

The Island Current

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One Dollar

SEASON(AL) START FOR C.I. LITTLE LEAGUE



Photos by RICK DeWITT

Although the rain began to fall as the parade passed Tier Street, the City Island Little League 2005 season got off to an enthusiastic start on April 25. With politicians, dignitaries, coaches and parents present to root them on, Island boys and girls showed off their new uniforms, bats and gloves during the ceremony at Ambrosini Field. The season opening national anthem was sung by Anthony Orzo and Samantha Nagy. This year, the City Island Little League is under the direction of president Bob Whelan and vice-president Larry Saulnier. Stop by and enjoy the games on weeknights and Saturdays through June.

Sewer Project On Hold Again

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Although the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) announced earlier this year that it would likely begin in April the massive task of replacing water mains and storm and sanitary sewers on City Island for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), no one was surprised to see that nothing was being done as the month of April drew to close. After all, City Island has been waiting since 1975 for the job to begin, but only now has the money been made available in the city's budget.

No official word was given to the residents, the City Island Civic Association, the Chamber of Commerce or this newspaper, and calls to DDC resulted in evasive answers as to when the job would actually start.

The Civic Association decided to devote its entire agenda for its April meeting to the issue, not only to find out when the project might start and what its scope would be, but also in response to complaints made by a large number of residents about the fact that DDC decided to call a summer moratorium on the job every year until it is completed, which may not be for at least three years.

DDC had been invited to present their plan at the April meeting of the Civic Association. Several representatives and elected officials had agreed to attend but did not. David Tweedy, the First Deputy Commissioner of DEP, addressed the large group of residents and said that the sewer project was now scheduled to begin in the fall, after the summer moratorium.

When asked why a summer moratorium had been put in place, Mr. Tweedy said he assumed it had been the result of a consensus reached by the community. It

was quickly made clear to him, however, that no discussion of the moratorium had been held with residents nor had the date change been announced, and he agreed to hold a meeting right away in an effort to resolve the problem.

Lee Anthony Nieves, Bronx Borough Director in the Mayor's Office, agreed to set up such a meeting, which would be attended by representatives of the Civic Association and other interested groups on the Island.

It is clear that the sewer project will entail a good deal of disruption to City Island Avenue and that traffic, already extremely congested on many summer evenings, would suffer at times during the project. However, as many residents pointed out, working through the summer would be both faster and cheaper for the city, as there are longer working hours in the summer and better conditions than during the winter. Work would shut down at night and during weekends, which are the times when traffic is generally at its peak. The blocks between Centre and Earley Streets in front of P.S. 175 are already congested when school is in session; that work would be best done in the summer.

Residents also reminded Mr. Tweedy that the construction of the new bridge was scheduled to begin in October 2007 and that it would be very disruptive to have both projects overlap. It was also noted that the sooner the job is completed the better, as the quality of City Island's drinking water would be assured in a timely manner.

After Mr. Tweedy left the meeting, the residents in attendance, numbering more than 50 individuals, voted unanimously to ask the city to start the project as soon as possible and to continue throughout the year until it was completed.



Photo by MARIA SWIECKI

Islanders have noticed an alarming number of "fender-benders" on City Island Avenue as traffic increases and construction crews move equipment around. One such accident occurred on March 22, 2005, when a car making a U-turn at Fordham Street collided with the City Island #29 bus. The driver of the car reportedly worked at the H&R Block office on the avenue. Police urge residents and visitors to drive carefully and slowly, obey traffic laws and use the fire lane only for left turns, not for passing.

BRIEFLY...

“DECADES DANCE” AT GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

If you've been getting the urge to do the Boogie-Woogie, Lindy, Mash Potato, Twist, and Disco, then put Saturday, May 14, on your calendar. City Island's own D.J. Ray will be spinning tunes from the 1940s to 2000 between 7 and 11 p.m. at Grace Church Hall, 116 City Island Avenue. Zoot suits, poodle skirts, sharkskin jackets, bellbottoms and polyester suits are NOT discouraged! Grace's "USO Canteen" will be selling light fare and beverages, and there will also be a 50/50 raffle. Tickets are \$25 per person and can be purchased in advance by calling 914-712-3015 or you may stop by Grace Church Hall on Sundays between 11:15 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Grace Episcopal Church Building Fund.

SHARPEN THOSE PENCILS!

Attention writers, readers, friends. It is time for the City Island Community Center's annual Drue Breen Literary Contest. This year's topic is the City Island Bridge. Any original fictional essay or poem (500 words or less) will be accepted for consideration. The winners and runners-up in each category will receive a Barnes and Noble gift card. Categories include Grades 1 and 2 (\$25 and \$15 gift cards), Grades 3 through 5 (\$25 and \$15 gift cards) and Grades 6 through 8 (\$25 and \$15 gift cards). This year, for the first time, there are categories for high-school students and adults, with \$50 and \$25 gift cards for high school students and \$75 and \$50 gift cards for adults. All prizes are provided by the Community Center's Drue Breen Literary Fund. Winners will also have their names and essays published in *The Island Current*. All entries are due no later than May 31, 2005, and may be dropped off at P.S. 175, St. Mary, Star of the Sea School and the Focal Point Gallery. For more information, please contact Amy Gottlieb-McElroy or Brenda Prohaska at 718-885-1145.

CITY ISLAND DOG SHOW:

A dog show benefiting the Community Center's Floor Fundraising Campaign will be held on Saturday, June 11, at 2 p.m. at the Anthony Ambrosini Little League Field. In case of rain, the show will be held at the Community Center located at 190 Fordham Street. Owners who wish to enter their dogs must submit a registration form by June 1; registration forms can be picked up at the Focal Point Gallery or at the Bronx Equestrian Center (formerly Pelham Bit Stables). Judged classes will be Best Trick, Obedience, Owner Look-a-like and Costume. A \$10 registration fee is required for each class entered. All entered dogs will automatically qualify for the People's Choice class, in which spectators will vote for their favorite pooch. All proceeds will benefit the Community Center's Floor Fundraising Campaign. For further information, please call Marcy Brennen at 718-885-9863 or e-mail Cldogshow@aol.com.

THE GARDEN CLUB SPRING LUNCHEON

will be held at the City Island Yacht Club, at the end of west Pilot Street, on Thursday, June 9, at 12 noon. There will be many wonderful raffles and prizes, so be sure to join us. The price is \$28 per person, to be paid in advance. Send your check to Ruth Collins, 45 Center Street, City Island, NY 10464. For more information, call Ruth at 718-885-1361.

METROCARD BUS/VAN

will be making stops in the Bronx during May. Senior citizens and persons with disabilities may apply for the Reduced Fare MetroCard on the buses or may obtain an application from the vans. Seniors must present photo identification proving that they are at least 65 years old. Persons with disabilities must have a valid U.S. Medicare Card along with a valid federal/state issued photo identification card in order to be immediately processed. Some of the stops near City Island include Metropolitan Oval in Parkchester (May 11, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.), St. Francis De Chantal at 190 Hollywood Avenue off Tremont Avenue (9 to 10 a.m.), and Bartow Mall on Co-op City Boulevard (May 19, 9 to 10:30 a.m.). For more stops and information, call 212-METROCARD or visit the MTA's website www.mta.info.

BRONX MASONS BLOOD DRIVE

will be held on Tuesday, May 10, between 4 and 8 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 113 Bay Street at City Island Avenue. Almost anyone from the ages of 17 to 75, weighing a minimum of 110 pounds and in good general health, can be a blood donor. Photo or signature ID and Social Security number are required at the time of donation. For more information, call Scott Meyer at 718-885-0374.

LEHMAN CHORUS SPRING CONCERT:

The Lehman College and Community Chorus and Orchestra will present Brahms' German Requiem, Dvorak's Slavonic Dances, excerpts from Copland's "The Tender Land," and a medley of songs from "South Pacific" during its annual Spring Concert on Sunday, May 15, at 2:30 p.m. in the Lehman Concert Hall. The concert is free and open to the public. Complimentary tickets will be available at the box office beginning at 1 p.m. on the day of the concert. Directed by Lehman Professor Diana Mittler-Battipaglia and accompanied by the Lehman Symphony Orchestra, the 120-member chorus consists of Lehman students, alumni, faculty, and staff and a broad selection of residents from the area. Lehman Concert Hall is located at Goulden Avenue and Bedford Park Boulevard. For more information, contact the College's Music Department at 718-960-8247 or 718-960-8833.

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Pelham Cemetery Vandalized and Restored

By KAREN NANI



Photos by KAREN NANI and JOHN ULMER

Vandals sprayed graffiti on eight headstones in the Pelham Cemetery on City Island over the weekend of April 16 and 17, 2005. The graffiti was cleaned within days through the graffiti removal program sponsored by Senator Jeffrey Klein, shown above, right, with John Ulmer, the cemetery superintendent.

For the first time in over 30 years, the cemetery on City Island was vandalized, this time with graffiti spray-painted onto several headstones. The vandalism occurred at some point during the weekend of April 16 and 17, 2005, according to John Ulmer, the Pelham Cemetery superintendent.

Vandals sprayed green paint on eight headstones located toward the waterfront edge of the cemetery. Mr. Ulmer noticed the graffiti on Monday, April 18, and immediately called the police.

Officers from the 45th Precinct responded and examined the damage. Some of the graffiti contained messages, including obscene phrases and words. On other headstones, the spray appeared to be initials (see photos) or just random strokes. A racial epithet was used on one headstone.

Police reported the incident as criminal mischief. They did not feel it classified as a bias crime, since only one message out of the eight appeared to be racist, according to Mr. Ulmer.

The cemetery superintendent then put in a call to the office of New York State Senator Jeffrey Klein to ask that the graffiti be removed. Mr. Ulmer spoke with the senator's chief of staff, Rod McLeod, who responded quickly.

Mr. Klein's office, which administers a



graffiti-removal program, sent a crew from Survillo Cleaning Services within two days of the report. Initially, the crew did not have a hose long enough to reach the damaged stones. They left and returned with a 400-foot hose that could extend to the lower part of the cemetery.

By the end of the day Wednesday, April 20, the graffiti had been removed from all the headstones with a high-powered spray wash. "The stones were fully restored and there is no permanent damage," a grateful Mr. Ulmer told *The Current*.

Mr. Klein also spoke with *The Current* about the incident. "It is outrageous that someone would desecrate the headstones of graves. It is incumbent upon us to get rid of graffiti quickly, and I'm glad we could clean up the cemetery as soon as possible."

The graffiti-removal program was initiated four years ago, when Mr. Klein was a state assemblyman from the Bronx. As a recently elected state senator, he has been able to continue the program to remove graffiti from residential and commercial properties in City Island and elsewhere in the Bronx, according to Alex Camarda of the senator's staff.

"There are two types of removal: a high-powered spray wash to remove graffiti from brick, cement and stucco, and a matching paint-over for surfaces such as wood," Mr. Camarda said. Residents and business owners who want to know more about the program may call the senator's office at 718-792-8500.

The last incident of vandalism at the Pelham Cemetery on City Island occurred in the 1970s, according to Mr. Ulmer. Headstones were overturned, but the persons responsible were caught and their families paid for the damage.

Police have been asked to pay extra attention to the cemetery during routine Island patrols. Anyone in the City Island community with information about the vandalism is asked to call the 45th Precinct or John Ulmer at 718-885-3036.

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Temple Beth El's 71st Anniversary



Photos by BOB BERENT

Temple Beth-El of City Island celebrated its 71st anniversary on Saturday, April 16, 2005, at the City Island Yacht Club. Shown during the opening ceremony, the Havdalah Service, which marks the end of the Sabbath, are (l. to r.) Rabbi Shohama Wiener, Alan Dattner, New York State Senator Jeffrey Klein (the evening's honoree), Sandra Hoberman and Elaine Belasco. Adolfo Carrión Jr., Bronx Borough President, proclaimed April 16 official "Temple Beth-El of City Island Day in the Bronx."



Photo by RICK DeWITT

Dressed to the nines on the occasion of Temple Beth-El of City Island's 71st Anniversary celebration at the City Island Yacht Club are (standing from left to right): Bob Berent (President of TBE), Steve Slotnik (Trustee), Herb Kuschner (Treasurer), Ed Rothschild (Trustee), New York State Senator Jeffrey Klein (2005 Honoree), Norman Orenstein (Trustee), Mort Ellis (Trustee), and Paul Klein (Trustee). Seated (left to right) are Olga Berd  Mahl (Vice President), Rabbi Shohama Wiener and Violet Ellis (Trustee).

Community Center and Museum Update

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

The auction sale of the condominium unit that houses the City Island Historical Society and Nautical Museum, scheduled for April 19, 2005, was canceled when the owner of the property, 190 Fordham Street Realty Corp., paid back taxes to the lienholder who had filed for foreclosure on the unit. The back taxes on the unit leased to the City Island Community Center were also paid to the lienholder, who had purchased the tax liens in 2003 from the city. Taxes had not been paid since 2001, and officers of the two organizations were concerned that their 99-year leases with the landlord were in jeopardy.

Virginia Callaghan, who helped to negoti-
tiate the terms of the original sale of the 190 Fordham Street building, the former Public School 17, told *The Current* that when the current owner purchased the property in 1988 for \$500,000 at public auction, the two 99-year leases were in place before the Board of Estimate released the building for auction.

According to information provided by the city's Commissioner of Finance, the two leases are restrictive covenants that run with the deed and are binding not only on the present owner but on any prospective purchasers.

HERE COMES THE BRIDE -AND 'GROOMSMEN'



Photos by KAREN NANI and BARBARA DOLENSEK

Actor-writer-director Edward Burns chose City Island as the location for several scenes in his new film "The Groomsmen," scheduled for release in the spring of 2006. Mr. Burns plays the groom, whose wedding to a lovely bride played by Brittany Murphy takes place in St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church. Also in the film are the groomsmen, John Leguizamo, Donal Logue, Jay Mohr and Matthew Lillard, and the father of the bride, John Mahoney (better known as father of "Frazier"). Mr. Burns posed with Father Michael Challinor, St. Mary's new pastor who offered "technical" support to the priest's costumer. Other scenes were filmed on King Avenue and in the Port of Kall realty office. The crew returns in May to film on Fordham Street and again on King Avenue.

Keeping the Bigger Picture in Mind...



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Community Center Nears Fund-raising Goal

By CELESTE ZAYAS



On April 8, 2005, the Pelham Masonic Lodge made a generous donation to the City Island Community Center for the new floor. In the back row (l. to r.) are Joe Zimmerman, Lou Juers, Celeste Zayas, Ken Fischer and Sue Chadwick; in front Joe Manzi, Myra Martin, Marcy Brennen and Brenda Prohaska.

Thanks to the outpouring of support from the community, the City Island Community Center fund-raising campaign for the new floor is fast approaching its goal of \$6,600. As of press time, \$5,000 has been raised, and with donations continuing to come in and two more fund-raising events scheduled, the goal should be met by early summer.

The local City Island community has shown support in various ways. Checks with tax-deductible donations have been arriving at the center's Post Office Box 135 on a weekly basis, and the revenue from donation cans placed at local businesses, including Papa John's, Connie's, the U.S. Post Office and JGL Wines & Liquors, has been very encouraging. The Make-a-Plate Fund-raiser held on April 1 was a resounding success, with more than 75 children expressing their creative side by making drawings that turned into plates for display or functional purposes.

Various City Island groups have also shown their support. The Masons, who have a chapter housed on City Island, presented the fund-raising committee with a generous donation at their annual charity dinner, and the City Island Civic Association, which holds its monthly meetings in the Community Center also donated a generous gift.

There will be a raffle at the annual Arts and Crafts Street Fair organized by the City Island Chamber of Commerce on June 11, and businesses both on and off the Island have donated prizes for the raffle. Tickets are currently being sold and will be available for sale at the fair on the day of the drawing.

Thanks to the article in the March issue of *The Island Current*, our campaign has

reached beyond our City Island borders to all parts of the United States, where former residents still keep in touch with the Island through their subscription to the paper. Adelaide Rosenfield Bialek of Palos Park, Illinois, sent a sizable gift in memory of her late mother, Adelaide Rodstrom Rosenfield, who worked long and hard to make the P. S. 17 building made available to the community. Members of the D'Allesandro family, who have relocated to Maryland and Virginia, sent in donations accompanied by a letter recalling their fond memories at P.S. 17.

Also in the works is the Community Center Dog Show, which will take place at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 11. The show will be held at the Anthony Ambrosini Little League Field, or at the Community Center in case of rain. Judged classes will include Best Trick, Obedience, Owner Look-a-like, Costume and People's Choice. Participants must be registered by June 1; registration forms can be picked up at the Focal Point Gallery or at the Bronx Equestrian Center (formerly Pelham Bit Stables). Each class requires an entrance fee of \$10. For more information, call Marcy Brennen at 718-885-9863 or e-mail Cldogshow@aol.com.

Kudos to the City Island community both near and far for the outpouring of support for this floor fund-raising effort. Because the center is a not-for-profit organization and operates through donations and fund-raising events, it cannot be successful unless the community is supportive. As the final goal becomes a reality, City Island has shown itself to be a community that comes through in a time of need.

Current Review

Life is a Cabaret, Old Chum

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photo by ELIZABETH RAUH

The Kit Kat Girls, standing (l. to r.): Cori-Ann Roublick, Susan Rauh, Lindy Tabano, Justine Costanza, Jean McCabe and Liza Reid.

Every season the City Island Theater Group offers the community something completely different, and it was clear from the moment we entered Grace Church Hall that this spring's production was going to follow in that great tradition. Small tables and café chairs were set up near the stage, inviting the audience to feel part of the action, a deliberate ambivalence between theater and real life that helped establish the tone for the rest of the play.

As all who know this fabulous musical are aware, "Cabaret" takes place in 1936 in Berlin, a lively city where fun and good times become overshadowed by decadence and evil, as the Nazis begin their rise to power. What appears to be entertaining quickly becomes ominous, but the characters remain in a fantasy world, believing that "life is a cabaret," while their real world is about to crumble around them.

The plot centers on a young, penniless American writer, Cliff Bradshaw (convincingly played by Anthony Ottaviano), who comes to Berlin to write a novel and becomes captivated by a beautiful, amoral young woman named Sally Bowles (the multi-talented Cori Ann Roublick), star of the Kit Kat Club. Like the audience, Cliff gradually becomes aware of what lies ahead for Germany but is powerless to save those he cares about.

The real centerpiece of the play, however, is the Emcee of the Kit Kat Club (the incredible Christopher McGowan), who opened the production by welcoming the audience to the cabaret and continued throughout the play in numerous roles as go-between and narrator. His performance was a perfect combination of deeply sinister and highly amusing, as he interacted not only with the other characters but also with the audience, making eye contact with those who sat at the café tables.

The club's chorus line, the Kit Kat Girls (Liza Reid, Lindy Tabano, Jean McCabe, Susan Rauh and Justine Costanza) were delightful and provocative as they sang, pranced and danced their way around the theater in sexy outfits (costumers Carol McCabe and Carole Sullivan must have bought out Frederick's of Hollywood for this production!). And the lone Kit Kat Boy, Matt Rota, was, like the Emcee, an intriguing combination of good and evil, as he sang the lovely ballad "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," which later becomes a Nazi anthem.

The struggle between good and evil was also expressed in the characters of the Germans who becomes Cliff's friends: Ernst Ludwig (Eugene Kopman), a prosperous businessman who welcomes Cliff to Berlin; Fraulein Schneider (Cathy Roskam, who is in her private life an Episcopal bishop and filled in at Grace Church last summer), a good-natured spinster who owns the boarding house where Cliff lives with Sally; and her suitor, Herr Schultz (Marvin Einhorn), a charming Jewish fruit merchant. Herr Ludwig turns out to be a Nazi, Fraulein Schneider becomes one of those Germans who chooses to look away from the truth, as does Herr Schultz, who is about to be a victim of Nazi persecution. Fraulein Kost (Margaret Cioffi) is the house's resident prostitute and is perhaps the only character other than Cliff who sees the world as it is. All of these characters were beautifully played by the actors, who elicited genuine sympathy from the audience.

The duets sung by Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz offered some of the most touching moments in the show, but in fact all of the songs were terrific, ranging from Sally's naughty "Don't Tell Mama" to a quiet duet in German sung by Susan Rauh and her sister, Dr. Beth Rauh, who served as music director for the show. Dr. Rauh brilliantly accompanied all of the songs on keyboard and played introductions and interludes for each of the scenes, a truly remarkable achievement.

The sets, designed by Con Grondahl, were wonderfully appropriate—simple black panels and free-standing door jambs that the cast members moved around to form different scenes. Pattie Walsh did a fine job as stage manager for this very complicated production, and Susan Velcheck and Julie White managed the lights very professionally.

"Cabaret" was directed by Nicholas Sala, who deserves great praise for bringing together such an accomplished group of actors and giving City Island a theatrical night to remember.

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Photo by RICK DeWITT

Young Rembrandts-in-Training gathered for the opening of the 12th Annual Young City Island Artist Exhibit on Saturday April 2, 2005, at the Focal Point Gallery on City Island Avenue. Shown in front of their artistic compositions are (back row l to r.): Gail Nathans, Ron Terner, Armondo Bocanegra-Cruz, Miriam Vega, and Davida Levinson from the Harry H. Gordon School. Front row: Cuauhtemoc Pulido, Lydia McElroy, JuliaDiMarco, Phoebe McElroy, Justin Ramos and Thomas Vega.

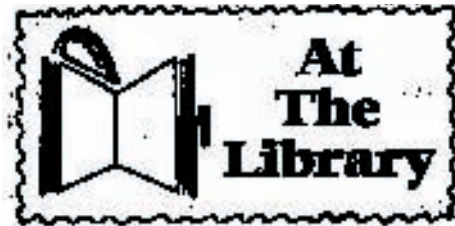


If you have a new business, or if your old business is offering a new service, write to The Current, P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464 by the 10th of the month.

The Kathlyn Moses Gallery at 327 City Island Avenue will present a group show in May. An opening reception will take place from 7 to 10 p.m. on Friday, May 13.

The Focal Point Gallery at 321 City Island Avenue will feature photography by Rajeev Terner from May 6 to 29. The opening reception is Friday, May 6 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. For more information, call 718-885-1403.

May at The Starving Artist starts off with former Islander Niru Terner presenting her seascape watercolors; the opening reception is on Saturday, May 7, from 3 to 6 p.m. That same day, at 8 p.m., singer-songwriter Sam Leopold takes the stage. On Mother's Day, May 8, the City Island Jazz Quartet performs from 3 to 5 p.m. The Beatles tribute band, Rubber Soul, returns to the Starving Artist, for two performances on Saturday, May 14, at 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. On Saturday, May 21, from 3 to 5 p.m. FOX television's Lis Wiehle will sign her book "Winning Every Time: How to Use the Skills of a Lawyer in the Trials of Your Life." Later that Saturday, at 8 p.m., mellow out to the jazz guitar of Lou Volpe. On May 22, singer-songwriter Theresa Sareo, performs at 3 p.m. Call 718-885-3779 for reservations for musical performances.



Adult Programs

Introduction to Microsoft Windows: Tuesday, May 10, at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

Children's Library

Arts and Crafts: Mother's Day Crafts. Wednesday, May 4.

Toddler Program: Every Thursday in May (5, 12, 19 and 26) at 10:30 a.m. Pre-registration is required. Ages 18 to 36 months.

Millennium Babies will meet for stories on Thursday, May 12, at 1 p.m.

Bilingual Picture Book Program: Thursday, May 12, at 3:30 p.m. Ages 4 to 8.

Picture Book Program: Thursdays, May 5, 19 and 26. Ages 4 to 11.

For information about any of the above programs, call the City Island branch at 718-885-1500.

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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
238 Bowne Street	10/7/04	\$609,000	Condo
248 Bowne Street	11/19/04	\$599,749	Condo
180 Terrace Street	12/22/04	\$200,000	2 Family
415 Hunter Avenue	1/10/05	\$475,000	1 Family
161 Ditmars Street	1/11/05	\$555,000	1 Family
67 Bay Street	1/27/05	\$522,000	1 Family
484 King Avenue	1/27/05	\$1,200,000	3 Family
48 Schofield Street	2/7/05	\$370,000	1 Family
151 Pilot Street	2/21/05	\$365,000	1 Family
58 Earley Street	2/25/05	\$635,000	1 Family
528 Minnieford Ave.	2/25/05	\$399,999	3 Family

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George Rio Gásne: Paratrooper of Pilot Cove

By RUSSELL SCHALLER

His gait is noticeably slower now, and the spring in his step is long gone. His voice, too, is not as strong as it once was. His name is George Rio Gásne, a senior citizen living in Pilot Cove, a very friendly, quiet man who is 94 years old and a veteran of WWII. His story is unique.

George was born in 1910 in the city of Merida in the Yucatan, Mexico. His family migrated to the United States a few years later and settled in Brooklyn, where George graduated from parochial school and Brooklyn Technical High School. Because it was the middle of the Depression, meaningful work was hard to find, so George went to sea as a merchant seaman, visiting many ports in Japan, China, the Philippines, and Okinawa.

December 7, 1941, would change life for many Americans. George was drafted into the Army the following year, at the age of 32. Although he was small in stature, about 5 feet 4 inches tall, and weighed only about 120 pounds, George volunteered for the paratroops.

Normandy

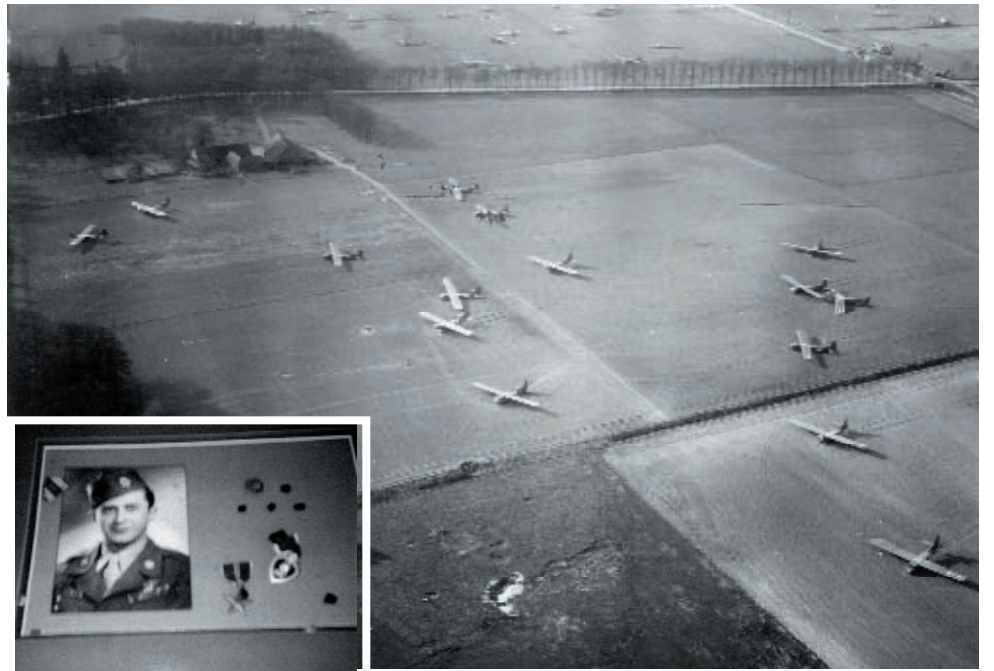
Most of you know that the paratroops are elite units. The training is rigorous, on a par with the Marine Corps and Army Rangers. The division that George was in, the 101st Airborne, was activated on Aug. 16, 1942, at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. The division had no history, but it certainly had a date with destiny. Known as the Screaming Eagles, the troops wore a shoulder patch depicting a likeness of Old Abe, a feisty American eagle and the mascot of the eighth Wisconsin Regiment,

who had survived six battles during the Civil War. Wounded at the battles of Vicksburg and Corinth, Old Abe always accompanied the troops into battle.

After months of training in dusty camps in the American South, the 101st Airborne left for England. The first units arrived at Osbourne Saint George in southwest England early in 1943, and training resumed in preparation for D-Day, even more rigorous than training in the States. In May 1944 the 101st began moving the marshaling areas, and on June 5, at about 11 p.m., General Eisenhower arrived and chatted with the troopers, wishing them Godspeed. George and his comrades boarded their C-47 with their parachutes, about 80 pounds of equipment and their signal crickets for communicating with each other on the ground.

One after the other, the C-47s lumbered down the runway, lifting off into the gathering dusk. The flight over the Channel was relatively short. As the red light came on, George stood and hooked up, anticipating the green light, which was the sign to jump. Finally, the green light flashed, and one by one the men jumped into the cool French morning. Tracers from the guns of German defenders raked the sky. Many in George's regiment were killed before reaching the ground, but George survived his baptism of fire and landed safely.

On the ground, and alone, George worked his way out of his chute and snapped his cricket once, but there was no response. (The response to one click was two clicks. If there was none, it could be assumed there were no colleagues nearby.) Slowly, groups of men began to form



Photos courtesy of GEORGE RIO GÁSNE

Pilot Cove resident George Rio Gásne was a paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division in World War II. Members of his division were dropped by gliders (shown above) into Nijmegen, Holland, for a battle in 1944. Of the 70 gliders towed from England, only 17 landed undamaged. He received various medals of honor, including the Purple Heart (shown in inset), for his bravery in several battles during the war.

in the hedge-rowed fields, woods and marshes. General Maxwell Taylor, the commander of 14,000 men, found himself on the battlefield without one of his men within his sight or hearing. His closest allies were a circle of curious Normandy cows roused from their sleep by all the activity.

The 191st Airborne fought in Normandy until July 10 and suffered 4,670 casualties, but it completed all its assigned missions. On July 13, the division's LSTs put into Southampton, England, for rest and regrouping before the next assignment.

Holland

Operation Market began on Sept. 17, 1944. Unlike Normandy, this drop took place during daylight, which enabled the troops to gather quickly after landing, with no more stumbling in the dark.

George did not hit the silk for this operation but remained ensconced in a glider for the trip. Of 70 gliders towed from England, only 53 landed without accident. Miraculously, George survived this landing too and went on to fight another day, unscathed.

The total Operation Market-Garden was the brainchild of Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. On the narrow corridor that was to carry the armored drive, five major bridges had to be taken intact, including the bridge at Arnhem and the Rhine River. Knowing that airborne troops would have to hold all bridges prompted General Frederick Browning, Deputy Commander of the first Allied Airborne Army, to ask Field Marshal Montgomery how long it would take him to reach Arnhem. Montgomery replied two days. Browning said: "We can hold it for four," and then added, "but sir, I think we might be going a bridge too far." (Some of you WWII buffs may have read Cornelius Ryan's epic classic "A Bridge Too Far.")

Mourmelon, France

Caesar camped here; later it was a battlefield in World War I; and by 1944 it was a German tank depot. The 101st, relieved from Holland, was anticipating a lengthy stay since the weather was showing signs of an early winter. Arriving on Nov. 27, the division celebrated a late Thanksgiving. The respite at Mourmelon, however, was short-lived.

Bastogne

On Dec. 16, 1944, Germany unleashed its greatest offensive in the West. Under the cover of foul weather, rain, snow, freezing temperatures and cloudy skies, German panzers rolled through the Ardennes and penetrated 65 miles into Allied territory. As battle-weary units of the U.S. Army were rotated, a green Infantry Division, Armored Division and Cavalry Group moved in for their indoctrination. On Dec. 17, it was decided to move both the 82nd and the 101st to Bastogne.

The transportation corps acted with dispatch, as truckers who had already been on the road for many hours were ordered to Camp Mourmelon. The last of 380 trucks needed for the movement of 11,000 men departed on Dec. 18. The column ran with lights blazing, a calculated risk. In Bastogne, General McAuliffe selected a location for the defensive positions. The battle for Bastogne would rage until Dec. 26, 1944, when the tide turned.

It was in Bastogne that T/Sgt. George Rio Gásne was wounded (he later received the Presidential Unit Citation, Purple Heart and Bronze Star). His half truck was hit by enemy fire, which wounded several men in his platoon. Oblivious to his own wounds, George evacuated the vehicle and led his men to safety.

George's mother had returned to Mexico after his induction into the Army. Word spread in his small hometown that the 101st Airborne had been annihilated in Bastogne. The local mayor and the clergy came to Mrs. Rio's home to offer condolences, and a Mass of the Dead was offered for George's soul. Weeks later, letters began coming from the battlefield that George was alive and well.

The Screaming Eagles would go on to Berchtesgarden, their last combat mission on May 4, 1945, where they would suffer their last three combat casualties.

After George returned to civilian life, he worked for many years at Tavern on the Green in New York's Central Park as a waiter and bartender. He married and raised three children: all boys, George, Louis and a son who died.

Although 30 percent disabled, George is active and alert for his age. Should you have occasion to be at Pilot Cove, you might see him sitting outside or partaking of a three course meal at the Nutrition Center. Stop and say thanks; he would appreciate it.



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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

MAY

Tues., May 10, **Bronx Masons Blood Drive**, 4 to 8 p.m., at United Trinity Methodist Church at 113 Bay Street.

Thurs., May 19, **Community Board 10 meets**, 7:30 p.m., Middletown Senior Center, 3303 Middletown Road, Bronx.

Sat., May 21, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: Cut-up chicken with rice.

Mon., May 30, **Memorial Day Parade**, 2 p.m., sponsored by the American Legion.

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

JUNE

Thurs., June 9, **Garden Club Garden Spring Luncheon**, 12 noon, City Island Yacht Club, Pilot Street.

Sat., and Sun., June 11 and 12, **Arts and Crafts Fair** sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. City Island Avenue.

Garden Club

The next meeting of the City Island Garden Club will be Monday, May 2, at 10 a.m. at the City Island Yacht Club on Pilot Street. The garden tour has been postponed until next year.

The annual Garden Club Spring Luncheon will be held on Thursday, June 9, at the City Island Yacht Club. Doors open at 12 noon and lunch will be served at 1 p.m. The price is \$28 and only prepaid reservations will be accepted. There will be fabulous raffle prizes. If you plan to attend, call Ruth Collins at 885-1361.

Gardening Hint: Everything can be done in the garden in May. Plant your annuals directly in the ground, and transplant seedlings grown indoors or purchased at your local garden center. It is also an excellent time to fertilize lawns and reseed bare spots.

Phyllis Goodman

Chapter 318 AARP

Our next trip to Atlantic City is on Tuesday, May 10. The bus departs at 9 a.m. from 113 Bay Street on City Island. For reservations, call Jean Ringel at 718-885-1479 or John Bonicoro at 718-885-1844.

Our president, Bob McLaughlin, submitted a request for an award from AARP for Helen Venturini, to recognize her many years of giving to Calvary Hospital in the form of lap robes. To our great sorrow, she passed away about three days after the submission was made. The award arrived in the mail this past month, and we presented it posthumously to her son Joseph at our meeting on Wednesday, April 6.

Our next day trip is to Mount Haven, Pennsylvania, for Polkafest on Thursday, May 12. For information, please attend one of our meetings or call Florence Bonicoro at 718-885-1844 or Marie Tirelli at 914-576-6223.

Chapter 3303 AARP

The members of the Minneford Chapter #3303 have been cooperating for some time with the New York State AARP in an effort to improve the quality of care in nursing homes, an AARP priority. In March the New York State Department of Health announced that consumers will now be able to access important data indicating the quality of care offered in nursing homes through the department's Web site www.nyhealth.com.

Consumers will be able to determine if a particular nursing home provides quality long-term care to its patients, as well as obtain information relating to complaint investigations and enforcement actions. The site also includes information about occupancy rates, ownership and administration, available services and other important details.

On Wednesday, May 11, 2005, the chapter will sponsor a Mother's Day Celebration at the beautiful Skylands in Randolph, New Jersey. The trip includes a full served luncheon, dancing and entertainment, which will feature the famous Copa Girls with their elaborate feathered costumes, and much more. Departure time is 9:15 a.m.

Prices and more details for these events will be discussed at our meetings, or you may call Tina De Cristofaro at 718-885-0865.

Lucy Puglia

Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El, "Your Shul by the Sea", a welcoming Jewish Renewal Congregation, conducts Sabbath services each Friday night at 7:30 p.m. Our doors are open to all at 480 City Island Avenue (between Beach and Bowne Streets). Rabbi Wiener will conduct the Kabbalat Shabbat service on May 6 and 20.

Our Torah Study Group continues on two Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, beginning with a short spirituality service. Rabbinical students Karyn Berger and Daniel Klipper will alternate leading the group on May 7 and 21.

The annual meeting and election of officers and trustees will be on Thursday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m. Celebrate Israel's Independence Day with song and dance and a 30-minute video about the making of the play "Golda's Balcony." All this, plus dessert and coffee too, after our elections on May 12.

Ballroom and Latin dance classes, led by Elaine Belasco, will be held on six Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. starting on May 19. Free for members; \$10 per session for non-members (or \$54 for all six classes if paid by May 19). For information and registration, call Elaine at 718-885-2154.

SHOHAM classes led by Rabbi Wiener offer Spiritual Healing Of Health And Mind and will be conducted on Monday, May 23, at 7:30 p.m. The classes are a pathway to personal and global spiritual transformation based on the mystical prac-



Photo by RICK DeWITT

The City Island Masonic Temple held a clothing drive on April 16, 2005. Shown above at the event are (l. to r.): Elsa Rojas, Luis Rojas, Scott E. Meyer, Edward C. Sadler, Joseph A. Zimmerman, Antonio Cardillo, Susan M Winter and Francis M Ruddy. The busy Masons will also hold a blood drive on May 10 (see Brief this issue).

tices of the Kohanim, the priests of biblical Israel (free for members; \$15 per class for non-members).

Visit our Web site at www.yourshulby-thesea.org.

Bob Berent

City Island Nautical Museum

We are still hard at work setting up new exhibits and refurbishing old ones in the School Room and the Community Room. If during your spring cleaning this year, you found any old artifacts you don't know what to do with and you think they might be of interest to our visitors, please send us an e-mail

(cihs@cityislandmuseum.org) or call 718-885-0507. We are especially interested in graduation photographs from P. S. 17, 175 or St. Mary's and any old photographs or scrapbooks of City Island scenes or people.

Because we are not yet clean and neat, we are not going to be open on Sundays as usual. Anyone wishing to visit or consult our library is invited to call 718-885-0507. We would be happy to give you a special look around.

By the third week in May, start watching for our sign under the City Island Diner window box, for it will mean that we are open again!

Tom Nye

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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

Dog Show benefiting the Community Center's Floor Fundraising Campaign will be held on Saturday, June 11, at 2 p.m. at the Anthony Ambrosini Little League Field (at the Community Center in case of rain). Registration forms must be submitted by June 1; registration forms can be picked up at the Focal Point Gallery or at the Bronx Equestrian Center (formerly Pelham Bit Stables). For further information, please call Marcy Brennen at 718-885-9863 or e-mail CIDogshow@aol.com.

Please help us improve the Center by making a donation toward our goal of \$6,600 for a new floor. Your support is appreciated!

Ongoing Events

Monthly Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m.

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in the Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

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

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

Martial Arts Class: Ba Gua Zhang Dragon Style :Exceptional Instructor Saturdays 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m, for ages 16 and up. For more information call Florence at 718 885-3551.

Beginner knitting classes for ages 8 and up! Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. Call Carol at 718-885-3190 for more information.

Dance Classes: Preballet, jazz and tap for kids: Thursdays after school. Call Linda at Dance Connection, 914 576-5515.

Painting classes will be held on Tuesdays, April 5 through May 31. Grades K-2 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.; grades 3-5 from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m. Call Laury Hopkins at 718-885-3202 for more information.

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

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

Adult Tap Classes: Call Corinne Grondahl at 718-309-8041.

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

Step Aerobics Classes: Sun. 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.; Mon., Wed. & Fri. 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and Mon. & Wed. 7 to 8:00 p.m. Babysitting available Mon. and Fri. a.m. Call Mary Immediato at 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 885-0724 for further info.

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

Legion News

The weather has taken a turn for the better, and it feels as though spring has finally arrived.

May 8, 1945, was V-E Day in Europe, the day that Germany threw in the towel. My unit, the 33rd Reconnaissance Squadron, was ensconced in its new quarters at R-37, a turf field at Braunschweig, Germany. Several German aircraft surrendered that day. Among them an FW-200 Condor, a four-engine transport that brought a Luftwaffe crew and their families from Trondheim, Norway. For them, World War II was over, and I'm sure that they were thankful.

On Monday, May 30, we celebrate Memorial Day by paying homage to those who served in the armed forces, especially the many who made the ultimate sacrifices. The monuments on City Island honor those who served in World Wars I and II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The World War II monument at the bridge lists the 17 Islanders killed in action. A plaque in Hawkins Park is dedicated to Leonard Hawkins, who died while serving in the Navy during WWI.

Our Memorial Day parade will step off at Belden Point at 2:30 p.m. We hope to have a contingent of marines and sailors from the fleet, which will be in New York for the weekend. General Bob Mennona, Retired, hopes to produce the Army Band. Other participants will be the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girls Scouts, Brownies, City Island Little League, Pilot Cove and possible some of the yacht clubs. We can also count on local politicians or their representatives to grace the line of march. A float will provide transportation for the veterans of WWII, the disabled and members suffering from sundry maladies associated with the golden years.

The parade will stop at Hawkins Park,

Pelham Cemetery and the bridge for brief ceremonies. Following the ceremony at the bridge, the marchers will double time to the post for hot dogs, beer and soda. It has been noted that the participants muster a second wind on the stretch from the bridge to the post.

It was reported that post coffers are at an ebb and monies will have to be generated to cover parade expenses. Your support is requested for the Spring Raffle. Past Commander Vincent Hecker informed me that chance books will be distributed with alacrity.

Membership night was held at our April 18 meeting. Pins were awarded to those with 25 years of continuous membership and for increments of five years. Refreshments were served, and the commander opened the bar for one hour on the house. Several members complained to the Sergeant-at-Arms about being jostled in the mad rush that ensued. The post will hold this year's memorial service at the Grace Episcopal Church. No date has been set, yet.

A poker tournament was held on Saturday, April 9, and the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Beach Party was held Saturday, April 16. Unfortunately, I have no results to report.

Captain Ed Sadler informed me that his granddaughter Mary Sadler has completed her stateside Army training and will be assigned to a unit in South Korea. If you know of anyone in the service, contact me on ext. 2087.

Remember our comrades who have recently reported to sick call and those who are being cared for at home or in hospitals. Dick Eberhart, Anthony Mirabito and Don Varian are at home. Louis Probst has opted for assisted living near his son in Georgia and his health is improving. Bill Zimmer is back in the fold after successful treatment for a serious illness. I'm told that he looks the picture of health. If you know of anyone who is not up to par, give me a call.

I was informed that Gus Gallowitz, a Korean War veteran and resident of Pilot Cove, has passed away. Gus was a member of the Post for the past 19 years and a past commodore of the Stuyvesant Yacht Club.

We could use a few volunteers for the flag detail. I'll be giving out schedules for the year shortly. Thanks for all who give their time. It is appreciated by all Islanders.

And for you WWII buffs, actress Hedy Lamarr, born Hedwig Eva Maria Kiesler, co-invented a torpedo guidance system that was evaluated by the U.S. Navy but never adopted. Hedy did this while a young actress living in Europe prior to WWII.

Until next month, at ease.

Russell Schaller

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Public School 175

The kindergarten students are enjoying the wonderfully warm weather, and in celebration, they are planting beautiful flowers for all to enjoy. In class the children are studying the word families *at* and *it*. The boys and girls are doing a great deal of reading, both guided and independently, and finally they continue to skip count and learn about the "greater" and "less than" concepts in math.

Grade 1 students are studying autobiographies by creating individual ones (for themselves). They are also reviewing the telling of time and the idea of fractions and learning about the various geometric shapes in math. In reading, they are preparing for E-Class testing. They are also getting ready for a trip to Alley Park in Queens, where they will take part in a celebration of cultures.

May is fairy tale month for the second-graders. The children will read and examine different versions of the same fairy tale and focus on comparing and contrasting them. They will then write their own version of one of the stories, both as a class and individually. They will also plant seeds for science, noting growth and changes. In math they are studying measurements and capacity.

The third-graders are very excited about International Day on May 27. There will be many varieties of food to taste, brochures to peruse and flags to identify. They are also excited about a visitor from Wave Hill, who will talk to them about invertebrates.

Grade 4 is busy preparing for the New York State tests in both math and science. They are now learning about how our government works, just in time for their trip in June to the state capitol in Albany.

Fifth-graders are bursting with pride and enthusiasm as they continue to practice for the upcoming play "Fiddler on the Roof" on May 16 and 17. In science they are studying the weather and Mother Nature and in math the concepts of area and volume.

The sixth grade students are studying persuasive writing in language arts and the Romans in social studies. They are also becoming very computer savvy, learning about circle graphs and other graphing techniques in math. In science they are busy working on group projects for the upcoming science fair.

April is poetry month, and it always extends into May because the seventh-graders have so many favorite poems that they wish to share with others. They will end this celebration with the annual poetry picnic on May 6. This month they will also take a trip to SUNY Purchase to view four plays performed by the Chamber Group of Boston, connected to stories that they have read.

Eighth-grade students appear to be walking on air these days as the school year ends and graduation celebrations draw closer. They will soon be taking the famous yearbook photos on May 20 and taking their last trip together as students of P.S. 175 to Medieval Times in mid-May. Best of luck to all of them as they get ready to leave us and move on to bigger and better things.

St. Mary, Star of the Sea School

Spring is in full bloom at St. Mary, Star of the Sea School. Five students attended the special Mass of remembrance for Pope John Paul II at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Every Catholic school in the archdiocese was represented as we all prayed for our Holy Father.

Grades 4 and 8 will take the New York State math test on May 8, and the eighth grade will also be taking the state science exam.

The seventh grade will be on a retreat for Confirmation on May 10. On May 13, Grade 5 will lead the school at First Friday Mass at 9 a.m. All are invited to attend. First Communion will be celebrated on May 14 at 11 a.m. The May crowning of our Blessed Mother will be at the 10 a.m. Mass on Sunday, May 15. Bishop Lagonegro will confirm our Confirmation class on Monday, May 23, at 4 p.m.

On May 19, grades 3 through 8 will be attending an arts workshop at the Broadway production of "Little Women." The students will work with the directors and actors in the morning at the theater and then be treated to the matinee performance in the afternoon.

Grades 4 and 5 enjoyed their trip to the Liberty Science Center, and Grade 4 is looking forward to its trip to Albany next month.

Congratulations to our seventh-grader Caroline Watson for being nominated for an Eddy Award presented by the Archdiocesan Cable T.V. station. Caroline was recognized for her interview with our own Dr. Kerry Murphy on the subject of childhood obesity.

We will offer flower arrangements to the children in honor of Mother's Day in order to show our moms how much we love them.

Registration for school year 2005-2006 is continuing for Grades Pre-K through 7. Please bring your child's birth certificate and immunization records, as well as a baptismal certificate (if applicable). Please call Mrs. Dennehy or Sister Loyola at 718-885-1527 for any questions regarding registration. Spaces are still available in our newly expanded Pre-K program for three and four-year olds.

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Renovations

As any family knows, renovating or building a home can be extremely stressful. Hollywood has that covered. We begin with the delightful classic comedy **Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House** (1948), which stars Cary Grant in the title role. Mr. Blandings is an advertising executive who becomes so fed up with big city apartment living that he decides to move to the country with his wife, Muriel (Myrna Loy), and daughters Joan and Betsy (Sharyn Moffett and Connie Marshall). This undertaking practically gives an ulcer to Blandings' best friend and lawyer, Bill Cole (Melvyn Douglas), as they all discover the extreme difficulties of renovating or building a house. The classic "choice of colors scene" is absolutely hilarious.

A movie of an entirely different sort is the English-Polish independent film **Moonlighting** (1982), the story of Polish workers brought to London at the time of the Solidarity movement in Poland. Jeremy Irons takes the lead as Nowak, the contractor and manager of the work group and the only one who speaks English. The workers provide cheap labor for the government while suffering loneliness at being separated from their families. There are comical moments when Nowak schemes to procure food for his men as money gets scarce, especially after the military takeover in Poland potentially strands them all in a foreign country.

Your response to the following two films will depend entirely on your taste for a particular genre. If you take pleasure in slapstick comedy, then perhaps you will enjoy **The Money Pit** (1986). When Walter Fielding (Tom Hanks) and his girlfriend, Anna Crowley (Shelley Long),

decide to leave Manhattan for an incredible deal on a country estate, they get way more than they bargained for. A horror film wannabe is **Pacific Heights** (1990), with Michael Keaton as Carter Hayes, who rents an apartment in a San Francisco multifamily dwelling owned by yuppie couple Patty Palmer (Melanie Griffith) and Drake Goodman (Matthew Modine), and then proceeds to destroy it.

A get-out-your handkerchief sort of film stars Kevin Kline as George, an architect, in **Life as a House** (2001). After being fired from his job, he forces his oldest son, Sam (Hayden Christensen), from the home of his ex-wife Robin (Kristin Scott Thomas) and compels him to spend the summer helping renovate the shack George inhabits on a cliff overlooking the ocean in Orange County, California. This is a poignant father-and-son reckoning film.

A delightful entry is **Under the Tuscan Sun** (2003), the story of Frances (Diane Lane), a San Francisco writer who journeys to Tuscany after discovering her husband's infidelity. There, on the spur of the moment, she buys a house and proceeds to have it renovated. As the house turns into a home, we watch Frances becoming more comfortable in her own skin.

A long-time favorite film that is not exactly on this topic is Peter Weir's **Witness** (1985), the story of the cultural contrasts of the Pennsylvania Amish with life as we know it. The film stars Harrison Ford as John Book, a cop who takes on the case of a murder in a train station. The only witness is an Amish boy, Samuel (Lukas Haas), who is traveling with his newly widowed mother, Rachel (Kelly McGillis), to visit her sister. When Book takes them to their community to hide, he meets Eli Lapp (Jan Rubes), Rachel's father-in-law, and Daniel (Alexander Godunov), Rachel's potential suitor. I include this film because of the memorable and touching barn-raising scene where a community of people come together to help each other. The movie is a thriller but is funny and sad as well, and Maurice Jarre's musical score is superb. From the opening sea of wheat blowing in the wind to the final showdown; this is a beautiful and unforgettable film.

And until next time, happy viewing. . .

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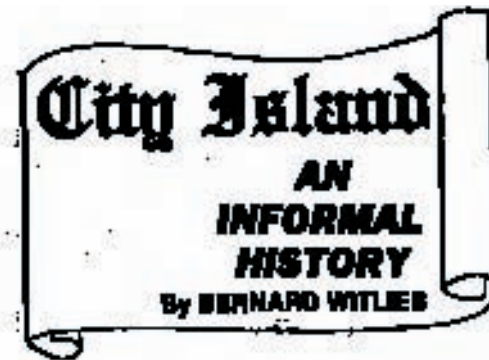
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Photo by LILY FERTIK

Clam digger Alice Payne received the Anne M. Hutchinson Award at a celebration of women's history month on Sunday, April 17, 2005, sponsored by WOW (Women on the Way). Cheryl Yehudit (right) of WOW presented the award to Mrs. Payne for her contributions to the City Island community.



OYSTERING COMES TO INGLORIOUS END

"Why, then the world's mine oyster," says Shakespeare's Pistol in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," as did the many City Islanders who thrived in the oyster business until the Albany legislature, overfishing and shady dealings brought a sudden end to their prosperity about 1900.

An early sign of decline: "Capt. Joshua Leviness has sold his oyster steam boat to parties in Westchester for to run as a freight boat between that place and New York. It will be remembered that Capt. Josh had this boat built in a peculiar manner and expressly to dredge by steam for oysters. Afterwards an act was passed by the Legislature forbidding the use of same." (*New Rochelle Pioneer*, June 24, 1882)

A trace of a case: City Island oystermen Edward Ayres and Peter Curran were charged by a nearby owner of oyster beds with "disturbing and unlawfully interfering with the complainant's oysters." When neither the complainant nor his counsel appeared, charges were lifted, the men were set free, and they vowed to sue for false imprisonment. (*Pioneer*, January 6, 1883)

A hint of a varmint: "Three oyster rakes, valued at \$40, were stolen from Capt. Charles Stringham." (*Pioneer*, April 14, 1883)

A token that trust is broken: Capt. Joshua Leviness was acquitted of all grand larceny charges brought against him by the executors of the estate of Samuel P. Billar, late of City Island. Leviness had been accused of having "unlawfully taken

oysters to the value of several hundred dollars from the oyster beds belonging to the estate."

District Attorney Baker at the Court of Sessions in White Plains called a number of witnesses to testify that "the defendant had gone 12 or 15 times on the oyster beds lying to the north and west of High Island and raked and tongued oysters in September and October 1883."

Leviness's counsel, Cornelius E. Kene, demonstrated that "the original lines and monuments of the beds had been staked out by Joshua Leviness 50 years ago." He also pointed out that after the taking of the oysters, the matter was submitted to arbitration."

County Judge Mills directed the jury to acquit Leviness. "It is said that a suit for false imprisonment is to follow, and that heavy damages will be claimed for the arrest and detention of the Captain." (*Pioneer*, May 24, 1884)

A sour note about a boat: "The sloop Maria, owned by Capt. Josh. Leviness, was let last fall to one Henry Zooner to dredge for oysters on shares. Capt. Josh. heard nothing of sloop nor oysters and on Thursday he found the vessel at work off Fort Schuyler with a quantity of oysters on board, and he caused it to be seized by Joseph Schowshoe under special warrant." (*Pioneer*, July 12, 1884)

A shred about the oyster bed: Despite his successes in court but maybe because of the costs incurred, Leviness sold off some of "his real estate situated on Prospect, Main and other streets, but as the prices offered did not approach the value he did not part with any great amount. The receipts at the bar and for clam chowder were more than sufficient to pay all expenses of the sale.

Leviness said, "Some people think I'm broke, but I'm like a clam; if it does not find food on one shore it crawls over to the other, and if I cannot sell my land I can go to the oyster ground" and always make a living. (*Pioneer*, July 12, 1884)

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Obituaries

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

Jean Lachman

Jean Lachman passed away on Dec. 22, 2004, at the age of 75.

Born in the Bronx on Jan. 4, 1929, Jean moved to City Island after marrying Robert Lachman on Jan. 20, 1951, at Trinity United Methodist Church. Over the years, Jean made many friends on City Island.

She is survived by her husband of 53 years, Robert of Reville Street, and four of her five children: Robert of City Island, Jeanne Occhicone of Pleasant Valley, New York, William of Monroe, New York, and Thomas of Wappinger Falls, New York. Her son Michael predeceased her in 1980. Jean also leaves one son-in-law and three daughters-in-law, as well as two grandsons, six granddaughters and one great-grandson.

Burial was from Trinity United Methodist Church on City Island, of which Jean was a member, with interment in Pelham Cemetery on City Island.



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Heights in feet above average printed on charts of water adjacent to City Island. Times shown are local times. For times on the table beginning with 1300, subtract 1200 to get ordinary P.M. time (e.g., 1325 = 1:25 P.M.). Times less than 1200 are A.M. times (e.g., 1154 = 11:54 A.M.).
MHH = mean high; MLL = mean low.
Tide chart by Tom Swails

MAY 2005

DAY	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	DAY
01 Sun	0534	7.2	1257	0.9	1859	5.9			Sun 01
02 Mon	0124	1.1	0729	7.2	1406	0.5	2009	7.3	Mon 02
03 Tue	0205	0.8	0837	7.3	1504	0.2	2107	7.7	Tue 03
04 Wed	0305	0.1	0935	7.5	1558	0.0	2158	8.1	Wed 04
05 Thu	0429	-0.4	1029	7.7	1646	-0.2	2245	8.3	Thu 05
06 Fri	0519	-0.9	1115	7.7	1732	-0.2	2329	8.4	Fri 06
07 Sat	0605	-0.9	1200	7.8	1814	-0.1			Sat 07
08 Sun	0011	8.4	0649	-0.8	1243	7.8	1859	0.1	Sun 08
09 Mon	0040	8.9	0731	-0.8	1323	7.3	1927	0.4	Mon 09
10 Tue	0126	8.0	0811	-0.2	1402	7.1	1959	0.7	Tue 10
11 Wed	0157	7.8	0847	0.2	1440	6.9	2016	1.0	Wed 11
12 Thu	0259	7.5	0919	0.7	1518	6.7	2049	1.3	Thu 12
13 Fri	0304	7.2	0944	1.0	1559	6.6	2151	1.6	Fri 13
14 Sat	0346	7.0	1017	1.3	1640	6.5	2220	1.8	Sat 14
15 Sun	0406	6.8	1101	1.5	1741	6.8	2315	1.9	Sun 15
16 Mon	0531	6.9	1152	1.6	1836	6.7			Mon 16
17 Tue	0018	1.8	0634	8.9	1248	1.5	1926	6.9	Tue 17
18 Wed	0129	1.5	0738	8.8	1330	1.4	2000	7.1	Wed 18
19 Thu	0230	1.2	0832	8.7	1429	1.1	2047	7.4	Thu 19
20 Fri	0324	0.6	0918	8.8	1516	0.9	2126	7.8	Fri 20
21 Sat	0412	0.4	1001	7.9	1602	0.6	2207	8.1	Sat 21
22 Sun	0458	-0.1	1045	7.1	1647	0.4	2251	8.4	Sun 22
23 Mon	0544	-0.3	1130	7.3	1734	0.3	2335	8.5	Mon 23
24 Tue	0631	-0.5	1217	7.3	1822	0.2			Tue 24
25 Wed	0023	8.9	0721	-0.9	1307	7.4	1914	0.9	Wed 25
26 Thu	0114	8.5	0815	-0.4	1401	7.3	2010	0.5	Thu 26
27 Fri	0208	8.3	0914	-0.2	1500	7.3	2114	0.7	Fri 27
28 Sat	0308	7.9	1021	0.1	1611	7.2	2234	0.9	Sat 28
29 Sun	0420	7.5	1131	0.2	1732	7.3	2350	0.8	Sun 29
30 Mon	0552	7.3	1239	0.3	1844	7.5			Mon 30
31 Tue	0112	0.8	0715	7.2	1340	0.3	1947	7.7	Tue 31

JUNE 2005

DAY	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	TIME HR:MM	HEIGHT FEET	DAY
01 Wed	0217	0.3	0815	7.2	1436	0.3	2043	7.9	Wed 01
02 Thu	0316	-0.1	0916	7.3	1532	0.2	2135	8.1	Thu 02
03 Fri	0410	-0.4	1007	7.3	1622	0.2	2224	8.2	Fri 03
04 Sat	0500	-0.6	1056	7.3	1708	0.2	2309	8.3	Sat 04



Spring Surprises

After a recent column, we received an e-mail from Jeff, who claimed that robins were no longer the harbingers of spring as so many of us learned in elementary school. Our initial reaction was "No way! It can't be." It was like someone changing the rules in the middle of a baseball game—two strikes and you're out.

But Jeff had consulted with an ornithologist friend, who confirmed his observation. We did a little checking too, with the New York Botanical Garden, and it seems as if Jeff is right. In the latest issue of the Botanical Garden's newsletter, naturalist Debbie Becker says that "robins are no longer a reliable harbinger of spring." And Ms. Becker should know: she conducts weekly bird walks in the garden every Saturday at 10:30 a.m., April through mid-June and again from September through mid-November.

Apparently, the warmer winters we have been having has had an impact on the robin. But not so the red-winged blackbird. Not yet, anyway. It continues to come and go with the seasons. So for now we may have to rethink what we teach our children about birds and the advent of spring.

If bird watching at the Botanical Garden is not your thing, try it on City Island. We have

which we suspect was a northern flicker. We have also come across a pair of wild turkeys and nuthatches. The nuthatch is easy to identify because of its tree-clinging tendencies (as opposed to tree-perching). Its sleek black eye band is another way to positively identify it. We are always ready to hear from our readers about their bird watching discoveries. Let us know at jdsstrat@msn.com.

Of course the Botanical Garden is better known for its flora than fauna. This month a wide variety of flowering plants will be in bloom. Some of these include the flowering dogwood, scotch broom, daphne, mountain laurel, honeysuckle, azaleas, rhododendrons, lilac, weigela and wisteria. Many City Islanders have already incorporated some of these specimens into their own gardens, and many others visit the Garden for ideas. We recommend both!

Did anybody else hear the story of the Beluga whale that got lost up the Delaware River? We know it's not anything close to a City Island sight or sound, but it is interesting. And it does serve as a reminder to the surprises nature may throw our way at any time. Be on the lookout this summer. A white whale...imagine that.

already heard (but not seen) a woodpecker,

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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.

Happy 89th birthday greetings on May 10 to Pilot Cove's Mary Iovieno, with love from your family.

It must be the water on Pell Place. Two new baby boys arrived recently to the delight of proud parents Jill and Scott Luderman, who welcomed baby Peter in March. A few days later, Patrick James Livingston was welcomed by big sister Ashley and thrilled parents Caroline and Jimmy Livingston.

Happy birthday on May 1 to Minneford Avenue's Diane Duryea.

Congratulations to Beth Rauh and Matt Rota on their engagement. A summer wedding is being planned.

Best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Louis Falzone of Deltona, Florida, on the birth of their son, Dylen "Parker" Falzone, on April 7. Dylen's mother is Jennifer Lee (Falzone), daughter of Kathleen Lee Cramb and Frank J. Roublick II. Fourth-generation honors go to Evelyn Lee Corcoran and James Corcoran; William R. Lee (Forstoria, Ohio), John "Parker" Roublick and Susan Roublick of Marine Street and Eileen Roublick of New Rochelle.

Happy birthday on May 16 to Frank Ring, with best wishes and love from the students and staff of P.S. 175.

Happy birthday with love to "To-Go" Express's Patrice Ortega, with love from the Swieciki family.

Happiest of birthdays to Molly Donovan, who turns 14 on May 9. Where did the time go, Molly-Wog? With love from Susie, Bob, Mandy, Tanya, Mary Ellen, Cathy, Anna, Mazie and Joe!

Belated happy 13th birthday on April 18 to Kesley. We all love and miss you.

Happy May retirement to Kenny with love from "all of us."

Best wishes for continued happiness to the Sailmaker's John and Judy Iovieno, who will celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary on May 12.

Happy first birthday on May 14 to the Calisi "trio": Joseph, Frankie and Brianna. With love from Mommy and Daddy, Mama, Pop, Nanna, Aunt Toni, Uncle Don, Kesley, Justin, Onyx and Tucker.

Happy 11th birthday on May 16 to Justin; we love and miss you.

God bless Minneford Avenue's youngest addition, Peter Garhardt Luderman, who was born on Feb. 23, 2005 (9 lbs., 5 oz.), and baptized into the Roman Catholic religion at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church by Deacon William Mueller on April 17. His proud parents are Jill Klopfer Luderman and Scott Luderman. His godfather is mom's brother Bryan Klopfer, with Amy Begley as godmother and Christine Lachmann Walden as honorary godmother. His even prouder grandparents are Joanie and Peter Klopfer and great-grandmother Vera von Hagen, all of Pell Place.

Get-well wishes to Fordham Street's Alice Rotello, with love from the gang at The Island Current.

Happy belated birthdays to Mari Doyle on April 14, Anne McIntyre on April 22, Cathie Doyle on April 24 and Peggy Eberhart on April 26.

And another happy belated birthday wish to Jack Strnad, who turned 10 on April 28, and to David Butterworth, who turned 12 on April 30.

Happy 12th birthday to Meaghan Strnad on May 21.

Happy 11th birthday to James Butterworth on May 10, happy May 22 birthday to Chuck Butterworth, and happy 18th birthday to Matthew Butterworth on May 26.

Happy Mother's Day to Cathie Doyle and Pat Lutz with love from your family.

And a very happy Mother's Day to all of our hardworking mothers and grandmothers.

Maria Swieciki



Here is a Boston team that even New Yorkers can cheer for. A group of Boston College students ran the 109th Boston Marathon on Patriot's Day, April 18, 2005, to raise money for the Campus School. The specialized school teaches handicapped students from the ages of five to 21 and is housed within the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. Over \$30,000 was raised for the school by the student marathoners, including Islander Roger Nani, shown with the entire team (middle row, fifth from the right) and above with running mates (l. to r.) Alison Finck, Dominique Ponticciello, Susan Doughty and Amy Racanello.



Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion Jr. visited Pilot Cove Senior Citizens Residence on April 19, 2005, and presented a check for \$26,958 for the City Island Nutrition Program to David Taylor (left) of Presbyterian Senior Services, which administers the program, and Mary Lo Brutto, who runs it. The Borough President also gave flowers and certificates to all residents of Pilot Cove over the age of 90.

Advertisement for Edward D. Heben, Certified Public Accountant and Certified Valuation Analyst. Includes contact information for Heben and Company, CPAs, P.C. at 120 Wappanocca Avenue, Rye, New York.

Moving form with fields for Name, Old Address, New Address, and a note to allow 6-8 weeks for change to take effect.

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