

# QUEST Q NEWS

A Quest Publication

May 2019

## A Note From the President



I am very happy to report that the state of Quest is excellent! We are just completing a great semester, where there was

a very diverse offering of classes. Our Friday Culture Events, Adventures in Dining, and our Travel Committee trips have made it easier for members to get to know each other, and to enjoy activities together away from 25 Broadway.

From the description of the new courses made at the General Meeting, next semester's classes will give all members a difficult time in selecting which courses to attend. A great problem to have. Although there was some controversy regarding the raising of our membership cap, the change from 260 members to 270 was very modest. As I indicated at the General Meeting, I will be asking the Council to allocate funds for a monthly social following our afternoon classes, to provide further opportunities for our older and newer members to interact.

I am greatly encouraged by the quality and number of Quest members who have agreed to run for at-large positions on the Quest Council. I would happily welcome any of the candidates, and I am sorry that they cannot all be elected.

If we continue working cooperatively, Quest will have a bright future. I will do everything in my power to make that occur.

— Bob Gottfried

## Distinguished Guest Lecturers Set For Fall, 2019

Arlynn Greenbaum, Bob Reiss, Arlene Hajinlian and Estelle Selzer are happy to bring you the following Guest Lecturers for Fall. Mark your calendars!

<b>Sept 11</b>	Rosemary Novellino-Mearns, <i>Saving Radio City Music Hall</i> .
<b>Sept 25</b>	Dawn Raffel, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Courney</i> .
<b>Oct 23</b>	Colum McCann, <i>Let The Great World Spin</i> , inaugural Kenneth Leedom-Peter Cott Memorial Lecturer.
<b>Nov 20</b>	John Reddick, <i>Ragtime to Jazz: Harlem's Black and Jewish Music Culture</i>
<b>Dec 4</b>	Jamie Bernstein, <i>Famous Father Girl</i> (daughter of Leonard Bernstein).

## Quest Council Election Results

We congratulate the four winners of the recent election for Council:

- Michael Wellner
- Wayne Cotter
- Pam Gemelli
- Frieda Lipp

The following is a complete list of all Council members and officers:

President: **Bob Gottfried**  
 Vice President: **Marian Friedmann**  
 Treasurer: **Steve Allen**  
 Secretary: **Carolyn McGuire**  
 Members at-large are:  
**Betty Farber, Phil Gisser, Jennifer Jolly, Michael Wellner, Wayne Cotter, Pam Gemelli, Frieda Lipp**

We thank the NEC for their hard work in this election.

## Cherry Blossom Festival Draws Questers to DC

*by Steven Rubin*

Over a century ago, some 3,000 flowering cherry trees were planted in Washington, DC, to herald springtime and honor the friendship between the United States and Japan. Although very few of the original trees exist today, the blossoms of the thousands of trees planted since then are still cherished for their unrivaled beauty and fragrance.

Questers participated in Road Scholar's April 12–15, 2019 National Cherry Blossom Festival Program in DC. It was a long weekend punctuated by a great learning experience as well as good camaraderie.

Highlights of this delightful program were amazing tour leaders; a number of interesting and fascinating lectures including a talk by a retired U.S. ambassador; visits to the national botanical gardens and national arboretum; views of National Cherry Blossom festivities, including a major parade; a guided tour around the city; plenty of free time to explore sites and enjoy activities on one's own and splendid meals and receptions.

All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable four days.



## Questers Visit Les Fauves at MOMA

*by Bob Reiss*

Thirty-five Questers enjoyed an informative tour of *Les Fauves* (The Wild Beasts) on March 29th at the Museum of Modern Art. We saw works by Matisse, Derain and Braque, all prominent in the movement. The docents also highlighted Les Fauves influence on later artists including Miro (currently the subject of a major exhibition at MoMA) and even Mark Rothko. The Friday tour followed a presentation by Paul Adler the previous Tuesday in the *Artists and their Work* course. Paul had given a comprehensive survey of Les Fauves that provided an excellent foundation for what we saw at MoMA.

## Tour of the Rose Center

*by Linda Downs*



Quest member and museum docent, Michael Hamburg gave a tour of the Rose Center for Earth and Space at the American Museum of Natural History for Culture Quest that was out of this world! With his expert guidance 30 Quest members were introduced to the history of our universe from its formation 14 billion years ago to the present configuration of our solar system. We learned how space is expanding, how stars are formed and disappear into black holes, how gravity bends space-time, how tiny a proton is in relation to an atom, that the gorgeous colors we see in photos of space are all photo-shopped, and how much we Earthlings have learned about our universe in such a short period of human history. We loved the story of the discovery of the largest meteor in Oregon and the legal battle for ownership before it was finally purchased and donated to the American Museum of Natural History. We all touched its almost pure iron magnetic surface with the understanding that it is absolutely the oldest object on Earth. It is now used as the "Ur" prototype for all meteors pictured in Hollywood space movies. What a thrill.

## Creative Corner

### One Week - Two Haiku

by Betty Farber

Sad loss we all mourn  
Brilliant, compassionate friend  
Who loved poetry.

Joyful occasion  
Daughter weds a kind, wise man  
Who loves poetry.

### How to Be Elected President in 2020

by Wayne Cotter

There's one issue that  
Makes so much sense  
To Republicans, Democrats  
And those on the fence.

The issue's so simple  
Yet never addressed,  
And those who embrace it  
Will surely be blessed.

It plagues all our days  
It haunts us at night.  
We're hapless hostages  
On this perilous flight.

It all seems so dismal,  
Devoid of solution.  
At times it seems harder  
Than ending pollution.

But if a contender  
Would make this one pledge,  
It would surely produce  
An unconquerable edge.

So what is this issue  
That I hold so dear?  
The issue that haunts me  
And consumes me with fear?

It's the incessant ring  
Of the phone that I tote.  
End all robocalls

And you'll have my vote!

### Fast Shoes

by Betty Farber

Walking to the bank, using my cane,  
  
I hurried to get there before  
closing time.

A father and daughter

Walked behind me, then passed me.

Laughing, he said, "I just told  
my daughter,

'That lady with the cane

Walks faster than me!'"

We all laughed, and he questioned,

"Were you ever a runner?"

"No, but I always walked fast,  
" I replied

"So now I still do, even with a cane."

We all laughed again.

And I remembered the day

When I walked with my husband

A long time ago

And a fellow New Yorker

Pointed down at my feet,

And said to my husband,

"She has fast shoes!"

So I guess I still do.

## An Enchanted Land

by Lynnel Garabedian



In January I fell in love with an exquisitely beautiful country: New Zealand. I have been fortunate to have traveled widely – to six continents and thirty-eight countries – but no country has so astonished me with its natural beauty as New Zealand. Two long islands constitute this country, so one is never all that far from gorgeous coastlines, but in addition much of the South Island is threaded with rivers, streams, low mountains, waterfalls, and fiords. Away from the waterways and charming small cities, rolling, lush green hills are home to thousands of sheep and cows peacefully grazing. Truly a bucolic sight. It is a well-known fact that New Zealand has more sheep and more cows than people!

I was also so impressed by the country's sensible, progressive policies. By law, New Zealand can have no nuclear weapons, and ships with such weapons are banned from coming within two hundred miles of its shores. In this tranquil, low-crime country, where most police officers do not carry guns, gun laws have been only slightly stricter than our own, but after the recent tragic massacre at a mosque by an Australian able to buy guns in New Zealand, far more restrictive laws are being passed, led by New Zealand's young female Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern. Fortune Magazine recently named her the second greatest world leader. (Bill and Melinda Gates topped her.) Free health care, LGBT and abortion rights are settled law. Yes, New Zealand has some problems, such as ground and air pollution from its many farm animals, but rational study and discourse have already produced progress in solving these issues. I felt that New Zealand was a magic planet, an enchanted land.



## Who Am I?

We turned back the hands of time and sent high school and college pictures and now expect you to recognize who we are... Can you guess ?

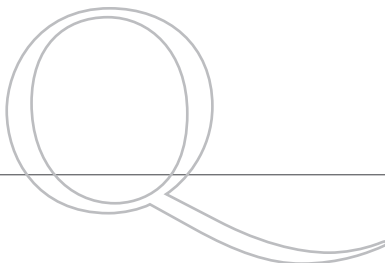
The answers are numbered according to the pictures on insert.



## Quest Members are Conversation Partners

### **Quest Members Come to the Aid of Brooklyn College Students looking to Become More Proficient in English**

A few weeks ago we were approached by the Director of the Brooklyn College American Language Academy, asking whether any of our Quest members would be willing to assist their students in becoming more proficient in English. These students, who are here on student visas, and for whom English is a second language, are looking for conversation partners, who would be willing to spend an hour a week with them (right after Quest afternoon classes end) helping them become more comfortable speaking English. About twenty Quest members volunteered, and the first sessions were begun in mid-April. Stay tuned for more information: if you'd like to participate in this very worthwhile project, please e-mail Michael Wellner.



## Dominic Chianese stars as Enzo in "The Village"

*by Martha Drezin*

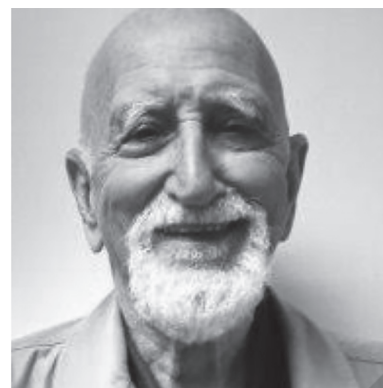
**Q**uest member, Dominic Chianese, can be currently seen in "The Village," a new program on NBC prime time.

Chianese is best known for playing Corrado "Uncle Junior" Soprano on the HBO series "The Sopranos." He also played Stuart Zedeck on the hit FX series "Damages," made an appearance on ABC Family's "The Secret Life of the American Teenager" and guest starred as Judge Michael Marx on "The Good Wife." He also portrayed Leander Whitlock on HBO's hit series "Boardwalk Empire."

Chianese's Broadway appearances include "Richard III," David Mamet's "The Water Engine," Archibald MacLeish's "Scratch," Tennessee Williams' "The Rose Tattoo" and Rod Serling's "Requiem for a Heavyweight." His recent stints onstage include Arthur Miller's "The Price"; "The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui,"; the Public Theater's production of "Much Ado About Nothing," and "A Second Hand Memory," by Woody Allen.

Chianese began his film career in 1972 with "Fuzz" and soon after played Johnny Ola in "The Godfather: Part II." This led to three films with director Sidney Lumet: "Dog Day Afternoon," "Q&A" and "Night Falls on Manhattan." Other noted films include "And Justice for All," "All the President's Men," "Second Sight," "If Lucy Fell," "The Cradle Will Rock," "Unfaithful," "When Will I Be Loved," "King of the Corner," "The Last New Yorker" and "Adrift in Manhattan," Chianese's television credits include a recurring role on "Law & Order," "Kojak," "East Side/West Side," "Beacon Hill," "Dark Shadows" and "Hope & Faith."

We've enjoyed Dominic onstage at 25 Broadway where he's played opposite thespians Roy Clary and Wayne Cotter and also, along with his band, presented us with a concert. We look forward to more of that but meanwhile will enjoy Dominic on NBC.



## Who's Doing What

**Ellen and Bob Gottfried** had a wonderful two-week vacation in January visiting Panama City and Bouquete, Panama with two of Bob's cousins. They took a series of day trips, which included two visits to native villages, a partial transit of the Panama Canal, bird watching and a visit to a butterfly enclosure.

They are going to the UK for two weeks from May 26 to June 10. Highlights of that trip include a tour of Highclere Castle, where *Downton Abbey* was filmed; Bath; Stonehenge, and Cardiff, Wales. In August they are going to Denmark and Iceland. But their most important travels are to Shorewood, Illinois to spend time with their grandsons, daughter-in-law, and son.

**Judy Weis** sang on May 10 and 11 in a performance of Beethoven Missa Solemnis, which she describes as Beethoven's masterpiece, presented by the Choral Society and Orchestra of Grace Church in New York.



**Patricia Geehr** took an "early spring break" with husband, **Jack**, before the flood gates opened to tourists in Rome, beginning with Easter...They are pictured here at the Trevi Fountain.

**Mary Beth** goes to camp! Every summer, Mary Beth Yakoubian and two long distance friends, one from VA and one from TX, share a dorm together for a week at Common Ground on the Hill. This Traditional American Folk Arts camp has been running for 25 years on the campus of McDaniel College in Maryland. The ever-youthful three ladies will sing, dance, build artsy-craftsy things and perform in the Gospel Choir. The following week, Mary Beth plans to do more of the same at the Swannanoa Gathering, a similar camp held on the Warren Wilson College campus near Asheville, NC.



**Adventures in Dining:** 12 Questers had an unusual experience on Saturday, April 27. They ventured to "Weekender Billiards" in Woodside, a billiard parlor known for Bhutanese food and also offering Snookers (not to be confused with billiards @ \$13 per hour). The food was good; the production values low. It was after all a pool hall! Their menu was Chiem ...Liver appetizer / Momo - Bhutanese dumplings with meat or cheese Keva Datse - potatoes and cheese / Ema Datse...Chili, cheese and garlic / Norsha KamPak - Dry beef w/beans & leafy vegetables / Jasha Maroo - Minced chicken with onions, garlic, tomato & chilies / Bumthang Putang Noodles...buckwheat noodles mixed with garlic and & scallions / Rice. All present enjoyed these delicacies as well as each other's company.

**Larry Gulotta** along with his wife Karen and son Nicholas are off for two weeks in Western Sicily. They will stay in a B&B on the vineyard "Antico Frantoio" and take trips to Selenute (Greek Temple on a beautiful beach with reddish sand); Porto Paolo (a secluded beach) and Sciacca (arts & crafts & sea port city of 50,000. They also intend to visit the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento. The "Temple of Concorde" is enormous in scale. They will have a few days in Palermo's Historic District with tickets to Il Massimo, Palermo's Opera House.

**Kykuitt:** On Friday, May 3rd, a second group of twenty-three Questers headed north by car and train to nearby Sleepy Hollow for a tour of the beautiful Rockefeller estate, overlooking the Hudson River. The tour included time to explore the exquisite, perfectly-landscaped grounds, as well as

nearly every room in the mansion itself, and was followed by a very pleasant buffet lunch (just for us) in the nearby visitors' center. Everyone agreed that this is one local landmark not to be missed.

**Hadestown on Broadway:** On Thursday May 2nd twenty Questers attended the very well reviewed performance of the somewhat-unusual musical *Hadestown*, at the Walter Kerr theater. A number of us had seen an earlier iteration of the show a couple of years ago downtown at the NY Theater Workshop, and were anxious to see its transition to Broadway. Suffice it to say that we were all very pleased; if you haven't seen it, by all means go! And a big thanks goes to **Eileen Fink** for arranging an excellent dinner

## Here I Am...

1. Michele Mackey; 2. LindZ Redding; 3. Wayne Cotter; 4. John Davis; 5. Karen Dick

## Freshman Class Update

by Betty Farber

**T**he *Freshman Class* is designed to help new members become familiar with all aspects of Quest and to encourage them to work towards active participation in our community. This class usually meets on the last Tuesday of each month. All new members of Quest are welcome. Because the month of April will include a full calendar with Spring Break and election of officers and council members, a Freshman Class will not be scheduled during April. The class will resume during the Fall 2019 term. If you have any questions, please contact coordinators Pam Gemelli or Betty Farber.

## Q News Staff

*A Quest Publication*

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## Q Travel

As Quest continues to grow and prosper, the Travel Committee is pleased to offer trips to new destinations, all through the year. These include one-day excursions (such as Kykuit), weekend trips (Washington & Philadelphia), and one and two-week trips both here in the US and abroad. All have fostered camaraderie among us and have been well attended. Right now our plans include the following:

- **London Theatre week** at the end of May
- A 4th of July cruise on the QM2 to **Halifax and Boston**
- A trip to the **Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-lake**, August
- A long weekend in **Philadelphia** in September to visit major sites
- And, then, two choices to escape the January (2020) cold weather:
  - An 11-day **Caribbean Cruise**, sailing out of New York (no flying)
  - A ten-day Road Scholar trip to **Oaxaca and Puebla, Mexico**

There is still space at the Summer Shaw Festival and the January 2020 trips. Join us!

## Profile of Steven Koenig

*by Dolores Dolan*

Brooklyn-born Steven Koenig began collecting records at age two. That is not a typing error. Steve collected the little Golden records his parents brought him. Today he has in his home a collection of many thousands of records and tapes of operas, classical music, rock, bluegrass and jazz. He admits that he is an obsessive buyer of records. His uncle Les introduced Steve to opera when he was a boy, and Steve attended free opera rehearsals at The Met starting at age 16. At Quest, for the last seven years, he is well-known as a coordinator of classes in many music categories.

After graduating from Stuyvesant High School, Steve attended Baruch College, majoring in journalism and creative writing. At Baruch, he founded the Gay Student Association and was editor of the college's newspaper, *The Ticker*. He earned an MFA in poetry at Brooklyn College. Steve taught English in New York City high schools for twenty-five years. When he first started teaching, a fellow teacher said he could choose to teach any writer but to stay away from Allan Ginsberg's *Howl*, which is a long poem of youthful outrage. But Steve did present it to his students. Steve's favorite books to teach are Chaim Potok's *The Chosen*, Shakespeare's plays and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

In addition to Steve's love of music, he is also a published poet. One of his books of poetry, *Among the Powder*, is in the Brooklyn Public Library.



On a trip to China, Steve got permission to record Tibetan monks chanting their prayers at 4 A.M. He was dismayed to learn that during the Cultural Revolution, Chinese musicians had their hands broken if they played western music. Steve also collaborates with improvising musicians and with Mexican painters and sculptors.

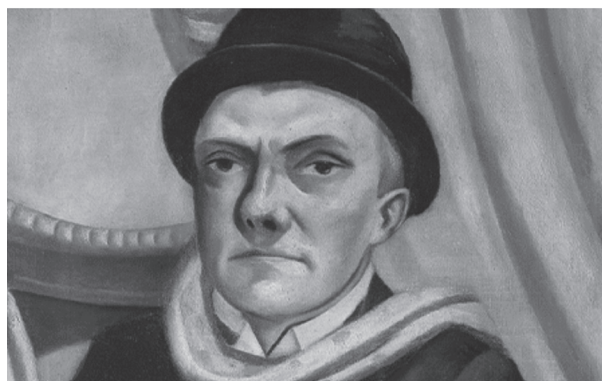
In German, Koenig means *King*, and Steven Koenig is the king of music presentations at Quest.

## Neue Galerie

*by Estelle Selzer*

On Friday, March 15th, twenty-five Questers spent the morning at the Neue Galerie. A museum for German and Austrian works of art. A wonderful docent led tour of the current exhibition, "Self Portraits from Schiele to Beckmann" highlighted the work of these two artists who were among the thirty artists on display. The entire third floor of the museum is dedicated to this exhibition.

As an added attraction our docent took us to the second floor and explained the history of the museum as well as the background of the painting *The Woman in Gold* by Gustav Klimt.



*Portrait by  
Max Beckmann*