

# West 104<sup>th</sup> Street

BLOCK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

December 2017

## SPOTLIGHT

### Fighting for An Accessible NYC

*Joe Rappaport Runs a Non-Profit That Helps New Yorkers with Disabilities*

Joe Rappaport, a longtime New York City activist and a block resident for two decades, first came to New York City in 1979 as an undergraduate student at Columbia University. A native of Rochester, New York, he moved to his rental apartment at 304 West 104th Street seeking a nice block in the neighborhood. Since then, he has volunteered at the block party, and has also helped out frequently with the annual bulb planting.

For the last 14 months, Rappaport has been Executive Director of the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID). But his work as an activist in New York City began back in 1983, when he volunteered for the Straphangers Campaign, the subway and bus advocacy group. He eventually came on staff to help run the organization. His disability rights advocacy started in 2004, when he began advising the Taxis For All Campaign, which wants yellow taxis, liveries and Uber to offer wheelchair-accessible service.

BCID's mission, says Rappaport, is to empower people with disabilities. The parents who started BCID broke off from the Muscular Dystrophy Association in 1956, seeking to find ways to foster independence for their children as they became adults. In the late 1970s, BCID joined the burgeoning independent living movement. For the first time, people with disabilities led their own battles, seeking access to everything from schools to buses to voting booths, along with independence in determining their own health care and where to live.

BCID still adheres to the principles of independent living and advocacy. Most of BCID's employees and its board have disabilities, and they'll help anyone with a disability – of whatever kind – advocate for themselves if at all possible. Rappaport was interviewed in November 2017 by Block Association board member Joyce Mann.

#### HOW DID YOU COME TO DO THIS KIND OF WORK?

I came to New York City in 1979 as a student, when the subways were at their lowest point. I remember chasing after the subway cars with closed windows in the summer. Why? Because they were the ones with air conditioning.

The lousy service, the broken doors, the steaming hot cars—all of this



Joe Rappaport

### 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Block Party A Success

*Unbeatable Bargains and Community Spirit Reign Supreme*

Once the sun peeked out on October 14, few local residents or visitors could resist the siren call of bargain hunting at a cherished annual event: the West 104<sup>th</sup> Street Block Party, which remains the pre-eminent Yard Sale on the Upper West Side.

Drifting from the corner of West End Avenue down to Riverside Drive, neighbors and friends scanned the displays of secondhand merchandise on tables in ten-foot stalls lining both sides of the street. They watched vendors and customers negotiate, share a laugh or two, and shake hands to complete their transaction. Over the din, they listened to pop and jazz played by seasoned New York musicians Foley Road (James Weatherstone and Kurt Emmerich), Joe Giglio and Carl Sciaberra and Josh Levine with Itai Kriss. They stopped to browse used books overflowing tabletops. They carefully considered their investment in raffle tickets that might win half a pot that would exceed \$3,600 by the end of the day. Shopping at the Bake Sale, they picked up savories for an afternoon snack and a cake for their evening dessert.



James Weatherstone and Kurt Emmerich, a.k.a. Foley Road, covered rock classics.

#### RAIN THREATS DISPELLED

These vendors—who spent the previous evening surveying contradictory weather predictions on a variety of websites—had gone to bed fearing a rainout, but hoping for a bright sunrise. Waking to hazy but welcoming skies, they packed their vans and hauled their merchandise to the corner of Riverside and West 104<sup>th</sup>.

Of course, preparations for this event began well before the morning of October 14. In late winter, the block association began the lengthy City permitting process that would enable the block to host the event. By spring, board members started pounding the pavement to local restaurants, stores, and cultural institutions that might donate gift certificates to the Silent Auction. With the arrival of summer, the block association negotiated terms with musicians and sold vendor spaces. As fall approached, volunteers set up the 50/50 Raffle table on the corners of West End Avenue and began

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*Contributors to the December Issue:  
Barbara Boynton, Caitlin Hawke, Jeff  
Howitt, Mary Koval, Joyce Mann,  
Hanna Rubin (editor), Steve Zirinsky.  
Newsletter designer: Brian Hajjar.*

### *Holiday Greetings from the Board of Directors*

*The Board of Directors would like to take this  
opportunity to extend our sincere wishes for a  
happy, joyous, and healthy holiday season. We  
extend our thanks to you, our residents, who make  
this community a wonderful place to live.*

## W 104 ST BLOCK ASSN FINANCIAL REPORT

### October 2017

Opening Balance      \$5,329.39

### Income

### Expenses

Yard Sale      \$1691.83

**Closing Balance**      **+3637.56**

(Note: Does not reflect Yard Sale receipts.  
See p. 5 for details.)

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We fully support Fair Housing, both in the spirit and the letter of the law.

## West 104th Street Block Association Board

President Mary Koval	895 WEA	212.866.3556
VP Gary Waskow	320 RSD	212.932.9082
Treasurer Barbara Boynton	905 WEA	212.864.1011

### Members

Alexandra Bell	304 W 104	
Barbara Bryan	315 RSD	212.864.5663
Mary Jo Gennaro	315 RSD	
Alex Grannis	895 WEA	212.316.1644
Jeff Howitt	315 RSD	212.866.5569
Nancy Lian	320 RSD	212.316.6112
Joyce Mann	309 W 104	212.721.6341
Martin Mann	309 W 104	212.721.6341
Lynn Max	315 RSD	212.666.3129
Hanna Rubin	315 RSD	212.865.4579
Larry Stern	315 RSD	212.794.2288
Steven Zirinsky	315 RSD	212.866.6732
Emeritus Sid Herzfeld	895 WEA	212.749.0085

## Yard Sale, continued from page 1

amassing the huge pot, one ticket at a time.

Days before the event, neighbors opened their hearts and ovens to produce an array of goods for the Bake Sale. After draping "No Parking Saturday" signs from the trees lining West 104<sup>th</sup>, residents tucked similar flyers into the windshield wipers of parked cars.

### A MAGICAL URBAN VILLAGE

On the morning of the Yard Sale, the curtain rose on a symphony of neighborliness. The individual players performed their parts in perfect harmony. Shoppers searched for bargains and discovered community. Vendors closed sales and opened themselves to new friendships. An urban village emerged from a municipal thoroughfare. At 5:00 PM, vendors and shoppers joint forces to dismantle displays, to clean the street, and to collect garbage.

By the end of the day, the pot of the 50/50 Raffle totaled \$3,650. The lucky winner—Sam Rittenberg—netted \$1,825, but donated \$200 to the block association. Second-prize winner Jonna Semeiks scored \$100, and third-prize winner Noah Franklin secured \$50 while earning distinction as the first 8-year-old raffle winner in block history. As a whole, the village of West 104<sup>th</sup> Street earned about \$9100 to ensure its safe, well-maintained, welcoming street.



Guarding treasure; jazz closed out the day with Josh Levine on bass accompanied by Itai Kriss on flute; shopping spree; Gary Waskow announces the raffle winner.

## YARD SALE 2017 FINANCIAL REPORT

### INCOME

Vendor tables	1930.00
Raffle (net)	1675.00
What a Bargain	772.05
Bake Sale/Breakfast	983.44
Books	778.25
Face painting	22.00
Silent Auction	2951.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9111.74</b>

### EXPENSES

Call A Head	223.19
Permits	70.62
Insurance	267.00
Flyer printing	300.00
Supplies	45.86
Entertainment	750.00
Tips/thank yous/schleppers	550.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2206.67</b>
<b>NET</b>	<b>6905.07</b>

## Thank You to Our 2017 Block Party-Yard Sale Volunteers!

*Many thanks to the following people who gave their time and baking skills to make our block association Yard Sale a success:*

**Bakery:** Steve Pred, Katherine Randall, Gary Hughes, Mary Cargill, Laura Bronson, Arleen Danford, Miriam Duham, Paul Ziegler, Larry Rosenberg, Louise Rosenberg, Prina Halek, Donna Tapper, Daniel Jenkins, Ursula Strauss, Barbara Cowling, 102<sup>nd</sup>/103<sup>rd</sup> Block Association, Carol Prager, Ruth Helfrich, Paula Zirinsky, Miriam Duhan, Marlene Schonbrun, Hannelore Roston, Mary Ann Preston, Gail Bryce, **Set-Up:** Dan Jenkins, Ira Gershenhorn (Sound System), Joseph Dearce (320 Super), Teresa Elwert, Victor Portelli (320 Super), **Books:** Pedro at 104<sup>th</sup> St. Deli, Emily Berleth, Jay Hector, Elizabeth Stone, Patty Smith, Linda Friedman, Nina Shapiro, **Raffle:** Ursula Strauss, Steve Max, Karen Odom, Robina Simpson, Ethan Zirinsky, Margaret Beels, Laura Bronson, Lani Sanjek, Patti Smith, Sharon Waskow, Gaetana Manuele, **What-A-Bargain:** Michelle Dearce, Angelo Jimenez, Muriel Maning, Carol Goodfriend, Karen Odom, Elly Ledogar, Rebecca Silber, **Silent Auction:** Lydia Dufour, Robert Laven, And all board members who worked tirelessly to plan and execute the 2017 block party: Mary Koval, Gary Waskow, Larry Stern, Nancy Lian, Hanna Rubin, Mary Jo Gennaro, Lynn Max, Alex Grannis, Alex Bell, Steve Zirinsky, Joyce Mann, Martin Mann, Barbara Boynton, Barbara Bryan and Jeff Howitt.



# COMMONLY REQUESTED COMPOUNDING IDEAS

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- Boric Acid Suppositories
- Hydrocortisone Suppositories
- Ibuprofen Suppositories 100mg / 200mg
- Progesterone Suppositories
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- Hormone Creams for men and women
- Pain Creams
- Nipple Ointment for breastfeeding
- Hydroquinone 6% Fading Cream
- T3 - T4 Thyroid Hormone Capsules
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*If You Enjoyed the Yard Sale,  
Please Thank...  
Our Generous Donors!*

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Amity Hall	Marlow Bistro
Arco Café	Martin Brothers Wine & Spirits
Bank Street Book Store	Metro Diner
Befitnyc Fitness Center	Mexican Festival Restaurant
Ben & Jerry's	Mezzogiorno Restaurant
Blondi's Hair Salon	Muscle Maker Grill
Book Culture	New York Brat Factory
Broadway Dive & Dive Bar	New York Tours by Gary
Buchetta Brick Oven Pizza	Nutbox
Café du Soleil	107 West Restaurant
Casa Mexicana	Paris Frameworks
Cascabel Taqueria	Photographic Portrait
Decision Coaching	Regional Bar & Restaurant
Dog Days of New York	Riverside Liquors
Earth Café	RoboFun Studio
The Ellington	Saiguette
Friendly Valet Cleaners	Silver Moon Bakery
Grape Collective	Suma Sushi Restaurant
Guggenheim Museum	Surrounding Flowers
Henry's	Symphony Space
Isola on Columbus	Thai Market Restaurant
Jack's Art Gallery	V & T Restaurant
Manhattan Valley Indian Restaurant	Westside Market

# Letter from the President 2017

As we look ahead to 2018, it's hard to believe that another year has passed. As Albert Einstein wisely said, "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow." In 2017, the block association continued its mission: promoting safety and the general welfare as well as preserving and improving the quality of life on our block and in our community. Thanks to generous members like you, we can achieve our goals.

We continued our beautification efforts this fall with a Planting Day, which added daffodils to our tree well to ensure a glorious spring. As usual, we had summer tree well plantings that were maintained through the hot summer months. We fertilized the trees on the block. The tree guards have been freshly painted to accent the tree



well plantings.

The block association maintained its security efforts by employing a block security guard during the evening hours to ensure your safety. Our block guard, Osbourne Thomas, stepped in to handle several incidents.

We sent regular "Neighborhood Update" emails informing you of issues and activities in our area. The block association has representatives attending our Community Board 7 meetings, the West Side Federation of Neighborhood and Block Associations, and the 24<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council meetings to relay your concerns. We continued our newsletter highlighting our residents, local news, and our historic neighborhood. We maintained the website which provides you with up-to-the-minute news and calendar events.

To improve your quality of life in our neighborhood, we have partnered with two neighboring organizations, the West 102/103<sup>rd</sup> Streets Block Association and Bloomingdale Aging in Place, to bring you the TriBloomindale activities of bird watching, home professional networking, ice skating, and more.

We have negotiated a substantial discount with the West 101<sup>st</sup> parking garage for our residents who are dues-paying members.

Please help us keep West 104<sup>th</sup> Street and our neighboring buildings on Riverside Drive and West End Ave. safe and beautiful. Our suggested annual **\$160 dues** are an investment in all that makes our block special. Ours is a true West Side enclave—a community of caring residents. Help us keep it that way.

Finally, I will be stepping down as president and a member of the board at the end of this year. It has been an honor and pleasure to work with you as well as the special people of the block association board. All of you have made this a community that I am proud to call my home.

Best wishes for the new year!

Mary Koval, President of the West 104<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association

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## Where on This Block?



Here on our block? The first person to send Mary Koval (mkoval@aol.com) the correct location of this architectural detail will win one of the West 104<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association's new totes or caps!

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seemed like something that could be fixed. So I eventually joined the Straphangers Campaign as a volunteer, then later helped run the campaign.

By 1998, when I left Straphangers for a policy position with Public Advocate Mark Green, we'd helped transform the subways by pushing for billions in spending and smarter management. Subway cars ran for more than 100,000 miles instead of breaking down every few thousand; the doors worked; and of course, virtually every car had working air conditioning. Beyond that, we had weekly and monthly discount passes after we convinced Gov. Pataki to support them.

Later, I did some consulting for the Taxis For All Campaign. Again, I thought, this is a practical problem with a practical solution. When I started in 2004, there were three accessible yellow taxis out of about 13,000 taxis in all. (Accessible taxis typically have a ramp for the wheelchair user to board.) But I soon learned that all of London's iconic black taxis were accessible, so I figured, why not here?

That's a long way of saying I like to take on campaigns where I see the potential to make simple changes that will improve lives. I'm drawn to practical problems that have clear solutions, whether that means increasing funding, better management or better design.

Disability is a bit tougher than fixing the subways, not that that's easy either. But there's just a lot of prejudice, or at least a dismissal of the need to accommodate people with disabilities. So sometimes it's not just a practical question to deal with, but takes a lot more imagination to make progress.

**TELL ME MORE ABOUT BCID AND WHAT IT DOES.**

We offer services to people with disabilities and advocate for change. Independent living centers take a different approach than some other organizations: While our employees do give guidance to people who come in for our services, we expect them to advocate for themselves.

For example, our benefits counselor works to help our clients determine what services they should be getting, and advises them on how to get those services. We also run campaigns to make systemic change, including our involvement in the Taxis For All campaign.

**WHAT IS THE TAXIS FOR ALL CAMPAIGN, EXACTLY?**

We're a loose coalition of organizations and individuals who want wheelchair-accessible taxis. (There are other accessibility features, such as hearing loops, which are essential too.) It's pretty simple: People who have mobility impairments should have the same access to transportation as anyone else.

**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR GOALS FOR THE FUTURE?**

We definitely want to increase our presence in Brooklyn. We currently serve 1,500-2000 people a year, with 12-13 in staff, but we'd like many more. We also need to increase our fundraising from individuals and foundations. Most important, though, is to advocate and win the kind of system changes so that accessibility for people with disabilities is no longer an afterthought or not thought about at all.

# Networking for Neighborhood Entrepreneurs

## *TriBloomingdale Group Trades Tips*

by Caitlin Hawke

**T**hree years and going strong, Networking in the Neighborhood (NITN) is a group of local sole proprietors working from home.

They convene monthly to discuss the challenges and joys of entrepreneurship, assisting one another with resources such as web design, social media, and billing platforms, as well as with avenues for client and business development.

The idea, hatched by leader Harriet Hoffman in 2015, is to bring these business people together—hyperlocally. This group is part of the TriBloomingdale Initiative which brings together members of the West 104th Street Block Association, the West 102nd and 103rd Street Block Association, and Bloomingdale Aging in Place. (TriBloomingdale also offers brisk-walking on Sunday mornings to members of all these organizations.)

NITN members range in age from 30s to 70s. Clearly there is no bad age at which to strike out on your own. All it takes is a great idea and a bit of know-how to bring that idea to the marketplace. But it can get lonely, and it can be hard to find time to network, though networking is essential to any entrepreneur's success.

"I started this group because after years of networking all over the city, I felt the time had come to 'act locally,'" says Hoffman. "Plus I wanted to meet neighbors (and potential clients) who were, like me, mostly working

from home. Older adults are now one of the fastest growing age groups represented in the small business, or sole proprietor, economy. People are living longer and want to continue to work. Some of the businesses represented in our group are web design, freelance writing, legal, mortgage banking, real estate, videography, photography and more, and my business—Make the Right Choice—helps people understand and make the most of their Medicare and Social Security benefits."

Monthly NITN meetings last about 90 minutes and the agenda always includes time to network as well as a more in-depth presentation from someone in the group. One recent topic was harnessing the potential marketing power of social media. Another session looked at best practices for client billing.

These networkers welcome new neighbors who are sole proprietors working from home. So if you can tear yourself away from your great new standing desk and head out one morning a month, this group welcomes new members.

*For more information on the networking group, please send an email to: [bloomingdalenitn@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdalenitn@gmail.com). And for more information on TriBloomingdale's brisk Sunday walks for adult neighbors of any age, write to: [bloomingdaletriwalk@icloud.com](mailto:bloomingdaletriwalk@icloud.com).*

## BLOOMINGDALE AGING IN PLACE (BaiP) [Bloominplace.org](http://Bloominplace.org)

BAiP is an intergenerational volunteer network of neighbors working to help older residents to continue living at home safely and comfortably. BAiP sponsors social and cultural activities, provides educational tools, and a helping hand for those in need through its **Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N2N)** program.

The latter takes the form of providing help going places, running errands, light shopping, accompaniment at home or outdoors, and information. If you want to contact N2N for this kind of assistance, or to talk about volunteering, e-mail: [N2N@bloominplace.org](mailto:N2N@bloominplace.org), or call: 212.842.8831 to leave a message with your contact information. Either way, a BAiP member will respond promptly.

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Publicize your neighborhood service (babysitting, dog walking, apartment cleaning, etc.) free in the newsletter and on our web site for one year, renewable. To submit an ad mail/deliver this information to Hanna Rubin 315 RSD or send to [104thstreetba@gmail.com](mailto:104thstreetba@gmail.com)

**For our records:** Your name and mailing address

**For publication:** Your name, contact method (phone or email address), description of your service.

The block association board meets once a month.

We enjoy having residents attend the meetings.

Please let us know if you would like to attend one and we will send you an invitation.

[104thstreetba@gmail.com](mailto:104thstreetba@gmail.com)

## Call for Safe Escort Home With Block Guard

If you're ever coming home at night and you'd like to have an escort, please don't hesitate to call Osbourne Thomas, our security guard. He has a special phone for these times, and he will come to meet you either on West End Avenue or Riverside Drive and walk with you to your home.

Security Guard Phone Number:

**347-723-1517**

## 2017 4th Quarter Dues:

Please allocate my contribution to:

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Suggestions for the block: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to West 104th Street Block Association Inc.

Please send to our treasurer: Barbara Boynton: 905 WEA, #71, NY, NY 10025 or leave with one of the following:

T. Grace: 308 W. 104, Apt 1A

G. Waskow: 320 RSD, Apt. 8G

M. Koval: 895 WEA, 6D

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