

A Letter from the Fried-Cassorla's - 2018

If you cannot see the pictures, please copy and paste this line into your browser:

http://www.fried-cas.com/Family_and_Friends/family_letters/fcfamltr18/

Dear family and friends,

We started this e-newsletter back in December and had just returned from a delightful trip to Longwood Gardens. In a way, this little journey was symbolic of other trips, large and small -- and, if you will, those of life itself. All filled with chances to enjoy, learn and experience. In a different letter, I will tell you about our great trip to Norway and Denmark and show you some pix that I think are amazing! If you don't mind, this letter will be told in the second person, since it does come from both of us, as we took turns writing and editing it.



It is now early January (though not as shown above, obviously!) Meanwhile, here's an update on us....



Martha's Singing City Choir and other choirs joined in the Silent Night Singalong at the Kimmel Center

Hear what is sounded like [HERE!](#)

Martha's performing with, Singing City, and Myers Community Choir

Singing continues to be a huge part of Martha's life! She sings with Singing City (her main gig), and Myers Community Choir. Albert is with Myers choir too. And this winter, we are preparing to sing Loch Lomond, an ancient Scottish folk tune. A fellow chorister and excellent composer, Chris Edelstein, has composed a sweet 4-part harmony for it. We're enjoying the rehearsals as much as we will the performance this upcoming January. If you're not familiar with the tune, here is a version from youtube that you might like: [Loch Lomond](#).

Martha is perhaps at her happiest when she sings -- and her enthusiasm is infectious, whether around the house or in a concert hall. Plus, she has vocal instruction. This year, her new teacher is Sheryl Woods, and Martha loves her weekly lessons.

Martha continues to enjoy providing psychotherapy to patients in Jenkintown, where she maintains a private office, and in Center City (downtown). Also, she has a great and active Book Club based on our own 2 to 3 block area. They have stimulating readings, discussions and chats every month.

Emma's varied life



Emma has been enjoying her job back at the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation. She has served as Director of Marketing and now will be Creative Director. Emma helped get an ambitious program off the ground to rehab and re-purpose the Cherry Street Pier. It is now a multi-use artistic space, with performances, galleries, concerts and more. In her new job, her duties are only now taking shape. One aspect will be art-related, perhaps pertaining to the huge new project to cover part of the I-95 trench that now separates the city from the waterfront.

Emma and James Healey have been together for awhile now. James is a software engineer with a great smile and a genial manner. They recently got a puppy, Bernie. He is very progressive. (Our joke, not theirs!)



Emma and James

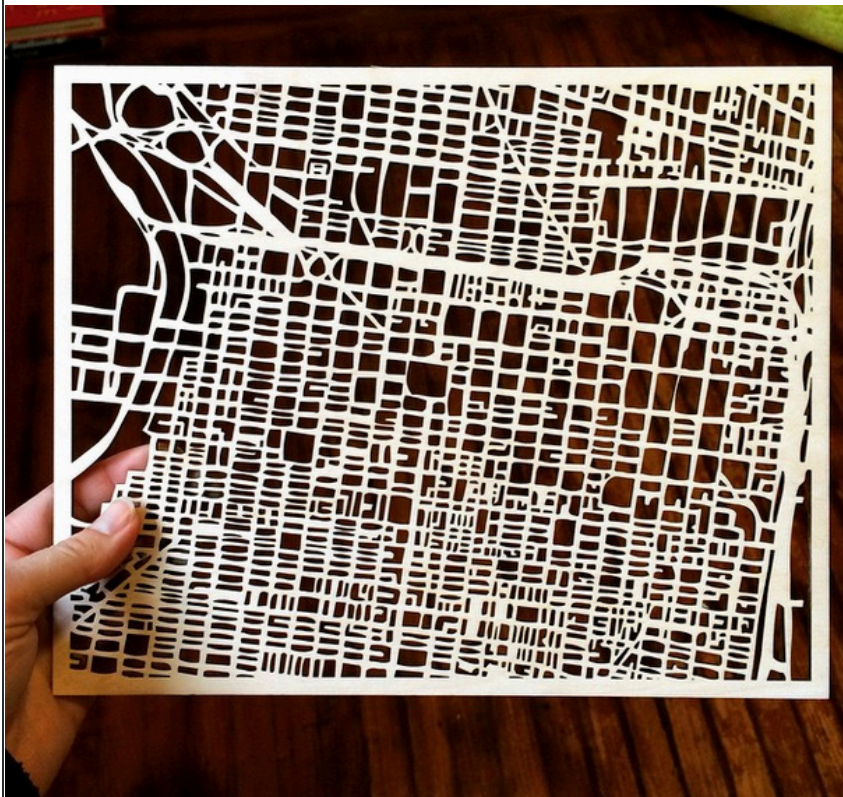
Also, Emma continues making her wonderful wooden maps of neighborhoods in Philadelphia. She sells some of these on the site called [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com). Since this has been going so well, she will expand her focus to other cities. Some of the profits from this enterprise have gone to charities.



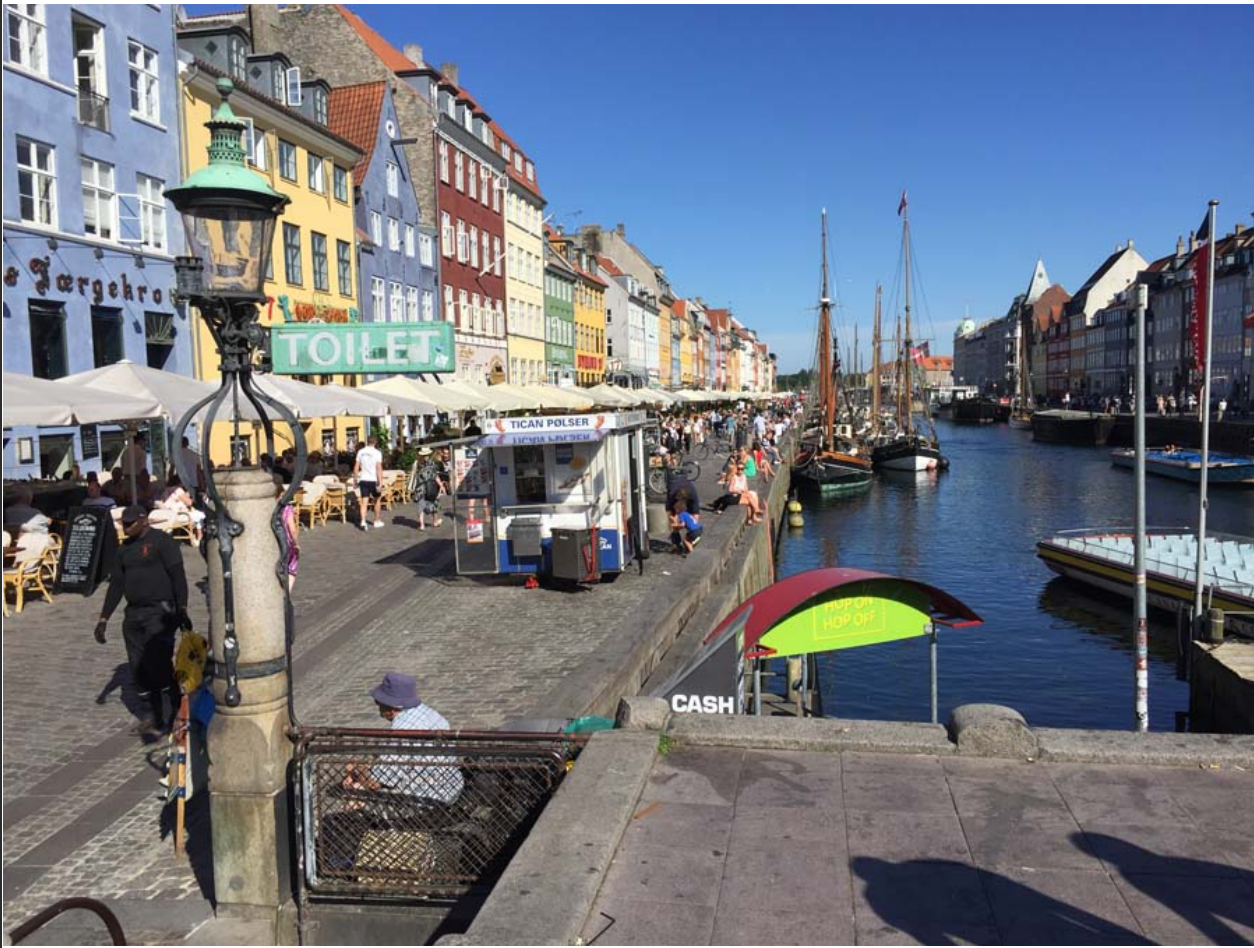
Our friends Jeannie and Gail visited a few months ago, with their adorable pooch, Charlie! We went down to Penn's Landing and the new Cherry Street Pier, which Emma helped launch and open . This archway was one of several cool features of the area that day. Jeannie, Gail and Charlie were the others!.



Martha and Emma outside a trendy bar-restaurant called the Writer's Rehab Cafe!



Emma's handiwork, an enterprise which she is expanding. Stay tuned!



Copenhagen harbor scene. We stayed about 3 blocks from this scenic spot!

Copenhagen, Denmark and Trondheim, Norway

We were fortunate to visit Copenhagen (above) and a fjord near Trondheim, Norway (below).



Enjoying teaching Poetry at Gwynedd Mercy University



Emceeding at our first Poetry Slam! (though not the first in the university's history)

This has been a fabulous experience for me, start to finish. I am about to begin my fifth semester of teaching this course, Introduction to Poetry. The course has three components:

1. a survey of great poetry (including some poems that they may not especially enjoy but which I think are important).
2. poems of all kinds that I know they will like, based on experience;
3. personal creativity -- meaning writing their own poetry,

My students continue to be interested, creative, hard-working, and more. If you are sincerely interested, I can email you a copy of my curriculum, into which I poured so much effort. I can hardly describe how wonderful it was to research and teach this course! A few people I know said they wanted to virtually "take the course." If you are among them, let me know and I will work on it with you. We had our first Poetry Slam this fall. The administration supported us with signage, a P.A.system, publicity and more. Best of all, the students presented their excellent work. We were all proud!



This is University Hall on the Penn campus, where Albert took the Rome to the Renaissance history course.

Working for progressive causes and candidates, studying at the University of Pennsylvania

Having Donald Trump as our new president was a set-back for the world. Both of us and many of our friends are angry but motivated. We are moving on and are energized. His victory was engineered mainly by the billionaires who control our society and do everything they can to keep Americans distracted from the truth and unable to see it.

As examples, we need Free Health Care for All and Free Universal College Education. The U.S. can afford these things. Coverage of those issues was scant. Yet coverage of Trump's every ignorant utterance was blasted all over the media. We are working with Our Revolution, founded by Bernie Sanders, to bring about a more just society. Learn more at: <https://ourrevolution.com>

With our chapter of Our Revolution / Elkins Park Indivisible, we sponsored several well-attended Forums featuring informed, interesting speakers. We also participated in protest rallies. And we worked successfully to support the campaign of Madeleine Dean. Our topics and guests included:

Author Roy Eidelson on media manipulation, and how the powers that be convince us that "we" cannot afford health care; Kay Lasker on Medicare for All; Turn PA Blue on why and how we can turn Pennsylvania Democratic and pass progressive legislation; Activist-lawyer Mike Bomstein on fighting the Sunoco gas pipeline; Steve Strahs on Election Integrity

I continue to audit courses in the region. Just as my Dad did. This past fall, I took a course called *Rome to the Renaissance*. It was a delightful tonic! We read and discussed original texts by such authors as Montaigne, Bocaccio, Catherine of Siena, and others. Always great to be on the Penn campus. So much going on there, and the libraries are fantastic. Plus, I got to hang with my pal Joe Holub, who works in the library there.

Funny-Cute! Do you really want funny and cute? Really, really? All right, you convinced me! Try [THIS](#) youtube video!

Betty keeps on keepin' on at 96!

Betty Cassorla turned 96 on Valentine's Day, 2017! We are planning a 97th birthday party for February 16th, which is two days after her actual birthday on Valentine's Day! My Mom continues to live at our home where she has lived since 1957 in Bellmore, Long Island, NY. And while her mind is not as sharp as it used to be, we still convey the love we have for each other. My brother Marshall visits regularly, and she has good-humored, dedicated aides. They talk to her during the day quite a bit... The robot cat we bought for her turned out not to be much of a comfort (she was scared of it). She does enjoy a mechanical bird we got for her that sings multiple songs.

Despite all of this, my Mom is in reasonably good health, with aches and pains of course. We have been singing to: "*People will Say We're in Love*," from *Oklahoma* and "*Loverly*" from *My Fair Lady* recently. If you want to hear my mom tell some of her stories, search on Youtube for Betty Cassorla, and you will find 9 or so.

Hear Betty talk about the strange people who tormented her in the 1930's at Steeplechase Park [HERE!](#)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kr0wNuzNk68&index=2&list=PL-qb62f3pOC6WD2FmfKc691BIPZvsEbb->



Volunteering at Edison H.S. - plus Philosophy Club News

Edison High School remains in Albert's mind. He has many friends there among the faculty, and he still got ONE warm greeting from a former students. Hey, it's been nearly 4 years since I taught there! He only spent one day there this past fall, but hopes to visit more in the spring. Here is a link to a detailed account of one day of volunteering this year:

http://fried-cas.com/edison/#May_11_2018

Our **Melrose Park Philosophy Club** continues to ponder concepts such as chaos theory, philosophy of science and more. We have a wonderful group of folks gathering every two months or so for great conversation and camaraderie. Interested in attending or getting on our e-mail list? Do drop me a line!

Our 2018 topics included:

- **Democracy** - featuring a chapter of my brother-in-law Fred Whelan's new book, Democracy, Theory and Practice.
- https://www.amazon.com/Democracy-Theory-Practice-Frederick-Whelan-ebook/dp/B07H4Y332N/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?sr=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1545841945&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=Fred+Whelan+Democracy

- Robert Kurzban - led by friend Len
- Robert Sapolsky and his book *Behave*, led by Justin Kaplan
- and more

Upcoming - a second session on *What is Consciousness?* - to be led by Albert in February. Interested?

Zoo trip with nephew Jesse - an annual tradition continues!



Celebrating Hannah's birthday!



We enjoyed a grand bash in Hannah's honor at the White Dog cafe in west Philly. They have separate rooms there, so you can actually conduct a conversation!

Martha's family... sadly, Aunt Carol passed



Here are the Maier siblings, children of Rose Ostrow Maier and Nathan Maier: (l. to r.) Marcia, Carol, Lee, and Elsie. Carol passed away just recently. She was a very accomplished woman, an attorney and a good soul. Aunt Marcia survives, and we visited her this summer in Nashville, TN.



Martha's grandma Rose Maier, holding Uncle Herbert! Circa maybe 1915?

August vacation scenes, Sea Isle City, NJ



Danny smiles enigmatically. Maybe teasing us about the location of his next gig!



Left to right: Dan, Hannah and Jesse Fried-Petersen.



Just scenic beauty on our trip back from the shore!

Just some beauty and history shots!



Van Gogh teapot at the Philadelphia Museum of Art store



Stanley and Elsie Fried - dear souls!



Betty and Lou - My mom celebrates her 97th soon!



Nephew Nathan Cassorla continues to train as a nurse and work at Stanford Health Care



Friends Dan and Martha Ruffo from Rochester visited us this year, and we had a wonderful time together!

I continue to talk, lunch and occasionally work off calories by running with my great and attentive friend Dick Goldberg!

Also, as the official biographer of my lifelong friend, Mark Zakarin, I am hard at work on new entries.





Cleomes need no permission to be beautiful!



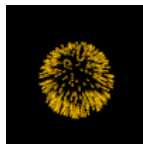
Penn campus in fall



Gaudy petunias in the neighborhood, doin' their thing!

Well, that's it for now! Stay good and be as happy as you can possibly be!

Happy New Year!





Love,

Albert, Martha, and family!

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Poems, movie reviews, biographies, photography, plays and more are at:

<http://www.fried-cas.com/creative>

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