

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

FEBRUARY 2022

BLOCK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## Getting Ready for Spring

The Block Association plants 1500 tulips.

It may be below freezing, but tulip time is coming. Bulbs must be planted before the ground freezes, so Block Association board members, neighbors and helpers gathered on November 20th to plant for spring. This year the Board's planting committee—Mary Jo Gennaro, Lynn Max and Larry Stern—picked a new collection: “Wedding Gift.” It combines lavender, pink and white blooms. Some 1500 bulbs, which cost about \$520, were planted in the block's tree gardens, and the Block Association supplied tools.

See additional photos on page 3



Board member Alex Grannis



John Daystar and Haley Elaszcz

## Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

The Yard Sale's return helped unite the block during the pandemic.

While we all had to endure another year of the ups and downs associated with the coronavirus pandemic, there was the Annual West 104th Street Yard Sale to be had. And thanks to all of you, we were able to pull it off. Judging by everyone's enthusiasm and reactions, it seemed to me that given the past two years this event was needed more than ever.

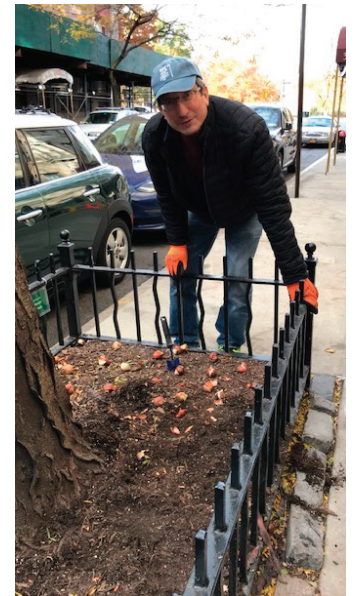
The community thrives when the community gathers. So we are planning more opportunities for our community to gather this year utilizing more open-air options. We encourage and welcome your participation. The more participation from you, the block's residents, the stronger that we as a block association can become.

We remain focused and vigilant about issues on our block ... security, landscaping, and rat patrol ... as well as being a good corporate citizen within the surrounding community. That includes assisting the Riverside Park Conservancy with cleanups, collecting toys for children in shelters during the holidays, networking in the neighborhood with other organizations and our elected officials. Everything we do goes back to our founding principles: To promote the safety and general welfare and to preserve and improve the quality of life of our immediate community.

We appreciate and thank you for your support and contributions both of time and money.

I look forward to another productive year.

—Steve Zirinsky, President, West 104th Street Block Association



Steve Zirinsky

Please see Block Association compliance update on Page 3.

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**Contributors to the February Issue:**  
 Mary Jo Gennaro, Stephen Helman, Peter Littlewood, Lynn Bender Max,  
 Joyce Mann, Hanna Rubin (editor), Larry Stern, Gary Waskow, Steve  
 Zirinsky. Newsletter designer: Brian Hajjar

# WEST 104 BLOCK ASSN FINANCIAL REPORT

## DECEMBER 2021

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| OPENING BALANCE .....     | \$32,588.25 |
| Income.....               | 3,848.99    |
| Dues.....                 | 1,348.99    |
| Co-op contribution .....  | 2,500.00    |
| EXPENSES .....            | 4,018.70    |
| Guard Service .....       | 1,767.80    |
| Newsletter .....          | 476.08      |
| Tulip bulb planting ..... | 400.00      |
| Yard Sale tips.....       | 210.56      |
| Dues envelopes.....       | 217.75      |
| Guard Tip .....           | 300.00      |
| Application fee .....     | 600.00      |
| CLOSING BALANCE .....     | \$27,678.89 |



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

# WEST 104 BLOCK ASSN BOARD



|                           |         |              |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------|
| President Steven Zirinsky | 315 RSD | 212.866.6732 |
| VP Mary Jo Gennaro        | 315 RSD | 917.547.9557 |
| Treasurer Gary Waskow     | 320 RSD | 212.932.9082 |
| Secretary Larry Stern     | 315 RSD | 212.794.2288 |

### MEMBERS

|                         |           |              |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Alex Grannis            | 895 WEA   | 212.316.1644 |
| Stephen Helman          | 315 RSD   | 917.853.8590 |
| Peter Littlewood        | 320 RSD   | 612.501.6919 |
| 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 |
| Nancy Lian (ex officio) | 320 RSD   | 212.316.6112 |

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# Getting Ready for Spring



The Block Association would like to thank the neighbors and helpers who participated in the tulip bulb planting: Kay Cynamon, John Damstra, Hayley Elszasz, Chris Freimuth, Rita Houlihan, Chad Miller, Steve Max, and board members Alex Grannis, Lynn Max and Steve Zirinsky.



Littlewood loads toys from the holiday drive

## Holiday Food & Toy Drive A Success Block Residents Responded Generously

The Block Association sponsored its second annual food drive this past December. This time, a toy drive was added. The effort was again coordinated by Block Association board member Peter Littlewood.

The food drive collected 18 boxes of non-perishable food items, some 600-700 pounds, that City Harvest picked up. The charity distributes items to food pantries and soup kitchens throughout New York City. Among the most popular donations were pasta, soup and ramen. The block's four corner buildings all participated with drop-off boxes. Other residents could use the drop-off box in 320 Riverside Dr.

This year, Littlewood also worked with Camille Colon to gather toys for Womankind, an organization that has two domestic violence shelters in Queens and Brooklyn. The shelters house families with children as young as 4 months and as old as 17.

Generous block donors rounded up some 30 bags of new and lightly used toys included board games, stuffed animals and LEGOs. According to Colon, the West 104th Street donations "really took us over the top."

The Block Association plans to continue the toy component each holiday season as well as the food drive.

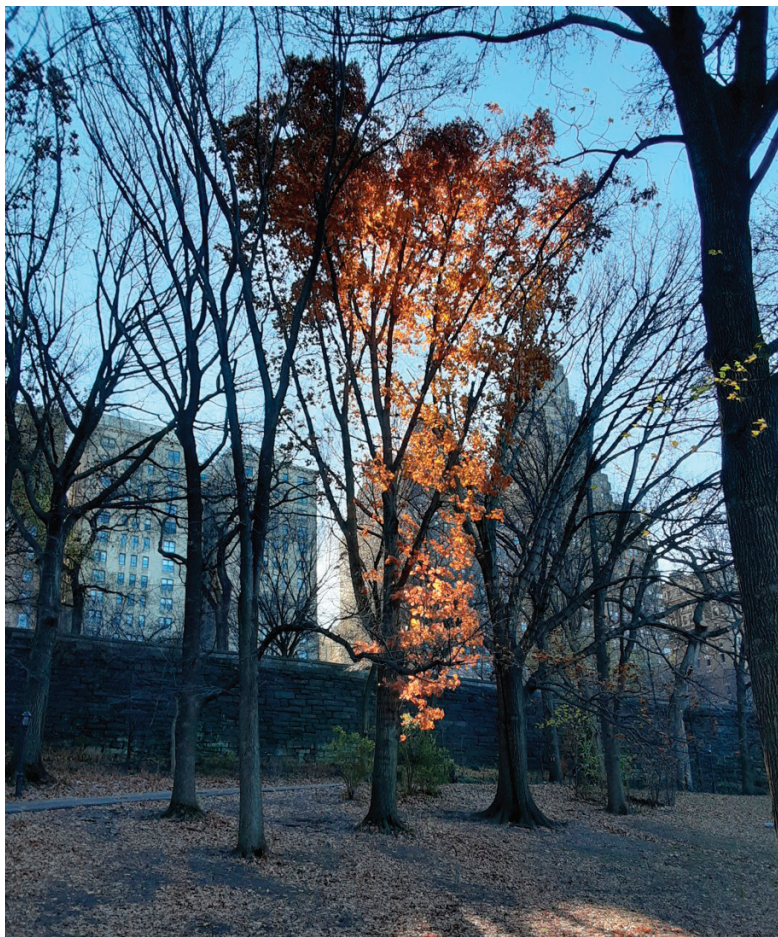
## Block Association Compliance Omission

Due to a compliance omission, the Block Association's tax-exempt status has been suspended. The Block Association is a non-profit 501(c)(4) entity entitled to tax exemption from income earned in the normal course of its business. Upon learning of the compliance issue, the Block Association promptly filed all tax returns, paid all application fees and submitted all documents necessary to process an application for reinstatement of its tax-exempt status and is awaiting review by the IRS, which has a nine-month backlog. There will be an update upon their review. There is no change in the Block Association's activities.

# What Winter Reveals

**Bare trees and a snow storm show another side of Riverside Park.**

*Photographs by Mary Jo Gennaro, Stephen Helman, Larry Stern and Steve Zirinsky*





# 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
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# New Neighbors With Digital Cred

Molly Fergus and Rob Youllar are online movers and shapers. By Joyce Mann

**“Y**ou can’t beat having Riverside Park right outside the door,” says Molly Fergus, who moved on the block into 309 West 104th Street with her husband Rob Youllar last year. The couple lived in the West 80s, but the park and the neighborhood lured them. They are longtime patrons of Ellington in the Park in summer, and love living on West 104th Street. Both have careers at well-known tech companies. Molly is senior vice president and general manager of Dotdash Meredith. Rob is a software engineer for Google. Below are his answers to a Q&A from the newsletter:



Side than Chelsea. I love the feel of the neighborhood up here. I also love being close to the parks. The West Village would be great, but, well, not even Google pays enough for that. I also think we’re pretty darn close. We’re right around the corner from the 1. With a transfer to the 2/3 I can be at the office in ~20 minutes. Nothing to complain about there.

**What is the corporate culture at Google?** “Corporate culture” is a pretty difficult thing to quantify. I would say the best part of our culture is that most people there have positive attitudes and want to do their best. Most are looking to help and are happy to talk with you and assist when needed. More importantly: it is a culture that accepts failure and looks to improve rather than one of covering your butt. I’ve been at the latter, it is very toxic, and grinds progress down to a near halt.

**Which division of Google do you work for?** I work on internal applications, especially our Human Resources suite of apps—I’m currently working on the application managers use to track their headcount: who their employees are, how many they can hire, who’s allocated to which projects.

**Where do you work?** Google’s New York City offices are in Chelsea, and include the old Port Authority Building, which is where I work. They also bought Chelsea Market and the building across the street from it. So now Google owns the three buildings from 15th Street to 16th Street, running from 8th Avenue to the Hudson.

**Why don’t you live nearer your office?** I’d much rather live on the Upper West

**What do you like/dislike about our building, block and our neighborhood? Are you happy here for the most part?** I’ve been loving this building so far! “There are some things that were obvious benefits when we were shopping for the apartment. The proximity to Riverside Park, especially in regards to the Ellington in Riverside. The close subway station, and Citibike docks. Those have all turned out to be great features.

Then there are little unexpected things that have really made it great to be here though. How well the building is run. How organized it is. The fire hydrant right out front making loading and unloading easy when necessary. The people in the building have been so nice. The area is quiet and comfortable. It’s hard to list, it’s just little things that keep making us smile.

## Fire Safety Lesson—Close the Door

By Steve Zirinsky

**T**he horrific fire in the Bronx last month will be analyzed by fire code officials for lessons learned to improve life safety in our building stock. However, there are several very clear take aways.

1. Self closing doors are your friend. These are a critical component for fire safety. Far more important than sprinklers...because it is the smoke inhalation that kills people, not the flames. Sprinklers handle flames but are useless for smoke. So the springs of a door need to work properly and the door cannot be kept ajar.
2. Self closing doors are your friend. They will afford a barrier that will last 90 minutes between you and a fire, but much longer against smoke.
3. Self closing doors are your friend. If there is a fire in your space, close the door on the way out to make sure that the fire is contained.

Our block is composed of two typical types of building in New York. Fire proof (the tall apartment houses that have concrete floors and ceilings) and non fireproof (those with wood beams, the brownstones).

Everyone’s initial reaction when there is a fire is to get out (that is my reaction as well). But in fireproof buildings, once you leave your apartment you lose the built-in protection and thus you become exposed to the smoke. It is generally better to wait for the Fire Department to get you after they clear the danger. Shelter in place.

With brownstones it is a more difficult decision. If the fire is combustible, there is greater urgency to leave. That is why (in a multiple dwelling at least) there are (usually) two ways out.

There are other important issues such as electric heaters, which should be checked by building management yearly for frayed cords etc., but knowing when to stay and when to go is critical.




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**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.

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**MEDICARE & AARP/UNITED HEALTH CARE MEDICARE PLANS.** I am a BAiP member and licensed independent agent with the AARP/United Health Care Medicare plans. I am happy to help you understand Medicare and Medicare plan options (no cost). Please feel free to contact me at (cell) 914-419-5499 or (email) susanmschorphd@gmail.com.

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 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.

## 2022 1st Quarter Dues:

Please allocate my contribution to:

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

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

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

Please send to our vice president: Mary Jo Gennaro, 315 Riverside Dr., Apt. 7C, 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**