

### MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

## Ensuring Your Eligibility to Participate in CRDC's Upcoming Endorsement Votes

Happy 2013 to CRDC members and friends. I hope that the new year will be full of peace, prosperity and happiness for each of you. I know that it will be full of exciting politics as candidates vie for municipal office in the coming months.

The new calendar year also brings a new membership year. Starting in November, CRDC members were encouraged to renew their commitment to the Club and its principles by paying their dues. In an ordinary year, this is important to CRDC: we need the money to finance our activities, and gain influence as an organization by having a significant number of committed members. I hope that it is also important to you — and that you get something from being a member.

This is an extraordinary year, though, and the stakes are higher for both the Club and the individuals who are its members. Because the elections this year are very local — from mayor to city council — who we endorse may have tremendous influence on the immediate future of our City — and our neighborhood. Participating in the initial stages of selecting our party's candidates for local office is a particular privilege of local political clubs and their members.

To ensure that you, your interested friends



*by Steven Skyles-Mulligan  
President,  
CRDC*

and neighbors are part of the CRDC endorsement process, all members must follow CRDC's clearly-delineated and well-established rules to prevent the practice commonly known as "club-packing." You ask—"what's club-packing?" Club-packing is a process in which candidate supporters flood the membership rolls in order to favor their candidates.

CRDC welcomes all people to join and are willing to make at least a minimal commitment. Here is a summary of the rules for voting in CRDC endorsements,

followed by a calendar of upcoming votes with eligibility cut-offs.

- Residents of the 75th Assembly District must be club members in good standing 45 days prior to the vote
- Members in good standing for the 2012 calendar year may pay 2013 dues on night of the vote
- Non residents of the 75th Assembly District must be club members in good standing for 6 months prior to the vote
- Members who are voting members of other assembly-district based clubs are not eligible to vote

If you have any questions about your membership status, contact CRDC Treasurer Paul Groncki at [paul@groncki.com](mailto:paul@groncki.com) or 917.601.8831.

Race(s)	Date	Voting Eligibility Cut-Off	
		Residents of 75th AD	Non-Residents of 75th AD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor</li> <li>• District Leader</li> <li>• (Nominee Club judicial delegates)</li> </ul>	March 21, 2013	February 4, 2013	September 20, 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comptroller</li> <li>• Public Advocate</li> <li>• Manhattan DA</li> <li>• (Elect Club Judicial Delegates)</li> </ul>	April 18, 2013	March 4, 2013	October 17, 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manhattan Borough President</li> <li>• City Council District 3</li> <li>• City Council District 2</li> </ul>	May 16, 2013	April 1, 2013	November 15, 2012

Endorsement meetings will be held at Fulton Center Auditorium, 119 9th Avenue (between 17th and 18th Streets.) The forum will start at 7 pm and end by 10. The ballot box will be open from 8:30 pm – 9:30 pm on each occasion.

*Source: CRDC constitution, Article IX.*



### A Well Coordinated Inauguration

Newly elected Brad Hoylman, with hand on Bible, gives his Oath as partner David Sigal holds up little Sylvia. Administering the ceremony is the Honorable Paul Oetken, United States District Judge, Southern District of New York. The January 13th event was hosted by Fashion Institute of Technology's President, Dr. Joyce Brown at the School's Haft Auditorium and emceed by State Assemblywoman Deborah Glick. CRDC's Christine Quinn spoke of Brads's incredible dedication in working causes, and outgoing State Senator Tom Duane gave Brad and David two new ties and a stuffy doll (pictured under Bible). Others who spoke praise and hope included US Senator Charles Schumer, US Representative Jerrold Nadler, Man. Borough President Scott Stringer, State Senator Keith Wright and the newly appointed Democratic Leader, State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. Our District Leader Tom Schuler was instrumental in coordinating the event. — D.S.

COMMENT ON ECONOMICS

## A Hopeful New Year

*(Written Mid-December)*

Did we drop off the fiscal cliff? Did the president, having just won an election, appease his opponents too much to arrive at a compromise with the still recalcitrant Republican Party? We come into the New Year full of opportunities and dangers. But it is also a hopeful time if the spirit of two conferences I recently attended, is any indication.



by Maarten  
de Kaadt,  
Vice President  
CRDC

What's our vision for New York City? That was the focus of a December 1st conference entitled "Urban Uprising: Reimagining the City." A week later another conference, "New York: Progressive Capital?", asked almost the same question. Both conferences were full of grand ideas. Both conferences offered lists of areas in which to work. Both complained about the "silo" mentality held by activists and activist groups. Both conferences tried to see the commonalities each silo group faces.

That there is a plethora of silos is both good and bad news. The good news is that in New York City, as well as other places in the country, a lot is happening. Community-based organizations are working on an impressively large set of issues. The bad news is that funding for these important activities is declining and each group is so focused on its own issue that they are unable to take the time to step back and see how their specific issue is related to the others.

Both conferences agreed one of the primary issues facing our city and nation is jobs. The report on jobs remains unsatisfactory. Too many people are still without work and

therefore without income. The official November unemployment rate dropped to 7.7%, but a more relevant (also official) statistic is that covering the unemployed, underemployed and the workers who simply stopped applying for jobs: 14.4% — double the more widely cited statistic.

As Super Storm Sandy clearly showed us the infrastructure is outdated and should be rebuilt. That is an expensive proposition that would put many people to work. Flood control needs to be improved in our cities. Electricity production needs to be decentralized and its distribution system needs upgrading and protection. Transportation systems need improvement and protection. And this is a short list.

The participants in the conferences I mentioned above agreed the quality of life in our city needs to be improved with more jobs and less income disparity. Eight years ago at his inauguration, one of our politicians announced that the ticket to living in New York City should not be a million dollar purchase of housing. Now, that same politician is saying it should not be a two and one half million dollar sum of money. What happened to affordable housing and rent regulations?

The general direction for our city was well stated at each conference. Missing were the specific suggestions. If you argue for no cars

in the city then you must also describe the desired transportation system. If you argue for decentralized power production then you must also design the regulations that will cause developers to install decentralized systems in new projects and retrofit them on existing structures. The same goes for storm water retention and its diversion from the sewage system (not to mention protection from storm surges).

As Bob Herbert, the former NY Times columnist, explained during his keynote address to the second conference, there is a vacuum of progressive leadership. If the "fiscal cliff" has been successfully overcome, then maybe the President is beginning to fill that vacuum on the national level. There is a local vacuum too. We must identify and elect progressive leadership during this year's elections to help us fulfill the progressive vision for our city.

What is the new vision for the city? Many have such a vision even though its particularities need greater specification. Getting there would create many jobs. Those jobs should be paid for through

the increased taxation and spending. And as money flows toward government spending, maybe it should be placed in a state bank so that the interest earned on that money can also be used for infrastructure reconstruction rather than going to the profits of the rapacious private banks.

A hopeful New Year will be one in which we learn to work together on the many issues that need attention, to form a complex, diverse, more egalitarian, safe, and livable city.

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help us fulfill the progressive  
vision for our city.*

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## Get Involved with the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club and Live Longer! Helping Others Promotes Longevity

According to the University of California at Berkeley, of the 2,000 individuals over age 55 studied for five years, those who volunteered for two or more organizations had an impressive 44% less likelihood of dying. And in another study, they found that generous behavior as a youth reduces adolescent depression and suicide risk.\*

The CRDC's Mission states: "The club is committed to further the interests and participation of all citizens in the civic affairs of our community; to support human and civil rights for all regardless of race, creed, religion, age, or sexual orientation; to work for peace." What

better organization is there to get more involved with, than us!

With election season soon upon us, wouldn't you like to work on election campaigns for our endorsed candidates? Or help plan and produce forums, or write and design newsletters and website content? Come to any of our monthly meetings and volunteer.

Latch on a cause and become part of the solution. Make a difference and live longer!

— D.S.

\*[www.whygoodthingshappen.com](http://www.whygoodthingshappen.com)

## CRDC's Letter to Governor Cuomo Concerning Jumping Political Parties

**Dear Governor Andrew Cuomo,**

The New York State Democratic Party stands for progressive ideals. We endeavor to make the American dream real for everyone, especially those whose rights are often ignored: racial minorities, immigrants, women, the poor, gays, working people, tenants, artists, students, and small business owners. The Republican Party, on the other hand -- as so dramatically demonstrated throughout this past election season -- wants simply to uphold privilege for those with extreme wealth and power.

Given the stark contrast between these parties, we were extremely disturbed to learn that, despite having run as a Democrat for the New York State Senate, Simcha Felder announced upon victory plans to caucus with Republicans -- in effect, to become a Republican. We were equally dismayed by Democrats Jeff Klein, Malcolm Smith, and Diane Savino, who after getting elected,



*Written and sponsored by  
Judy Richheimer  
Executive  
VP, CRDC*

suddenly defined themselves as independents -- meaning that they too will not be caucusing with their own party. We feel that, simply to succeed at the electoral level, these politicians cloaked themselves with the mantle of the Democratic Party, but later with a cynical eye toward gaining favor with the Republican majority, quickly shrugged off this mantle, along with the ideals it represents.

It is important that all New York State Democrats speak out against this betrayal. However, only our leaders can hold traitors accountable and also establish guidelines to help insure party loyalty in the future. Therefore, we call upon you to make the following announcements:

- 1) Funds drawn from our party's coffers used to support the recent elections of Simcha Felder, Malcolm Smith, Jeff Klein, Malcolm Smith, and Diane Savino, must be paid back**

with interest. In addition, if they so desire, individual contributors to these campaigns should be reimbursed.

- 2) When Democrats take hold of the New York State Senate, and if Simcha Felder, Jeff Klein, Malcolm Smith, and Diane Savino are still in office, committee chairs and other privileges of seniority will be withheld from them by the New York State Democratic Party.**
- 3) The party rule will be amended to state that it is an act of disloyalty not to vote for leadership positions recommended by the party caucus in the legislative body. Had this rule been in place, we likely would have prevailed in the 2002 effort to cancel the enrollment of Pedro Espada in the Democratic Party.**

Thank you for reading this letter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,  
Submitted by,  
Steven Skyles-Mulligan, President  
Chelsea Reform Democratic Club

## Remembering Estelle Katz

I met Estelle when I came to look at the first apartment offered to me at Penn South. My name had been on the list for 14 plus years. It was a blazing hot summer day in 2001. Realizing that I really didn't know much about the co-op, I decided that I needed to talk with someone who did. Hearing noise in the mail room, I went in and asked the woman standing there what she thought of Penn South. Being Estelle, she told me.

I was going to the 16th floor, so we went up together. She showed me the stairway to the 16th floor and said that since it was a hot day, I should come to 15F for a glass of seltzer to cool off when I was done looking at the apartment. She also said something uncomplimentary about the US President at the time. "Oops" she said, "You may not feel that way."

"Carry on", said I, "You can't say anything that I haven't thought or said!!"

Having more questions, and not remembering her name, I wrote a note and asked her to call me if she received it. She did. I did not know then what a wonderful friendship had just begun. What followed was an introduction to Chelsea for Peace, the CRDC, wonderful Party events, long talks, walks, meals in restaurants and our homes. We went to Central Park and enjoyed Christo's Gates, to the New York City Opera, played Scrabble, went to the annual reading of The Constitution in Central Park, thence to the Dive Bar on Amsterdam Avenue with a couple of her friends.



*by Leathe  
Vanadore*

Estelle loved her family more than just about anyone I've ever known, her friends, her activism and looking out for the less fortunate. This atheist Communist party member was the best Christian I knew and one day when she didn't have anything in her hand to throw at me, I told her so!!

You may think this weird, but, if you list the tenets of Marxism next to those of Christianity, you will be shocked to see that they are basically the same -- except that Marxism has no God.

This past December, Estelle at 96, sadly passed. She will long be remembered by those who knew her well and those who did not. She was a woman who lived by what she believed. It was a privilege to call her "friend". I miss her immensely.



*Estelle as a 21 year old and later, as a protester (with sign)*



# Holiday Cheers From CRDC!

Food, fun and fellowship was the flavor of the day at the CRDC Annual Holiday Celebration held on Sunday, December 9th at the Hudson Guild Elliott Center. Local elected politicians, judges, candidates and activists joined club members for a feast worthy of a King, as well as State Senators and Assemblymembers alike. As Public Advocate Candidate Catherine Guerriero put it, the CRDC “had the best cold cut spread of any of New York City’s political club parties.”

A big special thanks to the Hudson Guild’s Children & Youth Service volunteers Danyoline Balbuena, Tian Carling, Chae’la Griffin and Carynn Maldonado for helping set-up, host, serve food and take turns in photographing these wonderful pictures of our guests. — D.S.

*The set-up crew (back row from left): Donathan Salkaln, Sylvia Di Pietro, Steven Skyles-Mulligan, Paul Groncki, and front row from left: Tian Carling, Carynn Maldonado and Danyoline Balbuena. Not pictured: Tom Schuler, David Warren and Chae’la Griffin.*



MEET OUR NEW  
STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN  
**Sylvia Di Pietro**

*As a longtime resident of the area, what do you like most about the many changes in Chelsea over the past 15 years?*

“Chelsea was so dingy when I arrived in 1983. I remember balking to my then husband because we had DEA agents in the lobby of our building peeking out of the curtains and then arresting drug dealers on the street; the area was so depressed. Now it’s polished and accessible. Anything is obtainable in just a few short blocks. The High Line has become one of my grandson’s favorites—as well as hot dogs—he loves buying hot dogs from the street vendors.

*What issues are most important for Chelsea in the next ten years?*

There are many but let me address three very important issues.

**Gay Rights:** One of the most important issues for our community, with its rich large gay population, is the right to live happily or miserably, as a divorced person or married couple with a family with the same hundreds of “rights” and privileges that are enjoyed by heterosexual couples, such as the right to adopt or have children via alternative methods, healthcare, housing and inheritance. The right to inherit \$5 million from your spouse is pretty important!

**Affordable Housing:** What scares me is how fast the affordable housing market is evaporating and what I view as a classic case of the “warehousing” of apartments by landlords and I feel also banks. With all of these foreclosures, we should have had many more apartments for sale at affordable prices and we don’t. The rents are off the charts and this breeds a lack of diversity in our City’s population. Moreover, the promises made to increase affordable housing aren’t being honored. The condos and coops are marketed towards the top 1% and the situation is out of hand.

**Schools:** The area also lacks sufficient elementary and middle schools and we find that even before a school is built, it is already projected to be “over-crowded.” That’s scary....and people are having kids again, so where are these children going to go in the Chelsea area at such a tender age for schooling.

*When not in court what are you most likely doing?*

My clients and my work as an elder law advocate and trusts and estates litigator takes up a lot of my time. My work is very taxing but I enjoy my profession. I also began teaching Elder Law as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School this month. With America’s aging population, it’s imperative that young attorneys be knowledgeable in this area of law because the baby boomers are aging, and with that comes an entire body of law that is evolving.

*What’s your favorite movie?*

My most sentimental movie is *Splendor in the Grass* with Natalie Wood. My parents forbade me from seeing it and I went anyway—I defied authority!



CRDC NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING  
**Activists Address Affordable Housing's  
 Disappearing Act**

REPRINTED FROM CHELSEA NOW

When a former New York State Supreme Court judge gets so riled up that she drops the F-word, it's time to sit down, spit out the gum and take heed. That's just what happened when the Honorable Karen Smith (of the Real Rent Reform campaign) discussed the state of affordable housing at a November 15 community forum hosted by the Chelsea Reform Democratic Club (CRDC).

After a numbing presidential election and an uninvited guest named Sandy who overstayed her welcome, Smith's presentation was a wake-up call to a local problem in need of serious attention. She was joined by Matt Klein of the West Side Neighborhood Alliance, who provided insights regarding the planning, building and term limits of affordable housing.

"Real estate is to New York what oil is to Texas," Smith stated firmly, "And we're up against it. If you look at the papers and editorials, they're demonizing us much as they use to demonize welfare recipients years back. They claim we don't need rent control and rent stabilization even though statistics show that the median income for those in rent regulated apartments is under \$35,000. Busing to Albany no longer works. They no longer listen."

Two years ago, Smith turned in her judicial gavel for a hammer to fight for the rights to affordable housing for struggling New Yorkers — much with the same spirit as her mother, the late Esther Smith, did in fighting for housing and equal rights when she was Chelsea District Leader (1980-90). This

apple didn't fall far from the tree (which was in Penn South, a rare housing project that manages to comfortably keep affordability).

During the course of her work with Real Rent Reform, Smith has met with over 75 organizations, examined the problems associated with all types of housing and



by Donathan  
 Salkin,  
 CRDC  
 Vice President

is now in the process of forming a coalition under the banner of "Affordable New York." Smith, who envisions a growing force that Albany will not be able to ignore, made the case for why the current affordable housing movement's scope should be broadened to include all renters (co-op, condo and limited equity), home owners and public housing.

"We have vacancy de-

control provisions that have deregulated over 500,000 apartments in the last 11 years, many of them illegally," Smith said, adding that there's also "the issue of Major Capital Improvements and Individual Apartment Improvements (IAIs) — where a landlord says he's done major work to your building or apartment, so you get a rent increase. There are only six inspectors statewide to see if the landlord really did the work."

*"A landlord says he's done major work to your building or apartment, so you get a rent increase. There are only six inspectors statewide to see if the landlord really did the work."*

of the State Legislatures up in Albany."

After Smith spoke about the high foreclosure rate in the outer boroughs and for further regulation of the open rental market, Klein added, "We are losing affordable housing through vacancy destabilization, the fact that they are not building any more public

housing projects and that Mitchell-Lama and Section A buildings are opting out of their affordability." He lamented that most apartments in the current affordable housing programs lose their affordable status after a set number of years — units of Low Income Housing Tax Credits in 30 years, the 80-20 Program (20 percent affordable) in 15-30 years, and 421A (20 percent affordable) in 30 years.

"These are not permanent fixes to a permanent problem," said Klein. "They all cost the city millions in lost revenue. What we need to do is come up with ways to build permanent affordable housing that doesn't cost the tax payers or the city money."



Karen Smith, with Matt Klein, speak at CRDC forum.

Real Rent Reform's current battle is to get a series of rent protections back into a bill that renews tax abatements for co-ops and condos and for landlord's J-51 tax abatements. That bill, A.10798, is believed to be part of a deal to be enacted when the State Legislature reconvenes to approve their own raises.

But most disturbing to those in attendance was Smith's assessment of public housing — based on recent volunteer work at Fulton Houses alongside CRDC members and a band of locals. Smith said that housing residents fear the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) more than anything Hurricane Sandy could have brought, citing cases where NYCHA residents refused to evacuate no matter how dire their situation. "Public housing is in terrible shape," she said. "In fixing apartments, they say to a family, 'Here's a Section A

## ON THE FRONTLINES WITH CRDC MEMBERS

### Cold Weather Social

On a blustery December day, CRDC'er **Muriel Beach** took her walker to the steps of City Hall to voice opposition to another chilly forecast, that of social security and Medicaid cuts. Her speech was as follows:

"I am an 85 year old senior who depends on my social security to provide me with the means to live comfortably. The cola is vital to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living. For example as a rent control tenant my rent increases 7-1/2%. Per cent per year. Even though in recent years the cola has been small it is better than the



proposed changes would be. In its 71 years of existence, Social Security has pulled countless seniors, children, disabled, and surviving spouses out of poverty.

Social Security has not caused nor contributed to the debts of this country. By instituting the chained cola, the White House and Congress will mortgage the future of all

Americans for years to come. It is crucial that our elected officials stand by the promise of not cutting, but strengthening Social Security and Medicare.

Thank you, Muriel Beach, Chair, Public Policy Committee New York State Wide Senior Action Council."

voucher. Go live somewhere while we fix up your place and you can come back.' Guess what? They're not letting them back in. And they all know it!"

Smith blames the fear of NYCHA on a new federal government policy of privatizing housing projects. She said that in New York City, Citibank

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*Smith said that public housing residents fear the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) more than anything Hurricane Sandy could have brought.*

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is systematically filling apartments "with people making quite a bit of money." The idea is that, over time, the extra income will pay for improvements at the same time "they are kicking out people who are poor." Adding insult, NYCHA has also been selling off its real estate, including a St. Nicholas children's playground in Harlem to the developer of a school for \$7 million even though there was an empty school across the street. "They're destroying communities," she declared.

Smith and Klein were joined by the meeting's moderators, Judy Richheimer and Lee Sinovio, in requesting that the community generate their own ideas to improve the state of affordable housing.

As Smith put it, "We need to broaden our vision of what is possible."

### A Comprehensive Storm Surge Plan

On January 7th, **Robert Trentlyon**, CRDC's founding president, shared center stage with Professor Mathew Bowman of Stony Brook University and David Gmach of Con Edison at a Manhattan CB2 Environmental Committee meeting. Con Ed's Bowman spoke of the record storm surge not seen since 1820. And while Hurricane Gloria darkened 110,000 customers and Hurricane Irene 200,000, Hurricane Sandy took 1.1 million customers off the grid. Robert Trentlyon gave the packed auditorium an updated list of electeds and community boards in favor of a storm surge barrier.



Among the many plans currently under review, Professor Bowman's presentation, by far, protects the most vulnerable of communities in both New York and New Jersey. It is based on a successful combination of barriers and berms already used in St. Petersburg, Russia

and Denmark's Dutch Delta. The surge barrier between Sandy Hook, New Jersey and Breezy Point would include slush gates and three gateways for commercial and recreational traffic and also have a 4 lane highway (tunnels under the gateways). Do I hear toll booths — or better yet,

the long awaited freight rail line with the jobs that would come with it?

— Donathan Salkaln




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A Special thanks to CRDC club members who planned and helped with the meeting: The Event Committee of Judy Richheimer, Lee Sinovoi, John Johnson, and David Warren with William Newsome, Michael Schreiber, Steven Skyles-Mulligan, Paul Groncki, Evelyn Suarez, and Muriel Beech, plus our District Leaders Mary Dorman, Tom Schuler and Democratic Committee Woman Sylvia Di Pietro!

PO Box 1120  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York City, NY 10113-1120

Chelsea, Madison Sq., Flatiron, Rosehill



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, February 21, 7-10 pm:

**Climate Change: Daniel A. Lashof, Director of the Climate Change Program at the National Resources Defense Council**  
Elliott Center (Hudson Guild), 441 West 26th St

Thursday, March 21, 2013, 7-10 pm:

**Endorsement of Mayor, District Leader, Nominations for Club Judicial Candidates**  
Fulton Center (Hudson Guild) 199 9th Ave (bet. 17th and 18th Sts)

Thursday, April 18, 2013, 7-10 pm:

**Endorsement of Comptroller, Public Advocate, Manhattan DA, Elect Club Judicial Delegates**  
Fulton Center (Hudson Guild) 199 9th Ave (bet. 17th and 18th Sts)

Saturday, May 4, 11:30 am

**Spring Brunch**  
El Cid Restaurant, 174 8th Avenue, at 19th Street

Thursday, May 16, 2013, 7 – 10 pm

**Endorsement of Manhattan Borough President, City Council District 3, City Council District 2**  
Fulton Center (Hudson Guild) 199 9th Ave (bet. 17th and 18th Sts)

We Welcome You to Come to Our Meetings!  
Visit Our Website: [www.crdcnyc.org](http://www.crdcnyc.org)

## Join CRDC Today!

Send monthly newsletter by:  Email or  Postal delivery

Please pay your 2013 dues so you can vote for our 2013 officers and Members-At-Large. Please fill out the coupon below and mail to our postal box, or you may renew by going to our website, [www.crdcnyc.org](http://www.crdcnyc.org).

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\$35 Individual     \$50 H'Hold     \$100 Patrons

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