

## Earth to Bush: Lay off Social Security

by George Morin

With slides, facts and actuarial projections the three speakers at the Club's "Social Security Forum" on April 4th revealed the truth about Social Security:

*It ain't broke and don't need fixin'.*

Despite the terrible pronouncements from the "great and powerful" little man behind your TV screen, Social Security is on a very sound financial footing and the worst that could happen by 2025 is that it will have a \$6 trillion reserve.

The speakers at the forum were Steven Max of the Midwest Academy; David Langer, consulting actuary and Social Security expert; and Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. They were introduced by Program Chair Arthur Schiff.

### Strength and success

Steven Max presented a Midwest Academy slide show that dramatically demonstrated the strength and success of Social Security today and how it will continue to serve the nation for many decades into the future.

"Last year," he said, "we paid out \$493 billion and we took in \$658 billion and the reserve grew to \$1.7 trillion."

He went on to say, "They're trying to make 75-year projections that include a dozen factors and the way they interact, but economists can't predict even one of those factors more than a few years ahead – and then they're often wrong.

"In any case, Bush's projected shortfall of Social Security equals the tax cuts he gave to the richest 1%. So if there were to be a shortfall, the solution is very simple, don't make those tax cuts permanent – or, raise the cap on wages from \$90,000 to \$140,000."

### Boomers die, too

Mr. Max also pointed out, "By the time the 'crisis' hits, the baby boomers, whose retirements supposedly caused it, will already be on their way. The oldest boomers will be 95 in 2041 and a ripe old 106 in 2052."

### Political manipulation

In his presentation, David Langer charged that "the public was never informed that the

Bush-appointed trustees *required* the Social Security actuaries to make assumptions for their projections that *didn't meet actuarial standards*. And the chief actuary misled the public even more by not noting in his certification of the reports that the Bush trustees, *not* the actuaries, made the final decisions on *actuarial* matters."

Using assumptions based on actual economic experience over a 20-year period, Langer concluded, "The system is in fine shape. There's no reason for privatization or other substantial changes."

What would Langer do today?

"Simply don't do anything for 20 years. All the estimates show that nothing is going to happen until 2041 or 2052 – so just leave it alone."

### Remember the WMDs?

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney compared the administration's selling of the Social Security "crisis" with its selling of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and Iraq's connections with Al Qaeda.

Maloney reported that a White House memo made clear the fight isn't about fixing problems in Social Security, it's about remaking it.

Quoting from the memo she said, "'The first time in six decades the Social Security battle is one we can win, and in doing so, we can help transform the political and philosophical landscape of the country.'"

### Expert testimony

The congresswoman also reported that Alan Greenspan testified when she questioned him at the Congressional hearings that "privatization would do absolutely nothing to help the solvency and strength of Social Security."

### The last straw

Maloney concluded saying, "Social Security is not an investment scheme, it's a security safety net.

"This attack on Social Security is the last straw and the American people are not going to buy it.

"It will be defeated." **LDC**

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### The Truth

- Social Security is not broke and is not going to be.
- There is no crisis.
- The dire projections are politically manipulated
- No action's needed for 20 years

### Get all the facts:

www.midwestacademy.com  
www.davidlanger.com  
www.house.gov/maloney

East Side Democrats, indeed Democrats from all over Manhattan, waged a huge effort in 2004 to defeat President Bush, only to be disappointed in an extremely close election.

Many of us traveled to Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio and other states to try to persuade voters in the battleground states to elect Kerry.

**Membership up**

Even though the effort was unsuccessful, political involvement can be intoxicating and it appears that East Siders are choosing to stay involved in opposing the Bush agenda.

New Club memberships are up and attendance has been growing at recent Lexington Club programs on Albany reform, the West Side stadium and Social Security.

**73RD DISTRICT**

**More ways to get involved**

With the 2005 municipal elections just around the corner, Lex Clubbers will have lots of opportunities to be involved in candidates' campaigns.

But there are two other opportunities that members should also consider: joining the Democratic County Committee and signing on as an election inspector.

The County Committee is the real grass roots of politics. Volunteer committee members carry petitions, knock on doors and, in some cases, even vote to nominate Democratic candidates.

**Make elections run smoothly**

Election inspectors are paid \$200 per day for their efforts and make a huge contribution by helping the elections run more smoothly.

If interested in either of these opportunities, please call me at (212) 348-4158 or any of the Lexington Club's other District Leaders.

- Arthur Schiff, District Leader, Part A

Last week, Council Member Eva Moskowitz introduced a bill that requires the Department of Education to make accurate and up-to-date class size information available to parents.

**Class size**

The average NYC classroom is well above capacity, yet parents have no way of knowing just

**CITY HALL**

how overcrowded. "The Department of Education's class size data is, at best, inaccurate," Moskowitz said. "The best tool parents have to combat overcrowding is the ability to compare different schools accurately."



**Children in Custody**

Council Member Moskowitz, joined by Education Committee members and criminal justice advocates, also released a bill of rights for court-involved youth.

More than 2,000 kids are in juvenile detention in NYC every day and roughly 1,200 students return to the city from upstate jails each year, yet over two-thirds of them never go back to school.

The bill of rights includes a requirement that the school system knows how many city students are released from custody each year and how many enroll in school. The bill also requires that offenders receive a useful education while incarcerated, get credits for classes taken while in custody and receive a list of schools they're eligible to attend before their release.

- Robin Marsico

**THE ASSEMBLY**

The passage of the budget has not led to a lull in the activities in Albany. Over the last month, I have introduced important legislation to make ATMs safer and have secured funding for needed renovations at the Stanley Isaac's Senior Center.

**Unregulated ATMs**

I have authored legislation that would make non-bank ATMs safer for one's financial information and physical safety. ATMs located at supermarkets and convenience stores are not currently regulated by federal or state law and are, thus, vulnerable for identity theft.

The legislation (A. 7270) would require all ATMs to be registered and to have safeguards for the consumer's safety.

**ALBANY**

In addition, I was able to secure \$50,000 in funding for renovation of the Stanley M. Isaac's Neighborhood Center to be used for needed improvements for the senior center. Fostering the growth of local institutions, like Isaac's, has positive effects on both families and the community.

- Assemblymember Jonathan Bing

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney remains a whirlwind of activity on Capitol Hill and the East Side.

**From the economy to 9/11**

She has been busy on issues affecting the economy; women and families; and the city's homeland security and 9/11 recovery needs.

As senior Democratic House Member of the bicameral Joint Economic Committee, Carolyn has led efforts to marshal opposition to Bush's ill-conceived plan to privatize Social Security and slash benefits.

She has published opinion articles on Social Security in major newspapers and has kept a busy schedule of town hall meetings focussed on Social Security.

**WASHINGTON**

In early May, she earned national headlines when she expressed her concerns about inflation in light of new quarterly economic figures.

Carolyn has also introduced bills on emergency contraceptives, the domestic sex trade, and

protecting mothers' right to breast feed.

She also has introduced measures to ease tax burdens of New Yorkers affected by 9/11; to improve the City's first responders' telecommunications equipment; and to ensure that all National Guard members receive fair federal retirement benefits for 9/11-related service.

**Treat the Guard fairly**

While some National Guard units will obtain benefits because they served at federal sites like West Point, other Guard members on state duty for service in lower Manhattan are being denied federal benefits.

Carolyn rightly argues, "All National Guard troops deserve equal status for their service in this time of national crisis."

- Brice Peyre



**DEAR LEX CLUB MEMBERS:**

The Club has had a very successful month since our last newsletter.

The Club's annual Dinner at the Sky Club on April 21st was a smashing success. We honored State Senate

Democratic Leader David Patterson who delivered a speech that reminded us all of what it means to be a Democrat.

I want to personally thank the chairpersons and members of the Dinner Committee for a job well done.

The Club's new Community Service Committee had its first event in April, helping to clean up a park as part of "Hands on New York Day".

We look forward to offering more opportunities for members to help in the community.

I would also like to remind qualified members that the Club's endorsement vote is on May 19th.

These endorsements will determine which candidates will appear on the Club's petitions when petitioning begins on June 7th.

There are a large number of fine candidates to choose from as the membership was able to see during the Club's three candidates forums.

We are lucky as Democrats and New Yorkers to have so many dedicated people running this year. It is a tribute to the strength of New York's Democratic party.

Sincerely yours,

*Alex*  
Alex Tisch

President, the Lexington Democratic Club



## Annual Dinner in the Sky honors Senator Patterson

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Democratic State Senate Leader David A. Patterson; Lilli Balinova, Linda Foa and Sue Avery; Assemblymember Jonathan Bing; Heather Leifer, James d'Auguste, Sue Moss and Susan Avery; and Ken Mills with Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney.

The stars of New York's Democratic party came out in force on April 21st to honor Senator David A. Patterson, the New York State Senate Democratic leader.

The dinner took place in the heavenly confines of The Sky Club in the MetLife building, high above the glittering lights of nighttime Manhattan.

Trudy Mason and Linda Foa chaired the Dinner Committee and Lillie Balinova, Meg Laporte, and

Susan Avery were co-chairs.

David Patterson, as the Democratic Leader of the New York State Senate, is one of the most influential forces in New York State government.

Other community leaders in attendance included Carolyn Maloney, Liz Krueger, José Serrano, Jr., Jonathan Bing, Pete Grannis, Gifford Miller, Eva Moskowitz, Scott Stringer, Virginia Fields and a host of aspiring candidates. **LDC**

## Lex Club lays lots of "Hands On New York"

On Saturday, April 16th, the Lex Club's Community Service Committee participated in "Hands On New York Day" by scraping and painting the benches in Stuyvesant Square Park, between 15th and 17th Streets on Second Avenue.

More than twenty volunteers braved the brisk early spring morning and scraped and painted and painted and scraped. By day's end all the park's benches sported a fresh new coat of hunter green paint, ready for the warm months ahead. Thanks to those who made our inaugural event a success. We hope to see you and many others at future events.

— Larry Goodman

ABOVE: After & Before: Melissa Moorehead scrapes old paint off a bench next to the one she had just painted. RIGHT: Some of the crew lined up for immortality. L to R: Melissa Moorehead, Lou Nock, Caroline Carrier, Mark Edelman, Anthony Pirro, Larry Goodman, Cathy Finlayson, Alex Tisch, Billy Sternberg, Tory Davis, Heather Leifer, Marcy Erhard



## VOTE FOR CANDIDATES

**Vote for the Club's endorsements by secret "drop-in" ballot**

for  
 Mayor  
 Comptroller  
 Manhattan Borough President  
 Public Advocate  
 Manhattan District Attorney  
 Manhattan Surrogate  
 Council District 4  
 Council District 5  
 District Leaders  
 Judicial Delegates

Thursday, May 19, 2005  
 6-9 pm

**Ruppert Community Room**

222 East 93rd Street  
 (Across the street from Brown Gardens)

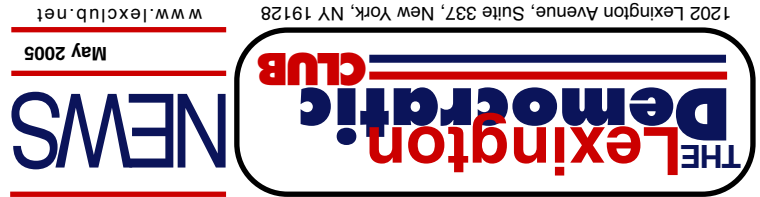
See it all at [www.lexclub.net](http://www.lexclub.net)

**INSIDE:**

- Report on the Social Security Forum
- News from the 73rd District, City Hall, Albany and Washington
- Annual Dinner report
- Hands on New York report

**ABOVE THE FOLD:**

"Where I Stand"  
by State Senator  
Liz Krueger



## WHERE I STAND

### Home Rule for NYC Housing

by State Senator Liz Krueger

Last month, I acted to bring my bill to the floor of the Senate to restore home rule over housing policy to New York City. The bill (S.2735) would repeal the 1971 Urstadt Law, which was a part of the Rockefeller vacancy-decontrol legislation.



The law specifically bars New York City from adopting rent limitations that are "more stringent or restrictive than those now in effect."

The law effectively places control over New York City housing policy in the hands of upstate legislators who lack the local knowledge of the city to make informed policy decisions.

#### From chronic to crisis

Since 1971, when this home rule was taken away, New York City's housing situa-

tion has gone from chronic shortage to acute crisis. According to the 2002 NYC Housing and Vacancy Survey, the rental vacancy rate is now 2.94%, way below the 5% that creates abnormal market conditions.

#### Who carries the burden?

Rent hardship afflicts poor and middle-class households alike, with half of all New Yorkers paying at or over the federal hardship level of 30% of income in rent; a fourth of all households are paying more than half their income in rent.

Firefighters, nurses, teachers, police officers, construction workers, seniors, artists and thousands of others can no longer afford to live in the communities they serve.

#### More homeless today

More and more low-income families have become homeless – there are now more homeless people in NYC than at any time since the Great Depression.

By preventing the City Council and the Mayor from preserving affordable housing, the Urstadt Law is an unconscionable restriction on the democratic "home rule" of NYC residents, undermining our ability to control our destiny on a strictly local issue.

Speaker Gifford Miller has recently

announced that the City Council will pass a "home rule message" supporting the repeal of the Urstadt Law.

The message must be approved by the Mayor, who has voiced support for repeal in the past, but will no doubt face real-estate pressure to veto the home rule message.

We must all make sure the Mayor knows how important Urstadt Law repeal is to ensuring that affordable housing in New York City is protected and expanded.

The Urstadt Law was named after Governor Rockefeller's housing commissioner who became one of the architects of Pataki's 1994 transition platform that explicitly promised to end rent and eviction protections entirely, a promise which took giant steps toward realization in the Rent Regulation Reform Act of 1997.

#### NYC deserves upstate support

My Republican colleagues frequently talk about the importance of local control when speaking on legislation affecting other localities in New York State, but fail to apply the same standard to New York City.

Other localities are given home rule over issues of local importance. New York City is entitled to equal protection. **LDC**