

The Island Current

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One Dollar

City Island's Marathon Man

By MIKE RAUH



Photos by KAREN NANI

Island physician and marathon runner Dr. Norbert Sander was instrumental in bringing the National Track and Field Hall of Fame to the Armory in New York from its previous home in Indianapolis. He presided over the ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 27, 2004 (above photo, center), with several Hall of Fame athletes, including John Carlos (left with scissors), Olympic bronze medallist from the 1968 games in Mexico City and former world record holder in the 200-meter sprint. Later Dr. Sander moved onto the indoor track at the Armory (top right photo), located on 168th Street and Fort Washington Avenue in Manhattan, where he joined another Island marathoner, Mike Rauh (left) and Billy Mills, 1964 Olympic gold medallist in the 10,000 meter run.

Most baseball fans, and many New Yorkers, can tell you that the National Baseball Hall of Fame is located in Cooperstown, New York, but hardly anyone knows where the National Track and Field Hall of Fame can be found. Give up? Until recently, it was in the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis, but not long ago USA Track and Field accepted bids from five cities vying to become the new home of the Hall of Fame. This is the story about the man who promoted the winning bid to bring it to New York City.

Those who know Dr. Norbert Sander realize that his credentials as a fine person aren't limited to his medical skills. When you meet him, you are impressed by his athletic appearance and easy smile. Although it has been more than seven years since he ran a marathon, he still seems to have unbounded energy, and he is in great shape. He should be, for all the activities that are part of his life.

Many City Islanders know Dr. Sander from his medical practice. After graduating from Albert Einstein College of Medicine more than 30 years ago, he opened a practice here. His introduction to City Island was through his father, who was an airplane pilot when there was a seaplane port here.

Norbert grew up in Yonkers and began a life-long affinity for running as a student at Sacred Heart grammar school. He continued to compete in high school and college, where he raced both track events and cross-country for Fordham Prep and Fordham University, often at the 168th Street Armory in Washington Heights. After college, he switched to long-distance races. In the early 70s he was one of the top marathon runners in the country, winning the New Orleans Marathon, the Yonkers Marathon and the prestigious New York City Marathon.

The Armory was home to track and field events from 1914 until the late 1970s, but in recent years it served as a shelter for homeless men. In 1992 a judicial ruling required New York City to move the men to more suitable quarters, and Norbert took the opportunity to try to make the Armory again a center for track and field. That same year, he organized

the Armory Foundation, which obtained funds to install a new track and reopen the facility to track meets. Over the years, the foundation, of which Norbert is now president, has raised more than \$20 million for the Armory's track and field center, as well as its multi-purpose community center for the neighborhood.

The meets held there are so successful that Norbert and the foundation have been able to install a world-class track with banked turns and a speedy Mondo racing surface. New field event structures and equipment have also been installed for pole vault, high jump, long jump and shot put. Now the center attracts more than 350,000 student athletes to participate in over a hundred meets every year. Recently, a long-term relationship was established with New Balance, an athletic shoe company, and the center was named the New Balance Track and Field Center.

When the National Track and Field Hall of Fame decided that its location in a hallway of the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis was insufficient, Norbert and the foundation made a bid to bring it to the Armory in New York. Their proposal was accepted, and work was begun to prepare 15,000 square feet of exhibit space. The project took months to complete, but by Jan. 24, 2004, it was ready to show the world.

Many Track and Field Hall of Fame athletes attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony, including Bob Beamon (long jump), Al Oerter (discus), Frank Shorter (marathon), Jim Beatty (miler), Don Bragg (pole vault), Mel Rosen (coach, from the Bronx), John Carlos (sprinter), Chandra Cheeseborough (200- and 400-meter runner), Grete Waitz (marathon) and Alberto Salazar (marathon). The New Balance Track and Field Games were staged on the same day and the Hall of Fame inductees came upstairs to see the competition. I spoke to Olympic marathoner Frank Shorter, who was impressed with the facility and enjoyed watching some of the races. Billy Mills (Olympic 10,000-meter gold medallist) posed with Norbert and me for a picture.

In the 1960s, when I ran high school races at the Armory, it was a dimly lit, dingy



building with a track that consisted of a splintered wooden floor with lines painted on it to mark the lanes. Today, thanks to the Armory Foundation, it has been transformed into a magnificent arena. Several City Island families, including the Nanis and the Kreigs, are already familiar with the revived building because they have children who compete there. Mick Byrne, a Fordham Street resident and track coach at Iona College, is also very familiar with the Armory.

When I interviewed Norbert Sander for this article, I asked him how he manages to balance all his activities. He told me he follows a schedule to get everything done, "and at night I sometimes awake to think any problems through." He's the father of four children, two of whom are grown and living on their own. In the morning, he still has time for breakfast with his two youngest daughters, ages 4 and 10.

When asked if his work has taken a nega-

tive toll on him, Norbert told me, "It doesn't feel like I'm going to work. Years ago, when I was a student and carried golf bags to make some cash, *that* was work." He really enjoys what he does now, both at his practice on City Island and in his role at the Armory. In both places he is surrounded by a highly dedicated support staff, which he credits for his success. I was curious to know if his schedule allowed any time to run; amazingly, he finds the time to get out for about 25 miles per week.

As a physician, athlete and an author ("Forever and a Day: Stories of Love" published by Yorkville Press in June 2002), Norbert Sander serves as an excellent role model, especially for his hugely successful work at the Armory. When I asked what inspires him to continue, he said, "When I'm standing on the infield of the track during a meet, I can feel the energy and enthusiasm of the competing athletes and their cheering fans."

Continued on page 5

BELDEN POINT TO BE FIXED UP

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

City Island will soon be the beneficiary of funding from New York State's Environmental Protection Fund as part of a statewide effort to restore and rehabilitate waterfront areas. The sum of \$170,000 has been granted to the Department of City Planning to design and construct a project at Belden Point, which has long been an eyesore at the southern tip of the island.

According to Purnima Kapur, director of the Bronx City Planning office, "This is something we have been wanting to do for a long time. In addition to improving the

site, we will also provide information on the Island's maritime history in the form of plaques or other design elements, such as a railing. Similar historical references and written text have been integrated in other such projects. The Fulton Landing pier in Brooklyn is perhaps a good model."

No information is yet available as to what kind of project City Planning plans to construct, but when design proposals are ready, they will be shared with the community.

Gas Pipes to be Relocated

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Before the storm and sanitary sewer project is scheduled to begin, at some point after Labor Day 2004, Con Edison must transfer its gas mains from the street to locations beneath the sidewalk along City Island Avenue.

This work may begin before mid-March at Horton Street and move north along the east side of the avenue to Fordham Street. A few side streets, including Schofield, Carroll and Ditmars, may also be affected.

The project may last as long as six months, or it may take less time if Con Edison is able to implement what spokesperson Gail McMillan called "trenchless technology." This would involve boring through the sidewalk at intersections rather than digging up the entire

length of the sidewalks on each block.

Bill White of Con Edison attended the Feb. 24 meeting of the City Island Civic Association and made it clear that the work would occur between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., with no work done on weekends or evenings. He said that photographs would be taken of the existing sidewalks and streets so that everything could be restored to its original condition after the project is completed.

All businesses and residences along the affected roadways will be given advance warning when their gas service will be interrupted as the new gas mains are attached to existing lines.

BRIEFLY...

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT BARTOW-PELL: On two consecutive Saturdays, March 20 and 27, the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum on Shore Road will hold an all-day event called "Clearing the Way to Our Past." Volunteers, working under the direction of museum and Parks Department staff, will be asked to thin a section of the arbor and to help create a new trail that will allow visitor access to the historic site of the Treaty Oak where Thomas Pell purchased much of today's northeast Bronx and lower Westchester from Siwanoy chieftains. This activity has been planned in anticipation of the 350th anniversary commemoration of that event to be held on June 27. For further details or to register as a volunteer, call 718-885-1461 or email bartowpelled@aol.com (please leave your name and telephone number).

SAFE BOATING COURSE: The City Island Squadron, a unit of the United States Power Squadrons, will conduct an eight-week safe boating course at the City Island Yacht Club located at 63 Pilot Street, beginning Monday, March 1, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Participants must be 12 years of age or older and will be awarded Personal Water Craft (PWC) certification upon completion. Topics include boat types, terminology, seamanship, navigation aids, elementary plotting, rules of the road, fundamentals of sailing and more. Instruction is free. The cost of student materials is \$50. Call Jim at 718-863-8355 or Dan at 718-822-1284 for information and registration. You can also visit their Web site at <http://city-islandpowersquadron.org>.

DON'T BE A VICTIM OF CON ARTISTS: Senior residents can learn how to protect themselves against some of the most common scams and fraud through a free educational pamphlet published by the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation (CNR) Health Care Network. The Con Artists pamphlet highlights how to recognize when a deal might be too good to be true and what sales pitches to watch out for. It also gives examples of some of the most popular scams that are designed to separate seniors from their money. The pamphlet also explains how to guard against identity theft, and how to protect PIN numbers, credit cards and assets from thieves and con artists. For a free copy of *Con Artists*, call toll free at 1-877-426-7225).

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION: On March 14 at 11 a.m., City Island women and girls are invited to attend the annual celebration of Women's History Month to be held at Alice's Restaurant at 296 City Island Avenue. Toni Roberts of Co-op City will give a presentation entitled "Feminine Energy—What is It?" Islander Inge Unger will demonstrate the Feldenkrais method of creating well-being, and there will be a performance by the musical group Retumba, which features four City Islanders. Bring something about yourself—a story, poem or photograph—to share with the group, as well as business cards and networking information. Off-Island women and girls are welcome. We will enjoy a brunch of our choice. A donation of \$5 each is suggested for the program presenters. For more information, call Rena Hansen at 718-885-0579.

YOUTH JAMBOREE: The New York Road Runners Foundation is sponsoring its first annual Youth Jamboree at the Armory on Saturday, March 20, 2004. The event starts at 9 a.m. at the New Balance Track and Field Center at the Armory, 216 Fort Washington Avenue, at 168th Street, in Manhattan. It includes friendly, fun athletic competition for kids ages 4 to 15, as well as child health screenings, nutrition information and safety workshops. Admission is free for kids and \$2 for adults. For registration information, call the NYRR Foundation at 212-423-2227.

ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT in the garden of the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum on Shore Road, will be held Saturday, April 3 (rain date April 4) beginning at 10 a.m. Admission is \$10 per child, \$25 per family. Have your picture taken with the Easter Bunny and join in fun crafts. There will be treats for all. Reservations are required. Please call 718-885-1461 or email bartowpell@aol.com and leave your name and telephone number.

A LIMITED ENGAGEMENT FOR "LOVE LETTERS" will be presented by the City Island Theater group on Saturday, March 6, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 7, at 3 p.m. in Grace Episcopal Church Hall, 104 City Island Avenue. Tickets are \$12 (adults) and \$10 (seniors/students/Bronx Cultural Cardholders) and may be reserved by calling 718-885-3066 or e-mailing email@citg.net.

A SAFETY-IN-BOATING COURSE will be offered by the Bronx Power Squadron, a member of the United States Power Squadron. Registration and the first class for the nine-week course will be held on March 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the New York State Maritime College in Fort Schuyler, Bronx. Topics include navigation, charting, compass, marine radio and more. A completion certificate is provided. The cost is \$30 for room fee and book. Please contact Nick Cavaluzzi at 914-693-7692 or e-mail him at vettenik84@aol.com.

ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR: The City Island Chamber of Commerce is planning an arts and crafts fair this spring during the weekend of June 5 and 6 to coincide with Fleet Weekend. Interested vendors should contact Paul Klein at Exotiq at 718-885-3090.

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A RECEPTION FOR ALICE PAYNE, author of "City Island: Tales of the Clam Diggers", which is being republished after 35 years, will be held at the City Island Nautical Museum, 190 Fordham Street, on Sunday, March 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. The author will be available to sign copies of the book, which will be on sale at the museum. A new exhibit of images of City Island past and present will be on view.

C.I. GIRLS SOFTBALL REGISTRATION will be held at Public School 175 on Tuesday, March 9, at 3:30 p.m. Girls must be in grades 4 through 8. The season fee is \$75. For more information, call Nancy or Nick at 718-885-0941 or e-mail them at Ncs3d@aol.com.

45 BLOTTER

Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during December 2003 and January 2004. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list nor are complaints for crime occurring on the mainland.

DECEMBER 2003

2 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
2 – GRAND LARCENY
1 – GRAND LARCENY (auto)
2 – AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT
1 – LOST PROPERTY
1 – DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED (DWI)

Police report the following arrests and incidents for the month of December:

12/5 – Unknown suspects reportedly threw bricks at apartment units on a Bowne Street construction site at 6 p.m., breaking windows and causing over \$1,000 in damage. A canvass by police yielded negative results.

12/18 – A resident owner reported a 1999 GMC van stolen from Fordham Street at 4 p.m. Police are searching for the vehicle.

12/19 – At 7 p.m. on City Island Avenue near Hawkins Park, residents reported seeing a swastika measuring six to eight 8 inches wide drawn on the sidewalk. By the time it was reported to police on 12/22 and they investigated, it had been washed away. The 45th Precinct Detective Unit was notified of the incident (see story in January/February 2004 *Current*).

12/19 – A male, 62, was arrested and charged with Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) on City Island Avenue. At a police checkpoint, the defendant had a strong odor of alcohol on his breath and blood-shot eyes.

JANUARY 2004

2 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
1 – GRAND LARCENY
3 – ASSAULT
2 – HARASSMENT
2 – AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT
5 – LOST PROPERTY
1 – DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED (DWI)
1 – FORGERY
2 – PETIT LARCENY

Police report the following arrests and incidents for the month of January:

1/3 – A male, 31, was arrested on Minneford Avenue and charged with aggravated harassment. The suspect continuously threatened a victim with bodily harm, to the point where he feared for his life and property, according to police.

1/3 – On Minneford Avenue at 5:30 p.m., a male, 57, allegedly stabbed a male victim, 31, with an ice pick during a verbal dispute. Police arrested the defendant at the scene after responding to a radio call. The victim sustained two abdominal wounds and was taken to Jacobi Hospital for treatment.

1/4 – Police arrived at the scene of a vehicular accident on City Island Avenue at 10:30 p.m. and charged a driver with DWI. The defendant hit three parked cars and was observed to have slurred speech.

1/12 – A Minneford Avenue resident reported that a suspect who had been hired to do contracting work had removed and issued two checks from the victim's office in 2003 without permission. The suspect allegedly passed the checks to a witness, and the case is under investigation as a forgery.

1/31 – Police arrested a male, 25, and charged him with assault on City Island Avenue at 11:30 p.m. The defendant allegedly struck the complainant with a closed fist, causing swelling and pain. During the same incident, another male, 26, was arrested and charged with criminal mischief after allegedly throwing a bottle through a glass door causing damage in excess of \$250.

NYPD Recruiting Season

By KAREN NANI

Councilwoman Madeline Provenzano announced that the New York Police Department is seeking candidates to join "the greatest police department in the world."

Qualified applicants may file between now and April 16 to apply for one of the following four examination dates in 2004: Friday, June 11, Saturday, June 12, Thursday, June 17, and Sunday, June 20.

"I encourage all interested young men and women to research the many opportunities the NYPD offers and strongly consider a career as one of New York's Finest," Mrs. Provenzano told *The Current*.

Once again, the New York Police Department's City Resident Recruitment and Retention Unit will provide free tutorial sessions to all candidates throughout the five boroughs. These sessions are aimed at enhancing the candidate's test-taking skills. For further information, candidates can call 212-RECRUIT, or visit the NYPD Web site at www.nyc.gov/nypd. Candidates may also apply for the exam online at the same website.

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Longtime Island Business Pulls Up Roots

By KAREN NANI

After 31 years, the interior landscaping business John Mini Indoor Landscapes will move from City Island to Congers, New York.

Owner John Mini told *The Current* that this is a "bittersweet move" for him, as so much of his personal life and business success is tied to City Island. His story is not quite rags to riches, but rather a testament to patience and learning from trial and error.

Mr. Mini came here in 1973 after graduating from Fordham University as a pre-med student in 1970. He decided to take a year off and worked in a plant shop in Manhattan, where he discovered that he really enjoyed working with plants. He also found that he was very interested in the business aspects of the shop.

He decided to branch out on his own (pun intended), so he started a new business from his rented house on Hawkins Street. "There was no place to study horticulture and indoor landscaping, so I had to learn by doing," he reminisced.

In hindsight, Mr. Mini realized that he was in the right business at the right time. "I caught a wave. Indoor plants were taking off. People started wanting more of them in their homes and businesses wanted them in their lobbies and offices."

He opened a shop on City Island Avenue between Hawkins and Carroll Streets, next to Louie's Barber Shop (like many longtime Islanders, Mr. Mini refers to him as "Louie the Clip"). This block is particularly special to him because he was married a few doors down at the Black Whale Restaurant in 1977 to his wife, Sue Ann.

Mr. Mini toiled away, making careful note of his successes and failures in interior landscaping. He serviced his commercial customers during the week, both installing and maintaining the plants. He also opened the shop on weekends to walk-in customers.

As his business grew, he began to rent more and more space around the Island to store and cultivate the plants. By the late 1970s, in addition to the original shop, Mr. Mini rented storefronts near Artie's and the Lobster Box Restaurant, as well as space in the old mall across from Thwaites Restaurant near Cross Street.

Meanwhile, he purchased a house on Earley Street, and the first two of his three children were born. The house had most recently been owned by the Foerst family, but before them it was owned by the chief rose gardener at the New York Botanical Garden. "Ironically, it had a beautiful rose garden and we added a greenhouse in the backyard." At the same time, his mother kept asking when he would return to medical school. She said, "this plant thing is very nice, but when are you going to be a doctor?"

In 1979 Mr. Mini consolidated most of his facilities into the former Airways Bar building on Fordham Street. He rented it from owner Herb Hild and the business has been there ever since. It is this location most Islanders associate with John Mini's firm. They see his familiar white and green vans departing from Fordham Street, and many flock to his monthly plant sales open to the public.

But even this was not enough space. "We never stopped growing," he told *The Current*. His business offerings expanded to include holiday decorations and displays for which he rented a 16,000 square foot warehouse on Zerega Avenue. His clientele increased to 1,200 commercial customers, including offices, hotels and malls across the tri-state area.

By 2001 it became clear the business needed

even more room, and he found it in Rockland County. He now had 110 employees, two offices in Manhattan and Connecticut, and the business had become the "fifth largest landscaping firm in the country." Mr. Mini purchased 19 acres of property in Congers with a 40,000 square foot building, which enabled him to bring almost all of his facilities under one roof.

"It's the most exciting thing professionally," he explained because the new building will eventually include a greenhouse, storage areas, offices and showrooms for both the interior plants and the holiday decorations. He even plans to expand into exterior landscaping for the first time.

Mr. Mini and his family moved north to Armonk, New York, in 1984, where he currently resides with his wife, who is a social worker; his daughter, a teacher; his oldest son, a student at the University of Maryland; and his youngest son, a high school senior.

During his many years on City Island, Mr. Mini and his employees contributed generously to the community. He donated plants to the Garden Club, the Chamber of Commerce and many other organizations. He supplied Tom Nye with the first plantings for the boat on the front of P.S. 175.

Perhaps the most poignant story this newspaper has written about him came after the terrorist attack on Sept. 11, 2001. "When I heard about the attack, I ran from my office on Fordham Street to the other side of Fordham Street to look across the bay." It turned out that his brother was on the 49th floor of the World Trade Center and escaped. He also had four employees working in the Winter Garden atrium who also "thankfully escaped unharmed."

But he became directly involved in the aftermath of Sept. 11. His business had found and installed the 40-foot palm trees that were the centerpiece of the Winter Garden atrium in the World Financial Center. The atrium was attached by two bridges to the World Trade Center, and when the towers fell, the bridges were destroyed and the atrium badly damaged.

Mr. Mini was contacted a short time after the attack and told that the atrium was going to be rebuilt. "I was asked if I could replant the palm trees, which had died. I asked when it would reopen and I was told Sept. 11, 2002. I couldn't believe it was so fast."

Under normal circumstances, he would have needed a year to find the trees and acclimate them to the indoor setting. This time around, he would only have several months, but Mr. Mini could not refuse and began searching for the trees. He and his staff made seven trips to the south in search of the trees and finally found a batch in north Florida.

They purchased 20 palm trees that were 40 feet high and "shaded them" from March to August 2002 in a shed in Florida to prepare them to survive in an indoor atrium in New York.

As the day approached when the trees were to be delivered to the site, construction workers repairing the Winter Garden put stickers on their hard hats saying "The Plants are Coming!"

As the cranes arrived and began to lift the giant palms off the trucks, the construction workers stopped and broke into spontaneous applause. Others thanked him for "putting our garden back together." Mr. Mini described this as one of the greatest moments in his life.

As his March departure date approaches, Mr. Mini told *The Current* how much he will miss this "very special community—its cama-



Photo by SUE ANN MINI

After 31 years as a City Island business, John Mini Indoor Landscapes will move from its current Fordham Street location to Congers, New York. Owner John Mini is shown above right with the first shop he opened in 1973 on City Island Avenue between Hawkins and Carroll Streets.

raderie and diversity. It is a small town within the biggest city in the world. Islanders should never lose sight of how unique it is."

But before the business leaves, there will be two more plant sales, on March 13 and 20, which Mr. Mini hopes will be the "best ever for

Islanders" (see classified ad this issue). He and his staff, especially Ed Traynor, who has been with him the longest, will offer for sale every plant, planter and piece of furniture that is not being moved, and he looks forward to seeing Islanders one more time.

Traffic Trials and Tribulations

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photo by BOB CARMODY

A pothole at the City Island Bridge on Feb. 8, 2004, caused a multitude of blown tires until some good Samaritans filled it with a sign (and a poor duck that had washed up on the beach, probably a victim of the cold weather).

After suffering through last winter's disastrous road conditions, caused by the installation of water mains along City Island Road, residents were sure it couldn't get worse. But for two days in February 2004, it got worse.

The trouble started on Saturday, Feb. 7, when a major foot-deep pot hole suddenly appeared on the City Island Bridge, causing a series of blown-out tires and frayed tempers. Resident Geri Seiter observed some of these incidents and began a series of telephone calls to 911 and 311 that had no effect for several hours.

The Police Department's 911 response system referred callers to 311, which turned callers over to the Department of Transportation (DOT). Marion Rosenfeld of the Chamber of Commerce reported that DOT operators were unable to help because there was no address for the bridge in the computer. Upon returning home late Saturday night, Frank Fitts, president of the City Island Civic Association, was alerted to the situation by Bob Carmody of the Chamber and managed to contact the DOT Bronx commissioner. The pot hole was fixed the following morning.

Geri Seiter noted that all of the blow-outs seemed to have happened to off-Islanders, not residents. "I guess we all know enough not to drive on the edges," she told *The Current*.

A bigger problem occurred the following Saturday, Feb. 14, when Valentine's Day drew thousands of diners to City Island, where restaurants were prepared to serve special holiday meals. Both the Chamber of Commerce and the

Civic Association reminded the Police Department to anticipate the annual traffic crush by putting on special officers to handle the flow of traffic.

Spiros Chagares of Artie's Restaurant became concerned early on Saturday evening because many of his customers who had reserved tables had not shown up or had called in to say they were caught in traffic. He walked up and down City Island Avenue several times and noted that the police officers were not on the street directing traffic but sitting in their vehicles. One officer told him that her job was to "secure safety on the Island," not to direct traffic.

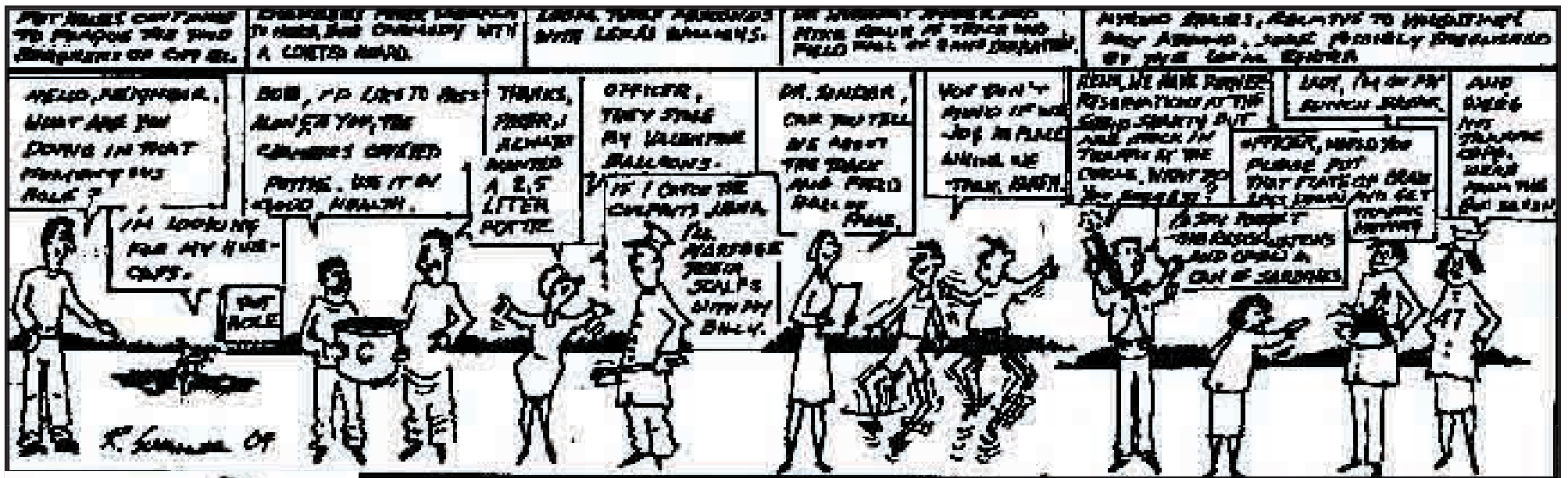
Because the 45th Precinct had not been able to provide personnel, officers from other precincts were sent to cover the traffic detail. However, these officers are not familiar with City Island and its unique traffic problems, and there was no preparation or supervision to help them figure out how to handle the traffic. As a consequence, at several points during the evening, cars at the bridge came to a virtual standstill, although many observers reported that traffic was very light in the center of the Island, once cars had made it through the Cross Street intersection.

According to eyewitnesses who spoke at the City Island Civic Association meeting on Feb. 24, the police prevented access to the Island at two different times, between 7 and 8 p.m. and again at 11 p.m. Residents who showed identi-

Continued on page 13

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POTS Full of Thanks

(A copy of the following letter was received by The Current.)

Part of the Solution
2763 Webster Avenue
Bronx, NY 10458

Hello St. Mary Star of the Sea:

Sister Mary, myself, and all of our guests would like to express our deepest gratitude to you and the City Island community. You guys are so very special, wonderful and loving.

POTS

Clearing the Way

To the Editor,

This is an open letter of "THANKS" to Fordham Street's Pat Fusco. During the recent snowstorm, Pat was up at the crack of dawn, bulldozing snow with his all-terrain vehicle and clearing sidewalks, driveways and anything that needed to be cleared of snow. His generosity, kindness and compassion for his City Island neighbors know no bounds. Thank you Pat so much for clearing my driveway and sidewalk and the next "Bud" is on me!

Annette Comier-Lopez

In Praise of New York's Bravest

To the Editor,

This Saturday (Feb. 21, 2004), the City Island Fire Department did a "drill" here on Tier Street. As I stood on my porch watching, one of the firemen told me that after this drill, they go back to the firehouse and write down what they found—such as what size ladders they need to reach the roofs of the houses here.

I was impressed that this was truly a drill for them. They were wearing all their gear,

including oxygen tanks; they brought ladders to the waterfront area, made sure that the fire hydrant worked and the hoses could go all the way from the street to the bay. I'm glad to know the Fire Department is keeping itself in shape.

Molly Grose

Behavior Must Stop

To the Editor,

In regard to the "small group of teens" and their racist antics on Halloween and during

the lighting of the Menorah, let's not take this with a grain of salt! These teens need to be stopped now and part of this should fall on the parents. Tolerance for all people of all nationalities, creeds and religions starts in the home. I will not take a laissez faire attitude towards these miscreants. I guarantee, I see something in regard to any bias crime or hate crime, I'm taking names and numbers and going to the Police. This behavior must stop now.

Annette Comier-Lopez

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IDEA Proposes Community-Wide Project

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

The City Island-based organization IDEA (Innovative Directions, an Educational Alliance) is launching a new project that is intended to benefit the entire City Island community. The seed money for the project was contributed by elected officials, and IDEA is looking for community consensus before it moves ahead.

Since 1997 IDEA has been committed to teaching children about the marine environment at the City Island School, Public School 175. Beginning in 1999, under IDEA's guidance, P.S. 175 incorporated a Marine Wildlife Ecology curriculum into the school day. IDEA has also sponsored and organized a Maritime Open House at the school and a maritime festival, Fleet Weekend, every year since 1998. This annual festival has grown to be a City Island favorite, reminding all residents and visitors alike of the importance of appreciating and building upon the island's rich maritime past.

Since it was originally founded, IDEA has raised both program and capital funds, beginning with the first capital grant in 1998 by State Senator Guy J. Velella. The senator was one of the first proponents of the IDEA program and granted \$100,000 to be used to purchase marine science equipment and supplies. These funds were utilized in March 2003 by the staff and administration at P.S. 175 to outfit a science laboratory in the P.S. 175 school building. Currently, the sum of \$600,000 raised by IDEA as part of a new capital campaign is being held in the budget of the Department of Parks & Recreation. Of this sum, \$400,000 was provided by the Bronx delegation of the City

Council, and an additional \$100,000 each was provided by Councilwoman Madeline Provenzano and Borough President Adolfo Carrión Jr.

This money was raised for the purpose of constructing an educational/recreational facility on the Parks Department property adjacent to P.S. 175, with an estimated campaign goal in 1999 of \$1.2 million. The remaining \$600,000 has yet to be raised, owing to severe departmental budget cuts and a lack of outside funding opportunities.

Rose Rodstrom and Patricia Hennessy, founders and co-directors of IDEA, are committed to full-time jobs, as well as family obligations, and are challenged by the amount of time necessary to continue their fund-raising efforts.

Because the \$600,000 raised to date is earmarked for City Island, IDEA has proposed that the community ask the Parks Department to allocate this money toward a broader City Island effort—a new educational/recreational facility, not only for students at P.S. 175, but for all Island residents in all age groups. As Mrs. Hennessy told *The Current*, "We do not want this money to be absorbed into the Parks Department budget. Our motto is 'use it or lose it.'"

Since May 2003, Mrs. Rodstrom and Mrs. Hennessy have met on a monthly basis with representatives of other City Island organizations to discuss the use of this considerable amount of money. Members of the City Island Historical Society, American Legion, Leonard H. Hawkins Post, Chamber of Commerce, Civic Association, the City Island Community Center and Millennium Moms, St. Mary's Parish Council, COLONY, the City Island Theater Group and other Island groups, as well as representatives from the offices of Senator Guy Velella, Councilwoman Provenzano and Borough President Carrión have consistently attended these meetings.

The group agrees that a committee should be formed to explore the possibilities of building a multiuse facility to benefit not only children but the entire City Island community as well. A committee will be selected at a meeting to be held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 10, 2004, at the City Island Nautical Museum, 190 Fordham Street. All who would be interested in learning more about the project or would be willing to serve on this committee are invited to attend.

"Tales of the Clam Diggers" Back in Print!

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Thirty-five years ago, in 1969, Alice Payne and her husband, James, published a small book entitled "City Island: Tales of the Clam Diggers". Little did they imagine that it would become an underground classic. The book soon went out of print, so those lucky enough to own copies kept them tucked away for safe keeping.

At long last, Mrs. Payne's daughters, Dorothy and Virginia, have arranged to reprint this wonderful little book, which will be republished in both hardcover and paperback this spring, with a launch party at the City Island Nautical Museum on Sunday, March 21, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Alice Payne, who was "born across the street from the Bronx Zoo," as she told *The Current*, grew up in Queens but moved to City Island in 1946, soon after her husband got out of the Army. The Paynes had been looking for an apartment in the Throggs Neck area, but there were none to be had, so in desperation, at the suggestion of a friend, they bought a little house on Reville Street over the telephone, sight unseen. Mrs. Payne still lives in the house, which she takes care of herself, even at the distinguished age of 89.

Mrs. Payne worked for many years at various jobs, including Union Carbide (during World War II) and the Jewish Theological Seminary, but she retired to raise her children. After they started school, however, she began a two-week job at the City Island branch of the Public Library, a job that lasted 11 years!

She found that many people, Islanders and visitors alike, would come into the library looking for information about City Island and there was not very much to be found. The City Island Historical Society was in its infancy during the 1960s but there was very little documentation available. So Mrs. Payne and her husband began to gather material, doing research at other libraries and interviewing Islanders.

"What really got me going," she said, "was hearing that Mrs. Horton, the one who lived where Sammy's Fish Box is



Photo by RENA HANSEN

Islander Alice Payne with a copy of her 1969 book, "City Island: Tales of the Clam Diggers." Her classic history of City Island will be reprinted and dedicated at the City Island Nautical Museum on Sunday, March 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. Come to the museum, 190 Fordham Street, to meet Alice in person, buy a copy of the book and have her autograph it for you.

now, had gotten so sick of hearing all her husband's stories, that she threw out all of his papers. What a loss!"

Eventually the Paynes amassed enough information for a book, and so she wrote one, which her daughter Dorothy illustrated with charming drawings of City Island places. These will be in the new edition, but Mrs. Payne declined to take on the enormous task of bringing the book up to date from 1969.

"The scene on City Island has changed a great deal since those days," she said, "and not all for the better. Now that we have a fire lane instead of the four lanes we used to have, there isn't as much traffic as there used to be. And I'm happy to see that more people are interested in the Island's history than they were in the old days."

National Track and Field Hall Visitor Information

The National Track and Field Hall of Fame is in the Armory located on 168th Street and Fort Washington Avenue in Manhattan. The exhibition space covers 15,000 square feet and encompasses three floors. The first-floor atrium displays the theme of the museum: "A Sport for Everyone," which features a range of individuals from Olympians to everyday athletes, people for whom the sport is an exercise in joy.

The names of all 197 inductees, engraved on a vast glass wall in the Hall of Fame Gallery, can be seen by visitors looking through at the track and field arena. Thus one gets the perspective of the great athletes of the past while watching the athletes of the future working on the track. The "What Makes a Champion Gallery" is both an exhibition space and a classroom. It contains several videos, including one that gives visitors an opportunity to "interview" five athletes and get responses.

Display cases contain trophies, uniforms and even the racing shoes worn by members of the Hall of Fame when they won major victories. It is recommended that you see Bud Greenspan's film "Olympic Legends," which is shown continuously in the first-floor history gallery.

The Fred Lebow Marathon Hall of Fame encompasses the second floor and celebrates the history of American marathon racing. The auditorium features a film that gives visitors an in-depth orientation into the sport of track and field. The Armory Fan Club is located in the third-floor lobby and sells hats, shirts, track and field books and videos.

The National Track and Field Hall of Fame is open from Tuesday through Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and during most track meets. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and senior citizens.

Marathon Man

Continued from page 1

Now that he has established a long-term relationship with New Balance for sponsorship and opened the National Track and Field Hall of Fame, I asked him what was next. He immediately launched into a discussion of the work that will be done at the Armory this spring and summer. A new air-conditioning system will be installed, all the bathrooms will

be renovated and a new track will be installed. I was surprised by the last item and had to ask: "Another new track?" He explained that with 350,000 athletes working there each year, it must be replaced every few years to keep it in top racing condition.

As some people approach 60, they start to think about retirement. This man, however, is just hitting his stride, and he is unlikely to retire any time soon. His patients near and far and track athletes everywhere, can be thankful for that.

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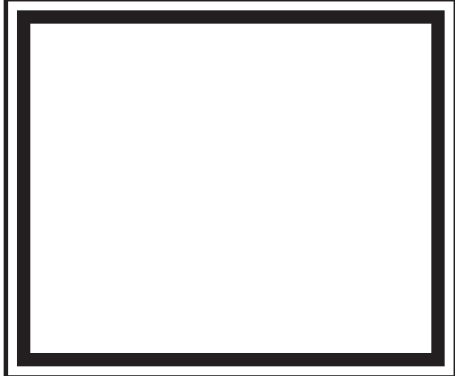


If you have a new business, or if your old business is offering a new service, write to The Current, P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464 by the 10th of the month.

On Friday, March 12, 2004, the **Kathlyn Moses Gallery**, located at 327 City Island Avenue, will host an opening for its Second Anniversary Show from 7 p.m. -10 p.m. New work by Kathy and Tim Moses will be featured through the month of March.

The **Starving Artist Gallery**, now a coffeehouse exhibiting handmade jewelry and fine arts and crafts, will host the first musical performance at its new location (249 City Island Avenue) on Saturday, March 27, from 7 to 10 p.m. That evening City Islander Lucille Rivin will perform as part of her folk/rock trio Works in Progress and the group will sign copies of their new CD recording. Gallery owner-jeweler Elliott Glick promises much more music and cultural fun and fare in the future!

The **Focal Point Gallery**, 321 City Island Avenue, presents a photographic exhibition by the students of the Focal Point Visual Workshop from March 1 through March 31, with an opening reception on Friday, March 5, beginning at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 718-885-1403 or visit www.focalpointgallery.com.



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 listings below represent some of the recent sales. *The Current* is not responsible for errors or omissions in the data.

Address	Closing Date	Sale Price	Type
106 Ditmars Street	5/12/03	\$250,000	2 Family
77 Marine Street	7/7/03	\$50,000	2 Family
336 King Avenue	11/6/03	\$379,250	1 Family
168 Reville Street	12/1/03	\$412,000	1 Family
682 Minneford Ave.	12/22/03	\$330,000	1 Family



On Wednesday, March 10, at 3:30 p.m. there will be a St. Patrick's Day craft program at the library; registration is required.

Every Thursday in March at 3:30 p.m. there will be a picture book program.

The Millennium Moms and Babies will meet at 1 p.m. on March 11 at the library for story time.

ISLANDERS MAKE MUSIC



Photos by RENA HANSEN and MONICA GLICK

On Sunday, Feb. 7, 2004, the **Starving Artist Café & Gallery** celebrated the opening of its new location at 249 City Island Avenue (above photo). The following week, the gallery hosted its first acoustic guitar jam (inset).

On Sunday, Feb. 15, the **Starving Artist Café & Gallery**, at its new location of 249 City Island Avenue, held its first acoustic guitar jam. As the gallery continues its transformation into a coffeehouse serving coffee, tea, treats and offering handmade jewelry, fine arts and crafts, its proprietor Elliott Glick promises many more such gatherings. "I'd like this become a place where people meet and enjoy art and music over a cup of coffee or tea or cappuccino," said Mr. Glick, a guitarist himself for some 40 years.

He speaks with great joy about his current roster of 20 guitar students—many of them Island teens—and points to their interest in music as a healthy and hopeful sign. Mr. Glick's youngest student, his five-year-old daughter Hannah, took time during the jam to show another of her dad's pupils, Justin Rodstrom, a little of what she knows. Also enjoying the afternoon was Vincent Ficarra, the tenant of 249 City Island Avenue when it was a paint shop, who strummed guitar with Messrs. Glick and Rodstrom.

Young City Islanders Stephen Lott, Evan Berent and James McGowan also helped fill the afternoon and the **Starving Artist Café and Gallery** with beautiful music that Sunday.

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BOAT SHOW '04

By BILL CLANCY

It was a beautiful, sunny and 50-degree day on the first Saturday in January, possibly the warmest day we have had since then. Son Bill and I were making our annual trek to the Boat Show, the 94th edition. It was so nice we even thought about stopping to see the newly arrived Concorde on the *USS Intrepid*. The idea was fleeting, however, as I thought of my sometimes tenuous relationship with various *Island Current* editors. Things are going well now, why cause a problem, I mused, so straight on to the Javits Center we went.

Signs of good karma appeared immediately as we drove into a reasonable parking lot (\$19 for eight hours) only two blocks away. We knew the show was going well when we saw crowds of people outside the center. Some were getting dirty water dogs for a buck fifty, fifty cents more than normal but half the price charged by the stands inside. There was also a new group of folks here today, people who didn't have on their Sperry (or knockoff) Topsiders. They were motorcycle enthusiasts, attending the Motorcycle Show on the lower level. They just added to the great demographic mosaic that is New York.

We dropped off our jackets and picked up our press ID at the public relations office on the fourth floor, where the young gal remembered us from last year. She has dinner on our island often and professed to know Jimmy of City Island. I have been in Jim's company a few times, and there is no doubt that he has a charming personality. I have a lot of friends who are Yankee fans, and I hope we will have the opportunity to meet Jimmy's cousin, Alex (A-Rod), when he puts on the pinstripes this spring. Ditto Derek Jeter. If personality were electricity, those three guys could give Con Ed a run for their money. Tommy Diehl of Bridge Boat could be looking at a few sales if we could ever get these guys to make a tour of the island.

Our first stop was at the Chris Craft exhibit just inside the entrance. We spoke to the leading salesman, Frank Halsey of Freeport, Long Island. He told us about the firm's recent corporate problems and how the company was pulling out of them. Two men from Sarasota, Florida, are the new owners and have come up with a new concept. The production run this

year will be only 250 boats, custom-ordered from eight models. The one I liked best was the Corsair, a 28-foot, 100-foot-beamed boat powered by twin Volvos with outrives. It was a beauty and was rated at 55 mph. It was advertised with "low maintenance woodwork." That meant that there was (unfortunately) very little wood.

I reminded Mr. Halsey of the City Island carpenter who said "Wood is good; use it if you could." He said that this was a saying on Long Island, too . . . in the old days. We heard that saying a couple of times that day. Bruce Killen must be rolling over. Older City Islanders will always think of Ray's Chris Craft on City Island Avenue at Beach Street. It was run by the Starace family, who lived on King Avenue. In their heyday during the 1950s and 1960s, they were the largest Chris dealer on the East Coast. The top of the line was the 55-foot *Constellation*, the most beautiful production boat of its size ever produced. Most of the brothers were WW2 vets, the last of whom, Andy, passed away last year. Their sister, Peggy, has been in Florida for many years.

The boat section of the show was so crowded that we couldn't get near most of the exhibits. A lot of the crowd seemed to be spillover from the Motorcycle Show. They had a lot of children with them and were very good for the concession business. We did make a couple of pit stops ourselves that day to check on a few things—the quality, availability, temperature and economy of certain products. During the day we sampled a sausage-and-pepper sandwich, which was very good, even though it was six bucks. Hot dogs were \$4.50, at the right temperature and readily available in many locations. The downside was that the barkeepers were neither good-looking nor of the culture; there were no buybacks, but, most importantly, there were no options. Adaptability is one of our City Island traits.

We looked in at Jim Ross's Sunseeker exhibit and could not see a familiar face. There was a beautiful, deep green-hulled Luhrs for 440 thousand. Even though it was only 40 feet, longtime Island boater Captain Gerry Cohen of the *Rum Runner* would have scarfed it up. My brother Captain Gerry would moor it in Lyme, New Hampshire, on the scenic Connecticut River. There was a 38-foot Donzi ZF on sale for 250 thou, reduced from 290. Another good-looking craft, as always, is the Azimuth brand from Avigliana, Italy. Some day I hope to see the whole line at anchor in the Med.

Fred Chall Marine of Freeport, Long Island, is a very large dealer of many brands. They are advertised as a "factory outlet." I don't think I ever heard that term used in reference to marine products. Betty Jordan and Ann Sul-

livan always shop at the outlets at Woodbury Commons. I'll have to ask them to look for Fred Chall. He had a good slogan: "The only hitch to this price is the hitch on your car."

The most interesting man we met during the day was Victor Mooney, a 39-year-old African-American New Yorker. Next February, he plans to re-create the "middle passage," the route African slaves took from the early 1600s to the mid-1800s traveling to the Americas. Mr. Mooney's solo rowing expedition will take him 8,000 miles from Goree Island off Senegal in West Africa to NYC. The longest part of the journey will be from Senegal to Barbados—2,500 miles unsupported. The trip will take him through the Caribbean to the Florida Keys and continue up the East Coast. The event is scheduled to take seven months, and this is after three years of training in local waters around Manhattan and Long Island. He is considering naming his boat *Foganbala* (Clear the Way) to honor his Irish ancestors. Slainte' Victor!

The incredible adventure that Victor is about to undertake reminds me of the story of a Slovenian man, Martin Strel, who at 47 years of age swam the length of the Mississippi River in 2002. It was reported in a *Sports Illustrated* story that he swam the 2,360 miles in 68 days, 2 days longer than he had planned. He warmed up for this madness by swimming the length of the Danube River, all 1,862 miles in 58 days. When is the last time anyone swam around City Island? What about Rat Island?

In recent years there has been a marked increase in environmental and conservation awareness. This was overwhelmingly apparent at the Boat Show. There is a slew of local organizations doing great work in Raritan Bay, the Hackensack River, the Passaic River and lower New York harbor in general.

A group called the Urban Divers is doing work in Coney Island Creek, Jamaica Bay, the Gowanus Canal, Newtown Creek, Flushing Bay and the East Harlem and Bronx Rivers, and they are looking at some projects in Eastchester Bay for this summer. They actively participate in the restoration, conservation, protection and education of our rivers, oceans and marine wildlife. I spoke to some of the staff at the booth and was very impressed by their commitment. They are in need of donations and volunteers, both diving and non-diving. They may be contacted at www.urbandivers.org or 718-802-9874.

The major group, however, is the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Starting with the Pure Waters Program of 1965, which put \$1 billion into a statewide effort to eliminate polluted discharges into our waterways, the state set the example for the rest of the country. At that time nearly 1,200 communities were pouring raw or minimally treated sewage into the state's waters. The Pure Waters Program led to the national Clean Water Act of 1972. Between them, during the next 15 years, more than 500 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants were paid for. Strict programs regulated all industrial and municipal wastewater discharges, and the manufacture and use of the worst contaminants, such as DDT and PCBs, were banned. The combination of all these programs has had a dramatic effect on the quality of our water.

New York is one of the most water-bountiful states in the country. We have more than 7,800 lakes, more than 52 thousand miles of rivers, 2.4 million acres of freshwater wetlands and 25 thousand acres of tidal wetlands. New York City is equally blessed to have so much of God's precious liquid, as are we here on City Island. We spoke with Conservation Officer Byron Young, who was a great spokesman for DEC. He told us how the well-intentioned gasoline additive MTBE had to be banned for the damage it was doing to many bodies of water around the state, including those that contribute to New York City's extensive reservoir system. When the additive was found to be leaking from tanks, it was found to be a ground-water contaminant and a carcinogen. The additive supposedly produced a better burn of your auto fuel, but it also created a new pollutant in the emissions being found in all our bodies of water, owing to its

extreme solubility.

Fishing on the whole is doing better these days, with the size limits on a few species being lowered. Blue claw crabs are also making a comeback, Mr. Young told us, from Troy to New York harbor. I don't think this return of the crabs has hit City Island yet. Years ago every piling on every dock in every boatyard seemed to have dozens of crabs. The only successful crabber I know is Uncle Joe at Royal Marina.

The last DEC person we talked to was Jennifer Dupont. She was at the sturgeon exhibit telling all about the prehistoric fish of the Hudson River. They are deep-water fish, five to six feet long, averaging 60 to 70 pounds. There was a full-size model on the table that is like no other fish you ever saw. It has what looks like armor plates applied to its entire



body.

The last item in this category was a report from outdoor writer Ken Moran. In Michigan and Wisconsin, large bottled-water companies have applied for and received permits for high-capacity wells to extract spring water from the headwaters of some of the most pristine streams. Capacities of 700 thousand gallons a day are removed from the normal evaporation/precipitation cycle, and the cities and towns downstream that use this water for drinking will have correspondingly less. It is said that eventually some of these streams end up in Lake Michigan. Because of the drought last summer, however, the lake is at its second lowest level of all time. Could this happen here? Let's keep our ears to the ground.

A couple of events that are going to take place in the harbor this year might be worth looking into. First, Maritime Day will be on Saturday, May 22. Adopted officially in 1933 this day traces its roots back to the building of the first steamship, the *Savannah*, in 1819. The celebration recognizes the great contributions of the U. S. Merchant Marine to the welfare and security of the country. Water tours will be available from Pier 1 on Wall Street and Pier 83 on West 42nd Street. Details are available at www.NY-HiddenHarbor-NJ.com.

There will also be three offshore power boat races this summer, one on June 19 from New York Harbor to Haverstraw and back, one on Aug. 21 from Manhasset Bay (Port Washington) around Long Island, and the third on Sept. 18 from Hempstead Harbor (Glen Cove) around Long Island. These races will be fun to watch. Remember that the world record for these craft is 149.7 mph.

We had a good talk with the Super Ship-bottom paint guy. He asked me if I tried his product last summer and I had to tell him no. "We had a change in boatyard procedures," I explained. "Maybe this year. Tell me about it again." The response was: "It is a hard ablatives, multi-season, antifouling bottom paint that is 62.4 percent cuprous oxide." It is advertised to last two to three seasons a coat when the boat is stored over the winter. Buddy's Hardware carries it, and it comes in black, blue, green and red. I will have to confer with my marina boss, Johnny Barron.

Out in the lobby, as we were leaving, we stopped at the world's only operational WW2 replica submarine, *R.V. Needlefish*. It is 32.5 feet long, diesel/electric two-man sub, and it was built by Bill Gifford of Gifford Marine in Egg Harbor, New Jersey. A WW2 sub vet himself, he dedicated the sub to all those who fought in that war and helped preserve our generation. I know only a couple of men who have had the experience of the undersea craft, and I told Bill about Ger Artz, Larry Baron, Joe Goonan, Greg Clancy and Mr. Nadoolman from City Island. "Come to see me," he said. "We'll go down."

The experience was different this year because of the crowds, but any show is better than no show at all. We didn't see any Islanders but we heard that a few were down during the week, Gene Valesio and Phil Dolensek among them. We are going to stop in at the Motorcycle Show now, but that will be another story. See ya next year!!

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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

Thurs., March 18, **Community Board 10 meets**, 7:30 p.m., Providence Rest, 3304 Waterbury Avenue, Bronx.

Thurs., March 25 and Fri., March 26, **Kindergarten Registration**, 9 to 11 a.m., P.S. 175, 200 City Island Avenue.

Sat., March 27, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: baked ziti.

Tues., March 30, **City Island Civic Association meets**, 8 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

Chapter 3303 AARP

The members of the Minneford Chapter 3303 have been informed by the New York State director about the next steps by which prescription drugs will be made more affordable. From the initial announcement AARP made in support of the Medicare drug bill, they have stressed that the legislation is a start and vowed to strengthen and improve it.

AARP recently announced aggressive plans to make the law better by closing the "doughnut hole," allowing reimportation of drugs from Canada and giving the Federal government the power to negotiate directly with drug companies to get lower costs for drugs. These efforts are already under way in New York State, where we have begun educating our chapter members about what we can and need to do to improve the Medicare law.

While AARP is working very hard at the Federal level to increase access to prescription drugs, the organization has also continued with its strong efforts to make drugs affordable at the state level. AARP is dedicated to preserving and strengthening the N.Y. State Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Program (EPIC) and to ensure that older New Yorkers benefiting from EPIC are able to retain their coverage. AARP commends Governor Pataki for his budget proposals to maintain and preserve EPIC.

On Thursday, April 22, the chapter will sponsor an all-day trip to the Mohegan Sun Casino. We will receive the package on the day of arrival. Departure time is 8:30 a.m. Prices and more details for this event will be discussed at our meetings, or you may call Tina De Cristofaro at 718-885-0865.

Lucy Puglia

Garden Club News

The next meeting of the Garden Club will be Monday, April 6. At our March meeting we made silk flower corsages for the residents of Providence Rest Nursing Home and discussed plans for a spring garden tour.

Gardening Hint: Now is a great time to prune ground cover and flowering shrubs and fruit trees.

Phyllis Freeman

Chapter 318 AARP

Our next trip to Atlantic City is on Tuesday, March 9. The bus departs at 9 a.m. from 113 Bay Street on City Island. Call Jean Ringel at 718-885-1479 or John Bonicoro at 718-885-1844.

Our next day trip is to Westbury on Wednesday, March 10, to see Al Martino and Carmel Quinn and to have dinner at Troshi. We are also taking reservations for our day trip to Dolan's on Monday, June 22, in Silver Springs, New Jersey, and to Cape Cod in September, a three-day,

two-night trip. Please see Flo Bonicoro or Marie Tirelli at our meetings.

Florence Quinn, who has been recuperating at home from a fall, and Gloria Salacan have been making preparations for our end of the season luncheon at the Marina del Rey.

Have a Happy St. Patrick's Day and a happy St. Joseph's Day!

Marie Tirelli

City Island Historical Society

This is a big month for the Historical Society and the Nautical Museum. We are delighted to be hosting a reception for Alice Payne to celebrate the reprinting of her long out-of-print "City Island: Tales of the Clam Diggers" on Sunday, March 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. Come to the Nautical Museum, 190 Fordham Street, to meet Alice in person, buy a copy of the book and have her autograph it for you.

We are also starting on a renovation project in the Walsh Room, making our library more efficient and accessible and reframing many of the pictures by Harold Walsh, thanks to a generous gift from his daughter, Winifred Doane. Some of these will be on exhibit, along with other images of "City Island Then and Now" to celebrate the republication of Alice Payne's book.

We are open every Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m., so drop by for a visit. If you have old photographs of City Island, we would love to borrow them to make scans for our collection, returning the originals to you.

Barbara Dolensek



City Island Chamber Music

The concerts began again in February with a lovely performance on Feb. 29 to celebrate Rossini's birthday in 1792, 53 leap years ago. We heard excerpts from "The Barber of Seville," as well as instrumental selections.

We are pleased to announce that Sato Moughalian will assume artistic leadership of Sundays on the Island. She has performed with Orpheus, New York Chamber Ensemble and the Dorian Wind Quintet and has appeared as principal flute with the Long Island Philharmonic, Queens Symphony, American Ballet Theater and L'Opéra Français de New York.

On March 7, Helen Heran Kim (violin) and Laura Bontrager (cello) will perform Cenovia Cummins's "Small Suite for Violin and Cello" (1996), Maurice Ravel's "Sonata for Violin and Cello" (1920-22) and the "Passacaglia, Duo for Violin and Cello" by Handel and Johann Halvorsen.

On March 14, Todd Palmer (clarinet) will be joined by Nardo Poy (viola), Wendy Sutter (cello), Kathleen Kelly (piano), Sato Moughalian (flute), Sharon Rothman and Jane Chung (violins), Joseph Bongiorno (bass) and Laura Wallis (oboe) to perform Weber's "Introduction to the Dance" and Messager's suite from the ballet "Two Pigeons."

The concert for March 21 will be announced; call 914-664-6934 for information.

On March 28, Adrienne Kim (piano) will be joined by strings to play a chamber music program.

All of the concerts will be held at the cottage behind Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Avenue starting at 12:30. Admission is \$16. If you wish to be put on our e-mail list, please contact *SundaysOnTheIsland@earthlink.net*.

Paul Gewirtz



Photo by RENA HANSEN

City Island Cub Scout Pack 211 received funds for their annual trip to Medieval Times from Anthony Mormile of Hudson Valley Bank on East Tremont Avenue. James Vacca, district manager of Community Board 10, requested and secured the generous donation from the bank. The grateful scouts are shown above at the check presentation on Feb. 17, 2004. Front row (l. to r.): Luke Kitagawa, Andrew Simoncek, Nicholas Bellocchio, Daniel Green, Kyle Kreig and Kevin DeCuffa. Back row: Michael Bellocchio, Angelo Bellocchio, Mr. Mormile, Mr. Vacca, and Peter Green.

City Island Theater Group

Back by popular demand, the City Island Theater Group proudly presents a revival of "Love Letters," starring Jean McCabe and Christopher McGowan. "Love Letters" tells the story of correspondence exchanged over a lifetime between two childhood friends who moved apart but continued to share their life stories. As the actors read the letters aloud, we are shown their lives through funny, touching and honest moments. See it for the first—or second—time; you are sure to love it!

In an exciting limited engagement, "Love Letters" will be performed only Saturday, March 6, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 7, at 3 p.m. in Grace Episcopal Church Hall, 104 City Island Avenue. Tickets are \$12 (adults) and \$10 (seniors/

students/Bronx Cultural Cardholders) and may be reserved by calling 718-885-3066 or e-mailing: email@citg.net.

We are proud to announce our spring show: the hilarious comedy by Eddie Cope: "Agatha Christie Made Me Do It," directed by Christopher McGowan. Performance dates are scheduled for April 23, 24, 25 and 30 and May 1 and 3.

In other exciting theater group news, the Grace Episcopal Church Hall has become our permanent home, and we are renovating the former thrift shop into our new office! For more information or to be part of the action, please call 718-885-3066 or email@citg.net.

Susan L. Rauh

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If you wish to submit, for inclusion in this column, information regarding events and activities at the City Island Community Center, please call Laury Hopkins at 885-3202 no later than the 15th of each month, except December and July. Leave a message, including your name and phone number.

Announcements

The deadline for entries for the **Drue Breen Literary Fund Essay and Poetry Contest** has been extended to March 15. The theme is Footprints in Time—Stepping Out of the Box. Choose your inspiration: Oprah Winfrey, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., John Lennon, Gandhi, Muhammed Ali. The winners for best essay and poem will receive a \$50 Barnes and Noble Gift Certificate; the runners-up will receive \$25 gift certificates. The contest is for sixth, seventh and eighth graders who live or attend school on City Island. Collection boxes will be at P.S. 175 and the Focal Point Gallery.

Community Tag Sale to be held at the center (indoors!) on April 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; set up at 9 a.m. Reserve a table now! \$10 donation suggested per table. Call and leave a message at 885-1145. Available till spaces are full.

Beautiful Wooden Doors for sale by the Center; 35 x 83 inches. Call 718-885-1145 and leave a message.

Ongoing Events

Monthly Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. in the Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

To schedule events at the Center, call Laury Hopkins at 718-885-3202.

Teen Center: Saturday evenings. To volunteer your time so that we can keep the Teen Center open, please call Jay Howard at 718-885-2192.

Dance Classes: Pre-ballet, jazz and tap for kids. Call Linda at Dance Connection, 914 576- 5515.

Millennium Babies: A Moms and Babies Playgroup. Call Brenda Prohaska at 718-885-9040.

Senior Nutrition Program: Held at Pilot Cove Manor, weekdays 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All senior citizens are welcome; the cost is only \$1 per meal. Call 718-885-0727 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. for your monthly calendar with daily lunch menus and schedule of visits to shopping centers.

Irish Dance: Call Deirdre O'Mara at (201) 947-8535.

Kundalini Yoga: Saturdays at 10 a.m.,

call Ann Ward at 718-885-1478.

Adult Tap Classes: Call Corinne Gron-dahl at 718-885-2011.

Photography Classes: for adults and teens. Call Ron Turner at 718-885-1403 or inquire at Focal Point Gallery.

Step Aerobics Classes: Sundays, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.; Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 to 10:30 a.m., and Mondays and Wednesdays, 7 to 8 p.m. Call Mary Immediato at 718-885-0793.

Yoga: Basic-level Hatha Yoga classes include yoga postures, deep relaxation and breathing practices, and stress management for peace of mind and physical well-being. Call Annette at 718-885-0724 for further information.

Scrapbook Club: If you are interested in getting all those old photos out of the boxes and into attractive books, without cluttering up your dining room table, call Joanne Brogan at 718-885-2713.

Chess Club: Monday evenings from 7 to 11 p.m. For ages 13 and up. No need to register, just show up!

Laury Hopkins

Boy Scouts Troop 211

Our scouts have been busy working on advancement requirements and earning merit badges throughout this past season. To bring you up to date, 10 scouts attended Ten Mile River Camp this past summer and earned 30 merit badges, four Mile-Swim awards, and four World Conservation awards.

In the fall, the troop did some backwoods camping on New Eljam's property in upstate New York. In November, Scouts participated with the Mid-Hudson Orienteering Club at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation. Although December flew by, the scouts squeezed in their holiday party while preparing for the Klondike Derby and a Merit Badge Fair in January. Several scouts earned an additional nine merit badges and a World Conservation Award. In February, the scouts prepared for a weekend of winter tent camping and a day of skiing/snow boarding.

An Eagle Court of Honor and Dinner to recognize Justin Rodstrom will be held on March 20. Justin satisfactorily completed his board of review on Jan. 27 to become the troops 29th Eagle Scout. Pictures and a review of Justin's accomplishments will appear next month.

Upcoming troop activities include winter tent camping, our annual flower sale on April 7-10, parent's night on April 20 and a canoe trip in May.

Summer camp registration and deposits are due by April 1. Visit with us any Friday night if you are interested in joining our troop. Parent volunteers are always needed and welcome to support our scouts.

Rose Kolb

Girl Scout News

On Saturday, Feb. 7, the Girl Scouts attended their annual Sweetheart Dance held at Stuyvesant Yacht Club. The dance was a spectacular event. The girls and their escorts danced, laughed and ate the night away. DJ Ray gave a phenomenal performance as usual and kept everyone hopping and laughing all night. The food was great and seconds even greater. A wonderful time was had by all. A big, warm thank-you to all the organizers and volunteers. Can't wait until next year!

Rose Kolb

Legion News

This will be a relatively brief newsletter as I have been a little tardy this month. A good start would be the annual pig's knuckle party. This festive occasion was attended by the members and friends. Monies generated by this event, sponsored by the Sons of the Legion, were turned over to the Post. The commander regarded this as a noble gesture, since charity should begin at home. The kitchen chores were shared by Gene Valesio, Peter Booth, Ray Kelly and Peter Zavaro.

The St. Patrick's Day dinner will be held Saturday, March 13. There will be two seatings, from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 4 to 6 p.m. The fare will be corned beef and cabbage. Liquid refreshments will consist of beer, wine and soda. The price is \$17.

The commander thanks Ray Kelly for placing a banister on the cellar stairs and Noel McIntyre for his plumbing repairs.

This year's St. Patrick's Day parade will take place on Sunday, March 14, at 12 noon. The troops will muster at Tremont and Lafayette Avenues.

Commander Hecker is pleased to report that 90 percent of our members have paid their dues for 2004.

The Sons of the Legion have donated an outdoor grill to the Post.

On Saturday, April 3, from 1 to 3 p.m., the Post will hold an Easter party. All children are welcome. There will be an egg hunt, games, prizes, snacks and beverages.

Remember those on sick call, as well as those in hospitals and housebound.

I have been told that Jack Hartigan, Richard O'Keefe and Bob Mennona are starting a fishing club.

Meetings for the month of March are: regular meetings March 1 and 15; executive board March 8.

And for you WWII buffs, on March 4, 1945, Lieutenant Karl Timmermann led the first American troops across the Rhine River over the Ludendorf Bridge, a.k.a. the Remagen Bridge. The first enlisted man to cross the bridge was Joe Delisio of the Bronx.

Russell Schaller

Trinity United Methodist Church

Please mark March 27 on your calendar for our annual Spring Fair. We will have many delightful homemade goodies and crafts on sale, plus a delightful luncheon for you to enjoy. The fair will be held in Fellowship Hall from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Don't miss it!

Our Children's Sunday school will begin a new unit entitled "Alleluia," which focused on God's love and presence in our lives as revealed in the teachings and ministry of Jesus. All children ages 3 to 13 are invited to attend each Sunday at 10 a.m. Through activities and stories, we will help the children to learn how to live as a Christian "Kid."

During the six Sundays of Lent, from Feb. 29 to April 4, an ongoing Bible study of the Book of Revelation will resume. The meetings will be held in Trinity's Fellowship Hall on Sundays from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Trinity's lay leader, George Cavaliere, will be moderator and instructor. Each meeting will begin with a brief video and light refreshments.

Everyone interested in Bible study is welcome, whether or not you have previously attended. No registration is required. Chapters 7 to 14 will be studied. The focus of the study will be a discussion of the text's subjects on a verse-by-verse basis. The Book of Revelation opens with the following promise: "Blessed is the person who reads the words of this prophecy and blessed are those who hear and take to

heart what is written in it, because the time is near." (Revelation 1:13)

You are invited to come and prove the reality of this promise for yourself this Lent.

Something New: We are initiating a Ladies Night Out. Please come and join us for dinner and conversation at our new Meet to Eat on March 12 at 6:30. Please call Ellen at 718-518-7241 or Donna at 718-885-0931 on or before March 11 to let us know if you will be able to join us for a night of fellowship. We'll let you know at that time where to meet.

Donna LaValle

City Island Civic Association

In spite of the bad weather, we are having meetings and discussions about all sorts of issues affecting life on City Island. The low turnout at the January meeting (in the middle of a blizzard) was quite a success, as we turned it into a round-table discussion of many different subjects, such as how we might increase membership, combine forces with the Chamber of Commerce and so on.

During the month, we met with our City Council member, Madeline Provenzano, to discuss quality-of-life issues on the Island, and we also had a meeting with the Department of Environmental Conservation to clarify their jurisdiction over waterfront properties.

At our meeting in February, Inspector James Capaldo of the 45th Precinct addressed the assembled membership to talk about the traffic problems on Valentine's Day. He also reported that the crime rate was very low for the Island during the month of January.

We are assembling a list of issues to discuss with the Bronx Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT), and those who wish to add to the list are invited to call or fax 718-885-3823 or e-mail civicci@yahoo.com.

Members who have not yet renewed their membership are asked to send \$20 to the Civic Association, P.O. Box 117, City Island, NY 10464. Residents who are not yet members are invited to join; even if you can't make our meetings on the last Tuesday of the month (at 8 p.m. in the Community Center at 190 Fordham Street), you will enjoy having our newsletter and giving the Civic the numbers it needs to make an impact on our elected officials.

Frank Fitts

Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber would like to thank everyone who made the holiday season special—the Fire Department for putting up the lights across City Island Avenue and Verizon for the Seasons Greeting lights. Plus everyone who worked on the holiday events, including the free raffle, which attracted nearly 1,300 people.

Our meeting in February was spent discussing the traffic horrors on Valentine's Day after an interesting presentation of business services offered by representatives of the Chase Bank.

We are preparing a new tourism brochure for City Island and hope to include all of the businesses and organizations. Lily Fenick, a new resident, will be gathering the information.

Mark your calendars: Our crafts fair this spring will be on the weekend of June 5 and 6 to coincide with Fleet Weekend, and the fall fair will be on Sept. 18 and 19. Our 93rd Annual Awards Dinner will be held at the Lido Restaurant on Friday, April 2. Award winners are Bob Carmody, Peter Karikas, Rena Hansen, James Vacca and Joe Burck.

Remember to check out our Web site at www.cityislandchamber.org; e-mail us with any questions at information@cityislandchamber.org.

Peter LaScala

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St. Mary, Star of the Sea

The kindergarten children are learning about migration and birds and are planning a trip to the Bronx Zoo in connection with this study. This month they are concentrating on the letters K, J, W and V and are also learning to tell time. The cooking project for this month will be Irish soda bread.

The first graders will hold their own St. Patrick's Day parade in and around the school. They will study about Ireland as "the Land of Saints and Sinners" and discuss Irish immigration, as well as the role of immigration from other countries and how this has made our country great. Sister Joan will explain mythology and its vital role in Irish culture. The children will then learn about mythological dragons and real dinosaurs and compose their own dragon stories.

In preparation for First Penance, Grade 2 will learn about the parts of the Mass and practice some religious songs. The children will prepare the liturgy for the First Friday Mass. They are exploring different possible destinations for Flat Stanley's postal adventure. I wonder where he will end up?

The third-graders are studying measurements—standard, metric and liquid. They are also learning about Flat Stanley, but instead of sending him off on an adventure they will imagine and make travel itinerary for themselves. For social studies they are studying the Spanish missions of California, and in science they are learning about habitats and the food chain.

Grade 4 is finishing its study of Native Americans and will display lodging projects for the school. The class will soon begin the study of the Revolutionary War and New York State's vital role in it. In science the students are studying habitats and examining the different ways animal bodies are constructed in order to adapt.

On March 15, the sixth-graders will hold the annual Julius Caesar Memorial Pizza Party. They are beginning the science section on ecology and environment by looking at living and non-living factors and their role in shaping the environment. In religion Mr. Garrison will explain the necessity of the church for salvation.

Grade 7 will read "The Diary of Anne Frank" and then view the film and spend time analyzing both mediums. In social studies the students are learning about the growth of early colonial America and events leading up to the Revolutionary War.

The eighth-graders are learning about air, in particular the ozone layer and how to protect it. They are continuing their monthly reports on books of their own choice.

The faculty and students are exceedingly grateful to Miss Joseph for the series of lectures she presented in grades K-8 during February. Miss Joseph spoke of the contributions and influences to American culture and life made by black Americans. Her hard work and insight enriched the cultural life of the school this winter season.

Kindergarten registration will take place March 1-4 from 9 to 11 a.m. only. Please bring the child's birth certificate, baptismal certificate and immunization records. There is also a \$20 non-refundable registration fee.

Special dates for St. Mary's are as follows: March 1-5, ITBS tests will be

given to grades 1-8; March 3, High-school registration for eighth-grade students after 2:30 p.m.; March 5, First Friday Mass at 9 a.m.; March 7 and 8, Sr. James Patrick will attend the CSAANY (Catholic School Administrators Association of New York) meeting in Albany; March 22, Conference Day, school closed; March 25, Bronx Catholic school science fair will be held at Mount St. Michael. Sr. James Patrick, Mr. Caddell and Mr. Beskin have been invited to judge the competition; March 27, First Penance at 11 a.m. in the church; March 29, Sr. James Patrick will attend the Catholic school principals meeting in Suffern, N.Y.; April 2, First Friday Mass at 9 a.m.; April 5, Testing for new students.

Public School 175

The kindergarten students are working hard learning to tell time and make coin exchanges. They love to make up subtraction stories as well! In language arts the children are writing in their journals every day and wondering if the leprechauns will play tricks on them on March 17. Of course they will let us all know!

Grade 1 will take a trip to the Central Park Marionette Theater this month. As St. Patrick's Day approaches, the students are wondering if the "resident leprechaun" will be making his annual appearance, causing much mischief in the classroom.

Second-graders are looking forward to spring and the warmer weather. March is mystery month, and the children will be reading mysteries in their reading groups. The class science fair project is keeping everyone very busy. Measuring is a focus in math, and students will practice their measuring skills by making traditional Irish soda bread for St. Patrick's Day.

In literacy the third-graders are developing their reading strategies by learning about main idea, facts and details, sequencing, cause and effect, comparing and contrasting, making predictions, drawing conclusions and other important skills to help them on the citywide test in April. They are also learning about the importance of multiplication and how important it is to know their facts.

Students in Grade 4 have been busy interviewing relatives and gathering information about their heritage. As part of their science curriculum, the children will be visiting the Bronx Zoo, where they will learn about endangered species, animal adaptations and predator-prey relationships. In mid-March they will be attending a performance by Music Outreach at Lehman College.

The fifth grade is finishing up a study of weather by taking a look at how meteorologists do their work. The students are also continuing their study of the fantasy genre in language arts. They are also studying fractions, decimals and percentages.

Grade 6 is exploring many exciting topics in science. The students will investigate energy forms and alternative energy sources, and in life science they will learn how to use a microscope. Math class includes the study of percentages and the reading, understanding and construction of different types of graphs.

The seventh-graders are busy sharpening their skills in the areas of percentages, decimals, fractions and geometry. They thoroughly enjoyed their Greenkill trip and are preparing the girl's team for the Preston Math Competition. P.S. 175 will send a team of six girls to compete. Good luck, ladies!

Grade 8 is busy studying "Romeo and Juliet" in language arts. The focus in social studies is on the rise of industry, as the students look at inventors and inventions in the 1865-1914 period. The winter bake sale was a huge success, and students are now focused on completing exams and presentations for graduation.



"The Passion of the Christ"

Mel Gibson's controversial film *The Passion of the Christ* is perhaps the most nauseatingly brutal movie I have ever seen, and viewers must be forewarned that some children may have nightmares for years to come if their parents take them to see it. The absurdity of the MPAA rating system has never been underscored more acutely than by the fact that this film did not receive an NC-17 rating for its extreme violence.

Viewers may delude themselves into thinking that children are used to bloodshed at the cinema. But this film is not a comic book of action heroes being maimed and killed, nor is it even as joltingly horrific as the opening half hour of Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan." This film, which focuses on the last 12 hours of Jesus' life on earth, is an unrelenting two-hour portrayal of the incessant, unremitting brutalization of a single man.

As one not of the Catholic faith, I found the movie often confusing, especially regarding the identity of some of the characters. However, my Catholic companion was also uncertain at times, which validated my feeling that the director lacked attention to certain details that would have made the story more

accessible to those relatively unfamiliar with details of Christ's life.

The dialogue in the film is presented entirely in the form of subtitles, because only the languages of the time, Aramaic and Latin, are used. This was an interesting choice, and it kept the noise of the ranting crowds and the jeering Romans from obscuring the scant dialogue.

A primary question of tremendous controversy, which has been written and spoken about ad nauseum in the media, is whether or not this film is anti-Semitic. I think that anti-Semitism is largely a matter of intent, and I do not believe that anyone can enter the mind of the director. However, for those of faith, the fact that Christ's fate was a foregone conclusion raises the question as to why it would be necessary to lay blame in the first place.

As a viewer, I saw a film showing that the Jewish hierarchy of the times wanted Jesus of Nazareth crucified, and that the Romans sadistically tortured him for most of the film's length. Where the director goes completely over the top is in conveying the very idea that a human being so viciously tortured and mutilated could actually stand up, let alone carry the burden of the cross.

In these terrifying times, when religious fundamentalists all over the world are performing unspeakable acts, it is difficult to watch a creative work that has the potential for being so incendiary, whatever the director's intent might have been. I presume that Mr. Gibson is attempting to create a visceral experience for the audience, in which they might garner a greater appreciation for the ultimate sacrifice that was made. But the brutality of the depiction obscures the message that I believe was intended by the Christ himself, that of peace and forgiveness.

EDWARD D. HEBEN
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT and CERTIFIED VALUATION ANALYST

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CITY ICELAND?



Photos by KAREN NANI and BARBARA DOLENSEK

The frigid January temperatures and the snowstorm on Jan. 21, 2004, left the Island covered in snow and surrounded by ice. Longtime Islanders said it reminded them of the "good" old days, when you could ice boat on and walk across Eastchester Bay because it was frozen solid. The surrounding waters started flowing again in the middle of February when the temperatures climbed back above freezing.

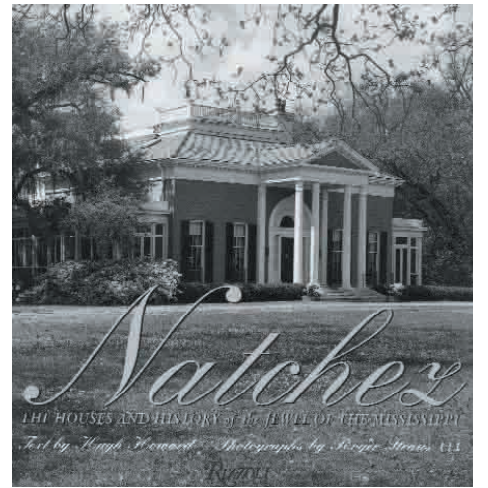
Current Review

The Heart of the Old South

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Natchez: The Houses and History of the Jewel of the Mississippi

Text by Hugh Howard
Photographs by Roger Straus III
Rizzoli, \$39.95



About this time of year, people who live in the North wonder why they didn't bail out weeks ago and head South. The winter weather this year just made matters worse for those of us who stayed here and watched Long Island Sound do its imitation of the Arctic Ocean. Although March is finally here, reliably warm weather is still a few weeks away, and for those who would rather be somewhere else, this book offers a lovely escape.

The team that brought us the buildings of Thomas Jefferson and Frank Lloyd Wright chose this time to focus on the antebellum days of the South as reflected in the fabulous mansions of Natchez, Mississippi. Here are gorgeous full-color photographs of spacious, elegant houses and their beautifully furnished interiors, accompanied by a chatty text that weaves the lives of their owners into descriptions of the architectural details. (Interesting aside: Many of these houses were built by Northerners escaping the North!)

Although the styles range from simple wood-framed houses to massive Greek-revival structures, the mood conveyed by these buildings is warm and inviting, and the gardens just beg to be walked through and admired—Southern hospitality in three dimensions.

Although Natchez was once the perfect expression of Southern prosperity, the city suffered a severe economic depression after the Civil War. Ironically, this is what makes

Natchez such a special treasure today. Without money, the inhabitants of Natchez could not renovate or "remuddle" their houses, as the preservationists put it, and so the houses remained virtually untouched for years.

Now, of course, there is a strong preservationist movement alive and well in Natchez, and this has led to the restoration of the city's former glory. Anyone planning a trip South should definitely include this special place on the list of sites to visit.

In the meantime, where will Messrs. Howard and Straus lead us next? Pelham Bay Park lost its fabulous mansions to the wrecking ball of Robert Moses, but there are still some nice places here on City Island that might deserve their attention. But no, let's encourage them to travel for us to wonderful parts of the country that we would like to visit—if not in person, then through the pages of their beautiful books.

Register for Warriors Football!

Jerry Demers, chief of Warrior Football, announces that the 2004 registration for boys and girls interested in tackle or flag football will take place on two Sundays, March 7 and 14, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All registration will be in the Lehman High School gym located at 3000 East Tremont Avenue (use the side entrance by the football field).

Chief Demers welcomes all City Islanders and told *The Current* that many residents have participated in Warriors over the years, including some season MVPs. New players must be accompanied by a parent and bring a copy of their birth certificate.

Boys and girls ages 6 to 8 are eligible for flag football, and there is no weight limit. For boys and girls interested in tackle football, the age and weight groups are:

- Mites: 7-9 years old, 90 pounds or less

- Pee Wee: 10-11 years old, 110 pounds or less
- Juniors: 12-13 years old, 130 pounds or less
- Midget Travel team: 13-14 years old, 150 pounds or less
- Bantam Travel team: 15-16 years old, 180 pounds or less

Ages are determined as of July 31, 2004. All divisions are co-ed.

Practices begin in August on weekday evenings for the fall football season. Games are played on Saturdays and Sundays at Pelham Bay Park and Lehman High School. The cost schedule for the 2004 season is \$120 for tackle football, \$130 for travel teams and \$80 for flag football. Prices increase by \$20 for registration after March 14.

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis, and those who fail to register in the spring are not guaranteed a roster spot in August even if they are returning players. For more information about football, call Jerry Demers at 718-829-7574.

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TAX TIPS

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

As we approach April 15, there are many things to consider so that you and your family can benefit from all of the recent tax law changes. For those of you who utilize the services of a professional tax preparer, such as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), this article will serve as a reminder that your CPA should be your most valued and trusted advisor.

The annual tax season is here, and your 2003 personal income tax returns are due on or before April 15, 2004. For individuals, this year provides lower capital gains tax rate provisions, new dividend income tax regulations, new retirement plan contribution regulations, new minimum IRA withdrawal regulations, increases in the applicability of the alternate minimum tax (AMT), new adjusted gross income modifications, new estate and gift tax regulations, new mileage deduction allowances, new education expense regulations, new accounting method elections, and so on.

As usual, ever-changing tax legislation, regulations, requirements and other issues impose overwhelming complexities, so be careful with the filing requirements and in determining whether or not any of these recent changes affect your personal income tax situation. As you prepare for the upcoming tax season, I thought you might find this brief rundown of the 2004 tax changes useful:

- The adoption tax credit increases to \$10,390.
- The kiddie tax threshold increases to \$1,600.

- The nanny tax threshold remains at \$1,400.
- Higher education expense deductions increase to \$4,000.
- A new \$2,000 deduction allowance for singles with income from \$65,000 to \$80,000, and \$130,000 to \$160,000 for married couples.
- The top estate tax rate drops to 48%.
- The estate tax exemption amount increases to \$1.5 million (but the annual gift tax exclusion allowance remains at \$11,000 for individual gifts and \$22,000 for married couples).
- The maximum Section 179 expense deduction increases to \$102,000, and the phase-out threshold increases to \$410,000.
- 401(k) maximum salary deferral increases to \$13,000, and the 50 and older catch-up limit increases to \$3,000.
- The SIMPLE maximum salary deferral increases to \$9,000, and the 50 and older catch-up limit increases to \$1,500.
- The standard mileage rate allowance for business driving increases to 37.5¢ per mile, the rate for medical and moving mileage increases to 14¢ per mile, and the rate for charitable driving remains at 14¢ per mile.
- The Social Security taxable wage limit increases to \$87,900, and retirees under age 65 can earn up to \$11,640 without losing their benefits.
- New Health Savings Accounts (HSA) allow taxpayers under 65 years of age with high-deductible health insurance to set aside pretax dollars that can be withdrawn tax-free for medical expense purposes.
- And although the capital gain and dividend income tax rate has been reduced, tax brackets, personal exemptions, and income limitations for various tax benefits increase due to IRS inflation adjustments. Furthermore, this year, many more taxpayers may be surprised to learn that they are subject to the ever-widening tentacles of the AMT or Alternate Minimum Tax.

Furthermore, this year, many more tax-

payers may be surprised to learn that that they are subject to the ever-widening tentacles of the AMT or Alternate Minimum Tax.

In addition to preparing taxes, your financial professional should be able to review your investment of other holdings in order to help determine if you might benefit from a repositioning of assets or the realization of greater appreciation. Also, remember to re-examine your financial goals including college funding and/or retirement planning and make certain that you are on the road to achieving all of your investment objectives.

Your financial professional's intention should be to provide you with the best tax package possible, one that is accurate, complete and prepared in a manner that will best reflect your absolute minimum legal liability. However, in order to accomplish this task, they need your help. So that your 2003 tax returns can be properly and timely prepared, be sure to provide all of your pertinent tax-related data, information and materials as soon as possible, and before preparation of your returns are finalized.

The information required includes all items of income and expense of a tax-related nature. If you are unsure about the taxability or deductibility of any specific item, be sure to ask.

Some, if not all of the following materials, which may be applicable and necessary for the proper preparation of your tax returns, should be readily available for reference:

- A copy of your 2002 income tax

return

- Year 2003 Form(s) W-2 (wages, etc.)
- Year 2003 Form(s) 1099 (interest, dividends, etc.)
- Year 2003 Schedules K-1 reflecting income or loss and other information from any partnerships, LLCs, PLLCs, LLPs, "S" Corporations, estates, trusts, and so on that you may be involved with
- Year 2003 Forms 1098 (mortgage interest paid), and real estate and/or property tax statements.
- Brokerage statements for all stocks, bonds and/or any other investments you may own
- Closing statements pertaining to real estate and/or any other capital transactions
- Any and all supporting data and/or documentation (schedules, analyses, etc.)
- Tax notices if any, that you may have received from the IRS and/or any other taxing authority

I cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of maintaining proper records, receipts and other forms of tax-related documentation. This is the only way that income reported and deductions taken can be substantiated and is especially important when it comes to demonstrating evidence for sources of income; adjustments to income (including alimony, adoption expenses, self-employed health insurance); tax-related expense deductions for such items as medical and dental expenses, taxes, charitable donations, travel, meals and entertainment, and all of the various miscellaneous itemized expense deductions that may apply to your personal situation. The list goes on and on.

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<i>Saturday, March 20</i>	Charmed Life	10PM-2AM
<i>Sunday, March 21</i>	Chris Brown	4-8PM
<i>Saturday, March 27</i>	AKA	10PM-2AM
<i>Sunday, March 28</i>	Jim Kenally	4-8PM

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 (e.g. 1325 - 1300 = 4:25 P.M.). Times less than 1300 are A.M. times (e.g. 1104 = 11:04 A.M.).
 HHI = hours; MM = minutes. Tide chart by Tom Smith

MARCH 2004							
DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HHMM	FEET	HHMM	FEET	HHMM	FEET	
01 Mon	0332	1.8	0735	6.8	1407	1.2	Mon 01
02 Tue	0157	1.8	0627	6.8	1456	1.0	Tue 02
03 Wed	0351	1.8	0910	7.1	1537	0.7	Wed 03
04 Thu	0334	0.9	0944	7.4	1613	0.3	Thu 04
05 Fri	0411	0.5	1011	7.5	1648	0.0	Fri 05
06 Sat	0447	0.1	1041	7.5	1711	-0.3	Sat 06
07 Sun	0523	-0.3	1116	7.9	1742	-0.6	Sun 07
08 Mon	0602	-0.9	1155	8.0	1817	-0.6	Mon 08
09 Tue	0614	0.3	0844	-0.7	1238	7.8	Tue 09
10 Wed	0556	0.4	0729	-0.5	1324	7.5	Wed 10
11 Thu	0149	0.2	0919	-0.4	1414	7.2	Thu 11
12 Fri	0238	7.9	0916	0.0	1510	6.7	Fri 12
13 Sat	0330	7.5	1037	0.5	1619	6.8	Sat 13
14 Sun	0441	7.2	1222	0.8	1808	6.1	Sun 14
15 Mon	0556	1.2	0632	7.0	1358	0.4	Mon 15
16 Tue	0158	1.0	0900	7.3	1440	0.1	Tue 16
17 Wed	0256	0.6	0903	7.8	1635	-0.2	Wed 17
18 Thu	0359	0.0	0905	7.8	1684	-0.5	Thu 18
19 Fri	0443	-0.4	1044	8.0	1709	-0.8	Fri 19
20 Sat	0529	-0.7	1128	8.0	1751	-0.8	Sat 20
21 Sun	0611	-0.7	1208	7.8	1825	-0.4	Sun 21
22 Mon	0623	0.0	0851	-0.5	1347	7.8	Mon 22
23 Tue	0656	7.8	0727	-0.9	1322	7.8	Tue 23
24 Wed	0125	7.6	0759	0.0	1359	7.0	Wed 24
25 Thu	0151	7.4	0823	0.4	1424	6.7	Thu 25
26 Fri	0222	7.2	0849	0.8	1500	6.4	Fri 26
27 Sat	0301	6.9	0829	1.1	1548	6.2	Sat 27
28 Sun	0348	6.7	1030	1.4	1648	6.1	Sun 28
29 Mon	0444	6.6	1127	1.8	1718	6.2	Mon 29
30 Tue	0532	6.6	1257	1.5	1829	6.4	Tue 30
31 Wed	0639	1.8	0714	6.8	1958	1.3	Wed 31

APRIL 2004							
DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HHMM	FEET	HHMM	FEET	HHMM	FEET	
01 Thu	0156	1.4	0811	7.0	1442	0.9	Thu 01
02 Fri	0251	0.9	0859	7.3	1520	0.5	Fri 02
03 Sat	0337	0.5	0931	7.5	1558	0.1	Sat 03

ALL TIMES ARE DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINNING SUNDAY, APRIL 4



PASSING TIME

There was a time when the bitter cold we've been having was just the thing for curling up with a good book before an open fire. It still is for some. But for others, the Internet is fast becoming the pastime of choice. The old ways may have their charms, but the sad fact is that they are hopelessly less instantaneous in this age of instant gratification.

Be all that as it may, we were "surfing the Web" the other day, searching for City Island wherever we could find it, when we came across a collection of old post cards with City Island themes. There was the Ben Hur Hotel, which we had never heard of, the electric trolley to and from the Bartow train station, the horse-drawn carriage, Belden Point and good old P.S. 17, among others. Our favorite, though, was a view from Eastchester Bay of the waterfront from Tier Street to Fordham (circa 1915). We believe one of the structures pictured there is our own home before the second story was added and the wide water views were squeezed out by the new construction.

For those of our readers who may be interested in this sort of thing but who do not have (or want!) access to the Web, we would like to recommend a trip to the City Island Nautical Museum on Fordham Street. If you can't find that vintage postcard you've been looking for all these years, then you're sure to find something else of historical interest there to help you pass the time.

Maria noticed some birds passing time in

the melted spaces around chimneys on City Island rooftops. Our bet is that it isn't the water but the warmth that they are after. John wrote in to tell us that the birds in his backyard could hardly wait to get at the crumbs he had thrown out there to them. No sooner had the door closed behind him than there was an avalanche of wings and beaks and tweet-tweet-tweets showering down from above.

Pickings this winter must have been scant. When this happens, it is not uncommon to see more road kill than usual along our highways and byways. A friend told us about an item he had recently read in the news on this subject. Apparently the British, in an effort to save the hedgehog population from a nasty fate along their own busy highways, are thinking about digging small tunnels for small animals who suddenly feel the need to get to the other side.

One has to wonder, however, that if the hedgehog can be trained to use the new tunnels in the first place, why can't it figure out when to cross the road and when not to cross? Still, we applaud the British people for making the effort, and we wish them every success.

Hang on! We're almost there! Spring is on the horizon. In the meanwhile, be on the lookout for those harbingers of the new season—the red-winged blackbird and the crocus—and for any other sight or sound that happens to pass your way as you pass the time; woodpeckers, for instance, or blue jays that go "caw caw." As always, we can be contacted at jdsstrat@earthlink.net.

Traffic

Continued from page 3

fication to the police officers were allowed to return home, but diners, even those who had reservations or were attending a party, were not able to cross the bridge until officers gave the go-ahead.

To make matters worse on Valentine's Day, officers from the Highway Patrol chose that evening to check cars coming onto and driving off the Island for operators driving under the influence of alcohol. Drivers were checked in both directions, which served to increase the bottleneck at the City Island bridge.

Joe Valenti Jr., who works with the Sea Shore Restaurant, among other restaurants on the Island, told *The Current* that the restaurant owners were forming a group to compare facts, calculate their losses and address the Borough Commander of the Police Department so that this situation would not be repeated in the future.

"If the police had been doing their job, this would not have happened," Mr. Valenti said.

"It wouldn't be a problem for us to have City Island closed to visitors if our parking lots had been all filled up, but that isn't what happened."

Inspector James Capaldo of the 45th Precinct, who attended the Civic Association meeting, took responsibility for the situation and apologized for not having seen that the officers on duty were adequately prepared to handle the traffic. He had already set up a meeting with some of the restaurant owners, and he agreed also to meet with representatives of the Civic and the Chamber to discuss plans for handling future heavy-traffic days before the regular Orchard Beach detail begins on Memorial Day. In addition to Easter and Mother's Day, traffic can also become a problem on unexpectedly warm evenings in the early spring.

Bob Carmody, speaking for the Chamber of Commerce, said "The Chamber, the Civic or any volunteer could monitor the weather in the early spring and determine with the Police Department if additional police presence is necessary. Residents, business owners or visitors with suggestions are invited to call the Chamber at 718-885-9100 or the Civic at 718-885-3823."

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 14TH-21ST: Join Dianne & John O'Sullivan on their 3rd annual summer "All inclusive" vacation to Aruba for only \$1299.00 a person. Price includes everything. Airfare, 7 nights deluxe accommodations at the Divi Aruba Beach Resort, all meals, drinks, taxes, gratuities, water sports, wonderful weather, casino etc. (You can leave your wallet at home). Children 2 thru 17yrs. pay only \$659. Children under 2 are free (limit 2 children per room). This is a wonderful and super reasonable vacation for singles, couples and families. (We have only 24 seats left and they are going fast!) If interested call: O'Sullivan Travel 718-885-0715. All final payments will be due by April 15th.



Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Brianna Reilly shows librarian Evelyn Gerges and William Soto, special assistant to Assemblyman Stephen Kaufman, how to make Valentine's cards at the City Island Library arts and crafts program on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2004.



We hope everyone had a healthy and happy holiday season. As the frost finally begins to melt, we are eagerly anticipating the start of the 2004 baseball season. Our winter program is in full swing and will continue throughout the month of March. This year we were fortunate enough to be able to use the gym at P.S. 175 and keep the program right here on City Island. The children are learning the fundamentals of throwing, catching and hitting, so they will be ready to hit the ground running come opening day. At this time we would like to thank the principal of the school, Mrs. Lopez, and her staff, especially Tina Giasante, for helping to make this program a reality.

Our season will begin with our Opening

Day Parade and Ceremony at Ambrosini Field. This year we will open our season on Saturday, April 17, 2004. The parade will kick off from Bridge Park at 11:30 a.m. sharp and proceed to Ambrosini Field. We will hold our opening ceremony and the first games of the season. All are welcome to attend and join in the festivities.

We held our final registration on Feb. 21 at St. Mary's gym. Anyone who missed this registration and has a child who is interested in playing must contact us ASAP at cityislandlittleleague@yahoo.com or call Larry Saulnier at 718-885-1313. Time is running out, and we must have our teams in place early so they can begin practicing. Any child of any skill level between the ages of five and fifteen is eligible to play Little League baseball. We teach not only the fundamentals of baseball but also the values of sportsmanship and teamwork.

We are always looking for volunteers. We need people to help with field maintenance, concession duty and coaching. There is a lot of administrative work that goes on behind the scenes and often goes unnoticed, and we also need people to help with those duties. Interested volunteers can contact us by e-mail or telephone. Parents will receive postcards in the near future for a Little League parents meeting. This meeting will be held on Saturday, March 13, at 10 a.m. One parent of each registered Little Leaguer must attend. We hope to see you all out on the field and in the stands.

Larry Saulnier

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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.

A fond farewell to the Laurels' Dr. Ellen Dierenfeld, Georg Weyand and their son Christoph who have relocated to St. Louis, Missouri. They will be missed by their many friends here on the Island and their extended Bronx Zoo "family."

Congratulations to our Aunt Jennifer Sortino and Uncle Louis Marrone on their Nov. 21, 2003 marriage. All our love, Angela and Dominick Acocella and Peter O'Keefe Jr.

Best wishes for continued happiness to Bay Street's Hy and Connie Cantor, who will celebrate their anniversary on March 17.

Congratulations to Dan Treiber and the success of the Crafty Records.net Acoustic Invasion Tour starring Brook Pride-more and Chris Martin. They completed 18 shows in 17 days between New York and Chicago.

Happy birthday greetings go out to Pell Place's Barbara Stiene, who will celebrate her big day on March 31.

Congratulations to former Reynolds Street resident Melissa (Koller) and her husband Edward Byrnes on the Feb. 6 birth of their son, Ryan Joseph. The happy family resides in Lausanne, Switzerland. Proud grandparents are Cheryl and Frank Koller of Reynolds Street. Thrilled great-grandparents are Frank and Margaret Koller of King Avenue and Myra Martin of Minneford Avenue.

Happy first birthday wishes on March 7 to our beautiful triplets, James, Jese and Jenee. Love, Granpa Gene and Granma Maryann.

Happy March 15 birthday greetings

to Granpa Gene with love from Maryann, Jadee, Mike and, of course, your three grandchildren, James, Jese and Jenee.

Happy birthday to Judy McCormick on the 18th of March from the "doghouse" and Maryann, Eugene, Karen, Tina, Katie, Gerald and all.

It's been a busy six months for Minneford Avenue resident Jill Klopfer Luderman. First, Jill was married on Aug. 22, 2003, to Scott Luderman, a graduate of the SUNY Maritime Academy at Fort Schuyler in the Bronx. Since then Jill has completed her studies in Equine Science at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. She did an internship at the Pelham Bit Stables, and she is now a trainer and instructor there and at Making Strides Stables in Cortlandt, New York. Many Islanders also know Jill from her years of working Sundays at the City Island Diner. Her proud parents are Pell Place's Joanie and Peter Klopfer.

Maria Swieciki




Minneford Avenue resident Jill Klopfer Luderman is shown above at her 2003 wedding to Scott Luderman. Jill, who was raised on Pell Place, recently completed her studies in Equine Science at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island.



Photos by ROSE KOLB

On Saturday, Feb. 7, 2004, City Island Girl Scouts held their annual Sweetheart Dance at the Stuyvesant Yacht Club.



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