

The Island Current

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One Dollar

Restoration of the Waterfront Behind P.S. 175

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photo by BARBARA DOLENSEK

The City Island Oyster Reef has recently undertaken the renovation of the waterfront area behind Ambrosini Field and P.S. 175, where Nevins Shipyard was once located, removing invasive weeds and replacing them with native coastal plants. As some volunteers worked on the plantings, others worked with interns to study the progress being made by oysters in the cage moored just off the shoreline.

The City Island Oyster Reef (CIOR) has made great progress this year with its oyster cages placed in the waters around the Island, but the most recent effort of the group is one that will have long-term impact on land, specifically the area on the water behind P.S. 175 and Ambrosini Field.

During the month of October, volunteers have gathered to clean up the abandoned waterfront area behind the fence, removing invasive weeds such as ragweed and putting in native marshland plants. CIOR envisions that this effort, carried out with the support of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, which provided plants as well as access to the area, will eventually result in an educational space to provide a hands-on environmental experience for students as well as for the general public.

CIOR's goal is to restore the area and provide a comprehensive and tangible introduction to environmental science, the ecology of tidal wetland habitats, and marine biology. The project envisions natural walkways planted with indigenous wetland vegetation that would connect the flow across the grounds, as well as a stepped walkway supported by pilings to enable safe access between meadow and marsh. Oyster cage monitoring stations would be accessible for study, and the development of oyster reefs would be created further out in the water. The group believes that such a space where everyone could enjoy and learn about this important ecosystem is an important part of protecting and ensuring the survival of the environment.

The area where this activity is taking place has been inaccessible to the public for several years, but longtime City Island residents will remember that before P.S. 175 was built in 1975, this was the location of the Nevins Yacht Yard, which was one of City Island's most important maritime businesses. After Nevins closed in 1961, the land lay dormant, until the city purchased the property and constructed

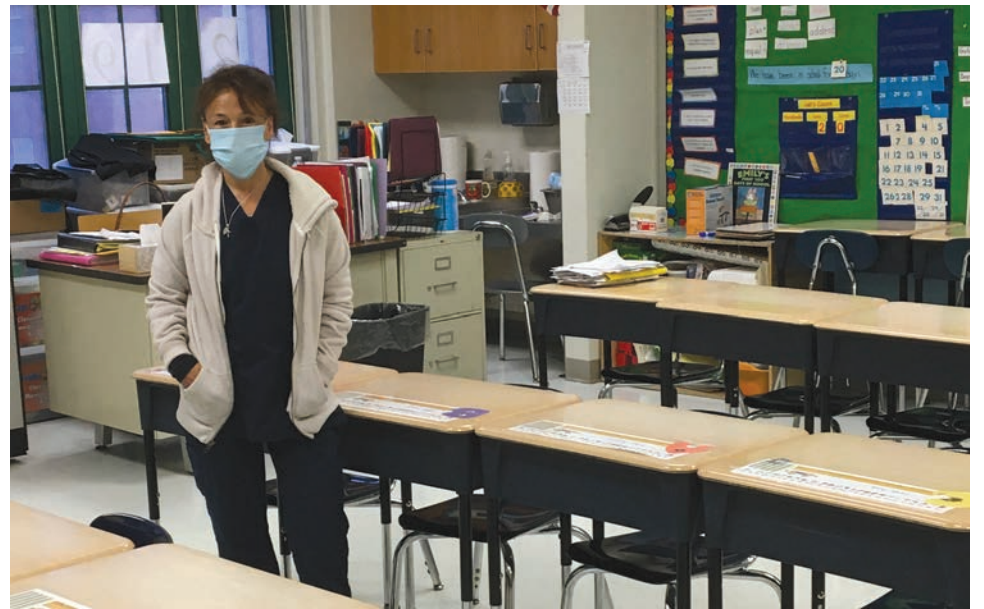
a public school to replace P.S. 17, now the home of the City Island Nautical Museum and the Community Center. The Parks Department acquired the rights to the waterfront land behind the school in 1981, but for many years after the new school opened, the rotting docks and piers remained in place. In 1997, the Army Corps of Engineers removed most of them and amassed piles of rocks to protect the shoreline from flooding and storm damage. Weeds and garbage accumulated, however, and the Parks Department eventually had to construct high chain-link fences to keep the public from accessing the area.

This new effort to create a learning center is by no means the first. In 1996, an organization called Innovative Directions: An Educational Alliance (IDEA) was formed to cultivate an appreciation and awareness of City Island's rich nautical history. The IDEA vision, administered by Rose Rodstrom and Patricia Hennessy, was to construct a pier behind P.S. 175 and to incorporate marine science and maritime history studies into the curriculum. IDEA worked with the school for five years, organizing the annual Fleet Weekend, a maritime festival to celebrate the unique qualities of our community. Bronx Parks Commissioner William Castro supported the concept of developing the property behind the school into a waterfront park and constructing an educational learning center there, but it was met with some resistance from the community and required more support and funding. IDEA's founders at that time were pursuing degrees and raising seven children between them, and they ultimately decided to focus on their families and work. IDEA did, however, manage to fund the installation of a state-of-the-art science lab at P.S. 175 and worked with NYC Board of Education to fund a full-time marine science educator at the school. And their annual Bucket Brigade filled a 1,000-gallon salt water tank in the

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Viewing the New School Year From the Teacher's Desk

By KAREN NANI



Hard-working Island teachers are adapting to classroom life during the pandemic. Shown are Rose Kolb in her classroom at P.S. 83 (top photo) and Craig Antelmi, who teaches at the Bronx High School of Business (right).

The 2020 school year is under way, and students are adapting surprisingly well to learning during the pandemic, according to Island teachers.

Longtime resident Craig Antelmi teaches mathematics at the Bronx High School of Business on the Taft campus. Craig graduated from Fordham University with a degree in business and then attended Lehman College for his Master's degree in education. He has taught for 17 years, but he admits that the 2020 school year, which began on Oct. 1 for his students, is unlike any he has ever experienced before.

"Everything is different this year because of the Covid-19 crisis. We taught remotely all last spring during the shelter-in-place, but now the situation is fluid with parents and students having the option of remote or hybrid learning," Craig explained. In his high school, he estimates that 60 percent of students are learning remotely full time from home, and 40 percent are in the hybrid model coming to school two or three days a week in person.

In contrast, most teachers are required to teach in person. Craig's in-class day begins as in years past at 8:10 a.m. and ends at 2:30 p.m., but the similarities end there. Depending on the new schedule ("A, B or C day"), there are only nine to ten students in the room with him for a geometry lesson and everyone is wearing masks. "We also have to 'layer up' because we now keep most windows and doors open to improve air circulation, and it can get cold."

To minimize exposure, movement and the number of people in the hallways, the teachers now rotate from classroom to classroom when the period ends, rather than have the students move as in the normal image of high school life. In each room he moves to, Craig teaches 45-minute lessons to "A group" students on Mondays and Tuesdays, then the same



two lessons to "B groups" on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The "C group" learns remotely, entirely from home. Depending on the rotation, Fridays might be for in-person lessons or for reviewing assignments, tests and quizzes.

Sound confusing? Imagine the situation for students and faculty! "The students are definitely affected by this unprecedented year, but they are getting acclimated." The halls are more subdued, and the students are missing the usual social camaraderie of the gym, locker rooms and cafeteria. What about lunch? "Students now have what many in the business world have been doing for years: a working lunch!" Instead of having students go to the high school lunchroom, lunches are delivered directly to classrooms or students bring their own food. Then they eat while the lesson is being presented by the teacher.

A somewhat different system is used in the New York City elementary schools. Islander Rose Kolb teaches first grade at P.S. 83 in the Bronx. She and her six-year-old students are also divided into A, B and C groups, but Rose stays in the same classroom all day with whichever group is scheduled for in-person learning that day.

Both Craig and Rose have been pleasantly surprised at the compliance with masks and social distancing among their students. "On the first day of school on

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BRIEFLY...

THE CITY ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER has at last opened its doors, although in a modified way, because of Covid-19 restrictions (see page 9 for the schedule). The Center will monitor the regulatory health guidance and plans to offer new programming in the future based on safety of each activity. On Nov. 2, from 1 to 7 p.m., the NY Blood Center is holding a critical Blood Drive, and appointments made in advance are highly encouraged. Please call 1-800-933-2566 to schedule a time to give and to help address the severe shortage of blood.

THE CITY ISLAND NAUTICAL MUSEUM will remain closed through the winter, but the shop is still offering City Island face masks and other gifts. Call 718-885-1616 for information and to place orders. In the meantime, the museum staff is working up a series of webinars on City Island to be held through the winter, as well as improving exhibits. Visit www.cityislandmuseum.org for updates.

WATERFRONT RESTORATION behind Ambrosini Field is a City Island Oyster Reef project. Volunteers would be welcome on Saturday, Oct. 31, and Sunday, Nov. 1, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. To register, please e-mail cityislandoysterreef@gmail.com. Bring gloves, masks and lots of energy! For more information about the City Island Oyster Reef, visit www.cioysterreef.org.

45 BLOTTER

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

- 1 – HARASSMENT
- 2 – GRAND LARCENY
- 2 – LOST PROPERTY
- 1 – CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE
- 1 – DEAD ON ARRIVAL (DOA)
- 1 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

Police provided details on the following arrests and incidents for the period from Sept. 20 through Oct. 19, 2020.

9/21 – At 6:20 p.m., an off-Island male told police that several items had been removed from the trunk of his parked vehicle in an act of grand larceny at a commercial establishment on City Island Avenue.

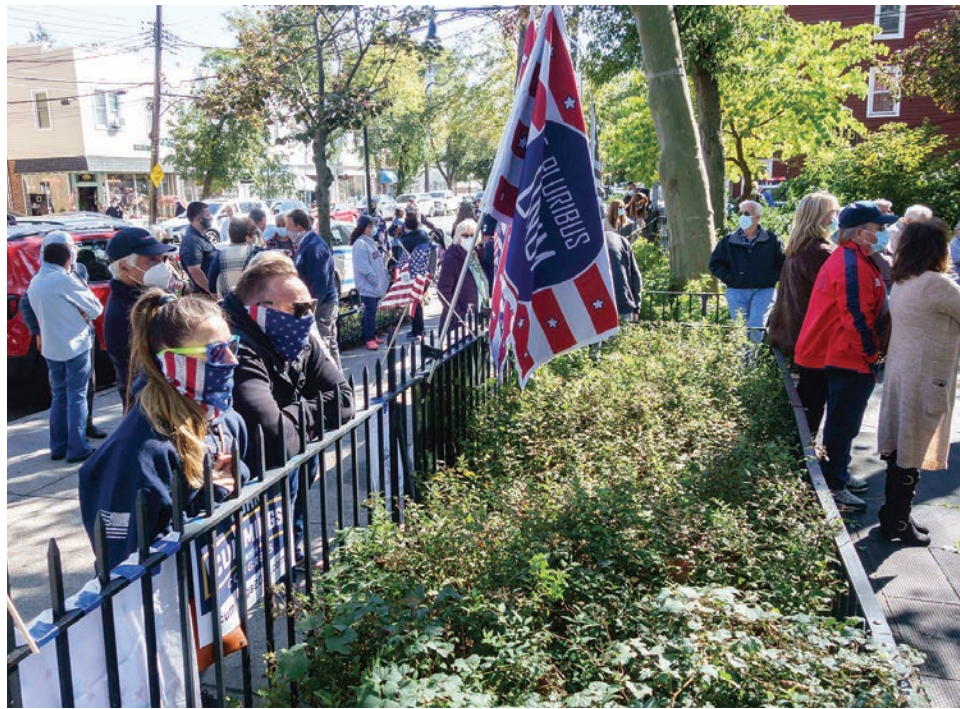
9/26 – An off Island male reported that his wallet was missing at 6:30 p.m. on City Island Avenue.

9/28 – An Island male reported an act of criminal mischief on Tier Street at 7 a.m. An unknown male popped the rear tire of his parked vehicle.

10/3 – Police are investigating a male found DOA on City Island Avenue at 1:41 p.m.

10/5 – On City Island Avenue at 3 p.m., an Island male reported being harassed by an unknown person who posted messages about him on Facebook that included his social security number.

10/7 – Police arrested an off-Island male, 50, and charged him with criminal possession of a controlled substance at 6:07 p.m. Officers observed the defendant's vehicle swerving out of its lane on City Island Avenue and having a broken taillight. When police stopped the vehicle, they found the driver in possession of marijuana and (alleged) cocaine.



Photos by RICK DeWITT

On Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020, City Island hosted a well-attended Back the Blue Rally in Hawkins Park, organized by Islanders Bob Carmody and retired Lieutenant Bob DiMartini (bottom photo), who is the most decorated police officer in the history of the NYPD.

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CIVIC ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 70TH YEAR

By BARBARA DOLENSEK and KAREN NANI

On Nov. 16, 1950, five City Island residents filed with New York State a certificate of incorporation for a new organization called the City Island Civic Association (CICA), whose purpose would be: "to protect and enhance the welfare of the residents of City Island in such a manner as will result in a common benefit for all."

This month marks the 70th anniversary of the organization, which continues to work for the benefit of City Island residents. It is therefore fitting for *The Island Current*, which is celebrating its own anniversary milestone next year, to recount the Civic Association's accomplishments over the past seven decades.

In the City Island Nautical Museum is a poster celebrating a clean-up of City Island Avenue, the first of many subsequent efforts on behalf of the community. One of the leaders of the effort was the Civic president and co-founder Jerome Healy, whose daughter, Barbara Hoffman, serves the organization today on its executive board.

During the early years, meetings were held from March through November at various Island churches, including Grace Church, St. Mary, Star of the Sea and Trinity United Methodist, and the American Legion hall, all of which had spaces large enough to hold the membership. After the P.S. 17 building on Fordham Street was replaced by P.S. 175, the auditorium on the second floor was used for meetings, and when the building was sold to a developer, the Community Center space in the basement became the meeting room.

The first issue of *The Island Current*, published in October 1971, listed a number of major accomplishments of the Civic, including the paving of streets, improvement of street lighting, revising the official city map of the island, putting up a fence to prevent fishing from the bridge, preventing the expansion of the landfill near the Shore Road Bridge into 30 acres in Pelham Bay Park. CICA also worked collaboratively with other groups to continue clean-up drives, to help establish the City Island Volunteer Ambulance Corps, to participate in meetings with the 45th Precinct, the Community Board, the Parents Association at P.S. 175, and to send representatives to various meetings with the City Council, the Board of Estimate, the Planning Commission and more.

It is not surprising that in the 50 years since *The Current* provided that description the Civic Association has continued to work for residents and can be proud of its many achievements. However, the history of CICA has not always been a matter of smooth sailing. In 1972 alone, meetings were often interrupted by residents arguing about various issues on which the community did not agree: the construction of P.S. 175 at 200 City Island Avenue, the recording of Civic meetings without permission, changes in bylaws and more. And some CICA efforts were in vain: asking the Federal Aviation Authority not to route planes over City Island (although later Civic complaints did result in some rerouting), demands that the Department of Correction on Hart Island take over the drug rehab Phoenix House, and fights against landfill off various streets on the



Photos by RENA HANSEN and KAREN NANI

Howard Smith (above) was president of the Civic Association from 1985 to 2002, when his vice president, Frank Fitts (top right photo), became president. Barbara Dolensek (lower right photo), standing next to Howie, was then recording secretary and is now second vice president.

east side of the Island.

Successful issues in which CICA became involved during the 1970s included fighting off the installation of a power plant on Hart Island, participating in establishing City Island Special District Zoning, supporting the ballfield next to P.S. 175, and joining with other Island organizations to sponsor senior citizen housing on Pilot Street. During most of the decade, the president of the Civic Association was Virginia Gallagher, and serving with her were longtime Island residents Murray DeCandido, Russell Schaller, Eileen Schaller, Rosalie Phillips and Alice Persteins.

The Current has covered the achievements and activities of the Civic Association since its first issue, but in June 1980, the paper printed an editorial complaining that the officers were manipulating votes and called for Civic members "who claim they care about City Island would be taken more seriously regardless of which side they are on if they came regularly to meetings and shared in the burdens of the association. . . . People should wake up and concern themselves with all issues involving City Island, not just those pertaining to their particular interests. What happens to any area of the Island ultimately affects the entire community."

The editorial sparked several responses from Islanders, both for and against its opinion, but the Civic got the message and quickly elected a new slate of officers, with Barbara Barry as president. Frank Fitts was elected vice president and would himself become president in 1982.

In June 1981 the Civic Association's complaints to the 45th Precinct commanding officer about traffic and parking problems on the Island made the front page of *The Current*. Civic members made clear the need for enforcement of illegal parking along City Island Avenue and illegal fishing off the bridge and insisted that the fire lane be kept clear and excessive traffic be controlled by the police department.



Except for fishing from the bridge, these complaints would be repeated virtually every year up to the present time.

In 1985 the Civic elected Howard Smith, an officer with the NYPD Harbor Patrol, as president, a position he would hold until 2002, when he resigned because of illness and passed away shortly afterward. During his time as president, the Civic formed a subcommittee called SONE (Save Our Natural Environment), which still continues today. The initial reason for the formation of SONE was to protest the proposed construction of an amphitheater at Orchard Beach that would have created serious noise issues for City Island residents. Under Howie Smith's leadership, the Civic fought against illegal landfill and development inappropriate within City Island Special District Zoning, fought the Pelham Bay Landfill and the expansion of the towers on High Island. He made a special effort to work with the Chamber of Commerce, the AARP, and other Island organizations to represent concerns to the Community Board, the Borough President, the City Council, the Department of City Planning and numerous city and state agencies.

The issue of overdevelopment has long been a concern of the Civic, as have such ongoing issues as water quality, street conditions, waterfront taxes, threats to reduce the fire department on the Island, street conditions, and many more. When the City Island Bridge was condemned by the Department of Transportation in 1998, the Civic became involved in many aspects of its demise and replacement, which finally took place in 2017. But its longest-lasting fight with the city is one that began in 1992 and continues today—sound abatement of the NYPD firing range at Rodman's Neck.

In September 2002, Frank Fitts was again elected president of CICA, and under his watch, CICA met with the Bronx Borough President to establish City Island's position on the bridge construction, monitored the progress (and the numerous delays) with sewer replacement, made a special request to the NYPD for Harbor Patrol coverage (a plea to be made in 2020 by the current leadership), petitioned the state to help protect wetlands on City Island, and mounted a campaign to install security cameras along City Island Avenue.

In September 2008, Frank Fitts moved

to Long Island, leaving vice president Bill Stanton in charge of the organization. Bill's term as president began in January 2009, and he has remained president ever since. His career as a private investigator proved helpful in coordinating with the 45th precinct to remove drug offenders from the Island. Under his watch, Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Police Commissioner William Bratton and Comptrollers John Liu and Scott Stringer came to the Island to meet with residents, and rallies were held to protest the removal of Ladder Company 53 from the Fire Department. In May 2009, the Civic, with the help of the McGowan family, sponsored a CI Clean-Up Day, followed by a community picnic at Ambrosini Field.

Other issues in which the Civic played a role included studying the installation of cell towers at various locations around the Island and opposing the construction of an oversized senior housing complex on City Island Avenue at Schofield Street. The Civic sponsored a meeting with the MTA to protest the lack of bus service on the Island and hosted a mayoral candidates' night in September 2013 that brought a media storm because of the presence of Anthony Wiener. Other than sponsoring occasional candidates' nights, however, the Civic Association has remained completely removed from political issues.

In 2018, efforts were made by some residents to vote in term limits, but the effort failed, and Bill Stanton won re-election in 2018 and has continued to serve ever since. Two of the current officers have dedicated themselves to the Civic for over 20 years: Tom Smith (Howie's son), who is currently treasurer and parliamentarian, and Barbara Dolensek, who has been recording secretary and is now second vice president. Fred Ramftl and Janie Blanks, a first vice president and recording secretary, have served for over a decade.

Although the Civic Association has held monthly meetings since it was founded 70 years ago, the Covid-19 pandemic made it impossible for the membership to meet during 2020. The Civic continued its work on municipal services to improve sewers, traffic conditions and numerous other problems; on zoning issues, and on crime control, but it also launched a program called City Island

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For The People of City Island

To the Editor:

On Tuesday, Sept. 29, I attended the first in-person meeting held by the City Island Civic Association since the onslaught of the pandemic. I would like to thank the association for inviting me to be present on this occasion.

The invitation noted that I was to be thanked for my contributions to City Island. It was a surprising gesture for one who has done so little. And I was far from the only one so honored. As the evening progressed outdoors under a tent with a view of the lights of the city, I felt humbled as one after another, City Island residents were thanked, each one an example of compassion and concern for others during the worst of the pandemic so far, works of mercy far surpassing any small contribution of mine.

All these instances of feeding the hungry, caring for the elderly, responding without prejudice and seeking a common ground as an island community mirrored the intent of the Law set out in the 10 Commandments received by Moses on Mt. Sinai, the unchangeable moral law binding a people together. Times are, indeed, tough, but hope will never fail us. For a moment on Tuesday night, I experienced many gathered together in a common purpose: e pluribus unum, from many one . . . working together for a common purpose, respecting human dignity and caring for all.

(The Rev.) John Covington
Pastor, Grace Episcopal Church

Plea to Remedy Voting Issues

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

Dear Director Ryan,

We, members of City Island Rising Inc., a community-based organization for the City Island neighborhood of the Bronx, New York, write to you with respect to our concerns about past Election Day issues at our local poll site at P.S. 175. Our community is small and geographically remote from the rest of the City of New York and as such does not always receive the attention it needs from local government.

The most recent and troublesome issue occurred this year on the June 23 primary. According to The American Prospect, City Island was identified as the last polling site to open in our city, nearly three hours late at 8:50 a.m. Voters waited outside during this time, but many were unable to adjust their work schedules on such short notice. As a result, they were disenfranchised of their right to vote. We were told this was due to the fact that a poll site coordinator called in sick that day. No matter the reason, this was unacceptable and had an impact on hundreds of our neighbors who were unable to participate in our democratic system.

This is, unfortunately, not an isolated incident. During the 2018 general election on Nov. 6, our community experienced several scanner malfunctions, apparently caused by the rainy weather, which led to long delays for those waiting in line. This resulted in some prospective voters simply walking off the waiting line, as they could not wait for over an hour to cast their vote.

These incidents have left many of our neighbors fearful of what could go wrong on Nov. 3, as even more variables are at play due to the coronavirus pandemic. We respectfully ask that you and the Board fully review operations at P.S. 175 and implement the appropriate changes to ensure that the site will be fully opened and operational on this upcoming Election Day.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

City Island Rising

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HAUNTING HALLOWEEN MEMORIES



Photos by RENA HANSEN, MATT PANZA and RICK DeWITT

Because of the Covid-19 crisis, the much-loved Halloween parade along City Island Avenue was cancelled for 2020 (Hurricane Sandy caused the only other cancellation in recent years). Here are photos from past parades so Islanders can relive some frighteningly funny Halloweens.



WHO KNOWS THE GHOSTS ON CITY ISLAND?

By PATRICK GANNON

Now that I have your attention, I need your help to consider that question. This idea came to my wife, Nancy Kheck, and me on a recent mini-vacation to Block Island. We went to the bookstore at Old Harbor and bought "Ghosts of Block Island," by a local author, Fran Migliaccio. We asked the bookseller for details, which she graciously shared, although she ended with the following advice: "If you want to learn more, ask any senior on the island." After some initial reluctance, possibly because of our off-island foreigner status (sound familiar?) and maybe some embarrassment, we started asking randomly and the story doors opened wide. The elders of Block Island, since they are among the 31 storytellers presented, are very proud of their ghost stories, and the book captures this (www.islandboundbookstore.com/featured/ghosts-block-island).

After we had delighted in the ghost stories native to Block Island, it occurred

to us that Block Island and City Island are not so culturally dissimilar. Our deep histories both include Native American, Revolutionary War, agricultural and maritime foundations (www.blockislandinfo.com/island-information/history). And, just as on City Island, most people on Block Island seem to know almost everyone else who lives there, along with their family trees, and they even presume to know what they are up to.

With the help of Clementina Esposito, Nancy and I would like to use Fran Migliaccio's book as a model to compile and create a compilation of City Island ghost stories. First we will conduct standardized personal interviews and then write literary narratives to delight natives and tourists alike with City Island's spiritual-cultural local color. If you have a ghost story to offer for this publication, please contact us at cityislandghosts@gmail.com or 718-757-1699.

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Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK

Volunteers (top photo) removed invasive weeds from the area behind Ambrosini Field before putting in native plants. CIOR co-chair Sally Connolly (second from right, bottom photo) met with expert advisers on the project (l. to r.): Jason Smith, Director of Northern Manhattan Parks for the New York Restoration Project, Dr. Paul Mankiewicz of the Gaia Institute and Dr. Eric Sanderson, senior conservation ecologist with the Wildlife Conservation Society.

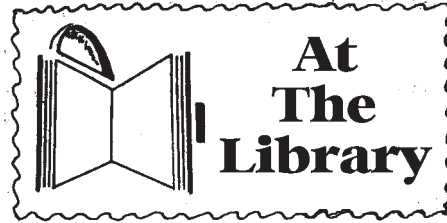
Waterfront Restoration

Continued from page 1

school lobby, and built a freshwater pond behind the school under the direction of Island scientist Paul Mankiewicz, GAIA Institute.

Although the efforts to create an environmental learning center on the site 20 years ago did not succeed, it is not surprising that two of the leaders involved

in the new project at the site are Rose Rodstrom and Paul Mankiewicz, both of them members of the CIOR board. Advice has been provided to the CIOR by Island resident Dr. Eric Sanderson, who is senior conservation ecologist with the Wildlife Conservation Society, and by Jason Smith, Director of Northern Manhattan Parks for the New York Restoration Project at Swindler Cove. Their expertise and experience in working to restore shoreline ecology have been invaluable in giving this new venture a great head start.



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As of Aug. 3, the City Island branch has offered a grab-and-go service, which allows patrons to access a limited area of these branches to return materials and pick up holds. Reserve your items online or by phone, and you will receive an e-mail when your items are ready, at which point your items will be automatically checked out to your account. You can then head to your selected branch for contactless pickup. Simply grab your items from the holds shelf—then go! There will be no need to stop by the circulation desk for checkout. The same goes for returns—rather than visiting the desk, there will be a designated bin where you can return any items you currently have.

The process of reserving an item is the same as always. You can place a hold on an item online or over the phone, which will put your request into a queue until a copy becomes available. The wait time will vary depending on how many others have reserved the item and how many copies we have.

During this time, patrons are encouraged to explore the online resources available on *NYPL.org*. Both *SimplyE* and *Overdrive* can be accessed from any smartphone, tablet or e-reader. Once either app is downloaded, use your NYPL library card number (found on the back of your card) and 4-digit PIN to log in. Once you are logged in, you will have access to an extensive collection of electronic materials that can be downloaded onto your device free of charge! If certain items are unavailable, you can place a hold on them so that they appear on your device once they become available.

Additionally, you can still call our helpline at 917-ASK-NYPL (917-275-6975) or contact the City Island Library staff directly on our Facebook page. Not only will we do our best to answer any questions that you may have, but we will be posting information about some of the NYPL's remotely accessible databases for you to check out while you are at home.



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

Address	Sale Price	Closing Date
One-Family Houses		
97 Horton Street	\$499,999	7/20/20
279 Fordham Place	\$200,000	7/21/20
94 Winters Street	\$535,000	7/29/20
165 Ditmars Street	\$600,000	8/13/20
123 Horton Street	\$640,000	8/13/20
42 Schofield Street	\$388,000	8/17/20
162 Ditmars Street	\$600,000	9/9/20
70 Buckley Street	\$630,148	9/9/20
111 Horton Street	\$650,000	10/1/20
154 Reville Street	\$450,000	10/2/20
Two-Family House		
105 Centre Street	\$350,000	8/10/20
Condominiums		
35 Island Point	\$1,045,000	6/18/20
3 Deepwater Way	\$575,000	7/15/20
72 Island Point	\$858,000	8/12/20
170 Schofield St, 3F	\$285,000	8/28/20

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Fr. John E. Covington, Pastor
116 City Island Ave., at Pilot St.
718-885-1080
www.gracecityisland.net



Photo by KAREN NANI

Island boaters hoped they were done with storms for the 2020 season after tropical storm Isaias in August, but leftover winds from Hurricane Delta caused more problems on Oct. 12, including this sailboat, which broke loose and washed up against St. Mary's schoolyard.



Photos by ROY SMITH and RICK DeWITT

The City Island Oyster Reef fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 26, started with a kayak and paddleboard race around City Island that started and ended at the west end of Tier Street (top photo). A sailboat race took place in the afternoon, followed by an award presentation at the Morris Yacht Club that was attended by many supporters of the organization. Above State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (center) stands with three members of the CIOR board (Barbara Dolensek, Barbara Zahm and Paul Mankiewicz), who were joined by Coulter Fordham, a descendant of Orrin Fordham, who launched City Island's oyster industry in the mid-19th century.

Buildings Department Still Has to Rule on U.S. Crane

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Community Board 10 tabled a decision at its September meeting on whether or not to support a request from U.S. Crane & Rigging to approve an application regarding changes on its site at 155-57 Pilot Street. Because the Department of Buildings (DOB) has yet to rule on this issue, the request for a "letter of no objection" was taken off the agenda for the board, which has invited a representative of the DOB to attend its next Zoning and Land Use Committee meeting in November.

The issue regarding the pending DOB permit relates to a change of use for the site, which has been a boatyard since the mid-19th century. Consolidated Yacht Yard has a lease with U.S. Crane for their use of part of the property, but that is

scheduled to expire at the end of this year. Concerned residents of City Island are working with the Department of City Planning (DCP) to review City Island's Special District Zoning regulations, which were developed over 40 years ago and have not been revised since 2003. During the past 17 years, the number of maritime uses of sites zoned for manufacturing have declined in number, and Islanders fear that industrial contractors will move their businesses here, although they may not be compatible with the Island's residential community, especially seniors and children, for reasons of health and safety.

Anyone with questions about these issues is invited to e-mail Maria Caruso, who serves on Community Board 10, at mrcaruso@gmail.com.

Behind the Teacher's Desk

Continued from page 1

Sept. 29, I was happy to see everyone wearing their masks and cooperating," Rose told *The Current*. "I usually start the new school year with a shared writing activity on 'Classroom Rules.' This year I let them tell me how they will conduct themselves. Many hands were raised, and the students enthusiastically provided Rose with a pandemic appropriate list of safe practices, including keeping their masks on except when eating, staying six feet apart, never sharing food, always keeping all their books and jackets at their desks, and more. Rose said she is proud of the way the children have complied, and she credits the parents with preparing them for the unusual school year.

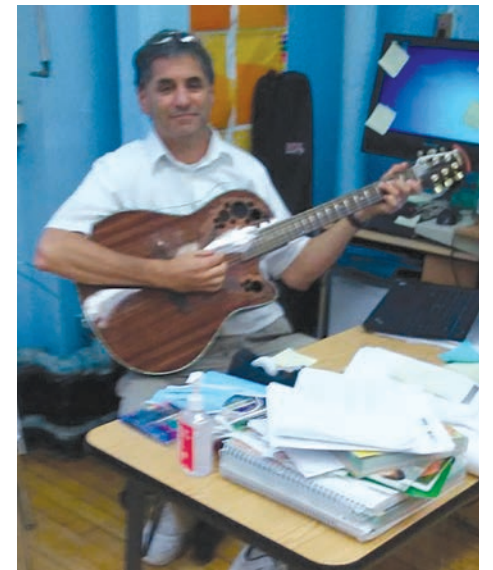
As *The Current* went to press, only a handful of New York City public schools had been closed because of coronavirus outbreaks. Rose and Craig believe the efforts to minimize the spread have been working. "There are no more 'cubbies' for the children to store their books and coats. They have to bring everything with them every day and take all books home at the end of the day," Rose explained.

The new school year is even more varied for Islander John Sheridan, who teaches fourth grade at P.S. 48 in Hunts Point in the Bronx. Unlike Rose and Craig, John is in a "blended role," where he teaches both in person and remotely depending on the day of the week. "I have a dual role where I have students in my classroom in-person two or three days a week, then I am in a classroom by myself teaching them remotely on the other days."

But unlike Rose and Craig, the vast majority of students at his school opted for remote-only learning, and John believes this is not as meaningful for them. Before the pandemic, P.S. 48 had approximately 650 students in attendance (pre-K to fifth grade) and now there may only be 50 children in the building on any given day. "It sometimes feels like a ghost town. We need to get the kids back in the building as soon as possible," he told *The Current*.

He explained that the students who show up are good kids, but there aren't enough of them coming in person because of the crisis. His principal believes that there will be an influx in December, when parents can switch to blended learning. In the meantime, John, who has taught at the school for 32 years, does his best to keep his "live" classroom engaged, taking them outside in the schoolyard when they have a free time on Fridays and the weather cooperates. "They need to get away from the computer screens and run around."

John can commiserate after school with his wife, Maria Sutherland, who is a guidance counselor at Pelham Middle School in Westchester. How has her role



John Sheridan, a fourth-grade teacher at P.S. 48. John leads his students in singing "Oh What a Beautiful Morning" every morning.

changed? "My role so far has evolved from 'Counselor' to 'Technology Help Desk,'" she waxed nostalgically. Maria returned to the school building for the first time since March 12, 2020, and found that her skills were needed to help remote learning students navigate Google Classroom, stay organized and remain focused.

Although the pandemic has exacerbated anxiety levels for some, she marveled at the adaptability and flexibility of most students when dealing with the rules and changes for both in-person and remote learning. "The kids coming to class have to carry around tri-fold dividers and set them up each time they change classrooms and desks. They are following the rules because they understand how serious this situation is and the need to stay safe."

Most teachers, including Rose, were tested for Covid-19 before the start of the school year. Random monthly testing of 20 percent of the staff was scheduled to begin in November in the city, according to Craig. Temperature checks are administered daily and faculty have to complete health surveys. Students are instructed not to come to school if they have any coronavirus symptoms, and so far the results are encouraging. Craig believes that if schools remain open and Covid-free, more parents will select the hybrid option when the option to switch becomes available, possibly in December. Right now, parents can only opt out of hybrid learning into remote only, not the other way around, because of the logistics required for in-school learning.

Meanwhile, two of Craig's children attend P.S. 175 elementary school on City Island, and he reported that safety practices are being followed there as well (see article in the October issue of *The Current*). He believes that parents have to do their part to encourage healthy eating and exercise for the entire family, along with safety precautions in all aspects of life during the pandemic.

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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.

City Island Civic Association

The October meeting was well attended in the tent at the Morris Yacht Club. This was the first meeting since the February 2020.

Reporting for the Zoning Committee, Barbara Dolensek said that complaints have been made about the noise and heavy trucks in the fire lane caused by U.S. Crane, which recently moved into the old Consolidated Yachts lot. Maria Caruso explained that Community Board 10 is tabling its vote about supporting the company's application for permits to rebuild the entrance and to change the use group for the lot.

For Municipal Services, Cathy Cebek thanked Councilman Mark Gjonaj, the Wildcats (who were present), the Sanitation Department, and a number of restaurants for their efforts to keep City Island clean during the past summer.

For the Water Safety committee, John Sheridan explained that recent cuts in the NYPD budget will likely rule out the addition of a Bronx Harbor Patrol unit, but boats from Queens and Brooklyn are continuing to respond to our reports. This committee is exploring ways to get the U.S. Coast Guard more involved in our local law enforcement issues.

Civic has a new committee, the Unity and Solutions Committee, headed by Stu Sorell, Joseline Nova, and Ricardo Garcia, who were introduced to the membership at the meeting. The committee was formed to respond to the wants and needs of all Islanders and to find ways to help the community. Special recognition and thanks were given to City Island Strong, especially Teri Kurtz, who managed the operation that has been bringing food and assistance to residents in need during the pandemic.

The election of three Civic officers (president, second vice president and recording secretary) is usually scheduled for November, but because the schedule cannot be maintained, the election will not take place until January.

We still need to be positive and to support residents in dealing with quality-of-life and safety issues. For example, if you see something, say something: call 311, help your neighbors, and adhere to Covid-19 regulations set by NYC and NYS: wear a mask in public and observe social distancing.

To become a member of the Civic, send your annual dues (\$20 per year or \$50 for a three-year membership) to City Island Civic Association, P.O. Box 117, Bronx NY 10464, or pay online at [paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com) to cityisland.civic@gmail.com, the "friends and family" option. Please note that joining the Civic Facebook page does not represent membership in the association.

Jane Protzman

AARP 318

Our chapter has been notified by the National AARP that all chapter meetings must be discontinued for the remainder of 2020 as a necessary precaution against Covid-19. Although we are disappointed, we look forward hopefully to 2021. Until then, stay well and be safe.

Carroll A. Reid

Trinity United Methodist Church

As of Sunday, Aug. 1, at 10 a.m., Trinity United Methodist Church resumed in-person worship in the Sanctuary. All persons wishing to attend must wear masks and enter through the Fellowship Hall entrance on Bay Street. Attendance is recorded and temperatures are taken. While maintaining social distance, attendees then enter the

Sanctuary, where seating is staggered. At this time, there is no singing, but hymns are played by our extraordinary organist, Joy Kim. For the foreseeable future, this is how we will worship in person. Every effort is being made to thoroughly clean the facility after the service. Trinity understands that these are unprecedented times. Many people will not feel comfortable coming to a service, even while wearing a mask and social distancing, so the services will be live-streamed and recorded for YouTube. To request information about the live stream, e-mail Pastor Dave at david.jolly@nyac-ucm.com.

The new hours for the Food Pantry are Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m.

Rick DeWitt

PSS Senior Center

PSS City Island is currently open Tuesday and Thursday from 12 to 2 p.m. to distribute meals, masks, sanitizers and more as we receive them. Please be sure to listen to the One Call Now sent to members to update them on meal pickups, new groups and the steps we will take when reopening. (hopefully soon!)

Our Facebook page (PSS City Island Center) is updated regularly as new information becomes available for our members. It also shows instructions on how to access exercise classes online, our remote balance class, arthritis class and our singing group. The staff regularly calls our members individually to check on their well-being. If you are not on our calling list, please e-mail pattis@pssusa.org with your name and phone number, or you can reach the center at 718-885-0727. Until we're together again, stay safe and healthy.

Patty Attis

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 156

After many months of conducting business via e-mail, Unit 156 held its regular monthly meeting out-of-doors at the Leonard H. Hawkins Post on Oct. 6. The meeting was well attended and featured our annual children's clothing drive for the Fort Drum military families. The unit is considering conducting future winter meetings via Zoom.

Unit 156 gratefully thanks everyone who baked and bought at our successful bake sale, held during the American Legion's annual pumpkin sale. Quilters by the Sea QOV is actively planning the next two awards of Quilts of Valor to local veterans.

Harlan Sexton

Garden Club of City Island

The Garden Club was very lucky to be able to hold its September and October meetings in person (socially distanced and wearing masks, per NYS guidelines) on the beautiful lawn at the City Island Yacht Club. Fortunately, both days were warm enough to sit outside. We had a close-up view of the sparkling water, the boats and the Montauk daisies on the club seawall. It was great to see each other and have a chance to catch up. The weather in November will undoubtedly be cooler, and we are anticipating holding the Nov. 2 meeting via Zoom. Members who have not used this online meeting platform can get help from our secretary, Ellen Murphy, by calling or e-mailing her.

We hope that you have been enjoying our planter boxes, which have been spilling over with flowering plants this summer. Thanks go to all the Garden Club members and other volunteers for keeping them watered and trimmed. As the plants fade, we will be removing them in anticipation of putting in winter greenery in late November



Photo by RICK DeWITT

City Island's first Art Walk, held the evening of Saturday, Oct. 10, featured special exhibitions in eight galleries along City Island Avenue and a musical event featuring Papa Guyo Guyocious and Days of Wild and Dylan Annalise Vivolo and Model Students, outside the Focal Point Gallery, which is celebrating its 46th anniversary this year.

or early December. We continue to maintain the Post Office garden by weeding and pruning and hope that you will enjoy the fall colors of the leaves and mums. We are making plans to decorate 50 holiday wreaths and distribute them to our public spaces after Thanksgiving.

The Garden Club regrets the recent passing of one of its founding members, Jacqueline Kyle Kall. In 1961, Jackie took on the task of organizing a garden club along with Rose Healy. This involved not only pulling together an initial group of members, but also doing all the paperwork so that the club could become a part of the Federated Garden Clubs of NYS. Under her leadership, the club formed the basis of what it is today with its beautification activities and social support. Over the years, she remained an active member and worked to bring new members into the club. We owe her a debt of gratitude, and we will miss her.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Garden Club, please contact a current member who will refer you one of our officers. We will make sure to include you in our meetings, whether in person, via Zoom or just to receive a newsletter.

Judy Judson and Gail Hitt

St. Mary's Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop's temporary home will

be the St. Mary's School gymnasium, which will be open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We are preparing for our "No Frills" Christmas Fair, to be held on Dec. 5 and 6. A million thanks to the Boy Scouts for all their help. Hope to see you soon.

Arlene Byrne

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

Greetings from the City Island Community Center. We are happy to announce that the Center has been approved to reopen, at least in part! We will be following all CDC, NYS and NYC safety and social distancing policies and protocols, which include a maximum 25 percent occupancy rate for the Center, mandatory mask wearing, thorough cleaning and sanitizing after each use, and a limitation on the type of programming permissible.

Unfortunately, none of our exercise classes will be allowed at the present time, according to the latest ruling by New York City. Because we hope that this will change, we have listed below what we hope will become our schedule. Please call the respective contact numbers for program registration. We will monitor the regulatory health guidance, and we hope to be able to offer this programming based on safety of each activity in the coming months.

Some upcoming City Island Community Center happenings. On Nov. 2, from 1 to 7 p.m., please join the NY Blood Center for a critical Blood Drive. Appointments in advance are highly encouraged. Please call 1-800-933-2566 to schedule a time to give and to help address the severe shortage of blood: https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/285377.

The next City Island Community Center fundraiser is a Holiday Gift Basket Sale on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Center. Come shop for festively wrapped, gift-ready holiday baskets for your friends and family. And take your last shot at entering our 50/50 Raffle, the winner of which will be drawn at the end of the sale.

Our annual Fall Membership Drive is in full gear. Please look out for our membership forms, which are being sent by mail to existing members and are being distributed throughout the community.

We hope to see our friends and neighbors at some of these upcoming events but, until then, please stay safe, get your flu shot and be well.

Proposed Schedule

Mondays: Aerobics 9 to 10:15 a.m. Call Mary at 718-885-0793; Irish Dance, 5 to 8 p.m.; Culinary Club, 7 to 10 p.m.

Tuesdays: City Island Civic Association (last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., except December).

Wednesdays: Aerobics, 9 to 10:15 a.m.; Yoga, 7 to 9 p.m., Joann, 917-853-4719.

Thursdays: Narcotics Anonymous 8 to 10 p.m.; Zumba with John, 7 p.m. 914-882-0245.

Fridays: Aerobics 9 to 10:15 a.m.
Saturdays: Yoga, 8 to 9:15 a.m.; Strength Training and Zumba, 10 a.m., Julia, 917-601-5514.

Melissa Cebollero

Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El (TBE), "your shul by the sea," is a stimulating non-denominational, welcoming place for observance of Jewish traditions. Jewish Renewal is the style of our deeply spiritual, innovative, all-inclusive and open-minded worship. All Temple offerings are online via Zoom. Many tutorials for registering a new free Zoom account are available online. You do not need an account to join our offerings. To participate in any of our offerings please e-mail yourshulbythesea@gmail.com, and identify which you would like to attend.

Twice a month Rabbi David Evan Markus leads Friday night Shabbat services. Other services are led by congregants in a joyful celebratory manner. To members we offer Torah study, mystical teachings, ethics study, social gatherings and rabbinic office hours. We also offer for the community meditation, yoga, qi gong/tai chi and Feldenkrais classes, suitable for all persons, ages, body types and experience levels. Pre-registration is required. Suggested freewill offering \$10 per session. All classes and services begin promptly, so sign in 10 to 15 minutes early. A schedule can be found on our website, www.yourshulbythesea.org. We look forward to seeing you.

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

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

Our newsletter has returned to a monthly schedule; if you would like to be on our mailing list, please e-mail us. For additional information and membership opportunities, check out our website, www.yourshulbythesea.org.

The entire TBE community offers prayers and best wishes to all during these unprecedented times.

Paul Klein

St. Mary, Star of the Sea

Masses continue to be celebrated. Weekdays: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m.; Saturday evening vigil, 5:15 p.m.; Sunday 9 and 11 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 1, is the Feast of All Saints, the day that honors all those who have attained heaven. Monday, Nov. 2, is All Souls Day, a time to pray for departed souls. Sunday, Nov. 22, is the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Thanksgiving Day is Thursday, Nov. 26. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Thanksgiving Mass usually celebrated the Tuesday before the holiday will not be celebrated this year. We look forward to celebrating the Mass together next year.

OLA/St. Mary, Star of the Sea's new Archdiocese's Family Based Parish Religious Education Program has begun. If you have any questions regarding the program, please don't hesitate to contact Teri Kurtz at the Religious Education office by calling 718-885-1440 or by e-mail at smssreled@yahoo.com.

Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, we will not be holding Turkey Bingo this year. However, we will be holding a Thanksgiving raffle. Tickets will be sold before and after Masses the weekends of Nov. 14 and 15 and Nov. 21 and 22. We look forward to having Turkey Bingo again next year.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy Thanksgiving!

Rose Dietz and Teri Kurtz

Grace Episcopal Church

The coronavirus has altered many aspects of our lives. People are confused and frightened and dealing with almost unprecedented uncertainty. As we explore new and different ways of living together,



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many of us find comfort in those things that are constant: family, dear friends, worship (in whatever form) and our congregation at Grace Church.

Our sincere thanks to Kevin Boyle and John Skinner, who are making it possible for us to connect and worship together on a regular basis. On Sundays at 10 a.m. we have our online church service. Please join our 10 a.m. Sunday service from your computer, tablet or smartphone via <https://www.gotomeet.me/JohnSkinner1>. You can also dial in using your phone: 571-317-3122 Access Code: 386-753-157. Are you new to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/386753157>.

Grace Church is now open for prayer between 2 and 3 p.m. each Wednesday. The church is located at 116 City Island Avenue, on the corner of Pilot Street. Those who are not able to attend in person are invited to pray at home. Feel free to visit at any time during the hour. Please enter by the main entrance, and a church member will seat you. Observe social distancing; the use of a mask is required, and hand sanitizer will be available at the door. Please join us for a time of prayer, with masks on, sitting socially and safely distanced in the pews. We pray for each other, for ourselves, the sick, the lonely, the caregivers. And as Father John Covington suggests: "Find a moment to be thankful for our lives and those things that bring us comfort and joy."

Our congregation will endure. Vestry is continuing to hold monthly online meetings coordinated by our Senior Warden, Bruce Weis. A vestry committee is also planning to live-stream our Sunday Service, along with plans for our eventual return to public worship. Paul Nani reports that Cuba, our sexton, checks on the building daily; our treasurer, Kathy Lonergan, sorts the mail and visits the office during the week; and Evyonne Baker, our volunteer office assistant, is continually updating our website, which now has Father Covington's sermons posted.

Karen Nani looks forward to meeting again in person with her Sunday School when Grace Church reopens its doors later this year (hopefully in time for Christmas). Meanwhile, the group, which ranges in age from 2 to 14, will participate in a virtual Youth Service on Nov. 1, All Saints Day. If you would like to be part of Grace's Sunday School, call Mrs. Nani at 917-853-4401 or e-mail her at karenrn1@optonline.net.

Our music ministry is introducing a new opportunity for all to participate in music during our worship services. No prior musical experience necessary. Contact Caroline Coppola, Minister of Music, for more information and a demonstration of our hand chimes (geccimusic@gmail.com).

When it is safe to do so, the GraceTones are eager to return to singing for residents at area nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, as well as supporting local businesses with shows featuring hymns about the power of God's eternal grace, love and joy.

Sandy Dunn

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Performances by Young Actors

E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial (1982) is a classic sci-fi adventure starring Henry Thomas as Elliott, a young boy living with his single mother (Dee Wallace); his older brother, Michael (Robert MacNaughton), and his younger sister, Gertie (Drew Barrymore). When Elliott finds an alien whose scientific spaceship accidentally left him behind on Earth, he names him E.T. and wants to help him figure out a way to get home. E.T. rigs up a communication device from junk he finds around the house, but will he be rescued before a group of government scientists gets hold of him?

The classic film **WarGames** (1983) stars a young Matthew Broderick as David Lightman, a computer genius and high school underachiever who tries to impress his classmate Jennifer Mack (Ally Sheedy) by hacking into their high school's computer from his home to change a bad grade. Thinking he has accessed a computer game company, he winds up playing "Global Thermonuclear War." However, he soon realizes that he has tapped into the real thing, which makes for a hair-raising, suspenseful film. The supporting cast includes Dabney Coleman as NORAD Systems Engineer John McKittrick and John Wood as Professor Falken, the designer of the military supercomputer.

The Neverending Story (1984) is a charming fantasy film starring Barret Oliver as Bastian who is dealing with his mother's recent death, a strict father (Gerald McRaney) and school bullies who makes him want to escape reality. While in the attic of a strange bookstore, he discovers and finds himself sucked into a book called **The Neverending Story**, about a sickly childlike empress (Tami Stronach), who dispatches a young warrior named Atreju (Noah Hathaway) to find a cure for her illness. The land of Fantasia is fraught with a plague called The Nothing, which gives everyone bad dreams and hopeless fantasies. Atreju learns that the only way to save everyone is with Bastian's help.

The Goonies (1985) is an old-fashioned tale of a group of adventurous Oregon kids who want to save their homes from foreclosure. The group that calls itself "the Goonies" includes optimist Mikey Walsh (Sean Astin); his older brother, Brandon (Josh Brolin); the inventive Data (Jonathan Ke Huy Quan); the talkative Mouth (Corey Feldman) and the overweight klutz, Chunk (Jeff Cohen). When the children discover an old pirate map in the attic, they follow it to find lost treasure but encounter many dangerous obstacles along the way.

Stand By Me (1986) is a piece of nostalgia set over Labor Day weekend in 1959 Castle Rock, OR. It tells the story of four inseparable friends who set out in search of a dead body that one of the boys overhears his brother discussing. The foursome consists of intellectual Gordie (Wil Wheaton), born leader Chris (River Phoenix), emotionally disturbed Teddy (Corey Feldman) and chubby hanger-on Vern (Jerry O'Connell). As the boys travel to find the body, we learn about all the personal pressures brought to bear on them by the adult world. Richard Dreyfuss, playing the grown-up Gordie, narrates the film. Kiefer Sutherland, as gang

leader Ace Merrill, dominates every scene he's in as a brutish high-school bully. It is sad to note that the promising actor River Phoenix died at age 23 of a drug overdose.

Empire of the Sun (1987) tells the story of Jim Graham (Christian Bale), a spoiled young British boy who was living with his family in Shanghai at the dawn of World War II. When the Japanese invade, Graham is separated from his parents and befriended by an American opportunist named Basie (John Malkovich). They are thrown into a prison camp where they spend the duration of the war struggling to survive. The cinematography is dazzling, and the music is haunting.

Searching for Bobby Fischer (1993) is the story of Josh (Max Pomeranc), whose father (Joe Mantegna) is thrilled to discover that his son is a gifted chess player. Josh is heavily influenced by Vinnie (Laurence Fishburne), a speed chess hustler whom he meets in Washington Square Park. When Josh is placed under the tutelage of callous chess master Bruce Pandolfini (Ben Kingsley), there is a risk that the boy will put competition above sportsmanship. This is an inspiring story of the resolution of that conflict.

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

The title character (Sean Nelson) in **Fresh** (1994), is a 12-year-old black boy living in a very tough NYC neighborhood. He tries to go to school, but is often late because of his work for drug dealers, led by Esteban (Giancarlo Esposito). Fresh is a survivor who lives with his aunt and 10 cousins. He secretly meets his father (Samuel L. Jackson) in the park where they play chess. When Fresh witnesses the murder of someone he knows, he weaves an intricate plot that is uncanny in its ingenuity. Vulgar language is distracting at first, but the excellent acting and strong storyline rise above it.

In **Fly Away Home** (1996), Amy (Anna Paquin) must leave her New Zealand home after her mother is killed in a car crash to live in Canada with her eccentric father, Thomas (Jeff Daniels). His art includes huge metal sculptures, and his hobby is trying to fly with his friend David (Terry Kinney). Miserable in her new home, Amy's spirit is lifted when she finds a bunch of goose eggs abandoned because their mother has been killed by land developers. How these birds are taught to fly and migrate is fascinating.

When Scarlett Johansson was 14, she appeared as Grace, a girl involved in a horseback-riding accident in **The Horse Whisperer** (1998). The family is advised to have the horse put down, but Grace's mother, Annie (Kristen Scott Thomas), resists. She has read about a famed "horse whisperer" named Tom Booker (Robert Redford) who heals troubled animals. Booker runs a cattle ranch out West with his brother, Frank (Chris Cooper), and Frank's wife, Diane (Dianne Wiest). With a mother's determination, Annie takes Grace and the horse to Montana for treatment.

Based on the true story by Homer H. Hickam Jr., **October Sky** (1999) stars Jake Gyllenhaal as Homer, who is growing up in a poor West Virginia mining town. Inspired by the Sputnik launch to start building rockets of his own, Homer is encouraged by his teacher, Miss Riley (Laura Dern). This angers his father, John

(Chris Cooper), who expects Homer to be a miner like himself. This is a story of how education can be a ticket out of poverty.

In **The Sixth Sense** (1999), Cole Sear (Haley Joel Osment) is an odd child who thinks he sees dead people. Bruce Willis is excellent as Dr. Malcolm Crowe, a child psychiatrist in a troubled marriage to Anna (Olivia Williams). Toni Collette is wonderful as Lynn, Cole's very concerned mother, who hires Dr. Crowe to help Cole. This is a spooky, thought-provoking film, and its ending will make you want to see the movie again from the beginning.

Set in northern England, **Billy Elliot** (2000) recounts the story of an 11-year-old boy (Jamie Bell in the title role), who takes the money his mineworker father (Gary Lewis) gives him for boxing lessons and instead pays Mrs. Wilkinson (Julie Walters) for ballet lessons. The process by which the father accepts his son's ambition is poignant indeed.

Set in modern-day New Zealand, **Whale Rider** (2002) is the story of Pai (Keisha Castle-Hughes), a young Maori girl whose twin brother dies in childbirth along with her mother. Pai's grandfather Koro (Rawiri Paratene) is devastated when his son, Porourangi (Cliff Curtis), refuses to take over as tribal chief and deserts the family. Pai, left in the care of Koro and Nancy Flowers (Vicky Kaughton), is heartbroken that her grandfather considers her just a worthless girl. When a pod of whales is washed ashore, Pai is presented with an insurmountable challenge and the opportunity to prove herself and become a hero to her people.

Secondhand Lions (2003) is a coming-of-age story set in 1960s Texas. It stars Haley Joel Osment as shy introverted Walter Caldwell, whose irresponsible man-crazy mother, Mae (Kyra Sedgwick), drops him off to spend the summer with his eccentric great uncles, Hub (Robert Duvall) and Garth (Michael Caine). They regale him with fantastical stories, such as fighting for the Foreign Legion and Hub's love affair with a Sultan's daughter. We see the stories through Walter's imagination, which makes the viewer wonder at the veracity of the stories.

Akeelah and the Bee (2006) is the story of Akeelah Anderson (Keke Palmer), an 11-year old black girl and her siblings, who are being raised by their widowed mother, Tanya (Angela Bassett), a hard-working nurse. Because of Akeelah's aptitude for spelling, she is asked by her school principal, Mr. Welch (Curtis Armstrong), to participate in the school spelling bee, which her mother thinks is a waste of time. Akeelah is challenged by the driven Asian-American Dylan (Sean Michael Afable) and befriended by Mexican-American Javier (J.R. Villarreal), both of whom live in very upscale neighborhoods. Akeelah really begins to shine when she secures the

tutelage of Dr. Joshua Larabee (Laurence Fishburne). The film demonstrates that ambition can co-exist with generosity of spirit.

Set in the early 1930s, **Hugo** (2012) stars Asa Butterfield in the title role as a lonely orphan who lives in a Paris train station where he winds all the clocks. The only link to Hugo's happy past is an attempt to repair a mechanical man started by his late father (Jude Law). Hugo salvages parts from toys that he steals from a store in the station run by Georges Méliès (Ben Kingsley). Hugo is befriended by Isabelle (Chloë Grace Moretz), Méliès' goddaughter, which leads to unexpected connections. In supporting roles are the menacing station inspector (Sacha Baron Cohen) and a friendly flower vendor (Emily Mortimer). The real Georges Méliès was a turn-of-the-century filmmaker and shopkeeper in a Paris train station. Enjoyable for parents as well as children, this was director Martin Scorsese's effort to make a film suitable for his grandchildren.

Set in World War II Germany, **The Book Thief** (2013) is about the life of Liesel (Sophie Nélisse), a young orphan taken in by the childless Hubermanns. Although Hans (Geoffrey Rush) is kind and gentle, his wife, Rosa (Emily Watson), seems cold and bad-tempered. Liesel is taught to read by Hans and starts to "borrow" books from Ilsa Hermann (Barbara Auer), the Mayor's wife. This worries her new best friend, Rudy Steiner (Nico Liersch). When the Hubermanns take in a seriously ill Jewish refugee, Max Vandenburg (Ben Schnetzer), Liesel reads stories to him. Max encourages her to write her own stories, which she winds up telling in an air raid shelter to calm the families waiting out the night. The film, shown through the innocence of a child's eyes, humanizes the German people.

Gifted (2017) is the story of Frank Adler (Chris Evans), a loving single man raising his seven-year-old niece, Mary (Mckenna Grace), a math prodigy, following his late sister's desire for a normal school life for Mary. Unfortunately, when Frank's formidable mother, Evelyn (Lindsay Duncan), learns of Mary's abilities, her ambitions for her granddaughter threaten to separate Frank and Mary. The supporting cast includes Octavia Spencer as Roberta, Frank and Mary's landlady and best friend; and Jenny Slate as Mary's teacher, Bonnie.

The documentary **Showbiz Kids** (2020) recounts the personal and professional price of fame and failure on a child. Sharing their own experiences are Henry Thomas, Mara Wilson, Todd Bridges, Milla Jovovich, Evan Rachel Wood, Cameron Boyce, Jada Pinkett Smith and Wil Wheaton.

And until next time, stay safe and healthy, and happy viewing.

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Looking Back At 50 Years of The Island Current

As reported in last month's issue, The Island Current began its 50th year of publication in October 2020, and we promised to feature examples of some of our favorite columns that have appeared in the paper over the years. This month, it seemed appropriate to reprint a column about Thanksgiving and food by Debby Kall, who passed away 20 years ago and whose mother, Jackie Kall, died this year on Oct. 20. Debby's amusing column, "As Time Goes By," ran for 56 issues of the paper; Jackie collected them in a book by that title, and copies are still available at the City Island Nautical Museum. Another longtime column contributor was Dr. Fred Hess, whom Sky and Telescope magazine called an "evangelist for astronomy." He was a popular lecturer at the Hayden Planetarium for many years, until his death in 2007. His column for The Current, "What's Up Doc?" ran from April 1979 through December 2001 for a grand total of 218 issues. It wasn't easy to pick out a favorite, but this one, from November 1996, incorporates everything that made his columns so special: science, useful information, charm, humor and enthusiasm.



Let's Eat

Years ago, disaster struck on Thanksgiving Day. My mother was cooking the turkey, and she basted the bird in Glamorene instead of cooking oil. Apparently the Glamorene jug and the Wesson oil bottle had been on the same shelf in the back closet. Instead of roast turkey, the smell of rug cleaner permeated the house. Now, for me, this would have meant nothing short of hysteria, but not for Mom. When she tried to wash off the turkey, we all screamed until she called up one of the local restaurants and had them deliver a cooked turkey. This saved us from having to call up the poison control number.

It is no secret that some people love food and enjoy being gourmands. They seek out new restaurants like prospectors staking claims in the Old West. After discovering a mother lode of fine food, they will introduce other food lovers to their discovery. Unfortunately, I am seldom spoken to in this way about food since I am not one of those epicures.

Believe it or not, my mother is a good cook. My mother-in-law is also a good cook. They both can get all the food on the table at the same time, hot, and feed up to 15 people at once without incident. This is amazing to me. I am a failure in the kitchen, and I usually eat the same thing day in and out without giving it too much thought.

If a group of my friends ventures out to a new restaurant, and I am forced to make a food decision, I panic. I will turn to a friend and ask, "What should I have?" "Chicken," she will say. "You like chicken." So I always order the chicken. Sometimes it is disguised with a fancy sauce or it is mashed into a different shape, but it is chicken nonetheless, familiar and palatable.

When I took chemistry in college, I passed with a 69. Cooking, like chemistry, has a lot to do with having the right instincts for combining and balancing elements. Good cooks don't really measure anything. They just use a pinch of this or that, and they keep secret stashes of ingredients in small cabinets for use in preparing everything they make. I have salt and pepper and Mr. Bubble in my cabinet.

I have learned two dishes that I can prepare reasonably well. They are served only when we have guests. I volunteered to have Thanksgiving dinner at my house a few



Debbie Kall

years ago, but the silence in the room was deafening. Finally, a member of my family asked if the menu would be lasagna or pasta salad. I got the message.

I thought that having children would develop my nutritional instincts. But basic food groups, balanced meals, and calcium for the bones are all phrases that fill my heart with dread.

After I have prepared broccoli, hamburgers, and baked potatoes, one of my kids will eat the entire meal and the other will ask for plain spaghetti. This worries me, because I am afraid I am fostering another foodaphobic.

In order to draw attention away from my culinary attempts, I have come up with a foolproof scheme. I take great pains to use lots of candles, the good china, and cloth napkins, with fresh flowers as a centerpiece. The guests are so stunned by the table setting that they say nothing about the food they are eating in the dark. They probably don't know what it is anyway. (Ah, well, does it really matter who eats what, so long as it isn't tons of red, mooing meat or cholesterol-ridden eggs?)

So much socializing revolves around eating. Business lunches, coffee klatches, birthday dinners, eating out, dining in, taking out. I feel as if I'm missing something. The really big seasonal eating days are fast approaching. I have promised myself to try to get into the spirit of things. All those cookbooks I have stored in the basement next to the food processor and the juicer are coming out for the holidays.



By DR. FRED HESS

What Is a Star?

Early in life, often school age, children are sometimes invited to look at the night sky, to enjoy a view of the lighted objects above them. They are introduced to jingles such as "Star light, star bright, what is that star I see tonight?" Invariably, children are intrigued by the dazzling decorations that pierce the darkness above them.

But are stars mere decorations? Are they there only to entertain children? What are the patterns the eye and the imagination appear to create in various parts of the sky? Are they real? The answer to these questions is itself contained in a question: What is a star?

One cannot begin the story with "Once upon a time," because it begins before there was time itself, before there was any rhythm to compare with day-night, or seasons, or years. It begins with gases from a primordial explosion freezing in the bitter cold of nearly empty space into small irregular

chunks. Slowly they were attracted to each other and grew into larger masses.

These masses, through an ever-increasing gravity, gradually swept the smaller masses to themselves, becoming still larger. Eventually, through this process, the masses grew so big that their own gravity began to compress each mass into a shape approaching a sphere. The outer layers of this matter squeezed hard on the interior material, and as this occurred, the interior of the newly formed ball began to grow warmer just from the squeezing alone.

The growing mass grew hotter as it swept smaller pieces of matter into itself through its gravity. Eventually the interior temperature soared to hundreds, then thousands of degrees. As the temperature neared one million degrees from this tremendous compression, a new force began to develop. The hot interior of the mass became increasingly unstable. As the temperature peaked above one million degrees, the interior began to radiate not only some of its own heat, but also light and other forms of radiant energy. Thus it began to glow, to shine, to become a blindingly brilliant mass a million or more miles in diameter. It became a star!

Even as this was occurring in one place, the same thing was happening in thousands, millions, billions of other similar places. A shining universe came to be. Stars were everywhere!

By and large the stars were separated from each other by vast distances. As they radiated, they also threw off bits of their own matter. These bits grew into masses that took up orbits around the star. These came to be planets and moons, each one too small to glow, but large enough to be visible by reflecting the light of the orbited star. On a planet near one star, life came to exist, and one form of that life was able to see stars and planets. Delighted by the glow of the stars, the living beings learned to communicate with each other and eventually to say: "Star light, star bright, what is that star I see tonight."

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Obituaries

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Maureen Moran

Maureen Moran, who was born on City Island, passed away in Washington, NC, on Aug. 27, 2020, while in the hospital.

She was born Maureen Theresa Keane on Sept. 23, 1933, to Margaret and Patrick Keane. Beginning in 1947, her parents owned and operated The Manor, a restaurant on Ditmars Street and City Island Avenue, now known as Arties' Steak and Seafood. Maureen and her older siblings, Leo and Eileen, all helped out at The Manor while they were growing up.

She attended St. Mary, Star of the Sea School on City Island and then St. Nicholas of Tolentine High School in the Bronx, graduating in 1951. Maureen then attended Good Counsel College in White Plains, NY, and received her BA in 1955.

In 1965, she moved her family from City Island to Rye in Westchester County, NY. Maureen had multiple careers during her lifetime, as a social worker, an entrepreneur and a salesperson, and when she retired, she moved to North Carolina. She was a self-described politics addict, an avid reader (biographies and the news), and she loved to travel (Caribbean, Mexico, across the U.S.).

She was predeceased by her son, John Haldor Olsen III, and is survived by five children: Patrick Olsen, Maryanne (Olsen) Normann, Maureen (Olsen) Hausmann, Michael Olsen, and Christian Olsen. She is also survived by her devoted niece, Maura Hein, and seven grandchildren.

If you have a story about Maureen that you would like to share, please leave remembrances for Maureen at <http://bit.ly/MaureenMoran>.



Olga Lopez

Longtime Island resident Olga Lopez passed away at the age of 95 on Oct. 17, 2020.

She was born on Nov. 13, 1924, in Puerto Rico to Pedro Lopez Sallas and Olga Rivera and moved to New York in 1948, with her 4-year-old daughter. She and her family moved to a house on King Avenue on City Island in 1985, and she later went to live at Pilot Cove Manor.

On City Island, Ms. Lopez attended St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church, and was a member of the Latin Debonairs Social Dancing Club and the PSS City Island Senior Center.

Olga Lopez was predeceased by her brother, Marcial Lopez. She is survived by her sister, Migdalia Robakowski, and her daughter, Yvette Mooney, along with three grandchildren, Kelly Mooney and Marissa Mooney-Kretzmer of City Island and Yvette Martinez, three great-grandchildren, David Mooney, Janessa Desjardin and Grace Kretzmer (all of City Island), and one great-great-granddaughter, Kayla Mooney.

A small memorial was held at the family home on City Island on Oct. 24, 2020.



Photo by RON TERNER

Jacqueline Kyle Kall

Jacqueline Kyle Kall, a longtime City Island resident, passed away peacefully on Oct. 10, 2020, at the age of 95.

She was born on May 26, 1925, in Springfield, MA, to Stella and Grattan Kyle. The family moved to City Island, where Jackie and her brother, Grattan, were raised. She attended P.S. 17 and graduated from Christopher Columbus High School. She became an avid swimmer and an active member of the City Island community.

She met Robert Kall at the Rauhauser home on Winters Street when they were teenagers playing Glenn Miller records, and they were married on Oct. 2, 1948. They moved into the Victorian house at 678 King Avenue, which Jackie named "Port of Kall," and where they raised three children, Deborah, Jeffrey and Christopher.

Jackie and Bob traveled to many ports around the world, making many friends. It gave her joy to invite them to visit her at the "Port of Kall." Her daily routine included a swim in Long Island Sound and then going off to work in the family real estate business on City Island Avenue. Jackie loved her work and was an honored member of the Board of Realtors. She continued to go to her office every day into her 90s, dressed to the nines, continuing a family tradition that began in 1880 when her grandfather went into the real estate business.

In 1961, Jackie was one of the founders of the Garden Club of City Island and remained an active member ever since. She played a major role in organizing the club's activities and laid the ground work for how the club runs today, especially the beautification of the Island. The club gave her the opportunity to connect with people and share all of her colorful stories.

She was the first woman president of the Bronx Board of Realtors and was instrumental in the development of several important City Island residential sites, including Pilot Cove Manor and the Boatyard Condominium. Jackie was also honored by the Bronx Times as one of 25 influential women of the Bronx in 2013.

Jackie's resilience, quick wit, sense of fashion and gift for living life to its fullest made her an endeared and colorful member of the City Island community, and she will be missed.

Jackie is survived by her son Christopher; two grandsons, Nicholas and Matthew Salacan, and three nieces, Leslie, Lauren and Danielle.

A graveside memorial was held for her at Pelham Cemetery on Monday, Oct. 19.

SAFE BLESSINGS FOR ISLAND PETS



Photo by VIRGINIA DANNEGGER

A socially distanced Blessing of the Animals took place on Sunday, October 4, 2020, in St. Mary's schoolyard. Even the animals appeared to cooperate with the new distancing rules and waited patiently for their special moment with Deacon Bill Mueller.



Bill Stanton (above), presiding here in September over the first full membership meeting since February, has served as president of the Civic since 2009.

Civic Association

Continued from page 3

Strong, which helped housebound residents by offering food delivery, shopping and other assistance. On Sept. 28, CICA held its first in-person meeting since February, and Bill Stanton expressed the community's gratitude to all individuals and organizations who had helped to make City Island strong.

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Times and heights of high and low water (Eastern Standard Time)
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HH = hours; MM = minutes Tide chart by Tom Smith

NOVEMBER 2020									
DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	HH:MM	FEET	
01 Sun	0046	7.27	0529	0.74	1130	7.76	1805	0.22	Sun 01
02 Mon	0001	7.11	0542	0.76	1145	7.77	1819	0.28	Mon 02
03 Tues	0017	7.04	0612	0.80	1215	7.81	1846	0.34	Tues 03
04 Wed	0047	7.02	0649	0.89	1252	7.81	1924	0.45	Wed 04
05 Thu	0126	6.99	0732	1.04	1334	7.76	2008	0.60	Thu 05
06 Fri	0211	6.95	0820	1.20	1422	7.63	2057	0.75	Fri 06
07 Sat	0302	6.93	0913	1.33	1516	7.46	2151	0.86	Sat 07
08 Sun	0359	6.97	1013	1.36	1615	7.31	2253	0.87	Sun 08
09 Mon	0502	7.11	1121	1.21	1722	7.24			Mon 09
10 Tues	0001	0.72	0609	7.40	1242	0.84	1833	7.31	Tues 10
11 Wed	0113	0.41	0716	7.81	1403	0.24	1945	7.50	Wed 11
12 Thu	0219	0.01	0816	8.26	1507	-0.41	2049	7.73	Thu 12
13 Fri	0316	-0.37	0910	8.65	1603	-0.96	2146	7.90	Fri 13
14 Sat	0407	-0.64	1001	8.91	1656	-1.34	2239	7.97	Sat 14
15 Sun	0458	-0.76	1050	9.00	1748	-1.48	2331	7.92	Sun 15
16 Mon	0547	-0.69	1140	8.91	1840	-1.39			Mon 16
17 Tues	0024	7.75	0638	-0.46	1231	8.64	1935	-1.10	Tues 17
18 Wed	0120	7.51	0733	-0.09	1326	8.24	2031	-0.67	Wed 18
19 Thu	0221	7.25	0835	0.34	1429	7.77	2131	-0.20	Thu 19
20 Fri	0328	7.04	0944	0.73	1545	7.35	2232	0.21	Fri 20
21 Sat	0436	6.96	1054	0.96	1659	7.09	2333	0.51	Sat 21
22 Sun	0539	7.01	1200	1.02	1805	6.98			Sun 22
23 Mon	0031	0.68	0637	7.16	1300	0.92	1904	6.98	Mon 23
24 Tues	0125	0.73	0731	7.34	1354	0.72	1957	7.03	Tues 24
25 Wed	0215	0.73	0820	7.51	1444	0.49	2046	7.08	Wed 25
26 Thu	0300	0.70	0904	7.63	1530	0.29	2131	7.10	Thu 26
27 Fri	0340	0.68	0945	7.68	1611	0.14	2213	7.07	Fri 27
28 Sat	0415	0.69	1021	7.66	1649	0.06	2250	7.00	Sat 28
29 Sun	0442	0.72	1048	7.62	1721	0.03	2321	6.91	Sun 29
30 Mon	0455	0.73	1058	7.61	1745	0.04	2339	6.85	Mon 30
DECEMBER 2020									
01 Tue	0516	0.69	1118	7.70	1803	0.04	2356	6.88	Tue 01
02 Wed	0550	0.67	1151	7.79	1831	0.04			Wed 02
03 Thu	0027	6.95	0629	0.68	1229	7.83	1907	0.08	Thu 03
04 Fri	0106	7.02	0714	0.73	1313	7.79	1950	0.15	Fri 04
05 Sat	0151	7.08	0802	0.79	1402	7.65	2037	0.24	Sat 05



WE ARE NOT ALONE

In the summer of 2015 a treasure trove of American Indian artifacts was unearthed by developers in Pelham Bay Park. It was not the first such discovery in our area, not by a long shot. Hundreds of sites have been discovered by archaeologists dating back to the 1920s at least. An amateur named Reginald Pelham Bolton was among the first citizen scientists to dig for artifacts in our area and to document it, although some of his own writings suggest that relic-hunting was a popular pastime in the NYC area since as far back as 1850.

Within a two-mile radius of the City Island bridge there are at least 27 known sites documenting the presence of Native Americans from between 1,500 to 1,000 years ago, during the late Woodland period. Knowing this, and out of an abundance of caution, scientific studies were performed on the soil and sediment around the old bridge before the new bridge was built so as to prevent the disturbance of any potentially new sites. That said, we may have discovered a 28th site. It's on Hunter Island off Orchard Beach.

Most of the known sites, including the one from 2015, have been identified formally as shell middens. A shell midden is a mound of mostly discarded oyster, clam and mussel shells, which, believe it or not, have their own peculiar stories to tell of life long ago, or so the scientists say. But often bone fragments, stone implements, ceramic shards and more are mixed in with the shells. These are the true prizes, the windows into the world of prehistoric times in our area. And so these sites are treated with the respect that they deserve. That is the hope, anyway. Allan S. Gilbert makes this point specifically in his book, *Digging the Bronx: Recent Archeology in the Borough*, published in 2019 by the Bronx County Historical Society.

While the above shell midden is not the first documented site on Hunter Island, the literature we have seen tells us that most of the already known locations exist on the island's western shore, of which this is not. There are indications that other known sites on Hunter Island exist on its other shores, but there is nothing yet to lead us to believe that the above example is one of them. So stay tuned...

Cormac McEnery, Esq.

Kerry A. Dinneen, Esq.

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In The Garden

By MARY COLBY



Photo by MARY COLBY

Dried seed heads and grasses in November

Let It Go

After the rain last night, the asters and sunflowers have fallen over, bending mournfully toward the ground. The green world has been touched by Persephone, a quiet dying of the flame. Nothing quickens except for the hellebores, which are springing to life with fresh leaves emerging from the bracken. The green bells of Hellebore foetidus are showing, ringing in the holiday season amid the delicate blooms of cyclamen. But all else is faded,

and I am curious to try to leave things as they are. Autumn is a time to tidy up the garden, at least that is what I have been told and what I feel I should be doing.

When I force myself to just sit in the garden, without jumping up to stake a dahlia or pull out a weed, I am surprised by the sounds of nature. The sky expands and I wonder "What if I just left it all as is?" Winter arrives, snow and rime cover the seed heads and grasses, and a new garden emerges, tawny colored with grasses bleached by the sun. Here is solace, and doubly comforting with no work.

Winter brings a different sort of jubilation, not the joy of smelling lavender and watching poppies unfurl, no, but a relief of letting go the effort and the related happiness of not having to work at or talk about gardening for a season.

Yet this year is different than all others. We are in the time of Covid, and gardens have been a paradise for many, so with the waning light we must turn to other interests and distractions. Leave the garden's seed heads and grasses to be caught by hoar frost with the boxwoods and evergreens hummocked in snow. Winter, engage my eye and my heart.

To all my friends and readers, I give thanks for all of you. May you have a very dear and safe Thanksgiving.

Mary Colby is available for consultation, garden plans and installation. Call 917-804-4509.

A Meditation for Parents in Uncertain Times: What Do I Know?

By JOHN SCARDINA, Certified School Psychologist

I am writing this on Oct. 12—the traditional Columbus Day of my youth—realizing now that the story of colonialism is more complex than drawing pictures of the three ships that "discovered" a culture that was already sustaining itself before European contact.

I believe that we can grow in our understanding of our past, and thus teach our children that there are multiple stories in the American experience, and not all of them are pleasant for all involved. Indigenous people certainly have a story that we can learn from today.

This edition of *The Island Current* will come out right around the time of the presidential election. When you read this, we may or may not know who our next president will be, but hopefully you will have voted and participated in the election as informed citizens. Modeling good citizenship for our children means understanding the issues we are voting on, knowing the candidates and where they stand on issues important to us and to our community, and being clear that democracy works best when we let our system of government work at ensuring a fair election.

Whatever the results on Nov. 3, as we seek to be good parents as well as good citizens, we need to ask ourselves: What do I know? Here is a list that comes to mind for myself, a semi-retired school psychologist living on City Island, in these uncertain times:

• I know that I am privileged to live in this country that has provided me with a political voice and a chance for a sustainable lifestyle as an educated white male.

• I know that my children and my grandchildren are similarly blessed as citizens of the USA.

• I know that my white male privilege is real and requires me to acknowledge my privileged status and commit myself to use my privilege to help others.

• I know that democracy demands my participation as an educated and inquisitive voter.

• I know that our society can choose to be civil in times of challenge, embracing change when the people have spoken, and that our leaders have chosen to help everyone. Our children are watching right now to see how we adults are handling this time of political and cultural polarization, with unrest on many fronts: the upcoming election, the black lives matter movement, immigration, the pandemic, and economic uncertainty for many Americans.

• I know that dialogue with people who hold different views than me is important. Children learn in school that, though they might not like everyone, they need to respect everyone. Are we modeling this behavior with our neighbors whose lawn signs are different from our own?

• I know that my faith in a spiritual force in the universe requires me to be compassionate to all and to fight for justice for all.

• I know that children learn by what they live: people who lack a stable housing situation, food security, and equal access to education are less able to fully participate in our democratic society. We need everyone's voices in a just society.

• I know that parenting is the hardest job I will ever do, and also the most important job I will ever do.

So, what do you know as you strive to be a parent and mentor for our young people?

Let us go forward with faith in one another to do the next right thing. Let us be examples for our children as members of a democratic society. Let us be grateful for what we have (Thanksgiving is coming!) and firm in our commitment to share our good fortune with others. And please go out and VOTE!

SAFE RETURN OF THE PUMPKIN SALE!



Photos by RICK DeWITT and RENA HANSEN

Islanders and visitors were thrilled to see the annual Legion Pumpkin Sale take place on schedule from Oct. 1 to 4, 2020. With so many community events cancelled because of the pandemic, the annual outdoor event at the Leonard Hawkins Post 156 was a welcome sign of autumn and normalcy. It was all hands safely on deck including the Legionnaires, the Auxiliary, and many enthusiastic City Island Girl and Boy Scouts (top photo, l. to r.) sitting: Niquel Rodado, Patrick Noonan, Ryan Ayala, Jack Hickey, Oisin Daly, Ronan Daly, Herman Williams, Jack Leone, Malcolm Walker, Leonard Cooper and Joseph DeSantis; standing: Joe Goonan, Angel Alvarado, Antonio Ayala (in back), Norman Stewart, Matteo Ciccone, Liam McNiff, Thomas Riordan (in back), Brian Hickey, Cassius Walker, Matthew Clancy, Peter Hickey, James Clancy, Victor Lopez, Jayden Martinez and Matthew DeSantis. By Sunday, every pumpkin had been purchased, along with most of the beautiful mums and delicious goodies at the bake sale. *Current* archives show a smaller but equally enthusiastic pumpkin sale from the 1970s organized by the City Island Volunteer Ambulance Corps (CIVAC).

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OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT: Commercial building, centrally located on City Island with office and warehouse spaces available for rent. Please call 914-760-1106.

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ART PRINTS OF CITY ISLAND BRIDGE by Island artist Marguerite Chadwick-Juner are available at: marguerite-chadwickjuner.pixels.com. Seasonal panoramic views of the bridge as well as iconic portions of the bridge can be purchased as prints on archival paper, aluminum, acrylic and canvas, but here you can purchase the images on iPhone and Galaxy cases, pillows, duvet covers, tote bags, and t-shirts! Show your bridge love!

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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.



Grayson Richard, born Oct. 3 to Kristin and Al Hein.

Belated happy birthday wishes to my grandson, Joseph, who celebrated his 12th birthday on Oct. 24. Wishing you success in your new school and in all your team sports. Much love from Grandma Penny.

Congratulations to Kristin and Al Hein on the birth of their son, Grayson Richard, who came into the world on Oct. 3 at Greenwich Hospital. His grandparents Joanne and Anthony Valletta and god-mother Lauren Ciuti are ecstatic. A true blessing!

Happy birthday wishes on Nov. 12 to our "Coastie" Bobby Swieciki, with much love from Mom and Dad, Stephen and Maria Christina.

Birthday greetings to the Boatyard's Ethel Lott, who celebrates her big day on Nov. 23.

A very big THANK YOU to all our veterans with love and appreciation on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, and all through the year.

November birthday wishes to Richie Ferris (Nov. 4), Rosette Dietz (Nov. 15) and Nick Ruggiero (Nov. 21). Enjoy!

Happy Nov. 15 birthday to King Avenue's Paul Nani. Have a great day and good luck blowing out all those candles!

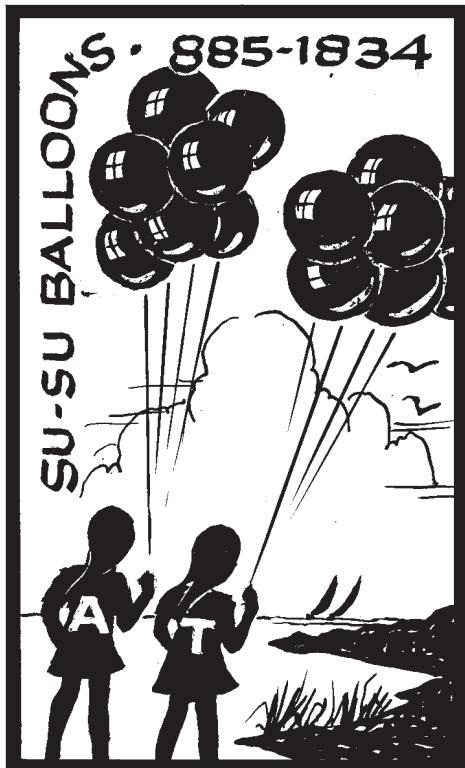


L'Amoreaux Patrick Charles was born on Oct. 16 to Sharlotte Lawrence and Patrick Keegan.

It's a boy! Welcome to the world L'Amoreaux Patrick Charles Lawrence-Keegan, born on Oct. 16. Proud parents are Sharlotte Lawrence-Keegan and Patrick Keegan, and family pooches Scritch and Scratch. Congratulations to all!

Wishing all our neighbors, friends and readers a very happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Maria Swieciki



Photos by RICK DeWITT

Although the Halloween parade was cancelled this year due to the pandemic, another old tradition was safely revived on Oct. 24 as Island businesses invited families to paint their windows with spooky scenes and funny frights.

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