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# The Island Current

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One Dollar

## LIBRARY BIRTHDAYS AND TOP TEN LISTS

By KAREN NANI



Photos by RENA HANSEN, KAREN NANI and courtesy of DOROTHY PAYNE

The New York Public Library is celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2020. The City Island branch's 109-year history includes the early location on City Island Avenue where Alice Payne was librarian (top photo), the expansion of the present location at 320 City Island Avenue in 1996 (ground-breaking ceremony, above photo), and the current library staff, building and collections (photos right).

The New York Public Library (NYPL) was founded in 1895 and is celebrating its milestone 125th anniversary this year. The NYPL has 92 locations throughout New York City; among them is the City Island branch, which was founded in 1911.

However, there was a library on the Island before the NYPL established a branch here. An old photograph of Sam Miller's grocery store at the corner of Hawkins Street (then Orchard Street) shows a sign "Circulating Library." Island resident and historian Tom Nye, the great-grandson of Sam Miller, confirms that there was indeed a circulating library in the store as early as the 1890s.

According to Alice Payne, author of "City Island: Tales of the Clam Diggers" and a librarian on the Island for many years, the "first sub-branch of the NYPL to be serviced in the outlying areas of the city" was established in 1911, through one of its trustees (H.C. Appleton), whose sister-in-law (Dora Appleton) lived on City Island. The first location of the branch library was Buchbinder's Drug Store at 527 City Island

Avenue near Cross Street. The library was stocked with books from the private collections of Mrs. Appleton and Mrs. Robert Jacob, but the NYPL agreed to furnish books from its Traveling Library Division "if a place were provided and a person would take charge." The first librarian was Miss Helen Pell, assisted by Miss Mamie Golden.

Eventually, the library moved to larger quarters at 325 City Island Avenue, where the Sea Breeze Deli is located, and in addition to books, it offered puppet shows and story hours for children. Mrs. Stella Weber was the head librarian for 25 years at the City Island branch, which celebrated its golden anniversary in 1961.

In 1970 the library moved across the street to 320 City Island Avenue, on the corner of east Bay Street. The branch was the smallest in the city's library system, but in 1996, thanks to the efforts of Friends of the Library, it was expanded from 1,900 to about 5,000 square feet. This group, led by Sara McPherson, Laura Nadoolman, Shirley Litwak, Jane Protzman and Carmen

Sterling, raised over \$400,000 from book sales and capital funding from then Bronx Borough President, Fernando Ferrer.

At the time of the expansion, 57 percent of Island residents were registered card holders and library users! You can read more about the exceptional community efforts to expand the library in the July/August 1996 issue of *The Island Current*. All back issues of *The Current* are available at the library and the current manager, Tiffany McCrae, is committed to maintaining the newspaper archives. The earlier years were bound, but now the NYPL will no longer cover that cost, so she is accumulating them in a looser format.

Given the Island's nautical history, it is fitting that the City Island Library has a 1,000+ volume Ship Collection, including books on boat construction, naval history, pirating, famous shipwrecks, lighthouses, sea fiction and surfing. Among the treasures in the collection are seascapes by famed Island photographer Morris Rosenfield.

Ms. McCrae, who has worked for the NYPL for 14 years, is excited about the anniversary and the many programs offered at the City Island branch. She told *The Current*, "we enjoy serving the City Island community and the anniversary allows us to educate Islanders about the library."

The expanded branch now features a separate reference and children's section and a landscaped backyard garden for public use. A new community room can accommodate 45 people for programs, lectures and meetings. Eight laptops and four regular computer stations are available for public use. During the school year, they open

the community room to students to play video games on the Wii or PlayStation, or to do research on the Internet.

Meanwhile, in honor of the 125th anniversary, the NYPL compiled a list of the Top 10 most checked-out books of all time since the library was founded. The Top 10 were: "The Snowy Day" by Ezra Jack Keats; "The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Seuss; "1984" by George Orwell; "Where The Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak; "To Kill A Mockingbird" by Harper Lee; "Charlotte's Web" by E.B. White; "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury; "How To Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie; "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" by J.K. Rowling; and "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle.

Most of these books have been checked out over 300,000 times since the NYPL was founded and the books were published. Honorable mention was given to the children's book "Goodnight Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown, which would have been among the system's top checkouts if not for an odd piece of history: extremely influential New York Public Library children's librarian Anne Carroll Moore disliked the story so much when it was published in 1947 that the Library didn't carry it until 1972.

The City Island branch has tied into the NYPL list with graphics from the cover of "The Snowy Day" on the front door and on a special edition library card available to anyone. It also compiled its own Top 10 List for 2019 and the most checked-out books include, "Ella Minnow Pea" by

Continued on page 7

**BRIEFLY...**

**LOOKING FOR PICTURES:** Work on the City Island Nautical Museum's Oral History Project continues in preparation for its launch on Sunday, May 17. The project is based on interviews of City Islanders in 1984 who recall their school years, the impact of historic events on the Island, growing up in the City Island community and working in the boatyards and sail lofts. The developers of this project are looking for informal pictures from St. Mary's School, especially of students and nuns rather than graduation pictures, and for photographs of some of the interviewees, especially Harry Chernoff (the button king), Doug Hearle, Herbert and Hunter Hild, Leo Keane, Elsa Gilbert Kroepke, Jenny Lowndes and Francis Horton Smithson. Anyone who has photos and would consider loaning them to the museum to scan for this project, please contact [maryatmc@gmail.com](mailto:maryatmc@gmail.com).

**SPRING FLING:** On Saturday, March 21, Temple Beth-El will hold its 86th Anniversary Gala Dinner Dance from 7 to 11 p.m. at Pelham/Split Rock Golf Course. It's a highlight of the TBE year, the annual gala dinner dance to benefit Your Shul by the Sea. Bring your dancing shoes and dress colorfully for this first day of spring. This year's event honors TBE vice president Jodie Sadovsky and Phillis Mauciri (see ad this issue).

**45 BLOTTER**

**Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during January and February 2020. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list.**

- 1 – AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT
- 1 – GRAND LARCENY
- 1 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
- 2 – LOST PROPERTY
- 1 – GRAFFITI

Police provided details on the following arrests and incidents for the period from Jan. 22 to Feb. 17, 2020.

1/23 – On Buckley Street at 9:15 a.m., a female Islander reported an incident of grand larceny. The victim said she received a phone call from an unknown person impersonating a family member who had allegedly been arrested. He told her to withdraw \$9,400 from her account and hand it to a courier, which she did. Police learned the phone call was a scam.

1/30 – At 6 p.m. on City Island Avenue, a female Islander told police that her daughter was being harassed by an unknown caller. The victim feared for her safety after multiple calls.

2/2 – An Island male reported an incident of lost property at 1 p.m. on Winters Street. The complainant is a retired NYPD member and his NYPD identification was missing.

2/3 – At a commercial establishment on City Island Avenue, a male reporter told police that when he arrived at the location, some windows had been broken. Video footage showed three unknown males throwing objects at the windows. Police are investigating.

2/10 – An off-Island male reported an incident of lost property on City Island Avenue at 8 p.m. The victim noticed the license plate missing from his vehicle.

2/12 – Police from the 45th Precinct took a report of graffiti vandalism of a USPS mailbox on City Island Avenue at 9 p.m.

**CORRECTION**

The article about Hells Angels on City Island in the February issue of *The Island Current* contains an error regarding the purchase by the club of a building at 415 City Island Avenue. The apartment building next door, at 417 City Island Avenue, is the one purchased by the club. The error occurred because the New York City Departments of Buildings and Finance have 415-417 listed as the same property, whereas 415 is To Go Express and 417 is the apartment building. *The Current* regrets the error and apologizes to the owners of 415.

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**When? Friday, March 20, 2020 Doors open 6:30 pm**

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EDITOR: Karen Rauhauser Nani

Editorial Office: 718-885-0760  
 Display Advertising: 718-885-1636  
 or: [margci@aol.com](mailto:margci@aol.com)  
 Subscriptions: 718-885-9268  
[www.theislandcurrent.com](http://www.theislandcurrent.com)

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Sara S. McPherson  
 COPY EDITOR/WRITER: Barbara Dolensek  
 ART EDITOR: Marguerite Chadwick-Juner

DISTRIBUTION: Emily Leni  
 SUBSCRIPTION: Rose Kolb  
 ADVERTISING MANAGER: Margaret Lenz  
 BUSINESS MANAGER: Judith Rauh

STAFF: Maria Swieciki, Ed Heben, Marsha Treiber, Jane Protzman, Bill Stuttig, Tom Smith, Virginia Danegger, Monica Glick, Maria Sutherland, John Sheridan, and Johanna Paciullo.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Rick DeWitt and Matt Panza

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS: Stephanie Ribaudo, Lorraine Nicoletti. Masthead and special artwork by the late Theodore J. Mazaika. Cartoon format originated by Russell Schaller Sr.

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# CONSOLIDATED YACHT YARD AT RISK

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Many City Islanders were alarmed at the news that the Consolidated Yacht Yard at 157 Pilot Street might be replaced by a contractor's yard for storing huge construction cranes.

The property is owned by KBBJ Temp LLC, which is owned by Joseph Briody, who purchased the property from Wesley Rodstrom three years ago. Mr. Briody leased the boatyard to Mr. Rodstrom, but that lease expires on June 30 this year. We have learned that U.S. Crane & Rigging, LLC, has entered into a contract to purchase the property and to convert it to a contractor's yard for the storage of building cranes, which would be moved on and off the Island by truck and/or barge. The historic buildings would likely be demolished and the yacht yard would cease to exist.

Many Island residents are not aware that this site has been an active boatyard since 1856, and it is probably the only one in the city to have remained in constant use since that time. In 1870, the first successful defender of the America's Cup was rebuilt here; from the 1860s through 1980, some of the most beautiful wooden yachts in the world were built and launched here; during World War II, many minesweepers, PT boats and other military vessels were constructed here for the U.S. Navy. Many boat owners continue to use the yard for repair, winter storage, dock space and maintenance during the season.

The website for the Department of City Planning, in its introduction to the City Island Special District Zoning regulations, states: "The only commercial and manufac-

turing uses permitted are those that reflect the Island's nautical flavor or serve the retail needs of residents and visitors." Members of the community, including the Civic Association, the City Island Historical Society and the City Island Oyster Reef, are working to make certain that the Department of Buildings understands the intention of the Special District Zoning and denies the permit for crane storage.

It should be noted that Consolidated Yacht Yard is across the street from Pilot Cove Manor, which houses 135 seniors, and where access by emergency vehicles must not be compromised. Grace Church, up the street from the yard, was built by David Carll, who operated the historic boatyard from the 1860s to 1900. The building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, has multiple stained-glass windows that would most definitely be at risk with the movement in and out of large building cranes on flat-bed trucks. The church hall also houses a senior center administered by the Presbyterian Senior Services. On the same corner as Consolidated is a house for disabled adults operated by the Association for the Advancement of Blind and Retarded; not only would their lives be affected by a crane yard, but the house, which dates to the 1860s, would also be compromised.

Community Board 10 has asked representatives of U.S. Crane & Rigging to come to the board and describe their intentions for use of the property. As of press time, they had not responded to the invitation.



Photo by MATT PANZA

The Department of Transportation organized the replacement of many sidewalks on City Island during February in order to correct defects or illegal installations. Owners of properties with sidewalks that do not meet current regulations were inspected and issued violations some months ago. The cost of correcting damage caused by trees will be paid by the city, but owners will be billed for the repair of other defects.



Photo by MATT PANZA

The Department of Transportation recently installed a street light at Bowne Street and City Island Avenue after evaluating a request made by a City Island resident who was concerned about the number of accidents at the Seafood City exit.

# Nurse-Family Center May Come to City Island

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

On Feb. 10, 2020, two professional grant writers met with the executive board of the City Island Civic Association to describe several possible programs that may end up on City Island. They told the Civic board that they were representing two doctors who were applying for grants from both the federal government and the New York State Department of Mental Health and wanted to know what types of programs would be acceptable to the City Island community.

The grant writers explained that the doctors were interested in leasing property on City Island that would be in line with "the certificate of occupancy, the zoning laws and preferences of City Island's Civic Board, and any other regulatory bodies." Research by Civic board members reveal that two buildings on the Island—176 Kilroe (the former convent) and 596 Minneford—were purchased last year by a real estate firm that intends to lease them. Because one of the buildings can accommodate multiple residents, the Civic assumes that these are among the properties the doctors have in mind.

The Civic officers reviewed the grants for which the doctors would be applying, and the possibilities included crisis intervention centers offering temporary housing for adults

and/or children in mental crisis. However, *The Current* has since been informed that there is only one program for which the doctors, owners of Centennial Housing in the Bronx, will be applying for funding to support.

The proposed Nurse-Family Partnership program is a non-residential program designed to help low-income mothers pregnant for the first time. Each mother is partnered with a registered nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing nurse home visits through the child's second birthday. Only professionals, nurse practitioners, physicians, nutritionists and so on will occupy the designated buildings on City Island for office work, clerical work, training and counseling sessions during business hours. *The Current* has been assured that no clients will reside in the property at any time, day or night.

The Civic board explained to the grant writers that City Island already has two homes for disabled adults and a state-run day rehabilitation center, as well as traffic issues, no medical or police facilities on the Island and limited public transportation. The grant writers noted this but responded that the emergency lane would make it possible for patients in need to reach appropriate medical facilities if needed.

The Civic reached out to elected officials, including Councilmember Mark Gjonaj, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi and Assemblyman Mike Benedetto for help in evaluating potential problems with crisis rehabilitation centers on City Island. However, the program described by the doctors is far less likely to cause problems for Island residents. The grant writers told the Civic that their clients will be moving forward right away to apply for grants to fund their program and that "they look forward to joining any other Civic board meetings once they have situated their program in the community as new neighbors."

# Melissa Cebollero, Leader, Community Center Health Program

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

The board of the City Island Community Center recently asked Island resident Melissa Cebollero to serve as the health coordinator for the Center by helping to plan and coordinate monthly health programming.

Melissa has lived on City Island for the past 15 years and is raising three clam diggers, all daughters. Her goal is to learn the most pressing health concerns of the

Community Center board and membership, as well as the broader City Island community in order to understand the type of questions, access to services and resources that are most pressing for this community. As she told *The Current*, "I am excited to have reached a point in my professional career where I can be of added value to the community in which my family happily resides."

Melissa is former director of Health and Human Services for the Bronx Borough President's office, which is engaged with the health policy and engagement portfolio for the 1.4 million residents of the Bronx. In that capacity, she helped found a borough-wide initiative called #Not62 Campaign for a Healthy Bronx. This initiative works to guide the borough out of last place, or 62 out of 62, in New York State with regard to health indicators and outcomes.

She is currently employed by the Montefiore Health System, managing government and community relations for the system's 11 hospitals, 250 ambulatory sites and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The main focus of her work is to maintain good relationships throughout the communities where Montefiore has a presence and to proactively facilitate strategic community engagement that provides much-needed health education, access to clinical resources and health screenings.

Once she has learned about the most pressing health concerns of the Island community, she will organize the most strategic health programming to answer those needs, which began with a workshop covering heart health in February. In March she will explore women's health, April will be dedicated to autism and May will focus on mental health, after which the Center board will convene to plan summer programming.

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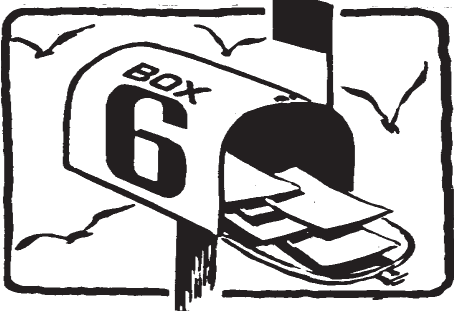
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We welcome letters and opinions. Letters longer than 250 words will be edited, with every effort made to preserve their substance. We reserve the right not to print letters that are copies, libelous, inaccurate or in bad taste, or those that cannot be verified. Include your phone number. Anonymous letters will not be printed, but names will be withheld upon request.

**Clearing Up Confusion**

To the Editor,

I would like to make a correction to an article written on the front page of the January-February *Island Current*, "Hells Angels on the Island," regarding my property located at 415 City Island Avenue.

For the record, I have owned this property for over 21 years and I have not sold it, as the article claims. The property that was sold recently, which has nothing to do with me is 417 City Island Avenue, my neighbor. He sold this property directly to the current owners.

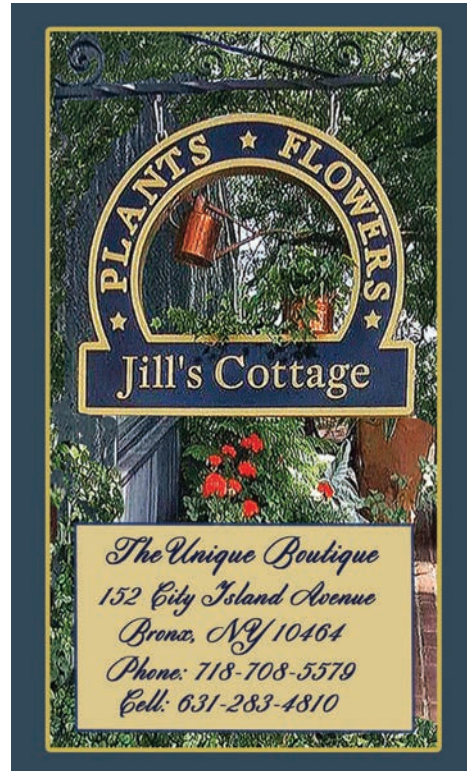
Maybe you should have reached out to me to confirm an address prior to printing this article. I consider this a slanderous claim because it could directly impact my business as a real estate agent on the Island.

People believe what you print, and I expect an apology and retraction immediately. The article also mentions my tenants, which is completely unfair to them as well.

I love City Island and the people of City Island and will continue to represent it ethically.

**Louise DelGiudice**

*Editor's Note: See Correction page 2.*



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# Sewage Pollution in City Island Waterways? An Investigation

By ADJIE HENDERSON and BARBARA DOLENSEK

This article is the first of a series on the problem of sewage in New York City waters. It begins with an overview. The subject will be continued in future issues of The Current in more depth.

Although City Islanders may be unaware of it, many New York City waterways contain some level of sewage, especially after rainstorms, a matter that has recently come to the attention of several Island groups. In this area, the sewage comes from many sources, including our own sewer system, as well as from surrounding towns, especially Mount Vernon, which has raw sewage leakage issues that go directly into the Hutchinson River, which flows into Eastchester Bay.

Many sewer systems still use leaky pipes that are decades old and have definitely passed their usefulness. Given what we pay the city's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for water and sewer, our expectation is that the city has replaced all of the bad or aging pipes. Yet even with functionally perfect pipes, some systems are set up to allow some overflow into nearby waterways when it rains, and that can include a solution of raw sewage and anything that is tossed down the drain or onto your street (e.g., dog poop, car fluids, lawn fertilizer, industrial and restaurant waste, medicines).

It works like this. According to DEP, sewage drainage systems in New York City fall into two main categories. A minority of systems use two separate lines; one for human wastewater and commercial/industrial wastewater and the other for rainwater and whatever finds its way into the street sewers. This two-barrel system reduces the liquid load coming into sewage plants, since street sewage water can be discharged separately during rains (or floods) directly into waterways. The more usual system, however, is one in which everything flows through the same pipe, which results in untreated overflows into receiving waters after certain levels of rain. These pipes are called combined sewage overflows, or CSOs, and they account for 60 percent of the city's sewer system. As the DEP puts it: "When flows surpass twice the design capacity of the wastewater treatment plant, a mix of stormwater and untreated sewage flows directly into local waterways to prevent damage to our wastewater infrastructure."

There are a few areas of the USA where overflow tanks have been constructed to hold sewage until it can be treated, but there are few in our area. Even where there are separate lines (SSOs) for raw and storm drains, some overflows can be expected. The outcome, as reported in the New York Times, is that 20

billion gallons of raw sewage and polluted stormwater are discharged from 460 combined sewage overflows through "outfalls" (large open pipes carrying untreated sewage) into New York Harbor every year. For decades, it was not just simple overflows. Raw sewage from the Upper West Side of Manhattan flowed untreated into the Hudson River as recently as 1986, according to the environmental group Riverkeeper. The last of the treatment plants around the city were not completed until the late 1980s. Today, with aging pipes on some side streets on City Island, polluted rain water uses the street as the easiest gravitational path directly to Long Island Sound.

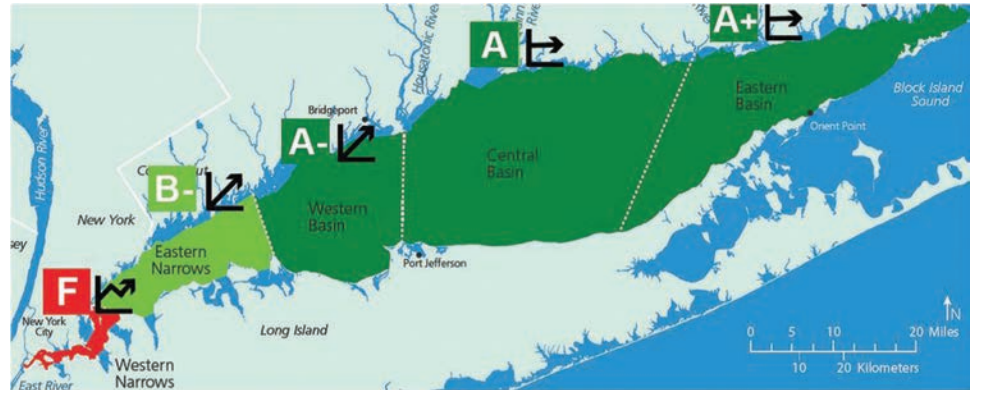
## City Island Waterway Quality

In 1938, the WPA developed a sewage system for City Island that became a very outdated system of street sewers, cesspools and septic tanks. A central pipe was laid down City Island Avenue, and lateral street lines were fed into the central pipe. One pipe exited on east Schofield Street into the Sound, but was probably later linked to a treatment plant on Ward Island to avoid the pollution of Orchard Beach.

The main sewer pipe on City Island Avenue was replaced in 2006–2008 with one sewer line for storm runoff and a sanitary sewer line for human waste, each of which exit at the east end of Schofield Street in a CSO. The storm sewer north of Schofield empties as a runoff into Long Island Sound at east Schofield. On streets south of Schofield, the storm water exits at Belden Point through a line that runs under City Island Avenue. Industrial and human waste is pumped from a station on east Schofield across the Island to Centre Street, where the pipe runs under the Sound to a Throggs Neck interceptor and ends up at the Hunts Point treatment facility. The DEP assures residents that the pumping station on east Schofield is adequate to the task. So far, we have been unable to obtain a map of the complete sewage system on City Island.

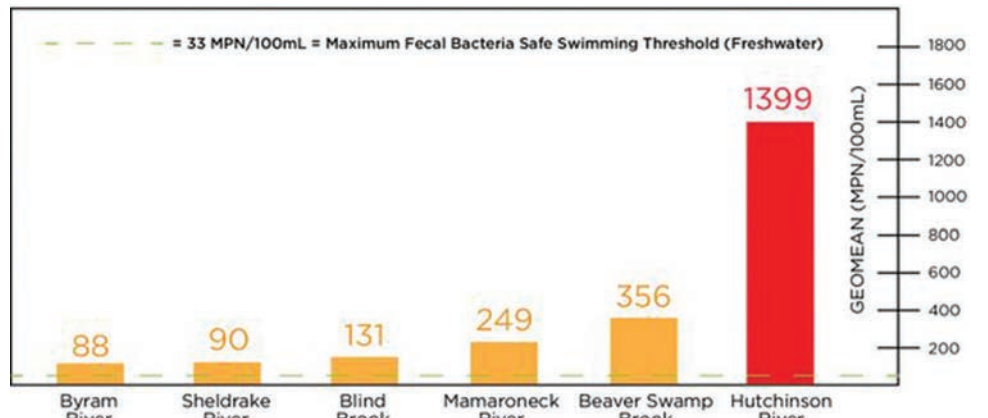
Much of Long Island Sound has been cleaned up in recent years, largely thanks to the environmental organization Save the Sound ([SavetheSound.org](http://SavetheSound.org)), but the area of the Sound called the Western Narrows, which extends from Sands Point on Long Island across to the north end of Pelham Bay Park, continues to be classified with an F rating (see chart). The Save the Sound report evaluates water quality on five criteria: overall quality, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, chlorophyll and water clarity. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has designated the waters around City Island as "uncertified," meaning that shellfish cannot be harvested for use of food. DEP regularly monitors these waters for pollutants, as does the NYC Department of Health, and Save the Sound tests the waters weekly in Eastchester Bay and the Hutchinson River throughout much of the year.

Part of the reason that these waters are considered uncertified is the outflow from the CSO's on the Hutchinson River. Two of them, located at 233rd Street and Conner Street, overflow often in rainstorms, according to DEP data. This does not mean that the water is unsafe for swimming every day during the warm weather. In fact, many Island adults and children swim off and enjoy the beaches on the west side of the Island, including Fordham Street Beach Club, Earley Street and the Morris Yacht Club, without complaints or any health issues.



Images courtesy of SAVE THE SOUND

This map of Long Island Sound shows the water quality as of 2018. The Western Narrows, in which City Island is located, have remained stalled at an "F" grade (45%) since 2008. The area is densely developed, heavily populated and has very little exchange with the Atlantic Ocean, so it is still suffering from nitrogen pollution stemming from human waste and stormwater runoff. Save the Sound, which monitors the water regularly, indicates that this most challenging part of the Sound has shown significant improvements in dissolved organic carbon in the 10-year data, leading to a sense of optimism for scientists involved in the study. However, the levels of fecal bacteria in the Hutchinson River are far higher than those of other rivers along the Sound.



However, it is worth noting that although Orchard Beach was closed down for swimming only a handful of times over the last 20 years, two beaches on City Island have received multiple warnings and several closings during the past decade, usually after rainstorms, from the DOH, which records these statistics on its website, [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/beach-class.page#report](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/beach-class.page#report). The warning signs issued to these beaches by the Health Department indicate that the "water is contaminated with sewage or storm runoff, which may cause vomiting, diarrhea, respiratory illness or infections."

The discharge of any sewage overflow into coastal waters brings pathogens. Untreated wastewater of any kind can cause health hazards for people and animals as the load of pathogenic microorganisms associated with human disease and fecal pollution increases. There are many types of disease-causing pathogens in the raw sewage that is discharged into local waterways, according to the Long Island Sound Study, a bi-state partnership consisting of federal and state agencies, user groups, concerned organizations and individuals dedicated to restoring and protecting the Sound.

It is good news that most of the nearby towns along the Sound have largely cleaned up their acts, but the biggest miscreant in our area is Mount Vernon. The city's infrastructure is inadequate, and untreated sewage has been discharging from the stormwater pipes into the Bronx and Hutchinson Rivers. Currently, there is a lawsuit in process based on the Federal Clean Water Act against Mount Vernon, filed by the United States of America, the State of New York, and the Commissioner of NY State's DEC. The city concedes liability and does not dispute that it is in violation, but claims that owing to long-standing financial mismanagement and corruption, it does not have the funds to remedy the situation.

However, Mount Vernon has just elected a new mayor, Shawyn Patterson-Howard, who is determined to help remedy the situation and assured a group of concerned Island residents that the issue is a priority for her. *The Current* will write more about the lawsuit in the next article, but clearly it will take a long time to wend its way through the court system. The Mount Vernon sewage leaks may affect the west side of City Island, since the Hutchinson River is subject to tidal flow, and untreated sewage can move with the tide. The Hutchinson River is also used as a dumping ground for any liquids associated with cars, as well as motors, tires, etc., from the mechanics' stations above Co-op City.

One of our most important environmental laws, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), states that the government is responsible for "assuring for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings." More than 160 nations have used the law as a goalpost for maintaining a safe environment. The introduction of the Clean Water Act of 1972 led to the availability of grant funding and legal requirements for at least a minimal level of water treatment.

We will tackle the question of "why can't something be done?" in the next issue of *The Current*. In the interim, please think about contributing time and money to City Island groups, such as the Hutchinson River Restoration Project, the City Island Oyster Reef and City Island Indivisible. These groups are forming a coalition to working with elected officials and environmental groups to fight waterway pollution in our area.

For further reading: [www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/issue](http://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/issue); <https://longislandsoundstudy.net>; [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4077002](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4077002); [www.riverkeeper.org/campaigns/stop-polluters/sewage-contamination/cso](http://www.riverkeeper.org/campaigns/stop-polluters/sewage-contamination/cso); [www.soundhealthexplorer.org](http://www.soundhealthexplorer.org)

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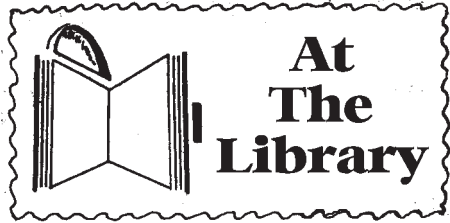
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**MARCH CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

**Reading Rocks! A Sensory-Friendly Music, Bubble, and Comedy Series:** This critically acclaimed music series is about inclusivity and why reading rocks! Each week kids will dance, sing and hear stories that include counting, colors, animals and music. Parents, teachers and caregivers are also welcome to join the fun. All programs are created and facilitated by certified music therapists and certified specialists in autism and early childhood. Recommended for children ages 2 through 5 years old with parent/caregiver. No registration required. Presented by Turtle Dance Music. Every Wednesday at 11 a.m.

**Circle Time:** Children from birth to 3 years old and their caregivers can enjoy stories, songs and finger plays while spending time with other toddlers. Limit of 15 children with their caregivers. Craft included. Every Tuesday from 11 to 11:45 a.m.

**Tiny Tots:** Learn, grow, and have fun through educational play! Ages birth to 4. Every Thursday at 11 a.m.

**Read & Play:** Children from birth to 3 years old and caregivers can take part in wonderful stories, discover amazing toys and meet new friends in this fun, informal program. Limit of 15 children with their caregivers. Every Friday from 11 to 11:30 a.m.

**Craft-A-Way:** Drop in and participate in creating projects related to a theme or holiday. Ages 2 to 5. Friday, March 20, at 11:30 a.m.

**MARCH TEEN AND TWEEN PROGRAMS**

**Juggling 101** Come juggle with Tommy and his merry band of jugglers! They'll perform for you, and we'll spend some time learning how to juggle together. This session includes a juggling ball-making workshop, and you'll be able to take home what you create. If you've ever wanted to step right up and join the circus, now's your chance! Wednesday March 11, at 4 p.m.

**Books and Bites:** Every week, come together to read the selected book while enjoying some snacks! We will be reading "The Bridge Home." Every Thursday at 4 p.m.

**After School Lounge:** Looking for a quiet place to get some homework done? Take advantage of library resources to catch up on homework, study, and read. Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 5 p.m.

**Game Jam:** Get in the game! Whether it's using the Wii or going old school and getting out the board games, this is the perfect way to relax at the end of the week! Every Friday at 3:30 p.m.

**Wacky Wednesdays:** Take some time halfway through the week to explore technology, research and the arts with different activities. Every Wednesday at 4 p.m. March 4: Try Irish!; March 18: Women's Right Buttons; March 25: Lego Freebuild.

**MARCH ADULT PROGRAMS**

**Live Music with Annette St. John.** Born and raised in Harlem, vocalist Annette St. John grew up in an artistic family that influenced her musical style: equal parts jazz, blues, standards and gospel. She has worked with such greats as Jimmy Smith, Della Griffin and George Benson, and performed all over Manhattan, including at the Apollo, the Blue Note, the Village Vanguard, Smoke and the Cotton Club. In recent years, she has appeared in Japan and led her own groups in NYC. Annette always says, "It's Not Work If You Love What You Do!" Satur-

day, March 28, at 1 p.m.

**Mensa Mondays:** Doing puzzles has been linked to improved memory, better problem-solving skills and even lower stress levels. Let us help you work off those Monday blues by providing you with riddles, word searches and number puzzles to train your brain! Every Monday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Computer Lab Assistance Monday:** C.L.A.M. is here to shell out answers to your tech questions! Use one of our desktops or laptops, or bring your own device. Smartphones, e-readers and tablets are welcome as well. Every Monday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**City Island Scrabble Club:** If you're looking for some friendly competition, then join our Scrabble Club! Come in and flex your vocabulary muscles. Note: Limited to 12 participants, registration required. Thursdays, March 5 and 19, at 5 p.m.

**Crossword Crunch:** There's no "I" in team, but there is a lot of fun in solving puzzles with friends! Join us in unwrapping the clues and attempting to complete the entire puzzle before time runs out! Who's ready to savor the sweet taste of victory? No registration required. Thursdays, March 12 and 26, at 5 p.m.

**City Island Book Club:** Call or stop by the branch for more information. Mondays, March 9 and 23, at 5 p.m.

**The Island Writers:** This is a group for all who are interested in writing either professionally or personally. Regardless of your experience level, we're here to help one another along in the journey of self-expression and creativity. All are welcome, so come join in on the literary fun! Every Tuesday from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

**One-on-One: Computer, Tablet, and Resume Instruction:** Stop in or call to make an appointment for one hour of personalized instruction that addresses your questions and concerns. No computer? No problem! We have computers available for instructional use. Registration required.

**Saturday Afternoon Movie:** Feature movie titles, varying in length, at 1 p.m. March 7: "Some American Feminists" (documentary with discussion); March 14: "Brooklyn"; March 21: "Suffragette."

Some programs require advance registration, which can be done in person, or by phone. All programs are free!



**Bartow-Pell Events**

Both a New York City and a National Landmark, Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Road in Pelham Bay Park, offers programs, exhibitions, and special events that speak to contemporary life, connect the past to the present, and cultivate appreciation for the area's historical, natural, and cultural resources. The museum is open to the public Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 12 to 4 p.m. For more information or reservations, call 718-885-1461.

There will be a Pysanky Workshop on Sunday, March 1, from 12 to 3 p.m. Learn the time-honored art of creating intricately patterned Ukrainian Easter eggs, and make your own, using a wax-resist technique at this hands-on workshop. Instructor Alesia Kozicky has been making pysanky all her life and has taught the craft for over 25 years. Her work has been widely displayed, including at the Library of Congress and libraries throughout Westchester. Hot wax and permanent dyes are used, so dress accordingly. Ages 12 and older. Please bring a bag lunch. Registration required. Cost \$25 (includes admission to the museum and materials fee).

On Saturday, March 7, from 10 a.m.

to 12 p.m., BPMM will present a fruit tree pruning workshop. Early March is the perfect time to prune your fruit trees as they will be just coming out of their winter dormancy. Learn how to do it right in Bartow-Pell's apple orchard with Master Arborist Dan Dalton of Almstead Tree Care. Bring your favorite pruners or borrow a pair of ours. Rain or shine. Registration suggested. Cost Free.

Bring your friends to Bartow-Pell's conservatory on Saturday, March 21, at 3 p.m., for conversation, light refreshments, and, of course, tea. Find out the difference between high and low teas, fun etiquette facts, and why this afternoon ritual began. Because of limited space, registration is required. Cost \$40.

On Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m. join American classical furniture and decorative arts expert and Bartow-Pell board member Carswell Rush Berlin for cocktails in the conservatory, followed by a tour of the mansion featuring some of the museum's most important pieces. Cost Bartow-Pell Members: \$10; Not-Yet Members: \$15.

First Friday will kick off the season on Friday, April 3, from 6 to 8 p.m. with a performance by John Michael Hersey. Enjoy the music, explore the museum, and stroll the garden; light refreshments are available. The free trolley makes an hourly loop starting at 5:25 p.m. from the #6 Pelham Bay Park subway station to Bartow-Pell to City Island. Registration requested. Cost Heritage Members and above: Free; Friend Members: \$5; Not-Yet Members: Adults \$15; Seniors/Students \$10.

The BPMM annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 4, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This is the one day when it's okay to put all your eggs in one basket! Children 2 through 12 hunt for eggs, enjoy arts and crafts, and have photos taken with the Easter Bunny. Please bring your own basket. Tickets online at [bpmm.org](http://bpmm.org). Rain date: Sunday, April 5, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free parking across the street in the Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course parking lot. Cost Bartow-Pell Member Children: \$12; Not-Yet Members: \$16.




As a service to our readers, *The Island Current* will periodically list recent sales of residential and commercial property as found in the public record. This feature is designed to give a general idea of the fair market values of property on City Island. An update will be published every few months at our discretion. The following information was collected by Janie Blanks, associate broker with Exp Realty, LLC. *The Current* is not responsible for errors or omissions in the data.

Address	Sale Price	Closing Date
<b>One-Family Houses</b>		
400 King Avenue	\$600,000	10/4/19
77 Bay Street	580,000	10/4/19
179 Hawkins Street	160,000	10/10/19
345 King Avenue	400,000	10/23/19
678 King Avenue	1,200,000	11/01/19
670 Minneford Avenue	383,000	11/21/19
626 King Avenue	1,300,000	12/9/19
32 Winters Street	590,000	12/20/19
256 City Island Avenue	426,000	12/23/19
105 Rochelle Street	560,000	12/27/19
119 Pilot Street	675,000	1/15/20
<b>Two-Family Houses</b>		
85 Earley Street	800,000	10/3/19
197 Beach Street	520,000	1/7/20
<b>Condominiums</b>		
37 Island Point	914,389	10/8/19
238 Bowne St., 254A	373,100	10/16/19
33 Island Point	944,936	10/21/19
7 Island Point	730,000	10/28/19
152 Tier Street, 202A	415,000	11/6/19
39 Island Point	914,389	11/6/19
41 Island Point	832,929	12/6/19
43 Island Point	1,100,000	1/2/20
2 Leeward Lane, 20	450,000	1/24/20
170 Schofield Street, 2H	263,000	1/27/20

Disclaimer: The above sales include foreclosures and family transfers, which do not reflect real market or assessed value in those cases.

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**A Current Review**

**“GOD OF CARNAGE” VISITS CITY ISLAND**

By BRUCE A. WEIS

The City Island Theater Group (CITG) has been generating warm and happy feelings recently with enjoyable, feel-good productions such as “Auntie Mame” and “Mamma Mia!” For the group’s first production of 2020, however, they took a giant step away from this happy place with the far more sobering production of “God of Carnage.”

This play by Yasmina Reza is set in Brooklyn and features a pair of couples, the parents of two 11-year-old children. Recently, one of the children had intentionally knocked two teeth out of the other at a public park after being refused permission to join a group. Both sets of parents have agreed to meet to discuss the matter in a polite manner. That meeting is the focus of the play, and it begins graciously enough but rapidly spins out of control as the conversations grow heated and the parents’ focus turns in increasingly unexpected directions.

The CITG production of the play stays true to the unexpected directions of the play. Before seeing it, one could assume that the events onstage are pretty obvious; the par-

ents of the two children will engage in increasingly tense conversations and insults, and ashtrays will be thrown, and ultimately some heartrending resolution to the events that brought them to that living room would occur. After the show, the audience would go home feeling slightly wiser about the nuances of human relations, and life would go on.

You might reasonably have expected this of the evening, as I did, and you would have been wrong. The story line of “God of Carnage” uses the assault on an 11-year-old boy by another as a jumping-off point but spends the rest of the evening veering further and further away from that topic. Each of the play’s four characters begins by projecting solid outward personalities, and each of these façades is torn to shreds during the course of the show. Bitter disappointments, strained relationships and ugly qualities are revealed on all sides, together with a shared desperation to maintain appearances. Perhaps Yasmina Reza wished to point to the façades we sometimes employ in life. In any event,



Photo by MARY McINTYRE

Rehearsing for the new production of “God of Carnage,” a dark comedy by Yasmina Reza, are (l. to r.): Robert McEvily, Kaitlyn Stoltze, Matthew A. Tomasino and Elizabeth Paldino. The play was presented during the weekend of Feb. 21, with remaining shows on Feb. 28, 29 and March 1.

“God of Carnage” was a powerful and entertaining event.

Originally written in French by Yasmina Reza (Le Dieu du carnage), the play was translated into English by Christopher Hampton and premiered in March 2008 at the Gielgud Theatre in London’s West End starring Ralph Fiennes, Tamsin Greig, Janet McTeer and Ken Stott. The play came to the United States and opened at the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre on Broadway on March 22, 2009. A limited engagement had been envisioned for the play, but its run was first extended through February 2010 and ultimately left open-ended. The show ultimately ran into early June 2010, after 452 performances. The original Broadway cast included Jeff Daniels, Hope Davis, Marcia Gay Harden and the late James Gandolfini. Each of the actors was nominated for Tony Awards for their performances with Marcia Gay Harden winning the 2009 Tony for Best Leading Actress in a Play. Yasmina Reza also collected the 2009 Tony for Best Play.

In translation, “God of Carnage” has been produced in Germany, Slovenia, France, Spain, Croatia, Serbia, Australia, Romania, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Belgium, Chile and the United Arab Emirates.

Michael and Veronica Novak (Robert McEvily and Kaitlyn Stoltze) are the aggrieved parents of Henry, the child who may have lost two teeth in the incident (his prognosis is unclear in the story). Michael operates a wholesale business, and Veronica is a writer who specializes in African history. As the play begins, Michael seems proud of his business and Veronica is happy with her writing and a pending book release.

Meanwhile, Alan Raleigh and Annette Raleigh (Matthew A. Tomasino and Elizabeth Paldino) are the father and mother of Benjamin, the child wielding the stick. Alan is an international attorney with an annoying habit of taking cellphone calls in the middle of a conversation, and Annette works in wealth management. Alan is annoyed at having to spend time discussing this issue, and Annette, while appearing to share Veronica’s concern

with the issue at hand, also wants to get the issue behind them. In minutes, it becomes obvious that these personalities will clash, and clash they do, but for unexpected reasons and in wholly unanticipated ways.

It was a pleasure to watch these actors at work. “God of Carnage” was written without an intermission; once the action begins it doesn’t stop, or even slow down. Robert McEvily, Elizabeth Paldino, Kaitlyn Stoltze and Matthew A. Tomasino were as one, coordinating lines and action into a seamless narrative. Attention to production detail for the production was exacting. To meet the *Island Current* deadline, I was allowed to sit in on a dress rehearsal, where I witnessed a 20-minute review and discussion of the best way for Annette to throw Alan’s cellphone into a bowl of tulips. Attention to such details is one of the reasons this is such a good show.

A film version of the play was produced in 2011 with the slightly shortened title of “Carnage.” The film was directed by Roman Polanski, and although the movie retained the story’s Brooklyn location, the film was actually shot in Paris, owing to Polanski’s outstanding criminal conviction in the United States. The movie starred Jodie Foster, John C. Reilly, Christoph Waltz and Kate Winslet. I wasn’t able to attend a costumed performance of the play, but Nick Sala assures me that the costumes are fantastic. In any event, they were designed by Carol McCabe, and additional costume sewing was done by Cheryl Brinker, Barbara (Boo) Dennis, Kathy Gibbons and Jane Protzman. Set design was by Carl Tallent and set construction was by Dan Srdoc. Props were provided by Pamela Johnston, who also served as production stage manager and was again responsible for the goings-on backstage. Brian Argiento handled sound design and used an interesting soundtrack of songs designed to match the onstage mood.

Joseph Montano did an great job in his directorial debut with the CITG, and Nick Sala handled the myriad details of production manager.

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**Library**

*Continued from page 1*

Mark Dunn, “The Treasure of Hart Island” by Mike Monahan, “Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine” by Gail Honeyman, “Redemption” by David Baldacci and “Dark Sacred Night” by Michael Connelly.

In addition, the NYPL published a list of “125 Books We Love” on Valentine’s

Day 2020 as part of the anniversary celebration. Among them is “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald, “The Bonfire of the Vanities” by Tom Wolfe and “Naked in Death” by J. D. Robb (a pen name for Nora Roberts).

For more information about the 125th anniversary and other plans, go to [nypl.org/125](http://nypl.org/125). Meanwhile, happy 109th anniversary to the City Island branch!

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## Organization News

News on this page concerning organizations, and events listed in, are submitted by representatives of those organizations. A limit of 150 words is requested for all news items submitted. In most cases news will be edited and every effort will be made to preserve the substance of longer items. News and calendar events must be received by no later than the 20th of each month except December and July. If the 20th falls on a holiday or Sunday, the deadline is the 19th. Mail submissions to P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464. YOUR NAME AND PHONE NUMBER MUST BE INCLUDED.

### Current Calendar

#### MARCH

Sun., March 1, **City Island Theater Group's "God of Carnage,"** 3 p.m. matinee, Grace Church Parish Hall, 116 City Island Avenue at Pilot Street.

Fri., March 20, **P.S. 175 PTA Bingo and Raffle Extravaganza,** 6:30 p.m., Morris Yacht Club, 25 City Island Avenue. Call 718-885-1093 for information.

Sat., March 21, **Temple Beth-El Gala Dinner Dance,** Pelham/Split Rock Golf Courses, 7 to 11 p.m.

Sat., March 28, **POTS Program,** St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: chicken with vegetables and potatoes.

Tues., March 31, **City Island Civic Association meets,** 7:30 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

#### American Legion Auxiliary Unit 156

Our next meeting will be March 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the Legion Hall.

ALA Mission Training will be held on March 14 in Hartford, CT. Contact Doreen Gallagher for more information at [doreeng-wall@gmail.com](mailto:doreeng-wall@gmail.com) or 646-823-0388.

The St. Patrick's Day Dinner will take place on March 15, from 2 to 6 p.m. in the Legion Hall, hosted by the Auxiliary. Seating is limited to 85 persons, so be sure to sign up and pay in full ahead of the event. Please contact Laura Booth at 917-337-3326 for reservations.

Quilters by the Sea QOV: Our first Sew Saturday of 2020 was fun and successful. With 14 participants, we finished a quilt top. Doreen Wall, Auxiliary President, and Auxiliary members honored us with lunch, certificates of appreciation and a new Singer sewing machine. We plan to use the machine during our Sew Saturdays and to teach machine basics to anyone interested. Two of our Junior Members, Emma and Grace Riordan, assisted the Senior Members with the lunch and handing out the certificates. If you are interested in making Quilts of Valor to honor our local veterans, contact Harlan Sexton at [harlan.sexton1@gmail.com](mailto:harlan.sexton1@gmail.com).

Looking ahead: On May 2, there will be a Kentucky Derby-themed fundraiser event for the Stop Soldier Suicide project. Mark your calendars and watch for more information.

Thinking about joining the Auxiliary? Come to any of our meetings, talk to our membership chairwoman Viki Trifari at [wik99@me.com](mailto:wik99@me.com) about eligibility, and meet the 150+ members of the largest, oldest and most active women's group in our community. We're growing and doing more every year.

**Harlan Sexton**

#### Grace Episcopal Church

Grace Episcopal Church, a place of worship and fellowship, located at 116 City Island Avenue on the corner of Pilot Street, warmly welcomes you to the following:

Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. led by Father John Covington with Holy Eucharist Rite II. After the service, we offer coffee hour, a time for refreshments and fellowship. We have birthday and anniversary prayers on the first Sunday of each month; the healing prayers are on the third Sunday each month.

You are invited to join Father Covington's Bible Reading Group, which meets during coffee hour on appointed Sundays. On Sunday, March 1, the group will discuss the first chapter of the First Book of Samuel.

Sunday School: Members of the Sunday School will work on special crafts dur-

ing Lent. They will also begin preparing the presentation of the Passion of Christ on Palm Sunday. The group meets every first and third Sundays of the month at 10 a.m. and all ages are welcome. No extra time is needed. Students will begin the service with the congregation at 10 a.m., then leave with Ms. Nani for lessons and activities for 30 minutes during the service. They will rejoin the congregation during the exchange of peace. Come and join our lively Sunday School!

Music Ministry: Guided by our music director, Caroline Coppola, this music ministry began in the fall of 2015 with a handful of singers from the church choir and City Island locals rehearsing hymns and popular music to perform at area nursing homes and rehabilitation centers. Since then, our membership has grown from 5 to 11 singers who lend our voices to this "feel-good ministry."

We call ourselves the GraceTones, and we have sung for the residents at Workmen's Circle Multicare Center in the Bronx, Dumont Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care in New Rochelle, and Sunrise at Fleetwood Assisted Living in Mount Vernon, to name a few. Over the past year we widened our audience base by performing at City Island venues such as Clipper Coffee and The Artist. We'll be at The Artist on Sunday, March 1, starting at 3 p.m., with special guests Laurie Vega, Karen Nani and Maurice Richards, all local residents who will be lending their beautiful voices to the show, as well as keyboardist Frank Pisani, a friend from off the Island. Wherever our venue is, we feel truly blessed to be able to sing and lift the spirits of our listening audience!

**Sandy Dunn**

#### Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El (TBE), "your shul by the sea," 480 City Island Avenue, is a stimulating non-denominational, welcoming place for observance of Jewish traditions. Jewish Renewal is the style of our deeply spiritual, innovative, all-inclusive and open-minded worship. Twice a month Rabbi David Evan Markus leads services with music by Your Band by the Sea. At other times, services are led by congregants in a joyful celebratory manner. Events begin promptly, so please arrive 15 minutes early. Services are followed by an oneg\* (refreshments). Reminder: for the health and comfort of all, please refrain from wearing perfume or cologne. We look forward to seeing you.

Services take place on Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Doors may be locked. Please knock and be patient. Thank you.

March 6: Community-led services

March 13: Women's Herstory Shabbat. Join Rabbi David and the Band for Women's Herstory Shabbat, coinciding with a special Shabbat of Shabbats. This week's Torah portion (Ki Tisa) includes our V'shamru, making this Shabbat the Shabbat about Shabbat. Celebratory oneg to follow.

March 20: Community-led services

March 27: Join R. David and the Band for a spirited musical welcome to the Shabbat of Vayikra, the first chapters of the Book of Leviticus. We reach Torah's middle book and her teachings about spiritual humility and inclusion, lessons the world especially needs now. Celebratory oneg to follow.

#### Other Activities

March 8: Purimpalooza, 7:30 p.m. Join Rabbi David (who won't be Rabbi David) and a veritable cast of characters for a super-fun Purim of hijinks, lowbrow, highbrow, hiddenness and revelation. Come in costume, shed inhibition (we have ways of helping!) and prepare for the unexpected.



Photos by **EVYONNE BAKER** and **PAUL NANI**

It's been busy at City Island's Grace Episcopal Church so far in 2020. On Jan. 26, Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche, visited and was given a special presentation by the members of the Sunday School (top photo). Grace Church also hosted Scout Sunday for worship and lunch on Feb. 2. More than 30 scouts and their leaders and families attended, with many of the scouts taking an active part in the worship service.

March 21: Spring Fling: our 86th Anniversary Gala Dinner Dance from 6 to 10 p.m. It's a highlight of the TBE year, our annual gala dinner dance to benefit Your Shul by the Sea. Bring your dancing shoes and dress colorfully for this first day of spring. This year's event honors TBE vice president Jodie Sadovsky and Phillis Mauciri and TBE's amazing musicians!

April 9: Community Passover Seder: The fiftieth Earth Day. 6 to 9 p.m. Join Rabbi David, the flow of liberation, millennia of freedom fighters and the whole planetary ecology for a community Passover Seder unlike any other. Tradition's four cups will weave with modern spiritual innovation to inspire, touch, teach and transform. RSVP and pre-payment essential. Reservation information will be posted soon.

Chesed Committee: Do you need a helping hand, a caring call, a ride to the doctor? Let us know. If you have love to give, we need your support. No experience required. To seek support and/or to volunteer, please e-mail us at [yourshulbythesea@gmail.com](mailto:yourshulbythesea@gmail.com).

Prayer Group: TBE has an informal prayer group to hold members, friends and family in prayer for healing. If you feel called to join this group, please e-mail us at [yourshulbythesea@gmail.com](mailto:yourshulbythesea@gmail.com).

\*Oneg Sponsorships: Onegs are joyful community celebrations, often sponsored by people commemorating special events to honor others or their own special occasion (e.g., birthday, anniversary, new job, yahrzeit, memorials, etc.) To sponsor one or to find out more information, please contact Violet Smith at [violetsmi@aol.com](mailto:violetsmi@aol.com) or 718-885-0978.

For additional information, check out our website at [www.yourshulbythesea.org](http://www.yourshulbythesea.org).

**Paul Klein**

#### St. Mary's Thrift Shop

We are open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Check out our Winter Clearance Bag Sales, with many half-price specials. The thrift shop will be closed from March 19 through March 28 and will reopen on April 2 with our Spring Collection. Stop by for a complimentary cup of coffee and crumpets.

**Arlene Byrne**

#### REGULAR MEETINGS

Weekly Twelve-Step Meetings on City Island

##### Narcotics Anonymous:

Fridays at 7:30 p.m., St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church, City Island Avenue near the Bridge.

Thursdays at 8 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church hall, 113 Bay Street.

##### Alcoholics Anonymous:

Mondays at 8 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church hall.

Tuesdays at 8 p.m., St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church.

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., Grace Episcopal Church.

Saturdays and Sundays at 7:30 a.m., AA open meetings at City Island Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church: 718-885-1440

Trinity United Methodist Church: 718-885-1218

Grace Episcopal Church: 718-885-1080

##### Al-Anon

Wednesdays at 7 p.m., Trinity Methodist Church Hall, 113 Bay Street.

##### Overeaters Anonymous:

Saturdays at 11 a.m., Grace Episcopal Church: 718-885-1080.







### On the Road Classics

**It Happened One Night** (1934) is Frank Capra's ground-breaking screwball comedy, which won all five major Academy Awards for 1934. It stars Claudette Colbert as Ellie Andrews, a spoiled heiress who has escaped from her disapproving father (Walter Connolly) in order to marry fortune-hunting aviator King Westley (Jameson Thomas). She boards a Greyhound bus bound for New York where she meets newspaper reporter Peter Warne (Clark Gable), who has recently been fired for drinking on the job. When Peter admits he recognizes her, she makes a deal with him: if he helps her get to New York, he can write a scoop about her for his paper. Predictably, as they travel north and are involved in a series of comical misadventures, the gruff newspaperman and the spoiled rich girl fall in love.

**Wells Fargo** (1937) tells of the origin of express mail in the United States, beginning in the 1800's with a horseback route between Buffalo and St. Louis. It stars Joel McCrea as Ramsey MacKay, the frontiersman who makes it all happen, while his loyal wife Justine (Frances Dee) stays home with the children. This is a fascinating historical drama that explains a period in history unfamiliar to most Americans.

The "ruby red slippers" from **The Wizard of Oz** (1939) are so famous, they reside at the Smithsonian in Washington D.C. This classic film stars Judy Garland as Dorothy, who is swept away from her Kansas home to the mythical mystical Land of Oz. When Dorothy finds those famous shoes on her feet, she is terrified by the Wicked Witch of the West (Margaret Hamilton) who wants them for herself. She is sent by Glinda the Good Witch (Billie Burke) on a journey to Emerald City by following the Yellow Brick Road. There she hopes to ask the great Wizard to help her get home. On her way she befriends the Scarecrow (Ray Bolger), the Tin Man (Jack Haley) and the Cowardly Lion (Bert Lahr), who join her on her quest.

**They Drive by Night** (1940) stars George Raft and Humphrey Bogart as brothers Joe and Paul who are delivery-truck drivers. They work extremely hard trying to run their own business, but one night, a sleep-deprived Paul falls asleep behind the wheel. He demolishes the truck and loses an arm, forcing the brothers to finally accept truck company owner Ed Carlsen's (Alan Hale) job offer. Ed's wife Lana (Ida Lupino), is smitten with Joe, with tragic results. Ann Sheridan appears as Joe's love interest Cassie Hartley.

Based on the famous John Steinbeck novel, **The Grapes of Wrath** (1940) is set during the Great Depression in the 1930's. It stars Henry Fonda as Tom Joad who heads home to his family's Oklahoma farm after he is paroled from prison. When the bank seizes their property, the whole family makes a grueling journey across the United States to California looking for a better life. On the road, beset by hardships, the Joads meet dozens of other families making the same trek. Once in California, they serve as migrant workers with their American dream not panning out the way they had hoped. The film garnered seven Academy Award nominations with two wins for Best Director John Ford and Supporting Actress Jane Darwell (Ma Joad).

Another depression-era film is **Sullivan's Travels** (1941) Preston Sturges' classic comedy about filmmaker John L. Sullivan (Joel McCrea), who is fed up with directing profitable comedies and consumed with the desire to make a serious social statement. Convinced he needs to suffer first, he decides to leave Hollywood and travel across America meeting "real" people. Disguised as a tramp, John travels incognito. En route, he meets a down-and-out failed actress (Veronica Lake) whom he tries to help upon his return to the studio. Having experienced firsthand the execrable existence of real-life

hoboes, Sullivan returns to Hollywood full of bleeding-heart zeal. He redoubles his efforts to make a difference, but he loses his memory and winds up a prisoner on a chain gang. While Sullivan has longed to make a socially relevant drama, he eventually learns that creating laughter is his greatest contribution to society.

For a complete change of pace there is the Swedish film, **Wild Strawberries** (1954) directed by Ingmar Bergman, an achingly bittersweet reminiscence on aging and regret. This deeply moving character study chronicles an automobile trip taken by grouchy retired Doctor Isak Borg (Victor Sjöström) who travels from Stockholm to Lund, Sweden, with his pregnant and unhappy daughter-in-law, Marianne (Ingrid Thulin), in order to receive an honorary degree from his alma mater. Along the way, they encounter a series of hitchhikers, including the vivacious young Sara (Bibi Andersson), who looks like the doctor's own love. The incidents and conversations occurring during the journey are intermixed with dreams and memories as the old man comes to terms with the life he has lived.

For many years I resisted viewing the revered film **The Searchers** (1956) because Westerns are not one of my favorite genres. However, I was very surprised to find that it was a social statement on the extreme prejudice against the Native Americans in Texas in the 1800's. John Wayne plays Ethan Edwards, a former Confederate soldier who returns to his brother Aaron's (Walter Coy) frontier cabin three years after the end of the Civil War. When members of his brother's family are killed or abducted by Comanches (played in the film by Apaches), he vows to track them down and bring them home. Upon discovering that his niece Debbie (Natalie Wood) has been abducted by the fearsome Comanche chief Scar (Henry Brandon) and is alive, Ethan and his adopted nephew Martin Pawley (Jeffrey Hunter) embark on a dangerous five year mission to find her. This is a film about one man's troubling moral codes, with Ethan driven by a bitter hatred of Indians, though he knows their lore and language. As time passes, it becomes unclear whether Ethan wants to rescue Debbie or murder her because she has lived with Indians too long to be considered "white." The "Making of" documentary that accompanies the film was commissioned by director John Ford and is fascinating and extremely informative.

Alfred Hitchcock's **North by Northwest** (1959) is a tale of mistaken identity, with an innocent man pursued across the United States by agents of a mysterious organization trying to prevent him from blocking their plan to smuggle out government secrets on microfilm. This classic suspense film finds New York City ad executive Roger O. Thornhill (Cary Grant) pursued by ruthless spy Phillip Vandamm (James Mason) after being mistaken for a government agent. Hunted relentlessly by Vandamm's associates, Thornhill makes a cross-country journey, meeting the beautiful and mysterious Eve Kendall (Eva Marie Saint) along the way. Jesse Royce Landis appears as Thornhill's mother in several comical sequences. One of Hitchcock's most famous scenes occurs when he is following a

clue to a remote rural highway and is attacked by an armed crop-dusting plane. The film's finale is a nail-biting chase across the top of Mt. Rushmore.

Stanley Kramer's **It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World** (1963) features an all-star cast of who's who in the comedic world. A massive traffic jam, caused by injured reckless driver Smiler Grogan (Jimmy Durante), results in his telling the onlookers that he's buried a fortune in stolen loot, "under the Big W." The group set out on a race to be the first to find the fortune. The motorists include a dentist (Sid Caesar) and his wife (Edie Adams), a henpecked husband (Milton Berle) accompanied by his mother-in-law (Ethel Merman) and his beatnik brother-in-law (Dick Shawn), a pair of comedy writers (Buddy Hackett and Mickey Rooney), a slow-wit (Jonathan Winters), a wheeler-dealer (Phil Silvers), and a pair of covetous cabdrivers (Peter Falk and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson). Closely following every move members of this eclectic group make is a scrupulously honest police detective (Spencer Tracy). Virtually every appearance is filled by well-known comic actors including Carl Reiner, Terry Thomas, Arnold Stang, Buster Keaton, Jack Benny, Jerry Lewis, and The Three Stooges. Two prominent comedians not appearing are Groucho Marx who refused to appear when Kramer couldn't meet his price and Stan Laurel who declined because he felt he was too old-looking to be funny.

**Easy Rider** (1969) is the story of Wyatt (Peter Fonda) and Billy (Dennis Hopper), Harley motorcycle riding hippies, who after completing a drug deal in Los Angeles, decide to ride eastward hoping to reach New Orleans in time for the Mardi Gras festival. On their way, they wind up in a New Mexico jail where they meet alcoholic ACLU lawyer George Hanson (Jack Nicholson). George helps them get out of jail and decides to travel with them to New Orleans. On their journey, they experience bigotry and hatred from the inhabitants of small-town America and also meet with other travelers seeking alternative lifestyles. After a terrifying drug experience in New Orleans, the two travelers wonder if they will ever find a way to live peacefully in America. The "Making Of" accompanying feature is fascinating. It has interesting

tidbits from director Dennis Hopper such as recounting when it was suggested that Jack Nicholson be cast as the alcoholic lawyer, he replied "I'm friends with Jack, and he doesn't drink!" Nicholson garnered a best supporting Oscar nomination for his efforts.

**Duel** (1972) was Steven Spielberg's first feature film that was a thriller shown as an ABC Movie of the Week. It stars Dennis Weaver as David Mann, a businessman from California driving a Plymouth Valiant to meet a client. When he passes a truck, he soon finds himself chased and terrorized by the mostly unseen driver of a grungy Peterbilt 281. The original made-for-television version was 74 minutes long with filming completed in 13 days (three longer than the scheduled 10 days), leaving 10 days for editing prior to its TV broadcast. It was later edited, extended, and released theatrically.

**Harry and Tonto** (1974) stars Art Carney in his Oscar winning role as Harry Coombes a man in his seventies who is evicted from his Manhattan apartment because the building is set to be demolished. He decides to travel around the country with his cat Tonto visiting his grown children. First he stays briefly with his son Burt (Phil Bruns), and then moves on to visit his former love Jessie (Geraldine Fitzgerald), his daughter Shirley (Ellen Burstyn) in Chicago, and his youngest son Eddie (Larry Hagman) in Los Angeles. These encounters defy Harry's expectations.

Television featured two well-known On the Road Classic series. The first was **Route 66** (1960-64 116 episodes over 4 seasons). It starred George Maharis as Buz Murdock and Martin Milner as Tod Styles, a pair of young men driving Tod's Corvette across the southern route of the United States, having many adventures along the way. It included many soon-to-be screen legends such as Martin Sheen, Robert Redford and Robert Duvall.

The documentary style **On the Road with Charles Kuralt** series began in 1967, and ran on CBS for more than 20 years. In that popular program, the veteran journalist rode across America in a bus, meeting "regular" folks telling their stories. A collection of On The Road episodes has now been released on DVD.

And until next time, happy viewing...

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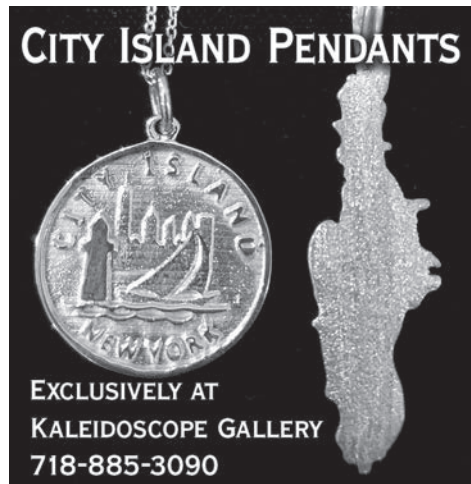
## Organization News

*Continued from page 9*

0727 or drop by the Center.

**Transportation Services.** Off-Island shopping trips leave at 9 a.m. and include Shop Rite, Stop & Shop, Target, Farmer's Market, Trader Joe's and more. The suggested contribution for a round trip is \$1 on City Island, \$2.50 for off-Island shopping trips. Anyone over 60 is encouraged to take advantage of our door-to-door transportation services. Call Alex at 347-834-6466 for more information or for pickup or trips.

**Patty Attis**



**CITY ISLAND PENDANTS**

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## City Island Civic Association

The Board continued working on its different projects. The Water Safety Committee has gotten a Bronx-based Harbor Patrol into the NYC budget as a result of its working with the office of the Police Commissioner, the 45th Precinct Community Council, Community Board 10, eight other waterfront community associations as well as Bronx Councilmen, Mark Gjonaj and Fernando Cabrera.

The Municipal Relations Committee has been working with Bronx DOT commissioner Nivardo Lopez on the dangerous merge on the southbound Hutchinson River Parkway at Exit 5. Their Highway Design Unit conducted a field inspection of this location and has revised the design and replied to the committee, "new markings will be installed in the spring 2020 markings season." Also the committee reports that these bus stops are on the list to be removed in the latest MTA proposal: Cross Street, Sutherland Street (Dunkin Donuts), Schofield Street and Pell Place. Residents were asked to attend a hearing on Feb. 20 and to send their protests to Councilmember Gjonaj.

The Officers and Board met with grant writers representing two unnamed doctors, affiliated with an organization called Centennial Housing, Inc., and they are applying for government grants to fund a healthcare facility on City Island. One of them would be a "crisis intervention center" for either adults or children with serious mental health issues. The doctors are looking for two houses for rent on City Island where they would like to place this program should they receive the grants. Members of the

Board tried to explain that City Island already had two homes for disabled adults and a day-time habilitation center for adults, and had no resident medical facility or police station and considerable traffic during the warm months, but the grant writers were not convinced.

The Housing and Zoning committee have asked City Planning and the Community Board as well as elected officials to protest the replacement of Consolidated Yacht Yard by a construction crane company. Not only is Consolidated on the site of the oldest continually operating ship yard on the Island but the operation of such a yard is not in keeping with City Island Special District Zoning. The Civic wrote a letter to elected officials protesting the issuing of a contractor's permit for such a use.

Our next meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2020, in the Community Center at 190 Fordham Street. Please bring your annual dues to the meeting (\$20 per year or \$50 for a three-year membership). If you cannot make the meeting please take the time to send your dues to PO Box 117, City Island, or pay online at [paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com) to this e-mail [city.island.civic@gmail.com](mailto:city.island.civic@gmail.com). Remember to use the "friends and family" option so a service charge is not deducted.

**Jane Protzman**

## Garden Club of City Island

The Garden Club meeting on Feb. 3 featured a presentation by Jessica Schuler from the Westchester County Parks Department. She spoke about "Gardening for Good," by building plant communities through plant selection

and considering ecology and biodiversity when choosing plants. Because genetic biodiversity provides resilience to disturbances, prevents disease and helps species adjust to changes in the environment, we should be thoughtful in our gardening choices. Be especially sure to plant only non-invasive native plant species. Jennifer Bakshi, an instructor at the New York Botanical Garden, will give a presentation at our March 2 meeting on the subject "Unraveling the Mystery of Plant Names."

Our beautification committee is busy organizing the annual April beautification fundraising drive. Next month, club members will be delivering letters to all City Island residents and businesses requesting donations to be used for beautification projects, such as seasonal plantings in the containers along City Island Avenue, holiday wreaths for public spaces, payments for cleaning tree pits and grassy areas on the Avenue and special projects.

Thursday, May 14, is the date of our annual spring luncheon, which will be held at the Harlem Yacht Club on City Island. The luncheon concludes with a raffle of gift baskets created by Garden Club members, gift certificates donated by our local businesses and some special items. This event is open to everyone. Save the date!

Garden Club meetings are held monthly, except August, usually on the first Monday of the month at 10 a.m. at the City Island Yacht Club on Pilot Street. Meetings conclude with coffee, tea and fresh baked goods served by our hospitality committee. You are invited to join us.

**Sharynne Wilder**

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# City Island Yacht Club

## 2020 WINTER-SPRING EVENTS

**Open House**  
10am-3:30pm: Sat Feb 29 and Sat April 25

Come and learn about sailing opportunities at CIYC! American Sailing Association (lessons), Junior Sailing Summer Programs, CIYC Club Boat Program, Coast Guard Auxiliary Programs, City Island Power and Sail Squadron.

## 2020 Spring Seminars

**FREE**  
**Wednesday Night**  
**Public Seminars**

**March through May**  
Bring a friend! Sharpen your sailing skills and prepare your boat before the season starts.

Restaurant/pub opens April 3.  
Seminars start at 7:30pm.  
Please RSVP (718) 885-2487

**Kick-off Event:**  
**Big Tom Racers' Town Hall**  
**March 25**

- Topics include:
- Getting your boat ready for racing
  - Navigating a race course
  - Getting a crew together
  - Racing made simple!

**Saturday Seminar**  
**Course from American Sailing Association:**  
**North U Racing Trim**  
**March 28**

Full day seminar, including lunch.  
Price TBD.



## City Island Junior Sailing 2020

**Full Day Program 9am-4pm** (With optional extended care.)

- Classes for Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced, grouped according to skill.
- All instructors are certified by US Sailing, the national organization of sailing, and have First Aid/CPR training.
- For children, ages 8-16. Scholarships and discounts available!
- Swimming proficiency required.

## 2020 Session Dates

Session I June 30 - July 3  
Session II July 6 - July 17  
Session III July 20 - July 31

Gala Awards Dinner  
July 31 (fee)

All sessions are held at:  
**City Island Yacht Club**  
63 Pilot St.  
City Island, NY 10464

Contact us at:

**City Island Junior Sailing**  
[www.cityislandyc.org/JuniorSailing](http://www.cityislandyc.org/JuniorSailing)  
[city.island.jr.sailing@gmail.com](mailto:city.island.jr.sailing@gmail.com)  
(347) 692-0696 (Junior Sailing Office)

**Find out more at the CIYC Open Houses**  
**on Sat 2/29 and Sat 4/25 from 10am-3:30pm**



## Obituaries

The Current will print obituaries free of charge upon notification by a member of the deceased's immediate family. Call 718-885-0760 or write to P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464, including your telephone number.

### Julia Gleeson

Longtime City Island resident Julia Gleeson passed away on Feb. 2, 2020, at a nursing home on Long Island.

Julia was born on Oct. 12, 1926, in New York City and grew up in the Bronx, the daughter of Irish immigrants and the oldest of three children. She worked at several different jobs, including the telephone company, the plumbers' union United Association Local 2, Fordham University, and Farberware.

After retiring, Julia moved to City Island, where she was one of the first residents at Pilot Cove Manor, which opened in 1981. She became a very active member of the community, as a member of St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church and the Garden Club, a trustee of the City Island Historical Society and Nautical Museum, a volunteer at the St. Mary's thrift shop and at Calvary Hospital. She also enjoyed music and animals and her many nieces and nephews.

Julia is predeceased by her brothers Gerald and Maurice. She is survived by her sister-in-law, Loretta Gleeson, her nephews and nieces (Gerald, Loretta, Brian, Chris, Michael, Kristen and Ryan) and several grandnieces and grandnephews.

A service was held at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020.

### Jean Steiner D'Allesandro

Jean Steiner D'Allesandro passed away on Sept. 8, 2019, after a brief illness. She was 77.

Jean was born on City Island in 1941 to Tom and Ann Steiner. She attended P.S. 17, Christopher Columbus High School and Drake Business College. She worked as an executive secretary and bookkeeper for several firms in Manhattan and Westchester.

After her marriage to Robert D'Allesandro, the couple traveled cross country for two years, settling in Berkley, California, where she and Bob managed her uncle's stationery business. After five years on the West Coast, they returned to be closer to Bob's children. Jean enjoyed the country life for over 25 years. After Bob's passing, Jean returned to City Island, where she enjoyed reconnecting with old friends and making many new ones. She was affectionately known to many as "Aunt Jeanie."

Jean enjoyed traveling with her friends back on City Island. She was an active member of the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary and the West Fordham Street Beach Club.

Jean is survived by her sister, Dorothy Tomsen, her niece and godchild, Annemarie Tomsen (Joe Scotti), her stepchildren, Pattian (Hank) Gilcher, Howard (Barbara) D'Allesandro, Susan Snyder, Teresa (Tim) Hartsoe, and nine grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.

Jean was interred at Pelham Cemetery on Sept. 12, 2019.

eligible child.

**Earned Income Tax Credit:** For tax year 2020, the maximum Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for low and moderate-income workers and working families rises to \$6,660 up from \$6,557 in 2019. The credit varies by family size, filing status, and other factors, with the maximum credit going to joint filers with three or more qualifying children.

**Child Tax Credit:** For tax years 2019 through 2025, the child tax credit is \$2,000 per child. The refundable portion of the credit is \$1,400 so that even if taxpayers do not owe any tax, they can still claim the credit. A \$500 nonrefundable credit is also available for dependents who do not qualify for the Child Tax Credit (e.g., dependents age 17 and older).

**Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit:** The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit also remained under tax reform. If you pay someone to take care of your dependent (defined as being under the age of 13 at the end of the tax year or incapable of self-care) to work or look for work, you may qualify for a credit of up to \$1,050 or 35 percent of \$3,000 of eligible expenses in 2020. For two or more qualifying dependents, you can claim up to 35 percent of \$6,000 (or \$2,100) of eligible expenses. For higher-income earners, the credit percentage is reduced, but not below 20 percent, regardless of the amount of adjusted gross income. This tax credit is nonrefundable.

**American Opportunity Tax Credit and Lifetime Learning Credits:** The maximum credit is \$2,500 per student for the American Opportunity Tax Credit. The Lifetime Learning Credit remains at \$2,000 per return; however, the adjusted gross income amount used by joint filers to determine the reduction in the Lifetime Learning Credit is \$118,000 (\$59,000 single filers).

**Interest on Educational Loans:** In 2020, the maximum deduction for interest paid on student loans is \$2,500. The deduction begins to be phased out for higher-income taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income of more than \$70,000 (\$140,000 for joint filers) and is completely eliminated for taxpayers with modified adjusted gross income of \$85,000 (\$170,000 joint filers).

### Retirement Savings Plans

**Contribution Limits:** The elective deferral (contribution) limit for employees who participate in 401(k), 403(b), most 457 plans, and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan increases to \$19,500 (up from \$19,000 in 2019). Contribution limits for SIMPLE plans increase to \$13,500 (up from \$13,000 in 2019). The maximum compensation used to determine contributions increases to \$285,000 (up from \$280,000 in 2019).

**Income Phase-out Ranges:** The deduction for taxpayers making contributions to a traditional IRA is phased out for singles and heads of household who are covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan and have modified AGI between \$65,000 and \$75,000.

For married couples filing jointly, in which the spouse who makes the IRA contribution is covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan, the phase-out range increases to \$104,000 to \$124,000. For an IRA contributor who is not covered by an employer-sponsored retirement plan and is married to someone who is covered, the deduction is phased out if the couple's modified AGI is between \$196,000 and \$206,000.

The modified AGI phase-out range for taxpayers making contributions to a Roth IRA is \$124,000 to \$139,000 for singles and heads of household, up from \$122,000 to \$137,000. For married couples filing jointly, the income phase-out range is \$196,000 to

\$206,000, up from \$193,000 to \$203,000. The phase-out range for a married individual filing a separate return who makes contributions to a Roth IRA is not subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment and remains \$0 to \$10,000.

**Saver's Credit:** In 2020, the AGI limit for the Saver's Credit (also known as the Retirement Savings Contribution Credit) for low and moderate income workers is \$65,000 for married couples filing jointly, up from \$64,000 in 2019; \$48,750 for heads of household, up from \$48,000; and \$32,500 for singles and married individuals filing separately, up from \$32,000 in 2019.

### Businesses

**Standard Mileage Rates:** In 2020, the rate for business miles driven is 57.5 cents per mile, down one half of a cent from the rate for 2019.

**Section 179 Expensing:** In 2020, the Section 179 expense deduction increases to a maximum deduction of \$1,040,000 of the first \$2,590,000 of qualifying equipment placed in service during the current tax year. This amount is indexed to inflation for tax years after 2018. The deduction was enhanced under the TCJA to include improvements to nonresidential qualified real property such as roofs, fire protection, and alarm systems and security systems, and heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems. Also of note, is that costs associated with the purchase of any sport utility vehicle, treated as a Section 179 expense, cannot exceed \$25,900.

**Bonus Depreciation:** Businesses are allowed to immediately deduct 100 percent of the cost of eligible property placed in service after Sept. 27, 2017, and before Jan. 1, 2023, after which it will be phased downward over a four-year period: 80 percent in 2023,

60 percent in 2024, 40 percent in 2025, 20 percent in 2026, and 0 percent in 2027 and years beyond.

**Qualified Business Income Deduction:** Eligible taxpayers are able to deduct up to 20 percent of certain business income from qualified domestic businesses, as well as certain dividends. To qualify for the deduction business income must not exceed a certain dollar amount. In 2020, these threshold amounts are \$163,300 for single and head of household filers and \$326,600 for married taxpayers filing joint returns.

**Employee Health Insurance Expenses:** For taxable years beginning in 2020, the dollar amount of average wages is \$27,600 (\$27,100 in 2019). This amount is used for limiting the small employer health insurance credit and for determining who is an eligible small employer for purposes of the credit.

**Business Meals and Entertainment Expenses:** The deduction remains at 50 percent for taxpayers who incur food and beverage expenses associated with operating a trade or business. For tax years 2018 through 2025, however, the 50% deduction expands to include expenses incurred for meals furnished to employees for the convenience of the employer. Amounts after 2025, however, will not be deductible. Office holiday parties remain 100 percent deductible and employee meals while on business travel also remain deductible at 50 percent. Also eliminated is the deduction for business entertainment expenses (only meals are deductible at 50 percent; receipts must identify and separate meal costs from entertainment costs).

This checklist outlines some of the important tax changes for 2020 but is not intended to be all-inclusive. Additional changes in tax law are likely to arise during the year ahead.

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From EDWARD D. HEBEN, C.P.A.

### Important Tax Changes for Individuals, Part 2

This month we will focus on tax credits and deductions that will affect taxpayers during 2020, as well as giving advice for those who run their own businesses.

#### Tax Credits


**Adoption Credit:** In 2020, a non-refundable credit (only those individuals with tax liability will benefit) of up to \$14,300 is available for qualified adoption expenses for each



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Times and heights of high and low water (Eastern Standard Time)

Heights in feet above soundings printed on charts of water adjacent to City Island. Times shown are nautical times. For times on the table beginning with 1300, subtract 1200 to get ordinary PM time (e.g., 1625 - 1200 = 4:25 P.M.). Times less than 1200 are A.M. times (e.g., 1154 = 11:54 A.M.).

HH = hours; MM = minutes

Tide chart by Tom Smith

**MARCH 2020**

DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	
01 Sun	0256	7.22	0922	0.72	1525	6.48	2135	0.89	Sun 01
02 Mon	0344	7.16	1014	0.89	1619	6.31	2227	1.09	Mon 02
03 Tue	0438	7.11	1113	0.98	1719	6.25	2326	1.19	Tue 03
04 Wed	0538	7.13	1224	0.92	1826	6.36			Wed 04
05 Thu	0032	1.12	0643	7.28	1350	0.62	1939	6.68	Thu 05
06 Fri	0146	0.82	0751	7.56	1500	0.13	2045	7.15	Fri 06
07 Sat	0301	0.31	0856	7.92	1555	-0.39	2139	7.66	Sat 07

All times are Eastern Daylight Time beginning Sunday, March 8

08 Sun	0503	-0.27	1053	8.26	1743	-0.84	2328	8.13	Sun 08
09 Mon	0558	-0.80	1146	8.47	1829	-1.15			Mon 09
10 Tue	0016	8.47	0650	-1.17	1237	8.52	1914	-1.27	Tue 10
11 Wed	0102	8.64	0741	-1.32	1327	8.37	2000	-1.18	Wed 11
12 Thu	0150	8.61	0834	-1.24	1419	8.04	2048	-0.89	Thu 12
13 Fri	0240	8.40	0932	-0.96	1515	7.59	2140	-0.44	Fri 13
14 Sat	0336	8.03	1036	-0.54	1621	7.09	2242	0.09	Sat 14
15 Sun	0442	7.61	1146	-0.13	1740	6.71	2358	0.56	Sun 15
16 Mon	0606	7.29	1256	0.16	1856	6.55			Mon 16
17 Tue	0113	0.83	0723	7.18	1402	0.28	2003	6.63	Tue 17
18 Wed	0220	0.86	0829	7.26	1502	0.26	2102	6.86	Wed 18
19 Thu	0320	0.72	0927	7.43	1556	0.18	2155	7.14	Thu 19
20 Fri	0414	0.51	1019	7.60	1645	0.10	2243	7.41	Fri 20
21 Sat	0502	0.30	1105	7.71	1729	0.07	2326	7.59	Sat 21

**APRIL 2020**

01 Wed	0506	7.40	1142	0.91	1749	6.64			Wed 01
02 Thu	0000	1.27	0608	7.33	1251	0.90	1857	6.78	Thu 02
03 Fri	0109	1.16	0716	7.39	1414	0.66	2010	7.11	Fri 03
04 Sat	0231	0.79	0829	7.59	1529	0.21	2118	7.60	Sat 04



**THE COLORS OF SQUIRRELS**

A friend's recent sighting of a rare albino squirrel in the wild got us thinking more of the black squirrel population in our area. We remember that catching sight of a black squirrel used to be a lot less common than it appears to be today. Scientists have noticed, too, and some have turned their attention to learning the reasons why.

First, it should be noted that a black squirrel is a genetic variant of a gray squirrel. Scientists have found evidence to support the theory that black squirrels are the result of interbreeding between gray and fox squirrels. The gene mutation that accounts for the darker pigment, they tell us, began with the fox squirrel and was passed to the gray.

Now it seems black squirrel populations are on the rise. Scientists have postulated that their increase may have to do with their ability to stay warmer in the cold. There is evidence to support this, too: studies have shown that black squirrels can generate 11 percent more body heat in cold weather and retain body heat 18 percent better than gray squirrels. There is also speculation that black squirrels may be poised for a takeover because they are more aggressive and territorial than gray squirrels, and are more able to tolerate cold.

There is precedent for the kind of rise and fall in squirrel populations that we are observing here. For example, the native red squirrels of England are few and far between in large parts of that country

these days. Their demise would appear to coincide with the introduction of gray squirrels to England's shores about 100 years ago, probably from Canada or the United States. But the story doesn't end there. Eventually black squirrels were introduced. No one is sure how or when, but today it is clear that black squirrels will someday be supplanting the grays, who supplanted the reds for most common English squirrel.

One last, closer-to-home squirrel that we would like to bring to your attention is the flying squirrel. Many people think of the flying squirrel as much more exotic a creature than it actually is. In fact, flying squirrels have called NYC parks home for centuries. They are native New Yorkers. The reason that they are not as well known as their gray and black cousins is because of their size—they are the smallest squirrels of New York—and because they are nocturnal creatures as opposed to their diurnal, or daytime loving, cousins.

Of course, a flying squirrel doesn't actually fly like a bird. It does, however, glide. It does this by extending its feet to cause large flaps of skin called patagium to stretch out. Some flying squirrels can glide up to 150 feet at a time. Because of their extra large and sensitive eyes, they are able to navigate the tree limbs that would otherwise get in their way. We have been told that the best place to find flying squirrels in New York City is Inwood Hill Park in Manhattan. While you're there looking, keep your ears out for the Eastern screech owls that call Inwood Hill Park home.

*Cormac McEnery, Esq.*

*Kerry A. Dinneen, Esq.*

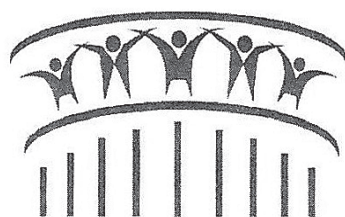
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# In The Garden

By MARY COLBY

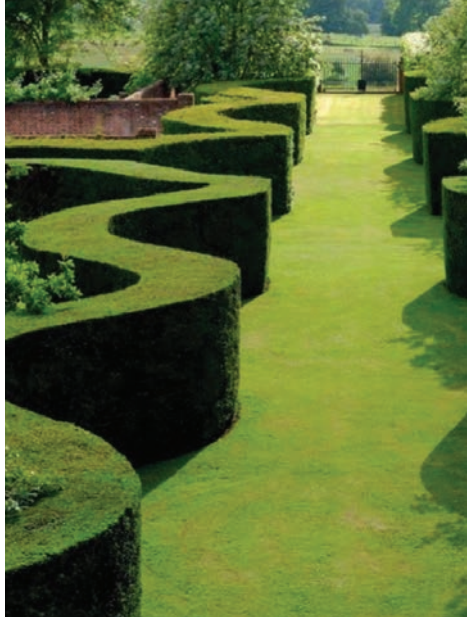


Photo by KRISTINA COOK

## A crinkle-crackle hedge

### Topiary: Sculpture in the Green

The word topiary comes from the Latin *toparius*, meaning ornamental gardening. My first encounters with great topiary were at the garden of Hidcote and then again at Great Dixter in Kent, England—two tremendous examples of what may be the most creative of all garden arts and practices.

There is a real magic that lends itself to a garden when yew or box are shaped into fanciful birds, chess pieces, teapots, etc., etc. When these green sculptures are human size, they mimic the human form, standing mysteriously in meadows or walled gardens. At Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania, you walk into a green room peopled with larger-than-life topiary. Although this method of shaping trees and bushes into pyramids, balls, eggs and archways belong to grand residences, the average gardener can have at least one or two that will make their own space more fanciful.

I have made spirals out of columnar box by winding a string around the shrub and

cutting into the lines below the string with a Fiskars scissor. Once that is done, a bit more shaping for the twists into soft rounded edges will produce something very satisfying.

To make a bird, it is best to first have a plinth of the boxwood itself and to let the top elongate before tying in the top branches to create the tail and head. I have seen amazing results as well with wire forms of animals. The wire skeleton goes around the plant. You just have to water and feed it and wait until it fills the form. Then you can shape it.

Yew is by far one of the best plants to make topiary from. It will outlast you, for some yew trees are a thousand years old. Irish yew when clipped is even tighter than the English variety. I wouldn't turn my nose up to using privet, especially for a short hedge that makes a boundary around beds and borders.

A hedge style I love is called a crinkle-crankle, which is basically a serpentine pattern. Walls were built this way in the early 19th century. Instead of being many bricks thick and needing buttresses, these walls only had to be one brick thin. The alternate convex-concave wall provided stability, and fruit trees could be grown on the south side, which retained heat, making the growing and fruiting season longer. Hedges may be carved and clipped in this way to make a beautiful configuration for planting trees in the concave areas. It could be made from hornbeam, holly, beech or yew. Or a shorter form outlining a flower border could be fashioned out of box.

If you are inclined toward the magical, embellish your own garden with some topiary sculptures, shears at the ready.

Mary Colby articles, "In the Garden," which have been published in The Island Current since November 2012, are now available in the Vertical File collection in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library at the New York Botanical Garden. If you would like to see her collection of gardening articles, stop in at the library on your next visit to the Garden and ask a librarian for her file.

# The Importance of Family Rituals

By JOHN SCARDINA

We live in a world of fast-paced interactions. If someone doesn't respond to a text within a few hours, we are already making up a script in our heads about what's wrong! Transactions are quick and to the point, and novelty and efficiency take precedence over tradition and quality time.

All cultures have rituals that create "sacred space" that is separate from day-to-day living. Many of us have faith practices—a church service, a seder, prayer vigil, a period of fasting, meditation at home or the shared silence of a Quaker meeting—that allow us to move into that space-time limbo and experience deeper connections: connections with the Divine, the universe, our loved ones and ourselves. However, as fewer and fewer families participate in organized religion, perhaps we can create family rituals that allow for a break from the mundane and a chance for shared connections.

Some of these probably already happen in your home: grace before meals, family prayers, the tooth fairy moment, the special birthday breakfast or the annual trip to a favorite vacation spot. Perhaps more such events, or rituals, could be established to honor and support family values. These might include:

• Community Service Day: Plan a special day each year to engage in community service as a family. Everyone can participate; no child is too young to be there! And there can be a sense of giving back to others. Returning to the same place of service each year can build long-lasting relationships with the folks

there. Have a family sharing circle over dinner that night and discuss what you learned from serving others.

• Communing with nature: Pick a place of natural beauty close to home and plan to spend a day each year at that place. Make it a day of no electronics and offer special activities that engage each family member: making and flying kites, a nature scavenger hunt, a silent period of observing the wildlife or a family hike or bike ride. Have everyone keep a journal of words, pictures or even found objects, and share what that day meant to you.

• Communion with local history: Draw a circle with a 50-mile radius from your home and look up all of the historical sites within that circle. Once a year, plan a family trip to one locale and learn more about your local history. Let each family member take turns choosing a place to visit, and have the children share what they learned at school the next day.

• Fundraising for a worthy cause: Research which non-profit organizations support your family values. Plan an all-day family fundraiser: it can be as simple as a yard sale or as complex as a "mini-Olympics" for the neighborhood or a puppet show displaying your family's creativity. Take photos of the day and send it to the organization you are supporting: you may appear on their website! Humans yearn for connection, and rituals provide special opportunities for that connection to grow. Here are four ideas: I am sure you can come up with many more. What are you waiting for?

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Information for the Talebearer must be received in writing no later than the 15th of the month except July and December. Mail to The Island Current, P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464; include your name and telephone number.



Photo by JACK ARONSON

Sandy Dunn (above, center) celebrated her birthday with a "Roaring 2020's" party at Grace Church Parish Hall on Feb. 1. She is shown above with (l. to r.) David and Harlan Sexton, her husband Bruce Weis, Cheryl Solomon and John Esser.

Get-well wishes are being sent to Pilot Cove's Frank Rosa, who is recuperating at home from gall-bladder surgery. Hope to see him up and about very soon!

Happy birthday greetings on March 31 to Pell Place's Barbara Stiene, with love from your family and friends.

It was a triple birthday celebration on Jan. 25 for three Islanders: Barbara (Boo) Dennis, Barbara Dolensek and Colleen Murdock. Friends and family toasted these three amazing women at a party at the Harlem Yacht Club.

Happy anniversary on March 28 to Bay Street's Anne and Scouse McIntyre, with love from your family and friends.

Belated birthday wishes to Sandy Dunn, who celebrated with her husband, Bruce, and friends at a "Roaring 2020's" birthday bash at Grace Church Parish Hall on Feb. 1. Lots of flappers and fun!

Happy March 8 birthday to Chris Butterworth and his cousin Joseph Nelson on March 10. More birthday greetings to Joseph's dad, Joe, on March 28. All with love from the Doyle and Butterworth families!

And a great big WELCOME to spring, which arrives on March 19!

Maria Swieciki



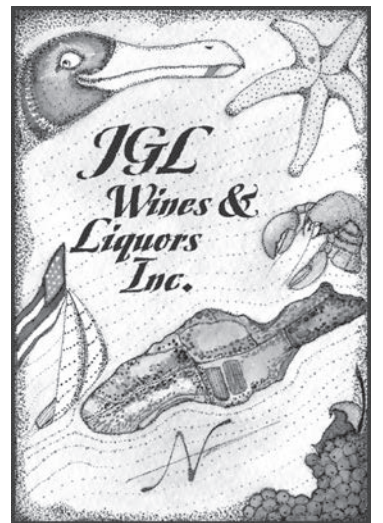
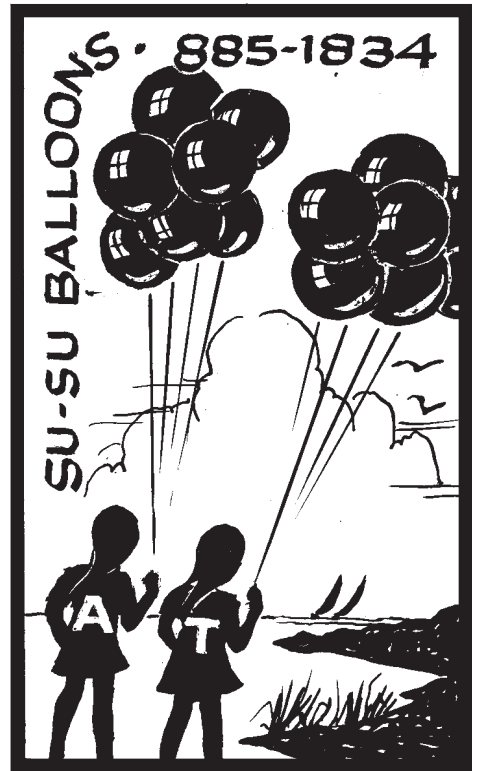
Photo by KAREN NANI

A triple birthday celebration for (l. to r.) Islanders Barbara (Boo) Dennis, Barbara Dolensek and Colleen Murdock, was held on January 25, 2020, at the Harlem Yacht Club.



Photo courtesy of DAVID ELLIS

On Feb. 1, 2020, members of the Trinity United Methodist Church Sunday School took the Souper Bowl of Caring on the road! Pastor Dave, Gabriel and David Ellis, and Lilly and Ben Chadwick set up in front of Dominick's Market to spread the word and receive donations. Thanks to the generosity of Dominick's and the City Islanders, they collected over \$170 and 30 bags of food for those in need.



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358 City Island Avenue  
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jgl1358@verizon.net  
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**THE SNUG'S 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ST. PADDY'S DAY PARTY**  
 TUES., MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup> 12 NOON TIL...  
 CORNED BEEF & CABBAGE (OTHER TRADITIONAL IRISH DISHES)  
 MUSIC ALL DAY LONG  
 RESERVE YOUR BOOTH NOW!!  
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 COME JOIN THE FUN!!!  
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE

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 "Your Shul by the Sea"  
 Requests the pleasure of your company at our  
**86<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner and Dance**  
 Honoring:  
**Jodie Sadovsky & Phillis Maucieri**  
 &  
**TBE Band by the Sea members:**  
**Robert Berent, Stu Goldstein, Steve Gottlieb,**  
**Robyn Lobe & Monty Renov**  
**Saturday, March 21, 2020**  
 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM  
 Pelham Bay & Split Rock Golf Courses  
 870 Shore Road  
 Bronx, New York 10464  
 Cocktail Hour, Complete Dinner with Complimentary Wine, Beer, Soda & Dessert. Cash Bar Available.  
**Live Entertainment by the Lickety Split Band.**  
 \$85.00 per person  
 RSVP by mail with payment and /or online at yourshulbythesea@gmail.com using PayPal by March 10, 2020  
**Chinese Auction, 50/50 & Silent Auction** to support our Temple's future. Items can be previewed and bids accepted prior to our event at Kaleidoscope Gallery  
 For additional information contact Paul Klein 718-885-3090.  
 \* If Glatt Kosher food is required please notify with RSVP