

Next issue:  
Sat., May 15

# The Main Street **WIRE**<sup>TM</sup>

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Roosevelt Island's Independent Community Newspaper



**You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown** is being staged by The Main Street Theatre next weekend (May 7-9) with three casts in six performances (see ad, page 5). Here, Patrick Fallone (left) plays Spike, Chloe Goldmansour plays Woodstock, Anthony Fallone plays Snoopy, and (rear) Nora Weiser (left) is Belle, and Alexandra Fallone is Patty.

## Stewart Recuses Self on Privatization, Takes Flak

by Dick Lutz

Patrick Stewart, a resident member of the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC), has recused himself from participation in the Board's discussions related to the sale and possible privatization of Island House and Westview for "conflict of interest" reasons. Stewart revealed his stance last week in a liaison meeting between members of the Residents Association (RIRA) Common Council and resident members of the RIOC Board.

Stewart said, "If I have knowledge that could benefit me as a resident of Island House that the other residents of Island House don't have, then that puts me in a position of straight serious conflict of interest potential."

The question came up in the liaison meeting (the full transcript of which is available at [nyc10044.com/wire/2416/liaison.html](http://nyc10044.com/wire/2416/liaison.html)) because a potential buyer is negotiating with the current owner, and RIOC controls several factors that could determine the viability of a financial deal and its outcome for tenants of the two buildings – a ground-lease extension, ground rent, and any conditions that might be imposed as part of a ground-lease extension to protect the tenants.

Another resident member of the RIOC Board attending the liaison meeting, David Kraut, took exception to Stewart's recusal. "Look at it this way," he said. "The sale and possible conversion of Westview and Island House [and other buildings] is the most important single action facing this [RIOC] Board in its history and in its future."

Stewart agreed, "No question. Absolutely."

Kraut continued, "Nothing else will have more effect on the shape of this Island and its future than this vote. And I don't understand how you can be a director of this corporation and not vote that issue one way or the other, because in terms of conflict of interest, we all have conflicts. You are always going to know more as a director about the actions, about the interior operation of this corporation

on whose Board you serve, and you are always in a position to profit from your decisions. What you may not do is profit in a way that other members of your buying public don't have access to. If you vote to take your building private because you happen to want to buy your apartment, you are allowed to do that and it is not a conflict of interest unless you get a better price than other people. If other people in the building get apartments on the same terms as you have voted for, then it's not a conflict of interest... It is only a conflict of interest when you do something to your own benefit which is not equally shared among others.

"You are setting up a hypothetical situation in which you will not vote on Westview/Island House, and I'm not going to vote on an Eastwood conversion for or against, and [two Rivercross residents who serve on the RIOC Board] Mark [Ponton] and Debbie



David Kraut says RIOC Board members should vote on sale and privatization of Island buildings, while...

[Beck] can't vote on a Rivercross conversion, and it's not what we're on this Board for. We're on this Board to take a stand one way or the other, for or against, based on

## RIOC Meeting on Disaster Plan Is – Well, a Bit of a Disaster

by Mary Camper-Titsingh

with additional reporting by Dick Lutz

Fewer than two dozen residents gathered in the auditorium at PS217 last week to hear about emergency planning for Roosevelt Island. The meeting was the culmination of some eight months of work by the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation following last summer's Blackout, when some elements of Island services were caught flat-footed.

Residents, who were expecting to hear the result of "a study of the Island and its needs," as suggested in RIOC President Herbert E. Berman's April 17 *RIOC Column* in *The WIRE* expressed profound disappointment bordering on anger.

A lengthy presentation made by Michael Dendekker, a Public Information Officer from the City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM), contained no information specific to the Island. He did warn residents, however, about the danger of leaving car engines running in their closed garages, apparently unaware that residents here have no closed garages. Dendekker's hour-long talk was essentially a recital of information contained in the widely-distributed *Ready New York* household preparedness guide.

"Develop a household emergency plan," he told residents before turning the microphone over to the Regional Director of the State OEM, Ted Fisch. Fisch presented organizational charts and offered details about the responsibilities of various segments of State government (not including RIOC), until he was interrupted with questions from several residents.

"We need to know how Roosevelt Island will handle emergencies – what parents can do when they are separated from their children and there is no transportation available to or from our Island," said Marianne Russem, a member of the Rivercross Board of Directors.

Members of the Residents Association (RIRA) Common Council asked questions:

• Nurit Marcus asked whether residents would find a RIOC Red Bus at the foot of the Queensboro Bridge

our best assessments of what's best for the community, and if in fact I might profit from an Eastwood conversion, so be it, so long as all of my neighbors have the same chance to profit. And if I think we shouldn't privatize, because I want to continue to rent, then all my neighbors will continue to pay rent and not have to come up with the [purchase] money. And that's the basis on which we decide... I don't see how you or anybody else can not vote on the most compelling issue this Island faces."

Stewart responded, "I appreciate that. I appreciate your sharing. I do not happen to share that opinion. I do not read the State code of ethics law that way. I do feel this is a conflict of interest [and] until someone proves to me otherwise, in writing, from the State code of ethics, as long as I have a piece of information that my neighbors do not

have and that I am not able to share, I do not [want] that piece of information. It gives me an advantage, real or otherwise, real or perceived advantage, and I'm not going to put

after walking to Queens, if another Blackout disables subways and the Tram, and the Queensboro Bridge is closed to vehicular traffic, as it was in last summer's emergency.

• Vicki Feinmel asked if a community shelter had been designated for use in the event of extreme temperatures – heat or cold – during a power outage, and whether emergency water, first-aid supplies, blankets, and food would be available.

• RIRA First Vice President Steve Marcus asked about a plan for deployment of equipment RIOC purchased after the Blackout, and why residents are not informed about its availability and responsibilities for its use.

• RIRA President Matthew Katz asked whether the Island's dock was being repaired in case evacuation only by water was possible.

There were no answers.

Katz, who discusses the session in his column in this issue (page 2), described the presentations of the City and State representatives the day after the meeting when members of the RIRA Common Council met

See **Disaster**, page 2

## Briefly...

**The Roosevelt Island Day Nursery** has received accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading organization of early-childhood professionals. The Nursery offers a subsidized full-day program for four-year-olds, plus two-morning, five-morning, and full-day programs for children two through five.

The Icla da Silva Foundation is seeking volunteers to help with its annual **Blood Drive**, to be held on Roosevelt Island Day, June 12. The committee will help with publicity, sign-ups, and other details. Call Airam da Silva at **212-593-1807**.

Roosevelt Island has once again been named a **Tree City USA** by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

myself in that position, nor do I think that, [under] the oath I took as a director of this corporation or an officer of the State of New York, I should do that."

The discussion continued, briefly, with RIRA Common Council member Frank Farance suggesting that Stewart's stand meant he would have to recuse himself from any decision affecting the Island, and Stewart responding, "I will give my opinion [and vote] as long as my special interests are not involved." Later, he added, "If it's an Island-specific issue [being considered by the RIOC Board], I am for the Island, period. If it's a building-specific issue, which in this case is the privatization of these buildings, which I live in, then I have to take myself out of it, and hope to God that my representatives in RIRA will speak for me and speak to RIOC for me, because that's what democracy is about."

Earlier in the meeting, another resident Board member, Mark Ponton, told the liaison meeting

that his understanding of the Westview-Island House sale and privatization process is that "there is a two-person subcommittee of the [RIOC] Board [non-resident member John Mannix and resident member Deborah Beck]... The last time I was informed about it they were advocating, I think it's a fair statement to say, minimum involvement by RIOC."

Other matters discussed in the RIRA-RIOC Board liaison meeting



...Patrick Stewart sees a conflict of interest in his participating in such discussions on Island House.

included:

• Space for the Youth Center, which wants the Blackwell minischool space, but could lose  
See **Recusal**, page 2

**Disaster** from page 1

with three members of the RIOC Board of Directors in a previously scheduled liaison session. "They were utterly unprepared to discuss any of the contingency plans for this place... They were going to a level of talking about the organizational charts for [their] organizations, as though this was the critical information Roosevelt Island needed to hear." (The full transcript of the RIRA-RIOC Board liaison session is posted on *Website NYC10044* at [nyc10044.com/wire/2416/liaison.html](http://nyc10044.com/wire/2416/liaison.html).) Katz continued, "There was not one word about Roosevelt Island."

Katz said that Sari Dickson, RIOC's Vice President for Operations, was the only RIOC representative who spoke at the meeting, and she "said it was not RIOC's responsibility to provide any emergency services."

On Wednesday, asked by *The WIRE* to clarify her position, Dickson wrote in an e-mail, "What I said was that there are professional emergency management planners at the State and City level. They are the ones that put together any emergency management plans because they are the ones with the expertise and they will be the ones to carry out any emergency responses. RIOC is working with the people who have the experience in this area. We found that they are well aware of the Island and have always included the Island in the overall emergency plans of the State and City. They are now reviewing those plans in context of meetings with us and the community."

She continued, "I have to stress again that, since they are the ones who will have to marshal appropriate air, land, and marine responses, any plans and procedures must come from them. RIOC will continue to participate in this process and will make the Island residents aware of any public progress."

The Residents Association Vice President for Government Relations, Margie Smith, who chaired the next day's liaison meeting, reported asking Dickson at the end of the meeting, "Are we still in the midst of doing a study, or is this an update, or is this it - is this the last we're going to hear?" She said that Dickson responded that "other than from time to time the OEM guys would come back and do this same thing for us, that's it." Smith said that when residents asked the OEM representatives if residents could work with them on an emergency plan for the Island, the response was that the OEM offices would work only with RIOC.

During the emergency planning presentation, when Nurit Marcus asked the OEM representatives, "Can't OEM force RIOC to develop and distribute a plan?" Ted Fisch of the State OEM responded, "No, it is up to your Resident's Association to keep after New York City and State officials to press RIOC to develop such an emergency plan."

Dickson expressed disappointment at the low turn-out for the meeting. "It was meant as an opportunity for information exchange, but both sides wanted to give information, and did not want to hear what the other side was saying," she said.

Copies of the *Ready New York* pamphlet, published by the City OEM, will be distributed with a future issue of *The WIRE*. The item is currently out of stock and is expected in two to three weeks.

**Recusal** from page 1

\$2 million in City funds unless it has a long-term lease on some space. Mark Ponton said that an informal survey suggested that a majority of RIOC Board members would vote to give the Blackwell minischool space to the Youth Program, and that he would ask that the matter be put on the agenda for the RIOC Board's May 13 meeting. But, he said, getting the matter on the agenda apparently depends on the willingness of Board Chair Mary Beth Labate to have the Board consider it.

- Island signage, which those attending the meeting agreed was sorely lacking, especially for first-time visitors.
- Creation of an on-line problem-reporting system that would provide a central point for listing the Island's physical problems, where RIOC staff could report their progress and resolution.
- School-bus pickups for Child School students, many of whom board buses at Blackwell House, where multiple buses line up and stop traffic while the students cross Main Street without a crossing guard, and are then unable to line up on the curb because a yellow chain restricts them to the street where the buses stop.



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*Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough.  
A.E. Housman, A Shropshire Lad*

Did you see the posters that RIOC hung on the Main Street kiosks publicizing the City and State Offices of Emergency Management (OEM) meeting on April 21? Apparently very few Islanders did see the undistinguished green signs as fewer than two dozen

**The  
RIRA  
Column**

of us attended. Both RIOC President Berman and I mentioned the meeting in our last *WIRE* columns. The meeting was a major disappointment in that it failed to speak to any of the considerations specific to Roosevelt Island. RIRA (and many of you) have asked RIOC to create a contingency plan ever since last August's blackout. The speakers made reference to the *Ready New York* preparedness guide that we all received in the mail months ago, and offered a generic Power Point presentation on the steps we can all take to protect our families and ourselves. They discussed fires in the Adirondacks, floods in Oneonta and general New York City issues, but had nothing to say about the unique problems that our Island home entails.

That we are connected to emergency services by one movable bridge, years overdue for overhaul, left them unmoved. That we have a special senior and disabled population, less mobile than other City communities, failed to impress. That Roosevelt Island, unlike any other community in New York City, has an on-site State public-benefit corporation with some 70 employees, a private State peace-officer force, and an annual budget of over \$12 million, whose sole function is to administer and manage this Island, was not a consideration.

Most disturbing, the one RIOC exec present stated that it was not RIOC's job to provide emergency services to this community, merely to "facilitate" other emergency responders. If that is so, why has Public Safety (a RIOC department) taken on the role of providing defibrillator emergency service? Uniformed peacekeepers are expected to provide first-responder emergency care everywhere and, in fact, Public Safety officers were critical to the total response during last August's Blackout. Many City neighborhoods may need to create volunteer organizations to plan for and respond to emergencies. Roosevelt Islanders have (and pay for) RIOC to provide these critical services on our behalf.

Two Rivercross residents, Mary Camper-Titsingh and Marianne Russem, interrupted the hours-long lecture (quite rightly, in my opinion) to state that we had been led to believe that the purpose for the RIOC presentation of OEM was to consider contingency planning specifically for Roosevelt Island. They cited Herb Berman's last column, in which he stated, "A study of the Island and its needs was also performed by the State and City. Now that the study is underway, I am pleased to announce that I have additional information about the emergency-planning meeting... scheduled for Wednesday, April 21." However, it was obvious that the City and State OEM reps were not prepared to present or discuss the issues specific to Roosevelt Island. The small audience clearly had come with the expectation of learning what planning RIOC had undertaken with these agencies to anticipate blackout, transportation, or communication disruption or worse. And clearly neither the speakers nor the RIOC staff reps were prepared to meet those expectations.

It was interesting that not one RIOC Board member or a single RIOC technical staffer attended the meeting. Operations VP Sari Halpern Dickson, and Public Safety Chief Jim Fry represented RIOC. Mr. Fry had nothing to say and Ms. Dickson suggested that discussions had been underway with community leaders to address the unique contingencies that are part of life on Roosevelt Island. I have been a part of no such meetings and, in fact, understood that we would be informed only after contingency planning was completed. For that reason, I was looking forward to the OEM meeting on the 21st as the culmination of site-specific planning for Roosevelt Island. The actual presentation was anything but.

Roosevelt Island has exceptional conditions of ge-

ography, location, infrastructure, population, and yes, political and administrative oversight, that make our situation a one-of-a-kind contingency problem. Yes, we should all have battery-powered radios, a landline telephone, a flashlight, a modest first-aid kit and minimal stores of water and food. I read and acted on that advice when I received the *Ready New York* pamphlet in my mailbox months ago. It was RIOC's responsibility to adequately publicize this meeting and act on its promise of information for our circumstances, not Watertown's or Syracuse's. We all recall that, two weekends ago, RIOC failed to post a single advisory on the Tram outage anywhere on Main Street. Until RIOC makes an attempt to anticipate our needs for



**Matthew Katz**, President  
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timely information, to anticipate our need for contingency planning targeted to this unique community, and to work with us prior to setting policy in stone, there will be bad blood and shouting matches like the one on April 21. I've offered my services as your elected representative to OEM and to RIOC to start the process of anticipating and planning for emergencies and then *communicating* that information to you. I hope my offer is accepted.

Did you attend either of the Insurance Fairs? These RIRA Housing Committee events were major successes, with terrific speakers, large turnouts, and the dissemination of valuable information. Every Islander should have apartment insurance and should be knowledgeable on the details. My thanks to Committee VP Mark Chipman and his minions, to the speakers from Housing Management, the Police and Fire Departments, and the Insurance Information Institute, and to the insurance agents who allowed us to comparison-shop under one roof. This project was on a back burner for years and took a group of committed volunteers to bring it to fruition. Thanks, guys.

So, what was your *Dark Water* filming experience? I've heard everything from pleasure at the proximity of Hollywood glamour to rage at the disruption of everyday life. Some folks have been barred from entering their buildings, some hallways in Eastwood have been temporarily trashed, other residents have had their cars towed and still others found the backup bus for the Tram inadequate. Said one neighbor, "They turned a four-minute ride into an hour's journey over the 59th Street Bridge."

I have some experience in renting space to film companies (my old employer's headquarters/mansion), and it is a given that payment is rendered not just for space rental but to compensate for inconvenience. I hope that RIOC negotiated a pretty penny to rent out the Island to the production company. However, the recompense for nuisance value, frustration, and disruption should belong to the community whose lives were altered, and not for the better, by this experience. And to the best of my knowledge, no such reimbursement was ever discussed.

Island old-timers have informed me that when *Nighthawks* was filmed on the Tram, the Youth Center and other organizations shared in the film company's largess. This was not the case with *Dark Water*. I've been in contact with the producers to see if they might, after the fact, consider giving us an outdoor screening of a movie from their film library, similar to the ones RIRA presented last summer. Also, I asked if the Disney Company, distributors of the finished movie (whenever that might be), would consider a special screening of *Dark Water* for the Roosevelt Island community. I've been given no guarantees or even encouragement, but I will persevere. Should you run into location producer Diane Pokorny (or any other production company honchos) while they are still on Roosevelt Island, you might ask them about givebacks directly to the community they impacted. We'll have to wait and see whether they will comply with a reasonable request even when RIOC has not obliged them to. Stay tuned.

**Letters Policy**

*The WIRE* welcomes letters to the editor, to the community, and to/from officials. Publication on a *Name Withheld* basis will be considered, but the writer's name, address, and phone number **must** be provided for verification and for our records; *letters submitted anonymously are not considered for publication*.

**Preferred form of submission:** E-mail to [Letters@MainStreetWIRE.com](mailto:Letters@MainStreetWIRE.com) (plaintext e-mail format preferred, or attach a file created using any common wordprocessing software, but no MSWord files containing macros), or on a PC-standard 3.5" disk left at the desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*. **Alternatives:** Typed copy left at 531 Main Street or faxed to 212-755-2540. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered if brief, but we are not able to take telephone dictation of letters. **Letters subject to acceptance and to possible editing for length and clarity.** Recommended maximum length, 300 words; longer letters will be considered if their content merits the required space.

**Letters deadline for May 15 issue: Tuesday, May 11**

After deadline, letters are considered on a space-available basis.

At press time, the **Public Safety Blotter** for April 16-30 had not yet been received. It is expected soon, and will be posted on *Website NYC10044* at [nyc10044.com/wire/2416/blot2416.html](http://nyc10044.com/wire/2416/blot2416.html).

It seems that spring is really here this time. The cherry blossom trees around the Island were in full bloom this week, making my first spring here a truly remarkable experience. I look forward to the annual Arbor Day tree planting this Friday to add one more tree to the beautiful array on this Island. I can't thank Maurice Bleifeld and the Roosevelt Island Tree Board enough for all that they do to preserve and enhance the beauty of the Island.

## The RIOC Column

On another happy note, the elevator at the Tram is finally operational again. At the time that I am writing this, it has been operational for more than 24 hours, the longest stretch in months. This has been one of the more frustrating experiences for me. I am pleased that the new company seems to have the situation well in hand, and I am hopeful that there will no longer be any problems in this area. I have to thank both the residents of the Island for their patience, and the staff at RIOC for staying on top of this issue and pushing all of the elevator companies on a daily basis.

I am also happy to report that Roosevelt Island was the featured area in the Classroom Extra section of the New York Post on April 22. It mentioned that Roosevelt Island is a small community with a thrilling commute across the river. While the history given was fairly accurate, it doesn't fully depict how wonderful the Island is today. We are beginning to get requests from other news outlets requesting information for neighborhood profiles. We will keep everything posted if anything develops from these inquiries.

On a not as happy note, I am distressed by what I hear about the emergency planning meeting that took place last week. Despite the fact that it was mentioned in my column in *The WIRE* several times as well as notices being placed on the kiosks and in the buildings, only approximately 21 residents attended. I, and the people from the City and State Offices of Emergency Management, really do want to hear from you. Please forward any questions or concerns to Sari Dickson or Michael Moreo in my office. They are heading up this project and will pass all of the information on to the appropriate planners at the City and State.

RIOC is a facilitator in this process. There are professionals at the City and State levels that specialize

in emergency planning. We want to continue to bring them to the community and make them aware of the issues facing Roosevelt Island. To this end, we were planning to hold additional meetings on this subject in the future with other members of the emergency planning community, including the Police and Fire Departments. Please contact Ms. Dickson or Mr. Moreo to let us know if interest remains high in this area. We would like to be able to show the planners that there is a real interest in this subject by having more residents in attendance.

One example of the positive impact that the community can have is the new information line that is going to be implemented at RIOC. One member of the community suggested that we obtain a dedicated phone line with a separate phone number. When residents call this phone number they will get a pre-recorded announcement about any transportation issues, meetings or other necessary information. We hope to have this fully operational within the next few weeks and I look forward to reporting on that



**Herbert E. Berman**, President Roosevelt Island Operating Corp.  
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phone number. RIOC is committed to working with the community to implement positive change. It is our goal for the community to be fully informed about any important service announcements.

Finally, it is just about time to say goodbye to *Dark Water*. The film, which was supposed to finish shooting on Roosevelt Island several weeks ago, met with some delays. They are now scheduled to leave at the end of this week. It is going to be so exciting to see the movie with the Island residents as extras. I want to thank everyone again for their patience. In my next column I will be able to announce how much money the film brought to RIOC and what projects can be realized as a result.

Enjoy the beautiful weather. I look forward to seeing everyone as I walk around the Island!

# COMING UP

## — This Weekend —

**Trees of Roosevelt Island** exhibit, through May, Rivercross Main Street windows.

**Arthur Tress Exhibition**, through May 29, Tues.-Sat., 11:00-6:00, Hunter-Fox Gallery, 35 East 67th St., 4th floor. Photographs of constructions made in 1984 at Charity Hospital (since demolished) on Roosevelt Island.



TREE CITY USA.



## — The Coming Week —

**Residents Association Common Council meeting**, Wed., May 5, 8:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Public access near beginning of session.

**You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown** at The Main Street Theatre, Fri., May 7-Mon., May 10. Three casts, six performances (see ad, page 5). Adults, \$10; mat seating, \$5 for kids 4-10. Reservations strongly suggested; call 212-371-4449.

## — Future Events —

**Toastmasters Public Speaking Group**, Mon., May 10, 7:45 p.m., Westview Community Room.

**RIOC Board of Directors meeting**, Thur., May 13, 4:30 p.m. (rescheduled from Apr. 29).

There is no charge to list Island events here. E-mail information to [ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com](mailto:ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com) or leave copy at the lobby desk at 531 Main Street, addressed to *The WIRE*. Please provide telephone numbers for possible follow-up.

**The Main Street WIRE** — next issue Sat., May 15. (To receive e-mail bulletins in the meantime, send an "Add Me" message to [Bulletins@MainStreetWIRE.com](mailto:Bulletins@MainStreetWIRE.com).) **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., May 7; decision on fliers for *The Bag*, Mon., May 10; fliers due Thur.,

May 13. **Future issues:** May 29; June 12; July 3 (Fourth of July issue), 31; Aug. 28; Sept. 11, 25; Oct. 16, 30 (pre-election issue); Nov. 6 (post-election issue), 20 (Thanksgiving issue); Dec. 4, 18 (two December holiday issues), then twice a month starting in January, 2005. (Schedule subject to adjustment.) **Phone/fax** for news, 212-826-9055/755-2540; urgent matters 917-617-0449. **Phone/fax** for display and classified advertising placement and information, 212-751-8214/755-2540. **To list your organization's Island event in this column**, e-mail information to [ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com](mailto:ComingUp@MainStreetWIRE.com), or leave it, addressed to *The WIRE*, at the desk at 531 Main Street; provide a telephone number for follow-up questions; there is no charge for such listings.

**Community Board 8 meeting** on Roosevelt Island, Wed., May 19, 7:00 p.m., PS/IS 217 auditorium.

**Book Discussion** — *Patience and Sarah* by Isabel Miller, Thur., May 20, 6:30 p.m., Library. Free. Books available at the Library.

**Tree Walk** with State Forester Bob Bealin, Sat., May 22, 10:00 a.m. Sponsored by the Roosevelt Island Tree Board. Meet at Blackwell House. Free.

**Toastmasters Public Speaking Group**, Mon., May 24, 8:00 p.m., Westview Community Room.

**Residents Association Common Council meeting**, Wed., June 2, 8:00 p.m., Chapel of the Good Shepherd. Public access near beginning of session.

**Roosevelt Island Day**, Sat., June 12, all day.

**Blood Drive**, Sat., June 12, all day.

**General Slocum Memorial**, a boat ride following the course of the day-trip steamer 100 years ago, Sat., June 12, departing from South Street Seaport. (The General Slocum caught fire near Blackwell's Island; 1,100 died. Sponsored by the Maritime Industry Museum; tickets \$35 c/o the Roosevelt Island Historical Society, 212-688-4836.

**Book Discussion** — *City of God* by E.L. Doctorow, Thur., June 17, 6:30 p.m., Library. Free. Books available at the Library.

**Book Discussion** — *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham, Thur., July 15, 6:30 p.m., Library. Free. Books available at the Library.

**Toastmasters Annual Dinner**, June 28.

**Book Discussion** — *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry, Thur., Aug. 19, 6:30 p.m., Library. Free. Books available at the Library.

# Letters

## To RIOC President Herb Berman:

I recently gave birth to a baby girl, and one of the rewards of motherhood seems to be the constant struggle to comply with mass-transportation requirements. More specifically, folding strollers on buses, riding taxis with a car seat, and carrying strollers upstairs and down in the subway. I understand that some of these rules are made for the greater benefit, especially in a city like Manhattan, where millions ride daily. But folding the stroller in the Red Buses on Roosevelt Island? Please give me a break.

You wouldn't expect a wheelchair to be folded inside the bus, would you? Same happens with infants. They can't walk, and for the most part their mothers, I among them, can't fold and carry both the stroller and the infant and get in and out of buses. I have even seen the bus driver ask a mother of twins to fold the stroller. Can you imagine what it would be like to fold a twin stroller and carry two babies for a ridiculous seven-minute ride at the most? It can't be done.

Maybe a good compromise for the Red Bus stroller policy would be that if the child can walk, the stroller has to be folded, but if a non-walking baby has to ride the bus, then I'd expect the same consideration as to any other citizen with special needs, that is, stroller remains unfolded.

When it comes to quality of life, let's be leaders of common sense instead of followers of nonsense.

Myriam Lopez

## To the Editor:

Hailing as I do as a hillbilly from Kentucky, I must say that I was most intrigued and excited to see a major motion picture being filmed on our quaint Island. However, my excitement quickly turned to frustration, inconvenience, and even verbal assault. My Constitutional rights were trampled by the higher power of Hollywood. I guess this paramount source of power does not require due process to abridge my right to freely walk down the streets of my home community. Instead, young men and women with headsets dictate when and at what length I may travel down the street.

Roosevelt Island has been whoring herself to the Hollywood community for too long. It is the residents that have to pay with their inconveniences and abridged freedoms. I understand that RIOC receives a substantial sum to permit filming, but this benefit does not trickle down to the residents. My rent isn't discounted. Heck — RIOC cannot even parlay those substantial fees into some much-needed community capital improvement and repairs.

I propose to RIRA the general idea for a bill to enable the people of Roosevelt Island to garner control through RIRA as to who films on our Island, when and how the residents may be inconvenienced, and how these large shooting fees will be distributed to benefit the residents.

I am especially concerned with denial of transportation access of the Tram for large blocks of hours and sometimes days. For some elderly and handicapped, this is their only manner of transportation on and off the Island. Furthermore, I intend to file a lawsuit against

## To the Editor:

I would like to thank the following sponsors who helped make the Roosevelt Island Film Festival such a success: Manhattan Park, Jack Resnick, M.D., Becker and Becker, Roosevelt Island Housing Corporation, Hudson Companies and The Related Companies, Gristede's, Page Ayres Cowley Architects, James Flannigan, D.C., Roosevelt Island Tramway, Rivercross Tenants Corporation, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Lawrence Itskowitch, D.D.S., New York National Bank, The Child School / Legacy High School, Roosevelt Island Disabled Association, Roosevelt Island Seniors Association.

Also, a special thanks to the members and friends of the Roosevelt Island Historical Society, who were great volunteers and made the event a fun-filled weekend. We also appreciate *The Main Street WIRE's* coverage.

Our thanks to Mark and his staff at Rooftop Films for enhancing the films and making them come to life.

Judith Berdy, President Roosevelt Island Historical Society

RIOC, the RIOC President, the operator of the Tram, and any production company that denies access to the Tram for the benefit of all the elderly and handicapped that are marooned on our Island on the civil grounds of false imprisonment, which is defined as a willful detention of another without their consent, the next time the Tram is closed off to the public due to filming. Hampered individuals have been unwillingly landlocked on this Island and denied vital access to the City transportation system for too long.

John Hafner

# Senior Center

## Monday

10-11, Latchhook Class  
10-11:30, English as 2nd Lang.  
10:30, Blood Pressure Screen  
12:30, "Oldies" Movies  
1:00, Tai Chi  
7:00, Dance Class (Beginners)

## Tuesday

10:00, Computers  
10-11, Dance & Relax  
1:00, Bingo  
6:00, Yoga Class  
7:30, Games (RISA)

## Wednesday

8-9, Swimming/Water Aerobics (Westview seniors only)  
9:15, Stay Well  
10:00, Spanish Class  
10:30, Shoppers' Bus  
12:30, Sculpting  
7:00, Pokeno (RISA)

## Thursday

10:00, Tai Chi  
10:30, Creative Arts  
12:30, Movie  
7:00, Dance

## Friday

6:00, Dance & Relax  
9:30, Yoga Stretch  
7:00, Games (RISA)

## Saturday

7:30, Bingo (RISA)

## Special Events

Sat., May 8, Mother's Day Party, 6:00 p.m.

Tue., May 11, Health Fair, 10-12 Sun., May 16, Senior Day (all day)

Wed., May 19, Atlantic City trip  
Fri., May 28, Birthday Party  
Mon., June 7, Wildwood trip

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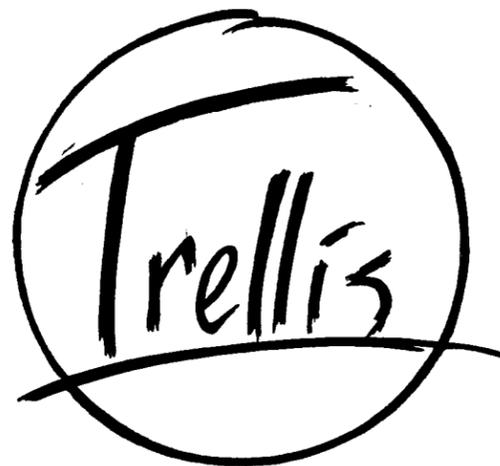
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A Musical

#### CAST A

May 8, 7:30 pm  
May 10, 7:30 pm

Morgan Callender  
Joan Cusick  
Alexandra Fallone  
Anthony Fallone  
Patrick Fallone  
Jared Francis  
Chloe Goldmansour  
Daniela Jovanovic  
Malik Henry  
Jena Hirji  
Cecilia Lopez-Holland  
Graham McMillan  
Arta Perezic  
Emily Schuman  
Samantha Stone  
Nora Weiser

#### CAST B

May 7, 7:30 pm  
May 9, 2:00 pm

Chantelle Acosta  
Eren Adriansen  
Gregory Bednarsh  
Chaunce DeVine  
Thomas Diamond  
Alexis Franco  
Elisa Garcia  
Hallie Geier  
Joshua Gurwitz  
Colleen Herlihy  
Stephanie Herlihy  
Stefan Iliescu  
Lana Jovanovic  
Allie Michels  
Eric Michels

#### CAST C

May 8, 2:00 pm  
May 9, 7:30 pm

Kaitlyn Abdul  
Lauren Abdul  
Summer Calenberg  
Tyler Cannon  
Thibault Codderrrens  
Tychell Dickerson  
Alexander Dow  
Nia Felder  
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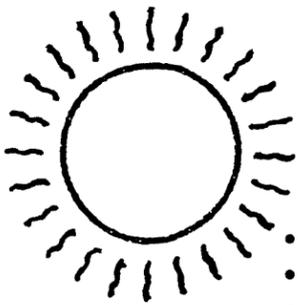
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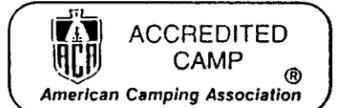
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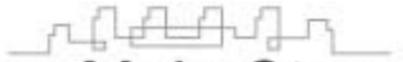


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