

## ***THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS***

Cathedral Station ♦ P.O. Box 1316 ♦ New York, N.Y. 10025 ♦ (212) 539-7602

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

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# **June 12, 2013**

FEATURED TOPIC & SPEAKERS: JERRY GOLDFEDER, Esq. ON FAIR ELECTIONS and VOTING & PETITION PIZZA PARTY

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12<sup>TH</sup>

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. SPEAKER - JERRY GOLDFEDER ESQ, ELECTION LAW EXPERT SPEAKING ON FAIR ELECTIONS and VOTING
2. PETITION DISCUSSION AND DISTRIBUTION
3. DISTRICT LEADER AND STATE COMMITTEE REPORTS
4. PIZZA

## **CALENDAR**

**Wednesday June 12, 2013**  
**Three Parks Meeting, 8pm**  
Pizza and Petitions  
Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103d St.

**Wednesday June 26, 2013**  
**Board Meeting**  
Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave

**Wednesday, July 24, 2013**  
Three Parks Picnic

**Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2013**  
PRIMARY DAY

**Wednesday, Sep. 11, 2013**  
Three Parks Meeting 8PM  
Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave

## President's Column

By Elizabeth Kellner

On May 22, TPID successfully concluded what must have seemed like, and in fact was, a marathon season of candidate forums and endorsement votes. In this year of unprecedented competition for various public offices, our organizational, logistical and communication capabilities were tested and met the challenge. And in the middle of it all, we held a great party to raise money for our operations, outreach and community education and organizing activities. TPID heard from over 40 candidates and conducted votes for 14 public and party positions as well as the selection of our own eight Judicial Delegates. We listened to many speeches, answers to questions and impassioned expressions of support. Despite our differences and disagreements, everyone was treated with respect, and everyone had a chance to be heard. We have summarized the vote tallies for all these contests, including that perennial candidate No Endorsement, here in the newsletter.

Now that the candidate showcases are behind us, the hard work of a summer of petitioning and campaigning begins.

We will also refocus our efforts on the issue organizing which has been TPID's trademark. Heightened interest in this banner city election year brought us many new members as well as visits from old familiar faces we had not seen in a long time. Please don't be strangers now that the voting is over. We need your people power, we need you to motivate your friends and neighbors to join us, and we need your input to help identify and prioritize our work for the coming year.

Thanks to all who helped us cross the finish line of this marathon, and thanks to all those who participated as candidates, campaign staff, volunteers and TPID members. Let's keep the momentum going.

## District Leader's Report

By Bob Botfeld

### What is the NY Democratic County Committee?

### Would you like to be on the County Committee?

Would you like to be the Democratic representative for your block? In our neighborhood one or two blocks comprise an election district. Each election district is represented by two, three or four Democratic County Committee members and as a member of the County Committee you become part of the governing body of the Democratic Party in Manhattan.

The requirements are simple – reside in the 69<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, collect between 15-30 signatures on the club petitions, and attend one or two organizational meetings during your two-year term.

### Why is the County Committee important?

It is the County Committee who nominates the Democratic replacement for any city, state or congressional office when the nominated candidate is unable to or chooses not to run in the general election. Selection of our state legislators by the County Committee is surprisingly common.

Almost one-third of New York State's Senators and Assembly members are first elected by the County Committee. In recent years the Three Parks' area was in the middle of several elections decided by the County Committee. In 1992 Congressman Ted Weiss died a few days before the Democratic primary. The County Committee members representing Three Parks and other West Side clubs convened a nominating assembly to replace Weiss. In a hotly contested election, then Assemblymember Jerrold Nadler was selected to be the Democratic nominee for Congress. A few days later, in a dramatic convention, the 67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District County Committee members chose Scott Stringer as the Democratic nominee to replace Nadler in the New York State Assembly by the ultimate small margin of a single County Committee member.

If you would like to be on the County Committee, contact District Leaders Bob Botfeld (email [rjbwteg@aol.com](mailto:rjbwteg@aol.com) or phone 212-865-1450) or Cynthia Doty (email [cldoty@aol.com](mailto:cldoty@aol.com) or phone: 212-749-4085).

Petitioning for the County Committee and all offices begins Tuesday, June 4. Petitioning is our opportunity to meet our neighbors, talk about local issues and politics, get some fresh air while we're standing on our local corner, join other club members at the weekend tables and knock on our neighbors' doors.

Petitioning on behalf of our candidates is critical. If candidates do not get the requisite signatures, they won't be on the ballot. If they're not on the ballot, they cannot be elected – even if they are the incumbents.

If you have not petitioned in the past, please take the opportunity to join in this very important activity and learn what your neighbors think about local and national politics. Distribution of the petitions will begin on June 3 and also at the June 12 club meeting and pizza party.

**Please take a moment and fill out our important issues survey either online at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/important\\_issues](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/important_issues) or call/text Erl Kimmich of the Outreach Committee at 917-570-1497 for a hardcopy of the survey if you would prefer.**  
**THANK YOU!**

## What the Frack?

By Daniele Gerard

So here's the latest—and it would be funny if the health and environment of all New Yorkers were not at stake.

It appears that a consulting firm hired with taxpayer dollars in 2011 to assess the economic impacts of fracking on our state is a member of Industrial Oil & Gas Association of New York (IOGA), the state's major oil and gas entity responsible for peddling natural gas as the fuel we desperately need. News reports show that the firm, ironically named Ecology & Environment Engineering, even signed a letter IOGA sent to the Governor urging him to approve fracking! E&E also reviewed comments submitted by the public regarding the impacts of fracking on organic farmers.

This blatant conflict of interest is just one more reason to throw out the state's environmental impact statement regarding fracking, in addition to the absence of a comprehensive health study and myriad other problems.

And if that were not enough, tens of thousands of tons of hazardous wastes are being shipped to New York State each year from fracking sites in Pennsylvania and other states. These wastes have high levels of heavy metals, carcinogens and other toxic chemicals and compounds, yet are exempt from storage and treatment regulations that govern the handling of other hazardous substances. Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell and State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk have just introduced legislation in Albany to ban hazardous waste products from out-of-state fracking operations from being imported into, treated, or disposed of in New York State. Assembly Member O'Donnell has also sponsored a bill to prohibit fracking wastewater from being used on roadways as a de-icing agent. Stay tuned.

By now, you have received alerts about the **June 17th rally against fracking in Albany**. Three Parks and other members of New Yorkers Against Fracking (200+ organizations statewide) want to make this the biggest anti-fracking rally ever. Please sign up for one of the buses at [http://act.foodandwaterwatch.org/site/PageNavigator/Events/Water\\_fracking\\_NY\\_CrossroadsRally.html](http://act.foodandwaterwatch.org/site/PageNavigator/Events/Water_fracking_NY_CrossroadsRally.html) Join your friends and neighbors on **Monday, June 17th**, as we demand that Governor Cuomo ban fracking now!

## Update on Indian Point

By Erl Kimmich and Daniele Gerard

Licenses for the two working reactors at Indian Point, the nuclear power plant located in Westchester, are set to expire in 2013 and 2015. Erl and Daniele testified at a Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing regarding Indian Point in Tarrytown on May 15th. Erl made some analogies that resonated with both the crowd and the five-member NRC panel. He pointed out that IP was designed to last 40 years

and that the NRC ought to stick with that plan like scuba divers do: they "plan the dive and then dive the plan."

Erl also likened IP to a carton of milk that has reached its expiration date; we wouldn't drink it no matter what the alleged nutritional value—so should we get our electricity from other available sources. Finally, Erl lamented the much-touted "culture of safety" at Indian Point, explaining that NASA and the Army Corps of Engineers had a similar culture that failed on several shuttle missions and during Hurricane Katrina. Any such failure at IP would be catastrophic for the 17 million people living with 50 miles of the plant—the recommended evacuation distance at Fukushima.

Daniele asked (1) how much insurance Entergy, the plant's owner, carries, and would it really be enough or would taxpayers be the actual "insurers" in the event of an accident; (2) when there would be public hearings and a comment period on the document Entergy is required to submit regarding the impact of Indian Point on New York State's coastal waterways; and (3) when the NRC would go beyond examining the minutiae of IP and look at the big picture. As the NRC knows, relicensing depends only on the physical condition of the reactor's machinery and little else. The NRC has a very impressive list of every nut and bolt in the plant, all of which are checked to determine if, having lasted for 40 years, they are now good for another twenty. That is all that is considered—not the lack of a viable evacuation plan, or the 1500 tons of waste stored onsite and the 1000 additional tons that would be created under renewed licenses, or terrorist threats, or climate change, or readily available energy alternatives, or anything else.

When the plant was built, no one knew it was sitting on an earthquake fault. The NRC itself has called Indian Point the most likely nuclear plant in the United States to experience core damage and a release of radioactive contamination following an earthquake. Apparently, this will not be considered in relicensing. In addition, there have been changes to the rules for siting nuclear plants near population centers. In short, Indian Point could not be licensed today, so it defies logic to extend its current licenses.

Finally, Daniele reminded the panel that in August 2011, New York experienced the effects of an earthquake, Hurricane Irene, and a tornado all in one week. We have not yet recovered from 2012's Hurricane Sandy. It no longer suffices to say, "It can't happen here."

The NRC could not answer our questions.

## The IRS was right – Obama caves again

By Steve Max

President Obama should be defending the I.R.S. employees who have only been doing their jobs. As a careful reading of the [Inspector General's Report](#) shows, there is no scandal.

Well, let's put it this way: there are scandals at the I.R.S., but this isn't one of them.

### The Build-Up

As the 2012 elections approached, there was a marked increase in the number of organizations applying to the I.R.S. for status as Social Welfare Organizations known as 501(c)(4)s. Such groups may participate in electoral politics as long as it is not their primary purpose, and they do not need to disclose their contributors.

### What the I.R.S. Looked for "Inappropriately"

The I.R.S. has been charged with using "inappropriate criteria" for determining which applications should be given extra scrutiny as "political cases." Here is the list of "inappropriate" criteria from the Inspector General's Report (p. 6)

### Figure 3: Criteria for Potential Political Cases (June 2011)

1. "Tea Party," "Patriots" or "9/12 Project" is referenced in the case file.
2. Issues include government spending, government debt or taxes.
3. Education of the public by advocacy/lobbying to "make America a better place to live"
4. Statement in the case file criticizes how the country is being run

Source: EO function briefing dated June 2011

Clearly, only the first I.R.S. category applies to specific right wing organizations; the rest of the criteria could apply just as well to centrist or progressive groups.

Only 33 percent of the applications singled out for further processing had the name Tea Party, 9/12<sup>1</sup> or Patriot in their names. But what about those named groups: was it unfair to single out the Tea Party for additional scrutiny? No, not at all. Consider this. What does the word "party" mean? It can indicate an individual person, it can be an event at which tea is served, or it can be a political party. None of these meets the criteria of being designated as a Social Welfare Organization. The I.R.S. staff was therefore called upon to determine whether Tea Party means political party, or whether these groups are something else that might let them qualify for 501(c)(4) status.

Significantly, *Roll Call*,<sup>2</sup> the on-line publication that covers Congress, reports that over 104 groups with "Tea Party", "Patriot," or "9/12" in their titles have registered themselves

<sup>1</sup> 9/12 organizations were inspired by Glenn Beck of Fox News in 2009. They have something to do with 9 principles and 12 values.

<sup>2</sup> <http://blogs.rollcall.com/moneyline/I.R.S.-records-available-showing-over-100-tea-party-or-patriot-or-912-groups/> May 17, 2013

with the I.R.S. in the category known as 527 that includes political parties, political committees, candidate committees, and PACS. One can easily understand why, when some groups with these names register as electoral organizations, the I.R.S. might question why other groups with the same names are calling themselves Social Welfare Organizations. *Roll Call* suggests that some of these groups may have tried to register twice or may have set up separate accounts in each category, a possibility that certainly would warrant further checking.

### The Inspector General Actually Agrees With the I.R.S. Staff

"We reviewed all 298 applications that had been identified as potential political cases as of May 31, 2012. In the majority of cases, we agreed that the applications submitted included indications of significant political campaign intervention. However, we did not identify any indications of significant political campaign intervention for 91 (31 percent) of the 296 applications."<sup>3</sup> So, I.R.S. staff got it right two-thirds of the time in deciding which applications needed a closer look by a higher body at the I.R.S. Now the Republicans want them arrested and the President is acting as if something awful has happened.

### What Is Really Going On Here?

Perhaps the Obama Administration is happy to have so much attention focused on the treatment a handful of little local groups. It keeps everyone from noticing the failure of the I.R.S. to regulate the huge 501(c)(4) organizations that spend hundreds of millions on political campaign advertising. Some of these are right wing, such as Karl Rove's Crossroads GPS, but others, such as Priorities USA, were founded by former Obama aids to support his campaign. Did these groups really spend more on social welfare activities than on campaign ads? If there is a scandal, it is probably here. (For an excellent discussion of this, see *Uneven I.R.S. Scrutiny*. NY Times 5/14/2012.) These groups exist because of the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision and the notion that corporations are people with constitutional rights to influence elections. Obama should take advantage of the I.R.S. flap to attack the role of corporate money in politics.

## Resolution on Colombia

From time to time, Three Parks introduces resolutions to enable the club to work formally on various issues, for example, health care/single payer, Social Security, fracking, and Indian Point. Below for consideration by the membership is a proposed resolution to end all but humanitarian aid to Colombia due to the poor human rights record there. It will be read, discussed, and voted on at the June 12<sup>th</sup> club meeting.

Currently Peace talks are underway between the Colombian

<sup>3</sup> Inspector General's Report at p. 10

government and The FARC-EP. The Communist FARC-EP have lead an almost fifty year armed insurgency against an oligarchy masquerading as a two party democracy. Their goal is to enact socialist programs and sovereign Colombian control of Colombian resources.

([http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/7100034-revolutionary-social-change-in-colombia?auto\\_login\\_attempted=true](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/7100034-revolutionary-social-change-in-colombia?auto_login_attempted=true))

The Liberal and Conservative Colombian governments with support from the United States seem bent on turning control of the countryside over to large property owners and foreign investors and companies.

In Colombia paramilitaries or the army kill or imprison union members, human rights activists, and dissenters.

(<http://www.laborrights.org/end-violence-against-trade-unions/colombia>)

### **Resolution to End U.S. Aid to Colombia**

WHEREAS Colombia has one of the worst human rights records in the Western Hemisphere

([www.justiceforcolombia.org/about-colombia/](http://www.justiceforcolombia.org/about-colombia/)),

WHEREAS the United States has given more than \$7 billion to Colombia, 75 percent of which has gone directly to military aid ([http://www.fpif.org/articles/playing\\_the\\_spoiler\\_in\\_colombia](http://www.fpif.org/articles/playing_the_spoiler_in_colombia)),

WHEREAS, as a result of the continued conflict between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces-People's Army (FARC-EP), it is estimated that between 50,000 and 200,000 people have been killed since 1964 and between three and five million Colombians have been driven from their

homes ([http://ploughshares.ca/pl\\_armedconflict/colombia-1964-first-combat-deaths/#Deaths](http://ploughshares.ca/pl_armedconflict/colombia-1964-first-combat-deaths/#Deaths));

(<http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/27/land-and-loss-in-colombia/?ref=colombia>), and

WHEREAS the number of political prisoners in Colombia has grown from 7,200 in 2008 to over 10,000 in

2012 (<http://afgj.org/colombian-prison-strikes-continue-inhumane-conditions-made-in-the-usa>),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Three Parks Independent Democrats calls on the Obama Administration and the Congress of the United States to (1) pass and sign legislation eliminating all aid to Colombia except that which is truly humanitarian.

## **Thank you for Attending!**

Three Parks Independent Democrats would like to thank everyone who attended our Annual Benefit on April 28, 2013 when we honored Carolyn B. Maloney, Representative of New York's 12th Congressional District and Susan Lerner, Executive Director of Common Cause New York. We had

more sponsors than we've ever had before, and extend a special thank you to our sponsors.

### **Benefactors**

Louisa Gilbert  
Hon. Noah E. Gotbaum  
Elizabeth Krob Kellner

Hon. Mark Levine  
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Hon. Daniel O'Donnell

### **Patrons**

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Yvonne Vulliemoz  
Ellen J. Werner  
Hon. Judy Wood  
Mel Wymore  
Gloria Zeche



## April 10 Judicial Delegate Endorsement Vote

### Delegates:

Theresa Canter 51  
Alan Flacks 66  
Corine Pettet 45  
Milivoy Samurovich 43  
Bruce Markens 37

### Alternates:

Ernestine Gallagher 37  
Merle Mceldowney 39  
Katherine Samuels 26  
Stephanie Tegnazian 21

## May 8 Endorsement Vote

### MAYOR (1st ballot)

Albanese 0  
Credico 3  
de Blasio 38  
Liu 40  
Quinn 1  
Salgado 0  
Thompson 6  
NE 3

### 2nd Ballot

de Blasio 29  
Liu 45  
NE 1

### COMPTROLLER

Stringer 73  
NE 18

### PUBLIC ADVOCATE

Guerriero 5  
James 62  
Saujani 0  
Squadron 20  
NE 2

### BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Brewer 69  
Jackson 14  
Lappin 2  
Menin 6  
NE 1

### DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Vance 78  
NE 12

### FEMALE DISTRICT LEADER

Doty 85  
NE 8

### MALE DISTRICT LEADER

Botfeld 85  
NE 5

## May 22 Council Endorsement Vote I

### 6th

Ken Biberaj - 1  
Debra Cooper - 3  
Noah Gotbaum - 14  
Marc Landis - 47  
Helen Rosenthal - 10  
Mel Wymore - 5  
NE - 1

### 7th

Alicia Barksdale - 1  
Brodie Enoch - 2  
Joyce Johnson - 11  
Manuel Lantigua - 0  
Mark Levine - 39  
Thomas Lopez-Pierre - 2  
Corey Ortega - 0  
Mark Otto - 6  
Cheryl Pahaham - 1  
Powell - 0  
Zead Ramadan - 8  
Luis Tejada - 2  
Ruben Vargas - 2  
NE - 2

Five unopposed Democratic candidates for Civil Court Judge were endorsed - Judge Peter Moulton and Judge Ann O'Shea who are seeking re-election, and J. J. Kelley, Dakota Ramseur and Mary Rosado, who are running for three vacant seats on the bench.

## Candidate Survey is on the website

The Three Parks board thought it would be good to ask candidates who wanted our endorsement for their positions on issues that we thought are important – so we appointed a committee of Three Parks board members to decide what questions should be asked. The surveys are available on the Three Parks web site. They will be there until the election is over. Just go to our home page [www.threeparksdems.org](http://www.threeparksdems.org), look just below the endorsed candidates box and find the list of the candidates who have completed the survey. Click on the candidate whose survey you would like to read.

The committee took three months and approximately 700 emails to cut it down to a reasonable length. The questions cover the topics we at Three Parks are interested in: housing, land use, education, environmental issues, criminal justice, taxation and more. Some of the responses from the candidates are pretty extensive. They reflect much about the candidates: what their positions are, how they go about answering questions, how they present their accomplishments. We will leave them up until the election is over. Candidates who have not answered yet, we will post their responses as soon as we receive them.

*Three Parks members Annie Petrus and Forrest C. Murphy were married on April 28, 2013.  
Congratulations!*

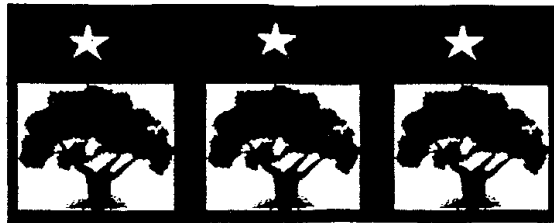
## Annual Club Picnic Planned for Summer

By Theresa Canter

Please put Wednesday, July 24th on your calendar now! Once again we are planning a Three Parks potluck picnic in Central Park by the pool/pond lawn at 103rd Street! It is always a lot of fun and the weather gods have been kind to us in the past. Petitioning season will be over, and it's the perfect opportunity for club members to share a lovely evening in the park before we gear up for the important city-wide primary elections in September.

We will be sending out a reminder postcard invitation and an Evite (please respond!) in July. In order to facilitate picnic planning, we will have a sign-up sheet at the June 12th meeting. As always, we request you to bring a dish to share with your fellow club members.

<p><b>2013 Election Calendar</b> <b>Petitioning: June 4-July 11</b> <b>Last day register for Primary: Aug 16</b> <b>Last day register for General: Oct 11</b> <b>Primary Election Day: Sept 10</b> <b>Run-Off Election Day: Sept 24</b> <b>General Election Day: Nov 5</b> <b>Board of Elections Website:</b> <a href="http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us">www.vote.nyc.ny.us</a> Click "Election Dates" in left column and then pdf "Dates to Remember"</p>
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### *THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS*

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Please pay your 2013 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*

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## 2013 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 2013\*\***

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

**NEXT MEETING**

**Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>  
FAIR ELECTIONS  
PIZZA AND PETITIONS**