

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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

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

President

Josh Pepper

Editor

Ray Schwartz (tappsch@nyc.rr.com)

District Leaders

Bob Botfeld
Cynthia Doty

State Committee

Lynn Thomas

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Aziz Huq, Brennan Center for Justice on
"Presidential Power and National Security"

NY Solidarity Committee for Katrina/Rita
Survivors on "Justice in New Orleans"

DATE: Wednesday, November 14, 2007

TIME: 8:00 PM

PLACE: American Youth Hostel (HI-NY)
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
3. Aziz Huq, Brennan Center for Justice
4. NY Solidarity Committee for Katrina/Rita Survivors
5. State Committee Reports
6. Hand out petitions
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

CALENDAR

Wed., Nov. 14, 8 pm
Three Parks Meeting,
PLACE: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Wed., Nov. 28, 8 PM
Three Parks Board Meeting
Place: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Sun., Dec. 2, 5 PM – 8 PM
Three Parks Holiday Party
Place: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103rd St.
Dec. 3rd – 6th, 2007
Filing of Petitions for NY Presidential Primary

Wed., Jan, 9th, 2008
Three Parks Meeting
Place: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103rd St.

Jan. 11th, 2008
Last day to Register to vote in Presidential Primary

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Joshua Pepper

Greetings all, once again! I know I said that the last column would be my last, but I am hanging on a little longer. Our state bureaucracy moves slowly. So I am remaining president for a little longer.

At our last meeting, we heard an excellent presentation from club member **Steve Max** and from **Dr. Mary O'Brien**, from **Physicians for a National Health Program**, about health care in this country and potential universal systems. Our next meeting is November 14, at which we will hear from **Aziz Huq**, of the **Brennan Center for Justice**, about presidential power and national security issues.

It is time for presidential petitioning! The club is having captain's choice petitions. Petitions for Clinton, Obama, and Edwards will definitely be available at the meeting on the 14th, and we are attempting to communicate with the other campaigns to make petitions available for their candidates as well. Anyone who wants to start petitioning before the meeting (and I encourage you all to do so) can get Clinton petitions from Cynthia Doty (cldoty@aol.com), Obama petitions from club member Amy Donaldson (amy_donaldson@yahoo.com or 212-665-2728), and Edwards petitions from me (jpepper9@nyc.rr.com).

It seems fitting that we should hear something about national security issues at a time when the U.S. Senate is hearing from the nominee to become the next Attorney General, Judge Michael Mukasey. Judge Mukasey served as a judge in the Southern District of New York for 18 years, and he has earned the highest respect from Democrats and Republicans alike. Some of his statements at his confirmation hearings have been troubling, particularly his characterization of presidential power as including the right to ignore laws for the purpose of defending the nation. He also refused to state unequivocally that waterboarding constituted a form of torture, and while his reason for doing so was an unwillingness to make statements that would put administration offi-

cial in legal jeopardy, I find such a reason to be unsatisfactory.

Nonetheless, I think that the Senate should vote to confirm Judge Mukasey. He has shown a deep respect for the rule of law, something that his two predecessors lacked. He spent 18 years as a judge, not as a partisan political hack, but rather as someone deeply committed to finding a just result. This makes him the best choice that we can expect from this president. The Justice Department cannot function for another year without an attorney general. Someone has to be in charge, and Judge Mukasey will be the best we can expect before 2009.

Aziz Huq

Speaker for the November Meeting

Aziz Huq is a Deputy Director of the Brennan Center for Justice. He is co-writing a book on presidential power and national security, to be published in March 2007 by the New Press.

He has investigated and worked on human rights issues and constitutional issues in a number of countries. He worked on human rights issues in Guatemala and Cambodia. In 2002, he received a Columbia Law School Post-Graduate Human Rights Fellowship to work with the International Crisis Group studying constitutional reform in Afghanistan. He has since worked with ICG in Pakistan, and Nepal on legal and constitutional reform.

Before joining the Brennan Center, Mr. Huq clerked for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg during the October 2003 Term of the Supreme Court of the United States, and for Judge Robert D. Sack of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals (2001-02). He is published in the Columbia Law Review, the Yearbook of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law, the World Policy Journal and the New School's Constellations Journal. He has written for Himal Southasian, Legal Times and the American Prospect, and appeared as a commentator on Democracy Now! and NPR's Talk of the Nation.

Volunteer to Help with the Holiday Party

Our annual Holiday Party is planned for Sunday, December 2, from 5-8 pm. Planning is underway and your help is needed. Please volunteer to join other club members to help with invitations, decorating, welcoming, bartending or cleanup.

To volunteer call Lauren Williams at
212-678-8609
or send an email to
LaurenWilliams1@cs.com

THE LOPEZ TORRES U.S. SUPREME COURT APPEAL

By Alan Flacks

Most of you heard about it on television or radio or read about it in the newspapers, but nonetheless, here's my short and novel report on the argument of the "Margarita Lopez Torres" appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court on 3rd October, 2007, which deals with our method of using judicial nominating conventions to choose State Supreme Court Justices.

The consensus of those with whom I spoke immediately after the argument is that the Court will probably reverse by viewing this as a "States Rights" issue with no justiciable issue before them. This may be to atone for their meddling by "un-doing" *Bush vs. Gore*. It was a "hot" bench as the Justices appeared to have read the briefs or were well briefed. They raised good, on-point questions, which at times, especially those by Roberts, Kennedy, Breyer, Scalia, and Souter, seemed to favor one side, but then again their further questions seemed to favor the other side. [Clarence Thomas was his usual silent self.]

Ted Olson (for the New York State Board of Elections) argued clearly and well. He knew his subject. Andrew Rossman (arguing for the New York County Democratic Organization)

was much better here, and seemed at ease, than he was at the Second Circuit hearing last year. But F.A.O. Schwarz, Jr. appeared unprepared, and did not parry well the Justices' "thrusts."

Issues raised touched many things including voter apathy, party unity and "educated" judicial delegates (compared to *hoi polloi*). Some of the justices saw no Constitutional issue of ballot access, but said that what Lopez Torres really complained about was lack of influence. Schwarz responded that what was the theoretical *schema* is not the reality of how the New York judicial convention system works.

Locals I espied in attendance include, in no particular order: Jane Solomon, Alice Schlesinger, Sheila Abdus-Salaam, Joan Madden, James d'Auguste, John Simpson, Charles Ramos, Eileen Branston, Linda Schoener, Emily Jane Goodman, Alex Tisch, Margaret Fung, Denny Farrell, Jon Rubin, Arthur Greig, Jerry Goldfeder, Anne Raphael, Peter Jenkins, Joanna Saccone, Meryl Brodsky, B. Ruth Kapnick, Susan Hochberg, Doris Ling-Cohen, and Victor Kovner.

For items you may not carry into the courtroom, there is a checkroom with a charge of twenty-five cents for a locker. Who gets this money? According to U.S. Marshall Pamela Talkin's office, it goes to the Treasury. And finally, did you know that the United States Supreme Court has a gift shop (run by the Supreme Court Historical Society)? It seems a bit out-of-place for such an exalted institution and in an austere courthouse. The gift shop is run-of-the mill touristy: mugs [I was hoping for mugs, each one with a different visage of a Justice, but no such luck: just decorated with a picture of the courthouse or of the Great Seal.], books, bookmarks, mouse pads with appropriate motifs, dolls, and other *chatchkies*.

Condolences are extended to Three Parks Member Suzanne Samelson on the death of her brother, Charles.



Scott Stringer, Manhattan Boro President on Military Recruitment in NYC Schools

In September I released a report in collaboration with the New York Civil Liberties Union showing that some New York City schools allow military recruiters to use class time for military sales pitches, in clear violation of Department of Education policy. Our report, *We Want You(th)!* also concluded that the DOE is not adequately informing students that they can opt out of federal requirements to have their personal contact information supplied to recruiters. I have issued a series of recommendations for protecting students' privacy and keeping recruiters from taking over instructional time, and will work with members of the City Council to see these measures put into place. Students facing graduation, especially those without a job waiting or a clear path to college, are at a vulnerable turning point facing an uncertain future. We should not allow them to be taken advantage of by aggressive recruiters who are breaking the rules. If you have any questions regarding the survey please contact my office at (212) 669-8300.

Three Parks' 1998 Gubernatorial Candidate Jim Larocca Named LIPA Chair

By Steve Strauss

Three Parks' endorsed candidate for Governor in 1998, Jim Larocca, a former State Energy Commissioner who also held a post at State DOT in the Cuomo administration has been nominated to serve as the Chair of the Long Island Power Authority by Governor Spitzer. Larocca had recently served as the President of a college on eastern Long Island and has long been involved with the Nature Conservancy in Suffolk County. Congratulations Jim. Three Parks recognized your talents early on.

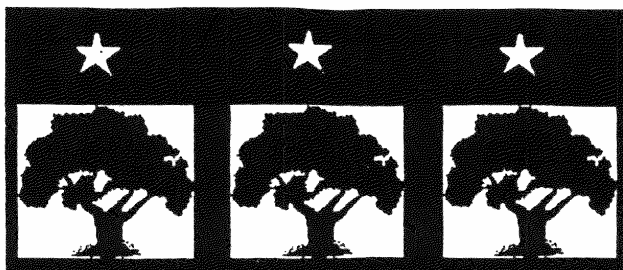
A Message to Three Parks Members from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

From Steve Strauss

I was very moved to be remembered by so many members of the Club [who expressed their condolences on the recent death of the Congresswoman's mother]. Send them my best regards.

Thank you.

Carolyn Maloney



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Please pay your 2007 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***

2007 MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member ___

Renewal ___

Membership Category -- Check One

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Family -- two adults in the same household (\$30) ___

Student/Senior Citizen/Low Income (\$8) ___

Sponsor (\$40) ___ Patron (\$100) ___

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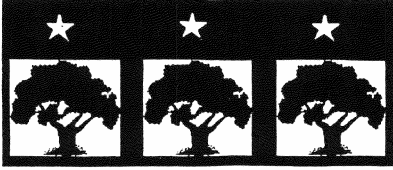
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Check here if you prefer to receive the newsletter via email.

Please make out all checks to "Three Parks Independent Democrats - Dues 2007"



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

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Presidential Power and National Security

Annual Holiday Party, Sunday, December 2, 2007