



General Meeting:

Getting from Here to There

Guest Speaker: Peter Goldwasser
Transportation Alternatives

Plus:

Awards for Outstanding Beautification

When: Thursday, June 19, 6:45 P.M.

Where: Cosi's (back room), 2186 Broadway (77th)

A better way to get there

Transportation Alternatives advocates for bicycling, walking, and public transit, with a mission of reclaiming our streets from the automobile.

Founded in 1973 during the explosion of environmental consciousness that also produced the Clean Air and Clean Water Act and the Environmental Protection Agency, T.A. has helped win numerous improvements for cyclists and pedestrians, and has been the leading voice for reducing car use in New York City.

Learn more about T.A. from Peter Goldwasser, our guest speaker. This will be our last general meeting of the season, and in a new venue more centrally located for all members, Park to Park.

standing beautification efforts will be given at the meeting.

**Jake Abrams, Joey Abrams; Joe Bolanos, Suellen Estey, Patience Freeman, Dorothy Greenberg, Chris Greeno, Laura Jelinek, Louis Kleinman, Josef Langel, Mary Ratcliffe, Dan Rieber, Mary Wagner.*

From Park to Park, we will all enjoy the beautiful plantings by our neighbors — the tree bed gardens we planted on June 1 and the many gardens already in bloom. *Thanks to everyone on W75 who has been generous with their energy and dedication!*

Seeing New York at 3 MPH

On a recent Saturday I led about 30 men and woman on an historical walk and photo shoot around Roosevelt Island

New York has many organizations that lead walks and tours in the five boroughs. The walks are a great way to make the most of living in this fantastic city (and get some exercise, too). Walking becomes more interesting when combined with scenic discovery and historic perspective.

My Saturday walk was sponsored by Shorewalkers (www.shorewalkers.org). Most of these walking groups are very affordable, e.g., Shorewalkers charged \$5/person, which included a \$2 donation to the Roosevelt Island Historical Society for a half-hour presentation by the Roosevelt Island historian. After that we headed first south, past the old smallpox hospital ruin, into the future Roosevelt Park, and then north up to the old light house and, finally, back down south to board the tram to Manhattan.

As you can imagine, not only are the old structures on the Island (some dating back to the 18th century) fascinating, but the views on all sides up and down the East River are magnificent.

The new Roosevelt Island development itself is also interesting. It is a planned community with a strong bucolic atmosphere smack in the middle of a major metropolis. And you cannot get lost on the Island.

Even without a guided walk, you can take the tram on a beautiful day, stop at the visitors information center when you get off for guides and a list of public restrooms, and have a relaxing journey into history as you enjoy the views of the East Side and Brooklyn. Should you get tired, there is a bus available that will cost you about 25¢. Bring lunch and a beverage (although there are several restaurants) and watch the river flow by.

The Shorewalkers slogan "Seeing New York at 3 MPH" is particularly apt for this small adventure.

—Louis Kleinman

Forum addresses preservation of local West Side businesses

The recent closing of Health Nuts, a specialty shop which served our neighborhood on Broadway at 75th Street for 30 years, made the rampant loss of small local merchants personal for a lot of us.



PHOTO: JOSEPH BOLANOS

Laura Jelinek and Suellen Estey were among the hardworking volunteers planting tree beds on the Central Park West block on June 1.

Beautification: Adopt-A-Tree

On June 1, W75BA was out in full force to make our block a greener, more beautiful place to live! Block Association volunteers* planted some forlorn tree beds on the Central Park West block (W75BA brought plants, gardening gloves, tools) and welcomed new members to the Association on our newest member block.

Residents from Park to Park were encouraged to plant tree beds and window boxes, and awards for out-



PHOTO: MARY RATCLIFFE

Health Nuts, a popular neighborhood specialty store for 30 years, was forced to close when it was unable to absorb a 30 percent rent increase.

PHOTO: DEE RIEBER



Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer addressed a packed auditorium at a June 11 forum on preserving local West Side businesses. That's forum co-sponsor Thomas P. DiNapoli, NYS comptroller, at the table.

Dismay that Broadway has become a corridor of banks, chain stores, and nail salons (how can they afford it?) escalated.

Not surprising, then, that an anticipatory crowd of residents and business owners packed the West Side Institutional Synagogue on West 76th Street on June 11 to hear that city government was prepared to step up to the plate and take action that could lead to the preservation of our beloved local merchants — merchants that have been disappearing from our community in recent years.

The running theme was that small businesses are finding it more and more difficult to meet the astronomical rents now being charged on the Upper West Side. Prices are ranging from \$350/square foot to \$500/square foot in some cases for commercial space. When you combine that with the taxes and rising costs of materials, it is crippling the ability of our local merchants to compete or even survive in this changing marketplace.

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, while not advocating for any one solution, is committed to exploring the issue and working with state and city legislators to address the problem. One proposal to help local merchants would take the form of commercial tax relief. Clearly the loss of small, indepen-

dent stores remains among the top issues facing our community, and as Scott pointed out, it is happening across the city in every borough.

— Dee Rieber

W75BA website launched on February 28

The West 75th Street Block Association launched its website, www.w75ba.org, at a general meeting on

February 28. We hope you will find it useful, informative, and even entertaining.

The site is organized into eight sections: Home, About Us, Calendar, News, Resources (useful links), Contact Us, Membership/Support, and Site Map. Except for the Site Map, which outlines the entire site on a single page, sections have side menu bars with links to the topics they include.

Since the launch, the site has been updated every few days, so frequent visits will reward you with up-to-the-minute information and photos. Watch for announcements of meetings and social events. (And find out what you've missed!)

This is **your** site! We're counting on you to send us items for the News and Resources pages as well as your comments and suggestions. Also, send photos of your pets for the Pet Corner and your anecdotes about life on W75 for the Diary page. E-mail them to us at info@w75ba.org.

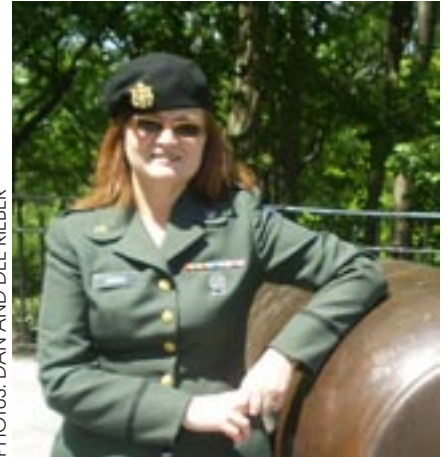
We hope you'll visit us often!

—Mary Ratcliffe, Webmaster

Memorial Day

On Monday, May 26, New Yorkers gathered for the re-opening and ribbon cutting at the restored Soldiers and Sailors Monument and to stay for the annual Memorial Day Observance and wreath laying.

After a year of construction, the plaza is beautifully restored, much thanks to the hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding allocated by the Parks Department, Riverside Park Fund, and council member Gale A. Brewer, and especially to the vision and leadership of Margaret C. Bracken, landscape architect.



PHOTOS: DAN AND DEE RIEBER

W75BA president Dee Rieber, in uniform, attended the Memorial Day observances as a veteran who served as a first lieutenant with the U.S. Army.



Plan Ahead

Currently scheduled W75BA events:

September

Saturday, September 13
Annual Street Party
200 block

October

Thursday, October 30
General Meeting
Time and place TBD

December

Thursday, December 11
Annual Holiday Celebration
Time and Place TBD

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/YEAR, FAMILY \$25/YEAR

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

W75BA NEWSLETTER

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