

# NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018

VOL.48, NO. 3

## Ghosts and Goblins Will Come Calling Next Month!

**P**LEASE UPDATE YOUR SOCIAL CALENDAR AS FOLLOWS: You, your family, and your friends are cordially invited to attend a terrific event sponsored by the West 102nd and 103rd Streets Block Association on Wednesday, October 31. It starts at 6 p.m. and festivities last for about two hours. Can you guess what it is? If you think it is something related to Halloween or trick-or-treating, you are correct. We are now prepping for the annual Halloween Parade, which the Block Association has sponsored since the organization was founded 47 years ago! Folks of all ages, including some 200-plus children, gather at the northwest corner of W. 102nd St. and West End Ave. to line up for the parade. The kids (and many adults) dress in terrific costumes. The parade sets off to the north along West End Ave., turns left to walk down W. 103rd St. toward Riverside Dr., turns left again on the Riverside Dr. service road, and then makes its final turn back onto a traffic-free W. 102nd St. Several homeowners along the route decorate their stoops with pumpkins, ghosts, spiderwebs, and sometimes a surprise or two.

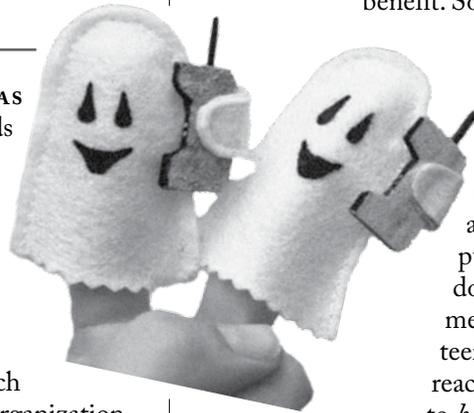
At parade's end, kids are rewarded with a party and refreshments provided by the Block Association and donated by neighbors.

Jane Hopkins is the Halloween Parade coordinator. She and her team of volunteers work on the event for several weeks in October. First they connect with our local police precinct for approval to close W. 102nd St. from West End Ave. to Riverside Dr. and to arrange for delivery of wooden barriers to block off the street from traffic.

Next the focus turns to publicity, starting with this very article, reminding our readers of this wonderful event. As the date gets closer, the team places posters in building lobbies inviting neighbors to attend and asking them to consider volunteering.

Our friends at the St. Luke's residence help us in so many ways. They prepare delicious baked goods and help us set up for the event, break down tables at the end, and clean up.

Our talented neighbors share their skills and we all benefit. Some take photos, which we then place on the Block Association website and in our next newsletter. Other neighbors decorate the fence along Riverside Dr. with scary Halloween masks. Still others are involved with storytelling, arts and crafts, face-painting, and pumpkin-carving. Many bake or donate food or drink to the refreshment tables. Please consider volunteering for this year's event. You can reach Jane at (646) 319-6956 or write to [halloween@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:halloween@w102-103blockassn.org).



## Help Tuck in Our Trees for the Winter

**T**HE ANNUAL FALL TREE-WELL CLEANUP AND BULB PLANTING is on Sat., Oct. 13! We will add mulch to keep the soil moist and prevent weeds from sprouting in tree pits. We will 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 improve the health of our trees. All ages welcome. Extra credit for participants under five and over 95.

What: Fall Tree-Well Cleanup and Bulb Planting

When: Sat., Oct. 13, 10 a.m. till noon

Where: Bulbs, mulch, and gear will be waiting for you outside of 878 West End Ave.

Contact Block Association board member Mark Schneiderman at [trees@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:trees@w102-103blockassn.org) for volunteer opportunities or with any questions.

## The West 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association Newsletter

[info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org)  
Hedy Campbell, 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](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org). Phone messages may be left at 212-865-8524. Previous issues of the Newsletter are available online at [w102-103blockassn.org](http://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](mailto:email@w102-103blockassn.org).

### GUARD SCHEDULE

Our security guard makes rounds Monday through Thursday from 6 p.m. until midnight, and on Friday and Saturday from 7 p.m. until 1 a.m. To report neighborhood security issues to the guard or to request his assistance, call him at (646) 722-2240, or call the office of Starr Security at (212) 767-1110.

## What's New at the Website

OUR REGULAR FEATURE "What's New at the Website" reminds readers that the Block Association is here for you with all sorts of resources between newsletters, too. At the website, you'll find contact information for people and groups, a link through which you can donate to the Block Association, a calendar of events, updates about our special initiatives, an archive of the newsletters, and the ever-more-popular blog written by Caitlin Hawke. Her posts cover all sorts

## Help Wanted

THE BLOCK ASSOCIATION is seeking new board members! Our immediate need is for people who are willing to make an ongoing commitment to the Block Association. The best way to keep the organization fresh and moving forward is to welcome new ideas, new leadership, and new energy. Plus, many of our board members have served for decades! Although they agree that it's a satisfying role, they're ready to kick back and/or redirect their energies. Our monthly meetings (second Tuesday of each month, at 8 p.m., 306 W. 102nd St.) are quick and to the point and seldom last more than 90 minutes. Our camaraderie is robust. There are usually cookies. There aren't many circumstances in which you get to share your ideas, have a laugh, and make an impact on your neighborhood without taking more than a few steps from your own front door. Join us by coming to a monthly meeting or email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

### 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.

Oct. 9

Nov. 13

Dec. 11

of topics, including a subject very near to her heart: food. "Hyper Local Eats" is the section in which she features nearby restaurants or particular dishes from them. From "The Naked Tomato" to "Fumin' Cumin," you'll find all kinds of delicacies. See page 7 for her recent ode to the dry hot pot, complete with a how-to guide you'll find useful when assembling your own dish at 108 Food Dried Hot Pot. Find more "Hyper Local Eats" at the blog tab of our website: [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org).

### BLOCK ASSOCIATION UPCOMING EVENTS

#### W. 104th Street Block Association Yard Sale

Sat., Sept. 29  
(see page 3)

#### Tree-Well Cleanup/Mulching

Sat., Oct. 13  
(see page 1)

#### Broadway in Bloom, BMA Benefit

Tues., Oct. 16, 6:00-8:30 p.m.  
(see page 3)

#### Halloween Parade and Party

Wed., Oct. 31, 6 p.m.  
(see page 1)

#### Winter Newsletter

Early Dec.

#### Solstice Caroling

Thurs., Dec. 20, 7 p.m.

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# Greetings from . . . Well, Right Around the Corner!

By KATE MCLEOD

**H**OW OFTEN have I bought just one banana from the fruit cart on the northeast corner of W. 103rd St. and Broadway? Well, countless times. When I turn over a measly 35 cents for one banana, Abdul or his employees don't blink. He's been on our corner for 17 years, selling fruit and bagging one banana—or two. If I am short a dime, he says, "Pay me next time." Customers will often reply, "I'm so happy you trust me."

Like many immigrants, Abdul Kadir did not know a word of English when he came to America on January 1, 1991, from Bangladesh. He was 28. Today, Abdul is our longtime neighbor and he likes being in our neighborhood very much.

When I asked him about this interview, he said, "My English is not good, but okay." In fact, his English is quite good and he attributes his mastery of the language to the generosity of the people around him, especially older people who come and speak English with him. "Some of them have had to explain something ten times to me. And they will sit with me and explain and explain," he says.

And that is part of what he loves about being in this country. More than once in our conversation, Abdul remarks, "This is a beautiful country."

Business at the fruit-and-vegetable stand is "okay." I take that to mean he's not going to buy a new Ford F150 anytime soon. But what he values more than wealth is his independence. Our patronage has supported his family, which includes two grown daughters and his wife, and two employees. And now he has two grandchildren. "Even if it isn't a lot of money, it is my own business. Nobody bothers me. When I came to America, I worked as a painter, I worked at a burger place on 101st St., and at a Whole Foods. Then I said, I'm

not going to work for anybody else and I started this.

"At first I worked between five and seven days. Now I work three or four days and my employees work the same amount. And my wife helps out when she can. We're always on our feet and moving, so it is hard."

As for the customers, he tells me that often a buyer will pick only fruits or vegetables that have no spots. That is not the way to get the best. It should be ripe and, in many cases, have a fragrance, not necessarily look "perfect," he says.

Abdul has medical issues with his leg. It is difficult to be standing all the time and worse when it is freezing outside. In the winter months he will go back to Bangladesh and take time off. But the fruit-and-vegetable stand keeps going. The two employees who work with him, whom he found through Bangladesh village connections, tend the "store" when he is gone.

Does he miss his original home? Sometimes he misses the flavors in the jackfruit and the mangoes, but not much else. He does not have family in Bangladesh and he is ever grateful that his daughters have college educations and skills. "My older daughter finished college and she has a good job. My younger daughter is finishing her degree in accounting. My wife is looking out for my granddaughters when the girls are working and studying.

Has he had any trouble? "My employees have been robbed a couple of times. I tell them to let it go. They will take \$200. It isn't worth your life. Mostly, I am not a weak guy. I'm not scared of people. If you stand up, they say okay.

"I worked in three or four places before this. Now I am selling fruit. I feel it is very comfortable. I don't see anyone as bad. If you are good to people, you don't have a problem. I'm such a lucky guy."



## Events of Interest to Locals

**T**HERE ARE THREE EVENTS COMING UP that residents might want to mark on their calendars:

The W. 104th Street Block Association Yard Sale, our neighbor group to the north's annual fund-raising event, is scheduled for Sat., Sept. 29, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Walk from West End Ave. down to Riverside Dr., and you can browse the crafts, buy a snack, enter the raffle, and possibly rekindle an old friendship. Tables were still available when our newsletter was compiled; vendor fee is \$60. More information is available at the group's website: [bloomingtondale.org](http://bloomingtondale.org).

Also on Sat., Sept. 29, you can attend Art in the Park at Straus Park the (rain date is Sun., Sept. 30). Between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., artists will sell their work, and musicians will perform—this year it's the Blue Vipers of Brooklyn. Find more information at [fospark.com/events](http://fospark.com/events).

On Tues., Oct. 16, the Broadway Mall Association (BMA) will hold its annual fall fund-raising event, Broadway in Bloom, at Calle Ocho (45 W. 81st St.), from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. BMA beautifies and maintains the Broadway malls, which run from W. 70th St. up to W. 168th St., as well as curating the changing public art exhibitions that punctuate them, and arranging for the annual winter lighting, usually scheduled for just after Thanksgiving. Individual ticket prices begin at \$45 for those under age 35; tickets are \$60 for those older. Sponsorships that include free tickets are also available. Find more information under the Our Programs tab at [broadwaymall.org](http://broadwaymall.org).



# Meet Your Talented Neighbors

By JULIA C. SPRING

**A**RT EXHIBITS AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCES FOR YOUR SUMMER PLEASURE.

A play, an exhibit, and music classes/performances—take your pick.

## NEW PLAZA CINEMA

Keep updated on where this new venture is showing independent films like those that were at the late, lamented Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. Through Labor Day they were partnering with Symphony Space, so presumably the website will have a new announcement as we get into fall: [newplazacinema.com](http://newplazacinema.com).

## KATE MCLEOD

Kate has a new play, *By the Light*, premiering on **Sun., Sept. 30, 2 p.m.**, at the New Jersey Repertory Company, 179 Broadway, Long Branch, NJ. She says: "A young man sets off on a journey . . . looking for himself. And he could never imagine . . . who he would find." Information on tickets and directions at [njrep.org](http://njrep.org) or (732) 229-3166.

## BETSY GOLDBERG

Betsy's recent paintings—many of the neighborhood—will be in the neighborhood, at the Master Gallery, 310 Riverside Dr., at the corner of 103rd St., November into December. The opening reception is on **Thurs., Nov. 1, 7 p.m.**

## BLOOMINGDALE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Right at 323 W. 108th St., between Broadway and Riverside Dr., BSM has a full menu of performances for the fall. Here are a few faculty concerts, all on **Fridays at 7 p.m.**: **Sept. 28**, African percussion music; **Oct. 19**, duets for guitar and saxophone; **Nov. 16**, piano sonatas of Mozart and Chopin; **Dec. 7**, music for guitar and piano, including Mozart. Check out the website for "concerts & events" (go month by month): [bsmny.org/concerts/september-2018-1](http://bsmny.org/concerts/september-2018-1).

*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 Fall 2018 Newsletter (or beyond) to [creative@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:creative@w102-103blockassn.org). Do it today, before you forget!*

## On Broadway

By KERSTIN HASENPUSCH

### NEWLY OPEN

★ **Melt Feathers Spa**, on W. 99th St. between Broadway and West End Ave., another place to enjoy a massage in the neighborhood, is open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., in the lower-level space below Drybar. Several varieties of massage are offered. Prices range from \$40 to \$140.

★ **Lida's Beauty Lounge**, on the east side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts., a gorgeous new hair salon, is now open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Both men's and women's haircuts are available, as are blowouts, coloring, waxing, and nail salon services.

★ **Spirit Halloween**, on the west side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts., one of our annual neighborhood pop-up stores, is ready to get you into the Halloween spirit with wigs, costumes, makeup, etc.

★ In case you don't have a trip to a mall or an airport in your future, there's now a **Panda Express** on the east side of Broadway between W. 110th and W. 111th Sts.

★ Longtime neighborhood resident Susan Rappaport has reopened her **NuYu Revolution** fitness studio, now on the southwest corner of Broadway and W. 100th St., on the second floor (above the space that was Turkuaz). She offers yoga, indoor cycling, mat Pilates classes, and strength training, with a focus on correct posture. Introductory rates, package rates, and private training are all available.

### WELCOME BACK!

★ **Carmel** car service, on the east side of Broadway between W. 100th and W. 101st Sts., second floor, finally reopened its offices following a fire several years ago.

★ **The Broadway Restaurant**, also closed following a fire, has reopened in its same location, on the east side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts. With an "A" from the health department, the same decor, and the familiar smell of hamburgers, a piece of the old neighborhood is back see our article on page 9.

★ **104 Broadway Farm**, on the southwest corner of Broadway and W.104th St., is no longer open 24 hours. The new store hours are from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. It's a convenient place to grab a bunch of flowers or some good-quality Korean food.

★ **The Citibank** on the southwest corner of Broadway and W. 111th St., also closed for years following a fire, reopened in the same location in a brand-new building.

### SOON TO OPEN?

★ A **CVS Pharmacy** is said to be replacing the Rite Aid on the southwest corner of Broadway and W. 110th St. The single-story profile of the buildings on the block and the number of storefront vacancies suggest that this might be a site slated for redevelopment. If that's the case, which we haven't been able to confirm, will the CVS move in before or after the construction is completed?

### CLOSED

★ **Blondi's** hair salon, on the east side of Broadway between W. 105th and W. 106th Sts., is now located at 447 Amsterdam Ave., between W. 81st and W. 82nd Sts.

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# National Night Out Against Crime, 2018

By CELIA KNIGHT

**T**HE NYPD 24TH PRECINCT'S ANNUAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME event took place this summer at the Happy Warrior Playground (Amsterdam Ave. between W. 98th and W. 99th Sts.) on Tues., Aug. 7. National Night Out is a community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships to help make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. This year's festivities began at 6 p.m. and were supposed to run for three hours, but were cut short after just an hour, as a storm approached the area.

Nevertheless, with dance music pulsing in the background, the precinct's Community Council served refreshments and invited attendees to get acquainted with the various city agencies that set up information tables as police officers and local youth got to know each other. Representatives for several government officials were present, as were 24th Precinct commanding officer Captain Seth A. Lynch and Community Council President Tom Burnett.

The NYPD distributed information about an upcoming neighborhood policing and safety meeting at Church of the Holy Name (207 W. 96th St.). Police department employees also handed out business cards describing the Crime Victim Assistance Program, which helps "individuals and families who are victims of crime or abuse."

Comptroller Stringer's flyer credited New York as being "the safest big city" in America, emphasizing the importance of having the NYPD and the community take a unified approach to "bringing our City into a more just and fair future."

The 24th Precinct Community Council holds monthly meetings throughout most of the year. These meetings typically take place in the precinct house (151 W. 100th St.) on the third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m. For further information, call the precinct house at (212) 678-1811.



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# News From Tri-Bloomingdale

**T**RI-BLOOMINGDALE is our initiative, together with BAiP and the W. 104th St. Block Association, to offer neighbors even more opportunities to connect. We're looking for someone to lead a book group or other activities that would appeal across generations and across these three organizations. Contact Caitlin Hawke with your ideas: [chawke@bloominplace.org](mailto:chawke@bloominplace.org).

And don't forget:

For brisk walkers, our Tri-Bloomingdale Initiative has a fast Sunday-morning walk for you. Meet up at 8 a.m. with neighbors each week and get your heart pumping by walking at a pace of 3.7 MPH. To join, contact [bloomingdaletrio.walk@icloud.com](mailto:bloomingdaletrio.walk@icloud.com).

For local sole proprietors, Tri-Bloomingdale also has something for you! Networking in the Neighborhood is our monthly meet-up group for neighbors running their business from home. Learn best practices and get advice for building your website, managing your social media, handling clients, and dealing with billing. This group ranges from accountants to graphic designers to business consultants and more. For information, contact [bloomingdalenitn@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdalenitn@gmail.com).

## Broadmoor Residents Lose Gas Service

**N**OWADAYS, WHEN A GAS LEAK IS DETECTED, Con Edison responds by shutting down gas service to the entire building that is involved. Commercial and residential tenants on W. 103rd St. suffered a long service suspension until repairs were completed and inspectors determined that all was well. In August, after residents smelled gas, the Broadmoor's gas service was shut down and is expected to remain off through the fall. If you're a Broadmoor resident and would welcome the opportunity to slide a pie into a neighbor's oven, or if you would be willing to let someone do so, please let us know. Send an email to [bedyfc@nyc.rr.com](mailto:bedyfc@nyc.rr.com).

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# Hyper Local Eats: Choose Your Spice Level

By CAITLIN HAWKE

*Ma la.* If you've ever tasted a Sichuan peppercorn, you know of what I speak. And *ma la* is what you'll get, in literal varying degrees, at 108 Food Dried Hot Pot. How to describe this very specific taste? *Ma la* is to Sichuan cuisine what *umami* is to Japanese cooking. Indispensable. At its mildest, *ma la* is the sensation of a peppery spice that tingles on your tongue. At its strongest, it's a three-alarm fire. But let me assure you that I don't have a high tolerance for spicy, and 108 Food Dried Hot Pot has just the right level for me.

In what was Cannon's Pub on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 108th St., in a cheery, cherry-red storefront, sits 108 Food Dried Hot Pot. It's a humble spot that looks more like a cafeteria or a food court than a mecca for thrill-seekers. When Columbia is in session, watch out, because the turnover and traffic is prodigious. I even know a colleague who travels 3.5 miles down to this spot when the urge hits. He's Taiwanese and claims it's the closest he's come to the food he grew up on. I wouldn't be surprised if Tony Bourdain ate there. It's just his kind of place.

I've warmed progressively to this temple of spice. And here now is an ode to the thing on the menu that people come from all points to devour: the dry hot pot.

First keep in mind that you'll have to choose your spice level. The four-point scale goes from non-spicy, to spicy, then medium spicy, and finally to very spicy. You'll actually have to choose everything. But be thinking about how brave you plan to be. You might want to be incremental and start on the low end of the Sichuan Richter scale.

That will be the last thing you tell the cashier. And she'll repeat the scale at least twice before you make a stab at the level you want. So think on it. Now.

Before you get to that, you are going to be under a little pressure to choose your stir-fry ingredients. Here, too, I

advise prudence. It's priced per pound. Meat, poultry, fish, and shellfish are weighed separately from the veggies and tofu you'll choose. And you want the person who is choosing your ingredients to not have too heavy a hand if you want a variety of ingredients. Again, it's priced per pound.

So you could go surf-and-turf with sole and chicken, shrimp and pork, or focus on the more exotic meat choices like beef tripe and chicken gizzards. But in between, there are many other delicacies to choose from, like squid, shrimp balls, and paper-thin slices of fatty beef.

Once you've conquered the meats, turn to the body of your dish. Stoke it with bok choy, cabbage, string beans, enoki mushrooms, three or four sorts of tofu, eggplant, bean threads, lotus, cellophane noodles, and much more.

Then it's on to the weighing and paying. Since the food is charged by the pound, make sure what you see is what you can eat! A very filling

bowl will run you roughly \$12 to \$14. After you pay, your selections are whisked back into the kitchen, and seven minutes later: Behold the Bowl!

Glistening with the spicy oil—at the heat level you pre-selected—your hot pot arrives with a side of rice. One bite of the filet of sole—slightly crunchy, perhaps, because it was dusted in flour on its way to a sizzling hot skillet—and you know

there's a master chef in the back. Then a bit of chicken: moist and delicious. And the supporting cast of vegetables? All have their crunchy snap. Each element is cooked to perfection and all

together make up a meal, bespoke for you and you alone, unless you prefer to share it.

People are trekking here because the hot-pot spot has drawn raves. And you've been walking by it each week wondering what's going on in there. Wander and wonder no more. Go in. Take your time. Ask for help. And enjoy your creation.

It's not glamorous. And when it's a full house, there can be some bustle. But if you choose your season and the right hour, you are in for one very satisfying, chowhounding meal in the neighborhood. Just remember to spice it right.

108 Food Dried Hot Pot is located at 2794 Broadway (at the southeast corner of W. 108th St.); phone (917) 675-6878. It is open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Online ordering and delivery is available; credit cards are accepted.



## 98TH STREET POTTERS

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# BAiP in the News: Building Community, One Group at a Time

By STEPHAN RUSSO

“AGING IN PLACE” has become a term of art when discussing the realities of growing old and the importance of staying active. “In place” means New Yorkers are not leaving the city or running off to retire elsewhere. Who can blame them? What better place to spend these years than in this beloved city, which offers opportunities for continued personal growth and civic involvement?

As members of the Block Association know, in 2009, a group of active West Side neighbors decided to answer this question for themselves by creating an all-volunteer network called Bloomingdale Aging in Place (BAiP). Their mission was to build community among older adults who lived in our area. Residents were surveyed about what was most needed to help their elderly neighbors stay in their homes. The overwhelming response was the need for an active social life and connection to other residents who were concerned about feeling isolated.

Fast-forward nearly 10 years, and what began as a handful of volunteer group activities and helping-hand visits has blossomed into a full-blown organization with more than 1,200 members, 70 group activities, and panel discussions and social events organized by the volunteers themselves.

Why are efforts like BAiP so necessary today? The data is very clear about the shifts in our population. The Baby Boomers, the generation that is now leaving the workforce, is becoming one of the fastest-growing demographics. In New York City alone, the Department for the Aging projects that by 2040 the number of residents over the age of 60 will rise to close to 2 million — more than 20 percent of the population.

I recently joined BAiP, having retired last year from a career in the nonprofit sector. I also just turned 67 and am facing the challenge of figuring out how to spend my next 20-

plus years. Last November, when my 92-year-old mother decided she could no longer tolerate the NYC winters, I moved her to a senior residence in Florida. I recognized, through helping her, how challenging life can be as the aging process kicks into high gear.

This past spring, I attended a BAiP panel discussion led by two knowledgeable attorneys titled “Over My Dead Body.” I thought there would be few attendees, but when I entered the Bloomingdale Library on W. 100th St., there were about 100 people gathered to learn about wills, revocable trusts, health proxies, and what happens to your apartment if you live alone and die at home. (Did you know that you could disinherit your children but not your spouse?)

Want to feel uplifted? Sit in on one of BAiP’s activities.

Arlene Seffern is 82 years old, and used to work in a knitting store on Broadway. She also spent part of her working life as a bookkeeper at several nonprofit organizations. Arlene felt that she had a special artistic ability. Her weekly BAiP knitting group has become a godsend to her. “Every time I am in my knitting group, my face lights

up,” Arlene says. “I get so much joy out of teaching the group, and the members care deeply for each other. When one group member was having cataract surgery and had no one to be with her, another member picked her up and stayed with her.”

This is a wonderful example of what BAiP calls N2N—its neighbor-to-neighbor program—and considers a core organizing principle. Caitlin Hawke, one of the many forces behind BAiP, characterizes the effort as “connecting democracy to action.”

“It’s a balancing act between having a structure and encouraging members to create opportunities themselves,” Hawke says.

Membership is open if you live within the area bounded by W. 96th and 110th Sts., from Riverside Dr. to Central Park West. To learn how more about BAiP and how you can become involved, visit [bloominplace.org](http://bloominplace.org) or call (212) 842-8831.

*Stephan Russo is the former executive director of Goddard Riverside Community Center and a member of BAiP.*

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# The Neon Lights Are Bright Again on Broadway

By DAYLE VANDER SANDE

**S**PRINGING WEST FROM THE SEAT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION to the Upper West Side, Greece's greatest legacy to New York City may arguably be the institution of the diner. The Broadway Restaurant has survived half a century at its current Bloomingdale location, on the east side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts., and nearly four decades of that time under the proprietorship of cousins Chris and Angelo Arsenis.

Nothing much has changed over the years—from the retro sign above the door to the wagon-wheel chandeliers hanging over the classic U-shaped counter in the center of the room. And Chris maintains that his longtime loyal customers like it as it is and don't want him to update a thing. Indeed, time has lent a nostalgic charm to the unassuming interior, which also turns Broadway into Hollywood with glamour shots of actors from its golden age. Some of the same patrons still frequent the restaurant from the time when Chris and Angelo first bought the business in 1980. Chris reflects that "customers feel like family." Several of the employees have worked with them for 10 to 20 years. One chef, now deceased, was a 28-year veteran in the kitchen. Chris and Angelo's cousin Tony Arsenis has served as a waiter since the beginning.

It's a family business, and when you meet the Arsenises, you'll come to know some of the nicest people you would ever want to have as neighbors! The family hails from Patras, Greece, where Chris was a young farmer learning about food, literally from the ground up. When the family moved to Astoria in 1970, the enterprising young men opened a diner in the West Village, and then saw an opportunity to buy the business in Bloomingdale, where they could be the only game in town. Reportedly, in those days, there were lines out the door at

6 a.m. In time, competition mounted as other restaurants opened and tastes demanded trendier trends, so business is not quite what it once was.



Tony and Chris Arsenis at the Broadway.

Photo: Dayle Vander Sande

Yet today, daily specials and low prices make for loyal return customers, and more than just being a bargain, the food at the diner is quite fine. For dinner, I ordered one of the most "dinery" of selections on that day's menu, the Yankee pot roast. It was delicious and beautifully presented.

There were no issues with substituting a second vegetable for the potato, and even the salad was arranged attractively on its plate. It's the extra mile that brings a smile. My dinner partner ordered a classic turkey club on rye, which was moist and satisfying. Fries included! For dessert, I ordered the rice pudding, since it is made on the premises. Truly, it's the best rice pudding you'll find anywhere! I brought my mother a slice of their lemon meringue pie—her favorite—which was made to perfection: not too sweet and with a perfect balance of lemon to meringue. It got the thumbs-up, and you can certainly rely on that endorsement. Chris recommends the hamburgers, which are made fresh to order, and breakfast is unbeatable: two eggs, coffee, juice, and toast for \$6.95! The pancakes and French toast are prepared fresh, as well. Breakfast is served till noon on weekdays and till 3 p.m. on weekends.

Chris boasts that theirs is the best coffee around. People come early before their commute and directly after work for a mug of the famous brew. The menu is amazingly extensive, chock full of everything you would expect from an old-timey New York coffee shop,

including standard Greek dishes and the now elusive egg cream.

Sadly, on this past New Year's Day, the Broadway Restaurant endured a fire, and due to complications owing to insurance and utility companies doing their worst, the shutters were closed for six months, leaving devotees nervous that another longtime establishment would fade into oblivion. Happily, Chris and Angelo reopened just two months ago, and one would never suspect such a disaster ever occurred. However—and it hardly bears mentioning—costs of running a business on Broadway are pretty high, and we all need a leg up when given a second chance. If you have ever been a patron, now is the time to return. If you have not yet been a patron, try it, and I promise you will return time and again.

The website makes it easy to order online, and of course they offer free delivery and on-site takeout. But part of the thrill is stepping back in time when you cross the threshold. To find it, just look for the neon lights—as you're walkin' down that street and ain't got enough to eat—on Broadway.

The Broadway Restaurant is located at 2664 Broadway (between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts.); (212) 865-7074; open daily 6:30 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.; credit cards are accepted; [broadwayrestaurantnewyork.com](http://broadwayrestaurantnewyork.com).

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