

West 104th Street

BLOCK ASSOCIATION

April 11, 2001

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Nancy Lian

Layout and Design: John Johnston

Beautification Challenge Grant Status

We're just a few hundred dollars short of our \$2,500 goal at which point an anonymous block resident will contribute \$500 to complete our 2001 beautification budget.

We were particularly helped in this achievement by Clara Onishi of 320 Riverside, who made a generous contribution in memory of her late husband, Hironori Onishi. Hironori, who died earlier this year, loved flowers and always enjoyed seeing them grow in our block's tree gardens. My heartfelt thanks to Clara and to all of you who responded so quickly and magnanimously to the challenge grant.

And, of course, thanks to our anonymous friend for spurring us on to make the block more beautiful than ever. We can all look forward to a splendid crop of tulips, daffodils, impatiens, and ivy this spring and summer—thanks to you!

Teresa Elwert

Dog Dilemma

Several residents remarked that there seemed to be more than the usual amount of dog litter left on our sidewalks this winter. The block association is reacting to the problem four ways.

First, we contacted John Martinez at Community Board 7 who arranged for the Department of Sanitation to post two yellow and red anti-dog-litter signs on the south side of the street; the signs indicate that the fine for not picking up after your dog is \$100.

Second, we've found an early-rising neighbor to keep an eye on the street from 5:00 to 7:00 a.m. when, we surmise, the offending dog owners are flaunting the law.

Third, we're reinstalling green and white pick-up-after-your-dog signs on each tree garden fence.

And fourth, in the interests of public health and block aesthetics we're asking all building supers / owners to wash their sidewalks daily.

Save this date!

This year's 104th Street Block Assoc. Yard Sale will take place **Saturday, September 15**, (raindate September 16). COST TO RENT A SPACE STILL TO COME.

Two Early-Spring Activities

Your block association sponsored two events in March: a tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a performance of *Rashomon*. On March 2, Nancy Thompson (320 Riverside Dr.), of the Met Museum, kept about 25 residents rapt during an early evening tour of the Museum's Egyptian collection. Young Neil Maheshwari of 312 W 104, who has been studying Egyptian history and culture, was particularly attentive. He frequently (and very politely) raised his hand to ask questions or offer an exquisitely esoteric piece of information. Did you know, for instance, that *senet*, was a backgammon-type game played by Egyptian children? (Don't feel badly, neither did we!) Nancy has promised she'll do another tour for us.

And on March 11, the block association co-sponsored with the West 102nd-103rd St. Block Association an outing to *Rashomon* at the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. We plan to do an annual excursion to Pan Asian Rep so watch for the posters.

Hannah Rubin Comes Aboard!

I'm delighted that Hannah Rubin of 315 Riverside Dr. has joined the block association board. A native New Yorker, Hannah has lived on the block since 1996 and calls it a "piece of paradise." She's volunteered to help on whatever issues need it (wow!) and is already at work getting our perpetually blinking street light to be always on. Welcome, Hannah!

Teresa Elwert

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VP / Secretary: Nancy Lian
Treasurer: Sid Herzfeld

Members
Ned Barnard
Barbara Bryan
Michael Deegan
Sheila Garden
Alex Grannis
John Johnston
Hannah Rubin
Mimi Schade
Marsha Tantleff

E-mail: West104block@hotmail.com

West Side Center Wins Award

The NYS Education Dept. recently gave its "Outstanding Early Childhood Award" to the St. Matthew's and St. Timothy's Day Care Center on West 84th St., one of only eight child care programs in New York to be so honored. A good part of this is due to the leadership of the center's director, Bruna Herzfeld, of 895 WEA. She has been director for the last 20 years, and has brought a wealth of knowledge gained in education - a Master's in Early Childhood, a Master's in Social Work, and a degree in Business Administration from Italy where she was born. She stresses parental involvement, and focuses on literacy development and an anti-bias curriculum for the children. She heads the Parent Advisory committee which meets monthly to reinforce the lessons that are taught.

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Thank you, contributors!

Around February of this year, the block association's bank account dropped to the level the board set as the minimum required to continue operating for three more months. Residents responded generously to our March annual dues appeal and, as a result, our bank balance is once again healthy. Below are the members who paid dues to the block association in the first quarter of 2001. Our special thanks to those of you who contributed a bit extra - you're good neighbors, one and all!

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Out of Africa • • Letters from Kenya

Here are the first two in a series of letters home from **Jane Deegan**, the 12-year old daughter of Michael Deegan and Sarah Conly of 309 W104, who chose to attend eighth grade this semester in Nairobi, Kenya. (Her uncle works for the American Embassy there.) Jane's Email address: lconly@usaid.gov

February 26, 2001

February 15, 2001

Hey, everyone, I have been in Kenya for about a month and a half now! My grandparents came about two weeks ago, and my cousins and aunt and uncle are coming tomorrow.

Last weekend, we went to Amboseli Game Park. It has mainly elephants, so I got to see my first elephants in the wild. The first night we had a little trouble finding the place where we were staying. Just as we found a sign pointing to it, we also found a very nice lake, but we could not dive into it because it only came up to our hubcaps. We were all getting ready to spend the night in the car in the wilderness, with wild animals all around us, when a car from Tortelli's (the place we were going to) came looking for us. Then they pulled us out of the mud. Kenyans are probably the nicest and politest people that I have ever met.

Tomorrow we were supposed to go to Zanzibar, but they are kind of having a few issues and problems there so instead we are going to Mombassa (the coast) on Saturday. We get back on Monday and then I leave for a Massai village near Lake Magadi on Tuesday. I am really excited because my whole class will get to spend 4 days with the Massai, and learn about their lifestyle. They are going to sacrifice a goat for us, and let us drink mixed cow blood and milk. But I'm gonna say no to both of them and hope that they do not get insulted. My excuse is that I do not eat meat, and it's not a lie, they will just think that I'm really weird.

School is great. Making tons of friends. I'm learning how to dive in PE. I got the best Valentine's Day card ever: I learned that I got into Stuyvesant. I was so excited and relieved that I cried!! I will write on next Friday about the Massai. I miss everyone. Write or email!

Janie

Hiya every 1, sorry I have not written for so long, but I have been really busy for the past week and a half. Last night was my first free night since two Thursdays ago, and I was too tired to write. On the 17th the McNearys (my aunt and uncle and two cousins) arrived. We had a 7 a.m. flight for Mombossa the next morning. Mombossa is on the coast. It was really neat, and beautiful. It was so cool to swim in the Indian Ocean because it was actually warm!! We just relaxed for three days (I took Monday off from school) then on Monday night my uncle and I took a 9 p.m. flight back to Nairobi, so I could be at school the next day at 7 for my school trip to Magadi.

We stayed with the Massai, tribal people of Kenya. There were good and AWFUL parts about the trip.

Day 1: we arrived at about 12:30 and we had lunch. It was so hot!! Then we had to set up our tents in the heat! For the rest of the day we just hung around, then had dinner. They did not have good food for vegetarians (actually they had hardly any for vegetarians). After dinner we finally got to meet the Massai. They gave us shukas (robe/toga type things that they wear).

Day 2: we got up at 6:30 in the morning, and the head of the trip blamed me and my tent mate Mawii for waking everyone up by talking (he really does not like us and just was looking for an excuse to wake everyone else up). The reason that we were talking was because we were woken by other people talking, and we could not get back to sleep. But none of my other friends were mad at us. Then we went into the village and the Massai got blood from a cow for us to drink. I was so grossed out and did not drink it. But nobody minded. Then we went on a one hour hike. Or at least our teachers said that it would be one hour. But it took us about 4 hours to get to our destination (a river). By the time we got there we were out of water, so we sent a Massai back to get more water and both of the busses. But only one of the busses came. So all 50 of us had to stuff ourselves into a 20 person bus.

Day 3: got up at 6:30 again. This time not our "fault". We went to a Massai school, but on the way, we got stuck in a ditch. So again we all crammed into one bus and drove the rest of the way. The kids at the school seemed happy to see us, and they were very cute. But it was sad to see what the school looked like. We drove back to where the bus was. While we were waiting for it to get unstuck, I saw a scorpion. Then we got back onto both busses, and I got stung by a two inch wasp!! That night the Massai killed and sacrificed a goat for us. I did not eat it, but all my friends did.

Day 4: the best part of the trip was getting back on the bus!!! We got on and went to a prehistoric sight then drove back to Nairobi. That night my aunt and uncle had a surprise party for a friend of theirs. I was so happy to eat other stuff than overcooked rice and watermelon. The next morning we left for Lake Nakuru. Nothing too interesting happened. We went on a few game drives.

I miss everyone tons,

Janie

March 2001 — Treasurer's Report— By Sid Herzfeld

OPENING BALANCE 3/1/01		\$ 8,309.03
INCOME		
Dues	4,375.00	
Bank Interest	4.69	
TOTAL INCOME	\$4,379.69	+\$4,379.69
DISBURSEMENTS		
Guard Service	2,573.08	
Champagne brunch		
Equipment rental	368.05	
Printing	173.20	
Bank fee	11.00	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$3,125.33	-\$ 3,125.33
CLOSING BALANCE 3/31/0		\$ 9,563.39

A Tale of Two Trees That Share a Common Ancestor

By Ned Barnard

If the giant sequoia is the king of North American forests, the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) with its graceful branches, delicate blossoms, and crimson fall foliage is the queen. As Donald Culross Peattie wrote, "Stepping delicately out of the dark woods, the startling loveliness of a Dogwood in bloom makes each tree seem a presence, calling for an exclamation of praise, a moment of worship with our eyes." Sadly, the flowering dogwood is no longer blooming so profusely in the shaded understories of our eastern forests. A virulent fungus disease called *Discula destructiva* has killed a high percentage of wild trees. Some cultivars and varieties, however, seem less susceptible, especially when they are grown in bright, breezy locations.

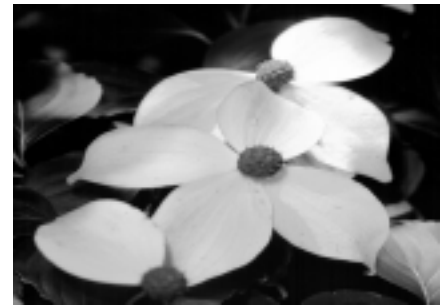
Once a valuable source of lumber, the flowering dogwood produces a shock-resistant, fine-grained wood that wears smooth with use. It was made into loom shuttles, golf-club heads, tool handles, pulleys, and spindles before synthetic substitutes were developed.

Introduced to North America in 1861, the kousa dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) is an elegant Asian cousin of the flowering dogwood. Botanists theorize that the two species have a common ancestor that thrived in an epoch when northern temperate flora stretched in a continuous band across North America and Eurasia. Eventually shifting land masses and climate changes isolated plant populations, and separate dogwood groups evolved. The kousa dogwood developed fleshy fruits appealing to monkeys living in China and Japan. The monkeys helped to disperse the tree's seeds, which passed unharmed through their digestive systems. The flowering dogwood, on the other hand, had no monkeys in its range, and developed smaller, red fruits attractive to birds.

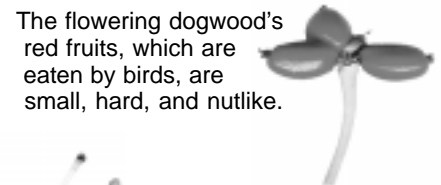
Like the flowering dogwood, the kousa dogwood has blossoms with showy bracts, which begin as bud scales protecting the inconspicuous central green flowers. But the kousa dogwood's creamy white bracts taper to points instead of broad, notched tips.



The flowering dogwood's blossoms have bracts that are rounded and notched at their ends.



The kousa dogwood's blossoms have bracts with pointed ends.



The flowering dogwood's red fruits, which are eaten by birds, are small, hard, and nutlike.



The kousa dogwood's red fruits, which are eaten by monkeys, are fleshy and berry-like.

Oil spill on 105th St.

In early January, there was a leak in an oil tank in a house on 105th St. and the seepage soon appeared in the basement of 309 West 104th St. Various government agencies, including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, are involved in determining the extent of the seepage. Their work includes drilling holes in the sidewalk and testing the soil for evidence of oil.

Rats: don't feed 'em, don't breed 'em

Did you know that 75% of food put out for pigeons is eaten by rats? Being so close to the park, we're particularly plagued by rats. Someone has been putting out bread in front of 318 W 104. If you know this individual, please speak to him or her. Or tell any board member and we'll approach the individual.


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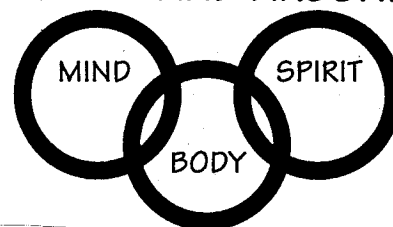
Calendar of Selected Events

- 4/17** **Carousel** at Riverbank State Park, Riverside Drive at 137-145th St. Opening day. Call 212-694-3654 for schedule and further information. Accessible easily by #5 Riverside bus.
- 4/20** **New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra**, Eckart Preu conductor, Jonathan Spitz, cellist, perform *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky and *Cello Concerto, B minor* by Dvorak. Symphony Space, 95th St., 8 pm. Tickets \$12.
- 4/21** **Fourth Annual Straus Park Commemorataive Celebration**, 11 am to 3 pm. Straus Park. (Rain date 4/22)
- 4/21** **Kotchegna Dance Company of Vadou Diamonde** presents a trip through ancient and contemporary African rhythms, drawing on more than 60 different regional dance styles from the Ivory Coast. Symphony Space, 11 am. Call 212-864-1414 for more information.
- 4/23** **"Takin' the Duke Out"**: The Dom Minasi Trio: Dom Minasi, Ken Filiano, Jackson Krall. Be part of the live recording and videotaping as Dom's trio reinvents Duke Ellington for his new CD. The Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St. 10 pm. Cover charge \$10. Call 212-219-3055 for more information.
- 4/24** **Cinema Italian Style**. Continuation of Italian movie series. Night of the Shooting Stars, 1981 and La Famiglia, 1987. Other movies on 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22 and 5/29 (Bernardo Bertolucci, 1975 a special film restored in 1991) Symphony Space, 95th & Broadway. Call 212-864-1414 for more information.
- 4/26** **Myths and Legends: Dances of Dionysus**, World Premiere by David Noon, *Sonnets to Orpheus* by Richard Danielpour and *Apollo* by Stravinsky and the Claremont Ensemble 2001, John C. Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 8 pm. Free Concert. Call 212-749-2802, ext. 429 for more information.
- 4/26** **Beyond the Iron Curtain**, Bernarda Fink, mezzo soprano, Lisa Saffer, soprano, and Steven Blier, pianist with the NY Festival of Song present moledies from Czech, Polish, Hungarian, and Romanian, countries. Music by Dvorak, Smetana, Enesco, Chopin, Bartok, and others. Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, 8 pm. Call 212-772-4448.
- 4/28** **Dance Sampler**, a four-hour non-stop extravaganze featuring more than a dozen of New York's dance companies. Symphony Space, 7 to 11 pm. Tickets \$15. For more information call 212-864-1414
- 5/2** **Short Scores: A Celebration of the Musical Theatre**. Selected Shorts, with four fully-staged works including two world premieres: Thomas Meehan's *Yma Dream*, Chase Pamela Morrison's *Women of the Lighthouse*. Tickets \$14. Symphony Space, 8 pm. Call 212-864-1414.
- 5/5** **Messiah by G.F. Handel, Family Concert Selections**, Riverside Choir and Festival Orchestra and students from NYC Public School Districts 4,5, & 6. One hour beginning at 2 pm. Riverside Church Nave. Free.
- 5/6** **Alban Berg Chamber Concerto**, American Symphony Orchestra, Miller Theater, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., 3 pm. Tickets \$15. Call 212-854-7799.
- 5/10** **Song Recital** by Daniel Neer, Lyric Baritone with Nicholas White, Piano, performing songs by Finzi, Quilter, Vaughan

Williams, Schubert, Debussy and Rachmaninoff. St. Michael's Church, 99th St. & Amsterdam, 7:30 pm. No ticket price, but contributions are welcome.

- 5/12** **Manhattan School of Music Symphony** performs *Millennium Variations* by Cortese, *Piano Concerto No. 3* by Bartok and *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky. John C. Borden Auditorium, 8 pm. Free.
- 5/13** **Orpheus Chamber Orchestra** performs Faure's *Pavanne*, Ibert's *Concertino for saxophone and orchestra*, and Stravinsky's *Pulcinella Suite*. Riverside Church Nave, 3 pm. For ticket information call 212-896-1704.
- 5/23** **Happily Ever After: An Operetta Junket**, light opera from Vienna to Broadway with music by Lehar, Kalman, Offenbach, Gershwin, Kern, Sullivan, Chapi, Luna and more. NY Festival of Song chorus and soloists, Steven Blier, pianist. Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College, 8 pm. Call 212-772-4448.
- 5/31** **A Cabaret Evening in Riverside Park with Judy Collins**, to benefit the Riverside Park Fund. For details contact the Park Fund at 212-870-3070.
- 6/6-17** **18 Mighty Mountain Warriors**, a madcap skit comedy troupe from San Francisco, at the Pan Asian Rep Theatre, 263 W 86th St. Call 212-505-5655 for ticket information.
- 6/8** **New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra**, Eckart Preu, conductor, Jennifer Owen, violinist, perform *Serenade for Winds*, R. Strauss, *Violin Concerto No. 1* by Prokofiev, and *Scheherazade* by Rimsky-Korsakov. Riverside Church, 8 pm. Tickets \$12 at the door.
- 6/10** **Dawn Padmore** presents a concert of Yoruba, Igbo and Akan Folk Songs from Africa. Riverside Church Christ Chapel, 3 pm. Free with an offering taken for the artist. Call 212-870-6722 for more information.
- 9/15** **104th Street Block Association Yard Sale**.

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Dues

If you haven't paid your second quarter dues, won't you please do so now? Your dues help pay for your nightly security guard, flowers, and newsletter.

Reduction in guard service

While many of you responded to our dues solicitation letter by paying your annual dues in part or in full, the response was not sufficient for us to maintain a full level of guard service. Rather than cut service back to six days a week, however, the board voted to eliminate one hour of service each day. So the guard is now working from 5:00 p.m. to midnight seven days a week.

Dues 2nd Quarter 4/01-6/01

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