

## EDITORIAL

# 9/11 symbol belongs at Battery Park

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell bowed to common sense this week when she told Mayor Michael Bloomberg that the National Park Service would at least temporarily screen visitors to Liberty Island in Battery Park when the Sandy-tossed Statue of Liberty reopens on July 4.

So that's one noisy dispute resolved — and one to go. The remaining rhubarb focuses on the Sphere, the Fritz Koenig statue that wound up in Battery Park after 9/11. As with the security tent, the Sphere has never quite meshed with the aesthetic ambitions of the Battery Conservancy, which manages the 25-acre preserve. The conservancy wants it moved elsewhere. Bloomberg likes it where it is.

The conservancy view isn't frivolous. It worries, among other things, about weighing down the park, which already has other memorials, with too many monuments invoking wars and death.

But the argument to keep the Sphere in Battery Park is stronger. Not only is it at one of Liberty Island's portals, it anchors a district in lower Manhattan that sees more than 10 million visitors a year.

And it's powerful. Unveiled in the 1970s on a plaza between the Twin Towers, it was an optimistic symbol of a world united around the benefits of trade. Today it evokes dashed hopes and dreams. It brings tears regularly to the eyes of high school students, aging firefighters and visitors on their first trips to America.

There are practical reasons for not placing it at the Sept. 11 memorial site. For example, the only feasible place for it there would be on the roof of the 9/11 museum, which couldn't support it. But it does deserve a prominent, permanent space in lower Manhattan and not storage. The Port Authority, which owns the piece, should remember that. Meanwhile, what better place for it than at Liberty's door?



The Sphere, by Fritz Koenig, in Battery Park



"...and that's his City Council campaign poster..."

AM NEW YORK/JIMMY MARGULIES

## TRAIN OF THOUGHT

### Solutions to trashy subways

In response to the letter about keeping subway trains cleaner, it's not just a matter of work ethic.

I feel that if a "no food, no drink" policy were implemented, as is done in the Metro system in Washington, it would help improve two problems: dirty subway cars and the rodent population.

Anthony Olavarria  
Brooklyn

Regarding the letter about the subway cleanup crew, I'm always amazed and disgusted

at how some people don't bother to discard their food or newspapers in the trash cans. Pigs. No class!

Randy Robins  
Manhattan

### Springy single seats are irksome

Why are the single-rider subway seats, situated in the corner of the inner car door, made in such a way as to scare the daylight out of you, as soon as a passenger gets up from that seat?

The seat springs upward, then slams against the wall of the train, making such a banging noise. It's guaranteed

to wake up any person who was taking a quick nap, or to increase one's heartbeat, whether awake or asleep, by 20 beats per minute!

That irks me when I'm on the 4, 5 or 6 trains.  
Rajesh D. John  
Bronx

### LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Submit your complaints, joys, concerns, suggestions or observations about New York City. Please provide your full name, email address, phone numbers and community to [thoughts@am-ny.com](mailto:thoughts@am-ny.com).

## #Chirp about it

@GarysBasement

I'm deciding my vote for NYC mayor solely on whether they support and approve of the increase in Staten Island Ferry service. #priorities

Want to share an "only in NYC" moment? Tweet or retweet your favorite message. Use the tag #amNY. Look for the best ones here each day.

## COLUMN

# You spell it 'knaidel,' and I spell it 'knedyl' . . .

BY MARJORIE GOTTLIEB WOLFE

Growing up in the Arverne area of Rockaway Beach, I always knew how important it was to understand Yiddish. Even though my parents were American born, they both spoke it.

Yet I don't recall ever being asked how to spell the Yiddish word for matzo ball. Is it:

a) knaidel

- b) kneidel
- c) knedyl
- d) knaydl
- e) all of the above

The correct answer is e. *Ver volt dos geglaibt?* (Who would have believed it?)

Arvind Mahankali, an Indian-American eighth-grader from Bayside Hills, won the 86th Scripps National Spelling Bee last week when he correctly spelled the German-Yiddish word "knaidel" — even though it was reported that Arvind had

never actually tasted one.

Had he gone with option b, c or d and lost the contest, there would have been an uproar. Yiddish lovers know there are four correct ways — see above. The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research says the preferred historical spelling is "knedyl," but spelling bee officials said the contest accepts spellings from Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary.

When Arvind asked the

pronouncer, Jacques Bailly, to use "knaidel" in a sentence, Bailly replied that a diner "hoped to find at least one more knaidel in his soup bowl, but all he discovered was his missing lower denture."

My mom would have disapproved. Her preference would have been: *Oh, my knaidel, tsegait zich in moy!* (My knaidel melts in the mouth; it's delicious.)

In our home, the three R's were reading, writing

and rugelach. We knew the difference between the schlemiel and the schlimazel — both are losers, but it's the schlemiel who accidentally pours the soup on the schlimazel.

Next year, Scripps should include the Yiddish word "shviger" (mother-in-law). Mothers-in-law are universal targets of so much humor. And, as the denture crack reveals, there's room for that in the bee. So when the contestant asks the pro-

nouncer to use the word in a sentence, what will we hear?

"The first man, Adam, lived as long as he did because he didn't have a 'shviger.'"



Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of "Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and "Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish Trivia."

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