

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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President

Daniele Gerard

Editor

Ray Schwartz (tapsch@nyc.rr.com)

District Leaders

Bob Botfeld
Cynthia Doty

State Committee

Lynn Thomas

September 10, 2008 Meeting

**FEATURED TOPIC &
SPEAKERS:**

**Senator Bill Perkins & Dave Pollak, NYS Obama
Campaign Director: On to Victory with
Obama/Biden—How You Can Help Win the White
House!**

DATE:

Wednesday, September 10, 2008

TIME:

8:00 PM

PLACE:

**American Youth Hostels
891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103rd Street**

ROOM:

Chapel

AGENDA

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

1. President's Report & Announcements
2. District Leaders' Reports & Campaign Storefront
3. Sen. Bill Perkins & Dave Pollak, NYS Obama Campaign Director
4. Constitution Amendments
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 9th PRIMARY DAY

Wed., September 24th, 2008, 8 PM

Three Parks Board Meeting

Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103rd St

Fri., Sept. 26th, 9 PM, Jim Lehrer as moderator

Presidential Debate on Foreign Policy & National Security at the Univ. of Miss.

Fri., Oct. 10th, 9 PM, Gwen Ifill as moderator

Vice Presidential Debate at Washington University, St. Louis

Wed., October 15th, 2008, 8 PM

Three Parks Meeting

Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103rd St

Wed., October 22nd, 2008, 8 PM

Three Parks Board Meeting

Place: Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St

President's Column

By Daniele Gerard

Welcome back, members and friends—the conventions are over, the presidential tickets established and now we are really off and running!

The Grand Opening of the Three Parks/Broadway Democrats “Democratic Victory 2008” storefront will take place later in September at 2742 Broadway at 105th Street (the old Bear Farms). Again, we will have the opportunity to work together in our famous presidential storefront to support the ticket, build enthusiasm, and unite with our neighbors and community for progressive causes and candidates. In 2004, Three Parks made 35,000 calls on behalf of the presidential and other races. We also arranged bus trips to take more than 1,500 volunteers to canvass in Pennsylvania and Ohio. And this time, we'll take back the White House! Be sure to stop in and volunteer.

Look for an upcoming Club email with all the details about working together to elect Senators Barack Obama and Joe Biden our next President and Vice President. Club members and other volunteers will be making calls, tabling and going door to door in the City, New York State and neighboring states on behalf of the national ticket and Democrats running for various Congressional, state and local offices. Check the Club website for updates: <http://threeparksdems.org>

The Club's September meeting will feature Senator Bill Perkins and the Obama Campaign's NYS Director, Dave Pollak, who will talk to us about linking up with the Obama campaign in New York State and other states where our volunteers can make a difference.

As we heard at the Three Parks June meeting from Rodd McLeod of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and Ryan Whalen of Senator Schumer's office, there are realistic possibilities across the country for increasing Democratic margins in

both the House and Senate. Thanks to both speakers for a thoughtful overview of the races that can help achieve a meaningful legislative majority in Washington.

Three Parks had a successful summer—we registered hundreds of new voters, enrolled many new Club members, petitioned on behalf of our elected officials, held our annual picnic and, of course, sold buttons to fund the storefront and transportation for campaigning out of state. We also lined up terrific speakers for the Fall: Congressman Jerry Nadler will address Three Parks on October 15th and Congressman Charlie Rangel on November 12th.

Finally, please take a moment to sign and send the attached letters to Governor Paterson and Attorney General Cuomo to make your voices heard in favor of closing Indian Point, the nuclear power plant 30 miles from here. As you know, the owner has applied for license extensions for another 20 years, which would generate an additional 1,000 tons of nuclear waste stored in our own backyard. Our elected officials should continue to demand that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission deny the proposed license extensions for Indian Point.

We look forward to seeing you at the storefront—remember to check the Club website for updates!

Proposed Amendments To The Three Parks Constitution: The Instant Run Off Ballot Method Proposed

By Bob Botfeld

Every few years, the Three Parks board of directors and its constitution committee review the Three Parks constitution in order to determine if changes are needed. This year the Three Parks board of directors is recommending a few changes to accommodate the club's growth over the past

few years and the anticipated expansion that follows every presidential election year.

Instant Run-off Balloting

The main recommendation is to adopt the instant run-off ballot method for endorsement votes. This method will be used only where there are multiple candidates for a single endorsement. It does not apply where there are several positions or slate to fill for an office such as judicial delegates. Under Three Park's current system, if a candidate for public or party office does not receive a majority of the members' votes cast on the initial ballot, a second (or even a third) ballot is required until either one candidate has a majority of the votes cast or "no endorsement" has the majority.

Because it takes time to count the votes, these additional ballots usually occur late in the evening after most of the members have left. In some instances, less than a third of the members are able to remain for the second ballot. Instant run-off balloting would eliminate these late, sparsely attended ballots. It has been adopted successfully by a number of New York County Democratic clubs.

Under the instant run-off method, there will always be only one single ballot. On this single instant runoff ballot, members will be able to indicate which candidate they prefer and also their second and third choices; that is, the candidates they would vote for on a second (or third) ballot. It should be noted that one is not required to vote for a second preference. If additional preferences are not indicated, the ballot will be counted as "no endorsement" if runoff recounts are required. Thus even if a member needs to leave early, that person can still participate in the entire run-off process.

On the ballot, club members will indicate their choice for candidates for office in order of preference. For their preferred candidate, club members will place a 1 next to the

candidate's name. For their next most preferred candidate, club members will place a 2 next to that candidate's name. And so on for subsequent preferences. If a club member would like to indicate a preference for a single candidate only, then that club member's ballot would be counted as a vote for "no endorsement" if a second count is required. If there is only a single candidate that a member would support for an individual office, then the member would either place a 2 in "no endorsement" or leave the other candidates' names blank.

When the ballots are counted, if no candidate has received a majority of votes, then the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated. On those ballots where the candidate is eliminated, the second choice candidate is then counted as the preferred candidate. If this still fails to produce a majority for any candidate, the ballots of the next lowest vote getter are eliminated and those second choice votes are distributed. This process of recounts will be repeated until either a candidate or "no endorsement" has a majority of the votes.

The current ballot method for electing club officers, board members and public offices where there are multiple openings for a position or a slate of candidates will remain unchanged.

Attendance Requirements

The second change is to modify the attendance requirement for voting at endorsement meetings. Currently, in order for a new member of the club to vote at an endorsement meeting, the new member must have completed an application for membership, paid dues, and after a waiting period of thirty days have attended one meeting in the previous six months. The proposed change for new members is to extend this period from six months to twelve months and to change the meeting attendance requirement from one to two meetings within that twelve-month period.

For current club members, the rule now is that the club member must have simply paid their dues by the endorsement meeting and have attended one meeting within the previous six months. The proposed change is to extend the period from six to twelve months and to change the attendance requirement from one to three meetings within that time.

The rationale for the attendance requirement in both the existing constitution and proposed changes is that the club's resources and efforts should reflect the views of active participating club members. The primary benefit and consequence of the club's endorsement vote is the opportunity for the active club members to use the club's resources to petition and campaign for endorsed candidates. Endorsement votes that do not reflect the views of a consensus of club members who participate in club meetings and activities are relatively meaningless. They do not advance the club's primary goals, which are to facilitate club involvement in political campaigns where members can work together on common goals and elect Democrats. If there is no true consensus within the club, the club and its members are better served with a "no endorsement" where club members can campaign for the candidates of their choice.

Meetings can be called by one-third of members

Finally, in Article Four, club meetings may currently be called by the president or by one-third of the board of directors. A meeting may also be called by one-third or forty of the club members, whichever is smaller. The recommendation is that the specific number "forty" be deleted. Due to the club's growth in recent years, forty members is an unnecessarily small number.

These proposed changes will be discussed and voted on by the club membership at the September and October meetings.

Condolences to Ernestine Gallagher on the passing of her youngest sister and to George McGuinness on the passing of his brother. Our sympathies to their families as well.

Remembering Stanley Michels

By Cynthia Doty

Last month former long-time City Councilmember Stanley Michels passed away. Stanley was a staunch advocate for tenants and decent affordable housing. He also fought to protect the environment and improve health care and health safety, authoring the first no smoking laws and lead paint laws in NYC. He was a great supporter of our parks and the arts. A true public servant who worked tirelessly for his constituents and New York City, he will be sorely missed. Our condolences go out to his wife Molly, his children and his grandchildren.

The 2008 Judicial Elections

By Alan Flacks

This year the focus of the judicial contests in Manhattan is on the three-way race for the Democratic nomination for Surrogate. [Manhattan has two Surrogate judges: incumbent Renee Roth, who vacates her seat on the bench because of the statutory retirement age, and Kristin Booth Glen.]

Nora Anderson, a trusts and estates lawyer and former chief clerk in the Surrogate's court; John Reddy, Jr., a counsel in the Public Administrator's office; and Milton Tingling, a State Supreme Court Justice, are vying for the Democratic nomination on September 9th. The winner of the Democratic Primary is expected to win in the November General election.

There are two N.Y.C. Civil Court vacancies. A county-wide seat which sees a contest between Michael Katz and Nancy Bannon,

both law clerks to judges, and a downtown local seat where there is no contest. Frank Nervo will be the Democratic nominee there.

For the State trial bench, there may be as many as seven lower court judges seeking the one "open" Supreme Court seat created by the statutory retirement of Justice Louis York. The candidates, in alphabetical order, are: Lucy Billings, Laura Drager, Ellen Gesmer, Judith Gische, Debra James, Cynthia Kern, and Saliann Scarpulla. This designation, done at the Party's judicial nominating convention on September 18th, will be for the November ballot. In addition, three incumbent State Supreme Court Justices, Marcy Kahn, Shirley Werner Kornreich, and Martin Schoenfeld, are running for re-election.

2008 Petition Drive

by Bob Botfeld

Thanks to our hard working petitioners, 2008 was another successful petition drive. Club members manned the petition drive tables on Broadway in June and July collecting signatures, registering hundreds of new voters, and sold Obama buttons to raise money for the fall campaign. We helped our candidates for Congress, State Senate, State Assembly, state committee, surrogate court and judicial delegate in the critical task of qualifying for the September primary ballot.

Over forty club members and friends of Three Parks participated this year. Leading the petition drive were these hard working Three Parkers each collecting over forty signatures: Mary Ann Marks (175), Robert Ginsberg (126), James Simpson (109), Michael Oliva (91), Bob Botfeld (75), Daniele Gerard (57), Martha Pincus (45), Rose Podrasky (46), Robert Plautz (45), Lynn Thomas (45), and Jock Davenport (44),

These stalwarts collected over thirty or more signatures: Deborah Thomas, Marion Kaplan, Milivoy Samurovich, Corinne Pettey, Lynn Max, Doris Schneider, Nicholas Bryan,

Rita Kardeman, and Steve Max.

Adding to the totals were these Three Parkers with over twenty signatures each: Marie Lunn, Mogus Fassil, Mary Geissman, Laura Guggenheim, Ellen Flax, Jane Thompson, Dana Patton, and George McGuiness

Rounding out the qualifying petitioners were these spirited contributors: Ken Tulloch, Lauren Williams, Elizabeth Ginsberg, David Lazarus, Michael Meade, Robert Bardin, Joan Green, Wilhelmina Perry, George Voorhis, Mulughta Abraham Sultan, David Kaplan, Cy Adler, Joan Levinson, Barbara Lee, Marjorie Roesch, and Christine Samurovich.

A great job and congratulations to all!

The Three Parks Picnic

The Three Parks fifth annual Picnic was a great success! We had an excellent turnout and lots of good food (including Rosetta Williams's famous fried chicken!), in what turned out to be a glorious evening in Central Park. Many thanks to all the people who helped to coordinate, set up and clean up the event – Bob Botfeld, Cynthia Doty, David Kogelman, Ken Laufer, David Lazarus, Marie Lunn, Mary Ann Marks, Steve & Lynn Max, Ray Schwartz, Cal Snyder, Anna Spiro, and Deborah Thomas. Special thanks to Ellen Flax for securing the entertainment.... we were once again entertained by Alan Cary who sang and played the banjo!

Bob Ginsberg for State Committee

By Theresa Canter

The Democratic primary is September 9th, and I urge you to join me in voting for **Bob Ginsberg**, the **Three Parks** endorsed candidate for Democratic State Committee in the 69th Assembly district.

Bob has been the most active, independent member of the State Democratic Committee and the leader in the efforts to create a more progressive Democratic Party. Among other

things, he sponsored the resolution opposing the start of the war in Iraq war, authored several State Committee resolutions in support of single payer health care, made a series of progressive tax proposals that were passed by State Committee, and co-sponsored at the last State Committee meeting a resolution calling for an excess profits tax on oil companies.

In addition to the endorsement of **Three Parks Independent Democrats**, Bob's re-election has the support of **Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Congressman Charlie Rangel, State Senator Bill Perkins**, and former **State Senator Franz Leichter**.

Because there are only two contests in this year's Primary, this will be a very low turnout election — that means your vote can have a significant impact on the results. A march in the neighborhood starting at 1:00 pm at 96th and Broadway, followed by a rally in Straus Park (permit pending) is being planned for Saturday, September 6th, to spread the word and get out the vote. Please join us! To volunteer on primary day or for more details on the rally, email me at tesscanter@aol.com.

Primary Elections, Sept. 9th

There are two contested positions that Three Parks Members will have an opportunity to vote for on Tuesday, Sept. 9th. The Three Parks endorsed candidates are Nora Anderson for Manhattan Surrogate and Bob Ginsburg for the State County Committee.

September 13th Electronics Recycling and Clothing Donations

Recycle unwanted electronics, clothing and linens on Saturday, Sept. 13th at Columbia University at 116th St and Amsterdam Ave. from 8 AM to 2 PM. The event is sponsored by the NYC Dept. of Sanitation. For more

information call 311 or go to www.nyc.gov/wasteless.

A FREE PERFORMANCE: THE STEPPING STONE SHOWCASE FOR SINGERS & ACTORS

Anna Bartos, Director; Kathleen Tagg, Pianist

Songs and Monologues
from the Classics to Broadway

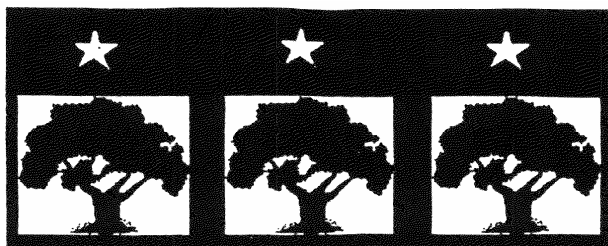
Date: Thursday, September 11th at 7:30 PM
Location: The Ellington Room at Manhattan Plaza, 400 W. 43rd Street/9th Ave., 2nd floor
Reservations requested: 212-594-5113
Reception following.

This showcase is the culmination of a series of performance workshops. They will be repeated several times during 2008-2009. Anyone interested in participating in both the workshops and showcase should send their resume or paragraph describing previous vocal training and performance to: Anna Bartos at anna.bartos@gmail.com. For further information, please contact: Anna Bartos, www.ensemblealma.com or (212) 594-5113.

DEMOCRATIC VICTORY STOREFRONT OPENING SOON AT 2742 BROADWAY (105TH ST)

Storefront operational details will be announced at the September 10th meeting and will be published on the Three Parks website: threeparksdems.org





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

Please pay your 2009 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

2008/09 MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member _____

Renewal _____

Membership Category -- Check One

Individual (\$25) _____

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

Student/Senior Citizen/Low Income (\$10) _____

Low Income Family (18) _____

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 make out all checks to "Three Parks Independent Democrats - Dues 2009"

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

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, September 10th, 2008

**On to Victory with Senators Obama & Biden:
Find out how you can help win the White House!**

Speakers:

Sen. Bill Perkins & NYS Obama Campaign Director