



The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association NEWSLETTER

Annual Halloween Parade Scheduled; Join the Fun Now!

By Marc Reiner

New York's recent earthquake and hurricane might have been scary, but they don't compare to the Block Association's spooky annual Halloween festivities when, on All Hallows Eve, Monday, Oct. 31 at 6 p.m., we invite costumed kids and their sociable parents and neighbors to join a parade and block party. W. 102nd St. will be closed between Riverside Dr. and West End Ave. so that revelers can munch and mingle after the parade. The Witching Hour strikes at 8 p.m. as the street is reopened to traffic. This year we would like to add some games and activities for our Tiny Treatseekers, if some of the larger folk would volunteer to help out.

The evening's events begin just before 6 p.m., as the throng of children (in recent years, over 200) and costumed adults gather along W. 102nd St. at West End Ave. Shortly thereafter, the Spooky Stroll begins, heading north along West End Ave., left down W. 103rd St., left again on Riverside Dr., and then one more left onto the closed-off W. 102nd St. where the homeowners generally decorate their stoops with pumpkins, ghosts, spider webs, dancing monsters, and bowls of candy. There will also be a pirate lady waiting to read Halloween-themed stories for the younger set.

The kids in the parade are rewarded

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Block Association in Crisis: Volunteers and Funds Needed

By Hedy Campbell

Over the summer, the Block Association was notified about a grant program offering as much as a thousand dollars toward a project aimed at greening the neighborhood.

Sounds great, doesn't it? We've been very successful with grant applications lately, we know that our residents support ecology events, and we can certainly use the money. We did not, however, apply for this grant. The grim reality was that our already overcommitted board members couldn't think

of a project that would meet the grant's guidelines and could be executed within the required time frame. Even if we could, we didn't have the manpower to coordinate and execute it.

It's a sad story isn't it? Our finances are dwindling to the point that we've begun discussing curtailing the guard's hours (more than 90 percent of our budget goes toward paying for the guard), an organization is offering free money, yet we don't have the fresh eyes to come up with a good idea nor the volunteers to make it happen.

With a current board of a dozen members, you might wonder how it is that we're short of dedicated time and energy. The fact is that many of us

have taken on double and even triple roles. And several of us have been doing so for too many years. I've passed the quarter-century mark, and I'm not even the longest-serving member of the board! Consider that:

- Two board members serve as

co-chairs. I oversee administrative tasks, follow-up and keeping up with correspondence from residents. Terence Hanrahan focuses on increasing the organization's visibility in the neighborhood and beyond its boundaries.

- I'm also serving as

co-editor of the newsletter, have a long history of organizing social events, and managing the Yard Sale refreshments table and, lately, writing grant applications. This volunteer needs some helping hands.

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What's at Stake

- 7 hour, 7-day evening and night guard service
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Annual spring Yard Sale
- Halloween parade around our blocks for over 200 children
- Holiday caroling through our streets attended by over 60 neighbors
- Spring treewell planting

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 Sept. 13, Oct. 11, and Nov. 8.

Mexican Street Food, Just Up the Street

By Hedy Campbell

Once in a while, here in New York, I'm lucky enough to eat both lunch and dinner out on the same day. Rarely, I get to eat those two meals at the same restaurant. I clearly remember the last time: it was the spring of 1995 and the restaurant was the very high-end Gotham Bar and Grill. Now it was the summer of 2011, and this time the eatery of choice was the much more casual, wallet-friendly **Cascabel Taqueria**, the Mexican hot spot that's opened on the corner of Broadway and W. 108th St. in the space formerly occupied by the Thai Lime Leaf.

I mean "hot spot" quite literally. My first attempt to dine there wilted. It was during those terrible dog days at the end of July. Anticipating a cold margarita and some hot salsa, my party of three arrived to find wide open windows and an absence of air conditioning. We were game to sit outside and catch whatever breeze we could but were disappointed to learn that they did not yet have a café license, so outdoor service was out.

Once the weather broke, Cascabel's mascot, an image of a caped and masked *luchador* (costumed professional wrestler) beckoned once again. (He can also be found at the taqueria's East Side location on 2nd Ave. at E. 80th St.) At lunchtime, seated within one of the Broadway-facing open windows with a fan doing a good job of providing a steady breeze, a friend and I did our best to sample the menu. We kicked off with guacamole (\$8.50), ordered medium (not mild or hot). Creamy and zesty, it was served, unusually, with several small, whole corn tortillas to be used for dipping. The quesadilla (\$3) looked more like a tiny empanada, with the flaky, fried outer crust entirely containing the *queso fresco* filling. It was served with tomatillo sauce, which, along with two hot sauces, are offered on each table. None of them is likely to cause steam to erupt from your ears.

When in a *taqueria*, one must order tacos, no? We tried two of the nine kinds available. They're all served on soft corn tortillas, two to an order (no mixing!) and priced at \$8.50 (at lunch-

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BAiP Starts New Activity Groups in Summer; Prepares Survey and Panel Discussions

By David L. Reich

This year the summer has been a surprisingly lively period for Bloomingdale Aging in Place, with two new social activities groups formed, two well-attended salons with fascinating speakers, a new program of discount tickets to theater and cultural events, the installation of equipment in the Mar-seilles Community Room to enhance the listening experience for those who have difficulty hearing, and work underway for a new survey and a schedule of panel discussions through next spring.

One of the new social groups began meeting in July to play ping pong at the

Wang Chen Table Tennis Club on W. 100th St. Willeen Smith is leading the group and twelve people have signed up. About half of them showed up for the first session when BAiP, with the help of a generous contribution from Willeen, footed the bill for table rental and also paid for an hour of lessons with proprietor Wang Chen, a member of the United States Olympic team in 2008. A second session in August filled three tables. All the players enjoyed the sessions and their excellent workout.

The other new activity is a watercolor group started by Phyllis Sperling. It met for the first time in early July with

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The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association

Newsletter

Published four times each year. **Hedy Campbell** and **David L. Reich**, co-editors. Comments and questions related to the Association or Newsletter are welcomed. Letters should be addressed to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1940, New York, NY 10025. Send email to info@w102-103blockassn.org. Phone messages may be left at (212) 866-5769. Recent issues of the Newsletter are available online at bloomingdale.org/newsletter102-103.htm

Email List

The Block Association maintains an email list to notify residents about important matters that arise between issues of the Newsletter. You can join the list by sending your email address, full name, home address (with apartment number) and phone number to email@w102-103blockassn.org.

Street Guard

Your contributions to the Block Association provide funding for our street guard, Rafael Hernandez, who makes rounds from 5 p.m. to midnight, Sunday – Thursday and from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., Friday and Saturday. He can be reached, while on duty, at (646) 772-2240 to report security issues or to request his assistance on the street.

Neighborhood Artists To Be Seen, Heard or Published this Fall

By David L. Reich

Editor's note: we asked our Block Association residents if any of them were performing, publishing, or exhibiting their creative work in nearby locations this fall. Here is what we discovered: a musician, a singer, a photojournalist, and two writers. Now you can discover them as well.

Martha Cooper

Photographer Martha Cooper has three very different books coming out this fall and winter.

Remembering 9/11 published by Mark Batty Publisher captures the spontaneous street memorials that arose in New York City after 9/11.

Tokyo Tattoo 1970, to be published in October by Dokument in Sweden, is about the artistry of traditional Japanese tattoo master Horibun I. He allowed Cooper to photograph him and his customers as he worked in 1970.

Kodakgirl, to be published in December by Steidl in Germany, and edited by photo curator John P. Jacob who, until recently, lived in the Masters, is a book about Cooper's extensive collection of images of women with cameras.

Anthony DeCurtis

In September, the paperback edition of *Blues & Chaos: The Music Writing of Robert Palmer*, an anthology edited by Anthony DeCurtis, will be published by Scribner. Scribner published it in hardcover in 2009, and it was widely and very favorably reviewed. Palmer, who died at 52 in 1997, was the chief pop music critic at the *New York Times*, and he also wrote for *Rolling Stone*, where he and DeCurtis were colleagues. Palmer's book *Deep Blues* (1982), is still regarded as the definitive study of the Delta Blues. DeCurtis is a contributing editor at *Rolling Stone*, and he teaches writing at the University of Pennsylvania.

Patience Higgins

Known primarily for his tenor sax work, Patience Higgins is a busy man. His Sugar Hill Quartet will perform at the **Lenox Lounge** at 288 Lenox Ave., just south of W. 125th St. in Harlem, on Sept. 1, 5, and 12 and Oct. 3, 8, and 10. The sets start at 9:00 or 9:30 p.m. and run to the wee hours of the morning (2:00 or 2:30 a.m.). He will play with the Duke Ellington Orchestra on Sept. 17 at the **Waldorf-Astoria** and tour with the group from Oct. 13 to 30 in Europe. Higgins will also appear at the Kitano Hotel on Park Ave. on Sept. 29. For all the other days in September, he will be the reed section in the band for the hit show **Avenue Q**.

You can even hear Higgins right in our neighborhood. On Friday, Sept. 30 he will be part of a free live jazz show at Whole Foods on Columbus Ave. at W. 97th St. from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Adam Klein

Tenor Adam Klein will be appearing in a concert sponsored by the Hellenic Music Foundation in Petros Petridis Hall, 30-03 30th Drive, in Astoria, Queens on Sunday, Oct. 23 at 7 p.m. The concert will include a selection of oratorios and opera excerpts. Klein, who sang two solo parts as a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Children's Chorus at age 12, went on to sing with the Edmonton Opera in the 1990's.

In 1995, he made his debut with the New York City Opera as Don José in *Carmen*. In 2001, he returned to the Metropolitan Opera making his house debut as Count Elmer in *Arabella*. He lives with his wife, Tami Swartz, at 310 Riverside Dr.

Jon Reiner

An engaging memoir, *The Man Who Couldn't Eat* (Simon and Schuster, published Sept. 6), was written by Block Association member Jon Reiner, based on his Esquire story that won the 2010 James Beard Award. The book depicts Reiner's relationship to food complicated by illness, with much of the story set in the 300 Riverside Dr. apartment he shares with his wife and two children. He will have an author's reading on Thursday, Sept. 15, at 6:00 p.m., at the Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side. The book recently received a Starred Review from Kirkus in which it was described as "an incredible and inspiring book."

Semiperm Seeks Childcare Volunteers

Semiperm, the innovative housing program located on W. 102nd St., east of Broadway, is seeking two childcare coordinators. The coordinators will be responsible for overseeing group childcare for children ages 1-12 as well as supervising other volunteer childcare providers. Sessions typically last one to two hours and occur approximately five to eight times a month on evenings and weekends. For more information or to become a volunteer, please contact Tricia Blanchard at (212) 222-3673, ext. 12 or tblanchard@shfinc.org.

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Block Association in Crisis: Volunteers and Funds Needed

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- One board member, Camille Colon, monitors the guard's performance and interacts with Starr Security.

- One board member, Cynthia Doty, maintains liaisons with local politicians and organizations.

- One board member, Ginger Lief, serves as archivist, attends monthly West Side Federation of Neighborhood and Block Associations meetings, and keeps in touch with local groups who are involved in historic preservation.

- Two serve as co-treasurers: Marlene Lee handles weekly deposits of contributions and writes our checks; until recently, Molly Sugarman managed the computer-based data entry and book-keeping tasks. (She now works with Terence Hanrahan on outreach activities to engage new members.) Currently, David Reich is temporarily performing those functions. He is co-editor of the newsletter, our webmaster, and handles our email communication with members. He regularly attends monthly Community Council meetings at the 24th precinct and is the president of Bloomingdale Aging in Place as well.

- Marlene Lee also usually takes and prepares the minutes at board meetings with Alan Cary ably serving as backup.

- Bob Aaronson coordinates the annual Yard Sale, a task that requires a good six months of attention.

- John Hewitt runs the annual spring treewell planting and related arboreal tasks and periodically repaints mailbox-
es with USPS paint to remove graffiti.

- Dorothy O'Hanlon offers valuable input and provides an extra pair of hands at many events.

As you might gather, we're all pretty well filled up managing our current commitments and have little time or energy to take on new responsibilities. At the same time, because the financial climate has resulted in decreases in our revenue, the need for outreach

to increase our visibility and residents' awareness of the organization has never been more critical.

We need your help. Can you contribute some new ideas that would help raise residents' awareness and our fund-raising? Do you have an area of interest that dovetails with a function or service we already provide? Are you available for a one-shot project (developing our network of building reps, coordinating an effort to get building owners to contribute toward pruning and feeding our street trees and maintaining the treewell guards, or updating an already-created map of our neighborhood's street trees) or do you prefer an ongoing role? Among the specific jobs for which we currently need volunteers are:

- Webmaster: we have a rudimentary website set up. It needs major improvements in appearance and function.

- Newsletter Ad Sales Rep: Having one person manage the existing advertising and continue to recruit new advertisers would take a big weight off the editors' shoulders.

- Co-treasurer: We have someone who collects contributions from our post office box, deposits them, and writes checks. We need someone who will manage contributor information (we use Access) and keep track of financial information (we use Quicken), producing monthly treasurer's reports as well as an annual report. Training will be provided.

It would be a shame to be compelled to curtail the guard's hours. We are currently enjoying the most reliable service we can remember, thanks to Rafael Hernandez. If we shorten the schedule, it's entirely possible that we'd lose him to a full-time position elsewhere. With a smaller financial burden to meet each year, however, the pressure to increase membership and income would decrease. Board members would be somewhat freer to attend to the func-

tions for which they've volunteered and, perhaps, find inner wellsprings of innovative spirit.

The future of our 39-year-old Block Association is up to each and every one of you. You can let us know what's important to you by voting with your checkbooks, your time, both, or neither. With the three first choices, we can thrive. With the last one, we decline.

You can let us know that you're available in a number of ways.

- Attend monthly meetings, which are held on the second Tuesday of the month (Sept. 13, this month) at 8 p.m. at the St. Luke's house (306 W. 102nd St.). We're done by about 9:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining the board, please know that attendance at meetings is encouraged but not required as long as it is easy to contact you by email.

- Send details of your interest in an email to info@w102-103blockassn.org. We will respond right away.

- Pick up the phone and call me at (212) 865-8524 to discuss how you can contribute.

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O'Reilly Promoted; Barry Takes Over at 24th Precinct

Deputy Inspector Kathleen O'Reilly, the commander of the 24th Precinct for almost five years, has been promoted to inspector and assigned to head the Domestic Violence Unit based at Police Headquarters in Manhattan. Her replacement is Deputy Inspector Nancy Barry who comes to the 24th after two years as commander of the 7th Precinct on the Lower East Side.

O'Reilly set a new standard for openness with the community, regularly giving out her personal cell phone number at the monthly public meetings of the Community Council. She could be seen on her police-issued bicycle in the precinct, which stretches from W. 86th St. to W. 110th St and from Riverside Park to Central Park. Among her concerns were quality-of-life issues and she was personally involved in encouraging homeless people in the precinct to find places to live off the street. On her last day on the job, she said she loved the Upper West Side and particularly the involvement of the residents and local politicians in reducing crime and making it a better place to live. O'Reilly said she hoped some day to come back to the neighborhood.

The new commander of the 24th Precinct, Deputy Inspector Nancy Barry, has worked in the Police Department for thirty years. Prior to her position in the 7th Precinct, where she rose from captain to deputy inspector, Barry had been the commanding officer of Police Service Area 9, responsible for public housing developments in Queens. She was quickly learning about the precinct when we spoke with her, briefly, two days after she left her position on the Lower East Side. Already, she had driven around our blocks with Community Affairs Officer Pam White, getting to know her new neighborhood.

Edith Eisler Remembered as Exceptional Musician, Writer, Teacher, Neighbor

By David L. Reich

Long-time Block Association resident and supporter Edith Eisler died at age 86 on July 18 in her apartment at 300 Riverside Dr. This spring, at the annual meeting of the Block Association, she had been honored with seven other residents who had also lived here for more than 50 years. She was an accomplished violinist as a child and went on to enjoy a long career of performing, teaching, and writing with an emphasis on chamber music and musicians.

Pianist Ruth Geiger met Edith when she was ten and Edith was eight. "[We] were musically gifted children growing up in pre-war Vienna of the 1930's." Ruth wrote recently. "My first recollection of meeting her is being taken to her parents' house to play a Mozart sonata for violin and piano. I had never played with a violinist before, and I remember thinking, 'I wish I could make such a beautiful sound on the piano as she does on her violin!'" "When Hitler invaded Austria, Edith and her parents went to England ... and my parents and I came to New York. During the war, Edith and I kept up a lively correspondence, first in German but soon in English; even at that time, she was already an excellent writer in either language, and her letters were delightful. After the war, she and her parents came to New York to live, and of course we revived our old friendship. I shall always miss her lively presence, her sense of humor, and her kind and generous heart."

For the past 60 years, Edith had lived in the same apartment, first with her parents and then, after her father died in 1975, with her mother who lived to be 100. Neighbor and cellist, Ruth Sommers wrote that "[Edith] never lost her excitement and childlike curiosity about music." "I love uncovering and performing rarely heard music by almost unknown composers.... I would always

call Edith to tell her of my new discoveries. She either already knew the piece or the composer or if she didn't, she couldn't wait to hear it. She always wanted to look at the score and often invited herself to our rehearsals so that she could get to know the piece before she heard it at the concert."

Edith wrote extensively about music and musicians. Robert Kissel, a long-time friend, notes that two books of her *Strings Magazine* articles, one her fascinating interviews with famous string quartets, and the other, a volume of her interviews with fine cellists, are still in print.

Another neighbor, Pat Lewis, wrote that she used to have afternoon tea at Edith's apartment or take walks around the block with her. "Edith was a brilliant individual, and our conversations ranged from music and politics to tennis. I loved to hear her stories about growing up in Vienna, and could visualize her romping around the mountains there as a child." When Edith's bad leg pain made walking too difficult, Pat would offer a wheelchair but her pride would not allow it.

Edith was an only child and she had no children of her own. She did have a large and devoted family of students, friends, and colleagues. A cousin of mine, who took lessons from her as a teenager and as an adult, would always stop by, years later, to see her when visiting New York from his home in Israel.

Greg Cahill, an editor at *Strings Magazine*, captured her devotion: "In the end, after injuries had impeded her playing, she lived only to write and to enjoy an occasional concert. Eisler continued to share her wit and wisdom right until the end. Just hours before her death, she submitted a handful of CD reviews and a Master Class on her beloved Schubert's epic *Death and the Maiden* string quartet."

Individual Contributions Plus Building Support Equals Healthy BA Coffers

By Hedy Campbell

It appears that there may be some confusion among residents about the need for their contributions since the Block Association also receives financial support from co-op boards and rental building owners. In fact, we rely heavily on both sources of funds.

If the residents of all the 2,000+ apartments in the Block Association territory made an annual contribution of \$100, as we suggest, our organization would have an annual income of \$200,000! Yet we struggle each year to reach our budget of \$45,000, not even a quarter of that total. Our annual income from residents in multi-family buildings usually covers less than half our budget. That's why we send an annual request to the managers of these buildings suggesting the contribution of a small dollar amount, about \$5 - \$10, *per unit per year*, to augment those we receive from individuals. Many buildings contribute less, yet almost every building in the neighborhood sends something, for which we are very grateful.

Although individuals derive the most benefit from the guard service (it's the Block Association's primary expenditure, representing 90 percent of the

budget) in terms of personal safety and the safety of their personal property, building owners derive benefit as well. Property values are increased when crime is low. Buildings save time and money, not to mention gains in aesthetics, when graffiti and vandalism are kept to a minimum. Having guard service and an active block association contributes toward reducing apartment turnover and periods of vacancy.

Receiving financial contributions from both residents and building management enables the Block Association to keep its suggested annual donation for residents relatively low. If donations in either category ceased, we would be unable to provide nightly guard service. Should the percentage of contributors rise, we would be happy to decrease the suggested contribution so that all could enjoy the savings while we could still meet our budgetary responsibilities.

The annual appeal to co-op boards and landlords (and owners of private homes) was recently sent out. Please help ensure the solvency of your Block Association by encouraging your board or landlord to send a contribution and by putting your own check in the mail as well. The Block Association and your neighbors thank you for your support.

W. 104th St. Friends Invite You to Their Yard Sale

At the 22nd Annual West 104th St. Block Association's Yard Sale on Saturday, Sept. 24, you can enjoy the energy of a bustling street market as if in an exotic land.

Shop in more than 60 stalls bursting with treasures retrieved from the darkest corners of your neighbors' closets. Bid on gift certificates, services, art objects, show tickets, or appliances at the Silent Auction. Browse a large selection of books of all kinds and CDs at the book sale. Select your family dessert at the

bake sale. Hunt down a two-dollar labor saver or conversation piece at the 'What-A-Bargain' table.

Enjoy freshly-grilled hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings. Take a chance in a raffle worth hundreds. Tap your foot to live music performed by seasoned New York musicians. Have fun with more than 1,000 neighbors and help raise funds for the W. 104th St. Block Association to keep our neighborhood safe, welcoming, and beautiful. We look forward to seeing you!

Annual Halloween Parade Scheduled; Join the Fun Now!

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with trick-or-treat bags, complete with an apple, some candy, and a small toy, that are provided by the munificent Block Association. Tables full of homemade and store-bought treats are sure to calm the frightening disposition of even the most savage ghoul.

There are many things you can do to help with this event: contribute refreshments, host the trick-or-treat bag packing session, volunteer to be a chaperone or carry a boom box with the parade, create and/or help run new activities (such as a photo station, a crafts table, a scavenger hunt, or even projecting (mildly) scary images on the outside walls of one of the buildings), be available for setup or cleanup, protect the street from errant motorists who try to drive around the barricades, or even just station yourself on the parade route to cheer the Costumed Cuties.

Here's your chance to make a significant, once-a-year contribution of your time and energy to an event that underscores how unique and wonderful our neighborhood truly is. To volunteer, you can contact me, Marc Reiner, now, at marcsreiner@gmail.com, or Block Association co-chair, Hedy Campbell, at info@w102-103blockassn.org or at (212) 865-8524. We need you to help organize the event or an activity, or to otherwise contribute your time, ingenuity, or money to help our annual Halloween Parade survive and thrive.

In mid-October, start watching for a poster in your building lobby that announces the parade and party. Then come out on Oct. 31, in costume if you can, to join your neighbors for an evening of community fun. (Free advice: it can get quite chilly, so it may not be comfortable to dress like Lady Gaga.)

Boo!

Brandeis HS to Share Space

The Upper West Success Academy charter school won a ruling in August that appears to allow the school to share space in Brandeis High School on W. 84th St. with five other high schools. A State Supreme Court judge dismissed a lawsuit seeking to stop the sharing by ruling that the issue of sharing space should be decided first by the State Education Department, not the court. The counsel for the Education Department was reported by the *Wall St. Journal* to be in favor of the co-location. The lawsuit that was dismissed had been brought by public school parents who were upset by the possibility that space in Brandeis would be given to the private charter school, the most recent of several started by former Council Member Eva Moskowitz.

West End Ave. To Be Discussed

The Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold its third and final session on the West End Ave. Historic District extensions on Oct. 25. The public meeting will be held in the Commission's offices at 1 Centre St., on the ninth floor. Under discussion will be the northern part of the proposed extension from W. 94th St. to W. 109th St. between Broadway and Riverside Dr. All the buildings within our Block Association are included in this extension and residents and owners are invited to speak briefly to the Commission at the Oct. 25th session. Potential speakers are asked to register with the Commission by calling (212) 669-7817 or by writing to info@lpc.nyc.gov. The three extensions are supported by Landmark West! and many public officials.

Winter Damage Repaired

The heavy snows that blanketed the City's streets last winter caused many problems for pedestrians and drivers alike. Parking was, at times, haphazard, as drivers of cars and trucks had a hard time knowing the exact location of the sidewalk curb. Among the victims of this situation were the iron tree well guards opposite the Marseilles Residence on the west side of Broadway between W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts. Some were damaged and one was twisted and broken into a dangerous tangle of metal. Now, the manager of the Marseilles, Joanne Vargas, has arranged for the replacement or repair of all those treewell guards. The work was recently completed in August by contractors who did an excellent job of restoring a nice look to our streetscape.

Tales and Music of UWS Composers on Orfeo Duo Program

Our neighborhood has long been home to a wide variety of musicians and, especially, composers. On Sept. 15, from 7 to 9 p.m., the Park West Neighborhood History Group and the Columbus-Amsterdam Business Improvement District will sponsor a free evening of *Upper West Side Composers, Past, Present, and Future* performed by the Orfeo Duo: Vita Wallace, violin and accordion and Ishmael Wallace, piano and baritone.

The program, at the Marseilles Community Room, 230 W. 103rd St., just west of Broadway, will include "vivid stories of the famous and unknown with musical and photographic illustrations." Among the more famous neighborhood composers represented will be Edward MacDowell, Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, and John Coltrane. For further information, call (212) 666-9774. The Community Room is made available through the generosity of the West Side Federation

of Senior and Supportive Housing.

This program is an example of why the Orfeo Duo is so deserving of support in our neighborhood. Last spring, the duo was chosen to receive a Good Neighbor award, a distinction conferred annually by the Goddard Riverside Community Center. The award "acknowledges the commitment and talent of New Yorkers who have been volunteers here or made significant contributions to the community at large." They were presented with a plaque at Goddard Riverside's annual Neighbor to Neighbor dinner, held May 7, and expressed their appreciation, as you might have guessed, in song.

Recently, the Block Association agreed once again to serve as fiscal sponsor for the Or-

feo Duo, enabling the ensemble to apply for a Lower Manhattan Cultural Council grant. The Wallaces use the funds to offset the costs of their "What a Neighborhood!" series of concerts, which "celebrate Manhattanville, Morningside Heights, and the Manhattan Valley primarily through the music of living local composers." Begun in 2003, the concerts are presented each spring and "encourage and inspire composers and draw neighbors together, helping to nurture a strong community that includes all the diversity of our area."

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Mexican Street Food, Just Up the Street

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time, you can add a third for an additional \$3.25). There are two seafood choices, one vegetarian, one chicken, and four varieties with meat on the menu plus one daily special. We had the piquant, finely chopped chorizo from the menu and the special, a lightly battered and fried fish with a lime-marinated slaw and chipotle sauce. Both were excellent, although the exudation of grease from the chorizo might be off-putting to some. At lunchtime, two sandwiches are available: shredded pork butt with mango, Oaxaca cheese, *queso fresco*, smashed avocado, and *papalo* mayonnaise; and shredded chicken with black bean spread, roasted Serrano relish, lettuce, onion, *queso fresco*, and *papalo* mayo. *Papalo* is an herb, popular in the southwest, which also freshens the pitcher of water that's placed on each table.

That evening, seated a little more toward the interior of the restaurant on bar stools at a stainless steel countertop, I was able to take note of the colorful mosaics adorning the walls. With Señor Luchador looking down from above the bar, I enjoyed that cold margarita, one of several unusual varieties the bartender concocts, while my companion had one of a wide selection of Mexican beers, some from micro-breweries. Organic tequilas are also featured. We shared a delicious salad (\$7.50) of grape tomatoes, avocado chunks, cilantro, red onion, and toasted coriander.

The dinner menu loses the sandwiches but gains four *platos grandes*, all priced between \$12 and \$15. I sampled the *pollo asado*, half of a roasted chicken served atop a bed of creamed corn and cascabel chili. (Cascabel, incidentally, means small bell and is a moderately hot variety of pepper.) My dinner date ordered and enjoyed the *tacos dorados*, marinated shrimp served with roasted calabaza (a kind of squash), fingerling

potatoes, *queso fresco*, and tomatoes. The other two entrees are grilled hanger steak and adobe-marinated pork butt. If you opt for tacos but want to round out your meal, add a side or two (\$3.50 to \$6), such as quinoa, black beans, or grilled corn.

As usual, I ate so much dinner that I eschewed dessert, but would happily go back for an order of *churros*, Mexican doughnuts, (\$1). Flan (\$4) is also available. In those dog days of July, the snow cones \$2 (spiked with tequila for an extra \$2, if you wish) surely went fast. Before too long, we'll be looking for a cup of *ancho* chile-spiced hot chocolate (\$4).

Cascabel is located at 2799 Broadway, on the southwest (where else?) corner of W. 108th St.; telephone: (212) 717-8266; website: *nyctacos.com* (though it still only mentions the East Side restaurant). It's open for dinner daily from 5 p.m. until midnight (to 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights) and for lunch on weekdays and brunch on weekends from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Delivery is available until midnight Sunday through Thursday, until 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Major credit cards are accepted.

Landmark West! Offers West End Avenue Tour

On Tuesday, Sept. 13 at 6 p.m., Andrew Scott Dolkart will conduct a walking tour of West End Avenue with its assortment of grand residences, houses of worship, and educational institutions, offering a cohesive picture of the development of the Upper West Side. It will be good preparation for the final Public Hearing at the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the proposed West End Avenue Historic District Extensions on October 25th. Tickets for the tour are \$25. Call (212) 496-8110 for reservations.

June Treewell Planting Brightens Our Blocks

By John Hewitt

The Block Association had a very nice day on June 4 for its annual spring treewell planting. Good weather always makes this outdoor activity more enjoyable for the gardeners and passersby who stop to appreciate their work.

The day before, Hedy Campbell's station wagon was filled to the brim with plants and soil mix, the cost of which was covered this year by a grant from the Citizens Committee for New York City. The materials were unloaded and available to the 17 neighborhood participants who worked on 21 treewells and 8 planter boxes.

The gardeners had their choice of dahlia, dwarf snapdragon, coleus, impatiens, petunia, sun devil (*salvia*), vinca, and ivy. They all made commitments to see that the plants were watered during the summer, which was very important in response to the heat waves that rolled through. We will do this again next year and hope that even more neighbors will join in the fun.

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On Broadway

Openings and Closings: ♦♦The luggage store, **All Bright Trading**, on the northwest corner of Broadway and W. 101st St. has closed. ♦♦A block away, the toy and greeting card store, **Broadway Cards and Party Supplies**, on the west side of Broadway between W. 100th and W. 101st St. has also closed. Neither the luggage store nor the card store space appears to have a new tenant. ♦♦Further south on the west side of Broadway between W. 97th and W. 98th Sts., the recently closed **Duane Reade** drugstore has been emptied to the walls. The ground floor has over 8,600 sq. ft. and the rent asked when the property was first on the market, in the spring of this year, was over \$92,000 per month. The new occupant will be **Westside Market**, adding a fourth store to the three current locations: on Seventh Ave. near 14th St., Broadway near W. 76th St., and Broadway at W. 110th St. As with the others, the new store will be family-run. It is about the same size as the W. 110th St. store and is expected to employ about

70 people. Completion of the renovation is planned for January or February of 2012. ♦♦There is also new life next door to the former Duane Reade where a **Sleepy's** mattress store had been on the second floor of the two-story building. A "dog care" business is currently renovating the space. Large photos of dogs are in the second floor windows but no name of the establishment has yet been displayed. ♦♦The small "Fresh Juice Bar," called the **West Way Cafe**, that had been on the northeast corner of W. 108th St. and Broadway has turned into the **Manchester Diner**, all polished up and shiny. It opened for business on Aug. 22. ♦♦Two blocks south, on the southeast corner of W. 106th St. and Broadway, the low-cost linen and luggage store that styled itself **@Home** has been in the long, slow, sad decline that begins with a 50%-off sale, announced with hand-lettered signs, and dwindles down, a month or two later, to an employee or two watching over the remaining inventory in a mostly empty shop. The store was scheduled to close

at the end of August but the business is actually moving to another location in Manhattan in the West 30's, hoping for a better opportunity. ♦♦High rents sometimes lead to taking in a roommate. Broadway is known for high commercial rents so it is not surprising to see tenants doubling up. **Angel Eyes Optical** did that with a tax accountant when it moved to the east side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts. about two years ago. Now **Reamir & Co.**, the barbershop on the east side of Broadway between W. 97th and W. 98th Sts. has taken in **Rubinoff Jewelry**, a seller of rings, bracelets, etc. and a buyer of gold and silver. ♦♦In an unusually quick turnover, the space formerly occupied by **Crystal Gourmet** on the east side of Broadway between W. 108th and W. 109th Sts. will become the latest link in the **Crumbs Bake Shop** chain. The cupcake and cookie shop, which started on the Upper West Side in 2003, is now a publicly traded company operating in seven states. It expects to have 200 stores by 2014.

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Marc Sorkin

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New BAiP Activities Underway; Survey and Discussions To Come

Continued from Page 2

six people on the roof of Phyllis' building. More sessions are planned.

Phyllis and her husband, Herman Sands, also hosted two salons that each filled their living room. In June, Mark Nowogrodski talked about microwaves with anecdotes and information the audience found fascinating. In July, Carol Prager, food editor of *Weight Watchers Magazine*, spoke about the process of creating recipes for the magazine evoking many questions from the audience. If you know a neighbor who would be a good salon speaker, please contact Phyllis at activities@bloominplace.org.

The discount tickets program will offer access to music and theater performances on short notice at reduced prices.

The BAiP Neighbor to Neighbor committee is developing a new survey on the needs and volunteer availability among our residents. The Panel committee's first event on Thursday, Oct. 20 will discuss Medicare's new rules.

For more information about BAiP, visit our website bloominplace.org or write to info@bloominplace.org.

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