

Ed Weintrob / The real story is the land grab, not the Nets

That the Nets are coming is beside the point. And that is the real story, a story masterfully buried by developer Bruce Ratner and his media skills. (When the New York Times is your real estate partner, it's amazing the story's pages will tell — more than three pages featuring nine upbeat, lucrily illustrated sto-

ries in Thursday's edition.) The real story is that the Atlantic Yards project — and its companion Downtown Brooklyn Plan — is not about the Nets (whose stadium would occupy a tiny part of the massive site), it's about a land grab by Ratner and his political clients, the largest, most expensive government

seizure of private property for private benefit ever in Brooklyn. Let's dispose of the sidebar first: Atlantic Terminal is probably the best site in town for a Nets arena, just as it would have been for the Dodgers in the '50s. The site's residential neighbors might not like to hear this, but the Flatbush-Atlantic area is

too good a hub to leave fallow, and they should have suspected that Ratner's early steps here — the ugly, dysfunctional, failed Atlantic Center shopping mall he opened in the '90s and his takeover of the Manhattan-centric, expansionist (in a real estate, if not an artistic, vein) Brooklyn Academy of Music — was little

more than a holding action. With virtually no public consultation (and no request for competing proposals), Gov. Patuki is apparently prepared to condemn enough privately-owned property to allow a potential build-out of more than 14 million square feet, the equivalent of seven Empire State buildings.

Ratner's architect (sorry, the media's been instructed to say "world renowned" architect) Frank Gehry said his intent is to build a neighborhood from scratch. Brooklyn's been hot for a number of years, and not because there's nothing here worth preserving. People live in Brooklyn (and

pay millions for homes in neighborhoods abutting the condemned sites) for many reasons, not the least of which is it's not Manhattan but close to it, and it's not the kind of sterile, suburban campus represented by Ratner's Metrotech which, contrary to popular but uninformed opinion, is anything but a smashing success.



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GO BROOKLYN

'Hiroshima' in DUMBO

The Bay Ridge Paper

Including The Bensonhurst Paper

Brooklyn Papers Publication

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RATNER NABS NETS

B'klyn cheers, trembles as \$300M bid accepted



Architect Frank Gehry's design for an arena Bruce Ratner would like to build near the intersection of Atlantic and Flatbush avenues. This week, Ratner purchased the NBA's New Jersey Nets, which he plans to move to Brooklyn.

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Goodbye New Jersey. Hello, Brooklyn.

After months of negotiations, developer Bruce Ratner reached a deal this week to purchase the New Jersey Nets for \$300 million. He plans to bring the team across two rivers to the Borough of Kings.

Community Youth Organization, which owns the team, agreed to the deal at a meeting Friday morning putting an end to the drawn-out bidding war. "We're very excited," said Ratner spokesman Barry Baum. "We have a few issues to work out, but we think it would be great for New York and great for Brooklyn."

Borough President Marty Markowitz, who has been dreaming of bringing professional sports back to Brooklyn ever since the Dodgers left for California in 1957, was ecstatic about the prospect of "netting the Nets."

One of the loudest supporters of the plan, Markowitz remained collected this week, maintaining a wait-and-see attitude until the contracts are signed and final approval given.

The deal must be approved by three-fourths of the NBA team owners. A move of the team to Brooklyn would also require the approval of NBA owners.

"I can hardly wait for Brooklyn to realize all of the jobs, housing and other benefits that this project will deliver along with Brooklyn's return to the national sports stage," Markowitz said. Until late last week, the Nets owners were also in negotiations with New Jersey real estate developer Jon Kushner and U.S. Sen. Jon Corzine (D-N.J.), who had the second-highest bid.

"He fought hard to keep this team in New Jersey," said Kushner spokesman Michael Turner. "He played by the rules." See **RATNER** on page 5



Developer Bruce Ratner tries on a fedora and jacket at Junior's when announcing plans in October to purchase the Nets.

Moose Lodge senior center under way

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Renovations that will allow for a summertime opening of a replacement in Bensonhurst for the former Narrows Senior Center began last week at the Loyal Order of the Moose Lodge, seven months after area seniors were told they would have to shuttle more than a mile away to the next closest center.

When its 3,800-square-foot ballroom opens to seniors in June, the Moose Lodge, on 18th Avenue at 77th Street, will act as a part-time satellite center for the one built at the Angel Guardian Home, in Borough Park, where meals will be prepared for delivery to the Bensonhurst site.

Hot seats

CB10 members free to sit where they want for first time in three years

The Brooklyn Papers

It began three years ago, as a reaction to distracting chic-chat and voluble claps at Community Board 10 meetings, but board members now say that the divisiveness that led to assigned seating based on seniority is a thing of the past. And so on Jan. 26, when the full board meets for the first time this year, members will once again be allowed to choose their seats, a luxury that Brooklyn's 17 other community boards have always enjoyed.

Newly elected CB10 Chairman Craig Eaton See **SEATING** on page 17

"I'm extremely happy and especially for the seniors who really have had no place to go," said Sam Marza, the chief administrator at the Moose Lodge, who began lobbying for the center's opening nearly five years ago. "No matter where I go, they ask, 'When you gonna open, when you gonna open?'"

The renovations, which began Jan. 8, are expected to continue through May while workers install a wheelchair ramp at the 18th Avenue entrance, refresh the ballroom's wooden floors See **MOOSE** on page 5

Emergency team gets first test



Members of Bay Ridge's Community Emergency Response Team carry a "victim" during the Jan. 17 drill.

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

As second-responders churmed through wreckage and mangled bodies, a rescue worker took a moment to alert the media of surprises yet to come.

"This is good. Get in here," one of the workers said as he waved on cameramen and reporters that were cordoned off less than 100 feet from what turned out to be one of the more surreal moments to hit Shore Road Park in recent memory.

He was talking about volunteers, including state Sen. Marty Golden, who had rushed to the aid of a victim who'd been suffering under the collapse of a fallen wooden pallet as a crush of reporters circled close by. Outside the park house near 79th Street, six other bodies lay



This dummy hand was part of the surreal scene.

lifeless as patches of fire spit clouds of smoke. Amid the chaos, rescue workers wearing green helmets rushed to save the few who were still "alive." Fortunately, it was only a drill.

The bodies were mannequins and the fire was arranged. The rescue workers were, perhaps, the only real aspect to the test on this 19-degree afternoon.

Lawyers and doctors by day, the jumpsuit-clad rescue workers, part of Bay Ridge's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) reacted appropriately during the city's first such exercise. The 45-minute hypothetical went off without a hitch, thanks to the volunteers, all of whom live or work in Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights or Bensonhurst.

The idea for the team, the city's first, was born after the trauma of the Sept. 11, 2001 disaster incited nearly 1,000 residents living in then-Councilman Marty Golden's 43rd district to demand that their neighborhoods organize in the event another attack should occur. In April 2002, the state Senate Committee on Homeland Security met at Fort Hamilton to discuss the area's readiness to react to emergencies. There, the program was born.

Golden, who studied search- See **TEST** on page 17

Mayor stumps in Dyker Hts.

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Mayor Michael Bloomberg made a near-surprise appearance at a Veterans of Foreign Wars hall in Dyker Heights on Wednesday night to discuss the city's budget, public schools and property taxes.

The visit, word of which had spread like wildfire the night before, attracted more than 100 residents to the tiny hall on Fort Hamilton Parkway at 70th Street, which had been reserved weeks in advance for a meeting of the United Neighbors Association, a group concerned primarily with Fort Hamilton Parkway crime and quality of life. Television cameras rolled in the back row and a reporter from the New Yorker watched just as closely.

"He's at three, four, five events most nights — sometimes more," said mayoral spokesman Chris Coffey. Flanked by state Sen. Marty Golden, a fellow Republican, and

Community Board 10 District Manager Josephine Beckmann, a founder of the neighborhood group, Bloomberg listened as residents peppered him with local questions like cleanliness on Fort Hamilton Parkway and preservation zoning in Bay Ridge and Dyker Heights. Although Bloomberg didn't say See **MAYOR** on page 17

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Fender-bender turns to rage

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

A rush-hour fender bender turned bloody when the driver on the receiving end dared complain.

Police say the motorist was driving on 94th Street when a black, late-model Jeep Grand Cherokee ran a red light on Third Avenue and plowed into him at 5:20 pm on Jan. 15.

When the wronged driver leaned out his window to tell the other motorist to be more careful, or something to that effect, both driver and passenger leaped from the Cherokee and began yelling back.

One of the two then reached into the man's car and slapped him. But when the victim began to write down their license plate number, the attacker reached through the window and punched him, causing his nose to bleed.

To make matters worse, the goons ripped from his hands the fare voucher book that held not only the written plate number but \$200 in cash, as well, according to the victim.

He described the two attackers as in their 30s and about 6 feet tall with brown hair. They were also described as being well dressed and muscular.

Bar stabbing
 Police are searching for a man involved in a Bay Ridge bar brawl that left a 24-year-old man with a knife wound. The Jan. 17 incident hap-

62/68 BLOTTER

Coin collector
 A crook snatched more than \$1,900 worth of foreign and U.S. currency from a Bensonhurst home.

The Jan. 18 incident happened around 10 am, when the burglar forced his way through a side window of a home on West Eighth Street between Bay Parkway and Avenue O. In addition to the coins, which included currency from Canada and China, the crook reportedly collected \$2,000 worth of jewelry and a credit card.

Namesake items
 Be on the lookout for a jacket named Barbara.

Cops say that, among other name-specific items, the jacket, bearing an inscription, was stolen Jan. 14 when a crook broke into a woman's home on 77th Street between Fort Hamilton Parkway and 10th Avenue.

While the woman left her home around 1:30 pm to run errands, cops say, a burglar forced his way in through the front door and turned the house upside down. The 49-year-old victim told police that her son's friends, who of late have made the home their gather-

ing place, may have been involved.

She said the so-called friends may have struck when nobody was home, helping themselves to the jacket with "Barbara" stitched on the inside, as well as a power drill, more than \$2,000 in cash and \$1,200 in jewelry that included a bracelet with the words, "Adam loves Grandma" imprinted on its tag.

Duct work
 Some apparently thirsty crooks broke into a Bay Ridge bar and helped themselves to cash and liquor, police say.

The Jan. 12 incident happened after the bar, on Fifth

Avenue between 80th and 81st streets, closed sometime after 2 am.

The crooks broke in through a rear exhaust duct that led them to the ceiling above the men's room.

Once inside, they allegedly removed \$3,000 from the cash register and at least \$75 worth of liquor.

Domestic violence
 A man was arrested for allegedly beating his 22-year-old wife with a broomstick when she refused to have sex with him.

Police say that before bringing out the broomstick, which he allegedly used to beat her legs and body, the 33-year-old man punched and kicked her.

The Jan. 17 incident happened inside their home on Bay 13th Street in Benson Avenue a little after 2 pm.

Go Army!
 Police say an army of one, or possibly two, attempted to break into a U.S. Army recruiting station last week.

The Jan. 17 incident never got past basic training, however, because while they were able to damage the locks on the door, they were not able to break-in.

The station, at Fourth Avenue and 85th Street, closed at 6 pm, say police, who believe the break-in attempt followed shortly after.

It was unknown what the would-be burglars sought to steal.

Cops nab a burglar with the keys to the kingdom

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

A man described by police as a career criminal who had at his disposal more than 100 master keys that he may have used to break into homes in Bay Ridge was arrested after officers investigating an earlier burglary in the neighborhood allegedly caught him in the act.

Police say they spotted the 35-year-old suspect as he exited a first-floor window of the building on 67th Street at Fort Hamilton Parkway that he'd allegedly just broken into. A week earlier, two

apartments in a building on the same block were broken into at around 4:30 pm, netting the culprit more than \$3,300 in jewelry.

"We're definitely investigating the other burglaries from the recent past," said 68th Precinct Police Officer Robert Pinnisi. "That's all ongoing."

The suspect was charged with criminal trespass, burglary and possession of burglar's tools, according to the criminal complaint, which stated that while in the building he told a custodian that he was there to visit a friend.

"He's been arrested in the past so he's not new to this," said Pinnisi, adding, "He's a recidivist."

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3 Teens nabbed in knife attack

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Three teenagers were arrested in a knife attack outside an 11th Avenue bar that sent three other men, including the 34-year-old owner, to Lutheran Medical Center.

Police found a bloody knife and a fake ID at the scene.

Investigators say that the teenagers came to the OK Cafe, a bar on 11th Avenue at 62nd Street, at about 2 am on Jan. 2 asking to use the restroom. When they were turned away, one of them began shouting at the owner, the police said.

After they began to argue with two patrons outside the bar, both of whom are in their early 20s, the owner stepped in between them, according to investigators.

A criminal complaint filed with the district attorney's office states that the teens allegedly beat and stabbed the two patrons outside the bar before setting their sights on the owner. A 17-year-old boy allegedly stabbed the owner in the wrist and chest while another punched him in the face. The youngest of the three, a 16-year-old, allegedly beat him with a spring whip while he lay on the ground.

The bar is located a block away from the Fort Hamilton Parkway stop on the N subway line.

Police Officer Jammie Cafaro arrested the teenagers at the scene. They were arraigned the next day, according to a spokesman for Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes.

Afterwards, 68th Precinct police raided the bar on Jan. 8, checking patrons for proof of age. Capt. William Ashby, commanding

officer of the 68th Precinct, said all IDs were valid.

The raid came as Aubry, who recently took over the precinct command, stepped up surveillance on areas thought to be hotspots for teen violence. Since last week, auxiliary police have patrolled Fort Hamilton Parkway at 70th Street, near an Internet cafe that has allegedly been a trouble spot in the past.

This week, several more auxiliary police were to be stationed near Fort Hamilton High School, said Aubry.

"The late-night activity is spiking again," said Josephine Beckmann, president of the United Neighbors Association, which formed in October 2002 in response to incidents of teen violence. "We have a marijuana problem on Fort Hamilton Parkway. Whenever that happens and there's large groups of kids we worry about potential for fights."

Bensonhurst burglaries target Asian populace

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Police say a rash of burglaries within Bensonhurst's Asian community may be connected to the Chinese New Year, which began on Thursday.

Burglars have struck at the homes of at least seven Asian

families since Jan. 13, say police from the 62nd Precinct, seizing more than \$22,000 in cash and jewelry. Police did not say whether the same person was believed to be behind all of the break-ins.

"I think that it's in part due to Chinese New Year," said the precinct's Sgt. Peter Moy. "They're thinking that they

might have extra money around right now."

Among the burglaries, police are investigating a Jan. 18 rear-window break-in, on 63rd Street at 18th Avenue, in which \$12,000 worth of jewelry was stolen sometime between 6 pm and 8:30 pm. In another burglary, on Jan. 14, bandits made off with \$1,200 in cash, as well as a green card and a Social Security card.

Suev Chung, president of the Brooklyn United Chinese Association, said that some Chinese families might have more money stored away at home than usual this time of year because of several traditions. He said that lucky red envelopes, or "laissez," are stuffed with money and passed to children and unmarried people during the New Year celebration. The cash-filled envelopes are a symbol of good luck. Besides that, families are more likely to spend money on lavish dinners or social events, he said.

"Married couples, they give to children a red envelope with money," said Chung. "That's the only other reason they would have more cash than usual."

Celebrations of the Lunar New Year are scheduled to commence Saturday, Jan. 24, on 86th Street at Bay 25th Street, within blocks of a home on 81st Street at 20th Avenue that was broken into on Jan. 14. As the parade snakes north, revelers celebrating the Year of the Monkey will pass within blocks of most of the homes that were robbed over the course of the last week.

The 15-day lunar holiday, which this year began on Thursday, Jan. 22, and ends on Friday, Feb. 6, is celebrated in Brooklyn each year by more than 200,000 Asian-Americans.

"It's the greatest occasion for Chinese people," Chung said, "so a lot of people will have more money ready to spend on their family members."

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Keeping the Best Teachers in City Classrooms

By Randi Weingarten



Study after study shows that, with the exception of parents, the single most important ingredient in a child's success in school is the quality of the teacher in each classroom.

We at the United Federation of Teachers have some specific ideas about how to help make our schools better, make teaching more effective and - perhaps surprisingly - how to help people for whom teaching is not the right career.

Helping students succeed

Most of this city's teachers are extraordinary people who work hard to help their students succeed. Just last month, the results of annual nationwide math and reading tests showed that our public school students outperformed students in other major urban school systems across the nation. And earlier this month, the number of low performing schools in the city, cited by the state, reached an all-time low - down to 46 from a high of more than 100.

Good teachers are leaving in droves. We're now seeing a record number of retirements among our most experienced teachers. And every year for the past five years approximately 20 percent of our new teachers haven't returned for a second year while 35 percent don't make it past their third year. This combination of newer talented teachers resigning and older more seasoned professionals retiring has become a formula for disaster.

Professional salary and respect

In order to ensure a qualified instructor in every classroom the city should start by providing a

salary that enables teachers to live a middle class life without a second or third job. Even with the pay increases we got in our last contract - which expired last summer - New York City school teachers still earn \$10,000 to \$15,000 less than their colleagues in surrounding areas.

Second, the city needs to treat teaching as a real profession. Currently, the only way for a teacher to advance is to leave the classroom for an administrative post. The teaching profession should have a career ladder similar to what you see in the medical profession.

Third, administrators should respect teachers' professionalism. Today, even the most experienced and highly-educated teachers are being told what colors to use on their bulletin boards, where to place wastepaper baskets and how to arrange classroom chairs. This micro-managing directly contributes to the retention crisis.

Helping struggling teachers

The city also must do a better job of helping struggling teachers. City Hall and the Department of Education constantly charge that the teachers' union or the union contract drags out disciplinary hearings to get rid of bad teachers, but it's the school system that needlessly stretches out the process. And while newspaper accounts might imply a large number of incompetent teachers, in any given year only about 1,000 people are given unsatisfactory ratings. Another 200 to 300 teachers are cited for charges that can range from chronic absences to corporal punishment.

That's fewer than 2 percent of the city's 80,000 teachers.

Over the past several contracts we've worked out methods designed to cut the time needed to adjudicate such charges, but the education department still insists it can't complete these cases in less than two years.

Here's our common sense and humane way to solve these problems:

The education department should stand aside and allow the union to work with these teachers. If we can't help them within 90 days, we would recommend that they no longer teach and we would help them find employment in other professions.

This proposal is based on a program that we've run successfully on a limited basis for 15 years.

Ending the backlog

At the same time, more than 200 teachers accused of other serious offenses, regardless of their innocence or guilt, are out of the classroom languishing in education department offices around the city - so-called rubber rooms - for years in some cases.

The education department and the union should jointly appoint a special master to work with a staff of pro bono attorneys to hear such cases and get rid of the backlog promptly. At the same time, all controversies - be they disciplinary cases or contract disputes - could be handled within three to six months between the accusation (or dispute) and resolution. Such a step would help ensure that justice is done in a timely way. And the dollars that are saved could be used for supplies, equipment and lowering class size.



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BAM celebrates King's dream

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

If Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were alive today he would be 75.

And while the civil rights pioneer made great strides during his short lifetime, this country still has a long way to go when it comes to race relations and racial equality.

That message was carried by elected officials and speakers taking the stage at the city's largest Martin Luther King Jr. birthday celebration, hosted each year by the Brooklyn Academy of Music at the Howard Gilman Opera House in Fort Greene.

More than 2,000 people packed the auditorium with hundreds more turned away at the door.

Politicians, musicians and business leaders took turns honoring the late civil rights leader, who was assassinated 38 years ago in Memphis, Tenn.

"If Dr. King was here today he would be thrilled at this kind of event. He would also be terribly disappointed, because we have come very far but we certainly have left an awful lot of people behind," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who also addressed celebrations across the city.

Touting education as a remedy, Bloomberg said one of the only ways to level the playing field is through education. Stressing education as a key mayoral priority when he took office two years ago, Bloomberg successfully fought to have local school boards abolished and control of the vast school system consolidated under his control.



Musician Wynton Marsalis makes his keynote speech at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Monday.

"Education is a civil right; it's just as important as voting," Bloomberg said. "We cannot dumb-down our expectations, we have to do something about the school system and we have to do it now and I'm going to take on that challenge."

But among the day's most impassioned speeches were remarks by jazz musician Wynton Marsalis, a Pulitzer Prize-winner and nine-time Grammy

Award-winner, who put down his hom and addressed the audience in a speech that rivaled even the spirit of his music.

Comparing King to President Abraham Lincoln, Marsalis said, "Both determined to make the Constitution mean what it says, and both ultimately sacrificed their lives in pursuit of the people's democracy."

Marsalis touted the "oratory genius" of King, whose best-

known speech, "I Have a Dream," was delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., just over 40 years ago.

But in a society accustomed to shortcuts, Marsalis said we have "reduced a famous speech to just four words."

"First and foremost Dr. Reverend Martin Luther King was an activist. He became known not because he dreamed, but because he acted," said Marsalis, adding his belief that some of the radical aspects of King's vision have been reversed by the violence of Hollywood films and the "brutality of some contemporary music."

Previous celebration speakers have included United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Myrtle Evers-Williams, widow of slain civil rights worker Medgar Evers.

Elected officials taking the podium at Monday's event each took the opportunity to rally behind a particular cause.

City Council Speaker Gifford Miller, of Manhattan, pushed for education while state Attorney General Eliot Spitzer vowed to fight against "predatory lending" practices in Brooklyn and throughout the state.

Borough President Marty Markowitz remembered two Fort Greene council members who died last year — Mary Pinkett, the first black woman elected to the City Council, and her successor, James Davis, who was slain inside City Hall by a deranged political rival last summer.

While protestors gathered outside the theater to rally

against a plan to bring the New Jersey Nets to Brooklyn and build an arena just blocks from BAM, Markowitz lauded the plan, which would realize his dream of returning a major league sports team to the borough and vowed to help secure jobs for minority communities.

While most speakers received a hearty round of applause it was a fiery performance by the Boys Choir of Harlem, along with a capella performers, The Persuasions, that had some audience members jumping out of their seats. Shouting words of encouragement, the audience showed support for choir founder and president Walter Turnbull who has recently been under fire for allegedly ignoring evidence that a top staffer abused a 13-year-old choirboy.

"We love you," shouted one audience member as Turnbull lifted his hands to lead the choir in a rendition of "Precious Lord."

While Turnbull declined to comment to reporters about the sex scandal, he had plenty to say onstage. "It ain't about singing, it's about helping these boys to survive in this society," said Turnbull, who ended the day's performance with a round of "We Shall Overcome."

"On the way out of the theater, Janice Coleman, of Williamsburg, who brought her 9-year-old grandson Andre to the day's festivities stopped to get a King poster with the entire "I Have a Dream" speech printed on it.

"I wanted him to know about the legacy," Coleman said.

Don't take my cop to build arena for Nets

LETTERS

To the editor:

As a shareholder in 475 Dean St., in Prospect Heights, which would be lost to Bruce Ratner's wrecking ball, I must express the fervent hope that the entire city will take a stand against this egregious use of eminent domain in Mr. Ratner's spurious and unnecessary assault on the private property rights of hardworking Brooklynites.

The entire political establishment, both state and local, as well as the media, seem to be so caught up in the euphoria of having a professional basketball team in Brooklyn, that the plight of those of us who would be displaced has been dismissed out of hand.

In order to comply with the laws concerning eminent domain, Mr. Ratner and the media have characterized our neighborhood as blighted. I assure you that Prospect Heights is anything but.

When my wife and I bought our half-floor in an abandoned sewing factory in 1982, the area might have been considered such, but seeing the potential for community revitalization, we renovated our pottery studio, conceived our child and built a life. Since then I have seen the value of my investment increase more than tenfold as our building, two other formerly commercial buildings and the entire neighborhood

Architects back Ratner's plan

To the editor:

The Borough Chapter of the American Institute of Architects would like to commend Borough President Markowitz for his position, as stated in your paper, on bringing a major professional basketball team to Brooklyn. The chapter wholeheartedly endorses the borough president's contention that bringing the Nets to Brooklyn will enhance both Brooklyn's prestige and its economic development. Although we would welcome having the Nets in Brooklyn in any one of several locations, we agree that the location chosen over the LIRR yard makes good planning sense, and is probably the best location in Brooklyn for a sports facility.

The chapter also looks forward to seeing a Frank Gehry building in Brooklyn, and we enthusiastically support the borough president's efforts to bring the Nets to Brooklyn.

L. Donald Weston, Chairman
Urban Design Committee, AIA Brooklyn

Nets plan's Slope connection

To the editor:

After almost a year of feeling like a "voice crying in the wilderness," or, at the very least, the local neighborhood loony, I am at once encouraged and newly angered.

In our fight to preserve what had made our neighborhood below Fifth Avenue in Park Slope a wonderful place to live for many years, there seems little hope left. However, the proposal for the Nets stadium is, apparently, large enough and destructive enough to wake up the people.

The rezoning that has already taken place along Fourth Avenue, the construction that has been ongoing on so many of the blocks below Fifth Avenue, and the news coverage that ignores the lives of those of us who have been here all along, give the sense of our neighborhood being raped, with our elected officials running for the rapists. It might be too late for us. Maybe a project as obscene and obvious as the proposed stadium will at least stop this juggernaut where it is.

To Mr. Markowitz I would suggest that we all know which road is paved with good intentions. The rezoning of Park Slope was under discussion, good intentions took us right down that famous road. We would have hoped that you had learned from that experience that well-intentioned hopes for improving the borough you love are no match for the animality that comes with lust for power, fame and extreme wealth. We no longer trust your ability to do what is best for Brooklyn, and those being the most immediately threatened by the arena are coming to the same conclusion.

This summer, when you visited our block party, I walked you to a six-story building under construction on our block of one- to three-story homes. I will never forget the look on your face when you saw it. That's half the size of buildings now allowed on Fourth Avenue — and by zoning law, 100 feet into our blocks. Whoops! Someone, we thought you had made a disastrous, but honest mistake. The new arena, though, gives us pause.

I sincerely believe you were NOT elected because we thought you could radically change areas of Brooklyn that were already doing quite nicely, thank you. You were elected because our perception that you valued our history, lifestyle and price (what has been accomplished, not by the city, but by your borough's citizens. We're tired and resentful that after years of vigilance against crime, prejudice and economic hardship to build our neighborhoods, we must now be as vigilant to protect them against our government.

You say you "don't want anyone ever leaving Brooklyn for anything." For the first time in 25 years, we're beginning to think it's our only choice. Our neighbors have been talking about it, too. Trendy, over-priced, over-built, and both racially and economically gentrified are what we opted out of when we moved here. Maybe it's inevitable. Your celebration of it isn't.

—Christine Napolitan, Park Slope

Marty, see you on Election Day

To the editor:

You advise us that Borough President Marty Markowitz is enthusiastic about the possible "arena" plan, which would mean the destruction of a large segment of Brooklyn, displacement of thousands of residents and enough air-pollution to choke the rest of us!

Perhaps Mr. Markowitz should recall that he was elected to his office. Regular protest that many Brooklynites should be a signal that the plan is NOT popular.

Next Election Day Mr. Markowitz may take the hint. Hopefully a candidate will win the office on a platform of "No more skyscrapers and no arena!"

—Lily Samuels, Brooklyn Heights

has come to life.

Prospect Heights is a shining example of positive community redevelopment, representing the fulfillment of the American dream for all who participated. This egregious use of eminent domain can only be construed as a land grab for a private project, no matter what the effect on our borough's self esteem that having a sports team might generate. And all at the expense of those of us who invested our all in performing this small miracle.

Then there is the equally egregious use of Tax Incremental Financing, which would shift the burden of financing the entire project to the taxpayers of New York. Much has been written by economists of this fantasy scheme that never results in a positive outcome for taxpayers, that really is a form of developer's welfare that shifts existing tax dollars to the development at the expense of other needed programs.

Then there is the fantasy, echoed in the media, that Mr. Ratner will compensate all of us who are displaced. Given this city's and Mr. Ratner's history of exploiting eminent domain as a club in their negotiations with property owners, who will intervene in our behalf after we have received the anticipated low offer? And will his offer recompense us for the considerable expenses we are only beginning to incur in our struggle to fight this assault on our Constitutional right to own property?

The saddest fact of all is that this is so unnecessary. Mr. Ratner already owns sufficient property in the neighborhood to meet his dream without destroying ours. His own failed Atlantic Center Mall, failed that his major anchor is now the Department of Motor Vehicles, after a succession of department stores have given up and can be converted to an arena if extended over Atlantic Avenue.

The most egregious fact of all is that Mr. Ratner has yet to meet with anyone in this neighborhood, all of whom would eagerly support a rational development plan for the LIRR yard behind our homes.

There is no doubt in any of our minds that this area can be developed in a fashion that complies the significant efforts of those who have preceded Mr. Ratner.

Prospect Heights

Gimme back my \$100 contribution

To the editor:

Marty Markowitz was resoundingly elected Brooklyn borough president two and one-half years ago on the reputation he built over the course of his 23 years in the state Senate for being that rare political creature known as "Buckin' off." While other politicians cloak themselves in the pretensions of power, Marty was "one of us."

How well I remember his campaign, which I volunteered for, and to which I proudly wrote a \$100 check. I went for Marty because his issues concerned us: affordable housing, tenants' rights, overcrowded schools, youth centers, day-care facilities for the elderly and I, Lately, Marty has been saying he campaigned on bringing a major sports team to Brooklyn.

I don't remember his talking about it, nor did it appear in his literature as far as I know.

Marty, you sold out. You, who were one of us, now are one of them, cloaked in pretension.

PS. Marty, could you return my \$100, please? —Schelle Hagan, Prospect Heights

Breeder gave up on dog too soon

To the editor:

In the article headlined "A doggone shame" (Jan. 17), a Park Slope breeder made an appointment with his veterinarian when his prize-winning French Bulldog, Alice, showed the first signs of pain.

He had apparently asked the doctor to euthanize the animal but was "too distraught to stay and watch Alice take her last breaths." Two months later, he returned to the vet to recover the ashes, only to find out that Alice was not put to sleep but was, instead, secretly and informally adopted by the veterinarian. The owner wanted to recover the dog but was rebuffed by the doctor.

Let your readers sympathize with the man who owned the dog for 11 years, there's a gap in the telling of the story that makes quite a bit of difference. Did the owner ask the vet whether the cancer was treatable, since the dog was merely showing the first signs of pain? (Obviously it was, since Alice is still alive months later.)

While the doctor should, in fairness, return the dog, her owner might regret that a vet (to my knowledge) is not compelled to fulfill any and all orders to put dogs to sleep. Though the doctor acted unethically by assuming title to Alice, Mr. Robertson's haste to put a "Trendy" to death at the very first sign of pain is both hasty and irresponsible.

—Harvey Kamen, Conant Village

Send us a letter

By mail:

Letters Editor, The Brooklyn Papers, 55 Washington St., Brooklyn 11201.

By fax: (718) 834-9278.

By e-mail:

Newsroom@BrooklynPapers.com.

All letters must be signed, and include the writer's home address and phone number (only the writer's neighborhood and street name are published with the letter). Letters may be edited and will not be returned.

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

Jewish International Film Festival



Brooklyn Heights Jewish International Film Festival explores Jewish issues through five films of artistic excellence. We seek to examine universal Jewish themes through post-film dialogue with directors, actors, filmmakers, critics and scholars.

Saturday, February 7, 2004 • 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Schmelvis: In search of Elvis Presley's Jewish Roots (2001)

Director: Max Wallace; Canada • Runtime: 76 minutes; MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Was "The King" kosher? Investigating the claim that his great-great grandmother was Jewish leads a diverse group of Montrealers, including an ultra Orthodox and Jewish Elvis impersonator, a Rabbi and the filmmakers, on a quest to Memphis to find out what Elvis fans think of this revelation. (He did wear a Chai around his neck.) By the time the group heads off to Israel to plant a tree for Elvis, it all comes to a head. Funny, suspenseful and wickily witty, Schmelvis brings a unique spin on celebrity, Judaism and religious perceptions. It's a hoot.

Post-film concert and dialogue with Schmelvis, the world famous Orthodox Jewish Elvis impersonator.

Saturday, February 14, 2004 • 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Welcome to the Waks Family (2002)

Director: Barbara Chobodsky; Australia • Runtime: 52 minutes; MPAA Rating: Not Rated

With 17 children from the same two parents, the Orthodox Waks family is one of Australia's largest. Everyday life in the Waks household is a logistical challenge of monumental proportions. Having two mini buses for transportation and five ovens for kosher cooking helps. The director follows the warm and lively Waks family over years and was privy to the wedding of the eldest daughter and the struggle of one son to break away from the religious life of his parents.

Post-film dialogue with Waks family member, Yossi Waks.

Saturday, February 21, 2004 • 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

One Day in September (1999)

Director: Kevin Macdonald; USA • Runtime: 92 minutes; MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Munich, August 1972. The Olympics of peace and joy commence, symbolizing Germany's post war rehabilitation in the eyes of the international community. But ten days into the games, eight Palestinian terrorist break in and take eleven Israeli athletes hostage, demanding the release of hundreds of political prisoners. As the world watches, the West German Police plan to overpower the raiders. This Academy Award-winning documentary includes archive footage, eyewitness testimony, and the only interview ever recorded with the sole surviving member of the terrorist group.

Post-film dialogue with Simcha Weinstein, former associate of the British Film Commission.

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Continued from page 1
and build a new kitchen and handicap-accessible bathrooms.
The construction marks an end to lengthy delays that resulted from political bickering and the city's decision to transplant the original Narrows Senior Center, on New Utrecht Avenue at 79th Street, to Borough Park, rather than the lodge three blocks away.
Several false starts in August, October and December, partially due to commitments from the contractor, finally pushed the start date to last week.

"It's been so long, to the point where people were saying, 'It's never gonna happen, it's never gonna happen,'" Mazza said. "But," he said with a long pause, "it's happening."

When the Narrows Senior Center announced it would have to close because it wasn't handicap accessible, Mazza began negotiations to have the center relocated to the Moose Lodge, where he's been a member since 1980. But the city Department for the Aging and Catholic Charities, which is the prime sponsor for the senior center, instead decided that the Angel Guardian Home, on 63rd Street between 12th and 13th avenues, more than 21 city blocks away, would make a better home for the 100-plus senior citizens.

Added to that was the fact that two other senior facilities already operate in Borough Park within blocks of the Angel Guardian site — the AMICO Senior Center, on 13th Avenue at 59th Street, and the Borough Park Senior Center, on 11th Avenue at 56th Street.

To make matters worse, state Sen. Marty Golden and Assemblyman Peter Abbate, who both promised matching funds that together would cover two-thirds of the \$380,000 cost to renovate, bickered over the estimated costs of construction.

Golden, who according to sources was instrumental in moving the center to Borough Park, announced during his campaign for Senate that he had secured \$225,000 in matching funds from Senate Majority Leader Joe Bruno and \$100,000 in annual operating costs from the city, for a center at the Moose Lodge.

But the money was contingent upon two things — the Assembly committing to put in the other half of the funding and the election of Golden, a Republican, to the newly drawn seat. Abbate, a Democrat, pledged \$100,000.

When Golden was elected, seniors in Bensonhurst wanted to know when they would have their center at the Moose Lodge.

Enching a framed picture that hangs on the wall of his second-floor office ("Old age and treachery will overcome youth and skill," it reads), Mazza said that he persevered, making daily calls to their offices and, finally, setting a deadline for both to release their respective funding.

Golden and Abbate finally shook hands on the deal last March at the old Narrows center. In the end, Golden secured \$175,000, down from his initial promise of \$225,000. Abbate secured \$100,000, and Borough President Marty Markowitz added \$35,000.

"We talk on a regular basis and those issues are behind us," Golden said of Abbate.

During a lunchtime meal of meatloaf, some seniors at the transplanted Narrows Center, in the basement of the Angel Guardian adoption agency, said the opening of the Moose Lodge satellite threatens to close their small center. Sal Frisca, a senior who lives with his wife near the Borough Park center, said that less than 100 seniors use the facility (on an average day?). When the temperature dips, so does attendance, he added.

"I'm afraid too many people are going to leave this place and then they'll close this place up," said Frisca.

Golden vowed that the Angel Guardian center would not close. "That's one thing we're definitely not on," he said, noting the large number of residents over the age of 65 in his southern Brooklyn district.

Mazza said he wants to add a touch of class to the senior center set, which he said is too often thought of as little more than a parlor for bridge games and lunch. Pointing to the hardwood floors, he said the ballroom, which can hold 400, would be perfect for dancing, a pastime already enjoyed by lodge members like himself. To emphasize the point, Mazza pointed to a collection of eight-track tapes that included Paul Anka, Barbra Streisand and the soundtrack to "Chitty-Chitty Bang Bang."

"I don't want this to be a cookie-cutter senior center," said Mazza. "I want this to be special. To do some of the things that I want, it's a little bit more than bingo and a meal."

N.J. officials see no economic harm from team's departure

By Jeffrey Gold
Associated Press

New Jersey's economy could actually get a boost if the likely new owner of the New Jersey Nets succeeds in moving the team to Brooklyn, Garden State officials and an economist said Thursday.

A planned \$1.4 billion makeover of the site now occupied by the Nets' home at the Meadowlands Sports Complex will produce economic activity "that will dwarf whatever the Nets generate," said James W. Hughes, dean of the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University.

In addition, "the dollars that people will spend going to the Nets game will simply be spent somewhere else in northern New Jersey. So if you don't go to the Nets game, you spend it at a restaurant or somewhere else," he said.

The state loses \$2 million to \$2.5 million a year from its lease with the Nets at the Continental Airlines Arena, said George K. Zoffinger, president of the New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority.

"We think that the economic

impact will be minimal to the state and to the sports authority itself," he said.

The Meadowlands would still be home to the New York Giants and New York Jets of the NFL, a horse racing track and the NHL's New Jersey Devils, which have shared the arena with the Nets.

The state would nevertheless seek another professional sport, possibly including baseball, for the complex, Zoffinger said.

The Nets will not be leaving immediately, in any case. The team missed the deadline to escape its lease prior to its 2006 expiration, Zoffinger said. A move sooner than that would require a negotiated buyout.

The winning bidder, developer Bruce Ratner, still must sign an agreement with Community Youth Organization, which owns the Nets. Then the reported \$300 million deal must be ratified by the board of YankeeNets, the holding company of the Nets and New York Yankees, which is to meet Friday, as well as NBA owners.

Finally, Ratner still needs a multitude of permits from New York City and state before he can construct an arena for the team in Brooklyn.



Atlantic Yards architect Frank Gehry flanks design models of his skyscraper-enclosed sports arena, at a press conference in December.

Ratner topped the other remaining bidder, a New Jersey-based group led by real estate developer Charles Kushner, which had pledged to keep the team in New Jersey. The group included U.S. Sen. Jon S. Corzine, D-N.J.

"The Nets are an excellent team that reinforced our state's winning identity," the senator said in a statement. "The players wear New Jersey proudly on their uniforms, and I am equally proud to call myself a fan. Like thousands of others, I feel a real sense of loss and disappointment today."

A spokesman for Kushner said he had no immediate comment on Thursday.

That is where the governor drew the line. He made it very clear that we would not get involved in subsidizing bids, or bidders, or wealthy team owners," Rasmussen said.

He said the privately financed Xanadu sports, retail and entertainment development at the Meadowlands, as well as a planned rail link and arena renovations, will make the site even better.

RATNER...

Continued from page 1

rules and was told there would be ample time to negotiate a deal. Clearly, there wasn't.

Purchasing the team is just the first step of Ratner's sweeping plan to construct a \$2.5-billion arena and office complex at the intersection of Flatbush and Atlantic avenues stretching into Prospect Heights.

In addition to the Frank Gehry-designed arena, the project would include 17 towers — reaching as tall as 60 stories — with 4,500 units of housing down the line.

If all goes according to plan, a Ratner spokesman said, the team should be playing in Brooklyn by 2007.

During the season the team

would play half of its 82 games at the arena and on an additional 10 games if the team went all the way to the NBA finals. During the off days, a Ratner spokesman said the arena could be used for high school and college sports, concerts, ice shows, conventions and graduations.

This week's decision caps six months of negotiations to purchase the team, which despite faltering sales has won the Eastern Conference championship the past two seasons.

Over the past few weeks, former Knicks and Nets great Bernard King, a Fort Greene native who attended Fort Hamilton High School in Bay Ridge toured the city as a

booster for Ratner's bid.

Rap star Jay-Z, who has announced his retirement from performing, is also an investor in the plan along with Vincent Viola, chairman of the New York Mercantile Exchange.

But not everybody is thrilled with the proposal. To construct the arena, more than two square blocks of private property would be condemned and seized by the state. And residents along those blocks do not plan to go quietly — or quickly.

"We're going to fight this," said Dan Michaelson, a graphic designer and spokesman for Development Don't Destroy, a group of tenants and owners who live on the blocks that would be taken.

Over the past month, the group has been meeting with attorneys and is weighing legal options.

Another group, the Prospect

Heights Action Coalition, an early opponent of the arena plan, has collected more than 5,000 signatures against building the arena at Flatbush and Atlantic avenues.

But residents won't be the only hurdle for Ratner, who is best known for developing the Metrotech office complex in Downtown Brooklyn and far less visionary Atlantic Center mall, also at Flatbush and Atlantic avenues.

Ratner must first secure development rights from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to build over the Long Island Rail Road yards along Atlantic Avenue.

He would also need the Empire State Development Corporation to condemn and seize property along the blocks from Flatbush to Vanderbilt avenues between Pacific and Dean

streets, something both city and state officials have indicated a willingness to do in order to realize the arena plan, which is being called the Atlantic Yards project.

"We have to be careful on how we use taxpayer money for stadiums or arenas," said Empire State Development Corp. chairman Charles Gargano, who will direct state involvement in the project.

"Sometimes we can help with infrastructure, we can help in other ways, but at this point we don't know," Gargano said shortly after a meeting with Gov. George Pataki on Thursday afternoon. "It remains to be seen what's coming up and what happens."

Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg, Sen. Charles Schumer and Markowitz have all rallied behind the plan, but Council-

woman Letitia James and state Sen. Velmans Montgomery, whose districts encompass the planned arena and tower sites, are fiercely opposed.

State involvement could help Ratner avoid much of the city's lengthy and stringent land-use approval process. Opponents said that is one of a number of advantages Ratner has because of his political connections.

Ratner has held high-level positions in two mayoral administrations, and was once appointed by Pataki to study the possibility of luring pro sports back to Brooklyn.

Said James, "There's a notion that he's not going to have any problems getting MTA approval because of his relationship with the governor."

— with Brooklyn Papers wire reports

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BROOKLYN CYCLONES

In Gardens, mayor plays bocce with seniors



By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

When Mayor Michael Bloomberg made a pit stop in Carroll Gardens this week he was met by a radically different-looking group of questioners than the usual press corps. Armed with plates of mashed potatoes and fish files, and with an average age hovering around 75, seniors at the Eileen Dugan Senior Citizens Center grilled Bloomberg Tuesday when he stopped in at lunchtime to say hello. And they didn't go easy on him either. Questioning everything from the property tax hike to the proposed professional basketball arena in Prospect Heights, the seniors topped off the visit with a heated game of bocce in the basement.

Whale Sal Noto, 86, and Marco Valenti, 81, said they had pretty much given up the old Italian game in favor of more leisurely games of cards, the two men, near daily regulars at the center at Court and President streets, gave it a go with the billionaire mayor. The presence of hizzoner did little to deter Noto and Valenti from arguing over whose turn it was to throw the ball or whose ball landed closest to the "pallino," or target ball. "You sound like the City Council," Bloomberg told the bickering retirees. After the game, the three gentlemen went to examine the final results. "Let the record show it was tie," said a diplomatic Bloomberg. Asked about the mayor's job performance so far, Noto said, "If I had his money I'd be doing a great job, too." Noto added, however, that he was impressed the Upper East Side mayor knew how to play the South Brooklyn game.



At left, Mayor Michael Bloomberg tosses a bocci ball in the basement of the Eileen Dugan Senior Citizens Center at 380 Court St. in Carroll Gardens as Marco Valenti looks on. Above, Valenti and Sal Noto (center) give the mayor tips on pitching the perfect roll.

D'town 'Cops of Year'

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

Three officers from the 84th Precinct received top honors this week for outstanding police work in 2003. Police Officers Jason Palamara, Bryan Mullady and Oscar Polanco registered almost 100 arrests last year in the precinct area covering Downtown Brooklyn, DUMBO and Brooklyn Heights. Those arrests, along with their outstanding police work, landed them cop of the year honors.

At a ceremony at Borough Hall Tuesday evening, Borough President Marty Markowitz and Councilman David Yassky lauded the officers and handed over special certifi-

cates in their honor. Deputy Inspector Christopher Rising, commanding officer of the 84th Precinct, thanked the men for their "heroism, courage and commitment to service." Palamara, 25, a uniformed police officer who goes out on routine patrol responding to 911 calls and local emergencies, logged 25 arrests in 2003. With just three years on the job, Palamara — who was accompanied Tuesday night by his wife and daughter — said he was surprised and honored to receive the award. "We work as a team," said Mullady, 33, a plainclothes officer working in the anti-crime unit, which often deals with many of the most dangerous offenders.

Nab landlord in TV camera grab

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

The owner of an apartment building in Dyker Heights was arrested last Wednesday after he allegedly tried snatching a television camera from a WNBC-4 TV news crew that was interviewing a tenant who claimed he had not had heat for the past two weeks. Joseph Maratea, the part owner and manager of the building on 13th Avenue at 77th Street, was arrested Jan. 14 shortly after 12:30 pm and charged with grand larceny, according to the criminal complaint filed with the district attorney's office. Juan Delosrios, the NBC cameraman, pressed charges. John Noel, the reporter on the story, said that the altercation happened after he and Delosrios met with a tenant to discuss the claims. With tape rolling, Noel interviewed the tenant in a lobby, but when they tried to climb the stairs leading to his apartment, Maratea allegedly passed them both and headed for the cameraman. "He ends up jumping the cameraman, and he's trying to pull the camera away from him," said Noel, 52, a Brooklyn native who discussed the incident with The Brooklyn Papers this week after wrapping up a segment on the Maratea Stewart trial. "That was a three-way scuffle happened," said Noel. "During the scuffle, I called 911." Police said that after a brief struggle over the \$3,000 camera, Maratea, 27, let go and ran down the stairs and into the passenger side of a 2002 Cadillac SUV, which headed west on 78th Street. The camera, still rolling,

caught it all, including the car's license plate number. "The guy never said, 'Hey, what are you doing?' This is my building," said Noel. "If the guy would've said something, we would have stopped the tape, called the [news] desk and the desk would've probably told us to come back." Vincent Romano, a TV reporter representing Maratea, said that Noel and Delosrios had filmed inside the building without permission and were trespassing. "My client didn't steal the reporter's camera, nor did

he intend to," said Romano. "He was merely attempting to remove them from the property because he considered them trespassers." And while the tenants' cold-weather complaint never saw the light of day, or at least broadcast, Noel said that a segment with others he spoke with who had similar complaints aired later that day. "When you look at it, he wanted to stop us from doing his story," said Noel. "He never said anything, he just grabbed."

Rape attempt near DUMBO 'F'

By Deborah Kolben
The Brooklyn Papers

An attempted rape near the York Street subway station last weekend has once again raised concerns among DUMBO residents, who have long feared the deserted station. A 27-year-old woman heading to work from her apartment in the nearby Farragut Houses apartment complex was grabbed from behind on the corner of Jay and York

streets as she headed for the subway station just before 8 am on Sunday morning. The attacker knocked the woman to the ground and tried to pull off her clothing, police said. But the victim was able to fend him off. Police describe the attacker as a black male, about 5-foot-10 and 160 pounds, wearing a black, military-style jacket and work boots. "As a woman who walks there alone, it's really unnerving," said Evelyn Carr, a DUMBO resident

who lives just a few blocks away and uses the F train at York Street to get to work. "Where were the police? They are supposed to be monitoring that corner at all times," fumed Carr. Following a rash of robberies in and around the station, police stepped up patrols in the area and often keep a patrol car along Jay Street just outside the entrance, according to Deputy Inspector Christopher Rising, commanding officer of the 84th Precinct.

After-effect of divorce

Dear John: Four years ago, I walked away from a horrible marriage. Unfortunately, I had to leave my two children with my ex-husband. I have been in and out of court trying to get custody of my children and to lower the child support my ex-husband expects me to pay. Because of his vindictiveness, I have seen my children only once since then, although he allows them to call me once a week. I moved out of state with a man with whom I had a platonic friendship. We have since started an intimate relationship. Through my various court battles, "Bill" has been by my side. But lately, he's grown distant. Our lovemaking has deteriorated. We both want to move on from my past, but he feels we can't do this until this situation is resolved. My ex-husband is jealous. He swears that my children will never meet Bill. I am at a loss. I love Bill with all my heart, but should I walk away from this man and let him have his life?

Dear Loney: Life's setbacks can indeed pull couples apart or draw them together. A man wants to be the "knight in shining armor" and solve all of your problems. Unfortunately, divorce — espe-

cially those in which children and money are issues — are complicated and take time to resolve. Over the years, Bill has watched your anxiety grow. He must be feeling some frustration over the fact that he hasn't been able to "fix" the situation for you. Although he is powerless to change the legal issues involving your case, he needs to know that he has been instrumental in helping to provide. Reinforce to him your appreciation for all that he has done. Whenever you get upset about this issue, challenge yourself to move beyond your negative feelings and onto more positive ones — which Bill has been instrumental in helping to provide. **Dear John:** My husband's name, I am a light sleeper, and as I am getting older, I seem to have many sleepless nights that leave me a "next-day zombie." It is no fun. I am convinced that his snoring is worse when he drinks alcohol. I cannot ask him to stop drinking, as he has already cut back drastically!

We have discussed sleeping separately, but I interpret this as if he is choosing alcohol over sleeping with me. He gets offended when I say that, but I'm still sensitive about this. We love each other, and

MEN ARE FROM MARS WOMEN ARE FROM VENUS

By John Gray
we love to be close, so this is a frustrating problem. I am trying to resolve my sleep problems with my doctor, but nothing seems to work. Can you offer any thoughts?
— Sleepless in California

Dear Sleepless: Believe his response. If he did not want to sleep with you, he could always find other excuses. The medical industry has made impressive strides in efforts to reduce or eliminate snoring. If your husband truly wants to get a referral from your doctor to a specialist for this procedure. Many people find that, as they reach 50 or older, it is nice to sleep alone periodically. By doing so, you may enjoy the more in your case, it might actually work as a mini-vacation. On the days that you decide to stick it out, you may also consider an old-fashioned remedy: earplugs.

Advice from bipolar moms

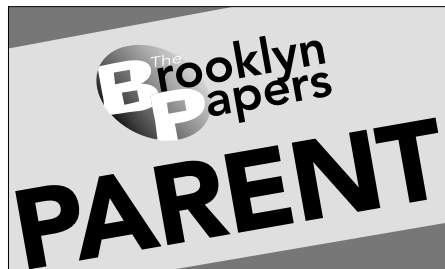
Q: I want to know more about bipolar disorder in children. My son, who is 7, takes four medications for it. I've tried to learn about it, but I still don't understand. — a mother

A: When Cindy Singer's out-of-control daughter was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at age 6, the mother went on a journey to learn what she could to help her child. The path, many times, was dark. "I went on a mission to educate myself, to give myself some sort of control over this monster that was invading my child's mind, body and soul," she says. The mother's journey — through violent tantrums and her child's suicide threats — began with no "how-to manual" for parents, Singer says. Her new book, "If Your Child is Bipolar" (Perspective Publishing, 2003), co-written with Sheryl Gurewitz, is full of what she learned over the years as she helped her daughter, now a teenager. Parents have a lot to learn to

Parent-to-Parent

be effective players on their child's treatment team, the authors report. After all, they've got to dole out any medications as needed and watch for side effects, coordinate appointments, track behavior, and provide meals and bedtime routines. Living with an unstable bipolar loved one isn't easy, nor is understanding the mental illness. Bipolar disorder, formerly

known as manic depression, is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. Researchers continue to explore the mysteries of the illness and how medication works as part of a multifaceted treatment plan to smooth out quirky brain chemistry. Unlike adults with the disorder, kids have rapid mood swings within the course of a day and at times react to "no" with rage for 30 minutes or more, says Denizir Papolios, MD, co-author with his wife of "The Bipolar Child" (Broadway, 2002). The aggression and daily ups and downs don't match the adult patterns of bipolar disorder, weeks of extreme highs and lows, Papolios says. The disorder impairs how a child functions in school, with peers, and at home. The illness is treatable but a diagnosis can be tricky: Bipolar disorder and ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) symptoms observed in children



overlap but have different causes and call for different treatments, psychiatrists have found. For example, one 8-year-old girl could not pay attention long enough to write her name and begin an assignment. Misdiagnosed as ADHD and given a stimulant, her father says, her brain raced out of control. She went into a kicking, screaming rage. Now she is being assessed for bipolar disorder. A key part of the medical assessment: The child's family history shows depression, bipolar disorder and other mood disorders on both sides of her family, as well as alcoholism. Tips for more information: "A mother whose daughter was diagnosed at age 15, is among several parents who recommend "The Bipolar Child," and the Web site for the Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation, www.cabf.org. The foundation is led by parents, and can be a source of information as well as much-needed

emotional support. The National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Md., conducts and supports research on early onset bipolar disorder. For more information, call toll-free (866) 615-6464. The Web site is www.nimh.nih.gov. **Can you help?** My husband has his way and I have mine when it comes to parenting our children, a 3-year-old boy and a baby girl. Let's say it's bath time before a day out and our son is watching cartoons. I give him a warning, let him choose a bath toy, and he typically comes within 10 minutes on his own. If my husband is in charge, he drags our son kicking and screaming upstairs with no warning. My approach runs perhaps 10 minutes later, but the process is peaceful and fun. How can we get on the same page?" — a mother. If you have tips or a question, call (800) 827-1092 or e-mail us at p2tips@att.net.

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The Brooklyn Papers' essential guide to the Borough of Kings

January 24, 2004

Bland 'Maiden'

Puppeteers hinder emotion in St. Ann's Warehouse play about victims of atomic bomb

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

In 1955, 25 Japanese women who had been disfigured by keloid burns after the bombing of Hiroshima came to Mt. Sinai Medical Center in Manhattan where they were to undergo reconstructive plastic surgery. The U.S. Air Force provided the transportation, and city Quakers provided the lodging.

These women, known as "Hiroshima Maidens," were brought to the United States through the combined efforts of Norman Cousins who, as editor of the Saturday Review, visited Hiroshima in 1949; Kiyoshi Tanimoto, a Methodist minister Cousins met on the trip; and the Hiroshima Peace Center Association.

The maidens' stay here caused a media frenzy that climaxed in several of the women appearing, along with Tanimoto's wife and children, on "This Is Your Life," a television show (hosted by Ralph Edwards from 1952 to 1961) that helped famous personalities relive their lives by asking them to identify people from their past after hearing them speak from behind a curtain.

In one of the most bizarre episodes in television history, the Hiroshima Maidens actually met Capt. Robert Lewis, co-pilot of the Enola Gay, the B-29 bomber that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

Lewis was reportedly not told he would meet these women. But before the taping he began to realize what the show's producers were planning and fled the studio. Later he was found in a bar, somehow persuaded to return to the studio (one cannot imagine how) and the taping proceeded.

A surviving tape shows Lewis describing the bombing and how he watched Hiroshima disappear before his eyes. He reports later writing down, "My God, what have we done?"

Dan Hurlin, who wrote and directs "Hiroshima Maiden" — a puppet play at St. Ann's Warehouse through Feb. 1 — first

heard about the Maidens from his friend, historian David Serlin, and couldn't stop thinking about these women, most specifically their extraordinary encounter with Capt. Lewis.

Hurlin, whose previous works dealt with the abuse of power (the 1990 Obie-winning "A Cool Million" and the 1995 "Nothing as powerful as Truth"), traveled to Hiroshima in 2001, met one of the maidens, Michika Yamaoka, who was 15 years old at the time of the bombing, and found in her story the inspiration for "Hiroshima Maiden."

"Hiroshima Maiden" uses elements from Bunraku, a style of narrative puppetry developed in 17th-century Japan, as well as

other graphic and visual devices (dance, posters, slides) all set to the incredible music of Robert Egan, who mixes jazz, Asian, vocal and instrumental music in moving and melodious ways. (Cellist-vocalist Egan is joined by Jeff

Berman and Bill Ruyle.) Given the great drama inherent in his material, it's amazing that so much of "Hiroshima Maiden" is so bland.

Hurlin, who teaches dance and puppetry at Sarah Lawrence College, believes puppets can be more powerful purveyors of human emotion than people. But with nine puppeteers manipulating a handful of smaller-than-life-sized puppets, it's often hard to concentrate on the puppets and not their handlers.

Add to this Hurlin's many graphic ics, and "Hiroshima Maiden" becomes as abstract as E=mc².

Between the scenes from Yamaoka's life, a narrator (Dawn Akemi Saito), sitting by the musicians, tells the story of a young American boy growing up in the '50s, refusing to watch Lucy humiliate herself on "I Love Lucy" (a show Hurlin himself always hated), hiding under his school desk during an emergency drill for a possible nuclear war, and enduring the scathing remarks of his vicious music teacher.

Are these lessons in the different types of degradation humans inflict on themselves



Facing the past: Victims of the bombing of Hiroshima are brought to life through Japanese-style puppetry in "Hiroshima Maiden" at St. Ann's Warehouse.

and others? Do they form Hurlin's picture of what it was like to grow up in the paranoid '50s? Whatever his intentions, these scenes do provide a humorous and much-needed break from the tension and pain of the tragic women's story. And the narrator's imitation of the sounds generated by channel surfing — show, commercial, show, commercial — is an amazing tour-de-force.

Hurlin, a gay man whose ancestors came to America on the Mayflower, claims to view the world both as an outsider and a denizen of the dominant culture. Although this might give him a balanced vision, in "Hiroshima Maiden" it seems to burden him with both the guilt of the European oppressor and the anger of someone who is unable to lay complete claim to his privilege.

There are many aspects to the story of the Maidens that Hurlin leaves out. He doesn't mention that when these young women returned to Japan they were ostracized not only because the bombing of Hiroshima was considered a national shame, but also because they were believed to have committed

an act of betrayal by traveling to America and becoming "Americanized" — on stage shown by having the doctors sew a cut-out dress onto the puppet.

Hurlin barely mentions the role of Cousins, who adopted one of the Japanese women. And he doesn't mention at all the Quakers who opened their hearts and their homes to these visitors from Japan.

As for the bombing of Hiroshima, we see Capt. Lewis in church before boarding the plane, but there is nothing about Japanese actions that may have provoked the bombing, such as the rape of Nanjing, the bombing of Pearl Harbor or the torturing of prisoners.

How much more textured, how much more thoughtful would this story have been had Hurlin presented it in all its complexity? One suspects "Hiroshima Maiden" is supposed to be about human suffering and reconciliation (remember that meeting between the maidens and the pilot), but to this reviewer it seems more about guilt and expiation. In the end, there's more polemic than poetry in this piece.

MUSIC



Soul man

Brooklyn Academy of Music's "Winter Soul" program on Jan. 24 at 7:30 pm pairs soul legend Sam Moore with newcomer singer-guitarist Raul Midon for a one-night-only performance that promises to put R&B's living history alongside its future.

Moore (pictured), 68, recorded hits such as "Hold On, I'm Coming" and "Soul Man" while part of the Stax Records duo Sam & Dave, with Dave Prater, as well as garnering gold and platinum records and a 1967 Grammy for "Soul Man." Sam & Dave were an inspiration for Dan Akroyd and John Belushi's Blues Brothers characters. (Prater was killed in a 1988 car accident in Georgia.)

Tickets are \$20 and \$25 for the show at the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene. For more information call (718) 636-4100.

— Lisa J. Curtis

EVENT



Monkey biz

The Brooklyn Public Library celebrates the Chinese New Year on Jan. 24 with a day of arts and cultural activities. The event will feature a reading by Brooklyn author and illustrator Kam Mak ("My Chinatown: One Year in Poems" (HarperCollins, 2001)), as well as crafts and entertainment for children ages 6 to 12. It runs from 11 am to 1 pm.

(A lion dance from the 2000 celebration at the Central Library is pictured.)

From 2 pm to 4 pm, Ba Ban Chinese Music Society will perform the Chinese opera, "Monkey King," and there will be martial arts, dance, magic and music performances.

At 4 pm, there will be a screening of Zhang Yimou's film "Not One Less," about a young teacher in a rural Chinese village and her heroic efforts to prevent any of her students from dropping out of her class. (The 1999 film is in Chinese with English subtitles.)

The events take place at the Central Library at Grand Army Plaza. For more information, go to the Web site at www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org.

ART

Strange trip

"From Burma to Brooklyn: New Works by Erica Harris" is on display at the Object Image Gallery (91 Fifth Ave. between Prospect Place and Park Place in Park Slope) through Feb. 8.

A collection of 30 drawings, collages and paintings inspired by the Flatbush artist's year-long tour of Southeast Asia are on display, including the mixed-media work, "Congregation" (2003), pictured.

"I've shown her work for about three years," said gallery director Bob Weiss. "She has an amazingly quirky way of the very different, and puts images together in ways you wouldn't think of. I've always loved her work. Asia looks very weird through her eyes."

For more information about gallery hours, call (718) 623-2434.

— Lisa J. Curtis



'My God, what have we done?': Written and directed by Dan Hurlin, the play recalls an episode of the television show "This Is Your Life" in which the co-pilot of the Enola Gay met women disfigured by the atomic blast on Hiroshima.

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BROOKLYN Eats

Neighborhood Dining Guide

This week: WILLIAMSBURG

Chickenbone Cafe

177 S. Fourth St. at Roebling Street, (718) 302-BONE. (MC, Visa) Entrees: \$4-\$15.

Chickenbone Cafe recently changed chefs and expanded its menu, but it still dishes out original, locally flavored cuisine in this low-key cafe with a hipster attitude. Great for soup and sandwiches and delicious dishes served with crusty, artisanal bread. The PWF is a sandwich featuring pancetta, mozzarella and roasted tomato, the cavallini bean puree and truffle bruschetta tops thick, grilled slices of olive bread, and easily slow-roasted salmon with wasabi aioli smuggles against a hearty, faintly sour, pumpkinseed baguette. (There's even a dessert sandwich — bitter-sweet chocolate on brioche, from the grill.) Closed Mondays.

Ciao Bella

138 N. Eighth St. at Bedford Street, (718) 599-6550. www.ciaobellawb.com (Disc, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$8-\$24.

Owner Mark Giordano's Ciao Bella Ristorante offers a wide variety of Italian food in a casual, environment. Ciao Bella uses all fresh ingredients in its entrees, which include a number of pasta, meat and seafood dishes. Linguine were all arrabiata, a black linguine with shrimp in a spicy tomato sauce, rigatoni in a pink sauce with sweet sausage and mushrooms and cotoletta alla Milanese, pan-fried rack of veal with arugula and marinated tomatoes, are three of many popular dishes. Ciao Bella also serves a variety of salads, sandwiches and salads. The menu brings with baby lamb chops, Tiramisu and lobster.

Now serving weekend brunch, too. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Ciao Bella is also available for large groups and private parties. Free parking. Giordano encourages artists to contact him about hanging their work in the dining room; the art changes each month.

Cono & Sons O'Pescatore

307 Graham Ave. at Ainslie Street, (718) 388-0168 (AmEx, DC, MC, Visa) Entrees: \$8.95-\$29.95.

Your first impression of Cono & Sons O'Pescatore will be one of elegance, evoked by crisp white tablecloths with napkins pointing heavenward, black lacquered chairs and a beautiful tile floor. As the name suggests, this is a place for serious seafood and Italian cuisine enthusiasts.

Chef Cono Natale's signature dishes include the Contadina, a mouthwatering mixture of veal, sausage, beef and chicken, prepared with peppers, mushrooms and potatoes (\$39.99 for two or more) and the tortoni di pesci — clams, shrimp, mussels, whiting, squid and flat of sole served with rice (\$39.95 for at least two people). There's something for everyone: homemade cavatelli, wild chops alla Cono, shrimp fra diavolo and fried scallops, Cappuccino and a traditional Italian dessert (chocolate, spumoni and more) ensure a happy ending. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Jo Restaurant and Lounge

119 Kent Ave. at North Seventh Street, (718) 388-3320. www.joestaurantandlounge.com (MC, Visa) Entrees: \$8-\$21.

A century has brought this Williamsburg landmark, whose name means "I" or "me" in Italian, a ring way from the salubrious waters of the East River. Furnished with its original oak bar, the restaurant opens up to a formal dining room with a breathtaking view of the Manhattan skyline and a lounge with a live salsa band on Fridays and Saturdays.

Chef and co-owner John Mancauso primarily Italian dinner menu navigates pleasantly between home cooking and fine dining. Try the shrimp cappuccino appetizer and these entrees: lobster ravioli and grilled pork tenderloin with sweet potato hash. Open Wednesdays through Sundays for dinner and brunch on Sundays.

★ = Full review available at **BrooklynPapers.com**

Abbreviation Key: AmEx=American Express, DC=Diner's Club, Disc=Discover Card, MC=MasterCard, Visa=Visa Card

Jumbo shrimp in a clay pot at SEA Thai Bistro.

Oznot's Dish

79 Berry St. at North Ninth Street, (718) 599-6596. (MC, Visa) Entrees: \$11-\$16.

Built by owner Eric Baum's own two hands, Oznot's Dish creates ambience with lots of curves, tiles and mirrors. The restaurant, which opened in 1993, serves New Mediterranean cuisine, which means it's a bit more flavorful for the American palate with touches of lemon, truffle oil, cardamom, and za'atar from North Africa.

Two popular dishes include chicken breast stuffed with fig and goat cheese and fennel-crusted pork loin in a bacon-and-date demiglace, served with sweet potato gratin. Salads, eggs, crepes and sandwiches are on the lunch menu, and desserts include sticky walnut date cake or warm cardamom bananas Foster. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Check back for special Valentine's Day menu.

Peter Luger Steak House

178 Broadway at Driggs Avenue, (718) 387-9922. www.peterluger.com. (Cash only) Entrees: \$25-\$30.

This legendary Williamsburg steakhouse has been rated No. 1 in New York for years — and for good reason. New York's best steaks are served here in a German beer hall setting — principally Peter Luger's famous porthouse for two — juicy, tender and delicious.

The restaurant also serves broiled salmon and lemon sole. But if you've made it this far, go for the steak and their signature German fried potatoes. Unless, of course, you come before 3 p.m. Then you can try one of the best deals in the city — the lunchtime-only Luger Burger (order it with cheddar and the thick-cut bacon). One of the tastiest and juiciest around, it starts at just \$5. Oh, and the bar stocks a good selection of beers on tap and they make a martini.

SEA Thai Bistro

114 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue, (718) 384-0890. www.thaicurrynet.com (MC, Visa) Entrees: \$6-\$13.

SEA Thai offers serene views against an aural backdrop of pulsing club music, and center stage, a large pool presided over by a life-size golden Buddha with a small wooden boat filled with purple and white orchids floating about his ankles. Two bars serve designer drinks to a clientele of young, hip parties. Chef Tony Rongco, who has worked at the city's best Thai restaurants, has a menu that includes a variety of Thai dishes — 20 by the glass, a sublime sake, exquisite port and dessert liquors — selected by master sommelier Roger Dagom, of Manhattan's Chantrelle restaurant. Open daily.

Teddy's Bar & Grill

96 Berry St. at North Eighth Street, (718) 384-9787. (MC, Visa) Entrees: \$3.95-\$13.95.

For more than 115 years, Teddy's Bar & Grill has been the Williamsburg destination for dinner, brunch and lunch. A notable dish is the cabana shrimp stuffed with spicy cheeses, wrapped in smoked pork and served with Caribbean colelaw and seasoned rice. Teddy's famous 10-ounce burgers are made with beef that is ground fresh daily and grilled to perfection. On Fridays, it's all-you-can-eat beer-battered fresh fish fry (\$8.95).

Happy hour Monday through Friday, 4 to 7 p.m. — with specials on beer, wine and frozen drinks. (The restaurant is currently undergoing a facelift, so its closed Tuesdays until 4 p.m.) Teddy's has 10 beers on tap and is serious about its wine selection. Call for information about upcoming wine tastings. DJs and live music, too. Open daily for lunch and dinner.



Sample sale

Smith Street restaurant Sample serves up flavorful dishes — without a kitchen!

By Tina Barry for The Brooklyn Papers

The logical sequel to Biscuit, a successful, southern-style barbecue restaurant in Prospect Heights that serves biscuits, fried chicken and ribs, would be a spin-off of the first, with, perhaps the addition of a wood-lined pit for slow roasting.

Owners Maio Martinez and Josh Cohen see it differently.

Instead of another down-home eatery, they opened Sample on Smith Street in October, a restaurant without a kitchen (there's a microwave oven behind the bar for reheating) and without cooking.

Using as a prototype Quinnet, a long-standing restaurant and bar in Midcity that specializes in *conservas* (conserved foods either canned, smoked, jared or in some way preserved), Martinez and Cohen offer a menu of savory small bites — call it antipasti, tapas or meze — sourced worldwide. The "cooking" consists of slicing, simply plating, the sprinkling of sea salt and occasionally warming something in the microwave.

DINING

Sample (152 Smith St. between Bergen and Wyckoff streets in Borsum Hill) accepts Visa and MasterCard. Dishes range from \$4-\$6. The restaurant is open for dinner seven days a week. For information, call (718) 643-6622.

The room is long and narrow with a tiled floor and stools along the bar. Painted a soft cocoa with neutral accents, the decor makes an attractive, unobtrusive backdrop to the vivid flavors of the food.

The menu is divided into five categories: meat, fish, vegetables, cheese and a small selection of desserts. A couple sharing four different meat dishes, without wine, can expect to enjoy a light feast and be set back no more than \$24. Less if they opt for other selections. (Dishes range \$4-\$6.)

Sample will surprise anyone who disdains canned goods. The freshness and richness of flavor that I enjoyed while visiting the cafe surprised me, and I'm not averse to serving a meal that begins with a can opener.

"Most of the canned foods are very good as is," says Martinez. "Sometimes a little salt or add lemon juice or vinegar for acid. That's all it needs."

A few coarse grains of sea salt enlivened smoky, grilled peppers filled with a puree of codfish. Sixteen-year-old sherry vinegar mellowed tender baby squid stuffed with tentacles and their own ink. Both dishes are imported from Spain where they obviously know what to put in a can.

Giant white beans from Greece in a rich olive oil and tomato sauce were firm, creamy-centered and surprisingly beefy tasting. Thickly sliced, fried Turkish baby eggplant were a bit drab without adornment. With a squirt of lemon juice, perfect.

Octopus from Japan, called *wasabi*



At Sample restaurant, the owners think outside of the box, serving (top left) a glass of Wakatake sake with wasabi tako, a fiery helping of Japanese octopus, and (above) rellenos de bacalao, red peppers stuffed with cod fish, paired with a glass of Christopher Philip 2002 riesling.

tako, is delivered vacuum-sealed in Muscatel wine that sat beside it) for the plate of cow milk cheese from Basque, France, a pungent bleu Fournet d'Amber, or a delectably nutty cheddar, a triple cream that is only occasionally on the menu. With a glass of Australian port, which has just a hint of cherries, you'll enjoy dessert.

And there's so much more: sweet, grilled onions and artichoke hearts perfumed with oregano from Italy; a shredded squid salad seasoned with ginger and cucumber pickle from Japan; chewy, salted, aged beef called *bresaola*, from Italy; and, in addition to French cheese there are fabulous examples from Italy, Switzerland and Spain.

There's very little to whine about at Sample. I didn't love the overly rich, crumbly *campone*, a highly seasoned pork pate from Italy, or the fishy New Zealand mussels with plum compote, a case of opposites not attracting.

Most of the dishes were so good, however, that you may be tempted to order four (or more) instead of the well numbered two.

As Brooklyn's own Mae West would say: "Too much of a good thing is wonderful."

Strawberry patch

For those wringing their hands over the demise of Max Court in Cobble Hill — take heart. In October, two of the three Max Court owners (one left, the "new one" is Andres Rodas) opened Frigole Ristorante in its place.

Changes have been made — the interior, according to Rodas, is "lighter and leafier," and, in an attempt to give the neighborhood more choices, chef and co-owner Building Veronica's menu has "15 pastas instead of the five offered at Max Court, and a lot more wines by the glass and the bottle."

tomato sauce made daily and lots of salads and simple entrees at reasonable prices — is still intact.

The revamped has brought new clientele to Frigole, which means Strawberry in Italian.

"Before we had singles and couples, not too many families," said Rodas. "Now we have people bringing in their kids. It's a different mix. We like that."

Frigole Ristorante (394 Court St. between Carroll Street and First Place in Carroll Gardens) accepts cash only. Entrees: \$9.95-\$16.95. The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner seven days a week. Brunch is served Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 4 pm. For information call (718) 522-7133 or 7170. — Tina Barry

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Step right in

DUMBO play takes audience on a rollicking, historic ride

By Paulanne Simmons
for The Brooklyn Papers

If "What's That on My Head!?" were any more cutting edge it might slit viewers' throats. As it is, this latest madcap adventure by the National Theater of the United States of America (NTUSA), now playing in DUMBO's Nest Arts Complex, takes audiences right to the edge, gives everyone a good look, then yanks them all back again.

The "naking" in this case is literal. "What's That on My Head!?" is a 1964 World's Fair-type romp that presents 400 years in American history as seen through the kaleidoscope lens of NTUSA writers and performers.

The audience sits in swivel seats bolted onto a rolling platform pushed back and forth by several handy cast members. A flashing light-studded garage door that opens and closes the passageway and curtains on either side permits a mind-boggling number of scenes—all accompanied by costume (Kirstin Tobasson) changes that in and of themselves are worthy of an OBIE, and enough light (Ben Kato) and sound (Jody Elf and Parked Stu) cues to send many stage managers to Bellevue.

THEATER

The National Theater of the United States of America's production of "What's That on My Head!?" plays through Feb. 8, Thursdays through Sundays at 8 pm. Tickets are \$15. The Nest arts complex is located at 88 Front St. at the corner of Washington Street in DUMBO. For reservations, call (212) 915-6607. For more information, visit www.ntusa.org.

The history unveiled in "What's That on My Head!?" unfolds as part of a game show that involves three contestants, a panel of celebrities, an intergalactic game show host having a bad hair day (Jonathan Jacobs), his bearded sidekick (Mark Doskov) and a monster (China E. Chine) whose main role seems to be lurching about menacingly. After the contestants are asked to guess what object has been placed on their heads, everyone becomes part of a chronologically ordered vignettes depicting key moments in American history. The vignettes are peppered with dancing, singing and declaiming executed with a frenzy that makes one imagine vaudeville on speed, and interrupted periodically by commercials for



And the winner is: (Top left) Jesse Hawley and Normandy Sherwood in a scene from The National Theater of the United States of America's "What's That on My Head!?" now playing at the Nest Arts Complex. (Above) The play unfolds as a game show, hosted by Jonathan Jacobs (far right), with Mark Doskov and James Stanley.

a nonspecific group of products.

The journey begins in old England where King Charles proclaims the founding of the American colonies, after which the audience crosses the Atlantic (the platform actually moves gently back and forth) and witnesses the early colonists stealing or flogging the land from Indians.

The adventure continues as the colonists struggle to establish a foothold in the New World, the rich and pious take advantage of the poor and the Revolutionary War is fought and won.

Then a quick transition to the Civil War (a bowling ball rolls frighteningly toward the audience with the ominous message that we are all cannon fodder) and the audience arrives at a Wild West saloon, the Temperance Movement (featuring one of this reviewer's favorite stupid songs of the '60s "My Baby Does the Hanky-Panky") and a World War I veteran thanking his country for giving him the chance "to make a man of myself."

Then comes the Great Depression ("It's not so great") and President Herbert Hoover seated in a comfortable armchair observing the homeless camped out on the White House lawn. Finally there's the Roaring Twenties (a little out of historical order), the Atomic Age and the Cold War, and a grin ending that seems to predict endless paranoia and panic.

NTUSA is a Brooklyn-based collaborative founded by a group of theater people who met at Skidmore College and the Williamstown Theater Festival in the mid-'90s. After their first two shows, "Places Sunrise" and "Carvey & Suppant's": Episode 23," new members were attracted to the group.

Members pride themselves on their democratic process in which "each company member's skills, passions and ideas serve as the impetus for the NTUSA's original theatrical works."

There can be no doubt about the originality of "What's That on My Head!?" But a little discipline mixed into this

democracy might have gone a long way to making this a more focused production.

"What's That on My Head!?" contains many unnecessary characters and scenes that could have easily been omitted. Most of the time the platform rolls back and forth with evident purpose, but at times the experience is something like being lost at sea. "Where is this play going, how will it get there, and has it indeed arrived?" are all questions that are not always answered.

Some people, however, may not mind the uncertainties in this production. After all, this is not the America we learned about in history class, so why should it be the theater we learned about in drama class?

Whatever one's theatrical preferences, the energy, originality and great sense of fun that NTUSA demonstrates in "What's That on My Head!?" make the show worthy of attention. This journey through history is one you really shouldn't miss.

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BAMcafe
30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100, www.bam.org.
Jan. 24, Second Stage, 10 pm, Jan. 30, Sylvester Evertson, 9 pm. Both FREE with \$10 food/drink minimum.

Barbes
376 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 965-9777, www.barbesbrooklyn.com.
Jan. 24, Gina Lashman, 7 pm, FREE, and Bill Carney, Jugg Addicts, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 25, Amy Schreiner, 7 pm, FREE; Jan. 27, Jazz series curated by Chuck McKinnon featuring Sara Gurlinger, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 28, Jay Wang's Kung Fu Sui, 7 pm, FREE, and "Night of the Ravished Limer" non-music series curated by Michael Jeter featuring Biggan Kraus and Jim Black, 9 pm, 50, Jan. 29, Niklov, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 30, Hiron, 7 pm, FREE, and Banning Eya, 9 pm, FREE.

Boudoir Bar
41 East End Avenue, 272 Smith St. at Sackett Street in Carroll Gardens, (718) 624-8878, www.eastendboudoir.com.
Saturdays: "Brooklyn Brew Ha-Ha" stand-up comedy, 9:30 pm, \$5 plus two-drink minimum; Sundays: DJ melo-music and live jazz, FREE.

Cafe 111
111 Court St. at State Street in Downtown Brooklyn, (718) 582-2800, www.cafe111.com.
Jan. 24, Gina Broderick, Asha Miko, Jason Spirt, Skiddick, 8 pm, FREE; Jan. 25, Mary McBride, Curtis Eller, 8 pm, FREE; Jan. 26, Monday Night House Band with Mike, Ronze & Friends, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 27, Mary Horn, Juddbury, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 28, Jonathan MacIntyre's Strips & Strips with Ben Mondor and Barney Miall, Originals, 8 pm, FREE; Jan. 29, Bethany Young, Emily Juski, Alex Franks, 7:30 pm, FREE; Jan. 30, Tom Shaw, Soled, 8 pm, FREE.

Chocolate Monkey
329 Flatbush Ave. at Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 813-0103.
Mondays: Karen Gibson-Rock with Fluid, 8 pm, 50; Tuesdays: Karaoke with Tony Billy, 11 pm, FREE; Fridays: Happy Hour with DJ Cokaz, 5 pm, FREE.

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160 Court St. at Amity Street in Cobble Hill, (718) 596-3514.
Fridays: Karaoke, 10 pm, FREE.

Delia's Lounge
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Tuesdays: Live jazz, 8-11 pm, \$10.

Duplexx
46 Westchester Ave. at Park Avenue in Clinton Hill, (718) 643-6400, www.duplexx.com.
Saturdays: Island Vibes DJ spin R&B, hip-hop and reggae, 10 pm, FREE; Sundays: Roots Reggae Caribbean music, 8 pm, FREE; Wed. 10 pm, women only \$2 and men pay \$10; Tuesdays: Caviar Tuesday with karaoke and dancing, 8 pm, \$10, 55 for women before 10 pm.

Five Spot
459 Myrtle Ave. at Washington Avenue in Clinton Hill, (718) 652-0202, www.fivespotsoffroad.com.
Monday: Open burlesque bring your own needles and wigs, 6 pm, 8 pm, FREE; Thursdays: Super Lower Bowls, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Saturdays: Super Lower Bowls, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE.

Frank's Lounge
660 Fulton St. at South Street in Fort Greene, (718) 625-9339, www.frankslounge.com.
Fridays: DJ Tyrone and Julian, 10 pm, 55; DJ Aaron Ippantini, 11 pm, 55; Saturdays: DJ Tyrone and Julian, 10 pm, 55; Sundays: Cassie Ouyun Quartet, 8 pm, FREE; Mondays: DJ Keith Foster and James Morone; Tuesdays: DJ C. Kidron, 9 pm, FREE; Wednesdays: Karaoke with Dave B., 7 pm, FREE; Thursdays: Blues with Lonnie Youngblood, 9 pm, FREE.

Freddy's Bar & Backroom
485 Dean St. at Sixth Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 622-7035, www.freddysbar.com.
Jan. 24, David Miki, Mondays: Live the End of the World, 8:30 pm, FREE; Jan. 25, Country Joe and the Outlaw Band, 8:30 pm, FREE; Jan. 26, Thea Marston: Live in a troupe of veteran actors reproduce two episodes of the classic TV show, 9:30 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 27, Will Ross: Live in a troupe of veteran actors with quiz master Roger Paz, 9:30 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 28, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 29, The Holy Diver: Live! Big Brother and the Holding Company plus Michael Brewster Sam and David, 9:30 pm and 10:30 pm, FREE.

Galapagos
714 W. 57th St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 782-5100, www.galapagosartspace.com.
Jan. 24, "Cash Art" emerging artists series featuring Dexter Chalk, Dave Cabral, New Writing and Debra, and more, 7 pm, 50, and DJ Auro, 10 pm, 50, FREE; Jan. 25, Avery Kaufman, time and cover TBA, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Thursday: Laptop stories and music featuring Jon Keith Bivona, Adam Kendall, Glenn Spector, Agent Cal, Daniel Vabky, 7:30 pm, 55, and Monday Evening Burlesque, 9:30 pm, FREE; Jan. 27, "New York's" with Lucia, "Planet Queens" by the Vangelina Theater, Elsa Baruch, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 28, Brandon Reed: Live! at the Academy of Music, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 29, Schwefel DJ release party with Livin' Lovens, 8 pm, 57, 29; Schwefel DJ release party featuring Schwefel, The Ladies, Jeffrey Lewis, City and Eastern New York Folk Smashers with DJ Chevy Di La Spina, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 30, The K&S, 8 pm, 55, and Posing Vaudeville, 10 pm, 55.

Grand Central Bar
659 Grand St. at Leonard Street in Williamsburg, (718) 387-5515, www.grandcentralbar.com.
Fridays and Saturdays: Live music, 10 pm, FREE; Mondays: Music open mic night, 9 pm, FREE; Tuesdays: "Unto the Torques" spoken word open mic, 7 pm, FREE; Wednesdays: Karaoke, 10 pm, FREE.

Haleon
224 Smith St. at Butler Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 260-5299, www.haleon.com.
Saturdays: Bingo-go-go, 9 pm, FREE; Sundays: Hangover Helix, noon, FREE and Undercity with the Sirens, Shadow Drake and DJ Spinach, Club on Saturn, Mary Kellan, and Haze: Making experimental and psychedelic, 10:00, 7 pm, FREE; Tuesdays: Chocolate Buddha Happy Hour party with Ron Posing, 6 pm, FREE and Monday Sessions with The Almagor, 9 pm, FREE; Fridays: Acupuncture breakfast party, 10 am, 20 pm, FREE.

The Hook
102 Commercial St. at Columbia Street in Red Hook, (718) 792-3007, www.thehookmusic.com.
Jan. 24, Rick Park and His Gas House Corolla, time TBD, 8:00; Jan. 29, Country Club and the Pom Horns, Ewenstar, 10 pm, 55; Jan. 30, The Wobblies, USA:GA MCGSTER, The Hercules Shells, 9 pm, 50.

IO Restaurant
119 Kent Ave. at Leonard Street in Williamsburg, (718) 389-8202, www.iorestaurantandbar.com.
Weekends: Dove Santiago and the Latin Affair, 9:30 pm, FREE.

Jazz Spot Cafe
173 Marcus Garvey in Williamsburg Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (718) 453-7825, www.thajazz.com.
Monday: Jam session, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 24, Sultan H. Wigton, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 25, Jam session, 8 pm, 50; Jan. 30, Monday Duran Quartet, 9 pm, 50.

JRQ Fashion Cafe
177 Flatbush Ave. at Ashland Place in Park Slope, (718) 399-7079, www.jrqfashion.com.
Fridays: Damage Band, 9 pm, FREE; Saturdays: International Night, 9 pm, FREE; Sundays: The Damage Band, 8 pm, FREE; Mondays: R&S Music and the Trio, 8 pm, FREE; Tuesdays: DJ spin, 7 pm, FREE; Wednesdays: Electric Card, 8 pm, FREE; Thursdays: Jazz night, 8 pm, FREE.

Kill Bar-Cafe
81 Hoyt St. at State Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 655-5574.
Tuesdays: Soul acoustic jam, 8 pm, FREE.

Liberty Heights Tap Room
34 Van Dyke St. at Dwyght Street in Red Hook, (718) 246-8000.
Jan. 24, Electric, 10 pm, 50; Jan. 30, Open Jam with Kitcherwood, 8:30 pm, 50.

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To list your events in Brooklyn Nightlife, please give us as much notice as possible. Include name of venue, address with cross street, phone number for the public to call, Web site address, dates, times and admission or ticket prices. Send listings and color photos of performers via email to Calendar@BrooklynPapers.com or via fax at (718) 634-9278. Listings are free and printed on a space available basis. We regret we cannot take listings over the phone.



Mary Hornik will perform at Cafe 111 on Jan. 27.

Lillie's
46 Beard St. at Dwyght Street in Red Hook, (718) 858-9822.
Tuesdays: Turntable Tuesdays with Gallagher, 9 pm, FREE; Wednesdays: Sammy's Social Club, open mic, 8 pm, FREE.

Magnetic Field
97 Atlantic Ave. at Henry Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 440-009, www.magneticfield.com.
Jan. 24, Ernest Anderson presents Sophie Unit and Tapageur, 7:30 pm, FREE, and "Dynamite Soul" with DJ Squash, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 26, "Rockin' Karaoke" with Colin the King of Karaoke and DJ Film Plan, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 30, "Events: Musicians Party" - Alcohol, food, soul, mustaches and more, 9 pm, FREE.

Magnolia
486 Sixth Ave. at 12th Street in Park Slope, (718) 369-4914.
Jan. 24, New York Jazz Outfit, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 30, James Yoshida, 10 pm, FREE.

Meson Flamenco
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Mezzo Cafe
130 Montague St. at Henry Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 522-0202, www.mezzocafe.com.
Saturdays: Malvin "Guitar" Williams, 9:30 pm, FREE; Tuesdays: Live jazz with Jay & Friends, 7:30 pm, \$10; Wednesdays: Musicians open mic, 9 pm, FREE.

Moda Cafe
294 Fifth Ave. at First Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-6970, www.modacafe.com.
Jan. 24, "F" opening party for Moda Cafe's newest exhibit of year art with DJ Daniela Medina and Chris Anzures! Also live! 8 pm, 8 pm, FREE; Jan. 25, Karaoke, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE.

National Restaurant
273 Brighton Beach Ave. at Brighton Street in Brighton Beach, (718) 414-2225.
Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays: Live Russian music and dance show, 9 pm, FREE.

Night of the Cookers
130 Montague St. at Henry Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 522-0202.
Thursdays: Blues, 8:30 pm, FREE; Fridays and Saturdays: Jazz, 10:30 pm, FREE; Sundays: Jazz brunch, noon, FREE.

Northix
66 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 594-2102, www.northix.com.
Jan. 24, Chris O'Brien & Squares, Red Yellow, The Detachment, 9 pm, \$10, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 25, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 26, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 27, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 28, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 29, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 30, The Minors, Benjamin Carter, Todd Drenthage Band, and Downstairs: The Good Good, Broken! Brooklyn! The Looking, 9 pm, 50.

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1904 Surf Ave. at Keyport Park in Coney Island, (718) 440-2000, www.peggyoneills.com.
Jan. 24, Firing Bull, 11 pm, FREE.

Pete's Candy Store
709 Lorimer St. at Richardson Street in Williamsburg, (718) 302-3770, www.petescandystore.com.
Jan. 24, Phil Akers, Jason Hestfeldt, Kate Diamond, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 25, Open mic, 8-8:30 pm, FREE, and Company 766, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 26, Marijatta O'Neil, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 27, Laddie, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 28, Marty Chalk, 8 pm, 10 pm, FREE; Jan. 29, Adam Snyder, Jeff London, The Ben Carroll Band, 9 pm, FREE; Jan. 30, Teddies Machine, The Reverend Vice Anderson & His Love Choir, 9 pm, FREE.

Samba Restaurant & Nightclub
493 Third Ave. at 9th Street in Bay Ridge, (718) 439-0475.
Saturdays: DJ Nino: Tony plays Latin, disco and club hits on Latin rhythms, salsa and more, 11 pm, \$10 (FREE for women); Wednesdays: Disco and club hits on Latin rhythms, salsa and more, 11 pm, \$10 (FREE for women); Wednesdays: Disco and club hits on Latin rhythms, salsa and more, 11 pm, \$10 (FREE for women).

Sistas' Place
456 Nostrand Ave. at Hancock Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (718) 399-7160, www.sistasplace.com.
Jan. 24, Manuava, 8:30 pm, 10 pm, 10:30 pm, \$10-50.

Southpaw
125 Fifth Ave. at St. John's Place in Park Slope, (718) 230-0202, www.southpaw.com.
Jan. 24, Rollage, Tandy, Wayne "The Train" Hancock, 9 pm, 50; Jan. 25, The Tarbo Ramblers, Munkie, 8:30 pm, 50; Jan. 29, BEKAY Mix CD Release Party with performances by Saena and Jay, "Lily Katz" by Dan De Ban, Pete Flo, Shafstoson, BEKAY, 8:30 pm, 50; Jan. 30, The Bronx, April March, 9 pm, 50.

TJ Bentley's
119 Kent Ave. at Leonard Street in Williamsburg, (718) 745-0748.
Fridays: Tom Daniels, 6:30 pm, and Latin Night, 10 pm, FREE; Saturdays: Live big band music, 8 pm, FREE; Tuesdays: Karaoke, 10 pm, FREE; Wednesdays: Live big band music, 8 pm, FREE.

Toybox
119 Marcus Garvey in Williamsburg Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, (718) 599-1000, www.toybox.com.
Saturdays: "Lingo" with DJ Giffin, 8 pm, 50; Sundays: "Lingo" with DJ Giffin, 8 pm, 50; Mondays: "Gotham" indie rock night, 8 pm, 50; Tuesdays: "Tenderloin" "No dance party with DJ, 8 pm, 9 pm, FREE; Thursdays: Girl night, 8 pm, FREE.

Two Boots
514 Second St. at Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 493-5253, www.two-boots.com.
Jan. 24, Blues with Gene Ambuter, 10 pm, FREE.

200 Fifth
200 Fifth Ave. at Sackett Street in Park Slope, (718) 638-2920, www.200fifth.com.
Thursdays: Open jazz, 9:30 pm, 50; Fridays and Saturdays: Live jazz, 9:30 pm, 50; (Women FREE).

Up Over Jazz Cafe
351 Flatbush Ave. at Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 398-5413, www.upoverjazz.com.
Mondays: Victor Hanning Quartet, 9:30 pm, 50; Tuesdays: Eric Payne Trio, 9:30 pm, 50; Wednesdays: Robert Glasper Trio, 9:30 pm, 50; Thursdays: Robert Glasper Trio, 9:30 pm and 11 pm, 50; Jan. 24, Albert Abdul's Band: Tom with Billy Berg, Alvin Hestfeldt, Alan Blake and Andrea Stronbert, sets at 9 pm, 11 pm, 12:30 pm, \$30 plus \$5 minimum per set.

Warsaw
300 Waterfront Ave. at Bedford Street in Greenpoint, (718) 387-5252, www.polskainformation.com.
Jan. 30, Kora Ota Ota, 9 pm, \$30 advance/\$55 day of show.

Waterfront Ale House
300 Waterfront Ave. at Bedford Street in Greenpoint, (718) 522-3794, www.waterfrontalehouse.com.
Jan. 24, Paul Sullivan Quartet, 11 pm, FREE.

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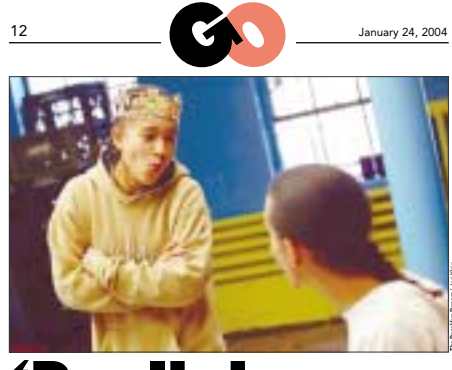
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"Real" theater

Young Brooklyn theater troupe lends its unique, urban spin to ancient tale of German king

By Paulanne Simmons
For The Brooklyn Papers

Five years ago, Stephen Half, a music and drama teacher at Bushwick High School, founded Real People Theater, a company of young actors who revamp classic and modern plays into what they call the "Ghetto Remix."

After producing "Romeo y Julieta," "Hamlet-Prince of Brooklyn," "King Lear-Brooklyn Remix" and Canadian star George Walker's "Tough," the group is now presenting "Ring Around the Royalty," RPT's remix of the "Nibelungenlied," the same cycle of Germanic and Nordic myths Richard Wagner turned into "Der Ring des Nibelungen." RPT's "Ring Around the Royalty" will be presented in the company's home since last year, the Real People Theater, at 678 Hart St. between Central and Wilson Avenues in Bushwick.

"Ring Around the Royalty," commissioned by the Nibelungen Spiel Feste in Worms, Germany, is about how Ziegfried, a great warrior who has slain a dragon and stolen the dragon's magic, goes to Burgundy to win the hand of Briemhild and gets her brother, Gunther, to help him in exchange for his assistance in Gunther's courting of Brunhild, Queen of Ireland.

"The treachery of the two men and Ziegfried's use of magic cause tragic disaster. And the conflict between the two women in the text is staged on the steps of the Worms Cathedral," said Half, who directs.

As of this date, RPT has performed "Tough" in Nova Scotia, "Ring Around the Royalty" in Germany, and other works in New York theaters such as the Flea, New Dramatists, Repertorio Espanol, The Woodstock Hotel and The Performing Garage; and theaters, high schools and colleges in Los Angeles, Chicago and Toronto. RPT has a working and mentoring relationship with Bennington College, Fordham University, and The Woodstock Hotel, which has adopted RPT as its official apprentice company. And the group's work has attracted the attention of the press including The Village Voice, Germany's Manheimer Morgen and Chicago's The Reader.

But it wasn't always that way. In fact, Half told GO Brooklyn that RPT's practice of using no props and a set consisting of two chairs and perhaps a table began as a necessity.

"The school gave us nothing," he said. "The students made creative use of their bodies and their voices. That's an aesthetic we're very proud of."

Necessity also played a big role in the founding of the group.

"When I was trying to teach 'Romeo and Juliet,' the kids were rejecting it," Half said. "I think it was because I was going about it in a very conventional way, without any intrinsic motivation. That changed when I asked them to rewrite the scene in their own words."

Half's students were so pleased with their props that they asked him if he could stage it.

"That was the first production. It was a combination of Shakespeare, Spanish and street language," said Half.



Dragonslayers: Members of the Real People Theater troupe (top) Cynthia Candelaria (left), 19, rehearses a scene with Albert Young, 19, from "Ring Around the Royalty." (Above) Real People director Stephen Half acts out a scene with puppets.



"Our next play was 'King Lear,' and it was half Shakespeare and half street language.

Half believes his students' interpretations bring out their own originality and resiliency, and the experience of producing theatrical work "involves all of the intelligences that there aren't otherwise outlets for at school — bodily, verbal, interpersonal and intrapersonal, and rhythmic."

"Working with classical writers is, in part, an apprenticeship for eventually working in a partnership. We always start with reading the entire work [for 'Ring Around the Royalty,' RPT has used the Penguin Classics English translation]. The kids are very aware of how language expresses character and emotion. They're extraordinary at finding the humor in serious texts like 'To Be or Not to Be.' The kids are bringing up what they are to the stage. That's what keeps all their theater alive, especially Shakespeare."

It's still Half, however, who chooses the material.

"The plays come from my experience and what I feel will be an exciting and promising match with the students," said Half, a 38-year-old who grew up in Stratford, Ontario, the site of the famous Shakespeare Festival.

RPT's next project will be "Paradise Lost."

THEATER

Real People Theater's production of "Ring Around the Royalty" runs through Jan. 26, Saturday at 7 pm and Sunday at 3 pm. Running time is 60 minutes, followed by a discussion. Tickets are \$5. The Real People Theater is located at 678 Hart St. between Central and Wilson Avenues in Bushwick. For reservations, call (718) 646-6475.

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Danish delight

Catch the Royal Danish Ballet's rare NYC performance at Brooklyn Center

By Kevin Filipski
For The Brooklyn Papers

There is no doubt that New York City is a dance mecca. With its rich and varied dance scene, the city has long been a magnet for dancers from around the world. Two prestigious ballet companies — American Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet — reside at Lincoln Center, dozes more perform in the city throughout the year, and such venerable dance institutions as the Mark Morris Dance Group call the borough of Brooklyn home. And there's always the Brooklyn Academy of Music's annual spring series, DanceAfrica.

So it's easy to miss other world-class troupes as they touch down for a single performance. Don't miss this weekend's opportunity to see the Royal Danish Ballet making its Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts debut on Jan. 25 in the Walt Whitman Theatre.

The ballet troupe, under the artistic direction of Peter Bo Andersen, is based in Copenhagen, Denmark, and will be making its first local appearance in more than a decade as part of its short U.S. tour that also brought them to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., for a week-long residency.

Not only is the Royal Danish Ballet one of the oldest dance troupes in the world, having been formed in 1772 and housed under one roof along with the national theater, the opera and orchestra since the mid-1750s (at the Royal Danish Theater in Copenhagen), but its world-renowned ballet school has been in existence since 1756, producing dancers who have gone on to fame in Denmark and abroad.

"Principals and Soloists of the Royal Danish Ballet" is the official title of the Brooklyn Center program, but it is just a little misleading, as a New York City Ballet principal, Nikolaj Hubbe, will be joining the Danish dance stars for this performance.

(Hubbe was born and raised in Copenhagen.) The featured Royal Danish Ballet dancers include principals Mads Blangstrup, Caroline Cavallo, Thomas Lund, Stija Schandorff, soloists Diana Cuni, Morten Eggert, Claire Henriksen, Tina Hojlund and Amy Watson; and dancers from the corps de ballet Niklas Hansen, David Kupinski [Kupinskiy?], Femke Molbak Slot and Kristoffer Sakurai.

The ballet program is an overview of two great choreographers, past and present, who have worked closely with the Danish troupe.

Principal and Soloists of the Royal Danish Ballet will perform selections from "Napoli," choreographed by August Bournonville, at Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts on Jan. 25.

program, five are choreographed by esteemed 19th-century Danish master and tut choreographic giant, August Bournonville (1805-1879), who began performing with the Royal Danish Ballet in 1828. Then, after two decades dancing with the troupe, he became one of Denmark's major choreographers.

Bournonville is best remembered for the precision of his technique and a very distinct romantic-era style that meshes well with the works the Royal Danish Ballet is performing on this bill. The

His choreographic masterpiece, the full-length ballet "La Sylphide," which was unveiled in 1842 while Bournonville was working as both a soloist and a choreographer, will be represented by several excerpts.

The other four Bournonville dances being performed are set to music by his composing contemporaries, H. S. Hellsted and H. S. Pauli: "Pas de Trois" (1849), "Wilhelm Tell" (1873), "Flower Festival in Genzano" (1858) and two selections from the third act of the full-length ballet "Napoli" (also from 1842), "Pas de Six" and the Tarantella.

Although most of the program is taken up by this homage to the greatest Danish choreographer, one of his modern-day masters is also represented by two dances: British-born Tim Rushton, who started as a dancer with the Royal Danish Ballet, among other troupes, before turning exclusively to choreography in 1991, shares Bournonville's belief that dance is the language of the body, a language that is universal in its embrace. Rushton's choreography also emphasizes innovation, especially as regards the music to which he sets his dances, and his two works on the program highlight this aspect of his art.

Rushton's "Triples," from 1999, is set to the timeless music of J.S. Bach, while his more recent "Nimade" (2001) uses the moody strains of the Estonian modernist composer Arvo Part, whose shimmering minimalist style seems tailor-made for modern-dance choreography.

Principals and Soloists of the Royal Danish Ballet will perform at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, 290 West 45th St., on Jan. 25 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$25. For more information, call (718) 951-4500 or visit www.brooklyncenter.com.

biennial of the choreographer's birth arrives next year, and it will be celebrated with even greater fanfare than usual as part of the annual Bournonville Festival in Copenhagen.

Bournonville was a legendary teacher whose thoughts on the art he loved above all else are unusually eloquent. For example, he said, "Dance is essentially an expression of joy, a desire to follow the rhythms of the music. The dance can, with the aid of music, rise to the heights of poetry. The height of artistic skill is to know how to conceal the mechanical effort and strain beneath harmonious calm."

BROOKLYN Nightlife

Send resume and cover letter to:
Lisa J. Curtis, GO Brooklyn Editor, The Brooklyn Papers,
55 Washington St., Suite 624, Brooklyn, NY 11201
No phone calls please.

Where to Go

SAT, JAN 24

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
METRO TOUR: Mauricio Lorenzo hosts a walking tour of Brooklyn history, from Green and Clinton Hill, \$25, 2 pm to 5 pm, 100 Court St., (718) 799-6450.
PERFORMANCE
PLAY: "There Goes the Neighborhood," a play about the gentrification of Carroll Gardens. One-woman show is based on the words and deeds of people of the neighborhood. \$15, 5:30 pm, 100 Court St., 7 pm, Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. (718) 222-4111.
FORUM: Open Ground hosts a talk on gentrification and rezoning. 4 pm to 8 pm, 252 Grand St. (347) 613-1849. Free.

RHYTHM AND BASS: Brooklyn Academy of Music presents "Winter Soul," a program featuring solo legend Sam Moore and singer-guitarist Raul Midon. \$25, 8:00, 75th St. Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-6100.
BARGEMUSIC: presents a chamber music concert of Bach, Mozart, Schiffr and Fauré. \$35, 7:30 pm, Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.
CBCC: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents reggae singer Freddie McGregor. \$35, 5:30 pm, Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. (718) 951-4400.
LOCAL PRODUCE: spoke of the Hub hosts a third annual writers' festival featuring an array of dancers, musicians, actors, and performing artists. \$15, 5:30 and seniors, 2 pm, 252 Douglas St. (718) 408-3234.
GALLERY PLAYERS: presents "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown." \$15, 5:12, 199 14th St. (718) 955-6247.
BROOKLYN ARTS EXCHANGE: presents a shared evening performance by artist, musician, and actor, featuring Division 13 Productions, HalfBourne/Sanchez Works and Antonio Ramos. Discussion follows. \$15, 5:30 pm, 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0015.
ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: presents "Hiroshima Maiden." Puppet theater dramatizes the true story of the Hiroshima Maiden, a group of Japanese women displaced by the nuclear blast. \$25, 8 pm, 38 Water St. (718) 254-8779.
SHAKESPEARE: Waterloo Bridge Theater Company presents "Twelfth Night or What You Will." \$15, \$10 students, 8 pm, 250 B'way. (718) 520-0796.
CONCERT: Park Slope Singers performs vocal music featuring Fauré, Handel and Billie Holiday. \$10, 7:30 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
DANCE: Williamsburg Art Nexus presents "BigMomma's." \$12, 8 pm, 205 N. Seventh St. (718) 399-7797.
BAM CAFE: Second 2 Last presents an evening of poetry, rhythm, hip-hop, reggae and jazz. \$10 food/drink minimum. 10 pm, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-6100.
HIGHTS PLAYERS: presents "A View from the Bridge." \$12, \$10 seniors and children 12 and under, 8 pm, 250 B'way. (718) 237-2752.
HISTORY PLAY: The National Theater of the United States of America presents "What's That on My Head?!" \$15, 8 pm, Next Arts Complex, 70 West 45th St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
CHILDREN
BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Body of movement workshop for ages 12-18 years is invited to learn about the current exhibition "The Making of a Living in Brooklyn." Participants interpret work moves, moves they see people do everyday on the job, and moves they see in the exhibit. \$2 children, \$5 adults, 12:30 pm, 128 Pierrepont St. (718) 222-4111.
CBCC: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents "The People's Playground." Learn about this seaside resort included in museum admission of \$6, 2:30 pm, 128 Pierrepont St. (718) 222-4111.
ADAPTATION TALK: Brooklyn Arts Exchange offers a four-week class, "The Craft of Writing for the Stage." Meet with 19- to 30-year-olds. Ages 13 to 19 welcome. 1:30 to 3:30 pm, Call to book, 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0015.
BROOKLYN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM: Workshop: "The People's Playground." Painting: Kids are invited to make a painting in the style of the exhibit. \$4, 10:30 am, 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718) 735-4400.
KIDS CAFE FEST: Dancewise Inc. presents its 10th anniversary festival featuring dance, music and theater. Over 150 kids from NYC and beyond perform. \$16, \$12 kids, 3 pm, Brooklyn Music School, 126 Fols St. (718) 522-4696.

SUN, JAN 25

OUTDOORS AND TOURS
BEACH ECOLOGY: Salt Marsh Nature Center hosts a talk. 11 am. Meet at Coney Island Beach, Boardwalk at Denos Vouders Place Formerly West 12th St. (718) 421-0021. Free.
PERFORMANCE
CBCC: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents Principals and Soloists of the Royal Danish Ballet. \$35, 2 pm, Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College, one block from the intersection of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues. (718) 951-4400, ext. 26.
CONCERT: Bach at Zion presents Baroque Chamber music by Weidli, Telemann and Handel. \$15 includes wine reception. 3 pm, Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, 313 Prospect Park West. (718) 768-2972.
BARGEMUSIC: presents a chamber music concert of Bach, Mozart, Schiffr and Fauré. \$35, 7:30 pm, Fulton Ferry Landing. (718) 624-2083.
GALLERY PLAYERS: presents "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown." 3 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
SHAKESPEARE: Waterloo Bridge Theater Company presents "Twelfth Night or What You Will." \$15, \$10 students, 8 pm, 250 B'way. (718) 520-0796.
ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE: presents "Hiroshima Maiden." 4 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
LOVE PLAY: presents "A View from the Bridge." 5 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
HIGHTS PLAYERS: presents "A View from the Bridge." 8 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
HISTORY PLAY: The National Theater of the United States of America presents "What's That on My Head?!" 8 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
PLAY: "There Goes the Neighborhood" at Brooklyn Historical Society. 3 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.

WEDS, JAN 28

FILM: The Watch Club presents "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets." 7:30 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
SAFETY AND ALZ-
HEMERS: Park Slope Geriatric Day Center presents "The Chamber of Secrets." 7:30 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
WORKSHOP: Gowanus Canal Community Development Corp. offers a program "Fire Safety in Your Home." \$6, 6 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
CHILDREN
KIDS CAFE FEST: Dancewise Inc. presents its 10th anniversary festival. 3 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
PUPPETWORKS: "Rumpelstiltskin." 12:30 pm and 6:30 pm, See Sat., Jan. 24.
OTHER
SUNDAY PLAYGROUND: Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture hosts a platform for spiritual growth. 11 am, Postlark Without, 53 Prospect Park West. (718) 768-2972.
ROAST: Roast 2004 for the benefit of the Brooklyn Historical Society. 1 pm, Pizza lunch at 12:30 pm, Sirico's Restaurant, 230 East 12th St. (718) 254-6029.
FILM: The Watch Club hosts its monthly film series. "The Making of a Living in Brooklyn." Episode 8 of R. Burns' series about New York which chronicles the rise and fall of the World Trade Center. 12:30 pm, 128 Pierrepont St. (718) 222-4111.
FORUM: Hear and report back on two Brooklyn residents who recently visited Israel and the occupied territories. 3:30 pm, 100 Court St., 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
FILM: Brooklyn Underground Weekly Movie Series: "Long Gone." 5:15 pm, The Next Art Space, 48 Front St. (646) 729-8774.
RECREATION SUPPORT: The Metropolitan Hospital begins a six-week series of "Recreation Support." 10 am, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Meet the Author series presents Michael Innes, author of "Coney Island: The People's Playground." Learn about this seaside resort included in museum admission of \$6, 2:30 pm, 128 Pierrepont St. (718) 222-4111.
SAMPLE SALE: hosted by several Brooklyn artists. 10 am to 4 pm, 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718) 735-4400.
MON, JAN 26
REUNION LUNCH: 39th semi-annual subway reunion lunch. Noon to 4 pm, Leaf Tavern, 67th Street and Fifth Avenue. (718) 951-1017.
MEETING: Community Board 10 meets. 6:30 pm, St. Ann's Episcopal Hall, 83rd Street off Fourth Avenue. (718) 745-8522.
ANGER WORKSHOP: Families First offers a talk to help you figure out "How Angry Am I?" 10 am to 12 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 624-2083.
ADAPTATION TALK: Brooklyn Arts Exchange offers a four-week class, "The Craft of Writing for the Stage." Meet with 19- to 30-year-olds. Ages 13 to 19 welcome. 1:30 to 3:30 pm, Call to book, 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0015.
SINGLES EVENT: Bay Ridge Singles Club celebrates Chinese New Year. Noon. Meet in front of 7424 13th Ave. Chinese dinner follows. Call (718) 256-3523.
EXHIBIT: Micro Museum presents visiting artist J.T. Noon to 6 pm, 123 Smith St. (718) 797-3116.
MUMMY'S BAZAAR: Brooklyn Museum of Art hosts a family party, its annual fund-raising event. Activities for the whole family including: "The Mummy's Burial," dancing and food. All inspired by the film "The Mummy." \$25 per person and \$50 per table. 6 pm to 8:30 pm, 200 Eastern Parkway. (718) 501-6423.
YEAR OF THE MONKEY: Salt Marsh Nature Center celebrates the Chinese New Year with "16 to 18: The Year of the Monkey." 7 pm, 3302 Ave. U. (718) 421-2021.

TUES, JAN 27

RECEPTION: Park Institute hosts a reception for the faculty exhibit "Computer Graphics and Interactive Media." 4 pm to 6 pm, 200 West 45th Ave. (718) 636-5517. Free.
SPEED DATING: Meet the man or woman of your dreams. At least have some fun. 7 pm, Red Rose Restaurant, 315 Smith St. Advance registration necessary. (718) 625-0963.
WILLS FOR PARENTS: Families First offers a workshop on legal and financial planning for parents with young children. Workshop covers estate planning, estate tax information, how to name a guardian, living trusts and more. Call for fee info. 7:30 pm to 9 pm, 250 B'way. (718) 237-1862.
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THURS, JAN 29

BARNES AND NOBLE: Author and illustrator Todd Parr reads from his cheerful books including "The Feel Good Book." 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 246-1158. Free.
DANCE: Williamsburg Art Nexus presents "Kakakakak" and "Defacto Dance per form." "Cinderella." \$12, 8 pm, 205 N. Seventh St. (718) 399-7797.
SHAKESPEARE: Waterloo Bridge Theater Company presents "Twelfth Night or What You Will." \$15, \$10 students, 8 pm, 250 B'way. (718) 520-0796.
CAMP FAIR: Parents and children with disabilities are invited to learn about camp programs for summer 2004. 10 am to 3 pm, Church of St. Paul the Apostle, 405 W. 59th St. (718) 242-4650. Free.
BARNES AND NOBLE: Author and illustrator Todd Parr reads from his cheerful books including "The Feel Good Book." 5 pm, 100 Court St. (718) 246-1158. Free.
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Dyker residents fume: Out, damn spot-remover

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

A pair of two-ton dry cleaning machines have had some Dyker Heights residents shaking with anger—literally and figuratively—since December. But the tremors that they say have been emanating from a nearby dry-cleaning business may be ending sometime soon.

Residents found a reason to cheer last week when the owner of Happy Cleaners, on 13th Avenue at 74th Street, said he would relocate his business, possibly within six months.

"It's too tight of a place for us," Calvin Jiang told The Bay Ridge Paper. "We're looking for the right location, but I can't tell exactly when, maybe in a couple months. We'd like to stay in South Brooklyn, in Sunset Park, in an industrial area."

At a fiery meeting at the Knights of Columbus hall on 86th Street at 13th Avenue on Jan. 14, residents listened as a representative from the Department of Buildings unloaded a laundry list of alleged zoning violations, including one for operating a dry cleaning business larger than the 2,000 square feet that commercial regulations allow.

Calvin Jiang was also issued violations for cleaning more than 60 pounds of clothing at one time and receiving laundry from other businesses, including his own.

"He says he claims he's going to relocate, but he was very evasive," said Ken Lazar, a community liaison for the Department of Buildings. "We'll just continue to violate them."

Josephine Beckmann, district manager of Community Board 10, said that residents have also called to complain about fumes coming from the building. Last summer, the business was fined \$880 by the city's Environmental Control Board as a result of a fresh air outlet on 74th Street that could be covered with metal. Jiang confirmed this and



The Happy Cleaners dry cleaning business at 13th Avenue and 74th Street has raised the ire of local residents, who are upset with the way they do business.

said that the problem was resolved, but according to the ECB, Jiang still owes a \$150 fine.

"I can't even begin to tell you how concerned, boisterous and upset these people were," said Beckmann, who helped organize the meeting.

Sandra Castro, who lives on the first floor of a building that abuts the cleaners, only recently began noticing the vibrations, even though Jiang has owned both of his dry cleaning machines since last April. She first noticed movement last month, she said, when she began spending her days at home to take care of her granddaughter.

Since then, she said it's gotten so bad that she frequently has to rearrange the glassware that rests on top of her china cabinet, which jitters to the center whenever the machines start rocking.

"I thought the blood was running through my veins funny," said Anthony Nuccio, Castro's neighbor. "We're right on top of it."

Each day, Jiang loads some 500 pounds of clothes into the

two machines, each of them costing about \$60,000 and taking up the space of six refrigerators.

Capable of holding 60 pounds of clothing at a time, the machines are what is called in the dry cleaning business,

"fourth generation." That, Jiang said, means that they're the most environmentally safe of the lot.

He also said, with no small amount of pride, that both machines, although varying in quality, are fully licensed with

the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Fire Department.

"One's like a Cadillac and the other is like a Buick," said Jiang as he drove away.

And therein lies the problem, or at least one of several, said a Department of Buildings spokesman. According to commercial district zoning regulations, "the capacity of machines [at] dry cleaning or clothes pressing establishments shall not exceed 60 pounds."

Bay Ridge-Dyker Heights Councilman Vincent Gentile started getting calls about Happy Cleaners in late December, but the complaints reached a crescendo earlier this month when residents discovered that the business was a hub for as many as six other dry cleaning businesses owned by Jiang, all of which use those same two machines. Jiang would only confirm that he owned one other storefront, on Fifth Avenue in Bay Ridge.

"If he's got a factory operation in a residential neighborhood then it's ridiculous," said Gentile, who writes letters urging the Department of Buildings and Department of Environmental Protection to re-inspect the business. "It's no longer about old Mr. Jones cleaner anymore. This is a major commercial industrial operation they have here."

Jiang said that neither Fire inspectors nor Department of Environmental Protection agents saw problems when they inspected the premises last week. When pressed, however, he said that the Department of Buildings warned him that he couldn't keep both machines in the same small room because of zoning laws.

Beckmann said the community board office on 86th Street at Fort Hamilton Parkway has been getting calls both from people like Castro, who say the noises ebb and flow during the day until the business closes at 7:30 pm.

"A homebound senior called the other day," said Beckmann, one of at least six people who have called about the vibrations. "She thought she was going crazy because all of a sudden her dishes were shaking. She said, 'I wash maybe once a week, but these vibrations happen five to six times a day.'"

Two men in their 20s were arrested shortly after the bouncer was rushed to Lutheran Medical Center for emergency brain surgery.

Days after last month's stabbing, Deputy Inspector Matthew Pontillo, then commanding officer of the 68th Precinct, said the bar had never been a problem.

"As long as I've been here, it's always been a relatively quiet place," said Pontillo. "I don't know if it's just bad luck or a change of clientele."

The woman, 70, entered the crosswalk at 1:48 pm when the 18-wheeler hit her, apparently unbeknownst to the driver, and dragged her several feet, decapitating her. According to witnesses, the driver kept on going and was stopped by police in Gravesend, at West Ninth Street and Avenue S. He was reportedly shocked and distraught when told what had happened.

The Police Department said on Thursday that no charges were filed against the 35-year-old driver. But at a widely attended United Neighbors Association meeting on Wednesday in Dyker Heights, Capt. William Aubry, commanding officer of the 68th Precinct, said that the driver had been issued several summonses, including one for straying from a truck route.

If the driver was off his designated route, it would be the second death in Bay Ridge resulting from a truck driving off designated routes since December.

The other occurred on Dec. 17, when a tow truck killed a woman while she crossed Fourth Avenue at 79th Street.

"It was with a matter of time before something horrendous happened," Bob Cassara, a member of the Bay Ridge Community Council's transportation committee, said this week. "We are no match for these large trucks."

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Cops: Bouncer beat patron

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Police are searching for a bouncer from a Bay Ridge nightclub who they say viciously clubbed a patron with a steel baton while on the job last Saturday.

The Jan. 10 incident marks the third consecutive month that an employee of the Shangri-la nightclub on Fourth Avenue at 91st Street has allegedly been involved in a violent incident, police said.

In the latest incident, a 20-year-old man got into a tussle with bouncers who were trying to usher the rowdy patron out of the bar.

After the man was ejected from the club, the bouncer, described as 28 years old and weighing about 220 pounds, with short brown hair, allegedly began beating the man with a baton. The victim needed 14 stitches to his head. The incident happened on the northeast corner of 91st Street and

Fourth Avenue.

In a telephone interview Thursday, a man who described himself as the owner of the bar denied the incident happened. "We had nothing like that. I was here that night and I'm the one that locks up the place," he said. "Anything that happens outside the bar doesn't concern me."

A similar incident happened last month. Police say that the owner of the nightclub was stabbed in the chest and taken to Lutheran Medical Center af-

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Extended hours for Fort Ham HS pool

By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

Fort Hamilton High School officials agreed this week to extend the hours that its swimming pool will be open to the community, temporarily putting on hold a battle over who gets to take a dip — and when — in Bay Ridge's only public pool.

Beginning Feb. 2, the pool will be open to the public from 5:45 pm until 10 pm on scheduled days, nearly the same hours kept before changes took place last September. The new schedule will last through Feb. 26, when the school's swim team season ends.

Tom Greene, the school's assistant principal who fought

to get the pool built more than a decade ago, thought that re-opening defied logic.

"Why is it 5:45?" he asked, noting that the time for public use used to be 15 minutes earlier.

"The pool's going to be open after 3 pm, but nobody's talking about that," said Greene, noting the end of the swim team's use of the pool after February and wondering why public hours would not be extended rather than shortened.

"But even then, we got some

time back and we appreciate that," he added.

Until now, school officials contended that they needed the pool for school functions, but many residents who used it said it was often empty of students by 5 pm. Since September, however, doors have stayed closed to the public until 6:30 pm.

"There was no other facility available to the community," said Councilman Vincent Gentile, who added that before the pool was built, in 1993, resi-

dents and swim groups had to drive to John Jay or New Utrecht high schools, in Park Ridge and Bensonhurst, respectively.

The extra hour, said Gentile, who helped negotiate the new schedule, will be especially helpful for kids, who sometimes weren't able to swim until 8 pm or 9 pm because of swim teams practicing.

"It's very encouraging to see that the Fort Hamilton administration has finally acknowledged their obligation to make the pool

acceptable to the community as much as possible," said Charles Fiore, president of the Bay Ridge Aquatics Institute (BRAINS). "The taxpayers own the pool, built the pool and pay their salaries. And it's good to see the community gets the access to the pool they deserve."

The additional hour stems from a demonstration in September in front of the pool, attended by many Bay Ridges, including members of some of the adult swim clubs and groups from the St. Patrick's

and Our Lady of Angels churches.

Gentile said that he's also been in front of the pool with the school to build a community-based organization that would be contracted by the Department of Education to take over the after-hours use of the pool. "That way it would be the responsibility of the community," he said.

Two years ago, Greene, who led a 20-year fight to get the pool built — it is now named after him — was stung by a

felony teacher at poolside.

The so-called "pool brawl" took place on Jan. 4, 2002, when Greene tried to enter the pool's first aid room, and was confronted by several female physical education teachers.

Greene, 63, was left with two black eyes and a cut above his right eye.

"We're saving the city hundreds of thousands of dollars and we've never once been thanked by the school," said Greene. "This is the least they can do."

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By Jotham Sederstrom
The Brooklyn Papers

The president of the 68th Precinct Community Council announced Tuesday that he would not seek a third term in June, opening the doors for the precinct's chaplain, who has expressed interest in the position.

Former Community Board 10 chairman Stephen Harrison was rumored to be interested in the position, but remained non-committal, saying only, "Anything's possible."

Frank Grassi, who served four years as president, said his decision was the result of an in-

creased workload on his job as a subway car inspector for New York City Transit, where he works nights in the Bronx.

"While I enjoy the work, I felt I wasn't giving the council all the hours and the attention it deserves," said Grassi, who has plans to paint his house and do some plumbing with his extra time. "When you have work commitments you just don't have the time. I have more of a sense of loss than anything."

The council, which serves as a liaison between police and residents in Bay Ridge and Dyker Heights, enjoyed something of a renaissance after Grassi, a member since 1987, was elected president.

Attendance at the monthly meetings has risen, partially because of an initiative Grassi put forth in 2000 to move monthly meetings to locations outside of the precinct. The "Roadshow" concept, he said, boosted the turnout and allowed police to hear the concerns of a variety of residents, not just the council's most faithful.

The second road show, held at the St. Patrick's school auditorium, boasted a crowd of more than 300, including one resident who gave information that helped police capture a graffiti vand who had ruined \$10,000 worth of property.

Representatives for Assemblywoman Adele Cohen, Councilman Vincent Gentile and state Sen. Marty Golden all regularly attend the meetings. "That's something I think is a rather recent phenomenon," said Grassi.

Among the representatives who regularly attend meetings, Robert Capano, an aide to Markowitz, has expressed interest in running for the vice president position in June.

The Rev. Richard Doscher, the precinct chaplain, has indicated interest in the president's position.

"To be honest, I was considering the presidency, but after speaking to Father Doscher, to me he's an ideal candidate," said Capano.

According to precinct council

regulations, candidates must be residents, local business persons or members of a locally oriented group to qualify. They also must have attended at least three meetings within the past 12 months.

Before Grassi, the late Michael Behlen had been president of the council for 24 years, the longest a president has served in the council's history.

Grassi said that he would still be connected to the community

by way of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which last Saturday held its first full-scale drill in Shore Road Park. As CERT communication officer, he oversees administrative duties.

As for the community council, he still plans on participating in the National Night Out Against Crime, the annual event meant to raise community safety awareness and crime alertness.

68th Precinct council prez retires

Hurst gets Children's Hosp.

Schneider Children's Hospital

To further its mission of reaching New York area children in need of the finest medical care, Schneider Children's Hospital has opened a Pediatric Specialty Center in Bensonhurst, located at 8622 Bay Parkway, Suite 2D.

Under the direction of Michael LaCorte, MD, the 2,800-square-foot Pediatric Specialty Center provides an array of medical services staffed by pediatricians who are specialists in a wide range of medical conditions, including genetic disorders, neurology, cardiology, rheumatology, adolescent medicine, developmental and behavioral problems, ophthalmology, dermatology, gastroenterology and endocrinology.

"The essence of a children's hospital is to

gather, under one roof, a galaxy of professionals dedicated to overcoming children's illnesses with the highest levels of medical expertise and modern technology," said Dr. Lankowsky. "Over the past 20 years, we have met this goal in the Queens and Long Island areas. It is very gratifying to be able to bring comfort to the children of Brooklyn and the people who love them."

Since it first opened its doors in 1983, Schneider Children's Hospital in New Hyde Park, N.Y., has earned the reputation of being the premiere children's hospital in the New York metropolitan area. Child magazine recently recognized it as the best children's hospital in New York State.

To provide the greatest number of families with the highest level of health care, Schneider Children's Hospital has

community based facilities throughout Queens and Long Island. In addition to its main facilities on the Campuses of Long Island Jewish Medical Center in New Hyde Park and North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, Schneider Children's Hospital has consultation centers in Flushing, Queens, and Haverstraw, Westchester and Hampton Bays and Long Island.

Schneider Children's Hospital's new Pediatric Specialty Center in Brooklyn was designed as a convenient resource for local pediatricians, family practitioners and families with children. The center is readily accessible by the M and W subway line and the B6 or B82 bus. Office hours are 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. For more information, call (718) 372-8402.



Mayor Bloomberg addresses the crowd. Behind him is new CB10 chairman Craig Eaton.

MAYOR...

Continued from page 1

anything substantive about a Community Board 10 zoning study that was submitted to the Department of City Planning last month, Craig Eaton, the mayor's chairman, was excited. "We have the eyes and ears of the mayor and City Planning tonight," he said.

As the mayor made his way through the thick crowd to leave, the meeting morphed briefly into something like a rock concert, with scads of seniors mugging for photographs with hizzoner and at least one sixth-grader angling for an autograph.

"It doesn't get any better, darling," Bloomberg said as he signed his name in her autograph book. "Everyone in this room wishes they could go back to sixth grade."

When Bay Ridge-Dyker Heights Councilman Vincent Gentile, who shares an icy relationship with the mayor, entered just after 8 pm, an hour after the mayor had arrived, a crowd standing in the aisle shifted to let him by. Up front, he greeted the audience and shook Bloomberg's hand.

Later, the councilman reflected on the evening.

"I wasn't anything special," said Gentile, a Democrat who earned the mayor's wrath when he featured the billionaire's Upper East Side townhouse in a campaign ad denouncing his property tax increase. "It was more the curiosity of having a billionaire in the room."

TEST...

Continued from page 1

and-rescue procedures during seven training sessions in November, said the ration came when following 9-11, thousands of New Yorkers volunteered to help with the cleanup at the World Trade Center site.

"We wanted to bottle that up," he said. "We wanted to have that if we ever needed it again in the future."

Since then, volunteers have helped direct traffic during the city's blackout last August and to navigate pedestrians stranded by October's Staten Island Ferry crash to buses crossing the Verrazano Narrows Bridge.

"This wasn't just a knee-jerk reaction to 9-11," said Ray Aulube, part of the CERT team and a spokesman for the Fort Hamilton Army base.

The Jan. 17 drill included 16 of more than 100 volunteers with the program,

who were acting according to the scenario that called for police and firefighters to be tied up with other emergencies.

"We'd never be taking these actions if the police department or Fire Department were available," said Scott Caniblers, chief operations and training officer with the CERT.

The CERT, however, that had first-responders been tied up with other fires when flames scorched an apartment on Emmons Avenue in Sheepshead Bay earlier that morning, they could have lent a hand. Though that incident was outside of the program's immediate response area, it was exactly the type of emergency for which CERT volunteers are trained.

Over the course of the training sessions, which began last November, volunteers who live or work in Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights and Bensonhurst learned safety skills like CPR, first aid and fire extinguisher use. Others, like Pat Conden, a Community Board 10 member, are trained to deal with weapons of mass

destruction. The next full-scale drill is on March 28, following a second session of classes beginning in February.

When rescuers opened the garage of the park house to discover more fire and a body wedged under the pallet, Golden yelled, "Is there anybody in there?" Chip Cafero, another volunteer, shouted, "We got bodies in here!"

As several of the volunteers entered the house on Shore Road at 79th Street, Golden unloaded piles of wood from a truck to be used for cribbing, or leveraging, the pallet from the body. Golden, Cafero and the rest were able to free the body but soon found that the victim was suffering from cardiac arrest.

Conden moved the mamequin to a nearby tent, where he performed CPR. Along the way, he spoke to the pretend victim, another skill he learned during the training courses.

"We learned how to console and empathize with people during traumatic situations," said Tom DiLavore, another volunteer.

Continued from page 1

reversed the mandate earlier this month. His predecessor, Stephen Harrison, instituted the seating assignments on the contentious board after his election in January 2001. He also assigned board members to read "Robert's Rules of Order" during the board's summer break in 2002 after a particularly heated meeting.

"I wanted to break down some of the barriers," said Eaton, who will still sit front and center with the board's vice chairman, secretary, treasurer and district manager.

"I'd heard some people complaining that they used to enjoy being able to sit where they wanted," explained Eaton. "I think [assigned seating] worked for awhile but at this time it makes sense to let people sit where they feel comfortable."

Before the reversal, members were seated in five rows of 10 based on the number of years they'd served on the board, with the longest-serving members in the front rows and those with less seniority in back.

To complicate the matter, instead of simply seating from left to right, the arrangement alternated, with the most senior member seated at the far left of the aisle and the second most senior to the far right, nine seats away.

While Harriet Rosenberg, a 20-year veteran, sat in the front and clear to the left, newbies like Bob Cassara sat four rows back, near the aisle.

"Sitting in the back, you got a good view of what was going on," said Cassara, who joined the board last year. "And not that I do, but if you wanted to flunk out of the board you could probably do that there, too."

Harrison said his decision to institute assigned seating was a reaction to what he called a growing divisiveness among the board's members, especially when the discussion returned to controversial subjects like the various proposals for the massive lot at Bay Ridge and Narrows avenues, that also came to be known as the UA lot for the original proposal to build a multiplex movie theater on the large assemblage of lots. That and other long-simmering issues, including a dispute over board bylaws, seemed to splinter the board into as many pieces as there are members.

"I wanted people to think independently," said Harrison, who likened the seating arrangement to those instituted in the U.S. Congress. "I wanted people to not have pressure on them from the people next to them."

Newly elected vice chairman Dean Rasinia said the arrangement was immediately effective. Before then, groups of friends would chatter over the voice of the chairman, who at that time was Kirk Zandies.

"Those were contentious times, and maybe that contributed to it," said Rasinia, a member of the board for five years who, until recently, sat in the third row, left of the aisle. "That may have been some cause."

While it sometimes serendipitously placed friends together, the assigned seating arrangement, by sheer twist of fate, seemed to erode toward seating ideological opposites within clawing distance of one another.

And some members, like Rosenberg, felt secluded. She said the mandate dropped her in the front row, in a corner that barred her from eying anyone besides the executive board members.

"It was like we were being plucked up and placed," said Rosenberg, who conceded that she learned to like the arrangement. "I assumed at the time that it was to keep the cliques away from each other."

Unlike today's set-up, board meetings before the assigned seating arrangement were assembled so that members and visitors were separated on either side of the aisle and evenly distributed from the front of the room. Members of the press, meanwhile, sat front and center.

"To be completely honest, I also wanted to de-emphasize the chair talking to the press," Harrison said.

Many board members believe that when the board meets on Monday, Jan. 26, at St. Anselm's Meletia Hall, on 83rd Street at Fourth Avenue, members will be on their best behavior. That the evening's most controversial agenda item may be a vote to support legislation reforming the Metropolitan Transportation Authority doesn't hurt, either.

"It'll be fun to be able to sit next to friends," said Gloria Melnick, who named several members she'd be sitting near on Monday. "Of course, there will be some socializing — that's part of human nature. But that's good, too."

— Jotham Sederstrom

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Oy vey! City says 'no way' to Marty's Williamsburg signrage

Associated Press
"Oy vey" was too "me-shugga" for the city Transportation Department. The department said Monday it rejected a request from Borough President Marty Markowitz for a sign on the

Williamsburg Bridge that would have read, "Leaving Brooklyn: Oy Vey!" The agency felt the sign—featuring the Yiddish phrase for "oh, woe"—would be more distracting than helpful to Manhattan-bound motorists. "We considered it, but we

didn't think it added directional information," said DOT spokesman Tom Cocola. He said an example of useful signs would be those blue job reading, "Hospital," or "Coney Island Aquarium, straight ahead."

While an earlier highway sign using the word "Fuhgedd-aboudit!" was criticized by some as an anti-Italian slur, Cocola said any concern that the "Oy Vey" sign might offend the sensibilities of Brooklyn's large Jewish community was not part of the DOT decision.

Markowitz, who was born and grew up in that community, agreed with the department—at least to that extent. "Oy vey" was originally a Jewish phrase, but everyone knows what it means and it's now a common Brooklyn expression — part of that Brooklyn attitude," he said in a telephone interview. "All I'm trying to do is put a smile on people's faces. I'm sorry if the DOT has no sense of humor."

Since his election as borough president, or "beep," in 2002, the bubbly former state senator has become what he calls his "chief advocate, biggest promoter and most enthusiastic cheerleader."

To that end he began the sign campaign a year ago with one reading, "Welcome to Brooklyn: How Sweet It Is!" — a line borrowed from the late Brooklyn-born comedian Jackie Gleason. The DOT let that stand, but nixed another sign reading, "Leaving Brooklyn: Fuhgedd-aboudit!" at the Verazano Narrows Bridge to Staten Is-

land, for what Cocola said was the same reason, "a lack of directional information."

"We try to minimize distractions to drivers," Cocola said. That sign was later moved off the city-controlled right of way, but remains in place — despite complaints by the Washington, D.C.-based National Italian-American Foundation that it "reinforces a negative and demeaning stereotype" of Italian-Americans.

"To them I say, 'get a life!'" Markowitz said with a chuckle. "It has nothing to do with Italians. It's just another multi-ethnic expression. You live in Brooklyn, you can't help but pick up these words. Their problem of stereotypes is with 'The Sopranos' on HBO, not us." Asked what might be his next move, given that Brooklyn has 91 other identifiable ethnic groups, Markowitz replied: "On the scope of things all of this is unimportant, but anything I can do to help Brooklyn I will."

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Schumer's upstate campaign

Associated Press
ORANGEBURG, N.Y. — Even without a clear opponent yet in his re-election bid to the U.S. Senate, it is a safe bet Sen. Charles Schumer will find a way to use all of his \$20 million campaign chest. A lot of it may be spent just on gas money.

Schumer, a lifelong Brooklyn politician who has tried to become a household name upstate, seems to be coasting toward an easy re-election victory. Instead the 53-year-old is racing, peppering almost every city, town and hamlet with his squinty grin, even as Republicans continue to search for a challenger.

On a recent one-day swing through Rockland, Putnam, and Orange Counties, Schumer made four stops — a plastics factory threatened by cheap Chinese imports, a home affected by water contamination, a genetic drug company looking for greater access to the marketplace, and a senior center.

He began the day with a speech to business leaders in New York City, and returned to the city at night to catch his daughter's basketball game and a late fund-raiser.

But don't call it a campaign. "If you're doing your job, this is what you should be doing all the time," said Schumer. His hectic public schedule — a hallmark of his career since he successfully ran for the Assembly straight out of college — and the continued lack of a challenger has led some to question whether he is positioning himself for a run for governor in 2006.

"I'm even thinking about that," Schumer insisted, jabbing his plastic fork in the air to emphasize his point as he caught a quick meal in a car between visits in Orange County.

Bull shows Marist College poll a recent Marist College poll shows plenty of other people are thinking about it, including your financial planner, tax professional, and estate planning attorney. You can create a plan that will help you avoid these and other mistakes so that you can ensure that the people you want to receive your assets do so. You keep control.

After all, that's what estate planning is all about.

Note: this article is designed as an educational resource. Neither MetLife nor its representatives are engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or tax advice. L0201B8RD (exp12/06) MS1-LD

Estate Planning Questions? ASK JOHN

Mr. John Calabrese (718) 567-3157
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Many people think that "estate planning" is something meant for just the "rich." This is a misconception that all too often leads to miscommunication, hurt feelings, and unhappy surprises. Here are the seven mistakes people often make and how you can avoid them.

- 1.) Failing to plan.** Estate planning is about making sure your wishes are carried out. It's making sure that the people and/or organizations you wish to receive your assets do so. Working with a team that includes a financial planner, tax professional, and estate planning attorney can help put you on course.
- 2.) Not documenting your wishes.** It's important to work with your attorney to create:
 - **A will** — one that clearly spells out what you want to happen to your assets and possessions at your death. Without a will, the state may decide where your things are going to go.
 - **A durable health power of attorney or proxy** — to assign the person that you want to make health decisions for you if you are unable.
 - **A durable financial power of attorney** — to assign the person who will make financial decisions if you are unable.
 - **And a living will** — to provide clear instructions as to what treatment you do and do not want if you are unable to speak for yourself.
- 3.) Not properly setting up guardianship for children.** If you do not name a guardian to care for your children, a judge will appoint one, and it may not be someone you would have chosen. Talk to the person ahead of time about what you are asking. And, remember that the person that you are naming as guardian doesn't necessarily have to be the person that manages the money that is left for your child's benefit. You can name a couple as co-guardians, but that may not be advisable because, should the couple divorce, custody will come into question and your children may not end up with the person you originally chose.
- 4.) Not taking advantage of trusts.** The reason to set up a trust is to give you additional control. Think of a trust as a container designed to hold money for your heirs. You decide what you are going to put into the trust, who gets what in the trust, and how it is distributed. So, a properly structured trust can help ensure that your plan is executed exactly the way you intended it to be. A trust should be drafted with an attorney with expertise dealing with estate planning and trusts.
- 5.) Disregarding federal estate taxes.** If your estate is subject to federal estate taxes, keep in mind that they are due within nine months of death — in cash. This may be a concern if much of your estate is not actually in cash. That will mean selling assets, such as a house, for instance, that you may have meant to leave to an heir. Federal estate taxes you meant for your heirs to enjoy — not Uncle Sam. You can work with a financial planner, tax professional, and estate planning attorney to determine which strategies may best help you avoid this.

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