

# 336 CPW Newsletter

S P R I N G 1 9 9 7

## *Meilman, Lane to Leave 336 Board Candidates Sought for Two Openings Annual Meeting to be Held May 21*

After serving for several terms each on the 336 Board of Directors, both President Roy Meilman and Treasurer John Lane have decided to step down this year. Candidates are sought to fill the two openings. The election will be held at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday May 21 at 8 p.m. in the fifth floor meeting room at Columbia Prep's new building at 36 West 93 Street.

Have you considered running for the Board? The Board meets approximately one a evening month to discuss financial, management and other issues of running this cooperative. The Board needs a variety of talents. If you love 336 and have not yet served on the Board--or if you are willing to serve again-- please nominate yourself by sending a brief

biography and statement to Brian Kenny at Insignia Residential Group, 909 Third Avenue, New York 10022. Any member of the Board will be happy to answer questions about Board activities.

Our thanks to Roy Meilman and John Lane for their dedicated service to the building. Meilman, who became a Board member in 1994, soon after moving into 336, has been President since 1995. John Lane, who has lived in 336 since 1977, has served as Treasurer since 1993, and this past year oversaw the refinancing of the mortgage.

The Board has chosen a new annual meeting site this year, in order to provide facilities that are more accessible than the hall we have used for the past several years.

## **Our Hearty Thanks To Sergio Ochoa**

Since November, our handyman, Sergio Ochoa, has taken charge of 336 with devotion and diligence. Thanks to Sergio, the heat and hot water did not fail, and building services continued as they had in the past. We all owe him a huge vote of thanks.

Sergio's dedication was particularly evident on Sunday and Monday April 20 and 21, when an aging cable and connection caused an electrical failure in a main service line. As a result of this, power was cut to lobby and stair landing lights, elevator signals, the boiler room, and the pump that feeds water to our rooftop tank. On Sunday the 20th, Sergio was alerted at home about the problem, and arrived at 336 by 10 a.m. When it became clear that the problem was serious, he called the electrician who did temporary work, working from mid-afternoon until early evening (and completing the job on Monday and Tuesday).

Meanwhile, Sergio spent the night here, after discovering that an electrical surge had burned out the relay box serving the water pump. Sergio worked with the pump repairman, from about 11 p.m., until 3 a.m.; they got the pump going, so that everyone's water pressure was normal on Monday morning. Sergio also reset the relay on the boiler, because it had been off for more than two hours, assuring us of hot water and heat.

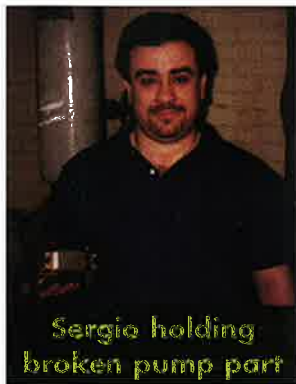


Photo by Sonia Bulgary

Our new superintendent, Harold Ochoa (same last name but no relation to Sergio), will begin work at 336 on May 14. We wish him and his family a hearty welcome.

The superintendent's apartment has been renovated. After inspecting the space, board members authorized necessary painting, floor scraping and kitchen improvements, in preparation for the new occupants.

# Around the Building...

## STRIKE AVERTED

Everyone breathed a sigh of relief to learn that a strike by building workers, threatened for midnight April 20, had been averted. Seeing our staff on duty after the strike threat made us feel even more appreciative than usual for their assistance.

As shareholders were aware from material distributed by Insignia/Kreisel, plans had been made in case of a strike. In particular, we are all deeply grateful to Sergio Ochoa who had been deputized to act as superintendent and to live at 336 for the duration of the strike. We also thank Phyllis Sternau and Mary Gould who had volunteered to sort the mail if the staff was not on hand, and had already compiled an alphabetical list of 336's residents to make the task lighter.

## CABLE GOING DOWN

Have you noticed that your cable TV costs less than it used to? A few months ago, on behalf of the 336 Board, Andrea Gerstle negotiated a bulk rate price for our building from Time Warner. The saving is \$10 a month for apartments which had been subscribing to basic plus tier one service. The arrangement was reached with Time Warner because we met their requirement that 70% of the building be subscribers. (An arrangement with Liberty Cable would not have been practical, because they require 100% participation.)

## CRASH

Our awning frame suffered critical damage when it was hit by an 18 wheeler making an illegal U turn on Central Park West during the wee hours of the night on Wednesday, January 29. Hearing the crash, Leo (Leonardo Garcia) rushed out to see the truck turning and leaving the scene. Quickly, he took down the license number, locked up the front doors, and ran after the truck; a red light allowed him to catch up with it. Before returning to duty at 336, Leo had the doorman at the Ardsley phone the police, who filed a report on the incident.

Thanks to Leo's vigilance, our building has been able to collect insurance for the new frame and canopy. A new canopy has been selected and will be installed as soon as we receive approval from the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

## SQUEAK

What's ailing the front door? Evidently the area beneath the door freezes and expands in the winter, causing the door to bind. The company that has repaired the door in the past says that the present door can no longer be repaired. Further studies of the door and underlying structural problems must be made before the door can be replaced.

## SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE--BUT MAKE IT OFFICIAL

If you share a basement storage bin with another apartment, please be sure to draft a written agreement that will make the arrangement known to any future owners of your apartment or the apartment you share with. It will also be a good idea to label all possessions in a shared storage space with your name and apartment number. Those precautions will prevent the recurrence of a regrettable incident in which new shareholders disposed of the partial contents of a storage bin which they believed had been left by the former shareholders, but in fact belonged to shareholders still at 336.

And by the way--remember only non-flammable items should be stored in the bins: no mattresses, no cardboard, no wood.

## ALL PLAY AND NO WORK?

Perhaps nowhere in this building is cooperation more necessary than in the playroom. Keeping the room tidy is the responsibility of its users. Teach your little ones to do their part in returning toys and books to their shelves, and be sure to remind your caregivers that the building staff does no more than cleaning the room--and that cannot be done properly if the room is untidy.

## CHIRPS AND WAILS

Have you changed the battery in your smoke alarm lately? Usually the alarm emits a persistent chirp when a battery is running out. But sometimes a failing battery causes a full-fledged wail. Not only does this scare you and your neighbors, it forces you to change the battery while the nerveracking alarm is on. So--follow the advice of many experts: to prevent annoying beeps or false alarms while you're asleep or away on summer vacation, be sure to change the battery annually with the coming of daylight saving time in spring--or now, if you haven't done it yet.

## FREE AND CLEAR

It's time to remind everyone again: for safety's sake hallways must not be used as storage areas; they must be kept free and clear of extraneous objects.

## PEEP

Crocuses which were planted last fall in our tree pits peeped out after the April Fool's Day snow. Pat Meilman has brightened the planters at the front door with pansies. One sunny day your editor left her computer, put on her gardening gloves, and planted impatiens and more pachysandra on the 94th street side of the building.

The flowers at the side of the house were suggested just a few years ago by Sally Sanford (who has since moved to Massachusetts), and inaugurated by Ann Lewis Seltzer and Phyllis Sternau.

## WHOOPS

In our last issue, the credit line for Mark Gerstle's photograph of the tree-trimming party got lost. Belated thanks!

## SHAREHOLDER NEWS

There are many new faces in the back elevator since last fall, as three apartments have changed hands. Margaret E. Nelson, Willard S. Moore, and their three year old daughter Sarah Elizabeth live in 12F. Margaret is a Senior Counsel in the General Counsel's office at Merrill Lynch & Co.; Willard is an Associate Counsel at the New York State Housing Finance Agency. Both grew up in New York and returned here after law school. Both enjoy reading when they find time in their busy schedules. Margaret runs for recreation; Willard's special interest is genealogy.

Four floors below you'll find Catherine Kaputa, Michael Kadri, and their son Ramsey, who was born on New Year's Day, just weeks before they all moved into 8F. She is the Director of Advertising and Community Affairs at Smith Barney; he is Technology Project Leader for Bankers Trust. They're both nature lovers who take special pleasure in birdwatching (in Central Park and in travels abroad), but you might also bump into them at a classical concert or the opera at Lincoln Center. They observe that our neighborhood seems friendlier than that around West 79 Street, where they recently lived.

Deborah Shah and her fourteen-year-old daughter Lauren, who attends Riverdale Country school, moved into 11E in February, after living in Scarsdale. Deborah runs a consulting firm, Management Partners, which focuses on organizational change, working primarily with large clients in financial services and the entertainment industry. Aside from her work, Deborah does a lot of reading, and participates in a ten woman investment club, the "Doll Jones Group."

On April 13, the New York Times Book Review called The Day the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers Case by David Rudenstine (apartment 2A) a "splendid history" and a "compulsory element in any understanding of this great press case." Adam Clymer wrote that "even though the result of the case has been known for a quarter-century," Rudenstine's "narrative breathes the suspense and concerns of that moment."

## NOTICES

### CLEANING WOMAN AVAILABLE

My reliable, efficient, and thorough cleaning woman is looking for additional work in this building or nearby. She has done excellent work for me for more than eight years. Call me and I'll give you her name and telephone number. Jay Pott, 9A, phone 316-6949.

### WANTED: 3-4 MONTH SUBLET

Residents in 336 for the past six years are looking for a three to four month sublet--here at 336 or not too far away--starting in mid-October 1997, while their own apartment is being renovated. Please contact Jonathan and Carolyn Schindel (10D) or call 662-8590.

### WANTED: STORAGE SPACE

Zina Steinberg (2A) would still like to rent space in the basement to store a few file cabinets. Please call her at 864-1160.

### PLEDGE FOR NEW YORK AIDS WALK

Linda Amster (Penthouse C) will be participating in the ten kilometer New York Aids walk on May 18. Encourage her and help a good tax deductible cause by pledging whatever amount you choose for each kilometer she walks. For instance, if you pledge a dollar a kilometer you would donate \$10. when she completes the walk; if you pledge two dollars, you'd donate \$20. Send her a note and let her know how much you'll pledge.

### ATTENTION "D" LINE OWNERS

John Lane (10C) would like to purchase a "D" line one bedroom apartment. If you're thinking of selling, please let him know: phone (daytime) 633-5006 (evenings) 868-5704.

## STAFF NEWS

In our last issue, we mentioned that it would be worth keeping an eye out for the work of the playwright, Migdalia Cruz, the daughter of Pepe (Pedro) Cruz who has worked at 336 since 1983. We are delighted to say that several shareholders who saw Ms. Cruz' play, "Another Part of the House," recently at the Classic Stage Company gave it rave reviews. Mary and Gordon Gould, who are avid theater-goers, called it "one of the best things we've seen all season." They said the play was "electric" and that it was given a "very solid production." Kate Bar-Tur, who enjoyed the play immensely, considers Ms. Cruz to be a "very talented and imaginative" writer.

The play received a major award from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays. Here are excerpts from Ms. Cruz's acceptance speech, with a moving tribute to her father:

*It is an honor to receive this award, especially for a play that is inspired by a poet as passionate as Lorca, and shared with a theatre as committed as Classic Stage Company to the reimagining of the classics. I also wondered if I was imagining this award...It is a miracle to receive money for a play when the United States is the only cultural and political world leader that has retreated so far from the support of the arts. This raises the fundamental question: Why does art matter? It is because though it often does not make money -- it always makes humans. We pay electricians to re-wire our houses, but what is the price of grounding our soul? How much should we invest to maintain our humanity?*

*Art gives us a chance to feel something and to see that we are not alone....we have artists of many different disciplines who collectively record, explore, explode and honor the human spirit.... I always wondered why I became a writer. My father worked in a steel factory, my mother in a hospital laundry. What an absurd thing to be. A writer? Can't make any money that way, girl!*

*A few years ago, I was talking this over with my dad. "Isn't this weird," I said, "that I do this crazy thing? I don't know how it came into my head to do it." Then my dad told me he knew this one poem in Spanish about a child who, though he had a father, felt he was an orphan because his father never took the time to look at the stars with him. It was such a haunting, mournful poem that it made me cry. "Who wrote that poem, Pop?" I asked, expecting to hear Lorca or Mari or someone like that. And he shyly lowered his eyes and said, "Me. A genuine Pepe Cruz!" This from a man who came to this country to be a boxer, then ended up in a factory, and now runs an elevator in a highrise! So then I knew I had become my father. No more fear, just relief! I also knew then that money doesn't remind you who you are; daddies with histories and poetry do. And a poem only costs you pieces of your heart -- and those grow back. So, even if the funding does end, the poetry won't. That's the really hopeful thing about being human. Thank you.*



Oliver Villeta has become a relief elevator operator and doorman. He grew up in the Bronx and did maintenance work for the New York City Parks Department before coming to 336.

Gino (Agenor Bolggiani), who has served as relief man and porter since 1990 will be retiring on May 24, just in time to devote his summer to his vegetable garden. Be sure to wish him a hearty farewell before he leaves.



New plants for old: Our plant supplier agreed to replace the ailing plants in our lobby with fresh new ones.



Photo by Angelo Lomeo

# NEW MAIL CARTS MAKE SORTING, DELIVERING EASIER

Thanks to the inspiration, ingenuity, and generosity of shareholder John Hagmann (apartment 4B) our mail is now being delivered from three elegant and efficient wooden mail carts that he designed and made.

John got the idea to construct the new boxes after watching Scotty and other staff members struggling to get mail in and out of the old metal pigeonholes which had metal lips that tended to cut the sorter's hand. John, who enjoys doing carpentry in his garage-shop at his Pennsylvania home, volunteered to make the carts for the cost of materials alone.

Using his skills as an architect, John planned three wheeled carts that are placed in a "U" shape to surround the seated mail sorter (one cart holds mail for the front elevator; two carts serve the rear apartments). Not only are the new cubicles bigger than before, but there are ledges on top for sorting and cubbies below for large items. John also consulted his wife, Lee, about sizes, and went over the dimensions with Scotty.

John said that the carts were fun to make. He worked with four by eight foot plywood which he routed out to insert masonite dividers. The carts are stained a tone similar to the elevators, and labeled with plastic signs and paste-on letters that John bought from local sources.

Recently Scotty (Lorenzo Scott) declared the carts "perfect," observing that magazines fold nicely into the cubicles. John (Juan) Ayala who does much of the weekday sorting also finds the task much easier than before.



John Hagmann demonstrates the new mail carts

## Our New Man at Insignia

Our new managing agent, Brian Kenny, comes to us after managing five prewar buildings in Inwood for Kreisel during the past two years. Kenny now also manages other properties on Central Park West and the Upper West Side. He works out of the Insignia/Kreisel offices at 909 Third Avenue, and can be reached by phone at 212-350-2827. He has reminded us that in the event of an emergency after hours or on a weekend, the Insignia emergency number is 212- 370-9200, or alternately, 212-350-2800.

After receiving an MBA from Fordham University, Kenny gained ten years' experience in the sales, property management, and banking end of real estate. He is a native of the Bronx and an alumnus of Manhattanville College in Purchase.

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*The 336 Board welcomes comments and suggestions from shareholders. Please contact:*

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