

A publication of Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) May 2017 • Free

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Next Month: Senior-friendly Fun



Ceramic artist Jimmy Clark displays one of his pottery vessels; others are visible in the background.

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

Could it be that the earth of Germantown's Vernon Park cast a spell on potter Jimmy Clark, that some mysterious sorcery of the soil has returned him to where he began learning his craft 40 years ago?

Clark, 64, an award-winning ceramic artist, first studied pottery as a young man at the Germantown YWCA, and now he teaches that craft at Center in the Park, a senior community center mere steps from the old YWCA. "It's a dynamic class where people help each other," says Clark, who has taught at the center for the past six years. "I tell first-timers to relax and enjoy themselves." Clark has also taught pottery classes at Rowan University and other area schools.

Although Center in the Park and the YWCA stand just steps apart, decades of craftsmanship and half a million miles of travel to study, make and sell pottery distance Clark from his early pots. He has learned many techniques but prefers "pinching," an ancient method in which a vessel is formed from one piece of clay by pinching the clay walls between thumb and forefinger. "Pinching involves a dialogue with the clay," Clark says. "When I start a pot, I might have a form in mind, but it's fun to let the clay help me decide what it's to be. That way, the resulting piece is a discovery."

Experience abroad

Theater, travel and pottery run through the fabric of Clark's life. Raised in Glenside, Clark was a theater major turned English major at LaSalle University. He first ventured abroad during his junior year in 1972; he picked up French and German while studying at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland.

Celebrate Arts 'Celebrate Arts & Aging' showcases artwork by seniors

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) showcases the work of 168 senior artists at three city sites this month for its 15th annual "Celebrate Arts & Aging" event. The celebration is held in May each year to coincide with Older Americans Month. Highlighting older adults' talent and creativity, this year's displays include paintings, drawings, mixed-media works, photographs and more. Participants run the gamut from those new to art to longtime amateur and professional artists.

The celebration also features something altogether different this year: a mixed-media mural, an intergenerational project created collaborative-• continued on page 8



The 'Celebrate Arts & Aging' signature artwork is 'Autumn' by Yuk Yun Mark.

Milestones

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May 2017

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Health Brief

The art of better health: Get creative

Creative activities can be fun and calming, and research shows they can also benefit your health. The American Journal of Public Health published a comprehensive review of the positive impact of art on health and self-healing. The report, "The Connection Between Art, Healing, and Public Health," analyzed more than 100 studies of various kinds of art – including music; writing; dance; and the visual arts, such as painting, drawing, photography, pottery and textiles.

Studies of patients battling chronic illness and cancer found the creation of art to be a positive distraction that produced measurable health and mood improvements. Participants noted decreases in negative emotions, depression, stress and anxiety, as well as improvements in medical outcomes, positive emotions, spontaneity, social networking, positive identity and expression of grief.

Other artistic genres have been shown to produce benefits in the physical body. A study published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine that used writing as a treatment for HIV patients found the creative activity resulted in improved blood counts. Writing impacted the patients' blood cells and improved their immune systems. In other words, the process of creating art doesn't just make you feel better; it also creates physical changes in your body.



Creating art – instead of just viewing it – has been shown to be good for your health.

You don't have to share your art to reap health benefits. The activity of creative expression alone is good for you.

The best part about these findings is that no special skills or equipment are required to create art in its simplest form. Use the technology at your fingertips: Sit down at your computer, open a blank document and start typing. You can write anything - a journal entry about what you did today, a poem, an essay or even the start of a novel. Grab your camera - even the one on your phone will do - and take a picture. Play around with simple editing software to crop or enhance your photo. If you want to get down to basics, get out a blank notepad and any writing implement. Start writing a story or sketching a drawing. You can also combine exercise with expression. Turn up the music and dance. (Don't worry; no one is watching!)

If you are interested in arts activities, read on!

Centers offer arts opportunities

Senior community centers offer prime opportunities for artistic growth and enjoyment in May and year-round. Seniors can take a stained glass class, learn tap dance or salsa, try their hand at painting or drawing, or take a drama class and perform for their peers. They can also study photography or filmmaking, learn to make ceramics, and join in poetry discussions and writing workshops. Crafters can find likeminded fellows in sewing and needlework classes and groups. For music lovers, glee clubs and choruses, and piano, ukulele, violin and guitar lessons are available.

To find classes and arts and cultural events, go to the PCA website at www. pcaCares.org/events-search.

For more on "Celebrate Arts & Aging," including exhibits, receptions and special discounts, see pages 10-11 or visit pcaCares.org/ seniorart. AT ALWAYS BEST CARE, RESPECT, DIGNITY AND QUALITY CARE MATTER.



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Celebrate Arts

'G-Ma' project celebrates individuality of African-American grandmothers

By Abbey J. Porter

Gigi McGraw had long admired the sleek coffee table books she would see at bookstores and friends' houses. But she noticed something: They mostly featured white people. McGraw, a 43-year-old African-American woman, decided she'd like to create a book featuring people of color.

McGraw had been close to her grandmother, who died in 2010; she lives in her grandmother's home in Southwest Philadelphia. She wanted to do something to honor the memory of her beloved Grandmom. An idea took shape: She would create a coffee table book celebrating African-American grandmothers. "G-Ma" was born.

The book, which McGraw planned to complete in April, features 36 grandmothers – one for each year McGraw's own grandmother was part of her life. More than just a collection of stories and photos, McGraw says, the project aims to challenge stereotypes and send the message that "all grandmoms are not the same. All people are not the same."

Creating conversation

One stereotype of black grandmothers, which McGraw has seen depicted onscreen, is that of the "mammy," who is usually a large, sassy woman who plays a nurturing role. "There are other types of [black] grandmoms, just as there are other types of grandmoms in other ethnicities," she says. "I want to speak to the diversity of grandmothers." For example, she points out, grandmothers can vary in sexual orientation, as well as age; the women featured in "G-Ma" range from 43 to 103.

"I want people to know there's beauty in diversity and variety, and black grandmothers run the gamut," she says.

For McGraw, the project is "social art" meant to spark dialogue. "I like to generate conversation and discussion," she says. "I like art as a means of having conversations that might be challenging or difficult." Topics like age and race can provoke such discussions, she notes.

"I'm not very political," McGraw says,

"but there are things I believe in, and I think my voice is stronger when I use art to address what I think the concern is. As I get older and our world is changing, I feel like now is the time. All these ideas and dreams I've had ... They have to come to fruition. I have to make them happen."

A wider reach

To complete the book, McGraw teamed with the Philadelphia Photo League, whose members agreed to take the grandmothers' portraits for free. McGraw interviewed the subjects herself, using an "old-fashioned tape recorder," on topics such as what lessons they would like to pass on to their grandchildren. McGraw's plan is to first self-publish the book, then approach a publisher in hopes of putting the project into wider production.

But "G-Ma" will have life beyond the page: McGraw, who holds a master's degree in theater from Villanova University, also is working with the Painted Bride Art Center to present a "G-Ma" exhibit in June as part of the center's annual "Souls of Black Folks" series. The exhibit is planned to include photos from the book displayed in a room that symbolizes "a grandmom's living room."

An important role

"G-Ma" participant Paulette Rhone describes herself as "a no-nonsense grandmother" to her three grandchildren: Jordan, 11; Skylar, 6; and Elias, 4 – all of whom call her "Ya-Ya."

"I'm pretty much old school," she says. "I certainly welcome conversation and talking about whatever they want to talk about, but you will always speak to me respectfully. I'm not one for the temper tantrums and such. They all know that."

Rhone, who is a founding board member and president of Friends of Mount Moriah Cemetery in Southwest Philadelphia, met McGraw a few years ago when McGraw volunteered at the cemetery. Rhone was glad to be part of "G-Ma."

"I think the role of grandmothers has historically – especially in the African-American community – been sort of the foundation of the community," she says. "I think grandmoms are very important."



Paulette Rhone is among 36 women featured in 'G-Ma,' a coffee table book that aims to celebrate African-American grandmothers and challenge cultural stereotypes.

At the same time, she sees the role of grandmothers changing. For example, her own grandmother used to stay home and prepare hot meals, including homemade biscuits and iced tea. "I'm not that grandmom," reflects Rhone, a retired budget analyst. Nonetheless, she provides a nurturing presence for her grandchildren.

"I'm sort of the on-call babysitter," she says. "I think that's important because it gives them a sense of stability."

And Rhone figures she's doing something right. "They're happy kids," she says, "which is what to me was most important – that my grandchildren be happy."

A perpetual student

At 62, Rhone describes herself as "a work in progress."

"I am a perpetual student," she says. "I've always been that. I love learning." And that education doesn't have to take place in a classroom. For example, through her work with Mount Moriah Cemetery, which encompasses some 200 acres of greenspace, she says, "I'm learning to appreciate nature; I'm learning to appreciate God's work in such an enlightening way. I'm learning more and more about ecology and horticulture and things like that."

Until now, Rhone "didn't know one tree from another." But that's changing, and she looks forward to sharing her new knowledge with her grandchildren. "We're going to have a garden this year," she says

That plan fits with Rhone's goal for her grandchildren: "I just want to impart basic knowledge to them so they can see a much broader world in terms of what they choose to do in life."

Abbey J. Porter is editor of Milestones. Email her at ajporter@pcaphl.org.

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Celebrate Arts

Singer-songwriter strikes a positive chord with original folk compositions

By Linda L. Riley

"I decided at a young age, I'm going to have, in my mind, my own radio – and that's how I comfort myself," Tom Gala says. "That's where the songs come from." Sitting with a cup of coffee in a rocking chair in his living room, he punctuates his conversation with phrases from songs he's written over the past four decades. They have grown out of exhilarating experiences, disturbing encounters, conversations overheard and everyday annoyances.

He starts telling a story about a time his truck broke down, then begins to sing, in his warm baritone, closing his eyes and swaying a little with the beat:

"Bald tires, busted shocks/ But I'm still rolling, rolling on the road."

Gala's songs are grounded in Philadelphia's geography and culture; many reference places only locals would know:

"That old Shackamaxon Street, the sug-

PCA

ar refinery/ It's just a place by the river I sometimes go ... / Today's the day wintertime finally let go/ Today's the day winter let go."

At the same time, the songs are universal. Like an Edward Hopper painting, Gala's lyrics call out what is extraordinary in what most would find ordinary, such as auto repair shops, diners – "those silverlined shiners" – and South Jersey bars.

His rhythms and melodies are drawn from a varied pool of influences: Gregorian chant from growing up in the Catholic Church; jazzy rhythms from the Big Band era; rock 'n' roll; rhythm and blues; and a country music influence from listening to Hank Williams. "So I'm gonna have five different ways to write songs," he says, each one dictated by the subject. "Abelard and Heloise" draws on the simplicity of Gregorian chant; another song is a rock 'n' roll ode to a hopped-up "Rangoon Red" car; and "Dancing Again" has a swaying, cha-cha beat.



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Folk singer Tom Gala plays a dulcimer as he performs one of his original compositions.

In the beginning

Gala says his songwriting began spontaneously one day when his first son was young. "In my 30s, I was in the car with my son Jesse, and we were behind the 23 trolley," he recalls. Instead of being annoyed at the slow pace and stop-and-go progress, he says, "we started singing, "Trolley, how I love ya, how I love ya.'"

But it wasn't until he began to earn his living as a tree surgeon that he had the space in his mind where the music could take root and really grow. He got into tree work – pruning and, when necessary, taking trees down – after undergoing vocational testing. "The result of one test, the man told me, was 'You're supposed to be conducting an orchestra in a forest.' Well, I'm not sure where you go to get that job," he says with a laugh. But the idea of being outside felt right. "When I was outside, I felt like that was where life was happening," he says. He went to the phone book and looked up trees. "I got as far as Davey Tree Co., and they were hiring – and I learned on the job," he says. "And in climbing trees, I got in shape, I felt strong, I felt wonderful, and the main thing was, it kept me in the present. I'm up in a tree with nobody telling me what to do or how to do it – and then the music came."

He sang in public for the first time when he was 34 and went to an open-mike night. "It was this big bar near the Delaware Bay in Sea Breeze, New Jersey." He was nervous - even more so because everyone else had instruments. He got onstage and first sang an old standard with the guitarist who was there. Then he stood and sang his own song, "Freewheelin' Fool," without accompaniment. When he finished, there was what seemed like a long silence - then wild

applause. Afterwards, he went outside to stare at the bay, and the bar owner, May, came out and said, "You've got something there, kid."

Gala has since become well-known in Philadelphia folk music circles and gained national recognition as well; he shared the spotlight with acclaimed contemporary folk artists John Gorka and Susan Werner in a 1993 overview of the Philly folk scene that appeared in Fast Folk Musical Magazine. For many years, he led the open-mike nights at the Mermaid Inn in Chestnut Hill, and he continues to perform at local venues. He has not sought widespread recognition, however, and says of his music, "It doesn't matter that thousands don't know about it."

Make a joyful noise

While some of Gala's songs are poignant, none are bitter or angry. "Music • continued on page 21 May 2017

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Saturday, June 3

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Monday, June 5

and casual, from Southeastern Pennsyl-Bowling - check-in 6 p.m.; start 7 p.m. vania and Southern New Jersey are in-V&S Lanes, 7235 Elmwood Ave. vited to participate in the annual Phila-Women's billiards - 10 a.m. delphia Senior Games for Adults 50+ in West Oak Lane Senior Center, June. Presented by the Philadelphia Parks 7210 Ogontz Ave. & Recreation Department, the games offer a variety of fitness activities and sport-

Tuesday, June 6

Men's billiards - 10 a.m. West Oak Lane Senior Center, 7201 Ogontz Ave.

Wednesday, June 7

Daytime bowling - check-in 10 a.m.; start 11 a.m. Thunderbird Lanes, 3801 Holme Ave.

Thursday, June 8

Putting, golf and driving contest -8 a.m. John F. Byrnes Golf Course, 9500 Leon St.

Friday, June 9

Game Day: Pinochle, Scrabble and darts – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Northeast Older Adult Center, 8101 Bustleton Ave.; and West Oak Lane Senior Center, 7210 Ogontz Ave.

Saturday, June 15

Triathlon (150-yard swim, 1-mile run, 5-mile bike ride) - registration 6:30 a.m.; start 7 a.m. Fairmount Park - Memorial Hall,

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Swimming is among the events featured at next month's Senior Games.

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May 2017 Celebrate arts

continued from page 1

ly by middle school students and seniors under the auspices of the Philadelphia Museum of Art's after-school Delphi Art Club program.

Exhibit sites include Center on the Hill, 8855 Germantown Ave., Chestnut Hill; Philadelphia City Hall, fourth and fifth floors, 1401 JFK Blvd., Center City; and West Philadelphia Senior Community Center, 41st and Poplar streets. Artists' receptions, which are free and open to the public, will be held at each site. (See page 11 for more information.)

"We encourage the public to come see these outstanding works of art. Participating artists are up to 100 years old and demonstrate that creativity does not diminish with age," says Holly Lange, PCA president and CEO. "It's an inspiration for all of us."

The celebration also provides older adults with the chance to experience the area's many arts and cultural offerings through classes, and special discounts for museums, arts venues and performances. (See page 10 for more information.)

This year's signature artwork, a watercolor by 70-year-old Yuk Yun Mark entitled "Autumn," is on display at City Hall. Selected for recognition by PCA, the delicate Chinese landscape painting features two bare white birch trees alternating with two black trees that stand amid swirls of colorful fall leaves. A late-blooming artist, Mark had not painted since attending elementary school in her native China. She began taking painting lessons two years ago after retiring from a long career in the United States as a registered nurse.

Like many artists participating in Celebrate Arts & Aging, Mark learned her skills at a senior community center. She participates in the popular painting class taught by Josephine Tsai at On Lok House, a senior community satellite center in Philadelphia's Chinatown. "For me, painting provides relaxation and a sense of achievement," says Mark, who is currently at work on a nature painting of bamboos and orchids.

On Lok's art class is always full and has a waiting list, says center director Echo Chung, adding, "We wish we were able to add more classes so more people like Yuk Yun could have the opportunity to discover their ability to paint." (For more information on art classes, see page 9 and contact your local senior center.)

A tapestry from the art museum's collaborative mural project, also displayed at City Hall, is titled "Then and Now: An Intergenerational Collaborative Work of Art that Weaves Together the Past and Present." The senior artists were suggested for the project by PCA. The seniors and students decorated 1- by 8-foot strips of canvas with artwork they created based on themes explored during tours of the museum galleries, then wove the strips together to form the two tapestries. The collaboration took place in weekly sessions during March and April and was a positive experience for both groups.

"The [senior] artists took this commitment very seriously and came each week with a positive attitude and an excitement that was contagious," says Marissa Clark, the museum's accessible programs coordinator, who oversaw the new initiative. "The children were excited to invite these visiting artists into their art studios and welcomed them with open arms. The older adults and the children bonded with each other and learned from each other through this shared experience."

Sponsors for "Celebrate Arts & Aging" include Always Best Care Senior Services, City Life Neighborhood Clinics, Health Partners Plans, JEVS at Home and PECO.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl. org.

Theme for Older Americans Month in May: 'Age Out Loud'

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has designated the theme as "Age Out Loud" for May's Older Americans Month (OAM) "to give aging a new voice - one that reflects what today's older adults have to say," according to the ACL. "More than ever, older Americans are working longer, trying new things and engaging in their communities. They're taking charge, striving for wellness, focusing on independence, and advocating for themselves and others. What it means to age has changed, and OAM 2017 is a perfect opportunity to recognize and celebrate what getting older looks like today."

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*PHA Cassie L. Holly Apartments Satellite 2100 Dickinson St. 19146 215-684-4893

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Philadelphia Senior Center – Avenue of the Arts 509 S. Broad St. 19147 215-546-5879

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SOUTHWEST PHILADELPHIA CHCS – Star Harbor Senior Citizen Center 4700 Springfield Ave. 19143 215-726-7468

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Not valid during special programs or events. Check website for more information. Reg. price: \$8. Discounted price: \$6 Redeem in person. 1020 South St. phillymagicgardens.org 215-733-0390

Act II Playhouse

20% Off "Brighton Beach Memoirs" May 16 - June 11 Reg. price: Varies. Redeem online, in person or by phone. | Use Code: PCAdeal Use Code: PCA20 56 E. Butler Ave., Ambler act2.org 215-654-0200



'The People You Don't See' by Alexander R. El is on display at City Hall this month.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society 60% Off "Gamut Bach Ensemble" May 17 at 8 p.m. Reg. price: \$25. Discounted price: \$10. Church of Holy Trinity 1904 Walnut St. pcmsconcerts.org

215-569-8080

Anne-Marie Mulgrew and **Dancers Company**

50% Off Home Season Concert June 8 and 9 at 7:30 p.m.; June 10 at 3 p.m. Reg. price: \$20. Discounted price: \$10. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Redeem at the door. Cash payment required. Christ Church Neighborhood House Theater, 20 N. American St. annemariemulgrewdancersco.org 215-462-7720



'Lemons and Limes' by Cindi Hersh is on display at Center on the Hill this month.

Clip coupons to receive discount.

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging presents

Celebrate Arts & Aging

Celebrate the arts all year round with free and discounted admissions

First Fridays at Spring Garden Center

First Friday of the month Free monthly events showcase works by some of Philadelphia's finest visual artists, and feature a variety of film screenings, literary readings, and exhibits of paintings, photographs and sculptures. Spring Garden Senior Center 1221 Spring Garden St. springgardencenter.blogspot.com 215-787-2944

First Sundays at the Barnes Foundation

First Sunday of the month Free admission to this internationally renowned collection of impressionist, post-impressionist, African and Native American art.

The Barnes Foundation 2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway barnesfoundation.org 215-278-7000

Pay-What-You-Wish at Philadelphia Museum of Art

First Sunday of the month, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and every Wednesday, 5-8:45 p.m. Explore this vast collection of art, architecture, tools, toys, film and furniture that covers the full range of visual and decorative arts and every corner of the globe, from ancient to contemporary times. Philadelphia Museum of Art 2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway philamuseum.org 215-763-8100

Pay-What-You-Wish at Rodin Museum

Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Experience and enjoy masterpieces by a renowned master of sculpture. **Rodin Museum** 2151 Benjamin Franklin Parkway rodinmuseum.org 215-763-8100

First Wednesdays at Please Touch Museum

First Wednesday of the month, 4-7 p.m. Admission reduced to \$2 first Wednesday of the month. Please Touch Museum

Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park 4231 Avenue of the Republic pleasetouchmuseum.org 215-581-3181

4oth Street Summer Series

Saturdays: May 20, June 17, July 22, August 19 and September 16 Free monthly outdoor concerts in University City 40th and Walnut streets Behind the Walnut Street Library universitycity.org 215-243-0555

The Old City Experience: First Fridays

First Friday of the month, 5-9 p.m. Cutting-edge paintings, sculpture, ceramics, photography and fiber art on display at these monthly open house events at galleries in Philadelphia's arts district. 230 Vine Street and locations throughout Old City oldcitvdistrict.org 215-625-9200

Pay-What-You-Want Fireman's Hall Museum: National Fire House and Museum of Philadelphia

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. *Open First Friday of the month until 9 p.m.* Witness the history of some of Philadelphia's bravest though the collection of artifacts and archives of firefighting in the City of Brotherly Love. 147 N. Second Street firemanshallmuseum.org 215-923-1438

Bartram's Garden: Boating on the Schuylkill River

Free every Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., April 30 to October 28 Bartram's Garden is a 45-acre national historic landmark that is free to the public and open year-round except on national holidays. Bartram's Garden Community Boathouse, located at the base of the Bartram's Garden meadow. 5400 Lindbergh Blvd.

bartramsgarden.org 215-729-5281



'Herencia Hispana' by Antonia Aponte is on display at City Hall this month.



'Art Appreciation,' a photo by Jerry Porter, is on display at City Hall this month.

Senior art exhibits and free receptions

As part of "Celebrate Arts & Aging," three exhibits of work by senior artists are on display this month at the following venues. Artists' receptions, which are free and open to the public, will be held at each of the exhibit sites.

• **City Hall**, 1401 JFK Blvd., fourth and fifth floors. (Exhibit: May 6-31; week-days, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Reception: 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, May 10.

• West Philadelphia Senior Community Center, 1016-26 N. 41st St. (41st and Poplar streets.) (Exhibit: May 1-31; weekdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.) Reception: 4-6 p.m. Thursday, May 18. • **Center on the Hill**, 8855 Germantown Ave. (adjacent to the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill) (Exhibit: May 1-31; weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays, 9 a.m. to noon.) Reception: 4-6 p.m. Tuesday, May 23.

"Celebrate Arts & Aging" is sponsored by Always Best Care Senior Services, City Life Neighborhood Clinics, Health Partners Plans, JEVS at Home and PECO.

ACCESS card is your ticket to discounted admission to museums, cultural sites

Thirty-three of the Philadelphia area's top museums and attractions now offer \$2 admission to low-income Pennsylvania residents through the ACCESS Admission program. Pennsylvania residents who have state-issued ACCESS/EBT cards that they use to manage governmentfunded benefits are eligible for these discounted rates. The Franklin Institute, Please Touch Museum, Barnes Foundation and African American Museum in Philadelphia are among the participating institutions.

One ACCESS Card admits up to four family members at a rate of \$2 per person



'El Morro' by Luz Vázquez is on display at City Hall this month.

- including the ACCESS cardholder. To be eligible for the rate, you must present your valid ACCESS card and your matching photo ID. Some sites also require your guests to show ID. Admission is to be paid by the visitor, not through the cardholder's EBT card. The ACCESS Admission discount is not valid on special exhibitions or features or with any other offers or group rates. ACCESS Admission is led by Art-Reach, supported by various community partners and sponsored by the Barra Foundation and PECO. For information about the ACCESS Admission program, call Art-Reach at 267-515-6720.

Following is a list of participating sites; be sure to call ahead for visitors' hours. Most sites are accessible by public transportation. (Locations are in Philadelphia, unless otherwise indicated.)

• Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University – 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway; ansp.org; 215-299-1000.

• The African American Museum in Philadelphia – 701 Arch St.; aampmuseum.org; 215-574-0380.

• American Swedish Historical Museum – 1900 Pattison Ave.; americanswedish.org; 215-389-1776.

• The Barnes Foundation – 2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway; barnesfoundation.org; 215-278-7200.

• Betsy Ross House – 239 Arch St.; historicphiladelphia.org; 215-629-4026.

• Chanticleer Garden – 786 Church



An untitled work by Juanita Ramos is on display at City Hall this month.

Rd., Wayne; chanticleergarden.org; 610-687-4163.

• Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site – 2027 Fairmount Ave.; easternstate. org; 215-236-3300.

• The Franklin Institute – 222 N. 20th St.; fi.edu; 215-448-1200.

• Franklin Square: Parx Liberty Carousel and Philly Mini Golf – 200 N. Sixth St.; historicphiladelphia.org; 215-629-4026.

• Grumblethorpe (Part of the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks) – 5267 Germantown Ave.; philalandmarks.org/grumblethorpe-1; 215-843-4820.

• Historic Christ Church and guided tour of Christ Church Burial Ground – Christ Church: Second Street above Market Street; Christ Church Burial Ground: Fifth and Arch streets; christchurchphila. org; 215-922-1695. • Independence Seaport Museum – 211 South Christopher Columbus Blvd.; phillyseaport.org; 215-413-8655.

• James A. Michener Art Museum – 138 S. Pine St., Doylestown; michenermuseum.org; 215-340-9800.

• Longwood Gardens – 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square; longwoodgardens.org; 610-618-1000. ACCESS cardholders can purchase general admission tickets onsite and do not need to reserve timed tickets in advance.

• Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania – 100 E. Northwestern Ave.; morrisarboretum.org; 215-247-5777.

• Mütter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia – 19 S. 22nd St.; muttermuseum.org; 215-563-3737.

• National Constitution Center – 525 Arch St.; constitutioncenter.org; 215-409-6700.

• National Liberty Museum – 321 Chestnut St.; libertymuseum.org; 215-925-2800.

• National Museum of American Jewish History – 101 S. Independence Mall East (Corner of Fifth and Market streets); nmajh.org; 215-923-3811.

• Penn Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology – 3260 South St.; penn. museum; 215-898-4000.

• Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts – 118-128 N. Broad St.; pafa.org; 215-972-7600.

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	Sunday	Lung & Heart Scans. Discussion by Chestnut Hill Hospital radiologist, David Udis, M.D. 12:30 p.m. Center on the Hill 215-247-4654. Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Presents: 2017 Celebrate Arts & Aging. Exhibits of art by seniors. See page 11 for gallery hours & information. pcaCares. org/seniorart (Through May 31)	Antiques Roadshow on the Hill. 2 Appraisal of 2 hand-held objects per person by Gerald Schultz & Barbara Caplen of The Antique Gallery. No fabrics or furniture. 7-9 p.m. Center on the Hill. RSVP by May 1: 215-247-4654. Life Empowerment. Positive discussion about growing older. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969. (Also May 16)	Resources for Amputees. 3 Networking & information for ampu- tees, caregivers & professionals. Learn about DIY devices for activities of daily living & exercise & Pa.'s Fair Insurance Legislation for Amputees. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Mount Airy Learning Tree. Register: 215-843-6333. \$
A C	7 Opera Philadelphia Presents: "The Marriage of Figaro." New co-production of Mozart's screwball comedy with Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Performed in Ital- ian with English supertitles. 2:30 p.m. Academy of Music. 215-893-1999. \$	B The Importance of Having a Will. Lecture with Q&A by CLARIFI. 11 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717- 1969.	9 Learning to Look. Tools for art appreciation. 1-2:30 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654. \$ Spring Bake Sale. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. PSC – Avenue of the Arts. 215-546-5879. Spring Fling Social. Dancing, fun activities & refreshments. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. \$	 'Celebrate Arts & Aging' Recep- 10 tion. 5-7 p.m. City Hall. 4th floor. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055. (Exhibit: May 6-31; weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Lunch & Learn: Rabbi, I Want a Good Funeral – Jews & Crime in America. 12:30 p.m. Gershman Y. 215-545-4400. \$ Mother's Day & May Birthday Party. 11:45 a.m. KleinLlfe: NE Phila. 215-698-7300.
	Mother's Day 144 Mother's Day Brunch. Celebrate Mom with brunch in the pavilion. Food by Cooperage. Sittings from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Franklin Square. 215-629-4026. \$ Philadelphia Chamber Music Soci- ety Presents: Gamut Bach Ensemble. Works by Bach. 8 p.m. Church of the Holy Trinity. 215-569-8080. \$	15 Breast Cancer Support Group. 1-2:30 p.m. Center in the Park. Register: 215- 848-7722.	Celebrate Arts & Aging Exhibit & Sale. Works by the center craft- er & members of Color Wheel Painting & Clay Creations classes. St. Anne's Senior Center. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 215-426-9799. (Through May 31) Dramatic Reading & Performance Class. Workshop for poetry readers, budding actors & creative types. 10:30 to noon. Center on the Hill 215-247-4654. (Continues May 23, 30 & June 6) \$	Ausical Comedy: "Back to the '50s." Written & performed by center's theater group. 10 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969. \$ Open House: The WOW of West Philly. Classes, workshops, entertain- ment & activities. Prizes, raffles & snacks. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. West Phila. Senior Center. 215-386-0379.
BALIANCE STATES OF THE STATES	21 Jazz Vespers. Worship service with music by saxophonist Larry McKenna & jazz band. 5 p.m. Lutheran Church of Holy Communion. 215-567-3668.	22 Pre-Memorial Day Picnic Luncheon. Menu: hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans & cantaloupe. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. Register for lunch by May 16: 215-848-7722.	Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4-6 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055. (Exhibit: May 1-31; Gallery hours: weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. & Sundays, 9 a.m. to noon.) Jewelry Workshop: Wire Wrap Semi-Precious Gems. Instruction by professional jewelry designer. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717- 1969. \$	Caregiver Support Work- shop. A form of self-care: discuss feelings & experiences of caregiving; give/receive advice. 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. West Phila. Com- munity Center. 215-386-0379. (4th Wednesday of month) Live Right: Healthy Eating & Nutri- tion. Presentation & tasting by ShopRite nutritionist. 11 a.m. St. Anne's Senior Center. 215-426-9799.
Events that are free may request a dona- tion or offer items for sale. Please call the number listed for information on pricing or other questions about an event. Send your calendar items to: Attn: Calen- dar Editor, PCA Communications Dept., 642 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130-3409 Phone: 215-765-9000, ext. 5081 Fax: 215-765-9066 Email: acolombo@pcaphl.org	28 Memorial Day Parade, Service & Reception. Recre- ation of Decoration Day service at site of Philadelphia's first Memorial Day obser- vance in 1868. Includes wreath-laying, speeches & honor guards. Complimen- tary beer & refreshments follow service. Noon. Laurel Hill Cemetery, enter through Gatehouse. 215-228-8200.	Memorial Day	30 African-American Journeys. 1-2 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.	Actively Aging Series: Laughter, Humor & Health. Add joy & 31 improve quality of life. 10 a.m. The Gershman Y. 215-545-4400. \$ Brain Health Workshop. 10-11:30 a.m. Center in the Park. Register: 215- 848-7722. Sharing & Caring. Discuss life experi- ences, advice, center activities & more. 9:15-10 a.m. West. Phila. Senior Center 215-386-0379. (Wednesdays)

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Finding Positive Perspective in 4 Your Everyday World. Laughter Leader Sue Simmon discusses the health benefits of laughter. 10:30 a.m. Center on the Hill 215-247-4654. (Continues Thursdays through May 25) \$

Northeast Philadelphia Centenarian's Luncheon. Entertainment, music & giveaways for seniors age 100-plus. 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. KleinLife: NE Phila. Register: 215-698-7300.

11

Memorial Service. Remember, reflect upon & celebrate the lives of members who have passed away. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. Speaker Series on the Hill: Harry Groome, The Journey from Health Care Chairman to Award-Winning Actor. Noon to 1:30. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.\$

18

Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4-6 p.m. West Phila. Senior Center. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055. (Exhibit: May 1-31; Gallery hours: weekdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Friday

5 Caregiver Workshop: Health, Legal & Financial Planning. Strategies & info to prepare for the future. Caregiver testimonials & light refreshments. 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Philadelphia Corporation for Aging. Register: 215-765-9000, ext. 4391.

Clay Creations Class. 12:30-2 p.m. St. Anne's Senior Center. 215-426-9799. (May 12, 19 & 26) \$

12 Sewing Class: Intermediate Level. 1-2:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Fridays; Beginners class: Wednesdays)

Social Dance with Otis Givens. Learn the bop, cha-cha, Salsa & more. 1-3 p.m. West. Phila. Senior Center. 215-386-0379. (Tuesdays & Fridays) \$

Aging Out Loud Dance Party. **19** DL music, food & raffles. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969.\$

Fire & Freedom: A Conversation with Dr. Psyche Williams-Forson. How meals transcended taste & sustenance in early America by observing the labor of slaves at George Washington's Mt. Vernon. 7-9 p.m. Cliveden. Register: 215-848-1777.

26

Women's Wellness Worshop: Financial Wellness. Health & lifestyle resources for African & Caribbean immigrants. All women are welcome. 5:30-7 p.m. African Cultural Alliance of North America. 215-729-8225.

Saturday

Bruce Klauber Sings Frank Sinatra. 9 p.m. to midnight. Paris Wine Bar. 215-978-4545.

Pops Rocks. The Philly POPS perform hits from the '70s & '80s. 3 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-893-1999. (Also May 7) \$

Family Fun Day: Celebration **13** of Black Arts. Explorate art, history & culture. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. African American Museum in Phila. Register: 215-574-0380. Free admission to first 250 people.

Yoga in the Garden with Dawn Reid. Meditative slow flow class for all levels. Bring a yoga mat or beach towel. 10 a.m. Stenton. Register: 215-329-7312. (May 20 & 27)

Armed Forces Day

20

6

All-Star Jazz Trio featuring Mary Ellen Desmond. 8 & 10 p.m. Chris' Jazz Café. 215-568-3131. \$

Designer Handbag Bingo. Dooney & Burke, Coach, & others. Lunch & raffles. Benefits senior center. 1 p.m. PCA's Older Adult Sunshine Center. 215-727-6188.\$

27 Memorial Day Weekend. Honor America's fallen military heroes with a variety of family-friendly programs & activities including flag etiquette & folding workshops, arts &

crafts, & interactive shows. 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. National Constitution Center. 215-409-6600. (Through May 29. Sunday hours: noon to 5.) \$

Positive Aging. Interactive discusfocus on staying safe & happy. 1 p.m. Center on the Hill 215-247-4654.

25

sion about normal aspects of aging with





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May 2017

Celebrate Arts

The stage and screen offer rewarding opportunities to act for older residents

By Abbey J. Porter

Marie Ryan's son John gave her an unusual gift for her 75th birthday: acting lessons. When she went to class and the instructor called on the students - most of whom were in their 20s and 30s - to talk about why they were there, Ryan's classmates bemoaned having waited too long to get into acting. She didn't want to follow suit, so when the instructor got to her, Ryan announced, "I came here to meet guys."

That was 12 years ago, and since then, Ryan has had nearly 60 acting jobs and counting. The ones she brags about: appearances on the TV shows "Law & Order," "Boardwalk Empire," and "The Sopranos," as well as a role in the movie "That Awkward Moment," in which she played the grandmother of Zac Efron's character.

In addition to TV shows and movies, Ryan has done commercials, print ads and a music video. "Of course, I play old lady parts," she says.

Ryan says she enjoys the relative fame her work brings, noting that her children and grandchildren are proud. "To my friends, I'm a big movie star," she says.

The pay adds up to "not a lot of money" for the actress: She has been paid as

little as \$50 and a ham sandwich for a commercial spot and as much as \$1,500 for five hours' work. "Sometimes it's a good paycheck," she says, "but I couldn't live off of this."

Ryan, who does most of her work in New York City and travels there on her own, says her good health is one of the keys to her continuing success. "I can walk and talk and do a lot of things because I'm healthy enough," she says.

She has no regrets about stepping in front of the camera. "It's enjoyment for me," she says. She recommends the activity "if someone is relaxed and wants to have some fun."

Her suggestion to older people who are considering acting: Give it a go. "It's like the lottery," she says. "Most people don't make it, but somebody wins, and it could be you."

How do older adults increase the chances that they'll "win?" That's where agencies like Kathy Wickline Casting come in.

Getting started

Casting director Kathy Wickline's job is to find actors. She mainly works for production companies that need people for commercials or corporate training

• continued on page 20



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Getting out to walk on Germantown Avenue — even though I hate exercise

By Frank Burd

I'm 70, and I've just never been one for exercise. I admire my friends who still go to gyms and health clubs to work out. I've tried. I go two or three times, then I quit. It's just not for me. I got my exercise from playing sports when I was younger and, later, from being a teacher who rarely sat down in the classroom. I liked to move with a purpose.

I used to run on the track team when I was in high school. I got into running again in my 30s, for a few months, but couldn't keep it up. Two years ago, my son invited me to join him in a "turkey trot" when I visited him in Kansas City. It was a 5K (just over three miles), and you could walk or run. I did a little of each. I spent a month getting into shape, but I did it to share the experience with my son rather than for the exercise.

I have a friend – she's almost 70 herself – who runs several miles four or five times a week. "I'm not going very fast," she says, "but all my parts are still moving. And they say it's a good way to stave off dementia." She's right. But still...

I needed some motivation of my own to get my body underway. That motivation came in an unexpected manner. The week

after my youngest son moved out to live with friends in Fishtown, my father died (at the age of 101). I was lonely. I needed something. And so I took my camera to the top of Chestnut Hill, on Germantown Avenue, with the intention of photographing the street. And I started walking. I didn't try to do the whole avenue in a day. I walked a piece of it, then took the 23 bus back to my car. I came back another day and walked some more. In the end, I walked the entire length of the avenue, from Chestnut Hill to below Girard Avenue - 11.3 miles - in three outings. And as I walked, I discovered so much! Exercise was the by-product.

I saw cemeteries dating from the Revolution and earlier. I passed many historical markers. One denoted the site of the October 4, 1777 Battle of Germantown, where Gen. George Washington lost some 70 soldiers before retreating.

I learned about William Allen, one of the wealthiest men in the Colonies. He helped to establish Pennsylvania Hospital and the Academy and College of Philadelphia (which became the University of Pennsylvania) and assisted in the construction of the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall). Mount Airy is named after his estate, and Allens Lane is named in his honor. Another marker announced that in 1688, the first recorded protest against slavery in America was written at the home of Tunes Kunders. Penned by German Quakers, it was signed by Germantown founder Francis Daniel Pastorius and "preceded by 92 years Pennsylvania's passage of the nation's first state abolition law."

"I took my camera to the top of Chestnut Hill, on Germantown Avenue, with the intention of photographing the street. And I started walking."

Trekking down the avenue, I got a look at some of the marvelous paintings that are part of Mural Arts Philadelphia. In addition, many public schools have created their own murals on their walls. And the sculptures, whether in the small parks commemorating historical events or beside the dozens of churches, are breathtaking.

I saw brightly painted stores on a fourblock stretch near Lehigh Avenue and a variety of restaurants and markets. And yes, I also saw dilapidated buildings on the verge of falling down. And I recorded them all – with my camera and, occasionally, in the little notebook I carried. My

> stroll down Germantown Avenue turned into a goal of walking every street in Philadelphia, end-to-end,

camera in tow.

Sometimes, I am stopped on the street and asked what I am photographing. As I explain my walks to people, they become enthusiastic and even recommend things to see. Sometimes, they ask, "You want to take my picture?" When I do, I get their email address and mail it to them.

In the two years since I started my quest, I've walked not only Germantown but also Ridge, Frankford, Allegheny, Girard, Passyunk, Erie, Baltimore, Haverford, Lehigh, Cecil B. Moore and Lancaster avenues from end to end. I've walked Broad, Fifth, Front, Second, Market, South, Spring Garden, Levick, Main and Rhawn streets in their entirety. Each time I finish, I feel a sense of accomplishment.

I am at a point in life where I don't want to accumulate more stuff. In fact, I am trying to get rid of things. But my mind is still sharp. It still wants to learn and grow. Sadly, my memory for new things is not as strong as it once was. With my camera and notebook, I create and experience words and images that take up little new space. If my friend is right (and my therapist says she is), I am also keeping dementia at bay. In fact, as I accumulate new memories and save them, I also feel vital. One more thing: I get plenty of fresh air and exercise without thinking about it. I love it.

Frank Burd, a freelance writer and photographer, is a former Philadelphia public school teacher.

Scenes captured along Germantown Avenue by walking enthusiast Frank Burd include, below left, the Baby Grand Lounge; below right, a young man playing basketball in Nicetown Park; and, far right, a mural of Lucretia Mott, Martin Luther King Jr. and other activists in North Philadelphia.









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Celebrate Arts

Late-blooming author shares stories from life, chronicles migrant experiences

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

Stories can let people, real or fictional, speak into our lives and stretch them in new directions. Through the rough, authentic voices of stories written by Mark Lyons, 74, of Mount Airy, readers learn the gritty truth of other people's circumstances.

"I live attuned to people's voices," says Lyons, who won fellowships from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in 2003 and 2009 and was nominated for the distinguished Pushcart Prize for literary work published by small presses. "When I meet people, I listen for their tone, choice of words and accent. Listening to someone's voice is like listening to music."

Drawing from experience

Lyons, who graduated in 1965 from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in history, began writing in 1995 at age 52. He published the shortstory collection "Brief Eulogies at Roadside Shrines" – based on hard-luck but resilient people he has known – in 2014. Kirkus Reviews named the collection a book of the year. Lyons also collected and translated from Spanish the true stories of Mexican farmworkers, among other projects.

One story in "Eulogies" is set at Rancho Los Amigos, a California facility for people paralyzed by accidents or illness where Lyons worked as an orderly in his early 20s. The story's characters speak in first person. "Most of my stories are in the first person – I feel more at home letting people speak for themselves, letting their voices reveal who they are," Lyons says. The story describes how, despite their disabilities, two residents plan to escape Rancho in their wheelchairs.

"Arnold's Roadside Café," another story from "Eulogies," honors the time in 1972 when Lyons, a California native, hitchhiked across the country and met hobo Arnold, who was skilled at making delicious meals from roadkill. Arnold shared a spit-roasted rabbit with Lyons. "Arnold, down and out by all societal measures, was a philosopher who shared his theo-



Author Mark Lyons has published books including the short-story collection, 'Brief Eulogies at Roadside Shrines.'

ries of the universe while he picked the bones of his latest entrée," Lyons says.

In the story, Arnold says, "When I die, I hope some vulture finds me and nibbles away, picks me clean. Then I'll give the energy back, fill that vulture's tank with a few more hours of flying time. We're all glorified roadkills in one way or other."

The power of story

Lyons has lived in Mount Airy for many years with his wife, Jeane-Ann. A certified physician's assistant who holds a master's degree in public health, he has worked in the Latino community for the past 28 years teaching farmworkers about health care, protecting themselves from pesticides and avoiding HIV/AIDS. As the only Anglo among Spanish-speaking migrants, he had to learn the language.

In 2001, Lyons began a three-and-ahalf-year oral history project that recorded the experiences of Mexican migrant farmworkers in Kennett Square. An ardent advocate for farmworkers' rights, Lyons believes the project gives a voice to people who seldom have one.

He also spent eight years doing health education in farmworker camps. "I heard many stories of people who took great risks to come to this country and 'work like burros' to create a better future for their families," Lyons says. He document-



ed those stories in a collection, "Espejos y Ventanas/Mirrors and Windows: Oral Histories of Mexican Farmworkers and Their Families," published in 2004. Lyons co-edited the book and translated it into English.

One story from "Mirrors and Windows," that of a 16-year-old who came to the United States alone, riveted Lyons' youngest son, Seth, who was 16 himself at the time. As the photographer for the book, Seth photographed the immigrant teen, Jesus, who was working 80 hours a week to support his disabled mother and demented father. After hearing the youth's story, Seth decided to become a lawyer specializing in immigrant rights.

A desperate flight

An incident at a reading Lyons gave drew him into another project. He recalls: "Lilian Velazquez, age 15 at the time, came over to me after the reading and said, 'Will you help me tell my story?' Her family back in Guatemala had yanked her out of school after first grade to care for her four younger siblings, so she couldn't write her own story."

Velazquez grew up in Guatemala, near the border with Mexico, in miserable conditions. "All seven members of her family lived in a one-room shack," Lyons says. "Her parents beat her often, and her mother once stabbed her with a pair of scissors. On two occasions, men tried to rape her. At 13, Liliana tried to drink pesticide, but her younger sister walked in and stopped her."

Velazquez decided to risk another way out. She persuaded her sister – the one who had stopped her from drinking pesticide – to lend her \$10 to buy a sturdy pair of shoes instead of the flip-flops she'd always worn. At 14, Liliana stole away from home one night. "In her 2,200-mile trek to the U.S., Liliana and her fellow travelers were robbed by drug-runners," Lyons says. "They paid bribes, skirted roadblocks, rode on boxcars and walked miles in brutal heat.

"Immigration agents caught her small group in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona. If you're an unaccompanied minor, they can't send you home without due process," Lyons says. "That's how she ended up in foster care in Philadelphia." After two years in the court system, Velazquez convinced immigration authorities that she would be in danger if she returned to Guatemala, and they granted her permanent residency.

Velazquez's memoir, "Sueños y Pesadillas/Dreams and Nightmares: I Fled Alone to the United States When I Was Fourteen," written in Spanish and English by Lyons – "It's 95 percent her words" – will become available on Amazon this spring. It includes a teacher's guide.

"Liliana said that telling this story has been therapy for her," Lyons says. After spending 2,000 hours translating and editing the tapes from 45 interviews with Velazquez, he rejoices in the healing effect. However, he hopes the book will have a broader reach: "It's really important for undocumented immigrants to have a voice, especially in this time of ugliness. Their voices are often absent in discussions that affect them."

* * *

To hear Mark Lyons read, visit You-Tube.com and type "Mark Lyons brief eulogies" in the search box.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

Potter

• continued from page 1

After graduating from LaSalle in 1974, Clark launched and directed Imagination Theatre. The company produced plays in small theaters in Philadelphia, then Switzerland. "We had very little money, and at first [the members of the company] all stayed in one room provided by the theater," he says. The company folded after three months, but Clark remained in Europe for a year, stitching together a series of gigs, including a three-month stint in Berlin as a GED tutor for the U.S. Air Force. He returned to the United States in 1975 with an excellent command of German, a skill that would prove crucial to his future as a potter.

Back home, Clark headed the business side of the Wilma Project, a precursor of the Wilma Theater, while also making pottery. He began selling his work at a weekly craft show at Headhouse Square. Then his girlfriend at the time, a professional dancer in Philadelphia, went to West Berlin to open a dance studio. Clark joined her there in 1978.

His timing was superb: He arrived at the peak of Germany's pottery renaissance. "People wanted to buy pottery and learn how to make it," he says. Selling pots and teaching in his studio soon let Clark quit his job as a restaurant dishwasher and live from ceramics alone. Growing more proficient each year, he won first prize in the West Berlin Biennial Crafts Competition in 1981. "That launched my career in Germany," he says.

Home again

By 1984, Clark had broken up with his girlfriend. Before returning to the States, he participated in a German ceramic art symposium where he met ceramists from many Eastern Bloc countries – including Angela Klaerner, a German porcelain artist. They liked each other, but they both had other obligations. "I also missed the theatre," Clark says. After returning home in November 1984, he formed a comedy troupe called "No Respect for the Human Condition."

The group enjoyed success, but Clark couldn't make a living. He got married, then took a job as director of the Clay Studio in Olde City in 1986. He met potters from all over the world, and he traveled



Potter Jimmy Clark, center, encourages students Thomas and Dorothy Grant at his pottery class at Center in the Park.

abroad to teach, attend conferences and sell his work. In 2000, a year after separating from his wife, Clark ran into Klaerner at an international exhibition in Amsterdam. The two soon began trans-Atlantic dating. By 2003, Klaerner's frequent trips to the United States had aroused customs officials' suspicions. "They thought Angela was coming to do business, not to see a boyfriend," says Clark, who had divorced his wife. "They told her, 'You'd better get him to marry you!'" She did. The couple just celebrated their 12th anniversary.

Clark, who has led pottery workshops in the United States and abroad, recently added another feather to his cap. In 2015, China's Shangyu International Ceramic Art Center invited him for a one-month residency. "It's a special honor because pottery is China's premier medium," Clark says. In China, ceramics may please not only the eye but also the palate. "The earthiness of the red clay in Yxing, used primarily to make teapots, is said to enhance the flavor of tea," Clark says.

Finding inspiration

Travel has spurred Clark's artistic growth, but he also has found inspiration close to home. "I've come upon antique ceramic shards when I walk my dog along the Wissahickon, and I incorporate them in my work," he said. "The shards are chunks of history, and I like to think that by reusing them I've given them new life."

Klaerner's love of delicate white por-

celain, which differs from Clark's earthtoned creations, also feeds his creativity. "We ask each other's opinion, but we don't want to make similar work. That would be boring," he says. A 2012 exhibition, "Attracted Opposites," spotlighted their contrasting styles. "The Germantown Artists Roundtable, which includes all kinds of artists, also motivates me," he says.

If China's red clay holds the surprise of flavor, Vernon Park's earth may have magic that summoned Clark back to his roots. He and his wife were out walking one day when intuition made them pop into Center in the Park. "When we asked if they had a pottery program, they said no, but they wanted one," Clark says.

The rest, as they say, is history. "I love my class," Clark says. "People have different styles and draw on each other's strengths. For instance, one woman is a painter, and she advises other people about color." Clark literally brings a world of experience to his class but says, "Beginning potters only need one thing: a sense of humor."

Pottery classes at Center in the Park run for 15 weeks. Call 215-848-7722 for information.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

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Acting

continued from page 15

films, and ad agencies that are casting to school at age 35 to Glassboro State commercials or print ads.

Wickline offers the following services:

• Connecting actors or aspiring actors with potential roles

· Conducting acting classes and seminars for older actors on how to get into the acting business

• Offering private consultations for beginning actors, or those returning to the field, in which she provides advice on getting started. Cost is \$100 for an hour or \$175 for an hour and a half, with a \$25 discount for those 62 and older.

"I like to help actors get where they want to be," says Wickline, who has been that resonated with Wilcox, who had in the casting business for more than 25 years.

When actors are ready, Wickline connects them with talent agents - and she has good news for older Philadelphians: "They're always looking for seniors." The same goes for Wickline's clients, which includes pharmaceutical companies that look for older actors to play patients and doctors. Wickline says such clients "love" to find people who are in their late 40s through around 70.

And aspiring thespians shouldn't worry if they don't have model-perfect looks. "We're looking for real people," Wickline says. "We're not looking for model-y types at all. That's certainly not Philadelphia."

Roles are available for both experienced and non-experienced actors, she says, as well as people of both genders and all races.

acting to do their homework. If considering hiring an agent, she says, first investigate him or her with the Better Business Bureau. Actors also can find legitimate agents, Wickline says, through the SAG-AFTRA actors' union website at sagaftra. org.

Philadelphia offers opportunities for seniors who want to give acting a try, Wickline says: "If you've ever thought of it and put it aside, this may be a good opportunity to go into it in this phase of your life."

Becoming someone else

Anthony Wilcox can testify to the re-

wards of acting. "It is, for me, a catharsis," says Wilcox, an office administrator. "It lets me be somebody else."

He took to the stage after going back College, now Rowan University. He performed in a couple of plays and liked it, but his family's demands on his time and attention stopped him from doing more. Then, several years ago, his daughter did some acting, and Wilcox's interest was rekindled. He auditioned for a one-act play at South Camden Theater Co. When the director called to say he'd been cast in the lead role, Wilcox didn't believe him. His next thought was, "What have I gotten myself into?"

The play, "Stop Requested," portrayed a schizophrenic Vietnam veteran – a role served in the Marine Corps. "It was a very good introduction," he says. From there, Wilcox's career "just took off." He has performed in other plays, as well as commercials and movies. "I like plays, but I'm starting to like the TV thing," Wilcox notes. "If you make a mistake, you can repeat [the scene]." As a 57-year-old African-American man, Wilcox believes his career has been helped by a demand for actors of his age, race and gender.

He is picky about the roles he chooses. Having grown up watching Sidney Poitier portray strong, positive African-American men, he now looks for opportunities to embody positive role models.

As far as Wilson is concerned, age is a benefit when it comes to the stage and screen. "It's very difficult to get a young person to act the role of an older person," he says. "As an older actor, you Wickline advises those interested in have a variety of experiences you can draw on. Age is a plus."

He notes playing a character challenges actors to "find those emotions that we try to hide." But acting is also a stress-relieving activity that harkens to his childhood.

"You get to relax and make characters come to life ... to find that inner makebelieve person," he says. "In some ways, we're still all kids."

Information on Kathy Wickline Casting is at wicklinecasting.com.

Abbey J. Porter is editor of Milestones. Email her at ajporter@pcaphl.org.

Songwriter

• continued from page 6

really comes from rejoicing," he says. "There are works of art that punch you in the kidneys." But he's not going for that effect, he says: "I'm going to tell myself stuff that helps me, that gives me a brighter view. I'm not gonna focus on death and destruction and misery."

He's had his share of troubles, starting with a childhood in which he escaped a difficult home life by spending time at the Salvation Army center down the block. Once when he was young, he woke at 4 a.m., frightened by the sounds of the man next door yelling and breaking things, and wrote these words: "A man is shouting in the night – he seems all alone out there." Decades later, his observation became a haunting song.

Now in his 70s, Gala has survived many trials, including a recent bout with cancer. His knees are giving out, which – for a man who earns his living climbing trees – is not a good thing. Nonetheless, he finds a bright side when he compares the past to today: While he has health insurance now, he recalls, "I didn't have health insurance for 25 years – I did have a roll of electric tape in the truck in case anything happened.

"Winter is temporary; trouble is temporary," he says. Staying focused in the moment is what helps him through hard times: "When I climb the tree, the branch is strong; I can rely on that. My foothold is strong; I can rely on that. I'm in the moment."

And now he's embarking on a new adventure: He has formed a musical trio with his 12-year-old twins, Sophie and Danny, and they've begun working on arrangements of his songs. The Galas' living room is filled with musical instruments: a drum set, an electronic keyboard piano and the dulcimers he's just recently started playing.

'Witch Hazel,' one of Tom Gala's songs, has resilience as its theme.

He describes their playing: "I sit there, Sophie's on the mike, with her beautiful voice, Danny's on the drums – Danny has rhythms that are the heart and soul of what we're doing. When Danny sits at the drums, he starts to play and he just goes off, trance-like. It's so utterly thrilling."

Playing music with his children is meaningful to Gala. "Life has given me so many wonderful answers to my wishes," he says.

Resilience is at the heart of much that he has to say about life, and it's the theme of "Witch Hazel," one of the songs he's working on with his children:

"I am lookin' at a witch hazel, blooming in the garden/ Bright yellow flowers in the middle of wintertime/ And I tell my heart, be strong like the witch hazel flower/ And iStock you will not be injured by this dark and troubled time/ And you will not be injured by this dark and troubled time."

Contact Linda L. Riley at lriley@pcaphl.org.

Solutions to the Milestones Crossword puzzle (See page 23.)



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• Philadelphia's Magic Gardens -1020 South St.; phillymagicgardens.org; 215-733-0390.

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• Please Touch Museum – 4231 Avenue of the Republic; pleasetouchmuseum.org; 215-581-3181.

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Milestones 23 Introducing Milestones' freelancers

In addition to its internal staff, PCA relies on its trusty freelance contributors to produce the vibrant publication that is Milestones each month.



Don Harrison, former Milestones editor, has had a journalism career spanning more than six decades. Following distinguished posts at several Philadelphia publications, he retired in 2001 as deputy editor of the Daily News' opinion pages. He is on hiatus from his monthly Milestones column following a stroke.



Frank Burd, a new addition to the team, reviews plays for Montgomery News and Broad Street Review. On his own, he writes "anything and everything": poetry, plays, short stories, and a novel. He is a former teacher in Philadelphia's public schools.



Sally Friedman "retired" after a brief teaching career to raise a family. Three daughters and seven grandchildren later, she has had a long writing career that often focuses on family and lifestyle. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Family Circle and The Huffington Post.



Constance Garcia-Barrio enjoys writing personality profiles and stories on education, history and art. She speaks Spanish and serviceable Mandarin and likes learning about other cultures. She won a magazine journalism award from the National Association of Black Journalists and a Mature Media Award for a Milestones story.



Paola Nogueras is a photographer who started her career working as a photojournalist for a decade for The Philadelphia Inquirer. She has also published several books about Puerto Rico. Currently she works as a freelancer specializing in theatre and event photography.



Maralyn Lois Polak, a screenwriter, cartoonist and novelist, writes columns on a variety of topics. Her career includes a long stint as a nationally syndicated weekly celebrity interview columnist for Knight-Ridder and the now-defunct Sunday Magazine of The Philadelphia Inquirer.



Dorothy Stanaitis taught children's literature at Rutgers University, where she is now a trustee. She is also a Philadelphia tour guide and performs presentations such as "Rumors, Scandals and Dirty Rotten Lies." Her Milestones "nostalgia" pieces contain no lies, only loving memories of a Quaker City childhood.

The Milestones Crossword

Handily

ACROSS

1 Overhead 6 Stride 10 Farm structure 14 More distressed 15 Honduran seaport 16Armor 17 Manual skill 19 Formerly 20 Netherlands city 21 Squeeze in 22 Quibbled 24 Turn aside 25 Take away by force 26 Femme 29 Helsinki man 30 Brit. knighthood order 33 Like a bird 34 Gem weight 35 Chinese dynasty 36 Fuel 37 Inn 38 Spar 39 Noun suffix 40 Subdued: with down 41 Digger 42" was going to St. Ives" 43 Herd of deer 44 Manage

45 Suggestive of Trafalgar Square 47 Conjurer's rod 48 Some Broadway shows 49 U.S. illustrator 50 Brine 53 Unruly moppet 55 Secondhand 58 Bombast 59 Symphony instrument 60 Ascended 61 Gump or Griffith 62 Labels 63 Nocturnal sound

DOWN

1 Tennis ace 2 Onus 3 French department 4 Sustained 5 Fall by drops 6 Stalk 7 Harnessed oxen 8 Sprite 9 Fatherly 10 Porticos 11 In close quarters 12 ____homo 13 Action 18 Algonquin

23 Express 24 Glut 25 Installed lighting 26 Beauty treatment 27 Cuban ballerina 28 Assume charge 29 Greek goddesses 31 Swiss city 32 Among: Fr. 34 ____ Island, Brooklyn 37 Certain missile 38 Reason 40 Gait 41 Cattle troughs 44 Evil 46 Simple song 47 Walks in stream 49 Condescending one 50 Indifferent 51 Pitcher 52 Actress Jackson 53 Bikini part 54 Unraveled 56 Camel's hair fabric 57 Noise

Solution

The solution for the crossword puzzle can be found on page 21.

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