



The Y's Women

May 2021

The Y's Women Newsletter

Dear Y's Women,

We hope you all are safely immunized against Covid and looking forward to a wonderful Spring and Summer. This past year presented many challenges in all aspects of our lives. We are proud and appreciative of our members who supported our organization even when this meant meeting virtually, learning new software, changing the meeting location of satellite groups, etc.

We hope to resume in-person meetings as soon as it is safe for us to gather. We are tentatively planning to begin these meetings in September 2021. Of course, we are closely reading guidelines identified by the CDC, Health Departments, and other medical professionals. We also are watching the experience of other local organizations such as libraries, schools, and senior centers. If the September date is not medically advisable, we will continue our virtual meetings until we can safely meet in person.

When we do meet in person, our meetings will be held at a different location. Enrollment in Temple Israel's Fall preschool program has increased so dramatically that they no longer have the room needed to accommodate us. We are grateful to Temple Israel for facilitating the wonderful experiences we had there. While we are sorry to leave, we're pleased that they are experiencing this increased enrollment. We are considering a number of other locations for future meetings, and are confident that we will find an excellent alternative.

In the meantime, please continue reading our newsletters and emails. We plan to continue our usual schedule of meeting on the second and fourth Mondays from September through May. Specific information about location and format will be sent to you as soon as possible. Know that we are doing everything possible to keep our organization viable and our members safe.

Looking forward to our future together,

Barb Stephen, President
Margaret Mitchell, Vice President

During COVID, General Meetings are broadcast on the Y's Women YouTube channel – [Y's Women YouTube](#) – and can be viewed live or at a future date.

**Liam Lonigan, Westport Country Playhouse:
May 10 at 11:30 am**

Liam Lonigan, Assistant Artistic Director of Westport Country Playhouse, will describe in detail this 90-year-old institution which saw, firsthand, the birth of the modern American theater. With each year it brought more artists and more audiences

together to experience a joyous expression and powerful storytelling – making it one of the most influential arts organizations in the Northeastern United States. The COVID-19 pandemic forced all theaters to pause live programming over the past



year, which is the only time the Playhouse has stopped producing theater since World War II. Facing the challenge of being a historic theater

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organization without making live theater, the Playhouse has taken this moment to reflect on its own identity, build innovative programming, and plan for a meaningful future.

Before founding Egg & Spoon Theatre Collective in 2017, Liam received his BFA from Syracuse University, where he was the Managing Director of Black Box Players while directing and assisting on numerous productions. Most recently, he co-directed *The Rats* and directed *The Killer* for Egg & Spoon's second season. Other assisting credits include *Fiorello!* (Off-Broadway, Director Bob Moss), *Man of La Mancha* (Director Mark Lamos), *Thousand Pines* (Director Austin Pendleton), and *In the Heights* (Director Marcos Santana). Liam is an Associate Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

Rabbi Greg Wall, 'The Making of a Jazz Rabbi,' May 24 at 11:30 am



Rabbi Greg Wall, currently the Rabbi of Beit Chaverim Synagogue in Westport, will share the fascinating story of his voyage back to his ancient spiritual roots through his love affair with

music. Together with live and recorded examples, he will give highlights of his travels through time and community, creating a life that embraces the nexus of art and religion.

A Jewish artist, thinker, teacher, and student with a non-traditional background and equally unique current professional life, the rabbinate is a midlife addition to Greg's journey. And although he is a modern but traditionally observant Jew, he does not align with any particular Orthodox rabbinic group, choosing to mix freely between and study within centrist, liberal, and ultra-Orthodox circles.

Rabbi Wall was raised as a functionally illiterate Jew and opted out of Jewish communal life after his Bar Mitzvah, as did most of his peers. Drawn to music, he graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music and moved to New York in the early 1980s to pursue a career as a jazz saxophonist and composer. As a result of a remarkable set of occurrences, he began to explore his Jewish roots, married, became traditionally observant, and raised three children

within the day school system. He began a study of traditional texts – at first casual, later in-depth – and in 2006 received the first of three Orthodox rabbinic ordinations.

During that time, Rabbi Wall developed an international performing and recording career combining his passions for Judaism and Jazz improvisation. His ensemble, *Hasidic New Wave*, toured extensively throughout North America and Europe, appearing at many of the world's top music festivals and garnering critical acclaim. He then formed the ensemble *Later Prophets* and released an eponymously titled recording exploring the prophecies of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Malachi, followed by *HaOrot: The Lights of Rav Kook*, featuring original compositions accompanying dramatic readings of the mystical poetry of Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook.

As Rabbi of Beit Chaverim Synagogue in Westport since 2013, he has continued his musical activities while working hard to bring Torah into the lives of his congregants and community members. He has released four CDs with Zion80 and produced the Jazz Rabbi Series in Westport since 2015.

A brief introductory video introducing Rabbi Wall is available at <https://youtu.be/gBpfCHKIO7w>.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to announce the death of Barbara Kelley, at the age of 95, from complications resulting from Alzheimer's disease.

SATELLITE GROUPS (Y's Women Members ONLY)

Book Group 2 will meet on Zoom on Thursday, May 6 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. The book to be discussed is *Chances Are* by Richard Russo, and the discussion will be led by Sue Harris. This group will also meet on Thursday, June 3 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm to discuss *Ask Again, Yes* by Mary Beth Keane. The discussion will be led by Arlene Bloom. For information, please contact Arlene at 254-9096.

Book Group 3 will meet on Zoom on Friday, May 14 at 10:30 am to discuss *Educated* by Tara Westover. Teri Klein will lead the discussion. Questions? Contact Doris Levinson at drjlevinson@gmail.com.

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The **Movie Club** will have a Zoom meeting on Wednesday, May 19, at 1:30 pm to discuss *Inherit the Wind* and *Crip Camp*. *Inherit the Wind* was shown on the WNET network of PBS as part of Reel 13 Classics (April 24 at 9:00 pm). *Crip Camp* is available on Netflix. If you did not see or record *Inherit the Wind* when it was originally broadcast, you may be able to see it through a PBS playback system (such as Thirteen Passport) or other streaming service such as Hoopla. Also, a DVD of *Inherit the Wind* is listed in the catalog of the Westport Library.

Inherit the Wind is a fictionalized account of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey Trial," which took place between July 10 and 21, 1925, and resulted in John T. Scopes' conviction for teaching Charles Darwin's theory of evolution to a high school science class, contrary to a Tennessee state law.

Crip Camp starts in 1971 at Camp Jened, a summer camp in New York described as a "loose, free-spirited camp designed for teens with disabilities." Starring Larry Allison, Judith Heumann, James LeBrecht, Denise Sherer Jacobson, and Stephen Hofmann, the film focuses on those campers who turned themselves into activists for the disability rights movement and follows their fight for accessibility legislation.

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

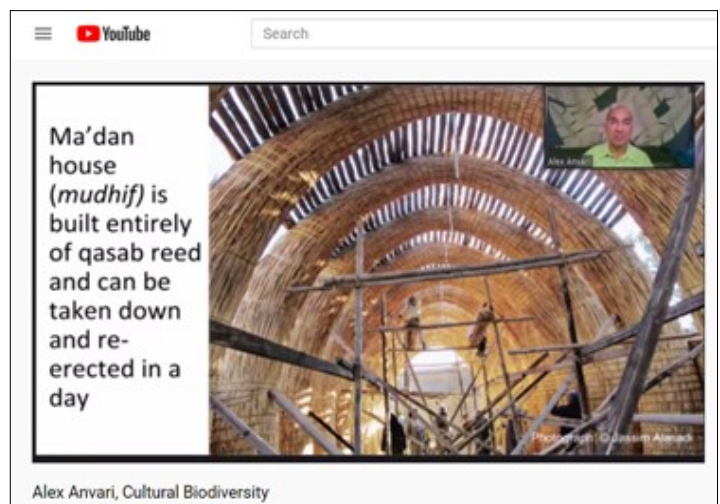
NewsTalk will meet on Zoom at 10:00 am on Thursday, May 27 for a lively discussion of news of the day. If you're interested in this group, please contact Doris Skutch at 247-3656.

Wisest Investment Group: 20+ years and still going, the Wisest Investment Group has weathered up stock markets and down stock markets and learned a lot along the way. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 27 from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon on Zoom. If the market intrigues and you like researching, sharing ideas, and being a part of a Wise Group, please contact Lois Block at loisblock@optonline.net.

The **Memoirs Group** will meet on Tuesday, May 11 at 2:00 pm. We will meet in person, outdoors at the Levitt Pavillion! Our group welcomes new members; if you're interested, please contact Cary Peterson at carypeterson3@gmail.com.

FREE TUESDAYS AT COMPO BEACH

We have arranged a permit enabling Y's Women without Westport beach stickers to enjoy Compo Beach on Tuesdays during the summer. You can go between 10:00 and 11:00 am or after 5:00 pm – just tell the gatehouse attendant that you're a Y's Woman. If you go at the end of the day and bring a picnic dinner, head for the Cannons and you're likely to run into other Y's Women.



Alex Anvari, President of the UN Association of Southwest Connecticut, gave a fascinating presentation on Cultural Biodiversity on April 12. If you missed the program, you can access it anytime at [Y's Women YouTube](#).

