

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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

President

Theresa Canter

City Council

Phil Reed – 8th District
Gale Brewer – 6th District

Judy Wood, Editor

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District Leaders

Bob Botfeld, Cynthia Doty

State Committee

Lynn Thomas

JUNE 2004 CLUB MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, June 9, 2004
TIME: 8:00 p.m.
PLACE: American Youth Hostel
891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103rd Street
ROOM: Chapel Room

AGENDA

8 p.m. Call to Order

1. President's Report & Announcements
2. District Leader Reports
3. Speaker
Hon. Lesley Crocker Snyder
Candidate for Manhattan D.A.
4. PIZZA PARTY and PETITION
DISTRIBUTION
5. Discussion and vote on
Gay Marriage Resolution
6. Speaker on proposed West Side
Stadium
7. New business

CALENDAR

- Sat. June 5**
**Canvassing and Voter Reg
in Pennsylvania**
- Tues. June 8**
Petitioning begins
- Sat. June 12**
**Pres. Election Panel Discussion
at Baruch College – 10:30am**
- Wed. June 23**
**June Board meeting
@AYH@8pm**
- Thurs. July 1**

Petitions are due

President's Column

Theresa Canter

The month of May was certainly active at Three Parks. We started May out with a full house at our 29th anniversary celebration held at Carne, 105th and Broadway. It was a lively crowd comprised of our electeds, club members, judicial candidates and other friends and supporters of the club.

Our awards presentation included the Ted Weiss Public Service Award to Speaker of the City Council, Gifford Miller, for his outstanding leadership of the city council and his consistent support of progressive causes. The 2642 Broadway Residence, jointly operated by Institute for Community living and Volunteers of America, received the Jesse Crawford Community Service Award for their very successful program providing a quality residence for the homeless with mental illnesses and for revitalizing their lives. The award was accepted on behalf of the residence by Monica Drewer, Program Director of ICL and Federico A. Morrobel, Program Director, VOA– Greater New York.

A special award was given to Judy Wood this year, our former District Leader for her years of spirited leadership and dedication in defending and preserving the progressive and liberal tradition of our community. Our thanks Judy for your on-going commitment to Three Parks!

Many thanks to the hard work by the fundraising committee and other members of Three Parks, whose efforts were outstanding in pulling the event together. Without their time and energy it would not have been the tremendous success that it was. A special mention to our District Leaders Bob Botfeld and Cynthia Doty, Ralph Andrew, Jock Davenport, Ellen Flax, Ernestine Gallagher, Brenda Morgan, Jason Morgan, Josh Pepper, Roschel Holland Stearns, Odessa Steward, Steve Strauss, George Voorhis, Judy Wood, and Marlene Zucker. The proceeds from the fundraiser have given us a great start in raising the money to finance a storefront for the fall election. Thanks again to all those who came out in support of Three Parks and our political activities in this critical election year!

Our guest speaker at our June meeting will be Judge Leslie Crocker Snyder. From her early years as the first female homicide prosecutor in New York to her two decades as a judge, she has served on the front lines of the battle against crime in New York City.

Judge Snyder's experience as a prosecutor, co-author of New York's rape law and founder of the first Sex Crimes Bureau in the nation, and judge, might offer us an inside and uniquely personal perspective on how the criminal justice system works and how it could better function to protect and serve our community. Should make for a lively and interesting evening!

At the June meeting we will also have our annual petitioning kick off with Pizza for everyone! This is a

very important part of our club's work. It is essential we get out there and get the signatures needed for our endorsed candidates. Our presence on the streets and in the lobby of our buildings will serve to remind everyone what an important year this is politically. Don't forget to wear those Kerry buttons!

I am proud of each and everyone of you who has chosen to participate in the taking back of our country in a myriad of ways. An impressive amount of club members and volunteers have been tabling on weekends, taking the bus to Pennsylvania, fundraising for our candidates and participating in other political activities. Let's keep the energy up, we can't afford to sit this election out!

Betting on the Budget: A Modest Proposal to Raise Revenue for New York State

Ray Schwartz

The clear and convincing incompetence of the New York State Elected Officials to pass timely and thoughtful budget has been demonstrated for more than 20 years. Raising revenue (i.e. getting money, for those not use to Albany Talk) has proved to be real challenge to the skills (or lack thereof) to those individuals who have been elected to tend to the "People's Business" in Albany. Why we keep on electing people who cannot do the job is for another discussion. In this proposal I am focusing on getting money for New York State.

Taking a cue from the old adage, if you have lemons make lemonade, I propose that we raise revenue for New York State by establishing a mechanism for the public to bet on when the New York State Budget is passed. Expanding the Off Track Betting Corp. (OTB) to include a subsidiary entity called Off Track Budget Betting (OTBB) the public could help raise revenue by betting on when the budget is passed. Since our elected officials have kept the budget off track, and have become skilled professionals at running around in circles, what better way to help cashed starved education, affordable housing or health care service sectors in the state.

An ancillary industry would develop just as in horse betting, the tip sheet. Albany Pundits would publish tip sheets on the status of the budget and handicap elected officials. For instance, former State Senator Guy Velella could be described as runs well on a dirty track. Moreover, if we start betting now, we could bet on whether the recent proposals to change the State budget process will make a difference.

I am confident that New York creativeness and ingenuity will make this proposal a model for the rest of the country. The New York State Legislature would no longer be laughed at but would be viewed as innovative revenue raisers. Of course, the New York State Legislature would need to pass legislation to permit

betting on the budget and the Governor would need to sign. What are the odds

District Leader Report

Bob Botfeld

SWING STATE

Montgomery County, Pennsylvania is a swing county in a swing state (21 electoral votes). Montgomery supported Gore over Bush in 2000 but it has supported the two Republican US Senate incumbents – Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum. Montgomery voted for the Democratic governor and auditor general; for the Republican attorney general and state treasurer. The county is represented by one Democratic and one Republican state senator; ten Republican and two Democratic state assemblypersons.

On May 8th, a sunny, crisp Saturday morning along with club members Cynthia Doty, Lynn and Steve Max, Pamela Wax, Milivoy and Christine Samurovich and their friends Nina and Ernest Scher, Arlene Geiger, and Sheila Yablon, I boarded one of three Montgomery bound buses at 34th St and 8th. Recruited and led by Lynn and Steve Max, the Three Parkers would canvass in Blue Bell (educated, 62% bachelor's degree; affluent, \$90,000 median family income) within Montgomery.

I don't like buses but this was a quick, pleasant, even enjoyable two hour ride. We were briefed by our bus captain, Alan Charney, and kept alert and a little surprised by a showing of a documentary on the government infiltration on liberal groups - like us. Hmmm.

It was superbly organized. At a modern and corporate looking union hall, we were welcomed with coffee and donuts; introduced to the area by Pennsylvania State Senator (and former U.S. Senate candidate) Alison Schwartz; and given additional training by a terrific local organizer, Susan Gobreski. We were quickly armed with a survey list of ten issues, voter registration cards, and a decal identifying us as member of the League of Conservation Voters. Then we were whisked into buses – dropped off in groups of ten in the surrounding neighborhoods (good-sized homes, ½ acre lots, 3+ cars) and started knocking on doors.

Our tasks were to register new voters, ask potential voters to select their three most important issues from among a list of ten, and gather name/address/phone/email contact data. In the weeks to follow, phone callers would engage these contacts on the issues they identified.

The hardest part for us, Manhattanites, was to grasp the concept that these suburbanites would willingly open their doors and respond to our questions. Susan and the other organizers painstakingly repeated that these people

would do these things.

And as the organizers in the union hall had promised, the voters opened their doors and talked to us. One soccer mom - she was wearing a Blue Bell Soccer League shirt - gave me a bottled water and talked about her concerns about jobs. Most of the Blue Bell voters completed the questionnaire. War and terrorism were the leading issues. In my area, I also found concern about the future of Social Security among the 30-45 year olds.

The canvassing time seemed too short. We enjoyed wandering the 'burbs and talking to this critical electorate on a nice cool day. Afterward, we were quickly collected by bus, returned to the union hall, debriefed for our experiences and suggestions (more time to canvass), and fed good pasta and salad.

But the highlight for everyone and especially the Three Parkers was an introduction by the very professional, quick talking organizer, Susan Gobreski. Susan said that she had been an professional activist organizer for the past 15 years. But, it was one of the members of our several hundred assembled canvassers who had been her inspiration for all these years – Steve Max. Three Parks member Steve Max had trained Susan at the Midwest Academy which he has co-run for the past 30 years.

Steve was taken by surprise but not at a loss for words.

His short, impromptu speech made every moment of the trip feel worthwhile. [I am paraphrasing from memory]. Steve said that “As New Yorkers, we are unique in that we believe that everything we say or think is important. And that everyone needs to hear what we say or think – all the time. In the rest of the country, like Montgomery County, people do not think this way. They do not think what they have to say is important [and may not think as much about the national and international issues that we argue about all the time]. But by coming to canvass and solicit their opinions, we are letting them know that what they think is important. And that is a very good start in getting them to question the current policies.” (My apologies to Steve).

There is a second trip scheduled this Saturday, June 5th. Check with Lynn (212-666-3129) or Bob (212-865-1450) to see if there are remaining seats or for future trips.

Foreign Policy for a Change

by Steve Strauss

In the May newsletter of the Broadway Democrats Democratic District Leader Curtis Arluck wrote an

excellent column on the Kerry campaign, the disaster of the Bush Presidency and how the President has so sullied the reputation of the United States around the world.

While urging liberal Democrats to press Kerry to be bold on domestic economic policy, Curtis expressed caution on foreign policy where the risk to Kerry's election in November is high. Here's a piece of his column for your consideration:

"Too many radicals and even Democratic liberals still don't get the lessons of 9/11 and the recent butchery of Nicholas Bert. The hijackers-of-Islam terrorists who attacked our country and murdered Berg and hundreds of other innocents are an evil force, and easily the biggest threat to U.S. and worldwide peace and security since the Nazis. Bush is absolutely right that they must be confronted and destroyed; Kerry must be equally resolute. It is of course correct and necessary for Kerry to say, as he has started to, that not only does the war in Iraq not fight terrorism, it strengthens it. But there is no clear exit strategy out of Bush's Iraq mess, and the lives of the American soldiers Bush sent there are still very much at risk. Americans know who got us into Iraq; they don't need Kerry reminding them. To expect Kerry to oppose all military action (such as Afghanistan), or to qualify every atrocity committed against Americans with explanations about 'context' or 'American culpability' is to guarantee Bush and his gang another four years."

ENDORSEMENT DILEMMA

Bob Botfeld

At the May meeting of the Three Parks board of directors, a technical endorsement issue was discussed regarding the club's previous May endorsement of the civil court candidates. The problem is that our club's preferred candidates had withdrawn from the race and we had to decide how to officially support the democratic nominees whom we had not endorsed. Below is a summary of that discussion:

BACKGROUND

This year in the Three Parks Independent Democrats civil court preference poll conducted at our May 12 membership meeting, we supported Milagros Matos, Fredy Kaplan, and Frank Nervo for the three open countywide civil court positions. However, on the following day, the executive committee of the New York County Democrats, i.e. the district leaders, met and endorsed civil court candidates Milagros Matos, George Silver, and Arlene Bluth. {The candidates may run in each of the three open civil court slots.} After gauging their own support among the district leaders, all the candidates except Silver withdrew from the first vacancy slot; Silver was then nominated by voice vote. Matos

was similarly nominated for the second judicial vacancy. For the third slot, Bluth beat Nervo in a roll call vote by over a 2 to 1 margin.

As a result of the withdrawal of two of our endorsed candidates, Nervo and Kaplan (as well as the withdrawal of the other four candidates not receiving the majority support of the Manhattan district leaders), the only remaining candidates for civil court and the presumptive democratic nominees are Bluth, Matos, and Silver.

It is the tradition of Three Parks Independent Democrats to carry on the club's omnibus petitions only the names of candidates we have endorsed in a club endorsement election. On several occasions our endorsed candidates for state or city office have lost the primary. The result was that the club could not officially support and use the resources of the club on the candidates' behalf even if the candidate were highly qualified and valued by club members. To address this situation, several years ago we added the following amendment to our constitution to avoid having to go through the formality of re-endorsing for an office.

ARTICLE 8: ENDORSEMENT

Paragraph 5: Following a primary or special election or judicial convention, the Democratic nominee for any public office will automatically receive the Club endorsement unless withdrawn by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Unfortunately, this amendment unintentionally omitted the current situation for civil court. The remaining democratic candidates and presumptive nominees for civil court are neither endorsed by our club nor are we currently in a period of time "following a primary, special election or judicial convention".

BOARD MEETING

In the May board meeting, this issue was discussed. The items to be weighed were that the petition period starts on June 8; the scheduled club meeting will be on June 9; that they [the nominees] did not need our signatures since they were running unopposed and would collect many thousands more signatures than required.

The options that the Three Parks board discussed were the following:

- (1) Hold a second endorsement and print and distribute the petitions later.
- (2) Print the petitions with the non-endorsed candidates and assume that the club membership would endorse the non-endorsed candidates.

(3) Print the petitions with only the club's current endorsed candidates and distribute single petitions for the non-endorsed candidates.

The board selected (3) as the most efficient and respectful of the previous club meeting's endorsement. The board then voted to report their decision to the club.

There will also be future recommendation for an amendment to the constitution to avoid this situation again. Amendments must be voted upon and passed in two consecutive club meetings.

Proposed Gay Marriage Resolution

WHEREAS, in the opinion of the New York State Attorney General, the marriage law of New York State allows marriage only between opposite-sex couples

WHEREAS, such a law is discriminatory against same-sex couples and in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution

WHEREAS, Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell, the state representative of the 69th Assembly District and whose district encompasses the region of Three Parks Independent Democrats, has filed a lawsuit to declare said law unconstitutional

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT

1. The Three Parks Independent Democrats unequivocally support the right of same-sex couples to marry legally; and
2. The Three Parks Independent Democrats support Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell in his lawsuit against New York State, for, in the opinion of the Three Parks Independent Democrats, said lawsuit deserves to win on its merits; and
3. The Three Parks Independent Democrats call on the New York State Legislature to change New York State law so that same-sex couples can marry legally in this state and so that same-sex couples married in other states shall have their marriages recognized in this state.

		endorsement	
US Congress	Rangel	78	10
NY State Senate	Paterson	82	9
	Schneiderman	80	3
State Assembly	O'Donnell	90	8
State Committee -	h		
Male	Ginsberg	67	21
Female	Thomas	76	6

Civil Court County-wide:

Arlene Bluth	19
Fredy Kaplan	38
Tanya Kennedy	21
Milagros Matos	62
Rita Mella	12
Frank Nervo	25
Migdalia Pares	6
George Silver	18
Lisa Sokoloff	16
No endorsement	5

Civil Court - vacancy #12

Shirley Kornreich	79
no endorsement	6

Surrogate Court

Eve Preminger	80
no endorsement	5

3 Judicial delegate

Alan Flacks	87
Ralph Andrew	39
Brenda Morgan	36
3 Alternates	
Milivoy Samurovich	15
Jason Morgan	13
Joshua Pepper	10

ELECTRONIC VOTING - WORLDWIDE

Brenda Morgan

At our February meeting we heard and witnessed compelling arguments regarding electronic voting issues as presented by Teresa Hommel and club member, Board of Elections Commissioner Doug Kellner.

The PRI (Public Radio International) show "A World of Possibilities" devoted an hour-long discussion to electronic voting. Doug Kellner is interviewed in the last quarter hour. Listen to a digital record of the broadcast:

http://www.aworldofpossibilities.com/audio/dill_kellner24kb0329.m3u

"Program Description: Four years after the Florida 2000 debacle electronic voting is being hailed as a remedy for hanging chads and other confusion, but skeptics say it's prone to mistakes and mischief. Listen with us to learn

ENDORSEMENT ELECTION RESULTS

whether technology provides more accuracy or multiplies errors and manipulation.”

In addition to Doug, other authorities from California to the UK representing public advocacy and academia are interviewed. I commend this program to you – and you may listen to it on your computer whilst doing other work – if you can. I found that I became too engrossed.

Thanks again to Doug.

JUDICIAL VACANCIES, CONT'D

By Alan Flacks

In my prior columns, I reported on the Party's non-partisan, merit screening panel for Manhattan Civil Court County-wide vacancies this year. The panel reported in April nine of the 24 lawyer applicants as the “most highly qualified” for the three “open” judgeships. They are: Arlene Bluth (a private practitioner), Fredy Harrison Kaplan (a private practitioner and former Legal Aid attorney), Tanya Kennedy (law clerk to an appellate judge), Milagros Matos (a private practitioner), Rita Mella (law clerk to Brooklyn judge Margarita Lopez Torres), Frank Nervo (private practitioner), Migdalia Parés (chief A.L.J., N.Y.S. Div. of Human Rights), George Silver (private petitioner), and Lisa Sokoloff (litigator). Also Shirley Kornreich, an incumbent Civil Court judge standing for re-election, was found qualified for re-designation.

Of all the Manhattan Democratic clubs, only our Club made an endorsement before the New York County Executive Committee [the district leaders] made its choices. We endorsed Shirley Kornreich and Milagros Matos, who got over 50% of the vote (Fredy Kaplan and Frank Nervo were runners-up, but with less than 50%). The County Executive Committee endorsed Kornreich, Matos, and in addition George Silver and Arlene Bluth. (For the last slot, Nervo and Bluth ran against each other, with Bluth emerging the victor. Our D.L.s followed the Club's “lead” and voted for Frank Nervo.) This selection by the District Leaders effectively forced the other candidates out of the race. [For a fuller explanation, please see District Leader Bob Botfeld's column in this issue.]

If you would like a list of the panelists who served on the Civil Court screening panel mailed to you, please telephone my service, 212-840-1234. The forming of the Supreme Court screening panel now awaits the call of the County judiciary committee. Stay tuned.

MAYOR BLOOMBERG?

Tuesday, June 15th at 12:30 PM

Parish House of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle
405 West 59th Street

(West of Columbus Ave)

Commissioner Eggleston oversees more than 14,000 employees, a \$5.6 billion budget and provides services including welfare to work, temporary public assistance, food stamps, Medicaid, HIV/AIDS support services, domestic violence prevention, homelessness prevention and emergency intervention services.

- What are the main problems welfare is facing?
- Has food stamp availability improved?
- How are state budget cuts being addressed?
- What is the outlook for the hard to place?

VERNA EGGLESTON/WELFARE REFORM, JUNE 15th at 12:30PM at PARISH HOUSE

Fees are not refundable (no charge for WCC members/\$10 nonmembers). Space is limited; please return this form and a check made out to Women's City Club of New York located at 33 West 60th Street, 5th Flr, NY, NY 10023. Phone and email reservations are accepted, call 212.353.8070 or email info@wccny.org

CONDOLENCES

To Ira Manhoff on the loss of his mother last Fall. Our sympathy as we learned of his loss.

We sadly note the untimely death of Rev. Dr. Matthew Adams, Jr. on May 8, 2004. He was the 1994 recipient of Three Parks' Ted Weiss Community Service Award for his service and commitment to this community. While pastor of Grace United Methodist Church he was active in the 24th Precinct Community Council, Community Board 7, and a board member of Anchor House amongst his many efforts. Board member Ernestine Gallagher attended a service of thanksgiving for him and extended our condolences to his family.

And on a more cheerful note, **CONGRATULATIONS** To Craig Charney and Shari Cohen on their marriage on May 9, 2004. We wish them much happiness.

And thanks to my fellow club members for the honor

bestowed upon me at our terrific '04 fundraiser. It was a pleasure to serve all those years as District Leader.

* * *

WHERE HAVE OUR YOUNG SOLDIERS GONE?
Inspired by Pete Seeger and George Bush
By Cy Adler

Where have our young soldiers gone?
Don't see them anywhere.
Where have our young soldiers gone?
Nowhere near their home.
Sent to strange lands every one,
Far away lands every one.
When will our men return?
When will our young men return?

How will some of them come home?
Don't see them anywhere
How will some of them come home?
Don't see them here.
Flown home in jet planes-- cold as stone
In flag-draped coffins, all alone.
That's how our men return,
That's how some young men return.

Who sent our soldiers off to die
Far, far overseas?
Who sent our boys away to die
Far, far overseas?
Politicians steeped in oil,
Men who set our world aboil.
Will these men ever learn?
Will these old men ever learn?

When will this bloody warring end?
Let's pray it will be soon.
When will this bloody warring end?
Let's pray it will be soon.
When the cowboys waving flags,
Grow weary of the body bags.
That's when this war will end,
That's when this war will end!

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Thanks to: Lincoln Bonner, Emily Brandt, Bob Lesko,
Ed Martin, Al Podber, Pete Seeger..

*Cy Adler and Judy Wood are members of the New York City
Labor Chorus which performs peace, freedom and labor
songs around NYC and environs .*

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

BUS TO A SWING STATE

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO DO
SOMETHING THAT REALLY COUNTS
and HELP BEAT BUSH --

**REGISTER VOTERS AND CANVASS
IN
MONTGOMERY COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA**

On Saturday, June 5th, get on the bus(2.5 hrs) and talk to
Pennsylvania Voters Face-to-Face!!.

On June 5th, we will be registering PA voters and talking
to them about the issues most important to them! The bus
will leave from the West Side at 8am.

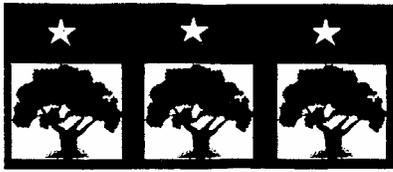
Call Bob Botfeld (212-865-1450) or Lynn Max (212-
666-3129) ASAP for details and to save a bus seat. The
bus will leave from 86th and Broadway at 8am.

SATURDAY, JUNE 5TH, 2004

**Remember, we New Yorkers Know
What is at Stake -!**

**FOOD DRIVE - BRING TWO or MORE
CANNED GOODS for a LOCAL PANTRY**

**Labor Chorus Concert
Mon. June 14
6pm
P.S. 75
96th St. and West End Ave.**



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

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SNYDER**

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