

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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Club Meeting, September 11, 2019, 8:00 pm

The Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103rd Street

Climate in Crisis: What Can We Do?

Speakers:

Alex Beauchamp, Food & Water Watch

Ling Tsao, United for Action, and

Didi Pershouse, Soil Carbon Coalition

AGENDA

7:45 pm Sign In
8:00 pm Call to Order
District Leader
Panel of Speakers
Questions & Answers
Adjourn

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President's Report

By Lorraine Zamora

I hope you've all had an enjoyable summer, whether it was spent in the city, at the Jersey Shore, in the Adirondacks, on Cape Cod, in the Berkshires, or places beyond. Wherever we all were, many of us managed to attend Three Parks' annual picnic in Central Park on July 24. Last year it poured on the designated day and the picnic had to be rescheduled; this year the sun shone gloriously all day long (as if to make up for the year before!). Theresa Canter did an extraordinary job of organizing the event, as she does every year. But this year it seemed better than ever: the food, the weather, the attendance and the ambiance. Could it be that as our political environment gets more dire, getting together with friends and neighbors of like minds gets more enjoyable?

This year promises to be another busy and challenging one for Three Parks. As usual, our club meetings will present expert speakers on critical issues, both local and national. Our first fall meeting on Wednesday, September 11, will feature a panel discussion titled "Climate in Crisis: What Can We Do?" Our panelists will be Alex Beauchamp from Food & Water Watch, Ling Tsao from United for Action, and Didi Pershouse from the Soil Carbon Coalition.

For club members who are eager to start campaigning for the 2020 elections, the first of what will likely be a series of phone banks and postcard-writing events has already been scheduled for September 18. Board members Steve and Lynn Max and Chuck Wall will be at the helm, and we encourage you to volunteer. There is an article on the phone bank elsewhere in this issue.

For Three Parks trivia fans:

Do You Know who used to occupy the landmark building that now houses The Youth Hostel?

In 1883 it opened as the residence of the Association for the Relief of Respectable Aged Indigent Females. While the name may bring a chuckle, the Association was a remarkable organization. It was established by the wives of wealthy merchants so that disadvantaged, elderly women didn't end up in the poorhouse, located down near City Hall. It was an early example of women taking action to address societal issues. There were 100 residents, an administrator,

and about 25 staff, including nurses, cooks, and housekeepers. It shut down in 1974.

The building was abandoned for a while, until a coalition of Columbia students and neighborhood activists got involved when the city held its first Five Boro Bike Tour. City Hall officials realized they had nowhere to host the students who were participating. The Economic Development Corporation was asked to find a building, and 891 Amsterdam Avenue was identified. The Hostel opened in January 20, 1990, the first in New York City, with 480 beds at \$19 per night. Today the Hostel has 670 beds, making it the largest in North America, at a nightly rate of \$79-\$94 per night, depending on the number of beds in a room.

Hope you enjoyed that bit of Hostel history. I look forward to seeing you at our club meeting on September 11!

District Leader Report: 2019 Petitioning

By Bob Botfeld

Democratic Incoherence

During the Democratic presidential debates, as I tried to determine who would be our best candidate to defeat Trump, the only definitive takeaway was that both television networks, NBC and CNN, abused their role as debate hosts and debased the discussion.

At the start, the overwrought sporting-event-styled candidate introductions were more appropriate for a boxing match than a serious discussion of Trump's domestic and foreign policies, including the damage these policies inflict on our country and the planet.

In the first hour, when the audience was largest, both the CNN and NBC moderators used that time to instigate confrontations between the candidates about minor differences on issues that are divisive within the party and the country—but overlooked the innumerable ways Trump is harming the country.

Only in the second hour, with diminishing audiences, did CNN and NBC raise the climate crisis, an issue where the Democrats have overwhelming national support. Trump's weakening of the inspections and regulations of our food supply, testing of drugs, the damage to the environment from the corrupt sale of federal lands, the rollback of financial controls that have delayed the next financial crisis, and other destructive Trump policies, were barely mentioned.

The blame for the debate fiascos begins with the networks but also rests with the Democratic National Committee (DNC) which sanctioned the debates and the candidates who participated. While the number of candidates made it difficult for the DNC or any individual candidate to pressure the networks to adopt a format that would enable the candidates to explain Trump's destruction of our country, I can only hope future debates will be more enlightening; otherwise, we will be in for four more horrible years.

County Committee FAQ, Part III

In the Three Parks April newsletter, you reported that the Manhattan County Committee will meet in late July or early August. What happened?

The New York state legislature passed a law on June 25, 2019 (see Assembly 8227B/Senate 06421B) that changed the window period for holding the county committee organizational meetings from July/August to **September 17 to October 6**.

Furthermore, because it is difficult to find an affordable space large enough to hold 3000+ county committee members, as of this writing, the location has not yet been found. When the location and date has been confirmed, we will notify the Three Parks county committee members by email and postcard.

What is the purpose Manhattan County Committee meeting?

As directed by the state legislature, the primary purpose of the biannual county committee meeting is organizational: to certify the recently elected county committee members, and to elect officers to administer the county committee.

Periodically, the county committees may also adjust the rules of the county as we did last year. Last year, the county committee strengthened the authority of the divisional county committees, to replace vacancies in the state assembly, state senate, and congress when the vacated district crossed county lines. In addition, the county committee voted to eliminate a number of irrelevant committees.

At the beginning of previous county committee meetings, there were lists of hundreds of names read. Why do we have to endure it?

While Three Parks usually fills our county committee slate through the petitioning process

and has few or no vacancies, most clubs have many vacancies in their county committee and use the biannual meeting to fill those vacancies at the beginning of the meeting.

There has been a recommendation that this time consuming vacancy filling ritual occur at the end of the meeting. However, if this tedious process were reserved for the end of the meeting, there is a strong likelihood that the required quorum would be lost.

Why isn't the biannual Manhattan County Committee meeting used for more substantive purposes, such as taking positions on issues?

First, it's an unwieldy body of 3000+ members.

Second, the elected representatives, Council members, State Assemblymembers, State Senators, and Members of Congress are most influenced by the voters who elect them.

The effort required to lobby a body of 3000+ members is far better spent to get your community members to lobby directly the elected officials. Three Parks has been successful in changing or influencing the positions of our representatives on both national and local issues.

Errata: Important Omissions

In the 2019 newsletter petitioning report, two stellar petitioners were unfortunately omitted. Soprano Deborah Thomas collected 42 signatures and Kitty Crowley added 40 to the club total. Thanks and apologizes to Deborah and Kitty.

Campaigning for 2020 Starts Now!

By Chuck Wall

Last fall, we did it! The hard-working Take Back Congress team (shown below at one of our many phone bank events) helped elect Democrats to Congress and regain control of the House.



Now the 2020 elections are approaching, and the stakes couldn't be higher: winning the Presidency, gaining control of the Senate, keeping control of the

House, and maintaining the hard-won Democratic control in Albany. It's time to get back to work.

If you are eager to get started, you can volunteer now for what will likely be the first of many exciting events this fall. A phone bank and postcard-writing event has been scheduled at a neighborhood site for Wednesday evening, September 18. This event will target one of the most important contests in the country: the race to unseat Sen. Mitch McConnell in Kentucky.

For details about the time and location of this event, watch for email blasts or check the TPID website www.threeparksdems.org. There will also be a sign-up sheet at the club meeting on September 11. We invite all interested club members to join us, but once you get the email invitation, remember to respond promptly as space may be limited. No computers are needed, but please bring a cellphone. Scripts and training are provided.

November Ballot Refresher:

Early Voting and Ranked-Choice Voting
The next election will be the General Election to be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019. Polls will be open from 6 am to 9 pm everywhere. Here are two important items to note about this election.

Early Voting. There will be 9 days of early voting between October 26 and November 3. In



Manhattan, there will be 9 sites for early voting, distributed throughout the borough. For more

information, check the Board of Elections website at www.elections.ny.gov.

Ranked-Choice Voting. On your ballot, you will be asked if you approve using "ranked-choice voting" for primary elections in New York City.



New York City elections currently allow for a winner who gets only a

small share of the total vote. When a runoff is necessary, elections can be costly and produce low voter turnout. The City Council Charter Revision Commission recommends implementing ranked-choice voting as a way to fix these problems.

Voters rank the candidates by preference order. The candidate who ranks first on the fewest ballots is removed until, after multiple rounds, one candidate has the majority of votes.



Attending the June 7 presentation of the Society for Ethical Culture Public Service Award to Congressman Jerry Nadler.
Left to right: board members Lorraine Zamora, Corinne Constantine, Steve Max, Lois Safian, Miriam Rabban and Lynn Max.

Starting with this issue, the electronic version of this newsletter has a totally new format. It's now packed with attractive design, color photos, and eye-catching color graphics. All the major articles start on the opening page, so you can see all of the contents at a glance. To read each article in full, just click on the "Read More" link that follows the opening paragraphs. Everyone who subscribes to the electronic version will now receive this and future newsletters in the new format.

Gov. Cuomo: Sign the SWEAT Bill!

Governor Andrew Cuomo has not yet signed this bill into law. You can urge him to sign the bill immediately by calling his office at 1-518-474-8390.



By Alan Flacks

There were three vacancies for the state trial bench: Martin Shulman, who was running for re-election, and two "open" seats created by the departure of Arthur Engoron and Mary Rosado, who reached the state's constitutional retirement age.

re-designation." Civil Court Judge Shawn Kelly was chosen for the second slot unopposed. He had garnered sufficient support over the past few years that this year he had a majority of the 190 delegates backing him; no one chose to run against him. For the third vacancy, however, there was a contest between Civil Court Judges Carol Sharpe and Jennifer Schecter. Schecter won on the first ballot, 112 to 78.

● Independent Democrats

Suba Pharmacy
2721 Broadway at 104 Street
212-866-6700



Three Parks Annual Picnic! By Theresa Canter

What a glorious day we had for the Three Parks Democrats annual picnic on July 24 in Central Park! It was a tremendous success. We had one of our largest turnouts ever, with well over 150 folks participating in the fun throughout the evening. In addition to our club members and neighborhood friends, we were joined by many judges and judicial candidates and by our Borough President Gale Brewer. Also attending were our State Senator Robert Jackson, City Council Member Bill Perkins, and Assembly Member Dan Quart. Two declared District Attorney candidates, Alvin Bragg and Janos Marton, were there as well. Many thanks to all the members and guests who brought lots of good food and drink to share. Thanks also to those who volunteered to make reminder calls, transport supplies, set up, serve, photograph, and clean up after the event—including Bob Botfeld, Dan Cohen, Corinne Constantine, Wendy Dannett, Jock Davenport, Cynthia Doty, Ellen Flax, Daniele Gerard, Jessica Haberstock, Hannah Leider, Erl Kimmich, David Lazarus, Marie Lunn, Mary Ann Marks, Lynn Max, Merle McDowney, Barbara Nelson, Alfred Placeres, Miriam Rabban, Lois Safian, Irene Shrier, Deborah Thomas, Daniel Tsadok, Chuck Wall, Lauren Williams, Lorraine Zamora and all the many others who pitched in to help as needed. And thanks to Alan Cary who again sang and played the banjo for the crowd.



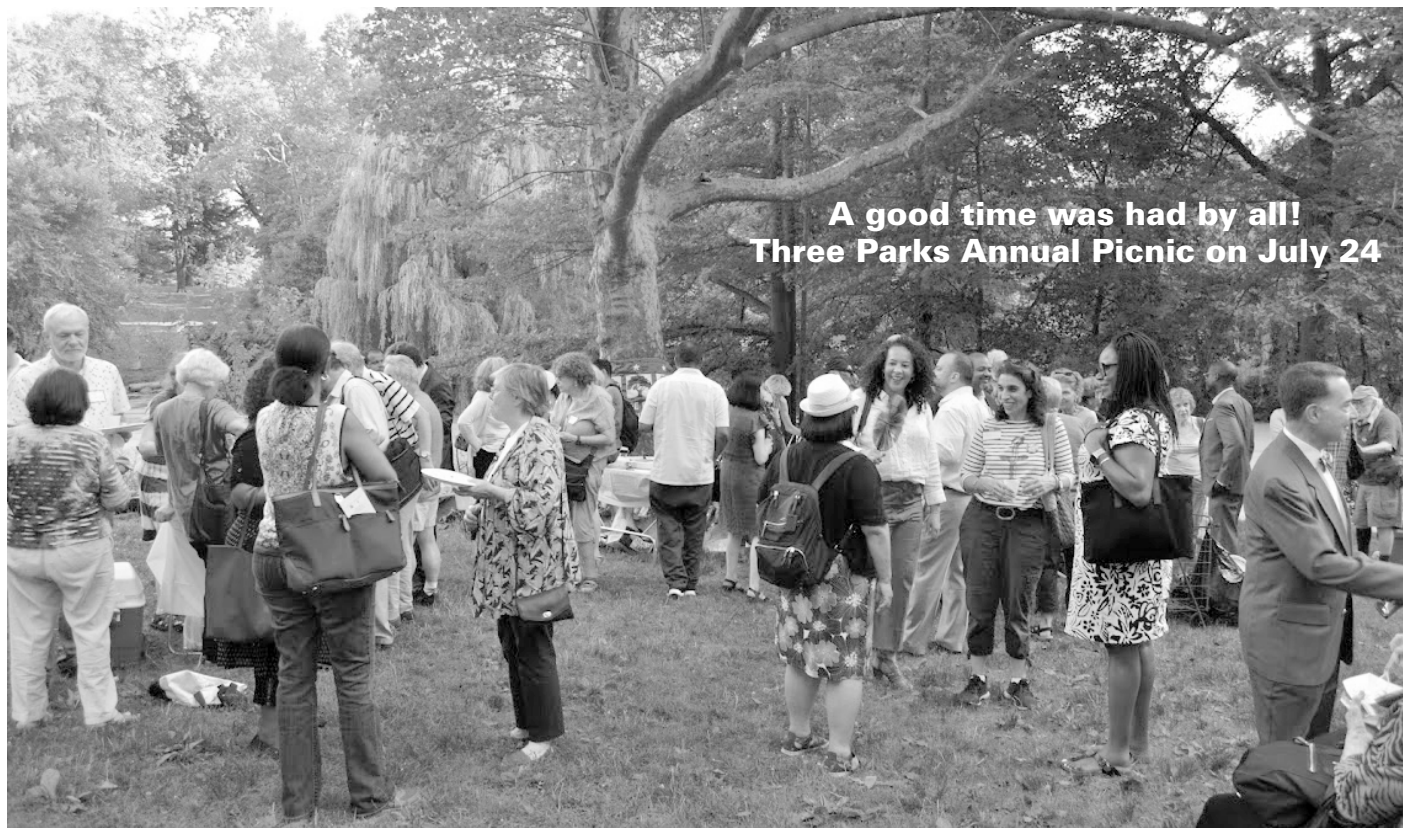
Above left: District Leader Cynthia Doty, Boro President Gale Brewer, and Al Placeres

Above right: State Senator Robert Jackson and Three Parks friends

Below left: Lorena, State Committee person Lynn Thomas, and Abigail McGloster

Below right: Lois Safian, Barbara Preston, Christine Verzar, Chuck Wall, and Daniel Tsadok





2019 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.

Please pay your dues with a check, money order or via PayPal.

Please make out all checks to **Three Parks Independent Democrats—Dues 2019.**

Mail to: Three Parks Independent Democrats

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:
September 11, 2019

Climate in Crisis:

What Can We Do About It?

Alex Beauchamp, Food & Water Watch

Ling Tsao, United for Action, and

Didi Pershouse, Soil Carbon Coalition

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, September 25, 8:00 pm

Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 9, 8:00 pm

Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 23, 8:00 pm

Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 13, 8:00 pm

Three Parks Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 20, 8:00 pm

Three Parks Board Meeting