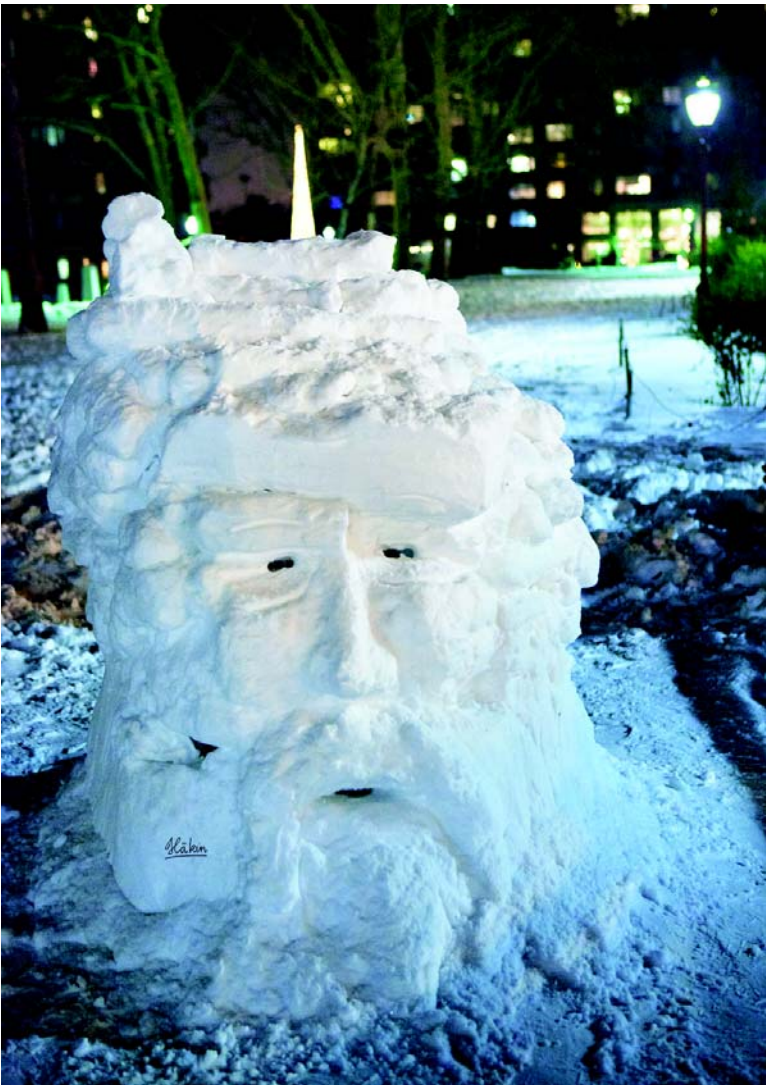


Next issue:
Saturday,
January 29

The Main Street WIRE™

31st year as Roosevelt Island’s Independent Community Newspaper



Old Man Winter Is that a scowl or a sneer we detect in Ha Kin’s snow sculpture? He produced it after the December 26 storm provided an ample supply of the raw material.

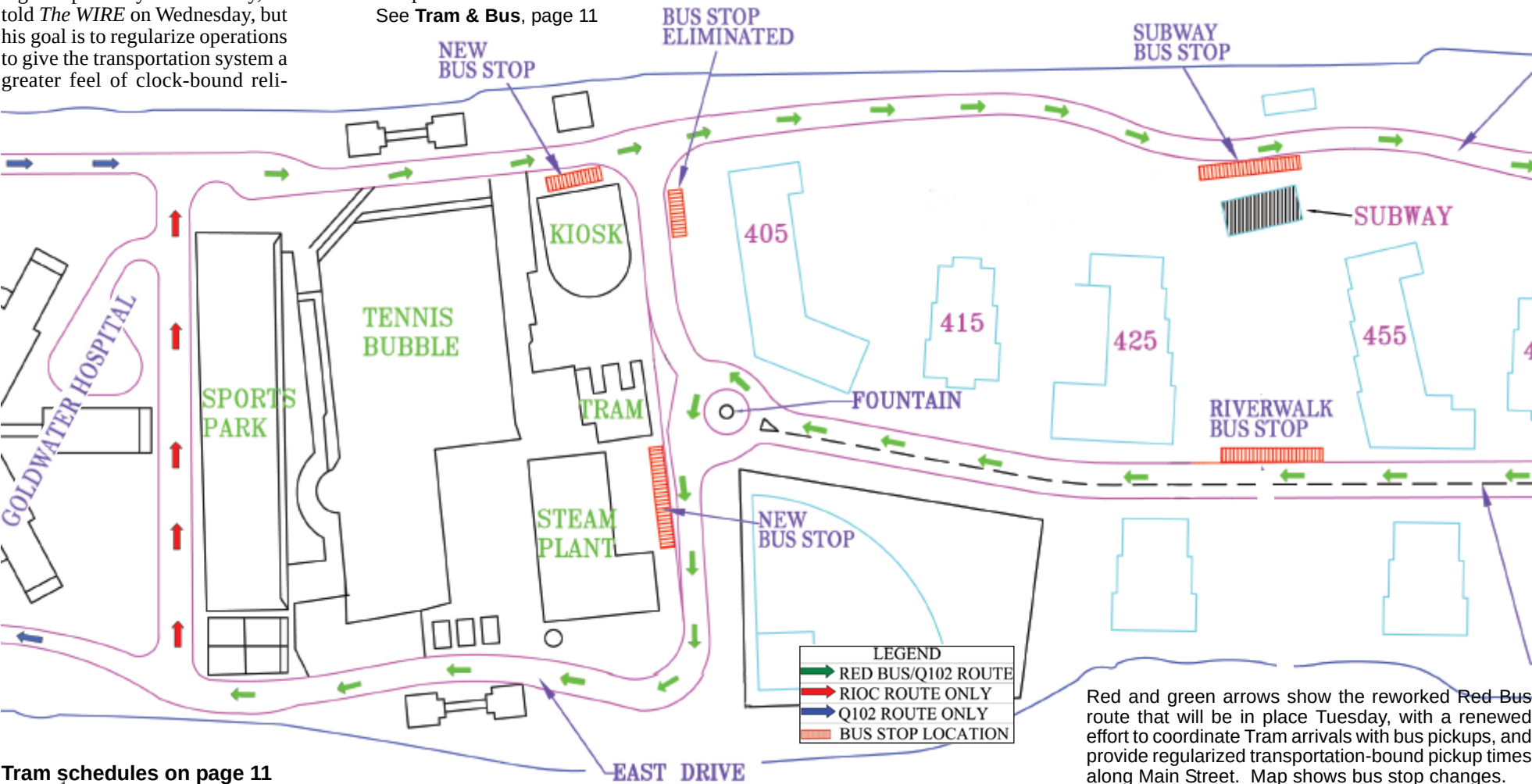
Starts Tuesday Tram & Red Bus to Have Coordinated Schedules

Starting Tuesday, RIOC will be attempting to synchronize the Tram and Red Bus schedules in non-rush periods.

Vice President for Operations Fernando Martinez warns that it’s a work in progress. Some tweaking will probably be necessary, he told *The WIRE* on Wednesday, but his goal is to regularize operations to give the transportation system a greater feel of clock-bound reliability.

Martinez has been working with representatives of the Residents Association Common Council, including President Matthew Katz, Island Services chair Aaron Hamburger, and Planning chair Frank Farance.

Farance provided *The WIRE* See **Tram & Bus**, page 11



Tram schedules on page 11

New RIRA Common Council Displays a Fresh Enthusiasm

News analysis by Dick Lutz

There’s a new energy about the Common Council of RIRA, the Roosevelt Island Residents Association.

It happens every two years. A fresh group of elected or re-elected residents, now numbering 40-something, convene to represent their neighbors. Coming off an early-November plebiscite, they arrive with goals, peeves, pet projects, and – occasionally – genuine anger.

The questions, every two years, are always these: *How long will this enthusiasm last? How deep will it run? Will they stay with it?*

While it’s hard to describe with precision, to any longtime observer of this body of Islanders, there is definitely a sense of fresh energy: many younger members, and some with political experience and interest; fuller representation from the “new” parts of Roosevelt Island – The Octagon and Southtown, and, despite its not being at all “new,” Manhattan Park.

And there’s a more eager desire to chair committees and serve on them – not as much of the usual

extra effort required to assemble a group of councilors for a working committee with enough person-power to make something happen. to accomplish something *real*.

RIRA

Every Roosevelt Island resident is a member of the Residents Association. But the Common Council – currently 45 officers and building representatives plus five alternates, who have the commitment to declare their interest in becoming del-

See **Council**, page 13

Inside on page 12:
Thumbnail Profiles of
Some Council Members

RIRA Council Moves to Control Use of Sensitive Information

The Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association acted last week to restrict the availability of its working papers to Island media.

The Council member who proposed the policy, Joyce Mincheff, was taking a blogger, Rick O’Conor, to the woodshed.

The dustup started when O’Conor put the working papers of RIRA committees (meeting minutes and draft reports), with comments, into his Internet blog. Both Mincheff and RIRA President Matthew Katz felt there was material in the minutes that could do harm to an individual, and asked O’Conor to remove it. He responded, “I do not intend on deleting the material,” saying, “I don’t think it wise for RIRA to follow down a path of lack of transparency, keeping information from the public.”

Later, in response to a request from Public Safety Director Keith Guerra, O’Conor removed an individual’s name from the blog posting, though other content made it clear who the individual is.

Mincheff’s resolution, passed by the Common Council in a 17-12 vote (three at the meeting abstained), read:

*In order to protect the inner workings of committees and their respective members, and in order to ensure that only matters with the backing of the Common Council are made public as the opinion of the Common Council, we hereby resolve: That committee meeting minutes, reports and work product be distributed **only** to members of the Common Council prior to the Common Council meeting at which they are to be considered. Such restriction can be overridden by a 2/3 majority of the committee.*

Mincheff explained the reasons for her proposal in an e-mail to *The WIRE*: “Corrections to words misspoken cannot make them disappear from the Internet’s memory. In fact, we’ve recently seen suicides resulting from the bullying practice of exposing people’s blemishes to public scorn.” She characterized the posting of “unfounded accusations” as “morally deficient,” adding that the blogger “should exert greater care... not stand on his First Amendment right to trounce people publicly...”

O’Conor explained that he has been posting RIRA’s committee materials, “unedited and in their entirety,”

See **Information**, page 13

With Freedom Comes...

Words have consequences. If they didn’t, there would be little evolutionary value to speech, writing, and communication in general.

Evolution also gave the human species the ability to *think*. Unfortunately, thinking *straight* was not an automatic part of the deal – at least, not for everybody.

And humans are also able to take responsibility – most of us, anyway – for what we do or say, print or publish.

When assembled in one place, an ability to communicate combined with a *lack* of responsibility and a *lack* of straight thinking can produce unfortunate, even tragic, consequences – and that was a lesson to be learned last week not only in Arizona and in the nation, but also here on Roosevelt Island.

Not all speech deserves to be uttered. Once uttered, not all speech deserves to be reported. And while the cure for unfortunate speech is more speech and a robust public debate, nothing about the cure *requires* indiscriminate utterances in the first place – nor does it require that they be repeated or published.

None of these observations is intended to suggest that free speech be curtailed. Free expression is a basic right. But the larger the bullhorn, the greater the responsibility to use it with care.

Last week, reacting to a blogger’s publication of some potentially damaging material on the one hand, and some possibly inflammatory material on the other hand, the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association voted to withhold, from all Roosevelt Island media, access to some of its working materials.

It rejected a Housing Committee report that virtually all agreed was a wrongheaded personal tirade, and sent it back for a rewrite. Unfortunately, it had already been pushed out over the Internet and was quickly picked up from the blog in question by other bloggers. At least one then blew up one person’s misguided rant into a “feud” between Roosevelt Island neighborhoods. For the record, there’s no feud. But, clearly, the words, shoved through a megaphone, had unnecessarily negative (and misleading) consequences. It’s likely to leave a lasting impression, and there’s near certainty that not all those who “learned” of a “feud” here will follow up and learn the truth.

Another set of minutes presented to the Common Council last week, because they were published too widely, were characterized by Public Safety Director Keith Guerra this way: “They blew something way out of proportion and put a man’s livelihood, and the safety of this community, in jeopardy for no apparent reason.”

Even allowing for a bit of exaggeration out of pique, Guerra shows himself as alert to the possible consequences of over-reporting – unnecessarily pushing rough-draft thoughts or unsubstantiated rumor through the machinery of media.

Those who control access to media can make mistakes. *Fox News* is a prime example of handing the megaphone to right-wing maniacs. The technologies of the 21st century have put those megaphones into inexperienced and irresponsible hands. It’s no longer a news organization’s community of professionals making a disciplined, careful decision about what gets repeated by publication. Now, it can be just one person, answerable only to himself, free of traditional constraints, with no particular responsibility to standards of right and reason.

Such circumstances put the RIRA Common Council in the position of restricting the flow of information based on the lowest denominator with a concern for the worst possible consequences. Last week, they made a decision on that basis, perhaps with fully adequate motivation. As a result, information may not flow as freely, seasoned professionals will be denied reasonable access to information, and they will lose the opportunity to exercise good-sense judgment about appropriateness for publication.

We understand the Common Council’s concerns. We can’t endorse the result.

DL

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters of local interest to the community, and to/from officials. Requests for a Name Withheld signature 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. Submit letters by e-mail to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net or on a disk left at the desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to The WIRE. If you e-mail, expect a confirming response and, if you receive none, resend and call 212-826-9056 to alert us. 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 are 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.

Letters

To the Editor:

By now, it is apparent that, while not the worst storm of the 21st century so far, our post-Christmas blizzard was a storm for the Roosevelt Island ages.

Most of the RIOC grounds staff, NYC Sanitation, and many others deserve applause and kudos for their incredible efforts against the blizzard on Sunday and Monday. The RIOC administration deserves a swift kick in the *** for not maintaining the longstanding tradition of declaring a snow emergency on Friday or Saturday in advance of the storm, which was well-predicted by everyone. Declaring a snow emergency would have required all parked vehicles on Main Street to be moved off the street, which would have permitted more effective sanding, salting, and snow plowing and removal during and after the storm. We have done this countless times before. What happened this time?

In the not-so-old days, RIOC staff did a pretty decent job of posting signs and other advance notice so that all parkers would get their vehicles off Main Street, allowing for more efficient use of plows, sanders, etc. We have a huge garage that is barrier-free and wheelchair-accessible, and other off-street parking options accessible to

To the Editor:

Several years ago, during the summer, I noticed pigeons on the loose in the Chinese restaurant on several occasions. Warm weather seems to dictate that they leave the door open. A casual rumination on where pigeon waste might be resulted in a personal decision never to order from there. The pigeon condition has been going on for years.

Oh, well. We are used to standards of hygiene or simple cleanliness not being enforced in our restaurants and stores. The “captive market” syndrome has always been pervasive here. But now, it has sunk to new lows.

On Monday, December 6, I passed at 10:00 a.m. when China1 was closed – but not empty. Two squirrels were gleefully scampering around on the tables and chairs.

See Letters, page 10

all – so how did RIOC (and the Mayor, for that matter), miss this one? The parking situation here on Main Street is bad enough without snow conditions. We should go back to the old practice of getting the cars off Main Street when snow is predicted – a little prevention goes a long way.

Nina Lublin

To the Editor:

I was very excited to ride the Tram during the first week it returned to service. It was wonderful to hear the familiar words: “If you are standing, please hold on.”

I looked around for something to hold on to. The thick gray upright was too wide for me to hold more than 15 seconds without strain. The four narrower steel uprights in the four corners near the seats were too close to the seats to accommodate more than two or three standing passengers, and each was already taken. The steel rails on the cabin ceiling were much too high for me to reach. The bars on the inside of the sliding doors were gone. I finally saw some handholds on the inside corner walls of the cabin. Those could accommodate a few passengers in each corner, and I grabbed on to one.

Who was the genius that designed this? Clearly, someone without mass transit in mind. Who at RIOC approved it?

This Tram cabin is not passenger-friendly. The old Tram cabin worked better. Was this really worth the cost?

Gilda Hannah

Letters deadline for Jan. 29 issue: Tues., Jan. 25, 5:00 p.m.

The name on her apron is *Dreena*. “My mother got to make it up,” she explains. “And I get to spend a lot of time spelling it.”

She’s the flight attendant January 2 on USAirways 3611, LGA to BUF. “How long have you been an FA,” I ask, and she says it’s been six and a half years. I am tempted to say, by way of asking, “Came late to this,” but I stifle the thought, realizing I’d be commenting, in effect, that she looks too old for this to be her first career.

She relieves me of the need to reformulate: “But I was a software engineer before that. I’m not as dumb as I look.” *Whew*. “You look plenty smart to me,” I respond, and she smiles. “Things trailed off in the Cobol business,” she adds. “Got pretty bad, even free-lance, even part-time. So I ran away and joined the circus.” I laugh at this apt comparison of the airline business to a three-ring assemblage of jugglers, acrobats, and clowns.

I give her the brief version of my story: “I was consulting in New York for a while for a British firm, then on my own. But I got to the point where I didn’t want to have to learn another piece of software. So now I publish a newspaper.”

“You ran away and joined the circus, too.” I laugh in agreement, because there’s no time to explain that I’ve been in media – a journalist – all my adult life.

In many ways, editing and publishing *The Main Street WIRE* is a bit of a circus. Yet, perhaps because I do it because I want to, in retirement, I enjoy it more than any actual paid work I’ve ever done, the possible exception being the year I took off back in the ’80s to write fiction (the novel *Jadwiga’s Crossing*).

That is not to say that publishing a fortnightly community newspaper is 99% enjoyment. It isn’t. The financial aspects are no damn fun. Newspapers this size with a readership this size are always on the brink of collapse, even with 90% volunteer labor, including my own. But *The WIRE* has been lucky. In a growing community, it broke out of a difficult period of meager eight-page issues and poor collections from advertisers about 10 years ago (though a couple have gone out of business without paying up, and Flanigan the chiropractor still owes the paper \$825 from 2007), and though the budget is still an iffy proposition, these days almost all issues do a little better than break-even.

My own professional goal has been to take this publication to the point where an editor-publisher can be paid – not handsomely, just *paid something* – ideally, enough to make it an attractive retirement activity for a seasoned journalist ready to quit the daily grind. That’s an elusive moving target, but it remains in sight somewhere just over the financial horizon.

(It’s especially gratifying that two fully literate Islanders remembered *The WIRE* in their wills, and that others have said they intend to.)

There are other challenges that are more fun to con-

sider and take on. How should *The WIRE* make a transition to the digital age and paper-free distribution of its news product? No one in the media world has found an ideal answer to that question, and it’s particularly challenging in a service area where success has been snatched from the jaws of bankruptcy by volunteers who deliver the paper to every residential door on Roosevelt Island – an important value to advertisers. Digital can’t do that (yet). To make “a clean break,” *The WIRE* would have to abandon the vast majority of its readership – anathema to the community’s needs and the newspaper’s mission.

Nonetheless, we’re working on an integration of more digital product. In the next year, you’ll see us poking at the possibilities, mainly via *Website NYC10044.com*. I came to the City and Roosevelt Island originally as a consultant to the BBC, working on the journalistic dimensions of a digital information utility. That was in 1981, and I over-optimistically thought that, by 1985, a quarter of the population would be consuming news and advertising electronically. **Wrong**. Thirty years

later, print, while staggering, still has its place. And digital, while rising, does not yet have universal *reach*.

That’s especially true here, where a high percentage of residents are not likely to receive Island news on digital media, but *will* get it (and will often read it) when it is delivered to their doors. Carefully contemplated words on paper have a special value, too, especially in a world increasingly satisfied with mere *superficial awareness* in place of *depth of understanding*.

But we can’t rest on the paper platform forever – not in a world where concentrated reading and focused contemplation are being shoved aside by the color screens and bite-size news bits that appeal to a young audience raised amid cartoon action that trains young brains to pay extended attention only with glitter, non-stop motion, and anticipated explosions. Distraction has replaced depth, and the challenge is to convert that fragmented distraction into focused attention despite – and using – the characteristics of new media.

There is also the question of meaningful standards. Today’s digital media range from journalistically responsible, where opinion is clearly labeled and facts are facts, to material generated by individuals more interested in “sounding off” than in uncovering facts and presenting them clearly. Often, you find an abominable admixture of opinion, truthiness, and passed-along press releases.

What we’ll do at *The Main Street WIRE* and its companion *Website NYC10044* is stick with the standards and maintain the values of traditional newspapering, while seeking ways to leverage the capabilities brought to us by digital technology, and hope that Roosevelt Island media will find their way through the medium-term transition to that brave new circus.

COMING UP

— This Weekend —

Blue Wave, exhibit of the art of Izumi Tokuno, Octagon Gallery, 888 Main Street, daily 9am-9pm, opening **today (Sat Jan 15)**, through Feb 20.
Main Street Theatre and Dance Alliance registration, **today (Sat Jan 15)**, 11am-3pm. Also subsequent **Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat.** (See ad, page 9, for times and place.)



— Coming Week & Next Weekend —

Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Board of Directors meeting, **Wed Jan 19**, 5:30, Manhattan Park Community Center, 8 River Rd. Public comment precedes formal session.
Support Group for Foster Parents, first meeting, **Thu Jan 20**, 7pm, 536 Main St. Information: E-mail islandkidsri@gmail.com. (Ad, page 9.)
Book Discussion, *District and Circle* by Seamus Heaney, **Thu Jan 20**, 6:30pm, Library.

— Continuing —

Open-Rec Basketball, **Sat**, 10am-1pm, 2-6pm, Sportspark. All ages; free.
Absolutely Cool, members show, at Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St., through Jan 30. Gallery hours **Sat-Sun** 11am-5pm, **Wed & Fri**, 6-9pm.
Open Swim at Sportspark, **Sat-Fri**. For hours and fees, see ad, page 16.
Renaissance painting group, **Sat** pm; oil/acrylic with mentor Art Zamora. Call **917-291-8799** for time, location, and fee information.
Reading Aloud for an audience of children, **Mon-Fri**, 3:30-4pm, at the Library.
Toastmasters, 2nd and 4th **Mon**, 7:30pm. Info: **212-751-9577**.
Knitting & Crochet Circle, **Tue**, 10am, Library. Adults.
Living Library After-School Program, **Tue, Wed, Fri**, 3-6pm, PS/IS 217 Beacon. Open to all.
Island Office Hours for State Senator Jose Serrano and/or staff, **first Tue** of each month, 4-7pm, RIOC offices, 591 Main St.
Ping Pong: Open Play, **Tue & Fri**, 6-9pm, Sportspark. **Class**, **Wed**, 6-9pm, Sportspark. All ages; free.
Sci-Fi Discussion Group, **first Tue** of month, 6:30pm, Library.
Poetry Hour (adults), **last Tue** of month, 6:30pm, Library.
Picture-Book Bingo / Story Time for toddlers to pre-K, **Wed**, 10:30.
Picture Book Hour (age 4 and under), **Wed**, 11am, Library.
Nintendo Wii Play (kids), **Wed**, 3pm, Library.
RIOC's Community Office Hours, **Wed**, 3-5pm, 591 Main St.
Island Office Hours for Assemblymember Micah Kellner and/or staff, **every Thu**, 3-7pm, RIOC offices, 591 Main St.
Book Bingo for Kids 5-12 years old, **Thu**, 4pm, Library.
Robots for Kids ages 6-13, **Thu & Fri**, 6:30-8pm, Youth Program, 506 Main St., 2nd fl. Information: **917-751-2900**.

— Future Weeks —

Island Kids winter semester starts week of **Jan 24** (See ad, page 9).

There is no charge to list Island events here. E-mail information to editor@MainStreetWIRE.com or leave it at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*.

212-826-9056; *urgent* matters, **917-617-0449**. **Advertising**, display and classified: **917-587-3278**.
Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Feb 2**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.
Book Discussion, *The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell, **Thu Feb 17**, 6:30pm, Library.
Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Mar 2**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

See **ComingUp**, page 11

January 12, 2011

Happy New Year to all residents and friends of Roosevelt Island! Our recent winter storms resulted in difficulties for many New York City commuters, but the streets of Roosevelt Island were quickly cleared for our buses and resident vehicles. I am extremely pleased by our Grounds and Maintenance crew's impressive work. I sincerely thank our employees who work through all sorts of strong weather and show great dedication to the Roosevelt Island community.

On a related note, the Tram remained in service during the entire time of the December 26 blizzard, including high winds exceeding 50 miles per hour. Operation of the Tram only stopped briefly because of lightning during the storm. Almost six weeks into operation of the modernized Tram, I am proud to report that the system is performing very well.

Also, the New Year marks a changing of the guard in the Governor's office. So, I would like to congratulate our new Governor, Andrew Cuomo, on his election. I am positive that this New Year will see great prosperity and infrastructure and service development on Roosevelt Island and in all of New York State.

Cheers!

Projects Under Way

Good Shepherd Chapel Flooring Repair – In the Chapel's multipurpose area and the offices, including the back office, removal of existing tile is in progress, and installation of the floor finish will follow. The flooring is anticipated to be complete by the end of April 2011.

The WIRE publishes *The RIOC Column* and *The RIRA Column* as a service to RIOC, RIRA, and the community, and does not control or censor either.

The holidays are over, and five weeks have elapsed since I shared any straight poop with you in these pages. I'll try to make up for lost time.

The RIRA committees were reconstituted at our December 1 meeting, and since then, I've attended seven meetings called by the new chairs. This new Common Council is an amalgam of old and new residents, with a diversity of skills and life experiences, and the organization is stronger for it. We worked around and through the holidays, and the work now continues at high speed.

RIOC Board of Directors

I attended the RIOC Board meeting on December 15 and, during the public comment session prior to the start of the meeting, I offered a suggestion that came from one of our committees. There are seven resident Board Directors and 21 new RIRA Common Council delegates (and five alternates) who don't know each other very well. We are neighbors who share a love for and a commitment to this community, and it would be useful to meet occasionally to get to know one another and to consider Island issues. With the exception of two Board members, the idea was met with deafening silence, neither pro nor con. I've asked Lynne Shinozaki, chair of the Social, Cultural, and Educational Services Committee, and author of the idea, to follow up. Remember, two-thirds of the Board was appointed on the strength of the vote you gave them in the 2008 and 2009 elections, and they need to give you, their constituents, a reason to retain them in office. And the next election in 2012, to fill several expired seats, will offer our new governor those candidates who can best answer the community's question, "What have you done for me lately?"

The RIRA Column

Good Shepherd Chapel HVAC Installation – Work continues on installation of the new HVAC system. Temporary heaters have been placed in the multipurpose room to accommodate event usage until the new system's expected completion by the end of April 2011.

Motorgate Parking Garage Refurbishing – The seventh floor and roof of Motorgate Parking Garage are now available for parking, except for 60 spots still being renovated.

Tram Heating – Radiant heater installation on both the Roosevelt Island and Manhattan station platforms is now complete.

Z-Brick Resetting – Board approval has been received for additional funds to continue eliminating pot holes and low spots in the early spring.

Projects in the Pipeline

AVAC Underground Piping – During inspection of the AVAC system piping, seriously worn areas were discovered in the 20-inch-diameter piping under Gristedes and in the east-west run between Roosevelt Landings and Capobianco Field. The RIOC Board has approved a proposal to repair the worn areas.

Tram Departure Times – A new Tram departure See **RIOC Column**, page 10

After that meeting adjourned, Chairman of the Board and DHCR Commissioner Brian Lawlor was kind enough to spend some time with me. He confirmed his cautious support for the Board elections, noting that the process, invented and executed by the Maple Tree Group, will be dependent upon the good will of Gov. Andrew Cuomo. I hope to meet with Mr. Cuomo at some time to explain who RIRA is, what we do, and why we are extraordinary.

I reminded Commissioner Lawlor that we are losing our senior and disabled demographic as those populations are replaced in Roosevelt Landings, especially the senior building at 546 Main Street, by fair-market renters. Roosevelt Island was created, in part, as a sanctuary for seniors and the disabled, and no other community in New York City can make that claim. The contracts between the Roosevelt Landings Building Committee and the residents it represents, Urban American and DHCR protected current tenants through Section 8 sticky vouchers and a LAP (landlord assistance program), but make no provision for future residents, and are unlikely to save this special housing or the associations that have supported these folks. What to do?

I noted that the Southtown developers are required by the General Development Plan to preserve 10 to See **RIRA Column**, page 10



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Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
e-mail: LTorres@RIOC.com



Matthew Katz, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
e-mail: MatthewKatz@verizon.net

Senior Center

Monday

Closed Mon Jan 17
9:30 **Ballroom Dancing**
11:00 **Tai Chi**
1:00 **Ballet**
3:00 **Play Reading**
6:00 **Yoga with Nurit**

Tuesday

9:30 **Chinese Massage**
10:20 **Shoppers' Bus**
10:30 **Ping Pong**
11:00 **Blood Pressure**
2:00 **Paint & Sculpt**
7:30 **Games (RISA)**

Wednesday

9:30 **Yoga with Irene**
10:20 **Shoppers' Bus**
10:30 **Computers**
10:30 **Spanish**

Thursday

9:30 **Stronger Bones**
10:45 **Ping Pong**
12:30 **Movie**

Friday

9:30 **Yoga with Irene**
10:30 **English as 2nd Language**
10:30 **Ballroom Dancing**
1:00 **Korean Games**
6:00 **Ballroom Dancing** (last Fri each month)
7:00 **Games (RISA)**

Special Events

Closed – Martin Luther King Jr Day Mon Jan 17
Tax Preparation Help starts Tue Feb 1

The WIRE

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Verdant Power, LLC hereby gives notice of its submittal of a Pilot License Application on December 29, 2010 to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). This Pilot License Application is to commercially develop a 1 MW hydrokinetic pilot project in the East Channel of the East River as the Roosevelt Island Tidal Energy (RITE) Project (FERC No. 12611). The proposed project is a hydrokinetic facility comprised of axial-flow turbines installed under water to generate clean renewable energy from tidal currents.

A copy of the Pilot License Application can be obtained online at www.theriteproject.com or at www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp. The Pilot License Application is also available for inspection by request at the corporate address of Verdant Power, LLC, 888 Main Street, New York, NY 10044, or by email request at info@verdantpower.com.

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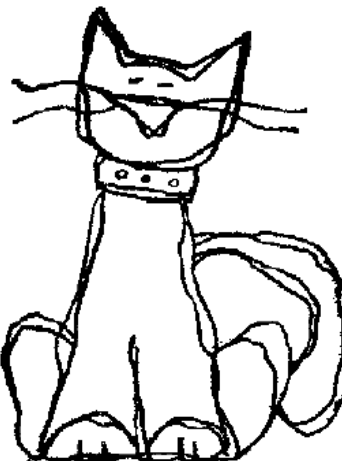
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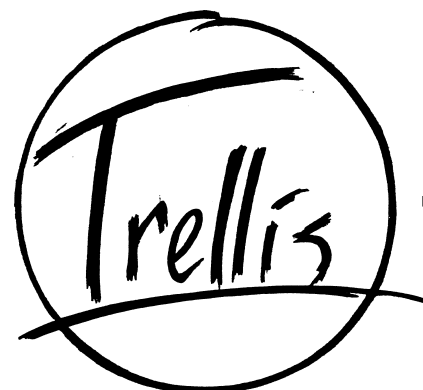
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Eight Organizations Seek Grants From Island’s Public Purpose Fund

Eight Island organizations have put in their requests for part of the \$100,000 in Public Purpose funding. The grants are awarded annually to Island non-profits by The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), based on recommendations from the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA). (There is related information in *The RIRA Column*, which starts on page 3.)

Seniors Association	\$20,000
Historical Society	\$20,000
Disabled Association	\$9,105
Lifeframes (Living Library)	\$34,610
R&R Concerts	\$9,600
RICLA	\$9,500
Island Kids	\$25,000
PS/IS 217 PTA	\$26,558

The **Seniors Association** request is for funds to cover the cost of classes for seniors, including yoga, Tai Chi, Chinese massage, stronger bones, weightlifting, ballroom dancing, Spanish, and computers.”

The **Historical Society** request, according to the organization president, Judith Berdy, “is for staffing the RIHS Visitor Center Kiosk, which welcomes over 15,000 visitors a year, Island history programming at the Island branch of the NYPL, historical walking tours of the Island, and an intern to catalog our collection so that it can become more accessible to the community and scholars.”

The **Disabled Association** request, according to its president, Jim Bates, is to “provide transportation for the disabled to more places and events, It will also help subsidize entrance fees to many places of interest that many of the disabled community could not afford. Funds will allow RIDA to continue providing dinner at Thanksgiving and Christmas for our members who would otherwise be alone.”

The **Lifeframes** request would cover the cost of continuing a gardening/greening program with PS/IS 217, Coler-Goldwater, the Disabled Association, the Child School, the Seniors Association, the Visual Art Association, the Garden Club, and to raise funds to continue the programs.

R&R Concerts plans to bring musical performances to broad audiences on Roosevelt Island in 2011 with about eight free concerts, plus outreach programs at Coler-Goldwater. The public-purpose funds request, according to Marc Diamond of R&R, is a third of the organization’s budget for the year.

RICLA (Roosevelt Island Community Literary Associates) seeks to continue a program of aiding the Island’s non-profit organizations in advertising their programs with a one-to-one match of advertising expenditures, to provide proposal-writing services for Island non-profits, and to sponsor a parenting circle.

Island Kids provides a well-known program of classes and events for families and children.

Birth: Leah Duchman



Rabbi Zalman Duchman and his wife, Nechama, have announced the birth of a daughter, Leah, born December 6. With her, above, are Bentzion, Chana, Mushkie, and Mendel.

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The Island on the Web

compiled by Rick O’Conor

Roosevelt Islander – Rivercross Ground Lease Extension Sought – [tinyurl.com/2d7dxn5](#)
Roosevelt Islander – The 12/26 Blizzard – [tinyurl.com/2dny8pf](#)
Roosevelt Island 360 – Ends Blog – [tinyurl.com/39neadn](#)
Roosevelt Island School G&T – December Newsletter – [tinyurl.com/39dmeld](#)
RIOC – Public Safety Stats for January – November 2010 – [tinyurl.com/2d28lgy](#)
RIOC – Public Safety Blotter November 2010 – [tinyurl.com/2d3l7wh](#)
Curbed – Neighborhood of the Year Battle: Island v Park Slope – [tinyurl.com/26fvjuk](#)
Curbed – Ballot Stuffing in Roosevelt Island/Park Slope Battle – [tinyurl.com/3yewer4](#)
WSJ – Roosevelt Island Riverwalk Condo Comparisons – [tinyurl.com/3xmfcxb](#)
WSJ – Science & Engineering School May Come to Roosevelt Island – [tinyurl.com/339mxvr](#)
NYC.gov – Bloomberg Statement on Science/Engineering School – [tinyurl.com/2ufg7af](#)
Curbed – More on Science School – [tinyurl.com/39kx59](#)
NY Times City Room Blog – Tidal Power Project Enters Next Phase – [tinyurl.com/3275z4o](#)
Power Gen – More on Verdant Power East River Project – [tinyurl.com/35xgcrw](#)
NY Observer – Island’s Wireless Parking Sensors – [tinyurl.com/2uf2dgh](#)
Fast Company – Wireless Parking Sensors – [tinyurl.com/2bnpama](#)
interior Design – Island’s Architectural Brutalism – [tinyurl.com/2uaj8j7](#)
Mutant Frog – Video: 1970s Subway Tunnel Boring Under Island – [tinyurl.com/2uhfqu7](#)
Gotham Center – History of Roosevelt Island Lighthouse – [tinyurl.com/2wzvunn](#)
Ladies of Comedy – Andrea Rosen Grew Up to Buddy Hackett Jokes – [tinyurl.com/25rldrw](#)
Karathon – Cab Refuses to Go to Roosevelt Island – [tinyurl.com/3xonhdf](#)
WSJ – Religious Discrimination Settlement at Coler-Goldwater – [tinyurl.com/3ypkgff](#)
Daily News – Legacy High Takes 2nd Place in Foreign Policy Contest – [tinyurl.com/364kefy](#)
AMNY – Is Roosevelt Island Home of Porn Site? – [tinyurl.com/327d9tw](#)
Curbed – Is Roosevelt Island Home of Porn Site? – [tinyurl.com/2wl68ce](#)
Mania – Red Garden Japanese Anime Takes Place on Roosevelt Island – [tinyurl.com/3xfeaqr](#)
NBC New York – FDR Park for Roosevelt Island – [tinyurl.com/32hs75y](#)
Daily News – FDR Park a Memorial to FDR or to Architect Kahn? – [tinyurl.com/3xd4ssj](#)
New Yorker – FDR Memorial for Island – [tinyurl.com/2ucnr54](#)
CBS New York – Island Resident at St. Patrick’s for Christmas – [tinyurl.com/242a9yr](#)
Metro NY – Child Legacy School Teacher Is Local Hero – [tinyurl.com/39lusy3](#)
Bowery Boogie – Scenic Roosevelt Island Subway Office Space – [tinyurl.com/3abzs8h](#)
Jazz Hostels – Flying Above East River on Roosevelt Island Tram – [tinyurl.com/38vxtm2](#)
Fodors – Tram a Waste of Time for Tourists – [tinyurl.com/34yfm4e](#)
Fabulously Frugal – View from Tram – [tinyurl.com/2d35kmu](#)
You Tube – Christmas Carols at Good Shepherd – [tinyurl.com/2ahedw7](#)
You Tube – Blizzard on Roosevelt Island – [tinyurl.com/2udtymu](#)
You Tube – Video: Gallery RIVAA Absolutely Cool Exhibit – [tinyurl.com/33bgnrc](#)
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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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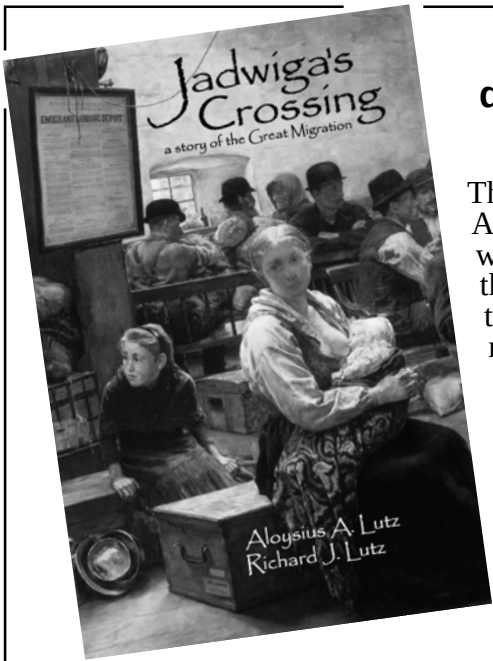
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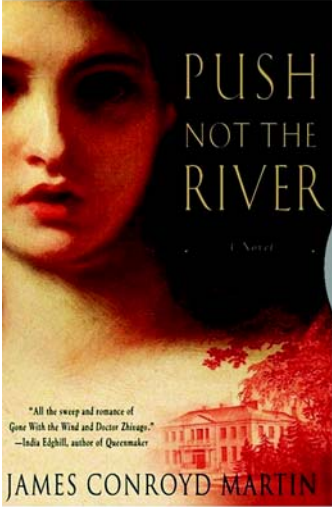
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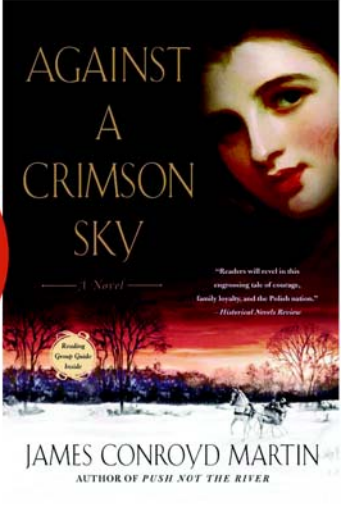
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Publishers Weekly

James Conroyd Martin is the winner of the 2007 Gold Medal for Literature from The American Institute of Polish Culture. For more information, go to www.JamesCMartin.com.

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Island Kids, Inc., is sponsoring a free-of-charge
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First meeting will take place
 Thursday, January 20, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

Please e-mail islandkidsri@gmail.com
 for more information

Letters from page 2
Another rumination: How many others may be in the food storage and preparation areas? How did they get in? Holes in the basement? What other kind of critters were in there? What kind of rodent excrement might the Board of Health find if they ever bothered to inspect?

This is disgusting, and RIOC should hold the owners accountable, just as the residents should hold RIOC accountable. It seems to me that any lease should carry a requirement for upkeep of the premises. Is it any wonder that the residents of Southtown never wander north on Main Street? Southtown stores and restaurants are clean and well-maintained. Do we credit developer Hudson-Related?

Ever look at the floor in the Deli? It is usually in desperate need of sweeping (not to mention repair). The Deli now has a sign stating *no pets allowed*, yet they keep a cat in there. Is that for rodent control?

Northtown, with its lack of the simple amenities that we used to enjoy – like a liquor store, bakery, and fish store – and with deplorable conditions in the existing businesses, is more and more resembling a Third World country.

Mary Cavanaugh

RIRA Column from page 3
20 percent of its housing for low-income residents, with 30 to 40 percent for the middle class and 40 to 60 percent for those able to afford market-rate units. To the best of my knowledge, no low-income housing whatsoever has been provided in the Riverwalk buildings. Given the three buildings yet to be constructed on the East Promenade, perhaps a deal could be struck to include housing for the senior and disabled populations currently disappearing from Northtown.

The Commissioner was sympathetic to the problem, and understanding of the unique nature of this diverse community. The contract to build these last three buildings has two years to run, and RIOC’s financial health will depend on their completion and the ability of developers Hudson-Related to pay ground rent to the Corporation. There is not much we can do to stem the tide of the inexorable gentrification of Roosevelt Island. Nevertheless, preserving what is best about our Island home, and that includes our Senior and Disabled Associations, must be paramount in our minds and in our efforts.

The Red Bus and the Tram
There has been much talk and considerable displeasure with the synchronization, or the lack of it, between the new aerial Tramway and the Red Buses. Many Islanders have commented that nine months have been wasted in which the planning for new schedules and new routes could have been considered, and there is truth in these complaints. The appropriate RIRA committees met with the operations folks at RIOC on October 4 to plan for the Tram reopening that finally arrived on November 30, but our discussions were never implemented. These discussions continued at the RIOC Operations Committee on December 9.

To be fair, the Tram is now a completely new system with new criteria for coordination with our buses and some new procedures will evolve with trial and error. RIRA met again with RIOC Vice President of Operations, Fernando Martinez, just prior to Christmas to consider these problems and again on January 13. We agreed that the Red Bus must

To City Councilmember Jessica Lappin:
Wishing you the best in the new year, I join you in celebrating the rebirth of our world-famous Roosevelt Island Tramway. Everyone knows about the Tram, except for the MTA. I say this because when I got on the City bus (Q102) for work on Monday morning, the bus did not stop at the Tram as it used to. Instead, it first went to the hospital. One could get off near the Tram eventually, but that makes no sense. We need to get to work in the morning, and expect one form of mass transit to connect to another directly.
Could you please talk to the MTA and reinstate a bus stop near the Tram, either just before the circle or, better, as it turns to go past the Tram?
It seems that MTA bus drivers are rewarded for keeping their schedule, and would be perfectly happy to race up and down our Island without passengers. If only they could also be rewarded for the number of passengers they move.
As for the Roosevelt Island Red Buses, could they have put the bus stop any farther away from the Tram? I understand the new flow of direction does not allow for the bus stop to be in front of the Tram and they needed to move the stop across the street. However, they could put the stop in the middle of the block, instead of at the west end of the block. Ideally, the bus should run in lock-step with the Tram, as in the past, but if they are not capable of still doing this, then we will need some kind of shelter from the elements while we wait.

Neal Weissman

To the Editor:
The Roosevelt Island Chamber of Commerce would like to thank everyone – organizations, residents, professionals, and businesses – for their contribution toward the cost of Holiday Lights. Every year, we try to light up Main Street because it is so dark and dull.
The Roosevelt Island Chamber of Commerce would like to give special thanks to:

Dr. Jack Resnick	\$50
RY Management	\$1,100
Island Newsstand/Card Shop	\$50
M&D Deli	\$50
Main Street Theater & Dance Alliance	\$275
PS/IS 217 PTA	\$275
RI Korean Association	\$275
RI Residents Association	\$275
RI Senior Association	\$25
RI Visual Art Association	\$50
Rivercross Management	\$275
Roosevelt Island Cleaners	\$50
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation	\$1,100
Roosevelt Nails	\$50
The Child School	\$275
Urban American/Roosevelt Landings	\$825

Julie Palermo

stop at the Tram station on the south side of the street, as it always has, and also just west of the visitors’ kiosk, and this will be implemented starting this Tuesday. Instead, and with the intention of providing predictability for riders waiting for a bus to take them to or from the Tram, the Red Buses will run on a fifteen-minute schedule from Octagon to the Tram station. Originally conceived as a twenty-minute turn-around, this experiment is designed to meet the Tram, also on a fifteen-minute schedule during off-peak hours, although the days when the buses met every Tram may well be over. Of course, this will require that there be adequate shelter at the Tram station during the wait for the bus, as there is at the subway station. In fact, Fernando informed us that overhead radiant heating units have been installed at both Tram stations. Fernando expects this scheduling experiment to be in place in a week or so.

In addition, we mentioned the problems associated with the new bus stop at the subway station, located a distance north of the old stop at the station doors. We noted that when a single bus approaches this station, there is no reason for it not to stop directly in front of the entrance, and drivers must be trained to do so. In addition, they must be instructed to power up the global positioning units, controlled by each driver, that now allow Internet users to track the buses’ positions on Main Street. This training may have to await the hiring of a Transportation Director who will oversee both Tram and bus staff, and we look forward to working with such an expert.

The bottom line here is that both RIOC and RIRA are acutely aware of the tweaking necessary to perfect the new systems. Our concern is to

get these fixes up and running now, during the winter, to maximize rider comfort and convenience. The RIRA Planning and Island Services Committees will continue to monitor Island transportation as these glitches are sorted out.

Public Purpose Funds

Once again, RIRA has taken on a thankless but necessary job. Over the years, RIOC has distributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to deserving Island organizations, allowing them to serve the community. This money originated in the PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) funds derived from deferred sales taxes in the construction of Manhattan Park. However, when these funds began to run out, RIOC determined to offer \$100,000 each year as a fixed sum. The problem is that, often, the grants requested by Island groups far exceed the amount available. (This year, eight organizations have requested in excess of \$164,000.) The question was, who will decide?

As the elected representatives of this residential community, RIRA agreed to play Solomon, and this will be our fourth year making these excruciatingly difficult determinations. Our premise was, we resident representatives use, or know neighbors who use, these Island services. Who better to make these hard choices? At our January meeting, the Common Council elected Octagoner and new RIRA delegate Bill Long as chair of the Public Purpose Fund Committee. Part of our task has been to create a structure and a methodology that are above reproach and, over the years, we have tweaked the system to make it fairer. We know that there is no way, given the disparity between the amounts requested and the funds available, to satisfy everyone, but rest assured, we

Briefly...

- Jonathan Kalkin, a member of the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), reports that a **“Master Lease RFP for Main Street retail is in final preparation** to create a final proposal for full Board approval.” The matter is not on the RIOC agenda for the Board’s meeting on Wednesday (January 19) at 5:30 p.m. (see *ComingUp*, page 3), but Kalkin says the eventual result will be that “we can actually have stores rented easily and quickly without the burden of going through a long process.”
- Rivercross resident Sue Cina has uncovered a little-publicized **Motorgate discount for seniors**. It’ll reduce a senior resident’s non-reserved parking charge from \$177 to \$96.20. Get a letter from your building’s management office verifying that you are a resident; take it and your driver’s license and car registration to RIOC; complete the application; wait a day or two; and then present the package at the Motorgate office. Cina counsels, “Don’t let the parking people bully you into parking on the roof. RIOC says that, on this deal, you can park in any non-reserved spot.”
- The **Island House** Tenants Association reports that “ESDC has approved our affordability plan for conversion of our building” from all-rental to an arrangement under which residents can own their apartments. “The next step is for the RIOC Board to approve a ground lease extension,” after which the owner will create the necessary red herring (formal proposal) for approval by the State Attorney General.

RIOC Column from page 3

schedule is planned for the week of January 17. It will be posted on Island kiosks, Tram cabin monitors, the RIOC facebook page (www.facebook.com/riocny), and the RIOC website (www.rioc.ny.gov). Paper schedules will be available at the RIOC offices at 591 Main Street, and an advisory will be sent to all those subscribing to the RIOC advisories. To sign up, please visit the RIOC website and follow the link on the left side of the home page.

Tram-Station Bus Stops – RIOC will implement two Red Bus stops near the Tram station [diagram, page 1]. The first bus stop will be located on the east side of the Tram entrance, opposite Firefighters Field. The second bus stop will be located near the west side of the Roosevelt Island Historical Society visitors’ kiosk. The bus stops will also be serviced by the Q102, and will have shelters. The effective start-date of the bus stops will be January 18. For a map of the new bus stops and routes, please see the RIOC website, www.rioc.ny.gov.

Events, Recreation, & Community Dedication of “George Braithwaite Ping Pong Court” – The Roosevelt Island Table Tennis Program, which provides free lessons to residents every Wednesday night and has over 70 registrants, was created by George Braithwaite. George, who is a 35-year resident of the Island and was inducted into the USA Table Tennis Hall of Fame in 1989, played on the US team that visited China in 1971, bridging what was then a political gap with an historic gesture of “Ping Pong Diplomacy.” This April marks the 40th anniversary of that historic event and, in recognition, three outdoor cement ping pong tables will be installed in the area adjacent to the handball courts in Capobianco Park. The court will be dedicated to George during this year’s Health & Fitness Day in May. In addition, Henge, Inc. (the manufacturer of the tables) and the USATT will be promoting the event. Mark your calendars because, as part of their promotion, free ping pong paddles and balls will be distributed to Island youth.

Graffiti Removal – With the help of the Public Safety Department, the Grounds Crew will continue to remove all graffiti Island-wide. We encourage everyone to report any incidents of graffiti directly to Public Safety at **212-832-4545** to ensure immediate removal.

Island-wide Use of Organic Fertilizer and Pesticides – We will implement an organic-only policy regarding fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, and pest control starting this spring. As a result, lawns may not be as green, and weed control may not be as comprehensive, but, based on research and public opinion, we believe that the benefits of using non-toxic chemicals and fertilizer will be well worth it. This is one of several major green initiatives being undertaken by the Corporation, which also include purchasing hybrid buses and other electric vehicles, purchasing 20% of electric usage from biomass sources, using recycled print paper only, converting to green cleaning supplies, and installing energy-efficient bathroom hand-dryers. Other major green initiatives in the planning stages are solar panels, electric-car charging stations, and LED lighting.

Public Safety Department Coat Drive – The New York Cares Coat Drive, sponsored here by the Public Safety Department, collected 320 coats this year. They have been donated to the program for distribution.

Roosevelt Island Film Locations Promotional Video – A promotional video and brochure to be targeted toward film production companies is currently in development. The video will promote the Island’s unique photographic locations, such as the Tram, Octagon Field, Lighthouse Park, Southpoint Open Space (opening spring 2011), FDR Memorial (fall 2012), Sportspark, and the Promenades, to name a few. Through the efforts of Erica Wilder, Community Relations Specialist, RIOC will work in conjunction with several film schools whereby students will develop the video and brochure as a school project with a scholarship given to the winner.

take the task very seriously and endeavor to do our best. Wish us luck. And finally...
I’m writing this on Tuesday and thinking about my father, who would have turned 101 today. Trained as a lawyer, he published and edited a photographic catalog for 30 years. He had a profound love of language that he inculcated in me, and that imbued every dinnertime conversation during my childhood. He didn’t

live long enough to hear me speechify in what I laughingly call my political career, or to read these columns that I’ve been writing since 2000. I’d like to think he would have gotten a kick out of seeing his shy kid embracing elective politics on Roosevelt Island. My family characterizes me as a chip off the paternal block, as I look and sound like my old man. That suits me right down to the ground!

Tram & Bus – RIOC Trying a Plan to Coordinate Them (from page 1)

with some background on the original agreement about bus scheduling, but on Thursday night, plans were altered in another meeting. Farance fears the change will lead to failure, but Martinez says it will be “introduced soft” and subject to change. He adds, however, that the new route and new stops (diagram on page 1) are firm.

If the experiment succeeds, Red Buses will be making the Octagon-to-Tram station run on a 15-minute schedule. Waiting time in transitions from Tram to bus and bus to Tram should be eliminated or greatly reduced.

Martinez says the bus drivers have assured him that, at least during the non-rush periods that are the subject of this experiment, the trip can be made, with all stops, in 15 minutes.

RIOC plans to post the new schedule by Tuesday morning, making Monday, which is the Martin Luther King Jr holiday, the last day on the old schedule.

In the plan originally agreed upon, a run of approximately 13-14 minutes was envisioned. A bus leaving The Octagon on the hour (for example) is expected to arrive at :02 at Manhattan Park, :04 at Motorgate, :08 at Good Shepherd, and :13 at the Tram. If that works with enough leeway for the usual delays, the “soft” introduction will become “firm.”

In runs north, arrival at The Octagon is anticipated 14 minutes after departure from the Tram station.

Coming to the Island by subway, Islanders should be able to anticipate the arrival of a Red Bus two minutes after the quarter hour, eliminating the present uncertainty.

Tramway Departure Times

Roosevelt Island

Departure Times	
RUSH HOURS 7-10am, 3-8pm Mon-Fri	NON-RUSH All other times Mon-Fri All day Sat & Sun
Every Hour At:	Every Hour At:
:00	:00
:08	
:15	:15
:23	
:30	:30
:38	
:45	:45
:53	

Manhattan

Departure Times	
RUSH HOURS 7-10am, 3-8pm Mon-Fri	NON-RUSH All other times Mon-Fri All day Sat & Sun
Every Hour At:	Every Hour At:
:00	:07
:08	
:15	:22
:23	
:30	:37
:38	
:45	:52
:53	

Service starts at 6am daily; ends at 2:00 a.m. except Fri-Sat, when it ends at 3:30 a.m. More info: **212-832-4555**, ext. 300 or 302.

ComingUp from page 3

Book Discussion, *Absurdistan* by Gary Shteyngart, **Thu Mar 17**, 6:30pm, Library.

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Apr 6**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Book Discussion, *Life Is Short But Wide* by J. California Cooper, **Thu Apr 21**, 6:30pm, Library

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed May 4**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Book Discussion, *Tales* by H.P. Lovecraft, **Thu May 19**, 6:30pm, Library

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Jun 1**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Book Discussion, *Love is a Dog from Hell* by Charles Bukowski, **Thu Jun 16**, 6:30pm, Library.

Book Discussion, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* by Hunter S. Thompson, **Thu Jul 21**, 6:30pm, Library.

Book Discussion, *The Collected Stories of Chester Himes* by Chester Himes, **Thu Aug 18**, 6:30pm, Library.

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Sep 7**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Oct 5**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Nov 2**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

Roosevelt Island Residents Association Common Council meets, **Wed Dec 7**, 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. Public session at beginning for resident comments/announcements.

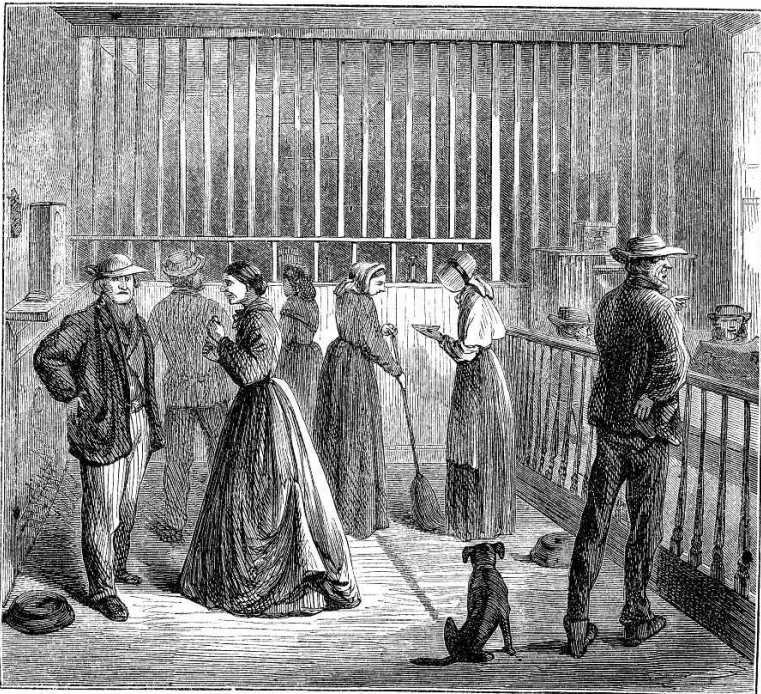
Once Upon a Time, on Welfare Island, at The Octagon

... composed of bread and coffee; the supper of bread, butter, and tea. Frequently, as patients are recovering from their disease, and manifest a desire for employment, they are furnished with it, and attendants' fare; this has greater variety, and includes roast meats, with coffee.

It would be desirable that each unfortunate should occupy a separate bedroom, and, as far as possible, this is done; but the overcrowded state of the Institution prevents it as a general rule. In one hall of the Retreat there are no bedrooms, and bedsteads line the walls merely. In most of the small bedrooms, also, two sleep, though on separate mattresses. Disturbances occasionally arise through this arrangement.

Most of the patients are from the lower ranks of life. They are in general friendless or poor. Persons able to afford it, and gifted with natural feeling, would, of course, prefer to send their diseased relatives or friends to other than a charitable institution. Many, however, arrive, committed by the city magistrates, their friends being ignorant of their affliction or whereabouts until weeks, or perhaps months, after their presence in the Asylum. Manifesting dangerous symptoms in the street, they are arrested by the police, brought to the station-house, thence to the Tombs; the physicians there file a certificate, and the steamboat transfers them to the Lunatic Asylum.

The time of many is mainly passed in coursing from one end of the long hall to the other, some rapidly, with violent gestures and occasional exclamations, invectives, and oaths; others, with dejected countenances and hanging heads, pace wearily to and fro. Some will stand or sit motionless for hours together, and of them there are those who would not go to their meals unless bid. Some, again, are loquacious, sociable with their companions, delighted at the presence of visitors; while others sedulously avoid all society, and will not speak even if addressed.



THE OFFICE AND DRUGGERY

The main treatment on which reliance is placed for cure consists in sedatives and tonics, the freedom from active excitements, and the establishment of correct habits. As happiness or unhappiness in all depends much upon mental training, so whatever tends to establish an evenness of temper aids not only in preventing insanity, but in actually restoring the diseased mind to its normal condition.

By far the majority of those in confinement being of an uncultivated class, it would be difficult to find means to alleviate the weariness they experience in their seclusion. But there are many to whom books and papers would prove highly valuable. Of these and such like inducements to mental ease the Institution exhibits a great deficiency.

from *Harper's Weekly*
February, 1866



RECOVERING PATIENTS—THE EXAMINATION.



THE DOCTOR'S MORNING ROUND.

A Few Profiles

Common Council Class of 2010... Some of the New Faces

by David Stone

Sora Caetano, a new member of the Residents Association Common Council representing The Octagon, claims first prize as the new member traveling farthest to get here, having been born in Ethiopia.

“I came to New York for an adventure and to attend New York University,” Caetano says. “Like most people who come to New York for a few short years, I never left. I love Roosevelt Island.”

She brings to RIRA “a professional political background, and experience at organizing constituent groups and growing relationships with stakeholders.”

A steering committee member of Democratic Leadership in the 21st Century, she counts serving as Regional Field Director and Organizer for President Obama’s successful 2008 campaign as one of her recent achievements.

“I’m a part of the community,” she continues, “but I’d also like to be a part of the process and a part of the solution, not just a spectator. I realize that the Island is what it is today because of a well-organized and hard-working grassroots community. I’m ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work!”

Guy Maxwell Long, who prefers “Max,” newly elected from The Octagon, is “proud to call Roosevelt Island home.”

Long discovered the community only two years ago, making a move from North Carolina. “I was impressed by the friendliness, diversity, and uniqueness.” His enthusiasm proved infectious. His parents recently followed with a move to Manhattan Park.

Long is a political professional who has worked on several campaigns, including the Obama presidential campaign as a field organizer in Georgia and North Carolina.

“I decided to run because of my strong desire to become more knowledgeable about how and why critical decisions are being made that affect all of us here on the Island,” he says. “As a representative, I will advocate for initiatives that improve our quality of life and support sound economic development goals that preserve the characteristics that make Roosevelt Island such a unique place to live. I also intend to be a strong voice for residents and to work on any efforts to increase residents’ participation and involvement in the process.”

Ilonka Salisbury was elected to represent Manhattan Park. She has lived here for eight years. “I love the energy of the City,” she says, “but I needed something and did not know what that something really was.”

Expressing a somewhat familiar sentiment, she “decided to live here for a year. I have lived all over the world, but New York City keeps one guessing. And then I fell in love with the Island, the sense of community, the diversity and spirit of making this Island speak up and speak out.”

Salisbury has also traveled a good distance to Roosevelt Island, having been born in Vienna, Austria.

“I work at the New York Philharmonic, which is really my client. Our company sends us to ‘embed ourselves’ with our clients and focus our energy on their needs, whether in fundraising and/or subscription sales.

“Joining The Council is a new adventure for me,” she adds, attributing her “motivation to join to my association and friendship with Lynne Strong Shinozaki and my commitment to the positive growth of Roosevelt Island. I so strongly believe in Roosevelt Island, such an amazing and diverse community, that I have joined the Planning Committee so that I can ensure that all of our voices are heard when further development is implemented. I am proud to be a part of this community and proud of my Council involvement.”

Another Octagon representative adding diversity to the Common Council is **Denise Shull**. She describes herself as “a Wall Street type, running a consulting firm that focuses on better judgment and decision-making. We have had great success helping people understand the context of feelings they bring to decisions, and I think this applies to the issues of our Island.”

She adds that, having moved to Roosevelt Island “a little over 4 years ago, I feel strongly that the residents of The Octagon are misunderstood by people living in the older buildings, and the lack of understanding has become mutual.

“I also think development is a good thing, if managed and planned for properly. This is – or should be – the single most desirable site in New York City. I wanted to add a pro-development voice to RIRA, with all the appropriate services and caveats.”

Lisa Knox is a longtime resident of Roosevelt Island who is returning to the Common Council after an absence. A teacher and housing organizer, Knox moved here from the East Village in 1986.

“I was born and raised in NYC and moved with my husband, an architect, because we wanted to raise our four children in a diverse, gentler and kinder place.

“Since then I’ve been active and involved in various community endeavors. Notably, I’ve been elected to each of my children’s PTAs, and been drafted as an Eastwood Residents Association representative. I am presently Vice President of the Roosevelt Landings Residents Association, spent several years on Community Board 8, and was involved in the workings of the Island’s Tree Board, Young Adult League, and other proactive committees and planning initiatives.”

With all that experience and community involvement, Knox goes on to declare, “I am particularly interested in



Sora Caetano



The Fortunas



Dave Evans



Lisa Knox



Steve Silverstein



Susan Marcus



Max Long



Ilonka Salisbury



Denise Shull



Barbara Allen

housing, environment, and quality of life issues.” She represents Roosevelt Landings on the Common Council.

Barbara Allen represents Manhattan Park. She’s originally from New Orleans. “My husband is from the Bronx. We were living in Albany when his job sent him to New York City.”

Allen’s story of coming here is a uniquely Roosevelt Island tale. “We moved to Brooklyn for a few months, then to Kew Gardens, but then we found out that his daughter, Lorin, was coming to live with us. Lorin is severely disabled and in a wheelchair. I had one day to find an apartment that was wheelchair-friendly.

“Not knowing much about the City or what constituted a wheelchair-accessible apartment, I did an internet search and found Manhattan Park and Roosevelt Island. That was five years ago. We have lived here ever since and love it.

“When we decided to make this our permanent home, I wanted to be a part of the community. I wanted to have a voice in the decisions. I am very proud to serve the residents of Manhattan Park and Roosevelt Island.”

Steve Silverstein represents Southtown. “My wife and I came to Roosevelt Island in the spring of 2006,” Silverstein remembers. “We moved here as empty-nesters returning from the suburbs to take advantage of all that the City has to offer.

“During our search we discovered Roosevelt Island, and immediately decided to move here to take advantage of its great location, its river views, its diversity, the proximity to midtown Manhattan, and the small-town feel and relative calm in the midst of the liveliest city in the world.

“I lived in the Bronx until I was eight years old. Then my family moved to Woodside, Queens, where I grew up. Yet,

I had never stepped foot on this Island until our discovery,

which led to a same-day decision to settle here.

“I am proud and happy to be a Roosevelt Islander and look forward to serving on the Common Council. It’s an opportunity for me to work collaboratively with my neighbors to make this a great place for all of us to enjoy. I am most excited to meet many new people and to learn more about resident concerns throughout the Island.”

Returning to Roosevelt Island in 2007 after a 16-year absence, **Susan Marcus** explains simply, “I came back because the Island is unforgettable. I am from Chicago and lived 10 years in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before coming to New York.” She represents Westview.

“I work as a special education teacher and textbook writer, and I am an ordained interfaith minister,” Marcus says. “It is my responsibility to make this world a better place to live in, and that certainly applies to Roosevelt Island. This was my motivation to become part of RIRA.

“My mantra, *Life is but a dream*, motivates me to appreciate See **Faces**, top of next page

Faces from previous page

ciate all that I have and all that is, because we are all ‘temps’ here. It also reminds me to work to make this place better for those who will be living here after we do.”

Marcus’s practical enthusiasms include “enhancing the library, providing additional security to the 575 and 595 entrances, and developing the Senior Center for a new generation, as well as affordable renting and cooping.”

Vinicius Fortuna and his wife, **Lorena**, both originally from Brazil, add even more diversity to the Common Council, representing Riverwalk. Both have already contributed much as volunteers in their three years here, and tend to extend their domestic commitment to volunteering as a team.

Vini, as he prefers to be called, is a senior software engineer at Google, while Lorena is a civil and environmental engineer, working on the restoration of the Williamsburg bridge.

Lorena notes, “I’m a volunteer in the Island Cats group. We have adopted two Roosevelt Island cats (Daisy and Fletcher), and now we want to make a difference on the Island by being in the Common Council.” She has been involved with a number of projects – “fostering, adoption, sheltering, and feeding cats, and website updates and maintenance.”

Vini says he “developed a bus-tracker application (Rlbustracker.viniciusfortuna.com) for the community, set up a Roosevelt Island search engine, renewed the Island Cats website (IslandCats.org), and migrated it to a much better infrastructure that could be maintained even by the less tech-savvy members of the group.

“We love the Island and hope to make it an even better place to live,” Lorena declares. Very much a team, the couple pledges to “bring energy, new ideas, and new perspectives to RIRA. We want to promote a more open channel of communication among the community, RIRA, and RIOC, wider and smarter use of technology, and environmental awareness.”

David Evans is a new representative for Southtown, joining the Common Council after only two years on Roosevelt Island.

“After having worked on separate continents – Europe and North America – my family selected the Island as a place to live, given its proximity to the City while offering a more youth-friendly environment for our son.

“I attended several meetings of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association,” Evans says, “and quickly realized it is an enlightening forum for Island residents to come together in service and more, with the potential to influence major decisions on near- and far-term matters affecting our quality of life.

“The Common Council affords the opportunity not only to deliberate the issues, but to actually vote and advance, where appropriate, the desires, needs, and wishes of RIRA to on-Island and off-Island decision-makers.

“While my interests are varied, they include a desire for a safe, secure, attractive, and clean Island environment; sufficient resources and programs for children, the elderly, and the disabled; and living conditions and services appropriate for our diverse community.”

He adds, “Paraphrasing Ralph W. Emerson and somewhat metaphorically, I wish Roosevelt Island to be a friendly destination with welcoming paths used often by good, decent people because otherwise, weeds will emerge, choking unused paths.”

The RIRA freshman class seems passion-packed, diverse, and filled with skills to complement Council initiatives. From dreamers to practical builders, new innovators seem ready to tackle Island issues, even the most intractable ones, with enthusiasm.

Council from page 1

egates and then campaign, to one degree or another – is composed of those with a special devotion to their community, at least at the start.

Over the two-year term of service, typically, some lose interest. Some who expected to be here for two years may move away. Sometimes, members quit in disgust over some frustration or perceived affront to their interests. A few fail to show up for three monthly meetings in a row and suffer the automatic expulsion provided in the organization’s constitution. (They can return, usually just by asking, sometimes offering a good explanation.) Some grow weary with the messiness of this lowest level of hometown democracy, or with fellow councilors they see as ex-

cessively contentious, pedantic, or just plain intractable.

By the end of two years, then, a typical roster of these unpaid electees can be diminished by a third or more.

This Time

Will it really be different with this new Council?

The answer probably lies with the first-time members. While RIRA’s long history includes Councils that simply failed to show up in quorum numbers out of a simple unwillingness to attend unruly meetings or suffer the aggravation of a president ill-equipped to lead or maintain order, that hasn’t happened more than once or twice in well over a decade.

With an old hand, Matthew Katz, serving his fourth term as presi-

dent, the new Council might expect reasonable order. In a meeting held last Wednesday at Sportspark (because there’s asbestos work going on at the usual venue, the Good Shepherd Community Center), Katz’s ability to moderate between firm parliamentary procedure and a collegial informality was tested by the discussion of a trio of controversial matters (see separate reports). His determined habit is to try to end the 8:00 p.m. meetings by 10:00; this one lasted until 11:00. One or two members left before adjournment, but the issues and their resolution were important enough that most managed to hang in.

In a separate report for this issue, *The WIRE*’s David Stone has rounded up impressions of a number of the new delegates serving

The Common Council

Officers

Matthew Katz, *President*
Ellen Polivy, *Vice President*
Sherie Helstien, *Secretary*
Russell Fields, *Treasurer*

Common Council Members

At Large:

Russell Fields

2 River Road

Steven Heller

4 River Road

Jim Bates

546 Main Street

Dolores Green
Anthony Moran

Island House

Helen Chirivas
Chair, Housing Committee
Frank Farance
Chair, Planning Committee
Michael Preradovic

Manhattan Park

Barbara Allen
Ava Dawson
Co-Chair, Communications Committee
Alex Fletcher
Neha Kaul
Suhail Mattoo
John Paul
Lynne Shinozaki
Chair, Social, Cultural, & Educational Committee
Joe Terranella
Ilonka Salisbury, *alternate*

The Octagon

Scott Bradbury
Bill Long
Chair, Public Purpose Funds Committee
Max Long
Denise Shull
Sora Caetano
Jeffrey Escobar

Tied for fifth seat; one will become an alternate

Rivercross

Marilyn Atkins
Ethel Romm
Don Semenza
Sharon Pope, *alternate*

Roosevelt Landings

Cynthia Ahn
Claudiu Cornetti
Lisa Knox
Linda Maynard-Hall
Joyce Mincheff
Chair, Government Relations Committee
Romano Reid
Lorraine Williams
Ahmad Darwish, *alternate*

Southtown

Peter Digilio
Dave Evans
Chair, Bylaws Review Committee
Lorena Fortuna
Vinicius Fortuna
Co-Chair, Communications Committee
Aaron Hamburger
Chair, Island Services Committee
George Ohring
Alfred Plastino
Mona Sen
Steve Silverstein
Tommy Nodland, *alternate*

Westview

Erin Feely-Nahem
Chair, Public Safety Committee
Sherie Helstien
Susan Marcus

Information from page 1

since April 2009. One Common Council member, defending O’Conor, said that the content of RIRA’s committee minutes should be more carefully prepared, with an understanding that they might be published.

[*The WIRE* does not generally publish material from RIRA committee minutes or reports unless they contain matters of news value, with reasonable documentation. In general, such material is more likely to become news in *The WIRE* if the RIRA Common Council acts on it. There is a related editorial on page 2.]

O’Conor wrote, in a statement e-mailed to *The WIRE*, that “RIRA should not be preventing the public from reading the same committee reports that are available to the Common Council delegates, not [concealing them] behind an opaque and arbitrary wall, preventing the free exchange of information to the public.”

Mincheff’s counter-argument was that, when Roosevelt Islanders ask a RIRA committee for help with some problem, they have a right to expect their privacy to be protected. “Not everything that comes before a committee is sensitive,” she wrote, “but some of it is.” Without protection of their privacy, she added, residents “would not turn to us for the help the RIRA structure is intended to provide. Just because an accusation is raised – and committees deal with many – does not mean it is true or that it merits publication... Now, minutes of committee meetings, due to Rick’s lack of journalistic common sense, will be released only when [elected Common Councilors] are convinced that [residents and others] won’t unnecessarily come to harm by doing so.”

O’Conor answered, “Don’t blame the messenger if you are embarrassed by the work of some RIRA committee members. Just take more care in what is put in writing before it is sent to the Council.”

“As a result of the motion [that passed],” Mincheff wrote, “committees now have the right to determine whether their minutes should or should not be given to the press.”



The Main Street WIRE

seeks **FEATURE WRITERS**
and **REPORTERS** as contributors...
Call Dick Lutz at 212-826-9056

We also need volunteers for *WIRE-Friday* “stuffing” sessions (call Teri at 212-317-7408) and delivery (call Sherie at 212-935-7534). Lunch is provided (at stuffing session).

on the Council. Along with the old-timers who earn merit badges for coming back year after year, these enthusiastic “newbies” will probably define this Common Council.

Power

RIRA wrestles with the fact that it has no “real” power, even while nominally representing the general will of Islanders interested enough to care about one issue or another. The organization’s power rests in its ability to speak for the Island’s resident population – speak to the Board and staff of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), where the “real” power and purse reside, and to speak for residents to an increasingly responsive group of elected politicians – City Councilmember Jessica Lappin, State Assemblymember Micah Kellner, and State Senator Jose Serrano. (The Island consistently votes heavily Democratic, and they are all Democrats inclined to reward the Island for its loyalty, or at least *listen* to resident leadership when it calls.)

This power of elected Island representation does not always extend to an ability to exert determinative influence over the main actor affecting Islanders’ lives, but it has accomplished a good deal over the years.

- Led by the Maple Tree Group (MTG), RIRA asked for and got a greater level of resident representation on the Board of Directors of RIOC.

- Led by MTG, RIRA asked for and got the right to nominate residents to the RIOC Board – with New York State governors so far generally respecting Islanders’ choices.

- The RIRA Common Council

has directly influenced Red Bus routing (and the specifics of the bus-stop locations).

- A committee of the Common Council now recommends the annual allocation of \$100,000 in Public Purpose Funds that go to Island non-profits (a function that used to be carried out by non-residents employed at RIOC).

- Resident representatives now attend meetings of the RIOC Board’s committees (and often influence the decisions they make).

- RIRA’s Social, Cultural, and Educational Committee has sponsored events that have enlivened life on the Island.

- Relying on RIRA’s right to speak for the community, then- (and current) president Matthew Katz lobbied successfully for MetroCard on the Tramway.

- On behalf of RIRA, Katz also got the City to move up its work on the Roosevelt Island Bridge by several years.

The Council has taken up some new challenges with vigor – most notably the creation of a more active Internet presence and use of new media to communicate with residents, the outside world, and within the Council itself.

And in last week’s session, Councilors acted, by a 17-12 vote, to control the outside distribution of committee-meeting minutes – a mildly controversial step that may ultimately prove to be an overreaction to a difficult episode involving a blog posting of “work product.”

How long will the new enthusiasm last? Only time will tell. But this group of old hands and new faces looks, for the moment, like it could go the distance.

unClassifieds

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Deadline for January 29 issue: Tuesday, January 25
Deadline for February 12 issue: Tuesday, February 8

PARROT SITTER – Island resident who can feed, visit, and take care of your bird in your own home. I have 25+ years of experience with all sizes of parrots. Call Pennie at **917-697-4966** or e-mail penniecannon@gmail.com. 1/31/10

TRAVEL AGENT – Meet your cruise specialist on Roosevelt Island at www.cruisewithmarilyn.com or call **866-304-8640**. 2/1

SEEKING ROOM – Retired gentleman living Europe/Upstate, longtime Island resident, is seeking to rent a room, full time, for occasional stays in the City. Please call **646-266-1013** or e-mail denis.bastin@gmail.com. 2/20z

CLEANING HELP – I have been a resident of Roosevelt Island for over 25 years. If you need your apartment cleaned, your laundry washed & folded, please call Ella at **212-980-1261**. end 1/31/10

MANHATTAN PARK SUBLET – 1-bdrm w/ balcony facing Manhattan, 6th floor. Rent \$1,820/mo., available 10/21. Assume lease which ends May 2011. Must meet Manhattan Park income requirements. Call **502-275-9030**.

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FOUND – If you lost your school picture from Ms. Garaway's class, it is at the visitor kiosk.

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NOTARY PUBLIC – Roosevelt Island Day Nursery, 4 River Road, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. school days. **212-593-0750**.

MAIN STREET THEATRE & DANCE ALLIANCE – Ongoing registration for dance and theatre classes. **212-371-4449**. Unique or period clothing & furniture gladly accepted.

NOTARY PUBLIC – 212-935-7534.

FOSTER A CAT – Island Cats urgently seeks foster homes for cats and kittens, all spayed/neutered with shots and negative on tests. We provide food & litter. You and the cats supply the love. Some may be seen on the adoption page of our website at islandcats.org. Call **212-593-1054** or e-mail contact@islandcats.org.

HELP SAVE LIVES – Volunteer with the Icla da Silva Foundation. **212-593-0474**.

CAT SITTER – VACATION IN PEACE – Will feed and play with your cat, water your plants, pick up your mail, etc. **917-587-3278**.

EXPERIENCED PAINTER/CONTRACTOR – Excellent Island references, fully insured. Free estimate. **212-751-8214**.

The WIRE runs on volunteer power! We may need help with distribution in your building (call **212-935-7534**), or join us for our Friday-morning stuffing session (**212-826-9056**), or try your hand at reporting (**917-617-0449**). Other help is needed, too. *What would you like to do?*

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Yvonne Smith



Goldwater Hospital resident Yvonne Smith died recently. She was a self-taught artist. Her work was exhibited at Gallery RIVAA during Coler-Goldwater Art Shows. Ms. Smith designed two holiday cards for the Historical Society. Her talents and joyful art will be greatly missed.

–Judy Berdy



Website NYC10044

The WIRE™ is seeking web help. Call 212-826-9056.

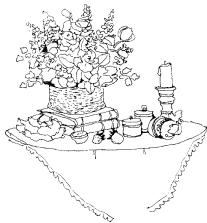
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