

QUEST Q NEWS

A Quest Publication

March 2019

A Note From the President



As we reach the mid-point of the Spring semester, we are all hoping that the weather follows the calendar, so we can all enjoy

our Spring break from Monday April 22 to Thursday, April 25.

Quest Council meets monthly, and the minutes of our meetings are sent to all members, and posted on the private pages of the Quest website. I am happy to report that our new piano keyboard has arrived, and will be put to good use by our talented

members for performances and to accompany Quest singers. Quest Council has also authorized the establishment of the Peter Cott and Kenneth Leedom Memorial Lectures, to be held once a semester to honor their contributions to Quest. The first speaker will be Colum McCann on October 23, 2019.

Our annual meeting is scheduled for April 10 at 1:00 pm in the auditorium. We will have reports from our treasurer, on the state of Quest's finances, the chair of the curriculum committee on the new courses that will be added in the Fall, and those being dropped, reports from our travel committee, update from the chair of the emergency response team, and a sneak preview of our 25th anniversary party to be held in Spring 2020.

As many of you know, Quest has just about reached our maximum membership, based on the current cap of 260, voted by the membership. We are planning a series of noontime knowledge events to explain the various options, enabling the membership to raise the cap, or keep the current cap. After the conclusion of the last noontime knowledge event, the membership will vote via email, and the results of the vote will be announced at the general meeting.

Finally, I am happy to announce the hiring of Barbara Bianco, as our new administrative assistant. If you have not already done so, please come to the Quest office to say hello and welcome Barbara.

— Bob Gottfried

Dates to Remember

March 13-15	Critical Perspectives on Human Rights Conference at CWE
April 10	General Membership Meeting
April 19-26	Spring Break
April 29	Special Performance, S. Scanlon
May 7-8	Elections
May 16	Acting Class Performance (morning)
May 16	End of Term Luncheon

In Memory: Joe Nathan

All of us at Quest were shocked and saddened at the sudden and untimely passing on Monday, February 25th, of our beloved founding member Joe Nathan. Joe, 96 years old, was still active at Quest, coordinating the Contemporary Poetry course this semester. In the past he guided us through Ulysses, and The Brothers Karamazov, always with a twinkle in his eye. Joe was a long-time resident of New Jersey, and he commuted faithfully to participate in all of Quest's activities, which were near and dear to his heart. He will be deeply missed by everyone who knew him.



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.



1



2



3



4



5



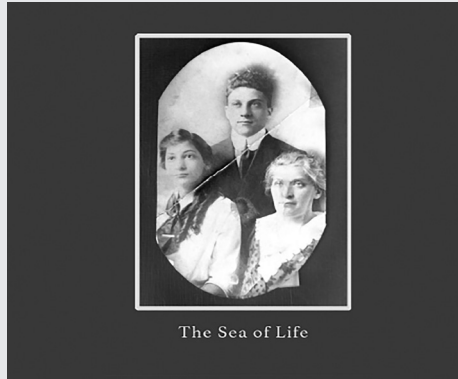
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The Sea of Life

by Lila Heilbrunn



The Sea of Life, the title of my new book, was originally the name of a poem my mother wrote. This winter I traveled in time and finished writing a book about the history of my mother's family, an adventure that took me a year and a half. *The Sea of Life*, my 161-page book, tells the story of how my

great grandparents and their seven children emigrated from Lithuania to Chicago in 1878. It follows the growth of the Sklovsky family using photographs, family trees, collected historical information and anecdotes.

Dining on Chinese New Year

by Frank Montaturo

It was Sunday. It had rained but was merely grey when we arrived for our lunch at Asian Jewels Seafood restaurant in vibrant Flushing. The main dining room exploded with red-gold and the rumble of rolling dim sum carts and the laughter and appetites of very many satisfied diners. We were treated to a private room and well cared for by Ling, the wonderful hostess who made sure that our feast of seven dishes fit our budget...and that we were not disappointed. We were not. And Flushing, a first for some of our diners, is really not so far at all though a world away.

Quest Council Annual Elections

Once again, it's time for Quest to hold elections. The NEC has been formed to produce a slate for new Council members. Sharing the chair are **Ruth Ward** and **Mary Ann Donnelly**. **Roy Clary** and **Mary Beth Yakoubian** are also on the committee and Marian Friedmann is the Council representative. At this time there are four vacancies on Council with eight nominees.

The eight nominees are **Pam Gemelli**, **Frieda Lipp**, **Eileen Kelly**, **Wayne Cotter**, **Michael Wellner**, **Stephanie Butler**, **John Spiegel** and **Linda Downs**. Their biographies and photos will be posted on the bulletin board and sent out via Quest community email around March 15th. The candidates will present to the membership on five days between Monday, April 29th and Monday, May 6th. Elections will be held on Tuesday, May 7th and Wednesday May 8th.

CultureQuest at the Museum of Arts and Design

by Renee Woloshin

On Friday, February 8th, twenty Questers enjoyed a wonderful guided tour at the Museum of Arts and Design at Columbus Circle. The museum focuses on crafts produced by contemporary artists working in glass, fiber, clay, metal, and/or wood. Our tour began with an exhibition of ceramic works created by Sterling Ruby. Ruby rolls, punches, assembles, and manipulates clay by hand and machine to arrive at basins or vessel-like containers, which often hold the debris of previous kiln misfires. (One of these sculptures is being viewed by the Quest group in the picture accompanying this article.)

The tour included an exhibit of the works of winners and finalists of the 2018 Burke Prize awarded annually by the museum. On view were innovative works created by the next generation of artists in the crafts movement. Last, but not least, we saw a beautiful collection of work acquired by the museum in the past five years. It was a very enjoyable tour and we were fortunate to have an excellent docent. When we were introduced to our docent, Sandy Masur, we were surprised and delighted to learn that she is a new Quest member.



Marian Friedmann's Updated Resume

by Marian Friedmann

I think I may have a future in restaurant service. It would be my fourth career: the first was as a teacher, the second was as an at-home mother of three, PTA'er and activist in school matters. The third was more than 25 years in university administration.

My waitress skills were only recently acquired when I did a swan dive from a narrow step while carrying salads out to the poolside dining table at my cousin's home in Florida. I hadn't really been drinking yet, just a little splash of Black Label to get the evening going and get into the BBQ mood (not my favorite cuisine). Out the door I flew. No one even noticed so I gathered my composure and a few scattered tomatoes and continued to the table. I earned my stripes that day! Not only did I not lose so much as one lettuce leaf, I did not put even one chip on the super fancy French Limoges plates... a regular ballerina!

You may have noticed, I sport a massive black brace on my right knee these days. A minor fracture was the only damage done in the fall and it is just about healed.

I'm going to check the "help wanted" ads, if any such thing still exists, and see if I can get some part time hours waiting tables at an uptown 5-star eatery, a local beanery or a Greek diner. I think my "experience" qualifies me.



Quest Travel Update

by Michael Wellner

We are off to **Washington, Philadelphia, Tarrytown, London, Halifax, Boston**, and points beyond! The Travel Committee invites you to join us; here's what's on tap: near and far. Here's the plan:

1. A trip to **Washington, DC** to see the **Cherry Blossom Festival**, from April 12th–15th. Several Quest members are already booked; if interested please call Road Scholar directly (1-800-454-5758), (and please let Carolyn know, too).

2. On May 3rd we will have our second excursion to see the fabulous **Rockefeller home** and estate (Kykuit) in nearby Tarrytown. Karen Levin has all the details; please let her know if you'd like to join the group.

3. In May, Carolyn is taking (yet another) group to **London**; this trip is sold out!

4. A few people are booked on a June 30th cruise on the Queen Mary 2, to celebrate the **4th of July in Boston Harbor**. We'll sail from nearby Brooklyn, with stops in **Halifax** and **Newport (RI)** in addition to **Boston**. If you are interested, please let Michael know.

5. In August we are again heading up to the **Shaw Festival**, in **Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario**. If you are interested, please let Carolyn or Bob Hartmann know.

6. In September, Karen has arranged a long week-end (Thursday to Sunday) to visit both the **Philadelphia Museum of Art** and the **Barnes Museum**. Details are in the office.

7. And we are looking at a few options to escape the coming cold winter weather (next January):

- A week-long Road Scholar trip to the Caribbean island of **Martinique** (including free airfare).
- A ten-day to two-week trip to **Oaxaca, Mexico**.

Creative Corner

This poem will be published by Steve Koenig. Eastern Parkway Poem will appear in the next issue of Brownstone Poets, a print journal, sometime before April 2019.

Eastern Parkway Poem (Brooklyn Routes #8) *by Steven H. Koenig*

It's the full moon again and it brings me home.
The IRT lost its screech and handstraps,
gained a homeless man in black plastic bags, pungent,
and an electronic announcer:
"Stand clear of the closings doors, please."
The IRT smells of August, packed sardines,
five years old clinging to my father's pants
on his way to work on Saturday, overtime,
when he could sneak his kid in the store—
the only free time he was able to offer me—
It's a full moon, and near the week he died,
also Christmas; so many *yahrzeits*, so many candles,
so much anger and forgiveness, so much love.

It's the full moon again and it's no longer New York City
but my eye is on the same moon from
another time, in another place, and you and me
after midnight, sitting on concrete blocks in the park,
your eyes a full moon, your long black hair back, brave,
ignoring everyone who passes by, and the moon
has many admirers, but the moon is said to be cold.

It's your eyes again, my love, full and round
like my memory of you, hovering in a bubble like Glinda,
and it's many years time as I walk up the steps
back home on Eastern Parkway, remembering the
black berries
grazing my fingertips in the alleys by people's yards,
old ladies throwing pots of boiling water on us alley rats,
scattering in the splattering, the only welts from
mosquito bites,
yet scared of the old hags, running, screaming,
giggling in each other's arms as only seven-year-olds can,

And it's a full moon again, mommy wheeling me in the stroller
up St. John's Place, even though I scream for her to carry me,
but she tells me the weight is too much and though
she loves me,
and we stop for vanilla malteds in the tall silver shakers,
the weight is too much, as the moon is too full, and you tell me
as I stroke your long, Indian hair that shines in the dark

that the weight is too much, *me duele*, you tell me,
your shyness causes pain, and my heart breaks,
full like the moon and my memories of you line the streets
of my heart,
the fast food alleys of *Colonia Guerrero*,
and the memories walk the alleys and sidestreets,
take in the green of the park even at night,
the water droplets spray high in the air in Lincoln Center
and in *Parque Alameida*, different eras and different
men converging,
make me look up to the sky where daddy is now a star,
winking down on me, telling me to keep walking,
el camino contiene sorpresas,
and like the full moon, I must stay filled with love,
even when it feels empty, but keep on walking, my boy,
keep on walking.

It's been said that "Betty Farber immortalizes the complexity of romance at Bagelworks Bakery." Bagels and Romance, Betty's poem, now hangs on the wall of Bagelworks Bakery on First Avenue. Inspired by a conversation she overheard, Betty captures a nugget of truth related to judging character through the lens of a bagel order in this commentary on modern love. This poem was included in her book, My New York: City Poems.

Bagels and Romance *by Betty Farber*

Bagelworks on First Avenue
Sells a variety of bagels
To please anyone's taste.
I'm waiting for my order to be filled.
A woman behind me is talking
On a cell phone to her boyfriend.
"I'm at Bagelworks right now.
What kind of bagel do you want:
Sesame, whole wheat, pumpernickel
Sourdough, poppy seed, everything?
What? A plain bagel?" She is incredulous
And complains to the nearest stranger,
"I thought he was unique, unconventional,
And he orders a plain bagel. I may
Have to rethink this relationship."
"That man is in deep trouble," I say to myself,
As I pay for my bagel order.
With an eye on my own relationships
I take home sesame, sourdough, everything.

Q News Staff

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Here I Am...

1. Deborah Yaffe; 2. Joan Diamond; 3. Marilyn
Rosen; 4. Helen Neilson; 5. Jeanette Himmel
6. Yona Rogosin; 7. Palma Mahl

Travels with Judy

Judy Weis went to DC on February 15th
for the American Association for the
Advancement of Science meeting. She
chaired a session bringing together
environmental and textile scientists to
discuss problems of microfibers left in
the environment from washing synthetic
fabrics in washing machines. Then Judy
and Pete flew to Denver and drove to
Colorado Springs to visit granddaughter
Emily. They went on to visit Taos, Santa Fe,
Albuquerque and friends in Scottsdale
Arizona. Then on to Los Angeles to visit
more family.

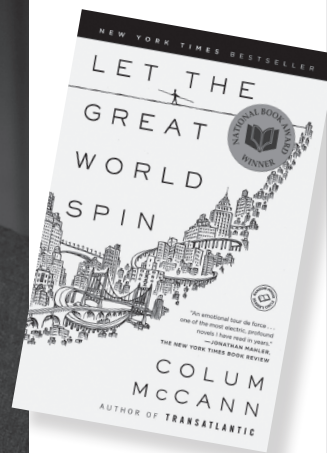
Colum McCann to Appear at Quest Courtesy of Kenneth Leedom and Peter Cott

by Arlynn Greenbaum

When Quest's Guest Lecturer Committee learned that Kenneth Leedom and Peter Cott had given Quest a generous legacy, they hoped a portion of it could be used to bring in one big name speaker in the arts per semester in their honor. As chair of the Committee, I made a presentation to Council on February 11, and Council approved the funding.

Thanks to literary contacts, the committee is happy to announce that the first Kenneth Leedom/Peter Cott Memorial Guest Lecturer will be Colum McCann on October 23, 2019. An Irish-born international bestselling author, McCann won the National Book Award in 2009 for *Let the Great World Spin*. Some of his other novels include *TransAtlantic* and *Thirteen Ways of Looking*. Co-founder of Narrative 4, a global charity, McCann teaches creative writing at Hunter College. On October 23, he will speak about "Letting the Great World Spin: How the Stories of Others Shape Our World."

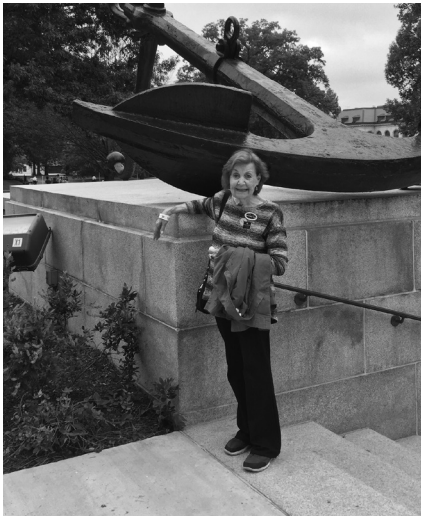
Before retiring in 2016, I ran a successful lecture agency, Authors Unlimited, which started in 1991 after a career in book publishing publicity and marketing. In addition to Colum McCann, the company represented many prestigious authors such as Elizabeth Strout, Jeffrey Eugenides, Amor Towles, Jodi Picoult and Chris Bohjalian. "I am happy to use my contacts and expertise to help bring some well-known speakers to Quest and to honor the memory of my friends Ken and Peter."



Colum McCann—Irish-born international bestseller Colum McCann is among the world's foremost storytellers. His National Book Award-winning novel *Let the Great World Spin* was a bestseller on four continents and was recognized with major awards from eight nations. Dave Eggers called it "one of the greatest-ever novels about New York." McCann's sixth novel, *TransAtlantic*, published in 2013, earned him comparisons to Michael Ondaatje and Toni Morrison. McCann is also a cofounder of the global charity Narrative 4. Led by artists, educators, students, and community activists (including Terry Tempest Williams and Ishmael Beah), Narrative 4 brings young people from all over the world together to "walk in one another's shoes." His writing has been published in *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *The Paris Review*, *Granta*, *The Atlantic*, *GQ*, *Tin House*, and *The New York Times*, among others. He wrote a short film, *Everything in This Country Must*, which was nominated for an Academy Award in 2005. In 2016, he was named a finalist for the Story Prize for his collection *Thirteen Ways of Looking*. McCann speaks on the intersections of storytelling, self-discovery, social justice, and travel. His next novel will be published in fall 2019.

<http://www.lyceumagency.com/speakers/colum-mccann/>

Who's Doing What



Ruth Kovner drove to Annapolis, MD to attend the United States Sailboat Show with her son Matt and daughter-in-law Vicki. This is the largest in-water sailboat show held in the U.S. with hundreds of boats to board and 50,000 visitors. As a novice, Ruth was surprised to see many pairs of shoes lined up on the decks next to each boat. No one was allowed to board wearing shoes because boat owners were reluctant to have teak or

mahogany decks scuffed. Each sailboat was seeking a new owner. There were parties to attend, and Ruth met many interesting people, including the Ambassador to the United States from Croatia. The family was permitted on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy, visited the beautiful Chapel and the wonderful U.S. Navy Museum started by then President James K. Polk in 1849 with the world's largest collection of model schooners all rigged in full sail. Without question, Ruth and family had a grand time. No decision as yet on which boat to buy.



Estelle Selzer is back from a fantastic 10-day *People to People* trip to Cuba. She

spent six nights on a three-masted sailboat along the southern shore visiting the cities of Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad, Cienfuegos and Santa Clara. She then spent three nights in Havana visiting the old city and riding in restored vintage cars. The picture shows Estelle and her friend with their driver in a '49 Oldsmobile. Estelle reports, "There is so much history in this small country and the people are so warm and friendly."

Leslie Goldman, Michael Goldstein and **Michael and Marva Wellner** spent a delightful week on a Road Scholar trip to Martinique, where they enjoyed 85-degree sunshine while we at home shivered through single-digit temperatures.



Nannette and Stan Lieblein are "enjoying" the cold windy weather on the Naples pier in January. Florida is beautiful but definitely not a winter warm get away...

UN International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Holocaust Victims

by Karen Levin



On January 28, 2019, Madeline Brecher, Karen Levin, Aileen Margolis, and Arlynn Greenbaum attended the **2019 United Nations International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust**. This is an annual event sponsored by the United Nations and is open to the public.

The speakers for this program included UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Ms. Alison Smale, Danny Danon from Israel, Jonathan Cohen from the US Mission to the UN and Sara Bloomfield, Director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Marion Turski and Inge Auerbacher were two special guests.

As Holocaust Survivors, they described the hardships they endured under terrible conditions as well as their loss of dignity while in Auschwitz and Theresienstadt.

Musical guests included the student chorus from P.S. 22 in Staten Island. Also in the audience were other survivors and their families, NYC school children and war veterans from World War II and the Korean War.

Listening to the stories brought many to tears. While the day was very emotional, it was uplifting to see so many people represent those who could not be there.