

Newsday

Tales from the corner diner booth

By The Editorial Board

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Good afternoon and welcome to The Point!

DAILY POINT

You never know who's in the next booth...

So two men walk out of a Woodbury diner on Tuesday morning and one says, "Are you Joe Mondello? I've always wanted to meet you."

And Mondello, who only 30 minutes before had said that "guy looks familiar," offered his hand to Steve Israel, the author, retired congressman and diner aficionado.

The longtime Nassau County Republican chairman and the 12-year Democratic congressman whose political base is Huntington, in another county — and a planet away in Long Island politics — apparently had never met. Israel, who was succeeded in the 3rd District seat this year by Tom Suozzi, was leaving the On Parade Diner after having coffee with businessman Tim Gomes of Sayville. Gomes, who stayed inside for another meeting, had just announced his candidacy for Congress in the 2nd District.

So Gomes and Mondello had never met, but the GOP chairman knows all too well Peter King, the representative from the 2nd District who has every expectation of running again.

Israel insisted to Mondello that they have lunch sometime, and after some banter, Mondello finally agreed.

Another day, another diner, another story in Long Island politics.

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