

Resolving Those Resolutions:
The Annual Star-Revue Guide to Personal Improvement



SPECIAL SECTION STARTS PAGE 8



**Red Hook Rings
in the New Year**
Photos page 7

**Is a Trolley in
our Future?**
story page 3



Celebrating Columbia *Waterfront District* **The Red Hook Star-Revue**

January 2011 The Hook's Local Newspaper

Serving Beers after Serving Our Country is What Goes On at the Red Hook VFW

by Matt Graber

As a national non-profit organization dating back to the Spanish-American War, Veterans of Foreign Wars has been at the forefront of advocacy for veterans and their families for over a century - it was instrumental in the creation of the GI Bill, and compensation for Viet Nam veterans exposed to agent orange and for veterans with Gulf War Syndrome. It clocks in 13 million hours in community service each year, and raises \$2.5 million in scholarships. On a national scale, the VFW is a powerful institution. On a local scale, it is a place for veterans to relax and have a beer.

Most of us have noticed the VFW post on Van Brunt Street between King and Sullivan by the larger-than-life soldier waiving his hat in the air, the memorial statue next door to the bar. When we walk past the bar, the venation blinds are pulled down but not closed, so that in the few seconds that we have to glance inside as we pass by we catch a fleeting glimpse of what's going on. Usually a handful of patrons seated at a well-lit sports bar, perhaps playing cards, shooting the breeze, watching a game or a horse race.

Step inside and you'll likely hear the jukebox playing some fifties classic by Buddy Holly or Frank Sinatra or Chuck Berry. Heads will turn in your direction - if you are a familiar face you'll get

a warm welcome, if not you'll at least get a nod. A row of five slot machines stands side by side near the window, between the front end of the bar and the card table where one or two men might be playing a game of gin. To the left is an empty room used for parties and events, which you pass through for the bathroom. Behind the bar you've got a lightly stocked liquor shelf, Budweiser on tap, a few jugs of Carlo Rossi and bottles of coke and ginger ale for mixers. The VFW is a club, but the "Members Only" sign hanging from the front door isn't written in stone - members can bring friends. According to the national web site, to become a member of the VFW you have to meet certain criteria. You must have either received a campaign medal for overseas service, served 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days in Korea, or received hostile fire or imminent danger pay. All veterans who have served overseas are welcome at Red Hook's post.

Friendly Atmosphere

Despite the exclusive nature of the social club, if given the opportunity to spend some time drinking miniature bottles of Bud and talking to some of the members and their friends or wives, you'll feel right at home.

At three o'clock in the afternoon on New Year's Eve, it's the usual scene. Sal Meglio is behind the bar and his wife, Rose, is sitting at the front end sip-



Sal, Rose, and Kenny, taking it easy on New Years Eve a few hours before the festivities begin.

ping from a glass of white wine. Blizzard coverage from NY1 is on the two flat screens above the bar, and an old episode of Twilight Zone plays on the monitor above the card table. Buddy Holly's "Looking for Someone to Love" plays in the background. The whole bar is decorated for the holidays. A few dozen yellow and purple balloons hang from the drop ceiling. The Christmas tree by the window is still in good health. A three-foot robot statue of Miss Santa Claus stands on the back bar shelf shaking a bell. On a small chalkboard near the entrance, the simple phrase "Happy New Year!"

is written in chalk, accompanied by a smiley face.

Walking into the bar to return a photo borrowed for this newspaper's "Way Back When" section and to pick another photo for January, I immediately catch a little hell from Sal for spelling his last name wrong (twice) in the last issue. Once that's out of the way, we're down to business. He gets out the manila envelope full of black and whites going back to the pre-war years, most of them capturing the vibrant working class neighborhood that was Red Hook in the 40's and 50's.

please turn to page 5



**Our take on
The Good Fork**
see page 19



**A Landmark on
Visitation Place? see p. 21**

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Growing Up Red Hook

Warm Winter Memories

by Danette Vigilante



If there was one thing we weren't growing up, it was cold. The New York City Housing Authority kept us nice and toasty.

That first smell of the steam heat pumping and banging its way up to our radiators announced the arrival of Fall. It also spoke of cozy Sundays spent in pajamas, playing in the hallway with our friends and the promise of wintertime fun that was just around the corner.

Sometimes, my mother would slice oranges and place them across our radiators giving our apartment a sweet scent. If we needed to dry our winter gear, onto the radiators they'd go until we needed them again. If we wanted to make sure our favorite pair of jeans would be ready to wear not long after they were washed, again, the radiator was a must. It didn't matter one bit that, once they were removed, they'd be stiff and crunchy and could just about stand on their own. We'd put them on anyway knowing that after only a couple of deep knee bends, everything would be put right once more.

My sister though, she was a bit more inventive and had her own idea of what the radiators were for. She'd heat up her *Now and Later* candies until they'd be soft and gooey; just right for a delicious treat if, and only if, you'd manage to eat one without pulling out a tooth filling!

Eventually, Thanksgiving would roll on by and as soon as the dishes had been washed and put away, my best friend's mother did something which set every kid's heart aflutter; she'd welcome Christmas by adorning her second floor living room window in beautiful multicolored lights; her Christmas tree proudly standing amongst it all. It was as though a door had suddenly swung open and one by one, from the first through sixth floors, other windows followed suit.

Then, it would be official. The magic of the season, with its good cheer and best wishes, had been sent straight into our hearts and we were full; ever hopeful, ever grateful, ever joyful.

May you too, carry these things in your heart throughout the New Year, sharing them along the way.

May you too, have more than enough warmth and love to accompany you on your journey.

Danette Vigilante is a children's author living in New York City with one husband, two daughters, Mr. Noodle, her love hog Yorkshire terrier and Daisy, a cat with a seriously bad attitude. Her newest book, *The Trouble with Half a Moon*, will be published on January 6, 2011.

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Celebrating Columbia Waterfront District
The Red Hook Star-Revue
The News of the Hook Volume 2 No. 1, January 2011

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The Red Hook Star-Revue is published monthly by Frank Galeano and George Fiala. It circulates by mail and on newstands throughout the downtown Brooklyn area. Our mission is to be the tie that binds our dynamic communities together, by providing one place for local achievements, art and history to be celebrated, local problems to be identified and solutions discussed, and also by providing an affordable advertising medium for local shops and institutions.

Our offices are at 101 Union Street, where you can take an ad, buy a coffee mug, make copies or simply tell us what's on your mind in-person, and we can be reached by phone at 718 624-5568 and by email at editor@RedHookStar.com or info@RedHookStar.com.

We welcome letters to the editor as well as press advisories which can be mailed to:

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SEARCH FOR RED HOOK STAR-REVUE

If you have story ideas or ideas in general of interest, please contact us by all means and methods outlined above or stop by our office. Next issue will be out the first week of February, 2010 - Advertising and Editorial Deadline is Friday, January 21, 2011.



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Red Hook Streetcar Study Makes Headway

by Matt Graber

The DOT held its second meeting last month in the gymnasium of the Police Athletic League at 110 West 9th Street to present the progress of the Streetcar Feasibility Study to a select group of elected officials, community leaders, and business owners (the Community Advisory Committee), as well as take questions and feedback.

The study, funded with a \$295 million earmark secured by Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez (who made a surprise appearance at the meeting) began in October and is scheduled to be finished by February 2011.

Given the obvious lack of transit options for Red Hook residents, the study seeks to determine whether or not a system of streetcars - connecting Red Hook with the Downtown Brooklyn area as well as the subway station at Smith and 9th Street - can be financially sustainable, as well as meet the demands of commuters and stimulate development.

B61 ‘Not Reliable’

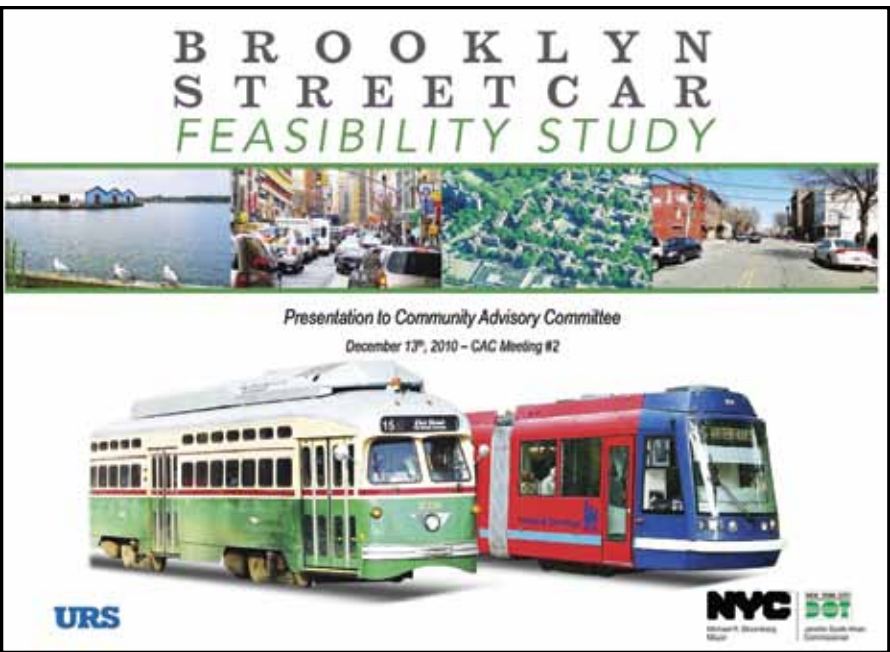
With help from the consulting firm URS, which specializes in streetcar systems, the DOT had, as of December 13 when the meeting was held, produced summaries on “Existing Conditions,” “Transit Analysis,” and “Case Studies.” The first focused on understanding the status quo for commuters coming in and out of Red Hook. As most readers already know, the B61 is our life-line to the rest of the city, without which we would depend entirely on walking, biking, or driving. The DOT has taken note of a “perceived lack of reliability”

“The route that the committee seems to be leaning towards is one linking to the Smith and 9th Street subway, snaking up Richards Street to Beard, making a right to Van Brunt, and then completing the loop down Van Brunt back to the subway.”

regarding our bus service.

The transit demand analysis looked at how many people ride the B61 every day (17,583 is the weekday average). It also predicted a 12% increase in transit demand to result form anticipated economic growth.

The case studies summary sought to learn from the experiences of other cities (Portland, OR, Philadelphia, PA, and Seattle, WA) that have recently built streetcar systems. This section of the study found that in the two cases when streetcar systems were supplemented with “complimentary incentives” for economic growth, such as lax parking regulations, easier boarding for passengers, and higher buildings in the immediate area, the desired development did occur. But in the case of Philadelphia, where there were few if any extra incentives, the streetcar system failed to ignite significant development.



This finding led Chistopher Hrones of the DOT to conclude that development “can be part of streetcar service, but only it is done right and includes extra incentives.”

The route that the committee seems to be leaning towards is one linking to the Smith and 9th Street subway, snaking up Richards Street to Beard, making a right to Van Brunt, and then completing the loop down Van Brunt back to the subway. This would provide access to Ikea and Fairway, with the hope that the Van Brunt route would stimulate commercial activity there.

The DOT will hold the third and final Community Advisory Committee Meeting in February, at which point it

will present the remainder of the research, which has to do with cost estimating, construction and alignment issues, and an overall evaluation of the findings of the study. Finally, a public meeting will be held sometime in early 2011. While there is no guarantee that any action will take place following the study, the study is the first step towards implementation, if the results are positive.

The first two Community Advisory Committee presentations are available on the NYCDOT web page, with plenty of additional information about the Streetcar Feasibility Study. The easiest way to get to that web page is to google ‘streetcar study Red Hook.’

Rally to Limit Pollution from Idling Ships at the Cruise Terminal



A small crowd of elected officials, community advocates and members of the press stood out in the cold on Pioneer and Imlay Streets on January 3rd to protest the idling of cruise ships on the Brooklyn waterfront. With the massive Queen Mary 2 in the background, which is said to emit as much toxicity into our air as 12,000 idling cars, Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez, State Senator Daniel Squadron, among others, sought to put pressure the Port Authority, the Economic Development Corporation, and other key players, to adopt the 2-year delayed “Shore Power” plan, which would build the infrastructure for ships to plug into electrical systems while at port.



Hook Goes Burlesque?

The small space formerly occupied by the popular music venue, The Hook, which drew several complaints from nearby residents over excessively loud crowds spilling out onto the sidewalk in the early hours of the morning, might soon become the site of Red Hook’s very own burlesque. Paris Burlesque Club will be a bar and performance space located at 18 Commerce Street, near Columbia Street, depending on what gets decided at an upcoming Community Board 6 meeting. According to the NY Post, the operators of the former bar at that location got into some trouble last January when servers were arrested for selling alcohol without a license.

But lots of people had good things to say about The Hook. “I’m surprised it went down,” says Greg Davoca, who works on Union Street near Columbia. “It was the only real music venue outside of Manhattan and Williamsburg. I saw the Super Suckers there. You could fit 700 people in that place.”

The CB6 will meet for a “presentation and review” of the application for a cabaret licence by the owners of Paris Burlesque Club, and Craig Hammerman, District Manager at CB6, is keeping his opinion on the matter on reserve until then. “We don’t know the applicant and the business isn’t running so there’s no track record to speak of,” he wrote in an email. “We encourage affected and interested members of the public to attend and participate in our upcoming committee meeting.”

The meeting will be held on January 24 at 6:30 pm at the PS 58 Auditorium, 330 Smith Street.



Precinct Report

Buddy's Burritos Robbed

On December 17th, sometime during the night, thieves broke into Buddy's Burrito, 260 Court Street and took away the cash register worth \$1800. Inside the register was \$2500 in cash.

Generator Thieves Nabbed

At about 8 pm the evening of December 17th, two men entered a dwelling at 362 Columbia Street and stole a DeWalt generator valued at \$1800. Two men, one 42 and the other 23 were arrested by Officer Sam Ouk and Sgt. Tobin.

Meeting Gone Bad

Sometime during the night of December 13th a victim had his Chase banking card, metrocard, NYS ID and cellphone stolen from his home at 90 Commerce Street. The perpetrator was someone that the victim had met earlier that evening on the subway and invited in.

Give Me Your Wallet

On December 20th, at the corner of West 9th and Court Street, at about midnight, a 6 ft. male ordered his victim to hand over his wallet. Taken from the 24 yr-old male was a wallet containing \$5, 5 credit cards, a Transit Check and also a cellphone.

Hand it Over

On December 20th, at 11:40 pm a male who was waiting at the bus stop near 32 Garnet Street was accosted by a male Hispanic saying "let me get that money that's in your pocket." The victim handed over \$230 in cash, at which point the 5'6", 180 lb. male fled in an unknown direction.

Give Me Everything You Have

On Saturday, December 18th at 10:15 pm a man was walking to the deli when he was held up by a man who stuck his hand behind his jacket making the appearance of having a gun and who demanded everything. Stolen was \$90 in cash and an HTC smartphone.

Snow Delivery

On Sunday night of the snowstorm, a Red Hook woman with labor pains was driven to the hospital by a 76th Precinct police sergeant who happened to have a 4 x 4 vehicle which was able to negotiate the drifting snow. Additionally, officers patrolled the BQE with defibrillators in case of problems.

News From the Streets

written and collected by the Star-Revue writing staff

Cops of the Month



Officers Richard Taveras and Carl Brady were pulling a shift in Mill Basin last month, as part of a program that dispatches cops to higher crime areas to provide extra coverage. Parking their van outside a Capital Bank, they were flagged down by a pedestrian who said the bank was being robbed. This was on Ralph Avenue and Avenue K. As Officer Taveras recalls: "We exited the van and headed into the bank, not knowing what to expect. As we entered, an individual wearing a black ski mask and hood was exiting with a laundry bag containing \$5,000. We confronted him, told him to get down on the floor, and handcuffed him." The bank robber, who did not have any weapon on him, had reportedly gone from teller to teller demanding that they put whatever money they had into the bag. The two officers are the dual recipients of the 76th Precinct's "Cop of the Month" award for January.

No Truth to Rumor

A rumor has been circulating that the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Roman Catholic church on Visitation Place and Richards Street, is in danger of being shut down and turned into residential condominiums. The logic behind this is that the church is in so much debt that it has no choice. Elsie Tweedy, the secretary and bookkeeper at the church, says she has not heard about any such thing. "We seem to be doing okay," she says, referring to the church's financial standing. "It was worse a year ago, but we've had all kinds of fundraisers, and many more projects coming up." The church has high goals for 2011, including paying its \$150,000 deficit (\$6,397 has been paid as of 12/19/10), and increasing mass attendance to 1,200 parishioners.

Housing in Brooklyn Bridge Park Discussed

The second public meeting held by the Committee on Alternatives to Housing drew a majority of speakers that were in support of the current plan to generate the \$16 million a year needed to maintain Brooklyn Bridge Park by building several private residential buildings within its boundaries. This was in contrast to the first meeting, held at the end of November, at which almost every speaker was adamantly against the current plan. Their anger goes back five or six years, when the park plan shifted from recreational facilities in favor of private development. The potential sale of the Jehovah's Witnesses buildings located near the park by their current owner, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, might present a compromise in which those buildings would be converted into private housing. But for now, the fate of Brooklyn Bridge Park is still up in the air. Of particular interest to residents of Red Hook and Columbia Waterfront District is whether or not private developments go up on the south entrance to the park at Atlantic Avenue. These buildings would make it more difficult to access the park and would undermine the potential role of Atlantic Avenue as a major gateway to Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Bicycle Laws to Be More Aggressively Enforced

Captain Jack Lewis of the 76th Precinct would like everyone to know that his officers will be more aggressively enforcing bike restrictions as a matter of public safety. Those that are used to riding their bikes on the wrong side of the street or on the sidewalk can expect to get a hefty summons if they continue to do so in the future. The tickets are the same as those issued to motorists for traffic violations. In addition, riding your bike on the sidewalk is considered "reckless" endangerment of other people and could result in criminal charges. In our November issue, we reported on an accident on Van Brunt and Sullivan Streets that resulted from a cyclist not stopping at a red light. With the thousands of miles of new bike lanes being installed in the city, these incidents should be reminders that cyclists have to be as careful and observing of the law as motorists.

Six Packed Panels by Vince Musacchia



Editorial:

As The Star-Revue Begins its Second Year...

Another year has come and gone and one of the unexpected things that happened was the birth in mid-year of the Red Hook Star-Revue. What happened was that after 10 years on Court and Nelson Street, I decided to move my business to a larger location. While living in downtown Brooklyn since 1983, I never really paid much attention to Red Hook, being one of those people who wrote it off because of the BQE trench. About all I knew was Lillies, the night spot that used to be near where Ikea is now, and The House of Pizza and Calzones, whose pizza is good enough to lure me whenever I was nearby.

Turns out that the best location I found for my mailing business was on the first block of Union Street, and it didn't take long for me to fall in love with my new neighborhood! Before beginning my mailing business I happened to have worked for 10 years for the now de-

funct Phoenix newspaper, a community paper serving the Heights, Park Slope and Cobble Hill and Carroll Gardens. When I realized that this great place I was lucky enough to be part of didn't really have a paper of its own, I decided to start one. With the help of Frank Galeano, a denizen, I was able to get a June issue out in a couple of weeks.

We started out with a few articles and a lot of photographs for the most part written by this editor, and the addition of talented artists and writers have made this a more interesting read. We work hard to be of interest to all the diverse communities that comprise this area, from the Red Hook Houses to the co-ops above Fairway. In just a little over half a year we have been able to double both our size and our circulation.

However, there is something lacking which we hope can be remedied this year. This editorial page ought to be filled with letters from readers expressing your dissatisfaction as well as oc-

casional satisfaction with our coverage. We also should have op-eds written by local leaders, politicians and experts on subjects of interest to us all. If we were a larger publication with a bigger staff, we would be actively seeking these types of contributions and personally inviting people to write their opinions for us. But as of yet, we are mostly composed of a bunch of part timers, who all have other jobs, and this paper is more or less a labor of love (excepting of course for our indefatigable advertising manager, whose more than fulltime efforts are really what makes this newspaper possible).

So let this be your invitation to join us here in our monthly newspaper project. In addition to letters and possible longer pieces, we are always open to suggestions from free-lancers, as well as contributions of poetry and prose from local artists.

As long as I'm at it here, let me also say that we are always looking for advertising salespeople and also we would be in-

terested in attaching ourselves to some sort of internet expert who could help us design a web page for the newspaper as well as a few other projects.

In lieu of a specific web page, by the way, we do keep up a **Facebook** page, which has at this writing 182 fans and onto which we post frequently, and which could serve as a place for friendly arguing back and forth on the topic of the day or month. If you are an online venturer (and these days who isn't?) I invite you to check us out there as well.

The basic point of this editorial is to invite you, the reader, to feel at home to use the pages of this newspaper to vent in or to contribute your art or to let us know of your successes. We can't promise that we'll have enough room to print everything we receive, but we will always publish as much as we can.

Wishing all the best for the New Year!
George Fiala

The VFW is a Funky, Friendly Place for Red Hook Veterans

(continued from the cover)

Sal is a Korean War vet, but he'd rather tell stories of growing up on Van Brunt Street, when the cobblestones were ripped up and tracks were installed to quickly transport cargo from the piers for the war effort. "When they laid the new cobblestones down," recalls Sal, "they used to lay tar between the stones, nice clean tar that melted when it was hot out. Then you could scoop it up with your finger and chew on it. As kids we all did this, both boys and girls."

I ask how parents reacted when their kids came home for dinner with blackened teeth. "They didn't care," he says. "As long as we weren't smoking cigarettes." I have to ask: What did the tar taste like?

Sal replies flatly: "Tar."

He also remembers when the infamous BQE ditch was being dug out along Hicks Street. During the winter, when the tar was too hard to scoop up from between the stones, he and his friends would go sledding in the ditch provided that there was enough snow.

To my left sits Roddy (hope I spelled that right), who doesn't go back as far as the tar-chewing, ditch-sledding days that Sal likes to reminisce about, but he does remember growing up in a very different Red Hook than what we have today, for better or worse. "It was great," he says. "Everybody knew everybody. We had a lot of things that we don't have today: shoe makers, butcher shops, grocery stores. You could go out the door and get anything you wanted. Now we have Fairway, which is great, too. It's changed, good, bad, different - I have no complaints."



Sal Meglio slinging beers on New Years Eve

Not everyone at the bar is as forthcoming as Sal and Roddy with their stories of the old neighborhood. A man way in the back, at a corner table, just sits with his beer. He blends in completely and no one bothers him.

Later on in the evening, the front door is wide open and the New Year's festivities are in full swing. The old jukebox has been replaced by a live DJ., who blasts "YMCA" by the Village People as the ball drops, ushering in the new year. All of a sudden the VFW is a dance club, as the jovial crowd spills into the extra room.

As this country welcomes home a new generation of veterans, it's a good thing that places like this exist.



Way Back When



Young Francis Campagna makes due with a broom handle back in the stick ball days on Verona Street between Van Brunt and Imlay, circa 1950. Photo courtesy of Sal Meglio.



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LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ APT: _____ CITY: _____ ZIP: _____
CURRENT SCHOOL _____ GRADE: _____
OSIS # _____ - _____ - _____ (The OSIS # can be obtained by calling the main office of your current school.)
GRADE APPLYING FOR: ☐ 6 ☐ 7 DATE OF BIRTH: ____/____/____ GENDER: ☐ M ☐ F
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I understand that my signature indicates my desire to enter my child into the lottery. Admission into Summit Academy Charter School is not guaranteed.

PARENT SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

New Years in Red Hook: Celebrating at Bait and Tackle, Rocky Sullivan's, Sunny's, Hope and Anchor and the VFW

photos by Fiala





Resolving Those Resolutions:

The Annual Star-Revue Guide to Personal Improvement



Elite Fitness Studio

111 Union Street, elitetrainingandfitness.com, (718) 596-0006

Getting to the gym often is half the battle when trying to stay in shape, so finding a fitness studio nearby often is a good idea. "There is a 90 percent chance that you will utilize your gym if it is less than a half mile away from your home," says David Cascia, director of Elite Fitness Studio.

Located in the Columbia Waterfront District, Elite Fitness Studio looks deceptively small from the outside, but downstairs has ample space, including a room with 35 cardio units—some with built-in TV monitors—and weight machines that can accommodate anyone who is not a bodybuilder. Classes include yoga, rowing, cycling and a variety of Pilates classes including mat, group reformer, equipment circuit and tower. Weight loss and nutrition coaching also is available.

Amenities also include showers and lockers equipped with digital locks. Care for children 4 months to 9 years is available on weekdays from 9 am to 1 pm, for a rate of \$7 for 60 minutes and \$10 for 90 minutes. Elite also offers classes for children, including Lil' Tumblers (18 months to two-and-a-half years), Tumble and Roll (ages 3 to 5) and fit play, yoga and karate (ages 5 to 9). Class cards can be purchased if parents are non-members, but Cascia says there are inexpensive family and business memberships.

Sign up for the trial pass online; though it says it is valid for seven days, that offer is available only in June, July and August, so you'll get a three-day pass. You may also have seen the \$50 gift cards around the area; Cascia says these are valid for new members only. Other promotions include three free months when you purchase a year membership and a couples' special: buy one year for \$899, get one year free. Elite Fitness is open Monday through Thursday from 5:45 am to 10 pm, Friday until 8:30 pm and on weekends from 8 am to 7 pm.

Almost every year, news outlets report the glut statistics about New Year's resolutions. About 40 to 45 percent of people celebrating the dawn of 2011 will make resolutions, yet an estimated 97 percent soon cast them aside. Some area businesses, however, offer easy—even fun—ways to help you keep those promises you made to yourself. Whether you've decided to get fit as a fiddle or take up the fiddle, there's a local class for you. - *Overview by Josie Rubio*



Red Hook Recreation Center

155 Bay Street, nycgovparks.org, (718) 722-3211, (718) 722-7105

Two of the most notable features of the Red Hook Recreation Center are the outdoor Olympic-size pool and the reasonable membership fees. Access to indoor recreation facilities without indoor pools is free for youths under 18, \$10 per year for senior citizens (55 and up) and \$50 per year for adults. (An additional \$25 per year will grant you access to centers with indoor pools.)

The center is open from 7 am to 8:30 pm Monday through Friday and 8 am to 5 pm on Saturdays. Facilities include a gymnasium, cardio room, athletic field, indoor basketball court, fitness room, afterschool room, computer resource center and the outdoor pool. The rec center offers computer classes, afterschool programs, a free indoor youth hockey clinic and nutrition seminar and free Shape Up NYC Zumba classes Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10

to 11 am and weight loss for senior classes from 11 am to 1 pm on weekdays through January 8.

Try out the center for free on the first Monday of the month, when the city's rec centers offer BeFit-NYC Free First Mondays. Facilities, programs and most classes are free of charge, though some classes incur a small fee. Surrounding Red Hook Park offers basketball and handball courts, playgrounds, soccer fields, baseball fields and running tracks.

Everyday Athlete

136 Union Street, everydayathlete.com, (718) 852-6300

Passing by the Everyday Athlete studio on Union Street, it's usually easy to tell if the place is full of adults or children, based on the size of the shoes in the cubbyholes by the entrance. Tomas Anthony and Alejandra Belmar started the business in their apartment and have been in the current location for the past six years. "Everyday Athlete uses a holistic approach that looks at an individual's physical health within the context of their family, lifestyle and goals," says Anthony. "We also believe that being fit means being able to 'play' or enjoy one's fitness outside in the real world and not in a gym."

If you're worried about signing up for a gym membership and not going, Everyday Athlete bases their fees on services, so all clients are on programs designed

for progress, lasting four, 12, 24 or 48 weeks. Ninety percent of the classes are \$30 or less, Anthony says. Some \$25 drop-in classes are available, such as Zumba or MELT. Signature programs also are offered, including Everyday Athlete, which includes 90-minute workouts and nutrition coaching, and Liquid Fitness, training for snowboarders, surfers, skaters or skiers. Pre- and post-natal programs also are offered, as are two boot camps—one with childcare and one without.

The winter session for children's classes begins on January 10 and costs \$360 for 12 weeks. Classes include Tumble Tots (18 months to 3 years), Tumble Cubs (ages 3 to 4), Tumble Bears (ages 4 to 5), Kangaroos (age 5), Fundamental Tumbling (ages 5 to 6), recreational tumbling (ages 6 to 8 and 8 to 10) and execution tumbling for girls (ages 8 to 12).

Creative Arts Studio II

119 Union Street, creativeartsstudio.com, (718) 797-5600

Adult classes at this location of Creative Arts Studio include modern dance and adult tap, as well as ballroom, Latin and swing dance for beginners. A trial class is \$18 and a four-class card is \$64.

Children's classes include hip hop for tots (ages 5 to 6), creative movement (ages 3 to 4), I Want to Be a Rock Star (ages 7 to 10) and Drama I & II (ages 6 to 9), as well as tap and ballet classes. Some classes have special fees, but most are \$180 for one class per week during a session, \$348 for two classes per week and \$648 for four classes per week. Check out the website for more information about classes and details about the Boerum Hill studio at 310 Atlantic Avenue.

Pay-What-You-Can Classes at Cora Dance

201 Richards Street., Buzzer #5, coradance.org

All classes for kids and adults at Cora Dance are pay-what-you-can. "We turn no one

away based on what they can or cannot afford," says Shannon Hummel, artistic director. "I passionately believe that all people should have access to excellent arts experiences through performance and education regardless of where they come from or how much they can pay, and I will keep it that way for as long as I can." The suggested tuition is \$290 for 18 weeks, but about 90 percent pay below that rate. A single trial class is \$15.

Children's classes include creative movement (ages 2 to 5), hip-hop/jazz fusion (ages 8-and-a-half to 12), tap (ages 4 to 8), ballet (ages 4 to 12) and modern (ages 6 to 8). Plus there are theater classes and "The Works!"—drama, drumming, clowning, storytelling, painting and more—for ages 4 to 5. Those interested in the spring semester, from January 24 to mid-June, should attend the open house on January 15. Cora also offers a pick-up and walk-over service for students of P.S. 15 and PAVE Academy Charter School.

Cora provides leotards, tights, dance pants, ballet slippers and tap shoes to children who need them and accepts donations, so



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if you have some unused or outgrown items, feel free to donate them. Also accepted: non-perishable snacks (crackers, pretzels, cookies, juice boxes, etc.) and cleaning, office and art supplies. Cora also is looking for donations of silent auction items for their May 7 gala at Rocky Sullivan's and service donations of graphic design, promotion and grantwriting.

For adults, there are drop-in Vinyasa yoga classes, which also are a suggested \$10 donation or pay-what-you-can. Cora also plans to offer Zumba—the popular fitness class that combines Latin music, dance and aerobic movement—on one weekday evening (the day is to be determined) and on Saturday mornings from 11 am to noon.

Wednesday Yoga at Everbrite Merchantile Co.

351 Van Brunt Street, ebmerc.com
This fun, quirky retail space offers a one-hour open-level yoga classes on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 pm with yoga instructor/dancer/choreographer Felecia Maria. Suggested donation is \$10 and students must bring their own mats. If you're in the market for yoga pants, Felecia Maria's designs are available, conveniently, at Everbrite.



Whether you've resolved to get moving or relax, Element Natural Healing Arts offers a variety of services, including yoga, acupuncture, reflexology and massage. Photo courtesy of Element Natural Healing Arts.

Element Natural Healing Arts

518 Henry Street, elementhealing.com, (718) 855-4850

Whether you've resolved to quit smoking, relax or take up yoga, Element Natural Healing Arts offers a wide variety of holistic therapies, classes and workshops. Classes include open flow yoga, yin yoga, Vinyasa, tai chi and Gyrokinesis, with prices ranging from \$10 for your first class to \$16 for drop-ins. Class cards are available for six classes (\$90, valid for 10 weeks), 10 classes (\$140, 15 weeks) and 20 classes (\$270, 24 weeks).

Upcoming workshops include Gyrokinesis with Alexandra Berger, January 16 and February 27 from noon to 2 pm for \$25; power restore workshop with Britt Butcher January 2 from 4:30 to 6:30; an Eastern approach to nutrition with Jane Hansen on January 23 from 5 to 6:30 pm for \$10 and an emotional support group with Risha Nathan on Tuesdays January 4 to February 13 (\$25 per class, \$140 for the series).

If relaxation is your 2011 goal, Element offers Swedish, deep tissue, prenatal, hot stone and sports

massage, as well as Oriental bodywork including shiatsu, Thai and reflexology. Acupuncture treatments are offered to treat health conditions, ease cigarette cravings and diminish wrinkles. (All needles are disposable, individually wrapped and pre-sterilized.)

Other services include naturopathic consultation, herbology, ear candling, Reiki, craniosacral therapy, Alexander technique, lymphatic drainage (light touch to improve circulation) and rolfing (a deep tissue therapy that alters posture and structure). Chiropractic services also are available at Element, as well as facials and skin-care.

Lessons and Classes Irish Lessons at Rocky Sullivan's

34 Van Dyke Street, rockysullivan.com, (718) 246-8050

If your idea of the Irish language is limited to asking for Guinness and Jameson's at local watering holes, then perhaps attending one of the free Irish language classes at Rocky Sullivan's at 7 pm on Tuesday nights with Peadar O'Hici will expand your horizons. Presumably, you'll learn Gaelic words. Stick around for traditional Irish music and try out your newfound language skills.

Learn an Instrument at Jalopy Theatre and School of Music

315 Columbia Street, jalopy.biz, (718) 395-

3214

Jalopy Theatre and School of Music offers multiple levels of lessons for guitar, fiddle, mandolin, banjo and ukelele. The next eight-week semester starts January 31 and will also include two new group classes: clogging (traditional American dance) and country harmony singing. Classes are \$225 and students can rent an instrument for \$25 per month. Owner Lynette Wiley notes the classes tend to sell out, so call to reserve a spot.

Check Jalopy's schedule online for Sunday afternoon one-time workshops. Wiley says that some, such as the washboard workshop or music theory, are great for beginners. The monthly vocal harmony workshop has a beginner and intermediate series, and some workshops are geared toward intermediate or advanced players, often graduates of Jalopy's classes who are interested in building their skills.

Jam at Union Street Star Theatre

101 Union Street, (718) 624-5568

Whether you're looking for a place to show off the new skills you learned at Jalopy or you're still harboring dreams of being a rock



A recent night of jamming at the Star Theatre

star, head to Union Street Star Theatre for free Thursday night open jam sessions. A stage, PA, bass amp, drums and mic, as well as refreshments, are provided—all that's needed is your talent.

Or just head over to the former marionette theater to listen and cheer on the musicians.

Learn How to Knit, Sew and More at Brooklyn General Store

128 Union Street, brooklyngeneral.com, (718) 237-7753

This charming fabric, yarn and notions shop, also offers classes in arts nearly lost to time and technology, including sewing, pattern-making, knitting, crocheting, embroidering and quilting, all for a variety of skill levels. Registration for classes must be completed 24 hours in advance and prices vary, from \$50 one-time workshops to \$200 intermediate and advanced classes.

Discover the Art of Pottery at Clayworks on Columbia

195 Columbia Street, clayworksoncolumbia.org, (718) 694-9540

For the past 17 years, this not-for-profit has been offering pottery classes and workspace in the area. Classes for adults and young



adults meet weekly for three hours over the course of 10 weeks, for a cost of \$320, plus a clay firing fee of 4 cents per cubic inch. Classes include instruction, earthenware clays, glazes and shelf space, as well as access to an electric wheel, a slab roller, a clay extruder and a work table. The open studio hours are for students, and member-

ships are available for master potters, who can use the studio whenever classes are not in session. Call or check the website for more information on the next 10-week session.

Let Your Floral Arranging Skills Blossom at the Little Flower School

Saipua, 147 Van Dyke Street, little-flower-school.blogspot.com

The wildly popular Little Flower School—the brainchild of Saipua owner Sarah Ryhanen and floral designer Nicolette Owen of Nicolette Ca-



The popular Little Flower School flower-arranging classes, offered in Red Hook and Greenpoint, often sell out quickly.

mille—draws a variety of students. "We have people interested from all walks of life—all kinds of designers, doctors, gardeners, other florists, aspiring florists, flower lovers, students, finance bankers, moms, dads, people looking for creative outlets, et cetera," Owen says.

The three-hour workshops are limited to 10 students, so they tend to fill up quickly. Currently, classes are booked through March, but Owen recommends joining the Little Flower School's mailing list to hear about the classes first. The \$250 class fee includes flowers, clippers, a champagne toast, snacks and the vase, urn or pot used to contain the arrangement. Classes are held either at Saipua, Ryhanen's Red Hook soap and flower shop, or in Greenpoint, at 50-52 Dobbin Street. Each class takes on a new flower subject, including arranging with citrus, orchids and succulents and begonias.

Learn How to Work With Metal with Marsha Trattner

sva.edu, (212) 592-2200

Since 2004, Marsha Trattner has been offering metalworking classes at her Van Dyke Street studio to both professional artists and hobbyists alike. "Some people are already artists or crafts people, wanting to add to their knowledge and/or skills, or they may even have a specific project to accomplish," Trattner says. "Others are motivated by the hands-on work—a respite from their long days on the computer, for instance—and are intrigued by connecting with an ancient tradition, or even are curious about a new occupational direction."

The classes are offered through the School of Visual Arts, but you do not need to be an SVA student to register for the classes—simply

(continued on next page)



Resolving Those Resolutions:



The Annual Star-Revue Guide to Personal Improvement

Resolving Your New Years Resolutions

continued from previous page

visit the website or call for more info. Upcoming Red Hook classes include Creative Blacksmithing I for beginners (February 10 to April 21), Creative Blacksmithing II for intermediate and advanced students (February 8 to April 26) and a Torch Workshop for Metals (January 27 to February 17) for all levels. Fees range from \$210 plus \$75 (for metal, forge and welding gases and other equipment) to \$395 plus \$195. "In the intro classes, people begin by making hooks, bowls and some other basic blacksmithing projects to acquire the basic skills," Trattner says. "After this, they easily branch out to independent projects ranging from home furnishings to sculpture."

Trattner also teaches metal class-



Marsha Trattner teaches metalworking in her Red Hook workshop, through the School of Visual Arts. Photos courtesy of Marsha Trattner.

es for all levels, including Metal Sculpture, Metal Furniture and a Weekend Welding Workshop at the



SVA Sculpture facility in Chelsea. She says all her students have one thing in common. "For every-



one, however their interest in the class, it is really fun!"



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New Year, New You, New 'Do

By Ligeia Minetta

Every January, the entire world says “out with the old, in with the new!” In our corner of the world, things are no different. As we turn the mirror on ourselves, we often take this as an opportunity for a new start.

While losing weight or taking up a new hobby takes some determination and time, freshening up your look with a new 'do is one of the quickest routes to self-improvement. An updated look also could provide inspiration for embarking on those resolutions. (Maybe the new you with highlights and chic style is more punctual and goes to the gym!)

If you shy away from change, try something small to freshen up your look. A little face-framing angle or keeping your length an inch shorter or longer than usual can do wonders.

Feeling bolder? Think about adding layers, drastic angling or asymmetry. Short hair—think Rihanna or Katie Holmes—is one of winter 2010's hottest women's trends, says Nayda Ortiz, stylist and salon owner of Suite 352 Hair Boutique, 352 Van Brunt Street. However, she adds, local women typically keep some length to their hair. Young moms, for example, often want something they can pull back during the day but keep the option of a sexy blow-out.

Men's trends are leaning toward short, clean classic looks with modern flair, such as hair higher fades, drastic length

differences between the sides and top, and lots of texture (Adam Levine of Maroon 5, LeBron James). The longer, shaggier look is still a favorite for boys and younger men. Older guys or the less adventurous can try things like switching or taking away a part, or trying a much shorter, cleaner look. Sometimes adding a new product to your routine is all the change you need to switch up your style.

Though following trends can provide some guidance when choosing a new cut,

“Ask your stylist for tips! There is no point spending the time and money creating a great new look if you don't know how to maintain it.”

Ortiz says it's important that your hair-style suits your personality and lifestyle. “It's how you carry the haircut,” she says.

Before taking the “new you” plunge, make sure it is a commitment you're willing to make—and live with. Take

maintenance into consideration, and ask yourself the following questions before a daring new look: How often will you need to return to your stylist? How much time will it take to get out of the house? What tools and styling aids will you need? And ask your stylist for tips! There is no point spending the time and money creating a great new look if you don't know how to maintain it.

If you're looking for other ways to spruce up your style for 2011, consider color. Many choices aren't permanent, such as deposit-only colors, which deepen and change the tone of your natural color. This type of color can take light hair to a deep, brilliant brunette. Take away brassy hues from lighter shades or add red hues to warm things up. Like any color, your stylist can use them in a variety of ways from an all-over application to low-lights. They gradually fade so there's no noticeable line as your hair grows out.

If you want a lighter or more drastic look, you will have to go with a permanent color and/or highlights. Just a few highlights around your face can brighten things up. Apart from cut and color, chemical texture services change your hair from straight to curly, curly to straight and everything in between. These include perms, relaxers, Japanese straightening and Brazilian blow-outs. Most are permanent, meaning your hair will maintain its altered texture until it is trimmed off.



Author Ligeia Minetta

Keep in mind that your hair is something you live with 24/7. Be realistic about your hair. Is it kinky curly, bone straight or something in between? Is it thin or do you have hair to spare? It is easier to choose something that will work with your hair, but if you go against your hair type expect extra upkeep. Are you prepared to straighten your short, curly bangs everyday or color your hair every three weeks to hide your drastically different roots? No matter how you choose to reinvent yourself this year, remember to have fun with it!

Ligeia Minetta is a licensed cosmetologist, who has an AA in journalism from Kingsborough Community College. She lives in Red Hook and blogs at curledupanddyed.wordpress.com.



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Life is Sweet on Imlay Street

Willy Wonka has nothing on Kidd Yellin. On the first truly wintry day in December, with temperatures dropping down into the low 20’s, I bundled myself up in so many layers that the shape of my very humanity was obscured and walked into the wind. Headed to Imlay and Verona street, I was making a visit to the gallery and studio space founded by artists Charlotte Kidd and Dustin Yellin named, appropriately, Kidd Yellin, which at that moment felt like the end of the world.

Or the beginning. Certainly the atmosphere of Kidd Yellin has an air of world-making. Entering the building through Yellin’s studio, one is immediately met with the feeling that whatever is going on in this place is not governed by outside rules. While nine to fivers (or five to niners) toil away in florescent-lit cubicles, at 133 Imlay Street the pleasant hum of studio assistants painting on layers of glass makes for an environment more confectionery fantasyland than capitalist assembly line. Of course, I did overhear some of the usual chatter of business going on: dumpsters and materials organized, appointments scheduled and the like. But, by and large, the easy-breezy way in which the artists working at Kidd Yellin moved from one activity to another, from one room to the next (sans choreographed musical interludes) gave me the impression that no one at the Chocolate Factory was particularly beaten down by the daily grind.

Perhaps the sense of entering an alternate, and more saccharine, reality was brought about by the tricks of volume and gravity contained Yellin’s candy-like sculpture. Brightly-colored natural forms appear weightless, encased in blocks of resin or layers of glass, like a rare licorice-red sapling suspended in a giant green-apple Jolly Rancher. Walking around the sculptures, the images inside them appear and disappear as your perspective shifts, adding to the sense that mystery and mischief was afoot. The works read like taxonomies of a world before the Flood if the architecture of Eden had had been subcontracted to the mentor of the eccentrically diabolical Mr. W. himself. One could imagine that, if ingested (by a giant, as pieces ranged from roughly 15”x15” to well over 7 feet tall), the unsuspecting glutton might find him or herself suddenly flattened, with limbs extending in several directions and planes at once, having to then be taken to the taffy stretcher to be manipulated back into a normal human size.

Yellin’s most recent works, also large block forms made up of layers of painted glass, are more narrative than the single-specimen-sculptures. They too embody the prism-like layering of time and space that one experiences walking among several of Yellin’s earlier works, but here it is condensed, with each work containing a spectrum of time lines, showing us both the fabled beginnings and apocryphal ends of human civilization. Having completed the minerals and plants, the fowls of the air and beasts of the field, He then made civilization. With images of war and suffering layered between sharks, cowgirls, and power lines, even in this lollipop land, civilization breeds chaos. Ah, the folly of man.

In other realms, other rooms, were the photographic works of Charlotte Kidd. If Yellin is this world’s off-kilter creator, Kidd is the scientist there to record the decay. Lining the walls are her photographs of taxidermied animals and roadkill against stark black backgrounds with a natural-history-like composition and attention to detail reminiscent of the fantastic collaborative books by scientist Stephen J. Gould and artist Rosamond Purcell.

Sharing the space is her brother Wilmot Kidd, also a photographer. Focused not on life and death but some sort of neither-here-nor-there limbo, his haunting images of night architecture, solitary gas stations in a dark and empty landscape, roadside snack shacks and headlights through the woods emanate out from the glossy printed surface like monuments to the Great American Nowhere. The immaculate images inspire a loneliness that might make one reach for the candy bar, or wish for the company of those industrious, if capricious, Wonka squirrels.

In the gallery, a cavernous, drafty space with room to spare, new experiments were in the works. Joey Frank, with a background in filmmaking, has created a series of mixed-media closet installations “Closets: INequality of Experience” offering varied representations of psychological spaces. In each installation, the viewer enters through closet doors and hanging clothes into an enclosed area with sound, interactive video, or assembled objects or texts; a space where time is looped, randomized, or simply waiting for you to show up.

Though I showed up unannounced to Kidd Yellin with no Golden Ticket in hand, all were warm to my questions and generous on smiles and praise for the other artists’ work hanging on the walls, climbing the stairwells, leaned against filing cabinets, adorning the office and illuminating the kitchen. Unlike the Chocolate Factory, Kidd Yellin is not creating a world behind locked gates. There is a sense of community in the building, and an appreciation for a neighborhood that has granted room enough for such a world to be concocted and enjoyed. I look forward to returning Kidd Yellin to sample the next treat the artists there have cooked up.



Paths. Less trodden, unmarked.
Path of wisdom.
Down the garden path.
Wrong path. Path of no return.
Haunted paths set by the indifferent
ghosts of history. Lenape paths
through hills and wetlands. Paths
through piles of oyster shells heaped
on the shores of a native New York
not yet known in a Western tongue.
Revolutionary path. Righteous path.
Path of destruction. The migratory
path of the meadowlark and the
predatory path of the snowy owl
who hunts it. Waring criminal paths
struck across a neighborhood, a
family, a face—a scar, a legend to
mark this place. Foolish paths,
secret paths—a gas lamp in a
window, a match struck and silently
followed. The path from my heart to
yours in measured in orange peels
and eggshells. Unknown path.
The rutted path of an anxious mind
pacing at night. Path of desire.
Flight path. Path of least resistance.
Obstructed path.
Paths with nowhere to go but down,
fighting to stay above poverty, above
addiction, above ground.
Paths through hardship and decline,
continuing as uncertain as the thin
afternoon light in winter that must be
bright enough because it is all we
have for now and it will keep us
warm, somehow.

And above it all, the path of one
shooting star.

Whatever path you have traveled on,
and wherever you may go from here,
Happy New Year.

Classic Cars Get New Lease on Life at Emilio's Auto Restoration & Repair

By Josie Rubio

Emilio Cuomo, owner of Emilio's Auto Restoration & Repair at 232 Van Brunt Street, discovered his talent for mechanics when he was about 10 years old. "When I did something wrong, my father would take my bike apart so I couldn't ride it," says Cuomo, 50, who grew up on Henry Street in Carroll Gardens. "Then he'd come home from work, and it would be back together."

When his dad asked, Cuomo explained that he'd watched the bike being taken apart, then figured out how to reassemble it. So his father hid the tools—but Cuomo would find them. After that, "it was over" as far as the punishment, he says. He says he grew up watching "sidewalk commandos—guys from the neighborhood who would be outside fixing their cars." Though they thought they knew what they were doing, often they would make things worse, he recalls. "Then they'd have to call a real mechanic."

These days, Cuomo, who lives in Carroll Gardens with his wife and children, is the area mechanic to call, relying on "word of mouth from the neighborhood" since 1980. After graduating from William E. Grady Career and Technical Education High School in Coney Island, he worked at Bruno Truck Sales, Universal Forklift and Bay Lincoln Mercury, but decided he'd rather strike out on his own. His first shop was at Van Brunt and Reed streets, before moving to a spot on Carroll and Henry Streets.

Three years ago, he moved his garage back to Red Hook. Cuomo typically starts his job as an auto mechanic at



5:40 am at the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, where he's worked for the past 20 years, then at 3 pm, he heads to his own shop, where you'll also find him on Saturdays.

Emilio's provides basic service for area businesses, such as the Red Hook Lobster Pound trucks, and gets a lot of no-starts up and running. "We help out a lot of businesses around here," he says. But his true love is restoring classic cars—especially old hot rods. "I love doing that," he says. "I try to keep them going."

You can often find Cuomo's '40 Chevy—painted an eye-catching black and pink—on Van Brunt. Back when it was manufactured, Cuomo says it was called a "businessman coup," preferred by traveling salesmen who needed a practical vehicle with space for samples and luggage.

Hanging in Cuomo's garage are before and after photos of a '65 Cadillac El Do-

rado—one depicting a rusted out old shell and the other capturing its impressive current condition. Cuomo started to rebuild the car in 1990, and the restoration took about 7 years. Since less than 2,000 models were made of the car, finding parts was a challenge. "I'd say it's about 80 percent done. I'm still collecting parts," he says.

But Cuomo essentially rebuilt the vehicle. "I did everything but the paint," he says. "That's a whole different animal." He takes cars to be painted to South Brooklyn Auto Body or to Sudden Impact, which is owned by his nephew, in Park Slope.

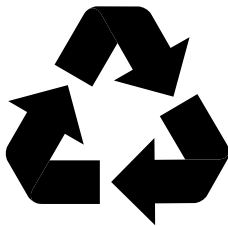
Overall, Cuomo owns six cars, including a '63 Ford Ranchero, a '65 Buick Riviera and a '35 Dodge Coup that's in the process of being fixed up. He usually finds cars in magazines or online, and sometimes he travels to New Jersey, Long Island or Connecticut to pick them up.

"We help out a lot of businesses around here," he says. But his true love is restoring classic cars—especially old hot rods. "I love doing that," he says. "I try to keep them going."

Currently, he's putting in a new motor for a '67 Mustang for Two Friends Auto Sales owners, who are going to race the car and display it at auto shows. Some of his favorite jobs include a '31 Model A for local real estate developer Greg O'Connell and a '65 Dodge for Judge Alex Calabresi, presiding judge of the Red Hook Community Center. Calabresi told Cuomo the car ran better than it ever had. "It's nice to hear," says Cuomo.

Is there ever a car that Cuomo thinks he can't fix? "No," Cuomo says, shaking his head. When he needs to work something out, he simply closes the door to get "peace of mind." Or he chases out some of his help—which includes his son, Michael, and his friends Sonny, Frankie and Alley Cat—when there are too many cooks in the kitchen, or in this case, mechanics in the garage. Cuomo says, "I like making the old cars hum."

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Bartender of the Month:



One day, Gerry Scott was strolling down the street when a nearby jay-walker was hit by a truck. The jaywalker was sent hurtling into Gerry, who was then thrown through a plate glass window. Seemingly impossible injuries are Gerry's thing, along with typical injuries like gunshot wounds and concussions. Despite this, Gerry is one the kindest, friendliest bartenders you've ever met. To add insult to injury, Jon Tyler and Gene Callahan sat down with Gerry at Pete's Waterfront Ale House.

Red Hook Star Revue: How much physical danger are we in right now?

Gerry Scott: None. Any danger will flow directly towards me.

SR: Have you injured yourself lately?

GS: Yeah, I broke my finger Christmas shopping.

SR: What?

GS: I got my finger caught on a woman's shopping bag, and she tugged on it until it broke (shows us his broken finger).

SR: Oh, gross. So, you've been shot on five separate occasions; what was the worst time?

GS: I have a security company, I was running security at a party after a De La Soul concert. I got shot eight times, in the vest. Two got through.

SR: I guess that's....good? Have you ever been stabbed?

GS: Eight times. This one was really bad (Gerry lifts his shirt to reveal a two inch scar on his belly).

SR: Ever been maced?

GS: One time, I was running security for a Grateful Dead concert in Vermont, and the state police tear gassed us, along with everyone else. They were running us down with horses.

SR: I think we're all familiar with Vermont's reputation

for things like syrup and rioting. So, everybody's heard of flirting with death, but it seems like you're having a fling with her.

GS: Death is a he. I can tell because I'm so sore afterwards.

SR: So you've been shot, stabbed, pepper sprayed, tear gassed; ever been hit with a baseball bat?

GS: Plenty of times.

SR: Ever been attacked with a sword?

GS: No. No I haven't.

SR: Pansy. How long have you been bartending in the neighborhood?

GS: In Park Slope, Red Hook, and Brooklyn Heights, 28 years.

SR: And you grew up in Park Slope?

GS: Yes, and believe it or not, my parents were not two rich lesbians with little dogs.

SR: You're saying it was different then.

GS: A lot more drug dealers and hookers.

SR: Do you prefer it then, or now?

GS: Both had their advantages.

SR: What are the advantages of...you know what, never mind. Who's your bartending idol?

GS: Jesus. I still can't figure out that water to wine business.

Jon Tyler and Gene Callahan decided not to give Gerry those backstage passes to De La Soul for Christmas. Instead: bactine.

LONG WALK HOME BY J.W. ZEH



Music:

Matt Rubendall Crafts Classical Guitars With A Personal Touch

By Stephen Slaybaugh

For all the conveniences modern technology may provide, machines can still never replicate the art and craftsmanship of something made by hand. As such, it seems fitting that my cell phone was little help in hooking up with classical guitar maker Matt Rubendall at his workshop on Ferris Street. “We don’t get any reception down here at the edge of the world,” Rubendall laughs as he leads me up to the second floor, where the common space windows look out past the Valentino Pier, with a view of the Statue of Liberty.

Rubendall is a professional luthier, the artisanal trade of making stringed instruments that dates back to around the 15th century. He got his start in this avocation by attending the Roberto-Venn School of Lutherie in Arizona in 1992. While students of the six-week program usually go to work for one of the large guitar manufacturers, Matt ended up starting his own business after moving to New York in 1998. He ran a shop on the Lower East Side before higher rents led him to Red Hook eight years ago.



Similarly, it was economics that led him to making his own guitars. “I wanted to make a guitar that sounded better than the expensive ones I couldn’t afford,” he tells me leaning against his workbench. Completely self-taught and using only

“I wanted to make a guitar that sounded better than the expensive ones I couldn’t afford,”

the barest selection of tools, Rubendall crafts each guitar entirely by hand, usually working on a few guitars simultaneously over three or four months. And though guitar manufacturers now have computer-controlled woodworking equipment and use lasers and robots for other components of the guitar-making process, Rubendall says this isn’t a trade destined for distinction. He believes the classical and jazz guitarists that buy his instruments appreciate the craftsmanship. “They will always value something that is handmade,” he says.

His personal touch is manifested in every aspect of each guitar, from the carefully selected woods and unique rosettes to his polishing each instrument using traditional French methods. So while the intangibles of sound are difficult to qualify, there is a distinct countenance to Rubendall’s guitars. “I suppose you can tell it’s one of my guitars by the sound,” he says. “I try to get a rich, lush sound.”

While there are a couple stores in Manhattan that sell Rubendall’s guitars, he frequently sells directly to musicians and can be commissioned to build something to meet an individual’s specifications or needs. Each guitar sells for around \$5,000, and when I visited, there aren’t any finished guitars on display, which says something positive about the demand. Rubendall also restores and repairs all make of guitars (not just classical), and can be found at his shop most days Monday through Saturday.

Matthew Rubendall can be contacted at 106 Ferris Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231; 917.575.0268; matt@mattrubendall.com

Music Bits: Garage and Barn Bands Hit the Hook

Jessy Carolina and the Hot Mess, Jalopy Theatre, January 25

Begun in April last year as the Bill Murray Experience by singer Jessy Carolina and guitarist Horatio Baltz, Jessy Carolina and the Hot Mess is one of a growing number of bands performing regularly in Red Hook that mine the sounds of the early 20th century. Taking inspiration from the strains of jazz and blues popular at that time, the six-piece band, which also includes Jerron Paxton on piano and banjo, Jay Sanford on bass, Satori Ohashi on trumpet and Mario Maggio on clarinet, churns out a hopping blend of such influences that is as vibrant as it is timeless. The band was part of The Simpsons

20th anniversary special, doing their own rendition of the cartoon’s famous theme song, and released one album under its previous moniker. But live is no doubt the best way to experience the ensemble, especially at the old-timey environ of the Jalopy, where the band plays pretty much on a monthly basis. —Stephen Slaybaugh

A Lee Grows in Brooklyn, The Bell House, January 22

Last time the A-Bones played the Bell House (opening for psych legend Roky Erickson), they were joined by Ira Kaplan of Yo La Tengo and Roy Loney of the Flamin’ Groovies. While for this free performance it will probably be just the core of the garage-rock stalwarts’ line-up,



The A-Bones featuring Cramps drummer Miriam Linna

the band usually has plenty of tricks up its collective sleeve. Singer Billy Miller and Miriam Linna (the Cramps’ original drummer), who have been running the venerable Norton record label for nearly 25 years, along with guitarist Bruce Ben-

net and bass player Marcus “The Carcass” Natale, bash out a choice selection of originals and covers that prove them to be true torchbearers of the greasy kids stuff captured on slabs like the Nuggets comps. Moreover, this show serves as a birthday party for former Magnetic Field co-owner, Dead Flowers Productions honcho and all-around good guy Lee Greenfeld. Rounding out the bill are the Brought Low, the Black Hollies, and the Above, while DJs Ursa Major and Pick-A-Bar will spin records in between. —Stephen Slaybaugh

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Dining:

The Good Fork Serves Up Exceptional Meals Devoid of Pretension

By Josie Rubio

The Good Fork sits toward the end of Van Brunt Street, between Coffey and Van Dyke, the entrance below an unobtrusive sign. Directions on the website from the nearby Battery Tunnel note, “Don’t accidentally go back into the tunnel.” With the exception for those who live in our neighborhood, this gem of a restaurant is a bit out-of-the-way. “It is challenging, but it’s part of what defines us,” says Ben Schneider, who owns the restaurant with wife and chef Sohui Kim.

Yet even when the refreshing summer breeze from the water turns to blustery, intermittent gusts and the fair-weather visitors to Red Hook disappear, on most given nights, you’ll find the Good Fork is fairly busy with happy diners. What’s the secret? “Consistently good food,” Schneider says. “I think to have a business in Red Hook, you need to have something people will travel for and have something unique. We have good people working with us.”

But if you have to ask, then you haven’t been to the Good Fork. In a time when restaurants are overhyped and hipster waiters deign to serve food that is fetishized and photographed and tweeted ad nauseum, this place is the real deal. The Good Fork consistently serves exceptionally tasty and good food—from the steak and eggs Korean style to the homemade gnocchi—in a cozy, inviting atmosphere with service that is devoid of the irritating pretension that’s become commonplace at many establishments, from Manhattan to the other side of the BQE.

The menu changes seasonally and when possible, serves vegetables from the nearby Added Value Farm. In fact, when an October hailstorm destroyed much of the crop, the Good Fork held a benefit dinner for the farm.

Since Schneider and Kim live nearby, the homey atmosphere at the restaurant seems like a natural extension. When the building that now houses the Good Fork became available in 2005, the couple decided to open their own restaurant. Kim had worked at such establishments



Steak and eggs Korean-style is one of the Good Fork’s signature dishes. (photos by Joe Tannis)

as the Savoy, Blue Hill and Anissa, and Schneider took to transforming the “dry-wall box” over the course of a year, before opening the space in March 2006.

Schneider accentuated the low ceilings by creating a curved wooden ceiling for a cozy feel, inspired by Gordon’s Wine Bar in London. Wine and beer bottles were used in the creative blocking of a door to create a restroom wall, and boards from a torn-down Vermont barn make up much of the tables. Touches in the cozy back dining room include a faux fireplace that actually serves as a heater, and an old hi-fi, where diners can play old country, Dixieland, jazz and rock and roll records. It was to the sounds of Johnny Cash on the hi-fi that we dined one evening.

While eating at the Good Fork, I thought often of the longtime restaurant reviewer for a publication where I worked for a decade. One of his highest compliments was that someone in the kitchen really cared, and that’s the prevailing feeling at the Good Fork. And when my crab cake arrived, I was reminded that he always commented on whether the crab cakes were sufficiently “crabby.” The jumbo lump crab cake (\$12) was mostly crab, so much so that it barely stayed together—which is good, because our group was sharing. I thought that this was that reviewer’s white whale—or I suppose, his

“With the exception for those who live in our neighborhood, this gem of a restaurant is a bit out-of-the-way. ‘It is challenging, but it’s part of what defines us,’ says Ben Schneider, who owns the restaurant with wife and chef Sohui Kim. “

crabby crabcake. Specials are offered on weekends, so we tried a lasagna appetizer, which was light enough to be a starter, despite its rich, meaty filling.

The fried oyster po’ boy (\$13), which arrives as a pair of sliders, is served on a fresh mini-brioche from Balthazar, and is served with a guacamole and red onion for just the right amount of delectable bites. The roasted Brussel sprouts (\$12), plated with a poached egg, serrano ham, arugula and Caesar dressing also are a good choice, though Brussel sprout enthusiasts might want to skip the extra fixings and order the side dish option (\$6). The roasted beet salad (\$12) is a perfectly-executed blend of romaine, goat cheese, candied walnuts, pickled apples, apple cider vin—and, of course, flavorful beets. The homemade pork and chive dumplings (\$9) are a mainstay at the restaurant, quite simply, I assume, because they are delicious.

Kim has a few subtle Asian touches in the kitchen, such as the “steak and eggs” Korean style (\$21). The fried egg is a nod to Korean classic bi bim bap, without the stirring or hot stone bowl. The skirt steak is marinated overnight in a version of Kim’s mother’s kalbi recipe of soy sauce, Korean pepper paste and mirin, for a flavor-packed Asian twist. The kimchi flavor is present in the rice, but not overpowering, so even those who aren’t big fans of the fermented vegetables can enjoy this dish. It’s also available with crispy tofu in miso ginger sauce, and judging from the care put into the dishes, I’d venture to guess it’s not a halfhearted attempt to appease vegetarians.

Pork belly is often mentioned and cooed about on foodie shows, but let’s face it if it’s not done right, you’re just chewing the fat. Not in a gossipy way either you’re really just trying to get a decent bite of something substantial that resembles



Owner Ben Schneider decided to accentuate the low ceiling of the main dining room by creating a curved roof for a cozy feel.

pork. To see how it’s done, try the braised Berkshire pork belly entrée (\$22) here, served with cannellini beans, grilled escarole and a flavorful arugula walnut pesto. Sure, it’s not low-calorie, but if you’re going to eat something that’s fairly fatty, it should taste this good. (Then please refer to the resolutions and fitness section in this issue.)

The burger (\$13) is of good quality, but for some reason, wasn’t as memorable as the other items. At another place where the other entrees weren’t so exceptional, the burger would stand out, but it’s somewhat overshadowed here. Still, it was hearty and arrived with tempura onion rings, the light batter letting the sweetness of the onion shine through. I managed to scam one bite of the homemade ribbon of parpadelle and lamb ragout (\$19) from a dining companion. My only

complaint is that I wish the owner of said plate was more generous. But then again, if I had been forced to share the homemade ricotta gnocchi (\$18), I would be a little stingy. The tender pasta pillows arrived with small scoops of winter squash, as well as taleggio and parmigiano, topped with a crisp kale leaf chip.

As for dessert, there’s the ubiquitous Steve’s Key Lime Pie, made in Red Hook and served for the average price of \$7 for a slice. The caramel tea flan (\$7) is worth ordering, especially for the almond brittle. But the flourless chocolate cake (\$8) was especially impressive, because I’m not typically a fan of chocolate cake, flourless or not.

The Good Fork has a fairly reasonable wine list and some cocktail selections. The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 10:30 pm and Sunday until 10 pm.

Bites in the Hook

Area Mexican Restaurants Ward Off Winter Chill

Though the patio of Alma might be a summer hotspot, the restaurant is offering a special to offset cold weather blahs. On Tuesday nights through February, diners at Alma, 187 Columbia Street, can order from an \$18 per person winter prix fix menu. Appetizer choices are guacamole, ensalada verde, tamales del día, chicken flautas or huitlacoche mac and cheese, and entrée selections are poblano relleno with beef short ribs and gouda, puerco manchamanteles stew, fajitas (chicken, shrimp or steak) and chicken and cheese or cheese and mushroom enchiladas. Then select either caramel flan or Steve’s Authentic Key Lime Pie for dessert. Tuesday night drink specials include \$5 house margaritas, \$18 pitchers and \$3 Mexican beers.

In other area Mexican restaurant news, Calexico Carne Asada now offers growlers of their two tap beers, including the restaurant’s signature beer, a collaboration with Six-point Craft Ales. El Barrio, is a modern take on traditional Mexican brown ale, is available only at Calexico’s location at 122 Union Street, as well as the new location in Greenpoint, 645 Manhattan Avenue. Growlers are \$23 \$5 for the growler itself and \$18 to fill. Draft pints are half price during happy hour, from 9 to 11 pm Monday through Saturday. Fairly new are the two varieties of peanuts, chipotle or garlic habanero, for \$1.50. All of Calexico’s beers are available for delivery --JR

New Owners Re-open Red Hook Café & Grill

The Red Hook Café & Grill, located at the corner of Van Brunt and Commerce streets for the past six years, reopened under new ownership in early December. After purchasing the neighborhood café, new owners Daniel Kraiem and Vincent Benfante spent four months cleaning and putting fresh touches on the space. The same cooks have remained at the café, which offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, and is open Monday through Friday from 5 am to 5 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 6 am to 4 pm. Breakfast items (\$1.50 to \$6.75), such as egg sandwiches, muffins, bagels, eggs and omelettes, pancakes and Challah French toast are served all day with a 75-cent additional charge after 11 am. The menu also offers appetizers (\$3.75 to \$5.50), deli sandwiches (\$5 to \$6.75), tortilla wraps (\$5.50 to \$6), salads, triple-decker club sandwiches, and hot sandwiches such as grilled cheese, tuna melt and Philly cheesesteak, all in the \$3.25 to \$6.75 range. The café also has a selection of burgers (\$4 to \$8.75) and daily hot meal specials from the steam table (\$7 to \$8). It feels like a fresh start, Kraiem says. The café accepts cash only, but has an ATM, as well as wi-fi. Red Hook Café & Grill also delivers; call (718) 643-0166 or (718) 643-0199--JR

Star-Revue Restaurant Guide



The dining room at Mazzat on Columbia Street

RED HOOK

BAKED 359 Van Brunt St., (718) 222-0345. Bakery serving cupcakes, cakes, coffee, pastries, lunch items. Free wi-fi. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. AE, DS, MC, V.

THE BROOKLYN ICE HOUSE 318 Van Brunt St., (718) 222-1865. Burgers, barbecue and pulled pork sandwiches. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Cash only.

DEFONTE'S SANDWICH SHOP 379 Columbia St., (718) 855-6982. Variety of large sandwiches, including roast beef and potato and egg. Open for breakfast and lunch Mon-Sat. Cash only.

DIEGO'S RESTAURANT 116 Sullivan St., (718) 625-1616. Mexican and Latin American cuisine. Open for lunch and dinner Mon-Sat. AE, DS, MC, V.

F&M BAGELS 383 Van Brunt St., (718) 855-2623. Bagels, sandwiches, wraps, chicken salad, breakfast plates, burgers, hot entrees and more. Open for breakfast and lunch daily 5 am-5 pm. AE, DS, MC, V. Delivery available.

FORT DEFIANCE 365 Van Brunt St., (347) 453-6672. Brunch, sandwiches and small plates. Open for breakfast Tue; breakfast, lunch and dinner Mon, Wed-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

THE GOOD FORK 391 Van Brunt St., (718) 643-6636. Excellent food from Chef Sohui Kim in an unpretentious atmosphere; menu varies seasonally and can include pork dumplings, roast chicken, homemade gnocchi and steak and eggs Korean style. Open for dinner Tue-Sun. AE, MC, V.

HOME/MADE 293 Van Brunt St., (347) 223-4135. Salads, sandwiches, cheese, charcuterie and brunch. Open for dinner Wed-Fri, brunch and dinner Sat-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

HOPE & ANCHOR 347 Van Brunt St., (718) 237-0276. Large menu that includes burgers, entrees and all-day breakfast. Open for lunch and dinner Mon-Fri; breakfast, lunch and dinner Sat-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

IKEA One Beard St., (718) 246-4532. Swedish meatballs, pasta, wraps and sandwiches; breakfast items include eggs and cinnamon buns. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. AE, DS, MV, V.

KEVIN'S 277 Van Brunt St., (718) 596-8335. Seafood, seasonal and local fare. Open for dinner Thu-Sat, brunch Sat-Sun. AE, MC, V.

MARK'S PIZZA 326 Van Brunt St., (718) 624-0690. Open for lunch and dinner daily. AE, MC, V. Delivery available.

RED HOOK CAFÉ & GRILL 228 Van Brunt St. (718) 643-0166 or (718) 643-0199. Bagels, pancakes, omelettes, wraps, salads, hot sandwiches, burgers and daily specials. Open for breakfast and lunch daily, Mon-Fri 5 am-5 pm, Sat-Sun 6 am-4 pm. Cash only. Delivery available.

RED HOOK LOBSTER POUND 284 Van Brunt St., (646) 326-7650. Maine lobster rolls, Connecticut rolls and whoopie pies. Open for lunch and dinner Wed-Sun. MC; V.

ROCKY SULLIVAN'S 34 Van Dyke St., (718) 246-8050. Irish pub with brick-oven pizza, sandwiches and Red Hook Lobster Pound feasts Fri 6-9 pm, Sat 5-8 pm. Open for lunch and dinner daily. AE, DS, MC, V.

COLUMBIA WATERFRONT DISTRICT
5 BURRO CAFE 127 Columbia St., (718) 875-5515. Mexican. Open for lunch and dinner Tue-Fri, brunch and dinner Sat-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

ALMA 187 Columbia St., (718) 643-5400. Modern Mexican fare. Open for dinner Mon-Fri, brunch and dinner Sat-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

CALEXICO CARNE ASADA 122 Union St., (718) 488-8226. Tex-Mex burritos, tacos, quesadillas and more. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Cash only. Delivery available.

CASELNOVA 214 Columbia St., (718) 522-7500. Traditional Northern and Southern Italian dishes. Open for lunch and dinner Tue-Sun. AE, DS, MC, V.

THE COFFEE DEN 144 Union St, (718) 875-8720. Sandwiches, pastries and coffee. Free wi-fi. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Cash only.

FERNANDO'S FOCACCERIA RESTAURANT 151 Union St., (718) 855-1545. Southern Italian fare, including pasta and panelle. Open for lunch and dinner Mon-Sat. Cash only.

FULTUMMY'S 221 Columbia St., (347) 725-3129. Coffee shop with sandwiches. Free wi-fi. Open for lunch and dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun. Cash only. Delivery available.

HOUSE OF PIZZA & CALZONES 132 Union St., (718) 624-9107. Pizza, calzones and sandwiches. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Cash only. Delivery available.

IRO 115 Columbia St., (718) 254-8040. Japanese cuisine, including sushi and noodle dishes. Open for lunch and dinner daily. AE, MC, V. Delivery available.

JAKE'S BARBECUE RESTAURANT 189 Columbia St., (718) 522-4531. Kansas City-style barbecue, including baby back ribs. Open for lunch and dinner daily. AE, MC, V. Delivery available.

KOTOBUKI BISTRO 192 Columbia St., (718) 246-7980. Japanese and Thai cuisine, including sushi, teriyaki, pad Thai

and special maki named after area streets. Open for lunch Mon-Sat, dinner 7 days. AE, MC, V. Delivery available.

LILLA CAFE 126 Union St., (718) 855-5700. Seasonal fare, hormone and antibiotic-free meats, bread baked on premises and homemade pasta from Chef Erling Berner. BYOB. Open for dinner Tue-Sun, lunch Thu-Fri, brunch Sat-Sun. MC, V.

MAZZAT 208 Columbia St., (718) 852-1652. Mediterranean and Middle Eastern fare, including falafel sandwiches, kibbe, bronzini, lamb shank, baklava and small plates. Open for lunch and dinner daily. AE, MC, V. Delivery available.

PETITE CREVETTE 144 Union St., (718) 855-2632. Seafood, including corn-and-crab chowder, salmon burgers and cioppino, from Chef Neil Ganic. BYOB. Open for lunch and dinner Tue-Sat. Cash only.

SUGAR LOUNGE 147 Columbia St., (718) 643-2880. Coffee bar, cocktails and breakfast (scones, croissants, muffins). Free wi-fi. Open for breakfast Mon-Fri, bar open nightly. AE.

TEEDA THAI CUISINE 218 Columbia St., (718) 855-1700. Thai dishes include papaya salad, dumplings and massaman curry. Open for lunch and dinner Mon-Sat, dinner Sun. MC, V. Delivery available.



Inside the Sugar Lounge

Credit Card Guide

AE—American Express
DS—Discover
MC—MasterCard
V—Visa



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It's About Time for a Red Hook Landmark

Last month I was discussing the odds of getting lost in Red Hook while dining with the staff of this newspaper at the Good Fork Restaurant on Van Brunt Street. I was sitting with editor, George Fiala, reporter Matt Graber, Josie Rubio, Feature/Arts Editor and Krista Dragomer, Visual Arts, when George related how years ago he used to get lost trying to find Lillies on Beard Street. Matt remarked almost nonchalantly “You’ll find Red Hook, is not a place to get anywhere from!!” A remarkably true statement, from a remarkably capable young man. I retaliated with the little ditty made up years ago when we were kids, to help us remember the street names in the Hook a lot easier. It went like this - **“King Sullivan told Wolcott, that Dikeman, spilled Coffee, all over Vandyke’s Beard.”**

However, while we may not get an accurate direction to Beard Street, there is a specific location you can ask for when making directional inquiries about Red Hook, and that is *Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church*. Just ask anyone where’s Visitation Church? You’re bound to hear, in addition to the directions, a personal story of someone’s life experience with the Church, the school, the basketball teams, the Church choirs, the altar boys or the annual Christmas shows. Performed year after year with never an admission charge, refreshments were always served gratis. And it made no difference whether you happened to be of a different denomination, or none at all. Everyone was welcome.

What kind of attraction does Visitation Church seemingly exert over so many people, of so many backgrounds and lifestyles, to cause them never to forget one of the oldest structures in the Brooklyn/Queens Diocese and right here in our

neighborhood?

The incredible Visitation story is continuously in the making here in Red Hook. It is daily being etched indelibly into the hearts and minds of people from everywhere imaginable, and from all walks of life, rich or poor, Catholic or non-Catholic, religious or non-religious.

To really understand this phenomenon, a person would have to understand the true nature of the residents and former residents of Red Hook. Ever since the Parish of the Visitation of the B. V. M. took roots in the neighborhood over a century and a half ago, the people were hard working, proud, and tough as nails as the saying goes. Living in a neglected neighborhood as it infamously was, with not enough important people to persuade better services from the various NY City agencies. But don’t tell that to a native Red Hooker. Living year after year paying double fare to get to work, while others from far away Canarsie and home owners to boot received the benefit of transfers and single fares. This despite living less than one mile from lower Manhattan. Many residents couldn’t afford to move elsewhere, but they would never admit it, they were too darn proud. So the hard knocks and hard times were endured and accepted and as a result, a special brand of people

The Visitation Church’s Historic Interior



ple emerged from the Red Hook mold. Dedicated to the core.

Those who did move elsewhere would never admit they moved away from a shabby neighborhood, because to them it really wasn’t shabby, it was their home, and always would be remembered as such.

Yes, Visitation was the main religious edifice. A smaller version was the Protestant Episcopal “Christ Chapel” located on Wolcott Street, whose Parishioners carried the same kind of admiration and loving memories as its big sister Visitation Church. And they also were smitten with the same favorable tendencies as other Red Hook residents. Naturally as families spread out across our great nation, sons enlisted in the service, or were drafted and settled elsewhere, the love for Red Hook and Visitation grew, and continues to grow every day of the year...

Visitation Parish down through its many years of service to the people has also had downsides. Devastating fires, one not too long after it first opened, left only the walls standing and was reconstructed using the same walls and foundation.

It was after this tragedy, that the Tiffany stained glass windows were installed with donations from generous people seeking to revive the spirit of Visitation. The Frescos adorning the apse and high walls of the Altar were also restored by

Italian artists from Italy. The Midmer organ was installed after this fire and was spared a horrible fate.

Visitation also had many personal tragedies; a popular Priest was killed in a car crash when another auto jumped the divider somewhere in New Jersey. A Pastor endured multiple sclerosis until he could not go on any longer and was mercifully transferred. Another young Priests developed cancer of the throat after recently being assigned to Visitation. These and many other setbacks too numerous to mention. But there was never a tragic event capable of breaking the indomitable spirit of Visitation’s friends and parishioners.

Also, this cordial, friendly church has been the subject of closure discussions for the past ten years. The falling off of attendance and the drop in donations, has affected the entire Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens. No parish has emerged unscathed. But recently after the problem came to a head with the loss of her most recent Pastor to personal problems and related illness, Brooklyn Bishop Dimarzio has given Visitation Parish a Christmas gift. While many other churches are struggling along on just one Priest, some with much larger congregations, Visitation has been assigned an Administer, Father Claudio Antecini, an assistant Father Johannes Siegert, three Sisters, and a slew of other consecrated lay people who voluntarily do all the work without compensation. They have already begun some badly needed restorations in the Rectory. The new Priest in charge Father Claudio has explained he was donating his Diocesan salary to Visitation. These people were given a mission by the Bishop to transform this beautiful church into a fully self reliant institution. They also have the unenviable task of drawing more people and building up the dwindling congregation. They are Catholic Evangelist with a Saint John The Baptist order. They are already reaching out into the community and making their presence known. I’ve lived in Red Hook all my life, and when Father Claudio celebrated his first Mass, every parishioner leaving the church that day had a smile on their face. I never witnessed that before in all the years I’ve attended Visitation Church.

If ever there was a reason to landmark a structure, Visitation possesses all the right qualifications. She deserves such recognition for her years of service to the community of Red Hook, and for gracing this neighborhood for so many years with her enduring beauty and gothic elegance. I have been told the same stone that Roebling used to build the Brooklyn Bridge also was used in construction of Visitation Church,

There is a petition circulating to grant Visitation Landmark status. Watch for that petition, and be sure to sign it. **Red Hook needs a landmark, we deserve it.....even more so does our landmark of faith- “Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church.”**

Shapiro’s Corner:



“My wife and I have decided to start a family - how do we begin?”

MUSIC & ARTS CALENDAR

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

Brooklyn General—128 Union St., (718) 237-7753. Beginning Knitting Session F, 1/10, 17 & 24 from 7-9 pm, \$120; Project Knitting Session G (beginning intermediate-advanced), 1/23 & 30, 2/6 from 7-9 pm, \$120; Seamless Yoke Sweater Knitting Session A, 1/4, 11, 18 & 25 from 6:30-8:30 pm, \$160; Sewing Dress Session A (intermediate to advanced), 1/27 & 2/3, 10, 17 & 24 from 6:30-8:30 pm, \$200; Patternmaking Workshop Session B, T-shirt, 1/30 from 10 am-noon, \$50; Introduction to Embroidery Session B, 1/16 from 11 am-1 pm, \$50; Sewing Fitted Blouse Session A (advanced), 1/5, 12, 19 & 26 & 2/2 from 6:30-8:30 pm, \$200; Crochet Workshop, 1/7, 14 & 21 from 6:30-8:30 pm, \$120. Registration for class must be completed 24 hours in advance.

Everbrite Merchantile Co.—351 Van Brunt St., (718) 522-6121. Open-level yoga with Felicia Maria, bring your own mat, 1/5, 12, 19 & 26 from 7:30-8:30 pm. Donations accepted.

Jalopy Theatre and School of Music—315 Columbia St., (718) 395-3214. West African Guitar Workshop by Sam Dickey, 1/30 at 1 pm, \$25.

DANCE

Cora Dance—Cora School for Dance Spring Open House, register for classes, ages 18 months through adult, with snack and sample class, 1/15 from 12:30-2:30 pm; Informal Workshop and Showing of Shannon Hummel/ Cora Dance's work-in-development, "Prey," 1/15 at 6:30 pm, Cora Studio, 201 Richards St. Buzzer #5, (718) 858-2520. FREE, donations for showing accepted.

EXHIBITIONS

Art Lot—206 Columbia Street, at Sackett St., *Media Mix x 4*, works by Cynthia Lawson Jaramillo, Babs Reingold, John Roach and Mary Schiliro, through 1/9. On view 24/7.

Gallery Small New York et Petit Paris—416 Van Brunt St., (347) 782-3729, smallnewyork.com. *Haunted New York*, by Madeleine K. Corbin, through 12/26. Open Thu-Sun 11 am-5 pm, Wed by appointment.

Kidd Yellin—133 Imlay St., (917) 860-1147, kiddyellin.org. *An Inequality of Experience*, works by Joey Frank, through 1/11. Open Tue-Fri from noon-6 pm and by appointment.

FOOD & DRINK

Botta di Vino—357 Van Brunt St., (347) 689-3664. Green Blackout Blind Tasting, candlelit tasting of wrapped bottles, with acoustic jazz guitar, 1/7, 14, 21 & 28 from 8:30-10 pm. FREE.

Dry Dock—424 Van Brunt St., (718) 852-3625. Spanish portfolio tasting, 12/3 from 5:30-8:30 pm; Laird's Applejack tasting, with apple-upside-down cake from Baked, 12/4 from 4-7 pm; Compass Box, Robin Robinson and artisanal whiskey from Scotland, 12/10 from 5:30-8:30 pm; Breuckelen Distilling Co. and King's County Distillers, 12/11 from 4-7 pm; John L. Sullivan Irish Whiskey, 11/17 from 5:30-8:30 pm; Laphroaig & Ardmore Scotch Tasting, 11/18 from 4-7 pm. FREE.

MISC

Bait & Tackle—320 Van Brunt St., (718) 797-4892, redhookbaitandtackle.com. Crafternoon, knitting and crafts, 1/2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 from 2-4 pm; Quiz Nite, 1/10 & 24 at 8:30 pm. FREE.

The Bell House—149 7th St., (718) 643-6510. Bingo Is For Lovers, 1/26 from 7-11 pm, \$5 packs.

Rocky Sullivan's—34 Van Dyke St., (718) 246-8050. O'Donovan Rossa Society meeting, 1/5 at 7:30 pm; Rocky Sullivan's World Famous Pub Quiz with quizmaster Sean Crowley, 1/6, 13, 20 & 27 at 8 pm.

Sugar Lounge—147 Columbia St., (718) 643-2880. Sugar Laughs, comedy, 1/13 & 27 (with Yannis Pappas) at 9 pm. FREE.

Visitation Church—98 Richards St., (718) 624-1572. Parish Bake Sale, 12/5 from 10 am-3 pm.

Visitation Church—98 Richards St., (805) 300-6913. Fundraising Event with Celebrity Hairstylists Francesco Carta and Mimmo Rossi, 1/10 from 9 am-9 pm. Hair cut, wash and blow-dry \$30 & up; hair cut and dye \$60 & up, hair cut and highlights \$60 & up.

MUSEUM

The Waterfront Museum & Showboat Barge—290 Conover St. at Pier 44, (718) 624-4719. The last covered wooden barge of its kind, the Lehigh Valley Railroad Barge #79 is now a floating museum. The museum's permanent display tells the history of the Tug and Barge "Lighterage Era" (1860-1960) and how food and commercial goods were transported prior to today's bridges and tunnels. Experience the exciting story of the rescue of Barge #79 by a clown and juggler and enjoy the captain's "Serious Foolishness." Displays also include bells, barge models and the audio-kinetic ball machine sculpture by artist George Rhodes that continuously whirls, goes loop-the-loop, plays musical boxes and bounces in mid-air. Stroll in the waterfront garden with views of the Statue of Liberty and the many workboats and recreational vessels of the NY Harbor. Group reservations for schools, camps & seniors available by appointment. For directions to the museum, visit waterfrontmuseum.org. Open Thursdays 4-8 pm, Saturdays 1-5 pm. FREE.

MUSIC

Bait & Tackle—320 Van Brunt St., (718) 797-4892, redhookbaitandtackle.com. Smitty on Steel, 1/3 at 8 pm; Spirit Family Reunion, 1/7 at 9 pm; Great Republic of the Rough & Ready, 1/15 at 9 pm; The Crevulators, 1/22 at 9 pm; Luciano Sabba, 1/27 at 8 pm; Ben Ratliff plus Slow Death and Loneliness, 1/28 at 9 pm; The Rob Reddy Group, 12/30 at 3 pm. FREE.

The Bell House—149 7th St., (718) 643-6510. The Detroit Cobras, the Back CC's and the Piggies, 1/1 at 8 pm, \$15; State Fair: Colorful Colorado, monthly series that celebrates states with deejays J.R. Spiegel and Tim Cook, a cook-off and a John Denver impersonation contest, 1/9 from 3-7 pm, FREE; AM to AM, Frances Rose and Ann Driscoll, 1/14 at 8 pm, \$10; O'Death, Tim Fite and the Goddamn Rattlesnake, 1/15 at 7:30 pm, \$10 adv, \$12 door; Mavis Staples and special guests, 1/18 at 7 pm, \$35 adv, \$40 door; Brooklyn Bounce with DJ Brooklyn E, 1/21 at 11 pm, \$5; Evan Dando and Juliana Hatfield, Lady Lamb the Beekeeper, 1/21 at 8:30, \$15; A Lee Grows in Brooklyn with the A-Bones, the Brought Low, the Black Hollies and the Above, 1/22 at 8 pm, FREE; The Muffs, 1/28 at 8 pm, \$13 adv, \$15 door; Mission of Burma, Buke and Gass, 1/29 at 8 pm, \$20; The Brooklyn Beardfest & Stache Bash with Neckbeard Telecaster, Los Encantados, Jon Mizrachi and Beard-lesque, 1/31 at 7:30 pm, FREE.

Hope & Anchor—347 Van Brunt St., (718) 237-0276. Karaoke, Thursdays through Saturdays from 9 pm-1 am.

Jalopy Theatre and School of Music—315 Columbia St., (718) 395-3214. Hooklyn Holler, 1/4 at 9 pm, \$5; Roots & Ruckus, 1/5, 12, 19, & 26 at 9 pm; Jordan Tice Trio, the Bee Eaters and Rob Hecht and the Country Life Press, 1/6 at 9 pm, \$10; Holler, Howl n Shout: Three Vocal Harmony Groups Converge with Real Vocal String Quartet, Moira Smiley and VOCO and Whistling Wolves, 1/7 at 8:30 pm, \$10 advance, \$12 door; Country Blues Guitar Night, Pat Conte, Ari Eisinger, Eden and John's East River String Band, the Little Brothers, 1/8 at 8

pm, \$15; Tone Johansen and Nate and Kate 1/9 at 8 pm, \$10; Tony Scherr Trio, 1/11 at 9 pm, \$5; Veveritse Brass Band, 1/13 at 10:30, \$10; Jordan Shapiro and Jonah Bruno present the 4th Annual John Hartford Tribute, 1/14 at 8:30 pm, \$10; The Brooklyn Honky Tonk Family Reunion Show, Fran Leadon, Katie Dixon and the Broken Arrowz, the Hunts, Jen Larson and North River, 11/15 at 8 pm, \$5; Toby Walker and Uncle Monk, 1/16 at 8 pm, \$10; Meryl Williams, Plume Giant and the Girl from Grassy Hill CD Release Party, 1/20 at 10:30 pm, \$10; The Five Deadly Venoms and the Hot Seats, 1/21 at 9 pm, \$10; Brooklyn County Fair with the Newton Gang, Rebecca Pronsky, Big Slyde, Frankepine and the Defibulators, 1/22 at 8 pm, \$10, free Sixpoint Craft Ale from 8-9 pm with adm; the Honey Dewdrops and the Calamity Janes, 1/23 at 8 pm, \$10; Jessy Carolina & the Hot Mess, 1/25 at 10:30, call for info; Mamie Minch and Æ, 1/27 at 10:30 pm, \$10; the Bandana Splits and Two Man Gentlemen Band, 1/28 at 9 pm, \$10; Rick Snell and Peter Stampfel and the Ether Frolic Mob, 1/29 at 8:30 pm, \$10; Steam Powered Hour, *New Yorker* cartoonist Matthew Diffee hosts, 1/30 at 7 pm, \$10.

Rocky Sullivan's—34 Van Dyke St., (718) 246-8050. Seanchai and the Unity Squad, 1/8, 15, 22 & 29 at 9:30 pm; Monday Night Trad Seisiun, 1/3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 at 8 pm, FREE; Tuesday Night Trad Seisiun, 1/4, 11, 18 & 25 at 8 pm, FREE. Call for adm info not listed.

Sugar Lounge, 147 Columbia St., (718) 643-2880. Karaoke Wednesdays, 1/5, 12, 19 & 26 at 8:30 pm; A Rainbow Rendezvous with Raymond, 1/6 & 20 at 9 pm; Free Music Fridays, 1/7, 14 (Mark Geary), 21 (El Diablo Robotico) & 28 at 10 pm. Check the Sugar Lounge Facebook page for updates. FREE.

Sunny's Bar, 253 Conover St., (718) 625-8211. Smokey's Round-up, 1/5, 12, 19 & 26 at 9:30 pm; acoustic jam every Saturday. FREE.

Union Street Star Theater—101 Union St. (between Columbia & Van Brunt), (718) 624-5568. Thursday Night Music Jam, open to musicians and listeners; stage, PA, bass amp, drums, mic and refreshments provided, 1/6, 13, 20 & 27 from 7-10 pm. FREE.

READINGS & LITERARY EVENTS

Rocky Sullivan's—34 Van Dyke St., (718) 246-8050. Last Wednesday Reading Series and Open Mic, a showcase for published writers and a peer review event for new and upcoming writers, with Lisa McLaughlin, 1/26 at 7 pm.

Sugar Lounge, 147 Columbia St., (718) 643-2880. Cherry Poppin' Poetry with Joanna Hoffman, 1/24 at 8:30 pm. Check the Sugar Lounge Facebook page for updates. FREE.

THEATER

Falconworks Artists Group—Red Hook Theater Project, free theater workshops for adults 18 and up, 1/12, 19 & 26 from 6-8:30 pm; free theater workshops for youth 14-21 years of age, 1/24 & 31 from 5-7 pm, Miccio Center, 110 W 9th Street, Red Hook, call (718) 395-3218, info@falconworks.com or falconworks.com. FREE, no experience necessary.

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The Brew Guide

What follows is a guide to what local establishments have on tap. Since taps are changed frequently, beer selections are subject to change. Cheers!

B61, 187 Columbia St., (718) 643-5400 (reaches upstairs restaurant, Alma). On tap: Yuengling, Brooklyn Lager, Franziskaner, Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Sixpoint Bengali Tiger IPA, Hoegaarden, Stella Artois, Anchor Liberty, Guinness. Open daily 4 pm-4 am.

BAIT & TACKLE, 320 Van Brunt St., (718) 797-4892. Blue Point Toasted Lager, Sixpoint Bengali Tiger IPA, Sixpoint Sweet Action, Stella Artois, Guinness Stout, Victory Prima Pilsner, Victory Donnybrook Stout, Boddingtons Ale. Mon-Fri 4 pm-4 am, Sat-Sun 2 pm-4 am.

THE BROOKLYN ICE HOUSE, 318 Van Brunt St., (718) 222-1865. On tap: Paulaner, Stone IPA, Lagunitas IPA, Founders IPA, Guinness. Open Sun-Thu from noon-2 am, Fri & Sat till 4 am. *

CALEXICO CARNE ASADA, 122 Union St., (718) 488-8226. Sixpoint El Barrio, Sixpoint Bengali Tiger IPA. Mon-Sat 11:30 am-11 pm, Sun 11:30 am-10 pm. *

FORT DEFIANCE, 365 Van Brunt St., (347) 453-6672. On tap: Reissdorf Kölsch, Abita Restoration Pale Ale, Sixpoint Bengali Tiger IPA, Hennepin. Open Mon, Wed, Thu & Sun from 8 am-midnight, Tue till 3 pm, Fri & Sat till 2 am. *

THE GOOD FORK, 391 Van Brunt St., (718) 643-6636. Sixpoint Righteous Rye, Captain Lawrence Kolsch, Brooklyn Brewmaster Series. Open Tue-Sat 5:30-10:30 pm, Sun till 10 pm. *

MOONSHINE, 317 Columbia St., (718) 858-8088. Twenty craft beers on tap that change every two weeks. Sierra Celebration Ale, Saranac Imperial Stout, Erie Brewing Derailed Black Cherry, Sixpoint Sweet Action, Kelso IPA and Lagunitas Brown Shugga. Mon-Fri 4 pm-4 am, Sat 3 pm-4 am, Sun 3 pm-2 am.

ROCKY SULLIVAN'S, 34 Van Dyke St., (718) 246-8050. On tap: Bud Light, Stella, Guinness, Sixpoint. Open Sun-Wed 11 am-2 am, Thu-Sat till 4 am. *Also see Restaurant Guide.



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