

The Island Current

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One Dollar

Season's Greetings!



From the Staff of *The Island Current*

BRIEFLY...

ST. MARY'S THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS FAIR will take place on Saturday, Dec. 7, and Sunday, Dec. 8, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in two locations, the Thrift Shop for slightly used items and St. Mary's school gym for new items. Gift items and goodies will be on sale: clothing, toys, books, decorations, coffee and crumpets.

GRACE CHRISTMAS FAIR: Grace Episcopal Church, 116 City Island Avenue at Pilot Street, will hold its annual Christmas Fair and Café on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lunch will be served in their café from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and home-baked goods and beverages will be available starting at 10 a.m. This year they are holding a toy drive in support of POTS (Part of the Solution). Please donate unwrapped toys for children ages 12 and under; hats, scarves and gloves for adults are also needed. Mrs. Claus will be on hand at Grace Church on Dec. 14 to accept all donations and to greet the children. Vendors will be offering handmade items, and there will be adult-supervised Christmas crafts to entertain your children while you shop.

ARTIST'S CHOICE: The Focal Point Gallery (321 City Island Avenue) will exhibit a holiday show from Dec. 6 through 31, with an opening reception on Friday, Dec. 6, from 7 to 10 p.m. Artists who are interested in exhibiting should call 718-885-1403 and be prepared to drop off work no later than Dec. 4.

CARE PACKAGES FOR MILITARY: In January, Grace Church will prepare care boxes for local residents who are on active duty. In the meantime, the church is looking for donations of \$20 to defray the cost, as well as small gifts (yo-yos, puzzle books and games). Also included in the boxes will be photos of City Island, baked treats and notes from residents. If you wish to donate, send checks (marked "military thank you" in the memo line) to Grace Episcopal Church, 116 City Island Avenue, Bronx NY 10464. Donations of gifts may be left at the City Island Library or in the entrance to the Grace Church Parish Hall. As part of its Friday Fellowship program, Islanders are invited to help pack the boxes on Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. and prepare them for mailing. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call Joanne Brogan at 718-885-2713.



Photo by BILL STANTON

This off-island male was apprehended by police on the roof of a City Island building, after a high speed chase on City Island Avenue.

45 BLOTTER

Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during October and November 2013. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list.

- 1 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
- 1 – BURGLARY
- 1 – ASSAULT*
- 1 – PETIT LARCENY
- 1 – RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT*

Police provided details on the following arrests (*) and incidents for the period from Oct. 23 to Nov. 22, 2013.

10/26 – Police responded to Fordham Place at 8:55 p.m., when unknown perpetrator(s) ignited a flammable substance in the street in an act of criminal mischief. No damage was reported.

11/2 – At 12 noon on Pilot Street, a resident reported that a boat outboard motor was removed from a shed without permission in an act of petit larceny.

11/15 – Police from the 45th Precinct are investigating the burglary of a commercial establishment on Schofield Street at 6 p.m. Unknown perpetrator(s) removed items from the work yard without permission.

11/18 – On City Island Avenue and Rochelle Street, two officers from the 45th Precinct responded to a reported assault at 6:11 p.m. Upon arrival, the suspect fled in his ve-

hicle at a high speed without regard for the safety of the passenger or pedestrians. After crashing the vehicle into a wall causing injury to the passenger, the defendant fled the scene on foot. The off-island male, 27, was apprehended by police on the roof of a City Island building. He was arrested and charged with reckless endangerment.

11/25 – At 10:43 a.m. on City Island Avenue, police arrested an Island female, 29, and charged her with assault after she allegedly hit a complainant in the face during an altercation.

In addition to the above incidents, officers from the 45th Precinct issued numerous Criminal Court Summonses during October and November throughout commercial establishments on City Island. Most involved open containers of alcohol. Police remind Islanders and visitors to drive responsibly during the holiday season.

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The Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy: CI One Year Later

By BARBARA DOLENSEK, KAREN NANI and BILL STUTTIG



Photos by KAREN NANI and Courtesy of Senator Jeff Klein

One year to the day after a fire destroyed the restaurant during Hurricane Sandy, elected officials and the owners of Tony's Pier, came together to celebrate its re-opening on Oct. 29, 2013. At the dedication, Senator Jeffrey Klein, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., and Assemblyman Michael Benedetto joined Tony Palumbo Jr. (middle photo, second from left) to start the seafood frying again. The biggest smiles of all were on the faces of Tony Jr. (holding a photo of his parents), his wife, Kim, and his daughter Rachel, (bottom photo).



The one-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy on Oct. 29, 2013, was cause for celebration by some City Islanders who recovered their businesses and homes, while others remained devastated by the storm's aftermath.

Ranking up there, in many Islanders' minds, with the hurricane of 1938, the "no-name" storm of December 1992 and Hurricane Irene in 2011, Sandy packed winds gusting to 80 mph, which caused serious waves that pounded both the east and west sides of the Island during unusually high storm surges. Although the Island was not nearly as seriously impacted as areas on Staten Island and New Jersey, Sandy caused flooding, fires, power outages that lasted for days, and extensive damage to the City Island marinas and yacht clubs.

Reporters for *The Island Current* revisited the damaged properties and found stories of recovery and rebuilding, as well as of loss and frustration.

Tony's Pier Restaurant

On the evening of Monday, Oct. 29, as Hurricane Sandy's winds were still climbing to their maximum speed, a pole with a Con Edison transformer blew down on Tony's Pier Restaurant at the south end of the Island and ignited a fire that quickly burned out of control. Firefighters from the City Island firehouse, later joined by off-Island trucks, were quick to the scene, but it was difficult to battle the fire in such high winds, and the building was destroyed.

The restaurant had been in operation since the 1960s, when Anthony Palumbo Sr. leased the property from Al and Norma Larsen. Tony Palumbo Jr. worked at the Pier on holidays and weekends from an early age and took over as president when his father passed away. He and his sister have continued to make Tony's Pier one of the most

visited restaurants in the Bronx, so they were devastated by the loss of the building and its contents. Nevertheless, they vowed to reopen as quickly as possible.

State Senator Jeff Klein joined their effort. "Exactly one year ago, Tony's Pier caught fire in the heart of Superstorm Sandy. As flames consumed the restaurant, decades of hard work and history were at stake. The day after the storm, I saw the damage Sandy had caused and vowed to do everything I could to get our local businesses and residents back on their feet," he told *The Current*.

While Senator Klein helped expedite permits, plans and licenses, Tony Jr. worked with another City Islander, Frank Cebek of CFA Drywall, to rebuild the entire facility, inside and out. They raised the pilings six feet above the original grade, rebuilt the interior and exterior walls, installed all new kitchen equipment and counters, put up new tiles and murals along the walls of the dining area, and rebuilt the outdoor deck. There is still work to be done, however, and bills to be paid. Mr. Palumbo collected \$900,000 from the insurance company after the fire, but the rebuilding added up to \$2.5 million. FEMA doesn't cover commercial businesses, so "the difference comes out of my pocket," he told *The Current*.

Standing at the south end of City Island, elected officials, members of the City Island business community and the owners of Tony's Pier came together to celebrate its reopening exactly one year after the fire on Oct. 29, 2013. At the dedication, Senator Jeff Klein, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Assemblyman Mike Benedetto and members of the City Island Chamber of Commerce



The once thriving Sailmaker Marina (top photo), part of the Sailmaker Condominiums on Schofield Street, was severely damaged on Monday, Oct. 29, 2012, as the winds from Hurricane Sandy shifted to the southeast. The 20-foot bridge that led from the land to the docks was brought down by a sailboat that broke loose, and then the two aluminum gangways that led down to each main dock were destroyed (bottom photos).

highlighted the progress made following the hurricane and noted that there is still more work to be done.

"I am thrilled to have this family-owned small business back on its feet in record time, restoring 60 jobs to City Island in the process," said Marlene Cintron, president of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation.

The Sailmaker Marina

As other businesses celebrated rebuilding, the mood at the Sailmaker Marina on Schofield Street is the opposite. Maura Mandrano and Paul Laddomada have owned and operated the Sailmaker Marina for 14 years. Located on the east side of City Island, the marina had been damaged more than once by nor'easters but it still survived.

Although the marina is legally part of the Sailmaker Condominium complex, its slips are separate lots and make up 40 of the 92 total units at the complex, according to the owners. In 2008 the marina began suffering the effects of the horrible economy and high gas prices, especially on the water. Customers lost their jobs and left boating altogether, or else they downsized to smaller vessels, and this cut the marina's revenue in half. In spite of this, property taxes doubled and insurance prices continued to go up.

The owners were barely keeping their heads above water when Hurricane Sandy roared into New York on Oct. 29. The preparation started out well, and they worked frantically during days leading up to the storm. "The 80-foot wave attenuator that Paul had made was in place to protect us from the northeast swells. He also tied hundreds of feet of heavy line to docks and pilings to keep them from breaking away," Ms. Mandrano told *The Current*.

Mr. Laddomada urged their few customers still in the water to haul out immediately, and almost all of them did. Fatefully, however, the owner of a 36-foot sailboat who had been told repeatedly to remove it from the yard before the storm, procrastinated until the last minute and then failed to find a shipyard that would haul his boat.

The wave attenuator protected the marina while Sandy blew from the northeast, but as the wind shifted to the southeast on Monday night about 8 p.m., all the cleats pulled out of

the deck and the sailboat that remained in the water broke loose. It lurched toward the Sailmaker's sea wall and destroyed everything in its path, including a bridge and two gangways that led from the land to the docks, effectively totaling the facility. To add to the catastrophe, it was later discovered that this boat owner had let his insurance lapse in September of 2013.

The marina's insurance company did the right thing, according to Ms. Mandrano, and issued a check for the damages. But like most marina owners, they were not insured for nearly enough to rebuild. FEMA came by twice and, as they had with Tony's Pier, said there was nothing they could do for a "commercial operation." They told *The Current* that they have appealed to the Small Business Administration, Congressman Joseph Crowley's office and Community Board 10, but so far without success.

Although the Sailmaker Marina was almost completely destroyed, city property taxes on slips that no longer exist continued to pile up. Without revenue, the owners fell behind and attempted to negotiate with the NYC Department of Finance. "It was too late," Ms. Mandrano said. "Liens were sold on much of the property. We are currently trying to buy back at least some of their property from the aggressive collection agency the city uses."

The condominium board has apparently chosen not to support the marina, and the marina owners are desperately attempting to hold onto their property without bankrupting themselves. They are faced with the ongoing job of cleaning up all the broken docks and pieces of the marina and repairing whatever can be salvaged. Sad to say, they believe that no one in the government really cares whether boating on City Island survives or not.

City Island's Yacht Clubs

Longtime members of the Island's yacht clubs who remember the damage caused by the nor'easter of '92 and Hurricane Irene in 2011, feared and even expected worse devastation, as the dire predictions for Hurricane Sandy began to come true in the hours leading up to the storm.

Greg Penny, currently the grounds chair-

Continued on page 15

ISLANDER ANITA LA SCALA ASSISTS WITH DESIGN OF OPENING CEREMONY AT OLYMPICS IN RUSSIA	HALLOWEEN PARADE RETURNS AFTER SANDY HIATUS	SENATOR KLEIN GAINS INJUNCTION TO TEMPORARILY HALT BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION	TONY'S PIER REOPENS ONE YEAR AFTER DESTRUCTIVE FIRE CAUSED BY HURRICANE SANDY	FLEEING FENCE FLATTENER FINALLY FOUND NEARLY NAKED
INTERESTING, ANITA, BUT WHAT IS IT?	WEIRD. WHAT'S HE SUPPOSED TO BE?	NOT SURE. NEW BRIDGE MAYBE?	...IS LIKE TELLING THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE IT CAN LAND AT LAGUARDIA?	MY CONTRACTORS SPENT THIS YEAR BUILDING US BACK BETTER THAN EVER. I SPENT IT PERFECTING OUR NEW SIGNATURE DISH.
WE'RE HAVING CONTORTIONISTS PROJECT THEIR SHADOWS ON THE SCREEN IN CONFIGURATIONS THAT REPRESENT SCENES IN RUSSIAN HISTORY. THEY'RE DOING SPUTNIK NOW.		BEAM ME UP SCOTTY, MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. I HAVE FOUND SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN NEW YORK POLITICS.		WE CALL IT THE SANDY. SEA SALT BRINED SHRIMP, FIRE ROASTED RED PEPPERS IN A TROPICAL STORM OF COCONUT SHRED & CREAM WITH JERK SPICE.
HE JETTISONED HIS SNEAKER OFF THE ROOF OF THE LIGHT HOUSE AND BEANED ME. THAT'S WHAT GAVE HIS LOCATION AWAY.				



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

St. Mary's Reunion

To the Editor:

On Oct. 5, 2013, the 1963 graduating class of St Mary, Star of the Sea celebrated its 50th reunion. It has been said that you can never go home again, but when home is City Island, you definitely can!

Talk about "It Takes a Village": In searching for our far-flung classmates, many siblings, relatives, past neighbors and supportive Islanders contributed information to help in our seek-and-find operation, with good suggestions and solid leads. In addition to the tri-state area, invitations traveled to California, Oregon, Indiana, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Virginia and Florida! We thank you all for your help and assistance, especially to our friends at *The Island Current!*

It was great seeing so many of our classmates and being able to hang out with all the comfort and camaraderie of old friends. We had a wonderful time reminiscing about our days at St. Mary's and even included a resounding rendition of "76 Trombones" from one of our school plays.

A special thanks to Joe and Marcello and their staff at the Light House. The service was above and beyond what was required; they made sure that everything went smoothly. The food was delicious and the ambiance excellent.

The Reunion Committee
(Georgia Mattinson, Stephanie Ribaldo, Mary Ellen Burgess, Barbara Stiene, Pegi Sinclair, Susan Hoffmann, Kathy Carlsen, Marilyn Johnson, Maureen Howard, Alice Carroll)



The 50th reunion of the St. Mary's 1963 graduating class: front row (l. to r.) Georgia Bagon Mattinson, Alice Vivola Frambach; second row: Pegi Conway Sinclair, Marilyn Coyle Johnson, Lorraine Bizzaro Giordano, Susan Hoffmann, Alice Carroll; third row: Stephanie Sinclair Ribaldo, Loraine Daneri Stafford, Bobby Uhlendorf, Mary Ellen Helgesen Burgess, Maureen Kortleven Howard, John Barron, Barbara Matteis Stiene, Nancy Muenzen Richie, Diane Ross Mattfeldt, Cormac McEnery and Kathy Warner Carlsen.

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Richard B. Chernaik, M.D.

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ISLAND CENTENARIAN

Currently City Island's oldest resident, Anna Fuerst celebrated her 100th birthday on Nov. 18, 2013.

Anna Fuerst was born Anna Caesar on Nov. 18, 1913, in Dernbach, a small village in Germany near Cologne. She had two sisters and one brother; one of her sisters, Leni, is still living a rich and happy life in Dernbach. The family was well respected in the neighborhood. In those days, women were not given a formal education, but Anna was clever and learned easily how to knit, crochet and design women's clothing.

During World War II, Anna's family lost an uncle, and her two sisters lost their husbands. Her grandfather (Johann Caesar) decided to spare Anna from a bleak future in Germany and brought her to live with affluent relatives in Chicago.

She met Joseph Fuerst, and after they were married, they moved to the East Coast. Their son, Edward, now deceased, was born in 1942; he served in the Navy on a nuclear submarine and then worked at the Zion Nuclear Power Plant in Illinois. Their daughter, Marie Caesar, born in 1941, worked at IBM for many years and then for New York City's Department of Health; she now lives the good life on City Island, sailing and traveling. Marie's daughter, Calliope Rigos, works at the City Island Yacht Club and Calliope's son, Alexander Giaccon, has developed a gift for all phases of marina activity.

While her children were growing up, Anna worked as a homemaker and earned a living designing and creating women's clothing. Her creations were widely admired, and she made many women very happy because



Photo by EYVONNE BAKER

Anna Fuerst celebrated her 100th birthday in style at the City Island Senior Center at Grace Church on Monday, Nov. 18, 2013.

of this talent. Nothing was too difficult for her: she could reupholster furniture, hang wallpaper and paint, and her home is filled with objects she created.

Anna lived as a widow for many years in Putnam Lake, New York, and then moved to City Island to be near her daughter, granddaughter and great grandson. Her new life in City Island has been terrific. The local support, the neighbors and the Senior Center have made her golden years truly golden.

City Island Bridge Delayed— At Least Temporarily

By KAREN NANI



Photo ANNA DURRETT

Senator Jeffrey Klein announced at a press conference on Friday, Nov. 8, 2013, that his office had been working with the City Island Civic Association, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Assemblyman Michael Benedetto and Council Member James Vacca, to file a lawsuit to stop work on the bridge project. A temporary restraining order has been placed on the project until a hearing on Dec. 4.

On a brisk Friday morning, Nov. 8, State Senator Jeff Klein, surrounded by community leaders and residents, held a press conference near the City Island Bridge to announce that with his help, the City Island Civic Association had that morning filed a civil lawsuit against the Department of Transportation (DOT) as part of the effort to halt construction on the bridge's controversial new replacement.

The proposed cable-stayed design includes a 164-foot tower and an aesthetic that many residents believe threatens the unique and historic character of the Island, which attracts thousands of visitors each year. Despite serious concerns raised by community members, Island residents and business owners about the inappropriate design, the budget of more than \$100 million, and various safety issues, DOT has remained unmoved in its decision to impose this bridge design on City Island.

When the Department of Transportation announced that work would begin on a temporary bridge this fall, the City Island Civic Association met with Senator Klein to explore possible legal options. Working with volunteer staff members from the offices of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Assemblyman Mike Benedetto and Council Member Jimmy Vacca, Senator Klein's staff developed a legal strategy to ensure that voices of City Islanders are heard and that the proposed design is subject to a more comprehensive review prior to construction.

At the press conference, Senator Klein said "Putting a cable-stayed bridge over Eastchester Bay is like telling the Starship Enterprise it can land at LaGuardia. It just doesn't fit. . . . As I have said all along, the community should have been consulted throughout this process. With the Department of Transportation moving ahead with a design that does not address some of the community's biggest concerns, I think it's important we file this lawsuit to make sure that the City Island community's voices are heard."

City Island Civic Association officer Barbara Dolensek, who is lead plaintiff in the suit, told *The Current*: "For over 10 years the Civic Association has tried to get the Department of Transportation to honor our concerns about the bridge. At the beginning, they told us that a new cable-stayed design with no piers in the water would last more than 100 years and

be more economical than rehabilitating our beloved 112-year-old bridge. They were eager to build a modernistic "signature" bridge, because this was the first new bridge to be built in the city in over 50 years.

"DOT claims that they accommodated our wishes by reducing the height from an astronomical 450 feet to 164 feet, but they ignored the fact that we have always objected to this particular design, and they refused to listen to our pleas for a more suitable bridge that would complement our low-rise, low-key community. We asked them to consider other designs that would not require piers in the water but that don't require huge towers, but they paid no attention. There were 'presentations' to the community, but no public hearing, no vote, no accommodation of our protests."

In 2002, Iris Weinsall, then Commissioner of DOT, told representatives of the Civic Association that if the community objected to the proposed design, she would withdraw it and continue to maintain the old bridge. But a year later the community was told that DOT had made its decision to build a cable-stayed bridge and that was that.

The basis for the lawsuit is to force DOT to go through a process to obtain a necessary land-use permit, which the agency claims it can do during construction. This permit would require a public hearing and support from Community Board 10, the City Council and the Bronx Borough President, all of whom have supported the City Island community on the bridge issue.

Just as the press conference was ending on Nov. 8, Senator Klein received a call that Bronx Supreme Court Justice Mark Friedlander had granted an order temporarily halting construction. The court proceedings are scheduled to begin on Dec. 4.

Community Board 10 was informed by DOT on Nov. 26 that the agency was starting the process to obtain the land-use permit and would hold a public hearing on the issue on Jan. 7, 2014, at a location to be determined. This is the opportunity many residents have been waiting for—an open forum where DOT must listen to their objections to the project. Once the Community Board votes on the issue, the process will move on to the City Council and the Borough President for a vote.



Photo by RICKDeWITT

The annual Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony was anything but usual on Nov. 30, 2013. A film crew from The History Channel was on hand blowing artificial snow (see inset of snow in front of The Black Whale) into Hawkins Park as part of a trailer being filmed for the series "Bonnie and Clyde." The film crew, Harrington Productions, is based on City Island and selected Lickety Split and Hawkins Park for the small town feeling sought for the segment. City Island Chamber of Commerce president Skip Giacco led the countdown to the tree lighting, and Ken and Elizabeth Farnum provided the perfect musical accompaniment to kick off the holiday season.

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Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Fe Fi Faux Gallery was filled to capacity with the crowd overflowing onto the sidewalk on Nov. 1, 2013, for the opening of the "Painting A Day" exhibition of paintings by Marguerite Chadwick-Juner (shown above, left, with gallery owner Mary Colby). The high-energy event also included a 97th birthday celebration for Bea Castiglia-Catullo, the founder of R.A.I.N. Senior Services.



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.

Edward D. Heben, the Current's Tax Tips columnist, has formed an affiliation with the PMG Professional Group and Pellegrino and Company and relocated his personal office facility to 22 Saw Mill River Road, Suite 3, Third Floor, Hawthorne, New York 10532-1533. His telephone number is now 914-345-5888 x 108; fax 914-345-8652; cell phone 914-925-1120; and e-mail address eheben@hebenonline.com.

A holiday exhibition of photographs by Paula Scifano, Vinnie Campisi and Mary Colby will be on view at the Fe Fi Faux Gallery (276 City Island Avenue) from Dec. 6 through Jan. 2. The opening reception will be on Friday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m.

The Focal Point Gallery (321 City Island Avenue) will exhibit "Artist's Choice" from Dec. 6 through 31, with an opening reception on Friday, Dec. 6, from 7 to 10 p.m. Artists who are interested in exhibiting should call 718-885-1403 and be prepared to drop off work no later than Dec. 4.

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Pelham Bay Park Events

Nature Exploration on Hunter Island: Sunday, Dec. 8, from 1 to 3 p.m. Hiking is the ultimate way to enjoy the outdoors, reduce stress, burn calories and stay fit. Join in and discover the plants and animals that inhabit the urban forest. This hike is designated as "moderate" level. Please wear comfortable shoes or boots and pack water and a light snack. Meet at the Orchard Beach Nature Center. For further information, call the Pelham Bay Nature Center at 718-319-7258 or the Orchard Beach Nature Center at 718-885-3466.

Holiday Nature Crafts: Sunday, Dec. 15, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Pelham Bay Nature Center on Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue. The Urban Park Rangers aim to connect children with nature, and this program is designed for young children and their families. Come join the fun and learn about conservation through eco-crafts. All supplies are provided. For further information, call the Pelham Bay Nature Center: 718-319-7258

Owl Walk: Saturday, Dec. 21, from 12:30 to 3 p.m., at the Orchard Beach Nature Center. Come walk the trails of Hunter Island to get a close look at many different species of nesting owls: great-horned owls, barred owls, long-eared owls and saw-whet owls. Registration is required: please visit www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers/register on Wednesday, Dec. 11.

Seal Exploration: Sunday, Dec. 29, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Orchard Beach Nature Center. New York City is home to an amazing abundance of wildlife, and viewing opportunities exist year-round. Come see the seals at Orchard Beach. For further information, call the Orchard Beach Nature Center at 718-885-3466 or the Pelham Bay Nature Center at 718-319-7258.

For January events, visit www.nyc.gov/parks/ranger and click on "Calendar of Events."

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The People of Trinity United Methodist Church

Friday, December 6
Christmas Fair & Dinner 2-8 p.m.

Saturday, December 7
Christmas Fair & Lunch 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, December 8
Parsonage Open House 113 Bay Street ~ 1-3 p.m.

Sunday, December 15
Children's Christmas Pageant During 10 a.m. Worship

Monday, December 24
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 10 p.m.

SPECIAL NOTE:
Trinity United Methodist Church expresses deep gratitude to chef Ann Cox, who served as the chef for the past 18 years, as well as to the many volunteers and anonymous contributors who made the traditional "Thanksgiving Dinner" possible at the church on Thanksgiving Day.

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BROTHERHOOD TREE SURVIVES NYC—AGAIN

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Many Islanders are unaware of the Brotherhood Tree, which was planted at the southern end of the bridge park in 1969, dedicated to the memory of Msgr. Edward Nilan of St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church, and the Rev. Henry R. Coleman of Grace Episcopal Church. Recently, the city developed plans for a new drainage system that would have involved the removal of the tree, but Barbara Hoffman and Barbara Harrison of the Garden Club of City Island, which cares for the memorial, appealed to Community Board 10 for the plans to be changed and leave the tree untouched.

The Parks Committee of Community Board 10 met on Nov. 14, 2013, to discuss the planned removal of a tree located south of the Catherine Scott Promenade just south of the City Island Bridge. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), working with the Department of Design and Construction (DDC), designed a plan to replace sewers and drains at the north end of City Island in order to create a new outflow, but a site visit after the plan was devised revealed that the tree slated for removal was in fact a memorial called the Brotherhood Tree, which had been planted in 1968 and dedicated to the memory of Msgr. Edward Nilan, pastor of St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church, and the Reverend Henry R. Coleman, vicar of Grace Episcopal Church.

Barbara Hoffman, president of the Garden Club of City Island, which has cared for the tree since 1979, presented the history of the tree to the committee and persuaded DDC to review the plan that would allow the tree to stay in place.

The tree was planted by City Islander and pharmacist Sam Bierman, then president of Temple Beth-El and chairman of the City Island Trade Association (now the Chamber of Commerce). For 45 years, the tree has symbolized the spirit of unity for Protestant, Catholic and Jewish residents of the Island.

In 1977 Resolution #522 was presented to the New York City Council by councilmembers Aileen B. Ryan and Stephen Kaufman to make the tree an official memorial. The resolution passed on March 27, 1979, recognizing the "City Island Brotherhood Memorial, four-foot square." Until that time, the City Island Civic Association had maintained the tree and the area surrounding it, and soon thereafter responsibility for the tree fell to the Garden Club.

A year later, Community Board 10 supported a plan proposed by an engineering company that was involved in upgrading City Island's streets and required the removal of the Brotherhood Tree. Stella M. Webber, who had been a librarian on City Island for many years, wrote a letter to *The Island Current* alerting the community to the project. Russell Schaller, longtime *Current* contributor, drew a cartoon entitled "Tree Relocation Stirs Hornet's Nest" for the June 1980 issue. The proposal was turned down.

Given that history, and the fact that the Department of Parks and Recreation refused to move the Leonard Hawkins memorial in Hawkins Street Park when the park underwent rehabilitation in 2008, on the grounds that memorials cannot be moved, representatives of DDC who were present at the meeting on Nov. 14 agreed to confer with DEP in an effort to revise the plan for the new sewer lines.

From Spiderman to Sochi: Anita La Scala Flies High

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Anita La Scala

As American athletes prepare for the XXII Olympic Winter Games and the XI Paralympic Winter Games, which will begin on Feb. 7, 2014, a City Islander is hard at work making certain that the opening ceremonies will be the most impressive and undoubtedly the most expensive ever mounted.

The Olympic Games will be held in Sochi, Russia, a resort city on the Black Sea, and the opening ceremony is scheduled to take place in a stadium built specifically for the show, not for sports. The Russians are calling all the shots in this project, which is designed to tell the history of Russia in an impressive series of five segments, but they are relying on the brilliance of a Russian-born designer named George Tsy-pin, who has lived in the United States for the past 30 years. Mr. Tsy-pin has designed many opera sets, spectacles, art installations and musicals, including "Spider Man: Turn off the Dark," which is where Anita La Scala entered the picture.

Anita worked as first assistant scenic designer for George Tsy-pin on "Spiderman," which is one of the most complex and innovative musical sets ever created, and when Mr. Tsy-pin was offered the immense job of designing the Olympic opening ceremony, he brought Anita along as part of his team. Since taking the job in April 2012, Anita has been to Moscow 10 times and has visited Montreal, Canada; York, London and Birmingham, England; Stockholm, Sweden; St. Petersburg and Sochi in Russia.

Anita, whose parents are Peter and Jane La Scala, grew up on City Island. Her first experience in theater was at the Horace Mann School, which has an impressive theater program. After graduating, she attended the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at SUNY Purchase, where she concentrated on design technology, which includes set design (her major), lighting design, costume design, costume construction, stage management and technical direction.

Although she claims that her creative skills are not impressive, her managerial skills definitely are of great importance to this project, which is beset by serious delays and management issues on the Russian side. She told *The Current*: "The Russians are wonderful—very warm, passionate and ambitious. They love art

and have a huge respect for it, but they are dreamers and often set unrealistic goals." She worries that the ambitious designs developed by George Tsy-pin may not be completed by Feb. 7, because of the very complex process involved in making models of the designs and then having international firms create the actual sets based on those models.

In spite of her worries, however, Anita wouldn't trade a moment of this extraordinary experience. "One of the things I find most exciting about working with George Tsy-pin," she says, "is his imagination and ingenuity. His architectural background allows him to embrace the building of his scenery in a way that most other designers do not care to do. He essentially designs objects, not just scenery, and the internal structure is just as important as the scenic details. George's sense of scale is remarkable and he is responsible for some of the largest scenery ever created."

"More often than not," she continues, "he pushes the envelope to create moving scenery which exposes the mechanical body, so that our minds are constantly learning new technology and approaches. It is fascinating to be able to engage scene shops in this way, and they appreciate the challenge and therefore the scenery as much as we do."

As we City Islanders stay at home preparing for, celebrating and recovering from the holidays, let's wish Anita success as she flies hither and yon, helping to make this ambitious Russian dream come true.

Assisted-Living Project Gets Another Round

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Although the Board of Standards and Appeals was ready at its executive session on Oct. 28, 2013, to reject the application made by Dr. Domenico Mignone of the Italian Hospital Society for a massive assisted-living apartment building at 222 City Island Avenue, by Schofield Street, as "the wrong project for the wrong site," the commissioners agreed at the public hearing the following day to allow the

applicant to make one more submission in support of the project.

The BSA will expect Dr. Mignone's attorney to submit additional information, mostly related to the environmental issues with the site, by Jan. 7, 2014. The Civic Association will have two weeks to submit a response and a public hearing will follow in two weeks, currently scheduled for Feb. 4.



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Christmas Caroling

Wednesday, December 25th
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Tuesday, December 24th, 7:00 PM
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Photos by EYVONNE BAKER

For over 150 years, the historic Bolton window has been in place above the altar at Grace Episcopal Church on Pilot Street. The panels of the stained-glass window were damaged over time, including a battering by the winds of Hurricane Sandy, and the congregation worked hard to raise money to begin the much-needed restoration. With help from the Episcopal Diocese of New York, the New York Landmarks Conservancy and parishioners, Rohlf Studio was awarded the restoration contract and work began on Nov. 18, 2013.



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Bartow-Pell Events

On Dec. 6, the holiday celebrations begin at the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, which will feature a storybook Christmas with Christmas trees throughout the mansion decorated by artists and designers inspired by contemporary children's storybooks. The festive BPMM holiday luncheon will be on Friday, Dec. 6, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Start off the holiday season by enjoying delicious food, shopping for gifts and home-baked goods and catching up with friends. Reservations are required; call 718-885-1461 or e-mail info@bpmm.org.

Later that day, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., enjoy the Holiday First Friday. Enjoy the mansion decked out for the holidays and delight in the festive a cappella sound of the Metropolitanones. Do a little holiday shopping and enjoy refreshments. The free Bronx Seaside Trolley makes a continuous loop from the #6 Pelham Bay Park subway station to BPMM to City Island. Registration requested. For information, call 718-885-1461 or e-mail info@bpmm.org. Cost \$12 adults, \$10 seniors and students; members free.

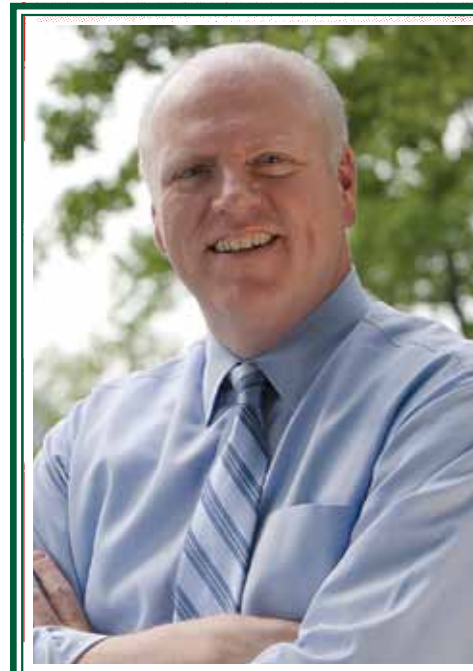
The annual BPMM Holiday Family Day will be Saturday, Dec. 7, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Holiday spirit abounds during this fun-filled day. Children (and parents) will delight in holiday storytelling and crafts, professional photographs with Santa, holiday shopping and more. Storytelling at 10:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.; holiday crafts and photos with Santa are on-going. Space is limited, registration required. Cost: \$20 children one year and up; member children

\$15 (adults and children under one year free). Photos with Santa additional \$20 fee. The Holiday Evening Celebration will be on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 7 to 10 p.m. Celebrate—and support—the mansion in holiday splendor. Enjoy cocktails, holiday fare, caroling, auction and more!

The Bronx Arts Ensemble Holiday Concert will take place on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14 and 15, at 1 and 3 p.m. The Bronx Arts Ensemble and Singers present a wonderful holiday concert with music for St. Nicholas. The concert is free, but space is limited and tickets are required. Call Bronx Arts Ensemble at 718-601-7399 for tickets. The museum will not be open for tours on Saturday or Sunday.

On Saturday evening, Dec. 14, from 6 to 8 p.m., enjoy candlelight tours with costumed docents highlighting 19th-century holiday traditions. Victorian carolers add to the festive atmosphere as you enjoy light holiday fare and wassail in the Orangerie. Christmas trees throughout the house have been decorated by designers and artists inspired by contemporary children's books. Reservations required; cost \$12 adults, \$10 seniors, students and members.

Birding at Bartow will take place on Saturday, Dec. 21, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Start the holidays with a bird walk, searching for the legendary owls that winter at BPMM. Barred, long-eared, saw whet, and great horned owls have been returning year after year to harbor in the pines and woods around the mansion. Also of interest are rare visitors such as crossbills and pine siskins that may be migrating through. Registration requested. Cost \$10; seniors, students and members \$8.



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Happy Holiday Season To All Our Friends And Neighbors

Thank You For Your Support Throughout The Year

This Holiday Season, City Island Has a Lot to “Give”

By MONICA GLICK

From end to end—the bridge to the view of Stepping Stones Lighthouse—City Island has shops, galleries, restaurants, cafés and businesses ready to “give” you all you need for the happiest of holiday seasons!

Give the gift of pampering. Getting the right look for celebrating with family and friends is as certain as the chill in the December air. At **The Art of Beauty** (413 City Island Avenue) you’ll get pampered by professionals, always with a personal touch. And if nails are your focus, stop in at **Bay Rose Nail Salon** (329 City Island Avenue) and say “hi” to Amy and the crew, or drop in at **Nail Island** (462 City Island Avenue).

Top off your new look in hair and nails with a fit form. City Island has two spots for you to check out: **Krunch Time Fitness** (538 City Island Avenue), and the new mid-Island **Club Fit** (440 City Island Avenue). There’s also Master Edwin Castro’s **Dragon’s Path Tae Kwon Do Academy** (229 City Island Avenue), with classes in martial arts/boxing, as well as tae kwon do. Sign up for yourself, or for your little one!

Give the gift of sweet sounds. Taking the stage at **Starving Artist Café & Gallery** (249 City Island Avenue) in this and any season are the finest musical artists in a variety of styles: jazz, blues, singer-songwriter, pop, folk and more. The New Year’s Eve celebration begins on Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 10 p.m. and features jazz legend Lou Volpe. Stop in and ask owner and music-artist Elliott Glick for more details, and maybe even sign up for his guitar lessons, taking the stage yourself some time in the future!

Speaking of stages, the gift of theater may hit the right note for someone on your gift list, and who better to help with that than our own **City Island Theater Group**. Visit the CITG website (CityIslandTheaterGroup.com) for information about becoming a subscriber and to have a look at productions past and future!

And if it’s just sweets you’re craving, then stop in to **Sugar and Spice** (536 City Island Avenue). The possibilities are big-



IGA Supermarket

ger than cupcakes here; there’s full-service catering, wedding cake consultation—and more!

Give the gift of celebration. Throwing a party for the holidays? Order a platter from Scavello Catering at the **IGA Supermarket** (385 City Island Avenue). The display case in this Island supermarket will make you want a container of *everything!*



JGL Wines & Liquors

And get just the right bottle of wine for gift-giving or guest-serving at **JGL Wines & Liquors** (358 City Island Avenue).

Gather friends to celebrate one Sunday with brunch at **The Black Whale** (279 City



The Seashore Restaurant

Island Avenue). Or ask about the possibilities for a holiday party for your family and friends or co-workers at the **Sea Shore Restaurant** (591 City Island Avenue). Get there early, or hang out after, sipping and sharing with friends by the beautiful fireplace. Say “hi” to Louis and Debbie!

And all you need for a festive time may



City Island Nautical Museum

be found at the Island’s newest business, **Amandabear Party Rentals** (474 City Island Avenue).

Give the gift of memories. Interested in history or anything past? We’ve got several shops to fill that bill. Wander through the **City Island Nautical Museum** (190 Fordham Street), open Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. (but do it soon as



Early Ruth Antiques

the museum closes between Dec. 23 and March 15), or explore antiquities from land and sea at **Trader John** (239 City Island Avenue).

Visit **Early Ruth Antiques** (319 City Island Avenue) where Ruth herself or artist Anoosh Donahue will host first Friday art openings, including Donahue’s “Bronx Flowers, Fall/Winter,” while they guide you through the handmade gifts, art and antiques that fill the shop. And no season—holiday or otherwise—would be complete without spending some time with Smitty at **Silver Arrow Antiques** (275 City Island Avenue).

Make holiday memories with Spiro Chagares and staff at **Artie’s Steak & Seafood** (394 City Island Avenue). And choose your wine before you arrive to dine; Artie’s website (ArtiesOfCityIsland.com) gives the endless possibilities in red, white or sparkling.

Give the gifts of the sea. The riches of the sea are plated and served at several Island spots, including **JPs Restaurant**



The Lobster House Restaurant



The Crab Shanty Restaurant

(703 Minneford Avenue), **Sammy’s Fish Box** (41 City Island Avenue), the Original **Sammy’s Shrimp Box** (64 City Island Avenue), the **Lobster House** (691 City Island Avenue), the **Crab Shanty** (361 City Island Avenue) and **The Light House** (565 City Island Avenue), which is celebrating its first holiday season on our Island home. Down as far as you can go on our Main Street, give the reindeer a hand as he helps Santa down the chimney before stepping inside for fish fare at **The Lobster Box** (34 City Island Avenue).

And while you’re down that end of the Island, give a heart-filled “welcome back” to **Tony’s Pier Restaurant** (1 City Island Avenue), back better than ever as they promised, following a devastating fire during Hurricane Sandy. Buddies in the fast-food seafood business are **Johnnie’s Reef Restaurant** (2 City Island Avenue) and **Seafood City** (459 City Island Avenue). If Johnnie’s is already shuttered for the winter season, fear not. The spring will bring back the shrimps and scallops—and the corn on the cob—before you know it!

And still speaking of the sea, there’s all you need to “go fish” at **Jack’s Bait & Tackle** (551 City Island Avenue) or **Island Bait & Tackle** (632 City Island Avenue). Your boat’s best bets may be found at **JJ Burck** (526 City Island Avenue) or **Remy’s** (272 City Island Avenue). Or “get deep” with **Captain Mike** (530 City Island Avenue).

Give the gift of treasures. Start with art for gift giving and you’ll finish a winner. Let Mary Colby help you make the right choices at her **Fe Fi Faux Studio & Gallery** (276 City Island Avenue). Celebrating 20 years, Mary is launching a holiday photography exhibition with an opening reception on Friday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m. The show, which will run through Jan. 2, features art work (in the windows) by Melissa A. Calderon, and photographs by Paula Schifano, Vinnie Campisi and Mary Colby herself!

See also what art you’ll find at **Cheryl Brinker’s Studio / Gallery** (276 City Island Avenue). And for body art, say “hi” to Tommy Houlihan at **City Island Tattoos** (314 City Island Avenue).

You’ve got art on the walls and treasures in the showcases at **Focal Point Gal-**



Focal Point Gallery

lery (321 City Island Avenue). The lovely couple in charge—Ron Turner and wife Susan Lamantia-Turner—will guide you through the jewelry and art for sale, helping you find the right fit for all on your gift list. And maybe the art is in the memories of the season. Let Ron help you there as well, with a family portrait to treasure through time.

There are more possibilities for gifts nearby as well, at **Calico Juno Designs** (310 City Island Avenue) and **Corona’s Hidden Treasures** (327 City Island Avenue).

Where to put all those gifts? Well under a tree of course! Visit Louise and Skip Giacco at **Lickety Split** (295 City Island Avenue) to find the right one for your home. Don’t ask them for a cone or cup, though: that’s springtime fare!

Decorations, wrapping and gift ideas may be found right across the street at the



Kaleidoscope

City Island Pharmacy (290 City Island Avenue). (Be sure to say “hi” to sweet Olivia!) Down a block, greet Karl Hoedl at **Buddy’s Hardware** (260 City Island Avenue) for some holiday fare and always all you need to fix things or build them.

And if you get stumped on what to get one special someone, don’t fret! That person will treasure a holiday gift card from **Chase** (207 City Island Avenue).

Give the gift of fun and games. You can’t help but feel the fun of the holidays as you walk into **Kaleidoscope** (280 City Island Avenue). Immediately you’re greeted by stacks of toys, side-by-side with shiny, beautiful ornaments and trinkets of the season. Ask owner Paul Klein to show you the art and other treasures here as well.

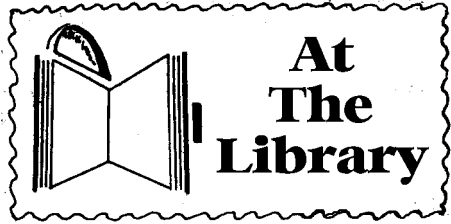
Want to play a game this holiday season? How about pool at **Fella’s** (522 City Island Avenue)? Or see what game is on the screen at the **City Island Ale House** (288 City Island Avenue), and try one of the many unique beer selections while you do so.

Give the gifts of the world. Where would you like to travel for the holidays? France? Italy? Japan? Well, if the budget prevents the airline ticket purchase, you can at least dine there, right here on our Island home.

For some French fare, greet Stephane Kane and his wife, Maria, at **Bistro SK** (273 City Island Avenue). On Sunday evenings, there’s jazz piano with Jeremy Bacon.

Maybe Italy is more what you crave. Try **Portofino** (555 City Island Avenue), and you can read all about the feast awaiting you on the large menus posted outside! And the travel to Japan is just a walk down our City Island Avenue, to catch din-

Continued on page 19



PROGRAMS AT THE CITY ISLAND LIBRARY- DECEMBER 2013
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December Children's Programs

Please call the branch for information about upcoming children's programs, such as read-aloud, toddler, and so on.

December Teen Programs

After-School Lounge: Students can play Wii, bring a book, do their homework and sneak in a snack. Monday through Friday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in our Community Room.

December Adult Programs

Introduction to the Internet: This workshop is designed to introduce anyone who has never been on the internet before. Gain proficiency in using e-mail, utilizing social media and finding resources on the NYPL web site. Every Tuesday morning from 10 a.m. to noon.

Resumé Writing Workshop and Online Job Search: Staff will be here to help you look for employment and get your resume into top form for the competitive job market. Pre-registration is encouraged but drop-ins are fine. It is recommended you bring along a flash drive to save your work. Every Wednesday morning from 10 to noon.

Saturday Afternoon Movies: Every Saturday that we are open, we will present a movie or a lecture/discussion. Please check

the flyers in the library or call for Saturday movies or lecture programs. All events begin at 1 p.m.

Tablet Group: Learn how to borrow and download library e-books, discuss your favorite apps and ask questions about how to use tablets in your day-to-day life. Every Thursday afternoon from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Island Writers: This is a creative writing workshop that meets in our community room once a week. "When we write, we find ourselves writing answers to questions we didn't know we had." Every Tuesday afternoon at 1 p.m. Presented by Ms. Gail Hitt.

The Hart Island Project Presentation by Ms. Melinda Hunt: Melinda Hunt, founding director of The Hart Island Project, will speak about the history and possible future access to Hart Island. She has spent twenty-two years researching, documenting and helping families from around the globe to gain access to information about the burials. Saturday Dec. 7, at 1 p.m.

"Why Do Only White People Get Abducted by Aliens?" This talk by author Ilana Garon is based on her book, which is part memoir and part sociology study on the lives of teenagers. In it she reflects on her first four years teaching at a public high school in the Bronx. (The title is taken from a student's suggestion for a research topic.) Ms. Garon's refreshing lack of agenda makes this book charming and raw in its honesty. Ilana Garon has been teaching high school English since she graduated from Barnard College in 2003 and received her MFA from Sarah Lawrence College in 2009. Saturday, Dec. 14, at 1 p.m.

The Greatest Game Ever Played. Professor Victor Mastro, an expert on Bronx history who has given numerous lectures at various NYPL branches, will discuss the National Football League Championship Game that was played on Dec. 28, 1958, at Yankee Stadium. In addition, the City Island branch will honor the 50th anniversary of the NFL Hall of Fame. Saturday, Dec 28, at 1 p.m.

Special for January

Blacks in the Colonial Bronx. Slavery existed in New York State up until 1827, an era brought to life by Professor Lloyd Ultan in his new groundbreaking book "Blacks In The Colonial Bronx," published by the Bronx County Historical Society. Saturday, Jan. 11, at 1 p.m.

The City Island branch is located at 320 City Island Avenue at Bay Street. Please call the branch at 718-885-1703 for more January programs, as well as any unscheduled changes, additions or cancellations. Visit www.nypl.org for more details and for programs in other branches throughout the city.

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Halloween Happiness!

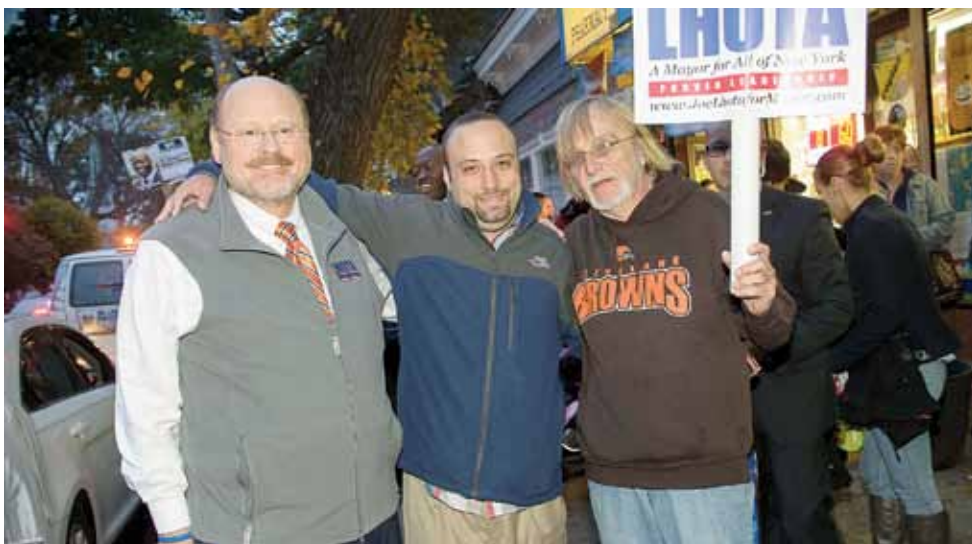


Photo by RICK DEWITT

After Hurricane Sandy ruined last year's Halloween, Islanders bounced back with a fabulous array of costumes in 2013. Winners for best costume were Arnold Palmer (male) as the Headless Horseman; Christina Oyola (female) as the half-face skull, and the Frei family (top photo), as the Titanic disaster, complete with the iceberg, the ship, the captain and a shark. The best children's costumes were Euren Medina as Baby Batman (male) and Gina Marie as Princess Belle from "Beauty and the Beast" (female). The scariest beasts were Melanie Glynn and Dena as Bloodthirsty Vampire and Zombie Doll, and the best animal costume prize went to the witch dog Lulabelle. The product Styrofoam was well represented, and mayoral candidate, clam digger Joe Lhota (bottom photo, here with Fred Ramflit Jr. and Bill Werner) was also here, though not in costume.

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Chamber of Commerce Hosts Awards Dinner

By MARIA SWIECIKI



Photo by RICK DEWITT

The 103rd annual Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner was held on Friday, Nov. 15, 2013, at the Pelham / Split Rock clubhouse: (back row, l. to r.): Paul Klein, vice president of the Chamber; Assemblyman Michael Benedetto; Josy Rice, Chamber volunteer; Marcello Galli of the Light House Restaurant, honoree; Chamber president Skip Giacco; Senator Jeffrey Klein, master of ceremonies; Frederick Ramflit Jr.; Rhea Rivera, co-owner of Magickal Realms; Nick Sala, president of the City Island Theater Group; (front row): Cheryl Palumbo, her niece Rachel and her brother Tony Palumbo Jr., of Tony's Pier, and Carol McCabe, vice president of the City Island Theater Group.

Dancing to the music of the Lickety Split Band, Islanders and off-Islanders alike enjoyed an evening of good food, entertainment and, best of all, honoring their own for contributions to the community at the 103rd City Island Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner Dance. The event, emceed by State Senator Jeffrey Klein, was held at the Pelham/Split Rock Golf Course on Nov. 15 and recognized politicians, actors, activists and others who make City Island a better place to live and work.

Assemblyman Michael Benedetto received the Tom Cerreta Community Service Award and thanked everyone for the honor, saying: "In my 35 years of teaching and public service, I have always considered myself a lucky person." He noted his support, along with that of Senator Klein, of the community's recent efforts to delay construction of the new City Island Bridge. "That's the way government should work," he said. He thanked presenter and Chamber president Skip Giacco for the honor and vowed to continue his work on behalf of City Island.

The Catherine Scott Award for Perseverance was presented by Senator Klein to restaurateur Tony Palumbo Jr. of Tony's Pier Restaurant. The renowned eatery, located at the southern tip of City Island, was destroyed last year during Hurricane Sandy when a transformer fell on the roof of the building and started a fire that quickly burned out of control. "In a quick moment of time, our lives were turned upside down," he said. "The restaurant and a lot of keepsakes were lost in that fire, including irreplaceable photos and the flag that draped my father's coffin." Despite all that, the family has rebuilt and is looking forward to making new memories and welcoming back loyal customers. Senator Klein praised Mr. Palumbo and his family saying that "Tony's Pier is an institution, a tradition and a symbol that

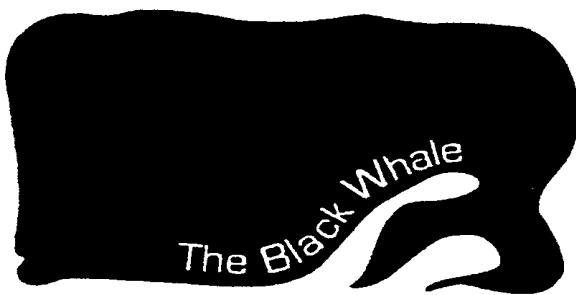
the Bronx can rebuild after Sandy".

Since it was founded 15 years ago, the all-volunteer City Island Theater Group has offered Islanders and neighboring communities a wide variety of theatrical productions, including comedies, dramas, thrillers, musicals, staged readings and one-act festivals, as well as programs for young people. When presented with the Sam Bierman Business and Community Service Award, board president Nick Sala invited fellow board members to join him in accepting the award. He then reminded everyone in attendance to come and see the latest production of "Barefoot in the Park," which had opened just an hour ago for its two-weekend run.

The Community Service Award was presented to lifelong City Islander Fred Ramflit Jr. by Chamber vice president Paul Klein, who lauded the clam digger by saying: "At a very early age, Fred decided it was time to give back. He protects the quality of life in our community." At the age of 12, Fred was riding his bike and hit a pothole. Instead of merely complaining, he started a letter-writing campaign to all the local officials and later that year, the street was resurfaced. He never looked back, and since then his involvement has grown and he is now involved in many organizations in the community, including the Civic Association, the City Island Nautical Museum and the American Legion.

Accepting a citation for a New Business Award, was Marcello Galli, manager of the Light House Restaurant, which had its grand opening on Memorial Day weekend. Rhea Rivera, co-owner of Magickal Realms, also accepted a New Business Award and thanked the Chamber on behalf of her business partner, Sandra Rivera, who was unable to attend.

In closing, Chamber president Skip Giacco thanked member Josy Rice, proprietor of Joss Unique, who "for the last several years has been an enormous help to the Chamber" in planning and hosting the successful event. He also told *The Current* that he owes a special debt of gratitude to his wife, Louise, for her constant support in making sure everything happened according to plan. The only hitch, in fact, was that the printed journal usually distributed at the dinner was not available on time, owing to the illness of the journal's designer, but it will be distributed when ready, a permanent souvenir of a lovely evening.



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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

DECEMBER

Fri., Dec. 6, and Sat., Dec. 7, **Annual Christmas Fair**, Trinity United Methodist Church. 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Friday) and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Saturday).

Sat. and Sun., Dec. 7 and 8, **St. Mary's Thrift Shop Christmas Sale**, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in St. Mary's School Gym and in the Thrift Shop, 595 Minneford Avenue.

Sat., Dec. 14, **Grace Church Annual Christmas Fair and Café**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sat., Dec. 21, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: pasta with meatballs or meat sauce.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

JANUARY

Sat., Jan. 25, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: tuna noodle casserole.

Tues., Jan. 28, **City Island Civic Association meets**, 7:30 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

Trinity United Methodist Church

Our weekly worship service and Sunday school are at 10 a.m. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Trinity often has a coffee hour after the service. Come and join us for worship and fellowship. Children's Sunday school takes place during the 10 a.m. service. All children are welcome to attend.

The Annual Trinity Church fair is scheduled for Dec. 6 and 7. Stop by on the evening of the 6th for some dinner or for lunch on Saturday. Perhaps just come by to browse the tables of crafts, fresh baked goods or new and gently used items.

The annual children's Christmas Pageant is Sunday, Dec. 15, during the regular service. Come by and let the children remind you about the true meaning of Christmas.

The Budget Corner is open! The fall schedule is: Dec. 3, 10, 13, 14, 17 and 20. While you are getting out your holiday decorations, look around and see what extra items you have but no longer need and consider donating them! As always, Trinity United Methodist Church is thankful for the City Island community's continued support of the Budget Corner.

Rick DeWitt

Rotary Club of the Bronx

The club has been very busy this fall, and much more is planned for December.

The second phase of the Outreach program's food packaging occurred on Nov. 16 with Bronx Rotarians packing up an additional 10 cartons of rice and beans and macaroni and cheese dinners. Those packages will serve over 2,100 people, and the cartons went to St. Andrew's Church and St. Lucy's in the Bronx.

In addition, at the Nov. 18 meeting, 10 turkeys with all the fixings were boxed up for distribution to families in need. Our thanks go to member Bill Gouldman, who did all the shopping for the meals.

The club has moved locations once again for our luncheons. We are back at Sammy's Shrimp Box at 12:15 p.m. on Tuesdays, except for the second Tuesday of each month, which will be an evening meeting starting at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

In December, the club is partnering with

the Sons of Italy to purchase gifts and toys for the children of P.S. 811 in the Bronx. There are over 630 children with physical and mental disabilities in this school, and for many of them ours will be the only gift they receive this season. Last year the favorite gifts among the children were Snuggles. The kids lit up and were hugging them with joy. Member Lilyanna Pekic does all the purchasing and negotiates with the big box stores for excellent deals. We thank Lilyanna for performing this arduous task. Members will be on hand at the school for the holiday party to help distribute the gifts. There are four floors dedicated to these special students, so we will have four Santas to help us out.

We will celebrate the holidays once again with entertainment provided by the Bronx Opera Company on Dec. 17. It is a wonderful, heartwarming way get into the spirit of the holidays. We have supported the Bronx Opera Company with grant money for more than 35 years, and they will be presented with another check at this celebration. This special luncheon is only \$35 per person and is open to everyone. Please RSVP to Mary Springman at 718-617-1600 if you plan to attend.

The Rotary Club of the Bronx wishes everyone a wonderful holiday season and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

Marguerite Chadwick-Juner

AARP Chapter 318

The AARP 318 meets at 1 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, in Trinity Methodist Church Hall on Bay Street. Our Dec. 4 meeting will be the last day to donate items for our "Christmas Giving Through POTS" campaign. Please purchase items and place them in the bag to be delivered for the holidays (no need to gift wrap). Thanks to all those who have already donated. On Dec. 18, our members will celebrate at our holiday luncheon at the Lobster House Restaurant on Bridge Street at 12 noon. Join us for this festive afternoon. Meetings will begin in the New Year on Jan. 8 and 22. There will be no meetings in February. Remember, new members are always welcome. We wish all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Rosetta Woods

Grace Episcopal Church

Located at 116 City Island Avenue, Grace Church is a historic Episcopal parish, which has served the nautical community of City Island for over 160 years. We welcome you!

Worship Schedule

Holy Communion Rite II, Sundays at 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve Service, Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 7 pm.

Christmas Day Service, Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 10 a.m. All are welcome!

Upcoming Events at Grace

Hearts And Hands will meet on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. in the church hall.

Our Christmas Fair and Holiday Café will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mrs. Claus will be on hand to collect new, unwrapped toys for POTS.

The Grace Church concert series will resume on Jan. 5, when the a cappella group Sing We Enchanted returns for the third annual Epiphany post-holiday concert. Time: 4 p.m.; tickets are \$25 (\$20 for seniors and students). Reservations can be made by e-mailing music@gracecityisland.org.

On Jan. 10 at 7 p.m., as part of our Friday Fellowship program, we will be putting together care packages for local residents



Photos by RICK DEWITT

Helping Anne Cox prepare her 18th Thanksgiving dinner at Trinity United Methodist Church are some of her helpers: Richard and Lesly Cox, Elizabeth Peters, Celia Murray, Rose Zervas, Arlene Byrne, Adje Henderson, Pastor Ezra and Lucia Yew, Michael Vivian and the Lotrionte family. A musical ensemble with Tiffany and David Chung, Jayden and Jessica Kim and Young Kim performed during the dinner.

who are on active military service. We are looking for donations of \$20 to defray the costs, and everyone who donates will be acknowledged with a thank-you note in the boxes. We plan to provide photos of City Island on digital frames so that our brave service members will be able to remember, and share with others, just how special and beautiful a place our home town is. We also want to include small items, such as yo-yos, games or word puzzle books and will be asking for baked goods and notes from Island residents. You can drop off donations of checks (with "military thank you" in the memo line), books, games and cards at the City Island Library or in the entrance to Grace Church Parish Hall. Please join us on Jan. 10 to box up the gifts and prepare them for mailing. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call Joanne Brogan at 718-885-2713.

Eileen Marcus

Holiday Services

St. Mary Star of the Sea Church

City Island Ave. near the Bridge

Sunday, Dec. 22: Lessons and Carols Concert, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve, Carols at 7:30 p.m. and Mass at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 25: Christmas Day Masses at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and 12 noon.

Tuesday, Dec. 31: Anticipated Mass for Feast of Mary, Mother of God, 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 1: New Year's Day (Feast of Mary Mother of God), Masses at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 12 noon.

Trinity United Methodist Church

113 Bay Street

Friday and Saturday, Dec. 6 (2 p.m. to 8 p.m.) and 7 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.): Christmas Fair.

Sunday, Dec. 9: Parsonage Open House, 1 to 3 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 15: Children's Christmas Pageant, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 10 p.m. All are invited to attend.

Grace Episcopal Church

City Island Avenue at Pilot Street

Saturday, Dec. 14: Arts and Crafts Fair and Holiday Café, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 20: Christmas Caroling, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service, 7 p.m. Babysitting available.

Wednesday, Dec. 25: Christmas Day Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m.

Temple Beth-El

480 City Island Avenue

Friday, Jan. 17: Tub'shevat Shabbat (New Year for the Trees), 7:30 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 27: Holocaust Memorial Ceremony, 11 a.m.

St. Mary's Thrift Shop

Our Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday, Dec. 7, and Sunday, Dec. 8, in the Thrift Shop and in St. Mary's school gym from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. New and used gift items will be on sale: clothing, toys, books, decorations, coffee and crumpets. We will be open at the Thrift Shop from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays and Saturdays, Dec. 12, 14, 19 and 21. Don't miss the fair and our holiday sales throughout the month of December. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all

Arlene Byrne

St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church

Sunday, Dec. 1, marked the beginning of the holy season of Advent, a time of preparation for the coming of Our Savior at Christmas. We wish everyone a happy, peaceful season.

Our monthly holy hour with benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will take place on Friday, Dec. 6, from 4 to 5 p.m. All are welcome.

Our annual Thrift Shop Christmas sale will be held on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 7 and 8, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in St. Mary's School Gym and in the Thrift Shop. Old and new items will be available. We are sure many great bargains will be discovered. Come and look around!

Thursday, Dec. 12, is the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, who has been declared the patroness of all the Americas. We will have a special Mass that evening in English and Spanish at 7:15 p.m. in the church, followed by a reception in the school gym.

Our monthly coffee hour will be held this month on the third Sunday, Dec. 15, after the ten o'clock Mass. All are welcome to join us in the rectory.

The children in our religious education program hope to present the Christmas pageant on Tuesday evening, Dec. 17, in St. Mary's Church. Come and join us in this proximate preparation for Christmas.

Our annual ceremony of lessons and carols will take place on Sunday evening, Dec. 22, at 7:30 p.m. in the church. Come join us for a joyous, prayerful evening as we anticipate the wonderful feast of Christmas.

The joyful celebration of the Birth of Christ will begin with our 8 p.m. liturgy on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, preceded by the singing of Christmas carols at 7:30 p.m. Masses on Christmas day will be at 8 and 10 a.m. and 12 noon. A very happy Christmas to all!

The New Year begins with the celebration of the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, a holy day of obligation. We will follow our Sunday schedule: anticipated Mass on Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 5:15 p.m. and Masses on Jan. 1, 2014, at 8 and 10 a.m. and 12 noon. A very happy, peaceful New Year to all!

Sr. Bernadette, osu



For additional information about the Community Center, or if you are interested in conducting classes here please call 718-885-1145.

Open Monthly Meetings of the Board are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Main Room at 190 Fordham Street. All members are encouraged to attend. For up to date information, visit www.cityislandcommunitycenter.org, call 718-885-1145 or "Like" us on Facebook.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Our Annual Members Holiday Party will be Friday, Dec. 13, at 7:00 pm. Come join us for a night of fun and dancing. Last year's band is back by popular demand!

Weekly Weight Watchers Meetings: Thursday evenings at 5:30 with Debbie. Join us, and we can make it through the holiday season together. For more information, call Patty at 718-885-1891.

Monthly Teen Dances: Dances for teens in 6, 7 and 8th grades. Come join your friends for a night of fun on Dec. 14 from 7 to 10 p.m. The dances are free.

Monthly Parenting Discussions with John Scardina. We laugh, we cry and we learn from one another. Join us as we each share our experience, strength and hope on this journey of parenthood! The next meeting will be Dec. 3.

Family Bingo Nights return in January. Call the Community Center for the date and time. Come join us for a great night filled with laughter, joy, and great prizes for the family. Refreshments will be available for purchase; bingo cards are \$5, and Community Center members get one free card.

NEW PROGRAMS

Feng Shui will be returning soon. For more information on this great program, call Barbara at 914-315-6556.

Scrapbooking Classes and Paper-Crafting Events with Desiree coming to City Island Community Center soon! Feel free to check out our website at www.demaliland-crafts.com or call 914-562-5857 for details.

Weekly Schedule

YOUTH PROGRAM

Irish Dance: The Deirdre O'Mara School of Irish Dance teaches step dancing in a fun, competitive environment for all ages. A confidence-building and cultural experience for all who participate. Wednesdays after school. Call Deirdre at 201-679-1450 or visit www.deirdreomara.com.

Jill's Playgroup: for pre-school children on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 12:30 p.m. No charge but donations are appreciated. Call 917-330-0922 for more information.

Introduction to Art Portfolio Prep: For high school prep or just for fun! Taught by Geri Smith, former LaGuardia High School teacher and exam auditor. \$90 for five-week session, \$25 materials fee (after session ends students bring materials home). For registration or more information, call 718-885-1503.

ADULT PROGRAM

Zumba with Julia: Want to lose that belly fat? Well here is your chance to Zumba with Julia. It's a high energy Zumba workout for an hour. Saturday mornings from 10 to 11 a.m. \$10 per class. Call 917-601-5514. It's fun!

Zumba with Letti: Letti is a fantastic Zumba instructor who brings a lot of creativity and energy to her classes. Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. Classes are \$10 or 5 class card for \$40.

Yoga Stretch with Norma: Thursdays at 7 p.m. This is an easy hatha vinyasa class suitable for all fitness levels. These Yoga Stretch poses helps remove any fears or challenges in doing these exercises, while it also assists with stress reduction and weight management. This class focuses on stretching and toning muscles that are often neglected, but so important to keeping you healthy and mobile. And best of all, Yoga Stretch is easy and fun enough for beginners, or those who just haven't exercised in a while. \$10 a class. Call 718-885-0535.

Zumba Gold: A fun-filled dance/exercise session with a salsa beat. Geared for age 50 and up. Fee for the class is \$4.

Aerobics with Mary: Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 9 to 10 a.m. Call Mary Immediato at 718-885-0793.

Chess Club: Meets each Thursday at 7 p.m. Chess taught, played and discussed. All levels welcome. Come on in! Avoid T.V. Have fun.

City Island Civic Association: Meets at 7:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday of every month (except December).

Sarah Persteins

Garden Club of City Island

The Christmas spirit and holiday festivities abound! By the time *The Current* comes out, the Garden Club will have purchased and decorated 41 wreaths for distribution to City Island's public buildings, including religious institutions, the fire house, the Nautical Museum and the library. The club has done this for many years, and it is an activity that brings as much joy to the club's members as to the wreath recipients.

At our regular meeting on Monday, Dec. 2, guest speaker Liz Leduc of Giordano's Pelham Bay Florist demonstrated how to use fresh greens, as well as bought flowers and various winter decorations, to create beautiful arrangements for the holidays.

Last month's plant exchange was very successful, and another exchange is planned for next spring. The club is looking forward to many more interesting speakers and some fun trips in 2014. Members will have their Christmas luncheon at the Light House Restaurant on Wednesday, Dec. 11. A gift exchange is a highlight of the afternoon.

We welcome prospective new members to attend a meeting, learn what we do and how they can participate, and perhaps join us in our City Island beautification efforts. Best wishes to all for the holidays.

Barbara Harrison

City Island Theater Group

The City Island Theater Group wrapped up the 2013 season with full-house productions of Neil Simon's "Barefoot in the Park." The board of directors is now involved in making choices for the 2014 season, which will include a celebration of CITG's 15th year of bringing theater to City Island.

The group is proud to once again give back to the community. During its run of "Barefoot in the Park," more than 150 pairs of new socks were collected at the door of the theater to donate to POTS, so that "no one would have to go barefoot this winter." CITG also collaborated with the students of P.S. 175, which donated 230 pairs. Grade 1A brought in the most socks and will be enjoying a pizza party as a thank-you from CITG.

Mary McIntyre

Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El of City Island, Your Shul by the Sea, an unaffiliated, all-inclusive synagogue, offers a stimulating place for observance of Jewish traditions. The spirited congregation is led by our innovative Rabbi Shohama Wiener, our joyful musical associate spiritual leader, Reb David Evan Markus, and our multi-talented rabbinic intern, Reb Eva Sax-Bolder. For almost 80 years, Temple Beth-El has welcomed all who come to celebrate and pray here as our services embrace diversity at 480 City Island Avenue. We extend an invitation to the City Island community and beyond to join us at these events.

Friday night Sabbath services commence promptly at 7:30 p.m. Please come at 7:15 to enjoy the welcoming music and an opportunity to meet and greet before services begin. We use a prayer book written primarily in English with some text in Hebrew, transliterated to allow all words to be easily sung and read. Your Shul by the Sea Band provides a delightful quality to our services, inspiring some of us to dance as we welcome the Sabbath. After services, an oneg consisting of wine, challah and delicious refreshments is generously provided by one of our members or the temple's board of directors to celebrate our coming together as a community.

Every Friday evening the temple opens its doors for Sabbath services, and when the clergy is not there, services are led by congregants. Often our own Bob Berent and his wonderful accordion grace our celebration. Recently another congregant Michael Eiron has taken the lead. We are hoping that other congregants will engage and lead services as well.

Our special events and services for December are as follows:

Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m.: Join Rabbi Shohama, Reb David and Your Band by the Sea

with a special Sabbath service and oneg to honor our many new members and friends. Spread the word and help our community grow!

Friday, Dec. 27: Services with Reb David and Your Shul by the Sea Band. Oneg sponsored by Ellen Ruth Topol honoring the wisdom of discriminating awareness and welcoming 2014.

Our website, yourshulbythesea.org, is growing and now includes weekly Torah teachings, descriptions of upcoming events and our calendar. You can also follow our weekly blog. Please share our web presence with friends on Facebook, Twitter and more. Let us know how we can better communicate with you.

Thanks to Ken Binder and Steve Roth, Temple Beth-El is sponsoring an emerging Jewish community on the Pacific coast of Mexico. This community needs a collection of tallitot (prayer shawls), mezuzot, Spanish-language recipes for Jewish foods and other religious items. To donate items or funds, please contact Ken Binder at kenbinder@aol.com.

The temple seeks to become 100 percent accessible for the mobility-impaired, an important project that will require both funds and creativity. To join this committee or to offer support, please contact Paul Klein at paul.klein@att.net.

Our outreach commitment is expanding with a committee for bikkur cholim (visiting the sick). Sponsored by Reb Eva, this committee will receive training in the Jewish pastoral tradition of visiting ill and mobility-restricted community members. To join this committee, please contact Sue Fleishaker at ldblbass@gmail.com or Reb Eva at lbolder164@aol.com.

We are looking forward to 2014, so mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

Jan. 17, at 7:30 p.m.: Tub'shevat Shabbat. Join Reb David and Your Shul by the Sea Band for an especially spiritual celebration of Shabbat and the mystical Tu B'shevat (New Year for the Trees). Even though mid-winter may appear outside, inside and underground, the first hints of spring will begin to blossom and poke through the frozen soil. Bring neighbors and friends for this memorable event.

Jan. 27, at 11 a.m.: Delegation to the United Nations. In this 65th year following the U. N. Convention against Genocide, please join the temple as a delegate to the United Nations Holocaust Memorial Ceremony on this international day for the commemoration of the Holocaust. Speak out against Holocaust denial and in support of religious and ethnic tolerance worldwide.

March 22, at 6 p.m. Join dignitaries and community leaders as we celebrate the temple's 80th anniversary. At this highlight of our year, we will honor the array of civic associations that enrich City Island and help make our unique and vibrant community flourish and grow.

Ellen Ruth Topol

REGULAR MEETINGS

Weekly Twelve-Step Meetings on City Island

Narcotics Anonymous:

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

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

Alcoholics Anonymous:

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

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

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


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

Trinity United Methodist Church: 718-885-1218

Grace Episcopal Church: 718-885-1080

Overeaters Anonymous:

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



**Best Wishes
for a
Happy
Holiday
Season**

Assemblyman
Michael R. Benedetto

Free Shop at Home

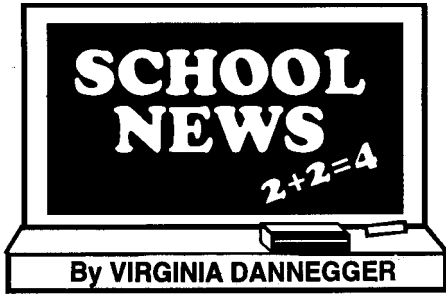
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Public School 175

November was a busy month, which began with our hard-working PTA's Election Day Sale. Thanks to the support of the many City Island residents who came to vote, the PTA raised much-needed funds that will be used to provide students with many enriching programs, including our long-time collaborations with the Lincoln Center Institute and the Bronx Arts Ensemble. Many thanks to those who participated in the sale and to the many hard-working PTA volunteers who helped to make the sale a huge success!

Several enriching educational trips took place this month. The second grade visited the Top of the Rock as part of the NYC social studies curriculum; the third grade visited the American Museum of Natural History; the fourth grade went to the Hall of Science and participated in many hands-on activities; and the eighth grade went to the Bronx Zoo. The kindergarten through the third grade also visited the City Island branch of the NYC Public Library. Many thanks to all those at the library who make these visits meaningful for our students. Kindergarten students also visited the City Island fire house, which is always a thrilling experience for them. We were also lucky to have a teaching specialist from the New-York Historical Society come to school to work with our second-graders on their NYC unit of study.

Penny Harvest continues, and we are on our way to meeting our goal of \$1,000.

We were delighted that the school managed to collect 230 pairs of donated socks in connection with City Island Theater Group production of "Barefoot in the Park." The first grade class 1A brought in 100 pairs and is the winner of a pizza party sponsored by the theater group.

After-school hours have been busy as well. Rehearsals continue for our spring production of "Annie," and our after-school vocal program will be starting with students in grades three through eight at the beginning of the new year. These programs are both possible through the generosity of Councilmember James Vacca. In addition, Sports & Arts contin-

ues after school, and there will be some trips during the Christmas break.

Several exciting upcoming events include Hollyrock and our annual Holiday Sing, which will be taking place in the weeks to come.

Please keep in mind these important dates: Dec. 20, last day of school for winter recess; Jan. 2, students return to school.

November Citizens-of-the-Month are Riley Tarsnane (kindergarten); Antalya Rodriguez and Erin Crowe (first grade); Lorelei Cullen (second grade); Adam Garforth and Jhadelyn Castillo (third grade); Joseph Peloso and Michael Gierum (fourth grade); Jasmine Mariette and Kaltrina Rugova (fifth grade); Jessica Lachman and Krisanta Ojo (sixth grade); James McGaughan and Cesar Lugo (seventh grade); John Cebollero and Catherine Ficke (eighth grade).

Best wishes for a happy holidays.

St. Mary's Early Childhood Program

November has been filled with many exciting endeavors for St. Mary's Little Stars of the Sea. We began our month learning many new things, including the letters D, E and F, sequencing, position words, and all about Thanksgiving. In keeping with tradition, Little Stars and the community of City Island enjoyed our annual Turkey Bingo on Nov. 22, and it was a great success. We are grateful to our local businesses, which were extremely generous in their donations; a special thanks to the Lobster House, JP's, the Crab Shanty, the Snug, the City Island Diner, the Rivers Edge and Ginger, our very own "Pampered Chef."

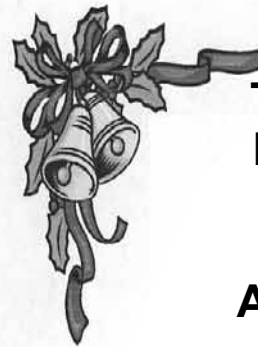
We are excited to begin a new month and a new project that will guide our daily activities for the next several weeks. We will use this holiday season as the basis for many lessons and activities, and focus on love for ourselves and each other. Little Stars will embrace the spirit of giving by hosting a toy drive to help brighten the holidays of underprivileged children. All donations will be greatly appreciated and can be dropped off at the school between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. The spirit of giving begins on Dec. 2 and ends on Dec. 20.

There is still space available for both our Aftercare Program and our early childhood program. We are also offering vacation care to accommodate working parents when their children are off from school. If you are interested in any of our programs, please call Lisa Moore, 718-885-1527 or stop by the school for more information.



Photo by JUDY RAUH

On Nov. 11, 2013, the annual Veterans' Day Remembrance was held at the World War I Memorial in Pelham Bay Park. Members from several local veterans' organizations took part, including representatives from the Leonard H. Hawkins Post 156 on City Island. Performing as the rifle squad were Post 156 members Commander Dave Carman, acting as sergeant-at-arms, with Ron Watson, Mike Torres, Mike Rauh and Robert Neglia. Leading the ceremony was Bronx County Adjutant and City Island resident Joe Goonan, who made note of the armistice ending World War I at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.



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If you would like to write to any of the above contact the Leonard H. Hawkins Post 156, 550 City Island Avenue.
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Sandy Aftermath

Continued from page 3

person for the historic 113-year-old **Morris Yacht and Beach Club** at the southern end of City Island recalls being at the clubhouse when Sandy was at its most ferocious, as winds blew from the southeast with gusts over 100 mph and Tony's Pier, just 50 yards east, suddenly caught fire.

"It was unbelievable," Mr. Penny told *The Current*. "The whole sky was lit up, and the flames were shooting right in our direction." As the fire raged, he feared the worst, that the new clubhouse would catch fire. The original Morris clubhouse, which had been built about 1850, had burned to the ground in March of 2006, setting off a five-year fund-raising and rebuilding effort that culminated in a grand opening of the new clubhouse in 2011. But with a fire raging 50 yards away in the midst of a devastating storm, it was easy to fear and even expect a tragic repeat. It was ironic, Mr. Penny said, that the gale-force winds headed directly at the clubhouse proved to be the clubhouse's savior, because the burning embers were blown right past the clubhouse and into Eastchester Bay.

However, those devastating winds and the storm surge they caused were not so kind to the waterfront of the historic club. "Pop Penny's Pier" at the south end of the property, built by Mr. Penny and his father in 1985, was destroyed by the storm surge, although the end of the pier, with its covered Tiki Bar, survived. Over the past year, with the help of many members, the beloved pier was rebuilt and the electrical connections to the bar were reinstalled. "We even improved on the old pier by eliminating the steep incline at the beginning."

The pier on the north side of the property also suffered significant damage: the launch house was blown off the pier and onto an adjacent property. All of that damage has been repaired as well, Mr. Penny reports. The best news for Morris members was that not one boat was lost, since the club managed to get all the boats but one out of the water before the storm hit, and the one that remained in the water survived unscathed. The last major repair, which still needs to be completed, is the restoration of the sea wall at the south end of the club's property. The club is in the process of applying for grants to pay for the remainder of the project.

Although Sandy's threats to the Morris were not as bad as anticipated, the **City Island Yacht Club** on west Pilot Street was not so lucky. Having suffered the complete loss of its dock when Hurricane Irene blew through in 2011, the club saw Sandy inflict the same fate on the newly rebuilt dock. In addition, the storm surge infiltrated the clubhouse walls, flooded the locker rooms, bathrooms and boiler rooms and severely damaged the electrical and HVAC systems.

In assessing the repairs, which were finally completed a year later, City Island Yacht Club Commodore Ernie Bivona said, "We have weathered it very well. We were quick on the mark to have our pier rebuilt. We made our club house walls stronger. We replaced the furnace and got a new water heater, a new gazebo and a new detachable launch house. In general, we are now in better shape than before the storm, mostly because our membership came through like troopers. After the storm, we came together and ended up with a great sense of camaraderie going forward."

Mr. Bivona credits all the members who came forward, bringing a wide variety of skills—from talented craftspeople who helped with the rebuilding to those who organized fund-raising, with such events as this past summer's "Rock the Dock" party. Others helped secure government loans to pay for the completed repairs not covered by the club's insurance and for future repairs such as restoring the bathroom, which suffered waist-high flooding along with the rest of the lower level of the clubhouse.

"We are definitely in better shape than last year," said long-time club member and former commodore Jimmy Lynch. "The dock is rebuilt and stronger than before." CIYC member Francine Alheid said that the new pressure-treated synthetic dock was tested one afternoon in October, as 50 mph gusts blew for three hours. Water shot up in the air through the spaces between the planks, but the dock held and survived the sudden storm undamaged.

At the **Harlem Yacht Club** on Hunter Avenue, commodore Steve Lochner credits

the club's survival to its sheltered location and the club's talented and giving membership, which completed most of the rebuilding this past spring. Sandy caused significant roof and dock damage, and a foot and half of sea water flooded the Harlem's clubhouse, wiping out the kitchen equipment and much of the flooring. In addition, the deck was torn away from the house, and the launch house was torn off the dock and ended up in the property next door.

During the six months after the storm, everything was repaired or replaced, largely through the industrious volunteer membership. "I was away from the club for a few days and when I came back, I was astonished by the progress they were able to make," the commodore said.

Mr. Lochner told *The Current* that the club had made changes after being devastated in the nor'easter in December 1992 and that they had learned some lessons from Hurricane Irene in 2011. These lessons led to the quick recovery in time for this past boating season. "We had a good board," he said, "and a caring and talented group of members. Everybody came together. I am amazed by what they have been able to accomplish."

Harlem Yacht Club member and City Island resident Ellen Murphy said that symbol of Sandy for the club became the osprey nest that sits atop one of the club dock pilings. "Miraculously, the nest suffered no damage whatsoever and we had a hatching of osprey this spring!"

Recovery efforts after Hurricane Sandy were a huge challenge for the **Stuyvesant Yacht Club**, at the west end of Centre Street, which was hit especially hard when the massive storm surge rose up and caused serious damage to the protective sea wall. As longtime club member Mike Rauh told *The Current*, "The waves tore into the waterfront deck, the launch house and summer house, all of which were swept away. The powerful wind carried some of the roof material and lumber northward, and some of the wreckage could be seen along the beach in Pelham Bay Park. Eventually the sea water penetrated the club building and damaged the first floor."

The storm also took a severe toll on boats stored in the yard, and 29 of them were heavily damaged as the action of wind and the surging waves pushed many of them over on their sides. Club members, working with BoatU.S. and a local salvage firm, cleared the yard area of the damaged boats, several of which were declared a total loss by the insurance companies and were towed away on a barge. Boats that were deemed seaworthy were put back in the water and placed temporarily on moorings.

The next step was to regrade the yard with tons of gravel to fill in the sink holes created by the receding tidal surge. Then the boats that had been temporarily put back in the water were hauled out and stored in the yard again. All of this work was finished before the end of 2012.

During the spring, the club held a number of work parties as members pitched in to clean up the property. Inside the building, they removed the 24 inches of sheetrock and insulation at the bottom of the walls, which were then restored and painted.

The summer was spent on recovery efforts at the south seawall, which included digging a long, deep trench, installing fiberglass rebar and erecting forms. Several tons of concrete with a specific salt-water resistant formula were then poured, and once everything had cured, the forms were removed to reveal a very solid new sea barrier. Work along the south sea wall will continue in the spring of 2014. Plans for a new dock have been developed, a huge project that will be discussed by the yacht club's board this winter.



Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

This little cottage at the west end of Carroll Street finally looks great—better than before Sandy, in fact.



A photograph taken during Hurricane Sandy by *The Island Current's* own photographer, Rick DeWitt, was selected by the Museum of the City of New York, where it is now on display in an exhibit cosponsored by the International Center of Photography. Rick believes that his may be the only photograph in the show that was taken in the Bronx.



Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK and MIKE RAUH

During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the damage to Stuyvesant Yacht Club on Centre Street was so extensive that one year later recovery efforts still continue. Funds are low and the work is a huge expense for the small club, but members are organizing and volunteering to repair the sea wall (bottom photo) and main dock.

Residential Damage

Although many gardens were washed away and varying degrees of damage were sustained by houses along both east and west shorelines, at least two houses on City Island's west side suffered serious damage that required a great deal of time and effort to repair.

At the very end of Carroll Street, Ruth Markowe's cottage on the water was hit hard by waves during the storm surge and ended up with five feet of water inside. The tenant, ironically a retired firefighter, failed to turn off the electricity, so the house burst into flames, which gutted the interior, destroying the boiler and appliances. The Buildings Department quickly red-tagged the house and declared it uninhabitable.

Although FEMA and Ms. Markowe's insurance company were able to come up with funds to rebuild, she could not proceed because her tenant refused to move. For seven months he remained on the premises, paying no rent and complaining to the authorities that there was no heat. Ms. Markowe repeatedly explained to the authorities that there was no heat because there was no boiler, which could not be replaced until the house was completely

rebuilt. Finally the tenant left, and she was able to rebuild the cottage, which is now, as she told *The Current*, "better than ever."

Another home owner on the Island suffered serious flooding damage as well, although no fire, and had to do major rebuilding to make the house livable and resistant to future floods. The process was expensive, time-consuming and inconvenient, but the owners were pleasantly surprised to find that as layers of damaged material were removed, it became apparent that parts of the house had been built as early as the 1880s, far earlier than they had imagined.

Although the official hurricane season on the east coast ended on Nov. 30, no one on City Island who remembers that ill-named "Storm of the Century" in December 1992 is ready to relax quite yet. Indeed, concern is building throughout the Island that new flood zone classifications and increased flood insurance rates will take a considerable toll on residents and businesses even without another serious storm. But community spirit and determination being what they are here, it is likely that City Island will survive that crisis as well.



Merry Christmas

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A Message for Our Children and Ourselves

By JOHN SCARDINA

“Live Simply so that Others May Simply Live”

– Gandhi

There are basic needs that all of us face: shelter, sustenance, human contact and a sense of security. There are people in our NYC community who lack these basic needs—people with children like yours and mine—and thus they face a daily struggle for survival.

Mohandas Gandhi’s quote is a daily reminder for me of my own well-being and my obligation to share with others. I am also reminded of the work of Abraham Maslow, who created a “hierarchy of needs” pyramid to describe the potential of human development:

Unless the lower levels of the pyramid are maintained on a regular basis, there is little chance for the kinds of success we all envision for our loved ones: stable and loving relationships, achievement in school and work, and the potential to make a change for the better in this world.

As we approach this holiday season,



can we share our good fortune with those in need? The ongoing well-being of all people may depend on the good works that one of these challenged children may accomplish when given the simple life gifts of food, shelter and compassion that you can provide right now. It only makes sense that we take care of one another, doesn't it?

City Islander John Scardina is a school psychologist, child development specialist, and parent educator. Check out his website at www.ThinkLaughLearn.com, and his parent discussion groups at the City Island Community Center.

IN THE GARDEN

By MARY COLBY

JOY TO THE WINTER WORLD

Winter is a mystery too marvelous to be understood. Although the flowers have faded and winter is knocking, the garden can still be beautiful during the cold months, yes, even miraculous. A transformation occurs after the leaves have fallen, and if you have the right plants, your garden will be a success all year round. Bundled up for the cold, I find the garden a very exciting place in December and January. I think I get a bigger thrill from a single flower blooming outside in the winter than a whole garden of summer blossoms.

A walk in the beautiful Wave Hill gardens in Riverdale will give you a good idea of what I am talking about. Mahonias, with their trusses filled with grapelike berries, are a feature here, along with hollies that are laden with berries. The leather leaf viburnums with their felt-like leaves and the burnished color of the red twig dogwoods (*cornus alba*) give the winter scene character and color. The New York Botanical Gardens is a good place to see the best barked trees, and their conifer collection is worth a look to see the magnificence of evergreens in their maturity.

Christmas roses (*helleborus orientalis*) stand up stiffly on their stems, and if you brush the leaves away you can see the fat buds getting ready to burst forth out of the earth and through the snow. They like heavy soil and shade. The lovely green *helleborus foetidus* starts its display in November. The green buds among the handsome cut leaf look so fresh at this time of year that I planted a big patch of them around a tree. Intermingling some variegated lamium as a groundcover makes a good pairing. So does ivy, as hellebores are strong enough not to get muscled out. Of course you might add a witch hazel to this composition; I delight in its ribbon-like flowers perfuming the air in January.

Skimmias are beautiful and a bit of a challenge; their dark shiny leaves complement the berries. Position them close to the house so you can enjoy their beauty without going too far afield in the cold. My old winter-blooming jasmine cascades over a little wall and rewards me with its tiny yellow super-cute flowers in early March. I shear it to keep it under control. I wait for the days that will bring the cyclamens and the aconites and, of course, the violets.

It is interesting to note that the Catskill



Mary's winter garden.

region was once the violet capital of the United States. Victorians loved their posies, and although the hothouses that grew them are gone, it would be well to remember their beauty by having some in the garden. I love the plain violet-colored ones and the white flowers with the purple eyes that have naturalized now in my lawn. When the mower goes over them they are short enough to stay intact. Plant some now, as they are early too and they will multiply by scattering their own seed.

The best of wintertime surely is having the time to read, and reading garden books is fun because work is done and we can dream about new plants and different garden plantings for next year. Try the “English Flower Garden” by William Robinson.

If you decide to plant your Christmas tree that may be a spruce or a fir, carefully site it. They grow to 80 to 100 feet. If you want to buy a potted evergreen to decorate and don't have the space for the big boys, try a juniper, but don't keep it indoors for more than two weeks and water it well. New evidence is out that a square hole is better than a round one, and let it be thrice as large as the pot and just as deep. After the ground has frozen, collect evergreen branches to use as mulch and to protect your garden. The first snow was here on Nov. 12, which is very early this year. Keep cozy and happy holidays.

Mary Colby is a gardener and fine artist, whose studio and gallery, Fe Fi Faux, is on City Island.

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A Current Review

“Barefoot in the Park”

By BRUCE A. WEIS



Photo by MARY MCINTYRE

Laura Shelly and Steven Bendler.

The City Island Theater Group capped its 2013 production season with a truly rousing presentation of Neil Simon’s “Barefoot in the Park,” which could only be described in a Twitter feed as “LOL.” This production was packed with high-energy, rapid-fire dialogue, delivered with perfect comedic timing by a cast that literally swarmed the boards, taking advantage of every available inch of the small stage.

The plot of “Barefoot in the Park” centers on newlyweds Corie and Paul Bratter and the events surrounding their move to a sixth-floor walk-up apartment in Greenwich Village. Paul is a proper, hard-working young attorney just starting out in a legal practice, while his spontaneous bride is a free spirit, determined to create a romantic environment in a tiny one-room apartment with spotty heat and a hole in the skylight.

Although the disconnect between their two personalities is a large piece of the show’s story, their visitors (along with the astonishing number of steps that separate the apartment from the street) contribute mightily to the plot line. The show’s title refers to the pivotal night that Paul becomes drunk and runs barefoot in Washington Square Park in response to his wife’s repeated complaints about his sober and cautious demeanor.

“Barefoot in the Park” made its Broadway debut at the Biltmore Theatre on Oct. 23, 1963, and ran for 1,530 performances before it closed on June 25, 1967. This was Neil Simon’s longest-running show; in fact, it is the tenth longest-running non-musical play in Broadway history. Elizabeth Ashley starred as Corie; the

cast also included Robert Redford as Paul, featured Mildred Natwick (Mrs. Banks) and Kurt Kasznar (Victor Velasco), and was directed by Mike Nichols. The show received three Tony Award nominations in 1964, and Mike Nichols won a Tony for Best Director. The show was revived, at the Cort Theater in February 2006 and closed in May after 109 performances. That cast included Amanda Peet, Patrick Wilson, Jill Clayburgh and Tony Roberts.

“Barefoot in the Park” became a movie in 1967, as Neil Simon’s screenwriting debut, starring Jane Fonda and Robert Redford. Mildred Natwick and Charles Boyer were featured, and Herb Edelman reprised his stage role as the telephone installer. The movie role of Corie was originally offered to Natalie Wood, who had played opposite Robert Redford in several movies, but she declined the offer in order to take some time off. Mildred Natwick was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress; Jane Fonda received a nomination from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for Best Foreign Actress for this production.

A little-known television series based on the play ran for 13 weeks on ABC in 1970 and featured Scoey Mitchell and Tracy Reed. Interestingly, this forgotten effort was one of two television series based on Neil Simon plays to debut on the network that year; the other was “The Odd Couple,” which will likely be in syndication until the end of time.

A production of “Barefoot” at the Moore Theater in Seattle was taped and presented as a made-for-TV movie by HBO in 1981. This show starred Bess Armstrong (Corie), Richard Thomas (Paul), Barbara Barrie (Mrs. Banks) and Hans Conreid (Velasco) and was telecast in March of 1982.

As with any Neil Simon play, the “Barefoot” script is densely packed with quick jokes and retorts that seem to pour out one over another. Comedic timing, something that isn’t obvious unless it’s missing, is vital when working from a script like this. The cast of CITG’s “Barefoot in the Park” was notable in the way they dealt with Simon’s writing style, timing the delivery of their lines to let the audience appreciate the material. The cast’s mobility and energy was also remarkable; at no time did a performer plant himself or herself to deliver a line. The actors were in constant motion—walking to and fro, running, and even leaping—all of which added effectively to the liveliness of the production.

Laura Shelly, who played Corie Bratter, is a native of Seattle and a newcomer to the CITG. She brought enormous energy to her role, as Corie works to make her new hubby a happy home, in spite of the

numerous deficiencies in their apartment and the difficulties climbing the stairs to reach it. At one point in the show, Corie’s mother, Mrs. Banks, tells her, “You jump into life.” Ms. Shelly truly jumped into this role.

Paul Bratter was played to perfection by Steven Bendler, a CITG regular who provided a dramatic counterpoint to his new wife. When he insists on staying home to work on briefs for a trial the following day, Corie wants to get drunk and ring all the neighbors’ doorbells. Finally, by the third act, he has evolved into a barefoot mode (and a mild case of hypothermia) to demonstrate his love and save his marriage.

Kevin Ian Gordon brilliantly played the part of Victor Velasco, the upstairs neighbor who is perennially locked out of his apartment, in a style reminiscent of the world’s most interesting man. He gave a stellar performance, making himself the focus each time he set foot on the stage.

Corie’s mother Ethel Banks, played by Camille Kaiser, was the epitome of the worried, slightly melodramatic and ever so slightly put-upon mother of a beloved daughter who has finally flown the nest. Ethel’s scenes with Victor Velasco and her ongoing struggle with the five flights of stairs leading up to the apartment are nothing short of uproarious.

Phil Garfinkel played the telephone repairman who makes repeated trips to the apartment. Each time he came on stage, it was possible to read the temperature of the relationship between Paul and Corie on his face. Thomas Losito wore two hats for this production, appearing in the brief but amusing role of the deliveryman and serving as the production stage manager for the show.

Audiences have come to expect handsome sets of the City Island Theater Group, and this re-creation of a 1960s Greenwich Village walk-up was particularly impressive. Dan Srdoc was responsible for this one, including a fabulous skylight that

had everybody talking. Joe Burck artfully decorated the apartment, as well as the lighting for the show, and Denis Zepeda, as usual, did a professional job with the sound design. CITG’s prop mistress, Barbara Dolensek, furnished the newlyweds’ apartment by borrowing stuff from various Island residents who never throw anything away.

With this production, Maria Provenzano realized her dream of directing a long-admired show, and she did so admirably. Nick Sala was Production Manager, along with Carol McCabe, who designed and produced costumes for the show with the help of Cheryl Brinker. Natalia Vargas-Caba, a newcomer to the group, did a fine job with the make-up.

Having completed 14 years of increasingly impressive productions, the City Island Theater Group, recently honored by the Chamber of Commerce for its contributions to the community, looks forward to celebrating its 15th anniversary next year. Let’s get ready for another terrific year by giving them a standing ovation for this one!

Christmas is Fun



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Holiday Island

Continued from page 9



Magickal Realms

ner and all the “trimmings” (an amazing chef-show) at **Ohana Japanese Hibachi Seafood & Steakhouse** (500 City Island Avenue).

And there's the option of “Mexican Night” every Thursday at the **Snug**, or try the home-style cooking like your mother used to make at the **City Island Diner** (304 City Island Avenue) right next door. Donna's cupcakes and specialty breads hit the right spot, no matter your location.

A new shop on City Island, **Magickal Realms** (258 City Island Avenue), will take you on magical journeys, so visit with Lady Rhea and Lady Zoradia. And there painting portraits—of you, of you and your pet, for example—is Jan Rhodes.

And quite magical as well are cigars at **Amadiz Cigars** (470 City Island Avenue), where they offer possibilities for special events, parties and weddings.

Give the gift of a break. As you rush around, shopping and wrapping and such, there comes the time to press “stop.” At that time, perhaps you can “stop in” at **Ray's Café** (205 City Island Avenue) soon to open. Or if you still need to keep going,

run in for something to take with you from **Dunkin' Donuts** (636 City Island Avenue), the **City Island Deli** (520 City Island Avenue) or **Papa John's Deli** (325 City Island Avenue). (If it's that last location, you can drop off your clothes for washing with Susie and Mariana at **On Board Laundromat** (323 City Island Avenue) and save some time in that department.)

Or bring home something to feast on while you wrap those gifts from our Island shops. Try Chef Rafael's **To-Go Express** (415 City Island Avenue) and see about Chef Rafael Ortega's daily specials. There's always a delicious sandwich or slice from **Filomena's Pizza & Pasta** (286 City Island Avenue), or maybe some dumplings and egg foo young from the **City Island Chinese Restaurant** (84–86 City Island Avenue).

Maybe you just need a few items to make a snack for late night decorating? Well the **Fire House Corner Deli Grocery** (240 City Island Avenue) is open late, or plan ahead and visit Sara at **Connie's New Way Market** (307 City Island Avenue) for just what you need!

It's about the giving in this season—but remember your City Island shops and stops and eateries have a lot to give all year round! Happy New Year, indeed.

Obituaries

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

In Memoriam

The *Island Current* staff was saddened to hear that Stu Hawkins had passed away on Monday, Nov. 18, 2013. For several years, from 1987 to 1992, he contributed a column entitled “A Current Close-up” to the paper, poking fun at Islanders and off-Islanders alike with clever cartoon portraits and witty repartee. He will be missed.



Unlikely Friendships

The Chosen (1981) is the story of the Hassidic Jewish community in Brooklyn during World War II. The plot focuses on the unlikely friendship that develops between Danny Saunders (Robby Bensen), the son of a Hassidic rabbi (Rod Steiger), and Reuven Malter (Barry Miller), the son of a politically active professor (Maximilian Schell). It portrays social clashes within the Jewish community, as well as those with the world at large. It is a moving story of the love between two sets of fathers and sons, and the place that each holds in their community.

Driving Miss Daisy (1990) is the story of a 25-year relationship between a proud southern lady, Miss Daisy Werthan (Jessica Tandy), and her chauffeur, Hoke Colburn (Morgan Freeman). Miss Daisy is furious with her son, Boolie (Dan Aykroyd), for hiring Hoke and feels frustrated by this limitation on her independence, but ultimately Hoke turns out to be Miss Daisy's best friend.

In **Grand Canyon** (1992), when Mack's (Kevin Kline) car breaks down in a very dangerous Los Angeles neighborhood, Simon (Danny Glover) tows him to safety and saves Mack from threats by local gun-waving gang members. From this incident grows a friendship that has profound reverberations in both of their lives and the lives of their families. The supporting cast includes Mary McDonnell as Mack's wife, Mary-Louise Parker as a secretary in love with Mack, cynical film maker Steve Martin as Mack's best friend and Alfre Woodard as Simon's love interest (a match made by Mack). This is a special film wherein miracles abound.

The Shawshank Redemption (1994) is the story of two men, Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) and “Red” Redding (Morgan Freeman), who are serving life sentences in prison. Many would be put off by a prison drama, thinking it too depressing. However, this film lifts one's spirits in the way that these two men become friends and survive the years together. It is based on an excellent novel by Stephen King, with the large majority of the dialogue taken straight from the book. The musical score by Tom Newman is as heartwarming as the film.

The Professional (1994) stars Jean Reno as Leon, a hit man, who, to his initial regret, saves the life of a stunning adolescent girl, Mathilda (Natalie Portman). She is the sole survivor when her family is executed by a group of dirty cops, led by Stansfield (Gary Oldman). The friendship that develops between Leon and Mathilda is touching indeed. However, the real star of the film is the soundtrack, which is so excellent that I just couldn't fast forward over the gruesome parts as I didn't want to miss the music.

Boys on the Side (1995) is the story of three women. A singer named Jane (Whoopi Goldberg) and her friend Holly (Drew Barrymore) are given a ride west by Robin (Mary-Louise Parker), who advertises for someone to share the driving with her. They are wildly different in character; Jane is a cynical lesbian, Holly a man-crazy, reckless bundle of energy and Robin

a competent, compulsive but fragile woman with a secret. Their friendship turns them into a family as events force them to curtail their journey in Tucson. Matthew McConaughey is on hand as Abe, a cop who is Holly's love interest, and Anita Gillette is delightful as Elaine, Robin's mother.

In **Livin' Out Loud** (1998), a very unlikely friendship, born out of loneliness, evolves between Judith (Holly Hunter), a tenant in a ritzy Fifth Avenue building, and Pat (Danny DeVito), her elevator operator. When Judith's rich doctor husband (Martin Donovan) leaves her, she takes refuge in attention from Pat, as well as a friendship that develops with a nightclub singer, Liz (the always wonderful Queen Latifah). This is a bittersweet film with very interesting characters.

Finding Forrester (2000) stars Sean Connery as William Forrester, a reclusive writer who befriends a black teenager, Jamal Wallace (Rob Brown). Jamal, though brilliant, has been an underachiever in high school, but his athletic prowess and high SAT scores cause him to be offered a scholarship to a private academy. How the old man and teenager learn from each other is inspiring, especially when it comes to the concepts of integrity and loyalty.

The Station Agent (2003) is a quirky comedy set in New Jersey, starring the excellent Peter Dinklage as Finbar McBride, a four-foot-tall man who chooses to live the life of a hermit in an abandoned train station he has inherited. He unexpectedly meets and befriends a couple of fellow loners. Troubled Olivia (Patricia Clarkson) is an artist devastated by the loss of her son and separation from her husband, while carefree and verbose Joe (Bobby Cannavale) runs a hot dog stand. The three unlikely friends each deal with their need to connect compared with their individual need for isolation. This film won the Audience Award at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (2008) is the story of a Nazi official (David Thewlis) who moves his family to “the country,” where they will live on “a farm.” His wife (Vera Farmiga) is greatly troubled that the “farm” is in reality a concentration camp, where her husband is commandant. The story is told through the eyes of their son, Bruno (Asa Butterfield), an adorable and imaginative 8-year-old who is totally unaware of the truth of his surroundings. He befriends Shmuel (Jack Scanlon), a Jewish boy he meets by the barbed wire fence. He visits often, and in a quest to help Shmuel, Bruno places himself in great jeopardy. The movie's ending is the most haunting of virtually any film I have ever seen.

The King's Speech (2010) features Colin Firth's Oscar-winning performance of a lifetime as Bertie, the duke of York, a tortured stutterer who is brother to the king of England, Edward VIII (Guy Pearce). When the king takes up with a much-married woman, Wallis Simpson (Eve Best), and the country is on the brink of war with Germany, Bertie is terrified that he might have to fill his brother's shoes while struggling mightily with his stammer. Throughout Bertie's efforts to overcome his impediment, there is humor provided by his unconventional speech therapist, Lionel Logue (the amazing Geoffrey Rush), found by Bertie's loving wife, Elizabeth (Helena Bonham Carter). Even though Lionel is a commoner, he and Bertie form a friendship that lasts for the rest of their lives.

Based on a true story, **The Intouchables** (2011) recounts the friendship that forms between Philippe (Francois Cluzet), an aristocrat who became a quadriplegic from a paragliding accident, and Driss (Omar Sy), a young man from the projects whom he hires to be his caretaker. There are huge cultural differences between the two, but they become and remain friends. This film is inspiring, uplifting and extremely funny at times, definitely a must-see.

Starlet (2012) explores the unlikely friendship between 21-year-old Jane (Dree Hemingway) and isolated 85-year-old Sadie (Besedka Johnson), two women who meet at Sadie's yard sale in California's San Fernando Valley. After purchasing a relic from Sadie's past, Jane uncovers a hidden stash of money inside it. Jane attempts to befriend the bitter old woman in an effort to solve her guilty conscience, and secrets emerge as their unlikely friendship grows.

And until next time, happy viewing. . .

Happy Holidays

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—Naomi Shihab Nye

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Photos by JUDY RAUH

Several local runners were among the nearly 50,000 people in the 2013 ING New York City Marathon. Top row, l. to r.: Jimmy Mantzaris, Mike Rauh and John Peters. Not pictured: Matt Delaney. Bottom row: Marje and Dave Kos, who were once again part of the ham radio team in Central Park. Jimmy finished the Nov. 3rd race in 4 hours, 8 minutes. Matt came in with a time of 4:42, with John not far behind in 4:56. Mike's time was 5:54. This was his 35th consecutive New York City Marathon! On the Friday before the race, Mike and several other runners who had completed 15 or more NYC Marathons were part of the Parade of Nations and opening ceremony in Central Park. Marje and Dave have competed in the New York City Marathon in the past, as well as races in several states. Mike has been collecting marathon mugs from the New York City race over the last 35 years (inset). Not one for every year, but a fine collection for sure!



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

2013 Year-end Tax Tips: Special Report

The end of 2013 brings many new planning opportunities, along with the traditional year-end tax strategies. It also brings challenges for both individuals and businesses. There is much for taxpayers to consider before 2013 ends, and beyond, including important changes made by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (ATRA), the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare), the Supreme Court's decision on same-sex marriage and the release of significant new IRS rules on many pressing issues. We must also consider the prospect of comprehensive tax reform in 2014, which will require some "crystal ball" forecasting of what Congress may or may not do in the coming year. On top of everything, the IRS shutdown in October could delay the start of the 2014 tax filing season, and the potential long-term effects have yet to be determined.

Let's explore some of the planning opportunities available to taxpayers, especially those resulting from provisions that are new for 2013 and those that are currently scheduled to expire after 2013. Of course, every taxpayer's situation is unique and a year-end planning strategy, whether for an individual, family or business, should be customized in consultation with a tax professional.

For higher-income taxpayers, 2013 represents a year of increased tax burden in comparison to previous years. Not only did ATRA set the maximum income tax rate at 39.6 percent, but the Affordable Care Act's new surtax on net investment income (NII) and Additional Medicare Tax came into effect retroactively to Jan. 1, 2013. The combination of these and

numerous other factors makes year-end considerations all that more crucial.

Planning for Individuals

The rapid approach of the year end brings more certainty to tax planning than in 2012 because of ATRA. In addition to the permanent extension of the Bush-era tax cuts for lower- and middle-income taxpayers, ATRA also revives the 39.6 percent tax bracket at new taxable income levels for most if not all higher-income individuals. It also revives the personal exemption phase-out (PEP) and the limitation on itemized deductions at new levels and increases the maximum tax rate on qualified dividends and capital gains, along with many other changes. As already noted, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) brings two additional considerations that need to be factored into year-end tax planning by higher-income taxpayers for the first time in 2013: the NII surtax and the new Additional Medicare Tax.

Tax Rates

For 2013 and subsequent years, individual income tax rate schedules reflect a continuation of the rates under the Bush-era tax cuts, except for the addition of a new 39.6 percent rate for the highest bracket. Thus, the individual income tax rates for 2013 and future years are 10, 15, 25, 28, 33, 35 and 39.6 percent. As in the past, each of the taxable income rate brackets is increased slightly each year based on an inflation factor. The starting points for the 39.6 percent bracket for 2013 and 2014 (as projected for inflation) are:

	2013	2014
Married filing jointly and surviving spouse	\$450,000	\$457,600
Heads of households	\$425,000	\$432,200
Unmarried individuals	\$400,000	\$406,750
Married filing separately	\$225,000	\$228,800

Because the highest rate for estates and trusts starts at a relatively low level of taxable income (\$11,950 in 2013 and \$12,150 in 2014), executors and trustees should consider making distributions to beneficiaries before year end, which generally will pass that amount of taxable income through to those beneficiaries and escape tax at the comparatively high estate/trust level.

Capital Gains/Dividends

Starting in 2013, ATRA has raised the top rate for capital gains and dividends to 20 percent, up from the previous Bush-era 15 percent maximum rate. This top rate is generally aligned with the same income levels at which the new 39.6 percent income tax rate bracket starts: long-term capital gains and qualified dividends, to the extent they would be otherwise taxed at the 39.6 percent rate as marginal ordinary income, will be taxed at the 20 percent rate.

Absent ATRA, the maximum tax rate on net capital gain of all non-corporate taxpayers would have reverted to 20 percent (10 percent for taxpayers in the 15 percent bracket) starting Jan. 1, 2013. On the other side of the spectrum, because of ATRA, taxpayers with incomes below the top of the 15 percent income tax bracket for 2013 and in the future will continue to be subject to a zero capital gains/dividends rate.

The 28 and 25 percent tax rates for collectibles and un-recaptured Code Sec. 1250 gain, respectively, continue unchanged after 2012. Also unchanged is the application of ordinary income rates to short-term capital gains, except that taxpayers may now be potentially subject to a higher top rate (39.6 percent instead of 35 percent). This could be even higher (43.4 percent) if the NII surtax applies.

Taxpayers may consider using carry-forward losses from 2012 by recognizing capital gains to the extent available, preferably short-term gains if applicable, since they are taxed at ordinary-income rates. Carry-forward net capital losses from pre-2013 transactions that would have offset capital gains at a maximum 15 percent rate can be used to offset capital gains at the new higher rates without adjustment for the rate change.

Holding capital assets for more than 12 months before taxable disposition to avoid short-term capital gain status is usually advisable, unless sufficient loss offsets have been recognized, or market conditions indicate otherwise.

Year-end planning should also be utilized to avoid spikes in income whenever possible because ordinary capital gains and other types of taxable income could be pushed into either the 39.6 percent bracket or the 20 percent capital-gains tax bracket. Spreading the recognition of certain income between 2013 and 2014, rather than recognizing it all in either 2013 or 2014, may accomplish this goal.

Alternative Minimum Tax

Year-end planning was made more complicated in the past because of the uncertainty over the alternative minimum tax (AMT). Congress had originally intended that the AMT operate so that wealthy taxpayers could not escape taxation. Because the AMT had not been indexed for inflation, along with other factors, the AMT began to encroach on middle income taxpayers. To prevent this, Congress routinely "patched" the AMT by increasing the exemption amounts and making other changes. ATRA permanently patches the AMT for 2013 and subsequent years. Under ATRA, the exemption amounts

for 2013 are \$51,900 for single individuals and heads of household and \$80,800 for married couples filing a joint return and surviving spouses. ATRA provides that these amounts are indexed for inflation after 2013. Taxable income that exceeds the exemption amount is subject to a 26 percent AMT rate on the first \$175,000 of alternative minimum tax income (AMTI) and a 28 percent on any AMTI above this \$175,000 amount. ATRA also allows taxpayers to take all of the nonrefundable personal credits against regular and AMT liability.

The 2014 AMT exemption for married joint filers and surviving spouses is currently projected to be \$82,100 (up from \$80,800 in 2013). For heads of household and unmarried single filers, the exemption will be \$52,800 (up from \$51,900 in 2013). Taxpayers who were accustomed to reviewing their AMT liability versus regular tax liability in years before ATRA permanently patched the AMT should continue their analysis. Some taxpayers may find that their AMT liability and regular tax liability are roughly equal from year to year. Other taxpayers may find that they have had significant fluctuations in income from year to year and could explore the benefit from being able to shift some AMT-triggering items from an AMT year to a non-AMT year.

For many taxpayers, large amounts of certain items may trigger AMT liability. These include, but are not limited to, itemized deductions for medical expenses, the addition of certain income from incentive stock options, changes in income from installment sales, and more. Some taxpayers may benefit from participating in an employer's pretax medical deduction plan, which could reduce their taxable compensation and AMT liability.

Taxpayers who discover they are not liable for AMT for 2013, but who had been liable for the AMT in a past year, may be eligible to take a minimum tax credit against their regular tax this year. This credit cannot, however, be used to reduce AMT liability in a future year. Additionally, the minimum tax credit is allowed only for the AMT caused by deferral items (such as depreciation) and not exclusion items (such as the standard deduction).

President Obama has proposed to replace the AMT with the "Buffett Rule," which would impose a minimum tax of 30 percent on taxpayers with incomes above \$1 million. In April 2013, the Senate rejected the Buffett Rule as proposed in a bill sponsored by the Democrats. Senate Democrats may want to reintroduce the bill in 2014.

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Times and heights of high and low water (Eastern Standard Time)
Heights in feet above soundings printed on charts of water adjacent to City Island. Times shown are nautical times. For times on the table beginning with 1300, subtract 1200 to get ordinary PM time (e.g., 1625 - 1200 = 4:25 P.M.). Times less than 1200 are A.M. times (e.g., 1154 = 11:54 A.M.).
HH = hours; MM = minutes Tide chart by Tom Smith

DECEMBER 2013									
DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	
01 Sun	0255	0.06	0900	8.39	1558	-0.59	2139	7.44	Sun 01
02 Mon	0349	-0.21	0950	8.63	1650	-0.92	2231	7.65	Mon 02
03 Tue	0443	-0.40	1041	8.76	1741	-1.11	2322	7.77	Tue 03
04 Wed	0537	-0.48	1132	8.72	1834	-1.15			Wed 04
05 Thu	0015	7.80	0634	-0.43	1226	8.52	1929	-1.03	Thu 05
06 Fri	0111	7.74	0736	-0.28	1323	8.16	2029	-0.79	Fri 06
07 Sat	0214	7.61	0847	-0.09	1427	7.71	2133	-0.51	Sat 07
08 Sun	0326	7.48	1004	0.06	1549	7.29	2239	-0.24	Sun 08
09 Mon	0443	7.44	1117	0.08	1715	7.03	2344	-0.07	Mon 09
10 Tue	0552	7.50	1224	-0.03	1825	6.95			Tue 10
11 Wed	0046	0.02	0654	7.63	1326	-0.22	1926	6.97	Wed 11
12 Thu	0145	0.02	0751	7.79	1423	-0.44	2022	7.05	Thu 12
13 Fri	0239	0.00	0843	7.93	1516	-0.61	2114	7.14	Fri 13
14 Sat	0329	-0.02	0932	8.01	1604	-0.70	2201	7.21	Sat 14
15 Sun	0415	0.01	1017	8.02	1649	-0.69	2246	7.24	Sun 15
16 Mon	0457	0.10	1059	7.96	1731	-0.58	2327	7.23	Mon 16
17 Tue	0535	0.24	1136	7.83	1809	-0.38			Tue 17
18 Wed	0005	7.19	0606	0.40	1207	7.66	1841	-0.15	Wed 18
19 Thu	0038	7.11	0623	0.53	1224	7.50	1901	0.06	Thu 19
20 Fri	0059	7.06	0637	0.58	1241	7.41	1907	0.17	Fri 20
21 Sat	0113	7.07	0708	0.59	1311	7.33	1933	0.21	Sat 21
22 Sun	0142	7.12	0747	0.62	1349	7.23	2010	0.26	Sun 22
23 Mon	0219	7.18	0831	0.67	1432	7.08	2052	0.33	Mon 23
24 Tue	0301	7.24	0919	0.71	1519	6.91	2138	0.41	Tue 24
25 Wed	0349	7.29	1011	0.72	1612	6.74	2229	0.47	Wed 25
26 Thu	0441	7.36	1109	0.67	1709	6.61	2323	0.49	Thu 26
27 Fri	0537	7.48	1212	0.52	1810	6.58			Fri 27
28 Sat	0021	0.43	0636	7.66	1324	0.24	1915	6.69	Sat 28
29 Sun	0124	0.27	0736	7.90	1441	-0.18	2020	6.92	Sun 29
30 Mon	0230	0.02	0836	8.16	1547	-0.64	2123	7.22	Mon 30
31 Tue	0336	-0.28	0935	8.40	1644	-1.05	2224	7.58	Tue 31
JANUARY 2014									
01 Wed	0443	-0.64	1034	8.59	1739	-1.44	2319	7.83	Wed 01
02 Thu	0542	-0.85	1129	8.61	1831	-1.56			Thu 02
03 Fri	0014	7.97	0640	-0.94	1224	8.46	1923	-1.51	Fri 03
04 Sat	0109	7.98	0740	-0.88	1322	8.17	2017	-1.29	Sat 04
05 Sun	0207	7.89	0842	-0.71	1425	7.76	2113	-0.95	Sun 05
06 Mon	0310	7.73	0946	-0.49	1536	7.33	2213	-0.57	Mon 06
07 Tue	0417	7.57	1052	-0.28	1648	6.98	2315	-0.22	Tue 07
08 Wed	0524	7.46	1157	-0.16	1756	6.77			Wed 08
09 Thu	0017	0.04	0626	7.44	1259	-0.13	1859	6.70	Thu 09
10 Fri	0117	0.19	0725	7.49	1358	-0.18	1956	6.74	Fri 10
11 Sat	0212	0.25	0820	7.57	1451	-0.26	2049	6.84	Sat 11
12 Sun	0304	0.25	0910	7.66	1541	-0.33	2138	6.97	Sun 12
13 Mon	0351	0.24	0957	7.71	1626	-0.36	2223	7.08	Mon 13
14 Tue	0435	0.25	1039	7.71	1707	-0.32	2305	7.14	Tue 14
15 Wed	0513	0.28	1118	7.64	1744	-0.23	2342	7.15	Wed 15
16 Thu	0544	0.33	1148	7.53	1814	-0.10			Thu 16
17 Fri	0013	7.13	0602	0.36	1202	7.42	1830	0.00	Fri 17
18 Sat	0025	7.12	0614	0.32	1214	7.39	1836	0.00	Sat 18
19 Sun	0038	7.22	0643	0.24	1243	7.39	1904	-0.05	Sun 19
20 Mon	0107	7.35	0721	0.20	1320	7.35	1940	-0.05	Mon 20
21 Tue	0144	7.46	0803	0.22	1402	7.24	2021	0.01	Tue 21
22 Wed	0227	7.52	0849	0.28	1449	7.06	2107	0.13	Wed 22
23 Thu	0315	7.53	0940	0.37	1541	6.85	2157	0.27	Thu 23
24 Fri	0407	7.51	1037	0.45	1638	6.65	2252	0.40	Fri 24
25 Sat	0505	7.50	1141	0.44	1741	6.55	2354	0.45	Sat 25
26 Sun	0607	7.54	1302	0.27	1851	6.61			Sun 26
27 Mon	0103	0.35	0715	7.69	1435	-0.14	2007	6.87	Mon 27
28 Tue	0224	0.07	0825	7.94	1541	-0.67	2118	7.27	Tue 28
29 Wed	0342	-0.37	0932	8.21	1636	-1.15	2218	7.68	Wed 29
30 Thu	0445	-0.81	1032	8.42	1728	-1.49	2312	8.01	Thu 30
31 Fri	0541	-1.15	1128	8.50	1817	-1.65			Fri 31
FEBRUARY 2014									
01 Sat	0004	8.21	0635	-1.31	1221	8.40	1906	-1.6	Sat 01
02 Sun	0055	8.24	0729	-1.27	1315	8.14	1955	-1.36	Sun 02
03 Mon	0147	8.12	0824	-1.05	1411	7.76	2046	-0.96	Mon 03
04 Tue	0243	7.89	0922	-0.71	1512	7.32	2141	-0.48	Tue 04
05 Wed	0343	7.60	1023	-0.32	1618	6.91	2240	0.00	Wed 05
06 Thu	0449	7.35	1126	0.01	1724	6.63	2342	0.39	Thu 06
07 Fri	0554	7.19	1228	0.22	1828	6.51			Fri 07



Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Although the sight of large trucks and lots of movie equipment on the avenue is old hat to residents when television and film companies use City Island as a location, the fact that the Breakers was briefly a bar again did come as something of a surprise. This scene took place on Nov. 14, 2013, for the pilot episode of a television series called "Believe."



THE SPECTER OF SIGHTS AND SOUNDS YET TO BE

If you haven't yet seen a picture of the new bridge that is supposed to replace our old City Island Bridge, you owe it to yourself and your neighbors to do so ASAP. After all, it is a project that will affect us all for years during construction, probably about five, and, for years and years after that, as a first impression for all those coming onto the Island.

It is not difficult to be against the new bridge on purely aesthetic grounds. It is a design way too futuristic for what is an historic community. But this project is an affront to City Islanders on a much more fundamental level. Are you aware that not one of our elected representatives supports the new bridge's design? Not Councilmember Vacca, not Assemblyman Benedetto, not Senator Klein, not our United States Congressman, Joseph Crowley, nor our Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz Jr. We're sure that U.S. Senators Schumer and Gillibrand would not be supporters were they aware of the federal dollars about to be spent here. Get this: more than \$100 million of taxpayer money is scheduled to be used to build a bridge that most City Islanders don't want. It's safe to say that the President himself, a former community organizer, would be outraged.

The only representative we are not sure

about is Mayor-Elect Bill de Blasio. Anyone with a connection to the incoming administration is invited to reach out on City Island's behalf. Or if you would prefer to put work through the Civic Association, we can facilitate that here at jdsstrat@msn.com.

Think about it: What kind of representative government do we have here if the represented are being ignored? Not one representative is for this and yet, somehow, the green light this new bridge has been given can't be turned yellow, let alone red. What is it going to take to finally be heard? Acts of civil disobedience?

We have a feeling that Mayor-Elect de Blasio would also be interested in another issue that Civic Association leaders have been hard at work on. It concerns the proposed construction of an assisted-living facility on City Island Avenue. In order for this project to proceed, its developers must secure a zoning variance on the property. To that end, it has been claimed that, because of the lot's configuration, the only way to make the property profitable is to change the kind of building that can legally be built there. But of course this argument conveniently overlooks the fact that the lot was purposely and relatively recently configured the way it is now. The owner did not have to purchase surrounding parcels and thereby render the new, larger lot unprofitable.

All of that is moot, however, when you consider the lot in question and its proximity to an already overcrowded P.S. 175. This fact, coupled with Mayor-Elect de Blasio's oft-repeated campaign promise to develop a universal pre-kindergarten program in New York City, adds value to the lot in question that has not yet been considered seriously. Why can't the City buy the land or lease it to develop a new early childhood center, a pre-K through second grade annex that would help to alleviate overcrowding at P.S. 175 as it helps the new mayor deliver on a key promise? What do you think, City Islanders? Share your thoughts at jdsstrat@msn.com. Or write a letter to the new mayor. Or an e-mail. Or all three.

And have a happy and safe holiday season!



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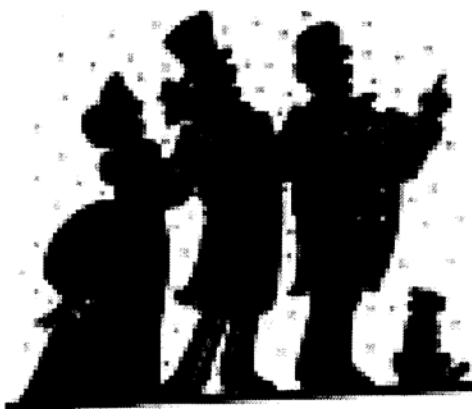


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Photos by KAREN NANI

Island tenor Freddie Lando headlined a Hallow"eve"ning at Grace Church on Oct. 26, 2013. Turnout for the cabaret style event was great, including the singer's fan club, "The Freddie's" (top photo). Guests were invited to wear costumes and prizes were awarded for the best.



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2013

LESSONS AND CAROLS CONCERT
Sunday, December 22
7:30 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24
Carols: 7:30 PM
Mass: 8:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25
Masses: 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM
and 12:00 Noon

NEW YEAR'S EVE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31
Mass: 5:15 PM
(Anticipated Mass for Feast of Mary, Mother of God)

NEW YEAR'S DAY
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1
(Feast of Mary, Mother of God)
Masses: 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 Noon



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.



Tommy Bollati

A fond farewell and Godspeed to Fordham Street's Tommy Bollati, who has been appointed to a two-year assignment as a foreign service officer in the American Consulate in Sao Paolo, Brazil. Tommy, who has been in government service for three years, previously worked in Guadalajara, Mexico, as a consular officer. Accompanying him on his new assignment is his beloved pooch, Maya.

Belated 80th happy birthday greetings to former Minneford Avenue resident and Legion Post Judge Advocate Chief Jack Hartigan.

Happy 49th wedding anniversary wishes on Dec. 26 to Fordham Street's Dom and Carol Alia.

Love and hugs to our little grandson, Jake Penny, who will be celebrating his fourth birthday on Dec. 26. You look so handsome in your new eyeglasses—Grandma and Grandpa Penny.

Happy 13th birthday on Dec. 7 to Minneford Avenue's Michael Mancuso and also to his sister, Alaura Imperioli, who will celebrate on Dec. 29, with love from Mom, Dad and Joey.

Congratulations to Islander Lisa Strazzera Keschl, whose hugely successful restaurant, Perfecto Mundo, was recently featured in The Long Islander newspaper. The restaurant, which Lisa opened three years ago, is located in Commack, Long Island, and features Latin-fusion cuisine. Check it out!

Congratulations to City Island's Hannah Glick and Elizabeth Paldino, who performed in the off-Broadway Darknight Productions of "Come Back to the 5 & Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean" last month. Both actors are members of the City Island Theater Group and were cast



Steven Schmitz

in the roles of Mona NOW (Paldino) and Edna Louise THEN (Glick).

Happy birthday on Dec. 22 across the miles to former Hawkins Street resident Anjulee Sebastian, R.N., who is now residing in Rochester, New York.

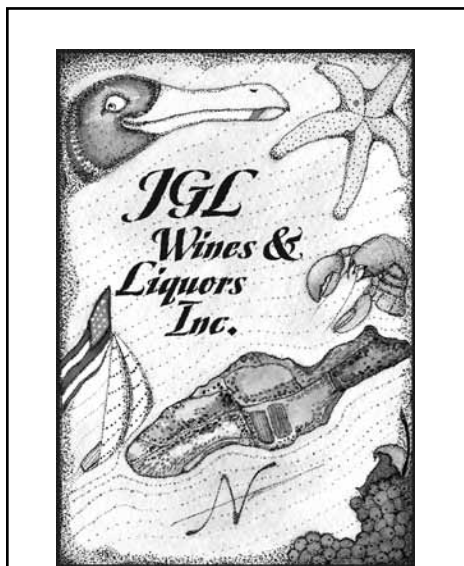
Congratulations to Steven Schmitz of Carroll St. on becoming a United States Marine. After three months of intense training on Parris Island, he completed the requirements to become one of the few and the proud. His mom, Monica, and his family are so proud of him. Semper Fi.

New Year's Eve birthday wishes to Hawkins Street resident Bobby Cavinee, who turns 27.

Congratulations across the miles to City Island's Samantha Pecoraro, who is working in Australia for Geo Visions as an au pair for three young girls. The recent Iona College graduate is loving every moment of her life "down under" and is planning on spending the month of December in New Zealand.

And a very happy holiday to all our neighbors, friends and readers. See you next year!

Maria Swieciki



358 City Island Avenue
City Island, NY 10464
jgl358@verizon.net
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Hannah Glick and other cast members of "Come Back to the 5 & Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean."



Samantha Pecoraro at Bondi Beach, Australia.



Photo courtesy of THE LONG ISLANDER
Liz Strazzera Keschl and her husband at their successful restaurant, Perfecto Mundo, in Commack, Long Island.

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