

# THE ALLIANCE ALERT

## September-October 2023

The Women's Alliance of the  
Unitarian Church of All Souls, Inc.



### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Christine Goodwin

Welcome to the fall, to cooler weather, and to more activities for the Women's Alliance. Over the summer, we tried something new, as you know from my many emails, "Pop Ups." We had visits to museums, art galleries, theater and concerts, many of which were free. New York City has so much to offer, even during the summer. We varied the days and times to offer alternatives for members. While attendance was sparse at many of the events, the most well attended were the theater events.



WA committees have been working over the summer to plan our monthly luncheons with a speaker, as well as monthly outings for our members, as you will see listed in this issue of The Alert. Our monthly meetings for lunch and a speaker will be on the third Wednesday of most months. Last year our monthly meetings were almost all on Zoom, with a couple in the spring as hybrids, in person and Zoom. Our meetings will be only in person this year, and we're very much looking forward to renewing our friendships.

In September, the Women's Alliance has traditionally hosted a Welcome Back party for the whole All Souls community. Over the summer, it was encouraging to gather for two brunch celebrations hosted by the church in Reidy Friendship Hall. The first was a brunch in honor of Rev. Audette after her final Sunday sermon at All Souls on July 16<sup>th</sup>, with catering by Mentari, a nonprofit that provides mentorship and empowerment programs for survivors of gender-based violence, abuse, and exploitation. The second was a potluck brunch on Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. Both brunches were well attended and celebratory, indicating the readiness to resume in-person gatherings, such an important part of community building. Our Welcome Back Party will be on Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in Reidy Friendship Hall.

I look forward to the renewed energy of autumn. Please join your Women's Alliance sisters in restarting WA activities, luncheons, outings, coffee hour, etc.

**THANK YOU, JOAN . . . And Happy Birthday!** We want to thank Joan Brown, who now lives in Utica, NY, for the wonderful financial contribution she just made to our Women's Alliance. Joan took part in many Alliance celebrations over the years, often providing the pizzas, and it is extra special to see her here at her own celebration, when she and her family marked her 90th birthday.



## WOMEN'S ALLIANCE UPCOMING EVENTS

*NOTE ON EVENT PARTICIPATION: The Executive Board encourages all members to participate in Women's Alliance activities. However, as some outings require the use of staircases, walking long distances or crossing uneven terrains, any member with physical limitations should use good judgment before registering. The Board asks that such members speak with the outing leader and consult the visit site to determine how able they will be to get around; further, it is strongly recommended that they bring a companion to help them. Because outing leaders are responsible to a group of attendees, they cannot assist an individual on an outing, unless, of course, an emergency arises. By participating in WA outings, attendees agree they have read this statement and will follow its recommendations.*

**Thursday, September 21, 11 a.m.**

**Downtown Yonkers, its galleries and history of the enslaved of Westchester**



Please join the WA Outings Committee for a return visit to Yonkers, which we traversed a couple years ago. This time we'll visit Riverfront Art Gallery, which presents contemporary works from both established and emerging artists, with special emphasis on local artists and those reflecting the city's diverse communities; and we'll take a river walk through the Enslaved Africans' Rain Center on the Hudson River Esplanade. Created in 2022 by Westchester artist Vinnie Bagwell, the Rain Center features life-size bronze statues that tell the

stories of five people who were enslaved in Yonkers. No entry fees.

Meet at 11 a.m. in front of Yonkers Metro North Railroad Station, 71 Dock St. in Yonkers.

Transportation via Metro North HUDSON Line from either Grand Central (10:20 a.m.) or 125th Street (10:30 a.m.), off-peak senior rate, arriving at 10:53 a.m. (71 Dock St., Yonkers). Return trains every 30 minutes or so.

Lunch about 1 p.m. at The Dolphin, 1 Van Der Donck St. — varied menu with views of the Hudson River and the last Victorian-era steel pier on the Hudson River. Contact tour leader Alix-Marie Hall ahead to RSVP for lunch at [AMHAdvisory@yahoo.com](mailto:AMHAdvisory@yahoo.com) or text (917) 621-5495.

For those who want more art after lunch, Blue Door Art Center features work by local artists.

**Tuesday, September 26, 6:30 p.m.**

**Welcome Back Party!**

WA will host our traditional Welcome Back Party with light refreshments, music, wine, and good cheer in Reidy Friendship Hall. The League will join us and the entire All Souls community is invited to attend.

**Friday, October 6, 10:50 a.m.**

**Morris-Jumel Mansion and Sylan Terrace**

Built in 1765, the Morris Jumel Mansion is the oldest surviving residence in Manhattan. During the Revolutionary War it served as headquarters to both George Washington and British forces, and dinner guests there have included John and Abigail Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Eliza and Alexander Hamilton. It has been home to figures as diverse as Aaron Burr and Anne Northup, whose husband wrote "Twelve Years a Slave." Lin Manuel Miranda wrote some of "Hamilton" in one of the upstairs

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bedrooms. Right next door, Sylvan Terrace is a block of wooden townhouses built in 1882. \$16 for a half-hour tour of the mansion's gardens and exterior plus a self-guided tour of its interior; \$10 for the interior tour only.

Accessibility: The mansion and its gardens have stairs. Sylvan Terrace can be reached without climbing stairs.

The Mansion and the Terrace are within walking distance of the #1 Train stop at Broadway & 158<sup>th</sup> (stairs), the M4 bus stop at Broadway & 160<sup>th</sup> (stairs), and the M101 bus stop at Amsterdam & 158<sup>th</sup> or 161<sup>st</sup>.

Lunch afterwards at Hilltop Park Alehouse, 3821 Broadway at 159<sup>th</sup> St.

Let tour leader Victoria Kimbrough know you are coming to the Mansion and/or lunch at [vikifitz2@yahoo.com](mailto:vikifitz2@yahoo.com) or (cell) 917-608-0004.



### **Wednesday, October 18, Noon-2 p.m., location TBD**

#### **WA Membership Meeting**

Lunch (BYO) and business meeting, followed by a speaker and socializing. We'll provide coffee, tea and a sweet.

### **Monday, October 30, 11 a.m.**

#### **Halloween Decor Walking Tour**



Join WA and League members for a 1-1.5-mile walk on the Upper East Side between 89<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Streets, Fifth and Second Avenues, with Jane Levenson, a lifelong resident of this historic neighborhood. We'll stop to enjoy delightful Halloween-decorated yards, gardens, door and window fronts and more. Some will be high-end decorated, some family done, and some far less fancy but chosen to delight. Free.

Meet before 11 a.m. at a small sunken plaza on the NORTH side of 96<sup>th</sup> Street between Lexington and Third. (There is a bathroom in a park on the south side of 96<sup>th</sup> on

Lexington Ave.). The #6 Train comes to 96<sup>th</sup> and Lexington and the Q Train comes to Second Avenue and 96<sup>th</sup>. Many buses also come near.

Bring your lunch for a post-walk gathering at a charming public plaza at East 92<sup>nd</sup> Street between Second and Third Avenues. There are lovely trees, nice stonework and many chairs and tables.

### **Women's Reading Group (SIG)**

#### **First Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom**

Sept 5: *Home Fires* by Kamila Shamsi

Oct 3: *Villa Air-Bel* by Rosemary Sullivan

Nov 7: *Old Filth* by Jane Gardham

Dec 5: Poetry reading evening

For more information, contact: [christina.black50@gmail.com](mailto:christina.black50@gmail.com)

## OUR FRIEND ROSINA

By Kate Kleber

Rosina Cotruzzola, a longtime member of All Souls Church and the Women's Alliance, died on April 29<sup>th</sup>, eleven days after celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. She lived for 30 years at the nearby James Lenox House, where she was a respected and loved neighbor and friend.



Rosina grew up in Brooklyn during the Depression, when it was a challenge for parents to provide the necessities to their growing families. There were few luxuries, but Rosina's hardworking mother and father instilled values in their children that became their mainstays in life: the desirability of thrift, the importance of a good education, and a sense of responsibility. As the oldest of seven children, Rosina not only helped her mother with the housework at an early age, but she was responsible for the behavior and misbehavior of her siblings as well. Imagine her delight when her parents scraped together enough from their savings to buy her a secondhand piano, which led to her lifelong love of music.

She helped to support her family even after she graduated from Hunter College's branch in the Bronx, but once she became fully employed and had the opportunity to travel, she was able to gain a sense of independence and freedom. She had always loved to study and learn something new, and travel across the globe introduced her to different ways of living. She lived in Mexico and in England, and she spent three weeks on the Peace Train sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, traveling from Helsinki, Finland to Beijing, China, stopping at 12 countries in between. It was on this trip that she attended an international women's conference, where plans were shared to create activities for the peace movement.

Rosina enjoyed volunteering after retirement: at All Souls; at the James Lenox House, where she was a devoted member of the Library Committee; and at the American Museum of Natural History, where her previous years as a science teacher and her exposure to world cultures made her an invaluable tour guide. Using her origami expertise, she helped for years to decorate the Museum's origami Christmas tree.

Those who knew Rosina enjoyed her hearty sense of humor and her optimistic view of life. She leaves us with many happy memories.

*Editor's note: Rosina is seen in the photo above on a Peace Train stop in Sofia, Bulgaria, 1995.*

# RESULTS OF THE 2023 WA MEMBER SURVEY

By Sandra Ekberg

The Women's Alliance Executive Board is pleased with the response to the online questionnaire distributed to members in May. Half our members shared their thoughts about our current and future activities, an excellent response. President Chris Goodwin expressed gratitude to all who participated, pointing out that "the survey results are particularly valuable in guiding the Executive Board's planning for 2023-24 and beyond."

## Key Survey Findings

Current Activities. Members expressed continued interest in all current WA activities, with our four annual events (Angie Utt Lecture, Fall Welcome Back Party, Holiday Party, Spring Event), as well as monthly luncheons and outings, of greatest interest to most respondents. Our Special Interest Groups (SIGs) also hold interest for significant although smaller groups of members.

New and Home-based Activities. Members expressed enthusiasm for instituting Sunday brunch after church at a restaurant, a walking group, and potluck suppers at members' homes. As Church space is unavailable to the WA during daytime hours, respondents were asked if they might be willing to host an occasional event in their homes. The Executive Board is grateful to have the names of those women who said they would be happy to do so. Among small group activities of interest to members were a daytime book club, arts and crafts, and bridge.

Advocacy. The Executive Board has been interested in WA undertaking a more prominent advocacy role than in the past. The four advocacy topics of highest interest to members included: Reproductive Rights, Voting Rights, Gun Control, and Violence against Women. However, more than half of respondents also mentioned Climate Change, Homelessness, Immigration, the NYS Equal Rights Amendment, and Prison Reform. Members can expect to hear more about how the WA plans to pursue advocacy topics soon.

Fund-raising. The pandemic interrupted the Women's Alliance's annual Holiday Gift Table sale, which raised monies that WA gave to charities. The Board wishes to restart organizational fund-raising activities with Raffles, a Sunday Church Sale, and Weekend Street Fair the activities of most interest to members.

Preferred Days/Time for Activities. Because our membership consists of a diverse group of women, with some working, some retired, and some involved with other organizations, it was not surprising that every day of the week was checked off, although Tuesday-Saturday are preferred days. As for time of day, afternoons (1-4 p.m.) are preferred for Outings, SIGs, programs, and social events, with Mornings/Midday (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) also popular for Outings. Because a sizable number of members would also like programs and social events to be held evenings (6-9 p.m.), the Executive Board has held some summer evening pop-ups and will plan additional evening and weekend events.

Summer Programs. Many members expressed interest in holding summer activities, with the Board immediately implementing such programs this year. In addition to movies and concerts, pop-up programs (those suggested by individuals) were also offered, with member participation good. The Board plans to continue summer programming next year.

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Alliance Alert. It is clear from responses that the Alert is universally well-regarded by our members. The Calendar clearly serves a valuable need as **all** respondents said they have “High Interest” in this regular feature.

Committee Volunteers. The Board appreciates how many members volunteered to lead a program or work on a committee. This fall, committee chairs will contact those who offered to join specific committees.

### **Conclusion**

Chris Goodwin summed up the Board’s appreciation for survey participation. “On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our gratitude for the enthusiasm expressed by members in volunteering to work on committees and on programs. The WA is a group devoted to member-led activities and we appreciate all members who have offered to take on organizational responsibilities.”

As Chair of the Survey Committee, I would like to recognize committee members for their efforts throughout the process: Lois Coleman, Sheila Darnborough, Linda Floyd, Barbara Reed and Sally Turner. You have my heartfelt gratitude for your enthusiastic participation. Thank you!

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE WOMEN’S ALLIANCE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**By Jane Colvin, Chair**

I hope you're having a safe and enjoyable summer! Just a reminder about submitting recommendations of charities that you would like to have included in our annual Charitable Giving Program for 2023.

We do have the following guidelines and criteria for your recommendations:

The charities must be 501(c)3 organizations and have a 3-star or higher rating on Charity Navigator, Candid (formerly Guidestar) or other similar highly regarded third-party charity rating agency.

Organizations must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Programs that provide support for women and girls
- Programs of, supported by, or affiliated with the Unitarian Church of All Souls
- Programs affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association, such as the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the UU Women’s Federation, and programs supported by the Unitarian Universalist Office at the United Nations (UU@UN)
- Programs that provide support for local neighborhood programs in New York City

Please send your recommendations to me at [JaneColvin914@aol.com](mailto:JaneColvin914@aol.com) by September 15.



# WOMEN'S ALLIANCE ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2024

## An Update From Barbara Reed

The Nominating Committee consisting of Anne Brewer, Mary Dugan, and Barbara Reed, Chair, will present a slate of candidates at the October monthly meeting for the following three positions:

1. Vice-President
2. Assistant Treasurer and Chair of the Investment Committee
3. Recording Secretary

The slate will be voted on at the November monthly meeting and will take office at the February annual meeting.

The Women's Alliance Executive Board consists of WA officers plus chairs of all standing committees and Emerita board members. These are the 2023 members:

### Officers:

President — Chris Goodwin  
Vice-President — Winnie Olsen  
Recording Secretary — Barbara Reed  
Corresponding Secretary — Carol Schneider  
Treasurer — Mary Geissman  
Assistant Treasurer — Karen Steele

### Standing Committees Chairs:

Communications — Lois Coleman  
Finance — Jane Colvin  
Membership — Linda Floyd  
Program / Luncheons — Heli Blum  
Program / Outings — Sandra Fisher

### Executive Board Members Emerita

Sandra Ekberg  
Maureen Marwick



## WA's NEW SAFETY SIG

### Is Your Walk in the City Becoming More Dangerous?

By Sandra Fisher

For two years I've been muttering about the proliferation of e-vehicles (specifically, all personal mobility devices that are battery powered, such as e-bikes, e-scooters, hoverboards, and mopeds), and their increasing danger to pedestrians, drivers and residents in NYC. Our streets are a chaotic mess! Due to coverage in the UES and UWS digital newspapers, New York Daily News and The New York Times, community action movements are gaining traction to regulate unsafe lithium batteries, *and demand new laws for e-vehicle licenses, insurance, and safety enforcement.* (Google e-bikes and "go down the rabbit hole!") Orin Kotula, Barbara Reed and I are the nucleus of WA's Safety SIG and welcome your participation in this new special interest group. Email me at [sfisher535@aol.com](mailto:sfisher535@aol.com). This summer Barbara and Orin attended a vociferous, action-oriented meeting of the NYC E-Vehicle Safety Alliance (NYC EVSA) founded by Janet Schroeder, an UWS community activist. To join, email [nyc-evsa@outlook.com](mailto:nyc-evsa@outlook.com) and mention the Women's Alliance to be put on the list. Let's get going!

## PHOTOS FROM SPRING OUTINGS AND SUMMER POP-UPS

Women's Alliance monthly meetings and outings are not scheduled in the summer, but many members still got together in July and August — on their own or at one (or more) of the WA's 18 summer pop-up and Special Interest Group (SIG) events.

On August 24<sup>th</sup> Jane Levenson, a longtime gallery tour guide and explainer at the American Museum of Natural History, shared her knowledge with other WA members in the Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals. L to r: Kate Kleber, Kim Calder, Alynne Wesson, Jane Levenson, Judy Staples, Mary Ann Lang, Christine Goodwin. Not in the photo: Anne Brewer.



On August 17<sup>th</sup>, about 40 members of the WA and the League climbed up to the roof of Heli Blum's apartment building for a rollicking potluck get-together and spectacular views of Manhattan.

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, Sandy Galett, Heli Blum, Mary Geissman, Susan Hoehn, and Alix-Marie Hall and her husband Victor, attended Robert Icke's "The Doctor," at the Park Avenue Armory. A reimagining of Arthur Schnitzler's 1912 "Professor Bernhardt," the play featured Juliet Stevenson in the leading role.



On July 13<sup>th</sup>, members of WA and the League met up in SoHo for what was billed as an unauthorized exhibition. "Banksy in New York / Defaced" featured 80 original works by the activist artist, as well as reproductions of his most iconic pieces. (L to r) Karen Steele, Heli Blum, Katie Gray, Mitchel Gray, Judith Moldover, Ken Wachtell, and Tom Creasy.





Also on July 13<sup>th</sup> Chris Goodwin, Anne Bradley, and Christina Nargowala (l to r) met for a WA pop-up visit to Dia Chelsea for “Chryssa & New York,” an exhibit of work by one of the few women recognized as leading figures of the New York art world of the 1950s and ‘60s. Chryssa was especially well known for her pioneering work with neon lighting.

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, WA members toured the Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site. From left: Betsy Meehan, Alix-Marie Hall, Ingrid Krinke, Maureen Marwick, Terry Manzella, Christine Goodwin, and Mary Ann Van Osdol, in front of a portrait of TR’s father, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr.



Last April 13<sup>th</sup>, WA member Ingrid Krinke led WA members on a guided tour of the “Comparative Hell: Art of Asian Underworlds” exhibition at the Asia Society, where she is a docent. L to R: Sandra Fisher, Maureen Marwick, Susan Hoehn, Ingrid Krinke, Judy Staples, Jane Colvin, Barbara Reed, Patricia Glennon, Dixie Goss, Carol Magai, and Sally Turner.

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