

Opinions

Editorial comment

The price of better bus service

Hopes have been raised and disappointed so many times since the Bronx Transit Study was released almost five years ago, that it has become hard to hope again. Nevertheless, the Transit Authority's assertion that it intends to make far-reaching changes in the borough's bus service next month is a cause for hope.

Let's hope the authority goes ahead and makes the changes, which would bring significant improvements to this area's public bus system.

But let's hope the authority does it right. Riverside and Kingsbridge riders will benefit most from two especially significant changes. Riders will at last be able to reach important destinations to the east, including Lehman College, Bronx Science, the Jerome-Gunhill shopping area and Montefiore, and North Central Bronx Hospitals, with one bus, on an entirely new line. And the Bx 24 which now ambles between Riverside and the Fordham Road area every 40 minutes or so, would cease to be a Toonerville Trolley and run every 10 minutes.

There is, of course, a catch. There always is. To pay for the additional service, the MTA says, the buses will have to make fewer stops. The plan calls for buses to stop every three blocks, instead of every two.

Transport Workers Union officials are most unhappy about the reduction in stops, as is Borough President Stanley Simon. But the price seems acceptable to us, if it pays for such vastly improved service as the plan offers. And through a year of public hearings and almost five years of frustrated waiting, Community Board 8 and every public official in the area has agreed, however reluctantly, that the sacrifice was worth it.

Mr. Simon and the drivers are absolutely right, however, to warn that chaos can ensue if the change is not properly planned and publicized. Not only are the locations of the bus stops to be changed, but every bus is to be given a new number, under a system that assigns even

numbers, running sequentially from north to south to east-west routes, and odd numbers, running from east to west to all north-south routes. The new line from the city line to the hospitals, for example, will be called the Bx 10, while the old Bx 10, familiar to generations of Riverdaleans, will become the Bx 7.

It was felt that making a total change would highlight the introduction of a totally new system, and hopefully induce the public to learn about it. The Transit Study comments dryly. To a rider headed for the A-train, it will be a learning experience indeed, but not a good one, if he's passed by at his accustomed stop by a dozen Bx 10's, finally walks a block or two to board one, then looks up from his paper to find himself on Gunhill Road instead of Isham Street.

Two years ago, residents raised the roof when the Transit Authority eliminated stops along the Bx 20 line with no announcement or preparation. Red-faced TA officials admitted that "the people were short-changed" by the decision and restored most of the stops. Now the authority has an opportunity to regain riders' confidence. But there are ominous signs that it might bungle again.

The authority does not have sufficient bus stop signs on hand, or crews to install them, one official warns. Borough President Simon points to a list of bus stop shelters sent to the Board of Estimate for approval that retains stops every two blocks. Although the TA says the list was drawn up by the city Department of General Services, the lack of coordination between agencies is not a good sign.

If the bus plan is not to founder once again, the public must be adequately prepared. Riders must be sought by every means at the TA's disposal—newspapers, radio and TV, handouts on buses, posters at every stop. At a minimum, the public must know when the plan will go into effect, where the bus stops for each line will be and what numbers the buses will use. The authority does not have long to make the effort. The time to start is now.

From other pens

A thin thread, a potent ally

December 10 is Human Rights Day, marking the anniversary of the signing of the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Eugene Wexler, group coordinator of Amnesty International's Riverdale chapter, group 167, suggested reprinting this editorial from the Los Angeles Times to mark the occasion.

Amnesty International is a thin thread of civilization that circles the world. Founded in London 21 years ago and with sections now functioning in 40 countries, the organization has three goals: to work for the release of prisoners of conscience, to advocate fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and to stop torture.

That the organization is needed at all is an ominous indication of the barbarous conditions that prevail in the late 20th Century in many nations. Amnesty International is not only needed, it is urgently needed.

David Hinkley, the director in Los Angeles of the Western headquarters of Amnesty in the United States, offers a grim survey. Amnesty has established that torture is the national policy or is tolerated in 60 countries. The technique varies from one nation to another, but the common characteristic is a disdain for human life and a contempt for the dignity of the individual. Hinkley says Amnesty continues to get reports on psychological torture inflicted on persons in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block. They are committed to psychiatric institutions and treated with mind-bending drugs. He said, "In Latin America, especially El Salvador and Guatemala, it seems that the vast majority of

people who are found killed have been mutilated."

The news frequently corroborates Amnesty's reports that torture is widespread. Reporting from Buenos Aires, Times staff writer Kenneth Freed discloses that more than 900 Argentines are kept behind bars by the military under a state of siege declared in 1974. One is a former economics student, 29, who has been held in prison for nearly eight years without charge, trial, or sentence. His family says he has been tortured, put into solitary confinement for long periods and moved from one prison to another seven times. Under the military's emergency powers, nearly 9,000 people have been detained for varying lengths of time since 1974. Their fate has been decided by a whim of the government, rather than by any rational legal process. A Western diplomat commented, "It is a brutal system, rotten and unfair."

But, brutal as it is, the system is more humane than the actions of some elements of the Argentine military in the middle and late 1970s. According to information obtained by governments and human-rights groups, the military caused the "disappearances" of about 6,000 people who are presumed to have been killed.

Amnesty takes no position on the political ideology of governments or the merits of the beliefs of prisoners. Its exclusive concern is the human rights of the prisoners.

Against the powers of repressive governments, Amnesty's efforts may appear to be almost quixotic, but it has a potent ally. That ally is the conscience of civilized people everywhere. He/she who tortures is an affront to any standard of human decency.

Riverdale ramblings

PRESS reporter Louise Jamieson finished fifth in a regional Scrabble tournament this weekend at the Game Room on the Upper West Side. Her husband, Merrill Katz, edged her for fourth place, making the two the unduped best couple in the country. The competition was by invitation only, and was part of a series of elimination tournaments leading to the national championships. Their high finishes guarantee them a place in the semi-finals, to be held in May.

PORCHETTA D'ORO the Italian restaurant on Kappock Street, may have new owners, but they're no newcomers to serving good food. The restaurant has been taken over by the owners of Amici's, one of the best restaurants in the Bronx's Little Italy.

THE GREMLINS have been taping again in our typosetting equipment. In the Progress TV ad of Dec. 2 the *Mystasy* Video Module was priced at \$99.95. It sells for \$75.85.

DENTAL PATIENTS of Dr. Leonard J. Seide recently participated in a video taping demonstration in the office of the Riverdale orthodontist. The sessions provided material for an eight-hour educational video tape series developed by Dr. Seide, who also teaches at the NYU College of Dentistry. The orthodontist has used the tapes as learning aids in his course; the material is now available to dentists across the country through the Video Education Company of America. The Riverdale residents who participated in the taping were Daisy

Alvarado, Ellen Cashin, John Galligan, Linda Bolick, Sandi Ehrlich, Kathleen Clancy and Nathan Treitel.

RESERVATIONS for the dinner honoring Grace Belkin, district manager of Community Board 8, on Wednesday, Dec. 13, are \$15 per person. The price in last week's Press was in correct.

THE WEEKLY cost of feeding a family of four bounced back to \$107.01, after falling to below \$80 levels, the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs reported. The department's latest survey, covering Nov. 8 to 18, showed New Yorkers paid 2 percent, or \$2.14, more for food this year than last.

Yours, Ours and Others



Letters to the Editor

Community's generosity helps Mental Health

Editor, The Press:
While all the returns are not yet in, we have been thrilled to find a warm reception by community and the willingness on the part of a good percentage to give gifts that will qualify for the match. This, then, is our way of saying "thank you" to the community for its cordial and encouraging response.

The *Phonathon* is the second phase of our three-year On The Move Campaign, undertaken when the co-op plan of the previous premises of the Riverdale Mental Health center forced us to find a new home. The On The

Move drive to raise \$550,000 is intended not only to cover the ongoing costs of the move to new and larger quarters, but also to help us meet the expanding need for our services and to secure the future of the center. Requests for service have continued to increase now that we are settled in our new and more accessible location at 5676 Riverside Avenue.

With 18 months to go in our On The Move campaign, we have passed the \$310,000 mark. We know, however, that it will be far harder to raise the balance of \$240,000 in these uncertain times.

And, to the editors and staff at the Riverdale Press, who have recognized the need to bring our work to the attention of the community ever since we were founded 22 years ago, our ongoing deep gratitude as well.

KATRIN PHOCAS
President

Monkeying with Broadway traffic

Editor, The Press:
I am heartily in agreement with the letter of Jesse Auerbach (Nov. 25), regarding the traffic problem at 230 St. and Broadway. However, the problem has become increasingly aggravated by a recent action of the Traffic Department.

They have quietly put up signs at the corner of 228 St. and Marble Hill Ave., one block west of Broadway and south of 230 St. stating, "No left turn 7 a.m. to 9 a.m."

I have been taking this route to work for the past five years. I was caught last week by an officer stationed to catch the unwary who have been doing the same thing and are still doing it.

There were about 20 cars lined up behind me.

JESSE MARCUS

Editor, The Press:
Again, the long-suffering public is the loser. Talk about the difficulties

Editor, The Press:
I wish to respond to a recent letter to the editor regarding adoption records. The writer indicated that he/she was in favor of open adoption records whereby the "adoptive and birth parents know each other and may have continuing contact."

As a social worker for a prominent adoption agency in the metropolitan area, it has been my experience that adoptive parents more often than not, do not desire to have contact with their child's natural parents. Many, however, have indicated a willingness to let their child in locating their natural parents if the child so desires.

The writer also indicated that it was his/her opinion that separating children from their parents as adoption agencies do "is one of the cruelest practices that exist in our society."

And bonds are perfect for Christmas gift-giving. One size fits all. Plus, the returns are terrific!

ANGELA M. BUCHANAN
Treasurer of the United States

Should adoption records be open?

Editor, The Press:
I fail to see the purpose of the sign, as it aggravates the congestion at 230 St. and Broadway, to which I must travel now to go south on Broadway. It is increasingly dangerous at that intersection, since it increases the flow of traffic at that corner in addition to the heavy bus traffic which goes that way.

Violating the no-turn rule carries a mandatory \$35 fine, so obviously it has been done because the city needs money. There is no other reason for such a regulation.

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Obituaries

MARGARET BURNS
A Mass of Resurrection was celebrated for Margaret Burns, of Kingsbridge, on Dec. 4 at Our Lady of Angels Church. She died on Dec. 2 at Montefiore Hospital at the age of 75.

The widow of the late Joseph Burns, she is survived by one daughter, Mary Anita; four sons, Joseph, James, Francis and Robert; 14 grandchildren; and a brother, Robert Duncan. Burial was at St. Raymond's Cemetery.

WILLIAM KELLY
William Kelly died on Nov. 28 at his Kingsbridge home. He was 60 years old. He was a clerk and auditor at the Gramercy Hotel in Manhattan.

He is survived by his wife, Frances; six children, Kathryn Bobker, John, William, Patrick, Anthony and Joseph; two grandchildren, Steven and David. He is survived by his wife, Frances; three brothers, Thomas, Ned and Frank; and two sisters, Alice Carr and Dolores Hobbs.

Mr. Kelly was a member of the Council of Columbus, St. Patrick's Society and William Irwin Post of the American Legion.

A Mass of the Resurrection was offered on Dec. 1 at St. John's Church. Interment followed at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Hawthorne, N.Y.

MICHAEL REIDY
Michael Reidy died on Dec. 4. He was a laborer with Con Edison.

A Mass of Resurrection was scheduled on Dec. 7 at Church of the Visitation. Interment was to follow at St. Anthony's Cemetery in Nanuet, N.Y.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret; four sons, James, Michael, John and William; three daughters, Ellen Clancy, Mary Reidy and Patricia Chesser; a sister, Madge Martin; and nine grandchildren.

CHESTER WHALEN
Chester J. Whalen, an employee of the New York Transit Authority, died on Dec. 1. He was 62 years old. A Mass of Resurrection was offered on Dec. 4.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret; four sons, James, Michael, John and William; three daughters, Ellen Clancy, Mary Reidy and Patricia Chesser; a sister, Madge Martin; and nine grandchildren.

SPETTER IS ECS SPEAKER
Daring to Love Again" will be the Sunday morning topic on Dec. 12 at the 11 a.m. meeting of the Riverdale Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture. It will be held at the Society's Meeting House, 450 Fieldston Rd. Speakers will be the society's religious leader, Dr. Matthew Ies Spetter.

For further information, call 454-4445.

WIDOWS CAN JOIN NEW SUPPORT GROUP
The Single Parent Activity and Recreation Center at the Riverdale Y invites widows to register for its support group, Start Living Again.

The group is for women who have been recently widowed, and is intended to help them come through the initial period of bereavement. The group meets Thursday evenings from 8 to 9:15 p.m. and will continue for five or six weeks.

Interested individuals should be able to attend starting on Dec. 9. Enrollment is limited and immediate registration is suggested.

For additional information, call Lynn Fried-Whyne at 548-8200. Registration and group meetings will take place at the Y, 450 W. 250 St.

ISRAELI EDUCATOR TO SPEAK AT ESTHER CHAPTER MEETING
Esther Chapter, American Mizrahi Women, will hold its annual Chanukah meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 12:30 p.m. in the Riverdale Jewish Center, W. 237 St. and Independence Ave.

Chava Fraenkel will be the guest speaker. She is active in the curriculum center of the Ministry of Education in Israel. Her topic will be "Some New Trends in Religious Education in Israel and Their Impact on Israel Society."

Traditional Chanukah refreshments will be served. Miriam Lenoff and Irene Roth will be the hostesses. Rhoda Pogrow is the program chairman. For further information, call 548-4033.

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