

District Leader Report

By Bob Botfeld

**Nothing is normal amid COVID-19,
but Three Parks somehow collected
1279 signatures.**

Nothing is normal. We are in lockdown, directed to remain in our apartments and maintain social distancing, a term no one knew three weeks ago but now universally understood to mean stay at least six feet away from any other person. It is physically impossible to maintain social distancing and petition. Petitioning, the most neighborly of our political activities, became the most dangerous thing each of us could do.

Governor Cuomo issued an Executive Order that terminated petitioning prematurely on Tuesday, March 17, before some of our usual late-starting petitioners had even begun. Cuomo also reduced the required number of signatures to nominate a candidate by 70%.

We scrambled to collect and bind the petitions, but no one knew when they were supposed to be filed. The published petition filing dates were March 30 through April 2, but on the morning of Wednesday, March 18, Governor Cuomo signed into law joint NYS Senate/NYS Assembly bill *S8058/A10151*, which abruptly moved the filing period to Thursday, March 19 and Friday, March 20 only.

Yet, Three Parks collected and filed a remarkable total of 1279 signatures. We were led by Mary Ann Marks with 167 signatures, which no longer can be considered amazing or remarkable because somehow she does this every year with an indescribable charm and ease. The team of Audrey Isaacs, a Three Parks' judicial delegate, and Norm Lafond commanded Columbus Avenue and delivered 163 and 117 signatures, respectively.

Miriam Rabban paused just long enough from her herculean effort in support of the SWEAT bill to collect 69. Newsletter editor and Take Back the House coordinator Chuck Wall scooped 66 signatures with a steady effort at every Broadway table. Lynn Bender (Max) and Steve Max organized the petition tables and added 61 and 34 signatures. President Lorraine Zamora presided over the collection of 45 signatures. Steadily improving Jacob Gross quietly amassed 32 as did Doris Schreiber, rebounding from her injuries last year. Irene Shrier, also nicely recovered, collected 31 signatures.

District Leader Cynthia Doty, Susan Dess, and Maine Kavanaugh all agreed that 30 is the right number. The twenties brigade was led by Three Parks' fundraiser chair Lois Safian, Three Parks' holiday party coordinator Corinne Constantine, Susan Maderer, Carol Myers, and long-time former Three Parks' president and the voice at the end of the Three Parks phone line, Daniele Gerard.

In this shortened petition period we had many teen contributors, led by Bonnie Mairs, Mary Jane Thompson, Jessica Haberstock, Bruce Markens, Dan Cohen, David Lazarus, Elliot Podwill, Iris Real, Margo Nash, Marian Goldberg, Michelle Grady, Rob Gottheim, and Alex Medwedew.

And finally our thanks to these spirited contributors: Deborah Thomas, Madelyn Innocent, Michael Stearns, Barbara Nelson, Elaine Hazzard, Elizabeth Kellner, Lyndall Callan, Robert Bardin, Robert Botfeld, Carol and Sam Bartos, and Roschel Stearns.