

# West 104th Street

BLOCK ASSOCIATION

April 28, 2000

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Nancy Lian

Layout and Design: John Johnston

## Our Website Is Up!

And the address is [www.bloomingdale.org](http://www.bloomingdale.org). Why that address? Two reasons: first, the area from 96th to 110th streets and from Amsterdam Ave. to Riverside Drive is known as Bloomingdale; second, the site is planned as a portal to the websites of other organizations and institutions in the area. The site's information has been categorized as follows:

Home: about the Block Association; try your hand at the quarterly contest

Upcoming events/news: our own and others

Yard Sale: includes the vendor agreement

Social activities

Beautification

Newsletter

Security

Dues

History: Gil Tauber has written about our block's architectural history; the page also contains many historic photographs

T-shirts

Real estate

Links

Guest book

Contact us

Thanks go to Teresa Elwert for designing the site and writing much of its material and to John Johnston for scanning the photos and creating the newsletter files. The ideal screen resolution for viewing the site is 800 x 600. The preferred browser is Internet Explorer 4+; Netscape Navigator 4+ works well with a few minor exceptions.

Give us your feedback on the site and let us know of exciting, fun things to add to it. What favorite neighborhood and city-wide links would you like us to add? Your photos are always welcome: we'd love to build up an inventory of photos to change with the seasons. You can e-mail your comments to:

[west104\\_block@hotmail.com](mailto:west104_block@hotmail.com)

or call Teresa Elwert at 866 4260.

### DOUBLE PARKING ETIQUETTE

When you double park, please consider the owner of the car you've blocked in by displaying your name and phone number or address on your dashboard.

## *New-York Historical Society Tour*

Kathleen Hulser of 309 W 104 recently led a group of block residents and guests through *New York on the Brink*, a show she curated at the New-York Historical Society ([www.nyhistory.org](http://www.nyhistory.org)). The exhibition commemorates the 25th anniversary of New York's brush with bankruptcy. Kathleen told us about both the material on display and about her efforts to gather them, which took her to the offices and homes of people involved looking for photos, art work, and other memorabilia from the time. Several tour members told about the personal impact the crisis had on them. The show continues through May 7.

Another exhibit at the N-YHS is *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*, on which Kathleen leads weekend public discussions; goes through July 9.

## Subway Harassment Stopped

*By Teresa Elwert*

In mid-March, Benetta Dunning of 320 RSD wrote me about a problem at the W103rd St. subway station. On Friday and Saturday nights, a group of boys was harassing riders into giving them tokens. The boys allowed the riders through the turnstiles by swiping an altered Metrocard. The boys then turned in the tokens for cash. By the time the police arrived, the boys would be gone.

Benetta was prepared to help work on a solution to the problem. At the suggestion of board member Marsha Tantleff, however, I called Marjorie Cohen, the director of the Westside Crime Prevention Program. Marjorie called Captain Roppa at the 24th Precinct. He knew of this kind of scam, but was unaware that it was happening in his precinct. Roppa called his counterpart at the MTA and together they decided to post undercover police in the station on weekend evenings.

Two weeks later, Marjorie told me a boy had been arrested and the police were continuing to monitor the station. If you see a recurrence of the problem, please call Marjorie at 866- 8603.

Board member Barbara Bryan and I recently introduced ourselves to Keisha, the subway clerk who works evenings, and offered her our help should she want it in the future.

This is a great success story for our community. Everyone involved — Benetta, Marsha, Marjorie, Captain Roppa, and the MTA — worked swiftly and effectively to stop a problem affecting many people. We can only hope that the boy arrested fares as well.

## WCPP Seeks Mentors

Would you like to play an important role in a young person's life? Do you have a few hours a week to spare? Westside Crime Prevention Program, a community group that has been active on the Upper West Side for 20 years, is seeking volunteers (particularly men) for its mentoring program. By providing a positive role model for a 9 to 13 year-old, you can help make a major difference in a young person's life—and in your own. Mentors meet with their mentees once a week for about two hours to hang out, do homework, go to a museum, play a sport...the possibilities are enormous. Please call Kate Schaffer at WCPP at 866 8603.

## Support WCPP Financially

Become a member of the Westside Crime Prevention Program and support its programs, of which Safe Haven is perhaps the most visible and well-known. The block association is a WCPP member. Make your tax-deductible check payable to WCPP and mail it to 893 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10025.

## Community Supported Agriculture

Fresh vegetables grown in Columbia County and delivered weekly to the Upper West Side. Does this sound like the farmers' market at 72nd St. and Broadway? Nope, it's the Roxbury Farm Community Supported Agriculture group which delivers to 86th St. and West End Ave. every Thursday from June to December. The CSA is accepting new members for the 2000 season. For more information, call 539 3826 or Jonathan Hilton of 320 RSD at 932 1315.

### Time for a Spring Tune-Up

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## Return Your Census 2000 Form

Can't find, misplaced, threw out, or gave away your Census 2000 form? You can pick up a replacement form at the Cathedral Station Post Office on 104th St. Get what's coming to you: fill out and mail your Census 2000 form today.

## Tree Fertilization Scheduled

In fulfillment of its responsibility to care for our street trees, the block association has contracted with Bartlett Tree Service to apply a deep-root liquid fertilizer this spring and fall. Only our mature trees will get the treatment; the immature trees are too tender to drink such liquids. You are helping to pay for the treatments by contributing financially to the block association. Please mail your dues contribution today. Thank you!

## April Showers Bring May Flowers...

We are blooming radiantly and redolently defying urban dirt, dust and snow aberrations, enjoying your admiration. We are confident you will remind your dogs to curb themselves. There are more of us "in the wings", impatient to spread our beauty.

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John Johnston  
Mimi Schade  
Marsha Tantleff

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# They Say New York City's Nothing But a Concrete Canyon, but We Have More Trees Than They Do, So There!

by Ned Barnard

New Yorkers love superlatives whether it is the biggest, the tallest, the most expensive, or whatever. When it comes to trees, I think we can brag with some justification that we have more of them than any other city in America—5,214,000 at last count. I also believe that we can claim to have more different species of trees than any other city in the US—or in the world for that matter. If anyone wants to dispute my chauvinistic, arboreal bragging with hard facts and figures, I'd like to hear from him or her. Meanwhile, here are a couple of New York, gee-whiz tree facts that may surprise you: New York is home to at least 3 giant sequoias and to a "living fossil" tree related to the California redwood that was thought to be extinct as recently as 60 years ago.

The giant sequoia is one of the tallest, most massive, and oldest living things on earth. It can attain more than 325 feet in height, as much as thirty-two feet in diameter, and well over 3000 years of age. Although its natural range is restricted to just 75 groves on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, the giant sequoia is grown as an ornamental in many temperate locations around the world. Its cones mature in one season but may remain on the tree green and closed for twenty years before dying and releasing their seeds.

## Where to look for the Giant Sequoia

A giant sequoia over fifty feet tall stands near the southwest corner of the Japanese Pond at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Other specimens are located at Wave Hill in the Bronx and at the New York Botanical Garden.

A bushy 35-foot giant sequoia overlooks the north lawn of Wave Hill House, a gracious city-owned estate in Riverdale.

Known only from fossils until 1941, the dawn redwood grows naturally in just one small mountainous area of central China. However, this ancient relative of the giant sequoia and the redwood tree of California is now thriving as an ornamental in temperate regions around the world. A deciduous conifer, it looks very much like the baldcypress but grows twice as fast and tolerates alkaline soil better. Only planted in Europe and North America for about thirty years, some trees are already nearly one hundred feet tall.

## Where to look for the Dawn Redwood

The dawn redwood is represented in the conifer collections of the New York Botanical Garden, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and other arboretums in the metropolitan area. Recently planted specimens are also scattered about New York City's parks. In fact, there is a young dawn redwood on the slope below the stairway to Riverside Park at 104th Street.

One of the largest dawn redwoods in the metropolitan area stands behind Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum near Oyster Bay, Long Island.



GIANT SEQUOIA  
*Sequoiadendron giganteum*  
(Lindl.) Buchh.



DAWN REDWOOD  
*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*  
Hu & Cheng

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## Spring Sports at Baker Field

By Teresa Elwert

You know that Ivy League school up the road a piece called Columbia? Did you know that even farther up the road — at the very northern tip of Manhattan, in fact — you can watch Columbia's teams play baseball, softball, track, lacrosse, archery, and tennis at Baker Field.

I was there on April 1, a beautiful, warm Saturday. Columbia's baseball team was playing Brown University's and leading 10 to 2 in the 5th inning. Brown narrowed the gap considerably in the 6th inning with five runs, including a grand slam home run. What a thrill the grand slam was: the ball soared high against a light blue sky before sinking in the no-man's land behind the left field fence. Columbia held on to its lead, however, winning 10-9. What fun to watch — and it was free!

Columbia's sports schedule is available at [www.gocolumbialions.com](http://www.gocolumbialions.com). Baker Field is at the 215th St. stop on the #1 or #9 train. Go, Lions!

# Calendar of Selected Events

- 4/30 Poetry Place.** Meet on the Island at 102<sup>nd</sup> St. and Riverside by the benches for a poetry reading in memory of Upper Westside Poet Frank Latner.
- 5/2 Bird Walk.** 116<sup>th</sup> St. & Riverside Drive, to seek out Riverside's resident and visiting bird species. 5 pm. Continues Tuesdays at 5 pm, Thursdays at 9 am until May 18. Bring binoculars.
- 5/5 Music and Dance of Hungary:** by Muzsikas, Hungary's folk group including violin virtuoso Alexander Balanescu and two of Hungary's leading dancers. Tickets \$26, Symphony Space.
- 5/6 Planting Flowers in Straus Park,** 10 am to 2 pm. Contact Leon Auerbach at 865-4948 if you can help.
- 5/7 Riverside Chamber Singers,** Third annual spring concert of choral music. Riverside Church Christ Chapel, 3 pm. Free.
- 5/12 John Knowles Paine: Mass in D,** performed by the Harvard University Choir and The Mozart Society Orchestra of Harvard. Riverside Church, 8 pm. Free.
- 5/18 Irish Music** with DeDannan & Delores Keane, Traditional Irish music, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the band with Keane, known as "The Voice of Ireland". Symphony Space, 8 pm. Tickets \$26.

- 5/19-6/4 A House,** an original play by John T. Cooper (a mansion built in 1908 in San Francisco). This is a chronicle of the family and different residents of the house during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, from the tycoon and his family who built it, to their children who live in it and sell it, to the black family who buys it then sells it to a hippie commune, and finally the descendants of the original family who buy it back and restore it complete with its ghosts. Michael and Jennifer Graves (320 RSD) play the original builders of the mansion. It is comedy and drama spanning the century just behind us. 8 pm, continues Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 3 pm until June 4. Tickets are \$12, \$10 for seniors, at the Undercroft at Trinity Lutheran Church on 100 St. east of Amsterdam. Reservations, call 877-0509.
- 5/19 New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra** with Wagner's Tristan and Isolde Prelude, Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1, Saint-Saens' Danse Macabre and Dukas' The Sorcerer's Apprentice. Symphony Space. 8 pm. Tickets \$12. Call 864-5400 for more information.
- 5/20 One Hundreth Street Block Fair.**
- 5/21 Straus Park,** Third Anniversary Celebration, Sunday, 11-2.
- 5/28 Choral Music I:** Motets of J.S. Bach: Singet Dem Herrn, Der Geist Hilft, Lobet dem Herrn, St. Michael's Choir, St. Michael's Church, 225 W. 99 St., 5 pm. Call 222-2700 for information.

## In Memoria

By Carol Goodfriend

Ruth Kuttner, of 309 W 104, passed away on March 29 at the age of 90. She had been a resident of the block since the mid-50's, and was a great supporter of block activities. Ruth and her husband Fritz were active in the beginning of the block association, helping to administer the treasurer's duties. Ruth and Fritz were holocaust survivors who felt it was "the right time to leave". She sought refuge in England with distant relatives, and her husband-to-be left on the "boat going to Shanghai". They reconnected and married in 1951 after which she supported him in his ethno-musical writings on ancient Chinese music. They made their apartment and piano available to chamber music groups led by neighbors Fiona and Dick Simon. In September 1999, just after her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, her "adoptive" grand-daughter, Sari Goodfriend and boyfriend, Jacob Park, took Ruthy back to Berlin to revisit her old neighborhood. Sari said we shall miss "our" Ruthy tremendously.

### Treasurer's Report for March 2000

Sid Herzfeld

OPENING BALANCE	3/1/00	\$12,477.22
INCOME		
Bank interest		2.65
Dues		6,460.00
Advertising Income		220.00
Off-block contributions		30.00
TOTAL INCOME	6,712.65	+6,712.65
DISBURSEMENTS		
Guard Service		2,711.38
Tips to Guard		40.00
Office Supplies		78.02
Memberships		35.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	3,150.23	-3,150.23
CLOSING BALANCE	3/31/00	\$16,039.64

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## Security Guard Working Six Days a Week

Your block association board has cut security guard service back to six days a week. While we had an encouraging response to our February appeal for contributions – for instance, we received 95 \$100 contributions – and we have a healthy bank balance at the moment, it's not enough to continue with seven-day service. Three key considerations led to the cutback:

- \* Unexpected hourly increase in the rate we pay for service;
- \* Minimal likelihood of receiving additional contributions from residents who have already contributed \$100, the suggested annual amount;
- \* Equally minimal likelihood of receiving contributions from our perennial non-contributors.

By cutting back service now, we hope to have enough money to return to seven-day service in June for the summer.



James Perez  
Vice President

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of check \_\_\_\_\_

(Suggested Amount: \$ 25.00)

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

**Mail to our treasurer: Sid Herzfeld, 895 WEA., Apt. 5D New York, NY 10025  
or drop off at**

**315 RSD: Steinhardt, Apt. 18B, 320 RSD: Elwert, Apt. 9D,  
905 WEA: Bryan Apt. 141, 309 W 104th: Deegan, Apt. 5B**