



WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

VOL. 42, NO. 5

HELPING HANDS NEEDED

Tenth Annual Yard Sale Set for May 18

For the tenth consecutive year, your Block Association will present the popular spring Yard Sale. We are pleased to announce that the date this year is **Saturday, May 18**. The sale will be open for browsers and buyers from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on W. 103rd St. between West End Ave. and Riverside Dr. The rain date is Sunday, May 19.

The coordinator is, once again, Bob Aaronson, a W. 103rd St. resident. If you still have questions after reading this article and visiting our website, then call him at (212) 662-4046 or email him at yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org.

Now is the time to reserve a vendor space at the Sale. Anthony Bellov, our expert vendor coordinator, has already received reservations

from veteran vendors who value this opportunity. Go to our website (w102-103blockassn.org) and click on "2013 Yard Sale" for detailed information and a link to the vendor agreement. Spaces cost \$40 for Block Association residents, \$55 for others. Each space is 10 feet wide by 8 feet deep. As this is a neighborhood event, noncommercial vendors are given priority. Tables are not provided, so if you need one, be sure to make your own arrangements in advance.

Back by popular demand, we'll have another split-pot lottery where your contributions may be rewarded with half of the total amount collected. Look for opportunities to buy raffle tickets at the Yard Sale and at tables
(Continued on page 5)

April Is Not the Cruellest Month

The 15th annual Poetry Event will take place on **Sunday, April 28** at 2 p.m. at Franklin's Bench, Riverside Dr. and W. 103rd St. on the island west of the service road. All are welcome to listen and to read their own work and the work of others. In case of rain, the event will move indoors at 310 Riverside Dr.

Emergency Preparedness Focus of Annual Meeting

With Superstorm Sandy fresh in our minds, the Block Association asked itself what we could do to help our community prepare for similar events in the future. As a step toward answering that question, we have made disaster preparedness the focus of our **March 14** meeting.

This year's featured speaker will be resident Shelly Fine, who is a member of CERT, which stands for Community Emergency Response Team Program. CERT educates people about being ready for all sorts of hazards that may affect their areas, and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Drawing on both classroom training and practice during exercises, CERT members can then assist others in their neighborhoods or workplaces following serious events when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency re-

sponse agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. Our neighborhood's elected officials have also been invited so that they can answer questions.

We will also honor those who have lived in the neighborhood for 50 years or more. Each will be presented with a certificate and small gift. If you know anyone who qualifies, please contact us at info@w102-103blockassn.org or by phone at (212) 865-8524. For more information about this event and the Block Association, visit our website, w102-103blockassn.org. Also on the agenda are presentation of the 2012 financial report and election of the board of directors.

Mark the date—**March 14**—and plan to join us from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Marseilles Residence, 230 W. 103rd St. It's sure to be an informative evening and is the ideal opportunity for you to learn about the Block Association and share what's important to you with us.

BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

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

April 9 and May 14 at
306 W. 102nd St.
at 8:00 p.m.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m.,
Thursday,
March 14 at the Marseilles,
230 W. 103 St.

Letters from Neighbors: Construction Controversy, Guard Service

To the Editor:

As long-time residents, neighbors, and Block Association members, we are writing to respond to your December 2012 article, "Building Owner Seeks Block Association Help."

Jacob Avid purchased 315 W. 103rd Street and began construction to enlarge the historic brownstone by 80% in 2009, without contacting tenants, neighbors or the Community Board.

On multiple DOB filings, Mr. Avid claimed that the building was vacant. In July 2009, upon realizing that the building was occupied, DOB issued a Stop Work Order. A June 2010 WSJ article quoted a senior DOB official saying that DOB wouldn't have approved the permit for the enlargement if it had known the building was occupied.

The project has had a severe impact on tenants who for over four years have faced serious ongoing issues caused by the construction.

During the past four years, Avid has not responded to numerous concerns brought to him by owners of neighboring buildings, but made repairs to address leaks in an adjoining brownstone after being ordered to do so by the DOB Commissioner. In doing so, Avid attempted to continue construction on the project. In June 2010, DOB determined that this work exceeded what was permitted to address the leaks and violated the Stop Work Order.

Borough President Stringer, Assembly Member O'Donnell, and Council Member Dickens have all asked DOB to order the building restored to its original state, as have several hundred neighborhood residents who have signed a petition. We trust that the Block Association will see past Mr. Avid's after-the-fact appeal for help and understand that any

resolution to this problem must include the things that Mr. Avid has to date refused to provide: limitations on over-reaching construction plans and sufficient protections for neighbors, tenants and members of the Block Association.

For more information, please contact w103rdstresidents@gmail.com.

NADINE HERMAN AND MARK DANNA (315 WEST 103RD STREET), RICHARD ROBBINS, WENDY STRYKER, DAN SCHNEIDER, LAUREN ATTINELLO, JAY BLOOMFIELD, SASHA GEE ENERGREY, JAMES MASSOL, DAVID MYERS, LESLIE BIALLER, ANTONY MOTT, CHRISTINA MOTT, MANOLIS ANTONOYIANNAKIS, DONNY LEE (317-319 WEST 103RD STREET)

To the Editor:

Has a rationale been provided why we continue to have guards as part of the Block Association-supported activities? The two guards are lovely people, and this is no reflection on them. As the Upper West Side is a low-crime neighborhood, and most blocks do not have guards, it would be useful to analyze what additive value this service provides.

DAVID HOOS, 310 RIVERSIDE DRIVE

Thanks for writing. There are several reasons that we consistently conclude that keeping the guard on duty is worthwhile.

First, although serious crime is rare in our area, petty crimes regularly occur citywide. We believe that having a guard on patrol is a deterrent to these incidents, at least during the hours that he's on duty. Unfortunately, there's no way to measure whether that's the case without suspending guard service to see what happens. The possibility that harm might befall any of our neighbors while we conduct such an experiment is troublesome to our board members. Secondarily, after work-

ing for many years to find a reliable guard service and guards who truly do earn the money we work so hard to raise, we're loath to disrupt that relationship just to see what would happen.

We get reports of incidents in which the guard has been helpful on a regular enough basis that our board believes that continuing to employ the guard service is reasonable.

Keeping the guard on duty not only protects our residents and their vehicles, but adds to property values, which benefits many residents, albeit some of them indirectly, and protects the aesthetics of the neighborhood. We enjoy little graffiti on our buildings and mailboxes and seldom have plants stolen from our tree wells. Both add to the quality of life on our blocks.

We believe that the suggested contribution of \$100 per household that funds the guard does not present an unreasonable burden to most of our residents. We'd love to see a greater percentage of households participating in the Block Association and contributing to it, in which case we could reduce the suggested contribution to less than \$25 per year rather than per quarter!

If you write a letter, please indicate whether you'd like your letter to be considered for publication or answered privately. Letters for publication should be brief and must include the writer's street address, email address, and phone number. We will not publish an anonymous letter, but will withhold publication of the writer's name upon request. We reserve the right to edit letters and will notify you in advance of publication if the letter is changed significantly. Send your letter to P.O. Box 1940, New York, NY 10025 or by e-mail to editor@w102-103blockassn.org.

THE WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION, info@w102-103blockassn.org

NEWSLETTER Published four times each year. Hedy Campbell and Nancy Butkus, co-editors. 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 bloomingle.com/newsletter102-103.htm

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.

STREET GUARD Your contributions to the Block Association provide funding for our street guards, Rafael Hernandez, who makes rounds from 5 p.m. to midnight, Sun., Wed. and Thurs. and from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., Fri. and Sat., and Roy Chavarriaga, on duty Mon. and Tues. from 5 p.m. to midnight. The guards can be reached, through the office of Starr Security, at (212) 767-1110, to report neighborhood security issues or to request assistance on the street.



AWARDS SEASON

Local Leader Recognized

If you've lived on our blocks for any length of time, especially if you're involved at all in local politics, you're bound to have run into Cynthia Doty. She's been a mainstay in our community for 35 years, and has an encyclopedic knowledge of who's who and what's what in a vast array of organizations. When we need to get something done and a city agency is involved, Cynthia is our go-to gal. We think of her as a valued and valuable resource, a national treasure on a local level. The West Side Federation of Neighborhood and Block Associations thinks so too. An umbrella group that works hard to bring together community groups of all sorts and the various governmental bodies that represent them for the benefit of all concerned, the Federation selects a few deserving individuals on whom to bestow Community Service Awards each year. On December 3, 2012, at the Federation's annual holiday party, Cynthia became a recipient.

When you consider Cynthia's background, it's a wonder that she didn't receive one of the awards years ago. She's currently a Democratic District Leader for the 69th Assembly District, which earned her an invite to the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. last fall. She is a leader of Three Parks Independent Democrats, serves on Neighborhood Advisory Board #7, and is treasurer of the Interfaith Assembly for Homelessness and Housing. She was a staff member for former Assembly Member Ed Sullivan, and has worked on countless political campaigns, most recently co-managing the Obama campaign center on Broadway. She is a founding member of Westsiders for Responsible Development, which was a powerful force in changing the zoning laws that allowed the huge Extell buildings to go up on Broadway, and is a member of the Coalition to Preserve Community. Cynthia was also a driving force in the creation of the Manhattan Avenue and West End Avenue Historic Districts. She is active with the Morningside Heights/West Harlem Sanitation Coalition and is on the advisory board of the Institute for Community Living, a neighborhood residence for the homeless.

We're proud to count Cynthia among our board members and congratulate her on her well-deserved recognition.

BAiP Parties to Thank Marseilles Residents and Staff

By DAVID L. REICH

Since 2009, Bloomingdale Aging in Place has held an annual party in December to thank the management and tenants of the Marseilles Residence for their year-long cooperation in hosting BAiP meetings and activities. This past December, we changed the format to encourage conversation and mingling among the guests and it was a great success.

More than 60 people from the neighborhood turned out, including 18 residents from the Marseilles, more than ever before. They enjoyed the wonderful DJ Andy who played great salsa and songs that the crowd knew well. The Community Room was packed but still there was dancing in the aisles!

Delicious food, contributed by many neighbors, was supplemented with empanadas made by a local building super and succulent ham and turkey. The desert table was overflowing with homemade goodies, but not for long as partygoers enjoyed the sweets. Dorothy Crouch, Judy Pietrasiewicz, Roses Katz, Jane Tuttle, Elly and Bob Ledogar, and Bonnie Mairs all contributed to the organization and smooth running of the event.

A highlight of the evening was a neighborhood trivia contest created and run by Gil Tauber. No one knew the answer to all 14 multiple-choice questions, but Mildred Speiser, with 11 correct responses won first prize. Second and third prizes were awarded and the randomly chosen door prize winner was a Marseilles resident. All the prizes were generously donated by Judy Pietrasiewicz.

Since the party, BAiP has had one Dinner in the Neighborhood, at Regional Restaurant; more such events will be announced once Bonnie Mairs, who organizes them, returns from her trip to Myanmar. Tai chi and yoga classes resumed after a New Year's break. Tai chi is full but there are still a few places open in the yoga class. Both are designed specifically for seniors.

For more information about Bloomingdale Aging in Place, visit the website bloominplace.org. If you, or someone you know in the neighborhood, would like to join the BAiP email list, send your name, phone number, and address to signup@bloominplace.org. BAiP can be contacted by email at info@bloominplace.org and by phone at (212) 842-8831.



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Solstice Caroling Concludes Convivially

By HEDY CAMPBELL

We were more than a little nervous. In 2011, weather behooved us to cancel our annual holiday caroling event. Then in 2012, the after-effects of Sandy behooved us to cancel our annual Halloween party. Would the weather gods put the kibosh on this year's caroling? Happily, the third time was the charm! After a string of unseasonably warm days, the evening of December 21 was crisp and clear, just cold enough to lend the right mood for caroling, but not so cold that we were over-eager to retreat indoors.

As has been the case for longer than either of us cares to remember, Anthony Bellov convened the group in the lobby of 865 West End Ave. With the help of Dayle VanderSande, he shepherded our group of nearly 70 enthusiastic singers and hummers and tambourine shakers of all ages as we wound our way through the neighborhood. We blessed each block with "Dona Nobis Pacem" in round form, and serenaded the residents of 300 Riverside with "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

Thanks to the residents and building managers of 310 Riverside for loaning us their newly and beautifully renovated Riverside lobby for our after party, to Mildred Speiser for minding the cider pot, to David Reich for lending the hot plate, to Ed Campbell for last-minute help with shopping, set-up, and clean-up, and to the Hanrahans for help with clean-up. Watch for notices of next year's solstice caroling and come join us!



ACTION! Michael J. Fox's new NBC sitcom filmed a few scenes in the neighborhood in early January, including the one above where multi-colored water balloons were thrown off the roof at 878 West End. In the new series, Fox plays a NYC news anchor who returns to work after Parkinson's Disease forces him to take time off.

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May 18th Yard Sale

(Continued from page 1)

we'll have set up in strategic locations during the weeks preceding the Yard Sale.

New this year, as an added service to our community, we are sponsoring a blood drive. Hedy Campbell, who organized the Block Association's first-ever blood drive last year, will coordinate. Please schedule your preferred time for donating by calling (212) 865-8524 or sending an email to blood@w102-103blockassn.org. You'll also be able to sign up at the raffle tables. If you have questions about donating, visit the New York Blood Center's website (nybloodcenter.org) or contact Hedy, who has donated dozens of times. We'd like to have at least 36 reservations logged in advance of the event.

Deborah Lott, who so ably organized the silent auction last year, will do so again. If you have an item of value you would like to donate (a few days at your weekend house, tickets to a sports event or a performance, or a gift certificate you're not likely to use, for example), please send email to her at auction@w102-103blockassn.org or call her at (212) 749-1637.

We'll repeat the e-waste recycling, too, that was so capably run by Andres Veranes. Please let him know what you'll be bringing and if you can help during the event or with transporting collected material to a local transfer point (averanes@verison.net).

We will again host a Community Sale table, for the benefit of the Block Association, where we will sell donations of new or gently used toys, games, CDs/DVDs, art, crafts, or household items in good working order. In other words, things you would give or sell to a friend. Beginning Monday, May 3, you can drop items off

with the doorman at 240 W. 102nd St. between the hours of 8 a.m. and midnight. For more information, please email us at commtable@w102-103blockassn.org or call Cynthia Doty (212) 749-4085.

Since clothing donations will not be accepted at the Community Sale table, we're planning to make arrangements for textile recycling. Bins in which donors can place used clothes, linens, curtains and drapes, throw rugs, and other types of textiles will be provided. Usable items will be recycled via shelters and similar organizations. Items that have given up the ghost are sent for processing into new material. For further information contact Cynthia Doty (cldoty@aol.com).

To keep our visitors and vendors well fed we will be offering a variety of refreshments, mostly homemade. To contribute baked goods (cookies, cakes, or cupcakes, for example), if you have resources or ideas for this aspect of the Yard Sale, and if you'd like to help out with refreshments, please contact food@w102-103blockassn.org. Sandwiches, fresh fruit, yogurt, and cold beverages, as well as baked goods, are welcome.

Most of all, please volunteer. We need all sorts of help setting up, staffing the Block Association tables, and cleaning up. Give us an hour or two of your time and we'll give you all the appreciation you could want as well as the well-being that can only be gained from contributing to one's community. You might even get to choose a freebie from the refreshments table to boot! This is a great way for teenagers to help out and get community service hours for school. To sign up, send email to Bob Aaronson at yardsale@w102-103blockassn.org or call him at (212) 662-4046.

CORRECTION

Contrary to popular belief, we weren't trying to emulate e e cummings. Because of a last-minute production glitch, our last issue was entirely absent of commas. We apologize for the error.

Give Blood at the Yard Sale

May 18, 10 am to 4 pm

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO DONATE:

Bring ID!
Be between 17 and 76
(younger and older people may also qualify).
Most recent donation must be before Mar. 23.
Weigh more than 105 pounds
Be infection-free.



Check nybloodcenter.org or call 800-688-0900 for specifics regarding foreign travel and excluded medications

CONTACT BLOOD@W102-103BLOCKASSN.ORG OR
212-865-8524 TO RESERVE A TIME SLOT



Next Stop: Bacon Central!

By KATE MCLEOD

Grab your hat and get your coat. Leave your diet on your doorstep and direct your feet east to Columbus Avenue between W. 104th and 105th Sts. You have arrived at bacon paradise. Wesley Klein, the mad baconist behind this cute café, doesn't cure all of the bacon himself, but he does curate them, choosing only the best from the masters of smoke and pepper around the country. Klein, 34, doesn't have a culinary background, but he knows his bacon and is bringing the best in the whole country to his café and our neighborhood.

Bacon is like chocolate in that its quality ranges from ridiculous to sublime. Who hasn't watched a pound of bacon shrivel to nothing but salt and fat in a frying pan? But cook up Nueske's or Benton's from The Baconery and the experience is one of rich flavor layered with sweetness and smoke. The Baconery sells bacon, including turkey and wild boar, by the pound; prices range from \$12 to \$15 per pound.

The café has a limited, but delicious and inexpensive menu. A bacon, egg and cheese sandwich for breakfast (\$5.99) is substantial enough to last you through the afternoon. Bring the kids to share a bacon and grilled cheese (\$4.99), or order an "Elvis" that combines bacon, peanut butter, banana, and honey (\$6.99). Good luck getting out of The Baconery without buying one of the "Don't Go Bacon my Heart" T-shirts.

The Baconery's blueberry muffin is a sensational combination of moist cake, plump blueberries, and smoky bacon chips. It's a combination so perfect, one wonders why it hadn't been thought of before. Chocolate or maple vanilla brownies, mini chocolate chip, chocolate and peanut butter and oatmeal cranberry cookies with bacon are available as are marshmallow bars, bacon croissants, bacon pecan pie, bacon lollipops, caramels, and chocolate-dipped bacon strips. Snacks and baked goods range in price from 99 cents to \$7.99.

Klein and his staff are friendly and welcoming. Plans for a DJ night and other social events are in the works. If you have a preference for how you want your bacon cooked, state it upfront. You may need to ask for condiments. The Baconery is located at 911 Columbus Ave.; tel. (917) 675-3385; baconery.com, and is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Credit cards are accepted and once you are in the system you don't ever have to present your card again; the system emails your receipt.

Organization Reports Reduced Income and Expenses in 2012

Your Block Association had a 6.5 percent decrease in total income for the year 2012 and a corresponding 4 percent decrease in expenses. We have had a number of new contributors but the percentage of neighborhood residents who contribute is still low. Newsletter ad sales have increased 58 percent and our yard sale income has increased by almost 25 percent. These factors combined to allow a very small surplus for the year.

Financial Report for 2012

Opening Balance, 1/1/12 \$25,991.70
Closing Balance, 12/31/12 \$26,085.23

INCOME

Individual contributions..... \$21,210.00
Building contributions..... 14,540.00
Newsletter ads..... 2,470.00
Grants & other income..... 1,830.00
Yard Sale 4,994.91
Total Income..... \$45,044.91

EXPENSES

Contributions, dues \$1,507.66
Event expenses..... 1,290.44
Operating expenses..... 254.00
Printing 3,587.01
Security guard..... 38,312.27
Total Expenses..... \$44,951.38

Net Gain(Loss)..... \$93.53

HELP WANTED

Here's an offer even the busiest person can't refuse! All you need is an email address and a printer. Our goal is to develop a network of residents, ideally one in each building, to receive occasional (not more than a dozen a year) flyers that announce one of our events, then print and hang them in their buildings. To volunteer, contact Hedy Campbell (hedyfc@nyc.rr.com).

SEEKING HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

If you moved into the neighborhood in 1963 or before and we haven't already inducted you into our Residents of Long Standing Hall of Fame, please let us know. At the March 14 annual meeting the newest inductees will be introduced to the community and presented with a certificate and a small gift and photographed. If you qualify or know someone who does please contact Hedy Campbell (212-865-8524 or hedyfc@nyc.rr.com).

MEET THE NEIGHBORS

Three Actors, One Cellist, Two Writers and a Castanet Player

By JULIA C. SPRING

We found three Block Association residents who are appearing in plays in the coming months—one in an off-Broadway production, one in radio theater and one in an improv show—and two neighborhood residents who will participate in chamber concerts, one as director and cellist and the other playing the castanets. In addition, one neighbor seeks new members of a monthly poetry discussion group, and another would like you to share your anecdotes about the Christmas tree seller at 102nd and Broadway. How can you not find something that interests you!

Laura Leopard

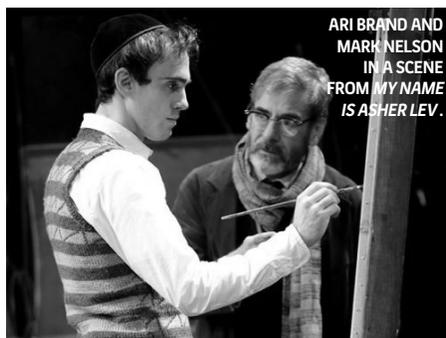
As the founder of Gotham Radio Theatre, Laura is one of a core group of actors who assume the personae of 1940s actors (complete with faux 40s bios) and then perform a one-hour radio show. Each performance is full of great sound effects, old-time commercials, and actors playing multiple roles.

Gotham's next show is *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (The Speckled Band)*, being performed on Sat., Mar. 23 and Sun., Mar. 24. This classic story begins as a young woman arrives at Baker Street asking Holmes to look into the mysterious death of her sister on the eve of her wedding. As Holmes and Watson investigate the sinister happenings at her ancestral home, they encounter complicated family relations, protected money, and a poisonous jungle animal. Laura, who plays two parts in this radio play, has an extensive acting career in the New York area, including at the Paper Mill Playhouse and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Performances take place at the ArcLight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for seniors, through gothamradiotheatre.com.

Mark Nelson

Mark is one of just three actors in the critically acclaimed off-Broadway play *My Name Is Asher Lev*. The play is an adaptation of the Chaim Potok coming-of-age novel about a Hasidic boy in Brooklyn who is determined to become an artist despite the opposition of everyone in his family and community. *New York Magazine* calls Mark an actor of the old-school, with seriousness of purpose



that allows him to play a variety of different roles with equal passion. A *New York Times* review says that he shines. No wonder that the play's run has been extended through May 26!

Mark has performed in Europe and New York on a tour with The Bridge Project, Sam Mendes' classical rep company. He has been in nine Broadway plays, including Tom Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* (Lincoln Center), Arthur Miller's *After the Fall*, and Chekhov's *Three Sisters* (Roundabout Theatre), as well as in the original casts of *A Few Good Men*, *Rumors*, *Biloxi Blues*, and *Amadeus*. For his performance as Einstein in Steve Martin's *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, Mark received an Obie. He has directed plays at Manhattan Theatre Club, McCarter Theatre, George Street Playhouse, and Chautauqua Theatre Company, and is a frequent guest director at the Juilliard School.

You can see My Name Is Asher Lev at the Westside Theatre (upstairs), 407 W. 43rd St.; asherlevtheplay.com.

Deb Rabbai

Deb, voice/anime and improv actress will be featured in *Broadway's Next Hit Musical*, a show that recurs yet is always different. The first act is an improv awards ceremony featuring four "Best Musical" nominees based on song titles suggested by audience members. The second act is a full-blown improvised musical based on the song that the audience has voted its favorite. Everything—characters, songs, plot twists, and witty dialogue—is made up right on the spot.

BNHM (broadwaysnexthitmusical) will take place on four Fridays: May 17 and 31, June 7 and 14, at 7 p.m. The performance takes place at Stage 72 (formerly The Triad) at 158 W. 72nd St., second floor. Tickets are \$20 plus two drinks through smartix.com.

Ruth Sommers and Jerane Michel

Ruth Sommers founded the Festival Chamber Orchestra in 1992 and is its director and cellist. Its five concerts a year are known for their relaxed intimacy, a comfortable setting for many first-time classical music concertgoers. The musicians speak informally before each work and there is a party after each concert at which the audience meets the musicians and each other.

There are two concerts scheduled this spring, both on Wednesdays. The Mar. 28 concert will feature piano quartets by Mozart and Dvorak as well as pieces in the Spanish style by Arbos; Jerane Michel, a professional Spanish dancer, will play the castanets in the Arbos. On May 15, the concert will include a Brahms trio and works that feature bassoon, guitar, and piano in different combinations.

Both concerts are at 8 p.m. at Weill Hall (Carnegie Hall, 154 W. 57th St.). Tickets are \$30 and may be purchased by phone, 212-678-6970, or online (festivalchamber.org) two months before each concert.

Temma Ehrenfeld

Temma runs a monthly poetry discussion group in her neighborhood home. Each meeting includes participants' poems as well as works published by others. Temma is a journalist and editor who has worked at *Fortune* and *Newsweek*. Her articles have appeared widely, including in *The New York Times* and *Ms.* She is the author of the novel *The Wizard of Kew Gardens*. Anyone interested in the poetry discussion group may contact Temma through her website, expertediting.org.

Jon Reiner

Jon, author of the award-winning memoir *The Man Who Couldn't Eat*, is working on a project about François, the Christmas tree vendor who comes from Montreal every year to sell trees in front of the paint store on the east side of Broadway between W. 102nd and W. 103rd St. Jon is interested in hearing from people who have anecdotes about their experiences with François to share. Please contact him at jonreiner@nyc.rr.com.

Think Spring (Planting)!

Spring Planting Day is around the corner!

Every year, area residents spend a day cleaning the tree wells on our blocks, turning and fertilizing the soil, and planting annual flowers. By popular request, the date of the annual Spring Tree Well Cleanup and Flower Planting Day has been moved from June to **Saturday, April 27** (rain date Sunday, April 28). Thanks to the efforts of volunteers on the Ecology Committee, this is now possible. The earlier date will allow us all to enjoy the flowers and plants for a full month longer than in the past.

The Block Association supplies plants, work gloves, tools, mulch, fresh soil, and fertilizer. You supply the elbow grease and enthusiasm. Please join your neighbors and give an hour or two to ensuring that our street trees have a good growing season and that our blocks are clean and flower-filled this spring and summer. This year, we aim to clean and plant every empty or uncared-for tree well in the Association's territory including the heavily trafficked ones on the west side of Broadway. Tree wells with planter railings and decorative guards may need the soil turned and cleaned as well.

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

needed. Booklets on care of street trees will be supplied by the MillionTreesNYC program of the Parks Dept.

Plants and tools will be available for pick-up at the staging area in front of 878 West End Ave. starting at 9:30 am on the 27th. (Tools must be signed for and returned.) You may wish to bring a pad or pillow to kneel on while you work. You may wish to work on tree wells near your address, but there are also tree wells that get little care and could use your help. It's always helpful to let us know in advance if you plan to participate. You can do so by emailing the Ecology Committee at trees@w102-103blockassn.org. Or just show up!

In past years the Block Association has received funding for this event from the Citizens Committee for New York City, and we have once again applied for a block beautification grant. Our thanks to the Citizens Committee for its support.

Fall Bulb Planting Planned

Area residents have also expressed a wish to plant flower bulbs this autumn, to enliven early spring next year (before Planting Day) with tulips, daffodils, and squills. We have therefore scheduled a Fall Cleanup and Bulb Planting Day for Saturday, October 19 (rain date Sunday, October 20). Please save that date and watch the newsletter for more information.

Shedding Light

Two down and three to go. This winter two new sets of scaffolding (aka sidewalk sheds) have arisen in the neighborhood, a controversial one has finally come down, and one whose spooky frame has darkened our sidewalks for five years is about to head back to its resting place in the Bronx.

First up, or down, actually, was the controversial one at **315 W. 103rd St.**, a blight on the block for the last four years. Jacob Avid, the building owner, has been at loggerheads with some tenants and neighbors over the construction of rooftop and rear extensions, which has resulted in a stop-work order from the NYC Department of Buildings. (*See the letter to the editor on page 2.*) Neighbors were heartened to see that in December, Avid took down the sidewalk shed, creating much-needed goodwill and light. The other shed that came down had been at **300 Riverside Dr.** for six months. According to board president Jon Reiner, it had been erected "to comply with Local Law 11," which requires exterior examinations of buildings of more than five stories every five years.

Two new sets of scaffolding, catty-cornered to each other at W. 102nd St. and West End Ave. have surfaced at **865 and 858 West End Ave.** Alan Garfield, the owner of 858, says the brownstone façade is cracked and the shed is "for protection of tenants and neighbors." Because of extensive cracks, which are "symptomatic of a bigger problem," he expects to replace 25 percent of the façade and estimates the work will be finished by the end of this year. Michael Young, owner of 865, said through his assistant Dorothy Luciano, that "pointing and lintel work will be finished sometime in the summer."

The granddaddy of our sidewalk sheds belongs to the **Marseilles**, at **230 W. 103rd St.** and Broadway. The Beaux-Arts behemoth has had its sidewalks covered for the last five years for both window replacement and repointing, according to Andres Acevedo, the building super. The new buff-colored windows have all been installed and the shed should be coming down "very soon" says Acevedo, "before the summer." Alison Connell of Everest Scaffolding in the Bronx said "they have not yet received an order to take it down," however. Reclaiming this busy corner to light, air, and trees will be a welcome balm to our community.



TAKE A BOUGH! Hats off to neighbor Costello Caldwell for so artfully placing evergreen boughs in the tree wells along W. 102nd St. Not only are they a beautiful sight during the winter doldrums, but they protect the trees from dog urine and salt from the roads and sidewalks, promoting the health and longevity of the trees.

On Broadway



★ After more than a year battling a host of opponents including neighbors, the New York City Police Department, Community Board 7, and the New York State Liquor Authority over allegations of excessive noise, serving alcohol to minors, violence, and misuse of a liquor license assigned to a former occupant of the premises, **Papasito Mexican Grill and Agave Bar**, on the east side of Broadway between W. 104th and W. 105th Sts., closed at the end of 2012. The company's first restaurant, in the Inwood section of Manhattan, remains in operation. The local Papasito had begun as a joint operation with the owners of **Café du Soleil**, across Broadway, who had operated two successive, and ultimately unsuccessful, restaurants in the east side location: **Tokyo Pop** and **Angelina Pizza Bar**. Those owners have decided not to do anything further in that space.

★ The first **7-Eleven** store in our neighborhood has opened on the west side of Broadway between W. 96th and W. 97th Sts. in half of the former **Gourmet Garage** space. The other

half of that space remains vacant. A second 7-Eleven is supposed to open on the southeast corner of Broadway and W. 106th St. where the last tenant was a discount linens store but as of the middle of February, no renovation or other work has been visible there.

★ The "For Rent" sign on the marquee of the former **Metro Theater** on the east side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts. has been replaced by an "Alamo 2014" sign. The rebirth of the long-empty shell with the landmarked façade as an **Alamo Drafthouse Theater** is still on track to occur next year after the Austin, Texas-based company first opens one of

their signature dinner-and-a-movie locations on Central Park Ave. in Yonkers in 2013. In addition, the company has announced that 2015 will see the opening of their third New York City-area operation, in Brooklyn, at City Point, a new retail and housing development on the Fulton St. Mall.

Students from Barnard and Columbia were joined by former workers in front of Indus Valley to protest treatment of delivery people and dishwashers.

★ Last November, students from Barnard and Columbia were joined by former workers in front of **Indus Valley**, the Indian restaurant on the east side of Broadway between W. 99th and W. 100th Sts., to protest treatment of delivery people and dishwashers. Later, a suit was filed by eight former delivery workers claiming the restaurant's management had illegally withheld a portion of the tips they had earned, ostensibly to pay the fees of online food ordering services, such as Seamless and GrubHub, through which the orders had been placed. Now a United States District Court judge has rejected Indus Valley's claim that the deductions were legal and has refused management's request to dismiss the suit.

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