

Next issue
October 24

The Main Street **WIRE**

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with **Website NYC10044**



Body recovered. NYPD Fire & Rescue recovered the body of an unidentified white male seen floating in the East Channel Monday night. The body was brought ashore on the rocks below the Nurses Residence. Police seek help with identification (detailed description, page 7).

RIRA's Common Council: Openings at All Buildings

All the seats on the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association are open, and at press time every building on the Island had fewer candidates for its seats than its allotted number. Each building is represented by more than one delegate (10-40 River Road get eight, for example), but runners-up are eligible to serve as alternates and to work on RIRA business.

The Presidency and Vice-Presidency are open, as well, though both Patrick Stewart (incumbent President) and Joan Christianson (for Vice-President) have declared their intent to run.

All Island residents over 18 are eligible to serve. In addition to a monthly meeting (on Wednesday nights during the past two years)

that runs about two hours, members are expected to serve on RIRA's committees and take on various projects that RIRA deems worthy of some effort. These range from staging protests to ferreting out information on emergency evacuation plans for the Island's buildings, as Councilmember Joan Brooks has been doing for the last two months or more.

The forms used in filing for candidacy are available at RIOC (591 Main Street), the Library, Housing Management, and at several other Island locations. The deadline for filing is October 27, but candidates who declare their intentions before October 16 will be eligible to speak their minds at Candidates Night, Tuesday, October 27.

RIRA, Pausing at a Crossroads, Determined to Retain Its Role, Seeks Common Council Candidates

News Analysis by Dick Lutz

Almost as one, the members of the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) paused Wednesday night and stood back to survey the past two years, and to look forward to its Island-wide election – now just 24 days away.

Almost as one, RIRA's Council appeared weary after two years of being treated as "just another of the 50-some (or 60-some) Island organizations" by President Jerome Blue of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation. Yet, in the pausing and standing back, there was a palpable determination to maintain the organization's role as advocate for the Island's people, as its only body elected Island-wide, and as its stream of continuity in a world of transience stirred by Albany politics.

For his part, Jerome Blue has formed a "Resident Advisory Council," which RIRA Council members see as a yet a further insult, and a blatant determination to ignore the body which has successfully opposed so many of his moves over the past two years.

Ironically, as RIRA faces its November 3 election, it must go to Blue for Public Purpose funding – some \$2,650 – to pay for rental of voting machines. "They [RIOC] would be crazy to turn it down," RIRA President Patrick Stewart told the Common Council on Wednesday night, after a report indicating that RIRA would have to run its need for the funds past Blue's new "Resident Advisory Council."

Despite that seeming injury heaped upon repeated insult, the mood of the Council was openly philosophical, even hopeful, as its individual members contemplated whether to run again. The final deadline to file is October 27, but most who attended Wednesday night have either decided to run or will do so well before the deadline. A Candidates Night is planned for Tuesday, October 27.

"Because of the current administration of RIOC," Patrick Stewart counseled those around the tables in the basement of the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, "the job of RIRA is much more difficult, complex, and time-consuming. When you're considering running again, please keep that in mind. We are unfortunately in an adversarial position with RIOC and, as a result, it requires a lot of reactive work."

"Instead of spending time making this a better place, we are faced with having to react. Things may change and hope springs eternal. But one thing I can say: Had we not been addressing these things we would be in really serious trouble. We would be having two 26-story towers built at Southpoint and a [25-story eldercare] building built in Octagon Park. We would be paying exorbitant rents for the playing fields. Kids would be having to pay for Tram passes to go to school."

We, all of us, working together, have kept those things and more from happening. And when I look at all we've done, it's a long and thorough list, but unfortunately, all of it is what we have kept RIOC from doing to us.

"But, please, if you decide to run, be prepared to work."

Stewart, who has decided to stand for a second term as RIRA President, was not applauded, but his personal despair over the change in RIRA's role is shared in some measure by almost everyone on the Common Council. Jeff Hochman, Chair of the organization's Planning Committee, gave a report indicating that developer progress on Southtown – the residential buildings planned for the space north of the Tramway station and now partially occupied by the abandoned Nurses Residence – has been greater than originally thought. But it has been a stealth process, he said, in which RIOC has avoided revealing anything to residents by vesting the development process in a private entity, rather than taking management responsibility itself – an arrangement that might make it subject to a legal requirement to reveal what's going on.

Hochman said that a growing trend toward "segmented funding," in which portions of a project are funded without necessarily knowing whether the next phase of funding will be available, could ultimately leave the Island with an abandoned foundation at Southtown. He said he has detected no large source of funds for the Southtown project.

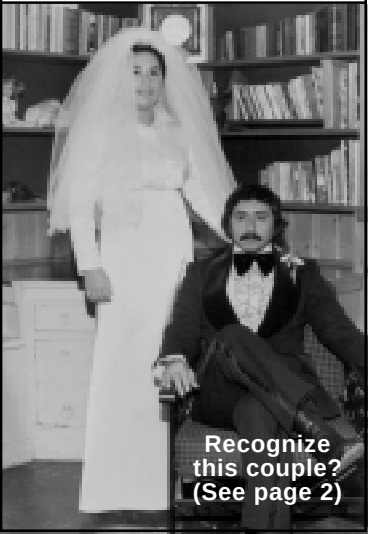
Hochman, ideally positioned to monitor Southtown development activity – to the extent it can be monitored – by virtue of his position as a Project Manager with the City's Department of Design and Construction, explained that RIOC has hidden the development process behind a facade in which the Morse Diesel company, acting as "owner's representative,"

receives all developer reports, exercises long-honed skills in hiding information from the public. This spares RIOC having to deal with residents, specifically RIRA, which has demanded a role in planning as the elected representatives of the Island's residents.

Al Weinstein, another RIRA Council stalwart best known for his defense of the Tramway, had a similar complaint about RIOC secrecy under Jerome Blue.

See RIRA at Crossroads, page 3

Inside: **Blue's Last Days, Again?** Editorial page



Recognize this couple? (See page 2)

Roy Eaton Brings His Personal Renaissance to Roosevelt Island

by Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Roy Eaton is by all definitions a true Renaissance man. His professional accomplishments have spanned the diverse worlds of classical music, the healing arts, esoteric philosophy (he is a thirty-year practitioner of Transcendental Meditation), and the competitive arena of advertising.

For the past eighteen years, this eclectic man of spiritual vision has chosen to make his home on Roosevelt Island. He first came here after being introduced to the Island by his dear friend, Bernie Silverman (with whom he was taking a class in Jewish Biblical studies).

Eaton is an award-winning classical pianist and recording artist. In the past several years he has released three critically acclaimed albums: *Joyful Joplin* (Newport Classics), *Meditative Chopin* (Seventh Wave) and *Joplin Piano Rags* (Sony Classical).

He has also been one of the most successful jingle writers in the history of the advertising world. In fact, some of the most memo-



rable commercials ever aired on television and radio were written and arranged by him, and performed by a host of musical luminaries. There was "Beefaroni's full of meat, Beefaroni's really neat. Hooray for Beefaroni!" and the catchy commercial lyric, "You can trust your car to the man that wears the star, the big, bright, Texaco star!" Many of Eaton's original commercials now air on cable's "TV Land Network." He says, "A wonderful thing about my commercial experience is that I've gotten to know, and to be on a personal, friendly basis with, musicians who are now recognized for their greatness... Bill Evans, Ron Carter, Blossom Dearie, Nina Simone, Clark Terry, Doc Severinsen, Cannonball Adderly, Milt Jackson and Barry Manilow (whom, at the time, I didn't actually want to sing on a jingle that he wrote for me!). I think that I might have been a refreshing surprise for those high calibre musicians, because here I was – an ad agency guy who actually knew what he was doing."

In addition to all of this, the essential Roy Eaton is devoted to a spiritual path of exploration and equally devoted to a firm belief in the unity of mankind. It is hard to imagine that such a quiet, humble man carries such an amazing amount of life experience with him. His unlined, practically ageless face is a huge endorsement for his and his wife's health-conscious life-style.

Roy's wife, Barbara Pittman (whom he wed in 1996), shares his enthusiasm for and commitment to Roosevelt Island. She is a busy nurse-practitioner for Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, as well as being an acupuncturist, and an involved mother to her son, Joshua, a film student at NYU. Soon, Barbara will be beginning a new challenge as the supervisor in "Triage" in the new "Alternative Therapies" section of Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. The couple, always expanding their horizons, recently returned from an acupuncture seminar in Viet Nam. While in the Far East, Roy also performed a

See Eaton, page 6

Pages of Thought and Opinion

Respect

During the past two or three weeks, I’ve been seeing Shaquille O’Neal on a number of television shows and, on each of them he has worn a sweater bearing the word “RESPECT” on it. Now it seems to me that he doesn’t need to wear it because that is his only sweater - he must have lots of them - nor does he need to remind anyone to be respectful of him. He earned our esteem long ago.

My conclusion is he’s reminding each of us to have Respect for one another. And in thinking about respect, I realized there is not much of that around these days.

Lots of kids don’t respect their parents and the feeling is mutual. Youngsters don’t give a hoot about oldsters and the latter really only can yell at them.

Many employees have no regard for their bosses, who, the workers are certain, often rightly so, have no concern for them. The same holds true for police and for politicians, most of whom, most of us believe, really have brought this symptom of mistrust on themselves by their actions. But who elected them, we must ask.

All of this cogitating on respect has put me in a glum mood. I’ll certainly try to respect the person who can bring me out of it. Would be nice if it were Shaq, wouldn’t it? Below, at least, are two who respect their neighbors.

Respectfully yours.

Respect for Community

On September 1, 1975 two newcomers from The Bronx moved to Roosevelt Island and it is lucky for all of us that they did because Sam and Lillian Rodriguez have greatly influenced life here over the ensuing years. On October 20, they will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary, still living on the Island and contributing whenever asked to do so.

Sammy, for instance, just recently helped to provide muscle power by carrying tables all over the place for the FDR Day events. For 14 years, those same muscles prepared the Little League, Soccer and Men’s League ball fields for play.

They also were partly responsible for winning Sammy the RIRA-sponsored “Good Neighbor” award for 1979-1980. The citation reads in part: “...for his great pride in his surroundings, respect for all his fellow neighbors and willingness to contribute to the well-being of the community.”

Lillian for her part was active in the founding of the Roosevelt Island Hispanic Society and served as one of its officers. One of her hobbies is cooking and she often is called upon to prepare one of her dishes for civic events here. Lillian’s other interests are dancing and collecting Egyptian art. For 20 years, she has been employed by Lowe McAdams Healthcare Inc., a medical advertising agency.

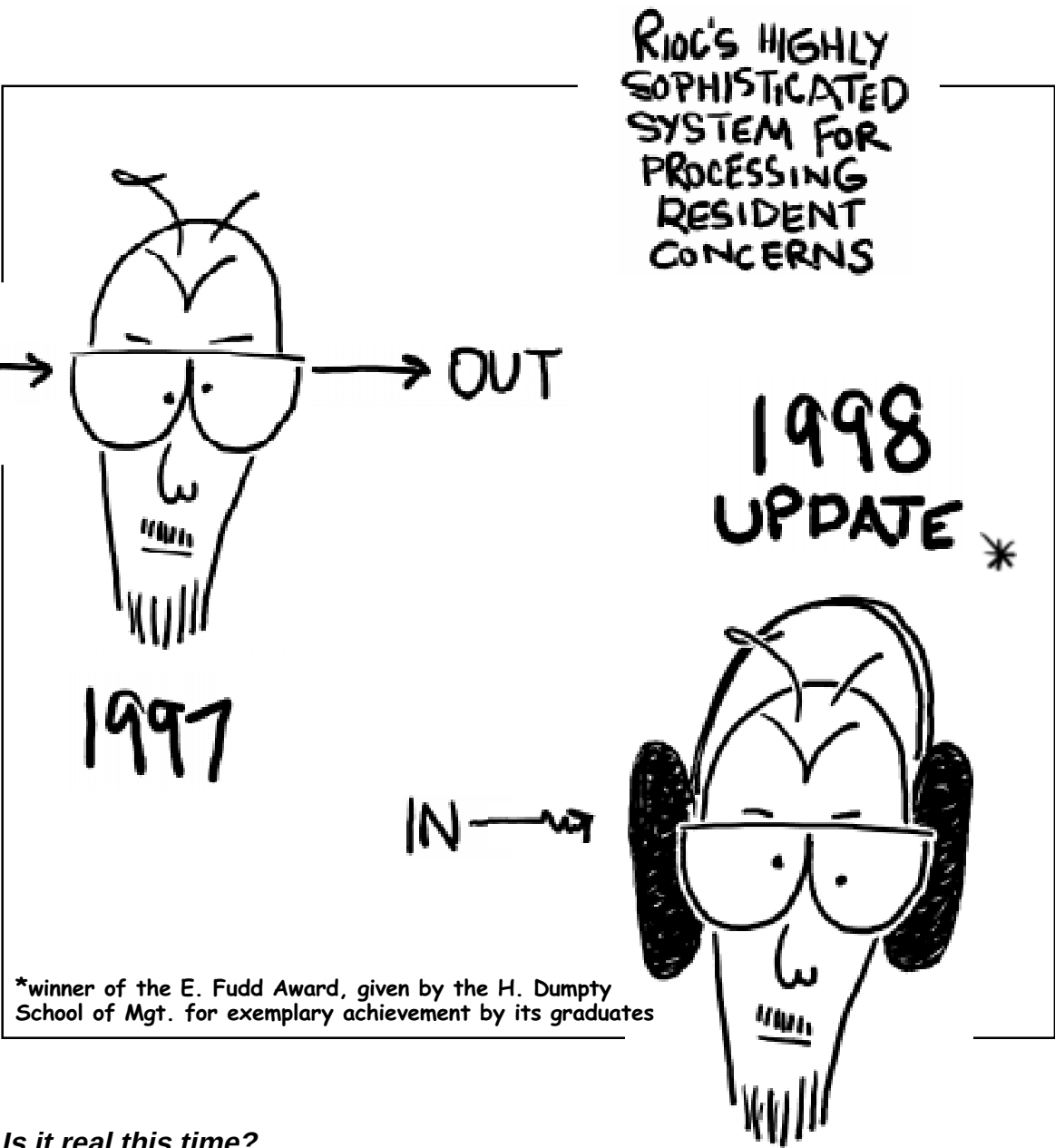
Sammy is a long-time member of the Garden Club. He likes Frank Sinatra music and, like Lillian, enjoys dancing. He has been employed for 44 years by Transportation Display Inc., and works at Grand Central Station.



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Is it real this time?

Wishful, Wary, Island’s Activists Are Once Again Counting the Days Until Jerome Blue Is Gone

Commentary by Dick Lutz

What will you do the day it’s announced Jerry Blue is gone?

OK, *after the party*, what will you do?

The election, just over three weeks away, is a watershed moment for Roosevelt Island. Many Islanders have marked the next day on their mental calendars as the first possible day of Blue’s departure. If it happens as expected, they’ll turn out to reset Roosevelt Island’s town clock to run forward again.

The conventional wisdom has been that Governor George Pataki would not replace Blue before the November 3 election, because that would be an admission of an incredible blunder in naming him in the first place. As true as that may be of the blunder, it may be true of the timing as well.

But an equally likely reason is that no competent replacement would take the job with only months or weeks – now days – to run in Pataki’s term: Why take a flyer on a job that could evaporate in an election night surprise?

The job has been shopped around. There are even some indications that a successor has been chosen, and Blue has been given the word.

Among the straws in the wind:

- Blue’s public relations guy, Michael Greason, is gone. No announcement – just a quiet disappearance, followed by professions like, “He’s not in right now” and “Don’t know,” from other members of the RIOC staff (who truly may only suspect).
- This week’s RIOC Board meeting was cancelled. Why have a meeting, after all, when everything’s about to change?
- Blue’s been to Albany within the last two weeks on some slightly mysterious errand – very likely to hear what’s in his future.

island observer

There is the possibility, as well, that he has been given some incentive to leave quietly, without leaving behind any smoke-solid claim of “mission accomplished,” or charges of racist motive in the opposition he has stirred over the past two and a half years.

Whatever the case, there may be reason for increased confidence in Jim Kaufman’s laconic pronouncement: “He’s toast.”

Now what?

It is a watershed moment for Roosevelt Island because Pataki is not likely to appoint another individual unwilling or unable to work with the community. That’s too risky a course, given the Island’s high level of activism and demonstrated ability to make waves in the political firmament – waves out of proportion to the Island’s reasonable place as a concern for any Governor.

We are likely, therefore, to get someone who will at least appear to be more sensitive to residents’ concerns. More willing, at least, to play the game of listening and seeming to heed. A really smart administrator might even find a way to pull the Roosevelt Island Residents Association into a working relationship – to use its Common Council as a sounding board and its monthly meetings as a forum for trial balloons.

However that goes, there is likely to be far less immediate incentive for residents to demand the fundamental change that local governance would represent. There could be an even further diffusion of the available effort, which is already fragmented into a glass menagerie of fragile and distant hopes.

It could mean less Island support, and legislative support harder to recruit, for the self-governance bill Assemblymember Pete Grannis has put into the Albany mill at the request of the Island’s Maple Tree Group.

But relaxing would be a mistake. Whatever relief politics brings Roosevelt Island after the election, it will not produce the fundamental change required to remove the threat of some future Jerome Blue being assigned here in a high-paying parking spot to buy his silence, as a political reward, or just to sideline him where the damage will be limited to Roosevelt Island, sparing the rest of New York State. The Pataki political organism, and its future replacements, will still have more reason to value Roosevelt Island as a dump for hazardous political waste than as the valuable experiment it was before Jerry Blue changed everything.

All the more reason, then, for those who have doubts about the Roosevelt Island Drive for Democracy (RIDD, curiously enough) or the efforts of the Maple Tree Group, to reconsider those doubts and weigh them against the likely shape of our future.

As good as the next administrator may be, and as appealing as it may be to engage in the wishful thinking that New York City may one day ride to our rescue, as long as Roosevelt Island is a possession of the State, our only really good future is likely to be one controlled by the voting power of residents, electing a Board of Residents, and carried forward by a professional administrator whose loyalty is to the Island and its people – not to a political patron.



Gonzales Retires at Island House

After 22 years of dedicated service, Island House's chief fixer-upper is hanging up his hammer. Tony Gonzalez, pictured here at his retirement reception, retired as Building Superintendent on October 2. A true Roosevelt Islander, he was born in Metropolitan Hospital at the southern end of what was then Welfare Island, back in 1932. During his tenure here he worked in Rivercross, Westview, Eastwood and Island House.

Gonzalez and his wife, Rita, the friendly face dispensing cash at Chase Bank's Roosevelt Island branch, will be taking time to enjoy their Florida vacation home and to pursue his jewelry business. Asked what he'll miss most about his work on Roosevelt Island, Gonzalez unequivocally responded, "The people!" A few minutes with "Tony G" and it's easy to understand why those same "people" will sorely miss him as well!



Pearl Kaplan

Pearl Kaplan thought of Roosevelt Island, like so many of us do, as more than just a place to live. It meant family. It was community. It was a place she could walk, stop and talk on Main Street for an afternoon. Where neighbors held elevators, took in *The Times* (and *The WIRE*) and caught the baseball games of nephews on a Sunday morning. Where she volunteered five days a week and from whose Library she could take out large-print books, which she read by the water as the tugboats passed by.

Pearl Kaplan passed away on September 29th at 7:30 a.m. in Manhattan, reportedly the result of some too-frequent hospital mistake. During her hospital stay, she expanded the possibilities of what being strong could mean. She remained optimistic. She stayed fighting for her health, talking about coming home, about taking trips with her friends and asking about her family. She said what she meant, acted on how she felt and will always be missed and forever remembered. Not just by her family, but by her community as well.



Letters

The following letter is to the Fire Department facility on the Island.
Dear Lt. Amadeo:
I am writing this note today to congratulate you and let you know about a couple of great people from your station and honor their names. Their names are Mike Gambino (badge number 754) and Peter Langone (badge number 9286).
When I was walking on Saturday morning on the east side of the Island, I saw a big bird caught on a fishing rod and stuck on a tree stump upside down. I didn't know how long it had hung there like that, but it did look very tired. I went to the fire department and found two great people. They came right away with a ladder and rescued the bird.
The stones were very slippery and the tide started rising, but those two people were very brave and very caring. I believe that saving any life is equally important, whether it is human, dog, cat or even bird.
Thank you for being on the Island to protect our lives, and congratulations once more.

Sonia Jang



Nearly 100 Roosevelt Islanders contribute their effort, every two weeks, to bringing *The WIRE* to every residential door on the Island. We attempt to list most on page 2. Above, last issue's Friday morning crew of stuffers. Back row: David Tsireskin, Matthew Katz, George Rubin, Bernie Schwartz. Middle row: Pearl Thomas, Myrna Mendis, Teresa Hasing, Beryl Seaforth, Elena Vrinceanu, Hazel Lynch. Seated: Lena Lutz, Margaret Harley, Rose Woods. **More help is always needed**, and if you'd like to volunteer anything from an hour to several hours, please call George Rubin at **935-6043** or Sherie Helstien at **935-7534** to learn about the possibilities in stuffing and distribution, or Dick Lutz at **826-9055** for information on news, photographic, art, or other contributions.

COMING UP

Saturdays, 11:00 a.m., Time-Warner Cable channel 34, **Charlie's House**, produced by the Roosevelt Island Youth Program.

Sat., Oct. 10, 10 a.m., the Roosevelt Island Tree Board's annual **Fall Tree Walk**, starting at Blackwell House. Free.

Sat., Oct. 10, 3:00 p.m., **Roosevelt Island Tennis Association** event. See Sports, page 7.
Mon., Oct. 12, 8:00 p.m., **Toastmasters International** Open House. For information: **751-9577**.

Mon., Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m., meeting of **The Maple Tree Group**, open to the public and new members, to discuss modifications of **Self-Government Legislation** for Roosevelt Island, and to organize for the **Drive For Democracy** to secure its passage. Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Fri., Oct. 16, deadline for nominations for offices in the **Roosevelt Island Residents Association** and for its Common Council, for those who wish to participate in Candidates Night the week of October 18. (Final deadline: **October 27**.) Information: **308-0479**.

Thur., Oct. 22, PS/IS 217, training sessions for tutors in the New York City **School Volunteer Program** for adults who wish to work one-on-one with a child to improve reading, writing, math, or English skills. Additional sessions (all are required) October 29 and November 5. Information: **980-0294, ext. 2422**.

Fri.-Sat., Oct. 23-24, next scheduled issue of **The Main Street WIRE**. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, **Fri., Oct. 16**; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, **Mon., Oct. 19**. **Future issues:** 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) **755-8214/755-2540**; phone & fax to list your Island organization's event without charge, **317-8523** (provide call-back number for possible follow-up).

Mon., Oct. 26, Open House, **Toastmasters**. Information: **751-9577**.

Tue., Oct. 27, 8:00 p.m., **Candidates Night** for the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Sat., Oct. 31, 11:00 a.m., **Halloween Parade**, assembling at Blackwell House, followed by **Festivity Center** at 11:30 in the basetball court at Tony Capobianco Field (under the nearby ramp if it rains).

Sat., Oct. 31, 7:00 p.m. (to 11:00 p.m.), **Masquerade Ball**, Manhattan Park Theatre Club. Adults \$5, Children (must be accompanied by an adult) \$3. (See ad, page 4.)

Tue., Nov. 3, Election Day. All Roosevelt Island residents over 18, **including** those not citizens of the United States or New York, are eligible to vote in the election for members of the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA), and on the ballot question regarding self-government for Roosevelt Island. 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., PS/IS 217.

Wed., Nov. 4, 7:45 p.m., **Photographic Society** meeting, Island House Community Room.
Wed., Nov. 4, 8:00 p.m., **Roosevelt Island Residents Association** Common Council meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Mon., Nov. 9, Toastmasters. Visitors welcome. Information: **751-9577**.

Thur., Nov. 12, 10:00 a.m., **Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation** Board meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Thur., Nov., 13, at the Senior Center, **RISA Fashion Show**. Information, **980-1888**.
Mon., Dec. 14, Toastmasters. Visitors welcome. Information: **751-9577**.

Sun., Dec. 13, Special Guest Performance, **The Morgan Scott Ballet Company**, Coler Hospital. Times & tickets: **848-6043**.

RIRA at Crossroads from page 1

Discussing work being done for the MTA at the Tramway by the engineering consulting firm, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Weinstein said that City Councilmember Gifford Miller "will soon investigate what is happening at the Tram, what the MTA is seeking, and what the whole thing has to do with possible attempts by Dr. Blue to have the MTA take over the Tramway." In the meeting's more philosophical vein, Weinstein continued, "I would like to draw your attention to this: When we've had no discussions or negotiations with Dr. Blue, when he's turned down our requests to participate, when no notice is given to the community, when we are told nothing except that the Tramway is closing, we have to be very, very careful, because if something is secret, something is wrong."

Shirley Margolin, a member of the Common Council by virtue of her work with the Roosevelt Island Council of Organizations, spoke similarly of the secrecy at RIOC: "I have a great sense of frustration that a \$500 million project [Southtown] is going forward without the community being informed."

"We continue to be stonewalled," she said. Stewart added to RIOC's list of secrets: a Corps of Engineers report on the condition of the Island's seawall, unavailable to residents; a Deloitte Touche report on RIOC financial management, unavailable to residents. He said he has a stack of FOIL requests, and "RIOC non-responses," almost a foot high.

But perhaps more than anything, members of the RIRA Council are frustrated that Blue has studiously ignored the Residents Association role as elected representatives of the Island's people, and that Blue has formed small committees of Blue-friendly residents, who back him regardless of what RIRA Council members see as grave transgressions. In one case – Jessie Rademaker, whose Young Adult League received Public Purpose funding from RIOC after Blue rewrote the rules for getting such funding – many Council mem-

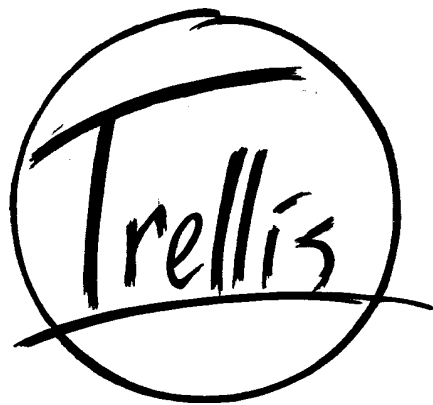
bers believe Blue has simply used community money to pay for the illusion of community support.

Hopes are pinned on a growing belief that Blue will be relieved of his job after the November 3 election [**Commentary**, page 2]. But Wednesday night's meeting showed the Common Council, thinned though it is by loss of those who've moved away and those whose frustration has reached the breaking point, to be nonetheless determined to move forward to a post-election period in which the RIRA role could remain reactive, if Blue stays, or could return to its preferred role of community advocate working hand-in-hand with a new President at RIOC's helm.

Meanwhile, members of the Common Council, notably the husband-and-wife team of Matthew Katz and Sherie Helstien, joined by others including Vicki Feinmel and Judith Berdy, are working another path – self-governance – through the Maple Tree Group and the Drive for Democracy. It's widely recognized as both a long shot and a potentially perilous course that would put residents in control, but possibly at the helm of a sinking ship or an entity no longer embraced by New York State, yet independent of the City. Even so, the self-governance plan is seen as unassailable in principle – that people who live in a place, not aloof political appointees ruling from a mental state far removed from resident concerns, should be in control.

So whoever decides to run for RIRA's Common Council, and whatever role the organization plays after the election, it could be that the most important question on the November 3 ballot will be the attempt to measure the strength of sentiment behind the ballot question:

Shall the present governance of Roosevelt Island, consisting of political appointees, be replaced by a popularly-elected Board of Residents empowered to hire professional management, as proposed in legislation introduced in the New York State Legislature by Assemblymember Pete Grannis?



HELP bring back the music. Cut me out, sign me, and drop me off at Trellis.

To the RIOC Board: *I am a Roosevelt Island resident. I'd like the weekend music back at Trellis next summer.*

Signed: _____

See you at Trellis

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Halloween Festivities 1998
Saturday, October 31st

Halloween Parade - 11:00am - Meet at Blackwell House.
Festivity Center - 11:30am - Basketball Court area at
Tony Capobianco Park
(Under Motorgate if it rains.)
Manhattan Park Theatre Club
Masquerade Ball - 7pm to 11pm - 8 River Road
Admission - \$5 Adult
\$3 Children

All children attending the Masquerade Ball must be accompanied by an adult, 18 years or older, and no more than three children per adult. There will be food and refreshments for sale, D.J. Marty Party, a COSTUME CONTEST for children and adults, free treats, 50/50 and other raffles, and lots of fun for everyone!

Sponsored by P.S./I.S. 217 P.T.A., Roosevelt Island Housing Management Corp., Manhattan Park Management, Rivercross Tenants Corp., & coordinated by Marilyn Engstler, Director of Community Relations.
All proceeds benefit P.S./I.S. 217 P.T.A.

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meeting, Wed., Nov. 4 at 7:45 PM, Island House Community Room

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Eaton from page 1

concert of classical music at the Ho Chi Minh City Conservatory.

Roy Eaton was born in Sugar Hill, Harlem, in 1930. During the two decades following his birth, the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing, and was an absolutely undeniable breeding ground for genius jazz musicians and jazz vocalists, as well as African-American social activists, writers and actors, such as the great Paul Robeson.

Although the young Roy Eaton was surrounded by jazz, he felt a special affinity for classical music, which continues to this day. He began playing classical piano at age six, and won his first competition at age thirteen. His parents were Jamaican immigrants, and his hard-working mechanic father made a respectable but modest salary. Luxuries were few during the Depression. The family piano that Roy first learned to play on was an old Mason & Hamlin upright. Today, he describes his late mother, Bernice Neil Eaton, as a woman of tremendous fortitude, spirituality and amazing persuasive abilities. She believed in Roy's talent, and knew that he needed a decent piano to progress as an



artist. Somehow she managed to buy a rebuilt grand from the Steinway factory. To this day, no one knows where or how she obtained the funds.

Throughout his youth, Eaton continued to evolve as a classical musician. His mother's emotional support was essential, and given unselfishly. She frequently told Roy and his siblings, "You are very bright children, but you're black, and getting 100% will not be enough. If you're going to be successful in this world, you have to do 200%... A challenge is your opportunity to grow. It's to your benefit." If Roy came home from school with a 97, the first thing out of his mother's mouth was, "What happened to the

other three percent?" Roy has said that it was largely through his mother's leadership that he and his three siblings realized the importance of spiritual development.

Bernice Neil Eaton died in January, but Roy says he senses her presence constantly, and it's clear that her effect on his life and personal drive is all-encompassing. In 1950, when Roy graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from the City College of New York, he simultaneously earned his B.M. degree from the Manhattan School of Music. And on the same day he graduated, he played in the finals of the Kosciuszko Foundation's Chopin Competition. When he returned home from the graduation ceremony, the phone was ringing – a call from the Foundation President telling him he had won.

Though still enamored of classics, Eaton has a foot in the jazz world, as well. "Although I don't really perform as a jazz artist, I do have several compositions that are frequently performed. Tenor saxophone legend Sonny Rollins plays one of my things – he is also from Sugar Hill, in fact, we grew up together. He lived at 377, and I lived at 375. He and his sister and I went to the High School of Music and Art together. On the street you would hear me playing something classical on the piano, and Sonny practicing jazz improvisations all day long."

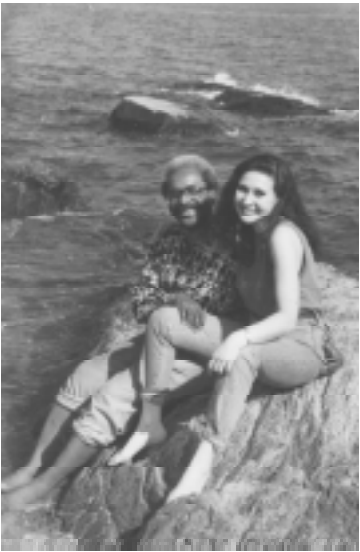
Eaton's formal education also includes a Graduate Fellowship at Yale and Master's Degree in piano and conducting from the Manhattan School of Music.

He has performed in concert in many of the nation's most prestigious concert sites, including a memorable concert at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in 1992.

In the '50's, Roy was drafted, and it was in the army that he first became interested in popular American standards and jazz. "In the jazz idiom, I love to listen to Bill Evans. No question. In terms of my personal style... the style that I most admire would be exemplified by the great Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson. I also loved Bud Powell, but it was tough to see what drugs did to him."

It was also in the '50's that Eaton began working in advertising, for agencies like Young & Rubicam and Benton & Bowles.

In the 1980's, after nearly thirty years of creative output, Roy decided to retire from the advertising business. "I left advertising because the guys in charge were only looking



at the bottom line, and they felt that someone who could just administer musicians' contracts could perform the job just as easily – so they got a clerk, and eliminated the music department. They did me a favor, of course, in that I was able to go out and start really doing creative things for myself. They had a total non-recognition of

what it was that I was doing. Now, in the advertising world, they're not even making the effort to write original music – they're using standards, and spending millions of dollars on music rights for existing tunes."

Roy Eaton initially became interested in both Transcendental Meditation and alternative medicine as part of his recovery process from a near-fatal car accident – an accident that claimed the life of his then wife of ten months. Always evolving, he maintains a busy teaching

schedule at The Manhattan School of Music, and also works as a Shiatsu massage therapist, and he recently became involved in film... both as a performer, and in casting.

As the father of three grown sons, and stepfather to Joshua, Roy is particularly concerned with the well-being and development of Roosevelt Island's youth. "To deal with the problems of our youth...I don't know how to communicate this to others who have not seen the possibility of an inward vision, but I feel that the changes that we want to see here on the Island have to come about as a change of consciousness. It is not a matter of dealing with the individual actions, or acts, or looking at the surface manifestations, but, rather, making sure that the place you're coming from in your observation and in your interaction is from a 'glass half-full' perspective. For the past week or so, I've been looking around – just opening up my eyes a little bit more. The things I saw here were beautiful and exciting – much more worthy of recognition and acknowledgment than the negative occurrences that do happen. Our Island is brimming with life, activity, joy and hope. So many extraordinary things are happening here. It's a matter of 'Where's your vision?' 'What are you seeing?'."



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SPORTSWIRE

The Roosevelt Island Tennis Association (RITA) recently held its annual Club Championships on the beautiful outdoor tennis facility adjacent to Octagon Park. Great weather and fine tennis made for an enjoyable weekend for everyone involved. The earlier rounds were fiercely competitive. Five categories were played.

Results
Women: Karin Jacobson vs. Jenni Wood, 6:2 4:6 7:6
Men: Jan Buenner vs. David Eaton, 6:0 6:1
Men’s Doubles: Tom Smith/Jan Buenner vs. Michael Kolba/Vladimir Zbodakm, 6:1 6:2
Mixed Doubles: Atsumi & Mike Kolba vs. Karin Jacobson/J.B. Jones, 8:3
Men’s Consolation: Atul Gokhale vs. J.B. Jones, 8:0
All winners and runner-ups received trophies. Perfect weather conditions and a great crowd on that weekend contributed to participants and fans having an excellent time.
But the fun doesn’t stop here. Currently under way are the playoffs of RITA’s ranking system, the “ladder.” Summer qualifiers now play to determine best players in three different skill groups. One round per week is being played, with the finals today (Saturday, Oct. 10) at 3:00 p.m.
There will be an exhibition “best of the best” match: The winner of the Men’s Singles Club Championships against the winner of the Ladder Playoffs. That match will be played Sunday at 3:00.
Finally, RITA will sponsor a final season event, a doubles tournament Saturday, Oct. 24, on the last day of daylight savings time. It will start at 12 noon. Weather permitting, it will be followed by some fun tennis matches. Players can bring their own tennis partners, or pick one in a random drawing. This event is open to men and women. It is also open to advanced players who don’t have a current permit for the courts, and who want to find out whether tennis might be a sport for them on Roosevelt Island next year.
Roosevelt Island’s outdoor courts will remain open through the fall and winter. For information about outdoor tennis, call Jan Buenner at **469-3107**, or Michael Kolba at **980-3811**.

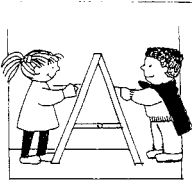
Police Seek Help With ID

Police at the 114th Squad, Queens, are looking for help in identifying the deceased male whose body was recovered Monday night from the East Channel of the East River off Roosevelt Island. He is described as 5'11", 155 pounds, in his late 40’s or early 50’s, having black/gray hair (mostly gray), with extensive skin-grafting scars on his left arm. He was wearing blue jeans over light blue slacks, a dark blue zippered sweatshirt-jacket, a black “Champion” T-shirt, and maroon and white socks. If you have any information that might assist Police with the case, call Det. Bob Henning at the 114th Pct., **718-626-9334**.

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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.

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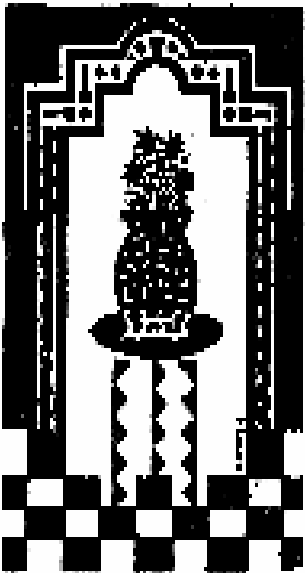
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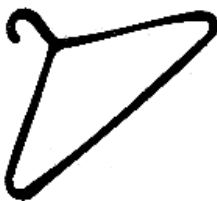
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