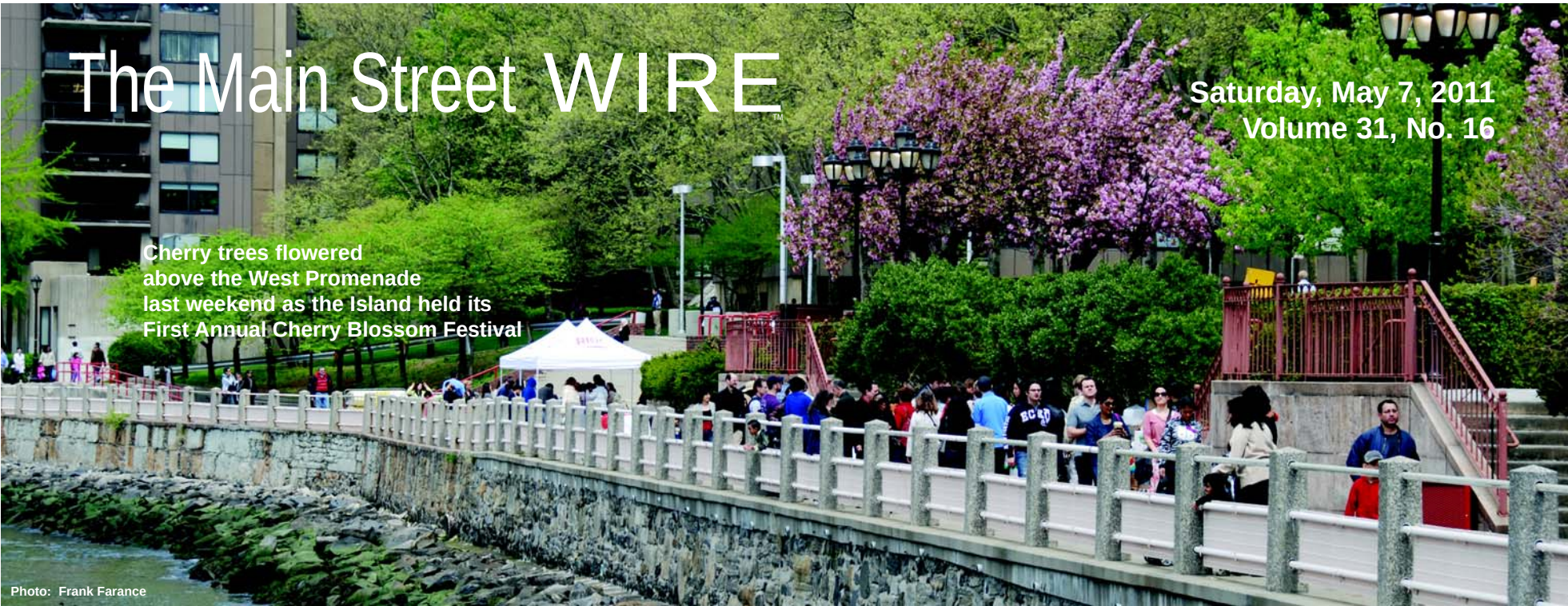




The Main Street WIRE

Saturday, May 7, 2011
Volume 31, No. 16

Cherry trees flowered above the West Promenade last weekend as the Island held its First Annual Cherry Blossom Festival

Photo: Frank Farance

Child School to Honor Founder at Award Dinner

by Adrienne Smith

It's Wacky Wednesday at Roosevelt Island's Child School/Legacy High School, a home-grown institution for students with educational disabilities. About eight of the campus' 250 students have opted to spend a class period of their choosing in teacher Camille Mouquinho's art classroom.

"I'll laminate!" one student calls, as he dashes to the machine.

The next 40 minutes are spent sketching, coloring, laminating, and cutting dozens upon dozens of paper flowers.

The paper flowers (masses of violet, periwinkle, navy, aqua, and

lavender-blues and purples) will blossom into 45 centerpieces for the school's first annual Founder's Award Benefit Dinner on Thursday, May 19.

The benefit is both a tribute to Founder and Executive Director Emeritus Maari de Souza and a fundraiser for the school's new Fine Arts Center.

Students across the school are pitching in. Leading the preparation is the Sunshine Society. Destini Henry, a ninth-grader and the Sunshine Society bookkeeper, said they are managing the centerpieces.

"We're coloring a bunch of flowers. We draw them, make a col-



Maari de Souza

lage, and laminate it. We have the whole school working on it. In every class, people are helping."

The Sunshine Society is also helping with more than 300 pieces that will grace the walls – and sup-
See **Child School**, page 10

At Motorgate, Questions Of Responsibility for Enforcement and Upkeep

by Jim Baehler

At any given time, only five or six cars are parked in violation of Motorgate rules, according to the Central Parking facility manager, Roman Pustilnik.

But a one-day survey this week showed 83 cars in violation of the rules – 37 large cars parked in spaces marked as reserved for small cars, and 46 encroaching on an adjoining space. Seven of those straddled lines, using two full spaces.

None of the multi-space cars had any warning notices on them, though Pustilnik said that "my assistant managers go through all the levels three or four times a day" to place warning notices on such cars. "A record is kept in a daily ledger," Pustilnik said. "If an owner parks illegally again, we put a boot on his wheel. When he reports to the office, we tell him about the rules and ask him to follow them." Pustilnik says that, in almost all cases, the offending owner causes no further problems. If it happens again, Central Parking will charge an owner an additional \$20 a month. He says that hardly ever happens, and adds, "I am not allowed to have cars towed away."

Neither is Public Safety, apparently. RIOC Vice President Fernando Martinez says, "Public Safety cannot ticket cars [in Motorgate]. Public Safety cars make a tour of Motorgate once each hour for security purposes."

The lack of enforcement at Motorgate has put at least one resident on
See **Motorgate**, page 12

Parking is no longer free on West Drive, RIOC has announced. Public Safety is now patrolling for expired muni-meter tickets.

Anguish and Mystery Remain After a Young Man's Plunge to Main Street

By Jim Baehler

Some questions, however troubling, go unanswered.

Most of us eventually leave such questions behind. We move on and, eventually, the vague feeling of dissatisfaction fades.

For the parents of Ryan Santana, it is not vague dissatisfaction. It is a deep and wrenching anguish, and the questions about their son's death on March 6 may never be answered.

Ryan, who was 20 when he died that day, was a personable young man with a winning smile (obituary, page 6). His life ended in an apparent suicide – a plunge from a 15th-floor balcony at his family's Manhattan Park apartment.

At the time, he was in the company of what his parents describe as a wannabe girlfriend, Benazir Balani, who, it is said, later denied, then admitted giving Ryan the hallucinogenic herb salvia divinorum. Also called "diviner's sage" and "Sally D," the drug is fast-acting when smoked, producing a 15-minute "high" sometimes described as LSD-like. Authorities, including Roosevelt Island Public Safety Director Keith Guerra, have been issuing warnings; 14 states have made it illegal. Federal authorities warn



Ryan Santana

that long-term use can produce flashbacks, depression, and possibly schizophrenia, a potentially dangerous mental disorder.

The New York State Senate has passed a bill that would ban sale of the drug to minors; the Assembly may act on it in June.

Belani, also 20, is reported to have described Ryan's behavior, after smoking it, as bizarre – odd movements and animal-like noises – ending with a running leap from the balcony.

Results are not yet in from toxicology tests, but no one has so far disputed this rendering of the facts.

Lauro and Vera Santanna express dissatisfaction with the NYPD handling of the case, at least in terms of their efforts to get information. Thwarted in

attempts to reach the investigating detective, their calls unreturned, they now await the results of toxicology tests, confident of better treatment from the office of the medical examiner.

With Ryan's sister Carolyn, who recently turned 17, they have moved off Roosevelt Island, but they returned for an interview, eager to tell their son's story, after *The WIRE* wrote to them seeking obituary in-

See **Santanna**, page 6



Fiddler on the Roof, Jr. is playing this weekend at the Main Street Teen Theatre. Above, left to right, Jordan Johnston as Tevye, Stephanie Herlihy as Tzeitel, Auste Norvila as the rabbi, Bill Cusick as Motel, and Lauren Abdul as Golde. Eric Sydnor is director/choreographer and Phillip Bettencourt is musical director. See *ComingUp*, page 3, for the schedule.



Politicians spoke, there were proclamations and music, and the event, organized by the Roosevelt Island Residents Association, raised about \$8,400 in assistance for Japan.

Consultation? There’s Consultation?

We learn, as a byproduct of Adrienne Smith’s reporting on the gala banquet that will honor Maari de Souza (page 1), that The Child School (TCS) has a verbal commitment from the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation for the second floor at 504 Main Street – with only details of a lease to be worked out with Hudson-Related once the now-ready master retail deal is signed.

The school’s executive director, Sal Ferrera, tells *The WIRE* that the 7,000-square-foot fine-arts center will be available not just to staff and students of TCS/Legacy High, but to the community at large, as well – a nice across-the-street adjunct to Gallery RIVAA.

On the other hand, we had hopes that second-floor space might become a community meeting center – Island organizations need a truly useful space so badly – when the lower floor becomes the new home of the Island’s branch of the New York Public Library.

In addition to the loss of that opportunity, there’s the question of *consultation*. **Consultation with the community.**

When residents worked their tails off for 10 years to increase resident representation on the RIOC Board of Directors, and to have it be (quasi-)elected, one goal was a tighter connection between residents and RIOC – *information and consultation*. Instead, we find that a very large number of projects and commitments are being undertaken *without* community consultation. As far as we know, no one has been *consulted* on this commitment, made by somebody at RIOC or on the RIOC Board’s Real Estate Advisory Committee.

Fait accompli was, for a long time, a hallmark of RIOC’s relationship with residents. It went away for a while.

It seems to have returned.

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.



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...and the students of Legacy High School; Hassan Wazani and students from the PS/IS 217 Beacon.

Attention – Island Organizations & Businesses:
The WIRE is currently updating the Island CONTACTS LIST, preparing for a reprinting. Please check your listing at nyc10044.com/contacts.htm and supply any corrections or changes (or additions) to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net.

Letters

To the Editor:

Congratulations on your informative, revelatory front-page article (*The WIRE*, April 23) on RIOC’s shocking deferral of the Trellis lease extension. Previous debacles of shops and businesses on Main Street were handled too secretly.

Why our good neighbor and 15-year contributor to the culinary life

To the Editor:

It is hard to read the article about Trellis in the April 23 issue without coming to the conclusion that RIOC is trying to find a pretext to force Trellis out of its premises. I am sure that the location is considered prime. I hope that forcing Trellis out wasn’t a condition of the agreement between RIOC and Hudson-Related.

Kaie Razaghi, or Mr. Kaie as he is affectionately known, and his son have done a very good job of maintaining not just a restaurant but a community center where residents can go to greet their neighbors and spend time with their friends. The

Alive ... in Green Time

by Deek di Salvo

All those enduring tropic saunas or
The frosted kiss of arctic ice can’t know
The utter joy of watching winter fall
Asleep, surrendering to festivals
Where trees adorn themselves in emerald gowns
And blossoms crowns; where daffodils announce
They have survived to burnish earth with gold
When birds sing hymns to springtime’s life renewed
And withered dreams discover they might hope again

reprinted by permission of the author;
original appearance in Renderosity’s Writers Gallery

and miscellaneous charities of Roosevelt Island – Kaie Razaghi – should be given the insulting, disrespectful, progress-interfering treatment that he has been subjected to these last few years is beyond comprehension. It is noteworthy that when he was about to sign a renewal of his lease in 2008, that action was dropped following the still-mysterious dismissal of Steve Shane, and now, alas, unsurprisingly, Razaghi is again being blocked on renewing his lease, as you write in your article, on “the eve of [RIOC’s] concluding a deal for Southtown developers Hudson-Related to manage the Island’s Main Street retail strip.”

This coincidence shakes one’s confidence in the business acumen, let alone common-sense capability, of RIOC. Why, after Mr. Razaghi was subjected to a three-year delay, is he now being stalled again – especially in the face of so many retail spaces on Main Street having been left to languish and remain empty (some for four, five, six years)? Don’t these obstructive actions then, and now in danger of being played out again, demand an explanation, possibly an investigation? And how many thousands of dollars has the Island lost because of this shocking incompetence?

Then there are the aesthetic and humanistic aspects of RIOC’s behavior to be considered. Why should these rentals be turned over to a firm that has endowed Southtown with a so-called state-of-the-art set of little stores that are such sad, uninteresting replicas of similar unappetizing ventures in Manhattan and Greater New York? Doesn’t Roosevelt Island want to continue to pride itself on its individuality, its uniqueness? Trellis, for example, reflects, in a modest but endearing way, the international character of our Island, as well as featuring an excellent international cuisine and a variegated, delightful international cast of waiters and cooks. One dreads to contemplate what banalities Hudson-Related has in store for us.

Quo vadis? Can *The WIRE* launch a campaign to halt the coming encroachment of Hudson-Related before the entire Island is inundated by Southtown?

And what about the overdue investigation of the Steve Shane mystery?

**Maurice Edwards
Nina Cassian**

**Letters deadline for May 21
issue: Tue., May 17, 5:00 p.m.**

John Dougherty

Editor’s note: As indicated in the article, *The WIRE* asked RIOC and the chair of the RIOC Board’s Real Estate Advisory Committee for comment. The chair, Jonathan Kalkin, failed to respond by deadline (and still hasn’t); speaking for RIOC in the absence of President Leslie Torres, CFO Steve Chironis said RIOC would not comment. When one side in a dispute communicates and the other does not, the community is effectively invited to draw conclusions based on information from only one side. RIOC’s recent return to a policy of withholding information does not serve it or the community well.

To the Editor:

At the Westview health club and swimming pool, the porter/janitor takes the liberty of wandering in and out of the women’s locker room when the pool is open. Neither reasoning with him nor screaming at him keeps him out. He can be aggressive and out of control. I reported this to building management in January. Jennifer Jones promptly spoke to the manager, who promised it would not happen again. On April 22 at about 5:30 pm, that porter showed up in front of the sauna. A club member said the same thing happened to her in 2009.

If you see a man in the women’s locker room, Public Safety advises to call them immediately at **212-832-4545**. Set the number on speed dial and have your cell phone handy. If you cannot get a signal, run upstairs or to the pool, and keep dialing until you get through. Time is of the essence.

If there is a man in the women’s locker room, you need to report it to Public Safety. Don’t listen to anyone who tells you otherwise. We need to do something to keep our health club a safe and healthy place. If you have suggestions or would like to communicate on this matter, please e-mail me, with the subject as *swimming pool*, at mohan26@earthlink.net.

Maureen Leong

See **Letters**, page 13

COMING UP

— This Weekend —

Fiddler on the Roof, Jr., Fri May 6, 8pm, **Sat May 7**, 2pm & 8pm, **Sun May 8**, 7pm, Main Street Theatre. (Ad, page 8; photo, page 1.)
RISA Flea Market, today (Sat May 7), 9am-5pm, Senior Center.
Roosevelt Island Fundraiser Walk for Bladder Cancer, today (Sat May 7), 9:45a.m. registration for 10am walk, starting at Riverwalk Bar & Grill. Information: **646-442-4431**. Donate, walk, or both.
Memorial Service for Gwen Almoduvar, today (**Sat May 7**), 3pm, Senior Center.

— Coming Week & Next Weekend —

Roosevelt Island Bridge Closures continue on weekdays, 10am-2pm, 15 minutes at a time, through Fri May 20.
Creative Impressions, art exhibit of patient/resident paintings, crafts, and photography, **Wed May 11** to **Sun May 15**, 10am-4pm daily, auditorium, north campus of Coler-Goldwater Hospital.
Gaelic for Beginners, Wed May 11, 4pm, Library. Ages 13-18.
Public Safety Department Promotion & Commendation Ceremony, Fri May 13, 4:30pm, plaza at 591 Main St.
Health and Fitness Day, Sat May 14, 10am-4pm, Capobianco Field (just north of Roosevelt Landings). Info: 212-832-4540. (Ad, page 16.)
GMC Rocks Rosey, Sat May 14, 1-6pm, Riverwalk Commons. Performance of a rock band from the Gowanus Music Club. Free. Information at nyc10044.com/z/20 and nyc10044.com/z/21.
PAW Day 2011, a health fair for pets and their families, **Sun May 15**, 9am-noon, Carl Shurz Park (84th St & East End Av), sponsored by the Animal Medical Center. (Ad, page 9.)
Racquet Club Open House for boys and girls 5-17 and their parents, **Sun May 15**. 2-4pm, Roosevelt Island Racquet Club at the Tram station. (Ad, page 11.)

— Continuing —

Exhibition of Works on Paper by Annette R. Hochberg, through **Sun May 29**, 9am-8pm daily, The Octagon Gallery, 888 Main St. (Review, page 12.)
Wheelchair Basketball, Sat, 10am-1pm, Sportspark.
Blanket of Ash and Lapilli, an exhibition of art by Ioan Popoiu, Gallery RIVAA. Gallery hours Sat-Sun 11am-5pm, Wed & Fri 6-9pm. Continues through May 22.
Open-Rec Basketball, Sat, 2-6pm, Sportspark. All ages; free.
Swimming at Sportspark, **Mon-Fri** 6-10am, **Mon Wed Fri** 7:30-10:30pm, **Thu** 6-9pm, **Sat-Sun** 12-3pm. **Adults** (18-up) **Tue** 6-9pm, **Sat-Sun** 4-7pm. Adults \$5, children 4-17 \$3, free for seniors 60+ and infants 3 and under. Schedule of classes and activities at nyc10044.com/z/0j.
Infant Lapsit, stories for ages 0-18 months, **Mon**, 10:30am, Library.
UNO for teens, **Mon**, 4pm, Library.
The Tex Allen Trio plays jazz, romance, and a lil' boogie-woogie, **Mon**, 7-10pm, East River Café, 1st Av at E 61st St. Featuring the Roosevelt Islander's trumpet, bassist Aaron James, and drummer Mark Johnson. No cover charge.
Toastmasters, 2nd and 4th **Mon**, 7:30pm. Info: **212-751-9577**.
Knitting & Crochet Group, Tue, 10am, Library. Adults.
Living Library After-School Program, Tue, Wed, Thu, 3-6pm, PS/IS 217 Beacon. Open to all. Information: **347-724-5529**.
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.
Toddler Story Time (ages 18-36 months), **Wed**, 11am, Library.
RIOC's Community Office Hours, Wed, 3-5pm, 591 Main St.
Constituent Service Hours for State Senator Jose Serrano and/or staff, **1st Wed** of each month, 4-7pm, RIOC offices, 591 Main St.
Island Office Hours for Assemblymember Micah Kellner and/or staff, **every Thu**, 3-7pm, RIOC offices, 591 Main St.
Game On @ Roosevelt Island for ages 13-18. **Thu**, 4pm, Library; Japanese comics/novels.
Robots for Kids ages 6-13, **Thu**, 6:30-8pm, Youth Program, 506 Main St., 2nd fl. Information: **917-751-2900**.

— Future Weeks —

School Tour at PS/IS 217, **Wed May 18**, 8:45am. RSVP to **212-980-0294** or rademaker@schools.nyc.gov. Additional tour June 1, 8:45am. (Ad, page 13.)
Irish Folk-Dancing, Wed May 18, 4pm, Library. Ages 13-18.
RIOC Board of Directors meeting, **Wed May 18**, 5:30pm; Manhattan Park Community Center, 8 River Rd. Public comment period, starting at 5:30, precedes formal meeting.
Child School / Legacy High School Founder's Award Benefit Dinner, a tribute to Maari de Souza, **Thu May 19**, 6pm, Down Town Association, 60 Pine St., Manhattan. (For details, see article, page 1.)
Book Discussion, Tales by H.P. Lovecraft, **Thu May 19**, 6:30pm, Library
R&R Concert, Provocative Masterworks, Thu May 19, 7:30pm, Good Shepherd Center. Ralph Allen, violin; Junah Chung, viola; Iris Jortner, cello; Jean Schneider, piano. Works by Frank Martin, Dmitri Shostakovich, Robert Schumann, and Paul Hindemith. (Ad, page 9.)
Once on This Island, Jr., Fri-Mon May 20-23, Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance. (Ad, page 8.)
The Main Street WIRE – Sat May 21. Advertising deadlines: Display ads, **Wed May 11**; decision date for circulars/inserts, **Tue May 17**; 5,500 copies due **Thu May 19**. **Additional issues in 2011:** Jun 4, 18; Jul 2; Aug 27; Sep 10, 24; Oct 8, 22; Nov 5, 19; Dec 10. Dates for **2012** listed online in the *WIRE* archive on *Website NYC10044.com* at nyc10044.com/z/0r.

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*.

**The WIRE**TM

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See **ComingUp**, page 11

The Island is finally in full bloom, and it looks gorgeous.

RIOC's ground maintenance crews have been busy at work strengthening and conditioning the soil to promote healthier and greener lawns. They have also been caring for the tree pits Island-wide, increasing the supply of nutrients to the tree roots. All products used are environmentally friendly.

Following up on my comments about green initiatives in the March 26 column, we are pursuing opportunities to realize these projects. Jonathan Kalkin, a member of the RIOC Board of Directors, has taken an active interest in this development, and played a lead role in exploring a pathway to make electric-car charging stations available. We have just received notice from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) that a grant has been awarded for partial funding of this initiative. The installation of charging stations for six vehicles at Motorgate is expected to be complete

The RIOC Column

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.

Where do I begin, to summarize the RIRA First Annual Cherry Blossom Festival? Were you there? It was a triumph! I'm staring at a list of participating Islanders, Island organizations, Island vendors, performers, and visiting dignitaries representing both New York and Japanese government agencies. The list includes over 150 references. This program was the brainchild of the RIRA Social, Cultural and Educational Services Committee, and especially its Chair, Lynne Strong Shinozaki. If we could wire her up to the New York City power grid, her energy could illuminate the City!

About a month ago, we did a 180° shift from our original premise, which was to raise a few bucks for the echoing RIRA treasury by honoring our "necklace" of flowering cherry trees. Then, in consultation with the Roosevelt Island Japanese Association and the Japanese Consulate in New York, we decided to turn over every dime we raised to the Japanese people for the relief of those affected by the tsunami and nuclear disaster that followed the earthquake on March 11. The kids at PS/IS 217 joined us by raising funds through a Walkathon. The Gallery RIVAA folk rounded out the triumvirate by holding an art auction and raffle following our celebration on Saturday. I don't have the exact totals as I write this, but in the course of one afternoon, we've raised at least \$8,368.61 (but who's counting?). Extraordinary!

We started the afternoon by dedicating a beautiful bronze plaque to the people of Japan, and we have RIOC to thank for funding this remembrance, for providing the setting in our youngest stand of cherry trees, and for providing the boulder upon which the plaque will be mounted. While I'm at it, I must thank RIOC for massive logistical support, and Public Safety for the superb crowd control, maintenance of reserved parking for our off-Island VIPs, and keeping safe the fabulous piles of cash that amassed during the afternoon.

Councilmember Jessica Lappin provided two City Council proclamations honoring the Japanese Ambassadors who helped make the day possible. These were accepted by Deputy Consul General Yasuhisa Kawamura, who was clearly impressed with the beauty of Roosevelt Island and promised to return.

The RIRA Column

by this fall.

We are also upgrading street parking. You may have noticed that we have installed new parking meters along West Drive, from the back of the building at 405 Main Street to the back of the building at 475 Main Street. These meters are part of a pilot program to determine the best parking-meter technology for the Island. The installation process should be completed shortly. We will have information about fee structure and a user's guide available on our website and *Facebook* page.



Leslie Torres, President
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
e-mail: LTorres@RIOC.com

See **RIOC**, page 6

On behalf of Roosevelt Island and RIRA, I was honored to accept a citation from the New York State Assembly, presented by our Assemblymember, Micah Kellner, and also a framed page from the Congressional Record, courtesy of Rep. Carolyn Maloney, citing our community for producing such an extraordinary day. My buttons were bursting with pride.

If you couldn't make it, you missed some wonderful music, provided by four different Japanese groups, including a fabulous drum band, a samisen and koto orchestra, woodwinds, and dancers. The performers were dressed in traditional costumes, as was Lynne, who sparkled in a lovely kimono. There was origami crane-folding, Japanese calligraphy, afternoon-long presentations of the traditional tea ceremony, sushi, cherry-blossom cupcakes, ices, and bottled teas to keep everyone interested and happy. All the tables that we set out were decorated with cloths recreating the rising-sun Japanese flag. Our own Fuji East offered a sake tasting. I went back for seconds.

I can't begin to thank everyone who put this day together, but I understand that Lynne, on behalf of her committee team, will attempt to do so in a letter to this newspaper. We, that is, RIRA, intend to continue providing innovative and fun things to do as the good weather begins to grace our Island. Come join us!

Following Up

On April 25, I met with the chairs of the RIRA Island Services and Planning committees, Aaron Hamburger and Frank Farance, new RIOC General Manager for Bus Operations Cy Opperman, and RIOC Vice President Fernando Martinez to continue tweaking our on-Island transportation services. We reached several decisions and agreed to continue discussing
See **RIRA**, page 12



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

Senior Center

Monday (closed May 30)

9:30 **Ballroom Dancing**
11:00 **Tai Chi** (not 5/9, 5/16)
2:00 **Dance & Drama**
5:30 **Yoga with Nurit** (not 5/16, 5/23)

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

9:30 **Yoga Stretch**
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 Stretch**
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

RISA Flea Market, today (Sat May 7), 9am-5pm
RISA General Nominations, Tue May 10, 7pm
Nutrition Lecture, Fri May 27, 11:15am
Closed Memorial Day, Mon May 30

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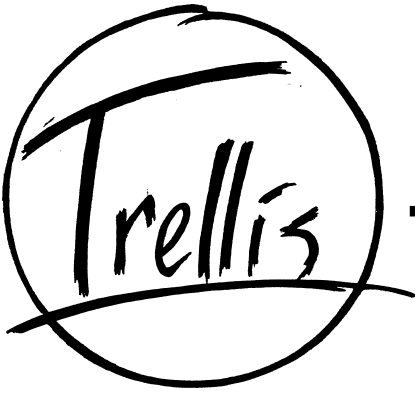
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May

A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Is not worth a fly."

–Rhyme from England

See you at Trellis!
212-752-1517

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Santanna from page 1

formation and an opportunity to learn what they know about the circumstances of his death.

Understandably, Ryan’s parents blame Benazir Balani. “One thing is certain,” said Lauro Santanna. “If that girl had never entered our home, our son would still be alive.”

They say that Ryan met Balani during his last year in high school, in Florida. The family had moved to New York, but Ryan was living with an uncle in order to complete the final months before his graduation. The Santannas say the two had a close relationship for about six months, but that Ryan broke it off just before moving north to continue his education at an art school in Rhode Island. Ryan broke it off because, as Lauro Santanna quotes his son, “I found out she was cheating on me.”

Ryan transferred to The Art Institute of New York City in January 2009. Attending the school in Greenwich Village, he lived with his parents on 82nd Street. One evening, his parents say, Balani appeared at their door, said she had no place to go, and asked to be taken in. She stayed two nights, then left to go to her sister’s home in Elmhurst, Queens. But Vera Santanna reports that a day or two later, she received a surprising phone call from the girl’s mother, wanting to know how things were working out now that her daughter would be living with the Santannas permanently. Vera Santanna told Balani’s mother that no such living arrangement had ever been discussed, and Ryan later reported learning that Balani had moved back to Miami.

It was around this time that the family moved to Roosevelt Island, finding exactly the accommodations they wanted. “We loved Roosevelt Island,” says Vera Santanna. “We liked everything about it – the people, the green spaces, the shops... We felt so safe here. My son and daughter could come home late at night and I never had to worry about them.”

The Santannas relate that, during this time, Ryan was “pestered” by frequent phone calls from Balani, asking that their relationship be resumed. Ryan said he learned from friends in Miami that Balani was demanding that her mother move the two of them to New York City – once allegedly threatening to kill herself if the demand was not met. Mr. Santanna says that once in New York, Balani began “stalking” Ryan. “She would call Ryan at all hours, send him e-mails... She wouldn’t leave him alone.” He says that Ryan tried to ignore her, but relented one morning in February, when Balani called at 5:00 from the Roosevelt Island subway station, saying she had no place to go. He went to the station and took her to the Santanna apartment. She left at 10:00 a.m., supposedly to return to her mother in Queens.

By February, Ryan was in his final year at the Art Institute and working nights as a cashier at a parking lot near Times Square. On March 5, he left for work at 10:30 p.m. His shift ended at 10:00 a.m., and he clocked the family car into Motorgate at 10:49.

His mother was at work, but his father and sister were at home. Ryan showered, ordered a delivery from China 1, and got into his pajamas, planning some catch-up sleep after lunch. His father was taking a nap.

The doorkeeper called, saying Benazir Balani was in the lobby and wanted to come up. Ryan changed into jeans. He told his sister that Balani was coming up; Carolyn went to her room to study,

Ryan Santanna

Obituary by Jim Baehler

People talk about Ryan Santanna’s winning smile and his personal sincerity.

He died March 6 (see photo and story, page 1) at age 20. He was born on the Fourth of July, 1990, at St. Vincent’s Hospital in Manhattan. At the time, his parents were living in Huntington, Long Island. They had moved north from Miami, their first stop after emigrating from Brazil.

An insight into Ryan’s generous nature is found in a letter he wrote when he was seven years old. “My dream is to give all the poor kids in the world toys, because my parents gave me lots of toys.”

Ryan attended Maplewood elementary school in Huntington and became close to his cousin Pedro Raicovich, treating Pedro’s family as his own. After Ryan finished elementary school, his family returned to Florida. In high school, Ryan was a good student who made friends easily and was especially noticed for his winning smile. A measure of the affection Ryan generated in those who knew him then was demonstrated when 15 of his ex-schoolmates from Michael Kropp High School, and two of his teachers, made the trip from Miami to New York after Ryan’s death to offer their condolences to his parents and to recount memories of the teenager they had known.

While growing up in Miami, Ryan became an accomplished swimmer, serving as a lifeguard. He loved scuba diving, video games, little children, animals, and movies. Ryan couldn’t get enough of movies and, early on, decided to make his career in film production. He dreamed of being a nature cinematographer for productions of *National Geographic Magazine*.

Ryan’s post-high-school education began at an art school in Rhode Island but, in January 2009, he transferred to The Art Institute of New York City in Greenwich Village. He worked in his chosen field of film production and was excited at the challenges that lay before him.

Ryan’s parents, Lauro and Vera Santanna, say that the same loving nature Ryan exhibited as a child remained as he grew older. After his death, the Dean of Academic Affairs at the Art Institute wrote to them, “Ryan was a great member of our student body. In talking to faculty over the course of the last week, the most common theme that came up was how positive and respectful Ryan was, a tribute to having such dedicated and caring parents. Ryan made a meaningful and positive impact on his fellow students, our staff and faculty, and that is something we will remember always.”

Vera and Lauro Santanna have been invited to the Art Institute’s December graduation ceremony, when Ryan would have graduated. The invitation reads in part, “We would like to recognize Ryan for his contribution to the school with an honorary graduation certificate. The school would like to offer this small token of remembrance for Ryan.”

Talks with three people reveal a young man with an exceptional ability to make friends. His cousin Pedro says, “At the memorial service, when people got up to talk about Ryan, I can’t tell you how many said he was their best friend.”

Nadine Vega met Ryan about 15 months ago when she enrolled in the Art Institute after moving to New York from California. She says, “Ryan was an incredible person. He was the first person I met in New York who I could really call a friend. You could talk about anything with him and know that your secrets would be safe. He always listened and he never judged you or made fun of your beliefs. He was never sad and never complained about anything.”

Marcus Vazquez knew Ryan for three years at the Art Institute, and saw Ryan every day while they were working together producing the film that Ryan had written. “If you knew Ryan for one day, it seemed you knew him for years. When he smiled, you could see how much he loved you. He was like a magnet, drawing people to him. He treated everyone as if they were a member of his family.”

Cousin Pedro says that if he had to use one word to describe Ryan Santana, it would be “vibrant.” He goes on to say, “He touched so many people. He had a great smile and the ability to feel calm about troubles and then say something to make you forget your troubles.”

Pedro continues, “About six months after Ryan and his family moved from Huntington to Miami, Ryan’s father sent me a ticket to fly down to Florida. I was 15 or 16 at the time and we had never been apart until then. I was nervous about seeing Ryan again but he gave me the biggest hug and it was if we had never parted. He was close to my family and never forgot to say ‘I love you’ to them. He loved his sister Carolyn and once said that his goal was to be the best big brother in the world.”

Ryan Santanna’s hopes for himself and his life will never be realized, but his family and friends can comfort themselves with the “mystic chords of memory,” in Abraham Lincoln’s phrase, that join the living to the dead. The many photographs his loved ones have of Ryan and his dazzling smile will keep those memories alive.

Ryan is survived by his parents, Vera and Lauro Santanna, and his younger sister, Carolyn.

and Ryan took Balani to his room – the room with the balcony.

After an hour, Lauro Santanna heard a noise and woke up. At the same moment, Balani burst into Carolyn’s room. “Your brother jumped off the balcony!” she said. Carolyn ran to the balcony and looked down. Her screams alerted her father. He, too, looked down – and saw his son’s body in the street.

Lauro and Carolyn ran to the elevator with Balani, but Carolyn ran down the stairs. Laura reports that, riding down in the elevator, Balani told him, “He smoked salvia and got sick. He was hanging on his stomach over the balcony railing.”

When Lauro Santanna reached the street, Carolyn was cradling her brother in her arms.

Aftermath

Lauro Santanna reports that, questioned by police, Benazir Balani admitted buying salvia. When she later said she felt sick and departed, she left her jacket and purse in Ryan’s bedroom. In it, Lauro Santanna says he found a page torn from a magazine that described salvia and its use. The police sent a detective to examine the purse and its contents, but Santanna reports that the detective said there was nothing of interest – that the purse and its contents could be discarded. Santanna says he thought that the magazine piece should have been retained, but, to rid his home of reminders of Balani, he threw it away.

He later learned that, on her

Gwen Almoduvar



Gwen Thomas was born August 14, 1944, at the old Metropolitan Hospital on Welfare Island. She returned to the newly named Roosevelt Island in 1977 with her husband, Gaspar Almoduvar, and two sons, Andre and Jacques.

She was an active Islander, involved in the Main Street Theatre and the Senior Center. People admired her decorating skills, her clothing designs, and her modeling.

Gwen died April 25 at Coler Hospital. She is survived by her two sons, daughter-in-law Ann McManus, uncle Fredonia Thomas, sister Lillian Hines, brother Sterling Thomas, and many nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, as well as many members of her extended family and friends.

A memorial service will be held today (Saturday, May 7) at 3:00 p.m. at the Senior Center.

RIOC from page 3

We are Hiring

To help keep this Island beautiful throughout the summer, RIOC is once again recruiting for temporary summer staff positions. These opportunities are perfect for college students and graduating high school seniors. The minimum age requirement is 17 years. The positions will run from May 16 through September 9, 2011.

We have several positions to be filled in a variety of departments, and are looking for hard-working, energetic, and upbeat candidates. Some of the work will be manual, and most will require working outdoors for the duration of the summer. Prior experience in gardening, cleaning, construction, or manual labor is a plus, but not necessary.

We encourage Roosevelt Island’s student residents to apply. Interested candidates may apply through the Youth Center, by dropping a resume off at RIOC’s administrative office at 591 Main Street during business hours, or by e-mailing a resume to HRStaffing@RIOC.com.

Cherry Blossom Festival

I had the pleasure this past weekend of attending the Roosevelt Island Cherry Blossom Festival. It was a great event for a great cause: all proceeds from the festival, including the food and beverage sales, will be donated to the Japan Society’s Earthquake Relief Fund supporting the March 11 earthquake survivors in Japan.

RIOC, the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA), the Japanese Association of Roosevelt Island, and the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association (RIVAA) also joined together to dedicate a cherry grove to the people of Japan.

Congratulations to Lynne Shinozaki, Sherie Helstien, and the rest of the RIRA team for putting together such a wonderful event for our community, and supporting our Japanese neighbors and their loved

ones in Japan.

Check out some photos on our Facebook page at Facebook.com/RIOCNY.

Upcoming Events

Health & Fitness Day, Saturday, May 14, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.: Join us for RIOC’s fifth annual Health and Fitness Day, which will feature great activities for kids, youth, adults, seniors, and pets.

Kids’ activities include rock climbing, Pee Wee Tennis with Joyce Mincheff, a kite-flying workshop with Curtis Jones, inflatable games, and more!

Youth, adult, and senior activities will include free massages, Wii balance training, nutrition education, pilates, yoga, tango, free swimming at Sportspark, and much, much more. There will also be basketball and ping pong tournaments. In addition, there will be a ceremony unveiling the new outdoor concrete ping pong tables and a dedication of the George Brathwaite Ping Pong Court.

For pets, the Mayor’s Alliance for NYC Animals will be on site to provide low cost micro-chipping, and there will be additional activities and services, including free pet portraits.

For more information, check out the Health and Fitness Day tab on our Facebook page.

Sing For Hope

Sing for Hope, a non-profit organization that mobilizes professional artists to volunteer in service programs, will place 88 pianos on the streets of New York City’s five boroughs from June 18 to July 2. One of these pianos will be placed at the Island’s Blackwell Plaza. This is the second year for the outdoor piano program, which encourages amateurs and artists alike to create impromptu concerts.

The piano at Blackwell Plaza will be available to the public for anyone to play. We will set a time when the piano will be locked to avoid disturbance of the residents in the surrounding area.

MySpace page, Benazir Balani calls herself “Gata Peligrosa” – dangerous cat.

Dissatisfied with the NYPD’s handling of the case, Lauro and Vera Santanna now await a toxicology report. The medical exam-

iner has told them it could take months to get those results, as samples are analyzed at several out-of-state labs. Those results will add a small piece to an agonizing puzzle, but pieces will always be missing.

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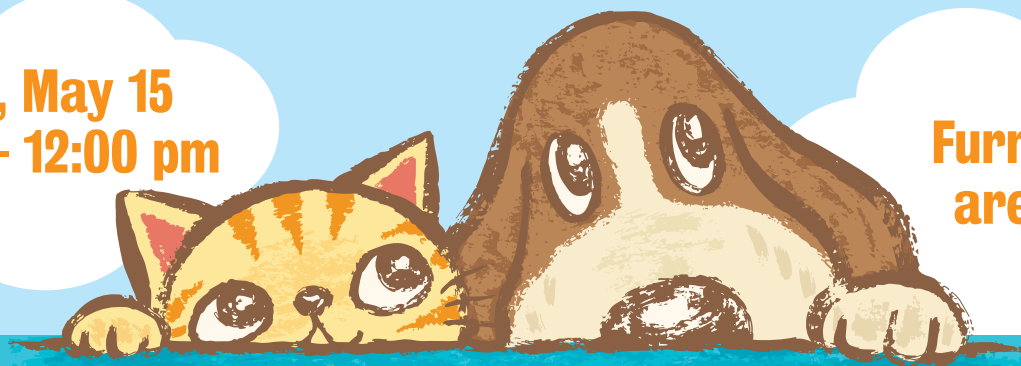
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This year’s Roosevelt Island baseball season is off to a fantastic start, with a large number of new kids joining up, producing eight teams ready to play – three Majors and five Minors. We also have many new coaches this year.

There are games Tuesday and Thursday nights, and four on Saturdays. Our newly designed ballpark has a 410’ fence (or so the sign says) and a real-time scoreboard.

The Majors game on April 26 pitted pitchers Luca Goldmansour leading the Black Attack against Sean Christianson’s Reds team. Both pitchers were outstanding and limited the number of hits and runs. They were also backed up by great defense, with Reds’ Jaden Perry at shortstop making slick use of his glove, and Goldmansour snaring a bullet off the bat of Jordan Chambers. A towering hit from Christianson landed in the glove of Attack outfielder

Gianluca Yong-Gonzalez. After the Reds’ Aren Marfey stole home in the third inning, the Attack answered with back-to-back doubles from Goldmansour and Jalen DeJesus. Concluding a brilliant outing, Goldmansour handed the ball over to Braden Bryce, who made his Roosevelt Island pitching debut. Bryce got the final two outs of the inning via strikeout. Attack had a chance to add runs when a runner attempted to score on an outfield hit, but the relay from Perry to catcher Jahlil Caraballo nailed the runner and ended the threat. In the final inning, with the Attack up by one, Reds’ Caraballo beat out a grounder that plated the tying run. The game ended in a 4-4 tie.

The Majors’ Reds met the Dodgers on April 30. The Dodgers’ Kerwin Barrera came up with the Reds on top 4-1 and smacked a 2-RBI single to bring the Dodgers within one. Later that inning, Nick Lovelace knocked in two more to put the Dodgers ahead. The Reds mounted a comeback in the bottom of the inning before the Dodgers’ Solomon Diarra made a great catch of Jahlil Caraballo’s line drive to end the rally. The Dodgers added four more, aided by Khalief Cole’s bases-loaded single. Barrera’s pitching kept the Reds’ bats silent until Aren Marfey ripped a triple that plated Billy Cusick, followed by a near-home run by Serica Samms. The Reds came up short, though, by a score of 11-10.

In the second half of the double-header, the Dodgers were ahead of the Black Attack 6-1 in the third inning when

SPORTSWIRE

Jonathan Hurt hit a 2-RBI triple and later scored to put the Attack within one. The Dodgers answered back in a huge way when Thomas Guzman hit the first-ever over-the-fence home run in the newly designed ball park, but the Dodgers’ attempt to add on was thwarted when Hurt, playing catcher, nailed a runner trying to steal second. Both teams kept battling until the bottom of the final inning when, with the score tied 10-10, the Attack’s Chynna Mitchell doubled, followed by a game-winning RBI double from Luca Goldmansour that gave the Attack the victory, 11-10.

The Minors also played a double-header, with the first game showcasing the Red team vs the Blue team in a low-scoring game, due partly to a highlight-reel defensive play by Reds shortstop Brad DiBenedetto. With the Reds leading 2-1 going into the final inning, Blues’ Raffey Andrabi tied the score with an RBI double.

The Reds’ Desmond Bent came up with their final chance at bat and wasted no time smacking a home run to give Reds the victory 3-2.

The final game of the day matched the Dark Shadows against the Green Hornets. Both teams started hot, and the score was 3-4 after the first inning. The Hornets were playing with a short team of only 8 players, but played with the fire of a full squad, illustrated when Kendell Evans hit an inside-the-park homer. The Hornets also scored on hits by Ryan Dawish, Zephany D’Cruz, and Tyler Young. But the Dark Shadow defense, bolstered by Kenny Holguin at short, Francine Elisaia at pitcher, Galen Bennie at second, and Karina Loureiro at first, all turned in great plays to keep the Hornets at bay. And the Shadow hits coming off the

bats of Ryan Wagner, Alysa Hasegawa, Tshering Penjo, and Georgia Bobo were too much for the Hornets to handle, as the Shadows won 11-4.



Photos: Illiana Wong

Child School from page 1

porting fundraising efforts. Reaching out and helping others is a primary focus of the Society.

“My favorite part about being in this club is when we raise money and make a difference,” said Society President Nicole Luna, a ninth grader. “I get excited when I see kids talking about it. When they offer to help, it makes me even more happy.”

The Society’s aim to reach out, unite the school, and help others reflects an attitude that de Souza has worked hard to instill in students, and that she hopes future Founder’s Awards will highlight.

“I hope [the award] will symbolize a compassion for other people. That’s something I’ve stood for all my life – never to stop learning, and be compassionate to others, and respect.”

De Souza started the Child School/Legacy High School in 1973 after coming to America from India on a scholarship.

“We started in a four-bedroom apartment in Eastwood,” she said.

The school teaches and empowers children with educational disabilities ranging from autism to dyslexia, and grades kindergarten through 12th grade.

“I came to this country on a scholarship and was taken aback,” de Souza said during a recent conversation in her office. “There was no vision for these children. These

kids were juggling so many things and had to walk the walk like everybody else... We had to find the way to teach them, rather than look at them and say they can’t learn.”

De Souza began with five students, she said. These days, she oversees more than 250 throughout a campus of four buildings. Each of them looks up to de Souza, Luna said.

“We really love Maari. I just came here recently, and my friends told me about her. They love her because she created this school.”

The benefit dinner will recognize the 38 years that de Souza has invested in the school, but she said she’s nervous. “I like stand-

ing in the background. But what I think is most wonderful is that the fundraiser will become a tradition to acknowledge other people.”

Raising funds for the Fine Arts Center is the benefit dinner’s second objective. A silent auction will take place, and donations will be accepted.

The Fine Arts Center, yet to be officially named, will be located on the second floor at 504 Main Street (the former Lilies School). With over 7,000 square feet of space, the building will house a 300-seat theater and music, dance, and art studios.

A physical fitness center will oc-

cupy 503 Main Street. These ideas swept in during the fall of 2010, along with new Executive Director Dr. Salvatore Ferrera.

“On nice days, you’d walk up and down the Island and see these empty buildings,” Ferrera said. “So I contacted Fernando from RIOC [Fernando Martinez, Vice President of Operations] and asked about these spaces, and he showed them to me. They make a lot of sense for us.”

Ferrera’s first focus was improving the campus’s “cosmetic issues,” he said. New clubs, such as crew and fencing, will soon be available for students, and the elementary school’s inner courtyard has been given a facelift.

“What we needed is exactly what Sal has brought to this school,” de Souza said. “He is very much about taking this school forward and out.”

The Fine Arts Center will be a bigger and bolder step toward improving students’ resources.

“Right now, we convert the gym into an auditorium,” Ferrera said. “They’re doing a great job, but a gym is a gym. Our kids are so tuned into the fine arts. Having a building dedicated to that will work wonders for these kids.”

Money raised by the benefit dinner will speed along the Fine Arts Center’s projected September 2011 construction start date.

But more importantly, Ferrera

said, it will celebrate de Souza and what she stands for. “I’m interested in establishing this Founder’s Award,” he said. “We want to give it to someone who represents her understanding of kids with special challenges.”

The May 19 Benefit Dinner will take place at Manhattan’s Downtown Association, a member-owned social club at 60 Pine Street. A cocktail reception begins the night at 6:00. Dinner, guest speakers, and awards follow at 7:00.

Two guest speakers will attend: Phylisia Rashad, a Tony-award-winning actress and singer, and Curtis Sliwa, an anti-crime activist, founder of the Guardian Angels, and radio broadcaster.

All proceeds will go toward the Fine Arts Center; the Child School/Legacy High School is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.

The dinner is open to the public. Anyone is welcome to attend or contribute.

Until then, children across all grades will rush to finish their bouquets of blue and purple. De Souza will continue waving at children through her office’s wall of windows as they pass in the hallway.

Her walls are lined with drawings and notes from students. Perhaps one of the 45 centerpieces, signed by a lucky artist, will make its way onto one of her bulletin boards.



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COMING UP

from page 3

sified): 917-587-3278.

RIRANetworking Breakfast, Sat May 21, 9am-12noon, residential lobbies.

Readings from Our Island: Hospitals and Penitentiary, Tue May 24, 6:30pm, Library, presented by the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. (First of 3 events; see listings for Jun 7, Jun 28.)

Opening Reception for Art from the Heart IV, a collection of visual art by Coler-Goldwater patients and residents, **Sat May 28,** 6-9pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St., through June 19. Gallery hours **Sat-Sun,** 11am-5pm, **Wed & Fri,** 6-9pm.

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

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged), Fri-Sun Jun 3-5, Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance. (Ad, page 8.)

Sunday Concert Series – Ann Panagulias, Soprano, Sun Jun 5, 2:30pm, Good Shepherd Center. French and American songs, with pianist Richard Pearson Thomas. Free. Donations support the food program.

Readings from Our Island: Letters from the Almshouse, Tue Jun 7, 6:30pm, Library, presented by the Roosevelt Island Historical Society (2nd of 3 events).

Roosevelt Island Day, Sat Jun 11.

Blood Drive, Sat Jun 11, as part of Roosevelt Island Day.

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

R&R Concert, Sat Jun 25, 8pm, Good Shepherd Center. Ralph Allen, violin; Elisabeth Perry, violin; Richard Wolfe, violin; Iris Jortner, cello. Additional players and program to be announced.

Readings from Our Island: Stories from Nursing Schools, Tue Jun 28, 6:30pm, Library, presented by the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. (Last of 3 events.)

RIOC Board of Directors meeting, Wed Jun 29, 5:30pm; location to be announced. Public comment period, starting at 5:30, precedes formal meeting.

R&R Concert, Fri Jul 1, 8pm, Good Shepherd Center. Ralph Allen, violin; Elisabeth Perry, violin; Richard Wolfe, violin; Iris Jortner, cello. Additional players and program to be announced.

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

RIOC Board of Directors meeting, Wed Aug 3, 5:30pm; location to be announced. Public comment period, starting at 5:30, precedes formal meeting.

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.

RIOC Board of Directors meeting, Wed Sep 21, 5:30pm; location to be announced. Public comment period, starting at 5:30, precedes formal meeting.

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

RIRANetworking Breakfast, Sat Oct 15, residential lobbies.

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

RIOC Board of Directors meeting, Wed Nov 9, 5:30pm; location to be announced. Public comment period, starting at 5:30, precedes formal meeting.

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

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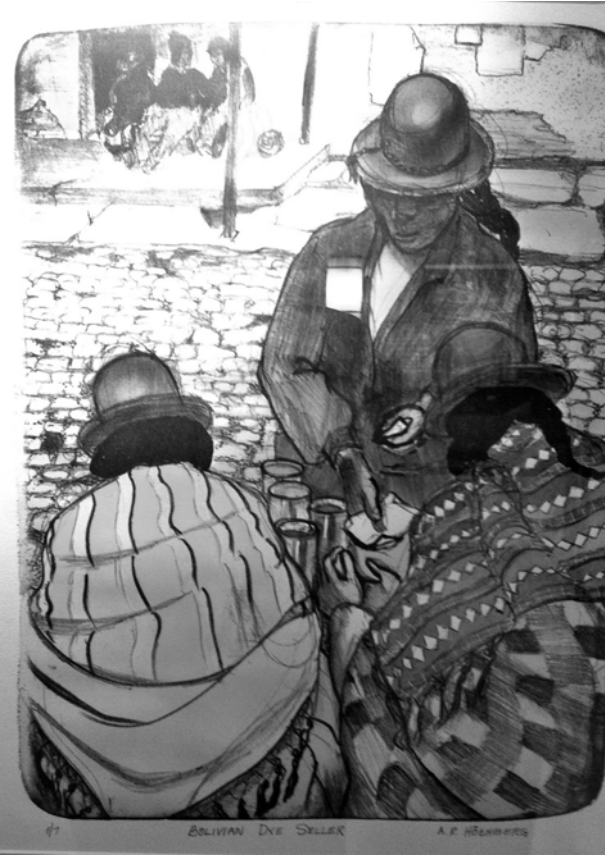
CAT

SITTER

Hochberg Shows Works on Paper at Octagon

Review by David Stone
Veteran local artist Annette R. Hochberg has opened a new show, *Works On Paper*, that will run through May 29 at the Octagon Gallery at 888 Main Street. Unlike many of her colleagues at Gallery RIVAA, Hochberg eschews the bolder statements of acrylics, pastels and oils in favor of etchings and delicate watercolors. Her pictures are subtle, and range from whimsical composition to thoughtful observation. Her spirited *Degas Unravelling* assumes that two figures, apparently ballet dancers, are coming undone while in motion, as if made up completely of decorative ribbons, in a playful stroke of fantasy. Similarly, a second etching has *King Alfred* about to come asunder as additional ribbons shower from above. In a show that is expansive in style, Hochberg makes exuberant

use of color in her *Honduran Street Scene*. Tropical colors abound as people pass on bicycles or pause at a street vendor. The presentation escapes chaos through a deft use of figurative work that pins down the picture’s abstract expressionism. Showing versatility in several styles, Hochberg also gives us realism in a complexity of surfaces and lines in the lithograph *View From Rooftop, Latin America*. She carries on her affectionate depictions of other cultures in *Bolivian Dye Seller*, another color-rich setting of wraps and hats in a street scene where patterns abound without conflicts. *Palestinian Woman, Israel* is apolitical, but heartfelt. Dressed in black, a woman stands alone on the street, her isolation emphasized by brightly colored robes hung out along a wall behind her. Of all the well-executed images in this gallery, this one seems the most complete, with its hearty compliments of style, design, content, and emotion. In contrast, Hochberg’s *Irises* is a refined presentation of floral lines, poetically executed. Her etching *Trees* reminds viewers in artfully handled strokes that their true story is not in the leaves but in the limbs as they curve away from the trunk, mixing and mingling into the surrounding environment. *Manhattan Park In Winter* carries on with the spirit of what can be shown in simple shades of black to white. Children running defy



RIRA from page 3
several others. Starting shortly, the official Tram bus stop will be at the East Channel bus shelter adjacent to the steam plant. While buses will continue to use the West Channel stop near the Visitors’ Center, buses will wait for Tram passengers (dwell time, in technical parlance) at the more convenient stop. This is directly a result of your input, so thank yourselves for giving us the necessary feedback.

We heard the residents as well regarding the need for more benches, especially at the bus stop in front of the Good Shepherd Community Center and directly opposite the Senior Building. RIOC tells us that special benches are on order, for the bus shelters and for placement around the Island. Thank you, RIOC! Last week, I received a phone call from Deputy Inspector Stephen Cirabisi, the commanding officer of the 114th Precinct. There has been some controversy regarding the status of NYPD patrols from this Queens precinct. As a result of our conversations with Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, as well as efforts made by RIOC and our resident RIOC Board Members, he informed me that, as of April 25, he would be assigning officers to the shift once held by Officer Evelio Fernandez. He intends to replace this shifting roster with a permanent

police officer, working the 4:00 p.m. to midnight shift, five days per week. Our thanks to Inspector Cirabisi for his rapid response, and also for assigning an officer to our Cherry Blossom Festival. **Death of a Monster** Last Sunday’s news of the U.S. surgical strike on Osama bin Laden’s compound in Pakistan engendered celebration around the world. It is particularly poignant for Roosevelt Islanders. We lost five neighbors on 9/11, as well as friends at the FDNY Special Ops firehouse. Many of us watched the Twin Towers disappear from the skyline. The smell of smoke that drifted north for a week is a memory that never fades. I don’t know how to think about this. Revenge is sweet, and I’ve exulted in the closure that bin Laden’s death brings. But I’ve also

the starkness of snow and cold while a single figure in color, a small child in red, spreads hopeful arms toward the viewer from his own small corner of the park. Hochberg reserves a good section of the gallery for etchings of animals she clearly admires, depicting them with an almost childlike innocence. A *Sleeping Cat* joins a *Fish*, *Zebra*, and *Rhino*. *Ponies In The Wind*, a more complicated picture, seems a contem-

plated view of rural life on a succession of rolling hills. Although structured and domestic, this scene suggests that nature, in its most basic form, is never far off. Thirty-seven well-realized pictures make this solo exhibit memorable. One woman’s observations of the world, her affectionate, varying perspectives, will be on display in the lobby of the Octagon through May 29. Viewing hours are 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week.



felt guilty about celebrating a death. I remember the images of Middle Eastern women ululating in the streets to celebrate our tragedy. Are the thousands massing in streets all over the world truly that different? Ultimately, the question is, are we safer now or more at risk? We’re New Yorkers, and we’ll ramp up our street radar to ‘high’ over the next few weeks. If we see something, we’ll say something. And then, we’ll go about our business as we always do.

Presenting funds raised in Cherry Blossom Festival – Back row: Tad Sudol (RIVAA), Tatsuya Yamamoto (Japan Association), Matthew Katz (RIRA); front row: Beatrice Popoiu (RIVAA), Sherie Helstien (RIRA), Junko Hasegawa (Japan Association), Lynne Shinozaki (RIRA), Toshiko Groner (RIVAA), Selwyn Fund (RIVAA).



Motorgate from page 1

the warpath. Rivercross resident Raye Schwartz claims that certain people are consistently allowed to park incorrectly. She cites a Lexus RX300 that regularly parks in a small-car space and is never issued a warning. During *The WIRE*’s survey of the facility, only three misparked vehicles, all in small-car spaces, had warnings on them: “Your vehicle is parked illegally. If it is not moved it will be towed at your own expense. This is your final warning.” But none of the warnings was dated.

Martinez concedes that, during recent renovation work, when sections were closed off, “Central Parking may have let it go.” However, he added, “Central Parking is responsible for enforcing the rules. The last resort is to have an offending vehicle towed.” Schwartz contends that, “Roman Pustilnik’s hands are tied by RIOC. He wants to do a good job, but he does not receive the backing he needs from RIOC.” Schwartz’s solution is to empower Public Safety to issue tickets to cars parked “illegally.” Martinez responds, “Public Safety cannot issue tickets at Motorgate because it is a private facility. As such, neither the NYPD nor Public Safety can issue tickets there.” Pustilnik says that Public Safety did tow cars at one time, identifying it as the period during which James Frye headed the department. “If a car was parked in a reserved spot, I would call Public Safety and they would put a ticket on the car and have it towed away. But owners complained and RIOC told Public Safety not to ticket cars or have them towed.”

Motorgate Rates
\$190/month, including taxes
\$235/month for a reserved space
\$96/month for seniors

North Elevator
Another Motorgate problem affects residents of 30 and 40 River Road – the non-working elevator at the north end of Motorgate. Like so many matters on Roosevelt Island, a history of divided responsibility exists there. Martinez says, “The north section of the structure was built in the mid-’80s at the same time as Manhattan Park. The builders of Manhattan Park paid for the addition to the building under an arrangement that gave them 31% ownership, with RIOC holding the other 69%. But the elevator shaft itself has a design flaw – it’s exposed to the elements and, over time, rain and snow caused the elevator to become inoperative.”

Motorgate Money
2010 revenue: \$2,686,788
The split: RIOC 61%, Manhattan Park, 39%

“After considerable discussion,” Martinez says, “it has been decided to replace the elevator and enclose the shaft. We have finally agreed on how the renovation of the north elevator and the shaft are to be paid for. We hope to have something to present to the RIOC Board in the near future.” **Senior Discount** Seniors with cars have recently discovered that there is a senior discount at Motorgate that lowers fees by nearly 50%. Among others, Schwartz complains that efforts to make the community aware of the discount have been hopelessly lame – and nobody’s offering refunds for years of overpayments. She calculates that she has overpaid by \$9,268 since 2005. “Originally, the senior discount was available only to low-income individuals living at 2-4 River Road and at Eastwood

[now Roosevelt Landings],” explains Martinez. “Part of the problem is that the wording of the contract with Central Parking stated that fees and discounts would be established by the owner. Central Parking was told what the discount should be and what the residency requirement was, but was not told what income levels qualified. Central Parking decided not to inquire into customers’ income levels. “It is my understanding,” Martinez goes on, “that the discount was common knowledge among residents of the qualifying buildings. The problem arose when residents of other buildings applied for the discount and were turned down.” Ultimately, in a meeting about two months ago, RIOC, Manhattan Park, and Central Parking agreed to make the discount available to all Island seniors. Asked about the failure to publicize the special rate, Martinez said, “I believe it was noted in the president’s column in *The WIRE* and it was recorded in the notes of a public meeting of the Operations Committee.” Other than that, he says, there is a rate sheet in the Motorgate office listing the various discounts. Martinez says, “Seniors who want the discount need to bring a letter from their managing agent attesting to their residency and some proof of age, if it is asked for, in order to receive a discount on the parking charge.” Overall, Martinez is optimistic about Motorgate’s future. “This year, we will finish repairs and renovation. Then the lanes will be restriped, and all the slots will be renumbered. “The escalator has been decommissioned and it will be dismantled and removed.”

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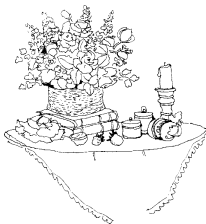
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Letters from page 2

100% of the money raised would be devoted to Japanese relief efforts, and the event was a rousing success!

Expecting 300-400 people, we estimate that approximately 1,000 visitors came, helping us celebrate our beautiful trees and giving so generously! As of this accounting, in one Saturday afternoon, RIRA and the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association (RIVAA), with the contributions of the PS/IS 217 Walkathon, raised over \$8,300!

First, thank-yous to RIRA members. Neha Kaul did a yeoman's job organizing the manpower from RIRA membership: Bob Darwish, Jeff Escobar, Frank Farance, Sherie Helstien, Matthew Katz, Bill Long, Susan Marcus, Joyce Mincheff, Sharon Pope, Ethel Romm, Ilonka Salisbury, and Don Semenza. Thanks also to Flo Kerr; the Japanese Association's Tatsuya Yamamoto, Junko Hasegawa, and Harumi Kifume; Deputy Consul General Yasuhisa Kawamura; representatives from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney's and State Senator Jose Serrano's offices; Assemblymember Micah Kellner; RIOCC President and CEO Leslie Torres; RIOCC Vice President Fernando Martinez; and our Public Safety officers, who kept the event and our earnings safe.

Thanks to those RIOCC Board members who volunteered. And thanks to Fuji East, Nonno's Focacceria, and Starbucks for their tasty donations. Thanks to Gallery RIVAA, which auctioned art works and items donated by the Noguchi Museum gift shop, and presided over a Starbucks Gift Basket raffle. They will later adjudicate the Photo Contest! We received either financial or "in-kind" support from Gristedes, Costco, ITO EN, SakeOne, Sunrise Mart, Fujifilm, Ippodo Tea Company, Ippodo Gallery, Nihonwasou USA, Inc., Sharaku, Masako Inkyo, Asahi Syuzo, and Daiei Trading.

We thank our Youth Center/Beacon kids for creating the large posters on the kiosks. Many thanks to RIOCC, which supported RIRA with the cost of the plaque, dedicated in solidarity with the Japanese people, along with the grove of "baby" cherry trees on the western promenade.

We are so grateful for the participation of the four musical groups, three calligraphers, two origami demonstrators, two traditional dancers, and women from the Kimono School who assisted in the tea ceremony and handed out maps of the event.

You can see that we had an amazing number and array of people and companies supporting this effort. I am sorry there's not enough space to mention every single one of them individually.

Neighbors and friends, we couldn't have done this without you! Thank you.

Lynne Shinozaki
Chair, RIRA SC&E Committee

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Please see *ComingUp*, page 3, for other advertising deadlines

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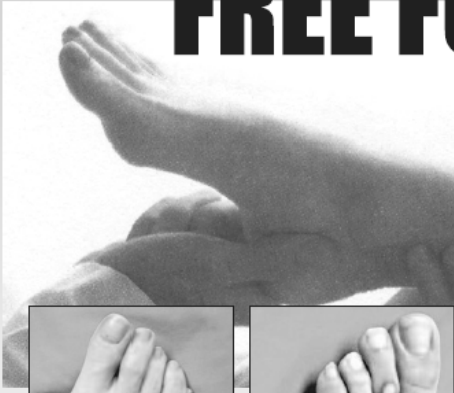
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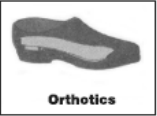
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the 5th Annual
Health &
Fitness Day

Saturday
May 14th
10am-4pm

Join us at
Capobianco Field
for a FREE day of fun including
pet microchipping and photos,
karate, zumba, tango, pilates, yoga,
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spin classes, Pee-Wee tennis,
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