occupied by the Japanese military, so none of us at 36 were upset about a few copper pipes stored at 36. Life went on.

Some time later, as I was killing time in the garden, throwing a stick for my dog or trying to catch one of our chickens, I noticed a peeling scrap of paper on the cellar door. It had been rained on and was undecipherable, at least to me. So I scraped it off and wiped the door jamb clean. Before I knew it, I was surrounded by yelling servants, followed by my mother. “How could you be so stupid!” she shrieked, not for the first or last time.

Suddenly the judge leaned over his podium. “How so young so high?” He actually smiled and spoke in English. I don’t know how I replied. He and the interpreter chatted for a few minutes, and then I was told to go home. It was over.

Our rickshaw was waiting for us outside. My father told him to take us directly to Kiessling and Bader, the celebrated German patisserie. I was still clutching his hand tightly as we sat at a table. “How about a chocolate éclair?” he asked. I nodded. “A cream puff?” “Yes, please.” They certainly didn’t stint on whipped cream. It was all over my face when I finished the second cake, and then threw up the whole lot over my ruched bodice right there in the restaurant.

Rudge into my chest through the ruffled batiste. “Such a broad chest for a child her age!” she sniffed and, “Hold your stomach in!” She was actually trying to change my shape as she fitted my dress, without success. I was going on seven years old.

We arrived at the courthouse. It was a famous building, Marble Hall, a pretentious mansion on Bubbling Well Road, requisitioned from the Kadoorie family. It lived up to its name, as the floors, walls and various columns were all varieties of marble. The Kadoorie furnishings had been removed, and the place was fitted as a military courtroom and echoed with the sound of boots.

Dad held my hand tightly. “Don’t be nervous. Dad’s not going to let anything bad happen to you.” I must have looked miserable, so he added “Cheer up! I have a surprise for your afterwards.” My mother rolled her eyes and stayed home.

There were other felons waiting their turn, some with lawyers, who my father greeted with a handshake. I did not notice any other children, or anyone with a pretty, flowered dress like mine. One of the lawyers waved at me with a big smile. Dad repeated “Don’t be nervous. Just answer the questions. It’s going to be O.K.”

A stern Japanese military man escorted me to the judge. After he rummaged through some papers, the judge signaled to his interpreter, who boomed “Speak loud!”

I quavered “The seal was nearly all washed away from the rain. It didn’t look like anything important.” And “No I did not take anything out of the cellar.”

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Carbon Footprint One Step at a Time

By Karilyn Prisco

As a fashion stylist I am constantly being introduced to new brands, trends and products. My love for fashion and my consumer responsibilities have always held a tense relationship. The devastating statistics speak for themselves. A 2021 report from the World Economic Forum identified fashion, and its supply chain, as the planet’s third largest polluter (after food and construction), releasing 5% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions (climatecouncil.org). The fashion industry produces 10% of all humanity’s carbon emissions and is the second-largest consumer of the world’s water supply (unece.org). So what does that mean? Well let’s take a pair of jeans for example, it is estimated that a single pair of jeans requires 1 kilogram of cotton. As cotton tends to be grown in dry environments, producing this 1 kilo requires about 7,500–10,000 liters of water. That’s about 10 years’ worth of drinking water for one person (https://unfccc.int).

In a world where we produce more than we can consume, I am always on the quest for responsibly made products that are fashionable, functional and sustainable. Most recently I discovered a NYC-based brand that really hit the mark in each of these categories, Ramati. I was introduced to Ramati when I was given a pair of their trademark, hand-woven raffia mocassins. The luxe craftsmanship, design and comfort of the shoe stood out to me at first. However, as I learned more about the brand and the people behind it I quickly became curious and inspired.

Ramati is Sanskrit for God of Love, also meaning enjoyment, paradise, pleasure and time. All of the components of Ramati’s shoes are eco-friendly and plant based. The colors are vegetable-based dyes and leather alternatives are used to have a 100% cruelty-free product. They have a non-leather sole made out of TPU that is referred to as the bridge between rubber and plastics. It is extremely flexible, durable, water resistant and smooth to the touch. Most impressively TPU is recyclable and biodegradable. The body of the shoe is made from raffia. Raffia is a palm tree native to tropical regions of Africa. Raffia fiber is extracted by hand and produced from the membrane on the underside of each individual palm leaf. The membrane is taken off to create a long thin fiber, which can be dyed and woven as a textile into products ranging from hats to shoes to decorative mats.

Ramati is co-founded by Matteo Pandani and Fernanda Uribe. Matteo, originally from Perugia, Italy, grew up in a multicultural, vibrant environment. If his face seems familiar to you, you are probably right. Last month he opened and manages the fabulous “Sogno Toscano Market & Wine Bar” on 17 Perry Street. Be sure to stop by and say “Ciao!”

In addition to his current main occupation, he graduated in 2019 from the Master in Business Impact and Sustainability at the Glasgow Caledonian College in New York to benefit the Ramati brand and its concept. His wife Fernanda was born in Tijuana, Baja California a city that is a continuous inspiration for her work. She is a visual artist, sculptor, curator and educator that graduated from the New Academy of Fine Arts (NABA) School in Milan, Italy. Through multimedia techniques she creates organic structures that are inspired by the fragility of our nature.

After living and visiting many prominent and multicultural cities such as Milan, London, Sao Paulo and Cannes, they both settled in New York City. Matteo and Fernanda have a vision for society that will also be able to pay forward resources at a high level for these immigrants, who can then become integral members of our community.

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LGBTQ+ MONTHLY Q&A
BY RESEARCH FOUNDATION TO CURE AIDS PRESIDENT KAMBIZ SHEKDAR, PH.D.
Follow us on Instagram @OpinionatedQ, @westviewnews & @RFTcureaids

OpinionatedQ: “How should NYC welcome LGBTQ+ refugees from Afghanistan?”

Gay Nathanael Holley
Creative
he/him
I’m going to be very serious in this response because human life is at stake. America should do whatever it takes to secure the lives of anyone who is threatened by this totalitarian theocratic regime. No stuttering, no exceptions, no hesitations. Land of the free and home of the brave? What a lie.

Queer / Questioning Query the Queer Fairy
Man on the Town
this/that/other thing
NYC should welcome LGBTQ+ refugees with a largely televised welcoming, that has outrageous flash and pizzazz, and with LGBTQ+ politicians and celebrities BUT most importantly this welcoming event must include real resources to get them situated. Real resources don’t include just a back pack with food and blankets. They should be welcomed with substantial structures in place to offer them two critical needs: 1. full time employment and 2. two years of free living accommodations in the form of apartments and homes. There is enough money to pay a Major League Baseball player $300 million dollars for four years of playtime. So there is no excuse to not offer resources at a high level for these immigrants, who can then become integral members of our society that will also be able to pay forward these gifts.

www.westviewnews.org

Ramati, the Local Shoe Brand that is Changing Fashion’s Carbon Footprint One Step at a Time

By Karilyn Prisco

As a fashion stylist I am constantly being introduced to new brands, trends and products. My love for fashion and my consumer responsibilities have always held a tense relationship. The devastating statistics speak for themselves. A 2021 report from the World Economic Forum identified fashion, and its supply chain, as the planet’s third largest polluter (after food and construction), releasing 5% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions (climatecouncil.org). The fashion industry produces 10% of all humanity’s carbon emissions and is the second-largest consumer of the world’s water supply (unece.org). So what does that mean? Well let’s take a pair of jeans for example, it is estimated that a single pair of jeans requires 1 kilogram of cotton. As cotton tends to be grown in dry environments, producing this 1 kilo requires about 7,500–10,000 liters of water. That’s about 10 years’ worth of drinking water for one person (https://unfccc.int).

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Style on the Street: *Fashion Fun +1*

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.

Local Finds. Local Love.

Support some of our favorite West Village shops and designers.

Curated by Karilyn Prisco

**FIREPLACE 409**
409 Bleecker St
Keith Kelly “Hand Pants”
Unisex, double knee work pant
fireplace409.com
IG @fireplace409

**DIANA BROUSSARD**
19 Christopher St
“Nathan”
Deep green marble resin chain necklace, adjustable clasp
diana-broussard.squarespace.com
IG @dianabroussard

**MÛRE+GRAND**
277 Bleecker St
“New York Colorful Canvas Tote”
Machine washable, leather handle
mureandgrand.com
IG @mureandgrand

**RAMATI**
“Raffia Moccasin”
Hand knotted raffia, vegan, Italian-lined linen, beech wood heel
ramatigoods.com
IG @ramatigoods
The Digital Age or the End of the World as We Knew It

By Roger Paradiso

Some say the digital age had its beginning with the transistor, which belonged to the analog age. Remember transistor radios? I remember walking around the neighborhood listening to WABC disc jockeys who played the top forty hits. Whether it was the Beach Boys or the Four Seasons, it was a special time. Now I walk with my phone and Apple Music app, and I am in the digital world playing disc jockey to unlimited songs on my phone. The difference is, I have to pay around ten dollars a month for that. During my youth the AM/FM stations were advertiser supported.

Many artists prefer listening to analog sound captured on some kind of tape, which they consider to be warmer, and which also captures the feel of a live performance with varying highs and lows, plus room ambience which can add pleasing as well as unwanted sounds.

Digital performance is preferred by some because of the crisp and clean sound, with low levels of noise and distortion. I asked Tim McCusker, who is a musician and friend, to describe how digital has affected the industry. “Before digital, a guitar player might have a tuning fork or pitch pipe. So, what’s missing now is the ear; whether you have a good ear or not isn’t important. Now a clip-on will tell you if the string is in tune… Sonar paved the way for auto-tune which helps marginal singers have hit records” (by keeping them in tune).

Others point to the computer chip, like the Motorola 6800 microprocessor chip that was used to invent the Apple computer. But more influential was the Intel 8080, which IBM used to create millions of personal computers in the 1980s. George Capsis was in the marketing department of IBM and remembers the days prior to the first PCs.

“The very first day I went to work for IBM I was told that I would tend a 705 computer that filled the showroom at IBM headquarters at 590 Madison Avenue near the corner of 57th Street. This monster machine was driven by programs written on stacks of punch cards, each offering only 81 characters and guided by circuit boards composed of vacuum tubes.

“At that time there was a popular fear in the press that computers would take over and run the world, and to address this concern I traveled up to Columbia University to the Watson Laboratory and sought out the director and asked, ‘Will we ever have a personnel computer?’ He paused and looked into the distance and offered ‘No,’ and then, ‘Oh, well, we may have computer-like devices in our thermostats.’

It is to be noted that IBM did not prevent other companies from using the Intel 8080 chip or the later Intel upgrades. Apple kept their chip to themselves.

In my opinion, these pivotal moments in time moved us toward the digital age, the greatest disruptor since the printing press. Slowly, but surely, we were moving from analog to digital, from the 1950s to today, where we are virtually all-digital. The revolution was won by digital, and I don’t like some of it. I wonder how many others feel the same way.

The digital revolution began to affect mass society in the early 1990s when almost 10 percent of us had a PC and a cell phone. It really took off near the turn of the 21st century. In the 2000s, when the Internet (and its accompanying machines) became more and more user-friendly, we woke up one day in the digital age—which began running our lives, good and bad. Seventy-five percent of the households and businesses in the U.S. had computers and cell phones. Little did we know it was the beginning of the end of the world as we knew it.

Here’s the Bad Stuff sprinkled with some sugar…

INSTANT COMMUNICATION Where did privacy go? You can phone me, text me, email me, video me, photograph me, or track me (think FBI and police) at any moment. Have we forgotten what privacy means? Did we forget what in-person socializing means? You can speak to someone without seeing an ad jump into your head. You can take a long walk in the woods or on the shore without something digital producing sounds that constantly interrupt your solitude.

Despite thoughts of Pavlovian dogs hearing a bell ringing and reacting with a conditioned response, having a cell phone when your car breaks down is nice.

HACKERS PARADISE I wrote about pirates in the last issue. Hackers are a little different; they are people who look to steal information and to disrupt as well as to steal money. They may be terrorists also. Pirates generally want to steal content, usually creative, and sell it. I’m not suggesting that you should give up your internet or cell phone and live in a cage. Just know that at any moment you can be hacked if you are in a digital mode.

The good news: if you have Internet security and keep a low profile you may never get seriously hacked. And stick to this one tip: if you don’t recognize the sender or feel at all that something is fishy, do not click or call. Send it to junk mail. If it is an important message, they will know how to contact you by letter or email, not with a call out of the blue. When in doubt, do not respond to a phone call or email.

EDUCATION: ONLINE CLASSES AND OTHER THINGS

The pandemic has taught us that online classes can work. Expect more of them and fewer live teachers. There are many wonderful things that can be shared in the digital age. You can save your family pictures and videos. But can you educate yourself and your children without being in a classroom with a teacher? And on the college front, will we pay those high tuitions for online experiences? Will we miss the college atmosphere and socializing? It would be a shame to miss out on playing with your friends in school and the memories that would last.

ARE WE DUMB OR DUMBER?

You can look up anything on the internet. It’s an instant library. But can you remember your wife’s cell phone number? Can you remember how to get somewhere without a navigation system? And can we remember what we learned without having learned it? Have we lost a certain kind of intelligence? A case can be made that we aren’t quite as street-smart as our parents.

CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND THE INTERNET Is it really a social network or is it just about marketing information? Have we given up too much? Do we go to movies and concerts to experience an event with an audience and a friend? Or are we happy to sit home and watch our computers or televisions alone most of the time? If you are interested it’s the best thing since the DVD player, but if you are extroverted you may miss the good old days.

ONLINE BANKING When I first started making some decent money my new Citibank location, their flagship, opened on 5th Street and Broadway. I joined. The service was impeccable, and despite long lines on Fridays, there were many tellers lined up in a row to speed you out of there with your check safely deposited. And you got a receipt. Today you get a smaller bank with maybe one or two officers, one or two tellers, and a row of four to ten ATM machines. You can bank online wherever you are in the world. You can take pictures of your paychecks and send them via text or email to the bank and they are cashed. This is the digital world.

But I miss talking to my account officer. I don’t fully trust computers. Remember Hal in Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey? I wonder how many times banks have been hacked and how much money they have lost. (I notice that banking fees keep going up.)

CONCLUSION The digital age will pass too. Artificial intelligence and robots will make our lives simpler until they “think” they can replace us. See Hal again in Kubrick’s masterpiece, 2001: A Space Odyssey.

However, every action causes a reaction. People will rebel against artificial intelligence. Smaller and independent movie theaters will show old masterpieces as well as revolutionary new films. Cults of film, theater, dance, music, and other arts appreciators will pop up on college campuses and in the cities. The exhilaration of something new and exciting will kick the young and old in the pants. They will desire something new. As they say, everything old is new again.

Ecclesiastes 1:9 “What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”
The Village Trip Festival 2021
By Roger Paradiso

The Village Trip Festival comes back for its third year on Saturday, September 18th, through Sunday, September 26th, with a variety of events covering most of the arts. It is a celebration of what the Village was, is today, and could be in the future. It is definitely worth a visit online at greenwichvillage.nyc/events/village-trip-2021-festival.

My favorite Village artist, whom I have written about, and is in my documentaries, is the great David Amram who is not slowing down at the age of 90. David was appointed artist in residence of the first Village Trip by the festival’s Executive Producer Liz Thomson. This year he was given a raise, and is now artist emeritus. He once told me that his “heart forever belongs to the Village even though I may sleep somewhere else.” I had the pleasure to speak to David about his many roles in this year’s festival. He said that on September 18th “We’re going to celebrate the collaboration of artists through music in Greenwich Village. I wrote music for the world premiere of Arthur Miller’s After the Fall in 1964. We were supposed to do it at the new Lincoln Center Theater, but it wasn’t ready yet. So we opened at the ANTA Washington Square Theater on West 4th Street. For this year’s festival, we’ll be outdoors on opening night, playing on West 8th Street. You know, Ernest Hemingway once said, ‘Paris is a moveable feast.’ If you walk down 8th Street today, you feel something special because the Village is also a moveable feast.”

Joining David will be vocalist Renee Manning, Jerome Harris on guitar, and Earl McIntyre on trombone. The Electric Guitar Quartet will also perform, playing music from the 1960s.

At Judson Memorial Church, on September 21st, the festival will present the world premiere of Eve Beglarian’s “Earth Requiem,” and the world premiere of Amram’s “Prelude, Prayer and Dance for Unaccompanied Viola” with soloist Consuelo Sherba. Other events and artists I would recommend seeing are the following:

Walk on the Wild Side: The Folk Scene, Before and After Bob Dylan: on September 18th, from 2:00-3:30 p.m., starting out at the Abingdon Square Veterinary Clinic at 130 West 10th Street, music historian Jesse Finkel will lead us back “down the foggy ruins of time” on a tour of places associated with the folk revival.

The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel’s Talk: on September 19th, from 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the North Square Lounge at the Washington Square Hotel, 103 Waverly Place, hear Bill Groom, production designer of The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, talk about using Greenwich Village as one of the key locations for the hit television series.

“It’s Difficult to Write This Without Sounding Alarmist…” Larry Kramer and the Start of AIDS Activism: this free event will take place on September 22nd from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the NYC AIDS Memorial Park, 76 Greenwich Avenue. The quote comes from the beginning of Larry Kramer’s first article on AIDS, “A Personal Appeal,” published in August 1981 in the New York Native, a gay newspaper.

Bringing It All Back Home to Washington Square—Free Concert in the Park: this performance, featuring friends and special guests, will take place on September 23rd from 6:00-7:00 p.m. at Garibaldi Plaza, Washington Square Park. Bring your dancing shoes for the ultimate high-energy, feel-good afternoon.

Sing Out! The Village Trip Hootenanny: on September 26th, from 7:30-11:00 p.m., a glorious finale to The Village Trip—a celebration of the New York folk revival and its rich and enduring heritage.

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TUESDAYS 7pm MULTI GENRE PERFORMANCE
9/28 Body Medium: Annika Rhea & pianist Hannah Reimann
10/12 Pianist Matthew Culbertson, Brahms, Sierra, Gershwin
11/9 Grammy-winning Latin Pianist, Arturo O’Farrill, solo
12/7 Messiaen’s Quartet for the End of Time
$20 CASH AT DOOR
OR BUY ONLINE VIA INSTAGRAM
photos: Sasha Bianca & Steven Burton
Autumn in New York

By Robert Heide with John Gilman

One of the favorite theater musicals of all time for many people including myself is The Fantasticks, which opened in the Village May 3, 1960. It attained a record of the world’s longest running musical after 42 years and 17,162 performances. The book and lyrics by Tom Jones are first-rate all the way and the music by Harvey Schmidt is top notch. The opening song Try to Remember sung by Jerry Orbach was captivating and it was reprised at show’s end. I had met Jerry at Northwestern University in the 1950s and we became colleagues in the theater department; and so it was amazing for me to see and hear him singing that great autumnal song and the words really touched the audience:

Try to remember
The kind of September
When grass was green
And grain was yellow
When life was so tender
Deep in December
It’s nice to remember
The fire of September
That made us mellow
—in the Village at the Sullivan Street Theatre which was built by Lee Paton who later became Lee Paton Nagrin after her marriage to the dancer Daniel Nagrin. Lee inaugurated the theater with the introduction of Eugene Ionesco to American audiences with The Bald Soprano and Jack, or the Submission with Salome Jens. After renting the Sullivan Street Playhouse to the Fantasticks she went on to build a new theater at the corner of 3rd Street and Thompson called New Playwrights where she produced my first two plays Hector and West of the Moon.

Back in 1960 and onward I attended The Fantasticks many times because a good friend of mine was the stage manager Ron Link. I got to hang out in the Village with the stars Rita Gardner who played ‘The girl’, Jerry, and other members of the cast. I first met ‘Ronnie’ as we called him, at a popular gay cellar dive named Lenny’s Hideaway on 10th Street between West 4th and 7th Avenue (now Smalls Jazz Club). Regular patrons there included Edward Albee, Ian Orlando MacBeth (in Renaissance garb), H. M. Koutoukas, and composers Ned Rorem and Jerry Hello Dolly Herman. Adding to the mix Tallulah Bankhead or socialite Hope Hampton would often show up. Ronald Bruce Link was so named by his mother Rita who idolized the film stars Bruce Cabot and Ronald Colman. During his stage managing days Ronnie did the same for my partner John decided to start playing and singing along with the autumn songs which often seem to be sadly remembering the passing of Summer, i.e. Try to Remember, but that also burst out with references to the color foliage when the leaves turn brown, red, yellow, and orange. It’s also a time of, God help us, back to work, back to school, getting our sweaters out, and one can’t ignore COVID, COVID, COVID. September has, in addition, two important holidays. They are Labor Day, which is the 6th, and what they call Patriot Day, September 11 this year marking the solemn 20th anniversary of the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Still, in the Village, we must have fun, fun, fun.

With music by Kurt Weill and book and lyrics by playwright Maxwell Anderson, Knickerbocker Holiday opened on Broadway in 1938 with the great Walter Huston introducing September Song, which, recorded by Decca, went to the top of the charts; Huston’s unique version of the song hit the charts again in 1950 in the film September Affair starring Joan Fontaine and Joseph Cotton. Nelson Eddy did his own singing in a World War II film of Knickerbocker Holiday in 1944, and over the years many others also picked up on the sad strains of September Song, including Lotte Lenya, Jimmy Durante, Sarah Vaughan, Willie Nelson and a rock n roll version by Lou Reed.

It spells the thrill of first nighting Glittering crowds and shimmering clouds In canyons of steel They’re making me feel I’m home

Autumn in New York brings a promise of new love
Autumn in New York is often mingled with pain But it’s good to live it again

AUTUMN NOCTURNE—
This is also the title of a 1954 LP recording of all autumnal songs beautifully sung by the Ray Charles singers When autumn sings her lullaby And green leaves turn to gold Then I remember last September You and I said goodbye Whispering that we would be returning When autumn comes again Now autumn roams the hills once more But you forget your vows
Now here am I alone with only memories

AUTUMN LEAVES—
The falling leaves drift by my window The falling leaves of red and gold I see your lips the summer kisses The sunburned hands I used to hold But I miss you most of all When autumn leaves start to fall

Autumn Leaves was sung by Nat King Cole over the opening and closing credits of a 1956 film noir also entitled Autumn Leaves starring Joan Crawford about a May to December romance and the mental illness of Joan’s co-star Cliff Robertson.

SHINE ON HARVEST MOON—
was composed in 1908 by Nora Bayes (whose story is told in the 1944 film starring Ann Sheridan and Dennis Morgan) and over the years it was recorded by many including Ruth Etting and Kate Smith The night was mighty dark So you could hardly see For the moon refused to shine. So shine on, shine on harvest moon Up in the sky I ain’t had no lovin’ Since January, February, June or July

INDIAN SUMMER—
And I remember the Indian summer When the leaves hid the tree’s goodbye How you held me in the moonlight And if I’d known I’d lose you The moment I found you I’d love you all over again

Well, that’s all for now folks but stay tuned for the upcoming month of October and our recollections of a week-long blackout caused by Hurricane Sandy which also cancelled the Halloween Parade and how we hid out one night in St. John’s Church on Christopher Street, and then driving around in the dark with our friend Gordon Ramsay and his family.

Robert Heide and John Gilman are the authors of many books on American popular culture. Robert’s most recent publication is Robert Heide 25 Plays, available on Amazon.
She Paints while Dancing
Body Medium: Annika Rhea’s energetic collaboration of dance, live music, paint & audience

By Hannah Reimann

“The audience is part of the energy,” Annika told me. On September 28th at 7pm for our second Revelation Tuesday event at St. John’s in the Village’s gallery, we will have the pleasure of witnessing Body Medium, Annika Rhea’s one-woman synthesis of live dance and painting with her body on a floor canvas which, when dry, is exhibited, a resulting keepsake. I’ll collaborate with her, playing solo piano music of a composer she loves, the innovative, Argentine Astor Piazzolla. We spoke about Piazzolla and decided to work together.

I first met Rhea at a show near her work-space at The Box Factory in Ridgewood, Queens. A multi-use facility for artists on the border of Bushwick, Brooklyn, and Ridgewood, Queens, the Box Factory is a prime example of how the outer boroughs, over decades, have served artists in the 21st century, much like Soho and Noho did in mid-20th century Manhattan. Clad in a white or black ankle-length unitard with long sleeves, she dips her fingers into bowls of paint, engages in Jasper Johns-like flinging of the paint, then, in her unique style, strokes the canvas with her feet, hands, elbows and any other body part that her improvisation leads her to. Her unitard also becomes a canvas. At her live performance to an enchanted audience at the Box Factory in June 2021, she wore white, quickly flecked in azure, royal blue and yellow. Born in Westchester County amongst Pound Ridge’s forest and wetlands, Rhea started dancing at two years old, and started performing at age four. A lifelong visual artist who draws and paints, she has always been a movement artist who has aspired to mix media.

While a freshman in college, she excelled in the dance program that was her main focus. Her dancing suddenly stopped due a hip contusion injury and two other serious injuries. She refocused on her painting and also began to write. It was a dark period wherein she missed dancing tremendously. She would imagine “dancers pushing the paint along” as she painted, a spatial choreography of her inner eye. She envisioned a group of dancers, each a different color, creating a type of abstract expressionism also known as action painting. She also spent four years working in film, expanding her repertoire and skills.

One day she wanted to become one of the dancers herself, and to match her own movement with the paint. Thus began the conception of Body Medium, a title formally given to this work in 2016 when she performed her premiere performance for Bushwick Open Studios. Her love and work for film, paint and dance all inspired this new way of creating.

Performance art is fleeting. The longing to create a concrete piece that can be exhibited and enjoyed after engaging in a dance is satisfied by these unique performances. We intend to videotape September 28th’s show, as well—another keepsake of the work, one that can be shared again and again.
"I should have sent them a couple of bucks..."

will be the words you will guiltily offer under your breath when somebody tells you...Yah hear, WestView went under...

Tim, who has been delivering WestView free to your front door for 15 years got very upset when somebody wrote a very angry, very nasty letter attacking our architectural editor Brian Pape for reporting on the Community Board opposition to the uncontrolled clutter of restaurant sheds that now have even attracted rats but then, when Tim rolled in a pile of December papers to the 4th floor of Barrow Street Greenwich House he got standing applause for helping to save their dining room. It was Benjamin Franklin’s older brother that owned that early Philadelphia newspaper and Franklin knew his brother would never print his letters so he secretly assumed the role of a widow and carved out a role for himself as an articulate commentator on the local scene.

WestView loves to get those same local letters. Those same letters you send to the politicians which get, at best, a form letter in response when printed by WestView are read by hundreds perhaps thousands of local West Villagers who share the same problems. The politicians know this so they read WestView complaints with just a little more care.

In case you have not noticed it we don’t have reporters.

We just have people living and working in the Village who have something to say and feel strongly enough about it to sit down and struggle out some words.

Every time I get a complement for something we wrote in WestView I feel great but I always think how much better we can still be.

I am told we need to build our online readership and for years I have wanted to have you open your computer to find a hot news item from WestView or even an interview in which we ask the hard questions “what are the police doing to stop graffiti and then removing it and then setting up cameras to catch the graffiti artists at night and then hitting them with a fine to pay for the graffiti removal?

A newspaper can be a weapon for good and I hope I live long enough to bring together people who will take WestView a little further but of course that takes money.

I was cheered when our first Go Fund Me netted $22,000 so I know it is possible to keep West View alive and even make it do some exciting new things. When I offer a very worn phrase “the future of WestView is in your hands,” for most readers it is time to skip to another article. So this is written to you, one of the very few who really want to see the next issue in their mailbox or at their front door and for those even fewer who have a burning need to write for the paper.

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