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Dear Neighbors,

District News

This weekend the Pope will be in town, and the NYPD will be **closing several streets**, including a few dozen blocks on the Upper West Side on Friday, September 25th:

- Central Park West between Columbus Circle & West 81st Street
- W 61st – 66th Streets between Central Park West & Broadway
- W 67th – 77th Streets between Central Park West & Columbus Avenue

Try to stay off the streets if you can, and see the [full list of street closures](#).

This weekend is also the Global Citizen Festival Concert in Central Park, which will **limit access to Central Park** and reduce parking on Central Park West. [See here for the full announcement](#).

PB is back! If you missed it last year, **Participatory Budgeting** (PB) is a way for residents to decide how \$1 million in taxpayer money is spent to improve the neighborhood. Last year residents suggested hundreds of ideas, and over 2,000 Upper West Siders voted on the final ballot; you can learn more about PB and the projects that won last year [on my website](#). If you have an idea for how the next million should be spent, the PB committee wants to hear from you! There will be [six meetings in October](#) where you can share your ideas, or you can submit your ideas on my website (the form will go up by October 1). All locations are wheelchair accessible.

I am proud to announce a new season of **free, monthly housing clinics**, starting

with an Introduction to Rent Control and Rent Stabilization and an Update on Rent Laws on Wednesday, October 7, from 6pm-8pm. You can also meet with a lawyer for a free consultation. Last year about 60-80 residents attended each session. Feel free to spread the word to your neighbors. [See the flyer for the full season.](#)

This Thursday, September 24th there's a **free mammogram clinic** for women over 40 who haven't had one in the past year. The van will be parked at 69th Street and Amsterdam from 8am-4pm, and [screenings are by appointment only.](#) Thanks to Senator Brad Hoylman for sponsoring the event.

Last week I spoke to Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia about **trash on the Upper West Side**, and she agreed to do a walk-through to assess the situation and see what we can do to make it better.



Left: Helen and a constituent. Right: Helen serving Shakshuka. GrowNYC West 79th Street Greenmarket (September 13, 2015).

Recently GrowNYC invited me to join them in preparing the Israeli dish Shakshuka at the **West 79th Street Greenmarket**. I had a lot of fun, and particularly enjoyed speaking to those of you who stopped by. If you'd like to try making Shakshuka at home, [don't miss this recipe.](#)

Last year Council Member Daniel Dromm and I passed a resolution calling on the NYC Department of Education to distribute its **Parents' Bill of Rights** to parents at the start of each school year and to inform parents of their right to opt out of standardized tests. Parents, if your child's school did not give you a Parents' Bill of Rights booklet this school year, let me know at Helen@HelenRosenthal.com. If you'd like to learn more about the resolution, you can [read it here.](#)



Left: P.S. 9 Principal Kate Witzke, P.S. 9 Pre-K Teacher Nancy Stitham, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Helen, and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer at P.S. 9. Right: P.S. 191 Principal Lauren Keville, Helen, Department of Education Deputy Chancellor Elizabeth Rose, and P.S. 191 PTA presidents Kim Watkins and Kajsa Reaves outside of P.S. 191. First day of school (September 9, 2015).

The **first day of school** is a big day for kids and their families, and this year Mayor Bill de Blasio came to the Upper West Side to talk about the expanded Pre-K program, which now has enough full day seats for every four-year-old New Yorker. (Fun fact: 65,504 children registered for opening day of pre-K – more students than in the entire school district of Boston!) If you're interested in learning more about the pre-K program, you can do so [here](#).

Stop by my office this Sunday, September 27, from 12pm-3pm for a **Fall Daffodil Bulb Giveaway**. Bring a bag to collect your free daffodil bulbs, then plant them this Fall in your neighborhood street tree beds and community gardens. You can also get a "Love Your Tree Day" dog reminder sign first come first serve. A huge thanks to the New Yorkers for Parks Daffodil Project for supplying the bulbs! [See the flyer](#).

The New York Times interviewed me and other residents for a short video about the **Upper West Side in the 90's**. While I was disappointed they cut out my comments on affordable housing and the loss of small businesses, it's certainly a [fun little video](#).



Helen with CityArts volunteers who restored the Alice Walker mural at 92nd Street near Broadway (August 19, 2015).

The crumbling, 22-year-old **mural at 92nd and Broadway** looks as good as new thanks to a restoration by CITYarts and a team of high school volunteers. CITYarts is a great organization that restores and creates public art citywide, and I was happy to allocate funds to restore the mural. You can read more about the project and the people behind it in [DNA Info](#).

City Hall



Left: Helen, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Council Members Antonio Reynoso, Elizabeth Crowley, and Andy King, John Jay President Jeremy Travis, and John Jay staff and alumni at a proclamation ceremony for the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Right: Council Member Inez Barron, John Jay Associate Professor of Biology Jason Rauceo, John Jay President Jeremy Travis, and Helen at a Proclamation ceremony for Professor Rauceo. City Hall (September 17, 2015).

The **John Jay College of Criminal Justice** is an esteemed institution of higher learning and a key voice in public policy on criminal justice. The College just celebrated its 50th anniversary, and I was proud to honor it and President Jeremy Travis last week with a proclamation at City Hall. Council Member Inez Barron also recognized

Associate Professor of Biology Jason Rauceo for his work in microbiology.

Nearly 40% of New York City's jail population at any given time are in jail because they cannot afford **bail**. Last week the Council passed my pre-trial detainee reporting bill ([Int. 753-2015](#)), which requires the City to post reports online with detailed information about inmates' bail amounts, length of incarceration, severity of alleged crime, and the correlation of crime to incarceration, by borough. This bill enables policymakers to know who is incarcerated so they can get people out of jail if they shouldn't be there. Transparency is the first step to securing fair treatment for these individuals, and the first report will be available online by July 2016. You can read more about the bill and the package of criminal justice legislation last week in the [New York Observer](#).

Warmly,

Helen.



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