Join Us at the Fourth Annual Food for Thought Fundraiser Oct. 21

The Park Slope Civic Council is thrilled to be planning our fourth annual “Food for Thought” fundraiser on Wednesday, October 21, 2015, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., at the beautiful Prospect Park Picnic House, to support our education scholarship program. We’re hoping to make this year’s event even better than last year’s, which netted $14,000.

There will be outstanding food from local restaurants, beverages, music, mingling, and lively conversation in addition to Storykeep’s video of the 2015 winners - always a poignant climax to the evening. Proceeds from the event go to the education scholarships awarded by the Civic Council to one outstanding high school senior from each of the Secondary Schools at the John Jay High School campus who exhibits exceptional commitment to community service; the balance of funds raised will build the scholarship endowment. Past participants have said that “this event keeps getting better and better. It’s a beautiful setting, the food and drinks are amazing...what’s not to like?”

Tickets are on sale now on our website: $75 per person for General Admission before October 15 ($100 per person at the door); and $125 per person for Premium Admission (only 30 tickets available), which includes an exclusive Swag Bag loaded with fabulous giveaways. Donations to the scholarship program are welcome if you are unable to join us at the fundraiser. (See last year’s awardees on page 3.)

For questions or more information please call us at 718-369-4006, or visit our website at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org/food-for-thought/.

From Our Co-Presidents

We are so enthusiastic about kicking off the 2015-16 Park Slope Civic Council season! After a very busy summer of meetings, brainstorming and planning, we know the community is in for lots of activity -- and fun!

In this issue, you’ll find an article about development at the Pavilion Movie Theater. When concerned neighbors and our Historic District Committee protested the scale and design of a new building, the LPC with CB6 required the developer to scale down the program and make the building more contextually appropriate. A movie theater will also be retained. We will, of course, monitor this project and keep you updated.

As advocates not just for Park Slope, but for our friends in other neighborhoods, the PSCC joined about a dozen civic groups and elected representatives in a letter of support for the review of two new buildings planned for construction at Pier 6 (base of Atlantic Avenue). Keeping developers and government officials to their promises is the goal of thoughtful and consistent neighborhood watchfulness, and we are not just concerned with “our backyard,” rather the ongoing support and improvement of all of Brooklyn.

We have lots of events coming up, so mark your calendars! “Food for Thought” funds four awards for community service to graduating seniors on the John Jay campus. This year we will be hitting an all-time high of $2,000! With your support, we can meet our goal of increasing the awards each year and building a reserve so the scholarships remain self-sustaining.

Civic Sweep, our neighborhood-wide cleanup, is about picking up litter, eradicating graffiti and planting flowers -- all a meaningful way to socialize with neighbors and keep Park Slope cleaner and greener. One of our most popular events is the annual Halloween Parade. This year’s theme is “Wild Wild Life,” and we’re proud to announce noted local author and NY Times writer, Charles M. Blow, is our official Parade Grand Marshall! As Halloween falls on a Saturday, we have lots of activities that will take place before -- and after -- the parade.  

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At the Annual June Meeting

The Arts Festival is a rapidly expanding group focused on a multi-faceted event for Fall 2016, to include residents of our neighborhood engaged in all aspects of the arts in a large scale curated/juried exhibition and installation of interactive works. It will be neighborhood-wide and incorporate artists' studios, local merchants, galleries and restaurants, as well as open-air performances, ongoing art installations, readings and publicly accessible site works. - Gilly Youner, chair

The Committee on Trustees (COT) consists of one Trustee and four PSCC members (non-Trustees) and is generally responsible for oversight of the governance functions of the Council. Among its specific responsibilities are recruiting, nominating and orienting new board members, working with the Executive Committee to ensure leadership succession, confirming active participation of board members at board meetings and on committees, assessing compliance with the Conflict of Interest Policy and reviewing and recommending changes to the bylaws, as necessary. - SJ Avery, chair

Forth on Fourth Avenue (FOFA) organizes locally to protect, advance and improve the diverse Fourth Avenue corridor between Flatbush Avenue and the Prospect Expressway, focusing on safety improvements and streetscape enhancement through hands-on activities, such as expanded planting and tree care and identification of potential street amenity sites, and sponsorship of related advocacy forums and events. - SJ Avery, chair

The Historic District Committee is dedicated to the preservation of the 19th-century architecture and streetscapes that give Park Slope its heralded sense of place and history by educating property owners about landmarking, advocating for the expansion of the Park Slope Historic District, and providing input to our elected officials and at public hearings on land use and development issues that affect the neighborhood. - Peter Bray, chair

Toys for Tots is a gift-collection drive organized by the Civic Council that helps local children and families in need celebrate the holiday. Last year's record-breaking program provided over 2,900 gifts during the 2014 holiday season. - Thomas Miskel, coordinator

The House Tour Committee plans and coordinates the Annual Park Slope House Tour, the proceeds of which are largely returned to our community by The Grants Committee as awards which support programs in a variety of active, creative, non-profit/non-commercial local organizations benefitting Park Slope. - Candace Woodward and Darryl Cook, House Tour co-chairs / Gilly Youner, Grants Committee chair

The Livable Streets Committee works for a safe, lively street life and sensible traffic and transportation policies for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike. Its focus also extends to public art, aging in place, and independence of the disabled as they affect, and are affected by, the life in and around the street. - Michael Cairl, acting chair

The Outreach Committee coordinates the Civic Council's informational, marketing and membership efforts, working with the other Civic Council committees to publicize programs and initiatives using press releases, media advisories and contacts, social media and our redesigned website. The Committee also organizes the annual and very popular “Food for Thought” fundraiser for the Civic Council's college scholarships. An Archives Subcommittee has been formed to oversee the preservation and cataloging of the Civic Council's historical records. - Sarah Gersowitz, chair

The Scholarship Committee grants annual awards to one college-bound graduating senior from each of the four high schools at the John Jay campus. Criteria for these awards are based on volunteer and community service, scholarship, passion and counselor recommendation. The awards are funded through the annual “Food for Thought” fundraiser. - Joe Rydell, chair

The Sustainability Committee advocates for responsible use and conservation of natural resources, and promotes practices that have a beneficial effect on the environment. The Committee organizes both fall and spring Civic Sweeps, our semi-annual beautification, recycling and clean-up events, as well as the Civic Council's co-sponsorship of Mulchfest, a partnership with the Prospect Park Alliance. This summer the Committee participated in the NYC Tree Census. - Chandru Murthi, chair

Get involved! Visit our website to contact committee chairs.
Scholarships and Award Recipients Celebrated

Community Service Scholarship Winners Honored

Each year the Civic Council is delighted and honored to give Community Service Scholarships to deserving students from the John Jay Educational campus, funded by the “Food for Thought” event. This year, scholarships in the amount of $1,750 each were presented to four outstanding students by Scholarship Committee co-chairs, Joe Rydell and Joan Emerson. Congratulations to the following students and our best wishes for a successful future! Bryan Baez, Millennium Brooklyn High School, will be attending SUNY at Oswego; Armani Braithwaite, Secondary School for Law, will be attending Sienna College; Aissata Moussa, Secondary School for Journalism, will be attending Baruch College; and Lisa Suriya, Park Slope Collegiate, will be attending Barnard College.

Lovgren Awards Presented

Each year, the Civic Council is proud to present Lovgren Awards for Community Service to outstanding individuals in both professional and volunteer categories. The Lovgren Award for Community Service by a Professional was presented to Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director, Fifth Avenue Committee, for her work in developing and managing affordable housing and community facilities, creating economic opportunities and fighting against displacement caused by gentrification. This award was presented by Eric McClure, former Trustee and co-founder of Park Slope Neighbors. The Lovgren Award for Community Service by a Volunteer was presented to former Trustee David Alquist for his efforts to expand the Park Slope Historic District as a co-founder of Park Slope Neighbors. The Lovgren Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service went to Joan Emerson. Congratulations to Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director, Fifth Avenue Committee, and Joan Emerson. Thanks to our Government, Business and Professional Supporters!

Civic Council Grants Awarded

Gilly Youner, Chair of the Grants Committee, honored this year’s grants recipients at the June Annual Meeting – innovative, local organizations whose programs benefit Park Slope. Park Slope Civic Council grants are funded by the House Tour. The Brooklyn Arts Exchange will use its grant for their Teen Artists Learners & Leaders Council, a free, youth-led initiative for middle school to college students, which produces workshops, events and performances, and provides young artists, aged 11-25, unique opportunities to cultivate leadership in the arts. Spoke the Hub will use its grant to serve as “a con of origina n new dance and theater works, created, performed and organized by their current young artists, which will be performed at local hospitals, schools, senior centers and community events in Park Slope in 2015. Brooklyn Conservatory of Music will use its grant for their Teen Jazz Program’s master classes/performances, which offer students a jazz education that goes above and beyond standard lessons through additional training in theory, history, listening, improvisation, arranging, ensemble playing and participation. Spellbound Theatre will use its grant to support three free, public Community Arts Days to reach out to the Park Slope community and provide free puppetry, storytelling, and creative drama activities in public spaces. BRIC Arts | Media Brooklyn presented an Ezra Jack Keats Family Concert as part of the Celebrate Brooklyn Performing Arts Festival this past summer at the Prospect Park Bandshell: an energetic drum-off by the Blue Man Group, plus highly interactive community involvement from professional percussionists and enthusiasts, preceded by a 15-minute reading of EJK works by a guest celebrity reader with video projection of the EJK illustrations. Piper Theater will use its grant to support need-based financial aid to families involved in Piper, which this summer introduced one-week puppetry workshops for Starlings participants, ages 7-11. Each of the four weeks featured a different style of puppetry shadow puppets, hand puppets, rod puppets or object puppets. Students created their own puppets, and at the end of each week, students and their puppets performed for family and friends.

Our Mission Statement

The Civic Council’s mission is to understand the concerns of the various Park Slope constituencies and to select and implement effective responses through events, activities and advocacy efforts that engage the community and enhance our quality of life.

Thanks to Our Government, Business and Professional Supporters!

Assembly Member Jim Brennan, Assembly Member Jo Ann Simon, Council Member Brad Lander, Council Member Stephen Levin, Lion in the Sun, North Flatbush BID, Park Slope Chamber of Commerce, Park Slope 5th Avenue BID, TD Bank, Matthew Pintchik
Upcoming Events

October 1 & 1st Thursday of the month (except July/Aug) – Park Slope Civic Council Board Meeting, Old Stone House in Washington Park, 7:00 PM (check website beforehand to confirm location)

October 20 & 3rd Tuesday of the month (except July/Aug) – Office Hours, Parish Bar, 223 7th Ave. 7-9:00 PM, meetup with PSCC and neighborhood folks

October 21 – Annual Food for Thought Tasting Fundraiser, Picnic House in Prospect Park, 6:30-9:00 PM, Tickets on sale now at neighborhood locations, online at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1989603 (see our website for details)

October 25 - Fall Civic Sweep, Old Stone House in Washington Park on 5th Ave at 4th Street, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, refreshments provided

October 31 – Annual Halloween Parade, kicks off at 14th St. and 7th Ave., 6:30 PM, this year’s theme “Wild Wild Life,” plus Daytime Costume Contest & Dance Party at Old Stone House/JJ Byrne Playground

November 14 - Help PSCC Rebuild the Rockaways. To join us sign up at http://tiny.cc/y9t5x

December/January Holiday Program – details available at our website for a fun-filled lineup of holiday festivities including: Jingle Bell Jamboree, Park Slope Civic Council Holiday Party, Toys for Tots and Mulchfest

Check our website at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org for updates & more info

A distinguished panel of judges is ready to review projects nominated for the second annual Evelyn and Everett Ortner Awards for sensitive and appropriate rehabilitation, restoration and new construction.

We are excited and invigorated by our EIGHT new trustees, voted onto the board in June. We are lucky to have a wonderful cross-section of creative, skilled and dedicated folks to bring new energy and ideas to the table. Please introduce yourself at our various activities, and find out how you, too, might get involved.

What can you do to help? Become a member! Bring a neighbor or two to a meeting, activity, event or party. Our goal in 2015-16 is to continue to increase membership. This is YOUR neighborhood! Park Slope did not just “come to be.” So many before us devoted their lives to restoring brownstones, improving the park, making streets safer, cleaning up subway stations and so much more. We owe it to them – and to ourselves – to continue in their footsteps. Join us, and make Park Slope stronger and more effective, for all of us in this community.

With heartfelt thanks, Gilly and Judith
New Trustees 2015-16 Park Slope Civic Council
In Their Own Words

David Abramson

David is an architect specializing in historic preservation, trained at Columbia University, registered in both New York and New Jersey and in practice for four decades. He has won many preservation awards and has had academic appointments, as well.

I've spent my professional career as an architect and contractor working in New Jersey, specializing in historic preservation. During that time, I served on many boards and commissions including Habitat for Humanity (Newark, NJ) and as Chairman of the City of Newark’s Landmarks Preservation Commission. Locally, I spent two “tours of duty” (about 3 years each) as member and then chair of Congregation Beth Elohim’s House and Restoration Committees. Additionally, I served on The Berkeley Carroll School’s building committee and a short term as trustee. I have enjoyed participating in the PSCC’s house tours as a volunteer in recent years.

As I wind down my professional career, I want to devote more of my time to the Park Slope community where my family and I have lived for 23 years. The Park Slope Civic Council, with its commitment to protecting and bettering all aspects of our community, offers me the opportunity to share some of what I’ve learned to support this effort. I look forward to meeting more neighbors and making more friends while assisting the PSSC in achieving its goals.

Ron Daignault

Ron Daignault is an intellectual property litigator and trial attorney specializing in patent, trademark, false advertising, trade secret and copyright cases across a broad spectrum of industries and technologies.

After spending seven years in the West Village, my wife, our one-year-old daughter and I moved to Park Slope in 2001. We expanded our family (we now have three daughters), moved to 1st Street and are in love with the neighborhood! Park Slope is truly a special community, and becoming a trustee of the Park Slope Civic Council will provide me with a unique opportunity to contribute to this community in a deeper and more meaningful way. I care about Park Slope’s historic preservation, the streets and sidewalks, the stores and restaurants that open up, the traffic, the trees and landscape, the schools, the parks and playgrounds, the diversity and culture, and the people. All of this we must cherish and protect, but we must also move it forward in thoughtful and modern ways. I also think there is room for greater involvement from the children we are raising in Park Slope. I would love for my daughters and other kids to have roles in our community. The kids in our community are inspiration for the future we create here. With my twenty years of management experience leading teams of attorneys and assistants in litigations, I believe that this management experience is applicable to participating in, and contributing to, committee activities and initiating new ones. I have also assisted my wife, who is co-chair of the Prospect Partners (a sub-group of the Prospect Park Alliance) in fundraising and event planning activities.

David Gurin

David has a master’s degree from Harvard University in city planning and has published widely on the subject with titles, such as Walking into the Urban Future; Housing Prices and Greenbelt Protection; Understanding Sprawl: A Citizen’s Guide; and Toronto’s Exhibition Place: Closing the Integrity Gap between a Nineteenth-Century Fairground and a Sustainable Twenty-First-Century City.

I believe in citizen participation in city planning, and I know this participation cannot take place solely through elected officials. An informed body like the Park Slope Civic Council is vigilant about neighborhood conditions and an inspiration for improvement. I joined the Forth on Fourth committee out of concern for the street I live on and am pleased to join the Council out of concern for the larger community. I lived in a rented apartment on Eighth Avenue in Park Slope from 1973 to 1990 and left to work in Toronto. When I returned to a condo on Fourth Avenue in 2011, I saw a street badly in need of improvements. I joined FOFA, which was already at work encouraging the city to bring amenities to this traffic-drenched avenue. Through PSCC, I hope to enlarge on these efforts.

Meredith Little

Meredith has spent the last decade as a marketing and promotions consultant for publications, such as Martha Stewart Weddings, Bride’s, Women’s Health, Fitness, Bon Appetit, Better Homes and Gardens, House and Garden, and many more.

In ancient times, I was a grassroots organizer and lobbyist for an array of associations in Washington, DC, which is where I first fully embraced the idea that an individual can be instrumental in large-scale change and progress. This belief has carried over into community involvement and the belief that active and personal participation in one’s neighborhood leads to a stronger community as a whole. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to be part of such an proactive and positive organization dedicated to making Park Slope such an amazing place to live.

Kerry Quade

Kerry has experience as varied and vast as community organizer, fundraiser and event planner. During and after Hurricane Sandy, Kerry was part of a team to create, coordinate and implement a hub system throughout Red Hook, giving residents and business owners access to information, supplies and volunteer assistance. She managed the intake and dispatch of hundreds of volunteers and secured the immediate needs operation into a long-term solution with the creation of the Red Hook Volunteers.

Kerry was a special projects coordinator for Carlos Menchaca’s political campaign, and in a professional capacity, Kerry has done event design and production, small-business development, and manages a design studio with the capacity to create floral and decor for large-scale events, as well as intimate dinner parties. Kerry has been instrumental in the success of the Park Slope Civic Council’s “Food for Thought” fundraiser in recruiting food and wine purveyors, coordinating and interfacing with vendors and making the event both inviting and beautiful.

It is inspiring to be a part of an active group engaging their community, preserving the history of a neighborhood and making life in a big city feel like living in a small enclave.

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Erica Stauffer
A seasoned professional with an MBA from NYU and 5+ years HR experience in financial services, Erica recruited, trained, managed and designed recruitment and development plans for analyst and associate programs across Wall Street.

I have lived in the neighborhood for over 20 years and have watched it grow and change with enthusiasm. I have been fortunate enough to raise my family here and watch how the younger generation enjoys the bounties of our community. The community in which we live is a wonderful one, but it is one that needs passionate people to be involved in order to keep it that way. Change is a good thing but we must always be mindful of the fact that communities only grow and thrive if they keep their spirit. I believe that the PSCC understands that our community is not a bunch of streets and blocks of individuals that live in the moment but rather an interconnected web of the young and old who call Park Slope home.

The wonderful events and awareness campaigns that the PSCC runs every year are a part of what will keep the fabric of our community strong and enable it to grow in the future without losing its spirit.

Jamie Yuenger
Jamie owns a production company that creates oral histories, video documentaries and heirloom books based on personal and family stories.

She has been a t.v. host for “BK Live!,” an independent radio producer, a freelance writer and theatrical coordinator. She was trained at the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies and loves gourmet cake baking, hosting underground dinners, 3D paper creations and yoga.

I like being in the thick of it. I like having an idea and working with others to see it come to fruition. I like feeling focused and driven. Being on the PSCC lets me get excited about making our neighborhood a better place and to really doing something about it. For the past three years, my company (Storykeep) has produced the PSCC scholarship video, the one we share on the big screen during the fundraiser, Food for Thought. I get that same feeling when we show the video: THIS IS POWERFUL. We went from having a Park Slope school that was effectively ignored by its immediate residents to a Park Slope campus supported by a roomful of people inspired to give large sums of money to help some of those students go to college.

I'm passionate about the power of community. Community raises us up -- both as individuals and as a society. The power of community is to lift up -- giving us leverage, despite our differences, to create good in the world.

Josh Silverstein
Josh has lived in Park Slope since 2010 and has family that has lived in Brooklyn for several generations. He has been active in organizing and advocacy activities for nearly twenty years, currently working for an international environmental non-profit with headquarters in Manhattan.

Currently I serve as the Recording Secretary of the Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats and have been a member of that organization for the last five years. I serve as president of my ten-unit co-op and have done so for the last four years. I have also recently joined the Participatory Budget Project (PBP) Amplifier Board, and have been a member of PSCC since 2014. In all these roles, I try to serve each constituency as best I can and with the group's interest at heart. Each group's mission is important to me and my values -- especially speaking to community service. I feel the same way about the Park Slope Civic Council because as much as I want to help improve my building and the livability for myself and my neighbors, I want the same for my community, as Park Slope is a special place for me, and I want it to continue to be so. I believe that for a neighborhood to be well served, there must be people and organizations that work for its best interest. That includes keeping up on community affairs, discussing potentially important changes to the area and speaking up about them if they have a particular adverse (or beneficial) consequence.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE PARK SLOPE CIVIC COUNCIL WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Become part of one of Brooklyn’s most active community organizations!

Complete this form, make your check payable to The Park Slope Civic Council and mail to:
Box 172, 123 Seventh Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11215, or sign up online at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org

Enclosed is my check for:

- Benefactor: $250
- Patron: $100
- Business/Professional: $100
- Non-Profit/Organization Partner: $50
- Household: $40
- Student/Elder Community (65+): $25
- Other: Contribution of $________

JOIN! RENEW! DONATE! BECOME a VOLUNTEER for PARK SLOPE parkslopeciviccouncil.org