

W75BA NEWS

WEST 75TH STREET BLOCK ASSOCIATION ■ CENTRAL PARK WEST TO RIVERSIDE DRIVE



First Fall Get Together Special Guest Scott M. Stringer Manhattan Borough President

WHEN: Thursday, October 12, 7:00 P.M. Sharp

WHERE: West End Collegiate Church

**245 West 77th Street off West End Avenue
(entrance through the porch)**

SAVE THE DATE: Thursday October 12, 7:00 P.M. sharp, to welcome a very special guest: Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer (our former Assemblyman), who will tell us all about his new job as BP. Here is a rare opportunity for you to voice your concerns to the top, whether crime, homeless people, SROs, affordable housing, the election, school lunches, commercial rents, construction and destruction sites, traffic, street fairs, zoning, garbage, and the chances of his moving up from BP to Mayor in the future.

A spokesman from the Parks Department has been invited also, to tell us about free or inexpensive Manhattan events this fall and winter, such as the all-day "Uptown Treasures" on Sunday, October 15, and the "Union Square Chocolate Lovers' Tour."

Over coffee and doughnuts—and before our guests appear—your Executive Committee will discuss the possibility of creating a lively and interactive Web site for W75BA.

We need a Webmaster, a designer, and volunteers to contribute and scan photos and also to report on neighborhood events. In the future we hope to distribute this newsletter electronically and want to gather every e-mail address between Riverside Drive and Central Park West. For starters, e-mail Joan Franklin at sayfrank@juno.com

and expect an immediate reply. While we take pride in our 19th Century structures, we can still move into 21st Century communications.

Beautification

To bring the bloom back to W75, landlords and residents have contributed exactly \$4,000.00 to fund the restoration of eight tree beds on the 200 and 300 blocks. Each bed now has a permanent rim of granite stones and a thick layer of good soil, with tulip bulbs and ivy to follow. The masonry work, which is backbreaking, plus the dirt and compost, cost \$2,354, leaving approximately \$1,200 for planting, and \$400 for black iron-rod fencing, to be installed when planting is complete. These fences are easy to handle, high enough to discourage dogs, and light enough to be set up again if a car knocks them down—at about one-tenth the price of heavy iron hoop tree guards.

The city has promised three new trees for the 200 block in the foreseeable future, and the management of #318 will plant a tree privately. Planting is permitted only between October 15 and May 15, when the weather is cooler.

This landscaping endeavor has been a learning experience for all of us; we had originally thought of July 1 as the day for planting. If we want more work done in 2007, we will so-

licit those who failed to contribute in 2006. Fair enough?

Farewell To Leon Jones

After 28 years with the U.S. Postal Service, Leon Jones will retire on September 29. In an eloquent letter, he thanks us for his "joyous experience" delivering the mail on our blocks. We will miss our jovial, amiable, thoughtful postman. There will never be another like our Leon.

Come back and pay us a visit, Leon—you know the way!

On the Blocks

- Updating the electric wiring to minimize the risk of blackouts or electrical fires, one manhole at a time, accounts for Con Edison's seemingly permanent presence in the 200 block.



Sturdy granite stones now border tree beds at #245, lovingly planted and cared for by Christine Dhimos.

- A streetlight was replaced at #317 after an outage of 5½ months, during which a large water pipe was drilled through—an unpleasant surprise for all who were affected..
- The Manhattan Day School has apparently shelved plans to add a fifth story and play area. All of us on 75th and 74th Streets had been dreading the chaos of a major construction and the increased number of pupils, teachers, parked cars, and noise. Should the school decide to proceed with the addition, we will definitely mount a protest. Meanwhile, busses continue to idle and park, and pre-dawn deliveries continue.
- Note that all our mailboxes are now freshly painted.
- Rats still infest the 300 block, drawn by uncovered garbage.
- Rumor has it that Loehmann's will occupy the space vacated by Gristede's. Affordable duds? Let's hope....
- The Broadway Mall Association has installed delightful topiary animals along its length, including a large, alert green Newfoundland dog at 75th Street in our family-oriented turf, a dinosaur at the Museum of Natural History block at 79th Street, a horse near the Claremont Riding Academy on 89th Street, a bull and giraffe farther uptown. The BMA was so entranced by these topiaries, they purchased five of them.



PHOTO: MARY RATCLIFFE

The topiary Newfoundland on the W75–W76 Broadway mall won't drool on the furniture or woof to be walked in the rain. He just brings carefree smiles to our faces.

Street Party

Our summer soiree on July 26 attracted about 40 members and friends (although we didn't get an accurate sign-in sheet) who brought lots and lots of good food, notably home-made brownies. Gale Brewer dropped in, as did Dan Hunter, our landscape gardener. No entertainment was planned except the pleasure of neighborhood camaraderie, which went on long after dark. Our bazaar table netted nearly \$100.00. We still have two very warm women's coats, going for \$25.00 each. Call (212) 799-4800 or email sayfrank@juno.com.

Bird Lady of Riverside Drive

"Wild birds deserve respect—they are a wonderful gift of nature," declared Meg Myles, perhaps best known as an actor/singer, but also known to many throughout the city as a volunteer caretaker of wild birds. She maintains an overnight emergency ward for wild birds of all kinds. Once she had two chickens brought in by Riverside Park Rangers who found them wandering in panic, painted red, with their beaks cut off. They had somehow escaped from a Santa Maria sacrifice on Memorial Day. Myles kept them alive with a deep dish of wild bird seed, a deep dish of water, and gave them a plastic crate, where they cuddled up, fell asleep and murmured throughout the night. She once was given what she was told was a sick robin, who turned out to be a beautiful little kestrel, a genuine bird of prey.

"I first began caring for birds when a friend brought me a three-week-old ball of fluff," Now calls come to her from the ASPCA and the Center for Wildlife Control, and from the Audubon Society. Starting in spring, she receives sparrows, starlings, finches, doves, mocking birds and baby pigeons, some terribly injured, some just babies with no fuzz and tiny transparent bodies, eyes still set back in the head, and unopened tiny hands that will one day become wings. She gives them Baby Bird pablum with a syringe and a hot water bottle. The main work is done by "Don the Rehabber" from New Rochelle, who comes in early next morning and takes the birds to his vet for surgery, care and de-poisoning, and then to bird sanctuaries upstate. "Birds are smart, and their ability to survive speaks of intelligence. And," she insists, "nature has provided them with a sense of humor as well! Where would we be without the lovely bird songs we have in this noisy city?"

**PLEASE NOTE DUES INCREASE TO \$15/YEAR.
STILL A BARGAIN!**

**WEST 75TH STREET BLOCK ASSOCIATION
CENTRAL PARK WEST TO RIVERSIDE DRIVE
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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

DUES: \$15/YEAR

Mail application with check to
 W75BA, 311 West 75th St, New York, NY 10023
 For more information: (212) 799-4800

W75BA NEWS

Editors: Joan Franklin, Mary Ratcliffe
 Writer Joan Franklin
 Design & Layout: Mary Ratcliffe