



WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2020

VOL. 50, NO. 4

## Resumption of Security Guard Service

By BOB AARONSON

**B**EGINNING ON TUES., NOV. 17, SECURITY GUARD SERVICE RESUMED for our Block Association area. One of our two guards, Kevin or Dwight, will be on duty seven days a week, from 5:30 to 11:30 p.m. (excluding a “lunch” break). Each guard is equipped with a cell phone (646-772-2240) that also functions as an incident reporter and a “station” tracker. The stations are located in several large building vestibules in a pattern that routes the guard up and down both W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts., from Broadway to Riverside Dr. and back. The guards are wearing nylon mesh security vests over their company-issued coats. They have also been issued gray cloth masks imprinted with the Block Association logo. We are planning to add our logo to the vests.

We encourage residents to greet the guards and introduce themselves. The more engaged they are with us, the more visible they will be and the more they will see. The Board of Directors has authorized creation of a Security Advisory Committee that will monitor the guard service. Please contact [security@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:security@w102-103blockassn.org) to provide feedback, volunteer for the committee, or even join a “walk-along,” to see the neighborhood from a new perspective. You may see opportunities for improving security and/or visibility for our street guards.

**This edition is chock full of fun events to enjoy safely and remotely. Read on for the details about our 50th anniversary celebration.**

## Caroling Goes Remote on Account of COVID-19

**W**E WERE OPTIMISTIC THAT SINCE OUR ANNUAL WINTER SOLSTICE CAROLING EVENT takes place outdoors, we could safely proceed as usual. But with infection numbers on the rise again, we have, regrettably, had to go to Plan B.

Credit for thinking outside the box goes to Anthony Bello, the event’s leader for almost 40 years, and his husband, Dayle Vander Sande. They’re formulating a marvelous plan that will preserve our tradition of coming together on the shortest day of the year while keeping us all healthy. In particular, they’re promising to do their best to make sure that we can continue blessing each block in Block Association territory with “Dona Nobis Pacem” (“Give Us Peace”) and enjoying a spirited performance of “The Twelve Days of Christmas.”

Their plan was not quite ready for publication when the newsletter was, but may well already be good to go. Find out more by writing to [solstice@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:solstice@w102-103blockassn.org) or calling (212) 865-8524. Details will be provided so you can join the chorus.



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. 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 seven days a week from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. To report neighborhood security issues to the guard or to request his assistance, call him at (646) 772-2240.

BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

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

Dec. 8

Jan. 12

Feb. 9



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

Help Wanted

SECURITY COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS:

We've reviewed the results of our recent survey about having the street guard, and, after considering many factors, have decided to reinstate the nightly patrol. We've made some changes to ensure that we'll get better-quality service for our money. We need people to help us make sure that continues to be the case. Write to [security@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:security@w102-103blockassn.org) if you're interested in helping.

Alternate Side Parking: Do the Shuffle! The Alternate-Side Shuffle!

But Only Sometimes

IF YOU'VE BEEN AWAY FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD for a while, you may not know that the NYC Dept. of Transportation is giving drivers a break. For the indefinite future, parking regulations are in effect only on the latest day of the week posted. For example, if a sign says "No Parking Mon. and Thurs.," you can ignore the Monday restriction. Caveat parker: Since many spots have been given over to outdoor dining, spots on the side streets are more in demand than ever.

UPCOMING BLOCK ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Solstice Caroling, Remote Edition (see page 1) Mon., Dec. 21 8 p.m.

Spring Newsletter Early March

50th Anniversary Programs (see page 3)

RSVP to [amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org) for any of the following events:

Candela Corners Presentation Tues., Dec. 8 8 p.m.

Honoring 2020 Residents of Long Standing (50 Years or More) Tues., Jan. 12 8 p.m.

Block Association History Photo-Collage Presentation Tues., Feb. 9 8 p.m.

Stories of Our Founding Years Tues., Mar. 9 8 p.m.

The DOT calendar of parking-regulation suspensions is now available. You can find it at the Block Association website ([w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org)) by clicking on the Resources tab or go to NYC DOT site, [www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/alternate-side-parking.shtml](http://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/alternate-side-parking.shtml). For a PDF of the 2021 calendar go to [www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/asp-calendar-2021.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/asp-calendar-2021.pdf).

Candela Corners: A Look at an Iconic Architect and Our Neighborhood

THE BLOCK ASSOCIATION IS PLEASED TO PRESENT A SPECIAL TALK about the Candela Corners, two buildings in our neighborhood that were built by legendary architect Rosario Candela. The event will take place on Tues., Dec. 8, at 8 p.m., via Zoom.

Although better known for his Upper East Side buildings, including a Rockefeller triplex on Park Ave., Candela is also responsible for 865 and 875 West End Ave., both built in 1924. A baker's dozen of his buildings can be found up and down West End Ave., in fact.

Anthony Bellov, a longtime Block Association resident, has generously agreed to present an extract from his highly acclaimed lecture on this

subject, which he originally created for Landmark West! and has presented several times to sold-out audiences. He'll speak for about half an hour and then take questions from the audience.

Anthony is a graduate of the Pratt Institute School of Architecture and the Bank Street Graduate School of Education. He is also a professional singer and pianist, and is well known in the neighborhood for leading the annual Solstice Caroling for the past 37 years. In addition, he is very involved in the Merchant's House Museum, and is creating virtual behind-the-scenes tours on its behalf.

To attend the Candela talk, please RSVP to [amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org).



The Candela Corners, 865 and 875 West End Ave. Photo: Hedy Campbell



Block Association Plans Series of Remote Golden-Anniversary Events

WALKING AROUND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD TODAY, it's hard to believe that in 1971, safety issues were of significant concern. Crime rates were high. Drug-related incidents were on the rise. Burglaries, muggings, and car break-ins were all too common. In response, a group of community-minded men and women came together to figure out a way to address these problems and create a safer environment for their families, and our Block Association was born.

This month we're kicking off the celebration of our golden anniversary with a program of events coordinated by board member Ginger Leif, one of the people involved in those early grassroots efforts and a member of our Neighborhood Hall of Fame. Here's what she's put together so far to commemorate the association's early years and its growth. (All events are at 8 p.m. and you can RSVP for the Zoom link to [amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:amzoom@w102-103blockassn.org).)

COMING OF AGE ON THE UPPER WEST SIDE: Neighbors Together Shaping an Environment of Well-Being for All

Celebrating the W. 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association's 50th Anniversary, 1971-2021

DEC. 8 Candela Corners: Former board member and architectural historian Anthony Bellov will talk about two neighborhood treasures designed by renowned architect Rosario Candela.

JAN. 12 Honoring 2020's Residents of Long Standing (50 Years or More): Board member Hedy Campbell will present our newest inductees to the Neighborhood Hall of Fame.

FEB. 9 Block Association History Photo-Collage Presentation: Former Block Association chair Terence Hanrahan

will narrate, marking memorable Block Association activities and events.

MAR. 9 Stories of Our Founding Years: Asya and Ted Berger will speak to the rich legacy upon which the organization stands.

APR. 12 Block Association Annual Meeting, Including Induction of 2021's Residents of Long Standing (50 Years or More): Board member Hedy Campbell will present our next class of inductees to the Neighborhood Hall of Fame.

# Halloween Goes Digital

WHILE WE WERE, OF COURSE, DISAPPOINTED TO have to cancel our annual Halloween parade and party, we found a way to make good use of the neighborhood's spooky spirit! Janet Harvilchuck, our stalwart Halloween story reader, set herself up in front of one of the decorated brownstones on W. 102nd St. and recorded herself reading a

Halloween story for our neighborhood kids. Thanks to the Lauren/Doyle family for decorating and offering their stoop. If your kids are not maxed out on Halloween fun, go to [w102-103blockassn.org/halloweenstories.html](http://w102-103blockassn.org/halloweenstories.html), where you'll find Janet's story as well as one by Hedy Campbell, our original Halloween reader..



Listen to *Trick or Treat, Little Critter* by Gina and Mercer Mayer or *Big Pumpkin* by Erica Silverman



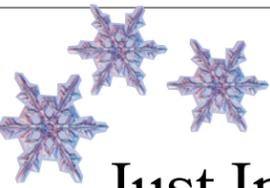
Stills from the readings  
Photo: Alex Medwedew

# Block Association Shows Some (Masked) Love to Building Staff

THE BLOCK ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZES THAT THE VARIOUS BUILDING PERSONNEL in our neighborhood make an enormous contribution to our collective well-being day in and day out. As a gesture of gratitude, we decided at our last board meeting to give every building staff member in the territory one of our brand-new logo masks. Would it surprise you to know that there are 17 staffed buildings that employ more than 110 workers? We were a little shocked by the number, but are going ahead with the project nonetheless.

If you'd like to underwrite the

cost of masks for some or all of your building's employees, please let us know. Or if you'd like to purchase a mask for yourself or anyone else, get in touch with us. Each mask costs \$10. They're available in S/M or L/XL. If you'd like to order, please write [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org) or call (212) 865-8524.



# Just In Case We Get Some Snow This Year

DEPENDING ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW, last year's minimal snowfall was either a godsend or very disappointing. We won't take a position, except to remind landlords, supers, co-op boards, building owners, and anyone inclined to lift a shovel that snow removal is a responsibility to take seriously. If you've ever pushed a stroller, wheeled a shopping cart, or tried to navigate the sidewalks with a cane, walker, or wheelchair after a big snowfall, you know what we mean.

Here are the rules according to the NYC Dept. of Sanitation: "Every owner, lessee, tenant, occupant, or other person having charge of any lot or building must clean snow and/or ice from the sidewalk within four hours after the snow has stopped falling, or by 11:00 a.m. if the snow has stopped falling after 9:00 p.m. the previous evening."

Mainly, those in charge of the larger buildings do a pretty good job of clearing the sidewalks. Owners of smaller buildings, especially if you're spending a lot of time elsewhere these days, please have a plan in place before a blizzard is upon us. If you're able-bodied and are happy to have a good excuse to work up a sweat, lend a hand and clear the storm drains so that the snowmelt has somewhere to go other than ponding at the corners.



Rendering of the proposed Open Streets program  
Photo: Street Plans

# Reimagining Our Very Own W. 103rd St.

ON FRI., OCT. 23, FROM 12 TO 6 P.M., Open Plans and Street Plans, two groups that advocate changing streets to be more pedestrian-friendly, hosted a socially distanced event to unveil their idea for a reimagined W. 103rd St., a.k.a. Humphrey Bogart Pl. (Did you know that the famous actor once lived at 245 W. 103rd St.? And that Lauren Bacall, his wife for the 12 years before his death, attended the street-renaming ceremony in 2006?) Live jazz and a vividly colored street mural boasting the iconic silhouettes of Bogey and Ingrid Bergman from *Casablanca* were the highlights of the afternoon.

Open Plans and Street Plans

have been gathering information and consulting those with a vested interest in the area, including board member Mark Schneiderman, toward the goal of making the street more pedestrian-friendly. According to their research, only 60 cars use the street per hour compared to 250 people. Purple Circle, the preschool that is moving from Anshe Chesed to the corner of Broadway and W. 103rd St., is another actively involved stakeholder, recently organizing their families to participate in a sidewalk cleanup event. Extended curbs at the Broadway and West End Ave. corners and permanent status as a pedestrian-only corridor are part of the two groups' vision for the block.

The recent closure of the street has been part of the NYC Dept. of Transportation's Open Streets program, a measure put in place to designate 100 miles of roadway as pedestrian-only from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to boost public safety during the pandemic. Street Plans conducted an informal survey of 91 passersby. Almost 70 percent were in favor of making the change permanent. What's your opinion? Let us know! Email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

For more information about Open Plans and Street Plans and the reimagining of W. 103rd St., contact [pfrishauf@gmail.com](mailto:pfrishauf@gmail.com).



Top: Live Jazz  
Left: Street mural: "Here's Looking at You, Kid"  
Photos: Terence Hanrahan

# What's New at the Website

By CAITLIN HAWKE

IN THE LAST SIX OR SEVEN MONTHS, WE LEARNED SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT. Since its inception nearly 50 years ago, the Block Association has successfully relied on a very old-school communication and fund-raising method: a paper newsletter and contribution envelope slipped under each apartment door four times a year. When staying home and limiting contact with the outside world became the norm, we found ourselves with no other choice but to move to an online newsletter, test-driving how broadly our digital reach would stretch.

Not very broadly, it turns out. Although we normally distribute more than 2,000 hard copies of the newsletter, when we moved to the digital-only version, there were barely 600 names on our email list. It's clear that when we rely only on email, we're not reaching the majority of our residents, which is our essential raison d'être.

Help us correct that. Go to our website ([w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org)) and sign up. It's an easy process. Click on the blue box that reads "Click Here to Join Our Email List."

Once you're there, you'll see that you also have the option to make a financial contribution. You are not required to do so. But we'd really appreciate it if you did. After a months-long pause, we've reinstated guard service (see page 4) and rely on donations to cover the cost.

Do it today!



## Keep in the Loop!

Sign Up to Receive Our Emails

We can't send you updates about events, initiatives, safety concerns, or other topics of importance if we don't have you on our email list.

Go to [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org) and sign up today.

Contributions welcome, but not mandatory!



# On Broadway in November 2020

By NANCY GROPPER

WITH THE CONTINUING MILD WEATHER, it is still possible to take a comfortable walk down Broadway. It seems to me that there are more people out and about and certainly far more cars than when the COVID pandemic began. Most people wear masks, and I was told that the 10025 zip code has one of the lowest infection rates in the city.

On a recent walk, I noticed that there is a new pediatric office, Manhattan Valley Pediatrics, at 2637 Broadway, on the southwest corner of W. 100th St. On their website, they point out that their goal is to "restore the community doctor; someone you see around the neighborhood but also someone you can talk to as a trusted friend." I am sure this is a welcome addition for many neighborhood parents.

That said, I am sad to report that there are empty stores on almost every block between W. 96th and W. 106th Sts. While some were shuttered before COVID hit, many more have closed since. Restaurants and nail and beauty salons appear to have been most vulnerable, although some new salons

have opened.

Even as far north as W. 108th St., stores have continued to close. I noticed that Hoshi Coupe, a unisex hair-cutting shop, is gone. A neighborhood fixture since my thirty-something sons were in elementary school, it offered reasonably priced haircuts, no appointment necessary. A nail salon on the same block that had been around for a number of years is also closed. And just across Broadway, a Sleepy's mattress store has disappeared.

I mention these closings as a segue into reminding us to support our local small businesses. We still have the banks, drugstores, cleaners, groceries, liquor stores, barbershops, and hair salons to meet our varied needs. And while the temperature is dropping, people are still choosing to eat at outdoor tables at our local restaurants. Some, like Flor de Mayo and Café du Soleil, have built semi-enclosed structures in an effort to provide shelter for outside diners.

Remember that restaurants, in particular, are struggling, so if you don't like the outdoor options, you can treat yourself to takeout or have food delivered every now and then to help them stay afloat.

# Tales from the Pause

Thanks to resident Jennifer Ian for taking us up on our challenge to create a winter version of her COVID-19 Bingo board. See how many of the items you can spot this winter!

If you have a special story to share about your experiences during the pandemic, please send it along. We'd love to publish it. Submit contributions to [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org).



# Make a Donation to Help Those in Need

FOR MANY YEARS, a former board member has worked with the U.S. Dept. of Justice's New York office's efforts to help the needy at holiday time. The beneficiary of the project this year is Womankind, which operates domestic-violence shelters in Queens and Brooklyn and also offers a variety of additional support services. On Womankind's behalf, the DOJ is collecting donations of small toiletry items that can easily travel with families when they are relocated. Think travel-size shampoo and conditioner, skin lotion, adhesive strips, and so forth. To make a donation, please mark your package for Camille and drop it off at the lobby desk of 305 Riverside Dr., or call (646) 345-5209 to arrange for items to be picked up.



## Winter Bingo

Play from your window, when you go out, or both. Adapt to your needs - have fun with it!

Wreath	Something blue	Trash can	Bicycle	Moon or stars
Water tank	Pizza	Street lights	Christmas/fir tree	Window guards
Balcony, terrace or fire escape	Puffy coat (not black)	Mask	Ladder	Santa*
Gloves/mittens	Holiday lights (or any string of lights)	High wind	Hat	Lights in windows
Freezing weather	Boots	Poinsettia (or any red holiday flower)	Backpack	Delivery
Cardinal (They don't migrate!)	Helicopter	Sled	Live music/singing	Person with 2+ dogs

\* In the new year, substitute Valentine ♥ for Santa

Created by Jennifer Ian Nov. 2020

Winter Bingo by Jennifer Ian

## For All of Your Real Estate Needs



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on Our Website

# If I Could Savor Thyme in a Bubble: Eating Outdoors at Café du Soleil

By HEDY CAMPBELL

IN SEPTEMBER, WHEN CAFÉ DU SOLEIL, on Broadway between W. 104th and W. 105th Sts., first pitched clear plastic tents on the sidewalk, I got so excited! How great to be able to eat out of doors rain or shine and even once temperatures started to drop. I made a reservation on the spot. Then I got to thinking about all of that exhaled air trapped inside the bubble. What if the person before me was contagious? Even with the flaps open, was there sufficient air circulation? I mulled it over briefly and then canceled my reservation.

Fast-forward to an unusually warm night in early November. Some highly COVID-trustworthy out-of-the-neighborhood friends had asked us if we'd join them to try out a restaurant someone else they know had recently recommended: Café du Soleil. Since there are a few un-bubbled tables under a spacious tent on Broadway, I figured we could snag one of those and dine safely. My well-considered plan was foiled, however, when we arrived at the restaurant and discovered that our friends were already seated . . . in one of the bubbles! Before asking them to relocate to a table under the tent, I stopped to talk to the maître d'. "What happens inside the bubbles between diners?" I inquired. He assured me that every interior surface is sanitized and that disinfectant is sprayed between seatings. It was a weeknight, so there'd been no brunch service, and it was early enough, I reassured myself, that probably nobody else had yet dined in our particular bubble. Two glasses of wine and a lovely dinner later, I was very glad we took the plunge.

Over salads and main courses, all four of us cleaned our plates. The salads were the perfect balance of greens and dressing, as is always the case at the café. Our main courses (mussels, short ribs, swordfish, veal) were first-rate as well. The staff was masked, helpful, and attentive. And, best of all, the noise level, which is the one thing that usually displeases me about Café du

Soleil, was drastically diminished! In the bubble, we could hear one another just fine, and the protection of the bubble meant we were comfortable dining without wearing our jackets, as well. It was a warmish evening, so the space heaters that were at the ready weren't in use, but I was glad to see them in place, anticipating making a return trip on a colder night.



## It's Easy Being Green: News About Composting and Giving Eco-Friendly Gifts

By SHARON WASKOW AND CHRISTINE CAMPBELL

ALTHOUGH THE CITY PUT THE AKIBOSH ON COMPOSTING in individual buildings as a cost-cutting measure last spring, all is not lost. There are two convenient locations where composters can bring their food scraps.

The farmers' market on W. 97th St. between Amsterdam and Columbus Aves. accepts compost from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Fridays. **Acceptable:** fruit, vegetables, non-greasy food, pasta, rice, bread, grains, cereal, coffee grounds, tea bags, eggshells, nuts, cut flowers, houseplants, and soiled brown-paper products. **Not acceptable:** meat, fish, bones, dairy, fat, oil, greasy food, animal waste, charcoal, coconut, insect-infested plants, plastic ties, plastics, rubber bands, or paper receipts.

Reclaimed Organics accepts compost every Wednesday between 4 and 6 p.m. on the southeast corner of W. 107th St. and Columbus Ave. **Acceptable:** fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat bones, tea bags, coffee grounds, and coffee filters. **Not acceptable:** glass, metal, plastic, certified compostable products, napkins, tissues.

With gift-giving season upon us, we urge everyone to shop with an

eye toward creating as little waste as possible. We have lots of gift ideas that don't have a negative impact on the environment. For example:

- Give children gifts that will foster a love of nature.
- Shop for reusable straws, silicone bowl lids, reusable tote bags, and other waste-reducing products.
- Prepare a homemade gift, whether from your kitchen, from your camera, or fashioned by hand.
- Make a donation to a favorite organization—like the Block Association—in someone's name!

*It's Easy Being Green is an initiative operating under the TriBloomingdale umbrella, which includes the W. 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association, the West 104th Street Block Association, and BAiP. Its mission is to bring as many of our neighbors as possible onboard with green practices and to inform them of New York City's efforts to mitigate our climate emergency. We publish a monthly newsletter and action blast, hold speaker events, and partner with other neighborhood groups on environmental advocacy. To sign up for IEBG's newsletter, go to [itseasybeinggreen.org](http://itseasybeinggreen.org) or send an email to [uws@gmail.com](mailto:uws@gmail.com).*

# Meet Your Talented Neighbors

By JULIA C. SPRING

## AMY SCHNITZER

From Sat., Dec. 5, to Sun., Jan. 3, Amy's pottery is in the juried *smallWORKS* show at the Garrison Art Center, where you can also buy her and others' artwork ([garrisonartcenter.org](http://garrisonartcenter.org)). The center is located at 23 Garrison's Landing, Garrison, N.Y., (845) 424-3960, and is open Tues. through Sun., 10 a.m.–5 p.m. You can also purchase Amy's wares at her Etsy shop ([etsy.com/shop/AmysPotsNYC](http://etsy.com/shop/AmysPotsNYC)): 20 percent off for locals who enter the code NEIGHBOR20 until Dec. 20.

## MERCHANT'S HOUSE MUSEUM

The museum, of which Block Association members Anthony Bello and Dayle vander Sande are active supporters, is presenting a virtual *Christmas Carol at the Merchant's House* at various times from Fri., Dec. 18, through Thurs., Dec. 24. You will be transported back 150 years in a one-hour performance filmed in the museum's elegant double parlor, decorated for the season with a tree, holly, and candles. Dickens's holiday classic will be performed from his own touring script. Performances are free (with a suggested donation of \$30 for those who can afford to give) but reservations are required for online access; contact [merchantshouse.org](http://merchantshouse.org).

## 2020 HISTORY PROJECT

Until the end of December, the project will continue to solicit photos and paragraphs memorializing the pandemic. There already are a number of contributions from local residents at [upperwestsidehistory.org/2020-project.html](http://upperwestsidehistory.org/2020-project.html). Add yours!

## BLOOMINGDALE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The music school has restarted its faculty concerts and other performances on a virtual basis. On the website ([bsmny.org](http://bsmny.org)), scroll down farther than you think you should for the links. You can also join its email list by going to [bsmny.org/about-us/contact-us](http://bsmny.org/about-us/contact-us).

## NEW PLAZA CINEMA

This organization that grew out of the beloved Lincoln Plaza Cinemas ([newplazacinema.com](http://newplazacinema.com)) offers online viewings of independent films. I just rented *Oliver Sacks: His Own Life* for five days at \$12. As always, I was inspired by him to write more and better! A resolution for 2021 . . .

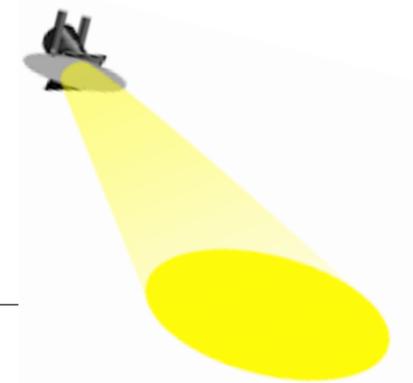
## MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The renowned conservatory (130 Claremont Ave., at W. 122nd St.) has live performances, often streamed simultaneously. Go to [msmny.edu/email-sign-up](http://msmny.edu/email-sign-up) to receive email announcements of their events.

## WHAT A NEIGHBORHOOD!

This community project from the **Orfeo Duo** has commissioned 30-second hand-washing songs from area residents, on the theory that "Happy Birthday" should be saved for special occasions (not to mention "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," in my opinion). Two are by Anthony Piccolo of Claremont Ave. and Kate Copeland Ettinger, a singer-songwriter, who grew up on Riverside Dr. Go to [soundcloud.com/orfeo-duo/mantra-for-clean-hands-by-anthony-piccolo](http://soundcloud.com/orfeo-duo/mantra-for-clean-hands-by-anthony-piccolo) and [soundcloud.com/orfeo-duo/handwashing-mantra-song-by-kate-copeland](http://soundcloud.com/orfeo-duo/handwashing-mantra-song-by-kate-copeland)

*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 Spring 2021 Newsletter (or beyond) to [creative@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:creative@w102-103blockassn.org). Do it today, before you forget!*



## JAMES PEREZ

Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker

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# Bloomingtondale Aging in Place: Aging Conversations

By KAREN KORMAN

**B**AiP's NEWLY LAUNCHED GROUP AGING CONVERSATIONS provides a space for open dialogue about aspects of aging that are rarely talked about yet experienced universally--issues related to family, friendships, isolation, grief, and the multiple lifestyle changes we encounter along our aging trajectory.

The idea to form this group came from one of the six-week Narrative and Aging workshops that BAiP has co-led for the past two years with graduate students from the Narrative Medicine program at Columbia University. In these workshops, participants use prompts from literature, art, and music to share their personal stories. At the conclusion of the workshop I participated in, members expressed a desire to make this an ongoing group. I then took on the challenge of making this a reality.

Modeled after the Columbia workshops, our group sees as its purpose to confront all of those aging-related issues that we face on a regular basis--the obstacles, disappointments, and joys of our age group--as well as to encourage new friendships.

A very diverse group of BAiP neighbors gathered for the group's first meeting on March 5. Though we are all clearly getting older, many of us are still reinventing ourselves, and some of us are still working. There is so much to say about our stage of life! We determined that this would not be about doctors' appointments or ailments, but about the more universal (though not necessarily more pressing) issues we are facing, and we used poems and prose to prompt discussion. Who knew that seemingly every major author has written a piece or more on aging, whether fiction or nonfiction, from Eudora Welty to Ernest Hemingway, Bernard Malamud to Philip Roth . . . so much to say.

Immediately after our launch, we were immersed in the COVID-19 pandemic. Suddenly, we had even more

to discuss: loneliness (as so many of us live alone), sheltering in place, and losses--possible illness or death from the virus but even loss of our children's and friends' company. Those of us who reveled in contact with others were no longer able to see people in person. The computer became our mode of communication, albeit not our preferred one, but a way to keep in touch.

With Zoom as our meeting place, and two hours whittled down to one, we moved to a more focused agenda, addressing the immediate needs of our group members and fostering a deeper connection among us. We have discussed our fears of going out and the fact that we are among the most vulnerable to the virus. We all look forward to meeting up--so to speak-- each month, as much for the conversation as for the reassurance that each of us is handling this in the best possible way.

The group has been a wonderful source of companionship and friendship, enabling us to "see" one another and catch up. We compare stories about how each of us is coping, and what joys or sorrows or obstacles we're encountering. As difficult as this has been, it has also been a great occasion to be "together" and to share and to foster community--the mission of BAiP. It has been a privilege to be able to continue this group.

*Aging Conversations is one of dozens of BAiP's volunteer-led activities groups. To see a listing of groups, visit: [bloominplace.org/ongoing-groups.html](http://bloominplace.org/ongoing-groups.html). Adults of all ages in our neighborhood are welcome to join BAiP. For more information, visit: [bloominplace.org/membership.html](http://bloominplace.org/membership.html)*

*Membership is free.*

*Karen Korman leads the Aging Conversations discussion group and is co-editor of the BAiP newsletter, BUZZ*

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## Calling Neighborhood Volunteers: TriBloomingtondale Needs You!

By CAITLIN HAWKE

**I**N THIS LEAD-UP TO THE NEW YEAR, it's a great time to plan how to connect with neighbors and build our community. This is a reminder that the TriBloomingtondale group is recruiting volunteers for three roles. The initiative unites two block associations and BAiP in a variety of activities. And we need your great ideas and willingness to lead. Maybe one of these roles is a perfect fit! Read on.

We are looking for:

- **Coordinator for the TriBloomingtondale Initiative**  
Are you a good bridge builder? We're looking for a coordinator to work with our Block Association, BAiP, and the West 104th Street Block Association to build activities involving neighbors of all ages, from reading groups to exercise groups to cleanup and snow-removal squads.
- **Group Leader for the Networking-in-the-Neighborhood Group**  
With so many residents now working from home, we would like to move our sole-proprietor group, Networking in the Neighborhood, to Zoom and are looking for a leader to take over from its
- **Activity Leaders for Social Groups**  
The pandemic has forced us to rethink how neighbors have traditionally connected. We looked across the street and saw one another hanging out windows, banging pots and pans. How great would it be to deepen connections and do more things together? We are looking for activity leaders: Want to run a discussion group or book group online for neighbors in all three organizations?

Please reach out if you are interested in taking on any of the roles above: [chawke@bloominplace.org](mailto:chawke@bloominplace.org).



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