

# Silurian News

Published by The Society of The Silurians, Inc., an organization of veteran New York City journalists founded in 1924

**Society of the Silurians**  
**EXCELLENCE IN**  
**JOURNALISM**  
**AWARDS BANQUET**

*The Players Club*

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

Drinks: 6 P.M.

Dinner: 7:15 P.M.

Meet old friends and award winners  
(212) 532-0887

Members and One Guest \$100 each  
Non-Members \$120

MAY 2016

## The Silurians Celebrate Journalism At Its Best

A sterling list of winners highlights the Society of the Silurians Excellence in Journalism Awards for coverage in 2015. In addition to two special citations — the Peter Kihss and Dennis Duggan awards — this year brought 85 submissions from print, broadcast and online media in 18 revised categories.

Top awards for breaking news, features, and investigative reporting went to The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times. Winning Medallions and Merit Award certificates will be presented at the Awards Dinner May 18 at The Players, 16 Gramercy Park South.

For the esteemed Peter Kihss Award, honoring The New York Times reporter who exemplified the highest ideals of dogged journalism and mentorship, the Silurians named Daniel Sforza, managing editor of The Record in Bergen County. Sforza, who groomed countless other prize-winners over the years, was the former transportation reporter who first broke the news, in a web posting, that Capt. Chesley (Sully) Sullenberger III landed a distressed plane on the Hudson River in 2009, saving all on board. (Kihss, a 30-year-veteran of *The Times*, died in 1984 at 72.)

The Dennis Duggan Memorial Scholarship Award, given annually to a student at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism for exemplary coverage of New Yorkers, was awarded to Megan Cerullo of Brooklyn Heights, who profiled the Italian community in the Bronx, among other notable projects. She will intern this summer at The



On Feb. 3, 2015, a Journal News photo assistant, Albert Conte, who is also a volunteer fire fighter, responded to a report of a commuter train hitting a car in Valhalla. He helped rescue commuters and also used his iPhone to shoot photographs and video. Staff photographers soon joined him. Their series of photos won the Journal News the medallion for Breaking News Photography. Another of their photos appears on page 3.

Daily News. (Duggan, whose columns celebrated New Yorkers over six decades in five newspapers, died in 2006 at 78.)

Here is a list of all winners:

### NEWSPAPER, NEWS SERVICE AND ONLINE

#### Breaking News

**Medallion Winner** Wall Street Journal, “Metro-North Crash” by

Andrew Tangel

A wide-ranging tour de force of the crash and its after-effects. It is old-fashioned journalism at its best, from gathering quotes and information to recreating the horrific scene with a compelling narrative.

**Merit Award** Wall Street Journal, “Brooklyn ISIS Plot” by Pervaiz Shallwani, Rebecca Davis O’Brien and

Andrew Grossman

From its comprehensive lead, it details an intriguing timeline that often reads like a spy novel, with many government sources.

#### Feature News

**Medallion** The New York Times, “The Lonely Death of George Bell” by N.R. Kleinfield

Continued on Page 3

## In the Spirit Of Kihss

BY MARTIN GOTTLIEB

Add up the people who count this year’s Peter Kihss Award winner, Dan Sforza, as a mentor and the numbers probably grow from the dozens to the scores and maybe even tip into triple figures — not bad for someone who at 45 is a mere pup in Silurian years.

The evidence is there everyday at The Record of North Jersey — known more familiarly as the Bergen Record. There reporters congregate at his desk in some mix of bakery line and kaffeeklatsch, bantering and awaiting instruction, correction and hoped-for pats on the back from an estimable former reporter who served as deputy assignment desk director for a dozen years before being pro-



Dan Sforza

moted to managing editor in January.

It’s also there in the front-page stories of the interns he invariably takes an interest in and hears from over the years, and at Ramapo College in Mahwah, where hundreds of students have taken his journalism classes since 1995 and re-

ceived his guidance as faculty advisor to the student newspaper.

That advice at times can be succinct, as one of his mentors, The Record’s new editor Deirdre Sykes, sums up: “be concise and laser-focused, don’t blather when you’ve made your point.” It can also come in lengthy discussions about stories or be transmitted in the course of the personal kindnesses that have helped imbue the Record newsroom with a special collegiality. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, when a lot of the staff had no heat or electricity in their homes, Dan was the one who brought in his coffee maker and pods of coffee, tea and cocoa. He deep fries turkeys in the parking lot every New Year’s for the working staff and he chats up his troops when they come by for a helping.

“It’s better to ask questions and listen, rather than to spout out pearls of wisdom,” he said recently. “I find it’s much more effective to help someone

reach a desired conclusion than to present a conclusion myself.”

That approach may hold a clue to why his role has spread from editor to teacher to a mentor much in the spirit of Peter Kihss. The reporters whose lives he’s touched say that he’s helped them see themselves and trust themselves. That’s often helped them produce their finest work.

“Dan’s even keel, his humor, and his chronic reliability have a calming effect that gives reporters the confidence to do their best work,” observed Shawn Boburg, who benefited from Sforza’s guidance and editing as he broke open the George Washington Bridge scandal and landed two years of sensational scoops exposing systemic dysfunction at the Port Authority.

Chris Maag, a lyrical narrative writer, recalls fretting about whether he could mesh his talents with his new

Continued on Page 2



## President's Report

BY BETSY ASHTON

*Hello and Happy Spring to all.*

I am delighted to announce that our board of governors has voted to grant two scholarships of \$2,000 each to worthy graduate students in journalism for this coming fall. One will go to the NYU Graduate School of Journalism program for Culture and Arts Reporting and will be the first scholarship designated for students in this program. I am even more thrilled to report that NYU decided to match the Silurians' donation and make ours a \$4,000 scholarship! The second \$2,000 Silurians' scholarship will go to the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, and we are hoping that CUNY will also match the amount. The scholarships were the first project to come out of the board's new Future Committee, chaired by former president Allan Dodds Frank with Ben Patrusky, Carol Lawson, David Andelman and Gerry Eskenazi participating. The Future Committee was established to consider worthwhile new initiatives for the society. These scholarships may be continued, expanded or increased in coming years, as our funds permit. Given that college tuition now runs in the tens of thousands of dollars, this is a worthy project, indeed!

### ANOTHER HELPING HAND

Many members may not be aware that we have a fund that can provide help to fellow Silurians who are in financial need. Any such requests to the Silurians Contingency Fund are held in strictest confidence. Its members have taken on the volunteer jobs of being, well, angels. The board of governors has appointed Steve Marcus as chairman of the fund and Betsy Wade and George Arzt as new members. Mark Lieberman continues as a member. Contact any one of these people if you need some help or know of someone else who needs a bit of financial assistance to get through a rough spot. And please help me thank retiring board chairman Larry Friedman and Marty Steadman, Joy Cook and Nat Brandt for their years of service on the board of the Contingency Fund.

### CHANGES ON THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

We have some upcoming changes on the Board of Governors for the membership to approve at our June meeting. Ralph Blumenthal, who so ably co-chaired our awards program this year, is stepping down at the end of this season to do more writing, and to keep up with his fulltime position at Baruch College. Barbara Lovenheim, who last year, helped redesign our website and assisted this year with our Facebook page, is also retiring from the board. The board enthusiastically nominated new Silurian Valerie S. Komor to fill one of those vacancies. As the founding director of the AP's corporate archives, Valerie organized the many thousands of documents that were in untended file cabinets in the basement of the AP headquarters so that they are now available to researchers. She also plans great events for the AP.

### AND FINALLY

I regret to inform you that I will be stepping down as your president at the end of June after what for me has been a wonderful year of working with all of you. I have very much enjoyed being your president, and originally planned to serve the expected two-year term, but I am afraid it has caused me to neglect my business. If I don't get into my studio, my paintings don't get done. And I have just signed with an agent to write a memoir, which is something else that now needs my time and attention. I had no idea that I would be this busy with creative and fun projects at this stage in my life. Nevertheless, I will remain on the board of governors and you may even see me helping to check you in at lunches next season. And you will have a fine new president in Bernie Kirsch.

*Thank you all for a great year!*

## In the Spirit Of Kihss

Continued from Page 1

news-driven transportation beat. He presented Dan with a deep spreadsheet of ideas and asked which he should attack.

"Dan was quiet for a few seconds," he recalls. "Then he said, 'Just find stories that people want to read.'"

"That was the end of the meeting."

Chris grasped Dan's intent. "Behind their message was the way he said it," he remembers, "a manner which seemed to say, 'Calm down. You're doing fine. Don't worry too much about it, and just do the work.'"

Sean Oates, who runs The Record's digital news operation, northjersey.com, first met Dan 18 years ago, when he enrolled in the student newspaper class at Ramapo, just intending to fulfill a course requirement. As the semesters progressed, he says, "he stealthily added more to my plate, pushing me into more serious assignments, nudging me into leadership moments."

At the end of his junior year, while Sean still embraced the role of "under-the-radar kid," Dan named him editor-in-chief.

"Had I fooled my hard-nosed reporter/adjunct professor into thinking I was capable of leading the paper?" Sean wondered. "Or had Dan already tricked me into becoming the leader I needed to be for precisely this moment? The answer, of course, is that Dan Sforza is not so easily fooled. And it was time to stop doubting myself."

Having started my career at The Record 45 years ago under the tutelage of Sue Servis Scilla, a mentor of the whirlwind variety, I feel a particular gratification in Dan's award. He was a soul mate and go-to guy during my four years as editor. He has a dream family I've been fortunate to meet -- his wife, Allison, and his delightful daughters, Lauren, 15, and Charlotte, 12 -- and I know that for all his devotion to The Record, it pales beside his devotion to them.

But Dan also represents something deep in the Record's DNA, and I can't help but see an acknowledgement of the institution in the recognition of the in-



Mitsu Yasukawa / Staff Photographer

The Record's reporter Rebecca O'Brien, who was one of the finalists in 2014 for the Pulitzer Prize in the local reporting category, is celebrated by her editor Dan Sforza.

dividual — the great circle of newsroom life a few miles over the bridge.

When I was at The Times awhile ago, a colleague, Ron Wertheimer, who worked with me in Hackensack in the early 70s, counted 44 alumni on the staff. That was more than an incredible number on its own; it was reflective of the enormous contribution of Record mentoring to the profession, which is populated coast-to-coast by talented journalists who emerged from what has long been an industry incubator.

The mentoring also played a significant role in the biggest change I found in the newsroom on my return—a substantial, talented core staff that cut its teeth here and stayed to build distinguished careers, replete with Silurian awards.

Dan grew up locally, in Teaneck and Ramsey, and later moved to River Edge when he married Allison. He dreamed of working at either The Record or The Times and shortly after his college years at Villanova University, he became, in Deirdre Sykes's description, "a green journalist-in-training on the news clerks' desk." From there, she recalls, "He worked his way up the hard way, in fits and starts, learning as he went, determined to succeed. He would do anything. He ran out on assignments whenever the desk ran out of bodies."

He found perhaps his greatest mentor

when he was promoted from town coverage to junior transportation reporter. The senior transportation writer was a buoyant, revered, tough-minded reporter named Pat Gilbert, who succumbed to cancer when she was only 45.

Deirdre recalls how Gilbert shared with Dan "her insights, her secrets of the trade, her strict code of ethics, her belief that hard work was at the root of all good stories, her knack for turning a hunch in a Page One news break."

"Pat was devoted to Dan's development as a journalist; he became devoted to her and her principles."

One lesson Dan learned was to focus on seemingly insignificant details. On one occasion, Gilbert took note of item 27 on a New Jersey Turnpike Authority agenda.

It authorized the hiring of a mortician.

Behind it, Gilbert discovered, was a plan to disinter more than 1,000 bodies from a Potter's field to make way for an exit ramp to a new train station in Secaucus. Front page!

Digging deep became part of their daily routine. In a three-hour phone interview after 9/11, Gilbert and Sforza grilled two Port Authority executives about their plans to the point of exhaustion. "At the end, the pair were so flum-

Continued on Page 4

## From Brooklyn to the Bronx to the Duggan Award

Megan Cerullo is the winner of this year's Dennis Duggan prize, awarded annually to a student at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism who excels at covering ordinary New Yorkers.

At the J-School, the 30-year-old native of Brooklyn Heights chose a Bronx beat: the Belmont section that includes Arthur Avenue. "I wanted to profile the lingering community of Italians," said Cerullo, who studied romance languages as an undergraduate at Brown University.

Scooping the competition, she covered for DNAinfo the threatened cancellation of the Arthur Avenue Christmas tree lighting, an event that draws a crowd -- and brings shoppers to local merchants -- every holiday season. (Subsequently, City Councilman Ritchie Torres came up with the funds to restore the tradition.)

Another Bronx tale profiled a graduate of the borough's CitySquash program, a nonprofit that teaches the sport -- and offers college-prep support -- to local youngsters from low-income households. (A former varsity squash player,



Megan Cerullo

Cerullo says she was eager to write about the program because it democratizes a sport traditionally played at "private clubs with membership fees or elite boarding schools and colleges.")

Looking beyond the Bronx, she found other "ordinary" stories. A holiday curtain-raiser for DNAinfo about Macy's famous window displays took readers to

industrial Brooklyn, where carpenters, artists and engineers raced the clock to create the magic on 34<sup>th</sup> Street. A story on the city's bike-lane expansion took her to the Lower East Side, where some elderly residents see the new lanes as a safety threat. A New York City Marathon piece for the J-School's NYC News Service explored the runners' struggles to find places for bathroom breaks during the race.

"Although the J-School has a bumper crop of people who have done good local reporting," said Tim Harper, one of Cerullo's professors, "it's hard to find anyone who has done more good reporting -- and gotten more published -- about everyday people."

Before entering J-School, Cerullo was an intern at Condé Nast and a reporter at The Vineyard Gazette, where she profiled local islanders as well as summer vacationers. She also freelanced for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle and the Brooklyn-based Brownstoner.

Specializing in business and economics reporting at the J-School, she will intern this summer at The Daily News.



# The Silurians Celebrate Journalism At Its Best

Continued from Page 1

In the daily blur of humanity that is New York, millions crowd the subways and sidewalks, offices, bars and apartments, yet people die often alone, unmourned. Sonny Kleinfeld was curious about these solitary deaths. Who was this person and what became of all the stuff left behind? Sonny provided the answer in this epic narrative that riveted readers. Piecing together the clues like a detective story, he recreates the death and life of a both prototypical and entirely unique New Yorker.

**Merit** Newsday, “The 7th Precinct vs. Jack Franqui” by Gus Garcia-Roberts

When 26-year-old Jack Franqui, facing misdemeanor charges, hanged himself in a holding cell of the Suffolk County Police Department on Jan. 23, 2013, the public was told little — and almost all of it false. Combing through hundreds of pages of previously unreported documents, Gus Garcia-Roberts exposed Franqui’s disturbed history and desperate final hours as he weepingly begged for medical attention and threatened suicide while officers seated nearby ignored him and later covered up their inaction.

## Investigative and Public Service Reporting

**Medallion** The New York Times, “Profiting From Addiction” by Kim Barker

Kim Barker exposed a virtually unregulated “housing netherworld” of so-called three-quarter homes that exploits thousands of desperate men and women “recovering from addiction or with nowhere to go.” She fleshed out the story by profiling several residents of homes controlled by an unscrupulous businessman, Yury Baumblyt, who allegedly profited from kickbacks and coerced addicts into relapsing so he could cash in on their participation in substance abuse programs. Barker’s report had significant impact: Mayor DiBlasio set up a task force and prosecutors filed criminal charges against Baumblyt. To top it off, a reader from Atlanta recognized her long-lost, mentally-ill brother and was reunited with him.



Another in the series of photos of the Valhalla train crash by the Journal News staff that won the medallion for Breaking News Photography.

**Merit** Newsday, “Zombie Houses” by Denise M. Bonilla, Carl MacGowan, Maura McDermott and Deon J. Hampton

The Newsday team presented a compelling series on a facet of the mortgage crisis that has been underreported: an “epidemic of blighted, abandoned houses” that has seriously damaged neighborhoods and property values in many communities on Long Island. The solid reportage, data analysis, and interactive map made for a powerful, original presentation that provided a valuable public service.

## Sports Reporting

**Medallion** Newsday, “Hard Knocks” by Jim Baumbach

You feel the pain in this extremely well-researched, well-written piece about one of the most important issues — concussions — in sports (and beyond) today. It also is a model of investigative and public-service reporting.

## BUSINESS/FINANCIAL

**Medallion** Reuters, “Wall Street’s Way” by Charles Levinson

This penetrating, deeply reported series of articles goes behind the scenes of Wall Street’s efforts to weaken securities regulation; shines new light on the revolving door between government regulators and the securities industry; and shows how the accounting industry

stymied auditing reforms.

**Merit** Financial Planning: “Deleted: FINRA Erases Broker Disciplinary Records,” by Ann Marsh

An in-depth investigation into the practices of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority questions whether the self-regulatory agency properly protects investors from abuses by brokers.

**Merit** The Record, “The Chairman’s Flight” by Shawn Boburg

Relentless reporting uncovered the scandal surrounding a sweetheart deal between United Airlines and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that led to the resignation of the airline’s CEO, the head of the Authority and New Jersey’s Transportation Commissioner.

## Science and Health Reporting

**Medallion** The Record, “After the Miracle” by Lindy Washburn

In three meticulously researched, masterfully crafted stories, Washburn explores, in highly personal and touching detail, how a series of modern-day medical “miracles” -- deep-brain stimulation to quell the tremors of Parkinson’s disease; surgery to nip potentially lethal brain aneurysms; immunotherapy for the deadliest form of brain cancer -- profoundly altered the lives, both clinically and emotionally, of patients who benefited from them.

## Arts and Culture Reporting

**Medallion** Vanity Fair, “Balanchine’s Christmas Miracle” by Laura Jacobs

“Balanchine’s Christmas Miracle” is a fresh look at an artistic genius. It reveals George Balanchine’s lifelong emotional

attachment to “The Nutcracker,” which began in his boyhood at the Mariinsky Theatre in Russia. It also sheds light on the creation of New York City Ballet, the greatest ballet company in America, and its evolution from generation to generation, always buoyed by the dancers’ deep appreciation and affection for Balanchine.

**Medallion** Vanity Fair, “Might at the Met” by Bob Colacello

Written in advance of the opening of the Met Breuer, a new branch of New York’s Metropolitan Museum, Bob Colacello’s article is a deeply reported, sophisticated, and well-timed analysis of the Met’s growing interest in modern and contemporary art. By connecting the dots behind a series of developments that led up to the Breuer, Colacello presents a unique overview of how the collections, boards, and new building projects of MOMA, the Met, and the Whitney are now irrevocably intertwined.

## COMMENTARY AND EDITORIALS

**Medallion** TheStreet.com, columns by Susan Antilla

“Watch what Wall Street does, not what it says,” Antilla enjoins her readers and, heeding her own counsel, she does just that in a string of columns, built on solid reporting and trenchant analysis, that expose the duplicitous practices unscrupulous stockbrokers employ to intentionally mislead and, ultimately, fleece their clients.

**Merit** The Record, Editorials by Alfred P. Doblin

Alfred Doblin writes meaningful and impactful editorials that offer readers keen-eyed perspective on a broad swath of local issues, always with clarity, reason and a strong sense of decency — his sharply critical examination of a proposed deal to build a new Hudson River tunnel, for example, or his artful takedown of a Republican congressman’s opposition to the party running gay candidates.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

### Breaking News

**Medallion** The Journal News, “Metro-North Crash in Valhalla” by Albert Conte, Frank Becerra Jr., Seth Harrison & Carucha L. Meuse

Conte, a photo assistant at The Journal News, was off duty on Feb. 3, 2015, when he got word that a commuter train had struck a car, resulting in a fire and explosion. A volunteer fireman, Conte was one of the first on the scene. After helping with rescue operations, he used his iPhone to take pictures and email them to the newsroom. Staff photographers



J. Conrad Williams Jr. of Newsday was awarded the medallion for sports photography for this scintillating shot of American Pharoah winning the Belmont Stakes and the first Triple Crown since 1978.

Continued on Page 4



# The Silurians Celebrate Journalism At Its Best

Continued from Page 3

Becerra and Harrison soon joined him, resulting in an outstanding package of photographs that led coverage in The Journal News and wound up being used by newspapers and TV stations around the country.

**Merit** The Record, “A Driver’s Remorse” by Tariq Zehawi

Looking beyond the obvious when he photographed the aftermath of a fatal accident in which a truck struck a car, Zehawi focused instead on this revealing moment when the truck driver, overcome by what had happened, suddenly fell to his knees in the middle of the street.

## Feature Photography

**Medallion** Newsday, “Dunia’s Smile” by Thomas A. Ferrara

Despite a horrendous attack by chimpanzees in his native Congo two years ago that ripped his face apart, eight-year-old Dunia Sibomana is still able to smile while awaiting rare and complicated facial reconstructive surgery at Stony Brook University Hospital. As Dunia shares a laugh with Jennifer Crean, whose family has been hosting the boy since he was brought to the U.S. by the Smile Rescue Fund for Kids, he is a portrait of hope.

**Merit** The Record, “Daddy’s Home” by Kevin Wexler

All the emotions of greeting a soldier safely home from war in the Middle East are vividly displayed in the face of Mari Gumann of Vernon, N.J., as she hugs her son, Sgt. Jesse De La Cruza, at a Jersey City armory where families had gathered for reunions with their loved ones.

## Sports Photography

**Medallion** Newsday, “American Pharoah” by J. Conrad Williams Jr.

With no other horse in sight, American Pharoah is all sinew and strength as he comes flying home on June 6, 2015 to win the Belmont Stakes and the first Triple Crown since 1978. Underscoring the challenge of photographing horse races, photographer Williams and his camera were about 50 feet apart when he fired it. He had set it just above ground level near the track, decided what angle to place it at, connected it to a foot pedal by wire, and activated the pedal from a photographers’ riser near the finish line. A little guesswork and 30 years’ experience produced a classic.

## MAGAZINE.

### Feature Writing

**Medallion** Bloomberg Businessweek, “How Trump Invented Trump” by Max Abelson

Abelson delves into the uniquely New York world of the leading Republican candidate, profiling the people who work for him (his chief operating officer is his former bodyguard), challenging his claims of business success, and showing how he turns everything he does into some kind of victory. The story shows how glamour and desire—and the desire for glamour—can overcome any gritty reality.

**Merit** Vanity Fair, “Pope Francis at Ground Zero” by Paul Elie

In this brief essay, Elie uses the Pope’s visit to the 9/11 Memorial to reflect on the importance to New York of this sacred ground—and on how even the Holy Father visits the site more as a pilgrim than as a leader of the church. The visit makes clear “that even in an apparently secular city people still conceive of grief and loss in frankly religious terms.”



**DUNIA’S SMILE** Jennifer Crean hugs Dunia Sibomana, 8, who was seriously injured when he and his brother, who was killed, were attacked by chimpanzees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He has been living with Ms. Crean while awaiting facial reconstructive surgery. This picture by Thomas A. Ferrara for Newsday won the medallion for feature photography.

## Investigative and Public Service Reporting

**Medallion** Bloomberg News, “Loan Sharks: How Two Guys From Brooklyn Lost God and Found \$40 Million” by Zeke Faux

This journey into the new world of unscrupulous online predatory lending takes readers on a jaunt with the two young boiler-room promoters of an “advance lending scheme” that provides unregulated, ultra-high interest loans to people with shaky or no credit. Living in Puerto Rico as tax exiles after collecting more than \$40 million for selling their business, Pearl Capital, the tale they tell raises the question about the sometimes slim differences between the practices of Wall Street boiler rooms and mainstream firms such as Goldman Sachs, which offered to buy their firm.

## TELEVISION

### Feature Reporting

**Medallion** MetroFocus (WNET), “Restoring Brooklyn’s Lost WWII Memorial,” by Dave Brown, executive producer; Diane Masciale, executive producer, local production; Sean McGinn, producer; Jack Ford, host

For more than 60 years, the Brooklyn War Memorial — a granite and limestone memorial to more than 11,000 Brooklynites who died in combat during World War II — has gathered dust in Cadman Park, rarely used and little noticed. Now, efforts are being made by veterans, legislators and the New York City Parks Commission to repair and upgrade the memorial and restore it to its original purpose: an open, central gathering place for public use as well as a tribute to the borough’s fallen. “MetroFocus” illuminates the project and brings to light a memorial few people even know about.

## Investigative and Public Service Reporting

**Medallion** News 12 New Jersey, “The Oil Changers”

Reporter Walt Kane and his team expose the pervasive use by oil change establishments of substandard oil that could cause severe damage to cars. Their three-part series also reveals that New Jersey’s weights and measures rules governing motor oil have never been enforced. The State is now complying.

## RADIO

### Feature News and Public Service Reporting

**Medallion** 1010 WINS, “East Village Gas Explosion”

When a gas explosion ripped through four buildings in the East Village, leveling three of them and leaving a total of 19 people injured in the East Village on March 26, 2015, 1010 WINS was one of the first at the scene with live coverage from the firefighting to eyewitness accounts, neighborhood reaction and every press conference by Mayor de Blasio and other officials. WINS updated their listeners every 10

minutes, allowing them to follow the most current findings and staying as close to the events as possible.

## ONLINE INVESTIGATIVE AND PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTING

**Medallion** The Record/NorthJersey.com, “In Heroin’s Grip,” by Rebecca D. O’Brien, reporter; Thomas E. Franklin, videographer; Tyson Trish, photographer; and Michael Pettigano, digital projects editor.

The scourge of heroin ravaging a neighborhood hardly merits a headline these days, but this series from The Record brought home to readers and online viewers the savagery the drug epidemic is wreaking on Northern New Jersey. The reporters and photographers dragged us into the drug world by finding people who have lost their jobs, health, homes and families and were willing to share those horrid experiences. The Record staff explored how the damage from heroin costs communities dearly and goes way beyond the toll it takes on addicts themselves. The combination of print, video, interactive maps and statistical graphics now has made this fine journalism a teaching tool in school.

**Merit** DNAinfo, Murray Weiss and James Fanelli. “Coverage of the Unsolved Gail Mark Murder.”

Before being murdered in 1982, 28-year-old Gail Mark was convinced her husband would kill her. He was a suspect but was never charged and the case went cold for 33 years, until Murray Weiss and James Fanelli discovered a clue in a civil case filed by Mark’s husband’s sister and new witnesses, who raised enough questions for the New York City Police and the Manhattan District Attorney to resume the criminal investigation.

*The Silurian Awards were chaired by Ralph Blumenthal and Michael Serrill.*

# In the Spirit Of Kihss

Continued from Page 2

moxed,” Dan recalled recently, “that they wore each other’s coats home, not realizing the mistake until they reached for their house keys.

“That was a lesson in methodical questioning and building momentum during an interview that I’ll never forget.”

By the time he became an editor in 2004, he had amassed more than 350 front-page bylines and a host of awards.

During my tenure, Deirdre, then the assignment desk director, and Dan were an unbeatable, indefatigable team, presiding over strong editors and dozens of reporters who cover North Jersey’s 80-plus towns, Trenton, Washington, and a host of specialty beats. Their edits on the stories of the day were also lessons in the writing of the stories of tomorrow, not just for newbies, but for skilled reporters like Boburg.

“He was a reporter of accomplishment before he worked with Dan, but under Dan’s mentoring he became a force of nature,” Deirdre says. Shawn made a point of crediting Dan’s influence in his acceptance speech for the George Polk Award for state reporting in 2014.

Behind his deep tip of the hat were the endless hours both devoted to a running story they made sure never died: I remember Shawn batting out a strong follow outside the Metropolitan Opera, while his wife, Stephanie Akin-- an exceptional reporter herself-- and his parents, in from Oklahoma, enjoyed the

Sunday matinee, next to his empty seat; I remember Dan at home in Denville, sometimes with a room full of girls enlivening the house or a morning’s work on his father’s new home behind him, rigorously editing stories about the secret toll-hike plan of 2011, the slush funds built with much of the proceeds, and, early on, about an e-mail from Governor Christie’s deputy chief of staff that proclaimed, “Time for some traffic problems in Fort Lee.” They scooped everyone and took the scandal into the Governor’s office.

Dan also coordinated coverage of heroin’s spread into North Jersey’s suburbs, a line of reporting that began months before the issue took hold nationally, and one that led to Rebecca O’Brien and Tom Mashberg being named Pulitzer finalists in 2014. Dan’s relationship with Rebecca, who joined The Record with no daily newspaper experience less than two years before she took on this subject, was a mentoring classic.

“I’ve come to understand that the faith and confidence he placed in me (and in all of his reporters) wasn’t a reflection of how great I was, but how great HE was,” she reflected recently. “He knew when to hold my feet to the fire, when to push, and when to step back. I had no doubt, ever, that he supported me 100 percent.”

She and Shawn are both being recognized by the Silurians again this year for their outstanding reporting.

As they pursued their separate reporting trails, they bestowed a less formal honor on Dan -- usually when he was out of earshot.

They referred to him, with smiles, as “Our Fearless Leader.”



## From Brooklyn to the Rocky Mountains

BY GRACE LICHTENSTEIN

“Brooklyn Bombshell heads for hills!” That was the headline on the postcard I sent to everyone as I prepared to take up residence in Denver as the New York Times Rocky Mountains bureau chief back in the 1970s. “Mountains quake, Crown Heights weeps, John Denver sings at news of move,” read the dek.

I was full of enthusiasm - and ignorance.

My enthusiasm stemmed from my love of Western movies, skiing and hiking. My ignorance started with the fact that I had never been to the city of Denver before. Why should that stop me? I had been skiing in Utah and Aspen, and had crossed Wyoming as a child on a cross-country road trip with my parents. I had wanted a national posting for a long time, so when Dave Jones and Abe Rosenthal offered me the job, I accepted immediately. Then I made a scouting trip; Jim Sterba, the current bureau chief, lived in Boulder, and showed me around a bit but I wanted to be in the “big city” itself. So I took an apartment in a Denver high rise, and prepared to move.

At my going-away party in New York, Betsy Wade gave me an apron with a fifth of Jack Daniels in the pocket. The truth was, I had barely tasted Jack Daniels before but it seemed like the perfect gift for a two-fisted reporter in her early 30s.

To gain some perspective, I went to Chicago first, to visit the Times bureau there. The Chicago bureau covers the Midwest but I would be watching even more acreage: 10 states between Canada and Mexico. Bill Farrell gave me careful instructions on filing my expense account (Chicago was a relatively expensive city; Denver was not. Moreover, when I voiced nervousness at having to settle for a Holiday Inn on some reporting trips, I was told that I would be staying in so many flea-bag motels I would be glad when I found a Holiday Inn.)

The important thing, Bill said, was to treat myself right; the west was so huge I would get exhausted otherwise flying regularly from Denver to far flung towns like Billings, Montana, and Albuquerque, N.M.

## Ah, Yes, I Remember Them Well

BY GERALD ESKENAZI

I suspect that to most journalists, their memories of the seminal events they’ve covered are quite personal, and even small.

One such moment in my own career—writing about the young, underdog United States hockey team defeating the vaunted Soviet Union in the 1980 “Miracle on Ice” Olympics—came down to how I would file my story. Perhaps the greatest upset in the history of American sports? I wasn’t thinking that at the moment. My problem was I was stuck in the balcony while thousands of people headed for the exits, and there was no room for a computer. I had my typewriter, though. The rest was simple: After typing a page, I rolled paper up in a ball, and threw it to the tier below, where colleague Dave Anderson ran with it to our computer operator in the basement. Then he dashed back up for my second page.

More recent, Super Bowl 50 may have been the biggest event in the history of television—at least the way the National Football League had it—but to this reporter the Super Bowl has a more quaint memory.

In fact, who even recalls that the first Super Bowl in 1967 was not even called the first Super Bowl? It was called, simply, the N.F.L.-A.F.L. championship game. And as far as giving it Roman numerals—well, that didn’t happen for a few years as well.

But as time went by, there was this sense that America stopped what it was doing to watch the big game. So one Super Bowl Sunday, The Times sent me out to the streets of New York City to find out whether or not this was actually so—and was anybody out there? Just what was America doing on this

I left Chicago on an overnight train for Denver. When I awoke, the sun was just rising and cows dotted the landscape outside my window. Dawn! Cows! Nebraska! I was ecstatic. I had rarely seen any of those, and certainly not all at the same time. I grabbed my portable typewriter (Remember those?) and pecked out a letter to friends back home. I am sure I had never written anything quite that early in the morning.

The first story I attempted involved a “Summit on Coal” in a Denver hotel. Energy and natural resources were overriding issues in the intermountain west. I felt like a freshman who had stumbled into a graduate-level seminar. What did I know about coal? It heated the tenement in Brooklyn when I was a child. I decided to file the material as background.

Instead, I drove to Boulder, which was not yet the hip place it became. It was a half-hour from Denver. (The ride itself was a hair-raising experience given my underdeveloped driving skills.) There, I visited a small tea company called Celestial Seasonings, which made herbal teas fancifully named Red Zinger and such. That was my first Western bylined piece.

It was March, prime ski season in Colorado, so I packed up my skis and went to Aspen for both business and pleasure. After a morning on the slopes, I interviewed local authorities who had proposed building a narrow gauge railway that would ease auto congestion in the Roaring Fork Valley. (It didn’t get built, but it has been discussed ever since.)

From Aspen I went to Telluride, another of Colorado’s gorgeous old mining towns that was reinventing itself as a ski resort. It was almost unknown at the time—the first film festival had taken place only in 1974, and I’m sure neither Oprah Winfrey nor Ralph Lauren, later celebrity second-home owners, had never heard of it.

Telluride had everything: scenery, skiing, hippies, bagels. Bagels? Yes indeed—a local entrepreneur baked them right in Telluride. In my article I said the town’s flavor was “one part Coors, one part egg cream”; at the time 60 percent of its tiny population was Jewish.

The locals invited me to a Passover

auspicious day?

I walked around Times Square. Why, there were people strolling—not many, not like today, certainly, but in some numbers. And then I saw a policeman and realized that all the people who serve the public in some capacity were working that day—waitresses, cops, firemen. And of course, pizza delivery guys.

Well, I strolled around the area, which had become a district of sleaze. Cars had signs that promised “no radio” to thieves, and graffiti adorned the rolled-up gates of shuttered businesses. But there was at least one noisy place doing business. It was a strip club. Aha, people working on Super Bowl Sunday. I wanted to get in and get out as quickly as possible, for the truth is, I wanted to see the game myself.

So I strolled in and, with as much journalistic cool as I could muster (I was worried about being mugged or drugged), said I’d like to see the manager.

A large man came over. “My name is Moose,” he said.

I introduced myself and told him what I was writing, and that I wondered whether business suffered. Standing atop the bar, women were wiggling and men were applauding politely.

“Look around,” said Moose. “Do you see anyone watching the game on television?”

I didn’t respond to this rhetorical question, and even turned down his kind offer of a drink. I walked the few blocks to my office, and set out to explain what America was really doing that day. That is, the America within a few blocks of The New York Times. But then again, all of us in this business think everything revolves around them.



The author with John Wayne, in Nevada, on the set of the actor’s last film, “The Shootist.”

seder at the home of one Jewish hippie transplant. It was perfect. There was Mogen David wine, relabeled Mogul David, and after the meal everyone passed around joints.

I managed to sample just about every hill with a ski lift on it in the Rocky Mountain West. But skiers were mostly just visitors like me. Over time I realized the truth of Wallace Stegner’s observation: “The real people of the west are infrequently cowboys and never myths. They live in places like Denver and Salt Lake, Dillon and Boise, American Fork and American Falls, and they confront the real problems of a real region, and have gone some distance toward understanding... that they live in a land of little rain and big consequences.”

Of course, there were cowboys too, and the one photo of myself from out West that sits proudly on my wall shows me with a legendary one: John Wayne. When we met in Nevada, on the set of

what turned out to be his final film, “The Shootist,” Wayne made it clear that he did not have much use for The New York Times. At our first meal, he proposed a toast: “Here’s to The New York Times, goddamn it!”

Nevertheless, he was friendly and kind. He had nothing more to say about politics or newspapers. I was allowed to observe just about everything. I saw the Duke ride a horse, relax at dinner (drinking first a martini, then red wine) with Lauren Bacall and others. I laughed dutifully as he mimicked smoking marijuana.

A famous line from a Wayne movie, “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,” comes to mind: “When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.” Experiences like mine in the West were comprised of both fact and, indeed, legend. Energy and water politics might have been my best factual articles, but John Wayne made all my days in Denver and nights in fleabag hotels worthwhile.

### New Members

**Rebecca Baker**, managing editor of The New York Law Journal, started her journalism career around 1999 at The New Haven Register, where she was a staff writer. In 2004 she joined The Journal News for eight years. In 2012, she became a staff writer by The (Bergen) Record before going to The Law Journal in 2014.

**Patricia Bosworth**, a contributing editor at Vanity Fair magazine, which she joined in 1988, has been a journalist since the 1960s, when she became an editor at Woman’s Day. From 1969 to 1972, she was senior editor at McCall’s, then spent two years as managing editor of Harper’s Bazaar. Her work has appeared in such publications as The New York Times, New York magazine, The Nation and Esquire, and she has taught at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University and at New York University. She has written biographies of Montgomery Clift, Diane Arbus, Jane Fonda and Marlon Brando, plus a memoir, “Anything Your Little Heart Desires.”

**Francois Bringer** has been a freelance producer and director of documentary films since 2003. From 1984 to 1999 he was a producer for CBS News in Paris and London, turning out news segments throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. In 1999, he joined CNN, producing pieces for Financial News Network and then working with CNN senior correspondent Garrick Utley, in addition to covering a wide swath of events, including U.S. elections, the 9/11 attacks, and conflict in the Middle East.

**Thomas Easton** was a Silurian in the 1990s but dropped out when his work took him to Asia. Now he’s back in New York, where he is American finance editor at The Economist, which he joined in 2000. Earlier, he was New York bureau chief and then Asian business editor. Prior to joining The Economist, he was the New York and then the Tokyo bureau chief for The Baltimore Sun and a senior editor at Forbes.

**Ellie McGrath**, a former writer and editor with Time magazine and Condé Nast, is now with Witty Press, an independent book publisher which she founded in 2004. She was a staff writer at Time from 1976 to 1986. In 1988, she was on the Time team covering the Olympic Games. She went to Condé Nast in 1991 and was articles editor and a senior editor at Self magazine until 1998, when she returned to Time as an editor covering education.

**Peter Moses** was a reporter at The New York Post from 1984 to 1993. He then went to WWOR-TV as a reporter and producer until 2001. He later became an editor at a series of news websites in Westchester County.

**J. Alex Tarquinio** is senior digital editor at Time Inc., where she assigns and edits articles and infographics on topics including personal finance and small business. She has been a journalist since 1993. Her résumé includes stints as a staff reporter at American Banker; an editor at Forbes.com; book reviewer at the San Francisco Chronicle; and a contributor to Reader’s Digest, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. She is a past president of the Deadline Club.



# When Mike Quill Made Me the Story

BY EDWARD SILBERFARB

January marked the 50th anniversary of the transit strike that crippled New York City, launched the bedeviled administration of Mayor John V. Lindsay and provided center stage for one of the city's most colorful and provocative public figures, Michael J. Quill. My own involvement with Quill began several years earlier.

Mike Quill, a fiery, overstuffed leprechaun from County Kerry, started as a "ticket chopper" (the fare collection method on the early IRT), and rose to become president of Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union in New York City. He had a thick Irish brogue (some said it was fake) that he used effectively in denouncing management, the press and politicians, and in winning favor with his rank-and-file members. They were the subway motormen, conductors, track walkers, mechanics, change booth clerks, porters, bus drivers, in fact anyone paid by the hour who had anything to do with running the City's subway trains and buses.

It was December of 1961. The union's contract would expire the end of the year, and the biennial strike threat chorus had begun. "No contract, no work!" was the cry. The drumbeat would grow louder until New Year's Eve. Traditionally, settlements were reached at midnight.

I had been covering the 1961 transit contract negotiations for the New York Herald Tribune. Then came the mass meeting of union members to authorize a strike. It was in Manhattan Center at Eighth Avenue and 34th Street. Some 10,000 screaming transit workers crowded into the auditorium. I sat at the press table in front of the podium. Quill began with a few incendiary remarks to set the mood.

Then he produced a copy of the day's Herald Tribune, and cited an unsigned editorial. "I'll tell you what it says," he shouted. "You didn't read it. No working man reads that newspaper. It says Michael Quill wants a strike so he can take over the Central Labor Council (a federation of all New York City unions).

"That's a lie. That was written by Edward J. Silberfarb ('No! Boo! Hiss!'). You know what we're going to do? We're going to take up a collection and send him to journalism school." ("Yeah! Boo! Journalism School!!")

The shouting and hissing and booing roared down from the rear and from above like an avalanche. I was flanked at the press table by The New York Times and the Associated Press, and I wondered if I could count on them if things got out of hand. Better yet, I thought, would be to slide under the table.

I didn't have to. The uproar subsided. Quill turned his attention to other matters, like calling for a strike vote. A thunder of "yea's" and a strike was authorized if no settlement was reached. The meeting ended, and I rushed to a phone booth. The Trib was only seven blocks away, but first edition deadline had arrived, so I had to phone in my story. Then I walked to the office.

In the city room I drew some amused looks, but the night city editor was not amused. "Where the hell have you been?"

"I phoned in my story. I was on deadline."

"You didn't say that Quill attacked you in front of 10,000 transit workers."

"I didn't want to put myself in the story."

"Well, you're in it. The A.P. led with you and Quill. Sit down and rewrite it for the late city."

While I pecked at the typewriter, and



Michael Quill, head of the Transport Workers Union, holding a sign calling for a strike meeting.

squirmed at having to tell a first-person story, the editors argued about an editorial follow-up to the evening's events and to the editorial, which I had not written, but which Quill had used to arouse his followers.

At first they planned a flame-thrower response, denouncing Quill as a bully and a demagogue who abused the working press. Then calm prevailed and they agreed to say only that the person who wrote that editorial did go to a journalism school, but the Trib would accept Mr. Quill's generous offer and use the money for a scholarship for some wor-

thy applicant.

The TWU and the Transit Authority reached a contract agreement after an all-night "cliff hanger" negotiation New Year's Eve. Four years later they really did strike and paralyze the city. Quill tore up a court injunction to end the strike, said the judge could "drop dead in his black robe," and was thrown into jail. Suffering from a heart ailment, he was moved to a hospital, and died two weeks after the strike ended. He never became the head of the Central Labor Council. The scholarship money? It never came.

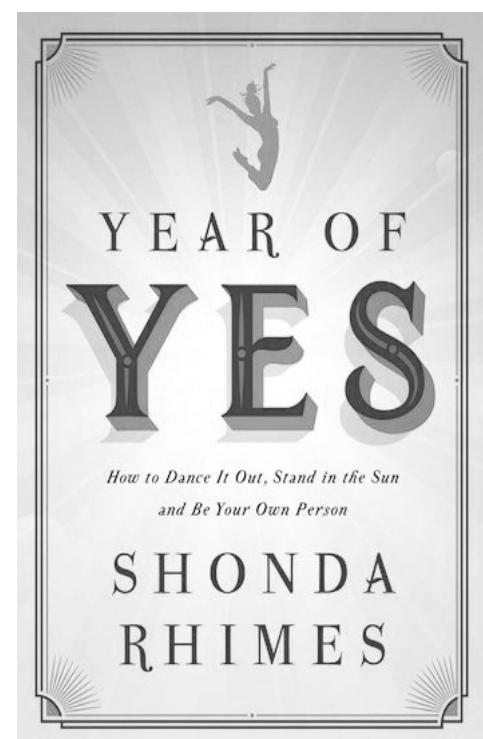
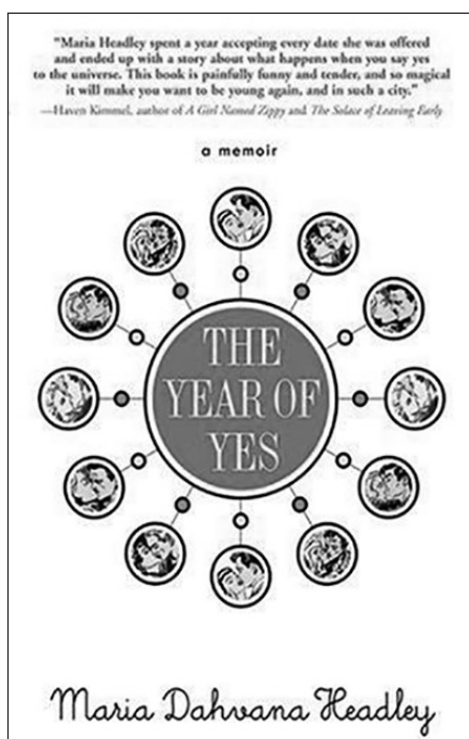
# Somebody Else's Great Idea

BY LEIDA SNOW

Anyone ever take one of your ideas and pass it off as theirs? It's happened to me, so I can definitely empathize with Maria Dahvana Headley. Her book, "The Year of Yes," was published in 2006. Publishers Weekly called it "sheer chick fluff, but amusing." One newspaper said it was the "poignant and hilarious" story of how Headley dated anyone who asked her out during the year and, in the end, how she found true love.

Tracee Sioux may have come up with the idea on her own, or maybe — knowing that you can't copyright an idea or a book title — she just grabbed Headley's and came up with "The Year of Yes" in 2012 to answer the question: "What if I did everything my Soul told me to do?" Her book is about aligning "with our Soul's purpose," so "the Universe makes sweet love to us."

Flash forward to a new book by Shonda Rhimes titled — you guessed it — "The Year of Yes." Rhimes, the award-winning creator and executive producer of TV's Grey's Anatomy and Scandal, has writing creds, and — may-



Yes, Yes, Yes. It was indeed the year — many years in fact — of Yes.

be — she came up with the idea to spend a year accepting any and all invitations and facing whatever she was afraid of.

The advance public relations from the publisher called this "poignant and hilarious." Sound familiar?

I figure we'll be looking at books with that title every few years. Publishers and editors seem to like it — in fact, they may have been involved with choosing the title and/or the idea of these efforts. And it's a swell theme.

How about a year in which the author decided to say yes to everything her partner asks for, including strange trips or sexual acts? Or 12 months of saying yes to everything her child asks for, including permission for activities beyond her age group? Or saying yes to her mother's requests, including spending a whole lot more time with her? Or always saying yes to her boss? Or agreeing to all telemarketers' offers? The options go to infinity.

Wait a minute, though. In researching "The Year of Yes," I came upon a cycle of books titled "But Enough About Me." Nancy Miller published hers in 2002, Jancee Dunn came out with hers in 2006, and Burt Reynolds' memoir was slated for late 2015.

I guess that's the trick: find a title you like and make sure no one's used it for a few years. Don't go for anything too well known, like *War and Peace*, and you're home free.



# The ‘Gentle Soul’ Of the New York Post

BY HERBERT HADAD

It's the lucky man or woman who finds the job he or she loves. Myron Rushetzky found such a job. But the most remarkable part of Myron's saga is that the job loved him back.

For almost 40 years Myron held various support staff slots at the New York Post, including the very visible city desk assistant, becoming the informal heart and soul of the paper. The essence of the mutual love affair with the often gruff and manic stable of reporters, photographers and editors was Myron's practice of sending everyone birthday or anniversary cards. And in a trade where deadlines mean everything, Myron's cards always arrived on time.

"A Postie once told me that for years he and his then wife (#2, he is now on his #3) thought that I was off by a day in sending my anniversary card to them until one year they went back and looked at their marriage license and realized they were celebrating their anniversary on the wrong day and I did have the right day," Myron said.

A onetime wireroom clerk, Rose Salyk, went on maternity leave and had a daughter and son, Colette and Lucien. They became the first children of the more than 200 recipients to get Myron's cards. Years later, her children, now in school, Rose called the Post with a story tip. "I got a little lazy with the birthday cards... Rose told me that her children really, really missed them.

"That was a benchmark moment that registered with me, and I went into full throttle with the birthday cards."

Charlie Carillo, a Post graduate and current novelist, remembered Myron this way:

"Myron Rushetzky is very much alive, but the legendary figure he cut in New York City journalism is now a thing of the past because Myron has hung up his telephone for good. To countless ink-stained wretches, past and present, this is like hearing that the Statue of Liberty is leaving the harbor. Myron was the ear of the New York Post. You called the city desk, you got Myron.

"Take a moment and think about what that job would be like. No publication in the history of the world makes more noise and pisses off more people than The Post. So anybody with a quarter and a gripe, a threat, a rant or a rave had access to the ear of Mr. Rushetzky. I answered phones at The Post on the day shift for more than a year, and the job eroded my already dubious love for humanity. The best part of my day was when Myron showed up to relieve me and my fellow crash-test dummy on the phones, Donnie Sutherland.

"By the end of our shift Donnie and I always looked as if we'd given blood, but Myron was immaculate and ready to go — hair neatly brushed, mustache trimmed to perfection, loose black vest open over his shirt. 'Anything I should know?' Myron would ask as he took the hot seat. 'Yeah, buddy. I'm very glad to see you.'"

Upon leaving the Post as support staff supervisor with a buyout in 2013 — "Don't say I retired" -- Myron suspended the mailing of cards but keeps the tradition alive via e-mails.

Reporter Mark Mooney, writing for CNN Money, profiled Rushetzky, now 63, as "the gentle soul who watched over the jaded souls of the New York Post."

Reporters who served on the paper over the years are known as "Posties" and the whole ragtag cadre has become known as "Post Nation." And of course they grow old, encounter misfortune, pass away.

Myron has assumed the role of notifying the "Nation" that it's time for a visit to Frank E. Campbell's.

When former reporter Margie Feinberg was in declining health, Myron alerted the Nation to visit her hospital room. She died without any family, and Myron then helped arrange a memorial service and the shiva, the Jewish mourning ritual.

Far from lugubrious, Rushetzky also "does" weddings, book publications, retirements. Aside from emails, he eschews the modern media. He also has been a stalwart Silurian for many years.

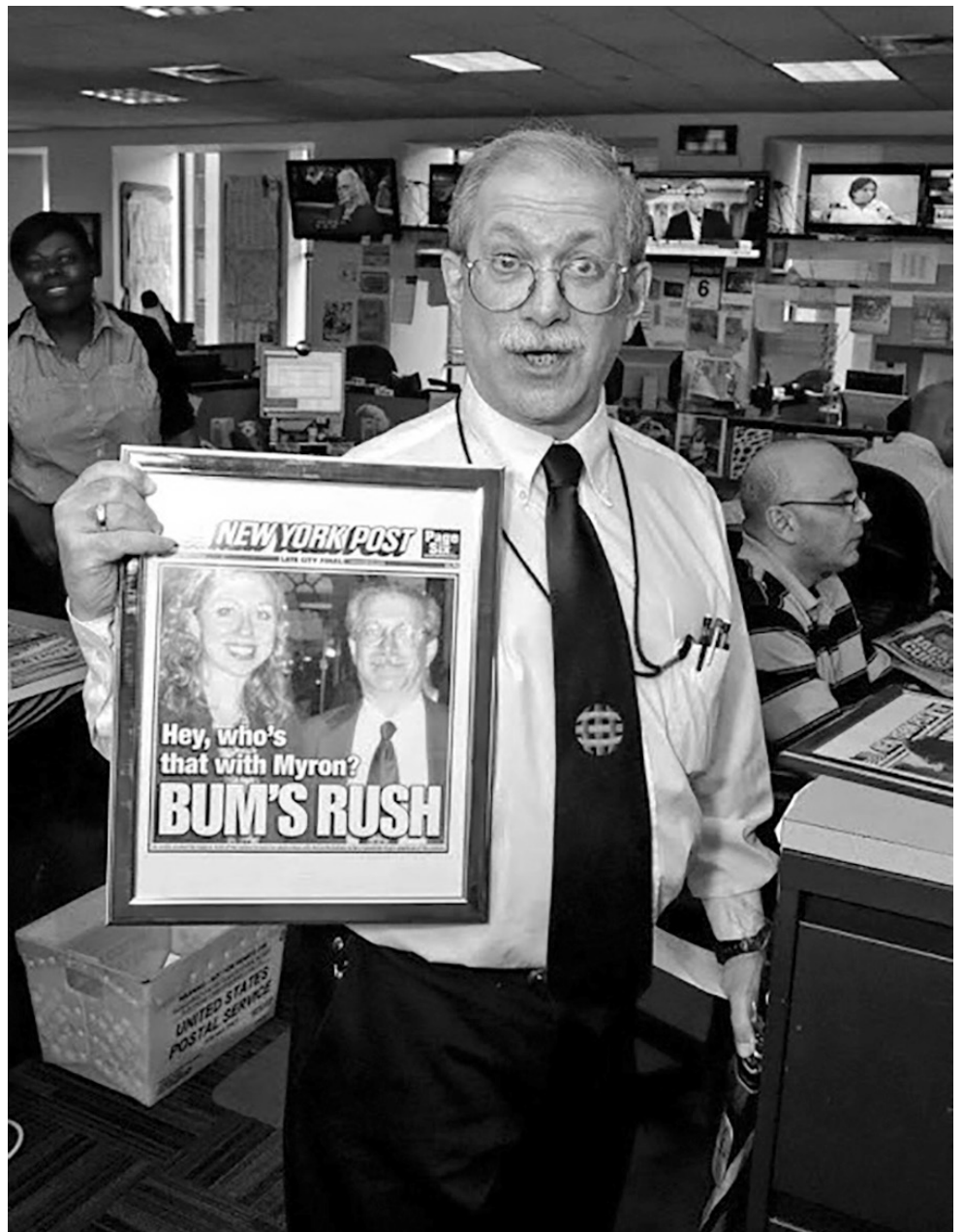
Oh, by the way, he also excelled in his job, a protégé of the late Bobby Spellman. Here is an example of Myron in motion:

"Yes, I worked for Bobby Spellman, 'God rest his soul.' Bobby called me 'Abracadabra' because with me on the floor, he could reassign other copy people (like Steve Cuzzo or Phil Mushnick or Beth Seymour or Laurel Gross, etc.) to other departments and confidently know that I could cover.

"One hot summer day in 1976 Bobby told me to go up to the Associated Press offices in Rockefeller Center to pick up a hard glossy copy of a photo that an editor wanted (again, this was 1976) and bring it back to the office, via public transportation, and *be back in an hour!* I literally ran from 210 South Street to the East Broadway subway station. I took the subway to Rockefeller Center. I ran through the subway station and through Rockefeller Center to the elevator, rode it up, while running in place, to the AP offices. I burst through the opening elevator doors and ran to the photo department (I had made regular pick-ups there when I worked on the lobster shift, so I knew where to go.) and cleaned out the New York Post coop. I ran back to the elevator, rode it down, running in place. I ran back to the subway. I ran back from the subway to the Post's newsroom at 210 South Street and handed Bobby the envelope. *65 minutes.* Bobby had told me to be back in an hour. I felt like I had let him down."

He also has had his share of newspaper excitement, including helping to track down reporters after midnight the night serial killer Son of Sam was arrested. With the Post under the management of foreigners with distinctly non-New York accents, Myron also had an amusing story to tell. Also late at night, a bulletin on the wires described a fatal fire in a brothel in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Editor Roger Wood and Metropolitan Editor Steve Dunleavy, both from across the pond and beyond, were at a Christmas party in Westchester County for Rupert Murdoch's supermarket tabloid The Star.

"Roger called to check in. Since he and Steve were at a party, I'm guessing they had consumed some alcohol. Steve started instructing me to call various reporters, who proved to be unreachable and Dunleavy's intensity rose. Finally I realized what was going on and after letting him rant, I told him that the fatal brothel fire was in Amsterdam, Netherlands, not on Amsterdam Avenue. Si-



Myron Rushetzky on his last day at the New York Post

lence. And the last thing I heard before he slammed the phone down was "(unprintable) King Roger!"

Myron is a graduate of City College and, according to LinkedIn, dabbled in early jobs — as a stock boy at the Century 21 department store and as office manager for P.R. man Mortimer Matz.

Myron last spoke with Spellman, his mentor, on Dec. 31, 1976. "I was on vacation and called to wish him a Happy New Year and remind him I'd be back to work on Monday, January 3. Bobby died in the early hours of Saturday, January 1. There was no Sunday edition at that time and I'll never forget seeing the devastated reaction of people coming in Monday and first learning that Bobby had died over the weekend." (I was a rewriter,

reporter and Westchester bureau chief for the Post from 1972 to 1979 and remember Spellman with great affection. His favorite expression for cooling off an exasperated staffer: "All you need is a good rubdown with a pork chop.")

Myron, a good-looking fellow with blond-gray hair and a bushy mustache, is single and does his good deeds from his home in Queens. If one were asked to describe what he looks like, he looks like a New York Semitic Leprechaun.

He is fond of quoting the great Mary McGrory, the columnist for the Washington Star and Washington Post who died in 2004. "I should confess, I have always felt a little sorry for people who didn't work for newspapers."

P.S. Myron's birthday is July 15.

## Society of the Silurians Officers 2015-2016

### OFFICERS:

**President**  
**BETSY ASHTON**

**First Vice-President**  
**BERNARD KIRSCH**

**Secretary**  
**LINDA AMSTER**

**Treasurer**  
**KAREN BEDROSIAN**  
**RICHARDSON**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS:**  
**DAVID A. ANDELMAN**  
**RALPH BLUMENTHAL**  
**JACK DEACY**  
**BILL DIEHL**  
**GERALD ESKENAZI**  
**TONY GUIDA**  
**MYRON KANDEL**  
**CAROL LAWSON**  
**BARBARA LOVENHEIM**  
**BEN PATRUSKY**  
**ANNE ROIPHE**  
**WENDY SCLIGHT**  
**MICHAEL SERRILL**  
**MORT SHEINMAN**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**  
**ALLAN DODDS FRANK**

**GOVERNORS EMERITI:**  
**GARY GATES**  
**HERBERT HADAD**

**GOVERNORS EMERITI:**  
**ROBERT D. McFADDEN**  
**LEO MEINDL**

### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

**Awards**  
**RALPH BLUMENTHAL and**  
**MICHAEL SERRILL**

**Dinner**  
**WENDY SCLIGHT**

**Membership**  
**MORT SHEINMAN**

**Nominating**  
**BEN PATRUSKY**

**Social Media**  
**BILL DIEHL and**  
**BARBARA LOVENHEIM**

**Website**  
**BEN PATRUSKY,**  
**MORT SHEINMAN, co-editors**

**Webmaster**  
**FRED HERZOG**

**SILURIAN NEWS:**  
**BERNARD KIRSCH, EDITOR**

**CONTINGENCY FUND:**  
**LARRY FRIEDMAN**





## James J. and the Bee's Knees

For icons of New York in Prohibition, it's hard to beat Mayor James J. Walker, who from 1926 until '32 was known as the Nightclub Mayor. Here he is in his tux, cigarette carefully palmed and probably with a flask of Golden Wedding in his hip pocket. It's March 11, 1927, the night of New York Newspaper Women's Club Ball. The organization's president, the gritty feminist reporter Emma Bugbee of the Trib, is dressed to have a sip of the drink of the day, perhaps the Bee's Knees (honey and homemade gin). Emma started at the New York Tribune in 1910, after graduating from Barnard, and was still there when some of us Silurians worked for it on 41<sup>st</sup> Street. By then, she was famed for her coverage of Eleanor Roosevelt. Emma's club, founded two years before the Society of the Silurians, is now known as the Newswomen's Club. It too has its headquarters at the National Arts Club, and the president is Toni Reinhold of Reuters.

—Betsy Wade

## The Subject Was Money

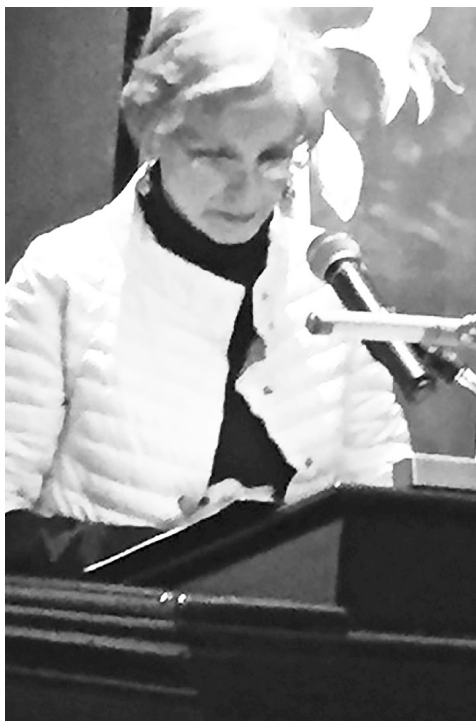
Dispensing the plain-talk advice that has made her one of the country's top financial faces, Jane Bryant Quinn struck an optimistic tone at the Silurians' February luncheon at the National Arts Club.

Referring to the current political climate, as well as the economic tsunami of 2008, she said, "We have all, all, been through this before and survived."

Much of her talk centered about retirement, and the best way to invest. She reiterated the stance she has taken—from her 30 years as a Newsweek columnist, to gigs on the CBS and ABC networks, to her current assignments for Bloomberg.com—that total-market funds and government-indexed funds are the safest route. She was not so sanguine about certain universal-life policies and variable annuities.

She sprinkled humor into her talk—warning the lunch crowd about financial advisers who use what she termed the "Doppler Effect: Stupid ideas seem intelligent when thrown at you quickly."

And she recalled the wedding of a friend, a widow, who wanted to make certain that her children would be the beneficiaries of certain holdings—and



Jane Bryant Quinn  
at our February lunch

had a notary public certify papers as soon as the ceremony ended.

Ultimately, she said she believed that the market would reward investors over the long haul—especially using the 4 percent return formula—and had this comforting advice: "To worry about what the stock market will do today or tomorrow is just fruitless."

—Gerald Eskenazi

## Lots of Pages To Turn

One hundred and fifty people let their lunch get cold as they listened to fellow-journalist Robert Caro spin his fascinating tales about two of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most important figures.

"My books are about power," said Caro in his talk at the National Arts Club in April. Speaking before one of the largest audiences in Silurians' history, he detailed the background as well as the nitty-gritty work in producing his books about Robert Moses and Lyndon Johnson.

Caro burst upon the national literary scene in 1974 with "The Power Broker," the biography and critique of Moses, perhaps the most significant urban planner in United States history. And then, in 1982, he published the first of his projected five volumes on Johnson.

Just the sheer numbers of words fascinated not only the Silurians, but Caro himself. And he credited one of his early newspaper editors with helping him to learn how to dig, to not take things for granted. That advice?

"Turn every page."

It was a phrase he used often in his talk, and the advice still makes sense. When he was rummaging through hundreds of boxes of notes and letters at Johnson's Texas library, he came across one that was innocuously marked.

Still, Caro opened it and came across a letter from Johnson's paramour, Alice Glass. It was simple advice: at a time when those around him were telling him to run for the Senate, she told him to run for the House of Representatives. The rest is history. To Caro it symbolized the fact that those three words he had heard years before, "Turn every page," worked quite well.

Doing the kind of archival work that his research demanded was a chore



Robert Caro speaking to a sellout crowd of 150 people at the April Silurians luncheon.

he could not do alone. He asked his wife, Ina, to stand before the luncheon attendees. She not only helped him find the arcane of the lives he was investigating, but also helped bankroll him—to his surprise. For during the writing of "The Power Broker" he had little money. One day Ina told him she had sold their Long Island home so he could continue to write.

The book, though, resulted in the first of his two Pulitzer Prizes, and afforded him the time to do his relentless research.

In reflecting on writing books and his earlier career as a newspaper reporter, Caro contended: "There's no difference in writing books and journalism. It's writing the truth."

Caro declined to comment on a current national figure, Donald Trump, saying only, "I'd like to see his tax returns."

—Gerald Eskenazi

## Law Enforcement Is in His Genes

Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson's first words before the Silurians March luncheon were not about his initiatives for handling low-level crime, nor even about his new programs that have made an impact on bringing illegal guns to the city.

Rather, Thompson paid homage to his mother in speaking at the March luncheon.

"I'm standing here before you thanks to Clara Thompson," he said. "She raised three children alone. She was a female police officer when that was rare. She was one of the first women police officers to patrol New York's streets."

Thompson has been at the highest levels of law-enforcement. A former Federal prosecutor in the Eastern District of New York, he delivered the opening statement for the prosecution in the notorious Abner Louima beating and torture case. Thompson also served as a special assistant to the Treasury Department and also founded his own firm.

But now, as the Brooklyn D.A., his far-ranging concerns include breaking up criminal activity such as the "iron pipeline," which he described as bringing in illegal guns from the South, and using wiretaps to prevent crime.

"In my two years, we've been able to take out three gun-smuggling rings—550 guns."

Equally important to Thompson is justice for the innocent, and he has created the country's largest team to look



Ken Thompson  
at the Silurians luncheon

into possible wrong convictions. Another program, Begin Again, helps those with open summons warrants, along with one that aids young offenders, in certain cases, reach a resolution without a criminal record.

If there is a theme to his tenure, it probably could be summed up with this statement: "As I follow in my mother's footsteps, I'm determined there will be justice for all."

—Gerald Eskenazi

**Society of the Silurians**  
PO Box 1195  
Madison Square Station  
New York, NY 10159  
212.532.0887  
[www.silurians.org](http://www.silurians.org)