



~~Help Wanted.~~ Help Badly Needed!

By Hedy Campbell

We need your help, but the help we need right now is in addition to your financial contribution. Currently, we have 11 board members, each of whom fulfills one or, in some cases, several roles within the group. Many have been doing so for a long time. We are starting to see the effects of burnout and are concerned that the leadership of the Block Association is in jeopardy.

No leadership, no Block Association.

We need volunteers to help with operational tasks, to generate new ideas, and to work on the excellent ideas that you've offered, but we haven't had the energy to do.

For example, we need a person to coordinate the Yard Sale, an intense but short-term activity that currently has many hands and feet but no head. Another volunteer is needed to organize social events such as Halloween and Holiday Caroling. These are events that everyone loves, but they don't happen without conscientious organizers. Having new people take on these functions will ease the burden on current board members, extending their service time. Meanwhile, the newer board members can gain the experience needed to run the Block Association.

Please consider applying your skills and energy toward the betterment of your community. Contact Hedy Campbell at info@w102-103blockassn.org or (212) 865-8524 to keep our community spirit thriving.

The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association *NEWSLETTER*

Happy Hordes Haunt Haven of Halloween Hobgoblins

By Hedy Campbell

What has hundreds of legs, moves slowly in a linear fashion amid an air of festivity, and is made of fake fur, plastic, cardboard, pipe cleaners, felt, and all manner of other colorful materials? It's the annual Block Association Halloween parade. Every year we're astounded to see that the parade seems even better attended than it was the year before!

For the second year in a row, we arranged to close off W. 102nd St. between Riverside Dr. and West End Ave. and enjoyed the conviviality that having the space to spread out affords. We were happy to discover that the townhouses along both sides of the block were even more lavishly decorated than they had been last year. Thanks to the owners for making the effort. After being ably led around the block by 300 Riverside Dr. residents Susan Lally and Jon Reiner (a gorgeous butterfly and a lepidopterist, respectively) and their children, the parading children received trick or treat bags and they and their families enjoyed refreshments and story time until the wind picked up and the raindrops began to fall.

Many volunteers helped to pull this event together. Our thanks go to all of them. In approximately chronological order, thank you many times to: board member Marlene Lee for seeing to the street closure with the timely assistance

of 24th Precinct Community Affairs officer Vincent Durante who supplied the barricades; to Stacey Lauren for coordinating donations and mustering the townhouse owners; to Seth Jucovy, building manager of 310 Riverside Dr. for offering a backup plan in case of bad weather; and to board members Ginger Lief and David Reich for distributing publicity posters.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of long-time resident Cherie Tredanari who donated 200 apples that went into the trick-or-treat bags packed by Rosalie Campbell, Clara Dutton-Kneaves, Catherine Foy, and Nita Jonas. Our thanks to the packers! We had help from board members David Reich and Cynthia Doty who strategically parked their cars (and removed them on Saturday evening) to reserve space for the refreshments table. The residents and staff of St. Luke's Halfway House supplied the tables and refreshments to go

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BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Regular Block Association meetings are held twelve times a year, usually on the second Tuesday of every month.

TIME: 8:00 p.m.
PLACE: 306 W. 102nd St.

The next three meetings are scheduled for Dec. 8, Jan. 12, and Feb. 9.

107 West: Old Favorite Gets New Look and Menu

By Anthony Bellov

Although 107 West has been a presence in our neighborhood for some 20 years or so, it's time to go and have another look. The dining room has been redecorated in a chic charcoal gray and outfitted with comfy aluminum chairs. A beautiful waterfall divides the sky-lit rear dining room from the bar area and the bright and airy sidewalk cafe up front. Overall, the look is tasteful and ultra-modern.

Regrettably, the brick walls and hard reflective surfaces make for magnified decibel levels. It was all too easy to share the information being exchanged at the table next to ours. The large-screen TV in the bar area up front motivated one party to ask for a table toward the back, where they found the acoustics more manageable. The addition of some soft surfaces—like the leather

banquettes and throw pillows found in the back room—to soak up a little of the extra “ambiance” would help up front.

I was pleased to find that the sophisticated décor is matched by the menu. Cajun and Creole favorites with some Tex-Mex options continue to make up the bulk of the menu. A selection of Japanese items, including sushi, is the new kid on the block.

From the “Table Sharing” section of the menu, we sampled delicious, tiny black bean Maryland crab cakes (\$8) that were elegantly presented with a swirl of herb mayonnaise in the center. It's difficult to properly cook bacon-wrapped sea scallops (\$9.50 for four) since the meat and the fish require different cooking times but whoever's in the kitchen at 107 West got it just right; the accompanying mango salsa was a perfect accent. Calamari fritti (\$8) with rémoulade was an excellent version of

the classic. A bowl of chilled gazpacho (\$5.50) from the Daily Special menu admirably sidestepped my gazpacho pet peeve (too much green pepper, which overpowers the broth). It was wonderfully refreshing with a powerful tomato flavor. Other diners report happy encounters with the New England clam chowder (\$5.50), the tomato corn chowder with crabmeat (\$5.50), and the kami salad with tobiko, also known as crabmeat with flying fish roe (\$5).

For our main courses, we tried two from the regular menu and two specials. First the regular menu category: Arugula, endive, and radicchio salad with goat cheese, orange sections, honey walnuts, and basil balsamic vinaigrette (\$7) was large enough to serve as a main course following a shared appetizer. The jambalaya (\$16.50) was the best I have ever tasted, and I've had this dish at top New Orleans restaurants. I had to take half of it home and it made a fantastic cold lunch the following day.

One of the specials we tried was mushroom ravioli (\$15), which was
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Bloomington Aging in Place Concludes Busy Year

By David L. Reich

With a well-attended panel discussion and two membership meetings in October and November plus an evening of entertainment early in December, the new organization supporting seniors in the neighborhood, Bloomington Aging in Place, is finishing the year in a rush of activity.

It was eighteen months ago, at a public meeting, that the idea of volunteers helping elderly residents remain in their neighborhood homes took shape. Six months later a survey was distributed to members of the West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association and the W. 104th St. Block Association to assess the resources that might be available and the needs they might satisfy. On a parallel track, the public membership meetings continued, expanding into panel discussions of emergency pre-

paredness and the need for, and sources of, caregiving assistance for the elderly. At the most recent panel, an audience of more than 50 heard and asked about Social Security and managing retirement income. Experts were recruited to speak at each panel and lively question-and-answer sessions ensued.

Those meetings brought out an underlying issue as attendees spoke up about their need to deal with the loss of connections and increase in loneliness that often accompany aging. The gatherings have become part of the solution as neighbors meet each other in the comfortable surroundings of the Marseilles Community Room thanks to the generosity of Laura Jervis, executive director of the West Side Federation of Senior and Supportive Housing, owner of the building.

A natural outgrowth of these meetings
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The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association Newsletter

Published four times a year.
Hedy Campbell and David L. Reich, co-editors. Comments and questions related to the Association or Newsletter are welcomed. Send US Mail to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1940, New York, NY 10025 or email to info@w102-103blockassn.org. Phone messages may be left at (212) 866-5769. Faxes may be sent to (212) 866-5916. Recent issues of the Newsletter may be viewed at <http://www.bloomingtondale.org/newsletter102-103.htm>

BA Applies for Block Improvement Grant

In late October, the Block Association learned that Mayor Bloomberg and the Citizen's Committee for New York City had launched a block transformation grants program called Love Your (NYC) Block. The Citizen's Committee was formed more than 30 years ago in 1975 by Jacob Javits and Osborn Elliott while Javits was still a US Senator from New York and the city was in the midst of an exceptional financial crisis. Now, organizations such as ours are eligible to receive up to \$500 in funds to spend on a block improvement project. Grant recipients would also receive expedited support from city agencies such as the Department of Sanitation, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Parks.

The Block Association board decided to apply for a grant to support our spring tree-well planting event. The funds offered would be sufficient to cover plants and materials for the number of treewells on our blocks that usually need community assistance plus two that we have "adopted" in front of the Semiperm building on W. 102nd St., east of Broadway. Our event fits

all the selection criteria: the group must be volunteer-led, at least 20 community members must participate, the activity must cover multiple blocks, and it must include a one- or two-day block beautification event between April 1 and June 30. The application also required a budget for the project, a brief summary of the organization and the project, and selection of desired city services.

Block Association co-chair Hedy Campbell prepared the application with the help of board member John Hewitt, who has organized the tree-well planting for the past couple of years. They included several pages of before-and-after photos showing evidence of the success of last year's planting initiative. The application was submitted well in advance of the November 30 deadline.

If our group is chosen to receive a grant, one or two team leaders will be selected to attend a grant orientation workshop at which they will meet with representatives of the mayor's office, the Citizens Committee, and the various city agencies involved in the program. Stay tuned for more news and for the date of the 2010 spring planting event.

Neighbors Help at Semiperm with Childcare and Tutoring; Another Writing Tutor Needed

Your Block Association continues its fruitful relationship with the residents of Semiperm, the apartment building at 210 W. 102nd St. that is supported by the Settlement Housing Fund. Our last call was for people to help with childcare during parent workshops at the building. Three residents responded and a fourth volunteer has arranged to teach a music class there for children.

Four neighbors are currently engaged in tutoring both children and adults in English and math. The children are in elementary school or are just entering middle school. The adults are either preparing to take the GED exam or

are in college or other programs where some extra one-on-one assistance will allow them to progress at a faster pace.

Just recently, a request was received for a writing tutor to work with a parent who is in college and needs help with essay assignments. If you have the right skills and the time, please contact Tricia Blanchard at (212) 222-3673, ext. 12 or send an email to her at tblanchard@shfinc.org.

Block Association Celebrates Winter Solstice on Dec. 21

According to Wikipedia, "The winter solstice occurs at the instant when the Sun's position in the sky is at its greatest angular distance on the other side of the equatorial plane from the observer's hemisphere."

According to the Block Association, the winter solstice is a festive occasion on which dozens of neighborhood residents brave the cold and stroll the streets of Block Association territory serenading residents and passersby. Everyone gets a song book from which we sing traditional seasonal favorites, mostly *a capella*. Anthony Bellov, choirmaster par excellence, will again lead our group, which will convene at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 21 in the lobby of 865 West End Ave. Thanks to Seth Jucovy, building manager of the Master Apartments, we'll be able to warm up with cider and snacks in the lobby at 310 Riverside Dr. once the last song's been sung.

If you have never participated in our three-part "Twelve Days of Christmas" round, you're missing out on some wonderful camaraderie. Children and canines of all ages are welcome, as are tambourines, sleigh bells, and flash-lights. Come on out for some traditional fun with your neighbors. For more information, contact Hedy Campbell by email at info@w102-103blockassn.org or call her at (212) 865-8524.



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Precinct Council Connects Community with Local Police Leadership

When President Tom Burnett opens a monthly meeting of the 24th Precinct's Community Council, as he did at 7 p.m. on Nov. 18, he doesn't know what complaints or kudos will be animating the crowd in the precinct meeting room. He does know that he will usually have Deputy Inspector Kathleen O'Reilly, commander of the 2-4, at the table ready to listen carefully and to respond to residents' concerns.

Burnett introduced other officers of the Council and scanned the room for representatives of political officials who are given a few minutes to address the group. Joyce Goodman, from

Assemblymember O'Donnell's office, described some of their activities.

O'Reilly then took the floor with a brief but wide-ranging presentation in which she mentioned her new boss, Assistant Chief Philip Banks ("community-oriented"), deplored the shooting of 15-year old Vada Vasquez in the Bronx ("her mother doesn't care that homicides are way down" and "we need to get the guns off the street"), described a rash of thefts at Starbucks, introduced her new executive officer, Justin Lenz, and provided her cell phone number (646-739-0693) and her email address (kathleen.oreilly@nypd.org).

Hands shot up as she asked for questions. Some were progress or lack-of-progress reports with ongoing problems at 300 W. 106th St. Others were new: suspected drug users in a community garden and young adults hanging out at a building frightening older residents. A West End Ave. resident complained of aggressive ticketing of cars loading and unloading passengers. O'Reilly explained that these weren't her officers, describing her attempts to mediate with the Traffic Dept. Minutes later Burnett closed the meeting, but it wasn't really over as O'Reilly and her officers went on talking with concerned neighbors.

Police Reports: Some Victimized, But Overall Crime Down in 24th Precinct

By Molly Sugarman

Editor's note: The crimes reported below occurred in the area from W. 96th St. to W. 110th St., and Riverside Dr. to Broadway. The information was taken from CompStat reports, available online through nyc.gov/nypd, and from more detailed crime reports provided by the 24th Precinct for the month of September. Detailed reports were not made available for October and November.

Several crimes took place in the neighborhood around our Block Association (see editor's note, above) during September. The specific locations were excluded from the reports to which we had access.

On Sept. 10, just before 6 p.m., an 88-year-old woman was grabbed from behind by an unknown man as she entered her home. She was tied up while her assailant stole her credit card, jewelry, and cellphone.

The same day, at 6:50 p.m. transit authorities received a report of a man pointing a black semi-automatic handgun at a 30-year-old man from whom he took a cellphone.

Arrests were made in three assault

Child Abuse can now be reported to the New York County District Attorney's Office after business hours. From 5 p.m. to 9 a.m., call the Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau Hotline number, (212) 608-6174. (Child abuse is homicide or physical/sexual abuse of children under the age of 14.) During working hours, call the D.A.'s office, (212) 335-4300. Business cards and refrigerator magnets with the numbers are available at the 24th Precinct at 151 W. 100th St.

cases:

- a 66-year old man who hit a woman in the mouth with a hand-held radio on Sept. 23;
- a 61-year old woman who burned the face of another woman with a cigarette on Sept. 17;
- a 53-year-old shoplifter who punched the clerk who confronted him on Sept. 28.

Also in September, grand larcenies were reported by:

- a 73-year-old woman whose bank account had been raided of almost \$3,000;
- a 66-year old man who reported

unauthorized charges on his debit card for almost \$7,000;

- an 86-year old man who lost his debit card, only to have \$3,000 charged to it during a 3-month period;
- a 25-year-old man who paid a bill by mailing a check; the check was cashed by someone other than the payee;
- a 63-year-old man who had sent explicit photos of himself to a younger man and was blackmailed with the threat of exposure to his employer;
- a 62-year-old woman whose car was stolen on Riverside Dr. at W. 104th St.

On Sept. 19, a laptop computer was reported stolen after someone apparently pushed in the air conditioner in the front window and entered the apartment. In another incident, a woman reported \$1,100 having been removed from a desk drawer during a fire drill.

As of Nov. 8, major crime was down year-to-date compared to 2008 in the 24th Precinct by 14.5 percent. Felony assault and burglary had increased but rape, robbery, grand larceny, and auto theft had declined. Overall, incidents of major crimes were down compared to two and eight years ago by 18 and 36 percent, respectively.

Street Guard Keeps a Watchful Eye on Our Blocks

By Marlene Lee

It was a chilly night (dark and stormy, too) in November when I accompanied our Starr Security Services guard on his rounds of the neighborhood. In the two years Rafael Hernandez has performed his duties, he's achieved a record for reliability.

He likes the job. "The work is nice and calm," he says. "And I like the people. It's a good area." One of his favorite streets is West End Ave. where people walk their dogs and jog. He's never been bitten by a dog (or a jogger). He enjoys speaking to those who, seeing the Starr ID badge on his summer shirt or winter jacket, say hello. He knows the building doormen and exchanges information about anything unusual. "One of the doormen brings his walkie-talkie and we communicate while I'm walking around," Rafael tells me. "He keeps an eye on West End Ave. when I'm over on Riverside Dr. or one of the number streets."

Every 40 to 50 minutes he makes a complete round of our perimeter and the streets between, stopping at 12 different buildings to "swipe" his Deister Electronics wand over an attached bar code label. The procedure electronically stores the time of his check-in, which is downloaded by the Starr office and eventually received by board member Camille Colon, who monitors Starr's performance and charges.

I waited for Rafael to swipe the wand before asking, "How do you handle the cold nights in winter?"

"Oh, I just bundle up. No problem. In summer, I carry water. I have bathroom breaks at two of the buildings."

"Have you had any brushes with crime?"

"No. Several car break-ins happened before I got there. I've reported car accidents to the police, and homeless people who won't leave when I tell

them to," he replied.

About five times during his tenure he's found a homeless person sitting on a brownstone stoop. If necessary, he calls the police, waits for the car to arrive, then records the officer's name, badge number, and precinct (our 24th). If he sees graffiti on mailboxes, he reports it to board member David Reich who, with John Hewitt, paints over it. Starr Security Services has instructed Rafael to speak to bottle collectors only if they are leaving a mess on the street.

He walks a regular route. At 5 p.m. most evenings (6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday) he begins at 240 W. 102nd St., crosses the street, swipes the wand over the bar code (in some buildings located in the lobby, in others outside at the front entrance), continues on to West End Ave., turns north, then east on W. 103rd St. to Broadway. There, he crosses the street, walks west to Riverside Dr., and comes back up on the other side of W. 103rd St. to West End Ave. His route goes south to W. 102nd St. and west to Riverside Dr. where he checks out the dark and rather isolated block opposite the park. Finally, he is back on W. 102nd St. going east to Broadway for a complete round. At all times he scans the surroundings for trouble or unusual movement. His tour ends at midnight during the week or at 1 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Rafael will escort members of the Block Association who find themselves walking late from the subway or bus stop during his tour. His cell phone number is (646) 772-2240.

Every Thursday he reports to the Starr office on W. 51st St. where he picks up his paycheck and communicates on-the-job information. During his rounds he can be instantly in touch with the office via his Starr cell phone/walkie-talkie. By choice, Rafael works seven days a week, without vacation. He has a fiancée with three children. His sister

lives locally.

"By the way," I said. "Do your shoes wear out on this job?"

"Yes," he said. "I have to buy new ones pretty often." He says that, provided he's had enough sleep the night before, the job does not tire him.

We'd reached the end of his first round. While I headed home to spend a comfy evening in my armchair, Rafael was continuing his circumnavigations. The Block Association and its board warmly appreciate Rafael Hernandez for his dependable job performance and pleasant interactions with our members.

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See page 2 for contact information.

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Photos from the 2009 Halloween Parade



Upper left, Sax Freymann's carved pumpkin, and lower right, unidentified ghost. (Photos by Ozzie Alfonso.) Upper right, Jill Chase, David Reich and Hedy Campbell at the refreshments table in front of St. Luke's House below the Block Association banner. (Photo by Stacey Lauren.) Lower center, unidentified "hot dog," complete with mustard down its back. (Photo by Hedy Campbell.)

Happy Hordes Haunt Haven of Halloween Hobgoblins

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on them and helped put up the Block Association banner that identified our organization. We thank them for their ongoing cooperation and contributions to the neighborhood.

Everyone was amazed by the fantastic carved pumpkin on the refreshments table that was created by neighbor Sax Freymann, an artistic genius and generous neighbor. Many thanks to Jill Chase (wearing her unique design of face paint) and Judy Pietrasiewicz (one of the cooperating W. 104th St. Block Association members who helped out this year) for staffing those tables. We are grateful to Terence Hanrahan, our co-chair, and W. 104th St. Block As-

sociation board member Miriam Duhan who supplied recorded Halloween music and accompanied the parade carrying booming boomboxes.

As the crowd came around the corner and into W. 102nd St., the kids were greeted by Cynthia Doty, Ginger Lief, Judy Pietrasiewicz and David Reich handing out the trick-or-treat bags. They received their "thank you" directly from the recipients (sometimes with just a bit of prompting from Mom or Dad). At the end of the parade, Janet Harvilchuck, in pirate garb, perched on a stool in the middle of the street reading stories that enthralled her young audience. Thanks, Janet, for carrying on this tradition. Throughout the event

Maura Gouck and Ozzie Alfonso took photographs of the throng that are greatly appreciated.

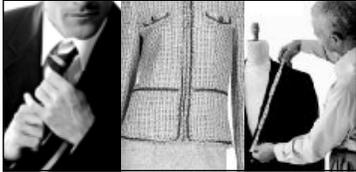
In addition, many people donated candy for the trick-or-treat bags and baked goods for the refreshments table. Thanks to those folks: Robin Baron, Nancy Becker Cope, Patti Davis, Elissa Fishman, Marc Hansen, Margot Hotchkiss, Maria Kastanis, Penelope Kim, Deborah Lott, Ellen McGirt, Libby Newman, David Reich, Janis Ruden, Mike Titowsky, and Claudia Vignoles.

Finally, many generous neighbors put a dollar or two or twenty in the collection pumpkin to help the Block Association. We thank them all for their anonymous contributions.

We consider things that are not even visible

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Updates>>>News Updates>>>News Updates>>>News

W. 96th St. Station Progress

Much of the renovation and construction work at the W. 96th St. subway station is now visible to passersby on the street and travelers who use the station. Overhead, the building in the Broadway Mall has taken shape and is now being enclosed. Underfoot, ceramic tiles are being laid on the platforms. Unfortunately, they are a mottled gray that appears grimy even when they have been cleaned. What were the designers thinking?

A major benefit motivating this project was the improvement of access to the platforms from the street. In addition to the new elevator, which will allow access for handicapped riders, one can now see some of the new stairs that will permit riders to take a shorter, more direct route in and out rather than first going down below the track level and then walking back up as one does now.

Assuming the work remains on schedule, there is still about a year to go before the project is completed in the last quarter of 2010.

Shelters Seek Holiday Gifts

For the ninth year in a row, the Block Association will join the Dept. of Justice's New York office in their holiday toy and gift party for the victims of domestic violence who live at the Henry Street Settlement shelter. Over the years, hundreds of toys, books, and small gifts, both new and gently used, have been donated, collected, wrapped, and delivered. A wrapping party is held at DOJ with delivery of the gifts by Santa and Mrs. Claus at the shelter.

Gifts are also collected for men at the Doe Fund's Ready, Willing and Able shelter. They are the folks you see in

blue coveralls keeping Broadway clean. To donate to the Henry Street Settlement or the Doe Fund shelter, please leave your gift at the desk at 305 Riverside Dr. for Camille or call (646) 345-5209.

Another Street Tree Removed

One of the three ailing trees near 878 West End Ave. on the southeast corner at W. 103rd St. has been removed by the NYC Department of Parks. The other two were found to be strong enough to recover though they didn't look very good to this observer at the end of the summer. Residents of the building have inquired about when they might expect to see a replacement for the tree that was removed. According to the Manhattan Forestry division of the Parks Dept., it might take as long as two years for a new tree to be planted because there is a long waiting list.

James Perez

Senior Vice President/Associate Broker

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Alternate Side Parking Exceptions for 2010

Editor's note: the map of our area showing where the various Alternate Side Parking rules apply, is now available, with the exception list, on our website w102-103blockassn.org.

Jan. 1, Fri: New Year's Day

Jan. 18, Mon: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

Feb. 12, Fri: Lincoln's Birthday

Feb. 14, Sun: Asian Lunar New Year

Feb. 15, Mon: Washington's Birthday/ Presidents' Day

Feb. 17, Wed: Ash Wednesday

Feb. 26, Fri: Purim

Mar. 30-31, Tue-Wed: Passover, 1st, 2nd days

Apr. 1, Thu: Holy Thursday

Apr. 1, Thu: Holy Thursday (Orthodox)

Apr. 2, Fri: Good Friday

Apr. 2, Fri: Good Friday (Orthodox)

Apr. 5-6, Mon-Tue: Passover, 7th, 8th days

May 13, Thu: Solemnity of the Ascension

May 19-20, Wed-Thu: Shavuot (2 days)

May 31, Mon: Memorial Day

July 4, Sun: Independence Day

July 5, Mon: Independence Day (Obsrv.)

Aug. 15, Sun: Feast of the Assumption

Sep. 6, Mon: Labor Day

Sep. 9-10, Thu-Fri: Rosh Hashanah

Sep. 10-12, Fri-Sun: Idul-Fitr

Sep. 18, Sat: Yom Kippur

Sep. 23-24, Thu-Fri: Succoth (2 days)

Sep. 30, Thu: Shemini Atzereth

Oct. 1, Fri: Simchas Torah

Oct. 11, Mon: Columbus Day

Nov. 1, Mon: All Saints' Day

Nov. 2, Tue: Election Day

Nov. 5, Fri: Diwali

Nov. 11, Thu: Veterans' Day

Nov. 16-18, Tue-Thu: Idul-Adha

Nov. 25, Thu: Thanksgiving Day

Dec. 8, Wed: Immaculate Conception

Dec. 24, Fri: Christmas Day (Obsrv.)

Dec. 25, Sat: Christmas Day

Dec. 31, Fri: New Year's Day (Obsrv.)

Dig We Must: Con Ed Activity on W. 103rd St.

You know, of course, that water and gas are delivered to your building in pipes. Did you know that your electric supply requires pipes as well?

In early November, a Con Ed supervisor and a crew of contractors opened a trench in the street running along the south side of W. 103rd St. from West End Ave. to about halfway down the block. They removed the old conduit, along with the old electrical cables inside the pipes, and replaced them with four rows of new four-inch steel pipe.

New cables were run through the pipes a short time later. There were no electricity outages during this work because multiple feeders serve the area.

According to the supervisor, the work was being done as part of the regular upgrade to the distribution system, which would incidentally increase the capacity somewhat. He knew of no problems on the street that would have prompted the work. The pipes being removed, he estimated, might have been 50 to 60 years old.

107 West: Old Favorite Gets New Look and Menu

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served with shrimp, asparagus, and plum tomatoes in a cilantro pesto sauce—finally, a plate of ravioli plentiful enough to fill up an adult with enough extra to share! Another was blackened New England cod (\$17), served with roasted garlic chili sauce and seasonal vegetables and choice of a side to boot, another total winner. Rigatoni with boneless chicken, arugula, giant capers, and brown sauce (\$11.50) pleased our neighbors when they visited, as did fettuccini with grilled chili-crusting shrimp (four of them), sun-dried tomatoes, mushrooms and broccoli rabe (\$13.50).

107 West also prides itself on a broad menu of microbrewery beers and specialty cocktails—and supplies a bottle of tap water to each table. It was a dreadful, steamy night and we decided to brave a “corpse reviver,” consisting of Plymouth gin, Lillet, Cointreau, lemon juice and a dash of Pernod. Not a one of us was a real gin fancier, so we were a tad apprehensive. It was delicious and as reviving as promised. The “ruby-red cosmopolitan” arrived at the table looking quite a bit paler than we’re used to but totally satisfying.

Our group was too full for dessert, but I’ve heard from another customer that the otherwise varied selection lacks any items that would appeal to a serious chocoholic. She was mollified, how-

ever, by a top-quality decaf espresso.

Leaving with leftovers and full bellies, we all felt that 107 West warranted a “Best of the West” medal and a definite return visit. Among the four of us, we give it eight thumbs up!

107 West is located at 2787 Broadway, on the west side of Broadway between W. 107th and W. 108th Sts. It is open for lunch (noon - 4 p.m.) and dinner (5 p.m. - 11 p.m.) every day and for brunch (11 a.m. - 4 p.m.) on weekends. Credit cards are accepted. For more information, phone (212) 864-1555 or visit the website: 107west.com.

MBP Stringer Invites Community Board Applications

If you are interested in changing your community and advising your elected officials, you can apply to become a member of CB7. Three Community Board information sessions are available: ►Thurs., Dec. 10th, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Municipal Bldg., 1 Centre St., 19th Fl. ►Thurs., Dec. 17th, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Adam Clayton Powell State Office Bldg., 163 W. 125th St., Rm. 8A and ►Mon., Jan. 11th, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Community Board 12, 711 West 168th St. Please RSVP to (212) 669-4374 or RSVP@manhattanbp.org and specify which session you plan to attend. For more information visit mbpo.org and click “COMMUNITY BOARDS.”

On Broadway

Openings and Closings: ♦♦The **Andrade Shoe Repair** shop, currently on the west side of Broadway between W. 97th and W. 98th Sts., will move uptown by the end of the year to the storefront formerly occupied by an accountant, Irving Pearlberg. The newly renovated space is between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts., also on the west side of Broadway. ♦♦The huge retail space on the ground floor of **Ariel West** on the west side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts. has been empty since the luxury apartments became available two years ago. Recently, to the horror, we suppose, of the upscale tenants, the space was occupied by a Halloween costume purveyor who fitted out the bare concrete space with pipe racks and wire shelving for the month of October. Scary! ♦♦As if one huge Halloween store wasn't enough, the former **Planet Kids** space on the east side of Broadway between W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts. also housed a costume purveyor for the month of October. It, too, is again empty.

In Limbo: ♦♦We previously reported that **Urban Outfitters** was planning a retail store in the 15,000 square feet of the former **Metro Theater**. When nothing happened, we were assured by the leasing agent at the time that the delays were due to difficulties with the NYC Department of Buildings. Now, a new leasing company, **Besen Retail**, is trying to market the space. Marketing associate Caitlin Heikkila reports that the Urban Outfitters deal fell through as did a much earlier interest in using the space for a theater education group. No new deal is in the works but some interest is being shown by both large companies and smaller ones that would subdivide the property, according to Heikkila. ♦♦The net amount of vacant retail space on Broadway in our area has remained about the same since our last report three months ago. In that earlier report, several new shops and restaurants had opened between W. 96th St. and W. 110th St. Those openings have not marked the beginning of a trend, at least not yet.

Going Down, Going Up: ♦♦The largest commercial building activity in our neighborhood is now on Amsterdam and Columbus Aves. between W. 97th and W. 100th Sts. The buildings, constructed for mixed residential and commercial use, are now being called **Columbus Square** (previously Columbus Village). They contain a total of about 300,000 square feet of retail space, a fifth of which is occupied by **Whole Foods**. Other large retailers now open include **T.J.Maxx**, the women's clothing chain, and **Michaels**, a nationwide arts and crafts chain. Other stores planned for Columbus Square but now on hold are **Modell's**, the sporting goods store and **Crumbs Bake Shop**, a cake and cupcake chain. **Borders**, the bookstore chain, was due to open on Oct. 14 but has not. The **Associated Supermarket** planned for Amsterdam Ave. also has no opening date. Both **Chase** and **Bank of America** are advertising new branches in Columbus Square but no information is available on when they might open their doors.

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Bloomingdale Aging in Place Concludes Busy Year

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has been the formation of interest groups such as book, writing, and bridge groups. Residents can join these groups by email to *book* or *writing* or *bridge@bloominplace.org*, respectively, or by calling (212) 866-5769.

The one-to-one neighborly assistance that was the basis for forming Bloomingdale Aging in Place is proceeding at a slower pace than expected as we seek to deal with issues of privacy, boundaries, and other concerns. To date, our volunteers have helped with computer problems, visited an elderly shut-in, and assisted the geographically-distant child of a dying neighbor.

Bloomingdale Aging in Place is now a New York State not-for-profit corporation through the *pro bono* services of Proskauer Rose, as generously arranged by neighbor Bob Batterman. Federal 501(c)3 status is yet to come. Our Steering Committee, soon to become our Board of Directors, is hard at work on next year's program. Your comments and suggestions are welcome at *info@bloominplace.org*.