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August 25-26
summer schedule

The Main Street WIRE

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044

Chase Plans to Close Its Island Branch Office

by Armand Schwab
The Chase Manhattan Bank, dissatisfied with the amount of revenue it can get out of Roosevelt Island, plans to leave.
It has announced that the branch at 619 Main Street will close on Friday, October 20. Accounts will be transferred to a branch at 21-21 Broadway in Astoria.

Chase says its two automatic teller machines will continue to function on Main Street. But there will be no full-service bank on the Island to cash payroll checks or to service some 8,000 residents, about 2,000 of them Chase depositors. Many of them are wheelchair-bound or otherwise physically handicapped or are elderly, and

they will not find it easy to follow Chase to Astoria.

Whether Chase will manage to get away remains to be seen. The New York State Banking Department can (but does not often) prevent the closing of a branch if it would cause a "significant reduction of services," according to Deputy Superintendent Edward B. Kramer. Chase did barely comply with the requirement for 90 days' notice. Now the planning committee of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) is organizing opposition to the move.

The closing became known (to a few people) a week ago Wednesday. According to branch manager Geraldine Depaolo, who had been given no inkling of the plan, two men showed up at about 4:00 in the afternoon and posted signs on the automatic teller machines announcing the Oct. 20 closing and

transfer to Queens.

The news began to circulate along Main Street the next day. Depositors got a mailed notice on Friday, July 21.

Chase rents its space from the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation for \$5,787 a month and acknowledges that the lease runs through July, 2001. The bank has yet to notify RIOC of its intention to terminate; RIOC president Rob Ryan learned about the move only a week ago Friday from a resident.

He says he then spoke with a "contact" at Chase and asked if it would help if RIOC lowered the rent. He got a negative reply. Ryan says he has since been "in touch

with members of the [State] administration" but has not complained formally to the Banking Department. Nor has he yet brought the issue to the RIOC board of direc-

Judith Berdy, Chair of RIRA's Planning Committee, is urging residents to write the State Banking Department to protest the closing of the Chase branch, pointing out the Island's population of disabled and elderly. The address is: Elizabeth McCaul, Superintendent, State Banking Dept., 2 Rector Street, New York 10006. Letters should mention the branch address: 619 Main Street, Roosevelt Island, N.Y. 10044.

RIOC to Disburse Balance of Public Purpose Funds

The Board of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) is looking to give away about \$640,000 to benefit Island residents. The funds are left over in the Public Purpose Fund.

At the July 13 Board meeting, its members set aside a resolution brought to the table by David Kraut, a resident member of the Board, who is heading up a Board group charged with making recommendations on distribution of the funds. Kraut had proposed a plan closely similar to past practice, in which the Roosevelt Island Council of Organizations (RICO) and the Residents Association (RIRA) Common Council made recommendations to the RIOC Board. That approach was opposed by a public speaker, Jessica Rademaker.

Kraut responded to a *WIRE* request for his views on use of the funds, and a means for arriving at the best method. Portions of his memo to the Board and his response are included here, along with Jessica Rademaker's comments (see page 3) to the Board. (They are published in their entirety on Website NYC10044 at www.nyc10044.com.)

Kraut's memo read:

"At the time Manhattan Park was built, it was recognized that the increased population of the Island would make additional demands on our various social infrastructures that were beyond our resources at the time. RIOC negotiated with the

See **David Kraut**, page 3

RIRA's Stewart Explains Minicondo Abstention

Residents Association President Patrick Stewart offered the organization's Common Council an explanation at its July 12 meeting for his failure to vote no, as a RIOC Board member, on the conversion of minischools into luxury condominiums with a second floor. The night before the June 8 vote, Stewart had told the Common Council he would cast a no vote pursuant to Council and resident sentiment and his own opposition to the plan, which would add a second story to the one-story structures.

"An amendment [was] proposed by one of the Board members, Mr. Leo Kayser. The amendment was supposed to have said and put certain restrictions on the developer such as financing, construction,

etc., etc. Those issues were not specific. If they had been specific, I would have voted for the bill, but since they were not specific, I voted to abstain," Stewart said. He then asked if there were questions.

Joyce Mincheff, a member of the Council, responded, "Yes. What did you just say?" Stewart asked if there were others who didn't understand what he said, and in response to a show of hands, he explained further:

"There was a vote... there was a resolution proposed by RIOC that proposed to carte blanche the minischools as proposed by Diane Wilson, meaning first floor plus second floor. Now, to go back in history a little bit, which you all recall, I suspect that the Planning and Development Committee of the

Board had voted six to one against the second floor. The Board was aware of that vote. In an attempt to compromise, Mr. Kayser put forward an amendment to that resolution which said, I believe - I haven't seen the amendment yet - which said, pretty much, that there were to be added certain criteria for the development of that project, i.e., financing within a certain period of time - 30, 60, 90 days, engineering drawings, architectural drawings, 30, 60, 90 days - actual construction... The specifics were not in his amendment, and because I, as a Board member, have an obligation to both the Board and to the community, to have those specifics put forward, I voted to abstain. I have yet to see those specifics, and that will be one of the

subjects of the Board meeting tomorrow, if anyone cares to go and listen. In other words, the abstention was based on a lack of sufficient information to vote either for or against."

Stewart's statement that he would have voted to go ahead with the minicondos (as every other member of the Board did at its June meeting) brought a flurry of questions and criticisms from members of the Common Council.

Speaking earlier, during the Council's public session, Byron Gaspard said, "I am deeply disturbed by the direction our President has taken on the minischools. When we met with Patrick [he] stated very affirmatively that he would vote against the minischools.

See **Stewart**, page 8

Medical Corps Contributes to Island's Home-Town Feel

by Anusha Shrivastava

One of the many factors that give Roosevelt Island a special small-town feel is the medical practitioners who live and practice here. Doctors Katherine Teets Grimm, Jack Resnick and Lawrence Itskowitch have offices in Rivercross while Dr. James Flannigan, the most recent addition to the pack, has one on Main Street.

Doctor Grimm

Dr. Katherine Teets Grimm has been living in Rivercross since the summer of 1987. She was born in Plainfield, New Jersey, but her family moved to Colorado when she was eight years old as she suffered from severe asthma. "We lived in the Rockies until I turned thirteen. We returned to New Jersey and I entered medical school in the 60s," said Dr. Grimm. She attended Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, then Rutgers in New Jersey. The last two years of her training were at Mount Sinai, where the department head encouraged her to pursue further studies at Johns Hopkins. She spent two years there, on the faculty and in charge of pediatric emergency.

"I debated between internal medicine and pediatrics but chose pediatrics because I enjoyed working with kids and believed in preventive medicine. For instance, a lot of cardiovascular diseases have roots in the lifestyle of adolescent years," said Dr. Grimm.

Moving to Mt. Sinai as a full-time employee, Dr. Grimm has served as Vice-President of pediatrics and as the medical director of the Children's Advocacy Center, which evaluates and treats abused children, since 1997. "I spend 50% of my time in this practice but none of the jobs take up just 50% of my time," says Dr. Grimm. "I wear many hats. I am a Board-certified allergist, too. My work with child abuse started as part of the territory of being in the emergency room. Many children were brought in as a result of inflicted injuries."

"Parenting is tough," she admits. "If I see that there is abuse or neglect, I have a legal and moral responsibility to report it. I work with the system and ensure that the family gets the support it needs. Most parents don't want to be neglectful but may not know how to handle the situation."

"I am an easy-going pediatrician," says Dr. Grimm. "Parents today are well-informed and have opinions in terms of medicine. Many families on the Island are into alternative medicine and do not want antibiotics for their children. I try to work with them. Some families are against immunization, but I think that is because they have not seen the damage that can be done. I give parents my opinion and try to be supportive, unless I believe they are endangering the child's welfare."

Two issues that all mothers of toddlers grapple with are toilet-training and feeding. "Toilet-training is a developmental stage, and becomes a non-issue down the line, so I think a relaxed attitude is best," advises Dr. Grimm. As for diet, she says parents often agonize over picky eaters. "I suggest that they should present an array of foods to the child. Some parents give high-calorie foods to the child, thinking that some calories are better than none, but that is not correct as it becomes a problem later on. I think it is important to instill healthy eating habits right from the beginning. Also, never forget that kids like to see their parents upset. It becomes a sport for them, so try to remain calm. Of course, there is no 'right way' to do things and, in any case, the 'right way' is always hard to implement. Having your own kids makes you a humble pediatrician," admits Dr. Grimm. "My son, Joshua, didn't eat fruit, not even apple sauce, when he was a baby."

Dr. Grimm meets over 1500 children through her practice on the Island. "I meet kids who are zero to 23 years old," says Dr. Grimm. "It is a very special practice because I meet people from different socio-economic groups and can

do home visits if required. However, I avoid that because a home is a safe haven for a child and I do not like doing traumatic things to them at home. Adults understand, but for a child, it is tough to comprehend why these things are being done. Also, the lighting in many apartments is not good so I cannot see rashes clearly."

Doctor Resnick

Dr. Jack Resnick, the internal medicine doctor, primarily does home visits. "I mostly meet disabled and seniors, so it is simpler to meet them at home. I have to carry everything with me but I learn a lot more about the patient at his or her

See **Doctors**, page 6



Dr. Katherine Grimm

Margery Rubin

Letters

To the Editor:

Pleased to see several of my friends with physical disabilities featured in the June 30 *WIRE*. The theme seemed to be the amenities of Roosevelt Island for people with a disability.

As a person with a disability, I feel compelled to comment. While this idea is largely accurate, it does not apply to the Library. Since the renovation of our wonderful Community Library to accommodate New York Public Library “requirements,” the Library has been virtually inaccessible to the physically disabled and seniors.

The onerous one-way narrow maze is an absolute fire trap. *The WIRE* has remained consistently indifferent to this public pariah and to my early attempts to draw attention to this shameful situation. *The WIRE* did, after several submissions, print a mangled version of my letter on this subject, summer

’98. I would like to see *The WIRE* address this contemptible utter disregard for the disabled and seniors of Roosevelt Island.

Sharon Stern

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters to the Editor, to the community, and to/from officials, and will consider publication on a *Name Withheld* basis, but the writer’s name, address, and telephone number must be provided. All letters subject to acceptance for publication. **Preferred methods of submission:** PC-standard 3.5-inch floppy disk left at 531 Main Street for *The WIRE*, or by e-mail to nyc10044@rcn.com (ASCII text preferred or use any wordprocessing software, but no MSWord files with macros). Alternatives: Typed, double-spaced copy left at 531 Main Street or faxed to (212) 755-2540. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered. We cannot take telephone dictation of letters. **All letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.**

I’m thinking **Mary Matalin and James Carville**. Perhaps the real highlight of the July 12 RIRA Common Council meeting was President Patrick Stewart’s attempt to name “the four most divisive people in this room.”

No statuettes were handed out; this was not intended as a compliment.

Stewart was responding to a comment about Graham Cannon’s guest editorial in the July 1 *WIRE*. Cannon had written of the Common Council’s lack of meaningful or lasting accomplishments recently, pointing out that politics of personality (as opposed to politics of issues) have hindered the Council in its missions. Cannon’s point was that even people who disagree on one issue can join forces when they sense there is common advantage in unity – and that making disagreements personal makes coalition-building impossible. “Let’s fight for the issues we care about and work with whom we need as if there were no self-rule bill while, if we choose, we fight them on self-rule as if we needed them for nothing else.”

Stewart’s attempt to name “the four most divisive people in this room” was cut short.

It went this way:

Stewart: Personally, just to add a little thing here, I believe that the divisiveness in this group is created by four people in this room, and those people are, um, um, our secretary [Joyce Mincheff], Linda Heimer...

Joyce Mincheff: And *that* isn’t divisive?

Stewart: No, it’s not divisive, it’s a fact... Linda Heimer, Sherie Helstien...

Byron Gaspard: Patrick, could you repeat that? Could you repeat that, Patrick, I didn’t... I didn’t hear you.

By the time Stewart had named Councilors Mincheff, Heimer, and Helstien, several members of the Council, including his strongest supporters, were issuing involuntary exclamations in an attempt to get him to stop it. First Vice President Joan Christianson, sitting next to Stewart, was nudging him under the table. Heads were shaking in an attempt to signal, *Don’t do this*.

Stewart was indulging in the very politics of personality that Cannon had decried, throwing coalition-building to the winds, and allowing himself a personal moment of pique from his position as RIRA President. Hearing the reaction, he rapped his gavel once and grinned what my high school buddies used to call “an S.E.G.”

Stewart: That is just a little personal aside, folks, so... Thank you very much.

Personal, indeed. It didn’t stop there. Later, when asked who the fourth of his nominees for “most divisive” might be, Stewart named your ’umble servant. (A few others were disappointed at being left out, but the honors were limited to four recipients, so an Auxiliary is being formed.)

Oddly, it just happens that I had requested and had a three-hour off-the-record meeting with Stewart just three weeks earlier (June 12), in which my main re-

quest of him was that he give up the personal attacks – because they personalize political disagreements and make it too difficult for residents to mount a united effort on any of the major issues facing the Island. Stewart had listened, and when the session ended, had said he would be in touch about a continuation two days later. But he didn’t call to set a time, nor has he responded to a request that he select another possible time.

Is he putting personal pique above his responsibility as RIRA President? Do active residents get nominated for a Patrick Stewart enemies list for acting on beliefs he doesn’t share?

In the RIRA meeting July 12, Stewart also complained that his views on the minischool condo conversions weren’t included in *WIRE* reports of the RIOC Board’s June 8 vote on that project. He didn’t mention that he failed to respond to three requests, personally delivered, that he provide

something explaining his views and his failure to vote the position taken by residents and the RIRA Common Council. His view, as expressed in the RIOC meeting, was that he absolutely opposed the minicondos, and absolutely would vote against them. Within minutes, he then abstained. In the absence of the explanation he refused to provide, his abstention made his anti-minicondo rhetoric moot and drew a heavy veil over his mid-meeting change of heart.

[Stewart attempted to explain his vote to the July 12 meeting of the Common Council, and a report on that appears on page 1 of this issue of *The WIRE*.]

RIRA Common Council meetings can be contentious. At times, statesmanship is a shriveled shadow left in some distant, dusty corner. Stewart’s job, in chairing the meetings, is to control them, and he often finds it more of a challenge than he can handle. No wonder, when his gavel and his judgment seem so completely clouded by his conversion of policy differences into personal grudges.

In my June 12 meeting with Stewart, I urged upon him my own belief that personal feelings are inappropriate in political institutions – that coalition-building is an appropriate and necessary part of community and common effort. (I also urged him to give residents information on his views and activities by resuming the *RIRA President’s Column* in

The WIRE.)

Perhaps one day Stewart will come to realize that naming those he considers “the four most divisive people in the room” and then passing it off as “just a personal aside” is far below the caliber of resident leadership Roosevelt Island needs just now – that in itself, it is far more divisive than residents merely holding – and acting on – opinions that don’t conform to his.

So I’m thinking **Matalin and Carville**. Maybe they can provide a badly-needed model for separating personal feelings from political differences.

Dick Lutz

Councilmember A. Gifford Miller
336 East 73rd Street
New York, NY 10021

Dear Gifford:

What would we do without your assistance to Roosevelt Island? Once again you have secured funding for The Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance from the New York City budget, and at an increased amount for Fiscal Year 2001.

In the coming year, we will provide over 200 scholarships to needy and deserving Roosevelt Island boys and girls to enable them to participate in our theatre and dance classes and performances. Your backing is *vitaly important* to these scholarships.

Thank you very much from the MST&DA, our youthful student-performers, their families and the community at large, which benefits from our work.

Eugenie L. Martin
MST&DA Board Member

Assemblymember Pete Grannis
1672 First Avenue
New York, NY 10128

Dear Assemblymember Grannis,

I am deeply disappointed with your failure to use your considerable power and influence to prevent the killing of the legislation that would have democratized local governance of Roosevelt Island. That law would give residents the constitutional right to elected representation in our local community. In addition, it would end double taxation here.

We vote for you, Senator Mendez, Councilmember Gifford Miller, yet we cannot affect whether even the street lights are maintained because none of you can. RIOC turns a deaf ear to you and our other elected officials.

Moreover, we are doubly taxed, once by the city for services we do not receive, and again by RIOC, whom we pay again through our rents, for services it often will not or cannot provide.

This is classic taxation without representation. No wonder we residents flock to the alphabet soup of organizations that have sprung up to take action.

We are losing on every single development issue, one after the

other, because residents have no say on the body that controls our area, the RIOC Board of Directors. This Island desperately needs development, and we stand helplessly by while rights that could provide us with ample income are given away at pitiful prices, sometimes for foolish projects out of keeping with the original plan.

The financial risks that you are rightly concerned with are the same whether RIOC continues to govern us as constituted, or we elect RIOC Board members ourselves and the Board hires professional management. In truth, the

financial risks will be far, far less when residents elect representatives because residents understand the value of ground leases here, and will insist on superior management of a tight budget. We’ll make sure that the seawall, for example, is paid for by the same agencies that care for the seawalls on every other New York City shore.

In short, Pete, to win my support, you must work hard to assure fast passage of legislation to restore our constitutional rights immediately upon the opening of the next session.

Ethel G. Romm

To the Editor:

I am sure everyone at one time or another encounters the same experience I did last week. Even though the reminder was posted on the refrigerator for the last month, I had about one hour to purchase a gift.

I was going to settle for a gift of money, but as I was trekking toward the bank, I noticed Irving outside handing out flyers. To my amazement, his shop had many lovely items to choose from: beautiful candles, picture frames, vases, candle holders, perfumes, colognes, bath and body gels, scented oils, and more.

It’s a shame such a fantastic store, open daily, is hidden from potential customers behind [in Westview] one that is never open.

The purpose of this letter is to inform residents that his gift shop is Roosevelt Island’s best-kept secret. The next time you find yourself in need of a gift, stop by.

Mercedes Lugo

To the Editor:

The Roosevelt Island Glee Club elected Jim Baehler its president and was fortunate to get Mary Jo Schragar as its pianist. Next meeting Wednesday, August 27, at 7:00 p.m. Bring \$6 for annual RISA dues. Future meetings, also 7:00 p.m. at the Senior Center, will be Tuesdays.

Frances Salten

Public Safety Blotter

The Blotter for the July 1-17 period is too extensive for the space available in this issue. It is published in its entirety on *Website NYC10044* at www.nyc10044.com.

COMING UP

appears on page 8 of this issue



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Design for black T-shirts celebrates Patrick Stewart’s naming of “the four most divisive people in the room.” (Not available in stores.) Design below is for back of the Auxiliary’s shirt.

Joyce, Linda, Sherie, and Dick
got to be divisive.

And all I got is this lousy T-shirt.

Two Voices on Awarding Public Purpose Funds

David Kraut from page 1

Starrett Corporation an agreement that certain Payments in Lieu of Taxes would accrue to the Island to meet these various social needs. These payments, eventually totaling approximately \$4,000,000, were labeled Public Purpose Funds. Later, in concert with various citizens’ groups, RIOC dedicated approximately 3/4 of the money to ‘capital projects,’ and reserved approximately 1/4 of the money to future ‘social service’ needs.

“The ‘capital projects’ portion of the funds were spent fairly quickly and to positive result. The main beneficiaries were the new Octagon Park and the Cultural Center. The park, with its playing fields, tennis courts and garden plots, is in use virtually year-round, and the Cultural Center is likewise in constant use for performance classes, public presentations and meetings, and also includes the Island’s only synagogue. These expenditures were clearly successful.

“The record for the ‘social service’ portion of the funds presents less clear results. A large grant for the establishment of an Island-wide social service umbrella agency showed no strong positive result. Various ongoing grants for demonstrated needs likewise ‘failed,’ in the sense that the agencies thus started or supported failed to attract ongoing funding from other sources.

“Certain fund allocations have been more successful. From time to time we have been approached by various Island agencies or groups which had been long-established prior to the Funds’ establishment, seeking temporary or ‘tide-over’ funds to meet emergency or temporary needs on a ‘one-time’ or ‘ad hoc’ basis, and these efforts have been generally useful. The various agencies or entities used the emergency funding to get themselves through their particular temporary short-falls, and then continued to provide their basic service responsibilities through their other, more-regular funding channels.

Problems

“1. The basic problem facing this Agency is whether we should be active in the social service area at all. Previous to the establishment of the Public Purpose Funds, RIOC had no designated social service responsibilities beyond our broad legal mandate to ‘operate, manage and develop’ Roosevelt Island. The existence of the Public Purpose Funds has caused us to accept a responsibility for which we are neither operationally staffed or equipped nor philosophically prepared. Nonetheless, that responsibility does now exist and will continue as long as Public Purpose Funds exist. We have both a fiduciary and a social responsibility to see that these Funds are dispersed in the wisest possible manner.

“2. The next problem is to establish a modality whereby Funds will be dispersed. [I believe it] must combine prudence with a willingness to experiment and try new things. Furthermore, in my view, the method of distribution must actively seek the broadest possible input from the entire Roosevelt Island community.

Recommendations

“[My resolution] outlines a preliminary application process entailing the use of forms and structures currently existing, with some modifications. The application form is to be forwarded to the Roosevelt Island Council of Organizations (RICO) for recommendations as to structure, informational needs, and possible overall suitability of the basic proposal. After RICO has made its best efforts to ensure that the proposal is viable and fundable, the proposal should be forwarded to the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) Common Council for public comment and response. Those should then be forwarded to the Public Purpose Funds Advisory Committee, to be included as supporting information to the Board at the time the Committee brings the funding request forward for a Board vote per resolution. The Board has final say-so concerning Fund distribution, and may accept or deny any application.

“Two major considerations must be recognized and addressed here, brought to my attention by RIOC Director Susan Whitaker, who also chairs RICO, and RIOC Director Patrick Stewart, who is currently president of RIRA. Generally, these considerations might be labeled *Conflict of interest* and *inclusivity*.

“**Conflict of Interest:** RICO and RIRA might come to RIOC for funding needs of their own. In fact, RICO as formerly administered was the organization requesting funding for the umbrella-type social service needs administration referred to above. And RIRA has several times approached the Board for funding of voting machines to ensure the fairness of their Island-wide elections. They manifestly should not be passing on their own requests, and I anticipate that their proposals should come directly to the Board.

“**Inclusivity:** Ms. Whitaker has shared with me her concern that RICO as currently constituted might not be considered to represent a broad-enough spectrum of Island groups to make a meaningful assessment of any requesting organization’s funding proposal. While I cannot speak for her directly in the context of this memorandum, it is my understanding that she intends to reach out to a broader group of organizations to develop meaningful input on specific spending proposals. This would be a very positive development, in my view, and would lead the Board to additional confidence that sufficiently broad views have been heard.

Conclusion

“The Board has wrestled with the issue of Public Purpose

Funding many times over the years. We have recognized and accepted our responsibility to disburse these funds wisely, and sought varying modalities to do so. We have not always been successful, neither in achieving the desired effects of our spending nor of satisfying all the views or needs of every part of the Island community. Nonetheless, the funds exist and ought to be distributed. It is my expectation and belief that the methodology broadly outlined in the enclosed Proposed Resolution Language and described in this memorandum will provide a modality by which we can meet our responsibility in a timely and judicious manner.”

Kraut’s comments in response to *The WIRE*’s request for a statement included:

“One answer to the question, ‘What do we do with these funds?’ might be simply, ‘Spend them.’ And that seems to be the way the Board is currently trending.

“The Board assumes that I, Patrick Stewart, Susan Whitaker and perhaps also Kevin Fullington would logically have the best sense of the Island’s needs as we are resident here, and they appointed Pat, Susan and myself as an advisory committee to make spending recommendations to the Board.

“So the question is how to make those recommendations fairly and equably. “We are still faced with the responsibility of devising a fair and equitable parceling of the funds. One thing I learned very early in the previous process is that people will naturally be suspicious of any method which seems to have been foisted on them from above. I sympathize with those feelings, but the fact remains that the Board will make the final decisions [based] on the recommendations of this committee. So I guess it behooves us on the committee to make our ears as widely available as possible.

Rademaker Urges Revised Procedure In Awarding Public Purpose Funds

At the July 13 meeting of Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), Jessica Rademaker addressed the question of what mechanism should be used in making decisions to fund projects proposed by Island organizations,

asking the Board to drop a system in which the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) and the Board of the Roosevelt Island Council of Organizations (RICO) made recommendations to the RIOC Board. Although Rademaker did not

make a copy of her remarks available to *The WIRE*, her reasoning is thoughtful and worth the attention of a broader audience than was available at the RIOC meeting; this version is reconstructed from a reporter’s notes of the meeting.

Does she have two votes? Patrick Stewart is a RIOC Board member, President of RIRA, and a Community Board 8 member. Does he have three votes? Dave Kraut is a RIOC Board member, ex-President of RIRA, possible member of RIOC’s Public Purpose Fund committee, and supporter of returning to the failed RIRA/RICO approval process. Is there a conflict of interest? If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it must be a duck.

If control is returned to RIRA and RICO, a hand-picked group will again return to the self-interested distribution of Public Purpose Funds. It is not surprising that the major portion of the Public Purpose Funds have been spent on

projects that are enthusiastically supported by the so-called community leaders. No wonder the Cultural Center, headed by a then-member of the RICO Board, and whose members are her relatives, are staunch supporters of the Cultural Center, received over \$600 thousand in Public Purpose Funds. No wonder RICO received \$350,000 in Public Purpose Funds. Return of control of one-half of the approval process to RICO, the beneficiary of \$350,000, which is over one-third of the Public Purpose social service funds and a complete failure to the extent that former supporters Dave Kraut, Ron Vass and other Board members [now disavow it, would be a mistake]. Patrick Stewart, [also a] former enthu-

siastic supporter of the RICO fiasco, finally rejected further spending when results returned to the past policies that resulted in a stranglehold and lack of interest on the part of many who have been rejected in a request for funding.

Returning the other half of the approval process to RIRA with its domination of reactionary “back to the future” mentality will further erode confidence in equal opportunity on Roosevelt Island.

Returning control of the Public Purpose Funds to RIRA and RICO would be a terrible mistake. The same group continues in their attempts to control all aspects of life on Roosevelt Island and stifle any community spirit and encourage the continual apathy of the majority of residents. The only organization to receive Public Purpose Funds without RIRA and RICO approval was the Young Adult League. It is no coincidence that the Young Adult League is, without question, the most successful social service program on Roosevelt Island, despite the disapproval, denunciation, and ridicule of RIRA and RICO and the so-called community leaders.



Website NYC10044
Jessica Rademaker

Katherine Teets Grimm, M.D.

Board Certified Pediatrician and Allergist
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***Don't wait until the last minute.
Schedule your child's camp
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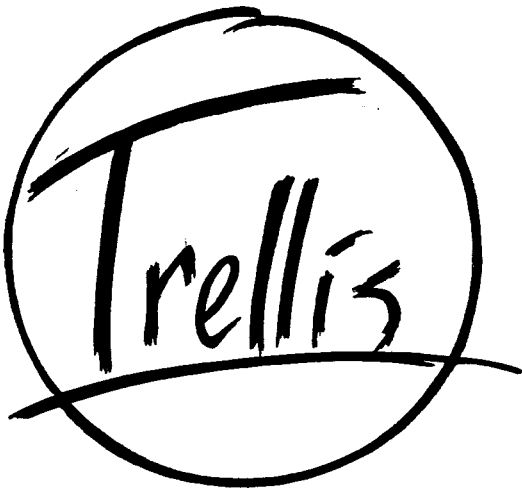
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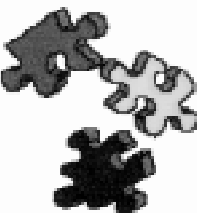
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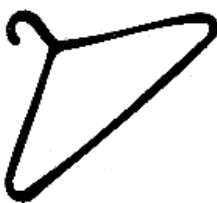
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Chase from page 1

not give any reason for the closing, but Judy Miller, a “spokesperson” for the bank, said the amount of business generated by the branch has been way below expectations. For example, its “sales and new-account numbers have been lower than those of all our branches in Queens and Long Island.”

Miller said she could not reveal the trend in depositors over the past few years. That trend might show whether any decline in depositors reflects the advent on the Island of another banking facility, the Montauk Credit Union, almost three years ago.

A credit union does many of the things a bank does. Montauk offers insured savings accounts (4.25 percent interest) and checking accounts (no minimum balance or per-check charge, 2 percent interest on balances over \$500) and has an ATM. It makes personal loans and does residential mortgages.

Whereas Chase has a major role in cashing payroll checks for the Island’s hospital and building-service workers, Montauk cannot handle large conventional payrolls. Nor can it open a commercial line of credit or meet certain other needs of local merchants, although it does make loans to small businesses. At a meeting Tuesday, members of the Roosevelt Island Chamber of Commerce pressed RIOC’s Ryan for action with regard to Chase.

Louis Jimenez, Montauk’s president, was no more willing than Miller of Chase to reveal the trend in depositors (“members” in the case of a credit union), although he said things have been looking “better.”

Jimenez said that whereas Montauk will certainly try to fill some of the gap left by Chase, he had always expected that the credit union would be an alternative here to a full-service bank rather than the

Damon La Scot Takes a Bride



Jo Hook, 27, and Damon La Scot, 36, an Island resident for more than twenty years, were married in Skottvangs Gruva, Sweden, on June 23. The son of Zann La Scot, a healer, and Paul Rodrigues, a Union organizer, Damon graduated from the Berkeley School of Music in Boston and now plays lead guitar with the band Meat Loaf. Jo’s mother, Eva Ottenas, is a radio broadcaster while her father, Peter Hook, is a Web journalist. Born and raised in Sweden, Jo, a graduate of the New School University, currently works as a personal trainer. She has founded her own system called “Body As an Instrument” and hopes to start a center called “House of Health” around it. “Damon and I are raw foodists, but that is just one of the million interests we share,” said the bride recently.

sole banking facility.

Quite aside from the problem it can pose for current residents, the absence of a full-service bank may well disturb potential developers of Island real estate. Ryan indicated that he had not yet discussed the matter with Related or Hudson, the companies whose plan to develop Southtown has survived a recent court challenge (see page 7). Their officials either refused to speak to *The WIRE* or failed to return telephone calls.

State Senator Olga Mendez expressed dismay when she learned of Chase’s plan, as did Tony Morenzi of Assemblyman Pete

Grannis’s office. Both said they would do their best to make the Island’s case to the State Banking Department.

Patrick Stewart, president of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (who thinks he first tipped off Ryan and Community Board 8 about Chase), reflected the general concern for physically handicapped and elderly residents.

Like several others, Stewart made the point that there are banks considered more user-friendly than Chase; he mentioned Citibank. Like some other residents, he also suggested that a likely replacement might well be some small savings

SPORTSWIRE

The Roosevelt Island Youth Program entered all-star teams in the district Little League Baseball tournament in the Minor division (ages 9-10), the Little League division (11-12) and the Senior Division (14-16). Opening round games in all divisions were played on Roosevelt Island Saturday, July 1, and Sunday, July 2. The tournament experience was a great success, with Youth Program teams winning a game in both the Minor and Little League divisions before being eliminated in the double elimination format.

In the Minor Division, the Youth Program team advanced in the first round when its opponent, a team from the East Harlem League, forfeited. After losing to a team from the Harlem League, the Youth Program team defeated a team from the Greenwich Village League by a 4-3 score before being eliminated by a team from the West Side League. In the victory over Greenwich Village, Justin Gonzalez pitched the first three innings for the win and Thomas Herlihy pitched the last three innings for the save. Other members of the tournament team included Jenna Steuber, Neal Steuber, Steven Morabito, Max McMillan, Eyosyas Taddesse, Austin Lee, Samuel Johns, Sanger DeVine, Joshua Hart, Tim Mucunski, Adrian Gordan, and Alfredo Figueroa. The team was coached by Patricia Steuber and Carlos Gautier.

In the Little League Division, the Youth Program team lost its first game, but then defeated a team from the North Riverdale League by an 8-4 score before being eliminated. In the victory over North Riverdale, Matthew Brodsky pitched a complete game for the win. Other members of the tournament team included Sasha Agosta, Tyrell Anderson, Paul Brown, Lamar Burrows, Shirome Dixon, Christopher Dominguez, Hugo Genes, Omani Guy, Schuyler Penny, Dennis Perezic, and Adam Silverschotz. The team was coached by Joseph Brodsky and Paul Sokoloff.

In the Senior Division, the Youth Program team lost its games to teams from the Felix Milan League and the North Riverdale League. Kenny Hovi pitched the first game and Blas Loor pitched the second game for the Youth Program team. Other members of the tournament team included Scott Davis, Carlos Gautier, Carlos Hiraldo, Michael Kirkman, John Mason, Fabian Medina, Steven Parades, Jovan Ponce, Junior Ruiz, and Brandon Steuber. The team was coached by Steve Kaufman and Carlos Gautier.

SportsWIRE will return in September. Have a great summer.

bank with nearby branches. Several people recommended Astoria Federal Savings.

Stewart said that RIRA’s effort to thwart Chase’s move would be headed by the association’s Vice

President for Planning, Judith Berdy. She has already distributed a call to action, asking residents to write to the State Banking Department in protest (see the box on page 1).

Doctors from page 1

home,” says Dr. Resnick. “I see the environment, whether the refrigerator is well-stocked or not, whether an asthmatic’s home is dusty and if there are loose rugs that can be potentially dangerous.”



Dr. Jack Resnick

Dr. Resnick was born in Germany, but his family moved to Brooklyn when he was two years old. He has lived in New York since then, and attended Yeshiva University High School, Brooklyn College and New York University. He moved to Rochester briefly for his specialization. “In 1977, I came to Roosevelt Island for the first time. My job interview for a group practice on York and 66th was held in Rivercross,” reminisces Dr. Resnick. “I worked in several group practices before deciding to work on the Island full-time in 1997.”

“The Island was a wonderful dream in the ’70s,” says Dr. Resnick. “Some of it came true. We had no institutions back then. We had to build our own social-

support structures like the Day Nursery and the theater. There was no newspaper. One day something was wrong with the Tram and no one knew what had happened, so a group of people decided to start a paper. I was part of it and found that, for the first five years, a lot of people volunteered to work for it. Then, the feeling waned, but now I see it coming back again.”

The doctor has 841 patients on his current list and says he can’t take long vacations because he has a solo practice. “I had a lot of trepidation about being the doctor of a place where I lived, but it worked out well and this is the best medical practice I have been in. It is a very unusual population and no other doctor I know gets to do what I do. However, we need more people so we can have more doctors. For instance, we need a radiologist and an X-ray machine. The current population cannot support that. If the Island reaches 20,000 people, we will have better services,” says Dr. Resnick.

Dr. Resnick reads a lot and enjoys traveling but does not manage to get away too often. He has four boys, all of whom grew up on the Island and started their schooling in PS/IS 217. The older two are 25 and 22 years old and attend medical school, while the two younger ones are 16 year old twins

This article focuses on medical professionals who have major office practices on Roosevelt Island. A future story will cover others, without offices, who provide services to the Island’s residential community. If you’re in that category, please contact *The WIRE* at 826-9055 (fax 755-2540; email nyc10044@rcn.com).

who are in 10th grade. He separated from his wife recently and moved off-Island.

Doctor Itskowitch

When you first catch sight of Dr. Lawrence Itskowitch emerging from his room, he may be wearing a pair of glasses that might scare you, but as you sit down to talk to him, he turns out to be a friendly soul. The 28th resident in Rivercross, the dentist grew up in downtown Manhattan and attended City College as an undergraduate, then



Dr. Larry Itskowitch

New York University for his dental degree.

“I had a fellowship at Goldwater Hospital, and a friend of mine used to drop me off in the middle of the 59th Street bridge where I went into a hole to reach the Island,” said Dr. Itskowitch, referring to the elevator that existed before the Tram became operational.

“I went into service in Vietnam in 1968 and, when I came back, I came to visit some friends at the hospital. That’s when I noticed all these empty buildings and thought of starting a practice here. This

place was fantastic. I felt as if I had the whole place to myself. I could choose the tennis court I wanted to play on. There were no parking problems. For the first five years, at the New Year’s party, everyone knew everyone else. When someone new came, it was an event,” he recalls. “There were no stores – nothing, zero – it was great. Now it has become more like Manhattan. There are more people but less of a community,” laments Dr. Itskowitch. “Even so, it was a great decision to move here. My wife and I raised three sons here. Two are out of the nest and the third just graduated from college.”

He says he enjoys the diversified practice and the fact that he gets to meet people from all over the world. “I have never been to Egypt, but I think I know a lot about it through my patients.”

Doctor Flannigan

The chiropractor, Dr. James Flannigan, came to Roosevelt Island looking for an apartment in the summer of 1999 and noticed the lack of a chiropractic service. He didn’t find an apartment here, but decided to start a practice, nevertheless. Born in New York, Flannigan went to St. John’s for his undergraduate degree in biology, and then to the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic. He practiced in Southern California for eight years before moving back to the East Coast. “I love the City, but the weather kept me away,” he admits.

“I don’t use any drugs in my practice,” says Dr. Flannigan. “My aim is to remove nerve interference in the body. I treat extremities and help older people with balance. I can help colicky children who may have problems with bone alignment. Also, I can help if a child has an ear infection.”

Some people are skeptical about the efficacy of chiropractic services, but if you talk to Damon La Scot and his bride, Jo Hook, who visit Dr. Flannigan every month, you might change your mind. Jo, a personal trainer, said that going to Dr. Flannigan was like “ensuring skeletal maintenance just as one would for one’s hair and nails.” Damon, a musician and athlete, swears by chiropractics in general and Dr. Flannigan in particular. “My repetitive-movement injuries get cured here. I don’t believe in western medicine, which gives you a pill for everything. If a pill didn’t make you ill, why should it make you better?”



Dr. James Flannigan

Dr. Flannigan’s fledgling practice is growing through word-of-mouth. “I have patients who range in age from two to 90. I see a lot more cases here that are varied in need than any other population. This is a very special place,” says Dr. Flannigan.

Photos: Margery Rubin

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Groups File Intent to Appeal on Southtown

Two groups have filed notices of intent to appeal a State Supreme Court decision on Southtown. The Alternative Southtown Design Committee, headed by Attorney Robert Chira, and Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development (RIRSD) are both making plans to raise funds for the continuing legal battle.

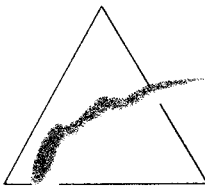
In a decision issued July 5 (and the subject of a *WIRE* extra issue that day), Justice Harold Tompkins ruled (erroneously, according to both sides in the case) that RIRSD had filed its petition too late; that is likely to be a subject of RIRSD's appeal. The Court ruled against Chira on the major points of his case, all of which are likely to be appealed.

[Residents who did not receive the July 5 *WIRE* **EXTRA** edition delivered to their apartment door can pick one up at Montauk Credit Union; in buildings where it is known distribution failed, copies are included with this issue.]

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Stewart from page 1

When the actual vote was taken, Patrick did not vote against the minischools, and an abstain vote, in my opinion, is taking himself out of involvement in something that he knew himself, and very often voiced, himself, that he was against, and that the community was against... There seems to be a problem sustaining and backing his word that the President has exhibited toward the members of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association. I'm very disturbed by it." After Stewart's explanation of his vote, another Council member, Linda Heimer, asked, "...if you had that additional information, you would have voted for [the Diane Wilson minicondo plan]?" Stewart then responded, "I might have." Heimer asked, "Would you please explain your change of position within a few hours?"

"Let me try and re-word it. What I thought the night before was that the resolution would be as stated in the Board package, which said that the minischoools would be built as per Diane Wilson's plans. That was my understanding the night before. I opposed that, 100%. The following morning, in an executive committee meeting, when there was an amendment, a friendly amendment proposed to that, I had to make up my mind one way or another. I couldn't do that until the Board actually was in the meeting, so rather than vote against it, as it had been changed, but I didn't completely understand the changes, I had to vote to abstain." Heimer followed up: "If you were against it at the beginning, why would you have voted for it when you know the whole community is against it?" Stewart responded, "Because the amendment would have put certain

restrictions on the builder, but I don't know what the..." Heimer interjected, "Those weren't enough restrictions according to what the community wants, so..." Stewart responded, "So noted. Thank you." Thereafter, Stewart's response to most questions and criticisms was, simply, "Noted." Gaspard again described the situation before the RIOC Board vote: "There's a definite direction that RIRA has taken toward the minischools, and it was a definite direction that our president in principle [also] took toward the minischools... The community was not willing, and the president had indicated that he was not willing, to accept... the minischools... I would have felt better if irregardless of what form the Board began to take in reference to the minischools, if our President... would be bold enough in spite of his position on the RIOC Board,

would take a position of a no vote, as stated, as he had promised." Another member of the Council, Judy Berdy, asked, "Can't you just ask that something be tabled [if] it is getting too confusing, and it's not clear, and you just don't vote on it? You just say, 'I move that we table this thing.' ... I mean, what's with you guys? Can't you just both say "we want this tabled until next month?" In another comment, Gaspard mentioned reports of the RIOC meeting in *The WIRE*, prompting a response from Stewart: "One last statement that I will make, and that is that, for those people who were there, how many were there, by the way? You will have noted that I had comments to make at that meeting. You will also note that many of the citizens had extraordinary comments to make about that development. There was some discussion about that. As I read *The WIRE*, I think

that most everybody's comments about the development were in *The WIRE*, except mine..." *WIRE* Managing Editor Dick Lutz then said he had asked Stewart three times for a statement explaining his abstention, but Stewart had provided nothing. Stewart then said, "Everyone's comments at that meeting were reported in *The WIRE* except mine, albeit, no *President's Column*. You all know why I don't do a *President's Column*, etc., etc. So that's that. We're finished with that subject." [In this report, Stewart's comments, where quoted, are quoted word for word; those of others are abridged for space reasons. The full transcript of portions of the meeting dealing with Stewart's minicondo abstention accompanies this report on *Website NYC10044* at www.nyc10044.com. A related commentary appears on page 2 of this issue.]

COMING UP

Compiled by Alain Pinset – phone and fax 208-2907
e-mail alpinset@cs.com

Mon., July 31, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Changing Neighborhoods*, amphitheater; enter at passageway next to 540 Main Street. Rain location: Senior Center.

Mon., July 31, 7:30 p.m., Maple Tree Group Meeting, residents seeking democratically-elected local control of Roosevelt Island, Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Open to all residents.

Tues., August 1, 6:00 p.m., Lecture on History of Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Library, 524 Main Street.

Wed., August 2, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Changing Neighborhoods*, amphitheater.

Mon., August 7, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *The Lion in Winter*, amphitheater.

Tues., August 8, 6:00 p.m., Octagon History Lecture, Library, 524 Main Street.

Wed., August 9, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Classical Variety Show*, amphitheater.

Thur., August 10, 11:00 a.m., RIOC Board Meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Residents wishing to speak in the public speaking portion of the meeting should call 832-4540 to register.

Mon., August 14, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Lysistrata*, amphitheater.

Wed., August 16, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Dear Liar*, amphitheater.

Mon., August 21, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *Crazy Street and Garden of Songs*, amphitheater.

Wed., August 23, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *It Never Snows in Texas, Crazy Street and Going Places*, amphitheater.

Sat., August 26, next scheduled issue of *The Main Street WIRE*. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., August 18; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., August 21; bag materials due Thur., August 24. **Future issues:** September 9, 23; October 7, 21; November 4, 18 (Thanksgiving issue); December 1, 15 (Holiday issue); generally every two weeks starting early in January. Advertisers wishing to be included in unscheduled **EXTRA** editions, *without notice at the time*, are invited to call 826-9055 to make their interest known. **Phone/fax** for news, 826-9055/755-2540; urgent/breaking news, 917-353-1647; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, 751-8214/755-2540; phone/fax to list Island events here (no charge), 317-8523.

Mon., August 28, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *The Last Victim* (Act 1), amphitheater.

Wed., August 30, 7:30 p.m., Free Performance, *The Last Victim* (Act 2), amphitheater; enter at passageway next to 540 Main Street. Rain location: Senior Center, 546 Main.

There is no charge for listing Island events here. E-mail information to alpinset@cs.com or fax/call 208-2907.

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7:00 p.m., Glee Club (RISA)

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