ROBOTIC PARKING

"Bot" spots make parking a piece of cake in Chinatown.

By Joshua Knoller

When I drive into the city from New Jersey, parking always comes with a hefty price. If I park on-street, I worry whether or not I'm legally parked. If I park off-street, I worry the parking attendant is going to damage my car. Now if I ever decide to park in Chinatown, I'll use the city's first automated parking garage, which is now open to business at 123 Baxter St. It opened to monthly customers at the beginning of March, but is now open to the average city parker. The garage now serves approximately ten to 12 monthly customers and about 20 to 30 daily customers (out of 67 spots available).

A concept that has been successful in other countries, automated parking has not gone off one-hundred percent according to plan here. An automated garage in Hoboken damaged two vehicles back in 2002.

Ari Milstein, the director of planning for Automotion Inc., and one of the

masterminds behind the system, says that the garage has gotten off to a great start.

"It was a nice smooth transition with a lot of repeat customers," Milstein said. "There were some small issues here and there, nor-

mal start-up issues that come with any normal start-up business."

However, this garage has gotten rave reviews from critics, including Gridlock Sam himself, who went to take a look at the garage on a personal tour back in February, and was assured that steps were taken to ensure no cars get damaged, including extra sensors and lasers to protect the vehicle as well as the consumer.

How the garage works

The driver, that's you, enters through a traditional garage door, parks the vehicle on a pallet inside an "entry and exit room." The driver then uses his "key," typically a credit card, takes a receipt, and walks away. Sensors and lasers scan the room to make sure there is no one inside and to determine if it will fit in the system and where to place the car.

"One woman sat in the car for five minutes not realizing she needed to be out of the room," Milstein

said.

Once the sensors determine everything is ok to proceed, the pallet with the car on it, which sits on a lift, lowers the vehicle into the system, via computer, similar to a sideways elevator.

When the driver, that's you again, returns, he or she swipes his credit card which initiates the retrieval process. The system, using the credit card information to identify the appropriate vehicle, begins the retrieval process (the same as when your car is lowered into the system, except reversed).

Now let's say you lose your receipt, the key to getting your vehicle back. And since the garage is automatic, no one theoretically needs to be there. Milstein explained how this situation resolves itself.

"If someone loses a ticket, I can pull up the car and resolve the problem," Milstein explained as he was sitting in his hotel room in Southern California monitoring the system via remote log-in. This also works in case there is an emergency.

You could quite conceivably call it robot-valet-parking, but the wave of the future is finally here in the big apple with more to come at prices similar to those of regular garages. Additional automatic garages by the same people who brought to you 123 Baxter St. are planned for 24th St. in Manhattan and in the Bushwick, Williamsburg and Brighton Beach sections of Brooklyn. Stay tuned for more!

Benefits of Automated Parking

The endless search for parking is a burden on the environment, and negatively impacts on quality of life. In a busy city, almost every third driver is looking for a parking spot. The convenience of automated parking is obvious, but some additional benefits.

include......

Increased capacity
Reduced space
No ventilation required
No lighting required
Enhanced user experience
Enhanced safety and security

GRIDLOCK TALK

Name: Richard Wilner

Title: Controller / HR Director

Place of birth and year: Brooklyn, NY 1951

Family: Wife - Fay, Sons - Ryan, 27 and Evan, 25, Daughter - Jennifer, 19

College: Pace University, BBA in Accounting

First job unrelated to accounting: I started working in a Pharmacy at the age of 13, first making deliveries, then behind the counter at age 16.

First job in accounting: After graduating from college I worked for a small CPA firm in NYC.

Hobbies: Golf

Favorite novel: The Pillars of the Earth - Ken Follett

Favorite film: Papillon

Favorite tv show: House

Favorite food: Italian

Keys to success: Staying focused to achieve my goal

If you had to choose a different profession, what would it be: Stock Broker/Investment Advisor

Announcements and Speeches

Jawairia Sial welcomed her newest niece, Fatima Salman, born on Feb. 6, 2006 at 12:49 a.m. Fatima weighs 15 lbs 10 oz. **Marybeth Miceli** has been nominated for the 2007/2008 Metropolitan Who's Who Among Executive and Professional Women in Engineering "Honors Edition" of the Registry. On March 26th in Orlando, FL, Marybeth was interviewed and later selected to serve on the National Board of Directors for the American Society of Nondestructive Testing (ASNT). **Sam Schwartz** has been keeping busy again these past couple months. His speaking engagements included the Courier Times where he spoke on "Congestion Pricing" on Feb. 27. The previous day he spoke at the Five Borough BIke Club and recently on a trip to California he spoke at the Institute of Transportation Engineers about "Congestion Pricing - Applying Lessons from London to the United States." And lets not forget his trip to Germany last month where Sam was able to continue to explore the new technology of automated parking garages.

NEW JOBS

New York Presbyterian Hospital Study/Implement Traffic Mitigations, PD Dan Plottner, PM Harris Schechtman, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Institution.

Extell Development-Additional Parking Analysis West 58th Street, PD Lucien Linders, PM Harris Schechtman, Type: Planning for Real Estate Developer.

Van Wagner - Identity Analyze, Gain Approval for New MTA Billboard Sites, PD Jee Mee Kim, AICP, PM Harris Schechtman, Type: Permitting for Private Client.

NYU Medical Center Traffic Engineering Services, PD Erich Arcement, P.E., PTOE, PM Tom Pagano, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Institution.

MPT for Emergency Repair along FDR Southbound/63rd Street, PD Amir Siddiqui, P.E., PM Shahab Raza, P.E., Type: Permitting for Contractors.

SBLM Signal Study, PD Erich Arcement, P.E., PTOE, PM Ian Sacs, P.E., Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Other Design Professionals.

Inner-Outer Harbor Traffic Study, PD/PM Al Meyer, Type: Planning for Other Design Professionals.

Brooklyn Greenway Phase II, PD Erich Arcement, P.E., PTOE, PM Doug Adams, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Private Client.

Prospect Park Lakeside Center Ice Rink, PD Erich Arcement, P.E., PTOE, PM Dan Plottner, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Private Client.

The Caroline Bus Stop, PD/PM Erich Arcement, P.E., PTOE, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Real Estate Developer.

Thor Shore Parkway Development LLC, PD Jee Mee Kim, AICP, PM Lucien Linders, Type: Planning for Real Estate Developer.

WOR Parking Systems, PD Samuel Schwartz, P.E., PM Janet Campbell, Type: Traffic Engineering/MPT for Private Client.
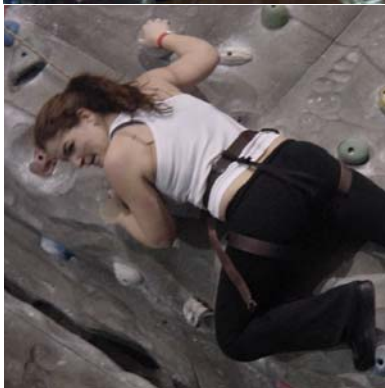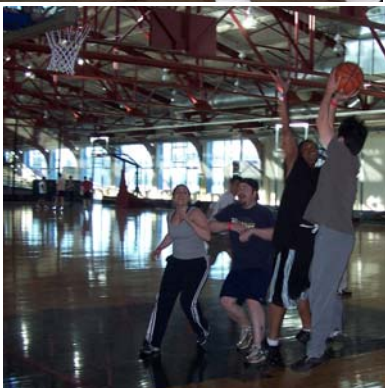
UPCOMING EVENTS

There are plenty of social events coming up to help kick off the summer for SSC employees. **The JP Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge** run will be the first on June 20. Good luck to all those who signed up. **SSC's 12th Anniversary Party** will be held at Shea Stadium on Tuesday, July 24th from 7-10 p.m. Everyone is invited to celebrate another successful year while watching the Mets vs. Pirates. Stay tuned for the details of this year's **Company Picnic**, which should be announced soon.

A Day At The Piers With Our Peers

On Friday, February 9 Sam Schwartz PLLC held a day at Chelsea Piers for all employees. The day was filled with volleyball, basketball, rock climbing and plenty of other activities. It was a great day for everyone to relax.

SUDOKU

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

	2	3		8	6	5		
8	5	3	2	1			6	7
	6						8	2
		6			2	1		
	7		6	1	3		9	
		1	9			7		
6	4						5	
3	5		2	6	4	9	7	
		7	5	9		6	3	