

The Main Street **WIRE**™

28th Year as Roosevelt Island's Independent Community Newspaper



Community nominees Fay Christian, Jonathan Kalkin, and Kathie Grimm took seats on the RIOC Board Thursday morning. David Kraut, right, was reappointed to the Board.

In Historic Change, Three Community Nominees Get Seats on RIOC Board

Mayor Bloomberg Could Still Name Two More; But At Least One of the Six Nominees Is Excluded

by Dick Lutz

Three new members were seated on the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) Thursday morning, making history of a sort. They were elected by the community as its nominees to the Board on February 5, then, last week, appointed by the Governor and approved by the State Senate.

They are Kathie Grimm, Jonathan Kalkin, and Fay Christian. One fills an open seat. The other two replace Mark Ponton

(who joined the Board in June of 2002) and Alberteen Anderson (December, 2004).

In addition, as anticipated in *The WIRE*'s June 14 issue, David Kraut, a longtime Board member, was reappointed. He had fought for the seat during the administration of Governor Mario Cuomo, having run for the presidency of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association on a platform calling for RIRA to be represented on the RIOC Board.

At Thursday morning's meeting of the RIOC Board, RIOC President Steve Shane welcomed the new members, thanked Ponton and Anderson (who were not present), and expressed pleasure at Kraut's reappointment. "Talk about continuity," he said, "What better anchor?" Then he added, in a joking reference to Kraut's bulk, "And I'm not speaking morphologically."

But Kraut's reappointment tempered the elation felt by residents who had championed the February election in which the community, voting in record numbers, chose six nominees from a field of 10 candidates. Six openings were available on the nine-member Board – four to be filled by the Governor, and two by recommendation of the Mayor. Because the Governor used one of his four openings to reappoint Kraut, no more than five of the community's elected nominees can possibly be seated.

MTG Statement

The Maple Tree Group (MTG), the RIRA subcommittee that mounted the February balloting and has worked for over a decade to democratize Roosevelt Island governance, issued this statement: "Everything now depends on Mayor Bloomberg. The Governor has put the ball in his court.

"By choosing to reappoint a RIOC Board member who decided not to stand for election, the Governor has given the community three-quarters of what we voted for, from his portion. While on the surface 'three out of four ain't bad,' in this case it could leave those who live here one or two votes short of an elected majority – just as powerless as ever – depending on what the Mayor does.

"It now falls to the Mayor to remedy at least part of this situation. The Mayor doesn't have the power to appoint all three remaining election winners to the Board, because he's only entitled by law

to recommend two. But if he fills both of those seats with residents who won the election, the community will then have a RIOC Board with an elected majority of resident members.

"We sincerely hope the Mayor will honor the democratic choices this community made in the February 5th election."

Indeed, whether any more of the community's nominees are seated depends on what the Mayor does. He is required by the law establishing RIOC to appoint (or reappoint) one Island resident, but not obligated to select one of the community nominees. For his other appointment, he can choose anyone. If he fills both seats with residents' elected choices, five community-chosen nominees will be seated on the Board. If he fills both with people other than the community's choices, three of those electees will be left out.

A further concern of residents who have worked for 11 years to democratize the RIOC Board by giving residents ballot-box power over those who serve on the Board is that the Governor's appointments staff appears to have "cherry-picked" the nominees, not taking the top three winners. Grimm (937 votes) and Kalkin (933) were the top two, and Island House resident (and Island House Tenants Association Board member, and Residents Association Common Councilor) Frank Farance came in third (911). He and Erin Feely-Nahem (832) were bypassed for Fay Christian, who came in fifth (803).

The Mayor has not made his appointment intentions known, though his appointments staff has been in touch with the remaining community nominees to schedule interviews.

David Kraut

As reported in *The WIRE* June 14, David Kraut had told *The WIRE* that he did not care whether he was reappointed to the RIOC Board (transcript at nyc10044.com/wire/2719/KrautInterview.pdf). But Assemblymember Micah Kellner was told otherwise when he asked the Governor's office about the reappointment. In an e-mail, he reported, "[The Governor's] Appointments [Office] spoke to Mr. Kraut and he told them that he very much wanted to serve."

To clarify, Kraut provided this statement to *The WIRE*: "Re-reading my comments in *The WIRE* I See RIOC, page 8

The F Train

Weekend Diverts Not Torture Enough? How About Those Station Escalators?

by Gene Roman

On a recent evening, Islander Judith McGee saw an elderly woman trying to negotiate a stairway at the Roosevelt Island subway station, one of the deepest in the New York City transit system. The escalators were out. It was hot. And the woman seemed ready to cry, McGee told *The WIRE* this week.

"I escorted her to the elevator on the downtown side as the Queens side had at least a 10- to 15-minute wait," McGee said.

That was Wednesday evening, June 11. For the next four days, through Saturday, June 14, McGee tracked escalator service and, while passengers could ride down, there were no up escalators when she checked. New York City Transit is replacing escalators here, but McGee and other residents express frustration and disgust that the available ones are so of-

ten running the wrong way, or not running at all.

Landing Strandings

That frustration was one reaction expressed Tuesday night at a joint meeting of two Community Board 8 committees – the Transportation Committee and the Roosevelt Island Committee. One resident asked for "active management" of the escalators, or at least an active effort to provide in-station information about their operating status. Alissa Kosowsky, Assistant Director for Government and Community Relations of New York City Transit, said she would ask her agency to look into the notion of posting signs to avoid "landing strandings," currently a particular problem in the Island station. Residents often take an escalator from the lowest level of the station to the midway landing only to find that, from there, no up escalator

See Escalators, page 10

A Growing Island Gets A Second Pediatrician, Joining Kathie Grimm

by Jennifer Dunning

Dr. Alyssa Harrison Siegel left her job as attending physician at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and moved to New York City two years ago, when she married. But she was disappointed in the limited job opportunities here. There was the possibility of working in a pediatrics practice on Roosevelt Island, but only part-time. So she returned to Philadelphia as a commuting doctor. Soon after, Katherine Teets Grimm, the Island's beloved pediatrician, realized that she actually did need full-time help. Her practice had grown as building increased on the Island and more patients came over from Queens. At the same time, Dr. Grimm was struggling with a painful hip injury after being struck by a bicycle in September. Dr. Siegel accepted the full-time offer, and is now ensconced in the Main Street office that she and Dr. Grimm share with Dr. Jack Resnick, the Island's internist.

Quietly vivacious and surprisingly self-effacing, Dr. Grimm's new associate is quickly adjusting to Island life. "The small-town atmosphere in such proximity to Manhattan is so striking," Dr.



Siegel said in a recent interview. "It was so unexpected. For me, it's been a very comfortable population to work with. I like the international feel. And everybody is very intelligent and respectful and appreciative.

"I think people have such negative experiences going to doctors today. When people tell me about their bad experiences, I feel very defensive. I take it very personally. And yet when I'm the patient, I realize that it is very unpleasant. Not because you're sick or you got bad news. It's unpleasant because

the system makes it unpleasant. And I think that this office is one of the last old-fashioned practices. It makes it easy to maintain that personal relationship and have a little bit of time to spend. And because everybody sort of lives in the area, and our staff is all neighbors, it's really a much closer relationship. The parents come to Dr. Resnick, the kids come to us, and we know the whole family. That's quite unique, certainly in Manhattan."

Dr. Grimm talked happily of how Dr. Siegel "is going to really fit the bill." "I was praying for someone. It's a godsend that she came to me. She has a very nice personality and she's also extremely competent. Everyone loves her. The feedback I'm getting about Dr. Siegel is wonderful, including from the secretaries. It is critical that you work well with the secretaries."

Born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, Dr. Siegel comes from a family of doctors. Her father and brother are dentists. Her sister, who relocated to Philadelphia just as Dr. Siegel was moving north, is a rheumatologist.

Dr. Siegel trained at the State See Pediatrician, page 9

Briefly...

Rent Determination Hearings have been scheduled for Island House and Westview for Tuesday and Wednesday, August 12 and 13, respectively (see *ComingUp*, page 3).

DHCR has announced an increase in the maximum surcharge for **Rivercross** from 20% to 30%, along with a lower per-room increase (2.5%) than the building's board had recommended.

Music classes will be offered by the Youth Center, starting in July, if Island interest is strong enough. E-mail RIYPMusic@RIYouth.com for information. Classes will be fee-based; guitar and piano are planned.

The Editorial Page

July 25, 1998

Grannis Bill Aims At Home Rule for Island

November 7, 1998

Self-Governance Wins Ballot Appeal By 92%

June 15, 2002

Self-Governance, Ever-Elusive, Still Stumbling in the Legislature

June 29, 2002

Appointed Residents to Get Majority Control of RIOC Board

December 18, 2004

Pataki Appoints Two Residents As Members of RIOC Board For First Time, Residents Hold a Majority of Seats

July 1, 2006

Island Self-Governance Bill Fails Again in Albany

November 18, 2006

By a 95.5% Margin, Voters Ask For Election of the RIOC Board

April 21, 2007

Shane Says Residents Should Vote on RIOC Board Candidates DHCR's VanAmerongen Concurs on Indirect Process

February 9, 2008

Record-Busting Turnout As Community Elects RIOC Board Nominees

June 28, 2008

In Historic Change, Three Community Nominees Get Seats on RIOC Board Mayor Bloomberg Could Still Name Two More; But At Least One of the Six Nominees Is Excluded

Next?



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End of June 2008, beginning of Summer

1. **RIOC Board of Directors:** At this week’s meeting, scheduled for Thursday morning at 9:30 as I write this column to meet a *WIRE* deadline, the first order of business will be the seating of Dr. Kathie Grimm, Fay Christian, and Jonathan Kalkin, three of the Island residents proposed in the RIRA process, and David Kraut for the seat he now occupies, all as nominated by Governor Paterson and confirmed by the State Senate. I want to personally thank Alberteen Anderson and Mark Ponton for their years of hard work and dedicated service on the Board of Directors. The entire community owes them a debt of gratitude. The Mayor’s office has the nominating power as to the remaining two (2) seats. One seat is filled by Charlee Miller by prior appointment and two (2) seats are ex officio.

2. **Renwick Ruin:** Actual work by the outside contractors is under way, removing the most endangered portions of the walls, numbering the stones, and palletizing them for the future.

3. **Southpoint Park-Green Rooms/Wild Gardens:** The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is completing the environmental analysis to permit step one to go forward.

4. **Tram:** (a) RFP [Request for Proposals] and final specs for the overhaul are being reviewed by engineers and lawyers to be ready for publication by the end of June. Bidders’ conference July 15, 2008 and responses due September 2, 2008.

(b) Tram closure Tuesday, June 10 through Tuesday June 17. The track rope had to be slipped, requiring taking the Tram out of service. Service was restored at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday the 18th (for free) and regular operations resumed at 6:00 a.m. on Thursday the 19th.

(c) During the outage, RIOC ran Red bus service to Queens Plaza during morning rush hours (6:00-9:30) and hourly service to Manhattan from 10:00

The RIOC Column



Steve Shane, President
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
e-mail: SShane@RIOC.com

5. **Park and Restroom facilities:** The Board authorized the purchase of prefabricated concrete facilities to be located at Lighthouse Park, with the understanding that if successful, similar facilities will be placed at Firefighters’ and Capobianco Fields. Our target for delivery and installation has slipped because the DOT work on the bridge requires special permitting to deliver the heavy load. We have ordered the engineering for site preparation and made arrangements for porta-sans to be available in the interim. We will advise of progress. We are increasing the frequency of trash collection on weekends especially, to try to keep things orderly. Cooperation in using

See **RIOC Column**, page 18

Summer has come to Roosevelt Island. The smell of grilling hot dogs is in the air, and we’ve enjoyed the first outdoor film screening at Firefighters’ Field. However, this is also the sixth summer in which Island children cannot buy an ice cream cone on Main Street from the bakery/ice cream parlor, shuttered these long years. Summer is not summer without chocolate ice cream on a sugar cone, chocolate sprinkles please. Will New York State ever figure out how to release our Northtown storefronts for leasing?

Congrats!
As I write this, the RIOC Board of Directors is set to convene Thursday morning. Commissioner VanAmerongen will introduce three newly appointed Directors, elected by this community, appointed by Governor Paterson, and confirmed by the Senate. Best wishes and good luck to Kathie Grimm, Jonathan Kalkin, and Fay Christian. We know you will serve your neighbors well. Our election story, begun 15 months ago for the core group that produced last February’s election, is not yet over. Mayor Bloomberg gets to recommend two additional appointments, and we hope he will choose two of the winners we residents elected. Should he do so, your choices will constitute a majority of Board members, even though only five of the six winners will have been appointed. To paraphrase (nineteenth-century British Prime Minister) Gladstone, who was speaking of justice, democracy delayed is democracy denied. Stay tuned.

The RIRA Column

While I’m in a congratulatory mood, let me include someone you may know by sight but not by name. For 18 years, Juanita Green has served as crossing guard in front of PS/IS 217. She recently retired for health reasons, and I want to thank her for keeping our school kids safe. Thank you for your long service, m’dear, you’ve done us proud.

Blood Drive Tally
Despite the shower that drove the late afternoon musical festivities inside, Roosevelt Island Day was yet another success. We spruced, we planted, and we wore our new navy-blue t-shirts with pride. Many of our elected officials joined us to wish us well, and some of them weren’t even running for office! RIRA offered OJ, bagels, and coffee, and these treats disappeared as quickly as ever.

The day marked the culmination of months of work planning for the RIRA/New York Blood Center blood drive. For four consecutive Saturdays, volunteers from RIRA and the Roosevelt Island CERT team solicited your blood donations at our table at the

a.m. to 2:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. We have the statistics from this schedule and will be analyzing them to try to ascertain best utilization for 2009 when the Tram will be down for the longer overhaul.

(d) For all who suffered inconvenience during the week the Tram was out, RIOC is aware of the problem, thanks all for their patience and understanding and, within governmental abilities, will try to address the issues. One issue that was raised is the matter of getting schoolchildren to their off-Island schools and back. Unfortunately, school days start during the morning rush hours and end at the beginning of the evening rush, making special bus service to this population a very difficult and expensive proposition. Maybe the parents of such children should organize now for some special private transportation. Other ideas welcome.

Farmer’s Market. Sixty-seven Islanders pledged. The Blood Center took donations all day at the Senior Center, and the count is in: Between 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., 48 residents showed up. Thirty-six were eligible to be punctured. Two donors gave “packed red blood cells” on the special aphaeresis machines provided, and each of their contributions counted as two donations. Therefore, our final count was 38 pints and this is in the ballpark of our goal of 40. As my Blood Center liaison reminded me, this is 38 pints the City otherwise would not have. Thanks to all you donors!

Thanks also to the RIRA and CERT volunteers who sat out at the Farmer’s Market, through hot sun and rain, to convince sometimes-skeptical passersby to give blood. Those volunteers are Brad Brooks, Frank Farance, Georganna Galateau, Dolores Green, Aaron Hamburger, Linda Heimer, Sherie Helstien, Jon Kalkin, Gad Levanon, Jim Luce, Ellen Polivy, Howard Polivy, George Reither, Ronnie Rigos, Ron Schuppert, and Margie Smith. Given our unique population, blood drives are a labor-intensive affair, and we accomplish them only with the support of folks like these. Kudos to all.

!!!NOISE!!!
Those of us whose apartments face the Roosevelt Island Bridge perhaps have been waking up earlier than usual these days. Rather than awaking to the sounds of songbirds and seagulls, as has been my Island pleasure, we’ve been aroused from our slumbers by the insistent cacophony of jackhammers from the Roosevelt Island Bridge renovation project. Our friends at DOT and the Skanska Construction Company told us a month ago to expect summer-long, seven-day-a-week work on the bridge’s structure, specifically the replacement of the roadbed, and they have kept their word. They show up at 5:00 a.m. on weekends, but, as promised, haven’t begun the teeth-rattling heavy work until 7:00. Now friends, I’m accustomed to arising just a tad later than seven, especially on weekends, and perhaps you are, as well. Nevertheless, the work must get done and, I suspect, I will be running my air conditioner

See **RIRA Column**, page 18



Matthew Katz, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
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COMING UP

— This Weekend —

Inventions continues at Gallery RIVAA through Aug 24. Gallery hours **Sat-Sun** 11-5, **Wed & Fri** 6-9. ▷



— The Coming Week —

Southpoint Park closed Mon June 30-Thu July 3 for fireworks-viewing setup.

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

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

— Future Weeks —

Open Swim Hours extended, **Mon July 7** onward, 6am-9pm daily, for all ages, Sportspark. Adults \$5, children \$3, seniors & infants, free.

Goodwill Industries Community Action Fair, Sat July 12, 11am-4pm, Lighthouse Park, collecting donations of clothing, shoes, linens, computers, electronics, small appliances, etc. Information **718-728-5400** or goodwillny.org.

Islander Roy Eaton performs in Bryant Park's *Music at 5* series, playing a program entitled *Gershwin and Friends*, including Joplin, Ravel, Chopin, and Bill Evans. **Thu July 17**, 5pm, Bryant Park (42nd St. at Sixth Av.)

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

Auditions for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, production to be presented August 23 and 24 on the Rivercross Lawn, **Fri July 18**, 6-8; **Sat July 19**, 1-3; **Sun July 20**, 1-3; Good Shepherd Community Center. Information **646-648-2348**.

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

Book Signing Event with **Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Mon July 28**, 6pm, New York County Lawyers' Association Home of Law, 14 Vesey St. (betw Broadway and Church St.), for her book, *Rumors of Our Progress Have Been Greatly Exaggerated: Why Women's Lives Aren't Getting Any Easier and How We Can Make Real Progress for Oursevels and Our Daughters*.

The Main Street WIRE – Next issue (reduced summer schedule) **Sat Aug 2**. (To receive e-mail bulletins between issues, send an *AddMe* message to Bulletins@MainStreetWIRE.com.) **Advertising Deadlines:** Ads in the paper, Thu July 24; decision on circulars/inserts for *The Bag*, Tue July 29; they are due Thu July 31. **Additional issues in 2008:** Aug 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**.

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

Island House Rent Determination Hearing, Tue Aug 12, 4-6pm, Good Shepherd Community Center.

Westview Rent Determination Hearing, Wed Aug 13, 4-6pm, Good Shepherd Community Center.

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

Shakespeare in the Park, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Sat-Sun Aug 23-24, 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.

Fall for Arts Festival, Sat Oct 4, Rivercross Lawn and Good Shepherd Plaza.

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**
11:00, **Gardening**
12:30, **Movie**

Friday
9:30, **Yoga**
10:30, **French class**
10:45, **Theater Group**
1:00, **Bridge**
7:00, **Games (RISA)**
Saturday
7:30, **Bingo (RISA)**
Special Events
Stop ‘n’ Shop, Wed July 2, 12
Bayside Mall, Queens, Wed July 9, 12
Flea Market, Sat July 12, 9am-?
Atlantic City trip, Tue July 15
Kennedy Senior Center, Harlem, Fri July 18, 11am

Home-delivered meals
212-744-5022, ext. 1203

Letters

To Assemblymember Micah Kellner:

All of us on Roosevelt Island appreciate your strong efforts on our behalf. When I voted for you initially, I had no reason to think you would be so active in our support. Thank you.

Regarding the Roosevelt Island list of preferred RIOC Board members, we strongly object to the Governor's decision to appoint only three of the six individuals indicated in our preferred member election. We also absolutely object to continuing one sitting member. He chose not to put his name forward in our electoral preference list, and *thus has no right* to continue on the RIOC Board. In fact, it shows the disdain and arrogance of this person. Please do whatever you can to make sure that *our voice is heard*.

Doris Chernik, PhD

To the Editor:

My name is Makeva Francis. I've been living on Roosevelt Island for 17½ years. I have two boys, 13 and 18 years old.

I'm writing to inform my neighbors about how out of control Public Safety has become. On Saturday, June 21, my son Jared (13) called and told me that Public Safety was chasing him around the Island, and he managed to get away and went home without them catching him. I told Jared I was in front of the building, and for him to come downstairs so we could go to Public Safety to see what was going on. My son said he was afraid, but I convinced him that he was safe as long as he was with me. When I hung up, I saw about three Public Safety officers going into my building. I said, "Excuse me," and Sergeant Hernandez recognized me and proceeded to tell me that they were chasing my son because he lit a firecracker and threw it into building 575. While we were standing there, my son came downstairs, and another officer was behind him on a scooter. We all went to the Public Safety office.

My son continuously told the officers that they had the wrong person. More than one of the officers told me that they saw my son on the tape. I asked to see the tape, and Sergeant Hernandez told me I have to put in a request to management to see the tape. About two officers left to go pick up the doorman from the building so he could ID my son.

Sergeant Hernandez also told me that, "If we would've caught him, he would've gotten hurt for running from us." At that point, I felt Sergeant Hernandez was taking his authority a little too far. I told him he had no right to put his hands on a child for throwing a firecracker. It's not like he had a gun or weapon. His response was, "Well, I don't know that."

After we waited in the Public Safety office for about an hour, the officers showed up with the doorman. The officer working behind the desk told my son to stand in front of the Public Safety window, while they had the doorman outside as if it were a police lineup. I stopped my son and told the officer that this was not a lineup, especially because a lineup consists of five people. If they want the doorman to ID my son, they needed to bring him into the office. The doorman came into the office and said, "No way. I know this kid, this is not the kid," and gave my son a handshake and said, "Hi, Jared."

Public Safety didn't apologize, and said we could go.

I feel, just like Sergeant Hernandez said, my son would've been hurt that night if they would've caught him. His rights as a child and a citizen would have been violated if I wasn't present and if I didn't know the law. I find that not one officer in the office knew how to handle the situation properly. Sergeant Hernandez, being the leader of the Public Safety office of that shift, defiantly didn't know the proper way to speak to me as a

To the Editor:

As we all watch the fireworks celebrating the birth of the Republic, we can consider the debt of gratitude we owe to Governor Paterson. Not for supporting the democratic form of government that all Americans, including Roosevelt Islanders, are entitled to, but by making it crystal-clear that we in fact do not have that form of government here on Roosevelt Island – perhaps the best vantage point for our democracy's most remarkable celebration!

By insisting that a non-elected board member, who failed to stand for election, be reappointed to his grossly expired seat (appointed, over 14 years go, to a four-year term), he has withheld the ability to serve from an individual whom the community expressly elected. The Governor has clearly demonstrated that the existence of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, the local government for the community, may in fact violate Article IV, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees us the right for all forms of our government to be a "Republic..." not a Public Benefit Corporation! In fact, Public Benefit Corporation is never mentioned once in the U.S. Constitution!

Some would argue that we should all appreciate what we got. As an American, I'm vehemently opposed to accepting any form of government other than the form my father fought for in World War II. You can't be a little bit pregnant, and you can't be a little bit democratic, either!

The Maple Tree Group, a sub-committee of RIRA, has fought long and hard to bring a democratic process to our community. It's been an exhausting struggle, which included the community's recent election. There is no system in place to continue carrying out elections in our community, and no guarantee that either the Governor or the Mayor would honor it even if it existed. In fact, this Governor has demonstrated that he will honor it to whatever extent he chooses. As of this writing, the Mayor has yet to weigh in.

If you have an interest in furthering the community's right to have elected local government, please let me know. It's going to take the committed action of many to replace some overly weary hands and to move this cause forward. I can be reached at joyce.mincheff@cbhk.com.

The Fourth of July is a remarkable holiday. I, for one, will truly celebrate when it applies to the community I live in. How 'bout you?

Joyce Mincheff

Letters deadline for August 2 issue: Tuesday, July 29. After deadline, letters considered on a space-available basis.

parent or to an underaged child. I feel the Public Safety officers need to take public relations, sensitivity, and common sense classes to service Roosevelt Island.

Makeva Francis

To the Editor:

On June 12, 2008, Daryl Getman authored a story with a most happy ending. It began as Michael Rogers sat on the subway bench waiting for the F train to Manhattan.

He entered the train and, as it pulled out of the Roosevelt Island station, he felt his pockets and realized that his wallet was missing. He felt sure that it had slipped out onto the bench that he had been sitting on at the back of the platform. He got off at 63/Lex, caught the first train back, and returned to the bench. Nothing.

Mr. Rogers then approached the police officer sitting on the platform, identified himself, and explained his position. The officer listened carefully, then lifted his black book and handed over the wallet with all its contents intact.

Officer Merrick showed me his report and the name of the honest citizen who had handed the wallet in. The name was Daryl Getman.

I would appreciate it if Daryl Getman would get in touch with me through *The Main Street WIRE* so that I might express my appreciation in person.

Michael Rogers

To the Editor:

I was almost left behind on the subway platform Friday, June 13, but it was not because the subway was packed. The problem was that the folks before me apparently did not know how to walk and move quickly into the car.

For all the reputation as a fast-paced place and its "move it or lose it" attitude, I find that the majority of the people in this city move about as if they had no home-training, are out for a leisurely Sunday saunter without a care in the world, are alone in this city (except for the people with them, if any), and are completely oblivious to the millions of other New Yorkers.

Yes, NYC Transit can certainly do better in running its trains more dependably and frequently, but let's also look at ourselves as contributory culprits in our subway transportation woes.

Kent Kurkiewicz

To the Editor:

I want to publicly thank Mike Acevedo and RISAR (Roosevelt Island Search and Rescue) for helping me after I injured my foot in Manhattan. First, the basic first aid class I took with RISAR in May came in very handy, as I immediately applied the routine *Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation* (RICE). Second, Mike Acevedo delivered loaner crutches to me from the RISAR supply closet the very next day.

RISAR is an asset to this Island.

Ellen Polivy

Additional **Letters**, page 18

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.

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A professional headshot of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored top. The background is a neutral, light gray.

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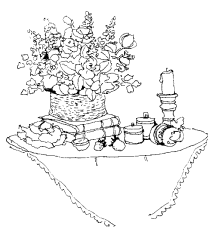
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Pediatrician from page 1

University of New York at Stony Brook School of Medicine, graduating in 1994. Was there a lightning moment in medical school when she realized she wanted to dedicate her life to helping children? “I wish I had a really exciting answer,” Dr. Siegel said. “It just felt right to me.”

She was a resident in pediatrics at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in Philadelphia before moving on to Children’s Hospital and the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. She has also taught at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and at Harvard Medical School. She hopes to resume teaching in Manhattan. “I’ve had constant involvement with medical students,” she said. “It’s important for me. Teaching forces you to constantly maintain your own level of education. If you can’t explain something to a student, you probably don’t understand it.”

She also hopes to resume working as a medical consultant in international adoptions. “It’s sort of an unofficial specialty. Basically, when people are adopting from other countries, they get advance information on the child. Some agencies require that

the parents have a medical person with experience in this area review it with them so that, if there are any risks, either they can decline the adoption of this particular child or just know what to expect.

“The information has gotten more and more complete over time. And it’s pretty reliable. So parents need to understand it all. Some of the more common issues that occur would be developmental concerns, especially if the kids have been in an orphanage setting – whether or not there have been neglect or stimulation issues.” Dr. Siegel took particular pleasure in following the adopted children to an age when they were ready to travel back to their home countries and reconnect. “It’s nice to work with these families because they’re very, very motivated to love the child,” Dr. Siegel said.

Many of the patients Dr. Siegel sees on the Island these days are coming in for camp or school checkups. “For some of the kids, it will be a once-a-year visit, so I take advantage of it to try to find out about any issues about their health that may not be specific to the time of year.” There are more outdoor-related injuries in the summer, Dr.

Weekend Subway Diversion Schedule

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Weekend	No Service Available...
July 12-14	Manhattan to Roosevelt Island (uptown)
August 9-11	Manhattan to Roosevelt Island (uptown)
August 23-25	Roosevelt Island to Manhattan (downtown)
August 30-September 1	Roosevelt Island to Manhattan (downtown)
September 6-8	Manhattan to Roosevelt Island (uptown)

Note: The multi-month Tramway update outage is not expected to start until March 2009, at the earliest.

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Siegel said, advising parents to think constantly about safety issues. “Sun protection, insect-bite protection, just being aware of these types of exposures. And injuries – wearing helmets when you’re riding a bicycle or scooter. Swimming, having good guidelines for supervision.”

Both Dr. Grimm and Dr. Siegel believe in going easy on antibiotics, in discouraging too-frequent visits to the doctor, and in the efficacy of vaccines.

Dr. Siegel, who is 39, lives on the East Side with her husband, Jonathan, a lawyer. “He thinks it’s nice to be a doctor,” she said. “He’s really very, very supportive.” Beeper signals don’t bother him, and he once volunteered to accompany his worried wife to a sick patient’s home.

Her life is otherwise quiet. “I don’t do anything fascinating,” she said, laughing. “I do a lot of reading. You’ll find me at the Roosevelt Island Library once a week. It’s

nice that it’s right across the street. And since I married, I do a lot more cooking. My husband is a fan of my cooking. I don’t know how good it really is, but he seems to love it.” Low-fat cakes and cookies are a specialty.

So far, she has not added any personal effects to the office she shares with Dr. Grimm. “I’m new and I’m trying to respect Dr. Grimm’s history, so I don’t want to make too many changes. But to be honest, I probably won’t bring anything. My old office had nothing personal at all, except for things that the patients gave me. People sometimes bring little gifts, and I’ve always saved every one of them, especially drawings that the children make.” Her old office walls were papered with her favorite kind of art work, the head with legs that children around three to four years old tend to draw to represent people. “I have tons of those pictures. I love them because it’s so interesting that they all do that.”

Escalators from page 1

or down staircase is available – they must climb the rest of the way. That’s OK for the young and vigorous, but a definite problem for the elderly, the infirm, the seriously overweight, and anyone carrying heavy packages.

Ellen Polivy, who represents Roosevelt Island on Community Board 8, is temporarily among the infirm. She’s wearing a special boot and using a scooter to allow her foot to heal. At Tuesday night’s CB8 session, she told of carrying her scooter up a long flight of stairs because there was simply no alternative. NYC Transit’s Kosowsky agreed that active placement of warning signs would help passengers avoid that sort of situation when escalators fail.

City Councilmember Jessica Lappin is also exasperated at the problem, both in her district (which includes Roosevelt Island) and throughout the system. “The failure on the part of the MTA to consistently provide working escalators for the elderly and disabled at the Roosevelt Island subway stop is shameful,” she said in an e-mail. “My office has repeatedly contacted the MTA regarding this issue. While there are a variety of problems that must be overcome, one thing is clear: the MTA must do more to provide working accommodations for Roosevelt Island’s elderly and disabled.”

The Blue Wall

For months during this \$36 million escalator project at the Island station, a 12-foot blue wall has extended from the street level to the mezzanine level. Islanders know *something* is going on behind those temporary barriers, but the urge simply to be *done* with their workaday battle with the transit system dampens curiosity about progress and the meaning of noises behind the barriers. What they do know about – no need to ask – are those landing strandings.

“This organization is very, very good at subway car maintenance,” Howard Roberts, President of NYC Transit, recently told *The New York Times*. “It’s very good at bus maintenance. But it hasn’t done well at maintaining auxiliary equipment. I think we are in the process of trying to create the same competence in elevator and escalator maintenance that we have in buses and subway cars.”

But that’s not an overnight fix for the problems on Roosevelt Island, where the escalators date back to 1989. “These escalators have reached the end of their useful lives,” said Transit Authority spokesman Charles Seaton. “The entire battery is being replaced. This is necessary construction. Replacing them will minimize future disruptions.”

Over the years, Islanders have often compared escalator situations at Bloomingdale’s with those in the subway system. If they can be kept running at a department store, they argue, they should never be out of service in the subway system. But at Tuesday night’s meeting, representatives of the transit system said it’s just not that simple. “We have a 24-hour system,” said Josh Orzeck of the Manhattan Borough Commissioner’s Office of NYC Transit. “Everywhere else in the world, the system goes down at night. It’s an opportunity for maintenance. Here, we run 24/7, and we have to keep the system going, working around repair and reconstruction activities.”

2008 Completion

The reconstruction on Roosevelt Island is supposed to be finished early this fall – certainly no later

than December – spokesman Seaton told *The WIRE*. “The new escalators will be connected to a system that will immediately report any problems to an escalator/elevator control center,” he added. That system is called “LiftNet,” Kosowsky told Tuesday night’s CB8 session. She explained that it’s a computerized real-time reporting system that will alert system managers to escalator outages as soon as they occur.

Islander Judith McGee added her own voice on behalf of the elderly in an e-mail to Steve Shane, President of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC). “RIOC and the MTA have exhibited a lack of regard for the Island’s elderly population,” she wrote in asking that RIOC get involved in the transit mess.

Shane responded. “Your allegations about RIOC are completely unfounded,” he wrote. “We have a great deal of concern for the elderly and infirm, but we do not run the subway system. The difficulties in the station are precisely why RIOC runs supplemental bus service.” At Tuesday night’s meeting of CB8 committees, Shane said that the escalator situation in the Island station is what prompted him to add all-day Red Bus service during the recent Tramway outage. In his e-mail conversation with McGee, he continued, “RIOC has appealed, along with every other elected official and community-based organization, to the MTA for more reliable escalator and elevator service. Would that there would be up escalator service to the street at all times.”

Exasperated, upset, discouraged, angry, resigned, frustrated, determined – all apply to Roosevelt Islanders, who manage to escape the inconveniences of Manhattan at the end of the workday, but find that the troublesome elements of city life follow them home when it comes to transit.

Islander Edward Earle can tell you about that. He arrived at the Roosevelt Island station during the evening rush hour on Wednesday June 11, to discover that the escalator carrying passengers to the street level was stalled. He saw several people struggling and stopping at the intermediate landing as they walked up the stairs.

“The MTA could have switched a down escalator to an up,” he said. “This service inconsistency particularly affects the elderly or those who may be infirm.” But he understands, he says, that completing repairs and installing new equipment on a system that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, poses a challenge to transit agency leaders. “There is never a good time to take out a major form of transit, but it would have been sensible to wait about a month to ensure that their third escalator was operational before taking all of the escalators out of service.”

Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign, a transit riders’ advocacy group, discovered the challenge of navigating the Roosevelt Island station when a family member had a stay at Goldwater Hospital. “For many riders, it’s an ordeal. God forbid you have to walk out of there. It’s a deep station.”

Elevators

Lily Chang lives in the Riverwalk complex. “The construction of the new escalators is not much of an inconvenience for me,” she said recently while sitting in Blackwell Park with her son and two elderly friends. “When I travel on the subway, I use the elevator –

Commentary

Without Transit Solutions, Building More Towers Will Have Us More Stuck

by Robert Chira

This month’s Tram shutdown raises important questions about further housing development here.

Construction nears completion on buildings 5 and 6 in Southtown and three more buildings are planned, each 28 stories – seven more than any other Island building. They’ll bring many hundreds of additional Manhattan commuters.

And – need anyone need reminding – in 2009, the Tram will be out of service for half the year.

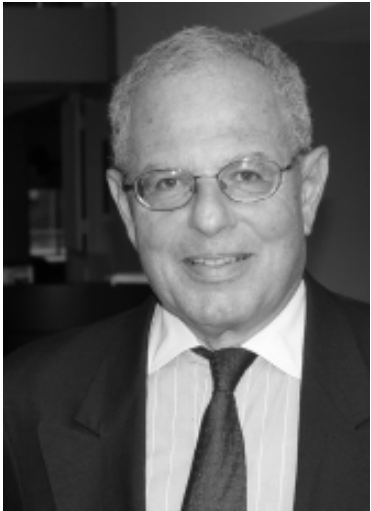
But, even with the Tram running, transportation capacity is already inadequate during the morning rush. Subway trains often arrive so jammed that few Islanders can board – and the MTA stubbornly resists the notion that improvements in subway service are needed or possible, rejecting, out of hand and without alternatives, every suggestion sent their way.

One recent idea, proposed by resident Frank Farance, who has demonstrated expertise in this area, asks that the MTA reserve one car per train during the morning rush, opening its doors here for the first time. Islanders could then count on boarding, up to 200 at a time. The MTA is not likely to accept that or other ideas. Indeed, two years ago, the MTA claimed in a letter that its “ridership surveys indicate that, on average, the F line operates within passenger loading guidelines.”

Operating in its own make-believe world divorced from this Island’s reality, the MTA further maintains that the tunnels and connectors in Queens are operating at full capacity, making it impossible to provide additional F service for Roosevelt Islanders. It also says a separate shuttle train originating at 21st Street is not feasible, because there is no express track bypassing the Island station..

Unfortunately, other transportation options are not likely to help much.

Ferry service is a limited option for those who work in midtown Manhattan. Any ferry landing will be at the water’s edge and far from offices. Due to swirling currents and other conditions, docking ferries is difficult except for Wall Street and 34th Street, but those places are far from the workplace of most Is-



Longtime resident Robert Chira practices law in Manhattan.

land residents. Additional ferry service to 42nd Street would help UN workers who live on the Island, and perhaps a ferry service further uptown at 60th Street might help some others, but this will alleviate only a small part of the overall problem

Another Tram that leaves from the Manhattan Park area and lands in Manhattan at 72nd Street and Second Avenue might help, but requires huge expense to condemn buildings in Manhattan to make way for a landing. It may also pose a safety hazard due to low-flying aircraft (now deterred by the existing Tram’s location next to the Queensboro Bridge with its towers). In any event, a Tram is one of the least efficient ways to move masses of people. At best, a Tram can carry 125 passengers, or about 800 per hour if run at full capacity and at maximum speeds. That is much less than what a subway can transport.

Few could be expected to use express bus service to Manhattan that would take up to an hour, or four times what it takes to squeeze ultimately into a subway car.

All this leads to an obvious conclusion: *This Island’s available transit cannot possibly accommodate the three 28-story buildings proposed for Southtown.*

RIOC and developers will argue that the 1969 General Development Plan (GDP) for the Island contemplated a total of 5,000 housing units. But the GDP did not anticipate the transportation problems we have today. It did not consider the subway bottlenecks that prevent additional trains from being added to the F line. It did not foresee the explosive growth of the subway-riding population in Queens.

Given the limited impact of other available transit solutions, the reality is that Roosevelt Island is highly dependent on subway service, which already carries twice the daily load of the Tramway. There are no magical solutions in sight.

Given that reality, the short and simple stopgap answer to the Island’s severe transportation problem is *no more building* until transit solutions are ready. Under present conditions, bringing many hundreds of additional residents to Southtown buildings 7, 8, and 9 is just not rational.

not the escalators. But I like the Tram better because it’s faster and I love the view.”

But for over a week recently, the elevator on the uptown side of the Roosevelt Island station was out of service. Hauling the results of Manhattan shopping, some residents used an escalator to go up one level, just above the tracks, cross over to the downtown side, go down to the platform level (via stairs, since the only escalator has been upbound for weeks), then ride to the street level on the elevator that serves that platform.

Solutions like that can make residents feel like jungle guides who work out the path of least resistance through the urban thicket. But it doesn’t always work – particularly when the system does out surprises – like those “landing strandings” midway up the trip out of the station.

Outages

The T.A. has spent almost \$1 billion to install more than 200 elevators and escalators in the entire subway system since the early 1990’s, according to a May article in *The Times*. They discovered that “one out of every six elevators and escalators was inoperable for more than a month last year, according to the NYC transit agency’s own data.”

The Times also reported that the 200 mechanics who are charged with fixing the subways elevators and escalators receive as little as four weeks of formal training.

“They don’t have enough com-

petent people with proper training,” Michelle O’Toole, president of J. Martin Associates, told the newspaper. The transit authority hired her company to evaluate the systems elevators in 2006. “It all reflects back to qualifications, training and capabilities.”

Dr. Jan Wells, associate director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, empathizes with the residents of Roosevelt Island. “I know it is frustrating for the residents, but think of the new equipment that will be coming,” she wrote in an e-mail. “Until the construction is finished, there is probably going to be some inconvenience when existing options go out of service. If it’s any consolation, this is a system-wide problem, and other stations suffer poor escalator and elevator service as well.”

As Always, Funding

Is there a permanent solution to this problem?

Kate Slevin, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, an advocacy and policy group working to improve transit service in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, said that elected officials need to push for more funding for public transportation.

“You can’t put the whole burden for operating the system on the rider,” she said in a phone interview. “There is a need for transportation improvements across the city. We need more funding to ensure that escalators and elevators are working properly.”

The solution for Julia Vitullo-Martin, director of the Center for Rethinking Development at the Manhattan Institute, lies in breaking the transit authority’s stranglehold on public transportation. “The monopoly held by the MTA and the NYC Transit Authority on public transportation in the city does not promote the kind of innovation that riders need,” she told *The WIRE*.

The superintendent of elevators and escalators for the entire system told *The Times* that “he often felt under pressure to rely on quick fixes to keep the system moving... We’re faced with trying to solve a problem, but I don’t have the luxury of having all day to do it,” said Joseph Joyce.

Next Year

Meanwhile, Roosevelt Islanders face a 2009 during which the Tramway will be out of service for a time. On Tuesday night, RIOC President Shane described that as “four, six, eight months,” depending on the schedule resulting from bids for the Tramway upgrade. Those bids will be due September 2, in response to a Request for Proposals that was scheduled to go out by the end of this week.

For whatever period the Tram will be out of service, most residents will have to cope with the subway system and the service outages in elevators, escalators, and train service. By then, at least, those new escalators are supposed to be in service and, presumably, working reliably 24/7.

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JULY 12TH, 2008

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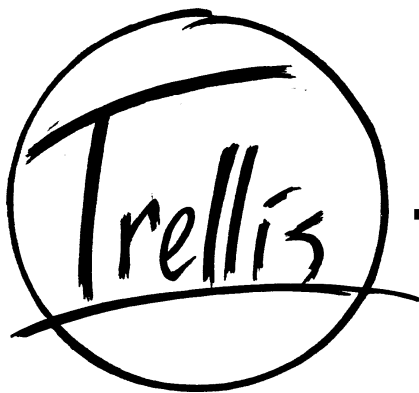


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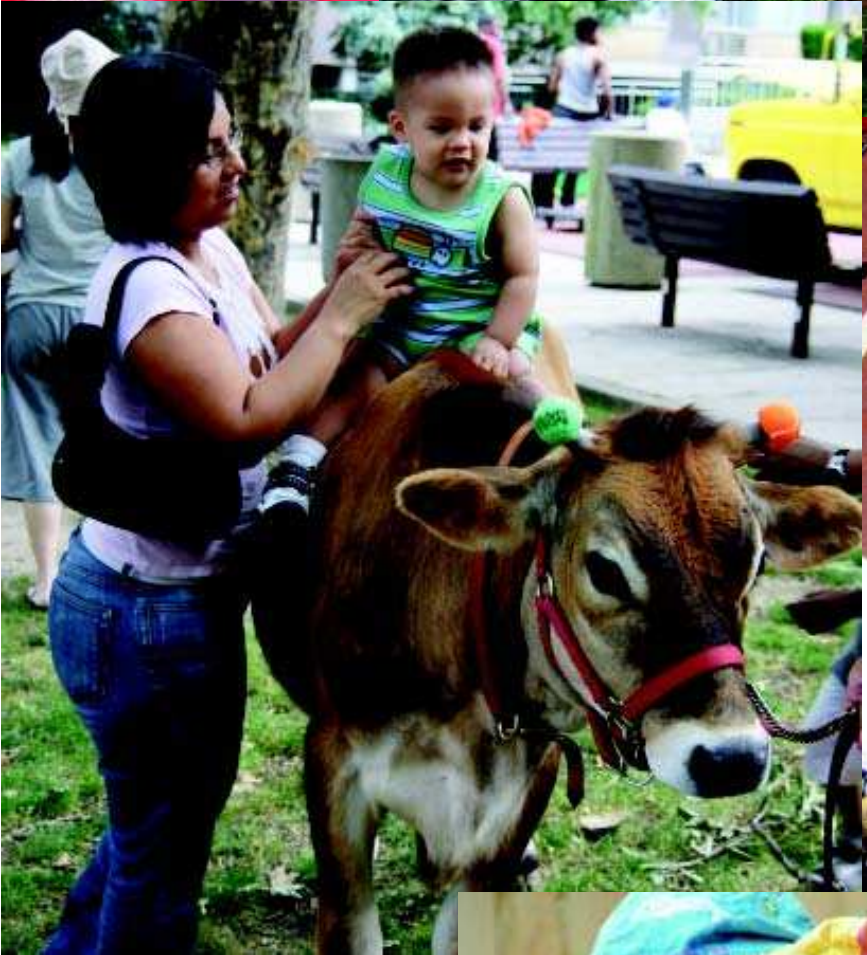
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On the Island

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.

Trellis Closed Briefly After Health Department Inspection

Trellis was closed for two days last week when the restaurant failed a Health Department reinspection. That reinspection was triggered when, on May 30, by going four points over the Health Department’s 28-point limit for violations, the establishment was put on notice that certain deficiencies had to be corrected.

“This was a reinspection, so I should have expected trouble,” said owner Kaie Razaghi. “Mostly, my downfall was food temperature. The guys brought food from downstairs to warm up, put it in the oven, but forgot to turn the oven on. The inspector came in at just that time. With food out of the ’fridge for however long, with the kitchen temperature at 100 degrees, the food changes temperature. The inspector came in at just that time and found the temperature too high.

“Food temperature is a critical violation that gets a lot of points.” Razaghi said this inspector identified himself as “the one who shut down Four Seasons.”

Trellis recovered quickly. “I reopened in one day and, when they inspected me for reopening – they look *not* to reopen you, the going period is a week to 10 days to reopen – when they inspected me for reopening, I had only four points.”

The average score for Manhattan restaurants is 15 points, according to the Health Department’s website – where the restaurant is listed, with a stray apostophe, as “Trelli’s,” as though “Trelli” is the owner’s name.

The Health Department website is at nyc.gov/html/doh/html/rii/index.shtml, where Island food-service operations can be accessed by entering zipcode 10044.

On their most recent inspections, Island operations scored as follows:

China 1, 26 points; Octagon Deli, 4; Fuji East, 29; Nonno’s, 0; Starbucks, 2; Subway, 24 (at Coler) and 25 (at Goldwater); and Trellis, 32.

Read Island history as it was made in the *WIRE* archive at nyc10044.com

Playing Field Availability

OCTAGON

	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S
10am							
11am							
noon							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							

CAPOBIANCO

	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S
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11am							
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1pm							
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3pm							
4pm							
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6pm							
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8pm							

FIREFIGHTERS

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10am							
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1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
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8pm							

PONY

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10am							
11am							
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4pm							
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6pm							
7pm							
8pm							

Available for Residents

Permitted Out

See *Planning Summer Activities*, at left, and the RIOC website at rioc.com, for information on how to reserve Island facilities.

LIGHTHOUSE PARK, ROOSEVELT ISLAND

SATURDAY JULY 12TH, 2008
11am – 4pm

This free event will include:

- **Education Zone** - adult classes and resources for kids!
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- **Community Zone** - learn about services and agencies in your community!
- **Health & Fitness Zone** - free health screenings provided by local healthcare professionals!
- **Kid's Center** - Natural History Moveable Museum Dinosaur Exhibit, clowns, games, face painting, music and more!
- **Green/Environmental Zone and Donation Center** - learn how to "Go Green," donate clothing, household goods, and computers!



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For more information about the event please contact Goodwill Industries:
Youth Services Department 718-777-6315

Roosevelt Island on the Web

Compiled by Rick O'Connor
rooseveltislander.blogspot.com

Website addresses (URLs) have been condensed
for your convenience in copying from this page.

New York Times article on what life is like without the Roosevelt Island Tramway –
tinyurl.com/3k2cad
2007 July 4 Fireworks celebration at Southpoint Park, What to expect for this year –
tinyurl.com/67w8sb
New York Sun article – How will 2009 Roosevelt Island Tram shutdown impact the
Island's transportation infrastructure, as well as Riverwalk condo pricing and
sales? – tinyurl.com/4rep68
Streetsblog – Governor's Island to test bike-sharing program – tinyurl.com/3p53fh
Video walk through Roosevelt Island's Renwick Ruin via Roosevelt Islander blog –
tinyurl.com/6qecoz
Proposed Queensboro Bridge wind turbines could provide power for Roosevelt Island
walkways – tinyurl.com/4wpoz
Wild-animal rescue on Roosevelt Island: Seal found in East River – tinyurl.com/4k6l2v
Roosevelt Island summer outdoor movie moved from Southpoint Park to Firefighters
Field – tinyurl.com/65g4n6
Video recap of Roosevelt Island Day from Roosevelt Island 360 – tinyurl.com/5jt34w

Spot something on the web that you think your neighbors should know about?
Send your suggestion, with full URL (web address), to rooseveltislander@gmail.com.

Direct links to many Island-oriented websites are provided
on the home page of The Main Street WIRE's Website NYC10044 – nyc10044.com.

Blogging opportunities at:
blog.nyc10044.com
rooseveltislander.blogspot.com
rooseveltisland360.blogspot.com

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Roosevelt Island Youth Program

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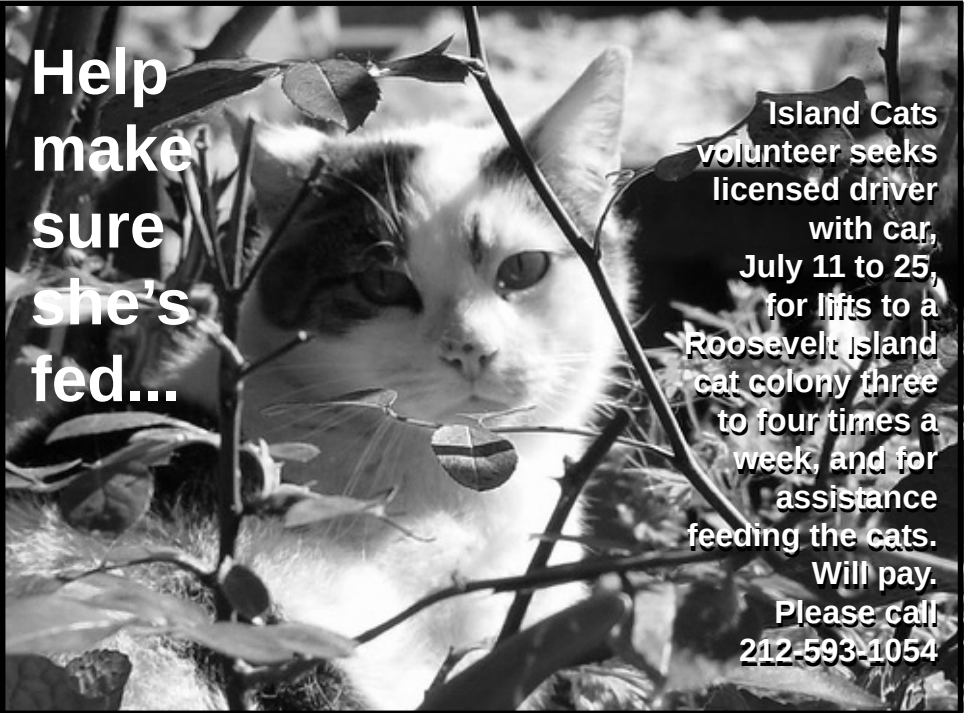
Please email RIYPMusic@RIYouth.com if you are interested in
enrolling your child in any of these fee-based group classes:

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Intermediate Beginning Guitar
Intermediate/Advanced Guitar

Beginning Piano
Intermediate Beginning Piano
Intermediate/Advanced Piano

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PTA Academic Spotlight

Mohamed Sall was nominated by his 7th-grade math teacher, Mr. Mac, to receive the PS/IS 217 PTA Academic Spotlight Award. Mr. Mac says that Mohamed works hard every day, and asks questions on concepts he does not understand. He also states that Mohamed is “a perfect example for his peers of what a hardworking, respectful student should be.”
Ms. Johnson, Mohamed’s Language Arts Teacher, is equally impressed. She appreciates how well Mohamed responds to her feedback, and how he is always looking for ways to improve his work. Ms. Johnson says that Mohamed often completes his school projects early, and because of this, he is often able to help his peers. She feels that he is very talented at helping fellow classmates generate project ideas, and focus on their school work.

Tamala Pita was nominated by her teacher, Ms. Lewis, to receive the PS 217 PTA Academic Spotlight Award. Tamala is in the 5th grade at PS 217. Ms. Lewis describes Tamala as a “naturally bright student who applies herself every day.”
Ms Lewis feels that Tamala works hard to be successful in school by diligently studying and reading challenging books of all genres. She also feels that Tamala is a talented writer whose work throughout the past school year has demonstrated high ability and growth.
Ms. Lewis says that Tamala is a “sweet soul, and a good friend to all of her classmates.”
Recipients of the PTA Academic Spotlight Award receive a free lunch special at Nonno’s.



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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.



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Letters from page 3

To the Editor:

After watching Tappy Phillips on ABC News do a special on the problems of many grocery stores in the city overcharging for milk, I learned that there is a price cap set by the State Department of Agriculture. Oddly, Gristedes was not mentioned in either airing. You’d think that the media would want to cover the fact that Mr. Catsimatidis, presumptive New York City mayoral candidate and owner of Red Apple/Gristedes stores, is overcharging his customers.

With a little foot-work, I discovered that Gristedes pricing indeed exceeds the cap. When I called their executive office milk/dairy department several weeks ago, I spoke to a very indignant gentleman by the name of Bob Euler. He knew “nothing” about any milk pricing caps, and said Gristedes was justified in charging the following prices. He was quite defensive. Here’s what I have found at our MegaStore: Gallons are being sold at \$4.99 and should be no more than \$3.99. Half-gallons are \$2.69 and should be no more than \$2.09. Quarts are \$1.69 and generally should not be more than \$1.09.

Charles Huff, the Director of Milk Control with the New York Department of Agriculture, is aware that Gristedes all over the City is overcharging for milk. He has even had a few calls from Roosevelt Islanders. But considering the number of families with children here, he should be hearing from more of us. His number is **518-457-1772**, and his e-mail address is charlie.huff@agmkt.com.

Dairy pricing can be checked at www.agmkt.state.ny, Divisions, Milk Control and Dairy Services. There is a link at the top of the page to Statistics. Mr. Huff said that the cap may be going up this month, but gallons will still not be as high as \$4.99.

Other comparison pricing: McCann’s Steel Cut Oats (28 oz. can) is almost \$9 at Gristedes; at Fairway (Broadway and 74th), I spent \$5.49! Grapenuts cereal at Gristedes is \$6.49. At Fairway, I spent \$4.29.

Sherie Helstien

The next issue of *The WIRE* will appear Saturday, August 2. Something on your mind in the meantime? *Blog about it on Website NYC10044* at blog.nyc10044.com.

To the Editor:

At our toddler playground (near Southtown), a sign clearly states that it is for the use of *young* children, and that children must have adult supervision.

I have noticed three startling occurrences there. First, many older children (ages 9-13+) use the playground after school and into the night. Never have I seen an accompanying adult. Second, as a result, our playground is used improperly and it is deteriorating. Third, these children behave recklessly, and it endangers children who are much younger and much smaller.

I hope that Public Safety will make an effort to monitor the playground, and parents will tell their older children to use other playgrounds on the Island. The toddlers cannot use the playgrounds designed for older children and, soon, they will be unable to use their own toddler playground if it is overrun with older children.

Many a mother has had to leave the toddler playground because there are full-size boys and girls running at full speed, not watching where they are going, sometimes knocking a toddler right off his or her feet. I have even seen some of these unsupervised older children riding bikes within the playground! Furthermore, I cannot help but be offended by the foul language used by some of these older ones, as well.

Recently, a group of children who were about 10 years and older were, as usual, using the swings, including the infant swings. When asked to get off the infant swings because they are not designed to hold the weight and size of older children, the children simply refused to comply.

Corinna Kell, who has lived here for many years, recalls that the rocking animals have been broken before by older children and teenagers who were too heavy and wildly rocked on them. The behavior continues. The animals will likely be broken again.

Here is a list that will continue to grow if the playground is not monitored more closely: A broken latch on the front gate (at least twice that I have noticed); full-size children swinging two and three at a time, resulting in a broken swing; graffiti; a Plexiglas window that was broken, resulting in removal of the window; and now, a dangerous hole I have seen young ones fall out of. RIOC, please note these damages, and protect the budget from needless expenditure due to further damage caused by age-inappropriate use of the toddler playground.

To the Editor:

On Monday morning, approximately 75 parking spaces on the west side of Vernon Boulevard, from the Queensboro bridge to Costco, became *No Standing Anytime* spots with no advance notice and no discussion with the community. They have been turned into bike lanes.

These parking spaces are the only spots close enough to Roosevelt Island to be used as unfettered street parking and overnight spots for Roosevelt Islanders, who compete with local Queens residents, visitors to Socrates Park, and the Noguchi Museum for parking.

Astoria Community Board 1 voted against losing the parking, but this decision was just dropped on them without their input. Apparently, Vernon Boulevard is part of the larger city bike-lane plan.

Transportation Alternatives has organized a letter-writing campaign in favor of bike lanes. This is particularly bad timing. I like bike lanes, too, but we need spaces for our cars, especially while the bridgework has taken our under-bridge parking. If we are to try to get the parking spaces back, everyone must write letters to Mayor Bloomberg and Councilmember Jessica Lappin, as this is a city decision.

Ellen Polivy

I worry that the problem will only get worse when school is out and older children will have the opportunity to use the toddler playground all day, rather than just late in the day.

There are plenty of other playgrounds designed for the use of older children that they should be using. There is no excuse for them to endanger our little ones in their own toddler playground, as well as damage it by using it in ways for which it was not designed.

Parents, please teach your children the proper way to act at the playground, and make sure they are not using the toddler playground.

Public Safety, please monitor the toddler playground more often, making sure children are not too old, and have supervision to keep it safe and in working order.

RIOC, please note that, in the interest of children of all ages as well as the RIOC budget, supervised play in age-appropriate playgrounds should be required.

Holly Hancey, Theresa Chenn, Corinna Kell, Rachel Theurer, Joanna Rodriguez

RIRA Column from page 2

with the windows closed considerably more often than has been my wont. To make an omelet, you must...well, you know.

On a whim, I called 311 to report a noise violation. Not the bridge; I’m referring to the commercial helicopters that use Roosevelt Island as their flight path at all hours of the day and night. Years ago, when C. Virginia Fields was Manhattan Borough President, I joined her Helicopter Task Force to see if the rules, requiring commercial helicopters to fly a thousand feet over urban residential buildings, could be enforced. I found a Task Force that appeared to be a sounding board for the commercial helicopter industry, and that was profoundly uninterested in the community representatives who, like me, had joined to register their complaints. I didn’t return.

Here’s the result of my 311 phone call today: The apparatchik who answered my call stated that he “didn’t have a code corresponding to a helicopter noise complaint,” therefore there was nothing he could do for me and could he send me a brochure on barking dogs? Frankly, I didn’t expect anything different. I will pursue the question with our current Borough President, Scott Stringer, and hope to report some progress in the near future.

Transit

Community Board 8 held a joint meeting of their Transportation and Roosevelt Island Committees Tuesday evening. On the agenda were key Island issues, including East River ferry service, track work on the F train, escalator and elevator breakdowns at the Roosevelt Island station, the Tram overhaul scheduled for next year, access to the Queensboro Bridge, and the loss of parking on Vernon Boulevard so that a bike lane may be set aside. Representatives of the MTA and DOT answered questions, of-

fered studies of various questions, and promised... nothing.

I hope that Alissa Kosowsky, representing New York Transit, will follow through on CB8 member Ellen Polivy’s request that the Authority provide ramps on our subway platforms that will allow motorized wheelchairs to board trains.

The key question posed that evening was why a usable dock was to be constructed on the west promenade near Octagon when no ferry operator has agreed to provide service, nor has EDC or DOT conducted feasibility studies that might persuade such an operator that Island ridership is sufficient to make their service profitable. Cart before the horse, don’t you think?

FDR Memorial

We’ve heard precious little from the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (FERI) in recent days or, for that matter, from the Trust for Public Land (TPL), responsible for the ten northernmost acres of Southpoint Park. Likely, this is because of the collapse of the James Renwick-designed Smallpox Hospital and the start of the stabilization work that must precede any other park construction.

You may recall that the Parks Committee of Community Board 8 convened a meeting last January to consider the FDR Memorial and the \$40 million Louis Kahn design that is the only commemoration of President Roosevelt presented over the last 35 years. Ambassador William vanden Heuvel, Chairman Emeritus of FERI, spoke eloquently of his association with this 20th Century titan, and of the Kahn plan. During the Q&A, a resident asked the Ambassador whether FERI would consider a deadline within which they would either raise the money or cede control of those three acres back to the State. He stated that four months, five at the outside, would be sufficient, after which FERI would simply

RIOC Column from page 2

the receptacles will be a big help.

6. Octagon Ferry Dock: Studies for required work and permitting under way. We met with City officials at EDC and DOT to determine what modifications to the piers might be necessary to accommodate. Stay tuned for future developments.

7. Fourth of July: Plans are proceeding. RIOC has made tickets available to Island residents for \$18, a 10% discount from the price for the general public. The discounted tickets to Islanders, on proof of residency, are available at the Tram. Southpoint will be closed the entire week of June 30 to July 3 to permit the setup for the fireworks watching.

8. Playing Fields: Engineering work on replacement of drains and playing surfaces going forward. When finalized, will be back to the Board before issuing an RFP.

9. Open Swim: RIOC has hired a lifeguard and there will be new Open Swim hours at Sportspark, Monday to Friday, 6AM to 9AM.

10. Public Purpose Funding: At the behest of RIOC, RIRA undertook the very difficult job of vetting the applications for \$100,000 as allocated by RIOC in the 2008/2009 budget. Balancing Island priorities among the competing organizations on a limited budget is not an easy task. RIRA recommended to RIOC’s Board that the Day Nursery receive \$20,000, Island Kids \$19,000, Marlins Swim Club \$22,000, Boy Scouts \$24,000, RISAR \$15,000, Life

walk away. Last Sunday was exactly five months since that January 22 meeting.

I’ve spoken to Ambassador vanden Heuvel and also to FERI Executive Director Gina Pollara, and I can tell you that there is no deadline now on the table. They are confident that the city and state will come up with the funds to cover at least the first \$20 million of construction costs and that, by raising half the money they require, permitting may begin while they seek the rest of the funds.

I asked what level of pledged funds were in hand, remembering that, five months ago, only about \$10 million was available. Their answers were vague, and I got the impression that the total hasn’t changed much. RIOC President Steve Shane believes that the con-

struction of Southpoint Park will bring closure to the Kahn project by virtue of the pedestrian paths that would block any construction at the south tip of the Island. Vanden Heuvel thought materials could be barged to the FDR construction site, so I reminded him that the Hudson and Related Companies had considered this strategy for the Southtown development and rejected it because of the fast currents and tidal nature of the river surrounding the Island. Gina thought that start of the TPL project now has been moved up to April 2009, primarily because of the Renwick collapse, and this could affect the scenario. In any event, whatever promises, deadlines, starting times, and resident expectations may have been considered in the past, the present and future

of Southpoint Park are on shifting sand with nothing, absolutely nothing, certain.

We Islanders got to add our two cents to the equation through the RIRA/*Main Street WIRE* survey conducted this spring. Clearly, we residents are of two minds regarding the Kahn design, although many respondents, both pro and con, expressed a desire for a statue of FDR in his wheelchair, to acknowledge the special population of Roosevelt Island. I think that an appropriate memorial to this Island’s namesake is decades overdue, and that a more modest memorial might have been funded and built a generation ago. But then, you know my feelings. What happens now is entirely in the hands of people who don’t live here, and that’s a shame.

Happy Birthday America.

Assembly Member Micah Z. Kellner

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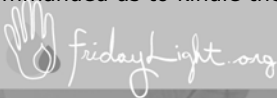


SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

- Friday, June 27 at 8:13 pm
- Friday, July 4 at 8:12 pm
- Friday, July 11 at 8:10 pm
- Friday, July 18 at 8:06 pm
- Friday, July 25 at 8:00 pm
- Friday, August 1 at 7:53 pm

Blessing: Boruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheer Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Ve-tzi-vo-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Sha-bos Ko-desh.

Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the light of the holy Shabbat.



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BASEBALL

The Little League Baseball season ended with incredible championship games and the wildly popular All-Star game, all generating lots of action, excitement, and fun!

The **Minors** championship game was one for the record books. With the Athletics down by 7 runs in the final inning against the Cubs, they battled back with a 13-run rally to win the game 19-13, to become the **2008 Roosevelt Island Minor League Champions**. The rally went through the lineup four times, as all A's batters made solid contact at the plate.

Trophies were given out to all players after the game. For the Athletics, additional trophies went to Sean Christianson for Gold Glove, Jaden Perry for Most Valuable Player, and Nick Lovelace for Sportsmanship. For the Cubs, additional trophies were given to Jordan Chambers for Most Valuable Player, Adrian Fernandez for Sportsmanship, and Luca Goldmansour and Wilson Wong for Gold Glove for fielding excellence.

The **Majors** championship, as usual, came down to the wire, with the winning run crossing the plate in the final at bat, winning the game and the **2008 Roosevelt Island Major League Championship** for the Tigers. With the Athletics leading for most of the game and the Tigers closing in, the Tigers were down by two runs going into the bottom of the last inning. With key hits and stolen bases, they pushed the last run across the plate for the victory.

Trophies were given out to all players after the game. For the Athletics, additional trophies went to Jack Privatello for Gold Glove, Jaemel Carter for Most Valuable Player, and Cameron Gordon for Sportsmanship Award. For the Tigers, additional trophies were given to Brandon Ewing for Most Valuable Player, Billy Cusick for Sportsmanship Award, and John King and Kevin Wagner for Gold Glove for fielding excellence. The Cubs held their trophy ceremony before the game, and gave additional trophies to Drew Clarke for Most Valuable Player, Liana Penny for Gold Glove, and Jerry Machacek for Sportsmanship.

Both leagues played their All-Star games, with the top players from each team playing an unofficial game to show off their talent and have fun. The games featured lots of fantastic action, but the most enjoyable part may not have been during play: Thanks to the efforts of coach Brian King, the fields were decorated in red, white, and blue, with baseball themes and plenty of music. Brian even called the play-by-play and provided plenty of laughs. Russ Cusick sang the national anthem for the majors, while Ed Lucas sang the anthem for the minors. Charles DeFino and the Youth Center contributed manpower, hot dogs, and sodas.

It's worth noting that, in both leagues, no team was winless and no team was undefeated. Not only was the talent spread throughout the leagues, but plenty of coaches stepped up so that all of the kids could benefit from good teaching and become better players throughout the season – which is really what it's all about. The Youth Program would like to thank all coaches and parents involved, including, but not limited to, the Minors Eli White, Tim Wong, Peter Alber, Kristen Goldmansour, Johan Marfey, Ray Pabon, Carolyn Christianson, Jamaal Perry, Chris Enock, Steven Vordenberg, and Steven Hogan. For the Majors, coaches included Brian King, Leon Wagner, Paul Sokoloff, Lloyd Woltz, Ed Lucas, David Nisthaus, John Aimone, Scot Bobo, and Joe Jones. And of course, everyone's first and favorite coach, Tee-ball Coach Tommy Howlin.

SOCCKER

Fall soccer registration is now open for the 2008 league. Registration forms are available at the Youth Center at 506 Main Street, or online at www.Rlyouth.com.



The Athletics' Jack Privatello scores ahead of the throw to the Tigers' catcher.



Athletics' catcher Jack Privatello applies a tag at the plate.



Tiger Roy Mesquitta slides under a tag at second base



The Athletics' Aiden Strein nails a runner at the plate.



Photo coverage by Allan Peterson

The Athletics players and coaches discuss strategy between innings.



The Tigers' Kevin Wagner takes a cut

Wet 'n Waggin'.



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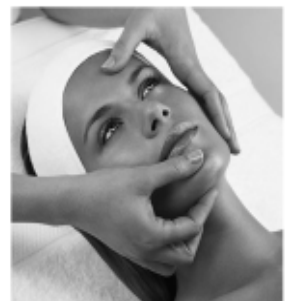
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