

NewsBytes

FEBRUARY 2021

A Message from our President
Johanna Abramo



This month marks **one year (!)** since we were first introduced to the stark reality and meaning of the words Pandemic, Covid 19, quarantining, social distancing and to the wearing of protective covering like masks and gloves.

Thankfully, now, some of our membership have been able to get their first vaccines and we are very hopeful that this deadly virus can soon be contained, if not eliminated. *(Please read article [here](#) on precautions one still needs to take even after receiving the vaccine).*

In the meantime, we have all found our own ways to manage, both at our club and at home. We have worked hard to continue our monthly programs with a few add-on activities in between to get us outdoors. We have also sought to engage and stimulate you during this forced confinement with some fun videos to make you laugh, smile and think and to impart some interesting information you may not have been aware of on varied topics.

Our board has done a great job in being flexible in how we go about our business. This month we held

our first board meeting via Zoom! In turn, our Book Club held its first Zoom meeting last month. It was well attended and enthusiastically received. They will continue to do this each month until we can once again meet in person. **All are invited to join in.** We are still feeling our way with Zooming but hope to offer you soon some mini-presentations and activities through this novel way of keeping in touch.

Our year ends at the end of April and we will have a few spots available on the board. If you are interested in helping out on the board or on one of our committees, please contact Linda Akers (linakers@yahoo.com or 917-941-2536) and she will happily find the perfect fit for you.

This is an enjoyable and gratifying way to meet new people and become involved with the various activities of our club ... Take the leap!

Stay happy and be safe!

Johanna

**ALL OUR WCD GENERAL MEETINGS
FOR THE MONTHS OF
FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL
ARE ON HOLD UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Woman's Club of Douglaston
will hold all forthcoming Board Meetings virtually
using "Zoom"

at 1:00 pm on

THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2021

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021

**A ZOOM LINK WILL BE EMAILED THE NIGHT BEFORE THE
MEETING TO ALL BOARD MEMBERS**

BOOK CLUB

(All book club meetings will be temporarily held via
Zoom on the **second Thursday** of each month
**A Zoom link to join the meeting will be emailed the
day before the meeting.**)

**Joan Curran, Book Club Chairwoman, led
the discussion of February's book selection,**

“The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West”

by David McCullough. (See more details in the article below "Meet our Board".)

The following books were selected for discussion in the next months.

Thursday, March 11 at 5:00 pm: “Mudbound” by Hillary Jordan describes how two families cope with the remains of the “Jim Crow era” after WW II.

Thursday, April 8 at 5:00 pm: “American Dirt” by Jeanine Cummins follows the journey of people fleeing drug cartels and life hazards as they seek help at the U.S. border.

Highlights of our Feb. 4, 2021 Board Meeting:

A **Nominating Committee** was selected by our President Johanna Abramo. This special committee is chaired by Linda Akers and co-chaired by Fran Bello and Nina Kowalsky.

They will solicit nominees from our current board members and general membership for the positions of President, Vice President, Recording Secretary.

Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer.

Potpourri Committee chaired by Diane Polland is busy preparing virtual events while we cannot plan any in-person events. If you think of a theme of interest to our membership please contact Diane at dpolland@aol.com.

Useful information on how to make an appointment to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. and more

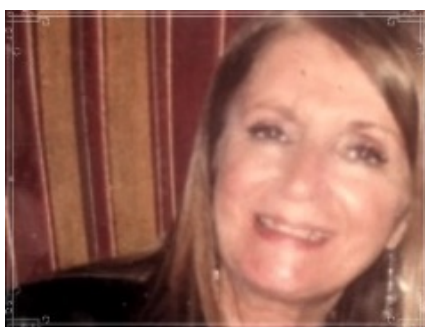
www.turbovax.info

<https://vax4nyc.nyc.gov/patient/s/>

<https://nycvaccinelist.com>

<https://covid19.nychealthandhospitals.org/UnaffiliatedHealthCareWorkers>

Editor-in-Chief,
Annette Aloisio



PONDERINGS, MUSES AND IDLE THOUGHTS

With much time on one's hands these days, the word “**Dedication**” is pertinent.

Webster's Dictionary's definition of dedication:
“*to give oneself wholly to a worthy purpose*” ...

What does this mean to you? How do you relate to this word? Does this word/act remind you of someone? Where would we be without dedicated people? How would we survive without the dedication of so many?

The most obvious dedicated people in our lives, from inception, are our parents. When one thinks of the sacrifices our parents, and we as parents, make on a daily basis and for years on end, without question, without judgment, without fanfare, one is in awe. Parental duties aside, parents “wholly” give unconditional love, support, understanding, comfort, encouragement, and advice (*sometimes unwarranted!*).

We are aware some of us are childless; we are also aware that in some familial capacity, you are there for the children or adults in your family or your

circle of friends. This actually is an even greater example of dedication as there is no so-called obligation, but instead a *dedication* to a greater cause and need.

Obviously, the teachers, the doctors, the nurses, the clergy, the caregivers, the volunteers in all capacities, etc., who give “wholly” to their profession(s) are examples of “dedication”.

Our lives would be different without the dedication of the men and women who selflessly give their time and energy to their chosen fields. When we hear of firemen and firewomen rushing into a burning building to save lives and yes, even pets, we are reminded of their great sacrifice. Recently, when I questioned an acquaintance, who is a firefighter, how he is able to continue on in this perilous occupation year after year; he modestly stated: “It’s a job”. We do believe it is much more than that. There are many “jobs” available where one doesn’t risk one’s life. Obviously, the list goes on – policemen and policewomen, and all the aforementioned. ***So, a shout-out to those dedicated men and women whose daily task is to keep us safe; to help us in our time of need; to foster a sense of comfort knowing they are “there for us”.***

Another word which deserves recognition is **“Volunteer”**. *“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart”*. (Elizabeth Andrew)
“Those who can, do; those who can do more, volunteer”. (Author Unknown). *"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"* (Mahatma Gandhi).

The Board Members of the **Woman’s Club of Douglaston** are these **dedicated volunteers**. Behind the scenes are countless hours of meetings, planning and executing events, emails, telephone calls, research, etc. Be it the president, vice presidents, treasurer, corresponding – recording secretaries, antiques, book club, charity, floral arranger, historians, hospitality, luncheon, membership, potpourri, museums, music/dance, parliamentarian, programs, theater, website, and yes, sunshine, we all graciously and freely give of our time, talent and energy in whatever capacity that may be.

Often, when we attend meetings, we do just that – “attend”. Do we realize and acknowledge the amount of time and effort expended to bring the meeting to fruition?

While we are all volunteers and no one is forced to volunteer, the fact is there is a sense of satisfaction to see the fruits of one's labor so resplendently evidenced as in our "Woman's Club of Douglaston".

Can we say then that we women committed to the WCD dedicate ourselves to volunteerism - absolutely 100%!

A. A.

FEBRUARY 2021



Six more weeks of winter ...

"February" used to be called "cabbage month" or "kale-monath" and "solmonath" which means

“mud month”. (Old English). Eventually, **February** was named for the Roman festival of purification called “**Februa**” during which people were ritually washed. *Interesting ...*

February's zodiac signs are “**Aquarius**” and “**Pisces**”. The birthstone for **February** is **Amethyst** and the birth flowers are **Violet, Iris and Primrose**.

January is a memory and **February** is here and along with it, as usual, comes continued winter weather with a slight difference. *When **February** arrives, we know that March is fast approaching, which means -- “Spring” is in the air!*

Who can help but notice that the sunsets are later and the daylight give us more time for enjoyable outdoor activities. Snow lovers enjoy the obvious skiing, snowboarding, snow-angels and even *shoveling!* Traditionally, **February** is the time when we escape to a warmer climate - heading south or island destinations, or as aforementioned, ski resorts (*maybe not this year?*)

Some Holidays in February:

National Freedom Day; Presidents' Day (*which includes George Washington and Abraham Lincoln –*

*formerly celebrated as individual holidays), Chinese New Year (Year of the Ox), National Wear Red Day, Valentine’s Day. **February** also marks American Heart Month. February 2nd – Groundhog Day – six more weeks of winter this year!*

Then there are the lesser-known holidays: National Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day, National Shower with a Friend Day (*I kid you not*), National Umbrella Day, National Tortellini Day, Galentine’s Day, and the list goes on.

We also anticipate “**Fat Tuesday**” (*the day before Ash Wednesday*). If we were in New Orleans (*the home of Fat Tuesday*), we would enjoy Mardi Gras and all the carnival festivities attributed thereto and the feasting and gorging of Fat Tuesday.

“February is the shortest month, so if you’re having a miserable month, try to schedule it for February” – (Lemony Snickett)

“The February sunshine steeps your boughs and tints the buds and swells the leaves within...”
(William Cullen Bryant – Among the Trees).

A. A.

Meet our Board ...

Joan Curran, Book Club Chairwoman



Joan Curran, has served as an Officer of the WCD Board as Vice-President, Recording and Corresponding Secretary, and is presently the Chairwoman of one of our Standing Committees, the Book Club. Joan has been a member of the WCD for more than 28 years.

As Book Club Chairwoman, Joan fulfills her role with diligence, intelligence, and earnestness. Joan, in her quiet and sincere demeanor, leads our book club discussions with a short summary of the selected book, asks pertinent questions and allows the members freedom to discuss their thoughts and

opinions. The book club is a vibrant part of the WCD. Although membership is small in number, it is huge in spirit.

This month's selection is "*The Pioneers*" by Pulitzer Prize Winner David McCullough. The Zoom Meeting (*under the direction and expertise of Linda Akers*), was attended by Joan Curran (Chair), Annette Aloisio, Beverly Emery, Brenda Lamb, Carolyn Lippman, Diane Polland and Rosemary Pepe and Pam Timoyanis.

Joan opened the meeting with a summary of the book which takes place in the late 1700's between the time of the Revolution and Civil War and documents the settlement of the Northwest Territory and is an extremely important part of our history: *The Northwest Ordinance*. The book is riddled with famous men and women in history including George Washington, John Quincy Adams, Aaron Burr, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Johnny Appleseed, et al. The book speaks in detail of the hardships endured by these early pioneers and their ideals which are the basis of these United States, including freedom of religion, public school education, and against slavery.

On a personal note, Joan and I met at the local library when I joined the still-existing Book Club in Douglaston. Shortly thereafter, I joined the WCD where Joan and I met again. Joan's quiet determination "to get things done" is admirable to say the least. Joan is steadfast, loyal, calm, logical, "dedicated" and a "volunteer".

Joan's family is her everything. Her husband, five children, and eleven grandchildren are blessed by her loving care and nurturing. Joan loves to walk, loves to read, loves to work and play in her garden and is a great listener.

Joan and husband, Don, were active members in the Douglaston Community Theater for many years and very supportive of a worthy, neighborhood institution. Joan (and Don) performed in several plays in the Theater -- to great acclaim!

Obviously, Joan is an integral part of our WCD.

Thank you, Joan, for your many years of service to the WCD.

"Here's to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise

them.” (Unknown)

A. A.

Fresh Air ... the Big Outdoors

The Benefits of Being Outdoors:

Fresh Air has been shown to help digest food more effectively improve blood pressure and heart rate, strengthen the immune system, reduce obesity rates, and strengthen family ties, all leading to a healthier you.

A Winter Walk around Oakland Lake in Bayside

February 10, 2021

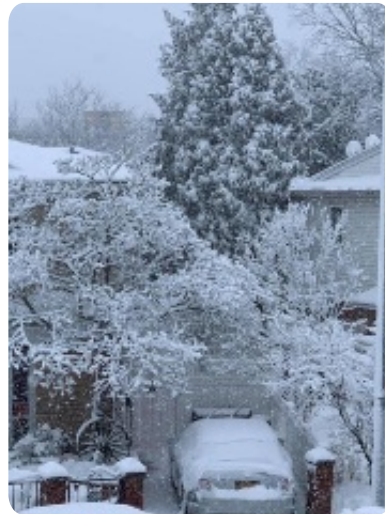


UNFORTUNATELY DUE TO RECENT SNOWFALL, ICY CONDITIONS AND FALL- RISK,

THE WALK WAS CANCELLED. THIS ACTIVITY WILL BE RESCHEDULED AT A LATER DATE.

Around our Neighborhood

Enjoy these photographs taken by some of our members of recent snowfalls in our neighborhoods. You might recognize some of your own pieces. [Don't we all love snow?](#) (... in pictures)







*Stay socially connected at
the Woman's Club of Douglaston!*

PLEASE REMEMBER TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE OFTEN

(to access click below:)

www.womansclubofdouglaston.com

TO VIEW OUR CURRENT AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES,

PROGRAMS, PHOTO GALLERY OF EVENTS, AND ALL

OUR "NewsBytes" COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Remember: *"A good friend is a connection to life -- a tie to the past, a road to the future, the key to sanity in a totally insane world. More people are focusing on friendships later in life -- and research reveals the many health benefits".*

Warm regards,

Johanna Abramo

President

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