

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

SEPTEMBER 2021

BLOCK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## The Long Haul

Local businesses try to outlast the pandemic.

By Joyce Mann

**M**any neighborhood stores have struggled to bounce back from Covid-19; we checked in with several on or near West 104th Street.

### CAFÉ DU SOLEIL

Alain and Nadine Chevreux, owners of the café located on Broadway between 104th and 105th Streets, have been in business since 2004. They shut the café down for two and a half months during the first wave of the pandemic, staying in business only by offering take out and delivery. They also received a small PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan.



Chevreux

They reopened in the fall of 2020 with plastic pods for diners to sit in and have now expanded to more permanent outdoor seating. Alain said their regular customers stayed loyal and if before they usually came in once a week, they now come two times a week and also order for delivery.

Like many other restaurants, the café has limited hours because of a shortage of workers. Alain says they are using the recovery money to survive but aims to return to fulltime hours in the fall. He said the café is at approximately “70% recovery” as of now, and hopes for a “return to normal” soon.

### SUBA PHARMACY

Bashir Suba has been at his location on the corner of West 104th and Broadway for 39 years. He officially closed in March 2020 when the pandemic struck, and only fully reopened at the beginning of this June. In reality, the pharmacy never closed entirely. With the help of his daughter Iram, Mr. Suba set up an email account to handle prescriptions, refills and sundries and survived with loyal customers ordering their meds and occasional other home and health care items.



Suba

The pharmacy received a small PPP loan after a wait of several months, which helped Mr. Suba pay the employees. Sadly, the loan has not been enough and the pharmacy has not been able to pay rent for over a year. Repairs to the store that the landlord had promised but never made are also an issue. Mr. Suba has been served an eviction notice. His survival depends on the reduced rent which he can afford under present circumstances. Negotiations are ongoing, but “My future,” he says, “is now in the hands of my lawyers.”

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## Celebrate Our Block at the Yard Sale

On Sept. 25, a beloved tradition returns

By Jeff Howitt



**F**or thirty years, the Annual West 104th Street Yard Sale celebrated our community. This year, in the aftermath of the pandemic, it celebrates the triumph of our spirit.

When you look out your window on September 25, you will find our block pulsating with the energy of a bustling street market in an exotic city. For the Thirty-First Annual West 104th Street Yard Sale, your neighbors will set up some 60 stalls on the curbsides from West End Avenue to Riverside Drive, where they will display their second-hand treasures and will welcome bids from hundreds of bargain hunters.

In addition to digging through mounds of cut-rate merchandise at the Yard Sale, you can enjoy a delicious snack, tap your feet to live music played by seasoned New York musicians, and take a chance in a raffle, which awarded \$2,495 to the winner at our last Yard Sale. For more bargains, you can visit the following stands sponsored by our Block Association:

**Bake Sale**, where you can purchase a tasty snack to fuel your bargain hunting or a delicious dessert for your evening dinner

**Book Sale**, where you can browse a large selection, including novels, plays, poetry, history, biography, children’s books, cookbooks, dictionaries, and CDs.

**Silent Auction**, where you can place bids on gift certificates for

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**MASKS ARE REQUIRED AT THE YARD SALE!**

If you do not have a mask,  
the Block Association will provide one.

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## Contributors to the September Issue:

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# WEST 104 BLOCK ASSN FINANCIAL REPORT

## JULY 2021

<b>OPENING BALANCE</b> .....	<b>\$30,666.62</b>
Income .....	385.00
Dues.....	80.00
Yard Sale.....	305.00
<b>EXPENSES</b> .....	<b>1206.38</b>
Guard Service .....	1197.55
PayPal Fees .....	8.83
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b> .....	<b>\$30,296.46</b>

## Say Hi to Security Guard Peter Campbell

By Joyce Mann

**T**he new block security guard, Peter Campbell, has been on the job on 104th St for a few months. Originally from Jamaica, he lives in Canarsie, Brooklyn, which he enjoys because it is “a quiet and peaceful place.” His only problem with New York is the weather—he dislikes cold and prefers the summers.

Being a security guard is his full time job. He likes that he has time during the day to “do my laundry, listen to my music and cook my food.” He favors the cuisine of his native Jamaica and likes to prepare Jerk chicken, pork and goat. He likes his food spicy

but not “too, too spicy.” The proteins are usually eaten with rice, yams or banana dumplings, all of which he prepares. Peter has a girlfriend, and as far as hobbies likes to listen to classic reggae, especially Bob Marley. He is shy, and does not like having his picture taken.

When asked about the block, he said: “I like making sure everyone is safe going out of the block and coming into it.” Please say hi to Peter when you next see him. If you need him to escort you from the corner to your door, please call his cell: 347-723-1517.



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

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# The Yard Sale Czar Bids Farewell

Jeff Howitt turned a block party into a neighborhood celebration.

After many years of coordinating the West 104th Street Block Association's Yard Sale, Jeff Howitt plans to move this summer from the block he has called home since 1977. Since taking over the block's annual party in 2008, he has worked with the board and volunteers to increase attendance, rentals of vending spaces, sales of raffle tickets, and donations to block tables like Books and the Silent Auction. Under his leadership, for example, the Yard Sale team raised the number of Silent Auction gift certificates donated by local businesses from 14 to 60. As he planned his upcoming departure, Howitt shared some highlights of his West 104th Street life. He will be sorely missed.



Howitt at the Silent Auction

**What were the best things about the neighborhood in 1977? The most challenging?** The most challenging aspect was the urban blight of the 1970s. Like most young adults moving into town from the suburbs, I regarded the crime and deterioration of services as part of the romance of urban life. I simply accepted graffiti covering the City's entire superstructure, regular occurrences of muggings, endemic vandalism, piercing car alarms at all hours, and various forms of intimidation on public streets. I stopped accepting the blight when I became its victim.

I viewed my move to West 104th Street as an escape to an oasis offering a wide street lined with prewar apartments, nineteenth-century townhouses, and healthy trees framing a view of Riverside Park and the Hudson River. Even better, it offered the

protection of a guard patrolling the block and of 24-hour staff manning the doorways of apartment buildings. Now, looking back on the long succession of unique individuals who served as our street guards and doormen, I appreciate them less for their well-performed duties than for the character that they lent to our community.

Broadway was more fun in the 1970s, when idiosyncratic, independent stores and restaurants far outnumbered predictable corporate outlets and franchises. At that time, the avenue blossomed with new, alluring Asian establishments. On the corner of West 105th, a Thai store stocked a wide array of startling food and merchandise. Throughout the Upper Westside, new Japanese restaurants opened their doors and enticed hesitant Westerners to taste uncooked fish. Korean fruit and vegetable stands seemed magically to replace the traditional Italian ones. Shattering the assumption that Americanized Cantonese food comprised the diet of the Chinese nation, immigrant entrepreneurs opened restaurants displaying words such as "Szechuan," "Mandarin," and "Hunan." Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi restaurants also began to specialize in regional food.

In those years, West 104th Street was home to many Europeans displaced by events of earlier decades and burdened with memories of loss and, sometimes, horror. Resilient and resolved to make the world a better place, they inspired those of us who grew up in the shadow of World War II.

**What were some of the biggest hurdles in organizing the Yard Sale? The biggest rewards?** Thanks to outstanding community support, the hurdles were few. Two volunteers stepped forward whenever a problem arose. The biggest reward remains the sense of community that radiates from the event in progress.

**Where are you moving?** With my girlfriend, I am moving ten blocks uptown to Riverside Drive and West 114th Street, which is one block from the Columbia dormitory where I lived more than fifty years ago when I first moved to New York.

**What will you miss most about West 104th Street?** I will especially miss the sunny mornings of Yard Sale setup, when everyone is filled with optimistic anticipation and the spirit of collaboration. Those mornings capture the essence of this community.

**What drew you to the neighborhood?** At the time, I wasn't so much drawn to West 104th and Riverside as repelled by West 119th and Amsterdam where I was living. Within the previous ten months, my apartment had suffered two break-ins. On Jimmy Carter's election night, I awoke to the creaking of floorboards under the feet of an uninvited guest. I screamed; he fled, leaving me shaken, unhurt, and hankering for a new home.

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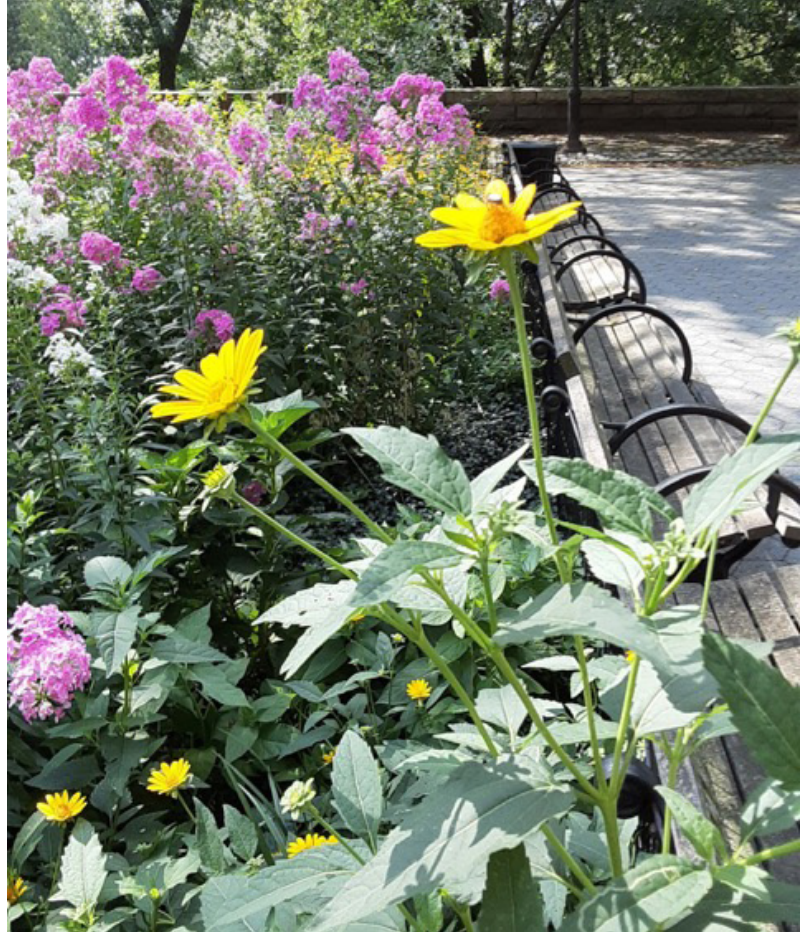
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# Summer Blooms on West 104th Street

Visitors and residents have enjoyed the garden (and park) at the foot of the block tended by Karen and Ira Gershenhorn and Dru Heidle. This year it featured a spectacular array of giant purple phlox, thanks to ample rainfall.

Photos by Mary Jo Gennaro, Stephen Helman, Nancy Lian and Larry Stern.









# COMMONLY REQUESTED COMPOUNDING IDEAS

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- Boric Acid Suppositories
- Hydrocortisone Suppositories
- Ibuprofen Suppositories 100mg / 200mg
- Progesterone Suppositories
- Hyaluronic Suppositories for vaginal dryness
- Hormone Creams for men and women
- Pain Creams
- Nipple Ointment for breastfeeding
- Hydroquinone 6% Fading Cream
- T3 - T4 Thyroid Hormone Capsules
- Nitroglycerin .2% Ointment for Anal Fissure
- Nifedipine 2% Ointment
- Diltiazem 2% Ointment

\*\*\*Topical Creams (in Lipoderm Base) for nausea, vomiting, pain, fever for adults and children  
We can formulate or reduce dosages on commercially available tablets or capsules.  
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Email: [subapharm@yahoo.com](mailto:subapharm@yahoo.com)

## The Long Haul *continued from page 1*

### LITTLE SHOP ON THE CORNER

The deli owners Jae Kim and her husband whose store is on the corner of 104th Street and Broadway have been here for 33 years. The store's pre-pandemic hours were from 7am -9 pm but now, after Covid, they open at 9a.m and close at 7pm.

During the pandemic they had a few people who came in to buy plastic gloves and cleaning supplies, but "most people don't realize how many other grocery items we sell," says Jae. She said people call them "The Flower Shop on the Corner of 104th" and indeed, the flowers are their biggest source of revenue. They used to sell breakfast and other food items but with fewer customers since Covid, they do not offer them because of the cost. They still do make smoothies, however.

They did get a PPP loan, but with business down in the pandemic they had to let two employees go. Jae says, "We are doing very bad and it seems to be getting worse. We may have to close the store soon."



Kim

### SILVER MOON

Judith Norell started baking at home as a child with her mother and then continued to invent delicious breads and muffins as a hobby in the rare free moments in her career as a musician. She turned to full-time baking in the late 1990s, and began Silver Moon Bakery in November 2000 with co-owner Georgia Stamoulis. She chose this location because, as she says, "It's my neighborhood!"



Norell

During the pandemic Silver Moon received two PPP loans "which helped a lot." They did not have to cut staff (26 full and part time employees), but did limit customers to two at a time, fully masked. They also helped their workers get vaccinated.

Judith said that although many customers left town when the pandemic started, those who remained thanked them for staying open and usually bought double amounts, especially of their rye breads, sour dough boules and smaller tarts and sweets. She is optimistic about the future. "We love our customers," she says. And they love Silver Moon.

## Celebrate Our Block at the Yard Sale *continued from page 1*

local restaurants and stores, as well as on antiques, vintage collectibles, artwork, theater tickets, services (piano lessons, career counseling, etc.), and household items in their original boxes.

**What-A-Bargain**, where you can lose yourself in the piles of pre-owned bargains including jewelry, knick-knacks, kitchenware, toys, unopened personal care products, embroidery kits, and more priced from \$1 to \$20

Through your generosity, you and your neighbors make possible this annual celebration of our community. If you have spare items or time, you can help prepare for this event:

Consider booking a vendor stall where you can declutter your apartment. (To learn more, obtain a vendor agreement form, and reserve your vending space, log onto: [www.bloomingle.org/vendor.htm](http://www.bloomingle.org/vendor.htm). You can also email [yardsale.104@gmail.com](mailto:yardsale.104@gmail.com).)

Contemplate new and exciting Bake-Sale creations, including cookies, cakes, pies, snacks, and finger foods. Contact Lynn Max to

arrange Yard Sale drop-off ([Lynnbendermax@gmail.com](mailto:Lynnbendermax@gmail.com).)

Cull your personal library for titles that would delight neighbors browsing the tables at the Book Sale. Drop off donations at 320 Riverside Dr. in sturdy bags from Sept. 9-23.

Gather items from your closets, drawers, and shelves for donation to the Silent Auction and What-A-Bargain. Contact Hanna Rubin with Silent Auction donations ([Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net](mailto:Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net)) or Joyce Mann for What-a-Bargain donations ([joycemann2@gmail.com](mailto:joycemann2@gmail.com)).

Decide to volunteer to help set up, break down, or staff tables for baked goods, books, bargains, auction items, or raffle tickets. Contact [Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net](mailto:Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net) to volunteer.

In the coming weeks, look for flyers delivered to your door, which will provide more details on donating and participating. Most importantly, prepare for a great day of celebrating our community and earning funds to keep our neighborhood safe, well-maintained, and welcoming.

## Choose to Reuse *By Sharon Waskow*

It shouldn't take much convincing in the summer of 2021 that the climate crisis is calling attention to itself. Wildfires, droughts, floods, heat waves, and violent storms provide strong evidence that there is no time to waste for us to step up our commitment to a greener lifestyle.

One easy way to lower our carbon footprint is to replace the disposable items in our lives with reusables. By cutting back or eliminating single-use items, you can save the energy and materials that went into them and prevent waste. According to Choose to Reuse (<https://www.hennepin.us/choose-to-reuse/tips/replace-with-reusables>), here are some items to stop using right now!

**Paper and plastic drinking cups:** Both eventually end in landfill.

Instead carry a reusable drink container.

**Plastic grocery and produce bags:** They are not recyclable. Reuse your stash of plastic bags or cloth bags for all shopping, not just food.

**Paper towels:** Replace them with rags, sponges or reusable cloths.

**Plastic Utensils:** Refuse them with takeout orders. Carry your own reusable utensils to use when you eat away from home.

**Straws:** New York City will have a straws-on-request law in effect in November. Until then, do without or carry a reusable stainless straw.

**Liquid Soap Containers:** The pump is not recyclable. Choose a brand that permits refills or opt for bar soap or laundry sheets

**Cleaning wipes:** Cut back on disposable wipes such as disinfecting wipes, mop cloths and dusters by using a green cleaner and reusable cloth.

Changing habits can take a while. If you start small and keep at it, before long you will be creating a lot less waste, and setting a positive example for friends, family, children and grandchildren.

Consult the It's Easy Being Green newsletter for monthly reviews of plastic-free products. They are posted at <https://www.itseasybeinggreen.org>. Contact us at <https://www.itseasybeinggreen.org/53-2/>

**BLOOMINGDALE AGING IN PLACE (BaiP)** 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, or call: 212.842.8831 to leave a message with your contact information. Either way, a BaiP member will respond promptly.

**COMPUTER CONSULTANT/PC DOCTOR**

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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 Jon Smith, 320 RSD or send to 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 (now via Zoom). 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. [steve@zirinskyarch.com](mailto:steve@zirinskyarch.com)**

## Contribute to the Newsletter

Interested in writing or photographing for the West 104<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association newsletter? Have suggestions about what to cover in the neighborhood? Want to share block news, suggest a profile, send a photo? Please send an email to [Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net](mailto:Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net). Your ideas are welcome.

### *Check Your Junk Folder*

Did you sign up for Block Bytes but have not received it lately? Check your junk folder. It may end up there unless you add the email to your permissions list.

## 2021 3rd Quarter Dues:

Please allocate my contribution to:

Security  Beautification  Social  Newsletter  Board Decision (Suggested amt: \$40/quarter or \$160/year)

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(For internal use only. The Block Assn. will not sell, exchange, or lend your e-mail address to any outside parties.)

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:

**M. Mann: 309 W. 104, Apt 3A**

**A. Grannis: 895 West End Ave.**

**G. Waskow: 320 RSD, Apt. 8G**

**H. Rubin: 315 RSD, Apt. 17C**