

QNEWS Q DIGITAL

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A Note From the President

Hello Quest Members, as you know, Quest is wrapping up a challenging but joyful Fall semester. Our finances are robust, and at our 25th Anniversary Gala Luncheon both the dean of the Center for Worker Education and the president of the City College of New York reassured us that they are happy with the CCNY-Quest Lifelong Learning Community affiliation and residence on the seventhth floor of 25 Broadway.

Our Fall presentations were outstanding. Many thanks to all of you who have emailed your requests for the Summer Encores program at QuestEncores2022@googlegroups.com.

Soon we'll have physical access to our online 2022 lineup of classes, as

our Spring course catalog will probably arrive before the end of this term. In the Spring semester, from January 31st through May 12th, we can look forward to intriguing new courses that were added to our prized legacy program: Passage to India, The Middle East, Women in Greek Drama, Across the Universe, German History, The Nobel Prize, Indie Films, and Reading Edith Wharton. Our Tech Team continues to implement our unique hybrid program, and we'll be welcoming CWE's Felix Piña as a technical support person in the spring.

We encourage you to come to 25 Broadway to participate in our lively community. Our morning coffee service has been growing in popularity, thanks to Pam Gemelli and her coffee prep team.

And, to celebrate the end of a super semester, Quest is throwing a Luncheon party on Tuesday, December 14th, in our lunchroom, with complimentary sandwiches, cookies, and beverages, including wine. Please make it a point come and share your holiday greetings and plans with your Quest companions and colleagues.

Our Winter break will extend from December 17th through January 30th.

Here are my heartfelt wishes for our time away from Quest: let's stay warm and safe while enjoying time with friends and loved ones. Let's recharge our mental batteries, rev up our curiosity, and come back energized for a fabulous spring semester.

— Warm regards,
Ruth Ward

*Wishing You and Yours a Joyous 2022
Filled With Good Health & Peace, Friendship & Gratitude, and
Wonderful Quest Experiences!*

Quest Tech

by Margaret Woodward & Michael Wellner

"Technology is best when it brings people together."

— Matt Mullenweg.

So who are these special Quest people who help bring us all together? You may not know that Quest has had a "Tech Team" in place for more than ten years, ready to help presenters with any issues or questions surrounding the operation of the podiums in each classroom. And generally speaking, things went fairly smoothly in each class.

However, all that changed abruptly when the Covid-19 outbreak forced us to suspend all in-person classes. Rather quickly, the Tech Team was introduced to a new word, *Zoom*, and the necessity of holding all our classes on line. Doing so proved to be no easy task. But with endless hours of on-line Zoom meetings, the newly constituted Tech Team learned how to navigate the intricacies of holding our classes remotely. And we all know the results: We may well have more hybrid classes than any other Lifelong Learning Program anywhere!

And it's all thanks to our superb Tech Team, profiled here. (By the way, if you have any interest in possibly joining the Tech Team in the Spring, please email Wayne Cotter wcotter999@gmail.com. No obligation! Thanks.)



Victor Brener has been a Quest member for about 6 years. He's an architect and worked with computers for several years. He volunteered to contribute to Quest. His responsibilities changed from an hour a week pre-pandemic to 12–16 hours a week now.

In addition to improving his computer skills with PowerPoint and Zoom, he's learned how to work with a team. "That is the best part, the camaraderie of the team. This is a very dedicated team and some of its members (not me) spend an enormous amount of time to make it work. To be successful on the team, one needs computer skills, communication, and patience."



Wayne Cotter, who has been a Quest member for nearly ten years, does not have a technical background. He is entirely self-taught! And now he is a co-chair of the Tech Committee!

Pre-pandemic, he could show up at Quest at 10:00 am. and still have plenty of time to set up for a presentation. Now, he arrives at 25 Broadway at least 75 minutes early, to be sure that all the many pieces are in place. Learning Zoom has been a process; there are many twists and turns requiring him to be flexible.

Wayne admires his team of hard working and dedicated members. He invites Questers who have knowledge of PowerPoint and feel comfortable with computers to volunteer for the Spring semester. It still takes time and effort to learn the many intricacies of setting up hybrid classes, but the Tech Team has systems in place to help with this process. Just know that you will be part of a very special team as Quest is a leader in hybrid classes.

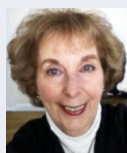
When reflecting on the future of Zoom hybrid presentations, he feels they will always be a part of Quest, but hopefully a much smaller part. Now that we have the technology to simultaneously conduct classes at 25 Broadway and at home, he believes we should continue to schedule such classes when pandemic restrictions are over. Although hybrid classes can be a godsend for the homebound, we need to encourage people to participate in person at 25 Broadway — talking, laughing, and learning together.



Susan Diehl Who knew that her former career — marketing for technology companies — would provide her with the comfort needed to embrace technology and be an asset to the Quest Tech Team?

Wanting to increase her contribution to our community, she volunteered for the team last January. Like all her team mates, she continues to learn the ins and outs of Zoom; a constant challenge as the technology continues to evolve.

Two aspects of her work are most satisfying — being able to help people with their presentations and taking the load from the folks whom she sees as the real "experts" — the group who got us started on Zoom last year. She is forever grateful to them! She appreciates our patience with the team and wants us to know that they, like us, are mere mortals who continue to learn as the technology evolves. If you are not afraid of technology and truly understand that there is always more to learn, Susan invites you to check out the Tech Team.



Jeanne Gold learned about computers in the Apple store; she is not a technical expert. She has always enjoyed working and "playing" on the computer and exploring its potential. "Learning about Zoom convinced me that this was a technology that could be great for Quest and I wanted to help make it happen."

For Jeanne, it is exciting and fun to work with people who keep looking for and finding more and more options to offer Quest members, and who persist in finding solutions to obstacles they encounter.

To be on the team, she recommends one have some technical knowledge, open mindedness, creativity, sense of humor, and persistence. We can support her and her team members by being patient.

As for the future, Jeanne hopes Zoom presentations continue "forever." They offer more members the opportunity to challenge their minds with new ideas despite their own personal issues traveling to Quest.



Sheryl Harawitz had been a member of Quest for several years when Covid closed everything down, and she immediately thought that the challenge of maintaining the Quest Community could be achieved by using Zoom technology. To do this, she bought a personal Zoom license and began to lead weekly poetry and short stories classes with that license. In September, when hybrid was

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becoming a reality, she organized a technical support team for room 15–17, first by learning and practicing with the hardware and software needed for hybrid, then by organizing and training a group of Questers as facilitators/host/support staff, whatever was needed to support the presenters and coordinator. The members of this team are an exceptional group of dedicated Questers and, for the most part, not formal members of the Tech Committee.

Sheryl attends Tech Committee meetings as a liaison from the Curriculum Committee, to ensure that the hybrid courses, which range from lectures to discussion groups to workshops, with a wide variety of presentation styles, are covered.

The Tech Committee handles the Auditorium; the Tech Team, which supports rooms 15–17 and 52–53, consists of Ellie Schaffer, Andrea Irvine, Ellen Shapiro, Donna Ramer, Martha Drezin, Mary Ann Donnelly, and Ilene Winkler.



Bob Reiss has a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, Master of Electrical Engineering, and is a Licensed Professional Engineer. Looking for something to keep him busy when the pandemic struck, he volunteered for the Tech Committee. It delivered!

Although competent running the podium system, Zoom was new to him. He started at square one, learning it and then figuring out how to make it work for Quest. And, with technology, he learned that *“anything that can go wrong will go wrong.”*

For Bob, what is most gratifying is seeing Eva Shatkin, at over 100 years of age, partaking of Quest classes, even though her limited mobility means she cannot get to 25 Broadway (and the same for several other members who are elderly or infirm). Dealing with iPads, Chromebooks, and members’ computers representing a myriad of brands, models, and vintages has proven to be most challenging. Bob reiterates the Quest Tech commitment to provide us with the best possible online experience, adding that we can support the team by communicating any issues that we encounter. This helps the team grow and learn. He encourages any Questers who have some facility with computers and a willingness to learn, to join the team. He will help teach you the rest. When asked about the future of Zoom presentations at Quest, Bob believes that Zoom will be here forever, perhaps on a more selective basis. The benefit of online learning for our mobility-limited members is enormous.



Michael Russo is the newest member of the Tech Team, who joined Quest in June 2020 in the height of the pandemic. Unlike so many team members, Michael is well versed in computers. He is twice retired — first as an engineering analyst for Grumman

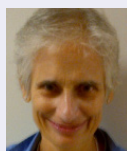
Corporation, and then as a math and computer science professor at Suffolk County Community College.

His first effort at Quest was to catalog all our class videos on the Quest website, and then to redesign the entire website, all from his home on Long Island. Since being on the technical team, he’s

learned that many Quest people really want to meet face-to-face at 25 Broadway to attend classes and to enjoy the camaraderie among members.

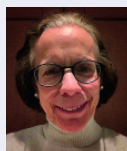
Michael notes that modern computer and communications technology is not for the squeamish. It takes time to get things done right. However, one who is open and flexible and willing to welcome the changes technology brings will enjoy being on the Tech team. He feels we can support the Tech team by speaking up about any and all technology issues you encounter. “If our website is difficult to navigate or is missing content that you think is important, let us know. If you are uncomfortable, can’t hear, or feel left out, tell us. We need feedback to improve.”

And, given his long commute (from Port Jefferson), full-time, in-person participation is not an option for him. He believes that Zoom is essential, extending a modified Quest experience to more people, a win-win for all involved, in his view.



Ellen Shapiro, with Quest for eight years, is one of the newer additions to the Tech Committee, and, although she has no background with computers, she attended a year of architecture school! Both she and Bob Reiss had independently heard about Zoom, and suggested that it might be of use to us. She embraced the Zoom technology and is self-taught. And she has learned to follow technical instructions while trusting her intuition. To be on the team, Ellen has found, one needs to be dependable, and a great listener open to other people’s ideas.

Ellen supports hybrid classes as a necessity, not a convenience. She believes that everyone should come to 25 Broadway to share classes, lunches and enjoy a richer fulfilling experience, but realizes that for those who cannot, Zoom is a lifesaver.



Ruth Ward, our esteemed President, had participated on the Zoom team before it morphed into the Tech Team, volunteering to serve because she believes that the work is important for Quest’s survival. Being a member of the team has helped Ruth practice being patient, an especially useful skill now that her responsibilities have increased. As a lifelong learner, she enjoys challenges, although the quirky technology is almost a bit more than she anticipated. But there is no doubt that the technical work can be very absorbing. Ruth believes that the Tech Team members feel most supported when we all maintain our appreciative attitude. As for the future, she feels that Zoom presentations will play an essential role in fulfilling our mission.



Pete Weis was educated and trained as a marine biologist, where he used computers in his research. But he certainly does not consider himself to be an expert. When, in the good old days BC (before Covid),

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Steve Allen asked him to chair the Tech Committee, the job was a lot simpler: learn how to use the podiums in each classroom, and you were set. Now, his responsibilities are a lot more complex, learning to master Zoom as well.

Pete enjoys being helpful and part of the Quest community. He notes that we can help the Tech Team in many ways, including sending your PowerPoint presentation to the Tech Team member assigned to your class at least 48 hours in advance.

When asked about the future of Zoom presentations, he wrote, “we were already planning to make presentations available to members at home; the pandemic pressured us to jump on it quickly.” And then he added, “But it would be great, however, if more members attended classes in person. Remote attendance doesn’t allow for the same community feeling as does being there in person.



Michael Wellner has the distinction of having graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (twice!). One might assume, therefore, that he has a technical background, but he does not. Although studied basic engineering for two years, both his degrees are in business. But that was in the early 60s BC — Before Computers! He used slide rules. Along with Bob Reiss, Michael was drafted by a former Quest president to start the original tech team. Since that time, his, and the team’s responsibilities have changed radically. At first, all they had to know was how the podiums worked. Now the tasks are *far* more complex; everyone has had to learn how to integrate Zoom with the existing CCNY equipment.

Although the long hours can be challenging, he values the sense of accomplishment helping Quest members who cannot physically

get to 25 Broadway to attend classes. He, and his team members, are very proud of the team’s accomplishments. Michael invites anyone with basic computer skills, a willingness to learn and to commit to help, to join the Tech Team. Going forward, Michael feels hybrid classes are a great benefit; we can now reach so many more people.



Ilene Winkler came to Quest after a nearly-thirty year career as a technician for the New York Telephone Company, where she was one of the first women to work on the then-new computerized switching equipment. When Covid-19 struck, and Quest first switched over to an all-classes-on-Zoom format, Ilene seized this opportunity to do something useful during the pandemic. Now she shares her knowledge by helping Questers with both Zoom and PowerPoint.

Since joining the Tech Team, she has enjoyed meeting many more people at Quest, feels much more involved with the community, and is proud that she has helped keep Quest functioning this past year. And she knows only too well how much work is actually involved to hold classes simultaneously in person and on Zoom. To be on this team, she recommends being someone who is comfortable with computers and technical stuff. Perhaps most important is following instructions without panicking, and a willingness and ability to learn.

To support the Tech team, she says that people need to be patient. Just know that the Tech team is doing its very best to provide a good experience to people in the classrooms and at home. She emphasized the recommended practice that Questers who are at home, turn on their cameras and join the discussion.

Gala

Everyone had such a good time looking through pictures from Quest’s 25th Anniversary Gala, that we decided to bring you some more. Enjoy!



Helen McMahon, Frieda Lipp, Linda Rothstein



Founding members Beverly Francus and Carole Abrahams



David Bernard, Pereta Rodriguez

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CultureQuest: Tour at the Museum of Arts & Design

by Renee Woloshin

Friday, December 3rd was a sunny, brisk late-autumn day when fourteen Quest members visited the Museum of Arts and Design at Columbus Circle. Two excellent docents including Quest member Debbie Golomb, guided us through the exhibitions.

Starting with a group discussion led by our docents while viewing "Parlor for the People" (see photo) a site-specific installation created by the two featured artists "Carrie Moyer and Sheila Pepe: Tabernacles for Trying Times." On the walls surrounding the Parlor are fascinating abstract works by Moyer, painter and Pepe, sculptor who work both collaboratively and individually.

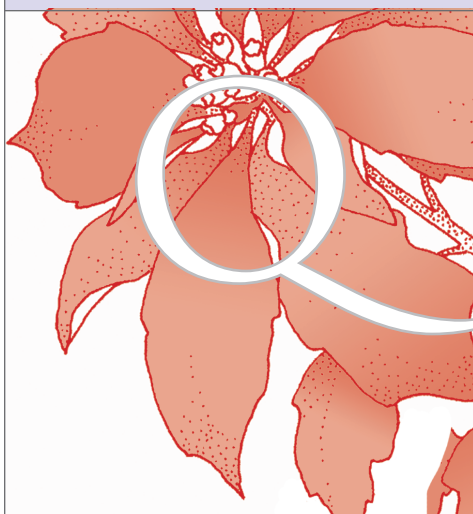
We then toured "45 Stories in Jewelry" which features pieces from the museum's collection of exquisite art jewelry. Afterwards, some of us dined at Robert, the restaurant at the top of the museum building overlooking Central Park. <https://www.madmuseum.org/>



Who's Doing What

Older adults are essentially sharpest and less distracted in the morning. Researchers are not sure why this is so but believe it may be due to circadian rhythms. If you need to do a cognitively challenging activity, tackle it first thing in the morning when you're at your best.

— Mind, Mood & Memory,
reported in *Harvard Heart Letter*



Celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary — one pandemic year late — **Stan & Nannette Lieblein** are going to Riviera Maya (Yucatán Peninsula) in Mexico for a week at Christmas with ten children and grandchildren.

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Gordon Gilbert, Arlynn Greenbaum, Dena Kerren and **Roy Clary** enjoyed the Jasper Johns exhibit at the Whitney Museum.



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Pete and Judy Weis had an early Thanksgiving when their oldest granddaughter, who has graduated college and is working in Denver, was able to get off for a long weekend. Since getting COVID boosters,

they have been gradually starting to come back to their usual activities, including the opera (Fire Shut up in my Bones), Broadway theater (Lehman Trilogy), several museums (Met, AMNH, MOMA, Whitney), and more. Judy's chorus (of vaccinated people) gave concerts in early December, which was a joyful experience for the singers, and the audience as well. And they are going with their son and granddaughter to Washington DC for a few days between Christmas and New Year's. And they hope that Omicron won't send us all back to being hermits again!

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Reuniting the family, **Sybil Cohen** flew to Englewood, CO with her three East coast sons and their children to celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of her youngest granddaughter. They plan to reunite next summer in Westhampton Beach.



Creative Corner

An Ode To Aging

by Philip Gisser

"Age is just a state of mind"
Or so the saying goes
Mouthed by someone young and kind
Not anyone who knows

The golden age soon turns to lead
As body parts rampage
And soon we know what is ahead
A war that we must wage

My gait is now so very slow
But, still, I have the will
To take a walk, get set, let's go
Oh no! It's all uphill

Can't see, can't hear, can't anything
Those limitations irk
But think about the bright side
Don't have to go to work

The doctors, first they look, then probe
Use instruments to see
Then don their diagnostic robe
"We think it's A G E"

But first we look inside they say
With our technologies,
Like CAT and PET, let's do today
To justify our fees

PET scan turns out to be a pain
Goes right to where you live
The juice they shoot into your vein
It's rad io active

The medics then create new words
I know not their deriv
Such terms as "age-related", "fail "
And "de gen er a tive"

We hid out during Covid
While New York closed its door
But Vaccines brought us freedom
And the City's like before

The restaurants are open now
The sheds are closing up
Not much the Docs will let me eat
But still, I like to sup

Though there are foods I savor
One rule that all must know
If it has any flavor
The answer's simply "No"

Abu, he is my trainer
He comes for a house call
He works on leg strength, balance
To make sure I do not fall

He stretches my leg muscles,
My shoulders and my neck
But then he brings the weights out
I end up being a wreck

It's not all disappointment
Age, indeed, has plusses
Like frequent senior discounts
And half-fare on all busses

Those small discounts, alas
Are hardly compensation
But free Chautauqua gate pass
The best deal in the Nation

The subway, it's no problem
Just stare and get a seat
But walking up those sixty steps
A challenge hard to meet

The phone rings every morning
Car warranties, the trend
But I pick up on every ring
In hopes that it's a friend

Or someone even closer
Like son Michael with his news
Or daughter, Marsha, making
A date I can't refuse

My grandchildren are on the phone
Absolutely, they are best
And when they turn to lead their lives
I can fall back on Quest

With classes running every day
My schedule never ends
It's not so much the learning, though
It's where I have made friends

Those friends, they too are aging
Infirmities do reign
They talk of their past doings
Their kids and of their pains

The wonders they have seen in life
Across those many years
The places that they stopped and viewed
And sometimes of their fears

We say some things that make us laugh
Sometimes we have to cry
We question how we live so long
But no one questions why

We scrimped and saved all through
our lives
To spend we did not dare
But now that we are affluent
We can't go anywhere

Today we all walk slowly
Can't eat without a pill
But none of us will dare admit
That we are o'er the hill

