

The Oasis

*The Newsletter of the Friends of the Richmond Hill Library,
Philip Skabeikis founder; Kay Carpenter, editor,
www.richmondhillny.com/Library/FRHL.html*

Summer 2011

Message from the President

I hope you were one of the lucky ones at the June 13, 2011 concert. The Friends of the Richmond Hill Library sponsored **An Evening of Music and Song** featuring **William Smiddy**, a renowned pianist from our community and a new and bright vocalist, **Victor Starsky**. Your Friends membership dues made it possible for us to sponsor this event. Please consider renewing or joining the Friends so that we can continue to present programs of this quality.

The Friends are preparing for a busy fall season. We will have our fifth **Jacob Riis Award** presentation and buffet on Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 6:00 P.M. in the Library Auditorium. We are proud to present this award to an outstanding member of our community, **Ivan Mrakovcic**. Details can be found on page 6 and a personal invitation is in the mail.

We are also planning to hold a **Chinese Auction** on November 10, 2011 from 3:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. We expect there will be many treasures that will appeal to you. Raffles to give you a chance to win the items you like will be sold. Refreshments will be available at a small cost. The Friends hope to see you at these events.

Carolyn Moss, President

CHINESE AUCTION

Thursday, Nov. 10, 2011 3-7 P.M.

LIBRARY FUNDRAISER (& *personal treasure hunt!*)

Fundraising is an important aspect of the work of the Friends of the RH Library. Aware that you are approached multiple times daily for charitable causes, the FRHL asks that you participate in this homegrown effort because, after all, charity does begin at home! Yes, the residents of RH and KG deserve a clean and up-to-date library with well stocked shelves and conscientious staff to help us. Community members should look forward to informative, uplifting and socially beneficial programs; young children should find their library visits exciting; teens should experience the resources and individual help the staff can offer. All this is enhanced with the help of the FRHL especially today with a severely limited library budget.

Fundraising can be a bitter pill so the FRHL Board thought “*a little bit of honey helps the medicine go down*” and developed the Chinese Auction to create some anticipation and fun.

→ So this is how it works.....on Nov. 10 donated *treasures* will be on display at the library for your review. Strips of tickets will be sold and you are free to deposit one ticket (or more) in the box near items that interest, intrigue or amuse you. At 7 P.M. a ticket will be drawn from each box and reveal the fortunate winner!

Sound like fun? It is!

We need **YOUR** participation to make this a success; please join us. Refreshments will be available.



An Interview with Leah Goldschmitt

by Philip Skabeikis, FRHL Board member

What Position do you hold here at Richmond Hill?

I am the Assistant Community Library Manager.

How long have you been part of the Queens Library system?

I actually started working as a page while going for my Bachelors Degree. I did that for 5 years. In September I will reach my 10 year anniversary working for Queens Library full-time.

What other positions have you served and in what branches?

I started working for Queens Library as a page in the Mitchell-Linden library. I was hired full-time in 2001, and my first library was Corona as a Library Assistant. I was shortly transferred to Sunnyside and became a Librarian Trainee. In 2003, I transferred to the McGoldrick Library. In 2006 I actually was the Assistant Manager at Richmond Hill. I was here for 6 months, but because of reorganization within the Library I was transferred to the Auburndale community library. I worked there for three years then worked at the Kew Gardens Hills library. I am now very happy to be back at Richmond Hill.

Are you a native NY'er? Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Flushing, NY.

Where did you go to School?

I went to public schools for elementary, junior and high school. I attended Queens College for my Bachelors degree and my Masters Degree.

What do you hope to see accomplished during your tenure at Richmond Hill?

To work with the manager to work towards building a collection that meets the needs of the community and to provide quality programs.

What do you see as the greatest challenges facing the Queens Library system today?

The never-ending budget cuts. Customers have had to cope with less library hours and limited new materials.

What is the last book you read and do you have any favorite authors?

The last book I read was the Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. Some of my favorite authors are Emily Giffin, Jennifer Weiner and Sophie Kinsella.

What do you think library users can do to fend off the ever-present threat of funding deficits?

They should let their voices be heard by contacting local officials. That is the best way for them to be heard and for local officials to know what is important to their constituents.

When not working at the library what do you enjoy doing?

I'm a huge NY Mets fan!!! I also enjoy shopping, going to the beach, spending time with family and friends, listening to music and reading.

If stranded on a desert island what books/CD's/iTunes would you want to have with you?

The two most important artists I would need are Bon Jovi and Celine Dion.

What type of music do you generally listen to?

I love 80's music and today's popular music.

What role do you see the Friends of the Library playing in the future of Queens Library?

The Friends of the Library can help play a major role by advocating to the Library Director and elected officials.

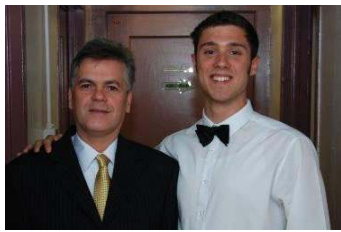
With the proliferation of Kindles and Nooks and other mobile devices encouraging mobile downloads of print media, what do you see as the future of traditional "printed" matter and their repositories i.e. our libraries how can our libraries remain relevant?

I feel printed materials will always be in demand. Some people just enjoy having the feeling of a book in their hands. Libraries will always remain relevant as a place to access information.

Reflection:

An Evening of Music and Song

On Monday evening, June 13, a rare event took place in the auditorium at our library. A concert featuring two remarkable artists commanded an SRO crowd (with over 100 more people hoping to be able to attend.) The program was splendid; the talent - matchless.



(left)
WILLIAM THOMAS SMIDDY,
Pianist

(right)
VICTOR STARSKY, Vocalist

Among Mr. Starsky's moving renditions of operatic, spiritual and popular songs were Donaudy's *Vainement ma bien aimee*, Donizetti's *Una Furtiva Lagrima*, Schubert's *Ave Maria*, Webber's *Music of the Night*, Chaplin's *Smile* (yes, that's Charlie Chaplin) and Rodgers' *I Have Dreamed*. The remarkably versatile Mr. Smiddy accompanied Mr. Starsky.

Mr. Smiddy's legendary brilliance as a classical pianist did not fail to astonish everyone who came to hear him perform. He delighted the crowd with Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto*, Azarashvili's *Nocturne*, a Chopin *Waltz* and Chopin's *Polonaise in A-flat major, Opus 53*.

Richmond Hill **Rallies** for our Library

A well-attended rally organized by the Friends of the Richmond Hill Library and Local 1321 drew large crowds from the community as well as our NYC Councilmember, Ms. Crowley, and local 1321's President, Mr. Hyslop. Ms. Crowley and Mr. Hyslop both emphasized the importance of keeping our libraries open in order to provide the services upon which our customers have come to depend.

The **availability of no-cost** literary guidance, books and tapes, computer access, study space, cultural programs, as well as **resources for** learning the English language, job hunting, sensible approaches to home ownership, sound parenting techniques, how-to budget, and much, much more provide the base for the exceptional standards of our free library system.

One of the Friends from the **Potter's Wheel** in Kew Gardens presented a complimentary pottery craft to the children which attracted 30 children. The Children's Librarian worked with the Activity Assistant to guide children in creating posters to use during the rally! Special thanks to Ms. Crowley, Mr. Hyslop, and the Girl Scouts troops 4002 and 4086.

Note: Hard work and perseverance pay off! Although many staff members of the RH/KG Library had received lay-off notices, we retained all our staff and remain open 5 days per week.

The FRHL are pleased to announce

Mr. Ivan Mrakovcic

as the recipient of the 2011 Jacob Riis Award

Ivan Mrakovcic personifies the qualities inherent in the Jacob Riis Award. He generously serves his community as a concerned resident influencing the areas of education, historic preservation and community management.

The Award Ceremony and Reception will be held on Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 6:00 P.M.

Light Dinner - Donation \$15 – RSVP September 26

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Donation \$15; check payable to the FRHL. Please return to FRHL
118-14 Hillside Avenue RH, NY 11418 **before 9-26-11**

Questions? Please call 718-846-6069.

*Please note: no tickets will be sent; there will be a guest list at the door.

Jacob Riis was a Danish immigrant, naturalized American citizen, noted journalist, author, photographer and social reformer. He was a resident of Richmond Hill and a member of the first Board of Trustees of the RH Library.

The Jacob Riis Award is given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions in the areas of education, literacy and/or social issues. Previous recipients are Nancy Cataldi (2007); Philip Skabeikis (2008); Carl Ballenas (2009); and Dennis Doyle (2010).

Report on the Annual Meeting

Friends of the Richmond Hill Library

In accordance with the by-laws an Annual Meeting of the FRHL was held on June 13, 2011.

The mission of this library support group is to work for the interests of the residents of Richmond Hill and Kew Gardens.

With this as the focus President Carolyn Moss addressed the 125 people in attendance. Ms. Moss presented a brief review of the activities of the past year, spoke of the ongoing (roof & interior walls) and expected improvements to our library during this year, introduced our Manager, Rebecca Alibatya (see Oasis Winter→Spring 2011) and Asst. Manager, Leah Goldschmitt (see p.2 this edition), read nominations for the FRHL Board and welcomed nominations from the floor. Nominations were accepted which included new nominees, Joanne Lacey and Linda Meeth. Elections were then conducted and the results announced.

Friends of the Richmond Hill Library Board of Officers 2011

PRESIDENT, *Carolyn Moss*

VICE-PRESIDENT, *Kay Carpenter*

TREASURER, *Mildred Dana*

SECRETARY, *Rita Werner*

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE,

Joanne Bassin, Eleanor Doyle, Carol Gonzales, Marilyn Legenhausen, Phil Skabeikis, Joanne Lacey, Linda Meeth

Book Discussion Club

By Rita Werner

Year 2011 has been a good one for our Book Discussion Group. Much enjoyable reading and reviewing have been realized from the following books:

- January - *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan
- February - *Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks
- March - *Charles and Emma* by Deborah Heiligman
- May - *Amy and Isabelle* by Elizabeth Strout
- June - *Mudbound* by Hillary Jordan
- July - *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese

The members of the Group extend to our Manager and members of the staff our sincere appreciation for your literary guidance and tangible support.

Naturally, we welcome all new members; we are a *friendly* Friends of the RH Library group! Our schedule is available at the reference desk.

“Artie” Asks...



“Do you know the name of the sculpture represented by this piece of clipart? ”

If so, get it to “Artie” at: FRHL
118-14 Hillside Ave. RH, NY 11418
by 10-12-11 and be eligible for a complimentary FRHL membership.

[*If not*, just seek the help of a librarian!]

EVERYONE IS URGED TO JOIN our local library support group.

Your annual dues, only \$5, *says* and *does* so much!

Says? Yes, the *number of members* indicates the value that residents place on this resource in our community. It says that we regard our library as vital to the well-being of our neighborhood.

Does? Yes, your dues serve not only as a contribution that *supports* the work of the FRHL but also *validates* the efforts of the Board members. The newsletter, the *Oasis*, is, and always has been the result of pure volunteerism. Special programs, such as An Evening of Song, Children’s Summer Reading Group, purchase of books and stringing of decorative holiday lights are examples of your dues at work. Every member of the Board is a *volontario*, *ochotnik*, *התנדבות* and in plain English – a volunteer! You may not presently be able to volunteer but your dues indicate your appreciation and regard for the work of the Board. *Thank you.*

Membership Form

[send to FRHL 118-14 Hillside Ave. RH, NY 11418]

Please include me as a member of the Friends of the RH/KG Library! I have included a check for \$5 (tax-deductible) drawn to the FRHL.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

e-mail _____

