

The Main Street **WIRE**

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044

Saturday Ceremony
**Island's Library Becomes Branch
Of New York Public Library System**

Amid the kind of pomp and ceremony more common in the towns and villages of the Midwest, Roosevelt Islanders last Saturday celebrated the friendly takeover of the Community Library as the 85th branch of the New York Public Library (NYPL) system.

Following a Main Street parade from Manhattan Park to Good Shepherd Plaza, those who had worked long and hard to put the Island's facility into the City's system made speeches congratulating the community and one another on the achievement.

Singled out for high praise were City Councilmember Gifford Miller and State Assemblymember Pete Grannis, each of whom had arranged significant appropriations of City and State funds over the years. Those improvements upgraded and expanded the Library to prepare it for Saturday's move into the biggest league of librarydom.

Also cited by several speakers were the volunteer efforts of many Islanders, with special notice for the recent president of the Roosevelt Island Community Literary Associates (RICLA), David Bauer, who worked much of the past year to sweep away various barriers to completion of the two-decade-long effort to bring an NYPL branch to Roosevelt Island. NYPL President Paul LeClerc, for example, described Bauer as "a man who really knows how to use e-mail" to keep things moving.

LeClerc told the audience in Good Shepherd Plaza that Roosevelt Island's Library is "joining the most advanced, most aggressively positioned library in the world," in welcoming the Island branch on behalf of NYPL's 2,500 staff members.

City Councilmember Gifford Miller told the crowd, "This has to rank as one of the greatest days



At the Finish Line. As the Island's Library became part of the New York Public Library System, a ceremonial ribbon was cut at the Library doors. Participants (left to right) include Norman Holman, Director of NYPL's branch libraries, Lawrence Kapture, the NYPL-assigned Branch Librarian for Roosevelt Island; David Bauer, President Emeritus of Roosevelt Island Community Literary Associates (RICLA), which shepherded the library through its pre-NYPL years; C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President; Councilmember Gifford Miller; current RICLA President Ivens V Stanton; NYPL President Paul LeClerc (assisted by his son, Adam), and Assemblymember Pete Grannis. More photos, page 6.

since I took office." He credited City council Speaker Peter Vallone, saying the Council Speaker's strong support "made it possible for the Roosevelt Island Library to prosper." (Vallone, who had been scheduled to speak, was unable to attend the ceremony because of a death in his family.) Miller noted that Assemblymember Pete

Grannis arranged a State appropriation of \$260,000 for shelving, furniture, and other updates of the original furnishings of the library. Manhattan Borough President C.

Virginia Fields commented that "Pete put this on the radar screen and never let us forget it." She presented a proclamation to the new President of RICLA, Ivens V Stanton, celebrating the library's transition to its new status as an NYPL branch.

Bauer, in an emotional speech near the end of the ceremony in the Plaza, paid tribute to the many Island residents who made the Community Library their special project over the

See **Library**, page 6

**July 4
Fireworks**

Tickets will go on sale Friday, June 19, for this year's viewing of the Macy's Fireworks from Southpoint. They'll be available, at \$15 per person, at RIOC (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), and at the Tram booth in Manhattan.

On July 4, the gate will open at 5:00 p.m.

**RIOC Avoids
June Vote on
Southpoint
Hotel Project**

**Board Will Meet in
July, May Vote Then**

RIOC's June Board meeting was canceled.

Faced with strong and vocal opposition by Island residents to commercial development of Southpoint, and with reservations about the project among State officials responsible for the Island, the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation canceled the Board meeting that would have considered the matter.

According to sources who asked not to be named, the State Division

**Audit Faults RIOC
On Hiring, Planning**

page 6

of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) called RIOC President Jerome Blue to a meeting Wednesday, May 27 – the same day he made an evening presentation to the community on the matter – and told him the matter was to be "tabled." Under RIOC's operating rules, a tabled matter cannot be voted upon without first being removed from the table in one meeting, then voted on in another, a two-month process. Tabling is a parliamentary move widely considered an effective way to kill a proposal.

A vote on the Southpoint proposal had been on the agenda for this week's meeting, and it presumably will be up for consideration at the next meeting, scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Thursday, See **RIOC**, page 6

**Volunteers Making Valuable
Contributions at Island School**

by Anusha Shrivastava

Rokeya Kabir, an island resident, has put in over eighty hours of work at PS/IS 217 in the past few months. She is not paid for her effort and not many people get to hear her name. She is one of a group of 21 community-minded volunteers at the school who tutored children or helped in the library, lunchroom or school office in the past school year. Armed with a degree in child education from the University of Maryland, her visa status does not allow her to work for pay, but she wants to "contribute in some way. My children are studying in this school for free so the least I can do is help out," she says with a twinkle in her eye.

Linda Kanfi is the teacher whose 24 kindergartners benefit from Rokeya's presence. She says, "It's a big help having her here. She's a breath of fresh air." Rokeya reads to her class.

Gene Schapiro, a retired accountant, tutors Peter Chow's Grade 5 and Grade 6 math students. "He's another adult, another trained eye watching over my students, and he provides the extra attention and support some of these children need. I want him back

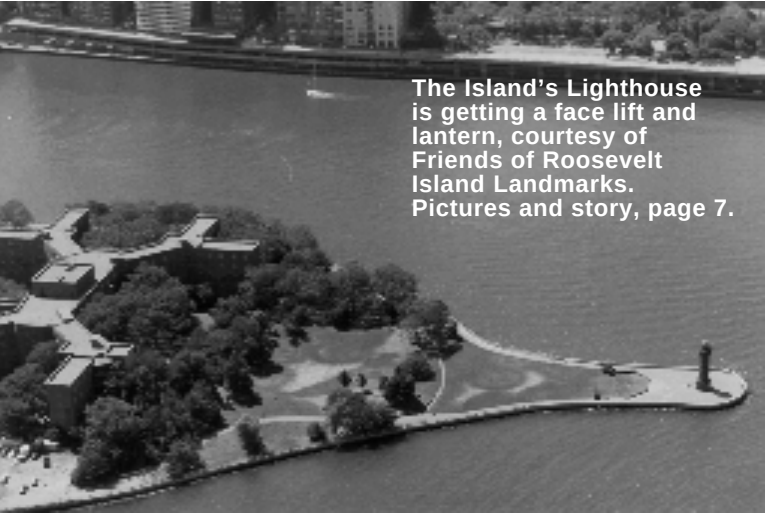
next year," pleads Chow. "A qualified, patient volunteer with a desire to work with children, like Gene, is a godsend."

See **Volunteers**, page 6



Rokeya Kabir and her sons, Mushfiq and Amit

Inside: **Graffiti Vandals Caught** page 7



The Island's Lighthouse is getting a face lift and lantern, courtesy of Friends of Roosevelt Island Landmarks. Pictures and story, page 7.

Put Your Business Card in the July 4 WIRE

Do it to promote your business or service, or just to support your community newspaper – See page 3

Pages of Opinion

Which Green Shall We Choose?

If you go searching for the soul of a great city, you will find that soul living in its parks.

In each case, the existence of such a park is the mark of an enlightened decision by the best minds of the body politic, or by a wise benefactor. Such a decision flows from a profound understanding that not all value is expressed in price. It arises from a vision, not a balance sheet.

In giving a city its soul, those who create parks also serve the human soul, which is renewed by the serenity of green, and open space, and clean air, and clear sky.

And thus we come to the question of Roosevelt Island and the future of its undeveloped areas. And we must ask: *Is the City of New York about to lose one of its last great opportunities to make such an enlightened decision?* Are some of its last remaining and most beautiful parklands about to be written into a commercial balance sheet in the cause of making Roosevelt Island “self-sufficient?”

If it is, we say, “Shame, shame!”

Is Central Park “self-sufficient?”

We come, in fact, to the question of planning, and we are moved to put a straightforward yes/no query to those who would make Octagon Park or Southpoint Park a line item on the income portion of a budget. This is the query: *Isn’t it a good idea to think through the uses of open space, and to make plans to preserve and enhance it?*

If Jerome Blue, George Pataki, and Alfonse D’Amato answer, “No, it is not a good idea to do such planning,” then they are asking us to surrender to the worst consequences of commercial greed, and asking us to excuse elected government from its responsibility to consider the lessons of experience – asking us to dismiss the value of gentle contemplation of how we shall treat our resources.

But if Blue, Pataki, and D’Amato would answer, “Yes, planning is a good idea,” then they need say no more, for the thinking and planning have been done, and they are in the public record. *No matter:* With or without the thinking of over two decades that has universally endorsed the use of this Island’s open space for parks, and putting aside the foolhardy quest for commercial proposals for such open space, we believe there is a simple, quiet answer to any question about Roosevelt Island’s open spaces:

They are an opportunity to enrich the soul of our City.

How they are used will speak to those living in a future time of the humanity of our minds, and the quality of our souls, in this time and place.

They are our gifts to the future.

They are our *parks*.

DL



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Jim Bowser - Editor
Dick Lutz - Managing Editor
Copy Editor - Sharon Bermon
Advertising Manager - Ellen Levy
Circulation Managers - George Rubin, Sherie Helstien
Founding Publisher - Jack Resnick

Sophia Adams, Amy Ambrosino, Russell Aragon, David Bauer, Judy Berdy, Maurice Bleifeld, Julia Chang, Pearl Cooper, Shirley Cruz, Morris Diamond, Arlise Ellis, Riquelmis Espanol, Ivy Ess, Enrique Fernandez, Claire Friedland, Selwyn Fund, Svetlana Galkin, Elba Gomez, Ben Haberman, Teresa Hasing, Linda Heimer, Janet Jamell, Peter Kaplan, Matthew Katz, Nina Lublin, Joan Matula, Clarissa McCraley, Merle McLean, Deirdre McNamara, Chris Mendis, Myrna Mendis, Terry Moses, Kathie Niederhoff, Jeff Palmer, Mort Pavane, Mildred Poydras, Joan Raimone, Frances Salten, Ron Schuppert, Bernie Schwartz, Raye Schwartz, Anusha Shrivastava, Quint Spitzer, Julian Stein, Pearl Thomas, Kay Thompson, Maggie Warner

At Last...



A two-decade pregnancy,
but worth the wait.

Letters

To the Editor:

These are the remarks I would have made if I had been informed of the meeting on South Point. Perhaps I should not be surprised since the notice of the elderly hearing in mid-April came in the mail on May 4th. My neighbors, as long-time residents on the Island, made the compelling case against Dr. Blue’s fantasy. Yet I think maybe these observations are relevant.

“This proposal, as Dr. Blue well knows, represents the core of the opponents of the Island 25 years ago. Everyone then knew that if the Island were open to developers that it would become just a fancier expansion of the East Side. But the prevailing idea was that New York City and State had an opportunity to do something no one else had ever done—create a community of mixed middle and lower incomes of every race imaginable, of the young and old, of the healthy and infirm. It has been a resounding success recognized everywhere except by RIOC whose gen-

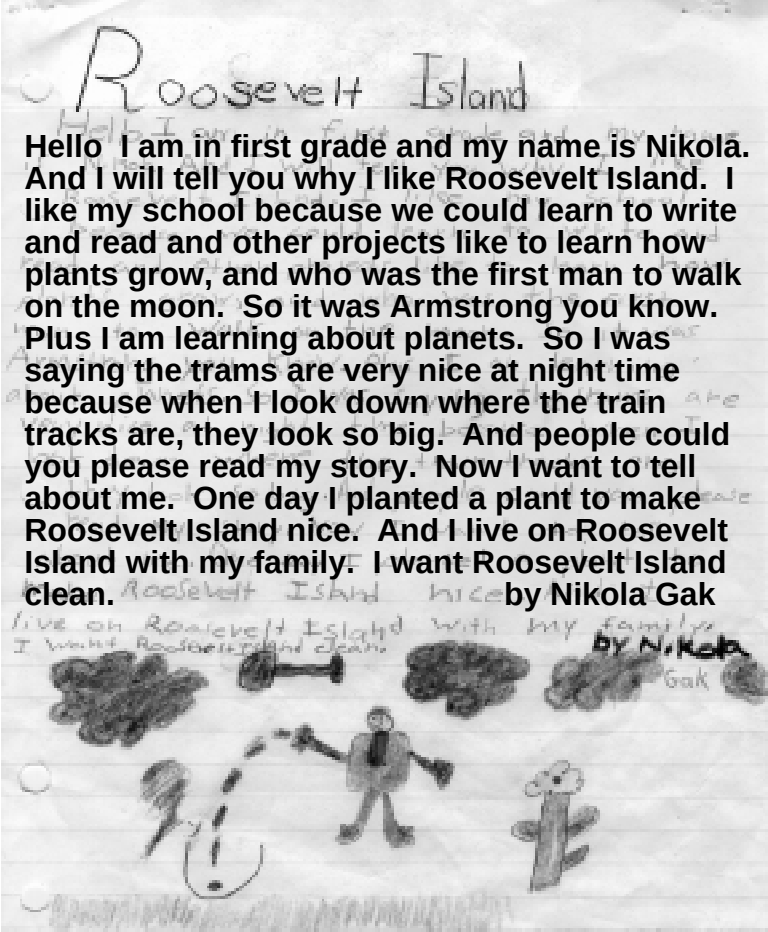
eral view is that the experiment has failed and what it needs now are the very developers who were turned back a quarter of a century ago.

“Let us make it clear. Dr. Blue, we were here years ago, we are here now, and we will be here after you are gone. Why do you persist in making irresponsible proposals whose consequences you want to saddle on the Island you scarcely know, and will be long gone before they even begin? Why not genuinely consult the residents who will have to live with your cockamamie ideas, none of which will ever be built?”

The Islanders have spent two decades, without subsidies, creating a library that has become a branch of the New York Public Library. Yet you never showed up for the ceremony which included all of the locally elected officials, to say nothing of Islanders who built the Library.

Everyone noted your absence. But, quite frankly, I didn’t miss you a bit.

Richard C. Wade



“Too many ads!”

Actually, not nearly enough.

Every newspaper has to be concerned, at some level, with the ratio between advertising and non-ad matter. This rather parochial topic arises in this issue of *The WIRE* because, as a scan of our eight pages will reveal, sale of ad space is down – and down seriously.

We’re hoping to make up a deficit in revenue through our *Great July 4 Business Card Issue* – an opportunity for Islanders who welcome the appearance of this newspaper at their doors each fortnight to lend some support.

Meanwhile, it is useful to look at why advertising space sales are down.

As we noted in a feature story some weeks back, the Island’s economic mix has changed with the appearance of the megastore in the parking garage. Not only does Gristede’s *not* advertise in *The WIRE* (its owner is in a continuing fit of pique that his store did so badly in our Comparison Shopper

island observer

feature, which he claims was rigged and everybody who compares prices knows was not), but the store has so damaged cash flow at other Island stores that some have dropped out of these pages: Bigelow Pharmacy and the Bakery are notable examples.

Of course, some Island businesses have never taken advantage of the opportunity to thank members of the community for their patronage by supporting their community newspaper. Chase Bank, for example, has turned away all requests – after some stalling – with an explanation that “We don’t advertise individual branches.” That’s one reason why *The WIRE*’s accounts are now at Montauk Credit Union, and others have moved their accounts, as well.

To be financially viable, *The WIRE* must be 50% advertising, on average, particularly when the paper is only eight pages. For its long-term health, we’ve set a goal of getting it up to a regular 12 pages, with six pages of ads, as soon as possible. At 12 pages, there is additional expense, but costs are offset somewhat by lower per-page press costs.

If you’re moved to complain “Too many ads!” – please don’t. Instead, when you patronize them, thank those merchants who do advertise for supporting the only newspaper that brings you news of Roosevelt Island on a regular basis.

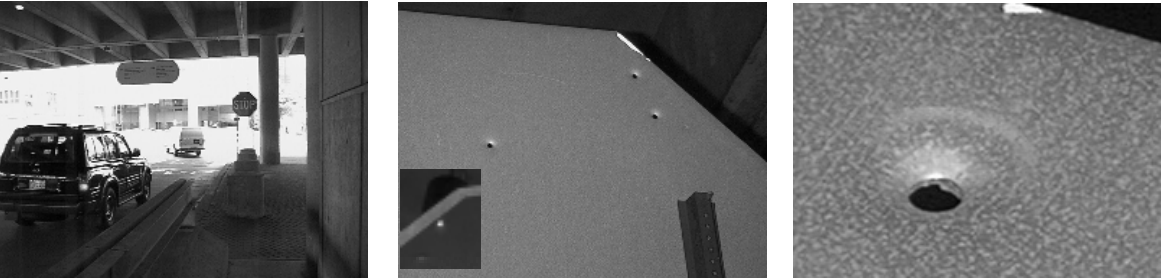
Meantime, please consider publishing your business card in the July 4 issue. If you and enough other Island residents participate, it could provide a valuable cushion against the next time we’re short on the life-sustaining ads that keep us going.

DL

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters to the Editor, to the community, and to/from officials, and will consider publication on a *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 word-processing software) left at 531 Main Street for *The WIRE*; by ASCII text e-mail (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.**

Yes, Those Are *Bullet Holes* in the Stop Sign



Someone – believed to be an Island resident – shot three large-caliber bullet holes in the stop sign at the foot of the ramp to the Island around 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 20. The shots were fired by an individual who stepped from a car, shot at the sign from the Main Street side, then sped off. There has been no arrest.

The Chair of the RIOC Board of Directors cancelled the June 11 board meeting, in part because of the effective community outcry over the development of a Marriott hotel on our Southpoint parkland. The proposal was the sole matter on the agenda. The cancellation was, however, probably as much due to the fact that the Board themselves had not been given any indication of the existence of the project until the very last minute. It certainly helped that we had such solid support from our State Assemblymember Pete Grannis, our City Councilmember, Gifford Miller, and Manhattan Community Board 8.

While the Governor’s lackey is putting our remaining parkland up for sale to anyone who’ll take it, the Governor himself is on the other bank of the river at the new Queens West development creating a state park, mind you, of their minimal open space. It must be the smallest state park in the country.

I guess Pataki thinks no one will notice. The arrogant disregard shown by RIOC’s management for the laws of the state of New York, the City of New York, the binding lease with the City that forms the basis of our community, their own Board of Directors, and, of course, us, the residents of this community is far more indicative of Pataki’s true stance than any political slogan. And D’Amato, whose candidate Jerry Blue was in the first place, is styling himself all over the airwaves as the friend of the little guy.

The only little guy that Al D’Amato has the least concern for is Al D’Amato. D’Amato comes from a small town on Long Island called Island Park. Imagine any of the things we’ve been putting up with for the past two years happening there. Imagine them happening in any town in New York where the residents have a say in their local government, which is, by the way, every other town in New York.

Imagine the mayor of Island Park, or any other New York town, flaunting his or her wanton disregard for the law, the bylaws of local government, the citizens, the town itself. Flaunting it.

Picture Giuliani putting Gramercy Park up for development, or Union Park, or Prospect or, what the hell, why not Central Park? Picture any other mayor in New York doing the same. Think they’d get away with it? Think someone might notice?

Think any other mayor could cut the town budget by 100%? Think any other mayor could get away with blatantly ignoring infrastructure issues once there have been engineering reports to the contrary? Think any other mayor would suddenly try to take over the local church? Think there’s any other Episcopal or Catholic church in the state of New York where the state is demanding rent?

Such thoughts are ludicrous. Political suicide at the very least. Major public scandal guaranteed. But for us, business as usual.

Blue, Pataki and D’Amato have one thing in common. Each believes he is invincible. Untouchable.

We’ll see.



Patrick Stewart

RIRA
President’s
Column

Steven Gonzalez

Steven Gonzalez, an Island House doorkeeper since July 1996, died suddenly last week while on vacation in Mexico. Gonzalez, who was only 25, was hospitalized, and died one day after emergency surgery. The cause of death was listed as failure of the pancreas.

Doryne Isley, General Manager of the Roosevelt Island Housing Management Corporation, described the staff as “devastated. Steven was the kind of person who always did his job, and more. He will be missed.”

Gonzalez is survived by his wife Natalie, a native of Colombia, and their nine-month-old son. There are no other surviving relatives. Residents who wish to convey their condolences may write to Mrs. Steven Gonzalez, 136-25 Jewel Avenue, Apt. A, Flushing NY 11367.

The Westview/Island House Task Force has voted to send a group donation to Mrs. Gonzalez. In addition, Island House Floor Captains will be in the 555 lobby today (Saturday) to accept individual donations. It has been suggested that residents make a contribution in the amount they would have given Steven at Holiday time.



Roosevelt Island Day



PS/IS 217 has been preparing for Roosevelt Island Day by having students think about litter. This is a detail from a larger drawing by Lisa Petty. Nikola Gak’s letter (page 2) also addresses the clean-Island question.

Don’t be left out... Everybody will be in it...

Be part of *The WIRE’s*
Great July 4
Business Card Issue

Run *your business card* in
The Main Street WIRE’s special July 4 issue
scheduled to be distributed to Fireworks visitors that date
as well as the usual distribution to every Island apartment

Just \$35 prepaid (3.5 x 2.0 inches)
Do it to advertise your service
Do it to advertise your business
Or do it just to support *The WIRE*

Just send your card and your check, payable to *The WIRE*, to:
The WIRE, 531 Main Street #1611, Roosevelt Island, NY 10044

Cards will run slightly reduced to 3.3w x 1.8h. The word **retired** will be added, if you specify.
You may write additional information on your card, if appropriate to indicate the nature of your work.

Deadline: Friday, June 26
Send it in now while you’re thinking about it,
and show your support for *The WIRE*

If you prefer not to publish a business card but would like to support *The WIRE*, contribute \$20 and have your name on a list that will accompany the business cards. Thank you for supporting *The Main Street WIRE*.

COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland • 317-8523

Fri., June 19, tickets go on sale for **July 4 Fireworks**. See news item, page 1.

Sat., June 20, Roosevelt Island Day. Clean-up and entertainment activities all day, starting at 9:00 a.m. To get involved, call **838-4747**, or just come.

Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m., **Strollercize**. Information, **308-4855**.

Tue., June 23, 6:00 p.m., **Debut Presentation of Renwick Lighthouse Collectible**, Lighthouse Park, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Historical Society. The replica will be available at the event, at a cost of \$25, or in advance by calling **688-4836**.

Sat., June 27, noon-6:00 p.m., **Father & Son Basketball Game**, sponsored by Public Safety. 832-4540, ext. 348 to register.

Fax or phone event information to **317-8523**. Please provide a phone number for follow-up. **There is no charge** for listing Island events here.

Fri.-Sat., July 3-4, next scheduled issue of ***The Main Street WIRE***. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., June 26; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., June 29. July 4 is a **Business Card Issue**; deadline for submission of business cards with prepayment, Friday, June 26. **Future issues:** July 25, August 15, 29; September 12, 26; October 10, 24; November 6, 20; December 5, 19; January 9, thereafter generally every two weeks. 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., July 4, evening, Southpoint, **Macy’s Fireworks**. Tickets available at RIOC office, 591 Main Street, during business hours, starting June 19. Gate opens at 5:00 p.m., fireworks at 9:00.

Sun., July 5, 10:00 a.m., regular meeting, **Roosevelt Island Art Association**, 546 Main Street, 12th floor. Live model. Call **517-0564**.

Wed. or Thur., July 15 or 16, **Jazzmobile** with **Etta James**. Further information to come.

Sat., Sept. 12, **Mini-FDR Day**. Watch this column for additional information.

At the Senior Center

Every week

Mondays

10-11 **Stay Well** (exercise)
11-12 **English as 2nd Language (ESL)** (Beginners)
12-1 **ESL** (Intermediate)

12:45 **Arts & Crafts Quilt Project**

Tuesdays

1:30 **Bingo**

Wednesdays

9:30 **Stay Well** (exercise)

10-11 **ESL** (Beginners)

11-12 **ESL** (Intermediate)

Thursdays

12:30 **Movie**

Fridays

10-12 **ESL**

Saturdays

7:30 **Bingo & Games**

Special Events

Wed., June 17 **Atlantic City**

Thur., June 18 **Lenox Hill Financial Mgt Service**

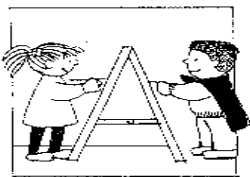
Fri., June 19 **“Oldies” Movie**

Fri., June 26 **Birthday Party**

It's time to register for September 1998

**Roosevelt Island
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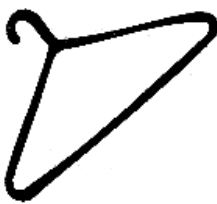
Betschart is actively involved in the education of students and doctors at several teaching hospitals. He uses the most advanced techniques for the relief of **Heel Pain, Ingrown Nails, Nail Fungus, Corns and Callouses, Bunions, Hammer Toes, Injuries and Diabetic Foot Problems.** Let his gentle hands help your tender feet **today.**

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Dry Cleaning Machine
To Serve You Better*

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**BRACES
AREN'T FOREVER,
SMILES ARE!**

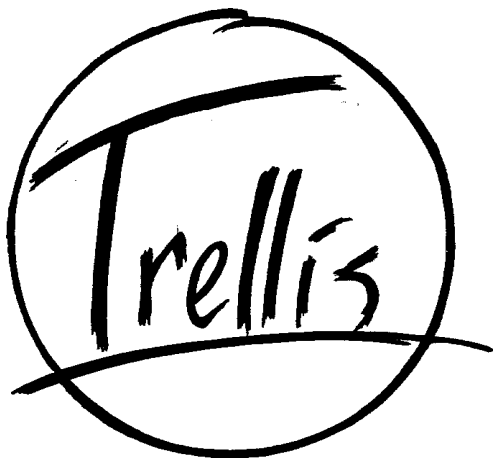
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Please call for an appointment.

Dr. Gerald Sweder and staff

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*At the heart of the community,
next to the historic Chapel of the Good Shepherd*

The Roosevelt Island Historical Society proudly offers The Roosevelt Island Lighthouse

Limited edition

Come meet
Bill Younger,
founder &
creator of
Harbour Lights
award-winning
collectible
lighthouses...



At the Lighthouse Tuesday, June 23, 6 p.m.

*The Roosevelt Island Lighthouse
Limited edition, 5x4 inches, \$25*

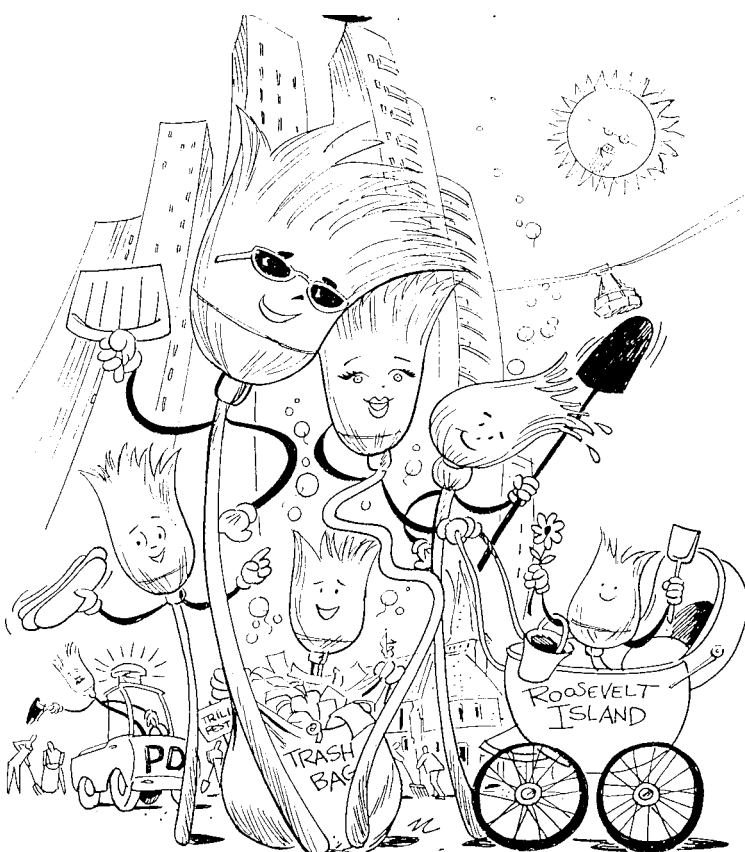
To order in advance by mail, send check payable RIHS to:

RIHS, PO Box 5, NYC10044

Limited edition: Last orders June 23 (at the event)
Proceeds benefit Historical Society

Roosevelt Island Day

Please join us!



- 9:00 A.M.** Participants meet at the Good Shepherd Plaza. Volunteers register for assignments. Distribution of T-shirts, water bottles, equipment.
- 9:15 A.M.** Spruce-up Activities begin.
- 9:30 A.M.** Painting on Canvas Art Project for children ages 2-10 years old. Sponsored by Island Kids, Inc., and the Young Adult League at 540 Eastwood Amphitheater.
- 10:00 A.M.** Girl Scouts participation in the Committee for NYC's 100th Birthday Celebration Cake Decorating Contest. Sponsored by the Roosevelt Island Youth Program at the Youth Center, 506 Main Street.
- 11:45 A.M.** Roosevelt Island Youth Memorial Fountain Plaque Dedication, 560 Main Street. Words and prayers by Vicar Chapin, Imam Glenn, Father Gorman, Pastor Obed, Sister Regina, Rabbi Spivak.

ENTERTAINMENT AT GOOD SHEPHERD PLAZA

- 12:30 P.M.** Refreshments served.
- 12:45 P.M.** P.S./I.S. 217 School Band, conducted by Gary Mure. Vocals and guitar by Billy Mure.
- 1:15 P.M.** The Manhattan Brass Quintet, artists provided by River Music, under the auspices of St. Francis Cabrini Parish. Sponsored by Roosevelt Island Housing Management Corp., Rivercross Tenants Corp., and Manhattan Park Management.
- 2:00 P.M.** Our own Gospel Singer Juanita Fleming and the Music Makers. Sponsored by Montauk Credit Union.
- 2:45 P.M.** Blues singer Walter G. Lewis. Special thanks to Eugene Robinson.
- 3:15 P.M.** Main Street Children's Theatre performance, directed by Nancy Howe.

Saturday, June 20, 9 A.M.

Scenes from the Family Album as the Library Goes NYPL



RICLA President Emeritus David Bauer and current President Ivens V Stanton marched together in the parade.



Councilmember Gifford Miller



The Proclamation: NYPL President Paul LeClerc, City Councilmember Gifford Miller, RICLA President Ivens V Stanton, Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, Assemblymember Pete Grannis

Photo coverage
by Julia Chang
and Website NYC10044



David Bauer



Assemblymember Pete Grannis



Inside the Library, C. Virginia Fields signed the guest book

Library Launches New Era As Branch of NYPL from page 1

years. To sustained applause, he recalled the library’s founders, Dorothy and Herman Reade, and Ursula Beauseigneur, a librarian who as a volunteer set up the original collection standards and procedures, and her successors Ruth Limmer and Kay Thompson, as well as Raya Barut, who served as Head Librarian for the last five years. Bauer also cited Joan Pape as an outstanding example of the dedication of 350 volunteers who kept the Library running over 20 years, praising them all for their dedication to the cause.

Staff

Manhattan Borough Coordinator Wendy Caldiero introduced the Island’s new Head Librarian, Lawrence Kapture, and his six-person staff. In addition to Raya Barut, they include Amy Hillick, First Assistant Librarian; Magdalene Chan, Librarian Trainee; Nandi Inglis, Senior Clerk; and Clerks Lateshe Lee and Joann Rosado.

A ceremonial key to the Island branch was presented to the President of NYPL, Paul LeClerc and to Norman Holman, the Director of the Branch Libraries, by Mr. Stanton.

Neither RIOC nor the State administration was represented at the ceremony.

New Hours, Services

Island residents will now be able to request books from the NYPL catalog regardless of where the books are located. Books borrowed from the rest of the system can be returned locally.

The former 20-hour schedule is being doubled (box, page 1), and the expanded internet-based facilities of NYPL will be available at the Main Street branch.

While the existing collection was basically assembled from donations by residents, the new Library will have an annual budget of \$50,000 for current books and periodicals.

History

The Island’s branch is now named for Herman and Dorothy Reade, the resident pioneers who founded and nurtured the Community Library. Over the years, they were joined by people from all parts of the Island community to provide basic Library service, as well as special programs: speakers, movies, discussion groups and special interest events.

There has always been an outpouring of support for the Library in terms of contributions of personal time, library materials, cash, and participation in Library fundraisers. One of the most noteworthy examples of this support occurred when the Library was relocated from the Westview basement to the present quarters at 524 Main Street. Relocation of materials and equipment was accomplished in one day by a flow of residents using shopping carts.

RIOC from page 1

July 9. If passed, the resolution would give Blue sole authority to negotiate the details of Southpoint development.

Members of the RIOC Board first heard about the proposal about a month ago. Had they voted on the matter on Thursday, their period of consideration would have been under three weeks. Critics, who oppose the proposed development as an improper diversion of parkland, have suggested Blue was attempting to put the proposal on an excessively fast track, giving his Board and the community too little time to evaluate the impact of such a project.

RIOC Board member Ron Vass, a resident, told *The WIRE*, “I’m neither for nor against anything [Blue] has proposed,” but he suggested a vote this month would have been premature, saying he has too little information to support the project. In particular, he expressed

concern about traffic. “I’m really concerned about vehicular traffic. These roads are not designed to handle it. I can’t vote for it until I’m assured that the roads are up to it.

“Even without construction, there’s a need for a means of vehicular egress beyond the single bridge we have today. I really feel I could support much more in the way of construction, [perhaps including] Marriott, if we had a bridge or a causeway from the southern tip of the Island to Astoria.

“Without it,” Vass concluded, “I don’t know where to take this. I’m in the middle. I feel a need for some construction – something. I think he [Blue] might be heading in the right direction... I just don’t know.”

Asked about the chances of a favorable vote on the Southpoint proposal at RIOC’s July board meeting, Vass said he hadn’t taken the pulse of other Board members, but said his own view is that such a vote would still be premature – “going too fast.”

Audit Faults RIOC Hiring, Failure in Capital Planning

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation may be hiring people unqualified for their positions, according to an audit released Thursday by State Comptroller H. Carl McCall. The audit found, according to a press release from McCall’s office, “that RIOC’s hiring practices did not include clear job descriptions, nor indications that employees had the appropriate background for the jobs for which they were hired.”

McCall’s report also recommended that RIOC develop formal plans to address the Island’s future capital construction needs, cited lack of an inventory system to account for RIOC’s assets, and asked for better documentation of use of public purpose funds.

“The residents of Roosevelt Island need proper assurances that their community is well-managed and that there is a thoughtful plan for meeting future concerns,” McCall said in issuing the audit. “They need to know that qualified employees work on Roosevelt Island and that funds earmarked for the community are being properly spent.”

Volunteers from page 1

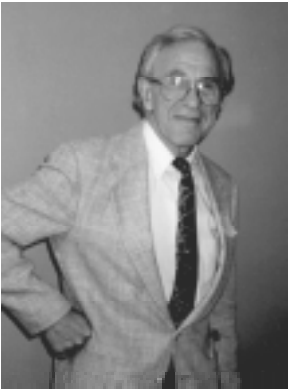
Another grateful teacher, Joy Frangola, declares confidently that the volunteer assigned to her is “the best. Peggy Bell has been reading to my kids for over three years now and she is absolutely marvelous. Kids love her because she is like a grandmother with whom they can have fun.”

The main focus of the volunteer program is to work with students individually. A training program, held at the beginning of each school year, is arranged by Susan Cohen, the school’s Guidance Counselor, and Karen Smith, the energetic PTA President who herself is a volunteer. Cohen matches teachers’ needs with volunteer interests and follows up to see that a working arrangement is established. Volunteers are asked to put in at least four hours a week. “A lot of people sign up but, because this is

a transient community, people move away and some simply lose interest,” comments Smith.

One reason for that might be a lack of interaction with school authorities. Bill Raiford, a volunteer who has worked at the school for more than two years suggests that the school might consider having volunteers meet over coffee to discuss problems and issues. “I was put on my own and I liked that because there was no bureaucratic involvement with the school, but some feedback might have helped.”

“We can use all the help we can get,” says Susan Cohen. “I hope more people sign up at the start of next school year.” To do so, a volunteer can call Cohen at 980-0294, and sign up. With Karen Smith, the message they send out to children in the community is, “education is important.”



Gene Schapiro



Karen Smith

Vandals Caught, Porter Rewarded

In a quick and determined action, a Westview porter, Yamil Lopera, caught three Island graffiti vandals redhanded on Wednesday. He received recognition and a reward from Housing Management on Thursday.

Lopera, working on the fourth floor of Westview, saw the trio damaging property across Main street in Eastwood. He sprinted to the scene, recruiting help along the way, and nearly a dozen fellow workers joined him in apprehending the three as they were spraying a 12-foot wall.

“We know his tag,” Isely told a gathering of employees in an Eastwood courtyard, “and he’s done a *lot* of damage.” Isely presented Lopera with a plaque and a \$500 check to applause and cheers from his fellow workers.

Two of the three apprehended youths live in 4 River Road; the third lives in Westview.



Yamil Lopera receives a plaque and check from Doryne Isely as Thelma McIntosh and an audience of fellow employees applaud.

Lighthouse Getting A Facelift Soon, An Old Lamp Will Shine Anew

The Friends of Roosevelt Island Landmarks are giving its landmark lighthouse a makeover.

The \$120,000 project, funded through the Friends group by an anonymous donor, will light the structure inside and out, clean the stone, repair the roof, and generally make it highly presentable. The lantern will reproduce the lighting of the original beacon.

The Friends group was founded years ago to help save the Island’s landmarks. This particular project was initiated over two years ago. It’s scheduled to be finished by late July.

A mild detergent is being used to clean the stone.

Meanwhile, the Roosevelt Island Historical Society is sponsoring sale of a lighthouse replica produced by Harbour Lights, known for its limited edition pieces. Sales of the reproduction, priced at \$25, will help fund the work of the Historical Society, which has scheduled a 6:00 p.m. ceremony, at the Lighthouse June 23, to introduce the replica.

“More supporters of lighthouses will add momentum to the care and maintenance of these historic structures,” said Judith Berdy, Vice President of the Historical Society. “We are pleased to work with Harbour Lights on this project.”

Some History

According to papers submitted when the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the Island’s lighthouse as a landmark, “This small lighthouse stands at the northern tip of Roosevelt Island on a projection of land which was at one time a tiny separate island connected to the main one by a wooden bridge. Local legend maintains that during the 19th century a patient from the nearby Lunatic Asylum was permitted to build a stone fort on this outcropping since he deeply feared an invasion by the British. When plans were formulated to build the lighthouse, this patient allegedly was persuaded to surrender the fort only after much cajoling and a bribe of bonus money. The tale continues that the patient himself demolished the fort and built the new lighthouse, carving the inscription:

*This is the work
Was done by*

*John McCarthy
Who built the Light
House from the bottom to the
Top all ye who do pass by may
Pray for his soul when he dies.”*

Actual construction of the lighthouse dates to 1872. It was designed and its construction supervised by James Renwick, Jr., who also designed St. Patrick’s Cathedral. The Landmarks Commission document goes on to describe the lighthouse as “approximately fifty feet tall... constructed of rock-faced, random gray ashlar. This stone (gray gneiss) was quarried on the island itself, predominantly by convict labor from the Penitentiary on the island... The lighthouse is encircled by a small yard paved with flagstone. An entry walk at the south is flanked by stone bollards which have pyramidal tops carved with simple trefoils. The lighthouse is octagonal in plan and vertically organized according to the tripartite division of the classical column – base, shaft and

capital. The base is separated from the superstructure by a series of simple moldings which are interrupted on the south side by a projecting gable above the single entrance doorway. This doorway, with an incised pointed arch above a splayed keystone with flanking corbels, is designed in a rustic version of the Gothic style. The stepped stones of the outer profile of this gable simulate roof tiles. The octagonal shaft of the lighthouse is pierced above the doorway by two slit windows which light the interior staircase. The top of the shaft is adorned with Gothic foliate ornament in high relief, separated by simple moldings from the brackets which support the observation platform. These elements form the crowning feature of the lighthouse. The octagonal lantern, originally surmounted by a picturesque conical roof, is of glass and steel and is surrounded by a simple metal railing.

“The rock-faced stone and the sparing use of boldly scaled ornamental detail give the lighthouse the strength and character of a medieval fortification. In its isolated setting the lighthouse is a prominent and dramatic feature of Roosevelt Island.”



SPORTSWIRE

TENNIS The New York Junior Tennis League (NYJTL) is discussing possible USA Tennis 123 evening programming for adults at the Octagon Park courts. Affordable group lessons for beginners, advanced beginners, and intermediates would be available starting the week of June 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m. A team tennis program for participants would take place in August. For further information, call Joyce Mincheff at 486-1997.

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Minor Division			
	W	L	T
Yankees	4	1	
Braves	3	1	1
Orioles	2	3	
Angels	0	4	1
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Braves	3	3	
Orioles	3	3	
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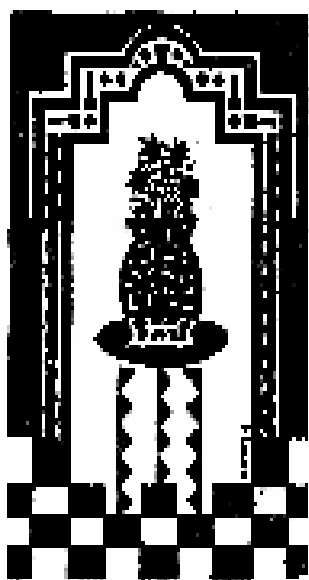
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