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The Main Street WIRE
Roosevelt Island’s Community Newspaper
in association with Website NYC10044 www.nyc10044.com

Next scheduled issue: Saturday, February 23

Vol. 22, No. 13 Saturday, February 9, 2002

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Letters

To the Editor:

I love Roosevelt Island: the view, the open spaces, the “so close yet so far” feeling of this small town one subway stop from Manhattan. It’s a tennis player’s paradise, and the best place in the city for families with children. Even the grumpy activism is endearing; I like living in a place where people care enough about what’s going on to make a racket. Sometimes, however, our grumpy activism degenerates into plain-old bitching and moaning. To fact-lose writer’s issue of the letter for the F Train – a terrible way to get a real problem! Instead of understanding the complications of the situation, the F Straphangers have been at it for years. Now you know why 4/5 riders want a Second Avenue line. Now you know how 1/2/3/9 riders feel (and they had it bad already, those poor people). In fact, if you look into this matter at your earliest convenience and take whatever steps are within your power to address the needs of the riders, you will appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your reply. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alissa Batson in my office at 728-7210.

Dawn Helene

Mr. Lawrence Reuters
President, MTA NYC Transit
370 Jay Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear President Reuters:

I am writing regarding the F Train station on Roosevelt Island. I have recently received letters, emails, and phone calls from many constituents on Roosevelt Island who describe the tremendous overcrowding that residents are experiencing as they attempt to commute into Manhattan. Riders are tired of seeing trains pull into the station each morning with no room left for them to board. The problem seems to be most severe on the F Train. I am aware of a great deal of inconvenience to subway riders, the overcrowded subways create overcrowded platforms that present a serious risk of a commuter falling onto the tracks. Furthermore, if you look at your earliest convenience and take whatever steps are within your power to address the needs of the riders, you will appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your reply. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alissa Batson in my office at 728-7210.

Gilford Miller
Speaker, City Council

To the Southtown Developers:

There are 150 apartments in Eastwood and 50 in Rivercross that directly face Southtown. In these 200 apartments, and in many affected apartments in adjacent wards, there are senior citizens, retirees, executives, and shift workers, people who work from home, preschool children, mothers kept up at night by infants, etc. These residents should not have to be awakened at 7:00 a.m. by drilling, the incessant, piercing beeping of the crabs in a bucket, pulling their fellows back.

There’s a lesson in this for everyone. Roosevelt Island’s politics is unique— and unfortunately, sometimes, a matter of principle. The very fact that this city has exist for almost 200 years, that this city has decided to take life easy. The development of the Manhattan Park developers gave in Public Purpose Funds); you wouldn’t even consider the alternative plan proposed by residents that by moving a building or two to the southern end of Southtown, would have saved our Blackwell Soccer Field. And, by eliminating the traffic turnaround, you have inconvenienced residents, guests, taxi drivers, and others.

Furthermore, you are costing the community money for Southtown infrastructure, half of which comes from community funds that could have been spent on much-needed capital improvements or maintenance elsewhere on the Island.

The very least you can do is prevent noisy equipment from disturbing the peace of so many so early in the morning. I’m sure there is other work that could be done in the early hours that wouldn’t be so disturbing to the hard-working citizens of Southtown. I urge you to consider the alternatives. Residents are looking to you to provide a turnaround, you have inconvenienced residents, guests, taxi drivers, and others. I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your reply. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alissa Batson in my office at 728-7210.

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Letters column

A quarter-century ago, it was an important concept for Native Ha-

waiians – a shorthand description they use when they ob-

serve great progress in terms that dis-

paragingly of the success of an-

other. The word Ha-waiian is en-

hanced by the meaning of the Ha-

waiian words, but I know the trans-

lation. Crabs in a bucket.

The letter were the crabs in a bucket, pulling their fellows back.

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Matthias Katz
RIRA President

Letters@MainStreetWIRE.com

Letters deadline for Feb. 23 issue: Mon., Feb. 18
Edith Mastrangelo

Edith Mastrangelo, a Roosevelt Island resident since 1978, died July 25. A life-long New Yorker, she was born in Brooklyn on May 23, 1911. Her parents, Luigi and Concina Petrelli, had immigrated from Italy in 1907. She was the last survivor of six sib-

Edith was educated in the City’s public schools and earned a B.A. degree from Hunter College at age 20, with a major in mathematics and sufficient additional credits for majors in both Italian and educa-

tion. Her desire to teach in high school was frustrated by the hiring freeze of the Depression. She took a crash course in foreign stygna-

‘co and began teaching in an importing firm specializing in European products. Nine years later, when she left to have her first child, she had risen to Treasurer of the company.

She married Peter Mastrangelo in 1935 and settled in Greenwich Village.

After the birth of her third child, she renewed her efforts to gain a teaching license and was hired by the NYC public schools as an ele-

mentary school teacher in 1947. She taught for 28 years, mostly first grade, in Harlem, the Bronx, and Chinatown. Because she held strong beliefs concerning a well-

rounded education, her students received considerable training in arts and crafts and music in addi-

tion to their regular classroom work.

In August 1973, she moved to Roosevelt Island and began teaching in her daughter’s school, Roosevelt Island Elementary School. With the help of her daughter and her students, she taught for two years.

Edith loved living in the city, particularly the theater and the opera. The events of September 11 saddened her greatly, and she joined with the residents of the Island in commemorating those who perished.


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Edith is survived by her daughter, Virginia Delfico of Alexandria, Va. and Margaret Sheehan of Alexandria, Va.
Saturday Hours

That’s right. **We’ve been listening** to what the Roosevelt Island community has to say about its needs in financial services, so we’re adding Saturday morning hours while keeping the rest of our schedule intact. Now, the **Better Way to Bank** isn’t a bank at all. It’s your neighborhood Credit Union.

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  - Doors open until 4:00 for drop-offs
- **Thursday**
  - Full services 12:00 noon-7:00 p.m.
  - Doors open until 7:30
- **Saturday**
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ASH WEDNESDAY

February 13, 2002

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12:00 noon Prayer Service and Distribution of Ashes
3:00 p.m. Prayer Service and Distribution of Ashes
7:00 p.m. Mass and Distribution of Ashes

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THE ICLA DA SILVA FOUNDATION thanks all those who made possible the January 5 blood drive, and all the donors.

VOLUNTEER TYPIST — The WIRE needs a volunteer typist for jobs ranging from short to long, from rush to long-term. No compensation, but lots of satisfaction in being part of one of the community’s oldest institutions. Call (212) 826-9055 or e-mail editor@MainStreetWIRE.com.

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Deadline for Feb. 23 issue: Feb. 18

BASKETBALL

The standings for the RIY Program Winter Basketball League are:

12-14 Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lakers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mavericks</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings</td>
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15-17 Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spur Bears</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raptors</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtics</td>
<td>15</td>
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RIRA Column from page 3

New Wheels: ROC President Robert H. Ryan presents keys to one of two new Public Safety patrol cars to Rene Bryan, Assistant Chief of PSD, as Public Safety Officer Wayne Jones looks on.

Priest from page 1

period, he also worked as a crisis-pregnancy counselor at the Mother and Unborn Baby Care Center in Long Island.

In 1987, he headed back to the seminary, attending St. Joseph’s in Dunwoodie, Yonkers. “It was a post-graduate institution and, with my graduation in 1991, I was ordained.”

His first assignment was in Staten Island where he worked for seven years until he was sent to Yonkers for a brief stint, and then returned to his first parish. It was from this church in Staten Island that he went to anoint the injured from the tragic attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. “That was the day that we, as a nation, came face-to-face with evil,” he says. “I went to the ferry building with a group of firemen from the firehouse right across from our church. We saw the mushroom of smoke and could not believe our eyes. When we crossed over to the Manhattan side, we were picked up by an ambulance and taken to 1 Liberty Plaza. My eyes were burning as we stood in a foot of ash in what was once a Burger King.”

The horrific destruction has etched itself into his mind. He recalls the scene as being “sur-real,” and adds, “The devastation was far worse than anything I had seen on tape or video that depicted war. This is the problem with evil in the world. God permits evil. God gives men free will and they use it to commit acts of evil. The plan was diabolically clever.”

To make sense of all that happened, he turns to the gospel. “After ten years of priesthood, I still find incredible the suffering that people have to endure. As a priest, I have been called upon to offer sacraments and teach the gospel,” he says. He hopes his parishioners on Roosevelt Island will help him become a good priest.

He says he was surprised to be assigned this parish at his young age but adds that he feels quite at home here. Sister Regina Palamara thinks his age is an added qualification, for he can work with the young adults on the Island. For starters, he will take a group of ten young adults to World Youth Day in Rome in July. “We will build on our past. The previous priests planted the seeds and we will bear the fruit,” said Sister Regina, who has herself been on the Island for over two decades.

Father Mejidi sees his role as a very down-to-earth one: “I am a regular person from the community who has been called upon to serve the community.”

RIRA Column from page 3

raised the questions and made the attempt to improve this well-meaning but flawed guide.

This past year we’ve produced my programs of direct benefit to “life on Main Street” than any time in recent memory. We threw a party last March that raised money for the RIRA treasury. We produced two concerts that raised $4500, served breakfast on Roosevelt Island Day, raised over $90,000 for the families of September 11, served Thanksgiving Dinner to the guys at the Special Operations Command at the firehouse, and convinced 63 of our neighbors with a record 72% of blood donors to give blood. We produced two summer dances on the River, served breakfast on Roosevelt Island Day, raised the questions and made the attempt to improve this well-meaning but flawed guide.

For many on the Council, volunteering to run for office was the last time they volunteered for a RIRA event. I’m sorry I wasn’t able to inspire a greater sense of personal responsibility in my colleagues. And I’m sorry they haven’t discovered that the most fulfilling part of community activity is not debating thorny questions once a month, but getting your dirty. I’ve had a ball tending bar, schlepping garbage cans, watching that glass jar fill with greenbacks out on Chapel Plaza, and convincing needle-shy potential blood donors that it only hurts for a second.

But part of the blame is yours. Some folks will always participate in whatever good things RIRA comes up with; they’re self-starters. Some need to be inspired by you, the electorate. If you fail to vote or merely vote for people who never volunteer their time simply because they live down the hall, or theirs is the only name you recognize or because they’ve ‘always represented your building,’ you can’t expect much. It’s your responsibility to make sure they do what you elected them to do; to carry out the programs and mandates of the Common Council and to represent your building and your views. In other words, to be leaders.

This Common Council will meet only seven more times before the next RIRA election. Be prepared to be informed voters. Ask your Council reps what they’ve personally accomplished in the past two years, what were their successes, what were their failures, and what did they learn from their failures? What committees have they worked on (not paid lip service to, worked on), and what are their goals for the next Council? If you’re not happy with the answers you get, fire them for the election. It always seems as though the same six or eight Members, supplemented by the same Good Samaritans from the community, accomplish everything. For many on the Council, volunteering to run for office was the last time they volunteered for a RIRA event.

Marge and George, Godspeed and I miss you already.

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Katherine Teets Grimm, M.D.
Board Certified Pediatrician and Pediatric Allergist
501 Main Street • Roosevelt Island • 753-5505

Have a happy and healthy school year

Office Hours
Monday & Thursday • 9 a.m. - 12 noon
Tuesday • 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday & Friday • 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Coverage provided at all times, when office is closed, by Dr. Grimm or by her group, Uptown Pediatrics.
We provide comprehensive health care to children and adolescents. Dr. Grimm is also qualified to evaluate and treat allergy and asthma in adults.

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