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One Dollar

Escape to Le Refuge Nouveau

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

In the midst of traffic congestion, new construction, water-main and Con Ed activity and other unpleasant realities of life, there is at least one spot on City Island where one can go to escape the noise, the clutter and the neon signs.

When Pierre Saint-Denis sold his house at 620 City Island Avenue to Adolfo Carrión Jr. and his family in the summer of 2004, Island residents were delighted to welcome the Bronx Borough President, but many were concerned about the future of one of the most attractive businesses on the island. Le Refuge Inn, a bed and breakfast and restaurant, first opened in 1992, and over the years it attracted to City Island many visitors in search of classic French cuisine, comfortable lodgings and Sunday chamber-music concerts.

Thanks to the partnership established between Pierre Saint-Denis and Michelle French, the owner of the landmark Samuel Pell House at 586 City Island Avenue, Le Refuge Inn is again a reality, and in some ways even more appealing than it was in years past.

Six beautifully decorated bedrooms in the 1876 house offer visitors a quiet, attractive place to spend a get-away weekend or a longer vacation. The renovated kitchen offers a classic French menu prepared by Pierre himself at both lunch and dinner, served in intimate dining rooms. But the *pièce de resistance* is the ambience of the place, where one receives a warm welcome as if one were visiting a friend's home (a very elegant friend with exceptionally good taste and a great kitchen!).

The official opening reception on Friday, Jan. 7, 2005, was festive, with many invited guests, elegant appetizers and a buffet dinner, and music provided by Elizabeth Farnum and Janine Robinson, two Island musicians of great talent. A number of dignitaries were present, including



Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Pierre Saint-Denis at work in the kitchen of the recently opened Le Refuge Inn at 589 City Island Avenue.

Councilwoman Madeline Provenzano and the Bronx Borough President, and a good time was had by all.

A week later, on Saturday, Jan. 15, this reporter visited the establishment again, this time to interview Pierre and Michelle and to watch Pierre at work in his newly designed kitchen. In the spacious living room several guests were seated in comfortable chairs listening to a young man play the piano as they sipped good French wine and chatted with each other and their hosts. Most had come from Westchester County, some from New Jersey and other points west.

Although Janine Robinson, who is working for her doctorate in music, will play the piano every Friday evening for the benefit of diners, this evening's music was unplanned. The young man, a friend of Pierre's, had simply dropped by to say hello and, when he noticed the piano, asked



Several Island residents attended the opening reception at Le Refuge Inn, including (l. to r.) singer Elizabeth Farnam, pianist Janine Robinson, proprietor and chef Pierre St. Denis, Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión Jr., owner Michelle French and realtor Jacqueline Kyle Kall.

if he could play. When Janine came by later on to see how things were going, she sat down at the piano as well, and the two played some stunning duets, although they had never before met each other. Needless to say, the visitors were delighted, as were the hosts.

Pierre is delighted as well by the early success of his new business, and he has high hopes for the future. Although he also runs a restaurant in Manhattan, Le Refuge on East 82nd Street, he loves the intimate setting of the Pell house and the opportunity to specialize in his favorite dishes, such as *canard (duck) à l'orange*, updated to today's palate. He buys the ingredients fresh each morning at Restaurant Depot in Mount Vernon, and the menu varies

according to what is available each day.

He plans to serve both lunch (\$35 prix fixe) and dinner (\$45) every day except Monday, but he asks that one make reservations in advance (718-885-2478 or 914-509-5959). The restaurant can accommodate 35 to 40 people, but for special occasions, such as wedding receptions and private parties, he can comfortably manage as many as 60 guests.

And comfortable those guests will be, based on this reporter's experience, not just because of the good food and the attractive setting, but because they will be treated like guests in a private home where time can be made to stand still for at least a little while.

Honoring the Spirit of Service



Photos by RICK DE WITT

Representative Joseph Crowley (far left) hosted the Chamber of Commerce gala awards dinner on Friday, Dec. 3, at the Lido Restaurant. Standing next to him is Peter LaScala, president of the Chamber, and the honorees are (l. to r.): former Assemblyman Stephen B. Kaufman, who received Special Recognition of Exemplary Service to the Community; Joseph Valenti Jr., who received the Sam Bierman Business & Community Service Award; Mildred Jewett, who accepted The Tom Cerreta Accomplished Business Service Award on behalf of Theodore Karikas; Borough President Adolfo Carrión Jr.; Elizabeth and Ken Farnum, who received the Service to Community Award; and Nick Lotrionte, who received the Catherine Scott Achievement Award.



Politicians apparently come in all sizes. Here Stephen B. Kaufman, former Assemblyman (left) joins Councilwoman Madeline Provenzano and U. S. Representative Joseph Crowley at the Chamber of Commerce Dinner.

City Island Post Office Closes Local Mail Slot

By MARIA SWIECIKI

Many customers of the City Island Post Office were puzzled this past holiday season when they discovered that the City Island mail slot had been sealed up. Initially they were told that this was a temporary situation that would be resolved after the holidays, but as of press time, the mail slot remains sealed, and no one knows when or if it will be reopened.

Anthony Nasta, the City Island postmaster, said the orders to seal the slot came from "higher up" and affected not only the City Island post office but many other branches around the country as well. Because of the need for increased security, City Island-bound mail deposited at the City Island post office must now be sent off the Island, radiated or screened for evidence of anthrax and other hazardous materials, and then returned for delivery to City Island.

Although most would agree that security is important, many Islanders are frus-

trated at the delays they are experiencing in mail deliveries. On Dec. 13, the City Island Chamber of Commerce mailed two envelopes at the City Island Post Office addressed to City Island recipients. The envelopes arrived 11 days later, on Dec. 24. On Dec. 1, Robert Carmody, of Atlantic Emeritus Realty, Inc., received a bill postmarked Nov. 1.

Employees at the City Island branch are making an effort, however, according to Jane Protzman, secretary of the City Island Civic Association. The bulk mailing of Civic newsletters was not held up by the new system, for example. The envelopes were deposited at the Post Office on Wednesday, Jan. 19, went overnight to the Bronx office for screening and came back Thursday morning for delivery to most Island residents the same day.

Post Office customers who want to register a complaint should call Tony Rosario of the Bronx Post Office at 718-402-8479.

BRIEFLY...

POSITION AT BARTOW-PELL: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, across from Split Rock Golf Course in Pelham Bay Park, has a job opening for a part-time lead docent to welcome the visiting public during the museum's open hours, which are Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon to 4 p.m. year round. The successful candidate must be mature and responsible and must demonstrate an ability and enthusiasm for engaging with visitors and relating information regarding the museum, its history and collections. The docent will also collect and record museum admissions and small gift shop purchases. The pay is \$10 per hour, and training will be provided. Please note that public transportation is not easily available, but free parking is available on site. Applicants should send a resumé or letter of interest to the museum by mail (895 Shore Road, City Island, NY 10464), fax (718-885-9164) or e-mail bartowpelled@aol.com.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER: On Tuesday, Feb. 8, the night before Ash Wednesday, a traditional pancake supper will be held at Grace Episcopal Church on City Island Avenue at Pilot Street from 6 to 8 p.m. All are welcome! The menu will include pancakes, bacon, sausages, salad and hot and cold beverages. A donation of \$5 per adult is suggested; children are free. For more information, call the parish at 718-885-1080.

VALENTINE'S DAY SALE: The eighth-grade students of P.S. 175 will hold their annual Valentine's Day Sale on Friday, Feb. 11, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in the school gym. The sale will feature home baked goods, Valentine's and St. Patrick's Day gifts for sale (from \$.50 to \$6) and raffle items. Proceeds help pay for the eighth grade's graduation expenses. Stop by on your way to work or school and buy a gift for your valentine! The school is located at 200 City Island Avenue. The public is invited to join in the fun.

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

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Islander Sentenced to Prison

Bowne Street resident, Michael Vivian, 59, was sentenced to a minimum of one and a half years to a maximum of three years in prison, on Jan. 19, 2005, in Bronx Supreme Court, for two crimes occurring in 2004, vehicular manslaughter and criminal possession of a weapon.

The sentence, handed down by Judge Troy Webber, ends speculation as to the fate of Mr. Vivian, who was arrested four times in 2004, according to the Bronx District Attorney's office.

The most serious charges stem from a traffic accident on July 17, 2004, in which Mr. Vivian struck and killed a pedestrian on Jerome Avenue in the Bronx. He was initially charged with leaving the scene of an accident and operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol. On Aug. 27, 2004, a Bronx grand jury amended the charges to include vehicular manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide.

Then on Sept. 23, 2004, after he was released on his own recognizance, Mr. Vivian was arrested on West 183rd Street and Jerome Avenue and charged with criminal possession of a weapon and ammunition, according to the police report.

In December 2004, Mr. Vivian pleaded guilty to vehicular manslaughter in the second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree, according to a spokesperson for the Bronx District Attorney. At that time he was remanded without bail to the custody of the Department of Corrections.

Two sentences were handed down on

Jan. 19 to be served concurrently. The first sentence was one and a half to three years for vehicular manslaughter. Judge Webber also sentenced Mr. Vivian to one year for the weapons possession crime. The earliest Mr. Vivian could be released is 2006.

According to the Department of Corrections, Mr. Vivian was transferred from the Vernon Payne Prison Center barge in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx to the Detention Center at Rikers Island. He will eventually be turned over to New York State and sent to a state facility to serve out his sentence.

Mr. Vivian was also arrested on May 12, 2004, at 240 Bowne Street and charged with criminal mischief, trespassing and making graffiti, according to the Bronx District Attorney's office.

Police responded to the 911 call and interviewed the security guard at the City Island development known as Mariner's Pointe. The guard told police that he observed Mr. Vivian spray-painting "U2" with silver paint on several buildings and guardrails, according to the police report.

Mr. Vivian also pleaded guilty in December 2004 to trespassing and criminal mischief stemming from the arrests at Mariner's Pointe in May and June.

Mr. Vivian has communicated with several Islanders during his incarceration. He wrote a letter to the parishioners of Grace Episcopal Church, where he had been attending services, and asked to be remembered in their prayers.

45TH PRECINCT GETS NEW COMMANDER

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

The new commander of the Police Department's 45th precinct, as of December 2004, is Captain James Alles, who replaced Deputy Inspector James Capaldo.

Captain Alles has been with the department for 23 years and served in the 45th precinct some years ago as second in command under Deputy Inspector Joseph Moscatt, in addition to working in the 43rd and 44th precincts in the Bronx.

He has worked in narcotics and fighting high-profile crimes, including robbery and murder, but he is also interested in quality-of-life issues and establishing a positive role in the community, according to a recent interview in the Bronx Times Reporter.

Captain Alles is scheduled to attend a meeting of the City Island Civic Association on Jan. 25, where he will be officially introduced to the community.

Frank Fitts, president of the Civic Association and of the 45th Precinct Community Council, said that D. I. Capaldo, who now works in the narcotics unit at police headquarters, will be very much missed. But he looks forward to working with Captain Alles, who is already familiar with City Island issues.

"We are very lucky to have him," Mr. Fitts told *The Current*. "He was executive officer of the 45th the summer we had that awful traffic jam caused by a concert at Orchard

Beach, and he is well aware of the ongoing traffic problems we have on City Island. He is also aware of the vandalism issues here on the Island, and he knows where the kids hang out. We will be in very good hands."

Peter La Scala, president of the City Island Chamber of Commerce, extends to Captain Alles congratulations on his appointment to the 45th precinct. "The residents and businesses of City Island look forward to having a strong working relationship with him on behalf of the community."

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New Administrator at St. Mary's

BY BARBARA DOLENSEK

Father Michael Challinor will become the new administrator at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church, on Monday, Jan. 24, 2005. Father Robert Moore, who has been ill with various ailments, is on medical leave.

Father Challinor, who was ordained in

1991, has held four previous positions as parochial vicar—at St. John the Evangelist in Mahopac, Immaculate Conception in Stony Point, St. Dennis in Yonkers and Sacred Heart in Hartsdale.

The City Island community looks forward to getting to know Father Challinor and welcomes him to the parish.

STUDENTS SALUTE RETURNING MARINE



Photos by KAREN NANI

Students and faculty at P.S. 175 paid tribute to Island resident and former student Charles Brill on Dec. 2, 2004, upon his return to City Island from Iraq. Marine Corporal Brill was wounded in November last year while servicing a helicopter in Teqadem Airfield in Iraq, where he is a crew chief. He was hit in the neck and face with some shrapnel following a rocket attack on the airbase. During the holidays, he recuperated with his family on Horton Street and is now on a military base in North Carolina. In addition to letters and tributes presented to him by students from the fourth grade (top photos), Corporal Brill was reunited with some of his former teachers, Julia DiMaio (bottom left), Felicia Stelman and Pat Cambria (bottom right). He told The Current that he is anxious to complete his recovery and rejoin his unit in Iraq.

DING DING DING COMES THE TROLLEY

BY BARBARA DOLENSEK



City Island will once again be served by a trolley, just as it was early in the 20th century (bottom photo). The new trolley will run on the first Friday of every month, free of charge, from Pelham Bay Station and back again, in order to give visitors an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment. Shown during the "test drive" on Jan. 19, 2005, are (top photo, l. to r.): Chamber of Commerce members Mort Ellis and Margie McNulty; Bronx Tourism Coordinator Janett Florindo; and Chamber of Commerce board members Violet Ellis, Mike Carew, Paul Klein and Bob Carmody.



On Friday, Feb. 4, City Island will once again be served by a trolley, just as it was early in the 20th century, when horses drew a car carrying passengers from the Bartow Station in Pelham Bay Park.

The new trolley is a bright-red replica of an old trolley with wooden benches, charming brass accents and even an authentic bell. Although the trolley has lots of historic appeal, it is a modern vehicle with heat and comfortable seats for 30 guests at a time. It will run from Pelham Bay Station and back again, beginning at 5:30 in the evening, with the final run back to the station at about 10 p.m. Passengers may get on and off wherever they like.

Thanks to the efforts of the City Island Chamber of Commerce, the trolley will run on the first Friday of every month, free of charge, in order to give visitors a delightful evening of dining, shopping and entertainment.

Galleries, shops, restaurants and other businesses on City Island will feature art openings and refreshments on trolley

chore at these establishments, you may be offered extra-special deals.

There are two other trolley projects in the Bronx, administered by the Bronx Tourism Council on behalf of Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión Jr., with the support of the Bronx Department of Parks & Recreation.

On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays year-round, the trolley makes a continuous all-day loop to three tourist destinations: the Bronx Zoo, the New York Botanical Garden and Arthur Avenue/Little Italy. Trolley runs may also take place in the evenings to coincide with holiday exhibitions.

On the first Wednesday night of each month, the Bronx Council on the Arts utilizes the trolley to offer a free loop to South Bronx cultural institutions such as the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos, the Bronx Museum of the Arts and Pregones Theatre as well as area restaurants.

Chamber officers hope that the City Island trolley will expand to include the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, depending on its staff availability, and that it will attract many New Yorkers in Manhattan and other parts of the city who view City Island as inaccessible. It is also hoped that City Island restaurants, shops and galleries will benefit from additional patrons without increased car traffic.

For more details about the City Island trolley, please call the Chamber of Commerce at 718-885-9100 or Paul Klein of Exotiq International Arts at 718-885-3090; or you may visit the Chamber's Web site at www.cityislandchamber.org.



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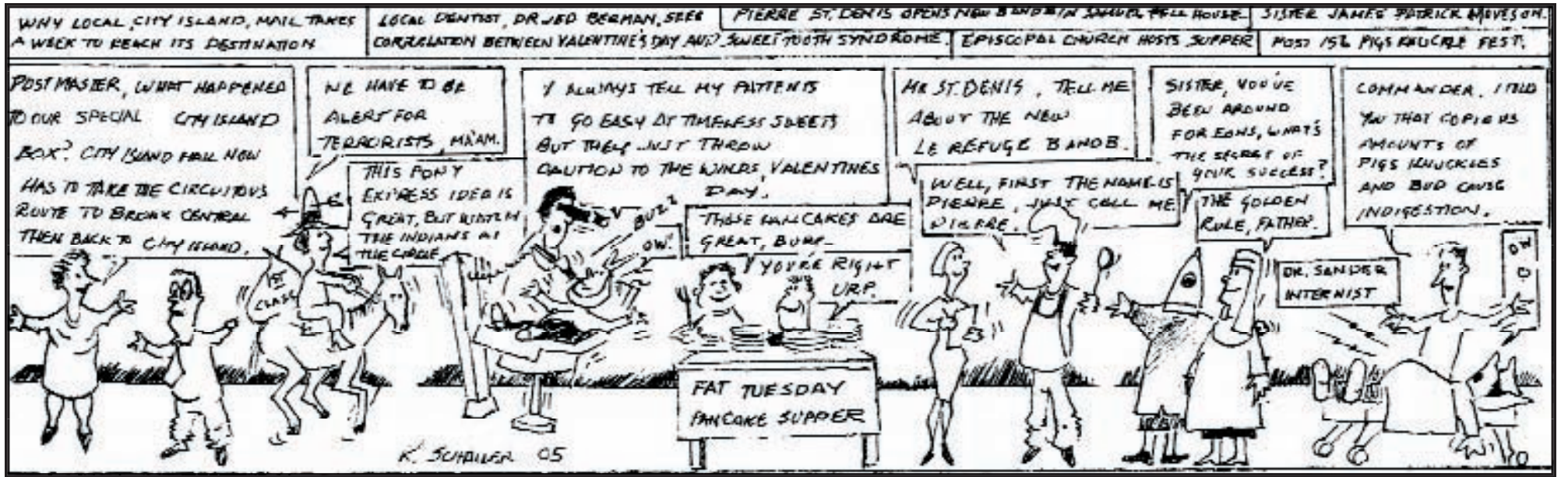
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Fair Winds or Foul: A column of editorial commentary on local items.

Fair Winds

To all the City Island residents and businesses who decorated their buildings and yards this year with holiday lights and other seasonal ornaments. The Chamber did a great job with the tree lights and the Hawkins Park tree and menorah, but the spirit of the season was widespread and City Island was beautiful.

Foul Winds

To Island parents who allowed their children to wreak havoc during the holidays of 2004 as they did in 2003. It isn't a serious crime to cause damage to cars by slashing tires and smashing mirrors or stealing hood ornaments, but it is a crime, and if these out-of-control kids are allowed to get away with it, the vandalism will only get worse. Anyone with information about this kind of activity is urged to call 911 if the crime is in progress or the 45th precinct (718-822-5449) after the fact. The theft of the infant Jesus figure from the Ruggieros' crèche on Minneford Avenue (see letter) is only one example of the nasty pranks caused by what many Islanders call our "feral youth."



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.

Missing Messiah

To the editor:

Once again, the little darlings of City Island found it compelling to ruin something beautiful. For years the Ruggiero family has decorated their house on Minneford and Beach for all to enjoy. One evening the infant Jesus disappeared from the manger and hasn't been seen since.

If anyone finds the infant lying in their shrubs or if it dawns on some parents that the doll hanging from a rope in junior's room looks suspiciously like the baby Jesus, the Ruggieros would appreciate its return, no questions asked.

Kudos to Matt and Kerry Murphy for instilling the virtue of giving to their daughter Nora. When it was discovered that the infant Jesus was missing from the Ruggieros' Nativity, little Nora ran right home and picked out her prettiest doll to stand in for the infant Jesus. "It's not right that the crib is empty during Jesus' birthday," she told her father as they made their presentation.

Tina Ruggiero

Pets on the Loose

To the Editor:

Regarding the "Who Killed the Cats" letter that appeared in your October 2004 issue, in the first paragraph, the author stated that the cats killed by automobiles driving on Minneford Avenue belonged to residents "who cared for them." The past tense use of the word "cared" is extra appropriate, since at the time they met their demise the cats were roaming in public, unattended, not being cared for by any-

one.

These so-called caring owners—who had an obligation to ensure their pets' welfare—placed them in harm's way by releasing them into an area known to have active roadways. I love animals, and I feel that what they did constitutes animal neglect. They are responsible for their pets' demise, just as a parent who did likewise with a toddler would be. My heart breaks for those animals. As for their owners? If a person cannot provide for proper full-time care of a pet, they should not own a pet (just as a person who cannot ensure the proper full-time care of a child should not have a child).

I and many of my fellow Islanders do not appreciate unleashed pets (1) darting out into streets creating hazardous driving conditions; (2) entering on our property to defecate and urinate on our lawns and plants, as well as in our vegetable plots (yechh!); and (3) torturing other creatures for sport (not for sustenance) and then leaving their dead or dying remains for us to deal with.

Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi
Postal Woes

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

Tony Rofaio
Postmaster of the Bronx
Bronx GPO, Penthouse
558 Grand Concourse
Bronx, NY 10451

Dear Mr. Rofaio:

The City Island Chamber of Commerce has recently received complaints regarding the new postal policies that require our intra-island mail to be sent to the main Bronx Post Office for security purposes. We understand that the new policy is to have all mail sent down to the Bronx post office for "radiation" testing before it can be delivered back to City Island.

City Island is a mile-and-one-half-long island of approximately 4,500 people with only one zip code. On Dec. 13, two pieces of mail that were sent from City Island to City Island took 10 and 12 days to arrive. We understand the need for security in the postal system, but we should not have to wait almost two weeks for a piece of mail

that was sent to an address within the same zip code. We have had other similar complaints from City Island businesses and residents.

The staff at our one and only post office is wonderful in their efforts to keep everything running smoothly and efficiently. However, that is now all changed with the new system in place! It is absolutely unthinkable to eliminate the "City Island Mail Only" slip when all of this mail could travel in bulk for screening purposes and be returned promptly to City Island for delivery. This current system does not make sense for our businesses and residents, and we would like your help in addressing this problem.

Peter LaScala, President

Generosity of City Islanders!

To the Editor:

I would like to thank the many people of City Island for their generosity in supporting a recent fund-raiser, initiated by Dianne O'Sullivan, that helped benefit many low-income children and adults. I was struck by the spirit of all those gathered at this dance and witnessed first-hand the gift of true community that I am told is so much a part of City Island's heritage!

With the leadership of Dianne and the help of many volunteers at this recent dinner dance, this charitable event raised \$1,000 toward our Multi-Service Center in Yonkers. I also would like to publicly thank DJ Ray Weis for supplying music as well as everyone who supported the dance! The toys that were collected that evening, as well as the money raised, helped to make the holidays brighter for many people who would otherwise have not had anything.

Sr. Terese McElroy, SC

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Franchise Friendship

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

Mr. Wayland F. Benbow
Development Consultant
Subway
75 Washington Avenue
North Haven, CT 06473

Dear Mr. Benbow:

I am writing you as a neighbor of the recently developed Subway franchise on City Island Avenue. You may recall that I contacted you and the management of Dunkin Donuts some months ago because the franchise owners had not complied with our City Island Special District Zoning as to the signage and fencing and were allowing litter on the sidewalks and illegal parking in the bus stop and so on.

We have had some success with the manager of Dunkin Donuts as to trash removal, placement of two decorated potted trees and an attractive sign for the holidays. However, the situation with the operation of the Subway franchise has remained pretty much the same.

My neighbor, Borough President Adolfo Carrión and I are both concerned about the refuse from Subway, as it winds up in front of our properties and we must clean up the refuse ourselves.

All in all, we hope we can work together and make your Subway franchise more attractive. Do not hesitate to call me at any time.

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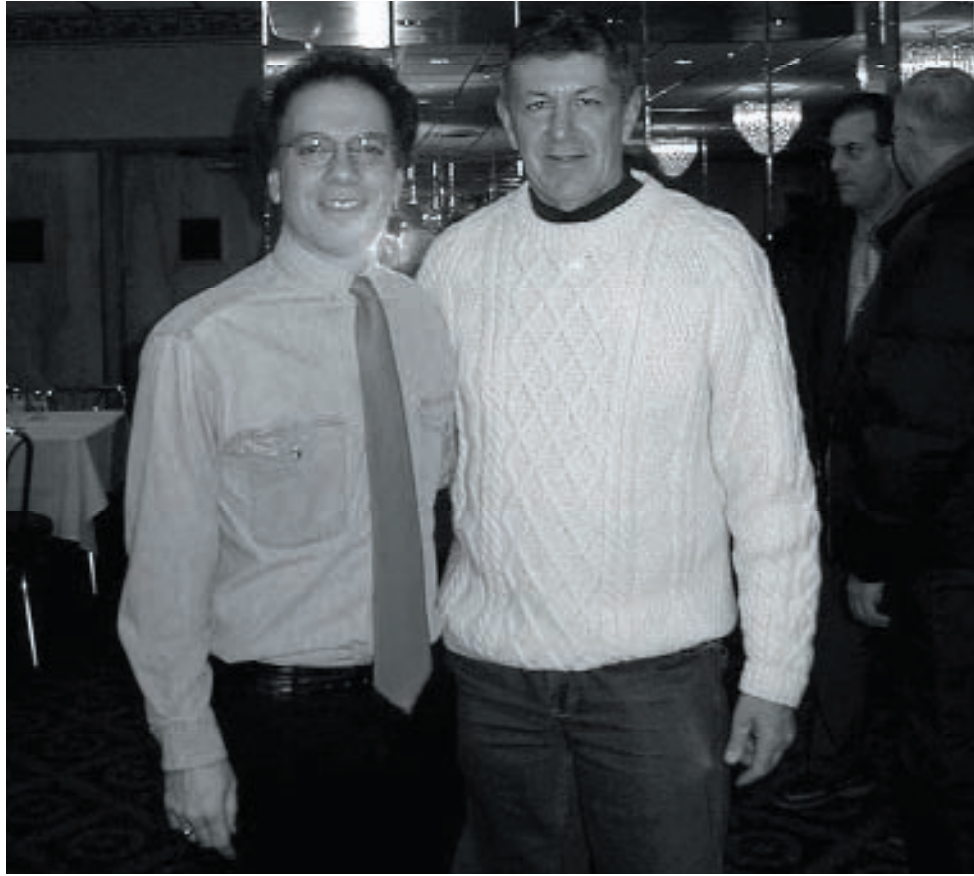
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JIMMY VACCA ACHIEVES MILESTONE

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Jimmy Vacca, district manager of Community Board 10, with Frank Fitts, president of the City Island Civic Association and of the 45th Police Precinct Community Council, talking business at a Community Board 10 meeting.

On Dec. 19, 1979, James Vacca became district manager of Community Board 10, little suspecting that 25 years later he would still love his job and look forward to going to work every morning. He even loves the fact that his responsibilities extend far beyond normal office hours, thanks to evening meetings and daily contact with residents of Board 10, which includes City Island, along with Pelham Bay, Throggs Neck, Country Club, Silver Beach and other communities in the northeast Bronx.

Jimmy, as he is called by everyone who knows him, grew up in Pelham Bay, where he launched his career as a community activist before he even reached high school. Although he couldn't alter the school zoning regulations in order to attend Christopher Columbus High School, which was outside his district, this young Italian boy decided to study Hebrew in order to get into Columbus, where he later served as president of the student body. When Jimmy realized that the buses from Pelham Bay continually ran late, he managed to convince City Councilmember Aileen Ryan to improve service so that he and other students could get to school on time.

After high school, Jimmy joined the Peace Corps and worked on an extension to the Middletown Plaza Senior Center in Pelham Bay, for which he raised money and supervised construction. After the completion of that job, he joined Community Board 10, where he has been a powerful advocate for the community.

His intimate knowledge of the area and of the complex nature of city government has made him invaluable in fighting his way through red tape on behalf of the residents and businesses in Board 10. From getting a pothole

fixed to helping protect the community against overdevelopment, Jimmy knows where to go for help and how to get it.

But what is unique about Jimmy's approach to his job is that he doesn't take no for an answer, according to Frank Fitts, president of the City Island Civic Association. "Jimmy is very determined, and when he decides that something needs to change, he will stop at nothing until it is right. He has done an outstanding job for the whole community, but City Island is especially grateful to him for his help over the years."

Although Jimmy Vacca is loyal and hard-working when it comes to all parts of his domain, City Island has always held a special place in his heart. Island resident Catherine Scott was his office administrator for 20 years before her death in 2001, and his daughter is a student at P. S. 175, where Jimmy volunteers his time as chair of the school leadership team.

He recalls that one of his first successes as district manager of Community Board 10 was to get New York Bus Service to provide express buses between City Island and Manhattan. "I remember standing in the rain that first morning watching the bus pick up its first passengers," he told *The Current*. He also recalls helping City Islanders fight to keep its community center early in the 1980s and later on to prevent a proposed amphitheater from being built at Orchard Beach. Jimmy was also instrumental in obtaining special zoning restrictions for City Island, and of course there is the never-ending battle against graffiti.

Virginia Gallagher, who was the first president of Community Board 10 when it was formed in 1977, has known Jimmy Vacca for many years. "Jimmy is a steadfast defender of people's rights. He hangs on like a tiger and doesn't let go of an issue. He's incredibly effective."

Another City Island member of Community Board 10 is Peter LaScala, president of the Chamber of Commerce, who told *The Current* that the Chamber of Commerce supports Jimmy's continuing efforts to represent the people of the district. "I am proud to be a member of Board 10 under Jimmy's leadership, for he understands the concerns of the communities he works with day to day. He has made Board 10 the best working community board in the city. I hope he has many years of public service ahead of him."

Although Jimmy Vacca has not yet made it official, it is no secret that he is seriously considering a run for a seat on the City Council this November, since Madeline Provenzano

will not be able to run again, owing to term limits. Some maintain that it will be difficult to fill her shoes, but most feel confident that Jimmy has the political experience and the knowledge of the district to do the job.

"I must say that I do know every street on City Island," Jimmy told *The Current*. "I even know where Paulis Place is! Not long ago, a handicapped person called me to report that a bus company insisted on picking him up on City Island Avenue because the bus couldn't turn around on Pell Place. I knew perfectly well that the street was wide enough, and I managed to convince the bus company to pick the man up in front of his house."

Jimmy Vacca's primary concern for City Island these days is young people, and he feels that what the community needs most is

a center that can accommodate the needs of young people, as well as programs to keep them busy and interested. "Community Board 10 has supported COLONY to the tune of some \$750,000 over the years, but we can't sit on our laurels and talk about the past. We need to focus on the future, and that means our young people. I believe in giving grants to children who do well so that they can serve as role models for others, but City Island also needs youth programs, especially for the older kids."

As we celebrate Jimmy Vacca's quarter century of service, it seems fitting that the man himself has his eyes firmly fixed on what lies ahead, not just for himself but for the community at large. Perhaps he can also explain to the rest of us exactly where Paulis Place is!

HOLIDAY MEMORIES 2004



Photos by JUDY RAUH, RICK DeWITT and BOB BERENT

As *The Current* went to press, snow was swirling around the Seasons Greetings sign across City Island Avenue giving us a wintry reminder of the holidays. The spirit of the 2004 season shone all around City Island with bright decorations (some hung by the firemen on City Island), singing around the menorah, and visiting with Santa. It was quite a Santa-fest on Dec. 18, 2004, when the American Legion hosted its annual children's holiday party. Under the direction of Kathy Seaman and her helpers, more than 120 children enjoyed the fun, the younger ones in the morning and the older children in the afternoon. They were treated to a puppet show, music with D.J. Ray, refreshments and a gift from Santa (assisted by elves Toni Ann Mastracchio and Nicole DiSilva). One child exclaimed: "Wow, Santa knew exactly what I wanted!" Included in the pictures above: Michael and Lisa Knapp and their daughter, Kaitlin; the Calisi triplets, children of Heather and Frank and grandchildren of Edwina and Ken Lemke; and Santa and Mrs. Claus waving goodbye.

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In the month of love, there's lots of music to love "on the menu" at the **Starving Artist Café & Gallery** (249 City Island Avenue). On Saturday, Feb. 5, the always-sold-out Port O' Monkeys, featuring City Island's own Dr. Christian Wertenbaker, takes the stage again with Spanish, Middle Eastern and original music, starting at 8 p.m. The next day, Sunday, Feb. 6, Robin Radus entertains us with his jazz keyboard. Check out the Valentine's Day article in this *Island Current* for the events of that weekend! Then the Starving Artist holds another of its famous guitar jams on Sunday, Feb. 20, starting at 3 p.m. Finishing off February is a jazz performance by the City Island Jazz Trio on Sunday, Feb. 28, at 3 p.m. Watch for the return of the Beatles next month, on March 5, when Rubber Soul, a Beatles tribute band, offers two performances at Starving Artist on that Saturday, at 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.; both are selling out fast, so make your reservations today by calling 718-718-885-3779. Always on the menu at **Starving Artist** are the handmade jewelry creations by Elliott Glick, fine art / craft by various artists, and coffee, tea, cappuccino, espresso and treats, including Jen's Sweets, the pastries that are works of art.

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Calling Young Artists

The **Focal Point Gallery** will host its 16th Young City Island Art Exhibition beginning on April 2, 2005, and all artists ages 17 and under are invited to bring in their art work no later than March 18.

Paintings, drawings, photographs or other works on paper are preferred (8 1/2 by 11 inches if possible), but all work will be accepted. The art must be delivered by hand to the gallery, at 321 City Island Avenue. The gallery will mat and frame the work and hang the exhibition, which will open with a reception for the young artists on Saturday, April 2.

This exhibition is made possible with public funds from the Bronx Council on the Arts through the New York State Council on the Arts decentralization program.

For further information, call Ron Turner at 718-885-1403.

REAL ESTATE REVIEW

As a service to our readers, *The Island Current* will periodically list recent sales of residential and commercial property as found in the public record. This feature is designed to give a general idea of the fair market values of property on City Island. An update will be published every few months at our discretion. The listings below represent some of the recent sales. *The Current* is not responsible for errors or omissions in the data.

Address	Closing Date	Sale Price	Type
238 Bowne Street	8/20/04	\$455,286	Condo
503 Minneford Ave.	8/27/04	\$196,850	1 Family
351 City Island Ave.	10/29/04	\$435,000	2 Family
170 Schofield Street	11/3/04	\$305,000	Condo
238 Bowne Street	11/5/04	\$569,201	Condo
64 Marine Street	11/10/04	\$425,000	1 Family
238 Bowne Street	11/19/04	\$609,500	Condo



Photo by MARIA SWIECIKI

Congratulations to Evelyn Gerges (above right), supervising branch librarian of the City Island Library, who recently received a New York Times Librarian Award. Ms. Marge White, a teacher at P. S. 175, submitted Mrs. Gerges's name and presented a plaque to Mrs. Gerges in a ceremony at the school. The two later attended an awards ceremony at the New York Times.

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BARTOW-PELL EVENTS

Nooks and Crannies of New York

The Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum on Shore Road in Pelham Bay Park will present a slide lecture by Justin Ferate, an acclaimed New York City tour guide and urban historian, on Sunday, Feb. 6, from 2 to 4 p.m.

The subject will be the many offbeat landmarks, secret gardens, hidden houses and covert byways, and Mr. Ferate will take his audience on an armchair trip through the five boroughs of the city to discover some often overlooked treasures.

Mr. Ferate's tours have been featured on national and international television and radio programs. In 2003 he was selected by the city's Department of Consumer Affairs to create the official professional tour guide licensing exam. He has won several

awards, and his tour of Grand Central Terminal was rated the "best walking tour" in New York by the AAA Guide to New York. Governor George Pataki and the state's Tourism Council honored him as "New York's most engaging tour guide."

The lecture, which is appropriate for adults and children over 12 years, will cost \$7 per person. Registration is advised; call 718-885-1461 or e-mail bartowpellED@aol.com and leave your name and telephone number.

Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, with its carriage house and gardens, is a New York City and National Landmark historic house site in Pelham Bay Park, the Bronx. The site is administered by the International Garden Club in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

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Love Songs for a City Island Valentine's Day

By MONICA GLICK

Got the Monday blues—stormy or otherwise? Well, this Valentine's Monday you can chase those blues away, with lots of help from City Island shops, galleries, antique stores, restaurants, cafes and businesses. Consider these love songs, played out on your island for all seasons.

"Unforgettable" is just what you'll be on Valentine's Day—and the weekend before it—if you make a visit first to **Lina Petite Salon** (474 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2330) or **Personal Touch Hair & Nail Salon** (413 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3831). If the relaxing facial and exciting new hair color or style doesn't complete your looking good feeling, try some hearts on your hands—your nails, really—from the artist-technicians at **Nail Island** (462 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2950). And guys, maybe you'll want to shave some hearts into your hairstyle at **Flexus Barber Shop II** (464 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3063).

Complete your new look with an adventure in fitness. Ladies, step into **Curves** (268 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2727); guys and dolls may stop by **A.J. Weight Loss Center** (538 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3445).

None of this pampering should be done on an empty stomach. So start your day at the **Island Cafe** (205 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0716), perhaps with a breakfast of pancakes covered in delicious red strawberries; maybe the chef will make them heart-shaped! Or the **City Island Diner** (304 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0362) can tempt you, and warm you up, with a steaming bowl of oatmeal covered with fruit and honey. Or for a quick, no-fuss bite on the big day, stop in to **Papa John's Deli** (325 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1263).

You and your honey, looking fine and fit, can then end the day at the Diner's new **Snug** (302 City Island Avenue; 718-885-9559), sipping something and snuggling together before settling down for the evening.

"Love Potion Number 9" or some number is being served at **B&B** (316 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3003) on this Valentine's Day, with a special price for the brew for the ladies. Then stay there to enjoy dinner for two after those cocktails, or sample the fine northern Italian and seafood menu at **Portofino** (555 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1220). Maybe try instead a visit to the lobster lovers' corner at the **Sea Shore Restaurant** (591 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0300) for one of the advertised "sweet and succulent Maine lobsters." Or choose something for you and your sweetie from the fine seafood selections at **The Harbor** (565 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1373), the **Lobster House** (691 Bridge Street; 718-885-1459), or, mid-Island, the **Crab Shanty** (361 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1810). There's always **Artie's Steak and Seafood** (394 City Island Avenue; 718-885-

9718-885), which promises special dishes you'll fall in love with, including a zuppa de pesce for two.

Then, if all that eating has you longing for a nap-for-two, try checking in at **Le Refuge Bed & Breakfast** (586 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2478). This jewel of City Island reopened its kitchen in its new location on Jan. 8, and Pierre Saint-Denis invites lovers and others to feast on a multi-course dinner for two on Valentine's Day or during the weekend that precedes it.

"Endless Love" and endless possibilities await lovers of music and art at the **Starving Artist Cafe & Gallery** (249 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3779). Although usually closed on Mondays, the Starving Artist will open its doors that day to welcome one and all to celebrate Cupid's day, perhaps with a daily special dish artfully designed for any food lover, finished off with one of Jen's Sweets, pastries



Handmade originals from the "Romance Collection" at the Starving Artist Cafe & Gallery.

that are works of art! On the weekend leading up to Valentine's Day, enjoy the energetic and original music of Sam Leopold (hear samples of his tunes at www.starvingartistonline.com) on Saturday, Feb. 12, beginning at 8 p.m., and then the City Island Jazz Trio on Sunday, Feb. 13, starting at 3 p.m. While you're listening, look at Elliott Glick's first handmade jewelry collection for 2005, "The Romance Collection."

Still craving more melodies? Visit **Tito Puente's Restaurant and Cabaret** (64 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3200) for live music throughout the pre-Valentine's Day weekend. While you are at the candlelit tables, be sure to finish off your meal with a Tito Puente specialty drink: El Besito de Celia, a mixture of rum, fresh strawberries, lime juice, coconut milk and a splash of grenadine, named in honor of the first lady of salsa music in America, Celia Cruz. A fine Cuban cigar may end your celebration—smoked outside of Tito Puente's, of course; stop by **Hispaniola Cigars** (470 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2806) to find one you'll enjoy.

"Maybe I'm Amazed"—and you will be, too—at what **The Black Whale** (279 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3657) can offer you this Valentine's Day. A romance-inspiring



Chocolate fondue and champagne for two at The Black Whale.

menu for that Monday, complete with pairing wines, can be topped off with a fondue-and-champagne for two. Start celebrating your love at brunch on Sunday, Feb. 13, and get



Photos by Monica Glick

Main Street Antiques offers a zebra couple.

close for dinner-and-a-movie on Feb. 15, when the Whale will be showing the mother of all lovers' movies, *Casablanca*.

While we're thinking about great pictures, take a stroll to the **City Island Historical Society & Nautical Museum** (190 Fordham Street; 718-885-0008) to see Jane Protzman's beautiful photographs of water in various places around the world. The pictures of Antarctica will make you feel warm in spite of the temperatures outside! The museum is open the Sunday before Valentine's Day—and every Sunday—from 1 to 5 p.m.

Stay in the past, for gifts, anyway. Choose from years and years of antiques at **Main Street Antiques** (278 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2172), or bring home a down-filled designer pillow for your special someone, or the pair of zebras standing lovingly together in the window! Perhaps a treasure awaits your sweetheart at **Quality Antique Furniture** (270 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2215), **Silver Arrow Antiques** (275 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1598), **Midtown Antiques** (310 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2820), **Wild Goose Chase** (312 City Island Avenue) or **Early Ruth** (319 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0228).

"When a Man Loves a Woman," he's probably willing to take her sailing, catch the evening's dinner or fix up the house a bit. You will find all you'll need for those tasks right here on your Island home. Stop by **Buddy's Hardware & Yacht Supply** (260 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1447), **J.J. Burck Inc.** (526 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1559), **Island Bait & Tackle** (632 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2153) or **Jack's Bait & Tackle** (551 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2042).

And if the fishing tale is more about "the one that got away," try grabbing a bite to eat at **Subway Sandwiches & Salads** (632 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3844) at the start of the Island, mid-Island at **Seafood City** (459 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3600) or at the far end of City Island at **Tony's Pier Restaurant** (1 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1424).



All dolled up at My Dolls and Things.

There can always be a latte or sweet treat in your future, from our Island's own **Dunkin' Donuts**.

"You Don't Bring Me Flowers." But you can bring your honey chocolate in the shape of roses, even a vase full of them, from **Timeless Sweets** (269 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2522). There are plenty of sweet treats on hand as well at **Sugar & Spice** (536 City Island Avenue; 718-885-9229), such as cherry-chocolate heart-shaped brownies, chocolate raspberry tarts, heart-shaped cookies and chocolate-covered strawberries.

Or give your living doll a doll of her own from **My Dolls & Things** (271 City Island



Aromatherapy candles from Exotiqua.

Avenue, 718-885-3777). Owners Monsey and Yvette will be delighted to take you on a tour of all their new and collectible dolls—that is, of course, after you finish looking at the cute-as-a-button selections in the store's window.

And while you're in fantasy mode, explore the whimsical offerings from around the world at **Exotiqua International Arts** (280 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3090). Don't forget to check out the aromatherapy products, including especially the "passion" candle and product line. Or stop by **Corona's Hidden Treasures** (329 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1330) and choose from its assortment of nautical and stained glass creations. Or create a fantasy in your home—maybe a faux marble wall in your dining room—with help from **Fe Fi Faux Studio & Gallery** (276 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2024) and artist Mary Colby.

"Your Smiling Face" and your honey's can be captured by Ron Turner of **Focal Point Gallery** (321 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1403) for Valentine's Day; he's even offering 40 percent off such portraits through Feb. 14.

After you "say cheese" then say "snapper" or "shrimp" or "sole" to your waiter or waitress at **Sammy's Fish Box** (41 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0920) or nearby at **Lobster Box** (34 City Island Avenue; 718-885-1952). The latter restaurant reopens from winter vacation the Friday before Valentine's Day, offering feasts for two that sound scrumptious.

"Love Is Like a Rock" this Valentine's Day at the **Kathlyn Moses Gallery** (327 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3440) when the "Livingrocks" display rolls in, thanks to Jay Howard. Find the heart on the face of these solid exhibits and win a prize. While you're there, look also at the lovely hand-painted furniture selections from Mrs. Moses herself.

Nature is also served at **The Tree House** (273 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0806) on Valentine's Day, along with northern Mediterranean specialties, served to you while seated around the restaurant's signature indoor tree. All ladies will receive a rose from the Tree House, and all couples will leave with a \$10 gift card good for the next time they visit this City Island eatery.

A "sweethearts' menu" is featured at **Fran's Trattoria** (105 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2406), or maybe the "love doctor" ordered a visit to **Lido's** (101 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2177) next door.

"Love Begins at Home," so one song goes, and a visit to **Connie's New Way Market** (307 City Island Avenue; 718-885-2121)—with its new red awning—and **Island Produce** (292 City Island Avenue) are sure to provide all you will need for your home-cooked romantic meal. Stop by **JGL Wines & Liquors** (358 City Island Avenue; 718-885-0200) to find the perfect wine for that supper, or try champagne instead. **The City Island Pharmacy** (290 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3053) offers a wide selection of sweet treats, candy-filled hearts and huggable stuffed bears for your sweetheart, including almost life-size greetings cards to show how much you really care. And your evening at home can include watching a romantic video or DVD rented from **JTs Island Event** (294 City Island Avenue). And if you're too busy snuggling to stand over a stove, then call for take-out from **To-Go Express** (415 City Island Avenue; 718-885-9656) or the **City Island Chinese Restaurant** (84-88 City Island Avenue; 718-885-3775).

In the end, it's just "an old-fashioned love song" playing out in great harmony this Valentine's Day and the weekend before right here at home on City Island.

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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

JANUARY

Sat., Jan. 29, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: sausage with peppers and potatoes.

FEBRUARY

Tues., Feb. 8, **Blood Drive**, 4 to 8 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 113 Bay Street.

Tues., Feb. 8, **Pancake Supper**, 6 to 8 p.m., Grace Episcopal Church, City Island Avenue and Pilot Street.

Fri., Feb. 11, **Valentine's Day Sale**, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, P. S. 175, 200 City Island Avenue.

Thurs., Feb. 17, **Community Board 10 meets**, 8 p.m., Hebrew Hospital Home, 801 Co-op City Blvd., Bronx.

Tues., Feb. 22, **City Island Civic Association meets**, 8 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

Sat., Feb. 26, **POTS Program**, St. Mary's School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: beef stew.

Chapter 318 AARP

Chapter 318 always meets the first and third Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in Trinity United Methodist Church Hall at 113 Bay Street in City Island. We are canceling our Atlantic City trips during the months of January and February.

We made our annual donations for Christmas to all the houses of worship on City Island, Calvary Hospital, Lighthouse, the American Legion Post on City Island, the City Island Historical Society and a few more.

We are all ready to go overnight to Atlantic City on Feb. 22 and 23.

In March we are going to Westbury Music Hall to see Andy Cooney and Ray Monte for St. Joseph/St. Patrick's Day. We have a few openings if anyone is interested. In April we are going to Ace in the Hold in New Jersey. The scheduled May trip is to Mount Haven, Pa., for Polkafest.

For information on any of these trips, please call or attend our meetings and see Flo Bonicoro (718-885-1844) or Marie Tirelli (914-576-6223).

We are sad to announce the passing of Helen Venturini, who died on Jan. 6. Helen was a charter member of Chapter 318. She knitted many lap robes for the patients at Calvary Hospital and donated plants for all our luncheons. We want to extend our condolences to Joe Venturini and his family. She was a great lady.

We are always ready to serve our members. You can have blood pressure readings taken on the first meeting of every month between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. We will endeavor to have a notary public available before and after meetings to notarize any document free of charge. Please see Margaret Iacone.

Marie Tirelli

Chapter 3303 AARP

The Minneford Chapter AARP 3303 has made its annual donations to the various charitable, religious, educational, service and youth organizations in our community, as well as to many nursing homes in our area, in order to maintain our connection between them and the chapter. We also support, encourage and assist them in any way possible to carry on their programs and services. Many of our members volunteer their services and time to help them with their programs, wherever possible.

The donations were made possible from the funds raised at our annual fair, which

was held in October. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made this fair possible, especially the chairpersons and the members who worked so diligently in making it a success.

On Thursday, March 10, 2005, the chapter will sponsor a St. Joseph and St. Patrick Festival at the Westbury Music Fair, for a spectacular show starring the famous Andy Cooney Show and the equally famous Ray Monte, son of the legendary Lou Monte, plus the comedy team of Mac & O. After the show we will have a complete sit-down dinner at the beautiful Koenig's Restaurant in Floral Park, Long Island. It promises to be a lovely and enjoyable day. Departure time is 12 noon.

A full program of trips, tours and luncheons has been scheduled for the remainder of the year. Further announcements and details will be forthcoming as the dates of these events become due. Prices and more details for the above events will be discussed at our meetings or call Tina De Cristofaro at 718-885-0865.

Lucy Puglia

Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El, a welcoming Jewish renewal congregation and your "Shul by the Sea," conducts Sabbath services each Friday night at 7:30 p.m. Our doors are open to all at 480 City Island Avenue (between Beach and Bowne Streets).

Rabbi Shohama will lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service on Feb. 4. (Members will lead the other Friday night services.) Our Torah study group continues each Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Rabbinical students Karyn Berger and Daniel Klipper will alternate leading the group on Feb. 5 and 19. (Daniel will start his group with a short spirituality service.)

The TBE Film Festival, scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 6, will continue with one of the following films: a documentary called **In Our Own Hands**, which tells the amazing story of the Jewish Brigade that fought in Europe during World War II, or the award-winning film **The Garden of the Finzi-Continis**. Call Bob Berent at 718-885-3098 for more information.

Yoga-Tai Chi classes, led by Marc Kaplan, will take place on Tuesdays, Feb. 1 and 8, from 6 to 7 p.m. His exercises will leave you feeling refreshed, more flexible and energetic. For more information, call Marc at 718-885-2445.

Spiritual Healing Of Health And Mind (SHOHAM) classes led by Rabbi Wiener will be conducted on Monday, Feb. 28, at 7:30 p.m. The classes are a pathway to personal and global spiritual transformation based on the mystical practices of the Kohanim, the priests of biblical Israel. The classes are free for members; \$15 per class for non-members.

The 9th annual "Shabbat Across America" will be held Friday, March 4, at 7:30 p.m. A Sabbath dinner following services will cost \$18 per adult and \$6 per child. R.S.V.P. (for dinner) by Monday, Feb. 28. Please send your name, the number of guests attending and a check payable to Temple Beth-El of City Island to P.O. Box 188, City Island, NY 10464. (Memo should read: Shabbat Across America.)

Our winter arts and crafts show will take place on Sunday, Feb. 20, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., rain or shine. This indoor show will feature 18 artists and craftspersons along with a bake sale and refreshments. There will also be a door prize and raffle. Admission is free.

Save the date and come celebrate our

71st anniversary at our dinner dance at the City Island Yacht Club on Saturday, April 16. We will be honoring our new State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein that evening.

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

Bob Berent

City Island Nautical Museum

Our evening devoted to stories about Skippy Lane last year was such a success that we have decided to set up more evenings in which Island residents may come and hear stories about City Island's past, told by City Island residents who remember the good old days. We are planning a series of these "oral histories," and anyone with suggestions for people to speak are encouraged to give them to us; please call 718-885-0507.

We will be having our School and Community Rooms painted; people who would like to volunteer to help uninstall and reinstall exhibits are invited to call Tom Nye at 718-885-1700. Many hands make light work!

Our membership drive has resulted in many renewals. If you've forgotten, or if you would like to join for the first time, please send a check for \$20 (individual), \$25 (family), or \$10 (senior or junior) to City Island Historical Society, P.O. Box 82, City Island, NY 10464.

Don't forget to visit our Web site (www.cityislandmuseum.org) or come visit us on a Sunday afternoon between 1 and 5 p.m.

Tom Nye

Trinity United Methodist Church

We would like to wish everyone a happy and blessed New Year. Services are held every Sunday morning at 10. Sunday school also meets at this time. Ash Wednesday services will be held on Feb. 9 at 8pm.

Services will be held each Wednesday during Lent with other Bronx churches. The first service will be on Feb. 16 at La Resurrection United Methodist Church. Services will be held at Wakefield United Methodist Church on Feb. 23. If anyone needs directions, please contact Sue Chadwick at 718-885-1218.

The Sunday school has been studying the birth and childhood of Christ. The lessons deal with how he grew in both wisdom and stature. During the month of February the children will study Jesus' early ministry. All children are welcome to join in our Sunday school during any time of the year.

Beginning on Feb. 13 and through the period of Lent, a Bible study will be held at 11:30 a.m. each Sunday in Trinity Fellowship Hall. The study will cover the three short New Testament Letters of John and the Letter of Jude. Each session begins with a video segment along, with some light refreshments. George Cavalieri, Trinity's lay leader, will moderate and lead the Bible study. Bible texts will be provided at each session, and anyone who is interested is invited, whether or not you have attended before. No registration is required.

Anne Sill



Photo by DOREEN ZAPATA

Representatives from the New York City Fire Department house on City Island helped the second grade Brownie Troop 1175 earn their Safety Sense badge in December 2004.

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

Ongoing Events

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

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

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

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

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

Art and Playgroup: Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon or 12:30 to 2 p.m.. Call Laury Hopkins at 718-885-3202 for more information.

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

Irish Dance: Call Deirdre OMara at (201) 947-8535

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

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

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

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

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

City Island Civic Association

Happy New Year, everyone! Once again we intend to embark on another year supporting our mission as it is stated in CICA's constitution: "...the protection of the public interest of the bona fide residents of City Island, the formulation of policies thereto, and the taking of action to effect these policies."

We are proud of our accomplishments for 2004 and thank all Island residents for their cooperation and participation. The following is a summary of some of them.

Our September meeting was Candidate's Night. Despite a rainy windy night, it was well attended by members and candidates. Meetings throughout the year welcomed representatives of Department of Sanitation, Con Ed, NYPD, Department of Transportation (DOT) and the city's Department of Design and Construction (DDC), the managing agency for the sewer/water main project. CICA chaired a community meeting along with the City Island Chamber of Commerce to host representatives from the DOT/DDC. We also sponsored the Island's effort in the Borough President's "Team Up to Clean Up The Bronx." More than 40 letters were written in response to local issues to our elected officials and city agencies.

The Zoning Committee, officers and board members continued to work with City Planning on the zoning now in effect not only for City Island but also the neighboring communities in Community Board 10. The new Lower Density Growth Management zoning is an outgrowth of City Island's Special District Zoning established in 2003. We also participated in meetings with City Planning to review the design of the new Belden Point reconstruction. We continue to monitor zoning violations and to meet with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regarding waterfront permits.

CICA officers held numerous meetings last year to establish good relations with neighboring civic associations and city agencies. As a result of several letters and consultation with City Planning, CICA managed to convince the Department of Buildings that its interpretation of opaque boat yard fencing was a misinterpretation of the zoning regulations. Surrounding community associations called to thank us because this ruling could have affected them as well.

We often remind you to call 311 to report violations or problems that the city can fix, but don't forget to call 911 if you see trouble brewing, or the precinct (718-822-5449) if you have suffered damage from vandalism. This is part of being a good citizen and is the responsibility of each of us.

The next meeting of the City Island Civic Association will be on Tuesday, Feb. 22, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Island Community Center, 190 Fordham Street. Please bring your dues for the year 2005 (\$20 per family) to our January meeting or mail a check payable to City Island Civic Association to P.O. Box 117, City Island, NY 10464.

Frank Fitts, President

Legion News

It's always difficult to get the ball rolling after the holidays, but here goes.

Unfortunately, I came down with a bad cold and did not make muster for the Post's annual Christmas party. I've been told by those present that it was well attended and that the excellent fare and the libation provided were enjoyed by all.

The children's Christmas party, too, was a great success, with 124 children in attendance. Plaudits to all who helped make it possible. Charlie Vincent, a.k.a. Santa, handed out gifts to the little tykes. Puppeteers were Tom McMahon, Betty Jordan, Ann Sullivan, Ann Marie and Cathy Simon. The photographer for the event was Jim Livingston. Tony Ann and Alana McIntyre were elves, and Matt Murphy created the scenery. Gumby and John Musto were on board and of course DJ Ray. Hope I didn't forget anyone.

At our last meeting the Post held everlasting services for two recently deceased members, both of whom were friends of mine over the years, Lt. Anne Costello, an army nurse who served in the European Theater of Operations during World War II and Captain Fred "Skip" Lane, Commanding Officer VSNS sealift-Mediterranean. They are missed by their families and by all of us.

At the ceremony the names of the deceased are placed in an envelope and burned in a brazier. All lighting is extinguished, "Taps" is played and the names of the deceased are transferred to the post everlasting.

Tom Costello, husband of Anne and members of her family attended; Tom read the following poem, which he dedicated to Anne:

If we would remember Anne in the years to come,
let us remember her in this light.
In the great war she fired no shot to wound another.
Each day she stood by the bedside of a fallen brother,
dressing his wounds so that one day he might recover
and return home to his loved ones.
Let us remember her in that light.

Skip Lane, too, showed compassion for others. This from a letter he wrote: "To all my friends on our island in the sound. A great day in my life to remember, my daughter Jackie's birthday and the fact that we have given part of America, our ship, to refugees from Vietnam that are now aboard. Nice easy pick-up. Actual time 12 minutes from when they were first sighted until alongside and aboard. Other time involved putting a line on their boat, turning it broadside to the sea and destroying it forever."

From the ship's log and relative to the above: "Sighted small craft in distress, reduced speed and picked up 10 refugees, 4 women, 3 men, and 3 children. Claimed native Vietnamese from Cam Ranh Bay region, afloat 8 days, health fair, very little English, plan to land at Sub K Bay." Typical Islander, true, but perhaps one cut above the rest.

Two events to remember, Super Bowl

party, Sunday Feb. 6. In addition to food befitting this festive occasion, liquid refreshments will be served beginning two hours before game time to one hour afterwards. It would be prudent to select a designated driver and to make your reservations early.

The Sons of the Legion will hold their annual Pigs' Knuckle Party either Feb. 19 or 28. Watch the bulletin board for further information.

Sick call: Lou Probst our member from Big Canoe, Georgia, is back on the road to recover after a few setbacks. If you haven't noticed Dr. Hess out for his daily walks, it is due to a recent fall. Fred hopes to be back in action soon. If you know of anyone I might have missed, give us a call.

Regular meetings for February are Monday, Feb. 7, and Monday, Feb. 21. An executive board meeting will be held Mon., Feb 14. All meetings will start promptly at 7:30 p.m.

To the best of my knowledge, 14 Islanders or relatives of Islanders are on active duty, many serving in Iraq.

Capt. John Green, Cpl. Charles Brill (home on sick leave), Maj. Hailey Clancy, Maj. Michael Clancy, Lt. Col. Patrick Eberhart, Lt. Claire Ganal, Lt. Edmund Ganal, C.W.O Joseph Goonan, Sgt. Michael Joslin, Lt. Chris Muller, Sgt 1st Class Louis Natale, Spc-A Colin O'Brien, Spc. Patrick Skea, and Lt. Thomas Woods. If I missed anyone or if you know of any additions, please contact me, Russ Schaller, on extension 2087.

There is also some good news to report. I had heard through the grape vine that Lt. Thomas Woods returned home. I contacted the Woods family and confirmed that Tom's unit had been redeployed state side.

And here's a choice morsel for you WWII buffs. William Patrick Hitler, Hitler's nephew, served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and if he is still alive, he lives in the New York area under an assumed name.

Russell Schaller

Grace Episcopal Church

Grace Church is pleased to announce our new children's church school, which meets in the Parish Hall at 10 a.m. every Sunday. Feel free to take your children directly to church school before our worship begins; children rejoin their parents in the service at the passing of the Peace.

We also offer an adult Bible study each Sunday during coffee hour. The class gives participants a preview of "coming attractions" by looking at the Gospel passage appointed for the following Sunday. Come and see!

Our regular services take place on Sundays at 10 a.m. (Holy Eucharist) and Mondays at 7 p.m. (evening prayer). In addition, this month we will offer special Ash Wednesday services on Feb. 9 at 12 noon and 7 p.m. (Holy Eucharist, Rite I, with the Imposition of Ashes). All are most warmly welcomed to join us for worship at any time.

For more information, please contact Mother Patty Alexander at 718-885-1080 or RevPPA@gracecityisland.diocesan.org.

Joe Nixon

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Biopics—2004

The year 2004 was replete with “biopics” (biographical pictures), a Hollywood favorite. Three of the films were about musical stars, with some award nominations already in the works. Jamie Foxx as Ray is uncanny in capturing the physical presence of Ray Charles, who was involved in the making of the film until his death last June. During filming, Foxx wore a prosthetic device that rendered him blind for as long as 14 hours a day. Two earth-shattering events in his childhood molded Ray Charles’s life. When he was five years old, his younger brother drowned in a bath basin while Ray was too emotionally overwhelmed to do anything, and he carried the guilt throughout his life. When he was seven, he went blind. Ray refused to use a cane or a seeing-eye dog, but he moved through his life deliberately and was a shrewd businessman, who helped popularize gospel music and moved to the top of the pop and R&B charts. The singing is all Ray Charles himself, but Mr. Foxx does a superb job of making us believe we’re seeing the genuine article.

Kevin Spacey directs himself and does all the singing as Bobby Darin, in **Beyond the Sea**. Although at the age of 47, Mr. Spacey clearly is too old to play the part of a singer who died at 37, having suffered rheumatic fever at seven, the film-within-a-film format attempts to gloss over that fact. In any case, Kevin Spacey is so good that we don’t really care. In another plot device, he has conversations with himself as a young Bobby (William Ulrich), and

it half-succeeds because the boy is so talented. Darin’s romance with Sandra Dee (Kate Bosworth) is interestingly portrayed as she begins to drink in order to deal with the loneliness caused by being married to such a driven man, one who was truly living on borrowed time.

De-Lovely is the story of Cole Porter (Kevin Kline), whose bisexuality as it is depicted in the film changes one’s interpretation of his lyrics forever after. Ashley Judd is wonderful as Porter’s wife, Linda, who allows him freedom while still desiring him, and the nuances of this relationship are palpable. Porter spent the last 27 years of his life in pain because a horse fell on him and crushed his legs, yet he still kept on writing music. The story seems to be filmed in a minor key, with a lifeless sadness about it. Two dozen of Porter’s songs are sung by contemporary singers, but their quality is undercut by their somewhat labored, self-conscious interpretations. Although it is relatively fictitious, the 1946 version of Porter’s life, **Night and Day**, starring Cary Grant, may be a more enjoyable film experience.

Liam Neeson is outstanding in the title role of **Kinsey**, about a human sexual behavior professor, and Laura Linney is equally good as his wife. Kinsey began his scientific career as a perfect nerd, collecting and studying a million gall wasps. When he started studying human sexuality, however, he discovered, in interviewing scores of men and women, that there is no such thing as “normal,” and that the variations of sexual behavior go beyond anything that was ever imagined. His work in 1947 was indeed shocking, to the dismay of his supportive but nervous university president (Oliver Platt). Kinsey encouraged sexual experimentation among his staff (Timothy Hutton, Chris O’Donnell and Peter Sarsgaard), whose troubled marriages were included in the research. This is a fascinating film, with wonderful performances.

Howard Hughes was truly an eccen-

tric man, and he is superbly portrayed by Leonardo DiCaprio in **The Aviator**. Martin Scorsese directs this film as both drama and action-adventure, focusing on Hughes’s forays into the movie business and the airline industry, in which he test-piloted planes himself. But Hughes’s unconventional behavior was actually caused by a classic case of obsessive-compulsive disorder, which led him to deteriorate at a time when there was no medication to ease his suffering. Cate Blanchett is wonderful as Hughes’s great love, Katharine Hepburn, before she fell for Spencer Tracy, and the ever-reliable John C. Reilly is terrific as Noah Dietrich, Hughes’s right-hand man, who seems uncannily capable of getting everything and anything done.

J. M. Barrie (Johnny Depp), the Scottish

playwright who created the children’s classic “Peter Pan,” is the subject of the biopic **Finding Neverland**, which is “based on true events.” With a bit of literary license, this film tells the story of the childless Barrie and his encounter with Sylvia Llewelyn Davies (Kate Winslet), a widow with four sons, and of the attachment he forms to the entire family. Through his friendship with the Davies boys, Barrie finds the childhood he missed and wonderful inspiration for his work. Although the film has a PG rating, it really is a sophisticated period piece for adults. A more extensive review of this film appeared in the December 2004 issue of *The Island Current*.

And until next time, happy viewing. . .

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St. Mary, Star of the Sea

Happy New Year to all! We hope to find you all rested and rejuvenated from the holidays. St. Mary, Star of the Sea, is in full swing after a busy January with plans for an even busier February.

In January the students were buzzing with final preparations for the Grade 8 English Language Arts (ELA) exam. Along with

their teacher, Mr. Caddell, they all rejoiced when it was over, only to begin final preparations for the math, science and social studies exams in the near future.

The fourth grade is getting ready for its ELA exam under the guidance of Mrs. McMahon, who is working tirelessly to be sure her class is prepared. We have also been very lucky to have the help of our local "consultant," Mrs. Mueller, who has been very willing to share strategies and ideas. Mrs. Mueller, a retired staff developer and administrator, is planning several faculty workshops on topics in literacy.

St. Mary's has implemented a new math program to complement the New York State curriculum and the Archdiocesan Essential Learning in Math program. ComMIT* is a comprehensive math-improvement tool

recently introduced in archdiocesan schools to improve mathematical competency in our students by developing skills, understanding and a consistent approach for all grades. ComMIT* emphasizes a balanced approach to math instruction.

We would like to welcome Mrs. Cabbell-Delgado to the St. Mary's family. Mrs. Cabbell enthusiastically took over the fifth-grade class in December and is doing a wonderful job. We are so pleased to have her aboard.

Jan. 30 through Feb. 4 is Catholic Schools Week. The theme this year is "Faith in Every Child," and St. Mary's has planned many events. During that week, we will hold two open-house sessions for prospective students and their families and for those who are interested in learning more about our school (see our advertisement). We think you will be pleasantly surprised. The open houses will be on Sunday, Jan. 30, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and on Wednesday, Feb. 2, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday of that week will be spirit days, and on Thursday, there will be a parent-catered international luncheon. This year we will be entertained by musical numbers from each class. Catholic Schools Week will close on Friday with a 9 a.m. school mass. You are all welcome to attend. Our school masses are wonderful.

February looks as if it will be another eventful month. St. Mary's has planned a Mardi Gras celebration with an academic theme in the morning, focusing on the historical, cultural and religious significance of this day, followed by an afternoon of classroom celebrations. Feb. 9, Ash Wednesday, marks the beginning of the holy season of Lent, and our students will attend a service to receive ashes. On Feb. 10, classes will focus on the Chinese New Year—the Year of the Rooster—in a continuing effort to expand cultural awareness. Our literacy theme for February will be black history. Later in the month, there will be a black history program prepared by parents and faculty.

For the first time in many years, St. Mary's is involved with "News and Views," a weekly student-produced Instructional Television (ITV) news program. Under the direction of Sr. McKinney, and Mr. Beskin, a team of seventh- and eighth-grade students is preparing a news magazine program on "Childhood Obesity," which will be televised at some point in the future throughout the archdiocese.

All in all, we have a full schedule ahead of us. The school year is moving swiftly and smoothly, and thus far we are making tremendous progress with the hard work and vigilant efforts of our fine faculty.

The kindergarten children are preparing for the 100th day of school, which falls on Feb. 17. They are improving their writing skills and will learn about American presidents for President's Day.

Grade 1 is hard at work on many projects as they get ready for the art auction. Classes 1C and 1S really enjoyed the "HollyRock Game Show," which was great fun.

The second-graders visited the City Island Library toward the end of January. February is Dental Month, and there will be an informative visit by Dr. Tanny Josen. The students will begin reading non-fiction books for language arts and learn about animal research in their science course.

Grade 3 is making excellent progress in literacy and math lessons. The students have also researched jobs they might like to have in the future and have written a research report including details about the job, both the benefits and the challenges. In math the students are learning whole numbers and decimals. They are also conducting interviews in preparation for International Day. This is a very busy time of year.

The students in Grade 4 will be taking the New York State English Language exam on Feb. 1-3. They will work with seeds and plants as a follow-up to their visit to the New York Botanical Garden. Work will soon begin on the genealogy projects.

The fifth-graders have begun their science unit on weather for this month. They will also be creating ABC books as part of their study of non-fiction.

In social studies, Grade 6 has just finished an intensive study of ancient Egypt and are now studying the Indus River Valley. In language arts, the students have begun a study of author Cynthia Rylant.

The seventh grade is currently immersed in the novel "The Outsiders" for the language arts class. The students are connecting with the struggles of Ponyboy and the other interesting characters in this great book. In social studies the class is focused on the Revolutionary War and making plans to reenact the Boston Massacre.

The eighth-graders must have a rough draft of their exit projects by Feb. 1. They must choose a topic from the period just after the Civil-War to the present time. Mr. Breen will be assisting the students with their projects during their computer time. The final paper is due on Feb. 28. The students are currently preparing for the Valentine's Bake Sale and other special activities.

Students in Grades 5 through 8 have begun their Webquest projects. They will create a Web page on an academic topic of their own personal interest. They finished their study of the Big 6, a metacognitive scaffold or problem-solving strategy to help guide them through the project. The students seem very excited about this project, and we hope to create some incredible and informative Web sites!

Public School 175



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TAX TIPS

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

As you prepare for the upcoming tax season, I thought you might find this brief rundown of 2005 tax changes useful.

- Adoption tax credit increases to \$10,630.
- Estate tax top rate drops to 47 percent, but the estate tax exemption amount remains at \$1.5 million. The annual gift tax exclusion remains at \$11,000.
- Section 179 maximum deduction increases to \$105,000. Phase-out threshold increases to \$420,000.
- 401(k) Maximum salary deferral increases to \$14,000 (50 and older catch-up limit increases to \$4,000).
- Simple maximum salary deferral increases to \$10,000 (50 and older catch-up increases to \$2,000).
- IRA maximum contribution increases to \$4,000 (50 and older catch-up remains at \$500).
- Standard mileage rate for business driving increases to 40.5 cents a mile. Rate for medical and moving mileage increases to 15 cents a mile. Rate for charitable driving stays at 14 cents a mile.
- Social Security taxable wage limit increases to \$90,000. Retirees under age 65 can earn up to \$12,000 without losing benefits.
- Sales tax can be deducted in lieu of state and local income tax on 2004 and 2005 federal income tax returns.
- Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) allow taxpayers under age 65 with high-deductible health insurance to set aside pretax dollars that can be withdrawn tax-free for medical expenses. For 2005, the individual set-aside amount increases to \$2,650; the family amount increases to \$5,250. Those 55 or older can put an extra \$600 in an HSA.
- Kiddie tax threshold remains at \$1,600.
- Nanny tax threshold remains at \$1,400.
- Tax brackets, personal exemptions, and income limitations for various tax benefits increase due to IRS inflation adjustments.

Financial Advice – No Charge

A corporate attorney I know sent the following note to the employees in his firm. Make a copy for your files, in case you need to refer to it someday. Better yet, make it one of your New Year's resolutions.

1. The next time you order checks, have only your first name and middle name initials (instead of your full first name) and your last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank should know how you sign your checks.

2. When you are writing checks to pay on your credit card accounts, do not put the complete account number on the "For/Memo" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handling your check as it passes through all the check-processing channels won't have access to it.

3. Put your work telephone number on your checks instead of your home phone. If you have a P.O. Box, use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a P.O. Box, use your work address. Never

have your Social Security number printed on your checks. You can add it if it is necessary, but if you have it printed, anyone can get it.

4. Place the entire contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each item (license, credit cards, etc.). This way you'll know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel if necessary. Keep the photocopies in a safe place. I also carry a photocopy of my passport when I travel either here or abroad. We've all heard horror stories about fraud committed by stealing a name, address, Social Security number, credit cards, etc.

If your wallet is stolen, the thief could make expensive purchases, order a monthly cell phone package, apply for a credit card or a credit line, get a PIN number from DMV to change my driving record information online, and more. Here is some critical information to limit the damage in case this ever happens to you or someone you know.

1. We have been told we should cancel our credit cards immediately. But the key is having the toll-free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know who to call. Keep this information where you can find it.

2. File a police report in the jurisdiction where your credit cards were stolen. This proves to credit providers that you were diligent and is a first step toward an investigation, if there is one.

3. The most important step of all is to call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. If you don't do so, an application for credit could be made over the Internet in your name. The alert means that any company checking your credit will know your information was stolen and will have to contact you by phone to authorize any new credit. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by any applications for purchases or credit.

Here are some phone numbers you will need to use when your wallet has been stolen: Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742; Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289; Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271.

We pass along jokes on the Internet; we pass along just about everything. But if you are willing to pass this information along, it could really help someone that you care about.

Obituaries

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

Robert F. Rodstrom

Robert F. Rodstrom, who was born and raised on City Island, died on Monday, Nov. 29, 2004, in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the age of 81.

A true clam digger, he was the seventh child of Captain Charles and Cora A. Rodstrom. He graduated from Public School 17 in January 1937, attended Evander Childs High School and then transferred to Christopher Columbus High School when it opened in 1938.

Prior to World War II, Mr. Rodstrom attended City College of New York and graduated with honors from the New York State Maritime Academy at Fort Schuyler. He served in the Merchant Marine during the war, traveling to Africa, India and Europe on Liberty ships. He earned a Master Mariners License for vessels of any tonnage upon the waters of any ocean.

In May 1949, he was married to Janice Amols of Pelham Bay at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church. Until her death, he and his wife took great delight in reminding his nieces Margaret Rodstrom Depaoli and Adelaide Rosenfeld Bialek that they had been junior bridesmaids at the wedding.

Mr. Rodstrom graduated from Tulane University College of Business Administration in 1952 and became a certified public accountant, a member of the Louisiana Society of CPAs, and subsequently a partner in a local CPA firm. In 1958 he graduated from Loyola University Law School.

He later served as the chief executive officer of an offshore drilling contractor until his retirement. He was a resident of New Orleans and Metairie beginning in 1946 and a member of the Southern Yacht

Club from 1954.

For many years Mr. Rodstrom owned his own oyster-shell island in Louisiana's Barataria Bay, where camping and fishing reminded him of his childhood on City Island.

He is survived by two sisters, Cynthia Kinsella of Vero Beach, Florida, and Josephine Rodstrom of Gainesville, Florida; and one brother, Wesley Rodstrom, of Port St. Lucie, Florida. His many nieces and nephews include City Island residents Wesley Rodstrom Jr., Walter Rodstrom and Nancy Rodstrom Fontana.

Burial will be in Pelham Cemetery on City Island.

Martin Serlitis

Longtime resident Martin Serlitis died on July 24, 2004. He was 76 years old.

Martin and his parents lived on City Island Avenue for many years above the wicker store. His father died when he was young and his mother eventually moved to Florida. Martin, who was an only child, continued to live in the same apartment on the avenue until seven years ago, when he moved to Pilot Cove. Islanders would often run into him at yard sales.

When he became ill, he was transferred to Calvary Hospital and eventually to the Hebrew Nursing Home in Co-op City, where he was a resident at the time of his death.

Martin is remembered fondly by his friends as a quiet gentleman who enjoyed

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Times and heights of high and low water (Eastern Standard Time)
 Heights in feet above meanings printed on charts of water adjacent to City Island. Times shown are local times. For times on the table beginning with 1300, add 1200 to get ordinary P.M. time (e.g., 1305 = 1205 = 4:25 P.M.). Times less than 1200 are A.M. times (e.g., 1104 = 11:04 A.M.).
 HH = hours; MM = minutes. Tide chart by Tom Smith

FEBRUARY 2005

DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	
01 Tue	0812	7.5	0838	0.4	1539	6.7	2153	0.4	Tue 01
02 Wed	0404	7.4	1057	0.5	1656	6.9	2248	0.6	Wed 02
03 Thu	0503	7.3	1147	0.6	1744	6.1	2351	0.8	Thu 03
04 Fri	0606	7.3	1224	0.5	1902	6.1			Fri 04
05 Sat	0108	0.8	0722	7.4	1451	0.1	2050	6.4	Sat 05
06 Sun	0238	0.5	0840	7.7	1588	-0.5	2140	6.0	Sun 06
07 Mon	0355	0.1	0960	8.0	1647	-0.9	2237	7.4	Mon 07
08 Tue	0455	-0.4	1050	8.3	1737	-1.2	2328	7.8	Tue 08
09 Wed	0550	-0.8	1143	8.4	1825	-1.3			Wed 09
10 Thu	0616	8.0	0841	-1.0	1234	8.3	1911	-1.3	Thu 10
11 Fri	0104	8.1	0732	-1.0	1325	8.0	1996	-1.0	Fri 11
12 Sat	0151	8.0	0823	-0.8	1416	7.8	2042	-0.8	Sat 12
13 Sun	0241	7.8	0917	-0.5	1510	7.1	2129	-0.1	Sun 13
14 Mon	0334	7.5	1014	-0.1	1609	6.6	2221	0.4	Mon 14
15 Tue	0434	7.2	1116	0.3	1713	6.3	2321	0.8	Tue 15
16 Wed	0536	6.9	1219	0.8	1818	6.1			Wed 16
17 Thu	0638	1.1	0948	8.9	1820	0.7	1919	6.1	Thu 17
18 Fri	0128	1.3	0742	8.9	1416	0.7	2016	6.3	Fri 18
19 Sat	0224	1.2	0835	7.0	1507	0.6	2106	6.6	Sat 19
20 Sun	0314	1.1	0926	7.2	1652	0.5	2152	6.8	Sun 20
21 Mon	0358	0.9	1006	7.3	1731	0.4	2232	7.0	Mon 21
22 Tue	0458	0.7	1045	7.4	1705	0.3	2307	7.1	Tue 22
23 Wed	0500	0.5	1118	7.4	1732	0.2	2330	7.2	Wed 23
24 Thu	0529	0.5	1129	7.4	1747	0.1	2341	7.4	Thu 24
25 Fri	0552	0.1	1146	7.3	1806	0.0			Fri 25
26 Sat	0603	7.8	0822	-0.1	1218	7.5	1885	-0.1	Sat 26
27 Sun	0636	7.8	0838	-0.2	1255	7.4	1911	-0.1	Sun 27
28 Mon	0118	7.9	0739	-0.2	1337	7.2	1951	0.0	Mon 28

MARCH 2005

DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	
01 Tue	0158	7.9	0826	0.0	1424	6.9	2036	0.3	Tue 01
02 Wed	0244	7.6	0918	0.3	1517	6.6	2127	0.8	Wed 02
03 Thu	0337	7.5	1016	0.6	1617	6.3	2225	0.9	Thu 03
04 Fri	0439	7.3	1138	0.8	1730	6.1	2337	1.2	Fri 04
05 Sat	0522	7.2	1331	0.9	1909	6.3			Sat 05



A Few Surprises

On our way out the front door the other day, we were greeted by a bird call that was not familiar to us. It was a noisy "peter peter peter." A quick scan of the trees nearby and we had our bird—a tufted titmouse, small and inconspicuous. The tufted crest of the titmouse, like that of a cardinal or a blue jay, makes it easy to identify. So do its flanks, which are rust-colored in an otherwise white under-portion.

For us the sighting was a first, and it was happily recorded as such. Later on, however, we learned that a tufted titmouse on City Island was not necessarily as uncommon as we thought. Neighbors told us that they had been observing them for years. A quick check on-line and we found they were right.

Apparently, the titmouse has been moving north from states as far south as Texas, Mississippi and Florida for some time now. Some experts attribute their expanded habitat to the ever-increasing number of backyard bird feeders, where, we understand, the titmouse can be quite a contender. He is also known for clinging upside down to tree branches in search of food, so keep an eye out for this one—even if he's not so uncom-

mon—especially in winter.

By now many of you have probably either watched a seagull drop a shellfish from the sky, trying to get at the food inside, or walked through the aftermath, wondering how all the pieces got there (now you know!), but have you ever seen a seagull being fed from the beach like a swan? Well, we understand there's a particular bird and human pair getting mighty chummy on the beach down Winter Street. Stay tuned on this one.

We also understand that a harbor seal was sighted on the breakwater at Minnecord's marina. Although this is certainly more unusual than our titmouse sighting, it is not without precedent. About 10 years ago, one adventurous little seal—at Stelter's, we believe—had his picture taken and printed in *The Current*. It would be interesting to know what has brought the seal population back as far as it has; one study has accounted for about 6,000 harbor seals in all of Long Island Sound. Any thoughts on this subject, or any other subject, can be shared at jdsstrat@msn.com.

Finally, any City Islander with eyes and ears cannot help but take note of the various construction sites (and sounds) along City Island Avenue at this time. Interest rates are still low, and money still cheap, and... Well, let's hope that whatever goes up looks nice and stays that way.

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Ambrosini Field Improvements

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

As construction begins on the filtration plant in Van Cortlandt Park, the Department of Parks & Recreation has already made plans to spend the \$240 million that it will receive for allowing the plant to be built in that location. Of that amount, \$1.5 million has been allocated to improve City Island's Ambrosini Little League Field over the next year and a half.

At a recent meeting on site at the field, Parks Department personnel discussed needed improvements with representatives of the community, including the City Island Little League, the Civic Association and the Chamber of Commerce.

The replacement of the water/sewer line that runs from the street to the clubhouse at the back part of the field has been in the budget since last year, and work may begin as early as April 2005. This is not part of the larger renovation project, which includes upgrading the children's playground near City Island Avenue and making it handicap-accessible.

The Little League also expressed the need for the following improvements: new fencing around the ball field; leveling of the field surface; new sod; repair of the backstop or replacement with new fencing; installation of a new practice field in the northwest corner of the park; installation of new drinking fountains at both ends of the park; new surfacing for the path enter-

ing the park; installation of exercise equipment; and a new scoreboard.

According to James Vacca, district manager of Community Board 10, the Parks Department will submit a scope of work to the board within a couple of months, and it will be the subject of a public hearing before any decisions are made. It is hoped that work can begin in June.

Several Islanders, including Virginia Gallagher, a member of Community Board 10 and chair of its Parks Committee, and Robert Carmody of the Chamber of Commerce have proposed that the city use Parks Department funds to purchase the now-vacant property on City Island Avenue near Schofield Street. Ideas for the site, which formerly housed cable-installation equipment, include a park, a recreational facility for the community or parking for the school.

However, it was made clear at the general meeting of the Community Board on Thursday, Jan. 20, that all of the filtration-plant funds were allocated to specific uses in August 2004 and cannot now be reallocated. According to Bob Nolan of the Bronx Borough President's office, state legislators working with the Parks Department decided where the funds would go, without consulting the Borough President or the local community boards.

Warrior Football Registration

Warrior director Jerry Demers announces that registration for the 2005 season will take place at Lehman High School on Sunday, March 6 and 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Players should be accompanied by a parent or guardian and come prepared for light exercise. Registrants should enter through the side entrance by the field and proceed to the gym. Lehman High School is located at 3000 East Tremont Avenue.

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

For boys and girls interested in tackle football, the age and weight groups are:

- Mites - 7, 8 or 9 years old, 90 pounds or less
- Pee Wees - 10 to 11 years old, 110 pounds or less; 12 years old, 90 pounds or less
- Juniors - 12 to 13 years old, 130 pounds

or less

- Travel team - 13 to 14 years old, 150 pounds or less
- Travel team - 15 to 16 years old, 180 pounds or less

Boys and girls ages 6, 7 or 8 are eligible for flag football and there is no weight limit.

Ages are determined as of July 31, 2005. All divisions are co-ed.

Practices begin in August on weekday evenings for the fall football season. Games are played on Saturdays and Sundays at Pelham Bay Park and Lehman High School. The cost schedule for the 2005 season is \$100 for tackle football and cheerleading, \$80 for flag football and \$130 for travel teams. Prices increase by \$20 for registration after March 15.

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis, and those who fail to register in the spring are not guaranteed a roster spot in August, even if they are returning players. For more information about football, call Jerry Demers at 718-829-7574, and for cheerleading call Geri Demers at 718-792-5747.

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

Get-well wishes across the miles to former Island resident and *Current* editor Sally McPherson, who has been under the weather recently. *Current* staff members and City Island friends send their love.

Best wishes for continued success to City Island's head librarian, Evelyn Gerges, who was recently recognized by the New York Times as one of the country's top librarians.

Happy birthday on Feb. 1 to Bay Street's Virginia DiGregorio, with love from your family and friends.

Happy Sweet 16 birthday greetings to Lauren Porelli, who will celebrate her big day at the Lido in February. Lauren is the niece and goddaughter of King Avenue residents Paul and Karen Nani.

Congratulations to City Island's doctor, Norbert Sander, who was honored as one of eight "Heroes of Running 2004" by "Runner's World" magazine. Dr. Sander was recognized as a mentor to runners for his work in restoring the track at the Armory in Manhattan. In 2004, 125,000 athletes competed at the New Balance Track and Field Center at the Armory. Dr. Sander was also instrumental in bringing the National Track and Field Hall of Fame to the Armory.

Happy sixth birthday on Jan. 27 to Joey DiNome, with love from Mom, Dad, Samantha, Peter and Michael.

Birthday greetings go out to Peter DiNome, who will turn 39 on Feb. 15. We love you!

Happy 14th birthday on Feb. 26 to Samantha DiNome, with love from your family.

Happy fourth birthday on Feb. 23 to Hailey Nelson.



Nicholas Ruggiero of Minneford Avenue is shown above with Joseph Miccarelli of the City Island Pharmacy. Nicholas won "The World's Largest Christmas Stocking," which was raffled off at the pharmacy in December 2004 as part of the holiday festivities on City Island. The only thing bigger than the stocking was the smile on Nicholas' face!

Thanks to all the Islanders who prayed, sent cards and good wishes to Gloria from the Lina Petite Salon during her cancer treatment and surgery. Gloria loves all of you and greatly appreciates everything that you have done for her.

Have a great Valentine's Day!

Maria Swieciki

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A Celebration of Grace



Photos by PAUL NANI

Clergy, parishioners, Islanders, family members and friends joined in the celebration of new ministry at the installation of Reverend Patricia Alexander as Priest-in-Charge of Grace Episcopal Church on Dec. 11, 2004. Bishop Catherine Roskam presided over the ceremony (bottom photo, right), which included a homily by Reverend Randolph Alexander, Rector of Christ the Redeemer in Pelham and husband of the new minister. The selection of Reverend Patricia Alexander renews a historic link between Grace Church and Christ the Redeemer dating back to the 1800s. This spirit of cooperation was evident during the installation with the participation of the organist, Kevin Jones, and members of the choir from Christ Church. After her installation, Mother Patty, as she is known, enthusiastically began planning for the new year by organizing a full schedule of events, including Bible study, church school, the parish annual meeting on Jan. 24 and a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on Feb. 8. She welcomes everyone to visit Grace Church or call her at 718-885-1080.

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