

FIRST ANNUAL WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE SUMMER POTLUCK PARTY

What star architect designed the Javits Convention Center (and has never designed a football stadium)? What did Jerry Nadler do before he was elected to Congress?

If the answers roll off your tongue, you could have proven your mettle with ease during a dramatic round of West Side Trivia at the first annual West Side Neighborhood Alliance Summer Potluck Party, held on July 21st in a playground on West 47th Street.



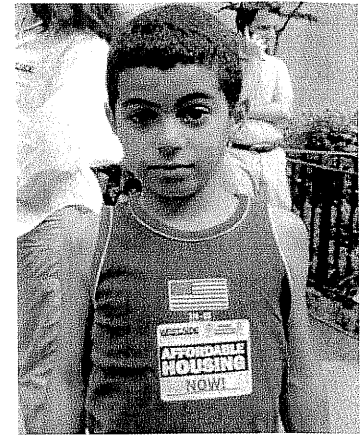
Scott Stringer says: an organized community wins the day.

After years of dedicated service work and successful tenant organizing, ANHD member Housing Conservation Coordinators has added large-scale community organizing to its repertoire with support from ANHD's Initiative for Neighborhood and Citywide Organizing (INCO). Using funds and technical assistance from ANHD, HCC launched the member-run West Side Neighborhood Alliance, now a 300-member-strong



organization at the forefront of West Side affordable housing fights.

For those hundreds of members, the mid-summer potluck was an opportunity to take a breather from shutting down illegal hotels, organizing for affordable housing on local development sites and campaigning for stronger rent laws. Dozens of West Siders cooked homemade dishes, rounded up the kids and, in at least one case, busted out the ukulele on a gorgeous summer day.



Kids need affordable housing too!



And though West Siders love a good old-fashioned hootenanny, the real celebration of the day was the rapid growth of their member-driven neighborhood group, the West Side Neighborhood Alliance, which is already giving long-time community members a strong new tool to fight for their needs in a quickly gentrifying neighborhood.

Even as the music blared and their neighbors chowed down, local tenant leaders were moving on to the next fight, pestering the local elected officials in attendance about the minutiae of housing laws and scheming to mobilize as many residents for the next public hearing as they did for the summer potluck party.

And so the fight for decent, affordable housing on Manhattan's West Side continues, but if the West Side Neighborhood Alliance has anything to say about it, tenants and long-time neighborhood residents will approach that fight stronger, better organized, and supremely well-fed after their first annual summer potluck party.

