



Saturday,
May 24, 2014
34:17

The Main Street **WIRE**

Kurt Wittman

Kids and kites were kings last weekend at Four Freedoms Park. More of Kurt Wittman's photos on page 13.

RIOC Cash for RIRA Activities Stopped After Its Lone Dissenter Charges Fraud

by Briana Warsing

A plan that would have provided the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) with \$10,000 annually for use at the discretion of the RIRA Common Council is stalled, and likely dead in its original form. Just why it was stillborn is a matter of some speculation and disagreement.

What's clear is that a vote on the funding was on the RIOC Board's agenda for its May 15 meeting, but was pulled after Frank Farance emailed RIOC President Charlene Indelicato and, later, several other New York State officials, charging that the funds amounted to "hush money" to silence RIRA Councilors who might otherwise be vocal in complaining about RIOC.

In a later email, Farance lectured the 18 Common Council members who voted for the plan: "This shows precisely how money is a corrupting influence. Y'all were blinded by receiving money and it significantly affected your decision-making... Unfortunately, given the resounding support of the vote on the fraudulent proposal (18-1) and RIRA's poor history this term on handling financial/governance matters, I believe external intervention is necessary." He said he would refer the matter for investigation.

This Tuesday (May 20), Indelicato insisted that removal of the funding item from the RIOC Board agenda had nothing to do with Farance's attempt at whistle-blowing. "Neither Romano [Reid] nor Frank had anything to do with the decision," she said. "That is not my impression and it is not my belief." Asked if

the plan had been quashed by the governor's office as a result of Farance's emails, Indelicato said there were or would be discussions with State officials, but avoided saying she'd had orders from Albany on the matter.

Background

RIRA Vice President Sherie Helstien had brought the matter to the RIRA Common Council at its May 7 meeting (*The WIRE*, May 10), where it received the 18-1 approval vote that Farance later criticized. She reported then on meetings with Indelicato that resulted in the RIOC President's approval to turn the funding plan into a formal request from the Residents Association to RIOC.

Once the RIRA Council voted its approval, the plan was discussed in the May 12 meeting of the RIOC Board's Operations Advisory Committee, where RIOC Board member David Kraut expressed some reservations: "We have never directly funded RIRA," he said, "except in a couple of specific cases." RIOC, he said, was being asked to underwrite

"RIRA's general operations."

Kraut's hesitation stemmed from his own experience as RIRA President, as well as when "members of RIRA came to [RIOC] after the Cherry Blossom Festival, where they had not made a good deal with their main suppliers and ended up with no money to show for it, and they asked [RIOC] to make them whole, and there was no basis for it." He went on to say, "Bottom line, I'm not opposed to funding RIRA, but I'm not sure RIRA is doing enough to raise their own money."

See **RIRA**, page 10



Frank Farance

Islanders

Clarinet... Oboe... Guitar... Busker... Busker? Then, Folksinger-Songwriter!

by Jim Baehler

Tracing the trajectory of a musical career can be confusing. That is especially true for Emily Mure. It began at an early age, and was far removed from her current profession as a folksinger and composer.

Emily was raised on Roosevelt Island, attended PS/IS 217, and was in many of the children's shows directed by Nancy Howe at the Main Street Theatre. In those days, Emily was most noted for the clarinet that she carried everywhere. This was only natural, as she came from a musical family. Emily's father, Gary, was a music teacher at the school – and his father, Billy Mure, played the guitar and banjo on the Arthur Godfrey show and did musical arrangements for Sammy Davis, Jr. and other singers.

Emily's love affair with the clarinet came to an end at age 10, when a group came to play at the school and she heard an oboe for the first time. "I fell in love with the sound of the oboe and immediately began taking lessons from Jim Wilson, who had been a student of

See **Mure**, page 11



RI Day Nursery Director Resigns; A Regrouping Faces Shortages in Aid

by Briana Warsing

Change, in the form of new leadership, has come to the Roosevelt Island Day Nursery (RIDN). Pamela Stark, formerly the director of the school's Riverwalk site, has been promoted to Interim Executive Director.

She replaces Steve Castar, who resigned last week. Before he resigned, Public Safety received a report, investigated by the NYPD, of inappropriate after-hours behavior at the River Road location by a male staffer who was alone at the time. The incident was not confirmed, and the staffer accused

was never named in any of the Public Safety or NYPD reports. The board acted quickly to suspend the staffer. That staffer remains unnamed, although it is rumored to be Castar, which RIDN will not confirm.

Reem Berro, the chair of RIDN's Board of Trustees, told *The WIRE*, "This incident is allegations, rumors. In our official language, we don't know, and we are not going to define the incident or the staff member because this person was never identified in any of the reports. The suspension was to protect the school, but we really cannot and don't have any evidence to name names. To the police, [the incident] is a joke. There was no follow-up investigation because nothing illegal happened. Official reports describe the person as a 'staff member of RIDN.'"

Stark says, "The accusation is real but the thing might not be. This could happen to anyone. Someone could see something and misunderstand it, and call it in." Further, Berro adds, "We don't want to hurt Steve [Castar] professionally with these baseless rumors. He was not a good fit. And he resigned. That is all there is to it."

Berro wants to turn the attention back to the good news, explaining, "The incident distracted from the real issue, which is that we are headed toward new change, and a new phase in the school's history." Berro is very firm in stating, "We are keeping these issues separate. The incident did not affect our decision. A change in leadership has been in the works for months."

Pamela Stark

According to Berro, "Pam [Stark] does a great job at leading the Riverwalk site, and we thought that she would be the perfect person to lead the school as a whole, and replicate, school-wide, what she's done at Riverwalk."

Berro would know. Her daughter has spent the past two years at the Riverwalk site. She comments, "[Stark] is a resource to parents. Our idea was that daycare would be a place where our daughter could benefit, and she has enjoyed it since she was four months old. We realize that the school hasn't only been

beneficial to our daughter, but to us, too, as parents. We really use the school and its administration as a resource for us to know more about early childhood, children generally, their emotional development and their behavior. To that end, [Stark] has conducted so many workshops. She acts as a consultant to any parent who contacts her. So, she has been a great resource for individual parents, parents as a group, and, of

Inside –

- New Cornell Renderings
- Kites at Four Freedoms
- Bike New York Day

course, the school."

As for the River Road site, Berro says, "I don't feel it was as dynamic with the parent community as the Riverwalk site. Not as many workshops, not as much community outreach. It's been a little stagnant."

Tapping Stark made sense. RIDN opened its Riverwalk facility in November 2010 to serve infants and young toddlers. Stark has been director there for the past three years. River Road serves preschoolers.

Stark explains, "This is a nice time for the school. I am part of the tradition, and a good bridge between the two sites because I worked at River Road for 10 years." From parent feedback, she says, there is a clear "desire to make the



Day Nursery founding executive Sara Seiden with Pamela Stark, the new Interim Executive Director, and Senior Teacher Marcia Ellis

transition between the two schools easier – more like one school with two sites," which is what RIDN actually is.

Time for Change

Stark explains that, "There were a number of things where the feeling was that there wasn't clear communication [from Castar] to the teachers about issues, [or] to the board, or to the parents." She adds, "Parents have to have trust in order for the school to be successful, and if parents start to feel as if *I got some information and not other information or I'm not getting follow-through*, it erodes how parents feel when they drop off their child."

Stark cites the Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) funding debate as an example of Castar's lack of communication. As late as April 20, with the UPK application date of April 23 at hand, RIDN was still listed on the Board of Education's website as an eligible school – one that would accept State UPK funds

See **Day Nursery**, page 6

The Editorial Page

More Politics of Destruction

Frank Farance is at it again – or still.

With his viewpoint rejected by an 18-1 vote at the May meeting of the Residents Association’s Common Council, but in his *certainly* that he was right and everyone else was wrong, he set out to destroy the good works of others – and apparently succeeded.

But Farance was wrong. *Wrong* to play the sore loser after the vote, *wrong* to attack his fellow Common Council members, *wrong* to broadcast his attack and accusations to State officials, and *wrong* in his basic assumptions.

We can start and end with a simple fact: *Every cent that RIOC collects and spends ultimately comes from Island residents – who put money into parking meters, pay rents and other fees, and patronize merchants who pay rents.* (There is a coming exception, in which New York State is paying some of the cost of accommodating Cornell, but it’s not relevant here.)

It stands to reason, then, that residents should have a voice in how money is spent here – and there is no good reason why the residents’ elected representatives on the RIRA Common Council shouldn’t have some discretion in such spending. Following that logic, RIRA Vice President Sherie Helstien talked with RIOC President Charlene Indelicato, and they formulated a plan to supplement the \$5,000 funding that RIOC provides to RIRA for election machines once every two years – by providing instead an annual \$10,000 grant (or “contract”), so that RIRA would have an additional \$15,000 every two years (out of a RIOC budget of tens of millions of dollars) to create services and events and other things to benefit residents.

But to Farance, this overriding logic makes no sense, hence his lone vote against acceptance of the funds. In a series of emails to Indelicato, widely circulated (as is his proclivity), he said that the arrangement “is fraudulent” and “appears to be ‘stinky,’” and later added, “As I see it, the problem with the funding is that, in essence, it is buying ‘hush’ money to influence RIRA, as you have attempted to do with personal relationships with other RIRA members in the hopes of quashing complaints about RIOC.”

Translation: *Only I have the integrity not to be bought off by RIRA being allowed to spend some of the residents’ money; all my fellow Common Councilors are susceptible to financial seduction by your \$10,000; I alone can resist this temptation.* “Money is a corrupting influence,” he writes, telling his fellow Councilors, “y’all were blinded by receiving money and it significantly affected your decision-making.”

This is a Farance theme: *Only Farance has integrity. The WIRE whitewashes when it chooses not to put its hand in the hyper-critical glove offered by Farance and embrace the nits he chooses to pick. RIOC Board members are corrupted by the influence of wives who can’t keep their pennies straight. Charlene Indelicato “bails” them out surreptitiously. Any funding beyond what Farance approves “shows poor judgment by RIOC executives and Board members.”*

From the vantage point of a longtime observer of both Farance, RIOC, and the RIRA Common Council, it now appears that Farance is expecting to leave the Island, and is quite willing to burn bridges and people on his way out the door.

As for the State officials who were spooked by Farance’s tirades, shame on them. If the governor’s office cannot stand up to one chronic complainer and take whatever minor heat might creep into November’s election, then this State administration should lose in that election. Or, better yet, be replaced with a Democratic candidate who is a true democrat, willing to follow Cuomo’s predecessors in giving Island residents a say in selection of RIOC Board members, and grant concessions toward greater resident democracy here.

DL

Letters

To the Editor:

The Westview swimming pool needs a public entrance.

As I walked past it last week on the way to my Westview apartment, I saw that the pool looked like it was getting ready to reopen. Then I began to think about the rash of burglaries in Westview recently, and became increasingly uncomfortable with the many people, particularly non-pool members, who would soon be walking unescorted down our hallways, from 625 to 595, and into the 595 elevators and stairwells.

I contacted both RY Management and the Westview Task Force. The main gist of the messages I received from both was that membership cards are checked, and *we have always done it this way*. I find this reasoning troubling and illogical. Just because something has been done in the past doesn’t make it right, or in our best interests, to continue.

For many years, the users of the Westview pool were almost entirely members and their guests. Only those members and accompanying guests were entering the building. There were no daily users paying a daily entrance fee. There were no teams and their families coming to practice in the pool. There were no school groups. There were no coaches and individual lessons. Slowly, other things have also changed on Roosevelt Island. Little by little, the Island population has probably tripled. Crime has risen dramatically, and burglaries are now commonplace in Westview.

When the pool was last open, individuals coming to swim who paid a daily \$5 entrance fee had become the norm. Many groups were using the pool. Pool usage by non-members seemed to have risen dramatically.

This public pool needs a separate public entrance. It has become a wonderful resource for the community. However, since it is in a private apartment building, it puts the security of Westview residents at risk if the public is allowed to walk unescorted through our hallways and into our elevators.

If a longstanding policy is no longer in the best interests of Westview tenants’ safety and security, it must be changed. Please do not reopen the Westview pool until there is a separate entrance.

Roberta Kleiman

To the Editor:

In a recent interview with *The WIRE*, former RIRA president Patrick Stewart was quoted as saying that I had voted against the Eastwood conversion. That was not the case. In fact, I abstained from that vote on the grounds that I had an interest in the conversion, being as I lived in the building (and still do).

To the Editor:

On the last Monday of May, 2014, many of us will not go to work or school or any other place we’re otherwise obligated to be, and will not be penalized for it. Unfortunately, some will not know why.

Monday is Memorial Day, when we honor those men and women who paid the ultimate price serving this United States of America. Unfortunately, we may dishonor their memory by the way we treat some who followed them. It is shameful that many veterans today are dying, not from combat, but while *maybe* awaiting medical care. This comes from ineptness and dishonesty in a somewhat bloated healthcare system designed to help meet the promises made to every man and woman who serves.

Hopefully, a real fix will be forthcoming. Maybe many of our leaders will have more positive news about this situation before Veterans Day on November 11. Otherwise, the veterans who have mastered the “Rolling Thunder” motorcycles might create a raging roar unlike any before, and where never heard before.

To the Editor:

I wish to alert you to an ad, running for many issues in *The WIRE*, that is, at best, misleading. Jay Shapiro Computers purports to have “a new location in We Are One (599 Main Street).” I don’t know if there ever was a computer service at this location in Westview, but there assuredly is not one now. Having found problems with my ancient Windows XP system, I called the number given in the ad, and, eventually, Jay Shapiro called me back; from his current location in Florida, 1,000 miles away. We determined to address my problems remotely, but Mr. Shapiro was never available when I telephoned him at the hour we had determined for the appointment. I understand that he is caring for an ailing mother, but this was not very businesslike.

Shapiro suggested that I work with a colleague/subordinate here in New York and I made contact with him. This nice young man came in from Staten Island for a 1:00 p.m. appointment, for which he arrived at 3:30. The consultation cost was \$85. Again, phone contact was sporadic; it seemed to me that both of these men were offering their services as a side-line. Having decided to replace the hard-drive, we set a Saturday date, which the local man didn’t honor, nor did he return my phone calls.

After five weeks of this, I decided to bite the bullet and buy a new system, and pulled the plug on Jay Shapiro Computers and company. My advice to you is caveat emptor, let the buyer beware. I found this service to be frustrating, unprofessional, aggravating, and, five weeks later, without benefit.

Since I began this letter, Jay finally called me back. He apologized for his and his colleague’s slow responses, and offered to refund half of my payment, a nice gesture. He mentioned that there was an on-Island colleague, not available during my five-week ordeal, who may (or may not) be able to assist clients in the future. Your call.

I want to make it clear that I don’t hold *The WIRE* in any way responsible. *The WIRE* is not the Better Business Bureau, and has no responsibility to investigate its advertisers, who make the free delivery of the newspaper possible. I only wish to share my experience with my neighbors.

Matthew Katz

To The Editor:

Kudos to the Four Freedoms Park staff. On Saturday, May 17, I hosted a group of 13 elderly ladies on a tour of the park, and it could not have been a more delightful experience. The five-seat jitney met us at the Tram and ferried us to the park in shifts. Once there, Franklin, the driver, stayed with the group to accommodate the handicapped among us. Our tour guide, Dustin, was inspirational; he helped me see the site in a much more appreciative way.

Anyone can schedule the jitney service by making a reservation, calling the park at 212-204-0831 – good to know, especially this year when the Red Bus is not going to the park because of the Cornell construction.

Of course, the beautiful weather that day didn’t hurt.

Sally Hamburger

To the Editor:

It is really nice to have our pier back for the summer, but it is hard to understand why all repairs on the Island are always half-done, and I am wondering if any qualified supervision was involved.

The metal railing painted in March already exhibits rust. It looks as if the rust had only been partially removed. The application of a single coat of paint, without a primer, cannot protect steel against corrosion for an extended period of time.

The steel nails used to fasten deck boards appear to be inappropriate for this application. I’m pretty sure the nails will rise up within a year or two and create a tripping hazard. They also tend to corrode quickly. Screws, although slightly more expensive, hold better and keep the deck seated. They are also coated for corrosion resistance or are available in stainless steel.

The joint sealant at the perimeter of the granite parapets is totally deteriorated, allowing water to saturate the concrete substrate. Saturation leads to bulging and corrosion of the supporting steel members, which in turn results in granite displacement and cracking. A relatively small expense to replace the sealant and address this condition at this time will prevent a more complicated and expensive repair in the near future.

The stair and railing assembly leading from the street down to the pier was fenced off during the rehabilitation, but it was left untouched. I see crumbling mortar joints between granite slabs and severely corroded railing. You get the feeling that the intent is to let the existing railing deteriorate beyond repair and then mount another costly project in replacing something that could be maintained for a fraction of the replacement cost.

Goran Jovanovic

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 email text to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net, or on a disk left at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to The WIRE. If you email, 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, in the judgment of the editors, merits the required space.

Letters deadline
for June 7 issue: Tuesday, June 3, 5pm

COMING UP

— This Weekend —

No Direct Subway service from Manhattan to Roosevelt Island, Fri May 23 9:45pm to Tue May 27 5am.

Deadline for Girls’ Soccer Team Contributions to get a \$6,500 matching grant from the Dick’s Sporting Goods Foundation, **Fri May 23.** See dsg.cm/0067 for details.

13th Annual RIRA Blood Drive, Sat signup through **Jun 21**, at Farmer’s Market.

— Regularly Scheduled Meetings and Events —

See separate listing, page 10.

— The Next Two Weeks —

Farewell Get-together for postal worker **Donnie Dionne, Wed May 28 5:45pm, Trellis.** (Come one, come all.)

Roosevelt Island Bridge closures, Fri May 30 10am-2pm, intermittent closures of 8-10 minutes.

First Sunday Jazz Salon, Sun Jun 1 5-7pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$5 donation; refreshments.

RISA presents National Senior Health & Fitness Day, Wed May 28 1-5pm, with fitness samplers, healthy-food samples, and presentations by multiple organizations. Free. Info: NewImageB@aol.com or 917-951-4137.

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

The Main Street WIRE— Sat Jun 7. Advertising deadlines: Display ads, **Wed May 28;** decision date for circulars/inserts, **Tue Jun 3;** 5,500 copies due **Thu Jun 5.** **Future issues:** Jun 21; Jul date to be determined; Aug 30; Sep 13, 27; Oct 11, 25; Nov 8, 22; Dec 13. **2015:** Every 2 weeks starting Sat Jan 10. **News phone, 212-826-9056;** urgent matters, **917-617-0449.** Email press releases or feature-story suggestions to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net. **Advertising** (display & classified): **917-587-3278.**

— Future Weeks —

Sunset Garden Party at Four Freedoms Park, Tue Jun 10 5-8pm. Music by Peter Duchin Orchestra. \$250-up. Info: tinyurl.com/FDRssg061014.

Bike New York Painting Party, Sat Jun 14 time to be announced. To sign up, contact cgoodspeed@bikenewyork.org. More details to come.

Islander Gerald Starlight performs on the shakuhachi with Andrew Newcomb, synthesizer and Mingmei Yip, quin (Chinese zither), **Sat Jun 14 7pm,** Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. Free; donations welcome.

Book Discussion, Mom & Me & Mom by Maya Angelou, **Thu Jun 19 6:30-8pm,** Library.

Roosevelt Island Day and Blood Drive, Sat Jun 21.

Summer Movie Series shows *Frozen* **Sat Jun 28** sundown, Southpoint Park.

Summer Movie Series shows *The Dark World*, **Fri Jul 11** sundown, Southpoint Park.

Summer Movie Series shows *The Avengers*, **Sat Jul 12** sundown, Southpoint Park.

Summer Movie Series shows *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*, **Sat Jul 26** sundown, Southpoint Park.

Cornell Construction & Community Task Force meeting, **Mon Jul 28 6-8pm,** 12th floor meeting room, 546 Main St.

Summer Movie Series shows *The Hobbit: Desolation of Smaug*, **Sat Aug 9** sundown, Southpoint Park.

Summer Movie Series shows *Goldfinger*, **Sat Aug 23** sundown, Southpoint Park.

At the end of this month, Donnie Dionne, one of the Customer Service Representatives at our post office, will be retiring after 42 years of public service, 22 years of them spent serving the postal needs of the residents and businesses of our little Island in the East River. A gregarious soul, always willing to give a smile, a wave, and maybe even a little political conversation to a neighbor who welcomes it, Mr. Dionne has been a comforting constant in a community seemingly beset with continual change. In an age where postal delivery, like so many other things, is being replaced by wireless and paperless technology, Mr. Dionne has devoted a good part of his professional life to a service that delivers not only bills and other less-than-desirable content, but also favorite magazines, cards with hellos and good wishes, packages with care and cheer, and letters with stories from family and friends in distant locales.

In the years that Mr. Dionne has been here, he could watch the Island change, grow, re-imagine itself, and grow again, in a never-ending cycle of change and rebirth. RIOC Presidents and Board members came and went, residents moved on- and off-Island, businesses opened and closed. Island children went on first dates, grew up, went to college, got married, and had kids. He could see the community struggle against adversity, its residents fighting among themselves as opinions diverged, only to come together time and time again, healing the rifts and finding pride in being Roosevelt Islanders. Against this cyclical backdrop of tumult, change, renewal, and recovery, Mr. Dionne

The RIRA Column

The RIOC Column

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

Last Tuesday, the Sportspark pool was closed due to a mechanical problem with its filtration system. Our staff has been working diligently to make repairs and restore the facility as soon as possible. We recognize the inconvenience that a pool closure poses to the community, and appreciate your patience while we correct the problem.

When an unexpected occurrence like a facility closure takes place, RIOC sends out notifications and updates via its RIOC Advisories email alert system as soon as possible. It is important to us to keep the community informed about what’s happening on Roosevelt Island. I encourage you to sign up for RIOC Advisories for alerts on issues such as traffic disruptions, construction, community meetings, events, and, most importantly, in case of an emergency. Remember, if we can’t reach you, we can’t alert you. Sign up at rioc.ny.gov/advisorybody.htm.

Bike New York

Thank you to everyone who participated in Bike New York’s Spring Kickoff Party last Saturday. Many members of the community came out to take part in the festivities, which included a free bicycle raffle for Roosevelt Island residents, a Learn to Ride – Kids Class, a popular free bike tune-up shop, and a chance for kids to show their creativity in the bike beauty contest. BikeGuard, a free registry provided by MyAssetTag.com, also offered free aluminum tags and assistance for residents who wanted to register their bikes. With perfect weather, wonderful activities, and enthusiastic participants, we could not have asked for better conditions. Many thanks go out to Bike New York for providing this fantastic event.

Bike Registration

If you missed the chance to register your bicycle at last Saturday’s event, you can still pick up registration tags and instructions for free at Public Safety’s headquarters (550 Main Street). BikeGuard allows residents to log a detailed description and photo of their bikes into an online database. The company has worked with RIOC to provide a community-specific program for Roosevelt Island residents to register their bikes locally. If you report your bike lost or stolen, our local community is notified as well as Public Safety. While this notification does not take the place of an incident report filed with Public Safety, it certainly does increase the chance that your bike will be returned to you if it is lost or stolen.

Upcoming Activities

On Saturday, June 14, Bike New York along with the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association will gather residents under the Helix Ramp to decorate their bicycle storage container with paintings. If you’re interested in taking part in this event, please contact Caitlin Goodspeed at cgoodspeed@bikenewyork.org.

Roosevelt Island Day will be taking place next

diligently served the Island and its residents.

His commendably respectful and reliable manner should be what we all aspire to, even if only in the tiniest ways. Whether helping a neighbor as he struggles to carry items to his apartment, or volunteering time to visit with our often forgotten elderly residents at the Senior Center, or through public service itself, each of us doing a little bit to better the lives of others makes the community a better place to play, work, and live. As day-to-day Island life challenges us and we begin to criticize, to say how things should be, or to point out the unfair inequities of life here, let us remember to pause and ask ourselves what the last thing was that we did to serve the Island in the generous way that Mr. Dionne has.

We all owe him a debt of gratitude for his years of service to our community.

Thank him with, at the very least, a smile, or a wave, or a bit of good wishes and conversation about his future plans and much deserved rest.

There will be a farewell get-together at Trellis on Wednesday (May 28) at 5:45 p.m. Roosevelt Islanders are invited to join RIRA representatives and RIOC staff in wishing him well.



Jeffrey Escobar, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
president@riraonline.com

month on June 21. This event is a celebration of spring and community spirit, with residents coming together to beautify and improve the neighborhood. After a morning spent planting and weeding, participants gather on Main Street to enjoy free games, rides, music, and more. This event is sponsored by Urban American in partnership with RIOC and the Roosevelt Island Youth Program.

On June 28, RIOC’s Outdoor Summer Movie Series at Southpoint Park will kick off with a screening of Disney’s *Frozen*. The fun starts at 7 p.m. – bring a blanket or a chair, and brush up on your movie knowledge for our trivia challenge. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. We hope you’ll join us for this fun, family-friendly movie in the park. We encourage you to visit rioc.ny.gov for more information on the event and to view the list of movies and showtimes.

Lighthouse Footbridges

An updated construction schedule for the repair of the Lighthouse Park footbridges has been released. Work is scheduled to be completed by July. We know the community has been eager to have full use of Lighthouse Park restored, and are pleased to be moving forward on this project. We are committed to repairing the bridges as soon as possible for the enjoyment of all who visit the park. Thank you for your patience during this project.

Motorgate Upgrades

We are pleased to report that, last week, the installation of upgraded lighting and re-stripping of parking spots in the Motorgate Garage was completed. This project was necessary to ensure the safety of all who park their cars in the garage. In the coming weeks, our engineering team will be performing walkthroughs of the garage to review the work that was performed.

Octagon Courts

At the Octagon Tennis Courts, the new concrete pole supports are expected to be fully cured by next week. Workers will re-take the construction site, and are on schedule to complete resurfacing in late June.

Good Shepherd Restoration

Restoration work on the Good Shepherd Community Center’s entry doors and narthex at its west entrance area is also moving forward. Cleaning of the brick and limestone in the north entryway has been finished, as well as installation of the south entryway’s ceiling, interior doors, and new bluestone steps at both entrances.



Charlene Indelicato, President
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation
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Day Nursery, from page 1

as full payment for a child. “We were coming up on the deadline,” Stark says, “and there were still concerns from the school’s board about how [Castar] was communicating the needs, requirements, and issues of UPK to both the board and the parents.” RIDN decided against accepting UPK funding for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year, after having done so for over a decade. This meant that the listing on the Board of Education site was misleading – and potential trouble for families listing it on their applications. Well before the April 23 deadline, many parents had submitted their applications.

Stark’s daughter, Leah, age 4, attends the River Road site. She will also be attending the school this upcoming year. Since Stark worked at River Road for 10 years before heading up the Infant and Toddler Program at Riverwalk, she knew the teachers and was comfortable with sending her daughter there, but, alluding to Castar, she says that, “Sometimes I thought that if I hadn’t gone in having complete faith in the teachers and the institution, I would have had a very different experience. Not my child, but myself – in terms of feeling connected and feeling trust.”

Stark does not believe Castar did anything improper. She cites her own qualifications. “I am a teacher, I am a social worker, I am a mandated reporter, and my daughter goes to that school. I have had many instances in my career where unsafe things have happened with children. I have had to talk to the police. I have the utmost faith that nothing like that ever happened [at River Road] with [Steve Castar] or anyone else there. There were other kinds of problems like follow-through, communication, community relations, but nothing safety-related.”

Checks and Balances

Stark explains that the board is responsible for governance and the directors for daily operations, but adds that, “We are looking into making the checks and balances better.”

She continues, “One of the things the board is working on and that we’ve learned is to have more transparency built into the governance of the school. One way that they plan on remedying that is by posting the bylaws, minutes, and contact information of board members on the website, “so people can just take a look and be more clear about who is on the board and how things are decided, because there is no reason to keep anything a secret.”

“In the past,” Berro explains, “parents have not been able to effectively communicate their concerns to the board and, moving forward, we are thinking about membership meetings between the parents and the board so the parents can communicate their feelings to the board.

“The way it works is that the board makes a decision, and it needs to be communicated by the executive director. This is part of why communication has not been effective. There was not a good line of communication between the board and the teachers or the board and the parents, and this has been creating a lot of tension and problems. This is why we have been in the process of making these [staffing] changes. We want to make the lines of communication clearer. This is part of our endeavor to increase and enhance the presence of the board.”

Board Turnover

A relatively new problem for the school is board turnover. Stark and Berro affirm that there’s always been board turnover, but that it wasn’t problematic until founding director Sara Seiden left the school. “When Sara was the director, it didn’t matter because she was the institutional history. Since she left, it’s become clear that it’s better for the health of the school for board members to serve longer terms.”

A practical way to solve that problem is a proposed change in the bylaws, to extend board service to alumni parents instead of limiting it to current parents.

There are two spots on the board for community members.

Susan Philips, whose 23-year-old daughter is an alumna of the school, and Vicki Garavuso, who taught there for many years, currently fill those seats. Their perspectives are helpful because, unlike the other current board members or parents, or the teachers, who are in the trenches at the school daily, the community board members offer a unique perspective and an ability to see the bigger picture.

At the last board meeting, Philips and Garavuso suggested opening up the parent workshops to the community at large. This is in line with Reem’s characterization of the type of change the board is seeking, “We are looking for some kind of rejuvenation for the school with the new leadership, tackling outreach for parents on the River Road side. That is going to become very helpful for both parent communities. Community outreach is our number one change in direction.”

Philips explains that she wants to add to what the school already offers. “We are in transition in terms of the vision thing, not the educational philosophy.”

Aid

RIDN is aware that to serve all interested Island children in this mixed-income community, it needs to find a way for children of middle- and lower-income families to attend. Garavuso says, “The Day Nursery is dedicated to reaching out to families of different incomes so that everyone can come. It is a tuition-based program, and it has to charge what it charges in order to run its program. It’s not-for-profit, but it really has the level of excellence in education of some of the most expensive and well-known and fancy nursery schools.”

Senior teacher Marcia Ellis, who has been with the school since 1984, says, “The school is for the Island. We want everyone on the Island who wants to come to be able to come.” To that end, Stark adds, “We have space to add a fourth classroom at the River Road site. At Riverwalk, we don’t have the space for another box of tissues.”

RIDN sets aside a certain amount of funding for financial aid each year, applies for RIOC Public Purpose funds for scholarships, and has recently partnered with Weill Cornell Medical College to subsidize heavily the children of parents in their postdoctoral program. According to Stark, similar relationships with Sloan Kettering and Rockefeller University are being explored.

Historically, the school was able to accommodate more students who were interested in attending, but that was with City help. The school participated in the UPK voucher program, which augmented the financial aid that the school was able to offer. But UPK was not paying enough. “It’s hard for a private school,” says Philips. Garavuso adds, “It’s a difficult piece for many families. Nine to 11:30 a.m. doesn’t work for many working families.” (That’s what RIDN had funding for.) UPK provided less than a quarter of the cost to send a four-year-old to the school.

Stark says, “Universal Pre-K is a good idea. The fees given for it through the Department of Education are considered relatively good amounts of money. It’s just that there’s a double tier. The reality of who works where and the levels of education, and levels of pay, have always been different in public school, private school, and public daycare. Many private schools cannot [cover their costs] on the fees the State gives.”

Stark says the schools’ strategic planning committee is still in the beginning stages and that, “Diversity is our goal – economic diversity. It’s tough, because we cannot take all of our money and give it to [just] two families, because that would damage the school.”

Everyone affiliated with the school heralds their desire to give aid. As the River Road site is located in 2-4 River Road, Stark pointed out that section 8 families have attended the school. She qualified that by adding that who gets aid and

what building they live in “is different every year. It depends [on] who applies for aid and what the pool is.”

This year, seven families at RIDN’s Riverwalk facility are receiving aid. Between the two schools, 15 families receive aid.

The amount allocated each year for financial aid is usually between \$50,000 and \$60,000, plus whatever Public Purpose funding is received from RIOC, but they are looking for other ways to increase their funding and open up the school to more families.

This goal should not be taken as a sign of financial or registration troubles, says Stark, who notes that the school’s overall finances are in good shape.

Pride

Everyone involved in the school itself is proud of it. Senior teacher Ellis says, “I am amazed at how good the newer teachers are. How did they get all of this expertise at such a young age?” As the veteran, her phone number is listed for emergencies right under the number for the fire department.

Stark points out that, unique for a baby and toddler program, all of the head teachers at Riverwalk have master’s degrees. She reminisces, “I remember when I first started out, 13 years ago. I didn’t realize what a gem this school is. I’ve worked at West Side YMCA [Co-op and Nursery School], Collegiate’s Preschool, BankStreet [School for Children], and this is the most educated of any early childhood program I’ve worked at anywhere. I don’t think [Islanders] realize that you don’t have to take the Tram to send your child to a great school.”

Stark adds, “There is a collegiality among the staff here. Everyone takes their job seriously.”

Garavuso sums up the state of early childhood education vs RIDN: “Academics are being driven down and down and down in age. We are expecting three-year-olds to read, which is totally inappropriate for [that age], and teachers at RIDN are committed to teaching what the children really need to know in developmentally appropriate ways. We look at the best ways that children learn, and don’t forsake those methods because of what someone else says. We offer children the quality education that they will need to go on, using methods we believe in – that we know work.”

Garavuso describes RIDN’s methodology as “a philosophical approach that has rhyme and reason. It is different from what adults are used to. It’s not drill-and-skill for early childhood. We ask, *What are children interested in, and how can we use that to teach everything we want to teach?* And we contextualize. Adults are very product-driven; they don’t see the process. What you see from looking at process is that what starts out as a scribble becomes a story by the time they’re ready to graduate. That’s why there are master’s degrees in early childhood education. There are [particular] skills involved in teaching young children.”

Details

The Riverwalk location offers two-, three-, and five-day programs for infants and toddlers. Drop-off is at 8:00 a.m., and pick-up is at 6:00 p.m. The two-day program runs on Tuesday and Thursday; the three-day program runs on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The Riverwalk program is 12 months, beginning in September and ending the third week of August.

The River Road site follows a more limited traditional school schedule. All its programs are Monday through Friday. There are three schedules: 8:00 a.m.-noon, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; and with the afterschool, 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Vacation camps provide coverage when the pre-school program is closed in December, February, and during the March or April spring break. In summer, there is an eight-week program with the same hours available as in the 10-month program.

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Show at RIVAA looks Far Back to an Ancient Culture

review by David Stone

Gallery RIVAA has opened what may be the finest show ever mounted in their space at 527 Main Street. It is *A Moment In Time*, a solo exhibit in which Ioan Popoiu’s paintings fill the gallery. His usual generosity of expressionist color is evident in service to a larger message.

As inspiration, Popoiu cites his “visceral connection” to the Cucuteni, a Romanian culture that rose and disappeared during the Neolithic Era, 4800-3000 BCE. Archeologists believe the culture was matriarchal and peaceful, and worshipped an “earthy” female goddess. Popoiu’s “moment in time” refers to the inexplicable mutability of this culture, here one day and gone another.

In his primary thematic canvas, *The Goddess*, Popoiu abandons strict expressionism in favor of female figures projected from an explosive, radiant field. The main figure, a halo circling her head, resembles goddess figurines excavated at Cucuteni. Her expression is troubled. More spectral is a green figure with an intense frown who seems in danger of falling off the canvas. There is also what appears to be a mummified, gray figure, the most animated of the three, with eyes and joints glowing red.

As an abstract expressionist, Popoiu hints at his intentions but leaves the space wide open for a viewer’s own interpretation. What you get from looking at this complex, passionate work will come from your own filters, but the artist is expressing an unpleasant ending, a goddess unable to save herself.

His related acrylic on wood, *Bride At Cucuteni*, returns to pure abstraction, rushes of color transitioning upward into entangled white lines set against an earthy brown, a hint at legends of a goddess associated with earthly pleasure.

In Popoiu’s last solo exhibit, *Ash And Lapilli*, three years ago, he used his art to expand on environmental concerns. Here, again, his intent is clear. At an exhibit of Neolithic Romanian art, several years ago, he was taken with the ceramic statues of goddess-like figures and other clay artifacts. “I had a visceral connection with those times,” he explains. “It was an emotive freedom that I hope my paintings bring.”

But there is more. His paintings reflect a distant culture that was unusual enough to fascinate archeologists. One aspect that Popoiu cites and reflects in his work is that archeologists have evidence of the culture’s deliberately cycling its cities, burning and replacing them in 60-to-80-year cycles. Celebrated birth and dreaded destruction mark the paintings.

His *When Gods Are Happy* is a harmonious play of soft red and white over a slatted background, highlighting the joy of freedom protected by just enough structure. Similarly, everything works together in *Celebration*, an acrylic on canvas where the colorful energies suggest the Fourth of July and Mardi Gras, both at once.

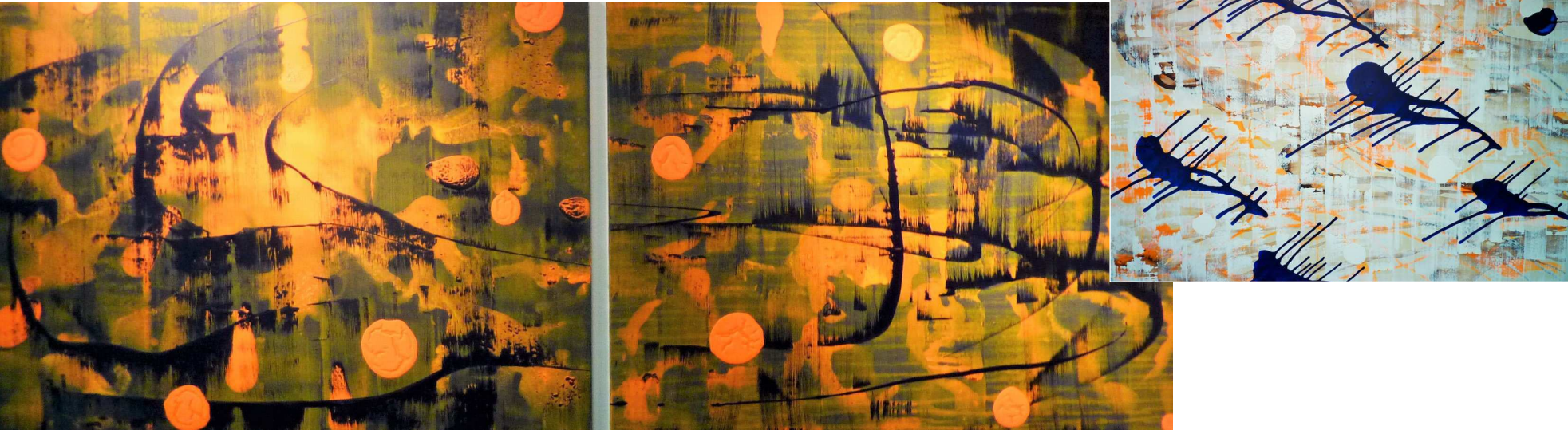
Popoiu’s *Miracle of Water* and *The Planets Dance* are likewise color-rich harmonies of acrylic on canvas. The three-dimensional vibrations of color in *Miracle of Water* are especially soothing and transcendental in their suggestion of universal harmony. But this painter is a realist, and trouble is brewing.

It starts with *Harmony Before Invasion*, a reference to the destruction of Cucuteni when it was overtaken by Kurgan culture in about 3000 BCE. *Harmony* consists of intricately interlocked reds over a background yellow, easily blending toward orange.

Warriors of Extinction and *Escape from Labyrinth* feature abstract, amoeba-like figures that, in *Warriors*, seem to be falling back, bleeding their essential blue color in trails behind them. These paintings suggest a struggle of survival that is being lost, just as Cucuteni culture was. The last time we see these figures is in *X-Ray of Devastation*. This acrylic on canvas finds them falling back, melting in the agonies of a furnace of color.

In *A Moment In Time*, Ioan Popoiu mounts an ambitious project to express his connection to a culture that reached his imagination from 5,000 years in the past, its dynamics and destruction. Whether it’s Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Associations’ best is a matter of taste, but it is the most ambitious in the last five years, its artistic intentions deep and comprehensive.

A Moment In Time will remain at Gallery RIVAA through June 15. Admission is free, and it’s open on Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-5:00 p.m., Wednesday and Friday 6:00-9:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



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COMING UP

— Continuing Events & Activities —
A listing of repeating meetings & events
(See page 3 for events this weekend and in coming weeks.)

ART EXHIBITS

Spring, RIVAA members group exhibition, Octagon Gallery, 888 Main St. **Daily** 9am-9pm. Extended through Sun Jun 1.

Moment in Time, a solo exhibition by Ioan Popoiu, Gallery RIVAA, through Jun 15. **Sat-Sun** 11am-5pm **Tue & Thu** 1-5pm, **Wed & Fri** 6-9pm. (Review, page 8.)

PARKS

Southpoint Park open **daily** 6am-10pm.

FDR Four Freedoms Park open **daily** 9am-7pm.

Lighthouse Park open **daily** 7am-9pm.

CLASSES (alphabetical, then Sat-Fri)

Art, taught by members of the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association (RIVAA), **Sat** 11am-2pm, Sportspark. Free

MUSIC (listed Sat-Fri)

Jazz Salon, 1st Sun (except Jul-Aug) 5-7pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$5 donation.

Drum lessons for 5th-9th-graders, **Tue & Thu** 3:30-5:30pm, Youth Center, 506 Main St. Info: Call 212-527-2505 or email info@RooseveltIslandYouthProgram.com.

Piano lessons for 5th-9th-graders, **Wed & Fri** 3:30-5:30pm, Youth Center, 506 Main St. Info: Call 212-527-2505 or email info@RooseveltIslandYouthProgram.com.

EXERCISE & SPORTS (alphabetical)

Note: Sportspark Pool closed until further notice.*

Basketball (all ages), **Sat** 2-5pm, Sportspark. Free.

Basketball (adults), **Mon-Thu** 8-10pm, PS/IS 217. Free.

Pilates with Karen, **Tue & Thu** 7:15pm; **Wed** 8:45am, 10am; **Fri** 9am, 10am; **Sat** 10am. Info 212-750-6223.

Pilates, **Wed & Fri** 6:30-7:30pm, PS/IS217.

Ping Pong (all ages), **Tue Wed Fri** 6-9pm, Sportspark.

Sportspark extended hours (ages 16-25), **Fri-Sat** 9pm-midnight.

***Swimming** (all ages; no instructor) – **Sat-Sun** 12-3pm, **Mon-Fri** 6-10am, **Mon Wed Thu Fri** 7:30-10:30pm. (All **Sportspark swimming** \$5; free for disabled, seniors 60+, and ages 0-3.)

***Swimming** (18 yrs+) – **Sat-Sun** 4-7pm, **Tue** 7:30-10:30pm, Sportspark.

***Swimming** – Water Aerobics, **Sun** 12-1pm, **Wed & Fri** 9-10am, Sportspark.

Yoga (open-level), **Mon & Thu** 6:15-7:15pm, **Sat** 11:15am-12:15pm, Sportspark. \$5. Mats available.

Yoga with Keren Messer, **Mon & Tue** 8-9pm. \$17; multi-session rates. Location and other info: KerenMsrg@gmail.com or 212-614-9181.

Yoga with Jax Schott, **Wed** 7:30-8:40pm, Island Kids, 536 Main St. \$15.

Yoga (open-level) with Lauren Blankstein, **Thu** 7:30-8:30pm, PS/IS 217 Beacon. Free.

Zumba, **Mon** 6:30-7:30 & 7:30-8:30pm, **Thu** 8:30-9:30pm, **Sat** 10-11am, Sportspark. \$5.

Zumba/Dance/Cardio, **Mon & Wed** 6:30-7:30pm, PS/IS 217. Free. (Replaced with Pilates until new instructor is found.)

BIRTH THROUGH TODDLER (listed Sat-Fri)

***Swimming classes** (age 3-up), **Sat** 3-4pm, Sportspark. \$15 or \$100/10 weeks. Questions/registration, ryansherrill84@gmail.com or 917-261-2771.

Art for Kids with Connie Tanner (ages 3-8), last **Sun**, 10-11:30am, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$10 suggested donation; materials supplied. No reservation required.

***Baby & Toddler Swim** classes (6-36 mo), **Sun** 11am & 11:30am, **Wed** 10:30 & 11:00 (ends wk of Jul 6), Sportspark. (Make-up classes week of Jul 13.) Drop-in rate \$7. Info: Eddie.Perez@rioc.ny.gov or 212-832-4569. Pre-registration rate \$5/class.

Baby Story Time (0-18 mo), **Mon** 10:30am, Library. Advance registration required.

Baby Playtime (0-18 mo), **Mon** 11am, Library.

Story Time with Olya (pre-school ages), **Tue & Thu** 9am, Main Street Sweets, 559 Main St. Free.

Toddler Story Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11am, Library. Registration required. Free.

Toddler Play Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11:30am, Library.

Island Kids Baby Group (0-14 mo), **Thu** 10am, 536 Main St. Info: IslandKidsRI@gmail.com.

Read Aloud (3-6 yrs), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.

OLDER KIDS (Sat-Fri)

Tennis – New York Junior Tennis League (ages 5-18), **Sat-Sun** 6-8am, Racquet Club. Free.

Tennis – Junior Tennis, **Sat & Mon-Fri** after school, Racquet Club. Info 212-935-0250.

Teen Time (ages 13-18), **Mon-Fri** 3pm, Library.

Beacon After-School Program for 1st-8th-graders, **Mon-Fri** 3-6pm, PS/IS 217. Free. Info: 212-527-2505 or RooseveltIslandYouthProgram.com.

Open Gym for high school students, **Mon & Wed** 6-8pm, PS/IS 217.

Board Games (5-12 yrs), **Tue** 4pm, Library. Free.

Teen Game Night, **Wed** 6pm, Main Street Sweets, 559 Main St.

Reading Aloud (children), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.

Girl Scouts (6-13 yrs), **Fri** 6-8pm, PS/IS 217. Info: 212-527-2505.

SENIORS (also see page 14)

Lunch, **Mon-Fri** noon, Senior Center, 546 Main St. \$1.50. Menus outside social worker office.

REGULAR MEETINGS (Sat-Fri)

Toastmasters, **2nd & 4th Mon** 7:30pm. Info: 212-751-9577.

Sci-Fi Discussion Group, **1st Tue** 6:30pm, Library.

114th Precinct Community Meeting, **4th Tue** 7pm, Riccardo’s by the Bridge, 2101 24th Av., Astoria.

RIRA Common Council meeting **1st Wed** (except Jul-Aug) 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center.

Book Discussion, **3rd Thu** 6:30-8pm, Library.

OFFICE HOURS

RIOC’s Community Office Hours, **Mon** 3-5pm, 591 Main St.

Constituent Service Hours for Assemblymember Micah Kellner and/or staff, **Mon-Fri** 9:30am-5:30pm, District Office (1365 First Av at 73rd St.). Call 212-860-4906 for appointment.

Constituent Service Hours for State Senator Jose Serrano and/or staff, **2nd Mon** 4-7pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St. Info: 212-828-5829.

Constituent Service Hours for City Councilmember Ben Kallos, **1st Wed** 4-7pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St.

OTHER

Knitting & Crocheting Circle (adults), **Thu** 11:30am, Library. Info: nypl.org.

Food Box Orders for Helping Families Help Themselves, ordering period **1st-11th of month**. Menu online at jolinfoodbox.com. Info 347-985-7540; pickup period at 546 Main St. **15th of month**.

Events, regular and otherwise?

Send your organization’s information to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net.

Katherine Vithlani



Islander Katherine Vithlani died last Friday, in hospice care. She is survived by a son, Daniel, who lives at 580 Main Street.

Vithlani was active until recently in *The Main Street WIRE*’s “stuffers crew” – the people who collate and box the newspaper for delivery to Island buildings. In the early days of the Visitor Kiosk in Tramway Plaza, she was a staff member there, greeting every visitor with a broad smile.

A memorial service will be held on Wednesday (May 28) at 2:00 p.m. at All Souls Church, Lexington Avenue at 80th Street.

RIRA, from page 1

(Farance had complained widely, extensively, and repeatedly about a financial report on the Cherry Blossom Festival, calling it “bogus.” He raised the question of Festival finances again in last week’s emails to Indelicato, citing the RIRA report as evidence that RIRA cannot manage finances. He complained that, in retaliation, he “was subjected to baseless expulsion procedures.”)

In the May 12 Operations Committee meeting, Indelicato advocated for her proposal, as did several Board members other than Kraut. The consensus was to approve the funding request, and Kraut ultimately concurred, saying that while funding RIRA is a “slippery slope,” he was “willing to take the step.”

That set the stage for a vote in the RIOCBord meeting held last Thursday (May 15), but the item was pulled from the agenda just an hour before the session convened.

Acrimony

An acrimonious email thread among RIRA Common Council members followed the RIOCB meeting (and continues), with some agreeing with Farance’s assessment that the funding proposal was “fraudulent.” RIRA Secretary Helen Chirivas characterized it as “apparently unethical, and possibly illegal.”

In a series of emails obtained by *The WIRE*, Romano Reid excoriated certain of his fellow Councilmembers for “trying to manipulate the process.” Claiming that “RIRA has no nickel in any of the quarters,” Reid asserted that this is “another blatant example of irresponsible behavior from those who claim to be representative of the community.” He called for the resignation of RIRA Vice President Helstein.

When contacted for comment this week, Reid asserted that he does not have sufficient knowledge of the issue, as he was not present at the May 7 Common Council meeting where the 18-1 vote approved the plan. “I have not, nor do I intend on, speaking to anyone in RIRA or RIOCB as it pertain[s] to this issue. Anything and everything else are ‘unsubstantiated’ rumors that I want no part

of.” He declined further comment.

In a telephone conversation with *The WIRE* on Tuesday (May 20), Indelicato explained that because she comes “from local government [in Westchester],” she was not fully aware of State procedures. “Funny thing with me, I thought an Island-wide group would be the proper mechanism for that. It was my fault. The procurement process was not right.”

Indelicato commented only obliquely on Farance’s complaints: “Truthfully, there are some statements I don’t understand. I don’t understand that if somebody goes into a room and talks to an Island-wide community group, that is [seen as] a ‘backroom deal.’ It has to do with my wanting to get things done, and not being familiar with all the processes.”

Helstien sees this as a missed opportunity for RIRA to further serve the community and to have greater say in how Island funds are spent. She explained, “The only string attached [was] that we have to take the money and commingle it in our account. That’s how RIOCB [would] keep it clear that they are not influencing RIRA. It would be impossible to know what RIOCB’s \$10,000 is being used for. [RIOCB] want[s] to encourage us to do more in the community.”

Of the past week, Helstien says, “We had good news and they have turned it into this hideous thing.”

Going Forward

While Indelicato would not give a direct answer to the question of whether RIRA might receive funding of the kind envisioned in the quashed plan, she said, “Nothing is ever off the table if it involves public purpose money for Island-wide events,” seeming to suggest that any funding might have to be related to specific activities rather than general. “It’s totally legal to give [money] to an Island-wide group for public purposes. I will talk to the State, to other State agencies that do procurement. There is a wish on the part of myself and the Board to have Island-wide events rather than targeted ones, and we’ll do it.”

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John Sheehan is a Roosevelt Island pioneer, a past president of RIRA, and has lived in Rivercross since 1978. During John's 30 year career he has been involved in at least 20 Rivercross transactions and is thoroughly familiar with the building. Jimmy Brett, John's business partner, also has a 30 year career in real estate successfully marketing, renting and selling in New York City, including on Roosevelt Island. Together John and Jimmy bring more than 60 years of knowledge and experience to every transaction they are involved in and are backed by one of the best real estate companies in the city. Contact John or Jimmy for a free private consultation.

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Mure, from page 1

John Mack, a famous oboist." Emily had a serious attachment to her instrument all through elementary school and junior high school.

In order to further her musical education, Emily wanted to attend the LaGuardia School of the Performing Arts, one of New York City's most selective high schools. "I performed an oboe selection for my audition. They must have liked it, because I was given a place in the freshman class of instrumental music." She continued to play the oboe all through high school, and then chose Ithaca College because of its strong music department. "I wasn't sure about a classical music career, and I wanted to get more than just a music education, so I studied oboe performance and psychology. The psychology part has helped me in all the dealings I have had

with the people on the business side of the music business."

Emily's focus changed again when she was a sophomore at Ithaca. "My grandfather bought me my first guitar and showed me some chords. I took to the guitar right away and, within a week, I was writing songs. I wanted to extend my musical education, so, during a summer break, I went to Ireland to study guitar and composition at the University of Limerick, where I learned to sing Irish songs and accompany myself on the guitar. It was musically challenging, because the tuning on a guitar is different for Irish songs."

While in Ireland, Emily had an opportunity to travel the country. "I enjoyed Ireland so much that I determined to move there after I graduated from Ithaca College. I especially loved Galway, and moved there with my best friend, Mady Spiegel, who is also a musician.

Mady found work in a restaurant, and I became a street busker, playing the guitar and singing on street corners. I sang mostly my own songs, but also hits from Johnny Cash, Bill Monroe, and the Punch Brothers."

Making a living as a busker was not easy for Emily. "Galway is very small and there really is only one main street. I had to get up early to get a good location because there are a lot of street singers in Galway. I had to stay there all day because if I left, someone would take my place. I always tried to select a narrow area of the street where the sound would carry better. Sometimes Mady would sing with me and we would really have some good times. The people in Galway were so kind and generous; they would stop and listen and applaud and give us money. They weren't in a hurry the way people are here in New York."

Emily was also booked into more formal venues—places serving food and drink. "One of the venues I played was *Roisin Dubh*, which is Gaelic for *Black Rose*."

"After six months, our work visas had expired, and it was time to return to America. I found work as an office manager for a small advertising firm. I tried playing and singing in Central Park on weekends, but it didn't work out too well; the pace is too fast here in New York. I spent two and a half years at the ad firm, all the time composing my own songs. After a year, I recorded my first album, and I eventually left the firm to concentrate on my music."

Emily started taking private guitar lessons and continued with her songwriting. "I began touring New England and the Northeast, playing any venue where I could get work. I also began giving private music lessons, and

I really enjoy that. It is so gratifying to see children develop musically and the pleasure they get from it."

"The hardest part of the music business for someone starting out is having to deal with the business side of it all. You have to be your own agent, manager, and promoter. Later on, if you become successful, you can hire people to do all those things and you can just concentrate on your music. My goal is to build a bigger fan base and play bigger venues. In the meantime, I still live on Roosevelt Island where I was raised and where I feel so much at home."

Emily says that her songs usually involve lost love and a sense of traveling. Asked which of her songs best typifies her style, Emily named *Odyssey*, the title song on her new album.

Odyssey

by Emily Mure

Do you like car rides in the rain
with the windows down and the wind singing
where Spanish moss hangs like lace
across the arms of trees?

I wrote you a song I try not to sing;
it opens a door I have trouble closing,
but you stopped your car and walked out into the rain
and I felt my senses opening

And you were what I never knew I was always looking for.
There are holes in the floor of your Odyssey,
and I've never felt so happy.

To our right, our whole country —
to our left, the endless ocean
Magdyn Osh and Phil sing songs of traveling
as we live them.

Out here we have all day,
and all the "shoulds" that once polluted our brains
dissipate into the moisture of the leaves
that came after the rain.

And you were what I never knew I was always looking for.
There are holes in the floor of your Odyssey,
and I've never felt so happy and free
as I did in your Odyssey.



As Goldwater Demolition Continues, New Phase One Renderings from Cornell NYC



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Last Weekend

At Four Freedoms Park, Kites and Their Makers

Photography by Kurt Wittman



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unClassified deadline for June 21 issue: Tuesday, June 17
Please see *ComingUp*, page 3, for other advertising deadlines

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10:30 Building Strength
11:00 Blood Pressure
1:00 Paint & Sculpt
6:00 Nutrition Workshop
Wednesday
9:00-1:00 Tax Help
9:30 Yoga Stretch
10:20 Shoppers' Bus
10:30 Salsa
10:45 Spanish
12:00 Bridge
1:30 Scrabble
6:00-8:00 Computer Lab
Thursday
9:15 Pilates with Ivette
10:30 Zumba
10:45 Ping Pong
12:00 Movie
1:00-2:30 Theatre tickets at discount prices; see Rema or Annie
Friday
9:00 Building Strength
10:30 Computers
10:30 ESL
10:30 Tai Chi
12:00 Korean Exercise
1:00 Korean Games
2:00 Art with John
2:00 Pokeno with Dolores
7:00 Games (RISA)

Special Events
New RISA Membership Cards now available – \$12. See Rema.
Closed Memorial Day, Mon May 26. No lunch, no classes.
21st Annual National Senior Health & Fitness Day, Wed May 28, 1-5pm, Good Shepherd Plaza. No afternoon classes.
Flea Market, Sat Jun 7, 10am-noon, Good Shepherd Plaza.
Flea Market, Sat Jun 21, 10am-noon, Good Shepherd Plaza.
Showboat Casino, Sat Jul 5. Contact Bubu or Pilar Mon-Fri 10am-noon.

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Eve of 2nd day Shavuot, Wed. June 4 after 9:12 pm

Friday, June 6 at 8:06 pm



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

Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d,
King of the universe, who has sanctified us with
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Guest Speakers and participation by

Arthritis Foundation
MS Society
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