

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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

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President

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District Leaders

Bob Botfeld
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State Committee

Lynn Thomas
Daniel Marks Cohen

CLUB MEETING, JUNE 8, 2016

Topic: The State of the Borough
Speaker: Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Date: Wednesday, June 8, 2016
Time: 8:00 pm
Place: The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103 Street
Room: Ballroom

AGENDA

7:45 PM Sign-in
8:00 PM Call to Order
District Leader Reports
Speaker: Gale Brewer,
Manhattan Borough President
Annual Petitioning Pizza Party
Plans for Three Parks Summer Picnic
Adjourn

CALENDAR

Wednesday, June 8, 2016, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Membership meeting,
The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue
Wednesday, June 22, 2016, 8:00 pm
Three Parks Board Meeting
The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue
Tuesday, June 28, 2016, 6:00 am–9:00 pm
Primary Election
July 2016
Three Parks Summer Picnic in Central Park
Check threeparksdems.org for date & details

President's Report

By Lauren Williams

Our May membership and endorsement meeting provided a little of everything as we heard from our candidates for Judicial Delegate, members speaking in support of NYS Assembly and Senate candidates, NYC Councilmember Mark Levine (District 7) reporting on the newly-passed plastic bag bill and increased funding for parks, and Political Director of the NYS Democratic Senate Campaign Committee Loren Amor updating us on races targeted to bring a Democratic majority back to the state Senate. Club members also endorsed candidates for State Offices, State Committee, and Judicial Delegate. (Results of the endorsement voting follow this report.) We also introduced and had presentations from candidates for Civil Court Judge as follows: Shah Ally, Josh Hanshaft, Judy Kim, Emily Morales-Minerva, Nick Moyne, Phaedra Perry, and Robert Rosenthal.

While our meeting on June 8 is the last before our summer break, Three Parks members will be busy as we prepare for the Federal Primary Election on June 28, and petition for our endorsed candidates to be on the ballot for the September 13 State Democratic Primary. Plan to vote and encourage others to go to the polls on June 28 since this election determines which Democratic candidates will be on the ballot for U.S. Senate and House of Representatives in the 10th and 13th Congressional Districts. As a reminder, Three Parks endorsed Chuck Schumer for Senate, Jerry Nadler for Congress in the 10th District, and made no endorsement for Congress in the 13th District. Petitions for State Offices, State Committee, and Judicial Delegate will be distributed at the June 8 meeting when we also will have our annual pizza party. Please sign up to help during June and early July as we seek signatures through tabling events and individual neighborhood efforts.

In July, we will have our Annual Summer Picnic in Central Park. Plan to join other members, guests, candidates and electeds to talk politics and enjoy a wonderful potluck meal in a lovely City park. Specific details will be announced soon.

Endorsement Vote Results

At its May 11 club meeting, Three Parks endorsed Bill Perkins, Micah Lasher and Daniel O'Donnell. Here is the full list of endorsement votes.

NY State Senator, 30th SD

78 Perkins

01 Brian Benjamin

05 No Endorsement

NY State Senator, 31 SD

33 Robert Jackson

51 Micah Lasher

05 No Endorsement

NY State Assembly, 69th AD

72 Daniel O'Donnell

13 No Endorsement

NY State Committee, Female, 69th AD

74 Lynn Thomas

08 No Endorsement

NY State Committee, Male, 69th AD

76 Daniel Marks Cohen

07 No Endorsement

NY State Judicial Delegates, 69th AD

52 Theresa Canter

32 Audrey Isaacs

33 Merle McEldowney

67 Alan Flacks

34 Bruce Markens

14 Abigail McGloster

16 Carmen Quinones

12 Stephanie Tegnazian

The top two candidates receiving the most votes are endorsed and nominated for Judicial Delegate. The next three candidates receiving the most votes are endorsed and nominated for Judicial Delegate Alternate.

District Leader Report

By Bob Botfeld

Petitioning—begins June 7 for our endorsed candidates Bill Perkins and Micah Lasher for state senate; Danny O'Donnell for assembly; Three Parks club members Lynn Thomas and Dan Cohen for state committee; and civil court and judicial delegates.

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. 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.

Petitioning on behalf of our candidates is critical. If candidates do not get the requisite number of signatures, they will not be on the ballot. If they are not on the ballot, they cannot be elected—even if they are the incumbents. Because we reliably petition for our endorsed candidates every year, they pay attention to our issues and our

neighborhood concerns. Help us and our neighborhood by maintaining the Three Parks petitioning tradition.

At our club meeting—and annual Pizza Party—on June 8, petitions and instructions will be distributed and discussed. Petitions also will be distributed at the Three Parks petitioning tables on Broadway.

Civil Court—The seven candidates for two open county-wide Manhattan Civil Court judgeships addressed the club at the May meeting. Each of the candidates was found highly qualified by the Manhattan County 2016 Democratic Civil Court Screening Panel. The candidates were Josh Hanshaft, Phaedra Perry, Emily Morales-Minerva, Nicholas Moyne, Robert Rosenthal, Shahabuddeen Ally, and Judy Kim. At the county executive committee meeting on May 22, several candidates withdrew from consideration because they had chosen to contend for open district civil court districts. Civil court judges elected for either county-wide or district positions have identical positions, responsibilities, and opportunities for advancement once they are elected as judges. The distinctions between county and district seats are anachronisms from former judicial structures.

Josh Hanshaft and Emily Morales-Minerva prevailed in gathering support among the Manhattan clubs and were nominated. The remaining candidates withdrew, either choosing to run for the open district seats or failing to gather sufficient support. Most of the candidates who have come out of any screening panel will become judges in the future. In general, the candidates who fail to gather sufficient support usually withdraw and work to gain more support in future years.

Vote Where You Live!

By Daniele Gerard

As I handed out fliers the day of the presidential primary, at 6:30 pm at 96 Street and Broadway, a young woman emerged from the subway wondering where she could vote. I asked where she lived and was stunned to hear her reply: “On Staten Island.” She couldn’t turn around to make the journey home to vote.

In a primary season that presented clear choices, New Yorkers on April 19 barely came out to vote—30 percent of registered voters is nothing to crow about. People did not know when or where to vote, or even the basic rules about registering to vote. Two more primaries before the general election do not bode well for voter turnout. In fact, it is absolutely ridiculous that New Yorkers have to go to the polls three times in five months before the general election. Who profits or otherwise benefits from this calendar? Certainly not the public, and certainly not the 100,000 plus voters who

were disenfranchised on April 19. Of course, there are many theories, but no one could have set this schedule without recognizing that it would doom turnout in the June and September primaries. Or maybe that was the point.

So what’s the best way forward for people like us, who spend a great deal of our volunteer time registering voters and trying to educate them? It seems that widespread public service announcements might go a long way toward increasing turnout, educating voters and making our elections more inclusive and therefore meaningful. Specifically, we should advocate for an advertising campaign on subways and buses to educate a captive audience of over five million riders every day. It need only say “Vote Where You Live,” and list the dates of the primaries, the times polls are open, a few rules and deadlines about voting and registration, and prominently display a website like pollsitelocator.com.

If riders can learn all day, every day, on our interminable commutes how to order groceries and meals, practice manners on public transit, and surgically alter various parts of our bodies, surely we should have an opportunity to learn how, when and where to exercise our franchise.

Prison Labor: A New Form of Slavery?

By Wendy Dannett

Human rights organizations are condemning what they call human slavery, in which Wall Street investors and large companies are investing in the prison industry. Companies don’t have to worry about workers striking, paying compensation time, or dealing with sickness and lateness, because the workers are not allowed. In fact, prisoners are threatened with solitary confinement if they refuse to work. According to a Daily News article by Keri Blankenger on 10/20/2015, this has already occurred in New York.

There are financial incentives to imprison people in this country. According to an article written in 2011 in Newsone, private prisons paid \$.93 to \$4.73 per hour; federal prisons paid \$.93 to \$1.25 per hour. Thanks to prison labor, the United States is once again an attractive location for investment in work that was designed for third world markets,” Vivki Palaez wrote in Global Research in 2014.

Chris Hedges, in Truthdig (12/28/2014) corroborated the above. “Prisons employ and exploit the ideal worker. Prisoners do not receive benefits or pensions. They are not paid overtime. They are forbidden to organize or strike... cannot formally complain about working conditions or safety hazards... can lose their jobs and be sent to isolation cells.” He further reports that in the name of austerity, state prisons have stopped providing essential items, such as shoes, extra blankets, and even toilet paper.

Prison privation began on a large scale in the 1980s, under Presidents Reagan and Bush Sr., according to Vicki Palaez. It reached its height under President Clinton, when cuts in the federal workforce resulted in the Justice Department contracting private prison corporations for incarcerating undocumented workers and high security inmates.

At least 37 states allow private companies to contract prison laborers, says Keri Blankenger in her 2015 article. She cites that Whole Foods was selling tilapia and trout produced by prisoners in Colorado. The company has since dropped the products, but had been paying \$.85 per pound for the fish and reselling it for over \$11.99 a pound. Vicky Palaez, based on an El Diario article in 2014, documented that Macy's, Target, Dell, Motorola and other companies take advantage of prison workers. Newsone, in 2011, reported that inmates in Texas were producing brooms, bedding, toilets and sinks. California inmates were sewing their own clothes. Prisoners in Wisconsin had helped build a Walmart in 2005, until community outcry halted the program.

Not surprisingly, protests in prisons have begun. There were work stoppages in Alabama prisons in January 2014, Chris Hedges reported in 2015. They were part of the "The Alabama Movement." Since then, the organizers have spent their time in solitary confinement; the inmates have become symbols of a growing resistance movement inside American prisons. 'Prisoners are currently organizing in Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, and Washington,' Chris Hedges writes.

I wonder: When will New York be added to that list? We can help make it happen by publicizing and protesting these atrocities.

Protecting the Environment

By Erl Kimmich

Members of Three Parks independent Democrats have a great record of activism when it comes to protecting our environment. We worked hard to push for Governor Cuomo's eventual ban on fracking. Along with thousands of activists in New York State, we can claim victory while knowing that the next step will be to get the legislature to pass a ban backing up Cuomo's lead in our state.

Bernie Sanders is committed to a ban, whereas Hilary Clinton favors a blend of regulations that vary in different locations. Still, it is due in part to Three Parks and the work of its membership that this issue is a part of the national discussion and cannot be swept under the rug. Ask any "fracktivists" on the Upper West Side and they will assure you that they will not rest until this insidious threat to our

nation has been eliminated.

We continue to work to close the decaying old nuclear power plant at Indian Point. One of our members, Merle McEldowney, was arrested along with other protestors. Merle told me she was grateful that the cuffs did not go on too tight and intends to continue, as will Three Parks, the fight to shut it down. Sanders has said that we must take action to shut this plant down. Clinton, while critical of Indian Point, has not yet called for a shut down.

Renewable energy technologies continue to improve by leaps and bounds. For example, a company called Arpa-E, founded in 2009 under Barack Obama's economic recovery plan, is proving results that might well transform our grid. According to Dr. Ellen Williams: "Our battery teams have developed new approaches to grid-scale batteries and moved them out." Other companies also have new batteries in development or already on the market. Batteries are one important part of the solution to transitioning beyond combustion. Intermittent sources of generation, like the sun which does not shine all the time and the wind which does not always blow, need large scale storage options so that end-users like you and me can flick a switch at night and have the lights and AC come on.

"2015 clearly marked a turning point for American energy," declared Lisa Jacobson, President of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy. "... We can now have both the tools and the capacity to achieve carbon reductions and cost savings along with economic growth. Now our job is to continue to build on the progress we've made." While we still have a long way to go in demand reduction/energy efficiency, conservation and new generation to replace fossil fuels and nuclear, the trend is steadily moving towards our liberation from the old dependencies on polluting power sources.

Here are some stats:

U.S. GDP has grown by 10 percent since 2007, while primary energy consumption has fallen by 2.4 percent over the same period;

At 1,985Mt (megatons), the 2015 power-sector carbon emissions figure was 4.3 percent below 2014 levels and 17.8 percent below 2005 levels;

Clean, renewable sources of power now make up 20 percent of the U.S. plant stack, at 222 GW. Hydroelectric facilities and pumped storage represent nearly half of this at 102 GW—a figure that has stayed roughly constant since 2008. Wind is the second-most prevalent renewable technology, standing at just under 75 GW at the end of 2015, roughly triple its installed capacity at the end of 2008 (25 GW). But solar has been the fastest growing, averaging

a 60 percent clip annually since 2008 to bring its total capacity to 28 GW;

New build in solar (7.3 GW) and wind (8.5 GW) outpaced even that of natural gas (6.0 GW). Wind in particular marked a 65 percent increase in build from the previous year.

As Colleen Regan, Senior Analyst at Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) explained, last year was certainly one for the history books: U.S. power sector CO₂ emissions fell to their lowest annual level since the mid-1990s and the net impact on consumers is negligible to positive as prices for electricity and fuel remained low by historic standards and customer choices expanded. Perhaps most importantly, many of the key changes seen in 2015 are likely permanent shifts, rather than temporary adjustments due to one-time events.

To learn more visit: <http://www.bcse.org/sustainableenergyfactbook.html>

Don't forget to make your way to Philadelphia on July 24 for the big Food and Water Watch led march for a Clean Energy Revolution.

NYS Democratic Committee Meeting

By Daniel Marks Cohen

On Monday May 23, the NYS Democratic Committee had its spring meeting in lovely Saratoga Springs. Largely called to endorse slates for the Clinton and Sanders campaigns, it was also an opportunity for the Progressive Caucus (aka the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party) to push for a vote on ethics reform. Deciding that tabling or voting down an ethics resolution would be a bit—shall we say...awkward—in this prosecution-heavy environment, the party leadership unanimously voted in favor of the resolution and it similarly passed unanimously at the full committee vote. So we are 2 for 2 now, the Caucus successfully getting the leadership to support the passage of pro-tenant legislation at the last meeting. Now, it is questionable about the actual value of these resolutions, but at least we are forcing the party to respond to us in the rank-and-file rather than solely expect us to rubber stamp their party procedural motions. *Side note:* especially after the fracas in Las Vegas at the Nevada Democratic Party convention, there was a lot of talk of unity and mutual respect and how the two candidates had to come together and forge a compromise so that there would be peace and harmony at the convention. And somewhat surprisingly, it was pretty calm. Everyone made nice and voted overwhelmingly for the proposed slates (although not us: both Lynn Thomas and I voted “a la carte” for the people we wanted—many of them off-slate people but

folks we knew that were activists and party workers for both candidates). I should also report that the Progressive Caucus had its largest turnout *EVER*, with over 50 people attending our meeting and debating and voting on our resolutions. Which was much more “real” democracy than the party meeting a few hours later.

Resolution of the Progressive Caucus of the NYSDC Calling for Real Ethics Reform

NYSDC Meeting May 2016

Whereas, we recognize that the vast majority of public servants are honest, hardworking and committed to improving the lives of New Yorkers, dedicating countless hours to serve and support communities throughout this State; and

Whereas, there have been significant changes in the State's ethics laws and rules in recent years, but there is more work to do; and

Whereas, there are calls to increase accountability and transparency at every level of government; and

Whereas, our existing campaign finance and ethics laws are prone to repeated abuse; and

Whereas, the corrupting influence of campaign contributions through LLCs, outside Political Action Committee spending, and outside income for elected officials, has been repeatedly demonstrated; and

Whereas, at a minimum, we must close the LLC loophole, reform public financing of political campaigns and restrict or eliminate outside income for our elected officials to address potential conflicts of interest;

Whereas, we acknowledge the need to be ever-vigilant in our ability to maintain the public's trust in the work conducted by our leaders;

Therefore, be it resolved that the New York State Democratic Committee supports comprehensive ethics reform that will provide New Yorkers with the continued confidence in our government and its elected and appointed representatives.



***Congratulations to Dr. Wilhelmina Perry,
a Three Parks club member,
on receiving the
2016 Lifetime Achievement Award
from the
National Puerto Rican Day Parade.***

Dates to Remember:

June 28

Primary Day, 6:00 am–9:00 pm

June 7–July 14

Volunteers needed to petition. Petitions to be given out at June 8 club meeting.

July

TPID Annual Picnic. Check for date and details at threeparksdems.org

July 25–28

Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, PA

Join the March for Clean Energy

Three Parks is an endorser of the March for a Clean Energy Revolution in Philadelphia on July 24, the eve of the Democratic National Convention. It's been over a year since Governor Cuomo banned fracking in New York. Join Three Parks members and thousands of our neighbors and allies to demand real solutions to the climate crisis: a ban on fracking across the country and a swift and just transition to renewable energy. Sign up for round-trip same-day buses around the city at the March website <http://www.cleanenergymarch.org/> or directly at St. John the Divine <http://act.foodandwaterwatch.org/site/Calendar?id=120384&view=Detail>.—*See you on Sunday, July 24!*

Tree Stewardship Event, June 18

District 7 Councilmember Mark Levine's office and Trees New York are partnering to host a Tree Stewardship Volunteer Event on:

Saturday, June 18, from 10:00-12:00 Noon—152 Street between Broadway & Riverside Drive

Your help is needed to remove litter from tree beds, cultivate soil, mulch, water, and plant flowers. Prepare as though you're going hiking—wear a backpack that you can keep on throughout the whole event, bring water to stay hydrated, wear sturdy shoes and clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. And bring a hat or sunblock. RSVP: district7@council.nyc.gov.

Poll Workers Wanted

Poll workers are needed for the June 28 Primary. Please sign up online at electiondayworker.com, or contact District Leader Cynthia Doty at cldoty@aol.com

Special Offer from Suba Pharmacy

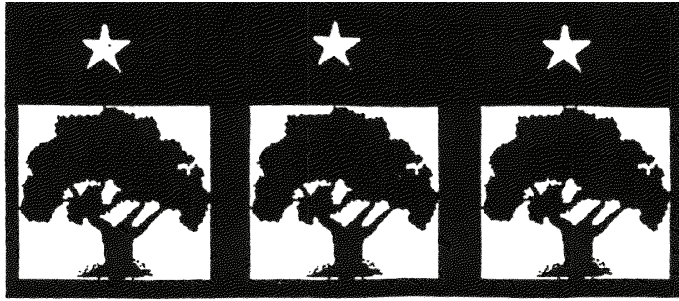
10 Percent Off for Three Parks Members Only!

In 2004, when Suba Pharmacy's lease was about to expire, Three Parks Independent Democrats petitioned successfully to reinstate the store's lease. The rest is history.

Today Suba Pharmacy remains one of the few independent, family-owned storefronts on the Upper West Side. Located at 2721 Broadway (at 104 Street), its prices are competitive with, and often significantly lower than, the major drug store chains in the area. The pharmacy is well-known for its personable and knowledgeable service.

Mr. Suba cares about his customers and goes out of his way to accommodate them. Effective immediately, he is offering Three Parks members a special discount.

Whenever you go to Suba Pharmacy, bring this coupon with you; you will receive 10 percent off all your purchases (excluding prescriptions) \$20 and up!



Three Parks Independent Democrats

Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316, New York, NY 10025, tel: 212-539-7602

Please pay your 2016 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

2016 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 solely by email.

Please pay your dues with a check or via PayPal—cash and money orders are far more difficult to process.

Please make out all checks to “Three Parks Independent Democrats—Dues 2016”

Thank you

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New York, NY 10025

Next Meeting
Wednesday, June 8, 2016
THE STATE OF THE BOROUGH
Speaker: Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Annual Petitioning Pizza Party