

The Main Street WIRE

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044



Website NYC10044
Main Street Teenage Theatre will present Noel Coward's 1930's comedy, *Blithe Spirit*, next weekend Friday through Sunday. Seen here in rehearsal is one of the two casts. Clockwise from bottom right: Bobby Fitzpatrick, Ilana Blumberg, Neil Tandon, Carla Blumberg, Meg Grady-Troia, Greg Goodman, Ellior Marcus, Susan Ahn. For schedule information, see *Coming Up* on page 3. For tickets: 371-4449.

RI Day Set For June

Roosevelt Island Day, also known as "Clean-Up Day," will be celebrated June 20. The planners are expanding this year's focus to lay the "groundwork" for a daily approach to beautifying our home. The day's activities will include:

- An anti-litter campaign
- Weeding, landscaping, and planting trees and flowers
- With the participation of all three housing management companies, sidewalks will be cleaned, pigeon droppings removed, windows washed
- Window-painting for children
- Face-painting for youngsters

Entertainment will be provided in the afternoon by the Island Youth Program and the PS/IS 217 band, with other features to be added.

A highlight will be "Adopt A Site And Make It A Beautiful Sight All Year Round" program. Residents and community organizations will be asked to select an area June 20 and watch over it throughout the year, calling on the proper sources for assistance as needed; if, for instance, an area needs watering.

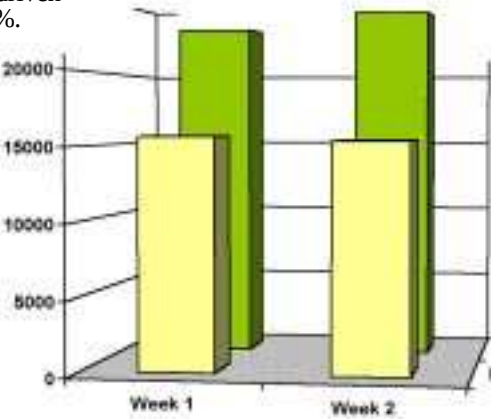
Shovels, brooms, and work gloves will be provided by the City Department of Sanitation. Participating organizations will be listed in the next issue of *The WIRE*. Housing's Director of Community Relations, Marilyn Engstler, is taking volunteer calls at 838-4747.

Tram Rides Up By Half

Subway troubles have driven Tram usage up by over 50%.

In a comparison of two February weeks prior to reduced subway service against two March weeks just after the change, ridership jumped from about a two-week total of 31,000 to nearly 48,000.

A portion of the later figures predates some current work that produces a haze of dust in the station (photos below).



Wednesday night meeting scheduled

Eldercare Facility Proposed For Island's Octagon Park Area

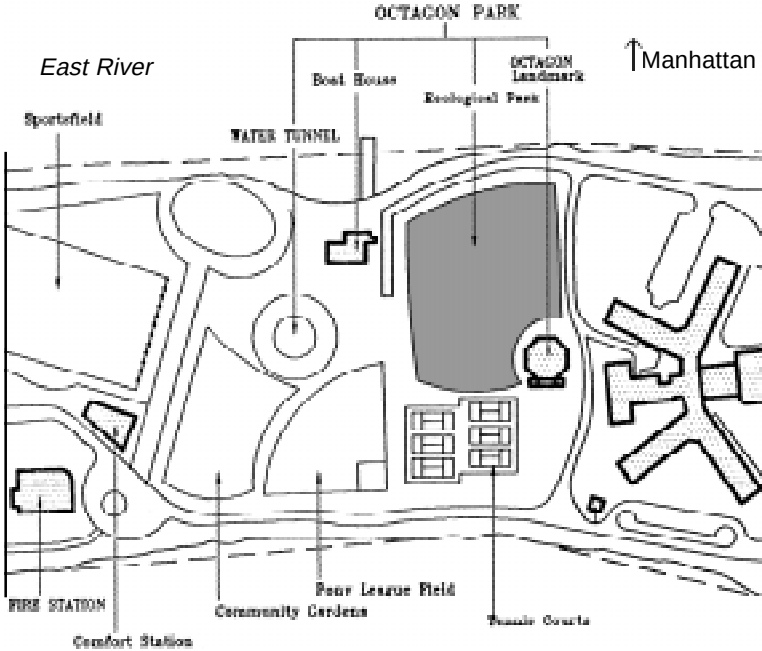
An eldercare facility is being planned for the Island. It appears to be positioned on designated park land.

Plans were announced April 7 at a sparsely-attended noontime "President's Meeting" called by RIOC. RIOC President Jerome Blue proposed "conditional selection" of the developer at RIOC's Board meeting Thursday, April 9, but no action was taken. The plans will be presented again Wednesday evening (April 22) at 7:00 at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd in a meeting open to the public.

The building envisioned by the developers and their architect, 75 by 285 feet at its base, would occupy land described by Blue at the RIOC meeting as "north of the Boat House and west of the Octagon." A member of his staff, Michelle Goodwine, has answered questions on the site with the words, "Octagon Park."

As described by the architect, David Lawrence Mammina, the 25-story facility would provide 150 assisted-living units on its first six floors, and 300 independent-living units on the balance of the floors. Rental rates were not discussed.

At Thursday's RIOC Board meeting, a member of Assemblymember



Eldercare facility is proposed for the ecological reserve (shaded) in Octagon Park. An architect's drawing was not available by press time.

Pete Grannis' staff asked Blue whether the General Development Plan (GDP) – the basis of an agreement between New York State and the City under which the State controls Roosevelt Island – provides for housing for the elderly, and whether the GDP would have to be revised for the site in question. Blue responded only that the GDP does call for senior housing.

The Vice President of the Island's Historical Society, Judith Berdy, told *The WIRE* she plans to oppose conversion of the park land for such a development. "Construction there is totally unsuitable," she said, adding, "Such a facility should be built in the Southtown area, where public transportation is close at hand for the senior population." She also suggested that construction on the site might

prove a danger to "the fragile, landmarked, Octagon building."

The proposed developer, Engel/Burman, built the Meadowbrook Care Center, a 280-bed nursing home in Freeport, Long Island.

A member of the company's staff, Steven Straight, described the proposed Roosevelt Island facility in a telephone conversation with *The WIRE*, as "subject to further market studies." He said that pending those studies, the 300

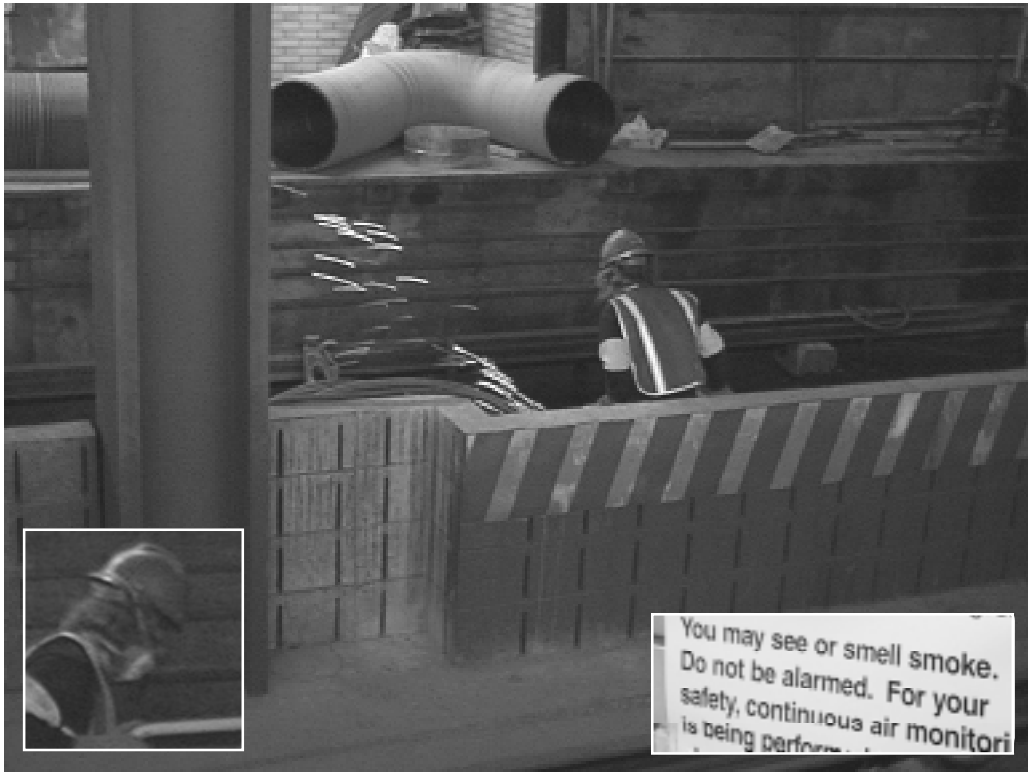
units of independent-living housing will have a common dining area, a private dining area, a library, a parlor, a cafe, meeting rooms, an arts and crafts facility, a beauty and barber shop, a greenhouse, billiard rooms, a woodworking facility, and a wellness center.

See *Elder*, page 7

Political Glue Secures Blue

News Analysis
Page 2

Subway Work Continues. Dust Flies in Island Station.



Footprints and fingerprinting betray the amount of dust lingering in the air as track work continues on the Q line. On Wednesday morning a worker, wearing a mask (inset), worked outside the open end of the protective tent, his grinder throwing sparks as a train entered the station, stirring the haze hanging in the air. Official notices claim air quality monitoring and tell passengers: "Do not be alarmed." On the official schedule, the work has another 14 months to run. As of this issue, The MetroCard is still not available on the Tramway.

Pages of Opinion

Rave Reviews

One of the most enjoyable evenings I’ve spent in many a day occurred when the Main Street Theatre “Went Western” recently. The food was good, the show was great and the dancers for the “Mostly Monty” were terrific. The guys who volunteered or who were conned into taking part by friends or loved ones deserve a big vote of thanks for providing side-splitting entertainment for us all and also for risking being the butts of lots of corny jokes.

Let’s Clean Up

Mark your calendar now! The date for this year’s Roosevelt Island Cleanup Day is Saturday, June 20. The committee hopes to enroll lots more of us this time around and will be conducting sign-up days for volunteers in the residential buildings and reaching out to groups with adopt-a-site plans for year-round maintenance of particular locations. The goal is to mobilize both youth and age in an on-going program to keep our Island clean.

‘Our’ Mayor

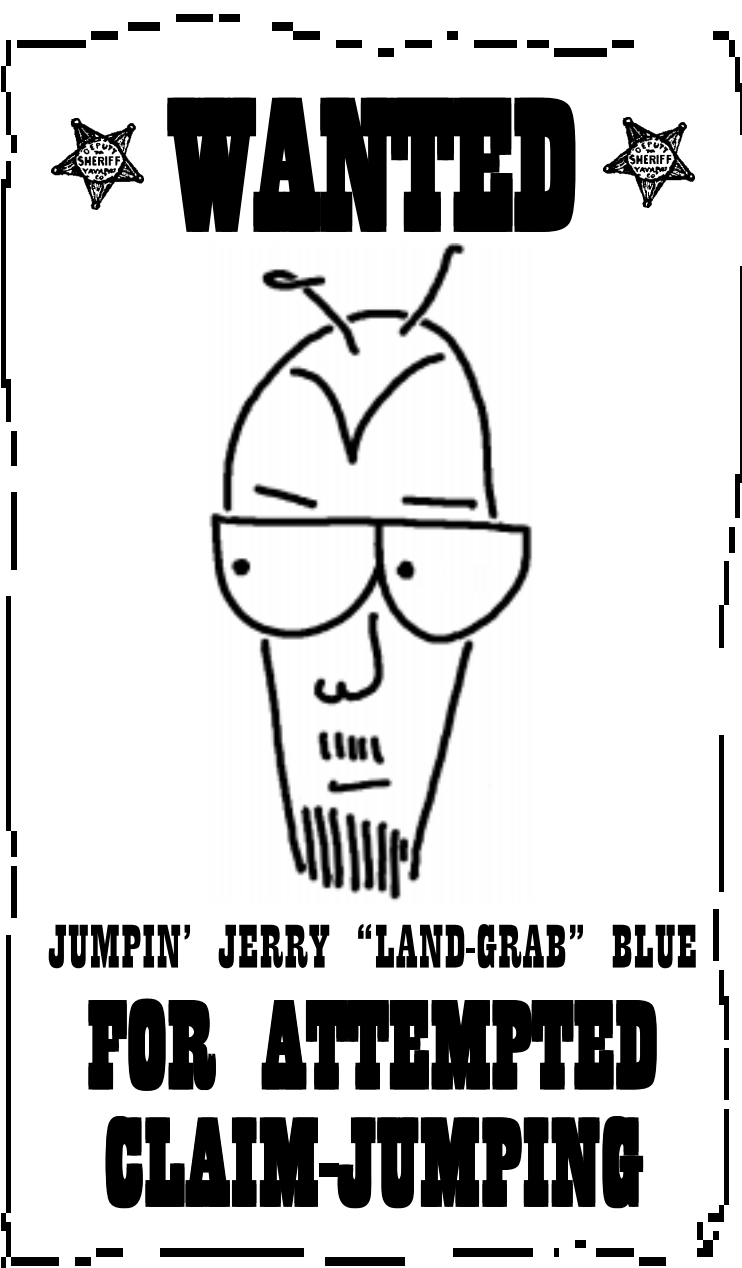
There is a move on to name the Little League field for a man who, for years, was deeply involved in almost every civic activity in our current history. Many of us knew him prior to death as the “unofficial Mayor of Roosevelt Island.” His name was Archie Seale Sr. Among the varied accomplishments credited to the Grog Shop owner by Lou Carbonetti, who initiated the memorial drive, was lobbying for the concrete posts protecting the Tram from traffic in Manhattan and being the first to sponsor a fledgling Men’s Softball League.

Well Done, PSD

Last Saturday in late afternoon, what could have been a teen riot on Main Street was avoided by decisive action by Public Safety officers. Two potential combatants, surrounded by maybe two dozen teens who appeared eager to see more excitement, quickly were separated and the crowd herded southward away from the center of the residential and business area by the PSD.

A Personal Note

Next week will mark the second anniversary of my stroke, a subsequent heart attack and a stay of over five months in hospitals. I credit the support of my family and good friends, many from here, who made both confinement in three hospitals and return home endurable. And the nicest thing is that the concern still continues. Thank you all.



Despite Activists, Political Glue Keeps Blue in RIOC Saddle

News Analysis by Dick Lutz

The RIRA campaign to remove Jerry Blue from the Presidency of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation has stalled. Or at least it seems so.

A drive still fueled by the Island’s most powerful renewable resource – volunteers determined to keep Roosevelt Island a special community -- appears to be faltering. The cause is apparently the intractable determination of U.S. Senator Al D’Amato, who rules the State G.O.P., to keep Blue in this job no matter how badly he errs, plus Governor George Pataki’s willingness to do D’Amato’s bidding, no matter how contrary to the public interest – and finally a State bureaucracy that falls in line behind whatever political or personal purpose D’Amato sees as his priority.

And Roosevelt Island just isn’t big enough or important enough for Democrats in the State Assembly to bring government to a halt over Blue. City government briefly showed a passing interest in getting involved, but there’s no evidence of anything beyond lip service – and unlikely to be anything more without a clamor that doesn’t seem to be rising.

The Island’s movement for democracy -- the drive for a voice in the governing of the Island – has also stalled in the face of an unresponsive government determined to maintain Blue in the RIOC Presidency.

Meanwhile, Blue appears to have his unfettered way with Island affairs, even offering up Octagon Park for development without so much as a nod in the direction of DHCR Acting Commissioner Joe Lynch, who appears to be Blue’s boss – at best only on some imaginary organization chart.

Wild Ride, Then Letdown

For the Island effort, the cause of depressed hopes may be, in part, a

natural letdown after a series of events produced an illusion that fate might have smiled on resident worries. Before those events, there was a gradually building determination to get Blue out and take control of Island management, or at least – in an interim period between departure of Blue and the arrival of some real form of democracy – at least a hope of an administrator who would listen to the elected Common Council of the Resident’s Association, and then talk back in something more than the Blue brand of polysyllabic obfuscation.

The favorable events were a December meeting with Lynch, who had started coming to the Island to chair meetings of the RIOC Board, and apparently to attempt a firmer grip on Blue and Blue’s staff. That meeting came about when Linda Heimer, an 18-year resident best known for her work in getting security cameras into the subway stations on Roosevelt Island and at 63rd and Lex, wrote to Lynch asking for serious attention to deficits in Island management. Lynch requested a meeting, and Heimer took along RIRA President Patrick Stewart and Audrey Berman of the Westview/Island House Task Force.

That trio of residents came back from their meeting convinced that Lynch would take the steps necessary to remove Blue – or at least to get him under control. There was to be another meeting in January.

But when January was near its end, there still had been no follow-up meeting. There was a growing suspicion that Lynch was simply stalling.

The Tram Accident

Then a construction crane hit the Tramway, and it became apparent that Blue wasn’t up to handling the crisis: He didn’t go to the scene, he

See **Glue**, page 7

Letters

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

Dear Dr. Blue:

We are writing to you on behalf of numerous constituents who contacted our office regarding the close of the Roosevelt Island Tram on Monday, March 30, 1998, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. for a film shoot.

As you should have anticipated, closing the Tram for a span of five hours on a Monday afternoon proved to be an enormous inconvenience for Island residents. The fact that you made this deplorable decision at a time when subway service has been significantly reduced due to MTA repairs at the Island’s subway station, we find to be particularly irresponsible and insensitive.

The interruption of service during the afternoon hours caused significant delays for the many adults and children who rely on the Tram for traveling to and from work and school. In addition, disabled residents and students were severely inconvenienced since no arrangements were made with the MTA to allow them to use their Tram passes on the City’s bus and subway system.

Providing safe and reliable transportation on and off Roosevelt Island is especially critical at the current time, when service reductions on the B and Q subway lines have forced many Island residents to seek out other commuting options such as the Tram.

We suggest that, in the future, you consider the implications of such a decision and, in the highly unlikely event that service interruptions on the Tram are deemed necessary, provide adequate advance notice and alternative means of transportation for residents who find it difficult to access the NYC subway.

We look forward to your prompt response regarding this matter.

Sincerely,
Gifford Miller
Member of City Council
5th District, Manhattan.
Alexander B. Grannis
Member of Assembly
65th District, Manhattan

Vincent Arcuri
Projects Manager
Morse Diesel
1663 Broadway
New York, NY.
Re: Southtown Development

Dear Mr. Arcuri:

In the past months we have conversed on the telephone numerous times concerning the development of Southtown. During each conversation you have stated that there is no movement on the above stated project. Six weeks ago you stated in a telephone conversation that an Architect has been selected and is doing preliminary development plans. Yet, the name of the firm was not stated when requested. Your response was that their work is preliminary and not important. Moreover, when any important development occurs, I would be informed.

Toward the end of the last evening Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) Public Board Meeting on Thursday March 12, presentation on Southtown was provided to the board and the public. Schematic

Letters continue on page 7

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. We cannot take dictation of letters by telephone. **All letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.**



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in association with
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With a few days notice, and without the mandatory scrutiny of the Board of Directors, RIOC planned to push through peremptory approval of the construction of a \$100 million 25 story “Eldercare Facility” at the April 9th RIOC Board of Directors meeting, with no community input or review.

Cooler heads prevailed at the closed Executive Session of the Board, held in the hour before the public meeting, and the item was withdrawn from the published agenda and tabled, at least until the next Board of Directors meeting.

Those who were at the public meeting learned very little about the project, and the Directors I was able to speak with directly knew no more than the public. Blue stated that the site was to be west of the Octagon building, and north of the old chapel, a site now partially used as a picnic area and playground.

There are numerous questions that come immediately to mind, none of which have been addressed.

- Is the proposed project within the confines of the revised Master Plan for the Island?
- Have the proper Environmental Impact Studies been done? Have any been done?
- Is the proposed site within the confines of Octagon Park, a designated ecological parkland?
- Exactly how much ground is required for the project and where exactly is it?
- Would this project, in fact, benefit the residents of Roosevelt Island, and how?
- How, specifically, is the “Eldercare” facility defined, and who are proposed as its residents?
- How and by whom would the project be financed, and how would that financing be guaranteed?



Patrick Stewart

- What arrangements have been made for the infrastructure demands of such a project, and who is to bear the expense of these demands?
- Who would own it?
- Who would maintain it, and to what standards?
- Who would build it?
- How would this construction impact the community in the face of simultaneous Southtown construction?
- Who is the architect, and what would it look like?
- What experience has the owner/operator with such facilities, and what and where are they?
- Will the project require approval by Community Board 8?
- Will it require approval by the City Council?

These are but a few of the imperative questions that must be addressed before any rational and appropriate business and social decisions can be made.

Blue has been forced by the Board to hold a public meeting on this subject, now planned for 7:00 in the evening of the 22nd of April in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd. We ask that, once again, you make an effort to attend in order that we may effectively let RIOC know that Roosevelt Island remains a community...not a kingdom.

Meanwhile, lest we feel that RIOC ignores smaller affairs while parceling our precious open space to the highest bidder, RIOC has thrown out the Boy Scouts from their long-held space in 531, in favor of a “Charm School” which has failed to materialize.

But then, perhaps the Charm School was part of the \$100,000 Management Consultancy that the State is procuring for RIOC.

We’d be far better off if we let the Boy Scouts run RIOC.

Holiday for Proofreaders?



OK, say this word five times, fast: Jewerly, jewerly, jewerly, jewerly, jewerly. (Sign on Main Street outside Westview commercial space.)

Shuttle Schedule					
Direction	Stop	Time	Stop	Time	Stop
To Manhattan					
Manhattan to Island	1st	8:00	2nd	8:15	3rd
	2nd	8:30	3rd	8:45	4th
	3rd	9:00	4th	9:15	5th
From Manhattan					
Island to Manhattan	1st	8:00	2nd	8:15	3rd
	2nd	8:30	3rd	8:45	4th
	3rd	9:00	4th	9:15	5th

Spring Tennis for Kids Gets Under Way April 27

The free New York Junior Tennis League (NYJTL) program for children 8–18 will begin on Monday April 27, at the Octagon Park courts. Providing instruction, equipment and special events throughout the Spring, the program will be conducted each weekday, Monday through Friday, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

A Parents Day is on the schedule for 11:00 a.m. Saturday, May 9, in conjunction with the United States Tennis Association “Free-For-All.” Parents may attend and bring their children whether they have played in an NYJTL program or not. All parents of children who currently participate in the League, however, are urged to attend.

Pee-Wee hour, for children 5–7, will be held each Wednesday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Pee-Wee players must have a parent or guardian remain at the site during play. Instruction and equipment will be provided.

Contact Joyce Mincheff at (212) 486-1997 for further information.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 1998

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Quick! What's missing? This ad for Manhattan Park apartments ran in *The Times* last week. (Answer: It doesn't mention Roosevelt Island.)

COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland • 317-8523

Sat., Apr. 18, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Flea Market at Motorgate, co-sponsored by Roosevelt Island Disabled Association and Roosevelt Island Senior Association. Information, 223-0879.

Sat., Apr. 18, 1:00 p.m., annual Little League Parade, Main Street.

Mondays, 8:00-10:00 p.m., Bridge, 546 Main Street. Free. Bring your deck.

Tuesdays, 11:15 a.m., Strollercize meets at the playground behind Blackwell House (if rain, in front of 531 Main Street). Information: 308-4855.

Wed., Apr. 22, 7:00 p.m., RIOC meeting, open to the community, on proposed Eldercare facility for the Island. Good Shepherd Chapel.

Fri., Apr. 24, 10:00 a.m., Roosevelt Island Tree Board's annual Arbor Day Tree Planting Program, Blackwell House, with Tree Board chair Maurice Bleifeld, State Forester Michael Curley, PS217 band under the direction of Gary Mure, and third-grade classes of Ms. Franjola and Ms. Lanaghan.

Fri.-Sun., Apr. 24-26, Main Street Teenage Theatre, Blithe Spirit, comedy by Noel Coward. Fri. & Sat., 8:00 p.m.; Sun., 3:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. All seats \$5. Reservations & information, 371-4449.

Mon., Apr. 27, start of free New York Junior Tennis League program for children age 8-18, 3:00-6:00 p.m., Octagon Park courts, Monday through Friday. **Pee-Wee Hour** for children 5-7 years, Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 p.m. Instruction and equipment provided for all sessions. For information: 486-1997.

Fri.-Sat., May 1-2, next scheduled issue of The Main Street WIRE. Deadlines: Advertising in the paper, Fri., Apr. 24; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., Apr. 27. **Future issues** May 15, 29, and thereafter generally every two weeks until summer. Unscheduled **extra** editions may be published as news and advertising support warrant; advertisers who would like to be included in one or more **extra** editions, without warning, are invited to call 826-9055 to make their interest known. **Phone/fax** for news, (212) 826-9055/755-2540; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, (212) 751-8214/755-2540; phone & fax for events, 317-8523.

Sat.-Tues., May 2-5, Main Street Teenage Theatre, Into the Woods by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. Sat., 3:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.; Sun., 3:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Mon. & Tue., 7:30 p.m. Reservations & information, 371-4449.

Wed., May 6, 8:00 p.m., Common Council meeting, Roosevelt Island Residents Association.

Sat., May 9, New York Junior Tennis League Parents Day. Information: 486-1997.

Thur., May 14, 10:00 a.m., meeting of the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation. To address the Board, register in advance by calling 832-4540.

Fri.-Mon., May 15-18, Main Street Children's Theatre, Annie, musical play by Strouse & Charnin. Fri. & Mon. at 7:30 p.m., Sat. & Sun. at 3:00 p.m. For reservations & information, call the theater at 371-4449.

Mon., June 1, Training and Development classes start at the Youth Adult League. Classes in use of computers free to those age 18-25 (fee for other ages). Registration at 599 Main Street. Information: 813-9406.

Sat., June 20, Roosevelt Island Day. Clean-up and entertainment activities all day. To get involved, call 838-4747.

Every week:

Stay Well (Exercise), Mondays 10-11 a.m., Wednesdays 9:30-10 a.m.

English as a Second Language (ESL), Beginner, Mondays 11-12.

ESL, Intermediate, Mondays 12 noon-1:00 p.m.

Bingo, Tuesdays 1:30 p.m.

English Classes, Mon. 12-1 p.m., Wed. 9:30-10 a.m., Fri. 10-11 a.m.

Arts & Crafts, Mon. 12:45-2:30 p.m.

Movie, Thursdays 12:30 p.m.

Scheduled activities & events:

Sat., Apr. 18, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Flea Market at Motorgate

RIOC Blotter

The Public Safety Blotter is no longer supplied directly to *The WIRE* by the Public Safety Department. It is now controlled and issued by RIOC. Narratives are printed here **as received** from RIOC; there has been no independent opportunity to review the incident reports or overall statistics first-hand. **During the period shown, if you witnessed or were party to an incident not included here, please call The WIRE at 826-9055.**

April 1 - April 13, 1998

4/4, **Robbery**, 688 Main Street. On 4/4 @ 10:26 PM., resident informed PSD officer he had been approached in the Concourse by seven males demanding money. One produced a fire arm, hit him on the head, and removed approx. US \$10 in currency, and a Metro Card from his pocket before fleeing. PSD officers and multiple NYPD units searched the area with negative results. Victim refused medical attention, and was transported to 114 Pct.

4/5, **Larceny**, 625 Main Street. On 4/5 @ 8 PM., delivery person phoned PSD, stated five males had taken the food from him and fled. PSD officers searched the East, West sea walls. Eastwood rear lobbies, and Main Street with negative results.

4/6, **Criminal Mischief**, 555 Main Street. On 4/6 @ 6:20 AM., PSD officer observed that unknown person had scratched swastika-like graffiti on door & on elevator door frame. NYPD classified it as a biased incident.

Spring Cleaning?

We accept clothing & items in good condition only

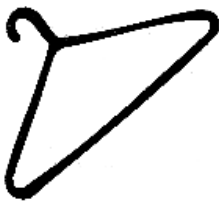
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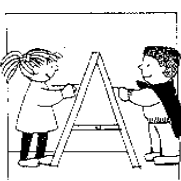
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 - Road testing appointments
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 - Practice road tests
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 - Highway lessons
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It's time to register for September 1998

Roosevelt Island Day Nursery

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for children ages 3, 4, 5 years



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This ad must be mentioned with your order to qualify for these prices. Offer expires December 6, 1997.

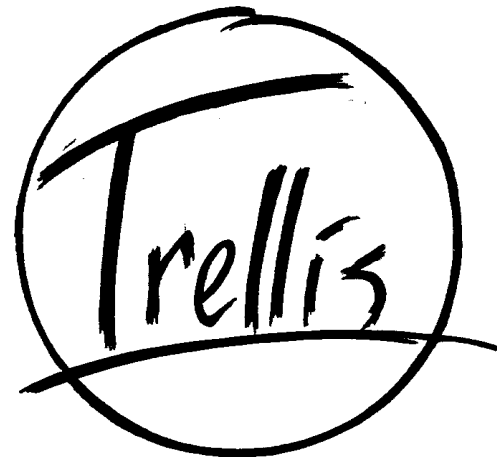
SPIRITS

Smirnoff Vodka 1.75 ltr.	\$15.99
Bacardi Lt. or Dark 1.75 ltr.	\$15.99
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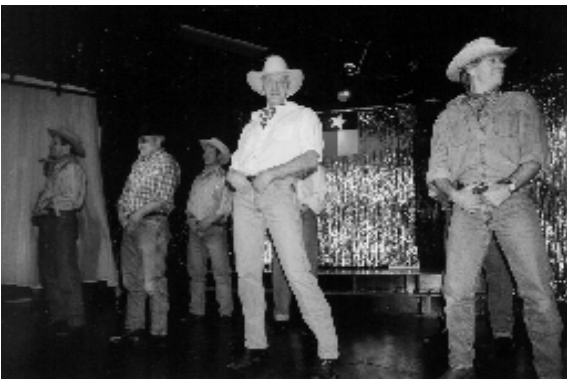


The local ranch hands gettin' ready to line dance with their gals



Elected King of the Cowboys for his performance in *The Mostly Monty*, Mitch Ellinson is surrounded by admirers

...with Scenes from The Mostly Monty



The brave men of *The Mostly Monty* in a series of shots only slightly censored. They include Mitch Ellinson, Larry Linzer, Shawn Chung, Worth Howe, Quint Spitzer, David Kolakoski, Joe Vacirca, Jim Baehler, Joe Palermo



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**.

Elder from page 1

Straight said the assisted living section will also have a wellness center and many of the same features (though separate) as the independent living section. In addition, plans call for a nurse station, with a nurse on duty to assist with medications, and a “country kitchen,” in which 15 to 20 residents on a wing can have breakfast together.

Straight emphasized that all aspects of the plan are subject to market studies. When asked about the apparent site of the facility being on designated park land, Straight indicated he would check into the matter.

Glue from page 2

didn't contact those injured in the accident, he didn't inform the community, and such steps as he did take made it apparent he was likely to use the accident as an excuse to shut down the Tramway for an extended period. RIOC announcements said service would be out “for an indefinite period,” while those knowledgeable about the Tramway knew it could easily be back in service quickly.

RIRA had already been planning a community-wide Town Meeting to rally opposition to Blue. The Tramway accident provided just the fuel needed to provoke real interest among residents, and hundreds came out to defend the Tram, ask for Blue's removal, and show community unity.

Deputy Commissioner Otis Jones attended the Town Meeting, representing DHCR, and he presumably took the word back that something had to be done. Something was. To quell the anger, the Tramway was put back into operation rapidly, in spite of Blue.

No Gain

Nothing had been gained. There was only the avoidance of loss of the Tram. As important as that was, the urgency went out of the movement against Jerry Blue, and with it, some of the enthusiasm for the cause.

And there was an escalation in the charges against the anti-Blue residents, made by Jessie Rademaker, Lisa Knox, and a few others, that all opposition to Blue is racist. That distraction, apparently encouraged by Blue as his ultimate defense under fire, proved effective enough that it was actually considered seriously by the top people at DHCR.

DHCR Turns

And then February passed into history without the promised follow-up meeting with Lynch. The meeting didn't happen, in fact, until early March. And when it did, Lynch's words and actions seemed to confirm the suspicion that his mission, straight from the Governor, was to stall the Island activists until after the November election. And he gave a naive credulity to the racism charges by conferring with Knox, Rademaker, Archie Seale and others before meeting with Heimer, Berman, and Stewart. He kept the latter group waiting 45 minutes, then stonewalled, then left his

deputy, Jones, to make a speech that suggested the “racism problem” had to be dealt with before anything else could be done.

Along the way, Lynch was quoted in a *New York Times* article likening dissident residents to cranky “infants” taken off a formula of State subsidies. And the Times article, expected to be definitive because of the number of Islanders interviewed and the quantity of background information provided, turned out to be fairly shallow. It saw fault only in Blue's style.

As high as the anti-Blue movement had flown in the days surrounding the Town Meeting, it slipped fairly quickly into its present quietude. Whether that's torpor or regrouping is unclear, but residents had little impact at a recent evening Board meeting, spreading their shots and making no dents in the D'Amato armor worn by Blue.

Distractions

And the distractions continue. The MTA's foul-ups in shuttle service have rightly absorbed some energy. The “racism” charges continue to hang in the air, despite Dorothy Donald's speech at the RIOC meeting that appeared to distance her from the charge she had earlier endorsed. Donald, Rademaker, Knox and others have even formed a rival to the Residents Association, presumably to lend some patina of legitimacy to Blue's rule by fait accompli.

On the face of it, there now appears to be little direction or thrust in the movement to oust Blue.

Remains To Be Seen

Even so, this has to be one of those analysis pieces with a Roland Burton Headley ending. He's the TV reporter in Doonesbury who does roughly what we expect of television journalism – the quick & dirty report that evades all responsibility for conclusion or foresight with a “remains-to-be-seen” ending. To wit...

Whether the RIRA movement and the proponents of democracy for Roosevelt Island can get up another head of steam and make something happen, or whether another Blue blunder like his handling of the aftermath of the Tramway accident will intervene (the Octagon Park matter?), or whether the State or Al D'Amato will finally come to its/his senses... you guessed it... it all remains to be seen.



One of several children's pictures displayed in windows at Gristede's, painted by Island children with the help and support of the Roosevelt Island Art Society.

Letters from page 2

drawings were presented and a timetable revealed that construction could begin as early as the end of the year.

I questioned you at the end of the presentation regarding the lack of information provided to the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) and myself prior to this meeting. Your response was that this presentation was preliminary and real development will only begin when the infrastructure issue was resolved.

As of now, I have not heard any more information from your office. I am requesting that we have at least one meeting a month to review development of Southtown. You have provided enough evidence that development of the project is proceeding without adequate input from RIRA.

Community development does not mean presenting a plan after the design is completed, but working together as a team for the betterment of Roosevelt Island.

Jeffrey Hochman

Vice President for Planning
Roosevelt Island Residents Association

To the Editor:

Even as the Island grows and develops, we can capture moments when it still feels like a small town. Saturday night, April 4, certainly had that old-fashioned, small town feeling at the Main Street Theatre and Dance Alliance. The Western Gala, to benefit the Scholarship Fund, was a tremendous success and great time for all who attended. Our local merchants helped to make this such a tremendous success.

Heartfelt thanks to Bigelow Pharmacy, Gristede's, Trellis Restaurant, and Constantine's Bakery. It's refreshing in these times when businesses are still willing to help and support programs to help the community and the arts.

Our thanks again.

The Board of Directors

Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance

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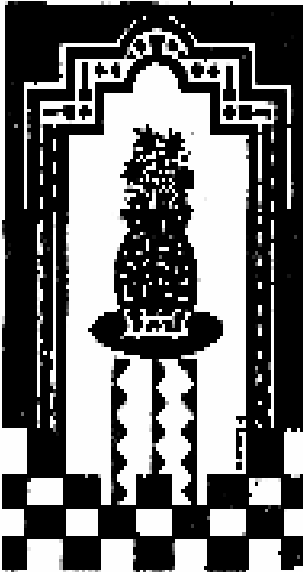
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