

# DESTINATION downtown

Newsletter from the Alliance for Downtown New York

## WINTER 2009

- Letter from the President
- Free local shuttle bus expands route
- Q&A with Manhattan Borough President

FROM THE PRESIDENT

# dear neighbor:



This year brings with it the promise of change, hope and new creativity Downtown.

Our newly elected president heralds a change in direction for America. President Obama has promised to revolutionize the culture in Washington. The stirrings of an urban renaissance are in the air, as issues like infrastructure and mass transit are moving to center stage in the national debate. Mr. Obama understands that Wall Street and Main Street are one and the same in Lower Manhattan. We welcome the kinds of changes he has proposed, as they will benefit both the global economy and Downtown businesses and residents who depend on the world's financial capital remaining strong.

Lower Manhattan is still growing steadily, despite the current uncertainty. Even in these challenging economic times, businesses value a Downtown address. Bright Horizons — a trusted leader in childhood education — is opening a new location at 20 Pine Street, expanding the existing range of the area's child care services. The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council is creating a new Downtown destination with an artist studio and exhibition space on Governors Island. And, the Gild Hall Hotel has been totally reinvented, now featuring modern, luxurious hotel rooms and a new restaurant from celebrity chef Todd English.

The Downtown Alliance is supporting Lower Manhattan's businesses, retailers and residents with new amenities in 2009. Our free Downtown Connection bus now boasts east-west service — connecting Battery Park City to City Hall via the new Warren and Murray Streets shopping and dining corridors. Our newest wireless hotspot in the 7 World Trade Center plaza brings the total to nine in the district, making internet access faster, easier and free for Downtown workers, residents and visitors. And, our Going Green Downtown Web site features all new content to help businesses and residents embrace environmentally-friendly practices.

This is a great year to be Downtown.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth H. Berger".

Elizabeth H. Berger





## DOWNTOWN thriving now

Science project, Bright Horizons Family Solutions

## DOWNTOWN MOVING FORWARD

- Governors Island will become home to an artists' studio and exhibition space beginning this spring. The 14,000 square-foot space, which will feature weekend cultural events, is part of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's initiative to make Governors Island a Downtown destination.
- Gild Hall, a new addition to Thompson Group's luxury hotels, has been totally renovated. This boutique hotel now features handsome brown leather furniture, luxurious amenities in all of its 126 guest rooms, and several private event spaces. Celebrity chef Todd English helms The Libertine — the hotel's new gastropub boasting a chic interior and menu with modern twists on pub classics.
- Bright Horizons will join the community of Lower Manhattan child care centers this March with their new 20 Pine Street location. This "family solutions" facility offers full-time child care as well as back-up care — a benefit that businesses can provide to their employees when regular child care arrangements are temporarily unavailable. Visit [DowntownNY.com/Discover](http://DowntownNY.com/Discover) for a complete list of Lower Manhattan child care centers.
- With the addition of the newest WiFi hotspot in the plaza at 7 World Trade Center, the Downtown Alliance now provides free wireless internet access at nine locations in Lower Manhattan. Other hotspots include the World Financial Center Winter Garden, South Street Seaport, City Hall Park, and Stone Street.
- The Tweed Courthouse will be filled with eager five-year-old minds this fall when six new kindergarten classrooms open to ease overcrowding at P.S. 234 and P.S. 89. After finishing kindergarten, students at this temporary "incubator" school will transfer to P.S. 276 or the Beekman School, both scheduled to open in 2010 and 2011 respectively.
- The Alliance for Downtown New York has relaunched the Going Green Downtown Web site — now updated with more in-depth tools and information. The site features an inventory of Lower Manhattan's green buildings and eco-friendly businesses, and access to great sustainability resources like the new "Green Toolkit" for businesses. Visit the Going Green Downtown Web site at [DowntownNY.com/GoingGreen](http://DowntownNY.com/GoingGreen).

## MORE CONNECTED THAN EVER



The Downtown Alliance will launch an expansion of the Downtown Connection bus service beginning in late February. The free shuttle, which circuits Lower Manhattan every 10 minutes, now includes a loop around Murray and Warren Streets.

The extended route includes stops near every subway line that runs through Lower Manhattan, improving commutes for residents and tenants of Battery Park City and the World Financial Center. The extension

is welcome news for shoppers, too. The shuttle provides access to the new cluster of businesses along Warren Street, including Whole Foods, Barnes & Noble, and Bed Bath & Beyond. J&R Music and Computer World is just a few blocks away from one of the new Murray Street stops.

Over 800,000 passengers took advantage of this free bus service last year. The extension is likely to attract even more riders in 2009. Support for this newly expanded service is generously provided by the Battery Park City Authority and J&R Music and Computer World.

Visit [DowntownNY.com/GettingAround](http://DowntownNY.com/GettingAround) for more information.



## HOLIDAY (AND EVERYDAY) SHOPPING DOWNTOWN

To entice New Yorkers to shop in Lower Manhattan, the Downtown Alliance launched its first annual holiday campaign last November. The campaign boasted a robust media schedule including a widely distributed brochure; posters on PATH trains and stations, newsstands and bus shelters; and newspaper, magazine and internet advertisements. *Holiday Shopping Downtown* showcased the infinite shopping opportunities and the extraordinary finds at every price point that Lower Manhattan has to offer.

## GOOD NEIGHBOR

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has been introducing several initiatives that will improve the pedestrian experience around the World Trade Center site. By instituting a monthly “walk-shop” of government officials and community leaders, the Port Authority will better understand and be able to respond to the obstacles and issues commuters, residents and visitors face every day.

The opaque fencing surrounding the site has been replaced by an art installation featuring renderings of the Freedom Tower, the Transportation Hub and other planned buildings. A portion of the fence on Liberty Street remains uncovered, affording passers-by a firsthand view of progress on the site.

Additionally, the agency is studying ways to improve the flow of pedestrian traffic without hindering the ongoing construction. The Port Authority has begun soliciting questions and comments from the public about construction and community issues on its Web site ([www.wtcprogress.com](http://www.wtcprogress.com)).



“From internationally famous clothiers to family-owned florists, Lower Manhattan has it all,” said Liz Berger, the Downtown Alliance’s President. “Downtown has been New York’s most dynamic business district for centuries; the arrival of luxury retailers like Tiffany and BMW have transformed the district into a shopping destination for the 21st century.”

One goal of the campaign was to raise awareness of some of the new, distinguished retailers who have recently joined long-established neighborhood favorites. Visit the *Shopping Downtown* Web site at [DowntownNY.com/Shop](http://DowntownNY.com/Shop).





1

### LA MAISON DU CHOCOLAT

63 Wall Street  
212-952-1123  
[www.lamaisonduchocolat.com](http://www.lamaisonduchocolat.com)

Downtown got a whole lot sweeter in October when La Maison du Chocolat opened its doors in the heart of the Financial District. The Wall Street boutique — which is one of only three NYC locations — features decadent truffles and desserts, and a tea room where you can warm up with a cup of tea, coffee, or hot cocoa.



2

### BROAD STREET BALLROOM

41 Broad Street  
646-624-2524  
[www.broadstreetballroom.com](http://www.broadstreetballroom.com)

The former headquarters of the Lee-Higginson Bank has been transformed into a premier event space. The Broad Street Ballroom's 30-foot-high mosaic pillars lend a classic air to the 5,700-square-foot grand ballroom. A state-of-the-art audio-visual system makes this beautiful setting an ideal venue for private receptions and corporate events.



3

### THE PALM RESTAURANT

206 West Street  
646-395-6393  
[www.thepalm.com](http://www.thepalm.com)

The family-owned Palm Restaurant chain has opened its newest location just north of Chambers Street. Over its 75-year history, the venerable Palm has won a devoted following for its legendary thick cuts of prime-aged beef, jumbo Nova Scotia lobsters, a variety of seafood and traditional Italian dishes.

### PYLONES

183 Broadway  
212-227-9273  
[www.pylones-usa.com](http://www.pylones-usa.com)

At Pylones (pronounced pee-lone), funky designs turn mundane objects into brightly colored whimsical pieces of art. Check out their new Downtown location, featuring snake-shaped bicycle locks, froggie tape-dispensers, or iPod docks that resemble Logo pieces.

4



### SEH JA MEH

114 Greenwich Street  
212-766-5825  
[www.sehjameh.com](http://www.sehjameh.com)

This Korean restaurant recently relocated from John Street to a chic new spot on Greenwich Street, renewing its commitment to Lower Manhattan. Seh Ja Meh features open pit barbecue tables where diners can grill their own meats and vegetables. Specialties include boolgogi (thinly sliced marinated beef) and sulung tang (oxtail soup).

5



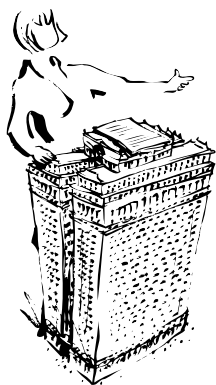
### NYU CENTER FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS

15 Barclay Street (Woolworth Building)  
212-992-8380  
[www.scps.nyu.edu/cga](http://www.scps.nyu.edu/cga)

The Center for Global Affairs draws on the talents of New York University professors — as well as community and world leaders — to present provocative and diverse programs on timely, global issues. Programming has included "Global Leaders: Conversations with Alan Ben-Meir Series" (pictured right). All events are free and open to the public. Reservations are required.

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## DOWNTOWN THIRD THURSDAYS

The Downtown Alliance's Downtown Third Thursdays lecture series is back this year with a lineup of prominent speakers in distinctive venues. Architect Daniel Libeskind, author and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Mike Wallace, and *The New York Times* correspondent Sam Roberts are just a few of the participants in upcoming events. Lectures are free. Reservations are required. Visit [DowntownNY.com/ThirdThursdays](http://DowntownNY.com/ThirdThursdays).

## POEMS AND PINTS

Fraunces Tavern hosts some of America's contemporary poets as they read from their works and the poetry of others. Presented by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Poetry Society of America, Poems and Pints features past and present U.S. poet laureates, winners of the Pulitzer and Bollingen Prizes, National Book Critics Circle Awardees, and recipients of MacArthur "genius" grants. Readings are held from 6:30-7:30; admission is free.

**Tuesday, March 3:** Katy Lederer; D. Nurkse  
**Tuesday, April 7:** Sophie Cabot Black; Sharon Olds

## WOMAN OF LETTERS

This world-class exhibit at the Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust tells the remarkable story of Irene Nemirovsky, a Russian-born Jewish author whose tour-de-force novel *Suite Française* was recently discovered and published — more than 50 years after her death at Auschwitz. Woman of Letters continues through March 22. Visit [mjhny.org/Irene](http://mjhny.org/Irene) for more details.



## SEAPORT ICE

Lace up your skates for a glide around Seaport Ice — the South Street Seaport's new skating rink. This 8,000-square-foot ice skating rink accommodates up to 325 skaters at a time.

Seaport Ice is open from daily 10am to 10pm; lessons and private parties can be arranged. Admission is \$5 and skate rentals are \$7 — the stunning views of the tall ships, Brooklyn Bridge and New York Harbor are free!

Visit [TheNewSeaport.com/IceRink](http://TheNewSeaport.com/IceRink) for details.

## WALL STREET WALKING TOUR

Even native New Yorkers are wowed by the Downtown Alliance's FREE walking tour of Lower Manhattan. The 90-minute-long stroll weaves together the history, events, architecture, and people of Downtown — the birthplace of a nation, the financial capital of the World, and the most dynamic neighborhood in the city.

Thursdays and Saturdays at noon. Meet at the steps of the U.S. Custom House, 1 Bowling Green. Call 212-606-4064 for details.



Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer comments on transit fare hikes, construction and the future of Downtown

**Q.** Do you think the proposed MTA fare hikes are reasonable?

**A.** The fare hikes first proposed by the MTA were unacceptable. While the budget problems are real, we cannot rely on straphangers to bear more than their share of the burden. Instead of raising fares, I support re-instituting the commuter tax, which could raise upwards of \$700 million.

**Q.** What is the current status of construction Downtown?

**A.** Projects like the Freedom Tower and the 9/11 Memorial and Museum have missed important deadlines and likely won't be completed until after 2011. The deconstruction of Fiterman Hall and 130 Liberty Street have moved more slowly than anticipated. Other projects, like the PATH station, have gone over budget.

On a positive note, new residential buildings have been completed, and several others are soaring skyward. Beekman Tower will soon bring a new school to Lower Manhattan.

**Q.** What progress has been made in reducing school overcrowding?

**A.** Two schools planned for downtown — the Beekman Street School and Site 2B in Battery Park City — are a decisive first step. My office's "Crowded Out" report showed how residential development was bringing families into neighborhoods where schools are already at or above capacity. In response, the City agreed to start planning for schools at the neighborhood level instead of the district level.

**Q.** What is the most important issue facing Downtown over the next two years?

**A.** Reuniting the World Trade Center site with the street grid. To do that we must create the right mix of office space and attractive street-level retail to re-integrate the area back into the community.



## PHOTO CONTEST

We have a winner! Congratulations to Rex Wu, winner of our Fall 2008 Photo Contest. For his winning entry, *Brooklyn Bridge and Lower Manhattan at Night*, Dr. Wu will receive a \$25 Tumi gift certificate.



**Want to get in on the action?** Submit a photograph of your favorite Downtown spot and a brief description of where it was taken to [Photo\\_Contest@DowntownNY.com](mailto:Photo_Contest@DowntownNY.com). You could win a \$25 gift certificate to Pylones and your winning photo may be featured in the Spring 2009 newsletter.

Photos must be 300 dpi 3" x 3" or larger. ONLY .jpeg, .tiff and .pdf files will be accepted.

Grab your camera and start snapping! The entry deadline is February 28.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### Return Service Requested

The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to be the principal organization that provides Lower Manhattan's historic financial district with a premier physical and economic environment, advocates for businesses and property owners and promotes the area as a world-class destination for companies, workers, residents and visitors. The Downtown Alliance manages the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Business Improvement District (BID), serving an area roughly from City Hall to the Battery, from the East River to West Street.

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