

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

Cathedral Station ♦ P.O. Box 1316 ♦ New York, N.Y. 10025 ♦ (212) 866-6378

Website: ThreeParksDems.org ♦ Email: ThreeParksDems@aol.com

President

Daniele Gerard

Editor

Lauren Williams
(laurenwilliams1@cs.com)

District Leaders

Bob Botfeld
Cynthia Doty

State Committee

Lynn Thomas
Daniel Marks Cohen

JANUARY 12, 2011

FEATURED TOPIC & ALBANY UPDATE: State Senator Adriano Espaillat;
SPEAKERS: FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY and MEDICARE: Steve
Max and Ray Schwartz

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12th

TIME: 8:00 PM

PLACE: The Youth Hostel
891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103rd Street

ROOM: Chapel/Ballroom

AGENDA

7:45 PM Sign-in
8 PM Call to Order

1. President's Report & Announcements
2. District Leaders' Reports
3. Sen. Espaillat Albany Update
4. Social Security & Medicare

5. New Business
6. Adjournment

CALENDAR

Wednesday, January 26, 2011
Three Parks Board Meeting, 8 PM
Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Wednesday, February 9, 2011
Three Parks Meeting, 8 PM
Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Wednesday, February 23, 2011
Three Parks Board Meeting, 8 PM
Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Wednesday, March 9, 2011
Three Parks Meeting, 8 PM
Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

President' Column

By Daniele Gerard

Once again, the Three Parks holiday party brought out hundreds of members, friends, and elected officials to eat, drink, be merry, and dance the night away. The sense of community was palpable, the decorations festive, and the DJ in fine form. Many thanks to State Committee Member and decorator extraordinaire Lynn Thomas, to the entire committee for all their hard work, and to all of you for coming out to celebrate.

November's education forum was a tremendous success. Thanks go out to our knowledgeable and informative panelists Leonie Haimson, Brian Jones, Noah Gotbaum, Nicholas Tishuk, and Valerie Babb. Several members commented on how much they learned and how much the panel impressed them by stressing the importance of cutting through media and corporate hype to be able to take positive steps actually to rescue public education.

January's meeting will feature our new State Senator Adriano Espaillat who will give us an update on Albany under the Cuomo administration and a Republican State Senate. We will also hear a detailed presentation from TPID member Steve Max and board member Ray Schwartz on threats to Social Security and Medicare. Members will be able to commiserate about the November elections while signing up to fight back with progressive grass roots friends on the Three Parks campaign to preserve Social Security.

Best wishes to all for a happy and a healthy New Year!

Proposed Nominees to the Three Parks Board of Directors

Elections will be held at the February 9 meeting.

Theresa Canter – Second Vice-President
Wendy Dannett
Jock Davenport – Recording Secretary
Ellen Flax – Treasurer
Ernestine Gallagher
Daniele Gerard – President
Louisa Gilbert
Elizabeth Kellner
Erl Kimmich

Barbara Lee
Marie Lunn
Bruce Markens
Mary Ann Marks
Lynn Max – Membership Director
Merle McEldowney
Corine Pettey
Milivoy Samurovich
Ray Schwartz
Ken Tulloch
Lauren Williams – Corresponding Secretary
Jane Wisdom
Judy Wood – First Vice-President

The District Leaders, Bob Botfeld and Cynthia Doty, are *ex officio* members of the Board.

As the Three Parks Constitution provides, to be eligible to vote, a member new to the Club during the calendar year of such vote must have attended at least one other meeting of the Club within the previous six months. Members of Three Parks in the prior calendar year must have attended at least one Club meeting within the previous six months and have their dues current by the vote. Any person residing in the 69th Assembly District or any adjoining Assembly District, or anyone employed in or doing business in the 69th Assembly District, who is a registered voter enrolled in the Democratic Party shall become a member in good standing 30 days after application for membership and payment of dues.

The 2011 Membership Form is included in the Newsletter. Renew your membership or join now to be able to vote at the February 9 Annual General Meeting.

Proposed Education Resolution

By Elizabeth Kellner and Bruce Markes

WHEREAS Community School District 3 in Manhattan currently offers a wide range of excellent public school choices as evidenced in part by strong demand, overcrowding and space limitations that have had a severe impact on several schools in the district,

WHEREAS District 3's Community Education Council (CEC3) believes all existing classroom space is desperately needed to accommodate the current and anticipated growth of District 3's elementary and middle school programs, WHEREAS Harlem Success Academy has recently received approval from the SUNY

Trustees, along with strong support from the Department of Education (DOE), to open a new charter school in District 3 with plans to expand to 700 students,

WHEREAS Harlem Success has embarked upon a long term, multi-faceted and expensive marketing effort to artificially stimulate demand for a new charter which would siphon physical and financial resources, as well as parental support, from District 3's existing highly regarded public schools,

WHEREAS Harlem Success, rather than pursue its original mission of offering innovative alternatives to communities that have long suffered from poor and failing public schools for a multitude of reasons including extreme poverty, neglect and underfunding, has now apparently decided its mission should be expanded to include displacement of successful public schools in ethnically and socio-economically diverse neighborhoods such as District 3 with thriving public schools,

WHEREAS the experience of other public schools that have been forced to co-locate with charters has resulted in their being pushed out and relegated to inferior facilities,

WHEREAS the results of charter schools' general effectiveness to improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged students as measured by the admittedly limited yardstick of New York State as well as national standardized test results has been mixed at best,

WHEREAS 95 percent of New York City's 1.1 million public school children will continue to be educated in the regular public school system, and

WHEREAS our society cannot afford to be distracted or diverted from the obligation to provide our children with a sound basic education by preoccupation with the highly marginal and arguable benefit of increasing the number of charter schools, especially in those communities where there is no evidence of systemic "failure,"

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Three Parks Independent Democrats:

1. Calls for a moratorium on charter school expansion in New York City;
2. Opposes the co-location of any charter school within District 3; and

3. Insists that the District 3 CEC be actively involved in all decisions relating to the allocation of classroom space in the District's schools.

The Democrats' Deal with the Devil **By Steve Max**

Manhattan House Members Nadler and Rangel courageously voted against the White House/Republican tax deal, which also was opposed by the Board of Three Parks Independent Democrats.

The NY Times (12/16/10) reported that "Representative Jerrold Nadler ... said he feared the one-year cut in the Social Security payroll tax, to 4.2 percent from 6.2 percent on income up to \$106,800, would weaken Social Security because Republicans would insist on it being made permanent, and Democrats would relent. 'We know that politically once you make that tax cut it will be impossible to restore it,' Mr. Nadler said."

The White House has been quick to say that Social Security isn't really losing this \$112 billion dollar cut in its tax revenue because the legislation requires the federal government to repay it. The real danger here is that Republicans have long been falsely charging that Social Security is a major cause of the deficit, although the truth is that until now there has been no connection whatsoever. The government does need to repay the money it borrowed from Social Security, but it was the deficit that caused the borrowing—not the borrowing that caused the deficit. Unfortunately, due to the Obama deal, the Republican charge has been put on track to become reality because the \$112 billion will be added to the deficit when it is repaid!

If, as Congressman Nadler suggests, the Social Security revenue cut is extended in 2011, it will certainly add to the cry from both Republicans and centrist Democrats that "benefits must be reduced to lower the deficit." (As many Three Parks members know, the deficit is not the cause of unemployment, stagnant wages, and rising household debt as conservatives claim, but that is another article.)

Speaking of the tax deal as a whole, former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich called it a return to Reaganomics. "The only practical effect of adding \$858 billion to the deficit will be to put more pressure on the Democrats to reduce non-

defense spending of all sorts, including Social Security and Medicare as well as education and infrastructure. It is nothing short of Ronald Reagan's (and David Stockman's) notorious 'starve the beast' strategy."

Although the White House says this a "win for working families," the big winners are the wealthy. Citizens for Tax Justice has done state breakdowns showing that in New York State, 72% of the tax breaks will go to the richest 20% of families, while the other 80% of us receive 28%. Does this add up to stimulus that will boost the economy? No. People living hand to mouth will no doubt spend what ever little they get, but the middle class is expected to use its tax breaks to pay down debt. The rich may invest, but that means more speculation, not more jobs. The Federal Reserve reported this month that the cash reserves of U.S. non-financial companies have reached a 50-year high of \$1.93 trillion, which they are unwilling to spend. Said the Wall Street Journal, "The cash buildup shows the deep caution many companies feel about investing in expansion while the economic recovery remains painfully slow and high unemployment and battered household finances continue to limit consumers ability to spend." Could anything be more clear? The shortage of money is not at the top, but at the bottom.

Condolences

Three Parks Independent Democrats expresses condolences to Board members Mary Ann Marks on the death of her husband Eddie and Lauren Williams on the loss of her sister Linda and to Robert Leuze on the loss of his wife Sarah, both TPID members.

Three Parks is also saddened by the passing of longtime club member, Odessa Steward. Odessa was one of the earliest residents in Douglass Houses and a vital member of our community. She created the Community Police Precinct Council, served in many Douglass Houses organizations, and worked tirelessly for years as poll site coordinator at West Side High. She served on our Board and was always one of our most reliable petitioners. Condolences to her family and

friends. She will be sorely missed.

Justice Will Be Served

By Judy Wood

Several weeks ago Cynthia and I attended a 30th anniversary celebration of the Chinese Workers Association at the Jing Fong restaurant in Chinatown at the invitation of Josephine Lee, a previous TPID honoree. It was an extremely festive occasion with music, entertainment, and lots of wonderful Chinese food. But their struggle continues even as they celebrate their longevity.

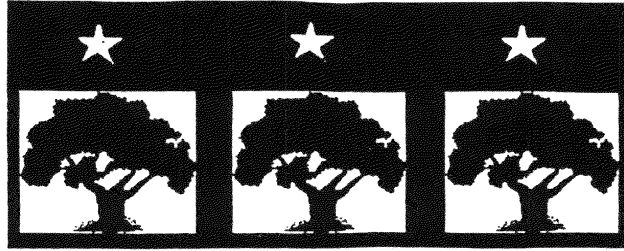
Many of you may remember the boycott of the Saigon Grill and other restaurants in the neighborhood over the past few years. It seemed as if the workers had achieved justice finally some months ago. But at a press conference on November 23, according to Josephine Lee it seems that the new owner of the Grill Simon Nget is not much better than the previous owners. He rejected some of the new workers as being too old (age discrimination), and when others protested, he fired all of them. He is also retaliating against workers who support the union and is prohibiting pooling tips.

The JUSTICE group is demanding that the new owners:

- Stop the retaliation and allow the union;
- Stop the age discrimination and ensure equal employment opportunity;
- Rehire the workers who were let go;
- Comply with the Labor Law – hands off workers tips.

Cynthia and Daniele attended the press conference where they said they are planning frequent picketing. We'll keep you posted as information becomes available.

The struggle for workers' rights and union recognition has been going on in our country as long as there have been workers and bosses. These days the union movement is losing a lot of its strength as the industrial base is disappearing and anti-union politics have gained way too much strength in recent decades. However, as a fine old union song says "we will not give up the fight, we have only started."



THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316 • New York, NY 10025 (212) 866-6378

Please pay your 2010 dues by filling out the form below and bringing it to the next meeting
or by mailing it with your check to:

*Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316
New York, N.Y. 10025
Attn: Treasurer*

2011 MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member _____

Renewal _____

Membership Category -- Check One

Individual (\$25) _____

Family -- two adults in the same household (\$40) _____

Low Income (\$15) _____

Low Income Family (\$20) _____

Sponsor (\$50) _____ Patron (\$100) _____

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Email _____

Check here if you prefer to receive the newsletter via email.

******Please pay your dues with a check or via PayPal--cash and money orders are far more difficult to process. Thanks in advance for your cooperation! Please make out all checks to "Three Parks Independent Democrats - Dues 2011"******

Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316
New York, N.Y. 10025

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12

**ALBANY UPDATE
FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
AND MEDICARE**