



# ANSONIA CONDOMINIUM NEWSLETTER

*“SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY, WITH OUR COMMUNITY”*



## EMPLOYEE OF THE SEASON: HENRY PEGUERO

For Henry Peguero, our Employee of the Season, the Ansonia is truly a home away from home. Some of Henry's earliest memories are of visiting his father at work, hanging out with his father's friends, and pretending to paint something or carry a tool or ride Elevator A. His father is Arturo Peguero, and that job was as a Porter at the Ansonia Condominium. Many of those friends that young Henry met are still familiar to us all: Marc, Victor, Felix and Billy, to name a few.

Around 18 years ago, Henry was looking for steady and interesting work. At the suggestion of his father, Henry decided to apply for a position at the Ansonia. He started work around 16 years ago and is now in the position his father held. Henry is a Porter, working 4 pm-12 am, Monday through Friday.

The work suits Henry. As a child he fell in love with the Ansonia. It was very comfortable for him to start working there and he felt it was simple to join the guys, since he grew up with them. Henry thinks the Ansonia is very family oriented and likes the hands-on work that is always varied.

Now Henry commutes to Manhattan from upstate New York. He decided to move his wife and three children to Mt. Hope, New York so that they could grow up in a suburban environment and play sports outdoors. Even so, Henry points to the Ansonia legacy as a part of his children's heritage. At 6, 10 and 16, they all love to play baseball (like Babe Ruth) and Henry's familiarity with the Frozen Ropes on 74<sup>th</sup> Street led him to enroll his kids at the Frozen Ropes franchise near his home.

If he's not working at the Ansonia, Henry likes to work out and watch his kids at their games. He also applies the skills he's learned at the Ansonia to fix up his home and keep it in good repair. He plants and tends his garden, which his wife wanted to hold loads of flowers. Henry is very proud of his home and the peaceful, quiet life he's created there.

For Henry, the Ansonia is not only his place of employment but also a part of him. All of us who live at the Ansonia appreciate the fact that Henry feels as we do. Thank you, Henry, for all that you do here!

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am extremely thankful to be living at the Ansonia, again! Starting in October 2015, my family moved to a rental apartment next door at the Level Club while our apartment went through a renovation. We finally moved back at the end of August.

What did my family learn through this process? Besides that renovations take too long and are crazy expensive? We learned that the building was very supportive of the outside contractors that were used to renovate our apartment and to properly handle any asbestos issues that might have been encountered. We also learned that they were very vigilant about the gas lines that were run to our apartment, complying with increasingly stringent DOB requirements after last year's major gas explosion in the East Village. We learned that although the Level Club is a nice place with nice people, we missed the Ansonia's grand lobby, wonderful staff, and diverse community. Indeed, there's no place like home!

Now It's time to reflect on another successful year at the Ansonia!

### Financial Summary:

The fiscal year ending April 2016 was an extremely successful one, mainly due to a mild winter, staffing optimization, and a fixed rate gas contract.

Although we had budgeted for a normal winter, we ended up having a relatively mild one. The mild winter enabled us to use less fuel and save on certain repairs. Overall, repairs and maintenance were almost \$500,000 less than budgeted.

The savings from converting to gas fuel continue to benefit our bottom line. We saved \$155,000 in heating costs, as we used less fuel and Sirius Management negotiated a lower 3-year fixed priced gas contract, \$4.295 versus \$5.221 per million BTUs, a savings of about \$1, which went into effect in November of 2015.

After conducting an overtime analysis, Sirius Management determined that it was often more efficient to hire part-time personnel rather than pay for overtime, for a savings of \$60,000, or about the price of a fulltime employee.

These positive results more than offset our normal increases: water + sewer, insurance and union wages—so much so that we have easily satisfied both our lender's reserve requirements (the National Coop Bank) and Fannie Mae's Pers reserve requirements.

Although our bad debt exposure, budgeted at \$31,000, came to \$38,000, thanks to Sirius Management and our fellow board member David Stellings, we are aggressively pursuing a conclusion and satisfaction of this outstanding debt.

**As a result, there will be no increase in Common Charges for fiscal year 2017. Our reserves are met and we are in a positive cash flow position. For the last 5 years, our common charges have increased, on average, only 1.34% per annum.**

### Quality of Life Achievements—Building Community:

We are about to conduct the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Life at the Ansonia Survey. This year we will again be using Survey Monkey, a well-known application that easily and anonymously gathers data for review. We encourage you all to answer the survey and to please provide us with constructive comments.

Based on your comments from last year, the following changes were implemented:

- 1) We raised the visibility of our House Committee, appointing Ed Lewit, Chair, as liaison with Management. Ed is your direct line to help improve response time with non-urgent maintenance matters. If you have not received a timely response to your questions to management, please contact the Chair via [www.ansoniacondo.org](http://www.ansoniacondo.org) , or by emailing [ansoniahousecommittee@gmail.com](mailto:ansoniahousecommittee@gmail.com).
- 2) In addition to the many cleaning and maintenance staff on each floor in any given day, our assistant super conducts a daily walk through of each floor of the building.
- 3) We have recently strengthened security and procedures around access to the building from the garage.

REMEMBER, the staff is constantly trained to reinforce the policies of the Ansonia so please respect their guidance – policies apply to us all without exception.

### Committee Involvement:

The Ansonia Advocacy Committee informs owners about the goings on in our community. We are very pleased with the Advocacy's commitment to attending 20<sup>th</sup> Precinct, BID and Community Board meetings.

This past year, after the Committee recommended the Board join forces with the Alexandria Board, including both buildings' commercial owners, a consultant was hired to pursue the enforcement of vendors' regulations. After a long and frustrating process, we finally saw some remarkable results. Our consultants met with NY Public Advocate Letitia James who called upon Police Commissioner Bratton (just before he left) to support our repeated requests. Finally, the 20<sup>th</sup> Precinct was given the green light to uphold the law, which among other provisions, requires vendors to remove their wares each night, that their goods be constantly attended to, and that their tables comply with standards intended to support normal egress of the sidewalks. This matter is not resolved and is still being challenged by the local vendor (who has been ignoring the regulations) in the courts. The Ansonia Advocacy Committee will keep you posted in the Newsletter.

The Communications Committee continues to provide us with the Ansonia Newsletter, the Life at the Ansonia Survey, and the Chair, Allison Epstein, oversees all the important written communications to residents of the Ansonia. Allison also works with Management to update and improve the website. This contribution is a vital and important part of enhancing our quality of life at the Ansonia.

The House Committee, while acting as liaison with management, has also played a vital role in encouraging such green practices as composting at the Ansonia. A special thank you to Cynthia Hardy, who has taken the lead in this effort! This year we will look to expand Mr. Lewit's role in monitoring the day-to-day conditions of our building, while finalizing our elevator landing lighting options and improving signage options around the elevators and floors.

## Looking Ahead

We have been very careful to maintain our home while tightly managing fiscal expenditures. This year we will make improvements while sustaining the essence of the Ansonia's history and grandeur. I welcome all new residents and encourage all to continue participation in keeping our community a great one!

Best,

Susan Elkind Orchant

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# HOUSE & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEES

## Elevator Landing Lighting Update

As you may recall, we submitted 4 options for new lighting fixtures for the elevator landings to a vote by the owners. With only 10% of the owners participating, Option D won by a slim margin. Once the sample of the fixture was placed, however, it became clear it would not work in situ. Armed with your comments from the ballots and from previous surveys, we went back to our designer who recommended something in keeping with the style and grandeur of our building. They will be going up soon in all the elevator landings, so keep a look out and see if you can see our signature Ansonia "A" hidden within the design of these beautiful fixtures.

## Resident Survey

Please complete the Fourth Annual Ansonia Survey by **Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**. You can access it online via the building website [www.ansoniacondo.org](http://www.ansoniacondo.org) or directly at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/2016ansoniasurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2016ansoniasurvey)

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# SIRIUS-LY: AN UPDATE FROM SIRIUS

**Heating Season** – Now that the heating season is upon us, please remember a couple of very important items:

- Please remove anything in front of or on top of your radiator cover, as this can restrict the heat flow.
- The heating valves are NOT adjustable, and should NOT be frequently tuned on and off. Doing so can cause damage to the system. If you have to turn the valves on or off, please do so when the radiators are cool.
- If you are unsure as to whether your valves are open properly, please fill out a Maintenance Request form, or log in a request through the website: [www.ansoniacondo.org](http://www.ansoniacondo.org).
- Please have your window air conditioners professionally removed for the season, as they can cause major drafts during the winter and can lower the temperature in your apartment dramatically. Although Ansonia staff is not permitted to do this work, we can recommend a/c

contractors who both remove and store air conditioning units. For information, please contact Erin, in the Management office, at [erin@siriusrealty.com](mailto:erin@siriusrealty.com)

- Let us know if you have too much or too little heat by notifying management or security so we can continue to improve our heat distribution throughout the building.

**Holiday Fund** – Once again, please look out for notice right after Thanksgiving of the Ansonia Holiday Fund. The response has always been great, and all the employees are very appreciative.

**Package Pick up** – Please be sure to pick up packages, as you are notified, as space is limited.

**MY BUILDING** – [www.ansoniacondo.org](http://www.ansoniacondo.org)

If you are one of the few owners who have not yet signed up for this incredibly helpful service, please take a moment to log on and give us your e-mail address. If you need any assistance, please contact Tracy in the Management office, at [tracy@siriusrealty.com](mailto:tracy@siriusrealty.com).

**Bicycles** – The Condominium still has a few Bicycle spots for rent. If you are interested, please contact Marc Lippman, at [marc@siriusrealty.com](mailto:marc@siriusrealty.com)

**Broadway Mall Lights** – As in past years, the Board of Managers has elected to make a contribution on behalf of the Condominium to the Broadway Mall Fund. This group is responsible for the cleaning of our general area as well as the decorated area in the Broadway Mall.

**Insurance** – As a unit owner, or renter, having apartment owner's insurance is critical. According to the Condominium Plan, damage to and repair of "Finishes" and "personal property" are not the responsibilities of the Condominium and therefore are generally not covered by the Condominium's insurance. They should be insured under **personal** apartment owners' or renters' insurance policies. Some examples of finishes and personal property are: finish painting other than white, wall coverings, wood flooring, appliances, cabinetry, marble, carpeting, furnishings, etc. For more information, please feel free to contact Marc Lippman or your insurance broker directly.

**Items in Public Hallways** – Reminder: It is both hazardous and against the NYC Fire Code to leave bikes, strollers or toys in the public hallways. Please also remember that if you need to ask visitors to wait before entering your apartment, they must do so downstairs in the sitting area until you are ready to receive them. Guests may not wait in the public hallways.

**Food Drive** – Board member Allison Epstein continues to champion the Ansonia's local charity drive. Please take a look at the notice in the basement, describing the preferred donations. This is a very worthy cause where the Ansonia has received recognition for its efforts.

**Dog Walking** – Sirius Management and the Board of Managers, ask all dog owners and dog walkers to use only elevator #1, and make sure your dog COMPLETELY clears either the 74<sup>th</sup> street or 73<sup>rd</sup> street entrances before doing "their thing".