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One Dollar

## CHAMBER HONOREES SHOW PASSION AND PERSISTENCE

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photos courtesy of THE CITY ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On Nov. 12, 2016, the Chamber of Commerce will honor those whose efforts have improved the quality of life on and off City Island, including David Carman (top left photo), Patty Attis (top right photo), and the leadership of the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum (top photo, far right).

On Nov. 12, 2016, the City Island Chamber of Commerce will present awards at its annual dinner dance to a number of people and organizations that have contributed to the City Island community.

**Dave Carman**, who will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Carman's Service Station next year, was born and raised on City Island and is the fourth-generation member of the Carman family to live here. His ancestors include his great-grandfather Caleb Carman, who had served during the Civil War on the *Monitor* and was married to a Native American woman who was the bridge keeper for the original wooden City Island bridge. And Dave's two great-uncles were the stone masons who built the foundation for Stepping Stones Lighthouse.

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and his father, Dave began to work on cars at a young age and helped at the family's service station at the corner of Winters Street and City Island Avenue. He graduated from P.S. 17 and then from Christopher Columbus High School before enlisting in the United States Navy.

In 1977, after his father retired, Dave and his wife, Betty, purchased the gasoline service station from Texaco; in 1998 the Carmans removed the gasoline tanks, and the station became an auto repair shop only. That makes David the third generation of automobile mechanics in the family: his grandfather Charles; his father, Charlie; and himself, though the legacy will end when Dave retires, which may be next year. Over the years Dave has seen many changes in the automobile industry and acknowledges that "we are now in the age of electronics, computers and many sophisticated components."

**Patty Attis**, director of the PSS Senior Center, which is open every weekday in the Grace Church Hall, grew up in Throggs Neck looking at City Island from across the water. In 1978, she left New York to travel across the United States teaching bible fellowships in South Carolina, Illinois and then Colorado, where she lived for almost 25 years. During that time, she also assisted the local pastor and played piano when the congregation gathered. When she returned

to New York in 2007 to care for her elderly mother, Patty knew just where she wanted to live. She is proud to call City Island home and loves the small-town community atmosphere here.

She began working part time for PSS (Presbyterian Senior Services) when it was still a nutrition program located downstairs at Pilot Cove Manor. In July 2013, the program relocated to Grace Church Hall, and Patty was named director of the PSS City Island Senior Center because of her vision and desire to see innovative programming for members. One of her initial goals was to obtain a new van for the members. She was told it couldn't be done, but she persisted until she got the van in June 2015. When Patty became aware of the number of adults who serve as caregivers, she brought the Circle of Care program to City Island with the cooperation of the City Island Library, which has also allowed the Senior Center to utilize a room for a program called "The Matter of Balance."

One of Patty's passions is to change the ideas that many people in their 60s have about senior centers. She challenges those who think "I'm not ready for that" to try out the early morning exercises or the free flu shots and painting classes. Besides the variety of exercise and other programs offered to members, the doors are open to those who need assistance for anything from inserting batteries into hearing aids to re-certifications for referrals to other agencies or help in obtaining physical or mental support.

In planning special events Patty supports local businesses whenever possible, and she has utilized the City Island Land Ferry for trips. The IGA provides the Center's daily meals, and PSS pays rent to help support Grace Church. Of the 16 regularly scheduled programs, 15 are conducted by local residents.

**Janie Blanks**, a resident of City Island since 2003, currently works in White Plains as a real estate associate broker. She is a member of real estate associations in the Bronx and Westchester County, as well as New York State and National Realtors associations. Before beginning her career in



real estate, Janie worked for 25 years in the information technology field for corporate financial firms, the city of New York, and a school system. She is also an Army veteran.

After moving to City Island, Janie decided to try her talents in other areas, and she attended classes at the New York Bo-

tanical Garden and acquired a certificate in horticulture therapy. She has volunteered for multiple organizations using these skills; she has also volunteered for the City Island Civic Association for over eight years and for which she now serves as recording secretary.

Continued on page 3

## Trees for Our Future

by BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photos by KAREN NANI

On Friday, Oct. 14, about 2,000 trees were planted in Pelham Bay Park near the City Island Circle by volunteers from Madison Square Garden, Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) and the New York Knicks (see photos above of workers preparing the trees for planting). PwC also adopted a bench in the park near the Orchard Beach entrance to commemorate their partnership with the Parks Department.

Volunteers are needed to help plant more trees, this time in the forest near Rodman's Neck on Nov. 19, following up on the planting event that took place on Oct. 14-16. Volunteers will be

trained in proper planting techniques and should be dressed in sturdy boots or shoes, long pants and clothing that can get dirty. Space is limited and registration is required for this event, which will take place near Rodman's Neck between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Register by going to [www.nycgovparks.org/reg/stewardship/2382](http://www.nycgovparks.org/reg/stewardship/2382).

Trees provide many benefits to New Yorkers, such as improved air and water quality, reduced pollution and lower energy costs, and these young trees, all native species, will help replace the invasive vines and unwanted species that were recently removed from the areas around the City Island circle.

## IN THE GARDEN

By MARY COLBY



Photo by MARY COLBY

### Country Living

Once again it is raining acorns. Oak trees, it seems, do not produce acorns until they are 20 years old. Big manufacturing begins when the canopy gets large and there is no cold snap to kill the flowers. Some oaks produce heavy crops every two to three years. This is a particularly big year for white oak. Aside from raking them up, you can have your gardener use a lawn vacuum, but I would not throw all of them away. Pile them in a corner and let the squirrels enjoy them, which might prevent the rascals from digging up your newly planted bulbs.

A house in the country, while relaxing, has its fair share of foibles, oftentimes besieged by critters. Upstate I have been battling the moles. Do we have them on City Island? I hope not. They have made rivulets of tunnels all through my lawn in Saugerties. The first time I saw one was 10 years ago. As I was prying up an old clump of grass, there beneath my feet lay a furry creature with claws and a star for a nose. I looked at it perplexed, not realizing what it was. So instead of getting stabbed by my shovel (I stayed my hand out of pity), the little thing escaped. Escaped to breed an army of children, and now it is too late. I have tried smoke bombs, electronic Buzzitrons, guillotine traps and garlic to no avail. All I can do now is cohabit and flatten out their subterranean roads with my feet.

Feet! Remember to shake your rubber boots out briskly before putting them on barefoot. Mine were a size too small, so after I thrust my foot in with one good shove, I felt the sickening squelch of a toad who had unsuspectingly found a home for

the winter. I had a devil of a time breaking free of toad and all.

And the field mice are finding every tiny opening to enter the house. Last fall I had company coming, so we trapped them with butterfly nets just before the dinner bell. Of course my guest found one atop the stove later in the evening.

When living in the country, one finds compassion. My husband took hours to disentangle a snake from bird netting I had wrapped around an Alaskan cedar. My gardener Scotty rescued another snake from my rafters after it had devoured an egg. Gleefully he put it in the sack and asked if he could keep it. "I could use a good ratter" he said, as I shuddered with relief.

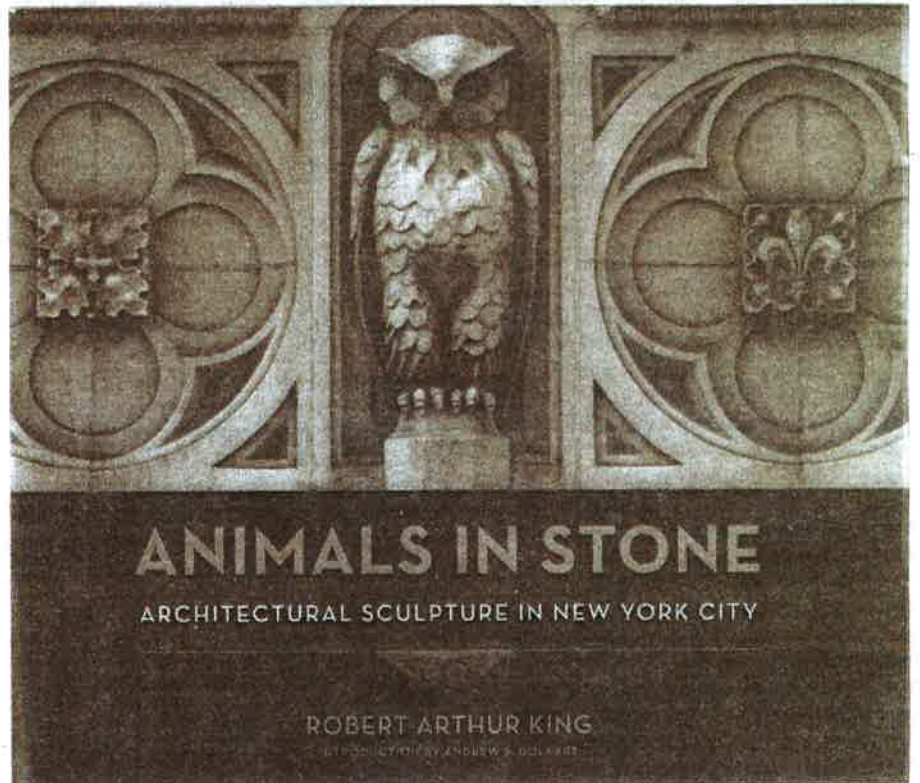
Finding a bear in the shed and shaking peaches from my neighbor's tree makes me explore my property with some amount of trepidation. I am a city girl, after all, and I am still not used to complete and utter darkness. I try every year to walk down the long driveway in a new moon. As I hit the halfway point, I remember that Native American children can do this in the forest from the age of seven, and that's when I turn and make for the porch dodging the bats.

Yet there are moments of quiet awe. Like seeing a beautiful wood turtle march across the lawn or a herd of whitetail deer waving their flags at the sound of a footfall. I remember the magical sight of a host of wild turkey in the low light on the forest floor. All these things mingle with joy and laughter, and I give thanks for all the antics and the wonder.

Mary Colby is an artist and gardener whose studio is at 276 City Island Avenue. She can be reached at 917-804-4509 for consultation and design.

## An Eye for Detail: Robert Arthur King

By BARBARA DOLENSEK



Photos by ROBERT ARTHUR KING

Above are two of the many building details captured on film by Island resident Robert Arthur King. The fish at the left decorate the building at 367-369 East 149th Street in Manhattan; the face at the right can be found at 37 Hester Street in Manhattan. Many more images can be viewed on the Facebook page Robert Arthur King, FAIA.

How many of us walk around the city with our eyes looking up at buildings in order to find beautiful details that might otherwise go completely unnoticed? Most modern buildings don't have these details, but those built in the late 19th century often do, thanks to the skills of local craftsmen, many of them immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

Someone who has found and documented these details is architect Robert Arthur King, who recently moved to City Island from Manhattan. His beautiful photographs of details have been published in two books, "Animals in Stone" and "Faces in Stone," celebrating architectural sculpture in New York City. Both books are being reissued by Norton in one volume, "Figures in Stone," which will be available early in 2017. He was the subject of a profile in the New York Times in 2015, which characterized his photographic searches as urban safaris, and he was the subject of a documentary film called "Stonefaced" issued in 2013.

But Mr. King has a great deal more on his resumé than simply being an architectural photographer. He graduated from the Columbia University School of Architecture and the Architectural Association Graduate School in London before opening a practice in New York City in 1977. He is an adjunct professor at the New York School of Interior Design, where he has taught building codes and systems, as well as historical

preservation, since 1989.

In 2014 Mr. King was given the distinct honor of being inducted into the College of Fellows with the American Institute of Architects, whose mission is to mentor young architects and to elevate architects who have made significant contributions to architecture and to society. A specialist in brownstone houses, Mr. King has completed historic restorations and preservation work on more than 200 buildings, like the one in which he grew up in Hamilton Terrace.

He did not always have his sights set on a career as an architect, however. In fact, he decided after graduating from high school to become an auto mechanic, but a cab driver client talked him into going to the Academy of Aeronautics, so he began to pursue a career in engineering at City College. In 1970, however, an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum, "The Rise of an American Architecture," curated by Edgar J. Kaufmann Jr., propelled him into architecture as a profession, and he never looked back.

Mr. King decided to move to City Island, where his daughter is a resident, because he loves the sense of community here, as well as the Island's historic significance. He recalls that during the 1980s, he did an asbestos inspection of the school building at 190 Fordham Street that now houses the Nautical Winds Condominiums, the City Island Nautical Museum and the Community Center.

In front of his office at 212 City Island Avenue, Mr. King has mounted several of his photographs, which he hopes will inspire others to look for such details as they travel, not only in New York City but all over the world. He had recently taken photographs in many other countries, including Sweden and Denmark, examples of which can be seen on his Facebook page. Several of his photographs will be on view in the Focal Point Gallery's holiday show, which opens on Dec. 6.

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