



Youth Center Comes Up for Bids

by Briana Warsing

Anyone dreaming of running the Roosevelt Island Youth Center, located at 506 Main Street, has until November 4 to put together a proposal.

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an operator of the Youth Center on its website, as well as to the New York State Contract Reporter's website. A pre-bid meeting was held on October 5 followed by a walk-through of the center.

The Roosevelt Island Youth Program (RIYP), headed by Charles Defino, has operated the Youth Center since 1978. RIYP also runs a Beacon after-school program out of PS/IS 217.

An RFP "doesn't mean we're against Charlie," said RIOC CEO and General Counsel Susan Rosenthal at an April Real Estate Committee meeting. "But we need some input and monitoring of what

the role is of the Youth Center. What are the programs and what should they be?"

The RFP

The RFP specifies that the operator provide year-round See **Youth Center**, page 7

RISA Cleans the Slate

by Dana Agmon and Briana Warsing

It's been a tumultuous few months for the Roosevelt Island Senior Association (RISA). Former RISA President Dolores Green stepped down in early June after a 16-year tenure and Barbara Parker was elected president. On June 30, the 37-year-old organization lost its Department for the Aging (DFTA)

contract — and the attendant funding — to manage the Island's Senior Center. On July 1, the Carter Burden Center for the Aging began managing the Senior Center, and RISA became a standalone organization.

Despite these upheavals, RISA's new leadership says the group is focused on the future, with new initiatives, a See **RISA**, page 4

Briefly...

- The owner of the future bistro/cafe at **503 Main Street** is filing with the **New York State Liquor Authority** for a license to sell wine and beer. A public hearing on the application will be held Thursday, October 13, at 7:00 p.m. at Marymount Manhattan College, 221 East 71st Street, Regina Peruggi Room.
- Islanders have dropped off **20,894 lbs. of food scraps** in less than a year to divert 10

tons from landfills thanks to the **NYC Compost Project** hosted by Big Reuse. Every Saturday, from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., residents can drop food scraps near the Wengerd Farmers Market. No meat, oil, or dairy.

• Senator Serrano and a representative from **Access-A-Ride** will be at the Senator's Island office hours on Oct 12, at the Senior Center from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

• **Westview** took their first official step toward

privatizing. In a vote taken last weekend, out of 227 apartments who voted, 209 voted to accept the **Affordability Plan**.

• The **Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space** is hosting their third Community Advisory Committee meeting: Thursday, October 13, at 7:00-8:00 p.m. at the Good Shepherd Community Center (543 Main Street) in the large community room.

• We have a **new public safety assistant director**, Kevin Brown.

• **Birds are migrating south**, through November. Bright lights disorient night migrating birds, says Wildlife Federation Foundation head Rossana Ceruzzi. She advises to turn off lights that aren't needed, close blinds, and move plants off windowsills to prevent bird fatalities.

ADA Celebrants Call for Action

by Briana Warsing

Islanders need to come together to support neighbors, advocate for greater accessibility, and push back against the dismantling of affordable housing that makes it increasingly difficult for residents with disabilities to call Roosevelt Island home, say the speakers assembled to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

More than 120 people packed the Roosevelt Island Senior Center on September 29 to hear City officials and local residents discuss not only national progress made, but also the many challenges that still remain for people with disabilities citywide and on the Island.

The event was hosted by the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association (RIDA) in partnership with the Carter Burden Center for the Aging.

The Mayor's Office

Victor Calise, commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and one of the headlining speakers, said his task is to make life easier for New

York's disabled population. Calise, a native New Yorker, sustained a spinal cord injury in 1994 and is himself in a wheelchair. He outlined the mayor's Accessible NYC initiative. Making local transportation easier is a huge priority for him.

"How do we get people around the City? You're fortunate enough here to have an accessible subway stop, but not a lot of people in New York have an accessible subway stop. Right now we have a lot of development going on around the City. We need to find a way to incentivize those developers to build more elevators. It's important. Of the [City's] 465 subway stations, only 84 are accessible. We need more. That isn't good enough for people with disabilities."

Calise sees the Island's growth as an opportunity. "I love the Island. It's beautiful and it's getting more and more crowded. The good thing about when things get crowded — and especially when new buildings go up — everything becomes more and more accessible."

See **Disability**, page 6

Colombian Artist Exhibits at Island's New Pop-Up Gallery

by Dana Agmon

Urbanism and consumerism collide in a new exhibit by Colombian artist Alexis Duque, opening October 13 at the Paul Calendrillo New York Gallery at 507 Main Street.

A working artist for two decades, Duque earned his BFA from the University of Antioquia in Colombia, and trained at the Art Students League in New York. Although he says his art has been influenced by many different experiences, he acknowledges being shaped by the Magic Realism movement of Latin American art and by artists like Frida Kahlo, as well as Mexican muralists that combine figurative style and social dimension in their works.

"My paintings depict imaginary cities inspired by slums and shanty-towns of developing countries, overflowed with consumer goods, as well as by nature, in an uncontrollable growth and accumulation of waste," says Duque. "My work explores the chaotic and unavoidable processes of urbanization in our globalized and overpopulated world,

See **Art**, page 11



Portrait 1 by Alexis Duque

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The Editorial Page

We Are an Island In Transition

At the last RIRA meeting, President Jeff Escobar tasked the incoming Common Council with maintaining what he coined, the “Roosevelt Island way of life.” He defined it as the ability to live equally and respectfully, in our diverse community, a diversity that is as much socioeconomic as it is cultural. He also discussed the challenges ahead; the impact of Cornell is an unknown.

At the recent Americans with Disabilities Act celebration, Judy Berdy said the Island used to be a bubble and now the bubble has burst, regarding our diminishing stock of accessible affordable housing.

This difference in perspective can be explained by the fact that she’s been here for 39 years and has seen changes in our commitment to the Island’s mission as asserted in the General Development Plan, yet as she also said at the meeting, she’s not going anywhere.

Mr. Escobar has lived here since 2006 and did not experience the bubble Ms. Berdy refers to. But that doesn’t mean his experience is any less valid. They have something in common, despite their differences in perspective. They are motivated and they care about their surroundings and dedicate much of their time to their community.

In other news, we have a new Deputy Director of Public Safety who Public Safety Committee chair, Erin Feely-Nahem, described as someone who “speaks community policing.” Westview voted to accept its affordability plan, ending the Island’s relationship with Mitchell-Lama.

In some ways we are set up for the future. But a lot depends on whether we embrace it. As Mr. Escobar said of the future RIRA, “The new slate is a new slate.” What do we want for our community? What values do we share and want to preserve? What can a strong RIRA do for our community? What can a strong community do for our community? Think about it. Make your ideas a reality. Run for the RIRA Common Council. Give your building a voice. Give your neighbors a voice.

Bring back the bubble!

BW

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Letters

To the Editor:

The recent mechanical problem with the Roosevelt Island access bridge on Friday, September 23, underscores a very serious problem that has long been ignored by a variety of federal, state and city agencies. Last week, once again, during the UN General Assembly meeting, East River traffic was diverted from the west channel to the east channel, requiring our antiquated drawbridge to open and close frequently to enable river traffic to pass.

This diversion ostensibly was initiated to protect the UN campus from being attacked from a passing boat. Each bridge closure is designed to last 15 minutes, but typically lasts longer, preventing emergency responders’ vehicles, such as fire trucks, ambulances, and police cars, from either entering or exiting the Island. The backed-up traffic on Main Street and Vernon Boulevard add even more time. As another point of information, the NYC Fire Department Special Operations Command Center is located on the Island. If they needed to make a rescue, they would be unable to exit the Island.

Further, even if earlier promissshines to station first responders here were kept, they could not handle emergencies such as a major building fire, or transport a critically ill or severely injured patient to a hospital in time to save a life. These bridge closures put the lives and safety of over 12,000 residents and workers at risk. Imagine if a child in any of the schools or playgrounds falls and is severely injured.

I am convinced that these closures and river traffic diversions are nothing more than a publicity display. For one, it is clear by looking at an NYC map, that the southern tip of the Island is directly opposite the UN campus, so that even with Coast Guard and NYPD boats, a terrorist on a north-bound vessel could stage an attack as it is about to enter the east channel. Or it could even attack the Long Island City power plant and knock out the entire city’s electricity for months.

Instead of these unnecessary closures, the following steps must instead be taken: First, all pleasure boats should be prohibited from north- or south-bound passage in either

channel during the times in question. Secondly, the only non-governmental boats allowed to pass during those times should be fuel delivery to the power plants. Third, RIOC should enlist the assistance of our city, state and federal elected officials to meet with Homeland Security and other agencies to resolve this issue. Last, funding must be provided to address the problem which caused the bridge mechanisms to malfunction September 23 after a full week of openings and closings.

The only way we will resolve this issue is to get our residents involved. Please keep writing and calling your elected officials, starting with RIRA representatives and including all our city, state, and federal officials.

Raye Schwartz

To the Editor:

The reorganized Roosevelt Island Senior Association Board wants to notify our neighbors that we are planning a party to recognize the former, longtime RISA President, Dolores Green, for her devotion to this organization and the seniors of Roosevelt Island over the past sixteen years.

At this time we are reaching out to family and friends to help us with this event. If you’d like to support the new RISA Board in this endeavor, please don’t hesitate to contact RISA at 917-951-4137.

Please stay tuned for further information.

The RISA Executive Board
Barbara Parker, President
Donna Chenkin, VP
Sherie Helstien, Secretary

To the Editor:

The sidewalk area on the north side of Gristede’s, near the exit door and the entrance to the garage, looks as if it has not been cleaned in years. Birds have been having a field day, and it is really gross. Who has the responsibility for doing this area? Please take care of this as it really detracts from the community.

Susan Cohen

To the Editor:

On a recent fall day, we were enjoying breakfast outdoors at the Riverwalk Cafe. Talk turned to Donald Trump: what’s wrong with Trump; why to fear Trump; and, finally, voices rising, how could United States Senator John McCain, so brazenly insulted by Trump, announce that he would vote for him? At the next table, a man and woman glanced our way. Deftly, a driver’s license was slipped onto our table along with a friendly introduction, “You never know who you’re sitting next to.”

The man was Doug McCain, the son of Senator McCain’s first wife, and the senator’s adopted son. An airline pilot, Doug McCain and a colleague were visiting the Island for the first time, and lingered long enough to charm this noisy band of Democrats. Just another Roosevelt Island day!

Judy Buck
Joyce Bratich Cherif
Phyllis Burdoo
Vicki Feinmel
Ellen Levy

To the Editor:

I joined the RIRA Common Council in November 2014 after someone simply invited me to join. I really had not thought about it before then, but I have always enjoyed helping others, being involved in community events, and meeting new people. This seemed like an opportunity I would enjoy.

I joined the Social, Cultural & Educational (SC&E) Committee, and then became the chairperson of the Hands-Only CPR Sub-Committee in January 2015. I have a background in nursing and social work, so this also seemed like something I would enjoy doing. Over 390 Roosevelt Islanders received training in 2014. We’ve also had training events at the Tram and Subway, the

See **Letters**, page 14

Letters deadline
for Oct. 22 issue:
Tue., Oct. 18, 5pm

Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters of interest to the Roosevelt Island community, and to/from officials. Recommended maximum length, 350 words; longer letters will be considered if their content, in the judgment of the editors, merits the required space. All letters are subject to acceptance and editing for length and clarity. Letters submitted anonymously will not be published. 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. Submit to MainStreetWIRE@gmail.com. Expect a response and, if you receive none, call 917-842-7638. Alternatives: Typed copy left at 531 Main Street, addressed to The WIRE.

The Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) is a volunteer-run organization whose members are elected by Roosevelt Island residents to improve our community and tackle any and all issues of concern to them. The rewards of serving are far greater than the time commitment of three hours per month to enrich the lives of our neighbors and the community. Anyone who is at least 18 years old may serve, regardless of citizenship or nationality. You, too, can be active in your community, and advocate for the issues that are important to you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors. Run for a RIRA Common Council position to

The RIRA Column

represent your building and your community.

RIRA will hold its next election for representatives on November 8, and we invite you to be part of this wonderful organization. If you are interested in making a difference on Roosevelt Island, please contact me, Adib Mansour, at riradib@earthlink.net so we can arrange a conversation about RIRA and how you might participate as an elected representative.

Submissions

Pick up your RIRA nomination form – available October 1 through October 25 – from the Public Safety Office (550 Main Street) or the Public Library (524 Main Street). Forms must be completed and deposited in the red box at the Public Safety vestibule *no later than*

Tuesday, October 25, 2016, at 9:00 p.m.

You may run for a general Common Council seat as well as for President or Vice President.

Seats Available

The following are the RIRA election districts and their needed number of Council members and alternates: Southtown (11); Rivercross (3); 546 Main Street in Roosevelt Landings (2); Roosevelt Landings (7); Island House (3); Westview (3); 2 River Road (1); 4 River Road (1); Manhattan Park (8); Octagon (5).

Officer Responsibilities

President: The President shall be the chief executive officer and the principal spokesperson of RIRA, a voting member of the Common Council, presiding officer at all meetings of the Council and of town meetings, and an ex-officio member of all committees. It shall be the responsibility of the President to co-sign, with the Treasurer, all checks.



Adib Mansour
Election Nomination Chair
riradib@earthlink.net

Vice President: The Vice President shall supervise all RIRA elections, all RIRA communications (both internal and external), secretarial services
See **RIRA**, page 13

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

Hope Church Roosevelt Island (Hope RI) launched just over two years ago. Hope RI is led by myself, my wife Amanda, and a leadership team who all live on the Island. Started by a group of Island neighbors, Hope Church's membership is made up of 35 different ethnicities and includes both Island pioneers and a growing group of young professionals who have moved here over the past three years.

Hope RI is a Christian church comprised of people from various contexts, cultures, and even creeds, asking questions about faith and how it intersects with their lives in New York City. Hope RI holds a core belief that starting new churches is one of the best ways to engage new people with an understanding and experience that there is a God who loves them. In addition, new churches often have the ability to innovate in ways that established churches cannot, especially when it comes to creating environments that allow people to learn about Christianity as they ask some of the weightier questions of life.

Though Hope RI is a part of a larger network of churches across the city (Hope Midtown, Hope Astoria, Hope Long Island, Hope East Queens, and Hope Brooklyn), it is committed to the social, cultural, and spiritual flourishing of Roosevelt Island. We understand that, while the Island's community is more tightly knit than most, living in such a large and fast-paced city can still be very isolating. We know that many of our neighbors come and go, never having the opportunity to engage in the life and

culture of the place we call home. We believe that God created us for authentic community and wants to move all of us from isolation into diverse communities where we can get to know one another and celebrate our diversity, experiencing encouragement, grace, and mercy, along the way.

Hope RI holds a central value that the church is not intended to be an institutional religious service that remains detached from the rest of life, but is instead meant to be a group of people learning to live like extended family, blessing others both inside and outside of that church community throughout the week. You can find Hope RI gatherings of 10-20 people meeting throughout the week in many Roosevelt Island buildings, where neighbors will come together to eat, learn the scripture, celebrate together, mourn together, and serve the neighborhood together.



Dan Sadlier
Lead Pastor, Hope Church
Dan@hopechurchnyc.org

Currently there are groups in the WIRE buildings [Westview, Island House, Rivercross, Eastwood which is now Roosevelt Landings], 10 River Road, 30 River Road, and the Octagon, and a new group will begin soon in Southtown. In addition, Hope RI has started a monthly gathering for international students
See **Hope**, page 13

COMING UP

— THIS WEEKEND —

Opening reception for Per G Hanson's Archipelago Love Sat Oct 8 6-9pm, Gallery RIVAA. Show runs thru Oct. 29. Gallery hours: Wed & Fri 6-9pm, Sat-Sun 11am-5pm.

Auditions for Call Me Crazy Dancers' Christmas show, Sun Oct 9 3pm, MST&DA. Seeking male and female dancers of all ages and all disciplines including ballet, jazz, tap, modern, contemporary, theater, and ballroom. Bring all applicable dance shoes. Info about Call Me Crazy Dancers: daydreams-dancetheatre.weebly.com

Columbus Day, Mon Oct 10. Senior Center will be closed. Registration open for Island Kids Afterschool Program for Kindergartners for 2016/17 school year (limited space available). Info: islandkids.org or islandkidsri@gmail.com.

Roosevelt Island Day Nursery open enrollment continues 8:30am-3pm daily, until classes are filled, at 4 River Rd. Info: 212-593-0750

Four Freedoms Park Third Annual Photo Contest, open thru Oct 15. Win a \$500 gift certificate to Adorama. Info and submit your entry: fdfourfreedomspark.org/2016-photo-contest

— REGULAR MEETINGS EVENTS — See page 10.

— NEXT TWO WEEKS —

ID NYC pop-up enrollment site, Oct 11-17 at the Senior Center. Mon 10am-12pm, Tue-Fri 9am-5pm. Appointments preferred. Get a free one-year membership at 40 of the City's leading cultural institutions, including museums, performing arts centers, concert halls, botanical gardens, and zoos, plus other benefits. Info and appointments: nyc.gov/idnyc.

Science fiction book discussion group, IT by Stephen King, Tue Oct 11 6:30pm, library. Free.

Access-A-Ride Application Process, Wed Oct 12 11am-2pm, See ComingUp, page 9

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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

The Community Column

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RISA, from page 1

broader vision, and, they hope, a clean slate. And the organization isn't going anywhere.

"I don't want to see an organization disappear if it doesn't have to," said newly appointed RISA Secretary Sherie Helstien.

A New Board

On a recent Friday morning, Parker, Helstien, and new board member Lorraine Altman sat at one of the picnic tables in the front room at the Senior Center to lay out their plans for RISA's future.

"We are formulating a full board and plan on having a community meeting to build on the foundation of RISA history," explains Parker. Parker was the secretary and outreach community liaison under former president Green and is credited with expanding the group's membership.

"When I became secretary three years ago, 95% of the membership was from this building [546 Main Street]. I did community outreach in the other buildings to get more members from other parts of the Island. Now we have 185 current members from all corners of the Island."

Parker says that shortly after being elected in June, she called on Helstien, longtime Island activist and vice president of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association, to join forces in her "rebranding, reorganizing, and revitalization" mission.

The group says they are planning to hold a general membership meeting on October 25 to introduce the new full board. They're very much interested in involvement and feedback from both members and non-member Island seniors.

Room for Everyone

When asked about the Senior Center's new management, the Carter Burden Center for the Aging, Parker says, "It could have been handled better." But she insists that it's all water under the bridge. They say they are looking forward to cooperating more with Carter Burden in the future; they hope to work together and share the space and hours to bring original programming to Island seniors.

RISA has opened up membership to more Islanders by adopting the AARP's guidelines, accepting adults ages 50 and up. Membership dues will remain at \$15 per year. "RISA is a dues-paying organization and always has been," says Parker. "Yearly membership runs from April 1 through March 31, and members can attend most of our events for free."

RISA Programming

Parker says the group will continue offering popular RISA benefits, like senior discounts at local merchants including Fuji East, Piccolo Trattoria, Island Wine & Spirits, and Wholesome Market.

"I started [the discount program] two years ago," Parker says. "It's not for all seniors; it's for RISA members

and it is in effect and growing." She says RISA will be adding more store partnerships and discounts in the coming months. "Members must show their 2016 orange and white membership card to receive these discounts," adds Parker.

Parker is optimistic about the group's potential. She thinks that being a standalone organization allows them "to partner and include more populations."

For one, the new board is focusing on active older adults, which Parker calls "AOA's," as well as what they call "special populations," like the disabled, people suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, Arthritis, and those recovering from strokes.

Classes will include a variety of fitness, intellectual, and practical workshops like the recent elder law seminar on wills and estates. Parker says that the next elder law seminar will focus on Medicare and Medicaid.

Practical workshops are free to everyone, while specialized programming is free for members with a nominal fee for non-members.

In 2017 Parker and her team are planning to expand RISA's offerings to include day trips, and movies. Parker is particularly excited about "Wine and Design," a fee-based program that combines wine and art evenings.

RISA will also continue their seasonal gardening program, Potluck Patio Gardening, which runs from May through October, for which they partner with the Roosevelt Island Garden Club and the Girls Scouts. According to Parker, this program is not impacted by Carter Burden's takeover of the Center because "the garden is still RISA property, not Carter Burden, and we compost."

Exercise

RISA is renewing the pilot exercise program, recently ended, which brought back two popular teachers and their exercise classes. These classes were pulled from the calendar when Carter Burden took over the management of the Senior Center. Both instructors had been paid \$40 an hour by RISA in the past, but because Carter Burden pays their instructors \$30 an hour, the teachers couldn't afford to stay.

According to Parker, "[Instructor] Rob's class took up both rooms and was always full." Because of his popularity, RISA is now able to pay him \$50 per hour for his Building Strength class by charging seniors \$27 for an 8-week program. They credit Doryne Isely of Roosevelt Landings for being "instrumental in getting more class time, as well as helping accommodate evening access to the Senior Center."

Additional Funding

Helstien and Parker intend to apply for Public Purpose Funds and other grants "to pay for teachers, other programs, larger events, and special population programming."

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Disability, from page 1

Access-A-Ride

Many in the audience spoke out about problems they'd experienced with Access-A-Ride, the city's paratransit system.

"Our problem is not Access-A-Ride coming late," said RIDA President Jim Bates. "It's Access-A-Ride not coming at all."

RIDA Vice President Nancy Brown detailed multiple incidents where she'd found herself stranded far from home.

"I called [Access-A-Ride] from Coney Island and they said, 'We don't have anyone in your area,'" recounted Brown. She was diagnosed with polio as a child and uses a ventilator wheelchair. "[Access-A-Ride] left me at Walmart because they said my cart was too heavy but it wasn't heavy. They said they were going to send someone else and I waited three and a half hours."

"That's unacceptable," Calise said. He offered to try to set up a forum with Access-A-Ride to discuss the problems.

"We work with Access-A-Ride. I hear those grunts and moans and I understand. It's a challenge for anybody to get around this city in a vehicle," said Calise. "If you think about it, I challenge anyone to go from the Bronx to Midtown during rush hour and see how long it takes you. Access-A-Ride makes 25,000 trips a day. It's a shared ride system. They're working to improve. And we're working with them, finding ways to use wheelchair-accessible cabs to get around, trying to figure out how we do that."

As part of Accessible NYC, 50% of cabs will be accessible by 2020. Calise said there are 1,000 accessible green cabs on the street now. "We are working on an accessible dispatch for all of the boroughs so everyone can get an accessible taxi in a more efficient way."

Affordable Housing

Several speakers also addressed the issue of affordable housing.

Roosevelt Island Historical Society President Judy Berdy called out the new regime of developers for valuing profit margins over the Island's legacy of providing affordable housing for people with disabilities.

"When they built Roosevelt Island, they thought about a community that was inclusive," said Berdy. "This was 1970. There was no ADA. There was no consideration of a person being in a wheelchair or [having] any other disability. Yet over 50 apartments were set aside on this Island for people with disabilities. Patients were recruited from the hospitals to come check out the apartments, tell [the architects] what was wrong with the design, and eventually move to the community."

"Mostly young couples came together [from one of the hospitals] and moved to our community and became part of our community," said Berdy. "That is the thing that we will never have again because

the rents here are no longer subsidized. The sad thing is, you won't recreate Roosevelt Island. We were just a wonderful bubble. And unfortunately, there were lots of holes in the bubble; it's now coming apart."

The State of Island Housing

Island internist Dr. Jack Resnick expressed regret over the current state of housing and the exit of Roosevelt Landings and other Island buildings from the Mitchell-Lama affordable-housing program.

"A lot of these people are my patients," said Resnick. "I spend half my time on house calls with many of the people in this room. I have been really blessed to get to do that. It's been an amazing 20 years. The idea that this incredible one-of-a-kind experiment in the country should be allowed to disappear is just heartbreaking."

"[Disabled] People here live longer, they're happier, and they stay out of hospitals," said Resnick.

This wasn't the first time Resnick has spoken out about this issue. In a letter to *The New York Times* last year, Resnick wrote, "Keeping the frail, elderly, and disabled at home and out of hospitals and nursing homes saves money and keeps them healthier. An Obamacare three-year demonstration project – Independence at Home – which is now ending, will show that Medicare saves over \$5,000 per beneficiary per year by promoting home-based health care. Those savings would be enough to produce the housing subsidy that has saved lives and money for decades on Roosevelt Island. That model should be rapidly expanded – not allowed to wither on the vine."

Resnick pointed to a 2002 study in an op-ed for *The Times* he wrote in 2011, which showed that, for the patients treated at home by the Veterans Affairs' Home Based Primary Care program, the number of days spent in hospitals and nursing homes was cut by 62% and 88%, respectively, and total healthcare costs dropped 24%.

"There has to be an answer to this problem," said Resnick at the ADA Celebration.

He advocates a lawsuit to ban the sale, rental, and construction of any new market-rate apartments. "In 1969, the City and State signed a General Development Plan [for Roosevelt Island]. As part of it, different kinds of supportive housing had to be here," said Resnick. "There was no end date. Mitchell-Lama was not part of that plan. Our agreement with the City doesn't mention an end date to this subsidized housing."

According to Calise, 7% of all affordable housing in the city is set aside for people with disabilities; broken down into 5% for mobility-impaired and 2% for vision- and/or hearing-impaired. "It would be great to fill that 7% and ask for more," said Calise.



Victor Calise, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office For People with Disabilities, with Jane Swanson of Cornell Tech, Wendy Hirsch, RIOC President Susan Rosenthal, and RIRA SC&E Committee Chair Lynne Shinozaki

Economic Advantage

Calise suggested looking for ways to reframe the conversation around ADA access and housing.

"We hear, 'If I put a ramp in, that's going to be expensive.' I understand that. But 11% of the population are people with disabilities. If you put that ramp in, you will increase your business by an easy 10%, and you're not even talking about the aging population and parents with strollers. They want to get in too. There is an economic draw. That ramp is not only an asset for people with disabilities, it's good for your business. And also you can get deliveries. So we are trying to encourage people to reframe the conversation instead of going the legal way."

Community Involvement

"The problem is our voice is rarely heard," said Calise. "We don't come together enough."

To make future change, Calise encouraged the audience to get involved by attending Community Board meetings. He implored the crowd to be "at the table, helping people to make those decisions." He rejected the idea that these issues are only relevant to the disabled population. All of us either are disabled, will be in the future, or are close to someone who is, according to Calise, and we should be invested in making our world ADA-accessible to plan for our future.

"We need advocacy; people with disabilities need to be involved in our Community Board process," says Calise. "When things are built in your community and they're not accessible to you, that's a problem. But when we are not at the table, and not helping people make those decisions, we will never get beyond that. Get involved in your Community Board, make sure they're advocating for everybody, make sure everyone is accepted in every way that we can."

"That's what my office is here to do: make sure we get people with disabilities together. We need to advocate together and make sure New York is doing that for everyone."

At the end of the presentation, Jeanne Waller, public-affairs director for Coler and Carter Hospitals, read the ADA Act.

RIDA's Bates hopes to make this an annual event on Roosevelt Island. "In the interim," he said, "We will have two to three training sessions where people from the regional office will come down here to share with us what the ADA can do for a disabled person: transportation, education, housing, and other areas."



Photos by Lynne Shinozaki

Participants gathered at the Senior Center for the ADA celebration.

Youth Center, from page 1

leadership, comprising educational, recreational, and cultural programs such as multimedia training, dance classes, art and music classes, science classes, leadership programs, high school/college/job preparation, life skills programs, and homework assistance.

The programs offered must target a diverse group of Island youth across the age spectrum and be provided free of charge. The operator is expected to provide all personnel, materials, and equipment to operate the facility, as well as solicit and manage youth activity.

The successful operator will enter into a three-year lease for the facility and an operating agreement to run the facility, and will receive a \$200,000 grant. After the initial three-year period, RIOC may offer two one-year extensions. The grant agreement will be renewed annually, subject to the availability of RIOC funds.

RIOC is seeking an operator with 10 years of experience operating, maintaining, and managing a space of at least 2,000 square feet for not-for-profit recreation, enrichment, and cultural organizations, including facilities management, scheduling, and developing operating budgets. The RFP also requests successful fundraising and marketing experience, as well as successful experience working with racially, ethnically, and

economically diverse communities.

The operator is required to maintain nonprofit status and demonstrate compliance with annual State and federal reporting requirements for non-profit organizations.

The Youth Center Space

The Youth Center building is comprised of several rooms, including a gym, a music room, game room, and computer room. The space, over 40 years old, is scheduled to undergo renovations, with project completion expected before the start of the contract. Should renovations take longer than expected, RIOC says they could be completed without the need to close the Youth Center.

At an April meeting of the RIOC Real Estate Committee, Rosenthal said that adding an ADA compliant bathroom would be the most significant piece of the renovation. Otherwise, Rosenthal characterized it as a "facelift" with new flooring and painting.

"Let's move forward," said Rosenthal. "We want a Youth Center we're proud of."

Regarding the current operator of the RIYP, Rosenthal said, "Charlie will be there. He will bid. He always makes believe he's going to retire, but he's going to bid when the RFP goes out."

For more information go to rioc.ny.gov/rfp/16-32331.pdf.

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High Holiday Services

All programs and prayers will be held at the Roosevelt Island Community Cultural Center, Renwick & Lighthouse Rooms
548 Main Street

Yom Kippur eve, Tuesday October 11

6:15pm Kol Nidrei and evening prayers

Yom Kippur day, Wednesday October 12

10:00am Shacharis and children's program

11:30am Yizkor

5:45pm Neilah

6:55pm Shofar blowing and break fast buffet

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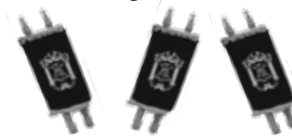
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- Friday, October 7 at 6:09pm
- Yom Kippur, Tuesday, October 11 at 6:03pm
- Yom Kippur, Wednesday, October 12
fast ends at 7:00pm
- Friday, October 14 at 5:58pm
- Sukkot, Sunday, October 16 at 5:55pm
- Sukkot, Monday, October 17 AFTER 6:53pm
- Friday, October 21 at 5:48pm
- Shmini Atzeret, Sunday, October 23 at 5:45pm
- Simchat Torah, Monday Oct. 24 AFTER 6:43pm
- Friday, October 28 at 5:38pm

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Adventures **OFF**-Island

curated by Sara Maher

The heat broke, the warm humidity turned to cool clamminess, and the Pumpkin Spice Latte reared its frothy head — fall is here! Enjoy the city's two weeks of pleasant weather with festivals, festivals, festivals (and one Halloween event ... I couldn't hold off any longer).

Pasta Meets Potstickers

The Marco Polo Festival started in 2009 as a celebration of the designation of the Chinatown & Little Italy National Register Historic District. Now in its eighth year, the festival honors the unique relationship between the Chinese and Italian American communities of Manhattan. It interprets the story of the Silk Road and the encounter between Italian explorer Marco Polo and Mongolian ruler Kublai Khan through music, food, and performances from both cultures, starting with a parade featuring large-scale marionettes.

➔ F downtown to Delancey St and walk southwest to Grand St between Mott and Mulberry Sts. Sat Oct 15, 11am-3pm. Free with the exception of vendors. Info and schedule: twobridges.org/events/ical-repeat/detail/2016/10/15/3175/-/8th-annual-marco-polo-festival

Light of Life

Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, rejoices in the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance. You can choose to worship Ganesha, the Hindu deity that represents wisdom and overcoming obstacles, in one of two ways: with a family art workshop, or going crazy in Times Square. The Rubin Museum hosts Celebrate Diwali! as part of its Family Sundays series with Diwali story time, a Ganesha scavenger hunt, and arts and crafts. If you want to focus on the "lights" part, head to Diwali Times Square for the "largest Asian-Indian event in the US." The eight-hour party

includes fashion shows, dance competitions, digital fireworks and diya-lighting, and a concert with Bollywood stars.

➔ Celebrate Diwali: F downtown to 14th St and walk northwest to the Rubin Museum of Art (150 W 17th St). Sun through Oct 30, 1-4pm. Free for children and their accompanying adults. For ages 3+. rubinmuseum.org/events/event/celebrate-diwali-10-30-2016
Diwali Times Square: F downtown to 42nd St-Bryant Park and walk west on 42nd St to Times Square. Sun Oct 16, 2-10pm. Free with the exception of vendors. Info and schedule: diwalitimesquare.com

Trick or Trivia

"Haven't you heard of peace on earth and good will toward men?" When it comes to kicking butt on trivia night, your answer better be "NO!" Get into the Halloween spirit with five rounds of The Nightmare Before Christmas Trivia from Trivia, AD. Round up your Locks, Shocks, and Barrels for team play, or sign up as a single to be slotted in (though you might end up with Oogie Boogie Man). Dressing up is encouraged, so start scouring Pinterest for ways to turn an old rat into a most delightful hat!

➔ Oct 20: F downtown to 42nd St-Bryant Park and walk southwest to Gotham Bistro (326 W 40th St, inside the Four Points by Sheraton). Sun Oct 23: F downtown to Delancey St and walk north on Essex to Essex Restaurant (120 Essex St). Both 8-9:30pm. and free, but reservations required. Info and tickets: triviaad.com

Pass on the Popcorn

Well, now we've seen (and smelled) it all. The Food Film Festival lets viewers "taste what you see on the screen" by showing you a movie about food while feeding you the food the film is about. The four themed nights are "Best of a Decade," which includes everything from fondue to fried pig tails;

"Taste of Louisiana," about pickles, pastrami, and something called Volcano Bread; "The Food Porn Party," which I'll let you explore on your own; and "Eat Japan!" with films about mochi and iced coffee. Mind (and mouth) blown.

F downtown to 42nd St-Bryant Park and walk west on 42nd St to the AMC Empire 25 (234 W 42nd St). Thu Oct 20-Sun Oct 23; various times. All festival events are ages 21+. Tickets \$75-125. Info and tickets: thefoodfilmfestival.com

Apple of Your Eye (and Tongue)

In case you haven't heard, hard cider is in. Join the cider revival at Cider Week New York City, an event that connects cideries with NYC restaurant, bar, and retail buyers. Even if you aren't one of said buyers, Cider Week lets you sample ciders and attend events and tastings, all to help raise awareness of and demand for local ciders. Basically, you can go to restaurants and your meal will come with cider instead of wine or beer, but hey, I bet it's good.

➔ F-accessible venues include Eataly NYC Flatiron (downtown to 23rd St and walk east on 23rd to 200 5th Av); Taproom307 (downtown to 23rd St and walk east on 23rd to 307 Third Av); Murray's Cheese (downtown to W 4th St and walk west to 254 Bleecker St); Tertulia (downtown to W 4th St and walk north to 359 Sixth Av); Wassail (downtown to Delancey and walk northwest to 162 Orchard St); Foragers Market DUMBO (downtown to York St and walk northwest to 56 Adams St); Krupa Grocery (downtown to 15 St-Prospect Park and walk south on Prospect Park West to 231 Prospect Park West); Stinky Bklyn (downtown to Bergen St and walk south on Smith to 215 Smith). Oct 21-30, various times. Tickets \$0-250. Full list of events, info, tickets: ciderweeknyc.com

Seawright Says Her Focus Is on Self-Governance for Roosevelt Island

by Dana Agmon

New York Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright became Roosevelt Island's elected representative in January 2015. A lawyer by training, Seawright says she entered politics to have an impact on the communities around her. "I want to be the most effective legislator I can be. A legislator who puts the community first."

As a part of *The WIRE*'s ongoing election and politics series, we asked Seawright her views on some of the issues affecting Roosevelt Island and on the upcoming election.

Island Governance

Seawright says she believes that Roosevelt Island should be self-governed to better serve and respond to the needs of its residents, and has been working to make that dream come true.

"I am a strong proponent of representative government," she says.

She sponsored both public-purpose funding bills that were signed into law, and says she was disappointed when the self-governance bill didn't pass the Senate.

"As a legislator," Seawright says, "my principal focus is to establish greater self-governance and full transparency of the conduct of RIOC business."

Referring to the seat left vacant since

2013 and the expired term limits of current RIOC board members, Seawright says, "I would like to see the RIOC Board at full strength in terms of its membership and in terms of its staffing."

Seawright would like to see more residents become vocal about Island governance and participate in public meetings, but she also believes a democratic-majority State senate will be a more conducive environment to support such a bill. She soon plans to reintroduce her bill to require the CEO of RIOC to be, or become, a resident. The bill passed the New York Assembly in June, after it failed to pass the State Senate.

Affordable Housing

Seawright applauds the efforts of Islanders to keep housing affordable, saying, "Just this weekend Westview residents overwhelmingly voted in favor of the plan to exit the Mitchell-Lama program and become a private co-op with an affordability plan."

While she understands the challenges inherent in ending the Mitchell-Lama housing era and the danger in the lack of controls on rents, Seawright thinks it was a significant and important win for Westview residents wanting to remain renters, with only a 6.1% initial rent increase versus the 14.9%

originally proposed. She was pleased she could play a pivotal role in having the increase rolled back.

To help residents make informed decisions, Seawright is looking to form a partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY) Law School campus in Long Island City to bring a legal clinic to the Island to advise and assist residents as gentrification continues.

She confirms that there currently are "no plans to add affordable housing" to the Island, but is hopeful to see more of it.

Education

When asked about the Island's public school, Seawright says she is very hopeful that Cornell Tech's arrival to the Island in 2017 will mean an expanded partnership and additional offerings for PS/IS 217. She points to the Girls Who Code workshops as a good example of what the school needs. She is also proud of the \$500,000 State capital funds her office successfully obtained for the PS/IS 217 STEM green roof project.

When talking about New York State ranking of PS/IS 217, Seawright promises, "I will continue to fight for more public money in partnership with United Federations of Teachers, New York State United Teachers and the

Community Supported Agriculture, so that we can have smaller class sizes, higher salaries for teachers and staff, and better test scores," but says there is a lot to be proud of, like the fact that 93% of survey-takers (including teachers, students, and parents) report strong family-community ties to the school, and 90% of parents saying they would recommend the school to other parents.

Seawright sees education as more than just the Island's public school system. She has put forth a plan that is being reviewed by Cornell Tech to allow seniors to audit classes for free, as well as to offer free or inexpensive classes for seniors on the Island via various higher education institutes including Cornell Tech and CUNY.

Presidential Elections

Seawright isn't mincing her words when it comes to her unwavering support of Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton: "I am a Democrat and a feminist and I believe in Hillary strongly."

She campaigns on Clinton's behalf by encouraging her own constituents to get out and vote for Clinton, and could not be prouder to have had Secretary Clinton announce her candidacy on Roosevelt Island last year.

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ComingUp, from page 3

Senior Center Lobby, 546 Main St. Sponsored by Senator Serrano and RISA (Roosevelt Island Senior Assoc.). **After School Awesome, Wed Oct 12** 3-4pm, library. STEM activities that build, inspire, empower and engage children. Ages 5-12.

Bingo & Bluecross, Thu Oct 13 1-3pm at the Senior Center. Free.

Five Senses early literacy workshop, Thu from Oct 13-Nov 10 3-4pm, library. For preschoolers. Free but space is limited; register at the library.

Info: nypl.org/events/programs/2016/10/13/five-senses

Make It Count, Thu Oct 13 4:30-6pm at the Senior Center. A RIRA Youth Initiative Leadership event for Senior Citizens, includes dinner from Piccolo Trattoria, original dances, and classical piano recital. Free.

Historical Society lecture, "Municipal Archives Treasures--The Blackwell's Island Ledgers", Thu Oct 13 6:30pm, library. Free.

Community Plan for Southpoint Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting, Thu Oct 13 7-8pm, Good Shepherd Center (543 Main St.) Open to the public.

Public Hearing with the New York State Liquor Authority for a license for the future bistro at 503 Main St **Thu Oct 13** 7pm, Marymount Manhattan College, 221 East 71 St., Regina Peruggi Room.

Open House New York tour, Cornell Tech campus and Four Freedoms Park, Sun Oct 16 1pm and 2:30pm. Free; registration required. Registration opens Oct 6. Info and registration: OHNY.org

Medicaid and Long Term Care presented by Elder Care Attorney, Douglas Chu, **Tue Oct 18** 1-2:30pm at 546 Main St, 12th fl conference room. Sponsored by RISA. Info. and registration: Barbara Parker, 917-951-4134. Space is limited.

College essay writing workshop, Tue Oct 18 3:30pm, library. Ages 13-18. Free. Info: nypl.org/events/programs/2016/10/18/college-essay-writing-workshop

RESCHEDULED: Cornell Tech Community Construction Task Force meeting, now Thu Oct 20 6-8pm, 546 Main St., 12th floor conference room. Open to the public.

Book discussion group, Super Brain by Rudolph Tanzi and Deepak Chopra, **Thu Oct 20** 6:30pm, library. Free.

The Main Street WIRE – Sat Oct 22. Advertising deadlines: Display, Wed Oct 12; decision date for circulars/inserts, Tue Oct 18; 6,000 copies due Thu Oct 20. Also: Nov 5, 19; Dec 3, 17. News phone, 917-842-7638. Email press releases and feature-story suggestions to MainStreetWIRE@usa.net. Advertising (display & classified) 917-587-3278

or msWIREads@gmail.com.

— FUTURE WEEKS —

Choosing The Kindergarten panel discussion, Sun Oct 23 4-6pm, Sponsored by the RI Parents' Network "Parents for Parents" series. RSVP before Oct 20, with full names of attendees to: EVA.BOSBACH@GMAIL.COM

Detective novels book discussion group, The Big Sleep by Raymond Chandler, **Tue Oct 25** 6:30pm, library. Free.

Deadline for submission of nomination form for RIRA Common Council 2016-2018 session. Tue Oct 25 9pm at the Public Safety Office 550 Main St. (See RIRA, page 3.)

Deadline for submission of candidates campaign statement for RIRA Common Council President and Vice President to The WIRE, Thu Oct 27 5pm. (See RIRA, page 13.)

Movies at the Library, Dracula (1931) and *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), **Thu Oct 27** 6pm. Free.

Cocktail party in honor of Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, Thu Oct 27 6pm, Nino's Restaurant (1354 1st Ave). Tickets \$250+. Info and tickets: Julian@Nashbanmansur.com or 212-213-2660.

Haunted Halloween magic show, Fri Oct 28 3pm, library. Ages 4+. Free. Info: nypl.org/events/programs/2016/10/28/

haunted-halloween-magic-show

Horticulture Club, Sat Oct 29 10am-1pm, Four Freedoms Park. Free. Also Nov 19. Info: fdfourfreedomspark.org/2016-events/2016/6/25/hort-club

Blessing of the Animals, Sun Oct 30 10am, Good Shepherd Center.

Candidates Night for RIRA Common Council Representatives, Tue Nov 1 8pm, Location TBA. (See RIRA, page 13.)

Candidates Night for RIRA Common Council President and Vice President, Wed Nov 2 8pm, Good Shepherd Community Center. (See RIRA, page 13.)

General Election, Tue Nov 8. Register in person by Oct 14; mail registration or change of address must be postmarked by Oct 14 and received by Oct 19; last day to postmark application for absentee ballot Nov 1; last day to apply in person for absentee ballot Nov 7; last day to postmark ballot Nov 7 (must be received by Nov 15); last day to deliver ballots in person to the local board of elections Nov 8 (by someone other than the voter).

RIRA Election, Tue Nov 8. Times and location/s TBA.

Science fiction book discussion group, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson, **Tue Nov 8** 6:30pm, library. Free.

COMING UP

CONTINUING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

(See page 3 for one-time events.)

ART AND ENTERTAINMENT

Four Freedoms Park Third Annual Photo Contest, open thru Oct 15. Win a \$500 gift certificate to Adorama. Info and submit your entry: fdfour-freedomspark.org/2016-photo-contest

Per G Hanson's Archipelago Love, thru Oct 29, Gallery RIVAA. Gallery hours Wed & Fri 6-9pm, Sat-Sun 11am-5pm.

Fall for the Arts RIVAA members group show, thru Nov 6, Octagon Gallery. Open daily 9am-9pm.

Classical Musicians' Rehearsal Symphony Orchestra, Thu 12-2pm, All musicians welcome to play along. For info, music, and location: 212-688-0034 or info@rehearsalsymphony.com

MST&DA Family-friendly Improv Show, 2nd Fri 7pm at 548 Main St. Ages 5+. \$10 seniors & students/\$15 general admission. Info and tickets: mstda.org/comedy-improv.html (See ad, page 7.)

MST&DA Stand Up Comedy Show, 4th Fri 9pm at 548 Main St. Ages 13+. \$10 seniors & students/\$15 general admission. Info and tickets: mstda.org/comedy-improv.html (See ad, page 7.)

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.

Adult Coloring, to destress. **Tue** 2pm, Library.

Earn a Bike program, thru 2016. Take five classes from Be New York and earn a free bike. Program info: bike.nyc/education/earn-a-bike

We Are New York English Class, every **Fri** 10:30-12:30 at the library.

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 from Karen's Pilates Studio. Info 212-750-6223.

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

Relaxation for Women, Sat 7:30-8:30am. RSVP to: ragireddy7@gmail.com Location given upon RSVP.

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

RI Moms on the Move walk and exercise program, **Mon and Thu** 9:30am, Visitor Kiosk in Tramway Plaza. Free. To confirm day and time: Eva.Bosbach@gmail.com.

***Sportspark** parks and recreation website for information on fitness classes and program calendar: rioc.recedesk.com.

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

BABIES AND TODDLERS (listed Sat-Fri)

RI Music Together (0-5 yrs). **Sat** 10am, Octagon; **Tue** 10 & 11am, Good Shepherd Center; **Thu** 5:30pm, Octagon; **Fri** 10 & 11am, Good Shepherd Center. Registration required: rimusictogether.com

***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.

Music with James, every Tue 4pm at the Cultural Center (548 Main St.) Ages 4mo-4yr. Drop-in \$15/child + \$5/sibling or \$140/10 classes. music-withjames.com

Toddler Story Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 10:15 & 11:15am, Library. No registration required.

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

Toddler Play Time (18-36 mo), **Wed** 10:45 & 11:45am, Library. No registration required..

Island Kids Toddler Time (14-30 mo), **Fri** 10-11am, 536 Main St. Free. Info: IslandKidsri@gmail.com

Family Storytime (picture books), **Fri** 3pm., Library. No registration required.

OLDER KIDS (listed Sat-Fri)

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 & Thu** 3-4:30pm for ages 5-7 (with parent/guardian), Octagon Park Courts. Free. No preregistration; 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.

LEGO playtime, Tue 3pm, Library. Ages 5-12. Free.

Board Games (5-12 yrs), **Tue** 4pm, Library. Free. **Teen Game Night, Wed** 6pm, Main Street Sweets, 559 Main St.

Chess Club (all ages), **Thu** 4:30pm, Library. Free.

Reading Aloud (ages 3-6), **Fri** 3:30pm, Library. No registration required.

Clip & Save

This list of continuing events will be updated at MainStreetWIRE.com, and will appear occasionally in the printed *WIRE*.

Please clip & save for reference.

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

SENIORS – RISA programs

(Also see add. listings, page 14.)

Building Strength*, **Tue** 10:30-11:30am through Nov 22; **Thu** (except Nov 24) 9:30-10:30 thru Dec 1.

Chair Pilates*, **Wed** 9:30-10:30am through Nov 23.

*RISA classes are held in 546 Main St. Conference Room, 12th floor. Info and registration: Barbara Parker 917-951-4137.

For **RISA special events**, please see Coming Up on page 3.

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.

Coloring for Adults, every **Tue** 12pm, Library. Materials provided.

114th Precinct Community Meeting, 4th Tue 7pm, Riccardo's, 2101 24th Ave., 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.

Chess Club (all ages), **Thu** 4:30pm, Library. Free.

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 & 3rd Wed 3-6pm, Library, 524 Main St; **2nd & 4th Wed** 11-2pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St. Info: 212 288-4607.

City Council Member Ben Kallos, 4th Wed 2-5pm, Senior Center, 546 Main St., 546 Main St. Info: 212-860-1950

State Senator Jose Serrano, 1st & 3rd Wed 3-6pm, Library, 524 Main St.; **2nd & 4th Wed** 11-2pm, Senior Center. 546 Main St. Info: 212-828-5829.

OTHER

Organics Recycling every Sat at the Farmer's Market under the Helix from 9:30am-3:30pm. Residents can drop off kitchen scraps to be made into compost for local parks and gardens.

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.

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

***Sportspark is closed** for renovation. Check rioc.ny.gov/Sportspark.htm for updates.



All Photos by Paul Calendrillo



Left: Silver Skull. Above: Alexis Duque at work on a canvas. Below: Cat. Bottom: Planet 2.

Art, from page 1

corroded with consumerism.”

Duque has been exploring the theme of architecture and slums in his art for the past decade, but writes, “[It] has always interested me since my college years.”

Gallery owner Paul Calendrillo says he sees, in Duque, a kind of profoundness that comes from Duque’s Colombian roots.

“It has become clear that, although the subject on the surface can be lively, funny or uplifting,” says Calendrillo, “the underlying architectural renderings that comprise each work represent the deterioration of communities. Very few people are depicted. Mostly structures you would find in Colombia.”

Calendrillo and Duque had met

several times at art openings, but it wasn’t until they became friends on Facebook that Calendrillo says he had



the opportunity to see Duque’s work. “The energy, carefree nature, and articulate attention to detail reminded me of a few artists I admired in Chelsea galleries in 2006 and 2007,” recalls Calendrillo. “The more I studied the work, the more I wanted to learn more about it.”

Duque begins new works by first lightly sketching directly onto the canvas. It is a bold technique, and one that seems to work well for Duque. Interesting techniques are also something

Calendrillo greatly appreciates.

Duque says he has always had an inclination towards art. “Ever since I was a child, I loved to draw and play with my imaginary heroes. I would say I was born with a gift, but I also work hard every day and spend long hours accomplishing my paintings.”

An opening reception for the Alexis Duque exhibit will take place October 13, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at 507 Main Street. The exhibit will run through November 3.

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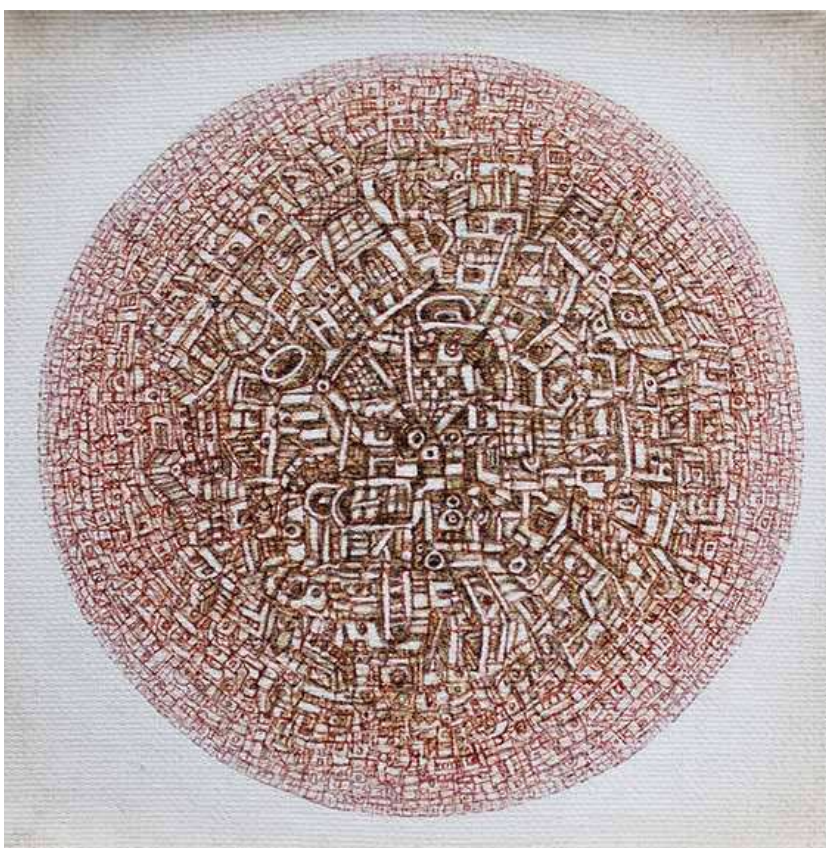


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Dogs Find a Place on the Island

by **Graham McMillan**

An old black lab licks any hand that reaches out to pet it, tail thumping enthusiastically against its owner's leg. A huge husky appears to smile as small children crowd around, burying their hands in her bushy fur. More and more, dogs are becoming a part of the Roosevelt Island community. But is the Island ready for them?

Changing Times

Not so long ago, seeing a stout puggle scamper along the promenade next to its owner would have been a rare sight. As recently as 15 years ago, the management of each building on the Island barred dogs except in the case of service dogs. The park spaces, courtyards between buildings, and public areas on the Island were also off-limits to dogs.

"We used to have to stop people at the bridge," one Public Safety officer reminisces, "just to make sure they weren't bringing dogs onto the Island."

This unofficial ban began to loosen in 2003 with the completion of Riverwalk buildings 475 and 465, which provides housing for staff at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and the Weill Cornell Medical College. In order to appeal to faculty and staff members who already had pets, the buildings did something unheard-of on the Island: they allowed dogs.

Today, a majority of buildings on Roosevelt Island permit dogs. Only three holdouts remain: Rivercross, Manhattan Park, and Westview. In 2010, a dog owner in Rivercross ended up in court to adjudicate her right to keep her pet. When she lost the case, the co-op board sued her for the cost of legal fees, according to the blog RooseveltIslandDogs.com. Nevertheless, there's enough demand for the Rivercross doorkeeper to keep a well-hidden bag of doggie treats in the front desk.

Amenities

In many buildings, however, the dog treats are kept front-and-center, a symbol of the Island's changing attitude toward dogs. At the Octagon, the treats are proudly displayed at the front desk in a glass jar. Octagon residents laugh about being pulled straight towards the doorkeeper at building-sponsored mixers for dog owners. And in Southtown, Riverwalk Crossing has a pet spa for residents to use at any time.

The Island has also added two dog runs in the intervening years. The northern dog run, around the corner from the Octagon, is a large fenced-off park separated into an area for large dogs and one for small dogs. It has trees just outside both entrances, and a bench for owners to sit in the shade. It is grassy, has a fence set up as an obstacle in the larger area, and often has a couple of good-samaritan tennis balls for the dogs to play with.

The second park sits farther south, across from the Riverwalk buildings. Originally lush, the Southtown park has been dug at and run over so much that it is now merely a large circle of pale brown dirt and rocks with sporadic patches of weeds and grassy corners. There is a black metal table in the center of the park that provides the only shade on hot days for dogs and scorched forearms for owners. The water bowl chained to the fence next to a wood pallet is rusty and can't be used.

"It's dirty, it's dusty, it doesn't have to be like that," says Riverwalk resident Sabrina Hermosilla of the southern dog run. "You need trees, especially in the summer."

Hermosilla has spearheaded a Facebook group called Roosevelt Island Dog Owners to discuss common concerns and hopes for their dogs in their neighborhood. Most pressing is the hope for a new dog park with shade, water, grass, and seating.

Alex Kaplan, associate project manager for Hudson, says the company does plan to upgrade the southern dog park as a part of its development of the future East Commons, though no timeline has been given.

Restrictions

The need for spacious and well-maintained dog parks is especially important to local dog owners because there are relatively few areas on the Island where dogs are welcome. Many of the gardens, courtyards, and evenly-kept grass areas ban dogs. Dogs are not allowed in the courtyards of the Roosevelt Landings buildings, must avoid contact with the many trees behind the church, and must ignore the tempting scents in the many bushes by the Tram.

Sergeant Will Dantone of Public Safety ascribed the many RIOC signs prohibiting dogs to concerns about dog waste that gets left behind.

Judy Berdy, Roosevelt Island Historical Society president, agrees. "People complain about poop in the promenade behind Eastwood [now Roosevelt Landings]."

According to RIOC's dog policy – and in keeping with City laws – dog owners are required to pick up their pets' waste.

When asked if he's given any tickets for leaving



dog waste on the ground, Dantone admits, "Not in a long time."

Service Dogs

Of course, not all dogs are restricted from the Island's more tempting spots. Service dogs, including certified therapy dogs and physical assistance dogs, are allowed anywhere their owners go.

Retired US Army Captain, Seth Hidek, says this isn't always the reality, though. Hidek, who has "orthological and neurological" injuries, relies on his service dog to help him keep calm and stay positive. He says he's been hassled or barred from entry on six different occasions in the past year.

"I'm irritated," says Hidek as he recounts being denied access to the Tram in February, from Four Freedoms Park on July 4, and denied use of the Red Bus as recently as August.

The problem, he says, is with training. The Americans With Disabilities Act states that "staff cannot ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card... or ask that the dog demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task." Hidek says he was denied access to the Island's public facilities on the grounds that the service dog was not clearly identifiable and that he refused to provide documentation.

"They [RIOC] are not taking the time to train their employees," Hidek said, "or they don't care."

Director of Public Safety Jack McManus acknowledges that officers have responded incorrectly to Hidek in the past. He says there's a misconception that service dogs must be big, harnessed, and special-vested dogs, and that he's spoken to his officers about this.

"We identified an issue," McManus says of his department, "and took steps to correct it." Hidek acknowledges that Public Safety officers did support his right to have his service dog during a recent conflict.

Part of the Community

For the most part, though, dog owners say they feel the Island is welcoming.

"I'll be walking and people will scream her name," says Hermosilla of her 6-year-old Siberian Husky, Talula. "And I don't even know who they are."

Hermosilla and Talula walk the Island for three to four hours a day. Hermosilla says Talula is very happy to be petted and played with when she is stopped by Islanders on the street. A certified therapy dog, Talula has such a positive effect on the people she meets that Hermosilla brings her to Coler Hospital monthly to spend time with patients who can no longer get outside.

Hermosilla attributes genuine connections with other Island dog-lovers to Talula. "Talula has enabled us to really bond with our neighbors. We've learned the word for dog in so many different languages."



Top: sign near Good Shepherd Center.
Right: Southtown dog run. Photos by Kelly Turner



Hope, from page 3

who are new to the neighborhood and seeking a community as they begin a new life in a new city. All mid-week meeting details can be found online at hopericc.org.

Author Dorothy Sayers wrote, "How can anyone remain interested in a religion which seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of his life?" Hope RI agrees, and holds a strong view that, when people are truly following the ways of Christianity, it spills into every area of life as they begin to work toward the common good of the city. Their faith should help the whole city flourish. For this reason, Hope attempts to educate, equip, and empower people to humbly live out their beliefs in a way that renews their vocational domains, whether in law, science, the arts, politics, or education. From teachings

on faith and vocation, to hosting roundtables where those in finance or medical research talk about how to practically find a healthy and productive work-life balance, we acknowledge that our work matters to God, and the way we do it is of the utmost importance.

In addition, the people of Hope RI serve in various capacities throughout the neighborhood by hosting conversational English courses, racial reconciliation trainings, holiday meals for international students, and providing food and counsel for those in need. We also partner with organizations like Do For One to intentionally come alongside our neighbors living with disabilities.

Hope RI is also passionate about serving families and enabling them to build sustainable lives in order to

not only survive living in the city, but to actually thrive in it. We feel honored to come alongside parents and guardians to help the next generation of the city understand the love we believe God has for them. In addition to age-appropriate programming for both toddlers and elementary students during our 4:30 p.m. service on Sundays, Hope RI has recently launched Generation Hope, a middle school program. Every Sunday night from 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., middle school students gather with a team of young professionals and parent volunteers to play games, eat together, and talk about where faith and life as a student intersect. Hope RI believes the next generation has a ton to offer the community, and so one will regularly see students serving in various roles during Sunday services and events

throughout the week.

We live within a culture that often attempts to define who we are by what we do, what we have, and what others may think of us. Every Sunday at 4:30 p.m., Hope RI gathers for 65 minutes of worshipful music, biblical teaching, sharing stories of hope, laughing with one another, and reminding each other about God's love for us and our city.

The goal is to start our week strongly rooted in who we believe God is, who we are, and God's calling upon our lives in New York City. Though the service is in English, much of the main content is translated into Chinese. We welcome you to join us at the Good Shepherd Center at 543 Main Street for any service.

To connect with Hope Church, join a mid-week community, or listen to a service online, go to hopericc.org.

RIRA, from page 3

that are not the responsibility of the Secretary, legal representation (in cooperation with the chairperson of the Legal Action Committee, should it exist), auditing of the finances of RIRA, membership participation, and fundraising. To perform the responsibilities of office, the Vice President shall supervise the Nominations Committee, the Election Committee, the Auditor, and should it exist, the Communications Committee. Should the President be temporarily absent or unable to serve, the Vice President shall become President until the completion of the term.

Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates should submit to *The WIRE*, by 5:00 p.m., October 27, a campaign statement (maximum 800 words) and a photo headshot for publication in the November 5 issue. (A *WIRE* editor will take your picture, if needed). We will send you a reminder once we receive your nomination form.

Common Council Members

Common Council members shall volunteer for membership in at least one committee. Any RIRA member (any resident) who is not a member of the Common Council may serve on any committee if approved by the chairperson of that committee. Council members are expelled from the Council if they fail to attend three consecutive sessions. Common Council members are subject to the requirements of Article II Section I (c), which requires them to be a member of at least one committee; any such expelled Council member must select another committee in order to continue to comply with such Section.

Alternates

In general, alternates who attend Council meetings may speak during the deliberations, but may not vote. However, in the event that a regular Council member is absent, the first alternate for that district may vote. If the first alternate is not available, then the second alternate may vote, and so on.

Candidates Night

Prior to the RIRA elections on November 8, candidates (and voters) should plan to attend two Candidates Nights to learn more about the candidates, as well as their positions and prior experiences, and to ask questions about both their candidacies and what they plan to do on the Common Council during the 2016-2018 term.

Common Council Candidates Night: November 1, 8:00 p.m. (Location to be announced in *The WIRE*.)

President and Vice President: November 2, 8:00 p.m. at the Good Shepherd Community Center.

Join Us

I have been honored to be part of RIRA in the last

two years; I'd always heard of this volunteer-run organization whose members are elected by Roosevelt Island residents to ameliorate our lives and tackle any and all [Island] issues. In the first several weeks, I sat back and learned from all the members that have graciously served as Common Council members, and I offered to run an Island-wide survey to take a snapshot of parts of the Island, in all the buildings. Five months later, over 700 survey takers have surely given us ample information and data to address at the end of this and the next term.

I am very pleased to say that all the monthly meetings I attended were filled with collaborative efforts to take on different issues. Common Council members chair an abundance of committees, such as the Planning Committee that has worked on emergency preparedness, transportation, the impact of Cornell on our daily lives, and short/long-term parking, to name a few. Also noteworthy is the Social, Culture & Education Committee, which taught several hundred residents Hands-Only CPR, organized Island-wide events, including the Cherry Blossom Festival, the Egg Hunt event, and the ongoing NYC Compost

Project. Other committees include the Island Blood Drive in its 14th year of benefitting the New York Blood Center and the Government Relations Committee, which organizes the Public Purpose Funding process in collaboration with RIOC and other Island organizations.

The Youth Initiative Committee I chaired has organized numerous events for the youth of the Island, including presentations by world-renowned chefs who elaborated on the Italian culture and cuisine and how their passions for culinary art became a worldwide business establishing them as cultural messengers. Other undertakings include the Make It Count Leadership Project that teaches young students how a bank works exposing them to new job opportunities in the financial field. In addition, the instructors provide budgeting and organizing activities and events for the seniors on the Island and get recognition for their leadership engagement.

If you are interested in making a difference on Roosevelt Island, please contact me: Adib Mansour, Chair of the Election Nomination committee at riradib@earthlink.net.

Bridge Malfunction Paralyzes Island



On September 23, the Roosevelt Island Bridge was stuck in the up position, stopping road traffic from 4:51 p.m. until 8:32 p.m. Traffic was backed up all the way to the Tram. Fire trucks waited, unable to respond to a fire in 4 River Road that caused P.S./I.S. 217 to be evacuated.

This bus driver had an 11:00 p.m. flight out of JFK. Numerous residents also had difficulty making their connections.



Letters, from page 2

summer movies in 2015, and on Roosevelt Island Day. We trained 216 people on Roosevelt Island Day 2016, bringing our total to 1,038 Islanders trained in Hands-Only CPR. Surpassing 1,000 was so thrilling for us! We are pleased to begin training in infant CPR and choking relief this fall.

I have also really enjoyed volunteering at the Egg Hunt and the Cherry Blossom Festival, both events organized by the SC&E Committee.

Being a member of the RIRA Common Council has been such a fun way to serve this community and make many new friends. So now I'm inviting you to join! I hope you'll consider serving with us.

Sharon Williams

Southtown RIRA Representative,
Elections Committee Co-Chair

To the Editor:

As a long-time resident of the Island and a RISA [Roosevelt Island Senior Association] member for over 16 years, I remember Dolores Green as RISA president. She was always running around on her scooter, greeting the seniors, laughing, and throwing parties for the seniors for which she asked Island merchants for donations.

I've seen the dedication and hard work Ms. Green did to make the seniors happy. She even gave out little gifts at the parties. With her laughter, there was never a dull moment. I understand that we must have change, but what I don't understand is how a Board could just let her step down without so much as a luncheon, or official thank-you. It's about respect; the

members should have the opportunity to say something to Ms. Green and wish her Godspeed.

We now have a new organization running the center. In my opinion they are doing a good job. I see a lot of good activities and new services being offered. Yet there is still RISA. What is RISA's current function? I paid \$15 to join RISA and I keep waiting to see what RISA is going to do for the seniors. I keep hearing we will have trips. The new administration was voted into office in June. They were even acknowledged on Roosevelt Island Day. We are going on four months. What is RISA going to do? And will they do something to acknowledge an outgoing president or just say, "Oh well?"

Name Withheld

To the Editor:

I have been a Southtown representative on RIRA for three years and I have truly enjoyed my experience. Participation in the RIRA Common Council affords me the opportunity to be involved in very concrete ways that affect life on Roosevelt Island. From working with fellow committee members on legislation that dictates the governance structure of the Island, to ensuring that walking and running paths remain open and available to Island residents during the Cornell University construction, RIRA members like me have incredible opportunities to help ensure a good quality of life for our neighbors Island-wide.

Melissa Wade

RIRA Southtown Representative,
Elections Committee Co-Chair

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Monday

10:30 Zumba**
1:00 Jewelry Making

Tuesday

10:00 Computers
10:30 Salsa
10:30 Building Strength (RISA)
11:30 Blood Pressure
1:00 Ping Pong**
1:00 Paint & Sculpt
1:00 Medicare Assistance*

Wednesday

9:30 Seated Yoga
9:30 Chair Pilates (RISA)
10:30 Health Is Wealth (Fitness)
1:00 Art Workshop
1:00 Bridge
1:30 Scrabble

Thursday

9:30 Building Strength (RISA)
10:00 Computers
10:30 Zumba**
12:30 Movie & Discussion
1:00 Knit & Crochet
2:00 Birthday Celebration
(every 3rd Thur)

Friday

9:30 Forever Young (Fitness)
10:30 Computers
1:00 Seated Yoga & Dance
1:00 Art Workshop
1:00 Korean Social

Lunch served Monday-Friday at noon. \$1.50 voluntary contribution. Also see Seniors listings on page 10.

* new activity ** time change

Special Events

From Oct 4, every Tue. 1-4pm a **health-care representative** will provide Medicare and insurance assistance. We are **closed** Monday, Oct 10 for **Columbus Day**. We will be a **pop-up site for ID NYC** Tue. Oct 11 – Fri. Oct 14 from 9am-5pm. The last day will be Mon., Oct 17 from 9am-noon. **Bingo & Bluecross** Thur., Oct 13 from 1-3pm **Fresh Food for Seniors** Sign Up, \$8 per bag of fresh produce - Mon. & Tue., Oct 17 & 18, 11:00am-1:00pm; bag pick is Wed., Oct 26, 3-5 pm.

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Deadline for Oct. 22 issue: Tuesday, Oct. 18

Please see ComingUp, page 9, for other advertising deadlines

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After School Program at PS/IS 217
 Homework Help, Snack and High Quality Enrichment Programming

Free of Charge Programs
 Island Kids Baby Group: Wednesdays @ 10:30
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Coming in October
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Family Pizza Party
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