

Photo by Briana Warsing

These Island Girl Scouts have planted an urban apple orchard. (Story below right.)

The Main Street WIRE

36:06
Saturday, November 21, 2015

Priest Diverted Thrift-Shop Funds

by Dick Lutz

Over a three-year period during his service as Roosevelt Island’s Catholic priest, the Rev. Peter Miqueli paid himself significant amounts of money from the proceeds of the St. Frances Cabrini Thrift Shop, *The WIRE* has learned. Funds from auxiliary operations like a Thrift Shop are supposed to become part of the operating funds of the parish, according to a church official, not for a priest’s personal use.

Miqueli is under fire for his conduct of financial affairs in the Bronx parish where he now serves, as reported by *The WIRE* in September (available online at tinyurl.com/wire3601).

Materials that survived what appears to have been a rushed session of document shredding when Miqueli learned he was being reassigned appear to show that Thrift Shop proceeds were consistently deposited into a

“Stipends” account used only by Miqueli. Such accounts may be established by priests as a repository for fees or offerings (“stipends”) they receive for conducting sacramental ceremonies like weddings,



funerals, and baptisms.

Around the end or beginning of each month from October 2009 through November 2012, Miqueli wrote checks to himself ranging

from a low of \$500 to a high of \$6,589. Most were for an even \$1,000, \$1,200, or \$1,500. Check stub notations in the “for” field, when made, typically read, in Miqueli’s hasty scrawl, “Stipends,” with the month indicated. In a few cases, the “for” field is blank, illegible, or unusual. “All Souls 2011” appears for a check dated “12/1/2011,” for example.

In the materials acquired by *The WIRE*, there are three checks (out of 45) on which no amounts appear on the stub, but where clearly noted, the amounts total \$54,605. Two of the checks in the register, with numbers from 1001 to 1045, are voided, and two are blank. Indications are that the only checks written on the account were to Miqueli, endorsed by Miqueli.

During the period in question, parish records show only 11 sacramental events for which stipends

See **Miqueli**, page 6

Cornell Tech Campus Rising Fast

by Sara Metzidakis

Cornell Tech gave representatives of area media their first construction site tour this week. (Photo pages 8-9.)

Construction is well under way on the Phase 1 buildings. The campus has been raised nine feet above street level with all buildings opening into the center of the campus as a precaution against flooding. At that level, they are set to withstand a 500-year flood.

The campus is 12.5 acres designed to be open to the public with over 20% of the space to be available for public use. Andrew Winters, Director of Capital Projects and Planning, says “our goal is to reach out to people and have this campus be accessible with open space that connects people together – no walls, no gates, no barriers.” A 50-foot wide “tech walk” will run diagonally across the campus. An open

green space will provide for art events and festivals. A cafe will be open to the public. There’s a promise of educational opportunities for students and seniors on the Island.

The three buildings scheduled to be open by summer of 2017 are the first academic building, now named the Bloomberg Center; the Bridge, a co-location building where the academic and entrepreneurial worlds will meet; and a 30-story residential building where the top two floors will be reserved for faculty housing. An executive education center and hotel will arrive in the future.

Bloomberg Center

The Bloomberg Center, named in honor of Emma and Georgina Bloomberg, is the main academic building where students and faculty will collaborate

See **Cornell**, page 6



RIRA Recommends Public Purpose Grants

by Briana Warsing

Nine Roosevelt Island organizations will share in \$100,000 of Public Purpose money, if the Board of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) accepts the recommendations voted on last week by the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA).

The vote was 19-2, with two abstentions, to pass on the recommendations of RIRA’s Public Purpose Funds committee. The recommended awards are:

- PS/IS 217 Parent Teacher Association (PTA) - \$17,000
- The Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Association (RIVAA) - \$9,300
- Life Frames, Inc. - \$5,000
- Roosevelt Island Historical Society (RIHS) - \$8,000
- Roosevelt Island Seniors Association (RISA) - \$15,000
- Island Kids, Inc. - \$7,000
- Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA) - \$11,000
- iDig2Learn - \$9,000
- Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance (MST&DA) - \$18,700

RIRA President Jeffrey Escobar reminded Common Councilors that the Council is “not empowered to release public funds. What we are discussing may very well be changed by higher-ups” – meaning the RIOC Board. In fact, Island Kids has entered a protest (letter, page 2).

The chair of the committee that worked out the numbers, Dave Evans, provided some details to the Council. “We had nine applicant organizations vying for a total pot of \$100,000. We looked at the purpose cited by the applicants, took their interview into consideration, and discussed amongst ourselves. When you have to spread that amount among nine organizations, all with compelling needs, that amount seems small.”

As a result, Evans said, “In the cover letter we send to RIOC, we allude to that fact, as well as our hope that the pot can be increased going forward.”

For the most part, RIRA council members stood behind the committee’s decision but some had questions and comments. For example, Rivercross delegate Ellen Polivy asked why RIRA recommended only \$5,000 for Life Frames. Evans responded, “This is a competitive exercise. The only evidence on the Island of Life Frames’ work is at the garden at 504 [Main Street]. That’s the extent of their work. They put together a very nice application but we had to look at it in full context along with all of the other applicants. It’s a competitive application. We have certain criteria

See **PP Funds**, page 6



Girl Scouts Plant Apples

by Briana Warsing

iDig2Learn, in a partnership with Trees New York, planted five apple trees last Wednesday between the Roosevelt Island Garden Club and the Octagon soccer field, coining it an “urban Apple orchard.”

The founder of iDig2Learn, Christina Delfico, an initiative that provides children with hands-on education using plant life, said, “Planting fruit-bearing trees provides food locally and is a great step towards food justice for our City. If we provide equal access to healthy food, the community will be served for years to come.” According to Delfico, these trees

will be available for picking by the entire Roosevelt Island community once they mature.

Trees New York provided the trees and Girl Scout troops 3001, 3244 and 3245 led by Aisha Eleusizov, Heather Smith, and Janine Shaefer, provided the person-power. The girls dug the holes, planted the trees, filled the holes, added mulch, and watered the trees. They spent four hours on the project, stopping only for apple-themed snacks – apple muffins and apple cider. Shaefer said, “It’s so important for us to come together and make our little corner of the planet

See **Orchard**, page 12

Briefly...

- Amalgamated Bank has set its 2015 **Holiday Toy Drive** in motion. Toys (unwrapped) for ages 2-16 can be donated through December 11 at the local branch. Games and gift cards are also welcome. The gifts will be distributed through a local charity.
- On Saturday, November 28th, the NYC **Compost Project** will come to the Saturday Farmer’s Market. Residents can drop off kitchen scraps, which will go to a local composting site under the Queensborough Bridge on Vernon Blvd. The compost created will be used locally for street trees, parks, and urban gardens. Sponsors are the PTA of PS 217, the Girl Scouts, and the Roosevelt Island Garden Club. To volunteer, contact Big Reuse or emailrigardenclub@gmail.com.
- The Cabrini Parish is accepting donations of clothing, jewelry, household goods, books, toys, furniture (except beds & bedding), for a **flea market** to start in December. Donations go to 564 Main Street, 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Call Sue at 630-202-2846 to have items picked up.

The Editorial Page

Join The Community

Mitchell-Lama housing stabilized neighborhoods in transition. TriBeCa, the Upper West Side, and the East Village are what they are today because of Mitchell-Lama. Hard-working people in middle-income professions settled down and formed communities throughout the City. They raised families, invested in local schools and stayed put, in some cases, until their kids were grown. In many cases, beyond.

Roosevelt Island also has Mitchell-Lama to thank for its success. There were no services or programs here when the Island pioneers came. They started the Little League, arranged for the first plots of land for their gardens. They facilitated a book exchange, now a branch of the New York Public Library. They organized the first plays in what became the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance and the first nursery school, which became Roosevelt Island Day Nursery. You, new Islander, are likely to run into someone you know on Main Street. You are likely to know someone that’s lived here over 10 years, or possibly someone that’s grown up here and is now raising their children here.

Now that all of the original buildings are going or have gone private, the Island is no longer a haven for middle-income families looking for a place to raise their children.

We are still attracting an international population – no longer solely United Nations families, but many scientists and doctors. We still attract educated, family-oriented folks. No one denies that this is still a great place to raise children. And let’s face it; people who have young children are probably less likely to move.

The difference with this new group of Islanders is their income; it’s higher, but these folks work more hours, making for less time to invest in the community. Their rent is higher, too, and not controlled by the state as part of a program to encourage middle-income professional families to stay put, so it’s more likely to decrease stability among residents.

With higher incomes, come higher rents and different types of problems for the community to solve, through its organizations. Community groups need to serve and be served by these new Islanders to remain fresh. They need to evolve to stay relevant and in so doing, need new Islanders at their helms and on their boards. They need *you*, new Islander, to help take them into the future. **BW**

Letters

To the Editor:

This letter was sent to the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) Board of Directors dated November 17, 2015.

We are writing to express our extreme disappointment regarding the Public Purpose Fund (PPF) application process. We believe that Roosevelt Island Residents Association’s (RIRA) recommended allocation for Island Kids was unfairly reduced, due to misinformation and lack of communication.

We feel the need to point out the following regarding RIOC’s fiscal year and the dissemination of funds. Despite repeated requests for clarification, we never received a definitive answer as to which fiscal year we were applying for from either RIOC or RIRA’s PPF Committee. However, at the special [RIRA Council] meeting on November 11, PPF Committee Chair Dave Evans explained that a

determining factor that negatively affected our request was that it was for “reimbursement funds” for our 2015 summer camp season. Had the PPF process proceeded as it has in all other years, the allocation would have been made earlier in the year (and spent over the summer). If we are indeed working within RIOC’s current fiscal year, which runs from April 1 to March 31, won’t all payments to Public Purpose recipients be retroactive? This would be a contradiction to the concern expressed by the RIRA Public Purpose Funds Committee. Similarly, if the \$7,000 we did receive is intended for next summer’s Camp Scholarship Fund, we are precluded from applying for FY2016 - the only applying organization facing such restriction.

We’d like to share with you specifically how our Public Purpose Fund allocation is put to use, and shed some light on why we

requested \$20,000.

Island Kids runs a high-quality summer camp for children ages 4-10. We strive to keep our camp as affordable as possible (\$325 per week, compared to \$600-\$800 for comparable, “affordable,” non-government-funded camps in Manhattan). One hundred percent of any Public Purpose funding that we request goes to provide scholarships to families unable to otherwise afford the camp. When, earlier this year, it looked like Public Purpose Funding would be entirely taken away, our Board made the difficult decision to fund \$10,000 in scholarships for the Summer Camp from our very scarce Operating Reserve – a surplus we had for the first time in our history. This prevented us from taking on other improvement projects and supply purchases, and left us financially vulnerable should an emergency expenditure arise.

See **Letters**, page 14

It’s nearly Thanksgiving, the world is at sixes and sevens, the Mets lost the World Series – and what exactly do we have to be thankful for on Roosevelt Island?

Well, let’s see... to start with, there’s Main Street. Yes, it’s true that if you look up to see what’s happening on all that scaffolding you risk falling into one of ConEd’s gas main earthworks, or being run over by a giant cement mixer on the back of a Cornell Tech construction truck. And you can’t drop off your old clothes at the Thrift Shop, because it’s gone; nor find a dusty screwdriver at the hardware, because that’s gone, too. And it’s no use looking for paper and an envelope to write a complaining letter to RIOC because there’s no stationery store any more. Forget dropping into Trellis for a cheering coffee because... you see a pattern here?

All this is true, and it isn’t going to get any better before the holidays, so get used to it. You’re also going to have to put up with ridiculous crowds at rush hours on the subway and ridiculous crowds on the Tram at all hours because that’s just the way it is. And the elevator on the Manhattan side still doesn’t work.

Speaking of things that don’t work, the AVAC garbage system is back – but for how long? It needs a thorough overhaul, something to do with getting worn out by all the garbage it has to handle, just like the rest of us when we reach 40. Everybody agrees on that – but there is some holdup at RIOC. (And you can’t get paper and an envelope to write a complaining letter to RIOC because...)

Of course RIOC isn’t exactly a model of democratic governance, or even Democratic governance. No one knows how the board is appointed – or rather everyone knows but there’s no point complaining because...

But southward look, the sky is bright... Well, actually, it isn’t, because the new Southtown buildings are blocking the light. Which, of course, will mean more Tram and subway passengers. As will Cornell, because whatever anyone says about reverse commuting, all those people will be going back and forth to Whole Foods on Second Avenue because Gristedes is relapsing into its bad old ways of ignoring sell-by dates and customers alike.

And there’s crime. According to the NYPD, robberies doubled between 2014 and 2015 – from 1 to 2. That included the mailman whose scanning device was stolen. Who would want to do a thing like that?

All this is true, more or less – and so are a bunch of other things like, where did all the middle-class housing go? According to the 2010 census, our median income was \$76,250. In 2000 it was \$49,976. That’s mostly the new buildings – but Roosevelt Landings (which we still call Eastwood) is slipping gently into market-rate territory, and you know what the man said: “The rents are too damn high!”

But wasn’t this supposed to be a Thanksgiving piece? Sorry, got sidetracked there for a minute. On the thanks side, some of us are really thankful that Roosevelt Island remains one of the most diverse communities in the city. According to the 2010 census, 54.4 percent identified as White; 23.7 percent African-American or Black; 14.9 percent Hispanic; 20.0 percent Asian;

0.6 percent Native or Pacific Islander; and 5.4 percent other. Nearly half of us were born somewhere else. The Roosevelt Island School (PS/IS 217) has kids from 60 countries – among them, some third-generation Roosevelt Islanders. Perhaps the Island should have its own census category.

Actually, the school is something to be thankful for. Looking one way, the school accepts students from way over in Queens as well as from the Island, making it one of the most diverse schools in the city. Looking another way, as part of Department of Education District 2, it’s lumped in with some of the poshest parts of Manhattan, with some of the highest-performing schools. And in this company, the school is holding its own, according to this year’s scores from the Department of Education, improving especially in math and ELA (that’s English Language Arts – because everything has to have an acronym).

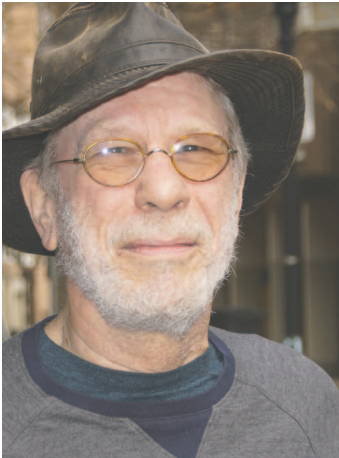
PS/IS 217 will soon do all this under a green roof. What is a green roof? Well, you know, it’s about ecology. Climate change, all that. No, really. The completed project will include things like shaded space for kids to work, gardening education, a hub for weather and air quality data, renewable energy experiments. Fact is, the school got out the vote, in an off year too. Supporters won \$500,000 of funding under the city’s Participatory Budget program, about a third of the total cost. You might say they “got the green.” We have some awesome educators, and parents too.

So change is all around, but Roosevelt Island is still its own place. Things happen differently on Main Street. Soon – at least some time in the foreseeable – the sheds and scaffolding will come down. Westview will have its façade fixed, and new windows too – and, as we all know, appearances are everything. And, after a decade of wrangling with the ownership, Island House and (if all goes well) Westview will become co-op and stay affordable – just. There will be gas lines that work, adding a feed from Manhattan to supplement the one from Queens. (Even the gas is going upscale.) Main Street will come back, better than... well, better than now, for sure.

As for shops – who needs shops? As of this year, we have Island Wines and Spirits – after a 5-year hiatus we can finally get happy without going to, maybe, Queens. And if you really want a coffee shop, you can pay for it yourself at Trellis crowdsourcing: kickstarter.com/projects/1013477143/food-art-and-architecture-on-roosevelt-island

If, after all this, you still want to get off Main Street without risking your life on the F train, there’s going to be a ferry service in 2017. OK, it’ll go to Queens first, and then to 34th Street, right around the corner from the Midtown Tunnel (in case you find you miss Queens). There’s even, maybe sometime, going to be a pedestrian bridge. OK, it’ll go to Queens, of course, but what do you want? You want to walk to Blooming’s?

So we have a lot, or anyway some, to be thankful for. Hey, the Mets won the pennant, the new and spacious Tram has never (yet) broken down, and Island Kids finally got some scholarship money. And if you’re not happy they didn’t get more, you can share your grief with RIOC – by email. It’s charlene.indelicato@rioc.ny.gov. Happy Thanksgiving!



Alex Marshall

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Allison Pearlman and students of Legacy High School;
Angelo Sacino, Kaitlyn Abdul, and students from the PS/IS 217 Beacon Program,
Juniors and Cadettes of Girl Scout Troop 3324

Public Purpose Funds

The Public Purpose Funds (PPF) process has wrapped up and the RIRA PPF Committee’s debate over the allocation of the funds has concluded. During a special session of the RIRA Common Council on November 11, the committee presented their report and, after lengthy discussion, recommendations as to the proposed allocations of public purpose funds were affirmed by the Common Council, as follows:

- PS/IS 217 Parent Teachers Association (PTA), \$17,000

The RIRA Column

- Roosevelt Island Visual Arts Association (RIVAA), \$9,300
- Life Frames, Inc., \$5,000
- Roosevelt Island Historical Society (RIHS), \$8,000
- Roosevelt Island

Senior Association (RISA), \$15,000

- Island Kids, \$7,000
- Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA), \$11,000
- Youth Center-iDig2Learn, \$9,000
- Main Street Theater and Dance Alliance \$18,700

The approved recommendations have been sent to RIOC for adoption, and, if all goes well and the pending legislation concerning the Public Purpose Funds is either signed or otherwise ratified, the applying non-profits should be receiving financial support before the end of the year. For more information regarding this year’s and next year’s PPF process, go to rioc.ny.gov/pdf/PPG_Guidelines.pdf or contact the Committee Chair, Dave Evans, at evansde23@hotmail.com.

It goes beyond saying that the PPF process for 2015 funds, which took more than one-and-a-half years to conclude, was a long and often challenging one. RIOC and the members of the PPF Committee cooperatively worked very hard to keep the process transparent, adhere to the state and statutory rules and guidelines governing the process, maintain the highest standard of ethical decision-making from both a legal and personal standpoint, and work within the often difficult constraints that the process provided to ensure that all Island organizations who applied for funding received fair financial support. We and the Roosevelt Island community commend the members of the PPF Committee for their hard work, dedication and tremendous contribution to the community and those non-profits organizations applying for funds, especially given the circumstances of this year.

Community Polling

In December, RIRA’s Community Polling Initiative will be rolled out to directly ask you, our Roosevelt Island community, which issues you believe directly affect you as an Island resident, as well as soliciting meaningful and actionable feedback. The intent of the community polling is to help target areas of need

so that both the present and future RIRA Common Councils can plan, allocate resources, and maximize efforts. Be on the lookout for more information on how you can participate in the community polling surveys and remind your neighbors and friends to fill them out and return the completed surveys to RIRA. For more details on the Community Polling Initiative, please contact Adib Mansour via email: riradib@earthlink.net.

PS/IS 217 G&T Forum

Are you a parent who is contemplating having your child tested for the New York City Department of Education’s Gifted and Talented (G&T) Program? Is your child currently registered for next year’s test and in the process of preparing for it? Do you have questions about both the G&T Program and other educational programming currently being offered at PS/IS 217?



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

In conjunction with the RIRA Social, Cultural, and Education Committee, the Parent & Teachers’ Association (PTA) of PS/IS 217, and the Education and Roosevelt Island Committees of Manhattan Community Board 8, we will be holding an education summit on Monday, December 14, at 6:30 PM at PS/IS 217 for parents planning to have their child tested, for those who already registered for next year’s test, and for those who have questions about PS/IS 217’s educational programs. A tour of the school will be conducted at 6:00 PM. Representatives of the NYC Department of Education, Principal Mandana Beckman, and members of PS/IS 217’s educational programs will be on hand to answer questions on planning for your child’s next academic year and what your child should expect during the G&T testing process, as well as questions on what to expect from the curriculum of the school’s G&T program, the differences between the educational programs available at PS/IS 217, the keys to success as a PS/IS 217 student, and the future plans for the school’s curriculum. Stay tuned for more details, and reach out to me at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com, with any suggestions or topics you would like to see covered.

Join a RIRA Committee

We are all community servants at some point in our lives. Whether it be as employees of government and for non-profits, elected officials, members of boards and community organizations, volunteers, philanthropists

See RIRA Column, page 14

COMING UP

— THIS WEEKEND —

Toy Drive, now through Dec 11. Drop off new, unwrapped toys, books, games, and gift cards for ages 2-16 at Amalgamated Bank, 619 Main St.

Crafts with Kids: Thanksgiving, Sat Nov 21 10-11am, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Parents Network. RSVP to eva.bosbach@gmail.com.

Palladino Academy of Soccer end-of-season-event, Sat Nov 21. Party 11:30am-3:30pm (Raven’s Head Pub, Astoria, Queens) and scrimmage 7-8:30pm (Octagon Field). Lunch buffet, \$32; children 8+, \$15; under 8, free. Info and RSVP at palladinoacademy.com/please-rsvp-fall-season-celebration-nov-21st

Opening reception for Winter Treasures, Sat Nov 21 6-9pm at Gallery RIVAA. Exhibit runs Nov 21-Jan 31. Gallery open Wed, Fri 6-9pm and Sat-Sun 11am-5pm.

Islander Joan Saunders appears in *The Hot L Baltimore* by Lanford Wilson, **Wed-Sat** 8pm through Nov 21, at Gloria Maddox Theatre (151 W 26th St). Tickets at tschreiber.org or 212-352-3101

Islander Toshiko Kitano Groner exhibits in group show, *Alone Together*, through Nov 28, First Street Gallery, 526 W 26 St #209, **Tue-Sat** 11am-6pm. Info: info@FirstStreetGallery.org.

— REGULAR MEETINGS AND EVENTS —
See page 10.

- THE NEXT THREE WEEKS -

Thanksgiving, Thu Nov 26.

Volunteers needed to serve Thanksgiving dinners to members of the Disabled Association, **Thu Nov 26**, multiple shifts available. Sign up by contacting Jim Bates at fdrhopenemorial@gmail.com or 718-614-4784.

Organics Recycling begins Sat Nov 28, then every Sat at the Farmer’s Market under the helix. Residents can drop off kitchen scraps to be made into compost for local parks and gardens.

A Christmas Carol: A Small Scale Tour, Sat Nov 28 3-4:30pm at the Library. All ages. Free,

Free legal clinic, Wed Dec 2 1-6pm on the Island. For exact location and to schedule private a one-on-one appointment, call Senator Serrano’s office at 212-828-5829.

Tree Lighting Ceremony, Wed Dec 2, 7-9 pm, Blackwell House.

RIRA Common Council meeting, Wed Dec 2 8pm, Good Shepherd Center. Meeting begins with public session, in which residents and others may address the Council.

RIOC Board of Directors meets, Thu Dec 3 5:30pm. Public comment period, starting 5:30, precedes formal meeting.

Island Kids Holiday Event, Sat Dec 5, 10-11:15 am for ages 2-3, 11:30-12:45 pm for ages 4-5. 536 Main Street. Info: jadegite@gmail.com or 212-593-0111.

Holiday Cookie Decorating, Sat. Dec 5 1-2:30pm, Four Freedoms Park. Refreshments. (Ad page 12.)

R&R Concerts performance, Sat Dec 5 7:30pm, Good Shepherd Center. Beethoven’s Symphony No. 1 (orchestra of 30); Debussy’s Prelude to the Afternoon of a Fawn (orchestra of 11), conducted by Benjamin Hochman.

Islander Bonnie Goodman performs in *Playin’ the Palace*, Sun Dec 6 3pm, Don’t Tell Mama, 343 W 46th St (8th/9th). \$20 plus 2-drink minimum. Info/reservations 212-757-0788.

Last day to contribute to Trellis’ fundraiser on Kickstarter.com, **Tue Dec 8** by 11:48am. Info and make a donation at tinyurl.com/nvphx6j

Holiday Open House with Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, **Thu Dec 10** 1-4pm at 1365 First Ave. (73-74 Sts.) RSVP by calling 212-288-4607.

Prepping for New Years cooking demonstration, Sat Dec 12 1-2:30pm, Four Freedoms Park. Refreshments. (Ad, page 12.)

The Main Street WIRE – Holiday Issue, Sat Dec 12. Advertising deadlines: Display, Tue Dec 1; decision date for circulars/inserts, Tue Dec 8 but insertions limited so earlier decision urged; 6,000 copies due Thu Dec 10. 2016 schedule issues: Jan 9, 23; Feb 6, 20; Mar 5, 19; Apr 2, 16, 30; May 14, 28; Jun 11, 25; Jul issue date to be announced; Aug 27; Sep 10, 24; Oct 8, 22; Nov 5, 19; Dec 10. 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 —

Education Summit, Mon Dec 14 6:30pm at PS/IS 217. Tour the school at 6pm. (See RIRA column, this page.)

Crafts with Kids: Holiday, Sat Dec 19 10-11am, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Parents Network. RSVP to eva.bosbach@gmail.com.

— 2016 —

Martin Luther King Day, Mon Jan 18.

Crafts with Kids: Valentine’s, Sat Feb 6 or Sat Feb 13 (TBD) 10-11am, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Parents Network. RSVP to eva.bosbach@gmail.com.

General Election, Tue Nov 3.

Puzzled yet?
See page 8.

The WIRE publishes this column, exclusively, as a service to the community and to the Roosevelt Island Residents Association, and does not control or censor its content.

Island Kids provides support to the families of Roosevelt Island by offering affordable, quality enrichment opportunities for children, and support groups for their parents. Located at 536 Main Street, Island Kids has had a presence on Roosevelt Island for over 30 years and was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 1993.

Island Kids was initially run by a group of volunteer parents who wanted to create programming for their children. I joined the staff of Island Kids in January 2015, eager to put my background in youth development and four years of after-school program and curriculum

The Community Column

development experience to use. As the current Program Director of Island Kids, my responsibilities include the management of the after-school

and summer camp programs, hosting and planning events, and sustaining the presence that Island Kids has on Roosevelt Island. Collectively, the Board of Island Kids has over 35 years of experience in childhood education, nonprofits, accounting, and campaigning.

Island Kids has always adapted its program to the needs of Island residents, which has led to its longevity. Three years ago, Island Kids created an after-school program for kindergarteners because there was no after-school option for five-year-olds on the Island. Now Island Kids is preparing to open a free universal pre-K program that will offer 15 pre-K seats to four-year-olds on Roosevelt Island. This is a much-desired service for parents,. PS217 opened up an additional pre-K class but the wait list is still very long. Island Kids received close to one hundred signatures on a

petition requesting the new program. The Island Kids pre-K program will be a part of Council Member Ben Kallos’ initiative to add more universal pre-K seats on Roosevelt Island, and funding to run the program will be issued by the Department of Education once Island Kids is approved as a universal pre-K site.

The Island Kids Baby Group, Island Kids’ longest-running class, allows parents to build relationships in a supportive environment while adjusting to their new role as a parent. It is offered every Wednesday



Julia Adegite

from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Along with its Baby Group, Island Kids boasts a tumbling class, a year-long after school program, and a summer camp program. Island Kids’ after-school program offers a safe space for kindergarteners to participate in age-appropriate activities. The Island Kids after-school program has reached full enrollment of 12 participants, which displays the need for an after-school program that serves kindergarteners. We plan on adding six more seats once we are approved by the Department of Health.

Additionally, Island Kids’ summer camp program is the only summer camp on Roosevelt Island that serves four- and five-year-olds. We offer an adult yoga class every Wednesday evening for \$20 per class. We are also in the process of finalizing a birthday party

See Community, page 11



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MEMBER

FDIC

Cornell, from page 1

across disciplines. It is a four story, 160,000 square foot building, designed to support the idea that innovation is a collective enterprise, according to the press package supplied by Cornell Tech’s PR firm. In addition to work studios and spaces for professors and students, the building will house an auditorium (which will be available for public events) and a cafe opening onto a ¾-acre lawn. Winters says that wireless access is being explored for the future.

The building, designed by Thom Mayne of Morphosis, is to be sustainable, providing nearly all its own power. There will be solar panels and geothermal heating and cooling systems as well as reduced-flow water fixtures. A 40,000 gallon stormwater tank will be buried under the lawn, and another 30,000 gallon rain tank will be placed on the roof.

Construction of the center started in March 2014, and the steel structure will be completed by the end of this year, with façade and enclosure

to start in early 2016.

In addition to the plans for net zero energy efficiency, the building will pay respect to the inspiration of the arts. Art will be displayed throughout the building. Among the installations will be a WPA mural recovered from Goldwater Hospital.

The Bridge

Kate Bricknell, Vice President of commercial and residential development at Forest City Ratner companies, defines the Cornell Tech mission as the bringing together of academic and industry people to bring new technologies and products to market. “The Bridge is the physical manifestation of that mission,” she says. Tech companies and researchers work in the same building, where it is easy to collaborate, and where established tech companies and university researchers will have many opportunities to interact whether on projects or in more casual encounters. Students will have the opportunity to understand the New York City

corporate world, develop cutting edge technology, or launch their own startups.

Designed by Weiss/Manfredi and developed with Forest city, the Bridge is also built to LEED standards for sustainability. The building will have a glass facade with river-to-river views of Manhattan, providing abundant natural light. There will also be solar panels on the roof. Winters says the building will be finished in early 2016.

Residential Building

Rising 270 feet into the sky, the 26-story residential building, designed by Handel Architects, is to be built to the highest standards of energy efficiency in the world. According to David Kramer, president of the Hudson Companies, the residence will be the largest passive energy structure ever built. “It is a real step forward for energy efficiency.” The 500 beds will furnish various layouts from studios to shared three bedrooms. The top two floors will be reserved for faculty and staff.



Miqueli, from page 1

might have been paid – eight baptisms and three deaths.

Miqueli was a priest here from 2002 to 2012. The records obtained by *The WIRE* do not include the period from 2002 to early 2009, and it is not clear how Thrift Shop proceeds were handled before establishment of this stipends account.

The St. Frances Cabrini Thrift Shop was established by Sr. Regina Palamara, whom Miqueli effectively fired a few months after his arrival here. (She now lives in California.) At the time, there were rumors that he had accused her of misusing church funds, though it now appears that one of his purposes in removing her was to take control of Thrift Shop income. The bank account in question was established within a month of her departure; the first check payable to himself, number 1001, is \$750, dated “10/1/2009.” On the same date, he wrote a second check, number 1002, also for \$750.

Thereafter, the checks soon rose to \$1,000 a month, then to \$1,200, then \$1,500, before occasionally dropping back to something below \$1,500. (One, for \$500, is a second check for “7/28/2011,” noted as “Father’s Day Novena.”) One check, for \$2,400, is dated “4/10/2010,” indicating it was written in mid-April, but is noted as being for “April & May Stipends.” It was written 5 days after a \$1,200 check for “March Stipends.”

Only two checks after the end of 2009 are for amounts other than an even hundred dollars – the \$6,589 check noted for “3/22/2011” and the “All Souls 2011” check for \$1,516. That check, and another for \$1,500, were both noted for “12/1/2011,” and each of those were written twice – first written as numbers 1028 and 1029, then voided, then written again as 1030 and 1031.

The account goes unused, and apparently closed, after the final check, number 1043, noted for “11/30/2012.” Miqueli is still a parish priest in the Bronx where he moved in August, 2012.

They’re 85– and Still Twins!



Twins Marion McLaurin and Frances Sheppard turned 85 recently, and celebrated at Sofrito NYC. (Photo by Pete Monsanto.)

Construction was begun in June 2015 with the fourth floor poured today. Kramer says if an additional two or more floors are completed every week as planned, the building will be finished by the winter of 2016.

Winters mentions that ferry service is projected to start in the summer of 2017, a coincidence that very much pleases him. The ferry will depart from the east side of the campus, close to the residential building.

Recent History

Winters explained that the \$750 million undertaking started with the demolition of Goldwater Hospital in January, 2013, and took 18 months to accomplish. That left the 12.5-acre site ready for the new campus. Winters says that by overlapping planning and design phases, time to construction was cut by a full year.

The process involves replacing all the roadways east and west of the site as well as replacing the utilities, which will be returned to public and private management when the work is complete.

According to Winters, 100% of demolition debris was barged off

the Island in containers or ground up and used to raise the level of the campus eight or nine feet as protection against 500-year floods. In the construction phase, a spud barge and a 60-foot bridge allow delivery of trailer-loads of construction materials. Winters estimates that the barging has kept 1,200 truck trips off Main Street.

As noted by Winters, when the project was awarded to Cornell University, back in late 2011, one of the commitments that Cornell made was to have the campus open in 2017, but to start hiring faculty and start bringing graduate students to New York City well before that. The result? There are currently about 140 students in master’s degree programs. Some 300 master’s students and 260 PhD students are expected to be enrolled by fall, 2017, when Phase 1 of the development is finished. Faculty and staff, funded researchers, and industry personnel will bring the number to 1,500.

Ultimately, half the students and a smaller percentage of the faculty and staff will be in residence on Roosevelt Island. Fifteen hundred people will arrive on campus after the first phase is completed, rising to a total of 2,500 by 2038, when construction is to be complete.

Library Awards Open

It’s baaack!

The Third Annual NYC Neighborhood Library Awards competition is under way and Roosevelt Island’s branch library has a chance to win \$20,000.

Islanders who want to support a bid for one of the five prizes should write a nomination on a form available at revsonfoundation.org/news/category/nyc-neighborhood-library-awards or call

212-935-3340, ext. 0 for additional information, which is also available at www.NYCLibraryAwards.org.

Nominations are due December 18.

The competition is funded and sponsored by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Charles H. Revson Foundation, in association with WNYC’s Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC.

Joyce Short Honored by NYJTL



The New York Junior Tennis League has honored Joyce Short (right) for 26 years of service. Also honored were Lorraine Alexander (left) and Christine Kostianis (second from right). Olympic Gold champion Gigi Fernandez (second from left) attended. Short says the 17-time Grand Slam Doubles title-holder is her inspiration.

PP Funds, from page 1

that are used and that’s the way it fell out.”

Joyce Short, a Common Council member from Roosevelt Landings, was curious about the merits of the request from RIVAA, concerned that RIVAA’s stated purpose for seeking the funds was to pay rent for the Gallery RIVAA space.

Evans said, “We only get qualified applicants. There’s vetting before [the applicant organizations] get to us. Rent is difficult to look at alone. But we did because we are obligated to and we felt that given the nature of the application, and the case that they made, to give them this money.”

Another factor the committee looks at is uniqueness of the services offered by the applicant organization. In regard to Island Kids, Public Purpose Committee member Erin Feely-Nahem explained that Island Kids offer the only summer camp on the Island for children aged 4 and 5, and that their request is for camp scholarships.

Otherwise, the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association got the closest, 96.5%, to its request of \$11,000. The biggest winners were the Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance at \$18,700 – just over half what they requested. (It was noted that they now have to pay rent to RIOCC.) The PS/IS 217 Parent Teacher Association (PTA) received a recommendation of \$17,000, also slightly more than half of what they requested.



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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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Manhattan-to-Queens view shows the velocity of the Cornell build, with three buildings rising simultaneously.

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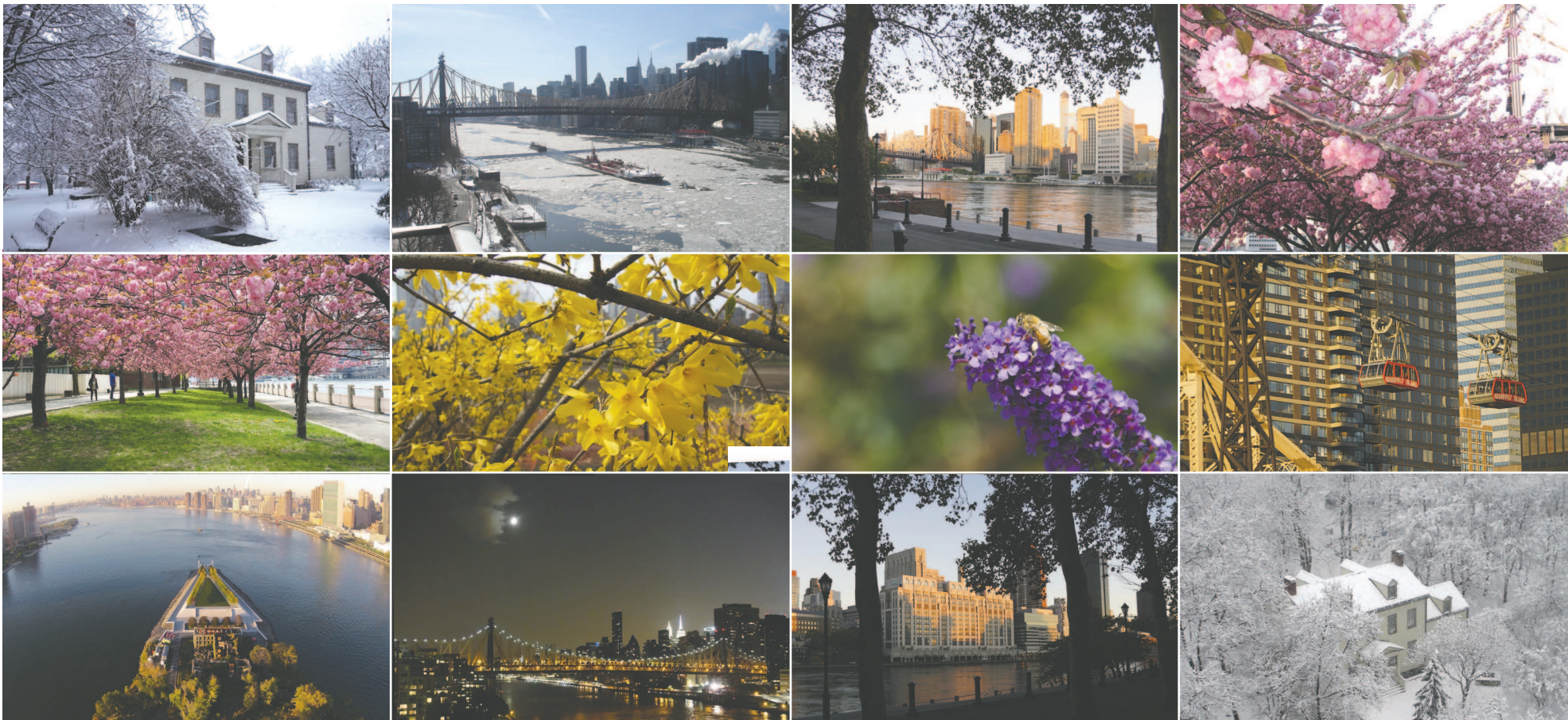
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Adventures OFF-Island

curated by Sara Maher

We got through Halloween, which means it’s time for... Christmas? Not so fast, folks! There is plenty to do between now and Chrismahannukwanzaakah, and none of it involves lining up for a midnight sale (but if you decide to stay up all night waiting for one of the following events, we certainly won’t judge you.)

Balloons Before Basting

For over 90 years, the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade has been watched by families across the country. You can be one of the 3.5 million people to see the spectacle live by camping out along the parade route. This year’s balloons include favorites like Hello Kitty, Pikachu, Spongebob Squarepants, and Ronald McDonald, and there will be performances by Jordin Sparks, Train, Mariah Carey, and the cast of the Broadway musical School of Rock. The wicked winter weather has held off so far, but if chilling out on Sixth Avenue still isn’t your idea of family fun, the parade will be broadcast live on NBC.

F downtown to 57th St, 47-50th Sts/Rockefeller Center, 42nd St/Bryant Park, or 34th St/Herald Square and find a spot along Sixth Ave. Thu Nov 26; parade starts at 9:30am

at 77th St/Central Park West and ends at Macy’s at 34th St/ Broadway. Free. social.macys.com/parade

As Country As We Get

Garrison Keillor and Tim Russell present A Prairie Home Companion Live every Saturday from November 28-December 12. Check in on the escapades of Dusty and Lefty and hear the latest News from Lake Woebegone while enjoying the various musical guests— pianist Jeremy Denk, GQ, Heather Masse, and The DiGiallornado Sisters— playing live.

F downtown to 42nd St/Bryant Park and walk northwest to The Town Hall (123 W 43rd St). Sat Nov 28, Dec 5, Dec 12 at 5:45pm. Tickets \$54-64. prairiehome.org

Every Night is Saturday Night

“Liiiiiiiiive from New York!” Whether you’re a casual fan and only have a favorite sketch or two or make sure you’re in front of the TV every Saturday at 11:30pm, Saturday Night Live: The Exhibition is sure to make you smile. “Become immersed in the fast-paced creative processes” that have driven the show over the past 40 years. Learn how the show comes together in just six days, then interact with original sets, props and costumes, including the Wayne’s World couch and the Weekend Update desk.

F downtown to 42nd-Bryant Park and walk southeast to 417 5th Ave. Ongoing; Mon-Thu 11-7, Fri 11-9, Sat 10-9, Sun 10-7. Last ticket sold one hour before closing. \$29 adults, \$24 seniors, \$20 ages 5-11. snltheexhibition.com

Chilling with Chewie

The last *Star Wars* film was a long, long time ago, but you can experience a part of the iconic films without traveling to a galaxy far, far away. Fire up your blasters at the Star Wars and the Power of Costume Exhibition at Discovery Times Square, presented by Smithsonian, Lucasfilm, and the Lucas Museum. The exhibit features over 70 handcrafted costumes from the first six films, from the mask of Darth Vader and the suit of C-3PO to the gowns of Queen Amidala. Visitors to the showing at Discovery Times Square also get a special presentation of seven costumes from the long-awaited Episode VII: The Force Awakens (which, if you haven’t heard, premieres December 18).

F downtown to 42nd St/Bryant Park and walk northwest to Discovery Times Square (226 W 44th St). Through Feb 29. Sun-Tue 10am-7pm, Wed-Thu 10am-8pm, Fri-Sat 10am-9pm with final admission 45 min prior to closing. Adults \$27.50, seniors \$24, ages 3-11 \$20. discoverytsx.com/star-wars-exhibition

COMING UP

CONTINUING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

A listing of **repeating** or **regularly held** meetings & events (a listing of other events scheduled for this weekend and in coming weeks appears on page 3).

ART EXHIBITS

Time-Semantics of a Korean Wedding, by Eunk Young Park, Octagon Gallery, through Dec 6. Gallery open **daily** 9am-8pm.

Affordable New York: A Housing Legacy exhibit involving Roosevelt Island continues at the Museum of the City of New York, Manhattan, **daily** 10am-6pm through Feb 7. Co-sponsored by RIRA.

Alone Together featuring Island artist Toshiko Groner, **thru Nov 28** at First Street Gallery, Manhattan. Tue-Sat 11-6; closed Nov 26-27.

Winter Treasures at Gallery RIVAA, **Nov 21-Jan 31**. Gallery open Wed, Fri 6-9pm and Sat-Sun 11am-5pm.

PARKS

Southpoint Park open daily 6am-10pm.

Lighthouse Park open daily 7am-9pm.

Four Freedoms Park daily 9am-5pm. **Closed Tue**. Free guided tours **Sat** 11am, 3pm; **Sun** 11am.

CLASSES

Art, taught by members of the RI Visual Art Association, **Sat** 11am-2pm, Sportspark. Free.

EXERCISE & SPORTS (alphabetical)

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

Basketball (adults), **Mon-Thu** 7:30-9:30pm, PS/IS 217. Free.

Pilates with Karen, **Wed** 8:30am. Info 212-750-6223.

Ping Pong (all ages), **Tue Wed Fri** 6-9pm, Sportspark. \$5.

Rhythmic Gymnastics Classes, **Mon** 4-6pm for beginners, **Thu** 4-6 intermediate, Sportspark. Information: RogueRhythms@yahoo.com or 917-331-2044.

RI Moms on the Move walk and exercise program, **Mon 9:30am**, Visitor Kiosk in Tramway Plaza. Free. Day and time may change. Info: Eva.Bosbach@gmail.com.

Palladino Soccer Academy season **Mon, Thu, Fri** through Nov 23, Octagon Soccer Field. U8 & under 4-5:30pm; U9-U11 and U12-up 5-6:30pm. Fees and additional info at palladinoacademy.com/fall-2015-details

Sportspark extended hours (ages 16-25), **Fri-Sat** 9pm-midnight. **Weight-lifting** and **basketball**. Free. **Note:** ID and proof of Island residency 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 Wed Fri** 7:30-8:30pm, Sportspark.

(*\$5; free for disabled, seniors 60+, and ages 0-3.)

Tennis for Kids, see **Older Kids** entries, below.

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: KerenMs@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. \$20.

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

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

BIRTH THROUGH TODDLER (listed Sat-Fri)

Parent and Me Swim Class, **Sun** 11am & **Wed** 10:30am, Sportspark. \$5 for pre-registered Island families.

Baby Story Time (0-18 mo), **Mon** 10:30am, Library. No registration required.

Baby Playtime (0-18 mo), **Mon** 11am, Library. No registration required.

Toddler Story Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11am, Library. No registration required.

Toddler Play Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 11:30am, Library. No registration required.

Island Kids Baby Group (0-14 mo.), **Thu** 10:30-11:30am, 536 Main St. Info: IslandKidsRI@gmail.com.

OLDER KIDS (listed Sat-Fri)

Little Guppies Swim Class (age 3-6), **Sun** 11 and 11:30am, Sportspark. Through Nov 22.

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

Tennis – New York Junior Tennis & Learning program, **Mon-Fri** 3-6pm (ages 8-18); **Tue** 5-6pm & **Thu** 3-4pm for ages 5-7 (with parent/guardian), Octagon Park Courts. No pre-registration; sneakers required. Info tc@nyjtl.org or 718-786-7110.

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

Beacon After-School Program, grades 1-8, **Mon-Fri** 3-6pm, PS/IS 217. Free. Info: 212-527-2505.

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.

Anime Club (teens), **Thu** 4-5pm, Library. No registration required.

Kids & Family Yoga (ages 4-7 & caregivers), see Exercise & Sports.

Reading Aloud (children), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library. No registration required.

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 additional listings, this page.

REGULAR MEETINGS (listed Sat-Fri)

Toastmasters (public speaking), **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, 2101 24th Av., Astoria.

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

Women’s Health Organization, **last Wed** except Nov and Dec, when meeting is on third Wed, 6:30pm, 546 Main St, 12th floor conference room.

Knitting and Crochet Group, **every Thu** 11:30am. Library.

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

OFFICE HOURS

RIOC’s Community Office Hours, **Mon** 3-5pm, 591 Main St. Info: 212-832-4540.

Conversations with Cornell Tech Staff at Gallery RIVAA, **Wed & Fri** 10am-12noon & 1-4pm, 527 Main St.

Constituent Service Hours:

Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, **1st Wed** 3-6pm, Library or Senior Assoc. Info: 212 288-4607.

City Council Member Ben Kallos, **4th Wed** 2-5pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St.

State Senator Jose Serrano, **Wed** 3-6pm, Senior Center or Library. Info: 212-828-5829. (No hours Nov 11.)

OTHER

First Sunday Jazz, **1st Sun** 2:30pm at Gallery RIVAA.

Clinic on Housing Law, **1st & 3rd Mon** 3-6pm, district office of City Councilmember Ben Kallos, 244 E. 93rd St. Reservations and questions: 212-860-1950 or RSVP@BenKallos.com.

Free Legal Clinic, **1st Mon**, sponsored by Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright. For appointment call 212-288-4607.

Policy Night, **2nd Tue** 6:30pm, Kallos office (see above), 244 E. 93rd St.; help formulate policy.

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

First Fridays with Kallos, 8-10am, district office (see above); questions and issues.

Organic Recycling, **Sat** Farmer’s Market under the helix. (See Briefly p. 1)

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

Senior Center

Monday

11:00 **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**

10:20 **Shoppers’ Bus**

10:30 **Tone & Tighten**

10:45 **Spanish**

11:00 **Social Media**

12:00 **Bridge**

1:30 **Scrabble**

Thursday

(Closed Thanksgiving)

9:25 **Chair Pilates**

10:30 **Zumba**

12:00 **Movie**

1:00-2:30 **Theatre tickets**

at discount prices; see

Rema or Annie

Friday

9:00 **Building Strength**

10:30 **Computers**

10:30 **Tai Chi**

12:00 **Korean Exercise**

1:00 **Art with John**

2:00 **Pokeno**

Special Events

Pre-Holiday Bazaar, **Sat**

Nov 21; details TBA.

Thanksgiving Dinner,

Sat Nov 21; see Wendy

Hirsch for details.

Holiday Bazaar, **Sat-Sun**

Dec 12-13; details TBA.

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**CHINA 1
KITCHEN**

City Asks RIOC Attention on Flooding Risk at Coler Hospital

by Dick Lutz

How will Roosevelt Island be protected against the next 100-year storm?

That was the subject of a meeting Tuesday evening, last week, between members of the RIOC Board and New York City representatives, and it barely dented the surface of a 100-year problem.

Executives from various City agencies face the question of how to protect Coler Hospital, the long-term chronic care facility at the north end of the Island. It was hit hard during Hurricane Sandy (October 2012), losing power and suffering serious flooding that affected infrastructure located in the structure's basement. But New York City only "owns" the facility's footprint plus a mere five feet out from its outer walls. The rest is leased to New York State and is under State control (the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, or RIOC).

The NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation, the NYC Economic Development Corporation, and the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency would prefer not to erect a high wall in that five-foot perimeter. It would box the building in, look more than slightly ridiculous, and would require complex openings for truck deliveries, the comings and goings of people, and would probably be a mistaken use of money available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Because the lease between New York City and New York State gives the state control over most of the Island, the Roosevelt Island

Operating Corporation must be involved in whatever flood mitigation measures are implemented by the City.

Setting aside the possibility of the wall close by Coler's outer shell, there appear to be two other possibilities: Raising the Island at the seawall surrounding Coler to create a kind of levee that would lift the promenade several feet higher than its present height. That's one. The other is creation of a berm – essentially a pile of fortified earth that would hold back the water – somewhere in the space between the hospital and the seawall.

There will probably be \$60-80 million involved.

There's no time limit on the available FEMA money, but there is a limit on the CDBG money. That means a specification has to be developed in the next two years. The City hopes RIOC will cooperate. The RIOC Board faces the question of what to do for the rest of the Island, except for the Cornell property, for which plans have already been made by Cornell.

In effect, much of the Island needs to be shored up in preparation for the next "one percent" storm – a designation that means that, in any given year, there's a one percent chance of a Big One. (There are also 500-year storms, but nobody's facing that possibility just yet.) Nobody should be fooled by the notion that 100 years should now pass before the next Sandy. No. Every year, there's a one percent chance, and it could happen this year or next, or in five years – after which the City hopes protection will be in place – RIOC permitting.

The challenge for RIOC, since it

controls the land beyond five feet from Coler walls, is to figure out just what should be done around and near the Coler property, but also to make some decisions about the rest of the Island, for which it remains responsible until 2068, when the City-to-State lease ends and the whole Island once again becomes the City's responsibility.

Joe Musso of the Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency, which was created by Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2014, says Roosevelt Island is not as vulnerable to flooding as many other areas of the City, particularly those "facing" the ocean. But given the damage to Coler during Sandy, something must be done to protect it. On Tuesday night, Musso showed some renderings of designs for the Coler area that might be considered by RIOC, and he expressed an eagerness,

on behalf of the other City agencies involved, to work with RIOC within the limits of the rules on use of the FEMA money, which are fairly loose, "as long as the facility is protected." A representative of the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) said, "We don't think building a wall is a good solution... We want to work with RIOC to elevate the shoreline in a respectful, therapeutic way" – meaning one that preserves a kind of "country living" circumstance for Coler's residents.

RIOC President Charlene Indelicato observed, "There's no question that there's a lot of questions," as discussions ranged over what might be done for the rest of the Island (no specific suggestions so far, but a realization that something must be done). "There are programming options when you go out to the

edge," said another representative brought to the meeting by the City, "or you could explore something in the middle" – meaning the idea of a berm somewhere between the hospital and the seawall. Another said, "Before bringing a designer aboard, we need to know where we're going," again a comment indicating that the City is quite willing to work with RIOC for the best solution for both Coler and the rest of the Island.

A possible timeline for the project would have the new protections in place in four to five years. Meanwhile, steps have been taken at Coler to protect electrical infrastructure and building facilities positioned below the surface of the surrounding land.

In the end, one City administrator said, "All the City wants is RIOC to OK use of the land."

Community, from page 3

package for families interested in hosting birthday parties for their children in the kid-friendly space. This option will definitely be budget-friendly and a welcome addition to Island Kids services.

Island Kids prides itself on offering much-needed services to all Island residents despite cuts in funding. Island Kids has been offering partial and full scholarships for almost 10 years, and this aspect of programming has maintained the ethnic and economic diversity of families that participate. We are able to keep weekly summer camp costs consistent because of funding that we receive from donors to cover the costs of scholarships. This past summer, Island Kids offered \$20,000 in scholarships to several families who would otherwise not be able to pay the \$300-325 weekly fee required to participate in summer camp. We normally receive grants from the Public Purpose Funds, and 100% of Public Purpose funding we have received for summer camp is utilized for scholarships. This year we received \$10,000 from a private funder—a cut of \$5,000 from last year—and utilized \$10,000 out

of the Island Kids operating budget just to meet the demand for scholarships. We did not receive Public Purpose Funds this past summer, and cuts in funding will steadily increase the cost of summer camp for families across the board.

Applications for summer camp and afterschool programs are accepted on a rolling basis beginning in mid-March (summer camp) and early August (afterschool programs). The tumbling class is offered in cycles beginning in January. For applications and additional information, visit our website at islandkids.org. You may also join us for our Holiday Event on Saturday, December 5th from 10:00-11:15 a.m. (ages 2-3) or 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. (ages 4-5) at 536 Main Street. The event includes music performances, arts and crafts, and refreshments, and you will be able to meet current Island Kids and their families. If you are interested in receiving more information about a program or have any questions, please contact me via email at jadegite@gmail.com or via phone at 212-593-0111.



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Orchard, from page 1
better.”

Trees New York
The scouts were assisted by Cheryl Baylock, the Director of Youth Programs for Trees New York and arborist Sam Bishop. iDig2Learn and the Girl Scouts had worked with Baylock before. In fact, last April the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) removed the iron gates in the tree pits from 11 trees along the sidewalk across from the post office to pave the way for a tree stewardship

effort. Trees New York worked with the Girl Scouts to loosen soil, add flowers and mulch those trees. Baylock praised the scouts. “They were enthusiastic participants of our street tree stewardship event last spring. So when we found a location on Roosevelt Island to plant fruit trees, we knew that iDig2Learn, the Girl Scouts, and the Garden Club would be the ideal partners to adopt [the trees] and take care of them. We look forward to continuing the program with lessons on fruit tree

maintenance, pollination, and soil science.” He added, “Trees New York selected Roosevelt Island among several garden locations around the City [that] were finalists to receive the FruiTrees program. The apple trees were selected because the existing crabapple trees nearby will enhance their ability to pollinate and produce fruit.” Dr. Ali Schwayri, president of both the Roosevelt Island Tree Board and Roosevelt Island Garden Club, joined Baylock and Delfico

in August to choose the site. He said, “We are lucky to have some remaining green areas on Roosevelt island. Fruit trees provide food for body and mind and are a welcome addition to the necklace of cherry trees on Roosevelt Island.” Trees New York selected the specific apple varieties for their unusualness and taste: Crimson Gold, King David, Pink Pearl, Red Summer Rambo, and Tolman Sweet. They are all dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties so they will be easier to pick.

iDig2Learn
iDig2Learn was launched in March 2012 with the help of New York City grants out of the desire to excite children about their natural world and allow them to discover how plants improve their everyday life. iDig2Learn’s purpose is to unite the community around the idea that city children benefit greatly from time outdoors in nature using their environment to explore science, math, and the origin of food through plant life. Delfico’s plans for the organization are to “grow the initiative out, and show other communities how easy it is to unite their neighborhoods with plant-themed fun and educational projects.” She says, “Plants can be the gateway to many topics – health, science, math, art, photography, history, and so much more. Local groups with the same goals can come together [to serve those interests].” Recently, iDig2Learn was honored as a top ten finalist in TEDx Manhattan, *Changing the Way We Eat*, and presented a workshop at the Green Thumb 29th Annual Conference. In July, the Producers Guild of America (PGA) named Delfico its East Coast Green Committee’s co-chair. The PGA produced a green guide to help media companies and television and film productions waste less. “I am working with RIOC on the film and television permits to reduce idling of production vehicles, a common concern from residents, and to remind our media friends that Roosevelt Island is green,” explains Delfico, who plans a cider tasting on the Island in our future. Stay tuned, this may bear fruit.



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RIRA Column, from page 3

or merely donors to an organization serving a community, at one time or another a piece of us is contributed to the greater good. Service to the community, in the truest sense, attracts a special kind of individual and is often based on a sense of duty or a commitment to a cause that extends beyond the needs of the moment. For some, investing in your community ensures a return three times over to a place where you live, breathe, work and play. For others, it is giving back to a community that invested in them. Regardless of one's motives, providing service to the community embodies the principles of common good, service to others and social equity.

With the election of David Lawson, Westview Representative, as chair of RIRA's Planning Committee, the leadership of RIRA Common Council's Committees is fully realized. As I have said many times, the work of RIRA is done largely through its committees, and you, as a RIRA member (as all Islanders are), are eligible to serve on as many committees as you wish. Are you concerned about the disappearance of affordable units on the Island? The RIRA Housing Committee wants you. Do you have ideas on how our infrastructure can more efficiently and safely serve our growing population? The RIRA Planning and RIRA Island Services Committees need your services. The following is but a small slice of the active RIRA committees that you and any of your neighbors may and should join:

- **Government Relations Committee:** As the representative of RIRA and the Roosevelt Island Community to the various Local, State and Federal representatives and agencies having jurisdiction over the Island, the GRC ensures the establishment of ongoing relations with local, state and federal government, and quasi-government officials.
- **Housing Committee:** Addressing the issues and concerns of Island residents regarding the management, living conditions, and rental policies of the residential buildings on the Island, it serves as the liaison for RIRA and the Roosevelt Island Community to various building committees and housing task forces.
- **Island Services Committee:** While supervising and reviewing the delivery of transportation, park and recreation, sanitation, postal and commercial services and common facilities, the Island Services Committee assists individuals and organizations who may experience problems obtaining Island services and looks to provide solutions on how current Island services can better serve the Roosevelt Island Community.
- **Planning Committee:** Tasked with all matters involving future development of the Island, including but not limited to commercial development, housing, vehicular access, transportation, social service and energy, the Planning Committee monitors and recommends positions on planning matters, and recommends and implements policies relating to energy, conservation, distribution and generation.
- **Public Safety Committee:** Charged with recommending and implementing RIRA and Community positions on all matters related to safety, security, vehicular traffic and parking on the Island, the Public Safety Committee looks to work together with the Public Safety Department and

New York Police Department Local Precinct 114 on behalf of the Community to address the concerns of law enforcement by Island residents.

- **Social, Cultural and Education Services Committee:** Looking to create social, cultural and educational programs and events promoting and improving community bonds on the Island, the primary task of SC&E, Social, Cultural and Educational Services Committee, is to develop initiatives and programming which bind and strengthen the fabric of the Island Community.
- **Communications Committee:** The hub for community publishing and educating the Island community of RIRA initiatives and community events, the Communications Committee looks to find and develop better means of increasing the visibility of the Island community and build better systems for information and event sharing among the Island's community groups.
- **Legal Action Committee:** Responsible for advising the Common Council and RIRA-at-large as to the viability of legal action as a means for solution and recourse.

The success of each of these committees, if not the Island community, depends on the time, effort and expense each of us make in our investment in these committees' work. No matter how rich or poor a service organization may be, it is only as successful as, and can only service the community to the extent of, those who commit themselves to its operation. With the completion of the election, the Common Council shall be reconstituting both the chairmanships and the composition of each of these committees. Thus, 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 have been mentioned) to directly reach out to myself at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com, or to the respective Committee Chairs at contact@riraonline.com. By joining and participating in a RIRA committee, not only will you become more engaged in the Island community, but you will be providing important services to your fellow residents.

Contacting Your RIRA Delegate

Did you know that you can always contact any member of the RIRA Common Council either through email or social media? Aside from directly contacting me at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com, you can now send an email to contact@riraonline.com or point your browser to www.facebook.com/riraonline, and your issue or question will be directly routed to your Common Councilor and those RIRA Common Council members and Committee Chairs who are in the best position to help.

Lastly, we would be remiss if the Common Council did not offer to each of you a full-hearted Happy Thanksgiving from our families to yours. As we all take this time to look back and reflect on the blessings of this past year while enjoying food and family, please also take the time to remember those in our community who are less fortunate and in need. In a city and community 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 New York City's overburdened shelters, do find a way to help all have a Happy Thanksgiving.

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Dr. Doka will review the many ways we might experience grief and we may deal more effectively with our loss. All our sessions are designed to be useful to people involved in a series of loss situations. We welcome you to join us.

Our last event of this season will be held **Tuesday Dec 1, 2015**; this is our ***Annual Memorial Tree Lighting***, whereby guests can bring an ornament in honor of your loved one to decorate our Memorial Tree and to participate in our Service of Remembrance. Please R.S.V.P. by November 27, 2015;

Both Sessions begin at 7:30

We, at **Thomas M. Quinn and Sons**, and in all of our **Dignity Memorial Funeral Homes**, are thinking of you throughout the year. We welcome you to join us for these events. Please R.S.V.P. to let us know you will be attending any or all of these sessions.

We look forward to hearing from you.....

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