As you know, because of precautions required to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all Y’s Women General Meetings have been canceled until further notice.

Please continue to STAY HOME, STAY SAFE, and take good care of yourselves. We will keep you informed as further information becomes available.

Letter from Polly Temple

Hello to my fellow Y’S WOMEN,

I hope you are all feeling well and staying inside during this time of COVID-19. I know it is very difficult and sort of boring. But it is better to be safe than sorry.

I just wanted you to know how very proud I am to have been your president or vice president for the last 5 years. When I moved here over eight years ago, going to a Y’s Women meeting was one of the very first events I participated in. I want to say that getting to know you all has enriched my life. We have a wonderful organization and I’m looking forward to when we will be able to meet again.

Until then, if you have any news you want to share or just to talk, please feel free to call me. After all, I am home all the time now.

Polly Temple
Outgoing President, Y’s Women

Enjoy the special supplement on life during the COVID-19 pandemic, prepared by Judith Schomer, on pages 4–5 of this newsletter.
In Memoriam

Kate Dickstein – a longtime Westporter and Y’s Women member – died Thursday, February 6 in Mill Valley, California. A beloved special education teacher and talented writing instructor, she was 86.

After earning an undergraduate degree from City College of New York and a master’s degree in special education from Fairfield University, Kate spent more than five decades as a teacher, first at Weston Elementary School, then Coleytown Middle School, and finally at Staples High School.

She was also instrumental in the development of an “Understanding Disabilities” program, which put educators in special education students’ shoes. During her long career, she served as a mentor to many special education teachers of all ages.

Other Losses

During these terrible days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Y’s Women have suffered a number of tragic losses:

- Barbara Brown lost her husband, Larry Brown.
- Marilynn Reed lost her long-time significant other, Joe Podrat, and is suffering from the virus herself.
- Pat Farmer lost her husband of 67 years, Haynes Farmer.

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2020-2021

President: Barbara Stephen (2-year term)
Vice President: Margaret Mitchell (2-year term)
Treasurer: Barbara Morrow
Secretary: Valerie Roffe

Since we cannot vote on this slate in person, please send an email to Polly Temple at pnptemple@mac.com ONLY IF you do not approve the slate.
SATELLITE GROUPS
(Y’s Women Members ONLY)

Book Group 2: Using Zoom, Book Group 2 will be meeting on Thursday, May 7 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. The group will discuss books they have read and enjoyed. Members will be receiving information on accessing this Zoom meeting.

Book Group 3 will meet by teleconference on Friday, May 8 at 10:30 am to discuss City of Girls by Elizabeth Brundage. Directions for calling will be emailed a day in advance. Questions? Contact Doris Levinson at 227-3371 or drjlevinson@gmail.com.

The Movie Club will have a Zoom meeting on Wednesday, May 20 at 1:30 pm. We plan to discuss As Good as It Gets, a 1997 American romantic comedy directed by James L. Brooks, who co-wrote the film with Mark Andrus. The film stars Jack Nicholson as Melvin Udall, who is rude to everyone he meets, including his gay neighbor Simon (Greg Kinnear). When Melvin has to look after Simon’s dog, he begins to soften. Although he still is not completely over his problems, he finds he can conduct a relationship with the only waitress at the local diner who will serve him. Carol (the waitress, played by Helen Hunt) is a single mother with a chronically ill son. The film shows the development of unusual and touching relationships among the main characters.

Nicholson and Hunt won the Academy Award for Best Actor and Best Actress, respectively. This made As Good as It Gets the most recent film to win both lead acting awards. It is ranked 140th on Empire magazine’s list of The 500 Greatest Movies of All Time.

If you wish to be added to the email list for future events, please contact Margaret Mitchell at 255-9094 or margaret06824@yahoo.com.

The Wisest Investment Group has soldiered on, in up stock markets and down markets, we are in! We met on Zoom for our previous two meetings and will meet again on May 28. Call Lois Block for more information at 761-1177.

Solos, Lunch and Trivia, and Carpool and Go will resume activities when we can all be together. Stay tuned for further notice.

Mercy Learning Center Needs Help
From Jane Ferreira, Mercy Learning Center CEO

We presently are trying to take care of our students who have the coronavirus in their immediate households. We have been delivering food and diapers to these mothers and children since they are in quarantine. This has been our focus. Many of our families have no outside support and therefore are really left alone. Once we get the food and diaper situation under control, we will use the financial support to help with their bills. Many are not eligible for the stimulus checks.

If your community wants to help in any way, this is the email that I sent out last week when our pantry got too low. And if they need to have someone pick up their items, I can ask one of our Board members who may live near them. Thank you for this opportunity.

The back parking lot of MLC will be open every Friday from 10 am to 12 noon for deliveries. Folks can come and drop off food, diapers, gift cards. Leave them by the back of the building and the janitor will take them into the building (he will be outside waiting). Everyone who is dropping off needs to have a mask and keep appropriate social distance. Donors need to put their name in the bag or envelope so we can send out thank you notes in the near future. Or you can email me with your friends’ information, etc.

Specific items: bags of rice and any type of dried beans, lentils, etc.; tomato paste, tomato sauce, or diced tomatoes; cooking oil, oatmeal, corn meal, cream of wheat, powdered milk, pasta, canned fruit, applesauce, and canned vegetables and meats. These are basic items that will help. Toilet paper and other toiletries. (There are more items on our wish list but these are the most essential right now.)

Diapers: 4, 5, and 6 sizes.

Gift cards: Stop and Shop, Shop Rite, Walgreens, CVS – denominations of $25 or above.

Financial Donations: always welcome – by check (preferred) or on the website – will be restricted to those in need during this pandemic.
**We are together**

Martha Aasen - busy raising funds to feed those in need. To donate: www.westport.gov/foodfund.

Gloria Lau - Cooking! Vegetarian Mullagatawny

Becky Ruthven at a driveway party - find a sunny spot and invite friends with lawn chairs!

The Movie Club on Zoom

Top Row: Margaret Mitchell, Judith Schomer, Sheila Weiss, Arlene Bloom

2nd row: Rosalee Kaye, Frankie Stein, Beverly Silverman, Linda Knox

3rd row: Arline Foodman, Jane Malakoff, Sandra Murdock, Nancy Bloom

4th row: Betty Walker, Sue Brenner, Barbara Rogan, Bonita Messman

Linda Knox with Zoe - A great way to get outdoors.

Vera DeStefano now finds the stay at home time to put the finishing touch on her trompe l'oeil.

Karen Como at the Assumption Church food pantry -
Information regarding grocery shopping

Many precautions are being suggested about grocery shopping and handling purchases after you bring them home. NPR provided an excellent summary of relevant information by contacting infectious disease, virology, and food safety experts.

The vast majority of the country is under lockdown right now. But stay-at-home orders come with a few exceptions — like grocery shopping. Many of us are still venturing out to stock up on food and toiletries. But what’s the safest way to shop during this pandemic? And what should you do once you’ve brought your haul home?

We asked infectious disease, virology, and food safety experts to share their tips about safe grocery shopping — and what you can stop worrying about.

Know the dangers — focus on the people, not the food

Avoid crowds and shop quickly.
Wear a face covering
Go alone
Sanitize carts and hands
Choose no-touch payment when you can

Don't drive yourself crazy disinfecting your groceries

"After 24 hours, the vast majority of virus is no longer infectious," Dr. Aronoff says. And after 72 hours, he notes that research has found the virus is trace or undetectable on most surfaces. If you're still worried and it's a food that doesn't need to be refrigerated, Graham says just leave it out for 24 hours. Editor’s note: many are storing their nonperishables in their garages. If you really want to wash your groceries, don’t use disinfecting spray or wipes. Rinse fresh produce in plain water — and eat your veggies!

Wear a face covering

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now recommends that people wear cloth face coverings out in public.

Skip the gloves

Gloves don't make you invulnerable. As soon as you touch something with your gloved hand, that contamination is on the gloves: leave the gloves at home and sanitize or wash hands instead — before entering the store, after leaving and again when she gets home.

Still anxious? Order online

Be sure to tip generously. As for what to do with unpacking those groceries, experts say the advice is the same as if you'd gone to the store yourself.

Funny Story Department

courtesy of Lois Ross

Can anyone tell the difference between “Completed” and “Finished”? No dictionary has ever been able to define the difference between Complete and “Finished”. However, in a linguistic conference held in London, England, Sun Sherman and Indian American, was the clever winner.

His response was: When you marry the right woman, you are “Complete”. If you marry the wrong woman, you are “Finished”. And, when the right woman catches you with the wrong woman, you are “Completely Finished”.