



# CARING TIMES

## Neighborhood Groups

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## Brooklyn



Botanic Garden

## JUNE

### **Who was ready, anxious, reluctant to go to museums, movies, etc., as soon as they opened**

With 11 people online via Zoom, only one was anxious to go to museums, other entertainments. Everyone else was reluctant, preferring to wait and see how things develop. "I'll wait and see," or "Take it day by day" were common responses. Of course, it all became moot after Cuomo refused to open museums, etc. al. for Phase 4.

## JULY

### **Physical health updates and mental health generally, and problems to watch out for**

Everyone is fine, fortunately. Those who left for vacation or summer homes are feeling even better.

## Downtown 1



The High Line

## JUNE

### **Experiences of the activities members are watching online**

One member shared a newsletter she receives weekly from Senior Planet (<https://seniorplanet.org/>) which lists exercises and other programming. She indicated she would forward her latest issue to the group.

Another member tried the Peloton Yoga Class which is \$40/month to stream. This is a follow-up from the discussion we had last month about recommended yoga classes. She mentioned they have added other programs in addition to bike stuff. There's a 60-minute class that she just loves. The yoga class focused on the lower body because people are sitting all day. She also has a trainer twice a week through Zoom.

Another member is working on de-cluttering her apartment. She said that it's a slow process as she's also doing caretaking. She cited an organization for those with ADD, which is also good for people with a creative mind called ADDA (<https://add.org/>).

She's also looking for support about needing to get a new Apple computer since hers is from 2014. She doesn't want a brand new one because it's like having a Mercedes Benz. Another member mentioned a refurbished one might be a better choice. She could buy it from Apple. They used to sell cheap computers, a lower price one for students. It might be best to call them.

Another member mentioned she uses iPad Pro with a keyboard.

One of our members has a mom in a nursing home and they have weekly Zoom calls with the family to keep in touch with everyone.

IMac and iPhone have Notes (app) on the device so you can search for things in the computer.

One of our members said looting took place in the store right below her apartment and how scary all the noise and mayhem was. Hopefully, the 8pm curfew will help to keep people off the streets. When you download the app called Citizen, it will tell you what's going on in your neighborhood.

Some of us are just yearning to visit family outside the Metro area. Some are still hoping to go out-of-town this summer to their regular place. It's hard to figure out what to do. Those of us already at our out-of-town homes have cancelled planned visitors as you don't know where they've been, and you just want to use caution for your own health.

## **JULY**

### **Sharing events among the TTN chapters**

It would be great if an author or speaker would do it for free, particularly, if they prefer a large audience. Many of the events that have been scheduled have a nominal payment to ensure attendance.

The discussion started with sharing the TTN events we've attended on Zoom and the question of whether TTN should continue to present those programs. It was mentioned that the attendance has been off the charts, with events getting very large attendance that wouldn't have been possible before. One of the benefits of Zoom is that meetings are available at the individual's convenience. This is a really great feature. There could also be theme-related programs with similar interests around the country.

We could do Zoom meetings with other Caring Collaborative groups. We could contact another chapter to see if they want to have contact with us.

There's no planning of in-person events yet. The first step might be an event with less than 10 people.

Under certain circumstances some of our members will leave their apartments. We're not anxious to go to an in-person event in the near term.

There are a lot of **issues to consider about interacting with others**. Each person has to make her own decision about what's good for her. One member who's been out of town mentioned she goes shopping every 2-3 weeks. Where she's staying there aren't any crowds, though she did mention that the bike path is crowded.

What are our feelings about public transportation? Perhaps certain hours of the day are better than others.

Some of our members have gone to see the eye doctor and another to the dentist for a cleaning. Another member mentioned she needs cataract surgery and plans to do one eye at a time. The first surgery was done in the hospital, but the second will be done in a clinic because the procedure had changed since the first surgery was done.

We've noticed that some masks make it hard to talk to people. It was mentioned that people can't tell if you're smiling. Some feel they need to wear a face shield as well as a mask. There was a discussion about those clear bell umbrellas that could be used like a face shield.

Some of us go to the grocery store to buy food to prepare; and others order in.

It was noted that Zoom has completely changed our lives.

### **Downtown 3**



Union Square Green Market

## **JULY**

### **How we were coping with the lockdown**

Suggestions about

- Activities,
- Online volunteer work,
- Cultural offerings on TV, etc.
- Sharing talents,
  - Stories about significant life events,
  - Activities we'd been involved with at home or abroad such as teaching in remote places,
  - Sponsoring deserving students.

Our members have been very open with each other and, ironically, seeing each other up close on the Zoom screen, has created intimacy.

### **Eastside Afternoon**



Bloomingdales

## **APRIL-JULY**

### **Staying safe in the age of coronavirus, and our current state of mental health**

- How to deal with the isolation of quarantine,
- Where and when to grocery shop,
- Public transportation or not? Also,
- How to get to medical appointments, and
- Personal safety.
  - Several neighborhoods have changed dramatically since so many people now work from home; areas once bustling with people now have homeless people sleeping in doorways, how can we be sure we are safe when we are out? Perhaps change your usual route, or travel with a friend if possible. One of our members fell and broke her arm; happily, she had great family support but she also had us to chat with.

We now really enjoy one another's company; in May we met for lunch in an UES park (BYO) just to check in with one another and celebrate Spring. We have tried to meet at an outdoor restaurant for lunch again, but the weather has not cooperated.

## **Lincoln Square**



Lincoln Center

## **APRIL-JULY**

### **Dealing with the risk of Covid and how to cope during the shutdown**

Once we became more comfortable with the situation we turned to other topics, including what we were learning about ourselves through the shutdown experience, dreams under Covid, coping with retirement and no-physical-contact volunteer opportunities. Since New York City began opening up we have also devoted two sessions to discussing how we are dealing with the added risks and opportunities that the evolving situation brings to us.

In addition, 8 members of the group enjoyed dinner “together” through Dinner Mates (<https://dinnermatesclub.com/>), which arranged for delivery of a three-course meal from a local restaurant to each participant.

## **MurrayHill/KipsBay**



Kips Bay towers

## **APRIL**

### **Successes and challenges in coping with the shut-down**

Group members exchanged practical information (such as local store openings) and ideas for online cultural and intellectual experiences. Here's a selection of online resources recommended by participants:

- Borough President Gale Brewer's e-newsletter with info about local issues as well as online cultural and educational resources. <https://www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov/signup/>
- Senior Planet's free online fitness classes including morning yoga. <https://seniorplanet.org/>

- Free online singalongs with New Hampshire-based singing coach. <https://fearofsinging.com/>
- NYC Ballet's past performances. <https://www.youtube.com/user/newyorkcityballet>
- Virtual museum tours. <https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>
- National Theatre performances. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJgBmjHpqgs45ktoX726MsJVsx5tcwVs7>
- NY Botanical Garden's virtual tours including annual Orchid Show. <https://www.nybg.org/>

## **MAY**

### **What we've been doing to stay engaged and positive during the epidemic**

Here are some online resources mentioned during the month:

#### **STREAMING VIDEOS**

Netflix:

- *Becoming* (Michelle Obama documentary),
- *Shtisel* (Israeli family drama),
- *Workin' Moms* (Canadian sitcom),
- *Restaurants on the Edge* (business and culture reality),
- *Win the Wilderness*, (reality competition),
- *Hollywood* (post WW II drama),
- *Unorthodox* (Hasidic drama),
- *Dead to Me* (dark comedy).

Amazon Prime:

- *The Painter and the Thief* (edgy documentary).

*Time100 Talks, Finding Hope* (interviews with experts):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_tqdP-IHC8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_tqdP-IHC8)

Internet Archive has many older free-to-view films: [https://archive.org/details/feature\\_films](https://archive.org/details/feature_films)

#### **WEBINARS AND VIRTUAL TOURS**

- The Rijksmuseum and Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam have extensive online tours of their collections: <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/van-gogh-museum>  
<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en>
- The Frick Museum's Cocktails with a Curator program is now online, also many other videos: [https://www.frick.org/interact/video/see\\_all\\_videos](https://www.frick.org/interact/video/see_all_videos)
- New York Adventure Club (American Burlesque, Wolf Conservation Center, and many other virtual tours in NYC area): <https://www.nyadventureclub.com/> Landmark West offers webinars and virtual tours, including Art Deco New York:  
<https://www.landmarkwest.org/publicprograms/>

## PERFORMANCES

- NY Philharmonic online concerts: <https://nyphil.org/playson>
- Met Opera performances: <https://www.metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams/>
- My Favorite Broadway: The Leading Ladies, 1998 Concert Recorded at Carnegie Hall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlBM1ZUBGq>
- Buzz feed to Daniel Radcliffe reading Soccer's Stone: <https://www.buzzfeed.com/noradominick/harry-potter-daniel-radcliffe-reading-sorcerers-stone>

## ONLINE GAMES

- Mah Jongg: <https://realmahjongg.com/>
- Jigsaw puzzles for Apple devices: <https://apps.apple.com/us/developer/veraxen-ltd/id640529080>

## FOOD DELIVERY

Foodkick same-day food delivery service: <https://www.foodkick.com/>

## ONLINE ESL TUTORS NEEDED

English Language Learners In-Home Program is a non-profit providing virtual one-on-one instruction to immigrants, including ESL at all levels, GED prep, and preparation for the US citizenship exam. They have a waiting list of over 900 potential students and are looking for more tutors: <https://eslinhome.org/>

## JUNE

**Our hopes, plans, and concerns about the continuing shutdown and gradual re-opening during the summer, and our emotional reactions to the widespread destruction in the city and how we're coping**

We're glad to see normal activities resume, and we're especially grateful to be able to return to our hair salons after a long absence. We have mixed views about taking advantage of restaurant street dining, but we're pleased that restaurants are able to offer this option to increase their revenue. However, we have serious concerns about the possibilities of contracting the Covid virus ourselves as well as a resurgence due to the recent large protest gatherings. A member who is from the Middle East reminded us to appreciate the freedom of speech we have in the United States.

Some of us are scheduling routine medical and dental appointments. One member mentioned that she's following the recommendation of her health care provider to take care of all outstanding medical issues, such as tests and appointments, during the summer in case another COVID shutdown occurs during the fall or winter.

### **What we've been doing to stay engaged and positive during the epidemic**

We've enjoyed online tours and lectures from many organizations including the New York Adventure Club, Lincoln Center, and Temple Emanu-El.

Here are a few of the many resources mentioned during the month:

- Daily NYC and NYS virus-tracking statistics from The Gothamist:  
<https://gothamist.com/news/coronavirus-statistics-tracking-epidemic-new-york>
- Online jigsaw puzzles: <https://www.jigsawexplorer.com/>
- Kara and Nate, extensive YouTube series by a couple spending years travelling the world:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4ijq8Cq-8zQKx8OH12dUSw>
- New York Gallery Tours has online visits to contemporary digital art exhibits:  
<https://nygallerytours.com/private-tours/>

## JULY

### Online events and other programming we've enjoyed

Here are a few resources mentioned at the meeting:

Two streaming services members are using:

- Sling TV has multiple packages of TV channels, from limited to extensive, and
- Peacock is a new service with many NBC shows (not available on all devices).

TV shows we're watching:

- *The Old Guard*,
- *Baby-Sitters Club*,
- *Richard Jewell*, and
- the Spanish telenovela, *Casa de Flores* (subtitled in English) on Netflix, and
- *Hanna* and
- *Newsies* on Amazon Prime.

## Queens



The Unisphere

## MAY

**“Quarantine Fatigue”** based on an article in the NYTimes by Syon Bhanot, an assistant professor of economics at Swarthmore College.

**Quarantine fatigue** was defined as exhaustion and waning discipline surrounding the restrictions to daily life needed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. It's entirely understandable as

staying home is stressful, boring and, for many, financially devastating. Even as some states lift their lockdown orders, we all felt that New York is on the right track and we're all trying to keep our resolve to follow the rules.

An article in the Wall Street Journal (which everyone was sent in advance) about **Introverts and Extroverts** and how they face different problems and solutions during this crazy time produced a very lively discussion.

### **Wearing masks and why people seem to be having a problem doing this.**

As a whole we couldn't fathom why it was so difficult as it not only keeps us and others safe, but it shows that we care about our fellow man.

### **Music**

Our likes, dislikes, favorite performers and how we came to discover their music. Although many of us have known each other for years the discussion provided some new insights and shared loves.

Once again, it's been wonderful to see our friends every other week, share our stories and feel connected.

## **JUNE**

### **The Importance of Friendship**

initiated by a program TTN had and with additional information gleaned from the internet.

1. Friends help us interact with just about everyone.
2. Friends keep us mentally and physically strong.
3. Friends help us weather lonely times.
4. Friends improve our quality of life.
5. Friends are the family we choose.

### **Answers to the following five questions:**

1. If you were famous, what industry would you like to be in?
2. What is the one thing you'd like to own that you could never afford?
3. What is the most interesting place you've ever visited?
4. If you were a Super Hero what would your special power be?
5. What are the three most important things you're grateful for?

Although we all try to stay positive and not get too political, we did end with a discussion of what has been happening in our country and how sad we all were to witness it.

### ***How to Stay focused, get things done, and possibly help your brain health***

A member provided the internet links below as a reference.

1. <https://www.beamlocal.com/stay-focused-manage-your-time-and-get-more-work-done/>
2. <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/10-critical-tips-prevent-distraction-and-sharpen-your-focus.html>
3. <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/why-improving-your-concentration-helps-your-memory/>

## JULY

### **Etiquette in the Time of COVID-19**

The presenter referenced online articles from CNN, the NYTimes and Emily Post. The major takeaways were:

1. Safety always comes first.
2. Speak up when you are uncomfortable but do it in an upbeat way and make it less about the other person's actions and more about how you feel.
3. Keep your cool, don't be aggressive and try a little levity and compassion.
4. Even though you're wearing a mask, smile.

### **Risk Factors in the Pandemic World**

1. Each person has to decide what activities and actions make them comfortable, and what is not for them at the moment.
2. Don't be dismissive of other people's fears, or what you perceive to be risky behavior.

### **Go Bags and other things to think about when you have to leave your home in a hurry**

Depending upon where you live and the types of emergencies you might encounter, certain items might be different but there are some basics.

1. ID's – for travel, access to assets, to register for help
2. Cash – credit cards might not be taken; have small denominations
3. Keys – for home, auto, safe deposit box
4. First Aid kit
5. Food (high calorie/ & lightweight), water

### **Ageism: before and during the pandemic**

1. Until 2019 clinical trials didn't include anyone over 65 years of age.
2. Old age is considered 65-100 years of age (quite a shock to most of us), which perpetuates a very negative stereotype. However, 20% of our current work force are elderly and many retirees, who were essential workers, came back to their jobs to assist during the pandemic as well as volunteering to help in any way they could.
3. The idea that the elderly are not as important since they're going to die soon anyway was mentioned by a politician and reported by the media. Reporting about deaths in nursing homes seemed to imply that most older people resided in these nursing homes.

### **Growing up in the 50's and 60's and the differences between then and now**

1. Most felt it was a more innocent time when we were free to just be kids.
2. There was less pressure put on kids.
3. We all agreed that we were happy not to be raising young kids at this time.

## Upper East Side 6



2nd Ave. Subway at 86th St.

## AUGUST

### Open forum

We could bring up anything that came to mind and resilience during the pandemic. Folks talked about walking and eating out with friends. Most are still frightened of going out but have gone to doctors. The biggest fear seems to be going to the dentist!

## Upper East Side 7



The Frick

## MAY

### What we're doing during this time at home

Some of us don't look at the calendar anymore since all the plans are on hold or have been cancelled like tickets to a show or lunch with a friend. Most of the members are having their groceries and carry-out food delivered regularly. Others shared their favorite stores (Gristede's, even though it's more expensive) who have a better track record delivering what was ordered. Some of us have started to tackle the build-up of papers that need filing or shredding, another defrosted her freezer. Another has re-arranged all her recipes. Some of us have rediscovered our love of cooking.

There was discussion about how we're handling the items we receive. Some of us are wiping everything down with Lysol wipes. Some of the members have a quarantine area either in or near their apartment door. The temptation to buy in bulk is there, but some of us have such small apartments that there's really no place to put it.

We're all missing the interactions of the activities we used to partake in and seeing friends. Everyone agreed it's good to go for a walk. The trick is finding an area of town that's not too crowded. One member mentioned she likes to walk on the east side of Central Park near the Conservatory Garden at 105<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

(<https://www.centralparknyc.org/attractions/conservatory-garden>) around mid-day. Others suggested waking up early, before anyone else, to take in some sunshine and be in the open air.

There have been reports of finding hand sanitizer at Duane Reade and CVS. It was mentioned that it's not located in the area where you think it would be so that customers don't buy out the stock. The store will tell you they can only sell you one bottle of sanitizer. Ask for it at the cashier.

Someone asked if anyone has bought a plant. One of our members purchased one for her terrace. Another mentioned having an orchid plant and not knowing how to care for it. One of our members, who's an avid gardener, shared that orchids love neglect. It doesn't like direct sunlight or to be moved around. It should be watered every 10 days with about a half cup of water. Even 4-5 ice cubes would do.

Another member mentioned an artificial plant. She specifically recommended checking out Michael Walter of Lexington Gardens on 70<sup>th</sup> and Lexington (<http://www.lexingtongardensnyc.com/>). Other members agreed that he's very talented. Look for his store on the east side of the street when you're out walking.

There was also a conversation about how busy some of us are watching programs on Netflix and other Zoom programming available through organizations like the JCC. One member asked if anyone was a member of the TTN group called the Culture Mavens. She indicated that she received a 3-page list of wonderful events for the current week. It was suggested to check the TTN website regularly for all the Zoom programming we are offering and those in our partnership with other chapters like Chicago and Philadelphia.

## **JUNE**

In the beginning of the meeting, one of the members thanked another for being there for her as an escort home from the hospital for minor surgery.

### **What everyone is going through**

A lot has changed. Some of us are enjoying socializing through Zoom. Some of us don't feel like cooking and are enjoying having food brought in. Some of us like seeing our doctors for follow up visits via a Tele/Med portal. Some of us are socializing with our friends through games on Zoom.

For others, the neighborhood feels disconnected. A member mentioned her son was in the hospital. He had all the symptoms of COVID-19. She hasn't gone out of her apartment since early March.

Another member remarked that her car's been in the garage for the past three months and is aware that she needs to take it out to let it run for a while. Another left her car in Westchester and she will probably take an Uber to her car to drive it. The members with cars talked about how they sanitize it each time they use it. She fills an aerosol bottle with alcohol, opens the car windows and sprays. It's assumed that the parking staff touch a lot of steering wheels and don't sanitize in between.

Only five of the group members go grocery shopping. Some go out to the park. If you see people not wearing masks, it was suggested to call your State Senator to report it. This is particularly important to prevent a resurgence of the virus.

You don't have to wear a mask unless you are facing someone and talking. Researchers and scientists keep coming across new information. How close are you to the person in front of you? Sometimes you must walk in the street and worry that you could be hit by a car or a bike.

A member commented that when she was walking out of a store, a guy was coming in, dropped his mask, and spit in the street, right in front of her. It's impossible to control others. We have a responsibility to ourselves. Maybe we should wear a face shield or wear gloves. If we don't want to be exposed, it's very difficult to be around others. People seem to interpret the rules however they wish.

Some people take off their clothes as soon as they come back inside their apartment and wash them immediately. Some keep their clothes in a back hallway and come in and take a shower. There's a lot of conflicting information. Our job is to take care of ourselves in the best way possible. It's very frustrating getting the other people in the building you live in to wear masks when walking around in the hallways.

Someone mentioned they took a bus. She felt relatively safe. You enter in the back. Everyone was wearing a mask that day. It was felt the more confined we are, the more dangerous it is. Taxis pick up and drop off a lot of people during the day. They probably don't disinfect between passengers.

It was felt the antibody test is 50% accurate. It was noted that you can get one at a Northwell Urgent Care Center. Another member mentioned she thinks she had the virus back in January.

It was decided that in the meetings going forward, that the first thing would be a check in round. We would talk about how we're doing since we're not at the new normal yet.

Many of us are spending time listening to the news. It was felt we haven't even finished the first wave yet. It's only been three months. It took years to develop a polio vaccine.

### **What are we doing to feel like our life has structure?**

Some of us do yoga for seniors on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. That member schedules her life around this class. Right now, it's free. The teacher's name is Karen Speier.

Another member became a tutor (English in Action) for people from other countries. She noticed that she wakes up later since she's not working. We all shared that we're doing everything possible to keep our immune systems healthy. One member drinks a green smoothie every morning and makes one for her husband to drink.

Another member mentioned losing a brother to an awful disease a long time ago. She felt she already experienced a horrible elusive disease. Companies are rushing through to find the vaccine. Treatments are needed to lessen the effect.

### **What are we doing for fun?**

One member shared going to a movie group. Each member watches the movie on their own and then they discuss it. She likes being in nature, walking outside.

Another member mentioned that she scheduled a two-week trip out of town at an inn where there are no children allowed. She shared that her room has a deck where there's a barbecue for outdoor grilling.

Another goes out frequently to walk her dog. She does volunteer work three times a week that involves technology.

## **JULY**

We are a new neighborhood group so instead of focusing on a central topic or two, we enjoyed getting to know each other through unstructured conversation. One shared interest did emerge: the pandemic – how our lives have changed, best practices for safety, how we cope with behaviors that infringe on our safety efforts.

### **Upper West Side 2**



116th St. Subway Station

## **JULY**

### **Our physical and mental health during these past pandemic months while quarantined**

Some members have newly discovered the pleasures of being alone while others miss intensely their contact with friends and others. Some of us experience both.

We have shared information about how we are spending our time, including what we are reading (an example is Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell) and what online resources we are enjoying including meditation and exercise classes (including Leslie Sansone), music concerts, Broadway shows, and BBC productions available on PBS and on an Acorn subscription through Amazon Prime.

## Upper West Side 3



West End Avenue

## MAY

### What was our past week like?

- We got creative with cooking and baking, had mixed results with grocery shopping, created a daily schedule, took care of chores, were mindful of how we felt, were concerned about the well-being of others, wanted to do something purposeful to help others.
- Zoomed with friends in lieu of Philly reunion, mentored Baruch College students, thought about how best to navigate re-openings in city, wondered how others in UWS3 will handle this
- Still doing okay and continued to take watercolor classes, long walks, talk with friends online
- Amazed to come across walnut pie crust in Walmart (Diamond brand) and immediately baked a quiche, traveled the world in 40-minute episodes through Netflix series "Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat" <https://www.netflix.com/title/8019828>, did meditative and creative "Zen Tangles" <https://zentangle.com/> nurtured a nearly dead orchid plant back to health
- Took free Feldenkrais class [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feldenkrais\\_Method](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feldenkrais_Method) open to Fortune Society volunteers - small movement exercise takes getting used to, felt uplifted by amazing number of people cheering service workers at 7PM, pleased that a neighbor organized system for buying dinner for building staff. Amazon Prime Whole Food delivery worked well - able to do same or next-day delivery. Person handling order asked about substitutions, tracked delivery online (free delivery if \$35 or more purchase and member Amazon Prime)
- Felt okay, busy with art classes at 92nd Street Y (nice to have option of 3-week sessions), Zoomed with various folks, thought about how and when to re-engage as city begins to open up
- Felt okay, but easily distracted, trying to create a routine and not fritter away the day, enjoyed roof garden without having to be around people, nice NYTimes article about re-engaging. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/07/learning/whats-the-first-thing-you-plan-to-do-after-quarantine.html>
- 104 degrees in Arizona, but enjoyed evening walks when temperature dropped to comfortable 93 degrees, found observing new life (ducklings) and nature comforting, wearing mask uncomfortable and did not wear one if other people not around, return to NY on hold, found managing Mother's Day expectations with family challenging, watched Chef

Todd Mohr free online classes on basic cooking techniques - how to sauté, poach, make roux (see YouTube)

- Trying for the PEN/Jean Stein Award for Oral History. Will use memoir of time in Crete that includes testimony from Cretan survivors of the Nazis' occupation taken during summers there 1989-1992 - excerpt appears in: NOWHERE Magazine, Pamela Manche Pearce, Blue Crete <https://nowheremag.com/2016/04/blue-crete/> worked extremely hard on artwork for class, wanted to do service work and coincidentally received call to use expertise as trained hospice volunteer, all in all a very satisfying week
- Attended online classes, Zoomed, stayed in touch with ad hoc New Plaza Cinema group formed after closing of Lincoln Plaza Cinema <https://newplazacinema.com/> although no raised expectations about re-opened city, stays optimistic. A legacy of having been born in a DP camp, Viktor Frankl's "Man's Search for Meaning" [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man%27s\\_Search\\_for\\_Meaning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man%27s_Search_for_Meaning) is essential reading in this regard
- Linked up with Baltimore writers group (a member from time lived in Baltimore), and can now participate in online meetings; frustrated about time spent at dentist, trying to reach West Side Rag about poetry submission, trying to reach Fairway
- Used iMovie and iPhone to create Mother's Day gift for daughter and daughter-in-law that captured their mothering experiences.

## **MAY-JUNE**

### **We're still coping well**

- Enjoying sound of neighbor's dog scampering around upstairs apartment (someone's having fun!); soaking up sunshine in small, local park and feeling "healthier"
- Took solo drive to Cold Spring complete with gloves, mask, wipes (traffic near Bear Mountain, so people traveling); thinking about trip to Vermont; will drive and park in city and meet friend in Washington Square Park; will watch movie and eat take-out with friend; housekeeper came by train to clean apartment (paid each week, even if doesn't come); building allows visitors and deliveries to apartment door (policies vary by apartment building); neighbor invited to visit
- First time meeting friend in park (hard to hear and talk with masks on); looking forward to doing watercolor in park; watching science webinars on vaccine development; figured out how to stream on smart tv
- Still in Sarasota, but driving back to NY on June 17 (will stay over in two places - got huge container of wipes in tattoo parlor, trying not to be anxious); took COVID-19 test (negative); Zen Tangle and grown-up coloring books calming; enjoying swimming in Gulf; Zoomed on Mother's Day with two sons in California (time zone breakfast/lunch celebration); spending more time than ever reading with grandchildren on Facetime; watching plays via TDF
- Walking in park early morning (fun checking if new hatchlings near reservoir); finding balance between spending time at home, exercising, socializing on-line - it's still our life, no matter coronavirus, and not getting it back, so why not make the best use of time; interest in meditation and Buddhism helps emotionally (per observer: as does pussycat draped around neck during Zoom meeting)

- Taking re-entering society slowly and will start going to grocer; proud (and relieved) to have hooked up new tv without having someone come into apartment to do it
- Pretty sure has immunity after recovering from coronavirus, but not taking chances; staying home, cooking, playing bridge; lingering leg pain post-coronavirus, but really can't complain; using In-Stride Folding Cycle instead of taking walks
- Still finding new, uncrowded places to walk in Central Park (e.g., North Woods); experienced vertigo on hike and hurt arm (we all hope its mended!); saw grandchildren; wondering what to do in summer, e.g., take a day drive, stay a few days in Ocean Grove, use time share in Newport...(and sanitize everything!)
- Fortunately, nothing dramatic has happened; walking longer and more often - met friend in Pine Grove in Central Park (lovely spot); doing Senior Planet exercises; finding wearing face mask in hot weather awful
- Able to further extend time in AZ, since tenants scheduled to move into apartment cancelled out (frantic search for new apartment aborted); realized how much enjoys AZ, despite cost of extended stay (not spending in other ways); not eager to fly back to NY
- Delightful experience with on-going poetry group ("attended" a seance!); has only been seeing building staff and grocer; hired team of three people to assist with writing competition project - August 1 deadline, so really focused
- Finding it okay to express frustration, if it makes you feel better; zooming with Baltimore writer's group; writing poetry at least once a week; has idea for cartoon and will link up with Carol to discuss drawing; enjoying JASA programs; took subway to doctor's office for COVID-19 and antibody test, both negative, for pending family visit (train from 96th St. to 57th St. uncrowded, cleanest ever seen, just fine)
- Created slide show for family, weaving together photography and music: a complicated technical feat, but most of all a deeply emotional experience for everyone (note: unable to host June 4 Zoom session, since picking up a new car. Exciting!)

## **JUNE** (four meetings)

### **Free-flowing conversation**

We talked about how we sometimes feel "down," although nothing bad has happened - a sense of loss of purpose and motivation that's hard to explain. Talking about this was gratifying.

- Hair cut in brownstone garden - luxurious; funds collected for building staff bigger than for Christmas; virus uptick in some states a concern; uncertain will attend BBQ on LI; heartbroken and heartened by nation-wide protests
- Anticipating haircut, manicure, and 3 months spent at Jersey shore; enjoying British tv
- Proudly installed tv without help; online Hebrew class instructor finding creative ways to get students talking about themselves in Hebrew; should read more and forming book club of two; not planning to change habits and staying "locked down," despite openings
- Learning to use Instagram to post poetry; drove to Hilton Head (AAMCAR car rental, 96th between Amsterdam & WEA), time-share community activities curtailed so low-key beach walks, private aerobics lessons, sorting through loads of old photos; visited friends in Baltimore en route; granddaughter new driver and relieved can gain experience safely since can't go far
- Will have social distance with family in Central Park; volunteering to get out the vote (see below)

- Took cab to dermatologist: wore face mask, face shield (foam headband provides tight seal), driver wore mask, windows open, thrilled to be out of house (mammogram/sonogram next); some tips online for looking good on Zoom (see below); writing project going well - 40,000 words right now, equal to 200 page book
- Arizona COVID-19 numbers going sky high; shop supermarket at 7am (not many people and all well-behaved); walk new puppy several times a day, loving the company, but hard work and stressful (have not had dog in 30 years, and first time in apartment); no immediate plans to return to NY, but if does dog will remain with son in AZ, and if trainable, will become therapy dog; first time spending summer in AZ in years, and new clothes a must (Land's End)
- Family get-together for grandson's 18th birthday; remote wedding guest; walking in park; contributing to fund-me page for African American students - glad to be part of this support for future leaders with wide-ranging interests
- Difficult week - a friend's husband died of COVID-19; living near 50th and Ninth unpleasant - crowding at street corners, people not wearing masks (seems like a display of power), people standing outside bars drinking, generally hard to go out; glad to see that go-fund-me sites for victims of violence doing well
- Taxes challenging; nothing new in how living life; traffic around Carnegie Hall neighborhood where lives seem only a little busier; reading about how epidemiologists feel about things is depressing
- Health seems okay, but talking still not what should be; lost a few friends in the past few weeks and attending funerals and sitting Shiva by Zoom; internet shopping; saying home a lot; has become a "news junkie"
- Loves taking online watercolor classes at 92nd Street Y (3-week sessions with good instructor), but always unhappy with work once finishes it; talks with friends; some walks with fellow-UWS3er
- Opening up and taking bus, car service, seeing friends, will go to physical therapy twice/week, wearing gloves and mask, Zoomed cocktail party with friends
- First time visit to supermarket and super in apartment; modest walks in Riverside Park; will quarantine 2 weeks prior to visiting family in the country (does not want to be vector); antibody test negative (not happy being at test center with potentially sick people); exercising new car (purchased upstate and drive back a challenge)
- Nieces and nephews older and no longer eager to visit Shelter Island; got used to communicating with them on Facebook, now need to learn Instagram (got help at Verizon and suddenly had 37 "followers" out of nowhere - an "Instagram star!")
- Super in apartment to install stove - stayed in separate and room wiped down *everything* with Clorox solution after; not happy walking in high humidity so taking advantage of good weather
- Meeting friends in park and enjoying take-out together (very complicated dealing with face mask in order to eat); considering ski trip to VT or NH in February, provided safe transportation; medical appointments by express bus or car service to start in July; happy not to deal with bat removal in middle of night by person refusing to wear mask, as was case with sister's friend in Westchester

### **Our suggestions:**

- "Reclaim our Vote" volunteer work via B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue:  
<https://www.bj.org/event/postcarding-and-phone-banking-with-reclaim-our-vote/2020-06-25/>

- Tips for looking good on Zoom by Tom Ford: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/style/tom-ford-video-chat-tips.html>
- Grantchester British TV series
- *Small Fry*, a memoir by daughter of Steve Jobs
- *Proud Winter*, a memoir by Madeline Albright
- PBS Broadway plays online
- “The Common Good” website for good talks: <https://www.thecommongoodus.org/>

## **JUNE** – continued

Getting a haircut was a hot topic: did it oneself, asked family member to do it, done indoors, done outdoors, appointment pending

### **More news:**

- Restless; meeting friends in local park not enough; anticipate one-day car trips with friends in “bubble” of two; will keep medical appointments in July and take public transportation for first time
- Lovely scenic drive to CONN and walk with friends; trip to VT in works; physical therapy going well; need to watch diet to control blood sugar and exercise more; progress cleaning house and organizing desk
- Seized opportunity to do quick sketches of fellow-participants in zoom watercolor class (would normally sketch people on trains); doing okay
- Doing what always enjoy doing - walks, meditation; not taking long-view, which can be depressing; prefer different lifestyle, but dealing with the here-and-now in ways that are calming
- Thrilled with NY’s COVID-19 numbers; going out twice a day; haircut and mammography appointments pending (scary, but doing it); resigned to long haul and going with the flow; not ready for restaurants and definitely not movie theaters when re-open (perfectly happy streaming)
- Busy every day with art, exercise, zooming, cleaning; first time on local bus to meet fellow UWS3er for lunch; shopped Trader Joe’s, but 72nd Street crowded; discovered uncrowded Riverside Park in 80’s and 90’s; hard not to envy others able to “get away;” taking one day at a time; more emotional about things than in past
- Finally, an “adult” lunch with fellow UWS3er outdoors with full table service; looking forward to Phase 3 pedicure; taking buses to medical appointments, but buses getting more crowded; will try to get COVID-19 antibody test, and, hopefully, be reassured has antibodies
- Took one-year lease on AZ apartment, so return to NY definitely on hold; managing 105-degree weather; new puppy exhausting but loving the company; family close by; family visits difficult to handle given different takes on social distancing
- Normal travel plans not an option, and with no car or family to visit, need to be creative - will rent studio apartment for one week in September in Ocean Grove, NJ - apartment has private entrance, well ventilated, kids back at school, expensive, but not otherwise traveling, yellow cab ride about \$100; taking one day at a time and making each day as good as possible; grant proposal due July 10;
- Considering renting a car (drove a lot in past, but not for many years); took grandchildren to small local park and delighted to have sprinklers suddenly turn on; volunteering with Reclaim our Vote effort to counteract voter suppression (see below) - something most passionate about, next to family; came across online concert and interviews by Yannick

Nezet-Seguin, Met music director - a wealth of good things are out there that normally require pricey tickets

- Enjoying being in SC and required to quarantine once back in NYC... (cut short by bad zoom connection)
- Saw family after 3-month hiatus; in retreat for a while in anticipation of other family visits mid-July - going back and forth being adventurous and not (NY Times science advisor in total quarantine with no plans to see family!); Weill-Cornell requires COVID-19 prior to scheduled colonoscopy; auditing interesting EdX course "Tangible Things" (how to look at things quietly, intently, seriously)

### **Suggestions:**

- Wear a face shield *and* face mask on public transportation
- Unwise to visit family members unless they adhere to COVID-19 precautions
- Salon Gabor, stylist Cookie <https://www.yelp.com/biz/salon-gabor-new-york>
- "The Bookshop" movie: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Bookshop\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bookshop_(film))
- COVID-19 test, CityMD, 88th and Broadway, SE corner, no wait, and results in 5 - 7 days
- Reclaim Our Vote volunteer work in partnership with JCC or B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue: <https://www.bj.org/event/postcarding-and-phone-banking-with-reclaim-our-vote/2020-07-06/>
- EdX: <https://www.edx.org/>

## **JULY** (3 meetings)

### **What interested or concerned us**

- Our first dinner meeting was small, but enjoyable, and worth another try
- A haircut in a barber shop was a little uncomfortable - it was good to be the only client in the shop, but another barber came over to talk who was not wearing a mask; he didn't stand too close, but it was not good
- Taking care of car repairs and keeping the larder well-stocked will definitely improve the quality of life for one UWS3-er
- Social distance messaging: If someone is walking towards you on the street and not keeping social distance, get showy and make a display of stepping off the curb to create distance
- Walking in the park can be fun, but challenging: It's hard for more than two people to walk on narrow paths; walking in Riverside Park along the river is enjoyable, but there is no shade; hot, humid weather makes our best efforts to walk difficult; little grassy areas in Riverside Park around 110th St. are lovely for picnicking, and it was nice to see four people seated at a folding table enjoying their food and wine
- Consulting a doctor if we are feeling unwell for any length of time is important; a negative COVID-19 test, unless very recent, unfortunately is not reassurance; also, symptoms may have many causes, all the more reason to consult a doctor
- Watching a distracting movie on BritBox is going to be more satisfying than watching July 4th fireworks for one (Loyalist?) UWS3-er

## **JULY** (2 of 3)

- Difficulty finding right exercise classes meeting at right time; Zoom instruction not terribly satisfying
- Summer in city “not a favorite;” visited friend in VT - gas, other logistics a bit complicated, people wearing masks and social distancing, hoped when returned all would be better, but discouraging news nation-wide; debating seeing patients in person - not sure better than Zooming, office space an issue; volunteering with Riverside Language Program (via B’nai Jeshurun); easy getting to PT; line dancing good exercise; dined at outdoor cafe and ordered in with friends
- Enjoying cool evening weather; learned another UWS3-er knows her friend (small world); outing with children and grand-children in Central Park very gratifying (not to mention homemade muffins and all kinds of treats)
- A haircut, finally; bumping into friends on street more so than pre-COVID; food shopping throughout; COVID test negative and relieved to know what doing all along seems ok; walking in early mornings - cooler; misses true exercise regime - exploring classes via DOROT
- 25 boxes to empty since moving to NY; doing computer “stuff;” not yet going to restaurants; enjoying JASA programs
- Medical appointments on East Side - more traffic than expected, only one yellow cab spotted; looking forward to Adirondack visit with friend to brother’s lakeside cabin - big decision and will avoid dining indoors (friend often uses city buses so not a perfect “bubble”)
- Not accomplishing a thing; doing puzzles
- Caring for new puppy; over a bout of bronchitis; organized freezer, but house cleaning overdue; not doing much intellectually (watching Britcom serials); son’s visits important since housebound in 110 degree AZ heat; counting # steps taken daily; maintaining “attitude of gratitude;” appreciates our Zoom meetings and finds them nicely intimate in a way

### **Tips:**

- DOROT exercise classes <https://www.dorotusa.org/our-programs/at-dorot/health-wellness-classes>
- Riverside Language Program: <https://www.riversidelanguage.org/volunteer>
- CVS accepts bottle returns

## **JULY** (3 of 3)

- Heat awful and face mask irritates; taking cabs to doctors’ appointments, but took subway one day - mostly young people, two not wearing masks and eating; buses better and mostly polite seniors, stops every two blocks so air comes in (see “tips” below); reading book about Spanish Civil War
- How to have happy birthday - dinner at outdoor restaurant (somewhat nervous about this), walk with friend, video call old friends; will miss usual ritual of Woody Allen movie and totally relaxing dinner; feeling ok for so long and harder now; envious of friends able to get away; almost no human connections these days
- Submitted 61-page grant proposal (PEN Jean Stein Literary World History Grant) to complete book in progress of personal reminiscences of time spent in Crete and interviews

of people who lived through Nazi occupation; felt as though climbed mountain in past month; time out to consider what next; appreciated UWS3 support (all of us in awe of this effort)

- Good feeling accomplishing things - visited friend in Sag Harbor, dined with friend at outdoor Union Square restaurant (everyone well-behaved), visited High Line, will visit NYBG, planning drive to Maine
- Visited NYBG on members-only day, timed visit, empty, lovely, went by car
- Doing well under circumstances, but could be better; taking lots of classes; key to "survival" seems being able to drive, and doesn't drive; no patience for tv, but watched John Lewis funeral and felt witnessing history
- Unknown when safe to return to NY from AZ; meanwhile, paying lower TTN National Membership fee; informed by TTN ineligible to stay in UWS3 as National Member (a member will look into this)
- Feels life restricted to "square mile;" always had feelings of claustrophobia; too hot to walk to place to sit with friends; broke fibular in apartment (leg turned wrong way when trying to avoid obstacle); consulted City MD and orthopedist - in boot from knee to foot and told to "rest foot"; even if could leave town a quandary as to travel-mate
- Question about road trip with friend to Adirondacks - whether share same approach to staying safe; love traveling in fall and worried about feeling let down; per young person who lives in Brooklyn, bus to beach very crowded, young people, including friends, not wearing masks
- Feeling optimistic - reading delightful book, The Sublime and the Vile, about Winston Churchill and discovered new route to walk; nice to have role model in fellow UWS3-er who is stalwart walker

## **TIPS**

- City buses free until October; people get on and off in back, so best to sit towards front; can always get off bus if uncomfortable
- When dining outdoors avoid sitting near pedestrians
- New Plaza Cinema Alfred Hitchcock festival in August

## Upper West Side 4



Soldiers and Sailors Monument

## MAY

### What in the past few days has made you happy?

Some members talked about the beautiful cherry blossoms in Riverside Park. Others talked about walking in Central Park. One member recommended an hysterical NYC centric book called Tepper Isn't Going Out. You will never look at alternate side of the street parking rules the same way again. Someone else recommended watching old Seinfeld reruns.

One member wanted people to read Forest Dark by N. Krauss and share feedback.

Two members are taking courses online.

Looking to the future we were told to buy in to Disney on cable in order to watch Hamilton on July 3, definitely a good tip.

Basically, we are all hanging in there, taking care of ourselves and choosing to focus on the positives rather than the negatives.

## JUNE

### What accomplishment, personal or professional or both, that you have made and are most proud of

Many of our group have advanced degrees. We all gave something back to our community. Some told amusing stories. Some hinted at hardships overcome.

Here are the highlights:

- One member headed up a group in the pharmaceutical field and was able to get South American doctors and the pharma people to talk, a big achievement. We discovered that she speaks Spanish. Who knew?
- Another member told how she has had 6 careers from real estate to publishing books. She is proud that she divorced, continued to raise her two children and is now taking classes.
- One member told how when she was working and raising her family, cooking was not on her list of priorities. Most recently she has rediscovered the uniting properties of a shared meal. Her Korean mother, always a good cook has been helping her fine tune her new dishes.
- One member told how she is proud of her ability to improvise and learn how to overcome obstacles while on the fly. She is better with the whole picture, not the details.

- Another member said that even though she had a very successful sales career, her proudest accomplishment was building a playground on W. 83rd and Riverside Drive. The ability to see a need, to envision a solution and then build it has stood her in good stead.
- One member told of having to get her masters/PhD at the same time with moving to Texas and helping her husband through dental school. She is still married and happy about it.
- Another of our members, a doctor, said that she was happiest with the fact that she raised two sons and that they all get along. One lives in Japan and both sons make sure that they stay in touch. How rewarding!
- My favorite story of the evening was from a member who talked about her grandmother's cookies. (Trust me, she had her successful career and traveled broadly). Her grandmother made fabulous chocolate chip cookies and our member wants to replicate them. Try as she would, she could not. She traveled to Brooklyn, sat down with her grandmother, and said show me how you make these fabulous cookies. The grandmother did. "You take a cup of flour" - BUT it was not the standard cup of flour - it was a special cup that came from Russia and THAT was the measuring cup. The same went for the tablespoon - it was her special tablespoon, nothing standardized.

We are all accomplished in our special ways. In the end titles mean not so much. What we do with our talents is what we need to celebrate.

## Upper West Side 5



**Zabar's**

## JUNE

### Our transportation concerns

There will be more people on subways. The North and South buses are already crowded. You can't control the homeless people who don't wear masks.

### What we're doing while we're isolating

Watching programs from the Public Theatre (<https://publictheater.org/>) New York Times radio play, it's a comedy about older couples.

There are lots of lectures at venues including the Roosevelt House (<http://www.roosevelthouse.hunter.cuny.edu/tours/>), the New York Historical Society (<https://www.nyhistory.org/programs/upcoming-public-programs>)

Red Bull readings on Mondays (<https://www.redbulltheater.com/live>)

The New York Society for Ethical Culture (<https://ethical.nyc/>) and programming on political focus including C-SPAN. The JCC had a 4-part discussion on Moshe Dayan and his family. It was 6-hours long.

Some of our group members go for walks at 6:30am. They are getting books on tape from the New York Public Library to listen to while walking (<https://www.nypl.org/books-music-movies/ebookcentral>). Some of us prefer someone reading to them.

The Promenade isn't crowded early in the morning. Some group members would prefer to go for a walk at 7:00pm in the evening – near Riverside and 87<sup>th</sup>-96<sup>th</sup> Streets. Perhaps you could meet in the middle.

There's music to listen to from Symphony Space (<https://www.symphonyspace.org/>). The Guggenheim Museum has events on Sunday and Mondays as well as virtual tours (<https://www.guggenheim.org/at-large>). Also, check out The Frick Collection online (<https://www.frick.org/>) as well as the 92Y which is opening their archives to view online (<https://www.92y.org/92yathome/family-activities>).

There's an art class at Zen Tangle (<https://zentangle.com/>). An easy-to-learn, relaxing, and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns on cards.

Some of our members have and continue to be involved in political mobilization from home with organizations like CPC and West Side Indivisible (<https://actionnetwork.org/groups/upper-west-side-moveonindivisible-action-group>) or (<https://indivisible.org/>), to do phone canvassing. They have also attended a NOW meeting about why women vote for Trump and how to talk to people. We need to reclaim our vote. This member shared about writing postcards to marginalized people in North Carolina and Georgia. It's non-partisan. You're telling them what they need to do. All the materials are provided. You're touching people who don't get a lot of mail. They get a sticker where they can go to vote.

Another member talked about phone banking and how to engage people to get them to talk. There are now three Democratic Clubs that came together to form one club – The West Side Democrats (<https://www.westsidedemocrats.com/>).

Some of us are more hopeful about the future. One member shared that the New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/times-talks>) has a weekly show on health on Mondays from 1:00-1:45pm moderated by Tara Parker-Pope.

There are programs with Brian Lehrer (<https://www.wnyc.org/people/brian-lehrer/>) – he had a great guest on from the epidemiology world. It was educating and calming. You can also subscribe to STAT (<https://www.statnews.com/>) which is a Boston-based scientific news site. It has the latest research on the latest stuff. They usually have a 30-minutes interview with one or two experts. This week they had the CEO of Salesforce on the "Future of Work." You can watch the Washington Post Live (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-live/>).

Some of our coping mechanisms include reaching back out to old friends. People we haven't spoken to in "forever." One member called one such friend out of the blue. It was a very fulfilling conversation.

Some of us are getting used to our hair at whatever length it is since we can't go to the salon. Some of us are coloring our hair at home and using products to enhance it.

The medical people are working as hard as possible to focus on a vaccine. There's been a debate among the labs and scientists. There are so many governments involved. At least 100+ major labs are involved in this project because the urgency is so great.

## **JULY**

### **What we're doing**

Some of our members have ventured onto city buses or the subway. The member commented how clean the subway was and everyone was wearing masks.

Another member commented about a homeless person on the train without a mask who came right up to her and from that experience decided not to take the subway anymore. Part of the problem is there are no programs in place to really take care of our homeless population. It was suggested she write to the West Side Rag (<https://www.westsiderag.com/>) a member suggested wetting your mask to stay cool or if it's hot, don't towel off your hair after you shower.

Some members play mahjong online through <https://realmahjongg.com/> The screen looks like a table. If there aren't four available to play, then the computer takes over. You can play with friends and have regular games. Another member mentioned taking classes at the National Council of Jewish Women (<https://www.ncjwny.org/programs/>). You can sign up for more info on their website.

Another member likes Bridge and misses her regular games. One member appreciated hearing about sending out post cards through political involvement from a discussion we had last month and has since gotten involved. It was mentioned that you can adopt a state and write post cards to people in that state. You can also send post cards to residents of nursing homes.

For deep canvassing it wasn't about a candidate, it was more about sharing a story of your own with the other person on the phone. You can allow yourself to be vulnerable while hearing their story, connecting with people who suppressed their vote, mainly people in the South. You're giving them non-partisan info to check their voting status.

The New York Society of Ethical Culture also has a similar program. Check out their program at <https://ethical.nyc/reclaimourvote/>. You are provided with post cards and stamps. NAACP is also involved as well as churches and synagogues.

You can also get involved in NY Vote – whether there will be absentee ballots. There's a lot going on and a lot of issues statewide. Every state has different issues. This should be the year to vote by mail because of the pandemic. For absentee voting you always needed an excuse. There's an interesting article in the New York Times about theatre in today's paper. It's fascinating how Broadway is changing by being able to watch shows on Zoom.

Our conversation shifted to a discussion about vaccines. It was mentioned that 25,000 young people have volunteered to take the new vaccine when it's ready. With Polio, we needed 400,000. Those children were guinea pigs and luckily it worked. The stakes are so high, the scientists won't be reckless. It's such a massive global effort.

Part of the problem is that we don't have any long-term immunity for this virus. We don't know how long it will last. They're talking about a synthetic vaccine which will be easier to produce.

One of our members went to the protest in Harlem. She indicated there were a wide range of ages of people who were protesting.

Another mentioned all the different events that are happening on Zoom through TTN. It was suggested to check the events sections of the TTN website frequently to see the offerings from our own chapter as well as listings from our sister chapters.

## **Upper West Side Afternoon**



Museum of Natural History

## **MAY–JULY**

**How to safely obtain necessary medical and dental care**, with every meeting featuring reports about the latest virtual or in-person visits:

- **New Covid Testing Site at 145 West 96th Street** M. used this alternative to CityMD on Broadway at 69<sup>th</sup> & 88<sup>th</sup> which usually has lines outside. Both COVID diagnostic and antibody (serology) tests are available. Appointment Only. Call 1-833-SOMOS-NY to sign up.
- **Mount Sinai Hospital** L. had to go for Covid diagnostic testing the day before her cardiac cath. and stent placement. Everyone had temperatures checked before entering the main lobby. The complex and elevators were very quiet in the early morning—she saw very few other ambulatory patients.
- S.R. visited **Dr. Paul Greenberg**, the podiatrist on West 79<sup>th</sup> Street. All staff was wearing PPE, and she was the only patient in the waiting room. Several other members also recommended Dr. Greenberg, who is affiliated with NYU.
- P.'s internist and dermatologist are affiliated with NYU but their group recently became part of **Caremount Medical**. She had a pesky rash on her hands, likely due to frequent handwashing, and scheduled a virtual dermatology visit with the CareMount app. It worked very smoothly. The dermatologist could see her hands and she had taken photos just prior to the meeting and sent those via the app.
- Several members have successfully utilized virtual **physical therapy** and do not wish to use a PT gym, especially since commercial gyms and health clubs in NYC remain closed.
- S.S. and B. began **dental treatment** that had been postponed. Dentists and office staff all wore gowns, masks and plastic shields and everyone had a temperature check upon arrival. Requesting an appointment where you are the 1<sup>st</sup> patient in the chair minimizes your contact with aerosolized particles expelled by patients during dental procedures.

- J. had her first in-person office visit at **NYU** on the east side and was impressed by all the PPE and precautions used by her MD and staff, who see many immunocompromised patients.
- B. was happy with all aspects of her annual physical visit at NYU 52<sup>nd</sup> Street except the large number of masked patients in the waiting room. Fortunately, she only had to wait a few minutes. Her doctor said they were spacing appointments further apart but everyone seemed to be arriving very early due to quick subway and bus trips.
- Traveling to appointments has worried some members unable to take buses or subways. Yellow cabs no longer roam the west side. They have been requesting that car service and Uber drivers wear masks and leave the car windows open.
- For those able to navigate the stairs, the local subways are uncrowded and have never been cleaner.

B. recommended a resource for accurate information about virus transmission, especially indoors, that a non-scientist can understand:

- Professor Linsey Marr <https://www.globalchange.vt.edu/dr-linsey-marr/> Her recent NY Times piece is excellent <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/opinion/coronavirus-aerosols.html>.

We were all frustrated at having to maintain social distance due to health concerns while viewing the many rallies and events around the city that we would have attended pre-coronavirus.

- This organization was recommended by S. S. to channel that frustration: **Vote Forward** allows anyone to be an activist from their couch. I first became involved with Vote Forward through my volunteer work in NY-11 during the 2018 midterm elections. Vote Forward is now laser-focused on battleground states crucial to the 2020 presidential election. Letters with personal messages added by Vote Forward volunteers go to registered voters in these key states in precincts identified as left-leaning but under-represented at the polls. As they state on their website (<https://votefwd.org/>): “*Sending a Vote Forward letter is one of the easiest things you can do to increase turnout. It takes two minutes and one stamp, and meaningfully increases the odds that the recipient will vote. A concrete action you can take, no matter where you live, to get unlikely-to-vote fellow citizens to the polls.*” You can do a little or a lot depending on your resources and inclinations. Every single letter sent is a contribution. And I personally feel a sense of community with the many thousands of other volunteers across the country participating in this effort. You will need a printer, some printer paper and stamped envelopes, and a burning desire to be able to *do something!*”

Several members have pulmonary or immune system conditions and we were so happy when they felt comfortable venturing out for walks, quick store trips, and then picnics in the park in July.

We regularly shared updates on favorite neighborhood businesses, especially the small ones struggling to stay open

#### **Small Businesses to support:**

- Mlle Feulle Bakery on Broadway near 77<sup>th</sup> next to the Belleclaire Hotel. <https://www.millefeulle-nyc.com/pages/our-story> The couple that own it now worry about frequently mask-less homeless men nearby discouraging their customers from coming in.

- IVAN Pharmacy on Columbus & 93rd <https://ivanpharmacy.com/> has KN-95 masks, the Chinese-made version of the 3M mask that is better at blocking small particles than a cloth mask.
- Gold Leaf Stationers on Amsterdam and 89th <https://www.goldleafstationersnyc.com/> offered pick-up service and delivery throughout the social distance period. The masked owner sat at the doorway and brought out whatever items customers wanted to buy.

**High quality take-out/delivery meals & correctly spaced outdoor tables:**

- Gennaro (Italian) on Amsterdam & 93<sup>rd</sup>
- Nice Matin (French/Mediterranean) on Amsterdam & 79<sup>th</sup>
- Kefi (Greek) on 79<sup>th</sup> Street
- <https://www.westsiderag.com/> reports regularly on which businesses are partially or fully open, or out of business.
- <https://ilovetheupperwestside.com/> is a newer newsletter that also reports on stores & restaurants, as well as UWS arts events.

We are now taking virtual classes or participating in zoom groups on almost a daily basis while also getting outside for fresh air whenever it's not too hot. Everyone is hoping for mild and virus free fall weather.