



## THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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### *State Committee*

Lynn Thomas  
Daniel Marks Cohen

## Club Meeting, May 9, 2018, 8:00 pm

The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103 Street

“Preserving the Upper West Side”

Speaker: Mark Levine, NYC Council Member, 7th District

## Endorsements for Public and Party Offices

### AGENDA

7:45 pm Sign-in  
8:00 pm Call to Order  
District Leader Report  
Speaker: Mark Levine  
Voting and Endorsements for Public & Party Offices  
Questions & Answers  
Adjourn

### CALENDAR

Sunday, May 6, 6:30 pm  
Gubernatorial Forum (*See page 7*)  
B'nai Jeshurun, 257 West 88 Street  
Wednesday, May 9, 8:00 pm  
Three Parks Club Meeting  
Wednesday, May 23, 8:00 pm  
Three Parks Board Meeting  
Wednesday, June 13, 8:00 pm  
Club Meeting: Annual Pizza & Petitioning Party  
Wednesday, June 27, 8:00 pm  
Three Parks Board Meeting

## President's Report

By Merle McEldowney

Our April 11 Club meeting featured speakers on two important topics: the recently enacted New York State budget and gun control. The first speaker, Daniel J. O'Donnell, our local NYS Assembly Member, listed the progressive measures that Democrats were able to include in the state budget, such as increased aid for education, expanded prisoner legal services, and oversight power for the state Education Department over all schools in the state. In addition, Danny pointed with pride to new measures to prevent and reduce gun violence by barring convicted domestic abusers from obtaining a license to possess firearms and empowering judges to order the immediate surrender of any firearms that such persons may own.

The second speaker, Richard Aborn, President of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, was one of the principal strategists behind the passage of the landmark Brady Bill and legislation banning assault weapons and large capacity clips. He has also worked with the New York City public school system to develop a one-of-a-kind program to reduce gun injuries as part of the curriculum. In Aborn's view, in the aftermath of the mass shooting at the Parkland high school in Florida, gun control advocates have reason for cautious optimism. Gun control measures now have wide public support, particularly among activist students who have demonstrated extraordinary organizing skills and commitment. For Aborn, gun control can be a winning issue in elections, and the time is right for progressives to demand nationwide background checks and reinstatement of the ban on assault weapons.

Coming up on May 6—the Upper West Side Gubernatorial Forum at B'nai Jeshurun, 257 West 88 Street (*see page 7*). The forum has been organized by the leaders of Democratic clubs—Stephanie Lasher/Community Free Democrats, Noah Kaufman/Broadway Democrats, Earl Scott/Park River Independents and the Ansonia Democrats, and me/Three Parks Independent Democrats—and aided by the amazing efforts of Daniel Marks Cohen, our State Committee Member.

At our May 9 club meeting, we will welcome Mark Levine, City Council member for the 7th district, with an update on the recent plan to rezone West 105 street, between Broadway and Columbus Avenue. We also will vote to endorse candidates for New York State Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Comptroller, Attorney General, State Assembly (69th), State Committee (69th), and Judicial Delegates (69th, Part A).

On June 13, we will have a panel of experts speaking on NYS elections, political trends and voter behavior: Ken Sherrill, Professor Emeritus, Political Science Department, Hunter College; Charles Tien, Professor of Political Science, Hunter College and the Graduate Center, CUNY; and Brette McSweeney, Executive Director, Eleanor's Legacy.

Also on June 13—and not to be missed—our annual Pizza and Petitioning Party!

## State Committee Report

By Daniel Marks Cohen

The NYS Democratic Committee called for its quadrennial convention to endorse statewide candidates for reelection at Hofstra University on May 22-24. At the moment, State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and State Comptroller Tom Dinapoli are both running unopposed, so the likelihood is a unanimous decision to place both on the ballot for September.

The drama is with the top of the ticket: Andrew Cuomo/Kathy Hochul. Cynthia Nixon's entry into the gubernatorial race, along with City Councilman Jumaane Williams in the campaign for Lt. Governor, makes things interesting. Many of you may recall that when Zephyr Teachout ran in 2014, she and her Lt. Governor colleague, Tim Wu, each got slightly more than a third of the primary vote in their category.

In primaries, the candidates for Governor and Lt. Governor run separately for their office. Once the primary is concluded, the winners run as a ticket in the general election. In 2014, out of 5.6 million registered Democrats, only 600,000 voted, a little more than 10 percent. A swing of about 2 percent of the total Democratic vote, or a little over 100,000 votes, could put Nixon on the road to the Governor's Mansion.

Teachout/Wu had no money and no "name ID." Nixon does not have either of those problems; she has money and fame from her acting career. Getting on the ballot requires 25 percent of the weighted vote in the State Convention. That is the weighted vote, not the total vote. The weight is measured by the turnout in the last gubernatorial election, and it just so happens that the 69th AD has the highest voter turnout in the State (and arguably the country), since there are more people, and more Democrats, in the city than anywhere else in the United States.

Based on the turnout from 2014 and the total of 500 members of the State Committee, the 69th's weighted vote was 1 percent. The 69th and 24 other Assembly Districts of similar weight would bring that up to 10 percent of the

entire State Committee and put Nixon and Williams on the ballot,

When the State Committee gathers next month, we will be guided in part by how the three clubs in the 69th vote in their endorsements for Governor and Lt. Governor. In 2014, Three Parks decided to vote “no endorsement” in the Governor’s race. The State Committee will be paying attention to the vote this time around.

I should also add that both Lynn Thomas and I are up for re-election this year, and we would both appreciate your support to serve another term.

## **Join Our Phone Bank/Postcard Party on May 14**

By Chuck Wall

With the congressional primaries now just around the corner, the Three Parks Take Back Congress phone bank team is turning up the heat! Following the success of our April phone bank/postcard-writing event, we’re planning another high-powered session for Monday, May 14. As before, we’ll be having three activities going on at once:

- ▶ Calling Republican senior citizens in the Hudson Valley to urge them not to support their local Congressman, John Faso. Faso is considered one of the most vulnerable Republican members of the House.
- ▶ Calling New York City Democrats who own second homes upstate to suggest that they switch their voter registration to their upstate address so they can cast their vote against Rep. Faso.
- ▶ Writing postcards to NYC Democrats with second homes upstate to urge them to make the same switch.

For the calls and postcards to second home owners, we’ll be working once again with the group SmartVoteNY. That organization has valuable experience in this area and has provided us with very helpful guidance.

In the past year, the Three Parks Take Back Congress team has held twelve phone banks, reaching out to many hundreds of voters in nearby “swing” districts with a message that we hope will make a big difference on election day. Our most recent phone bank/postcard writing event, on April 9, was so well attended that we began to wonder where we would fit in more people! Besides writing and mailing our complete allotment of SmartVoteNY postcards, our phone bank volunteers logged numerous significant conversations with voters—adding to an overall total that now approaches one thousand.

In keeping with the latest news from Washington, we have been alerting senior citizens to the growing and undisguised threats from Republican legislators to the Medicare and

Social Security benefits that they rely on. The goal is to warn those senior voters that they cannot count on Republican legislators in general, and incumbent GOP congressman John Faso in particular, to protect their interests. We have also urged those voters to call Faso’s office and ask him to promise in public to oppose any cuts to seniors’ benefits.

The May 14 phone bank/postcard party will be followed by more events this spring, and we’ll be watching closely as the primary season gets underway in the 19th District and also in other nearby potentially “flippable” districts, such as New Jersey’s 11th District, which has suddenly become a possible Democratic pick-up following the abrupt retirement announcement of longtime GOP Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen. Once Democratic candidates emerge in these districts at the primary election on June 26, we expect to work with local progressive groups to support those candidates. We will keep Club members posted as our plans develop.

So join your fellow TPID club members for the May 14 phone bank/postcard party and help take back Congress! Watch for details in your email, or check the TPID website [www.threeparksdems.org](http://www.threeparksdems.org). We invite all interested club members to join us, but remember to respond promptly as space may be limited. No computers are needed, but please bring a cellphone. Scripts and training are provided.

## **NYC Organization Round Table and Civic Fair**

By Jessica Haberstock

On April 8, Three Parks Independent Democrats attended a Round Table and Civic Fair. A variety of groups were in attendance, ranging from other Democratic clubs to newly formed Trump resistance groups. In the morning, there were multiple breakout sessions. During one session, groups were able to discuss problems they face and how to overcome these problems. Included in this discussion were the lack of trust in the political system, inclusion of underrepresented groups, and bridging gaps between various groups. At another session, the group discussed the opportunities and threats to the Democratic Party, as well as how the threats can be converted to opportunities.

In the afternoon, the groups took part in a civic fair. People throughout the city came to learn more about these organizations. Three Parks representatives were able to meet with members of our community and discuss our various activities and meetings.

Overall, the event provided a platform for groups to come together and discuss how they can work together to better the Democratic Party. New connections and potential collaborations were formed between Three Parks and other groups. Overall, Three Parks left the day with

a feeling of optimism and hope for the future and the democratic party.

## **Cynthia Nixon – Yes!**

By Steve Max

On Wednesday, May 9, Three Parks members will vote to endorse a candidate for Governor. Cynthia Nixon is the candidate most in line with our club's progressive values.

Campaign contributions tell the story. Not counting dark money spent on his behalf by unknown sources, Governor Cuomo has gotten more than \$64 million from business interests, half from the Finance, Insurance and real estate industries. Cynthia Nixon will not accept corporate contributions. Here and now we can register our disdain for big money in politics and show that we want campaign finance and ethics reform—about which Cuomo has done nothing but which Cynthia Nixon advocates.

New York City owes Cuomo no loyalty. It has been known for years that the City sends more tax money to Albany than it gets back; that's why our subways and schools are deteriorating. One example: 56 per cent of all NY State tax money comes from the City, but in Cuomo's budget, we got only 43 percent of state education spending.

Worries about Nixon's lack of experience are, to say the least, premature. Cuomo is polling 62 percent against Nixon and has \$30 million in reserve. The Nixon Campaign is really about taking advantage of an actual Cuomo virtue. He does respond to pressure from his left, so let's give it to him. In 2014, after Zephyr Teachout campaigned against fracking and got 34 percent of the vote, Cuomo banned fracking. After massive demonstrations, he raised the minimum wage. Now, with Nixon pressing him on his support for the renegade Independent Democratic Conference and his inadequate environmental program, he told the renegades to run, 'hide and stay out of sight' then he proposed a plastic bag ban. It isn't much, but it shows what can be done and the campaign is just beginning.

This is our chance to remind the Governor and the Democratic Party leadership that a major portion of their voting base wants them to do better, be more progressive, and get out of bed with corporate cash. This is not the time to say, "Thanks for all you've done."

It isn't as if Cynthia Nixon woke up one morning and just decided to run for Governor. "For the last 17 years, she has been fighting for better schools and more equitable education funding all across the state, including as a spokesperson and organizer for the Alliance for Quality

Education,<sup>1</sup> which helped to reverse hundreds of millions in education budget cuts. A lifelong Democrat, Cynthia is a well-known, outspoken advocate for LGBT equality. In 2010, Cynthia helped create Fight Back New York, an effort to remove state Senators opposed to same-sex marriage. The campaign raised \$800,000 and helped elect three new Senators in support of marriage equality. Cynthia received her Grammy for her role in the audio version of 'An Inconvenient Truth,' the seminal book warning about the dangers of climate change."<sup>2</sup>

The Nixon campaign will bring new people into politics. We need to make them welcome at Three Parks and show that "Independent" means something—we are neither part of the Democratic establishment nor reluctant to take a position. Our endorsement of Cynthia Nixon will also encourage the Upper West Side delegates to the Democratic State Convention to put her on the ballot. This campaign is an opportunity. We can make the most of it by endorsing Cynthia Nixon on Wednesday, May 9.

<sup>1</sup>The organization has issued a report "Pay To Play. Charter Schools & the IDC," documenting contributions to the renegade Independent Democratic Conference from charter school backers.

<sup>2</sup>Nixon Campaign bio.

## **Manhattan Judicial Vacancies to be Filled in 2018**

By Alan Flacks

This year there are nine vacancies on the Manhattan Civil Court and three on the New York State Supreme Court. All are for "open" seats except for one Civil Court incumbent, who is running for re-election.

On the Civil Court, incumbent Frank Nervo is running for re-election in the 1st Civil Court District, and may serve until 2023 if re-elected. The other eight Civil Court seats are "open" as a result of the election of those judges to the State Supreme Court or because a judge has reached the State constitution's mandatory retirement age.

There are two at-large county-wide Civil Court seats, and seven local district Civil Court seats (the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 9th, & 10th districts).

The three "open" Supreme Court seats are currently held by Lucy Billings and Laura Visitacion-Lewis, both of whom reach the State constitutional retirement age this year, and Shirley Werner Kornreich, who has decided to take early retirement this year on May 30.

Democratic Party judicial screening panels have been established by the County Organization and by district leaders for local panels for Civil Court, and a screening panel for the Supreme Court vacancies will be formed this summer.



**On May 9, we will vote to endorse candidates for New York State Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Comptroller, Attorney General, State Assembly (69th), State Committee (69th), and Judicial Delegates (69th, Part A).\***

**Voters Eligible May 9, 2018**

<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>
				Minda	Meister	Jane	Thompson
Cyrus	Adler	Pilar	Gomez	Alan	Messer	Ken	Tulloch
Emily	Baldwin	Judy	Gray	Brenda	Morgan	Christine	Verzar
Susan J.	Baldwin	Timothy	Greene	Charles R.	Morgan	Helene	Victor
William	Baldwin	Robert	Gumbs	Derrick	Mullins	Charles	Wall
Robert	Bardin	Jessica	Haberstock	Forrest C.	Murphy	Janet I.	Wasserman
Samuel	Bartos	Prince	Haigood	Carole	Myers	Arnold	Weiss
Margaret	Beels	Nichole	Homa	Barbara	Nelson	Lauren A.	Williams
Amy	Belkin	Jacqueline	Huey	John	Newell	Kitty	Williston
Shoshannah	Benmosche	Judy	Hummel	Mary	Pasley	Judy	Wood
Paul	Bifani	Audrey	Isaacs	Chris	Peralta	Matthew	Woodruff
Bob	Botfeld	Russell	Jenkins	Annie	Petrus	Vernita	Worrell
Vincent	Brancato	Emma	Jenkins	Ilene	Pfeiffer	Anthony	Zak
Linus	Brant	David C.	Kaplan	Judy	Pierre	Lorraine	Zamora
Raven	Brown	Elizabeth Krob	Kellner	Elliot	Podwill	Gloria	Zeche
Marla	Brunker	Erlend	Kimmich	Miriam	Rabban	Ariel	Zucker-Brull
Janice	Bynum	Warren	Kishner	Carol	Reisner		
David	Camacho	Andrea	Kishner	Jonathan	Rubin		
Theresa	Canter	Norman	Lafond	Lois	Safian		
Young Me	Chung	Penelope	Laitin	Katherine	Samuels	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>
Daniel Marks	Cohen	Jill	Larson	Milivoy	Samurovich	Eva-Lee	Baird
Margaret	Collins	Kenneth	Laufer	Carl Joseph	Scalise	Patricia	Barrera
Corinne	Constantine	Sam	Lazarus	Doris	Schreiber	Maxine	DeSeta
Kitty	Crowley	David	Lazarus	Gerald	Schultz	Arlene	Geiger
Mimi	Daitz	Hannah	Leider	Michelle	Semler	James	Guest
Wendy	Dannett	Gail	Leinwall	Jacob	Sher	Adam	Haridopolos
John	Davenport	Marie	Lunn	Barry N.	Sher	Janet	Harvilchuck
Wendy	Diller	Susan	Maderer	Ahmad	Shirazi	Anna	Lewis
Cynthia	Doty	Betsy	Malcolm	Irene	Shrier	Arlene	Mehlman
Timothy	Eckersley	Bruce	Markens	Carol	Siegel	Annie	Muir
Jeffrey	Felmus	Mary Ann	Marks	Deborah	Socular	Joan	Ogden
Gerry Ann	Fifer	Stephen	Max	Anna Lee	Spiro	Hank	Perlin
Alan	Flacks	Lynn Bender	Max	Allan	Spitz	Alfred	Placeres
Ellen	Flax	Merle	McEldowney	Michael	Stearns	Ann	Shirazi
Mary J.	Geissman	Abigail	McGloster	Michael	Stearns	Calvin	Snyder
Daniele	Gerard	George	McGuinness	Roschel Holland	Stearns	Polly	Spain
Robert	Ginsberg	Alex	Medwedew	Deborah	Thomas	Mildred	Speiser
				Lynn	Thomas	Daniel	Tsadok

**Voters Eligible if Paid May 9, 2018**

**\*Voting Eligibility Clause**

In order to vote in TPID club elections, a member must have paid dues for 2018 and attended at least one meeting in the past six months. Members who were paid up for 2017 and who meet the attendance requirement may become eligible to vote upon payment of 2018 dues. New memberships become effective 30 days after dues are paid. To be eligible to vote, new members must attend at least one meeting after the 30-day period and within six months prior to the election. Memberships that have lapsed due to nonpayment of annual dues are considered new. Reminder: Members may not vote at Three Parks if they also vote at other Democratic clubs.

## Evicted In America

By Wendy Dannett

Matthew Desmond, in his book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, describes the epidemic of evictions in America (there were almost one million nationwide in 2016) and its causes and impacts. In part, evictions are caused by poor people often having to pay 80 per cent of their income for rent. One man that Desmond studied, Lamar, fastidiously cleaned his squalid new apartment but when he had to pay \$550 for rent and his income was \$628, there was a problem with inadequate funds for food for his family. “The burden of ‘Evicted,’ says Desmond, is to show that the world Lamar inhabits is indeed hell...”

Desmond took diligent notes on the lives of people in Milwaukee’s poverty-stricken North Side. Many of Desmond’s interviewees pay 70-80 per cent of their income for homes that “are unfit for human habitation.” Many of Desmond’s informants have made bad choices. Lamar lost his legs in the cold in the middle of a crack epidemic. And 54-year-old Lorraine blew a month’s worth of food stamps for a single meal of lobster, shrimp, crab and pie. But it is not these bad choices that make people like Lorraine or Lamar poor; it is poverty. “Since there’s no point in even trying to achieve financial stability, people like Lorraine ‘tried to...season the suffering with pleasure.’”

There are a host of other factors leading to evictions, such as landlords not liking to be reported to the government because children have high blood lead levels. Then there was the story of a family that got evicted “because ambulances came too many times for a child with asthma.” Landlords often don’t like children. “One of the worst choices anyone can make is to have children. Landlords hate kids for being noisy, trying to flush toys down the toilet, or testing positive for lead poisoning.” If an address generates three 911 calls a month, the landlord will be issued a “nuisance citation” and the family will probably be evicted.

Eviction is the final result in Desmond’s story. If your income after rent is low, there is a temptation forego a month’s rent and buy groceries. If you have complained about holes in the walls, the landlord has a reason not to cut you slack. You may get a chance to go to court, but 70 per cent don’t show up: they can’t leave work or may not even have gotten the summons. It was in eviction court in Milwaukee that Desmond had the epiphany: If incarceration had come to define the lives of impoverished black men, evictions were defining the lives of black women.

“Evictions are scenes of incredible cruelty.” Desmond

describes a woman wandering around her apartment almost drunkenly as she is being displaced. “It was the look of someone realizing her family would be homeless in a matter of hours.” Denial giving way to surrealism: the speed; gum-chewing sheriffs with guns, leaning on walls; sweaty men piling your things outdoors. “Among the things left behind at one eviction site are ‘a half-eaten birthday cake and a balloon still perky with helium.’” Children are scarred in this process. They go from one school to another. They frequently lose their tiny cache of possessions. Their parents have difficulty keeping jobs or lack an address to get benefits. Only one evictee in Desmond’s book ended up with a job and apartment.

Desmond ends by explaining the concept of exploitation. The landlord who evicted Lamar, Lorraine and others is able to vacation in the Caribbean while her tenants freeze in Milwaukee. The owner of one trailer park takes in \$400,000 a year, made possible by the extreme poverty of the tenants who are afraid to complain.

## Development Alert: More Local Businesses Gone

By Lynn Max

Many local residents were saddened to learn that the Abbey Pub on West 105 Street is closing the week of April 30 after being in business for 49 years. But even more distressing is the further news that the buildings housing the Abbey and the Szechuan Garden next door are slated for demolition by the Roe Corporation, which plans to build a 12-story mixed-use retail and residential property on the site. In addition, the Roe Corporation is in “advanced negotiations” to purchase or joint venture with the entity that owns the entire block on the east side of Broadway between 105 and 106 Streets. This is more devastating news for our local “mom and pop” stores and for the character of our neighborhood. Mark Levine, City Council member, will be at our meeting on May 9 to discuss this issue.

### It’s a Date!

**Wednesday, June 13, 8:00 pm**

**Three Parks Club Meeting  
Annual Pizza & Petitioning Party**

**The Youth Hostel  
891 Amsterdam Ave at 103 Street**

# Upper West Side Gubernatorial Forum

Invited Candidates

Governor:

**CYNTHIA NIXON**  
**ANDREW CUOMO**

Lieutenant Governor:

**JUMAANE WILLIAMS**  
**KATHY HOCHUL**

Sponsored by:

☪ Ansonia Independent Democrats ☪ Broadway Democrats ☪  
☪ Community Free Democrats ☪ Park River Independent  
Democrats ☪ Three Parks Independent Democrats ☪

**Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm**  
(doors open at 6:00 pm)

**Congregation B'nai Jeshurun**  
257 West 88<sup>th</sup> Street between WEA & Broadway  
*This event is free and open to the public*

## 2018 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) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check here \_\_\_\_\_ if you prefer to receive the newsletter **solely** by email.

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Cathedral Station, P.O. Box 1316, New York, NY 10025 Attn: Treasurer

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

**Next Meeting: May 9, 2018**  
**“Preserving the Upper West Side”**  
**Speaker: Mark Levine, NYC Council Member, 7th District**  
**Endorsements for Public & Party Offices**