



CUENTOS

A COLLECTION OF ART FROM THE INTERNAL
MEDICINE RESIDENTS AND ATTENDINGS AT GW

2021

Letter from the Editors

"History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again," spoken by Maya Angelou on January 20, 1993, from her poem "On the Pulse of Morning," written for the Presidential Inauguration of Bill Clinton.

Fast forward 28 years and her quote could not be more significant than ever. This year began with wildfires spanning two continents and swept across the nation in politics, racial injustice, and the on-going coronavirus pandemic.

We started 2020 with a virus that the medical and scientific community were attempting to understand. As healthcare providers, we learned to be as adaptable as ever. We isolated ourselves from family and friends, potentially boarding elsewhere, canceled trips and conferences, endured changes to our work schedule, trained to take on a new role in the ICU or medicine service, watched humans pass without loved ones at their bedside--all of this while trying to learn about a novel virus so that we could educate our patients and make the best medical decisions. Like bamboo in an earthquake, we as a department showed grace, flexibility, and strength as this new historic chapter in medicine began.

This past year, and currently, we are living through historic moments that we have showcased in Cuentos 2021. We are proud to represent what our community has felt, missed, and lost this past year, while simultaneously expressing what brought it happiness, peace, and a sense of normalcy amidst ever-present chaos.

Thank you all for your unconditional support and for taking the time to contribute your creativity, which has helped keep our publication alive for over a decade. Let's continue to learn from these moments and from each other.

Sincerely,

L. Nedda Dastmalchi, DO, MA, 3rd Year Resident
Michelle Camp, MD, MS, 2nd Year Resident
Emily Newman, MD, 2nd Year Resident
Shaitalya Vellanki, MD 1st Year Resident
John Yi, MD 1st Year Resident
Katalin Roth, MD, JD, Professor of Medicine
Anokhi Shah, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine

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Horseshoe Bend, Arizona

Julie Zemskova, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident

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John Yi

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Letter from the Chairman

Here it is, year XIII, which after last year can not be considered to be unlucky. Nothing could ever match 2020, the year of Covid. Last year, and this year more than ever, we need something to take our minds off a raging epidemic, racial discrimination, and political unrest.

As we cannot travel, at least it is nice to remember what somewhere other than the 10-mile radius from downtown looks like. Remember the sea? Remember the mountains? Remember other countries? If we cannot yet go, at least we can look and yearn.

We all have ingrained in our minds so many terrible pictures and stories from the last year that anything different will be welcome. As I write this, most of us including our staff have been vaccinated and hopefully some degree of normalcy has been established and is now more than a figment of our imagination.

Are we now finished with looking only at Zoom pictures and WebEx photos? Do we no longer have to remain socially (or unsocially) distant? Everyone should decide who will be the first person that they want to hug. I will have numbers outside of my door, so people do not have to line up. Are we again seeing everyone's faces, whether we want to or not? How many dogs will be returned to the shelter once restrictions are lifted? My wish is by the time we publish this edition of Cuentos we will have returned to some joie de vivre. What is your wish? I will make a prediction, "Little darling, it's been a long cold lonely winter" but "here comes the sun and I say it's all right" (John Lennon, Paul McCartney, 1966).

This magazine would never have been sustained without "a little help from my friends" (John Lennon 1967). Once again, I am indebted to the talented and dedicated group that has sustained this effort for now 13 years. To our Faculty Advisors, Drs. Anokhi Shah and Katalin Roth and to our House Staff, Senior Editor Dr. Lily (Nedda) Dastmalchi, and the Associate Editors Drs. Michelle Camp, Emily Newman, Shaitalya Vellanki, and John Yi my sincere appreciation for the work you have done.

Finally, I am waiting with much anticipation to see if Dr. Silver can top last year's appearance by Lin-Manuel Miranda. I certainly am expecting some surprises. Oprah?

Alan G. Wasserman, MD, MACP
*Eugene Meyer Professor and Chair
Department of Medicine
The George Washington University
School of Medicine and Health Sciences*

BEYOND
THE
WATERS



Descontenta
John Yi, MD
1st Year Resident

Cusco, Peru



◀ Serendipity

Jennifer Makhoul, MD
1st Year Resident

Hallstatt, Austria



▲ Finding Nemo

Shivangi Vachhani (formerly Pandya), MD, RESD '14

Great Barrier Reef, Australia



▲ Under the Bridge

Stefano Leitner, MD, RESD '20

Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 2nd Year Resident



Golden Hour

Stefano Leitner, MD, RESD '20

Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 2nd Year Resident



Clouds over the Old Peak

John Yi, MD
1st Year Resident

Machu Picchu, Peru

Island of Burano, Italy ▶

Julie Zemskova, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident



◀ The Scenic Route

Jennifer Makhoul, MD
1st Year Resident

Falougha, Lebanon





◀ My Happy Place

April Barbour, MD, MPH, FACP
Associate Professor of Medicine
Director, Primary Care Residency Program

Driftwood Beach, Jekyll Island

Keep Soaring ▶

Esosa Imasuen, MD, RESD '20

Atlanta, GA





▲ **Sunrise in the Sky**

Michelle Camp, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident

Machu Picchu, Peru

P E A
C E I N
N A T
U R E



Mantis

Homan Wai, MD, RESD '09
*Associate Professor of Medicine
Inova Fairfax Hospital*



March 2020

Katrina H Naik, MD
3rd Year Resident

Washington, DC

Starstruck

Michael Bourne, DO
2nd Year Resident

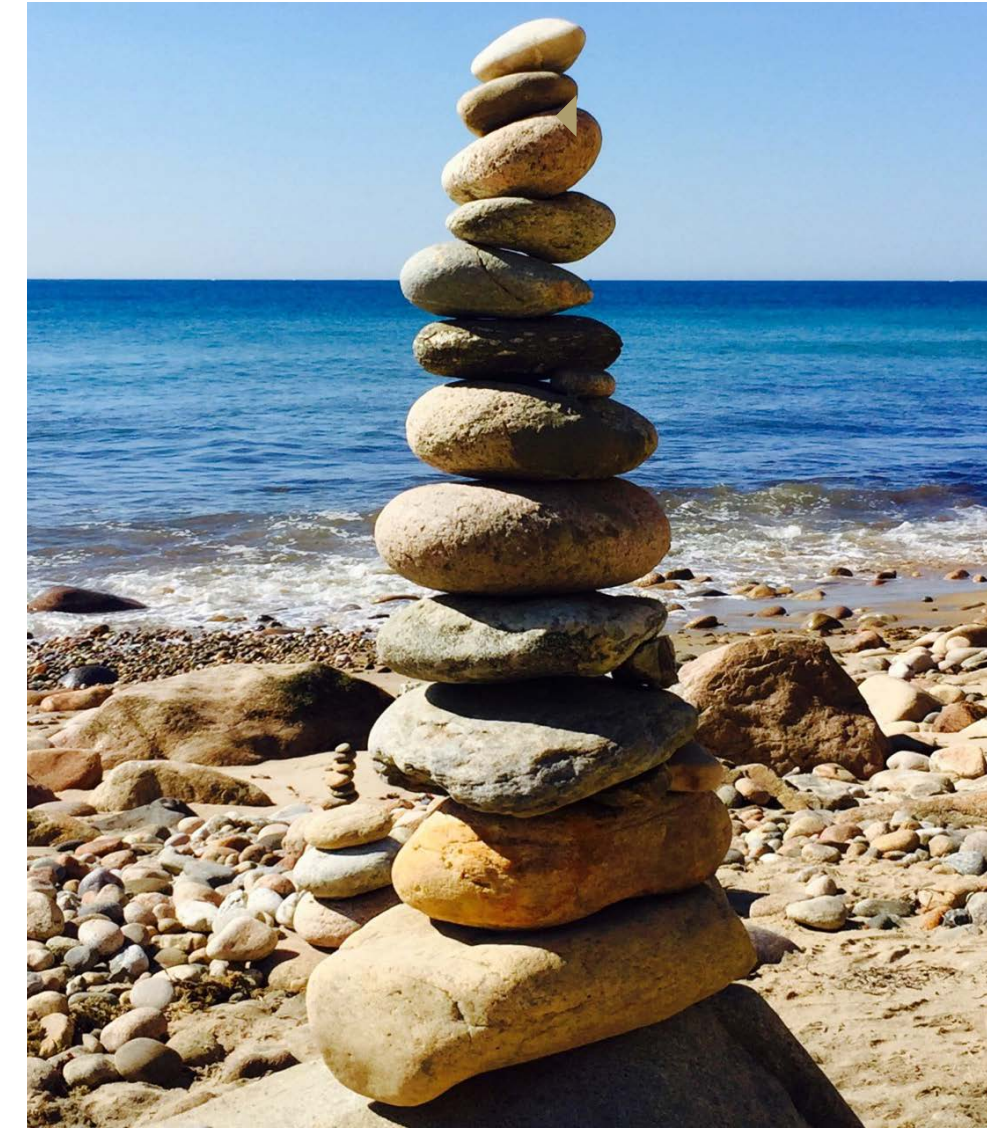
Newport, OR



Perfectly Imperfect

Michael Bourne, DO
2nd Year Resident

Victoria, BC



Finding Balance

Michael Bourne, DO
2nd Year Resident

Mohegan Bluffs, RI



Foraging for solitude

Danielle Grams Engskow, MD, RESD '20

In the chaos of last year, hiking became a way for me to relax and focus on something outside of the pandemic. While there were not many roses to smell, I did learn how to stop and appreciate the fungi.





Grand Canyon at Yellowstone

Robert Jablonover, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine



◀ Grand Tetons

Robert Jablonover, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine



◀ Two Bison at Yellowstone

Robert Jablonover, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Campfire Mellows ▶

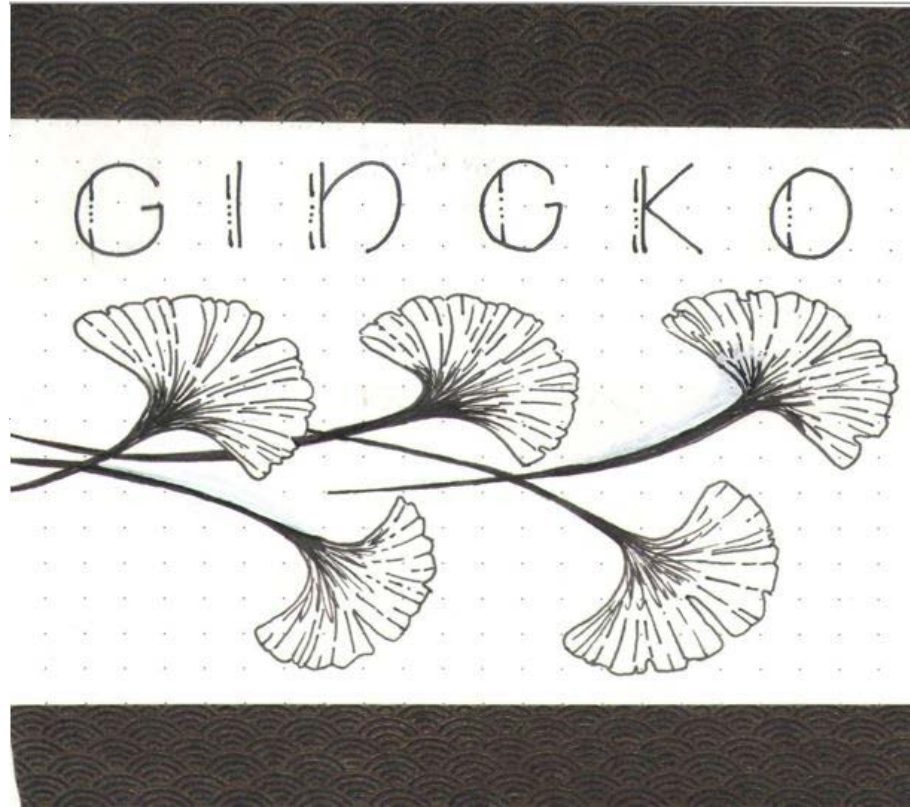
Michael Porter, DO
3rd Year Resident



Starry Night over Bryce Canyon

Julie Zemskova, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident

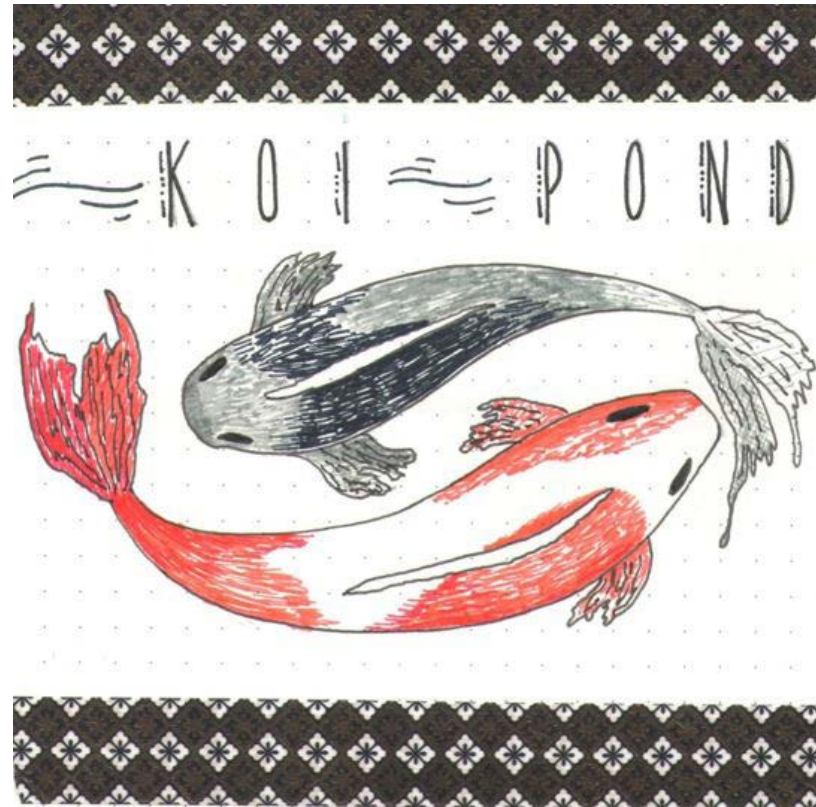




▲ **Gingko**

Sonia Silinsky Krupnikova, MD, RESD '20

Ink pen and foil tape on paper



▲ **Koi Pond**

Sonia Silinsky Krupnikova, MD, RESD '20

Ink pen and foil tape on paper



INTE
RNAL
IZING
MEDI
CINE

We think you should come in to see her

Janice Maliakkal, MD
1st Year Resident

This drawing was inspired by a non-COVID patient who I cared for in the ICU after inviting her husband to say goodbye during her last moments.

If you'd only let me choose...

Robert Jayes, MD, FACP
Associate Professor of Medicine

In a blues song* I am trying to learn, the protagonist sings: "If you'd only let me choose, I'd choose to sing the blues." As the song goes, he doesn't want to talk about it, discuss it, or press the issue (of his relationship with a woman). He only wants to sing the blues. Likewise, although I love teaching and writing the occasional paper, house calls to the frail elderly is what I live for. When our House Call Program gets a call from the anxious daughter of a forgetful 90 year old lady with no primary care for 3 years--who also fires her aides and has a mean little dog sitting on her lap--I happily grab my black bag and head out the door. I can usually make friends with the lady and the dog given about an hour and a half. To me, that's a great day.

I GET TO SPEND ALL THE TIME I NEED TO ADDRESS THE THINGS THAT MATTER THE MOST TO PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

With most house calls, I get to spend all the time I need to address the things that matter the most to patients and their families. I get the satisfaction of helping colleagues and neighbors with their parents. I constantly run into family members of former patients in church or the supermarket and get friendly waves or hugs. What's more, it's an intense and memorable

learning experience that I get to share with my students. But mostly I just like to do the house calls rather than teach or write about it. Our house call practice is a group effort of an inspired team. Several of our dedicated colleagues and staff are drawn to this work from their experience with a homebound relative. I'm thankful that our department values what we bring to patients and their families. Working with the elderly fills my day with

WORKING WITH THE ELDERLY FILLS MY DAY WITH MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS TO THE PAST.

meaningful connections to the past. We have treated two athletes from the 1936 Olympics, an intelligence official who interviewed Hitler, two Flying Fortress veterans, and a congressional leader who had two presidents attending his memorial service. There have been plenty of Kennedy connections: a couple who knew both John and Jackie before they were married, one of John's former secretaries, a woman who dated John as a senator, and a woman who used to sail with Bobby. There are many other remarkable people: a couple who raised a granddaughter who is now an Air Force general, a judge who was a Freedom Rider, and those who took great risks to integrate workplaces, mentor female colleagues, or love someone of a different race or the same sex.

Knowing patients and their families so well often leaves me awed by coincidences and connections. During a home visit to a dying holocaust survivor and terrorism expert, I took a call from the daughter of a second patient and at that very moment noticed a copy of a history of Russia written by the second patient on a bookshelf. Weeks later, while treating a third patient for an inexplicable decline, I discovered that he was mourning the death of the first patient, who had written about his family's story of escape from Berlin in 1937. These surprising

THESE SURPRISING CONNECTIONS FILL ME WITH THE SENSE OF OUR COMMON HUMANITY AND INTERDEPENDENCE, AND A RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ENDURED SO MUCH.

connections fill me with the sense of our common humanity and interdependence, and a respect for those who have endured so much. House call practice also draws on many of my non-medical skills making me feel more alive each day. I have negotiated with landlords to prevent evictions, unclogged feeding tubes with whatever I could find, and gained the trust of vulnerable elders who have never liked doctors. Sometimes I leave such houses with cookies or

or a kiss on the cheek to the amazement of their children. I have done a few minor home repairs essential to a patient's safety. I have had to make friends with many nervous dogs. I have only been bitten once; a Border Collie who warmed up to me instinctively tried to herd me back into the house as I was leaving. The future is bright for this field. Soon we can expand our care with point-of-care labs and ultrasound, as well as remote monitoring. It won't be long before payment mechanisms will reflect the quality and cost-savings we bring to Medicare. We already have the satisfaction of meeting a growing need as people survive with more frailties and comorbidities and want to stay at home.



My biggest challenge for the near future is to continue house calls as the rest of my life demands more time. I want to travel with my wife and play with my grandson more. I'd like to bicycle the world's best bike trails--did you know there is one from Notre Dame Cathedral to the Normandy coast? I'd like

to paddle a few hundred more miles in my Kevlar sea kayak. And one day, I'd like to play that blues song half decently.

* "Sing the Blues" by Cliff Eberhardt

Perfectly Wrong

Danielle Grams Engskow, MD, RESD '20

Before the critical lactate resulted, and the OR was booked STAT, and the surgeon's hands were scrubbed with diligence, and the equipment was laid out with purpose, and the drapes were placed with perfect sterile technique, and the first incision was made with mastery, and the retractors were pulled back to reveal every inch of your bowels that had become a black mangled mass...

– you were already dead.

And here I am eating my Hamburger Helper.

Suffocating

Mary Ishola, MD
3rd Year Resident

Mask in place,
Shield to my face,
I cautiously enter the room.

Trying to endear,
Though fumbling in fear,
As a PPE-clad buffoon.

Never before
Has one beheld
Such a master of multitask.

I am here,
Though my thoughts are there.
Or have you seen through my wily craft?

I can't breathe...And you can tell.
But you're the patient. And I am well?

Did I put this stuff on right?
Should it really feel so tight?

Gloved hands meant to heal,
I touch but can't feel.
I finish my exam and leave.

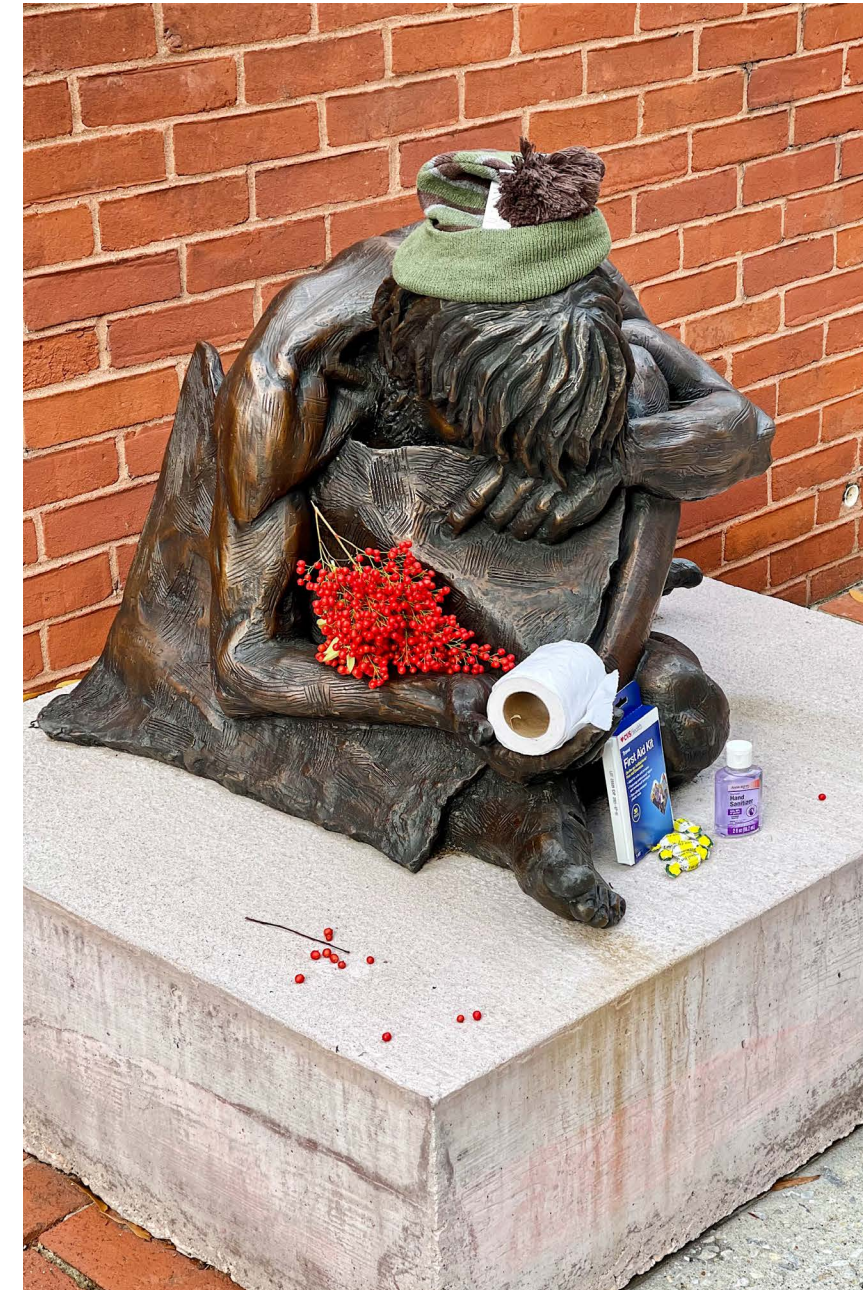
The scene is closed,
Well done I suppose,
But still. Why can't I breathe?

My First Patient

Shivangi Vachhani (formerly Pandya), MD, RESD '14

This is a poem I wrote in my 1st year of medical college, in honor of the donor whose cadaver I had the privilege of studying.

Deeds good and bad
He must have done.
Moments happy and sad
He must have spent.
Life uncovered its mysteries
To him, I imagine.
What he made out of life
I know not.
But it was good
Is all I can hope.
Who his peers were
I know not.
But they were nice
Is all I can wish.
Honest or dishonest
Angelic or devilish
Whatever he was
It was his life
But saint is what I see in him now,
For the gift he gave me,
And for the life he decided to live
After he passed.



◀ When I was Dressed

Nedda Dastmalchi, DO, MA
3rd Year Resident

For two years during my morning commute, I would walk by the Cathedral of St. Matthew and my tired eyes would be startled by the sculpture, "When I was Naked," and without fail, would think it was a real person from a distance. I would later learn that this sculpture was set to serve as a reminder to look for the good and holy in those who are underserved and vulnerable.

In the early months of the pandemic, the sculpture was decorated with items that were sold out and difficult to come by at pharmacies and grocery stores. At first, I thought it was mockery or vandalism of sacred space, but later I saw it served as a symbol to not neglect those who are suffering. The hand was reaching out for help.

I SAW IT SERVED AS A SYMBOL TO NOT NEGLECT THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING.

Parallel to this timeframe, I saw fear, chaos, and death. I felt as though I was further isolated from the reality outside of medicine and science. I momentarily had forgotten those still suffering from the pandemic who were not stricken by the wrath of the virus.

On January 20, 2021 my emotions changed. Our soon-to-be new president started his inaugural morning in the Cathedral of St. Matthew. Now, the sculpture sitting at the steps of this sacred space had its hand reaching for unity, collaboration, and harmony. The photo taken months before no longer seemed a reminder for the gluttony and selfishness shown during times of uncertainty, but instead, as a symbol to use those moments to care for others who could succumb to being abandoned.

Time to Go

Jennifer Pauldurai, MD, RESD '19
Neurology, 3rd Year Resident

I remember we were packing to return to the United States after visiting my family in India during the summer of 2015. I was hugging my grandmother goodbye when she said with tears in her eyes, "I wanted to see you get married, but I can never do that now. I'm not gonna be here much longer." I rolled my eyes at the time because this was so typical of an Indian grandmother to be dramatic on the last day of vacation. My grandmother was old, but she was healthy without any major diseases ushering her toward death. Her words made no sense; there was no reason for her to die.

Yet, less than six months after I had returned to D.C., she was gone. There was still no reason for her to die, except that she said she would. She had already decided in the summer that she wanted to go, and so she left. The hospital said it was a respiratory failure of some sort. I'm sure that's just medical jargon for "she gave up the spirit."

I thought it was elegant to choose to die. I really don't know how she willed it to happen. "Gave up" seemed too negative of an action to attribute to her decision. "Took her life" also seemed inaccurate. "Gave up the spirit" is more powerful than "her spirit left." The latter seemed so arbitrary, as if something tragically abandoned her and left her lifeless. But that's not what happened. My grandmother was in charge the entire time, and she was finished living.

The human spirit is so often lauded for being resilient and courageous and hopeful against all odds. Stories of survivors and heroes warm our souls because choosing to live and helping others to live is the best thing anyone could do, right? It's difficult to think about the alternative because what else exists apart from life? Lack of life is an emptiness that has yet to be experienced. It is unknown. But shouldn't choosing this unknown be the more courageous thing? To boldly go where no man has lived to tell the tale?

It seems odd to even think such a thing. Choosing death is quickly labeled suicidal ideation. Suicide goes against the basic human instinct to survive, so if you feel this way you must be ill. You must have depression or maladjustment from a chronic illness, and once you're recovered you will want to live again. If not mood, perhaps you have a personality disorder

that plagues you to feel the need for attention. Whatever it is, it is clearly a bad thing to want to end your life.

With that said, "ending your life" has to be different from "finishing your life." Finish implies a fulfillment-- nothing abrupt and nothing too soon. A life that is finished is like a marathon that is completed. Nobody shames you for running a full marathon; in fact, you are praised for finishing it in its entirety. Why can't the end of life be celebrated similarly?

**MY GRANDMOTHER DID NOT "EXPIRE,"
NOR DID DEATH "TAKE HER AWAY."**

I used to wonder if my grandmother wanted to keep living to see me get married, and this end actually was too soon. But she never said those dire words in protest or with resignation. She stated them as a fact, with acceptance and peace. I called her when she was in the hospital the night before she died. We spoke of the weather and how medical school was going. Then, at the end, she said she was leaving, and that it was her time. And I remember saying "okay" with a similar acquiescence. It was my last conversation with her before she died the next morning. My grandmother did not "expire," nor did death "take her away." Her life was over--not because she lost a battle, but because she finished life with the most dignified victory possible.

My Shadows

Shay Vellanki, MD
1st Year Resident

Conquer your fears they say...

As if one's fears are finite,
As if fear is one entity, a final target in battle.
The truth: our fears ebb and flow.
Constantly changing in number and size.
Some settle at the forefront depending on the seasons they are born.
Some are tucked away in our childhood closets to mourn.
Over the years, I've come to see my fears as lurking shadows cast down on a path which is mine to tread.
Often, I am unsure from which direction or which angle they will come in sight.
The dark, empty silhouettes that mock my walk and my stance.
I see you. You're mine to carry along in this dance.
But one thing is certain about these shadows, my fears.
They have been followers and never leaders over the many years.
Each shadow is simply my reminder that somewhere light is in sight.
And even though the light is obstructed in a silent moment of fear,
I need only take a step in the direction of my light for that shadow to disappear.

Blessons

Shay Vellanki, MD
1st Year Resident

While living life as a series of lessons learned,
I've come to encounter most blessings unturned.
Too busy washing wounds with guilt-ridden sands,
And circling my past with accusing pale hands.
"Should have this..."
"Should not have that..."
Who better to listen than the ghost of my past.
Yet every time she arrived to test my soul,
she left me with a greater blessing to hold.
To remind me that not all lessons are stained in tears,
and not all blessings paint golden smears.
Most lessons are simply blessings in disguise.
And to question "what was" proves always unwise.
For together they have become our blessons to teach,
the fluorescent-colored future just within our reach.

Not Meeting Expectations

Paul Silver, MD, FACP

Associate Professor of Medicine

It was back in the primordial days of paper charts, and the file that was placed on my desk was several inches thick. I had recently taken over the practice of a retiring physician whose many patients had been with him for decades. I had become accustomed to reviewing voluminous records prior to seeing, what was to me, a new patient, but this exceeded most by several orders. Mr. James Foyle* was in his late seventies and had disorders of virtually every organ system. Heart, lungs, kidneys, and joints were all in desperate shape. I pictured a frail, subdued individual who would speak in a quiet whisper with an air of melancholy given his seemingly debilitated condition. I braced myself for a complex and, perhaps, dispiriting session.

A few minutes later, I heard the sound of a rollator moving down the hall towards my consultation room. I looked up and saw a short, bent over man wheeling his way in my direction. He had a bushy mustache with matching eyebrows, but what struck me was the proverbial twinkle in his eye. Overall, he looked like an elf using a walker. As he entered my office, he extended his hand and, in an incongruous, booming bass, declared, "Hello Dr. Silver!"

Thus started what turned out to be a delightful relationship. Undeterred by his multitude of ailments, Jim absolutely radiated a joy of living. It was infectious. Despite my initial trepidation, I came to look forward to his visits. He was a meticulous patient, so managing his illnesses was surprisingly straightforward. Our sessions were full of conversations and swapping stories. He remained physically stable for a few years.

Unfortunately, a new complaint emerged: increasing shortness of breath. His heart condition was stable so that was eliminated as the cause. The final conclusion was a fibrosing condition of his lungs, perhaps caused by one of his heart medications. He faced this turn of events with equanimity. Eventually, he was admitted to the hospital with respiratory failure and required the use of a ventilator.

One night, shortly after he was admitted, I had a dream. In it, Jim was warmly embracing his wife and looked at me and smiled. When I arrived at the hospital the next morning, I learned that he had died--probably about the time I had my dream.

Over the years I have noted the variety of ways people respond to what life has dealt them. Some are virtually incapacitated by objectively minor conditions while others, like Jim, thrive despite monumental challenges. It has been 20 years since the night of my dream, but I smile every time I think of him. His memory is a blessing and an inspiration.

**Not the patient's real name.*



HEART
AND
HOME

The End of the Tunnel

Esosa Imasuen, MD, RESD '20

Taken the evening of the Biden-Harris win on November 7th, 2020. The joy in the District was palpable, even the streets beamed.



Concrete & Cherry Blossoms

Matt Mancini, PA-C

Metal clanking
Sunssets from Brooklyn
Neck strain from gazing at skyscrapers
Feeling so big and so small at the same time
Lines at the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree
The way that the subway screeches in your ear when you least expect it
Lines at Georgetown Cupcake in the evening
Feeling like you are making a difference
Foot pain from walking down 14th Street
Sunrise from the Lincoln Memorial
Cherry blossoms blooming

A Newborn Embrace

Anokhi Shah, MD, RESD '18
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Swaddled therapy
Sweet coos, a healing soft scent
Euphoria held



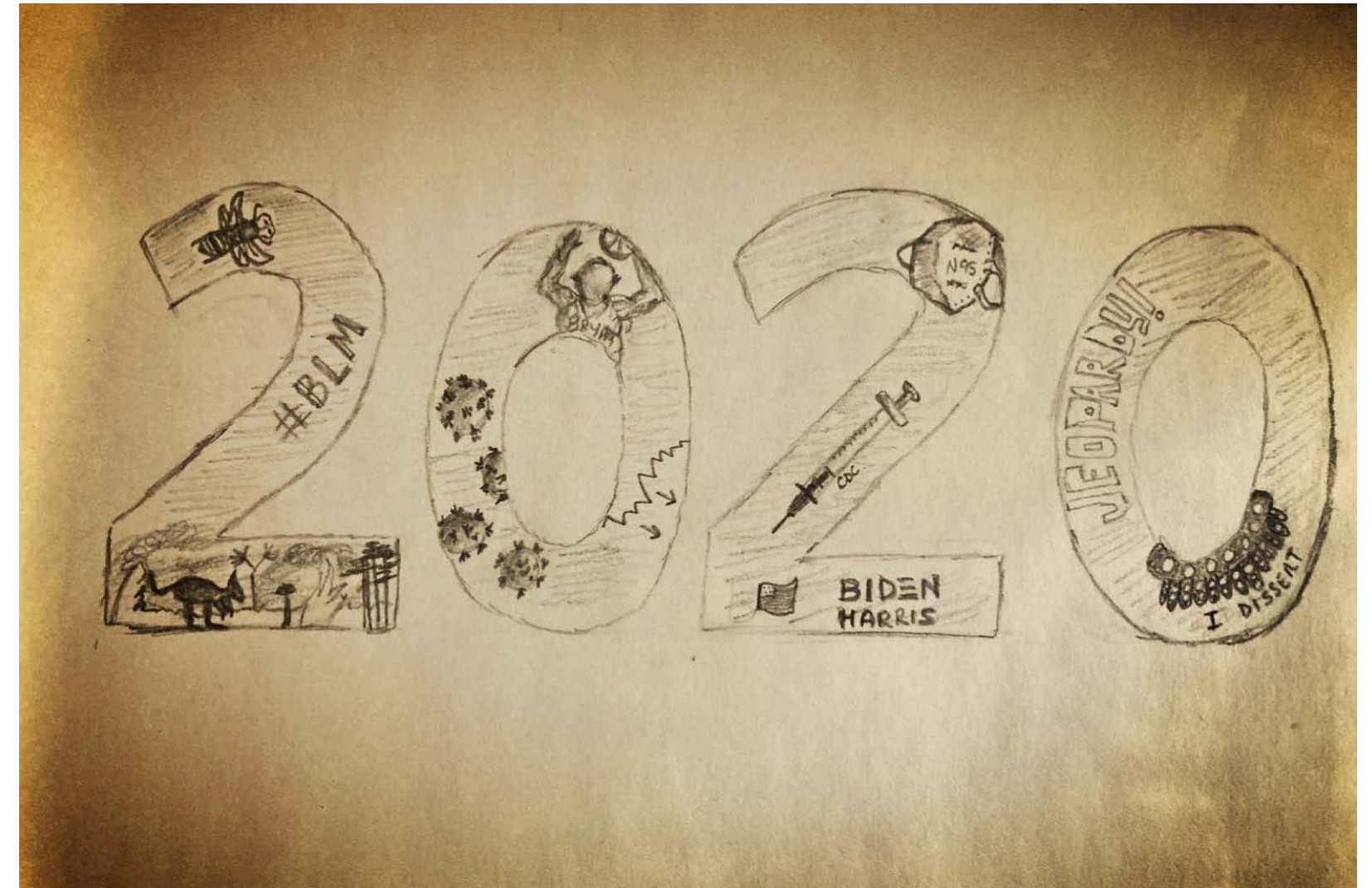
▲ Pandemic Puppy

Stefano Leitner, MD, RESD '20
Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 2nd Year Resident



▲ Peaceful Slumber

Aileen Y Chang, MD, MSPH
Assistant Professor of Medicine



▲ What a Year

Tanuka Datta, MD, RESD '18

What a year. From the Australian wildfires and murder hornets; to unity and transparency throughout the black lives matter movement, the death of many well known figures such as the irreplaceable Ruth Bader Ginsburg, television icon Alex Trebek, and basketball legend Kobe Bryant; to a pandemic that made us realize what bliss our previous "normal unmasked lives" had been; to healthcare heroes and hope in our nation's Democracy for 2021; to finally a vaccine that's our shot at recovery to a new normalcy... farewell 2020. What. A. Year.



◀ **Fourth of July in DC**

Danielle Grams Engskow, MD, RESD '20

2020: Physically Distant but Getting Closer

Jillian Catalanotti, MD, MPH, FACP
Associate Professor of Medicine and of Health Policy
Director, Internal Medicine Residency Program



When my husband and I decided to move to DC over a decade ago, we thought it was the perfect distance from family. An easy 4-hour train ride to my parents, sisters, and the growing number of nephews/nieces in New York, and a similar length drive to his parents. Those train and car rides were a regular part of our existence until 2020.

As I write this, it has been 14 months since I have seen a member of my immediate family in person—more than three times longer than I had ever gone in my life to date. I won't lie—that's been

hard. There are days when I want nothing more than a trip with my dad to our favorite pizzeria, a dance with my mom, a haircut from one sister, and a vocal harmonizing session with the other.

But, like others, 2020 has taught our family to connect in new and meaningful ways. Our family fitness selfies keep us moving (and honest!). I'm able to join in on family birthday celebrations even mid-week, which I had not been able to do since I left for college. We have been able to spend holidays with both my side of the family and my

husband's side of the family, without even having to fight the usual holiday traffic (because if you know anyone from New York, you know that they think the train only runs in one direction - towards New York!). Our weekly Catalanotti Family Zoom Game Hour brings us together in a brand new way, allowing all of us, from 7 to 76 years old, to laugh as we play Pictionary together. I even got to star in my niece's school play (which our family recorded via Zoom and shared with her teacher).

As a hugger from a close-talking Italian-American family full of extroverts, I won't pretend that video conferencing is a true substitute for spending time together. But on the whole, 2020 was a year for our family to connect and create great memories, and for that I am grateful.

And Then There Were Four

Paul Silver, MD, FACP
Associate Professor of Medicine

Just the two of us for years.
Children left to raise their own, and we enjoyed a quiet life.
Then Mom and Dad began to falter and could not live on their own.
Mom went to a home, and Dad moved in with us.
Accommodations made on all sides.
New equilibrium was reached with periodic disruptions—falls, hospitalizations, misunderstandings.
Not quite as quiet.
Mom passed, and Dad missed her every day but remained his gregarious self.
Always the storyteller, but we try patiently to listen to him tell them over and over sometimes within minutes.
Then, "Dad, how would you and Mom feel about us moving in for a couple of years?"
With three children, 7, 5, and 1.
Joyful noise and noise.
A house full.
Comedy, drama, slap-stick, pea-up-the-nose, the latest.
Now four generations.
Great Grandpa "talking" to toddler great-grandson is particularly cute.
Not where we thought we would be now, but would not have it any other way.

School at home

Mihir Patel, MD, MS, FACP
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Because of the coronavirus I have school from home
They even give me a computer with the word chrome

In my own bedroom I listen to the teacher
The video she shows could be clearer

I have homework they say I need to upload
At least the amount is not a boatload

I open up the app to read an online book
Since my little sister really wants to look

At night I tell my grandparents about my day
You are really growing up fast they say

Kids should be inside the school I hear adults say
To me having school at home is really just okay



A Peaceful Night in the District
Esosa Imasuen, MD, RESD '20



▲ Taking a Break
Michelle Camp, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident

Washington, DC



◀ Reflection

Michael Bourne, DO
2nd Year Resident

Washington, DC

Love of a Daughter

Maram Alkhatib, MD, MSc
Assistant Professor of Medicine

How much do I love you, you ask
I love you...
More than a million pounds of sugar
More than a GAZILLION pieces of chocolate chips
More than ALL the candy in all the stores in the world
More than ALL the animals that ever lived in the Amazonian rainforest

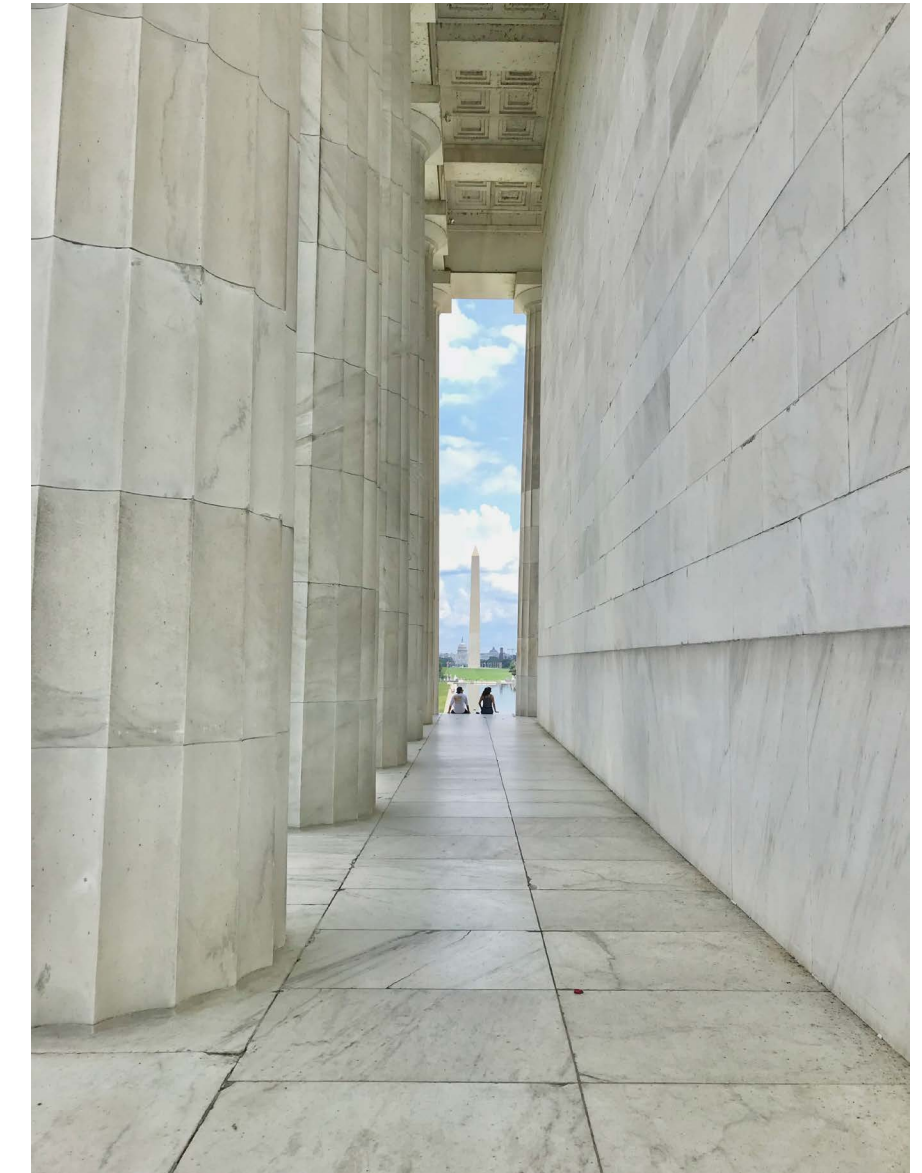
But don't worry my little one--one day you will grow up and understand
how much I truly love you

Loss of a Friend

Maram Alkhatib, MD, MSc
Assistant Professor of Medicine

So you're gone
And I'm not ready
...Wait, don't leave so fast
Let's talk one last time
Let's laugh one last time
Don't you know this is not how it was meant to go?
You haven't met my eldest and taught her how to game
Nor met my youngest and taught her how to swear

But alas, this is life...
So, Rest in Peace Friend.... you'll be forever missed!



▲ It's all about perspective

Michelle Camp, MD, MS
2nd Year Resident

Amy

Marijane Hynes, MD
Clinical Professor of Medicine
Director, Weight Management Program

Amy is my bff. The expression I had previously never believed in, "You only need one really good friend," would describe her.



Medical School Graduation, 1994.

I met her my first week of medical school. Amy was incredibly knowledgeable and really knew how to study. She was beautiful, with dark hair and almost purple eyes. She wore Birkenstocks and wool sweaters she knit; she knew all about choosing types of cheese and farming and canning. Amy knew about these subjects because she had grown up in Vermont

on a cranberry bog, where her father also had a pharmacy business. She would help him by delivering medications to all the sick people around her rural area; she then decided to become a doctor. Being a city girl into bling, I had never met anyone like her.

Amy was always solution oriented. I never had learned how to drive, so I was looking for residencies that did not require a car. My options were severely limited. Amy said, "Marijane, this is CRAZY!" and before I knew it, she was teaching me how to drive. Then, she sold me her family car, which I later learned she did far below blue book value. The first day of residency, I was petrified, not because of being a new doctor, but because I was driving alone for the first day ever. She told me I could do this, drive and park by myself, giving me needed confidence.

The years passed quickly, and I felt sad when she moved with her love to California. Her future husband had also been in medical school here. He had worked at a liquor store before they moved, so they always bought top-shelf liquor. They gave me all the liquor bottles they had not opened before they moved. These bottles were strewn all over the trunk of my car. I completely forgot about them when I had to pick up my non-drinking in-laws at the airport. I thought my future mother-in-law's eyes were going to pop out when she saw the trunk. This made for another great phone conversation with Amy now in California. We laughed about all of this.

We got together for years, meeting at the Providence, RI airport hub, where we would combine our family vacations, yet we always separated from our families by spending three days of the vacation alone. Everyone in both families knew this time was sacred and not to be interfered with.

As the years passed, we spoke at least once a week. We had jobs, sons, and dogs, lives that were not easy, and we were each other's support. In our work, I knew all about diabetes, and she knew all about intubating trauma patients in LA. We somehow could laugh about all of our own traumas.

A few years ago, my beloved dog died. I called Amy, and she was, as usual, amazing. A few days later she called, and I cried about my dog, and she said that this time she just had to tell me she had breast cancer, which required surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. I felt like someone had punched me in the stomach. I called my mom for support, and she said, "That's only two bad things. Something else bad is going to happen to you." (She is superstitious and thinks bad things happen in threes.) This was new conversational material, so I immediately called Amy: we had a good laugh.

She recovered with grace, never complaining, and was soon back at work. When COVID hit hard, rather than being scared, she was right there, on the front lines, reading as much as she could to take the best care of her patients. She called and told me the patients did better when they were not intubated, but on high flow oxygen. That was in the first days of the virus, when few were saying this. She knew all the details of care: she called me to tell me which websites were the best for COVID. Because of the pandemic, we were going to skip getting together this year, but she was traveling east for her brother's wedding, so we met for a few days in August in Lake George, again laughing non-stop for three days.



Lake George, 2020

Amy means "God has given" in Hebrew, and the name is often taken as symbolic of steadfast friendship and loyalty. For me, nothing could be truer. I tell my medical students this advice: "Don't just study, but invest in finding an Amy, as the returns are lifelong!"



2021 Cuentos Editorial Team

Top left to right: Katalin Roth, Faculty Advisor; Michelle Camp, Editor; Anokhi Shah, Chief Faculty Editor and Advisor

Bottom left to right: L. Nedda Dastmalchi, Editor-in-Chief; John Yi, Editor; Shaitalya Vellanki, Editor

Emily Newman, Editor (*not pictured*)

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