



VIEWS FROM THE HEIGHTS

Jackson Heights – “A Garden in the City”

Volume 32, No. 4
Winter 2021

Jackson Heights
Beautification Group

www.JHBG.org

2021: YEAR IN REVIEW Looking Ahead to 2022!



*“A ripple is considered a disturbance on the water’s surface.
The intent of this image is to represent how our perceptions
have changed while living with a pandemic;
2022 offers the potential for some clarity, optimism & hope.”*

—Artist Kirsten Magnani

Holiday Events



Saturday, December 11
Holiday Lighting
at Jackson Heights Post Office
(37th Ave. between 78th and 79th St.)

Crafts at 4pm ★ Lighting at 5pm
Join us for Caroling, Hot Chocolate,
Crafts, & Good Cheer!

Everyone is asked to wear masks and practice social distancing



Wednesday, December 15
**Jackson Heights
Orchestra Returns!**
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church
(34th Ave. between 81st and 82nd St.)

7:30 pm ★ Free (or suggested donation)

Masks and vaccination record required for all

Help the JH community by volunteering at our cleanups and other events!
Go to JHBG.org or e-mail info@jhb.org to sign up!

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Neighbors enjoying the snow at Travers Park during one of the city's snowiest Februaries on record.

President's Message

BY LESLIE ELLMAN



The end of the calendar year is often a great time for reflection. During times of crisis like these, reflecting on our everyday joys has become increasingly important to me.

At JHBG, our volunteer-led group focuses on both the beauty and wellness of our physical environment as well as the joy that comes from gathering in and caring for our public spaces.

I am so proud of the work we have done this year to afford all of our neighbors a chance to come together to enhance our community.

Our TreeLC group has busily cared for our local street trees and our community composting site, and JH-SCRAPS has seen increased demand as neighbors continue to understand the importance of reducing waste. Our ongoing community cleanups have made a significant impact

on the litter and garbage accumulating on our commercial corridors, and our programming returned after a pause due to the pandemic. We are so grateful for the many volunteers that make this work possible.

Whether you were able to come out to a concert at Travers or enjoy the Historic Weekend, march with us in the Halloween Parade, or maybe you will be at the holiday lighting, we hope you can take a moment and bask in the enjoyment that comes with spending time with neighbors in a community that distinguishes itself by the ways in which we care for our public spaces and for each other.

We wish you a joyous holiday season and a very happy new year!

Leslie Ellman
JHBG President

Editor's Message

BY MELISSA ZAVALA

Winter is Followed by Renewal

The Holiday Season is here following another extraordinary year. It is hard to believe 2021 is ending and another year begins with the pandemic still very much impacting everyday life. This year, our borough led the rest of the city in vaccination rates for adults, with our neighborhood registering higher inoculation rates in comparison to the rest of the city as well as the rest of the borough. Vaccine command centers became a regular sight on our streets, and so did arts programs of varying sorts. While our programming is not back

to pre-pandemic levels yet, we continue to look for ways of contributing to neighborhood life. This issue reviews this past calendar year and considers an additional pandemic-related effect that also became a common sight around the city and in our neighborhood, street vending, while also looking ahead to the Spring when signs of renewed life will emerge again.

Much like the tradition of marking the end of each year with gratitude while making New Year's Resolutions, we are already planning ahead for the coming year to find new ways of expanding our

services to the community we love. We greatly appreciate your support and are always glad to hear your suggestions for stories, article contributions, and other thoughts on how we can better serve you. To contact us, please email us at info@jhb.org or write to us by mail at JHBG, PO Box 720253, Jackson Heights, NY 11372.

Happy Holidays, everyone!

Melissa Zavala
Editor



34th Avenue Open Street: What's Legal and What's Not

BY LEN MANIACE

Though supporters of the 34th Avenue Open Street (OS) appreciate a walk down the avenue under a canopy of trees and a big sky, the OS often feels chaotic (JHBG also supports the program). Motorcycles, mopeds, electric bikes, powered scooters, and bicycles, zoom by too close for comfort.

JHBG President, Leslie Ellman, and I recently discussed this issue with Jason Banrey, Queens Deputy Borough Commissioner for the NYC Department of Transportation. We wanted to understand what is legal and what is not, and here is what we learned.

Motorcycles, which have limited access to the OS, must obey the same laws as cars and trucks. This means that when the OS is in operation, motorcycles are permitted entry for local travel for one block only. They are not permitted to use the OS as a through street. And they are limited to 5 mph. This is surprising because we see motorcycles usually using 34th Avenue as a through street.

What is even more surprising is that mopeds, electric bicycles, and other motorized modes of travel face the same limits as motorcycles, cars, and trucks – they can enter the OS for local travel only. From what we have seen, these smaller vehicles almost always act as if they have no restrictions on the OS.

Banrey suggests that stronger police presence on the street can improve the situation. A lack of a regular police presence is a frequent complaint in discussions about the OS.

Signs on the barricades read “Road Closed to Thru Traffic. Yield to Peds and Bikes. 5 MPH” and point to passages for pedestrians and bikes. Do operators of various motorized cycles, scooters, etc., know they, too, are covered by these restrictions on the OS?

Banrey assured us that motorcyclists do know; in getting licensed they learn that they must follow the same traffic rules as autos. Operators of electric bikes and scooters, however, lack mandatory education since they are not licensed.

In seeking a solution, we asked that signs explaining that all these vehicles are restricted be posted, but it is not that simple. Signs spelling out rules for these vehicles on the OS are not in the DOTs toolbox and the agency cannot just paint some. Banrey said such signs require legislative approval.



Motorcycles, cars, and pedestrians share the road—but motorized road users must follow the rules.



A Neighborhood Activist Remembered

BY EDWIN O'KEEFE WESTLEY



Janet Kelly with her knitting class in the 2014 documentary *In Jackson Heights*.

A memorial service was held to celebrate the Life of Janet M. Kelly on August 14, 2021, at the Jackson Heights Jewish Center, where speakers shared their memories of a life well-lived. Councilman Daniel Dromm was one of the friends celebrating Janet. Several days later, he called to suggest co-naming a street to honor her contributions to her beloved neighborhood. Janet's children, Chris and Diana, knew that their mother loved Jackson Heights but were unaware of her contributions until her memorial. We happily accepted this exceptional honor.

Janet taught knitting at the Catherine Sheridan Senior Center on 83rd Street. Of all her service, she enjoyed this the most because through it, she experienced the mosaic of cultures in Jackson Heights. Her gift for languages enabled her to learn basic phrases in her students' languages, driving her commitment to them. Naming the southeast

corner of 83rd Street and 35th Avenue Janet M. Kelly 'Knitting Teacher' Way is a fitting tribute.

She was a long serving director of the Jackson Heights Beautification Group. As leader of the garden club, she recruited many gardeners and created numerous tree gardens. She consulted on the reinstallation of the 34th Avenue median, advocating for elevated curbs to lessen the impact on plants of salt spreaders in the winter. Hospitality for the annual Children's Halloween Parade was provided by her, and Emma Brant, when Janet would dress as June Cleaver from the 1950's television series *Leave it to Beaver*. When the JHBG needed a Treasurer, Janet answered the call and implemented new procedures using her CPA credentials.

Janet was one of the founders of the Jackson Heights knitting group and her appearance in the documentary *In Jackson Heights* is hilarious.

A Review of Our Programming in 2021: Traditions, Old and New, Along with Some Tributes

At the start of the year, we distributed supplies to our unhoused neighbors with the help of Matthew Elkin, an energetic neighborhood resident who, together with his wife, Lorena, took on the challenge of providing those in need with hygiene supplies and winter provisions. We were able to contribute help thanks to your in-kind contributions.

Our dog run on 69th Street and 35th Avenue, JHCREW, remained open during the shutdown and beyond, offering dogs and their families respite from confined spaces during quarantine. Additionally, Our Graffiti cleanup team also remained hard at work, continuing efforts to help eradicate graffiti in our neighborhood. It has been an uphill battle over the last year given an increase in gang-related tagging. Donations to JHBG for graffiti-cleaning chemicals and supplies are always greatly appreciated. Residents can also report graffiti to the NYPD by emailing them at Graffiti@nypd.org.



In celebration of International Compost Awareness Week, volunteers and children make compost cookies.

Our cleanups continued along the 69th Street corridor between 37th Avenue and Northern Boulevard, and on Junction Boulevard in partnership with our elected officials and with some support from the Cleanup Corps. Our TreeLC crew tended to tree gardens on 37th Avenue and on the Median on the 34th Avenue Open Street, pruning trees and planting flowering plants.

This year we were able to celebrate Halloween again in true Jackson



Neighborhood residents show off their creativity in the 30th Annual Halloween Parade on a beautiful fall day.



Heights fashion: our Halloween Parade returned to the enjoyment of thousands of participants and onlookers! It was a perfect day for a parade.

Despite limitations on social gatherings interrupting some of our programming, we nevertheless sought new ways to provide neighbors with things to do outdoors. In partnership with the Municipal Arts Society, we participated in the Annual Jane's Walk program for the first time, offering a self-led Scavenger Hunt. This global event honors renowned urbanist Jane Jacobs. Her writings on cities have inspired generations of designers, planners, politicians, and others to make cities more livable. Our scavenger hunt considered the impact of urban infrastructure on public health following a difficult year of illness and loss.



One of the many walls cleaned following the quarantine, before-and-after.

We will participate again next year.

In the spirit of reflection and honoring collective losses, we also joined in the city's Daffodil Project organized by New Yorkers for Parks. Inspired by the global Holocaust Memorial project featuring daffodils throughout cities worldwide, New Yorkers for Parks began commemorating the deaths of those lost on 9/11 two decades ago using the same flowers. With this year marking the 20th anniversary of that day, the Open Street Coalition has planted more than 5,000 bulbs along the 34th Avenue median, with JHBG planting along Junction Boulevard and elsewhere in the neighborhood. These will bloom shortly after the crocus planted last year by Evie McKenna in remembrance of the lives lost to COVID-19.



Summer Sundays: 2021 Successes and Looking Ahead

BY JOE KNIPES



Some highlights from a successful comeback summer concert series including Cumbia, Jazz, Samba, Carnatic music, and much more!



Summer 2021 marked a return to in-person concerts at Travers Park. Supporting grants from Queens Council on The Arts funded the artists, sound man, posters and flyers, and cold bottles of water. Permits from the NYC Parks Department allowed us to present live bands before live audiences. Following a hiatus, Summer Sundays was up and running!

We reached out to a variety of musicians to present Queens' best. From a patriotic brass ensemble to rock bands, jazz, Brazilian, Colombian, and Indian, we fully realized an effort to reach diverse audiences.

Word spread and the concerts began drawing larger audiences to the tennis court where maximum shade could be found. Our intrepid volunteers showed up to haul chairs, canopies, banners, and coolers with bottled water into the park to set up for the concerts every week. Fortune smiled on us in the form of a feature article in the Queens Chronicle, complete with photos of dancing revelers and jamming musicians. Jackson Heights neighbors turned out to support great live music, and their neighborhood in general.

Looking ahead to 2022, we are already talking to bands that will represent our diverse village and will delight audiences with new and interesting sounds. We may see a couple of favorites return as well. Stay tuned! Should concerts move back to the performance area on 78th Street? What bands would you like to see perform? What improvements would allow for maximum enjoyment for everyone? Should we broadcast on Facebook or YouTube simultaneously for those unable to attend in person? Let us know your thoughts by emailing us at info@jhbg.org. Tell your friends about Summer Sundays and see you soon!

Link to Queens Chronicle: www.bit.ly/3w1JHwB

JH-SCRAPS Recap

BY LENNY OLSSON

It was another busy year at JH-SCRAPS. Between October 2020 and September 2021, residents contributed a total of 13,600 pounds of food scraps to produce finished compost for projects around the neighborhood. Compost reintroduces vital nutrients and soil life to the hardworking plants beautifying our area, bypassing the use of fossil fuels required for transporting food scraps elsewhere for processing, even while we relied on BIG Reuse to help with some of our intake when our bins were at capacity.

Following last year's shutdown, Earth Day's 50th Anniversary went unmarked. The date was commemorated this year instead with an afternoon of arts and crafts using recycled materials. We also celebrated International Compost Awareness Week, the most

comprehensive effort to expand composting nationwide, now also celebrated in several other countries. This outreach effort was done in concert with the Queens Climate Project, a group of Queens residents working towards a carbon-free future.

Several events are still underway as we wrap up the year and in preparation for the next. Operation Leaf Drop restocks our leaf piles with much needed material assisting the composting process, keeping odors to a minimum, and absorbing much of the leachate from decomposing scraps. We hope to get a delivery of Christmas tree mulch from New York City's annual Mulchfest held at Travers Park early every new year. This mulch keeps weeds down and acts as a natural air freshener with the always welcome smell of pine.



We are thankful for our volunteers' skills and innovations, like this new compost sifter!

None of this would be possible without a strong group of dedicated volunteers helping with the various tasks needed to maintain operations. Whether working the intake table; turning and moving compost as it finishes; sifting the finished product to a fine layer free of bulky matter like mango and avocado pits; or just picking up litter accumulating around

the site every week, our volunteers are invaluable. We cannot thank them enough. One volunteer even created a new system that will allow for quicker sifting with less physical exertion, keeping things moving along more efficiently. If you would like to join us, please come by any Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or email us at jhscraps@jhbg.org.

Mensaje de la presidenta

POR LESLIE ELLMAN

El fin de año es a menudo un buen tiempo para reflexionar. Durante tiempos de crisis como este, pensar en las alegrías cotidianas se ha convertido en algo cada vez más importante. En el JHBG, nuestro grupo dirigido por voluntarios, nos enfocamos tanto en la belleza como en el bienestar del ambiente físico, así como en la alegría que trae la convivencia y el cuidado de nuestros espacios. El grupo TreeLC se ha ocupado diligentemente de los árboles de nuestras calles mientras que el sitio de compostaje de la comunidad, JH-SCRAPS, ha visto un incremento en la demanda, ya que los vecinos siguen apreciando la importancia de reducir los desperdicios. Estamos muy agradecidos con los muchos voluntarios que hacen posible este trabajo.

¡Les deseamos unas alegres fiestas y un muy feliz año nuevo!

Mensaje de la editora. Vida renovada después del invierno

POR MELISSA ZAVALA

Las fiestas de fin de año llegan después de otro extraordinario año. El 2021 termina y comienza otro año con el impacto de la pandemia aún presente en la vida diaria. Este número revisita el año que termina y considera un efecto adicional relacionado con la pandemia, que se ha vuelto notorio en la ciudad y en nuestro vecindario: los vendedores ambulantes. Al mismo tiempo, mira hacia la primavera, cuando los signos de la vida renovada emergen otra vez. Apreciamos enormemente su apoyo y

estamos siempre encantados de escuchar sus sugerencias para las historias y de recibir artículos o cualquier idea sobre cómo servir mejor. Para ponerte en contacto con nosotros, envíanos un email a info@jhb.org o escríbenos por correo a **JHBG, PO Box 720253, Jackson Heights, NY 11372.**

¡Felices fiestas!

El regreso del Fin de Semana Histórico

POR DAN KARATZAS

Por primera vez en los 30 años que el JHBG ha estado organizando el Fin de Semana Histórico, este año los eventos tuvieron lugar en septiembre y no en mayo o junio. Mientras que el Fin de Semana Histórico del 2020 fue cancelado por la pandemia, este año limitamos las actividades a eventos al aire libre, el recorrido por los jardines y el de a pie. Los dos recorridos fueron exitosos: tuvieron una venta total de 200 boletos. Para el 2022 estamos planeando realizar el evento en mayo, cuando los jardines estén en pleno florecimiento, así que marca la fecha en tu calendario desde ahora.

Los destacados de Jackson Heights: Alfred Eisenstaedt, fotógrafo icónico del siglo XX

POR DANIEL KARATZAS

El hombre que tomó una de las fotografías más icónicas del siglo XX pasó 60 años de su vida aquí mismo, en Jackson Heights. Alfred Eisenstaedt es conocido por la renombrada fotografía a veces llamada "El beso", tomada el 14 de agosto de 1945 en Times Square. Nacido en lo que ahora es Polonia, Eisenstaedt emigró a Estados Unidos en 1935. Se convirtió en residente de



Cantantes de música de un género del sur de la India en uno de los conciertos del verano pasado en Travers Park.

Jackson Heights poco después y hasta su muerte en 1995 a la edad de 96 años. Vivió en el edificio The Salem, en el 72-15 de la Avenida 37. Eisenstaedt comenzó su carrera como fotógrafo en Alemania en 1929; posteriormente, después de fotografiar la primera reunión entre Hitler y Mussolini, decidió que, por ser judío, era momento de dejar Alemania. En 1936 fue contratado como fotógrafo para la revista Life, donde permaneció los siguientes 36 años. Aunque fotografió a presidentes, ministros y un sinnúmero de celebridades alrededor del mundo, siempre regresó a casa, a Jackson Heights.

Domingos de verano: éxitos del 2021 y perspectivas para el futuro

POR JOE KNIPES

El verano de 2021 marcó el regreso a los conciertos en persona en Travers Park. El Concejo de Queens

para las Artes proporcionó financiamientos para artistas, técnicos de sonido, posters, volantes y botellas de agua. Los permisos del Departamento de Parques de la Ciudad de Nueva York nos permitieron presentar bandas en vivo frente a audiencias en vivo. Hicimos un gran esfuerzo para llegar a públicos diversos: desde patrióticos ensambles de viento hasta bandas de rock, jazz, música brasileña, colombiana y de la India. Si quieres compartir tus ideas y opiniones, escríbenos a info@jhb.org. Pasa la voz entre tus amigos sobre los Domingos de verano. ¡Nos vemos pronto!

Conmemoración a una vecina activista

POR EDWIN O'KEEFE WESTLEY

El 14 de agosto de 2021 se llevó a cabo un homenaje para celebrar la vida de Janet M. Kelly en el Centro Judío de Jackson Heights, donde

algunos compartieron sus recuerdos de una vida bien vivida. El concejal Daniel Dromm fue uno de los amigos que homenajearon a Janet. Unos días después, propuso co-nombrar una calle en honor a las contribuciones de Janet a su querido vecindario. Los hijos de Janet, Chris y Diana, sabían que su madre amaba Jackson Heights pero no estaban conscientes de sus aportaciones hasta el homenaje. Janet impartió clases de tejido en el Centro para Adultos Mayores Catherine Sheridan de la Calle 83 y sirvió por mucho tiempo como directora del JHBG.

JH-SCRAPS: recapitulando

POR LENNY OLSSON

Fue otro año ajetreando para JH-SCRAPS. Entre octubre de 2020 y septiembre de 2021, los residentes de Jackson Heights contribuyeron con un total de 13.600 libras de desperdicios de comida para producir abono destinado

a proyectos alrededor del vecindario. Varios eventos están aún en marcha mientras cerramos el año y nos preparamos para el que viene. Nada de esto sería posible sin el fuerte grupo de dedicados voluntarios, a quienes les estamos muy agradecidos. Si quieres unírte, pasa por el sitio cualquier sábado de 11:00 a 1:00 o envíanos un email a jhscraps@jhb.org.

Seguimiento de la pandemia. Continuación: hacer que los fines se encuentren en la calle

POR MELISSA ZAVALA

Mientras que la economía se paralizó en 2020, el confinamiento indujo diferentes respuestas. Una de ellas es la expansión del comercio informal. En Jackson Heights, su forma más evidente son los puestos callejeros. Nuestro último número exploró el estado de recuperación de los pequeños negocios. En esta edición exploramos lo

que diferentes personas están haciendo para generar ingresos en tanto otras fuentes de trabajo quedan disponibles, o no, para ellos. Entrevistamos a Genny, inmigrante colombiana, quien no pudo seguir como niñera en lo que trabajaba antes de comenzar a vender golosinas colombianas en las calles, y a Yvonne, inmigrante china, quien vende de todo, desde agua embotellada hasta artículos domésticos para complementar sus ingresos como traductora de medio tiempo.

Nuestro ecosistema urbano Una mosca nada graciosa: la mosca linterna con manchas ha llegado

POR MELISSA ZAVALA

A finales de este verano, la mosca linterna con manchas (*Lycorma delicatula*) llegó a Jackson Heights. Este insecto se distingue por sus manchas negras sobre alas anchas y coloreadas con una mezcla de negro, blanco, marrón y rojo, y unas franjas amarillas en el abdomen. Sin embargo, este hermoso insecto de apariencia llamativa representa una amenaza para las huertas y los cultivos de uva, así como para los leñadores, ya que afecta tanto a los árboles de arce como a otras especies de árboles para madera. Se les pide a los habitantes de Nueva York que maten este insecto y eviten mover leña, muebles para exteriores y cualquier otro

objeto que pueda contener huevecillos (parecidos a manchas de lodo). Si lo ves, mátalos y repórtalos a NYC Parks enviando un email a Forest.Health@parks.nyc.gov con una foto, la ubicación de la infestación y los detalles de la propiedad dañada.

Retrospectiva de nuestra programación del 2021: viejas y nuevas tradiciones más eventos conmemorativos

A principios de año distribuimos suministros a nuestros vecinos sin casa con la ayuda de Matthew Elkin, un vecino entusiasta que, junto con su esposa, Lorena, asumieron el reto de proveer productos higiénicos y provisiones para el invierno a los necesitados. Nuestro parque para perros en la Calle 69 con la Avenida 35, JHCREW, permaneció abierto durante el confinamiento para ofrecer a los perros y a sus familias un respiro del encierro de la cuarentena. El equipo de limpieza de grafiti también siguió trabajando duro. Asimismo, participamos por primera vez en el programa anual Jane's Walk, para el que propusimos un juego de Búsqueda del Tesoro autoguiado. Además, nos unimos al Proyecto Narciso de la ciudad organizado por Parques de Nueva York con motivo de la conmemoración de los fallecidos en el 9/11. La Coalición Calle Abierta han plantado más de 5.000 bulbos a lo largo de la franja media de la Avenida 34, y el JHBG en Junction Boulevard y otras partes del vecindario, que florecerán poco después de los azafranes plantados el año pasado por Evie McKenna en memoria de las vidas perdidas por el COVID-19.



Unos de los muchos puestos del comercio informal por las calles de Jackson Heights.

Tracking the Pandemic: Making Ends Meet on the Street

BY MELISSA ZAVALA

As the economy ground to a halt in 2020, the shutdown induced different responses. One of them is the expansion of informal sector work. In Jackson Heights, its most visible form is street vending. Our last issue explored the state of recovery for small businesses. In this edition, we investigate what different individuals are doing to generate income as work becomes available or unavailable to them. Reports about the overabundance of work can be deceptive, leading people to find alternatives. Such has been the experience for two of the five vendors interviewed whose stories are recounted below.

Genny

A Colombian immigrant, Genny has been unable to continue caring for children as she did for some time before selling Colombian treats on the streets of Jackson Heights became her main source of income. The pandemic was especially stressful for her, leaving her unemployed for five months, forced to merge households with her adult son and his family (with a wife and two children) in a small one-bedroom apartment, and scrambling to pay bills. “Hasta el cabello se me cayó”, she says about the intense stress levels causing hair loss. Money ran very low and had it not been for two government checks she was eligible for she does not know how she and her family would have survived the past year. As she shared her story, her sentences often began with the phrase, “It’s been hard”. Spending time with her on her corner on an unseasonably hot fall day, she told me what people don’t know about the difficulties of making a living at a job requiring she cook for hours in



Street vending in its many forms - from food, to house wares, clothing, and more - residents crowd the streets as they try to make a living.



the morning, and then spend six or more hours on the street, making \$2 at a time at an unpredictable pace, five to seven days a week. Two customers stopped by while we talked.

Piecing together a living is hard, but she has learned a lot from being on the streets. She has watched crime rise even while also experiencing community when a fellow vendor took her to a pantry when she could not afford food. The economic meltdown has meant

growing problems like shoplifting which has increased in various locales around her station, especially at the chain store nearby. Licensed vendors working large tent stations are supplied inventories by stores, and she assumes, are paid to vend on the streets to increase their profits. Despite their better income, these vendors harass small sellers like her. City officials have also been making regular sweeps around the area, confiscating carts, ticketing vendors with \$1,500 fines



that are too steep to pay. Genny and others like her cannot afford the fines, nor can they take time away from working every day to make court dates or advocate for themselves—though she hears other vendors are trying to get better organized against harassment and are fighting for the opportunity to work in the only real way available to them: street vending.

Things have improved some for Genny and her family this year. Her son was finally able to find a job with steady pay rather than the occasional \$100/day for irregular day laborer gigs. Genny is still required to vend despite her son's help, even while having some trouble locating supplies. Material shortages and rising prices make it difficult to break even as she must afford production expenses from the money she makes selling her goods. Despite the ongoing challenges, she says, "Si Dios nos mantiene de pie, hay que seguir adelante", or "If God doesn't knock us down, we must keep going".



Yvonne

An immigrant from China living alone after losing her mother a few years ago, Yvonne sells anything from bottled water to household items to supplement her income as a part-time translator for an agency in Chinatown. As an immigrant living in a country she loves, she feels responsible for supporting herself and not burdening the social safety net. She

is thankful for every opportunity, living by the words preached by her minister: "Give and forgive, rather than get and forget". She avoids taking without giving and is frustrated by conditions on the streets for vendors where competition can be fierce and menacing. As a small vendor trying to make ends meet and keep up her salesmanship skills, she does not think larger-scale vendors should prey on smaller ones or threaten them. Like

Genny, Yvonne knows what it is like to be intimidated by large sellers, from ice cream truck owners, to licensed vendors selling factory goods. She regrets that there is not enough camaraderie among different types of sellers as they try to make a living facing the same limitations. Everyone should give and forgive, after all.

Competition for space on streets and potential customers has intensified. Now selling something small like a cold drink in the summertime is difficult, much as is finding space in the neighborhood's weekly unsanctioned flea markets.

Competition for flea market space is so fierce that fights regularly break out as people stake out spots, claiming them from week to week as their own, and lining up sometimes as early as the night before to enforce ownership. Yvonne cannot compete with big time vendors, and she does not want run-ins with anyone

threatening to take her picture to send to city agencies to cause her trouble. Instead, she is trying to find new ways of managing her bills, though her options are limited.

Making a living is arduous for many in the city. The pandemic has worsened circumstances significantly, pushing some to the edge and beyond. Competition is at times ferocious, and the lawlessness associated with vending is much more complicated to manage than licensing as many vendors as possible. Regulation is required to protect people at ranging levels. How can conditions be improved for those in need of sustainable work? With recent political support behind the lifting of vending caps, vacating prior records, and the ability to vend anywhere, is this approach a problem, the solution, or just part of it? Powerful retail, real estate, and Business Improvement District players have blocked such measures before. With political will behind overturning years of restrictions, what will this mean for vendors? Still exposed to dangers on the streets and cobbling together a living will persist as streets remain clogged. Open air markets have provided opportunities to vendors in cities around the world for making a living and establishing small businesses. New York City offers an innovative testing ground for livable alternatives. What innovations using shared spaces besides streets can we explore to provide workers with more safety and better sanitation? Creative solutions for improving neighborhoods are needed now more than ever.

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JACKSON HEIGHTS NOTABLES

This series features former Jackson Heights residents of notable interest for the ways in which they represent some of the elements of life in our neighborhood



Alfred Eisenstaedt Iconic Photographer of the 20th Century

BY DANIEL KARATZAS

The man who took one of the most iconic photographs of the twentieth century spent about 60 years of his life right here in Jackson Heights. Alfred Eisenstaedt is best known as the photographer of the iconic photograph sometimes called "The Kiss" taken on August 14, 1945, in Times Square. It captured a celebratory moment following breaking news of Japan's surrender, at which time an anonymous sailor grasped a nurse and kissed her in the middle of Times Square. Eisenstaedt never spoke with the couple when the photograph was taken, and their identities remained a mystery until late in the 20th century when several individuals claimed they were the subjects. The woman's identity has been established, even while Eisenstaedt never confirmed it himself. The photograph became controversial for the forceful imposition of affection on a woman by a man since the two people did not know each other. Despite



Famous Eisenstaedt photograph known as
"V-J Day in Times Square"

this, it remains a cultural icon and commonly referenced in pop culture.

Born in what is now Poland, Eisenstaedt emigrated to the U.S. in 1935. He became a resident of Jackson Heights soon after and until his death at age 96, in 1995, residing at The Salem, at 72-15 37th Avenue.

Eisenstaedt began his career in photography in Germany in 1929. However, soon after photographing the first meeting of Hitler and Mussolini, he decided that as a Jew, it was time to leave Germany. In 1936 he was hired by Time founder Henry Luce as a photographer for *Life* magazine. Eisenstaedt

remained there for the next 36 years, until the magazine folded in 1972. Over that time, he was extremely prolific; 90 of his photographs ended up on the covers of that magazine. His career coincided with the true "golden years" of magazine photography when circulation topped two million.

And, yet, while he photographed presidents, prime ministers, and a myriad of celebrities all over the world, he always came home to Jackson Heights!

OUR URBAN ECOSYSTEM

This ongoing series considers the impact of urban gardening and landscaping practices on city wildlife and open spaces.

No Festive Fly: The Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived

BY MELISSA ZAVALA

Late this summer, the spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) arrived in Jackson Heights—found and squished in the courtyard of The Towers. This insect is recognizable by its black spots on broad, colorful wings with a mix of black, white, tan, and red, with dashes of yellow on its abdomen. But this beautiful, festive-looking insect is anything but. First spotted in New York City in June of last year, this pest represents a threat mainly to orchards and agricultural producers of grapes

as well as loggers, though also to maple trees and other woody species. These insects harm ornamental and woody trees by infesting them as they reproduce, weakening tree health. The Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), itself an invasive species originating in China, is its preferred host tree. Though not fast-moving, lanternflies are successful hitchhikers (a term referring to their accidental spread through trade and human mobility), advantaged by a lack of predator species and other

competitors in the area.

New Yorkers are asked to squish them despite the city's bans against harming wildlife. Refrain from moving firewood, outdoor furniture, or any other items that can contain egg sacs that look like mud smears. If you spot these insects, kill them regardless of their stunning appearance. Report findings to NYC Parks by emailing Forest.Health@parks.nyc.gov and include photos, location of the infestation, as well as details of property damage in your report.



If you see this unusual and
flashy invasive insect, destroy it
and report it.

What gardening practices would you like to read more about? Share your thoughts by emailing us at info@jhb.org, or by sending us questions and comments via regular mail at JHBG, PO Box 720253, Jackson Heights, NY 11372.

Historic Weekend Returns

BY DAN KARATZAS

For the first time in the thirty years that the JHBG has been holding its annual Historic Weekend, this year's events took place in September rather than May or June. While the 2020 Historic Weekend was cancelled for the obvious reason (the pandemic), this year we limited activities to outdoor events, the garden tour, and the walking tour. The two rescheduled tours were very successful, with over 200 tickets sold in total. The weather cooperated, and many local (and non-local) people were again interested in seeing what Jackson Heights has to offer in terms of its gardens and architecture.

As usual, our events would not have been possible without our volunteers—Barbara Kunkel, Ed O'Keefe Westley, Louise Mulvihill and Kathy O'Connor. Our two new walking tour guides, Susan Latham and Matico Josephson, did a great job. Thank you all for such a successful and enjoyable weekend.

For 2022, we are planning to hold the Historic Weekend in May, while the gardens are in full bloom, so mark your calendars now.



Historic Weekend returned this year following a pandemic-related hiatus on a gorgeous day in September.



Calendar of Commemorative Dates for December

Wed. December 1 **Rosa Parks Day**

Despite February 4th being the national day dedicated to this Civil Rights Leader, it was on December 1st that Parks refused to give up her seat in the "Colored" section on a bus in Alabama. Her defiance sparked the great Montgomery Bus Boycott, which began on the day of her trial and lasted several months, strengthening moral arguments against segregation everywhere.

Thurs. December 2 **Special Education Day**

December 2nd commemorates the coming into federal law of IDEAS, or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, signed by President Gerald Ford in 1975, which ensures free education for students with disabilities.

Sun. December 5 **International Ninja Day**

This is a corporate invention created by a burger joint boasting their speedy delivery

service, but December 5th has taken off somewhat among Ninja enthusiasts and children.

Tues. December 14 **Free Shipping Day**

On December 14, small and large retailers offer free shipping and guarantee delivery of packages in time for Christmas.

Thurs. December 16 **Regifting Day**

Each year on the Thursday before Christmas, people

exchange gifts they have received but do not want or cannot use. This year, that date is December 16.

Tues. December 21 **Homeless Person Remembrance Day**

On December 21, the first day of winter and the date with the longest night of the year, is a day for reflecting on those who have died without a home to call attention to the inhumanity of homelessness and to seek policy changes nationwide.

Thurs. December 30 **Bacon Day**

December 30th is a day for celebrating bacon (unless you have religious restrictions or are a vegetarian).

Fri. December 31 **Make Up Your Mind Day**

Each year on December 31st, everyone is encouraged to make decisions and follow them through, rather like a day for New Year's Resolutions.



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VIEWS FROM THE HEIGHTS – Winter 2021

ONGOING EVENTS

Saturdays, 11am-1 pm

JH-SCRAPS (composting)

69th St. & 35th Ave.

For info on what is compostable,
contact info@JHBG.org

Most Saturdays, 10 am

Tree LC

Meets at the NE corner of
80th St. & 37th Ave.

Schedule may vary and include
some Sundays. Check the
[JHBG Facebook page](#)
for complete information.

Saturdays 10 am

Clean and Green

For complete details,
go to www.jhbg.org.

Daily

JH-CREW dog run

69th St. between 34th & 35th Aves.

To join, go to www.jhbg.org
for application. Suggested
donation, \$25/year.

FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS:

Please join us or renew your membership (there are 2 ways):

Go to www.JHBG.org/membership and pay by credit card.

It's quick and easy! Mail a check with this form
for the membership level you select to:

JHBG–Membership • P.O. Box 720253

Jackson Heights, NY 11372

Membership includes a subscription to *Views from the Heights* and helps fund our numerous
community activities. JHBG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, so your contribution is tax deductible.

Please check membership level:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Please print the following:

Name: _____

Address (Include apt. #): _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

If you're interested in being contacted about any JHBG activities, please email
info@JHBG.org.