



May 2010

Staten Island Democratic Association  
*est. 1961 as Staten Island's reform Democratic Club*  
*www.sidems.org*

At our Next Meeting:

**Assemblyman Richard Brodsky**  
**Candidate for Attorney General**

**State Senator Eric Schneiderman**  
**Candidate for Attorney General**

**NYS Comptroller Endorsement Vote**

**THURSDAY, May 20, 2010, 8:00 P.M.,**  
**at Karl's Klipper, 40 Bay Street - (718) 720-4442**



### **Editorial Policy**

Items for publication must be submitted to the newsletter no later than the last Friday of the month before the meeting. Please send items to:

[cmaxbauer@yahoo.com](mailto:cmaxbauer@yahoo.com).

Unless explicitly stated, the views herein are those of the authors and not of S.I.D.A.

*Chris Bauer, Editor*  
*(917) 976-9248*

## **S.I.D.A. President's Message**

### **The Tea Party, Who are They, What Do They Believe In?**

According to the recent poll by the New York Times, three quarters are over 45, a third are retired, 90% are white, 60% are male, more than a third have at least an undergraduate degree and the majority make over \$50,000 a year.

Nearly two-thirds almost always vote Republican, and 90% of them have a negative view of the Democratic Party. The majority consider themselves to be Republicans and are not looking to start a third party. Almost 60% have a favorable opinion of President Bush, but more have an unfavorable opinion of John McCain than have a positive opinion.

Over 60% get their information primarily from Fox News. The majority of them believe Sean Hannity and Glen Beck host news shows not entertainment shows.

They are more conservative than the general public on social issues such as marriage equality and abortion rights. The majority believe Roe versus Wade was a bad decision by the Supreme Court. The majority do not believe in global warming. However social issues are not what makes them attend a rally.

Nearly three-quarters of Tea Party supporters believe both blacks and whites have an equal chance of getting ahead and a majority believe that too much has been made of the problems blacks face.

Many believe that the Tea Party supporters are just a bunch of racists. I don't doubt that a segment of Tea Party supporters are racist, however racism is not the driving force behind the Tea Party. Tea Party supporters do not believe that discrimination still exists in this country. Therefore they view laws, such as affirmative action, as examples of unnecessary government intrusion into American society.

They are just like the rest of Americans in that jobs and the economy are their major concern. However Tea Party supporters are almost twice as likely to believe the economy is getting worse. And while most Americans

blame President Bush and Wall Street for the state of the economy, Tea Party supporters blame Congress. Very few blame President Bush.

Three-quarters of Tea Party supporters believe the economy would have improved without bailing out the banks and Wall Street.

Ninety percent of Tea Party supporters want a smaller federal government. Three-quarters would prefer cutting the deficit over spending money to create jobs and would be willing to cut Social Security, Medicare and defense spending. However 60% believe that social security is worth the cost to taxpayers.

The majority of Tea Party supporters are angry with what is going on in Washington. They are most angry about health care reform, government spending, and the government not representing the people.

### **So How Do We Counter the Tea Party?**

First we don't attack them as being stupid red-necks who are the decedents of segregationists of the 1960's. This does nothing to convince the vast majority of Americans who are not Tea Party supporters that our position on the issues is better for the country.

Also we should not confuse the close-mindedness of Tea Party supporters with lack of education. We are never going to convince them to listen to another point-of-view. They believe that only Fox gives "fair and balanced" news and dismiss all other sources as the "liberal, elite" media.

What we need to do is promote the positive aspects of legislation we support and quickly counter misinformation. We also need to inform voters of what American society would be like without social security, Medicare, labor laws and other targets of the small government Tea Party.

Finally we need to identify and energize those on Staten Island who would be receptive to our message.

Sincerely,  
*Richard Reichard*  
President, S.I.D.A.

## **Richard Brodsky**

*Assemblyman Richard Brodsky is a candidate for New York State Attorney General. He will be a guest speaker at our THURSDAY, May 20, General Membership Meeting. His campaign provided the following statement.*

Having served the people of New York for his entire professional life, Richard has worked tirelessly for issues of real reform. He is running for Attorney General to fundamentally reform New York. As Attorney General he will bring accountability back to our elected officials and government agencies and ensure that we all share in equal rights and protections. Richard is driven to fight against unfair corporate practices that take advantage of everyday residents with no regard for the law.

Time and time again Richard has taken on controversial and difficult issues that affected people in their daily lives, challenging governors, mayors, corporations, special interests, and wrong doers. He has a proven record of reform efforts that bring about real change in the form of legal victories and powerful legislation.

His vision for the office of Attorney General is as a vehicle for sweeping reform. He understands better than any candidate that the Attorney General needs to serve both as a cop and as an advocate for real, lasting reform. Richard has a proven record as a reformer who takes on issues that matter in the lives of the people of New York.

Having first been elected to public office in 1975 as a County Legislator from Westchester, he spent four terms leading the way on health care, transportation and tax fairness issues. In 1982, Richard was elected to the Assembly. His continued efforts to protect the people of New York have yielded numerous concrete victories and are widely known across the state.

From the beginning of his service in the State Assembly, Richard has championed numerous reforms on behalf of the people. He served as Chairman of the Committee on Oversight, Analysis and Investigation, where he began his long-term effort to revitalize legislative oversight, including public hearings and in-depth investigations. He authored laws to reform proprietary business schools, and took on the daunting task of investigating and exposing organized crime in the garbage hauling business. Richard has fought for one of New York's most vulnerable populations, our recent

immigrants. His efforts on their behalf include legislation to prevent private immigration services scams.

Richard always has and will continue to fight for fair treatment of all New Yorkers. He has co-authored New York State's School Tax Relief (STAR) program, saving homeowners and senior citizens thousands of dollars each year. He also led the fight against Mayor Bloomberg's congestion pricing plan because it unfairly targeted low and moderate-income people, especially those living in the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island.

In 2002, Richard was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions. It is as Chairman of this Committee that Richard brought the full weight of his talents and vision to bear on reform of state government. In 2009 this culminated with the passage of the Public Authorities Reform Act. It is a sweeping reform of all of New York's 700 authorities, including the MTA, New York Power Authority, Long Island Power Authority and the Thruway Authority. It has been lauded as the most significant reform of State government in decades.

Not only has Richard created laws to protect the people of New York, he has also served as a chief investigator, rooting out corruption at all levels of government. His investigation into the use of public funds to build the new Yankee Stadium revealed secret and illegal deals between the Yankees and NYC, including publicly funded luxury boxes for city officials, a failure to create jobs, and unfair high ticket prices. Richard has consistently fought to level the playing field and to make sure that all public officials are held responsible for their actions.

Richard has taken on investigations of private sector wrongdoers as well. He led significant investigations and authored the Cable Television Reform Act, landmark legislation to limit surcharges. In the 2006 power outage in Astoria Queens, Richard brought an administrative proceeding that held Con Edison accountable for its negligent actions that caused unnecessary suffering to residents and businesses. As a result, Con Ed returned over \$40 million to ratepayers and the community and issued an apology.

Richard has been a champion for the environment. In 1993, Richard was named Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Conservation,

beginning a tenure that left a lasting impact on our environment and public health. He authored the most dramatic advances in environmental law in decades, including the Environmental Protection Fund (the first dedicated fund for environmental protection in the State's history which has disbursed billions in land acquisition, park preservation, and clean air and water projects) as well as the Clean Air Compliance Act, implementing the state's first air pollution program under the federal Clean Air Act.

Through his legislative accomplishments, Richard has received the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs Distinguished Public Service Award, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award, the United Federation of Teachers Friend of Education Award, the International Association of Firefighters Achievement Award, the New York State Audubon Society William B. Hoyt Environmental Award, and the Adirondack Council Conservationist of the Year Award along with many others.

Richard has tirelessly worked to help the Democratic movement in New York as well. From his first job as a staff person on Ed Muskie's Presidential Campaign to serving as a National Delegate from New York for Presidential hopeful Gary Hart, he has always been working with fellow Democrats to advance and strengthen the party. In 1985, Richard led a coalition of New Yorkers to Bitburg Germany to protest President Reagan's appalling visit to Kolmeshohe Cemetery where many of those buried were Waffen-SS soldiers. He led a team of attorneys in Palm Beach in 2000 on behalf of Vice President Al Gore.

Richard is a graduate of Ardsley High School, Brandeis University and Harvard Law School. He currently resides in White Plains along with his wife Paige. They have two amazing daughters; Emily, a musician, and Julianne Willie, a student at NYU.

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**Seventh Annual  
Lathrope Voorspuy  
Memorial Scholarship Fund  
Awards Breakfast  
Saturday May 22, 2010, 10 AM  
Call 718-816-4128 to RSVP**

## **Eric Schneiderman**

*State Senator Eric Schneiderman is a candidate for New York State Attorney General. He will be a guest speaker at our THURSDAY, May 20, General Membership Meeting. His campaign provided the following statement.*

### **Eric Schneiderman**

Eric Schneiderman is a lifelong New Yorker.

After graduating from Amherst College, Eric served for two years as a Deputy Sheriff in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, where he started the first comprehensive drug and alcohol treatment program at the Berkshire House of Corrections. He attended Harvard Law School, and then clerked for two years in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. He later entered private practice and became a partner at the firm of Kirkpatrick and Lockhart.

In 1993, he became President of the Board of the Public Policy and Education Fund, which led the successful campaign for a managed care patients' bill of rights in New York State. He served as a legal advisor to the Clean Money, Clean Elections campaign for public financing of elections in 1998, and acted as lead attorney for the NYPIRG Straphangers campaign in a series of historic lawsuits against the MTA.

Eric was elected to the New York State Senate in 1998, where he has served on a variety of committees, including Environmental Conservation, Health and Higher Education. He also served as the chair of the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee and as the Deputy Minority Leader.

Eric's efforts were critical in passing the Clinic Access Bill, Hate Crimes legislation, the Women's Health and Wellness Act, legislation to increase the minimum wage, and a host of anti-illegal gun, environmental and civil rights laws. He has been recognized for his work on legislation protecting freedom of choice, fair funding for public schools, ethics reform, the rights of immigrants and the expansion of affordable healthcare for all New Yorkers. Eric has also been a leading advocate for rational and effective gun laws, and serves as national co-chair of Legislators Against Illegal Guns.

When the Democrats took control of the Senate in January 2009, Eric became Chair of the Senate Codes Committee, which considers legislation related to the state's criminal and civil justice systems, as well as Deputy Majority Leader for Policy. And just months after taking back the Senate, Eric shepherded through sweeping reforms to the notorious Rockefeller Drug laws. These reforms included an unprecedented expansion of drug treatment as an alternative to prison, gave judges more discretion to divert non-violent drug-addicts to treatment, and increased penalties for drug kingpins. Eric lives on Manhattan's Upper West Side with his seventeen-year-old daughter Catherine.

### **Eric's Vision for the Attorney General's Office**

Eric is now running for Attorney General because he believes there is no higher calling than the pursuit of justice. Equal Justice regardless of race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or identity; Independent Justice without regard to political or special interests; and Progressive Justice that takes an activist approach to protecting everyday New Yorkers.

His vision for the office includes:

*Public Integrity:* As a true believer in the potential for government to be a force for good, Eric Schneiderman is the harshest critic of corruption, waste and fraud in the public sector. As Attorney General, he will fight to restore the transparency, honesty and efficiency necessary to give New Yorkers the government they deserve. Specifically, he will:

- Put public integrity officers in every regional office across the state to prosecute corruption in state institutions, and serve as watchdogs for local government
- End “pay-to-play” practices in the state and local government pension fund and in all local and state government contracting
- Continue and expand the innovative programs started by Attorney General Cuomo, like Project Sunlight, which bring important information about legislative activity, campaign finance, lobbying, state contracts, and corporations, out of the shadows and into the light of day.

*Private Sector Fairness:* For the private market to work, we need clear and meaningful rules of the road – and they must be enforced equally across the board. If there is no confidence in the markets, the economy will not flourish. As Attorney General, Eric will fight corporate corruption on behalf

of New Yorkers who need protection from big corporations that don't play by the rules. Specifically, he will:

- Aggressively prosecute mortgage fraud and go after debt collectors who defraud consumers
- Protect retirement savings by establishing a first-in-the-nation securities fraud whistleblower program
- Target “Wage Theft” – the non-payment of prevailing wages as required by law, payment below the minimum wage, required overtime pay, and the failure to provide workers’ compensation
- Use the expanded state triple-damage whistle-blower — the so-called “Lincoln Law” — to go after Medicaid Fraud, government contractor fraud, and other fraud against the government that siphons off taxpayers’ money.

*A Smart-On-Crime Agenda:* Eric will advance a smart-on-crime agenda to keep our communities safe, while using the office as a platform from which to transform criminal justice policy in New York. Specifically, he will:

Lead an “I-95” coalition of state attorneys general, and state and local law enforcement agencies, to share and track data on gun crimes and gun sales between states—the only way to keep illegal guns off New York’s streets and stop gang violence

- Continue and expand Attorney General Cuomo’s work to ensure that the 700,000 people returning from prison to communities across America every year have the job training and other support they need to stay out of trouble and make a positive contribution to the communities to which they return
- Use the AG’s unique powers — the Organized Crime Task Force — to go after the multi-county gun and drug gangs
- Create an “Actual Innocence Officer” in the Civil Rights Bureau to review cases where there is strong evidence of a wrongful conviction

Eric has already been endorsed by prominent Democratic leaders, such as Congressman Jerry Nadler, New York City Speaker Christine Quinn and New York City Public Advocate Bill de Blasio. He has also received early labor endorsements from 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East and the United Sanitationmen’s Association.

For more information or to receive campaign updates, please visit [www.EricSchneiderman.com](http://www.EricSchneiderman.com) or call the campaign at (212) 242-5301.

## **Minutes**

### **General Membership Meeting April 20, 2010**

President Richard Reichard called the meeting to order at 8:16 p.m. He briefly reviewed the agenda for the evening. A motion was made to accept the previous month's minutes as published in the newsletter. The motion carried.

Joann Olbrich made a motion to close voting at 9:30 p.m. for the 23<sup>rd</sup> State Senate district, and the 60<sup>th</sup> 61<sup>st</sup>, and 63<sup>rd</sup> Assembly Districts. The motion carried. Gene Prisco, Peter Killen and Alex Baltovski volunteered to count ballots.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Gary Carsel gave the following balances:

Balance 03-31-10 \$5,188.15

Balance 04-20-10 \$4,420.71

### **Social Secretary's Report**

Social Secretary Alex Baltovski reported that he has scheduled the Annual Mark Herman Picnic for Saturday, July 17th and S.I.D.A.'s Annual Dinner is set for September 7th. He also reported that the Annual Awards are being given as follows:

Paul O'Dwyer Humanitarian Award - Assemblyman Matt Titone; Tyrone Butler Political Action Award - David Jones; Peggy Johnston Club Service Award - Susan Chew; Lifetime Achievement Award - Dan Kramer (posthumously).

### **Legal Committee**

John reported that the committee is drafting a questionnaire for N.Y.S. Attorney General, District Attorney and Judicial candidates.

### **Speaker - Peace Action**

S.I.D.A. member Sally Jones explained that she got involved with Peace Action of Staten Island because of the invasion of Iraq. She reported that we still have nuclear weapons after the Cold War and that there are approximately 25,000 nuclear warheads around the world. The U.S. has 3,500 nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert. Sally presented a slide show with assistance from her husband David. It illustrated the nuclear capable countries; it also showed photos of post blast Hiroshima. Sally emphasized the human cost and monetary cost of having these weapons.

She pointed out that it does not make sense to build new nuclear facilities when President Obama is trying to get rid of them. She said that nuclear weapons are catastrophically dangerous, illegal and immoral. She said that we need to work hard to abolish nuclear weapons across the board and circulated a petition to S.I.D.A. members urging President Obama to abolish nuclear weapons.

Sally urged members to attend an international disarmament conference on April 30 - May 1 at Riverside Church. There will be a march to the United Nations on May 2. After Sally's informative presentation, she took questions from many S.I.D.A. members.

Issues Chair, Loretta Prisco mentioned that Sally is interested in preparing a position paper on nuclear disarmament and asked if anyone was interested in working on it.

### **Organizing for America**

Phil Jonas of Organizing for America announced that there will be an event "New Health Care and You" held on Tuesday May 25, 7:00 p.m., hosted by Jim Foley. He will assemble a small panel. The location will be announced. Mr. Jonas asked members for their comments and questions regarding this issue.

## **Hydro Fracturing Position Paper**

Issues Committee Chair Loretta Prisco reported that Susan Chew and other S.I.D.A. members recently handed out information about hydro fracturing at the ferry terminal. Loretta said that Susan has done a remarkable job with this issue. Loretta also mentioned that there are five bills in Albany regarding this issue. She also reported that Assemblywoman Janele Hyer-Spencer's position is "No fracking, no way."

Loretta explained that most people don't know much about this hydro fracturing issue. She further explained that New York's water supply is going to be poisoned and we are going to pay for it.

Loretta spoke about the reactions from people that they met at the ferry terminal when handing out the information. She stressed that this is a very important issue. Member, Susan Chew has formed a non-partisan group called Clear Water NY. Susan Chew met with Congressman McMahon's aide and asked him to sponsor legislation to prohibit hydro fracturing. Susan also met with Senator Lanza's office. He is for hydro fracturing and said that it would create jobs.

Loretta asked S.I.D.A. to vote on the position paper, and she urged members to write letters to the *Staten Island Advance*. Loretta urged members to speak to neighbors, friends and family about this issue. She also thanked S.I.D.A. and DORC for the financial assistance the clubs provided for printing the information on hydro fracturing. Finally, Loretta mentioned that there will be a rally about this issue on April 29 on the steps of Borough Hall, 6:00 p.m. She strongly urged members to attend this event.

Joy Robins made a motion to accept the position paper as published in the newsletter. It passed unanimously. Carmen Cognetta, (Congressman McMahon's Chief of Staff) said he would get word out to Governor Paterson to stop the hydro fracturing. He also mentioned that the Congressman is 100% against hydro fracturing.

President Reichard asked Roy Moskowitz to reach out to the media to cover the rally on April 29. President Reichard mentioned that he would contact Tom Wroblewski of the *Advance*.

Cindy Lowney made a motion that Susan Chew and a committee go to the *Staten Island Advance*'s Editorial board to speak to them about hydraulic fracturing. The motion passed unanimously.

President Reichard urged members to attend the rally on April 29. He also plans to put Susan's position paper on S.I.D.A.'s web site. He also mentioned that Susan has tried to get other clubs on board.

### **New Business**

Clara Spector spoke about a group that is trying to get a natural gasoline along the North Shore to transport more natural gas. Carmen Cagnetta said that this group has been making presentations to many groups on Staten Island. Congressman McMahon's office plans to have a public meeting with this group on a Saturday in May. He also explained that the Congressman has not taken a stand on this issue.

### **Endorsement Vote**

Ballots Cast .....45

NYS Assembly 60<sup>th</sup> District

Janele Hyer-Spencer

Favor .....40

No Endorsement.....5

NYS Assembly 61<sup>st</sup> District

Matt Titone

Favor .....38

No Endorsement.....7

NYS Assembly 63<sup>rd</sup> District

Michael Cusick

Favor .....37

No Endorsement.....8

NYS 23<sup>rd</sup> Senatorial District

Diane J. Savino

Favor .....42

No Endorsement.....3

The club endorsed all four incumbents for re-election.

Chris Bauer said that the North Shore Dems are having a dinner on May 6. He made a motion that S.I.D.A. take a full-page ad for \$150 in their journal and send President Reichard to the dinner for \$85. Joann Olbrich made a friendly amendment to take a ½ page ad and send President Reichard. Chris accepted the friendly amendment. The motion for ½-page ad failed 19 opposed 17 favor. Helen Settles made a motion to take a full-page ad and send the President to the dinner. That motion carried. 25 in favor, 4 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

Cindy Lowney announced that the Brooklyn Democrats for Change will be holding a dinner on April 22. She made a motion to send the President to the dinner for \$70. The motion carried. President Reichard had a previous engagement but David Jones agreed to go in his place.

Jeff Stonehill made a motion to send President Reichard to his Grammercy Club event on May 2 for \$50. The motion failed.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on April 28 at President Reichard's home at 8:00 p.m. President Reichard said that May's General meeting will be held on Thursday, May 20 instead of Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> to accommodate speakers from state government.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Marie Dwyer

Corresponding & Recording Secretary

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**STOP HYDRAULIC FRACTURING**

## **Letters**

*We in S.I.D.A. like to make our views known. The following are some of the letters written by S.I.D.A. members that have appeared in print. Unless otherwise indicated, all letters were in the Staten Island Advance and/or posted on the Advance's website [www.silive.com](http://www.silive.com). Unless explicitly stated, the views herein are those of the authors and are not the views of S.I.D.A.*

On-line April 13, 2010

Printed April 13, 2010

### **President Faces Unfair Criticism for Keeping a Campaign Promise**

There was a time when politicians were criticized for not keeping a campaign promise and for moving too slowly to address a problem. That doesn't appear to be the case any more.

In their attack on President Obama, the Republicans make speeches on how the president is going against the will of the people by ramming the health care legislation through Congress.

But is he really going against the will of the people? Or is he fulfilling a campaign promise to those who overwhelmingly elected him to office.

Does a poll of adults, who may or may not have voted, really indicate the "will of the people" or are the results of the 2008 election a better indicator?

In defeating Senator McCain, President Obama received 7 percent more of the popular vote, won 28 states and 242 of the 435 congressional districts. Health care reform was a major promise he made during the campaign.

It is said that the only poll that counts is the one taken on Election Day. Therefore I would argue that when he signed health care reform legislation into law, he was fulfilling a campaign promise he made to the majority of Americans who elected him president

*- Richard Reichard*

On-line April 18, 2010  
Printed April 18, 2010

**We Should be Able to  
Disagree without Resorting  
to Name-Calling**

I am concerned about comments made by Communications Workers of America Vice President Chris Shelton on April 1. Mr. Shelton took the solemn occasion of Holy Thursday to refer to Congressman McMahon as “Judas.” According to the report, people laughed.

Demonic characterizations have no place in politics. We need rational political discourse. We need ways to solve our problems together, not antagonize each other. Congressman McMahon has young children. This was offensive. How is this different from the people comparing President Obama to Hitler?

I worked hard to get health-care reform passed. I attended rallies outside the congressman’s offices, leafleted the ferry terminal and spoke personally to his staff. I am a trade unionist and proud that my union, the United Federation of Teachers, supported health-care reform. I am proud that our president has consistently tried to find a path of compromise and avoided confrontation — even when the opposition has become violent.

I am also the father of young children who are members of the Catholic Church. I am a lifelong Democrat — I campaigned for Bobby Kennedy in 1964. I am certain that I speak for thousands of others in District 13. We need to be able to disagree politically without resorting to name-calling.

*- Tom Shcherbenko*

On-line April 17, 2010  
Printed April 25, 2010

**Government isn’t ‘Taking Over’ the Health-Care System**

Dr. John Reilly, in his guest editorial on April 10 [“For real health reform”], presented some good ideas for health-care reform, some of which are already in the bill that was passed and some of which President Obama proposed but couldn’t get through Congress.

But Dr. Reilly's arguments break down when he starts to make unsubstantiated generalities about big government and government programs. He indicates the bill gives the government control of one sixth of the economy.

Not true. Through this bill, the government steps in where the health-care system doesn't work for many Americans. It sets up regulations for the private sector as we've done in other areas like banking. The insurance companies, pharmaceuticals, hospitals remain privately owned.

Dr. Reilly also cavalierly dismisses Medicare, Social Security, the Veterans Administration and workmen's compensation as poorly managed and evidence that we can't trust government.

Not true. In fact, Social Security is a small, very well-run agency and while the VA has had serious deficiencies, it has greatly improved recently. And I might add, "poorly managed" as compared to what? For-profit private insurance companies work well for the CEOs and stockholders and not necessarily the doctors or the patients.

- *Susan Rappaport*

On-line April 17, 2010

Printed April 25, 2010

### **Numerous Hateful Comments Belie Tea Party's Claims of Innocence**

The flurry of letters denying racism runs rampant in the Tea Party movement would be comical if their Orwellian double-talk wasn't so scary. Some non-bigots sympathizing with the movement exist, but the volume of hate-filled comments on this newspaper's and other media outlets' Web sites are irrefutable evidence a healthy percentage of tea-baggers locally and nationally share an Archie Bunker/George Wallace world-view.

The daily hate permeating the [silive.com](http://silive.com) political forum has rendered it unreadable. The bigotry displayed in the comments section after any Advance article discussing racism, blacks, Latinos, the poor or Obama is an embarrassment to all Staten Islanders.

One regular poster uses Obama in minstrel make-up as his avatar. Another inserts a racist comment between Debi and Rose whenever the borough's first black elected official's name is mentioned. Another regularly

posting tea-bagger made disparaging remarks about a lawyer appointed president of an Island charity's board being Jewish and on the same day further showcased his bigotry by denying the Holocaust. This paper's on-line version is populated by people believing Obama isn't American-born or think he's a radical Muslim. Some intentionally misspell Muslim, "Muslin."

- Roy Moskowitz

*[S.I. Advance Editor's note: The letter-writer presumes that people who post hateful comments on line anonymously are members of the Tea Party, but there is no proof of that affiliation.]*

On-line April 30, 2010

Printed April 30, 2010

### **Gas-Extraction Plan Would Destroy Our City's Watershed**

I am greatly concerned about the threat that the land upstate, including the New York City watershed, could be subjected to the process called hydro-fracturing, in an effort to extract natural gas.

The results of this process are well documented in other states. Not only would it leave the land devastated, clear cut and unusable, but it would also pollute the drinking water upstate and for the at least 9 million people dependent upon the New York City water system.

It would also inevitably lead to a sizable tax increase to build and maintain a New York City water-filtration system. A conservative estimate for that would be \$30 billion, just for starters.

Our water has been admirably clean up to now. If it is allowed to be polluted, there is evidence that it can never be brought back. Some things just can't be filtered out.

We must all fight to make sure our water stays pure.

- Joy Robins

On-line May 10, 2010

Printed May 10, 2010

## **Hydraulic Fracturing Method of Gas-Drilling Threatens Our Water Supply**

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico should be a wake-up call for the nine million New Yorkers who receive their drinking water from the upstate watershed.

What the oil spill has demonstrated is that no drilling technology is foolproof and that no matter how careful an energy company is, accidents can and will happen.

Energy companies want to use hydraulic-fracturing drilling to extract natural gas from a geological formation that runs through our upstate watershed.

Opponents of this type of drilling are concerned that the chemicals used will contaminate our drinking supply. There have been a number of communities throughout the country that have experienced contamination of their water supply after hydraulic fracturing began.

Besides the health concerns associated with contaminated water, there is the real possibility that New York will be required to build a filtration plant, which will then require another increase in our water bills.

Let's not wake up a few years from now and discover our water supply contaminated. Let's not open our water bills and see a large rate increase because we had to build a filtration plant.

If we want to protect our water supply, vote for politicians who oppose hydraulic-fracturing.

- *Richard Reichard*

## **Flashback**

*We keep our history alive by reprinting articles from past newsletters, minutes from past meetings, or other items of interest from the past. If you have items that might be appropriate for the Flashback column, please call Joy Robins at (718) 816-4128. The following is a reprint of the Judy Randall column in the Staten Island Advance where she called our club the left "feather" of the Democratic Party.*

### **DEMOCRATS HELP THEMSELVES TO A BIG POLITICAL HEADACHE CONVENTION MOVE LED TO DISARRAY**

By Judy L. Randall

Sunday, May 23, 1993

Page B2

*Staten Island Advance*

Call it Excedrin Headache No. 1993 for Democratic chairman Bob Gigante.

Or call it half a convention, for that's what Staten Island Democrats held last week. They announced a partial slate of candidates on the local front and opted to hold off endorsing anyone for citywide office.

To make matters worse, they're now faced with the prospect of a primary against their man for borough president.

Part of the disarray was their own making. If you have all your ducks in a row, hold your convention early. If you don't, don't. Gigante said the city politics of the mayoral sweepstakes was too "fluid" to announce a pick. He was right, but there was more to it than that. It seems only one member of the party's executive committee argued in favor of endorsing Mayor David Dinkins for re-election when the committee met for dinner at the Mandalay in West Brighton prior to the convention.

Combine that with the fact that the Democratic candidates the party has lined up Larry Ambrosino for borough president, Councilman Jay O'Donovan and Anastasia Vasilakis for City Council say that, as things stand now, they have no intention of aligning themselves with Dinkins when they campaign this fall.

Former Deputy Mayor Bill Lynch, who has gone back to his old job as Dinkins' campaign manager, has a rule of thumb for this sort of dilemma.

Lynch is fond of saying that if Dinkins' presence on the stump is thought to hurt fellow Democrats more than help, he stays away.

Mothball the city helicopter, Bill. Hizzoner won't be asked to touch down on these shores any time soon.

Whether the primary threatened against Ambrosino by Helen Settles materializes remains to be seen. Ms. Settles, who is anti-secession, doesn't like Ambrosino's pro-secession stance.

Ms. Settles is a former president of *the only liberal club the Democratic Party has, the Staten Island Democratic Association. Indeed, the party's liberal contingent is so tiny that it can't even be called a wing of the Democratic Party; it's more like a feather.*[Emphasis added.]

In order to get on the Sept. 14 primary ballot Ms. Settles will need to get the valid petition signatures of 5,000 registered Staten Island Democrats. And you can bet your Bill Clinton saxophone pin that Gigante will direct the party's law chairman, Jamie Birch, to look over those petitions with an eagle eye.

Birch did the honors a few years back when Democrat George Boncoraglio had the nerve to file primary petitions against Republican state Sen. John Marchi, whom the Democrats cross-endorse. In the end, Birch bounced Boncoraglio.

Meanwhile, Republican South Shore Councilman Fred Cerullo is so popular in his district that the Democrats can't beg, borrow or steal a candidate to run against him.

“Fred is really a Democrat,” confided one top Democrat the other day.

Making Gigante's sales pitch to prospective South Shore candidates even more difficult is the fact that whoever runs against Cerullo will have to do so without benefit of matching funds, the Campaign Finance Board's registration deadline having already elapsed.

The Cerullo camp is feeling so good these days that Cerullo campaign manager Anthony Andriulli will do double-duty and manage Republican Lee

Covino's Council campaign against O'Donovan as well. After hours, of course. Andriulli is on Rep. Susan Molinari's payroll.

Heck, even the Conservatives treated Cerullo with respect when he interviewed with them the other night. He'll get their nod again when Island Conservatives hold their nominating convention in the conference room of Bayley Seton Hospital on June 1, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

And so Gigante says he'll announce the party's pick for Cerullo's seat and the endorsements for mayor, comptroller and public advocate any day now.

Take two aspirin and call us in the morning.

### **Convention Tidbits**

Ambrosino is a real '90s kind of guy. In the middle of an old-fashioned barn-burner of a speech for borough president, he read poetry to the Democrats. Hey, we couldn't make this stuff up. The poem was "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley the last two lines of which are: "I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul."

It was like old home week for Ambrosino, Ms. Vasilakis and O'Donovan. Seems Ambrosino was the assistant principal of IS 72 when Ms. Vasilakis was a student there back in the late '70s. As for Ambrosino and O'Donovan, they played football for New Dorp High just two years apart.

Two of the nominating speeches the other night sounded more like speeches candidates would give. In a podium-thumper for Ambrosino, Gigante pal Larry Arann harangued BP Guy Molinari and claimed O'Donovan and former City Councilman Frank Fossella were the ones who were actually responsible for the one-way toll not Molinari.

In another, Jon DelGiorno, who ran against Republican Mid-Island Councilman John Fusco two years ago, nominated Ms. Vasilakis. He blasted Fusco, saying at one point, "We short-changed ourselves when we elected John Fusco."

All of which sort of begs the question: If Arann and DelGiorno are so passionate, why didn't they run for BP and City Council?

## Jerry Get Your Gun

Newly re-elected school board member Jerry "Pistol-Packin'" Cammarata is quite a role model. The former Republican Assembly candidate and Christian Coalition guru was thrown out of a counting site where votes were being tallied the other day for carrying a .38 caliber revolver.

Cammarata says he's licensed to carry the weapon and must do so "because of the work I do. I'm in and out of hospitals and nursing homes at all hours."

"He's a speech pathologist," said a disgusted Republican of Cammarata last week. "What someone starts to stutter in the middle of the night?"

Cammarata apparently is so confident after his big school board win that he's telling folks he plans to seek the GOP nomination to run for Democratic Assemblyman Eric Vitaliano's seat again.

"Not if I have a breath left in me will that happen," said one top Republican last week.

*Strictly Political, by Advance political writer Judy L. Randall, appears every week in the Perspective section of the Sunday Advance.*

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## Sixth Annual Staten Island Pride Parade and Festival

Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Co-Grand Marshals  
Robin Garber  
Katie Cumiskey

It will step off in St. George at 12:00 noon and will culminate with an outdoor festival that will begin at 1:00 PM, and continue until 5:00 PM, in Tompkinsville Park. Food, music, entertainment, community resource / information tables, vendor merchandise and a variety of recreational activities will be available throughout the afternoon for all to enjoy.

S.I.D.A. will march in the parade and is staffing a table at the festival. Come march behind the S.I.D.A banner!

For information about the Pride Parade and Festival, e-mail [siprideparade@gmail.com](mailto:siprideparade@gmail.com).

