



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2015

VOL.45, NO.1

## Help Out at Our Annual Spring Bazaar on May 16

**F**OR THE TWELFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, the Block Association is pleased to present the very popular Spring Bazaar/Block Party/Tag Sale/Yard Sale. It will be open to all on Sat., May 16 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on W. 103rd St. between West End Ave. and Riverside Dr. The rain date is Sun., May 17.

The coordinator of the event is, once again, Bob Aaronson, a W. 103rd St. resident. If you have general questions

after reading this article and visiting the Block Association website ([w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org)), then call him at (212) 662-4046 or email him at [yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org). As you read about all of the various activities that take place at the event, please consider volunteering to help one of them run smoothly. Whether you have only an hour to spare or would like to take on a bigger role, we badly need your help!

**Included in the bazaar are:**

◆ **Vendor Spaces:** De-cluttering? Got valuable stuff to sell? Since more than 1,000 people pass through in the course of the day, it's a great sales opportunity. If you want a space, please go to the Block Association website (address above) and click on on "2015 Spring Bazaar" for an application and detailed information. If you have specific questions that aren't answered on the website please email Anthony Bellov at [vendors@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:vendors@w102-103blockassn.org). Space is limited and last year's vendors have already been contacted, so don't wait to apply.

◆ **Live Music:** Classical? Pop? Jazz? World? Would you like to present? Contact [music@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:music@w102-103blockassn.org).

◆ **Split-Pot Raffle:** Last year's winner took home almost \$1,000. We'll be selling raffle tickets during the weeks preceding the event as well as on the day of. Buy early and often!

◆ **Refreshments:** Vendors and customers alike get hungry so we always offer a variety of refreshments. Would you be willing to coordinate the refreshments table? Can you put in an hour or two serving at it, have resources or ideas for it, or are willing to make a donation?

Contact [food@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:food@w102-103blockassn.org).

◆ **Fun Family Activities:** Face-painting, caricaturists, and on-demand poetry are a few entertainments we've offered. It adds a wonderful artistic flavor to the atmosphere. Let us know what you'd like to see and what you might be able to do. Contact [yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org).

◆ **Silent Auction:** Neighbors bid on donations from neighborhood restaurants, service providers, and performers. If you'd be willing to help solicit

donations from local merchants (it's especially easy if you're already a regular customer) or to make a donation (a few days at your weekend house, tickets to a sports event or a performance, or a gift certificate you're not likely to use, for example), please contact [auction@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:auction@w102-103blockassn.org).

◆ **Community Table:** If you don't care to have your own table yet want to part with like-new or gently used toys, *(Continued on page 8)*

## ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR MARCH 11

**IN RECENT MONTHS**, the Block Association board has received questions or complaints about a variety of housing-related issues such as the stalled West End Ave. historic district, zoning that allows vertical extension of existing buildings, and harassment of seniors by landlords. Consequently, we've organized our Wed., Mar. 11 annual meeting (7 p.m. at 230 W. 103rd St.) with the theme: "Housing Issues: How Can We Help Ourselves Stay Put?" We've invited a variety of speakers, including our local elected politicians and other community leaders, to share their thoughts and field your questions. Please come and work with us for positive changes.

As we do each year at the meeting, we will also honor residents who have lived in the neighborhood for 50 years or more. If you know anyone who qualifies, please contact Hedy Campbell at [hedyfc@nyc.rr.com](mailto:hedyfc@nyc.rr.com) or (212) 865-8524. Additionally, a recap of the prior year's events and the 2014 financial report will be presented and an election for the board of directors will take place. For more information about this event contact [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

**STREETSCAPE**



1942, ROBERT F. BYRNES COLLECTION OF AUTOMAT MEMORABILIA, NYPL

Two views of what was originally the Horn & Hardart building. Originally constructed in 1930 by F. P. Platt & Bro., the three-story building is clad in limestone and adorned with Art Deco, polychrome, terra-cotta panels. In addition to the Automat, which closed in 1954, the building has housed a mini-golf course, billiards and



LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION ©1980

ping pong emporia, a health club, various other restaurants and grocery stores, and was, in 1956, temporary housing for the Bloomingdale branch library's children's room, and various community organizations, including the recent El Taller. The Landmarks Preservation Commission designated it a landmark in January 2007.

**HELP WANTED:**

**LIAISON TO WORK WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Although the Block Association has a long history of interacting with other groups, we recently launched an initiative to make our interactions with the 104th Street Block Association and Bloomingdale Aging in Place more regularly ongoing. As a result, we need someone willing to be the contact person for our group when issues pertaining to Tri-Bloomingdale matters arise. That person doesn't necessarily need to be involved with each of the programs that are created—a walking group and a small-business-owner networking group are already up and running, complete with leadership (see page 3). He or she needs to be willing to interface with the Block Association board when new ideas are proposed and to help identify candidates to lead the subgroups when needed. If you can take on this role, please contact [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org).

**THE WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION,**

[info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org)

**NEWSLETTER** Published four times each year. Hedy Campbell, editor. 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. Recent 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** Your contributions to the Block Association provide funding for our street guards. Rafael Hernandez makes rounds Tuesday through Saturday; Roy Chavarriaga is on duty Sunday and Monday. Guards patrol weekdays from 5 p.m. until midnight and from 6 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.

**BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**

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

**March 10, April 14, and May 12, 306 W. 102nd St. at 8:00 p.m.**

**Upcoming Events**

**ANNUAL MEETING:**  
Wed., March 11, 7 p.m. (see page 1)

**SPRING PLANTING AND TREE WELL CLEANUP:**  
Sat., May 2, 9:30 a.m. (see page 5)

**SPRING BAZAAR:**  
Sat., May 16, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
(see page 1)

**SUMMER NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**  
June 1

TriBloomingdale:

## Come Walk and Network with Your Neighbors!

As BOB DYLAN SINGS, "Something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you Mr. Jones?" That something is an informal effort among three community organizations: our Block Association, our neighboring association on W. 104th Street, and Bloomingdale Aging in Place (BAiP). Taking its name from our locale, the TriBloomingdale Initiative is spearheaded by one representative from each of the three groups: Hedy Campbell (W. 102-W. 103), Mary Koval (W. 104) and Caitlin Hawke (BAiP).

To date, there are two tri-organizational offerings: The first is the brisk Sunday morning walk (*bloomingdaletriowalk@icloud.com*) at which neighbors from all three groups are welcome at any time. Most walks are in Central Park. Neighbor Bob Flanagan says he joined in the walks to get in his daily exercise. He's become intrigued by BAiP's mission, having heard more from talking to other walkers.

The second offering, Networking in the Neighborhood (NITN), kicked off in early February and drew several dozen sign-ups. The theory behind it is that Bloomingdale, which is what our area was originally called, is awash with entrepreneurs and sole proprietors who work from home. It can get lonely out there, so having a hyper-local network provides layers of advantages: immediate access to expertise and ease of connectivity to name just two. The Metro Diner could become this group's proverbial watercooler! NITN will meet monthly (*bloomingdaleNITN@gmail.com*).

To learn more about these groups, take a look at our blog: [w102-103blockassn.org/blog.html](http://w102-103blockassn.org/blog.html).

If you have an idea for another activity, please email [blog@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:blog@w102-103blockassn.org).

## Want to Ride a Bicycle?

By PETER FRISHAUF

**DID YOU KNOW** that CitiBike will be arriving in our neighborhood in 2016?

Did you know that you can suggest station locations and/or vote to support stations others have already suggested? Well, you can!

Go to this Department of Transportation website and click on the heart: [nycbikeshare.herokuapp.com/](http://nycbikeshare.herokuapp.com/).

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## BAiP: AGING IN PLACE LOOKS BACK AND AHEAD

By LYDIA DUFOUR

“GONE ICE-SKATING,” you might hear in the morning, or “brisk walking,” or “to tai chi class.” Others might curl up in a chair to read the book group’s selected title. As the day draws to a close, still others attend a wine-tasting or a dinner in the neighborhood. These are just a few of the many volunteer-led, BAiP activities that engage area residents in healthy, enriching, and enjoyable ways. By the end of last year, the number of activities we offer had doubled! Now one can find assistance with computer glitches or other technical problems, seek a referral for a piano tuner or a podiatrist, request companionship for a stroll to Straus Park, or arrange for help with grocery shopping.

We held our annual holiday party at the Marseilles Residence on Dec. 18. It was even better attended than ever, to the delight of guests as well as the organizers who planned, decorated, brought food, and saw to it that everyone was entertained with music, a trivia quiz, and prizes. The party is BAiP’s way of expressing its deep thanks to the residents and staff of the Marseilles for their hospitality throughout the year. Particular thanks are due to Laura Jervis, Maria Chiluisa, Karen Reyes-

Negron, and Sonia Mendez, as well as to all of the Marseille’s doormen and janitorial staff. BAiP members are all very grateful for the work they do.

Thanks to loyal volunteers and generous donors, BAiP began 2015 with optimism and renewed resolve to build community in meaningful, helpful ways. Toward this effort, three new board members—Miriam Cukier, Ruth Helfrich, and Linda Seidel—were welcomed at the January board meeting.

Going forward, what we need most is access to spaces in which groups larger than those that already meet in members’ apartments can be accommodated. A newly-formed search committee will continue to try to identify suitable places that are close by and accessible. Suggestions are welcome.

We’re also searching for volunteers to serve as building representatives, to distribute flyers (announcements of BAiP panels, Flu Shot availability, and other programs) and to make sure that the elderly residents in area buildings know what BAiP has to offer. Several buildings in particular, 240 W. 102nd St., 235 W. 103rd St., and 885 West End Ave. currently have no building reps. If you are interested please contact [buildingreps@bloominplace.org](mailto:buildingreps@bloominplace.org).

## With Block Association Sponsorship, Orfeo Duo Receives Grant

“WHAT A NEIGHBORHOOD!,” the very popular 11-year-old program created by siblings Vita and Ishmael Wallace, has been awarded a grant this year by The Fund for Creative Communities for their project: “Creating Worlds Together.” The grant program is sponsored by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Decentralization Program of the New York State Council on the Arts. At the Orfeo Duo website, the Wallaces define the aims of the What a Neighborhood program this way: “Our goals are to inspire and encourage composers and other neighbors, to develop grassroots support for new American music, and to draw neighbors together, nurturing a strong sense of community that includes all of the diversity of our area. We are engaged in urban farming: cultivating music, the food of love.” The Block Association’s connection to the pair is as fiscal conduit; we provide documentation that establishes our group as bona fide, receive the grant funds, and then disseminate them to the duo, a service we’re pleased to provide.

## Verizon Considers Making FiOs Available

AS YOU MAY already know, Verizon’s fiber optic Internet service is not currently available on our blocks. Bringing in the necessary fiber optic lines is an expensive investment that the company has so far been unwilling to make. However, they will now provide the service if residents indicate that there is sufficient interest. Residents at 300 Riverside Dr. are spearheading an effort to request the service from Verizon. In order to be successful, however, other buildings on the block will also have to request it. If there is sufficient interest in your building, contact the NYC Verizon FiOs Real Estate Department by calling 888-364-3467 or emailing [NYCFiOs@verizon.com](mailto:NYCFiOs@verizon.com).

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## VOLUNTEER TO HELP OUT ON MAY 2: Spring Planting and Cleanup Day

EVERY YEAR, NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS spend a day cleaning up the tree wells on our blocks. We turn and fertilize the soil and plant annual flowers. The Block Association supplies the plants, work gloves, tools, mulch, fresh soil, and fertilizer. We need you to give an hour or two on Sat., May 2 to ensure that our street trees will have a good growing season and that our blocks will be flower-filled this spring and summer.

This is a great event for children—bring your kids! Don't worry if you've never done any gardening; neighbors will be on hand to offer tips and quick demonstrations as needed.

Plants and tools will be available for pick-up at the staging area in front of 878 West End Ave. starting at 9:30 a.m. The rain date is May 3. If you can, please let us know in advance if you plan to participate. You can email the ecology committee at [trees@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:trees@w102-103blockassn.org). If not, just show up!

This event survives on donations we collect on the day of the event. Even if you can't help plant, please stop by to make a contribution. Or, add something extra when you make your contribution to the Block Association. Your generosity will be visible to every person who walks by. Thank you!

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### 2014 Year-End Financial Report

BY SUE MADERER, *Treasurer*

The Block Association reported a 4.5% increase in total income and a 5% increase in expenses for calendar year 2014. We were able to maintain a net surplus of approximately \$3,500. We had a number of new contributors, but the total number of contributors compared to the total population of the neighborhood is still disappointingly low. Newsletter advertising (thank you, Jane Hopkins) increased again this year; the income pays for newsletter expenses. Yard sale income was up this year as well. Security guard costs remained stable despite a small increase in cost.

#### Income

Individual Contributions	\$ 24,000
Building Contributions	\$ 14,000
Yard Sale	\$ 5,100
Newsletter Ads	\$ 5,500
Other Income	\$ 1,300
Total Income	\$ 49,900

#### Expenses

Guard Service	\$ 38,700
Printing	\$ 4,800
Dues & Contributions	\$ 1,400
Events	\$ 1,200
Operating Expense	\$ 300
Total Expenses	\$ 46,400

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## CROWD OF CAROLERS OUTDOES ITSELF!

By HEDY CAMPBELL

**H**AVE YOU EVER RUN AN EVENT FOR SEVERAL (LIKE 20) years running? Just when you think that you've gotten to know the ins and outs, you may find yourself thrown for a loop. That's what happened to me this year, when more than 100 people—easily 25 percent more than we've ever had before—showed up for our annual caroling party! The group could barely make it across West End Ave. in one light change. If I knew what to attribute the increase to, I would make sure to do it exactly the same way again next year! Perhaps the recent increase in synergy among the Block Association and Bloomingdale Aging in Place and the 104th Street Block Association is in part the explanation, which is good news, as that relationship is ongoing.

Despite the surprise in attendance, the event went off without a hitch. The temperature was just right: cold enough to feel like winter but not so cold that we had to rush through our blessing of the blocks and our three-part round rendition of "The 12 Days of Christmas" outside of 300 Riverside Dr. The shortage of song sheets gave rise to the brilliant idea of making them downloadable to smartphones, solving the perennial problem of dim lighting to boot. And the crush meant fewer leftovers wanting cleaning up.

Thanks to Anthony Bellov and Dayle Vander Sande for ably leading us around our circuit. Thanks to the co-op board and management of 310 Riverside for allowing us to stage our post-caroling refreshments in the Riverside lobby. Thank you to David Reich for the loan of his hot plate, and to Mildred Speiser for babysitting the cider pot while the cider warmed, ensuring the safety of building residents and the pleasure of the intrepid carolers all at once. The winter solstice falls on Tues., Dec. 22 this year. Perhaps that's when we'll walk and sing again. Come fall, check the Block Association website for confirmation of the date, keep your eye out for a festive flyer in your building lobby, or look for an announcement in next December's newsletter.

## Building Matters Affect Residents

**W**E'VE BEEN MADE AWARE OF SEVERAL PROJECTS that will be of interest to residents with an interest in architecture, historic preservation, and development.

A bit south of us, on the west side of West End Ave. between W. 94th and W. 95th Sts., an eight-story addition to an existing six-story building has been proposed by a developer. The project is a reminder that the proposal to create a historic district that runs the entire length of West End Ave., which was announced at our annual meeting in 2010!, has not yet been approved. In fact, although the section referred to as Extension 1, covering W. 79th St. to W. 87th St. was approved unanimously in 2012, the upper sections of the project haven't even made it onto the Landmarks Preservation Commission calendar for discussion. If that seems wrong to you, get in touch with Landmarks West!, a preservation organization working hard to support the designation of the area as a landmark.

Closer to home, 315 W. 103rd St. has new owners. Construction that had been begun on the building was halted in progress several years ago after residents reported very serious concerns about the project, particularly concerning the veracity of the building permits that were filed. We hope that the residents, who have been living in untenable conditions, will soon be able to negotiate a successful outcome.

Right next door, at the two building co-op that includes 317 and 319 W. 103rd St., an extension is being built on top of the building.

Last fall, a representative of the Hotel and Motel Trades Council came to one of our monthly meetings to speak to us about the unregulated conversion of apartment buildings to hotels. As a result of that meeting, the Block Association has gone on record with the appropriate city agencies as being in favor of legislation that requires building owners to apply for a special permit before they can make such a conversion.

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## Nostalgia Is In! Long Live Nostalgia!

**A**ND THE BLOG ON THE BLOCK Association website is an ideal place to collect old-time images of our neighborhood. Called "Throwback Thursday—Bloomingdale Edition," the feature is a take on the meme that is burning up social media. Here, the intention is to reveal vintage photos of our area from eras past.

Several neighbors have provided leads on great old images. And now, I hope that newsletter readers will help piece together what our neighborhood

looked like back in the day. Please send me photographs with context enough to show what our neighborhood looked like in decades past. Have you lived here since the 1980s? Or did you move in in the 70s, 60s, or 50s? Do you have a pile of old photos that show the storefronts of yore? A streetscape with old cars parked curbside? If it was shot in Bloomingdale and it is at least 30 years old, then it is perfect fodder for a "throwback" post.

Email me ([blog@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:blog@w102-103blockassn.org)) and send me your golden oldie pho-

tos. (I can arrange help with scanning if you don't have the capacity to digitize old pictures.) Every Thursday, I'll post a new blast from the past.

If you are not a regular visitor to the Block Association's website, and have not read the blog, you are missing eclectic news from the nooks and crannies of our neighborhood. Take a look at it sometime: [w102-103blockassn.org/blog](http://w102-103blockassn.org/blog). If you wish, you can make sure you never miss a post by subscribing at [tinyurl.com/subscribeBAblog](http://tinyurl.com/subscribeBAblog).

**MEET YOUR TALENTED NEIGHBORS**

*Several exciting performances will take place in early to mid-March, so look right away at the first three listings below.*

By JULIA C. SPRING

**MARY JO PAGANO**

Mary Jo, founder and artistic director of the Chamber Music Center of New York, presents two concerts in the near future. The first is on Fri., Mar. 6 at 7:00 p.m. in her home. It is a benefit concert featuring faculty and students performing chamber music by Corelli, Menotti, Wolf, and Viotti. Italian food and wine will be served. Contact Mary Jo at [MJ-Pagano@chambermusiccenter.com](mailto:MJPagano@chambermusiccenter.com).

On Sat., Mar. 4 at 6:30 p.m., the organization will present a free chamber music and orchestra concert at St. Michael's Church, W. 99th St. between Broadway and Amsterdam Ave. Works by Beethoven, Bach, Schumann, Vivaldi, and others will be performed.

**CHARLES WUORINEN**

"It Happens Like This," Charles's cantata to poetry by James Tate, will be performed by members of the Metropolitan Opera, James Levine conducting, on Mar. 8 at 5:00 p.m. in Zankel Hall. Get tickets at the Carnegie Hall website.

**ANTHONY BELLOV and DAYLE VANDER SANDE**

The Bond Street Euterpean Singing Society, arts group in residence at the Merchant's House Museum, presents "Farewell, Father, Friend and Guardian—A Musical Elegy Commemorating President Lincoln's Death" on Sun., Apr. 26, 7:30 p.m. At the time of Lincoln's assassination 150 years ago, the family that lived in this now-landmarked and restored home at 29 E. 4th St., between Lafayette and the Bowery, gathered to observe the tragedy. Perhaps these elegies and lullabies, composed by leading musicians of the time and now rarely performed, were sung then. Visit [merchantshouse.org](http://merchantshouse.org) for ticket information.

**TEMMA EHRENFELD**

Temma's 10-year old poetry circle meets in her West End Avenue apartment the second Tues. of each month, at 7:30 p.m.; participants share poetry they enjoy and poetry they have written, about half and half. You need not be a poet, only a somewhat knowledgeable poetry-lover. Contact [expertediting@rocketmail.com](mailto:expertediting@rocketmail.com) if you would like to know more.

Temma also has a short story, "Before Some Beauty," in the current issue of the

*Chicago Quarterly Review* and a poem, "After the New Mexico Wedding" in the current issue of *Catamaran Literary Reader*. Both are available online.

**JULIA SPRING**

I will have a short memoir essay, "Group Therapy Replaces the Tribe," in the Spring 2015, online issue of *Smoky Blue Arts and Literature Magazine*. Other memoir pieces by Julia have appeared in *Blood and Thunder: Musings on the Art of Medicine and Hospital Drive*.

**LEE SEINFELD**

Lee, the owner of Broadway Dive, between W. 101st and W. 102nd St., has offered his bar to local artists who would like to display their work and have a small opening celebration. If you're interested, contact Lee at (203) 912-4842.

**MARK DANNA**

In the December 2014 arts column, there were errors in the entry about Mark. See a puzzle he created just for us below. He uses the pen name Tricky Ricky Kane only for his syndicated "Wordy Gurdy" puzzle; his other works, including word search books and his new puzzle calendar, are under his own name. Also his correct email is [puzzlestogo@gmail.com](mailto:puzzlestogo@gmail.com). Contact him at that address for customized puzzles.

**Annual Spring Bazaar** (Continued from page 1)

games, CDs/DVDs, art, crafts, or household items in good working order (but no clothing), donate it and we'll sell it. We'll need staffers to sort and price merchandise, and to work at the table. Beginning Mon., May 2, you can drop items off with the doorman at 240 W. 102nd St. between the hours of 8 a.m. and midnight. Email [commtable@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:commtable@w102-103blockassn.org).

◆ **Recycling:** We'll be accepting textiles (used clothing, curtains, linens, throw rugs, etc.) for recycling and providing information about recycling options, in general. Electronics recycling is now the responsibility of building managers and owners but if you want/need extra help, let us know by contacting [ewaste@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:ewaste@w102-103blockassn.org).

As you can see, volunteers for each of these aspects of the event are needed in order to make the day successful. In addition, we'll also need able hands to help distribute flyers, coordinate publicity, and help with set up and clean up. Give us an hour or two of your time and we'll give you all the appreciation you could want and the sense of well-being that can only be gained from contributing to one's community. It's also a great way for teenagers to get a taste of community service, perhaps earning needed hours for school. To sign up, get in touch with Bob Aaronson (contact info above).

**PUZZLE**

**Vocal Track**

By MARK DANNA

Insert into the grid, reading across, the last names (or only names) of the seven 7-letter pop singers whose names are given below. If completed correctly, the 7-letter name of another pop singer will be found along the shaded diagonal. Eight letters have been placed to get you started. The singers' names to be placed are: HOUSTON, MADONNA, MANILOW, MINOGUE, RIHANNA, SHAKIRA, STEWART.

						A
M			O			
					O	
						A
					O	
M			O			

See page 8 for answers

RESTAURANT REVIEW

# EATING AUTHENTIC AT CASA MEXICANA

By KATE MCLEOD

THE DEEP RED COLOR of the walls at Casa Mexicana was like a warm embrace when we walked in one frigid, unforgiving winter night. Then we noticed some lovely graphic paintings on the banquette wall. But wait, are those other paintings in the style of Diego Rivera celebrating the working man? Yes, they are. And unless you are going to the Detroit Institute of Arts soon, here's a satisfying school-of-Diego-Rivera fix. Did you know that Nelson Rockefeller had the Diego Rivera murals he'd commissioned for Rock Center destroyed because Rivera painted Lenin into them? As we unbundled ourselves, a couple from New Jersey struck up a conversation and lauded the meal they had just enjoyed. He raved about the skirt steak and she about *carinitas estilo* Michoacan, citrus-marinated pork slow-cooked in a *cazuela* (a kind of pot in which the food is cooked).

We were prepped for a great evening. And then... Despite not liking cinnamon combined with unsweetened chocolate, I went ahead and ordered something with a classic mole sauce. And having never understood combining proteins in one dish, why did I order enchiladas with both shrimp and steak? Despite an extensive menu with plenty of appealing choices, through no fault of the restaurant, it wasn't the best meal I've ever eaten. Yet, because of the incident, I felt compelled to go back before reviewing the restaurant. I'm glad I did. This time I ordered *cochinita pibil*, pulled oven-roasted pork shoulder marinated with *achiote*, fresh lemon juice, and Mexican herbs, served with refried beans, Mexican rice, and corn tortillas. Ever since, I have been dreaming in *cochinita pibil*! My companion had to catch a train

so he ordered something that would come out of the kitchen quickly: a *quesadilla* with skirt steak. It was delicious and hearty. I ordered take out *chile rellenos poblanos* for a friend. She reheated the stuffed poblano chile peppers and consumed every morsel, raving about how good it was. I also discovered that despite my disaffection for *mole* sauce, the kitchen has a gift for producing classic Mexican sauces, especially red cascabel sauce, green poblano sauce, and a white Mexican corn sauce.

Co-owner Eric Vidal shared the secret to the authenticity of the sauces: with his brother and his father, who cooked for 34 years in New York, but mostly in Italian restaurants, the family brought their cousin up from Mexico. "He has worked in some of the most notable restaurants in Mexico City," said Vidal. "He has a nice touch." This combination of talented family members is the reason you experience real Mexican food at Casa Mexicana.

Casa Mexicana serves brunch (weekends from 11:30 to 3), lunch, and dinner. Prices are extremely reasonable, especially if you consider the size of the portions: my *cochinita pibil* was good for three meals! Lunch prices range from \$8 to \$12, brunch from \$9 to \$13, first courses from \$8 to \$13, entrées from \$12 to \$25. There's also a kids' menus with choices for between \$5 and \$6. There is an extensive cocktail menu, a nice wine list with wine by the glass, and some interesting beers are available as well.

Casa Mexicana, is located at 894 Amsterdam Ave. between W. 103rd and W. 104th Sts.; tel. (212) 222-3151; [casamexicananyc.com](http://casamexicananyc.com). Hours are Mon.-Thurs. noon-11p.m.; Fri. noon-midnight; Sat. and Sun. 11:30-11:30.

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R	I	H	A	N	N	A
H	O	U	S	T	O	N
S	T	E	W	A	R	T
M	A	D	O	N	N	A

Vocal Track Puzzle Answer:

The bonus singer on the diagonal is SINATRA.

Reprinted from Workman Publishing's "365 Brain Puzzlers for 2015" Page-a-Day Calendar by Mark Danna & Fraser Simpson.

# On Broadway

By DAVID L. REICH

**FIRST, THE BAD NEWS.** Just a few months ago, Radio Shack, the struggling consumer electronics chain, gussied up its store on Broadway between W. 108th and W. 109th Sts., closed another one on Broadway at W. 93rd St., and then opened a smaller one on the west side of Broadway between W. 96th and W. 97th Sts. Now the company has entered bankruptcy in which it will sell off almost 1800 stores while converting others to include outlets for Sprint cell phone services. The two stores in our neighborhood are scheduled to be closed by Feb. 17, according to bankruptcy documents posted online, though sadly, the employees I spoke with in those stores on Feb. 8 said they had no idea what was happening. If the stores do close, they will add to the 10 other vacant retail properties currently depressing Broadway—and us—between W. 96th and W. 110th Sts. Of those 10, two had been delis occupying two adjacent storefronts.

★ In addition, two stores, the 10-Below low-price merchandise shop that recently showed up with its hand-written signage on the west side of Broadway between W. 100th and W. 101st Sts. and the expansion of Variazioni, also on the west side between W. 98th and W. 99th Sts., are both displaying For Rent signs while continuing to operate.

★ Last June, I reported that The Nutbox, originally a Brooklyn store on Smith St., which expanded to Chelsea and the Village, would be coming to the former Hot & Crusty space on the east side of Broadway between W. 104th and W. 105th Sts. Now it appears that those stores have all closed and there's been no activity in the Broadway space.

★ The future seems to be flickering at the Five Lamps Tavern on the east side of Broadway between W. 105th and W. 106th Sts. Three signs are posted on the front windows. One is a restaurant grade of C, as a result of an inspection back in August that found flies, improperly stored food, and food contact surfaces not properly washed along with four other less critical violations. In case you are eating while reading this,

I won't include the detailed description of the flies. A second sign mentions a Community Board 7 hearing for a new two-year liquor license. This indicates that the ownership of the restaurant is changing. According to John Martinez at CB7, one such change was in the works but fell through. The third sign mentions a hearing at the Department of Consumer Affairs for permission to have outdoor seating in the courtyard behind the restaurant. According to Martinez, there have been a lot of complaints about noise from neighbors in surrounding buildings that share the courtyard.

**NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS.** There are eight new stores and restaurants that have recently opened or have preparations underway for opening on Broadway between W. 96th and W. 100th Sts.

★ Paris Baguette, between W. 96th and W. 97th on the east side of Broadway is an international chain operating in the US mostly in California and the east coast offering breads, pastries, beverages, and sandwiches.

★ Value City Pharmacy is expected to open in April on the east side of Broadway between W. 98th and W. 99th Sts. The owner, Hitesh Patel, worked for five years at a big drug store. He is opening this independent pharmacy to offer drugs at low prices, he says, and "to help out my patients every possible way and develop a great relationship with them."

★ It's been a while since our neighborhood had a stand-alone butcher but one is on its way. Schatzie the Butcher will be moving from his current location on Amsterdam Ave. at W. 87th St. to the former PicNic Market and Café space on the west side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts. In addition to the butcher shop there will be a burger restaurant at the new location, which is expected to open in April.

★ There are now some signs of progress on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 106th St. where two musicians, Daddo Bogich and Merle Chornuk, are expected to open a high-end pizzeria. They have been at it since May of last year but recently the restaurant's façade was put up behind the plywood fence that protects the construction site. No

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word yet on a name for the restaurant or its expected opening date.

★ One block north, at W. 107th St., work on the interior of the new Bank St. Bookstore was visible as the paper covering the windows was removed. The shop is now open for business since their mid-February move from W. 111th St.

★ Work on a new Italian restaurant in the space formerly occupied by the Indian Café on Broadway between W. 107th and W. 108th Sts. is proceeding toward an opening at the end of March. It will have the same menu and the same name as Mezzogiorno, on the corner of Spring and Sullivan Sts. in Greenwich Village, according to Lorenzo, who owns the place with his brother Nick.

★ Keratinbar has opened its third full-service hair salon in New York City on the east side of Broadway between W. 107th and W. 108th Sts. The other two shops are in Chelsea and the Meatpacking district.

★ The former Crumbs Bake Shop on the east side of Broadway between W. 108th and W. 109th Sts. is seeing some construction activity but the contractor won't say who the new tenant will be.

# THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS!

Please accept our apologies! In the December newsletter, we omitted the names of three contributors: the Worman/Chun family in 240 W. 102nd St., and the Malpica and Sachs families in 300 Riverside. We are grateful for all contributions!

## RESIDENTS

### 235 W. 102 St.

Antonino  
Baxter  
Berens  
Cole  
Cox  
Davis  
Ehrhardt  
Fair/Guide  
Kirkpatrick  
Knight  
Koffler  
Lardner  
Leinwall  
Lyman  
O'Hanlon  
Parker  
Paul  
Rabbai  
Rabinowitz  
Rosen/Goertz  
Scott  
Sherman  
Spital  
Stevenson  
Timperley  
Zetlan

### 240 W. 102 St.

Eisenstadt  
Fishman  
Flanagan/Hopkins  
Kalish  
Newman/Mark  
Nissenbaum/Kim  
Reiner/Michelson  
Riehl/Hartsough  
Workman/Miller  
Worman/Chun

### 247 W. 102 St.

Dunn  
Robbins

### 251 W. 102 St.,

Bommarito/Mirsky

### 253 W. 102 St.

Cook/Biggs

### 254 W. 102 St.

Sagi/Moshier

### 307 W. 102 St.

Zakaria/Throckmorton

### 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  
Knox  
Weil

### 320 W. 102 St.

Brail

### 250 W. 103 St.

Agathocleous  
Horwitz/Bolotin  
Issacharoff  
Katzer

Muller  
Rahmani  
Soskin  
Sue/Lin  
Sugarman  
Tauro  
Wall  
Weinstein/Meislin  
Winick

### 303 W. 103 St.

Berger  
Frishauf/Rice

### 305 W. 103 St.

Bertin

### 307 W. 103 St.

Tredanari

### 308 W. 103 St.

Ian  
Verzar

### 312 W. 103 St.,

Aaronson

### 315 W. 103 St.

Danna

### 316 W. 103 St.,

Kleidon/Ahmed

### 855 West End Ave.

Crain  
Henwood  
Solowiejyk/Porjesz

### 858 West End Ave.

Regensburg

### 860 West End Ave.

Agajanian

### 862 West End Ave.

Hewitt

### 865 West End Ave.

Baker  
Beels  
Carroll/Bartlik

### 884 West End Ave.

Carponcy

### 885 West End Ave.

Bernstein/Bowen

### 888 West End Ave.

Fortunato/Moore

### 895 West End Ave.

Friedman

### 900 West End Ave.

Goldstein/Roney

### 905 West End Ave.

Kronenberg

### 910 West End Ave.

Sanders

### 915 West End Ave.

Spring/Miller

### 920 West End Ave.

Stokinger/Maas

### 925 West End Ave.

Tolkow/Woodbury

### 930 West End Ave.

Weiss

### 935 West End Ave.

Rotenberg

### 940 West End Ave.

Waller

### 945 West End Ave.

Wuorinen

### 950 West End Ave.

Babush/Catalano

### 955 West End Ave.

Baney/Bentley

### 960 West End Ave.

Barbor

### 965 West End Ave.

Borinstein/Vartanian

### 970 West End Ave.

Canin

### 975 West End Ave.

Canin/Sauer

### 980 West End Ave.

DeCurtis/MacDowell

### 985 West End Ave.

Eisen/Dworkin

Felton  
Freeman/Norwalk  
Fricke/Klimley  
Garbers/Belth  
Gillman  
Gordon/Lubansky  
Grosos/Fisch  
Issacharoff  
Keane  
Lasher  
Leiman

### 300 Riverside Dr.

Levin

Levine

Levine

Lohr/Trucco

Malatsky

March/Laferrère

McDermott

Pommer

Rogers

Rosenfeld/Stein

Rubel

Seaman/Dapre

Sondik/Greene-Sondik

Straw/Gubitosa

Ward

Yood/Helfrich

### 878 West End Ave.

Adams

Ballerini/Futrelle

Feinberg Alvarez

Frizell/Smith

Harmon

Hill/Schneiderman

Lansdale

Neiman/Camarasana

Sagalyn/Hack

Stearns

Winograd

### 884 West End Ave.

Carponcy

Cary

Colas

Davis

Fisch/Irizarry

Korman/Sher

Pines

Rousseau

### 885 West End Ave.

Bernstein/Bowen

Fortunato/Moore

Friedman

Goldstein/Roney

Kronenberg

Sanders

Spring/Miller

Stokinger/Maas

Tolkow/Woodbury

Weiss

### 299 Riverside Dr.

Bauchner/Weil

Bouwman/Michelson

Dane

del Alamo

Fell/Proessi

Guarino/Arlotta

Holtz/Horowitz

Kastanis

Kaufman

Leidner/Ruden

McLean

Moore  
Reich/Dessel  
Rich  
Shear  
Tedoff  
Titowsky/Price  
Toub/Pagano  
Wagner/Cecil  
Wang/Sedlis  
Zaner

### 300 Riverside Dr.

Abramski

Alfonso/Gouck

Bauman

Caggiano

Cherry/Hudson

Coffman

Corcoran

Davenport

Edelman/Gold

Faux/Willig

Forbes/De Prenger

Greenwald/Struhl

Hudson/Cherry

Levit/Ehrlich

Lipton/Sussman

Livingstone

Lupatkin

Maderer

Malpica

McLeod

Meer

Mills

Mojarro/Greiper

Nierenberg

Parker

Rack/Agnew

Rasmussen

Reich/Greenberg

Rocks

Sachs/Morgan

Schiff

Seget/LaBasse

Serra

Simon

Sinaiko

Smith/Silverman

Themm/Clevenger

Thomas

van Schaardenburg

Vaz/Moebius

Weissberg

Zyberman

### 305 Riverside Dr.

Avidon

Borrell

Colon

Doty

Hoffman

Logan/Stulz

McGinn

Pozen/Bulmon-Pozen

Sandlow

### 310 Riverside Dr.

Anonymous

Bien

Brown

Dixon/Griffin

Dooley

Freeman

Hagiwara

Hagiwara  
Handel  
Huber  
Hugus  
Kelly  
Maffei  
McKinney/Chin  
Ralph  
Sandberg/Lichy  
Speiser  
Turnock  
Wagner  
Wiener  
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Zuger

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254 W. 102 St.  
314 W. 102 St.  
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235 W. 103 St.  
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250 W. 103 St.  
308 W. 103 St.  
309 W. 103 St.  
319 W. 103 St.  
854 West End Ave.  
855 West End Ave.  
856 West End Ave.  
858 West End Ave.  
864 West End Ave.  
866 West End Ave.  
868 West End Ave.  
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