

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

MARCH 2024

BLOCK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## Meet the Block's New Pin Oak

A board member's tireless efforts finally take root.

By Joyce Mann

**H**urray! After almost five years of waiting, hoping, nudging, complaining, and pestering, and dozens of phone calls and emails, the City finally planted a beautiful pin oak sapling in front of 309 West 104th Street. It's been a long and difficult process because it involved outreach to three separate departments of the Parks Department, one to remove the dead stump that was still there, and one to actually plant the tree. And none of the departments had contact with the other. Oy.

The Block Association made its first request to the Parks Department in the spring of 2018. We were put on a citywide list. We made no progress in two years, and then Covid struck, shutting down many of the city's non-essential services for two more years.

The next hurdle was that Manhattan Forestry, the department responsible for the stump removal, had old maps that showed utility lines underneath the stump or in its immediate vicinity. This got our original request frozen and prolonged our efforts for another year and a half. Eventually, we were able to prove that their information was wrong. Kudos to Priscilla Lin at the Parks Department who helped expedite the process along with Bob Weinberg, the board president of 309 West 104th Street and Steve Zirinsky, our Block Association president. They provided the correct information to the agency and persisted with their requests, even calling in the assistance of our then city council member Gale Brewer. It took all of us to convince the city it was safe to remove the stump. However, the Forestry Department did not have that updated information, so nearly a year ago we had to start over with a new request.

Then, out of the blue in November, we saw that the stump had

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Crew planting pin oak

## Letter from the President

By Steve Zirinsky



**T**his past year has been one of involvement and camaraderie on West 104th Street.

Capped off with another successful Yard Sale—even with the change of dates due to the weather and with Con Ed digging in the street! It was the busiest in terms of numbers

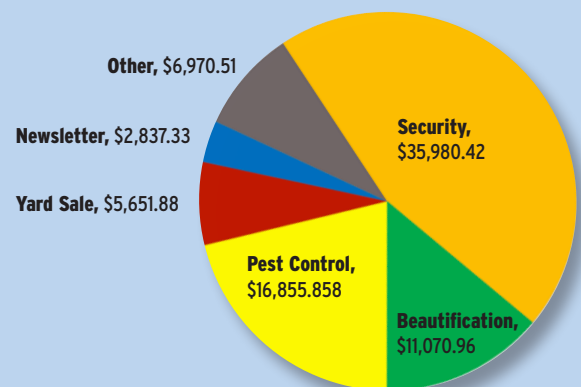
of people that I have ever seen.

The Block Association is self-funded. It does not get any grants or government support. It relies solely on your dues and contributions. If you have not contributed lately, please consider doing so as the work we do benefits everyone. To wit:

- Block Security: Our great security guard Larnel Peterson (who likes to be called 'Big L')
- Trees, Tree Maintenance, Spring and Fall Plantings
- Rodent Efforts

This year we are creating new opportunities to socialize. We are bringing back our sidewalk café—an after-work gathering on the sidewalk with light refreshments and talk-

### Where Your Support Goes



ing when it warms up.

We are also doing something new. We are partnering with other nearby block associations for what we are calling "Bloomingdale Bites." This will be a gathering here in the neighborhood where local restaurants can share delicious

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Contributors to the March Issue:  
 Stephen Helman, Mary Koval, Joyce Mann, Hanna Rubin (editor),  
 Larry Stern, Steve Zirinsky. Newsletter designer: Brian Hajjar.  
 Advertising: Jennifer Jones.



See more snow day photos on pp. 4-5.

## WEST 104 BLOCK ASSN FINANCIAL REPORT

### 4TH QUARTER 2023 FINANCIALS

OPENING BALANCE .....	\$24,886.27
INCOME.....	\$13,169.80
Dues .....	\$1,646.80
Merchandise .....	\$524.01
Yard Sale .....	\$10,308.81
Contributions.....	\$555.00
Credits .....	\$135.18

EXPENSES .....	\$15,117.97
Guard Service .....	\$7,339.04
Printing Costs .....	\$867.45
Beautification-Tulip.....	\$4,723.77
Rodent Control .....	\$1,676.68
Activities .....	\$11.03
Yard Sale/Tips.....	\$500.00

CLOSING BALANCE .....

\$22,938.10
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## WEST 104 BLOCK ASSN BOARD

President Steven Zirinsky	315 RSD	212.866.6732
VP Mary Jo Gennaro	315 RSD	917.547.9557
Treasurer Mary Koval	895 WEA	917.969.1984
Secretary Larry Stern	315 RSD	212.794.2288

### MEMBERS

Hayley Elszasz	314 W 104	440.231.1441
Alex Grannis	895 WEA	212.316.1644
Stephen Helman	315 RSD	917.853.8590
Jennifer Jones	315 RSD	212.749.3865
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
Gary Waskow	320 RSD	212.932.9082
Nancy Lian (ex officio)	320 RSD	212.316.6112



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## Meet the Block's New Pin Oak

been removed and the tree bed readied for a new tree. The crew working there said it would be two more weeks, so we waited and waited and hoped and hoped. With every passing day we thought they had forgotten us yet again. Then finally on December 4, board member Larry Stern called to say he saw from his window that our tree was being planted. I rushed out to take some photos, wildly cheering the planting crew. I learned that our new resident was a pin oak, which commonly reach more than 60 feet. It thrives in full sun, which is abundant on the block's north side, and in most urban environments. Stop and say hi to our hard-won new neighbor the next time you pass by.

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## Letter from the President

samples what they have to offer. We anticipate that the Bloomingdale Neighborhood History Group will give an historical presentation on neighborhood restaurants.

If you are interested, please make sure that you sign up for Block Bytes, our email blast, so that you will keep up-to-date. Go to our website, [www.bloomingdale.org](http://www.bloomingdale.org), to add your email. If you are uncertain whether you are getting it, let me know.

For new residents, contact me so you can get involved. We have many needs and activities, not all of them included in Block Bytes. For instance, we partner each year with the Riverside Park Conservancy on park cleanups. What can a block association do that an individual building cannot? If you can think of something, let us know. We are always trying to add more sparkle.

The energy that everyone puts out makes this block a special place. Please join us in our activities or continue your financial contributions.... we can't fulfill our mission without your support. Scan the QR code shown here, or go to our website to use PayPal to contribute. Or if you prefer, leave a check with your building representative (see the dues slip on the back page for info).

See you at the curb -but not in the gutter!  
—Steve Z



## We Need Your Help! Please Report Our Garbage and Rodent Problem

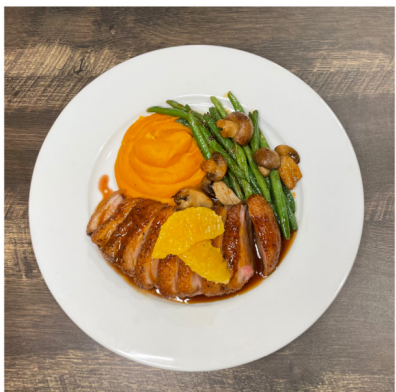
**T**he Block Association needs concerned residents to help flag the rodent problem on our block to the City. If the City receives enough complaints, they will send an inspector to the block and take action against buildings that are not handling their garbage properly. Rats come if they have food to forage. If you see open garbage containers, garbage left outside of containers, rodent activity or signs of rodent activity, please call 311, or

use the 311 app to report a "Rat or Mouse Condition." The person handling the complaint will need the address of the building where the problem occurred and the location type (apartment building, store, etc.). You will be asked if what you saw is a hole or burrow, open garbage or a rat. Please take a few minutes to help us get our block cleaned up. It's an essential step in getting our rodent problem under control.

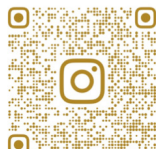
## THE GRAND FEAST

### Upper west side's hidden gem

weekend brunch, daily specials, live jazz, bottomless drinks and much more !



scan to view our menu



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## THE GRAND FEAST

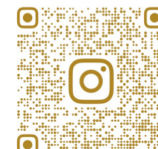
### Let us host your next special event

celebrate your birthday, anniversary, or any other special occasion with us



scan to view our menu

Ask us about catering!



follow us on Instagram



# Winter Wonderlands

Fleeting February snowstorms transformed Riverside Park into a fairyland.

Photographs by Stephen Helman, Jennifer Jones, Larry Stern and Steve Zirinsky









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# A New Neighborhood Deli

Broadway Star makes sandwiches to order and more.

By Joyce Mann

The Broadway Star Deli is the newest addition to the neighborhood food scene. It opened on the northwest corner of 104th and Broadway a little less than two months ago, but already has been drawing fans of its food, especially its handmade sandwiches.

According to the manager Mohammed and his assistant Ali what makes their establishment different from the other neighborhood delis they both said that their food is fresh and all of it is hand made. “We use only the highest quality



Grilled pork platter

products and pride ourselves on four points: freshness, quality, taste and customer service,” says Mohammed.

The store has chicken and organic meats delivered regularly, including the jumbo shrimp for the shrimp salad. They made their own sauces. “Our most popular grilled sandwich so far is the chopped ground beef with onions and peppers and your choice of cheese, on a roll, panini or rice,” says Mo-

hammed. Other popular items are the Philly cheese steak, pepper steak, falafel or grilled pork as a platter with rice and salad. “We feature a huge salad bar with only the freshest of ingredients, says Ali. He added that his motto is, “If I don’t want to eat it, I won’t serve it to a customer.” The store also makes fresh smoothies and you can have your morning coffee with bagels, cream cheese and even lox and capers.

“Our most popular convenience items so far are the Nutella biscuit cookies; we order them by the case,” says Mohammed. “We also have a line of kosher cookies “Sweet Sam” and specialty items such as high quality protein bars, Omega brand powders to make protein shakes and Haagen Dazs ice cream.”

Because Broadway Star deli is a new business, their website isn’t fully operational yet, but they will take phone orders for pick up and will deliver upon request. Their phone number is: 646-964-5320. Says Mohammed, “ We look forward to serving the community with pride.”

W.  


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## Block Holiday Food and Toy Drive A Success

The West 104<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association teamed up in December with City Harvest and several women’s shelters to organize a block holiday food and toy drive. Residents filled boxes in building laundry rooms with non-perishable items like canned soups, pastas, and juice packs. City Harvest



Toys for women’s shelters

reported a total of 600 pounds of food received from the block that will go to food pantries around the city for families in need. Block residents also donated six bags full of toys, from stuffed animals to soccer balls. These went to children in domestic violence shelters. The Block Association thanks our generous neighbors for participating. A special thank you to volunteer Peter Littlewood and board member Jennifer Jones.



# NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

## BABYSITTING

Responsible, experienced 29-year-old block resident available for babysitting during the evenings and weekends. Please contact Hayley by text or call (440-231-1441).

## 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.

## 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.

## QUICKBOOKS CONSULTANT/ PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

Accounting, business and personal finances, home and file organization. Contact Ellen Curtis at 212.749.2398, 607.829.5631, or EC4QBooks@aol.com.

## PET SITTING

Experienced, responsible, caring pet sitter. I take care of your pets like they are my own! Dogs, cats, small animals, birds, reptiles, fish. Very reasonable rates. Call Tova at 917-526-2862 or email tgetoff@gmail.com.

## WRITER/EDITOR

Professional writer & Faulkner finalist available for critiques, editing & as a writing tutor. Contact Pat at: 212-615-6927

## YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE PUBLICIZED FREE!

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, Hanna.Rubin@verizon.net. 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. 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.

## 2024 1st Quarter Dues:

Please allocate my contribution to:

Security  Beautification  Social  Newsletter  Board Decision (Suggested amt: \$43.75/quarter or \$175/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 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**

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

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

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