WELCOME

During spring, we experience renewal and transition. In New York, our weather moves from cold to warm, and we are reminded again of the beauty of earth’s natural resources as the barren comes to life and we see colors we haven’t seen for several months. In this neighborhood, surrounded by academic activity, we prepare to celebrate the end of a school year and laudatory accomplishments. From a Facilities and property management perspective, this is also a critical time for our department as we assess what transpired in the previous academic year and prepare for the new academic year, while building on our earlier achievements. As we think about renewal—our natural resources and accomplishments—this newsletter will focus on information appropriate to the spring and summer seasons that we would like to share with you. Enjoy!

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT – COVO
by Catherine Sanders, Assistant Director, Residential Operations

A few weeks ago a friend turned me on to a great new Italian place near Manhattanville. Since I am always excited for lunch, I quickly headed up to Covo! Covo Trattoria Pizzeria just opened in an old warehouse building on 12th Avenue, just north of 135th Street. It is owned by Antonio Lobrutto, the same owner of the Columbia hangout Max SoHa, located on Amsterdam Avenue.

So is it worth going out of your way for lunch or dinner? Absolutely! Currently Covo stands alone in its renovated warehouse building, but soon its building will contain two additional, new restaurants. Even if it was just Covo in that location, I would still head up north a little for the delicious food and great atmosphere!

On my first visit to Covo, my friends and I had the fried and grilled calamari appetizer. Both were delicious, but to be honest, the fried is spectacular! It is served with a great homemade marinara sauce. We also shared some pizzas and pastas. I absolutely love the margherita pizza and have now had it several times. The Rigatoni alla Bolognese is also fabulous. Everything that I have eaten at Covo is homemade with fresh ingredients.

The atmosphere is also very inviting. When you walk into the brick building, the first thing you see is a big pizza oven! Already, you start feeling warm and cozy! The wood tables make you feel right at home, with mom cooking in the kitchen. If you get there during a busy time, you can retreat to the bar upstairs while waiting for your table. The “lounge” is furnished with a mix and match of cozy couches and chairs with a long wooden bar. Perfect for an after dinner drink as well!

During the lunch hour the service is very quick; you can have a pizza in a few minutes and be back at your desk quickly. The dinner service moves at a comfortable speed. The servers dress very casually and bring you dinner at an easy pace, even if that means ordering a few dishes at a time!

The only downside I could find to this new “find” is the location. It stands alone about two blocks north of anything else. But to go there for dinner is worth this being your only destination for the evening!

Covo Trattoria Pizzeria is located at 701 West 135th Street in Harlem.
Congratulations and best wishes to the more than 1200 residents in residential housing who will be graduating in May! We hope you have enjoyed your stay in our housing and living in New York City. As another school year ends, many residents will be vacating their apartments. Students who graduate this May are expected to move out by May 31, 2008.

Moving out on time is essential since we must prepare apartments for incoming students in late summer. Those students who are expected to graduate should have received an e-mail from the leasing office with more detailed information regarding vacancy procedures. This e-mail will be followed up with a maintenance inspection by a representative of our office in order to prepare a preliminary scope of work for each apartment. Please follow the procedures outlined below when vacating since failure to do so may result in additional charges and/or forfeiture of your security deposit.

1. Notify the Leasing Department 30 days prior to your vacancy date. In general, moves should be scheduled between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday; however, you should check with your superintendent to see if there are any special move policies (e.g., no move-outs through lobby).

2. You must return all apartment, mailbox, elevator and other keys to the superintendent on the day of your move-out. You will receive a copy of the key receipt form at that time. If you are not able to contact the superintendent, call the Residential Operations Office at 212-854-9301. If keys are not returned, you may be charged for the replacement of the lock(s).

3. The apartment must be left free of all personal belongings and debris. All fixtures and appliances must be left in good working order and clean. The apartment should be broom clean. You may be charged for any damages and/or cleaning expenses.

If you have any questions, please contact the Leasing Department at (212) 854-9300.

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS FOR MOVING OUT**

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SUMMER CONSTRUCTION
The spring and summer months are the busiest time for renovations in most of our buildings. Because of the warmer weather, temperature-sensitive exterior projects (e.g., roof replacements, concrete repairs, etc.) and mechanical upgrades are usually completed at this time. You may notice an increase in exterior construction activity as building owners perform mandated façade repairs to comply with New York City's stringent Local Law 11 (NYC Local Law 11/1998). This law requires owners to inspect and repair all buildings over 6-stories high to ensure public safety.

During this period, work in University buildings will usually take place Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm and occasionally on Saturdays. We understand that this work can be disruptive and apologize for this unavoidable disturbance. We will make every effort to ensure that the contractor is considerate of residents in neighboring apartments and buildings, minimizing inconveniences and maintaining noise control. If you experience any problems while construction work is being done in your building, please call your superintendent or Director for Residential Services.

AIR CONDITIONERS
If buying a new air conditioner this season, please keep the following in mind:

• Select a unit that is properly sized for the space you will be cooling.
• Select an energy efficient unit identified with an “Energy Star” label. This will reduce your electric costs and save energy (do your part to help save the planet).
• Air conditioners must be installed safely and per manufacturer’s specifications. Air conditioners that are installed improperly are safety hazards and are considered violations by the New York City Department of Buildings. Our buildings are inspected regularly by building staff and engineers to identify unsafe conditions, and air conditioners are frequently found to be installed incorrectly. Residents should hire a qualified contractor to have the air conditioner installed properly. A few general rules regarding air conditioner installations to keep in mind:
  • The unit should be fastened securely from the inside with angles or by otherwise fastening it to the interior window frame. Please see the manufacturer’s specifications for installation.
  • Any unit supported from underneath on the exterior should be supported using metal brackets that are properly secured and sized to support the load. Loose objects such as wood blocks or bricks are considered safety hazards and cannot be used.
  • The air conditioner should be slightly tilted to provide adequate water drainage and prevent leaking into your apartment or other apartments.
  • Do not block fire escapes or any other exit with an air conditioner unit.
  • Change your air conditioner filter at least once every couple of months during cooling season. A dirty air conditioner filter will increase electric costs and waste energy.

For more information on proper sizing and energy efficient air conditioners, please visit www.energystar.gov or www.aceee.org/consumerguide.

For more window air conditioner installation tips, please visit www.nyc.gov/html/dob/downloads/pdf/ac_tips.pdf

For a complete listing of building services, please visit our Web site at www.columbia.edu/uh.

RENTER’S INSURANCE
During your occupancy in Columbia University Apartment Housing (UAH), it is important that you protect yourself financially against personal property losses by acquiring renter’s insurance. Renter’s insurance can provide you with coverage for damaged, lost, or stolen personal items as well as personal liability (in the event that someone is injured in your apartment or you damage property that belongs to others). Renter’s Insurance can also provide you with the financial means for acquiring temporary living facilities in the event that your residency becomes inhabitable due to severe weather damage or some other form of disaster.

Although Columbia University does not offer renter’s insurance, you can find information on how to determine your coverage, survey your items, and find a provider by visiting the Insurance Information Institute’s Web site at www.iii.org/media/publications/brochures/rentersins/.

HOW TO RECYCLE...

Light Bulbs
We are in the process of rolling out a voluntary used light bulb recycling program in all of our buildings. It is not currently required to recycle light bulbs in New York City. However, many bulbs, especially most fluorescent bulbs, contain metals such as mercury that are harmful to the environment if disposed of in landfills. To reduce this hazard, we have begun voluntarily recycling bulbs in residential buildings (this is also being done in the academic buildings). Please separate your used bulbs when disposing of your trash and speak to your superintendent or building personnel about how to participate in this program.

Batteries
New York City’s Rechargeable Battery Law (Local Law 97 of 2005) makes it illegal for residents to discard rechargeable batteries in the trash (as opposed to alkaline batteries that can be easily thrown away). Rechargeable batteries, including nickel cadmium and lithium batteries, are used in devices such as laptops, cordless phones, power tools and remote control toys. Retail stores in New York City that sell such devices or batteries are required to accept these batteries for recycling. Some University buildings will have the ability to accept rechargeable batteries for recycling. Please check with your superintendent or building personnel to find out if battery recycling is available in your building.

For more information, please visit the following Web sites:


www.rbrc.org/call2recycle/
EXTERIORS AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
Columbia University Facilities’ Exteriors and Historic Preservation (EH) division works to improve the University’s sense of place on campus and in the Morningside Heights neighborhood by restoring its building fabric.

For EH, restoration often involves the replacement of damaged and missing building elements and the cleaning of building façades. By restoring or “recycling” existing buildings instead of demolishing and building new ones, EH helps the University to reduce its carbon footprint and embodied energy—the quantity of energy required to manufacture a product, material or service or to supply it to the point of use.

EH’s team of five project managers (architects, conservators and engineers) maintain a portfolio of more than 250 buildings, an overwhelming majority of which were built in the late 1890s and 1900s. To capture the original architectural design of each building, EH pays critical attention to a building’s details—color, texture, coursing, etc. It is also important that they reference historic images of each structure, a majority of which are tax photographs taken between 1939 and 1941 by the local government to document the buildings. In addition to photos, EH uses other buildings within the campus and neighborhood as inspiration, particularly since many of these buildings were designed by the same architects with similar materials and details.

Since its inception, Exteriors and Historic Preservation has made significant contributions to the campus and neighborhood. Building 44 Morningside Drive, located on the southwest corner of 115th Street and Morningside Drive, went through a significant transformation after the completion of two projects in 2003 and 2005. The six-story building now boasts a new cornice, parapets, granite planters, entrance doors, and decorative metalwork.

To be counted among these improvements are the installation of “green roofs”—lush vegetative roof tops—at 423 West 118th Street (above Radio Perfecto) and 635 West 115th Street, where the University’s Office of Environmental Stewardship is located. Additionally, the façades of 435 West 119th and 434 West 120th (both on Amsterdam Avenue) were cleaned, after which a surprising variety of color in the brickwork was uncovered beneath the 100 years worth of dirt.

In striving to improve the University’s streetscapes and its historic façades, EH often plans their production schedules around the academic calendar to take into account the presence of students, faculty, and staff. Also, sensitivity is given to Columbia’s neighboring communities and their traffic and lifestyle concerns.

Exteriors and Historic Preservation has an ongoing list of projects which will be used to revitalize the campus. Their work is not only essential to preserving the University’s history, but it also positively impacts Columbia’s vast neighborhood.

DIRECTOR’S CHAIR – GO GREEN EAST HARLEM
by Ed Lauth, Director for Commercial Property Services

When you take a moment to think about it, the word green can be a pleasant homonym; you know, one of those words that are spelled the same but have different meanings. Green can be that flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes, that sunny gathering place in the village for family recreation, or those all important, flawless, manicured area on a golf course where every golfer wants to get to in the fewest amount of strokes.

For the past few months it has been my pleasure to collaborate with a unique group of organizations in creating Go Green: East Harlem Seminars for Supers, a series of free workshops for residential superintendents in East Harlem, focusing on recycling, water and energy conservation, Integrated Pest Management, cleaning and tree care. While the primary goal of these workshops is to present maintenance techniques that Supers can use to reduce a building’s impact on the environment, the superintendent’s success in implementing those techniques will largely depend on the cooperation they can get from their tenants.

In March, the Go Green Seminar committee held our most recent workshop on Energy and Water conservation. “Why bother to conserve,” one may ask, “My use of electricity and water is so small and insignificant compared to the city and world around me. What difference does it make?”

The answer of course is that everyone’s participation is important! Sure, it won’t be that lamp you hardly ever turn off that creates a major blackout, or that wasted drop of water that depletes our reservoirs, or, allegorically speaking, your straw that breaks the camel’s back, but it is all cumulative and with enough people caring we can lighten the load on that poor camel, keep our streets and homes lit, and save that extra drop of water for the future should our children, grandchildren or neighbors find themselves in desperate need for it.

Now that spring is here with the color Green abundant all around, let that vibrant hue, evoked in us human observers by radiant energy, be a reminder of the initiatives and action we can all participate in to help our environment. “Go Green East Harlem! Go Green Morningside Heights!” For more information on Go Green Seminars, go to www.cenyc.org/supergreen.