

The ARNIC Observer

The English-Speaking Union of the United States (ESU)

Andrew Romay New Immigrant Center

Summer 2017

Volume 5, Issue 1

*Tell me and I forget,
teach me and
I may remember,
involve me
and I learn.*

— Benjamin Franklin

In this issue:

The High Line	1
Great Drama	1
Secret Garden	2
Healthy Eating	2
Camping Out	2
Frogs and Toads	3
Food of the Levant	3
Graffiti	4
Aquarium	4

Connect with us online:

www.esu-arnic.org
www.stories-esuus.org
www.facebook.com/ESU.ARNIC
www.twitter.com/esuarnic
Instagram: esuarnic

Walking 1.45 miles at High Line Park

BY ARTURO VALECILLOS (VENEZUELA)

BY 1847, THE WEST SIDE OF MANHATTAN was the country's busiest industrial waterfront. The city had authorized the construction of street level tracks operated by the Central New York Railroad. Unfortunately, so many accidents were occurring that the freight yards became known as "Death Avenue." Men on horseback dubbed West Side Cowboys were hired to ride in front of the trains, waving pedestrians out of the way.

After decades of debate, the state of New York and the railroad in 1929 began a project to improve the infrastructure. The West Side was transformed with an elevated section of track known as The High Line, which in 1934, opened to rail traffic. It was designed to go through the center of city blocks rather than carrying goods around them on street level corridors. By the 1960s, industry declined and less than two decades later, the last train loaded with frozen turkeys made its delivery.

Suddenly, in 1999, this railway became alive again. Two visionary neighborhood residents, Joshua David and Robert Hammond, meeting at a community center in West Chelsea where local leaders were discussing a plan to demolish the High Line, founded a non-profit organization called Friends of the High Line advocating for its preservation. The foundation raises essential private funds to cover maintenance, operations and public programming of the unique, elevated structure.

The High Line opened as a park in 2009, stretching from Gansevoort Street to West 34th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. Its design is a collaboration between James Corner Field Operations and Diller Scofidio+Rento with landscape architect Piet Oudolf. Naturalized plantings were inspired by those that grew there during the 25 years since the trains stopped running. The landscape consists of about 210 species of ornamental grasses such as feathery red Andropogon gerardi, quaking gray Briza media, and pale green sedge Carex eburnea; perennials like lavender Monarda fistulosa and pale purple Nepeta racemosa; and small trees, and shrubs chosen for their hardiness, textures and color variation. Keeping these plants alive



Scenes from High Line Park

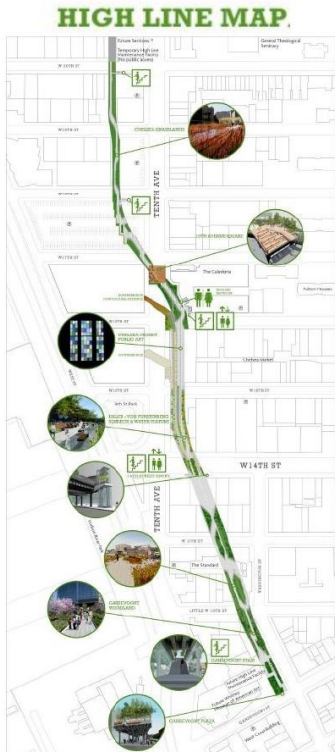


Photo montage by Arturo

involves an irrigation system designed to allow the planting beds to retain as much water as possible; and since many of the plants are xerophytic or drought-tolerant, they need little supplemental watering.

Elements at the High Line Park are still preserved from the original infrastructure and integrated into the planting beds. Seating, for example, includes the park's signature "peel-up" benches which rise organically from the planks of the former railway. The landscape scheme evolves effortlessly into a new family of elements to offer seamless transitions from walkway to peripheral seating, play features, planters, and more.

The High Line Park also encompasses epic views of the city skyline, the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building and the Hudson River. Along its 1.45 miles, the unique fusion of hardscape, wildflowers and outdoor fixtures makes it an exceptional work of art. Here you can connect your mind with the sky, feeling the wind and the sunshine. For so many reasons, don't overlook this magical, exceptional place, which delights every season of the year, but is even more captivating during the height of summer.

Great Drama at Great Prices

BY NADIA BELLAVINA (RUSSIA)

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being."
— Oscar Wilde

ARE YOU A LOVER OF DRAMA and theater? Or maybe you love theater but don't have hundreds of dollars to spend on tickets to see a play? If so, here are some ways of seeing a great play this summer without busting your budget.

Every summer the Public Theater produces Shakespeare in the Park. Delacorte Theater in Central Park was founded in 1962 by Joseph Papp, an American producer and director and a founder of the Public Theater. The shows attract over a million people and what's amazing is that you can see them absolutely free. To get tickets, you just need to get in line at Delacorte Theater on the day of the performance. The office opens at noon, but get there early. The closest entrances to the theater are at 81st Street and Central Park West or 79th Street and Fifth Avenue.

This summer, Shakespeare in the Park is doing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (July 11 to August 13). This comedy will keep your eyes peeled throughout the show bringing nothing but happiness. On top of that, since it's performed outdoors, the audience is able to enjoy the summer evening and fun laughs at the same time.

Signature Center, located at 42nd Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues in Manhattan, has three theater spaces, a bookstore, and a café and bar where you can have a cup of coffee or a glass of wine before the show. In 2014, Signature Center was also the first Manhattan based theater to receive the special Regional Theater Tony Award for its innovative programming.

After a short summer break, it returns in August 2017 with two plays *Fucking A* (August 22–October 1) and *In the Blood* (August 29–October 8) both by Pulitzer Prize winner

Suzan-Lori Parks, an American playwright, novelist and screenwriter. Each play explores with wit and candor the difficult life journey of a formidable woman fearlessly coping with notions of love, society, sex and power.

Don't miss discounted tickets for only \$30 in the first six weeks of the plays' runs!

Second Stage Theater/Tony Kiser Theater, located at 43rd Street and Eighth Avenue, seats 296 and the company also manages the smaller, 108-seat McGinn/Cazale Theater at West 76th Street and Broadway.

From July 11 Tony Kiser Theater presents *A Parallelogram*. This is an amazing story by Bruce Norris about a woman who can travel to any part of her life with a touch of a remote control and who is trying to make peace with things she can't change.

Second Stage Theater also offers the "30Under30" program which gives an opportunity for anybody under 30 years old buy a ticket for only \$30 plus fees. Plan ahead, so you don't miss a single show!

Another great theater is Manhattan Theater Club. The company owns the Samuel J. Friedman Theater with 650-seats at west 47 Street and Eighth Avenue and New York City Central—stage 1 with 299 seats and stage 2 with 150 seats at west 55th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues.

Here you can also get a full evening of entertainment for only \$30 if you're under 30. Just register on the theater's web site and wait for a welcoming email with booking links for any of the current productions.

Keep in mind that these are just a few of the many drama theaters based in the city.

Time Out magazine is my favorite way of staying in the loop about upcoming shows and new productions. And rely on word-of-mouth for hints on what's playing where—when friends rave about a new performance, it's a good bet you will, too.




Entrance to the Pershing Square Signature Center

Photo by Nadia

The ARNIC Observer

A Publication of



The English-Speaking Union
Andrew Romay New Immigrant Center

NADIA BELLAVINA, JUAN CASTILLO, VANESSA CONSTANZA, AHMAD REZA GOHARI, INA HOLIK, SUZANNE KHOJA, HANMI LIM, PAOLA ANDREA MARTÍNEZ, ARTURO VALLECILLOS, **Reporters**

TANZILYA OREN, **Production Director**

BOB SPEZIALE, **Consulting Editor**

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
144 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016
212-818-1200 | arnic@esuus.org | www.esu-arnic.org

Sleeping under the Stars

BY HANMI LIM (SOUTH KOREA)

“A great many people, and more all the time, live their entire lives without ever once sleeping out under the stars.” – Alan S. Kesselheim (Author of Trail Food)

When the weather gets hotter and the sun is blazing I pull a bunch of camping equipment out of storage. As I dust off a big tent and wipe down a barbeque grill I feel like I’m already in the forest.

Camping beside the green trees and escaping from the concrete jungle is the reason why I wait for summer. Can we go camping nearby in New York? You bet. Some camping sites within two to three hours of NYC include:

Beaver Pond State Park (Palisades Interstate Park Commission, PO Box 427, Bear Mountain, NY 10911)

If you want to go camping without a plan, nearby Beaver Pond State Park is a short drive from NYC. Located just 25 miles north of the George Washington Bridge, you can be there within an hour.

The campgrounds have showers, picnic tables, platform sites (50’ x 50’ plots with 14’x14’ wood decks) and ground sites (50’ x 50’ sites), which accommodate trailers and larger vehicles. There you can hike the Suffern-Bear Mountain Trail, which is the closest marked hiking trail. (Registered campers can visit nearby state parks without paying the vehicle entrance fee.) Also children can swim at a campground beach when lifeguards are on duty.

- Camping Fee: \$15-22 per night (out of state residents add a surcharge \$5 per night)

Clarence Fahnestock Park (1498 Route 301, Carmel, NY 10512)

Clarence Fahnestock State Park is one of the most beloved campsites for people who enjoy various outdoor activities such as swimming, fishing and rowing on the lake. (Row boats and oars are available for rental for \$7/hr, \$25/day.) This 14,086-acre park, stretching through Putnam and Dutchess counties, has 80 campsites and a huge beach surrounding Canopus Lake.

In addition, there are hiking trails, picnic areas, hunting, and specialty birding. The Bird Conservation Area there is the largest area of contiguous forest in the lower Hudson Valley. You can see diverse bird species during migratory and breeding periods like the Broad-winged Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, to name only a few.

- Camping Fee: \$15-19 per night (out of state residents add a surcharge \$5 per night)

Bear Spring Mountain (512 East Trout Brook Road, Downsville, NY 13755)

If you want to feel rough and rugged in Mother Nature, the campground in Bear Spring Mountain is one of the top choices. It is located at the western end of the Catskill Forest Preserve, five miles south of Walton, New York. The campground offers a beach, flush toilets, hot showers, boat rentals (rowboat, canoe, kayak and paddle boat), a playground, pavilion rentals, an amphitheater, horseshoe pits and a multi-use trail system for hiking. Also there’s Spruce Grove camping and trail system, great for horseback riding enthusiasts looking for a one of a kind facility in the Catskill region. For young children (five to 13), they also run a Junior Naturalist Program which includes nature-themed games and activities.

- Camping Fee : \$18 per night (out of state residents add a surcharge \$5 per night)

Even though New York is quite a busy city, it also has many nearby campsites that people can get to within an hour by car to escape city life. I think that is one of the benefits that we enjoy about living here.

If someone asks me why I like camping in New York, my answer is simple. I can relax and refresh myself at minimal cost and travel time. How about camping out under the stars this summer?

Plan well ahead to reserve a campsite by calling 1-800-456-2267 (TTY 1-800-304-1265) or reserve on-line at www.reserveamerica.com.



Lake at Clarence Fahnestock Park

Photo by Hanmi

A Secret Garden

BY INA HOLIK (BELARUS)

The most important is not that big what others have thought of, but the small one to which you yourself came.
— Haruki Murakami

DURING the financial crisis of the 1970s, many parts of the city suffered economically, culturally and environmentally, and vacant and abandoned lots were widespread. A nonprofit environmental group — the Green Guerillas — dedicated itself to preserving urban gardens by lobbing "seed bombs." The packets, containing seeds, fertilizer and water were thrown over fences to combat eyesores, and around vacant lots where access was otherwise limited. Improving these former bare spaces became a grassroots program founded by Green Guerilla leader Liz Christy.

How much new information can I give about parks in the city?

Shall I tap into my own collection of nostalgic memories?

Should I remind friends how good nature is for emotional health?

I’ll never forget that happy day when looking after a friend’s four-year-old boy. Stefan had entered the age of "Why" as in “Why is ‘Go Slow’ written on that tree stump?” “Why do peaches come in a mesh bag?” And changing course to another Wh-word, “Where do the fish sleep?” On the way to the swimming pool we came across an island oasis. This garden had fruit trees, vegetable patches, and many varieties of herbs and flowering perennials.



Photo by Ina

Stefan exhibits his incessant childhood curiosity

Later, I brought my future husband there, because the beauty of this natural place can be enjoyed in every season, even winter. "Wonderful park!" my husband exclaimed, "I've already been in NY for around 20 years, but I'm just learning about it for the first time."

Frankly speaking, at that time he was still my boyfriend. Truth be told, it is a great place for romantic



Photo by Ina

An environmental game at the garden counsels children to pay attention to nature.

meetings! Sometimes you will hear the songs of birds. And different kinds of junipers give off aromas of vivacity and freshness!

Beginners who love crafts learn ideas for inspection and fulfillment. There is a mosaic of tiles and an unusual drinking bowl for birds, and decorated pots for plants. Among the stone jungle of Manhattan I found a pearl drop of dew. That's why I want to share this discovery with you.

You’ll see a lot of plants like shiny ivy and needled juniper, ripening apricots and figs, colorful coleus and fragrant mints. You’ll find a nook to dream in or plunge into poetry. Another time you’ll watch the small fish in the pond. If you're lucky, the turtle will wait for you in the morning.

Everyone would like to live near this garden!

Urban planners note that a park in the city performs important environmental and social roles. Park and nature are indicators of sustainable and prosperous development of society.

Discoveries and miracles are near, you only need to adjust yourself to the positive! What is the name my secret garden? Where is it?

Established in 1985, it’s called the Liz Christy Garden after the community activist who started Green Guerillas. "Liz Christy will stand as a little monument to beauty," rhapsodized the newspaper *The Villager*. As the garden began attracting attention and winning awards, the Green Guerillas started running workshops there.

Need to center and embrace your calm? Relax at East Houston Street between Second Avenue and The Bowery, New York, NY, 10003. Train: F, B, D or 6 to Bleecker Street.

Keep Your Budget Down and Health Up

BY VANESSA CONSTANZA (DOMINICAN REPUBLIC)

A LOT OF PEOPLE say that it’s impossible to stay healthy, especially here in NYC, because it's difficult and expensive. If you think about it, you can spend more money in one day going to the doctor as a result of bad health or trying one of those "magic pills" after realizing that you are out of shape.

Here are some tips to becoming a healthier person without going broke.

1) Know a resource “ChooseMyPlate.gov”, which explains what to eat every day and also recommends portions for a balanced diet.

Recommend serving size: the amount of each food that you should eat as determined by various health organizations. For example, a serving of fruit is usually one medium whole fruit while a serving of dairy is one cup of yogurt or 1.5 ounces of cheese.

- Grains: bread, cereal, rice, pasta. Six servings per day
- Vegetable Group: lettuce, spinach, carrots. Five servings.
- Fruits: apples, oranges, watermelon. Four servings.
- Dairy group: cheese, milk, yogurt. Three servings.
- Proteins such as meat, fish, eggs, and nuts: Two or three servings
- Fat, oil, and sweets: Preferably unsaturated; use them sparingly.

2) You say you don't have enough time to cook?

Life in NY is not quite what we'd like it to be. But that's no excuse. Set aside one day per week to

prepare your meals and snacks. You'll save time and money (amazing, isn't it?) and have less chance of eating junk food.

3) Exercise. Expensive? Let's go through it.

Why pay thousands of dollars a year for a Gym membership when the streets can be your backyard; plus, NYC has many parks and recreation centers with an abundance of programs for free or less than \$100 a year.

A CNN report shows that the average American spends nearly half a day sitting at a screen (smartphone, computer, multimedia device) and according to the U.S. Surgeon General, we need only 30 min. to one hour of exercise a day.

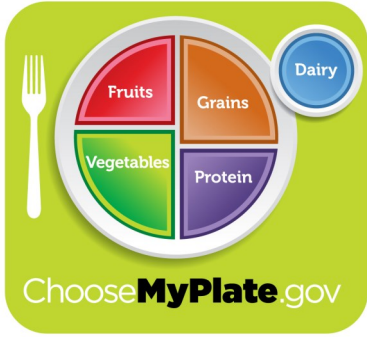
Let's not forget old-fashioned walking. We are lucky that we live here, instead of a suburb where everybody depends on their cars for transportation. Other simple suggestions: use the stairs instead of the elevator or get off the bus or train one stop before your destination and walk the rest of the way. Simple right? All of these burn calories.

4) Be aware of the difference between processed and fresh food.

Louise Hay, best-selling author and self-help guru, has said, "It is an act of loving ourselves to become aware of what we put into our mouth and how it makes us feel."

A good example of the difference is a handful of Doritos and a full dinner plate of red

(Continued on page four)



Courtesy of USDA

Imperiled Frogs and Toads

BY AHMAD REZA GOHARI (IRAN)

ZOOS ARE NOT only places to see diverse species of animals from different biomes in the same place, they also provide refuge for some who are not able to survive in their natural habitats. On top of that, some zoos also have ambitious plans to bring back to life animals that are extinct in the wild.

The Bronx Zoo is a fine example. Escape from the hustle and bustle of Manhattan in New York City from April to November by taking a 30-minute subway ride north from the heart of Manhattan to arrive at this sanctuary of serenity and peace. Sheltering more than 650 species in differing habitats such as African plains, world of birds, children’s zoo, mouse house, butterfly garden, Congo gorilla forest, Himalayan highlands, and world of reptiles, the Bronx Zoo remains one of the largest conservation parks in the United States.

One of the outstanding programs at the Bronx Zoo is to avert the extinction of endangered amphibians. Amphibians are cold-blooded vertebrates such as frogs, toads, newts, and salamanders. They are distinguished by having an aquatic gill-breathing larval stage followed by a terrestrial lung-breathing adult stage.

According to the recent Global Amphibian assessment, about a third of them are threatened with extinction. Habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, fungal disease, and over-collection have driven more than 170 species such as the Vegas valley leopard frog (native to Nevada), Ainsworth’s salamander (Mississippi), Harlequin toad (Central and South America), and gastric-brooding frog (Australia) to extinction over the past two decades. “They are comparing this die-off of amphibians to that of the dinosaurs,” Melissa Mohring, the Bronx Zoo wild animal keeper said. “Because there are so many species becoming extinct all at once.”

Recently, scientists have started a program named Amphibian Ark to save 500 species in captivity and breed enough to eventually reintroduce them into the wild. “In terms of scope, I think this is the biggest conservation project that humanity has ever tried to tackle,” said Kevin Zippel, the program’s director. The Kihansi spray toad and Panamanian golden frog are two species that have been brought back



A Kihansi spray toad plays in a terrarium at the Bronx Zoo.

Photo by Ahmad

to life by the Bronx Zoo. The Kihansi spray toad’s natural habitat was delimited by the mist zone of Kihansi falls in Tanzania before it was declared extinct in the wild in 2009. Kihansi dam, built atop the waterfalls in 1999, reduced the flow of water by 90 percent. Consequently, the falls no longer provided the adequate humidity that these mustard yellow, 0.7 inch toads depended on. Damage to the natural habitat in addition to a lethal fungal disease inevitably destined these tiny creatures to annihilation.

Fortunately, before the toads were wiped out completely, scientists had collected some for breeding. However, there were many challenges to creating a population in captivity. "No facilities were keeping spray toads in captivity—and this is a species with very specific needs—so the Bronx Zoo staff had to figure it out," says

Don Boyer, the zoo's herpetology curator. In 2010, after a decade of struggle, 100 Kihansi spray toads were reintroduced to nature in Tanzania.

The so-called Panamanian golden frog, which is technically a toad, was endemic to forested mountain streams in Panama before its extinction in 2007. Deforestation, which ruined its native habitat and a deadly fungal disease contributed to its extinction. Its exquisite coloration from pale chartreuse to bright golden yellow sometimes punctuated by black spots made it irresistible to poaching for the black market. This stunning specimen is also part of the Bronx Zoo’s captive breeding program and has been successfully procreated.

The laudable efforts of the Bronx Zoo have saved many species, among them the Kihansi spray toad and Panamanian golden frog, from extinction. As Stewart Udall, the former U.S. Secretary of the Interior and professor of environmental humanism, observed, “Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man.”

De Gustibus

Food of the Levant

BY SUZANNE KHOJA (SYRIA)

BABA GANOUSH (smoky and creamy eggplant purée), tabouli (bulgur wheat and parsley salad), hummus (spicy bean spread) and kousa mahshi (stuffed summer squash) are well-known. They are healthy, delicious and mostly vegan friendly, too!

There are many restaurants in Queens such as Ilili, Almayass, Taboon, Taïm, ABA Turkish Restaurant, Azuri Café and plenty of others that serve Middle Eastern food.

Originally, Mongol invaders, traders and the Ottoman Empire had a great influence on the food we know as Middle Eastern. Seasonings common to Indian cuisine, like cumin, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, coriander and black pepper were first introduced by merchants of the Persian Empire in 550 to 330 BCE. Much later, tomatoes came from the new world and okra from Africa. And we can't forget the sweet pastries and dense coffee from the Ottoman Empire.

Wheat, one of the staples of Middle Eastern food, can be found in many dishes and prepared in many ways. Flattened bread-like pita accompanies every meal, since by tradition in some regions, especially the Persian Gulf nations, the food is picked up with bread held between the thumb and two fingers and a knife and fork are not used. Meals are usually served on a cloth laid on the ground, and diners take off their shoes and use the right hand because the Islamic religion forbids eating with the left.

Bulgur, boiled wheat dried under the sun or in the oven and then crushed into different-sized grains, is used in salads like tabouli. It is one of the main ingredients of kibbeh, along with minced onions and beef, lamb, goat or camel meat and spices, shaped into balls or ovals, and baked, cooked in broth, or served raw.

Rice is also a diet staple, too!

Lamb, goat and chicken are the usual animal proteins. Pork is rarely, if ever, eaten, since it is forbidden by Islamic and Jewish teachings.

Eggplant, tomatoes, spinach, parsley, mint, cabbage and peas appear in all guises. Mahshi, the Arabic word for stuffed vegetables, is called Dolma in Turkish. Grape leaves, cabbage, eggplant, tomatoes or potatoes are filled with rice and minced meat and seasoned with black pepper, crushed mint, garlic and lemon and simmered in tomato sauce or sour-tasting sumac water.

Baba ganoush is grilled eggplant mashed with tahini (sesame paste) and garlic, parsley and, of course, olive oil. With no saturated fat, it is one of the healthiest foods you can eat. It is delicious, too!

Chickpeas, in the Levant, and fava beans, elsewhere, are the main ingredients in hummus.

In my opinion, what makes Middle Eastern food special is the liberal use of olive oil. But clarified butter known as smen is also used. A special kind called country clarified butter is handmade from cow’s milk strained overnight to remove the curds from the whey, and the former are then shaken in a container. It can take hours to make!

Qamar al-Din is a popular drink during Ramadan (Islamic fasting days) and is made from dried apricot paste, sugar, and rosewater garnished with mint. Ayran, also called doogh or tan, is a cold diluted yogurt beverage with added salt popular in areas of Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

Dating to the Ottoman Empire, it is customary to welcome guests with strong, dense coffee, syrupy and black, sometimes with sugar but never milk. It is said the emptied cup can predict the future by the designs on the sides left by the grounds.

So, for traditional and delectable healthy cuisine enjoyed for well more than 2,000 years, give Middle Eastern food a try.



Mahshi, or stuffed vegetables in Arabic, are called dolma in Turkish, like the tightly rolled stuffed grape leaves (above).

Photo courtesy of the Facebook group Kurdish Ladies Kitchen

A Stroll through Streets of Graffiti

BY PAOLA ANDREA MARTÍNEZ (COLOMBIA)

*Know that the walls do not shut up.
Bushwick, the best street art scene in the world.*

JUST A FEW MINUTES from Manhattan—a city where skyscrapers loom over the urban streetscape—lies Bushwick, a neighborhood located north of Brooklyn inhabited mostly by Latinos. This neighborhood, characterized by empty lots, old buildings and closed factories, supports one of the largest galleries of street art in the world.

Thousands of graffiti are displayed in more than 60 blocks. Street artists with little or no formal training have built a strong reputation through their empirical work and learning as animators, illustrators and people who rank among the best painters and writers in the world. In exploring line, drawing, letters, colors and techniques, they prove that art can be inclusive and participatory, collective constructions.

The graffiti begins on Jefferson Street and continues on Troutman toward St. Nicholas Avenue. How to get there? Take the L train to Jefferson Street, exit at Starr Street and Wyckoff Avenue from which it takes three minutes to walk there along Starr.

What do the walls tell you?

Wealth, poverty, gentrification, segregation, culture, life experiences, love, hope, political perspective and the environment are some themes that the graffiti addresses. “I really like the art street in Bushwick and I have never seen something like this neighborhood before; for me it’s so creative and beautiful, really a special place to visit,” remarked Marine Barret, a French visitor.

World renown signature legends, roughly equivalent to a more formal school, such as COPD, Zexor, Samo, Eros, Smithe (Mexican creator), to name only a few, have participated in the Bushwick scene. Some are so eminent that they also have pieces at the Whitney, Brooklyn, and Metropolitan Museums, as well as other influential institutions.

Highlights include beautiful artwork of the Ecuadorian Lady Pink, who is known as the "First Lady of Graffiti" because she was one of the first women actively working in the medium. She uses graffiti murals as a way to empower women around the world by distinguishing herself as one of the few female artists highly regarded in a profession perceived to be the province of men. In her work, the figures of women take center stage and stress



A tourist captures a corner of art in Bushwick, Brooklyn.

Photo by Paola

their roles in the development of our societies. Lady Pink has also participated in two documentaries about graffiti and women.

Bushwick then and now

“I am shocked by the transformation of the neighborhood, the experience has been very positive and I was delighted to see how the culture of art and the community that lives here is integrated,” said Javier Velasquez, a resident of Queens, who visited the big gallery for first time.

For his part, Mar, an artist who contributes to the gallery says, “I have been coming here for more than 10 years, the only difference is that now I walk in a neighborhood where graffiti is growing, the whole community of artists wants to participate with their art here to capture the attention of the world through their exhibitions.”

Over the last ten years, the neighborhood has changed due to the efforts of Bushwick Collective, a community group. You’ll find gastronomic treats for all budgets such as Roberta’s pizza, the most famous in

the area (261 Moore Street). Fine & Raw makes exquisite chocolate that will give you the energy to complete an art tour that lasts approximately two hours. You can also browse the famous Mo-lasses Bookstore (770 Hart Street), as well as a lot of second-hand clothing shops with great prices and quality, and finally, exhausted and thirsty, sample an artisanal ale at Kings County Brewers Collective (381 Troutman Street).

This summer come and enjoy busy Bushwick, where every weekend you can see in action famous artists renovating hundreds of graffiti. It’s a huge exhibition that is renewed monthly and takes two to three days to accomplish.



Photo by Paola

Joaquin Lamar Hailey known as CHOR BOOGIE works behind the scenes in Bushwick

Sun, Beach...and Fish?

BY JUAN CASTILLO (VENEZUELA)

SUMMERTIME: people mostly plan to go to the beach and have fun with friends and that’s always a great plan! Another option is to choose a place where there is more than a beach, sun and sand. That place is definitely Coney Island, where you can find attractions, fireworks, good food, fun rides and a beautiful and fascinating aquarium.

The New York Aquarium is the biggest display of aquatic wildlife in the city. It covers 14 acres on the seafront of Coney Island. In operation since 1896, first in the garden of a castle at Battery Park, it later relocated to its present site, where you can experience Glovers Reef, Conservation Hall, the Aquatheater, and outdoor landscapes of sea cliffs.

Begin the experience by discovering the vibrant underwater ecosystem—Glover’s Reef—where the adventures in the movie *Finding Dory* are depicted. Threads of light illuminate the reef and fish of many iridescent colors and sizes dance among the coral. The stingray circulates on the surface orchestrating the show and children go wild.

The coral is alive! It may look like rock or stone, but a piece of coral is actually an interdependent colony of organisms. Different colors, textures and figures provide food and shelter for numerous species of animals and plants.

As in the wild, aquatic life differs by habitat; the Pacific Ocean and the African Lake are home to diverse species. The Conservation Hall shows in brief windows how many species of animals share space underwater. Sometimes survival means teaming up. For example, fish and anemones, flowering aquatic plants, have a better chance to form communities and thrive by working together.

Outside the hall you’ll find the boardwalk with craggy sea cliffs where penguins swim and waddle in their funny way, sea lions bask in the sun and seals smile and squeal at the kids like they are best friends. In the gift shop you’ll find popular toys like Dory or Nemo and penguins of all sorts—stuffed, puppets, in books, and in games.

The Aquatheater offers a great show with stunning aquatic fauna and a compelling message on conservation. Children laugh and have fun while learning how to recycle and care for animals that live underwater. The Aquatheater team inspires the sea lions and seals to perform to the smiles and delight of the children.

Part of the Aquarium has been under construction since 2012 when Hurricane Sandy hit Coney Island. Rising in what looks like a modern ship that docks at the aquarium, this new feature called *Ocean Wonders: Sharks!* is scheduled to open this summer.

To conclude your visit, there’s a 4D Theater which combines a 3D movie with extra sensory effects. The current offering, Ice Age. fascinates kids with exotic wildlife and a message of conservancy.

The New York Aquarium opens every day of the year at 10 a.m. with seasonal closing times. Admission is \$12 for adults, and \$9 for children ages 3-12 and \$10 for senior citizens (65 and older); children under 3 years of age are admitted free. Parking is \$12 for cars and buses. The Aquarium is located on Surf Avenue at West 8th Street in Coney Island. Train: D, F, Q & N. Bus: B36 & B68.

Don’t forget to get your family photo taken with the fishes! It will be a cherished memento of a visit to NYC’s premier, aquatic wildlife extravaganza.



Photo by Juan

Tiny clownfish and a purple tang with a bright yellow tail frolic among the coral in an underwater scene at the New York Aquarium.

Healthy Eating (continued from page two)

apples. Although both have 200 calories, clearly the apples are far healthier. Keep in mind it is easier for your body to digest fresh food, which also keeps you from getting hungry again so quickly.

Have you ever thought how much exercise you'll need to burn a Flaming Hot Crunchy cheese snack like Cheetos? Any of the following: 24 mins. of cycling, 13 mins. of swimming, 44 mins. of walking, or 18 mins. of jogging.

5) Feeling flush today? Here are four good restaurants in NYC where you can find healthy and fresh food for less than \$20.

- Dig Inn: Seasonal American food, mostly vegetables.

- Barrilla: Italian food. "We were raised on the Mediterranean diet, one of the healthiest ways of eating in the world: pasta, fruit, and vegetable are our daily choices."
- Pret a Manger: Food prepared fresh every day, so you won't find "sell by" dates on their sandwiches or salads.
- Sweetgreen: Essentially a salad bar with attentive customer service.

In conclusion, try to find what works best for you and be mindful of what you are putting in your mouth. Remember this is for you and your health, practice healthy living every day, reach your goals, and always be proud of yourself and your progress.