

*Dan's Papers*

# 2017 OFFICIAL PROGRAM

SATURDAY, AUGUST  
== 19 ==

BATTING PRACTICE 12:30  
GAME TIME 2P.M.  
HERRICK PARK, E.H.

## ARTISTS 69TH ANNUAL CHARITY SOFTBALL GAME WRITERS

10:30 FUTURE A&W STARS  
SKILLS CHALLENGE  
11:30 HOME RUN DERBY

[artistswritersgame.org](http://artistswritersgame.org)

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# OFFICIAL PROGRAM



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The East Hampton Artists Writers Annual Softball Game is dedicated to building a community of artists, writers, celebrities, volunteers, and friends who are focused on supporting organizations that serve those in need on the East End of Long Island. As the longest continuing tradition in our area, we've come together each year to create a fun, festive event in the spirit of entertainment and competition for the mutual benefit and advancement of local charities that provide vital human services.

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## A Brief History of the Game

**THE ARTISTS & WRITERS** annual softball game began as a picnic on Sundays in the summer of 1948. It was played by artists such as Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Philip Pavia, Jackson Pollock, and Joan Mitchell. Everyone brought a dish. Some brought drinks. Two writers joined in this picnic, Barney Rosset of Grove Press, whose girlfriend was Joan Mitchell, and Harold Rosenberg, an art critic. All of this took place on Wilfrid Zogbaum’s front yard.

The artists had moved to Springs and the East End for cheap rent, larger studios and an easier life. They discussed art, gossiped, ate, drank, and shared in camaraderie. Some recall what a glorious time it was. The war was over, the world’s depression lessening, and more artist’s work was being seen in New York galleries. Some were successful in sales and reputation. Some drank too much. Most were just young artists anxious to be part of the emerging art scene. Writers joined the artists in the ’60s and ’70s. Irwin Shaw, Willie Morris, and James Jones were among the group who expanded to include politicians, actors, musicians, publishers, editors, and television personalities. The Game has included governors, mayors, senators, a former President and a Supreme Court justice.

Most importantly, the Game is now played to raise funds for four local charities that provide vital human services and it would not exist if it were not for the humor & determination of Leif Hope, who has for more than 50 years kept this Game alive—with a little help from his friends. Leif’s charm and wit have endeared many along the way—mostly women—to help keep him organized. Hats off to them. So have fun, buy lots of raffles, shirts, hats, posters and notecards. Enjoy our burgers, hot dogs, ice cream and Snapple. It is all for a great cause!

*We thank you for coming to the 69th Annual Artists & Writers Game!*

## Today’s Game Benefits Four Worthy Charities

**EAST END HOSPICE** is a New York State Certified Hospice, providing an individualized plan of care for patients, their families and loved ones throughout the difficult time of illness and loss. Since 1991, our team of skilled professionals and volunteers offers social, emotional, and spiritual support and pain and symptom control in a familiar and loving environment. No one is denied care because of inability to pay. Our bereavement care services are offered throughout the East End community. Our staff are extensively trained in grief therapy. East End Hospice also offers Camp Good Grief, a summer day camp for children who have experienced a loss—a place where fun is mixed with therapy, and a skilled bereavement staff plan and lead each day with care.

**ELEANOR WHITMORE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER.** Filling a need for day care in East Hampton while supporting single parents, working families and the businesses in the community that employ them, Eleanor Whitmore Early Childhood Center provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of pre-school children. Since 1969, the Center provides an environment that contributes to each child’s sense of belonging, gives recognition for effort and accomplishment, and encourages each child to express ideas freely without fear of rejection or ridicule. The only licensed New York State day care center in the town, the Center relies on contributions to maintain its vital programs and meet its growing needs.

**PHOENIX HOUSE ACADEMY OF LONG ISLAND.** The nation’s leading non-profit substance abuse treatment and prevention organization runs ten programs on Long Island. It provides treatment and a variety of prevention and intervention services to schools and communities. It offers a safe haven and a chance to rebuild damaged lives. Phoenix House treatment is comprehensive and includes health care, education, and job training among its broad array of supportive services that enable residents to leave drugs behind and start healthy, productive new lives as part of the Long Island community. Phoenix Academy of Long Island, is a 45-bed residential, adolescent treatment and school program in Wainscott. East Hampton Outpatient uses a combination of individual and group counseling approaches. They are a small program that provides clients with individualized attention, as well as support, counseling, education, and advocacy. The East Hampton Outpatient program is a phased program for adults and adolescents that begins with education and orientation. The second phase of treatment is a recovery phase and the final phase prepares the client for self-preservation and discharge. Phoenix House programs have been saving lives and strengthening families and communities since 1967.

**THE RETREAT’S** mission is to provide safety, shelter and support for victims of domestic abuse and to break the cycle of family violence. In pursuit of that mission, The Retreat offers residential and nonresidential services, including a 24/7 domestic violence hotline, group and individual counseling, legal advocacy, violence prevention education and crime victim assistance, as well as a comprehensive fatherhood program, self-sufficiency and financial literacy training programs, rental assistance, batterer education, and collaborations to offer support to victims living with mental illness, in foster care, substance abuse treatment and developmental disabilities communities.

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AUGUST 19, 2017

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UMPIRES

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David Brandman

ARTISTS

Walter Bernard

David Blinken

Russell Blue

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Peter Borish

David Brandman

Kevin Brennan

Tommy Clohessy

Peter Cook

Michael Dougherty

Dennis Duswalt

Eric Ernst

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Ronnette Riley

Thomas Romo

Hal Schroer

George Schulman

Lori Singer

Stu Sleppin

Billy Strong

Richard Sullivan

Chris Wragge

WRITERS

Jerry Antil

Ken Auletta

David Baer

Carl Bernstein

David Bernstein

Gabrielle Bluestone

Brian Burns

Bill Collage

Donnie Deutsch

John Franco

Jordan Green

Mark Green

Dan Greenburg

Zack O'Malley Greenburg

Jenna Hammond

Age Hollander

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# Walter Bernard Design is proud to support the 69th Annual Artists & Writers Charity Softball Game

*Walter Bernard and Fautia Kingue*



## Two New Events Take the Field at the Artists & Writers Game



This must be how the artists and writers feel on the inside once they take the field.

**I**t's time to play ball! **The 69th Artists and Writers Charity Softball Game**, one of the East End's longest running traditions—first played in Wilfrid Zogbaum's front yard in 1948 and now played annually at Herrick Park behind the Stop & Shop in East Hampton—takes place on Saturday, August 19. The annual game is always held on a glorious Saturday in August and features famous journalists, authors, painters, designers and others. Notable alumni from over the years include Willem De Kooning, Pelé, Dick Cavett, Jackson Pollock, Paul Simon, Alec Baldwin, Neil de Grasse Tyson, Mike Lupica, Carl Bernstein and countless others. *Dan's Papers* founder Dan Rattiner will again serve as umpire.

This year's game boasts two new additions. Leading off, the **Future Artists & Writers Kids Clinic** will be led by Eddie McCarthy of Hamptons Baseball Camp at 10:30 a.m. on game day. Aspiring stars between ages 5 and 11 can take the field to throw, bat and run. Players will be given instruction focused on defensive reads, base running, batting practice and more. This event is free but space is limited, and pre-registration is required, so please sign up at [awgame.org/events](http://awgame.org/events).

Following the Kids Clinic, adult sluggers will step up to the plate at the **Hamptons Home Run Challenge**, where two-person teams of a pitcher and batter will swing for the title of

Hamptons Home Run Champs. In this fierce and friendly home-run-derby-style competition, teams will be on the clock to see how many balls they can send over the outfield wall. The winning team will receive Hamptons Home Run Challenge Trophies, a \$500 gift certificate to Pierre's in Bridgehampton and four tickets to the 2018 Dan's GrillHampton. The entry fee to this inaugural event is a \$100 charitable donation to the Artists & Writers Game per team. Each team member gets an official Hamptons Home Run Derby shirt, commemorative photo and coverage in *Dan's Papers*.

Come check out the artists, writers and celebrities in action and enjoy hot dogs, hamburgers and ice cream—and more! Bring a chair and plan to get a shirt, hat and soak in all the fun of this timeless tradition—all for the benefit of agencies on the East End that provide vital human services. There's a suggested \$10 donation for admission. All money raised from the game will go to four worthy East End charities: East End Hospice, Eleanor Whitmore Childhood Center, The Retreat and Phoenix House Academy of Long Island.

East End Hospice provides care and comfort for terminally ill patients, their families and loved ones. Eleanor Whitmore Early Childhood Center is the only nonprofit

educational organization providing full-day, year-round childcare in East Hampton. It offers programs for pre-school children ages 18 months to five years to learn, explore and create. The Retreat in East Hampton provides safety, shelter and support for victims of domestic abuse and works to break the cycle of family violence. The Phoenix House Academy of Long Island is a substance abuse treatment center where young men make strides toward recovery while continuing their education.

For the full experience, head to the **Pre-Game Party** on Friday night, August 18, to celebrate and help raise more funds before the game at Schenck Fuel Yard, 62 Newtown Lane, East Hampton. A suggested \$25 donation per person will get you a fun evening of drinks, food and access to a live auction.

All of these events lead up to the big game at 2 p.m. on Saturday. Batting practice for both teams begins at 12:30 p.m. Don't miss out! ■

—Jordan Green

*The 69th annual Artists and Writers Game will be played at Herrick Park in East Hampton on Saturday, August 19. The rain date is Saturday, August 26. To purchase tickets for the Pre-Game Party or to sign up for the Kids Clinic and/or the Hamptons Home Run Challenge, visit [awgame.org/events](http://awgame.org/events).*

## Culinary Delights Come to the 2017 Game



A star in the kitchen will cook for the stars on the field and in the stands in East Hampton.



**S**ayan Isaksson is the executive chef and owner of four different amazing restaurants—all of them housed in the same old theatre building (Jarlateatern) at Kungstensgatan 2 in Stockholm, Sweden.

His first restaurant, Esperanto, opened in November 2005 and was awarded with one star in the Michelin Guide in early 2007, which they have kept ever since. Imouto, a 9-seater sushi bar housed in Esperanto's dining room, was also awarded one star in the Michelin Guide in 2017.

Three of his restaurants are among the top 32 restaurants (constituting "International Master Class" and "Swedish master class") in White Guide 2016, Sweden's most authoritative restaurant guide. In addition, Esperanto garnered the title "Restaurant of the year—gastronomy" with a score of 40/40—the highest food rating White Guide have ever awarded. This makes Esperanto No. 1 in the Nordic Countries, according to White Guide Nordic 2017.

In the years 2016 and 2015, Sayan Isaksson had the honor of being in charge of the Nobel Banquet Menu together with Pastry Chef Daniel Roos (the menu for 2015 can be seen at [nobelprize.org/ceremonies/menus/menu-2015.html](http://nobelprize.org/ceremonies/menus/menu-2015.html)).

During his time in the Swedish National Culinary Team between the years 2000–2004, the team won The Culinary World Cup (in 2002) and were the overall winners of the World Culinary Olympics in 2004.

### The Philosophy of Esperanto:

"We want Esperanto to be a treat for all senses. We strive to provide a whole, where food, drink and people work together, in the best possible way. We are inspired by all manner of things from around the world. Gastronomically, our tongue is universal and the produce we favor is carefully selected, with a view to caring for, and respecting nature.

"Esperanto is housed in the old Jarlateatern theatre. The dining room interior is, in large part, the same as when plays were staged here. There is a timeless quality to the restaurant, and a lingering romantic air that we find most attractive. Also, a sense of the past colors the craft, details and movements that are Esperanto's—something we manifest with the help of shapes and flavors, feel and precision.

"I'm really excited to be doing something in the United States now... and the pre-game reception for the Artists & Writers Softball Game in East Hampton seems like the kind of fun event at which to offer my culinary creations for the first time in this country!

"I'm also looking forward to being Grillmaster on Saturday at the game itself.... And, to make it an even more enjoyable experience for everyone there, I've created a number of delicious, creative and unique condiments to go with the hotdogs and hamburgers." ■

## Reflections on the Game

### Eric Ernst

*Healthy competition or blood sport?*

The head of *NBC News* lay sprawled in the dirt, his face a Kabuki mask of pain and confusion, his shoulder twisted and contorted at an unnatural angle while nearby, on first base, stood the former heavyweight boxer and one-time Great White Hope, whose head's up hustle (and bone crushing collision) had won him an infield single.

Among the spectators, who had come to see celebrities like Paul Simon, Christie Brinkley or Regis Philbin, the initial response was a kind of shocked silence. Midst the startled hush while the television executive was carted off the field and taken to Southampton Hospital, I heard someone nearby ask, "What the hell was that? I thought this was a friendly game."

A game made up of friends perhaps, but in the many years since I started watching the game as a child I've seen the textbook evolution of a competition that is, in the deluded minds of the players themselves, as intense and legitimate as the Red Sox against the Yankees, Muhammad Ali versus Joe Frazier, or the Celtics facing the Lakers. Motivated by the same explosively flammable combination of competitive drive and repetitive familiarity (absent, of course, any discernible athletic prowess), the Artist and Writers game illustrates with immediate clarity that victory is most satisfying when it's over those one is most familiar with.

As I once thought I heard the noted author Ken Auletta intone, he whose graceful fielding at first base is so often accented by quotes from Louisa May Alcott, "Rivalry adds so much to the charm of one's conquests."

So when might this blood feud have actually begun? Some have maintained it started when the writers began showing up more regularly and insisted on playing by legitimate rules. Up to that point the games were distinctly pick-up affairs where regulations were less important than libations and where the final score was often unknown to but a few who had actually paid attention.

All of a sudden, however, a premium was placed on actually knowing the intricacies of the game, subtleties often lost on artists like Willem deKooning, Esteban Vicente, or my father, Jimmy Ernst, all European émigrés all who loved American baseball but had been raised playing soccer.

As for the writers, each year always seemed to boast a dramatically better line-up than the year before with luminaries like George Plimpton elegantly patrolling center field like a WASP Joe DiMaggio, Neil Simon slinging wisecracks and cracking doubles over Larry Rivers's head, or Jimmy Lipton, playing a scrappy second base like a cross between Dodger great Eddie Stanky and an angry badger.

Against this kind of line-up throughout my youth the artists never provided a serious contest so no true rivalry developed until Lief Hope expanded his role from artist manager to P. T.



Eric Ernst and Mike Lupica



Clockwise from top left: Eric Ernst, John Franco and Walter Bernard, John Franco hitting the traditional "Melon Ball," Ray Kelly and Matt Lauer.

Barnum-like promoter on behalf of the various worthy causes the game serves to benefit.

The germination for the idea of raising money for charity began when the game was used to gather campaign funds for Eugene McCarthy (the only poet/Senator to ever run for President) and then a few years later to help defend artists Bob Gwathmey and Bill Durham in a landmark civil rights case which involved their arrest for flying a bath towel painted to look like the American flag with a peace sign where the stars would be.

Having realized it was possible to raise funds for a candidate who couldn't possibly win as well as helping to keep artists with a whimsical sense of political protest out of jail, an idea was born and Lief, while now seeing the altruistic possibilities the game presented, also recognized that in order to attract attention it would be necessary to promote the game in a whole new way.

As a result, his first promotion was fielding an all-girl team of artists and hiring a professional woman softball player to fire 90 mile per hour inside fastballs at the writers' which, for some inexplicable reason, many of the scribes found distinctly unfunny. They didn't find it entertaining when she pitched a scoreless first inning

and they were even more demonstrably unhappy when she was brought back into the game to squelch a writer's rally in the ninth. The artists ended up winning a game for the first time in modern memory and, among the writers, the manager of the artists had earned the lovable nickname "that son of a bitch Lief Hope."

Over the years other professional athletes were to follow including Dale Berra, Wesley Walker, Pelé, and Marty Lyons (whose mammoth home run into the tennis courts is still spoken of in hushed tones), but it was the actual accumulation of talent on the artists' team in the early 1990s that truly leveled the playing field. Admittedly, the definition of artist had expanded to include just about any profession that even remotely could be construed as "creative" but, at the same time, as soon as the game became competitive the meaning of "writer" also became significantly more elastic as well.

The artists would add a landscape architect which would be parried by an advertising executive who writes copy which was upped by a lawyer who has an artist for a client which was then offset by a real estate agent who once wrote a short story. And so on.

One wonders, then, what new manifestation of gamesmanship will be required for the two

teams to remain competitive in the coming years, especially as the core players for each team inevitably must bow to the inevitable inroads of time. Already within the past few years, a number of incidents of the use of performance enhancing substances have been documented including an overdose of Red Bull (leading the overly energized and wide-eyed runner to forget that one can't go from first to third by bisecting the diamond) and steroid use (actually a cortisone injection for a bad shoulder but, hey, it's a steroid). Further, at least one storied member of the artist team has for years been a known aspirin and milk junkie.

It should be pointed out, however, that even absent these recent evolutionary trends towards more competent contests, the historical enmity between artists and writers will always guarantee a measure of personal animosity regardless of talent on either side. This has been true from the moment in 1456 when the Renaissance sculptor Donatello taped a 'kick me' sign to the back of author Leon Battista Alberti's cloak, it was evident when heavyweight Gerry Cooney flattened NBC's Andrew Lack, and it'll be just as apparent this summer when sports-writer Mike Lupica has his annual collision at home plate with sculptor Randall Rosenthal. ■

## Reflections on the Game

### Juliet Papa

*From the Broadcast Booth at the Artists/Writers game*

It's not often you get to sit next to one of your journalistic idols, watch a multimedia mogul in action, or meet a future president on the ball field—in plaid shorts—behind your local supermarket. But that's been the strange and happy trajectory of my path to the broadcast booth for the Artists and Writers game.

It literally began at the grass roots—just like the game itself—when I meandered over to Herrick Park one fateful Saturday afternoon. It was fascinating to see the high-profile talent not in their natural habitat. There was the lean and handsome actor Roy Scheider, a giant on screen from blockbuster movies such as *Jaws* and *The French Connection*. He was perched on the pitcher's mound sporting shorts, a tee, and a deep dark tan. Domestic doyenne Martha Stewart stepped up to the plate carrying a basket of her home-made cookies. If you looked real hard behind the catcher's mask, you found Carl Bernstein of the *Washington Post* and Watergate fame. And it was only after I had plunked myself onto a sparse patch of grass along the third base line that I realized I was sitting next to Bernstein's boss, the handsome and elegant Washington Post executive editor Ben Bradlee. He was charming, gracious, and curious—and I was hooked.

I played in the game the next couple of years, got in an inning or two, and knew I wasn't cut out to hit the power home run or make the diving outfield catch. So I thought I'd stick to

#### FROM TOP

2016 Writer's Team; Juliet Papa and James Lipton; high-fives all around after a big moment; Mike Lupica





Action scenes from an intense game in 2016

what I know best—reporting the story!

That's when I found myself behind the raggedy cyclone fence backstop, sitting at a very unimpressive wooden table, and baking in the sizzling sun. No shade, no scorebooks, the line-ups were late on arrival. Welcome to the "broadcast booth!"

There were big shoes to fill and mics to manage. Predecessors included the impressive public relations powerhouse John Scanlon, and CBS network's then-president Howard Stringer, both of biting wit and running commentary. New York radio's midday maven Joan Hamburg also threw a few good curves.

I formulated an "opening ceremony"—a way to introduce the spectators to our unique and endearing spectacle; we sang the National Anthem, announced the starting players, the celebrity first pitch, and then it was "Play Ball!" I had the good fortune of sitting between two seasoned pros: the iconic host of *Inside the Actor's Studio*, James Lipton, and the incomparable sports announcer Bert Sugar. *Late Night* and Jon Stewart comedy writer Fred Graver later joined the crowd with good humor and a light touch. Never mind the play-by-play; there were the unique challenges of announcing the call the umpire changed for the third time, handling players' trash talk, to us, calling out raffles, lost dogs, or children. And a lot of laughs in between.

But it's a whole 'nother ballgame when a former President of the United States—the one who years ago showed up as governor of Arkansas in those plaid shorts—comes out of nowhere, walks onto the field and stops the game in its tracks. And it's a whole 'nother broadcast experience when you grab the mic, grab him, and do a live interview right then and there for the crowd. ■



## Casper at the Bat: Memories of Casper Citron at the Game



In a wondrous poem called “An Ancient to Ancients,” Thomas Hardy wrote of “the thinning of our ranks each year.” What Hardy knew continues in our time.

Pee Wee Reese, the great shortstop and champion of integration of the Major Leagues. Ring Lardner Jr., so quietly heroic. Woodie Broun . . . was there ever a more congenial gentleman? And now Casper. I’m reminded of lines Grantland Rice addressed to Charon, the ferryman on the River Styx: “Why do you always look my way? Why do you take my friends?”

But we are not here for a dirge but for a celebration of a most extraordinary life. I’m sure others can recall Casper at his cultural landmark, the Algonquin. Casper the cultural landmark at a cultural landmark. Myself, I’m concentrating on Casper at the Bat.

Forty years ago we played tough fast-pitch softball usually against each other, on a splendid green and brown and white ball field in East Hampton. At 10 o’clock on Sunday morning the church bells rang and our doubleheader began. Eli Wallach played and perspired into my favorite glove, ruining it. Cy Rembar played a first-class shortstop. A local laundromat person, Buna O’Connor, threw with a major league arm. We did not have set teams. That would have been dangerous. Competition was ferocious and we agreed that each Sunday morning we’d choose up sides, the way children do. The same

softball teams week after week would have led to fist fights.

Casper liked to play third base. He did not have the greatest hands on earth, but no third baseman—Cox, Robinson, Nettles—ever faced drives more bravely. Casper stopped many with his glove. He stopped just as many with his chest and gut and forehead. If you catch the sense that Casper was a competitor, you get my drift.

One Sunday, for forgotten reasons, third baseman Citron had to play left field. Casper was not only a talk-show host, he was a talky ball player, always chatting in a way designed to make you lose your concentration. He’d get you mad. You’d over swing. Pop up to short. On this one afternoon when he was way out in left, he had to holler to be heard. Casper hollered. I came up with winning runs on base and I heard from Casper, “I’m playing this guy shallow. He can’t hit one over my head.” A pitch I never saw before or since came in—a perfect pitch to hammer—and on this one occasion I had a hammer. I was into my best home-run lope, rounding second base when I thought, “Where is everybody? The fans, the gorgeous girls, my cheering team mates?”

Everybody was rushing out to left. To prove that I couldn’t hit a ball over his head, Casper had jumped to the planet Pluto. Landing, he ruptured a mess of blood vessels in one leg. Painful sounds followed. Rather than

cheer my hit, my whole team and the gorgeous girls turned themselves into paramedics. Forever after I’d say to Casper, “You owe me one moment of glory.” “Fine,” he said, come down and do my show.”

We did a bunch, but the one I remember most vividly was the last one. I was staggering through a book tour and I showed up sleepless and dull. “Were you at the greatest game in Ebbets Field?” he asked me.

“Which one was that?”

“Don’t you know?”

“Er-um, Jackie Robinson’s debut?”

“Wrong. I was there. It was the night Johnny Vander Meer threw his second consecutive no-hitter.” That was, I can tell you, June 15, 1938. I looked it up.

The moral, I suppose, is never do a *Casper Citron Show* when not fully awake. His great intelligence demanded no less.

If there is a great baseball diamond in the sky, as spring comes, Casper is trotting out to play third base. He’s being welcomed now by Pee Wee, Ring and Woodie. Casper would like that very much. He loved good company and he was good company.

Hail and farewell. ■

—Roger Kahn

Given at the celebration of Casper Citron’s life at  
The Historical Society May 10, 2002  
Courtesy of Christiane Hyde Citron

# Reflections on the Game



**Ken Auletta**  
*Victory is almost as sweet as charity*

Every Saturday for 35 years a group of us play softball in Sag Harbor. Only one Saturday each summer do we play in the Artists & Writers softball game. I’ve played in the annual game for about 30 years, half of them as captain of the Writers team. We trash talk each year about how we writers plan to thrash the artists, about how they cheat by smuggling in football players and house painters who can slug a ball 400 feet. In between winks, we’re united in a belief that no matter how foolish we sometimes look on the field, we’re luring fans to contribute to worthwhile local charities; we’re helping fortify a sense of community on the East End; and we’re laughing with, not at, each other. After the game, which is usually nail-bitingly close, we repair to a pub together to tip a glass and to wait to learn how much money we raised for our favorite local charities. ■



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP**  
Ken Auletta and Leif Hope; Chevy Chase and Jeff Meizlik;  
John Franco, Joe Torre and Carl Bernstein;  
Mort Zuckerman and Joe Sopiak

# Reflections on the Game

Interview by Ximena Castillo



Zack O'Malley Greenburg and Dan Greenburg



Alec Baldwin

## Dan Greenburg & Zack O'Malley Greenburg

Father and son talk life on and off the field

### DAN GREENBURG

**Tell me about your relationship to softball.**

Do you play?

**I don't actually. I don't play. I'm not even relatively good at softball.**

Well, neither am I. Were you born here?

**I was.**

Ok, so you know that growing up in America, the only way that boys judge your worth as a human being is by how good you are at baseball. And when I was in gym class or summer camp, the teams, they literally fought over me. They said, "you can't give us Greenburg! We had to take him last time!" I was not a good player.

**That's very interesting because I'm told that you've been playing in the game since the '90s. Did they fight over you?**

I think in the same way, yes. The thing is, now I can only be on the writers team—although, before I became a writer, I was an artist. I was an art director, an illustrator, a cartoonist. And then I read *Catcher in the Rye*, and it blew my mind and I said, that's what I want to do. So, I became a writer and I enjoy it a lot more than I did as a designer, cartoonist, art director or anything like that.

**So, you switched sides?**

Yeah, I switched sides.

**I'm all for it. This clearly means you have been playing in the game for many years. How did you first learn about the East Hamptons softball game?**

Oh, just living in East Hampton. I had a house in East Hampton for about 20 years. From, I would say the '70s to the '90s back before it was really popular, in fact. I was there even after, what I thought should be the time to move, which was one very bar-

ren winter we were there and I couldn't find a parking place in the A & P parking lot. I knew it was a sign that the golden days of East Hampton were at an end. But I stayed on until I had to go through a divorce and the house had to be sold in the process of the divorce and so on. I loved East Hampton, but you know. Along comes life.

**And you say the game was pretty popular and you just heard about it?**

It was popular, and that's what one did when one lived in East Hampton. If one was an artist or a writer, one played in the game. And I think the deal was, that they had to use me for two innings or something. But it was never like, "If only we could get Dan to play!" It was more like, "...I don't know, do we have to use Dan?"

**It's 2017 now, what would you say are some of the biggest differences you can recall from when you first started playing in the game vs now?**

Oh, one of the biggest differences, but this has been going on for some time—though not in the first few years, is the appearance of ringers. That is to say, professional baseball players. That started after about, I would guess, and this only a guess, the first two to five years. Then they started saying, "Who is that guy? God, he's really good!" "Oh, that's so and so." "Oh, okay. No wonder..."

**Do you think that has anything to do with the games growing popularity over the years?**

I think so. And, you know there's no money at stake in who wins. It got to be a lot more competitive than it was and I got a lot more nervous when I would get up to bat.

**Well, it seems to me, the only thing you really win is bragging rights for the next year.**

Yeah. But big, BIG, bragging. Now Zack, on the other hand, is an incredibly good player. And that isn't just me as a father talking. I think he really is a good player.

**Yes, Zack! I'm speaking with him on Monday, but why don't you tell me about him.**

You know what he won't tell you—I can brag about him, he won't do this—you know he's entertainment editor at *Forbes*, right?

**I do.**

He's a friend of all of the big hip-hop stars. Do you know that because of his interest in hip-hop and his interviewing them, the hip-hop stars bring Zack their new projects at *Forbes*, which is you know, a white-shoe billionaire's magazine, rather than to *Rolling Stone*.

**Really? He's very good at what he does then.**

Yeah, they just love him. He also is sort of, I would say better at easing Middle East tensions than Jared Kushner. Zack would never tell you this, but he organized two concerts in Jerusalem, that featured Israeli and Palestinian rappers in an effort to bring them together. He's done that twice. And he's always been such a great mediator among people. I'm very prejudiced, but he is a great guy.

**It's always good to hear that the game is composed of people who do such meaningful work off the field. This brings me to my next question: I was told that your son would be playing in the game this year.**

I'm sure he will be. He did last year. I think he's been playing for several years.

**That's interesting because there was a rumor going around that you two would be playing at the same time this year. Has that happened before?**

As I recall, we were a little late getting there last year so I barely had time to do any batting practice. But you know, they don't really like to put in players unless they have a lot of ability and they're really going to help them.

**I guess it really is as competitive as you say it is.**

It's very competitive. It's very competitive. I don't say that as a bad thing. It's just how it is.



Paul Rickenbach, Dan Rattiner, Christine Cadarette, Ken Auletta, Dan Evans, Leif Hope



Lori Singer and Stu Sleppin



Matthew Montemaro



Ed Burns



Mark Weinstein



Ed Hollander

**I was told way in the beginning that the game was just a game and it morphed into this massive charity event with big name sponsors like HBO and Snapple, with celebrities coming every so often. The purpose ultimately of the game is to act as a charity that donates to life services on the East End.**

This is recent. Or certainly wasn't a part of it when I was playing. It became a big thing, but in the beginning, it was as you say, it was just a fun game between artists and writers.

**What are your personal views on this event impacting the local community?**

I think it's great that it can earn money for good causes, it just changes the complexion of the game is all.

**In what way, would you say?**

You know when competition becomes really intense, some of the values go by the wayside. I truly haven't been to that game for years and years so I don't know anything about it other than what I've known. What I remember is running into people I hadn't seen in years being very happy about the game. I ran into Carl Bernstein, who I hadn't seen in years, and all kinds of people that I knew from the Hamptons that really I hadn't seen in years. It was a very happy experience for me because I got to see old friends.

**When you do get to play, is there a position that you play best at?**

I'm generally put in the least important position, the place where the ball lands least often.

**Would this game technically qualify as "father-son time?" How often do you get to**

**spend time with Zack?**

I spend a lot of time with Zack. Actually, quite a lot. We either have dinner, the four of us—he and his wife and me and my wife, Judith. We also have man dinners, you know? We try to do it once a month. And it's not that we have any secrets from our wives, it's just that sometimes a guy likes to talk to a guy, as a guy. I consider him one of my best friends, which is wonderful.

**How do you foresee this year's game going against the Artists? What would you like to see happen on the field this year?**

I would like to see the Writers win in a close game. Close games are always fun. But I'm not going to be crying if we lose.

**I suppose that's fair.**

You know one of the greatest experiences—well, that's overselling it—when Zack was, well there was a period of years where he and I were big Yankees fans and we used to go to their games. One of the great experiences that sticks out in my mind of learning life lessons: Zack and I went to a double-header between the Yankees and the Cleveland Indians. Those were just truly exciting games. The score kept see-sawing back and forth, back and forth. First the Yankees were one or two runs ahead, then the Indians would catch up and be two runs ahead, then two runs behind. We saw some of the most incredible plays you've ever seen. And the most incredible home runs. People were going crazy. But, at the end of each game, the Yankees lost. Zack and I were leaving the ballpark and people were swearing and pound-

ing the walls in anger. And I said, "I want you to notice something, Zack—these people are really angry and upset, but you and I just saw two of the greatest baseball games ever played and that's what's important. And he got it, immediately! And he refers to it now. And it was a real life lesson, it was so important for us.

**I feel like, not a lot of people understand that sentiment, who probably should.**

That's what I think. I think there should be more of that feeling in games.

**Over anything else.**

Yeah! It's the fun of the game, the excitement, the see-sawing of the leads. It's how well people are playing. We saw people playing better than they ever had before. Incredible catches! Some players hit two or three home runs in the same game. There were home runs with bases loaded. I gotta tell you, baseball is not the most exciting sport to watch, generally speaking. It's not as exciting as basketball or football to me, except in these kinds of games. That is real excitement.

#### ZACK O'MALLEY GREENBURG

**I was under the impression that your father has been playing in the game very consistently, but he tells me you've actually been playing more than he has in the recent past.**

Um. So, when I was little, he was the one who was playing. I was too young to play. But my first memories of knowing anything about the Artists and Writers Game were my dad playing when I

(Continued on next page)



Above: 2013 Writers Team; Below: 2013 Artists Team



(Continued from previous page)

was a toddler and my mom cheerleading. This was always to me, sort of the biggest deal of all time, because we would show up and the whole town would be there watching my dad play softball and I thought this was so immensely cool. But we sold our house in the mid-'90s and while I go back to visit friends every summer, dad goes back a little less frequently; but really since we moved, you know, he kind of stopped playing and it wasn't until 2007 or 2008 and I started working full time at *Forbes* that I figured, "you know, why not try to play now that I'm officially a writer." So, I've been going pretty much every year since then.

**That's fantastic.**

And, actually, last year was the first year that my dad had been out there in decades, to the game. That was when we went together and we both got our jerseys and hats and things.

**That's so cool. So, let me get this straight, he was out there last year, but did he play last year?**

So. We both were on the roster. And he took batting practice (*nervous laughter*) I did not. But I got into the game and he did not. But he probably had more hits in batting practice than I had in the game.

**That's interesting because he told me—and your father raves about you, by the way, you**

**are obviously the pride of his life—he says that he actually sucks at the game. That he would not hold it against anyone to not invite him back. But he says you're a very good softball player.**

Aw. Well, you know... I would say...I'm solid.

**That's a pretty good self-compliment, "I'm a solid player."**

I think he's being very generous with his praise of my softball skills.

**What position do you feel most comfortable at?**

Infield. Generally, wherever. In the game, I've played first and second in the past. I usually play third for the *Forbes* softball team. But I understand there are people who have been playing there longer than I have.

**You mentioned going and watching your father play as a child. What are the biggest differences then compared to now.**

It's kind of hard to really know the differences, because to me back then when I would go to those games, it was like the seventh game of the World Series at Yankee Stadium. But I think a lot of that was because I was five, you know? And in that way that things seem bigger and grander and you're young and your dad is doing something really cool—it becomes this sort of global mega event in your mind. So, I have a hard time separating facts from reality.

**What I've gathered from that is it is still**

**this huge mega event.**

Yeah! You know, I think if I were looking at it with those eyes, I would still see it the same way. To me now as an adult, it also seems like an incredible tradition I want to continue to be a part of. Although I acknowledge it's maybe not the Super Bowl.

**At one point, someone had referred to the game as a "celebrity" softball game versus a "charity" softball game and your father even noted that the presence of ringers was a new thing that he had not seen previously. Sometimes there are in fact celebrities, important people in the media who do important work playing in the game. Would you count you and/or your father as technically celebrities who participate?**

Oh, no, no, no. I think we just write about famous people (*nervous laughter*). Then again, I wouldn't really count us as ringers either. I think it's funny because there are people that play, who are both celebrities and ringers. Jim Leyritz and John Franco would be pretty good examples of that.

**You've obviously seen and played in the game more than a few times. What would you like to see most happen on the field this year?**

A stunning late-inning come-from-behind victory for the Writers.

**You and your father speak very highly of each other. Clearly, there's a lot of love there.**

Oh, yeah. He's much funnier than I am. He does it professionally. He's an incredible storyteller. What I later learned is that my dad sort of learned how to play softball later in life...so that he could teach me to play baseball and softball as a kid. When I was really little, he was learning, and by the time I was a toddler, or seven or eight, or whenever I started playing baseball, I just assumed he was always able to play. We would always go in the backyard and he would throw me pitches underhand and all that stuff. Little did I know, just a couple years earlier, he was furiously training just to be able to do that. I remember hearing he used to play in the Sag Harbor League on Sundays, which I guess is still going to this day, and a lot of the veterans there still remember him. He was even the Rookie of the Year in nineteen-eighty-something. I thought it was really cool to do that, at least in part, so he could play with me.

I couldn't ask for a better father—on or off the softball field. In addition to learning how to play just so he could teach me as a youngster, my dad is the most loving and supportive father I can imagine. When I was a little kid, he would always say, "You're the best boy a dad could have," and I would say, "You're the best dad a boy could have." I can only hope that, whenever I have children of my own, we'll be lucky enough to have that sort of relationship. ■

*\*Dan Greenburg is a writer, humorist and journalist. He has over 70 books published in 20 languages, including best-seller, *How to Be a Jewish Mother*. He adores his son, Zack and believes him to be a better mediator than Jared Kushner.*

*\*Zack O'Malley Greenburg is a writer, journalist and current senior editor of media & entertainment at *Forbes*. He openly admits that he is not as funny as his father.*

# Thirty-Nine Years & Still Swinging

## An Interview with Artists & Writers Veteran Jeff Meizlik

by Ximena Castillo



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT  
Lori Singer; Joe Torre throwing  
out the first pitch; Former Yankee  
Jim Leyritz and Bill Clinton;  
Dan Rattiner, Leif Hope,  
Stu Sleppin, Ronnette Riley,  
Bill Collage



### HOW DID YOU COME TO PLAY IN THE A&W GAME?

I'm originally from Brooklyn and became friends with Elaine de Kooning around 1971. About 5 years later I was talking to her about a job teaching bronze casting at a college. She called back and said Willem de Kooning (everyone called him Bill) wanted to make some new sculptures, would I like to come out to the Hamptons and be Bill's assistant? I said yes.

While working there, word got around that there was a softball game of artists versus writers. I was a pretty good athlete (I think I'm still a good athlete) so I went down and found out when the game was and tried to get myself into it. That was 1976.

### WHICH TEAM DO YOU PLAY ON? TELL US ABOUT YOUR ART.

I'm a sculptor. I work in bronze, which is my main medium. My sculptures deal with primitive shapes and forms that are found in ancient China, Africa, Egypt, etc. They are temples, memorials, altars and totems. They each have a sacrifice. My latest series was based on Viking rune stones.

I also did a series of softball sculptures to be auctioned off at the yearly fund raiser. Each sculpture in the series of "You Gotta Have Balls Too Play This Game" is a different baseball pitch. So, there is a sculpture named "Screwball," "Sinkers," "Forkball," etc.

### HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU WIN MVP?

At least twice. The first game that stands out I was playing short stop. I hit a home run or two and made some excellent plays on defense. That year, Tag Heuer was awarding a watch to the MVP, so that was nice. The funny thing about that game was that Paul Simon was playing left field. At the time they put up the usual fence of metal poles with a plastic wall. On one of the plays, Paul Simon went way back and caught the ball and chipped his tooth on the metal pole. When I got the write-ups on the game it was all about Paul Simon and his tooth chipping. I was briefly mentioned. But I did win the MVP and got the watch. It was also nice because I had brought my wife to the game for the first time. That was one of the years when they were giving out a nice reward. Paul Simon never came back.

### DO YOU HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF THE PLAYERS IN THE GAME—ARTISTS OR WRITERS?

Generally hanging out and getting to meet some of these people you wouldn't ordinarily meet, especially famous writers like Avery Corman, George Plimpton, John Irving. I was even there when Bill Clinton was the umpire. When I was growing up didn't get a chance to rub shoulders with people like that. I remember one incident when I was playing third base and Martha Stewart was up and I could tell she wasn't the greatest ball player. She hit a soft ground ball to me and took two steps and stopped. I held the ball for a few seconds and thought, "she's here to play ball, so she should have to run like all the other players." I waited for her to realize she should keep running to first base and then I threw her out. Just meeting these people and having experiences like these is what makes it great. People like Laurie Singer and Alec Baldwin you don't normally get to meet, especially in Virginia, but on the playing field, they're nice average people – easy to talk to and great to play with. Roy Schieder was a sweetheart. Leif Hope is the best and has been with the game since before I was born. Mike Lupica is a ball of energy and a great guy.

I have to give extra thanks to Eric Ernst. I had a place in the Hamptons the first couple years I got out there, but after I left for Virginia I would visit and stay with Elaine de Kooning, then Dallas Ernst and for the last 15 years or so I've stayed with Eric Ernst. I only come on the weekend of the game so he fills me in on who's on first and what's on second and we always have a great time. So I have to give a shout out to Eric for being so generous.

### WHAT KEPT YOU COMING BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR?

For one thing, it's the tradition, then there's the people and of course the game. It's obviously nice to have a week in the Hamptons and nice to visit old friends. Elaine de Kooning was around for quite a while and it was nice to visit Bill de Kooning after I left to Virginia. Being an athlete draws me back too. I played semi-pro baseball and went to the University of Tennessee on a baseball scholarship. I still play in a senior baseball league. I love baseball. When the game gets rained out, I get to stay out here for about two weeks, see more people and celebrities. ■

## Reflections on the Game



John Franco pitching with Dan Rattiner as the ump

### Dan Rattiner

*Memoirs of an umpire and player*

The annual Artist and Writers Softball Game in the Hamptons is celebrating its 69th year. The game has been joined on a sandlot ball field diamond behind the supermarket (currently Stop & Shop) on Newtown Lane in East Hampton each August for all these generations. The game was founded on the back lawn of the home of Wilfred Zogbaum in Springs in 1948 as part of a picnic for several artists and writers. I've been writing about it since 1968.

Things I remember:

Eugene McCarthy, the Senator from Wisconsin and former presidential candidate, playing first base in 1972 with a split in the back of his pants that nobody wanted to tell him about.

I recall singer Paul Simon leaping high up against

the left field fence to catch a ball and coming down on the spikes of the fence, fortunately without serious injury.

Writer George Plimpton pitching carefully to Eric Ernst for the Artists.

Superagent Sam Cohn at bat.

Bianca Jagger bidding against a gallery owner from Florida for some paintings made by Eric Fischl on a clothesline behind home plate.

Bill Clinton umpiring several innings in 1986.

The soccer star Pelé from Brazil playing in the game.

Yogi Berra making an appearance, there to watch his son, Dale Berra, a shortstop for the Pittsburgh Pirates, play in the game.

Heavyweight contender Gerry Cooney hitting a single to left.

Hippie Abbie Hoffman in 1971, after watching the first pitch to him called a strike, then watching the second one come in, for a ball, dashing down the base path to "steal" first base. (He trotted back when we told him he could not do that.)

Christie Brinkley getting three strikes and you're out, and after that missing the next pitch for strike four.

Walter Isaacson playing second base. Carol Channing in the outfield. Alec Baldwin in right. Chevy Chase hitting a single. A host of others over the years—Leo Castelli, Regis Philbin, Ed Burns, John Irving, Sylvia Tennenbaum, Alan Alda, Gail Sheehy, Walter Bernard.

Gallery owner Elaine Benson managing the Artists for 10 years, and "stealing" me from the roster of the Writers to play for the Artists. She said it was a trade, but there were no other players involved, nor was any money paid.



Clockwise from top left: Regis Philbin; George Plimpton; Bill Clinton; Paul Simon; Eric & Jimmy Ernst

Working as the umpire and declaring a called third strike against billionaire Carl Icahn, standing there with the bat on his shoulder and watching the pitch come in right over the plate.

Towering home runs (into the tennis court beyond left field) by Rick Leventhal, Bill Collage, Richard Weis and, earlier, Marty Lyons (defensive lineman for the New York Jets), and even earlier, sculptor Philip Pavia.

Having the game delayed because the ball field had been reserved and was still being used by a group of 10-years-olds who were now still tied in the top of the fourteenth.

Shaking hands with Barry Commoner, running for president in 1980 as a third party candidate and campaigning at the game. I didn't care for either major candidate that year. So I voted for Commoner because he'd gone to the trouble of shaking my hand where neither of the others, Reagan or Carter, had.

Actor Roy Scheider pitching with good humor for the Artists for 15 years in the 1990s and on.

Billionaire publisher and real estate man Mort Zuckerman pitching for the Writers for those same 15 years with great ferocity and focus.

The year I was declared one of two Players of the Game. It was in 1970 and I was awarded an enormous jeroboam of Champagne, which I carted home and didn't use for several years because we never had enough people to drink it all at one sitting.

Guest umpires working several innings that included Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Congressman Charles Rangel.

Betty Friedan, Kathleen Turner and writer Peter Mass playing the outfield. Howard Stringer (recently CEO of Sony) announcing the game. PR genius John Scanlon announcing the game. Boxing commentator Bert Sugar

announcing the game. TV personality James Lipton announcing the game. Juliette Papa of 1010 WINS announcing the game.

In the early years, radio personality Ted Brown announcing the game through a bullhorn.

Mayor Paul Rickenbach welcoming fans.

The graceful play for 20 years and more of the beautiful actress Lori Singer.

The tremendous and fiery play of New York *Daily News* sportswriter Mike Lupica.

The short after-game get-togethers at the Laundry Restaurant on Race Lane directly after the game, where stories were told, steins of beer raised and Leif, standing on a chair, telling us how much money was raised for charity. ■

*Dan Rattiner is the founder and editor-in-chief of Dan's Papers. Dan's Papers was founded in 1960.*

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THE WRITERS 2016



THE ARTISTS 2016



# ALUMNI PLAYERS

Abrams, Dan  
 Aiello, Danny  
 Albert, Calvin  
 Alda, Alan  
 Alexander, John  
 Allen, Woody  
 Angel, Johnny  
 Anson, Robert Sam  
 Anthony  
 Arrick, Larry  
 Asinof, Eliot  
 Atlas, Nancy  
 Aubert, Claude  
 Auletta, Ken  
 Aurthur, Robert Alan  
 Bacall, Lauren  
 Baer, David  
 Balaban, Bob  
 Baldwin, Alec  
 Baldwin, Billy  
 Baldwin, Stephen  
 Basaldua, Carlos  
 Bastore, Bill  
 Belafonte, David  
 Bello, Gregg  
 Bellow, Saul  
 Benson, Elaine  
 Berliner, Uri  
 Bernard, Stephen  
 Bernard, Walter  
 Bernstein, Carl  
 Bernstein, David  
 Berra, Dale  
 Berra, Yogi  
 Berry, Conor  
 Beucher, David  
 Birch, Pat  
 Bishop, Tim  
 Blaustein, Arthur  
 Bleckner, Ross  
 Bleier, Ed  
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 Bradlee, Ben  
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 Brady, James  
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Breyer, Stephen  
 Brinkley, Christie  
 Broderick, Matthew  
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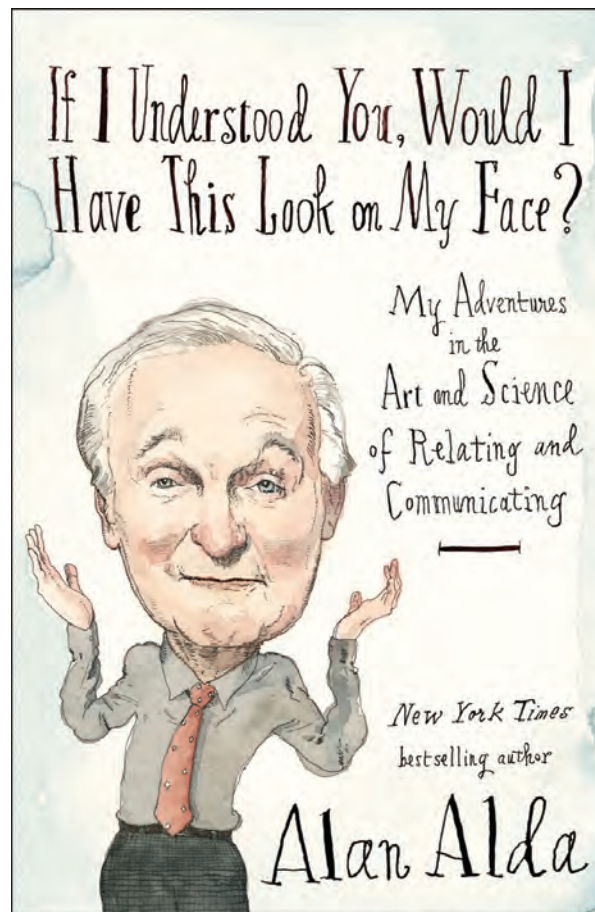
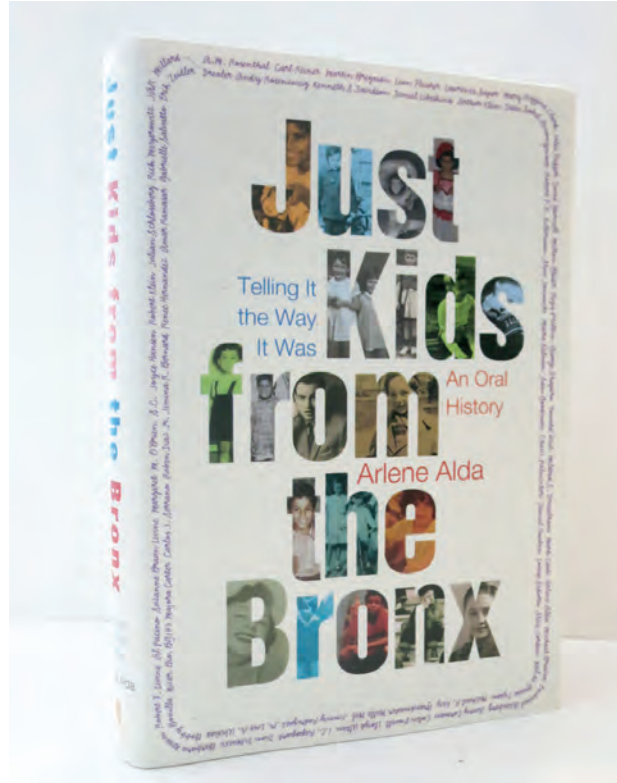
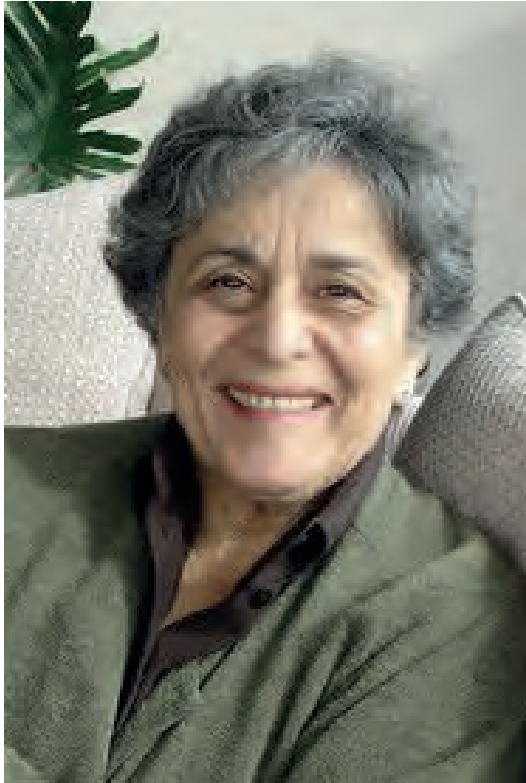
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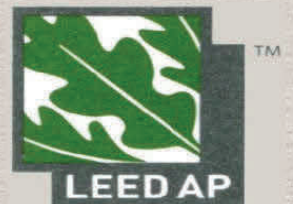
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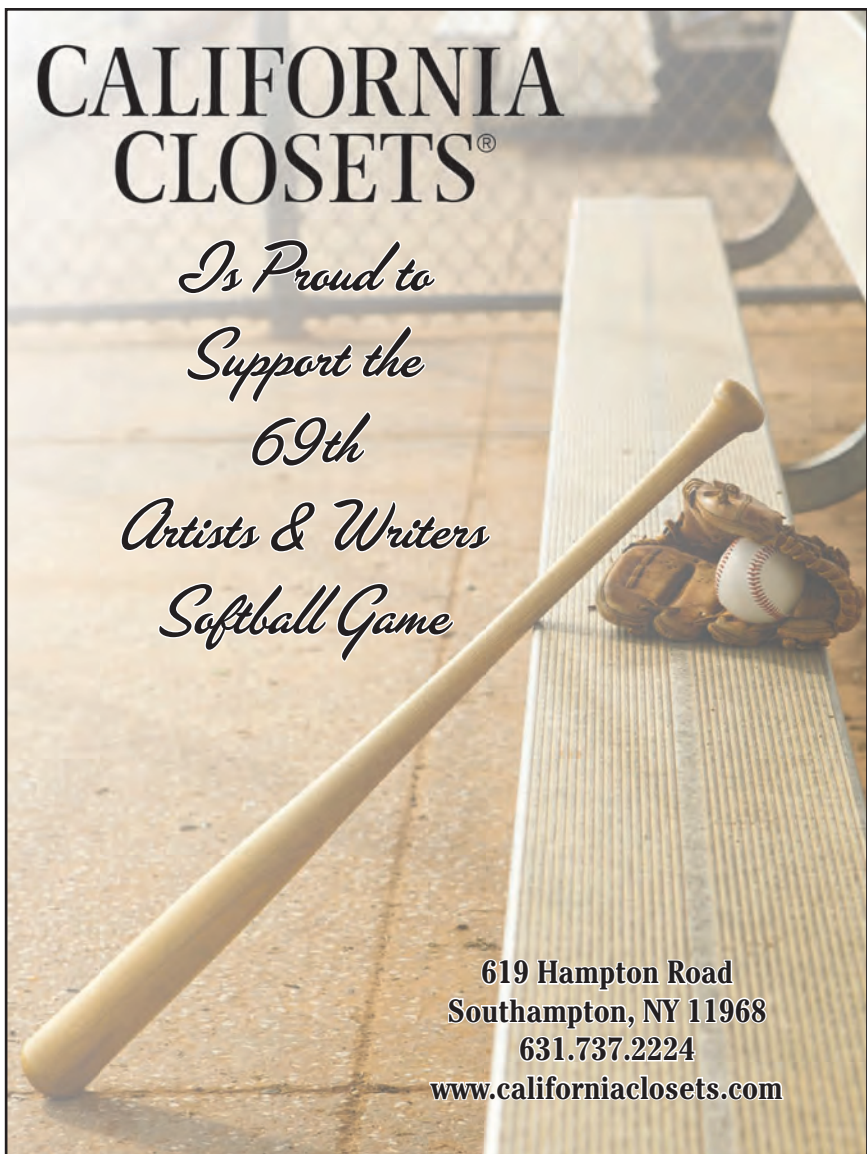


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