

The Island Current

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One Dollar

Councilmember Secures Discretionary Funds for CI

By KAREN NANI



Photo by KAREN NANI

New York City Councilmember Marjorie Velázquez (center) attended the P.S. 175 Card Party on March 31 and caught up with *Island Current* columnist Maria Swieciki (left) and a former St. Catharine's classmate, Dr. Marisa Censani.

Marjorie Velázquez began coming to visit City Island with her family when she was a child, and her positive impression of the community has grown even more since she was elected to the New York City Council in 2021. She has supported numerous Island organizations with funding and personal appearances since her term began.

This reporter caught up with the busy councilmember at the P.S. 175 Card Party on March 31 at the Morris Yacht Club. "I think that two of the most important groups in a community are the kids and the seniors. The students are our future and will keep these communities going," she explained. The councilmember's commitment to education is demonstrated in her funding of many projects to empower youth in District 13, which covers the northeast Bronx including City Island, Country Club, Morris Park, Pelham Bay, Pelham Parkway, Throggs Neck and more.

She has secured funding for more laptops for students across the district, as well as the "Chess in Schools" after-school program. On City Island, she has specifically supported the City Island Oyster Reef (CIOR) initiative, which works directly with P.S. 175 to teach students about the role that oysters play in a healthy, balanced ecosystem, with special programs both in the school and in an outdoor education center on the shoreline behind the school where they study the local marine environment.

For the 2023-24 fiscal year, the councilwoman has allocated a great deal of funding for City Island organizations, including \$15,000 for the Civic Association to support the tree-planting project along City Island Avenue; \$20,000 to the Community Center; \$8,000 to the City Island Historical Society and Nautical Museum; \$3,500 for City Island Rocks; \$9,000 for the City Island Youth Foundation; \$25,000 for City Island Cinema and \$10,000 for the PSS Senior Center. She is also allocating funds to remove abandoned boats from the shoreline of Rodman's Neck.

In addition to attending the P.S. 175 fundraiser, she recently went to City Island's Eagle Scout awards ceremony. "This is personal for me. My husband was a Boy Scout, and my brother was an Eagle Scout. Scouting elevates boys and unites parents."

Her parents moved to the Bronx from Puerto Rico, and her father, Josue Velázquez, worked as a young man at Johnny's Reef restaurant, where "he fried frog's legs," she told *The Current*. Her family later went to Johnny's often after spending summer days at Orchard Beach, and she recalls loving the onion rings along with the seafood. "We also had many family celebrations, like graduations and Mother's Day, at Portofino's and other Island restaurants."

Ms. Velázquez was raised in the Bronx and attended St. Catharine Academy. Ironically, she met up with a former classmate, Dr. Marisa Censani, at the P.S. 175 Card Party and they reminisced about their years at St. Catharine's.

After high school, she attended New York University and initially worked in the private sector in corporate finance. She soon shifted to a public service career and became treasurer and Municipal Services Committee Chair for Bronx Community Board 10, where she focused on providing a much-needed voice for the community on issues ranging from transportation to parks services and other quality-of-life issues.

When she was on Community Board 10, she worked with the City Island Chamber of Commerce and businesses like Lickety Split and Kaleidoscope. Then the pandemic hit, and she helped the City Island Civic Association's City Island Strong group and the American Legion to deliver food to those in need. "It takes a village, and City Island Strong spoke to the heart of the community. People put their political differences aside and united to address a need on the Island." She is concerned with quality-of-life issues and has

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CILL: Volunteers Needed at Bat

By KAREN NANI



Photos by KAREN NANI

City Island Little League's 2023 opening day on April 8 included the traditional ceremony led by President Dom Esposito and a special plea for more volunteers from the community. With support from loyal sponsors, teams in four different age groups, including T-ball and majors (shown above) along with minors and junior minors, will play on Ambrosini Field during May and June.

While City Island Little League (CILL) president Dom Esposito welcomed back players and coaches on opening day on April 8, he also called for volunteers to "step up to the plate" and help keep the 123-year-old tradition of baseball and softball on City Island going.

Under sunny skies, players said the Pledge of Allegiance and sang the Star Spangled Banner. Then Mr. Esposito introduced the teams and the coaches who generously volunteer their time. For 2023, there are 60 girls and boys competing in four different levels: T-ball (five and six year-olds), coached by Sean and Rachel Dennehy; Junior Minors (seven- and eight-year olds), coached by Sean and Rachel Dennehy and Tom Goldberg; Minors (nine and ten-year olds), coached by Arturo Mazzeo and Mike Cautillo; and Majors (11- and 12-year olds), managed by Dom Esposito, Alex Linzer, Rene Matos, Ginutis Sipas and Brendan Delaney.

The president made a special plea for more volunteers. "City Island must pull together to keep this league going." He asked for volunteers to be coaches and board members. There are two board positions open, vice president and recording secretary, so if you can't make practices and games, you can still help out with the administration of the league.

Special recognition of CILL's loyal sponsors and their continued support followed. Those who make the 2023 season possible are: Pryor Law, Leonard Hawkins Post 156 of the American Legion, JP's Restaurant, Sea Shore Restaurant, Jack's Bait and Tackle, Crab Shanty, A Taste of Italy, Local 79 Laborers, Sammy's Fish Box, Man Overboard, the Gilder Scholarship Fund, Seafood City and Artie's Steak and Seafood. "The support of our sponsors is critical, so please patronize these restaurants and businesses on City Island," Mr. Esposito reminded those fans in attendance.

Two ceremonial first pitches were enthusiastically thrown by Ava Cautillo to catcher Charlee Kessler and by Noah Esdelle to Giona Mazzeo. Mr. Esposito stressed the importance of community support and participation in baseball. So head to Ambrosini Field by P.S. 175 and root, root, root for the 2023 teams. T-ball meets on Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. and Junior Minors start after that around 11 a.m. Players from all teams will march in the City Island Memorial Day parade on May 29.

Please volunteer to help the CILL in any way you can by contacting them at cityislandlittleleague@gmail.com.

BRIEFLY...

THE GARDEN CLUB SPRING LUNCHEON will be held this year at the Morris Yacht and Beach Club on Thursday, May 25, at noon. The cost is \$65 per person; checks should be made out to the Garden Club of City Island. Reservations and pre-payment are required. If you have questions, please call Vangie at 917-691-9430.

THE ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY PARADE will be held on May 29 at 2 p.m. A color guard of Post 156 members and leaders will join the start of the parade at P.S. 175 at Winter Street with the rest of the community. Wreaths will be laid at Hawkins Park and Pelham Cemetery and the parade will end at the Veterans Memorial Triangle near the bridge. The Leonard H. Hawkins Post will welcome the public after the parade.

CITY ISLAND NAUTICAL MUSEUM will reopen for the season on Saturday, May 13, from 1 to 4 p.m. and will remain open on Saturday and Sunday afternoons through the fall. A members-only night to launch our 2023 season will be held on Friday, May 12. If you are a member, or are looking to become a member, stop by between 6 and 8 p.m. to see the beautiful new installation of Morris Rosenfeld photographs and paintings by Island artist Liz Alderman, to watch the oral history videos and to visit the museum shop. The best way to visit and support the Museum is by becoming a member. For the 2023 year, individual membership is \$35, family membership is \$45 and corporate membership is \$75. Members can visit the Museum for free and get a 10% discount at the gift shop; single day tickets are \$8 per person, with children under 12 free.

THE CITY ISLAND SAIL & POWER SQUADRON will hold a one-day boating and water safety course that meets NYS PWC and boat operating laws. It will be on Saturday, May 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the City Island Yacht Club, 63 Pilot Street. Instruction is free, but the cost of supplied materials and food is \$60. Register by April 29. For more information, e-mail cityislandabc@gmail.com.

45 BLOTTER

Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during February and March 2023. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list.

- 2 – LOST PROPERTY
- 1 – THEFT OF SERVICE
- 1 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
- 1 – CRIMINAL TRESSPASS
- 3 – PETIT LARCENY
- 1 – IDENTITY THEFT

Police provided details on the following incidents and arrests for the period from March 23 to April 18, 2023.

3/30 - At a commercial establishment on City Island Avenue at 5:50 p.m., a male and female ordered food and left without making payment, in a theft of service.

4/1 - An off-Island female reported a grand larceny at 1:43 a.m. at a commercial establishment on City Island Avenue. Victim stated that she was working when items were taken from her purse by an unknown person. Items were in an office that is shared by all employees. Items taken were ID's, medical cards and cash.

4/2 - Police from the 45th Precinct arrested an off-Island male, 24, and charged him with criminal trespass on Reville Street at 5:52 p.m. Upon checking a vacant residence for an open house showing, the reporter observed defendant inside without permission or authority to do so. When he asked defendant what he was doing there, the perpetrator said: "you're asking too many questions." Reporter told police that only he and the owner were allowed inside.

4/2 - On King Avenue at 8:30 p.m., an off-Island female reported an incident of petit larceny. The victim parked her vehicle, and upon returning to it she heard a loud noise and noticed the catalytic converter had been stolen.

4/2 - An Island male reported an inci-

dent of criminal mischief on Schofield Street at 4:45 p.m. The victim states that he went to work and upon return found his basement window broken and a large rock in a pile of broken glass.

4/5 - Two incidents of petit larceny were reported on Carroll Street at 10:30 a.m. and Fordham Street at 6 p.m. by Island females who told police that they parked their vehicles and upon return found that the catalytic converters had been stolen.

4/14 - At 2 p.m. on City Island Avenue, an Island female reported identity theft. Victim stated that an unknown perpetrator got into her bank account and attempted to withdraw approximately \$30,000 from a Chase Bank in Ohio. The perpetrator tried to claim that they were the victim by giving information about her identity to the bank teller. Perpetrator was unsuccessful in retrieving money but does have victim's personal information.


NOTE: Two years ago, *The Island Current* reported on the shooting of Lizbeth Mass on April 23, 2021, at the water main construction site at the north end of City Island Avenue. Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark announced that the defendant Jose Reyes of East 150th Street was arraigned on second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter and two counts of second-degree criminal possession of a weapon before Bronx Supreme Court Justice John Carter. The defendant allegedly shot the construction worker "multiple times during a fit of jealousy on April 14. The senseless incident happened in broad daylight in a quiet neighborhood and was captured on surveillance video. We will seek justice for the victim, who was a hard-working mother."

On Jan 10, 2022, Jose Reyes was charged with second-degree murder, first-degree manslaughter, and additional charges for having shot Lizbeth Mass. His case went to court on April 26, 2022, and again on June 14, 2022.

According to the DA's office, the Reyes case is ongoing and he remains in custody.

He was scheduled to appear in Bronx Criminal Court on March 28, 2023, but no additional information has been made available. *The Current* continues to follow the story

of this tragedy, the first fatal shooting on City Island in 24 years, and will report on further developments.



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Photos by KAREN NANI

On March 31, 2023, at the Morris Yacht Club, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) of P.S. 175 held its first card party fundraiser since the pandemic. The evening was a huge success, thanks to (from top to bottom) the eighth-grade volunteers, PTA board members and P.S. 175 principal (l. to r. Joann Cautillo, principal Julie Porras, Karen Esdelle, Cheryl Riordan, Michelle Del Pozzo and Melissa Rosado-Taveras), and emcees Moira Carter-Spencer and her husband, George.

# Brenda Prohaska: A Woman of Many Talents

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photo by RON TERNER

A story about Islander Brenda Prohaska appeared on the front page of the New York Times in March, not because of her many volunteer efforts on City Island but because of her newfound activity rescuing aquarium fish in trouble.

City Island woke up with a start on Saturday, March 17, to find that Brenda Prohaska's picture was on the front page of the New York Times, accompanying a story about her role as a fish savior. Many Islanders have known Brenda for years, as a beautician, teacher, waitress, real estate agent and volunteer, but the fish rescue business came as a surprise, at least to this reporter, who has known Brenda for almost three decades.

Many oldtimers will remember Brenda's parents—Ulla Dalsgaard and Edmund (Red) Brennen, a marine contractor and owner of Rat Island—who divorced in 1985 when Brenda was 13. Ulla moved with their three daughters to Westchester and later Rockland County, but returned to City Island and eventually moved, after a serious automobile accident, to Pilot Cove, where she passed away in 2010. Although Red Brennen spent his later years in Jupiter, FL, where he died in 2022, he continued to own property on City Island until 2011, when he held an auction on City Island Avenue attended by many Islanders.

Brenda Brennen attended P.S. 175 and the Ursuline School in New Rochelle and graduated from Roosevelt High School in Yonkers, eventually earning her college degree at Rockland Community College in hospitality and restaurant management in 2013. She also attended beauty school and became a certified cosmetologist, working as a beautician at Macy's in Nanuet, but supplementing her income as a cocktail waitress and numerous other jobs along the way. When Ann Livingston left Hair Ahoy, which was a salon in Red Brennen's building on City Island Avenue, he offered Brenda a shop there and then gave her the job as a landlord's assistant (which she interprets to this day as "slave labor!)."

In 1997 Brenda married Islander Michael Prohaska, a labor leader, and after several months living in Las Vegas and Buffalo, they returned to City Island to raise three children—Dusty Rose, Travis and Russell—before divorcing in 2017. Brenda left the beauty salon in 1999 and immediately began her long career as a volunteer, first as president of the City Island Community Center (until 2019), then as coordinator of the 8th-grade service team, campaign assistant for Councilman Mark Gjonaj, fundraiser for P.S. 175 and hospitality liaison for Picture the Homeless (facilitating group visits to Hart Island's memorial services). She was also a volunteer as a cookie manager for the Northeast Bronx Girl Scouts and as captain of beach cleanup for the American Littoral Society until 2018.



Brenda has not abandoned the notion of working for a living, however. She teaches cosmetology at an alternative learning high school in Dobbs Ferry and works with emotionally and mentally disabled children, a job she took on after spending many years working as a family club coordinator for P.O.T.S. (Part of the Solution) and as headwaitress for Yvette Shandel's catering business.

Like her mother before her, Brenda Prohaska is also a licensed real estate agent. She has sold and rented many properties on City Island, the Bronx and Westchester; she was with J. Philip's office in Pelham and is currently part of the team at CI Elite. She recently purchased the Early Ruth shop (opening soon as a bakery) and the old Lina Petite building between Beach and Bowne Streets, where she one day might reopen a beauty salon and consignment shop since she still has her NYS cosmetology license. Several years ago, she cut hair for seniors at the PSS Senior Center, and to this day she has many clients on the Island, perhaps as many as 100, whom she visits at home.

Brenda also finds time to help her older sister, Marcy Brennen, who runs the Bronx Equestrian Center in Pelham Bay Park, and the two sisters put on a lovely wedding for their younger sister, Amanda, in 2011. Amanda lives in Florida and travels often in her RV, but she still owns property on City Island, as does Marcy.

The fish rescue service, which Brenda performs in between her many other jobs, came about as the result of her interest in caring for her own fish that led her to join a local aquarium group some years ago. During the pandemic, she answered a call for help from an office closing in Manhattan, followed by many more calls, including an abandoned hospital in Queens to save 300 goldfish that were living in the basement. As she told the Times reporter, "I thought someone else would answer the call, [but] they didn't, so I had to." Since then she has undertaken about 90 rescues, saving the lives of abandoned fish all over New York City and beyond. When asked what drew her to the plight of these helpless animals, she says: "I always have been a giver, so it almost comes easy to me," she said. "They are living things, and I feel like nobody really cares that much." Surely, this is a reflection of her own gratitude for having been cured of a serious case of melanoma that had progressed to stage 4, an often deadly form of cancer.

The front page coverage in the Times has resulted in many more calls for help from fish owners all over the city whose pets have grown too large or require too much care. As the saying goes, "If you want something done, ask a busy person to do it." And clearly Brenda Prohaska is about as busy a person as you could ever find.

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 YEAR OLD ISLANDER MORGAN CALLES RECORDS SUBWAY ANNOUNCEMENT                                                     | COUNCILWOMAN VELAZQUEZ COMES THROUGH FOR CI WITH FUNDING                                          | CITY ISLAND LITTLE LEAGUE SEASON BEGINS                                                                                | BRENDA PROHASKA RESCUES FISH AND IS ON FRONT PAGE OF NY TIMES                                                        |
| <p>THAT'S RIGHT! ALL ABOARD!</p>  | <p>GREAT MEETING THE COUNCILMEMBER AT THE P.S. 175 CARD PARTY LAST NIGHT. I WON A RAFFLE TOO.</p> | <p>AND NO MORE WHINING AND COMPLAINING!</p> <p>COACH, ARE YOU DONE WITH YOUR PRE-SEASON TALK WITH THE PARENTS YET?</p> | <p>HEY BRENDA, YOU AND YOUR FISH KNOCKED POLITICS RIGHT OFF THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NY TIMES!</p> <p>CRAZY, RIGHT?</p> |



Photo by KAREN NANI

The area near the bridge has a whole new look, thanks to the removal of dilapidated buildings from the site.



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

What's in a Name?

To the Editor,

In the April issue of *The Current*, I referred to the Rosenberger boathouse during the years it belonged to John Persteins as the Worm Hole, which is what it was called by the New York Times reporters. However, after the building was

demolished, most Islanders I spoke with referred to it as the Worm Bar and recalled attending poetry readings (by Dr. Norbert Sander!) and other important events, including a scene with Drew Barrymore in "Riding in Cars with Boys" (2001) and the wedding of Trader John's son Waldo in 2003.

In order to determine the true name of the place, I checked with Waldo, who told me that the name actually depended on the groups who went there based on their age and experience and relationships. The most popular name, he felt, was probably "the boathouse," and that when people said "Let's go to the boathouse," everyone knew where to go. But Waldo also remembered that a few people called it the Star Wars Bar (aka the Cantina) because like the first Star Wars movie, the bar was a crossroads of the universe frequented by many characters.

Barbara Dolensek

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# EASTER SUNRISE AND SUNSHINE



Photos by EYVONNE BAKER, VIRGINIA DANNEGGER, RICK DeWITT and KAREN NANI Beautiful weather greeted Island worshippers on Palm Sunday and Easter, April 2 and 9, 2023. Photos from top to bottom: Fr. Kevin Moroney of Grace Episcopal Church led the blessing of the palms on April 2, and Fr. Augustus washed the feet of parishioners at St. Mary, Star of the Sea on Holy Thursday, April 6. The serene sunrise framed Trinity's Easter morning service at Pelham Cemetery on April 9, and children from Grace Church enjoyed an Easter Egg Hunt after the Easter service with some hints from their parents. Even Nanook Nielson (inset), who greets visitors to Kaleidoscope Gallery, got in the Easter spirit.

# ISLANDER PART OF A SUBWAY SERIES

By KAREN NANI



Six year-old Islander Morgan Calles, shown above on City Island Little League opening day and with his parents, Dan and Brenna, was selected to record MTA announcements during Autism Awareness month in April 2023.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) celebrated Autism Awareness Month in April by bringing in children with autism to experience the subway and tell their stories. One of them, City Islander Morgan Calles, age six, takes the subway to school every day accompanied by his father, and he loves trains.

The MTA invited kids with autism to pre-record a message for riders, and Morgan submitted a tape based on his love of riding the trains. His announcement was selected as one of eight winners and was played during April for thousands of commuters at 10 different stations throughout the five boroughs.

Morgan was featured in an ABC News story that aired on April 10 with the other children whose announcements had been selected. During the MTA ceremony, their announcements about rider safety and schedules were played back to them for the first time over the subway speakers. The kids got the chance to mingle with station agents, bus operators and conductors as part of the event.

Morgan and his parents, Brenna and Dan Calles, moved to City Island in September 2022. "We were living in Manhattan and wanted to move out of downtown.

We looked in several boroughs and fell in love with the house we eventually bought on Centre Street," she told *The Current*.

Brenna explained that Morgan was diagnosed with autism before he was two years old. "We were lucky to have an early intervention after we noticed his communication skills were delayed." Her son qualified for speech and occupational therapy and was eventually accepted into a special program run by New York University (NYU). The program is a partnership between the New York City Department of Education and NYU's Autism Spectrum Disorders Nest Support Project.

Although the family moved out of Manhattan, Morgan still attends the special school on the West Side, so he takes buses and trains every day from City Island. Like others on the spectrum, Morgan is drawn to trains. "It's calming for him. He likes the order and structure and things running on time," Brenna told *The Current*.

Morgan hopes to one day drive a train, according to his parents. Meanwhile, he and his family have embraced life on City Island. Morgan has joined City Island Scouts and the Little League. "We love our neighbors and the feeling of this safe, tight-knit community," Brenna exclaimed.

All aboard to Morgan and his parents!

**Catherine S. Mazzaro**  
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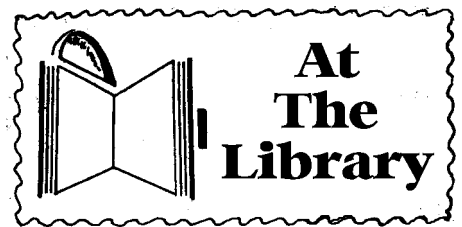




Welcome to the owners of **BMJ**, located at 201 City Island Avenue, where Carman's Service Station used to be. BMJ does inspections, body work, towing, lock-outs and repairs, and they plan to have a car wash. The telephone number is 914-885-7823 or 347-602-6630. Stop in and welcome them.

Welcome to **Ortega Upholstery and Interior Design**, located at 152 City Island Avenue (next to P.S. 175). Offering seat covers, auto tops, floor liners, canvas for boats, plastic covers, covers for couches, chairs and padded headboards, and much more. Hours are Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Offering 20 percent off for Island residents. Visit their website at [www.ortegaupholstery.com](http://www.ortegaupholstery.com), or call them at 347-995-0890, 646-354-8024 or e-mail [ortegaupholstery21@gmail.com](mailto:ortegaupholstery21@gmail.com).

**Mary Colby** is celebrating 30 years on City Island at her gallery at 276 City Island Avenue with an exhibition of her work that will be on view through May 21. Visit the studio on Thursdays from noon to 4 p.m. or by appointment; call 917.804.4509 or e-mail [marycolby7@gmail.com](mailto:marycolby7@gmail.com). [www.marycolby.com](http://www.marycolby.com)



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**MAY CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

**Family Storytime:** This event will take place in person at City Island. Join us for a live program with songs, rhymes and favorite read-aloud books as we show you that story time is fun for the whole family. Limited to 15 children and caregivers per session. Tuesdays and Fridays at 11 a.m. and Saturday, May 13, at 11 a.m.

**Start with Art:** Promote early literacy through art, while getting creative! Young artists will explore colors, shapes and more while working on motor skills, and creating some fun crafts along the way. Limited to 12 children and caregivers per session. First come, first served. Mondays at 11 a.m.

**Chill Zone:** No-stress, no-fuss relaxation time for kids, teens and tweens. Lap-tops, games, activities and snacks will be available. Ages 10 through 14. Tuesdays at 3 p.m.

**MAY TEEN AND TWEEN PROGRAMS**

**Love Letters to NYC:** Write a letter to the city we all share, reflecting on all the things that make New York a beautiful, vibrant, and unforgettable place to live. Wednesday, May 10, at 3 p.m.

**Manga Club:** Come in and enjoy our manga collection! Different manga volumes will be available to read onsite and to check out. Read and discuss it with

friends, and create anime/manga related crafts! Thursday, May 11 and 25, at 3 p.m.

**Teen Unwind:** Celebrate the end of the week every Friday at 3 p.m.

**Unplug & Relax:** Friday, May 12.

**Pop Art! Exploring Roy Lichtenstein:** The Jewish Heritage Month. Learn about legendary pop artist Roy Lichtenstein, a prolific Jewish American artist and founder of the 1960s new art movement. Explore his now famous pop art style, then see what you can create! Friday, May 19.

**Start Signing:** Use guided videos to learn the American Sign Language alphabet and a few key phrases! Friday, May 26.

**MAY ADULT PROGRAMS**

**Creative Aging Writing Workshop—Bringing Life to Life Stories:** Have you ever wanted to write a memoir but didn't know where to start? In this workshop writer and educator, Frank Ingrassiotta will guide you on how to bring your life stories to the page. In this eight-session memoir writing class, we will examine various aspects of storytelling. Through writing exercises, we will explore the tools of your personal expression that brings writing to life. Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 16 and 23, from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

**Introduction to Computers:** Join our computer class, with a different subject being taught each week. Subjects will include Internet literacy, social media, video chatting and more. All work will be conducted on our Library computers. No registration required. Call us for details on upcoming subjects. Thursday, May 11 and 25, at 11 a.m.

**Adult Coloring:** Have you been feeling more stressed than usual lately? The City Island Library will be hosting a bi-weekly adult coloring program to help relieve that stress and promote calmness. Coloring materials will be provided. Thursday, May 4 and 18, at 11 a.m.

**City Island Book Club:** Every month, a new title will be chosen and copies will be available for pickup on a first-come, first-served basis. Call us for details on what we're reading next. Monday, May 8 and 22, at 5 p.m.

**Island Writers:** Do you have a passion for writing? Join us for our Island Writers, a creative writing group. This group is for writers of different levels and expertise. We are here to help one another on the journey of self-expression and creativity! Every Tuesday at 1 p.m.

**Movie: Beat Street:** An aspiring DJ from the South Bronx, and his best friend, a promoter try to get into show business by exposing people to hip-hop music and culture. (1984; Rated PG-13; 1 hr. 45 min.) Saturday, May 20, at 2 p.m.

For any or all programs listed, please go to <https://www.nypl.org/locations/city-island> or call 718-885-1703 for more details and to register. Programs are subject to change.

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## Councilmember

*Continued from page 1*

allocated funds for the Civic Association's initiative to plant new trees along City Island Avenue.

Ms. Velázquez was asked about City Island's Special District Zoning and some of the concerns that Islanders have expressed about the use of former shipyards and marinas, which are zoned for manufacturing. "We have to keep the nautical charm of City Island. This includes keeping residential development to one- and two-family homes and maintaining the low density of the neighborhood." In response to com-

plaints from Islanders about ongoing violations by U.S. Crane, which is located on the Consolidated Shipyard site, she says: "I have asked for a meeting with the Department of City Planning about manufacturing zones. We can't have bad actors violating the zoning rules."

Ms. Velázquez ran and was elected for a two-year term to the council in 2021, and she plans to run for another two-year term in 2023. She prides herself on her pragmatic approach to issues and her commitment to realistic timeframes to get projects done. "I want to work with communities to accomplish things within three to five years."



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## PORTRAIT OF A PAINTER

By KAREN NANI



**David Laciento, also known as Dave the Painter.**

*The following profile is part of our longtime advertiser series.*

David Laciento, known as Dave the Painter, remembers coming to City Island with his parents and eating shrimp at Johnny's Reef restaurant. "I used to ask my father for quarters to look through the binoculars in the parking lot at Johnny's," he told *The Current*. "Little did I know I would be working on City Island when I got older."

As a painter with his own business, Dave has worked for many City Island homeowners and businesses over the years. "I started working with Dennis and Steve Owens years ago acid washing St. Mary, Star of the Sea school and church. But I was a painter by trade, so I wound up painting the rectory and the hallways in the school as well."

Dave grew up on Arthur Avenue in the Bronx, and eventually his family moved to Pelham Parkway. He attended Adlai Stevenson High School, but did not train as a painter. "I first worked as a chef for Uno's Pizza after high school."

Then, about 25 years ago, he took a job

as a helper on a construction site doing priming and sanding. One of the drywall tapers noticed he was good at sanding and encouraged him to keep at it. Dave watched and learned on the job and eventually worked with Plante Electrical on the R.A.I.N. facility in Morris Park. "I worked for Joe Vega, and he said to me 'you are the littlest man, but the hardest worker,'" "

Dave credits his success with a passion for painting and "being in the right place at the right time." He was sent for 10-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training and received certification. He was hired by the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), and he completed patching and painting jobs in 20 schools across the five boroughs. He worked the night shift for SCA and was able to do side painting jobs during the day.

He realized that he preferred working for himself, and he began getting referrals for painting jobs from City Island's Owens Brothers, who also own real estate in addition to their family tree service business (see profile in the November 2022 issue of *The Current*). "The Owens brothers introduced me to Margaret Lenz, and I took out a classified in *The Island Current*. It has been great!"

Dave also advertises on City Island Buy/Sell on Facebook, where he posts before and after photos of his work. He has worked for many nice people on City Island and has built up friendships. He explained his work ethic. "Any job I do, I stand by it. I treat people the way I would want to be treated and the way I would want my mom to be treated,"

Speaking of his mother, he still picks her up on Sundays and they often go for shrimp at Johnny's or dinner at the Sea Shore. He still remembers looking through the binoculars on the water at Johnny's.

So if you need your house or condo painted, give Dave a call at 646-548-8573. You can find Dave the Painter's classified ad on page 15 of this issue.

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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.

### AARP Chapter 318

Our next meeting will be on May 11 at Trinity United Methodist Church hall, 113 Bay Street. We will install new officers (President, Vice President and Secretary). Our end of the year luncheon will be on June 7 at the Lobster House restaurant. Please bring a check for \$55 payable to City Island AARP Chapter 318 to the meeting on May 11. New members are always welcome. We hope to see you there.

Joyce Kennedy

### Trinity United Methodist Church

God has asked us and is empowering us at Trinity United Methodist Church to help others to know greater love, joy and peace. Our Budget Corner Thrift Shop, the Rev. Susan Chadwick Food Pantry, Sunday Morning Worship (10 a.m.) are how each of us is being gifted by God's spirit to seek, grow and share this love, joy and peace. If you know someone who could use more of these gifts from God, then come and see what is happening. Come and see what only God can offer.

Since March 5 at 11:30 a.m. after worship, we have had "More Love, Joy and Peace in God's Words" Bible Study.

On Wednesdays at Trinity, at 4:30 p.m., Youth Group for all children in 5th through 12th grades. At 6 p.m., there will be a Community Supper of soup and bread followed by a time of prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday's Budget Shop is fully open and fully stocked. Thank you to all who donate and shop.

If you have any questions, call Pastor Dave Jolly at 845-532-3378.

Rick DeWitt

### St. Mary, Star of the Sea

Masses continue to be celebrated on weekdays, Monday through Friday at 7 a.m., Saturday at 8 a.m. and Vigil on Saturday evening at 5:15 p.m.; Sunday at 9 and 11 a.m.

Our monthly Holy Hour will be held on the First Friday, May 5, from 4 to 5 p.m. All are invited to attend this special period of prayer.

Congratulations and God Bless to the 12 students in our Religious Education Program who will receive the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 6, here at St. Mary, Star of the Sea.

On Mother's Day Sunday, May 14, we will honor all our mothers with a special blessing at all our Masses.

The Thrift Shop is open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lots of good stuff.

Rosette Dietz

### 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. During this COVID period, most of our offerings are on Zoom only, however, some are taking place at shul, with a Zoom option. You do not need a Zoom account to participate. If you are new to Zoom, there are helpful tutorials online for registering a new free Zoom account. To participate in any of our offerings please e-mail [yourshulbythesea@gmail.com](mailto:yourshulbythesea@gmail.com), and identify which you would like to attend.

To members we offer Torah study, mystical teachings, meditation, ethics study, social gatherings and rabbinic office hours.

Pre-registration is recommended. Suggested freewill offering \$10 per session. All classes and services begin promptly, so sign in 10 to 15 minutes early. Proof of vaccination is required for all in-person events. A schedule and Zoom links can be found on our website, [www.yourshulbythesea.org](http://www.yourshulbythesea.org). We look forward to seeing you.

The following events are scheduled for May 2023:

Friday Night Kabbalat Shabbat Services: (all begin at 7:30 p.m.)

May 5: with Shari and Monty (online only)

May 12: with Rabbi David (at Temple Beth-El and online)

May 19: with Stu and Leslie (online only)

May 26: with Rabbi David (at Temple Beth-El and online)

Saturday Morning SoulSpa: Spiritual Learning of Torah with Kabbalah: (10 a.m. start, online). With Rabbi David. No experience necessary. Bring your open mind, heart and soul.

Thursday Evenings, May 4 and 18: Place and Promise: A Spiritual History of the Land of Israel. With Rabbi David and Rabbi Heidi Hoover (this is the last half of a continuing class).

Tuesday Morning Meditation: (10 to 10:30 a.m., online). A calming way to start the day. With Tenzin.

OFF TO ISRAEL!!

Members of TBE and a sister synagogue in Brooklyn head off to the historic land of Israel for a week-long adventure. End of May to early June.

Do you have a special topic you might like to speak about? Let us know. We would be happy to host 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.yourshulbythesea.org).

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

**Rachel Stark, President;**  
**Shari Berkowitz, Vice President**

### Grace Episcopal Church

Grace Church is open for in-person worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. Our church is located at 116 City Island Avenue, on the corner of Pilot Street.

Our priest, Fr. Kevin Moroney, has been presiding over our worship services for seven months now and has also been very active in the Island community. Please join us for Sunday worship services starting at 10 a.m. and stay for fellowship during coffee hour immediately following the service.

**Bible Reading over Coffee and Tea:** Molly Grose, a certified mentor of Bible studies, will lead in reading a chapter of the Bible with parishioners and friends of Grace over coffee and tea right after church service around 11 a.m. Usually held on the second Sunday of the month, the next Bible reading is scheduled for May 14, when we

will read the Book of Tobit.

**Sunday School:** Members of Grace's Sunday School participate in the liturgy every month and are preparing for special services, including a Youth Sunday service on Father's Day in June. We will also begin preparing several of our teenagers for confirmation in 2023. If you would like to be part of Grace's Sunday School, call Karen Nani at 917-853-4401 or e-mail her at [karenrn1@optonline.net](mailto:karenrn1@optonline.net).

**The GraceTones:** We are happy to announce that we have resumed singing at area nursing homes and rehab centers. Remember, you don't have to sound like an angel, just have the desire to sing with like-minded folks who love to spread cheer and joy! If you are interested, please contact Sandy Dunn at [accentfix@gmail.com](mailto:accentfix@gmail.com) or send a text to 917-566-1296.

Sandy Dunn

### St. Mary's Thrift Shop

The thrift shop is open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Watch for our bag sales and the half-price sale. Hope to see you soon.

Arlene Byrne

### Quilters by the Sea QOV

Quilters by the Sea QOV were honored to present a Quilt of Valor to a 102-year old Army veteran of the Battle of the Bulge, World War II. The quilt was made by upstate members of the Quilts of Valor Foundation. Mr. Critelli was wrapped in his quilt by his two daughters on his birthday, with several generations of family present. In April, we also awarded off-Island Quilts of Valor to three other WWII veterans, a Vietnam War veteran, and a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and GWOT. Our next Sew Saturday will be in June at the Leonard Hawkins American Legion Post.

Harlan Sexton

### City Island Nautical Museum

After a busy winter refreshing exhibits, volunteers at the City Island Nautical Museum are excited to announce our opening weekend: Saturday and Sunday, May 13 and 14, from 1 to 4 p.m.! The Museum will be open these hours every weekend through the fall. Additionally, stay tuned for special events by following us on social media, and reach out if you would like to schedule a group tour by calling 718-885-0008.

We are excited to host a members-only night to launch our 2023 season on Friday, May 12. If you are a member, or are looking to become a member, stop by between 6 and 8 p.m. to see the beautiful new installation of Morris Rosenfeld photographs and paintings by Island artist Liz Alderman.

Starting May 13, the general public can visit these two new exhibits and check out our oral history video project. Visit us to hear stories about our boat industry, schools and community from Skippy Lane, William Clancy, Elisa Gilbert Kroepke, Fay Jordans, Herb Hild and more!

On Saturday and Sunday, June 3 and 4 (the same weekend as the Craft Fair on City Island Avenue), we will host a tag sale featuring objects from our collection that we are deaccessioning because of limited space and connection to our mission. Come by and see what we have! All proceeds will benefit the Museum's ongoing maintenance.

Don't forget that the Museum's shop is full of beautiful nautical-themed gifts, so be sure to visit us for apparel and more! If you can't get to the Museum on the weekend, Paul Klein's Kaleidoscope Gallery (at its new location 271 City Island Avenue, just south of the Black Whale) has some Museum gifts for sale.

The best way to visit and support the Museum is by becoming a member. For the 2023 year, individual membership is \$35,

family membership is \$45 and corporate membership is \$75. Membership enables you to visit the Museum for free and to get a 10% discount at the gift shop, as well as exclusive events and communications. Single day tickets are \$8 per person, with children under 12 free.

Lauren Nye

### American Legion Auxiliary

We are excited about the upcoming Memorial Day parade, and we look forward to seeing everyone there. We also continue to welcome new members. Our meetings are the first Tuesday of each month from September to June at 7 p.m. E-mail all inquiries for membership or for supporting the American Legion Family's commitment to serving our community, veterans and all military personnel and their families to [Ala156correspondence@gmail.com](mailto:Ala156correspondence@gmail.com). Service, not self.

Michelle Del Pozzo

### American Legion Post 156

The next meeting is Sunday, May 7, at 12 noon. We will conduct nominations for Post officers and welcome some new members. Dues (\$55) are past due for 2023; please drop off your dues at the Post, and make sure your name is on the envelope. The hall is available for your next party. We can accommodate up to 80 people, and members receive a discount on all hall rentals. Please call our Activities Vice Commander Joe Goonan at 917-825-9576 for availability.

Please come in and play the Queen of Hearts game of chance each week. The weekly drawing is held at 7 p.m. Saturday night. The jackpot grows each week until someone selects the Queen of Hearts. The game is open to all, and the proceeds help fund projects around the Post.

All retired flags should be dropped off in the former mailbox at the base of the Post's flagpole.

The annual Memorial Day Parade on May 29 at 2 p.m. will be a full parade. A color guard of Post 156 members and key leaders will proceed along the route and join the start of the parade at P.S. 175 at Winter Street with the rest of the Legion family and community. We will lay wreaths at Hawkins Park and Pelham Cemetery and end the parade at the Veterans Memorial Triangle near the bridge. The Post will conduct the usual gathering for the public after the parade. We look forward to sharing this day of remembrance with you.

Important dates during May include:

May 4: National Day of Prayer

May 5: Cinco de Mayo

May 8: VE Day 1945

May 12: National Military Spouse Day

May 14: Mother's Day

May 15: Peace Officers Memorial

May 20: Armed Forces Day

May 26: National Poppy Day

May 29: Post 156 will host the Memorial Day service at a house of worship on the Island, to be determined.

Thank you to the entire City Island community for all your support over the past 100 years. It is our honor to be your community partner.

Peter C. Del-Debbio



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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.

May flowers have bloomed, and the board of the City Island Community Center sends spring greetings to all our members and City Island residents. Thank you to all who have renewed your annual membership and/or have provided a donation to the Center. Please know that we recognize all of the support and are immensely grateful!

We have some fun and exciting special events coming up. On Saturday, June 24, from 1 to 4 p.m., please join us at the Center for a fun and family-friendly summer kick-off party. Free hot dogs and ice cream and drinks will be available, as well as some fun activities. Come and meet some of our long-standing board members and find out what else is going on at your local Community Center.

Our Culinary Club is also excited to announce the new Culinary Kids Club, which will launch on July 14. Join the dedicated members of our Culinary Club as they welcome younger members to learn about cuisine, cooking techniques and the magic of coming together to share a meal. We will have additional details in the June column, so stay tuned!

Friendly reminder of the Rotary Club's special Mother's Day Sip & Paint at the Center on Saturday, May 13.

Our schedule of offerings continues through the spring. Below please find our Spring 2023 programming schedule -

**Irish Dance:** Mondays, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Caitlyn Kelly, 914-262-4517.

**City Island Culinary Club:** Every other Monday at 7 p.m. Have fun with other Islanders who like to cook, share your favorite recipes and pick up some new cooking skills. For information, call Kenny Selesky at 917-533-7873.

**City Island Civic Association:** Last Tuesday of the month (except December) 7:30 p.m.

**Children's Playgroup:** Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Bring your little one for some fun and play and tons more. Please come join Gigi, the amazing woman running this program. For information, call Gigi at 347-739-1686.

**Yoga:** Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6 to 7 p.m., and Saturday morning from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Call Joann at 917-853-4719 for more information.

**Yoga & Meditation:** Wednesday evening from 7 to 8 p.m. and Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m.

**Girl Scouts:** Fridays, bi-weekly from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**AA:** Saturdays and Sundays, 7:30 a.m.  
**Zumba:** Saturdays, 10 a.m. with Julia; for information call her at 917-601-5514.

For up-to-date information, call 718-885-1145 or like us on Facebook!  
Spring regards,

**Melissa Cebollero**

### U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary City Island Flotilla

Boating season is officially here! Our members are eager and excited to get out and make sure everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer. You may have already seen our members walking the avenue, advertising our boating safety courses. This year we have already completed three classes and we have one to two classes scheduled every month. Some courses are on three weekday evenings and some are one-day weekend courses.

Our unit continues to grow with another three new members joining our ranks, which brings our membership up to 46. Our vessel examiners are gearing up, and our trainees are currently working to get certified as Vessel Inspectors.

As the weather starts to warm up, boats are beginning to hit the water. This is the

perfect time to get a Vessel Safety Check. Why is a VSC important? Not only does it give you peace of mind knowing you have gear in case of an emergency, but it also ensures that you have the required equipment to be compliant with state and federal regulations. If you have your vessel examined by the Coast Guard Auxiliary, there is no punitive action if an item is missing or expired. Knowing and replacing items beforehand can save you money in fines if you are stopped by the Coast Guard or the NYPD.

Our next flotilla meetings will take place on Tuesday, May 9, and Tuesday, June 13, at 7:30 p.m. at the Harlem Yacht Club. Our Command staff and officers are available as early as 5 p.m. to answer any questions for our members and guests. Our next boating class will take place on Thursdays June 15, 22 and 29 from 7 to 10 p.m. If you are interested in joining our unit or taking a boating class, send us an e-mail at [uscgaux0140504@gmail.com](mailto:uscgaux0140504@gmail.com).

**David P. Mooney**

### City Island Oyster Reef

CIOR welcomes new advisors to our team: Mike Clancy, retired U.S. Army Colonel; Cody Jernigan, former CIOR intern; Leigh Beer, environmental engineer at NYC Department of Environmental Protection; and Karen Heil, science teacher at P.S. 175.

We have been working closely with P.S. 175 to offer educational programs on marine ecology. The students recently constructed oyster spat catchers and planted Virginia wildrye in the Living Shoreline—a hands-on science project the students ultimately presented at the Bronx District Science Share. Council Member Marjorie Velázquez awarded NYC Council Discretionary Funding to CIOR to buy science equipment for P.S. 175 and to develop curriculum regarding oysters and marine ecology that will supplement the NYC Department of Education's Science and STEAM curriculum, Amplify.

**Shell Collection and Curing Program:** We will continue to collect, cure and turn oyster shells in preparation for use in seeding oyster reefs in the waters of the Long Island Sound. Luna Placchi, CIOR's Community and Education Engagement Coordinator, oversees the collection of shells from Seafood City, Sea Shore Restaurant, Sammy's Fish Box, Sammy's Shrimp Box, Johnny's Reef, and Tony's Pier. To get involved, reach out to her at [luna.placchi@cioysterreef.org](mailto:luna.placchi@cioysterreef.org)!

#### Upcoming Community Projects and Events:

Orchard Beach Clean Up and Fundraiser: Sunday, May 21, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Monitoring of Water-Quality Parameters and BOP Oyster Research Stations and Biodiversity will take place throughout the summer, from the end of May through October. Check on our website, [cioysterreef.org](http://cioysterreef.org), for the scheduled dates.

Webinar Series: On Wednesday, May 24, at 7 p.m. Mike Carew of Captain Mike's Diving Services will speak about dive surveys of local oyster populations.

**Sally Connolly**

### PSS City Island Center

Welcome May and Older Americans Month! Check out all the exciting activities PSS City Island Center has to offer, including special events planned for Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, May birthdays, and Older Americans Month!

If you need assistance with your technology devices, be sure to stop by the Center on Mondays to book an appointment with Julio Melo-Ramos. Julio is at the Center on Mondays for individual appointments in the morning and formal tablet/i-Phone training classes in the afternoon at 1 p.m. Our part-time social worker, Miriam Rodriguez, is available to help with benefits and entitlements such as Meals-on-Wheels, SNAP, Access-A-Ride, SCRIE and Medicare/ Medicaid. Please call the Center at 718-885-0727 to book an appointment for Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Lunch in the Center is from 12 to 1 p.m. Pick-up for lunch will be available from



Photo by MELANIE BENVENUE

The Post Office got a spring cleaning on April 19, thanks to Garden Club members (l. to r.) Joan Higgins, Susan Strazera and Judy Judson, who planted, weeded and watered the plants.

12:15 to 12:45 p.m. The Grab and Gab friendly visiting and lunch program has started for isolated, homebound members of the City Island community. Please let us know if there is someone on the Island who could possibly benefit from this program or if you would like to volunteer to bring someone a meal and join them with lunch and a friendly visit. We also have a telephone reassurance program if an older adult would like weekly check-in calls.

We offer in-person and remote classes; remote classes are through Zoom. Please pick up a calendar for login information and check for weekly updates. If you are interested in receiving free nutritional counseling with a Nutritionist over video (Zoom, FaceTime, WeChat etc.), please call the center at 718-885-0727.

#### May Activities

(get calendar as activities are constantly updated)

Wednesday, May 3, at 10 a.m. Osteoarthritis 101 (free virtual presentation by St. John's University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences—call for link)

Friday, May 5, at 12:45 p.m. Cinco de Mayo celebration followed by Bingo at 1:15 p.m.

Wednesday, May 10, at 11 a.m. Cooking with NYC Aging: Pineapple Zucchini Cake (free virtual presentation—call for login information)

Wednesday, May 10, at 11 a.m. Your Path to Good Bone Health—Preventing and Managing Osteoporosis (free virtual presentation at PSS Life! University—call for link)

Thursday, May 25, at 12:30 p.m. NYS Citizen Preparedness Corps—Part 1

Bi-weekly videoconferencing on Health Topics with Weill Cornell, St. John's, LIU and DFTA.

#### The Current Schedule

Please note that starting in May, Bingo is moving to Friday and the Singing Group will be on Tuesdays.

#### Monday

9 a.m. Tai Chi (remote and in-person)  
10:30 a.m. Balance Class with Susan (remote and in-person)

9 a.m.–12 noon One-on-one tech assistance with Julio

11:30 a.m. Mensa Mondays  
1–2:30 p.m. Tablet & I-Phone Training Course (must be pre-registered)

#### Tuesday

9 a.m. CardioFit with Mary (remote and in-person)

10 a.m. Yoga Stretch with Mary (remote and in person)

12 noon In the News  
12:45 p.m. Daily Dad Jokes

1:15 p.m. Singing Group

#### Wednesday

9 a.m. Beginner Broadway Dance (remote and in-person)

10:15 a.m. Arthritis Class with Patty  
11:30 a.m. Tech Byte

12:30 p.m. Knitting & Crochet Club with Evelyn

#### Thursday

9 a.m. Tai Chi (remote and in-person)

10 a.m. VNS Health Chair Yoga (remote)

10 a.m. Acrylic Painting with Lois (in person)

1 p.m. Trivia Thursdays

#### Friday

9 a.m. Broadway Dance with Danny Durr (in person and remote)

10 a.m. Individual Tech Instruction  
10:15 a.m. Arthritis Class with Patty (remote)

11 a.m. Blood Pressure Testing  
11:30 a.m. Brain Games

1:15 p.m. Bingo

We will be closing early on Friday, May 26, at 1:00 p.m.; lunch service will be 11:30 to 12:30. The Center will be closed on Monday, May 29, for Memorial Day.

Transportation: Transportation is available daily for shopping trips with a donation. Please call Alex at 347-834-6466 for the monthly trip calendar or to reserve a spot.

Stay safe and healthy.  
**Susan Rosendahl-Masella**

### Garden Club of City Island

The Garden Club's annual Spring Luncheon will be held this year at the Morris Yacht and Beach Club on Thursday, May 25, at noon. The Garden Club is creating many wonderful gift baskets and is soliciting gift certificates from local merchants, all to be raffled off at the luncheon. This year Mary Colby, local artist and gardener, has donated a beautiful painting, which will be included in the raffle. The cost of the luncheon is \$65 per person; checks should be made out to the Garden Club of City Island. Reservations and pre-payment are required. For more information, please call Vangie at 917-691-9430.

The Garden Club's annual Beautification Fund Drive is in full swing. By now, every residence and business on the Island should have received our fund-drive letter. The funds we collect go toward our beautification projects. We thank all of you who donated last year and hope that you will do so again this year. Donations may be sent to Garden Club of City Island, P.O. Box 43, Bronx, NY 10464.

Garden Club members are busy with their spring community projects. They are tending the lavender pansies and white alyssum that are filling our new and old containers on the Avenue and have weeded, fertilized and watered the Post Office garden, where they have also planted clematis paniculata. The clematis should eventually grow on the chain-link fence between the garden and the loading dock, producing a profusion of small, white, fragrant flowers in the fall.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Garden Club or being a "Helping Hand" for Club projects, drop a note to [gardenclubofcityisland@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubofcityisland@gmail.com) or attend one of our meetings. Our next meeting will be Monday, May 1, at 10 a.m. at the City Island Yacht Club.

**Judy Judson**





### Playing the Piano

A childhood favorite of mine is **A Song to Remember** (1945), the story of Polish patriot and composer Frédéric Chopin (Cornel Wilde), one of the 19th century's most famous musicians. His love of country and devotion to his legendary music are threatened by his passionate affair with novelist George Sand (Merle Oberon) and his rivalry with mentor Josef Elsner (Paul Muni). Despite his failing health and Poland's subjugation by the Russians, Chopin continues playing, deciding to give one last rousing concert tour across Europe that could cost him his life.

**The Competition** (1980) is a romantic comedy about Paul Dietrich (Richard Dreyfuss), an almost 30-year-old fading piano prodigy, and Heidi Schoonover (Amy Irving), a talented young pianist with a promising future. Heidi and Paul meet one day during practice for a major competition, and, though she is immediately drawn to him, Paul thinks romance will just be a distraction. Heidi's teacher, Greta (Lee Remick), is also wary of Heidi's newfound attraction. The supporting cast includes Sam Wanamaker as conductor Andrew Erskine and fellow competitors Jerry DiSalvo (Joseph Cali), Michael Humphries (Ty Henderson) and Russian Tatiana Baranova (Vicki Krieger).

**Amadeus** (1984) stars Tom Hulce in the title role as 18th-century musical genius composer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The story is told from the viewpoint of an aging royal composer, Antonio Salieri (F. Murray Abraham), who recalls the events of three decades earlier when the vulgar and obnoxious young Mozart first gained favor in the court of Austrian Emperor Joseph II (Jeffrey Jones). Seething with jealousy and enraged that God would bless the appalling young man with divine genius, Salieri sets out to sabotage Mozart's career. Amadeus won eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Actor for F. Murray Abraham. In 2002, the film received a theatrical rerelease as "Amadeus: The Director's Cut," a version that includes 20 minutes of additional footage.

**The Fabulous Baker Boys** (1989), stars Jeff Bridges and his real-life brother, Beau Bridges, as Jack and Frank Baker, who have spent their lives as a piano playing duo. When their twin-piano lounge act declines in popularity, they hire the gifted and gorgeous Susie Diamond (Michelle Pfeiffer) as their singer. This is one of Jeff's best roles as an enigmatic man who stifled his real talents for his entire career.

The life of Frederic Chopin is revisited in **Impromptu** (1991), starring Hugh Grant as the sickly but brilliant 19th-century Polish composer. Loosely based on the lives of the artists of the time, this film is the story of George Sand (Judy Davis), a writer who shocks the public by dressing in men's clothing and openly having affairs. She is smitten first by Chopin's music, and then by the man, much to the consternation of her jealous friend Marie (Bernadette Peters), mistress of composer Franz Liszt (Julian Sands), in this light-hearted humorous sexual romp.

**Immortal Beloved** (1994) is the story of another musical genius, Ludwig van Beethoven (Gary Oldman). The film creates a narrative around an actual letter found after his death, addressed to the composer's "immortal beloved," to whom he left his entire estate. The story follows Beethoven's secretary, Anton Schindler (Jeroen Krabbé), as he seeks to discover this mysterious person's identity, and the

investigation turns into an exploration of the composer's life. Through recollections and scattered hints, we receive glimpses of Beethoven's relationships with women, particularly his close interaction with a pair of very different countesses: Anna-Marie Erdödy (Isabella Rossellini) and Johanna Reiss (Johanna ter Steege). The film also considers the composer's obsessive relationship with his young nephew, Karl (Marco Hofschneider), and explores Beethoven's eventual hearing loss and descent into emotional instability.

Geoffrey Rush won a Best Actor Oscar for his performance as child piano prodigy David Helfgott in **Shine** (1996). David's musical ambitions generate friction with his overbearing father, Peter (Armin Mueller-Stahl). When David travels to London on a musical scholarship, his career as a pianist blossoms. However, the pressures of his newfound fame, coupled with the echoes of his tumultuous childhood, conspire to bring Helfgott's latent schizophrenia boiling to the surface, and he spends years in and out of various mental institutions. The film received seven Oscar nominations, with the only win going to Rush.

**Nightcap: Merci pour le Chocolat** (French, 2000) is a psychological thriller starring Isabelle Huppert and Jacques Dutronc as married couple Mika and André, the epitome of marital bliss, living a beautiful lavish life in Lausanne, Switzerland. Mika runs a successful chocolate company, while André rehearses marvelous compositions on the piano. They live with André's son Guillaume (Rodolphe Pauly), whose mother died in a car accident and had been Mika's best friend. The family's life is disrupted by the arrival of Jeanne (Anna Mouglalis), a young pianist, who might be André's daughter and who suspects that deep down something is amiss.

Moving to another era in time, we look at Adrien Brody's Oscar-winning performance in **The Pianist** (2003). It is based on the true story of Polish Jew Wladyslaw Szpilman, a classical musician who managed to survive the Holocaust through fate and incredible good luck. It was directed by Roman Polanski, who himself was a Holocaust survivor who survived through the kindness of strangers.

Jamie Foxx as **Ray** (2004) is uncanny in his capturing the physicality of Ray Charles, who was involved in the making of the film until his death in 2004. Two earth-shattering events in his childhood molded Ray's life. When he was five years old, his younger brother drowned in a bath basin; Ray was too emotionally overwhelmed to do anything, and he carried the guilt throughout his life. When he was seven, he went blind, but he refused to use a cane or a seeing-eye dog. He was a shrewd businessman who helped popularize gospel music and moved to the top of the pop and R&B charts. The singing is all Ray himself, but Foxx does a superb job of making us believe we're seeing the genuine article. During filming, Foxx wore a prosthetic device that rendered him blind for as much as 14 hours a day.

**Behind the Candelabra** (2013) dramatizes the last 10 years in the life of world-famous pianist Liberace (Michael Douglas) and the relationship he had with much-younger Scott Thorson (Matt Damon). Wanting to "adopt" Thorson, Liberace employed plastic surgeon Dr. Jack Startz (Rob Lowe in a hilariously tightened face) to make Thorson look more like a son. The relationship deteriorates when Liberace becomes interested in dancer Cary James (Boyd Holbrook) and Thorson becomes addicted to drugs. Debbie Reynolds is delightful as Liberace's mother, Frances. Michael Douglas's head was digitally composited onto the body of Philip Fortenberry for the piano-playing performances. Although both leads were nominated, it was Douglas who won both an Emmy and Golden Globe for his performance.

The film **Green Book** (2018) is a comedy/drama biopic inspired by the true story of a 1962 tour of the Deep South by African-American classical and jazz pianist Dr. Don Shirley (Mahershala Ali)

and Italian-American bouncer Frank "Tony Lip" Vallelonga (Viggo Mortensen), who was hired to be Shirley's driver and bodyguard. When the Copacabana is closed for two months for renovations, Tony accepts the job with the highly educated and snobbish Dr. Shirley, and the two make their journey, wisely following recommendations in "The Negro Motorist Green Book," a guide for safe travel through America's racially segregated states. They have difficulty getting along at first, but each begins to learn from the other. Tony misses his wife, Dolores (Linda Cardellini), very much, and Dr. Shirley begins to help him craft beautiful letters to her. As the two men experience America's atrocious racial injustices on the road, they find a newfound respect for each other, which leads to a life-changing friendship that endured for the rest of their lives. The film was nominated for five Academy Awards, winning for Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay and a second Best Supporting Actor award for the outstanding Mahershala Ali.

**Rocketman** (2019) is a biographical fantasy musical drama film based on the life and career of British musician Elton John (Taron Egerton, who does all the singing). When the film begins, dressed in a flamboyant devil's outfit, he enters an addiction rehabilitation session where he recounts his life in a flashback. Born Reginald Dwight (Matthew Illesley and Kit Connor play the child and adolescent versions), he changes his name to Elton John and collaborates with singer-songwriter Bernie Taupin (Jamie Bell) to become one of the most iconic figures in pop history. He is greatly influenced by music manager John Reid (Richard Madden), who sets him on a downward spiral of addictions to drugs, alcohol, shopping and sex, while at the same time helping raise his career success to new heights. Set to his most beloved songs, this is the epic musical story of Elton John, his breakthrough years in the 1970s, and his fantastical transformation from shy piano prodigy to international superstar.

And until next time, happy viewing. . .

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# PROHIBITION ON CITY ISLAND, PART I

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Bracker's Restaurant at the corner of Pell Place (above) was raided by Federal agents on Labor Day, Sept. 5, 1930, for serving liquor during Prohibition. Seven other bars were also raided, including one on the corner of Carroll Street (above right) and another, now a private house, on the southeast corner of Marine Street (above far right).



Religion and alcohol play significant roles in human civilization, on City Island as well as everywhere else, but historically speaking they have not always worked well together. Although the religion-based Temperance movement began in America in the 1820s, Prohibition didn't become law for 100 years, when the 18th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified on Jan. 16, 1919, and supported by the Volstead act later that year to provide for the enforcement of the amendment.

The 18th amendment, which prohibited the "manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors," was one of several issues advocated by women to improve life for the working class. However, because New York City was home to many ethnic and cultural groups for which liquor was a common bond, the city was slow to accept the new law and even slower to enforce it.

The federal government established the Bureau of Prohibition to crack down on illegal alcohol manufacturing and sales by shutting down distributors and speakeasies. However, the federal agents were poorly trained and easily bribed, and the Roaring Twenties saw the rise of crime families working together to smuggle liquor and operate bars and clubs all over the city. Most neighborhoods in the city managed to provide alcohol, and they developed many clever ways of avoiding arrest.

The City Island community was no exception. During the 1920s, City Island was an attractive tourist spot with restaurants, inns and taverns up and down the avenue, supported by visitors to the Island and by a local population that had swelled dramatically with workers at the boatyards and sailmakers.

### The Big Raid

On Saturday, Aug. 30, 1930, accord-

ing to the New York Times, four federal agents entered Bracker's Inn, located at 139 City Island Avenue. Music was playing and couples were dancing when the agents arrived. Two searched the dining room, and the other two went to the bar and ordered drinks. When one of them announced that they were federal agents, he was shot in the thigh. The other agent disarmed the shooter, who ran out of the building, and the City Island police station was called in and removed the victim to a local hospital.

A week later, on Labor Day, Sept. 5, the Times reported that 15 federal agents closed off City Island to traffic, raided the eight most popular roadhouses and restaurants on City Island, arrested 41 employees and proprietors and "seized considerable quantities of liquor." The agents were "followed from place to place by two large vans, in which they placed their prisoners and the confiscated liquor," attracting large crowds as it went. No restaurants were closed and no patrons were arrested or told to leave. Although the agents found only six bottles of liquor at Brackers, they took 17 prisoners there. All of the arrested individuals were charged at the Westches-

ter police station with violation of the national prohibition act.

The New York Herald Tribune also covered the raid but included some interesting details the Times must have missed, such as the colorful (and highly exaggerated) report that "most of the 10,000 residents of City Island had an enlivening afternoon watching the Federal men dry up for the holiday what has become known as one of the wettest spots in the city." The reporter explained that the federal agent had been shot at Bracker's by Henry Stevens, a trucking agent for Dutch Schultz, an American mobster who made his fortune in the Bronx and Manhattan in organized crime-related activities, including bootlegging and the numbers racket.

Both papers reported that 41 arrests were made at eight "resorts" on the Island, in spite of the fact that there were at least 100 speakeasies here at the time, which may explain why the addresses given by the two papers were somewhat different. The Times gave the addresses as 176 Fordham Street, 210 Carroll Street and six places on City Island Avenue (86, 139, 212, 250, 259 and 536). Most of these addresses are no longer valid: 176 Fordham does not exist; 210 Carroll is the Boatyard Condominium; 86 CIA is the Chinese restaurant; 139, Brackers, is now a row of apartment buildings; 212 does not exist as a separate building but may have been the build-

Continued on page 14

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# Obituaries

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

## John A. Martin

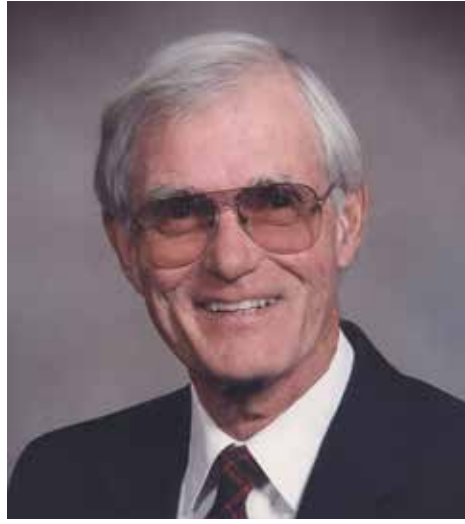
John A. Martin, a former resident of City Island, passed away on Jan. 10, 2023, at the age of 100 at his home in Newton, NJ.

Born in Bronx on Dec. 15, 1922, to John A. Martin Sr. and Jessica (née Rolfe) Martin, John Jr., better known as Jack, grew up on City Island with his brother, Robert Martin.

Jack worked for Western Electric in Manhattan and enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps in December 1942. After receiving basic training in Salt Lake City, he arrived at Hickam Field, Oahu, where he eventually was put ashore on the island of Guam installing radios on B29s. Discharged in 1946, Jack returned home to City Island, where he married another Islander, Dorothy Leuck; they moved to Whitestone, where they raised two children.

He loved doing his part in maintaining the beach at Boosters and considered that his time spent on a beach anywhere was time well spent. Jack was a good-natured, even-tempered, fun-loving father, grandfather and great grandfather who was always there to lend a hand.

He was predeceased by his wife, Dot, in 2021 and his grandson Jesse Tedesco in 2003. He is survived by his daughter, Suzanne, and her husband, Michael Capps; his son Steven and his wife, Eva Martin; his granddaughter Jenny Tedesco and his great grandson, Cody Leisner.



## Herbert W. McDaniel

Clam digger Herbert McDaniel passed away on Feb. 17, 2023, in Long Beach, CA, at the age of 100.

He was born on Nov. 10, 1922, on City Island to William and Lucretia McDaniel. He grew up in a house of Marine Street that had been moved by mules from the Robert Jacob boatyard. He attended P.S. 17 along with his older brother, William.

Herbert's father was captain of the *Arbus*, a water boat that transported water and ice to the yachts in City Island Harbor. Sometimes during summer vacation, Herbert would help his father and brother on the boat, which would load up more than 6,000 one-pound blocks of ice and 5,000 gallons of fresh water and transport them to yachts anchored off City Island. In 1984, Herbert participated in an oral history program at the City Island Nautical Museum, and his entertaining recollections of his father's business, which took place during Prohibition, are on the video in the museum library.

When he was 19 years old, Herbert McDaniel enlisted in the United States Coast Guard and served in the Normandy invasion and in Japan during World War II. He met his wife, Barbara, at a USO dance, and they were married for 69 years. Herbert and his father were members of the Masonic

Temple on City Island. His brother built wooden boats here on City Island, and his wife, Natalie, was a sail maker at Ratsey's. Herbert himself worked until his retirement at General Telephone Company after moving to California.

Herbert McDaniel was predeceased by his wife, Barbara May; his sister, Marian; his son Scott and great granddaughter LaBree Lemina Tuinei. He is survived by his daughter, Debra (Dee) Ann Hall; his son, Roy McDaniel; granddaughters Alisha Tuinei Samuels and Asia Watson (Borris); great grandchildren Lavasier Taulaai Tuinei, Duane James Anderson Jr., Destiny Murray (Kyle) and Jada Stewart.



## Frances Carrollo

Frances Carrollo, who was a teacher for many years on City Island, passed away on Jan. 3, 2023, at the age of 78.

She was born in Queens on Oct. 20, 1944, to Anna and Frank Carrollo, who moved the family to the Bronx when she was six years old. An only child, she had close relatives nearby, including her cousin Frances Matura, who still lives on City Island.

Fran Carrollo graduated from Preston High School, St. John's University and City College. She was drawn to teaching as a

career and began student teaching at P.S. 97, where she also had her first substitute job. She was sent to a conference at P.S. 17 on City Island and fell in love with the community.

When her substitute job ended, Fran went to the District 11 office for job placement, and there was a job opening on City Island. She couldn't believe how lucky she was, and she felt the same way until she retired in 2003. Fran realized that it was time to retire when she found herself teaching the children of children who had been in her class.

She always loved City Island, the children and the parents and the other teachers in the school. She told her colleague Angela Adler, who wrote a piece for *The Current* when she retired that "she was delighted to watch the children grow during their first year in school and the traditions they established together, such as the Night Before Christmas, the Halloween parade and the kindergarten graduation."

Upon her retirement, Fran moved to Heritage Hills in Somers, NY, and made a life for herself in this rural setting away from the city. She also enjoyed spending weekends and summers on the South Shore of Long Island.

Fran Carrollo is survived by her cousins, Frances Maturro of City Island, Lynn Calta of Eastchester, NY, Lauren Calta of Los Angeles and her partner, Anthony Aiello of Somers. She will be dearly missed by her entire family.

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HH = hours; MM = minutes  
*Tide chart by Tom Smith*

| APRIL 2023 |       |        |       |        |       |        |       |        |      |        |
|------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|
| DAY        | TIME  | HEIGHT | TIME  | HEIGHT | TIME  | HEIGHT | TIME  | HEIGHT | DAY  |        |
|            | HH:MM | FEET   | HH:MM | FEET   | HH:MM | FEET   | HH:MM | FEET   |      |        |
| 26         | Wed   | 0429   | 6.92  | 1129   | 1.27  | 1740   | 6.45  | 2255   | 1.83 | Wed 26 |
| 27         | Thu   | 0546   | 6.68  | 1229   | 1.54  | 1844   | 6.49  |        |      | Thu 27 |
| 28         | Fri   | 0023   | 2.01  | 0702   | 6.60  | 1327   | 1.64  | 1942   | 6.65 | Fri 28 |
| 29         | Sat   | 0143   | 1.93  | 0804   | 6.65  | 1419   | 1.58  | 2033   | 6.88 | Sat 29 |
| 30         | Sun   | 0241   | 1.67  | 0855   | 6.77  | 1504   | 1.42  | 2118   |      | Sun 30 |
| MAY 2023   |       |        |       |        |       |        |       |        |      |        |
| 01         | Mon   | 0329   | 1.30  | 0940   | 6.89  | 1542   | 1.20  | 2154   | 7.33 | Mon 01 |
| 02         | Tue   | 0410   | 0.90  | 1017   | 6.99  | 1612   | 0.96  | 2220   | 7.54 | Tue 02 |
| 03         | Wed   | 0447   | 0.49  | 1046   | 7.08  | 1639   | 0.71  | 2241   | 7.79 | Wed 03 |
| 04         | Thu   | 0520   | 0.13  | 1111   | 7.17  | 1710   | 0.49  | 2311   | 8.06 | Thu 04 |
| 05         | Fri   | 0554   | -0.16 | 1143   | 7.26  | 1747   | 0.33  | 2347   | 8.29 | Fri 05 |
| 06         | Sat   | 0632   | -0.34 | 1222   | 7.31  | 1827   | 0.27  |        |      | Sat 06 |
| 07         | Sun   | 0028   | 8.43  | 0713   | -0.37 | 1304   | 7.31  | 1911   | 0.34 | Sun 07 |
| 08         | Mon   | 0112   | 8.44  | 0759   | -0.27 | 1352   | 7.24  | 1959   | 0.52 | Mon 08 |
| 09         | Tue   | 0200   | 8.30  | 0850   | -0.04 | 1444   | 7.12  | 2052   | 0.78 | Tue 09 |
| 10         | Wed   | 0254   | 8.02  | 0949   | 0.25  | 1543   | 6.98  | 2154   | 1.05 | Wed 10 |
| 11         | Thu   | 0354   | 7.65  | 1104   | 0.51  | 1654   | 6.92  | 2315   | 1.22 | Thu 11 |
| 12         | Fri   | 0507   | 7.30  | 1228   | 0.60  | 1827   | 7.04  |        |      | Fri 12 |
| 13         | Sat   | 0057   | 1.08  | 0648   | 7.15  | 1339   | 0.50  | 1943   | 7.36 | Sat 13 |
| 14         | Sun   | 0211   | 0.65  | 0811   | 7.26  | 1440   | 0.29  | 2043   | 7.75 | Sun 14 |
| 15         | Mon   | 0314   | 0.12  | 0913   | 7.42  | 1535   | 0.07  | 2137   | 8.09 | Mon 15 |
| 16         | Tue   | 0410   | -0.37 | 1007   | 7.55  | 1626   | -0.10 | 2226   | 8.33 | Tue 16 |
| 17         | Wed   | 0501   | -0.72 | 1057   | 7.60  | 1713   | -0.17 | 2312   | 8.45 | Wed 17 |
| 18         | Thu   | 0549   | -0.89 | 1144   | 7.56  | 1758   | -0.11 | 2355   | 8.43 | Thu 18 |
| 19         | Fri   | 0635   | -0.86 | 1228   | 7.45  | 1839   | 0.06  |        |      | Fri 19 |
| 20         | Sat   | 0035   | 8.30  | 0719   | -0.65 | 1311   | 7.29  | 1916   | 0.33 | Sat 20 |
| 21         | Sun   | 0114   | 8.09  | 0801   | -0.31 | 1352   | 7.12  | 1948   | 0.64 | Sun 21 |
| 22         | Mon   | 0149   | 7.84  | 0840   | 0.11  | 1432   | 6.96  | 2014   | 0.96 | Mon 22 |
| 23         | Tue   | 0223   | 7.56  | 0916   | 0.54  | 1513   | 6.82  | 2044   | 1.25 | Tue 23 |
| 24         | Wed   | 0259   | 7.29  | 0946   | 0.93  | 1554   | 6.73  | 2123   | 1.51 | Wed 24 |
| 25         | Thu   | 0339   | 7.04  | 1013   | 1.22  | 1641   | 6.68  | 2210   | 1.71 | Thu 25 |
| 26         | Fri   | 0426   | 6.81  | 1051   | 1.42  | 1732   | 6.68  | 2304   | 1.82 | Fri 26 |
| 27         | Sat   | 0520   | 6.63  | 1137   | 1.52  | 1825   | 6.76  |        |      | Sat 27 |
| 28         | Sun   | 0004   | 1.80  | 0622   | 6.52  | 1227   | 1.52  | 1913   | 6.89 | Sun 28 |
| 29         | Mon   | 0111   | 1.62  | 0726   | 6.51  | 1319   | 1.42  | 1954   | 7.09 | Mon 29 |
| 30         | Tue   | 0216   | 1.32  | 0820   | 6.56  | 1409   | 1.24  | 2032   | 7.34 | Tue 30 |
| 31         | Wed   | 0311   | 0.93  | 0907   | 6.67  | 1458   | 1.02  | 2112   | 7.63 | Wed 31 |



**What's That Digital Bird in the Sky?**

Although nothing beats being out in the field for being a better birder, especially during spring migration, there are a few amazing digital tools out there from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology that we thought we would bring to the attention of readers. They are definitely not meant to take the place of actual looking and listening. Rather, if used properly, they can make the experience of the great outdoors even greater.

First, there is eBird, the place we go to online to learn what other birders are finding in our area. Among other things, it's where registered users upload lists of what they have seen and where. Each bird on a list is automatically linked to pictures and pinpoint descriptions, which often include other similar species—a feature we especially appreciate. Here is a link to the Cornell Lab's Intro to eBird video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-0xAjxakw>

For birders who want a better sense of what real-time birding can be like, the Cornell Lab has developed what they call a Birdcast Migration Dashboard. This is where to go for a sense of what species of bird and how many are in the air heading to a specific area. In the past, birders used the weather for this sense, now they can use both. Here is a link to a Dash-

board demo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpQ3rFlxTQE>

One of the most challenging aspects of bird identification in the field is making sense of aural clues. Most of us can identify a woodpecker by the rat-a-tat-tat sound as it plunges after concealed insects in trees. But what about the difference between the call of a red-bellied woodpecker and a red-headed? Cornell has this covered, too. It's called Merlin Bird ID. Users can simply turn their smart phones toward the unidentified sound and have it identified. Seeing is believing on this one. Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmSUOLxyatY>

One criticism of the Merlin Bird ID app that we are aware of is that it takes up too much of a device's memory. If that is the case, then the Macaulay Library is another, less voluminous digital option. The Macaulay Library is where administrators at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology collect the sights and sounds of birds in the field from users for users. It's the perfect place to go for video of individual species producing some of their most common calls. Here is the YouTube link to the Library's Video Essential Set: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgSpqOFjITa6CIX5xdRXwMI0nugvqqNUJ>

None of these digital tools will ever take the place of the Birding by Ear CDs we still keep in the car. And they certainly aren't meant to take the place of being in the field. Not theoretically, anyway.



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# In The Garden

By MARY COLBY



Photo by MARY COLBY

A July perennial combination in my garden: cornus elegantissima, red crocosmia Lucifer, rudbeckia goldsturm, and white phlox David.

## Plants and Plant Combinations between Spring and Summer

This is the mid season of the gardening year. The daffodils, hellebores and small bulbs have gone. The month of May is flowering time for many well loved and important shrubs. To know how to utilize them in combination with groundcover and perennials is a practice to which gardeners the world over aspire.

Azaleas and rhododendrons begin their lavish display from mid-April to mid-May, and some creeping woodland phlox would make blue pools beneath these shrubs. Now you have a picture. For that is what you are doing when timing the bloom of things near

each other: you are basically painting with plants.

Under some hollies (and I suggest you use the variety "Nellie Stevens" as it produces berries without a mate), you could plant white flowering sweet woodruff. It is a great colonizer and spreader about two inches high. Into this picture you might add a male or a lady fern with a variegated Solomon's seal to extend the interest of the bed, because the ferns last until the frost. This combination is best in half shade. What good is a garden without some ferns, I wonder?

The king of shrubs are the viburnums. The doublefile viburnum, although not for a

small garden, is breathtaking. When it opens its flat lacy discs, every inch of branch is clothed in dazzling white. There are dwarf viburnums available; one is called "popcorn."

A good choice for a part-shade to sun garden is the guelder rose, which is also in the viburnum tribe. The flower balls start out a desirable chartreuse green and open to white pompoms amid crinkly green foliage, growing up to 15 feet high. This shrub is very famous, an old, treasured garden plant. I saw them at Lowes Garden Center last year. It is also known as the snowball tree or viburnum opulus. Under this shrub you could plant white candy tuft or, in more shade, tiarella.

All green hostas don't mind full shade, but the variegated ones need sun. These can be grown around oak leaf hydrangeas or a nice shrub called enkianthus, which blooms with tiny bell-shaped white and carmine flowers. If you have room, the bottle brush buckeye is an amazing shrub for shade and is enhanced by the planting of ferns. The two belong together.

Moving on to the hot dry garden, I must say first that you would be surprised at how many incredible plants want and flourish in this situation. If your soil is dry and undernourished, leave it be. You could amend it a bit with composted manure and leaf mold, but don't use too much. Here are some options that will save you a lot of time and

maintenance.

For May plant from seed or beg a seedling of the fabulous euphorbia characias wulfenii. Its immense yellowish green heads begin in late April and run through June. It is a subshrub and does not like to be moved, since it has a taproot. You can see them now at Barbara D.'s house. When the flower heads become tattered, put on a pair of gloves and prune them right down to the bottom. The bluish leaves take over and are beautiful all year long. The only enemy to this plant is heavy snow. Pair it with small grasses such as blue fescue and California poppies, which are easy to grow from seed. Lavender, broom, lamb's ears, rock rose, shrubby phlomis, yucca filamentosa, artemisia and rosemary are all plants that do not require water after the first year, but try to limit yourself to a few plants repeated throughout the garden. Pare down your selection to a few kinds that give the impression of spontaneity or a natural effect, which is so rarely achieved by most gardeners. One last combo I love for May in full sun is ox eye daisy, iris, alliums and oriental poppies. Monet happened to like this combination too!

You can visit Mary, in her studio-gallery at 276 City Island Avenue, on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. She is available for consultation, garden plans and installation. Call 917-804-4509.

## Prohibition

Continued from page 11

ing where architect Robert King has his office; 250 is now A Taste of Italy; 259 was formerly Fritz's Cafe (now a private house with a Carroll Street address); 536 CIA was Thwaites Shore House but is now Archie's Tap and Table. The Tribune reported Bracker's and Thwaite's but also Frank's (probably Fritz's) at 259 CIA; the Sea Food Inn (formerly Weissker's Café) at 265 CIA (now an empty office building), the Marine Restaurant at 88 City Island Avenue (now a private house), and the Lobster Palace and Ruitz's, no address given.

Although I could find no evidence, Island tradition holds that two of the bars

on the Island that were not raided in 1930 included the private house at the end of Bay Street, which was allegedly a "dock and drink" establishment. One clamdigger remembers that the house at 128 City Island Avenue had bar in the a living room that could serve dozens of drinkers. As Bronx historian Tom Vasti notes, many private houses served as informal bars where booze flowed freely to those in the know.

Next month's *Current* will reveal more intriguing information about Prohibition on City Island, from the temperance movement in the 19th century to the recollections of Island residents with inside information about this historic era.

*Cormac McEnery, Esq.*

**Kerry A. Dinneen, Esq.**

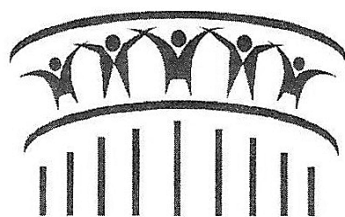
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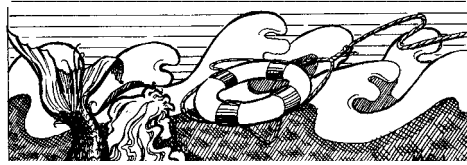
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## Energetic Easter Sale!



Photo by KAREN NANI

Scouts and leaders from City Island's Troop 211 were busy over Easter weekend 2023 selling lilies, azaleas, daffodils and other beautiful flowers at their annual Plant Sale from April 6 to 8 in front of Trinity United Methodist Church. Shown above are scouts (l. to r.) Jake Diaz, Joseph Penny, James Clancy, Cassius Walker, Matthew Clancy, Malcolm Walker and Owen Delaney flanked by Assistant Scoutmasters Jeremy Filomil and Victor Lopez.

## REALITY PARENTING

By JOHN SCARDINA, Certified School Psychologist

How do we prepare our children for a world that seems to be spinning out of control? War, climate change, gun violence, identity politics, and the threats to democracy around the globe: how can parents help to create solutions?

These are questions parents face today, and here are some thoughts:

- **Begin with yourself:** How are you dealing with the news? What helps you to cope with the daily barrage of negative messages? Find your safe space, your inner peace, and begin there.

- **Let your children ask questions as they come up:** School shootings are especially difficult for children, and they will want to know if they are safe. Be honest, affirming and age-appropriate.

- **Let your family values inform your conversation:** What are your belief about war, violence, reproductive rights and climate change? Are they informed by a faith practice? Do you have a "circle of friends" who can be models and resources for your children?

- **Take action:** Demonstrate your beliefs to your children by taking action with them. Support organizations that promote your beliefs. Vote. Let your children come up with fundraising ideas (a lemonade stand or a yard sale perhaps) and have them deliver the funds. Stock up the community fridge. Put a sign in your yard.

- **Choose hope over despair:** Children read our emotions all of the time. Find hope and be a beacon when things are tough.

## City Island Culinary Club

By KENNY SELESKY

Hello and greetings from the Culinary Club, March left us with the luck of the Irish and a feast of Irish favorites, featuring corned beef, cabbage, Irish soda bread and an Irish cheese board featuring Dubliner and Skellig cheeses. We also had boxty, a traditional Irish potato pancake, as well as homemade warm Irish apple cake.

In April we explored Greek cooking and recipes. We truly encourage anyone who is interested to drop in and join us Monday, May 1 and 15, at 7 p.m. at the City Island Community Center, 190 Fordham Street. Happy cooking to all.

Here is the recipe for the boxty. An old Irish rhyme goes: "Boxty on the griddle, boxty on the pan; if you can't make boxty, you'll never get a man."

### Irish Boxty

#### Ingredients

1 ½ cups grated raw potatoes

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup leftover mashed potatoes
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon skim milk
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup olive oil

#### Directions

Step 1. Toss the grated potatoes with flour in a large bowl. Add the mashed potatoes and stir until combined.

Step 2. Whisk egg and milk together in a separate bowl and mix into the potatoes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Step 3. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Drop in potato mixture, forming patties about two inches in diameter. Fry on both sides until golden brown, three to four minutes per side. Drain on a plate lined with paper towel. Serve warm.

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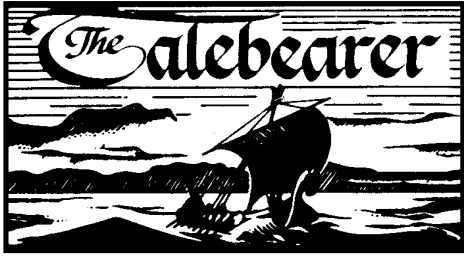
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Buckley Street's newest resident, David Joseph Hennessy, was born in February 2023.



Ditmars Street's newest resident, Miles Nicholas Pollack, was born on March 25, 2023.

In February, proud big sister Molly and her parents, Buckley Street's David and Christina Hennessy, welcomed baby David Joseph (Joe). Baby David Joseph is named for his grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great grandfather.

Nancy and Nick Lotrionte are thrilled to announce the birth of their third grandchild, Miles Nicholas, born on Grandpa's birthday, March 25. Proud parents are Nicolette and Andrew of Ditmars Street. Big brother, Wyatt, and big sister, Sydney, are so excited about the addition to their family. Aunts Jillian and Briana are spoiling him already. Grandparents Mary and Bruce Pollack of San Clemente, CA, can't wait to meet their new bundle of joy.

Hooray for Islanders Gwen Boyle and Sarah Goonan, who are members of the Maria Regina High School Cheer Team. The team captured the Silver Medal in the 2023 National Cheer Competition in Orlando, FL, on Feb. 12, 2023. Go, Team! Best wishes for a lifetime of happiness



Photo by HEATHER BOYLE

Islanders Gwen Boyle and Sarah Goonan were part of the Silver Medal team from Maria Regina High School at the 2023 National Cheer Competition in Orlando, FL.

to Emily Sexton and Christian Torres, who celebrated their engagement in March with a trip to Paris. Emily is a pediatric nurse at Blythedale, and Christian is a respiratory therapist at Elizabeth Seton.

Happiest of birthdays to Patrice Ortega, who celebrates her big day on May 28.

Happy 33rd anniversary on May 12 to the Sailmaker's John and Judy Iovieno, with love from the Swieciki and Iovieno families.

And a very HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY on May 14 to all our hardworking mothers and grandmothers. Enjoy your special day!  
Maria Swieciki

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Islander Emily Sexton and Christian Torres celebrated their engagement in March 2023.

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