



State of the Block

- Legislators on Residents' Concerns
- Long-Time Merchant Leaves
- West Side Landmark Restored
- Calendar of Events
- ...and more

Legislators Address Our Concerns

MORE THAN 30 Block Association members and residents came together for our first general meeting of 2010. Many thanks to the Manhattan Day School for opening up their newly renovated library to us.

We were fortunate to have NY State Senator Tom Duane, State Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, Councilmember Gale Brewer, and Joselinne Minaya of the New York District Attorney's office. They spoke on topics including state budget and ensuing cuts in services, school overcrowding in District 3, proposed new kindergarten classes at IS 44, and strengthening legislation to regulate the hiring of level 2/3 sex offenders as building maintenance staff in NYC.

Steve Burman of Credit Advocate Counseling Corporation (CACC) was on hand to inform us on issues surrounding new laws governing credit card companies. He advised attendees on how individuals with excessive credit card debt can get help through his non-profit organization. Steve can be reached at (212) 260-2776 or visit the Web site at www.creditadvocates.org.

Jill Greenbaum of Schools Unite Network gave an overview of how SUN has advocated for the safety of our young people in the neighborhood for over 20 years. SUN serves to link parents and the police department in a unified front to ensure the safety of our youngsters through an on-line communication network. Jill is happy to speak more about her agency's services at jillgreenbaum@sunnyc.org or (212) 580-4843.

—Dee Rieber



Jill Greenbaum, founder and director of Schools Unite Network was one of several guest speakers at the February 11 meeting.



Alex Alluia in his shop, New York Haircutters

Local Merchant Closes Doors after 35 Years on West 75

I recently sat down with Alex Alluia, who just weeks ago permanently closed the doors to his barbershop/beauty salon, New York Haircutters, after 35 years on West 75th Street between Broadway and West End Avenue.

Alluia, who is now almost 70 years old, came to New York from Bahia, Brazil when he was 19 to study hair design. In the past, he has worked in the West Village near Stonewall when the riots occurred, at 72nd and Broadway, and then in the Garment Center. Wanting to have his own shop and loving this neighborhood bought him to the Upper West Side in 1975.

He fondly recalled when there were many small stores and restaurants in the neighborhood. Especially, when Fairway and Citarella were less than half their current sizes. He also talked about how today is so different because of the number of young children and their nannies passing his store on their way home to their apartments.

His favorite spot in the neighborhood was Steps on Broadway above Fairway, where he took many dance classes. His favorite restaurants were Niko's and The Cottage. And one of his favorite memories of the block is of a gypsy fortune teller who was next door to his shop for a number of years.

Many of his clients were people from the arts, as well as the patrons of the gay bar under his shop, and Joan

Franklin, the late president of the West 75th Street Block Association.

Over the years Alex enjoyed helping people from Russia, Greece, France, Italy, and Brazil who had hair cutting experience, giving them their first jobs in this country at his shop.

Last year was his roughest ever due to the economy, and he attributes it to President Bush. He said that the

President Clinton years were his best because the country was less stressed out and the economy was better.

Alex was not forced out by escalating rent like many others in the neighborhood. He felt it was time to retire and go back to his roots in Brazil—to lie in the sun on the beach, attend Carnivale in Rio de Janeiro, watch some football (soccer) games, and get involved with the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio.

He finally said that what he will miss most is coming uptown from his Chelsea apartment every morning, getting off at the 72nd Street subway station and walking to his shop.

Good luck Alex—we will miss you!

Scot Steinberg
Block Leader-for
Small Business Outreach

Neighborhood Landmark Restored!

The need for the road-side “watering holes,” which, in the past were frequented by thousands of horses on a daily basis, is no longer a necessity on the Upper West Side. However, we are blessed with a few that remain. The Robert Ray Hamilton Fountain is a shining example. Created from Tennessee marble, this ornate, baroque fountain was dedicated in 1906 to the City of New York. It was made possible through a posthumous donation by Robert Ray Hamilton, who bequeathed \$9,000 to the city for its creation and installation. Hamilton owned property in Manhattan as well as serving as a New York legislator. He mysteriously drowned while on a hunting trip in 1890.

The architectural firm of Warren & Wetmore was commissioned to
(Continued on page 2)

Block Association Calendar 2010

- **February 11**
General Meeting
- **April 25**
Earth Day/block Promotion
- **May 6**
General Meeting
- **May 15**
Block Beautification Day #1
(Columbus to Amsterdam Avenue)
- **June 13**
Block Beautification Day #2
(Columbus to Central Park West)
- **June 18**
General Meeting
- **September 25**
Annual Street Party & Fair
- **October 14**
General Meeting
- **November 2**
Election Day Bake Sale &
Block Promotion with
West 73rd Block Association
- **December 9**
Annual Holiday Party

Did You Know?

We liked these household tips from my niece Betsy in South Carolina—

- Take your bananas apart when you get home from the store. If you leave them connected at the stem, they ripen faster.
- Heat leftover pizza in a nonstick skillet on top of the stove; set heat to medium-low and heat till warm. This keeps the crust crispy. No soggy micro pizza.
- If you seal an envelope and then realize you forgot to put in the enclosure, just put your sealed envelope in the freezer for an hour or two. Voila! It unseals easily.
- To get something out of a heat register or from under the fridge, add an empty paper towel roll or empty gift wrap roll to your vacuum. It can be bent or flattened to get in narrow openings.

—Mary Ratcliffe

Neighborhood Landmark Restored (continued from page 1)

design the fountain. Warren and Wetmore are also known for their work on Grand Central Station, Chelsea Piers and other New York City landmarks.

The fountain plaza has recently undergone a \$150,000 renovation, which included the planting of four Princeton Elm trees and the restoration of our beloved eagle's beak, which had been missing for many years. Hexagonal paving



PHOTO: RIVERSIDE PARK

Newly restored Robert Ray Hamilton Fountain on Riverside Drive at West 76th Street

stones have been laid in the plaza area and four new benches added. The project was funded by the NYC Parks Department as well as private donations.

Since most of our roadside fountains disappeared long ago, we are fortunate to have the newly renovated and restored Robert Ray Hamilton Fountain in our back yard

—Dee Rieber

Part-Time Jobs Available with 2010 Census

As unemployment figures remain high, it may be of interest to some of you to learn that the 2010 Census is hiring thousands of part-time workers as census takers.

Most jobs will be part-time, working flexible evening and weekend hours in the local community, knocking on doors and interviewing residents. The pay rate is \$14–\$21 an hour. There is paid training plus reimbursement of authorized

expenses (mileage, public transportation in some areas).

Applicants will be given a timed, 30-minute multiple-choice test of reading skill, basic math, map reading, and ability to follow instructions. Four out of five pass it easily on the first try, but you are allowed to take it again another day if you fail. You can also request a practice test.

You must be at least 18 years of age and have a valid Social Security number; U.S. citizens are given preference.

For more information and to apply, call (866) 861-2010.

—Mary Ratcliffe

Share a Cab and Save a Buck—or More!

The Taxi and Limousine Commission has instituted a pilot program in which riders can save money by sharing a cab ride with others. In our neighborhood, the group ride yellow taxi stand is at 72nd Street

and Columbus Avenue, where for \$4 you can share a taxi from there to Park Avenue and 42nd Street, getting off anywhere along the route.

A second West Side group stand will be at West 57th Street and Eighth Avenue; from there the group fare is \$3 per person.

—Mary Ratcliffe

W75BA Charities

In December of each year, Block Association members select one or more local charities to receive donations from our modest treasury. Recipients in 2009 were the West Side Campaign Against Hunger and City Meals on Wheels.

Recycle Your Electronics

Bring your electronics (no TVs) on Sunday, March 12, to NYC Council Member Gale Brewer's office, 563 Columbus Avenue (87th Street), 10 AM–3 PM, for Per Scholas for schools and other non-profits. There's a \$5 donation (or whatever you wish) to Per Scholas, whose staff does the refurbishing.

WEST 75TH STREET BLOCK ASSOCIATION CENTRAL PARK WEST TO RIVERSIDE DRIVE www.w75ba.org / info@w75ba.org MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____
E-mail _____
Date _____

DUES: INDIVIDUAL \$15/YR, FAMILY, \$25/YR, MERCHANT/\$50/YR

Mail application with check to
W75BA, 33 Riverside Drive, #2A, New York, NY 10023
For more information: info@w75ba.org

W75BA NEWSLETTER

Editor: Mary Ratcliffe
Contributors: Dee Rieber, Mary Ratcliffe Scot Steinberg
Design & Layout: Mary Ratcliffe
Color Printing: Halstead Property LLC

We welcome contributions from members.