

# QUEST Q NEWS

A Quest Publication

February 2020

## A Note From the President



**A**s we return to class for the spring term, there is a feeling of happy anticipation among our members. The

Curriculum Committee did a great job adding many diverse classes to our schedule. I urge everyone to take advantage of the opportunities Quest provides to keep the mind active and to cherish old relationships

and form new ones.

As a peer-to-peer learning program, attracting new members eager to participate in our classes as presenters and coordinators is key to the continued success of Quest. Quest is governed by our Council, consisting of four officers, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer; and seven at large members, each of whom is elected for two years and limited to two consecutive terms. The Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) will be seeking candidates for Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, as well as at least two

candidates for each of the three Council seats, replacing members whose terms are expiring this year. I urge all of our members to consider running for one of these positions. You will be receiving emails from the NEC Chair (once elected), inviting your participation.

Finally, I must ask again for all members to be respectful to each other by trying to come to class on time, turning off cell phones during presentations, not slamming doors on entering and leaving the classrooms, and most importantly, treating all members respectfully.

— Bob Gottfried

## Travel Update

**S**pring is rapidly approaching, and after what seemed like a long winter break, we are ready to get back to Quest. During the break several of us have traveled to various venues, trying to find some warm weather and escape the cold. A group of us sailed to the warm weather of the Caribbean on Royal Caribbean's ship *Anthem of the Seas*. Other Questers spent time in the Caribbean, in Hawaii, in Florida, and several other destinations.

Now it's time to make plans for our travels in 2020. Our first scheduled (sold out!) adventure will be to Italy's Puglia region (on Italy's Adriatic coast), a ten-day trip leaving the end of May.

Then on August 17th we have reserved places for the always-popular six-day Road Scholar trip to the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Please let Carolyn know if you think you might be interested in joining the group.

In the fall, for Columbus Day week-end, we are hoping to organize a three-day "Civil Rights Journey" to Atlanta, Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma. Please stay tuned for more details—and let Michael know if you think you may be interested.

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## CultureQuest Events for Spring

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|-----------------|---|
| <b>Feb 28</b>   | Skyscraper Museum:<br>Tour of Midtown High Rises exhibition and general tour of the museum  |
| <b>Mar 13</b>   | Louis Armstrong House Museum & Archives:<br>Tour of Louis's longtime home including audio clips and an exhibit on his life and legacy |
| <b>Mar 27</b>   | Museum of Modern Art:<br>Tour at the new MoMA of an extraordinary collection, remixed   |
| <b>April 10</b> | American Museum of Natural History:<br>"The Rise of Life" tour  |
| <b>April 24</b> | To be announced.  |
| <b>May 8</b>    | Guggenheim Museum:<br><i>Tour of Countryside, The Future</i> exhibition   |

## Quest Participates in Senior Resource Fair at Temple Emanu-El



Membership Committee Chair Michael Wellner and committee members Palma (Pam) Gemelli and Donna Ramer represented Quest at the 13th Annual Senior Resource Fair, hosted by Temple Emanu-El and sponsored by New York State Senator Liz Krueger, October 24, 2019. The fair was attended by more than 500 people seeking information from the estimated 100 non-profit service providers and advocacy groups representing housing, healthcare, legal, safety, lifelong learning, and other programs important to NYC seniors.

The Quest group was kept busy speaking with dozens of interested fairgoers seeking information about lifelong learning. And, to date, Quest can boast one new member who came, saw, and joined.

## CultureQuest Tour of the New-York Historical Society *by Deborah Yaffe*

On November 22nd, CultureQuest toured the New-York Historical Society. We learned about Paul Revere's accomplishments. Aside from the famous ride, he was an outstanding silversmith, printmaker, and a pioneering copper manufacturer in the colonies. We also saw artifacts from his time including, to our surprise, a sealed bottle of tea leaves from the Boston Tea Party.

We also saw artwork created by an early 19th century French baroness living in the United States. She was the first woman artist in America to leave a substantial body of work, and her highly detailed art portrayed the people and scenes of the young country, including the earliest accurate depictions of Native Americans.

From both exhibits, we felt we learned much about the history of our country.



## In Memory of Donna Rubens *by Eva Shatkin*

I would meet up with Donna mostly in the Poetry Writing Group. Her poems reflected the rich and varied life she had lived. Born in Chicago, she and her husband moved to many places but always involved themselves in the communities in which they lived. She had a kindly nature that attracted others to her orbit.

In her short stories, she allows her imagination to run riot in her wide-ranging dream world. Yet the inherent sweetness of her spirit shines through. In one of her stories, she writes: "to love is what is important—it keeps the mind and body alive."

And that is our Donna's coda to us all.



## The Quest "Book Swap" Library *by Deborah Yaffe*

In Room 27, on the lower shelves, we have a "book swap" library. Michael Wellner came up with this great idea several years ago after seeing tables in apartment buildings where people left books for others to take. That's exactly how our library works. The books are there for the taking, no need to return them. Books can be donated to the library at the Drop Off Books sign in the far left-hand corner shelf (but not more than one or two at a time). *(I put in the exact location of the shelf because de-spite the visible sign many people ask where they should leave the books.)*

The library's been a rousing success. As we'd expect from Quest members we've re-ceived very interesting books, both fiction and nonfiction. People sometimes ask me what type of books we want and the answer is anything: all books on all subjects are welcome, including audio books.

The books are arranged by category. Arts and Fiction are in the shelves behind the chairs as you come in. Then going down the far wall are Nonfiction, Science, Over-size, and Other, which is for books that don't fit nicely into any of the categories. Non-fiction is the largest category by far; the overflow of nonfiction books is in the Science and Over-size shelves further down the wall.

The fiction books don't move very quickly at all; many books have been on the shelf for more than a year. This is probably because it's hard to tell from the title what they're about. I'm going to print out a little paragraph from the Internet and tape it onto the cover of each book and see if that helps. Our mantra is "there's a book for everybody."

## Who's Doing What



**Phil Gisser** and his daughter **Marsha** took a side trip from his visit to the Seattle area to celebrate his 95th birthday. They visited

the Fremont Troll, a statue with an interesting background. The statue was an art project commissioned by civic leaders of Fremont, a Seattle neighborhood. It was designed with a dual purpose. For starters, these civic leaders like art and have commissioned a lot of public artworks around the city. Second, they wanted to solve the problem of unlawful activities centering around the protected area under the bridge. So, in 1990 they replaced the drug dealers with a troll-under-the-bridge, which has now become a tourist attraction. Note that it is big enough to clutch a full-size Volkswagen in its hands (lower right corner). Pictured are me (Phil Gisser), my daughter Marsha Shyer, and the Fremont Troll. The Troll is the one in the back.



**Linda Downs, Joyce West** and **Jane Lubin** spent a week in Los Angeles visiting as many museums as they could squeeze in, plus a few other sights including beaches. Linda made a fantastic lasagna for a dinner party.

**Bob** and **Ellen Gottfried** combined multiple trips. They travelled to Shorewood, Illinois to visit their son, daughter-in-law, and grandsons; went on to visit cousins in Palm Desert and Yorba Linda California;

flew to Hawaii and went on a seven-day cruise to four islands and spent two additional days touring on the island of Oahu.



**Sybil Cohen, Arlynn Greenbaum, Marilyn Weiss, Madeline Brecher** and **Gale Spitalnik** can be described as *living la vida loca*. They visited the Ixtapan de la Sal Spa in Mexico from January 19th to 26th, and according to Arlynn they were having a blast.



**Nannette** and **Stain Lieblein** visited Oaxaca, Mexico. They enjoyed a Road Scholar trip that combined hands-on cooking

and sightseeing. While there they cooked a three-course lunch at Seasons of My Heart School in Oaxaca. The lunch included corn soup, salad, chicken with mole sauce, rice, and dessert.



**Carolyn and Pete McGuire, Marilyn and Wendy Rosen, Stella and Leonard Gold** and **Mo & Brenda Zussman** sailed away

on the Royal Caribbean Anthem of the Seas on January 16th for 11 days. We visited six Caribbean islands including Puerto Rico, St Kitts, St Martin, Antigua among others. The weather was warm and lovely, the ship was packed with activities and the service was exceptional. We all had an enjoyable time. A surprise was meeting Ellie Chernick and her family on the same cruise.



**Judy** and **Pete Weis** spent a week and 1/2 in Belize.

The first week was at the Turneffe Atoll snorkeling, and the last few days inland where they visited Caracol, an ancient Mayan site, and visited a cave for tubing, which was not quite as wet as snorkeling.

## Travel Update

*continued from front page*

Our next overseas trip may well be a river cruise on Portugal's delightful (and increasingly popular) Douro River, planned probably for the spring of 2021. A few people have already expressed interest; if you think you might like to join us, please just send a note to Michael Carolyn or Karen.

## Here I Am...

1. Bob Reiss 2. Elaine Martin 3. MaryAnn Donnelly 4. Pam Gemelli 5. Toni Dickenson



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### *A Quest Publication*

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Quest, a community for lifelong learning,  
is affiliated with the City College of  
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Worker Education (CWE).

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## A Love Letter for Valentine's Day *by Betty Farber*

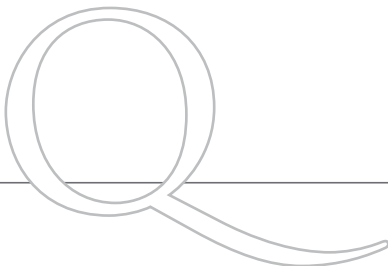
Opening the title page  
of a book he had given me  
years ago for my birthday,  
handwritten words I didn't remember.

We had said our final goodbyes  
so long ago, I could only assume  
that a love letter, newly written  
had traveled through time to me.

"I knew you would be  
even more wonderful at 60  
than you were at 20.  
Love, Love, Love, Forever."

So we are still connected  
through words and memories...

This much I have learned—  
nothing is final, even goodbye.



## Players' Club Reception *by Bob Hartmann*

The weather outside may have been snowy, rainy, and cold, but inside the Players' Club on Monday December 2nd the climate was warm and welcoming as CCNY President Vincent Boudreaux and CWE Dean Juan Carlos Mercado hosted a reception honoring Quest and two of its members, Bob Hartmann and Michael Wellner, for their efforts in establishing and funding scholarships for outstanding CWE students. But the highlight of the afternoon was clearly the (unexpected) presence and remarks of the three scholarship winners themselves, Myra Rose (Quest Scholarship winner), Tasifa Ali (Bob Hartmann Scholarship winner), and Kuan Newton (Captain Mike Scholarship winner), who were eloquent in explaining the significance that these scholarships have had in each of their lives. It was a heart-warming experience (made all the more meaningful by the lack of heat in the building) and a wonderful afternoon. Bob Gottfried spoke on behalf of Quest, and Bob and Michael each made a few remarks. All in all, a wonderful afternoon, and a time well spent with our friends at City College and the Center for Worker Education.



## 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.



## Diversity Reminder

Quest cards are available in the office. We should all carry a few to hand out to folks we know or meet who might be potential Questers.



## Adventures in Dining



Pho, the UNESCO recognized Vietnamese heritage soup, has a long and complex history. Evidence for its existence as far back as the Prelapsarian Age has been found in caves the length and breadth and narrow width of the country. Culinary archeologists studying the origins of the country's cuisine have found large clay pots containing wooly mastodon bones in caves long inaccessible to any but the most intrepid of food scholars. Hand paintings are thought to give detailed instructions on the soup's preparation.

And so, on a cold Wednesday in early January, twelve adventurous diners from Quest, in little need of persuading, undertook the arduous trek to lunch at PhoBar in Mott St. The appetizers included succulent fried wings, sautéed brussels sprouts that the early cave dwellers would have died for and a palate refreshing mango papaya salad. And the soup, rich from long hours of cooking, was the perfect antidote to any incubating cold.

Satisfaction seemed evident.



## A Profile of Marilyn Weiss

**M**arilyn is a well-known artist, especially in Jamesport, Long Island where, each summer, she is a regular exhibitor and prize winner. She was one of the *Abstract Women II* artists, exhibiting this past August in the group show at the William Ris Gallery.

Marilyn creates collages using many elements and colors. A thoughtful, witty narrative emerges from threads and fabric, paper and paint. It is the intricate layers of paper that draw you to the paintings. Each hand-made piece of paper, placed ever so carefully, makes the work vibrant. Ranging from simple solid paper to painted acrylic, from numerous fabrics to those with photo transfers, each element has a "Nana flair," says her granddaughter. No material is placed without intense thought about the best spot for it. Using bits of photos from a family album, the pictures are in no specific sequence and one holds no more value than the next. It's difficult to describe or disassemble each painting. You see the big picture and then you can focus on the smaller entities.

Each painting stands alone, strong and magnificent, capturing your eye and making it focus on layer upon layer of color, fabric, and paper. As you keep looking, you can identify the pictures hidden in the rich array of mediums.

In looking at Marilyn's work, you can instantly feel a connection to her and who she is. The forms these paintings take include paper dresses, sculptures, and many paintings of two or three women. I asked Marilyn what the significance was of all the women in twos or threes. She answered, "attitude" and "relationships." Looking again and again, I discern a definite attitude among the women in the paintings. Body positioning, texture of paper or fabric, string, and acrylic paint finally yield up what the painting is saying. If you're lucky enough to visit Marilyn's apartment you will be immediately treated to her beautiful artwork.



## Quest Holiday Luncheon

*by Michael Wellner*



**O**n Friday, December 6th, 2019, we had a record turnout as 140 Quest members gathered at the lovely Amata Restaurant on East 56th Street for our annual holiday luncheon. Without question, this was the best ever! There was ample room for all, the food was delicious, the service attentive and professional, and most important the rest rooms were easily accessible. Everyone agreed that this will be hard to beat. In fact, several members suggested that we return to Amata next year. We shall see. For now, here are a few pictures.

