

WEST MIDWOOD NEWS

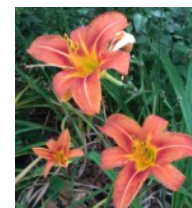
Volume 37

Number 2

June/July 2023



It's Summer!



Summer in West Midwood is in full swing: The WMCA has sponsored Summer Schmoozes, a Progressive Garden Party, and other fun events, with more to come. Thanks to local musical talent, as well as Operation Gig, we have porch concerts virtually every weekend, and wonderful events sponsored by Flatbush Development Corporation, like Open Streets on Sundays on Newkirk Avenue. That

doesn't even include the numerous barbecues, picnics and get-togethers in private homes, and all the other advantages of summer in West Midwood, like easy access to Coney Island, local beaches and Prospect Park. We are lucky and we know it. There are pictures of past events and announcements of future ones inside this edition of West Midwood News. Enjoy!

The Stories Your House Could Tell:

By Joe Enright

1430 Glenwood Road

In November of 1907 John R. Corbin sold a house he had just erected 35 feet west of the just submerged Brighton railroad for \$12,500 (or \$1,500 down and \$50 a month for twenty years). Louis E. Williamson, the well-to-do buyer, owned an ink business on William Street two blocks east of "Printing House Square" at the intersection of Spruce Street and Park Row, then more commonly known as New York's "Newspaper Row." Williamson likely bought the property as an investment (he owned two other houses in southern Brooklyn) and sold it less than two years later to Frederick W. Hearn a prosperous merchant who had been living for most of his 48 years in the "New Lots" east of Flatbush – later dubbed "East New York." The Hearn family owned 1430 Glenwood Road for the next thirty one years.



The ancestry of Frederick's wife, Sadie Lois Hyde, has been traced back to Sir Robert Hyde, Lord of the Manor of Norbury, 150 miles northwest of London, who died in 1571. A grandson emigrated to New England three decades later and after a lot of beggating, Sadie was born in New York in 1868. Frederick's family history is not as well documented, because there were no "Sirs" or "Lords" in his lineage. We do know that his mother emigrated from Holland and his father from England. Upon settling in New Lots during the Civil War, the Hearn family became dairy farmers. Frederick expanded his father's business, and with his brother Cornelius became a wholesaler of butter and eggs at the Fulton Market (later dubbed the Fulton Fish Market,

which relocated to Hunts Point in 2006). In 1899, the *New York Times* reported on Frederick Hearn's trip to Cuba, which had just become a US Protectorate in the wake of the Spanish-American War. Hearn represented a syndicate of investors with \$6 million in capital (a quarter billion bucks today) who wanted to establish sugar and tobacco plantations near Santiago. The result of his trip is unknown, but judging from his subsequent activities – expansion of his dairy business, multiple realty purchases in East New York, a new home on one of the finest blocks in Flatbush, and a vacation house in Setauket – we'd have to guess that he made out okay.

Hearn, like his fellow "Rough Riding" New Yorker, Teddy Roosevelt – whose Presidential term ended in 1909 – was a

Republican. He served as a party representative for the district during the First World War, along with his next-door neighbor. At that time, most homeowners in Flatbush were Republican, while the working class in their employ remained loyal to Democratic "Tammany Hall."

In August 1918, Frederick Hearn placed a classified ad in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* to sell "elegant" 1430 Glenwood with its "new garage" for \$12,500. However, the ad was pulled after just two days. In 1930, Frederick would peg the home's value at \$20,000 for the US Census taker, but by 1940 he estimated it had plunged back to its initial sales price of \$12,500 as a result

Editor's Note: Your Newsletter is Hiring!

The salary is really low (as in \$0, nada, bubkis), but the appreciation from your neighbors is great and the job satisfaction level is through the roof. Only four issues a year, conveniently spread out to once a quarter.

West Midwood News has been continuously publishing for nearly 37 years, and has faithfully marked the seasons as the neighborhood grew and changed, and new people moved into the homes where others had raised children, completed degrees, started and ended careers. And the cycle repeats again, and again. We intend for the newsletter to continue documenting that history, but really need some help. We already have some wonderful columnists and contributors, but here's what we need most desperately at the moment:

Writers: Specifically, we'd like to have a regular column on gardening, a restaurant reviewer, a local news reporter, and a person to interview and introduce new neighbors.

Photographers: From candid shots of the neighborhood to coverage of local WMCA events, we need more photographs. One of the advantages of our move to on-line publishing is that we can include color photographs. And you'll get a photo credit!

Copyeditors: It would be great to have an additional copyeditor with an eagle eye to edit copy before it's put into the newsletter and proofread the final edition before it is published.

Interested? Do you have ideas for how to make the newsletter better? Let me know!

Editor: WestMidwoodNews@gmail.com

Tori Rosen

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President's Message Summer 2023



Happy Summer, West Midwood!

The WMCA Board has been plotting improvements both to our physical plant as well as our corner of cyberspace. Take a stroll to the end of Glenwood Road and check out the newly painted wall, new planters, and flowers. This project was spearheaded by Aggie Smith, and the work was done by Anthony Finkel and his crew from DPH.

In cyberspace, we are in the process of redesigning <http://www.westmidwood.org> to refresh that space and make it easier to browse, which is especially helpful for potential new residents and others seeking info about our area. Do you have web development skills and are you interested in helping the Community Association maintain the website, and even the Listserve, going forward? If yes, please contact me at goldbergeric@yahoo.com. We welcome everyone's new ideas, talents and energies.

And as you'll see in this newsletter, there's a lot going on in the neighborhood: Dinners, yard sales, schmoozes Sunday Open Streets, and porch concerts. West Midwood is a great place to live: Enjoy everything the neighborhood has to offer!

Enjoy the summer,
Eric Goldberg



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Editor: Tori Rosen



West Midwood Cooks (and Bakes!) by Allidah Muller

Grilled Za'atar Chicken with Garlic Yogurt and Cilantro

I love our grill. I still have a lot to learn about how to best utilize it, but I really enjoy cooking outdoors and finding wonderful recipes that allow me to do so. This recipe from Melissa Clark is one such recipe. If I want to use the grill to make the whole meal, I'll slice some zucchini and summer squash lengthwise, grill them alongside the chicken, and serve everything with either rice or couscous. The Flatbush Food Co-op sells Za'atar if you're looking to add it to your spice rack.

- 6 garlic cloves, finely grated, pressed, or minced
- 2 lemons, zested
- 1 cup plain whole-milk yogurt
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus more sprigs for garnish
- 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
- 1½ Tbsp Za'atar, plus more for serving
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh oregano or marjoram, plus more sprigs for garnish
- 1¾ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2¼ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs

1. In a large bowl or container, stir together 5 of the grated garlic cloves, half the lemon zest, ⅓ cup yogurt, the cilantro, oil, za'atar, oregano or marjoram, salt and black pepper. Add chicken and toss until well coated. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight. (Note: I've made this both ways, and the recipe is definitely better if you have the forethought to marinate overnight.)
2. When ready to cook, light the grill to medium or heat your broiler with the rack 3 inches from the heat source. Remove chicken from the bowl, shaking off any excess marinade, and grill or broil on one side until charred in spots, 5 to 8 minutes. Flip the

chicken and grill or broil for another 5 to 8 minutes until just cooked though (165°F).

3. While the chicken is cooking, place remaining ⅔ cup yogurt in a small bowl. Stir in the reserved grated garlic clove and lemon zest, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Cut one zested lemon in half and set aside for serving (Save the other zested lemon for another use).

4. To serve, place chicken on a serving platter and drizzle with olive oil and a large squeeze of the zested lemon. Top with cilantro and oregano or marjoram sprigs and serve with the yogurt sauce. Tip: if you're broiling instead of grilling, you can line your sheet pan with foil for easier clean up. Don't use parchment paper, because it might burn.



Tomatoes with Sumac Shallots and Pine Nuts

This salad would go very nicely with the grilled chicken recipe. It comes from *Ottolenghi Simple*. The higher quality the tomatoes you use, the better the salad. It's yummy with pita or thick slices

of crusty bread to sop up leftover juices, or even chunks of ripe avocado.

- 1 large shallot sliced "paper-thin"
- 1½ Tbsp sumac (Eastern Fruits and Veggies on Coney Island between H and I sells sumac)
- 2 tsp white wine vinegar
- Salt
- 1½ lb mixed tomatoes (a mix of large tiger, green and red plum, red and yellow cherry; or a single variety if that's all you can get)
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ¾ cup basil leaves
- Black pepper
- ¼ cup pine nuts

West Midwood Cooks (and Bakes!) *continued*

1. Place the shallot in a small bowl with the sumac, vinegar, and 1/8 tsp salt. Use your hands to mix them - you want the sumac to be really massaged into the shallots - then set aside for at least 30 minutes to soften. (Note: this can be prepared 1 day in advance and refrigerated.)

2. Slice the large tomatoes in half lengthwise and then into 1/2-inch wedges and place in a large bowl. Slice cherry tomatoes in half lengthwise and add to the bowl. Pour the olive oil and mix gently with the basil leaves, a rounded 1/4 tsp salt, and a generous grind of black pepper.

3. Arrange the tomatoes on a large platter. Spread the shallot slices over them, lifting some of the tomatoes and basil from under the shallots to rest on top. Sprinkle with pine nuts and serve.

Spring Minestrone with Kale and Pasta

I feel like I have very little time in the evenings to cook dinner these days, so I'm always looking for recipes that are very quick. This one from Kay Chun via the *New York Times* is actually accurate on its time estimation: 20 minutes. It's a very flexible recipe; you can swap green veggies according to taste, use either vegetable or chicken stock and toss

in any type of short pasta. The pesto and Parmesan swirled in at the end provide richness and brightness, but you could also finish it with tapenade, sour cream, ricotta or even hot sauce!

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 large shallots or 1 small onion, thinly sliced

2 celery stalks, thinly sliced

Kosher salt and black pepper

2 Tbsp minced fresh ginger (optional, but highly recommended)

2 Tbsp minced garlic

2 quarts low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock

1 cup ditalini or small shaped pasta

8 oz asparagus, trimmed and sliced into 1/2-inch

pieces, thinly sliced zucchini or chopped broccoli

1 cup fresh or frozen peas

5 oz baby kale, baby spinach or torn spinach (about 4 cups)

Storebought pesto and grated parmesan, for serving

(I like to use the refrigerated LeGrand Pesto in a pouch that you can find at the Flatbush Food Co-op.)

1. In a heavy soup pot or Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium. Add shallots and celery season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes.

2. Add the ginger, if using, and garlic and stir until very fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add stock and bring to a simmer.

3. Stir in pasta and cook according to package instructions until al dente. (Note: I like to cook pasta for soup separately and add it later in case there are leftovers, because otherwise the pasta gets really waterlogged.) Stir in asparagus and peas and cook until vegetables and pasta are tender, about 3 minutes longer. Stir in kale and season with salt and pepper.

4. Divide soup among bowls. Swirl in some pesto and top with Parmesan.



Photo Album: Summer in West Midwood

The season got off to a great start with the West Midwood Progressive Garden Party. Over a hundred people signed up for the May event, although a few of them were unable to come because rain meant that the party was moved to next day. (That's why we set a rain date for these things.) Appetizers were enjoyed at three locations, then the whole crowd got together for dessert. Many thanks to event coordinator Melissa Scott, appetizer hosts Elizabeth Daniels, Steve Weingarten, Tori and David Rosen, Sam and Warren Bloom, Catalina Bertani, and Maura Minsky, and to dessert host Melissa Scott. The clean-up volunteers were numerous (it takes a village...) and the pre-event helpers included Tanya Coss, Robert Seidel, Scott Woodcock, and Carrie Nooten. (Photos by Laura Givner and Dave Kiefer)



Photo by Lynne Groveman



had plunged back to its initial sales price of \$12,500 as a result of the Depression.

The Hearn's two children, Lester and Gertrude, were wed in 1928 and 1929 respectively. By then, Frederick's income derived from his extensive realty portfolio, and for the next decade the Hearn's experienced an empty nest. On the eve of the Second World War, Sadie (age 72 in 1939) and Frederick (age 80 in 1940) died in the home.

During the war, 1430 Glenwood Road became a two-family house and it remains so designated today – an oddity for the block – although it has been occupied only by single families since 1946 when the home was bought by John and Jennie Lauro. John owned a plumbing business, and when he died in 1948, his wife managed it. Per the 1950 US Census, Jennie took on boarders and in-laws to make ends meet. In 1954 she sold the house to Betty C. Fisch and Dr. Martin L. Fisch, who by 1961 had become the Director of Clinics and Chief Psychologist of Long Island College Hospital, lecturing on “the morals of the young adult”, we learn from multiple 1960s’ press clips. The 1954 purchase price was \$13,000, somewhat above its assessed value at that time of \$11,800.

In 1969 Dr. Fisch sold the home to Eugene A. Czap and Carolyne Ebinger Czap of 1360 Ocean Parkway. Eugene was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross for his military service as a TEC 4 in WWII, and Carolyne was the daughter of Ebinger Bakeries President Arthur Ebinger. Arthur's father George founded the famous bakery at 1110 Flatbush Ave. near Cortelyou Road in 1898, which grew to over forty locations in Brooklyn by the time George died in 1935. Arthur further expanded the business and went public in 1969 to



raise capital for a five million dollar plant in Melville to serve outlets in Queens and Nassau counties. But Ebinger came under fire for discriminatory hiring practices in the early 1960s, hemorrhaged money during the late 1960s recession and declared bankruptcy, closing abruptly in 1972.

In 2001 Carolyne passed away at the age of 83, followed in 2008, by Eugene who died at the age of 93. A charitable foundation was established in their name, which funded in their memory the Alzheimer's Program at New York-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. It provides “a full continuum of care for patients diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and other memory and cognitive disorders [and] brain fitness training for older adults.”

The Czap's estate sold the home to Paul Weintraub and Robyn Wolnitz for \$935,000 in December 2009. Paul (Brooklyn Tech), created a very successful CPA firm, and Robyn, (Midwood High), became a neurologist associated with Maimonides and NYU Langone, and maintains a local practice on Avenue P.

In January 2019, after raising three daughters alongside the clatter of Brighton trains, Paul and Robyn moved to Woodmere, Long Island, and sold the house to Dr. Ramesh S. Gulrajani, a pulmonologist and Aggie Smith-Gulrajani, a recently retired

nurse. They had been living in Marine Park for many years and each had two children from a prior marriage.

Ramesh graduated from India's G.S. Medical College in Mumbai in 1975 and emigrated to the U.S. the following year to begin his training at Cumberland Medical Center. Since 1981 he has been affiliated with Brooklyn Hospital Center where he was appointed Associate Chief Medical Officer in 2007. Over the years, he has been responsible for training numerous students, residents, and pulmonary fellows, and has served as Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University. He has also co-authored several articles in scientific journals; was inducted into the “wall of fame” by the American Lung Association; and was named as one of the “Top Doctors in New York” by Castle, Connolly Medical Guide, New York Magazine, and Consumer Research Council of America. His son Avinash is a cardiologist in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and his daughter Samara worked in Human Resources at BAM before moving to Florida.



Aggie is also an immigrant with a distinguished medical career (BSN, MSN, OB-GYN, NP degree from SUNY-Downstate). She was a toddler when the Soviets invaded Hungary to crush the famous 1956 uprising – her family fled with Aggie to Austria and then to America. Her son Sean Smith is an architect in Pennsylvania and daughter Breann is a make-up artist in Florida. Aggie met Ramesh while running the Women's Health Center Clinic at Brooklyn Hospital almost 20 years ago: A compassionate social worker introduced the divorcees and love bloomed. Five years ago, Aggie was working in an OB-GYN office on Newkirk Avenue and would take walks around the leafy cocoons of Victorian Flatbush. She appreciated the quiet streets — a sharp contrast to the blare of the nightlife on her Marine Park block. By chance, she met Marilyn Cuff, who would accompany her on weekly walks, introducing her to welcoming neighbors, which led to driveway parking spots, membership in the Victorian quilters group, and an overall sense that she had found a mini-Arcadia in Brooklyn.

When 1430 Glenwood came on the market, Paul and Robyn welcomed her to sit on their porch at any hour to gauge whether the Brighton trains rushing past would be a deal-breaker. She found it “an easy background noise,” and eventually convinced Ramesh they should move from their transit desert. In doing so, Ramesh found subway travel preferable to traffic jams and Aggie learned to live with less pickleball. “We lived in Marine Park for so many years, yet barely knew any of our neighbors and never had a drink or shared a meal with any of them. Here it's a daily occurrence. We love how friendly and caring our neighbors and the community is.” The Gulrajani's only complaint? “When we have porch company, you have to gap your conversation from 6 to 8 seconds as a train rushes by, but it's well worth it to live here.” [Her only wish now is that her son Sean, who has been actively looking for a place in this area for his wife (a therapist at Maimonides) and two children, gets lucky so she can babysit more often.]

PUZZLE

By *The West Midwood Puzzler*

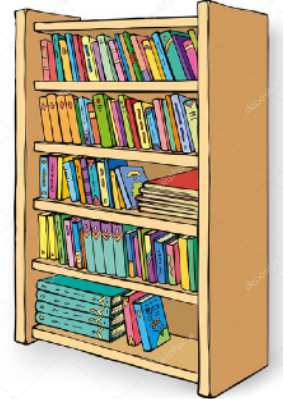
This puzzle is suitable for readers of all ages. It calls for creating a list of animals (mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, etc.) whose names all have exactly four letters. Shortened names, generic names, gender-specific names, and age-specific names are allowed. Your list may not include names of items that are derived from animals—such as beef, pork, stew, and veal. The answers to this puzzle may be found on page 13 of this issue.

RANK: 20=good; 40=excellent; 60=genius



West Midwood Bookshelf — *Joan Greenberg, librarian*

*Read any good books lately? Have a book recommendation for your neighbors?
Please send them to Joan Greenberg at joandavey@gmail.com.*



Recommended by Arthur Rhine:

The Wager, by David Grann, the author of **Killers of the August Moon**. Once you start, cancel any sleep plans.

Barbarian Days, by William Finnegan. **Barbarian Days** is about surfing, in the same way that **On the Road** is about driving a car. A classic!

Recommended by Aggie Smith:

West with Giraffes: A Novel, by Lynda Rutledge. Incredible story about the first two giraffes arriving from Africa who survive a hurricane and have to endure crossing from NY to arrive at the San Diego Zoo in 1938. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age story, **West with Giraffes** explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.



Recommended by Tori Rosen:

The Covenant of Water, by Abraham Verghese.

The latest from the author of **Cutting for Stone**, this is a sprawling feast of a novel, set in Karola, India filled with characters you won't forget, multiple intertwining plots, and medical mysteries, against the backdrop of the volatile politics of colonial and post-colonial India.

Pineapple Street, by Jenny Jackson

A great beach book. Fast moving, funny, and insightful story of a very rich family in Brooklyn Heights coming to terms with very first-world problems. Full of places you know, and people you might or might not, but you've certainly heard about. It's an indulgence, but such a fast-paced addictive read that it won't eat too much of your time, so don't feel too guilty.

Save the Date!
West Midwood Yard Sale
October 15
(Rain Date October 22)



Photo Album: Summer in West Midwood — *continued*

Summer Schmooze! A New Midwood Tradition

After the success of the Progressive Garden Party, neighbors began to consider how West Midwood could keep the good times rolling and developed the pilot of an idea for a neighborhood happy hour: the Summer Schmooze!

The hope of the West Midwood Community Association was that new and rooted neighbors could come together and continue to get to know each other. As the wildfires raged across Canada and the Tri-State area was bathed in a plume of orange haze, West Midwood prepared itself to reluctantly reschedule the first ever Summer Schmooze. Mother Nature, though, smiled on our little Hamlet, the smoke clouds cleared, the sun made an appearance (as did a little rain), and new and rooted neighbors gathered at the DeLamar-Kanters at 765 Westminster Road to enjoy an afternoon of wine and nibbles.

Neighbors from all over West Midwood spent the afternoon catching up, watching neighborhood children and teens play together, and enjoying a table-full of cured meats, cheese, and freshly baked bread. As a testament to the joy of being out in the fresh air and the community built around West Midwood, when a thunderstorm rolled into the area, neighbors didn't flee to their respective homes but instead sought shelter in the DeLamar-Kanter garage.

With rain pounding on the roof, neighbors gathered and laughed in the dry safety of the garage (or under the eaves of the house) and waited out the brief shower before returning to the backyard and more schmoozing! It was amazing how many of our neighbors chose to weather the storm to keep spending time with each other. Or maybe it was the charcuterie table? Minutes passed, the evening waned, and still neighbors hung out around the backyard strengthening ties and hoping to host more schmoozes, West Midwood residents made their way home a little happier, a little more joyous, and a little more connected.

A huge thank you to the West Midwood Community Association for sponsoring this event, Jennifer Firestone for spearheading it, and the DeLamar-Kanters for hosting Summer Schmooze Part 1. It was such a success that Summer Schmooze Part 2 followed in June, hosted by Jennifer Firestone and Jonathan Morrill.

Watch for announcements of the next Schmooze!

Summer Schmooze Part 1



Summer Schmooze Part 2

