



Patzer City Council Run Begins With Beach Clean-Up

By Kings County Politics September 9, 2019 **ENVIRONMENT**



City Council Candidate Steven Patzer, center, with volunteers cleaned up the Coney Island Creek yesterday. Contributed Photo.

Fresh on the heels of filing with the City's Campaign Finance Board that he is planning to run in 2021 for term-limited **City Councilmember Mark Treyger's** seat, community activist and **Thomas Jefferson Young Democrats Club President Steven Patzer** this weekend joined volunteers in recovering 26 hypodermic needles along Coney Island Creek yesterday.



Steven Patzer

The district includes Coney Island, Bensonhurst and Gravesend, and besides the needles, the volunteers carted away 50 garbage bags of trash.

“I saw hypodermic needles in the park and was horrified thinking about the potential for a small child stepping on an exposed needle and contracting a disease,” says Patzer.

In addition to removing trash and hypodermic needles, the cleanup also required cleaning up bureaucratic red tape.

“I’ve been organizing volunteer events with Steven for several years and called the NYC Department of Sanitation in order to get clean up supplies,” says Cardozo Law student Andrew Windsor, who organized the effort with Patzer. “I was advised they couldn’t do anything because NYC Parks and Recreation is in charge of cleanups on parkland properties.”

When he called the parks department, he was told a volunteer event slot wasn’t available until late October. Frustrated with the idea of leaving dangerous materials in a park for two months, Windsor started looking for loopholes. He found one. The Parks Department requires permits if there are more than 20 people.

Patzer and Windsor bought their own supplies and gathered family and friends to clean up the beach. The event got so publicized the two ended up exceeding their NYC Parks allowable headcount for an event without a permit.

“How can you turn away anyone who cares about their community?” says Patzer. He contacted **Kashif Hussain**, Deputy Public Advocate of Infrastructure and Environmental Justice. He not only helped him get approval for the group to grow to over 20 people, but he also came to help and filmed for the **Public Advocate Jumaane William**’s office.

Another clean up is planned for Sunday, Sept. 15 with Coney Island’s Cub Scouts and Warriors among the volunteers.



Contributed photo.

Some of the hypodermic needles taken from the Coney Island Creek

“I don’t want anyone to feel they can’t volunteer because the city or anyone else doesn’t let them,” says Patzer. “We can use this same volunteer base to clean up graffiti, support local businesses, and improve our school system.”

Patzer believes he can bring the community together to improve lives for Southern Brooklynites and that’s why he filed to continue and honor Treyger’s work in the district.

“I won’t be the kind of candidate that you’ll have to guess what they’ll do in office,” Patzer says. “I will be working with members of our community to create an impact for the entire time I’m running.”

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