



Bedford • Barrow • Commerce

Block Association
46 Barrow Street • New York, NY 10014

Annual Membership Is Still (Only) \$15;
For Information,
Please call 212.366.1451.

BBC NEWS AND VIEWS NOVEMBER 2010

There is NO Meeting this month. Instead your BBC Block Association is getting ready for —

The 2010 BBC Holiday Party — Save the Date!

The BBC Holiday Party is Saturday, December 11 at Greenwich House Music School (46 Barrow St.) 6-9 PM. Once again, BBCer **Dale Belli** has asked the BBC to put the word out to encourage our members to make/donate items for the PWA Christmas Project. Especially needed are sweaters and sweatshirts/sweatpants, hats, gloves scarves, mittens, pajamas, socks, men's white tee shirts etc. Dale writes that "we need more men's gifts than women's, and teens' gifts are needed too." (And any games, puzzles, DVDs, etc., are appreciated). These items will be distributed through The Urban Live Source Connection to people with AIDS in need of warmth in over 40 NYC area hospices and hospitals. We'll collect all contributions at the BBC Holiday Party. Thank you all for your generosity and holiday spirit!

BBC Fall Planting

Our fall planting is Saturday, November 13. Meet at 10 AM on Commerce St., at the driveway to the 81 Bedford St. garage. We have lots of bulbs — yellow daffodils and colored tulips — to plant. Our gardener, **Tyler Redmond**, will have prepared the soil so all you have to do is plant! Be sure to bring your own gardening tools (a spoon and fork will work) and bring a friend as well!

BBC Fan Mail

These responses to your BBC's contributions to our neighborhood cultural and helping organizations — made possible by all our members and Ye Olde Fair patrons — warmed our hearts. We thought we would share them with our mem-

bership — these thanks go to YOU all, as well, who are the BBC's own heart and soul!

From our friend and neighbor **Jeanine Flaherty**, writing for The Jefferson Market Garden: "Your support is a lifeblood to us. We had a lot of weather-related damage and loss this year. I know what hard work it is to raise the funds that you annually give to the community. We are mindful of BBC's increasing generosity to us and I assure you it is highly meaningful here. As The Jefferson market Garden chalks up its 35th season in bloom, we count ourselves lucky to have friends such as the BBC."

From Greenwich House: "We are moved by the contribution of the BBC Block Association in support of Greenwich House Pottery and the Greenwich House Music School. The \$500 Pottery scholarships for seniors will be warmly welcomed by our Center's members. And your ongoing support of Greenwich House Music School in the form of a \$600 scholarship and \$1,500 in general support will help us continue to cultivate great musical talents. By supporting these scholarships, classes, concerts and day-to-day operations, you make a difference in the lives of the students we teach and help mold the future of arts in our neighborhood."

From Visiting Neighbors: "Thank you so much for your check for \$750 in support of our services that help our community's elderly as they struggle to stay independent. We were particularly delighted that you were able to increase your support over last year, because as you know, this has been a very difficult year for us financially."

From the Hudson Park Library: "Thank you for your generous gift. It's no secret that the BBC is the best block association in the City and it's a joy to attend your annual street fair — also the best street fair in the city. Keep up the great work!"

And our favorite, from the BBC's own favorite **Sophia Scorgia**: Thank you so much for my scholarship. I love all my classes at Greenwich House!"

Thanks to all for all your thanks, and most of all, for ALL that these great neighborhood organizations do!

In and Around the Neighborhood

Commerce Restaurant, the BBC’s good friend and neighbor, would like to extend its Neighborhood Discount on Sunday Dinners through January 2011. Commerce will be offering to our neighbors 20% off on ALL food at Sunday Dinner from the regular commerce dinner menu. The 20% applies to Food Only, at Sunday Dinner. Inform Commerce upon arrival that you live in the West Village neighborhood — 20% will be subtracted from the food portion of your bill each Sunday evening through January 2011. Thanks to Commerce for their generosity!

The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation announces “Go West! Westbeth Studio Open House Fundraiser” on Sunday, November 14, 1-5 PM. Join in celebrating 30 years of the GVSHP and 40 years of Westbeth. Gain exclusive access to some 20 private artists’ studios with striking designs, artwork, and spectacular river and city views. Guided architectural and history tours are included. This day-long event benefits both the GVSHP and the Westbeth Artists Residents Council. For more information visit: gvsHP.org/westbeth.

In November: “Reconceiving the Historic Enclaves of Greenwich Village: A Lecture with Architectural Historian **Andrew Dolkart**” on Tuesday, November 16, 6:30-8 PM, at the Salamagundi Club, 47 Fifth Avenue (btwn 11th & 12th Streets). Free; reservations required. GVSHP 30th Birthday Party on Thursday, December 2, 6:30-8:30 PM, at the Neighborhood Preservation Center, 232 East 11th Street (btwn 2nd & 3rd Avenues). Free; reservations required. The Tree of Life, at the brand-new VillageCare Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, is a three-dimensional wall sculpture featuring steel leaves on textured branches. It is a fitting piece of artwork for this new care environment with a patient-centered program that will promote healing and growth for many years. With your gift of \$500, your name or the name of a loved one will be engraved on a nameplate and placed on the Tree of Life — visible to all residents, staff, volunteers and visitors for years to come. To reserve your nameplate or to learn more about the Tree of Life, call **Kristie DeKoker**, Director of Development, at 212.337.5751 or email kristied@villagecare.org.

The Greenwich House Music School (46 Barrow St.) presents a GHMS Faculty Recital by Cellist **Louise Dubin** on Friday, November 19 at 7:30 PM in the Renee Weiler Concert Hall. Ms. Dubin will perform a program of works for cello and piano entitled Favorites from the Cello Repertory, including selections

from Dvorak, Saint-Saens, Haydn, Schubert, and Mendelssohn. Admission is payable at the door from 7 PM and costs \$10. For more information, call 212.242.4770; or go to the GHMS website, www.gharts.org.

St. John’s Lutheran Church (81 Christopher St.) will host, on Thursday, November 18, 10 PM, “Not History’s Bones” — A Poetry Concert directed by Mario Biagini. General Admission: \$15.

From the BBC Poet Laureate,
Holly Rose Diane Shaw

FEW LEAVES

left on the Autumn branches
skittish winds playing
stealing them slowly leaf by leaf.....

these last few moments
before the whispers of first snow flakes
arriving. interrupting our kisses
all we have left
of our years of flowers.....

Neighborhood Notes & Notables

Shortly after **Melinda Hackett** put up the round, cedar treehouse f in a broad-trunked London Plane tree in her tiny Greenwich Village backyard, a neighbor called about “a structure in rear which is nailed to a tree” and “looks unsafe,” with no construction permit posted, according to a complaint filed with the city.

After months of legal battles, Hackett triumphed. Her treehouse, apparently unique in one of America’s most densely populated areas has been granted landmark status. The treehouse is five years old: Hackett’s townhouse is from the 1860s and she bought it from musician **David Byrne**.

It took Hackett about six months to defend the right to keep the structure, and it cost about as much as the construction price to settle three violation notices from the Department of Buildings for erecting a structure in a protected district without a permit, plus architect’s fees. Many believe that this creates a dangerous precedent that will encourage property owners to build in their back gardens under the pretext of recreational structures.

A state investigation has begun into two below-market leases that a real-estate broker negotiated on his own behalf with Horatio Street’s **Bill Cornwall**. An investigator had been assigned to look into whether the leases violated state laws or regulations designed to protect the public from conflicts of interest by brokers.

Cornwell, an 84-year-old retired advertising art director, has charged that a former broker at CitiHabitats had first showed the

apartment to prospective tenants, and then come back and pressured him to sign handwritten leases that he didn't understand.

The leases signed by the broker, **Amir Meiri**, and his father, **Herzel Meiri**, a real-estate developer in May, 2009, were for terms as long as 20 years at rents far below the going rate. Mr. Meiri was dismissed by CitiHabitats after the listing broker at CitiHabitats complained about the leases. Both men deny any wrongdoing and said that the leases were the result of fair negotiations. The dispute was the subject of a *Wall Street Journal* story.

CitiHabitats issued a statement saying that Mr. Meiri was acting on his own behalf when he signed the leases. A state court judge refused to nullify the leases last year, but Mr. Cornwell filed another suit against both Mr. Meiri and CitiHabitats, accusing them of violating their legal obligations to represent his interests. If a violation is found, the state could impose a fine, revoke a broker license or order restitution be paid to the victims, Mr. Barkin said. Real-estate brokerage firms and their agents have a fiduciary obligation to their clients.

In the *NY Daily News* (Oct. 30, 2010) **Amy Sacks** reports that Wally is a staple in the Village, where he goes on daily trots...literally, because Wally is a pig. **Jacqui Becker**, a professional Hula Hoop dancer, writer and holistic test prep instructor, recently adopted the piglet. One of Wally's new favorite places to be is the Washington Square dog run. The 11-month-old potbellied pig, who lives on the third floor of a walkup, is surprisingly mobile. He has ridden the subway and the Jitney to the Hamptons and has flown to LA. Wally didn't utter a peep during the flight, that is, until he let out let out a banshee yell upon descent. Wally is clean, affectionate and smart and is a quick study when it comes to obedience training. While pigs may make great pets, many people find that they are demanding and are overwhelmed by their needs — as shown by the abundance of shelters overflowing with abandoned pigs.

A search on Petfinder.com finds nearly 300 pigs available from animal shelters. If you're seriously considering a pig, go to the Pig Placement Network. The dog run is collecting blankets to donate to the Animal Care & Control Shelters.



Resources & Information

Sunday's Daily News ran a piece by **Alexandra Galkin** on the negative impact that the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital has had on local businesses. One of those interviewed was **Nicky Perry** of Tea & Sympathy on Greenwich Avenue. She says that her business is down by 20%. Nicky has always been a strong supporter of local efforts and we hope that folks will think of stopping in for a visit. It's a great place for mother/daughter chats. Other businesses mentioned were Tasti-Delite (recently opened) and Two Boots pizza. According to **Brad Hoylman**, chair of Community Board 2's St. Vincent's Omnibus Committee, "the federal bankruptcy court is in the driver's seat. They apparently have the mandate to sell the property to the highest bidder in order to pay the more than \$1 billion of debt that is owed to creditors of the hospital. There are numerous buildings on the St. Vincent's campus ready-made for medical uses which would seem to make the case for cost effective reuse."

Artist **Jim Campbell** has a new installation called Scattered Light, a 50-foot wide sculpture made up of 1,600 lightbulbs which have been outfitted with LEDs in Madison Park. "It's essentially 1,600 pixels that create an image," he says in a video by the website Switched, "but the image has been kind of blown apart."

The resulting work is a low-resolution, abstract piece which uses footage from Grand Central station to create the illusion of shadows moving, almost imperceptibly, through a curtain of lightbulbs. For a preview go to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/26/artist-jim-campbell-on-his_n_774396.html

Two new "dining" spots are opening at the corner of West 4th and West 10th Streets. What is now the Chow Bar is slated to become a high end Mexican restaurant and the Charles Restaurant has already re-opened at a sports bar called The Windsoe. It has seven flat screen TV's and a 12-person banquet positioned directly across from one of them. "A person close to the operation told *Eater*, 'people read sports bar and they imagine a frat scene' and the re-do of the former Charles couldn't be further from that. If it was a sports bar, would it serve fine food like truffle mac-and-cheese or a red velvet cupcake in a mason jar?"

In case you haven't walked on Morton Street lately, the Daily News (Oct. 15, 2010) reports that the 6-foot high mountain of garbage bags piled atop carts and dollies on Morton Street has been the home for eight years of a man who calls himself Dread. The ever-shifting pile of bundled recyclables and random trash is right across the street from the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. On a recent visit, the sordid suite included scrap metal, battered

pans, broken shades and spent tubes of moisturizer. Local residents say he has a son in his 20s and is originally from the South, but little else is known about him.

His shanty once took up half the quiet industrial block, but has since shrunk to a quarter of the street between Hudson and Greenwich after he paid a trucker to take some of his cans and bottles to a redemption center. The cops occasionally visit, locals say, but he's usually left to himself.

It seems the Daily News piece wasn't the best news for Dread. Soon after publication, city sanitation workers swooped in and dismantled the junky encampment and Dread has moved elsewhere. The Sanitation Department had no comment.



Old News

THE MURDER OF MARY LAWLER

Policeman John Doyle committed what was called the most dastardly murder in the annals of City crime. He decoyed a girl from the store in which she worked and blew her brains out. The tragedy caused a great feeling of shame and regret among the members of the Police Department. Doyle was 26 years old and lived with his mother and a sister at 73 King Street. He had a brother in State Prison. Doyle was a member of the Police Department, but was forced to resign due to his drunken habits.

Through some influence, however, he procured a reappointment and was assigned to the Fifteenth Precinct. From the books at Police Headquarters it appears that he was first appointed at the request of Andrew Bleakley Jr. (215 West Houston Street). His application was signed by W. F. T. Chapman (119 Macdougall Street), G. W. Keyser (246 West 22nd Street) and W. C. Rogers (80 Barrow Street), who all testified to his sobriety and good character. When he applied for reinstatement, his application was signed by John Quigley (233 West 18th Street), J.C. McCarthy (131 Barrow Street). James R Floyd (111 VanNest Place — Charles Street). He had been honorably mentioned for rescuing three boys from a burning building in 14th Street. The girl who Doyle basely murdered was Mary Elizabeth Lawler, aged twenty.one years, who lived with her parents at 183 West Houston Street. She was a handsome girl and all that can be learned was of a most amiable and endearing disposition.

Mary was employed as a dressmaker by George Bowman, (83 South Fifth Avenue). For two years she had been keeping company with Doyle. Her parents had warned her against him. Eventually, because of his drunken bad habits, she told friends that she would never speak to him again. He heard about this. One day when

he was supposed to be on duty, he turned up drunk at the dress shop and was refused admittance. He came again the next day and entered the shop. He and Mary spoke in the hall for about fifteen minutes. Another girl heard him say, "I'll shoot that man yet," when the girl answered. "Don't talk that way, Johnny."

Mary entered the workroom and said that she was quitting early. She went into the hallway and resumed her conversation with Doyle. Soon after there were gunshots. One of the girls named Delia Connolly ran out into the hallway. Mary Lawler was lying on the floor with a bullet entering through the left eye. The gun must have been held close to her face because it was burnt. Doyle was lying against the wall moaning that he would die for her and covered her face with his police officer's cap. He was taken into custody; when he was to be brought from his cell into the courtroom, it took seven officers to get him under control. Upon hearing about the crime, Doyle's mother said, " Oh what did he want to hurt that poor girl for? Oh, what was the matter? I loved her as much as I did my own child."

The New York Times February, 1874



An early view of Commerce Street at Blecker Street.