

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2017

VOL.47, NO.3

Celebrate Halloween

with Family & Friends Right in Your Own Backyard!

THERE'S SOMETHING MAGICAL about the Block Association Halloween festivities. Those who attend tell us they really like it and have a great time. It's clear we have a great bunch of neighbors!

Halloween falls on a Tuesday this year and the Block Association will once again sponsor our annual Halloween Parade. Neighbors can stay close to home for awhile and have fun. You may have other places to get to that evening, but why not start off with us? We'll make it well worth your while.

Jane Hopkins and her team of volunteers work for several weeks to create a memorable evening. The event begins just before 6 p.m. as folks of all ages and 200+ kids gather at W. 102nd St. and West End Ave. to line up for the parade. Homeowners on W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts. decorate their stoops with pumpkins, ghosts, spiderwebs, and sometimes a surprise or two. The parade sets off to the north along West End Ave., turns left down W. 103rd St. toward Riverside Dr., and left again on the Riverside Dr. service road. Finally, the crowd turns left one more time into a traffic-free West 102nd St. Kids in the parade are rewarded with a party and refreshments provided by the Block Association and donations from neighbors.

(Continued on page 7)

Come Celebrate the Tredanaris

WE'RE SO PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE that Len and Cherie Tredanari are getting the permanent recognition they deserve! They spent years working to establish and support the Block Association, making our months of fundraising, discussing, and coordinating seem, relatively speaking, like a drop in the bucket. Now, a bench in Riverside Park has been dedicated in their memory. You can go read the plaque on your own (the bench is on the west side of Riverside Drive by the W. 103rd St. stairs down into the park), or join us at the bench on Sat., Sept. 16 at 3 p.m., when it's officially unveiled.

Bring your best memories and help us celebrate the Tredanari's many years of commitment to our neighborhood.

BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Regular Block Association meetings are held monthly, usually on the second Tuesday of every month at 8 p.m.
306 W. 102nd St.

September 12
October 10
November 14
December 12

FALL TREE WELL CLEANUP

Coming This October

THE ANNUAL FALL TREE WELL CLEANUP and bulb planting is on Oct. 14! We will add mulch to keep the soil moist and prevent weeds from sprouting in tree pits. We can also plant bulbs that will give us practice in delayed gratification. If we're lucky, our neighborhood dogs will notice the care we are taking with the tree wells and spare them. Come beautify the neighborhood and help the health of our blocks' trees. All ages welcome. Extra credit for participants under 5 and over 95.

What: Fall Tree Well Cleanup and Bulb Planting

When: Sat., Oct. 14, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Where: Collect your bulbs, mulch and gear outside of 878 West End Ave.

Contact Block Association member Mark Schneiderman at trees@w102-103blockassn.org for volunteer opportunities or with any questions about your favorite tree well.

W. 104TH STREET BLOCK PARTY

SHOP AND SCHMOOZE Right Around the Corner

ON SAT., OCT. 14, you'll be able to walk just a block or two and enjoy the energy of a bustling local street fair. Any time between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., meander through the 27th Annual W.

(Continued on page 4)

Help Wanted: Co-Treasurer

THE DUTIES OF BLOCK ASSOCIATION TREASURER are divided among two people so that it's not much work for either person. As a result of unfortunate timing, both of our co-treasurers announced their retirements at the same time. Thanks to Komal Rathi, who stepped up in response to an earlier plea, we only have one co-treasurer spot left to fill.

Thank you to Sue Maderer, who has stayed on longer than she wanted to in order to ensure a smooth transition.

The co-treasurer's duties are not particularly demanding:

- A weekly stop at the W. 104th St. post office to pick up the mail
- A stop at the bank to deposit any checks received
- Writing a small number of checks per month
- Reconciling the monthly bank statement

Can you help? Email info@w102-103blockassn.org.

The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association Newsletter

info@w102-103blockassn.org
Hedy Campbell, editor; Jacob Gross, associate editor; Brad Spear, designer. Comments and questions related to the Association or Newsletter are welcomed. Address letters to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1940, New York, NY 10025. Email may be sent to editor@w102-103blockassn.org. Phone messages may be left at 212-865-8524. Recent issues of the Newsletter are available online at w102-103blockassn.org.

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.

GUARD SCHEDULE

Rafael Hernandez makes rounds Monday through Saturday from 6 p.m. until midnight Monday through Thursday and from 7 p.m. until 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. To report neighborhood security issues to the guards or to request their assistance on the street, call the office of Starr Security at 212-767-1110.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE WEBSITE

Surf's Up! Hang Ten on Our Website

By CAITLIN HAWKE

I would venture a guess that most of us spend a good bit of time noodling around online, checking out news and weather, playing games, buying books and groceries, and maybe even looking for Mr. or Ms. Right. But do you forget to surf the Block Association's website from time to time?

Here now are the top ten signs you need to "HANG TEN" on our site (w102-103blockassn.org) more often:

NUMBER TEN: you didn't know we have our own neighborhood Hall of Fame.

NUMBER NINE: you have your costume picked out but don't know what time our Halloween parade starts.

NUMBER EIGHT: you renewed your membership by mail but vastly prefer to pay online.

NUMBER SEVEN: you misplaced our Summer issue and didn't realize you could just download a copy.

NUMBER SIX: you don't know what a "hyperlocal eat" is (check out our blog).

NUMBER FIVE: you don't know if alternate side of the street parking is suspended for Simchas Torah (it is, see our Resources tab).

NUMBER FOUR: you don't know the significance of May 20, 1971 (the date our first newsletter rolled off the press; to view a facsimile, see the May 20 blog post).

NUMBER THREE: you have retro pics of Bloomingdale and don't know what to do with them (send them to blog@w102-103blockassn.org).

NUMBER TWO: Two words. Throwback Thursday. Subscribe to our blog for the Bloomingdale edition of this popular Facebook meme.

And the **NUMBER ONE** sign you need to visit the site more often? You get lonely between issues of this newsletter and need a good dose of catchment news. We've got you covered.

BLOCK ASSOCIATION UPCOMING EVENTS

Bench Dedication

Sat., 9/16, 3 p.m. (see p. 1)

BNHG Hostel program

Wed., 10/4, 6:30 p.m. (see p. 6)

Fall Mulching

Sat., 10/14, 10 a.m. (see p. 1)

W. 104th St. Block Party

Sat., 10/14, 10 a.m. (see p. 1)

Halloween

Tues., 10/31, 6 p.m. (see p. 1)

Solstice Caroling

Thurs., 12/21, 7 p.m.

National Night Out: A Festive Evening for All Ages

By CELIA KNIGHT

BACK IN THE SPRING, we received an email message from the 24th Precinct Community Council reminding us that the 34th annual National Night Out would take place on at the Happy Warrior Playground on Aug. 1. Especially since we'd become aware that we have a new precinct commander, Capt. Seth A. Lynch, who recently replaced Capt. William Burke, who'd we'd only first met at our March annual meeting, I thought it would be a good opportunity to stop by the playground at Amsterdam Ave. and W. 98th St. and touch base.

One of the main objectives of the event has been to make sure children develop a positive attitude toward the NYPD. The officers and children played ball games, danced, and chased each other on the playground basketball court while the parents and other adults exchanged ideas and picked up timely announcements at the information tables. Perhaps the children were not the ones who most eagerly looked forward to the entertainment—other than the face painter and balloon artist!—and camaraderie. Older residents, some with walkers and canes, turned out in droves to thank the police for providing protection and practical advice on how

to stay safe, hydrated, and happy all summer long. All enjoyed the music provided by a DJ, who played popular hits in a variety of styles that appealed to the multi-generational gathering.

Many of the uniformed officers on hand were members of the Auxiliary Police. They helped serve refreshments, played with the children, and talked to the adults about their commitment to protecting the public. A few plain-clothes officers were also on hand, and seemed to enjoy friendly basketball and handball games with neighborhood youth.

At the refreshments table, I met some of the Young Explorers, a group of teens that works closely with the Auxiliary Police. Later I spoke with Tom Burnett, 24th Precinct Community Council president, who urged me to show up at the next meeting (they're always the third Monday of the month; the next one is Mon., Sept. 20). Block Association co-chair Cynthia Doty is vice president of the Community Council, and reports regularly about the Community Council meet-

ings at our board meetings, so our group is already well represented. He then introduced me to Officer Morrison, a policeman with considerable knowledge of the council meetings.

Representatives of various other government agencies attended the event as well. They described their programs and offering printed mate-



rial. The New York City Commission on Human Rights, and Manhattan District Attorney's Office sent representatives to acquaint people with their work. The offices of the Mayor, the New York City Comptroller, and the Public Advocate each delivered proclamations to the 24th Precinct and Precinct Council in recognition of the event. Comptroller Scott Stringer and District Attorney Cyrus Vance, Jr., also made appearances. Each made a short speech. Various awards and citations were presented to individuals currently serving in the police department, including Capt. Lynch, who was so busy the whole time I was there that I never did get to say hello!

The formalities ended by 8:30 p.m., but people continued to mingle and enjoy outdoor music, dance, athletics, and other types of social interaction. All in all, it was a night of safety and fun for everyone!


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Meet Your Talented Neighbors

By JULIA C. SPRING

BOBBI & NER BECK

Bobbi and Ner will be exhibiting their art and photographs at two New York Public Libraries from **fall through the end of the year**. Bobbi will be at the Bloomingdale Library (150 W. 100th St.) for the months of **Oct. and Nov.** Both will be displaying their work at the beautiful new **53rd Street Library** (18 W. 53rd St.) directly across from the Museum of Modern Art. Ner's unusual street photos will be there from Oct. to mid-Nov., then Bobbi's fantastical artworks from mid-Nov. through Dec. Click on nypl.org/events/exhibitions for exhibit descriptions and information on exact dates and library hours

ANTHONY DeCURTIS

Lou Reed: A Life will be published by Little, Brown and Company on **Oct. 10**. It will be available at local bookstores and from Amazon. Anthony was one of the few music critics Lou read and whose company he enjoyed, and this biography shows why Lou Reed had such respect for him. This publication follows the successful documentary *The Soundtrack of Our Lives* based on Anthony's biography of Clive Davis, which opened the Tribeca Film Festival this spring.

ANTHONY BELLOV AND DAYLE VANDER SANDE

Ghosts, ghouls, and goblins haunt the lyrics of the 19th century. Come be spooked by these harrowing tales as the Bond Street Euterpean Singing Society bewitches your imagination and sings shivers down your spine, echoing sumptuous, rarely performed songs in an authentic period parlor. Singers Anthony Bellov, Amy Gluck, Jane Elizabeth Rady, and Dayle Vander Sande will perform in "Chant Macabre: Songs from the Crypt," **Wed., Oct. 18 at 7 p.m.** at the Merchant's House Museum (29 E. 4th St.). Music by Schubert, Liszt, Debussy, Duparc, Loewe, Mussorgsky, Humperdinck,

and others. 80 minutes. \$30, \$20 museum members. Visit the Merchant's House Museum website for more info and to reserve tickets.

SELENA CANIN & MARK STEINBERG

Selena and Mark will be performing as the violinists of the Brentano String Quartet at the 92nd Street Y (E. 92nd St. and Lexington Ave.) on **Sun., Dec. 3, at 3 p.m.** The program includes works by Mozart, Respighi, Schubert, Webern, and Schoenberg and features the soprano Dawn Upshaw. The Quartet, which performs around the world, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Tickets, starting at \$45, are available at the Y box office or at 92y.org/event/brentano-string-quartet.

CATHERINE TAMBINI

Catherine's documentary on Isaiah Sheffer, founder and creative director of Symphony Space, has been released on DVD. *Art and Heart: The World of Isaiah Sheffer* is available at firstrunfeatures.com/artandheart.html. The film is a warm celebration of his life and work. The DVD also contains an hour's worth of DVD extras.

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(Continued from page 1)

W. 104TH STREET BLOCK PARTY

SHOP AND SCHMOOZE Right Around the Corner

104th Street Block Association Block Party, on W. 104th St. between West End Ave. and Riverside Dr., and shop in more than 60 vendor stalls, bid on gift certificates and antiques, browse a large selection of books, browse the What-A-Bargain table, and select your family dessert at the bake sale, all while listening to live music. Take a chance in the raffle. You could win more than \$1,000!

If you're interested in a vendor slot or would like to donate items such as books, antiques, or nick-knacks, contact organization chair Mary Koval at mtkoyal@aol.com. Admission for shoppers is, of course, free. See the group's website (bloomingdale.org) for more information.

Do you have an upcoming publication, release, concert, exhibition or other arts event, physical or virtual? Let me know. Send questions or notices for inclusion in the Winter 2017 newsletter (or beyond) to creative@w102-103blockassn.org. Do it today, before you forget!

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MARC SORKIN

BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEMBER

BAiP Organizes Happy-Hour Get-Togethers

BY BOB NEUMAN

ORDERS FOR \$5 GLASSES OF WINE are coming from all directions, but the affable young waiter at Ellington in the Park seems unfazed. He has seen this phenomenon before. Organized by members of Bloomingdale Aging in Place, it's called the Blooming Hour. The happiest hour of them all.

It is one of the most eagerly—anticipated social events for BAiP members. Even folks who don't participate in many other BAiP activities show up for this one.

The park beckons, friends gather, the sun sets—this could only be the “Blooming Hour.”

Miriam Cukier and Gerry Borrell are the volunteers hosting the Blooming Hour this summer, and they have a knack for making everyone—newbies included—feel at home. Gerry says “it's like throwing a party” without all the cooking and cleanup. Ellington in the Park does that. Ellington has been very responsive to BAiP's needs, setting aside a special area where members can all be together to enjoy each other's company.



And enjoy they do! The whole place is abuzz with talk of travel, theater, and restaurants. Even politics comes up—albeit carefully. It's also the perfect time to exchange stories about all that is happening in the various and sundry BAiP groups. BAiP's tennis and walking groups are always a hot topic.

In this relaxed setting new friendships are made, old friendships solidify, and neighbors connect with one another. All this goes right to the core of what BAiP is about—building community among older adults.

Born in 2013, the Blooming Hour has been

going strong for the last four years. This summer every Blooming Hour in Riverside Park has been greeted enthusiastically by members. People embracing people—what a blooming revelation!

For more information about Bloomingdale Aging in Place, visit the website at bloominplace.org.

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Say Hello to HI NYC

By CAITLIN HAWKE

HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK CITY, OR HI NYC for short, is a neighbor worth knowing. Housed in the once-doomed but now landmarked building at 891 Amsterdam Ave., the hostel is a vibrant chapter in the HI USA national network of hostels.

The story of the 1883 building spans a huge chunk of the city's history. Originally, it was established as the Association Residence for the Relief of Respectable Aged Indigent Females and had a 90-year run in that incarnation. A picture of the early era of the building, in 1937, is shown below. The hostel as it appears today is above and to the right.

The building's lowest moment was probably during the infamous blackout of July 1977 when the shuttered structure was set on fire. Neighbors have described that night to me, recalling looking out of their windows onto a completely darkened city except for this surreal hotspot with flames raging through the roof.

Pam Tice, a former executive director of the New York Hostel and a Bloomingdale Neighborhood History Group (BNHG) planning committee member, is probably the person most well-versed in the building's history.

Pam will be participating in an Oct. 4 BNHG presentation about

the building and Hostelling International NYC alongside the hostel's head of community outreach Emily Gallagher and her colleagues Ben Puterbaugh and Indigo Goodson.

It's free and all are welcome to attend at 6:30 p.m. in the hostel's ballroom.

But before you head over to that talk, here's a chance to discover a little more about HI NYC, which since 1989 has occupied the building. The red brick behemoth, which takes up most of a city block and has one of the largest private gardens in Manhattan, was saved from demolition by, according to Pam, "a coalition of Columbia students and neighborhood activists" before being reinvented by a local community development corporation and American Youth Hostels.

Currently run by George Finn, the hostel belongs to a network of 50 hostels across the country. A jewel in the crown of this empire, HI NYC is a magnet for world travelers, bringing hundreds of urban explorers to our streets every week. But HI NYC isn't just a bed in a port. Thanks to its community outreach and education teams, the hostel is a vibrant hub of activity for New Yorkers and an educational nonprofit too. For example, they've partnered with Bloomingdale Aging in Place for members to help out in the hostel kitchen and cook

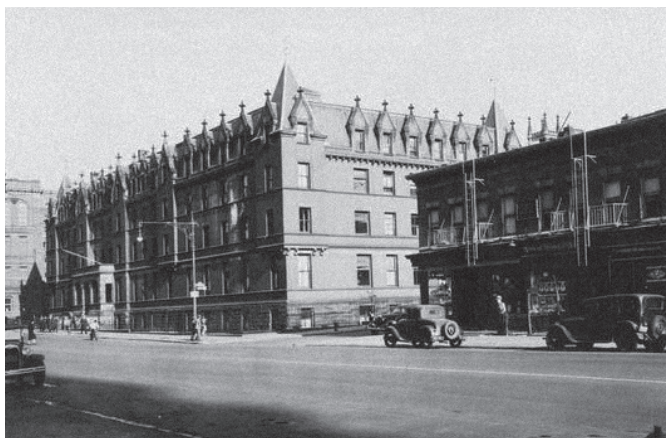


Photo Source: hiusa.org

cultural meals with New York school kids. And the building has become the go-to place for the Bloomingdale Neighborhood History Group's standing-room only presentations each month, opening up to our whole community of history-loving neighbors.

Fulfilling its social mission, HI NYC offers experiential learning programs, many of which are co-led by neighborhood volunteers. Their aim is to disrupt a traditional tourism experience by providing opportunities for engagement. Since 2016, some 30,000 travelers and community members have participated in 1,000 education and engagement programs offered by HI NYC. Programs include Travel Bootcamp to help aspiring travelers get in the right frame of mind for international travel; the Great Hostel Give Back program where, in exchange for a free hostel stay, travelers commit to a certain number of service hours to benefit the community around the hostel; and its Community Expressions program, where travelers and New York City high school students exchange about city culture and dine together. Many of the students who participate have never met a person who lives in another country.

And that just scratches the surface of this neighborhood gem. Check out the program on Oct. 4. You won't regret it!



The Hostelling International New York City building on Amsterdam Ave. in 1937, when it was the Association Residence for the Relief of Respectable Aged Indigent Females. Photo courtesy Pam Tice.

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On Broadway

By KERSTIN HASENPUSCH
AND JACOB GROSS

★ **Junzi Kitchen**, a Chinese restaurant specializing in noodle bowls and other street foods, has opened on the east side of Broadway between W. 112th and W. 113th Sts. It is the first satellite location of a restaurant in New Haven, which was founded by three Chinese graduate students at Yale who missed their local cuisine.

★ The Chinese food chain **Panda Express** will be opening its first Upper West Side branch at the southeast corner of W. 111th St. and Broadway.

★ **Extell Development** has reached a deal to purchase the lot on the southwest corner of 96th St. and Broadway. Already the **Gristedes** occupying the lot has closed, and presumably the **Chase Bank** will follow. The site will probably be demolished to make way for a residential development.

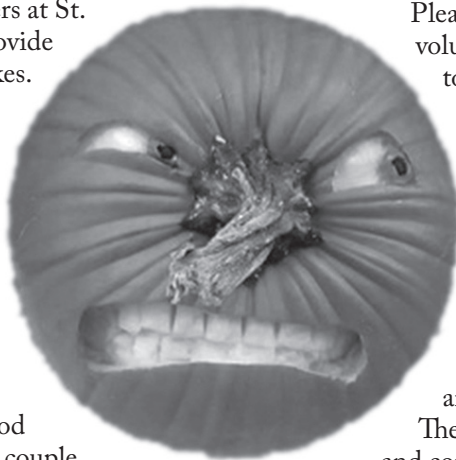
★ **Cohen's Fashion Optical** has opened a new branch on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 99th St., in the former site of **Brooklyn Industries**, and closed its location on the west side of Broadway at W. 96th St.

(Continued from page 1)

Help Celebrate Halloween

We have been fortunate to have volunteers who help considerably and add so much to the event. Our friends and supporters at St. Luke's Residence provide freshly baked cupcakes. There's also wrapped candy galore, fresh fruit, and beverages. Activities may include arts and crafts projects, face painting, storytelling, and portrait sketching, among others provided by talented neighborhood volunteers. A terrific couple has volunteered for the last several years to lead the parade as "King and Queen." Another neighbor has decorated the fence along Riverside Dr. with a scary Halloween theme, to the delight of parade goers.

Please consider joining our team. We need volunteers to contribute baked goods, candy, or other refreshments; help at the refreshment table;



give out candy along the parade route; or just clap and cheer, perhaps in costume. Can you lead an arts and crafts activity such as face painting or portrait sketching? We are always open to new ideas! And we always need one or two folks to stand guard at Riverside Dr. and W. 102nd St. to thwart motorists who try to evade our barricades, or to help with setup or cleanup.

Please contact us about volunteering by writing to halloween@w102-103blockassn.org.

Community service credit is available for teens. In mid-October, start watching for a poster in your building lobby that announces the event.

Then volunteer, donate, and come out to join your neighbors for a wonderful community event.

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Isola: Another UWS Find

By KATE McLEOD

“It’s another small space; it’s another brick wall,” you might say. But who can resist an intimate space with an exposed brick wall in the city? Didn’t we all dream of having an exposed brick wall when we got our first small apartment? Or am I dating myself? Regardless, I still fall for the charm that combination possesses.

Isola benefits not only from that intimacy but the lovely outdoor café attached to it. My companion and I hung for a few hours over dinner.

On one hand, Isola serves pizza, but it’s a big step up from the local pizza joint.

That means families can pile in: kids get great pizza and beleaguered parents slow down over a glass of wine in a beautiful atmosphere. There is a tiny bar with six seats as you enter. It’s good for a quick beer, a glass of wine, or a martini, and we saw a regular having a fast pizza.

The patrons are a fascinating combination. We saw families with grannies and teens having an actual conversation. Young families with children were also enjoying the casual, yet classy environment. Among the broad age range that night, some seemed to be figuring out college papers; others were definitely on a date.

And you’re wondering about the food? It never ceases to amaze how one brick-walled establishment can

distinguish itself from another with its treatment of a mushroom. The special mushroom pasta with roasted asparagus, arugula, prosciutto, goat cheese, lemon, and olive oil had just the right combination of crunch and smoothness. With just enough salt from the prosciutto, the flavors were perfectly aligned. My companion had pappardelle with funghi.

All it needed to be first-rate was a little salt. We shared a salad of arugula, fennel and parmigiano cheese in lemon dressing. Salad dressing can make or break a salad. This one makes it.

Antipasti span the usual suspects from caprese salad to fried artichokes and calamari.

The restaurant serves different shapes of pasta prepared as we are accustomed to—with eggplant, vodka sauce, bolognese, smoked salmon with green peas and onion, mushroom with truffle oil, and spinach and ricotta ravioli with butter and sage. Second courses include chicken, branzino, strip steak, and seafood stew.

The next time you think about ordering in pizza, consider some of Isola’s fare, including the quattro stagione with artichoke hearts, ham, wild mushrooms, and olives. They have standard combinations as well as white

pizza and gamberi with pesto, baby shrimp, zucchini, and cherry tomatoes.

Desserts? My mouth is watering as I type the words amaretto mascarpone with caramel, and I don’t even like mascarpone.

ISOLA ON COLUMBUS

Prices range from \$6 to \$12 for antipasti, pizzas are \$13–\$16, pastas are \$13–\$17, and main courses are \$16–\$21, so you don’t have to evaluate your finances before you go out to dinner as you would with some restaurant outings.

I have to go now. I’m starving.

Isola, 994 Columbus Ave.

(at W. 109th St.), 212-665-2970.

Hours: Mon.–Fri. 12:00–10:30 p.m.;

Sat. 11:30 a.m.–11:00 p.m.; Sun. 11:30

a.m.–10:30 p.m. Takeout ordering

available from Eat24, Seamless,

Grubhub, EatStreet, and Slice.

There’s a delivery minimum of \$12.

The restaurant website is isolaoncolumbusnewyork.com. All major credit cards are accepted.

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by DAYLE VANDER SANDE

SOME SAY ANGELS WALK THIS EARTH. The proof may be right in our own backyard. Meet Awilda Sosa, owner of Angel Eyes Optical on the east side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts., a location she has occupied for the past eight years. However, Awilda has been serving the Upper West Side for 27 years starting at Pildes Optical—on W. 95th St., then W. 99th St.—a franchise she first managed and then bought herself. She divested from the franchise and has been a private business owner for 15 years.

“I was born at St. Luke’s Hospital. My parents immigrated from the Dominican Republic, then met and married while living at 95th St. I was destined to be on the Upper West Side,” says the once self-proclaimed Upper Eastsider. She had worked for Pildes across from Bloomingdale’s and was transferred over here. “I came kicking and screaming, and now it’s my family.” She shows me photos of customers in the shop sporting their glasses. One in particular whom she fitted at four years of age is now 14, wearing the same model frames as in the nostalgic photo Awilda pulled out, remembering what she had first worn then. “These are my children. I cry when they grow up. I’m going to make a photo montage and put it on a video screen up on the wall here.”

Her mom ran her own business as a home decorator, and Awilda gleaned her business acumen from her, who taught “the value of life.”

“My motto is I treat customers as I want to be treated. I go out of the norm, and if it’s within reach, I make things happen.” As we spoke, Awilda was fielding three separate phone calls and making sure a customer’s delivery can happen the next day. If customers need special attention, she has been known to close shop and deliver to their residences. She even did an emergency off-site fitting for one home-bound customer when her glasses broke and the family, who lived remotely, called frantic for her help.

One repeat customer brought in her broken pair and, after multiple free adjustments, said, “Today I have reason to pay you for your services.” Awilda inspected the break and saw that it was simply an inner screw needing repair, so she tightened it up and sent her off free of charge. “I was ready to drop a lot of money your way today!” said the customer.

“I am a woman of faith. What goes around comes around.” Another tenet Awilda maintains—“At a less ethical place they would have told her the pair was irreparable and made money off her unnecessarily.

I don’t bait and switch.” After the woman left, the store was flooded with customers and she did more business in the next hour than she had all day. See, the angels indeed have eyes.

Obviously, what sets Angel Eyes apart from the rest is the personal care you receive from Awilda and the atmosphere she creates. As she waves back to someone out the window passing by she remarks, “That happens all day. It’s like Cheers in here. Everybody knows my name. People will just come in and sit at the counter to shoot the breeze.” She also likened her place to the film *Chocolat*, which takes place at a shop that is the heart of its community. Business is relationships. Her Yelp reviews are filled with effusive stories of customer satisfaction that almost read like fan mail. I first met Awilda when I needed a notary public, another good neighborhood service she provides. But what sets Awilda’s professional services apart from the rest, too, is that she is a highly skilled optician. She understands how to read prescriptions and has even caught mistakes doctors

have made when it didn’t add up—and this is where it pays to be a repeat customer receiving one-on-one atten-

tion—because she knows her patients’ histories and listens to what they are telling her about their vision problems, helping her identify errors.

Awilda also specializes in children’s eyewear. The 72nd Street Pediatric Center will only refer patients to her. She is also aware to keep costs as low as possible for



her customers while offering a range of styles from the fine to the funky. However, she does not take insurance except for UFT and 1199, because insurances require her to raise her prices. Most customers have vision plans that give substantial benefits on top of the base price Awilda charges, which makes the cost of glasses at Angel Eyes even more affordable. There is no excuse for Upper Westsiders to patronize anywhere else! When I entered the store to do this interview, I was aware that I was wearing a pair of glasses bought elsewhere and knew I would get scrutinized. “Where did you used to go to get your glasses? Notice I said ‘used to?’” she asked me with a gleam in her eye and a smirk on her face. It doesn’t matter. We both know in whom I’ll trust my eyes the next time: the angel of the Upper West Side.

Angel Eyes Optical, 2662 Broadway; 212-749-0070; angeleyesopticalnyc.com; Hours: Mon. - Thur. 12:30-7 p.m.; Fri. 12:30 - 6:30 p.m.; Sat. 1-6 p.m.

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS!

RESIDENTS

235 W. 102 ST.

Antonino
Awner
Baxter
Cox
Davis
Ehrhardt
Epstein/Eden
Fair/Guide
Kirkpatrick
Knight
McKendrg
O'Hanlon
Rabbai
Rabinowitz
Redpath
Stevenson
Timperley
Wilson
Zetlan
Zinsser

240 W. 102 ST.

Cope/Becker
Eisenstadt
Fishman
Flanagan/Hopkins
Hall
Kalish
Kojima
Nissenbaum/Kim
Riehl/Hartsough
Stern
Worman/Chun

247 W. 102 ST.

Dunn

248 W. 102 ST.

Fishbain

252 W. 102 ST.

Carroll/Musk
Eastman

254 W. 102 ST.

Sagi/Moshier

308 W. 102 ST.

Hollings

309 W. 102 ST.

Donnelly

310 W. 102 ST.

Albert

311 W. 102 ST.

Doyle/Lauren

313 W. 102 ST.

Betts

315 W. 102 ST.

Hansen Doeden

Knox

Saltzman

Weil

320 W. 102 ST.

Brail

250 W. 103 ST.

Agathocleous

Hicks/Frood

Katzer

Kay

Mulkin/Robertson

Rahmani

Soskin

Sue/Lin

Wall

Weinstein/Meislin

254 W. 103 ST.

Doherty

Feldman/Hasenpusch

303 W. 103 ST.

Frishauf/Rice

305 W. 103 ST.

Bertin

307 W. 103 ST.

Bridger/Paul

308 W. 103 ST.

Ian

312 W. 103 ST.

Aaronson

316 W. 103 ST.

Kleidon/Ahmed

854 WEST END AVE.

Wald

855 WEST END AVE.

Ausubel

Henwood

Holt

Huey

Seitchik/Titzen

Solowiejczyk/Porjesz

858 West End Ave.

Regensburg

862 WEST END AVE.

Hewitt

865 WEST END AVE.

Axelrod

Beels

Beels

Carroll/Bartlik

Chase

Currin

Cushman/Sorkin

Davidge/Lott

Koplow

Krasner/Perchower

Mao

Nye

Wight

Yi/Yui

Zakrzewski

870 WEST END AVE.

Wuorinen

875 WEST END AVE.

Babush/Catalano

Beilenson

Borinstein/Vartanian

Canin

Canin/Sauer

DeCurtis

Drath/Sieger

Eisen/Dworkin

Felton

Freeman/Norwalk

Fricke/Klimley

Grossof/Fisch

Issacharoff

Keane

Lasher

Leiman

Levin

Levine

Levine

Lohr/Trucco

Malatsky

McDermott

Meyer

Pommer

Rogers

Rosenfeld/Stein

Schwartz/Naegele

Seaman/Dapre

Straw/Gubitosa

Ward

Yahr/Delcolle

878 WEST END AVE.

Adams

Dubin

Feinberg Alvarez

Foreman

Frizell/Smith

Gross/Ochshorn

Hill/Schneiderman

Lansdale

Lawrey

Neiman/Camarasana

Posner

Schachter

Schoenberg

Stearns

Winograd

884 WEST END AVE.

Aaronson

Carponcy

Colas

Cutler/Young

Davis

Dispenza

Falk

Fisch/Irizarry

Kozodoy

Marsted

Pines

Yin

885 WEST END AVE.

Bernstein/Bowen

Brown/Gruber

Fortunato/Moore

Friedman

Goldberg

Hanna

Sanders

Sherman/Chafetz

Spring/Miller

Stokinger/Maas

Tolkow/Woodbury

Tympanick/Gilman

Weiss

299 RIVERSIDE DR.

Alamo

Bauchner/Weil

Bouwman/Michelson

Dane

del Alamo

Flateman/Goldstein

Guarino/Arloffa

Gwathmey

Healy/Emery

Holtz/Horowitz

Kastanis

Leidner/Ruden

McLean/Wang

Moore

Reich/Dessel

Seidel Field

Shear

Tedoff

Titowsky/Price

Toub/Pagano

Wagner/Cecil

Wang/Sedlis

Wong

300 RIVERSIDE DR.

Abramski

Alfonso/Gouck

Bauman

Blumberg

Butera/Warren

Chapple

Cherry/Hudson

Coffman

Corcoran

Edelman/Gold

Faux/Willig

Greenwald/Struhl

Greiper/Mojarro

Halberstam/Cohen

Hudson/Cherry

Jannicelli

Johnson

Kowal/Paul

Lipton/Sussman

Lupatkin

Maderer

Malpica

McLeod

Mills

Piken

Rasmussen

Redpath

Rehberg/Greenman

Reich/Greenberg

Reiner/Lally

Rocks

Schiff

Seget/LaBasse

Simon

Sinaiko

Smith/Castellano

Smith/Silverman

Themm/Clevenger

Thomas

van Schaardenburg

Vaz/Moebius

Vernacchio

Weissberg

Zyberman

305 RIVERSIDE DR.

Avidon

Borrell

Chang/Abuba

Colon

Danzig/Minerva

Denny

Doty

Gold

Hecht

Hoffman

McGinn

Minerva/Danzig

Pozen/Bulmon-Pozen

Wiedt

310 RIVERSIDE DR.

Bien

Brown

Calhoun/Alicia

Douhey

Freeman

Hagiwara

Huber

Hugus

Kostelanetz

Maffei

McKinney/Chin

Ralph

Steinhauer

Wagner

Woodward

Zwyns

Other

Budow

West

LANDLORDS/ OWNERS/CO-OPS

235 W. 102 St.

240 W. 102 St.

247 W. 102 St.

252 W. 102 St.

254 W. 102 St.

235 W. 103 St.

309 W. 103 St.

315 W. 103 St.

316 W. 103 St.

317 W. 103 St.

319 W. 103 St.

856 West End Ave.

858 West End Ave.

864 West End Ave.

866 West End Ave.

868 West End Ave.

872 West End Ave.

875 West End Ave.

884 West End Ave.

299 Riverside Dr.

300 Riverside Dr.

310 Riverside Dr.

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