

## Hillary Clinton Endorsed by CRDC

*By Tom Schuler,  
District Leader 75 AD*

After two ballots and excitement all-round, Hillary Clinton was officially endorsed by CRDC at the Club's January meeting. With 21 votes, she beat both Dennis Kucinich and Barack Obama who each received 7 votes on the second ballot.

Despite the inclement weather the meeting attracted a host of members and non-members many of whom took part in the spirited discussion on behalf of their preferred candidates. On the initial vote Senator Clinton received 16 votes, followed by 7 for no endorsement, 6 each for Senator Obama and Congressman Kucinich and one for former Senator John Edwards. Since no candidate received the required majority (19 votes were needed), another round of balloting was required.

At this point a discussion occurred as to whose names would appear on the second ballot. With no endorsement receiving the second most votes, outgoing Club president Steven Skyles-Mulligan asked for a show of hands as to whether the Club wished to proceed with a second ballot.

In a close vote, a majority favored making an endorsement. A new round of discussion took place, with compelling speeches for Clinton, Obama and Kucinich.

The excitement that was generated for all the candidates speaks volumes for both them and for Democratic prospects in November. But first is the Democratic primary on February 5 here in New York.

Don't forget to vote.

## It Was a Holly Jolly Holiday Party

*By Tom Schuler,  
District Leader 75 AD*

As usual, CRDC's holiday party – held on Sunday, December 9 at Dusk Lounge in Chelsea – was the toast of the town. -The annual pot luck supper attracted many yearly, favorites including Joanne Sinovoi's baked ziti, Doris Corrigan's corn pudding, Lynn Kotler's fruit tart and Tom Schuler's holiday ham. As in the past the crowd joined in singing happy birthday to Democratic State Committeewoman Doris Corrigan with a cake provided by newly elected Supreme Court Justice, CRDC's own Paul Feinman.

Joining in the festivities were City Council Speaker Christine Quinn,

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, State Senators Eric Schneiderman and Liz Krueger and City Council Members Dan Garodnick and David Yassky. In addition a number of Civil and acting Supreme Court judges were on hand including Judy Gisch, Andrea Masley, Robert Reed, Lucy Billings, Cynthia Kern and Sally Ann Scarpullo.

While everyone enjoyed the great eats and drinks, and the political gossip was abundant, a special thank you goes to all who contributed food to the St. Peter's Food Pantry.

## GENERAL MEETING

**THURSDAY,  
FEBRUARY 21 • 7:00 PM**

Hudson Guild  
441 West 26th St.  
(btwn 9th & 10th Aves)

## AGENDA

**“ALBANY UPDATE”**

**Guest Speaker:**

**Assembly Member,  
Richard N. Gottfried**

*Please be on time as  
Assembly Member Gottfried  
has a later commitment.*

**Club Business to follow.**

## Newly Elected CRDC 2008 Executive Committee

### OFFICERS

President: Lynn Kotler  
Exec. VP: Judy Richheimer  
2nd. VP: Luke McAuliffe  
Treasurer: Paul Groncki  
Secretary: Linda Longstreet

### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Andrew Berman  
Maarten de Kadt  
Paul Goetz  
Marvin Kohl  
Elyce Roberts  
Gloria Sukenick

## St. Vincent's Condo/Hospital Plan Has Huge Ramifications for Chelsea and Whole City

*By Andrew Berman, CRDC Executive Committee*

Public hearings just began on a plan by St. Vincent's Hospital and developers the Rudin Company to replace the current St Vincent's Hospital with a huge new luxury condo development and a new hospital. Well over half of the proposed new development, on more than 3/4 of the current hospital's land, would be luxury condos. Because the new hospital – previously spread out over eight buildings – would now be squeezed onto one site, it would rise to 330 feet high – far and away the tallest building around. The new luxury condos would include an enormous 1/2 million sq. ft., 265 ft. tall apartment block on 7th Avenue, which would also be one of the hugest buildings around. All nine of the hospital's current buildings would be demolished, rather than re-used. Neighbors worry about the impact upon overcrowded local schools and the secondary displacement effects from so much new luxury housing.

While this will all be happening a mere block outside of Chelsea, the ramifications will extend well into Chelsea and other neighborhoods. St. Vincent's and Rudin are proposing to do all of this in the Greenwich Village Historic District, and by law in any historic district buildings are only supposed to be demolished only in the rare cases where they are so new or out of character as not to warrant preservation. New development is supposed to match the scale and character of the district. How the hospital or developer's demolition or new development plans can fit these definitions is anyone's guess. But if they are approved, it will essentially change the definition of historic district protections, making it substantially easier for demolition and new luxury condo development to take place. The impacts of such a change could be huge, especially in a neighborhood like Chelsea, where historic district protections not only preserve neighborhood scale and character, but prevent the demolition of affordable housing.

But the ramifications extend even farther. Several years ago, St. Vincent's got permission to build larger than normally allowable buildings on the basis of it being a public health facility; now St. Vincent's wants to give that extra bulk to Rudin to build larger luxury condos, and Rudin is actually asking for permission to build EVEN LARGER. The justification? St. Vincent's says it needs lots of money to build a new hospital, and if it doesn't get everything it and its developer are asking for, it will leave the neighborhood.

Of course this all has shades of General Theological Seminary, which made similar claims in Chelsea last year. There the community offered a reasonable compromise and stood firm. Ultimately the Community Board and elected

officials stood with them, and GTS took the compromise and remains in the neighborhood. Let's hope the same thing happens with St. Vincent's, where the community has also offered a reasonable compromise which would allow the construction of a new hospital and even allow a modest amount of new development to pay for it, without the upzoning and wholesale demolition of protected buildings the hospital and developer are asking for. If not, we may well see an entirely new precedent set that will allow developers to demolish more buildings and build more and bigger luxury condos in our neighborhood than ever before, as long as they connect the development to some "needy" institution.

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## The (New) President's Corner

*by Lynn Kotler, CRDC President*

2008 is a time for opportunity and growth for the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club. At our January meeting the Club elected its officers; some returnees and some newcomers. We are fortunate to have returning treasurer Paul Groncki, whose experience is invaluable to our club on many levels, and Secretary Linda Longstreet who not only tends to our administrative and organizational tasks, but also ensures that CRDC runs efficiently. Judy Richheimer and Luke McAuliffe, as first and second vice-president, respectively, will provide the Club with enthusiasm and energy needed to carry out our goals in the coming year.

Many thanks to Steven Skyles-Mulligan for his hard work, dedication and commitment to this Club as president for the past five years and on a personal note, for his guidance to me. His term in office moved the CRDC into the 21st century and primed us for years to come.

Here is an excerpt from my speech given at our January 2008 meeting:

"As president, I will make recruitment of new members a priority. It is important to build the power base of this club and raise its influence in the community. We have started a Club web site, created a membership brochure and last week we held a presidential forum with representatives present for all the major candidates. We had a terrific community turnout. I will continue developing relationships with other democratic clubs and co-sponsor events with them to benefit the Democratic Party as well as our neighborhoods. Each of our elected officials will meet with us to discuss their policies and how they will benefit our community.

"There is no better way than giving back to our neighborhood than through community service. Many in our own neighborhood can use our help. This past December we donated food to St. Peter's food pantry. Not only did this simple gesture help our neighbors but also it increased our visibility as a club. As we continue on this

path, people will want to work with us and want to join us. This is an organization of volunteers. Good things happen when people volunteer and get involved. Together we can make our democratic community stronger.

“I look forward to seeing you at our events and working with each and all of you in the coming year.”

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## The (Ex) President’s Corner

*By Steven Skyles-Mulligan,  
CRDC President 2003-2007*

This is the sixth January in a row that I have been privileged to write to you in this space about changes happening in the Club. This time is different than those that preceded it; instead of laying out an agenda or expressing a vision, it is my job to say goodbye, to focus more on looking back than on looking ahead.

The past five years have been interesting and challenging in so many ways. Working together we have accomplished a great deal. We have helped elect candidates at all levels of government who share our views. On this score, we should be particularly proud that three sometime members – and longtime supporters – of CRDC have been elected to the New York State Supreme Court in the past few years: Roz Richter, John Stackhouse and, just this year, Paul Feinman. When we have disagreed with our elected officials we have not hesitated to hold them to account. Who will ever forget that memorable evening when the New York County Leader spoke with us about the judicial election process? We have held powerful and interesting forums, most notably the one on impeachment with Elizabeth Holtzman and the recent presidential candidates’ forum. And our annual brunch and bbq continue to be favorites among New York’s political elite. We have built an infrastructure that helps us accomplish the work of our club, from a clubhouse that people actually want to spend time in, to a website, to a marketing piece that, however controversial, is better than anything we have had before.

The biggest accomplishment to my mind – and the one that bodes best for the organization’s future – is less tangible and more difficult to describe. From the chair I have noted a simultaneous increase in both the passion and the decorum of debates. We are, for the most part, learning to listen to each other, to value each other’s opinions and to disagree without being disagreeable. That’s a tough journey for any organization to take, and necessary for growth and long-term health. It seems that CRDC is well on its way.

I was honored and humbled by the many rounds of applause I received at the Annual Meeting. While I am grateful to be so well regarded, I must say that everything that has happened over the past five years – like all worthwhile things in life – has been the result of collaborative effort. It is impossible to name – or thank – everyone who played a role, but I would like to draw your attention to those whose

efforts have been significant and consistent.

First of all, I must say that CRDC has been lucky in its elected party officials. Tim Gay, Kathy Kinsella, Mary Dorman and Tom Schuler have each done much good for the organization and its causes in their own particular way, providing leadership by reminding us of our traditions, calling us to our principles, stirring us to bold action and organizing us at the grassroots. Second, every head of an organization needs to be able to rely upon advice from people who have been around but have no particular personal agenda. While I was fortunate enough to have many such people, the two I seemed to speak with most often on this level were Maarten de Kadt and Katharine Roberts. Their advice was sage, selfless and devoid of flattery. Third, there are the people who get the work done – particularly those who can develop a concept, follow it through and cause something to emerge from nothing. We would have accomplished very little for the past five years without Luke McAuliffe, Judy Richheimer and Linda Longstreet. Fourth, and in a category all by herself, is Doris Corrigan, who has worked tirelessly for CRDC over the past quarter century and has to endure the changing agenda and whims that accompany each new club president. I am grateful to have worked alongside her and to call her my friend. Finally, I must thank my two mainstays, the senior officers who worked with me for the entire period, Paul Groncki and Marvin Kohl. They helped keep me focused, took on some of the burden when I could not readily bear it myself and gently corrected me when I went astray.

As for what’s next, that is not for me to say. The Club has promising and enthusiastic new leadership to see us through the next phase of our transition. I urge you to support Lynn Kotler in her efforts to craft and realize a renewed vision for CRDC. Be patient with her and remember to ask for what you want. The Club and I had five years to get used to each other and to grow to respect each other; it will take some time for both Lynn and the Club to adjust to her new role, but it will be well worthwhile.

In French there are two ways to say goodbye. One, *adieu*, literally means “until we stand together before God’s throne.” That sounds a bit too permanent to me, and so I bid you *au revoir* (until we see each other again).

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## HOMELESSNESS...

### On the Upswing, One More Time

*Gloria Sukenick, CRDC Housing Committee Chair*

Once again, as I walk on Eighth Avenue, I see faces now growing familiar, from encounters last week and the weeks before. Unfortunately, I will probably see them again next week. They are the faces of the growing number of homeless people. This should serve as a warning sign that something is seriously awry in all of our gentrifying

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## HOMELESSNESS... On the Upswing, One More Time

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neighborhoods: Chelsea, the Lower East Side, reaching into Brooklyn, The Bronx and Queens.

One particularly sad tale is that of “The Mosaic Man,” Jim Power, who enriched the streets of the Lower East Side for many years with his inventive, incredibly beautiful mosaics created from the bits and pieces of broken glass, china and cups. These items that would have been tossed into the garbage but instead turned lampposts, broken pavements, street walls and whatever else could be found into the most wondrous, joyous art pieces that everyone enjoyed.

However, here is another case of what the lack of housing and support systems has finally done to such a resource. A Vietnam veteran, he has lived, as many artists have, on the margins. First he was able to afford an apartment, then he lived in a squatter’s building. When that was

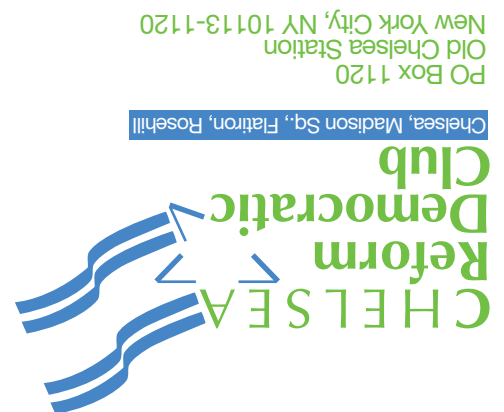
no longer possible as the Lower East Side property values soared, he often was seen sleeping on the street with his beloved dog, Jesse Jane. When he was lucky, he would exchange his talents and skills for a place to sleep as he created an art work in someone’s home.

However, all this has taken a terrible toll on The Mosaic Man. His health – mental and physical – has deteriorated. The last I heard, he was trying to destroy his wonderful lampposts to protest his plight and was in danger of being taken into custody.

The last news was that he had sold his website – yes, website – to someone, received some money and found somewhere to live for himself and Jesse Jane in Brooklyn, far from his neighborhood, the Lower East Side.

When we make this city a place where only the millionaires (or is it billionaires now?) can afford shelter, what kind of city are we creating?

Do we want a city where all the richness, diversity, vitality and liveliness is



destroyed and one sees only those with deep pockets ... and those with hands out and shopping carts containing their worldly goods.

Not good enough! As we, once again, see more and more homeless, let’s call for the changes in our government that will address these terrible inequities. The sad fate of Jim Powers is not only his tragedy, but our loss as well.

So that’s my story about the need for enriching Chelsea, and the rest of the City – and what really makes us rich as a community. We certainly need affordable housing as a basic building block to even begin.

Keep fighting!

