

THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JANE ELEEY



Dear Members and Friends,

The fourth annual Penn's Village Town Hall, convened via Zoom on February 23, was our second virtual gathering for the express purpose of reviewing the year just past, looking forward to the coming year, and celebrating our members and friends.

Our last face-to-face Town Hall took place two years ago in January 2020—just a few weeks before Covid-19 became our new reality. Shortly after that 2020 Town Hall, I described the evening as “a spirited celebration of community, friendship, and support, where Villagers, Neighbors, Volunteers, Board Members, Staff, and Friends came together to enjoy a delicious buffet, greet friends old and new, hear reports from our Board Members, and offer feedback, suggestions, and new ideas.”

During the two years of dealing with Covid 19, a lot of things changed for Penn's Village. Our coping skills evolved as we gained more information and adapted to public-health pandemic measures. Our first response was to postpone all programs, workshops, and social events, and to begin holding all meetings via conference calls. Office activities had to be handled remotely, and we suspended our volunteer in-person services.

But, wait! Volunteers continued to be in touch via phone with Villagers who had signed up for regular services and to respond to calls about how to get help from alternative sources; companionship services continued via phone calls, FaceTime, and Skype, and occasionally in the park at a distance. Technology presented our Program Committee with an effective way to connect the membership virtually through Zoom, and our energetic, innovative, and popular Zoom programs continue to be as well, if not better, attended than were our pre-pandemic programs!

So, reflecting on last week's virtual Town Hall, I have to admit that the old French adage, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* (the more things change, the more they stay the same), is certainly true for Penn's Village. Our not-so-secret secret, you see, is that it is about neighbors together—connecting, engaging, thriving! That's why we can celebrate our volunteers, who generously gave 8800 hours (worth \$240,000) of service in 2021!

To learn more about Penn's Village in 2021 and where we are going in 2022, take a few minutes to visit pennsvillage.org and check out the recording of the Town Hall meeting, which should be available soon.

Looking forward!

Jane

Penn's Village Interest Groups

A new Short Story group has recently formed and will meet at 2:00 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month for an in-depth discussion of a previously agreed upon short story. Several other groups, formed around common interests, are also currently active within our Village. At this time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many groups may still be meeting via Zoom. If you are interested in learning more, please email info@pennsvillage.org or telephone 215-925-7333.

Chat Group Every Other Thursday
11:00 am – Noon

History Book Group 3rd Wednesdays
1:00 – 2:00 pm

Intergenerational Book Group 3rd
Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Men's Group Mondays 10:30 am – Noon
Spanish Conversation Group Mondays
4:00 – 5:30 pm

Short Story Discussion Group 4th
Wednesdays – 2:00 pm

Support Group 1st Mondays 11:00 am
– 12:30 pm

Writers' Group 3rd Wednesdays 11:00
am – 12:30 pm

Follow us on social media:



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Village View Editorial Board

Editor:

Marianne Waller

Design and Layout:

Linda Karp

Contributors:

Patricia Callahan

Lois Evans

Linda Katz

Dick Levinson

Harriette Mishkin

Karen Orman

Newsletter Editorial Board:

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To become a member or to volunteer, visit www.pennsvillage.org

Do you know that talking about Penn's Village to family, friends, and strangers is the best way to grow Penn's Village?

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201 South 21st Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

INTRODUCING

Lew Jaffe

by Karen Orman



Lew Jaffe has been retired for twelve years now, but his passion of the past thirty years has not waned a bit. When Lew first

told me that he likes antiques and book shows, I quickly learned that this was an understatement on a grand scale.

Lew currently has the largest private collection of 18th century American Ex Libris bookplates in the country—about nine hundred of them. The bookplates have a personal motif that relates to the book's owner, such as a design commissioned from an artist or designer. These printed or decorative labels indicate ownership and are invaluable to historians.

In addition to rare 18th-century American bookplates, Lew is also interested in those that once belonged to famous people—actors, politicians, writers, or scientists, among others. His email address, bookplatemaven@hotmail.com, says it all.

Imagine that the first bookplate Lew acquired was in a used book store in 30th Street Station! He had never seen a bookplate before, but it attracted

his attention while he was browsing. To this day, if Lew sees something he likes, and it is affordable, he buys it.

In addition to bookplates, Lew collects art glass, ephemeral paper, American arts and crafts, and ceramic tiles, as well as small artifacts that catch his eye. Lew's purchases come from different sources, both here and in England.

His entire trove of bookplates and other collectibles numbers in the many thousands. He believes the American Antiquarian Society will acquire the majority of his bookplate collection at the appropriate time.

The origins of Lew's love for collectibles date from his youth when he accompanied his parents to auctions where they bought "junk". The greater influence, no doubt, was his wife who is extraordinarily knowledgeable about antiques.

Lew showed me some of his fascinating bookplates and explained the story behind each one; he is willing to present a program for Penn's Village. We'll look forward to hearing his expert descriptions of a sampling from his many collections and to seeing these beautiful works. Stay tuned!

COMMITTEE CORNER

From the **Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee**: March is Women's History Month. Visit the PV website, click on "Blogs" on the menu bar, and access "Inclusiveness & Diversity" to view articles focusing on women in history.

Penn's Village welcomes and actively encourages an inclusive and diverse community of members, staff, Board of Directors and volunteers. Inclusiveness and diversity mean welcoming all and excluding no one because of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical abilities, religious beliefs or political beliefs.

A very sincere thank you to The First Presbyterian Church for generously providing space to Penn's Village and for always being there for us.

ALL AROUND TOWN

March suggestions run the gamut from traditional theater to neon art, from marble tablets to human hands, from a zoom presentation/discussion on solo aging to the main library's author event. So much to see! Take your pick. And remember to celebrate Women's History Month and reflect on all the women whose contributions to events in history and contemporary society have paved the way for all of us. Look for the release of the new 2022 American Women quarters that will celebrate the five distinguished American women who are featured: Maya Angelou, Dr. Sally Ride, Wilma Mankiller, Nina Otero-Warren, and Anna May Wong.



Oklahoma. This is the 21st-century version and the Tony Award Winner for Best Revival of a Musical. Here's some trivia: What year did the show make its debut on Broadway? What year did the movie come out? And who were the stars of each? March 8-20. **Forrest Theatre.** 11th and Walnut Streets. <https://bit.ly/35W9KXD>.



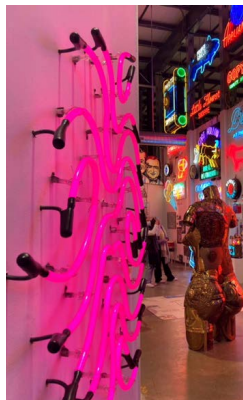
Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) comprises

fifteen of today's finest jazz soloists and ensemble players. They perform a vast repertoire ranging from original compositions to rare historic compositions. March 24, 7:30 pm. At the Kimmel Center. [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis - Kimmel Cultural Campus.](#)



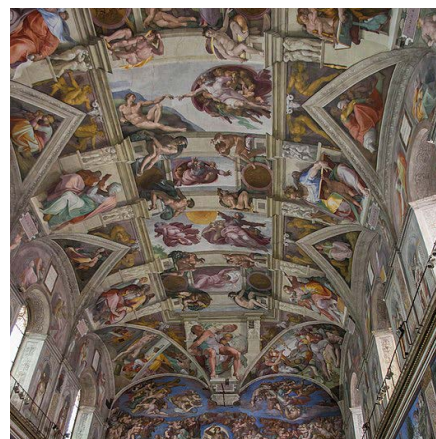
A Tribute to Aretha Franklin: The Queen of Soul. Beloved by musicians and listeners alike, Aretha is recognized as the most successful female recording artist in history with one hundred twelve charted singles on Billboard, eighteen Grammy Awards, and more than seventy-five million records sold. Featuring Karen Clark Sheard at the Merriam Theater. March 18, 8:00 pm. [A Tribute to Aretha Franklin: The Queen of Soul.](#) **Kimmel Cultural Campus.**

Neon Museum of Philadelphia. This exhibit includes contemporary work from eight regional neon artists who specialize in designing neon glass. The main exhibit, **Neon Currents**, features large installations, mixed media, and sculpture—showcasing the creative, exciting, and inspiring ways neon is used beyond the traditional application of signage. [Neon Museum of Philadelphia](#), 1800 N. American Street. Through March 20. Weekend hours. [Reserve tickets.](#)



The Rodin Museum debuted a new exhibition in February centered on its favorite artist's depiction of human hands. And which hands did he like to depict? His own! Rodin's Hands includes some fifteen bronzes and plasters, many of them rare or unique to the Philadelphia collection. 22nd & Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Open Friday through Monday. Pay-what-you-wish admission. Ongoing. <https://rodinmuseum.org>.

Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition. You can visit a traveling exhibition that has reproduced the ceiling using licensed, high-definition photos that bring it to life using a special printing technique that emulates the look and feel of the original paintings. Fashion District Philadelphia. 901 Market Street. Through March 18. Advanced timed tickets available. www.sistinechapel exhibit.com/Philadelphia.



Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Joan Semmel: Skin in the Game. This is the first retrospective of works by New York painter, Joan Semmel, from her early abstract-expressionist paintings through her movement-defining feminist art and activism to the vital work that she is making of her own mature body today. 128 North Broad Street. Continues through April 3. [Joan Semmel: Skin in the Game | PAFA - Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.](#)

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All Around Town

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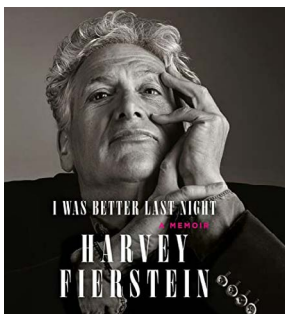
National Constitution Center. View the fifty-ton marble tablet, engraved with the forty-five words of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The iconic 1st Amendment tablet was previously displayed on the four-story-high, seventy-four-foot-tall façade of the Newseum in Washington, D.C. While you're there, celebrate Women's History Month by visiting the exhibit on *The 19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote*. <https://constitutioncenter.org>.



Presentations and Discussions

Free Library of Philadelphia. *I Was Better Last Night: A Memoir*

by Harvey Fierstein. Virtual. Sunday, March 13, at 7:30 pm. The acclaimed playwright, screenwriter, and actor reflects on his long career. <https://bit.ly/3rMVvgB>.



Positive-Aging Sourcebook. REGISTER TODAY! Plan now to safeguard your health and happiness as you age. Join this live and interactive discussion online with author Joy Loverde, of *Who Will Take Care Of Me When I'm Old?* and the best-seller, *The Complete Eldercare Planner*. Wednesday, March 2, at 12:00 pm. Register at <https://bit.ly/3rMVvgB>.

BOOK REVIEW

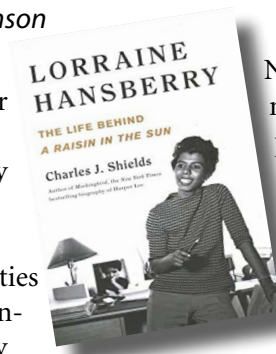
Lorraine Hansberry: *The Life Behind A Raisin In the Sun* by Charles J. Shields

reviewed by Dick Levinson

Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) was never shy about speaking truth to power. In May 1963, the playwright was present when a group of Black celebrities met with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy to discuss racial justice in America. Hansberry found Kennedy unwilling to look her in the eye. When he seemed not to understand what Freedom Rider Jerome Smith was saying, she exploded. Kennedy and his brother represented the best that white America had to offer. If they could not appreciate what Smith was telling them, Black Americans would have no recourse left except the streets. Hansberry stalked out, becoming the first to abandon ship.

This shameful episode enraged, but did not surprise, Hansberry, the visionary African-American playwright whose play, *A Raisin In The Sun*, opened a window into the daily lives of Black people in urban America so skillfully and with such force that it could never be closed again. After seeing *Raisin*, novelist and poet James Baldwin, quick to recognize an iconic work of art when he saw it, exclaimed, "Never before, in the entire history of the American theater, has so much of the truth of Black people's lives been seen on the stage."

Hansberry, who was just twenty-eight when *Raisin* was completed, was the first Black woman to have a play performed on Broadway and the first to win the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. Today, more than sixty years after the show first opened in



New Haven, it remains one of the most performed and anthologized plays in the U.S.

Simply being human is a complex, messy business that makes most of us hosts of contradictions. That was certainly true of Lorraine Hansberry. Born into an elite Black family of Chicago Republicans, Lorraine was drawn to the kind of African-American activists on the Left who gave her parents heart palpitations. The list included the Communist activist and singer, Paul Robeson, and the Leftist scholar and author, W.E.B. Du Bois.

In 1953, Lorraine married a white, Jewish New Yorker, Robert (Bobby) Nemiroff, who was a charming, enthusiastic fellow with an ability to organize people, programs, and events. In a great historical fluke, Bobby co-wrote one of the great pop hits of 1956, *Cindy, Oh Cindy*. Suddenly, Lorraine and Bobby were rich. This money bought Lorraine the freedom to write *Raisin*, which changed her life—and the American theater, forever.

The two were intellectual, but not sexual, soulmates. Lorraine, known to some as "The Invisible Lesbian", was in the process of preparing herself for intense relationships with other women; for the rest of his life, Bobby remained devoted, first to Lorraine then, eventually, to her legacy.

Perhaps the good don't always die young, but Hansberry certainly did—she was just thirty-five when cancer dispatched her quickly. Readers of this compelling biography are left to wonder what might have been, had she had lived just another ten years.

MARCH PROGRAMS

The Program Committee, under the leadership of Mario Oropeza, announces the schedule of programs for March. Registration is required, and you can register on the Penn's Village website or by emailing info@pennsvillage.org or telephoning 215-925-7333. Check the PV website and your email for updated information and/or newly scheduled program additions. All programs are offered as Zoom Teleconferences; members who register will be sent Zoom login information a day or so before the event.



Thursday, March 3, 2:00 pm. *Let's Talk, Penn's Village* provides an opportunity to socialize with old friends, connect to new ones, and discuss whatever is on your mind. It is an open forum where you can talk about what you're watching, what you're reading, family, travel, aging, whatever—even politics and religion. Designed for both men and women, the program will last about an hour. Think of it as having a cup of coffee with interesting people without having to leave your home! There will be a social host to get the conversation started, and you take it from there. We know you have something to say and *Let's Talk, Penn's Village* is just the place to do it

Wednesday, March 9, 2:00 pm. *Common Mistakes in Estate Planning*. Often called 'simple' estate planning, this could not be further from the truth. Frequently a Will, a Power of Attorney and an Advance Directive are looked at as the endgame. In reality, they're the starting point. Learn the basics of estate planning as well as common mistakes and misunderstandings and how to avoid them from presenter Bryan Adler, a Certified Elder Law Attorney in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and a member of the Penn's Village Advisory Council.



Thursday, March 10, 2:00 pm. *Talking about Death Won't Kill You*. Talking about death can lead to important, loving conversations. Our speakers for this program are death doulas, Russ Alexander and Annie Wilson, who will offer education on the concept of death doulas and how to foster conversations about death and dying among loved ones. Their practice, Sunset Companions, focuses on end-of-life education and personal services at the end of life. Both are hospice volunteers who took death doula training with the International End-of-Life Doula Association (INELDA).

Thursday, March 17, 7:00 pm. *Penn's Village Reads*. Penn's Village member, Polly McIntyre, will read an excerpt from Susanna M. Newstead's book, *She Moved Through the Fair*, set in Colorado at a new-music festival. Hoping to get through the event with a minimum of arguing over set lists and placement, the protagonist, Caitlin, soon discovers more trials await her than the usual music-business hassles.



Thursday, March 24, 4:00 pm. *Living with Osteopenia and Osteoporosis*. Dr. Al Mukaddam, director of the Penn Bone Center, will speak on causes and prevention of osteopenia and osteoporosis and common treatments. Dr. Christopher Hvidas, a lead pharmacist at the Penn Bone Center, will speak on medications used to treat either or both conditions.

Wednesday, March 30, 1:00 pm. *African American Museum of Philadelphia Virtual Tour*. This program will highlight the work of Anna Russell Jones, the first African American graduate of the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (now Moore College of Art and Design) and an alumna of the anatomy department of Howard Medical School (now Howard University College of Medicine). She was known to contemporaries as a talented artist working in wallpaper and carpet design, as a civil-service illustrator, and as a freelance artist. The exhibit, *The Art of Design*, highlights the diverse treasures of AAMP's permanent collection. There is an \$11 fee for this docent-led program, due at registration.



MARCH 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1  Women's History Month Begins	2  Ash Wednesday	3 2:00 pm Let's Talk, PV Zoom	4	5
6	7	8	9 2:00 pm Estate Planning Zoom	10 2:00 pm Talking About Death Zoom	11	12
13  Daylight Saving Time Begins	14	15	16  Purim Begins	17 7:00 pm PV Reads Zoom	18	19
20  First Day of Spring	21	22	23	24 4:00 pm Living with Osteopenia and Osteoporosis Zoom	25	26
27	28	29	30 1:00 pm AAMP Virtual Tour Zoom			

Help Us Plan a Fall Program on Confronting Racism

How do inclusiveness, diversity, and racism impact your life as an older adult? What can we do now to begin to make positive changes?

The Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee requests your advice and suggestions as we plan a special program on these topics for the fall. We envision a panel discussion followed by small breakout groups to process

what we have heard and to share our thoughts about making change happen.

Please share with our planning group what specific issues or questions remain for you, or what you think might interest others, in the broad areas of diversity, inclusiveness, institutional and historic racism, unconscious bias, equity, and so forth. What should the planning group be

sure to consider as we move forward?

Your ideas about how these issues impact the lives of older adults are especially welcome. Send your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions to communications@pennsvillage.org.

Deadline for comments is Monday, March 7 at noon.

Penn's Village Board Member Makes History

by Lois Evans

On February 2, Penn's Village Board Member and Co-chair of the Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee made Pennsylvania history. After a tough and close statewide race, The Honorable Lori A. Dumas was installed as the first Black female Commonwealth Court Judge from Philadelphia since the Court's establishment in 1970! Appropriately gathered in the National Constitution Center, a group of some two hundred that included family as well as friends and colleagues from the Bar, the Community, and the Bench helped celebrate with music, reflections, and rousing applause.



Commonwealth Court Judge Lori A Dumas sitting on the Bench with the other Commonwealth Court judges after her swearing in.

administered by The Honorable Kevin M. Dougherty, Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, while family members held the Bible. Final welcomes were shared by fellow Commonwealth Court justices.

The inspiring reflections shared by speakers highlighted the same personal and professional strengths and qualities that Penn's Village, together with the many other community organizations with which Lori is involved, has come to appreciate. They include her visionary, fearless, and inspiring leadership; the patient, calm, listening and thoughtful approach she brings to issues and problems; her fairness and evenhandedness; her extraordinary ability to "speak something into existence"; her success as a "fixer"; her longstanding commitment to justice and community work with Black

women and girls; her supportive role modeling and mentorship; her "grit"; her loyalty as a guide and friend; her personal commitment to "lift others up as one climbs"; and her amazing stamina, calm demeanor and grace. She was applauded for being able to bring her "Black girl magic" to the Commonwealth Court!

Penn's Village Board and I & D Committee members were thrilled to help fête Judge Dumas' important next step in "making the world a better place." We know you will join us in wishing her the best in this new historic and critically important role.



Editor's Note: The Lori A. Dumas swearing in ceremony on February 2 was indeed inspiring and uplifting, even when attendance was virtual. From the moving invocation given by the Reverend Dr. Alyn E. Waller, Senior Pastor of the Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church in Philadelphia and Tamika Patton's stirring vocal rendition of To Dream the Impossible Dream, I was transfixed; I cried, I clapped, and I smiled as though I was right there at the Constitution Center with Lori and her friends and colleagues. Congratulations, Lori. We at Penn's Village are so proud to know you.



Swearing in, with PA Supreme Court Justice Kevin Dougherty behind her and family holding Bible.

The ceremony was presided over by The Honorable Rene Cohn Jubelirer, President Judge of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. In attendance were robed justices from local and state courts. The oath of office was

Stay Informed about the May 17th Primary Election

by Linda Katz

Please follow my BLOG on the Penn's Village website pennsvillage.org. Open the menu and choose PA Voter for frequently updated information.

Am I registered to vote?

You can check on your status and/or register at www.vote.pa.gov. (If you are not online and live in Philadelphia, call 215-686-1591; they will mail you the forms. In my experience, they are very helpful, and WILL call you back.) **Last day to register before the Primary Election is May 2, 2022.**

Are these elections important?

The May primary elections will decide who runs for Governor and Senator of Pennsylvania, and those races will be of national importance. There may also be ballot questions, as well as races for nominations of PA House of Representative candidates.

What should I do if I want to vote by mail?

You must apply again this year. Go to www.Vote.PA.gov/ApplyMailBallot. (The Philadelphia County Board of Elections has also mailed out paper applications, if you prefer that to ordering one online.)

IMPORTANT: If you do NOT have a PA Driver's License or PennDot ID Number, you will need to download and send in your signature along with the last four digits of your Social Security number, in which case the paper application form might be easier. Call Philadelphia Board of Elections to mail you the form if you didn't already get one (1-877-868-3772).

You can check your Vote-by-Mail application status at www.pavoterservices.pa.gov. Give them forty-eight hours after you have submitted your online application. (Later, you can check on this site to make sure your mail-in-ballot has been received.)

What about Redistricting?

Pennsylvania is currently engaged in redistricting. There is a plan that has been passed by the Legislative Redistricting Committee (LRC) that is important to know about. Go to www.FairDistrictsPA.com, an offshoot of The League of Women Voters PA and a great source of impartial information.

Contact me if you need help. I am willing to help anyone, Democrat or Republican. Full disclosure, I am a Democratic Committeeperson. Linda Katz 215-732-7661.

A Penn's Village Community Blog Preview

In February, we took you to Florida. Want more adventure? In March, we travel to Uzbekistan. Yes, our international travel colleague, Clare Novak, is at it again. Read about her arriving in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, at 4:00 am and grabbing four hours of sleep before taking in the local sights prior to a business meeting in another town four hours away.

Clare begins, "With the sun up, and having limited time to be a tourist, I was out walking by around 11 am. Near the hotel was the Amir Timur Museum, a park, and a square where his [Amir Timur's] heroic statue glares down at tourists."

Want to read more of Clare's post? [Click here](#) to go to the Penn's Village website, then select Community from the Blogs menu on the Welcome page.

IN MEMORIAM

January 2022

Daniel Z. Louis

May His Memory Be a Blessing



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Please support all our business members. See www.pennsvillage.org for a complete list.



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VOCAL ARTS

bacchus

VIVO
strength-community-life

Home
Instead.
To us, it's personal



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA