



News & Nuts from The Loco Club

APRIL 1, 2014

Directory Nixes Honoree Suggestion

For the first time in history, Club Directors have rejected a recommendation from the State Dinner Committee. In a close vote, they decided not to honor reality TV star **Kim Kardashian**. After receiving advice from Controller **Darlene Craig**, Committee Chair **Michael Yon**, past Treasurer **John Sussek**, current Treasurer **Patrick Waide** and General Manager **John McGrath** argued that Kardashian and her current significant other, hip-hop artist **Kanye West**, would be a major financial draw. But Directors **Audrey Amdursky**, **Patrick Frawley** and **Melvin Stecher** objected on, respectively, aesthetic, moral and artistic grounds. **Steve North**'s nay vote tipped the balance. ("Anyone who names a baby 'North West' isn't worth taking seriously.") **John Dunn** amiably noted, however, that the Young Leadership Committee will petition to reinstate Kardashian's candidacy: "Whatever members' personal reactions may be, Lotos has to keep up with the times."

Breaking News!

CitiBike, the popular bike rental program, will be setting up a docking station right in front of the clubhouse. Calling the 27-bike station "a populist eyesore," the Club's legal expert **Philip Lacovara** will attempt to block installation. He predicts, however, that the Club's complaint will fall on deaf ears in the wake of Mayor Bill de Blasio's anti-Upper East Side feelings and his "tale of two cities" campaign.

High Times in Colorado

Responding to requests that Lotos should sponsor a trip within the U.S., **Ellen Monk** has planned a summer excursion to Colorado. The trip, three days each in Colorado Springs, Boulder and Vail, will focus on the state's natural beauty, as well as on

Club Reaches Resident Cap

Since the Club currently has a waiting list for Resident members, the Committee on Admissions recommended that the criteria for membership be revised. "We need to raise our standards," stated **Rick Petersen**. "We were very lax during the economic downturn and some of our members are less than stellar." **Robin Thompson** agreed. "Some of them don't even own yachts or spend winters in Palm Beach!" he said.

Of the various suggestions being considered, only one has been passed by the Directory so far. At the end of each interview, **Gail VanVoorhis** will escort the candidate to the lobby. During the five-minute elevator ride, Ms. VanVoorhis, with her brilliant attention to detail, will determine the the candidate's comfort level with the Club (e.g., does the candidate try to make small talk; pretend to get an important call on her mobile phone; seem fine with complete silence during the interminable ride). Ms. VanVoorhis will also confirm the Club requirements for special category candidates (e.g., "So, it is absolutely true that your income is mainly derived from teaching **legitimate** courses?").

Colorado's newly-legal pot shops. Participants will be able to sample marijuana of different sorts at each stop.

The Directory is confident that this trip will appeal especially to its baby boomer members, who may have invested in these new Colorado businesses. It is also hoped that older members who warned their children against smoking pot, yet secretly yearned to try it, and young Club members who may have been too uptight in college to indulge, will sign up. The trip will also include a stimulating lecture/discussion by marijuana expert **Paul Jock** about the effects of the now-legal drug. (All Directors, except Irv Jacobs, claimed that they never inhaled.)

Fly the Skies with Club Pilot



Lotos Director **Phyllis Ginstling** will fly Lotos members to Colorado this summer. Ms. Ginstling, who has had her license for many years, said, "This trip will be a real high for me! I just hope the passengers aren't too spaced out on their return." She has offered to give lessons to Lotosians with one stipulation: no texting!

A Note to Members

by Annie Hustle, President

With my term of office quickly coming to a close, I am pleased to announce three policy changes that I believe will benefit the Club in the future.

First, in response to comments that the results of a Lotos election are always a foregone conclusion, I have instituted some new guidelines that will encourage a more democratic process. Beginning in 2015, candidates for Club office will be asked to answer a hard-hitting question before an audience of Lotos members at a special members' meeting in April. The question will require the candidate to consider a pressing issue facing the Club. Sample questions include the following, all adapted from the Miss America pageant: What is the difference between "mature" and "old"? On what occasions do you lie? And, if the Directory booked an opportunity for you, as a new Officer, to pose for a magazine ad in a swimsuit, and the advertiser offered to give the Club a huge sum of money, how would you handle it?

Members will be urged to consider candidates' answers when they vote, and to step up and answer themselves if they feel they would be a better candidate.

Second, after the overwhelming number of reservation requests for recent State Dinners, especially for the Tony Bennett event, I have approved a new registration policy. In the future, if you wish to make a reservation, you will be asked to write a 2,000-word essay describing why you think you deserve to attend the State Dinner. Please include any connections you have to the honoree (e.g., your granddaughter shares the same Pilates instructor as the

honoree's dentist); information about the honoree that may not be known to the public; and a check for \$100 made out to **Sharon Situ** with "kick-back" in the memo. **Bill Johnson**, moderator of the Great Thinkers Seminar, has volunteered to review these essays. He will grade them based on the member's social status, Club "connections," and length of Club membership. If you have any questions regarding this new policy, please do not call John McGrath.

Finally, because of the success of the House Committee in improving the Club's cookies, I have established a Cookie Committee. In addition to evaluating current cookies, the group will also come up with new cookies as well as special cookies for themed events. If you wish to serve on this committee, please send samples of your favorite cookies (homemade, please) to **Leon Wender**, who will evaluate them for artistry and symmetry. (Note: You may want to consult with Colorado trip participants regarding cookie ingredients.)

Lotos May Host U.S./Russia Reps

Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian foreign minister Sergey V. Lavrov may meet soon here at the Club to continue discussing ways to de-escalate the crisis of Russian's recent annexation of Crimea. It is rumored that longtime member **Mikhail Baryshnikov** arranged the meeting when he recalled that points of agreement in the Treaty of Portsmouth, which ended the Russo-Japanese War, were reached by dignitaries at the Lotos bar.

Self-Promotion Okayed at the Club

The House Committee has decided to lift the restrictions that prevent members from promoting their personal interests. For a fee, members may now advertise their businesses, charities or themselves via the following: flyers in the Members' Lounge, advertisements on the lobby bulletin board, signs in bathroom stalls, text messages to members' cell phones and the most surefire way to get the word out: to have **Tony Pepaj**, doorman *par excellence*, walk around the Club as a human billboard. The hope is that, if members increase the revenue of their businesses, they will spend more money at the Club. It's a win-win situation.

Club Holiday

The Club will be closed on Friday, April 7, "No Housekeeping Day." Lotos housekeepers say they need a rest from their repetitious and endless tasks that go unrecognized. Some members were asked to fill in, but all politely declined, explaining that they didn't know how.

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Father's Day Dinner at the Lotos Club

Sunday, June 15, 2014

Seatings: 1 and 4 p.m.

Bring your dads and granddads to the Club for a special Father's Day experience. Chef Hollanda will prepare an authentic, all-American meal featuring *Grilled Burgers, Hot Dogs and Ribs, Smoked Brisket Corn on the Cob, Potato Salad (just like Mom used to make) and Apple Pie à la Mode. (Nothing green will be served.)*

Each room will have a section with a flat-screen television and reclining chairs. After dinner, Dads can watch Tiger Woods blow the lead again at the US Open, and, of course, take a nap.

*Jackets and ties prohibited. Includes unlimited beer. (\$60)
Do not call John McGrath in the Club office for details.*

Special Wine Seminar in the Grill

May 14, 2014, 6-8 p.m.

Are you planning a dinner for friends or family who are not knowledgeable about wines? Do you want to take a bottle of wine to your host who also is not a connoisseur? Or are you yourself not impressed with the nuances of fine wine? This event is the perfect opportunity for the frugal and unpretentious wine buyer. Representatives from Bottle King and Ultimate Wine Shop Online will provide samples of less expensive but still drinkable wines. They will also discuss the benefits of purchasing boxed wine. Reserve soon as a long waiting list is expected (\$10).

Note: Club Sommelier Philippe Sauriat will have nothing at all to do with this wine event.

Dress for Success at Lotos



The duo fashionistas will also offer advice for black-tie events: "Stilettoes and You"; "Cummerbund or Waistcoat for the Portly Gentleman"; "How Old Is Too Old for Strapless?" and "Comparable Attire for Women."

Lunchtime Learning

Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

Stay Fit, Stay Young

Micalyn Harris, recognized as the Club's "dancer *extraordinaire*," will lead a new 90-minute exercise program in the Ballroom. The warm-up will include basic pole dancing skills, generally thought to improve circulation, muscle tone and self-esteem. Ms. Harris will also teach "twerking," the dance move made notorious by Miley Cyrus. Involving low squats and lots of attitude, twerking is particularly effective for toning the thighs and buttocks, and is an opportunity to blow off bottled up frustration. This will be followed by an empowering 10-minute cardio striptease routine (no clothing will actually be removed). The cool-down will involve hula hoops and Bollywood dancing. (\$50, includes lunch: grapefruit half, whole wheat toast, and unsweetened tea.)

Monday, April 7, 12 noon

"What to Order?" Talk Table

Chef Raymond Hollanda will give tips on how to ensure that your order from the Club menu is "fresh" and not left over from a private event. (Chef Hollanda is also the author of the bestselling book, *How to Please All Lotosian Diners All the Time without Having a Meltdown.*)

Friday, April 11

Dress Code, "The Final Word"

Norman Horowitz and Phyllis Cohen (pictured at left), in an attempt to stop the constant barrage of questions to the Club office, will explain how to fashionably conform to the dress code. They will select a volunteer from participants and critique his or her personal style. Members will learn if their outfits comply with the increasingly confounding dress code; if they properly execute a "pop of color"; and if they look "hot" but not trashy.

Live Auction Will Lessen Club Deficit

This summer, in an attempt to prove that “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure,” a live auction will be held of the Club’s unwanted ~~trash~~ “treasures.” Lotos member **Jackie Aronson** will conduct the auction, putting her fast-talking skills to good use (cocktails and viewing auction items, 6 p.m.; auction, 7 p.m.; \$50).

The idea for an auction came about one day as office employees were having a particularly difficult day maneuvering around all the items that **John McGrath** is storing there. While trying to create some order, they discovered an array of unusual items: silk magnolia flowers (used years ago at a special event), an oversized candy dish (won at a staff holiday party), old, but still

usable carpeting, and fifteen boxes of light bulbs that work perfectly fine but don’t fit any lamps in the clubhouse. Realizing that there must be a wealth of other items that are of no use to the building, they searched each department and found a large collection of saleable items.

The auction will take place on **Wednesday, July 2** so that whoever wins the inflatable palm trees found in the basement can take them to the Hamptons for the holiday weekend. Other items up for auction include slightly chipped Lotos plates and glasses; a new, but never used wooden hamper; and an almost-new toaster that **Alison Baxter** threw into the mix because it took more than five minutes to toast her bagel.

John McGrath Moving On

The Club’s longtime General Manager, **John McGrath**, has notified the Directory that he will be leaving. During this past long, cold winter, McGrath took to wearing cardigan sweaters around the office, a habit that led to a fortuitous career opportunity. A location scout from PBS, at the Club to look for appropriate rooms for the network’s next stuffy period soap opera, noticed the uncanny resemblance of McGrath to the late Fred Rogers,

host of the soothing children’s show “Mr. Rogers Neighborhood.” It just so happened that PBS is currently negotiating with a major studio to produce a film version of the classic, and McGrath was offered the role without an audition. “It is a great loss for Lotos,” said **Renée Summer**, “but John will bring to the iconic role his Zen-like calm and infinite patience, developed during more than three decades pacifying Lotos members like me.”



Staff Offers Funding Ideas

In response to the need to raise funds for Lotos clubhouse repairs and light bulbs, Private Dining Manager **Heather Lasnier** has come up with another new idea. The sidewalk in front of the Club may now be rented for children (or grandchildren) to set up a classic lemonade stand. Chef Hollanda will be on hand to help the kids squeeze the requisite lemons and the Club will supply pitchers, cups and tables. The profits will be split 75% (Club) and 25% (child).

“It’s a wonderful opportunity for our young people to learn about hard work, the value of money and the danger of being exploited,” said former Finance Committee chair and longtime treasurer **John Sussek**. He recommends that the lemonade be sold for \$5.00 per glass (it *is* the Upper East Side, after all). Do not call John McGrath for rental rates.

Yolanda Carela urged the Club to start charging for checking coats and other items. “We spend a fortune on new tags every year to replace those that members have carelessly lost. There must be some accountability. Free coat checking is a thing of the past!” She suggested the following price list: top designer coats/ hats/ bags/umbrellas, \$5 each; all others, \$3. Concierge **Bill Chaput**, known for his top name brand savvy, will determine the category of the items.

Assistant Operations Manager **Tom Battersby** says that many committee members do not participate at meetings or support their events, and attend meetings only for the hors d’oeuvres. He suggests they pay a fee to be on committees: the more important the committee, the larger the fee. (A committee will be appointed to evaluate the relative importance of each committee.)