

Stuytown Officer Halts Arson

By JIM DOBLIN

"We're not cops," comments 29 year-old Security Officer Sheldon Goldberg. "We don't have the training or authority of regular police but we make do with what we have." What Officer Goldberg does have is the midnight till 8 shift protecting the Stuyvesant Town apartment complex at 352 1st Ave. In nearly eight years of service to Stuyvesant Town, he had apprehended some thirty individuals for acts ranging from burglary to kidnapping.

Although not a police officer, Goldberg received security training at the Police Academy of New York where he was instructed on "what is and what is not a crime, how to follow suspects, the use of the night stick, and the proper procedures for writing police and fire reports. "We also went over to the 13th precinct a number of times where we were lectured on ways to handle different situations," Goldberg said.

During his shift on June 8th, Goldberg observed police removing Ronnie Lee, 19, from a nearby building. As Lee was walking away

from the site, Goldberg shouted to the officers "do you want him" for arrest? The police did not take Lee at that time. A few minutes later after the police had left, Lee was again observed by Goldberg taking a box and emptying the contents of several trash cans from a nearby Chinese restaurant into it. "I knew he was up to no good," recalled Goldberg, as he watched Lee sit on the box and wait for the heat to cool down. Shortly afterwards, Goldberg remembers seeing Lee break down the door of 369 1st Ave. and go upstairs. Lee, already under the scrutinous eye of Goldberg, then left the building and walked across the street on to Stuyvesant Town property. At that point, Joan Froelich of 369 1st Ave. opened her window and yelled, "The fire's here!"

Police arrived on the scene and Officer Robert Bennet arrested Lee on charges of breaking and entering and arson. Since then, Our Town has learned, Lee was indicted on those two counts.

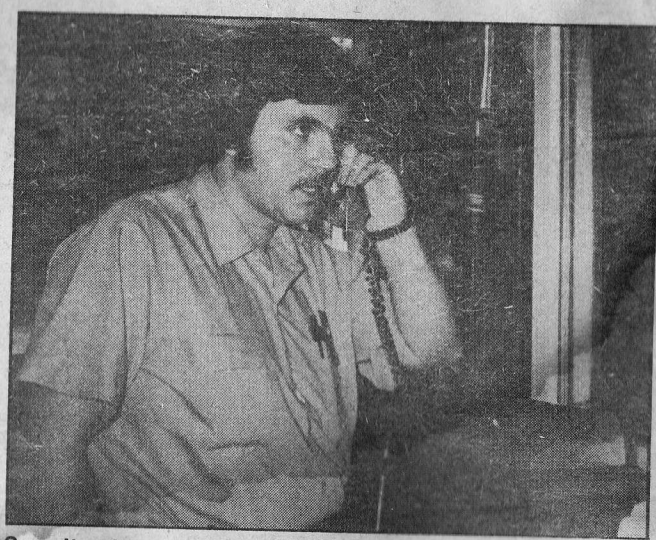
Since working with Stuyvesant Town, Goldberg claims some twenty-five commendations for out-

standing service from the Metropolitan Insurance Co., the building's owner. Each award consists of a citation and a day off. In addition, his actions on June 18th may merit him a Civilian Commendation Award, given once a year by the District Attorney's Office.

Since he is not a regular patrolman, Goldberg does not carry a gun. He does, however, carry a nightstick which seems to work just as

effectively as indicated by his outstanding service record at Stuyvesant Town. One advantage of being a security guard over a police officer, Goldberg noted, is that "we know the ground and the tenants a lot better than do regular cops." The guards are much quicker to spot suspicious individuals around the complex and, as a result, prevent a significant number of crimes. "The tenants around here deserve protection," Goldberg said.

Stuyvesant Town is, according to Goldberg, "by and large a safe community." With officers like Sheldon Goldberg, it's no wonder.



Security officer Sheldon Goldberg is back at the job after apprehending an arsonist at Stuyvesant Town. Photo by ED STRELSIN

Politicians covered up the nursing home scandal for 20 years.

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West Side Begins Urban Renewal Plans

By KIRK ADAMS

The West Side is presently taking an active role in the completion of longstanding, designated urban renewal

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the season by the West Side...
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From Rubble to Greenery, W.68th Street to Get Garden Growing

By JIM DOBLIN

Take an empty, brick-laden lot, a couple of hoes, spades, picks, some topsoil, seeds, and several devoted community members. The result: a community garden. Well, not exactly that simple, but it's the kind of transformation numerous Westside community organizations hope will occur at a vacant lot on the corner of W. 68th St. and Amsterdam Avenue.

Building a 5000 sq. ft. garden isn't as easy as planting a few seeds and doing a rain dance. This interim community garden proposal, initiated over two years ago by the W. 68th St. Block Association, has been slow in development but gained rapid support and assistance of a garden variety of city and area planning councils including Community Board 7, the Council on Environment, and the Mayor's Office for the Physically Handicapped. Other agencies, such as the Dorchester Tenants Council and the Parks Council, have also contributed their money and resources to the W. 68th St. Block Association in furthering the growth of the garden.

The land, originally city-owned property adjacent to the old 20th Precinct house, was rented for a dollar a year last November to the W. 68th St. Block Association, which, under the auspices of the Federation of Environment

and Parks, headed by Eleanor Garz, cleared over two and a half tons of trash from the site in March. Now the fenced-in area is free of garbage but covered with old broken bricks which, Garz hopes, will be collected and reused in the composition of the garden's pathways. However, she went on to say work such as planting may take some time. "We estimate the garden will take one to two years to complete because we can't do extensive work until we get the Community Development Funding that was requested. But we will begin to lay out paths and expect to receive some donated wooden sculptures for the garden soon", Garz said.

Although massive planting will not occur in the near future, the organizers of the W. 68th St. garden project will be ready to plant soon after the needed CD funds are received. The layout, drawn by Fred Rosenstiel, member of the Council on Environment and Manhattan's Green Guerillas, includes various types of plant growth from vines to vegetables; with lots of flowers and trees in between. Rosenstiel, who has been involved with the project since last fall, hopes to construct the garden according to the location of the sun on the ground during the day. Most of the area will not receive that much

sunlight and Rosentiel has planned accordingly. "Some of the most beautiful plants grow in the shade", he commented.

In order for plant life to flourish on the site, necessary basics such as topsoil and tools will be needed. Rosenstiel believes "about two-thirds of the soil will be bought and added with compost". Compost soil is the result of organic matter that contains carbon decomposing into soil; thereby enriching it. He also noted that there are several places around the city where a type of compost, known as "leafmold" can be obtained for the garden. The Block Association plans to purchase tools soon but, says Garz, "until we can start

buying, we have been loaned tools from the Council on Environment's lending library", adding "I have no complaints about city agencies. They have been extremely helpful, especially if they know that you're serious and have the support."

At a meeting held last week on the site, general plans for the lot were discussed by both Garz and Rosenstiel. In addition, Julie Shaw, representative of the Mayor's Office for the Physically Handicapped advocated that the garden, when completed, be available for use by the handicapped by using barrier-free design which, according to Shaw, will not add to the original costs.

July 4 Fireworks For West Side

Macy's will be staging an enormous fireworks exhibition July 4th, in the Hudson River off Riverside Park. It is the first time since 1963 that the fireworks display has taken place, and should provide West Siders with a spectacle all their own.

The show will begin at 9:15 and last for half an hour. During that time some 6,345 shells (fireworks) will be simultaneously fired from barges in the Hudson between 85th and 105th St. Valerie Lagauskas, Associate Special Events Director at Macy's, termed it "a mile of fireworks on the river."

The West Side Highway will be closed to motor vehicles from 8 to 10 p.m., so that pedestrians may watch the fireworks. Motorists will be directed to use alternate routes.

Lagauskas said that Macy's was sponsoring the fireworks display "to demonstrate our belief in New York City as a good place to live in, work and do business."