

# The Island Current

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One Dollar

## Injured Island Teen Returns Home

By KAREN NANI



Emily Sexton at Blythedale Children's Hospital before her return home.

Fordham Street resident Emily Sexton, who was injured in a horrific drunk driving accident on Nov. 13, 2010, returned to City Island for the first time on Jan. 24, 2011, to the delight of her family and friends. She had spent the previous 10 weeks in the surgical ICU of Jacobi Medical Center and then at Blythedale Children's Hospital for rehabilitation.

Emily's recovery from the severe injuries she received when a pick-up truck pinned her to a building on City Island Avenue near Fordham Street has been amazing, according to those who visited during her hospital stays. "I have taken to calling her 'Wonder Woman,' for that is exactly what she is: a living, breathing miracle who has consistently surpassed everyone's wildest dreams and expectations," said Reverend Patricia Alexander of Grace Church, where Emily was baptized.

Her parents, Harlan and David Sexton, credit the efforts of the trauma team at Jacobi with saving Emily's life, especially Dr. Sheldon Teperman (her trauma surgeon), Dr. Jose Toro (her orthopedic surgeon) and Lynette Excondo (her nurse). They performed three surgeries over a six-week period to stop internal bleeding and to reconstruct Emily's pelvis, which had been crushed by the truck. She also had a broken left arm, damage to the radial nerve and leg wounds. Thankfully, Emily did not sustain any head injuries, spinal cord damage or paralysis.

On Jan. 3, 2011, Emily walked for the first time at Blythedale with the help of a walker and some pain medication. Witnesses to the event reported that "Emily got up and walked forward six floor tiles and back again! She is fully weight-bearing (pelvis and arm) on her left side, and she can support 20 pounds on her right; she's about three weeks out from being completely weight-bearing."

The support from the City Island community has been remarkable. Sunday morning after the accident found many Islanders praying for her survival in a remarkable show of community spirit and support for this resilient 17-year-old, who is a senior at Preston High School. The Grace Church

Connection, led by Pat Parker, organized meal delivery for the Sexton family, including Emily's brother, Gregory, who was across the street when the accident took place. Islanders of all faiths and backgrounds stepped up to help out by providing dozens of dinners for the Sextons, who spent most of their days at the hospital.

Even more indicative of the caring nature of this community was the turnout for a blood drive held on Dec. 6, 2010, in honor of Emily, who required 20 units of blood while she was at Jacobi. Organized by Island resident Nancy Valentine-Adams with the New York Blood Center, the drive began at 3 p.m. in the Grace Church parish hall and was supposed to end at 8 p.m. More than 150 Islanders and off-Islanders turned out, however, and the medical team did not leave until midnight so that they did not have to turn anyone away.

Leslie Gonzalez from the New York Blood Center told *The Current*, "the blood drive in honor of Emily yielded 138 units, enough to aid 374 patients in need. By comparison, we consider 30 units to be a successful drive!"

Potential donors lined up early to give blood during the drive, which was extremely well organized. Emily's classmates from Preston High School, under the supervision of teacher Margaret Damo, welcomed everyone and directed them through the process. Among the many donors were Captain Russell Green, commanding officer of the 45th Precinct, and several officers, including the arresting officer at the scene of the accident, Benjamin Zonis. Island dentist Jed Berman, for whom Emily has worked after school, closed his office and came with his staff to donate. Teachers from P.S. 175, where Emily attended elementary school, lined up after dismissal to give blood, and many more neighbors and friends of all ages turned out to the gratitude of Emily's family (see Letter to the Editor this issue).

The accident on Nov. 13 is still under investigation. Emily had been walking with two friends on the sidewalk to the bus stop just north of Fordham Street. Suddenly a white Ford truck headed south on the



Photos by PATRICIA ALEXANDER and EYVONNE BAKER

The New York Blood Center held a drive on Dec. 6, 2010, in honor of accident victim and Fordham Street resident Emily Sexton. She was severely injured by a drunk driver on Nov. 13 and required 20 units of blood at Jacobi Medical Center. More than 150 Island residents and friends came to Grace Church Parish Hall to donate blood, including *Island Current* editor Karen Nani (above left), arresting officer Benjamin Zonis (above right), and many others. Donors were greeted by Emily's classmates from Preston High School (bottom photo): Julia Doyle, Kelly Bloom, Lauren Murphy, Taylor Ventrella, Heather Lynch, Lauren Mueller and Tiffany Meillilo. Emily returned home for the first time on Jan. 24.



avenue turned just before the stoplight and sped into the precise spot where Emily was standing. It was moving so fast that she had no chance to escape, and eyewitnesses told *The Current* that it is a miracle she was not killed. Both Emily and the driver, who allegedly broke a leg in the accident, were taken by ambulance to Jacobi Medical Center. Doctors worked through the night to stop the internal bleeding that was threatening Emily's life.

Witnesses reported that the man driving the truck, a former Island resident named Peter Wolfman, 40, had been at the Library Bar before the accident. Although he refused to take a breathalyzer test at the

scene, a blood alcohol test was performed at Jacobi soon after the accident and exceeded the legal limit.

Mr. Wolfman was arrested at the scene and was indicted and arraigned on the indictment on Dec. 20 on several counts, including vehicular assault, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, reckless driving and reckless endangerment in the first degree. He remains in jail at Rikers Island, held on \$250,000 bail or \$150,000 bond, and is due back in court on March 22, 2011, according to the Bronx District Attorney's office. The case is still

Continued on page 5

## LADDER 53 TO STAY OPEN ON CITY ISLAND

By BARBARA DOLENSEK

At this time every year, Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council begin to talk about the drastic cuts that will have to be made in the city budget, but this year they reached an agreement early on to keep 20 fire companies from being closed at night, including Ladder 53 on City Island.

Although City Island's ladder company was never mentioned by name in the speculation leading up to the agreement, it appears nearly every year on the chopping block, to be saved at the last moment after public protests, pressure from the fire-

fighters' unions and hard work by Council Member James Vacca.

Mr. Vacca was especially pleased with the decision, especially because the city had responded so inadequately to the blizzard on Dec. 26, 2010. "Imagine if we had 20 companies closed in New York City during the response to the snowstorm in December," he told the *Bronx Times*. "I was one of the members of the City Council who fought hard against this cut, and I hope this matter never rears its ugly head again."

**BRIEFLY...**

**FRIDAY NIGHT MOVIES:** The City Island Community Center invites you to join your friends and neighbors for a night at the cinema in the first of our monthly Friday Night Movie series. The program will begin on Friday, Feb. 11, with the American comedy classic and 1959 Academy Award-winner "Some Like it Hot," starring Marilyn Monroe, Jack Lemmon and the Bronx's own Tony Curtis. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., and the film will be screened at 7 p.m. sharp! Tickets are \$2 and concessions will be available. The Community Center is located at 190 Fordham Street. For more information please e-mail [BxShanley@optonline.net](mailto:BxShanley@optonline.net) or call 917-721-8747.

**BLOOD DRIVE,** sponsored by the Masons, will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 8, between 3:30 and 8 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 113 Bay Street, at City Island Avenue. Almost anyone between the ages of 17 and 75, weighing a minimum of 110 pounds and in good general health, can be a blood donor. Photo or signature ID and Social Security number are required at the time of donation.

**CITY ISLAND LITTLE LEAGUE REGISTRATION** will take place on two Saturdays, Feb. 12 and 19, at the American Legion Hall at 550 City Island Avenue, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, for boys and girls ages 4 to 14. Bring a copy of the player's birth certificate. For more information, call Kristin McConaghy at 914-258-5887 or e-mail her at [mem7502@yahoo.com](mailto:mem7502@yahoo.com).

**WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH** will be celebrated on Sunday, March 13, at the City Island Community Center, 190 Fordham Street, with a special celebration of Anne Hutchinson's 420th birthday. To volunteer or for more information, call Violet Smith at 718-885-0978 or Toby Liederman at 718-885-3423.

**THE CITY ISLAND SAIL AND POWER SQUADRON** will offer the America's Boating Course at the City Island Yacht Club, 63 Pilot Street, beginning March 1 at 7 p.m. Topics include fundamentals of safe boating, navigation rules and piloting techniques. The course material cost is \$75; instruction is free. For more information or to register, call Jim Duffy at 718-863-3855 (please do not call after 9 pm).

**ASPCA SPAY/NEUTER VAN ON CITY ISLAND:** On Tuesday, Feb. 22, beginning at 7:30 a.m. the ASPCA will bring a van to 320 City Island Avenue (in front of the library) to spay and neuter all stray or feral cats that have been rescued or caught by Island residents. There will be room for only 28 cats, so call Yolanda Cirulli at 718-885-3128 to get on the list or for information about handling feral cats.

**NIGHT WATCH,** a thriller by Lucille Fletcher, will be presented by the City Island Theater Group over two weekends opening on Feb. 25. Set in Manhattan in the early 1970s, the story begins when a young woman, Elaine Wheeler, sees (or thinks she sees) through her window a dead body in a neighboring apartment. But the police find no evidence, and when Elaine sees another body, they pay no attention to her. The plot thickens (of course) as her terror mounts and those around her think she is having a nervous breakdown. Performances will take place at Grace Church Parish Hall, 116 City Island Avenue at Pilot Street, on Feb. 25 and 26 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 27 at 3 p.m.; March 3, 4, and 5 at 8 p.m. For advance tickets, call 718-885-3066 or e-mail [tickets@cityislandtheatergroup.com](mailto:tickets@cityislandtheatergroup.com). Don't miss it!

**WARRIORS FOOTBALL REGISTRATION:** Registration for flag and tackle football in the Bronx Warrior Football League will be at Lehman High School (3000 E. Tremont Avenue) on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, Feb. 14, 15 and 17 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. All divisions are co-ed. Ages for flag football are five to seven with no weight limit. Ages for tackle divisions are: Mites (7 to 9), Pee Wee (10 to 11) and Junior (12 to 13). Participants should enter Lehman from the main entrance and should bring a copy of their birth certificate. Registrants should be accompanied by an adult. Costs are \$140 (flag) and \$160 (tackle). For additional information call Jerry Demers at 718-829-7574.

**45 BLOTTER**

**Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during December 2010 and January 2011. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list.**

- 1 – FELONY THEFT OF SERVICES
- 1 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
- 1 – BURGLARY
- 1 – ASSAULT
- 2 – LEAVING THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT
- 1 – DWI

Police provided details on the following incidents for the period from Dec. 1, 2010, to Jan. 15, 2011.

12/4 – At 2:30 a.m., a driver was found intoxicated in his car on City Island Avenue. Police from the 45th Precinct arrested the off-Island male and charged him with driving while intoxicated (DWI).

12/6 – Around midnight on City Island Avenue, an assault was reported at a local restaurant. A female perpetrator allegedly struck another patron with a ketchup bottle.

12/11 – A vehicle struck another vehicle on Carroll Street, causing damage. The driver fled the scene of the accident.

12/16 – A burglary was reported on Bowne Street at 2:30 p.m. Unknown person(s) entered a residence through a side entrance and removed money, computers and jewelry without the owner's consent. The incident is under investigation.


12/21 – At 11:30 p.m., a tractor trailer making a turn struck a street sign and hit the fence of a home on Bridge Street, causing damage. The truck driver fled the scene of the accident.

1/1 – A theft of services (felony) was reported at a local restaurant when patrons failed to pay a bill of more than \$600.

1/14 – The display window of Gabrielle's at 312 City Island Avenue was smashed in an act of criminal mischief.

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Photo by BOB BERENT

Rabbi Shohama Wiener and the congregation of Temple Beth-El of City Island welcomed members of the Bethesda Baptist Church of New Rochelle and their pastor, Dr. Allen Weaver, to a special Friday night service on the eve of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday on Jan. 14, 2011. Here Rabbi Wiener and the rabbinic intern, David Markus, share the story of crossing the Red Sea and escaping from slavery in Egypt with Dr. Weaver and guests as they look on at the Torah (some for the first time). A very inspirational evening was highlighted with several songs by the church's sanctuary choir and Dr. Weaver's reading from the Old Testament. Members of both congregations called it an extraordinary evening.

# CITY ISLAND WELCOMES NEW LIBRARIAN

By MIRIAM KLEINBERG

The reason Vershell Wigfall became a librarian is that she is a real bibliophile: a person who loves books. She doesn't like to read books on some kind of screen; she wants to hold the book in her hands, especially if it's a new volume and she is the first person to read it. What she loves are "new, fresh books." When she talks about books, her whole face lights up, and she is totally enthusiastic, the perfect attitude for a librarian.

Ms. Wigfall was born in Manhattan and grew up in the Bronx. She earned her undergraduate degree in social work from the College of New Rochelle and her MS



Vershell Wigfall

in library science from Pratt Institute and Queens College. Ms. Wigfall has worked at various locations for the New York Public Library since 1985, most recently at the Inwood Library, from December 2009 to September 2010. She now lives in Mount Vernon with her husband, who works for the New York Mets, and a 16-year-old daughter.

When asked how she likes City Island, Ms. Wigfall says: "This is the happiest I've been since I've been with the NYPL. This area is so awesome. The clientele that comes here gives a warm welcoming feeling."

She plans to continue some existing programs at the City Island branch and to initiate some new ones. Toddler Time and bimonthly history lectures with Jerry McCue will continue, but on Friday afternoons there will now be Tween Time for youngsters from 11 to 18, and free movies for everyone on Saturday afternoons. All events include refreshments, because Ms. Wigfall loves to feed people.

For years people from all over have come to visit the City Island Library—by boat, car, bus, train, even on foot and bicycle. They come to use the boat collection, which is said to be the largest in the city. They also come because they feel safe and comfortable and just like to be here. Ms. Wigfall plans to invite guest speakers to lecture on various subjects, such as City Island history, as well as other topics of interest.

The topic of interest that is getting the most attention right now is the 100th birthday of the City Island branch, which takes place this year, the same birthday as that being celebrated by the New York Public Library itself. Researchers are now busily finding the exact date the City Island branch opened, and their findings will be published in a future issue of *The Island Current*.

Ms. Wigfall plans to ask children on the Island to submit drawings of what they think the first branch looked like. (Hint: It actually looked like a grocery store, not a horse-drawn bookmobile.) If no one can find the exact date, Ms. Wigfall will choose a day in good weather and designate that as our library's official birthday, much as they celebrate the Queen's birthday in England no matter what the real date is. Ms. Wigfall is planning a celebration for the birthday party.

On Jan. 6 *The Daily News* published an article about the City Island branch, and Channel 12 also aired a segment about the branch's birthday. *The Bronx Times* is also planning to visit the City Island Library and interview the staff here.

All libraries are special, but the City Island Library is more special than most because of its intimacy, the helpfulness of the staff and the enthusiasm of our new librarian. Ms. Wigfall says she plans to retire from here, and we wish her many years of success in our second centennial.

## Snow Removal Laws

Because there has been unusually heavy snowfall this winter, and because many residents may not be aware of the Department of Sanitation regulations, please make a note of the following:

**Every owner, lessee, tenant, occupant, or other person having charge of any lot or building must clean snow and/or ice from the sidewalk within 4 hours after the snow has stopped falling, or by 11 a.m. if the snow has stopped falling after 9 p.m. the previous evening. Snow may NOT be thrown into the street.**

**If the snow or ice becomes frozen so hard that it cannot be removed, the sidewalk may be strewn with ashes, sand, sawdust, or similar suitable material within the same time limits. The sidewalk must be thoroughly cleaned as soon as the weather permits.**

**FINES: \$100 to \$150 for the first offense  
\$150 to \$350 for the second offense  
\$250 to \$350 for third and subsequent offenses**

It has been brought to *The Current's* attention that a number of property owners, many of them non-residents, disregard these laws with regularity, leaving the sidewalks in a dangerous condition for pedestrians. Many of those who do shovel throw the snow into the street, where it freezes and causes dangerous conditions for drivers.

Residents who are aware of offending property owners may report them to the City Island Civic Association, which will alert them to the consequences of ignoring the laws. Send the name and address to [cityisland.civic@mac.com](mailto:cityisland.civic@mac.com). Anyone who wishes to report repeat offenders may, of course, call 311 to lodge a complaint. If you do so, please forward the complaint number to the Civic Association for follow-up.

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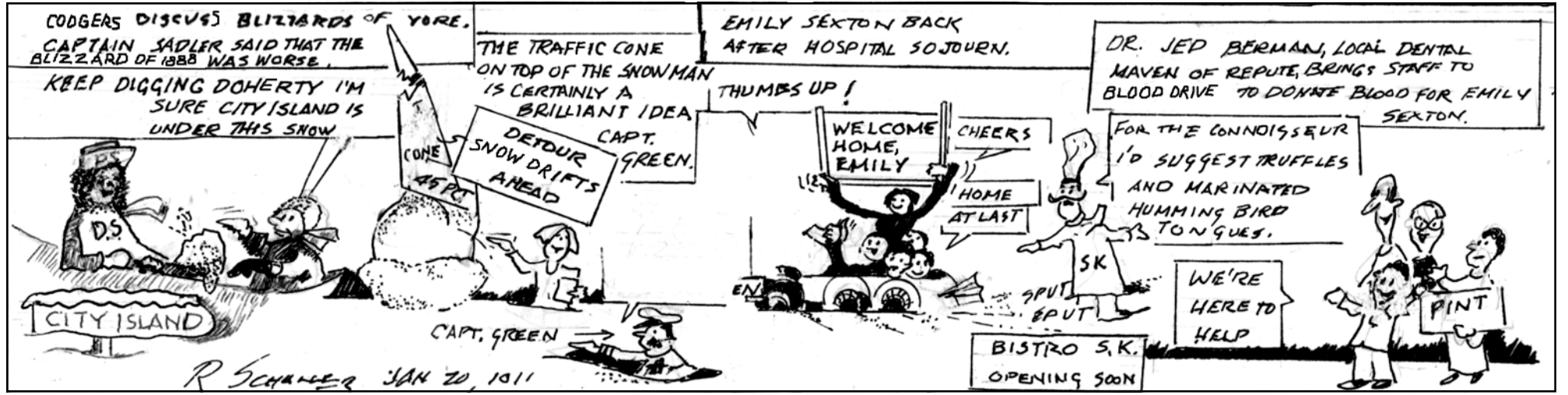
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**Giving Thanks**

To The Editor,

There really aren't words enough to express our gratitude and amazement at the generous outpouring of City Island's spirit at the special blood drive held in honor of our daughter, Emily Sexton, at Grace Episcopal Church on Dec. 6. My husband and I came to the drive twice ourselves, to talk to and thank people. Our son and some friends filmed donors sending well-wishes to Emily. We found ourselves trying to thank people, but over and over they insisted on thanking us for giving them a way to help!

All credit goes to Nancy Valentine-Adams, whose idea the drive was, and to her helpers and the NY Blood Center. We saw our world there—family, friends, neighbors, the NYPD, FDNY, Emily's co-workers, students and teachers from Emily's schools, elected officials, so many familiar faces and some we didn't know but who also wanted to give. We saw teenagers, senior citizens and every age in between.

City Island came together in all its decency and compassion that evening. Emily's care at Jacobi and then at Blythedale has been stellar. We are grateful that the community helped us thank the hospital by getting the blood bank ready for the holiday season.

We also want to thank the Blood Center staff who worked long hours to make donating safe, efficient and comfortable. I know several people who came away impressed at the care taken to ensure a safe blood supply.

**Harlan and David Sexton**

**Restoration or Destruction?**

To The Editor,

In support of Jack Rothman's letter to *The Current* (December 2010) and the "Sights and Sounds" column, I am adding my own comments about the events that have taken place in the Turtle Cove. These events prove that even well-meaning, good people can have terrible ideas. While I applaud the volunteerism of those who put their time into the work at Turtle Cove, the results are a disaster.

My friend Mary and I walked out on that new berm before Thanksgiving. What a horror! In her words, it looked wide enough for a four-lane highway and the bridge looks like a window-washing scaffold. This offense to the eye would never be allowed in Westchester County. It is unfathomable why they would rip out the variety of natural shrubs and grasses just so they can plant a homogenous sprawl of spartina grass. To my eye, the variety is what was beautiful and interesting.

On another point, yes, there was a culvert

through the smaller berm years ago, but it has been blocked for as long as I can remember. Doesn't that mean that over the years the second pond slowly became a freshwater marsh? How many places in New York City can you stand where you could observe fresh water and a saltwater marsh habitat within 15 feet of each other? That's gone now, and instead of a pond, we have a mud flat at low tide, as if there wasn't enough of that nearby already. I wonder if I will ever see a glossy ibis wading there again.

**Marguerite Chadwick-Juner**

**Turtle Cove Not a Lost Cause**

To The Editor,

Although I acknowledge that, in its current state, the berm and bridge at Turtle Cove are unattractive to people and to wildlife, I can assure you that this will change come springtime! The berm-breaching project called for removal of vegetation along the crest of the berm. Vegetation along the shoulders of the berm was removed as part of a larger plan by Parks to control invasive plants by re-establishing a mix of native species. These new plants will include marsh grasses below the high water mark and maritime grasses and shrubs along and atop the berm. Once the vegetation returns, the aesthetic experience will be vastly improved, as will the habitat value for regional wildlife.

The marsh on the north side of the berm had taken on a brackish character, as storm water mixed with a trickle of saltwater that managed to penetrate the berm. The interior of the marsh was dominated by the invasive plant Phragmites, while the perimeter was dominated by invasive vines. Collectively this created a low quality habitat. The highest value and function in the marsh were the small shallow water pond just north of the berm, which supported a few species of small shrimp and fish, as well as wading and water birds.

With the breach of the berm and the removal of invasive species that the Parks Department is doing along the perimeter, the overall habitat will improve markedly. First, a more diverse assemblage of native vegetation will host a wider variety of wildlife. Second, with regular tidal inundation, there will be an increased open water area for use by waterfowl at periods of high tide, and the breach was designed to retain a ponded area when the tide drops. The open water area will continue to support a variety of waterfowl as well as wading birds.

**Stephen Zahn,**  
Natural Resources Supervisor  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation

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## Injured Island Teen

*Continued from page 1*

in the pretrial hearings.

Reverend Patricia Alexander of Grace Church, where Harlan Sexton is senior warden and where Emily was baptized two years ago, spent many hours at the hospital and regularly reported on her condition to Islanders, dispelling rumors and encouraging Islanders to help the Sextons through this difficult time.

“When I told Emily that everyone at Grace and on City Island loves her and is praying for her, she nodded and started to cry. She gets it, and it’s making a difference. She’s really going to need us as cheerleaders during the difficult—and at

times frustrating, no doubt—work of learning to walk again. Trust me when I say that Harlan and David will be looking to all of us to encourage and motivate her as she fights her way back.” Emily’s recovery will continue with the many months ahead of physical therapy. Her pelvis and arm have permanent and substantial hardware holding them together. Doctors are also treating her hypertension and renal issues as well.

As if there isn’t enough on her plate, Emily is also applying to colleges for entry in the fall. Her mother hinted that her admissions essay will be about this experience and the dedicated healthcare professionals who helped her survive it, especially her physician’s assistant, Joe Lindner.

It is, after all, an amazing story.



The City Island Community Center held its fifth annual holiday party on Friday, Dec. 10, and it was a huge success. The Community Center board (l. to r.), including Amy Gottlieb, Brenda Prohaska, Jay Howard, Jackie Balassi, Sarah Persteins, Joe Burck and Michael Shanley, was delighted to welcome Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. (far right) to the party (not pictured Sally Lachman).

## Let’s Build and Strengthen Island Scouting

By WALDO PERSTEINS

Being a scout leader is one of the most important and delicate volunteer roles an adult can have. This is even more true in a small community like City Island. The scoutmaster and assistant scoutmasters of Boy Scout Troop 211 provide the community’s “young leaders in training” with challenging indoor and outdoor activities. We love to volunteer. We wish more City Island youth and families would take advantage of scouting on City Island.

As scoutmaster of Troop 211, I would like to stress that if you have any questions about boy scouting, be sure to speak with me or my leaders. If there are any misconceptions about our program that may be

keeping kids from joining, we would love to clear those up. Personally, I have heard some wacky things around the neighborhood, from both City Island youth and adults—everything from how I made a scout carry a boulder in his pack to the rumor that the troop does not welcome former scouts who want to be scouts again. Both of these stories, of course, are untrue, and I hope rumors like these are not hurting our membership.

Don’t let fish tales or the unknown stop you from enrolling a boy in scouting. Talk to one of the leaders of Troop 211 to learn what we really do and to take advantage of scouting on City Island. Let’s build, strengthen and defend this program together.




Photos by LARRY SAULNIER

The Cub Scouts’ Pinewood Derby was held on Jan. 21, 2011. The scouts pictured here are: Bears (top photo, l. to r.): Gerard Mazzella (first place), Jonathon Mazzella (third place) and Paul Mazzella (second place); Wolves (above photo): Ginutis Sipas (first place), Carlo Fragola (second place) and Carmine Testa (third place); Tigers (left): Jonathan Rodriguez (third place) and John Russell (first place); not pictured: Jackson Wepler (second place); Webelos (below): Joseph Zayas (first place), James McGaughan (second place) and Aiden Saulnier (third place).

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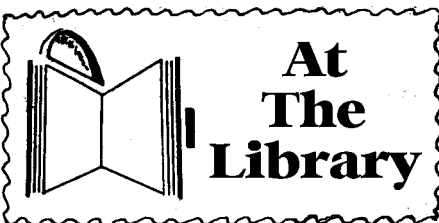
**What's Going On In There?**  
If you have a new business, or if your old business is offering a new service, write to The Current, P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464 by the 10th of the month.

**Focal Point Gallery**, 321 City Island Avenue, is celebrating Valentine's Day with an exhibition of art showing the artists' interpretation of the meaning of love. Artists are invited to submit their work, which must be ready to hang. There will be a hanging fee of \$20 and a 3 percent commission if sold. All work must be at the gallery no later than Feb. 2. The opening reception will be on Friday, Feb. 4, from 7 to 10 p.m. and the exhibition will run until Feb. 27. Call 718-885-1403 for more information.

The **Starving Artist Cafe & Gallery** celebrates seven years at its 249 City Island Avenue location in February, seven years of live music, while serving up fine art and crafts as well. The anniversary weekend line-up includes Starving Artist owner and music-artist Elliott Glick, on Saturday, Feb. 5, at 8 p.m., performing his originals, with John Guth on lead guitar. That Sunday, Feb. 6, features Jon and Lynn at 3 p.m. The next weekend it's all about love as we get set to celebrate Valentine's Day. There will be lots of love songs performed by City Island's "golden voice," Freddie Lando, on Sunday, Feb. 13, for some "love in the afternoon," beginning at 3 p.m. Also in February, come listen to Kagero, Japanese gypsy rock, on Saturday, Feb. 26, at 8 p.m.; Sonas, Celtic fiddlers, on Sunday, Feb. 20, at 3 p.m.; Lou Volpe, the "jazz man," on Sunday, Feb 27, at

4 p.m. For more of the schedule for February, visit, <http://www.starvingartistonline.com> or call 718-885-3779 for more information.

To those of us who have missed the Tree House, there is good news! A new restaurant, named **Bistro SK**, will soon be opening in that location (273 City Island Avenue). The proprietor, Stephane Kane, was born in Alsace/Lorraine in northeastern France near the border with Germany and Belgium. He attended culinary school for three years and learned all aspects of the restaurant business, from cooking to service to management. His work experience spans the globe from France to Belgium to Germany to the Caribbean to Canada and now New York City, where he has lived for 11 years and enjoyed the cuisine of many of the most renowned chefs. During the last three years, he worked as a restaurant consultant but he and his wife, Maria, always dreamed of owning their own restaurant. "I love the city's many quaint neighborhoods, especially this gem called City Island!" Maria grew up in the Bronx and has many friends here; when they learned that the former Tree House was available for rent, they decided to realize their dream—a small place, French, family-owned, a place where excellent food can be prepared rather quickly and not for much money and lots of great wine—in other words, a bistro. The menu will consist of the classic bistro dishes, such as snails (escargots), onion soup, pâté, salade niçoise, steak frites (steak and French fries), moules frites (mussels), grilled salmon, charcuterie, cheese plates and more. The Kanes hope to be open in February but are awaiting the final permits and licenses from various agencies, such as the State Liquor Authority. Since the BYOB system is no longer legal, they may have to wait to offer a glass of wine.



**At The Library**  
Come Celebrate the Library's 100th Anniversary on City Island (1911-2011)!

**Hours:** Mondays and Thursdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays 1 to 6 p.m. Fridays 12 noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**February Children's Programs**

**Lapsit Program:** Wednesdays, Feb. 9 and 23; 11 a.m. Birth to 18 months. All welcome for story time and music.

**Toddler Time:** Tuesdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15 and 22, 11 a.m. 18 to 36 months.

**Story Time:** Read-aloud picture books: Thursdays, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24, 3:30 p.m.

**Valentine's Day Arts and Crafts:** Tuesday, Feb. 8, at 3:30 p.m.

**Special Program:** For African-American History Month, "Peanut Prince," a celebration of the life of George Washington Carver, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 3:30 p.m. Ages 5 and up.

**Young Adult Programs**

**Manga Overdrive:** Every Tuesday at 4 p.m.

**Yu-Gi-Oh:** Every Wednesday at 4 p.m.

**Game On:** Every Thursday at 4 p.m.

**"Game Strike":** Saturday, Feb. 19, 1 to 3:30 p.m.

**New:** Fridays Tweens and Teen Lounge, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

**Adult Programs**

**Introduction to the Internet:** Tuesday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon. Please register in advance.

**Resumé Writing Workshop:** Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon. Please register in advance.

**Monthly Movie Series**

**The Best of Jazz and Blues:** A compilation of jazz singers and performers from the 1930s to the 1950s, Saturday, Feb. 12, 2 p.m.

**Beethoven's Hair:** A unique documentary about the genius of Beethoven based on the DNA from a lock of his hair and the people who owned it through the years, Saturday, Feb. 26, 2 p.m.

Please check our fliers for any additional programs, cancellations, or last-minute changes for February 2011. We are located at 320 City Island Avenue at Bay Street. For information about any of the programs above, call the City Island branch at 718-885-1703.

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# FROSTY HOLIDAY MEMORIES



## Bartow-Pell Events

“Be Mine, Victorian Valentine Workshop” will be presented on Saturday, Feb. 5, from 1 to 3 p.m. Show your care – not with a boring, store-bought card, but with a handmade, full-of-charm, sure-to-woo valentine. Learn about the history of valentines and the use of printed “scraps” to create them in the 19th century, as you make your own memorable valentine. A fun workshop for the whole family – it’s not just girl stuff! Registration required; call 718-885-1461

or e-mail [info@bpmm.org](mailto:info@bpmm.org). Admission: \$5 adults/seniors/children.

On Tuesday, Feb. 15, at 7 p.m. award-winning journalist and Pelham author Fen Montaigne discusses “Fraser’s Penguins: A Journey to the Future in Antarctica,” his recently published chronicle of five months in Antarctica with scientist Bill Fraser. There will be a book signing and reception after the presentation. Registration requested: call 718-885-1461 or e-mail [info@bpmm.org](mailto:info@bpmm.org). Admission: \$10 adults; \$7 seniors and students; members free.

On Thursday, March 3, at 7 p.m., in the winter lecture series “Brides, Bohemians and Booze: Historical Perspectives,” author Carol Wallace discusses her book “All Dressed in White: The Irresistible Rise of the American Wedding.” A book signing and reception will follow. Registration requested: call 718-885-1461 or e-mail [info@bpmm.org](mailto:info@bpmm.org). Admission: \$10 adults; \$7 seniors and students; members free.



Photo by RICK DeWITT

This year’s Christmas pageant at Trinity United Methodist Church was presented by members of the Sunday School: Angels: Gwen Boyle, Laci Howard, and Olivia Chadwick; Mary: Grace Kretzmer; Joseph: Ben Chadwick; Shepherds: Marc Browning and Jayden Clark; Three Kings: Jeremy Filomio, Jessica Melicharek and George Melicharek III.



Photos by BOB BERENT, VIRGINIA DANNEGGER, RICK DeWITT and KAREN NANI

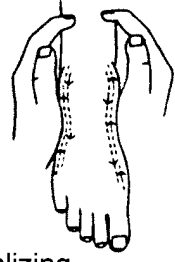
Although it didn’t start snowing until the day after Christmas, the blizzard of December 2010 added a touch of white to Islanders’ holiday memories. Following the lighting of the Christmas tree in Hawkins Park, the Hanukkah menorah was brightly lit on Dec. 1 by members and friends of Temple Beth-El (second and third photos above), who moved to the warmth of the Kaleidoscope gift shop for festival songs. Docents Amanda Kraemer, Barbara Dennis and Tanya Kraemer welcomed visitors to Bartow-Pell Mansion’s Candlelight Celebration on Dec. 3 (bottom left). The next day, Island artisans showcased their crafts at the Grace Church Christmas Fair, Terrace Street resident Joanne Brogan shows her jewelry to Lori Travers (bottom right). The sounds of Christmas could be joyously heard at St. Mary’s annual Ceremony of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 19, led by organist Ken Farnum (fourth photo above). On City Island Avenue, even Luigi the Maltese got into the holiday spirit! At press time, “Let it snow, let it snow . . .” was still the tune on many Islanders’ lips as more storms blanketed the New York area.

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## Organization News

News on this page concerning organizations, and events listed in, are submitted by representatives of those organizations. A limit of 150 words is requested for all news items submitted. In most cases news will be edited and every effort will be made to preserve the substance of longer items. News and calendar events must be received by no later than the 20th of each month except December and July. If the 20th falls on a holiday or Sunday, the deadline is the 19th. Mail submissions to P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464. YOUR NAME AND PHONE NUMBER MUST BE INCLUDED.

### Current Calendar

#### FEBRUARY

Thurs., Feb. 3, **45th Precinct Council Meeting**, St. Theresa's Church, 2855 St. Theresa Avenue, 7:30 p.m.

Tues., Feb. 8, **Blood Drive**, Trinity United Methodist Church, 113 Bay Street, 3:30 to 8 p.m.

Fri., Feb. 11, **Community Center Friday Night Movie Series: "Some Like it Hot."** Doors open at 6:45 p.m., 190 Fordham Street.

Sat., Feb. 12 and 19, **City Island Little League Registration**, Legion Hall, 550 City Island Avenue, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Thurs., Feb. 17, **Community Board 10 meeting**, 7:30 p.m., Lido Caterers, 101 City Island Avenue at Pilot Street.

Tues., Feb. 22, **City Island Civic Association meets**, 7:30 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

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

#### MARCH

Fri., March 4, **P.S. 175 Card Party**, Lido Caterers, 101 City Island Avenue at Pilot Street.

Sun., March 13, **Women's Herstory Month**, Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

#### St. Mary, Star of the Sea

On Thursday, Feb. 3, there will be an important meeting of all parents whose children are preparing to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist this year. It will be held in St. Mary's School gym at 7 p.m. All parents are urged to attend.

Our monthly Holy Hour with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be held on Friday, Feb. 4, from 4 to 5 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

All are welcome to attend our monthly coffee hour, which will be held in the rectory after 10 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Feb. 6.

Since all our children who attend public school will be on vacation during the week of Feb. 21, there will be no religious education classes on Wednesday, Feb. 23. Classes will resume on March 2.

The February meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Monday evening, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. in the rectory.

SAVE THE DATE: St. Mary's will hold a gala St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance on Saturday, March 12, in St. Mary, Star of the Sea School gym. Details will follow.

Sr. Bernadette, osu

#### Grace Episcopal Church

Weekly worship schedule: Grace Church celebrates Holy Communion every Sunday at 10 a.m. We also offer evening prayer in the church every Monday at 7 p.m. and morning prayer on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. For more information about Grace, please call the Parish Office at 718-885-1080, or visit our website, [www.gracecity-island.org](http://www.gracecity-island.org).

Here is an overview of what is happening at Grace Church during February:

Tuesday, Feb. 1, 7 p.m.: Bible Study and Hearts and Hands Ministry (Parish Hall). Newcomers are always welcome!

Saturday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m.: Monthly Men's Ministry Meeting (Parish Hall). All men of the parish – and friends! – are welcomed and encouraged to come for breakfast, prayer, conversation, and planning of future outreach and service projects. For more information and to RSVP, contact Scott Meyer at 718-885-0374 or [scott@meyer@verizon.net](mailto:scott@meyer@verizon.net).

[meyer@verizon.net](mailto:meyer@verizon.net).

Sunday, Feb. 6, 10 a.m.: "Lambs" Babysitting available, beginning at 9:50 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Following our worship, the young people of our church school will collect donations for the "Souper Bowl of Caring," raising money for POTS (Part of the Solution). Please give generously.

Tuesday, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.: Bible Study and "Hearts and Hands" Ministry (Parish Hall).

Tuesday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m.: Bible Study and "Hearts and Hands" Ministry (Parish Hall).

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m.: Bible Study and "Hearts and Hands" Ministry (Church, this week only).

Friday, Feb. 25, 6:30 p.m.: Grace Church Book Group (Rectory). Join Father Curt Hart and Stephanie St. Pierre for a discussion of Frederick Buechner's work, "The Sacred Journey: A Memoir of Early Days," available at Amazon.com. (Please access Amazon through the Grace Church website, [www.gracecityisland.org](http://www.gracecityisland.org); click on the Amazon link on the left-hand side of the home page. Every purchase completed through this link benefits Grace Church!)

Rev. Patricia Alexander

#### Temple Beth-El

Temple Beth-El of City Island, an unaffiliated, all-inclusive and egalitarian synagogue, provides an exciting place for observance for Jewish families who come from many different communities and cultures. We are a spirited congregation that gathers together under the leadership of the stimulating and innovative Rabbi Shohama Wiener.

Located at 480 City Island Avenue, between Beach and Bowne Streets, we conduct Sabbath services each Friday night at 7:30 pm. Our doors are open to all and we follow the Rabbi Marcia Prager prayer book, primarily in English, with easy-to-read typeface and singable Hebrew.

Tu B'Shevat, the New Year of Trees, was celebrated with a seder on Sunday, Jan. 23.

Rabbi Shohama will conduct her next Kabbalat Shabbat on Friday, Feb. 11.

On Sunday, Feb. 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Olga Berde' Mahl will talk about wills and financial planning, as we enjoy coffee and Danish. The workshop is free and open to all.

Purim (a big shindig on City Island) will be celebrated on Sunday, March 20 (starting at 1 p.m.), so plan on joining us then. Also plan to join us on Saturday, May 7, for our 77th Anniversary Dinner and Dance. (I'll be one of the honorees.)

Bob Berent

#### Sons of the American Legion Squadron # 156

Everyone should stop by the Post and see the new renovations to both the entranceway and the first-floor men's bathroom. Furthermore, the hallway up to the bar door and the stairway up to the top floor have also been painted. It is much brighter and welcoming. The work was done by local contractor Frank Cebek and his crew. Most of the painting and plastering was done by local painter Raphael and his helper.

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The Post would like to thank Ms. Nicoletti and her art classes at P.S. 41 in the Bronx for the wonderful cards that they designed for our Post's veterans.

Dues are now past due; they are once again \$30 and can be mailed in or dropped off.

Community Board 10 alerted us that there is a unit with the 10th Mountain Division whose lockers were destroyed and therefore lost most of their belongings. We will put a box in the entranceway to collect toiletries, personal items, and non-perishable snacks. SAL Advisor Greg Clancy has informed us that they would especially appreciate dips to have with their snacks.

Make sure you stop by on Super Bowl Sunday for our annual party. The price is \$20 with food included; there will be a cash bar with a few specials.

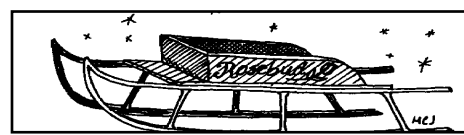
Our annual Pig's Knuckle Party will be held on Saturday, Feb. 26, and will include ham, wursts, beer, wine, soda and all the trimmings. The price is \$25 and a portion of the proceeds go to the State Commander's Emergency Relief Fund.

Pending any major snowstorms, the next meeting for the Squadron will be held on Thursday, Feb. 10, at 8 p.m.

Post Vice Commander of Americanism Ed Shipp wants to remind the City Island community that all old flags should be dropped in the decorated mailbox next to the flagpole at the Post. They will be retired with dignity.

There are several members on sick call: Ladies Auxiliary member Lucy Pontecorvo is recovering from a bad fall and Auxiliary member Holly Vincent is recovering from surgery. Regular member Jack Hartigan is also recovering from a surgical procedure. We ask that everyone in the Post family keep these members in their prayers. We have also been informed that Auxiliary member Geraldine Connolly has died. Hopefully, March will be a much happier and healthier month.

Fred Ramftl Jr.



#### City Island Republicans

Our next meeting will be held in April once the snow ends. Details will be in the next issue of *The Current*. We are celebrating our fifth anniversary! It seems like yesterday that we began the club.

Fred Ramftl Jr.

#### American Legion Ladies Auxiliary

Happy 2011! The Ladies Auxiliary welcomes Ginger Giritat, Rosetta Woods, Arlene Ricciardi, Joanne Hession and Kate McShane, who were sworn in at our last meeting. Also, a shout-out to Eleanor Gooan, who has proven to be a successful recruiter for the auxiliary. Thank you! We look forward to a successful year.

Our next two meetings will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 1 and March 1. We will start to plan our annual bingo event, which will be held in the spring (yes, spring!) with all proceeds going to cancer research. If you wish to donate a (new) prize, gift certificate or monetary gift, please drop it off at the Post. Thank you.

Regina Murphy

#### Trinity United Methodist Church

Our weekly worship service and Sunday school are at 10 a.m. Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Prayer service is held every weekday at 9:15 a.m. We encourage you to bring your children to Sunday school to further their knowledge of the teachings of Jesus Christ. Trinity often has a coffee hour after the service. Come and join us for worship and fellowship.

The Christmas Fair was a huge success, thanks to the hard work of Trinity's members and friends. A special thanks to Samantha Pryor and Dusty Prohaska, two student volunteers from P.S. 175 for all their hard work at our luncheon. Over the holiday season, our Sunday school kids collected almost \$80 in cash and lots of pet food and toys for the New Rochelle Animal Shelter. To keep the momentum going, the kids are now collecting nonperishable food items, culminating in their fourth annual Souper Bowl of Caring on Feb. 6. On that day there will be a special service and luncheon all are welcome to attend and all donations will go to City Harvest.

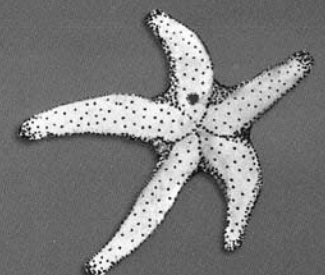
A Group Bible Study will begin March 13 and will meet for five consecutive Sundays of Lent, ending on April 10. The study is a continuation of the New Testament historical narrative of the book of the "Acts of the Apostles" written by Luke, Chapters 11-15. The study deals with the first church which began in Jerusalem, a totally Judean church. Under Peter and ultimately under Paul, the church grew to include non-Jews from the habitable world under the guidance and by the call of Holy Spirit's leadership, with a powerful Apostolic witness to the Resurrection of Christ Jesus, during the first century of the church. The method of study will be of the Biblical text, on a subject-by-subject basis, and a verse-by-verse study, with discussions aimed to understand the historic value and the present spiritual value of this record for believers in our day. George Cavaliere, Trinity's co-lay leader/ speaker is the moderator and instructor. No registration or fee is required. Each session begins at 11:30 a.m. with Bibles and refreshments provided and ends at 12:30 p.m. All in the community interested in Bible study are welcome, whether or not you have previously been in attendance. Please plan to attend.

On April 24, Easter Sunday, an informal ecumenical meeting will be held in Pelham Cemetery for a Sunrise Resurrection Celebration Service at 6:15 a.m. More details will follow in the next issue of *The Current*.

The Budget Corner is open with bargains galore! Will someone out there please volunteer to lead Budget behind the scenes? Myra Martin will work along with you to help and train you for this responsibility, which basically consists of contacting the established crew for work dates and help with the gleaning and pricing. We need your help; call Myra at 718-885-1049.

Rick DeWitt

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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.

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

**SPECIAL EVENTS/NEW PROGRAMS**

**Community Center Announces Friday Night Movie Series:** The CICC invites you to join your friends and neighbors for a night at the cinema in the first of our monthly "Friday Night Movie" series. The Community Center will launch this program on Friday, Feb. 11, with the American comedy classic and 1959 Academy Award winner "Some Like it Hot," starring Marilyn Monroe, Jack Lemmon and the Bronx's own Tony Curtis. Doors open at 6:45 p.m.; the film will be screened at 7 p.m. sharp! Tickets are \$2 and concessions will be available. For more information please e-mail [BxShanley@optonline.net](mailto:BxShanley@optonline.net) or call 917-721-8747.

**Get Ready, Get Set . . . (An Intro to Exercise):** The relaxed pace allows you to learn the basics of many different types of low-impact aerobic, strength training and stretching exercises, which will help to improve cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and range of motion. This class also utilizes chair (seated) exercises. Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. Fee: \$10/session (45 min.). First session is free of charge. Contact Judy at 914-548-4184 or [judyfarnum@aol.com](mailto:judyfarnum@aol.com).

**Art Classes:** New classes will start in April; check the March issue! Private and semi-private lessons available for kids and adults. Call Laury Hopkins at 718-885-3202. Please leave a message.

**Weekly Schedule**

**YOUTH PROGRAM**

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



**Mommy and Me Fitness:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 to 10 a.m. A high-energy aerobics class that allows you to bring your children along up to the age of 6. For more information, call Sarah Persteins at 718-885-9122.

**Jill's Playgroup:** For pre-school children on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 12:30 p.m. No charge but donations are appreciated. Call 516-841-5751 for more information.

**Tai Kwando Classes:** For men, women and children. Lil Dragons/Hapkido for teens and adults/Body Blast cardio kickboxing for men and women. For schedule, fees and information, please call Jahbumnim Eddie at 917-742-2007 or visit [www.dragons-pathacademy.com](http://www.dragons-pathacademy.com).

**Drama Classes with Laury Hopkins:** Friday afternoons starting in January. Ages 6 to 12. Call and leave a message if your child is interested. Classes and age groups will be determined from amount of interest. Classes will culminate in a show.

**ADULT PROGRAM**

**Gentle Yoga-Qi Gong Class with Norma:** Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Get into shape, relax the body and mind and have some fun doing it! This class is a combination of low-impact Hatha Yoga and Qi-Gong (freeform Tai-chi) and mild stretches. Although this class is geared to those who have not exercised in a while, all levels are welcome. Price per class is \$7. Please bring a yoga mat, yoga strap and yoga blocks. Most of these items are available at Barnes & Noble, Modell's, Target or K-Mart. Straps and blocks will be available for purchase on the day of the class. For more information, please call 718-730-3442. Namaste.

**Fit for Life with Sarah:** Hi-Lo impact aerobic and strength-training class. All levels welcome. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 5 p.m. and Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, call Sarah Persteins at 718-885-9122.

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

**Rhythmic Movement Exercise Class:** A fun way to combine exercise with various styles of dance. Mondays from 6 to 7:15 p.m. \$15 per person. If you have questions, please call Judy Farnum, Group Fitness Instructor, at 914-548-4184 or e-mail [judyfarnum@aol.com](mailto:judyfarnum@aol.com).

**Belly Dancing: Shimmy by the Sea.** Theresa Mahon (a.k.a. Salacia) teaches the oldest documented dance in the history of mankind—Egyptian belly dancing. It is a low-impact way to get in shape and tone your body while having lots of fun. Terry has been a professional belly dancer for 23 years and a teacher of the art for 15 years. Classes are held every Monday evening at 7:30 p.m. The fee for each one-hour class is \$15. Call 845-358-0260.

**Aerobics with Mary:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Half-hour low impact at 8:30 a.m. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 to 10 a.m. Call Mary Immediato at 718-885-0793. New class added: Saturday 9 a.m.

**Yoga with Vincenza:** All levels welcome. Wednesdays, 10 a.m. Classes \$10. Please bring your own mat.

**Tai-chi:** Please join us at 9 a.m. on Saturdays for gentle Tai-chi and yoga sessions.



Photo by PETER BOOTH

On Dec. 4, 2010, members of the American Legion Post 156 held their annual Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance ceremony. The legionnaires say a small prayer at the monument near the City Island Bridge and then read and ring a bell for each Islander who died in World War II. According to Fred Ramftl of the Legion, City Island had the highest number per capita in New York State who served in the war. Shown braving the cold weather are (front row, l. to r.): Russell Schaller Sr., Richie Ferris, SAL Commander Walter Natiw, Todd Davis, Bob Branizza, James Livingston, Tom Heffernan Jr. and Fred Ramftl Jr. Second row: Peter Zvara and Tom Vivolo.

Using bamboo props, balls, straps and partnering to increase flexibility and strength. For more information, please call Marc Kaplan at 718-885-2445.

**Parenting in the 21st Century: Talks with Teacher John:** Join an ongoing and free-wheeling discussion of the joys and pains of parenting led by Teacher John (parent, grandparent, school psychologist, parent educator). Learn to stop yelling, get what you want from your family life and create opportunities for your children to become responsible, loving and independent. Eight sessions (once per month) from 7:30 to 9 p.m. \$20 per session. Contact John Scardina at 718-885-9305 or through his website [www.thinklaughlearn.com](http://www.thinklaughlearn.com).

**SheWorkHer:** Learn basic home repair. SheWorkHer is dedicated to helping women learn just how much they can do with a few tools and the right knowledge, and saving hundreds of dollars doing it yourself. Classes are every other Monday. February classes start Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. Call Nancy today at 646-235-1175 and reserve your spot.

**Tap Dance:** Intermediate level adult Jazz-Tap class with Corinne Grondahl. Let your feet become a musical instrument! Tuesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. Call 718-309-8041.

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

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

Amy Gottlieb

**PSS Healthy Senior Exercise Program**

A happy and healthy New Year to all, and speaking of healthy, please join us at Zumba with Stephanie on Mondays at 10:30 a.m. in the Community Center; Cardio Fitness with Mary on Tuesdays at 9:30 at Grace Church Hall.; Sittercise with Patty on Tuesdays at 10:20 at Grace Church Hall; Orchard Beach Walk on Wednesdays (leave Pilot Street at 9:30 a.m.); Yoga Stretch with Michael on Thursdays at 9:30 at Grace Church Hall; Arthritis Exercise with Patty on Thursdays at 10:20 at Grace Church Hall. Remember that you can attend all classes for \$20 per month, or all classes for \$6 per week. Or you

can contribute to individual classes at \$2 for exercise and \$4 for dance.

Pat Grondahl

**PSS Transportation Program**

Everyone over 60 is encouraged to take advantage of our door-to-door transportation services. Call Anthony Mazzella at 347-834-6466 a day ahead for transportation on and off City Island. Regular afternoon shopping trips are: Monday, Bay Plaza; Thursday, A&P; every other Wednesday: Shop Rite in New Rochelle. Trips are also made to Fairway, Target, Trader Joe's, the Christmas Tree Shop, Key Food, Stop & Shop, Empire City and more. Suggested contribution for a round trip is \$1 on the Island and \$2.50 off-Island.

For further information and a complete schedule of transportation and exercise programs, call Patty at 718-885-1891. Programs are funded by Presbyterian Senior Services, the NYC Department for the Aging and the NYC Arthritis Foundation.

Pat Grondahl

**Rotary Club of the Bronx**

We would like to express our appreciation to Islander Martha Pucca for her assistance with our latest Gift of Life child Visar Neziraj and his father.

Visar, who came from Kosovo for his life-saving heart surgery at Montefiore Children's Hospital, was sponsored by the Bronx Rotary Club and hosted by an Albanian family in New Jersey. Visar and his father attended the Club's holiday meeting on Dec. 14, just one week after Visar's surgery. No one from the host family was able to attend, however, so there would have been no one capable of communicating with Visar and his father, neither of whom speak English.

Ms. Pucca volunteered her services as an interpreter, and despite dialectic differences, she succeeded in conversing with father and son and making them feel comfortable.

The Club welcomes participation from Islanders in this fulfilling program. If you are interested in hosting a child and their guardian for 2-4 weeks or just want to find out what it entails, please contact Rev. Susan Chadwick at 718-885-3658 or Mary Springman at 718-617-1600.

Marguerite Chadwick-Juner

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**The Best of Bruce Beresford**

Bruce Beresford is an Australian director who has some amazing credits to his name. He first came onto the movie map in 1980 with the critically acclaimed film **Breaker Morant**, in which he began his fascination with justice, culture and clashes. Set in 1901 in South Africa, the story takes place at the end of the Boer War. Three Australian soldiers—Morant (Edward Woodward), Hancock (Bryan Brown) and Witten (Lewis Fitz-Gerald)—are on trial for avenging the murder of a comrade at the hands of the Boers. They are defended by Major J. F. Thomas (Jack Thompson), an inexperienced country lawyer. This military courtroom drama is told partly in flashbacks as it investigates the nature of guerilla warfare, “a new kind of war for a new century.”

Beresford's next film, **Tender Mercies** (1983), is set in barren country near Waxahatchie, Texas, where a young widow, Rosa Lee (Tess Harper), runs a desolate motel, where she lives with her boy, Sonny (Allan Hubbard). When Mac Sledge (Robert Duvall in an Oscar-winning performance) passes through town, he winds up staying on. He is an alcoholic who is divorced from his country singer wife, Dixie (Betty Buckley), and estranged from their teenage daughter, Sue Anne (a very young Ellen Barkin). When Sledge is recognized by some young musicians, his past catches up with him in this gentle, simple drama.

After several ventures into mediocrity, Beresford eventually won the Academy Award for Best Picture of 1990 with **Driving Miss Daisy** (1989), which stars Oscar-winner Jessica Tandy in the title role as an elderly Southern woman. Her son, Boolie

(Dan Akroyd), is concerned for her safety and hires widower Hoke Colburn (Morgan Freeman) to drive her car. Thus begins a 25-year friendship, from the 1940s to the 1970s, of a black man and a Jewish woman. The cast also features Patti LuPone as Boolie's snobby wife, Florine, and Esther Rolle as Miss Daisy's cook and housekeeper. The richness of the acting is exquisite.

**Paradise Road** (1997) is the story of a remarkable group of women in Singapore in 1942 who wind up as POWs in a Japanese prison camp in Sumatra. They include British musician Adrienne Pargiter (Glenn Close), Australian missionary Margaret Drummond (Pauline Collins), Australian nurse Susan Macarthy (Cate Blanchett), the German Dr. Verstak (Frances McDormand), American Topsy Merritt (Julianna Margulies), British ingenue Rosemarie Leighton-Jones (Jennifer Ehle) and a snobbish upper-class British woman named Mrs. Roberts (Elizabeth Spriggs). The hardships are terrible, and to help themselves survive, Pargiter and Sister Margaret start a vocal orchestra that threatens, mystifies and enthralls some of their captors.

A change of pace is the thriller **Double Jeopardy** (1999), which stars Ashley Judd as Libby Parsons who wakes up one day on the boat that belongs to her husband, Nick (Bruce Greenwood), to find him missing and herself covered in blood. When she goes to jail for his murder, her son disappears with her best friend, Angie (Annabeth Gish). Libby survives with the help of her prison mates (Roma Maffia and Davenia McFadden), and ultimately comes under the supervision of parole officer Travis Lehman (Tommy Lee Jones), as she struggles to find her son and justice.

Next Beresford puts us in 1950s Ireland, the setting for his film **Evelyn** (2002). We learn the true story of Desmond Doyle (Pierce Brosnan), a Dublin house painter whose daughter, Evelyn (Sophie Vavasseur) and sons Dermot (Niall Beagan) and Maurice (Hugh MacDonagh) are taken from him when his wife abandons the family. He is offered the help of barmaid Bernadette Beattie (Juliana Margulies) and her lawyer brother, Michael. In a battle against the Family Act of 1941, which kept fathers from caring for their children, they are soon joined

in the fight by Irish-American lawyer Nick Barron (Aidan Quinn) and retired Irish legal legend Thomas Connolly (Alan Bates).

My favorite film of 2010 is the highly underrated **Mao's Last Dancer**. I knew nothing about the movie when I went to see it, and I found great value in all of its surprises. Simply put, it is the story of dancer Li Cunxin (Chi Chao), who during the Cul-

tural Revolution in China comes to spend a summer with the Houston ballet, where he is seduced by the luxurious American lifestyle. The juxtaposition of the two cultures is accomplished with flashbacks and just the right amount of suspense. The dancing is spectacular, as is the cinematography.

Stay warm and safe. And until next time, happy viewing. . . .

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### Public School 175

December was a month filled with educational and exciting activities. Our kindergarten students attended a performance of "Jack Frost" at Queens College. Second-graders had a docent from the New-York Historical Society visit their classrooms to study how New York City changed from a colonial town to a major metropolis; students handled artifacts and worked on a timeline. The third grade visited Hostos Center for the Performing Arts for a production of "A Christmas Carol." Seventh-graders visited Saint Paul's Church in Mount Vernon, where they learned about the Battle of Pell's Point and the role of the church as a place of congregation as well as a medical hospital, and they toured the graveyard to learn about famous people buried there.

The Hollyrock Game Show returned for its annual trivia competition. The students in grades K through 8 were asked trivia questions in various subject areas and participated in physical challenges. It was great fun and very informative.

Finally, on Dec. 21, P.S. 175 got into the holiday spirit with our annual Holiday Sing, in which children in all grades sang some of the great holiday classics, which is part of our rich school tradition. This ended our year on a high note!

January was just as exciting. Our fifth-graders have begun rehearsals for their spring performance of "The Music Man," and by the sound of things, this is going to be another fabulous P. S. 175 production! The Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation After-School Program has resumed for grades five through eight. Students are participating in a variety of activities including art, music, athletics, games and

homework help.

Our Character Education program continues to thrive. Community service projects continue with the eighth-graders doing individual projects and other grades doing class and small group projects. We are also fortunate that Parent Emeritus Ed Rothschild has continued to assist us with our Drug Abuse Prevention Program. He works with experts in the field of substance abuse to provide our seventh- and eighth-grade classes with informative presentations.

The last Friday of every month is School Spirit Day, and the sale of P. S. 175 apparel continues. Available for sale to students, parents and the greater City Island community are school t-shirts, zippered fleeces, sweatshirt hoodies and hats, all either embroidered or silk-screened with the school logo. Please join us in sharing the P. S. 175 school spirit! Anyone outside the school who is interested in making a purchase should contact our General Office.

The P. S. 175 family is excited about all of the opportunities that we are able to offer our students that enable them to explore educational as well as enriching pursuits!

**Kindergarten registration** for the 2011-2012 school year has begun. Between Jan. 10 and March 4, parents should come into the school to submit an application of interest. Parents must submit the child's birth certificate, proof of immunization and two proofs of residency (a current Con Edison bill and either a current deed or a lease).

Pre-registration for kindergarten will officially begin on March 28 and end on April 15 from 9 to 11 a.m. every day. The child must accompany the parent on the day of pre-registration, and parents will once again be required to submit up-to-date proof of residency. Any registration questions may be directed to Mrs. Veltri, Secretary at 718-885-1093.

Citizens of the month for December were Colin Kenny and Christopher Crowe (kindergarten); Samantha Hernandez and John Russell (first grade); Gabriella Carozza and Aran Glynn (second grade); Paul Mazzella and Adrian Kuka (third grade); Christine Whelan and Claudia Kim-

mel (fourth grade); Dusty Prohaska and Everett Sanderson (fifth grade); Samah-jae Thomas and Danielle Giaconda (sixth grade); Jake Desgroseilliers and Michael Santomassimo (seventh grade); Nileyris Sosa and Julian Ullah (eighth grade).

Citizens of the month for January were Nicholas Baratta and Max Wiehler (kindergarten); Oona Foxe and Samantha Kuc-

erak (first grade); Frankie Lubelli and Mia Villafana (second grade); Lauren Russell and Alexa Gjonaj (third grade); Joseph Zayas and Michael Powers (fourth grade); Erik Lomonaco and Sabrina Fontana (fifth grade); James Albertelli and Megan Moran (sixth grade); Alexis Candelaria and Nora Kuka (seventh grade); Maira Santos Carino and Briana Whelen (eighth grade).

## Reflections on a Day at St. Mary's

By JANE DENNEHY

As another Catholic Schools Week approaches (Jan. 31-Feb. 5), I am taking some time to reflect on our school, St. Mary, Star of the Sea. As principal, I get caught up in the everyday business of running a small Catholic school in very unsettling times. I continually review class sizes, fill out reports, answer every call and e-mail, check plans, review grades, speak to parents, check over finances and pray regularly. I realize that the most important aspect of my job is doing what I love the most. Each day, I have the privilege of one-on-one experiences with the greatest people in the world: our students and faculty. My reflection carries me down the hallways of the school.

I find the kindergarten class in a circle; the children are singing and asking God to bless their day. They pray aloud for their families and for the teachers they love. Miss Beth and Miss M. stand with their small students and listen tenderly to their prayers. Dan calls out: "Pray for my Dad. He is in Iraq. My mom was crying. I told her that Ms. Beth said that we had to be strong." Each day, small triumphs and breakthroughs are recognized; milestones are celebrated and thanks are given. We believe that miracles happen every day.

Ms. Bilma has handed the reins to Julian, the white-board expert of second grade, who leads the class in a vocabulary game. Ms. Bilma sits among the experts and beams with pride as Julian navigates like a pro. Second graders love to play games; they do not even realize that they are learning because Ms. Bilma keeps a good secret.

"My mom is coming home from Korea.

She is a soldier," announces a third-grader. "He is very anxious today," says Mrs. B. as she comforts this special child. "Let's make a number line showing how many days until Mommy is here. Every morning we will be one day closer. How's that?," she asks. He replies softly, "That's good. Can I sit next to your desk today?" "Of course, go ahead and move your desk." I try not to cry as I encounter this exchange.

I greet the first grade as the students work with Sr. Joanie on their elf stories: "Ernest is an elf. He makes video games for Santa. He goes to hospitals to give the games to the sick children. Ernest knows that Santa and Jesus are friends. Santa works for Jesus at Christmas. Ernest works for Santa. He is a volunteer. He does not get paid." Jonathan shouts: "This is hard work. Sister wants our stories to have details so they are not boring." Sister magically works the writing process.

In a Pre-K prayer service, a small student answers: "Purple is for preparation, Ms. Joyce." "That is correct, Ciara. How many purple candles are on the wreath?" Ciara replies: "But I like the pink one." Ms. Maria asks why. "Because pink is getting closer to the light of Christ and a lot of presents." Ms. Ellen chuckles: "That's my girl!" Ciara responds: "Well, I listen to Ms. Joyce when she tells us the same thing every day in circle time."

My reflection takes me up the back stairs to the second floor. "Hi, Mrs. Dennehy!" The eighth grade calls to me as I pass. Ms. Mirabito reminds me that her students are working on their morning word problem.

*Continued on page 15*

*Cormac McEnery, Esq.*

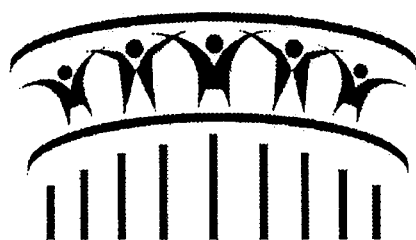
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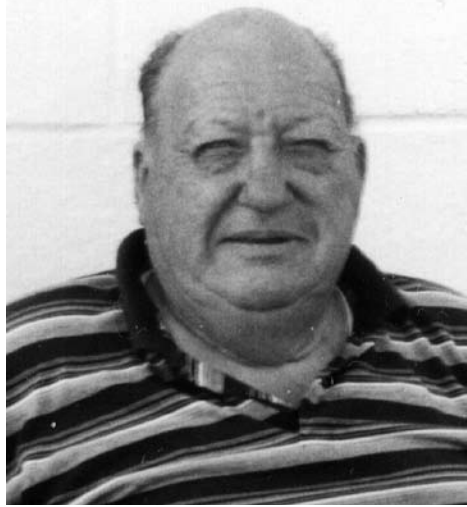
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# Obituaries

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.



Giles "Sonny" Bates

## Giles R. Bates

Longtime City Islander and Earley Street resident Giles R. Bates, known as "Sonny" to family and friends since early childhood, passed away at Sound Shore Medical Center in New Rochelle on Christmas day, two months short of his 90th birthday. Born Feb. 20, 1921, to Allan Bradley Bates and the former Viola Kathryn Graul, he moved with his family to City Island as a young boy and grew up on Bowne and Horton Streets.

He graduated from P. S. 17 years ahead of schedule and started working after school hours as a draftsman in his father's architectural office while attending Theodore Roosevelt High School. After he graduated from Roosevelt, his flair for drawing and mathematics sent him to the New York University School of Architecture for two years before he entered the Army, with which he served in England, Belgium and Germany until 1945 as a member of the Corps of Engineers.

After returning from military service, he married Island-raised Helen Bleidner and resumed work as an architectural draftsman and design supervisor. He moved back to City Island at the first opportunity, first to Fordham Street and finally to Earley Street. A good athlete in his youth and an avid sports fan all his life, he enjoyed fishing, boating and gardening in his spare time and served as a regular member of the Earley Street beach maintenance work crews. He retired at the age of 72.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, a son, two brothers, a sister, a niece, nephews and many friends. Following an American Legion memorial observed at his wake and a service conducted by Rev. Susan Chadwick of Trinity United Methodist Church, he was interred at the Woodlawn Cemetery.



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

## 2010 Tax Relief Act

The extension of the lower income and capital gains tax rates that expired on Dec. 31, 2010, along with significant reductions to the estate tax, has probably received the most media coverage. But the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010, signed into law by President Obama on Dec. 17, extends and expands a wide variety of valuable tax breaks.

Many of the breaks were set to expire after 2010 under the "sunset" provision of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, but they have now been extended through 2012. Other breaks expired at the end of 2009 and have been extended only through 2011, but they will provide welcome relief for many taxpayers when they file their 2010 returns.

## Payroll Tax Rates

The 2010 Tax Relief Act also provides a few new tax breaks, notably a payroll tax reduction for 2011. For 2011 only, the employee portion of the Social Security tax on earned income is reduced from 6.2 to 4.2 percent. Those who are self-employed pay both the employee and employer portions of Social Security tax, and the Tax Relief act also reduces their rate by two percentage points for 2011, from 12.4 to 10.4 percent.

For 2011, the maximum taxable wage base for Social Security taxes is \$106,800 (the same as for 2010). So the maximum tax savings from this break is \$2,136.

## Ordinary Income Tax Rates

Because of the 2001 tax act sunset, ordinary income tax rates (except for the 15 percent rate) were scheduled to increase for 2011. There was much talk about extending the lower rates for only the lower and middle tax brackets or for only one year, but the 2010 Tax Relief Act extends the lower rates for all brackets for two years. So income tax rate increases now are not scheduled to occur until 2013:

### Ordinary Income Tax Rates

2003 - 2012	2013
10%	15%
15%	15%
25%	28%
28%	31%
33%	36%
35%	39.6%

## Long-term Capital Gains Rates

Under the 2001 tax act, the 15 percent long-term capital gains rate was scheduled to increase to 20 percent in 2011. The 2010 Tax Relief Act extends the 15 percent rate through 2012. If you have children or other loved ones in one of the bottom two ordinary income tax brackets, note that the 0 percent rate will generally apply to their long-term gains through 2012. (Beware of the "kiddie" tax, however.)

## Qualified Dividend Tax Rates

The 2010 Tax Relief Act extends taxation of qualified dividends at the 15 percent long-term capital gains tax rate through 2012 (0 percent for those in the bottom two brackets). Without Congressional action, dividends would have gone back to being taxed at ordinary income rates in 2011, with a top rate as high as 39.6 percent.

## Small Business Stock Gains

To make investing in certain small businesses more attractive, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 (SBJA), signed into law in September, temporarily increased

the qualified small business (QSB) stock gain exclusion to 100 percent for stock acquired after Sept. 27, 2010, and before Jan. 1, 2011, that is held for at least five years. Additionally, the SBJA eliminated the alternative minimum tax (AMT) preference item on such gain, making it tax free for AMT purposes as well.

The 2010 Tax Relief Act extends the acquisition deadline for 100 percent gain exclusion and elimination of the AMT preference item to Dec. 31, 2011.

QSB stock can help diversify your portfolio while providing additional potential tax benefits. So purchasing it by the end of 2011 may be worth considering. (To be a QSB, the company can't hold gross assets exceeding \$50 million at the time the stock is issued and must be engaged in an active trade or business.)

## Itemized Deduction and Personal Exemption Phase-outs

The 2001 tax act reduced the adjusted gross income (AGI)-based reductions on itemized deductions and personal exemptions for 2006 through 2009 and eliminated them for 2010. The 2010 Tax Relief Act extends this elimination through 2012.

## Deduction for State and Local Sales Taxes

For the last several years, taxpayers have been allowed to take an itemized deduction for state and local sales taxes in lieu of state and local income taxes. This break can be valuable to those residing in states with no or low income tax rates or who purchase major items, such as a car or boat. But this break expired after 2009. Now the 2010 Tax Relief Act has extended it for 2010 and 2011 (but not for 2012).

## Dependent Care Credit

The 2001 tax act increased the maximum amount of eligible expenses for the dependent care credit from \$2,400 to \$3,000 for one qualifying dependent and from \$4,800 to \$6,000 for more than one qualifying dependent through 2010. The 2010 Tax Relief Act extends these higher limits through 2012.

The maximum credit is generally 20 percent of eligible expenses, which is \$600 for one dependent and \$1,200 for more than one dependent. There's no upper AGI limit for claiming the credit, but taxpayers with AGIs of \$43,000 or less are eligible for a larger maximum credit.

## Alternative Minimum Tax

The AMT is a separate tax system that limits some deductions and credits, doesn't permit others and treats certain income items differently. If your AMT liability is greater than your regular tax liability, you must pay the AMT.

Unlike the regular tax system, the AMT system isn't regularly adjusted for inflation. Instead, Congress must legislate any adjustments. Typically, it has done so in the form of a "patch" — an increase in the AMT exemption. The 2010 Tax Relief Act establishes patches for 2010 and 2011:

### AMT Exemption

	Single or Head of Household	Married Filing Jointly or Surviving Spouse	Married Filing Separately
w/o Patch	\$33,750	\$45,000	\$22,500
2010 Patch	\$47,450	\$72,450	\$36,225
2011 Patch	\$48,450	\$74,450	\$37,225

**Note:** Consult your tax advisor for AMT exemptions for children subject to the kiddie tax. For 2011, the Tax Relief Act also allows you to offset your AMT liability with certain nonrefundable personal credits (such as the dependent care credit and certain energy-related credits) for which you are otherwise eligible.

## An Expansive Act

We have been focusing on provisions that will help higher-income taxpayers to reduce their individual income tax liability,

but the 2010 Tax Relief Act provides many additional opportunities:

- If you have loved ones in the middle or lower tax brackets, they may benefit from extensions of breaks that you won't qualify for, such as various education- and child-related credits and deductions.

- If you are a business owner or executive, there are many business breaks that could reduce your business's taxes (and your own, if you are the owner of a flow-through entity).

- If estate taxes are a concern, you will want to review your estate plan in light of the 2010 Tax Relief Act's temporary estate tax relief.

- If you are interested in reducing energy consumption, you may want to take advantage of extensions of various energy-related breaks.

- If you are currently unemployed, you may benefit from the 2010 Tax Relief Act's extension of unemployment benefits.

If you would like to learn more about any of these provisions and how they might affect your situation, contact a qualified tax professional, who can help you take full advantage of the opportunities the 2010 Tax Relief act has to offer.

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Times and heights of high and low water (Eastern Standard Time)

Heights in feet above soundings printed on charts of water adjacent to City Island. Times shown are nautical times. For times on the table beginning with 1300, subtract 1200 to get ordinary PM time (e.g., 1625 - 1200 = 4:25 P.M.). Times less than 1200 are A.M. times (e.g., 1154 = 11:54 A.M.).

HH = hours; MM = minutes

Tide chart by Tom Smith

**FEBRUARY 2011**

DAY	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	HEIGHT	DAY
	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	HH MM	FEET	
01 Tue	0434	-0.06	1037	7.79	1707	-0.57	2302	7.30	Tue 01
02 Wed	0518	-0.13	1120	7.76	1747	-0.49	2343	7.38	Wed 02
03 Thu	0559	-0.12	1159	7.64	1824	-0.33			Thu 03
04 Fri	0020	7.38	0634	-0.03	1233	7.44	1854	-0.11	Fri 04
05 Sat	0050	7.32	0701	0.11	1258	7.21	1909	0.10	Sat 05
06 Sun	0109	7.24	0714	0.24	1314	7.01	1916	0.21	Sun 06
07 Mon	0126	7.20	0735	0.33	1338	6.84	1943	0.30	Mon 07
08 Tue	0154	7.18	0810	0.46	1413	6.67	2020	0.44	Tue 08
09 Wed	0230	7.15	0851	0.62	1455	6.48	2103	0.64	Wed 09
10 Thu	0313	7.09	0939	0.81	1542	6.29	2151	0.86	Thu 10
11 Fri	0402	7.03	1033	0.96	1637	6.16	2244	1.04	Fri 11
12 Sat	0457	7.01	1134	1.01	1738	6.14	2344	1.11	Sat 12
13 Sun	0558	7.08	1249	0.87	1847	6.31			Sun 13
14 Mon	0050	0.98	0703	7.27	1412	0.49	1957	6.67	Mon 14
15 Tue	0203	0.64	0808	7.57	1514	-0.01	2057	7.15	Tue 15
16 Wed	0312	0.12	0908	7.92	1604	-0.52	2148	7.65	Wed 16
17 Thu	0412	-0.44	1002	8.22	1650	-0.96	2235	8.09	Thu 17
18 Fri	0505	-0.92	1053	8.39	1735	-1.25	2322	8.40	Fri 18
19 Sat	0556	-1.24	1142	8.39	1819	-1.35			Sat 19
20 Sun	0008	8.55	0647	-1.34	1232	8.21	1904	-1.25	Sun 20
21 Mon	0056	8.51	0741	-1.22	1324	7.85	1952	-0.94	Mon 21
22 Tue	0147	8.28	0840	-0.89	1420	7.38	2045	-0.48	Tue 22
23 Wed	0244	7.90	0948	-0.47	1527	6.88	2151	0.06	Wed 23
24 Thu	0354	7.49	1100	-0.09	1652	6.51	2311	0.50	Thu 24
25 Fri	0523	7.21	1211	0.14	1810	6.41			Fri 25
26 Sat	0027	0.70	0639	7.16	1317	0.18	1917	6.55	Sat 26
27 Sun	0135	0.67	0744	7.28	1416	0.10	2016	6.81	Sun 27
28 Mon	0234	0.48	0841	7.46	1510	-0.03	2108	7.12	Mon 28
<b>MARCH 2011</b>									
01 Tue	0327	0.25	0932	7.63	1558	-0.13	2155	7.38	Tue 01
02 Wed	0414	0.05	1018	7.71	1641	-0.17	2238	7.55	Wed 02
03 Thu	0457	-0.07	1059	7.70	1720	-0.12	2317	7.62	Thu 03
04 Fri	0535	-0.11	1137	7.60	1753	-0.01	2351	7.60	Fri 04
05 Sat	0608	-0.06	1209	7.42	1818	0.15			Sat 05



By JOHN SHERIDAN and MARIA SUTHERLAND

**THE PROJECTS OF PELHAM BAY PARK**

Readers continue to weigh in on the Parks Department's restoration project at Turtle Cove. Marguerite, for example, writes to lament the loss of the freshwater marsh and the ugly new bridge. It wouldn't have been allowed in Westchester, she says, and to that we can only add, and neither would it have been allowed in our own Manhattan. Marianne Anderson, the administrator of Pelham Bay Park, seems to agree and is determined to make it right in the long run. We'll see.

In the meantime, Parks has gotten itself into another mess of its own making. And this time, even the New York Times has seen fit to report it. Check out <http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/19/free-money-and-endangered-parrots/?ref=nyregion>.

What happened was this: the light cages that housed the 30+-year-old monk parakeet colony in Pelham Bay Park were removed so Parks could work on the aging lights there. Of course, no one would argue that a potentially hazardous lighting situation be left alone, but one could definitely argue the timing. As it is, the monks are homeless for the winter. They are exposed not only to the

elements but also to the hawks and falcons that hunt in the park. Nathan, a longtime observer of the monks in the park, has reported that they have been seeking shelter in squirrel nests and the vine-covered arch by the bathrooms. He has also reported casualties.

What makes this latest episode especially upsetting is that it could have been avoided. In June 2010, at Leif Erickson Park in Brooklyn, Parks managed to do what it had to do with the lights but being mindful of the nearby monk parakeet nests. In that instance, they worked in concert with concerned members of the community. In this instance, after acknowledging the bad timing, Ms. Anderson is once again promising to rectify the situation. To this end, she has been in regular contact with members of the community, including Dr. DeCandido (aka Birding Bob). By all accounts, the Pelham Bay Park administrator means well and, more importantly, means what she says. Let's hope so.

On a cheerier note, we can report that we participated in this year's Christmas bird count, sponsored by the Audubon Society. It was the Society's 111th count, an annual event open to all. Along with City Island's own intrepid bird man, Jack, we braved the elements and more to track down one of this year's most interesting local finds: an American woodcock, actually two of them hiding in the marsh grass of Rodman's Neck. It was not simply a pleasant way to spend the morning after Christmas, but it was also a productive one. Citizen scientists all over North and South America report their findings so that the Society can more efficiently focus its conservation efforts. Going out to look for birds is enough to warm the extremities, even on cold, snowy mornings!

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# The Far Side of the Bridge

A Column about  
Bronx County  
By MICHAEL SHANLEY



The Kingsbridge Armory

## The Kingsbridge Armory: A Place that Matters

As a boy growing up in the Bronx, I was fascinated by the enormous medieval-style castle not far from my family's home. The building, a giant Romanesque fortress located at 29 West Kingsbridge Road, would spark my imagination and evoke mental images of knights in shining armor and damsels in distress. I was never quite sure what went on in there, but that only added to the mystique of this enormous structure, which loomed over our neighborhood with undeniable authority. Decades later, I am still intrigued by this colossal fortress but even less certain about its purpose.

In 1911 the New York State Legislature authorized the construction of a new armory in the Bronx, which when completed would be the largest armory in the world. It was built to house the Eighth Coastal Artillery Unit of the National Guard, which was being relocated from its base at Park Avenue and 94th Street in Manhattan. Although the building would be officially named the Eighth Regiment Armory, it eventually became known as the Kingsbridge Armory.

The site selected for the armory was the excavated but never used eastern basin of the Jerome Park Reservoir, and construction took place between the years 1912 and 1917. The architect Lewis Pilcher modeled the building after the Chateau de Pierrefonds, a 12th-century castle north of Paris that was partially demolished in the early 1600s but rebuilt in the second half of the 19th century. The "castellated" style was chosen not only to identify the military function of the building, but also to recall a past age of social authority and civil force. In the 19th century, the purpose of an armory's contingent of "national guard" was to suppress urban strikes and riots, and "fortress architecture" made the threat palpable. By the time of World War I, however, fear of urban anarchy had been replaced by concerns about national defense.

The Eighth Coastal Artillery Regiment traces its history back to 1786 when a peacetime militia was established in New York City. Because the regiment formed part of the honor guard at the presidential inauguration of George Washington, it later adopted the nickname of the "Washington Greys." Their insignia, a shield above an eagle with draped flags, was executed in terracotta and placed above the building's main entrance.

The Kingsbridge Armory is an exquisite example of military architecture, and it is considered the most interesting armory design in this country. Its vast expanse covers five acres and an entire city block. The red brick walls, which display some of the finest brickwork in New York City, are trimmed with stone and punctuated at regular intervals by slit window openings. Flanking the main entrance are two tall round towers that rise well above roof lev-

el, and the structure's corners are anchored by four smaller towers. Decorative stone bands, corbels and crenellated parapets accent the towers, each one crowned by a conical roof. A stone stairway with flanking stone walls is distinguished by massive wrought-iron lamps that lead up to round-arched double doors. A moat runs across the front of the fortification.

Inside the nine-story structure are an enormous 180,000 square-foot drill hall and an 800-seat auditorium. Two cellar levels, which once housed military vehicles, provide space for storage, lecture halls, a bowling alley, gymnasium, fitness room and a 400-square foot rifle and pistol shooting range.

Recognized as an architectural and engineering wonder, the Kingsbridge Armory was designated a New York City landmark in 1974, and eight years later it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Due to nationwide military cutbacks, the National Guard left the Kingsbridge Armory in 1994 and turned it over to the City of New York. Since that time, political, religious, tenant and civic organizations have worked to find a use for the historic castle that would best serve the local communities that surround it, the borough of the Bronx and, indeed, New York City as a whole. Many possibilities have been suggested, each one igniting debate.

In the late 1990s, the New York City Council secured \$16 million to rebuild the roof and waterproof the building. The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) issued a request for proposals (RFP) inviting developers to submit plans, and the winning bid was submitted by the group that owns and operates Chelsea Piers in Manhattan. Their proposal was to convert the armory into a massive sports and recreational facility, with retail space as well. However, some community organizations, notably the North West Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, opposed the plan because it did not also include space for new public schools.

In 2005, these community groups joined forces with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU), the owners of Morton Williams Super-

market and other local merchants to create a new umbrella organization they named KARA (Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance).

In 2006 a second RFP was issued by the city, and in April 2008 the NYCEDC announced that the winning submission was put forward by Related Companies, the most prominent privately owned real estate firm in the United States and developer of many high-profile projects around New York, including the Gateway Center at the Bronx Terminal Market and the Time-Warner Center on Columbus Circle in Manhattan. The two neighboring community boards and Mayor Michael Bloomberg supported the winning bid.

Related Companies planned to invest \$310 million to transform the armory into a giant shopping and entertainment complex—the most significant private investment in the northwest Bronx in generations and one that promised to create approximately 2,200 jobs, many of them high paying and more than half of them permanent. This should have been very welcome news for a county with the highest unemployment rate in the state of New York and three points higher than the national average.

The complex was to include at least one anchor store, retail space, a multi-screen cinema, a bank branch, a major supermarket, a fitness center and about 60,000 square feet of public and community space. The centerpiece of the mall's public space was to be a World Peace Atrium honoring the lives and works of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Daisaku Ikeda and others who dedicated their lives to peace and justice.

Outside the building, there was to be a public plaza dedicated to the memory of Phyllis Reed, a community activist who for many years maintained a vegetable and flower garden at the armory that she used to mentor young people from the neighborhood. The plaza was to include performance space, seating, vending kiosks, attractive lighting and "street-scaping" with horticultural features. The community and public space was slated to be used in a variety of ways including after-school programs, a small business incubator for local entrepreneurs, job training programs and a computer clubhouse. For the first time in almost a century, it seemed that this historic castle might finally be opened up to the people of the kingdom.

KARA opposed this project claiming uncertainty with the Community Benefits Agreement, or CBA (a type of contract in which developers agree to certain amenities in order to get community support). KARA

found a champion in the newly elected Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., who spearheaded the fight against the Related Companies project. His primary sticking point was a "living wage" requirement that 100 percent of the jobs at the proposed mall command a salary of at least \$10 per hour with health insurance benefits, or \$11.50 an hour without benefits.

Mr. Diaz argued that minimum wage jobs would be insufficient to support local families. He used his considerable influence to convince New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn to persuade other council members to vote down the project, which they did 45 to 1, unraveling many years of hard work. The Borough President and the City Council killed the project inches from the finish line. Their battle cry appeared to be "no jobs are better than low-paying jobs."

The Related Companies shopping mall at the Kingsbridge Armory would have created a windfall of jobs for the local community and a significant amount of tax revenue for New York City. Many of these jobs would have been entry-level positions paying at or around the state's minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. The host community has one of the highest student populations in all of New York City, with two colleges and three high schools within a one-mile radius of the armory. The Bronx also has the youngest population in NYC, with approximately 50 percent under the age of 25—ideal candidates for such entry-level positions. The positions also offered a rare opportunity for the large segment of young adults living in the Bronx who do not have a high school diploma or GED. Where chronic unemployment creates despair and invites anti-social problems, jobs offer a powerful deterrent against crime, drug and alcohol abuse, and gang activity.

More than 15 years have passed since the Eighth Coastal Artillery Regiment left the Kingsbridge Armory. The building is empty, and the city may have to go back to square one, for the third time, to determine what its future should be. The Chateau de Pierrefonds, the inspiration for the Kingsbridge Armory, was an empty ruin for more than two centuries. Let's hope that the Kingsbridge Armory's revitalization won't take quite so long.

*Note: Michael Shanley is a native Bronxite and longtime resident of City Island. He is a licensed tour guide for New York City, specializing in Bronx County. Comments are welcomed at BxShanley@optonline.net.*



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## Creating a Healthy Home

By JERI STARK

It's a new year, a time to take stock and take action. For homeowners from City Island to Samaria to Kinshasa, it's out with the old and in with the new. Although we celebrate the new year based on our beliefs and cultures, in many ways the themes are the same: family, gratitude, atonement and hope for the future.

So here we are. You are all revved up for the year ahead, but what about the quality of your home's environment? Although indoor air quality is invisible, it still has an impact on your family's health and the safety of your home. The level of some pollutants can be far higher indoors than they are outdoors. Take steps this year to ensure that the air in your home is clean and safe.

We recommend that you:

- Clean humidifiers based on manufacturer guidelines in preparation for seasonal use.
- Remove screens from windows where they might trap condensation on the glass. Such condensation can promote mold growth.
- Sweep the chimney to remove creosote buildup and inspect for necessary repairs.
- Seal any openings on the exterior of the house to keep out rodents and other pests.
- Test for carbon monoxide and radon levels, and take action as appropriate. Carbon monoxide gas is caused by incomplete burning of fossil fuels such as gasoline, kerosene, natural gas, butane, propane, fuel oil, wood or coal. Radon is an invisible odorless radioactive gas that occurs naturally from decaying uranium beneath the earth's surface. You can find reliable, affordable test kits at your local hardware store or online.
- Dust or vacuum detection equipment regularly and check to see that it is functioning properly.
- Clean air vents on heating systems

and space heaters, and be sure to service your furnace/heating system biannually.

If you following these maintenance tips, you can help everyone in your home breathe more easily. In addition, according to Dr. Ted Schettler, science director of the Science and Environmental Health Network, air filters that help to capture particulate pollution play a major part in home air quality. Clean, efficient fans and filters on furnaces, refrigerators and other appliances, such as clothes dryers, allow them to function efficiently and can also reduce moisture in the air and minimize particulate pollution in your house.

Be sure that air vents between the indoors and the outside aren't blocked by snow, leaves, dirt or other debris. Vacuum the rear grills on refrigerators and freezers, and empty and clean drip trays to prevent mold growth. Moreover, it's important to be diligent about fixing any plumbing leaks; even small drips can create favorable conditions for mold growth and affect air quality.

Is your garage attached to your house? Make sure that the door between the garage and the house is completely sealed. Check the weather stripping and make sure there are no holes or dry-rot.

We realize that while you are committed to your family's health and safety, you may not have the time or inclination to implement these recommendations yourself. If that is the case, we recommend that you entrust the work to a competent professional. It may cost a little more, but in the long run it is well worth the investment. You might even want to make it one of your resolutions to improve the health of your home.

Happy New Year... from our home to yours.

*Jeri Stark is a City Island resident who works as a project manager in the areas of general contracting and interior design for residential and commercial spaces.*

## Reflections

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Amber says that it is getting easier, though she used to be afraid to try. "I actually like doing this. It makes me feel smart when I get it right." Her report card made her look smart, too, with growth and improvement. Amber walks proudly; she is always on time and is eager to come to school. Her mother was very happy on report card night. What a difference one teacher can make!

Mr. Garrison proclaims with authority: "The Emperor Constantine saw the sign. He heard a voice from the sky: 'In hoc signo vinces.' By this sign you shall conquer." The sixth graders ask if he was present at this historical event. "Ha ha ha! In my dreams!" answers Mr. G. "This is still our battlecry, people." The class seems puzzled. "I feel a writing assignment coming on," sighs Shannon. "What subject will it count for Mr. Garrison?" He replies: "Religion of course! Every subject has religion in it when Mr. Garrison is your teacher." How true!

The seventh grade compares our school to a living cell. I like this comparison. Mrs. Dennehy is the nucleus; she gives directions to the cell parts. The classroom walls are like the cell membrane; the door lets some things in and out. Ms. Zangaglia is the mitochondrion, the power source; she too is like the cell wall in a plant cell, tough and necessary to support plants. We are the plants. We need a little food, sun and water. The desks are like the vacuoles, and the cafeteria is like the ribosome. (This actually comes from the notes I took during a classroom observation.) They end the lesson with a cell spelling bee. Ms. Zangaglia hardly says a word.

"What is the matter Jacob?" I ask. "Why are you outside the classroom?" He replies seriously: "I'm getting into character for our fourth-grade commandment play. I play this kid who lied to his mother about not doing his homework. You know, Mrs. Dennehy, that means that I broke three commandments, maybe more." "How's that Jake?"

I ask. He responds thoughtfully: "Number four, number one and the one about lying I think." "Is there one about lying?" I ask him. "If there isn't one, then there should be. Maybe we can add one like an amendment to the Constitution." Great job, Mrs. Helen! Great job!

A woman that can make something out of anything toils tirelessly in our fifth grade, filled with enthusiasm and hope for each student. Mrs. Lisa comes down to the office with one of her students. Trina says that she was sad and missed her dad, so she wrote a beautiful letter to him. They both want me to read it. Trina says: "I told Mrs. Lisa that I used the writing process to make it perfect." And nearly perfect it was! Trina followed her rubric and Mrs. Lisa followed her heart. She asks Trina, "Would you like me to mail this for you?" Trina smiles, nods her head and replies: "You know, I am smarter than I think I am sometimes. When I work hard, I get things right. Sometimes it is hard to work hard when I am sad, but Mrs. Lisa always makes me feel better."

As my reflection comes to an end, I consider the significance of Catholic schools and Catholic Schools Week and how they relate to what I encounter on a daily basis. This year's theme for the week is, "Catholic Schools: A+ for America." As I think about that, I think beyond the obvious academic meaning. We strive constantly for academic excellence, and there are many studies that show the real world value of a Catholic school education. However, our small school is so much more than simply that. It stands apart because it strives to nurture A+ quality hearts and souls in our students. It is the goal of every teacher, staff member and administrator to model faith, hope and charity every day, even when it is difficult to do so. And more importantly, it is our stated mission to instill the importance and understanding of caring and empathy in the day to day lives of the precious children entrusted to our care.

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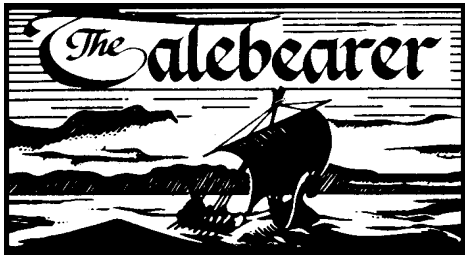


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Information for the Talebearer must be received in writing no later than the 15th of the month except July and December. Mail to The Island Current, P.O. Box 6, City Island, NY 10464; include your name and telephone number.

A happy Feb. 1 birthday to Bay Street's Virginia "Bama" DiGregorio with love from your family and friends.

Happy New Year wishes to my precious "OPAL" with love forever from your E.B.

Birthday greetings to Bay Street's Lucy Zec, who will celebrate her big day on Feb. 26.

Happy birthday to the City Island Diner's Lisa Clarke on Feb. 26 and to her mother, Ceil Clarke, on Feb. 21.

Happy 20th birthday on Jan. 18 to Alanna McIntyre, with love from the McIntyre and Butterworth families.

Congratulations to Andrew Kos of Winters Street, with love from your babysitter Anne. Andrew is seven!

Happy birthday greetings on Feb. 23 to Horton Street's Ducky Rauhauser, with best wishes for smooth sailing from Karen, Paul, Roger, Mark and Lyla.

Happy second birthday to Erin Katherine O'Brien, daughter of Mark O'Brien and Sara Dennehy-O'Brien of Bay Street.

Belated congratulations to Maura Dennehy of Bay Street for her admission to the New York State Bar.

Happy 13th birthday to Francesca Strazzera on Jan. 23 and also to her sister, Victoria, who will celebrate her Sweet Sixteen on Feb. 3. Their dad, Frank, turns a big 50 on Feb. 13 and Susannah's birthday is Feb. 16. Whew!

Happy 10th birthday on Feb. 23 to Hailey Nelson, with love from the Butterworths.

Congratulations to Mike Rauh, who successfully completed his 33rd consecutive New York City Marathon on Nov. 7, 2010. In spite of a really bad cold, he crossed that finish line one more time! In the days leading up to the race, Mike was the emcee at the ING Runners' Nation in the Javits Center, where he introduced the celebrity runners speaking at the Marathon Expo.

Marje and Dave Kos were also returning volunteers at the ING New York City Marathon, manning the ham radio base at the 25-mile mark. Marje completed her 41st career marathon on Oct. 9, 2010, at the Hartford Marathon. She had battled injuries in the months before the race and was like Mike just glad to finish. She and Dave competed in the Philadelphia Half Marathon on Nov. 21, 2010.

It was great to have Beth and Matt Rota joining the Rauh family for Christmas. They got here before the blizzard, thankfully, but had to switch to Amtrak to get them back to New Orleans when their return flight was cancelled. It was extra special to sing carols on Christmas with Beth playing the piano.

Check out YouTube's "Head in the Clouds" or "Marc Kaplan" to view three exercise videos you might find enjoyable.

Birthday wishes across the miles to former Islander Margaret Whelan, now residing in Blue Hill, Maine. Margaret will be blowing out 80 candles on Feb. 12.

Happy birthday on Feb. 2 to Gerry McCormick Sr., with love from your family and friends.

Feb. 26 birthday greetings to Colleen Pecoraro, with love and affection from the gang!

Happy ninth birthday on Feb. 2 to our special angel, Sarah Stark, with love from Mom, Grandma, Ronnie and Uncle David.

And a Happy Valentine's Day on Feb. 14 to everyone who loves someone!

Maria Swieciki



We made it! The staff of The Island Current ushered in the 40th year of publication with a party at longtime contributor Barbara Dolensek's home on Jan. 9, 2011. Editor Karen Nani acknowledged the years of experience among the volunteers: from the most recent staff addition, theater critic Bruce Weis, to business manager, Judy Rauh, who has been on board for an amazing 34 years. Shown at the event are (front row, l. to r.): Pat Parker, Maria Swieciki, Eileen Schaller Mazzaro, Barbara (and Teddy) Dolensek, Rick DeWitt and Laury Hopkins. Middle row: Karen Nani, Paula Huffell, Russell Schaller, Hans and Ginger Dannegger. Back row: Bruce Weis, Walter Huffell, Paul Nani, Judy Rauh, Bob and Maria Swieciki, Pauline and Michael Shanley, Jane Protzman, Cathy Mazzaro and Margaret Lenz.

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