



## WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023

VOL. 53, NO. 1

## Block Party Postponed

**W**ILL YOU MISS IT? We will! We were very much looking forward to hosting a fun-filled day later this spring. The sorry truth is that we didn't have enough personnel for an event of this scope to be successful.

We're not down for the count forever, though. In order to avoid being in the same boat next year, we're starting the planning process now. A portion of our April 11 board meeting will be devoted to getting our ducks in a row so we can make sure to launch a blockbuster of a spring fair next year. Show us that you're interested by attending the meeting and letting us know how you'd like to help or, if you can't attend, contact us at [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

The focus of the fair is two-fold: It's an opportunity to bring the community together as well as a vehicle for raising money. Events of years past have included vendor tables, refreshments, a raffle, recycling, a blood drive, a rummage sale, live music, and a silent auction. What will the components be in 2024? Come to the meeting and let us know what appeals to you and what sort of commitment you'll be able to make. Our next step will be to form a committee to manage the details.

The meeting will take place on Tues., Apr. 11, at 8 p.m., via Zoom. Email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org) to receive the link.

## Annual Meeting Apr. 18: Seeking New Board Members

**T**HIS YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING is scheduled for Tues., Apr. 18, at 7 p.m., via Zoom. Everyone is welcome! If you would like to attend, please RSVP to [annualmeeting@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:annualmeeting@w102-103blockassn.org). We expect to announce this year's special guest shortly. (If you are not already on our email distribution, be sure to join the list by going to [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org) and clicking on the button on the right-hand side of the page. It's a valuable way to stay apprised of our activities between editions of the newsletter.)

This is an opportunity to hear what the Block Association has been up to for the past year and to discover new ways to

## Did You Live Here in 1973?



**D**ID YOU KNOW that the Block Association operates a Neighborhood Hall of Fame for residents of 50 years or more? It's true! We launched it in 2010 and are proud to have inducted 40 people so far. All you have to do to qualify is to have lived within Block Association territory for at least half a century!

What's the territory? W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts. between Riverside Dr. and Broadway, including the south corners of W. 102nd and the north corners of W. 103rd and the buildings on West End Ave. in between.

What's involved? Participants are interviewed and, if they don't mind, photographed (thanks, neighbor Gus Butera). Honorees are introduced at our upcoming Annual Meeting (Tues., Apr. 18, at 7 p.m., via Zoom), and presented with a certificate—suitable for framing! Attendance at the meeting is not required. After the meeting, bios and photos of our newest inductees will be posted on our website.

Click on the "Neighborhood Hall of Fame" tab on our website to read past inductees' bios and see their portraits. If you qualify, or know someone you think might, please contact Hedy Campbell at (212) 865-8524 or [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org).



get involved. As in the past, at the meeting we will introduce this year's inductees into our Neighborhood Hall of Fame for residents of 50 years or more (see article above), and elect new board members.

Indeed, we are looking for new members to join our board, especially since two treasured longtime directors, Bob Aaronson and Sue Maderer, will be stepping down after years of dedicated service. Thanks to them both. Please consider taking an active role in caring for our neighborhood

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

[info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org)  
Hedy Campbell, editor; Amy Edelman, copy editor; Ariana Koblitz, designer; Terence Hanrahan, advertising manager; Avery Hudson, indexer. 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 and the index 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).

*Join our email list by going to the Block Association website ([w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org))*

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Annual Meeting**

Tues., Apr. 18  
7 p.m., via Zoom

(RSVP to [annualmeeting@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:annualmeeting@w102-103blockassn.org))

**Spring Planting**

TBD

**Summer Newsletter**

Early June

# Help Wanted

Thanks to Leland Woodbury for volunteering to help us with our database management!

We have several additional roles to fill. Please read the descriptions and get in touch to let us know which position will work best for you. Whether you prefer a one-shot shift or a small expenditure of effort on a regular basis, we've got a job for you. To volunteer for any of these roles, contact [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

**CO-TREASURER:**

One of our co-treasurers is retiring! Thank you, Sue Maderer, for serving over these many years. We'll need someone to take on her functions, which include picking up the mail from our post office box weekly, making bank deposits as needed, writing checks occasionally, reconciling the checking account monthly, and collaborating with the other co-treasurer, who handles data entry and generating reports. All told, the job requires two to three hours per month.

**SPRING PLANTING COORDINATOR:**

This event has a direct impact on what our blocks look like over the summer, but we need someone to pull the strings of it together. The date can be set to work with your schedule. We can supply all sorts of useful information from years past, so you wouldn't be starting from scratch, and we've allocated a small budget to fund the purchase of plants and other supplies.

**FUNDRAISING**

Although guard service is currently on pause, if we want to reinstate it, the financial shortfall we've recently been experiencing must be addressed. We need someone with fresh eyes who can work with seasoned board members and put some energy toward helping us figure out how we can recapture lapsed contributors and attract new ones.



## 2023 Financial Report

By SUE MADERER AND KOMAL RATHI,  
CO-TREASURERS

Total income compared to the previous year grew 45% (\$15,419) due to a 63% increase in individual contributions and an 87% increase in newsletter advertising. Building contributions declined by 5%. Year-over-year expenses increased 41% (\$15,239), due to an increase in the security-guard expense. Overall, we had a net loss of \$2,200. We thank all donors and advertisers for their contributions.

**Income**

Individual Contributions	\$36,274.24
Building Contributions	9,210.00
Newsletter Ads	4,335.00
Events	127.32
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>49,946.56</b>

**Expenses**

Security Guard	\$45,918.40
Newsletter Production	5,003.31
Operating Expense	588.53
Contributions and Gifts	636.43
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>52,146.67</b>

## BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Block Association meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month at 8 p.m., via Zoom, and are open to all. Email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org) if you'd like to attend.

**Mar. 14**  
**Apr. 11**  
**May 9**

# Youth Ambassadors Excited to Bring W. 103rd St. to Life

By ISABELLA GALLO

**W**. 103RD ST. WILL SOON HAVE its own permanent asphalt art installations. The design ideas and the energy are coming from Park to Park's Youth Ambassadors, six teenagers who are actively involved in making our community a more welcoming and vibrant place for all.

Ibrahim Danso, Shara Hayes, Hawakuly Jallow, Marysol Negron, Marie Valentin, and Kashif Wigfall all grew up on or around W. 103rd St. and went to middle school at West Prep Academy, located on W. 105th St. That's where they were mentored by Cidalia Costa, the Magnet School Specialist, who recruited them for this paid opportunity. Funded by a grant from the Department of Transportation, the program allows the ambassadors to engage with and impact their community while learning about urban planning, organizing, and networking.

Costa said that being part of Park to Park's events and designing asphalt artwork—both rendering sketches and doing the painting—was a chance for the ambassadors to “help in their community and offer their opinions as stakeholders in what happens around here, too.”

Taking an active role as a stakeholder is something that Marysol, now a high school junior, finds rewarding. “Being able to design something and place it on an area that may not have . . . a good interpretation or perspective and changing it so that we can attract more people and see more of the community,” she says, “is something that I really enjoy doing.”

Staffing the Open Street events is also something she relishes, recalling how she and the other ambassadors helped create dog-inclusive artwork during the (B)arking Day event last fall.

“We love having [the Youth Ambassadors] for events. They talk to people, they help people, they make people feel comfortable” says Costa.



Marysol and fellow ambassadors Marie Valentin and Shara Hayes helping set up the Park(ing) Day event in September 2022

As all ambassadors have connections to Douglass and the surrounding community, they're right at home welcoming people into the Open Street's activities.

Those connections are essential to their involvement in the transformation of W. 103rd St. “It's really important to them and to me that they feel represented in the asphalt art,” says Costa.

One asphalt art installation is planned for Amsterdam Ave., fronting Hostelling International and the Frederick Douglass NYCHA campus entrance. The other is planned for the corner on the west side of Broadway, wrapping around the Marseilles.

*Isabella Gallo, Park to Park's communication and outreach manager, is a journalism and urban studies student at The New School. Reach her at [parktopark103@gmail.com](mailto:parktopark103@gmail.com).*

# Latest on the Open Street

By PETER FRISHAUF

**D**OT HAS INFORMED US that they will resume installation of the Street Improvement Plan in the spring, weather permitting.

The pavement markings were finished at the Amsterdam intersection and one of the “hugs” on the Broadway block in December. But that really doesn't give anyone an idea of what any of this will look like, as the pavement *within* the markings will be painted tan with slip-resistant “graveled epoxy,” and flexible bollards placed in the pavement to further delineate those areas. A safety stone and a planter (maintained by the city every day, they say) will also go in those areas.

The treatment pictured below on the 34th Ave. Open Street in Queens provides an idea of some of the materials planned for our street.



Photo: 34th Ave. Open Streets

# Security Guard Service Paused

By BOB AARONSON

**O**NE OF THE OLDEST PROJECTS of the Block Association has been the funding and management of a security-guard service to provide a physical presence on our streets. A little more than a year ago, we engaged a new and larger security provider, who offered more modern technology, better training, and greater supervision. After working with that provider for a full year, however, we were still unable to achieve the consistent level of visibility and service that we thought

we needed. There were also multiple staffing changes (at the guard level as well as both the supervisory and the administrative levels). Consequently, we've decided to suspend the current provider's services.

The Board would like to thank those who've provided feedback over the past few months and hope they and others will offer suggestions about what we should do going forward. Please feel free to contact Board members directly and/or email your suggestions to [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

(continued from page 1)

## Annual Meeting

and volunteer to serve. If you are interested in joining the board or volunteering in some other way, please contact [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org). We need your help to keep the Block Association vibrant and active!

For more information about the Block Association, visit our website, [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org).



**Join Us**

[www.w102-103blockassn.org](http://www.w102-103blockassn.org)

# Proven Again! Caroling Increases Daylight

By HEDY CAMPBELL

**E**VERY YEAR WE GO CAROLING on the night of the winter solstice, and every year without fail we start enjoying more daylight immediately after! Explain to me all you want about the tilt of the Earth's axis and the northern and southern hemispheres, but I'm sticking with my view that spirited singing up and down the blocks of our neighborhood gets the job done.

As usual, we met in the lobby of 865 West End Ave. on Dec. 21, a Wednesday. It also happens to be the birthday of a longtime 865 resident who always joins us, so we kicked off the event with a heartfelt chorus of "Happy Birthday." Then we took to the streets. The weather was just right: cold enough to feel like caroling season, but not so cold that we were rushing to retreat indoors after we finished blessing each block with "Dona Nobis Pacem" and serenading the residents

of 300 Riverside Dr. with "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Maybe it was the festive weather that motivated so many people to join us; our crowd swelled to more than 70 people at one point.

Abundant thanks to Anthony Bello and Dayle Vander Sande, who, year after year, devote their time and energy to leading the group. Thanks, too, to Roberta Belulovich, who helps corral the carolers and has volunteered to help update our song sheet in anticipation of 2023's Solstice Caroling.

That will take place on Thurs., Dec. 21. Look for an announcement in the Winter 2023 Newsletter, watch for the reminder email (sign up for our mailing list at [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org)), and come on out and join us. With a little more good luck, we'll be able to go indoors afterward and raise a hot-cider toast to even more fully resuming our pre-pandemic lives.

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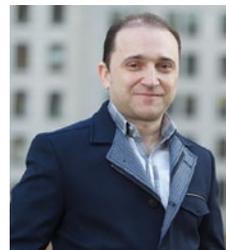
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Lynn Carroll, 252 West 102nd Street Co-Op President

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# Small-Business Profile: Lauren Stahl Healing Arts

By DAYLE VANDER SANDE

**A**CHES AND PAINS? Trouble sleeping? Undue stress in your life? Feeling fractured? The path to wholeness may be closer than you think. Meet Lauren Stahl, a Reiki and reflexology practitioner and neighbor within our own block association borders.

Reiki (loosely translated from Japanese as “universal life energy”) aims to facilitate a person’s own healing response through the body’s natural abilities. This energy is typically transferred through a light touch by the practitioner on a subject’s clothed body, giving the individual “the possibility of healing, awakening, and enlivening,” as Lauren states on her website.

“Sometimes we just need to get out of the body’s own way,” Lauren observes. She is clear that she cannot diagnose medically. Still, Reiki proves to be a conduit by which the subject may heal physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Reflexology—not to be confused with massage—attains the same goals by applying pressure to points on the foot that correspond to organs and systems of the body. These practices help people connect to themselves within and thereby heal in a safe manner. “We’re all grounded but don’t always have the key to access our own body’s healing,” Lauren asserts.

Lauren came to practice Reiki as a result of her job in architectural preservation. In 2005, she was working for an architectural firm doing façade inspection high up on Rockefeller Center. One bitterly cold February day, she could see dark clouds creeping over the Hudson from New Jersey, and she realized she didn’t want to be doing this high-pressure work for the rest of her life.

After joining a friend in a weekend-long introductory Reiki class, Lauren felt immediately better—as when a fever breaks, she says. She needed a change and decided to begin the years of training required for her to become a

certified Reiki practitioner.

Along the way, she discovered that making a healing practice her exclusive occupation posed some real challenges. Among other things, the 2008 recession hit. And it didn’t help that there has been some skepticism around Reiki, as science cannot explain how it works. Nonetheless, Reiki is now being taught in many top U.S. hospitals, joining the ranks of other non-Western-based practices, such as yoga, meditation, and acupuncture. According to an April 2020 article in *The Atlantic*, “[A] number of studies have shown that Reiki treatments help diminish the negative side effects of chemotherapy, improve surgical outcomes, regulate the autonomic nervous system, and dramatically alter people’s experience of physical and emotional pain associated with illness.”

Lauren offers an example from her own practice. A woman came to her as a last-ditch effort before she was to have exploratory surgery on her foot. She was noticeably depressed and in pain. After months of Reiki sessions, her mood increasingly lightened and her pain went away, to the point that she no longer required surgery. The woman would return periodically “just for a tune-up.”

Stahl has seen firsthand just how much stress and anxiety will manifest physically, and though our head and emotions tell us otherwise, our bodies will cry out with symptoms. Reiki has taught Lauren a lot about how mind, body, and soul are inextricably interrelated. “We’re a whole package,” she states. She finds the practice “beautiful” in that it is a win-win for both giver and receiver; each gets benefits from the process.

Though the pandemic shut down her private practice for a while, business has gradually been picking up again, and since it is hands-on work, she has been careful to adhere to safe practices around COVID-19.

Lauren continues to balance her time between preservation of buildings



Photo: Lauren Stahl

and healing work, emphasizing that there is a parallel between them. The building is a body with the structure as its bones, the bricks and masonry its skin, and IT making up its systems and how they work together. The human body has similar engineering with its structure, façade, and set of systems in symbiotic coordination. In each instance, we must check the status of its health and safety with a certified inspector, reintegrating all the segments into one balanced whole.

Lauren works out of her home and makes house calls, and offers Reiki healing for pets as well as people. For more information, contact [laurenstahl.com](http://laurenstahl.com) or (917) 670-1327.

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# Street Taco: (Taco) Street Food (and Drink)

By GAY HAUBNER

**I**S THERE ANYTHING BETTER than a taco and a margarita? *Sí, señora.* A crispy brussels-sprout taco and a blood-orange jalapeño margarita. I call it two servings of fruit and veg, and I get 'em at the bar at Street Taco.

I also call it a boon to the neighborhood. For more than a year, the “Street Taco, Opening Soon” sign taunted me every time I passed the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 102nd St. Not that there’s a dearth of Mexican joints in the neighborhood, but none came close to matching my memories of Mexico City taco stands, sitting on an uncomfortably wobbly metal stool, asking the sweating chef in the stained apron, “¿Qué es mejor?” and devouring the freshest tortillas topped with tongue or nopal or huitlacoche and served on a plate swaddled in Saran. Hot sauce and a squirt of lime ward off Montezuma’s revenge. No street margaritas, but a Mexican Coca-Cola is not a bad substitute.

I can happily dine on tacos made with a crispy shell, even from an Old El Paso taco kit, and if that’s your jam, Street Taco offers an elevated version, the Gringo (\$6), complete with the unnecessary lettuce.

But my heart belongs to the soft taco, downed in three bites, or maybe four, if you’re a delicate eater.

Taco traditionalists will be delighted with the carne asada and pork carnitas (\$6 each), the beef spiced up with serrano chilies (kickier than jalapeños), the pork with a salsa verde.

If you’re me, you return again and again to the crispy brussels-sprout taco. While there is no corn-smut taco, there is fungus: the blackened-mushroom taco (\$5), the portobello’s earthiness accented by the crunch of radish.

If you’re my FFF (Film and Food Friend), Barbie, you have to have nachos—how can someone that taut and toned grow weak at the prospect of melty cheese?

Or as it’s written on the Street Taco menu, “Nachos!” I love the exuberant

use of bangs—it’s like the joint itself is enthused about the food. The nachos come in a lasagna-size pan and are best crowned with the pollo or carne asada, adding a layer of flavor and texture.

I break my rule of “No Corn Before August” for Mexican-style corn on the cob. The Street Tacos version is served on a stick and smothered with mayo, chili powder, lime, and crumbly cotija cheese (\$6).

In the interest of research, at my last visit to Street Taco I ordered the Poco Loco cocktail (\$14, but what are you going to do?), perfection in a martini glass. The sweetness of pineapple is kicked out of the way by ghost-pepper-infused tequila and red-bird chili pepper. Based on this and the blood-orange jalapeño margarita, this beanery knows how to build a drink.



The Poco Loco cocktail, made with ghost-pepper-infused tequila and pineapple

Street Taco does a land-office business in delivery, but it seems wrong to make those carefully constructed tacos travel. The bar has deep, comfy seats, perfect for dining solo or à deux. And while the music could be lower (as it could be in every damn restaurant in Manhattan), you can carry on a conversation, which will certainly be centered on how delicious everything is. Street food might even be better enjoyed indoors.

Street Taco: 2672 Broadway (southeast corner of Broadway and W. 102nd St.); (917) 261-7333; [streettacony.com](http://streettacony.com)

Hours: M–W: 4–11 p.m.; Th, F: 4 p.m.–1:30 a.m.; Sat: noon–1:30 a.m.; Sun: noon–11 p.m.; Happy Hour: M–F: 4–6 p.m.

# On Broadway

By KEITH TAURO

OPEN



- **La Traviata Pizza II** is the name of the new pizza spot on the west side of Broadway between W. 105th and W. 106th Sts., in between Smoke Jazz Club and Six Corners Marketplace.
- **Shun Lee Café** is open on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 98th St.

OPENING



- **PingPod**, a “fully automated,” on-demand Ping-Pong space, is soon to open on the north side of W. 99th St. between Broadway and West End Ave.

*Editor’s Note: We think it’s worth pointing out that this chain store is opening just a block south of the local beloved and widely acclaimed Wang Chen Table Tennis Club, 250 W. 100th St., [wangchenttc.com](http://wangchenttc.com).*

CLOSED



- **Jerusalem Restaurant**, the longtime Middle Eastern place on the west side of Broadway between W. 103rd and W. 104th Sts., has closed.

## HEALING ARTS

Lauren Stahl

Reiki Practitioner  
Certified Reflexologist - ARCB, RAA, TRA

(917) 670-1327  
[lauren@laurenstahl.com](mailto:lauren@laurenstahl.com)  
[www.laurenstahl.com](http://www.laurenstahl.com)



# Good News for NYC and the Environment

By SHARON WASKOW,  
IT'S EASY BEING GREEN

**T**HERE'S RELATIVELY GOOD NEWS to report on the sustainability front.

## COMPOSTING

Mayor Adams has announced that the city will commit to a 20-month timeline to bring composting to all five boroughs. As presently planned, composting will be voluntary and there are no plans to make the program mandatory. Indeed, City Council members Shahana Hanif and Sandy Nurse, who have been working on a bill that will mandate composting, issued a joint statement expressing that without a mandate, the program "is not economically sustainable and fails to reach the environmental impact that the current crisis moment demands."

For context, San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon, already have successful mandatory composting programs. Participation in their programs is incentivized with fines sent out to businesses and buildings who are not in compliance.

Still unknown factors for New York City: Will the City Council demand the program become mandatory; what are the budgetary considerations; and how will the public be educated about the service?

*So what's in it for us?* Expanding the service means that less food waste ends up in landfills to churn out lethal methane. When brown bins are properly locked, rats and other vermin are denied access. No food=fewer rats. Expansion of the program on the Upper West Side will begin in October 2024.

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-Max J., Seller, 300 Riverside Drive

"**Great Communicator, Thoughtful Collaborator, Tough Negotiator.** If you are looking for a real estate broker in NYC who will successfully partner with you every step of the way, look no further than Laura Cook."

-Sara H., Seller, 300 Riverside Drive

"Laura is **extremely attentive and responsible**. She is also **well-connected, knowledgeable**, and very easy to work with. I highly recommend Laura as your agent!"

-Tracy H., Buyer, 310 Riverside Drive

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# Good News

*What can we do now to increase participation in District 7?*

Unfortunately, the Sanitation Department recently eliminated the option for buildings to sign up before the borough-wide program starts in 2024. Once that program gets under way, any building in Manhattan will be able to put out food-scrap bins for pickup and will not need to officially sign up. Meanwhile, service continues for buildings currently signed up.

If your building is participating now and you want to ramp up participation among your fellow residents, consider holding a compost presentation in your lobby. Write us at [itseasybeinggreen.uws@gmail.com](mailto:itseasybeinggreen.uws@gmail.com) to ask for help on how to do this.

Composting is one of the few, if not only, actions we can take to help the environment without attached caveats and “yeah, buts.” It’s easy and it works. Let’s do it!

## PLASTICS

One more bit of good news is that the New York City Council voted (43-7) in favor of the Skip the Stuff bill, which would prohibit takeout and delivery services from providing plastic utensils, condiments, or napkins unless explicitly requested by the customer. This big victory will result in lowering the amount of single-use plastic in the city’s waste stream. After an initial grace period through July 2024, businesses could start to see fines of up to \$250 if they are found to provide customers with these extras without being asked to specifically do so. Delivery apps must add an option for customers to request utensils. However, how the law will actually be enforced is unknown.

*What can we do to ensure that restaurants and delivery services follow the law?* When you order, clearly state that you do not want plastic utensils or condiments. Only request these items if you need them. If your request is repeatedly ignored, ask to speak to management and inform them of the law.

These two initiatives bring us a little bit closer to achieving a more sustainable, eco-friendly city.

*It’s Easy Being Green is your neighborhood climate-education and personal-action group. Consider subscribing to the It’s Easy Being Green newsletter to keep in the know on NYC environmental information and tips for a greener lifestyle ([itseasybeinggreen.org](http://itseasybeinggreen.org)).*

# FORUM on GREEN BUILDINGS

## LOCAL LAW 97 TAKES EFFECT IN 2024

Learn what your condo, co-op, or rental building can do now to start limiting emissions with experts from the City’s Dept of Buildings and NYC Accelerator

Tuesday, March 21, 2023, 10 am-12 noon via Zoom

Register at [bit.ly/UWSbuildingworkshop](http://bit.ly/UWSbuildingworkshop)



Here’s another green-related opportunity: This forum will educate residents on how to make their buildings greener before Local Law 97 takes effect in 2024. The law sets limits on emissions from residential buildings larger than 25,000 sq. ft.



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# Meet Your Talented Neighbors

By JULIA C. SPRING

## LINDA SEIDEL

Linda will have a conversation about her new book, *Vincent's Arles: As It Is & as It Was*, on **Tues., Mar. 14, 6 p.m.**, at Rizzoli Bookstore, 1133 Broadway, just north of the Flatiron Building. Copies will be available for purchase at the event. The book gives a vivid tour through that southern French town, where van Gogh lived from the winter of 1888 to the spring of 1889. To register for Linda's talk, go to [rizzolibookstore.com/calendar/2023-03](http://rizzolibookstore.com/calendar/2023-03). Her book will be published on Mar. 9, and if you can't make it down to her talk, you can find it for sale at other booksellers as well.

## FRANK SALOMON

As manager of the People's Symphony Concerts, Frank reminds us that this oldest and most affordable "Carnegie Hall-quality" concert event starts its spring series on **Sat., Apr. 1**. For information and to purchase series or individual tickets (most expensive is \$19), go to [pscnyc.org](http://pscnyc.org). Tickets are also available for streaming the event up to six days afterward.

## STEPHANIE AZZARONE

Stephanie lives just outside the Block Association area. A recent *West Side Rag* article tells of her new book, *Heaven on the Hudson: Mansions, Monuments, and Marvels of Riverside*

*Park*, available from online and local booksellers. Her website has information on upcoming in-person and Zoom talks based on her book: **Sat., Apr. 1** (this one in the Riverside Park Field House, on the lower level of the park at W. 102nd St.), **Thur., Apr. 6**, and **Wed., May 10**. Go to [stephanieazzarone.com](http://stephanieazzarone.com) for more information and to find the locations of the other two talks.

## ELIZA LANSDALE, MIMI DAITZ, AND BARBARA MORGAN

All three are members of the Riverside Choral Society, and on **Tues., Apr. 4, 8 p.m.**, they will join the Rutgers University Kirkpatrick Choir and Glee Club as well as soloists from the Metropolitan Opera and the gospel community in a concert at Carnegie Hall. They will premiere André J. Thomas's *Mass: A Celebration of Love and Joy*, a gospel-inflected composition by an American choral luminary. They will also perform Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, and Bryan's *Yet Unheard*, a poetic response to the death of Sandra Bland in police custody. Tickets: \$30-\$75: [riversidechoral.org](http://riversidechoral.org)

## MICHAEL VASCONES

A classical guitarist, Michael will be having his master's degree recital in Mikowsky Hall, Manhattan School of Music, 130 Claremont Ave., on **Sun., Apr. 9, 7 p.m.** He will be performing

works from the Renaissance to the 21st century. This recital is free; for many other free and low-cost events at the school, go to [www.msmnyc.edu](http://www.msmnyc.edu).

## BETSY GOLDBERG

Betsy will have an open-studio exhibit of works on paper, mostly recent, and drawn from our local landscape, our streets, our river, and beyond to Jersey and the sky: **Sat.-Sun., June 10-11, 4-6 p.m.**, 885 West End Ave., Apt. GC (northwest corner of West End Ave. and W. 103rd St.).

## MARK WISH AND ELIZABETH COFFEY

*Coollest American Stories 2022*, the first volume of the annual short-story series founded, edited, and published by Mark and Elizabeth, has gone to its third printing. Novelist Martin Ott calls it "the best current fiction anthology on the market." *Coollest American Stories 2023* is doing well, too. Both are available from online and local booksellers. Submissions are open for *Coollest American Stories 2024*: [coolestamericanstories.com](http://coolestamericanstories.com).

*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 Summer 2023 Newsletter (or beyond) to [creative@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:creative@w102-103blockassn.org). Do it today, before you forget!*

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