

Next issue
in 2 weeks:
Sat., June 14

The Main Street WIRE™

28th Year as Roosevelt Island's Independent Community Newspaper



Theater this Weekend Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* will be staged on the Rivercross lawn today (Saturday, May 31) and tomorrow at 2:00 p.m., and... (see photo and caption, bottom right)...

Slow 911 Responses to Island Might Be Key to a Future Here for RISAR

by Gene Roman

Nancy Brown fell earlier this month while walking from her wheelchair to her bed. A neighbor helped her. She remembers feeling fine for the first few minutes, but then a severe pain began spreading from her upper chest, through her left arm and to her jaw. "I thought I was having a heart attack," she said. "I immediately called Mike Acevedo of RISAR (Roosevelt Island Search and Rescue) and he was there in a matter of five minutes."

As reported in *The WIRE* May 17, RISAR is attempting to carve out a role for itself in responding to medical emergencies here, but the volunteer organization has run afoul of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) and its Public Safety Department (PSD). RIOC President Steve Shane says RISAR must "cease and desist" from responding in official-looking uniforms to PSD and 911 calls overheard on radio frequencies and – if it wants an approved role here – must get fully licensed and be placed on a 911 roster of approved responders. Until that happens and a cooperating agreement can be worked out, says Shane, Public Safety officers will ask any resident using RISAR services to sign

a waiver releasing RIOC and the State from any liability.

For RISAR's part, a spokesman, Chris Tocco, says, "We're not vigilantes or loose cannons. We're a wanted entity on the Island." Another RISAR volunteer, Kelmy Rodriguez, said, "We have people from RIOC and PSD who call us, under the table, for medical assistance."

In Nancy Brown's case, RISAR founder Acevedo and another RISAR volunteer took her vital signs, blood pressure, pulse, and breathing rate. "After hearing my symptoms, they advised calling an ambulance," she said. "The ambulance took about 15 to 20 minutes to arrive. The day was Friday, May 2."

Response Times

A *WIRE* review of emergency response times shows a disparity between the Fire Department's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) averages for Manhattan and Queens and the experiences of sev-

Transportation Tramway's June Downtime About to Bring a Preview of Next Year's Pain

If all goes according to plan, about a year from now the long-serving Roosevelt Island Aerial Tramway will be taken out of service at the pivotal moment in a replacement process that will modernize it and – so say the experts – endow it with greater service flexibility.

By then, another 200 to 300 apartments will be occupied. When the Tram goes down, the F train will see a daily increase of 50% in traffic. During the morning rush, that

change is likely to stress both the system and its Roosevelt Island passengers. It could last eight months to a year.

But commuters will get a preview much sooner. Tramway track-rope replacement is now just nine days away. From June 10 through June 18, a period that includes Roosevelt Island Day on June 14, the Tramway will go out of service – just long enough to provide a nine-day sample of the more extended pain to come.

RIOC has some workarounds in mind, but the MTA has continued to be unresponsive to suggestions that it should find some way to in-

crease morning-rush capacity at the Roosevelt Island station.

RIOC

For the near-term outage, RIOC plans to run rush-hour bus service to Queens every half-hour between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. (ad, page 10), but nothing in any other part of the day unless elevators or escalators go down. RIOC has asked the MTA to avoid weekend diversions during the outage, but the MTA had given no answer by press time. If the MTA does divert trains, RIOC plans on-the-hour bus service to Manhattan from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Return service, on See **Tramway**, page 6

Blog About It
Share the pain:
Tell *The WIRE* and other *Website NYC10044* users about your transportation experiences and personal coping strategies at blog.nyc10044.com.

Community's RIOC Nominees Go to Vetting

The community's nominees to the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) will soon be in the formal vetting process – a step delayed when Governor David Paterson replaced Eliot Spitzer. All six have now been interviewed.

Assemblymember Micah Kellner reports that they will soon receive vetting packets – materials to be completed for use in a State Police background check. Kellner says that once the forms are completed, the Governor will then send four nominees, for the seats he directly controls, to the State Senate for confirmation. Kellner reports that Mayor Bloomberg has agreed to consider the two who will then remain for the two seats for which the mayor recommends candidates to the Governor.

In the best possible scenario, Kellner said, all six will pass the background check and be appointed. Timing is tight. The Senate goes out of session at the end of June, returning in January. Kellner thinks it's possible that the first new appointments may reach the Senate before the June adjournment.



...The Main Street Teen Theatre is presenting *Once Upon a Mattress* in performances that started Friday night at 7:30 and continue today (Saturday, May 31) at 2:00 and 7:30, with performances tomorrow and Monday, as well. Above, Queen Aggravain (Nicole Herlihy) collars her son(s) (Jake Saunders and Graham McMillan) – the show is double-cast – to prevent them from proposing to the girl(s) he wants to marry, played by Katie Fallon and Emily Schuman. The set is by Russian illustrator and puppeteer Fyodor Pavlov. (See *ComingUp*, page 3, and ad, page 5).

Jim Bowser

1929-2008



Former *Main Street WIRE* Editor and Rivercross Board President Jim Bowser died Wednesday morning. (See page 12.)

Briefly...

- The RIOC Board approved purchase of an **additional hybrid bus** at its May 22 meeting. This will bring the fleet to nine, though the oldest bus, a diesel bought in 1994, has 164,000 miles on the odometer. In addition...
 - The Board approved a contract for expansion of **Public Safety's** headquarters.
 - **Trellis's lease** was extended to 2027.
 - The lease on the "boathouse," originally a church and now **Dayspring Church**, was renewed for 10 years (with an additional five-year option).
 - A procedure (reported in the May 17 *WIRE*) for awarding **Public-Purpose Funds** was approved. A committee of the Residents Association Common Council is now at work, considering several applications. (See RIRA Column, page 2.)
 - The Board agreed to buy a **prefabricated restroom** for use at Lighthouse Park, with more to come if that one works out.
 - There's theater on the Island this weekend. See photos, this page and *ComingUp*, page 3.

eral Island residents. Some have called RISAR.

Queens EMS units took 5:12 (five minutes, 12 seconds) to reach cardiac arrest and choking cases in April, according to FDNY records. Other life-threatening medical emergencies required 6:37, on average, and emergencies involving no threat to life took 7:35. "These times are measured from the time the FDNY dispatcher receives the call from the 911 operator and ends when the [EMS] unit signals its arrival on the scene," according to the department's performance indication sheets.

In Manhattan, average response times in April were 4:29 for cardiac arrest, 6:22 for life-threatening emergencies, and 8:58 for non-life-threatening emergencies.

RISAR says it can do better. "Our average response time for calls on the Island is 3-4 minutes," says Kelmy Rodriguez.

An ability to respond faster to life-threatening emergencies – in addition to meeting other RIOC requirements – may be a key factor if RISAR is to secure an approved role here. Public Safety relies on 911 responders and limits its medical response to first aid, CPR, and AED (automatic electronic defibrillator), according to PSD Director Keith Guerra.

Destination Question

Whether or not RIOC and PSD eventually accept RISAR as a legitimate emergency-response partner on Roosevelt Island, the Island will continue to have the same "split identity" problem it has faced since its inception as a residential community: Roosevelt Island is part of Manhattan, but its police, fire, and emergency responses come from Queens because of geography. Queens units can get here faster. But they are Queens-oriented.

At PS 217 a few months ago, a teenage female student was hit in the head with a wrench, according to Tocco. He said school officials called the police and then notified RISAR.

"We arrived within 5 or 6 minutes," said Tocco, 43. "We calmed her down, gave her oxygen, and stopped the bleeding." He said an ambulance arrived 27 minutes later. But the student and her father See **RISAR**, page 6

The Editorial Page

For some years, **Jim Bowser** occupied this space with his Roosevelt Island-centric views. A lover of the Island, he made himself both its advocate and its critic, seeking to preserve the good even while seeking something better for its residents. Homebound for the better part of a decade, Jim nonetheless remained active in keeping his community informed, proof-reading regularly and often calling with a correction that went beyond the bounds of errant typography, or making a story suggestion arising from his deep well of experience, both as a writer and as a happily involved resident.

The *WIRE* you read today is here because of Jim, who labored with love to keep the newspaper alive when resources were slim, when volunteer help waned, when some promised copy never came – all at a time when today’s technology was unavailable and the process of assembling a newspaper was far more difficult than now.

A proper obituary appears elsewhere in these pages, written by *WIRE* Founding Publisher Dr. Jack Resnick. But this space *belonged* to Jim, and it is appropriate that we note his passing here, as well.



Free the Red Bus

We’ve focused on transportation, to some extent, in this issue of *The WIRE*, anticipating the grief Islanders will experience when the Tram is shut down for a week or so, but also when the Tram goes out of service in a year or so, to be replaced with a new system.

The transportation hardships we’ll face when the Big Shut-down comes, though long, will be temporary. Now, we might ask, in what way can we seek other, longer-term improvements in the overall system?

One way is to smooth out the kinks in the Red Bus system, and return to the days when it was a free adjunct to the Tramway.

A free Red Bus ride would produce faster loading through both front *and* back doors, eliminate the fumble at the farebox, and move things along. It would cost nearly \$400,000 in annual revenue, but today’s RIOC can afford it, where yesterday’s could not.

Would it really work? Let’s find out. A good time to test it is during the June 10-18 outage. Let residents ride free – maybe just during the morning rush, but preferably at all times. Publicize it with notices at the bus stops. Let’s see whether that simple trick can improve Red Bus service enough to make a permanent change a good idea.

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Beginning of June 2008.

1. **Board of Directors:** The Board met May 22 and, among other things, authorized the purchase of a new bus, the engagement of the LiRo Group to act as RIOC’s Construction Manager in the Tram overhaul, the purchase and installation of a prefabricated rest room for installation at Lighthouse Park, the go-ahead for the architectural work for the renovation of Public Safety, and a revised process for Public Purpose Fund grants.

2. **Renwick Ruin:** Actual work by the outside contractors has begun. Southpoint Park closings will be necessary on occasion as the work progresses, to accommodate construction traffic and activity.

3. **Southpoint Park-Green Rooms/Wild Gardens:** TPL is completing the environmental analysis to permit step one to go forward. Hopefully, will be ready to start the actual work by the autumn growing season.

4. **Public Purpose Fund:** RIRA is hard at work processing the applications of the various applicants for funding. A report is to be ready for the Board to act upon at its next meeting on June 26.

5. **Tram:** (a) Draft RFP and final specs for the overhaul being reviewed by engineers and lawyers, hopefully to be ready for publication in the very near future.

(b) **Tram closure** Tuesday June 10. The track rope must be slipped, requiring taking the Tram out of service. We regret having to close the Tram for this nine-day period, but safety considerations mandate this work, which has not been done for 14 years. All that can be done to expedite will be done. The crew is scheduled to work 15-hour days and through the weekend.

Transportation issues: RIOC has been in touch with the MTA to try to get assurances about the week-end of June 14-15 but, so far, nothing definite. RIOC will run supplemental bus service, and it will be a good opportunity to see how things will work during the longer period in 2009 when the Tram will be down for the overhaul. There will be no weekday bus service to Manhattan as long as the escalators and elevators at the F train are operating. RIOC will run two buses to Queens Plaza every half-hour during weekday morning rush hours (6:00-10:00 a.m.). There will be no evening rush hour pickup at Queens Plaza. On the weekend, if there isn’t subway service

We’re back from vacation. My thanks to RIRA Veep Gad Levanon, for filling in so ably while I was away. Memorial Day has come and gone and wasn’t it a beaut! Roosevelt Island does summer well, and we all took advantage of the holiday’s glorious weather to stroll, sun, and picnic. Summer may not actually start for another three weeks, but we’ve unearthed last year’s sunscreen and we’re ready to go.

A Lesson from Mexico

Sherie and I got some scuba diving in about 450 km south of Cancun in Mexico. We stayed at a fishing and dive resort near the village of Xcalek just north of the Belize border. That’s near the metropolis of Majahual, if you’re keeping score, which means that we were near...nowhere. Our goal was to banish all Roosevelt Island thoughts for the duration.

We failed. Driving south from the airport on the main highway, we noticed that, as we entered each little town, the speed limit dropped to about 40 km/hr, with one or more speed bumps as incentives to do the right thing. It got us to wondering. Public Safety has informed us that they do not have the manpower (person-power?) to enforce the Main Street speed limit of 15 mph, or to ensure that drivers observe the Yield and Stop signs at our pedestrian crossings. What if RIOC installed speed bumps at those crossings, something that could be accomplished at minimal cost? We know (from first-hand experience, I confess) that crossing a speed bump at anything over 20 mph is a bone-rattling encounter. What do you think?

Public Purpose Fund Grants

You may know that, for almost 20 years now, a sum of money called the Public Purpose Fund (PPF) has been available to subsidize Island non-profit organizations. Originally, this money became available in 1989 when the State waived sales tax payments for materials used in Manhattan Park construction, and diverted the funds into the Fund. The original sum was in the millions, but slowly, incrementally, it was spent down until only the present sum, \$160,000, remained. With the current grant applications, this resource was about to disappear.

For many years, a committee of the RIOC Board of

The RIOC Column

both ways, there will be hourly service starting at 7:00 a.m. from the Island to the pet store diagonally opposite the Manhattan terminal of the Tram on 60th Street, returning on the half-hour, with the last pickup in Manhattan at midnight. The charge for the bus will be 25 cents. We have inquired of the MTA, but integration with the MetroCard system is not practical. Special-needs residents should please contact RIOC well in advance so that special arrangements can be made.

6. **Restroom facilities:** The Board authorized the purchase of prefabricated facilities to be located at Lighthouse Park, with the understanding that, if successful, also at Fireman’s and Capobianco Fields. Our target for delivery and installation by mid-June has slipped because the DOT work on the bridge has required special permitting to deliver the heavy load. Will advise of progress. Similar facilities are contemplated for each of the east and west entrances to Southpoint Park Phase I.

7. **Octagon Ferry Dock:** Studies for required work and permitting under way. Announcement of the City initiative was made with much fanfare, and service to the Rockaways began on Monday, May 12. A City delegation from EDC and DOT came to the Island May 16 to see how the ferry service might be integrated with the proposals by the Octagon developer, and will let us know. Stay tuned for future developments.

8. **Fourth of July:** Plans are proceeding. RIOC will make tickets available to Island residents for \$18, a 10% discount from the price for the general public. The discounted tickets to Islanders require proof of residency, and will be available at the Tram starting May 27.

9. **Subway water flow:** MTA and DEP are trying to find the source of the running water in the subway tunnel, and have experimentally turned off the water for short periods of time in Southtown. More sophisticated equipment will be brought to try to find the source. So far, no answer.

Directors considered the grant requests and made recommendations to the full Board. At one time, RIRA and another, defunct, Island organization, the Council of Organizations (RICO), had an advisory role in the process. RIOC’s Steve Shane wanted to reintroduce community involvement in determining procedures, criteria, and the fair allocation of funds, and considered ways of maintaining this social benefit to the Island, postponing any grants for some months until they arrived at a solution.

You read about the proposed solution in the last issue of *The WIRE*. RIOC will contribute \$100,000 annually from the operating budget to sustain the Pubic Purpose budget line item. Steve and Vice President Rosina Abramson made a pitch to the Common Council at our May meeting, and we voted to take on the task. Former RIRA President and current Rivercross delegate Steve Marcus has convened a subcommittee to take on the challenge. And challenge it is, having been asked in this first year of operation to begin work when the deadline for applications closed on May 23 and to present our determinations by June 9. In fact, for the Common Council to endorse the recommendations of the subcommittee, our work must be completed by the June 4 meeting, the last meeting of the Council until September.

The difficulty lies in the discrepancy between the \$100,000 available to Island groups and the over \$250,000 requested by eight organizations. It is unlikely that RIOC will ever again fully fund the organizations it once was able to support. My concern is that RIRA, by accepting this role as intermediary between Island organizations and the RIOC contribution, will not make any friends as we parcel out the



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Matthew Katz, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
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See RIRA Column, page 13

COMING UP

– This Weekend –

Once Upon a Mattress, presented by the Main Street Teen Theatre, **Fri May 30**, 7:30pm, **Sat May 31**, 2pm & 7:30pm, **Sun Jun 1**, 2pm & 7pm, **Mon Jun 2**, 7pm, Howe Theatre, Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance, 548 Main St. (entry behind video store). Evening performances \$15 (seniors, students \$10), matinees \$12 (\$8). Reservations & information **212-371-4449**. (Ad, page 5.)



CPR / AED Certification Class, Sat May 31, 10am-5pm, offered by RISAR at Island Kids, 536 Main St. \$25; discounts available. Information **212-752-4003**.

Shakespeare in the Park, Much Ado About Nothing, Sat-Sun May 31-June 1, 2pm, Rivercross Lawn.

– The Coming Week –

Constituent Service Hours for State Sen. José Serrano, **Tue June 3**, 3-7pm, RIOC, 591 Main St. Information **212-828-5829**.

Orphans International Benefit, Wed June 4, 6pm, Indonesian Consulate, 5 E. 68th St. Indonesian dance, batik demonstrations, gamelan music; silent auction, including two tickets to Singapore. \$250. Reservations **212-755-7285**.

Residents Association Common Council meeting, **Wed June 4**, 8 pm, Good Shepherd Community Center (lower level); meetings are open to all, and begin with an opportunity for residents to address the Council.

Basic First Aid Certification Class, Sat June 7, 10am-5pm, PS/IS 217, offered by RISAR at PS/IS 217. \$25; discounts available. Information **212-752-4003**.

– Future Weeks –

Book Discussion with Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney on her new book, *Rumors of Our Progress Have Been Greatly Exaggerated*, with Hunter College Provost Vita Rabinowitz, hosted by Hunter College President Jennifer J. Raab, **Mon June 9**, 6-8pm, Hunter College Faculty Dining Room, southwest corner of 68th St. and Lexington Av., 8th floor. RSVP **212-772-4007** or spevents@hunter.cuny.edu. Program starts 6:30 after hors d’oeuvres; reception at 7:30.

Toastmasters Open Meeting, Mon June 9, 8pm. Visitors welcome. Information **212-751-9577**.

Tramway Shutdown, Mon June 9, 10pm through **Wed June 18**; service resumes 6am Thu June 19. (See transportation story, page 1.)

Succeeding in a Tight Job Market – The Right Target, a program of Orphans International with Dr. Harriet Katz, **Wed June 11**, 5-6:30pm, OI offices at 559 Main St. Additional sessions June 18 (*Winning Cover Letters/Résumés*), June 24 (*Getting Meetings*), June 30 (*Moving to the Office*). \$30 donation to Orphans International. Reservation required. E-mail info@oiw.org or call **212-755-7285** by June 6.

Opening Reception for Inventions, a member show with special guest Mihai Caranica, **Sat June 14**, 6-9pm, Gallery RIVAA. Show continues through August 24. Gallery hours **Sat-Sun** 11-5, **Wed & Fri** 6-9. ▸



The Main Street WIRE – Next issue **Sat June 14**. (To receive e-mail bulletins between issues, send an *AddMe* message to Bulletins@MainStreetWIRE.com.) **Advertising Deadlines:** Ads in the paper, Thu June 5; decision on circulars/inserts for *The Bag*, Tue June 10; they are due Thu June 12. **Additional issues in 2008:** June 28; Aug 2, 30; Sept 13, 27; Oct 11, 25; Nov 8, 22; Dec 6, 20; then every two weeks starting Jan 17 2009. **News phone, 212-826-9055**; urgent matters, **917-617-0449**. **Advertising**, display and classified: **212-751-8214**. **Roosevelt Island Day, Sat June 14**. Clean up and spruce up in the morning; have more fun all afternoon with rides & games. Town center, mostly in Good Shepherd Plaza.

Book Discussion – White Noise by **Don DeLillo**, **Thu June 19**, 6:30pm, New York Public Library Island branch. Copies at the library.

Outdoor Movie, Sat June 21, 8:45pm, Firefighters Field (near the Tram). Blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics welcome.

Toastmasters Open Meeting, Mon June 23, 8pm. Visitors welcome. Information **212-751-9577**.

RIOC Board Meeting, Thu June 26, 9:30am, Good Shepherd Community Center.

Constituent Service Hours for State Sen. José Serrano, **Tue July 1**, 3-7pm, RIOC office, 591 Main St. Information **212-828-5829**.

At the Library for Kids

Mondays, After School

June 23, Silk Painting with Patricia Jacobs

There is no charge to list Island events here. E-mail information to ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com or leave information at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*. Please provide a phone number for possible follow-up.

Fourth of July Fireworks, Fri July 4, Southpoint Park.

Book Discussion – The Namesake by **Jhumpa Lahiri**, **Thu July 17**, 6:30pm, New York Public Library Roosevelt Island branch. Books available at library.

Outdoor Movie, Sat July 19, 8:45pm, Firefighters Field (near the Tram). Blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics welcome.

Outdoor Movie, Sat Aug 9, 8:20pm, Firefighters Field (near the Tram). Blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics welcome.

Book Discussion – Book of Illusions by **Paul Auster**, **Thu Aug 21**, 6:30pm, New York Public Library Roosevelt Island branch. Books available at library.

Shakespeare in the Park, Sat-Sun Aug 23-24, 2pm, Rivercross Lawn.

Residents Association Common Council meeting, **Wed Sept 3**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center (lower level); meetings are open to all, and begin with an opportunity for residents to address the Council.

RIOC Board Meeting, Thu Sept 11, 4:30pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Town-hall meeting, at end of formal session, for resident comments and questions.

Residents Association Common Council meeting, **Wed Oct 1**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center (lower level); meetings are open to all, and begin with an opportunity for residents to address the Council.

To the Editor:

What an impressive new Director of Public Safety we now have on Roosevelt Island!

Keith Guerra expressed genuine concern for the safety of Island residents, and exhibited a highly professional approach to his department’s responsibilities at Tuesday’s meeting of the Roosevelt Island Democratic Club.

His motto is *Together we can make a difference*, and he urged residents to call Public Safety at **212-832-4545** whenever he or his officers can provide assistance or answer questions.

We are lucky to have him here!

Mary Camper-Titsingh

To the Editor:

My father worked in a steel mill – a dangerous, dirty, noisy job. He admired FDR – said he was “a champion of the working man.” The mill where he worked is long closed, but people are still working at stressful, exhausting jobs. An Island House tenant, “Elizabeth,” put it so well at a community meeting: *People need light and air and open space*.

As you get off the Tram, look at the encroaching hulk across from it. The word “claustrophobia” comes to mind.

Mr. Roosevelt already has an Island named after him. That’s pretty good! Dr. Resnick got it right. The best way to further honor FDR would be a statue of him, in his wheelchair, at the entrance of a wheelchair-accessible path, with a simple plaque: “This beautiful open space preserved for the enjoyment of all, in grateful memory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.”

I “discovered” the Island when a casting director sent me over there for two days of work on the infamous film, *Dark Water*. I wish I had known about the Island during the time when it was planned as a place where people of all professions and incomes could live together – before the demise of Mitchell-Lama. However, I’m on the Island two or three times a week from spring through about October – and have three Roosevelt Island cats. It’s a special place, and I’m appalled at all of the overbuilding that is happening.

Colleen Kennedy

Letters deadline for June 14 issue: Tuesday, June 10.
After deadline, letters considered on a space-available basis.

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters of local interest to the community, and to/from officials. Requests for *Name Withheld* publication will be considered, but the writer’s name, address, and phone number must be provided for verification and for our records; *letters submitted anonymously will not be published*. Recommended method of submission: E-mail to Letters@MainStreetWIRE.com or submit on a CD left at the desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*. If you e-mail, *expect a confirming response* and, if you don’t receive one, *resend* and call 212-826-9055 to alert us that it’s been sent. Alternatives: Typed copy left at 531 Main Street; allow extra time for typesetting. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered, if brief. We are not able to take telephone dictation of letters. All letters subject to acceptance and editing for length and clarity. Recommended maximum length, 350 words; longer letters will be considered if their content merits the required space.

On the Island

Planning Summer Activities

Sportspark and Playing Fields

Fill out application available at rioc.com/generalapp.htm. No permit needed, and no charge, for groups of 15 and under, but permit holders get priority on a reserved field. To check field availability and permit fees, call Donna Masly at **212-832-4563**.

Octagon Park Tennis Courts

Annual-permit form at rioc.com/2008/tennisrules.htm. Adults, \$100; age 18 and under, \$10; 62 and over, \$20; Instructors, \$200. Courts open year-round at dawn and close at 10:30 p.m., seven days a week.

Barbecues

Free, first come, first served. To plan a special event using the grills, at Lighthouse Park, Southpoint Park, and near Manhattan Park call Donna Masly at **212-832-4563**. Permit and fee required for reservations.

To the Editor:

Now that the weather is getting warmer and our children are running and rolling in the beautiful grassy areas of Roosevelt Island, I could not help but make an observation.

On my own walks around the grounds of the Island, I notice many residents walking their dogs. I also notice that many of these dog-walkers are not cleaning up after their dogs.

Perhaps it is time not only to post signs but also to have Public Safety be aware of those who contaminate the grounds where our children grow and play and where we all live.

Michael Rogers

To the Editor:

After reading the article *Volunteer Rescue Group...* in the May 17 *WIRE*, it is apparent that there is a feud a-brewing on our little Island. I can certainly understand and appreciate RIOC’s contention that RISAR should be “legitimized.” However, I would think that when a volunteer group like RISAR arrives at the scene, it should identify itself (to include comments that it is a volunteer organization that is not affiliated with any State, City, or local government or organization) and ask whether it can offer any assistance, or whether the party would rather wait for more official assistance, and that this would be sufficient.

Expecting a volunteer organization to carry full liability insurance seems to me to be a bit much, but maybe the cost would not be prohibitive. If it is, perhaps RIOC or PSD should make a donation to RISAR to cover the cost, since they are requesting the insurance.

The article further goes into a lot of he-said-he-said, which sounds to me like the officials on this Island picking on poor little RISAR, especially the tickets issued after the fact. I would like to address one of those charges – speeding. PSD Director Guerra states that “15 miles per hour ... is the speed limit on the Island.” Well, I’ve lived here only a few years and do not drive, but I’d guess that about 95% of the cars I’ve seen driving on this Island should be cited. PSD needs to have a fair and consistently applied speeding-ticket policy. If one car is guilty (like RISAR’s), the rest should be held to the same standard.

What is the purpose of having an Island speed limit if it’s not enforced consistently, and is used for “piling on,” such as in this case? Aside from RISAR nonsense, we have *real* problems on this Island – like how we are going to transport our skyrocketing population, especially when the Tram is down, given that we are having significant difficulties doing so right now.

I would like to add that Mr. Shane seems to be doing a fine job since he’s been here – much better than his predecessor, Herbert E. Berman, but I guess a blind chimpanzee could have done that. Seriously, though, Mr. Shane has shown good leadership as RIOC President. I especially appreciate the way he keeps the populace informed and seems to be responsive to its suggestions. I cannot say anything about Keith Guerra, as he has not been here long and I am not aware of any changes he has put into practice, other than the Segways if that was his idea. For the record, I think that they are unnecessary, but everyone loves new toys... you should see my face light up when I get a new computer at work!

Kent Kurkiewicz

Senior Center

Monday
9:30, **Hawaiian Hula**
10:30, **English as 2nd Language**
11:00, **Tai Chi**
12:30, **“Oldies” Movies**
6:00, **Yoga**

Tuesday
9:30, **Get Stronger Bones**
10:30, **Blood Pressure**
10:30, **Shoppers’ Bus**
2:00, **Bingo**
2:00, **Paint & Sculpt**
7:30, **Games (RISA)**

Wednesday
9:30, **Yoga**
10:30, **Computers**
10:30, **Shoppers’ Bus**
7:00, **Pokeno (RISA)**

Thursday
9:30, **Get Stronger Bones**
10:30, **Creative Arts**
12:30, **Movie**

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Friday

9:30, **Yoga**
10:45, **Theater Group**
1:00, **Bridge**
7:00, **Games (RISA)**

Saturday

7:30, **Bingo (RISA)**

Special Events

Flea Market, Sat June 21, 9-4
Atlas Mall, Thu June 26, 12

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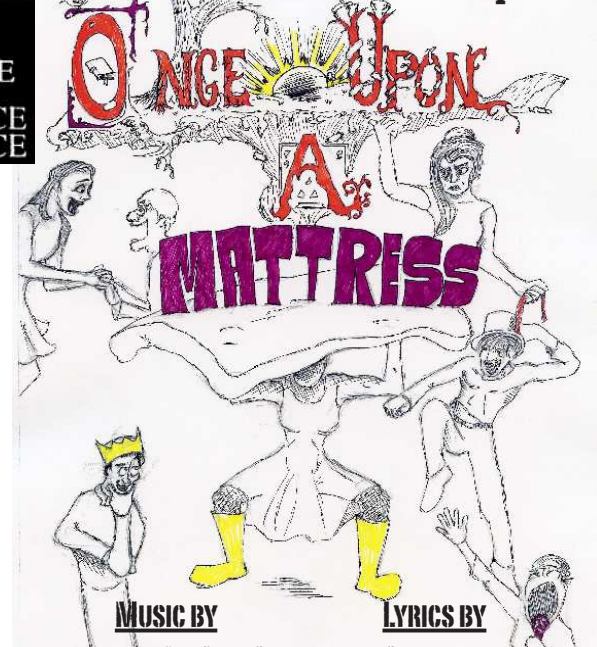
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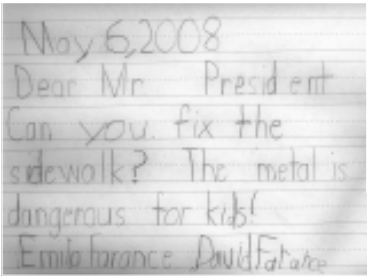
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Getting Action at the Top

Twins Emilia and David Farance got a quick reward for their efforts to have a sidewalk fixed when they wrote to RIOC President Steve Shane (letter below and photo right from the May 17 *WIRE*). Shane showed them results last week – a metal strip was removed, eliminating what the kids considered a hazard. David then invited Shane to come to his swimming class.



RISAR from page 1

ther, who had arrived a short time after the assault, wanted to be transported to Weill Cornell at East 68th and York Avenue, according to Tocco. “She and her father said that her primary-care physician worked at Cornell, and that’s where her medical records were,” Tocco recalled in an interview with *The WIRE*.

When the EMS unit refused to take the girl to Manhattan, the teenage girl’s father signed a release and took his daughter there himself, Tocco said.

Dr. Jack Resnick, who treats many Roosevelt Islanders, also told *The WIRE* that he has a frequent problem with Queens EMS units, which take emergency patients to Queens hospitals, often Mt. Sinai/Queens (formerly Astoria General Hospital). Resnick doesn’t practice there. It means he and his patients get disconnected and they come under the care of a physician unfamiliar with their medical history, medication requirements, and recent condition.

“Worse yet,” says Resnick, “they get discharged to a nursing home and we completely lose touch.”

Resnick would like to see RISAR fulfill the requirements outlined by RIOC and PSD. “They’ve asked me to be their volunteer medical director,” he told

The WIRE. “They could respond more quickly and meet our unique needs. But they must straighten out their insurance and other technical problems first. I’m going to try to help them do that.”

On the insurance question, RISAR says it solved that problem May 1 under a policy written by the Volunteer Firefighters Insurance Service, with a \$1 million/\$3 million policy that their insurance agent, Ken Andrews, says covers all their volunteers and indemnifies RIOC, the State, and the City.

Holiday Response Times

There are times when “average” response times mean little. RISAR’s Kelmy Rodriguez described another incident that occurred on the Fourth of July in 2007. He said a 22-year-old male was found drunk near the Public Safety office, and that PSD officers and a couple of the man’s friends moved him into the lobby of one of the residential buildings.

“His head was split wide open and there was bleeding everywhere,” Rodriguez recalled. “I could see his cranium. We had to do hemorrhage control using pressure bandages and ice packs until the FDNY EMS ambulance arrived 90 minutes later.”

Helping 911 Get Here

Islander Virginia Granato, who moved here from Astoria in 1976,

Columbia Unit to Study Island’s Transit

Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation will conduct a wide-ranging study of Roosevelt Island’s transportation needs, according to Jonathan Kalkin, one of the residents selected by the community in February’s election of RIOC Board nominees.

Kalkin says he contacted several area universities, finally striking pay dirt with Columbia, where Dr. Floyd Lapp, former Director of the New York City Department of City Planning (under Mayors Dinkins and Giuliani), will supervise an involvement of one-fifth of his school’s graduate student body.

Kalkin said the study will deal with bunching and overcrowding on the Red Buses, difficulties with subway service, and more.

Prof. Lapp has 45 years of experience in the field, has served as president of the New York Metro American Planning Association, and chaired the American Institute of Certified Planners. His last study of the

Tramway from page 1

the half-hour, will run from 7:30 a.m. to midnight, according to RIOC President Steve Shane, in his column in this issue. (Pickup & dropoff will be at the pet store diagonally opposite the Manhattan Tramway terminal.) Cost of the bus services will be 25 cents for all comers except children, who will ride free.

MTA

Subway authorities have repeatedly told Roosevelt Islanders and their political representatives that there’s simply nothing that can be done to increase capacity here. The problem is the allocation of resources against time, and the particular resource is feeder-tunnel capacity coming out of Queens. The 63rd Street Connector tunnel handles both F trains (which serve the Island) and V trains (which run under the Island, then through the station at 51st Street). The MTA says that the V is even more crowded than the F and that, in any case, there is no safe way to jam more trains through that tunnel.

Q trains? No. A shuttle? No. Stage a Roosevelt Island-only train back in Queens and bring it through at the right moment? No.

RIRA Common Councilor (and community nominee to the RIOC Board) Frank Farance has been the author of several of these ideas, some submitted through the Island’s elected representatives to

the City Council and the State Legislature – to no avail. He says the Transit Authority has spurned such ideas as swapping the F and V lines, running a shuttle, or extending Q service through Roosevelt Island from 57th/7th to 21st/Queensbridge.

New Farance Proposal

Farance is about to propose another idea. Here’s how he describes it:

“During the morning rush, for the months that the Tram is out of service, the MTA should reserve the first car for Roosevelt Island passengers. When each F train starts its run back in Queens (every four to six minutes), the doors on the first car would remain closed until the Roosevelt Island stop, where it would arrive empty. At Roosevelt Island, the front car would be opened, allowing up to 200 passengers to board. That’s over 2,000 passengers per hour, easily replacing the missing Tram capacity. Past Roosevelt Island, the first car would remain open, available for all passengers.

“The Tram is an important part of the transportation infrastructure and the MTA should make this accommodation while the Tram is out of service.”

At present, many of the F trains arrive here full, sometimes beyond rated capacity. A few Islanders squeeze past those who’ve planted their feet at the doors, but many are left behind. Occasionally, a train

Queens, said that there is no standard response time that EMS services are required to adhere to. “Everything used to be scoop-and-run in the old days,” he told *The WIRE*. “Now it depends on the nature of the injury. A lot of resuscitation, for example, can now be done in the field, thanks to advances in emergency medicine over the years.”

The American College of Emergency Physicians approved a policy governing alternate ambulance transportation and destination in January 2001. It reads in part:

“The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP) believe that patient care and safety are the priorities for all emergency medical services (EMS) systems. All calls requesting EMS response should be managed according to these priorities. EMS systems may encounter patients who do not need advanced life support (ALS) level care or evaluation at an emergency department. In these circumstances, transportation by alternate means or to an alternate destination may be appropriate.”

Nancy Brown said that her preference for an emergency service depends on the urgency of the situation. “RISAR is much quicker to respond while I’m waiting for FDNY’s EMS service,” she said.

Tappan Zee Bridge recommended construction of a new bridge, and received accolades in the industry.

“On May 17, RIOC Board member Mark Ponton and I met with Dr. Lapp and toured the Island. It was Dr. Lapp’s first trip back to the Island in 30 years,” Kalkin told *The WIRE*. “He said the current situation, especially in the middle and southern parts of the Island, where development is taking place, has put the infrastructure under extreme pressure.”

The Island study will involve six months of preparation, with presentations to the community. Its primary on-the-ground focus will be in spring 2009.

“Most important,” Kalkin said, “RIOC has agreed to be the client for this study. I have met with [RIOC President] Steve Shane and several RIOC Board members, and they are as excited as I am about this opportunity.”

“For residents, this could mean solutions – an easier morning commute, improved Red Bus service, and overall, an improved quality of life.”

comes through with fewer passengers, and it sweeps the platform. For the frail elderly and disabled, there’s no cross-river transportation until that happens. Able-bodied people report, over and over again, that they have had to wait for multiple trains to pass through before they can find space on one. The complaint became so common that few bother to voice it anymore. Manhattan-bound commuters develop little strategies – for example, a particular place to stand where, experience has shown, space is more likely to be available. Going a little earlier, perhaps, or a little later, to take advantage of a likely lull. Or traveling “upstream” into Queens to board a Manhattan-bound train before it fills.

Personal strategies and lucky breaks notwithstanding, the morning F trains are already desperately tight, and the left-behinds are about to grow in number.

Water Taxi

City Councilmember Jessica Lappin is pushing for Water Taxi service to be available from the Octagon dock by the time next year’s long outage begins. It won’t be available for next month’s shutdown, and it may take some doing to have it in service before the Tram rebuild.

In any case, waterborne service will be no panacea. The Tram holds 100 people per trip and makes eight or more Manhattan-bound trips per hour in its busy hours. Water taxi service won’t be that frequent, and patronage couldn’t fill the seats if it were. It’ll help, but it’s a minority of Manhattan-bound commuters whose travel needs can be satisfied by a trip terminating at a Manhattan riverbank, even when met by a bus that will carry them toward the central spine of the borough. Docking at The Octagon, the service will appeal more to residents there and in Manhattan Park. Despite capacity problems, residents in the new Southtown population center are likely to find the subway faster and more direct.

Other Modes

As now routed, the Q102 bus requires a transfer in Queens to a Manhattan-bound bus. Given the circuitous route and bridge delays, a multiple-train delay on the subway is likely to be more acceptable to Islanders headed to Manhattan, particularly in rush hours.

Next Spring

The schedule for Tramway replacement will enter the pre-construction phase in August, with a subcontract award period starting in October, concurrent with the start of the construction phase.

Actual shutdown is estimated to occur in May 2009 and last to November 2009, an out-of-service period of seven months.

The schedule is subject to revision, though the length of the outage is not likely to decrease.

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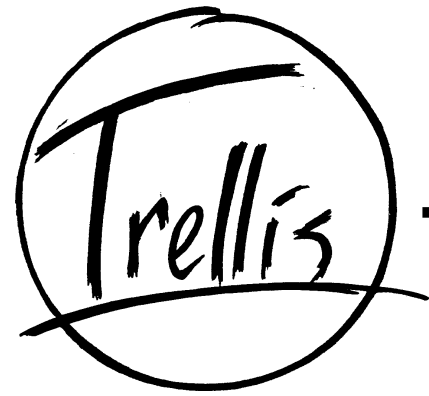
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Scenes from the Island’s Family Album: It Was Health & Fitness



On Health & Fitness Day

Members of Island’s Public Safety Team Receive Recognition



Members of the Island’s Public Safety Department (PSD) were cited two weeks ago, on Health and Fitness Day. In the foreground in the photo are Capt. Estrella Suarez, PSD Director Keith Guerra, and PSD Deputy Director René Bryan. Officers cited included: **Exceptional Merit** (for an “act of exceptional bravery, intelligently performed in the line of duty at imminent and personal danger of life”)– Sgt. Michelle Evans, Special Patrol Officer (SPO) Frensheria Michael, SPO Raphael Payne, Lt. Gary Yee; **Life Saving Service** (“instrumental in a person’s life being saved”) – Sgt. Michelle Evans, SPO Raphael Payne; **Meritorious Service** (“an act of intelligent and valuable service, demonstrating special faithfulness and a highly creditable unusual accomplishment”) – SPO Melinda Adolphe, SPO William Dentone, SPO Norberto Donet, Sgt.

Michelle Evans, Sgt. Raul Hernandez, SPO Frensheria Michael, SPO Raphael Payne, SPO Deborah Viel, SPO Ingrid K. Veras, Lt. Gary Yee; **Excellent Service** (“intelligent and valuable accomplishment”) – SPO Malcolm Chavis, Lt. Wanda M. Coleman, SPO William Dentone, SPO Michelle Evans; SPO Corey Fischer, SPO Randolph Forde, Sgt. Raul Hernandez, SPO Lindsey, SPO Raphael Payne, SPO Harry Rodriguez; SPO Ingrid K. Veras, SPO Michelle Williams, SPO Kionna Wray. **Civilian Awards for Bravery** were presented to SPO Galletti. Police Officer Evelio Fernandez of the Queens 114th Precinct (which is part of the Island’s Public Safety Department) received the **Police Officer Award of Recognition**.

ess Day Two Weeks Ago, and a Healthy Time Was Had By All



ognition

el Payne, Capt. Estrella Suarez, SPO
gent act materially contributing to a valuable
iam Dentone; SPO Norberto Donet; Sgt.
ndez, Sgt. Wayne Jones, SPO Rodell
SPO Jazmin D. Walker, Youth Officer
esented to Nelson Soltren and Joseph
h serves Roosevelt Island) was given a

Photos:
Paul Katz

TRAM SERVICE ADVISORY

DUE TO THE SCHEDULED ROOSEVELT ISLAND TRAMWAY OUTAGE
FROM MONDAY JUNE 9, 2008 AT 10 PM, TO THURSDAY JUNE 19th AT 6 AM,
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Queens Express Bus Service Schedule

Roosevelt Island Bus Stop Location:
Gristedes on Main Street

Queens Pickup/Drop Off Location:
Queens Plaza South / Jackson Avenue

Pickup Times are as follows:

Pickup Times are as follows:

Weekdays	Weekdays
6:00am	6:30am
6:30	7:00
7:00	7:30
7:30	8:00
8:00	8:30
8:30	9:00
9:00	9:30
9:30	10:00
10:00am	10:30am

Transfers Available at the Queens Plaza South/Jackson Avenue location (MTA bus stop):

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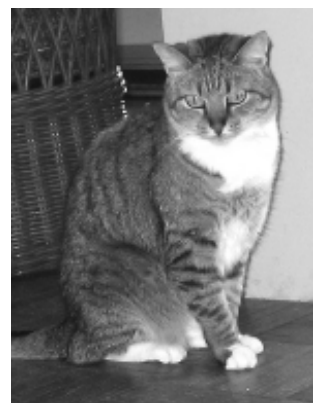
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Octagon Cited The Becker + Becker team observed the arrival of a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver plaque this week. The building is the largest LEED Silver multifamily development in the country, and the largest LEED Silver historic preservation project in the country. Left to right, above: John Renner, Senior Development Associate; Russ Unger, Executive Director of the New York chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council; Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Developer Bruce Becker; Kirsten Springer, Vice President of Development; Eric Lehto, Jr., project architect.

SPORTSWIRE

BASEBALL
Majors

Thursday, May 15 The Majors weekly action started Thursday evening with a match that pitted the Cubs against the Cardinals. The Cubs’ Collin Penny and Drew Clarke went against the Cardinals’ Steven Sanchez and Luke Kruger-Aimone in a hard-fought duel that saw the lead change nearly every inning, but the Cardinals held out and snuffed a last-inning rally to win the game 12-8. For the Cardinals, Chris Roman hit a 3-run triple and later scored, while Ben Sobel went 1 for 1 with 2 walks, 4 stolen bases and 3 runs scored. Medoune Cisse was 2 for 2 and Jake Hogan was 1 for 2 with a walk, a base hit, 3 stolen bases, and a run scored. Luke Kruger-Aimone went 2 for 3 and Esther Turay, Michael Leyden, Patrick Fallone, and Brock Lucas each scored once. Cardinals defensive highlights include a strong throw by catcher Brock Lucas down to 2nd and a subsequent run-down by Kruger-Aimone in the 4th inning, and a great play by 1st baseman Jake Hogan on a ground ball hit to the gap, tossing to a covering Kruger-Aimone to get the runner at 1st. A game ball was awarded to Medoune Cisse.

Friday, May 16 The Tigers battled the A’s in a Friday evening match-up that resulted in a Tigers’ victory.

Saturday, May 17 The Majors played a double-header that began with the Cubs hosting the Tigers in a game that ended in an 8-8 tie. The Tigers’ Brandon Ewing and James Matten combined for 5 Tigers runs, while the Tigers used three pitchers to get the outs when they needed them. The Cubs’ slick defense from Drew Clarke and Jonah Bobo kept the Tigers in check. Both teams scored every inning until the last two, when the defenses took over and deadlocked the game.

In game 2, with both the Cardinals and the Athletics down to just 9 players due to wrestling championships and the school play, the A’s Aidan Strein returned to the mound and threw a complete game, retiring the last seven batters in order. For good measure, Aidan also blasted a three-run homer in the bottom of the 5th to tie the game at 5-5. Jaemel Carter was robbed of at least one RBI on an amazing diving stab of a hot line drive by Cards Shortstop Luke Kruger-Aimone. For the Cards, starting pitcher

Hans Nisthaus pitched a complete game, striking out 11 and walking only 1 batter. Justin Reyes stepped up to play 3rd base, making a key fly-ball catch to end the 4th inning and another great play on a ground ball in the 5th to throw the runner out at 1st base for the second out. Luke Kruger-Aimone made an amazing back-handed diving catch of a line drive for the first out in the 2nd. Patrick Fallone caught a solid game behind the plate, while Hans Nisthaus threw

Standings as of May 25

Minors	
Athletics	2 - 2
Cubs	2 - 2
Cardinals	2 - 1 - 1
Tigers	1 - 2 - 1
Majors	
Cardinals	4 - 2 - 1
Tigers	3 - 2 - 1
Cubs	3 - 3 - 1
Athletics	1 - 4 - 1

Kruger-Aimone. The game ended on a bang-bang play at 1st base when B.J. Johnson, whose bat suddenly came to life, was thrown out by the Cards pitcher, who had a stellar game defensively as well as on the mound.

Thursday, May 22 In a make-up game between the Tigers and the Cubs, the Cubs scraped by with only 8 players and managed to get 6 runs across the plate. The Cubs’ Alexander Enock made a spectacular catch in left field and added to the run total later in the game. Thomas Jones also singled and scored for the Cubs. The Tigers got the run support they needed by way of a home run from Thomas Diamond and two runs scored by John King.

Minors

Wednesday, May 21 In Wednesday’s game, the Tigers bested the Cubs 15-7 by way of the big bats of Isiah Cole, Aren Marfey, and Kerwin Barrera, who got the Tigers on the board in the first inning. Serica Samms added to the hit parade, while home runs from Elijah Colon and Aren Marfey and a last-inning grand slam by Giovanni Story iced the game for the Tigers. Tigers’ defense held back the Cubs, led by Kamile McRay at pitcher and Isiah Cole at second base.

The Minors second game saw the Cardinals outmatch the Athletics.

Jim Bowser

by Jack Resnick

Jim Bowser always had a ready wit. One night, a bunch of us were playing poker. Someone noticed that the table’s surface was badly scratched and needed to be sanded down. “It should be rebuffed,” I said. And Jim, without a moment’s hesitation, said, “Bad Table! Bad Table.”

Jim passed away Wednesday morning in the Rivercross apartment he loved living in for more than 30 years. He had spent 13 years on the building’s Board of Directors, many of them as its President. Residents could almost always find Jim holding court in the lobby. Jim loved to hold court. He had his first stroke 12 years ago – the sort of profound stroke from which few people recover. He fought back through months of rehabilitation, and was back on Main Street holding court from his wheelchair.

Rivercross was but one of many Island organizations that benefited from Jim’s leadership. He chaired the Youth Center’s Board; he was president of the Roosevelt Island Community Library back before it became part of the New York Public Library System; he was a vice-president of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association.

But I knew him best as editor of this newspaper. I edited the paper for its first 15 years, but had run out of steam. The large cadre of volunteers who had started *The Main Street WIRE* had dwindled down to a precious few. Luckily, Jim was still around and he agreed to take over the editorship. He rejuvenated *The WIRE* and continued to work on it even after he returned from his stroke. His acerbic wit and incredible command of the language made *WIRE* editorials sparkle.

Jim was an old newspaper man. He was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania, to Thelma Smith and Kenneth Bowser. The family moved to Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where, after graduating from high school, he went to work at the steel mill. But, as Jim described it, “a little fat man” could not make it in the mill. The editor of the local newspaper, the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*, took him on as a reporter. (A search of the Trib’s archives will reveal that Jim was one of the early contestants on “21,” the 1950’s

quiz show. He reached the \$11,000 plateau, but the article doesn’t reveal whether he lost it on the next plateau or took his winnings home.)

He rose to become night city editor of the Trib but then headed to New York City, where he landed a job editing a trade paper,



The Barber’s Journal. From there he went to Dell Publishing Company for some 20 years, serving ultimately as its special projects editor. As a free-lance novelist, he authored a series of mysteries under the pseudonym Nick Carter.

Jim and Dorothy were married in 1976 and have a daughter, Sarah Cases, and granddaughter Yolanda. Dorothy Bowser served as principal of Roosevelt Island’s PS/IS 217 for six years in the 1980’s.

One last note: For the past 10 years, I have been Jim’s doctor. Jim had been failing rapidly for the last few weeks but his will remained strong. He was clear about wanting to stay home and not be hospitalized. Having your loved one die slowly at home is an incredible strain. Dorothy honored his wishes, kept him at home, and lived through the agonizing period of Jim’s final days. In doing this, she gave Jim one of the greatest gifts you can give anyone.

WIRE Seeking Webmaster

The Main Street WIRE is seeking a Webmaster for **Website NYC10044**, nyc10044.com. This is an unpaid volunteer position requiring appropriate software and hardware, and a knowledge of how to compose web pages, prepare and format photographs, create features, and do general maintenance on an existing index of hundreds of *WIRE* issues. Opportunities for creative development doing a task that serves the community. Estimate 2-5 hours every two weeks, but with possibilities for more if your schedule permits. E-mail Dick Lutz now at **editor@MainStreetWIRE.com** or call 212-826-9056 after May 17.

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RIRA Column from page 2

amount available. So why did we take on this thankless task, you might ask?

The Common Council thought it essential that we restore community involvement in the equation. The subcommittee, indeed the entire Common Council, represents hundred of years of Island experience, and often with the very organizations requesting funding. Who better to determine the distribution of scarce resources?

In the short term, we must deal with the terribly short deadline presented us. In the longer term, we will have the luxury of refining procedures and criteria, an essential component of the process that has never been codified or recorded in the almost 20 years of the Fund's existence. My hope is that we can inform Island organizations, in writing, of these rules, and well before the annual deadline for filing. I hope RIRA can maintain the good will of the community while attempting to make these Solomonic decisions.

RIRA Blood Drive

Once again, RIRA is gearing up for a Roosevelt Island Day that, on June 14, will include a free bagel and coffee breakfast for our intrepid "spruce up the Island" volunteers. As in past years, RIRA is sponsoring a blood drive with the participation of the New York Blood Center. Given the unique population of our home, with diplomats, world travelers, seniors, and the disabled, who are often precluded from donating blood, it's sometimes a hard sell to attract pledges.

For that reason, we will be out at the Farmer's Market for four consecutive Saturdays, asking you for a pint of the good stuff. Memorial Day Saturday was our first venture out there, and was a raging success. Twenty-one Island residents pledged to give blood on June 14 at the Senior Center. Our goal is 40 pints, which usually means we need 60 pledges, given the attrition for medical and other reasons. If we can keep up that pace, the Blood Center will have to send more phlebotomists to puncture us all.

If you can give blood, or if you have questions as to your eligibility, come see us today under the Bridge ramp and near the flea market between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. We will give you a balloon. We will try to accommodate your busy Roosevelt Island Day schedule by assigning you your choice of time. However, the choices will diminish as we approach the 14th, so sign up now. This year, Starbucks is offering discount coupons for all donors. My only request: Please down that double espresso *after* you finish donating!

A Necessary Music

I had the opportunity to see this Roosevelt Island-based movie last week at a Chelsea gallery. You may recall that Islanders comprise the entire cast of this remarkable film, and that Islanders generated much of the script. What must

have been a hundred hours of digital material has been edited into an atmospheric, ethereal 40 minutes or so. Three Island musicians provided mood music for the work, including Roy Eaton, Asher Elbaz, and yours truly. My hope is that you will get to see the finished product and judge for yourself, possibly at the RIVAA gallery and again during the summer outdoor film series sponsored by RIOCI. Cast members will be available on Main Street for autographs in exchange for fulsome praise.

Roosevelt Island Bridge

The three-year renovation project continues. I've received new information from the Department of Transportation (DOT) press office that I can share with you. Weekend work began on May 17 and will continue throughout the summer, primarily to remove the existing deck and to replace it with prefabricated panels. The work shift starts Saturdays at 5:30 a.m., beginning with several hours of quiet work to change the traffic pattern. The noisy deck replacement process that disturbed your sleep last weekend will follow. Work will end late Saturday afternoons, with Sunday as a possible backup day. In addition, when they pour concrete, most likely this will take place on Saturday mornings, with the altered traffic pattern remaining in place all weekend, to allow the fresh concrete to cure. I've asked DOT to start the noisy work as late in the morning as possible. Working people are entitled to their rest, and they originally told us

that the crews would be here only on weekdays.

RIOCI Board Elections Revisited

I'm happy to report that the process is back on track. Governor Paterson's Appointments Office has interviewed the six winners of our February election, as well as members of the current Board. We are using all our resources to move the process along, and to persuade the new Governor of the worthiness of our efforts. Once we have assurances that he is on board, and with all six winners, the presumptive Board members will then undergo a lengthy scrutiny, through an extensive application and vetting by the State Police. Joining the board of a public authority is no walk in the park, nor is serving on one. Our nominees are ready, willing, and able for both undertakings.

Memorial Day Revisited

It occurs to me that, throughout our history, American armed forces have been composed largely of citizen soldiers rather than professional cadres. And so, when Johnny Jones comes marching home, he resumes his persona as Mr. Jones, or Johnny who lives down the block, or dad, or grandpa. However, when he dies in combat and is interred in a military cemetery, he lies under a headstone and the generations remember him for all time as Sgt. Jones. Here's to the fallen, to their service and their sacrifice. And here's to the vets, who did their jobs and remind us by their presence of what we ask of our service people.



Public Safety Officers recently got training in use of bikes for policing. Photo: Judy Berdy

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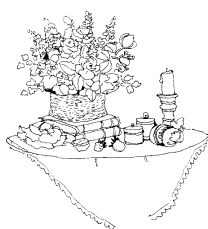
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