

Next issue
September 26

The Main Street **WIRE**

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044



David Bauer of the Maple Tree Group describes the financial implications of self-government legislation to a RIRA Common Council session Wednesday night. Over 100 residents attended, most cheering on the legislation proposed by Bauer's group and put before the State Assembly by the Island's representative, Pete Grannis.

Public Safety Scooter Torched After Off-Island Youths Arrested

Rumors were abundant early last week after a pair of young men were charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. The official report issued by the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation says, "On August 30, shortly after midnight, a Public Safety Officer asked two men to

two men they apprehended, leaving the 114 to disperse the crowd that had assembled. Two subjects arrested were Warren Stewart, 22, and Garth Stewart, 20."

The Public Safety statement continues with an account of a youth reporting an assault by two unknown individuals, one of whom is known to be a resident of 4 River Road.



lower their radio in the area of North Town Park. When they refused, [he] called for assistance and two additional [officers] responded. Again the two men refused to lower their radio and were placed under arrest for assault and disorderly conduct after pushing one [officer]. When the 114 Precinct arrived on the scene, RIOC [officers] left the area with the

person unknown." Eyewitnesses reported that about a dozen Island residents watched the arson but made no effort to stop it or call for assistance.

Residents Association President Patrick Stewart filed a Freedom of Information request on the incidents with RIOC, but received no hard information. It is the subject of his column on page 2.

Hero Cop Presenting Awards at FDR Day

NYPD Detective Steven McDonald will present awards to the Island's outstanding disabled athletes today (Saturday, September 12) at FDR Day. McDonald, disabled himself after being wounded in the line of duty, will present medals in mid-afternoon as a highlight in a day of varied activities.

Resident athletes will compete in sporting events including frisbee and bean-bag toss, dart and softball throw, a wheelchair obstacle course, horseshoe throw, golf, and a wheelchair basketball game scheduled for 2:00 p.m.

The day will also feature an art exhibit by Coler-Goldwater patients, a health mini-fair, and a flea market, with ample giveaways, food and refreshments, music, clowns, and more on Main Street along Tony Capobianco Field from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The day will end with an adult disco dance at Manhattan Park Theatre Club (8 River Road), 4:00-7:00 p.m.

The event is sponsored by Coler-Goldwater Hospital and Auxiliaries, and Roosevelt Island Housing Management.



Members of the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association produced a quilt for FDR Day. From left, Eileen Smith, Virginia Granato, Michelle Vidra, Florence Hazen.

Residents Prepare Self-Government Campaign in "Drive for Democracy"

News Analysis by Dick Lutz

On Wednesday night at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, just over 100 members of the Roosevelt Island community started a process that one described as "long and hard" – the consideration of how to turn Roosevelt Island into a community in control of its own destiny.

The subject was a bill put into the State legislative mill in June by Assemblymember Pete Grannis. It would create a new governmental entity, the Roosevelt Island Community. It would do away with the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) and its nine-member Board of gubernatorial appointees, replacing it with a panel of 5 residents, each member elected by residents. And it would eliminate the RIOC Presidency as a political patronage appointment, requiring the managing board to hire a General Manager with municipal management experience appropriate to the position.

The occasion Wednesday night was the regular monthly meeting of the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA), but the usual roster of old and new business was supplanted by a near-exhaustive description of the legislation, followed by a discussion session in which a dozen residents asked questions, suggested changes, and stirred applause with declarations that a community with self-government could surely do no worse than the present Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation under President Jerome Blue.

The legislation originated with the Island's Maple Tree Group (MTG), led by retired City Manager David Bauer. (Provisions of the bill are outlined in a chart on page 3.)

Bauer, responding to a series of resident comments, said, "The worst thing that could come of this effort is that we might stay the way we are." Under an elected Board, Bauer said, "Whatever might be proposed... we will have the chance to say it is *our* responsibility, and the decisions that are made are what *we* want them to be."

In discussing concerns that the funds available to the new community entity to operate Roosevelt Island might be inadequate, Bauer pointed out that Blue now claims that revenue exceeds or matches expenditures – that the Island is financially "self-sufficient." But he went on to point out that the average salary for the 80 employees at RIOC is \$50,000. "And if it wouldn't be possible for the elected body from our Island to come up with a more reasonable payroll," Bauer said, "then I think we all ought to hide our heads in shame."

"There is adequate funding in the existing budget," Bauer told his fellow residents. "Looking at how it's being spent, and making some adjustments, we can do better." He pointed out that in the Maple Tree Group's survey of services provided by the City, the State, and

by RIOC, those supplied by RIOC consistently scored zero, across the Board, on ratings of effectiveness. "We have, within ourselves, the intelligence necessary to begin addressing our own needs, and we'll make the necessary modifications." Residents applauded.

Tony Morenzi, the Grannis aide who appeared in place of the Assemblymember (who had a family commitment), pointed out some special problems likely to be faced by Island-based self-government. The Island would lack the taxing authority normally available to small communities, he said, and could not count on the State to subsidize the Island's financial needs. "You're not really a separate entity like a village," he said. The entity would be a public-benefit corporation, like RIOC, with the major difference being the community's direct election of members of its Board of Directors.

"None of this is set in stone," Morenzi told residents. "This could be the legislation; or it could be changed. This is really the starting point – something for residents of the Island to think about. This is the start of an Island-wide discussion, to involve everybody who feels strongly about the quality of life on the Island and how they want to live many years into the future." Bauer announced a Maple Tree Group meeting, open to all residents, for Monday night (September 14) at 8:00 at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, to mark the start of discussions aimed at sharpening the bill for reintroduction in the new legislative session that begins in January.

Morenzi pointed out that the legislation is only at the start of a very difficult route through the legislative process. He said it first needs near-unanimous backing from Island residents, then a serious effort to generate State-wide support.



Listening: David Kraut, the only remaining resident member of the RIOC Board of Directors.

Judith Berdy: "This is going to be the hardest struggle..."

To move through the Assembly, it needs a nod from Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. And, of course, it needs to win a majority vote in the Assembly.

As yet, however, the bill has no Senate sponsor. Not only does it need a sponsor in the Senate, Morenzi said, it

needs a committed sponsor willing to work for the bill's passage – perhaps to do the horse-trading that marks the political process in every deliberative body in the known world.

Then, it needs the Governor's signature – or enough votes in each legislative house to override a veto.

Frank Farance, a member of the RIRA Common Council, responded to Morenzi's discussion of the need to build support by revealing a "Drive for Democracy" plan, under which residents will be asked to supply the names of upstate friends and relatives who will later be asked to forward letters to their local Senator and Assemblymember in support of the bill. The idea, Farance said, is to show legislators that the right to elect local government is not just a Roosevelt Island issue, but a state-wide matter. RIRA President Patrick Stewart called it a "constitutional issue" after pointing out that while Island residents pay the same taxes paid by other Empire State citizens, none of that tax money flows back to Roosevelt Island, since RIOC has refused to request State funds under Governor George Pataki and RIOC President Blue. Funding aside, Stewart said, "This is the only community in the United States that doesn't elect its local government."

Farance called for Island residents to start the process of gathering names and addresses of contacts around New York State, so that prepared letters can be provided to those contacts when the time is right to trigger the state-wide campaign. He invited residents willing to volunteer for the campaign to call him at 838-7447.

Reservations expressed by residents attending Wednesday night's meeting ranged from procedural to political, and from fiscal to the fight and its specifics.

see **Democracy**, page 10

Today (Saturday) is FDR Day... Come on out!

Jerry Blue?
Forget the Man.
Fire the System.

Growing public opposition to Jerry Blue’s clumsy mismanagement of Roosevelt Island just might lead to his removal. But there will then be a replacement in his chair – another political appointee more loyal to a political system than to the people of Roosevelt Island. **Self-government is the answer – elected Roosevelt Island government, supervising professional management.** And resident government is the goal of Assemblymember Pete Grannis’s legislation, soon to be reintroduced in a new legislative session. Once it’s law, it will empower Roosevelt Islanders to hire competent management they can support.

But moving the Grannis bill through the legislature and immunizing it against a possible veto by the Governor will require the votes of a significant number of legislators – some of whom (let’s face it) have little interest in the Island.

They can *become* interested, though, if enough of *their constituents* speak out in sympathy with the goal – simple democracy for their fellow State residents.

That’s the goal of the nascent **Drive for Democracy** project – to ask as many Empire State residents as possible to contact their legislators in support of self-government for Roosevelt Island.

Jim Bowser is on the mend. His editorial column will be back soon.



If you and 299 other Island residents each supply the names and addresses of ten up-state contacts (**form, page 3**), and each contact forwards a letter to his State Senator and Member of Assembly, that will be **6,000 letters** to the legisla-

tors – from *their own constituents* – asking simple Constitutional rights for Roosevelt Island. We should do better than 6,000, of course, but the multiplier effect produces real leverage.

The mechanics of all this are being worked out. For now, it’s enough to get a start. Scour your address book for names and addresses, with zip codes, of every New York State friend, relative, classmate, and acquaintance you dare ask to send a letter to his/her legislators. Be ready to put them on paper, and the ad hoc project group will do the rest. (At some point, you’ll receive letters to forward to the contacts you supply, along with a cover letter to send them.) **Lead time is important**, so don’t delay – do it today.

Then, perhaps we can say...

Jerry Blue?
Forget the Man.
We Fired the System.

DL

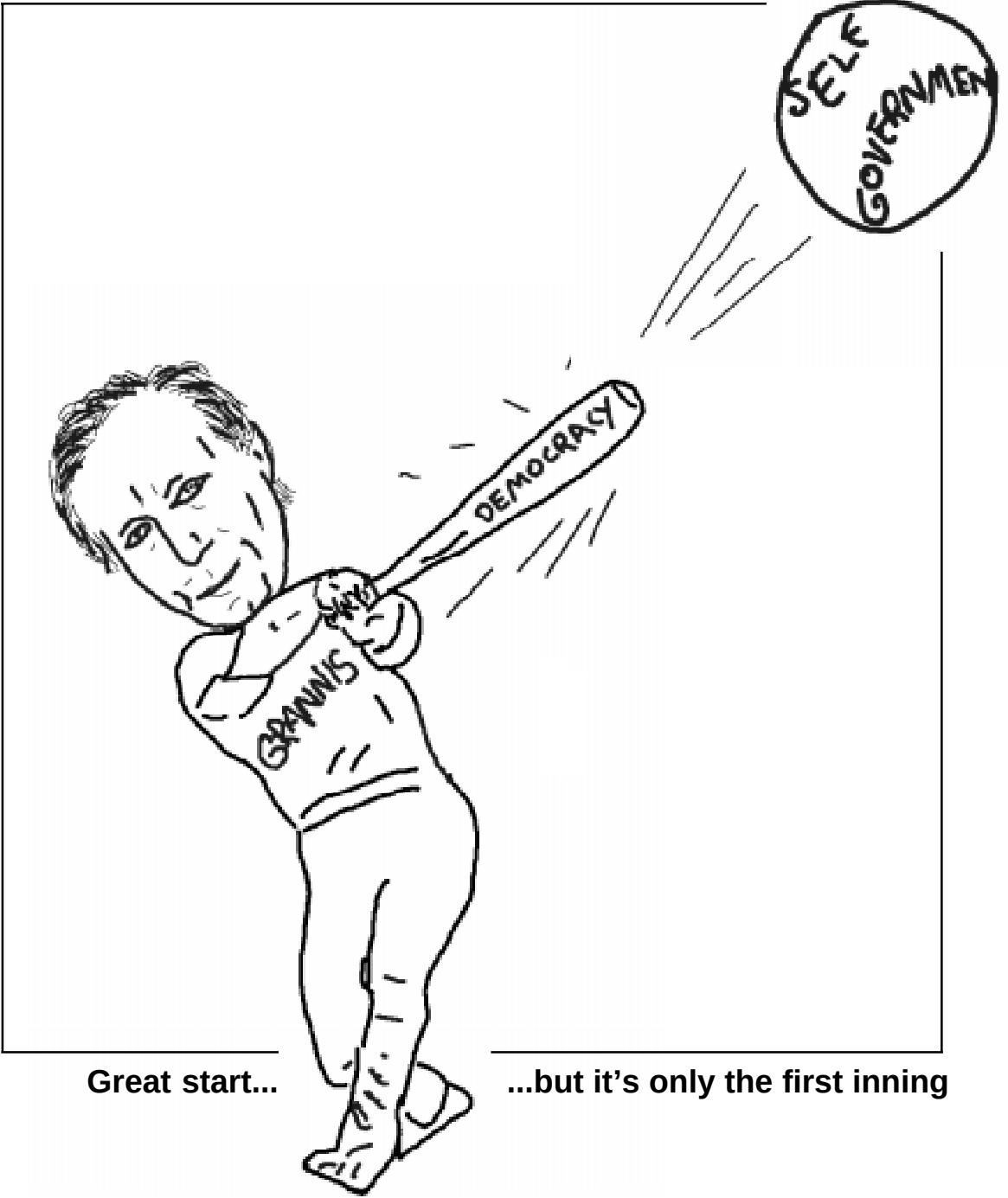


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Editor – Jim Bowser
Managing Editor – Dick Lutz
Contributing Editor – Sharon Bermon
Proofreaders – Kay Thompson, Frances Salten
Advertising Manager – Ellen Levy
Circulation Managers – George Rubin, Sherie Helstien
Founding Publisher – Jack Resnick

Sophia Adams, Amy Ambrosino, Russell Aragon, Sarmistha Banergi, David Bauer, Judy Berdy, Maurice Bleifeld, Mary Camper-Titsingh, Claude Cruz, Shirley Cruz, Ruth Davidson, Morris Diamond, Arlise Ellis, Ivy Ess, Riquelmis Espanol, Zinnat Farooq, Enrique Fernandez, Zoraida Fonseca, John Friedel, Claire Friedland, Svetlana Galkin, Elba Gomez, Ben Haberman, Teresa Hasing, Linda Heimer, Janet Jamal, Sharon Jones, Peter Kaplan, Mickey Karpeles-Bauer, Matthew Katz, Asija Jilani, Wendy Kennedy, Curtis Lowery, Nina Lublin, Lena Lutz, Hazel Lynch, Joan Matula, Clarissa McCraley, Merle McLean, Deirdre McNamara, Chris Mendis, Myrna Mendis, Shirley Margolin, Terry Moses, Louise Munsch, Sandra Narine, Kathie Niederhoffer, Juan Nieves, Mort Pavane, Mildred Poydras, Joan Raimone, Paul Russo, Debra Salitra, Ron Schuppert, Bernie Schwartz, Raye Schwartz, Marilyn Sherman, Anusha Shrivastava, Velda Sosa, Quint Spitzer, Julian Stein, Pearl Thomas, Maggie Warner, Gus White

Speaking of Home Runs...



Great start...

...but it’s only the first inning

COMING UP

and more news
on page 10,
including
MST&DA Auditions
RIRA Election Plans
New Rabbi for RIJC
Blackwell Review Set

Enough already of Czar Blue’s pronouncements that Roosevelt Island is financially self-sufficient. Enough of Pataki’s taking Roosevelt Island’s taxes and returning nothing, despite his contractual obligation to subsidize us until we have a population of 20,000, while he uses our taxes to pay for his campaign ads. Are we mice, or are we human? It’s time for a tax strike. Not another

island
observer

penny to the State until they remember that we are part of the USA and entitled to self-government. Put your taxes into a separate account labeled Tax Strike so that the State can’t claim we didn’t have the money, and then maybe they’ll talk and negotiate – first, of course, we have to join together to sing “Bye Bye Blue.”

Frances Salten

On August 28, the Saturday night of the weekend before Labor day, there was a series of incidents on Main Street that culminated in injury to three Public Safety officers and the total destruction by burning of a Public Safety vehicle. I’ve learned by now that the only way I have even a hope to get a response to any letter of mine to RIOC is to frame any inquiry into a request within the boundaries of the Freedom of Information Act. This does not necessarily guarantee that I will receive a reply either, but it’s by far my best shot. And so I wrote to Mr. Blue, asking the questions that you would want me to ask. How many were injured, and how badly? Were the perpetrators known to Public Safety? Were they local or off-Island? How much property damage had occurred? Was the 114th Precinct called? Did they respond? Was Jim Frey called? Did he respond? Is Mr. Blue planning to create a forum in which the incident can be discussed with the residents? My letter was brief, cordial and to the point. I asked in the name of the Common Council for a meeting, or at least a prompt reply. Well, it was relatively prompt, having been written on September 4.

RIOC’s response consists of a single paragraph:

Dear Mr. Stewart:
This letter acknowledges that the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation received your Freedom of Information request on August 31, 1998. I will either deny or grant your request on or about September 28, 1998.
Very truly yours,
Frank J. Rubino
General Counsel

RIRA has a long history of diligence regarding public safety, as indeed we should have. Each administration of RIRA has placed the safety of our community first on any list of Island issues, and has maintained close relations with the Public Safety Department, who have, in turn, treated these issues with the thoughtful respect they deserve. Until the current administration of RIOC, that is. Now, if you or I or anyone approaches the Public Safety Department for information, we are handed a Freedom of Information form to fill out to be submitted to RIOC.

RIRA
President’s
Column



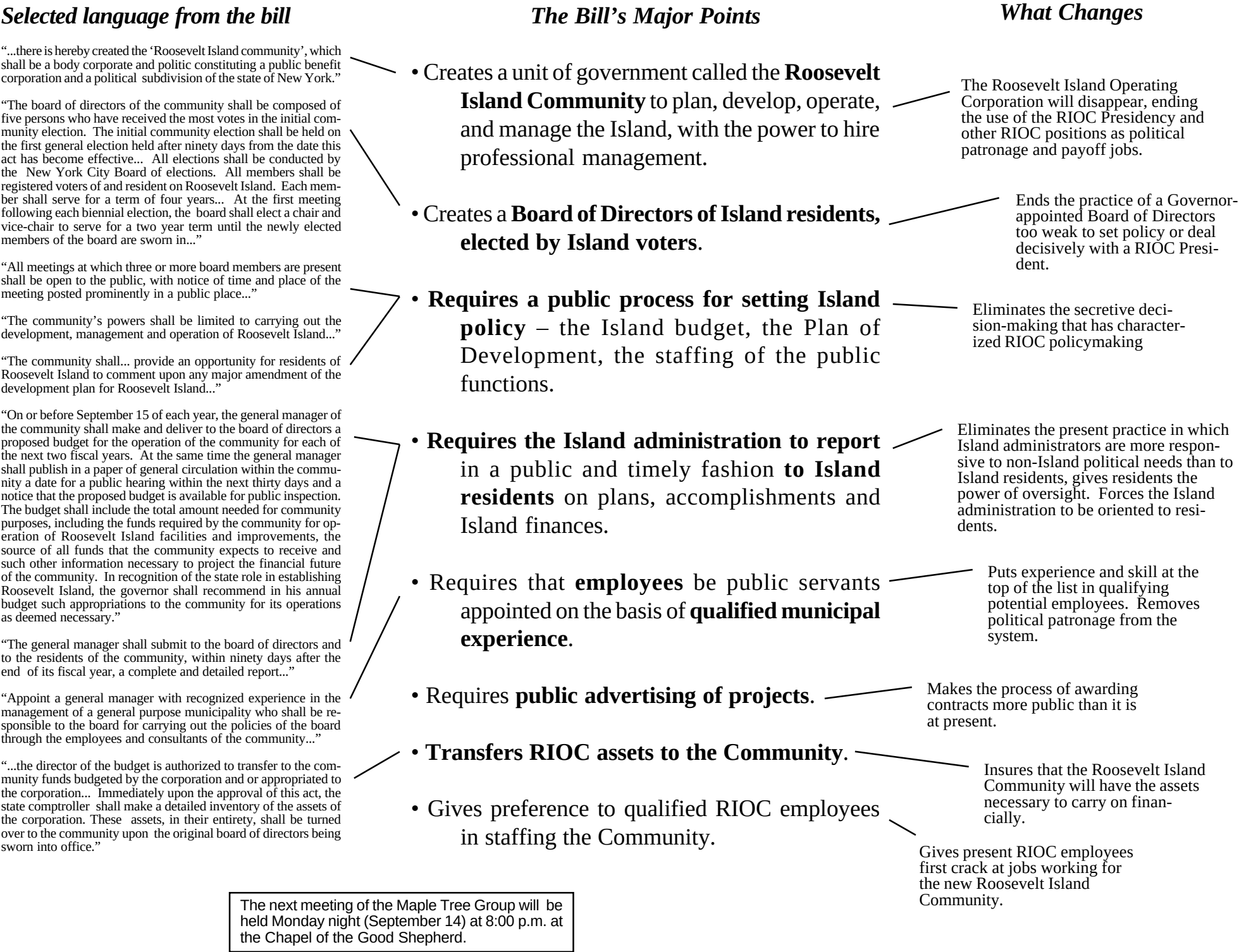
Patrick Stewart

The residents of Roosevelt Island have an absolute right to any information that affects their safety, and the steps needed to insure that safety. We must have sufficient information to determine whether our Public Safety Department is performing adequately or whether we need additional or supplemental enforcement on our Island. I wonder if Mr. Blue walked into the Freeport Police Station and made the same request regarding a local incident, particularly of this magnitude, he would be handed a Freedom of Information form. I doubt it. Don’t you?

What the Grannis Bill Will Do

Self-government for Roosevelt Island is the goal of legislation introduced by New York State Assemblymember Pete Grannis, who represents the Island. It proposes to turn over Island management to a Board of Directors of residents – elected by residents. The language of the bill is substantially the same as that proposed in the report of Roosevelt Island’s Maple Tree Group in December, 1997. Here is some key language from the bill and highlights of what it will do if it becomes law.

But to become law... the legislation will have to get a majority vote in both the State Assembly and the State Senate, and the Governor’s signature. If the Governor vetoes the bill, a legislative override would require a two-thirds majority of each house.



The Roosevelt Island Drive for Democracy

This form is being used by the **Drive for Democracy**, an ad hoc group managing development of state-wide support for the Roosevelt Island self-government legislation, to **gather names and addresses of upstate residents** who may be willing to **send supporting letters to their legislators**. Under the plan, the committee will prepare letters to be forwarded to upstate friends and relatives, who will be asked to sign them and forward them to their legislators. The forms go to Frank Farance, 555 Main Street, NYC10044 (fax 759-1605), or complete the form on the Internet at www.rooseveltisland.org/democracy.

I want to help secure self-government for Roosevelt Island. At the right, I’ve written the names of NYS residents (relatives, friends, classmates) who may be willing to send supporting letters to their State legislators.

My name _____

My address _____

My telephone _____

These are the names of New York State contacts I believe may be willing to send a letter to their State Senator and Assemblymember to support self-government for Roosevelt Island.

Name _____ **Name** _____

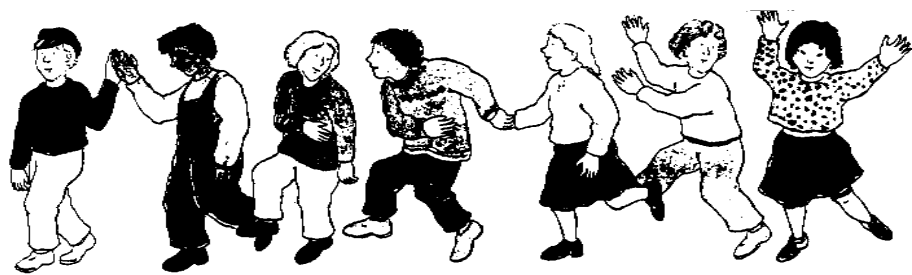
Address _____ **Address** _____

City/State/Zip _____ **City/State/Zip** _____

Check:
___ **Forward the letters to me.** I’ll send them to the contact myself. When I write to this person, I write **Dear** _____
___ **Don’t forward the letters through me.** Send directly to the contact and
 ___ Give my name as source
 ___ Don’t give my name

Check:
___ **Forward the letters to me.** I’ll send them to the contact myself. When I write to this person, I write **Dear** _____
___ **Don’t forward the letters through me.** Send directly to the contact and
 ___ Give my name as source
 ___ Don’t give my name

Please provide as many contact names as possible, using additional sheet(s).



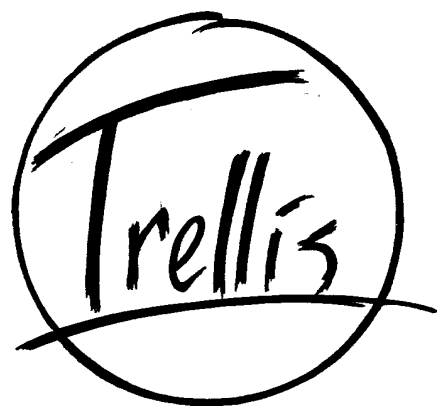
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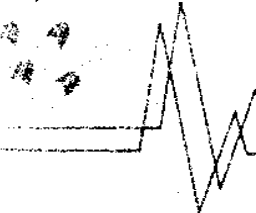
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Newly resigned from the RIOC Board of Directors, Ron Vass comments on the one area that can't speak for itself by popular vote

It's been a week and a few days since you resigned. Does it feel like the right decision now?

Judging by the attitude of most of my friends and neighbors on this Island, it is obvious it was the right decision. One dear friend, Oliver Chapin, my next-door neighbor, sent me a bouquet of flowers with congratulations. Aside from a lot of phone calls and cards, I was complimented on what I have done in the years I've put in, and on the way I stepped out and lambasted Dr. Blue. Nobody has said anything to the contrary. I've been complimented for the way I retired.

Has anybody asked you what took you so long?

Many people asked me that, including my wife. They have questioned me deeply on this.

So let me ask you, what took you so long?

I'm a very naive person, a very naive person. I really felt in my heart that right always prevails and that I could use my influence with Dr. Blue and the Board to bring things around to reverse his way of operating, to change his way of thinking, to convert some of his thinking, to get him to think with his heart instead of his head, because I know he's here on a mission, and that mission just doesn't take the same street as my mission. My mission is to take care of Roosevelt Island. His mission is apparently just to build and get development in here, without too much other thought.

You think it's more than just his style.

It's more than his style. I really think Dr. Blue is a messenger with a message to deliver and somebody is pressing the buttons and he's trying to run the errand. He may have more than one message to deliver, or more than one chore he was assigned to do, but I know one of them is to get development or at least create the atmosphere of development on Roosevelt Island during this tenure of office of the Governor [George Pataki] and the Senator [Alfonse D'Amato].

— Development —

I've heard some rumors that seem to come from somewhere upstairs, that there will be no development as long as Jerry Blue is president of RIOC. Do you have that same sense?

This is scuttlebutt I've heard. But that scuttlebutt equates to scuttlebutt I've heard that he has a preordained assignment, which is to get development. The scuttlebutt comes from people who don't want anything built, who don't feel very good about him, don't trust him, and I think it's more of a hope than a reality.

I don't know that it's a reality that we're not going to get anything built here. I sat and discussed both projects [an eldercare facility originally proposed for Octagon Park and a Marriott Hotel at Southpoint] with him, more particularly Octagon Park, knowing that it is parkland, knowing of the strong Island objection to it. I thought it could be circumvented. I'm in the construction business and I have seen areas preserved by building over them, with stilts — beams to support a building — that would not take away any parkland. The entrance could have been off to the side, and much of the construction could have been done starting at level two. If the man had given me the proper encouragement, he would "yes" me and then forget what I had to say. But I think he [Blue] could have overcome his problem by some intelligent planning and a little slower walk instead of trying to run right into it.

I agree we want the parkland, we don't want to give it up, but I think the area would have been very good for the type of resident that would live in the building, adjacent to Coler Hospital, utilizing that Octagon Park area, plus the fact that a block or two away we have Lighthouse Park. So the location might have worked.

His methodology is what failed him, because he was in a big hurry to promote and get "provisional" development, instead of giving it a better study first. He didn't come to the Board, he didn't share his thinking with it; it was all predisposed. I might have been amicable if he had done it with some more thought for the Island.

How did you become aware of that project? It struck me, and I think it struck many people, that it almost appeared from nowhere, as a fait accompli.

As a fait accompli. A very few days prior to a Board meeting, each project came to me in a large envelope at home, registered mail, with something I should have been studying for six months. I had maybe one night to glance at it and get the feeling of it, and then go to a meeting to discuss it. Both came the same way.

Railroading?

That's a good word, railroading. But again, as I said before, this is something that predecessors [of Dr. Blue] would have laid before me many, many weeks before. We would have discussed the pros, the cons, the different developers involved, the variations, the modifications, people's feelings on this Island, and we would have developed a plan. This never happened this way. This was a fait accompli that he tried to shove through.

I think the eldercare facility is a lovely idea. I think it will happen. But I'd like to qualify that — anytime anybody alluded to the fact that this would be a great place for Island people to retire... I'm in the business where I deal with this every day... I'm presently doing some very beautiful high-priced and low-priced nursing homes, privately funded and HUD-funded, which the eldercare had no provision for... I do not see Island residents able to afford it, but I don't resent other people coming here and enjoying it. I just hate alluding to who can be the

tenants and saying it might be me, who lives here, and I'm in the middle-income bracket. It's not affordable for most current Island residents.

Another question about the way this was brought to you, and the way RIOC seems to be working recently. I have the impression that a great deal happens in the executive sessions, and that what we see in the public sessions is largely a rubber-stamping of things already decided.

You're absolutely right. The executive sessions, these 9 o'clock meetings prior to a 10 o'clock public meeting, have only started in the last 4-5 months, and they became a necessity because of what I just described. One cannot go in, unrehearsed, and discuss a Marriott Hotel or an eldercare center at Octagon Park. Much of the infighting was the Commissioner [Joseph Lynch, Commissioner of the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal] and me, trying to hold this man [Blue] back from pushing this railroad job through too quickly, and inadequately. We've had it taken off the agenda. Each one of these topics has been taken off the agenda in that executive session, because we felt that it was premature — just not properly studied. The executive sessions were the only possibility [for study], when you received the package three days prior to a meeting where ten to twelve people could assemble and review it a little bit. And even that's totally inadequate.

What about application of some level of expertise in studying it? You're a contractor, and other people on the Board are not, and how would they...

It's not possible. There's no intelligent way that a layman, an engineer, an architect or developer could respond to Jerry Blue's proposals in the time he allowed for it.

Do you have any fear that, a year or year and a half from now, the project will be advanced another step, and ultimately it will be forgotten that there was a promise that Octagon Park wouldn't be used?

Positively, I fear it. And that's why I voted against it.

And the preparation for the Marriott Hotel was, in my mind, six months in being made, very expensively and very lavishly and very cleverly prepared, and for me to find out about it a few days before is really like hiding the cake under the table. It was quite an extensive study — something that should have and could have been shared many months before with the community and the Board. I did share the materials with the Residents Association, as I did in the case of Octagon Park, because it's the only way they were finding out about things like that. But I only found out days before it hit the agenda.

And at any of those executive sessions, was Dr. Blue to change his style of presentation of projects like this?

Otis Jones — who was sitting in the first few executive sessions in lieu of Joe Lynch — Otis tried to curtail Dr. Blue's activities in a nice way, and I believe Otis was asked to step back by somebody higher up. That brought Joe Lynch to the meetings. Joe Lynch then tried to restrain him.

Let's talk about the Marriott project. You've said you might support the Southpoint Marriott project with better provision for transportation. Do you still feel that way?

When we say transportation, I would like to talk about a fear that I've had, whether we have the Marriott or not, whether we're capable of building Southtown and living with it. It has been my thought for the last 15 years that having a singular means of vehicular egress from the Island is inadequate for our lifestyle. And again, I have gone to Dr. Blue with this, stating our roads are terrible, we are really not built for traffic. Our

to have a lot of traffic to and from it... car traffic, truck traffic, daily, seasonal traffic, and our Street is not equipped for it.

Can this be solved with barges?

It can be alleviated to some degree, but not totally from barges. Our construction industry does not function off barges. That's pie in the sky.

Concrete cannot be done on site?

The entire concrete job might be batched and brought in from barges, yes, that's possible. But there are certain items, mechanical items, that are used daily, and ordered on a daily basis... truckloads of pipe for plumbing, for heating, truckloads of metal for sheet metal for ventilation, electrical cables and other items that come from suppliers locally, that are brought in by union-regulated Teamster trucking, and it's not even economically feasible to bring it in another way.

— Blue's Future —

Let's talk about Jerry Blue's future on Roosevelt Island. Do you have any feeling that the Governor's going to replace him anytime soon?

I've heard rumors from two different sources, and I wish they're correct, that after election time it will be more feasible to get rid of him, but that prior to election it's just the wrong time to promote him, fire him, or move him along, it's not appropriate. I heard, "after election." Do I really believe it? I wish to believe it.

Isn't that a stall? After election, once everybody's re-elected or defeated, whatever happens, why would they need to move then?

There is a reason, and my logical thinking would be, to move somebody like this out of a job prior to an election is admission of an error, and when you're running for an election and your name is Al D'Amato, you don't admit to an error.

Let's talk about the legislation that Assemblymember Pete Grannis has put before the legislature at this point. It must be reintroduced, but it's a bill that essentially would provide for an elected five-member community board.

It would be a popularly-elected Board of Island residents, who would be voted in and would hire, and fire, a person who would run this Island with the revenue coming in — surely for less money than it's being run presently, without overstaffing, and under scrutiny of the residents of the Island, which is the way most democracies in most townships and boroughs throughout the city, state and country operate. The only one that doesn't operate that way is this Island.

So you think that's workable?

I think it's workable. I think it has to happen. I used to say that we aren't ready for it, but I think we are ready for it now. I think we've been hurt enough and angry enough that we wouldn't misbehave in our conduct in doing a good professional job of running the Island.

Do you think it's possible to run the Island without subsidy?

With the present population, it's not possible. With growth, ten years down the road, very possible. And when I say run it, [I mean] not the way it is now, by not giving the services, but really running it, providing the services, and affording it.

What happens if Jerry Blue is replaced sometime before the general election, and we get somebody we can live with, and everybody gets comfortable. Do you think the Grannis legislation stands a chance if Roosevelt Island doesn't get solidly behind it?

I believe that because of the Jerry Blue experience, no matter who comes, if that legislation has a chance to go forward, we will support it, we should support it. I cannot see not supporting it. I would say that maybe half a dozen people on this Island would not support it, but 99.9% would.

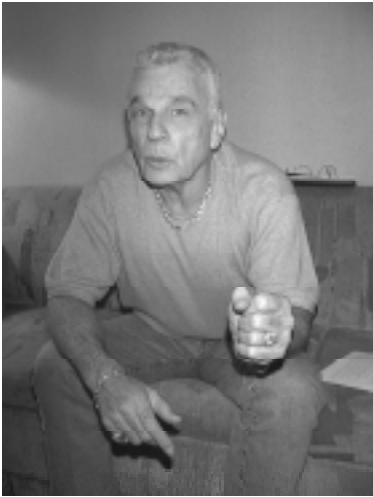
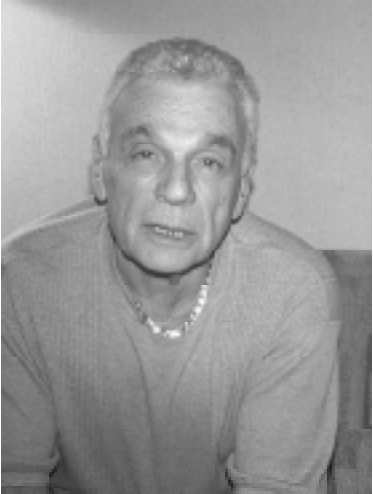
What do you think are the chances of that bill making it all the way through with enough insurance-votes that it will be veto-proof?

I don't know enough politically to answer. I can only wish it goes through. I know Pete is strong, and I know he is very persuasive, and very popular in the State Assembly. How Mr. Pataki will look in on this, I'm not sure.

— Waste —

When your resignation was announced, we asked Dr. Blue for a comment in response, and the comment was that he regretted that there wasn't complaint earlier about waste and inefficiency, but it strikes me that you've just said that in the present structure in RIOC there is waste and inefficiency. Can you pin that down for me?

Conducting a corporation that does \$10 million a year, and designing a staff to run that \$10 million operation, if you count, the people currently employed at RIOC far exceed what larger corporations are doing for the same dollar volume. That's number one. Number two, I will assure you that the same corporation that has far fewer personnel, has far more skilled personnel. The waste is the number of personnel, unskilled, untrained, unprofessional, drawing high salaries, accomplishing little. In fact, what I see as I look around sometimes amazes me. I see an Island where we can't get a road repaired. The road is sinking. I see an Island where the sidewalks have the same cracks that were there prior to his arrival. I see the benches disappearing. I see a few being rebuilt but they fall apart because he made them out of wood instead of concrete. And I see bandages going out. I see a little flower pot, which looks like a Christmas tree... I see the bandages coming out, which I know for a fact were put out based upon a unilateral, unprofessional decision...



Ron Vass resigned from the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation on August 14. He agreed to review the reasons for his decision with *The WIRE*, and responded to questions from Jim Bowser and Dick Lutz. An unabridged version of this Q&A session is available on Website NYC10044 – www.nyc10044.com.

roads were devastated before Dr. Blue got here, and they're only devastated worse since he's come here. Nobody has touched them. I went to Dr. Blue and said with regard to the Marriott, specifically, that we should be considering another means of vehicular traffic to and from Roosevelt Island. It would aid construction, aid life, make life safer here: [perhaps] some kind of bridge to Long Island City. If that's not feasible, maybe a tunnel to Long Island City, or maybe put back the elevator on the 59th Street Bridge, so that we have a second means of vehicular traffic back and forth. That would aid construction, that would make the Marriott more plausible, as far as building anything, and would make Southtown more plausible, and make life in general better on Roosevelt Island. The way our road is today... Main Street, in its present condition, we really can't even handle Southtown.

Because of what you do, you know what's involved in moving the equipment, people, materials for a project like Southtown...

That's what makes me so fearful. I know too much about what's required. Just let's take Southtown, forget about anything beyond Southtown. For concrete delivery trucks, Main Street doesn't have any type of underlying support that type of traffic requires. We will end up with not even a usable street. Any commitment to construction should have a commitment to some means of bringing construction materials in and out, and should have consideration for another means of egress from the Island for both construction vehicles and post-construction vehicles. If you're going to have a Marriott Hotel you're going

Comments: *There is no place in the country that is run this way. This election, and is dictated to by people not from this area...*

By Dr. Blue?

By Dr. Blue. And I see more in the way of blue canopies and awnings, to make the Island seem to be developing and looking clean, whereas if you look beyond it, nothing is happening. And if you go back to that flower pot arrangement with the trees all around, he placed them in such a manner to make it more difficult to keep the windows clean in Eastwood, because they are butting up against them. It is a typical, unilateral, unprofessional expenditure which has no value in it. And that's only the tip of the iceberg.

Let's look at the iceberg.

Some six months to a year ago, Mr. [David] Kraut [resident member of the RIOC Board of Directors] and I walked the Island, and we pointed out item after item. We walked Motorgate top to bottom. That, to some degree, has been addressed. We walked the streets, pointed out road defects, sidewalk devastation, stuff that was here prior to his tenure in office. I could walk the street tomorrow with anybody, and show you that every place where there was a little crack is now a big crack, every place there was a little crevice is now a big crevice. Everything he's done is only light superficial bandaging.

What about the seawalls?

When Jerry Blue first came here, and we talked about emergency situations and care, [the seawalls are] the rock that we need, our insulation for safety, and he, when he cut the budget initially, said "Don't worry, I always have another plan," something that he never really would share. When he brought in the Corps of Engineers to work with us, he was readily accepting a survey of a small perimeter of the Island. I asked, "Why not the entire perimeter?" Mr. Blue was coerced by me and the rest of the Board members to extend that study to the entire perimeter. It is now six to nine months later. He says publicly, when asked, at public meetings, that he's waiting for a report, but as of this date, I've never seen the report, I don't know to what degree the study was made, I don't know if the study was made above water level and below water level... When asked the question, he always gives you the right answer. When I said, to do a real survey, have they gone below the water level to see true deterioration, he said, "Yes, they have," but I've never seen a report, I've never seen even part of a report. So I can't really report on the condition of that seawall. Has it been pointed out to him? Over and over again, that it better be watched. But there's nothing being done, other than the Corps of Engineers study.

— **Public Safety** —

You were chair of the RIOC Board's Public Safety committee. Subjectively, I sense there has been a change recently, on the Island – that with incidents like the Public Safety Cushman scooter being burned, gasoline in hallways, fires in AVAC, other events – the Island has become a far more dangerous place to live than it was 12 years ago.

I agree. I have been yelling and trying for many, many years to change the fundamental operation of Public Safety. It has always been my contention that the inside of the buildings were not being scrutinized and covered enough.

Vertical patrols have always been inadequate. I have always tried, unsuccessfully, to isolate the interior work from the exterior work. But the story I've always been told is that the state is putting up about 50% and we, the Island population, are paying the other 50% in our rents, therefore it has to be run in the manner it is. So when I tried to cut Public Safety and take some of that funding and turn it into a management security firm, maybe subcontract the inside of the buildings, so that there would be a better refined street patrol, or even consider using more people inside and forcing the New York City Police Department to give more attention to our streets, I've been unsuccessful. Knowing that, and living with a condition that I have been unable to turn around or change or redesign, knowing that I'm hamstrung by a contract between the state and management, I've been trying to ride herd on the type of selection of the officers hired. And even going back to when Neil Hetherington was the Captain of Public Safety and with Peter [Norwood, Director of Public Safety until recently], I tried, and again unsuccessfully, to get them to hire older police, retired police in their late 40's, early 50's, and for some reason they keep bringing in the younger men and women with less professionalism and less experience. And because the age level is so close between the problem persons we have on the Island, and the age of the Public Safety staff, there is a relationship that develops between them that lacks the respect and authority that we need. Conditions in general are not getting worse, throughout the City, and the crime statistics may have improved all over, but the crime statistics have not improved on Roosevelt Island.

And for some reason they have always been concealed or disguised, or in some manner not shown to the NYPD. We've conducted meetings here where I've had open debates with our Public Safety director, whom I did respect, but I could never get them to communicate to the police authorities that we are at a brink or a crossroad on this Island, and that even if our statistics don't warrant more patrols, we are getting inadequate patrols, and we are on the point of either turning into a very bad community or reverting back to what we were – a very safe community – and if neglected for a few more years longer, we are going to go bad. That is my outlook, and I've been trying to get the statistics waived, so that the Police Department has a better comprehension of what life is on this Island. It is getting tougher.

Let's talk about that secrecy. During Peter Norwood's tenure in office, there came a time when the Public Safety

Blotter published by *The WIRE* suddenly started coming through RIOC rather than directly from Public Safety. The first two or three from RIOC showed such a decrease in activity that we began to mistrust them and stopped publishing the Blotter because we didn't want to participate in a whitewash. What is the problem with secrecy? Why don't the people have access to the information they need to know how serious the situation is and what needs to be done about it?

I will go back to Dr. Blue who is the designer of the modus operandi and the developer of the Island as President of RIOC. He's trying his best to show his superiors... the people who sent him here... what a perfect job he's doing. If he shows an imperfect job, and in any way displays a lack of strength, he could lose funding. God forbid if Public Safety wasn't functioning properly, he would have a black eye and that would not be part of his success program. I think Mr. Blue forced Mr. Norwood to turn his papers over.

I do believe the statistics are not a true reflection, and I think this is part of his political program, to show what a great place this is... crime-free and trouble-free, and not costing the state any money... and anything that brings him cash flow such as the funding of Public Safety, from building rents, subsidized 50% by state funding, has to show well. And in order to show well, he has to show a very low or no crime rate, and I think that's why he usurped the Blotter, because if it was that good he would be very proud of it and would not be "concealing" it. I think he's protecting the disposition of the shadow that he's created. He really wants to look like a success here.

What's behind the increase in things that require Public Safety activity. What's going on? Is it just...

This is a hard question. I was listening to our Mayor, Rudolf Giuliani, being questioned [on a radio program] by a citizen about why there is an increase in racism and crime in New York City recently, and Mr. Giuliani said if you study statistics, there is a decrease from a few years ago. For some reason, unbeknownst to me, we don't reflect that decrease. To me, there is an increase here. I wouldn't call it major crime. Minor crimes... acts of violence, minor muggings... incidents. I think they're multiplying, and I think the increase is a reflection of a current weakness in Public Safety.

I made a statement at the last Board meeting when we said goodbye to Peter Norwood, and welcomed Mr. Frye, that I have a gut feeling that this man may be more assertive, a little bit stronger and stricter than was Peter Norwood. That's my own feeling, and I recommended publicly that they maintain him permanently as chief, and it was publicly denied by Mr. Blue, [who said] that he has to go through the procedure, so they're going to spend \$40-50,000. They will go through a procedure and probably end up hiring Frye after the procedure.

— **Racism** —

Let's talk about this very difficult area, racism, and your comment in your letter of resignation that the RIOC office under Jerry Blue is a base for activities pointing into racism.

The most obvious reason for my statement about racism was the way he, Jerry Blue, maneuvered and bulldogged the grant of \$42,000 for a group...

The Young Adult League?

...Young Adult League, who said they were developing youth and young adults who were at the brink or the edge of society. That specific item never, never passed a roll call or any procedure that we had developed here for a legal way of giving public purpose funding. And I will repeat, it has to go to RICO, and RICO denied it, it has to go to RIRA, and RIRA did not go along with it, and somehow he, Dr. Blue, saying that any two groups could vote this in – and any two groups could be a half-dozen people who put three or four letters in front of a handful of people to push this through, and I believe he pushed it through. What broke my heart shortly thereafter is that the "Eye on the Isle," which was derogatory and racist, was being distributed from the RIOC office, and it only stopped when people like me pointed at it. My underlying feeling – probably the printing costs were paid with State money.

There may have been racial motivation in the subverting of the process for this specific organization. I went to the graduation of the class. They were all nice young men, not the group that we think of as the youth or young adults at risk; those at risk were not part of the graduating class. Then I ask myself – couldn't this have been done without spending the money? Couldn't this have been done by our Youth Center, without spending the \$42,000?

When you speak about racism coming out of the RIOC office, you're really talking about more than just a couple of groups. There's more to it than that, or is there?

I have seen the same contingent of a handful of people, sitting in varied meetings, representing the same few people, speaking as if they represented three or four larger organizations. This gives me the feeling... Jerry Blue has given a large voice to a small number of people.

You said earlier that in giving this large voice to this small group of people, he has effectively denied a large voice to a

larger group of people. What do you think are the motivations for that? Is there something to be gained there?

He came here with a mission. You can't complete that mission successfully without some kind of support. I think he has sought out a few henchmen, and I think he has empowered them because they will holler loud and make a lot of noise and appear as if they are a lot of people, and I think he has aligned himself with people who do think along the same channels that he does and utilized them to support his steps which include them, and some which don't include them. I think he's used them as a means to an end.

At a recent RIOC meeting two letters were read, complicated legal pleadings, in effect...

From RICA...

...from the Roosevelt Island Community Association, that seemed to be designed to support Dr. Blue's positions with regard to construction at Octagon Park and Southpoint. What did you think was going on there?

As I sat and I listened to that being read, I knew that the reader didn't prepare it. Somebody other than the reader prepared it – I suspect somebody in RIOC. I would then say to myself that this RICA may have half a dozen or eight members, and that they are synonymous with some of the other groups

that are the so-called one or two groups that might allow public purpose funding to move ahead. Again, these few voices have been given room to out-holler the majority, which is the Residents Association.

We've ranged over a number of areas here. Think-

ing about all we have talked about and your nearly 13 years on the RIOC Board, what does this say about the Island being managed by someone who doesn't live here, supervised by a Board that largely does not live here, working with or for an administration that's based in Albany, and, so far as I know, has never set foot on Roosevelt Island.

There is no place in the United States, State of New York, or City of New York, that runs this way. Any other place in this country, a body of people who are voted by popularity, run that area. This is the only area that can't speak for itself by popular election, and is dictated to by people who are not from this area, are not popularly elected, with a president or leader that is not from this area. The end result is... I've heard the expression "fiefdom," it's a dictatorial way of running a community, cannot be healthy, cannot be progressive, and cannot have – does not have – the community's best interests at heart.

And this becomes more obvious when you look at the man's behavior. He does not even have to respond to the feelings of the community, because they don't elect him. He can do whatever he damn well pleases and this is not the way the government of this country runs. It cannot be successful.

Picking up on what you said about the Board being inadequately responsive because they don't need to be, is the Grannis bill calling for self-governance of Roosevelt Island by a popularly-elected community board, is that the answer?

Yes, the answer is yes, emphatically. This is the way this country is run. It's run by popular vote. It's run by responsibility to the people who elected you. And if there is no responsibility to the people who elected you, you don't have to do a good job.

The Grannis bill answers the question properly. It puts the responsibility back to a popular election on this Island, so that those who are elected, who will hire the manager of the operation here, are answerable to the people who live here, and I'm sure there would be more of a positive outcome than the way we are operating today.

With the Grannis bill, we enter into normal governmental operations the way the rest of the country is run. And why should we be any different from

the State, the City or the federal government? This is what we need, this is what we desire, and this is what we should have.

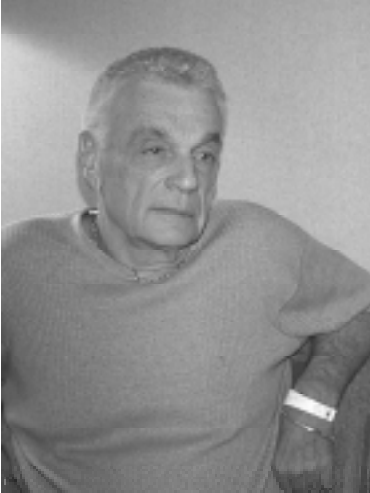
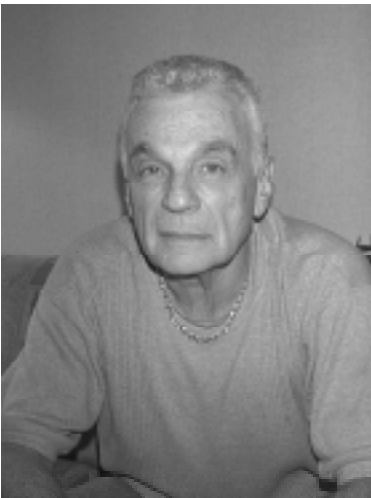
Where do you see Roosevelt Island being 10 years from now? What's the future?

Ten years from now, I see Southtown completed, the possibility of an eldercare center other than at Octagon Park, I see a successful, self-running community. I see the end of the Republican regime, I see the end of the Blue period, I see the reinstatement of the Democratic Party. I see the construction of Southtown coming. I believe the Island needs it to succeed.

With sufficient population, I see a better source of commerce, better commercial establishments, bigger, successful... I'm talking pharmacy, supermarket, I'm talking a variety of other types of retail outlets we don't have, services we don't have, possibly a bowling alley, possibly a small movie theater, possibly many other types of recreation that the Island's minimal population of 8,000 people cannot currently afford or justify. So in 10 years I see a lot of changes.

Really successful?

Yes. But we've got a couple of rough years coming, because of the Public Safety issue, the construction issue, the lack of current money to do things properly.



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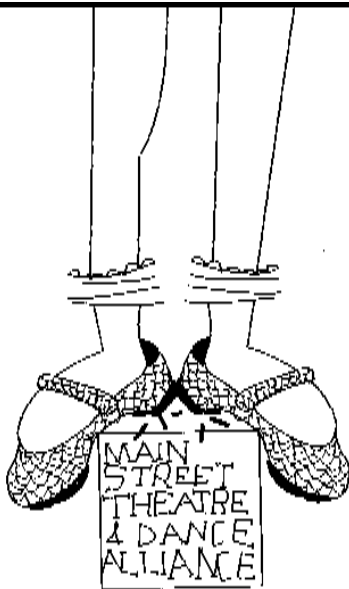
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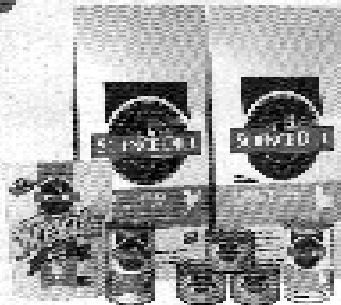
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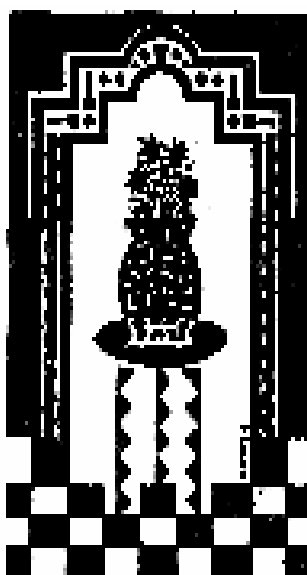
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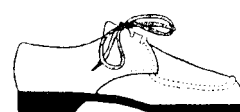
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MST&DA Holding *Fiddler* Auditions, Starting Season’s Classes Monday

The Main Street Theatre and Dance Alliance will stage the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* as a fundraiser early in December. Meanwhile, the Island-based organization is preparing for a season of

drama, dance and music classes under the slogan, “There’s no place like home.” MST&DA offers children, teens and adults a wide range of Manhattan-quality classes at Roosevelt Is-

land prices. New offerings include group voice classes provided by well-known vocal coach Nancy Evers, country western dancing taught by island residents Carmen Alvarez and Gene Scaglione, and adult acting classes with Nancy Howe. Returning old favorites include children and teen acting classes; ballet, jazz, and tap for children and adults; aerobics for teens and adults and private voice lessons.

Classes begin Monday (September 14) and will be held in the Cultural Center (entrance down the stairs under the red canopy behind the Video Store). Registration is ongoing.

Fiddler on the Roof, the tenth fundraising Broadway musical offered by the Main Street Theatre, will be performed in early December. Each year, cast members’ donations help pay for the production, which is the principal fundraiser for scholarships provided to about a third of the students enrolled in classes.

Auditions for principal and ensemble parts, open to all Roosevelt Island residents, will be held at the Cultural Center Friday, September 18, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., and Saturday, September 19, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. This year there are parts open to children and older teens. Being in the production is a wonderful contribution to the community and great fun for those who can sing, dance or just like to ham it up!

To schedule an audition, or for further class information, call (212) 371-4449.



Website NYC10044

Dance and aerobics teachers for the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance include (rear) Marietta Clark (tap), Mary McCatty (jazz/ballet), Gene Scaglione (country/western), Deanna Ford (ballet); (front) Barbara Parker (aeropump), Carmen Alvarez (country/western). Missing: Debra Orenstein (ballet, aerobics/yoga).

Election Plans Being Made; Petitions Due By October 15

Nominations for delegate to the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) will open in just over two weeks, with a nominating deadline of October 15, according to Island House resident Audrey Berman, who is managing the election for RIRA.

The RIRA Common Council is the Island’s only deliberative body whose President and Vice-President are elected Island-wide. Each building elects a delegate to the Council, which meets once a month, on a Wednesday night.

Berman’s committee is meeting Monday night (September 14) at 8:00 to plan for the nominating process and the election itself, which will be held November 3. All legal residents of the Island 18 years and older, whether U.S. citizens or not, are entitled to vote.

The committee plans to have voting machines for balloting on election day.

New Rabbi for Island Congregation

Rabbi Leon Morris has become the new spiritual leader at Roosevelt Island Jewish Congregation (RIJC).

Joining the RIJC formally on Sunday, September 20, he will conduct the Rosh Hashanah and all High Holy Day services.

“We are most excited to welcome Rabbi Morris to the RIJC,” said Steve Kaufman, congregation Co-President. “We are looking forward to working with him and making our High Holy Day, festival and sabbath services meaningful and relevant to our Island family.”

Morris attended the University of Pittsburgh, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Hebrew Union College, from which he received a degree in Hebrew literature and was ordained a rabbi. He received several awards for academic excellence and community service, including a Wexner Graduate Fellowship, and a four-year award for the most promising students in the rabbinate and Jewish education. He is currently Director of the New York Kollel, an innovative center for adult Jewish study at Hebrew Union College. He has worked as a teacher, intern, and legislative assistant in New York, Washington, Pennsylvania, Ontario, India, and Israel.

“The RIJC invites all our neighbors to join in High Holy Day services beginning Sunday, September 20,” Kaufman said.



Joyce Mincheff

In a refreshing end to a hot tennis season, New York Junior Tennis League participants reveled in the Unisphere Fountain on an excursion to Kids Day at the U.S. Open last week.

Lynch Orders Blackwell Review

A review of the state of Blackwell House was ordered at Thursday morning’s meeting of the RIOC Board of Directors by DHCR Commissioner Joseph Lynch, who chairs the Board. The landmark building has been the focus of concern in recent months because of deterioration

evident in its exterior trim and rear porch flooring.

Lynch asked RIOC President Jerome Blue to begin planning toward protection and long-term maintenance of the landmark building, and asked for a report at next month’s meeting on October 8.

Democracy from page 2

Judith Berdy, a RIRA Common Council member and Co-President of the Island’s Jewish Congregation, said, “I think this is going to be the hardest struggle in the world, in the State Senate. But we have to do it. We have to fight for this community, and I think we’re going to have to go all-out and... embarrass the Pataki administration [that] the only community in New York State that is begging for self-governance is the one the State governs. We have to inform the rest of the State of what we have to do to get our community back.” Berdy was applauded.

Another member of the RIRA Council, Rivercross resident Malcolm Cohen, expressed a concern that “if we don’t include [on the community Board of Directors] a representative of the City and the State,” it could be difficult to get the funding support that might be needed for capital projects. “We do have to give these people some input – minimal, perhaps, but at least token... We as residents should be the predominant force, but if we’re going to ask for money...”

Linda Heimer, a Rivercross resident and longtime activist, voiced what appeared to be the bottom line for many at the meeting: “If not this legislation, then what?” she asked, after pointing out that residents unhappy with the current RIOC regime have tried marches, petitions, demonstrations, letter-writing, and meetings with Jerome Blue’s supervisors at the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, who appear to be unable to change his administrative approach or restrain him effectively.

RIRA President Stewart told those attending the meeting, “We need to be heard, and we are not being heard. We have no power over our own destiny... We can stay stuck with it, or we can do something about it.” Stewart called for detailed financial analysis of Island operations before committing to self-government, but focused primarily on the problems inherent in building support for the Grannis bill: “This is a great start, tonight. The critical issue here is tomorrow – who’s going to show up tomorrow at the meeting to discuss paragraph one, subparagraph one, item C?”

Morenzi again pointed out that the legislation, as presently drafted, is a starting point for community discussion. He said, however, that introduction of the bill early in the legislative session could enhance its chances of passage. He advised Island residents to complete their work on any refinements of the bill by January.



The meeting was standing-room only.

COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland • 317-8523 (phone or fax) There is no charge to list Island events here

Sat., Sept. 12, FDR Day, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Sports, exhibitions, health fair, evening disco dancing (adults only).

Sat., Sept. 12, Youth Soccer Registration for ages 5-13. Season starts September 18. Information: 935-6598 or 688-3358.

Mon., Sept. 14, meeting of the **Maple Tree Group**, 8:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Topic: Pete Grannis’s proposed legislation for Roosevelt Island self-government.

Mon., Sept. 14, 8:00 p.m., meeting of the **RIRA Election Task Force**, Island House Community Room. All are welcome.

Mon., Sept. 14, **Classes** begin at **Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance**. Information: 371-4449.

Tue., Sept. 15, Primary Election, voting 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. at PS/IS217.

Fri., Sept. 18, 5:30 p.m., **TV Program** with RIRA President Patrick Stewart and residents Shirley Margolin and Linda Heimer, Time-Warner Cable Channel 34.

Fri., Sept. 18, **Auditions** for *Fiddler on the Roof* at Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance, open to all residents, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Cultural Center. 371-4449.

Sat., Sept. 19, **Auditions** for *Fiddler*, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Cultural Center. 371-4449.

Wed., Sept. 23, supplementary meeting of the **RIRA Common Council**, 8:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Residents are

invited to speak during the public portion of the session. No advance registration required.

Fri., Sept. 25, Join *The Main Street WIRE* **Stuffers Team**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For information, call 935-6043. Lunch provided.

Fri.-Sat., Sept. 25-26, next scheduled issue of *The Main Street WIRE*. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., Sept. 18; decision on staffers for *The Bag*, Mon., Sept. 21. **Future issues:** October 10, 24; November 7, 21; 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 advance notice* at the time, are invited to call 826-9055 to make their interest known. **Plan now to include your business card in the November 21 Thanksgiving issue.** Phone/fax for news, (212) 826-9055/755-2540; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, (212) 751-8214/755-2540; phone & fax to list your Island organization’s event without charge, 317-8523 (provide call-back number for possible follow-up).

Sun., Oct. 4, regular meeting of the Roosevelt Island Art Association, 546 Main Street, 12th floor. Live model. Information: 517-0564.

Thur., Oct. 8, 10:00 a.m., **Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Board of Directors Meeting**, Good Shepherd Chapel. Advance registration required for those who wish to address the Board. Call 832-4540 or see receptionist at 591 Main Street during business hours.

At the Senior Center

Every week

Mondays

9:30 **Stay Well** (exercise)
10:00 **English as 2nd Language** (Beg)
11:00 **English as 2nd** (Intermediate)

Tuesdays

10-11 a.m. **Blood Pressure Screening**
1:30 **Bingo**
Wednesdays
9:30 **Stay Well** (Stretch)
10:00 **English as 2nd Language** (Beg)
11:00 **English as 2nd** (Intermediate)
1:30 **Lotto** (Games)

Thursdays

10:00 **Tai Chi**
12:30 **Movie**

Fridays

10:00 **Billiards/Pool Table Open**
10:00 **English as Second Language**
12:30 **Blood Pressure Screening**

Saturdays

7:30 **Bingo & Games**

Special Events

Wed., Sept. 16 – **Atlantic City Trip**
Fri., Sept. 18 – **Birthday Party**

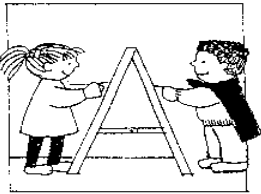


New York Junior Tennis League award recipients gather to thank Assemblymember Pete Grannis and City Councilmember Gifford Miller's representative, Jessica Lappin (not in photo), for their contributions to the NYJTL 1998 season. Award winners are: Most improved, Povl Schmidt, Luke Draunimasi; Most valuable player, Meera Tandon, Richard Hackman; Most dedicated, Jone Draunimasi, Pauline David; Best sportsmanship, Gordon Williams, Godfrey David (not in photo). Additional photo, page 10.

It's time to register for September 1998

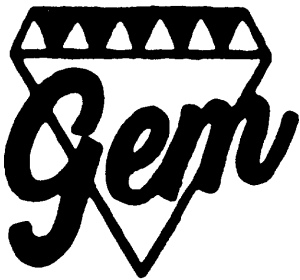
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SPORTSWIRE

Junior Tennis Wraps Season

Pin-striped suit jacket tossed to the side, Dr. Jerome Blue, President of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, accepted a New York Junior Tennis League racket to join the on-court activity on closing day, August 28. Not exactly the best demonstration of form, Blue served up a great lesson in sportsmanship, distributing Roosevelt Island drinking mugs to each of the 40 kids attending, and congratulating them on their participation throughout the summer.

Roosevelt Island's NYJTL participants scored high in Manhattan standings for the 1998 summer season with 13 up-and-comers chosen for Manhattan's all-star team. Meera Tandon, Eliana Katsiounis, Hana Driss, Sandra Mejia, Lilia Ovia, Sheila and Eva Raj, Yoriatou Camara, Povl Schmidt, Jone Draunimasi, Richard Hackman, Oscar Rodriguez, and Jack Jarcynski, several of whom are first-year players, competed in the Big Apple Games and the City playoffs for the 1998 summer season.

Joyce Mincheff, Roosevelt Island Site Director for the League, credited three on-court carnivals spaced intermittently through the summer months and the dedication of Assistant Coach Hasan Wazani, as well as additional staff members, with keeping participation, enthusiasm and learning at peak levels throughout the summer. "We had the largest consistent attendance this summer, better than any previous year," Mincheff said. "We have approximately 180 children registered for the summer. Over 40 kids a day regularly turn out, in addition to the children the Youth Center brings to the program."

The NYJTL program is provided free of charge to all children between 8 and 18, thanks to funding and support by Assemblymember Pete Grannis and Councilmember Gifford Miller. The next program will begin the first Saturday in November, staged 6-8 a.m. each Saturday to the end of March at the Roosevelt Island Racket Club. Equipment will be supplied for all who attend. No prior registration is required, but details are available from Joyce Mincheff at 486-1997.

NYJTL Tennis Ladder

End of season standings, summer 1998

Boys

1. Jack Jarcynski
2. Saurav Ghosh
3. Oscar Rodriguez
4. Povl Schmidt
5. Richard Hackman
6. Jone Draunimasi
7. Benjamin Daley
8. Jeremy Ovia
9. Luke Draunimasi
10. Scott Davis
11. Anthony Civrea
12. Foliki Ovia
13. Godfrey Paul
14. Saki Draunimasi
15. Mohammed Ovia
16. Anatoli Golovenkov
17. Shayne Kagaro
18. Aymar Handem
19. Chemseddine Sai
20. Jovelesi Draunimasi
21. Dhiya Sai
22. Kitiseni Ovia
23. Abdul Dione
24. Jamie Ovia

Girls

1. Meera Tandon
2. Vanessa May-Corsini
3. Hana Driss
4. Eva Raj
5. Arielle Robin
6. Sheila Raj
7. Lilia Ovia
8. Andrea May-Corsini
9. Natasha Kagaro
10. Pauline David
11. Yariatou Camara
12. Natalie Robin
13. Theresa Meki
14. Nicola Kagaro
15. Loretta Manele
16. Asheila Reza
17. Kenura Bassar

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.

Classified 751-8214

GUITAR INSTRUCTION – Enrich your life with music. All ages & levels welcome. Study in your home or at my studio on RI. Call for a demonstration: 308-6182

SHAPE UP! Whether you've just gained a few pounds on summer vacation or are chronically "weight-challenged," the perfect opportunity to do something about it is coming to Roosevelt Island. Weight-Watchers will sponsor a 10-week program on Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 (location to be announced), if 18 or more residents register. So encourage your friends and yourself to make what could be a life-changing call to Marilyn Engstler at 838-4747 for more information.

MAIN STREET THEATRE & DANCE ALLIANCE – Ongoing registration for dance and theater classes. 371-4449. Unique or period clothing & furniture gladly accepted.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE – Provided by long-term resident on Roosevelt Island. Snacks, play, homework supervision. Evenings, weekend sitting also. Eugenie "Another Mother" (212) 223-0157

NEED STORAGE SPACE? – Call Steinway Moving and Storage - 5x7 private storage vaults. Just 5 minutes from Main Street. Materials and pickup available. 718-278-9090.

CAT SITTER available on RI. My home or yours. References provided. Eugenie (212) 223-0157

LICENSED MASSAGE THERAPY – Island resident Diana Brill. Gift certificate available. (212) 759-9042

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CHESS TEACHER WANTED for school age children. Call Island Kids at 832-8789 or 758-8408.

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For a Change!
GOOD NEWS
at the
CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd at 543 Main Street, Roosevelt Island

Our Island's historic national landmark, a continuing center for Christian worship and fellowship since 1889.

Starting Sunday, September 20, our full Fall schedule resumes:

8:30 a.m. - Youth Choir for Teens

8:45 a.m. - Donuts and milk for younger children

9:00 to 9:50 a.m. - Sunday School - Tots to Teens. We have devoted teachers and the best study material available.

10-11 a.m. - Morning Worship/Holy Communion, with music from our volunteer choir.

11 a.m. - Teen Venture for all teens. Relevant Christian discussion with Pizza and Soda.

Every Tuesday 8-9 p.m. starting September 22, in the Chapel Oval Room - BIBLE FELLOWSHIP - Open study of God's Word, led by our Pastor. Come - NO OBLIGATION.

Come, join in a fellowship of believers and seekers, a good news family. Our family is joyously made up of:

People from 15 different denominations/national churches

Every ethnic background

People from our Island, all over the U.S., The Islands, Europe, Asia, Africa, including: Cameroon, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Uganda, Congo-Brazzaville, Sierra Leone, even the Bronx and Queens!

Episcopalians, Pentecostals, Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, Reformed, Presbyterians, Catholics, Anglicans and people with no former church affiliation, all committed to Christian Worship and Service.

GOOD NEWS FOR ALL
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