

Food, Drinks & Fun: Food for Thought

Join us for a fun night out on Wednesday, October 18th at 6 p.m. at the Picnic House in Prospect Park. Our annual Food For Thought tasting event includes sampling an array of delicacies and beverages from popular local restaurants and beverage purveyors! PLUS, you can mingle with neighbors and support a wonderful cause. TO PURCHASE TICKETS, please go to our website.



Serving up cheer from Shawn Fine Wine & Spirits at 2022 Food for Thought. Credit: Marc Goldberg Photography

Tickets will also be sold at the door. Tickets are \$100 per person, and proceeds fund our scholarship program. Each year, the Civic Council awards a Scholarship for Community Service to one college-bound high school senior from each of the four secondary schools at the John Jay Educational Complex who exemplify significant community and volunteer service and exceptional academic achievement.

Our new Scholarship chair, Linda Wilson, is the second vice president of the Civic Council. A life long Park Slope resident, Linda is the PSCC community liaison to the 78th Precinct Community Council and runs the Toys for Tots program. Scholarships are awarded every June at the Civic Council's Annual Meeting where school staff, administrators, parents

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Witches, Barbie and Superheroes: Halloween Parade 2023

What costumes will be popular at the annual Park Slope Civic Council's Children's Halloween Parade this year? Super Mario Brothers, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and The Little Mermaid were all on the big screen. And of course, Barbie. All are welcome - costumed or not - at the parade, the largest and longest-running children's Halloween Parade in New York City. Adults are invited to dress up and march, too. The Halloween Parade, on October 31st, follows neighborhood trick or treating along Seventh Avenue in Park Slope. Local businesses hand out candy and other treats from 3 to 6 p.m.

At 6 p.m., line up to march in the parade at 14th Street and 7th Avenue. Floats, bands and marchers follow the Park Slope Civic Council and elected officials for the parade, which starts at 6:30 p.m. The parade route heads north to Third Street, then turns left and ends at Old Stone House. There is more fun at Old Stone House/Washington Park. You can march the whole parade, join



Park Slope Civic Council trustees at the start of the 2022 parade. Credit: Berryl Schiffer

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President's Letter Fall 2023

Dear Members and Friends –

If you're passionate about the neighborhood you live and/or work in and willing to spend a small quotient of your time promoting and advocating for it, the Park Slope Civic Council can channel your energy in concert with your neighbors in enjoyable and productive ways. We have lots of events and activities you can choose to be involved in, with as much or as little time commitment as you're comfortable with.

- Our Livable Streets Committee advocates for safe streets and sidewalks for pedestrians, cyclists and responsible motorists alike. Among other things, the committee is working on a follow-up to the Civic Council's influential E-Bike Safety Survey from last spring (which you can read about on our website www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org) as well as researching the most promising legislative and enforcement solutions to the plague of drivers whose contempt for traffic safety puts us all at risk.
- The Trees Committee, which last year conducted a neighborhood survey that identified 234 empty tree beds in Park Slope and submitted that list to the Parks Dept, is developing information kits

for homeowners with street trees about watering and pruning, tree bed maintenance and beautification, and tree guard installation.

- The Sustainability Committee organized Civic Sweep, coming on Sunday Nov. 12 and is working to help homeowners and building owners install sustainable technologies like rooftop solar and heat pumps.
- The Historic District Committee is petitioning the Landmarks Preservation Commission to extend the Park Slope Historic District to include blocks below 7th Ave that are currently excluded but are every bit as historic as the existing District.

Featured in this issue of the *Civic News* are three terrific events coming up this fall.

- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT, Wednesday, Oct. 18**
- **THE HALLOWEEN PARADE, Monday, Oct. 31**
- **FALL CIVIC SWEEP, Sunday, Nov 12,**

We're looking forward to a great year. Hope you can join us!

Best wishes,
Timothy Gilles



Established 1896 as the South Brooklyn Board of Trade.
Incorporated 1938.

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The Park Slope Civic Council is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization

Thanks to our contributors: Scott Middleton, Ezra Goldstein and Christina Gutiérrez-Williams

Halloween Parade, cont.

for a little while, or stand on the sidelines and see all the fabulous costumes go by. The festivities end by 7:30 p.m. so kids can do their homework and get up for school the next morning. The Park Slope Civic Council presents the parade in partnership with Park Slope Parents and Old Stone House.



Trustee Rory Dineen greeting a costumed parade-goer at the Halloween Parade 2022.

Meet our New Trustees



Joyce Jed

I am pleased to be a new trustee of the Park Slope Civic Council. I recently became involved with the Civic Council when the aging-in-place organization of which I am the president, Good Neighbors of Park Slope, collaborated on a project to make our sidewalks safe for pedestrians. I hope to continue this effort as a trustee.

I have lived in Park Slope since 1970. My career has been as a psychologist and psychiatric hospital administrator, working for South Beach Psychiatric Center for 30 years. I have a Ph.D. in psychology. After retiring I have worked and volunteered as a horticultural therapist, most recently at the Park Slope Armory Women's Shelter, where I have worked with residents to plant a decorative garden in front of the building, therapeutic both for the residents and for the community. In 2014 a group of friends and I began to meet to discuss creating an aging-in-place organization similar to those in many other parts of the country. We launched the group, Good Neighbors of Park Slope, in 2015 and quickly grew to our current membership of about 670. As the president, this has been a primary activity in my life for the past 7 years.

I also volunteered for over 25 years at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden helping to maintain the Education Greenhouses, and before that preserved plants in the herbarium, and answered hot-line gardening questions in the library. I have participated in many collective community activities over the years, including the Park Slope Food Coop and the Park Slope Day Care Collective.

I am married and have two sons and four grandchildren. I love to garden and draw and paint flowers and plants. I feel that when neighbors work together to improve their lives everyone benefits. I loved Park Slope from the minute I saw it over 50 years ago, and would like to work to keep it wonderful.

Jeremy Woodoff

I was born in New York City and grew up in Stuyvesant Town until age nine, when my family moved to Aiken, a small town in South Carolina. I received a bachelor's degree in Sociology at Oberlin College in Ohio, after which I enrolled in a master's program in city planning at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. My first job after graduate school was for the City of Savannah (GA) community planning and development department. Much of our work involved studying and planning for historic areas of the city.

After three years in Savannah, I found a job in New York City with the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I was hired as a city planner, but the agency had stopped doing its little planning studies by the time I got there. Instead, I taught myself historic preservation and did a variety of jobs, including community outreach, environmental review, research, survey, and technical preservation reviews. I developed the Commission's protocols for reviewing work on city-owned properties, including scenic landmarks and street rights-of-way.

After 20 years at the Landmarks Commission, I transferred to the tiny historic preservation office of the city's enormous Department of Design and Construction. There I reviewed projects that would affect city-owned historic buildings and streetscapes. I retired from that position in the fall of 2022.

My first apartment upon returning to New York was on Prospect Park West across from the Bandshell. Three years later I bought a coop apartment on 8th Avenue with my future wife. I'm still in that building. We had two children, both of whom attended P.S. 321. Besides the Civic Council, I'm on the advisory board of the Historic Districts Council, the board of the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society, and the board of the Bowne House Historical Society. I collect and repair antique clocks in my spare time.

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Food for Thought, cont.

and families are invited to attend and share in this emotional event.



Trustee Tiff Ziter and Councilmember Shahana Hanif at 2022 Food for Thought. Credit: Marc Goldberg Photography

At the awards ceremony last spring, a guidance counselor at John Jay noted that he had been a recipient of a PSCC scholarship when he was a student at the school about 20 years ago. This full circle exemplifies the importance and endurance of our scholarship program.

Our list of restaurants, bars and wine stores who generously donate time, food and drinks, is growing. So far, we have:

- Slope Cellars
- The Commissioner
- Earthen
- Fausto
- Bar Vinazo
- Da Nonna Rosa
- Palo Santo
- Scottadito
- Al Di La
- Electric Beets
- Stone Park Cafe
- Winner
- Kos Kaffe
- Sky Ice
- Benchmark Restaurant

Check our website for updates. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, a host or a tasting partner, please contact Food for Thought Co-Chairs: Tammy Shaw, TShaw@bhsusa.com or Amanda McAvena, amanda.mcavena@compass.com.



Buy Food for Thought tickets at:
www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org/events/food-for-thought/

New Trustees, cont.

Ira Mont

Ira Mont has been a stage manager since 1987. His twenty Broadway credits include: Jagged Little Pill, Rodgers+Hammerstein's Cinderella, revivals of CATS, A Little Night Music, and The Norman Conquests, and The Producers. Ira is currently the Production Supervisor for the National Tour of Jagged Little Pill.

Ira is a past Chair of the Stage Managers' Association. He has lectured at Yale, Rutgers and Juilliard and was Adjunct Assistant Professor in the theatre MFA program at Columbia University for fifteen years.

He joined Actors' Equity Association in 1987. He was elected to its Council in 1996 and still serves. He became National 3rd VP in 2003, serving in that office until 2022. Committees chaired include Production (Broadway) Contract (participating in all the negotiations over the past thirty years and chairing the last fifteen years), Stage Managers' committee, Constitutional Review committee (leading a major overhaul of the Constitution and By-Laws in 2019), Public Policy, and House Affairs.

Ira has represented Equity on Capitol Hill, at NYC Council, at the AFL-CIO, the Dept. of Professional Employees, the International Federation of Actors, and the Coalition of Broadway Unions and Guilds. He is Secretary of the Actors' Equity Foundation and 1st VP of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Ira is an Equity-League Pension, Health & 401k Funds Trustee.

A Tony Awards Voter since 1996, he was made a member of the Nominating Committee this season. Ira is a sixty year old lifelong native resident of Brooklyn, NY. He and wife of thirty-three years, Jill Cordle Mont (also a Broadway stage manager), have lived in Park Slope since 1994. They have a twenty-six-year-old daughter and a twenty-two-year-old son.

Fall Civic Sweep

The Fall Civic Sweep & Neighborhood Trash Cleanup is happening on Sunday, November 12th from 10 am - 2 pm on 5th Ave in front of Old Stone House. We're excited to be hosting it on a Sunday this time around, when the Farmer's Market will be adjacent. The main event of the day will be trash (and leaf!) pickup, but we will also have distribution of free daffodil bulbs for people to plant in their gardens. You can also drop off your food waste for composting.

-Christina Gutiérrez-Williams



Trash bags filled after Spring Civic Sweep 2023.

Zuzu's Petals: A Growing Treasure

If you live in Park Slope and see somebody walking by with a gorgeous flower arrangement, there's a good chance it came from Zuzu's Petals. Brooklynites in the know have long flocked to the store, now officially included in the State Historic Business Preservation Registry for being a constant neighborhood business for over 50 years. Opened in 1971 and originally called Growing Things, this flower shop has a deep, multigenerational connection to Park Slope. Women owned and operated, the store has survived an economic downturn, a fire (necessitating a move from 7th Avenue to 5th Avenue), a flood, and Covid-19.

Fonda Sara, the owner, said that Growing Things,



It takes a village, and a dog: Fonda Sara, center, with Zuzu's Petals' friends & staff. Credit: Judy Antell

which opened in the back of a bookstore on Flatbush Avenue, quickly outgrew its first location and moved after six months to 7th Avenue. That's when Fonda, who had moved to Park Slope a year earlier, started working at the store. She managed the store for two years, then bought it. At the time that Fonda opened her store, women couldn't easily get credit. But Fonda had a cousin who had told her "Find something in your life that is yours, that you won't lose no matter who dies or leaves you." When the cousin died and left her money, Fonda bought the shop with her inheritance.

Fonda also benefitted from advice from a female manager at Chase Bank on Flatbush Avenue, who told Fonda to apply for a \$5,000 loan. The manager approved the loan which let Fonda create a credit history. When Fonda incorporated her business, she learned the name Growing Things was already incorporated in NY. She chose Zuzu's Petals from the movie "It's a Wonderful Life". She said "the symbolism of the petals to me is a reality check and a confirmation of life."

Fonda is honored to be included in the Historic Business Preservation Registry. Though she has stepped back from much of the daily activity in the shop, she still goes to the flower market at 4 a.m. She said "the shop has a life of its own now. I am no longer the face of Zuzu...just the heart and soul." And the heart and soul of Park Slope as well.

-Judy Antell

Save the Date: Mulchfest 2024

As we look forward to a new year, remember to hang on to your Christmas trees until early January! PSCC will be partnering once more with NYC Parks and Prospect Park Alliance on the annual Mulchfest Chipping Weekend -- typically held the first weekend after New Years Day at the 3rd Street entrance to the park. We will be looking for volunteers to collect streetside trees, prepare trees for the woodchipper (removing tinsel and ornaments!), dismantle wreaths, greet visitors, pour hot chocolate, and distribute mulch. If you are interested in "chipping in" please contact trustee Scott Middleton at scottmiddleton@gmail.com. The Prospect Park drop-off is typically the largest single collection site in NYC, so we can certainly use your help sprucing things up!



Trees ready for mulching at Prospect Park.

Even if you don't have a Christmas tree, you can participate in Mulchfest and take home mulch in tote bags or potpourri pouches (serving suggestion: bathroom air freshener). Mulch is particularly useful in tree pits, where it helps retain soil moisture, reduce erosion, and protect Park Slope's trees from the adversities of city life. Park Slopers have been bringing their retired Christmas trees to Prospect Park since at least the early 1990s. We recently learned that the idea for Mulchfest originated with the PSCC when President Jim Ryan had the idea of "Treecycling." It has since become a City-wide Parks Department event, recycling more than 50,000 trees every year, with Prospect Park serving as the largest single collection site in the city.

-Scott Middleton

Prospect Park Gets Even Better

Adapted with permission from the Prospect Park Alliance

Prospect Park, Brooklyn's backyard, is getting a facelift. Here are new initiatives in the park from Prospect Park Alliance, the non-profit organization that manages the park in partnership with the City.

Northeast Corner Improvements

Many improvements have occurred and are upcoming in the northeast corner of the park, from Grand Army Plaza to just north of the Prospect Park Zoo. This includes the restoration of the Flatbush Avenue perimeter. Through mayoral funding, the perimeter created two new entrances along Flatbush, the first new entrances in the park since the 1940s. Through additional funding from former Mayor Bill de Blasio, the Alliance is undertaking a \$40 million restoration of the Vale landscapes. The Alliance conducted extensive community engagement to develop the plans of this important woodland landscape. The Vale restoration transforms two key landscapes: the historic Children's Pond (a decorative water feature) and the former Rose Garden, and also encompasses an additional 3 acres of woodland restoration that will continue an important pollinator corridor across the park. The restoration of the Children's Pond will bring back historic details while improving the environment with new plantings and bird-friendly features. The former Rose Garden, which features three disused concrete basins, will be transformed into three connected landscapes that respect the park's historic design while restoring the woodland landscape. New amenities include: a pollinator garden and planted rustic arbor; a children's natural exploration area; and a shady picnicking lawn next to a small pavilion with composting restrooms.

To shape the vision for the Vale, the Alliance collaborated with the public design consultants Hester Street and Grain Collective, in a community outreach process. The broad themes that emerged from public feedback were to preserve the woodland character of the space,

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Prospect Park, cont.

provide opportunities for intergenerational play and enhance park amenities. In 2022, the Alliance returned to the community to share this vision prior to embarking on the design, soliciting feedback from park users and local groups. As a result, the pavilion was scaled down and set further into the landscape; three additional acres of woodland restoration were incorporated to further strengthen wildlife habitat and extend the park's pollinator corridor; and additional fencing was incorporated to ensure that the children's natural exploration area would not spill onto adjacent landscapes.

The resulting design was approved by surrounding community boards 8 and 9; the Prospect Park Community Committee, the Brooklyn Borough Board, the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Public Design Commission. The design also received letters of support from I AM CARIBBEING, the Natural Areas Conservancy, the Park Slope Civic Council, the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council, the Prospect



Restored Endale Arch in Prospect Park. Credit: Prospect Park Alliance

Lefferts Garden Neighborhood Association, the Brooklyn Borough President, and Council Members Shahana Hanif, Crystal Hudson and Rita Joseph.

Reviving Historic Structures

Through funding from a private donor and former Council Member Brad Lander, the Alliance has also undertaken the restoration of two important park historic structures, the Endale Arch and Concert Grove Pavilion. Both projects required historic research to harken back to the park's original design of these structures by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, and include beautiful details such as wood paneling, stained glass and



Children playing in Prospect Park. Credit: Prospect Park Alliance

beautiful stonework. The Alliance received Lucy G. Moses Awards from the Landmarks Conservancy for its work on both structures. In 2022 the Alliance also received a prestigious Organization Award from the Landmarks Conservancy for their 35 year legacy of sensitive restoration in the park.

In the coming year, the Alliance will embark on the restoration of the Tennis House, a historic structure on the park's Long Meadow, which for many years has served as a staff facility. The Alliance will return this magnificent structure to public use, including its grand portico, and provide public restroom facilities.

Sustaining the Environment

In addition to its important historic preservation work, the Alliance is also dedicated to the care of the park's natural areas, including Brooklyn's last remaining forest and only lake. Each year, the Alliance conducts extensive spring and fall plantings of roughly 15,000 tree saplings, shrubs and herbaceous plants of more than 124 native species to create healthy woodland habitats and pollinator corridors. In recent years, through grants tied to Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts, the Alliance conducted extensive woodland restoration work in the Prospect Park Vale and on Lookout Hill in the southern end of the park, and even brought in crews of goats to help remove weeds and set the stage for native plantings.

Getting Involved

Learn more about Prospect Park and how to get involved with Prospect Park Alliance on the Prospect Park Alliance website: www.prospectpark.org.



Box 172,
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www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org



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