

# QNEWS Q DIGITAL

A Quest Publication

Issue 42

August 2023

## A Note From the President

### Catching a Tiger by the Tail

**K**aren Levin and I attended this year's annual Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement, a three-day conference (July 17-19) hosted by the Osher Lifelong Institute at Clemson (South Carolina) University, home of the Tigers. This was their first conference since Covid-19 wreaked havoc across the country and around the world.

Close to 200 people connected to lifelong learning/learning in retirement attended workshops on such topics as *The Future Has Arrived: Older Adults and AI*; *Best Practices for Multi-Format Classrooms*; *The Ladder of Engagement Within Volunteerism*; *From Course Proposals to Catalog and More: A Case Study in Automation*; *From Classroom to "Zoom": The Development of the Hybrid Model*; *Data Driven Decisions: A Human Approach*; and *Internal & External Partnerships & Collaborations*.

While it's difficult to compare Quest governance and operations with the others in attendance (the overwhelming majority of which were 37 different Ollie programs and have one or more paid staff members), there were a few universal issues of particular note.

- **Technology:** All programs have tech teams of volunteers in the classroom with responsibilities to mute, read comments/questions, etc.
- **On-site Facilitators:** Most programs also require each hybrid course to have an on-site facilitator who works with the instructor from the development of the course through the last class to know the content, introduce the instructor, interact with on-site members and bridge the gap with instructors.
- **Sound:** No one has solved this two-pronged issue of ensuring everyone on-site and everyone at home can hear everything. One program uses both lapel

and ceiling mics and some members still have problems hearing.

- **Hybrid vs In-person Only:** This is left up to the course instructor (similar to Quest's lead coordinator) as is the decision for the course to be a lecture, presentation or discussion (all discussions are in-person only).

In many ways, we're light years ahead of so many other lifelong learning programs but let's not become complacent: we will always have more to learn from others and our plan is to continue to benchmark against other programs.

So once again, thank you, Quest founders: we are very proud of what you created. And thank you to our members who, today, continue to build upon our very solid foundation. We do have the lifelong-learning tiger by the tail.

Best wishes,  
**Donna Ramer**



## Renewal Reminder

**Reminder:** Deadline for renewing your Quest membership is August 15, 2023. You can send your \$550 check to Quest Lifelong Learning, 25 Broadway, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10004. And please make out your check to Quest Lifelong Learning. Contact **Donna Ramer** at [donnaramer1@gmail.com](mailto:donnaramer1@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

## Eva Shatkin at 105

*Nancy Richardson & Anne Hoyer Participated in This Tribute*

Woodrow Wilson was President when Eva Honigman was born in Brooklyn on July 20, 1918, four months before the November 11th Armistice, when the guns on the Western Front fell silent. Eva's father, Alex, had come to the US years earlier; his wife, Stella, remained in Russia with their two daughters. As the war raged in Europe, Stella was determined to join her husband in America, but could not travel westward. Stella and the children (the younger was 8 years old) traveled by train through Siberia and China to Japan, sailed the Pacific Ocean to Seattle, and then traveled overland to New York. Eva was born 9 months after her parents reunited in Brownsville, Brooklyn. Three more children were born to the couple after Eva.

Eva remembers an interesting incident from her childhood: Alex was a brick mason. Once he was unable to collect overdue money owed for his completed work. Thinking that no one would refuse young children, he sent Eva and her younger sister to ask for payment. The man who owed him the money was Fred Trump, father of Donald! Eva is not sure if her father ever got his money; probably not, knowing the family's reputation.

Eva went to Tilden High School and, being a smart young woman, graduated at 16. She then went to Brooklyn College. Her daughter Anne said Eva had to argue and plead with her parents to let her attend college. Even with a Regents Scholarship, it would be difficult to afford. In addition, her two older sisters had not had the opportunity, so it seemed unfair to give it to Eva. Finally, however, she won her parents over. She had met her husband-to-be, Sidney Shatkin, in high school. They married when Eva was in her junior year, and they settled in a \$30/month apartment in Borough Park, Brooklyn. Sidney had to drop out of college after freshman year to work in his father's business as a silversmith.

After WWII, the Shatkins moved to Long Branch, NJ, near the new location of Sidney's father's business. They lived in Long Branch for 20 years and in neighboring Little Silver for 10 more. Eva and her husband had a daughter and two sons. One of the sons, the youngest child, died at 70 of a rare autoimmune disease.

In 1957, Sidney suffered a near-fatal heart attack. It was an extremely stressful time for Eva; her children were all still at home. Sidney's recuperation was slow, and she'd only been working part-time as a nursery school teacher. For the security of

the family, she knew she needed to get better paying, full-time work. And so she did: first as a 3rd grade teacher and then as an English teacher in junior high. Next, she received a master's degree from Rutgers, and thus qualified to be a reading specialist. She worked in education in Long Branch for 19 years.

Though he had 19 years of relatively good health, Sidney died suddenly in 1976, at age 59. Her children grown, Eva decided Little Silver was no place for a widow, and in 1978 she decided to see the world. She took a job as a reading specialist at the American International School in Vienna, Austria for two years. During that time, she travelled all over Europe, sometimes with other teachers from the school, sometimes by herself. Eva returned to the US at age 62. Having lived in Vienna, she decided she wanted to live in a big city. She moved to her Manhattan apartment at Fifth Avenue and 8th Street, and she's been living there ever since.

She retired from teaching with this last move. In 1995 (at the age of 77), Eva was one of the founding members of Quest, when it was located at Franklin and Hudson Streets. Eva has taught a Quest course in Comparative Literature, and also a Poetry Writing class. She guided classes on works by Tolstoy (her favorite author), and Kafka, among many others. Eva was the editor of *QReview* for several years.

Her daughter says she cannot stress how important Quest has been to Eva during her retirement years. It fed her love of learning. "She'd come to my home in New Hampshire in August to beat the heat, and what would she do? She'd go to our college library each morning to prepare for her literature course. Often she's told me she didn't mind eating alone each evening because she had time to socialize with Quest friends at lunch."

Today, Eva reads for two hours every night before bed, in addition to staying up-to-date with the New York Times print edition. She is glad we now have Zoom, so she can still join Quest classes... *at the age of 105!*

• • •

*This video of Eva Shatkin about her vote for Hillary Clinton was made when she was just a kid... 98. We think you will find it very special.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trchSg68CWY>



## Eva through a Quest Lens

I met Eva when I first came to Quest nine years ago... She was the lead coordinator of the Creative Writing Workshop. While I wrote press releases and articles for an alumni magazine, I was introduced to creative writing in Eva's class and lucky enough to have her encouragement and feedback which was so important. I now cherish our friendship and enjoy every visit with her.

– **Helen Saffran**

When Eva and Joe Nathan co-taught Contemporary Poetry, it was lively, informative and my favorite class! Thanks, Eva and Happy 105th birthday!

– **Betty Farber**

Great Conversations was one of the first courses I attended when I joined Quest, so Eva was one of the first course coordinators/presenters I met. I was very impressed by her insightful comments, and then the breadth of her knowledge. When she stopped coming to 25 Broadway, I missed her. When she reappeared on Zoom, I was delighted to see her, and grateful to the tech people who made it possible to bring her back.

– **Ann Goerdt**

A few years after I retired I learned about this 'old geezer' school from Helen McMahon and really doubted that I would join, frankly thinking that I didn't want to be surrounded by 'old' people. The initial day I came to Quest, the first class I attended was a Poetry class run by Joe Nathan and Eva. I immediately fell in love and never looked back.

– **Frieda Lipp**

I came to Quest because of Eva Shatkin — or rather Eva's poetry class. I mentioned to my friend Helen Neilson, a former member, that when I retired, I wanted to take a poetry class. She told me about the contemporary poetry class at Quest and how wonderful the leaders were — Joe Nathan and Eva Shatkin. So I joined Quest and the poetry class was all I hoped for and more. Not only was I exposed to more poetry than I had

ever encountered, but I was guided by the best.

Eva brought so much enthusiasm to the class and her love of poetry was palpable. She also brought a rigorous approach to studying the form and structure of each poem.

Thanks to Joe and Eva, I developed a passion for poetry and even began writing some of my own. Again, Eva was there to help as a member of the Poet's Workshop. Her encouragement enabled me to find a voice I didn't know I had.

I am so thankful for the time I had with Eva and she continues to inspire me with her enthusiasm for life — always seeking — always wanting to learn.

She is the embodiment of Quest and I only wish all the new members could have had the pleasure of being in her presence.

– **Mary Ann Donnelly**

Eva was the coordinator of Creative Writing and Great Conversations, the first classes I attended. Here's To Eva.

In the realm of learning's vibrant domain, Eva beckoned me to a wondrous terrain. As the coordinator of Creative Writing's flow, And Great Conversations, where minds could glow.

In her classes, I found solace and release, A sanctuary where my words found peace. With Eva's guidance, I began to explore, The depths of my soul, like never before.

Her teachings ignited my creative flame, Unleashing a passion I could hardly tame. In Great Conversations, ideas took flight, Engaging in discourse, expanding my sight.

Eva's classes, the steps on my quest, To unlock the treasures within my chest. Through her guidance, my voice grew strong, And I found the courage to sing my own song.

So here's to Eva, the catalyst of my start, The one who nurtured the writer in my heart. In Creative Writing and Great Conversations' sphere, She fostered my growth, erasing all fear.

– **Sheryl Harawitz**

Dear Eva! What can I say that will fully express my affection and admiration for her? When I first joined Quest, Eva Shatkin was one of the first to welcome me. I remember her as very curious, genuinely interested in what others said, and always asking relevant, probing questions. I remember she was full of energy, and I would see her small figure moving at speed along the corridors at Quest. Despite her advanced years and physical frailty, she has retained an active mind and I'm always pleased when I see her joining us on Zoom. Now it's wonderful to be able to celebrate her 105th birthday.

– **Jennifer Jolly**

Whenever I visited Eva, she would show me a stack of books that she had just received from Jefferson Library, across the street from her apartment house. Some were the latest best sellers, others dealt with literary and philosophical questions. We also discussed our memories of the years we spent as members of Quest.

– **Beverly Francus**

Dear Eva,

One year after joining Quest, in 1992, the coordinator of the Art History course moved out of New York. It was you that insisted that I become the new coordinator, with constant support and encouragement. I never presented without your positive phone call or conversation following.

And you were always there during the next 19 years that I enjoyed, learned, and shared art history! I presented a 5 day course of Black American Art History, 18th to 21st centuries at Chautauqua in July. And *you* started my journey.

When you no longer were able to attend class, I cherished our email conversations. You are extraordinary, appreciated, and loved!

– **Sandy Gordon**

*continued on next page*



## Eva through a Quest Lens *continued*

Eva was part of poets' workshop when I joined Quest. Here is a poem she wrote in 2016:

– Judy Winn

**I Sit At My Window**  
*by Eva Shatkin*  
1/29/2016

I sit at my window  
looking at a world I see daily:  
the buildings with rooms behind  
numerous windows where  
unknown people live.

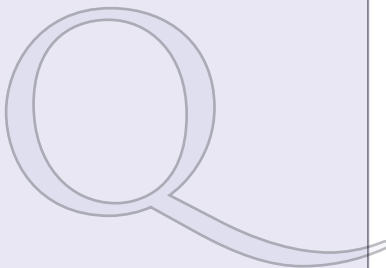
Strangers they are  
and go about their business  
occupied with living,  
accepting the universe,  
as fixed and solid.

All is steady and yet I know  
that my world is spinning  
and the year and its weather, focused on  
the orbit of our sun,  
is governed by its influence.

Not only my world  
but other worlds exist  
with unknown others  
who are constantly responding  
to pull and propulsion.

Whatever we are made of  
is composed and decomposed  
of matter that is used  
for whatever comes from it;  
not an atom is wasted.

What do I understand of  
what is reality?  
I do not factor in  
what is beyond me.  
Enough is my here and now.



## SoleMates Adventure



**F**lushing Freedom Walk, was an experience filled with contrasting moments and a wide range of cultural encounters.

From the serene and unassuming Quaker service to the elaborate rituals of dressing and honoring the gods in the Hindu service, we were immersed in the diverse tapestry of religious practices. It was fascinating to witness the stark differences in the ways people express their faith.

Our culinary journey added another layer of diversity to the day. We indulged in excellent Chinese baked goods that were delightful and then we found ourselves challenged by the Hindu Canteen, where the offerings and customs may have seemed confusing at first. It was an opportunity to expand our understanding and embrace new experiences.

Throughout the Flushing Freedom Walk, we truly experienced extremes, both in terms of spirituality and gastronomy. It was a testament to the vibrant and multicultural nature of the community we were fortunate to explore together.

The company of friends made the experience even more enjoyable. Thank you for sharing your day with us. Let's continue to explore new horizons together.

## CultureQuest Fall 2023 Schedule

<b>September 15</b>	AMNH New Gilder Center	In-person tour
<b>September 22</b>	MET Opera, <i>Dead Man Walking</i>	In-person opera
<b>September 29</b>	<i>The Gilded Age: The Heyday of High Society</i>	Walking tour
<b>October 13</b>	Brooklyn Museum's Exhibit of African Fashion	In-person tour
<b>October 27</b>	Whitney Museum Tour with Linda Sweet	TBD
<b>November 10</b>	AMNH Rose Center for Earth and Space	In-person tour
<b>December 1</b>	Museum of the City of NY: <i>Celebrating a Century</i>	In-person tour
<b>January 19</b>	Art Lecture by Deborah Goldberg " <i>Social Consciousness in Contemporary African-American Painting</i> "	Virtual zoom

## Summer Reading Group *by Andrea Irvine*

This Summer a group of passionate Questers came together to delve into the captivating world of Elizabeth Gaskell's timeless classic, *"Wives and Daughters."* As the pages turned, we indulged in delightful feasts, refreshing beverages, and lively discussions about the intricate plot and fascinating characters.

The group was an extension of last semester's class, a testament to the strong bonds formed during our shared exploration of literature. Eager to keep the intellectual fires burning, we decided to continue our literary adventures. *"Wives and Daughters"* became the perfect summer selection to deepen our connections and create new memories together.

One question that particularly intrigued us was the choice of the title: *"Wives and Daughters."* Why not *"Mothers and Daughters"*? The answer revealed itself through our spirited debates and interpretations, exploring the novel's themes of love, family dynamics, and societal norms. Together, we uncovered the hidden layers beneath the surface, making this literary gathering an enriching experience for all.



*The Elizabeth Gaskell Reading Group*

## Creative Corner

### **THE PLAY'S THE THING®** *by Betty Farber*

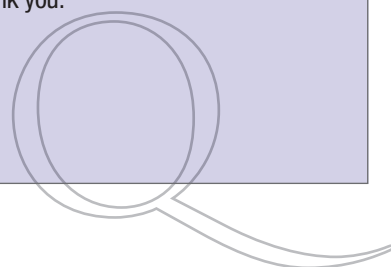
I'm so stuffed with emotion I can  
hardly contain  
The tingling excitement that inhabits  
my brain.  
As I wait for the time when the lights  
start to dim  
And the curtain goes up, I am filled to  
the brim  
With wonder about the magic to come.  
Will the scene be a mansion or a ghetto-  
like slum?  
What stories? What Insights?  
What hopes and what fears?  
Will I be inspired? Will it move me  
to tears?  
Will the playwright be seen as another  
O'Neill?  
Will the actors amaze with portrayals  
so real?

Or, despite my playgoer's intuition,  
If the playwright has offered a poor  
submission,  
Will I be leaving at intermission?

### Thank you *by Carolyn McGuire*

I want to thank all my friends at Quest for your expressions of sympathy and condolence on the passing of my beloved husband, Pete, after 64 years of marriage. My Quest family has been a wonderful source of caring support in my loss.

I find it difficult to find the words to express my gratitude, so these will have to do: Thank you.





## Who's Doing What

The Fab Five: **Madeleine Brecher, Michele Mackey, Karen Levin, Arlynn Greenbaum, and Gale Spitalnik** enjoyed the Hamptons together.



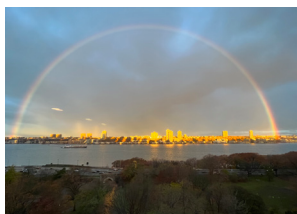
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**Vivian Oliver** celebrated her 87th birthday at brunch at The Smith with son Jono, his wife Alanah, and granddaughter Avery.



• • •

**David Bernard** caught a rare moment looking from his apartment across the Hudson River toward New Jersey. Didn't last long. He ran to the end of the rainbow, but found no gold.



• • •

**Bob Reiss** spent the July 4th Weekend with his three granddaughters.



• • •

## City Wandering

by Frank Montaturo

**Louis XIV...  
NYC  
July 2023**

**T**he Sun King has dropped by for a visit... so diminished in stature. How came he to be here?! Evidently... he has ignored court physicians and stayed out too long in the sun... Result: he is now bone dry and bleached.

A noted dancer... he got his moniker as an adolescent from performing as the sun god Apollo in a ballet at court. Et voilà!

Now... are the glorious royal gams folded up behind him? I dared not investigate. And who is that long legged courtier he's with? So many questions...



## Loch Ness Spotting

by Sandy Gordon



**S**uch fun... Confounded my tour-mates with this trick photo during my amazing trip to Scotland and Ireland. A superb Irish tour guide — witty, and a history and literature buff — kept his flock of only 26 laughing, enlightened, and enthusiastic, as he shared the love of his country and Scotland, inserting special extra moments!

One such was a ride to the peak of a mountain for a "Special" view. Picture this: a forty-passenger bus pointed up, turning "on a dime" to descend! I immediately inserted my seat belt and gripped the bars, visualizing a headline!!!

We recovered in a Downton Abbey-type of palace hotel, in a setting and with rooms fit for a King or Queen.

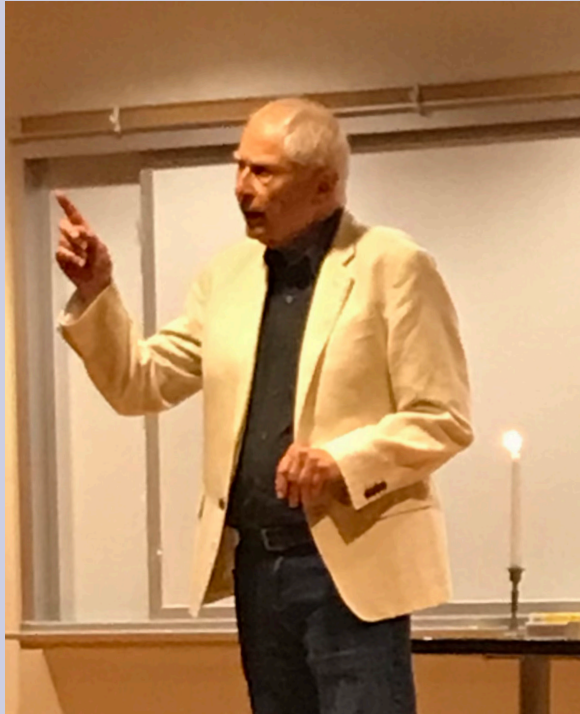
My return in July was with much joy and memory.

## Roy Aces It with “Bad Boys”

by Frieda Lipp

Questers were given a special treat on Thursday, July 20th, when **Roy Clary** performed Shakespeare’s *Bad Boys*, gliding from one character to another, bringing each vibrantly to life: Richard III and Iago, plus others. More than just monologues — Roy created Shakespeare’s context for each dramatic moment — a true tour de force. And during the Q&A, Roy generously shared acting tutorials and personal stories, giving Questers additional insights into the theatrical experience.

A memorable gift. Thank you, Roy.



## Harlem Delights: A Magical Evening of Dining and Theater

by Andrea Irvine & Sheryl Harawitz

Several Questers made their way up to Harlem to dine at the famous Harlem restaurant Red Rooster, and then to witness the splendid performance of “*Malvolio*,” a new play by the Classical Theatre of Harlem, centered around a character from “*Twelfth Night*.” Both the restaurant and the play were ground breaking for Harlem.

Harlem has become a hub of culinary delights, boasting a delightful mix of new and old restaurants, and we choose Red Rooster. Chef Marcus Samuelsson was one of the first modern restaurateurs to enter the Harlem scene in 2010, aiming to provide comfort food, such as crab cakes and mac and cheese, with a modern twist, then adding a dash of Harlem’s warm hospitality. You can explore the restaurant’s history at <https://www.redroosterharlem.com/aboutus#live-at-ginnys>

After indulging in the delectable offerings of Red Rooster, we headed to the theater, located in Marcus Garvey Park, where the Classical Theatre of Harlem ingeniously spun a new play around the character of Malvolio from Shakespeare’s “*Twelfth Night*.” It was fascinating to see how they reimagined and expanded upon this iconic character, breathing new life into the narrative.

The Classical Theatre of Harlem exceeded all expectations. The show’s incredible costumes and mesmerizing dance performances were a sight to behold, captivating our hearts and minds. It’s not every day that we get to witness such artistry and passion. The Classical Theatre of Harlem undoubtedly knows how to both entertain and stimulate the mind.

By 10:00 PM, tired but excited, we made our respective ways home — breaking up into two groups: the Eastsiders and Westsiders.

## Remembering Marcia Friedland

by Martha Drezin

If you wrote a book about **Marcia Friedland**, the title might be “How to Live Well.” Marcia lived with flair, style, courage, tenacity and, most of all, kindness.

About three years ago she shared her bat mitzvah with her lovely 20-something granddaughter and then orchestrated a lavish party overlooking the East River. She was an amazing mother and grandmother, lucky to have her family a stone’s throw away, and always with one grand kid or another at the other end of the telephone line.

Marcia was a great source of referrals — the best doctor, baker, colorist, jeweler — just call Marcia. She had strong opinions about food, theatre, film, clothing, hair, all of which she expressed, but she never expressed negative opinions about others.

Second to her family, Marcia had a passion for travel. Along with her favorite and devoted sidekick, husband Gary, never more than an arm’s reach from her side, Marcia traveled the world... more than once. This was facilitated by her connection with British Airways. She worked for them for almost 20 years preventing lawsuits from difficult customers. British Airways was happy, but more important, Marcia was ecstatic as she took advantage of extraordinary travel deals, fulfilling each and every travel whim. Her daughter Lauren said, “Marcia was never so happy as when she was on the way to the airport for a trip.”

To describe Marcia as a positive person is inadequate. Despite a devastating illness Marcia was bent on getting the most out of each day. She would explore every treatment option but never focus on her illness. In the last couple of years, Marcia was involved in helping to innovate and then served on Quest’s social committee. Marcia was determined to do whatever she could and even sometimes what she couldn’t.

Marcia, we miss you, but we carry you in our hearts.





# CultureQuest: Yayoi Kusama

by Madeleine Brecher

It is said that the world-renowned artist Yayoi Kusama is polka-dot-and-pumpkin obsessed. If you were lucky enough to view her art at the David Zwirner Gallery in Chelsea in July, you would surely agree. Twenty-seven Questers were delighted to spend 90 minutes wandering slowly through the air-conditioned, quiet galleries on a hot summer afternoon — the galleries are closed to the public on Mondays except by invitation — joined by several delightful guides from the Zwirner sharing their knowledge

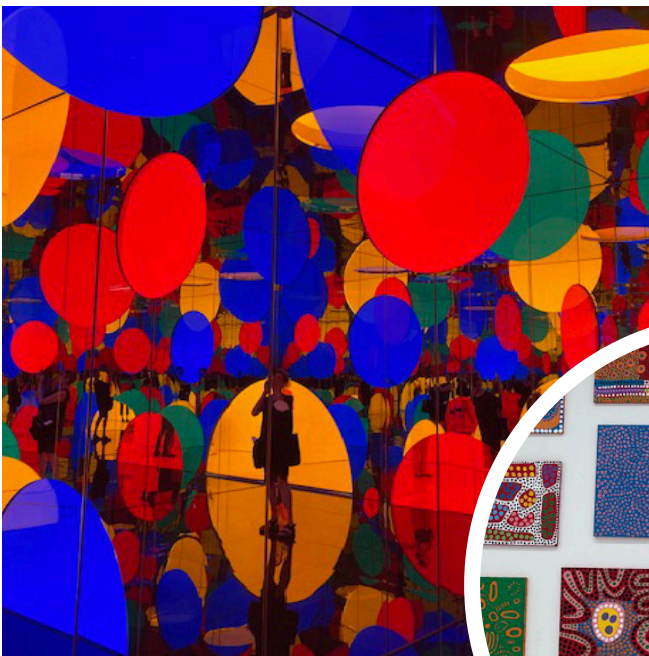
of Kusama's work. We got to see her self-portraits, infinity net painting, many iterations of pumpkins which speak to her of the joy of living, millions of dots, and a wall of paintings of her organic motifs. And finally, we were welcomed into one of her larger "spectacular" infinity rooms. Arlynn Greenbaum wrote, "Kusama may not be everyone's cup of tea, but there is no denying her creativity and popularity." There was lots of energy in the galleries, and all reported that they had a "fun" time!



Five Questers loving the pumpkins.



Eight Questers loving the pumpkins.



Madeleine taking pictures in the Infinity Room. Can you find her?

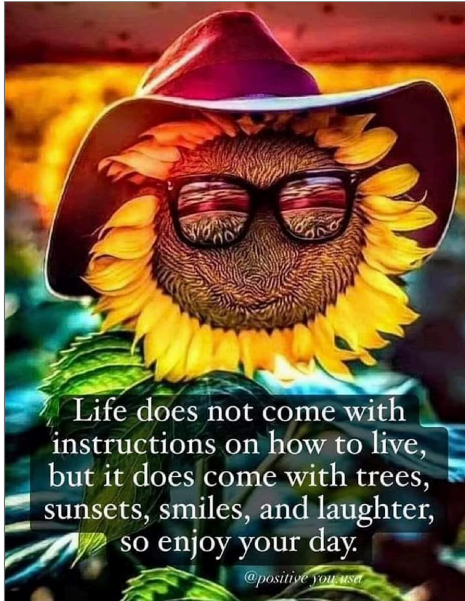


The exhibit was called "I Spend Each Day Embracing Flowers."



Wall of organic form paintings.





Life does not come with instructions on how to live, but it does come with trees, sunsets, smiles, and laughter, so enjoy your day.

@positive.you.see

## Q News Staff

*A Quest Publication*

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The Editor-in-Chief is the final arbiter of the publication's contents.

**"The Trouble With Quotes on the Internet Is That It's Difficult to Determine Whether or Not They Are Genuine."**

— Abraham Lincoln

## New Members

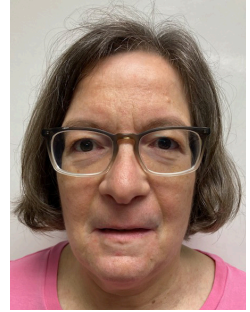
**Q**uest welcomes new members. Look for red lanyards, indicating a new member, at 25 Broadway, greet our new members, make them welcome, and include them in our wonderful Quest



April Koral



Trudy DeWeese



Babette Ceccotti



Lauren Gee



Hillary Weisman



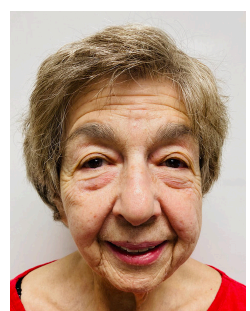
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