
WEST MIDWOOD NEWS



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West Midwood Bids Goodbye to a Strange Summer and Says Hello to Autumn

It's as though someone flipped a switch last week; summer suddenly ended, the nights are cooler (and arrive much earlier in the evening), the birds are packing up and flying south, the marigolds and zinnias are hanging on for dear life, and the tomatoes are finally ripening. For West Midwoodians, there are other signs that the seasons are changing: the Argyle Road noise makers held their final seven o'clock pot-banging session on Sunday night, and just as they started, the streetlights came on! As if to say yes, indeed, the sun is going down earlier. Kids are beginning to go back to school— whatever constitutes school these days, and families are juggling new schedules and responsibilities. The virus numbers are down in most of New York, but the pandemic still burns on throughout many parts of the country. It has been a strange summer, indeed, and promises to be an equally strange fall and winter. Routines are changing, but we need to continue to care of each other, regularly check in on our neighbors, stay safe, and most of all recognize what a blessing it is to live in this neighborhood.

The Stories Your House Could Tell By Joe Enright

667 Argyle Road



In 1897, Christian Baur, then 48, teamed up with a much younger John R. Corbin to build homes in the first Brooklyn “suburban development,” Vanderveer Park, now East Flatbush. Five years later Corbin, apparently tired of dealing with customers, disappeared into a factory he built at Flatbush Avenue and Avenue I, alongside the LIRR railroad tracks, to pioneer the mass production of pre-cut stand-alone houses, eventually populating most of West

Midwood and Midwood Park with his handywork. Baur was no slouch either: together with his architect son George, he erected a dozen homes in landmarked Midwood Park and Fiske Terrace.

By 1905, Christian Baur had already created the home he would soon retire to, at 2320 Foster Avenue (worth a walk just to ogle his playfully designed garage). But there was one last major project to finish before handing the reins to his son: erecting most of the homes on Argyle Road between Foster Avenue and Glenwood Road. While his former protégé, Corbin, was doing much the same at a breakneck pace on multiple blocks all around him, Baur proceeded methodically. Aside from the speed of construction, the major difference was that Corbin's houses were not centered on the lot and had less of a footprint, while Baur's were centered and squatter, with roofs less peaked. Over time, Corbin's layout became a best practice for maximizing light, air, and privacy. But the Baur's craftsmanship was every bit as magnificent.

667 Argyle Road was one of the last homes to be built on the block. Students of architectural history would note that its wrap-around porch, projecting bay, and intersecting hip and gable are all characteristic of the Colonial Revival style popular then. But would they notice the highly decorated balusters of the front porch, hand-carved because their asymmetrical shape could not have

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Editor's Note

With this issue of *West Midwood News*, we are beginning to return to our normal publication schedule. We'll publish this newsletter every three months. We're not quite back to our old routines, however. Like the special viral editions we published during the height of the pandemic, this one is only being published online. If things continue to head in the right direction, eventually we will be able to print and distribute the physical version of the newsletter.

But whether it's pixels or print, the newsletter depends on you: We can't include it if we don't hear about it. So please send us your news, pictures, story ideas, poems, drawings, etc.

— **Tori Rosen**



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Community Association
Editor: Tori Rosen
Copyeditors: Ellen Bilofsky
Kathy McDonald

President's Message Fall 2020

Eric Goldberg



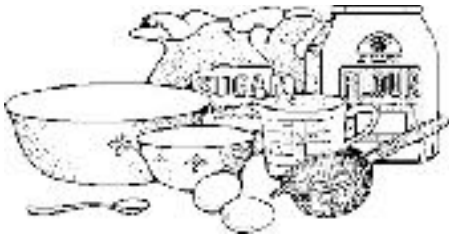
Undeterred by restrictions on gatherings and by barely recognizing one another as we walk around the neighborhood due to our faces being covered, the Board of the West Midwood Community Association recently held a successful virtual meeting at which a number of hyper-local topics were addressed. Below are some of the highlights. Going forward, and in the absence of in-person events for the foreseeable future, we intend to use this space and the WM blog to update residents on issues large and small affecting our slice of Brooklyn.

- The Board welcomes all new neighbors and wants to make sure that everyone is able to join the WM blog and become a dues paying member of the WMCA. For more information please visit <http://www.westmidwood.org>.
- It was agreed that there will be no WM Fall Block Party or Halloween Parade in 2020.
- Each Board member will monitor and report on a certain condition, issue, or agency so that information on that particular topic can be shared with the larger community via the WM blog and newsletter. Topics include: local eating/drinking establishments and businesses, local police precinct, Flatbush Development Corp., local elected NYS representatives, post office concerns, Community Board 14, updating the neighborhood tree survey, school news, and ideas for Glenwood mall plantings.
- The Board will communicate concerns to the proper parties about residents loitering outside and around the Safe Harbor house on E. 12th Street and Avenue H.
- A donation to Flatbush Development Corporation was approved in lieu of, and because they were unable to hold, their 2020 spring gala.
- The Board is implementing a novel idea to work with individual property owners to clean and clear graffiti. Say goodbye Deco!

These are just some of the exciting issues and topics that the WMCA Board addresses on a regular basis. Stay tuned for further information, and please contact me if you wish to get involved. Have a wonderful and healthy autumn season.

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West Midwood Cooks (and Bakes!) *by Allidah Muller*

Sticky Sweet-and-Sour Plums and Sausages

I follow Yotam Ottolenghi on Instagram, and have a few of his cookbooks. I love his recipes, but he is sometimes known for making things that are a little complicated. This recipe is not. The only thing that is somewhat tricky is that it has two slightly hard-to-find ingredients - pomegranate molasses and sumac - but it is otherwise incredibly simple. You do have to turn on your oven (something I try to avoid in the summer), but you might find it to be worth it. And I love a good sheet pan dinner! Ottolenghi writes of his recipe, "This one-tray bake celebrates plums in all their red glory, as they slowly break down into a sweet-sour sauce for sausages and potatoes. Use any kind of sausage you like here: duck or chicken would work well, as would vegetarian ones."

Prep: 25 min (or less)

Cook: 1 hour 35 min

Serves: 4-6

5 medium red onions, peeled and cut into 6 wedges each (I only used 4 because mine were huge... use your judgement)

2 heads garlic, cut in half width-ways

3 baking potatoes, skin-on, cut into quarters lengthwise

8 T olive oil, divided

Salt and black pepper

About 10 plums (you could do 8), halved with stones removed

3 rosemary stalks, leaves picked and stems discarded

8 pork sausages

3 T apple cider vinegar

¼ cup pomegranate molasses

¼ cup brown sugar

2 T sumac

2 ½ T parsley, picked leaves with soft stalks attached

1. Heat the oven to 390°F. Put the onions, garlic, potatoes, five tablespoons of oil, 100 ml water, a teaspoon and a half of salt and a good grind of pepper in a rimmed baking sheet. Toss together, then bake for 35 minutes, stirring once halfway until the vegetables have softened and started to take on color, and the water has evaporated. (Note: I don't know whether veggies are just bigger in the US, but only these veggies filled my baking sheet by themselves. I roasted them on 1 baking sheet, and then when it was time to add

the plums, sausages, and dressing in the next step, I transferred half of the potatoes, garlic and onions to a second baking sheet and then added the other ingredients.)

2. Lay the plums cut side up in the tray, add the rosemary leaves, then nestle in the sausages. In a medium bowl, whisk the vinegar, molasses, sugar, two tablespoons of water, a tablespoon and half of sumac, two tablespoons of olive oil, half a teaspoon of salt, and a good grind of black pepper, pour this all over the contents of the tray, then return to the oven for 40 minutes, turning the sausages once halfway, so they cook and color evenly. (I used the 20-minute sausage turning moment to also switch the pans' position in the oven.)

3. Turn up the oven to 425°F and roast for 10 minutes more, until everything is nicely browned, the plums have broken down, and the sauce is bubbling and sticky.

4. Toss the parsley with the remaining teaspoon and a half of sumac and remaining tablespoon of olive oil, dot all over the sausage mixture, then serve warm straight from the pan.

I serve it with a simple green salad on the side.



Harret Rhine's Lemon Squares

Crust:

1 cup flour

1/2 cup butter

1/4 cup confectioner's sugar

Blend. Press into 9x9 pan lined with foil.

Bake @ 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

Filling:

2 eggs

1/2 cup sugar (or less, to taste -- for sweetness)

1/2 tsp. baking powder

1/4 teas. salt

1/8 cup flour

4-8 T lemon juice (depends on taste for tartness)

Whip till foamy. Pour into hot crust and bake another 20 minutes. Let cool, then cut into squares and serve.

Honey Cake, by *Laura Givner*

I have had this recipe for at least 50 years, and I believe I got it from my Grandma Sadie, my maternal grandmother. She was a good cook and baker (but when she made gefilte fish "from scratch," I left the house to escape the strong fish smells).

I make several round honey cakes during the weeks before Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. The round shape expresses the hope that the coming year will be complete, unbroken by adversity.

4 large eggs

1 1/3 cups granulated sugar

1 lb honey

(I use a 1-lb jar of honey for each cake I make.)

3/8 cup oil—I use canola oil.)

3 1/3 cups all-purpose flour

1 1/3 tsp baking powder

1 tsp baking soda

1 cup strong black coffee, cooled

(I use regular coffee, not decaf.)

3 tsp lemon juice

2 tsp brandy.

(I use Paul Masson Grande Amber VSOP.)

optional: 1 cup chopped nuts (your choice)

and 1 cup raisins

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

2. Mix eggs and sugar; add honey, and mix well.

3. Add oil, and blend well. (I use an electric hand mixer—an engagement gift from my Aunt Ethel. It still works well, and she's 99 years old!)

4. Sift flour, baking powder, and baking soda 2 times, and add to egg mixture alternately with the cool coffee. (I cannot overemphasize the importance of sifting. You don't want your cake, golden brown on the outside, to have little white surprises on the inside.)

5. Mix the batter well, and add the lemon juice and brandy.

6. Optional: Add 3/4 cup of the chopped nuts and 1 cup of raisins.

7. Pour batter into an ungreased 10-inch tube form. (Confession: I lightly spray the sides and bottom of the pan and the tube with cooking spray: olive oil or canola oil.)

8. Optional: Sprinkle 1/4 of the chopped nuts over the top.

9. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. (After an hour, I test the cake with a toothpick to see if it needs a little more time.)

10. Invert immediately to cool. Pry the cake out gently with a spatula.



Voting Options in the November Elections

By now everyone has probably heard plenty about voting by mail and absentee ballots, pro and con. If you want to make sure your vote will count in the crucial November general election, here's what you need to know. Hopefully this information will help you make the right choice for you.

Election Day Voting (In-Person)

Polls will be open on November 3, 2020, if you want to vote in person. You can visit nyc.pollslocator.com or call 1-866-VOTE-NYC to verify your polling site and your election district by entering your address. You will also be able to see a sample ballot with a list of all the contests, once it is available, by clicking on "Ballot Information" in the upper-right hand corner of the page. You can even download a calendar reminder to your electronic calendar! You will be required to wear a mask at the poll site.

Early Voting

The Early Voting period for the November general election will be October 24–November 1, 2020. When it becomes available, you can find your early voting site at nyc.pollslocator.com or by calling 1-866-VOTE-NYC. You will be required to wear a mask at the poll site.

Voting by Mail

New York State has passed several laws clarifying the procedures for absentee ballots/voting by mail in the November general election:

- You can apply for an absentee ballot online now at <https://nycabsentee.com/>. (If you prefer, you can apply by mail postmarked by October 27 or in person at the local Board of Elections at 345 Adams Street by November 2). All advice is to request your ballot as early as possible.
- Once again, the risk of contracting COVID-19 is a legitimate reason for requesting an absentee ballot. The request form states "If you are affected by COVID-19 and/or the potential of contracting the virus, please check the box for "Temporary Illness." The definition has been temporarily expanded to include "a risk of contracting or spreading a disease" such as COVID-19.
- You will receive a tracking number once you submit your application that is supposed to allow you to track when your ballot is sent.



- Applications will be processed in the order that they are received. Ballots will be mailed out beginning the third week of September.
- Absentee ballots must be postmarked by Election Day, November 3, 2020, and must reach the Board of Elections no more than 7 days after Election Day to be counted. (Absentee ballots may also be hand-delivered to any Board of Election office, early voting site, or election day poll site by 9pm on November 3.)
- Absentee ballots received by November 10th will be counted, if postmarked on or before Election Day.
- Any ballot that arrives the day after the election will be counted, whether it is postmarked or not.
- Be sure to follow all directions, including placing the ballot in the provided envelope and signing, dating, and sealing that envelope.

Again, to make sure your vote is counted, all advice is to request your absentee ballot as early as possible and mail it back as early as possible.

Finally, amid the hubbub about mail-in voting, the USPS has created a new website to inform and reassure voters about their "role in the electoral process": <https://about.usps.com/what/government-services/election-mail/>

Announcing WMActs: A New West Midwood List Serve for Political Action, Social Justice, and Related Conversation

In this difficult time, with so many political issues at hand and the presidential election only a couple of months away, a few of us have been thinking that that we would like to build some political community in our neighborhood. There is so much work to do!

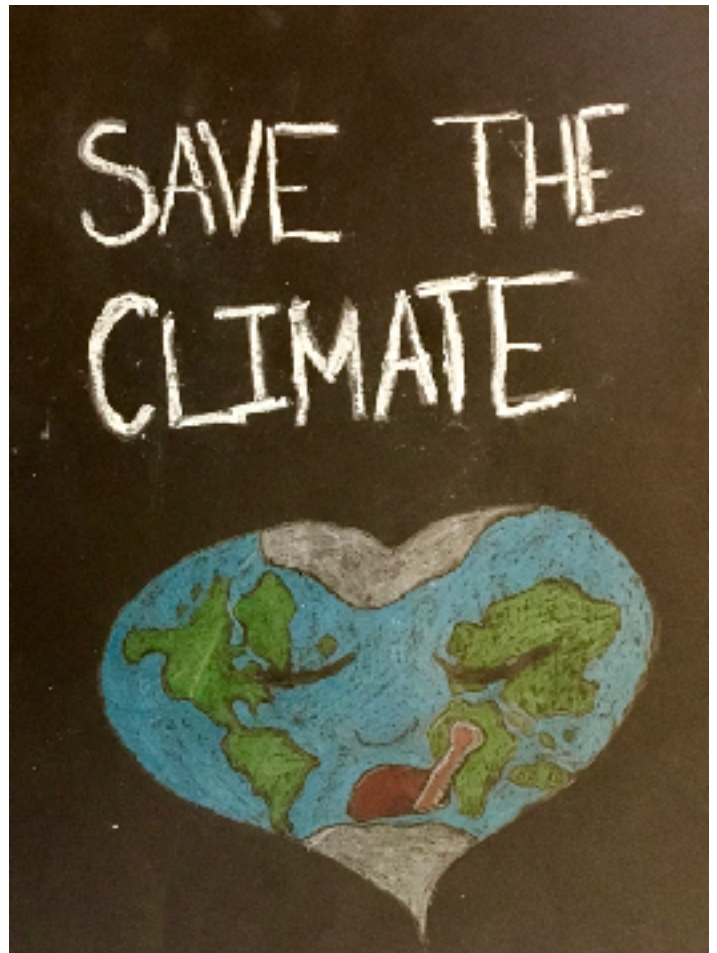
We very much appreciate the way that our West Midwood listserv holds us together across differences of opinion by keeping us away from politics and focused on the day to day of being good neighbors, and we wanted to respect the boundaries under which it was established. However, we also wanted to connect with our neighbors about politics and social action.

And so, we have created a new listserv, WMActs! Here is the description:

A discussion group for West Midwood and surrounding area to build political community in our neighborhood and connect with our neighbors about politics and social action—specifically, to receive or post information about political events, actions, rallies, protests, and reading material and to discuss political matters. Political matters, in this context, is not restricted to electoral politics, but includes social issues and social justice.

If you would like to join, please let Ellen know by sending an email to ebb11@optonline.net We are looking forward to sharing resources, conversation, and action with our neighbors,

— Sarah Ferholt and Ellen Bilofsky



West Midwood Trivia: Newkirk Ave was named after a farmer named Newkirk who lived up where Newkirk Ave begins at what is now Brooklyn Avenue. His little lane became much used when Vanderveer Park was developed and got called Newkirk Ave. But west of Ocean Ave, Newkirk was called White Street for most of the 19th Century, after a big property owner in Parkville named John White who didn't even live there for most of his life.

Neighborhood News *What's Happening in Your Life? Let Us Know!*

Let West Midwood News readers know about significant events in your life — a birth or a loss, a graduation, an engagement or a marriage, an honor or a promotion. Write editor.WestMidwoodNews@gmail.com.

Laura and Howard Givner will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on September 12, 2020.

Sarah Rosen, daughter of **Tori and David Rosen**, recently completed her Ph.D. degree in Anthropology from Durham University in England. Her dissertation was titled: "We Were Seeds: The Socio-Political Economies of Forensic Anthropology in Guatemala and Beyond".

This beautiful cedar waxwing hung around in **Lynn Grossman's** front yard for about twenty minutes before flying off to who knows where.

These guys nest in Prospect Park and surrounding neighborhoods in Brooklyn, Pretty bird, right?



The Stories Your House Could Tell — Continued from page 1

been fashioned on a fancy-schmancy Corbin lathe? Of much greater interest, however, is the human parade that has lounged on that porch over the last eleven decades.

Baur sold the house in March 1906 to Ida Gerry Dunnell, a 54-year-old single woman whose wealth derived from her dearly departed dad, John Henry Dunnell, who shuffled off this mortal coil in January 1904 at the family's Clinton Hill abode. But John Henry was not a steel-driving man. Gold was more his style. And so in 1849, when he heard about the strike at Sutter's Mill in California, he rushed to a steamer in New York harbor, trekked across the Isthmus of Panama on foot and by horse (60 years before the canal), and boarded another ship on the Pacific side that took him to San Francisco. Once ensconced amidst all the other gold diggers, Dunnell took pencil to paper and began to sketch what he saw—drawings that are still exhibited and sold today.

Ida Dunnell abandoned 667 Argyle Road in late 1907, relocating to another Baur creation in Midwood Park (690 East 19th Street). Why? Perhaps Baur took a liking to Ida—they were contemporaries after all—or perhaps Ida was being hounded by her next-door neighbor, an art dealer, for an original Dunnell drawing. We may never know.

But we do know that the next occupant, Joseph M. Busnop, a 59-year-old retiree, was arrested on November 3, 1908, on bogus election fraud charges for using a “non-existent address” when he cast his ballot that morning. The NYPD claimed their city maps still read “667 East 13th Street,” despite the fact that Argyle Road had been in common usage for the past three years. (The Brooklyn Daily Eagle reported many such arrests that day as a likely voter-suppression tactic by the Tammany machine in order to discourage voting in a heavily Republican district. For more on this, see <https://bit.ly/2DXYc8m>.)

Perhaps fearing the looming congressional elections, Busnop was soon gone, as the house was sold to a Dutch-German silk salesman with a seldom-encountered surname, Willy The Losen. Willy, his German wife, and a Norwegian maid had all immigrated to New York in the 1890s. In fact, according to the 1910 US Census, all the other families on the block were either first- or second-generation immigrants (German, Irish and Russian) with occupations of pawnbroker, lawyer, art dealer, City Hall messenger, human hair importer, and physician.

In 1919, The Losen sold the house to Daisy Hood, a 38-year-old widow employed as a secretary in a sugar refinery. Daisy was a native New Yorker with a teenage son, but her four in-laws who shared the house were all from what the newspapers termed “an old Southern family” in Covington, Kentucky. Within two years, half of them would pass away and be waked in the home.

In 1921 Daisy sold the property to George and Juanita Baxter, who would remain for the next 55 years. They reared their five children there amidst an ever-changing assortment of maids and cooks, and provided shelter to their offspring's families during the worst of the Depression. George Baxter, a textile executive, was “one of the best-known

Catholics in the NY area,” according to his obituaries, who attended daily mass until the morning he left St. Rose of Lima and had a heart attack in his car.

After the Baxters departed in the 1970s, a succession of owners coped with the redlining of Flatbush and the city's economic crisis. At 667 Argyle Road, this decline was marked by what some old timers in the neighborhood remember as raucous “rent parties.” One morning in 1983, the mailman was approaching the house when a car roared out of the driveway as heavy smoke started billowing from the upper-floor windows. In law enforcement they call that an arson-for-profit clue. In 1985 Peter Apers, a Dutch cabinet maker, bought the badly damaged property, gut rehabbed it, and—exhausted from seven years of back-breaking labor—sold it to the stars of this episode, Lance Tukell and Robert Seidel, who were then renting in Cobble Hill.

After two years of rejecting dozens of coop apartments in Brownstone Brooklyn and Queens because of awkward layouts, lack of eat-in kitchens, and no garden space, their realtor, having now exhausted all of her apartment stock and clearly exasperated, concluded, “You guys really want a big house.” The first home she showed them was 667 Argyle Road, so it was obviously meant to be. Inspired by all the named cottages they had visited on their travels over the years, they dubbed their new home The Lorelei and placed a handsome nameplate by their front door.



The Stories Your House Could Tell — continued

Lance, a retired human resources executive at AIG, developed widely adopted techniques for managing employees during times of profound corporate restructuring. He writes about those experiences as “The Clever Corporate Navigator™,” an online resource for career advice. He’s currently working on his memoir about joining and leaving Orthodox Judaism—a condensed version appeared this



summer in Tablet Magazine. Meanwhile, Rob directed training programs for the Regional Alliance, a public/private partnership dealing with economic development issues for small minority- and women-owned businesses that was located in the World Trade Center until 9/11.

Prodded for memories of their early days here, Lance recalled an elderly neighbor who had an ancient, rusted, tireless automobile in the front of his driveway. When Rob asked if he was ever going to junk it, the old-timer replied, “It’s stayin’ put—It can still drive!” As they spoke, Lance marveled at an ailanthus tree over the man’s shoulder, two stories tall, which was growing out of a basement window.

When Rob’s parents arrived to see their son’s new house, Lance remembers steering them away from vantage points where they could see the wreck and the tree.

In October, Rob and Lance will celebrate 27 years as helpful, wonderful neighbors. Rob has served as a member of the West Midwood Community Association Board for

the majority of his years here, many as VP and President. And Lance has shared so many detailed helpful tips and recommendations to the neighborhood with his email postings that he gives Consumer Reports a run for their money. They are exemplars of the community spirit that makes this a great place to live.

Asked if they were feeling the pandemic-inspired departure blues, their response was immediate and heartfelt. As Rob expressed it, “We are so grateful to have this house that has nurtured and sustained us for decades,” to which Lance added, “and we plan on enjoying The Lorelei for decades to come.”

Make Sure You Are Counted!

There are only a few weeks left to be included in the 2020 Census, and it’s really important that we get as accurate a count as is possible. Many things depend on how many people are recorded as living here: Money for schools, hospitals, affordable housing, senior support services and job training programs are allocated based on the census count. So is our representation in Congress, so this is a critical, once-in-ten-years opportunity.

If you have not yet been counted in the census, here’s what to do:

Choose ONE way to complete the census:

- Visit my2020census.gov on your phone or computer
- Call 1-844-330-2020
- Mail in the paper form if you received one



Count everyone you live with, including short-term and temporary guests, including children, people who were not born in the US, family members, friends, roommates, or partners living off-lease.

Even if you rent a room or live in a subdivided unit that might be unlawful, you can and should fill out your own census form online or over the phone.

Your census responses are private, and are protected by federal law. They will never be shared with NYCHA, HRA, Department of Buildings, or any other government agency – not even your landlord. The 2020 Census does NOT ask about your immigration or citizenship status, Social Security Number or income.

Make sure your household is counted, and encourage your friends and family to do the same. The deadline is September 30, 2020.

PUZZLE

Did you know that many car brand names have a non-English meaning?

If you are considering naming a product that is to be marketed abroad, you had better consult a linguist, a philologist, or a professional brand naming service. Choosing the family name of the founder was one approach. Think: Bentley, Ford, Olds, Peugeot, and Porsche. Beware that if you are not careful, the result could be disastrous when the name you choose has meaning to non-English speakers. Consider the urban legend of the Chevy Nova, whose sales were alleged to have faltered in Spanish-speaking countries. The truth is that the word “nova” means the same thing in Spanish as in English; however, “no va,” with a space, means “it doesn’t go” in Spanish. Max, which means “greatest” (in Latin), may no longer be a good name for an airplane model after the recent tragedy involving the Boeing 737 MAX 8 model. Then there is the story about the Audi model Q3. Q3 sounds like the Spanish word “cutres,” which means “miserable.” Surprisingly, Corona beer sales actually improved during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Familiar car brand names have significant meaning in a language other than English. Here is a list of brand names and a list of meanings. How many names can you correctly match with their meaning?

Rating: 5, good; 10, excellent; 15, genius

List of Brand Names

1. Acura
2. Audi
3. Camry
4. Ferrari
5. Geely
6. Honda
7. Hyundai
8. Isuzu
9. Kia
10. Koenigsegg
11. Maserati
12. Mazda
13. Mitsubishi
14. Nissan
15. Saab
16. Subaru
17. Suzuki
18. Toyota
19. Volvo
20. Yamaha

List of Meanings

- A. Bell tree
- B. Blacksmith
- C. Crown
- D. Fertile rice paddies
- E. Fifty bells pealing in harmony and celebrations
- F. Holy cow
- G. I roll
- H. Japanese-made
- I. Listen
- J. Lucky
- K. Modernity
- L. Mountain+Blade
- M. Original Rice Paddy
- N. Precision
- O. Swedish Aeroplane Company, Ltd.
- P. Thanks
- Q. Three Diamonds
- R. To rise from Asia
- S. United
- T. Wisdom

The storm

When will it be cold again? Safe again?

We look out from our windows for downed trees, power lines on car hoods. Hearing, seeing surges of wind, flares of birds, leaves waving frantically. Clouds speed by windows stuffed with air conditioners, rooftops catching a slant of light. What’s palpable is what’s beating us down: a man sags all over as, seeing his grandson on Zoom, he puts on a happy face; the building’s super, wet with sweat, saws and drags away shredded trees, his children safe somewhere. The bleating, blasting winds pierce my ears with frenetic arias as their invisible arms rip apart live limbs and wires.

by Jan Castro



Mid-August storm damage at the corner of Waldorf and Rugby Road. Photo by Eric Goldberg

Sign Spotting

When this column first appeared in 2004, it was solely devoted to signs that appeared on business establishments —e.g., on store windows and awnings and on menus. The column also included signs at construction sites and on billboards. Over the years this column has morphed to also include phrases in advertisements (print or broadcast), signs on commercial vehicles, and text on food packaging and in business correspondence.

I haven't been getting out and around as often as I used to lately, primarily because of the self-isolation imposed on higher-risk individuals. But I do have "foreign correspondents" that let me know about interesting signs that they have spotted. For instance, in Hawaii, an octagonal STOP sign with a NO STOPPING ANYTIME sign immediately below it on the same pole. Another remarkable combination was a sign on a restroom door in a California DMV office that read, "Avoid long lines by calling our toll-free number to make an appointment." The sign did include the toll-free number, but its placement was noteworthy. Closer to home—I do go out to the post office, as I consider that to be essential—is the sign just to the left of the entrance to the 11230 USPS office on Coney Island Avenue that says in bold colors and a large font size, "Danger, Lift Plow." Any driver intending to plow into the building from the street would appreciate the cautionary sign so as not to collide with the curb. Back in March of this year, before the pandemic was declared, a handwritten sign was posted on the door of a store on Avenue H saying that it would reopen soon. It did not reopen again until July. What optimism!

Now I will turn to text that appears in smaller print.

Occasionally, recipes give precise ingredient measures keyed to conventional package sizes. I have an old recipe created at a time when 6.5 ounces was the prevailing size for cans of tuna fish. What is one to do when 6.5-ounce cans of tuna fish are no longer available, and all that is available are 5.0-ounce cans, and the recipe calls for one can but mentions neither can size nor ounces, so you cannot even adjust by using proportional amounts of the other ingredients? One current can label is candid by stating that the contents weigh 5 ounces but 4 ounces when drained. Some recipes do call for draining the liquid out of a can before including its contents but make no mention regarding the size of the can.

There has been an ongoing outcry about breach of privacy, and that may explain why a notice I received from my bank referred to "your account(s) ending in" but showed no account numbers or parts of account numbers, presumably for the sake of my privacy. I have no idea to which account or accounts that notice pertains. I just know that the account agreement was updated and will become effective on a specified future date. The notice further stated that for additional information I should call any of the numbers shown above. Fortunately, one number was shown.

A water bill that I received showed a credit balance. Hooray! Then it went on to say it was not refundable. Boohoo. Finally, it gave instructions for obtaining a refund. I simply waited for the next bill, which showed that the credit balance from the prior bill was applied to the new balance. Why didn't the earlier bill simply make no mention of a refund?

A National Grid bill that I received last year came with an insert stating that they would be phasing out their business reply envelopes (BREs). That bill was accompanied by their BRE. I wondered at that time what they meant by "phasing out." Did it mean that with subsequent bills, I would get only $\frac{3}{4}$ of an envelope, then $\frac{1}{2}$ of an envelope, then $\frac{1}{4}$ of an envelope, and eventually none at all? Or did it mean that for some customers they would eliminate the BRE entirely, while other customers would continue to receive the BRE? This latter hypothesis was consistent with the fact that subsequent bills continued to arrive with a BRE and the phase-out notice, until I eventually received a bill without the notice and without a BRE.

Mystery: When you see red spray paint on the sidewalk, it usually indicates the location of electric power lines lying below. Likewise, yellow markings indicate the location of underlying gas lines. There are standard colors for sewer lines (green), potable water (blue), and communication cables (orange). These temporary markings are placed there to warn excavators to beware and not destroy the underground utility lines when they dig. What do white lines spray-painted on the sidewalk in our neighborhood indicate? Most likely the sidewalk will sooner or later be replaced.

Happy sign spotting (and listening).



Advertisements

Mario Catanzaro

No Victorian house, like those in our neighborhood, should be without an antique clock. Whether it be mantle, wall, shelf, or grandfather clock, or something more modern like an early electric clock, I can probably help. If interested, call me at (718) 282-8471.

Park Slope Copy Center

Owners: Jon and Jamie Kalb

123 Seventh Avenue,
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Phone: (718) 783-0268
Fax: (718) 622-8373

E-mail: pscc@nyc.rr.com

Goods & services: copies (color and black & white); engineering copies; digital prints (color and black & white); computer services including design; invitations; business stationery; business cards; mailing services; shipping services (wrap and pack) for UPS, FedEx, DHL and US Mail.



Box Tops For Education

by Sherry Goldberg

Please help P.S. 217 raise money by clipping Box Tops for Education! Our school receives 10 cents for every single box top we submit, and the funds add up quickly! It's simple: keep an eye out for the Box Tops for Education logo (shown above) on the products you use every day. Participating product lines include major brands such as General Mills, Green Giant, Pillsbury, Old El Paso, Ziploc, Hefty, Betty Crocker, and many more. Simply contact me at sherrymgoldberg@gmail.com. I would be happy to pick up box tops or coordinate a drop off.

Mark Your Calendars!

Rosh Hashanah	September 18-20
Yom Kippur	September 27-28
Milad un Nabi	October 30
Halloween	October 31
Milad un Nabi (Shia)	November 3
Election Day	November 3
Thanksgiving	November 26



What Is West Midwood Online?

Want to ask folks in the neighborhood whether they have any recommendations for a plumber or roofer or such? Or maybe what local eateries or merchants they like? Perhaps you'd like to be in the know about issues affecting our area? Then join the West Midwood Online email discussion group, aka the listserv.

Send an email to joe@enright.com with your street address, name, and the email address that you want to use to post and receive messages. He will add you to the group and send you the simple instructions. There are presently over 200 email subscribers representing about 125 households.

To join you must be a permanent resident of West Midwood and agree not to post messages of a religious, political, or spam nature. Insulting or crude language can also lead to revocation of the ability to post. Finally, new and existing members can also request a daily recap containing all of the activity within the previous 24 hours, rather than receive messages as they occur.

**Would you like to advertise your
Brooklyn-based business in this space?
For the bargain price of \$50 per year, you can be
included in all four issues of the *West Midwood News*.
Please contact Joe Mislowack at
jmislowack@gmail.com
to make payment and submit your copy.**

Artist's Notebook

by Florence Manglani



Neighbors' Businesses and Services

To add, cancel, or update a listing, contact Ellen Bilofsky at ebb11@optonline.net.

Babysitting

Griffin Umrigar Laguardia Arts High School student, available for babysitting. Creative, in the neighborhood and many references available! Please contact me at 917-244-9978.

Education and Lessons

Danielle Buonaiuto Private voice lessons for high-school age and adult students in classical, musical theatre, and pop styles. Master of Music from Peabody Conservatory, and 10+ years' teaching experience. danielle.buonaiuto@gmail.com.

Rob Garcia Drum lessons. I've been teaching private lessons to students of all ages for the past 25 years, and I have a great teaching studio in my home at 34 Wellington Ct. For more info about lessons, see <http://www.robgarciamusic.com/notepad.php> Contact me at robjgarcia@hotmail.com.

Udi Hazan Private table tennis and archery lessons. Certified coach - level 1 in ping pong and level 2 in recurve bow archery. 718-859-8432

Florence Manglani Semi-retired bilingual school psychologist, still teaching at Brooklyn College, is available for consultations. 718-434-2134

Julian Rhine Guitar lessons. BA in music and English from Vanderbilt University. 917-981-0675

Melissa Scott Yoga for Every Body! Currently offering private or small class instruction. 718-781-6509; kettleandkame@gmail.com.

Amy Rowe Tutoring in math, reading, writing, ESL, test prep, and other subjects. All ages, all levels welcome. Experienced education program leader, researcher, teacher, tutor, writer, and editor can help make learning fast and fun. amyrowe.nyc@gmail.com; 917-723-0348

David Wechsler Flute lessons. Long-time member of Brooklyn Philharmonic and many years of experience teaching at all levels. 347-528-6318



Health and Mental Health

Laura Campbell-Lui Shaklee Distributor household cleaning products; nutritional skin care; nutritional supplement products; appointments available. 917-767-3579; lauraclui@yahoo.com.

Jan Castro Custom Thai bodywork and Swedish, sports, and myofascial massage: 60–120-minute sessions. Reasonable rates. Great birthday or special occasion gift. jancastro1@gmail.com or 314-323-9060. Please call two or more days in advance.

Andrea Freshman, LCSW Specialty: trauma healing with emphasis on integrating the mind-body connection. 718-434-6873.

Pet Sitting

Neil Mendlinger and Lauren Sullivan, Owners, Abby on Argyle Pet Sitting & Dog Walking, LLC. Available 365 days a year for your pets. Bonded and insured, and all staff members trained in Pet First Aid and CPR. Member of Pet Sitters International and an eco-friendly company. www.AbbyOnArgyle.com.

Real Estate

Miriam Hurwitz Associate real estate broker with Douglas Elliman on Cortelyou Road. 917-589-6717.

Ester Sciallo Brooklyn residential real estate. Office: 718-676-1755; cell: 646-389-6248; es@brres.com



WEST MIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018 - 2020

MARY BAKIJA	776 WESTMINSTER ROAD	marybakija@gmail.com
ALVIN BERK	735 ARGYLE ROAD	alvin_berk@verizon.net
LAURA CAMPBEL- LUI	1434 GLENWOOD RD	lauraclui@yahoo.com
MARILYN CUFF	725 RUGBY ROAD	artemis1947@hotmail.com
ANTHONY FINKEL	1435 GLENWOOD ROAD	anthonyjfinkel@gmail.com
JEFFREY EWING	776 WESTMINSTER ROAD	J.R.Ewing@verizon.net
ERIC GOLDBERG	12 WALDORF COURT	goldbergeric@yahoo.com
LINDA HOWELL	815 E. 12TH ST.	LHPT49@gmail.com
JOSEPH MISLOWACK	1315 GLENWOOD RD.	jmislowack@gmail.com
CHAUDRY MOHAMMED	672 WESTMINSTER RD	cnmohammad@gmail.com
ERIC NEWSUM	667 RUGBY RD.	ericnewsum@gmail.com
MELANIE OSER	639 MARLBOROUGH CT	meloser@hotmail.com
MELISSA SCOTT	784 RUGBY ROAD	meliscott@optonline.net
ROBERT SEIDEL	667 ARGYLE ROAD	info@loraleinyc.com
VIRGINIA WATERS	715 ARGYLE RD.	vwaters715@aol.com
MIKE WEISS	15 WALDORF COURT	m.a.weiss@verizon.net

