

# QNEWS Q DIGITAL

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January 2024

## A Note From the President

**I**t seems that just yesterday 2024 was a year far enough in the future to be the setting for science fiction and fantasy stories yet now we're almost half through the decade. A year I never imagined ringing in is here along with the obligatory list of resolutions.

Yes, I'd like to lose those pesky 10 pounds (okay, 20), plow through that ever-growing stack of books, get a very early start on my presentations. But for almost a decade, I use the beginning of each year to reflect on what NYT columnist David Brooks calls eulogy virtues (Brooks Eulogy Virtues

April 11, 2015). Brooks differentiates between résumé virtues (the skills we bring to the marketplace) and eulogy virtues, the character strengths we would truly like to be talked about at our funeral: kindness, empathy, compassion, brave, honest, faithful, generous of spirit with depth of character and capable of deep love...

Every year has its ups and downs, great experiences and painful times, making new friends and losing others. This year we lost Phil, Marcia, Bobbie and Eva. And what do we remember: not what they did as much as who they were and their impact on our

lives. We talked and emailed about their eulogy virtues.

So as some of us are using the winter break for hibernation, drafting a presentation, taking a vacation or a combination, let's take a few moments to reflect on what others just might say about us. And, as we welcome 2024, we are living our future and, without being maudlin, know we have no more time to squander.

Happy New Year!

**Donna Ramer**

## "The Thanksgiving Play"



**R**ight after the Thanksgiving break, Quest presented "The Thanksgiving Play," a satire on political correctness by Larissa Fasthorse. Above are (from l. to r.): **Frank Montaturo, Mary Ann Donnelly, June Jacobson, and Wayne Cotter.**

## Distinguished Guest Lecturer Series

*by Estelle Selzer*

**O**n Wednesday, December 13th, Grace Cho, author of the memoir *Tastes Like War*, spoke via

Zoom. She told the moving story about what it was like growing up with a schizophrenic Korean mother.



## Grazie Per Tutto

by Gloria Peropat

This past semester, a handful of enthusiastic Questers set off for “Italia” to learn to speak “la lingua.” Each session, **Richard Elrouch** treated us to new words, spicy phrases, and informal lessons in the basics of Italian conversation.

Richard’s generous spirit provided us with useful handouts, a phrase book, and an unconditional acceptance of our attempts to speak Italian using French, Spanish, and Portuguese to get there!

“Grazie per tutto, Ricardo” (Thank you for everything) and to all, “Buon Anno Nuovo” (Happy New Year)!



## Stand-Up Comedians

by Wayne Cotter

On Monday December 4, nine aspiring comics each performed a brief stand-up routine for the Comedy Central class. Quest scholarship recipient Darrisa Rodriguez also joined the class to share her stand-up experiences. Pictured are (front row, from left): **Wayne Cotter, Arlynn Greenbaum, Darrisa Rodriguez, Bob Reiss**; (back row, from left): **Ellie Schaffer, Pete Weis, Roy Clary and Frieda Lipp**. Two other Quest members performed – **Ellen Shapiro** and **Beth Callender** – but are not pictured.



## In Memoriam: Bobbie Gold

by Michael Wellner

**Bobbie Gold**, was barely five feet tall, but she was a giant.

It is no exaggeration to say that Quest has lost a giant among its members. Although well under five feet tall, and certainly less than a hundred pounds, Bobbie was truly an outsized member of Quest.

For the past eleven years, she endeared herself to nearly everyone she met, not only here at 25 Broadway but in her long association with Big Apple Greeters as well. At Quest, she made so many friends, while participating in so many activities, both in class and outside. She was a regular in the film classes, contributing her insights and well-considered reviews.

As many of us know, she was a long-time resident of the Berkshires, where she had a lovely home right alongside a pretty little lake. Marva and I were fortunate enough to spend a couple of weekends at her house, and I was amazed to watch her handle her own kayak with ease, as we all set out for some on-the-water sightseeing around her neighborhood. Bobbie had so many interests and activities, including movies, the theatre, reading, family, and, of course, all her courses and classes at Quest.



She was such a vibrant, positive thinking, and delightful person, it’s so hard to believe that she is gone. We will all miss her terribly.

We Look Forward to a Kinder, Gentler 2024.





## Book Club

by Jan Goldstein

**T**he Quest Book Club will continue in the Spring semester. We meet once a month on the second Wednesday of the month from 12:10–12:55 pm, in-person at 25 Broadway. We hope you'll join us! Here are the dates and reading selections for Spring 2024:

**February 14** *The Bartender's Tale*, by Ivan Doig; presented by **Debbi Honoroff**

**March 13** *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*, by Lisa See; presented by **Joan Vreeland**

**April 10** *Stoner*, by John Williams; presented by **Madeleine Brecher**

**May 8** *Grey Bees*, by Andrey Kurkov; presented by **Linda Downs**

## On the Go

by Michael Wellner

**A** consistent “best seller” among all our trips has been a five-day excursion to the renowned *Shaw Festival*, in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake, in Ontario, Canada. Renowned for its stylish productions, the Shaw Festival is home to one of North America's largest repertory companies. Here we will immerse ourselves in theater performances, backstage experiences and lectures by Shaw company members. And we'll round out our trip with visits to Niagara Falls, the Niagara Parks Butterfly Conservatory and a local winery for a tasting of Niagara's renowned ice wine.

Our Road Scholar trip is from August 12th – 16th, 2024. Prices are just \$1,949/pp for a double, with a \$400 single supplement (airfare not included). Road Scholar trip #10396.

Feel free to ask any Travel Committee member for more details, or call Road Scholar directly (1-877-209-4634). We have a few Questers enrolled already!

## “Long Days Journey Into Night”

**E**ugene O'Neill's “*A Long Day's Journey Into Night*” was performed in Great Plays during the final week of the Fall 2023 semester. The play featured (l. to r.) **Ruth Ward, Roy Clary, John Davis, and Wayne Cotter**



**Be the Reason Someone Believes in the Goodness of People.**

**Procaffeinating: The Tendency to Not Do Anything Until You Have Coffee**

## City Wandering

by Frank Montaturo

**December 2023  
Astoria**

**W**ow... double wow!! A notions and buttons... and upholstery shop! When was the last time you saw one of these?! I can't remember. And there it was just the other day... opposite the Greek restaurant on Ditmars that we had gone to. The owner has had it for decades! This should be put on the city's List of Cultural Heritage Sites and protected in perpetuity. Hmm... just did a Google search. There are more of them than I imagined... but that still doesn't take away the utter delight I experienced on seeing this one.

And after finding that toggle button you've searched years for, you can just cross the street and eat a plate of fried *kalamarakia*!



## Quest Annual Holiday Luncheon

The calendar may have said December 15th, but the temperature was well into the fifties as over one hundred Questers gathered for our annual holiday luncheon at Arte Cafe, on West 73rd Street. And it was not only Quest members who were celebrating; we were honored to have CWE Dean JC Mercado join us, as well as Office Manager Nina Woods, and our two very able Tech Gurus, Felix Pina and Robert Hernandez — who, after many years of our asking — finally brought along his lovely wife!

After a wine reception upon arrival, we were treated to a delicious three-course luncheon, interspersed with welcoming remarks from both Quest President **Donna Ramer**, and Dean Mercado. Judging from all the wonderful comments received afterwards, the happy faces in the pictures, we can certainly say that a good time was had by all.

Special thanks go to our Special Events committee: **Marian Friedmann, Leslie Goldman, Bob Gottfried, Bob Hartmann, and Michael Wellner**



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## Quest Annual Holiday Luncheon



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## Quest Annual Holiday Luncheon



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## Quest Annual Holiday Luncheon at Arte Cafe



### Who's Doing What

For **Judy** and **Pete Weis**, December was full of concerts (sang in a few, attended many others), theater, holiday parties, medical check-ups of all kinds, and a visit to Providence RI to see their son, daughter in law, and grandkid.

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**Sybil Cohen** celebrated her grandson Matthew at his Bar Mitzvah.

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**Arlynn Greenbaum, Gale Spitalnik** and **Madeleine Brecher** met at the Met to view Women Dressing Women. They braved the thousands in line, and enjoyed every moment.

• • •



year's run — her 16th!

Every New Year's Eve, **Gale Spitalnik** participates in a four-mile run around Central Park at midnight, and this year was no exception. Here she is at the conclusion of this

**Aging is out of your control. How you handle it, though, is in your hands.... In my older face, I see my life: every wrinkle, every smile line, every age spot. There is a saying that with age, you look on the outside what you are inside.**

— Diane von Furstenberg

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