

The Main Street **WIRE**

Roosevelt Island’s Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044

No More Helicopters What’s That Quiet?

by Nancy Cruickshank

This year March came in like a lamb on Roosevelt Island. It was the first Sunday afternoon in the history of residential development without helicopters coming and going from the 60th Street heliport. The last flight roared out on Saturday, February 28th with its closing.

The heliport, opened in the 1960’s to replace the one atop the Pan Am building after a tragic accident forced its closure, has been the focus of community opposition for years. It is being closed because of structural problems and because of upcoming repair work to be done on the FDR Drive. At the present time there are no plans to reopen it.

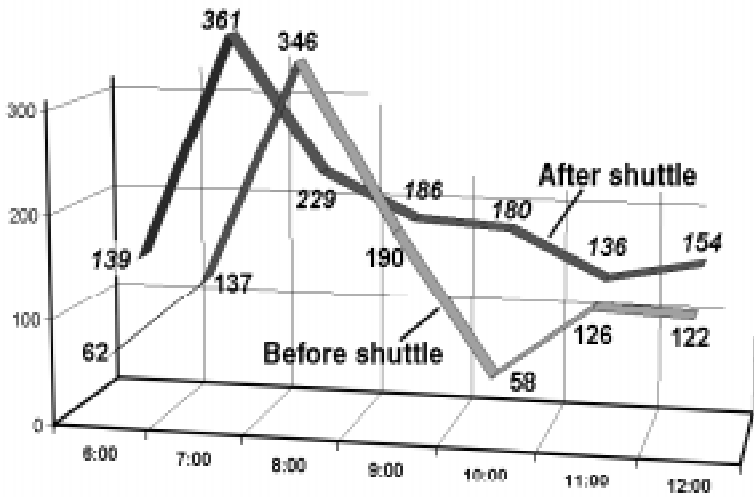
Since 1975 the heliport had been operating in violation of the New York City Charter with noise levels on Roosevelt Island exceeding those that cause permanent hearing loss.

Should one worry that Roosevelt Island will be too quiet, we continue to be under the East River helicopter flyway created to ease noise levels in Manhattan. There are also plans to open a helicopter repair facility at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Helicopters will be using the East River to access it.



Website NYC10044

On Monday, standing water on the tarmac was quiet evidence of heliport inactivity. Days before, the puddle would have been dispersed by turbulent air from the blades of transient helicopters.



Tram to the rescue...

Islanders switched to the Tramway over the past two weeks as subway Q-line service was replaced by a shuttle scheduled at 20-minute intervals, but running less precisely much of the time. The graph compares morning ridership for one weekday before the subway change, when 1041 took the aerial route, vs one day last week, when the total for the period was 1385. While this is a one-third increase in traffic, indications are the overall increase is about 20 percent. Analysis of the limited underlying data is highly speculative, but for the two days compared, the post-shuttle bump in riders during the 7:00 a.m. hour appears to include a large shift of students to the Tramway, as well as commuters getting an earlier start than normal. A third of the Tram’s morning-shift increase occurred in the 7:00-9:00 morning rush.

RIRA To Move For Shared Oversight Role in Public Safety

Citing high crime statistics in February, and noting the 50 percent share of Public Safety costs that are paid by residents through rents, the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) decided Wednesday night to ask for a clearly defined role in supervising the Island’s Public Safety Department.

PSD Chief Peter Norwood currently reports to Jerome Blue, President of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), and works with a committee headed by Ron Vass, one of two Island-resident members on the nine-seat RIOC Board of Directors.

Under longstanding arrangements, the cost of PSD is paid jointly by RIOC and the Island’s housing companies, except for Manhattan Park, which provides its own patrols.

At Wednesday night’s meeting, RIRA President Patrick Stewart appointed a committee to investigate and pursue the role.

Beacon School Grant Goes to Island’s PS217

The Island school is about to become a “beacon” school. The program, announced by City Councilmember Gifford Miller, will provide up to \$433,000 for an array of youth development programs. Funds became available after negotiations between City Council and the Giuliani administration on the City budget.

Beacon Schools are intended to provide safe havens for youth, and are focused on prevention of substance abuse. Programs target kids at risk of drug and alcohol use, providing a broad range of services such as homework and tutorial assistance, reading labs, and recreational activities.

“Beacons have proven extremely effective at empowering communities to provide the best education and substance abuse prevention services for our kids,” Miller said. He thanked Peter Vallone, crediting the City Council Speaker as a strong advocate for Roosevelt Island’s designation for a full Beacon program.

RIOC Night Meeting Next Week

The Board of Directors of RIOC, the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, will meet Thursday night at 7:00 at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, giving residents a rare evening opportunity to voice their concerns. Residents who wish to speak must sign up in advance by calling 832-4540, ext. 311.

From the FDR Institute Some Glimmer of New Hope for FDR Park at Southpoint

At a recent meeting of RIOC’s Southpoint Development Advisory Committee, the following presentation was read by Rona Silverbush, representing former Ambassador William vanden Heuvel, President of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, who was unable to attend.

I am sorry that I am unable to be with you today to discuss this important matter and to personally address questions regarding the history of the development of the Southernmost tip of this island as a memorial park honoring Franklin Delano Roosevelt — a history that I have been involved in since its inception — before this island was given its current name.

Those of you unfamiliar with the history of the memorial project may think that the tip of this island was chosen as the site for a memorial to FDR because the island was already named for him...not so. In 1970, the Roosevelt Institute (then known as the Four Freedoms Foundation) initiated the planning of a memorial to FDR in New York. The Four Freedoms Foundation entered into discussions with city and state leaders, including Edward Logue, president of the Urban Development Corporation, which was planning a new, self-contained community on what was then called Welfare Island. As a result of those discussions, the site on the southern tip of Welfare Island was selected for the memorial and because the island was to contain this memorial, the island was renamed in honor of FDR on September 24, 1973. Naming the Island for FDR was the first step in a project which was to culminate in the construction of the memorial on the Southern tip.

The announcement of these plans was first made on April 12, 1972 at the Annual Award Dinner of the Four Freedoms Foundation, at which then-

See Southpoint, page 6

Living a Little Leaguer’s Dream, Dishman Goes to Spring Training

by Sharon Berman

Rich Dishman, Jr., is living the dream of every American boy.

A lifelong resident of Roosevelt Island and a 6-foot-5 right-handed pitcher who weighs in at 220, Dishman was recruited by the Atlanta Braves organization last June after his graduation from Duke. This week he begins Spring Training in Orlando. There’s a lot riding on how well he does there, but Dishman has always had a single-minded focus: to play professional baseball and to play as well as possible. “I started playing in the Roosevelt Island Little League when I was 4 or 5,” he remembers. “At first, I wasn’t better than anyone else. There were a lot of good players. Several of my friends went on to be college athletes. But I really wanted to be a baseball player. I never wanted to be anything else, and it was a dream that seemed attainable.”

A dream that required dedication and sacrifice. “I practiced a lot with friends, my little brother and my father. Richard Dishman, Sr., coached a Little League team and was always supportive. “I received a tremendous amount of help from my family and friends.” Dishman rejected top-rated Stuyvesant High School to attend Archbishop Malloy High in Queens after his father researched schools that could help his son achieve his dream. “It was a good school with an excellent baseball program,” but it meant practicing at least four hours a day, six days a week, ten months of the year. “I was exposed to a high



level of competition,” Rich says. But he was noticed. He received a draft call from the Marlins as a high school senior, but rejected it without hesitation, turning down an impressive amount of money, because “I wanted to go to college.” He chose Duke because he could be a “normal student, not living and eating only with other athletes,” but he had the commitment and found the time to train four hours a day, six days a week, do weights for another hour, run three miles a day, and still maintain a 2.9 grade point average.

He played summers in a college league, turned down another draft opportunity (from the Giants) in his Junior year because he wanted to finish college, and finally, a month after graduation, it all paid off. He received a call from Atlanta. “I’m really happy about the Braves — they have great pitching and good coaching.”

Last summer, he played for the Emeralds, a short season A team in Eugene, Oregon. Chris Metz, a spokesperson for the Emeralds, described Dishman “one of our best pitchers and probably our best relief pitcher.” Describing him as “quiet, but getting along with everyone,” he went on to say that Dishman has “as good a chance as any on the team to get to the majors.”

And according to Metz, this is the big year for Dishman. Next week as Spring Training begins, the coaches will be watching him closely, and his performance will determine where he’ll spend his first full summer in pro

See Dishman, page 6

Pages of Opinion

Roundup Time

The Main Street Theatre “Goes Western” on April 4 by inviting Islanders and their guests to a fundraiser where the proper attire should be jeans and cowperson shirts, I think. A featured attraction for the night will be line dancing and the entertainment will include The Mostly Monty, performed by locals. Admission is \$20. If David Kraut is one of the Monty crew, I might be tempted to pay more. Or maybe less, on reflection.

Plan Ahead

The 6th Annual “Take Our Daughters To Work Day” will be held on April 23. Sponsored by the Ms. Foundation for Women, the event this year will be highlighted by publication of “Girls Seen and Heard: 52 Life Lessons for Our Daughters.” Theme of the 1998 event is “Imagine A Day” and, on April 23, the girls are to visualize what it would be like for them to work anywhere, doing anything. For more information, call the Ms. Foundation’s toll-free number **1-800-676-7780** or in New York City (212) **742-2300**, or check its Web site, <http://www.ms.foundation.org>.

Hallmark of Humor

One of the funniest birthday cards I have seen in many a year was given to me recently and I want to share its message with you. On the front is a picture of a baby with arms raised high and saying “Its your birthday! Throw up your hands and celebrate! Make some noise!!” Inside: “I get nervous when people your age don’t move!”

High on AARP

As a magazine and book editor, I was for years on the press list of the American Association of Retired Persons and always found its publications/news releases informative although I didn’t always agree with the AARP views. When I reached the age to qualify for membership, I joined. In recent years, the AARP efforts have gotten better and better. Special reports on a variety of subjects, including such topics as health care and providers in coming years, recent changes in tax laws, the latest phone scams, etc. are very worthwhile. I recommend AARP to you, but don’t always take its editorial positions as the final word.



Only Yesterday

There is an ad scheduled for this issue that raises a lump in my throat. It is for the Mount Tom Day Camp and it seems only yesterday that our Sarah bravely boarded the bus for what was her first experience away from home without us. It’s nice to know that Mount Tom is still with *The WIRE*.

Whew!

Made a bet with myself that I could write a column without using the B Word, but I must admit there were a couple of times that I almost blew it.

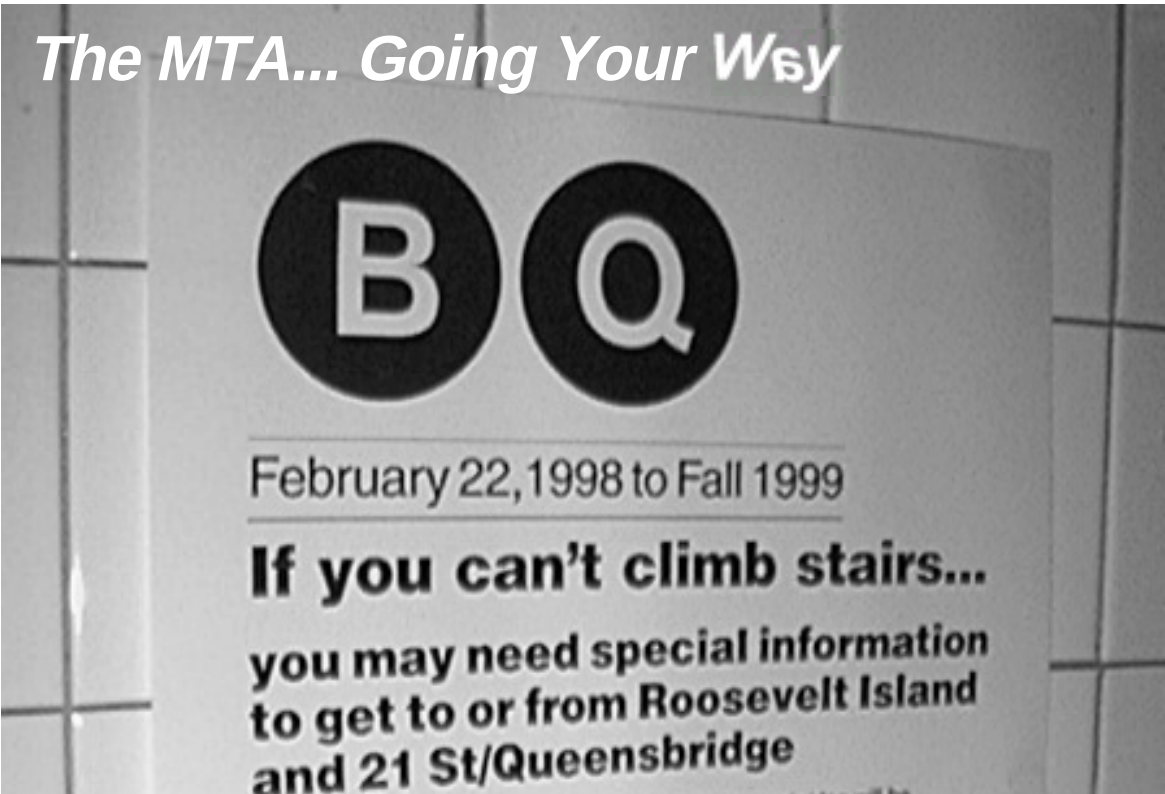


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in association with
Website NYC10044



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Targeted communication: Six copies of this MTA advisory poster were posted near the token booth in the subway station at 57th and 7th last week, at the bottom of *stairs* from the street, and at the top of *stairs* from the platform. That entrance has no escalators or elevators.

We can be confident that no able-minded individual here buys into the shrill charge of “Racist!” that now floats over our Island, fingers pointed ambiguously at every Islander who finds fault with Jerry Blue’s stewardship at RIOC. It’s readily recognizable, at this range, as a bankrupt *defense of last resort*.

The real danger of it is that someone *off-Island* might, in the credulity of our accusatory times, put some stock in it. You know the syndrome: No matter how completely absurd the charge, no matter how baseless, no matter how confused it may be... no matter the facts, those resorting to such a stance can, in this sorry day and age, count on someone “out there” thinking “Well, I’m sure it’s mostly poppycock, but where there’s smoke, maybe there’s a little fire...” Wrong. In this case... **Where there’s smoke, there’s a smokescreen.**

Those schooled in the annals of demagoguery remember Senator Joe McCarthy standing before the cameras, holding up his grocery list, and claiming to have a list of 100-some communists in the State Department. McCarthy had the cunning, at least, to claim some specific number, rather than pointing wildly at the entire State Department.

But, because he didn’t specify names of the accused, every hard-working public servant at State came under suspicion. The country lived

island observer

through a period of commie-panic that disrupted all rational debate. Every scoundrel with a dull ax to grind picked up the technique: “Commie!” “Red!” The nation was the worse for it.

Roosevelt Island’s amateur demagogues have so far done us the favor of indiscriminately hurling their cry of “Racist!” at everyone and anyone who opposes Jerome Blue’s bonehead errors. Such a charge sticks to nobody because it is so patently absurd. But if they learn their lessons from Joe McCarthy, they’ll soon start specifying organizations, just as McCarthy specified the State Department. Maybe they’ll even hold up a sheet of paper at a RIOC meeting and shout, “Mr. Chairman, I have here a list of 17 racists at...” Well, you fill in the name of your favorite Island organization, and you have the idea. Will you come under suspicion?

We might hope our local demagogues will learn the further lesson of the McCarthy era. Censured by the Senate, McCarthy died a discredited, broken shell of a man. His only legacy is his name, shorthanded into an “ism” for his demonic, failed tactic.

-DL

Letters

Dear Fellow Island Residents:

It has been five weeks since the fire in my apartment devastated my family and myself at 4 River Road. Not a day goes by that we don’t think about all the help and donations we received from all the people on the Island. From the Church to the Post Office. From 501 Main Street to Manhattan Park Management. *The WIRE*, the Thrift Shop, the teachers at PS 217, our phantom couple from 20 River Road who on the night of the fire dropped off food to us and were never thanked. To Maxine wherever you are, thank you so much. There are so many to mention, and all you other special people know who you are.

Never in our wildest dreams with the big loss we took did we expect the outcry of help we received from our community. I know from time to time there are a lot of negative things said about the Island, but not enough positive things are expressed. This tragedy of ours will never fade in our minds, but it has put my faith back in mankind. My family and I wish to thank you all for your help in getting us through these difficult times and helping us to put our lives back together.

Thank you all and God bless you all.

The Raimone Family
P.S. Hang in there, 7th floor.
We’ll be back!

Dear Councilmember Miller:

I want to thank you for your immediate response and unqualified support in the Tram Crisis. It’s what we’ve come to expect from you and your staff, but it’s still appreciated and worth noting. You’re always there for us -- your letter to *The New York Times*, your presence at the meeting last night, your good work behind the scenes — we notice and we’re grateful.

Speaking for all of Roosevelt Island, you don’t *need* to find an alternative means of transportation to go from the Island to Manhattan. *You can walk on water.*

Sharon Berman

Mr. Joseph Lynch
Acting Commissioner, NYS DHCR
25 Beaver Street
New York, N.Y. 10004

Dear Mr. Lynch:

Thank you very much for your recent positive attention to many matters of great importance lately on Roosevelt Island. All of those seem to have been erased today by your comments to *The New York Times*, which otherwise presented a pretty balanced report on Island life.

This letter continues on page 6
More letters, pages 3 and 6

Dear Dr. Blue:

I am writing to ask you to pursue an agreement with the MTA to install the MetroCard fare collection system on the Roosevelt Island Tram.

Installation of the MetroCard system will complete the goal of “One City, One Fare” by allowing residents of Roosevelt Island who use the Tram to transfer at no charge to the bus or subway. While track work is completed during the next 15 months, the

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters to the Editor, to the community, and to officials, and will consider publication *Name Withheld* basis, but the writer’s name, address, and telephone number must be provided. **Preferred methods of submission:** IBM-compatible 3.5-inch floppy disk (any wordprocessing software) left at 531 Main Street for *The WIRE*; by ASCII text email (72260.20@compuserve.com); or typed, double-spaced copy left at 531 Main Street or faxed to (212) 755-2540. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered. **All letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.**

Q line serving the Island will be operating as a shuttle with 20 minute headways. Riders have already begun to shift to the Tram because of this reduction in service. Furthermore, it is my understanding that riders with disabilities are more dependent than usual on the Tram because elevators and escalators have been malfunctioning at the subway station.

With the Tram serving much of the subway’s purpose, it is a matter of equity that the Tram’s riders have the same rights and pay the same fare as other riders in the mass transit system. Tram riders should not have to pay \$3.00 to travel to the West Side of Manhattan, one fare for the Tram and a second for the subway or bus in Manhattan.

There is precedent for such an arrangement. The City has installed the MetroCard fareboxes in its private franchised buses which operate both local and express routes. Franchised bus riders can now use the MetroCard to transfer to an MTA-operated subway or bus without an additional charge. While the specifics of the City’s agreement with the MTA may differ from RIOC’s needs, the concept is applicable.

I urge you to take action quickly in this matter to ensure that Roosevelt Islanders have access to the seamless transportation system all other New Yorkers can now enjoy.

Mark Green
NYC Public Advocate

To the Editor:

I thought I'd gone to heaven when I moved to the "most integrated community in the world," with a Tram over a river. So, being angels, we residents were, of course, all loving, intelligent....

I've been trying to avoid the realization—but the Franc Five (Lisa Knox, her co-signers, and the initiator of this Only Skin Color Counts Brigade) have finally made me realize that there is not only God, but also Satan.

A friend says the Fuming Five are trying to divide the community (oh, no!) by race: white and black. In 1998 we're to have the South revisited.... I implore my black neighbors not to be seduced by them — Blue is indeed black, as are Jesse Jackson, Vernon Jordan, Ossie Davis and as were Whitney Young, Thurgood Marshall, Harriet Tubman. And those of us who are decent admire them for their deeds, not their complexions. Every resident, complexion irrelevant, should evaluate Blue by his deeds. For me (I will not use the subway) what's vital is the Tram — and minibuses to 59th Street when it is down — not Blue's skin color. I'm not an idiot. I want the six million dollar subsidy back — I pay taxes to the State each year.

My teacher always says, "Nothing happens by chance." Could be. Today I received a reminder to renew my annual contribution to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which brings court cases against the white supremacists who lynch (no!) and otherwise torture blacks; sends free Teach Tolerance materials to schools; and protects against the Klan.

It made me feel whole again to write the check — larger this year to cleanse myself of the Festering Five's poisonous attempt to make us a racially divided community. I invite everyone of us angels to join me: send your check to Morris Dees, Southern Poverty Law Center, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104. Send your check and make these race-dividers the Futile Five.

Let's not turn this once-heavenly community into a black-may-not-be-criticized nuthouse. Black supremacy is no more sane than white supremacy. Ask any color consultant.

Frances Salten

Jerome H. Blue, Ph.D., President
Roosevelt Island Operating Corp.
591 Main Street
Roosevelt Island, NY 10044

Dear Dr. Blue:

I am writing to seek your assistance regarding a very grave matter that grows more serious each day. I am sure you are aware of the charges of racism which have been directed at the RIRA Common Council and other officers of RIRA, both in widely distributed printed material, and through other media.

These charges have no basis in fact and seem largely to be based upon the assumption that since RIRA fre-

The Paper Trail

Coping with the
new age McCarthyism:
A decoy charge of "Racist!"

racism

quently voices its disagreement with many policies and positions of your office, that disagreement can only be racial in origin.

Of course, this is a patently nonsensical assumption, as well as being, in fact, a racist assumption in itself.

These charges come from a single small group of individuals known to us both, who are unwilling to make those charges in any manner that can be answered directly by RIRA, although they have ample opportunity to do so. Any rational examination of any evidence of racism within RIRA would immediately expose the charge as having no basis whatsoever in fact.

In your capacity as Chief Operating Officer of the agency directly responsible for the welfare of our community, we ask that, as a senior employee of the State of New York, you publicly disassociate yourself from these charges in a manner that will reassure the residents of your concern for the good of our community. Roosevelt Island has a long, proud history as a peacefully-mixed community, and our primary concern should be to strengthen it further.

If I may be of any assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to ask.

Patrick Stewart

There is an increasingly vocal small group on the Island, who are saying that I don't like Jerry Blue because of his race. His race has nothing to do with it. *It's not because he's black...it's because he's Blue.*

I don't like that Jerry Blue is not qualified for his job, and that he has harmed this community by his incompetence, and will undoubtedly harm it further before he is done. These facts have nothing to do with the fact that he happens to be black.

What are these critics saying, anyway? That because he's black he wants to cut the Tram hours or shut it down?

That because he's black, we don't have the Metrocard? That because he's black, he wants to rent Good Shepherd Chapel to the highest bidder? That because he's black he's forsworn the capital budget that is required to preserve our Island infrastructure?

Nonsense.

Capability, diligence and honesty have nothing to do with race. Well-intentioned public service has nothing to do with race. We have several examples of this right here on the Island, who are admired as administrators. Many of them work under the same atmosphere of budget cuts and other severe management restrictions, and yet do an exemplary job.

You can be tough as nails, but still fair and forthcoming. You can keep your word, and give everyone a fair hearing. You can push your management (in his case, the State) and your staff for what's right and prudent for the Island.

There are many other black candidates, outside and inside state government, who would do the job we need done here, fairly and competently. And legitimately reduce State expense while doing so. Black or white, the job remains the same.

No, it's not because he's black that Jerry Blue is so wrong-headed. It's because he's Blue.

It's not because he's black that the State auditors needed over 12 weeks to revisit and update their last RIOC audit, done before he was here. The entire original audit took only four weeks.

It's not because he's black that the State will spend \$100,000 of our taxpayer money on a Management Consultant to assist him in the implementation of basic business practices, which seem sadly lacking at this writing.

I dearly wish that those who direct an accusation of racism at Blue's critics would have the courage to do so in a forum where those charges could be rationally examined, and seen for the demagogery they are.

Otherwise these charges are nothing more than a mean-spirited attempt to further disrupt an already beleaguered community.



Patrick Stewart

COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland • 317-8523

Thur., March 12, 7:00 p.m., Evening Meeting of the Board of Directors of the **Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation**, Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Residents wishing to address the Board must register in advance. For information, call **832-4540**, ext. **311**, during business hours, or go to 591 Main Street.

Continuing through March 15, Windows on Welfare photographic exhibit. Photos by Danielle B. Hayes of Welfare (Roosevelt) Island in 1968. Cultural Center, 548 Main Street, Fridays 8-10 p.m., Sat.-Sun., 1-5 p.m.

Tue.-Thur., Mar. 17-19, PS/IS 217, Dr. Larry Iskowitch will be giving **talks on dental health** and will show a video to kindergarten and first grade classes. For details call PS 217, **980-0294**.

Fri.-Sat., Mar 20-21, next scheduled issue of **The Main Street WIRE**. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the

Wed., Mar. 25, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Councilmember Gifford Miller hosts **City Council Speaker Peter Vallone**, for an open discussion with Island residents. Senior Center, 546 Main Street. Open to all residents.

Fri., Mar. 27, Dining Out Group of Roosevelt Island. Restaurant not chosen yet. For information call Harry Small, **583-0064**.

Wed., Apr. 1, 8:00 p.m., Common Council meeting, Roosevelt Island Residents Association, Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Open to all residents, who are invited to address the Council during the open discussion portion of session.

Fax or phone event information to **317-8523**. Please provide a phone number for follow-up.

Poetry

When space permits, a future issue of **The WIRE** will feature a selection of poetry by Island residents of all ages. To submit an offering, e-mail an ASCII text file to 72260.20@compuserve.com, or submit on a 3.5-inch IBM-compatible disk (any wordprocessing software) left for **The WIRE** at 531 Main Street (Rivercross).

as regards their characterization of their opposition.

I hope you will find time to meet with the signers of the letter as they request, as well as with Jessie and Eddie Rademaker.

There are two points in the letter that I want to address. The first is the usage of the phrase "minority of individuals".

The members of RIRA Common Council are elected every two years in an election held on the state/national Election Day. Acknowledging the importance of the RIRA election to Roosevelt Island, RIOC, in fact, paid for the rental of the voting booths used in this past election.

There were 2,162 votes cast in the past RIRA election, *more* than the votes cast for all candidates in each of the following categories: US Presi-

dent (2,118), US Representative (1,908), State Senate (1,559), State Assembly (1,826), and City Council (1,910). This is all the more remarkable given that the seats for each of the Manhattan Park buildings, as well as 546 Main Street, (more than a third of our residents) were uncontested, and drew no votes at all. In the past, the RIRA election was lucky to draw one quarter of the votes for the state and national candidates. This is a very clear demonstration that the residents of Roosevelt Island, all of whom are de facto members of RIRA, were very concerned about the matters represented by the election.

The campaign for the RIRA election was extensive, hotly contested, and, as you might expect, fully expressive. Great lengths were gone to by all the candidates in order that the residents be clearly able to understand the positions of each of the candidates. With all humility, my own election (amongst the four candidates) was by a margin of more than three to one.

The writers of that letter were at that time amongst the most vociferous spokesmen for the sanctioned authority of RIRA as the formally-elected representatives of the residents. Two of the signers ran for, and were elected to the Common Council. Each of them were outspoken supporters of Jessie Rademaker, (who came in second with 20% of the vote), who was the only candidate in this campaign who specifically adopted a tolerant stance on the current administration of RIOC. Ms

Rademaker was, by far, the best known of all the candidates, as she has been active for 20 years in Island affairs.

It is strange to me that RIRA is now described to be a minority voice by these same people. At our recent Town Meeting, the church was filled past the capacity of the Fire Laws (which is 675 people), and the Public Safety Dept. acknowledges turning away "a couple of hundred" people. With the possible exception of Ms Donald, none of the signers attended this meeting, where it was publicized that *anyone* wishing to speak would be heard. The residents

who did speak at this meeting were all but unanimous in their condemnation of Jerry Blue and RIOC. There were not a few speakers from the audience; the meeting went more than double its allotted time.

This voice of a community this size can hardly be described as a small minority, although they may well be called vocal.

My greater concern is with the charge of racism, which has come

over and over from this group who can claim no support for their view outside their own small circle. If the charge were any other, it could easily be dismissed as laughable, which this charge, in fact, is. But, as you well know, the charge of racism, once voiced in today's troubled times, seems to take on a life of its own. Especially when it is seen to be sup-

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Public Safety Blotter
appears this issue on page 7

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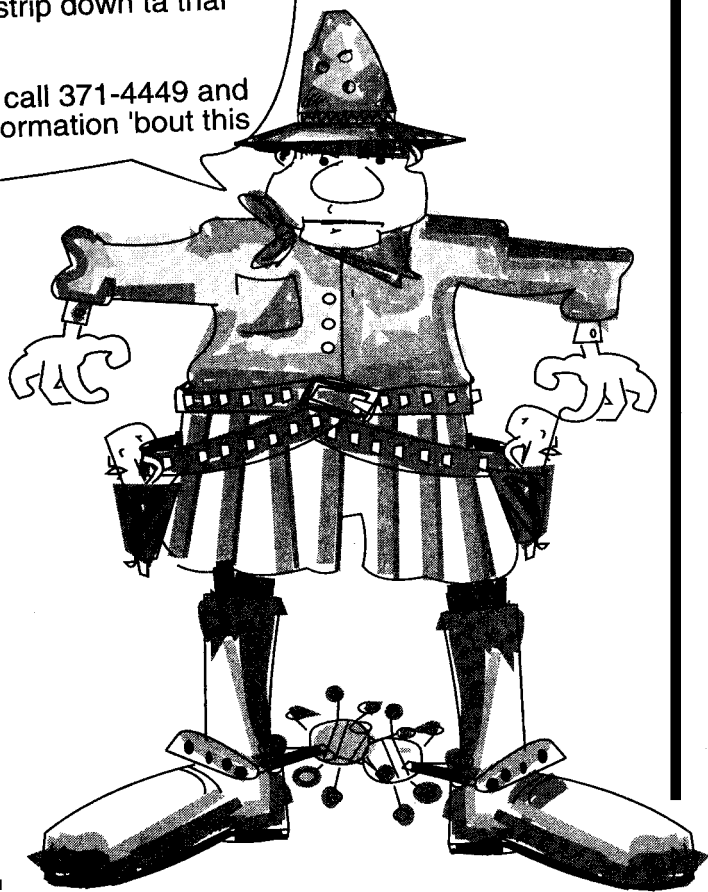
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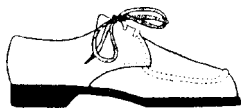
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Irish Music & Dance Friday

Irish Night is Coming next Friday. The director of River Music, Robin Russell, announced the fourth annual Irish Night in celebration of St. Patrick’s Day, March 13th at 8:00 p.m. at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd. The event will feature Irish music by Brian Conway, fiddle; John Nolan, button accordion; and Felix Dolan, piano; Irish-American favorites sung by tenor Brian Lyttle with Russell on piano; and traditional Irish dance performed by the Moore-Ryan School of Irish Dancing. Audience members will be invited to join in the dancing as Marie Moore and her dancers lead them in spirited jigs and reels.

The Moore-Ryan Dancers will be fresh from a performance at Carnegie Hall as part of Frank Patterson’s “Irish Evening at Carnegie Hall.” Marie Moore is a world champion Irish dancer who trained in Dublin with Marie Duffy, choreographer of *Lord of the Dance*. Tenor Brian Lyttle has performed at the Garden State Arts Center, the Waldorf Astoria and as guest soloist at the Heisman Trophy Football Awards. The evening’s instrumentalists, Brian Conway, John Nolan and Felix Dolan have all made names for themselves in traditional Irish music as performers and recording artists. Conway is one of the most popular

Irish fiddlers in the U.S. today, having won both the All Ireland Junior and Senior fiddle competitions. Button accordionist Nolan is the first American to win the Senior All Ireland title. Pianist Dolan is a founder of the New York Ceili Band. He made his New York debut with Paddy Killoran and Paddy O’Brien in *Night of Shamrocks* in 1957 at the Manhattan Center. The River Music series is now in its fifth season of presenting classical, jazz and world music concerts on Roosevelt Island. The series is directed by Robin Russell and is presented under the auspices of the Parish of St. Francis Cabrini.

Southpoint

president of the Foundation Joseph Robinson said: “I wish to announce that after consultations with Governor Rockefeller, Mayor Lindsay, Edward J. Logue, President of the New York State Urban Development Corporation, and August Hecksher, New York City Administrator of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs, and other state and city officials, an understanding has been reached whereby approximately 2 acres of land on the southern tip of Welfare Island will be made available to the Four Freedoms Foundation, for the construction of an appropriate memorial to the late President, Franklin D. Roosevelt... The memorial, when completed, will be turned over to the New York City Park System or the National Park Service or other appropriate governmental agency for maintenance and care and the public’s use...” In July, 1973, two months prior to the dedication ceremony, the *New York Times* ran an editorial announcing the memorial and the name change. The editorial stated: “Even more than the name itself, the island is to have an appropriate tribute to FDR in the form of a memorial to be constructed at its southernmost point. Of all the spots in the country, this is surely the most suitable for the purpose. Standing there, the traveler coming to pay his respects will look squarely at the capitol of the United Nations which his vision encompassed, see in the river and the harbor beyond it the ships that so filled his life, and finally extend his gaze to the Atlantic Ocean which President Roosevelt saw as the bond and unifier of the Western World.” And I recall how at the dedication ceremony on September 24, 1973, Mayor Lindsay announced the plans for the memorial, publicly pledging the city’s commitment to the memorial and using the rechristening of the island as the memorial’s launching event. As I’m sure you know, one of our century’s greatest architects, Louis Kahn, was commissioned to design the memorial and did so shortly before his death. His design for the memorial has been called, “one of the noblest unbuilt projects in New York” by the *New York Times*. Indeed, the noted architect Robert Gatje has assured me that the architectural community is emphatically united in its determination that the project be built — the wait is far outweighed by the historic and artistic benefits to future generations of a Louis Kahn memorial to FDR. Fund-raising commenced as soon as the project was conceived. In 1974, Governor Malcolm Wilson included \$2,200,000 for the FDR Memorial in his budget message and the Four Freedoms Foundation asked Mayor Abraham Beame for an equal amount from New York City. The Four Freedoms Foundation planned to raise the remaining funds for the memorial from private sources (the estimated cost of the memorial at the time was \$6,000,000), and had secured pledges totaling \$250,000 from foundations. However, the financial crisis in New York City and New York State in the mid-70s prevented these plans from materializing.

Although the General Development Plan of 1990 for Roosevelt Island simply calls for a park at the end of the Island, the record clearly shows that the Urban Development Corporation, the original planners of the Roosevelt Island development, intended to build the FDR Memorial on that site. The participation of the city and state governments in the project before the fiscal crisis prevented further action and the commissioning and approval of the Kahn design indicate that all the parties involved made a commitment to building the Kahn-designed memorial on the designated site. In 1985, the FDR Memorial Commission appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo, and co-chaired by leading Republican and long-time Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz and by former New York City Mayor Robert F. Wagner, reviewed the site and plans for the memorial, and reaffirmed that commitment. The Commission unanimously recommended that “the Memorial designed for Roosevelt Island in the East River by the late Louis Kahn, one of America’s greatest architects, be adopted and moved to completion with all possible speed.” Because of continuing fiscal difficulties, federal, state and city funding has not been available in recent years, but in these prosperous times, New York State, New York City and a partnership of private donors can surely be organized. Some progress has been made toward realizing the ultimate goal of building the memorial. The ruins of the old city hospital at the southern end of the memorial, have been torn down. And in 1994, RIOC filled, shaped and graded the site of the memorial in accordance with Kahn’s design. It had also planned to rebuild the sea walls around the memorial site before its capital budget was cut. As we know from the Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and FDR memorials in Washington, the selection of a site, the designing of and the raising of funds to build memorials is a difficult and lengthy process. In the case of the FDR Memorial on Roosevelt Island, the architectural community and other interested parties are unanimous in their agreement that the site and the design are outstanding; the only remaining obstacle — one which can certainly be overcome — is the money with which to build it. In the interim, the site could be named Franklin D. Roosevelt Park and, as RIOC has demonstrated in the past, it could be used for special events in keeping with its ultimate purpose. We are exploring the legal commitment made by the City and State to this project. I have personal knowledge of the moral commitment, made by the City and State in the earliest days of the project and reaffirmed time and again by both, to the creation of a Memorial to FDR on the Southernmost tip of the island. I trust that RIOC will not disregard history, and will honor that long-standing commitment by only entertaining those proposals for development of South Point which preserve the acreage at the tip set aside in the General Development Plan for its intended— and symbolically perfect — purpose...the long-awaited Memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a son of New York and the greatest President of the twentieth century.

Accident Group May Sue

A group of people who were on the Tram at the time of the accident January 27 are contemplating a legal action. They are trying to contact others who were aboard at the time. The phone number provided for the purpose is (212) 317-9374.

Letters

The remarks attributed to you about Islanders having “been spoiled: by State money” and being “like children taken off formula and made to eat other food” are highly insulting and extremely disrespectful. Shame on you! Hundreds of Island residents have, over the past 22 years, worked very hard to make the Island work in cooperation and collaboration with many different local and state agencies and their appointees and employees, and have put up with an awful lot of garbage from the very same people they have tried to work with. We are not spoiled but we are citizens of the only place in New York State that has to battle for basic community services that other New Yorkers take for granted. These remarks today have set back my hopes that you will be able to listen objectively, collaborate and respond appropriately to meeting the basic health, safety and transportation needs of the Island community. I’m sure this is not the only fax or letter or phone call you received today. I sure hope that you will clarify or retract those comments, perhaps by a letter to *The Times*, in time for the next meeting of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Board of Directors. Thank you in advance for your prompt response.

Nina Lublin

Dishman

ball. Rich sees it as an opportunity to prove himself. “Minor League baseball players get little money, have no say and travel all the time, but if you make it to the Big Leagues...” So what motivates him? Is it the money? He makes it clear that’s only part of it. “I love the competition, I love doing something that isn’t 9:00 to 5:00 and I love doing something that very few people are able to do.” Chris Metz says that “baseball is one of the toughest sports to predict. Only a small percentage make it to the majors. You have to pitch hard and fast – at least 85 mph – and you have to work at it, day after day. Baseball takes years of honing your craft and a lot of discipline.” Rich Dishman is well aware of the sacrifices involved. When asked about interests other than baseball, his reply was that he didn’t have time for hobbies. And he understands the risks. He worked as an intern on Wall Street last winter, and he plans to work at a different company every year for the next few years – just in case. “Age 25 will be the crossroads for me... the year I’ll know whether I play pro ball or go to business school.” If he becomes a major league player, how long will he play? “I’ll play as long as I can, but I want to play at least one year.” Because baseball has always been his dream. And right now, Rich Dishman is living his dream.



Lynch

ported, as it has been by RIOC, ~~highly sensitive to the needs of the community~~. I do not mean to claim that there is no racism whatsoever on this Island, although I would love to be able to say so. I do however believe that there is far less racism here than there is in most places. And. I believe that the majority of the black community here agrees with me. I can and do say that I have never seen the slightest sign of racism in the workings of the Common Council. And I know that there is no element of racism whatsoever in my own evaluation of Jerry Blue. RIRA does, in fact, want Jerry Blue removed as head of RIOC; we have formally stated that fact many times. **It is not, however, because he’s black...it is because he’s Blue.** There is no basis for our position other than his documented performance of his job. There doesn’t need to be. Nor is there any evidence, hard or otherwise, of racism in any form coming out of RIRA on this or any other matter. To the contrary, the Council is largely made up of the kind of community-centered New Yorkers who have actively fought racism all their lives. The Council grows more and more frustrated at these charges that are never made in any arena where they can be answered and thereby shown to be as empty and as frivolous as they indeed are. I do hope that you will be able to find the time to meet with this group. I know that if you do, you will be able to point out to them that such serious charges should not be made in the absence of any evidence to support their charges. The Council stands more than ready to address these irresponsible charges whenever we may be given the opportunity to do so. If you can think of any mechanism whereby this constant charge can be put forward, examined by RIOC, and then either formally supported or refuted by RIOC, I believe it would go a long way to quell the potentially harmful repercussions to our community. Please let me know any thoughts you have on this very serious matter. I look forward to hearing from you regarding our own next meeting as well.

H. Patrick Stewart
President, RIRA

SPORTSWIRE

The WIRE's sports reporter position is open. If you're interested in handling this valuable volunteer contribution to the Roosevelt Island community, or would like to propose a candidate, please call **826-9055**.

Public Safety Blotter

February 15 – Disorderly Conduct, 560 Main Street. Two females and a non-resident youth reportedly were engaged in a noisy fight when Public Safety Department (PSD) officers arrived on the scene. The younger of the two females claimed that the others had attacked her. Rachel Jeudy, 17, 580 Main Street, and Lase Wilson, 44, 560 Main Street, were issued summonses for disorderly conduct and the youth was issued a juvenile report citation.

February 15 – Grand Larceny, 595 Main Street. The concierge informed the PSD that someone was playing with a security camera. Officers responded and found that the camera had been removed from the lobby.

February 18 – Aggravated Harassment, 580 Main Street. A young female reported she was being harassed by phone calls and pages and that the same person banged on her door and allegedly had set fire to the doorbell. While a PSD officer was in the victim's apartment, two calls were heard over the speakerphone. PSD and NYPD officers went to 560 Main Street and the latter took into custody Lecia Hymson, 17, on the charge.

February 21 – Shoplifting, 686 Main Street. The manager of Gristedes phoned PSD for assistance. When officers arrived, they found that a store security officer had Romier Young, 25, of 510 Main Street, in custody. The PSD arrested Young for shoplifting/petit larceny.

February 21 – Criminal Mischief, 546 Main Street. A hallway rug was burned by an unknown person. The Fire Marshal was notified.

February 28 – Criminal Trespass, 580 Main Street. After PSD officers observed a male exiting from a stairwell at 4:30 AM, they took him into custody and checked the stairwell and discovered smoke and an aroma of marijuana. Charles Jordan, 18, of 211 Sunnyside, Brooklyn, reportedly had in his possession nine small bags allegedly containing marijuana. He was charged with criminal trespass and possession of a controlled substance.



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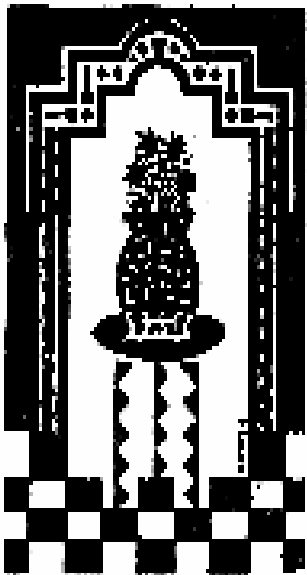
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