



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2014

VOL. 44, NO.3

SOLSTICE CAROLING

Celebrate the Solstice With Seasonal Songs

Amid the bustle of the December holidays, we make it an annual tradition to commemorate the winter solstice. Every year, the Block Association sponsors a festive stroll around the neighborhood, bringing favorite holiday tunes, good cheer, and a blessing for peace to each block.

The group will convene in the lobby of 865 West End Ave. on Sun., Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. Greetings are exchanged, song sheets are distributed, headlamps are turned on, sleigh bells are jingled, and, led by the very able and amenable Anthony Bellov and Dayle Vander Sande, off we go on a circuit throughout the neighborhood. After we've brought our joyful noise to each block, we repair to the Riverside lobby of the Master apartments for warm cider, light refreshments and an abundance of conviviality. If you're a regular, we're looking forward to seeing you. If you're a newbie, come join us! For information, contact editor@102-103blockassn.org.



HALLOWEEN

A Night of Costumes, Candy and Camaraderie

By Jane Hopkins

The Block Association's annual Halloween Parade and Party was a big success. Lots of kids and grown-ups in costume.... and some not... gathered on W. 102nd St, between Riverside Dr. and West End Ave. to wait for the start of the parade around our two blocks. Terence Hanrahan got that job done with the help of a bullhorn and that's when the real party started. Dolores and Bill Weeden led the parade that took us past artfully decorated homes and well-wishers distributing candy to young passers-by. At Riverside Dr., the crowd was delighted by Barbara Morgan's Halloween decorations all along the fence next to the park, adding a wonderfully spooky atmosphere to the walk between W. 103rd and W. 102nd.

Back on W. 102 our team of volunteers was ready for the party. Janet Harvilchuck delighted children once again this year, reading stories aloud. Laura Hanrahan referred her student Josh, a talented graphic artist, to draw free sketches for any parent or child in costume, each one taking just two to three minutes. The activity was a wonderful addition to the event. Sax Freymann donated a large pumpkin that was carved with an incredibly realistic face including teeth! Ozzie Alfonso helped again this year by capturing much of the event in photos. Check out our website (w102-103blockassn.org) and blog to see them.

org) and blog to see them.

Our friends at the St Luke's residence were terrific again this year, providing tables for refreshments, baking a large sheet cake with Halloween-themed icing, standing watch at Riverside Dr. to be sure cars did not try to get through our traffic cones and helping with set-up and clean-up. Jill Chase, Caitlin Hawke, Celia Knight, and Dorothy O'Hanlon were in charge of two well-stocked refreshments tables offering sweet treats, baked goods, apples and beverages, all donated by neighborhood residents. Thanks to Sue Maderer for her generous donation of bags of apples. Thanks also to Caitlin Hawke and Mary Koval, who helped publicize our event to members of BAiP and our neighbors on W. 104th St. Hedy Campbell printed our posters on candy corn paper that looked so real you wanted to reach out and grab a few pieces to eat! Bob Flanagan helped spread the word by making sure the posters got into neighborhood buildings. David Reich snagged a parking space right in front of St. Luke's, and vacated it just before the event, so we'd have an open space for our refreshment tables just in time. He also got the Block Association banner up, up and away. Calls and e-mails from numerous individuals offering to help at the refreshment tables and give out candy *(continued on page 3)*

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

Have you seen the Block Association blog? If not, you've missed the back story behind the latest Broadway Malls Association public art exhibit; the nomination of Loudon Wainwright, III, for poet laureate of Bloomingdale; a montage of photos from the Block Association's spring planting day and autumn Halloween parade; odes to Henry's kale salad and Judith Norrell's blueberry ginger muffin at Silver Moon. Written by neighbor Caitlin Hawke, the site's blog fills in the gaps between newsletters and offers a platform for additional images and videos of interest to neighbors. Need directions? You can get there from our homepage or go directly to w102-103blockassn.org/blog. If you like what you read, subscribe! You'll find options for staying abreast of new posts via either RSS feed or email in the lower right-hand corner of the blog page. If you have trouble, shoot Caitlin an email at blog@w102-103blockassn.org and she'll get you set up. Let her know, too, if you have ideas to contribute or would like to write a little something yourself. Although the newsletter only comes out quarterly, the Block Association, and its interesting and informative blog are here 24/7/365! Come check us out.

HELP WANTED

Crackerjack Staff in Search of an Editor

The Block Association's quarterly newsletter has so much going for it! We've got a team of experienced writers. We've got an energetic ad manager. We've got a talented designer. We've got a reliable printer. We've got a great distributor. We've even got an enthusiastic audience! All this talent needs one thing, though: a new editor. Responsibilities include: keeping abreast of Block Association events and issues; assigning articles to writers; writing short announcements; editing articles; and working with the designer to produce the four issues a year (March, June, September, December). Training and support come with the job. Contact editor@w102-103blockassn.org.

THE WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION, NEWSLETTER info@w102-103blockassn.org
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. Phone messages may be left at (212) 865-8524. Recent issues of the Newsletter are available online at w102-103blockassn.org.

EMAIL LIST The Block Association maintains an email list to notify residents about important matters that arise between issues of the Newsletter. You can join the list by sending your email address, full name, home address (with apartment number), and phone number to email@w102-103blockassn.org.

GUARD SCHEDULE 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.

EDITOR'S CORRECTIONS: Our sincere apologies for the following errors that appeared in the September issue:

The name of our restaurant reviewer was misspelled. She is Kate McLeod.

The photo that accompanied the obituary of departed neighbor Nadja Tesich was actually of another departed neighbor, Anna Berger. The photo at right is of Nadja; thanks to Stefan Savage for providing it.

Some of the businesses that support the Block Association were omitted from the contributor list on the last page. Brown Harris Stevens, Corcoran Real Estate Group, the Dive Bar, Keller Williams Realty, New York Framemakers, and Plant Shed should have been included.

Upcoming Events

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21:
Solstice Caroling (see p.1)

SUNDAY, MARCH 1:
Spring Newsletter Distribution

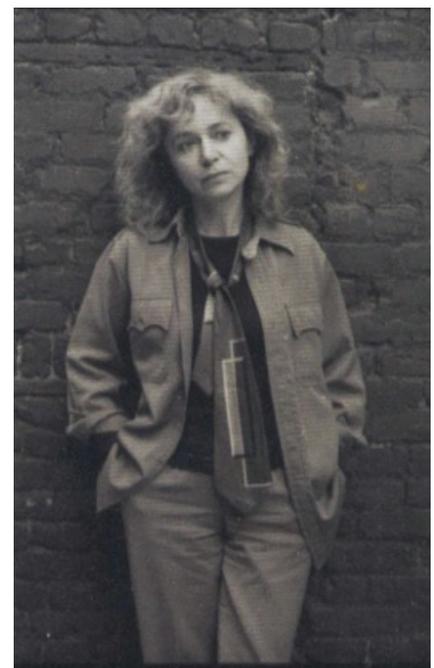
THURSDAY, MARCH 12:
Annual Meeting

SATURDAY, MAY 2:
Spring Planting

SATURDAY, MAY 16:
Yard Sale

2015 Alternate Side Parking Calendar Now Available

Check w102-103blockassn.org for the 2015 DOT calendar and a map showing the times at which the alternate side parking rules apply in our area.



(continued from page 1) along the parade route were a godsend. Thanks to Barbara Cutney, Roberta Marshall, Arlene Seffern, Phyllis Sperling, and Ronnie Tuft. Cash contributions the night of the event were much appreciated, too.

As Halloween coordinator, I was very pleased to work with such a terrific team of volunteers. Special thanks to Terence Hanrahan who helped me pull it all together. If you have ideas about how to make this event even better, we'd love to hear them. Please watch for an announcement in the newsletter next September. We'll be ready and waiting for you!

Bring Holiday Cheer to Victims of Domestic Violence

For the 14th year, the Block Association will join with the U.S. Department of Justice's New York office in an effort to provide holiday toys and gifts for victims of domestic violence who live at the Henry Street Settlement shelter. Hundreds of toys, books, and small gifts, both new and gently used, are donated, collected, wrapped, and delivered through this annual project. A wrapping party is held at DOJ, and gifts are delivered to the shelter by Santa and Mrs. Claus.

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 them to be picked up.

Shovel Brigade Step Forward!

The first big snowfall of the winter is always so pretty—for a few hours. Then the supers and building staff tackle the sidewalks, the plows come, and the car owners excavate their cars. Before you know it, the storm drains are completely blocked. When the snow starts to melt and has nowhere to go, that's when we get those enormous slush puddles at the corners. Rain boots leave feet cold. Snow boots leave feet wet. Last year was particularly bad. Who knows what this winter will bring. What's a pedestrian, especially one pushing a stroller, shopping cart, walker or wheelchair, to do?

What if we organized a Corner Corps to help keep the storm drains open and the corners passable? If you can lend a gloved hand, we'd be glad to have you. Get in touch so we'll know you're out there and ready to step up when conditions demand. Perhaps we can pass you a mug of cocoa when you're done. Email info@w102-103blockassn.org.

BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

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

December 9, January 13, and February 10
306 W. 102nd St. at 8:00 p.m.

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Cherie Tredanari: Our Very Own Artist in Residence

By JANE HOPKINS

If you've lived in the neighborhood for a long time, you probably already know Cherie Tredanari. She was a founder of the Block Association, and was among the first residents inducted into our Residents of Long-Standing Hall of Fame in 2010. If you're newish to the area and were to Google Cherie's name, you'd find out about her success as an artist. In 1981, at the request of Saks Fifth Avenue, she installed 13 of her sculptures in the store's Fifth Avenue display windows. As recently as January 2013, she exhibited at the Umbrella Arts Gallery in the East Village with nine other artists in a show called Ten Narratives. But did you know that the abstract sculpture on the Broadway median at W. 106th St. is one of Cherie's works? Completed in 1982, it's called *Memorial to Duke Ellington*.

Cherie was born and raised in Philadelphia and received a four-year scholarship to attend Moore College where she pursued her interest in the arts. After she married—her husband Len was a neighbor from Philadelphia—and had a son and daughter, in 1953 the family moved to a small apartment on West 103rd St. near Riverside Dr. She enjoyed the block from the start. It was quiet and they were able to get to know their neighbors. Their children went to public school just a few blocks away on W. 104th St. Life was good, Cherie recalls.

In the early sixties they moved to a single-family brownstone, also on W. 103rd, which had the space they needed to raise their family. And, there was plenty of room for Cherie to pursue her art. Helping others develop their talent and their careers in the arts was as important to her as drawing and painting and sculpting her own work. She encouraged her husband to pursue arts, and taught him sculpture. He demonstrated considerable talent, and sculpted heads of Cherie and himself, their two children, and President John F. Kennedy.

As a founding member of the Block Association, she made sure that one of the group's goals was to help neighborhood artists raise funds so they could exhibit their work in galleries. Funny that so many years later, we proudly continue the tradition by publicizing the upcoming events of local artists and performers in each issue of the newsletter! Cherie was also a founding member of the Sculptors Alliance, which began as an artists' cooperative and became a nonprofit corporation in 2002. The Alliance celebrated its 30th year in 2010 with an exhibition of the work of 19 original and new members, including Cherie. Despite advancing age (she's in her 90s!), Cherie stays as active as she can. Living in a brownstone, frequent trips up and down the stairs are the part of everyday life. She attributes her longevity to this fine exercise. She enjoys wine-making, an interest her whole family shares, likes sharing recipes for Italian food with friends and family, and watching old movies. We are fortunate to count Cherie among our residents and wish her all the best!

Three Groups Team Up: Walking Group First Initiative

When you have a Block Association that includes more than 2,000 households, and a smaller but even more active Block Association just a block to the north, and a huge cadre of enthusiasts of all sorts in the form of Bloomingdale Aging in Place, of course it makes sense for the three groups to join forces. There have been a variety of collaborative efforts among the groups over the years, but together we're going to try something new: formalizing the synergy to launch a variety of new informal tri-organizational projects. The first offering is a weekend morning walking group. And you are officially invited to join in.

This regular 60-minute walk on Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. will be at a super-brisk (minimum 3.5 mph) pace. It will always incorporate hills. The walk can also be used as training for participants' own planned walking activities or it can just be your weekend morning constitutional. The idea is to get together with nearby neighbors and exercise. Most mornings the group will stop for coffee after the walk. Teresa Elwert, who runs three popular BAiP weekday walking groups and was a founding member of the 104th St. Block Association, has volunteered to lead the group. If you're interested in participating, please contact BloomingdaleTrioWalk@icloud.com.

The three organizations will next launch a networking group for residents who run small businesses from their homes. The first meeting will likely take the shape of a coffee hour at a local restaurant in January. If you are interested in participating, please contact bloomingdale NITN@gmail.com. Include your first and last name, a brief description of the business you run, and a contact email address and phone number.

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MEET THE NEIGHBORS

Exhibits, puzzles, a book, and myriad performances to make hibernating through the winter impossible.

By JULIA C. SPRING

MARY JO PAGANO, founder and artistic director of the Chamber Music Center of New York, announces a free concert in the recital hall of St. Michael's Church (W. 99th St. and Amsterdam) on Sat., Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m. Works by Bach, Corelli, Dvorak, Shostakovich and others will be performed. For more information, visit the Chamber Music Center website. A profile of Mary Jo and her business was in the March 2014 newsletter, available at the Block Association website.

CHARLES WUORINEN, distinguished composer of contemporary classical music, has written an opera, *Brokeback Mountain*, with Annie Proulx, based on her novel of the same name. It premiered in Spain earlier this year, and will be performed at Teater Aachen, Aachen, Germany, from Dec. 7, 2014 to Jan. 22, 2015. On YouTube, Charles discusses the opera and their collaboration: youtube.com/watch?v=z0ZekAKhF84.

DEBORAH BOOTH and the St. Michael's Baroque Ensemble will present *Love and Light: Secular & Sacred Cantatas & Instrumental Works* by Vivaldi, Handel, and Telemann at St. Michael's Church (W. 99th St.) on Fri., Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m. The suggested donation is \$20; call 212-222-2700, ext. 24.

GERALDINE CHAPMAN passes on information about *Love Triumphant: Ten Years of Citywide Youth Opera* and its performances on Sat., Dec. 13 and Sun., Dec. 14 at 2 and 7 p.m. at Pearl Studios, 519 Eighth Ave. CYO provides 14- to 21-year-olds with the opportunity to receive the musical, dramatic, and interpretative training that goes into preparation of a major role in grand opera, culminating in public performances. For ticket information, contact 646-296-0344 or the CYO website.

LINDA MOSHIER of W. 102nd St. will be performing in a free winter spectacular at Lincoln Center on Saturday, Dec. 20 at 1 and 4 p.m. *Under the Mistletoe* features Broadway conductor Phil Hall at the piano with a bevy of singing and dancing beaus and beauties, including Linda herself, an American Songbook singer. Music, laughter, and "a little singing ringing through the rafter" are promised. It will be at the Bruno Walter Auditorium in the Lincoln Center NYPL branch (Amsterdam and W. 65th St.). Seating is first-come, first-served and the line for tickets starts one hour before each performance. For more information, call 212-642-0142 or go to nypl.org/events/programs/2014/12/20/under-mistletoe-0.

NER and BOBBI BECK will each be showing recent artwork this winter at the Saint Agnes Library gallery, 444 Amsterdam Ave. Ner's New York City street photographs, *Found Faces and Window Reflections*, present a whimsical view of our city and will be on display in December and January. Bobbi's imaginative drawings will be shown in February and March. For more information about the exhibits, contact bobbi.beck@verizon.net or ner.beck@verizon.net.

TISA CHANG, producing director of the Pan-Asian Repertory Theater, announces *Film Chinois*, a noir-infused drama of spy intrigue and dangerous liaisons in the vein of classic Hollywood films like *The Maltese Falcon*. It takes us to 1947 Peking where a fresh-faced American operative meets "Chinadoll," his would-be adversary and lover. An amoral Belgian ambassador, his current squeeze, a songstress, and a mysterious "Chinese Man," are all in search of an old piece of film. Performances are at the Beckett Theatre, 410 W. 42nd St., from Jan. 17 until Feb. 8, 2015. Tickets are available at Telcharge and the Theatre Row Box Office. Discount tickets of \$36.25 (use code TR Mystery) are available at telechargeoffers.com (212-947-8844). Tickets for the Jan. 22 opening night are \$76.25 and are available at the Pan Asian box office only (212-868-4030).

ANTHONY BELLOV and DAYLE VANDER SANDE, founders of and performers in the Bond Street Euterpean Singing Society, in residence at the Merchant's House Museum, announce the next concert: *Love in the Parlors*, a program of 19th-century art song celebrating love in its many forms. The 90-minute program will be on Valentine's Day, Sat., Feb. 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the landmarked 1832 Greek revival double parlor of the museum. Visit the museum's website for ticket information. Seating is limited and advance ticket purchase is highly recommended.

THOMAS SAUER, pianist, will be giving a free recital at Mannes College of Music (150 W. 85th St.) on Fri., Feb. 20 at 8 p.m. He will play music of Mozart, George Walker, Thomas Adès and Chopin. Thomas is on the piano faculty of Mannes, the music faculty of Vassar College, and has an extensive record of performing around the United States and Europe.

MARK DANNA, a 35-year resident of W. 103rd St., writes puzzles for a living under the pen name Tricky Ricky Kane. His 2015 calendar, "365 Brain Puzzlers," co-authored with top Canadian puzzle maker Fraser Simpson, contains a wide variety of MENSA-sanctioned word, logic, math, and observation puzzles geared to give the brain a daily five-minute work out. It is available at Barnes & Noble and through Amazon. For customized puzzles, contact Mark at puzzlestogo@gmail.com.

SUSAN WOODWARD, a clinical social worker and longtime resident of Riverside Dr. and W. 103rd St., has recently published *Otherness and Power: Michael Jackson and His Media Critics*. It is an analysis of the (mostly) unconscious factors that contributed to the hateful media coverage—as opposed to his ardent fan base—that Michael Jackson got during his life and immediately after his death. It is available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble websites.

Residents Get Down and Dirty

In our second annual fall planting and mulching project, on a lovely fall day, nearly 50 neighbors, including a dozen kids, came together to plant 1,000 daffodil bulbs and spread 30 bags of mulch on our 90 tree wells. Since some tree wells are inaccessible and some still had fully blooming flowers, which we didn't want to disturb, we were excited to be able to tackle one-third of the wells on our blocks. In addition five trees on Broadway were mulched and planted as well. As is our tradition, the two big tree wells in front of the Semiperm transitional housing residence on the east side of Broadway were mulched and planted with daffodils as well.

Thanks to efforts of volunteers over the last two or three years, the Broadway trees are beginning to look a bit better. Since the proprietors of the new urgent care facility and the real-estate brokerage have both expressed their willingness to help keep the tree wells clean and the trees watered and healthy, we expect to see the trees flourish. A couple of particular extra BIG thank yous are due to the following people: Camille Colon collected the bulbs from the city's giveaway program, the Daffodil Project, and schlepped them uptown from Union Square. Moe Imerukaj at 878 WEA, and the residents of the building, again gave permission for us to use the sidewalk in front of the building as our staging area. Moe stored several large bags of mulch and provided a hose and a big trash can. The staff and residents of 300 RSD, who allowed us to store bulbs and mulch there as well.

The staff and residents of the St. Luke's residence were awesome! Blaize and Moe hauled huge bags of mulch and soil around the neighborhood for hours. Along with Alex, they also cleaned up and planted the tree wells near St. Luke's. Staff members Mikhael Plain and Angie Townsend

helped clean and plant 10 tree wells on W. 102nd St. and Riverside Dr. Thanks as always to the members of the Block Association Ecology Committee, who turned out in force and did many hours of raking, digging, and mulching.

Since we've used the sidewalk in front of 878 West End twice a year for a couple of years now, it's time to ask whether another building on or near West End would be willing to take a turn. If you think your building might be willing, please contact trees@w102-103blockassn.org so we can try to get permission.

Farewell to a Founder

Evelyn Brodwin Miller, 74, a founder of the W. 102nd & 103rd Streets Block Association in the early 1970s, died at home on Oct. 1, 2014, from lung cancer. In addition to being on the executive board of the Block Association she later became the organization's secretary and then co-chair. According to the June 17, 1973 issue of Neighborhood News, the precursor of this newsletter, she was reelected to that position in May 1973 for "...the second year of the co-chairmanship for Evelyn, who hasn't stopped working in the association since it was founded three years ago. She was a prime mover in getting the 44 new trees for our neighborhood and has been orchestrating all the association's varied activities for the past year."

Evelyn was also an early participant in the beginning stages of Bloomingdale Aging in Place. In 2009 she helped to start its morning walking group and a bridge group. She was an avid member of the BAiP photography group and was actively perfecting her skills in the weeks before she died. Evelyn is survived by stepsons Jonathan, Ryder, and Ivan Miller. Her husband Leon Miller died two years ago.

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On Broadway

★ **Radio Shack** is closing its store on Broadway at W. 94th St. but will open a new one in part of the former **Gourmet Garage** space on the west side of Broadway between W. 96th and W. 97th Sts. The other part of the space is occupied by a **7-Eleven**.

★ **Paris Baguette Café**, a worldwide chain, will be opening a branch in the space recently vacated by the **Beauty Plus Salon** on the east side of Broadway between W. 96th and W. 97th Sts.

★ At the time we went to press, a painter finishing preparations at the new **Earth Café** in the space of the former Blimpie Sandwich shop on the northeast corner of W. 97th St. and Broadway, said it would be open in mid-November.

★ The **Beauty Plus Salon** and beauty supplies shop on the east side of Broadway between W. 96th and W. 97th Sts. had a going-out-of-business sale in the middle of July and closed by the end of the month.

★ **RCI Appliances** has moved from the southwest corner of W. 98th St. and Broadway to Queens. They had been in operation at this location for 80 years! When the signs went up announcing the move, some posts appeared online denouncing greedy landlords. However, the daughter of a current owner of RCI commented online (on *westsiderag.com*): "Wanted to thank you for your concerns. However, want to clarify, we are not moving because of increase in rent. Our landlord is a BLESSING to us. Business is not what it used to be and expenses are increasing on all sides. We are fortunate enough to relocate and will continue business as usual." Though an obvious use for this space would be an expansion of Westside Market to the north, a management employee of the market said she knew nothing about that possibility.

★ A block north, **Spices and Tease** on the east side of Broadway between W. 97th and W. 98th Sts. has closed.

★ Six months ago, the Chinese restaurant, **Hunan Balcony**, on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 98th St. "closed for renovation" and eventually reopened as **Szechuan Gourmet 98** but quickly changed its name to **Szechuan Taste**. Now that incarnation has had a short life and has again "closed for renovation." According to a worker coming out of the place recently, it should have reopened, by the time this newsletter is distributed, with "the same boss but new cuisine."

★ **Shoe Club**, on the east side of Broadway between W. 98th and W. 99th Sts. has closed.

★ The **Hong Liquor Store**, a few doors north of **Shoe Club**, closed in early November and almost immediately reopened with a new owner. With the recent opening of **Broadway Cellars** on the east side of Broadway between W. 105th and 106th Sts. in the former location of **Riverside Liquor**, which has moved south one block, the number of wine and liquor stores on Broadway between W. 96th and W. 110th Sts. is has grown to six. **Wine in November**, on the east side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts. just underwent a two-week interior renovation and is now open again with a new name: **Grape Collective**.

★ **Academy Floral** moved during the summer from the northeast corner of Broadway and W. 107th St. to the much more opulent retail space of Ariel East, the (very) high-rise just north of the moribund Metro Theater on the east side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts. Now, about three months later, they have been evicted for non-payment of rent. The Marshal's Notice went up on Nov. 5 and the shop has been dark ever since though the shop's abandoned flowers and plants were visible from the street. This is a very sad ending for a business that claimed to be "New York City's oldest operating florist."

★ A couple of doors north of **Academy Floral**, the small perfume shop known as **Ruby Fragrances**, which was having sale after sale, has now closed.

★ **Ten Below**, a store selling a remarkable variety of items priced below \$10 has opened in the space vacated years ago by **Sterling Optical** on the west side of Broadway between W. 100th and W. 101st Sts.

★ In spite of emails last summer warning of its imminent demise, **PicNic Market and Café**, on the west side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts., remained open through the fall but finally closed in late November.

★ The small **HSBC** bank branch on the northwest corner of Broadway and W. 102nd St. has posted a sign in its window saying it will close in December.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Voila! A Great Bakery

By KATE MCLEOD

Any time you can find a really tasty cappuccino along with world-class pastry, it's worth going just a few steps out of your way. Many of us would walk a mile for such a treat, and pay a premium, but nirvana is closer and less expensive than that.

La Toulousaine opened in January 2012 and was the first boulangerie to open in Manhattan Valley. It's a simple storefront with only six tables and a bar with six seats. For such a tiny establishment, the menu is extensive and the service solicitous. You can pick up an egg sandwich for breakfast, eat a hot dog wrapped in croissant dough for lunch as we happily did, or grab a baguette for dinner on the way home from work. Going for breakfast so that you can see for yourself that it is still possible to order two eggs any style for

\$4.75 is a fine option. For a little extra you can have your eggs on a baguette or croissant or add ham, bacon, sausage, homemade potatoes, swiss or mozzarella cheese. At lunchtime, you can choose from a traditional *pâté de campagne* on a baguette with cornichons or, *mais bien sur*, quiche, croque monsieur or madame or, for non-carnivores, a vegetable sandwich.

This is a French bakery, after all, so it's no surprise to find *macarons*, and a variety of cakes such as fruit mousse, opera cake, *mille feuille*, mocha and raspberry dark chocolate, all priced at \$30 and under so you will not have to mortgage your apartment to celebrate a birthday or anniversary. There are individual servings of many of these cakes for \$5 or less. We tasted a chocolate cake with raspberry and found it Mmmmmmm. I also sampled an

almond croissant pastry, which was out of this world, and a lovely sweet brioche topped with sugar crystals. A chocolate lava cupcake makes a fine reward for good grades or any other achievement. Creme brûlée is available to go (!), and comes packed in a recyclable small container. Although the caramelized sugar topping was a little soft (the container limits how much heat can be applied), it nonetheless ranks high among the many I've consumed in my lifetime.

LA TOULOUSAINE IS LOCATED AT 946 AMSTERDAM AVE. BETWEEN W. 106TH AND W. 107TH ST.; TELEPHONE (212) 866-2253; TOULOUSAINENYC.COM. HOURS ARE 6:30 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M. ON WEEKDAYS AND 7:30 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M. ON WEEKENDS. CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED FOR PURCHASES OVER \$10. FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED: THERE IS NO REST ROOM.

★ Remaining in the neighborhood, at least temporarily, is El Taller, the Latin American workshop, which offers Spanish lessons, an art gallery, and various musical events. It has moved out of its third-floor space on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 104th St. and into a basement space at St. Michael's Church with an entrance on W. 99th St. between Amsterdam and Broadway. El Taller is ultimately heading for a space on E. 99th St., but may continue its presence in our neighborhood at St. Michael's.

★ The awning was up in early November at Plowshares Coffee/Bloomingdale on the east side of Broadway between W. 104th and W. 105th St. in the space formerly occupied by a Juice Generation juice bar. The owner, Anthony Kurutz, who runs a small coffee roasting operation in Hillburn, NY, about 32 miles north of the store, planned to have his first retail shop open before Thanksgiving.

★ A block further uptown, construction has recently begun for the gastropub that is slated to move into the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 106th St., just north of the Five Lamps Tavern. For a while, it appeared that the corner of the three-story building was being supported by a single steel column about six inches in diameter. That scary fact is now obscured by a construction fence and some framing that is taking shape along the Broadway and W. 106th St. sides of the new restaurant.

★ The Bank St. Bookstore on the southwest corner of W. 112th St. and Broadway will not close but instead will move to the former home of Academy Floral on the northeast corner of W. 107th St. and Broadway. The bookstore expects to open by March of next year.

★ Construction is also underway for the Italian restaurant that will replace the departed Indian Café on the west side of Broadway between W. 107th and W. 108th Sts.

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