

QNEWS Q DIGITAL

A Quest Publication

Issue 66

September 2025

A Note From the President

Welcome back to another exciting term of lifelong learning! Each new semester is a chance to begin again—to open our minds to new ideas, explore topics we've always been curious about, and reconnect with one another. What makes this program so special is not just the wide variety of classes we offer, but the energy, wisdom, and curiosity that each of you brings. Together, we create a learning community unlike any other.

One of the joys of being part of this program is seeing how much fun learning can be at

every stage of life. Some of you return year after year to dive deeper into subjects you love, while others venture bravely into something brand new. Whether you're studying history, literature, science, or technology—or discovering art, music, or philosophy for the first time—every class offers an opportunity to be surprised, challenged, and inspired.

But our program is about more than just classes. It's about friendships, laughter, and the conversations that spill over from the classroom into the lunchroom and hallways. These connections remind us that learning

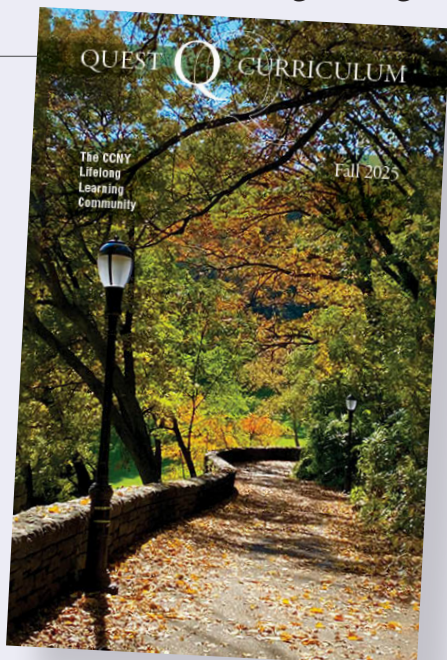
is not a solitary pursuit—it's something we do best together.

So as we begin this new term, I encourage you to bring your curiosity, your questions, and your perspective. Be open to discovery, be willing to share, and be ready to enjoy the journey. And don't forget to engage our red-lanyard members; remember when you were a newbie.

Here's to another rewarding season of growth, connection, and inspiration.

Donna Ramer

Another New Beginning



Fort Tryon Park
Photo by Debbi Honorof,
Quest Member

Mark Your Calendar

Our Social Committee is planning a back-to-Quest lunch for all Quest members, so mark your calendars for High Noon on Wednesday, Sept 10. You'll be treated to sandwiches and sides in the lunchroom, while chatting with old friends and new.

Our thanks to **Gale Spitalnik**, committee chair, along with committee members **Nina Dioletis**, **Pam Gemelli**, **Lois Klein**, and **Marilyn Ostrow**.

Met Scavenger Hunt *by Susan Diehl*

Calling all Met Scavenger Hunters! Please bring your lunch and join us for a meeting at noon on Tuesday, September 9, in Room 19. Share your experience with the hunt — what worked, what didn't work — and those of you who found all 20 objects will receive a prize! There is still time to find those last remaining objects. Email sdiehlnc@gmail.com for more hints!

Book Club

by Jan Goldstein

The Book Club kicks off the Fall semester on Wednesday, September 3, from 12:10–12:55 pm, in-person at 25 Broadway.

The Book Club is making an exception to its focus on fiction with this month's choice of *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali — because it's a memoir that reads like a gripping novel. With wit and a keen eye, Ayaan eloquently details her extraordinary journey from a strict Muslim upbringing through civil war, forced marriage, and asylum, to becoming a member of the Dutch Parliament fighting for Muslim women's rights. **Ze'eva Cohen** will be presenting.

The reading selections for the rest of the semester are:

Oct 1: *The Granddaughter* by Bernhard Schlink; presented by **Shirley Ranz**

Nov 12: *Table for Two* by Amor Towles; presented by **Joan Vreeland**

Dec 3: *A Piece of the World* by Christina Baker Kline; presented by **Debbi Honorof**

Special September Dates

1 Labor Day

2 V-J Day

4 National Wildlife Day

5 National Food Bank Day

8 International Literacy Day

9 International Day to
Protect Education From
Attack

10 World Suicide
Prevention Day

11 Patriot Day

12 National Chocolate
Milkshake Day

14 Grand Parents Day

17 Constitution Day

20 Oktoberfest

21 International Day of Peace

23 Rosh Hashanah 5786

24 National Punctuation Day

26 International Day for
the Total Elimination of
Nuclear Weapons

28 Ask a Stupid
Question Day

28 World Rivers Day

29 National Coffee Day

30 National Day for Truth
and Reconciliation

New Members

Quest welcomes two new members this month. Look for their red lanyards, indicating a new member, at 25 Broadway, greet our new members, make them welcome, and include them in our wonderful Quest.



Lisa Bu



Sheila Krilov Sasmor

City Wanderings

by Frank Montaturo

On a summer Sunday afternoon in the city there are fewer places that I would want to be than at the Harlem Meer for their concert series. Located at the northern end of Central Park it attracts few tourists... either they're unaware... hesitant about venturing so far north... or indifferent. And that's just fine.

The series... world music with a Latino influence... does attract Sunday after Sunday and year after year... familiar faces from the neighborhood. As they go around air-kissing other familiars, I happily muse: "Ah... he made it through another winter." And... "She's dancing better than last year!"

Be it to the rhythms of a drumming group from Guinea West Africa or a salsa ensemble from Puerto Rico, the grey slate dance floor is alive with stomping feet and the eddy of bright fabrics among the shorts. There is shade and occasionally a light breeze off the Meer... above all there is energy and the joy that only free-spirited dancing can bring.



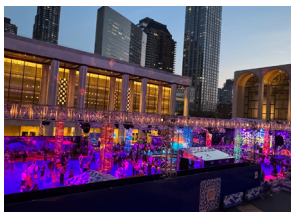
Who's Doing What

Madeleine Brecher and family gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of her husband, George.



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Debbi Honorof was at Lincoln Center recently and captured this photo of the plaza at night taken from the balcony at Geffen Hall. She ran into **Jan Goldstein** there, who suggested Debbi send the photo to QNews.



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Bob Gottfried celebrated his 75th birthday in a backyard party held at his home in Plainview, Long Island on Saturday August 16th.

• • •

Ellen Rittberg and some of her kids and grandkids posed with their friendly waiter in a bistro in Paris, where her son, daughter-in-law and kids rented an apartment overlooking the Seine for the summer.



• • •

Debbi Honorof welcomed her first grandchild on August 5, the daughter of her son and daughter-in-law, who live in Astoria. Her name is Abigail and she weighed in at 5 lbs. 3 oz.

• • •

Pete and Judy Weis were in London in July, mainly to see family and cousin James Inverne's new play entitled "That Bastard Puccini!" about the historically accurate competition between opera composers Leoncavallo and Puccini to complete their operas based on the story of "La Boheme." Based on the great reviews, they hope it will come to NY! Rest of the summer at their summer place in



Springs doing lots of walking, swimming, paddling, etc. and lots of art shows and chamber music concerts. And preparing Quest presentations.

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Howard Salik's granddaughter, Amanda Salik, was married last Saturday, among 275 guests, at Glen Head Country Club in Glen Cove, NY to Parker Laine (who is a triplet). They



are on their way to Italy for a three-week honeymoon beginning in the Lake Region and working their way down to the Boot.

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This summer **Marion Schultheis** spent nearly three unforgettable weeks adventuring with her daughter and grandson. Together they hiked and explored some national parks and monuments including Grand Teton, Yellowstone, Badlands, and Wind Cave.

• • •



Nina Sanders spent the summer in Vermont with various family and friends visiting. She also attended her brother Peter Sanders's 33rd annual chamber music festival in Randolph, VT. Wonderful concerts, including a piece by Nico Muhly. Peter's festival is found at cvcmf.org. That's Nina and Peter in the photo after the first concert.



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Madeleine Brecher and **Arlynn Greenbaum** agree: their days scouring the Met were educational, social, and fantastic fun. They did a deep dive into areas they never

knew existed, made friends with lots of guards, and had a joyous time! Here they are on Day 3 having just spotted the 20th art treasure on the list. Thank you **Susan Diehl!**

"In principle and reality, libraries are life-enhancing places of wonder."

— Gail Honeyman, "Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine"

Libraries were full of ideas—perhaps the most dangerous and powerful of all weapons."

— Sarah J. Maas, "Throne of Glass"

"The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man."

— T.S. Eliot, Nobel Prize laureate

Creative Corner

OUTDOOR SEATING ON FIRST AVENUE® *by Betty Farber*

On First Avenue and 61st Street
In front of Bed Bath & Beyond,
There are comfortable metal seats;

A city dweller's front porch,
A window on city life.

Looking across First Avenue,
I can see a red brick building,
Haunting and symmetrical,
Like a painting by Hopper,
With storefronts beneath.

On the sidewalk,
People with packages,
Couples, dog walkers,
Nannies pushing baby carriages.

In the street, police cars, trucks,
Taxis, stopping for a fare.
Overhead, the Tramway travels
On its voyage to Roosevelt Island.

I too am on a voyage,
Living the magic of city life.
And enjoying the ride.

Don't You Just Hate It When Your Brain Leaves The Room Without Permission?

Roosevelt Island *by Michael Wellner*



What could possibly be better than spending an afternoon outdoors, in absolutely picture-perfect weather, visiting some of the most interesting sights located literally in the center of our wonderful city, surrounded by water, wildlife, beautiful trees, and multiple urban vistas, in nearly total silence?

Well, on a delightfully warm Friday afternoon in late August, some 25 Questers (and a couple of friends and relatives) made their way by subway, ferry, and tram to Roosevelt Island to visit several of the local sights and attractions. And there were so many things to see, including: the Louis Kahn-designed Franklin Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park, on the very southern tip of the island; the old Smallpox hospital (or what's left of it, first opened in 1856); the absolutely magnificent brand-new Cornell Tech campus just south of the 59th Street Queensboro Bridge; the 60-year-old Bird S Coler Hospital (still operating now as a Memory Care facility); The famous Octagon, first built as part of the New York City Mental Health Hospital in 1841, and now reopened as the lobby entrance to a pair of modern apartment buildings; and so much more.

Finally, at the end of the day, a few of us gathered at the roof top bar of the Graduate Hotel, on the Cornell Tech campus, for a few drinks and absolutely fabulous views of the city in every direction!

Many thanks to **Andy Bata** and **Michael Wellner** for organizing such a wonderful outing — and for assuring us perfect weather, too!

Becoming Nature Lovers in Westhampton Beach *by Sybil Cohen*

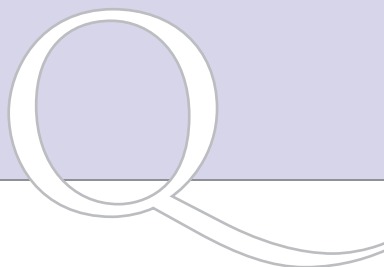
We are watching the ospreys training their young, counting robins, bluebirds, and red-winged blackbirds.
Mint, oregano, basil, and chives are growing in pots on the deck. Inverted plastic forks are effective in keeping the rabbits from eating the plants.

On Moriches Bay out the back door, our visitors can paddle the canoe or kayak and enjoy the sunset view.

Early morning we walk across Dune Road to the ocean and search for treasure the tide washes in.

Q Review

Only 61 Days until the Q Review dead line. Get your work in now!
Send prose to **Donna Ramer**: donnaramer1@gmail.com
Poetry goes to **Judy Hampson**: judyahampson@gmail.com
Write or speak to **Paul Adler**: adlerworks@verizon.net
to learn how to submit your art.



Ovations for Encores 2025

Our Summer Encores program, which began on June 3 and ended on July 31, was a resounding success. The 17 classes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings ran the gamut from art, music and history to genealogy, religion, psychology and even an original play. The diverse programming was representative of the wide range of offerings we have at Quest during the school year.

We brought back Creativity Day on June 26 which was in person only and very popular. All of the other classes were hybrid and we had a total of 780 people attending in person and 189 via Zoom.

After **Steve Allen's** presentation on "The Secret Life of the American Musical" on June 3, lunch was provided by the Social Committee. They also arranged for wine and pastries after Creativity Day. Thanks to them and to the Coffee Committee who made sure we had fresh coffee every morning.

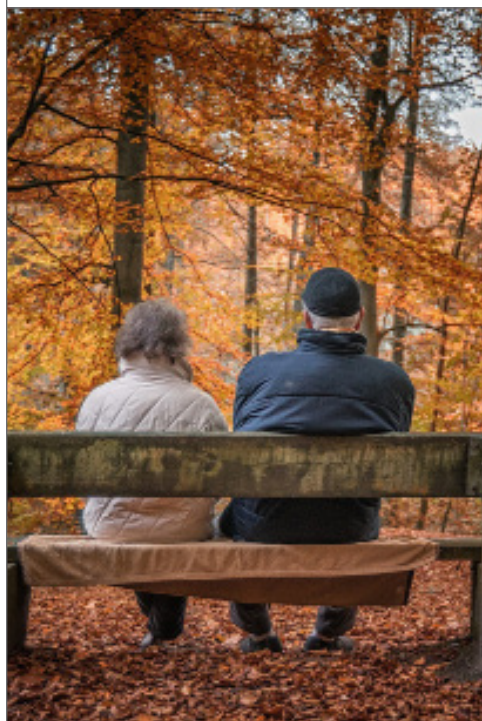
In addition to offering classes for members who may have missed some gems, Encores offers prospective new members the opportunity to experience Quest in a relaxed summer setting.

A big thank you to all the presenters, some of whom updated their material, to the tech team who made sure everything ran smoothly and to all who attended—new and old members alike.

As we begin a new semester, keep your antennae up for classes you think are worthy of being included in Encores 2026. And be sure to vote! Thanks from the Encores team—**Arlynn Greenbaum, Andrea Irvine, and Joyce Hinote.**

Complaining About a Problem Without Proposing a Solution is Called Whining.

Am I Perfect? No. But Do I Try My Best and Keep a Positive Attitude? Also No...



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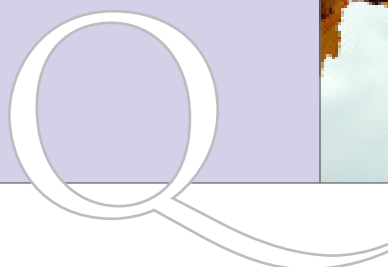
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Articles submitted to QNews may be edited by the Staff. The Editor-in-Chief is the final arbiter of the publication's contents.



Lunchtime Creative Nonfiction Book Club

Carole Blane and **Debbi Honorof** announce an exciting new monthly lunchtime book club, where we will discuss creative nonfiction books also known as narrative nonfiction. Creative nonfiction is a genre that brings true stories to life through the techniques of fiction writing, including vivid descriptions, character development, and engaging narratives. Together, we will delve into a wide range of topics, from history and science to society, travel, biography, and beyond, all through the lens of expertly crafted stories.

The club will meet monthly on Wednesday of the first B-Week from 12:10-12:50 pm. Here are the assigned books:

Oct 8: *Grandma Gatewood's Walk: The Inspiring Story of the Woman Who Saved the Appalachian Trail* by Ben Montgomery (Discussion led by **Carole Blane**)

Nov 5: *Wild Thing: A Life of Paul Gauguin* by Sue Prudeaux (Discussion led by **Linda Downs**)

Dec 10: *The Plaza: The Secret Life of America's Most Famous Hotel* by Julie Satow (Discussion led by **Susan Diehl**)

Happy reading!

