

Saturday, November 22, 2014
35:06



Akyibai Eleusizov

The Main Street WIRE

Soccer Finals Today The Island's older soccer-program participants play for championship titles today. Above, the next tier of players, now KinderKickers, enjoy a recent game. Details on today's matches, all on the Octagon Soccer Field, are on page 14.

Youth Soccer Season Wraps Today After Season of Strong Numbers

by Dick Lutz

Kids – 400. Coaches – 40. Teams – 20 plus. Referees – 8. Adib Mansour has reason to be proud. And maybe a little tired. But still enthusiastic.

The Island's youth soccer season comes to an end today (Saturday,

November 22) with a flurry of championship games at the Octagon Soccer Field, starting at 9:30 a.m.

But it's not just about soccer. "I want to do some education and teach them some things. DYCD [the City's Department of Youth

and Community Development] has started Soccer for Success with a curriculum where the first 15 minutes are spent teaching the kids about health matters. There are now four groups of 20 each. They learn to read [food] labels." Mansour wants to spread this gospel Island-wide, and he wants to enlist local food-sellers in an effort to steer kids to healthy foods.

It's also about sportsmanship. See **Soccer**, page 14

Subway Fare, Rising Soon, Will Hit Tram Riders, Too

by Laura Russo

There's a transit fare increase in the works. Tram riders will not be spared. By agreement, the coming increase will apply to Tram rides, too.

On November 17, the MTA officially announced a plan to increase subway and bus fares by 4% over the next two years.

The increase could feature one of two different pay structures – a rise in the base pay-per-ride fare, or the elimination of the bonus for putting \$5 or more on a MetroCard.

Editorial cartoon, page 2

Islanders who work or play off-Island have little choice but to use the subway or the Tram, so the amount and nature of the fare increase is an important question here. Islander Tom Lentakis said, "An increase would definitely" affect him. "Virtually everything I do requires me to commute."

Many residents use the subway or Tram every day. In 2013, over 1.9 million riders passed through the Roosevelt Island F train station, and annual ridership for the Tram was 2.5 million.

Under the current MTA fare proposals, the cost of a 30-Day Unlimited MetroCard would increase by 4% from \$112 to \$116.50.

"As a student, I'm really concerned about the increase," said Island resident Jinshu Ma, who rides the subway almost every day. "I buy a monthly [Metro]card to maximize the number of trips I can take."

The Process

The fare proposals will be the subject of public hearings in December. The MTA Board can modify the proposals based on public input before taking a final vote in January 2015.

"The MTA is keeping its promise to ensure fare and toll increases are as low as possible, and these options are designed to minimize their impact on our customers," MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast said in a written statement.

But the proposed cost increase is especially troubling because service interruptions already regularly impact the F train, residents say.

"Service has been shambolic since I lived here," Lentakis said. "The constant shutdowns on weekends are fairly horrifying, especially during winter."

When faced with a weekend subway service interruption, many residents head from the subway station to the Tram. But some are unaware that an increase in the subway fare will also mean an increase in the Tram

See **Fares**, page 18

Briefly...

- Roosevelt Island now has **Freecycle**, courtesy of RIRA Common Council member Susy del Campo Perea. It's an opportunity to give away useful items you no longer need, or to ask for things you do need. You can join at tinyurl.com/FreeCycleRI, and it's all free. (The site also seeks two volunteer moderators; write to rooseveltisland@mod.freecycle.org.)



- NYC Neighborhood Library Awards are on again, giving Islanders a chance to nominate their favorite NYPL branch. Nominations go to nycLibraryAwards.org, or they can be submitted in person at the library. There's \$20,000 in prize money (for the library) at stake. Last year, 4,300 New Yorkers sent in nominations.

New York Public Library Previews Update and Relocation of RI Branch

by Sara Maher

Roosevelt Island is getting a new library, and residents are getting a say in what it will offer.

Islanders and members of the New York Public Library (NYPL) staff gathered Thursday night to discuss the library's relocation and expansion. Residents were asked for their thoughts and ideas on what new programs and services are right for the Island community. Requests included space for classes and community events, assistance archiving old Island records, and copies of *Island View*, its former newspaper. Lorraine Lasker called for a special collection featuring the writings of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. Borough President Gail Brewer started the conversation with a reminder: "Don't forget about the books!" she said. "That's what a library is all about."

History

The Island's first library was founded by Herman and Dorothy Reade, a couple who moved to Westview from Forest Hills in April 1976. They obtained space from their management. Islanders donated books and volunteer hours, and the library operated without funding for nine years. It grew in popularity until the Reades knew they would need to expand. In 1985, they approached RIOC and were given the space at 524 Main Street that the library occupies today. At the time, it was operated by the Roosevelt Island Community Literary Association (RICLA) as a nonprofit. NYPL picked it up

as an official branch in 1997.

Roosevelt Island has grown and changed far beyond the plans created for it in 1963. When the Reades' original library was in operation in the early 1980s, the Island had a population of about 5,500. NYPL now estimates serving over 11,600 patrons here this year, according to Amy Geduldig, Manager of Public Relations. When the library moved to its Main Street location in 1985, it had an inventory of 40,000 donated books. In the last fiscal year, the Island branch circulated nearly 114,000 materials.

Funding

The Island's elected representatives have stepped up to improve the Island library's facilities. Former City Councilmember Jessica Lappin secured \$5.7 million between 2009 and 2013. Funds were also provided by her successor, Ben Kallos, by the office of then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and by the office of then-Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer. This funding allowed the Roosevelt Island branch to sign a lease for the first floor of 504 Main Street (at the south end of Roosevelt Landings) on July 1, 2013.

At 5,200 square feet, the new property will be more than double the library's size. Smith-Miller & Hawkinson Architects will begin planning in January, and construction will begin in September. The opening is slated for spring 2018, with the current branch remaining

See **Library**, page 2

Community Coalition Seeks Strong Turnout for December 8 Cornell Session

by Briana Warsing

As preparations for Cornell NYC Tech continue south of the Queensboro Bridge, the Roosevelt Island Community Coalition (RICC) continues to represent resident concerns and interests.

Formed over two years ago during the planning for the campus, RICC brought together the interests of some three dozen resident organizations to give the residential community a say in negotiations between the university and the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation.

RICC saw the planning through an Environmental Impact Statement and through the steps of the City's ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure), creating a *term sheet* as a guide for the population's wants,

wishes, and needs as host community for a major university graduate school.

RICC Co-Chair Judy Buck recalls that time as "frantic." She says, "We pulled together a coalition, taking ideas from many different sources, meeting with Cornell and City officials, and testifying at every step of the ULURP process." According to Buck, the goal in doing all of this work was "vigilance – trying to make certain Cornell and New York City are alert to our community presence, our needs, and our fears."

That was two years ago.

Today, anticipating a December 8 community-wide town meeting (ad, page 5) about the project and the community's future in its host role, the volunteer

See **RICC**, page 15

Fall Comes to Four Freedoms Park

and near the rocky outcroppings in the river, swans have appeared. See page 8.



Jeff Prekopa

The Editorial Page

Giving, To Receive

Probably no recent issue of *The WIRE* better demonstrates the widely varied interests and activities that are alive and well among the people of Roosevelt Island. Like the City that surrounds us, we are a people of many interests, many talents, and a healthy supply of determination.

Not only that, but it's clear from the efforts around us that we are, by and large, an altruistic bunch, many doing what we can to make life easier – or more rewarding – for others.

In such efforts, there are satisfactions, new friendships, the joy of achievement, and a good deal more. For example, consider Jeff Escobar's invitation to join the RIRA Common Council, for example – or make that *more* than an example.

DL



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Library, from page 1

in operation until construction is complete.

The expansion of the physical space is a step forward when it comes to improving the library, but the purpose of a community library extends far beyond the storage of books. Branch Manager Nicole Nelson wants it to be “a destination of learning and discovery,” and Islanders showed themselves eager to help shape this vision. The meeting Thursday night was the first of many that will occur between now and 2018, and Islanders are invited to participate in the ongoing discussion, continuing with a survey that will be sent out next month.

Eva Bosbach, Coordinator of the Roosevelt Island Parents' Network, sent her own survey to members of the Network, asking for feedback about the library. Bosbach says "most parents are very happy with the local library," and members were very complimentary regarding the friendly librarians, the first-floor accessibility, and the range of story and craft times offered for kids. However, they also brought up many things to consider as the library prepares for expansion.

One of the major concerns is the lack of books. Parents have noticed the supply of books decreasing, possibly a result of NYPL not sending books returned at other branches back to the Roosevelt Island branch. The Island's multicultural community is asking for more books in other languages, especially Japanese and Spanish, for both children and adults.

Patrons also expressed a need for a computer kiosk to look up books by author or title, the children's book section organized by reading level so kids can pick out books on their own, and more school-related workbooks for older students to help them prepare for standardized testing. The layout of the new library also needs to accommodate both an active children's area and a quiet space for adults and computer users. As one member of the Parents' Network noted, "the library is for adults as well."

Despite differences in age and primary language, resident's requests for the library come back to one thing: access to information. When asked about the most important thing that NYPL could do as it moves forward with the Island library, former RICLA President David Bauer had a simple answer – to make sure information is always available through the library. “It’s untold how many things that had been learned had to be re-learned,” says Bauer, referring to a continual loss of records due to outdated formatting, deterioration, and other factors. “That’s the thing that’s pressing on libraries now – how to keep information in a form that will last.” Whether you need picture books, books on tape, or no books at all, the Roosevelt Island library is where the community can go to find its information. As the Reads knew, it’s the sharing of information that brings the community together, more than the space it’s in – but that doesn’t mean the Island can’t celebrate its new center.

MTA Says Weekend Service Suspensions Are Near an End...



Now, What About that 4% Morning-Rush Capacity Problem?

Letters

To the Editor:

Saturday, November 5, my apartment is suffused with quite powerful wafts of “Gunja.” Used to be “weed” or “grass.” Anyway, Cannabis Marijuana very strong; open my windows and door, which admits even stronger fumes, to open outdoor windows to clear the air; they are bolted closed.

I'm stuck in bed and getting high; my aide is getting sick from the noxious odor and cold air, I call Public Safety with my plight, to request windows opposite my apartment be opened. Didn't catch officer's name but she said, "Hold on hold on," then silence, and then, "I'm sending an officer."

After 20 (?) minutes, my doors are shut. I felt damned either way. I called again to hear, "An officer came up. He said he smelled the marijuana in the hall." Me. "Can he open some windows?" "No, your neighbors are cold." "Can you do something to help me?" "We're writing a report." Me, incredulous: "Wonderful, and thanks for the free high."

And p.s. my neighbors *are cold*; they tell me and management all the time. 2013 new owners installed ineffective thermostats; after all, they're designed to save energy, [read \$\$] (folks are buying space heaters!) not provide adequate heat; (unless you're lucky enough to be severely physically disabled, they won't lower the trigger temperature.)

No wonder powerless people turn to other modes of comfort.

Sharon Stern

To the Editor:

As of my most recent swim at Sportspark last week, and according to some of the feedback I have received from other swimmers, I am very pleased to see that RIOC has responded positively and restored an average water temperature of 83 degrees.

Happy swimming!

Roberta Kleiman

To the Editor:

In response to the November 8 *WIRE* article, *When Smallpox Was the Killer...* (MainStreetWIRE/wire3505), and the growing concern about the treatment (and unfortunate quarantine) of people affected by Ebola here in the continental United States, we must remember that, as we continue to globalize, there are no longer geographical boundaries to disease transmission. Roosevelt Island has a diverse population, with residents representing every continent, and we need to show Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney that we care about the U.S. role in promoting healthier communities.

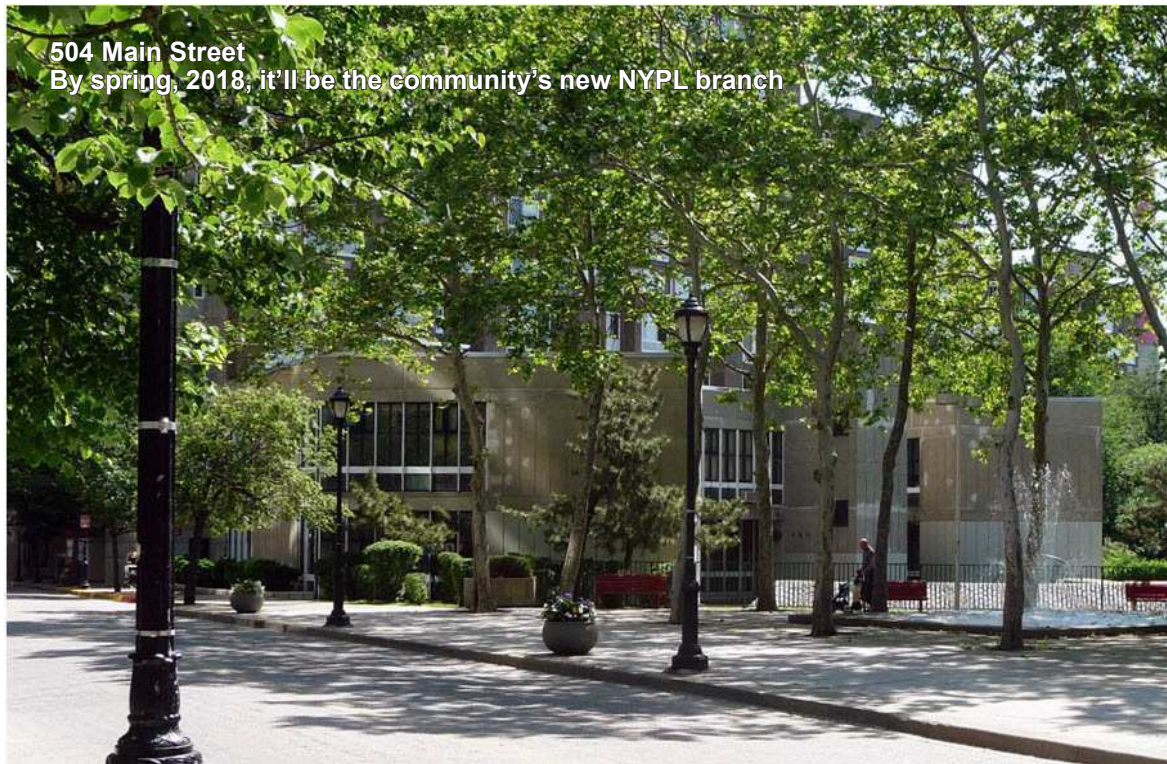
The current treatment of Ebola in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, and the quick spread of the disease transnationally, show that when we neglect health systems, we all, regardless of location, pay the consequences. Today, there are many other diseases that affect far more people worldwide, especially the most marginalized populations. Increasing the number of available vaccinations can dramatically decrease the transmission of diseases such as meningitis and measles.

We must applaud Congresswoman Maloney in her support of H.Res.688, which promotes the role of the United States in providing vital immunizations through the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) to those in need, and urge her to continue raising awareness for something that we, as Roosevelt Islanders, care about.

Elke-Esmeralda Dikoume

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.



COMING UP

— This Weekend —

Registration now open for Mommy & Me Water Safety classes to start **Wed Dec 9**, running **Wed & Sun** through week of Jan 25 (make-up classes week of Feb 1). Info & registration at rioc.recdesk.com or call 212-832-4569 or Eddie. Perez@rioc.ny.gov by email.

Championship Soccer, today (Sat Nov 22) 9:30 and through the day, Octagon Field.

Islander Bonnie Goodman appears in *Seven*, **Sat Nov 22** 3pm, Don't Tell Mama, 343 W. 46th St. \$20 & 2-drink minimum. Reservations: 212-757-0788.

Opening Reception for *Snow*, holiday show of Gallery RIVAA members, **Sat Nov 22** 6-9pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. Runs through Sun Dec 28. Gallery hours Sat-Sun 11am-5pm, Wed & Fri 6-9pm.



— Regular Meetings and Events —

See separate listing, page 16.

— The Next Three Weeks —

The Cotton Club at Library Movie Night (adults), **Tue Nov 25** 6pm, Library.

Opening Reception for *Revival* by Basana Chhetri, a show of Nepalese costumes, **Wed Nov 26**, 5-8pm, Octagon Gallery, 888 Main St. Daily 9am-8pm, through Fri, Jan 2.

Holiday Tree Lighting, Fri Dec 5 7pm, Blackwell House. Music, Santa, and more. Sponsored by RIOC.

Cornell NYC Tech Town Hall Meeting, Mon Dec 8 6-8pm, Manhattan Park Community Center, 8 River Rd. Open to public. (Story, page 1.)

Coffy at Library Movie Night (adults), **Tue Dec 9** 6pm, Library.

The Main Street WIRE – **Sat Dec 13**. Advertising deadlines: Display ads, Tue Dec 2; decision date for circulars/inserts, Tue Dec 9; 5,500 copies due Thu Dec 11. **2015 issue schedule:** Jan 17, 31; Feb 14, 28; Mar 14, 28; Apr 11, 25; May 9, 23; Jun 6, 20; July issue to be announced; Aug 1, 29; Sep 12, 26; Oct 10, 24; Nov 7, 21; Dec 12. News phone, 212-826-9056; urgent matters, 917-617-0449. Email press releases and feature-story suggestions to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net. Advertising (display & classified): 917-587-3278 or msWIREads@gmail.com.



— Future Weeks —

Women's Health Organization (RIWHO) meets, **Wed Dec 17** 6:30, 12th floor, 546 Main St.

Book Discussion, *Prague Winter* by Madeline Albright, **Thu Dec 18** 6:30pm, Library.

A Christmas Story at Library Movie Night (adults), **Tue Dec 23** 6pm, Library.

— 2015 —

Book Discussion, *Duty* by Robert Gates, **Thu Jan 15** 6:30pm, Library.

Cornell Construction & Community Task Force quarterly meeting, **Mon Jan 26** 6-8pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main

We are all community servants at some point in our lives. As government or non-profit employees, elected officials, members of boards or community organizations, volunteers, philanthropists, or merely donors to organizations serving a community, at one time or another a piece of us is contributed to the greater good. More extensive service attracts a special kind of individual, and is often based on a sense of duty, or commitment to a cause that extends beyond the needs of the moment. For some, investing in the community ensures a return three times over to a place where they live, work, and play. For others, it is giving back to a community that invested in them. Regardless of one's reasons, helping in the community embodies the principles of common good, service to others, and social equity.

On Roosevelt Island, service takes many forms. For some, it is visiting with our older community members in the Senior Center, at 546 Main Street. For others, it is mentoring an Island youngster in the Youth Program, at 506 Main Street. Whether we attend the annual performances of the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance, wait until December to buy a Christmas tree from the Boy Scout Troop underneath the Helix, or direct a bewildered off-Islander to our Visitor Center near the Tram, operated by the Historical Society, we have all, at one point or another, served our community.

With the Common Council elections concluded and the newly-elected representatives installed, another option for service is again available through the committess of the Residents Association (RIRA). The work of RIRA is done largely through its committees, and you, as a RIRA member – every resident is automatically a RIRA member – are eligible to serve on as many committees as you wish. Are you concerned about the displacement of affordable units on the Island? The Housing Committee is calling for you. Do you have ideas on how our infrastructure can more efficiently and safely serve our growing population? The Planning Committee and the Island Services Committee need your help. The following are the active RIRA committees that you and any of your neighbors may – and should – join.

• **Government Relations:** As the representative of RIRA and the community to the various governmental and

St. Open to public.

Book Discussion, *Beautiful Mystery* by Louise Penny, **Thu Feb 19** 6:30pm, Library.

Book Discussion, *Capital in the 21st Century* by Thomas Piketty, **Thu Mar 19** 6:30pm, Library.

Senior Center
listings – page 16

Book Discussion, *Vacationland* by Sarah Stonich, **Thu Apr 16** 6:30pm, Library.

Cornell Construction & Community Task Force quarterly meeting, **Mon Apr 27**, 6-8pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. Open to public.

Book Discussion, *Black, White & Jewish* by Rebecca Walker, **Thu May 21** 6:30pm, Library.

Book Discussion, *Half A Life* by V.S. Naipul, **Thu Jun 18** 6:30pm, Library.

The RIRA Column



Jeffrey Escobar, President
Roosevelt Island Residents Association
jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com

quasi-governmental entities that have jurisdiction over the Island, this committee establishes and maintains relations with local, State, and federal officials and agencies.

• **Housing:** Addressing residents' issues and concerns regarding the management, living conditions, and rental policies of the residential buildings, this committee serves as the liaison for RIRA and the community to the various building committees and housing task forces.

• **Island Services:** While supervising and reviewing the delivery of transportation, parks and recreation, sanitation, postal and commercial services, and common facilities, this committee assists individuals and organizations who may experience problems obtaining Island services due them, and looks to provide solutions on how current Island services can better serve the community.

• **Planning:** Tasked with all matters involving future development of the Island, including but not limited to commercial development, housing, vehicular access, transportation, social services, and energy, this committee monitors and recommends positions on planning matters. It also recommends and implements policies relating to energy conservation, distribution, and generation.

• **Public Safety:** Charged with recommending and implementing RIRA and community positions on all matters related to safety, security, and vehicular traffic and parking on the Island, this committee works with the Public Safety Department and New York Police Department Local Precinct 114 on behalf of the community to address residents' concerns about law enforcement.

• **Social, Cultural and Educational Services:** This committee supervises social, cultural, and educational programs that are part of RIRA, and represents RIRA to those that are not. It seeks to create initiatives, programming, and events that promote and improve community bonds on the Island.

• **Communication:** The hub for distributing information to the Island and beyond about RIRA initiatives and community events, this committee is also seeking to develop better means of communicating between the residents and the Common Council, better systems for information-sharing among the Island's organizations, and better ways of increasing the visibility of the Island.

• **Legal Action:** This committee is responsible for advising the Common Council and RIRA at large about the viability of legal action as a means for solution and recourse.

The success of each of these committees and, in part, of the entire Island community, depends on the time and effort each of us invests in their work. No matter how rich or poor a service organization may be, it is only as successful as, and can only serve the community to the extent of, those who commit themselves to its operation. With the completion of the election, the Common Council will be reconstituting the chairmanships and the composition of all committees. I call on each and every one of us who has even a remote interest in serving on any of the above committees (or, for that matter, on a committee that may not yet exist) to directly reach out to me at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com. By joining and participating in a RIRA committee, not only will you become more engaged in the community, but you will be providing an important service to those on the Island who really need it.

Turning from service on a RIRA committee to service on the Common Council – there are still a few vacant seats on the delegations from The Octagon, Manhattan Park, Southtown (Riverwalk buildings), and Roosevelt Landings. If you think that you could better serve the community through direct advocacy and representation on the Common Council, you may petition for a seat. Interested? Please reach out to me at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com or to Aaron Hamburger, Chair of the Nominations Committee, at ashamburger33@gmail.com, for more information.

In conjunction with two Community Board 8 committees, the Education Committee and the Roosevelt Island Committee, we will be holding an education summit in January for parents of young children who are planning to have their child attend PS 217 or any other NYC public school. The focus of this summit will be what to expect from the curriculum of PS 217's Gifted and Talented (G&T) Program, the keys to success as a PS 217 kindergartner, what the PS 217 kindergarten program provides over others, and stories from this year's G&T testing. Stay tuned for more details, and reach out with any suggestions or topics you would like to see covered.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not offer a full-hearted Happy Thanksgiving from my family to yours. As we all reflect on the blessings of this past year while enjoying food and family, please also take time to remember those in our community who are less fortunate, and in need. In a country and city of bounty and excess, it can still amaze how many continue to be underserved. Whether it be through a donation to a local food pantry to handing out food at our city's overburdened shelters, do find a way to help all have a Happy Thanksgiving.

How would you spend one million dollars? Participatory budgeting empowers you to decide how your tax dollars get spent in the community. In the past, member items – discretionary funds from individual Councilmembers – have been distributed with little oversight, giving the opportunity for corruption and abuse. Using member items is one of the solutions to put the money in the hands of residents like you, who can shepherd forward projects for the good of the community. I am proud to commit \$1 million of my discretionary dollars so residents can develop their own ideas and vote on how the money gets spent.

You also have the opportunity to serve as a budget delegate to assist in developing projects that will go on the ballot and moving them forward. Budget delegates are the backbone of the process, and the ones who drive forward the important ideas from the community. Whether you are passionate about park improvements, new benches, community gardens, computers in the classroom, or rebuilding public infrastructure, serving as a budget delegate is the best opportunity to get your ideas on the ballot.

Roosevelt Island is a particular funding challenge for participatory budgeting because of the State authority over much of the Island. We especially need Roosevelt Island delegates to help us navigate City and State bureaucracies,

The Community Column

to ensure that as many ideas as possible from residents are heard and voted on.

Throughout the winter, delegates will collaborate to create detailed project proposals and to determine costs. In the spring, they will present them to neighbors, who will give feedback on the proposals before they make their way onto the ballot. Delegates will work on issue-based committees in their areas of interest.

To be eligible, you must be 16 or over and live in the district. You must make a significant time commitment to attend meetings, and fully engage in the process.

Over the past few months, we have hosted half-a-dozen neighborhood assemblies throughout the district, with over a hundred ideas being put forth by as many residents. The budget delegates will determine which of these will be the most beneficial to the community and how to implement them.

To volunteer as a budget delegate, please email bkallos@benkallos.com with your full name, address, contact information, and area of interest, or call 212-860-1950. I look forward to working with you to improve our community!



Ben Kallos
City Councilmember
bkallos@benkallos.com

The WIRE publishes these columns, exclusively, as a service to the community and to the entities invited to provide them, and does not control or censor their content.

The Community Column will feature a broadly chosen rotating series of columnists and topics.

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Registration

Programs for Ages 3 Months to 5 Years

The Roosevelt Island Day Nursery

Riverwalk at 405 Main Street
3 months to 2.6 years

River Road at 4 River Road
2.6 to 5 years

Registration at 4 River Road; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

All registrations require a 10% deposit of the full tuition paid by check or cash

Financial Aid is available to those who qualify

Call to schedule a tour

For more information and tuition rates please visit our website www.ridn.org, call 212-593-0750 or email preschool@ridn.org




ROOSEVELT ISLAND DAY NURSERY
Serving Roosevelt Island families since 1979

Cornell Tech to host town hall to update community

*Monday, December 8th, 6 – 8
p.m. The Manhattan Park
Theater Club 8 River Road,
Roosevelt Island*

Cornell Tech and the Construction and Community Task Force invite you to a presentation and discussion about the Roosevelt Island campus.

At this town hall, Cornell Tech will introduce itself and its partners, provide a full briefing on its plans, and answer any questions that you may have.

For more information or to sign up for regular updates about construction, visit the construction project website:
construction.tech.cornell.edu

Task Force Members:

Anne Marie Boranian, Judy Buck, Christina Delfico, Jonathan Kalkin, Matt Katz, Greg Meyer, Larry Parnes, Jesus Perez, Ellen Polivy, Tricia Shimamura, Joe Strong, Latha Thompson



How Coler Coped When Sandy Hit – And What’s Being Done to Armor It for the Next Superstorm

by **Briana Warsing**

On November 6, Mayor Bill de Blasio and Senator Charles Schumer announced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) commitment to contribute at least \$1.6 billion to repair and protect public hospitals damaged by Superstorm Sandy in late October, 2012. Roosevelt Island’s Coler-Goldwater Specialty Hospital and Nursing Facility (Coler) is receiving \$181 million of that sum.

This money is in addition to the \$142 million that the City’s Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) has already received from FEMA for emergency stabilization measures, partial repairs, and temporary flood barriers.

“This historic, over-\$1.6-billion federal investment will provide a massive shot of adrenaline for New York City’s public hospitals, and their physical and financial recovery from Superstorm Sandy,” said Schumer. “Few services are as critical as our hospitals during extreme weather,” explained de Blasio.

“The FEMA grant to Coler-Goldwater Hospital will help ensure that Roosevelt Islanders and all New Yorkers are prepared for the next major storm,” said City Councilmember Ben Kallos. “We must invest seriously in our infrastructure to keep New Yorkers safe. Thanks to Senator Schumer and Mayor de Blasio for securing these funds.”

Coler

Coler is a large, public, long-term care facility with 800 patients at the north end of the Island. It had to evacuate partially when the hospital’s electricity and backup generators failed during the storm. The hundreds of remaining patients and staff had to cope with cold buildings and partial power. Many Coler patients were moved to the already overstretched Goldwater Hospital south of the Queensboro Bridge, which was still operating at the time.

Coler is a leading, comprehensive specialty-care hospital and nursing facility dedicated to providing quality medical, sub-acute, rehabilitative, and long-term specialty services. It is the largest such facility in New York’s public health system. It is a national leader in long-term and sub-acute care with centers of excellence in areas such as geriatrics, dementia, rehabilitation, and ventilator dependence, with the largest ventilator population of any hospital in the country.

HHC President Ram Raju said, “New York City’s public hospitals serve a very vulnerable patient population and must not be allowed to remain susceptible to future storms.”

Explaining the significance of keeping hospitals like Coler in good health, Raju said, “The local communities look to HHC hospitals for more than just health care, and the cost of shutting them down is human suffering. HHC hospitals returned to service quickly after Sandy, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of their dedicated staffs, but they remain at risk. I’d like to thank FEMA for an aid package that recognizes the need for public hospital resiliency. And, of course, Mayor de Blasio and Senator Charles Schumer, for their efforts in helping the City’s public hospital system.”

Largest FEMA Award

The award was the largest of its kind, according to Schumer. “This FEMA Public Assistance award will help ensure that our public hospitals have the necessary safeguards in place to operate continuously during a storm, mitigate damage and power loss, and, if evacuation is necessary, quickly return to normalcy. Smart recovery and resiliency work at New York’s great public hospitals, which serve millions each day, is exactly what we had in mind when crafting the Sandy relief bill, and I’m thrilled to have helped deliver this federal funding.”

Other Aid

Last summer, hard-hit NYU Langone received \$1.13 billion in FEMA assistance to help it recover from damage caused by Sandy.

At the time, HHC spokesman Ian Michaels said, “The FEMA grant to NYU is encouraging, and shows that the federal government recognizes the great importance of protecting hospitals during disasters... HHC’s public hospital system serves a vulnerable population, and had several facilities that were devastated by Sandy.”

At that point, HHC had submitted applications to FEMA for \$301 million for repairs to Coney Island Hospital, Bellevue Hospital Center, and Coler. HHC anticipated a need to request an additional \$179 million for repair reimbursement, and \$180 million for mitigation projects at Coler and Metropolitan Hospital.

Despite repeated questions, Michaels declined comment on whether the amount now received by FEMA will be enough, and whether HHC still believes it will have to request more funding.

NYU’s money came in a lump sum, a break from past practice where money came in fits and starts as receipts were submitted.

Of the total monies requested by HHC at that point, \$540 million was expected to be needed for repairs, and \$589 million was to go toward mitigation projects to protect against future storms.

HHC Response

Within two weeks of Sandy, on November 12, 2012, HHC held a Board of Directors meeting. President and Chief Executive Alan D. Aviles submitted a report summarizing Coler’s circumstances and responses regarding Superstorm Sandy.

Aviles wrote, “There was a loss of electrical power and

steam heat followed by a failure of the emergency generator located in the severely flooded basement. More than 100 patients whose care could potentially need electrical power were transferred to Goldwater Campus with the National Guard’s assistance.”

Meteorologists had predicted a storm surge of five to eight feet. That meant evacuation of the hospital was not mandatory. Aviles wrote, “The storm made landfall the evening of October 29, which coincided with a high tide that contributed to a surge of up to 14 feet in some areas. This caused significant flooding damage to mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and other essential systems located in the basement.”

The hospital responded by activating emergency response plans and command centers. All emergency generators were tested and fully fueled; additional food, supplies, and fuel were secured; disaster staffing patterns were implemented, and preparations were made for staff to spend the night.

Damage to Coler

Aviles stayed at Coler from Thursday, November 1, through Saturday, November 3, to monitor the progress of power and heat restoration, as well as to assess the status of residents and staff. Space heaters and an additional 1,000 blankets were used while residents and staff waited for heat. Full power did not begin to be restored until Friday, November 2, and heat started gradually returning on November 3.

At the time of Aviles’ November 12 report, full restoration of ConEd power and independence from a temporary boiler was not anticipated until March 2013 at the earliest.

Aviles announced that HHC was set to receive \$300 million for structural restorations, new boilers, new mechanical and electrical systems, roof repairs, flood remediation, and more. At that point, it was difficult to project the full cost for repair, restoration, and future risk mitigation.

Ultimately, Superstorm Sandy damaged all four buildings that make up 1,025-bed Coler. Additionally, the hospital’s six electrical services needed to be replaced and relocated.

Repair and Mitigation Projects

Four electrical service rooms in four areas of the hospital were designed and built at a cost of \$16 million.

FEMA guidelines mandated that these rooms be built on the first floor, above the flood plain. Existing office and storage rooms were demolished, and the new fire-related electrical switchboard service rooms and emergency power rooms with automatic transfer switches were built.

Fitting equipment and conduits into a building that was built in the 1950s and hadn’t been renovated since the mid-1970s was one of the team’s challenges.

The workers also had to work through existing conduits that had to be repaired, and to maintain the temporary connections that were made after the storm, so that no area of the hospital was without power.

The project team met daily with hospital staff to review progress and concerns, and held weekly status meetings with ConEd and the HHC.

Working seven days a week in two shifts while the 800-patient facility remained operational, the team completed the project in just 78 days, winning an award of merit for Specialty Contracting from ENR New York, which serves New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut’s annual \$25.9-billion construction marketplace.

Future

Crain’s reported the fruits of a brainstorming session among community leaders in November 2012.

Their solution: Turn Cornell NYC Tech, the \$2-billion planned technology and applied sciences campus, whose first buildings are expected to open in 2017, into a self-sustaining city – a place where residents can live for days without aid from the outside world.

“We have a high disabled population and, if we need to evacuate and it’s not possible, people on respirators need to go somewhere where it’s safe,” said Ellen Polivy, then

Co-Chair of the Roosevelt Island Community Coalition (RICC), a group of 36 member organizations that banded together to ease town-gown relations. “Someplace where there is water for three days, electricity, [and] food. If there’s a storm, we want to figure out a way that we can be at the Cornell campus.”

The City’s Office of Emergency Management often recommends that residents “shelter in place” during a disaster if evacuating is impossible. Protecting 14,000 residents, many elderly and disabled, from future natural disasters if evacuation is impossible is a daunting task.

Crain’s noted that being stranded may be more likely to happen on the Island than anywhere else in the city. It is low-lying, and accessible only by one subway line, the Tram, and one bridge to Queens.

Polivy said Islanders want Cornell’s construction to incorporate amenities that would make it the go-to “shelter in place” for the community, a safe, enclosed place to weather a storm.

At the time, Cornell officials said they were reviewing the request, and also looking into expanding transportation options with ferries to and from the Island. They have since decided against it.

Otherwise, the university is being designed with future storms in mind. Even before Sandy, plans were under way to raise the site above the flood plain by six or seven feet with materials from the demolished Goldwater Hospital, according to Andrew Winters, director of capital projects and planning for Cornell NYC Tech.

“Based on the 100-year-flood plain, storm surges, global warming, it all leads to the conclusion that the required height is about 16 feet [above water level] for elevation,” Winters said. “We were already going to 20 or 21 feet, pre-Sandy.”

“One thing that Sandy has done for us is that it put these sorts of issues in the forefront,” Winters said.

The HHC, which runs 11 public hospitals, had already received \$69 million in FEMA aid by the time the *Crain’s* article was published in November 2012. The total cost for repairs for the affected HHC hospitals was already estimated to be \$420 million between Bellevue, Coney Island Hospital, Metropolitan Hospital, and Coler.

The City’s Response

The City developed a new zone system in its Hurricane Sandy After-Action report.

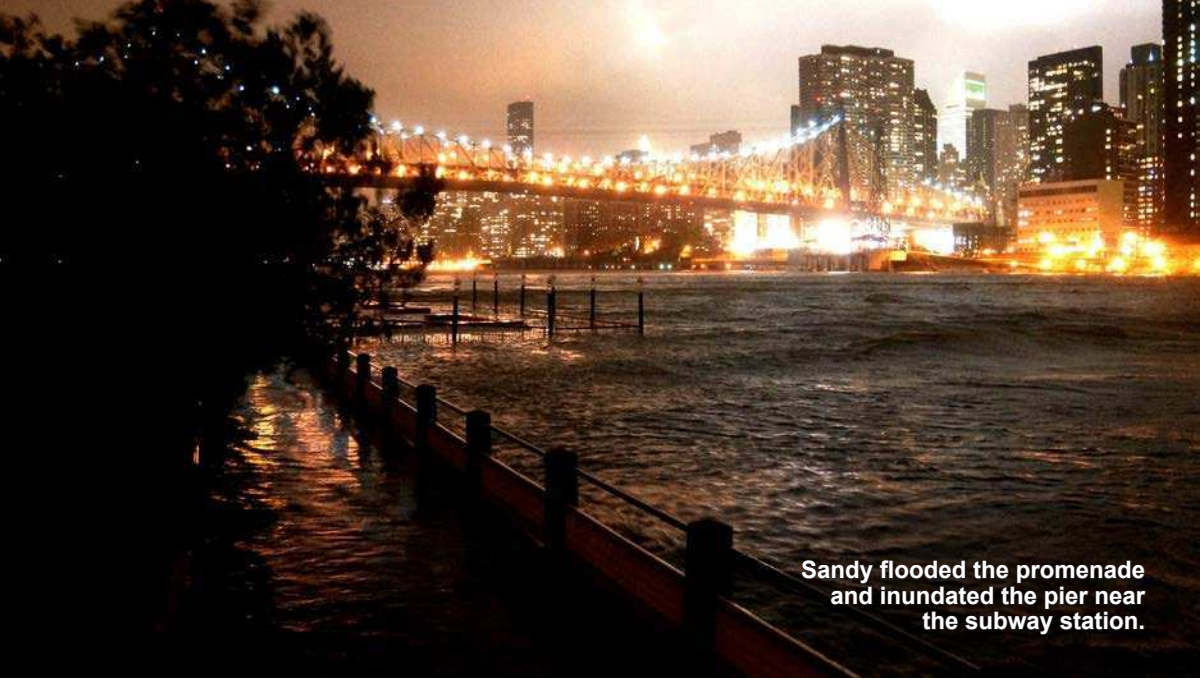
The new designations were developed using recent sea, lake, and overland surges from hurricane storm surge inundation maps generated by the National Weather Service, and processed by the Army Corps of Engineers. They based the new zoning method on coastal flood risk resulting from storm surge (the “dome” of ocean water propelled by the winds and low barometric pressure of a hurricane); the geography of the city’s low-lying neighborhoods; and the accessibility of these neighborhoods by bridges and roads.

The new hurricane evacuation zones incorporate a recently updated model from the National Weather Service, and the new model accounts for larger and slower-moving storms.

The resolution of the model has been increased, incorporating improved elevation data. Additionally, the new evacuation zones also assume that, like Sandy, the storm surge will coincide with high tide.

The new Zones 1 through 6 include an additional 600,000 New Yorkers who were not included in the former zones. The increased number of zones will provide the City with more flexibility in targeting areas to evacuate in advance of a predicted storm.

Zone 1 is most likely to flood and zone 6 is the least likely. What came out of the zoning change for us is that Roosevelt Island is now split into two zones with Four Freedoms, and part of Southpoint, as well as the Octagon and Coler Hospital designated zone 2 and the rest of the Island as zone 3. If Sandy happened today, it is likely that the entire Island would have been evacuated. (Previously, the system was lettered, and the entire Island was zone B.)



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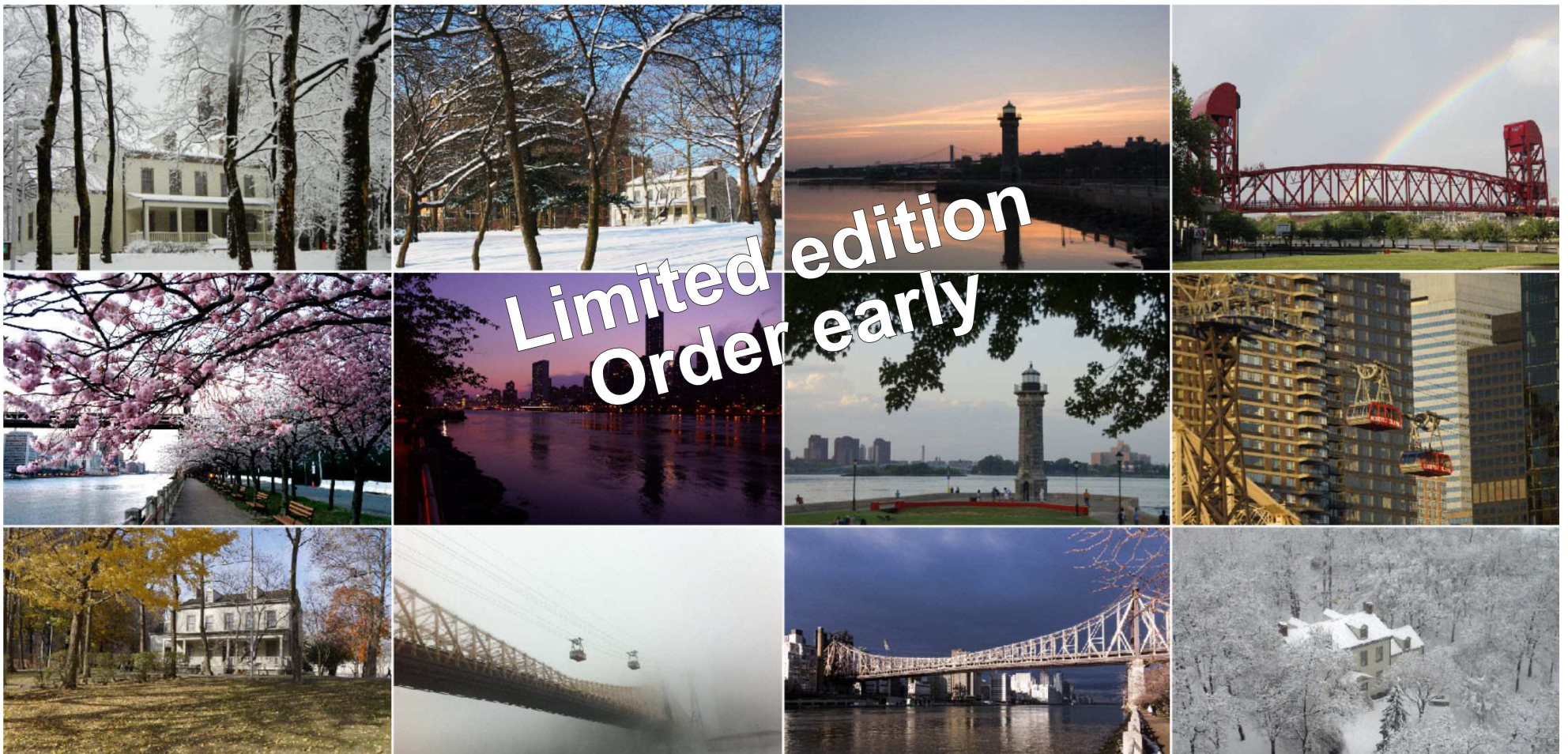
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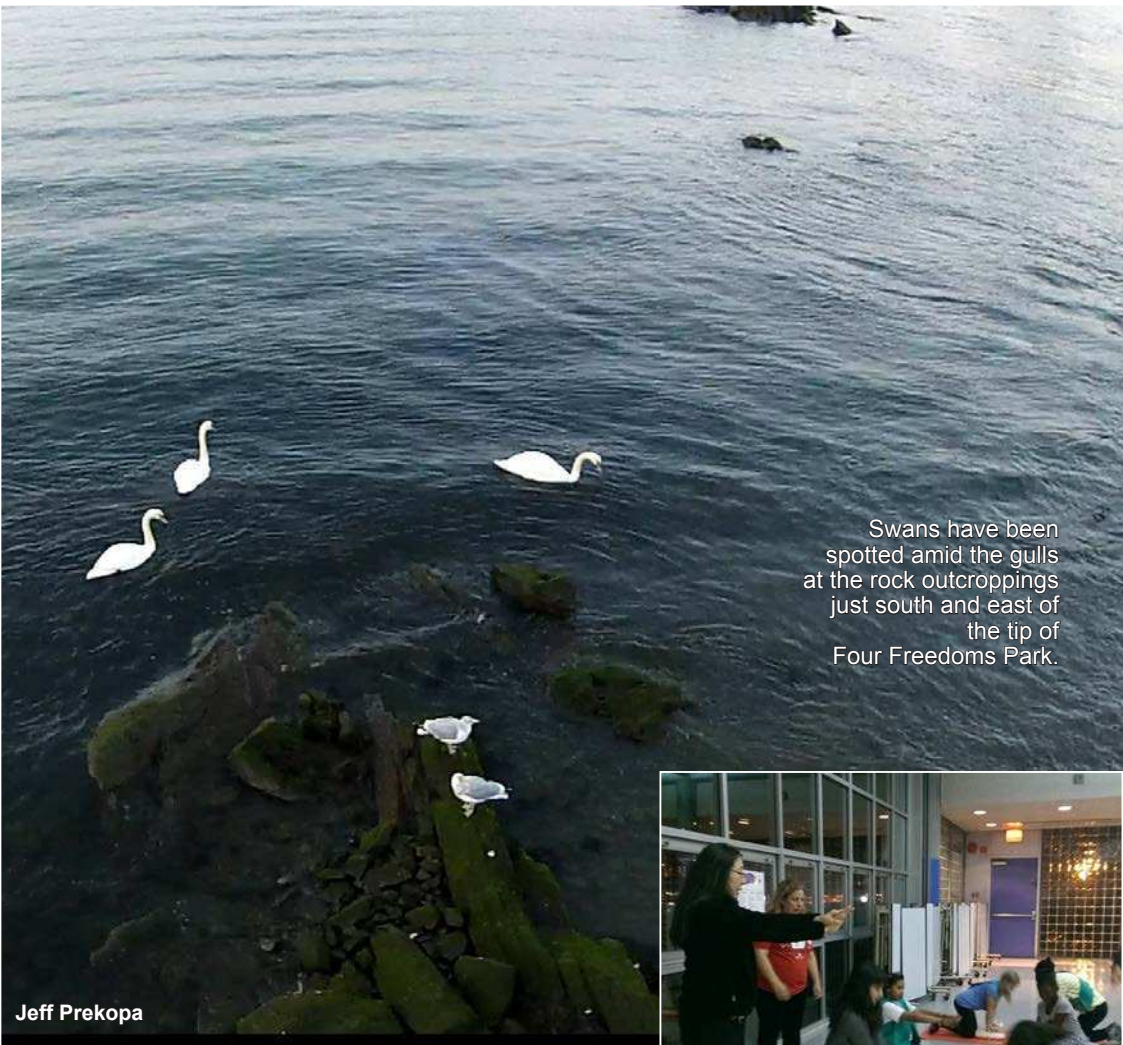
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It's Happening! A Roundup of Recent Island Events and Sightings



Swans have been spotted amid the gulls at the rock outcroppings just south and east of the tip of Four Freedoms Park.

Jeff Prekopa



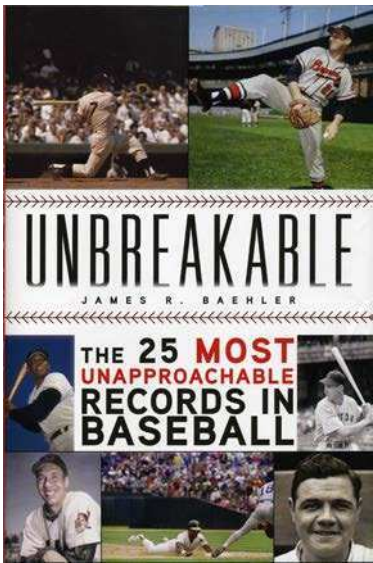
The Island's Girl Scouts got hands-only CPR training recently as part of the campaign launched by RIRA Common Council member Lynne Shinozaki.



These kids and many others auditioned this week for roles in the Main Street Children's Theatre production of *Little Shop of Horrors*. Performances are scheduled for May 29 through June 1.



Eli Warsing scored a prize when he entered the best guess in a contest at Main Street Sweets.

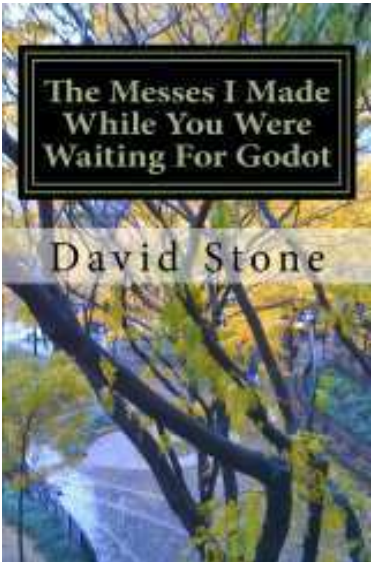


Jim Baehler's baseball book is out. The long-time Islander, who also writes for *The WIRE*, has identified 25 of the most meaningful records in baseball. They are so extreme that they are considered literally unapproachable.

Examples include a pitcher with 41 wins in a single season. (Today's pitchers don't even *start* 41 games in a season.) There's the batter who had a cumulative batting average of .401 over a five-year period, and a pitcher who won 16 games in a row. And there's Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak.

But the book isn't a list. There's a story behind each record – the players' lives, and troubles, and what each had to overcome to achieve baseball immortality. Some of baseball's daffier personalities also make an appearance.

The book is available on Amazon.com by typing in "Unbreakable Baehler." It is also available in all Costco stores and Barnes & Noble bookstores.



In *The Messes I Made While You Were Waiting For Godot*, David Stone's Peter McCarthy brings the characters, themes, and ideas he's carried through *The Garden Of What Was And Was Not* and *Traveling Without A Passport* to a conclusion – of sorts. Readers of the two earlier books will understand that his stories don't actually *end* any more than do those in real life. In *The Messes I Made While You Were Waiting For Godot*, Stone's alter ego rounds it all up and puts it away for a while.

In this volume, McCarthy discovers that his entire life, everything, the loves, the messes, the successes, the work, the friends – all of it – takes place during three days spent crossing America on a Greyhound Scenicruiser in 1976. He meets Marcie and, in the reflection of a quirky romance, sees decades in enigmatic spirals in either direction.

Stone describes Peter as funny, passionate, confused, perplexing, cynical, optimistic, and never bored. He says it's the last book in *The Autobiography Of X* series. Stone reviews art for *The WIRE*.



On Wednesday, stone benches were being placed in Good Shepherd Plaza, as part of the plaza makeover.



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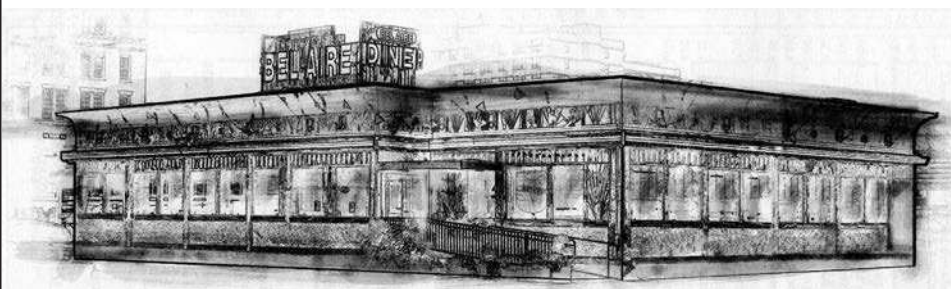
John Sheehan is a Roosevelt Island pioneer, a past president of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) and has lived in Rivercross since 1978. In John's 30-year career as a real estate broker he has transacted over \$250 million in sales. Jimmy Brett, John's business partner, also has a 30-year career in real estate, successfully marketing, renting, and selling in New York City. Together, John and Jimmy bring more than 60 years of knowledge and experience to every transaction that they are involved in, and are backed by one of the best real estate companies in the city. Contact us for a complimentary private consultation.

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New Insurance Program Brings Health Care Home

by Ted Kyser

For nearly two decades, Roosevelt Island physician Jack Resnick has been working on keeping his sickest patients out of the hospital.

That’s right – *out* of the hospital. Resnick believes that the home setting, with home health aides and a personal physician intimately familiar with patients’ moods and rhythms, is the best place to stay healthy.

Resnick points out that, on the other hand, hospitals can be downright dangerous.

Three years ago, *The New York Times* published an op-ed article by Resnick (also carried in *The WIRE* in an extended version, and available online at MainStreetWIRE.com/wire3207, page 11). It urged the federal government to move more rapidly in the direction of home-based health care. In fact, Obamacare includes a three-year demonstration project – the Independence at Home Act (IAH), which Resnick and a group of like-minded physicians helped draft before lobbying successfully for its passage. IAH is halfway through that test period and, if successful, it will become

a benefit for people on Medicare who would otherwise be in nursing homes.

But Roosevelt Islanders will not have to wait that long. In December, people who have both Medicaid and Medicare and need help



with at least two activities of daily living (walking, dressing, bathing, eating, etc) will be able to enroll in a new form of health insurance – Fully Integrated Dual Advantage

plans (FIDAs). Resnick is working with several of those plans to bring his vision to life here in January.

“I learned from bitter experience,” says Resnick, “that hospitals are a dangerous place for people with multiple health conditions when they become sick. They, and their cases, are too complicated to be handled by the anonymous ever-changing cast of staff in the hospital system. They must be cared for by someone who knows them well and is always available.”

Making that happen has not always been easy but, says Resnick, things will improve tremendously under this new form of insurance. It will fund the many innovations needed to make this dream come true.

The plan will provide a number of Resnick’s “dream features:”

- 24/7 Access – In an emergency, people will be able to reach their medical team at any time. They’ll have a live audio-visual link that they can activate at will. It’s a futuristic implementation of telemedicine that will allow physicians and their associates instant access to their patients, and allow their patients instant access to health care.

- Emergency Room (ER) at Home – When emergencies arise, the ER equipment will come to the home. Modern nanotechnology and computerization have made it possible to perform blood tests, take Xrays, and use ultrasound in the patient’s home, with immediate results.

- Emergency Treatment – The ER team will not just bring testing equipment. It will bring all the therapeutic equipment normally associated with ER care – intravenous medications, dressings, monitors, and more – into the home. Treatment will start without delay and without the disruption of transport, which can be a serious problem for many patients.

But Resnick’s plan doesn’t rule out the use of hospitals when they’re required. Instead, it’s intended to reduce greatly the need for trips to hospitals, and reduce

unnecessary exposure to the dangers there.

In addition, the use of modern technology will greatly speed up the process of pre-ER evaluation. By equipping the patient and the medical team with instant-access capability, unnecessary ER trips will be avoided, but, when hospital care is required, that decision can be made far more quickly.

Resnick says that today’s and tomorrow’s technologies, both in medical diagnosis/treatment and in communications, will bring health care home in a way that takes advantage of a key component – the human factor. That is, he says, “Patients will get the full range of care but, whenever possible, they’ll get it at home, and from their regular medical team – the people intimately familiar with their overall health-care requirements.”

Resnick says that additional information on the FIDA plans will be available soon. The rule of thumb, says Resnick, is “If you have both Medicare and Medicaid insurance and have difficulty getting around without assistance, then you will be eligible for this new program.”

The Tote!

page 10

Why Won’t Hospitals Let Doctors Fix Healthcare?

by Jack Resnick, M.D.

I practice general internal medicine on Roosevelt Island, a unique community in the East River that had been, until 1971, Welfare Island. Many of my patients are homebound. They live in 50 apartments specially designed to accommodate people who had spent years as inpatients at Coler and Goldwater Hospitals, two chronic-disease facilities on Roosevelt Island.

This homebound population has taught me what is wrong with the healthcare system.

Vinny was a 48-year-old man who became a quadriplegic after being shot during a robbery in the hardware store that he had owned and operated for many years. When he called me with high fevers, shaking chills, and dropping blood pressure, I told him I was going to call an ambulance to take him to the hospital. He begged me not to do that. We argued back and forth, but he finally relented and I admitted him to the hospital. We successfully brought his urinary tract infection under control, and he survived the crisis. But he didn’t survive the hospitalization. There weren’t sufficient staff in the hospital to turn him every two hours as was done routinely at home by aides. A bedsore developed, and the wound got infected with a bacterium that breeds in hospitals and is resistant to almost all antibiotics. It killed him. Ever since then, I have struggled to keep my frail, elderly, and disabled homebound patients out of the hospital.

It’s not easy. The healthcare system battles me every step of the way. The City’s ambulances insist on taking people to the nearest emergency room, not to the one where their own doctor is on staff. The State’s laws make it difficult to administer simple treatments in the home. Emergency rooms want to admit patients rather than send them home. Hospitals want to discharge people to nursing homes, not to the community.

Luba, 83, had emigrated from Russia in the early 1990s. Her arthritis kept her from moving around much, but she loved to talk about her career as a rocket scientist – working on weather rockets, not military ones. One day, a well-intentioned neighbor dropped by and, when she found Luba feverish and dehydrated from diarrhea, she called 911. After that, Luba disappeared. It took me two months to track Luba down to the nursing home to which the hospital had transferred her.

Luba, like many elderly people, became confused and disoriented when she got sick. This delirium, a condition that can improve when the underlying condition is removed, looks very much like dementia, a permanent change in a person’s brain. The staffs at the hospital and the nursing home had assumed that Luba was a demented old lady. They had sent her to live out her days in an institution, where her engagement with the world ended and her life would have been shorter. And she would have cost Medicare and Medicaid a great deal of money. Fortunately, when I arrived at the nursing home, Luba recognized me. I had to fight the bureaucracy for several months to get Luba home. But ultimately Luba’s personality and intelligence returned in full. It was crucial that I knew Luba and her mental status well, that I could differentiate hospital-imposed delirium from permanent dementia. Being in familiar surroundings with well-known attendants, friends, and family keeps people well, sane, and happy.

Ruth was 93 when I became her doctor. Dementia had set in several years earlier and, like most people in their 90’s, her blood sugar and blood pressure were a little high. A cardiologist had put her on three blood pressure medications, two drugs to lower her cholesterol, and a daily aspirin. An endocrinologist was trying to control her blood sugar “tightly” with three diabetic pills. A neurologist prescribed two drugs for her dementia, a sleeping pill, and two antidepressants. Each of these three assumed that her decrease in her energy and increasing fatigue could be ascribed to the problems that they were treating. None of them spoke to any of the others. When I met her, it seemed likely that much of her problem was overmedication. I cut her down to three drugs from her previous fifteen and, three weeks later, she was back in action.

The mantra of American healthcare is “more is better” – more medications, more specialists, more tests. We have built enormous institutions – hospitals, health systems, insurers, the drug industry – and, like any institution, their primary mission is their own growth and survival. For 40 years, we have been asking these systems to rein in their growth before they choke the rest of the economy. They have given us health maintenance organizations, integrated delivery systems, case managers, and, coming soon, accountable care organizations. None of these changes has or is likely to work. It’s simply not in the nature of institutions to find ways to shrink.

Our healthcare institutions provide fine products and services. They work hard to convince us to use too many of them, even when that’s not in our own best interest. We need to give the job of controlling health care to someone else.

In 2010, the American Academy of House Call Physicians successfully lobbied Congress to pass the Independence at Home Act (IAH). IAH allows physicians to create organizations that will improve the care of the country’s sickest people – the homebound, nursing-home eligible segment of the population – while also decreasing its cost. It is scheduled for implementation January 1, 2012.

Independence at Home organizations are founded on two underlying principles. First, each patient must have a personal physician who knows him intimately and is available 24/7. Second, these people should be cared for in their homes – not in offices, hospitals, or nursing homes – whenever possible. This change of the locus of care will dramatically decrease the infections, mistakes, deconditioning, and delirium that are the inevitable attendants of institutional care.

Unlike other components of the Federal healthcare reform, the IAH approach has a long and dramatically successful track record. Hundreds of programs across the country have been providing care in the home to our frailest patients for decades. The largest of these programs is the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Home-Based Primary Care Program. In existence for 30 years, the program serves tens of thousands of veterans spread over every state in the country.

The VA has cut hospital utilization by 54%, nursing home utilization by 82%, and total healthcare costs by 24%. Comparable or better results are reported by most organizations using this approach – organizations that range in size from solo practitioners to small group practices to academic medical centers.

Technology is what makes it possible for individual or small groups of physicians to provide complex care at home.

The Obama administration has aggressively promoted electronic medical records. A physician with an iPad has more information available about a given patient than any institution. That iPad’s internet access also allows him to rapidly search for the best answer to any urgent question – much more rapidly than awaiting the arrival of a hospital-based consultant.

With just a few drops of blood, a physician at the bedside can now get crucial test results in seconds. Waiting hours for staff to draw the blood, transport it to the lab, perform the test, and report the results are things of the past.

Similarly, portable X-ray and ultrasound equipment are wheeled into a patient’s home in suitcase-sized containers. Images are fed digitally hundreds or thousands of miles away where a report is generated and returned in minutes – not in hours or days. Even CT scanners can be rolled up to the patient’s front door. Sophisticated remote monitors measure every imaginable parameter of a patient’s status and notify the physician remotely. Audio-visual equipment can even allow nursing personnel to watch over many people dispersed over a neighborhood. Consultants are already seeing many complicated patients from a distance over webcams. And their consultations are much more productive when conducted in the virtual presence of the patient’s personal physician.

The role of hospitals will change. Acutely ill patients will still be brought to an emergency department for evaluation and stabilization. Those people who need an operating room or an intensive care unit will be hospitalized. Anyone else will be returned home to the care of a personal physician and a dedicated nursing staff who know them intimately and who have at their disposal technology’s tools.

Physicians who make themselves available 24/7 to these complicated patients will be well compensated. Doctors in IAH organizations, who provide measurable high-quality care and save Medicare money, will share in those savings, and those savings should be considerable. Conservative calculations suggest that these doctors will earn as much as today’s most highly paid specialists. This will quickly change the calculus of healthcare economics and end the shortage of primary care physicians.

IAH has the potential to do wonders for the national economy. Cutting Medicare’s cost dramatically will make the work of the congressional budget supercommittee much simpler. And moving much of health care into the home will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs across the country.

Applications to form IAH organizations have not been issued. Medicare has, instead, been focusing on other portions of the Obama Healthcare Reform that will encourage and reward hospitals and other large institutions for once again rearranging the deck chairs on their sinking ships. Through IAH, doctors have the means to address and solve the healthcare crisis.

Let us move healthcare into the home where it is safer, cheaper, and more effective.

(Dr. Jack Resnick is a general internist in solo practice on Roosevelt Island. He spends half of his time making house calls to 50 homebound patients. He has been working for several years with the American Academy of House Call Physicians on getting the Independence at Home Act enacted and implemented. You can meet some of his homebound patients in a 15-minute video on therooseveltdoctor.com.)

As the Board of Education Considers a Noteworthy Program in Early-Childhood Education, Roosevelt Island a Head Start

by Jim Baehler

An Islander is working to bring early-childhood education on Roosevelt Island up to date with a new program – one that dates back 70 years.

The time was 1945. The war had ended in Europe, and the people of that devastated continent were seeking to put their lives together again.

In Reggio Emilia, a town in northern Italy, the people came together and concluded that their first priority was a school. But the town treasury was empty, and provincial authorities made it known that no money was to be expected from them. The townspeople looked around, and decided that the abundance of abandoned German tanks, cannons, and other military equipment littering the countryside must have some residual value. In short order, scrap-metal dealers and other buyers of military equipment were carrying off the last vestiges of Germany’s effort to rule the world.

The money received was used to renovate a building that had been damaged by shellfire. While it was being prepared for its first pupils, the people gathered to discuss the kind of education they wanted their children to receive. From that discussion, certain principles emerged in respect to early-childhood learning. First, having children listen and watch while a teacher makes a presentation is not the best means of educating three-, four- and five- year-olds. Second, children should be actively involved in the learning process. Third, small group projects offer the best means of providing children with an understanding of their environment, the world in which they live, and the value of cooperating with others toward a common goal.

Using these principles, learning is transformed from a passive to an active experience in which, ideally, the children themselves select their projects through group discussion. The teacher’s role is not to enforce a set curriculum. Rather, it is to act as a guide and resource as the students define their projects and work together on them.

The success of that first school in Reggio Emilia caught the attention of Loris Malaguzzi, who became influential in spreading the word about Reggio Emilia. Today, there are schools inspired by its principles in countries around the world (including the Roosevelt Island Day Nursery).

Last Saturday, more than 500 people gathered in the auditorium of the 92nd Street Y to participate in a day-long conference, *Dialogue of Two Cities: NYC and Reggio Emilia*. Among the speakers was Claudia Guidici, President of the Pre School Institute and Infant-Toddler Center of Reggio Emilia. She described the instructional methods used in Reggio Emilia, and stressed the need for teachers to be continually communicating with one another, sharing their successes and failures, and providing an ongoing critique of their work.

Sophis Pappas, Executive Director of the New York City Early Childhood Department, described the many approaches that New York City is employing to improve the education of our youngest students. Reggio Emilia is one of the programs that the City is looking at very carefully. There is a pilot program in a number of Brooklyn schools that is based on Reggio Emilia principles.

Other speakers included Pietro Biroli, a Ph.D. candidate in economics at the University of Chicago, who talked about the economics of early-childhood education. His charts showed that effective early childhood education saves money in later years by reducing anti-social behavior. The final speaker was Jerome Bruner, who has been an educational forerunner for more years than most of us have been alive. At age 99, he is still an influential and effective voice in child-centered education. For his work over so many years, he has been made an honorary citizen of Reggio Emilia.

Following the main presentations, the group formed breakout sessions. The session of most interest to Roosevelt Islanders was conducted by Leila Vujosevic, who has started a Reggio Emilia-inspired program on the Island. She is an architect, and a principal with her husband in Omni Architects, a New York-based firm.

While designing a school, Leila concluded that she wanted to know more about how children learn – something that fit with her longtime interest in early-childhood education. She enrolled at NYU, and ultimately received her master’s degree in education. Along the way, she came across the Reggio Emilia approach to early-childhood learning, and it matched her views exactly. As a resident of Roosevelt Island, Leila decided to bring the principles of Reggio Emilia home.

She replicated the experience of the citizens of Reggio Emilia by beginning with a discussion group working on the question of how to bring a Reggio Emilia program to Roosevelt Island. After much discussion, the decision was made to begin with a garden where children could experience the joy of watching things grow, and of working together to make a suitable environment for plants and flowers.

Leila says, “The first step was to talk to the officers of the Roosevelt Island Garden Club, who were most helpful. They even provided us with many of the tools that the children would need to build a proper garden.” An approach to the board of directors in her building, 455 Main Street, yielded a plot nearby. Notices went up on kiosks. “They said, in effect, *Bring your child to our meeting to discuss*



Leila Vujosevic



how to set up an early-childhood education program. The invitation worked. It was also the first step in involving the parents in the program. This was in 2012, and the garden project was a success right from the start. We called the group Roosevelt Island Explorers (RIEx) because that is what we want the children to be doing – learning about their world by exploring it.”

The children wanted to know more about the Island, so Leila had a 20-foot-long paper map made of Roosevelt Island. “We took the map to Southpoint Park and spread it out on the ground. Using the materials they had brought, the children and their parents then made a collage showing the various features of the Island. It was a huge success.”

The garden is always open, but most of the work is done by the children after school and on weekends. There are more than 90 children involved in RIEx. The organizers of the Island’s Fall for Arts Festival invited the Explorers to participate in their annual showcase. Once again, the children and their teachers discussed what form their participation would take. Leila says, “Eventually we decided on a project we called *Creative Exploration of Blackwell Park*.” The object was to use found materials at the site and make creative use of them. We talked to the people who were demolishing

Goldwater Hospital, and they gave us metal tubing, giant rollers, and other items that the students then used to produce their own music.”

Leila goes on to say, “I obtained some cones of wool yarn that I hung from the trunks of the trees that surround the fountain at Blackwell Park. The children quickly began unraveling the yarn and stringing it between the trees creating what they called a cobweb. They then had a wonderful time crawling under and through it.”

Leila’s plans for the future include an early-childhood school for the youngest learners on the Island. “I even have the space identified. The second floor of what is now the Youth Center is not being used, and would be perfect for an early-childhood school. The biggest obstacle now is finding the money to make it happen. We need to involve the entire community on Roosevelt Island to make this dream come true. It will take a lot of effort and a lot of time, but I am sure we can do it.”

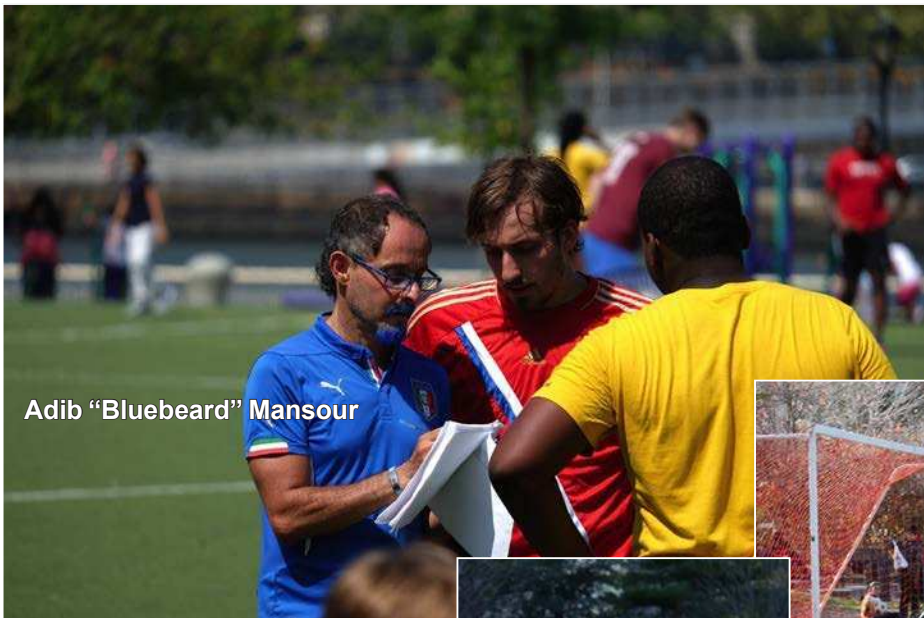
Without German military equipment available for sale, Leila Vujosevic faces a formidable task in raising the money that she needs for her Reggio Emilia school. But anyone who has talked to her about this project would not bet against the drive and determination she brings to the effort.

Youth Soccer, Stunning in its Success, Wraps Today

from page 1
And striving. “At the beginning of every game, I talk to the kids, especially the younger ones... I remind them to have fun, to exhibit what they learned in practice. I keep reminding them of sportsmanship, which is very important.” Mansour also urges on the kids who say they don’t know soccer and can’t do it. He tells of a young man who was in danger of being ejected from the program because his attitude was detrimental. Mansour sat with him for a time. “I said, There are two options: that you can’t play anymore; or – up to you – you can be a leader and become the captain of the team. His eyes lit up, and now he is one of the leaders.”

And then, of course, there’s all that exercise. Depending on the age group – the league ranges from Kinderkickers (5-6 years old) through Seniors (13-15), with no gaps – opposing teams play games with two halves that last 20-45 minutes on half-size fields, all at the Octagon venue. It’s free to participants, even with uniforms that cost over \$10,000 for the past season. DYCD foots the bill, though Mansour says that the size of the Roosevelt Island program means that additional financial help will probably be needed next year.

There’s also a winter season coming up. It’ll take place indoors at the PS/IS 217 gym, played with a smaller, heavier ball and smaller “field” – a way for enthusiastic players to sharpen their skills and their understanding of tactics. Registration starts next month. For next fall’s outdoor season, registration will come up at the end of August. Mansour is particularly pleased that he’s found a solution – at least a partial solution – to the problem of girls starting to feel awkward about competing with boys after a certain age. In addition to co-ed play in the younger ranks, there’s a girl’s team coached by Quincy Auger, an attorney who has plans to take her charges into court to see her at work. She’s a role model, but it doesn’t stop when she steps off the soccer field.



Adib “Bluebeard” Mansour



Photos by
Akylbai Eleusizov



	Goals	Pts	Rank	
Minors				November 15 semi-finals (goals / points):
Jorge/Eddie	5	7	4	Dan/Miguel 1 / 3 vs Jorge/Eddie 0 / 0
Alan/Lee	5	9	3	Alan/Lee 0 / 0 vs Nicola/Marco 1 / 3
Nicola/Marco	7	10	2	Today:
Dan/Miguel	15	25	1	9:30am Alan/Lee vs Jorge/Eddie for 3rd/4th
				9:30am Dan/Miguel vs Nicola/Marco for 1st/2nd
Sophomores				November 15 games (goals / points):
Luca/Lee	4	5	6	John/Alan 1 / 0 vs Sabrina/Marc 3 / 3
Sabrina/Marc	13	16	1	4th vs 6th: Johanne/Cristian 3 / 3 vs Luca/Lee 0 / 0
John/Alan	11	14	3	3rd vs 5th: Andrey/Tony 5 / 3 vs Carlos/Manuel 0 / 0
Andrey/Tony	21	15	2	November 18 games (goals/points):
Carlos/Manuel	9	9	5	Sabrina/Marc 2 / 3 vs Johanne/Cristian 2 / 0
Johanne/Cristian	16	13	4	John/Alan 1 / 0 vs Andrey/Tony 1 / 3
				Today: Sabrina/Marc vs Andrey/Tony, 10:30 a.m.
Juniors				November 15 games (goals / points):
Scott/John	40	24	1	Scott/John 7 / 3 vs Stephane/Julien 3 / 0
Jeff/Wallie	21	16	3	4th vs 6th: John/John 4 / 3 vs Moses/VJ 1 / 0
Johan/Richard	17	7	5	3rd vs 5th: Jeff/Wallie 3 / 3 vs Johan/Richard 2 / 0
John/John	25	14	4	November 20 games – semi-finals:
Stephane/Julien	29	18	2	Scott/John 2 / 0 vs John/John 2 / 3 (penalty kicks)
Moses/Joachim	12	0	6	Stephane/Julien 3 / 3 vs Jeff/Wallie 0 / 0
				Today: John/John vs Stephane/Julien 11:30am
Seniors				November 15 games (goals / points):
Jack/Daniel	23	6	4	Boris/Hector 4 / 0 vs Tarek/Bryan 6 / 3
Tarek/Bryan	38	18	2	Jesse/Romance 7 / 3 vs Jack/Daniel 3 / 0
Jesse/Romance	43	18	1	Today:
Boris/Hector	40	12	3	3rd/4th: Boris/Hector vs Jack/Daniel 12:30pm
				1st/2nd: Tark/Bryan vs Boris/Hector 2:15pm

Island’s Bike New York Program Drawing Followers – And a Prizewinner!

by Sara Maher

Yawa Kurkiewicz has a new bike, and thereby hangs a tale.

On August 29, *Bicycling* magazine named New York its top bike-friendly city in the United States. New Yorkers wanting to pick up pedaling as a way to exercise, save money, or speed up their commute can learn what they need to know about city bike safety by taking a free bike education course through the non-profit organization Bike New York.

Roosevelt Island has become home to two Bike New York education centers, one at Sportspark and one under the Helix Ramp. In its first year, Bike New York sponsored public classes and youth programs, an Island-specific summer ride series, a free pop-up bike shop at the Saturday Farmer’s Market, and classes at the school. Caitlin Goodspeed, the Bike New York Community Outreach Manager focused on the Island, is impressed by Island support and turnout. “I’ve had the pleasure of getting to know many people on the Island, and we’ve been happy to partner with several community organizations and businesses,” says Goodspeed.

This year, Bike New York entered the National Bike Challenge, a free event hosted by the League of American Bicyclists that challenges cyclists nationwide to ride as many miles as possible, and submitted teams based on entrants’ zip codes. Roosevelt Island had its own team, and our four riders logged 1,144 miles. Rich Conroy,

Education Director for Bike New York, hopes to see another Roosevelt Island team next year. “There are more cyclists on Roosevelt Island than the 52 people who joined the Bike New York team, so I’m sure a big Roosevelt Island team could outride Bike New York,” says Conroy.

Bike New York also entered a Learn to Ride team in the Challenge, open to riders who had been taking bike-riding lessons through Bike New York. To add a little extra motivation, Bike New York offered a new bicycle to the Learn-to-Ride team member who rode the most individual miles. As a team, the nine riders logged an impressive 4,512 miles, and the bicycle went to an Islander, Yawa Kurkiewicz.

Kurkiewicz started taking Bike New York classes in the spring. She admits, “I had always been a little anxious about learning to ride,” but after taking Bike New York classes and starting the challenge, she became more confident in her riding. She says she was “ecstatic” when she found out she had won the new bike, but would have been satisfied with her biking achievements either way. When asked about her experience with Bike New York, Kurkiewicz says that she can now “highly recommend Bike New York to anyone who has an interest in biking,” and that “any person who wishes to learn to ride, and even those who ride casually, can benefit from their classes and knowledge of biking rules and regulations.”

As Bike New York moves into its second year on the Island, it’s looking for ways to better serve the Roosevelt Island bike community. To share your thoughts, contact Caitlin

Goodspeed at CGoodspeed@bikenewyork.org. For more information about Bike New York’s Island programs, classes, and events, including the National Bike Challenge, go to www.bikenewyork.org.

bikenewyork.org. If you’re interested in volunteering for Bike New York or becoming a paid bike instructor, contact Tim Haney at THaney@bikenewyork.org.



RICC, from page 1

board members of RICC continue that advocacy, though often playing defense in the relationship with Cornell’s full-time paid staff.

Buck says that the most urgent issues now are traffic on Main Street, air pollution, and public transportation.

Backstory

Co-Chair Ellen Polivy opened a RICC board meeting this week with a piece of history. “Let me remind you of something you created – the term sheet. A couple of years ago, we presented it to Cornell, the City agencies, the officials, and, ultimately, Charlene Indelicato, the newly installed President of RIOC, who used it in her early negotiations with Cornell. As you all know, most of the items in it became part of Cornell’s contract with New York City.” But, she says, the items in the contract are “described in language that, although legal, is vague.” As a result, she says, negotiations continue to interpret these vague items and to attempt to resolve them in favor of residents.

Barging

RICC wants to minimize trucks on the Island in favor of barging. That was a success during the demolition phase. But for the construction phase, Andrew Winters, the Director of Capital Projects at Cornell, says that Cornell does not know with any precision how many trucks will be on Main Street on a daily basis. “Traffic estimates are all over the place,” Polivy said, “and the Environmental Impact Statement is an estimate from which you can draw both comforting and terrifying figures, depending on where you look.”

One of Winters’ calculations suggested 22 trucks – 44 trips per day on Main Street – in one of the peak periods of 2015. Because of the way the agreement was worded, even with these 22 trucks, Cornell could still be in compliance with their agreement. In contrast, during the demolition phase, barging replaced trucks almost 100% of the time.

Buck says, “We will continue demanding fewer trucks, more barges, and better explanations.”

Air Pollution

RICC expressed unhappiness with the air-quality monitoring being done by Cornell. In the agreement, Cornell agreed to undertake a program described as being in accordance with environmental law. Additionally, at RICC’s request, Cornell agreed to use on-site monitoring equipment.

But Polivy sees the current monitoring as inadequate. “Their scope of pollutants [is] way too limited. They should be monitoring fumes.” Buck explained that, according to some experts, what Cornell is measuring on site is within the law, but is not adequate for public health. Polivy added that the monitoring system is not accurate in rain or snow, yet construction continues during precipitation.

Dr. Ali Schwayri, a pulmonologist, voiced concern about there being no monitoring on Main Street. He believes there should be monitoring stations there, and that the results should be published in local media outlets. “To me, this is

the primary issue,” he said. “It’s more important than the school or anything else. This should come first.”

Buck responded, “It’s been requested for over a year. Cornell is not willing, so we will get some outside pressure.”

RICC’s next step is to meet with Cornell and get additional experts involved.

PS/IS 217

In the term sheet, education was an important item. It’s one of the few areas where RICC does not have to play defense and is actively seeking to maximize a Cornell influence. RICC board member Christina Delfico said, “They [Cornell and PS/IS 217] are both in the business of education, so it seems like a natural fit.”

The agreement says that Cornell will “adopt” PS/IS 217, but what that means is still being defined. The term sheet specifies the initial focus as tech education in the middle school. In a letter from Cornell to then City Councilmember Jessica Lappin, PS/IS 217 Principal Mandana Beckman is quoted as suggesting “teacher training and support, STEM [science, technology, engineering, math] education, after-school programming courses, tech events, Career Day options, and hardware and software programming development” as ways that Cornell could become involved in the school, and Cornell affirmed that “All of these elements are items that Cornell is anxious to pursue.”

But two years on, there has been very little Cornell influence in the school. Delfico reminded the group that Cornell has hired a K-12 liaison, Diane Levitt, adding that Levitt and Beckman have been meeting every six weeks. She described it as a “relationship in the works,” and characterized RICC as a “diplomat” in this process. She said that the shared goals are middle-school retention (keeping students in the school instead of losing them to off-Island schools) and highlighting PS/IS 217 as a STEM school.

RICC is hoping that Levitt will put together a menu of offerings for the 2015-16 school year and create one-year and three-year plans, so that Beckman can more easily give the green light to programming. RICC is also suggesting that the two educators meet more frequently. Delfico emphasizes, “This is a relationship that is just starting, and we hope to keep supporting it.”

Security

The RICC term sheet asks that elected officials and RIOC hold Cornell and New York City responsible for the security expenses necessary to provide for everyone in the community. Cornell committed only to security services for its campus and buildings, not the Island at large. But the New York Police Department (NYPD) has designated a liaison from its Office of Management Analysis and Planning “to make sure that Island safety concerns are appropriately addressed.” Board Member Joyce Short said, “Now, there is someone that our Public Safety Department Chief [Jack McManus] can have a dialog with.”

Cornell also committed to giving \$400,000 annually to

RIOC to be used for infrastructure. RIOC in turn has increased the number of officers in the Public Safety Department.

Trees

In the term sheet, RICC asked that Cornell replace destroyed or damaged trees with trees of equal number and size. Later, it became apparent that Cornell was removing 95 of 134 trees on what will be their campus. Schwayri, who heads the Island’s Tree Board, believes five of them should and can be saved. He describes them as “majestic,” and says one of them is the tallest tree on the Island. (*The WIRE*, August 2, online at MainStreetWIRE.com/wire3420.)

Winters has said the largest tree can’t be saved, and that it makes sense for Cornell to avoid complex roadway diversions, but the question will be revisited in the December 8 town meeting. Short explained, “It’s really RIOC’s decision what the roadway will look like. But Charlene Indelicato has made it possible for the community to weigh in.” RIOC has put together a schematic to be presented to the community at the town meeting.

Hearing Assistance

The term sheet called for a system to help the hearing-impaired. Cornell has hired a consultant who believes an infrared system should be installed, rather than an inductive looping system (which would circle rooms with a loop of wire transmitting audio from any amplification system in use). While nothing is final, the new NYPL library branch will offer a hearing-assistance system. Because RIVAA and Cornell have a relationship, Gallery RIVAA may be looped as well.

Transportation

Evolving transportation needs remain a key issue. The term sheet requests funding to expand transportation systems for the increased population. Cornell promised to assess the feasibility of reintroducing pedestrian and bicycle access from Roosevelt Island to the Queensboro Bridge, but that now appears very unlikely. Additionally, Lappin was able to secure some funding (but not all that is necessary) to build a ferry landing.

Buck characterizes transportation as “a huge problem with no solutions in sight.”

Town Hall Meeting

“Urge everyone to come,” Delfico said, speaking of the December 8 meeting. Tell your members to come. If you don’t show up, you won’t get any further with what you’re concerned about. If you want to be a part of what goes on and what happens here, then you have to attend.”

Elections

RICC board members were elected (or re-elected) during the meeting. Board members representing the Roosevelt Island Residents Association are now Dave Evans, Ellen Polivy, Lynne Shinozaki, and Joyce Short. Additional board members are Matthew Katz, Judy Buck, Christina Delfico, Erin Olavesen, and Stevie White.

COMING UP

— Continuing Events & Activities —

A listing of **repeating** or **continuing** meetings & events

(A listing of other events scheduled for this weekend and in coming weeks starts on page 3.)

ART EXHIBITS

Snow, RIVAA members winter show, **Tue Nov 11-Sun Dec 28**. Gallery hours **Wed & Fri** 6-9pm, **Sat-Sun** 11am-5pm.

PARKS

Southpoint Park open **daily** 6am-10pm.
Lighthouse Park open **daily** 7am-9pm.
FDR Four Freedoms Park open **daily**; hours 9am-5pm. **Closed** every **Tue**. Free guided tours **Sat** 11am, 3pm; **Sun** 11am.

CLASSES

Art, taught by members of the Roosevelt Island Visual Art Association (RIVAA), **Sat** 11am-2pm, Sportspark. Free.
Hands-Only CPR Training, **1st Wed** 10:45am, Senior Center, 546 Main St.; **2nd Tue** 8pm, 546 Main St 12th-floor conference room; **3rd Thu** 5pm, Child School, 587 Main St.; **4th Sun** 5:45pm, Good Shepherd Center, 543 Main.

MUSIC

First Sunday Jazz Salon, **1st Sun** 5-7pm, Gallery RIVAA, 527 Main St. \$10 suggested donation.

EXERCISE & SPORTS *(alphabetical)*

Basketball (all ages), **Sat** 2-5pm, Sportspark. Free.
Basketball (adults), **Mon-Thu** 7:30-9:30pm, PS/IS 217. Free.
Bike New York classes continue through winter; schedule at BikeNewYork.org.
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/IS 217. Free.
Ping Pong (all ages), **Tue Wed Fri** 6-9pm, Sportspark. Free.
RI Moms on the Move walk and exercise program, **Fri** 11am, Visitor Kiosk in Tramway Plaza. Free. To confirm time: Eva.Bosbach@gmail.com.
Sportspark extended hours (ages 16-25), **Fri-Sat** 9pm-midnight. Weight-lifting and basketball. Free. ***Note:** ID and proof of Island residency are now required.*
Swimming* (all ages; no instructor) – **Sat-Sun** 12-3pm, **Mon-Fri** 6-10am, **Mon Wed Thu Fri** 7:30-10:30pm, Sportspark.
Swimming* (18 yrs+) – **Sat-Sun** 4-7pm, **Tue** 7:30-10:30pm, Sportspark.
Swimming* – Water Aerobics, **Sun** 12-1pm, **Wed & Fri** 9-10am, Sportspark.
Swimming* – Master class, **Mon & Fri** 7:30-8:30pm, Sportspark. Through Sep 29. (*All **Sportspark swimming** \$5; free for disabled, seniors 60+, and ages 0-3.)
Yoga (open-level), **Mon & Thu** 6:15-7:15pm, **Sat** 11:15am-12:15pm, Sportspark. \$5. Mats available.
Yoga (Vinyassa-flow) with Keren Messer, **Mon** 7:45pm, **Fri** 10am, Good Shepherd Center. Info: KerenMsr@gmail.com.
Yoga (Hatha) with Keren Messer, **Tue** 6:30pm, Good Shepherd Center.
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** 6:30-7:30pm, **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.)

Events, regular and otherwise?

List ’em! MainStreetWIRE@usa.net

List early, so that other organizations can avoid conflicts.

See guidelines for information, page 3.

BIRTH THROUGH TODDLER *(listed Sat-Fri)*

Mommy & Me Swim Classes (0-3yrs), **Sun** 11-11:30am and 11:30-12noon, Sportspark.
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** 10:30-11:30am, 536 Main St. Info: IslandKidsRI@gmail.com.
Bi-Ligual Birdies: Mandarin (0-5 years), **Thu** 11am, Library.
Read Aloud (3-6 yrs), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.

OLDER KIDS *(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.
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 grades 1-8, **Mon-Fri** 3-6pm, PS/IS 217. Free. Info: 212-527-2505 or tinyurl.com/RIyouth
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.
Crafts, **Thu** 11am & 3pm, Library
Reading Aloud (children), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library.
Girl Scouts (6-13 yrs), **Fri** 6-8pm, PS/IS 217. Info: 212-527-2505.

SENIORS

Lunch, **Mon-Fri** noon, Senior Center, 546 Main St. \$1.50. Menus outside social worker’s office. Also see listing below.

REGULAR MEETINGS *(listed 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 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 State Senator Jose Serrano and/or staff, **Tue**, alternating between Senior Center, 4-7pm and Library, 3-6pm (Oct 28). Info: 212-828-5829.
Conversations with Cornell Tech Staff at Gallery RIVAA, **Wed & Fri** 10am-12noon & 1-4pm, 527 Main St.
Constituent Service Hours for City Councilmember Ben Kallos, **4th Wed** 4-7pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St.

OTHER

Clinic on Housing Law, **1st & 3rd Mon** 3-6pm, district office of City Councilmember Ben Kallos, 244 E. 93rd St. RSVP and questions to 212-860-1950 or RSVP@BenKallos.com.
Knitting & Crocheting Circle (adults), **Thu** 11:30am, Library. Info: nypl.org.
Food Box Orders from **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**.

Senior Center

Monday 10:00 Zumba 11:00 Computers 5:00 Brain & Body Stretch Tuesday 10:20 Shoppers’ Bus 10:30 Building Strength 11:00 Blood Pressure 1:00 Paint & Sculpt Wednesday 9:30 Yoga Stretch 10:20 Shoppers’ Bus 10:30 Salsa 10:45 CPR Training (1st Wed, monthly) 11:00 Social Media for Seniors: Facebook, Instagram, photos, more 10:45 Spanish 12:00 Bridge 1:30 Scrabble 6:00-8:00 Computer Lab	Thursday (closed Thanksgiving Day) 9:15 Chair Pilates 10:30 Zumba 10:45 Ping Pong 12:00 Movie 1:00-2:30 Theatre tickets at discount prices; see Rema or Annie 3:00 Computer Basics (at the Library) Friday 9:00 Building Strength 10:30 Computers 10:30 Tai Chi 10:30 Poetry/Dance 1:00 Korean Games 2:00 Art with John 2:00 Pokeno
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Adventures OFF-Island

compiled by Sara Maher

A New York City holiday season may come with plenty of boxes and bags, but even a Grinch’s heart will grow with all of these festivities.

Family Fun and Festive Lights

Bryant Park’s Winter Village has its tree lighting the day before Rockefeller Center’s, so it’s the perfect place to warm up for the rush to 30 Rock. The European-style open-air market features jewelry, decorations, and food from around the world. For fun with the family, try ice skating, a scavenger hunt, or a ride on Le Carrousel.

► F downtown to 42nd Street/Bryant Park. Tree lighting is Tuesday, December 2, at 6pm; Holiday Shops open through January 4; skating rink open through March 1; all hours vary by day. Admission to shops and tree lighting is free; ice skating is free, with skate rental \$15-19; one ride on Le Carrousel is \$3. WinterVillage.org

Party in the Plaza

The true New York holiday extravaganza is the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree Lighting. Push your way into Rockefeller Plaza to see performances from the top names in show biz and the world-famous Rockettes, plus the lighting of a truly enormous tree. Note: You will be standing in a large crowd in the cold for a long time, so this is not the best activity for small kids. Make some cocoa and enjoy the live telecast from home instead.

► F downtown to 47-50th/Rockefeller Center. Wednesday, December 3, with performances starting at 7pm and the tree lighting around 9pm. Free. RockefellerCenter.com.

Gingerbread for a Good Cause

Every year, Le Parker Meridien hotel hosts Gingerbread Extravaganza – elaborate gingerbread structures shaped like NYC landmarks. Vote via donation box – every \$1 donated counts as one vote, with all donations going to City Harvest. ► F downtown to 57th Street, then walk south and west to 119 West 56th Street. On display from December 4-January 4. Free. MainStreetWIRE.com/GBread.

Shop ’Til You Drop

The Union Square Holiday Market attracts over one million visitors each year. Hundreds of local artisans set up booths around the Square to sell traditional gifts like Tanjore scarves and Adelo ties, as well as more offbeat offerings such as brew-your-own beer kits, puzzles from New York Puzzle Company, and pet accessories.

► F downtown to 14th Street and walk east to Union Square. Daily through December 24 except Thanksgiving Day, hours vary by day. Free admission. http://urbanspacenyc.com/union-square-holiday-market/

Or Just Look in the Windows

We can’t all have our winter coats fitted on Fifth Avenue, but we can check out the beautiful holiday window displays at some of New York’s most iconic shops. Look for favorite cartoon characters, miniature landmarks, and all sorts of strange scenes, all with a holiday theme.

► All stores listed by F train stop. Lex/63rd St: Bloomingdale’s (1000 Third Avenue) and Barneys New York (660 Madison Avenue). 57th St: Tiffany (727 Fifth Avenue) and Bergdorf Goodman (754 5th Avenue). 34th Street: Macy’s (151 West 34th). Through the holiday season. Free.

Happy Thanksgiving

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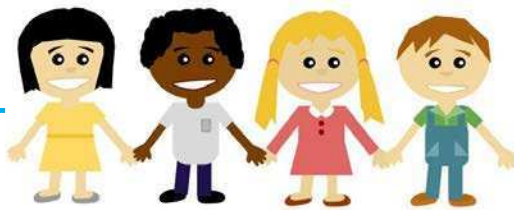


Island Cats thanks our wonderful volunteers
Ben and Jennifer Sileo, Erin Feely-Nahem,
Yeu-Fann Stafford, Meena Seralathan,
Trevor de Sane, Kati Kiehl and Michael Schamis,
Liza Shveitser, Kyoko Abe, Kazumi and
Koji Yoshioka, Yan Ruan, Xiaogeng Song,
Kim Smithingham, Malgosia Dymkowska,
Denise Kang and Gabby Ter-Sarkissian.

A big thank you also to Natasha Cotter,
Judy Buck, Ursula Beauseigneur and
Ron Davidson, Charlene Lacey and
John Dougherty.

We also thank Holly Staver and City Critters, and
our generous donors, as well as the Roosevelt
Island Residents Association and Roosevelt Island
Operating Corporation.

You have all contributed so much to making life
easier for the abandoned cats of Roosevelt Island.



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Deborah Saltzberg, M.D., FAAP
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unClassified deadline for December 13 issue: **Tuesday, December 9**
unClassified deadline for January 17 issue: **Tuesday, January 13**

U.N. EDITOR (retired). Contact Editing Solutions at 917-647-6650 or Joyce. Bratch.Cherif@gmail.com.

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THE CALENDAR - PAGE 7



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Fares, from page 1
fare. That's dictated by the franchise agreement for the Tram, which provides for the MTA to operate the turnstiles at both Tram stations, track Tram ridership, and share Tram revenues, according to Anna Rankin, Communications and Event Coordinator for RIOC.
The MTA declined to comment specifically on how any proposed fare increase would ultimately affect the cost of the Tram, saying initial proposals have not been finalized.
One daily commuter, Laura (who provided only her first name) was unaware of the relationship between the fares. "I use an unlimited [Metro]card. I don't want either [fare] to go up, but I do want to be able to continue using an unlimited card," she said.
Adam Lisberg, the MTA's chief spokesman, said, "The MTA has been clear for more than a year that our financial plan includes a 4% fare and toll increase to take effect in 2015 and 2017, which is basically equivalent to only 2% per year."
Alternatives
Most Islanders have few alternatives to the Tram or subway. But one way residents might lessen the economic impact of an MTA fare increase would be to commute by bicycle, say cycling advocates. The Outreach Manager for Bike New York, Caitlin Goodspeed, said, "If the 2015 MTA fare hike happens, you will definitely see more people choosing to commute via bicycle in the city."
Roosevelt Island does not currently participate in a bike share program, but as *The WIRE* has recently reported, Bike New York and RIOC have combined efforts to investigate what changes would be necessary to ensure a safe environment for cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.
Goodspeed said, "Before a bike share program is implemented on the Island, it is important to have the correct infrastructure in place – everything from better signage to more bike racks."
Commuting by car is not a likely choice for Island residents. Street parking is impractical, and a Motorgate space costs \$190 a month, with an added 18 ¾% New York City parking tax. At The Octagon, an under-building space costs \$300 a month before tax is added.
For years, ferry service has been discussed as a possibility for the Island, though progress toward that goal has been glacial at its fastest, and fares are likely to be higher than those for the subway and Tram.
Direct walking access to the Queensboro Bridge has also been proposed over the years, and the advent of Cornell NYC Tech may make that a more pressing issue, but it's probably at least a few years off.
An MTA decision on the fare increase, and the form it will take, will come in January.

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Chanukah Menorah Lighting

In front of Blackwell House
The fifth light of Chanukah
Saturday, December 20
6:30pm



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Chanukah Dates: December 16-24, 2014

SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING^{B"H}

Friday, November 21 at 4:15 pm
Friday, November 28 at 4:12 pm
Friday, December 5 at 4:10 pm
Friday, December 12 at 4:10 pm



Blessing: Boruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu
Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheer Ki-de-sha-nu
Be-mitz-vo-sov Ve-tzi-vo-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel
Sha-bos Ko-desh.
Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our G-d,
King of the universe, who has sanctified us with
His commandments, and commanded us to
kindle the light of the holy Shabbat.

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