Out With the Old, In With the New? City Island Continues to Grow
By BARBARA DOLENSEK

Although City Island retains its character as a small town in a big city, changes are taking place here that even visitors are beginning to notice. A new bridge is gradually appearing and will eventually replace the temporary bridge that was opened in December 2015. Some old buildings are in bad shape, but new ones are on the drawing board. A few storefronts are empty, but some are showing signs of life. The pharmacy may be gone, but the ice cream parlors have opened up for the season.

Many Islanders breathed a sigh of relief to learn that Consolidated Yachts will continue to operate as a boat yard, in spite of the recent sale, but many are still concerned that a few eyesores continue to exist in spite of community protests.

The scaffolding on the old Systems 2000 building at the corner of City Island Avenue and Carroll Street (top photo, below) has bothered residents and visitors alike for years, although the owner, an Island resident, claims that refurbishing the building will soon begin. The old Vallentine Sails building at 135 City Island Avenue (bottom photo), on the corner of Reynolds Street, appears to be having some work done, but the Bank of New York Mellon has held a tax lien on the property for several years, as the owner, who bought it at auction, has failed to pay taxes. The building has displayed graffiti, broken windows, and other signs of vandalism for many years now, and though it has been advertised as being for sale, there have been no takers.

Some empty buildings aren’t exactly eyesores, but they do lend an air of abandonment to the Island. At least three of these sites were the property of the late Virginia Cury or her husband, Thomas, and they have been empty for many years. Tax lien certificates have been sold for all of these properties, which include 311 City Island Avenue (the boarded-up building at the northwest corner of Fortham Street), 414 City Island Avenue (a derelict storefront that once held a cell phone shop), and 167 Rochelle Street. Other properties for which tax liens have been sold include Johnny B’s Marina (inside the parking lot at Don Coqui) and a few private houses on the Island.

Although Skip Giacco and the Chamber of Commerce, working with the City Island Civic Association, have been exploring the conversion of some empty storefronts into spaces where artists can live, work and sell or display their work, many storefront owners are unwilling to rent. Some take advantage of tax deductions they can claim on their properties; others simply don’t want to rent and would rather let their shops sit empty behind ugly steel gates or use them for storage.

Drop Anchor Inn at 189 City Island Avenue has been closed for years, and it is unlikely ever to open as a bar again, since it is across the street from PS 175. Another empty bar, Man Overboard between Carroll and Schofield Streets, looks attractive after a good deal of renovation, but it has been unable to obtain a liquor license and may remain empty for some time.

On the positive side, two of the empty shops at the north end of the Island, next to Dunkin Donuts, are being spruced up by a local business run by Teddy Montee, Daniel Srdoc and Vladimir Srdoc. The shop at 634 City Island Avenue houses the office of Grindstone Equity Group, Grindstone Construction and Grindstone Property Care and will have a construction showroom behind.

Seafood City is building an additional restaurant facility south of the present restaurant. The drawing of the work in progress (above) indicates that the new building will be more industrial than nautical in character.

MTA Bus Extension

After several years of trying to persuade the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to expand its service to City Island, especially during the early morning hours, the authority finally agreed to add one bus after 12:11 on weeknights and 1:11 on weekends. With the help of petitions signed by 700 residents of City Island and thanks to State Senator Jeff Klein, who supported the request, the MTA announced that the new run would begin in July.

Speaking for the Civic Association, corresponding secretary John Doyle, who had organized a meeting with the MTA in 2015, was pleased by the news, although the original request had been for hourly buses until 5 a.m. as well as better service for the existing runs, which are now shared with the Bay Plaza Shopping Center and rarely run on time.

The MTA may have been persuaded by the tragic death of cyclist Gabriela Aguilar-Vallinos in September 2015 who was struck by a hit-and-run driver as she rode off the Island after leaving work at the Shrimp Box after midnight. Her death shed a light on the need for such a service extension to increase commuter safety to and from the City Island.

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Two Pieces of Good News for CI
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“Extra hour of service will enable a sound alternative mode of transportation for the late-night crowds of City Island, including workers, residents and tourists. I’ve written several letters to the MTA over the years requesting such a service extension to the Bx29 line, and I’m thrilled the agency ultimately heeded the concerns of myself and the community,” said Senator Klein.

Muffling Rodman’s Neck
Councillor James Vacca reported on May 22 that in a hearing with the New York Police Department, he obtained assurances that funds from this year’s capital budget will be used to test sound baffling at the firing range in order to test the effectiveness of soundproof fencing at the facility. Construction on this temporary baffling is expected to begin after the start of Fiscal Year 2018 in July and to be completed within a year. The range will continue to operate, with one range closed at a time, although the NYPD anticipates that they may have to close the entire outdoor range for a few months and move training to another location. However the project moves forward, there may be some relief from the noise of gunfire within the not-so-distant future.
BRIEFLY...

THE ANNUAL BLESSING OF THE FLEET, with the cooperation of the City Island Tug & Tow Squadron and the Leonard Hawkins American Legion Post, will take place on Sunday, June 25, at 1 p.m. at Fenton Marine Dock in City Island. Multi-denominational clergy will bless vessels from the dock. Participation is by water only! Boats should assemble in City Island Harbor by the ferry dock on Hart Island at 12:30. Communications on VHF #71 will begin at 12:30. Event Chairman Dennis Gormley may be contacted at 718-652-3056 or 646-258-4250.

AARP DRIVER SAFETY CLASSES, sponsored by Assemblyman Michael R. Benedetto are held on a monthly basis at Fort Schuyler House, 3707 Cross Bronx Expressway, Bronx 10465. Call Assemblyman Benedetto’s office at 718-892-2335 for available dates and to reserve a seat. The cost is $20 for AARP members and $25 for non-members. This six-hour course will refresh your driving knowledge with a review of time-tested safe driving tips. Those who complete the course will receive a reduction of about 10 percent from the base rate of their automobile and motorcycle liability premiums each year for three years.

"AWAKE, THE DREAM OF STANDING ROCK," an outstanding and incisive documentary film, will be shown at the Community Center on Sunday, June 25, starting at 5 p.m. The showing will be followed by a discussion of the film and the social, political, environmental and historical elements of the recent non-violent protest activities in North Dakota involving the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, several private oil energy companies and ultimately state and local authorities. The event is sponsored by City Island Indivisible. For more information, call Michael Morrison at 646-244-7214.

City Island Nautical Museum: The Mark Whicome show will come down after Sunday, June 11, so be sure to visit before then to see these wonderful works of art. An exhibition of images of the old City Island Bridge will go up that weekend and open on Saturday, June 17. The museum has collected some wonderful pictures by Island artists, but there is room for one or two more if anyone has a picture (photograph or painting or print) they would be willing to lend for the summer months. Call 718-885-0507 for more information.

45 blotter

Complaints reported from City Island to the 45th Precinct during April and May 2017. Unfounded complaints are not included in the list.

1 – CONSTITUTIONAL VIOLATION
2 – CRIMINAL MISCHIEF
3 – TAMPERING WITH EVIDENCE
4 – HARASSMENT
5 – RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT
6 – VANDALISM
7 – GRAFFITI
8 – LEAVING THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT

Police provided details on the following incidents and arrests for the period from April 13 to May 23, 2017.

5/17 – At 12:16 p.m., an Island male was driving his vehicle when it was struck by an unknown person in a yellow truck. The driver of the vehicle fled the scene.

5/13 – On Bridge Street at 3:55 p.m., an off-Island female was driving her vehicle when she was struck by an unknown person in a yellow truck. The driver of the vehicle fled the scene of the accident.

5/17 – At 12:16 p.m., an Island male reportedly harassed a female neighbor following a verbal dispute on Reynolds Street.

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Poetry fans are aware that a haiku is an important form of Japanese verse, written in 17 syllables divided into 3 lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables, often on the subject of nature or one of the four seasons. But until Sunday, May 18, 2017, not many City Islanders were aware that we have a haiku poet in our midst, thanks to an article that appeared in the New York Times Metropolitan section.

David Ellis has lived on City Island for the past seven years, and for the past five years he has been writing haiku verses. He published a book of these verses, “Beach in City Island,” inspired by the images of nature that inspire his father: crabs, snails and waves. The original edition is currently out of print, but he has written haiku on pieces of driftwood, which beachgoers often come across in their walks around the Island.

Mr. Ellis grew up in Mount Vernon, NY, and he was raised in the Pentecostal Church, which he credits for inspiration in his writing, “a great foundation to have.” He graduated from Allen University in South Carolina and obtained a degree in elementary education. He has been working at a Catholic school in Harlem for the past 15 years and moved here in 2010.

He has written poetry since he was a teenager, but haiku is his favorite form now. As he puts it, “But everything changed when I came here. I became in tune with the Island. My poetry became spiritual.” Writing these poems is the closest he’s felt to God.

Stepping out of the house in the summer with my son, Gabriel, barefoot and walking on the beach feels so free. I’m glad he is able to have this memory as a kid, running on the beach and just being a kid.”

Mr. Ellis dedicated his book to Gabriel, who is now 6, writing: “May you always have a shell in your pocket and sand between your toes.” Gabriel is now illustrating a new children’s edition of “Beach in City Island,” inspired by the images of nature that inspired his father: crabs, snails and waves. The original edition is currently out of print, but check with the Kaleidoscope Gallery, which will have copies for sale when it is reprinted.

In the meantime, take a walk on the beach and find pieces of driftwood that Mr. Ellis has left for us. “Haiku is a way of life,” he says. “It’s about staying in the moment.”

Flock of birds fly high
Sun begins to relent
Ruby gold sunset

Sun shines moon is clear
As the waves come in slowly
Watching us closely

The ocean has eyes
Seagulls soar in air

Watching us closely
Seagulls soar in air

Sun shines moon is clear
As the waves come in slowly
Watching us closely

According to Sister Catherine Cleary, the Medical Missionaries of Mary moved to City Island 43 years ago this month and became part of the community, but they will be leaving for good later this year. As she told The Current: “Now, as with all missionaries, we are moving on, as our work is done.”

The Medical Missionaries of Mary is an international congregation of Catholic women dedicated to providing health care to the underprivileged around the world. The sisters are trained as doctors, nurses, midwives and counselors, and they serve in 24 countries, mostly in Africa. Donations received during this year’s annual Lenten Appeal at St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church went directly to bringing vaccination programs, nursing care and health education to Honduras in 1974, the order bought a house on Minnewford Avenue from Tommy and Mary Keegan, and they used it as their administration building for the Americas, including Honduras and Brazil. When the house is sold, the sisters living there will go to other convents that belong to their order.

Many devoted sisters have lived in the convent over the years. Sr. Catherine Cleary was a hospital administrator for 20 years in Nigeria and Tanzania, and on City Island, she was the business administrator for the Americas. “We will miss our neighbors, friends, St. Mary’s and the Island community, and we are very grateful for the years here,” she said. Sr. Catherine will be returning to her native Ireland.

Sister Margaret Meyer, a medical doctor who worked in Africa for 35 years with leprosy and AIDS patients, has recently left for Somerville, MA. Sr. Ann Flynn, a nurse and midwife in Tanzania for 17 years, will be joining Sr. Margaret in the Boston area. “Every place you go,” Sr. Ann said wistfully, “you carry a piece of each with you when you leave.”

Many St. Mary’s parishioners have fond memories of Sr. Mary Shepard, Sr. Marie Flynn and Sr. Bernadette McConville, who lived here for many years.

Judy and Mike Rauh told The Current that they will miss the sisters from the Medical Missionaries. “They brought the blessings of their religious community to our City Island neighborhood. More than neighbors, they became friends.”

The only convent still on City Island is on Kilroe Street. It houses the Daughters of Mary, a missionary congregation of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church.

Another parishioner, Matt Panza, noted: “We are experiencing a bleeding of sorts in our Island. In recent memory, we have seen the closing of the Catholic school and the annexation of St. Mary’s to the mainland parish of Our Lady of the Assumption. One of the yearly rituals was to give to the Medical Missionaries of Mary during Lent by placing quarters in a special folder. I just realized that this will be the last. The Medical Missionaries will no longer be on our Island.”

In a letter published in St. Mary’s Sunday Bulletin, the sisters wrote: “We leave the Island but we carry you in our hearts and prayers. Thank you so much for all your friendship, help and support.”

Parishioners and neighbors will miss the sweet smiles and compassion of the Medical Missionaries as they bid them a fond farewell.

After 43 years on City Island, the Medical Missionaries of Mary are leaving. Pictured here are Sr. Ann Flynn (at left) and Sr. Catherine Cleary, two of the many sisters who made City Island their home over the years.

By VIRGINIA DANNEGGER

A FOND FAREWELL

City Island’s High Schoolgraduation day bulletin, the sisters wrote: “We leave the Island. In recent memory, we have seen the closing of the Catholic school and the annexation of St. Mary’s to the mainland parish of Our Lady of the Assumption. One of the yearly rituals was to give to the Medical Missionaries of Mary during Lent by placing quarters in a special folder. I just realized that this will be the last. The Medical Missionaries will no longer be on our Island.”

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Dear Friend:

Thank you for the lovely article on Island Current. We would sincerely like to thank Lumia Decorators for making it possible and to Bill Stutig for such a well-written and kind article. We have been longtime advertisers and truly enjoy reading The Current. We treasure our clients and the many friends we have made on City Island!

Keep up the good work.

Paola and Joe Florio

Pursuit of Charity

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

To The Editor:

We would sincerely like to thank The Island Current for the lovely article on Lumia Decorators in the May 2017 issue.

Thank you to Karen Nani for making it possible and to Bill Stutig for such a well-written and kind article. We have been longtime advertisers and truly enjoy reading The Current. We treasure our clients and the many friends we have made on City Island!

Keep up the good work.

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Pursuit of Charity

The Brothers of the Bronx since 1918 have made the pursuit of charity one of our most important Masonic endeavors. In the early years, funds raised were for the sole purpose of welfare relief for Brothers and their families. Over the years with the introduction of medical and life insurance, it became evident that we needed to redirect our efforts. In the 1970s, the Brothers of the Bronx took on the mission to assist organizations that were bringing economic relief and social programs to charities that do not enjoy a national fundraising base and rely for the most part on individuals

who are in the local geographic area.

We raise funds through our charity ball journal. We sell ads and boosters and many months of diligent work go into the preparation of this journal; the profits we generate in turn are shared with charitable organizations. We have no administrative fees and 100 percent of the profits are distributed each year.

Here is a brief list of charities that we support in your area: Trinity United Methodist Church, the City Island Community Center, and various Boy and Girl Scout troops. We also run three blood banks during the year, clothing and food drives for residents of the South Bronx, and we run three to four Child ID programs at Bronx schools. We also hold a holiday party for children in the South Bronx.

Every year, we hold a charity appreciation night and invite the charities to receive gifts from our fund raising effort. Our message to these charities follows: “We appreciate your life’s work and your impact on the community and in our small way we hope this gift helps you continue your labor of love. Again thank you for what you do and your impact on the community you serve.”

This year on April 26, we presented gifts to the representatives of the following City Island organizations: Troop 231 Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts (Angelo Bellocchio and Jim McGaughan); City Island Girl Scouts and Brownies (Melissa Cebollero, Jonna Gallo-Weppler and Cheryl Risdian); Temple Beth-El (Elaine Belasco); the City Island Community Center (Brenda Prohaska); Trinity United Methodist Church (Violet Smith and Pastor Yew); and Grace Episcopal Church (Barbara Dennis and Paul Nani).

Our District message to our brothers is a simple one: “If you care, then please do and your impact on the community you serve.”

We welcome letters and opinions. Letters longer than 250 words will be edited, with every effort made to include them, but names will be withheld upon request.

Decoration Profile

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New Leadership, New Ideas at 45th Precinct
By KAREN NANI

The new commander of the 45th Precinct, Captain Carlos Ghonz (above left), met with Islanders at the Community Council breakfast on May 10, 2017, including retired NYPD officer and Island Current photographer Matt Panza.

The new commander at the 45th Precinct, Captain Carlos Ghonz, brings a wide range of police experience gained from his 12 years of rising in the ranks of the New York City Police Department (NYPD). He took the helm of leadership of the precinct, which includes City Island, Pelham Bay, Co-op City and other east Bronx neighborhoods, in March 2017, following the departure of Deputy Inspector Danielle Raia.

Captain Ghonz described his personal history and rise in the NYPD in an interview with The Current on May 23, 2017. He was born in the Dominican Republic in 1979, and his family moved to New York in 1989. “I attended Norman Thomas High School in Manhattan” he said nostalgically, “which doesn’t have that name any more.” He eventually received a full scholarship to Newberry College in South Carolina, “for baseball, because everyone plays baseball in the Dominican Republic.”

After college, he tried his hand at teaching and also considered law school. But in 2005 he applied to the NYPD. Although no one in his family had been a police officer, law enforcement was always in the back of his mind, and he knew that his family and peers consider it a respected profession. Things happened very fast after that; he was accepted into the academy, graduated in six months and was assigned first to the 33rd and then to the 30th Precinct in Manhattan.

Captain Ghonz’s next assignment was in the Narcotics Division in the Bronx, and in 2009 he was promoted to detective. His success at undercover work earned him a promotion to sergeant, and he was moved to the 46th Precinct in the Bronx. He also considered law school.

In addition to his police work, he spent time in Housing and Internal Affairs and was eventually promoted to lieutenant, when he moved to the 52nd Precinct. After being promoted to captain, he returned to the 46th Precinct, where he became executive officer, or second in command, and was put in charge at the 45th earlier this year.

Along the way, he met his wife, Michelle, who was working for the district attorney’s office and is now an officer in the 50th Precinct in the Bronx. The couple lives in Yonkers and are raising two sons. When asked if she could ever work under his command in the 45th, he joked that, in addition to its being against departmental rules, she wouldn’t be able to boss him around here the way she does at home.

So what does he think of his new assignment? “I love it in the 45th Precinct, because it is a very involved community, which makes it easier for us to do our jobs.”

He noted an interesting statistic—that there are more NYPD officers living within the boundaries of the 45th Precinct than in any other precinct. He praised the City Island Civic Association, whose April meeting he attended early in his tenure as commanding officer in order to meet and listen to residents.

It is especially focused on the traffic problems on City Island and is responsible for the new traffic pattern implemented on Easter and Mother’s Day. “There was a lot of traffic, but my officers kept it moving the entire day.” He was personally on the scene, and he instructed officers to make anyone caught in the fire lane turn around and leave the Island.

In addition to traffic, “my goal is that officers never leave the Island,” explaining that he strives to have a detail on the Island for every shift, especially during the upcoming summer weekends. He also wants more officers qualified for bicycle duty, because they can move around better in traffic and at Orchard Beach.

Overall, his emphasis is on crime prevention and having as many officers on the street as possible. “We will focus on chronic 311 complaints, which come to our computer if they are from residents in the 45th Precinct, and we try to fix the issue before it becomes a crime.”

Longer term, he looks forward to the 45th becoming an “NCO command,” which stands for Neighborhood Coordination Officers. These designations have been happening across the city, and the 45th is one of the few remaining precincts without that status.

“It will mean more officers for us, which will potentially increase the present total of 150 officers to around 200.”

Captain Ghonz summarized his optimism about working with the community. He wants residents to contact the precinct any time there is a problem or to call 311 or 911. He looks forward to better communication between the neighborhoods and the police in the large geography of the 45th Precinct.

Welcome aboard, Captain Ghonz!
**JUNE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

**Summer Reading: Toddler Playtime:** We bring all sorts of crawl tunnels, a portable ball pit and other fun toys along with a puppet story time! For toddlers to 5 years old. Limit to 20 participants. Monday, June 12, at 11 a.m.

**City Island Chess Club:** Chess is widely considered the oldest game in the world and has been played by people of all cultures for centuries. Now we're encouraging families, friends and people of all ages to come and learn how to play like a professional. Saturday, June 3 and 17, at 3 p.m. Pre-registration is required.

**Friday Afternoon Activities:** On Friday at 3 p.m. we plan a series of special activities to celebrate the beginning of the weekend so check out this month's events and come hang out with us! June 2: Color a Cube; June 9: Father's Day DIY; June 16: Wii and Board Games; June 23: Wii and Board Games; June 30: Wii and Board Games.

**JUNE ADULT PROGRAMS**

**Thursday Writing Club:** Where have all the good stories gone? They are lurking at the City Island Library. Come in to see what the weekly themes will be. Gall Hitt leads the adventure. No registration required. Every Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

**Growth Together:** A group for people who want to improve and develop themselves and help others to do the same by providing motivation and support as a group to the individuals in it. We seek to provide a comfortable atmosphere for people to explore goals they want to achieve and self-improvement ideas and be a network of people willing to listen, help and motivate them. Wednesday, June 7 and 21, at 2 p.m.

**City Island Scrabble Club:** If you're looking for some friendly competition, then join our Scrabble Club! Come in and flex your vocabulary muscles. You may even learn a thing or two while you're making some new friends. Note: Limited to 12 participants; registration required. Call or stop by the branch to reserve your spot. Thursday, June 1, 15 and 29, at 1 p.m.

**City Island Book Club:** Monday, June 5 and 19, at 5 p.m.

**The Island Writers:** This is a group for all who are interested in writing professionally or personally. Come check us out! Every Tuesday at 1 p.m.

**Intro to Computers:** Come to the library, ask questions about how to use computers and sharpen your skills through computer use. “How do I turn the computer on?” “How do I set up my own account?” “How do I check out this month’s events and come hang out with us!”

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Skip Giacco: “Think Small and Your Business Will Grow”

By BILL STUTTIG

Skip Giacco and his wife, Louise, have owned and operated Lickety Split ice cream parlors for over the past 14 years. As he was preparing to open up for another season of children and families and socializing over a scoop of pistacho ice cream on a nice spring evening, he told The Island Current that his business is proof that small businesses can make it on City Island over the long haul.

“Lickety Split is unusual because we appeal to both off-Islanders and Islanders, and it’s wonderful to see those two groups coming together and eating together,” he said. Skip believes that the combination of the local residents mingling with a small percentage of the more than 40,000 visitors who come to the Island each summer weekend is proof that it can be done, that businesses can be marketed to both visitors and residents and that it can work.

Skip, a former creative director for a major Madison Avenue advertising firm, and Louise, a former model, moved to City Island for a quiet retirement in 2001 after he was first diagnosed with macular degeneration and his eyesight had begun a slow progression toward legal blindness. For over a year, while exploring the Island’s small town appeal, he became curious about the ice cream parlor behind the cottage where he and his wife lived. It had been closed for some time, and, after investigating further, he found that the owners were going through difficulties, both financial and medical, which made it impossible to continue the business. Skip and Louise thought that reviving the former ice cream business behind their home might be an interesting retirement project, so they bought the business, fixed up the parlor over several months and began selling ice cream the following spring, while pursuing other interests, which included playing with a band at local gigs.

The Giaccos, with the help of several local teenagers, ran the shop from late spring through early fall for several years without getting involved in local civic affairs. But after a trip to Mexico in 2009 over the removal of the dolphin statue from Hawkins Park, which is next to Lickety Split, he joined with other local merchants and schoolchildren in a successful campaign to save the beloved dolphin from relocation.

From then on, Skip’s involvement with his fellow City Island entrepreneurs grew, and he decided to take on the role of lead entrepreneur. The Island Chamber of Commerce and to try bringing the many diverse businesses together to work with each other. “There are 108 businesses on City Island, including home office businesses, and we have 63 members, 10 of them restaurants, so I think the chamber is very healthy,” Skip says. For all his efforts, Skip has received the Sam Berman Award from the City Island Chamber of Commerce and an Outstanding Leadership award from the 45th Precinct Community Council. He accepted on behalf of the half of the City Island Chamber of Commerce the Tourism Award from the Bronx Borough President and several proclamations from our elected officials. Along with Barbara Dolensek and John Doyle, Skip led the fight for our new bridge and against the mismanagement of property on the corner of Schofield Street and City Island Avenue.

Skip believes that the participation and cooperation among the business owners remains high, but that the Island’s business community still faces many problems, including a limited customer base—only 4,500 residents, competition from off-Island and major traffic, which he considers both a blessing and a curse. “Whenever there is an effort to reduce or redirect traffic, the ones that feel it are the small local businesses,” he said. “What the traffic control is doing is essentially turning away our customers. The harder we make it for people to get here, the harder it becomes for the little guy.” He believes that what the Island needs to do is to not turn away those people but to reach out and encourage them to explore the whole Island.

“Our small business and a few others, like the Diner, have been successful over a period of years, and I ask myself: What do we have in common? The answer is that we are cool. We have small town appeal, and that is what brings a lot of people here. They come from the high-density communities to this little small town. Every product that we offer they can get in their neighborhoods, but they come here for the experience—the small town atmosphere that is unique here. City Island has to think small. That is what people want. That is the ideal.” Skip notes, however: “I don’t know how to make that idea grow, other than more small restaurants. A Mexican restaurant would do wonderfully, for example.”

Recent marketing ideas initiated by the Chamber—including a free trolley and reaching out to the Bronx Marriott to provide free transportation from the hotel to the Island—have been successful on a limited basis. But other ideas, such as taking advantage of available state grants to establish art studio residences in some of the vacant storefronts in the middle of the Island, have been met with resistance by the owners of those storefronts.

“Most of the landlords do not want to be bothered,” he notes, “because that means making a deal that may not be as good for them as they would like. But in the end, it would be good for the community. Everybody has to understand that if we don’t work together as a community, we are going to have a problem. The property owners must be willing to make deals with the entrepreneurs, who have to be willing to create a business that is going to work in this market. And the people who live here have to make a commitment to buy here; even if we have to spend a little more, we will help the community. We all have to be willing to make that effort.”

Skip adds that the key is affordability, providing a product that is simple but affordable so that both Islanders and off-Islanders will be willing to spend money here. That is the formula that has allowed his ice cream parlor to survive for 14 years, and it has worked for others as well. He knows that several of his fellow business owners realize that they are not going to get rich here, but he believes that this is a trade-off that allows them to stay here in a small quiet community and be happy.

Skip takes heart that a group of Asian entrepreneurs have come to the Island and opened businesses in the center of the island. “This is wonderful because they are seeing City Island as a place to invest their money. It proves that people are willing to come here and take a chance, and that it is up to the rest of us to support them.” Lickety Split offers everything a traditional community ice cream parlor offers, including high-quality ice cream and gelato, a unique assortment of specialty flavors and a variety of ice cream-based drinks, including milk shakes, egg creams and ice cream sodas. The store opened on May 20 and will remain open every day until early October from noon to 10 p.m. on weekdays and until midnight on weekends.

“We hire local kids,” Skip told The Island Current. “It is great. You see them grow up, and later they come back to say hello as they go on to college and beyond. It is a very special neighborhood type of feeling.” Louise agrees: “It’s authentic. I love the business, and I love the children. When they drop their ice cream, we go and get them another.”

Skip adds: “This business is about ice cream and kids and creating a space where people can be together. Where can you go wrong?”
We moved & the gang’s all here!

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June 2017

Page Nine

A Current Review
“The Philadelphia Story” Delights City Island

By BRUCE A. WEIS

The spring production of the City Island Theater Group was a lively and handsomely produced presentation of “The Philadelphia Story,” a comedy by Philip Barry, who wrote it in 1938 with Katharine Hepburn in mind. Surprising as it may seem now, the summer of 1938 was an anxious time for the actress, who had all lost money and was in a two-year slump. She liked to speak her mind, shunned make-up and didn’t choose to play the role of Hollywood star, but worst of all, her recent films had all lost money. That year a full-page ad appeared in the Hollywood Reporter criticizing studios for promoting stars like Hepburn whose “public appeal is negligible,” and that same day, RKO announced that the studio had “punted ways” with her.

But Barry’s “Philadelphia Story” changed all that. Hepburn felt that the story of a socialite, Tracy Lord, whose wedding plans are complicated by the simultaneous arrival of her ex-husband and an attractive journalist, might help create a vehicle for herself that could erase her label as “box of socialite, Tracy Lord, whose wedding to become tabloid fodder in order to salvage her career.”

The play opened on Broadway on March 28, 1939, at the Shubert Theatre in New York City, running for 417 performances, and the film version appeared shortly afterward starring Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. The film was released to become a huge success that snapped Hepburn’s losing streak. The movie was released to become a huge film version appeared shortly afterward starring Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. The film was released to become a huge success that snapped Hepburn’s losing streak.

The play opens as the wealthy Lord family is preparing to invite the cream of Philadelphia society into their home for the wedding of their daughter to George Kittredge, a self-made manager of a coal company. The pending marriage doesn’t sit well, however, with little sister Dinah, big brother Sandy or their aunt C.K. Kittredge. Have we all believed that George isn’t good enough for Tracy? To complicate matters even more, the philandering of Tracy’s father with a Broadway dancer has caused a scandal, and a scruffy, unscrupulous medical tycoon has threatened to expose it unless her reporters are allowed to cover the wedding. A connection develops between Mike Conner, the reporter, and Tracy as they spar over class boundaries. Tom between George, Dexter, and Mike, Tracy must determine whether or not she should be on a pedestal.

In the City Island Theater Group production, Casey Marie Ecker was charming, humorous and engaging in the role of Tracy Lord, and though the audience may have been reminded of Hepburn, Casey definitely brought her own interpretation and comic timing to the mix. Jean Eifert, as Tracy’s long-suffering mother, Margaret, made a great show of keeping up Philadelphia appearances and trying to hold the family together in the absence of her philandering husband, Seth Lord, who was played with sensitivity and warmth by Robert McEvily. Seth had not been expected to attend the wedding, but a secret invitation gave him the opportunity to mend some fences and to help Tracy come to terms with herself and the issues that had driven her and Eifert’s on the wedding day. Claudia Kimmel, as Tracy Lord’s younger sister, Dinah, easily had the most energy, pound for pound, of any actor in the cast. Claudia, a graduate of P.S. 175, is multi-talented, and we expect to see a lot more of her in the future. Robert McEvily, as Tracy’s brother, Seth, displayed an appropriately diplomatic charm in arranging for his sister’s wedding to become tabloid fodder in order to salvage her career.

Elizabeth Paldino handled the role of photographer Liz Imbrie, whose job was to cover the wedding, with her usual aplomb. The role calls for idealism with a sense of humor. Paldino brought off a convincing performance.

The production was not without its share of problems and adjustments. The Philadelphia Society, the actor’s production manager, kept track of the thousands of details that accompany all of the theater group’s wonderful productions.

Robbie Livingston convincingly played the role of George Kittredge, Tracy’s groom to be, as a suitably stuffy social climber, in spite of the fact that he actually got the role three days before opening. Lewis K. Montano, as Uncle William Tracy, had fun playing a predilection for pinching the backsides of nearby females.

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Current Calendar

JUNE
Sat., June 3, Clothing Drive, sponsored by the Bronx Masons, 241 City Island Avenue, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Sat. and Sun., June 3 and 4, Spring Arts and Crafts Fair, sponsored by the City Island Chamber of Commerce, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., City Island Avenue.
Sat., June 24, POTV Program, St. Mary’s School Yard, Minneford Avenue and Kilroe Street, drop-off between 4:30 and 5 p.m. Menu: chicken with peppers, onions and rice.
Sun., June 25, Blessing of the Fleet, 1 p.m. off Fenton’s Marine Dock, VHF Channel 71 beginning 12:30 p.m.
Tues., June 27, City Island Civic Association meets, 7:30 p.m., Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.
Thurs., June 29, Annual Bronx Fireworks Extravaganza, Orchard Beach, 6 to 10 p.m.

City Island Indisvisible

City Island Indisvisible is open to all people interested in working to promote progressive, inclusive issues through activit-

ism, conversation, information sharing and coalition building. We welcome you to join our meetings, our mail list and our Face-

book page to stay informed and in action; for more information, email cityislandindy@gmail.com and follow us on Facebook. Our meetings in June are on Tuesday, June 6, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, June 25, at 5 p.m. in the City Island Community Center.

Susan Bellinson

St. Mary’s Thrift Shop

Don’t miss our end-of-season sale, which includes half-price books, a bag and a $5 bag sale. We will close for the season on June 27 and re-open on Sept. 21.

Arlene Byrne

Grace Episcopal Church

Grace Episcopal Church, located at 116 City Island Avenue on the corner of Pilot Street, is a place of worship and fellowship. Grace warmly welcomes you to the following:

Worship Schedule: Sundays at 10 a.m. lead by Rabbi Shohama Wiener and Rabbi David Evan Marks lead services with music by your Band by the Sea. At other times services are led by congregants in a joyful celebratory manner. Events begin promptly, so please come 15 minutes before listed times. Services are followed by a celebratory oneg (referrals). Reminder: for the health and comfort of all, please refrain from wearing perfume or cologne and look forward to seeing you at our services.

Temple Services Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. music by Your Band by the Sea and celebratory oneg after the service.

June 2: Rabbi David June 9: Community-led
June 6: Rabbi Shohama and Rabbi David June 16: Community-led
June 23: Community-led June 30: Community-led
Please join us for our annual meeting and reception on June 11 at 7:30 p.m., where members in good standing can vote on new trustees to serve on the board, hear our annual report and express your wishes for the Temple’s future. Ballots require votes from 20 percent of members to conduct business. Please do your part to help TBE flourish. Ballots can be submitted by returning it to vote by proxy, please email paul.klein@att.net. Refresments served.

Looking Ahead

Save the date: Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. will be our Shabbat by the Sea, gracefully hosted by Ken Binder and Steve Roth at 2 Bay Street. We look forward to this joyous occasion all year long. We celebrate the Sabbath with a sunset view of Manhattan. Music provided by Your Band by the Sea. Prayer, song and dance prevail. Refreshment provided by the generous hosts.

Adult Education: TBE invites the City Island community to our yoga classes on Monday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Danielle Haney (Pattreesha Sat Inder Kaur), a certified instructor in spiritual disciplines of breath and body, continues our weekly series. This transformative practice for body and spirit for deep healing in body, mind and soul. Suitable for all persons, ages, body types and experience levels. Dress in loose-fitting clothes: participants can take session on the ground (mats and pillows provided) or sit in a chair. Tea and cookies are served after sessions. Suggested freewill offering $10 per session. RSVP to Danielle at kyoe@att.net. Oneg sponsorships: Special events to honor others or celebrate your own special occasion (e.g., birthday, anniversary, new job, achievement, yahrzeit or memorial) can be a joyful moving community celebration as we warmly invite you to sponsor a Friday night oneg. To sponsor an oneg or for more information, please contact Violet Smith at 718-885-0978 or violetzen@aus.com.

For additional information, check out our website at www.yoursoulfullytheasa.org.

Dr. Ellen Ruth Topol

City Island Republicans

John Cerini will be the Republican candidate for City Council. He has been officially endorsed by the Bronx Republican party.

Our next meeting will be held Wednesday, June 7, at 7 p.m. at the Legion Post on City Island.

Petitions will be going out. Poll workers must attend. It is important that every-

one eligible sign the petitions because that allows us to get the candidates on the ballot, including for mayor.

Fred Ramjt Jr.

Trinity United Methodist Church

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

The Sunday school children are collecting donations for “Imagine No Malaria” through May. Malaria is preventable, and the donations go to purchasing nets for families living in areas where malaria is common. Please visit Trinity’s new home on the web (www.trinityofcityisland.org), where you will find all things Trinity, including the texts of Reverend Yew’s sermons.

The Budget Shop is open! Stop in and see what is new. It is open the first and third Saturday of each month, and occa-

sional Saturdays. Trinity is thankful for City Island’s continued support, both in volunteering of time, and the generosity of the donations.

Rick DeVitt

REGULAR MEETINGS

Weekly Twelve-Step Meetings on City Island

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

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

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

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

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

Saturdays and Sundays at 7:30 a.m., AA open meetings at City Island Community Center, 190 Fordham Street.

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

Trinity United Methodist Church: 718-885-1218

Grace Episcopal Church: 718-885-1080

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

The Garden Club luncheon on Thursday, May 18, 2017, was a great success, with over 80 in attendance. Virginia Dannegger (top photo, at left) won several raffle baskets; she is pictured here with Judy Jozon, club president, and Sally Connolly, who won the Maurice Foliol painting. The success of the luncheon was the result of hard work by officers and volunteers (l. to r.): Francine Alheid, chair of the luncheon; Elena Nueslein, treasurer of the club; Melanie Benvenuto, vice president and assistant treasurer; Barbara Denniss, corresponding secretary; and Judy Jozon.

Photos by BARBARA DOLENSEK and VIRGINIA DANNEGGER
AARP 318

The chapter meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m. at Trinity Methodist Church Hall on Bay Street. On June 7, at our regular meeting, we will discuss the new “PSS City Island Center.” We hope to see you there. For more information, please contact Joanne Valletta at 917-533-7873.

Join Lalitha Cosme to explore the dance, called Bharatanatyam, that is said to have derived from the dance of the ancient Indian Goddesses. This dance is known for its expressive ability to convey emotions and stories through dance, music, and facial expressions. Lalitha Cosme is a professional Indian dancer, educator, and performer. She will guide you through various steps and techniques of this unique dance form. Don’t miss this opportunity to experience a different cultural perspective and immerse yourself in the beauty of Indian dance.

To register or for more information, please contact Lalitha at 347-920-3127 or visit www.espanolexperience.com.

**Spanish Classes for Children:** Enroll now for this new educational program for children at the Center beginning its second year in September. Taught by experienced school teachers, the Spanish Experience teaches conversational Spanish to children grades K-5. Your child will learn to read, write, speak, and enjoy the culture of the Spanish language. Children 7 to 14 years old are welcome. For more information, contact Joanne Valletta at 917-533-7873 or visit www.espanolexperience.com.

Yoga with Ryan: Thursdays, 7:15 to 8:30 a.m. Ryan can teach many yoga poses with emphasis on alignment, coordinated breath with steady growth, increased flexibility and strength through deep relaxation to integrate the practice. Good for new students or students with limited flexibility and limited mobility. Ryan at 916-356-6763 or ryangillyg@gmail.com

**For additional information about the Community Cen- ter’s programs, visit www.theheal- ingforce.net. For free consultation or an appointment with Ryan, call 914-837-6830.**

**Ballroom Dance: Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Welcome the month of May with the tango and other favorite ballroom dances with instructor Michael Bonilla. It’s lots of fun and soon you may be “Dancing with the Stars.” For information, call 914-356-6673.**

**Bollywood Dance: Sundays, 7:15 and 2:30 p.m. Teens/Adults, 3:30. Join Latithea Cosme to explore the dance, and explore the music and culture of Indian films. To register or for more information, call 914-266-2033 or e-mail latithea- dance@gmail.com.**

**Juvenile Programs**

**Irish Dance for Children:** Mondays, June 5, Monday, June 19, and June 26, 2 to 4 p.m. For children 9 to 16, in strong with cross fit aerobics strength train- ing. Call Mary Immediately at 917-885-0793.

**Chess & Card Club:** Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Come play cards. Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Chances are you will see other people. And don’t forget the Dec 13 club. Drop in and we welcome all and really need volunteers and donations.

**Dance Party Workout:** Mondays, June 12 and 26 at 7 p.m. Have fun working out to music with Joanne Valletta. Enjoy our rhythmi- cally dance class with Eva. For more infor- mation, Eva at 646-854-504.**

**City Island Culinary Library:** Mondays, June 5 and 19, 3-7 p.m. Share recipes and have fun with other islanders who also like to cook. Pick up some new cooking skills as well. For information, call Keeney Sekelos at 917-533-7873.

**City Island Drawing Society:** Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Find your inner da Vinci and enjoy the ambiance of Aaron Gluck. For information, call 917-721-1419.

**Weight Watchers Meetings:** Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., with Deborah Weiss. Trim down and be healthy with the support of a great group. Now is a good time to join. For more information, call 917-885-3420 or Patty at 917-885-1891.

**Yoga with Jo Ann:** Tuesdays, 7 to 8:15 p.m., Sundays, 8 to 9:15 a.m. Gentle level-one class. Please bring a mat, a strap if possible, and a yoga blanket. For informa- tion, e-mail Joannyyj@aol.com or call 917-853-4719.

**Zumba with Julia and Lettie:** Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Sundays, 9 to 10 a.m. Enjoy a combination of yoga, zumba, and a fun mix of zumba that is sure to make you sweat. For information, call Julia at 917-601-5514.

**Zumba with Lettie:** Thursdays, 6 p.m. Lettie will be teaching a very creative samba, a fun and energetic workout that will get you pumping. For information, call 917-292-4229.

**Patty Grondahl**

**American Legion Auxiliary**

On Saturday, April 22, Jane Gelsi, chair of the VA & Youth committee and an Auxiliary member, introduced the Legion to Greg Clancy, Boy Scout Troop leader, par- ticipated in an Earth Day community event with the Daughters of the American Rev- olution and city Troop on City Island. They cleaned up the entire avenue in spite of the rain. Cupcakes and drinks were served at Trinity Church.

**National Poppy Day began on May 26. The American Legion Auxiliary has been conducting a Poppy Program for over 100 years, and their members raise over $6 million annually to provide support for vet- erans, their families and community agencies.**

By wearing poppies on May 26, we honor every U.S. service member who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country, their families, and freedom and democracy. At the same time, by wearing this simple red flower, we want to show our support for veterans, their families, and for the generations that come to. Our poppy program runs throughout the year. Please be generous when buying.

Our Unit 156 was recently featured in the May issue of the ALA magazine on page 24 for our unique poppy program. Barbara Coker, Department Secretary in Albany for the Auxiliary, reached out to us to request that we send a poppy portrait painted by our very own member, Marilyn Anderson. Marilyn brought us the portrait to display it in her office at Legion headquar- ters in Albany. This is what we call being nothing short of patriotic.

The Memorial Day Parade was cele- brated on Monday, May 29. Auxiliary members walked proudly for our active ser- vice members, veterans and their families. It was a wonderful day filled with family and friends, hot dogs, tradition and patriotism.

The second Quilts of Valor will be given by Bill Anthony (Pontecorvo), World War II veteran and member of our long-time City Island resident. A ceremony and presentation will be held at the Leonard Hawkins Post.

Our Unit President, Laura Booth, will be joining the AFA (American Legion Auxiliary) in Syracuse, NY, to gain more information on the Girls State Program, which we hope to start in September 2017. The year-end volunteer dinner/meeting will be held at the Morris Yacht Club on Wednesday, June 7, at 6:30 p.m. Many thanks to Michael Pretzetti, who always goes beyond the call of duty for the Auxiliary women.

As the year ends, nominations were made and positions accepted by Sue Michaels as our new Unit Chaplain and Harlan Sexton as our new Recording Sec- retary. Many thanks to Vivi McGuire and Jean D’Alessandro for their past service and support. Initiations will take place at the June 7 dinner meeting.

If you would like to become a member of the Auxiliary, please contact Doreen Wall at americanlegionmembership156@gmail.com

**Have a great summer!**

Joanne Valletta

**PSS City Island Center**

The mission of PSS City Island Center is to provide neighbors with the tools to live their full life, keeping them healthy, engaged and connected through innovative programs and classes. We are not your everyday senior center!

The center is located at 116 City Island Ave. The Grace Church Hall is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. A delicious lunch is served every day from 12 to 1 p.m. Suggested donation: $2. Participants are funded by PSS and the NYC Department for the Aging.

All programs and events are subject to change. Please call 917-721-1419 or 917-885-0727. To receive our newsletter and calendar of events send your email to patti@psss.org.

**Highlights**

- Reserve a table for five or more friends and reserve a table for lunch especially for you.
- June 2, Friday: All-day trip to Dunkin’ Donuts and Dunkin’ Donut Day.
- June 5: Dessert Day with peaches, pound cake and whipped cream.
- June 14: Free Lickerty Split Ice Cream
- June 16, Friday: Father’s Day party with entertainment
- June 22, Tuesday at 12 noon: Annual luncheon at the Lobster Box. To attend the Lobster Box luncheon, you must have a ticket. Lunch will also be served at Senior Center on this day.

**Physical Exercise:** The exercise program offers classes at various levels of fitness. Drop in and try one of our classes. Perfect for younger adults and seniors alike.

Thanks to Mike Jawski for everything he does, and thanks to Mike Tate for making us all the more proud of our Membership. Our gratitude goes to all those who do so for Post 156.

We have space for your party. We can accommodate up to 80 people, and

**continued on page 13**
Memorable Cinematic Soundtracks

I once saw an interview with Academy Award-winning composer John Barry, and ever since I’ve been very aware of musical scores in movies. Barry won an Oscar for his musical score in Out of Africa (1985) (which won a total of seven Oscars), loosely based on the memoirs of Danish Baroness Karen Blixen, who wrote under the pseudonym Isak Dinesen. The film stars Meryl Streep as the baroness, who in 20th-century colonial Kenya is the owner of a coffee plantation and has a passionate love affair with big-game hunter Denys Finch Hatton (Robert Redford). Barry also won Best Picture for Dances with Wolves (1990), in which Union Army Lt. John Dunbar (Kevin Costner, who also won the Best Director Oscar), is exiled to a remote western Civil War outpost, becomes involved with the Lakota Indians and falls in love with Stands with Fist (Mary MacDonnell). Other films with his soundtracks that I found memorable were Somewhere in Time (1980), which stars Harrison Ford as John Book, a cop who takes on the case of a murder committed in the bad guys and the community, with a traditional Amish barn-raising in between, the music truly underscores this beautiful and memorable film. Jarre’s credits also include Oscar winners Dr. Zhivago (1965), Lawrence of Arabia (1963) and Oscar-nominated Ghost (1990).

My favorite Dance with Wolves is the one by Academy Award-winner John Barry and The Bear (1992) with Alan Menken’s music and Howard Ashman’s lyrics. This amazing musical team’s efforts include Oscar winners Aladdin (1992) and The Little Mermaid (1989). Pocahontas (1995) also won for both best score and best song, “Colors of the Wind” (with lyrics by Ste- phen Schwartz). These are all wonderful films for children.


Born on 11, including the awards for Best Picture and Best Direc- tor, tying for more Oscars than any other film. Other memorable horror scores that were Oscar-nominated include A Beautiful Mind (2001) and Field of Dreams (1989).

French composer Eric Serra scored Leon: The Professional (1994), a movie I mentioned a few years ago in a column called “Unlikely Friendships.” The film stars Jean Reno as Leon, a hit man who, to his initial regret, saves the life of a stunning adolescent girl, Mathilda (Natalie Portman). She is the sole survivor when her family is murdered by a group of dirty cops led by Stansfield (Gary Oldman). The friendship that develops between Leon and Mathilda is touching indeed, but the real star of the film is the soundtrack, which is so excellent that I just couldn’t fast forward over the gruesome parts, as I didn’t want to miss the music. Trent Reznor, founder of the rock band Nine Inch Nails in 1988, was the composer of the Oscar-winning soundtrack in The Social Network (2010). It is the story of Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg), the world’s youngest billionaire. While at Har- vard, he and his best friend, Eduardo Saverin (Andrew Garfield), begin the project that became Facebook. Much of the story is told retrospectively through the viewpoint of two major lawsuits against Zuckerberg—one by Saverin and another by Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss (both twins played by Armie Hammer), who claimed that Facebook was their idea. Facing is the outstanding virtue of the film, supported by its Oscar-winning script by Aaron Sorkin (TV’s “The West Wing”) and superb musical score.

Two of my favorite soundtracks by the French composer Alexandre Desplat were nominated for Academy Awards and each won Best Picture: The King’s Speech (2010) and Argo (2012). A winner of a Golden Globe for its haunting musical score is The Painted Veil (2007), based on a novel by Somerset Maugham. Set in the 1920s, it is the story of a scientist, Dr. Walter Fane (Edward Norton), who when he discovers his wife, Kitty (Naomi Watts), is having an affair with diplomat Charlie Townsend (Liev Schreiber) takes her to a Chinese village, where he works to contain an outbreak of cholera. The real stars of this film are the cinematography and the music. The music of Morgan Freeman is well rep- resented in the film Witness (1985), which stars Harrison Ford as John Book, a cop who takes on the case of a murder committed in a Philadelphia train station. The only wit- ness is an Amish boy, Samuel (Lukas Haas), who is traveling with his newly widowed mother, Rachel (Kelly McGillis), to visit her sister. When the identity of the killer is discovered, Book takes Rachel and Samuel back to their community to hide. From the opening scene—a sea of wheat blowing in the wind—to the final showdown between the bad guys and the community, with a traditional Amish barn-raising in between, the music truly underscores this beautiful and memorable film. Jarre’s credits also include Oscar winners Dr. Zhivago (1965), Lawrence of Arabia (1963) and Oscar-nominated Ghost (1990).

A winner of the Academy Award for Best Original Score was Thomas Newman (1989). He was nominated for Academy Awards and won for The Shawshank Redemption (1994) for his work on the film. Newman’s advice to composers was to “find your voice in the film. Don’t try to be too much like others. Find your own style, your own way of writing music, and let it be unique to you. Remember, this is your opportunity to create something new and exciting for audiences to enjoy.”

One of the most successful films in recent history, was composed by James Horner. This epic American romantic disaster film is a fictionalized account of the sinking of the RMS Titanic. It stars Leonardo DiCaprio as Jack Dawson and Kate Winslet as Rose DeWitt Bukater, members of different social classes who fall in love aboard the ship, much to the consternation of her abusive arrogant fiancé, Cal Hockley (Billy Zane), and her gold-digging mother, Ruth (Frances Fisher). The movie begins with an aged Rose (Glenn Stuart) recounting the tragic tale to treasure hunter Brock Lovett (Bill Paxton), with exceptional com- positions by the film score.” Many of the people I have mentioned are interviewed. I can’t wait to see it myself. And until next time, happy viewing and listening...
The Island Current

School News

BY VIRGINIA DANNEGGER

Public School 175
Best wishes to all the eighth-graders who, pending successful completion of promotion requirements, will be attending the following high schools in September:

Organization News

Continued from page 11

members receive a discount on all hall rentals. Call Joe Goonan at 718-885-1637. Remember to play the Queen of Hearts raffle. The game is open to all. Proceeds from the game will help fund the refurbishing of the flagpole from the proceeds of the game. The Post pays the dues of members who are on active duty. Younger people are willing to help out around the Post contact Tom McShane is currently going for rehabilitation at the NYS Veterans Home in Montrose, NY. Thanks to all of those who helped make “Million Dollar May” a success. This will be our monthly coffee hour. We will resume in October. Our monthly holy hour will be held on the first Sunday of each month. We will resume in October.

St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church
Our monthly holy hour will be held on Friday, June 2, from 4 to 5 p.m. This will be our last holy hour before the summer months. We will resume in October.

Our monthly coffee hour will take place in the rectorcy on Sunday, June 4, after the 11 a.m. Mass. Come join your fellow parishioners for light refreshments. This will be the last coffee hour before the summer. We will resume in October.

On Father’s Day, June 18, we will honor all our fathers with a special blessing at all the Masses.

St. Mary’s Thrift Shop will be open during the month of June but will close at the end of the month for the summer. The thrift shop will reopen in September. Have a happy and safe summer!

Rene Dietz


Thank you to the entire City Island community for all of your support over the past 98 years.

John Muhrfield

On Sunday, April 30, 2017, Elliott Glick and Joanne Valletta sponsored a “Young Performers Night” at the Starving Artist Café, featuring 10-year-old Michael Schiavulli from Lagrangeville, NY, playing saxophone and 9-year-old Jade Anais Mejia-Pecoraro, from Bronxville, NY, dancing flamenco, accompanied by Papa Gypo and the Days of Wild Band. It was a wonderful night for the children as well as the adults.

Photo by JOANNE VALLETTA

Sons of the American Legion Squadron #156
Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 8, at 7:30 p.m. Dues ($30) are now due.

New members are always welcome. If you are a male descendant, step-descendant or adopted descendant of a veteran set forth in the dates established by Congress, we would love to have you as a member. Stop by the Post to pick up an application. We will also need a copy of a DD-214 from your relative.

At last month’s meeting, we swore in several new members.

The SAL is conducting a 50/50 raffle to raise money for Bill Clancy III’s state campaign. Chances are $5 per ticket or $20 per book. Stop by the Post to pick up some. Chances will be going out to the mailboxes of all squadron members.

Thanks to all of those who helped make the Kennedy Derby Party a success. It helped Billy Clancy get closer to his campaign goal.

Fred Ramfitt Jr.

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Have a happy and safe summer!

Rene Dietz

We all know the tragedy of addiction and its consequences, right here on our own small island. Many ask for guidance: how did this happen and what can we do? Here are some simple solutions that can make your family and home a place that promotes health and well-being:

Have dinner together as a family at least three times a week. Face-to-face contact, and the regular and consistent scheduling of family time, provide a framework that makes it harder for kids to “go under the radar” and get into difficulty. Make these “real dinners”: set the table, talk together about your day, and get a real sense of how each person is doing. Have a “no devices” rule in place, including the adults, and allow for at least 45 minutes.

Have a large, white board family calendar, with each family member putting down their schedule in a different color marker. Update the calendar once a week, and let your children know you will be checking up on them. “I’m spending the night at Johnny’s house” isn’t enough. Talk to Johnny’s parent and know that there will be appropriate adult supervision. Make sure the adults fill in the calendar as well. We all can plan our lives better if we know where our loved ones will be.

Schedule one-on-one time with each family member. A simple date for a walk or a cup of hot chocolate will allow you to be aware of how things are going. This is not a time for interrogation but instead simple to share about your day and what’s been going on. Listen more than talk; everyone needs a sympathetic ear.

Know when to seek help. All children—especially teenagers—will push back with parents at one time or another. Be “something to push against,” but keep the door open on your end. Seek professional guidance when you feel you are “over your head” with your child. Follow your gut instincts and err on the side of caution.

Childhood, like life, is a journey. Be a part of that journey in loving and thoughtful ways.

City Islander John Scardina is a child development specialist, school psychologist, and parent educator. Check out his website at www.ThinkLanghEarn.com and join his parent support groups at the CI Community Center (usually the last Tuesday of the month).

The PS. 175 fifth grade received standing ovations when they presented “-break the Musical, Jr.” on May 18 and 19, 2017, with support from the Bronx Arts Ensemble. The cast (shown above) included: Cyrus Alston, Kylie Archambault, Dilly Branch, Ryan Branch, Yzabella Padadas, Jordyn Knapp, Paul Givon, Eric Lin, Cyrus Alston, Marcus Sipas, Denise Taclibon, Abigail Hayes, Dana Clary, Jaylenn Richardson, Kelvinn Bacilli, Sophia Amos, Isabella Reyes-Famous, Sonya Doyle, Michael Sanfrantello, Nicholas Sabilion, Michael Masella and Christopher Vasquez.

Want to Keep Your Child Off Drugs and Alcohol? Try These Simple Solutions

By JOHN SCARDINA

We all know the tragedy of addiction and its consequences, right here on our own small island. Many ask for guidance: how did this happen and what can we do? Here are some simple solutions that can make your family and home a place that promotes health and well-being:

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By JOHN SHERIDAN and MARIA SUTHERLAND

There is also a copy of that body’s approval of the project.

On the subject of City Island streets, our favorite find at NYHS was the following:

What it says is “… and order the streets of said Island to be opened and to give names to the streets….” We can be reasonably sure that even then, in the 1760s, City Island had at least one street—Main Street, what we call City Island Avenue today. Of course, it looked a lot different then, although the changes that took place on City Island did not happen as quickly as Benjamin Palmer would have liked.

Another fascinating item of the collection at NYHS is a handwritten account of the minutes of some of the meetings of the principal investors in Palmer’s plan for City Island. Even the most cursory glance of the document reveals an appetite less than hearty for the rapid development of City Island. Mostly they talked of fences and animals encroaching on the property rights of others.

Eventually, development was to come, but Palmer wouldn’t see it. He was dead and buried by the time the first bridge was built in 1873. In next month’s column, we will share more of what we learned about City Island’s development. Those who can’t wait should consider a visit to the Nautical Museum, where they have a good collection pertaining to this subject and many, many others relating to City Island.

Our Presentation at the Nautical Museum, Part I

On April 30, at the Nautical Museum on Fordham Street, we had the privilege of presenting some of the things we have learned about the streets of City Island. Not wanting to merely retell the stories John McNamara told so well in his definitive work on the origins of Bronx street names, “History in Asphalt,” we made an appointment with the librarian at the New York Historical Society (NYHS) in Manhattan. We knew we would not be disappointed at NYHS, as it is the home of the Benjamin Palmer papers.

Most City Islanders with a penchant for history can tell you that Benjamin Palmer was the man with the plan to turn City Island into a center of trade in the late 18th and early 19th century. The name City Island, in fact, comes from that plan (actually New City Island was what Palmer himself called it). Before that, the island went by any one of a number of names. The name referred to most often in the collection at NYHS is Great Miniford Island.

Because Palmer began his venture when New York still belonged to England, it was protocol of the time to request the Crown’s permission before making the sorts of improvements that Palmer had in mind. A bridge, for instance. Among Palmer’s papers at NYHS are drafts and copies of numerous examples of official correspondence with New York’s colonial legislature on the matter of building a bridge. There is also a copy of that body’s approval of the project.

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IN THE GARDEN
By MARY COLBY

The Poet’s Garden

On City Island there is a little blue house. Within it, purple onalils that have bent toward the light leave tiny white flowers pressed up against the window. Pressed flowers and a cavalcade of books remind me of Vita Sackville-West’s long library at Sissinghurst in England, where the garden sneaks into the house amidst imagined lively conversation.

Outside the blue house a hoist of pyracantha spreads its arching arm around the pane, leaving the garden framed in leaf, flower and thorn. The cutting garden is ready for seeding, right on cue, for it is June. The beautiful rose Sally Holmes is opening its ivory flowers punctuated with saffron-colored stamens. Beside this blooms a yellow David Austin rose called Celebration, which is cupped and full. Blooms a yellow David Austin rose called Celebration, which is cupped and full. What better reward after a day of work than to walk down a lane that still feels so quaint in 2017 and enter a world that one can call friend.

Mary Colby is an artist and gardener whose studio is at 276 City Island Avenue. She can be reached at 917-804-4509 for consultation and design. www.theartistgardener.com.

Cl Old & New

Continued from page 1

The front office, which will eventually move next door to 632 City Island Avenue when work there has been completed. These shops are leased from 630-636 City Island Avenue, a firm owned by John Ciafone, an attorney in Queens, who owns several other properties on City Island, which are listed as LLCs.

A large new building is being constructed at 435 Hunter Avenue, which is adjacent to Seafood City and under the same ownership. The building, which will contain a sit-down restaurant on the first floor and a series of catering rooms on the second, raised some eyebrows in the community when the architect’s design was posted on the Civic Facebook page. Although the architect, Edward Weinstein, has done a great deal of work on waterfront properties in the city, the rendering of the building made it appear very stark, more like an industrial facility than a waterfront restaurant. Councilmember James Vaccaro, concerned that this did not seem to reflect the nautical character of City Island, called a meeting with the owners, the architect and two representatives of the Civic Association, one of them an architect, Andrew Blackman. Mr. Weinstein expressed willingness to work with Mr. Blackman on aspects of the design that can make the building somewhat more appealing visually. The owners also noted that there would be an additional exit from the property onto City Island Avenue between Bowne and Ditmars Streets.

Mr. Weinstein is now in the process of designing five private homes for Haim Joseph, who received a permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to build in what has traditionally been called the Tier Street wetlands, between Tier and Ditmars Streets. No date has been set for construction, as the drawings have not yet been submitted to the Buildings Department, but Mr. Joseph assured The Current that the homes—four of them two-family houses and one for one family—would have a nautical character. DEC’s permit requires Mr. Joseph to build a section of William Avenue north of Tier Street, currently mapped but not built, in order to provide access to a private road above the wetlands, from which the new houses will face Eastchester Bay.

At the corner of King Avenue and Sutherland Street, a new house is being constructed to replace a house that once belonged to Tony Amato (of the Amato Opera) but suffered severe storm damage beginning in 1992. Although neighbors are happy to see that the old house is gone, since it was abandoned and vandalized over the years, they are concerned that the flood zone building requirements will force the owner to create a virtual skyscraper in its place.

There are only a few unsold units at On the Sound condominium at the west end of Fordham Street, and it is hoped that the remaining buildings will be completed by the end of year. Perhaps in time for the opening of the new bridge if you believe the contractors!
The 2017 Troop 211 Boy Scout Blue & Gold Ceremony was held on May 7 at the City Island Yacht Club, and many troop achievements were recognized. Eight boys “crossed the bridge” from Webelos into the Boy Scouts during the Arrow of Light ceremony (top photos) including Peter Hickey, Patrick Clancy, Paul Goonan, Michael San Frantello, Cassius Walker, Brendan Best, Marcus Sipas and Alex Persteins. The troop proudly showed off their first place trophy from the Klondike Derby Sled Race (middle photo). This year, City Island was picked to pilot a new program, called the Lions, consisting of kindergarten-age scouts. Led by Rene Matos, the young troop includes Chris Matos, Thomas McNemry, Matthew Dellacerra, Joseph Colon and Lucas Sipas. The Wolves, led by Brendan Delaney, also joined in the ceremony (bottom photo): Malcolm Walker, Robert Delaney, Jake Penny, Joseph DeSantis, Matteo Ciccone, Norman Stewart and Oisin Daly.
3. Resolve to improve your record as long as you own the asset, and for three years is better. Keep cost basis records for so I’ll simplify it for you. Keep your tax of times suggested for keeping tax records, take your old documents and shred them.

2. Shred or destroy old tax returns. Paper records, invest in a fire box. NEVER on a laptop. If you keep not wise to keep tax information on your or in an external hard or thumb drive. It’s with your hard copy tax return in a folder and make next year’s tax season a smoother time, however, to take some concrete steps and go on with their lives. Now is a perfect

10 Important Things to Do after Filing your Taxes
Too many people file their tax returns and go on with their lives. Now is a perfect time, however, to take some concrete steps and make next year’s tax season a smoother process.

1. Make sure that the records used to do your 2016 taxes are complete. File them with your hard copy tax return in a folder or in an external hard or thumb drive. It’s not wise to keep tax information on your computer. NEVER on a laptop. If you keep paper records, invest in a fire box.

2. Shred or destroy old tax returns. Your accountant, or your town or city will take your old documents and shred them. Never put them in a dumpster or out on the curb as garbage. There is a confusing array of times suggested for keeping tax records, so I’ll simplify it for you. Keep your tax records at least three years but seven years is better. Keep cost basis records for as long as you own the asset, and for three to seven years after disposition.

3. Resolve to improve your record keeping for the 2017–18 tax season. One way to do this is to get a dedicated credit card and deduct expenses. This is generally true if you have a business on the side. At a minimum, you should load apps that track your expenses. A good one is called Mint.Com, but there are others. These apps can track your spending so you can easily segregate your deductible expenses.

4. Don’t congratulate yourself for getting a large refund. Review your withholdings with your payroll department or employer. Whatever the difference between what you were receiving and your new net should be put into an automated savings plan.

5. Don’t waste your tax refunds on frivolous things. No one needs a vacation or a party or a new car when savings aren’t substantial enough to justify that expense. It’s tough being an adult, but here’s your chance. Deposit the money into an emergency savings account, or a retirement account, or your 529 plan. Replace all of your light bulbs with energy-efficient bulbs. Do anything that can help improve your financial position.

6. If you got hit with a large tax bill, have a conversation with your tax preparer. If you have a side business and are constantly facing a large tax bill in April, open a savings account and with every check received in receipt of goods or services, deposit 25 percent directly in this dedicated account. Make your quarterly estimated tax payments with this money.

7. Keep a notepad in your car. Mileage records are surprisingly useful when preparing your taxes. The IRS allows you to deduct mileage for medical trips to and from your provider, mileage dedicated to performing charitable deeds (e.g., dropping off food at a charity drive, providing a senior a ride in an organized “wheels for seniors” program or donating to a charity event). If your employer sends you some place other than your regular place of work on an assignment, or maybe you’re sent to another city and use your personal car, this mileage allowance is deductible on a “cents” per mile basis, but only if documented. That’s where your notepad comes in. Jot down the mileage, date and purpose of the trip. It adds up.

8. Invest in yourself. Your tax return is a sobering look at how much (or little) you’re making. Make the conscious decision to take classes to improve your skills; the cost of these classes is deductible. Make the effort to look for a new work situation. Job hunting expenses are also tax deductible. These include resume preparation fees, networking events (entrance fees, mileage or transportation expenses to and from) and subscriptions to trade magazines.

9. Start a side business. Not only does this position you to have an alternative stream of revenue, but there are many deductions available to the entrepreneur. Monetize a hobby. The IRS draws a sharp distinction between a hobby and a business. The distinctions, however, are relatively low threshold. Your primary interest is to make a profit. To that end, the IRS expects you to keep careful business records (not from) and subscriptions to trade magazines.

10. When You Work With Me to Buy or Sell, You are Working with the Best

Louise Del Giudice
NYS Lic. Real Estate Salesperson, CBR, CDPE
2016 Centurion President’s Producer & Quality service Pinacle Producer Awards

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Cell: 914.497.9021

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Family. Happy birthday wishes to our two
Kolb on June 4.
Lenz and to Ginger Dannegger and Rose
Island Current’s
Karen Nani and Margaret
Shared birthday wishes on June 7 to
Andrew, Jillian and Stella Rose.
Hope it’s a great year. Mom, Dad, Nicolette,
Lotrionte. We love you to the moon and back.
Happy belated 25th birthday to Briana
American Legion Post 156 for 45 years.
proud member of the Leonard H. Hawkins
Veterans’ Breakfast in April. Joe has been a
ough President Rubén Díaz Jr. at the Annual
Goonan, who was honored by Bronx Bor-
Congratulations to City Island’s own Joe
on June 23.
John Iovieno, who will celebrate his big day
Birthday greetings to the Sailmaker’s

Congratulations to Maria on 30 years of City Island tales!
features Maria’s first column in March 1987 alongside her 300th column in March 2017.
Maria Swieciki’s 300th column as the Talebearer with a plaque presented on April 25,
Island Current board members Ginger Dannegger, Emily Leni and Judy Rauh, celebrated
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.

MOVING?

NAME

OLD ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

NEW ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PLEASE ALLOW 6-8 WEEKS FOR CHANGE TO TAKE EFFECT.

Subscriptions

 Morm (Name of the Talebearer) created the plaque, which
AMG.
And a very happy Father’s Day on June 18
from your fabulous much younger sister,
older brother, James Goonan! With love
Happy 50th Birthday to my much
June 17.
Justin and Nicole Rodstrom, who will cel-
Best wishes for continued happiness to
P.S. 17.
Briana Lotrionte's special pal, Carolyn Fisey
Peters, of Huntsville, AL, on June 21. Their
friendship goes back to Mrs. Berg’s first-
grade class in P.S. 17. She wishes her dear
friend a happy and healthy year, and says hi
to all of their graduating class of 1952 from
P.S. 17.
Best wishes for continued happiness to
Justin and Nicole Redstrom, who will cel-
brate their first wedding anniversary on
June 17.
Happy 50th Birthday to my much
older brother, James Goonan! With love
from your fabulous much younger sister,
AMG.
And a very happy Father’s Day on June 18
to all our dads and grandfathers. Enjoy!
Maria Swieciki

Islander Johanna Paciullo was in Saratoga, NY, to applaud her granddaughter, Talia
Grace Fried (third from the left), at her ballet recital on May 7, 2017.

Photo by ROSEMARIE FRIED

Longtime Legion member Joe Goonan (second from left) was honored at the Annual
Veterans’ Breakfast in April hosted by Borough President Rubén Díaz Jr. (third from left).

Photo courtesy of MARY CARMAN

Photo by KAREN NANI

Island Current board members Ginger Dannegger, Emily Leni and Judy Rauh, celebrated
Maria Swieciki’s 300th column as the Talebearer with a plaque presented on April 25,
2017. The Current’s art director, Marguerite Chadwick-Juner, created the plaque, which
features Maria’s first column in March 1987 alongside her 300th column in March 2017.
Congratulations to Maria on 30 years of City Island tales!

NAME

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