



## Shema Kolainu Legislative Breakfast

*L-R: Councilman Mark Weprin; Michael Miller, Executive Vice President, JCRC; Ari Noe, CEO, OTR Media; City Councilman David Greenfield; Peter Hatch, State Director, US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand; William E. Rapfogel, CEO, Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty; State Senator Kevin Parker; Joshua Weinstein, Founder and President, Shema Kolainu "Hear Our Voices"; Peter Rebenwurz, Vice President, Shema Kolainu "Hear Our Voices"; Assemblyman Richard L. Brodsky; Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny; Menachem Lubinsky, President & CEO, Lubicom LLC; Yeruchem Silber, Yeruchim Silber & Associates and Ezra Friedlander, CEO, The Friedlander Group.*

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## Brooklyn Borough President Tops City Pals in Freebies

Borough President Marty Markowitz accepted more free travel than any other elected official in New York City last year, journeying with his wife to Turkey and the Netherlands, records released Tuesday showed.

Mr. Markowitz, and his wife, Jamie, visited the Netherlands March 18-21, 2009, and they spent Nov. 13-17 in Turkey. Each trip cost between \$5,000 and \$39,999, and in both cases the couple allowed others to pay their way, records show.

The trips were disclosed in a financial disclosure report filed with the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board. The board released Tuesday the reports for the lion's share of the city's elected officials, providing a glimpse at officials' income, debts and real-estate holdings.

For example, the filings showed a third of the City Council's 51 members listed credit-card debts.

As for the international trips, Mr. Markowitz wrote he traveled to the Netherlands to represent the city at that country's celebration of its 400-year relationship with New York.

Mr. Markowitz's spokesman, Mark Zustovich, said airfare was paid by the Keukenhof Garden and the Dutch government. The Grand Hotel Amrath Amsterdam provided lodging and breakfast, he said. The couple also accepted food at some of the official events, he said.

For the trip to Turkey, Mr. Markowitz wrote on his filing that the goal was to develop "sister-city" status with the city of Izmir and "develop multipurpose collaborations and strengthen relations." That trip was paid for by the Federation of Turkish American Associations.

To get a detailed breakdown of the borough president's expenses, Mr. Zustovich said The Wall Street Journal would be required to file a Freedom of Information request.

Two City Council members also reported accepted trips on other people's dime. City Council Speaker Christine Quinn traveled to Belfast, Northern Ireland, to speak at an awards dinner.

The Belfast Media Group paid for Ms. Quinn and one aide at a cost of between \$1,000 and \$4,999.99. Ms. Quinn personally paid for her father and another aide to attend, and she received board approval to do so, a spokesman said.

Council Member James Sanders of Queens reported accepting payment for a trip to Israel, but he said in an interview that the trip took place this year and that he had mistakenly included it on a disclosure report covering 2009.

He said he planned to amend the filing. Council Member Charles Barron of



Marty Markowitz

Brooklyn failed to report his high-profile trip to Gaza sponsored by Viva Palestina, a pro-Palestine group. "It was a simple oversight," he said, adding he couldn't specify the cost of the trip.

Two City Council members, Gale Brewer of Manhattan and Mr. Sanders, failed to file their reports on time. This year marks Ms. Brewer's sixth late filing and Mr. Sanders's second late filing. In 2005, the board fined Ms. Brewer \$5,000 and Mr. Sanders \$500.

This year, both council members are subject to a fine between \$250 and \$10,000. The board can consider, among other factors, a history of tardiness in assessing the penalty.

"I didn't know I was late this year," said Ms. Brewer when contacted at her office. Asked to explain why she was late, she replied, "There is no reason—busy with work." When told the board is expected to fine her, she said, "That's fine."

Mr. Sanders said he was late because he was "overtaken by the duties of being a council person."

As for the fine, he said, "Well, if they want to fine me, why not? Help yourself."

Mirroring many Americans, many elected officials reported they are burdened with credit-card debt.

Council Member Inez Dickens of Manhattan reported debt on eight different credit cards, with the debt on each card ranging from \$5,000 to \$39,999.

Asked to comment, Lynette Velasco, a spokeswoman for Ms. Dickens, said, "She pays her bills on time, and quite frankly, as far as getting more information, that's none of your business."

Council Member Vincent Gentile of Brooklyn reported debt on seven credit cards, with debt on each card ranging between \$5,000 and \$39,999. An aide didn't return a call for comment.

Council Member Oliver Koppell of the Bronx had the highest-ranging credit-card debt, listing three cards for a debt total of at least \$165,000. Mr. Koppell said his practice of borrowing was "pretty consistent" with what he's done over the years.

He said he borrows so much because of the low interest rates he's offered by the credit-card companies. Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

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## Met Council to Get \$150K Funding for Study on At-Risk Teens in NYC

U.S. Senators Charles E. Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand announced that the Senate Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee has approved the FY11 Appropriations Bill, which includes \$150,000 for the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty.

The funding will be used to conduct a study on at-risk teens in New York City. Schumer and Gillibrand worked closely with members of the Appropriations Committee to include funding for the project in this year's spending bill.

"This essential funding will help ensure that at-risk teenagers across New York City do not fall through the cracks," Schumer said. "Providing funding to this outstanding organization will deeply benefit communities across the city and identify areas where we're lacking to address problems with troubled teens. I will fight to see this funding through the full appropriations process."

"It is critical that we help our city's troubled teens so that they can achieve their full potential," Senator Gillibrand said. "Federal investment for the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty will provide insight into ways we can keep our urban youth away from crime, violence and drug abuse and guide them towards success."

"Teens in New York City face some of the toughest challenges and barriers to succeeding, and especially during

this tough economy, with households under more stress than ever, teens are especially at risk for falling through the cracks," said Met Council CEO Willie Rapfogel. "With our experience in tackling difficult urban issues, including poverty, domestic violence and youth at risk, plus our access to teens in religious and insular communities who aren't normally studied, we recognize the importance of this project and are grateful to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand for their leadership."

The research by the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty will study several types of at-risk teens in New York City. The Council plans to examine the characteristics of teens in danger of placement outside the home, teens impacted by drug or physical abuse, and those who have been branded as "problem teens" by their familial groups. Ultimately, the research seeks to identify service gaps and draft proposals on how to best meet the needs of this at-risk population. The findings will be disseminated to social workers, educators, counselors, and law enforcement officials.

Now that the bill has been approved by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, it will be sent to the full Senate Appropriations Committee, which is set to pass the bill this afternoon. Following approval by the Full Committee and the Senate, the bill will move towards Conference with the House and then to the President for signature.

## DOT To Implement Safe Streets for Seniors in Borough Park



The Department of Transportation will be working in Borough Park to institute several traffic calming measures as part of Safe Streets for Seniors, a new pedestrian initiative launched by the Office of the Mayor, Department for the Aging and Department of Transportation.

Although overall, New York City pedestrian fatalities have decreased by more than half in the last two decades, current data shows that our seniors, while only being 12% of the city's population, now make up 39% of pedestrian fatalities, said NYC Council Member Brad Lander. These figures spurred the creation of 25 designated "Senior Pedestrian Focus Areas" for concentrated study.

Lander said, Borough Park was chosen for its high density of senior citizens and high number of pedestrian accidents and industries.

The measures planned to be implemented in Borough Park by the end of 2010 include the following:

### Installation of curb extensions at the:

- NW corner of 5th Ave and 41st St
- SW corner of 5th Ave and 44th St
- NW corner of 5th Ave and 47th St
- SW corner of 5th Ave and 48th St
- NE corner of 13th Ave and 43rd St
- SE corner of 13th Ave and 50th St
- NE corner of 13th Ave and 51st St
- SE corner of Fort Hamilton Parkway and 40th St

### Installation of pedestrian islands at the:

- S crosswalk of Fort Hamilton Parkway and 45th St
- N and S crosswalks of Fort Hamilton Parkway and 46th St
- N crosswalk of Fort Hamilton Parkway and 47th St

### Installation of island extensions at the:

- S crosswalk (east side) of 14th Ave and 60th St
- S crosswalk of New Utrecht Ave and 45th St

### Installation of a median at the following intersection:

- Fort Hamilton Parkway from New Utrecht Ave to 45th St

## Survey: Marty's Concerts Are Too Noisy!

Borough President Markowitz's summer concert series in Asser Levy Park appears to be in violation of a new city law hastily passed last month to allow the performances as long as noise spillover from the band shell does not exceed 10 decibels above typical ambient sound.

At Thursday night's Beach Boys-Monkees-Turtles concert, readings taken by this newspaper on a sound meter showed sound levels as high as 30 decibels above the norm, especially during the Monkees' "Daydream Believer" and "(I'm Not Your) Steppin' Stone."

But those readings were inside the concert venue itself. On the streets nearby, the measurements diminished, though the needle did occasionally jump above 10 decibels above the norm, which is roughly 60 dbs.

**"We're not opposed to a couple of shows," said Al Turk, one of the plaintiffs in the suit. "But concerts all year? It will change the community!"**

The noise readings suggest that opponents of the concerts — including congregants at two Sea Breeze Avenue synagogues, are correct in suggesting that the performances are a bit too noisy, at least under current city law.

And this week's concert, plus last week's quieter Neil Sedaka show, are nothing compared to the act scheduled to perform on July 29: George Thorogood and the Destroyers — a band notorious for blowing out eardrums with speakers that go up to 11.

The noise levels emanating from the Asser Levy Park band shell is crucial given the law signed by Mayor Bloomberg that amended city law to allow amplified music within 500 feet of a school or house of worship as long as the noise did not exceed 10 decibels above normal street levels.

That law was passed after members of the two synagogues — Temple Beth Abraham and the Sea Breeze Jewish Center — sued to block Markowitz's proposed \$64-million amphitheater, citing the 500-foot sound rule.

The noise law, though, is only a piece of the anti-amphitheater fight. Mostly, residents complain that a state-of-the-art facility would allow for far more concerts than the six or so that Markowitz stages every summer.



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